

CHRISTMAS 2023

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS PARISH CHURCH PELSALL



www.stmichaelspelsall.co.uk

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“St. Michaels Church is maintaining a Christian presence in our community, serving the community, sharing the faith and offering a sanctuary for prayer and worship.”



SERVICES AT ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS PARISH CHURCH

St. Michaels has a planned church calendar of services with additional special services when appropriate. All of our services aim to be flexible to cater for the wide needs of the church and the community.

At present church services take place every Sunday at 10am Holy Communion. Fortnightly services include Wednesday Holy Communion at 10am and Tuesday Morning Prayer at 9am. All are welcome. (Please check the website for dates).



To Contact the Church, the Vicar or one of the Church Wardens please use the information below:

PRIEST IN CHARGE

Rev. Alison M. Morris 01922 477734

LICENSED READER

Mrs A. Myatt 01922 692420

CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs S. Morris 01922 516847

Mr A. Chantler 07870 783614

CHURCH OFFICE

TELEPHONE 01922 685666
(if office closed please leave a message)

CHURCH E-MAIL

stmichaelschurchpelsall@gmail.com

■ **FUNERAL, BAPTISM AND WEDDINGS** are taking place in church as usual.

■ **BAPTISMS** take place once a month at 4.00pm on Sunday afternoons. Bookings include a date for baptism preparation which is offered once a month.

■ **WEDDINGS** are being booked which automatically include dates for marriage preparation and wedding rehearsals.

For those interested in baptism and wedding bookings please see below for contact details or phone the Church Office to speak with the parish administrator - Jill Cumpston. Bookings for 2024/2025 are being taken.



We hope you are enjoying our magazine – if you have anything you would like to include please email:

stmichaelschurchpelsall@gmail.com

and we will do our best to include as many as we can.

Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the church.

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ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, PELSALL

FROM THE VICAR'S DESK

REV. ALISON

'The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen'

Luke 2.20

Are you ready for Christmas? This is a busy time of year – cards to write, presents to buy and wrap. Let alone the decorations, food and the people and family who we maybe only connect with once a year. And it all needs preparation. Shops start preparing for Christmas almost as soon as the Summer holidays are over. The Church also has a particular season set aside for preparing – we call it Advent.

Advent in the Church starts four Sundays before Christmas, so this year it begins on 3rd December. This is far from a tinsel-filled celebration time. It is a time of penitence, of self-denial. This is because the preparation we need as Christians for Christmas is nothing to do with cards or wrapping paper – it is everything to do with being ready to receive Christ into our world, into our lives. For the Christ-mas, or more properly Christ-mass, that we celebrate on 25th December is the coming of God into the world as a human being. It is the birth of Jesus, the only Son of God, as a human baby. Jesus is God's love embodied in flesh. There has never been a time in all of human history, either before or since, when God had reached out in the same way to save his people. The first Christmas is a once and for all event. This is the moment when salvation for humankind came to be so there is much to celebrate.

And so in Advent we prepare as a Church for that time of great celebration, but also as church members, we prepare our hearts to be ready to experience God's love and his forgiveness afresh, as he comes to us in the Christ-child. Advent is a time to have some quiet reflection, to clear away that which clutters up our minds, and to make space within ourselves, for God's love in Christ to come to us in a new and fresh way. 'Quiet', 'space', 'uncluttered', are all words that seem to be almost the opposite of what often happens in the run-up to Christmas. That is where our approach as a Church is in contrast to the rest of our society.

In order to help us find this space, the church spends time in prayer, reflection and silence contemplation. It will be one part of preparing your heart for the coming of Christ into the world and into our lives this Christmas. So we invite you to join us at our **Prayer & Pimms** (Mulled Wine & Mince Pies) on Thursday 30th November at 7.30pm in the church centre.

Another invitation comes from the Archbishop of Canterbury and York who are promoting the Church of England Christmas theme **'Follow the Star and Join the Song.'** The background to this is about the nativity story when the shepherds were astonished to find the night sky filled with singing God's praise. And before long they were singing, too, praising God and sharing their joy at having seen Jesus, the promised Saviour. Centuries later singing is still central to how many of us celebrate Christmas. Around the country people will gather in churches, schools, concert halls, high streets, hospitals and village greens, to hear and sing carols. We are being asked to do the same by simply accepting the invitation to 'Join the Song'. Quite simply this calls you to hear and respond to the angels invitation to gather in the presence of the newborn Jesus. Likewise St. Michael's Church invites you to 'Join the Song' with our full programme of services and events as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

As we gather for worship this Christmas St. Michael's invites you to follow the star, journey to the manger, join the song and come into the presence of Jesus Christ - a relationship which begins at Christmas but lasts for ever.

