



A newsletter brought to you during Covid-19

Church Together Apart



www.stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk



Follow us on Instagram

Easter Sunday Service

We are very much looking forward to our worship on Easter Sunday. It will be great, after the year we've had, to celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the hope of new life. There is even an opportunity to dress up and wear an Easter Bonnet! Do make one, and come to church in it or wear it from home on the zoom gathering. It will be a joyful sight.

Our Easter Day (merged) worship will start at 10am as one church community of people joining online via Zoom with others present in the building. After the Peace, Mike Strutt will lead those on Zoom into a time of 'sharing of food and drink', and our closing hymn. Please have something ready beforehand, say, a simple drink & biscuit. We will share this together in a meaningful act of remembrance and unity.

Those in the building, continuing into Communion, will be asked to remain seated to receive the bread (only) as Lynne & I distribute it around. We will ensure all safety procedures are kept to.

Whichever way you join us this Sunday, may you have a blessed time, along with others, celebrating our Lord's resurrection and promise of new life to us all.

Mark

Services this Week

Maundy Thursday (1st)

Holy Communion 10.30am in the nave

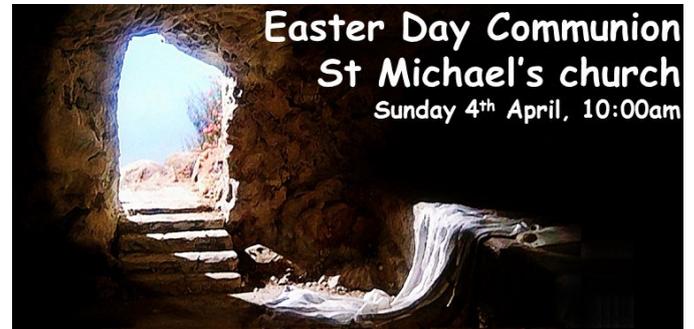
Good Friday (2nd)

- **Morning Service** 10.00 live and by Zoom
- **Reflective Service** 2.00pm live only (*Words from the Cross*: see page 7 for more details)

Easter Sunday Holy Communion 10.00 live and by Zoom (*live service must be booked in advance - see top of this page*)

Log-in as for Sunday services

Easter Bunny Tree



Easter Day Communion
St Michael's church
Sunday 4th April, 10:00am

Book for Easter Sunday Live Worship

If you wish to attend the Easter Day (April 4th) communion service in church then you will need to book online. Since we will still be socially distanced within the building we need to limit the congregation to 70 people. Note that there is, of course, no limit to how many may join the Zoom call and no need to book for Zoom.

Booking is free. To reserve places for you and your household group please book [here](#). If you don't have internet access then please ask someone to book for you or contact Paul Simms on 07879 446906

WALKING THE WAY
OF THE CROSS



Church of England

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion for many centuries because they offer a particularly vivid way of following in the steps of Jesus on the way to the Cross.

The Stations 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. 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.

We have our own St Michael's "Stations of the Cross" this week in the churchyard and, if you would like to explore this concept further, the Church of England has its own version which you can access online by clicking [here](#). Alternatively you can listen to this as a daily downloadable podcast, from Passion Sunday (21st March) to Easter Sunday). Click [here](#) to access this resource

You can also explore the Common Worship service of 'The Way of the Cross' [here](#)

Apologies from Lynne for mistakenly claiming last week that Palm Sunday is also Passion Sunday. It's incredible how she ever got to be licensed as a Reader. To be fair, though, the CoE website provides a Palm Sunday liturgy which also incorporates the full Passion Narrative, so it's no wonder she got confused.

A bit of fun for Easter Sunday

We hope that you will join in with our Easter Bonnet Parade. We are going to decorate hats, flat caps, trilbys, etc. and wear them on Easter Sunday. Folk on Zoom are already getting ready and we hope there may be a few brave souls in church who will join in.



Zoe Brandwood's Easter Bonnet

For inspiration, see the two fine specimens we have here!



Satsuki-Mei's Easter Bonnet

Well done to both girls.

Happy Easter, everyone, and don't eat too much chocolate!

Good Friday Reflective Service



2.00pm (live service only)

Approx length 60-75 minutes

Words from the Cross

A selection of Bible readings (the words from the cross) with poetry, music, images and silence

Please feel free to leave at any suitable stage (the service is not divided into half -hour sections this year)

In no way will our Annual Church Meeting resemble this!

