



**GROWING TOGETHER**



“NORMAL TRANSMISSION WILL BE RESUMED SHORTLY”

**ANNOUNCEMENT FROM St MICHAELS**

The interviews for the new Vicar of St Michael and All Angels took place in early January. The Churchwardens would like to announce that they have made an appointment, and they have appointed Revd Karen Brady to the post. She is a Curate at St Michael and All Angels Church, Macclesfield which is part of a Team Ministry. There are some formalities that we need to go through first, before she can be licensed. So we will keep you informed when she will be licensed as our Vicar.

Colin Keam & Rosemary Lunt  
Churchwardens St Michael and All Angels

**GROWING TOGETHER**

**In GROWING TOGETHER:  
CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY  
PUZZLE PAGE**

**WHAT'S ON IN CHURCH**

**HUMOUR  
CELEBRATIONS**

# FEBRUARY CHURCH SERVICES

## Sunday 2nd February (CANDLEMAS)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Morning Celebration  
12.00noon **Café Church**



## Wednesday 5th February

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 9th February (3rd Sunday before Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 12th February

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 16th February (2nd Sunday before Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 19th February

10.00am Holy Communion



## Sunday 23rd February (Sunday next before Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion



## Wednesday 26th February (ASH WEDNESDAY)

10.00am Holy Communion



Children are extremely welcome at all our services. Sunday Club meets in the Meeting Room during the service for all children. If you have a younger child who gets restless or cries during the service please **DO NOT**

**WORRY**—it's only natural. There are toys for the young child in the Meeting Room.

### The Three protect thee

The God of life to encompass thee,  
Loving Christ encompass lovingly,  
The Holy Ghost encompasser be  
Cherishing, aid, enfolding to send,  
To defend.

The Three be about thy head to stand,  
And the Three be about thy breast,  
The Three about thy body at hand  
For each day, for each night of rest,  
The Trinity compassing strong  
Thy life long.

*From Poems of the Western Highlanders*

### Places of Welcome

The Church is open every Thursday to anyone seeking to have some quiet time or to have some refreshment, 10.00am to 12.30pm.

**So come along.**



### Lot's wife

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, 'My Mummy looked back once, while she was driving,' he said, 'and she turned into a telephone pole!'

### Trumpets

On Mount Sinai a trumpet sounds  
As Moses ascends to meet God alone,  
He's given commandments to bring to the people  
Written down on tablets of stone.

Joshua leads the armies of God,  
The trumpets blast as they march around,  
Impenetrable though the city seems  
Jericho's walls come tumbling down.

Another trumpet is waiting to sound  
When we meet our Saviour face to face,  
With awe and wonder we think of that day  
Of standing before Him – the God of all grace.  
*By Megan Carter*

### BIBLE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY

#### 2nd February

Malachi 3: 1-5  
Luke 2: 22-40



#### 16th February

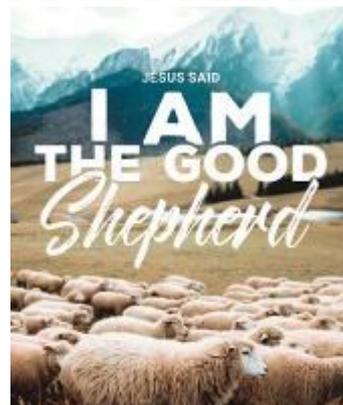
Romans 8.18-25  
Matthew 6.25-34

#### 9th February

1 Corinthians 2.1-12  
Matthew 5.13-20

#### 23rd February

2 Peter 1.16-21  
Matthew 17.1-9



# CHURCH SERVICES FOR MARCH

## Sunday 1st March (1st Sunday of Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Morning Celebration  
**12.00noon Café Church**

## Wednesday 4th March

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 8th March (2nd Sunday of Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 11th March

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 15th March (3rd Sunday of Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 18th March

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 22nd March (MOTHERING SUNDAY)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 25th March

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 29th March (5th Sunday of Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion



## Best time for stress? Middle of the day

If you have a stressful confrontation coming up, such as a row with your partner, or at work, try and have it in the middle of the day. That is the time when your body is functioning most efficiently, and when you can best cope with stress. Both early morning and late evening are never good times for stress, warns one expert on the human body's circadian rhythm. Early morning is when the cardiovascular system is the most responsive and reactive to stress, which is why more serious heart attacks tend to take place in the morning. And of course, stress late at night will badly affect your ability to sleep.

