

Hello everyone

I hope this week's newsletter finds you well.

It is now a few weeks since we reopened the church and services are going well. It is a different experience, but it feels calm and reflective and so far we have had very positive feedback from members of our church family who have been attending. At first, we worried about how people would find the new routine, but we needn't have as everyone has been very understanding and patient. It now feels quite normal and less scary. We have also been able to offer baptisms to families and these too have gone well.

It is beginning to feel very autumnal and the nights are drawing in. I have been trying to make the most of any sunshine we have had and taking the time to appreciate the beautiful areas we have in Flixton. Walking the dogs early in the morning on the old golf course is a time when I find I can empty my mind of all the challenges I have to face during the day. I focus on the sound of the birds, the feel of the cold air on my face and the small details of the trees and plants I can see. This can be described as mindfulness and I think about it as connecting meaningfully with God's creation. It restores me and fills me with gratitude for the gifts we have been given. This has been especially important to me, and I'm sure many others, over these past few months. I hope you have also found things which have done the same for you.

When things are uncertain it is easy to be overwhelmed by what we can't control. It is times like these which can both test our faith and also reaffirm it. The next few months will continue to be challenging for us all but St Michael's church will always be there, as it has been for hundreds of years, ready to welcome us in to receive God's love and provide a place of comfort and support. It has helped many generations of people through difficult times and it will be there for us in one form or another during this pandemic.

Take care and stay safe.

God bless you all.

Debbie

Debbie Gould, Churchwarden

Who is like God?

This coming Tuesday is the festival of St Michael; our church's namesake and patron saint. The name 'Michael' means 'Who is like God', and ever since I found that fact out, I have thought that it's a great phrase for us as a congregation - is it a question (Who is like God?), or a comparison (This person, who is like God)?

I think, as coronavirus mitigations continue over the next few months and take us into 2021, this is an important thing for us to keep in mind. Who is like God? Can it be us? Can we be God to our friends, family neighbours and community? I wrote a poem for Michaelmas 2017 which explored this subject - I hope you enjoy reading it - for the first time, or again if you've seen it before:

You placed a hand upon my shoulder.

"Who is like God?", you asked.

"Who else has laid the earth's foundations; a footstool for the heavenly throne?

Who else has built the building blocks of Earth, and life and space, and laid the very corner-stone?

Who else created stars that sang at the first dawning of the heavens?

Who else has measured, and set limits for seas and skies, for dark and light, for time, and for life's very essence?

Who else created life, and everything that will be, and is, and was, from naught?

Who else was, before the universe itself was wrought?

Who else loved and lived and danced before all that e'er began begun?"

"Who else?", I answered, fallen on my knees,

"Sir, surely, prayerfully, there is none."

You placed your hands upon my head.

"Who is like God?", you asked.

"Who else has eyes of burning flame and speaks with the voice of a multitude?

Who else is heaven-born and yet in human form is viewed?

Who else has fought the serpent, and triumphant, threw him down?

Who else has worth, through Heav'n and Earth, to wear the commander's victory crown?

Who else is a heavenly, warrior prince, protector of God's chosen nation?

Who else guards and defends the Church, a sentry standing at his station?

Who else will meet you at your last, and lift you up to life anew?"

"Who else?", I answered, as you stood me up,

"Sir, surely, prayerfully, it is you."

You placed your hand upon my heart.

"Who is like God?", you asked.

"Who else gave up all their power, taking on meek and weak and childish form?

Who else, given infinite infant choice, would choose to be so lowly born?

Who else let blind folk see, let oppressed go free, gave prisoners their cell-door key?

Who else has healed and resurrected?

Who else, despite all he taught, and gave, and loved, was so thoroughly by the world rejected?

Who else, once upon that tree, opened wide his arms and died?

Who else was pierced by thorns and nails and by a spear thrust in his side?

Who else, through all of this, has beaten death with one perfect sacrifice?"

"Who else?", I answered in breaking voice,

"Sir, surely, prayerfully, it is Christ."

You placed a coal upon my lips.

"Who is like God?", you asked.

"Who else will go out into the world, and spread this news of peace and amazing grace?

Who else will stand fast 'gainst fear and hate, and though all around may fall, stay stood in place?

