



@stmikesmacclesfield



www.stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk

## To see you more clearly

I'm sure that many of you will be familiar with the names given to paint colours by the company Farrow and Ball. I'm so gullible I painted a whole bedroom "Elephant's Breath" just because I liked the name. It's basically grey. "Sulking Room Pink" would have been pertinent in my adolescent years, and "School House White", appropriately for two ex-teachers, currently graces some of our walls.



Some time ago I was delighted to hear about a paint shop where the colours were even more flamboyantly named: a bright red called "You heard me the first time"; a deep pink bearing a cumbersome whole sentence of a name: "Many a man in love with a dimple makes the mistake of marrying the whole girl"; and my favourite, a dull pink, darkly called "Let's not speak of this again".

All this sticks in my mind as, 18 months ago, I paid to have corrective surgery on my eyes. Having worn glasses for short-sightedness (myopia) and astigmatism since I was 10 years old, and presbyopia more recently, and grappling increasingly with a combination of contact lenses, reading glasses, varifocals and – for close work - no glasses at all, I was weary with the whole shebang. Calculating that, over about 50 years, I must have forked out a veritable fortune on my eyes, I decided to blow some savings to deal with the business once and for all (as I thought), and have what is called "intra-ocular lens replacement" – very similar to cataract surgery but with lenses to your specific (complicated, in my case) prescription.

Sad to say, I do occasionally still need to wear reading glasses, but that's mainly in church when trying to read music by the church "lighting" (I use the term loosely), but generally I now function without glasses.

However, the point of this preamble is that, when I first began to see with my new lenses, I was completely bemused by the **colours** I was seeing. Many flowers I would have called bright white beforehand looked cream now (but not all); a blue fleece was more like iridescent purple and an orange jumper was definitely now pink. There were items of clothing I could barely recognise, the colours looked so different. I began to doubt my own colour awareness and to query what the "right" colour was: was it the colour I was *now* seeing or the one I had seen before? I wondered what others thought of the decor in our home. Had I been mis-seeing colours all along, and were our rooms a hideous cacophony of clashing colours to visitors, rather than the calm and coordinated combinations I had assumed? Well, I shall never know (although you might wish to tell me next time you visit). And, to be honest, Paul and I have always had disagreements about whether something is blue or green (I'm right of course). But who knows whether your "blue" is the same as my "blue".



*Blue or green?*

One of my favourite verses from St Paul comes in 1 Corinthians 13, that famous panegyric on love, which begins: "Though I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal" and continues in like inspirational vein.

But it's not the *love* aspect I want to focus on now (pun intended) although it is of course a powerful and profound passage.



*1st century mirror*

No, my verse is v.12: "**Now we see through a glass dimly**". I can't find which translation that is, but it's how I remember the verse from my childhood.

The NIV translation puts it: "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (mirrors in Paul's day being somewhat distorting affairs anyway, usually polished silver/bronze). The Message translation says: "We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist", which tries to capture the meaning but strays somewhat off-piste in terms of the

Greek. And JB Phillips says: "At present we are men looking at puzzling reflections in a mirror" which, apart from the gendered language (and I could write a whole other article about that) captures the Greek more accurately.

So, let's finally and inevitably get to that Greek (to which I hear you justifiably cry, "It's all Greek to me"!).

**βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι,**

A literal translation is: "For now we see through a **mirror** in a **riddle** (the word for "riddle" in Greek – "ainigma" – gives us "enigma" in English). This word "riddle", in most translations, gets turned into "darkness" or "dimness", i.e. something which **hides the real meaning**.

But I like the idea of the original Greek, that there are enigmas when we are seeking God: I believe there is mystery in our faith and that our eyes/understanding aren't perfect, that we are and should forever be searching, seeking him and trying to get him/his message in focus.



*Statue of the Great Sphinx of Giza, renowned for her deadly riddles*

Like me as a teenager, too embarrassed to wear my glasses (definitely not trendy in those days), and therefore often to be seen *squinting* at things, we should be squinting with our minds when pondering God and the Bible.

**Continued over page**

## The Collect for Sunday 17th March

### The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Gracious Father,  
you gave up your Son  
out of love for the world:  
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,  
that we may know eternal peace  
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Continued from previous page*

When reading the Gospels, ask yourself whether Jesus was being humorous or annoyed when he said this, or that. Was there tenderness in his voice or irony? Was he exasperated with his disciples or affectionate? What was his context? And what does it mean for *me*, in my here and now?

While preparing the talk for Mothering Sunday, I pondered that wonderful exchange at the wedding at Cana when Jesus apparently chides his mother after she tells him to help out with the wine problem, then he goes on to do it anyway! I love the relationship as shown in those few verses. It seems "true" somehow. And isn't it lovely that they were there at the wedding together, he a 30-year-old grown man with a troupe of followers and she his presumably now-widowed yet clearly feisty mum. I imagine the interchange as being one of mutual banter, understanding and affection. I can almost hear Jesus' sigh of exasperation as he did what his mum wanted, after all. But you perhaps see it quite differently.

Who's right? No-one, I'm sure. It's a cliché to say we see things from our "own perspective", but that's the truth. Yet your perspective can help mine, and vice versa.

As we attend our Lent study course, we are considering the ways in which we, as Christians, "disagree", often on relatively unimportant aspects of practice or church management, but sometimes on more fundamental beliefs about "right" and "wrong", love, tolerance, acceptance.

