

The LINK

30p

March 2016



The Parish Church of St Michael Braintree
www.stmichaelsbtreetree.co.uk



My dear Friends

Mothering Sunday this year falls on 6 March, which happily coincides with our monthly Church Family Worship. If you would like to cook a traditional simnel cake and bring it to share with others after the service, you will find a recipe elsewhere in this month's LINK (p 8).

The origins of the day go back to the C16, when people returned to their 'mother church' – either a large local church, or more often the nearest cathedral – for a service to be held on the Fourth Sunday in Lent. Anyone who did this was commonly said to have gone "a-mothering". The day has long been associated with mothers and family.

Often it turned into a family reunion and a chance for children working away from home – typically domestic servants – to spend time with their mothers. In many cases it was the only time that whole families could gather together, since on other days they were prevented by conflicting working hours, and servants were not given free days on other occasions.

Children and young people would pick wild flowers along the way to place in the church or give to their mothers. Eventually the religious festival evolved into the secular Mothering Sunday (now more often 'Mother's Day') tradition of giving gifts to mothers. In the hands of card manufacturers, florists and other retailers it has become big business, and has been joined by Father's Day on the third Sunday in June.

Mothering Sunday has thus travelled some way from its Christian roots, but the same could be said of Christmas, and the celebration can put us in mind of some important truths about motherhood and families in general.

First, although God himself is of course referred to as Father rather than Mother in the Bible, and with masculine rather than feminine pronouns, there is an important passage in Galatians 4

where Paul talks about Jerusalem as a mother. The 'present Jerusalem', characterised by unbelief in Christ, is in slavery, and bears children for slavery, whereas 'the Jerusalem from above', representing the Christian faithful, is free, 'and she is our mother', says Paul. This reminds us of how faith is handed down from parents to children and that God's people collectively, by their witness, bring others to new birth and freedom in Christ. The phrase 'mother church' is thus not just a bit of rather old-fashioned religious-speak, but expresses this beautiful truth.

Secondly, families do have a foundational role in human society. The Bible, in both Old and New Testaments, is full of exhortations to parents and children in their relationships with each other, and this extends 'sideways' to brothers and sisters. In this latter respect the sons of Jacob come to mind, and also the duty of a man in Old Testament times to raise up children for a deceased brother who has died without issue (Deuteronomy 25.5ff). In the New Testament, the book of Acts tells us how Paul was prevented from falling victim to a deadly ambush by the vigilance of his nephew (Acts 23.16).

Thirdly, Mothering Sunday reminds us that if we are Christians the 'ultimate' family to which we belong is God's family, the church. The word 'brother' occurs 346 times in the New Testament, in the vast majority of cases referring to a fellow-believer, and in modern parlance of course this includes 'sister'. As famously illustrated in Mark 3.31-35, this family claims our highest loyalty 'when the chips are down':

'[Jesus'] mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother." '

Your sincere friend and Vicar

Charles

MISSION OF THE MONTH OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD WITH SAMARITAN'S PURSE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF

Samaritan's Purse is an international relief and development organization with offices in Australia, Canada, Germany, and the USA. It works through local churches to demonstrate and proclaim the love of God amongst communities in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In addition to sending shoeboxes to these areas they also respond in a distinctly Christian way to issues facing people in the places where they work: issues like water and sanitation and sustainable livelihoods. Believing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ they are committed to seeing this Gospel shared in the form of both words (that can change spiritual circumstances) and acts of mercy (that can change physical circumstances). They choose to work through the local Church – seeing it as God's chosen instrument to bring hope to a hurting world supporting them to bring lasting hope to people in impoverished communities around our world. Through working in partnership they encourage each individual to use their own talents, gifts and unique contribution to this great work to which we have been called.

Samaritan's Purse has a Disaster Relief Team ready to work when the need arises. They have recently been supporting people around Kendal, following flooding from Storm Desmond, and in Yorkshire after Storm Eva.

