

Follow the link from our web site for live streamed services:

<http://www.stmichaelsgalleywood.org.uk/>



Sunday 3rd December – 1st Sunday in Advent

10:00 am Service of Holy Communion – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leaders: Jane Harpur and Revd David Cattle
Preacher: Travers Harpur – “We Are The Work of Your Hand”
Readings: Isaiah 64:1 – 9; Mark 13: 24 – 37

Sunday 10th December – 2nd Sunday in Advent

8:30 am BCP Communion – in-person only
10:00 am Service of the Word – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leader: Revd David Cattle
Preacher: Fiona Selden – “Comfort for God’s People!”
Reading: Isaiah 40:1 – 11

Sunday 17th December – 3rd Sunday in Advent

8:30 am BCP Communion – in-person only
10:00 am Service of the Word, featuring the Childrens’ Nativity – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leader: Fiona Selden
Preacher: Revd David Cattle – “Good News”
Reading: Isaiah 61:1 – 4
4:00 pm Carol Service – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leader: Jane Harpur
Preacher: Revd David Cattle

Sunday 24th December – Christmas Eve – 4th Sunday in Advent

8:30 am BCP Communion – in-person only
10:00 am Service of the Word – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leader: Geoff Windus
Preacher: Jane Harpur – “The Lord’s Faithfulness”
Readings: Psalm 89:1 – 8; Luke 1:26 – 38
4:00 pm Christingle Service
Leader and Preacher: Revd David Cattle
11:15 pm Service of Holy Communion
Leader: Revd David Cattle
Preacher: Chris Selden – “The Lord Has Made His Salvation Known”
Readings: Psalm 98; John 1:1 – 14

Monday 25th December – Christmas Day Family Communion

10:00 am Leader and Preacher: Revd David Cattle – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Reading: Luke 2:1 – 7

Sunday 31st December – 1st Sunday of Christmas

8:30 am BCP Communion – in-person only
10:00 am Service of the Word – in-person and live-stream on Facebook
Leader: Travers Harpur
Preacher: Fiona Selden – “Heirs with Christ”
Readings: Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4 – 7

Services During the Week

Weekly Morning Prayer on Tuesdays via Zoom at 9:30 am, but not on Tuesday 26th December.

Important dates in December

Fri 1 st , 7.30pm	– Carol Service singing practice (in Church)
Sat 2 nd , 9 – 12 pm	– Coffee Morning in Church
Weds 6 th , 2.15pm	– Wednesday Fellowship Christmas meeting (in Church)
Sat 9 th , 10am – 4pm	– Christmas Tree Festival
Mon 11 th , 10am	– MLT meeting (Fiona's house)
Wed, 13 th , 9:00 am	– Wednesday Prayer in Church
Sat 16 th , 9 – 12 pm	– Churchyard Tidy-up and Church Cleaning
Mon 18 th , 10am	– St Michael's School Carol Service (in Church)

Future dates

Weds 10 th Jan, 4pm	– Website Team meeting (via Teams)
Mon 15 th Jan, 7.30pm	– PCC meeting (in Church)
Mon 22 nd Jan, 7.30pm	– Lynchpins meeting (St John's, Moulsham)
Sun 28 th Jan, 4.30pm	– Joint service (Praise and Thanksgiving) – in Church
Mon 29 th Jan, 7pm	– Worship Planning Team meeting (via Zoom)

NOTICES

Christmas Tree Festival, 9th December, 10 am – 4 pm

A day for all the family, packed with items of entertainment, tombola, and refreshments, all in aid of our Building Fund. Free entry. The Festival includes a Reindeer Run (£1 charge), refreshments, Chelmsford Community Gospel Choir, the Mayor of Chelmsford, and much more!

To display a tree contact berylmoss11@gmail.com. NB. Beryl would gratefully receive donations of small chocolate items for Tombola and Raffle prizes.

Carol Service – Sunday 17th December, 4pm

We are looking for singers to join our singing group to lead the singing at our Carol Service. It is always a joyful event, which is well supported and appreciated by our local community. If you would like to join the group, please speak to Janette (jan.gibson@outlook.com) or Cesca (watkinson@blueyonder.co.uk). It is important to know names in advance, so that we can ensure consent forms are signed for the live-stream. Three practices have been set, and it is important that members attend as many as they can: Fridays 17th November, 1st and 15th December (all 7.30pm).

Singers needed for Christmas other events

We also need singers to lead the carol singing at two other Christmas events – the Senior Citizens' Christmas Lunch at the Keene Hall on Friday 15th December (singing starts at 2pm) and the outdoor Carols on the Common at the Heritage Centre on Saturday 23rd December at 4pm. If you would like to join for either or both of these, please see Janette or Cesca (contact details above).

Praying Together in Church on a Wednesday

This is an informal time of prayer at 9.00 am in the Church on the second and fourth Wednesday each month. It's a time of quiet reflection listening to God and to each other. All are welcome as we explore together the wonderful mystery of prayer. For December it will only be on the 13th. See Sue Kitson for more details.