Are there times we should be "angry" and is that anger to be directed at someone or at something – at a person or at an injustice? Is it *emotional* anger or *intellectual* anger? How do we do "disagreement"? Can disagreement be good (I think so, but then I would, wouldn't I?)

I have enjoyed the discussions so far, and I know that hearing and debating the views of others is helping to shape my own understanding; that my spiritual lenses are being refocused. We have disagreed, of course, but without acrimony or animosity, so maybe the course is doing exactly what it set out to do.



But I know only too well that I won't ever have all the answers, and that so much remains a "mystery" to be pondered and treasured, to be understood one day and perhaps understood differently the next as I grow and develop.

That day will come, we are assured, when we'll see all the colours just as they are meant to be seen, and they'll all be wonderful.

So, although it goes against the grain for me, let me give St Paul the last word:

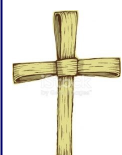
**"Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."**

Amen to that.

*Lynne*

## Palm Sunday

Don't forget that **next Sunday (24th) is Palm Sunday**, the start of Holy Week, when we will



remember Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem, with crowds celebrating his arrival, waving palm branches.

We will distribute palm crosses, as usual, during the service.



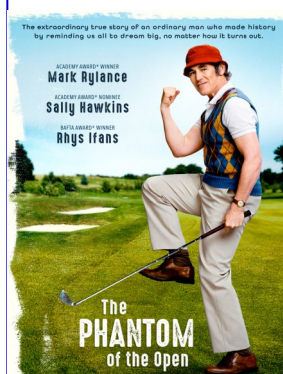
## Film Evenings



We enjoyed a great evening last Friday when we watched the film, "The Great Escaper". There was a full house and it seemed at the start that the film was almost superfluous to requirements, so much socialising and cake-eating was going on. However, discipline was restored and we all thoroughly enjoyed the film - with more cakes at the end (and Norma's ice-creams: something of a tradition).



*Adrian liked the look of the cake table so much he took a photograph!*



Our next Film Evening will be **Tuesday 19th March** when we will be showing "The Phantom of the Open".

It begins at 6.30pm as usual.

Please note that it is on a **Tuesday: the congested diaries of both the church building and the Speddings mean a Friday is not possible in the near future.**

This film stars Mark Rylance and Sally Hawkins and is yet another based on real life - that seems to be our theme this year! It is a light-hearted but heart-warming account of Maurice Flitcroft, who entered the 1976 British Open Golf Championship despite having never played a round of golf before. It depicts the importance of pursuing your dreams, no matter what hand you're dealt.

You definitely don't have to be a golf-fan or even know anything about golf to enjoy the film.

**Please sign the list at the back of church if you will be attending, or email [lynne.norbron@gmail.com](mailto:lynne.norbron@gmail.com).**

## LET'S This Sunday

Don't forget that Lets Eat Together Sunday is this week, **17th March**.



Don't eat alone on Sunday!

Bring some food and eat with others, maybe sharing if you wish.

Newcomers especially welcome: don't worry if you haven't any food – there's usually plenty.





## St Michael's Journey to Zero

At St Michael's we aim to *Celebrate and Sustain God's Creation*. As we know, humanity is not

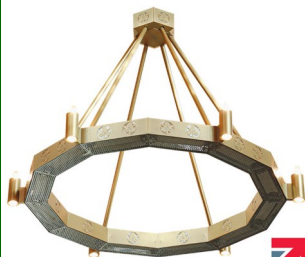
doing very well with the sustaining. This collective failure has been recognized by the Church of England (CofE) General Synod as leading to a global climate emergency crisis and a fundamental injustice. The CofE has mandated churches to reduce their carbon emissions and produced a draft guide to help: *Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030*. Here at St Michael's we have a long journey ahead to achieve net zero, to stop being part of the problem, and to start being part of the solution.

First, the good news: we are ahead of the curve. The CofE's *Milestones to Net Zero* sets out yearly targets that churches should aim to meet as they transition to net zero. The first milestone is that 10% of churches should be registered as an Eco Church, and 5% have at least a Bronze Eco Award by the end of 2023. We already had our Bronze Award in 2018, and Silver Award in 2022! We also already switched to a 100% green electricity tariff, and already started developing our net-zero action plan.



But there is bad news too. St Michael's is one of the top carbon emitting churches in the Diocese. In 2022 we used 169,000 kWh of gas and 25,000 kWh of electricity, which equates to approximately 37,000 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. Our church is large and difficult to heat: on the coldest days the boiler struggles at full power and people have to wear coats. There is no insulation and heat escapes very quickly. We cannot heat the Savage Chapel separately from the nave, and we cannot heat the Welcome Area separately from the upstairs meeting rooms, so we waste heat on empty rooms. The success of our *Open Door* policy means that the church is used every day of the week, and this is wonderful, but it brings a heavy cost in heating.

What are we doing about it? We are developing our very own ***Routemap to Net Zero***, which is currently on display in the north aisle. There are lots of plans for this year. Firstly, we aim to replace our aging gas boiler with two smaller and more efficient boilers that will be able to provide top-up/background heating when zero-carbon heating is eventually installed. Until then, the new boilers will be able to heat the church more efficiently than the old boiler.



Example of heating chandelier

Secondly, we plan to install an infra-red heater chandelier in the Savage Chapel. This will be able to keep people warm in the Savage Chapel without needing to heat the nave.