Every Blessing for Advent and Christmas
Rev. Alison



Lord Jesus, the angels sang as they shared the wonderful news of your birth. Help us to join the song and to follow in your ways of peace and good will this Christmas and always. Amen.

Follow The Star
Join the Song



GIVING – DONATIONS, TIME AND TALENTS

DONATIONS

Once again, our thanks go to the Mothers Union for organising the Macmillan Coffee Morning which this year raised **£725.20**, and to everyone who helped at the event, baked cakes, attended or donated to this very worthy cause.

Our thanks also go to those who gave gifts for our Harvest Festival, all tins and packets of food were donated to our local food bank. All cash gifts have been donated to Water Aid.

TIME AND TALENTS

St Michael's Church is at the heart of the local community in Pelsall. The building is used for worship but also for opportunities to gather and socialise or support during happy or difficult times.

In order to care for St Michaels Church in Pelsall we rely on the support and commitment of the congregation and community to carry out everyday tasks in order that our Church remains open and welcoming for the parish and visitors to the area.

We simply would not be able to care for our Building and surrounding Church Yard without the support, commitment and dedication of voluntary help.

We are fortunate that we have a number of people who give of their time and talents, to keep our Church clean tidy and carry out minor repairs both inside and outside and meet once a month on our Maintenance Morning. There are a number of choices for tasks from Gardening, Cleaning, Repairing of books or simple DIY.

We have a number of volunteers to help with the weekly services by reading prayers or the bible readings, welcoming people when they arrive at Church or making tea and coffee after the service.

Others help with the general running of the Church with administrative tasks and technology.

If you have a little Time to spare or a Talent you feel you could use why not enquire to see how you could help, in return we offer friendly company and a satisfaction of maintaining our Parish Church for the future.

FLOWER FUND

'Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful: they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul.'

Our congregation is very proud of our beautiful parish church as it offers a sanctuary for prayer and worship. Week by week (apart from Advent and Lent) St. Michaels Church is truly blessed with wonderful flower arrangements which enhance our sacred space of worship to the glory of God. Katie Lloyd - Adams and Sue Lloyd plan, design and construct their seasonal creations to match the themes of the church calendar. ***So, thank you to Katie and Sue who give their time, gifts and talents.***

Of course, this is only possible because of people's generosity with our church flower fund. So, we want to say a huge **thank you to you all.**

Please remember that if you wish to have flowers on a specific date for a celebration, birthday or anniversary of a loved one please see Katie or Sue for a chat or alternatively sign up on the flower rota in the porch.



SILVER ECO AWARD WON BY ST. MICHAEL'S ECO WARRIORS!

Congratulation to St. Michael's church who have won the **SILVER** award with A ROCHA UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales. ROCHA's vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully. By doing so the church demonstrates that the gospel is good news for God's earth. It also fulfils the fifth mark of mission which is to strive to safeguard the integrity of

creation and sustain and renews the life of the earth.

A ROCHA offers three levels of Eco Church Award – Bronze, Silver and Gold. Therefore, St. Michael's completed the online survey to see whether we had attained the required standard for the silver award. They also used the supporting resources which are designed to equip our church to express our care for God's world in our worship and teaching; in

how we look after our building and land; in how we engage with our local community and in global campaigns, and in the personal lifestyles of our congregation.

Our Award is confirmed with a certificate and plaque from A ROCHA UK to mark our achievement.

Well done **SILVER** Eco warriors!!



New Year Prayer

**Creator God
at the start
of this New Year
when thoughts turn again
to beginnings
starting afresh
new leaves
and turning skeletons
free from cupboards
be with us
as we gaze into the distance
of fresh mission grounds
of hopes and dreams
opportunities for service
challenges
and uncertainties
Take our fears
and turn them into strengths
Take our lack of faith
and empower us
through the Spirit
who breathes life into this world
whose presence is reflected
in the icy chill
of winter's breath
as well as the comforting warmth
of a summer breeze.
Walk with us into this New Year
of opportunity.**

John Birch – faithandworship.com

Watch out - Prayer Diary for
Winter 2023/24 available on Advent Sunday
Following the popularity of our first Prayer Diary
for autumn we have produced our winter edition.

