

Services this week

Advent: Sunday Cycle Year A

Services/Events are at St Michael's unless stated otherwise

St Michael's open: Monday-Friday 8.30 am - 4 pm

St Mary's open: Tuesday 10 am - 1 pm (not Jan-Feb)

SUNDAY (14)	Mass with Hymns (St Peter)	9 am
ADVENT 3	Sung Mass	10.30 am
Monday (15)	Morning Prayer and Rosary	8.45 am
Feria		
Tuesday (16)	Morning Prayer	8.45 am
Feria		
Wednesday (17)	Morning Prayer	8.45 am
O Sapiientia		
Thursday (18)	Morning Prayer	8.45 am
O Adonai	Mass	11 am
Friday (19)	Morning Prayer	8.45 am
O Radix Jesse		
	Morning Prayer	8.45 am
Saturday (20)	Mass	9.30 am
O Clavis David	The Boundstone Chorus	
	Christmas Celebration	7.30 pm
SUNDAY (21)	Mass with Hymns (St Mary)	9 am
ADVENT 4	Sung Mass	10.30 am
O Oriens		

Notices

Thanks for Christmas Tree Festival

Thank you to everyone who supported the Christmas Tree Festival in any way. The total raised (including the Grand Draw) is £1698.

Have a tea or coffee on Michael

Michael Jones has sponsored tea and coffee at St Michael's today in thanksgiving for his recent Confirmation.

Gwen's Open House for Christmas

All welcome to 49 Sompting Road on Monday 15 December from 10 am - 6 pm to see Gwen's amazing Christmas decorations. Donations to the church.

Evergreen - Wednesday 17 December

Gather around the piano with Aedan for a Christmas Time Sing Song, starting at 2 pm in the Church Hall. Lots of fun and refreshments for just £2pp.

There will be no...

- Memory Lane Café in December
- St Peter's Social Afternoon in January

Carols at Coombes - Saturday 20 December, 3 pm

A service with the Sinfonia of Arun Wind Quintet featuring well-loved carols and readings that proclaim the birth of Jesus. Admission free - retiring collection.

All welcome to Christmas services

Christmas Eve: Candlelight Crib Service 6 pm; Early 'Midnight'

Mass 8 pm (St Peter); Midnight Mass 11.15 pm

Christmas Day: Mass with Carols 10.30 am

Christmas shopping online? Support your church!

Go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stpeterssompting/ (St Peter), stmichaelallangelspcc/ (St Michael) or stmaryssompting/ (St Mary) to sign up.

Two opportunities to sponsor a candle - only £5

New sheets are now available to sponsor the candle by the Blessed Sacrament or the candle by the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary - for a special prayer request, for a cause / charity / society, in memory of a loved one, or to mark an important date. The sheets cover dates up until June 2026.

Curate: Father Ben Scott

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Parish Administrator: Heather Crookes

01903 750286 office@chalkspringchurches.org

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SUNDAY BULLETIN

Bulletin No. 429

14 December 2025

St Michael and All Angels, Lancing
St Mary the Virgin, Sompting
St Peter the Apostle, Sompting

Third Sunday of Advent



Welcome to our worship today.

9 am Celebrant and Preacher: Canon Michael Hart

10.30 am Celebrant and Preacher: Father Ben Scott

Father David Pike is the celebrant at St James the Less

Refreshments are available after both services

For your prayers...

SICK OR IN NEED: Olive Leonard, Richard Thompson, Patricia Barrett, Ben Stanton, # David Peskett and Ben Hollins # (#= due for renewal)

THE DEPARTED COMMEMORATED THIS WEEK: Fred Putland, Bill Digweed, Emily Barnes, Doreen Ayling and Sidney Littlejohn

PARISH: Commerce Way, Peter Road, Western Road

THE LAMP BURNING BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT is sponsored this week for spiritual and numerical growth in the Church

THE LAMP BURNING BY THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY STATUE is sponsored this week for Audrey Wall RIP

Names of the sick are included on the Bulletin for 4 weeks after which they have to be renewed in writing.