Thirdly, we aim to split the west end heating into 2 separate zones: one for the Welcome Area, and another for the upstairs meeting rooms and stairwells.

Last but not least this year, we are moving forward with plans to upgrade the lighting in the nave to a brand new, efficient, LED lighting scheme that will be brighter, better designed, more effective, and use significantly less electricity than our current lights.

Looking further ahead, we have aspirations for a professional heat-loss analysis to guide the best way to introduce a degree of insulation (roof? windows?), solar panels on the roof, and low carbon heating for the whole church – possibly using infra-red heaters or heat pumps.

Do we need help? Yes, yes, and yes! We don't yet have enough money to do all the things in this year's plan, let alone the future aspirations. And you will remember that we need to fix the leaking roof as well. Please pray for our church in this endeavour. The presentation in the north aisle lists some other ways you can help, including fundraising. It would be great if we had someone with the time and experience to help with grant applications – if anyone springs to mind, let us know!

As you can see, we have a long road ahead but with God's grace we will get there together.

*Matt Lewis*  
Churchwarden

## Something to Ponder

**"You are the only Bible some people will ever read."**

John MacArthur

**christian  
aid**

**Please help us to  
support Christian  
Aid**

**Christian Aid Week begins in almost two months' time,  
on 12th May.**

We shall be welcoming a representative of the charity to our service **on 5th May** to tell us something of the charity's work across the world. You can find out more about their work by clicking [here](#)

**We would also like to make a church donation** to Christian Aid, which offers desperately needed support to some of the most heart-breakingly troubled areas of our world, including the Middle East (Gaza/Israel) and Ukraine.



Of course, many of you will have made your own personal donations but, **if you feel able, please give any additional contributions to Lynne Spedding or Martin Bancroft, of the Social Action & the Wider World Team (SAWW).**

Just a few ££ (what you might spend on a coffee or tea at a local café) would be much appreciated and will grow with every contribution made.

**If anyone would like to undertake a specific fundraising activity, please let the Social Action & the Wider World Team know so that we can give assistance if possible.**

## Easter Sunday



You may have realised that Easter Sunday this year falls on 31<sup>st</sup> March, which is the last Sunday of the month, so there will be a Treacle Market. We have discussed this with the organisers of the Treacle Market, who recognise that it is a very special day for us, but regret that they do have to hold the market on that day in order to fulfil the contracts they have with stallholders.

**treacle  
market**  
Macclesfield

### However:

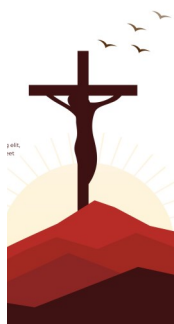
- there will be no charity stalls in the churchyard on Easter Sunday and they will ensure that access to the church gate is kept clear.
- access to the Town Hall car park will be reserved for church members attending the service at St Michael's (until after 11am), but unfortunately there will not be access to the church parking spaces.
- On this occasion only, we have decided NOT to open the church for refreshments for the general public, or to visitors, in order to enable all church members to celebrate Easter how they wish, with their families or friends.

## Good Friday Services

### at St Michael's

**10.30am: Good Friday Service.** Our speaker will be Alice, Territorial Envoy with the Salvation Army in Macclesfield.

**2.30pm: "At the Foot of the Cross"** - a service of contemplation (music, silence, reflective words) lasting around one hour.



## Tenebrae Service of Shadows



Maundy Thursday

## Tenebrae Service

Macclesfield & Bollington United Reformed Church is holding a **Tenebrae Service** on **Maundy Thursday, 28th March at 7.30pm.**

At this service, the church is lit by candles and we hear the bible readings and sing hymns which narrate the suffering and death of Jesus.

After each reading, a candle is extinguished until the church is left in darkness.

The service gives us an opportunity to consider the impact of Christ's death.

All are warmly welcome to attend.

## Chrism Service

## Chester Cathedral

**Maundy Thursday (28 March)**



## Holy Week

Bishops Mark, Julie and Sam warmly invite you to join them for the Chrism Service in the Cathedral on Maundy Thursday, 28 March 2024 at 11:00am. "As we gather to remember Christ's servant ministry to his disciples, we renew our commitment to our own shared ministry, serving the needs of others in love as Jesus first loved us."

At this service, oils are blessed for use in parish ministry throughout the year.

**Please sign the list in church if you would like to join the group going to this service from St Michael's.**



## Macclesfield Methodist Church Community Choir

Good Friday evening (29<sup>th</sup> March) at 7.30pm Macclesfield Methodist Community Choir, with orchestra, organ and soloists, will be singing **The Solemn Vespers of Confession** by Mozart.

Do come along and share a time of meditation on this most sacred of days. You will not be disappointed.

A retiring collection will be taken for a local charity and an international charity.

## Take Note



## Chris (Royle's) 60th Birthday Celebration

**Change of date:**

**now Monday 6th May**

**RSVP needed**

Chris warmly invites everyone in the St Michael's Church Family to his 60th birthday celebration.

This will now be held in church on **Monday 6th May, 1.30 - 4.00pm.**

All are invited but Chris needs to know approximate numbers **so please let him know if you will be coming.**

Also it would be lovely if people could bring some food to share. Ruth Thompson will be organising this. More information to follow



## White Tablecloths Available for Loan

Chris W made a number of large white tablecloths for Sue & Kev's wedding reception, which are now available for anyone who might like to borrow them.