Annual Meeting St Michael's Annual Meeting



Each year in the Spring, we have a get-together called the annual meeting (or APCM – annual parochial church meeting) where

we review what's happened in the last year, look forward to the next year and do various important jobs like electing our Churchwardens and Church Council members.

For the last two or three years we have done this as part of a Sunday morning service. Of course everything got disrupted last year so our 2020 APCM was held very late, in fact in October, and via Zoom.

We are planning something similar this year on Sunday 9th May. It will be a blended event immediately after the service so people can participate both from inside the building and via Zoom from home if they prefer. Although there are necessary "business" elements we hope that the meeting will be short, Christ-centred and positive.



Nominations for Churchwardens and/or Church Council members may be made via the forms on the noticeboard in church, or by emailing the details to paulspedding@gmail.com



Electoral Roll

Another feature of the meeting is to report on our electoral roll – what you might think of as our membership list, which also allows people to participate in the APCM and be elected to a role in the Church.

This needs to be revised each year and our Electoral Roll Officer, David Budgett is carrying this out now. If you want to be added to this list or if any of your details have changed, please pick up a form (from the desk by the church entrance) or let me know if you aren't entering the building at the moment and I'll get a form to you.

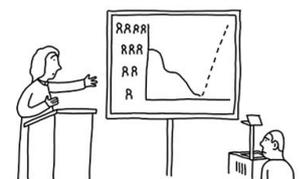
Forms must be returned to the Church Office by Sunday 18th April and a copy of the roll (without addresses) will be posted on the church noticeboard by Sunday 25th April.

Paul Spedding,
Church Council Secretary,
Macc 614819 or paulspedding@gmail.com

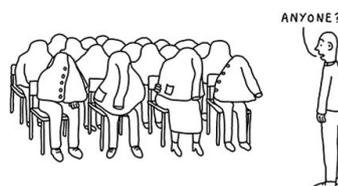
THE ANNUAL MEETING



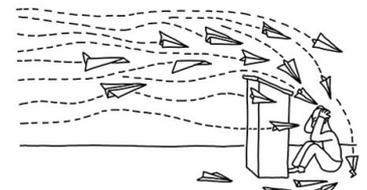
INTERESTING REPORTS ABOUT KEY AREAS OF OUR WORK



THE VICAR'S SPEECH ABOUT THIS YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS



THE ELECTION OF A NEW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL



SOME QUESTIONS FROM CONGREGATION MEMBERS

Winter's End.

A shaft of sunlight streams into my room,
as I, in bed, lift up a sleepy head and realise that another day is
here.

I ask myself which day has just begun;
with routine gone, the weeks and months have drifted by
throughout this last extraordinary year.

As each quiet prayer has helped my thoughts drift on,
encased within a bubble which has waxed and waned but will
not disappear,

Apart from walks within my neighbouring park,
with pen to paper, have I journeyed on to enjoy once more
acquaintances long gone by yesteryear.

So to the future now I look with hope,
knowing that my contemplative thoughts have safely carried
me with prayer to winter's end, and Eastertide is near.

Dorothy Bentley Smith.



*Dorothy sent this poem for inclusion,
which she says just came into her head
a few mornings ago!*

*Thank-you Dorothy - I think we all feel
pretty much the same as you. Ed.*

Church Flowers



The photograph above shows the beautiful pulmonaria
and scilla growing in Beth Marshall's garden - the signs of
spring.

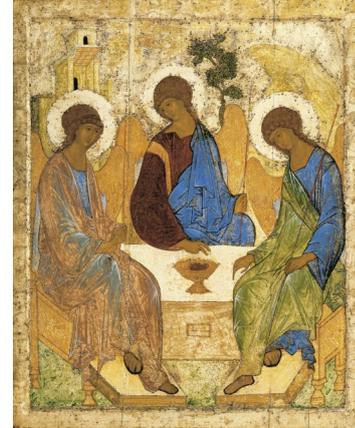


Beth also has a few
surplus dwarf Iris (photo
on left - they flower in
May), young hellebores
and mint plants (free, but
donations to church funds
would
be appreciated).

If you'd like one (or more), contact Beth on Macclesfield
262151 or email beth@capuchin.co.uk to arrange
collection.