We hope you find our new resource
both helpful and useful for prayer life
over the winter months.



COME & SUPPORT OUR ANNUAL TOY SERVICE

**SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER
AT 10AM
HOLY COMMUNION**

Bring a new toy in a Christmas bag, have it blessed and place it under the Christmas tree. Supporting the Mayors Charity of 2023 for the Black Country Toy Appeal. The Mayor and Mayoress of Walsall Cllr Christ Towe and Mrs. Louisa Hughes will be attending. Here's how you can take part:

- 1** Buy one or more brand new toys for ages 0-13.
- 2** Place the toy(s) in a brand new gift bag (no need to wrap).
- 3** Bring the toy(s) along to the Toy Service at 10.00am on Sunday 17th December.

If you have any questions, please speak to Stephen and Tracey McCallum who are supporting the youngsters in this exciting venture.

Or please contact the Parish Office:
Telephone. 01922 685666
Email. stmichaelschurchpelsall@gmail.com

***"We at St. Michael's pray that God
may bless each child and family
this Christmas, and may each one
knows that they are loved and
cared for by a loving God."***





Winter Warmers

As the weather gets colder there is nothing better than food designed to warm, energise and nourish us throughout the cold season.

Try these simple dishes on a cold, winters day when only comfort food will do.

MINSTRONE SOUP

Ingredients

- 1 small leek sliced
- ½ large onion
- 1 small carrot sliced
- 1 large celery stick sliced
- 100g cabbage shredded
- 100g frozen green beans
- 200g can tomatoes
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- ½ tsp dried basil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- ½ tsp sugar
- 450 ml stock
- 25g small pasta
- 50g grated cheese

Method

1. Put vegetables in a large pan with herbs, seasoning, sugar and stock
2. Bring to the boil and boil rapidly for 10 mins. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 45 mins to 1 hour.
3. Add pasta and simmer for 10 mins until cooked. Ladle into warm bowls and sprinkle each with cheese.

SAUSAGES WITH WINTER VEGETABLE MASH

(serves 2)

Ingredients

- 4 sausages, regular or reduced-fat
- 2 parsnips
- 2 or 3 medium potatoes
- 175g brussels sprouts or cabbage
- 4 tbsp milk
- 1 tbsp wholegrain mustard

Method

1. Grill the sausages for 10-12 mins, meanwhile peel and chop parsnips and potatoes and cook in boiling water for about 10 mins. Shred the sprouts and add to the pan and cook until all the vegetables are tender.
2. Drain and mash the vegetables, then beat in the milk and mustard with salt and pepper. Serve with the sausages.
3. Alternative: replace the sausages with boneless chicken breasts brushed with a little oil and seasoned with salt and pepper.

MARMALADE BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

(serves 6)

Ingredients

- 8 slices day-old crusty white bread, crusts removed (use leftover fruit bread or croissants if you prefer)
- 50g soft butter
- 4 tbsp orange marmalade, plus 4 tsp
- 300ml milk
- 248ml double cream
- 3 large eggs
- 4 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tbsp whisky (optional)
- Icing sugar for dusting

Method

1. Butter each piece of bread on both sides then spread 4 with the 1 tbsp of marmalade each. Put the remaining bread on top to make 4 marmalade sandwiches. Cut into triangles and place in a large baking dish. Heat oven to 160c/140c fan/gas mark 3.
2. Beat the milk, cream, eggs, sugar and whisky together, then pour over the bread. Leave to soak for 30 mins.
3. Dot the remaining marmalade all over the top of the pudding and dust with icing sugar. Bake for 45 mins to an hour or until puffy and starting to caramelise where the bread breaks out of the custard. Serve hot or warm.

