

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER

18th October 2026



The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

God, our light and our salvation:

illuminate our lives, that we may see Your goodness in the land of the living, and looking on Your beauty may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Revd Martin writes about

Finding - *and being* - light in the darkness



Over the past few days, I've been particularly conscious of the fragility of life. I've taken the funeral of a church member, visited a couple in the immediate shock of a family bereavement, and spent time with someone approaching the end of their life. And yesterday evening, Thursday 15th Oct, I supported our local Maternity Unit as we hosted their annual Remembering Service at the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week.

This photo is from it.



These experiences touch me personally, too, following the death of my dad earlier this year.

I don't ever recall death featuring quite so prominently in my quarter of a century as a parish priest. However, I find myself wanting to write not about death, but about life.

At this evening's service, one image particularly struck me. When we find ourselves in the darkness of night, our eyes gradually adjust. And then, almost imperceptibly, we begin to see what was there all along: the stars, the galaxies, the vastness and wonder of the universe.

Grief and despair can leave us feeling surrounded by darkness. We cannot simply switch on a light, nor should we expect those who grieve to do so. But perhaps, in time, we begin to glimpse something we could not see before: the love that sustains us, the kindness of others, and the quiet possibility of hope.

For me, that hope is firmly rooted in Jesus Christ, the Lord of Life. He entered into the depths of human suffering and death, yet death did not have the final word. In His resurrection lies the promise of life beyond death, and the assurance that even in our darkest moments, we are not abandoned. As John's Gospel puts it: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5, NIV)

In a couple of weeks' time, we are hosting another Remembering Service, at 4pm on Sunday 1st Nov. This is for anyone who's been bereaved and would like to remember their loved one(s) before God. If you know someone that describes, please invite them to come along. And make it easier for them to attend by saying you'll come with them, too.

Let your light shine in their time of darkness.

And God bless you as you do!

Yours, in Christ

Mark

Prayer Support

PRAY

Please pray for the Worship and Prayer team and all involved in the planning and preparation of services.

Let us give thanks for our wonderful music and pray for Karen and the choir as the busy seasons of Advent and Christmas approach.

Give thanks for the Pilgrim and Psalms study groups and pray people will be blessed and encouraged in their faith.



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Caring for Our Church Building- Stonework Survey Update

Our church is a precious part of our community, and like any historic building, it needs regular care and attention to ensure it remains in good condition for future generations.

Each year, we have a stonework survey carried out to assess the condition of the church's stonework and identify any areas that may need attention. This year's survey is taking place this week, with the Fogarty High Level Maintenance Team on site to carry out the inspections and associated repairs.

Our church is built from soft sandstone, which requires particular care. During work carried out in the 1960s or 1970s, cement mortar was used in place of the traditional lime-based mortar. Combined with the effects of industrial pollution over the years, this has contributed to a hard layer forming on the surface of the stonework. Moisture can become trapped between this layer and the softer stone beneath, gradually weakening the stone over time. Regular inspections are therefore essential to help us monitor its condition and identify any problems before they become more serious.

The annual stonework survey costs around £1,500. While this is a significant expense, it is an important investment in the long-term care and preservation of our church.

Alongside the survey, the team is also undertaking several other maintenance jobs at an additional cost:

Bell louvre repair - Replacing the wooden louvre on one of the bells.

Church porch lantern - Repairing the large lantern light in the porch.

Church pinnacle - Repairing & securing



These works are all part of our ongoing responsibility to maintain the church building, keeping it safe, sound and welcoming for everyone who comes through its doors. Looking after an historic church is a continuing commitment, and although much of this work may go unnoticed, it is vital to protecting the building we value so much.

By taking care of our church today, we help ensure it will continue to serve our congregation and community for many years to come.



All Saints Day

Sunday 1st November



If you think of anything on All Saints Day, what - or who? - is it you think about?

The last time All Saints Day was on a Sunday was during the pandemic in 2020. The next time is over a decade away. On All Saints Day this year, we're focusing on an important aspect of the lives of those saints still alive!

Come along to hear more!

Church Family Worship 10am at St Mike's



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Create Through the Psalms

You're invited to engage with Scripture in a new and beautiful way. Join us for this 4-week series, Wonder: A journey to create through Psalm 8.