Please contact Chris on 01625 428443



## The Paschal Candle

You may remember that in December I wrote about candles and mentioned the Paschal Candle, commenting that a whole reflection could be done on this candle alone. Here it is!

Our largest candle is the Paschal Candle. This is what our Paschal Candle originally looked like. The Easter or Christ candle tells of salvation through Jesus' Passion; his suffering, death and resurrection. Although having many different designs Paschal Candles have several parts in common.

The origin is uncertain but thought to derive from early Christian times (there are 4<sup>th</sup> century AD references to Easter Light celebrations) when a candle was lit during evening vigil before each Sunday. (NB vigil - eve of a holy day for special observance.) Easter Day, being a special day, the vigil would have had greater solemnity.



Traditionally the Paschal Candle is lit at the Easter Vigil from a new fire and carried into the dark church on Easter Eve, the night Jesus passed from death to life, and the light pushes out the darkness. From this other candles are then lit. During every Communion Service between Easter and Pentecost the Paschal candle is lit and stands next to the Communion Table.

White, pure beeswax is used to make the candle. It represents the purity of Christ. Sometimes the image of a lamb is used: Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Lent is a time for deepening our relationship with God, a time when we let go of the things that get in the way of that relationship. Jesus by dying and rising from the dead has set us free. Spend some time in prayer saying sorry to God and then use the words of the Agnus Dei:

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, grant us peace.**

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.**

The Cross signifies Jesus Christ. It is an empty cross which speaks of his death but Jesus did not stay dead. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24 This doesn't mean that we all have to be put to death for our faith. Each of us has our own cross to carry and our own way to the Cross. What does death to self mean? What do you need to let go? What is your way to the cross?



Alpha Α and omega Ω are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. They are above and below the cross indicating that God is the beginning and the end of everything. In the Book of Revelation, Jesus says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the beginning and the End." Revelation 22:13

Often the four digits of the current year are arranged around the cross. Christ is the Lord of all eternity, central to all time and is present here and now.

Being an Eco-church we do not have a new Paschal Candle each year but use the current one until it is consumed. Our candle does not depict the current year.

What does it mean to you that God is for all time?

**Christ yesterday and today,  
the Beginning and the End,  
the Alpha and the Omega.  
All time belongs to him  
and all the ages.  
To him be glory and power  
through every age and for ever. Amen**

Five bead pins of incense, sometimes in the shape of nails, are inserted into the cross, one in the centre and the others at the end of the four arms of the cross. They tell us of Christ's suffering; the wounds he received. There were three nails for His hands and feet, the crown of thorns and the spear that pierced His side. For all that Jesus went through out of love for us, how do we offer ourselves in His service? Our head? Our hands? Our feet? Our hearts?



A verse from *When I Survey The Wondrous Cross*

**See from his Head, his Hands, his Feet,  
Sorrow and Love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such Love and Sorrow meet,  
Or Thorns compose so rich a Crown?**

Our Paschal Candle has a chalice: many have images referencing Holy Communion, the body and blood Christ shed for us. At the Last Supper Jesus breaks the bread, "my body broken for you", and shares the cup of wine, "my blood poured out for you", saying, "Do this in remembrance of me." Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:19-20.

What does sharing in Holy Communion mean to you? Is all that Jesus did for us remembered or is it just something we do?

**By his holy and glorious wounds,  
may Christ the Lord guard us and keep us. Amen.**

The light of the candle represents the living, resurrected Christ defeating death; light and life push back darkness, sin and death. Some refer to the wick as a sign of Jesus' humanity and the flame His divine nature. Fire represents the destruction of our sin. We are purified, made clean, by Christ.

How does the light of His flame warm your heart and illuminate your path?



**May the light of Christ, rising in glory,  
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.**

The Paschal Candle is also used at other times of the year; at funerals to remind us of the Resurrection hope we have in Jesus, but especially at Baptisms. During a Baptism a candle is lit from the Paschal Candle and given to the person being baptised. As Christians, Jesus encourages us to, "Let your light so shine before others, that they might see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16. May each of us claim our Baptismal faith. This is the prayer used when the candle is given.

**God has delivered us from the dominion of  
darkness  
and has given us a place with the saints in light.  
You have received the light of Christ;  
walk in this light all the days of your life.**

**All Shine as a light in the world  
to the glory of God the Father.**

As we contemplate during lent, and think of Jesus' Passion; the love He demonstrates for each of us, may we take on that Christ is not dead but rose again. May we claim the resurrection for ourselves and live in the Holy Spirit, the Risen Christ. How do you live differently in believing in the Resurrection? Let us join in the Easter Acclamation:

**Alleluia! Christ is risen.  
All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Sallie Bancroft

thankyou

... to all those who bought my toadstools before and after Christmas.

I am delighted to have raised **£250** for church funds and will be gift aiding it.

Toadstools are still available to order and make fabulous Easter gifts for those who can't eat chocolate. Just let me know.

**Liz Bradbury**



## Spring comes early in the Munro garden

Each spring, Pete and Sue share a photograph of their glorious camellia in full bloom.

This year it has burst into flower earlier than usual: it started budding in January!

(I'm not sure if we should be worried about that, but let's enjoy the wonderful picture.)



## Cre8 Plant Sale

### Can you help?

Cre 8 will be holding a Plant Sale at St Barnabas' church on **27th April** **10am - 2pm**.

We would be very grateful for any contributions you can offer: indoor or outdoor plants; cuttings, seedlings or divisions - all very welcome.

