

The LINK digital edition

November 2021



**The Parish Church of
St Michael Braintree
www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk**



“We will remember them”

Dear Friends,

Last November, our churches were closed, so we had a joint online Remembrance Event, **“Braintree and Bocking Remembers”** on YouTube.

This year, we are planning to have our Acts of Remembrance in person, both at the Public Gardens (at 2pm) and at St Michael’s. **Remembrance Sunday** falls on 14th November this year. We are delighted to welcome **Group Captain Mark Bunting** to St Michael’s, on behalf of the Soldiers’ & Airmen’s Scripture Readers Association (SASRA). He will be speaking at both our 10am service and 3pm Civic Service, in St Michael’s Church. We look forward to what he has to share on the title, **“Nothing can separate us from the love of God”**.

We are **wise to remember** ... to remember, with gratitude, those who paid the **ultimate price** (in suffering and death) for the freedoms we enjoy. We also remember, with thankfulness, **God's deliverance of our nation** in time of war.

At both the 10am and 3pm services, we will be showing a video, recalling the events of **Dunkirk** in 1940. It is a moving account of our nation in prayer, and how exceptional (providential) circumstances brought about a great deliverance. It was not a military victory, but it was a great deliverance – 338,000 soldiers evacuated in amazing circumstances.

But we are also wise to remember past wars as a warning to us of **the futility and cost of war** ... to encourage us to seek peace wherever and whenever that is possible. I hope you will be able to join us as we remember and give thanks, this Remembrance Sunday.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel



MISSION OF THE MONTH BARNABAS FUND

Barnabas Fund is an organisation who supports the persecuted church, mainly in Muslim dominated countries. They have felt under attack over the last few years, which they should not be surprised about when they are working in so many different countries and helping huge numbers of persecuted brothers and sisters all over the world, from fully helping brick workers to repay their debts to the owners and helping with schools in a number of countries. Their work is very diverse and GOD be praised for His faithfulness towards them despite criticism and accusations, most of which are unfounded.

They continue to serve the persecuted church and the needs are growing monthly with their resources stretched like never before. Their overheads are the lowest in their sector, at below 12% of their income and they continue to ensure that every pound they receive is used efficiently and effectively.

There are many demands on Church funds and they will not take St. Michael's support for granted.

Peter Schaad

FARMING SEASONS



October is an important month on the farm because it is the month we commonly drill our winter cereals. This year October has been a mixed month with some heavy periods of rainfall but thankfully, thanks to a dry spell in the middle, we finished drilling our winter wheat by the 15th. This came as a relief because the soil has become quite saturated this year and too much rain would have made drilling tricky.

The damp conditions have been good for slugs, who are pests which can hollow out the seed before it germinates or graze off the new shoots as they appear, so it has been necessary to keep a close eye on the crop as it begins to germinate by regularly walking the fields looking for slug activity and damage. This is a

job my dog, Cherry, especially enjoys and it is important because we do not want to use slug pellets unless it is necessary.

Last month I mentioned soil and how important it is to our farming success, so important in fact that Jesus Himself even refers to soil fertility in the Parable of the Sower. Jesus was drawing on the fact that the condition of the soil hugely affects how readily seeds will grow – he was challenging his hearers to consider how receptive their lives were to His message.

The objective when we cultivate and till the soil is to create a good 'seedbed'. This means removing any compaction which would inhibit drainage, and excess trash in the way of previous crop residues and weeds and producing a reasonably level and fine soil crumb structure which provides good seed to soil consolidation. This helps with quick and even germination and makes the seed well hidden from pests such as slugs.

We are fortunate that the soil on our farm has generally good fertility. This is largely due to the natural soil itself and also the good management that has taken place by my Grandad and Dad with good drainage and applications of farmyard manures which improve the soils organic matter content.

Organic matter only makes up around 3 to 5 percent of the top soils in our area but it plays a crucial role in the soils fertility. This is because it helps improve drainage and the workability of the soil further encouraging micro organisms and earthworms. Worms are our greatest cultivators helping to oxygenate the soil, breaking organic matter into nutrients and improving drainage. Keen gardeners improve their organic matter content with the use of the compost heap and I notice that garden programmes are often using it in the bought form know as soil conditioner/improver. Organic matter is made from carbon compounds which come from decaying plant and animal waste.