Week 3 - When I Consider the Heavens

Read through this week's Scripture. Take a moment to sit with the passage. Prepare your heart to engage with God creatively.

Psalm 8:3-4

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?

WITH YOUR HANDS

Create, in whatever medium you choose, a piece that holds the vastness of the heavens and the smallness of one person beneath them.

WITH YOUR WORDS

What do you feel when you consider how large the sky is and how small you are? Try one:

- Write a poem or prayer that begins "When I consider ..."
- Do a word study on "mindful": what it means to be thought of and remembered by God
- Write a reflection on a moment when you felt both very small and very seen

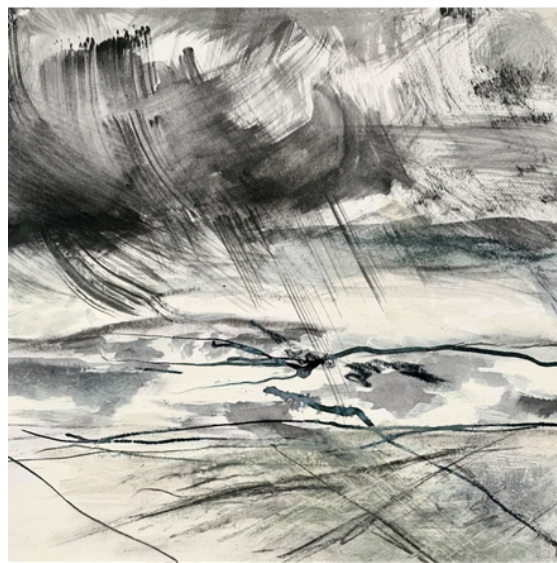
WITH YOUR ACTIONS

Give yourself time to consider.

Try one of:

- Take ten minutes to meditate on this week's verse
- Gather together a few friends to share what makes you feel small and held
- Learn one thing about the sky, such as a constellation or a moon phase, and share what you've learnt

We'd love to see what you create! Please email stmikesnotices@gmail.com or WhatsApp +447579820265 so we can share your artwork or reflections with the church community. Kirsty.



Eco Tip

Have you considered the advantages of washing less? That includes washing yourself - shower instead of a bath, fewer, shorter showers; meaning less water used and less energy used to heat the water.

And washing your clothes - do those socks and shirts really need washing after 1 day? Many items shed microplastics when they are washed, and washing increases wear; and of course less washing of clothes also means less water and energy used.



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Indian Banquet

On the 15th November join us for an evening of delicious food!

IMPORTANT - Please book your place with the church office so we can add you to the list and let us know if you've paid online! Soft drinks provided, please bring any alcoholic drinks. Proceeds to the St Michaels Building Fund. Adults £22, Under 11's £12, Family £60. Pay online or cash via the church office.

Proceeds to the St Michaels Building Fund

Pay online (details below) or cash in Church Office

Please use reference "(Surname), BANQUET"

Account: 10175873

Sort code: 16-24-32

TODAY at St Mikes - Music@Mike's FOLK MUSIC, FUN & FELLOWSHIP!

Join us today, at 1:15 pm, for a delightful musical afternoon featuring the many talents of local folk musician Arthur Marshall! Arthur will entertain us with a wonderful mix of traditional folk songs and his own original compositions.

Thursday 22nd October - Wendy Nugent to play a variety of classical, film and traditional tunes. Note this is a change from the published programme.

Friday 30th October - Cheshire chamber Collective - Adrienne Soilsbury (violin) and Julian Davis (piano).

Saturday 7th November - Neil Taylor - organ

Thursday 12th November - Kings School - Starting at 1pm - NOT 1:15!

There's no charge to attend, but donations in support of St. Michael's Church and East Cheshire Hospice would be warmly appreciated.

☕ Our Angel at My Table café will also be open, serving drinks, tasty food and lovely homemade cakes.

REMEMBERING GAZA

A Silent Vigil outside Macclesfield Town Hall

Forthcoming dates: 12noon - 12.30 pm, Saturdays 24th October, 28th November, 19th December.

Contact David Mayers, davidjmayers@btinternet.com

WHAT'S ON?

Lumos Event - A Fleetwood Mac Candlelight Experience (main church)

Saturday 7th November two sittings: 1st Sitting 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM with doors at 4:15 PM; 2nd Sitting 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM with doors at 6:30 PM.