WHAT'S ON AT ST MICHAEL'S

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY DECEMBER 2023 - MARCH 2024

Times and Dates may change, for up-to-date information go to our Facebook page or visit the Events section of the website at: www.stmichaelspelsall.co.uk

REGULAR SERVICES

WEEKLY SERVICES

Holy Communion
Sundays 10.00am

FORTNIGHTLY SERVICES

Holy Communion
Wednesdays 10.00am

Morning Prayer

Tuesdays 9.00am

Please check the web site for up-to-date information on fortnightly services.



SEASONAL SERVICES AND FESTIVALS

DECEMBER 2023

Advent Sunday
Holy Communion and
Lighting of Advent Candle
Sunday 3rd - 10.00am

Christingle Service
in Support of the
Children's Society
Sunday 3rd - 4.00pm

Holy Communion
with Toy Service
(supporting the Black
Country Toy Appeal
with the Mayor of Walsall
Sunday 17th - 10.00am

Service of Nine Lessons
and Carols
Sunday 17th - 6.30pm

Ecumenical Community
Carol Singing by
Memorial Clock in Village
Tuesday 19th - 6.30pm

DECEMBER 2023 CHRISTMAS EVE / ADVENT 4

Holy Communion
Sunday 24th - 10.00am

Crib Service
Sunday 24th - 4.00pm

Midnight Mass
Sunday 24th - 11.15pm

CHRISTMAS DAY
Family Christmas Eucharist
Monday 25th - 10.00am

Holy Communion
1st Sunday of Christmas
Sunday 31st - 10.00am

JANUARY 2024

Holy Communion
for Epiphany
Sunday 7th - 10.00am

Holy Communion for the
start of Week of Prayer
for Christian
Sunday 17th - 10.00am

JANUARY 2024

Joint Prayer for Christian
Unity Service at Pelsall
Methodist Church
Sunday 21st - 6.00pm

Candlemas Service with Holy
Communion (Cluster Service)
Sunday 28th - 6.00pm

FEBRUARY 2024 ASH WEDNESDAY

Holy Communion with
Imposition of Ashes
Wednesday 14th -
10.00am and 7.00pm

MARCH 2024

Mothering Sunday
Holy Communion
Sunday 10th - 10.00am

LENT

Reflection and Study
(More Details Later)
Wednesday 14th Feb -
Thursday 28th March

REGULAR GROUP MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH

Mothers Union
Meetings
2.00pm in Church Centre

THIRD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

LadiesDotCom
Meetings
7.30pm in Church Centre

MONDAYS WEEKLY

Bellringing
7.30pm in the Bell Tower

WEDNESDAYS WEEKLY

St Michael's Singers
7.00pm in Church Centre

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT ST MICHAEL'S

SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2023



CHRISTINGLE FAMILY WORKSHOP

FREE EVENT
Tickets required, please
contact Becky Legg or
Parish Office for availability.
St Michael's Church Hall
2.00pm

SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2023



CANNOCK CHASE CITIDAL BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT

TICKETS £5.00
Available from Rev Alison
or the Parish Office.
St Michael's Church
7.00pm

FRIDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2023



CAROLS & MINCE PIES WITH PELSALL LADIES CHOIR

TICKETS £5.00
Available from Sue Briggs
or the Parish Office.
St Michael's Church
7.30pm



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KNOW YOUR CHURCH

In these pages of 'Know Your Church' we are focusing upon the theme of Vocation. So what is vocation. Quite simply it means what you are called by God to be and do. For some, this is a specific calling to ministry. For others, it could mean serving God through faithful discipleship in everyday life. Everyone has a vocation. Our mission is to be a Christian presence in every community so God calls people to a wide range of ministries, lay and ordained, in our church and in our everyday lives. Youth and children's ministers, evangelists, missionaries, Lay Readers, pioneers, and community workers are generally lay ministers, though some may be ordained. Some roles are the same across the whole church, like Readers, deacons and priests. There also some lay roles which vary by diocese. In our parish St. Michael's has a Lay Reader, Mrs. Alison Myatt. Alison is an excellent and well respected colleague who holds the Bishop's Licence to minister in this parish. So I thought it would be useful and helpful if she shares with you some details about her calling, her vocation and her role in this church whilst also giving thanks to God for her ministry.

Thank you. Rev. Alison

What is a Reader?

A Reader is a lay person who, following a call from God, is trained and licensed by the Anglican Church to teach the faith, enable mission and lead in church and society. Readers are sometimes called LLM's (Licensed Lay Ministers).