Who else will cry aloud for justice, until there are no more tears or words?

Who else will fashion pruning shears and plows from poisoned spears and bloody swords?

Who else will be God's voice, God's hands, God's feet upon the mountain-tops?

Who else will forgive, and care, and love, until the whole world's spinning stops?

Who else will scream that Black Lives Matter? Who else will bend and take the knee?"

"Who else?", I trembled, rising up,

"Sir, surely, prayerfully, it is I. Send me."

Yours in Christ,

Stuart

(Stuart Durber is one the Readers at St Michael's)

Friday night prayer with Rev Fiona

After taking a summer holiday, Rev Fiona's night prayer services are back and returned last week! They'll be taking place on a weekly basis at 9 p.m. each Friday. You can watch live, and comment if you wish, by visiting our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/StMichaelsFlixton

You can watch last weeks on our [YouTube channel](#).

Harvest at St Michael's Church

Many families are experiencing hardship because of the pandemic and need our help more than ever. Unfortunately, due to the current situation with coronavirus we will not be able to accept food donations as we normally would this Harvest time.

Instead, we will be asking for cash donations in church which will then be passed to the Stretford Foodbank.

You can still donate food items locally at:

- Sainsbury's, Urmston
- ASDA, Trafford Park
- Onestop shop, Winchester Road
- Tesco, Chester Road, Stretford.
- the foodbank warehouse, 133 Barkway Road (open Wednesdays, 10am -2pm)

Alternatively, you could go onto the Stretford Foodbank website to donate at www.stretford.foodbank.org.uk

School admissions during the coronavirus pandemic

A letter has been sent out to the families (we are aware of) who are planning to use their Church service attendance to include within a Supplementary Faith Form to support an application to attend St Michael's School. If you haven't received a copy of this letter, or you'd like to share a copy with a family or friend, it is available on our [website](#).

As previously mentioned in the last newsletter, under the current coronavirus guidance and restrictions, it is not possible to describe our Church services as being publicly accessible and open to anyone to attend, if they so wish. Therefore, during this period attendance forms will not be signed and this will not be done until our services until we are fully re-opened.

Cleaning of St Michael's Church building

As our Church continues to move towards full opening we have started baptisms on the first and third Sundays of each month. In order for this to take place we need to clean the building at the end of the 10.15 a.m. service before the baptism party arrives. The cleaning involves the wiping down of the central pews, the warden's pews at the back, and the door handles with an antibacterial solution. With two people working together it will take about 20-25 minutes.

If you are able to help out with this please contact Lynda Sandbach on lyndasandbach@gmail.com or 07929658347 and we will set up a rota. Thank you.

Latest coronavirus information and how this affects services being held inside St Michael's Church building

Rev Huw has requested that you all regularly 'keep an eye on' the latest advice being issued by The Diocese of Manchester and The Church of England on the current coronavirus situation. You can do this in the following ways:

- [Diocese website](#)
- [Diocese Facebook page](#)
- [Diocese Twitter page](#)
- [Church of England website](#)
- [Church of England Facebook page](#)
- [Church of England Twitter page](#)

Sunday morning services within our Church building

These services are taking place at 10.15 a.m. If you are attending for the first time, please ensure you have read the coronavirus advice and information which is available on the [St Michael's website](#). They are not normal St Michael's Holy Communion services. It will be a shortened service, with Communion offered in one form only, and there will be no singing.

Please make sure you arrive in good time to be guided to your seats. The great news is our congregation is increasing in our building, but unfortunately there is a maximum number of people we can safely accommodate due to the coronavirus restrictions. If this number is reached, sadly, you will not be able to attend the service

Please make a note that our Zoom/Facebook Live service will still be taking place, and will start at 11.30 a.m. (see below).

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity Holy Communion service – 11.30 a.m. on Sunday 27th September

You'll be able to participate in this service via Zoom using your electronic device, mobile phone or landline. This service will also be available to watch via a simultaneous broadcast using Facebook Live, and later on in the day via our YouTube channel. The service is accessible by a PowerPoint presentation which is shared on the screen

This week's hymns are 'Come, ye thankful people, come' and 'Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour'.

