



# THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

*St Michael and All Angels*

Watford

**EASTER 5**

**Sunday 28 April 2024**

We are now able to receive the wine at communion. There will be a chalice on your left for those who wish to receive by drinking, and on your right for those who wish to receive by dipping their wafer in the wine. You are also welcome to just receive the bread.

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A warm welcome to our services today.

Hymns for Sunday are: 145 Good Christians all, 516 Love Divine all loves  
excelling, 148 Jesus lives thy terrors now, 619 When morning  
gilds the skies.

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## **For your prayers this week:**

**The Church:** The Parish of Much Hadham in our Diocese  
The Anglican Church of Bangladesh.  
All who work in the St Albans Diocesan Office.

**The World:** All work towards maternal mental health  
The prevention and treatment of skin cancers  
The work of fire brigades and fire fighters.

**The Community and Parish:** Our Churchwardens  
Our PCC Members and Deanery Synod Members  
All who give their time and energy for our Church.

**The Ill and the Housebound:** Especially Jean Alexander, Violet Allen-Smith,  
Julie Alvarez, Janet Chandler, Jemima Hill, Owen Hutchinson,  
Andrew Kiddle, Lisa Mills, Brian O'Riordan, Valerie O'Riordan,  
Matthew Paterson, Josephine Stadden, Catherine Stone, Fay  
Storey, Adelaide Tonkin, Bill Vidal, and all who care for them.

**The Departed:**

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**Collect**

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:  
grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect;  
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**FIRST READING Acts 8.26–40**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

- <sup>26</sup> An angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (This is a wilderness road.)
- <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship
- <sup>28</sup> and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.
- <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go over to this chariot and join it.’
- <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’
- <sup>31</sup> He replied, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.
- <sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: ‘Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.
- <sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.’
- <sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, ‘About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?’
- <sup>35</sup> Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.
- <sup>36</sup> As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?’
- <sup>38</sup> He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.
- <sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.
- <sup>40</sup> But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

**SECOND READING I John 4.7–21**

A reading from the first letter of John.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is  
born of God and knows God.  
8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.  
9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the  
world so that we might live through him.  
10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be  
the atoning sacrifice for our sins.  
11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.  
12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is  
perfected in us.  
13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his  
Spirit.  
14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of  
the world.  
15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in  
God.  
16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those  
who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.  
17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of  
judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world.  
18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with  
punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.  
19 We love because he first loved us.  
20 Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those  
who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom  
they have not seen.  
21 The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their  
brothers and sisters also.

## **GOSPEL John 15.1–8**

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

1 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower.  
2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit  
he prunes to make it bear more fruit.  
3 You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.  
4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it  
abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.  
5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear  
much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.  
6 Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such  
branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.  
7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it  
will be done for you.  
8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Our service today is available to attend in person  
or via livestream on our YouTube channel  
“St Michael’s Church Watford”  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8GTX0MfiICGmcDUkXTGFSw>

**The 10.00am Eucharist each Thursday is available to attend in person, and livestreamed.**

**The Church will be open** for tea and coffee on Wednesday mornings from 10.00am – 12.00 noon.

**Norma will be having a Bring-and-Buy Sale** after the 9.30 service today Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> April. Please support.

**At our Annual Meetings on Wednesday**, the following people were elected:

Churchwardens – Elizabeth Watkin and Valerie Blacklock  
PCC members – Steve Birch, Duncan Turton and Paul Chandler  
Deanery Synod Representatives – Mark Simon and Valerie Blacklock

Many thanks to them all on behalf of all at St Michael’s.