Our church family has for many years supported Operation Christmas Child by filling shoeboxes in October and providing additional 'fillers' that can be used in the warehouse when the boxes are checked prior to sending to ensure they meet customs regulations and have sufficient items in them. Our coffee morning on Saturday 12 March will have general

information, examples of items that are suitable for shoeboxes, and further information on the work of Samaritan's Purse.

It is always worth looking on the website, www.samaritans-purse.org.uk, for further information.

Jenny Chapman

COFFEE MORNING

In aid of
OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD
(Part of Samaritan's Purse)

Saturday 12 March
Small Hall, Church House
10am to 12 noon



Please come to:

- Enjoy coffee and cake
- Share the joy of children receiving shoeboxes
- Be surprised at the range of work done
- Discover what items are needed to fill a shoebox



For further information please contact:
Jenny Chapman / Frankie Winning

<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

LENT LUNCHEES 2016

This year the Lent Lunches are being held in Braintree Baptist Church each Wednesday between 12 and 1.30pm starting on 10 February and running to 23 March. The cost is £2.75 for adults and £1 for children. Our chosen charity this year is Sure Start.

St Michaels and St Pauls will be hosts on 2 March. If you can come and help that will be appreciated, but please come and support us each week.

Cyril Bamforth

ST MICHAELS LENT COURSE

Wednesdays 7.30pm Church

This year we are looking at some questions that people may have put to you at some time or other.

The evenings are being led by members of the Monday night 'Good Book College'. There will be time for discussion as well as the opportunity to look at the Bible.

Hopefully, these Wednesday evenings will help us the better to give 'a reason for the hope that is in you' (1 Peter 3:5). And, to borrow a phrase from days gone by, 'nourish our souls' as well.

24 February *'Is God really there?'*

2 March *'Science has disproved Christianity'*

9 March *'Jesus fascinates me, but the church puts me off'*

16 March *'Isn't it time to stop thinking about God as male?'*

Stephen Bailey

SIMNEL CAKE

Simnel Cake is especially associated with Mothering Sunday, which this year falls on 6 March. It is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with 11 balls of marzipan icing on top representing the 11 disciples. (Judas is not included.)

Would you like to make one to bring to Church that day?

FOR THE CAKE

- 100 g (4 oz) red or natural glacé cherries
- 225 g (8 oz) softened butter
- 225 g (8 oz) light muscovado sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 225 g (8 oz) self-raising flour
- 225 g (8 oz) sultanas
- 100 g (4 oz) currants
- 50 g (2 oz) chopped candied peel
- grated rind of 2 lemons
- 2 level teaspoons ground mixed spice



FOR THE FILLING AND TOPPING

- 450 g (1 lb) golden marzipan
- 2 tablespoons apricot jam
- 1 large egg, beaten, to glaze

1. Pre-heat the oven to 150 degrees C or Fan 130 degrees C/Gas 2. Grease a 20 cm (8 in) deep round cake tin then line the base and sides with baking parchment.

2. Cut the cherries into quarters, put in a sieve and rinse under running water. Drain well then dry thoroughly on kitchen paper. Measure all the cake ingredients into a large mixing bowl and beat well until thoroughly blended. Place half the mixture into the prepared tin and level the surface.

3. Take one-third of the almond paste and roll it out to a circle the size of the tin and then place on top of the cake mixture. Spoon the remaining cake mixture on top and level the surface.
4. Bake in the pre-heated oven for about 2½ hours until well risen, evenly brown and firm to the touch. Cover with foil after 1 hour if the top is browning too quickly. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes then turn out, peel off the parchment and finish cooling on a wire rack.
5. When the cake is cool, brush the top with a little warmed apricot jam and roll out half the remaining almond paste to fit the top. Press firmly on the top and crimp the edges to decorate. Mark a criss-cross pattern on the almond paste with a sharp knife. Form the remaining almond paste into 11 balls.
6. Brush the almond paste with beaten egg and arrange the almond paste balls around the edge of the cake. Also brush the tops of the balls with beaten egg, and then place the cake under a hot grill to turn the almond paste golden.

