



A newsletter brought to you during Covid-19

Church Together Apart



@stmikesmacclesfield



www.stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk



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## Advent Reflection...



Advent - at the end of the calendar year and the start of the Christian year - what does it mean to you? Here are some of my reflections which were sent as a letter to those receiving Home Communion Martin (Stephens) asked me to share them here.

When I was growing up, through Advent, as a family, at teatime we would light the Advent Candle and sing *"Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown, when Thou camest to earth for me"*. It was a very special time sitting together in semi-darkness, the candle light reflected in each other's smiling eyes, hearing our voices singing together.

One of the bible verses we read at Christmas is:-

Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

**Luke 2:19**

Mary is thinking about the words the shepherds said about her baby, words told to them by the angels. She is not just thinking but taking them deep into her, storing them. Is she aware of what will happen to her son? It is later when they visit the temple and meet Simeon that he says to Mary:-

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." **Luke 2:34-35**

These words must have been added to those said by the shepherds. And what of Gabriel's words? She must have wondered what they all meant and how they fitted together.

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." **Luke 1:30-33**

As I write this letter there is a lot of advertising about Black Friday. This is a push for us to buy more. Is it a bargain? Not if we don't need or want it. Not if the prices are not lower than they

were. It is sheer consumerism and greed! Black Friday reminds me of the sky turning black as Jesus died on Good Friday. Did Mary remember all the words she had been pondering? We do not know. What we hear is Jesus, even in His agony, showing love and care for his mother:-

When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. **John 19:26-27**

So as we go through this Advent let us think about these last years when we have been made acutely aware of the importance of love and friends and family. Let us turn blackness to light as we consider God's love for us. Let us ponder, as Mary did, the words we hear of the true meaning of Christmas. And let us say, "Come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee" so that at the end we may say "My heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus, when Thou comest and callest for me".



May we continue to share the love of God with each other, caring for each other and holding one another in prayer.

Every blessing for Christmas and a Peaceful New Year

*Sallie Bancroft*

### The Second Sunday of Advent

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God.

**5th December 2021**

**The Second Sunday of Advent**

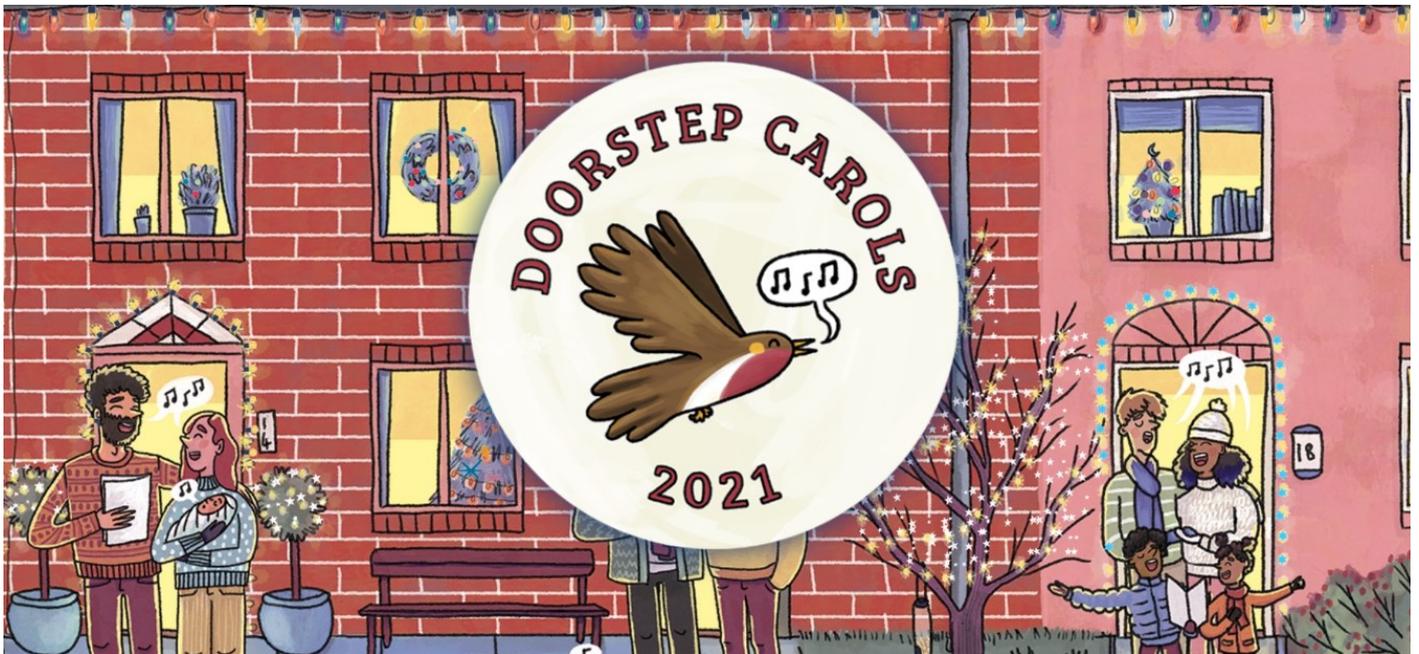
**Church Family Worship w. Communion — 10:00am**