## Activities at St Michael's Church

### St Michael's Maintenance Appeal Committee

Tea & Toast in the Meeting Room

Next Tea & Toast is on 7th March & 4th April

@ 10.00am to 12.00 noon Admission: £2.00

### Crafters Group

Crafters Group meets in the Meeting

Room every Tuesday from 10.00am to 12noon.

Everyone is welcome, including new members

### Art Club

Next meeting of the Art Club is on Saturday

25th January 2020 at 10.00am-12.00noon.

And future dates are 22nd February and 28th March.

Please come along and learn how to paint and draw.

We might find another Van Gogh.

### VML Wellbeing

An informal group that meets on a Thursday

afternoon in the Meeting Room from 1.00pm-3.00pm

doing crafts, having a natter and learning new songs.  
Also Mondays VML's Little Treasures Tots Group

from 9.00am-10.30am. In term time.

## Stressful for men

Men's stress levels increase when their partner starts earning more than 40 per cent of the household income. Their stress levels are also high when the man is the sole earner. "Neither of the extreme scenarios is good for male mental health," according to Dr Joana Syrda, a researcher at Bath University. It recently published a study in the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

It seems that social pressure on men to be the 'male breadwinner' is a factor. "For generations, in many cultures, there has been an expectation that men will be the primary income provider," Dr Syrda says. And so, "faced with a change in this outcome... men are likely to experience high levels of psychological distress."

The research team now plans to look at women's psychological reactions to mismatched earnings. Certainly, when the financial contributions to a home are too 'lop-sided' in either direction, it affects the 'balance of power' in the relationship. Who gets to decide what money is saved, and how the money is spent, and other key decisions?

## Church Action on Poverty Sunday – 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Church Action on Poverty Sunday takes place later this month. Many of us want to help the poor, but the challenges are huge. ‘Good News for the poor’ - that was what Jesus promised – and the crowd flocked to hear it. But He didn’t promise to abolish poverty. ‘The poor you always have with you’, He said, and everything we have seen since has proved that He was right. Two thousand years, many political promises and different regimes, and we still have poor people, often living alongside the conspicuously rich. ‘Good news for the poor’? Not, it appears, in any political or social revolution. Sadly, we have yet to abolish poverty. But followers of Jesus have been in the forefront of those who have tried to mitigate its consequences. Churches and various individual Christians have been prime movers in the amazing development of Food Banks. The Bradford-based charity ‘Christians against Poverty’ has helped literally tens of thousands of people out of debt. Night shelters for the homeless, schools in the world’s poorest lands and support for drug addicts these are on the agenda of every Church and that is good news for the poor. There is so much more to be done, of course, if poverty is ever to be eliminated. But not being able to do it all mustn’t stop us doing what we can.

## Keeping love going

Here is some good news: the divorce rate has fallen to the lowest level for nearly 50 years. It seems that the many children of divorce have in their turn decided to stick at their marriage, and thus avoid the trauma of splitting up. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) data shows that divorce has decreased to the lowest level since 1971. That means that couples who married five years ago have experienced 50 per cent fewer divorces than couples who married in the late Eighties. Family lawyers believe the reduction in divorce is due to the children of divorce wanting to protect their own children from the financial pressures and emotional devastation that a split family can bring.

## Men and doctors

Men do not like doctors. In fact, eight out of ten men would prefer to endure an illness rather than seek help from their GP. (This will not surprise many wives.) Despite recent campaigns urging them to take their health seriously, a survey by BUPA has found that 48 per cent of men would only go to the doctor if they absolutely had to. And 39 per cent of men would actually let the pain become unbearable, before they sought any help.



"Ready when you are, George..."