Please [subscribe to our full newsletter here](#) to receive the Zoom meeting details you'll need to join us in Zoom.

Online Tea and Coffee Mornings

Sadly, we decided not to continue with our online tea coffee mornings.

Other prayers and reflections

Members of the St Michael's Ministry Team are planning other prayerful, reflective and other meditative activities which we'll make available to you all via our website, social media pages, and YouTube channel. They can be found also found within these dedicated YouTube playlists:

- www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMGlwLyxfaMj7d9sf_Op6dU0PgPxDVDvp
- www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMGlwLyxfaMh_Y19OSR86EESMcVv7_BfQ

Our Online Church

We have already been sharing our services and prayers on our web and social media sites. If you don't know how to find these, please use the links below:

- www.stmichaelsflixton.org
- www.facebook.com/StMichaelsFlixton
- <https://twitter.com/StMichaelsFlix>
- www.instagram.com/stmichaelschurchflixton
- [St Michael's You Tube Channel](#)
(please encourage family and friends to subscribe to this)

Not using social media?

If you aren't a confident user of a computer, laptop, tablet or phone when accessing information on the internet, and you don't use social media, then please [start by visiting](#)

[the Church's website](#). Special sections have been created to help our congregation and the wider Flixton community, and [they can be found in the section called Online Church](#).

In the Online Church section, you can access a [copy of the service booklets](#) we are using during our online services, find links to [online information to help you to stay physically and mentally healthy during this period](#), and a page to [subscribe to receive this newsletter by entering your email address](#). You can in the News section watch [our recorded services and prayers via YouTube](#) option, and also see our social media posts (without having your own accounts) in the [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) page links.

Please continue to support St Michael's Church

Whilst self-isolating or socially distancing, you can still support our beautiful Grade II* listed building and churchyard in a variety of ways, as follows:

1. Online donations can be made at www.stmichaelsflixton.org/support-us
2. Please remember to use easyfundraising every time you shop online! Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate, so you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying. They even have fair trade retailers who work with easyfundraising as well. These donations really help us out, so please sign up if you haven't yet. It's easy and free! You can get started at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmichaelsflix/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_medium=email&utm_content=en-n2
If you want to find out how easyfundraising works, please visit our website page at www.stmichaelsflixton.org/easy-fundraising
3. If you have an Amazon account, please make your purchases using AmazonSmile instead. It is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.co.uk. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to St Michael's Church. A full explanation on how you can 'convert' your existing Amazon account into an AmazonSmile one that supports St Michael's can be found here www.stmichaelsflixton.org/shop
If you do need to set up an AmazonSmile account please click here to get started <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1134769-0>
4. You raise money for us by searching on the web. If you use easysearch as your search engine you can raise £20 a year for St Michael's by completing 10 searches a day. To get started visit <http://stmichaelsflix.easysearch.org.uk/> and save it as one of your internet browser's bookmarks.

Using and setting up Zoom

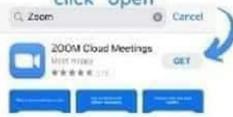
Zoom can be found by visiting their website <https://zoom.us> and clicking on the 'sign up it's free' button'. Once you have completed this process, please follow the steps on the image shown on the next page.

Alternatively, online help and guidance is available via [Zoom](#) or [Gadgets Now](#). Zoom can be used via your computer, tablet, and mobile and landline phones (for audio only), and there is a downloadable app to use as well.

helping you connect on **zoom** using your electronic device

1 10-15 minutes before start of call/event

- open app store
- search for "zoom"
- click "get"
- once loaded click "open"



2 Start a Meeting

Start or join a video meeting on the go.

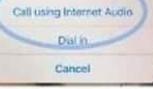


click "join a meeting"

3 enter meeting ID you received when you accepted the invite to this call



4 To hear others please join audio



click "call using internet audio"

5 "Zoom" Would Like to Access the Microphone

For people to hear you during meetings, Zoom needs access to your microphone.

- zoom would like to:
- access microphone: ok
 - send notifications: don't allow
 - access camera: ok

6 join with video



swipe left to see more participants

each device can differ. follow any additional instructions

8 on bottom of screen, mute volume when not speaking



9 click "more" at bottom of screen...

...click "chat" to comment or ask a question