**Christingle Service — 4:00PM**

**Leader:** Rev'd Martin Stephens

**Speaker:** Rev'd Martin Stephens

**Reading:** Luke 3:1-6



**WHEN? 6PM, WEDNESDAY 15TH DECEMBER**

**WHERE? YOUR STREETS!**

**HOW? TUNE IN TO LOCAL RADIO**

Doorstep Carols 2021 takes all that was so popular last year and adds even more sparkle to this nationwide event with cathedral choirs and professional singers ready to lead the nation in song. Working with BBC local radio stations & streaming to schools, hospital wards, care-homes, and communities around the country, no one need feel isolated this Christmas.

**WHY?**

**TO REMIND THE NATION OF THE SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE OF COLLECTIVE MUSIC AND TO SUPPORT CHARITIES THAT RECOGNISE THAT VALUE IN THE WORK THEY DO.**

For more information and resources, visit <https://www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/>

### Nativity 2021

Casting for the 2021 Nativity is now complete. My thanks to all the "volunteers".



I'll email (or, in the case of Hil, carrier-pigeon) the script, cast list, etc. as soon as everything's finalised

I will also bring out of storage the boxes of costumes (such as they are) and let you know where I put them so you can have a rummage, but you might well prefer to sort your own, especially if you want something which fits you.

Further instructions to follow.

There's nothing like being at the last minute!

Lynne

### TLC Update

Just to let you know that there will be no TLC after **Thursday 2nd December** until middle of January 2022. I will let you know the date of the next meeting as soon as we decide.



Alexa

### Charity Card Shop

A reminder that the charity card shop held in Macclesfield Library is open **Monday to Saturday until December 19th**. Most charities are represented including the Children's Society.



**Strict COVID rules are in place.**

## Wednesday Coffee and a Chat



### The Angel Gabriel – again . Luke chapter 1. Verses 26-56

There are many, many paintings which attempt to depict the visit of the angel Gabriel to the young girl, Mary, but this is my favourite. Why? Mainly because of its simplicity and the look on Mary's face. And the way in which it was painted. It was painted in 1898 by the artist Henry O Tanner who was an African American, living in Paris because there he was described as an artist but in his home country of America he was described as a 'negro artist'. He went to Palestine and found a young Jewish girl who was about the same age as Mary would've been and painted her in a modern-day Palestinian home.



It was quite a long reading so Heather started off with 'Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin'. It is always lovely to listen to someone else reading the bible from their own home. Heather's first question was 'How would you feel if an angel suddenly appeared to you?' Well, probably I would be disbelieving at first. We know that Mary was just a young girl, about 14 years old and betrothed to a much older man but he was a kind man. As Helen said, Mary was probably illiterate but she would know the prophecy from Isaiah 7.14. Could she ever have dreamt that she was to be that young woman? We often think of Mary as meek and mild and dressed in blue but she must've been quite a tough cookie really when we consider what she went through. The wonderful song that Mary sang which we now know as The Magnificat relates back to Hannah in the Old Testament, so next week Heather is going to help us discover a little bit of Hannah's story with particular reference to 1 Samuel 2. 1-10. Do join us if you can. The zoom link is on the back page of the newsletter.

Much Love.

Tricia Atherton

**Light up  
your homes!**

**Christmas Crafts Event**

Free Christmas walk-through  
with activities and entertainment  
for all the family.

Create decorations, Christmas  
wreaths and Christingles. Enjoy lights,  
music, films and refreshments.

**Saturday 11th December 1-4pm**

At St. Peter's Church,  
Windmill Street, Macclesfield

[www.stpetersmacc.org](http://www.stpetersmacc.org)

I'm not sure they looked hard enough.



