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Open Door

MERRY



CHRISTMAS

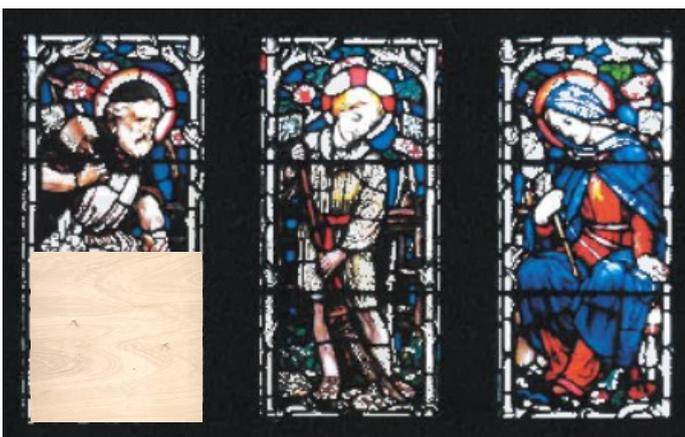
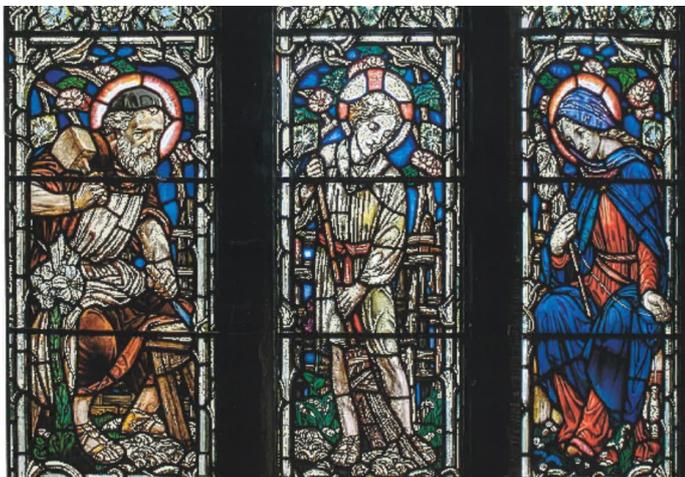
Immanuel, O Immanuel, bowed in awe I worship at Your feet – Graham Kendrick, 1988.

When is your 'deadline' for any further preparations for Christmas? The time of 'if it's not done by now it never will be!?' Whatever your preparations for Christmas, no doubt they will be a bit different from previous years. Maybe you have kept things simpler, since this year has put a lot of human activity into a greater perspective. Or maybe you have gone overboard, choosing to 'go big' with the tinsel and decorations precisely because much of this year has been constrained and (dare I say it?) locked down.

Church has had its fair share of 'differences' this year too, hasn't it? Many of them have seemed negative – not so much getting together; not able to attend lovely big services and celebrations (we're still waiting to pop over to Runcorn to see Karen in her 'new' parish!); not able to sing, etc.

In the Youth Centre the other day I saw again the damage that was done, during the first lockdown, to the stained glass window there. It struck me that its broken state is almost a parable on the year we have experienced.

Do you know the original (intact) image?



It's such a shame because that window depicts an otherwise normal family scene – two adults and a child – doing ordinary tasks: spinning thread, joinery and sweeping up.

(Having said that, despite Macclesfield's silk heritage, when was the last time you spun any thread? ... or actually saw a child sweeping up?!!)

However, this family is no 'average' family. This is the Holy Family: Mary, Joseph and Jesus.

I wonder what their Galilean neighbours would have made of them? Despite the utterly astounding and bewildering birth of Jesus .., despite their time as refugees in Egypt .., when they safely return to Nazareth this family gets on with life, like every other household. This family, made 'Holy' by the presence of Jesus, entered our world, our patterns of life, our troubles and our joys. ('Tears and smiles like us He knew'). This window's intact image speaks of how 'normal' this family were.

This year, though, the window was damaged, the glass was broken. The malicious damage, although unwanted of course, somehow magnifies the wonder of God entering our world as He did.

At this time of year, as we hear once again the account of Jesus' birth – in humble surroundings; under seemingly haphazard arrangements – it gives me a great deal of reassurance that our God was prepared to come into a world that was untidy, sometimes damaged, certainly ordinary most of the time.