Tea and coffee will be served. Do join us if you can. (I'm happy to pick up any contributions)

Thank you in advance.  
Jenny Wild  
07775 579968  
01625 420352



## Something to Ponder

Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important."

*C.S. Lewis*

## Grave Talk



Last year I hosted a series on bereavement, loss and mortality, based loosely on some CoE resources called "Grave Talk". I am offering this series again as there has been interest expressed.

The sessions will be held at **7.00pm** on:

- Sunday 5th May
- Sunday 19th May
- Sunday 2nd June

Please let me know if you wish to come along, or sign the list on the noticeboard. **Please note that this isn't a 'counselling group'**, although it does help to share our experiences about loss and grief in a 'safe' environment. Mainly it aims to address one of society's taboos: the inevitability of death.

*Lynne*

## Eco-tip

### Join The Big Plastic Count



Nearly 100 billion pieces of plastic packaging are thrown away by UK households every year, and just 12% is recycled in the UK. It's time the government got serious about tackling the plastic crisis. You can help by taking part in The Big Plastic Count!

**THE BIG  
PLASTIC  
COUNT  
11-17 MARCH**

Go to <https://thebigplasticcount.com/> to register and find out what is involved. This year from 11 - 17 March you can help build even more evidence to convince UK ministers to lead the way at the global talks that could finally phase out plastic pollution for good.

## Look on the Bright Side!

Pot-holes in the roads are becoming an ever increasing hazard, for both car-drivers and cyclists.

But look on the bright side: in the summer we can re-purpose them thus....





## Electoral roll update

As we approach this year's electoral roll update I thought it was worth reminding everyone about the purpose and process for this.

## Electoral Roll



### What is the Electoral Roll?

It is our parishes register of electors. Joining the church Electoral Roll means you can vote on church matters, attend the Annual Parochial Church meeting and stand for elections on the PCC.

### Do I have to join?

You can of course be a full and active member of St Michaels without joining the Roll. Being on the Electoral Roll does not sign you up for any commitments. However, it does help the Church show its strength. Representation on the governing bodies of the church depends on the number on the Electoral Roll

### How do I join?

There is an application form attached with this newsletter which can be returned to Lynn Brandwood, electoral reform officer, via [er@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:er@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk)

Paper copies will also be available from the office.

### I can't remember if I have joined already

Please contact Lynn via the email address to check whether you are already on the Electoral Roll

### My contact details have changed recently

If your details have changed in the last 12 months please complete a new form so we can update our records accordingly.



The Electoral Roll update will be done between 10th March 2024 and April 1st. Please note only names will be displayed on the published Electoral Roll. A report will then be provided at the APCM on 21st April.

**Lynn Brandwood (St Michael's Electoral Roll Coordinator)**

## Scarf Update

I'm delighted to say that our scarf is now more than half-way complete!

My delight wasn't shared by Chris W., however - her response when I joyfully told her of our magnificent progress was a heavy groan and the words, "**Only** half-way?"

Well, we knew it was a gargantuan project but take heart, knitters, more are joining our ranks.

Here's Garrie, star pupil, one of our beginners, on his

second ball of wool and demonstrating that he has definitely got the hang of "knit" (purl comes later).

And below is the youngest knitter yet, Lynne and Paul's granddaughter Evie who, at five years old, is streaks ahead of her gradnad.



Unfortunately she lives in London and no-one else in her house can help when a stitch gets dropped or a few extras appear at the end of a row, so I'm not sure we'll get a complete scarf from her. But full marks for enthusiasm and perseverance. She also tried her hand at French Knitting.

**Anyway - please keep knitting! We have until September to complete our challenge.**

You'll be so pleased when we get a new boiler! (see Matt's article on page 3)

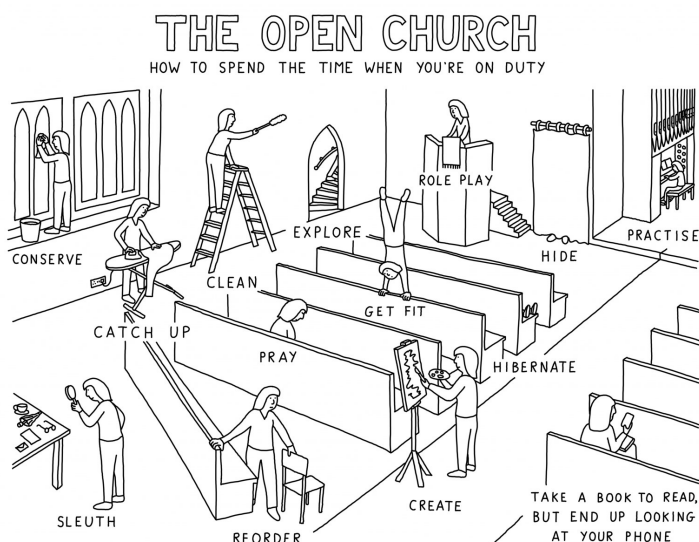
## Foodie Friday

Come and enjoy a three-course meal at the Angel at my Table café, cooked mainly from surplus food. The cost is on a "pay as you feel" basis and the money raised enables us to offer free meals during the week to those who cannot afford to pay. Many of these folk, but not all, are residents in hostels for the homeless but run out of cash towards the end of the month.

**Angel**  
at my Table

Foodie Friday is usually the first Friday of the month – book early (via Ali in the kitchen or the Church Office) as places fill up fast! If you haven't tried it yet, do join us.