Events this week

Full list of services on the back page

Services/Events are at St Michael's unless stated otherwise

- Mon: Gwen's Christmas Open House 10 am - 6 pm; Baby Boomers Christmas Party from 7.15 pm
- Tues: Christmas Story and Carols meet at reception 2.15 pm (Drumconner); The Globe Primary Carols (Year 4) 5 pm
- Wed: Evergreen 2 pm; The Globe Primary Carols (Years 2 and 3) 5 pm
- Thur: Mass 11 am; Seaside Primary School Carols 7 pm
- Sat: Mass 9.30 am Christmas Celebration with The Boundstone Chorus 7.30 pm
- Sun: Advent 4: Mass with Hymns 9 am (St Mary); Sung Mass 10.30 am; Carols with Sinfonia of Arun Quintet 3 pm (Coombes)

All items for inclusion in next Sunday Bulletin, in writing, to Ian Tout by Wednesday 12 noon.
Please send emails to stmichaelslancing@gmail.com

www.chalkspringchurches.org

Calendar

DECEMBER

Sunday 14 **Advent 3:** Services at usual times;
 Monday 15 Gwen's Christmas Open House 10 am - 6 pm
 Tuesday 16 The Globe Primary Carols (Year 4) 5 pm
 Wednesday 17 Evergreen 2 pm; The Globe Primary Carols (Years 2 and 3) 5 pm
 Thursday 18 Seaside Primary School Carols 7 pm
 Saturday 20 Mass 9.30 am; Christmas Celebration with The Boundstone Chorus 7.30 pm
 Sunday 21 **Advent 4:** Services at usual times; 9 am Mass with Hymns (St Mary)
 Wednesday 24 **Christmas Eve:** Candlelight Crib Service 6 pm; Early 'Midnight' Mass 8 pm (St Peter); Midnight Mass 11.15 pm
 Thursday 25 **Christmas Day:** Mass with Carols 10.30 am
 Saturday 27 Mass 9.30 am (Walsingham Cell)
 Sunday 28 **The Holy Family:** Services at usual times

JANUARY

Thursday 1 The Naming of Jesus: Mass 11 am
 Friday 2 Mothers' Union social 12.30 pm
 Sunday 4 **Epiphany:** Services at usual times
 Monday 5 "The Net" (Spring) deadline
 Tuesday 6 Craft Club 10 am
 Wednesday 7 Ecumenical Morning Prayer 8 am ()
 Thursday 8 Church cleaning 9.30 am; Mass 11 am
 Saturday 10 Mass 9.30 am; Mini Market 10 am - 12 noon
 Sunday 11 **Baptism of Christ:** Services at usual times
 Thursday 15 Mass 11 am; Parochial Church Council (PCC) Meeting 7.30 pm

18th - 25th January - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Sunday 18 **Epiphany 2:** Services at usual times; 9 am (St Mary); United Service 4 pm (St Michael)
 Monday 19 Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC) URC)
 Tuesday 20 Craft Club 10 am; Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC)
 Wednesday 21 Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC); Evergreen 2 pm
 Thursday 22 Mass with Anointing 11 am; Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC)
 Friday 23 Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC); Memory Lane Cafe 2 pm
 Saturday 24 Mass 9.30 am (Walsingham Cell); Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC); Games Afternoon 3 pm
 Sunday 25 **Epiphany 3:** Services at usual times; Prayers for Christian Unity 12 noon (Venue TBC)
 Friday 30 Messy Church 3.15 - 5 pm

FEBRUARY

Sunday 1 **The Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas):** Services at usual times; Alive! (Children's group):
 Monday 2 "The Net" (Spring) printing
 Tuesday 3 Craft Club 10 am
 Wednesday 4 Ecumenical Morning Prayer 8 am (); Social Afternoon 2 pm (St Peter)
 Thursday 5 Church cleaning 9.15 am; Mass 11 am
 Friday 7 Mothers' Union meeting 2.30 pm
 7-14 February: Marriage Week
 Sunday 8 **2 before Lent:** Services at usual times
 Thursday 12 Mass 11 am; Standing Committee meeting 7.30 pm
 Saturday 14 Mass 9.30 am; Mini Market 10 am - 12 noon
 Sunday 15 **Next before Lent:** Services at usual times; 9 am (St Mary); Evening Worship 6.30 pm (St Peter)
 Tuesday 17 Craft Club 10 am; Rooted 3-4.30 pm
 Wednesday 18 **Ash Wednesday:** Mass with Giving of Ashes 11 am (St James the Less); Evergreen 2 pm; Solemn Mass with Giving of Ashes 7.30 pm (St Michael's)

Fr Ben writes...

As Christmas approaches, our homes fill with light, laughter, and endless tasks. The days race on in a blur of shopping, cooking, and wrapping. Yet in the midst of this, the Lord whispers the same invitation he has given for two thousand years: "Come to Bethlehem and see."

Christmas is not truly Christmas without the Mass. That first crib in Bethlehem was not the end of the story; it was just the beginning. The same Word who became flesh and rested in a manger now rests upon our altars. At the words of consecration, the Babe of Bethlehem becomes present again - truly, really, substantially - under the humble appearance of bread and wine. The Incarnation continues; the crib is carried into every tabernacle and lifted high at every elevation. This is why the Christmas Mass is irreplaceable: only here do we adore and receive the very same Jesus whose tiny heart first beat beneath Mary's.

