

# The LINK

**AUGUST 2023**



**The Parish Church of  
St Michael Braintree  
[www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk)**

# GOD LOVES YOU TOUR



Dear Friends,

I know that a number of you will remember Billy Graham, the great American evangelist, who spoke at a number of evangelistic missions and rallies over many decades last century. His missions to the UK in the 1950s changed many lives, and it was noted that a really large number of ordained ministers had come to faith through Billy Graham missions. I recall going to some of his missions in the 1980s and saw how God used him in an amazing way.

Franklin Graham, Billy Graham's son, is speaking again this year at the "God Loves You Tour" on **Saturday 26th August**. It will be held at the London ExCeL Centre and we have organised a coach to go to it. There is no cost for either the coach or the event.

Some people from St Michael's went last year and you can expect some really uplifting music (with thousands of other people) as well as a timeless message of hope, in God's love, from Franklin.

The coach will leave from outside **Braintree Railway Station – 3.15pm for a prompt 3.30pm departure**. Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church, or let me know if you would like space on the coach.

We would recommend taking a drink with you on the coach. The timings will allow for us to get some food from the fast-food outlets at the ExCeL Centre, or you can take food with you.

Do please think about whether there is someone you could invite to join you for it. And please be praying for all aspects of the “God Loves You Tour”.

I hope you have a really good summer.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel



## ALL INCLUSIVE

### THE COST OF THE TICKET.

The family scrimped and saved to buy the cheapest tickets by sea to the USA. They were a poor family from somewhere in central Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. They had heard of the plenty that could be gained by a hard working family across the Atlantic in North America.

### NEXT STEP

Our poor family in the 1900s, saved for the fare by sea to New York. This was hard for the peasant family. But after great sacrifice and self denial, they had the money for the cheapest fare.

### TIN FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Having saved money for the sea fare to New York, the family started also to save tins of food to keep them fed on the journey across the Atlantic. Imagine their surprise when out on the sea, they discovered that in the cost of their tickets was included three plain meals a day!

### IN CHRIST

One of the Apostle Paul's favourite ways of describing the believing Christian is to say that they are 'IN CHRIST'. He not only invites us to make the journey to a new home in the Glory but he travels with us. We don't have to provide our own food for the journey, making every effort to feed ourselves. Jesus Christ says he is the bread of life. He sustains us with his forgiveness. He feeds us with himself because he is risen from the dead. He knows how to keep us going.

## ATLANTIC GALES

The Atlantic is known for high seas and storms. Being 'in Christ' means that he watches over us and protects us from whatever storms we have to meet. I can, of course, make the journey on my own. But it is better and happier to make the journey with the Lord Jesus who holds on to me as I hold on to him.

*Stephen Bailey*

## THOUGHTS ON READING THE NOTICE SHEET AND A GUIDE TO CONTENTED LIVING

Every week, when you open your Notice Sheet or read it online, do you, especially if you are a relatively new member of the St Michael's church family, wonder who some of the people are whose names are mentioned as being unwell or housebound. I was reminded of this a few weeks ago when I came across a 20-year-old copy of the Link magazine. It contained an article written at the time of my father's death, and I am reproducing it here because I think it has something to say about our attitude to those names today. The article was entitled "Charlie Sweeting. Many thanks and some reflections" and it began by thanking those who had sent messages of sympathy. It went on:

*"We have been sustained by your prayers and touched by the obvious affection in which [Charlie] appears to have been held by many in St Michael's, where he worshipped for over 70 years. For those newer to St Michael's, Charlie Sweeting was simply a name in the list of house-bound on the weekly notices sheet and it is this which has prompted me to write the following.*

*Dad died on 3 August [2003] after a full life, most of it as a committed Christian believer. He joined St Michael's in the early 1930s, becoming among other things a Sunday School teacher, local secretary of the Sudan United Mission (later Action Partners) and a member of the PCC for over 50 years. Friends have spoken of him as a great encourager and, even in old age, one with a real heart for young people.*