**The next Foodie Friday is Friday 5th April at 6.00pm**



CartoonChurch.com

## The Storm

A poem by Dorothy Bentley Smith



It's the first day of Spring - a few clouds in the sky,  
Yet the birds do not sing - the question is 'Why?'  
Do they also feel sorrow for the storm in the East,  
Which threatens a deluge, as gathering pace,  
It rolls on uninvited disturbing the peace,  
Symbolic, in form, of the whole human race?

Perhaps when the Summer, its glory reveals,  
And the heat rises fast chases clouds from the sky,  
The turbulent forces, admitting defeat,  
Will mist over the souls for whom no one did cry.

But when Autumn's bluster demands a retreat,  
And the creaking and cracking of branches is heard,  
The Winter must come with its herald prepared  
To conquer the evil, and find the true Word.

## Music@Mike's

The next lunchtime concert at St Michael's is on Friday 22nd March and features the RNCM trained pianist John Saber. Concerts begin at 1.15pm and last approximately 45 minutes.



Entry is free but donations, which go jointly towards the East Cheshire Hospice and St Michael's Church are very welcome.

Refreshments are available before and after at the *Angel at my Table* café.

## Lent Tips

- "Each day of Lent, I give up one item from my wardrobe which I no longer wear or need. I put the items in a bag, and after 40 days I donate the bag to charity."
- Slow down: set aside 10-15 minutes for silence and prayer each day
- Be kind to someone at least once a day

## ZERO HOUR

Like it or not, there will be another general election in the next 10 months, and candidates to be our next MP will be keen to talk to you, so this is a great opportunity to talk to them about your concerns.

The Eco-church team is encouraging all of us to contact our candidates to express our concerns that the state of our environment is being widely ignored by all politicians. Please send the open letter that you will find here:

<https://action.zerohour.uk/macclesfield> to all candidates and let us know what they say.

Engaging in the political process can be hard work and frustrating, but it is an important part of our witness as Christians.

## Green sheep?



One of the last coal-powered sheep:  
most sheep are all-electric now!



## Lifestyle Audit

Please complete & return

At our last eco-service in November we were challenged to make at least

one significant change to our lifestyles to help reduce our carbon footprint and, perhaps in a very small but still significant way, save the planet.

You may have chosen one of the ideas on this flyer (see additional attachment with this newsletter)

We would like to know how you got on.

Please send in your experience and/or suggestions to [stmikesnotices@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesnotices@gmail.com) for inclusion in future editions.

## St Mike's Newsletter Submissions



Our monthly newsletter comes out in time for the third Sunday of each calendar month. Please send your articles, items, photographs, etc. for inclusion **any time** and they will be saved for the next edition.

The deadline for the next full newsletter is noon on Wed 17th April. Email items to [stmikesnotices@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesnotices@gmail.com)

Our weekly Bulletin is for more urgent, brief notices and information.



## KEMS Singers Concert at St Michael's

Saturday 23rd March at 7.30pm

# BRUCKNER

Mass No 1 in D minor

# FAURÉ

Requiem

### Conductor

Mark McCombs

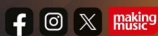
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 7.30pm

St Michael's Church, Macclesfield SK10 1DY

### TICKETS

Adult £15 – Under 18 free  
Macclesfield Visitor Information Centre  
Congleton Tourist Information Centre  
Margin Music, Macclesfield  
Online at [kems.yapsody.com](http://kems.yapsody.com)

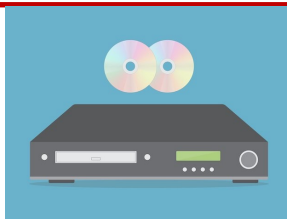
KEMS Macclesfield  
Singers  
Symphony Orchestra



Registered Charity No. 517554

## DVD "Lending Library"

Paul and I have a large stock of DVDs which we dip into only occasionally, rewatching old favourites at infrequent intervals. The rest of the time they sit on a shelf, sad and unwatched.



We are happy to lend any of our stock to people at church.

I am attaching with this newsletter a list of most of our DVDs, and will also pin a hard copy on the noticeboard for any who don't receive their newsletter electronically. In an uncharacteristic fit of organisation, I once catalogued all our DVDs and CDs so I have the spreadsheet to hand!

If there is anything specific to say about any (e.g. "not for the fainthearted" or "beware, foul language") you'll find it in the notes column.

Just contact us directly at church or by email ([lynne.norbron@gmail.com](mailto:lynne.norbron@gmail.com)) or phone (07881 423687).

We'll try to establish a suitable timescale for loans - maybe two weeks - when we will then ask for our DVD back again! Of course, we could enlist the professional, Mark, to manage the whole system for us.

There may be others in the church family who have a similar supply of home entertainment and who would be willing to establish a lending system. Just let me know for the next newsletter.

Lynne



## St Michael's Freecycle

(aka "FreeMichael")



When the Social Action & the Wider World Team organised a recycle-reuse stall last September, we were inundated with items, as so many of you took the opportunity to have a clear-out of unwanted goods.

While the SAWW Team summons the energy to organise another such event, the Eco-group thought it might be a good idea to launch a "FreeMichael" feature in our monthly newsletter, whereby you can send in a photograph and brief description of something you no longer want/need but which you think someone else might be able to use.

You will also need to give your **contact details**: a phone number or email address, so that any interested party can claim the item directly with you.