Carbon is an element that is the biological building block of life and it has more compounds than there are other elements. It is currently the 'hottest' topic on the planet at the moment because of its role in global warming and climate change where the gas carbon dioxide plays a key role in the carbon cycle.

The proportion of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere has significantly increased because of the dramatic rise in the use of fossil fuels over the last 50 years or more and now the agricultural industry needs to look at its part to see how it can become carbon neutral in the future. In my Grandads generation they would have been much closer to this relying more on organic manure from their smaller mixed farm operations and crop rotation to provide the plant nutrients and weed control.

However, in my Dads farming generation the demand for greater productivity led to a much greater use of artificial fertilizers and agrochemicals which use large amounts of fossil fuels in their high energy production. The greatest challenge for the future is for us to maintain the high levels of production while reverting back to the lower levels of fossil fuel usage and thereby carbon footprint of my Grandads generation. In the next article, I will be taking a closer look at some of the ideas for the future of how this might be achieved.

Adam Grove Smith

NOVEMBER – IN DAYS GONE BY.

This used to be the month when parents awaited to hear about their daughter. Grandparents longed to know if their seven year old granddaughter has been chosen.

CHOSEN FOR WHAT?

Soon rehearsals would begin for the primary school Christmas play. Once upon a time it went without saying that a boy would play Joseph and a girl Mary. The angel Gabriel? That would have been a girl of course. Will our daughter be chosen to be Gabriel? No one could do it better than our granddaughter! That no longer holds in these days.

WHY WAS A GIRL CHOSEN?

Well that is obvious wasn't it? Female nurses are angels. Visit any cemetery and the angel statues have a strange feminine look about them. And tradition says that the Archangel Gabriel in the school Christmas play should be a year 4 girl.

ON THE OTHER HAND

The Californian City of Angels (Los Angeles) has a baseball team of men who go by the nickname of 'The Angels'!

What do think angels are like? Like the nurse who saw you through your time in hospital or 'Mr.T' in the 'A-Team'? or the man at first base on the baseball field?

ANOTHER CITY OF SUN

The Bible speaks of a city which outstrips Los Angeles for light. It goes by the name of 'Zion'. It is the home of Almighty God. Los Angeles is famous for producing films. Zion is famous for something else.

Zion doesn't produce or make anything. The chief of occupation of the city is the worship of God. The first citizens are called 'the heavenly host' which means the numberless ranks of angel.

Their chief delight is not baseball or making glamorous films, but it gives them pleasure to do and give honour with heart and soul to Almighty God. Myriads of them take joy in going where he sends them and doing what he wishes. They are numberless.

OUR SUNDAY SERVICES.

When we meet on Sundays to praise Almighty God, we are joining a numberless crowd of angelic beings who started their worship long before the hour or so that we give and are still delighting to praise God long after we have gone home. Perhaps that gives a new perspective on our worship services.

It will enrich us and our Sunday services to remember who we are joining and what is their eternal pleasure. One day faith will give way to sight.

One day those who belong to Jesus Christ, because they have turned to him in repentance and trusting him to forgive them by his death on the cross, will see the real Gabriel and be overawed at the glory of God and want to join with him and the other angels in loving praise towards the Lord Jesus Christ. The sight of angels will be frighteningly magnificent. But we shall have no fear because we shall be welcomed both by Our Lord Jesus Christ and our heavenly Father.

FOLLOWING NOVEMBER

The next month is December and we shall hear again that the shepherds were overwhelmed by the glory of the angels. Maybe we need to remember that great vision those men had when we meet to worship the Lord God Almighty.

Stephen Bailey

From “The Worthy Brief”

“My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.” (Isaiah 51:5)

A group of scientists and botanists were exploring remote regions of the Alps in search of new species of flowers. One day they noticed through binoculars a flower of such rarity and beauty that its value to science was incalculable. But it lay deep in a ravine with cliffs on both sides. To get the flower someone had to be lowered over the cliff on a rope.

A curious young boy was watching nearby, and the scientists told him they would pay him well if he would agree to be lowered over the cliff to retrieve the flower below.

The boy took one long look down the steep, dizzy depths and said, “I’ll be back in a minute.” A short time later he returned, followed by a gray-haired man. Approaching the botanist, the boy said, “I’ll go over that cliff and get that flower for you if this man holds the rope. He’s my dad.”

His whole assurance was based in the fact that his father was trustworthy.