What might Readers do?

Readers can perform many roles. Some are more formal in church, whilst other involve going out into the community. Some Readers will robe, others don't. No two Readers will have the same role.

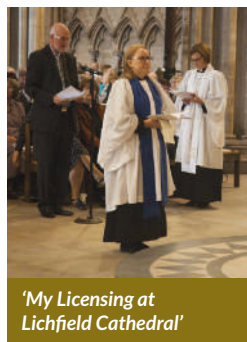
Readers can serve God and their communities in many ways, for example:

- Acting as Minister of the Word at the Eucharist, preaching and leading non-Eucharistic worship
- Working with their incumbent, and others to develop and implement Mission Action Plans
- Working with children and young people in schools and other settings
- Working as chaplains in hospitals, schools and across their communities

- Conducting funerals
- Leading Bible studies and other groups
- Pastoral visiting in homes and residential homes.

Why and how did I become a Reader?

I have been part of Pelsall Church for many years and have done various roles, such as leading lent groups, leading children's groups, reading lessons and many others. About 25 years ago I took part in the Bishop's Certificate course (a theological training course) and felt that God was calling me to serve in some more formal way but, due to circumstances at that time, I didn't take that thought any further. I retired early with a view to taking a more active part in church life but still hadn't thought of being a Reader. However other people around me had seen something in me, that I hadn't recognised, and suggested that I should consider training to be a Reader as I was already doing some of the role. After much prayer and thought, I completed a Pathways Course, as a precursor to applying for Reader training and then was interviewed to discern whether Reading training was the correct way forward for me. I didn't feel that I could do the role and said to God that if that was what he had planned for me he needed to help me. And he did! I then completed a part time course for two years, which was exciting and thought provoking. After training, I was licensed, along with other colleagues, in Lichfield Cathedral. At all stages in my journey with God I have found he has been by my side, enjoying the happy times with me, and supporting me in the hard and difficult times.



'My Licensing at Lichfield Cathedral'



'Helping lead at The Teddy Bears Picnic'

Have I any regrets about being a Reader?

My only regret is that I didn't have the confidence to start my training earlier in my journey with God.

Readers (LLMs) are uniquely equipped to enable Christians to live out their Christian faith in the places where they spend the majority of their time. As people who daily move between the worlds of work, home, social networks and church, Readers (LLMs) can teach the faith and play a part in leadership such that all God's people grow in confident and humble witness to God's kingdom. This ministry involves working together with an incumbent. It can also include pastoral care, funeral ministry, and involvement in many other aspects of leadership in church and society.

Readers are lay people in the Church of England, from all walks of life, who are called by God, theologically trained and licensed by the Church to preach, teach, lead worship and assist in pastoral, evangelistic and liturgical work.

The office of Reader is the only lay ministry in the Church of England which is voluntary, nationally accredited, Episcopally licensed and governed by canon.

Although nationally authorised, the scope of ministry and roles undertaken by Readers differs across the dioceses. In addition, each diocese currently provides its own programme of initial and continued training, which are moderated nationally to ensure consistency in preparing Readers for their office, supporting them and helping to keep them up to date.

Readers are lay people who are called to serve the church on the front line and to work together in a leadership role with clergy and other ministers.

They are sometimes known as Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs). They are trained and licensed by the bishop. There are 100 in the Diocese in Europe and more than 10,000 readers across the Church of England.

Readers are lay people licensed to a ministry recognised across the whole Church of England. Nationally, their ministry is characterised by three strands: preaching and teaching, enabling mission and exercising leadership. They are theologically trained lay people who provide a skilled resource for the church.

Readers are Lay Ministers who exercise their ministry with a Licence or a Permission to Officiate.

The growth in Reader ministry has been one of the great success stories in the Church of England. The office of Reader is over 150 years old and there are currently around 250 Readers active in Lichfield Diocese.

Reader is the only lay ministry that is voluntary, nationally accredited, licensed by a Bishop and governed by Canon.

Readers are trained to be lay theologians, equipped for leadership in its broadest sense within their parishes, communities and society. They are often seen leading worship or preaching wearing a blue scarf. However, Reader ministry is much broader than you might imagine.

There are three areas of specific interest for Readers:

- To be encouraging enablers of mission
- To be inspirational teachers of the faith
- to be influential leaders in church and society.