Harsha Mason

LADIES GROUP

Mrs Jean Bell came to speak to us in February and show us some of the beautiful handmade cards she had created. Jean uses many different methods to make her cards. She demonstrated the layering technique with black and white cards and different thicknesses of paper. Jean recycles as many materials as she can; these can include unused wallpaper and the centre's of peel-off stickers. Members then made either a gift box or a card.

Next month Helen will be showing her holiday pictures from her trip to Canada last year.

Helen Kemp

WALKS FOR 2016

Do you enjoy walking in the countryside?

It was good to have other folk joining us last year for three Saturday afternoon walks each of about five miles. Not only could we delight in being in the 'great outdoors' but we chatted as we went and had a leisurely stop for an ice-cream, a cuppa or a pint! It was suggested that more should be scheduled for Saturday afternoons in 2016.

The dates will be:

19 March
28 May
23 July
17 September
12 November

Nearer the time, details of each walk will be posted on the Notice Board in the Welcome Area and advertised on the weekly Notices Sheet.

You would be most welcome to join us for all, some or even just one of the walks.



Terry and Miriam Clark

THOUGHT

What every Christian should know

Take care of God's business and He will take care of yours!

Sow bad seeds, reap bad things.

I need to sow better seeds.

I can do what is right.

Leave it, drop it and let it go.

Prayer to be prayed every day

God, I am not mad at anybody today.

There is nothing in my heart against anyone.

And if something pops up I have forgotten then I have to take care of it

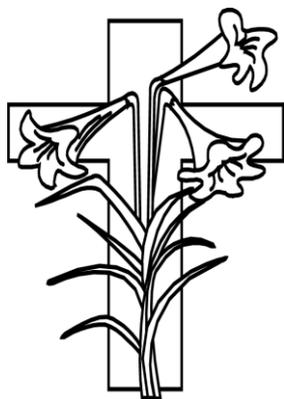
Peter Schaad

GARDENING TIPS

This year I have tried an experiment: the chilli plants from last year I brought in and have slowly been watering over the winter. So far they are looking good ready to go back outside, now to wait until the greenhouse is ready, and I'll keep you posted over the summer.

In the main garden this month, I've enjoyed seeing a lot of bulbs flowering early and so now it is time to prepare the summer bulbs, lift and move the snowdrops whilst green and then start my least favourite chore, mowing the lawn. I will also clean the greenhouse out and look to see what seeds I will plant in there to get a good start, in my case probably a variety of tomatoes. The yellow and black ones make an exciting salad with the trusty gardeners delight.

Dave Marriott



Easter 2016
at St Michaels
24 March
Maundy Thursday

8:00 pm Holy Communion – Jesus Chapel

25 March Good Friday

9.30 am United Service at St Peter's Bocking
followed by Procession of the
Cross to George Yard

10.45 am Worship in George Yard, with
Message of the Cross

2:00 pm Guided Meditation, with hymns
– Jesus Chapel

27 March Easter Day

8:00 am Holy Communion

10:00 am Family Communion

6.30 pm Easter Praise

MARCH DIARY

1 Tuesday

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

2 Wednesday

9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study

10.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason

12–1.30pm Lent Lunch (P7) – Braintree Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.30pm Lent Course 2 – Church

8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road

3 Thursday

2.15pm Women's Fellowship

3.30pm ASK

8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

4 Friday

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

5 Saturday

8-10am SuMMiT Prayer Breakfast – Church House

6 Sunday 4th of Lent

8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Stephen Bailey

10.00am Church Family Worship with Baptism – Born twice?
– Roger Cooke

5.15pm Evening Prayer – Jesus Chapel – Cyril Bamforth

6.30pm Café Church

7.30pm Focus

7 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing

7.30pm Good Book College

8.00pm Badminton

8 Tuesday

- 10.00am CHIP Group – Church House
- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks
- 7.25pm Elders – Church House
- 8.00pm Ladies Group

9 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study
- 10.00am CFW Planning Group – 10 Parklands
- 12–1.30pm Lent Lunch – Braintree Baptist Church
- 7.30pm Lent Course 3 – Church
- 7.30pm Deanery Synod – St Paul's
- 6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
- 8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road
- 8.30pm SuMMiT – Wetherspoons, Fairfield Road

