

The LINK

30p

May 2016



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



My dear Friends

We've got a rather unusual event coming up on the weekend of 14/15 May which I'd like to tell you about.

Several weeks ago I, along with all other serving clergy in the C of E, received a circular letter from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

It was headed: **A Call to Prayer in the week leading up to Pentecost 2016 [15 May].**

Their Graces went on to write:

“Like us, you will know that ministry is empty and barren without prayer. That is why we are taking the unprecedented step of writing to every serving parish priest in the Church of England inviting you and your people to join us in a week of prayer for the evangelisation of our nation. In the week leading up to Pentecost (8–15 May) we long to see a great wave of prayer across our land, throughout the Church of England and many other Churches. Our hope is

- for all Christians to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ;
- for all of us to have confidence to share the Gospel
- for all to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow Him as disciples, to live out the Gospel and to seek God's kingdom from day to day.

“At the heart of our prayers will be the words that Jesus Christ himself taught us - ‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.’ It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord's Prayer... When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use us to his glory.

“But how? We are aware that many dioceses, cathedrals, parishes, and chaplaincies will already be preparing to engage in special times of prayer and witness at that time. If this applies to you, please do not see this letter as an additional burden; we simply ask that your own prayers, as you engage in your diocesan or parish plans, should include your longing that more should come to know Christ.”

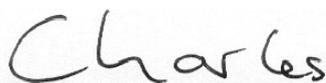
Way back in January, as reported in the February LINK, our PCC decided to hold a Weekend of Thanksgiving and Giving, coincidentally on that Pentecost weekend that the Archbishops were now writing about. The PCC's thoughts had been about how to encourage people to review their regular giving earlier in the year instead of relying on large one-off donations at our November Gift Day; Gift Day could then be scaled back or even not held at all. Thankfulness to God is the greatest motivation for Christian giving – hence the idea of 'Thanksgiving and Giving'.

The Archbishops' initiative actually fits in with this very well. After all, there is no greater gift of God for which to give thanks than Jesus Christ and his gospel, and the precious freedom which we still have to live it out and pass it on. Equally the mission of St Michaels, to 'Know Christ and Make Him Known', while not about money, cannot be done without it, whether we're thinking of our in-house or local activities, or the support of Christian outreach thousands of miles away.

There will certainly be mention of money and giving that weekend, and helpful materials, but the centrepiece is a planned **24 hours of continuous prayer in the church from 7am Saturday to 7am Sunday**, the aim being to have at least two people present at all times, with the emphasis on the evangelisation of our nation. A small group has been formed to plan the details, and you may expect some appeals and sign-up sheets to appear shortly.

If you've ever taken part in a prayer vigil before, I'm sure you'll agree with me that the time passes remarkably quickly, and that it is an enjoyable and deeply satisfying experience; but don't worry, we shall also be mindful of the practicalities and how important it is that those praying should be, and feel, safe and secure at all times, especially in the night hours.

Your sincere friend and Vicar

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MISSION OF THE MONTH CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15-21 MAY 2016

Jesus calls us to love our neighbours and not just those that live next door or down the street. Christian Aid Week unites over 20,000 churches to put their love into action, and that includes **ST MICHAELS, BRAINTREE!!**

Christian Aid exists to help those in need – regardless of religion, ethnicity or nationality. It works through partners overseas: churches, ecumenical bodies and movements who have common values and competence in eradicating poverty. Christian Aid takes seriously its commitment to measuring impact, making a difference and having leverage for great results. It is a leading force against global poverty as well as being a well-managed, flexible and professional organisation.

Right now in Ethiopia more than **10 million people** are suffering from hunger and thirst as the country faces the worst drought in three decades. Farmers haven't been able to harvest any crops for two consecutive seasons! Families are going hungry as they struggle to find enough food, and more than **400,000** children are experiencing severe malnutrition. Without urgent funding to address the food shortages, the humanitarian situation will deteriorate even further. Earlier this year, Christian Aid released **£50,000** of emergency funds to help some of the most vulnerable people in the hardest-hit communities. The money provided school meals for **4,000** children whose families don't have enough food to give them even one meal a day. They have also made sure that **700** children in two more schools have access to safe drinking water. Further assessments are being made to enable plans for further emergency responses.

Continued over...

In Bangladesh, Morsheda (pictured) lives in fear of the river. No matter how hard she works, every year the floods damage her home, leaving her and her four children struggling to cope.

Just **£250** is enough for a Christian Aid Home Safety package which would flood-proof her home by raising it 8ft and also provide her with a goat, seeds and a wormery (to make compost!) – thus giving her a lifetime income and a safer life.

ST MICHAELS CAN HELP and WILL HELP!!