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COMMUNITY NEWS



In 1946 a group of Pelsall residents set about raising funds to establish a much-needed centre for people to come together following the harsh times of World War.

It wasn't until 1965 that their efforts came to fruition when the local authority purchased a large property and grounds in the village known as The Oaklands. Some of the land was sold for development and is now Oaklands Way, the centre was built at a cost of £35,000 which included a tennis court and bowling green.

Pelsall Community Centre and was placed in trust to Pelsall Community Association. Over time many changes have taken place including an extension to provide a room and bar space called The Oaklands Suite.

Recently refurbishment has taken place on 1965 building. The technical development of the stage area gives Pelsall its own modern theatre capable of staging performances at professional level.

The name change to Pelsall Community and Arts Centre reflects this.

Our latest project is upgrading of our kitchen facility which will allow us to serve the needs of our community better in these times.

'We welcome all to our lovely centre, whether to come to Baby Sensory, enjoy sport, dance or simply to enjoy a live music show.'

MARY'S SAMARITANS

'A project by St Michael and All Angels Pelsall Parish Church'



KITCHENWARE, CUTLERY, CROCKERY, BED LINEN (NOT DUVETS), TOWELS, PLUS CHILDREN'S SCHOOL WEAR AND P.E. KIT ARE AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES IN NEED.

Brownhills Community Association is working in partnership with Pelsall Mothers' Union and St Michael's Church to organise support for local families in need of household items such as kitchenware, cutlery and crockery through our network of support organisations.

If you or somebody you know is in need of support through this project then please give us a call on 01543 452119 or email info@brownhillsca.org.uk



'Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted'.

Matthew 5 v 4

Pastoral care of families who are grieving and bereaved is a top priority at St. Michael's Church, Pelsall. This is provided in a range of ways. Over the year we have the privilege of leading funerals both in church and at the local crematoriums. This is often accompanied with burials in our own church cemetery, internments of ashes in Pelsall or elsewhere in Walsall. We recognise that each service is unique as we try to fulfil the funeral requirements of the family for their loved ones. Afterwards our Pastoral Care Team continue to support you if you wish in the coming weeks and months. In church we pray for the souls of the deceased and their families. Each November we offer a special service of 'Candles of Remembrance and Lament' where families are invited to return for a service of music, prayer and reflection. Candles are lit in memory of their loved ones. It is an honour to be with you on that journey of bereavement.

However, whilst speaking with funeral families we hear anomalies which perhaps needs unpacking. Firstly, it seems that some people think that they can only have a funeral in church if they attend regularly. *This is not true.* St. Michael's Church is the local parish church of Pelsall. It is there for anybody who wishes to have a church funeral regardless of whether they attend regularly

or not. Secondly, some people think that they cannot have a clergy person or lay minister to take a funeral at the crematorium. *This is not true.* Both clergy and lay minister can and do take funerals at the crematorium if requested to do so by the family. Lastly, some families will say something like 'Granddad was not very religious so we can't have a church or a priest, can we?' *This is not true.* Yes, you can! Funerals are not taken on the basis of measuring a person's Christian life. It is an honour to take the funeral of a person, to pray for their soul and to support their families in their time of grief. All funerals are prepared appropriately to reflect and respect that individual life whilst capturing the essence of that person's personality as they enter eternal life.

St. Michaels Parish Church is your local parish church. For 180 years it has provided the solace, peace and comfort for generations of Pelsall families in their time of loss. Thank you for that privilege and honour. Long may that continue to be so for the future generations to come in Pelsall.



Pelsall Hall



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CATCHING UP WITH
THE CONGREGATION

JONATHAN GRICE



CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE?