Our Heavenly Father wants us to place our entire trust in Him and is pleased to show His faithfulness, we can trust Him to hold us even when it seems we are on the very edge!

Supplied by Peter Schaad

BELFRY BULLETIN

We are pleased with the progress we are making - with our ability to attract regular visitors to our practice nights. This has allowed us to cater for all abilities - we practice simple 5 methods through to complicated 8 and 10 bell methods helping us to progress and it makes for exciting and enjoyable evenings.

We apologise for not ringing for a few services, there have some times when there have been more of us away than were in Braintree. SORRY.

On Monday 11th October, we were joined by Alan and May Winter. Alan is the organiser of The Ridgeman Trophy, which we are hosting on Saturday 30th October 2021. The Ridgeman Trophy is a competition between all the East Anglian County and Diocesan Bellingringing Association's. There should be some excellent ringing.

Recently we have rung 2 Quarter Peals :-

For Harvest Festival on Sunday 3rd October 2021
1260 changes of Plain Bob Minor on the front 6 in 41 minutes.
Simon Ward 1, Ellie Gray 2, Vicki Elliot 3, James Green 4,
Bradley Hill 5, Debbie Hill [c] 6.

On Sunday 10th October 2021, 1344 changes of Plain Bob Major on the back 8 in 48 minutes.

Simon Ward 1, Ellie Gray 2, Debbie Hill 3, James Green 4,
Ellis Whitehouse 5, Maurice Downs 6, Peter Smith 7, Bradley Hill [c] 7. The Footnote reads :-

Dedicated to the birth of Finn Gabriel Smith Grandson of Peter Smith [7].

Congratulations to Chris and Alice Smith.

1st inside of method Ellie [2]

1st conducting method Bradley [8]

Congratulations to Elli and Bradley for achieving these First's.

The print out of this Quarter Peal is framed and hanging over Finn's cot.

AWAY FROM THE TOWER

Bradley and Peter have been helping the Witham ringers ring for weddings.

Peter Smith

NOVEMBER DIARY

www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk

We are making some **significant changes** in the way we run and make our services available. All of the attached services are **“in person”** in the church building. We plan to **stop the pre-recorded YouTube services, with the last one being on 31st October**. A huge gratitude for all that has been done by a large team of people, particularly to David & Rachel Huxter, who have put them together for us each week, and to everyone else who has been involved in various ways. Many people have watched them and appreciated them.

We are working towards **live streaming our 10am service** each week. In the meantime, we plan to **record, and later upload the 10am service** to YouTube. We do want to seek to maintain some sort of online service, for those who are unable to get to church for any reason. Do please be praying for a smooth transition and bear with us if there are any glitches.

Our stopping the pre-recorded services will enable us to start to reintroduce other services – in November we plan to have **two 8am services and two 6.30pm services** in church

1 Monday

7:30pm White Horse Tavern: Bible group with Stephen Bailey

2 Tuesday

2:00pm Bible reading group in Church House

4 Thursday

11:00am Virtual Coffee on Zoom with Nigel & Jo Adams

12.30 - 2.00pm Women@St Michaels Prayer Lunch in church

7 Sunday

- 10:00am Church Family Worship in Church with Andy Malcolm from the Fishermen's Mission
- 6.30pm Holy Communion in church

8 Monday

- 7:30pm White Horse Tavern: Bible group with Stephen Bailey

9 Tuesday

- 2:00pm Bible reading group in Church House
- 8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

14 Sunday (Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts due date)

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)
- 10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)
- 10:00am Remembrance Sunday service with Group Captain Mark Bunting
- 3.00pm Civic Remembrance Service with Group Captain Mark Bunting

15 Monday

- 7:30pm White Horse Tavern: Bible group with Stephen Bailey

16 Tuesday

- 2:00pm Bible reading group in Church House
- 8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

20 Saturday

- 5:50pm St Michael's Quiz Night on Zoom

21 Sunday

- 9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)
- 10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)
- 10:00am Morning worship with Holy Communion

6.30pm All-Age Tonight service

22 Monday

7:30pm White Horse Tavern: Bible group with Stephen Bailey

23 Tuesday December LINK SUBMISSION DUE

2:00pm Bible reading group in Church House

8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

28 Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)

10:00am Morning worship

29 Monday

7:30pm White Horse Tavern: Bible group with Stephen Bailey

30 Tuesday

2:00pm Bible reading group in Church House