## When education for ALL children arrived

150 years ago, on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1870, the Elementary Education Act – commonly known as Forster’s Education Act – was introduced in England and Wales. It provided a framework for the education of all children between five and 13. Many people objected to the concept of universal education, including the upper classes, who wanted to keep educational privileges for themselves, and employers who feared losing cheap labour. But there was also a feeling that the newly enfranchised classes should be better educated. The churches in general had doubts about the Act, worrying that they would lose their influence on young people. The Earl of Shaftesbury, 20 years earlier, had feared national education would be “a death warrant to the teaching of the evangelical religion”. Before 1870, elementary education was provided largely by the Church of England’s National Society and the nonconformist British and Foreign School Society. In fact, in the 15 years after the Act, the number of Church of England schools rose from 6,382 to 11,864, and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century church schools are still flourishing. After the Act, however, the state did become increasingly involved with further reforms: and after 1880 attendance was made compulsory for children until they were 12.



## How older people can boost brain power

If you are a pensioner, and you spend two hours a day learning new skills, you can reverse any cognitive decline by the equivalent of up to 30 years. That is the conclusion of researchers at the University of California Riverside. They found that pensioners who practised a new language, or attended drawing classes, boosted their memory and reasoning. The good effect on 58 to 86-year-olds could be seen within six weeks. Furthermore, it was found that the older people could also maintain their new abilities while learning multiple new skills. As one scientist explained: “The message is older adults can learn multiple new skills at the same time, and doing so may improve their cognitive functioning.”

## 11 February – Caedmon: the poetic shepherd

Caedmon (d 680) should be the patron saint of all farmers who enjoy humming to themselves as they do the lambing this Spring. For Caedmon of Whitby was a bit like David in the Bible – he grew up as a simple herdsman out on the hills who enjoyed composing songs and poetry for himself while watching his flocks. Like David, Caedmon also had a keen awareness of God, and used his creative gift to express his devotion and love for his Creator. When his poems and songs became known to others, they liked them so much that soon Caedmon left his sheep in order to become a monk. This gave him time to compose many poems based on the stories in the Bible: from Creation and Genesis, to the Exodus and entry of the Jews into the promised land, to the birth, passion and resurrection of Christ, and finally to the future Last Judgement, Heaven, and Hell. Then one day Caedmon suddenly announced that he knew he was going to die soon. And so he did, in a state of charity and peace with everyone. There was great mourning. Sadly, only nine lines of his poetry have survived, and we have the great historian, Bede, to thank for even that much. But in his time, Caedmon's gift of telling Christian stories in the vernacular must have been of great value in evangelising the common folk.

## Lent Fasting

This month sees the start of Lent, the season of penitence, self-examination and fasting running up to Easter. Fasting can be a neglected discipline, but it plays an important part in the Christian life. Jesus began His earthly ministry by fasting in the wilderness for 40 days and He taught His disciples to fast (i.e. not *if* but *'when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen.'* (Matthew 6:17,18).

### Why Fast?

Firstly, giving up something in my life underlines my desire to put God first in my life. Secondly, fasting shows me how much I depend on things other than God in my life, so I can surrender my idols to Him. Thirdly, fasting encourages me to have a deeper hunger and dependency for God in my life. Therefore, fasting gives me space to humbly focus on God for His strength, provision, and wisdom and results in a more intimate relationship with Christ. It also enables the Holy Spirit to reveal my true spiritual condition, leading to brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life, with a heart more attentive to God.

### How can I fast?

Usually fasting involves missing one or two meals during the day, although some can't abstain from food for medical reasons. It might also include abstaining or limiting the time I give to television, alcohol or social media. However, Lent can also be a time to embrace new spiritual disciplines e.g. joining a study group, 'random acts of kindness', or giving more time to prayer and Bible study. Whatever you do, make Lent count this year!

*'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.'* (Matthew 5:6).



## Runcorn Foodbank

At the end of November last year the new foodbank warehouse in Russell road was officially opened by the Mayor of Halton, Councillor Margaret Horabin. The photos show some of the volunteers who work there and those who distribute the food at various points in Runcorn .



## Never underestimate a tortoise

They may be asleep at the moment, but tortoises are not the stay-at-homes couch potatoes that you may think they are.



In fact, so many have been leaving their homes to go on walk-about, that now the RSPCA is advising that they be microchipped. The charity rescued almost 1,000 tortoises last year. Experts advise that once Spring and Summer comes, tortoises will be able to climb, dig, and push their slow but determined way through barriers. They should be microchipped and kept in a secure enclosure. "Tortoises are actually quite active and can move at quite a pace when they want to."