Born in 1970 in Goscote Lodge Crescent to Tony and Marlene Grice. I was one of three children. I attended Edgar Stammers Primary School and Manor Farm Community School. It was a happy childhood with the family always going on holiday to Norfolk. (I can recall that I would watch Dad spend the first 2 days repairing the car so we could get home)! I have fond memories spending my childhood on Swannies Field playing football and cricket. During my teens age 13 - 18 I was in the Army Cadets from 1983 - 1988. Each Monday and Wednesday I went to T.P. Riley detachment based at the back of the school while most weekends I was camping at Fort Muller on Cannock Chase. The army cadets also took me travelling to Austria and Switzerland. It was while I was in the cadets that I earned my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. My Dad and I proudly went to St. James Palace London to receive the award from Prince Philip. It was a fabulous and memorable day. After school I went to work for British Steel in 1986 as a apprentice maintenance fitter. In 1998 I was made redundant and went to work for Walsall Council.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED WITH ST. MICHAEL'S AND HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

Prior to St. Michael's I attended St. Aidan's Church Forest Estate where Rev. Alison was then a Lay Reader at the time. It was here that we met and romance blossomed which led to our wedding in 2009 at St. Michael's, Pelsall. It was then that I moved to live in Alison's family home. After training to be a priest Rev. Alison was asked to consider being a curate at Pelsall. So in late 2008 I started to attend Pelsall Church in preparation of being there before Alison started in late June 2009.



WHAT DOES A TYPICAL WEEK LOOK LIKE?

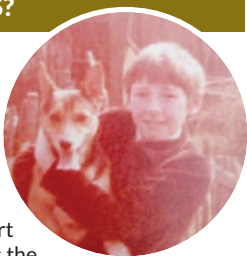
Mad! One is never the same as the other... working 5 days a week as Site Manager at Goldsmith Primary Academy in between school, church and married life my wife and I have to plan to spend time together as we are like passing ships in the night! We enjoy occasional nights out together or we entertain. At the weekend I catch up on household jobs or maintain the church cemetery. Then on Sunday it is church.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

What is that?! There is little spare time with married life and church life. In my earlier life I was a member of the Oak Park Running Club and did Cross Country for 3 years. I was also a member of Solihull Giro where I had 3 holidays abroad cycling in France. I also like to go jogging and walking our dog, Mavis. My wife and I enjoy nights out with friends. I enjoy a night out with best friends Steve and Mick usually in Pelsall. I am also a keen pet lover and have had dogs from an early age (see photo with Timmy). Since marriage we have had dogs, cats, guinea pigs and chickens which keeps me busy. Together we love travelling the world especially with Cunard and Viking cruises.

CAN YOU SHARE YOUR CHRISTIAN JOURNEY WITH US?

My Christian journey began with Granny Nell (Dad's Mom) who went to Coalpool Methodist Chapel. This meant that I attended the annual anniversary dressed up in my best attire - shorts, shirt and bow tie! My Mom was the 'big' church person so all the family went to church. It was her that really introduced me to church and God. After a while Mom decided to take the family to Christ Church, Blakenall Heath. It was here that I was baptised as a baby and later in life was also Confirmed at the age of 12 with Fr. Derek Smith who led the Confirmation Class. In 1999 the family moved to St. Aidan's Church which we enjoyed attending. Mom was in the choir as I was and I helped with the music (there was no organ and I played the CD's). I also helped do maintenance jobs like painting and decorating and the rewiring of the building. I was a member of the DCC and PCC. I really enjoyed helping to organize church and social events. St. Aidan's was a big part of my Christian journey.



WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE THINKING OF COMING TO ST. MICHAEL'S FOR THE FIRST TIME?

St. Michael's is a lively and growing church full of all age groups. It has a strong Christian ethos with super pastoral support for those who need it. I always think that Christianity is to be enjoyed rather than endured and people at St. Michael's believe that. Everyone and everybody is welcome at St. Michael's Church.

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FROM THE REGISTERS

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2023

FUNERALS IN SEPTEMBER

Jean Nickless (CB), Dot Woolley (CC)

FUNERALS IN OCTOBER

Susan Murphy (C@NW),

Donna Merricks (C@NW), June Duckett (SC)

FUNERALS IN NOVEMBER

John Burks (MFC), Patricia Joysey (CB)

Valerie Williams (C&MFC), Joyce Banks (CB)

CODES FOR FUNERALS

Streetly Crematorium (SC), Church and Burial (CB)

Church and Crematorium (CC), Mercia Forest Crematorium (MFC)