10 Thursday

- 2.15pm Women's Fellowship
- 3.30pm ASK
- 8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

11 Friday

- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

12 Saturday

- 9.15am Diocesan Synod - Cathedral
- 10-12 Samaritan's Purse Coffee Morning – Church House

13 Sunday 5th of Lent

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
- 10.00am Morning Worship– The healing of the paralytic –
Revd Charles Mason
- 6.30pm Holy Communion – Are you in too deep? –
Revd Stephen Bailey
- 7.30pm Focus

14 Monday

- 12.15pm Spotlight
- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers
- 7.30pm Bell Ringing
- 7.30pm Good Book College
- 8.00pm Badminton

15 Tuesday APRIL LINK SUBMISSION DUE

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

16 Wednesday ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION STARTS

12–1.30pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church

3.00pm Funeral of Greg Strathearn

7.30pm Lent Couse 4 – Church

8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road

17 Thursday

2.30pm Holy Communion – The Hawthorns

3.30pm ASK

7.30pm PCC – Church House

8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

18 Friday

2.30pm Bradbury House Service – Revd Charles Mason

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

19 Saturday

pm (tbc) Walk with the Clarks (See P10)

20 Sunday Palm Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Sarah Hayward

10.00am Holy Communion – A psalm for Passiontide –
Revd Stephen Bailey

6.30pm Evening Worship – Friendship tried and tested –
Revd Charles Mason

7.30pm Focus

8.00pm Prayer Meeting – Jesus Chapel

21 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Good Book College

8.00pm Bell Ringing

8.00pm Badminton

22 Tuesday

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

7.30pm SuMMiT Meal – Pizza Express

23 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study
12–1.30pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
7.25pm Elders – Church House
8.00pm Evangelism Group – Church House
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road

24 Thursday MAUNDY THURSDAY

- 9.30am St Michael's School Service
2.15pm Women's Fellowship
8.00pm Holy Communion – Jesus Chapel

25 Friday GOOD FRIDAY

- 9.00am Flower Club – Church [no Flower Club in evening]
9.45am United Service – St Peter's Bocking
10.45am Message of the Cross – George Yard
2.00pm Guided Meditation – Jesus Chapel

27 Sunday EASTER DAY

- 8.70am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am Family Communion – The Living One –
Revd Charles Mason
6.30pm Easter Praise – The cursing of the serpent –
Revd Charles Mason
7.30pm Focus

28 Monday

- 7.30pm Bell Ringing

30 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road

31 Thursday

- 2.15pm Women's Fellowship

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

- 28 January June Andrews (85)
9 February Doreen Richardson (93)

THE QUEEN'S 90th BIRTHDAY – EVENTS AT ST MICHAELS

We at St Michaels will be marking the Queen's 90th birthday with an exciting series of events over the weekend of 11 and 12 June, with which we can all be involved. Our focus will be on the Queen's faith, and we will be giving anyone who comes to the public events a booklet entitled 'The Servant Queen, and the King she serves', produced by HOPE and the Bible Society, with a foreword by the Queen.

90 Years of St Michaels Parish

The main event will be an exhibition of various aspects of life in the parish over the past 9 decades, enhanced with flower displays.

Have you any Royal memorabilia you can lend, or copies of documents or photographs of weddings and christenings, the church buildings, life in the St Michaels church family, or St Michael's School? Anyone who can help with items for this historic occasion should speak to or contact:

Mrs Lin Terris (See contact pages), or items can be logged and left in the vestry and we will store them safely until then.

The exhibition will be open to the public on 11 and 12 of June.

Other events

Civic Service: Saturday 11 June 11.00am.

Open Air Service: Sunday 12 June 10.00am

Church Family churchyard/street party: Sunday 12 June 12.30 – 3.00pm



More details later, but please start to bring in items which can be used in the exhibition.
Thank you

Jonathan Wicks

LINEN CLOTH CHALLENGE

Langushing and protected in the vestry is a table cloth. There is an inscription with it that says “Linen cloth embroidered in 1949 by ladies of St Michael’s Church. 750th celebration of Church and Charter”.

