



St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford

Newsletter and Notices

Sunday 14th December 2025

Third Sunday of Advent



NO SERVICE AT 8am

10am Parish Communion, in Church

Come and enjoy fellowship and refreshments in the WCC after the 10am service.

Collect for The Third Sunday of Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A Psalm for today, Psalm 146. 4-10

Refrain: The Lord shall reign for ever.

Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong and bread to those who hunger. **[R]**
The Lord looses those that are bound; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous;
The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow;
but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.
The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Alleluia. **[R]**

*Lord of all,
our breath and being come from you, yet our earthly end is dust;
as you loose the bound and feed the hungry,
so bring us in your mercy through the grave and gate of death
to the feast of eternal life, where you reign for evermore. Amen.*

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

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

PRAYER, COUNSEL AND SUPPORT

If parishioners would value the prayers, counsel and support of the church, in time of need for themselves or others on their hearts, please do reach out to the ministry team. Do speak to us in person at church services and events, or use contact details on the next page. Thank you.

Gospel reading for today, Matthew 11. 2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Come and share our short session for children and young people during our Sunday 10am service EVERY WEEK!

We invite children of all ages, with their adults, to come into the Lady Chapel during part of the service, and share in A Godly Play (a short visual storytelling of scriptures, with wondering questions, stories, crafts, puzzles, and even some acting for those that want ... for all ages to share together; then various age related activities). **We also have an older group breakout session most weeks. We continue our Advent series: *Christmas People*, and this week we hear about the shepherds, and praise God because Jesus is born (Luke 2. 8-21).**

Our [Children & Young People](#) website page has loads of activities to help young people get to know the person of Jesus this Advent and Christmas. **And perhaps you might like to open our [Digital Advent Calendar](#) each day – it's for adults and children alike.**

Our young person's choir - If your child is 7 or over and interested in joining, please contact Nathan Collins (stmichaelsbdsdom@gmail.com) We will also be starting choral and organ scholarships for our young people.

Children's Activities in the Lady Chapel at Christmas – From Christmas Eve to 6th January we'll be having our very own Nativity 'festival' with lots of different Nativity Scenes ... from Godly Play to St Michael's School. There will also be a prayer space, puzzle activity sheets, and craft materials to make the Wise Men to complete your own scene.



Last week, we opened our special Advent Calendar doors and heard about Joseph: how he and Mary finally found a welcome, and learned about the baby, Jesus, being born (Luke 2. 1-7). We wrote prayers of thanks to God on paper holly leaves and created a holly wreath to hang in church to welcome Jesus to our building.



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School Services – We are once again delighted to welcome many schools to our church for their Advent and Christmas Services these coming weeks. Please be aware that the church (and churchyard) will be busy almost every day, especially during this week, so check the website calendar carefully so as not to coincide.

Holy Communion, Wednesday 17th December, 10am – Refreshments afterwards.

Tiny Tots, Thursdays from 12:30-2/2:30pm, WCC – For parents/carers and babies/preschoolers in term time; plus older children in the holidays. Playtime, tea/coffee, songs, stories, activities and a prayer. Buggy access and baby change available, and you're welcome to bring a packed lunch if you like. It's also ok to be late, we understand!

Prayers for our Community, Saturday 20th December, 9:30-10am – All welcome.

Churches Together Carol Singing & Coffee Morning, Methodist Church, Saturday 20th December from 10am-12noon. We will be collecting for the Night Shelter. We weren't able to sing in Jackson Square so this was the best option ... so do come along and help, buy a coffee, mince pie or cake and join in the singing.

Forthcoming 8am services – We'll celebrate Holy Communion at 8am **on Sunday 21st December**, then 11th and 18th January.

Advent and Christmas Services at St Michael's – [All details are on our website](#) and on flyers in the Publicity Area but note our Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 6pm on Sunday 21st December, Crib Service at 3:30pm and Midnight Service at 11pm (with Choir Carols from 10:30pm) on Christmas Eve. We'll celebrate Parish Communion at 10am on Christmas Day. **We would welcome volunteers to read at Nine Lessons and Carols, speak to Derwyn if interested.**

TLC Tuesdays, next meeting on Tuesday 6th January in the WCC, 2:15pm for 2:30pm Join tea and talk and a regular short presentation on wide-ranging interests. This month we are delighted to welcome our mayor, Mr Richard Townsend.

Our craft group meets on alternate Mondays in the WCC, 10am - 12noon. Next on Monday 12th January – All welcome! We might bring along our own current crafting hobby and sometimes one of the group shares a craft. We usually prepare items for sale at the annual St Michael's Church Holly Fair. See the website [here](#) to read about our knitting workshop for the Travelling Crib.

Bereavement Journey Course, Saturday mornings, 17th January - 21st February For anyone bereaved at any time; with films and discussion groups. It's the chance to explore grief in a safe space. If you are interested and would value a preliminary conversation please contact Alison Jordan [via the Parish Office](#).

Quiet Days in Albury – Days of reflection and contemplation in June's home. We'll be taking a break for a few months, hopefully meeting next on **Thursday 26th March**. We desperately need drivers, please contact the Parish Office if you think you could help.

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Are you interested in joining a home group? Perhaps you'd like to find out about what they can offer? Contact Derwyn in the first instance if you'd like to know more.

Communion Music – To help with congregational singing at communion, the Sidespeople have melody versions of some settings available for worshippers. If you'd be helped by having some music for these, do ask for a score when you pick up your service books.

Charity Christmas Cards for sale – There's a wide range of cards on display in the Charnley Hall, on Sundays and Wednesdays; with profits to the Holly Fair.

We have a wonderful band of cleaners and are now looking for extras – We have two groups, and it would mean cleaning once every eight weeks. We meet on the final Saturday of the month from 10-11am or earlier if preferred.

Tower Room Update – Please see the Schedule of Documents on the [Notices page](#) of our website.

Giant Christmas Card – Once again the Giant Card will give everyone the chance to send Christmas Greetings to their St Michael's friends, and instead of incurring postal charges making a donation to The Children's Society. The card will be displayed in the Publicity Area during services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Many thanks for your support.

The Charities Support Group would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the Holly Fair a big success. We have made approximately £3,900. There was a welcoming atmosphere, including carol singing led by a group from the Choir. Thanks also to the Tower for contributing this year towards the total.

Christmas flyers – If you live in the parish and you'd like to take some for your road, please do. If you don't live in the parish, please use the flyer for a personal invitation to friends but don't deliver to non-parishioners, since they are served by our neighbour churches.

Invitation from the Bishop of Hertford to Young Adults Supper Party – Bishop Jane would like to explore the possibility of inviting members of our congregation who are aged between 18-35 to a Supper Party on Tuesday 3rd February (6:30pm onwards) at Bishopswood. If you might be interested in attending this gathering, or would like a chat about it, please speak to the Vicar.

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.

The Rev'd Derwyn Williams (Vicar)	899261	Churchwarden: Claire Conquest	07944 431873
The Rev'd Derek Hinge (PTO)	652173		
The Rev'd June Knight (PTO)	07539 058946	Deputy Churchwardens: T Pigram, P Rixson	
Parish Office	01279 654416	Parish Safeguarding Officer: Dotun Akinde	
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