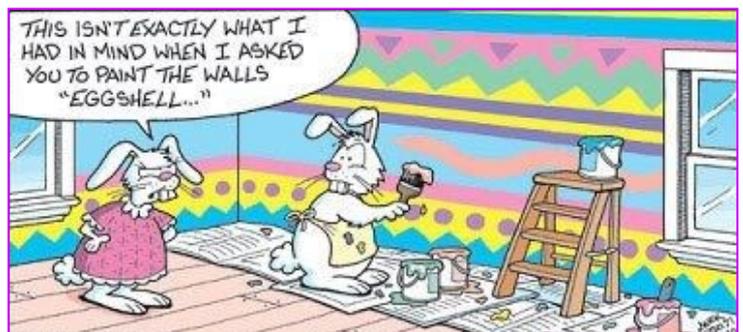
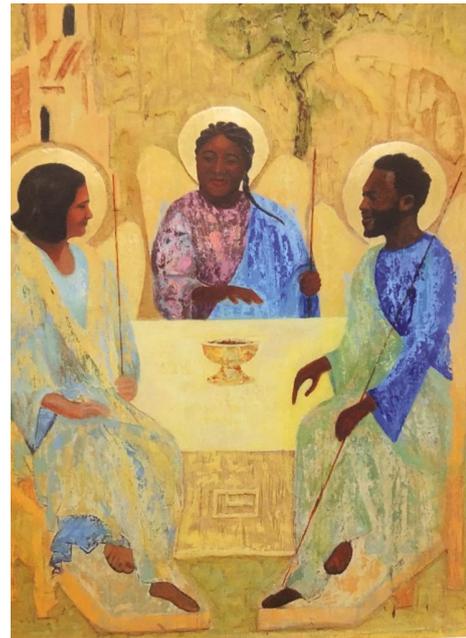
Rublev icon

Last Sunday I referred to a poem written by Rowan Williams, called
"Rublev", and I showed a picture of the icon which was the basis for his
poem: "The Hospitality of Abraham" (by Rublev, the 15th century
Russian iconographer). Most critics take this to be in fact a depiction of
the Trinity, or Godhead, and it is rich with symbolism to support this
interpretation.



Tricia has just shared a picture of an African version of the Rublev icon
which she bought at Greenbelt some time ago, and which casts new
light on our thinking - not least as it clearly depicts at least one figure as
female. I thought you might like to see and reflect on this.

Lynne Spedding.





Cre8 March News

Music

Our Music project has been back in full swing in the first part of 2021. Over the past few months, we've had lots of exciting things happening! We've started recording a podcast (*Cre8cast*) with our young people which we're really excited to share with everyone!

We've done some samba with our professional percussionist, and run online sessions on music theory, making instruments at home, making music online, a choir and quizzes. There have been **23 individual participants since January with an average of 15 young people a week.**

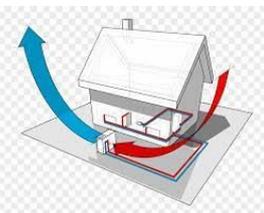
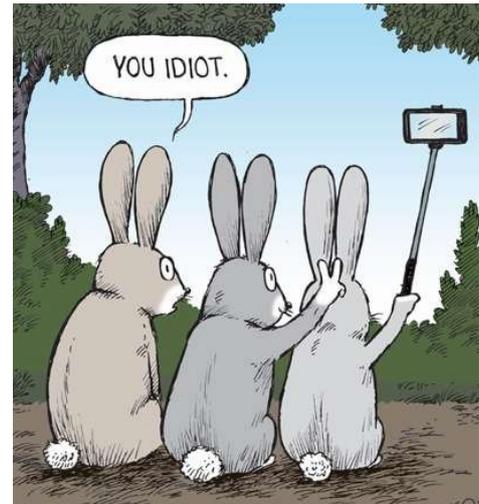
Surplus Food Grocery

Cre8's popular Surplus Food Grocery is still operating x3 a week, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at St Barnabas Church, and Thursdays at the Green in the Corner Cafe on the Hurdfield estate. We now have a total estimated **785 people** benefiting from our Grocery, and are averaging at around **69 visitors per grocery!** In February alone we had **47 new people** come to our Grocery, and we love to see all the people we are now able to help!

Social Enterprise Project

Our Social Enterprise project is still going strong and having great success! We had a really successful Christmas Tree project over the festive period. Below are some of the outcomes:

- Sold a total of **65 trees and 20 stands**. Most trees were sold by the 13th December. 16 trees were sold on Saturday 5th December. We made a profit of **£1,035.92**. This will be spent on employing young people to do work around the Cre8 sheds.
- Gave 34 hours paid employment to one NEET young person throughout December.
- We put a Community Christmas Tree outside St. Barnabas which was partly sponsored by Down To Earth. A large star for the tree by a local resident, decorations were donated, and the lighting was setup by **Cre8 Enterprise**. This felt like a real joint effort and it looked great.
- Supported **Rosendale Christmas Winter Wonder Scene** by giving them a tree and stand. We also supported **Just Drop In** by giving them a tree.