**If the recipient feels it appropriate, a donation to the church would be much appreciated, but this is absolutely optional.**

I will launch the stall by offering this wonderful, brand new **shopping trolley** (photo below) to anyone who might have use for it. It was a joke (I think) present from my two sisters for my 70th birthday. I can't see me using it any time soon. My trusty rucksack is my carrier of choice.

I might later advertise the special "mop slippers" and "lawn aerator spike shoes" they also gave me (such wags they are) - but in fact these might prove useful!



Brand new shopping trolley

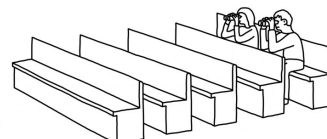
If you would like the shopping trolley, please contact Lynne on 07881 423687 or [lynne.norbron@gmail.com](mailto:lynne.norbron@gmail.com)

## NEWCOMERS

HOW TO GIVE CHURCH A TRY WITHOUT DETECTION



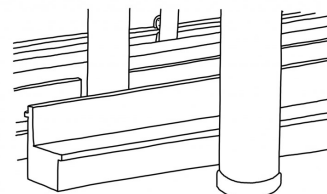
EVADE THE WELCOMERS



SIT NEAR THE BACK



TRY TO BLEND IN



MAKE FULL USE OF THE PILLARS

CartoonChurch.com

## Stations of the Cross

In Holy Week, the Stations of the Cross will appear on the railings in the church grounds.

Why do we do this?



The Stations of the Cross are a pilgrimage journey; pilgrimages are undertaken for a variety of reasons and with a variety of expectations, but whatever the reason there is an element of adventure and uncertainty.

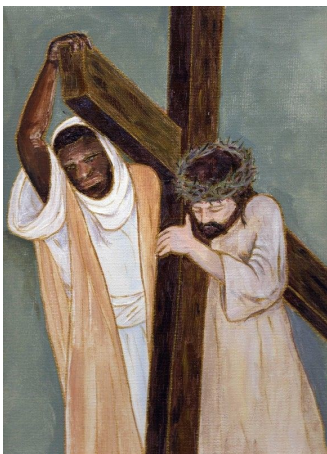


For early Christians a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a costly and dangerous prospect, out of reach of all but the most wealthy (it's not so different today).

We offer this opportunity for pilgrimage free of charge, but, we hope, not free of challenge.

The traditional "stations" are based on events in Jesus' last journey to the cross, most found in the Gospel accounts, and some legendary. They allow us to enter into the unfolding drama. Our version of the journey encourages us, as we reflect on those events, to reflect on the broken world in which we live and how the pain that Jesus felt on that journey is still felt by Him today.

May we encourage you to take part in this pilgrimage sometime during Holy Week, and encourage others to do so too? (We will have some paper copies in the Savage Chapel for anyone who is unable to take part outside).



*Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross*

### ***A bit of history...***

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion at Passiontide for many centuries because they enable us to engage actively with the path of suffering walked by Jesus. They originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem and wanted to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points.

## Church Flowers



The beautiful Spring flowers in the Worship Area have been graciously given by Vicky Darlington, in loving memory of her dear parents.

Thank you Vicky.

Eventually those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since then Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

In the late fourteenth century the Franciscans were given the responsibility for the holy places of Jerusalem and they erected tableaux to aid the devotion of the visitors. These kinds of images are now commonplace inside churches, and occasionally outside them.

The number of stations has varied immensely through the centuries from as few as five to as many as thirty-six, but the now traditional number of fourteen was established by Clement XII in 1731 – nine scriptural stations and a further five based on popular devotion.

Why "stations"? The word "statio" was used to denote a place of military guard duty. When the army pitched camp, some soldiers would be placed on "statio" and it would be their job to keep watch. It is understood that while they were on guard duty they would have to fast because they were not allowed to leave their post, so the word "statio" became synonymous with fasting, being in one place, and keeping watch. The early church used this same word to denote its own fast days on Wednesdays and Fridays, so the word "station" came to be used for the place where the Christian community watches, fasts and prays.



*Jesus is made to carry his cross, one of the stations at Southwell Minster, the work of Jonathan Clark.*



## The “Cardboard Cathedral” of Christchurch

On our recent ‘holiday of a lifetime’ to New Zealand, we had the rather wonderful experience - among many others - of looking round and attending a service at Christchurch’s ‘Transitional Cathedral’, also known as ‘The Cardboard Cathedral’.

We had heard about this before leaving the UK and were somewhat bemused. But there it was! An actual cathedral made almost completely from cardboard. Now when I say ‘cardboard’, forget the sort of material which might protect a parcel through the post, or contain your breakfast cereal. We’re talking **serious** card here! Incorporated into the building are 86 cardboard tubes each weighing 500kg, amongst many other cardboard features and structures.



*The exterior of the cathedral*

Other materials were used in the construction: some steel supports, a waterproof roof (it does rain down under!) and some simple stained glass. But virtually everything else is made from cardboard: pillars, pulpit, side chapels, you name it.

**Of course, the big question is “why”!**



*The original cathedral*

It was opened in 2013, to a design by the Japanese architect Shigeru Ban.

In 2011, Christchurch’s original stone cathedral was seriously damaged in the major earthquake of that year, and a decision was made to rebuild, so an interim place of worship was needed. Hence the Transitional or Cardboard Cathedral.



*The cathedral’s A-frame interior, made of massive cardboard tubes*



*Pulpit, constructed of smaller cardboard tubes*

After the service we had a good chat with the vicar, asking lots of questions, to which the repeated reply was, “That’s a very contentious issue” (“Wouldn’t you prefer to stay in this building?”, “Who is paying for the rebuilding of the old cathedral?”, “Did you think about doing something like Coventry Cathedral, and incorporating the damaged elements into something new?”).

So we learned that much of what has been decided in Christchurch Cathedral has been “very contentious” - back to “disagreeing agreeably” and our Lent course!

What struck us, though, was how amazingly creative and imaginative human beings can be. The space was beautiful, its back-story fascinating and we were left pondering its eco-credentials!

*Lynne and Paul Spedding*

## Summary of Services in Holy Week



**See page 4 for full details**

## Holy Week

### Maundy Thursday

- 11.00am Chrism Service at Chester Cathedral
- 7.30pm Tenebrae at the United Reformed Church

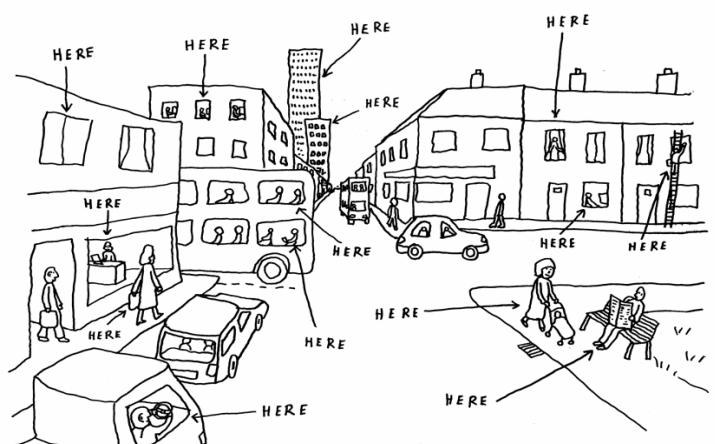
### Good Friday

- 10.30 am Good Friday Service at St Michael’s
- 2.30pm **‘At the Foot of the Cross’** a contemplative service with music, readings and silence (about one hour)

### Easter Sunday

- 10.00 Family Communion

### WHERE THE CHURCH IS



Join us for *Worship*



### Sunday 17th March

*The Fifth Sunday of Lent*

#### Family Communion

Bible Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Leader: Mike Strutt

Celebrant & Speaker: Rev'd Norman Jones

Please use the link below to stream this  
(and previous Services) on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/@stmikesmacclesfield>

### Start the Week ...

... Every Monday from 7.30 am in church

Morning Prayer at 8.30 am in church and also on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stmikesmacclesfield>

### Wednesday Morning Prayer Group

Alternate Wednesdays at 10:30 am in the Savage Chapel  
lasting 30-40 minutes.

Next taking place on Wednesday 20th March

### Thursday Morning Worship 10:30 am (35–40 minutes)

21st March: Morning Prayer

28th March: Holy Communion

(alternately thereafter...)

Our midweek services follow the order from  
the Book of Common Prayer (old language)

### Thursday Homegroup

Meeting for Bible study and prayer –  
Morning and Evening groups

The usual meetings are suspended during Lent so that  
members can attend the Lent Course

Please contact Eve & David Budgett (431606)  
or David Mayers (420716) for more information



### Compline/Night Prayer

Every Friday

Topic: Night Prayer | Time: 8.30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting; [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75676947476?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75676947476?pwd=R2twT2pQbTFzUGR5bk1reDZoVXdaZz09)  
[pwd=R2twT2pQbTFzUGR5bk1reDZoVXdaZz09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75676947476?pwd=R2twT2pQbTFzUGR5bk1reDZoVXdaZz09)

Meeting ID: 756 7694 7476 Passcode: compline



### How to contact the office...



Phone – Landline: 01625 421 984

Email – [clergypa@maccteam.org.uk](mailto:clergypa@maccteam.org.uk) (currently managed by  
temporary cover - see below for interim office  
arrangements)

– [office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk) to contact  
Elaine for room bookings and building matters

– [stmikesnotices@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesnotices@gmail.com) for newsletter items

– [maccteamprinting@gmail.com](mailto:maccteamprinting@gmail.com) for all printing

– [safeguarding@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk) to  
contact Katie Wilcock, Parish Safeguarding Officer

In person – The Office, St Michael's Church, Market Place,  
Macclesfield, SK10 1DY

Elaine's office hours are usually Monday,  
Wednesday, and Thursday 9:30 am – 1:30 pm

### Temporary Office Arrangements

While we are trying to find someone to be our new Clergy PA/  
Administrator, the office staff will be even more stretched than  
usual, so please bear this in mind and limit interruptions and  
the number of small tasks you might have asked them to do.

Judith Whittingham will be in the office on Tuesday and Friday  
mornings, so there will be some office cover every day. Judith  
will deal with urgent email, and arrangements for funerals and  
weddings.

Rota changes: if you cannot manage your slot please do your  
best to arrange a swap yourself, and inform Judith to change it  
on the master rota. If you can't find a swap then Judith will  
assist.

### Contemplative Prayer

Every Friday at 9:20am in the Savage Chapel lasting half an  
hour. An opportunity for quiet prayer followed by a short chat.



SCAN ME

Donating to St  
Michael's

has become easier!

Scan this QR Code or use the  
contactless donation point



Email any [prayer requests](#) here

(your request will be circulated confidentially to  
a limited group of people who will pray for you)

