St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford

Newsletter and Notices

Sunday 15th November 2026

Second Sunday before Advent

8am Holy Communion, in Church

10am Service of the Word, in Church & Zoom

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

You are welcome to share in our worship in the following ways:

1. Come to Church All are welcome!

Remember to bring your order of service for the 10am service.

2. Join Zoom on your computer

When signed in you can 'Join a Meeting' (ID: 927 480 8728 / Passcode: 889123).

3. Join with Audio Zoom via phone

a) Call **0131 460 1196** b) Enter Meeting ID then #, then enter Meeting Passcode then #

Collect for The Second Sunday before Advent

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A Psalm for Today, Psalm 90. 1-8, 12

Refrain: O Lord my God, in you I take refuge.

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth and the world were formed,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
You turn us back to dust and say: 'Turn back, O children of earth.'
For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday, which passes like a watch in the night.
You sweep them away like a dream; they fade away suddenly like the grass.
In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered. ***[R]***
For we consume away in your displeasure; we are afraid at your wrathful indignation.
You have set our misdeeds before you and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. ***[R]***

Almighty God, our eternal refuge, teach us to live with the knowledge of our death and to rejoice in the promise of your glory, revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 on the other page.

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

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

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.

A Gospel reading for today, Matthew 25. 14-30

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

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.** This week we continue our focus on the Christian Year and, from our Lectionary readings recently, we hear the parable of the ten bridesmaids, *(Matthew 25. 1-13).*

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



The 'Remembrance Tree' with poppies on and alongside, made by our young people as part of our Remembrance worship and reflections last week in *A Godly Play*.

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

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Forthcoming 8am services – We'll celebrate Holy Communion at 8am **this Sunday 15th November,** then 29th November, 6th, 20th and 27th December.

Craft group meets on alternate Mondays in the WCC, 10am - 12noon. We next meet **this Monday 16th November -** 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 Holly Fair.

Night Shelter introduction / induction dates – Monday 16th or Wednesday 18th November at 7pm; Saturday 21st November 10am AND 2pm in Holy Trinity Night Shelter. There's been a lot of work to improve both guest, and volunteer experiences. Come along to see if there is something that you can help out with including interaction with guests at lunchtime or evening; overnight sleeping supervision of the guests, admin; food collections. Every bit of help we receive enables us to be there when someone is finds themselves in the unenviable position of being homeless. htns.volunteering@outlook.com

Holy Communion, Wednesday 18th November, 10am – Refreshments afterwards.

Tiny Tots, Thursdays from 12:30-2/2:30pm, WCC – We are in need of volunteers to assist with this important community outreach for babies/young children and their parents/carers. Every week we join in a joyful time of worship, learning, prayer and fellowship, led by Derwyn. Without a minimum of two registered helpers, the session cannot go ahead. Please consider offering your time for this rewarding church ministry! Do speak to Lucie if you're interested.

Prayers for our Community, Saturday 21st November, 9:30-10am – All welcome.

Prayer Ministry – for healing, praise or thanksgiving are offered in the Lady Chapel after worship on fourth Sundays each month, **next on Sunday 22nd November.**

Recital with Fumi Otsuki (Violin) and Gisela Meyer (Piano), Sunday 22nd November, 3pm – Free admission, retiring collection. Tea and homemade cake afterwards. Programme information and biographies on our website (Music at St Michael's page).



Quiet Days in Albury – Days of reflection and contemplation in June's home. We'll be meeting next **on Thursday 26th November.**

Holly ring making – We're starting our holly ring making in preparation for the Holly Fair. Mossing up from 9am on 24th November, Ring making all day 30th November, 1st, 3rd (and afternoon of 2nd) December. Sign-up sheets on the welcome desk or speak with Peter or Claire.

Advent Service, Sunday 29th November, 10am – We would welcome volunteers to read at this service, speak to Derwyn if interested.

A wide range of Charity Christmas cards are on sale in the WCC on Sundays and Wednesdays, together with the usual Greetings Cards. All profits are going towards the Holly Fair. Many thanks, Rosemary Thomson.

Travelling Crib for ALL our church family – Once again we are delighted that our travelling crib will be making its way around the parish during Advent; **beginning with a blessing at the 10am service on 29th November**. Hosting the figures for a night is a wonderful chance to share the anticipation of Christ's birth and fellowship with other families as the crib is passed on ... and a moment of stillness in an otherwise busy Advent. Please chat to Katharine if you'd like to know more about it and to sign up for a night.

TLC Tuesdays, next meeting on Tuesday 1st December in the WCC, 2:15pm for 2:30pm. A lovely afternoon for tea and talk! This month we are delighted to welcome children from St Michael's School who will be singing carols to and with us.

Holly Fair (and Tower Tours too!), Saturday 5th December, 10-1pm – If you know anyone who could donate a raffle prize please speak to Carole Macdonald or Angela Weeks. We'll make Holly Rings as usual the week before the fair. If you would like to make any donations, there are boxes in church at services for the gifts stall, the bottle and chocolate tombola and for any raffle prizes. There will also be a list for donations for the raffle hampers. Any contributions will be greatly received; thank you very much. All proceeds go to charities.

Forthcoming events for our Church School – Ms Griffiths and our school community warmly invites you to share in some or all of our forthcoming events including **our End of Term Service in Church on Thursday 17th December at 11am.** Please come and support our children. Also, please do visit St Michael's School page on our website for a couple of really interesting articles on the school vision and our language of spirituality. Finally, do admire and reflect on the **new school display at the back of the church.**

New Governors for St Michael's School – Would you like to be a school governor? It's a rewarding and important role in a friendly team and we currently have **two vacancies for church Governors.** There are seven governors appointed by the PCC at church or St Albans diocese to uphold the Christian ethos of the school as well as taking other responsibilities. See Mark Johnson (chair) or Val Ashwood or email chair@stmichaelsjmi.herts.sch.uk

Charities Red Buckets – Following the Harvest Appeal we have sent £321.50 to our CMS Partner Chris who lives in Madrid but works regularly in the Middle East. He was able to join remotely for the Harvest Service. Our recent Nepal Flash Floods Red Bucket raised £378.31 and was sent to Hope and Homes for Children who have been working to rescue and rehome children in Nepal. Thanks to everyone for your kind donations.

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