Air Source Heat Pump

I have been asked by David Mayers who chairs the St Michael's Eco-Group to write a brief article about our household heating installation. Heating systems are on everyone's agenda at the moment as we stay warm in winter and try to keep costs down.

Our decision to install an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) was taken in 2015. Since then I have read many articles that all say in the next ten years the government will have to entice householders and businesses away from fossil fuels (Gas & Oil) towards renewable energy sources to meet its environmental targets. Our decision in 2015 was fuelled (apologies for the pun) by a need to replace our ageing gas boiler.

We received a government grant over 5 years (RHI) to cover three quarters of our new heating system. We researched a company that would install our ASHP and certify the paperwork required to obtain an MCS certification (required for grant purposes).

Our ASHP heats radiators only and we have a separate electric heater for hot water, although newer more efficient models have dual controls to heat both hot water and central heating.



We are very pleased with our ASHP because it uses much less fuel (as a lower heat source). It is low maintenance and we have seen our electric (only) bills (compared to previous Gas & Electric combined) nearly halved because heating the home (including hot water) amounts to 75% of one's household needs.

If you have any questions I am happy to answer them. You can contact me through church.

David Smith

This is a picture of David's air-source heat-pump



Week 5 of the Munro camellia.

Stunning!



Church Council Report

There have been two meetings since I last reported on Church Council discussions and decisions: 16th Feb and 23rd March. We are now alternating our meetings so that we consider "housekeeping" / day-to-day issues at one, and more strategic issues at the next.

February

Strategic Priorities

The Council split into three breakout rooms, with each group considering one of the three identified strategic priorities arising from our Vision Day. The three areas are:

- Discovering St Michael's and Encountering God;
- Exploring and Nurturing Faith;
- Celebrating and Sustaining God's Creation.

Each breakout room was to address three questions:

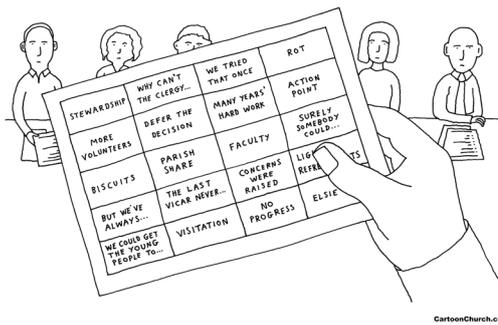
1. Does this reflect what we should be doing over the next 5 to 10 years?
2. How do you feel about using the strategic plan as a basis for determining what we put our energies into and (consequently) what we don't?
3. What is my role as a church council member in supporting and promoting this strategy?

Breakout rooms returned to the full meeting and their feedback can be summarised against the three questions as follows:

1. Generally accepted - this is a good framework requiring prayer as well as action if it is to succeed.
2. It was felt that new initiatives are to be welcomed but we need to ensure that they tie in with the strategic objectives. Some desirable projects require fairly immediate action; others are longer term.
3. It was agreed that the church council role is to promote the strategy to the greatest extent possible but that we need enthusiastic commitment from the whole church family and the wider community if the plan is to succeed. It was noted that the Sustainability objective is very ambitious and has large financial implications.

P.C.C. BINGO

WORDS AND PHRASES OFTEN USED DURING MEETINGS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL



Creative Action on the Deficit

The CAD Group had submitted in advance a paper outlining ways in which Treacle Sundays (post-pandemic) could be used to raise money for the church. There was lengthy discussion about the principle of using our Open Door initiative on Treacle Markets days as a fundraising opportunity, with a number of people being against the idea. However, at the same time much appreciation was expressed for the ideas which had been put forward if they could be actioned without the aim of raising money.

Emerging from Lockdown (Imagining the Future)

The council members were divided again into three breakout rooms to consider these four questions:

- what have we gained but are happy to lose at the end of lockdown:
- what have we gained and want to keep:
- What have we lost and don't want back:
- What have we lost and want to have back.

Feedback was given to the full meeting and it was suggested that the whole church family should be invited also to respond to these questions.

