



## Christmas Eve

8am Holy Communion  
3:30pm Crib Service  
11pm Midnight Mass,  
with Carols by the Choir from 10:30pm

## Christmas Day

10am Parish Communion for Christmas

## Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December

10am Holy Communion  
11am Tiny Tots

## Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December

10am Parish Communion  
for The First Sunday of Christmas

### A Collect for Christmas

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

### An anthem for Christmas

*For him all stars have shone (Text, Elizabeth Jennings; Music, Bob Chilcott)*

He is so small the stars bow down, the fierce winds ease their breath, and careful shepherds look upon the one unsullied birth. They kneel and stare while time seems gone and goodness rules the earth.

The blight on man is all undone, and there will be no death, for though this child will be nailed on a cross, he'll be so since he is the jewel of untold worth. For him all stars have shone.

### A Psalm for today: Psalm 98

O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm have gained him victory.  
The Lord has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.  
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.  
Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.  
Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.  
With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.  
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.  
Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy  
at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

*Lord God, just and true, you make your salvation known in the sight of the nations;  
tune the song of our hearts to the music of creation as you come among us to judge  
the earth; through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*



## Gospel for Christmas Day, John 1. 1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

## Gospel for The First Sunday of Christmas, Luke 2. 15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

## Children's Activities in the Lady Chapel at Christmas –

From Christmas Eve to 5<sup>th</sup> January we'll be having our very own Nativity 'festival' with lots of different Nativity Scenes ... from the one we made in Godly Play last year, to our knitted Nativity, to some belonging to our church team. There will also be a prayer space and lots of fun puzzle activity sheets.

Our [Children & Young People](#) website page has loads of activities to help young people get to know the person of Jesus.

## We are delighted to announce the recommencement of our young person's choir –

If your child is 7 or over and interested in joining, please contact Nathan Collins ([stmichaelsbdsdom@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaelsbdsdom@gmail.com)) We will also be starting choral and organ scholarships for our young people and welcome the support of those who would like to help contribute to these.





# Newsletter and Notices

## BEST WISHES FOR A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE CLERGY AND CONGREGATION OF ST MICHAEL'S

**The church is open each day, from morning to mid afternoon.**

*An opportunity to spend some comforting time in prayer, peace and reflection*

*Come and see the Christmas Crib • Enjoy the fresh floral displays*

*Write a prayer and hang it on the Christmas Tree*

*Children's activities (Lady Chapel)*

**Holy Communion at 8am** – Forthcoming services at 8am will be **this Christmas Eve, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December, and then 7<sup>th</sup> January.**

**Holy Communion, Wednesdays 27<sup>th</sup> December & 3<sup>rd</sup> January 10am** – A service of Holy Communion, in church. Refreshments after the service will be held in the WCC.

**Tiny Tots, Wednesdays 27<sup>th</sup> December & 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 11 for 11:15am** Worship for babies/toddlers and their grown-ups; with a story, singing and instruments for little ones too! Join us for refreshments, fellowship and a chance for the children to play beforehand in the WCC, if you can. **We gather in the WCC and walk across to the Lady Chapel for worship.**

**Prayers for our Community, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December, 9:30-10am** – All welcome.

**Clarinet and Piano Recital, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 3pm** – It's with great pleasure that we welcome back Andy Mellor and Angela Novy for a Clarinet and Piano recital. Visit the [Music at St Michael's page](#) on our website for programme notes and more information on other forthcoming concerts.

**TLC Tuesday, a date for your diary** – We're not meeting in January but do make a note of **6<sup>th</sup> February in the WCC, 2:15pm for 2:30pm.** An opportunity to join in with tea and talk and a regular 10/15 minute presentation on wide ranging interests. Later in the afternoon we welcome families after school for a short while, to share in reading/play and enjoy a biscuit/cake/fruit snack. Do come along...and tell your friends too! Our own James Hellis will be playing the guitar for us.

**The next St Albans Cursillo Weekend will be from 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at Pleshey.** Cursillo is a movement within the Anglican church which provides a framework for Christians to grow in their faith through prayer, study and action and assists them to share their faith with others. Many members of St Michael's find this helpful, and if you would like to know more, please get in touch with John Emmett (07773 528835).

Details of all services and events are available on the [Calendar](#) page on our website.

Do follow us on Social Media too, for regular updates.

# Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & 31<sup>st</sup> December, First Sunday of Christmas



**Congregation Giant Christmas Card** – Do take time to look at all the greetings in the card shared amongst our congregation this Christmas. It is not too late to add your good wishes and either put your donation to The Children's Society in the box, or if you are able to Gift-Aid, use one of the envelopes provided. Thank you for all your support for this charity's important work during 2023. The card is on display in the Publicity Area.

**Charities Support Group Advent Red Bucket appeal** – This year we've supported two local charities. **Care4Calais Stansted** helps asylum seekers, accommodated in two hotels close to Bishop's Stortford. The volunteers from and around Bishop's Stortford, provide moral and emotional support during this difficult time for local asylum seekers (many families with children, including new-borns) living in difficult situations. We source basic supplies, arrange activities (eg. children's parties/craft sessions) and English lessons. They have endured painful experiences and are escaping horrific situations - so your donations really make a difference. 100% of donations received purchase items and provide crucial local services. If you'd like to know more, please speak to Alison Jordan. We support the **Holy Trinity Night shelter** every winter and they are open overnight from the end of November. The Shelter needs more volunteers including evenings and lunchtimes. Please contact Dave Perry via [htnsmanager@outlook.com](mailto:htnsmanager@outlook.com) If you'd like to know more you could also see Val Ashwood, Margaret Fox or Angela Weeks.

**Food Bank Plea** – Increased costs of living continue to hit foodbanks hard. Do consider whether you can donate: details on our [website](#) and church noticeboard.

**We are collecting used postage stamps for charity** – Please cut off your address leaving an inch border of envelope and place in the bucket in the Publicity Area.

### DIGITAL GIVING TO ST MICHAEL'S – CHRISTMAS AND BEYOND.

We know that fewer people carry cash, and whilst our donations in the collection plates and offertory box are much smaller, the costs of running our parish remain. Please consider using our **Card-Giving facility (contactless or with PIN)** to support St Michael's. **To give by phone**, text STMIC (then a number from 2 to 20, e.g. STMIC7 or STMIC15) to 70085. The most efficient way to give is by **Standing Order** direct from your bank account: please see the Giving Season envelopes from our most recent Stewardship renewal, in the Welcome Area.

Thank you for considering your giving to St Michael's at this season.

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