# Café Church

Informal Service for all ages

Coffee Tea  
Cake  
Music  
Discussion  
Prayer  
Crafts

Taste and  
See

You are invited to our Café Church Service at St Michael and All Angels Church, Greenway Road Runcorn

Sunday  
1st March &  
5th April  
12.00noon to 1.30pm



## VML Wellbeing Group

VML runs a Toddlers Group in the Meeting Room. So if you know anyone who wants to join please contact Robbie Littler on **07718133018**

**Another up coming show at the Brindley for VML. Go along and support the show.**

## We welcomed the following into the Church Family through Baptism



We welcomed one child during the month of January **Finlay Thomas Highton** (January 26th) Please pray for Finlay that he may grow up to love and follow Christ. Please pray for his parents and Godparents, and pray that they may seek to know Christ and to worship regularly.

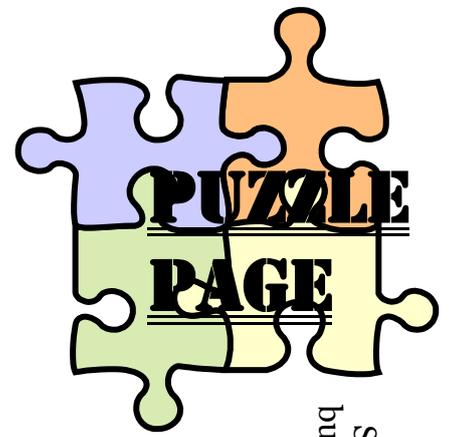
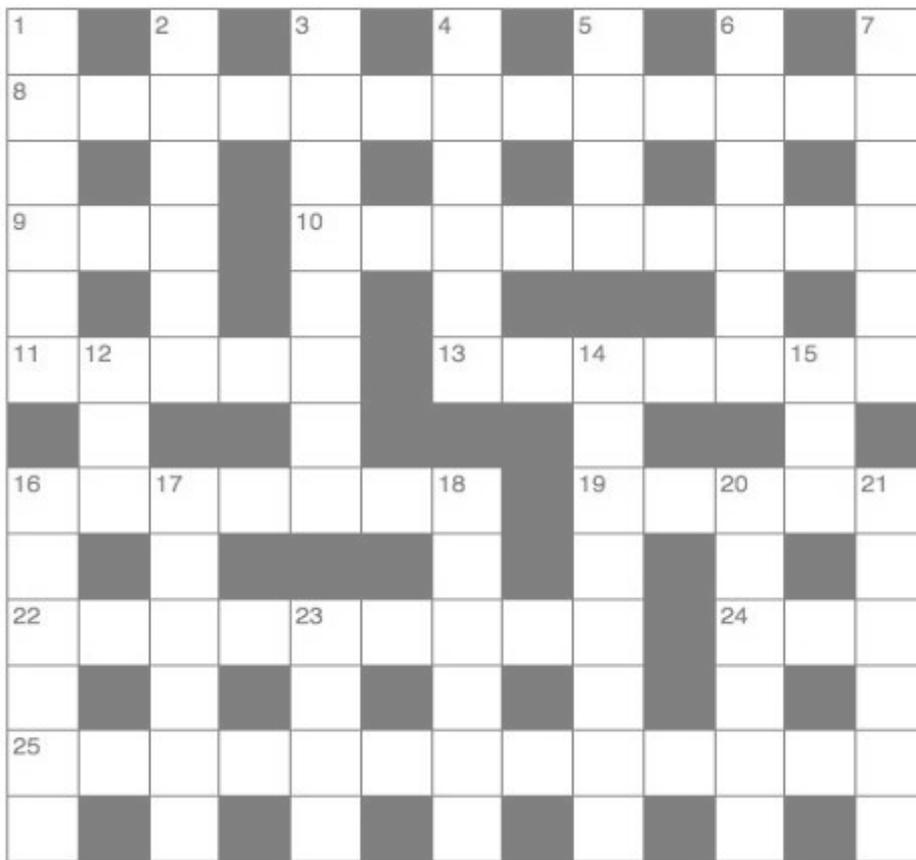


## Hedges

A hedge around your property is good for you. A recent study has found that the humble hedge, when in full leaf, can cut air pollution around it by up to half. A recent study by the University of Guildford measured traffic pollutants on either side of a hedge in a park on the road to Guildford. The survey found that the level of particulate pollutions – those tiny particles of soot and other matter that cause illness – was cut by half after the hedge reached full leaf in April. So – if your home is along a busy road, grow a hedge!