For various reasons, door to door collections are becoming less easy but we at St Michaels can aim to help by making use of the Christian Aid envelopes which will be given out on 15 May in church and which will also be available on the display table for the whole month. Please pray about what your response can be to this year's countrywide effort to help those who have such a struggle to cope, whereas we almost take it for granted to accept all that we can enjoy. The envelopes can be returned to the offertory boxes in church. **THANK YOU!!**

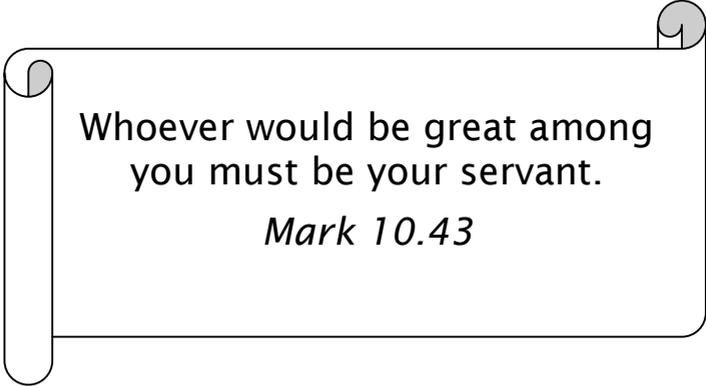
Marion Richardson

LENT LUNCHES

This year the Lent Lunches were held at the Baptist Church between 10 February and 23 March. Over this period almost 400 adults and 4 children attended. Despite the lower numbers we managed to raise £1,110 by keeping our costs down. This year we decided to sponsor only one local charity, so the Salvation Army will be receiving a cheque for their Lighthouse project helping formerly homeless people set up their new homes.

Cyril Bamforth

VERSE OF THE YEAR 2016



Whoever would be great among
you must be your servant.

Mark 10.43

LADIES GROUP

Rev. John Robinson paid us a return visit in April. He and his wife had suffered a devastating fire since he was last with us. Thankfully they were both unhurt, but their home took well over a year to repair; and of course many precious mementos were lost.

However much of John's music was saved and he continued to enchant us with both tunes and anecdotes of his life as a child; for example he had regular piano lessons, but when the teacher was asked to demonstrate how a certain piece should be played she became quite anxious and had to confess that it was several years since she last played an instrument!

Among the pieces John played were Land of Hope and Glory, Goodbye Dolly Gray, and samples from HMS Pinafore and The Mikado; all of which were written in the early part of the last century or before. Braintree High School and Black Notley Hospital were also opened at this time.

Next month Margaret Buston will be coming to speak to us.

Helen Kemp

In concert

**Joel & Jonathan Wicks
and band**



**Saturday 30
April
7.30 - 9.00
pm**

St Michael's Church Braintree

Refreshments



Free entry, but donations
to Christian Aid welcome

GARDENING TIPS

The chilli plants are now being replanted into new pots. They will be going into the greenhouse that I have now put out. From some research I have found out that if the roots are stressed then the chilli produces hotter fruit as it feels it needs to produce more seeds.

I would also this month look after the strawberries with the support of straw to prevent the fruit forming and rotting. These will need a gentle feed and consistent watering to ensure that they grow evenly.



easy to water.

Still with vegetables, I would still keep an eye on the tomatoes and place them outside to harden off, keeping a watch for a late frost. Tomatoes when grown in a grow-bag can benefit from the extra layer a grow bag pot brings to it. It gives extra depth to the roots whilst making it

Prune your penstemons now cut all the old shoots back to the base provided there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves. Cuttings can also be put into root hormone then put into a pot of potting compost. If you keep this gently watered you will see the growth of new plants.



Dave Marriott

MAY DIARY

1 Sunday

6th of Easter

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am Church Family Worship – One body...
which part are you? – Harsha Mason
5.15pm Evening Prayer – Jesus Chapel –
Revd Charles Mason
6.30pm Evening Worship – The thought that counts? –
Revd Charles Mason
7.30pm Focus
8.00pm Prayer Meeting – Jesus Chapel

2 Monday

- 7.30pm Bell Ringing
8.00pm Badminton

3 Tuesday

- 7.30pm Confirmation Service – The Bishop of Colchester

4 Wednesday

- 10.00am Holy Communion – Revd Stephen Bailey
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
7.25pm Elders – Church House
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road
8.30pm SuMMiT – Wetherspoons, Fairfield Road

5 Thursday

ASCENSION DAY

- 2.15pm Holy Communion – Jesus Chapel –
Revd Charles Mason
8.00pm CFW Planning Group – 10 Parklands
8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

6 Friday

- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

7 Saturday

- 8-10am SuMMiT Prayer Breakfast – Church House
9.00am Church and Church House Work Day