This year, I beg you: make Mass the non-negotiable heart of your Christmas celebration! There is plenty of opportunity: Christmas Eve- 8pm at St Peter's, 11.15 pm at St Michael's and Christmas Day 10.30am at St Michael's.

Do not let tiredness, crowded car parks, or the temptation of a lie-in steal what is most precious. The Child who had no room in Bethlehem still finds room on our altars, waiting for you.

And please, bring others with you!

Bring your children and grandchildren, your spouse, your parents. Bring the relative who hasn't been to church in years. Bring the neighbour spending Christmas alone, the friend who says they "don't do religion anymore." One hour spent before the Eucharistic crib can do more than a thousand conversations. Let them meet the God who became small enough to fit both in a manger and in their hearts.

This Christmas, let our churches overflow. Let every pew hold someone you have invited. Together, let us all make room for the One who made room for us in His Incarnation.

With love and prayers for a truly blessed Christmas,

Father Ben

My Confirmation at Chichester Cathedral

Michael Jones

On Wednesday 26 November, I and three others from St Michael's were confirmed at Chichester Cathedral by Bishop Martin. In all, more than 50 candidates from the diocese had assembled for confirmation.

To see the Cathedral in its fullest magnificence was a sight to behold. Inside it was standing room only. In conducting his pre-confirmation duties, Bishop Martin asked each of us who as a Christian had inspired us to be confirmed within the Church and which virtue we most admire in them. He also asked us for the most important thing that is part of confirmation: your name. For we are called by God by name to make us His own.

In the Church of England, confirmation is a sacramental rite where baptised persons, usually adolescents or adults, publicly renew their baptismal vows and receive the laying on of hands by a bishop. It strengthens them with the Holy Spirit for mature Christian life, often enabling full participation in Holy Communion.

For me, kneeling in front of Bishop Martin for the blessing and anointing was a truly special moment that I won't forget. Chrism (olive oil mixed with balsam) was applied to my forehead to the words: "God has called you by name and made you his own." I have rarely felt closer to God. When I started coming to church earlier this year, I knew that I wished to be confirmed. I did it to confirm my commitment to God and to try to live by Christian virtues. To bring love, peace and community to our small patch of the world.

I wish to thank Father Ben, Victor, Patrick, Sue, and Gill for coming along and supporting the four of us being confirmed from St Michael's. Additionally, I thank Father Ben for helping us prepare for confirmation.

Christmas Shoebox Appeal Road Trips

Victor Olliver

Over two days in November, Steve Gates and I drove an approximate 800 miles to collect about 1000 shoeboxes for the Christian charity Link to Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2025.

Steve did the driving. He is very 'decisive' at the wheel, and several times I wondered whether I should have rewritten my will. And I did the navigating, with the help of the female-voiced sat-nav. Unfortunately, 'Madame Sat-Nav', as I called her, experienced a number of nervous breakdowns – at one point the 3D moving map view relocated us to Ireland even though we were on the London Orbital (aka 'The Road to Hell'). On another occasion, Madame moved us to the Loire Valley, France. So, as you can imagine, Steve and I got a little lost at times.

In case you don't know, Steve has been collecting festive shoeboxes for years. They are destined for Ukraine, Romania and other deprived countries. Each box contains many different things such as toothpaste, sweets, mugs, socks, hats, etc. This year he asked me to join him – I had no idea what I was letting myself in for. But overall, it was huge fun and heart-warming to encounter so many kind people who had collected hundreds of shoeboxes in their garages, homes or churches.

Our first trip from Lancing was to Plymouth and Somerset. The second to Norwich, Ipswich and then Horsted Keynes, a village just outside Haywards Heath. I was surprised to see how many shoeboxes were either too big or just not packed or labelled correctly. These were collected anyway and then are repacked at the Ferring HQ by volunteers.

The Shoebox Appeal has been going since 1992 and over 1 million shoeboxes have been dispatched, mainly to Eastern Europe.

Each round trip took at least 12 hours including delivery to Ferring. What kept us going were bags of Werther's Originals. We left Lancing each time at 5 a.m., and it was a novelty experiencing dawn at 70 mph (mostly). Will I ever do this again? Probably....

Margaret Burton's 80th Birthday

Rosie Kirsch

I have to admit I quaked in my boots when June, Pat and I were asked by Margaret's husband Brian to help him organise a 'surprise' 80th birthday party for Margaret!