March

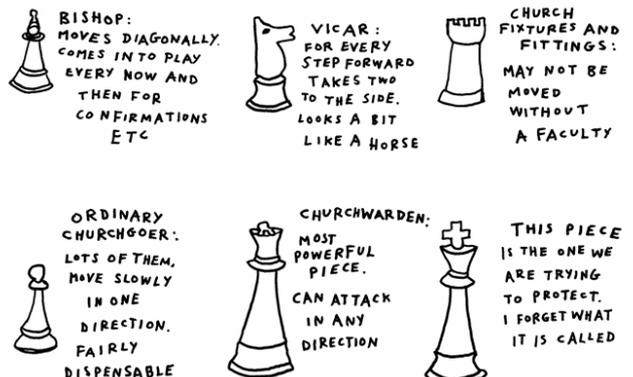
(day-to-day issues)

- 1 **Rector's Report** - Martin congratulated the Council and Church membership on their resilience and achievements during the pandemic, and identified ways in which we have already been addressing our three strategic objectives despite lockdown.
- 2 **Planning for the APCM on Sunday 9th May**
- 3 **Safeguarding Report** - received from Gemma Shepherd-Etchells
- 4 **Financial Report** – the accounts for the year were submitted by Mike Strutt for CC approval, already discussed and agreed within the Finance Group.
- 5 **Clergy PA Vacancy** - The post has been re-advertised and some applications received.
- 6 **Deanery Synod Report**
- 7 **AOB:**
 - An invitation to participate in a service for Karen Brady at her home church, since the pandemic prevented us giving her a proper send-off. A collection for a gift for Karen will now be started.
 - A limited Treacle Market is planned for April so we need to consider a return to opening the church.
 - Furloughed staff: as we resume use of the building it is hoped that furloughed staff, both of whom will soon have had their second vaccination, will return to work.

PS - This meeting was excitingly interrupted by a power cut in Tytherington which allowed some members to make an early exit. It was noted that two of the three affected individuals conscientiously returned when power was restored to them!

Lynne Spedding
Lay Chair, Church Council

CHURCH POLITICS EXPLAINED USING CHESS PIECES



CartoonChurch.com

Open to Change

Here are the lyrics of the song that Izzy Reid wrote and performed so memorably for us at the youthgroup service on 21st March. She hasn't given it a title, so David Mayers has called it Open to Change as this was the message that really stuck with him from her reflection. If we are not open to change, and allow ourselves to be deceived into accepting the many temptations of the 21st century materialistic lifestyle, then we will never achieve what I am sure deep down we all want – namely a peaceful, just, equitable, beautiful and sustainable world for our children and grandchildren.



Divine creator
God-inspired creation
You made the world according to your plan
From the emerald field, to the sapphire sea

My lord, my God
Got me singing in the shower to the morning rain
My lord, my God
Got me praising your name on my hilltop walk
My lord, my God

When the sun shines I see your world
Like the gift you gave
So I will care for it
As you care for me

Love beyond compare; beyond comprehension
You know me and you love me and you care
Our beauty is an echo of our likeness
So I'll take on a protector's role and say

My lord, my God
Got me singing ...

There's a serpent; it is the 21st century
Will we take the fruit or leave it on the tree
Idyllically just waiting by
Give a sigh as faith goes blind
Open our eyes and see

My lord, my God
Got me singing ...



Easter Story Cookies (recipe with bible verses)

If you like baking you may like to try this recipe.

NB contains nuts

Preparation time 30 minutes

Ingredients

1 cup nuts (pecan, walnuts, pistachio)
1 tsp vinegar
1 pinch salt
1 cup sugar

Also required

Re-sealable bag
Wooden spoon/rolling pin
2 lined baking trays
Teaspoon
Mixer and bowl
Bible
Tape



Instructions

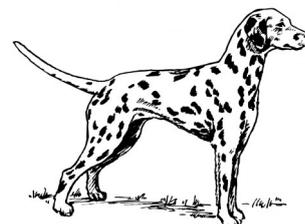
Preheat oven to 150C. *This is an absolute MUST that it is done BEFORE you start anything else. The oven must be heated for this to work and make the hollow cookies.*

1. Place pecans in bag and let the children beat them with the wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.
2. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 teaspoon vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
3. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10: 10-11.
4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.
5. So far the ingredients are not very appetizing, are they? Now add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Psalms 34:8 and John 3:16.
6. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.
7. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto lined cookie sheets. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.
8. Put the cookies in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. (If you have a gas oven leave on for 8-10 min, then turn off.) Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door closed. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.
9. Go to bed! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight, however, Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 & 22.
10. On Easter morning open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

Bad Joke

"I've just spotted an albino dalmatian.

It was the least I could do for it."



Holy Week and Easter bags

Holy Week and Easter are a special time in the Christian calendar. This last year has been challenging for us all and especially for children. The disruption to their education, not being able to see friends and the strain on families juggling work and home schooling has been really difficult.

We have all been called by name and we are all part of Christ in the church. Each child of aged 16 (Year 11) and below who belongs to our church family has received a named activity bag. These have been lovingly made, labelled, printed and put together by a team of people. Thank you to all involved – you know who you are.



Boot loaded and ready to go

Newsletters. Watch this space.

The bags contain instructions for making an Easter garden with a tray and flowerpot to help with construction, puzzles, craft activities and pictures to colour as well as readings, wonder questions and a prayer for each day.

Bags have been delivered to 50 children from 29 different households.

You may be able to try one or two of the puzzles, but this is up to the Editor! (*The puzzles and their answers have been attached to this newsletter as two separate PDFs. No cheating! Ed.*)

Hopefully, we will see pictures of their creations in subsequent
Sallie Bancroft



Easter bag contents



50 sunflower seed packets



Riding Lights Passion Play "Breaking Day"

As day begins to break on Good Friday, the occupying Governor's tenuous grip on authority is slipping. It's festival time in Jerusalem but his wife is plagued with disturbing dreams. Amid the demands of the Sanhedrin and the murderous cries of the mob, the lines between personal and political in Pilate's house start to blur. The teacher at the centre of it all remains silent.

Confused by the hopes and fears of her people, a Jewish servant in the Praetorium clearly knows more than she should. Pilate wrestles with a quandary of his own devising, while outside momentum is gathering – the power of the Capitol in tension with the will of the people.

With stark intimacy, *Breaking Day* casts a surprising light on the death of Jesus from inside the Governor's household, immersing us in the decisions that led to crucifixion.

All the details you need are at <https://ridinglights.org/breaking-day/> The cost for a single household is £10; and it can be viewed any time up to 15th April

If you can't book on-line, but would like to join us for a shared viewing on Zoom please get in touch (David Mayers 01625 420716) and we'll try to sort it out.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND Diocese of Chester

Lent Challenges

Challenge 7

Encourage Biodiversity

Plant trees and flowers to that will help local wildlife and organise a litter-pick

And here is a reminder of the previous 5 challenges

Cut out single use plastics

Keep it local

Introduce meat-free days

Stop food waste

Resist fast fashion

Reduce energy consumption

For the full 40 Lent reflections all of which have an environmental theme, click [here](#)

How to Contact the Office

Please be careful to use the correct email address for the purpose of your message.

- For the **newsletter**: stmikesnotices@gmail.com
- For **bookings, building maintenance**: office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk
- For **service details, rotas, anything else**: clergyga@maccteam.org.uk

These email addresses will be accessed at least once per week, but not every day, so don't expect an instant response. The office phone will also be accessed at least once each week.

Join us for
Sunday Worship



St Michael's Worship 4th April 2021

Easter Sunday

**Merged service this week at 10.00am:
live in church / from home on Zoom**

To join by Zoom click on the image or use
Meeting ID: 939 7279 7379
Password: 01625

Service Leader: Mike Strutt
Talk: Revd Martin Stephens
Reading: John 20:1-18



Can't join us live? Watch the recording of our morning worship service on Zoom at a time to suit you after Sunday lunchtime [here](#)

Good Friday Service 10.00am
Use the same link as for the Sunday morning services (click on image above)

Wednesday Morning Discussion
11.00am to 12 noon

Join Zoom meeting [here](#)
Meeting ID: 971 3599 5784
Passcode: 01625




Monday House Group

When? 7.30pm - 9pm Monday evenings

Join Zoom Meeting [here](#)
Meeting ID: 910 4838 5228
Password: Monday

For more information contact Martin [by email](#) or 01625 426110.

Thursday Homegroup

We meet via Zoom at 7.30pm using same details as before. All are welcome to join for Bible Study, prayer and fellowship, including by phone. Please contact David Mayers by [email](#) or phone 01625 420716 or 07963 802659.

This week we have started the Bible Course.



No Computer? No problem!

You can still join any of these Zoom meetings and services with your landline phone

If phoning:



Dial **0330 088 5830**.

When prompted, enter the **Meeting ID** from any of these boxes **followed by #**
[For Sunday's service: 939 7279 7379]

When prompted, enter #

DONATIONS: Donating to the church for general purposes has been made simpler. Either click on the blue Donate button or scan the QR Code.




Email any [prayer requests](#) here

Giving to the work and worship of St Michael's

Click here to donate towards our church's ministry [→](#)

