

**SERVICE SHEET  
29<sup>th</sup> November  
Advent Sunday**



**The 8.00am Holy Communion Service will be shared on zoom**

The 8.00 Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion will be live streamed from church. All welcome to connect using the Zoom link. The congregational liturgy will be on the screen, so a service book is not required. The service lasts about 30 minutes.

Zoom Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87558407907?pwd=TFBoMnRoRHkwU3FPLzZhZW1DMXVtQT09>

Meeting ID: 875 5840 7907

Passcode: 019631

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**A Service for Advent Sunday will be shared on Zoom at 10.00am**

You can join the service from 9.45am

The service will include well-known Advent hymns and readings.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87610417336?pwd=eGU4M3dibzVKcmF5NEJveEtCT0g4UT09>

Meeting ID: 876 1041 7336

Passcode: 472494

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**Worship Resources for Advent Sunday**

**Canticle - A Song of God's Righteousness**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits;

Who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your infirmities;

Who redeems your life from the Pit  
and crowns you with faithful love and compassion;

Who satisfies you with good things,  
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

The Lord executes righteousness  
and judgement for all who are oppressed.

He made his ways known to Moses  
and his works to the children of Israel.

The Lord has established his throne in heaven,  
and his kingdom has dominion over all.

Bless the Lord, you angels of his,  
you mighty ones who do his bidding  
and hearken to the voice of his word.

Bless the Lord, all you his hosts,  
you ministers of his who do his will.

Bless the Lord, all you works of his,  
in all places of his dominion;  
bless the Lord, O my soul.

*Psalm 103.1-7,19-22*

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness  
and to put on the armour of light,  
now in the time of this mortal life,  
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;  
that on the last day,  
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty  
to judge the living and the dead,  
we may rise to the life immortal;  
through him who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen**

### **Old Testament Reading.**

#### **Isaiah 64.1-9**

<sup>1</sup> O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

<sup>2</sup> as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

<sup>3</sup> When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

<sup>4</sup> From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.

<sup>5</sup> You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

<sup>6</sup> We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

<sup>7</sup> There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

<sup>8</sup> Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity for ever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

### **Psalm 80.1-8**

<sup>1</sup> Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

<sup>2</sup> **before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.  
Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!**

<sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>4</sup> **O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?**

<sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

<sup>6</sup> **You make us the scorn of our neighbours;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

<sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>8</sup> **You brought a vine out of Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

## **Gospel Reading** **Mark 13.24-end**

Jesus said to his disciples:

<sup>24</sup>In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

## **Sermon**

Advent – the start of the church's year and the time to start the countdown to Christmas – whatever that may be like this year! If you ask children what Advent is about, they will probably tell you it means chocolate – working their way through a month of daily chocolate treats from their Advent calendars.

But there is so much more to this first season of the church's year. It is a time of new beginnings, a time of expectation and hope, and a time of waiting.

We live in a world where waiting is almost a thing of the past. Communication is immediate, with mobile phones and the internet – no more waiting for the postman to deliver a letter written perhaps a week previously – even longer if coming from abroad. With credit cards and rapid loans, we no longer have to save up for things. If we want it, we can find a way to have it immediately. Even particular foods are available all year round, so we no longer have to wait for the due season to arrive, in order to savour the delights of strawberries, satsumas or even sprouts!

So why bother with this waiting business? What is the purpose of it if we can have instant gratification?

Waiting is not a time for doing nothing. Waiting can be a positive time of preparation for what is to come.

So what is it that we are waiting for in this season of Advent? Firstly, yes, we are awaiting the celebration of Christmas. We are looking back to the birth of Jesus Christ; the arrival of the Messiah, God incarnate, on earth, over 2 thousand years ago. But that is just part of it. The other part is more difficult to comprehend – the second coming (or Parousia, to use the Greek word) – whenever or whatever that will be. We are looking to the past and we are looking to the future.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus tells his closest disciples, what the signs will be when this happening takes place – how they will know when the time has come – a time only known to God. He tells them to *Keep alert* and to *Keep awake*. They are told to be prepared for this future time when they will see *the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory*. They must be actively waiting.

What will actually happen at this Second Coming is much disputed by theologians, with some maintaining that the Second Coming will be on this earth and others that it will be in another realm after death. Whatever it will be, the world as we know it, will be no more. The Second Coming will bring God's plans for the world to completion.

What is clear from Jesus' words to his disciples, is that it does not matter that we do not know when or how Christ will return. What does matter is that we are ready, doing what God has called us to do, being part of anything that helps to establish the Kingdom of God both in our own lives and the lives of others.

We are living through particularly challenging times at the moment. The current lockdown means that we cannot meet together in person to receive the sacrament on this Advent Sunday, but we are a people of hope, waiting patiently for what is to come. Waiting is not a passive thing. It can be a very positive time and Advent can be a time for all of us to wait actively.

Waiting actively does not mean waiting busily. You may well have seen the T shirts that say, *Jesus is coming – look busy!* But it is not a mindless busy-ness that is needed. Too often we can fill our lives with activity for its own sake. By doing this, we do not have to think about what is really important, that is, how God wants us to live - how we can help to bring the world to readiness.