As we celebrate this Christmas, aware of the upheaval of 2020, let's look again and think of how Jesus speaks of being here for us in the midst of our 'ordinary' and easy-going life as He is in the midst of the sadness and pain of our hurting and broken lives. Whatever upset or uncertainty we may have encountered (or still be going through) let's choose to worship Jesus ('Immanuel') right where we are.

Have a blessed Christmas.

Mark



Join us for

Sunday Worship



St Michael's Worship 3rd January 2021
Epiphany
ONE merged service this week at 10am:
both from home and in church

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



Service Leader: Martin Bancroft
Talk: Lynne Spedding
Reading: Matthew 2.1-12



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

Wednesday Morning Discussion
11.00am to 12 noon

Join Zoom meeting [here](#)

Meeting ID: 326 496 3258
Passcode: 01625



Join us Christmas Day Service by Zoom

Click on image



No service in church on Sunday 27th December
Church will, however, be open for private prayer from 9.45am to midday



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.



SCAN ME

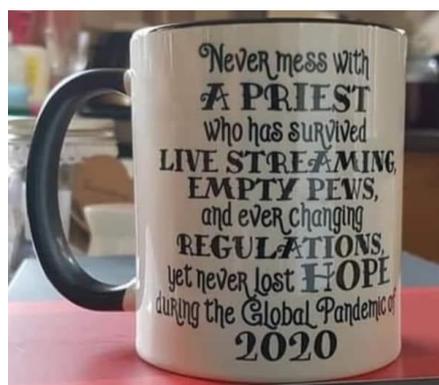
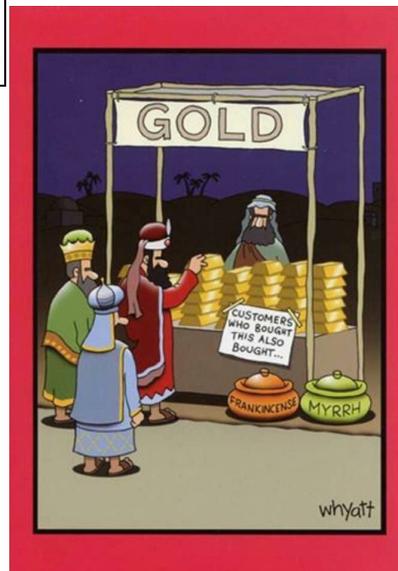
Giving to the work and worship of St Michael's

Click here to donate towards our church's ministry





Christmas dinner 2020



PEOPLE OVER PRESENTS
MUSIC OVER MAYHEM
SPIRIT OVER STRESS
FRIENDSHIP OVER FANCY
SERVICE OVER SANTA
FAMILY OVER FRANTIC
JESUS OVER JEALOUSY
TOGETHERNESS OVER TINSEL
BETTER OVER BUSY

Crib Service

Christmas Eve



Watch from home or at a later time over the Christmas period to suit you,

Click [here](#) to view.

TV & Radio

Christmas Eve

BBC1 Midnight Mass from Clifton Cathedral 11.45pm

BBC Radio 4 11.30pm Midnight Mass from Manchester Cathedral

Christmas Day

BBC1 Christmas Day Service 10am

BBC Radio 4 Christmas Service 9am

- **24 December 11:30pm** - Worship at Home: Midnight Mass with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Dover
- **27 December 9:00am** - Worship at Home for the First Sunday of Christmas with Church Army
- **31 December 9:00am** - Worship at Home: A service with the Archbishop of York
- **3 January 9:00am** - Worship at Home for Epiphany with Embrace the Middle East

Available to view [here](#)

0800 804 8044

DailyHOPE

A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

Professional Telephone Listening Service

The Hope Centre
Registered Charity 1140845

0300 3034 566

Open Every day



READY TO LISTEN!



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Church Office Assistants.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Join Us For Some Warm Food, Music and a Lovely Festive Atmosphere

Christmas Day 2020

On the Cobble Outside St Michael's Church Food will be served from 12pm-2:30pm.

Father Christmas will be with us!

All individuals and families welcome that need some Christmas Food.

STRICT COVID GUIDELINES WILL BE FOLLOWED

Organised by Reach Out and Recover, Macclesfield Lions and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter - Day Saints

Please contact 01625 619106 for further details.