

I'm new(ish)
at St Michael and All Angels



THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF
St Michael and All Angels
ŌTAUTAHI CHRISTCHURCH

‘It is not the task of Christianity to provide easy answers to every question, but to make us progressively aware of a mystery. God is not so much the object of our knowledge as the cause of our wonder.’ - Kallistos Ware, *Orthodox Bishop*

Welcome to St Michael and All Angels Church. We are a community of faith that tries to include all people whatever your background, from the youngest baby to the very old.

We want you to feel at home here. Our church can seem quite formal, but you will soon discover we are ordinary people trying to learn about and live the life and message of Jesus. You are very welcome to be part of this.

As the quote above encapsulates our services connect with all of our senses. Music and singing, art and beauty, ceremony and ritual all work together here to help us grow in our relationship with God and with one another.

We want to care for people not part of our community. We do this because we want to continue Jesus’ love and care in the world. Our parish school, St Michael’s Church School, is part of this care.

We are what is termed an ‘Anglo-Catholic Church’ which you can read more about on the next page. Our main services are called ‘Mass’ with bread and wine following the example that Jesus left us.

We believe the Risen Jesus is with us at Mass and stays with us in our daily lives. We also have some other services – you are welcome to all. Our community, and our services are led by a priest who will be very happy to speak to you about anything.

Blessings,



Fr Jordan, *Vicar*

Anglo-Catholicism traces its immediate roots to a time when the Church of England was in crisis during the mid-1800s. For decades modernity had a big impact on the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Church of England producing a church that lacked much of a soul. Rather than approaching the Church with biblical vision as the “Body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:27) and “the pillar and foundation of truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), many of the faithful (especially the clergy!) acted as if the Church were nothing more than the Crown’s tool for furthering local and global interests of the British Empire. In other words, the Church had become too worldly, too political, and too interested in one particular nation’s success. As in many points in history, revival was desperately needed.

At the risk of oversimplifying history, we can think of two responses to England’s Church crisis. The first is the Evangelical movement. It had already been in place for years thanks to the Wesley brothers and others who prompted the Methodist movement. Its answer to the crisis of modernity was to diminish the importance of an established church by focusing on the lives of individual believers. If everyone could be “born again” (have a conversion experience), then the national issues would work themselves out organically.

The second response is known as the Oxford Movement. Around 1830, clergy and laity centred in Oxford began publishing tracts (pamphlets) that argued for Anglicanism’s rightful heritage as a full member of the ancient Church by virtue of her unbroken succession of apostolic bishops. Because of this tactile connection of authority to the ancient Church and the Holy Apostles, Anglicans could, if they so desired, reform themselves to be more in sync with the universal Church. As a distinctly Western branch of the Church, this meant reviving Anglicanism by striving to bring it into greater conformity with the ancient and venerable Western ‘rite’. That is, the theology, devotion, and liturgy common in the Latin West from the time of the Church Fathers to the Middle Ages and beyond. It was the Oxford Movement’s hope that such “catholicising” of the Church of England would reclaim a proper vision of itself as a divinely founded institution. This in turn would empower the church to fulfil its rightful call to preach the gospel and celebrate the sacraments. Thus ‘Anglo-Catholicism’ was born and spread throughout the Anglican Communion. This tradition was brought to St Michael’s from England in 1910 by Father Harry Burton where it has been established ever since. We are a part of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch and the Anglican Church of NZ, Aotearoa and Polynesia.

You can find out more about our community online:

Website: tinyurl.com/SMAAweb

Facebook Page (with Masses online): tinyurl.com/SMAAfb

Instagram: tinyurl.com/SMAAinsta

If you wish to be in touch for whatever reason please email Fr Jordan at vicar@stmichaelandallangels.nz