



No service at 8am
10am Parish Communion
6pm Service of Nine Lessons & Carols

Please 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 126

Refrain: The Lord has indeed done great things for us.

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with songs of joy.

Then said they among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'

The Lord has indeed done great things for us, and therefore we rejoiced. **[R]**

Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, as the river beds of the desert.

Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed,

will come back with shouts of joy, bearing their sheaves with them. **[R]**

Lord, as you send rain and flowers even to the wilderness, renew us by your Holy Spirit, help us to sow good seed in time of adversity and to live to rejoice in your good harvest of all creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Special Advent and Christmas Services at St Michael's Church

Sunday 17 December
6pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
Beautiful choral music and traditional congregational carols

Sunday 24 December
8am Holy Communion
10am-3pm Church open for prayer
Come and see the Christmas Crib
Write a prayer and hang it on the Tree
Enjoy the fresh floral displays
Children's activities (Lady Chapel)
3:30pm Crib Service for all
Children can dress as a Nativity character
11pm Choral Midnight Mass with Carols by the Choir from 10:30pm

Monday 25 December
10am Christmas Communion
Open for prayer every day
Windhill, Bishop's Stortford
www.saintmichaelweb.org.uk
[Social media icons] [QR code] [Scan code for website]

A Gospel reading for today, John 1. 6-8, 19-28

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. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"', as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

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 on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. **This week we conclude our Advent series *Good news for Everyone*:** How will we demonstrate that the good news is for all people and all nations?

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) 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.

Children's Activities in the Lady Chapel at Christmas – From Christmas Eve to 5th 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 heard about the good news for the wise men, and made our own gifts for Jesus; as we recognised Jesus as the King God promised.



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

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

Advent and Christmas Services at St Michael's – [All details are on our website](#) and on flyers (see other page) but note our **Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 6pm this Sunday 17th December, Holy Communion at 8am, 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.**

MU Advent Service, Great St Mary's, 19th December, 2pm – Great St Mary's Mothers' Union branch would like to invite MU members to their service in Sawbridgeworth, followed by light Christmas refreshments in Church House.

Holy Communion, Wednesday 20th December, 10am – A service of Holy Communion, in church. Refreshments after the service will be held in the WCC.

Tiny Tots, Wednesday 20th December, 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.**

Funeral of Helen Britton, Thursday 21st December, 1pm – Chris and family would like to invite all who knew Helen to the funeral and then afterwards to refreshments in the WCC.

Prayers for our Community, Saturday 23rd December, 9:30am – A half hour session of informal prayer. All welcome.

Holy Communion at 8am – Forthcoming services at 8am will be **on Sunday 24th December and then 7th January.**

Company at Christmas urgently require a few more drivers on Christmas Day
This is a commitment of about one hour between 11:45am-12:45pm to deliver a meal and bring one/two people to the Methodist Church, and about a half hour to take guests home at 5pm. Please contact Steve Dale on 07769 908777 if you can help or Jenny Klincke on 07951 037851 if you have any questions before committing.

TLC Tuesday, a date for your diary – We're not meeting in January but do make a note of **6th 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.

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 next St Albans Cursillo Weekend will be from 16th-18th 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)

Once again the Giant Christmas Card gives 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 on Sundays and Wednesdays. Very many thanks for your support.

Charities Support Group Advent Red Bucket appeal – This year we're supporting two local charities. Details about donating by bank transfer can be found [via our website CSG Page](#). **Care4Calais Stansted** helps asylum seekers, accommodated in two hotels close to Bishop's Stortford. The group of 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 purchases items and provides crucial services in our area. 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 hntsmanager@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. You might also wish to consider a 'reverse Advent Calendar' – donating every day in Advent.

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. Any questions to Christine or Samuel Solway.

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