



St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford

Newsletter and Notices

Sunday 21st December

10am Parish Communion
6pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve

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

Christmas Day

Sunday 28th December

10am Parish Communion
for Holy Innocents

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

Nativity Carol (words and music by John Rutter)

Born in a stable so bare, born so long ago;
born 'neath light of star, he who loved us so.

Far away, silent he lay, born today, your homage pay;
for Christ is born for aye, born on Christmas Day.

Cradled by mother so fair, tender her lullaby,
over her son so dear, angel hosts fill the sky.

Wise men from distant far land, shepherds from starry hills
worship this babe so rare; hearts with his warmth he fills.

Love in that stable was born, into our hearts to flow;
innocent dreaming babe, make me thy love to know.



A psalm for today, Psalm 98

Refrain: The Lord has made known his salvation.

Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things.

His own right hand and his holy arm have won for him the victory.

The Lord has made known his salvation;

his deliverance has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.

He has remembered his mercy and faithfulness towards the house of Israel,

and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. **[R]**

Sound praises to the Lord, all the earth; break into singing and make music.

Make music to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the voice of melody.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn sound praises before the Lord, the King. **[R]**

Let the sea thunder and all that fills it, the world and all that dwell upon it.

Let the rivers clap their hands and let the hills ring out together before the Lord,

for he comes to judge the earth.

In righteousness shall he judge the world and the peoples with equity. **[R]**

Advent 4, Christmas Day & 28th December, Holy Innocents



Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Matthew 1. 18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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.

CHILDREN & 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.

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

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

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.





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

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

Prayers for our Community, Saturday 27th December, 9:30-10am – All welcome.

Holy Communion, Wednesday 31st December, 10am – Refreshments afterwards.

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.

Tiny Tots, Thursdays from 12:30-2:30pm, WCC – For parents/carers and babies/preschoolers. 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! **We next meet on Thursday 8th January.**

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. 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.

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.

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 – See the Schedule of Documents on our website [Notices page](#)

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.

Advent 4, Christmas Day & 28th December, Holy Innocents



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 2025. The card is on display in the Publicity Area.

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.

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.

Mary's Meals Foreign Currency Collection – There is a collection box in church during services for all your foreign currency, no matter how old, obscure or its value.

Postage stamps for charity – Remember to save your used stamps this Christmas and put them in the bucket in the Publicity Area to go to charity. Please ensure that the stamps have a one inch paper envelope border, otherwise they cannot be used!

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.

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 the contact details below. Thank you.

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	
		safeguarding@saintmichaelweb.org.uk / 07921 860862	

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