Our Beautiful Churchyard

We are privileged to have a wonderful churchyard here at St Michael's, which Anne, Chris and our volunteer team work so hard to maintain as a place of beauty, peace and connection with God. The churchyard has rules which are set by the Diocese and are part of English law setting out what is allowed to be left on graves. The Churchyard Care Team (Anne, Travers and David) are in the process of writing a new policy for how we administer the churchyard law, and this will set out how we deal with items on graves that are not allowed to be there. Once the policy is finalised, we will

begin a project to publicise the rules more fully, when we will write to families to ask that unlawful items be removed from graves.

We aim to get the balance right between two very important things: caring for our families and helping them to remember their loved ones, and upholding the law. This is not easy to get right, so we ask for prayer for wisdom as we care for our churchyard and all its users. More information will be available shortly. If you have any questions about this, please speak to one of us.

Churchyard Tidy-Up and Church Cleaning

Do join us if you can for our monthly churchyard tidy-up on each second Saturday, 9 am – 12pm. For December it's the 11th. **NB** Church cleaning has been added to the agenda, so if you could help in this area, do please come along. See Anne Pepper for more details.

Home visits

If anyone can't get to Church at the moment, for whatever reason, and would like David to visit, please let David know (contact details on the back page). David is also very happy to bring Holy Communion and celebrate it at home or in hospital.

Prayer Chain

The Church has a small, trusted group of committed members ready and willing to support you in prayer. If you have a prayer request for yourself, someone else, a group of people, or a situation, please let our Prayer Chain Co-ordinator Jane Windus know (janewindus@gmail.com). Jane will then forward your request by e-mail to Prayer Chain members. Prayer requests will remain confidential within the Prayer Chain membership. If asking for prayer for an individual, please obtain their consent, or the consent of a parent or guardian for prayer for those under 18. (Consent is not needed for information already in the public domain.) Also, if you would like to ask to become a member of the Prayer Chain, please let Jane know.

Homegroups – would you like to join one?

Lots of our Church members are already part of a homegroup. Homegroups are small groups that meet in people's homes, perhaps once or twice each month, where we study the Bible, pray, support each other, and enjoy ourselves with friends. They are places where people grow in faith, and find encouragement for the journey of life. We have a variety of styles of homegroup – some lean more towards serious Bible study, while others more towards friendship and support. Everyone is welcome to join a homegroup, and if we need to start more homegroups we will do so. Travers Harpur is our homegroup co-ordinator. If you would like to think about joining a group, please contact Travers for more details: travers.harpur@gmail.com.

Foundation Governor Vacancy at St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

There is a vacancy for a Foundation Governor for St Michael's School, to join our team of Foundation Governors (Jane Cregan-Bird, Revd David Cattle, Cesca Watkinson, Stephanie Drake, and others). Foundation Governors are Governors who are appointed by the local Church or the Diocese, with a role to:

- be a link between the Church, school and diocese.
- ensure the Christian ethos of the school is maintained and developed.
- play an active role in the school community.
- support the school in its journey of providing an excellent education for all children in an environment that enables them to flourish.

If becoming a Foundation Governor is something you would be interested in, please contact Revd David Cattle (d.cattle@stmichaels-jun.essex.sch.uk) or Chair of Governors Jane Cregan-Bird (admin@stmichaels-jun.essex.sch.uk) to find out more. Thank-you.

A Christmas message from the Vicar

As is my usual practice, I plan to donate to charity instead of sending Christmas cards to church members. This year I will donate to the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a truly blessed 2024! David.

Thought for the Month by Travers Harpur:

Advent

Advent is a season in the church calendar but what is it about?

It has three elements:

The nativity in Bethlehem
The coming of Christ into the heart of the believer
The return of Christ at the 'end time'

The Nativity is an event in history, in a real place – Bethlehem, at a real time – during the reign of Caesar Augustus. Bethlehem was in the news then and still is! If I was writing a report on advent for our church and nation, I would probably say the nativity is well celebrated in the church and even recognised in the wider world, though more commercialised and sentimentalised the further you move from the community of believers.

The **coming of Christ to the believer**. A relationship is established between our Lord and the individual believer and the community of believers. As a congregation we believe and practice this though, speaking at least for myself, there is a long way to go in deepening this relationship and seeing the transformation that flows from it. I have had many years, but I am delighted when I see the relationship blossoming in new followers of Jesus.

This leaves the third element, '**the Second Coming**'. The pendulum has swung in the last century from a preoccupation with this to it being a neglected issue. From a fascination with 'when' to a 'switch off'. While it is probably good to admit to a lack of knowledge of 'when', (Mark 13:32) we lose by neglecting the reality of it, and the call to watch and be ready. The right concern with how we live now should enhance, not replace our expectation. Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, who both transformed the ethics of our nation both regularly dwelt on the return of our Lord. 'Even so come Lord Jesus' (Revelation 22:20).

The deadline for articles for January is Sunday 24th December. Please send them to Geoff Windus (geoffwindus@gmail.com).

Church contact details:

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Churchwardens:

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Evangelism Enabler:

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