Margaret of course is our Chief Baby Boomer and the epitome of organisation so perhaps you can understand my nervousness. She arranges all sorts of events including socials where she arranges the food, cooks some culinary delights and generally brilliantly runs the group which she set up for us senior folk at church, (the precise definition of a Baby Boomer is someone born between the end of the Second World War and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II). Quite an act to emulate!

However, the good news is that it went very well, thanks to everybody rallying around and cooking for us some delicious dishes including lasagne, fish pie, curry, pasta, mouth-watering puddings and lots more. The tables were put up for us by Steve and looked great thanks to June's efforts and Pat's flowers. All invitees arrived promptly so that when Brian went to fetch Margaret and she made her entrance looking stunning and completely belying her 80 years, we were able to give her a raucous welcome and standing ovation. I think she was quite touched! Brian had organised a fabulous cake with a map of Sussex iced on it representing various places of importance to Margaret, and topped with a figure looking remarkably like her in her 'famous' (?) green dress.

But one of the heroes of the hour was certainly Aedan. We had no idea how things would go timewise and whether we would need an 'activity' but Aedan gallantly stood by and when there was a lull in the proceedings, stepped in with song sheets and piano to lead us in a good old sing song. Well done Aedan, as ever.

I think we all enjoyed Margaret's celebration. Trust you did too Margaret!!

Why do we pay Parish Share during a Vacancy?

Paid ordained ministry is a key part of delivering mission within the Anglican Church. However, there is so much more to ministry; chaplaincy within schools, colleges, prisons; reaching out to minority or excluded members of society; making new Christians and growing the church through making new connections in a huge variety of 'non-traditional' church contexts. Add to this a plethora of requirements on the Church; safeguarding, governance and compliance. Much of this vital work goes unseen by many, but is all part of why everyone's giving makes a difference, and why mission is at the heart of Parish Share.

During a 'vacancy' the Diocese continues to incur ministry-related costs; fees to voluntary ministers, upkeep of and improvements to clergy housing, training of new ordinands and curates, legal costs, etc. Each parish's offer through Parish Share does so much more than 'pay for a bit of a vicar'.

It's vital that the parishes of a benefice that finds itself in 'vacancy' make every effort to demonstrate good stewardship, generous giving, proper financial management, and financial viability – or are actively working on a plan to make themselves financially viable and sustainable. Prospective clergy, viewing advertisements and Parish Profiles will be keen to ensure that the benefice they might wish to come to, is both financially stable and has a generous heart; and they are likely to be considering any number of alternative appointments. Ensuring Parish Share continues to be met during a vacancy is a key way of demonstrating this.

As the Church, 'the Body of Christ' we are members together and we are interdependent on each other. Together our pooling of Parish Share enables the provision of ministry across the diocese; your giving during a vacancy will also be supporting essential ministry and mission elsewhere. During a vacancy in another parish then continuing to pay Parish Share from that place may well be helping to fund ministry in your communities and churches.

At one level this can be seen as just being a question about money; a necessity to 'pay the vicar'. However, there is much more here, that goes to the heart of our faith and beliefs as followers of Jesus Christ. What we have, we have in common, and this is never truer than when we are thinking about the mission of the Church. Parish Share is actually a 'mission fund', to which all of us, through our personal, regular, planned giving, can contribute. Those who have more should contribute more to this work, along with those who have less.

This is key to answering the question "Why do we still pay our Parish Share during a vacancy?" Parish Share is not a contribution to 'buy a bit of a vicar'. Rather, it is the pooling of all our giving and resources to allow the mission of the church to flourish and to allow ministry to respond to changing circumstances. It is biblically based on Acts 4:32, where we read that everything was held in common, with benefactors laying at the feet of the Apostles the proceeds of their property sales. So Parish Share is our way of attempting to give sacrificially for the good of the whole and this giving is always in response to God's overwhelming generosity to us.

Parish share for 2026

Our Parish Share pledge for 2026 is £70,549 (up from £69,229 in 2025). Our share of the ministry costs for our parish and Lancing with Coombes is £75,860 (total ministry costs £151,719).

We do still have a budget deficit and areas like our hall rental have not been performing as well this year. We know that times are difficult but can you reassess your giving to see if you can give a little bit extra? The inflationary increase available through the Parish Giving Scheme really helps. If everyone who currently hasn't "ticked this box" were to accept the percentage increase (which last time was 2.3%) then our giving would automatically increase by £330 next year. For example if your monthly gift is £20 per month this would increase by 45p and stay at £20.45 for the rest of the year (a total increase of £5.40).

To make this change contact the Parish Giving Scheme (0333 002 1271 or info@parishgiving.org.uk), or set up an account at www.paritygiving.org.uk and manage your giving there.