## The Big Give 2021!



Cre8 will be getting together on Christmas Eve for THE BIG GIVE 2021 to distribute food & gifts to households on the Moss Estate and wider across Macclesfield.

We're looking for:

- Volunteers who will be free on Christmas Eve in the evening (timings to be confirmed but likely to be after 5pm). Jobs will include; unloading deliveries of food, sorting through donations, and making up hampers. It's quite physical work but it's good fun!
- Teams to deliver the hampers on the night. You'll need a driver with their own car and helper(s).
- Donations of BRAND NEW gifts for children and adults of all ages. Preferably unwrapped. We are in desperate need of gifts for older teens, suggestions include toiletry sets, gift cards/vouchers, family games, socks!
- Other donations of store cupboard food (pasta, sauces, tins etc) and toiletries, sanitary products, nappies, wipes, baby food etc.

If you'd like to get involved, please get in touch with Katy via [katy.wardle@cre8macclesfield.org](mailto:katy.wardle@cre8macclesfield.org) or call the Cre8 office on 01625 503740 for more information.

### Cricket News

The photograph on the left shows some of the St.Michael's cricket team out for a curry this week to celebrate another enjoyable season!

Well done to all involved!

## What's Best to Donate?

Please find below a helpful list of the essential items we require the public to donate between October and December 2021

*'Thank You for Helping Us to Help Others'*

We help single people, couples and families who are facing a longer crisis. Post free professionals can refer through [foodbank@silklife.co.uk](mailto:foodbank@silklife.co.uk)

### Tinned Foods

Curry  
Tuna  
Salmon  
Sardines  
Fray Bentos Pies  
Macaroni Cheese  
Vegetables  
Potatoes  
Ravioli  
Meatballs  
Spaghetti  
Tomatoes  
Spaghetti Bolognese  
Chicken in Sauce  
Irish Stew  
Fruit  
Rice Pudding  
Custard

### Other Foods

Instant Mash  
Gluten Free Foods  
Jams  
Biscuits  
Sweets & Treats  
Tea & Coffee  
Hot Chocolate  
UHT Milk  
UHT Fruit Juices  
Cordials

### Toiletries

Toilet Rolls  
Shampoo

### Christmas Items

Christmas Cake *(Alcohol Free)*  
Christmas Pudding *(Alcohol Free)*  
Festive Biscuits  
Festive Sweets & Treats  
Festive Gifts



\*\*We are unable to accept fresh and frozen foods\*\*

**foodbank**  
MACCLESFIELD

Thank you



**New!**

You can now DONATE INSTANTLY at:  
<https://www.justgiving.com/silklifechurch>  
Cheques can be made payable to Silklife Church and marked on the reverse 'For Foodbank use'  
Post to: Silklife Church, George Street, Macclesfield SK11 6HS



# Cre8 Christmas Trees

★ Premium Nordmann Fir 5ft-8ft Cut Trees  
★ New this year - Eco 2-3ft Potted Trees! ★

Visit us and choose your tree at St Barnabas Church, Lyme Avenue  
Saturday: 27th Nov, 4th, 11th, 18th Dec 10-5pm

Get in touch to  
reserve your tree!

Local delivery available

5-8ft Cut Trees minimum pricing

Trees: £40

Stands: £20

Eco 2-3ft Potted Trees

minimum pricing

Sale: £30

Hire: £20

All money raised will go to  
employing young people  
and supporting Cre8!

Contact us for more information

Tel: 01625 503740

Email: [info@cre8macclesfield.org](mailto:info@cre8macclesfield.org)

Facebook: @cre8macclesfield



## Flower News



The beautiful flowers in the Worship Area have been graciously given and arranged by Sandie Bevan. Thank you Sandie.

Kitey

## Christmas café closure

**CLOSED**

Please note the café will be closed on  
23rd, 24th, 25th, 30th, 31st Dec  
and 1st Jan

## David Smith's Festive one liners...

Who is Santa's favourite singer?

Elf – is  
Presley

ha! ha!  
ha! ha!



### India Direct – Special Christmas Card/Gift

As you may know, several members of St Michael's congregation support two children's homes in India run by India Direct.

Please help to give one of the children a great Christmas. All you do is to buy a Christmas card which

comes with a stamped-addressed envelope. You sign it, post it and that's it.

Each card costs £12 but this also pays for a present for the child, a new outfit and their special Christmas dinner – great value for your £12!