*In the winter of 2001, his arthritis and a succession of falls rendered my father housebound and not at all mobile. At the same time my mother, Gertrude, died after nearly 57 years of happy marriage. Dad's whole life changed, yet he adapted. Despite bowel cancer, diagnosed in 1998, and although very*

*dependent because of his arthritic state, he was determined, if possible, to stay in his own home. This he was able to do until the last few days of his life.*

*He remained interested in the outside world, particularly St Michael's. So thank you to all who remembered him and the other housebound members in your prayers – in Sunday services or when using the notices sheet as a prayer guide at home. The housebound are still very much a part of the church family. If Dad is anything to go by, they in their turn pray for the more active church members.*

*Dad appreciated being told that someone in church had asked about him and enjoyed seeing any who visited him; Charles [Mason]'s visits with Holy Communion were a very special time. Every Sunday evening, Tom, Dad and I would read Evening Prayer together, followed by a reading aloud from John Bunyan. Those who visited Dad often commented on his cheerfulness and positive attitude.*

*His secret? He aimed with the Lord's help to live by a dictum of St Paul. He mentioned it to me on a number of occasions and after his death I came upon a little slip of paper in the Bible he used for his daily study. It read, "Phil 4:11 Own motto. C.S". The verse – "I have learned in whatsoever state I am to be content" (NKJV).*

*I thank God for my father, Charlie, and thank you for your support"*

That was what I wrote twenty years ago, and I hope it has some relevance for us today when we think of our present unwell and housebound. In my own life I hope I can live out the contentment of Philippians 4:11.

*Margaret St John-Coleman*

## FARMING SEASONS

Looks like we are in for a roller coaster ride with the weather this year and that can be concerning for any farmer, especially with harvest starting and no sign of settled weather forecast. Saying that I am pleased to report that our harvest has started and we finished combining the oil seed rape in the early hours of this morning, and it is all safely gathered in!



Two years ago, the week before we were about to start combining oil seed rape, we had a thunder and hail storm which all but ruined most of the crop. This year we have had a good crop and, to be fair, the

crop has been looking good for most of the year. Oil seed rape has a large tap root which meant it was obviously able to draw moisture successfully during our very dry and hot June. The wheat crop now only needs some warm sunshine to be ready to harvest as well, but it is always difficult to predict how good the crop is going to be until you actually start combining it.

With half an eye on the cereal markets, these too have been up and down largely affected by the war in Ukraine and the dry and hot weather in America. No one, however, is expecting the high prices we experienced last year and this is good news for those who are worried about more food price inflation.



Hopefully next month I will be able to report on a successful wheat harvest, but I am experienced enough to know that you cannot take anything for granted!

*Adam Grove-Smith*

## **GOD WITH US, ESPECIALLY IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

**“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Matthew 1:23)**

When Daniel was in the midst of the lion's den...God was with him. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were in the midst of the fiery furnace ... God was with them. It would have been perfectly easy for God to immediately transport these saints out of their difficulties, but no, He chose instead to be with them in the midst of their trials. God chose to reveal His power through the trials instead of exercising His power to remove them.

Trials and difficulties are simply a part of life and quite honestly, the longer I walk with the Lord the bigger these trials become. But how do we react when our faith is challenged by these adversities? James 1:2 says to count it all joy! What could possibly be joyful about difficult situations? Painful, yes ... but joy??

Yet, somehow, I do find joy in knowing, and even sensing that God is with me in the midst of my problems – in the midst of my trials. He did promise never to leave or forsake me; and as I look over my life, I find it to be absolutely true...no matter what crazy situation I'm in, God is with me.

We all have this decision: either to complain because of the trials we're enduring ... or to prayerfully lift our souls before him (Psalm 25:1) ... and rejoice in the midst of our troubles – knowing, believing, and even feeling, that God is with us, now ... always... all the way!

*Supplied from “The Worthy Brief” by Peter Schaad*

## **REDUCE, REUSE AND RE-CYCLE WITH WOMEN@ST MICHAEL'S**

Here's a date for your diary and an appeal for help! On Saturday 14th October the Women@StMichael's group is holding a coffee morning and sale of pre-loved clothes. All proceeds will go to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child appeal for 2023. The coffee morning will be open to anyone, but for the sale we plan only to cover ladies' and children's clothes, plus accessories (hats, gloves, scarves, etc).