KEMS Concert at St Michael's - Sat 14th November 7.30pm (main church)

Handel's Messiah (full version, edited by Ebenezer Prout). **Price: £15.00** for adults, **Free** for under-18s (also available on the door subject to availability)

Charities' Bazaar - Rotary Club - Saturday 14th November (main church)

A festive community market featuring a wide selection of local charities and community organisations. Stalls sell Christmas cards, unique festive gifts, handmade crafts, eco-friendly items, and local organization goods to raise funds and awareness for regional causes.

Service of Remembering

Reminder - **Service of Remembering - Sunday 1st November at 4.00pm, St Michael's.** All are welcome to this special service is an opportunity to give thanks for the lives of those who have died, remember with love those we still hold dear.

Town Carol Service

As per last weeks newsletter, this years Town Carol Service is on **Thursday 17th December, 7pm.** Our theme for this year is: **'The Business of Christmas'**, and our guest preacher will be Steve Parsons, Senior Pastor of TFW Church in Tytherington. Pop the date in your diary!

Charities' Bazaar

The Children's Society will be holding their Toiletries and 'Anything New' stall at the Charities Bazaar (Saturday November 14th). We would be grateful for any donations you may have.

Jenny Wild 07775 579 968

Hilary Haliwell 420 616. Thank you!



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Simple Invitation Can Make a Big Difference

Could you invite someone to church this week?

One Church of England church welcomed 75 people who weren't regular churchgoers to a special service, simply by inviting them to "Come and See".

It's a lovely reminder that a friendly invitation can open the door to faith, friendship and belonging. As a church at the heart of Macclesfield, why not invite a friend, neighbour or family member to join us this Sunday? You never know what a simple invitation might mean to someone.

[Read the full story here](#) on the Church of England website.

Too good not to share!
From Liz

Margaret's Guide to Serving After-Church Refreshments in a Civilised Manner

Issued by Margaret Basington-Smythe, for the avoidance of further incidents.

Refreshments are an extension of our Christian hospitality. They should leave people feeling welcomed, restored and reasonably confident that their cup has been washed.

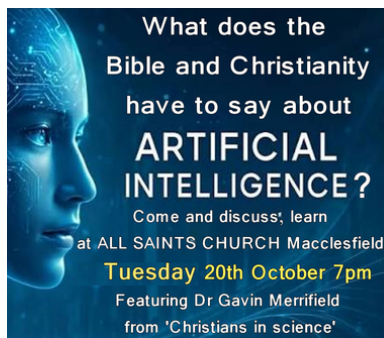
A few gentle reminders:

- 1. Tea requires boiling water.**
Water which was hot when the sermon began will no longer suffice. We are making tea, not encouraging a leaf to reminisce.
- 2. Allow the tea to brew.**
Briefly introducing a teabag to a large pot of water produces a beverage best described as a rumour.
- 3. Please ask before adding milk or sugar.**
"You look like a two-sugars person" is not an appropriate form of pastoral assessment.
- 4. Coffee drinkers are also welcome.**
Under a PCC resolution, and following our membership of something called "Fairtrade Church", only ethically traded tea and coffee will be served at St Faithful's. I support the principle, although I should have preferred to be consulted before the cupboard was reorganised. Decaffeinated coffee should also be available. Requests for lattes or cappuccinos will be passed to someone who has not yet spent twenty minutes arguing with the urn.
- 5. Alternative milks should be clearly labelled.**
So should the jug being used to water the flowers. We must not rely on people noticing the difference. Please ask what people need; a request for oat milk does not require a discussion of what was wrong with the world before we had it.
- 6. Biscuits should be arranged on a plate.**
Opening the packet at both ends is not "a more relaxed style of ministry", whatever the Rector says. Suitable biscuits should be offered separately, clearly labelled and somewhere visible. Keeping them in a cupboard known only to Pauline introduces an unnecessary element of spiritual discernment.
- 7. Please exercise restraint around the chocolate biscuits.**
Take one, then allow others their opportunity. Turning a second one upside down beneath a digestive does not render it invisible.
- 8. Visiting clergy receive the same refreshments as everyone else.**
There is no need to produce the concealed shortbread whenever a purple shirt appears. Some of us have been supporting this church for forty years.
- 9. Welcome newcomers before asking them to wash up.**
We want them to feel that they have found a spiritual home. The discovery that this includes kitchen duties can wait until their second visit.
- 10. Return cups to the kitchen.**
Please do not abandon them behind hymn books, on radiators or in the font. Mr Dobbs has begun photographing the evidence.
- 11. "Let me know if you need a hand" is a gracious offer.**
It becomes considerably more gracious if you remain in the building long enough to hear the answer.