Today's Old Testament reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah is part of a longer poem which is a communal lament. It reveals a mixture of hope and frustration felt by the Jewish community in Jerusalem about 550 years before the birth of Jesus. The community had returned safely from exile, so you might expect them to be rejoicing, but their hope for a return to the life they had had before, was being frustrated by the changes in Jerusalem in their absence, and plans to rebuild the Temple were being thwarted by setbacks. Isaiah felt that the people had turned their backs on God.

A communal lament is perhaps something we have not encountered much. We tend to think more about a personal lament – lamenting our personal failure to live as we should. However, the call for God to come down and be present among the people is a powerful one – *O that you would tear open the heavens and come down*. Although from a very different era, this plea for God to come to us very much fits the Advent theme and particularly this year when many of us are feeling that same mix of hope and frustration in the way we are currently having to live.

The idea of a communal lament is something that could give us a way to wait actively, this Advent. Rather than just reflecting on our own failings, perhaps we could reflect on how we, as communities, have gone wrong or failed to live up to the standards that God wants of us – as a local community, as a country, as a world.

We can say sorry for our failings and wrong-doings, but then what? In this morning's collect, we ask God to:

*give us grace to cast away the works of darkness*

*and to put on the armour of light*

In this season of Advent, we look for the coming of the Light of Christ into the world. We will be hearing a lot over the coming weeks about that light, of candle flames shining into the darkness

and dispelling it, sending light into the darkest corners. We must be that small flame in our communities and in the world.

Often, we can feel that we cannot do anything that will bring any sort of change in the world around us, let alone the world as a whole, but we should not let that stop us living our lives in a way that shows we are people full of love and hope. Something as simple as smiling and saying hello to the people we meet on our daily exercise; helping and supporting those in need; being positive when we talk to others, even in the present circumstances, showing that we are people of hope. What might seem like insignificant actions can, like a tiny candle flame, make a huge difference in the darkness of the lives of those we meet. We must show in our own lives that we know Jesus and his teachings and help others to know them too.

As we move forward into the new church year, let us all ensure that this season of Advent is a time for hope and active waiting and I want to end by sharing with you the Post-Communion prayer for Advent Sunday:

*O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful  
as we await the coming of your Son our Lord;  
that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin  
but active in his service and joyful in his praise;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

*Revd Ruth Bull*

#### **FOR YOUR PRAYERS**

##### **ST MICHAEL**

##### ***Those newly in need of prayer***

David Edge, Martin Dewes, Chris Clayton

##### ***Those in continuing special need of prayer:***

Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Elizabeth Chapman, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Alison Cox-Toplis, Chris Dickerson, Sonia Doidge, Colin Eastwood, Joseph Harrington, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Matthew and Emmeline and their parents, Ruth and Andrew Martel, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, Nick Rutter, Anthony Staples aged 6, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Judith Watson, Renee Wellings, Peter and Anne Whatson, Felicity Woodfield, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Julian & Wendy,

##### ***Those who have died***

Audrey Egleston, Yvonne Harper & Peter McCree

#### **ST JOHN**

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

##### ***Those who have died***

Eileen Fletcher

## **Christmas Services**

These are the services that we hope to be able to offer this Christmas at St Michael's and St John's. All our plans are subject to government regulations regarding worship and access to church buildings. Please check the website before coming to church to make sure that the service is taking place and what special conditions there may be. It may be that many people will wish to attend church this year. For this reason, it would be helpful if regular members of St Michael's congregation could limit themselves to one service over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day ie. Either, Midnight Mass, 8.00am Holy Communion or 10.00 Christmas Communion.

### **Christmas Services at St. Michael's**

#### ***Advent 4 Sunday 20th December***

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

6.00pm Carol Service on Zoom

#### ***Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December***

3.00pm—6.00pm

Open Church and Distribution of Christingles

*The church will be fully decorated for Christmas and there will be a one way path past the tree and the crib ending with a Christingle given to each family to take away*

11.15pm Midnight Service

#### ***Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December***

8.00am BCP Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

### **Christmas Services at St. John's**

#### ***Advent 4 Sunday 20th December***

4.00pm— 5.00pm

Open Church and Distribution of Christingles.

#### ***Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December***

9.00am Holy Communion

## CHURCH NOTICES

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHURCH AND WORSHIP DURING THE PRESENT LOCKDOWN UNTIL SATURDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

#### St Michael's Church Lichfield

The Church will be open for private prayer on Sundays from 12.00 – 2.00pm  
Thursdays from 12.00-2.00pm  
The church will be staffed and there will be the opportunity to light candles

#### St John's Church Wall

The Church will be open for private prayer on Wednesdays from 10.00am-12.00pm (this is a correction).

## SUNDAY SERVICES WILL RESUME ON SUNDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER at both St John's and St Michael's

#### WORSHIP BY ZOOM

The **8.00am Holy Communion** service will be shared on Zoom – see readings sheet for link.