What can you do to help? Please set aside any saleable clothes you or your children no longer wear and please let me know if you would be willing to help, either with the coffee morning or the sale. We shall need people to sort and price the donated items; to sell them; to make cakes and other items for the coffee morning; to serve refreshments; and to take care of the money. (Please note: any items not sold will not be returnable, but will be donated to a local charity shop.)

*Margaret St John-Coleman*

## COFFEE CHAT WITH ROGER COOKE



Third Monday coffee and conversation

I shall be in the Quadrant cafe on **Monday 21st August** at 10.30am so if you'd like to join me you'd be very welcome!

Looking forward to seeing you.

*Roger Cooke*

### THANK-YOU!

Jean, Louise and Martyn would like to thank everyone at St Michaels for their prayers, cards and messages of support during Eddie's time in hospital and Millard House Care Home where he peacefully passed away.

*Jean Wells*

## BELFRY BULLETIN

We need more bell ringers at St. Michael's to make sure that this important part of church life can continue. Every time the church bells are rung they are heard by people outside the church family and these non-Christians are reminded that the church is alive and well. It would be good if some of the St Michael's church family could learn to ring our bells and so help to continue this important Evangelistic part of Christian life. We practice on Monday evenings from 7.30 until 9pm, why not pop along and have a look at what goes on up the Tower, you would be very welcome.

### FROM THE LOG BOOK

On Monday 26th June 2023 ; Just because we could, we rang a Quarter Peal [QP] of 1440 changes of Cambridge Surprise Minor in 48mins 1 Debbie Hill, 2 Jodie Hill, 3 Jim Green, 4 Peter Smith, 5 Simon Ward, 6 Bradley Hill [c]. 1st blows in the method for Jodie.

Before the 10am service on Sunday 23rd July we rang a QP of St. Clements College Bob Minor, 1260 changes in 42mins. Treble Luke Attfield, 2 Jodie Hill, 3 Debbie Hill, Jim Green, 5 Peter Smith, Bradley Hill[c], this QP was Luke's first Treble to Minor and Jodie Hill's 1st of St Clements College Bob Minor.

### AWAY FROM THE TOWER

Debbie and Bradley rang their 1st handbell QP of Single Canterbury Pleasure Bob Major on 27th June.

On the 4th July Debbie rang a QP of Plain Bob Doubles on handbells.

To celebrate the Diamond wedding Anniversary of a member of The West Anglian Guild Peter joined the other WAGS Officers to ring a QP of Grandsire Triples.

Debbie and Bradley rang Grandsire Triples and Plain Bob Major for Sunday service on 16th July at Coalpit Heath

For a wedding on 22nd July at Rayne Peter rang with the emerging benefice band

*Peter Smith*

**EXODUS 3v14**

**I AM WHO I AM**  
I am not who you want me to be.

**I AM WHO I AM**  
**But**  
Oh can't you see  
I am the Lamb who saved you and me.

## AUGUST DIARY

[www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk)

Our YouTube services can be accessed through the “St Michael’s – Worship on the Web” YouTube channel and are generally updated during the week after the Sunday service

### **3 Thursday**

10:00am – 12noon Coffee@StMichael’s (in church)

### **6 Sunday**

10:00am Family Service

4:00pm Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)  
(No evening service)

### **7 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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

### **13 Sunday**

10:00am Family Service

(No evening service)

### **14 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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

### **16 Wednesday**

2:00pm Women@StMichaels: Afternoon tea at The Phoenix

### **20 Sunday**

10:00am Family Communion

6:30pm Evening Service

## **21 Monday**

10:30am Coffee Chat with Roger Cooke @Quadrant

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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

## **24 Thursday**

2:00pm Oasis@StMichaels: informal bereavement support group (Small Hall)

## **26 Saturday (LINK SUBMISSION DUE)**

3:15pm God loves you tour - Franklin Graham

## **27 Sunday**

10:00am Family Service

6:30pm Holy Communion

## **28 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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