## Psalm 23 Garden coming to RHS Chelsea

The Bible Society has announced that “We’re absolutely thrilled to be working with award-winning garden designer Sarah Eberle, to bring Psalm 23 to life at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May 2020!” The Psalm 23 Garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2020, designed by Sarah Eberle, will offer visitors the chance “to stop, reflect, and feel refreshed”. The Bible Society said: “This powerful psalm, with its visual imagery of green pastures, still waters and the valley of the shadow of death, just cries out to be turned into a garden. “We hope you’ll love it. And after the Chelsea Flower Show, the garden will find a permanent home at the Winchester Hospice in Hampshire, where it will be a blessing to patients and families.” The Bible Society says it is also hoping that people will “join us in creating community gardens across the country inspired by the Psalm 23 Garden. You can do this outside your office, in your school grounds, or in your churchyard. Let’s get gardening!”



**CROSSWORD CHALLENGE**

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by February 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

**Across**

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)
- 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)
- 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)
- 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)
- 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)
- 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)
- 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)
- 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)
- 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1)
- 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

**Down**

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
- 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
- 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)



**December/January  
Crossword answer**

**ROLL OF HONOUR**

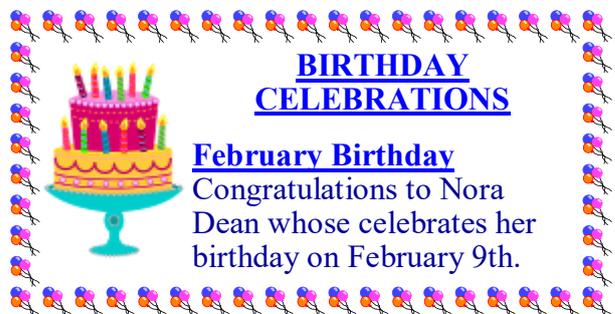
**Congratulations  
to  
Jim & Shelagh Goffin,  
Stan & Wendy Sefton  
on completing the  
December/January  
crossword**



February  
2020



Today's hymns are based on last week's trend in petrol prices...



### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

#### February Birthday

Congratulations to Nora Dean whose celebrates her birthday on February 9th.

### ARTICLES

News or articles for the next edition of Growing Together should be given to Colin Keam by February 22nd. I am looking for articles for the newsletter like people's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, praying for people who are sick or in hospital or any interesting or funny anecdotes.

**THANK YOU**

### INFORMATION

**Until the vicar is licensed, any enquiries to the Churchwardens please. See below for details**

#### Churchwardens

Colin Keam 01928 576293

Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

**e-mail: [warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk](mailto:warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk)**

**If you want to book a wedding, baptism or funeral please phone this number  
07722470940  
and ask for Robbie**



## *Please Pray*



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

**Romy & Linda Tiongco**

**José Colley**

**Peggy Hase**

**Liz Adams**

**Graham & Nicola Aylett**

**Norah Gamon**

**Maureen Holden**

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you please let the Vicar know. Or if you would like the Pastoral Care Team to visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

....and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

**Edward Ellis**

**Peter Worrall**

**Velma Woodward**

### All Saints Parish Church Runcorn Bell Restoration Appeal

The bellringers of Runcorn are appealing for your help in the full restoration of the eight 1851-cast bells. The overhaul will cost around **£75,000**.

The ringers have already raised (and spent!) nearly £2000 on new pulleys, but this will only help in the short term. The bells will fall silent in just a few years if they are not rehung by specialists, so your support would be much appreciated.

#### Contact Us

If you would like more information or to make a donation, please contact either:

**Rich Westman** (Ringing Master):  
27 Dale Street, Runcorn, WA7 5PF  
[rich.westman@gmail.com](mailto:rich.westman@gmail.com),

**Bill Allman** (Tower Captain)  
10 Curzon Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PG



(Please make cheques payable to Runcorn Parish Bell Ringers)

Or "Like" us on Facebook  
at [www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration](http://www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration)