

Hi everyone, I hope Lent is treating you all well, I hope Covid is not disrupting your lives too much, and I hope you are able to spread some hope yourselves for a new beginning after Easter!

After his baptism, Jesus was driven into a wilderness. Here, he was detached from the people he knew, his worldly comforts, and he was exposed to temptation. Some of us attempt experiencing that path for ourselves through Lent (I've given up bread!).

However, the whole of humanity seems to have experienced an emotional wilderness and discomfort for the last two years with Covid, and now with increased anxiety as we watch the conflict and suffering in Ukraine unfold. Terrifyingly, I believe we can expect to be yearning for peace far beyond Easter.

Throughout this though, each of us should acknowledge that our personal difficulties and the burdens we carry remain legitimate. We may deny ourselves of a comfort in some way during Lent, but we should not deny the existing pain that we may have carried into Lent. If it is real to us, then the brokenness that we might feel is still real to Christ.

We should still pray and seek our own release and renewal in Christ.

We should seek help if we need it.

We should each remain aware of the healing we can bring to our neighbour in our community.

As a congregation, we should continue to stimulate hope, draw people to the renewal that Easter promises, and engage in transforming our community this Spring and Summer.

Look up, consider the path before us, and look ahead in hope. Celebrate every person who finds release or victory over darkness. Whether it is escape from Ukraine, from lockdown, from illness, or just from a bad day and into a smile. However big or small it may seem, it is real to us and to them, and it is the work of Christ Jesus.

God bless and Kia Kaha (be strong),

Vaughan

Vaughan Reeves (Reader)

- **LATEST NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Easter services

Palm Sunday - Sunday 10th April at 10.15 a.m.

Sung Eucharist with Blessing of Oils and Renewal of Vows – Monday 11th April at 10.30 a.m., Manchester Cathedral and online

Healing Service – Tuesday 12th April at 7.30 p.m.

Holy Communion – Thursday 14th April at 10.15 a.m.

Maundy Thursday – Thursday 14th April at 7.30 p.m.

Good Friday Family Service – Friday 15th April at 10.15 a.m.

An hour at the cross, a quiet service inside our church building – Friday 15th April at 2 p.m.

Easter Vigil – Saturday 16th April at 8 p.m.

Easter Day Holy Communion – Sunday 17th April at 10.15 a.m.

Updated rota for Thursday morning Holy Communion services

1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 10.30 a.m. at St John's, Flixton

2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 10.15 a.m. at St Michael's, Flixton

5th Thursday of the month at 10.30 a.m. St John's, Flixton

Flixton Community Choir

The choir will start rehearsing inside our church building on Tuesday evenings between 7.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. on Tuesday 26th April. They will then meet on 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th May; 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th June; and 5th and 12th July. Past members and anyone new who would like to join them will be welcomed.

Walking Club

Our Walking Club meets on the first Wednesday of the month inside our church building at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome to join us, whatever your level of mobility. There will be a shorter and longer walk on offer. Initially these will be walks from church, but hopefully in time we will go further afield in cars.

Pub Church

Pub Church takes place on the first Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. The Church Inn pub is ideally located next door to St Michael's Church. Pub Church is a place to have a drink with friends (whether they be old or new), chat, have a laugh, and share in each other's fellowship.

- **ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH SERVICES**

Family Friendly services

Our Family Friendly services have restarted again on Mondays during term time only. They begin at 3.40 p.m. to allow as many people to attend following the end of the school day. The church doors will be open from 3.25 p.m. onwards.

Family Praise services

Our monthly Family Praise services are held inside our church building on the first Sunday of the month at 4 p.m.

Sunday School

Parents and children are all welcome to attend starting at 10 a.m. in Church Croft, during term time only. It is an hour's worth of learning and activities which are linked to the services and readings taking place during the main Parish Communion service in Church. Each session lasts for approximately 60 minutes, and the children are brought back into the church building for the end of the service. The parents/guardians of younger children are welcome to stay with their children for the first few weeks of their attendance or until they are settled.

Our Sunday School teachers plan and deliver the lessons each week. They are DBS checked by the Diocese of Manchester. If you are interested in volunteering please speak to a member of the Sunday School team.

Friday night prayer with Rev Fiona

Rev Fiona's night prayer services are 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.

- **GIVING AND FUNDRAISING**

Please continue to support St Michael's Church

Thank you all so much, as you have currently:

- Donated over £3,200 via your online donations
- Raised over £220 from your online shopping (via easyfundraising and AmazonSmile)

Please 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.