Please contact Paul Spedding to buy a card(s) ([paulspedding@gmail.com](mailto:paulspedding@gmail.com), Macc 614819 / 07747 622765) by the **8th of December** to ensure it gets to India on time. Please also gift-aid the amount if you can - forms available.

Thank you,

Paul Spedding





You are warmly invited to our  
**Annual Christmas Carol Service**

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 6.30 – 7.30 pm**  
**St Peters Church, Windmill Street,**  
**Macclesfield, SK11 7HS**

Unfortunately due to Covid, we are having to limit numbers  
this year.  
Please **RSVP** to [hello@justdropin.co.uk](mailto:hello@justdropin.co.uk) and join us for a  
magical evening.

### Contemplative Prayer



There will be a meeting on **Tuesday 7th Dec at 7pm**, at  
Bernice's house, 64 Lansdowne Street.

Half an hour's quiet prayer followed by tea and cake.

All welcome.

### Styal Update

Firstly an enormous thank-you for  
your generosity in donating items  
or money for the Styal Prison  
Christmas collection.

An amazing 40(-ish) selection packs  
of chocolates plus **62** A5 notebooks (or the money for purchasing these)  
were donated.

You have been so very kind, and we know for sure that these gifts will  
help to lift the spirits of the recipients - as much from knowing that  
there are people who care about them than from the gift itself, however  
appreciated in its own right.

### Another request...

... **PLEASE PRAY** for all in the prison - prisoners, staff and volunteers -  
who are enduring a more difficult time than usual at the moment as  
Covid cases have escalated and control measures mean that life is  
tougher than ever for everyone.



## Jesus the refugee

David Mayers

As we begin our journey through advent towards the most  
important, life-giving moment in history, the birth of Jesus in a  
manger; I am reminded that at this moment Jesus, Mary and  
Joseph were homeless – there was no room for them in the inn.  
Some time later, to avoid the anger of Herod, the young family  
were forced to flee to Egypt, and so became refugees.

So Jesus, God incarnate, experienced at first hand the trauma of  
upheaval, rejection, isolation and homelessness that is the  
experience of so many people today – in Belarus and Poland, in  
Libya, and on the beaches of, and in the small boats crossing,  
the English Channel.

And I wonder what He would make of the welcome given to  
those refugees by a supposedly “Christian” continent (Europe)  
and most relevantly our own enlightened and liberal nation.  
As the son of a refugee, the words of this poem resonate  
powerfully for me, and I offer them to you as we ponder the  
response of our government and of ourselves;

*“We can all be refugees  
Nobody is safe  
All it takes is a mad leader  
Or no rain to bring forth food  
We can all be refugees  
We can all be told to go  
We can be hated by someone  
For being someone...”*

*“We all came from refugees  
Nobody simply just appeared  
Nobody's here without a struggle  
And why should we live in fear  
Of the weather or the troubles?  
We all came here from somewhere.”*

**(extract from Benjamin Zephaniah's “We Refugees”)**

Many of the refugees desperate to reach Europe are fleeing  
catastrophic changes created by human-made (that is, humans  
in the developed and wealthy western nations) climate change.  
Here is an extract from another poem I have recently read which  
describes so powerfully their experience and our responsibility  
for caring for future generations;

At 11 years old, I watched my neighbour's house  
crumble before my eyes  
The flood waters washed away the earth and clay  
most people used to build their homes  
To see her wade through her home like that,  
to watch her try to salvage what little she had left  
Our country was already locked in turmoil  
and now the earth began to purge us too.  
If you could stop the next tornado from hitting your home,  
the next hurricane from wiping out your city,  
the next drought from starving your people,  
the next lightning strike from ending your life  
wouldn't you?

*The locusts in the Horn of Africa,  
the floods of South Sudan,  
the ice in Chicago,  
the fires in California, Australia.  
The threat of rain that won't stop  
or rest, that won't come.*

*We are at the precipice of possible change  
A turning point that can and will define us.  
Fire or ice, how will the world end?  
I don't know and I don't want to find out  
not in our generation, and not in the next.*

**Extract from Di Baladna, By Emthithal Mahmoud**



# Christmas at St. Michael's

## Sunday 28th November

10:00AM Church Family Worship  
6:30PM Advent Carol Service

## Sunday 5th December

10:00AM Church Family Communion  
4:00PM Christingle Service

## Sunday 12th December

10:00AM Church Family Worship

## Sunday 19th December

10:00AM Nativity Service  
Church open until 2PM for Treacle Market  
6:30PM Carols by Candlelight  
(Free Ticket Required)

## Tuesday 21st December

7:00PM Town Carol Service  
(Free Ticket Required)

## Friday 24th December

4:00PM Crib Service  
(Free Ticket Required)  
11:30PM Midnight Communion

## Saturday 25th December

10:00AM Christmas Family Worship  
with Communion

## Sunday 26th December

10:00AM Church Family Worship  
(Said Service)

Details of how to obtain free tickets can be found via the website <http://www.stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk/>, the newsletter or by contacting the office on 01625 421 984 /clergypa@maccteam.org.uk

\*\*\*\*\*  
★ Spaces for Carols by Candlelight, The Town Carol Service and the Crib Service are limited as a Covid Safety measure. In order to do this, we are asking you to book a free ticket in advance so numbers can be monitored and capped in advance.  
★ Please see the links below which will allow you to book a ticket for each of these services. Tickets are in singles so if you are attending as a couple, family or group, please ensure you select the correct number of tickets required.  
★ We also kindly ask all those attending to wear a face covering if possible in order to try and reduce any spread of Coronavirus.  
★ For Carols by Candlelight— <https://tickets.myiknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NDQwMi0y/t>  
★ For The Town Carol Service— <https://tickets.myiknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NDQwMi0z/t>  
★ For the Crib Service— <https://tickets.myiknowchurch.co.uk/gb/NDQwMi00/t>  
★\*\*\*\*\*

## Local Hostel Donations Needed...

Lorraine from Emerging Futures has asked if we could possibly donate to their two homeless hostels in Macclesfield.

They are looking to brighten up their Christmas and are looking for any Christmas gifts, decorations or chocolates for

their residents. They have nine residents at 1 Glegg Street and 10 residents at Great King Street.

Please contact Lorraine on 07904330505 if you are able to offer any donations.

## EMERGING FUTURES

Lorraine Murray  
Project Worker

M 07904 330 505 T 01625 348225  
E [lorraine.murray@emergingfutures.org.uk](mailto:lorraine.murray@emergingfutures.org.uk)

creating opportunities for change

[www.emergingfutures.org.uk](http://www.emergingfutures.org.uk)

What else could possibly go wrong this year?



Join us for

*Worship*



### St Michael's Worship 5th December 2021

#### The Second Sunday of Advent

Church Family Worship w. Communion — 10:00am:  
live in church / streamed on Youtube

Service Leader: Rev'd Martin Stephens

Talk: Rev'd Martin Stephens

Reading: Luke 3:1-6

**Please use the link below to stream the Service on Youtube. The stream will go live from 10:00am on Sunday or you can catch up later.**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVAzMVqQfoZ9qv0il7rlwEw>

#### Wednesday Morning Discussion

11.00am to 12 noon

Join Zoom meeting [here](#)

Meeting ID: 971 3599 5784

Passcode: 01625



Coffee & Chat



#### Monday HomeGroup

When? 7.30pm - 9pm Monday evenings  
(Fortnightly)

Where? The Rectory, Beech Lane, SK10 2DY

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

#### Thursday Morning Worship 10:30AM (35 minutes)

2nd December —Midweek Morning Communion

9th December —Midweek Morning Prayer

(and then alternate thereafter...)

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

#### Thursday Homegroup

Meeting for Bible study and prayer in various locations.

Please contact David Mayers (420716) or

Eve and David Budgett (431606) for more information.



#### How to contact the Office...



CONTACT US

**Phone**—Landline—01625 421 984

Mobile— 07579 820 265 (on

Thursdays when Porsche is working from home)

**Email**— [clergypa@maccteam.org.uk](mailto:clergypa@maccteam.org.uk) to contact Porsche

- [office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaels-macclesfield.org.uk) to contact Rachel 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 enquiries.

**In Person**—The Office, St Michael's Church, Market Place, Macclesfield, SK10 1DY

**Please note** Porsche is usually in the office on **Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays** between 9:30am-2:30pm. **Wednesday** is her day off and **Thursday** she works from home between the same hours.

Rachel's office hours are not set so please make a prior appointment if you wish to meet with Rachel in person.

#### Compline/Night Prayer

Every Friday

Topic: Night Prayer

Time: 8.30pm every Friday (join from 8.25pm)

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



Email any [prayer requests](#) here

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