ASHES IN NOVEMBER

Eric Connor, Michael Frost

Barbara Frost, Winifred Preston

CONFIRMATIONS

Jackie Gee, Nathan Martin,

Sharon Tompkins, Josie Webb

BAPTISMS IN OCTOBER

Alfie Smith, Eliza Smith, Mali Marple,

Oliver Corbett

BAPTISMS IN NOVEMBER

Reggie Jeffrey

ST MICHAEL'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Jenny Cooper** was 70 on the 23rd October. We wish you a happy birthday and God's blessings in the year ahead from your church family.
- **Jean Davis** celebrated her 80th birthday. Congratulations Jean, love and blessings.
- Many of you may not be aware but **Georgina Armstrong** is an artist. Some of her art work was exhibited at the Pelsall Community Association relaunch of their new name. Well done, fantastic art work Georgina.
- Welcome to another newest member of our church family - **Louie James Proffitt** born 7th September 2023 at 4.23pm weighing 7lb 5oz. Congratulations to James, Michelle and sister Neve.
- Congratulations to **Emily Roberts** who has been chosen to be Nancy in the musical 'Oliver' at St. Michael's Church School. Emily was one of several to be auditioned for the role for the school's Christmas production. Well done and congratulations.

It with sadness that we announce that three of our church congregation have sadly passed away since our last magazine.

- On 15th September **Dot Woolley** died suddenly at home. Dot had not enjoyed the best of health for a while but her death was still a shock.
- On Wednesday 18th October **Val Williams** passed away at home with her family at her side after a long battle with cancer.
- **Joyce Banks** at the age of 94 passed away peacefully on Thursday 26th October in the Manor Hospital.

Our sympathy and condolences to each family at this sad time. All three ladies were members of our congregation for a very long time. They were much loved and will be sorely missed.



May their souls rest in peace and rise in glory.



BOOKING FOR ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH HALL



PLEASE NOTE THAT NEW ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOW IN PLACE FOR ANY ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE BOOKING OF THE HALL.

For more information on booking the hall and availability please contact the Parish Office on **01922 685666** Monday to Thursday 1pm to 3pm or Friday 10am to noon (answerphone outside these hours, we will return your call as soon as possible) or email **stmichaelschurchpelsall@gmail.com**

Diddy Disciples

at St Michael's

'Children are not just
the church of tomorrow.
They are the church
of today as well.'



Christmas Post

Our postman Jude will be helping deliver post to the elderly and housebound. Post box will open on Sunday 26th November.



Toy Service

Sunday 17th December
10.00am

Children and families will bring gifts of new toys to be blessed during the service. These will be passed on as gifts to the Black Country Toy Appeal (Mayors Charity).



ADVANCE NOTICE! Shrove Tuesday

Tuesday 13st February 2024

Pancake race and pancake party.



Christingle Workshop

Saturday 2nd December
2.00pm-4.00pm

In the Church Hall - FREE
Come and make your own
Christingle and learn about its story.
BOOKING REQUIRED*

Christingle Service

Sunday 3rd December
4.00pm

Family service for young and old
to support the Children's Society.

Children's Crib Service

24th December
4.00pm

Gather for the Blessing of the
Christmas Crib suitable for children
and the whole family.

Welcome to the World our Newest Diddy Disciple

Louie James Profit born on
7th September. Congratulations to
Michelle, James and sister Neve.



OUR PAST EVENTS Fabulous Pets Service

thank you for all who attended
the service. Lovely to see your pets
and you of course!

Sparkling and Cracking Bonfire

A wonderful evening of family fun,
fellowship and fireworks.

Diddy Disciples

*For Christingle Workshop please book via Parish Office on 01922 685666.

Our numbers are growing at the 10.00am church service. Pop along to see what we do and to meet others! All welcome or contact the Parish Office on 01922 685666 for more details.



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Direct Cremation: £1,250.00

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Traditional Cremation: £2,895.00

Traditional Burial: £1,995.00

Please contact our office for more information.

Price valid at time of publication but may be subject to change.



The Traditional Cremation Package includes:

Conveyance of your loved one from a local Hospital within working hours

Care of your loved one within our premises until the day of the funeral

Washing and dressing your loved one in their own clothes

Use of our Chapel of Rest

Arranging the funeral including all administration

The Wrexham coffin

Jaguar hearse

One Jaguar limousine

Funeral Director to oversee the funeral

Crematorium fee

Doctors fee for medical cremation papers

Officiant fee

To discuss any of our funeral packages please don't hesitate to contact us on 01922 493131.