Our regular zoom worship is on the first and third Sundays of each month.

*Next regular service*

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 6.00pm**

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 40mins. ***If you have not had a link by Friday at 11am please contact the office [office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk)***

#### BIBLE STUDY

**The Book of Acts: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December** If you would like to join in our Bible Study please contact Angie in the office for the zoom link.

**OFFICE** – Angie will be working from home **during lockdown and whilst there is building work being done on the roof**, so please contact the office via email. [office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk)

#### ST MICHAEL'S & ST JOHN'S CHRISTMAS BAKE AND DELIVER SCHEME

**\*Nominations\*** are now be open for the **Christmas Bake & Deliver Scheme!** If you know anyone in Lichfield or Wall who might be in need of some good cheer and a baked treat, please complete the [nomination form on our website](#), or printed forms which will be at the back of church during times of private prayer. Nomination deadline is **Monday 7th December**. For full information about the scheme visit <https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/bake--deliver.html>

If anyone would like to volunteer to bake and/or deliver please let Mel know [revdr.melclark@gmail.com](mailto:revdr.melclark@gmail.com). Thank you!

## **NO CHRISTMAS CARDS**

Because of Covid-19 restrictions it will not be possible this year for anyone to bring Christmas cards to church to be collected by other members of the congregation. Also it will not be possible to hand out cards personally either at the start of the service or outside after the service. Both of these would be in danger of breaking the social distancing that we have in place in church and the rule of 6 outside church.

I am sorry that this is rather a Ba! Humbug! notice but it will be safer for everyone if we all restrict our card giving to those that we can post or personally deliver.

You might like to donate any money you save on cards to the church or a charity.

*Simon Baker, Rector*

## **CHRISTMAS FOOD DONATIONS**

Lichfield Foodbank is **now collecting for Christmas hampers**. If you wish to donate, please check the item will be in date till after Christmas.

**CHURCHES TOGETHER** There is a new messages on our website from the Cathedral  
[www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/churches-together.html](http://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/churches-together.html)

## **CHRISTMAS CHARITY COLLECTION DATES 2020 @ St MICHAEL'S**

### **Christmas Charity collections for Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December**

St Michael's will collect on both Sundays for

The Angel Tree, a charity that provides toys for prisoners' children, there is an information poster at the back of church. Please put donations in the white envelopes provided, fill the front in if you can gift aid and make cheques out to 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary Lichfield'.

Toys and gifts for women for Pathway, please put unwrapped gifts in the large white box on the table at the back of church. You can also provide wrapping paper if you wish.

Food bank, if people could bring a something extra on top of their normal contributions it would be great.

### **Christmas Eve Christingle**

Open Church

Donations for the Children Society, white envelopes and a collection plate will be available in church.

All the arrangements are subject to government guidelines and may have to be changed. We will keep you informed.

*Brenda Liptrot*

## **St Michael's Churchyard Christmas Trail Puzzle!**

A fun, half hour outdoor Christmas activity suitable for age 4/5 plus.

This is available to explore from Advent Sunday (Nov 29th) until Christmas. It consists of four A4 stations which you need to find. They introduce and tell the Christmas story through QR codes, revealing video story clues which give you the password for the final instalment. All stations are in the area around the turning circle at front of church. It requires a QR code reader/app on a tablet/phone with mobile data, and a pencil and paper to note the clues! Have fun, enjoy the reason for the season - and please observe social distancing and all Govt guidance!

**THE FOODBANK** is always happy to receive gifts of

- Tinned meat and fish
- Tinned fruit and vegetables, soup and beans
- Rice pudding and custard
- Instant coffee, tea, sugar, long life milk and fruit juice
- Packets of cereals, biscuits and snacks
- Pasta, rice and pasta sauce
- Jam

Items should be **at least 3 months in date** or the Foodbank is not allowed to issue them. If anyone wishes to donate but is unable to shop for Foodbank, we shop most weeks and would be able to buy items for them. Just let us know 01543 255308

*Maggie and David*

**MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2021** will be £8.50 payable by cheque to P.C.C. of St, Michael and St.Mary ". This will not be collected in the normal way by your deliverer. Please post it directly to me. Details are in the December magazine. Thank you for your cooperation Barbara Homewood Tel 255909

**WARNING!!!**

If you receive an email from: **Revd Preb Simon Baker** and the email address is either:  
[onlinechurch954@gmail.com](mailto:onlinechurch954@gmail.com) [churchvicar8@gmail.com](mailto:churchvicar8@gmail.com)

***Please do not reply or open any attachments.*** I never use that title in any emails I send and these are not my email addresses.

If you receive any email that asks you to spend any personal money on my behalf please delete it at once.

*Simon*

## **PARISH DIARY**

### **Sunday 29th November**

8:00am	Holy Communion	Zoom
10:00am	Advent Sunday Service	Zoom
12pm – 2pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's

### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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### **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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### **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
10 – 12pm	Private Prayer	St John's
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom

### **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
12pm – 2pm	Private Prayer	St Michael's

### **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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### **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

### **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10am	Holy Communion	St John's