Finally, please remember to thank those serving. They have missed the final hymn, endured the urn and listened to six separate opinions about the strength of the tea. Any suggestions for improving these arrangements should be accompanied by your name and three Sundays on which you are available.

Margaret Basington-Smythe
Standards are easier to maintain when everyone has some.
St Faithful's, Havnet - stfaithfuls.com

All Saints Church



Come along to All Saints Church on 20th October at 7pm for a talk on AI. You will be in for a very interesting evening.

Other events at All Saints Church:

Family Barn Dance & Harvest Supper - Saturday 24th November. Contact Chris 07920 014 756. Tickets £5, food provided and donation invited.

Light Party, Saturday 31st October 4-6pm. Games, crafts and food. Free, aimed at Primary school age children.



Reminder about **The BIG Quiz Night - Saturday 28th November, 7pm.** All Saints Church. Come along! Max 6 players per team. Contact Philip Marsh 07980 474 742. All welcome, bring your own snacks/drinks - but tea and coffee provided!



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Sunday 18th October 2026
The Twentieth Sunday after Trinity
Holy Communion

Church Family Worship

Theme: In God's presence

10:00am

Bible Reading: Exodus 33:12-23

Leader: Lynne Spedding

Speaker: Martin Bancroft

Use the link below to stream this
(and previous services) on YouTube
www.youtube.com/@stmikesmacclesfield

Start the Week

Every Monday from 7.30am in church
Morning Prayer at 8.30 am in church and also
on Facebook - [Link to Facebook](#)

Wednesday Morning Prayer Group

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

Thursday Worship 10:30am (35-40 mins)

Our midweek services follow the order from
the Book of Common Prayer (traditional
language) and alternate between Morning
Prayer and Holy Communion

22nd October: Midweek Communion Service

29th October: Morning Prayer

Thursday Homegroup

Meeting for Bible study and prayer
morning and evening groups
Contact Eve & David Budgett (431606) or
David Mayers (420716) for more information

Held in the Silence (Contemplative Prayer)

Friday mornings from 9.20-9.50.

An opportunity for quiet prayer followed
by a cuppa and chat.

Compline/Night Prayer - Every Friday

Topic: Night Prayer | Time: 8.30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting; [Click here to join meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 756 7694 7476

Passcode: compline



Choral Evensong

Usually **2nd Sunday of each month, 6:30pm**

Words from the Book of Common Prayer and
music in the Anglican choral tradition.

Everyone welcome.

**Share your Photos with
St Mike's Church Family**



If you've any photos of recent significant
birthdays or celebrations which you'd like to share in
Church Family News on Sunday mornings, please send
them via WhatsApp to this number: **+44 7579 820265**

You can, of course, also email pictures and text to
stmikesnotices@gmail.com. The deadline each week
is: 12 noon on Wednesdays

How to contact the office...Tel: 01625 421 984



Isobel: clergypa@maccteam.org.uk for
ministry queries
(Office hours usually Mon & Wed 9.00-15:00;
Thurs & Fri 9.00-1.00.



Phoebe: bookings@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk
for bookings and building matters
(Office hours are usually Mon,
Tues & Thurs 9:30am – 1:30pm

- Bulletin/Newsletter: stmikesnotices@gmail.com
- Printing: maccteamprinting@gmail.com
- Safeguarding: see box below

Postal Address:

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Macclesfield, SK10 1DY



The National Safeguarding Team
Promoting a Safer Church

Safeguarding Contact Information

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact
the St Michael's Safeguarding Officer. **Liz Bradbury is
the safeguarding officer:**

Phone: 07435 568 729

Email: safeguarding@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk

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Email any prayer requests to:

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Your request will be circulated confidentially to
a limited group of people who will pray for you.