We would very much like to display this cloth in church during the celebrations for the Queen’s 90th birthday in June this year. It would be lovely to include photos and recollections of these people. Listed on the next page are the 55 signatures. (*I hope that they have all been translated correctly!*).



I vividly remember Hilda McQuade and Nancy Stowe but I am sure that others know many more.

If you can help please contact Lin Terris (see contact pages).

Signatures on the Linen Cloth

Ethel Adams	Gladys Hardy	Norrie Robson
Dorothy Andrews	Olive Hardy	Jean Russell
Pat Axon	Hilda Hicks	Nettie Seaddon
Winn Bailey	Dorothy Holland	Josy Searle
Rene Balson	Phyl Johnson	Kathleen Selward
Lilly Bird	Elsie Ketley	Kitty Sharp
Queenie Bird	Sylvia Laughton	Minnie Smith
Mary Brown	Mary Livermore	Rita Smith
Winifred Brown	Caroline	Nancy Stowe
Mary Churchman	Mackenzie	Phylis Surrey
Kath Cooper	Hilda McQuade	Evelyn Thompson
Leonara Coulsen	Sylvia Moore	Vi Thompson
Freda Crow	Betty Morgan	Elma Tyrrell
Dora Edwards	Dorothy Overall	Hilda Vickers
Elsie Franklin	Gwen Parker	Gladys Wilkinson
Winifred French	Ruby Parker	Frances Wilson
Joan Garwood	Audrey Ray	Emelia Wright
Ettia Gilder	Peggy Richens	Dorothy Young
Iris Gordon	Evelyn Ridley	

Lesley Davey

BELFRY BULLETIN

St MICHAELS BRAINTREE GUILD of BELLRINGERS AGM

This was held in the ringing chamber on Monday 1 February.



Guild Master Debbie Hill welcomed Revd Charles Mason, Churchwarden Cyril Bamforth and Guild members to the meeting and invited Charles to open the meeting with prayer. Charles read Psalm 122 and prayed for bellringing.

Apologies were received from Churchwarden Lesley Davey and Queenie Brown.

The minutes of our last AGM were accepted and signed and with no matters arising we moved on to Officers' reports.

MASTERS

The Guild members were commended for their hard work which made for an improvement in the ringing quality and methods rang. Two of our young ringers were congratulated on their progress, Gareth Davies has rung his first Quarter Peal, is learning to ring inside to Plain Bob Doubles and is ringing the Tenor competently. Ellie Gray has progressed quickly from learning to handle a bell to ringing rounds and call changes to service ringing standard.

We have rung for most Sunday morning services, for weddings, St. Georges Day, the 70th anniversary of VE Day, 800th sealing of the Magna Carta, Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas services.

Four of our members have had medical problems, that we have managed to ring for all the above occasions shows the dedication, patience and determination of the Guild.

Debbie finished her report by thanking The Revd Charles Mason for his continued support.

STEEPLE KEEPER'S

Apart from putting on the muffles for the Remembrance period nothing has been done.

The meeting felt it would be a good idea to have an inspection of the bells to see if a maintenance programme was need.

TREASURER'S

Richard Ould reported a healthy balance sheet helped by an increase in wedding ringing.

This ended the reports and we went on to elect Ellie Gray as a full member of the Guild.

Charles then took the chair for the election of Officers.

Due to her back problems Debbie Hill stood down as Master. Expressing the sentiments of all the Guild, Richard thanked Debbie for her inspiring leadership and the encouragement she has given to all ringers who have come to ring at St Michaels, we have all benefited from her involvement.

- Bradley Hill is our new Master.
- Debbie Hill is our Deputy Master.
- Lin Ould is still our very efficient Secretary.
- Richard Ould is again in charge of the Treasury.
- Bradley is Steeple Keeper with Phil Kelly as his Deputy.

A ringing tour is planned for the Early Spring Bank Holiday in the High Peak of Derbyshire.

Charles closed the meeting by using the words of a bellringer's hymn as a prayer.

Peter Smith