8 Sunday

8.00am

10.00am

6.30pm

7.30pm

9 Monday

12.15pm

5.30pm

7.30pm

7.30pm

8.00pm

8.00pm

10 Tuesday

1.15pm

7.30pm

8.00pm

11 Wednesday

9:45am

6.30pm

7.30pm

8.00pm

12 Thursday

2.15pm

3.30pm

7.30pm

13 Friday

5.30pm

14 Saturday

7.00am

7th of Easter

Holy Communion – Revd Stephen Bailey

Morning Worship – Disaster strikes –

Revd Charles Mason

Holy Communion – Ready with the readies? –

Revd Charles Mason

Focus

Spotlight

4th Braintree Beavers

Bell Ringing

Good Book College

Archdeacon's Visitation – Finchingfield Church

Badminton

Tiddlywinks

Street Visitors' training – Church House

Ladies Group

Meeting Point Bible Study

4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

Evangelism Group – Church House

Bible Study Groups: Chestnut Grove, Lifebuilder,
Notley Road

Women's Fellowship

ASK

PCC – Church House

4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

THANKSGIVING AND GIVING WEEKEND

Start of 24-hour prayer vigil – Church

15 Sunday Pentecost

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Sarah Hayward
10.00am Holy Communion – Cold comfort –
Revd Charles Mason
6.30pm Evening Worship – What you get from giving –
Joel Wicks
7.30pm Focus
8.00pm Prayer Meeting – Jesus Chapel

16 Monday

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

17 Tuesday JUNE LINK SUBMISSION DUE

- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks
7.00pm Street Visitation

18 Wednesday

- 6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
7.25pm Elders – Church House
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road,
Chestnut Grove

19 Thursday

- 2.30pm Holy Communion – The Hawthorns
3.30pm ASK
8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

20 Friday

- 5.30pm Scouts AGM – Church

22 Sunday Trinity Sunday

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am Morning Worship – No easy answers –
Roger Cooke
6.30pm Evening Worship – Captive to Christ –
Revd Stephen Bailey
7.30pm Focus

23 Monday

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

24 Tuesday

- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks

25 Wednesday

- 6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road,
Chestnut Grove

26 Thursday

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

27 Friday

- 2.30pm Bradbury House Service – Tom St John-Coleman
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts
7.30pm Flower Club

29 Sunday 1st after Trinity

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Sarah Hayward
10.00am Morning Worship – All right in the end –
Revd Stephen Bailey
6.30pm United Service at St Peter's
7.30pm Focus

30 Monday

- 7.30pm Good Book College
8.00pm Bell Ringing
8.00pm Badminton

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

- 21 March Dulcie Joslin (89)



St Michaels nets award from Fishermen's Mission

As Jack and Joyce Green were away on holiday, to Harsha and me fell the great honour of attending the Fishermen's Mission AGM in London on 12 April and collecting on behalf of St Michaels Church their **2015 Christian Fellowship Award**, in recognition of literally decades of regular support. Nearly all of you will know of the Mission through Andy Malcolm, who for years has come to us at the start of December, with an update on the Mission and a lively Christmas message.

The meeting took place in the sumptuous setting of Trinity House, overlooking the Tower of London and Tower Bridge. There were various formalities to be dealt with, one of which was to read out a thankyou letter from their patron The Queen, to whom they had sent Loyal Greetings on the occasion of her 90th birthday. Jill Henderson announced her retirement as Chairman; she is to be succeeded by Prof Glyn Tonge.

We then moved on to the Awards part of the proceedings – and what a variety there was! Volunteer of the Year, Event of the Year, Restaurant of the Year, Fundraising Team of the Year, Twitter Friend of the Year, Corporate Champions, Fish Friday Event, Fish and Chip Shop, Outstanding Contribution, and of course the one that St Michaels Braintree received, the Christian Fellowship Award. The Fundraising Team, I noted, had ridden round Scotland on their Honda C90 motorcycles, which struck rather a nostalgic note with me, as that's a machine I owned back in the 1970s!

The awards were announced by Alison Godfrey, Director of Fundraising, and presented by Gina Moore, a Regional Fundraiser in the South West, ie Andy Malcolm's 'opposite number'.

We were then treated to a very moving presentation of family life in the fishing industry from a couple in Emsworth, Pete and

Chantelle Williams. Pete said what a hard life it was, but how much he enjoyed the sea environment and the challenges of adapting to the weather and seasons, both of which have a big effect on what and how much you catch. Chantelle almost broke down as she spoke of the constant anxiety of fishermen's wives, never sure whether their husbands would come home safely.



Rev Derath Durkin (Twitter Friend of the Year 2015) told us of how she had become involved as a volunteer with the Mission on her retirement to Newlyn, Cornwall, and had taken on a huge amount of schools work.

Our visit concluded with a very stylish buffet lunch, during which we were able to chat to various members of the Council, and of course catch up with Andy Malcolm (pictured above with Harsha and me), who as always was on great form. He sends warmest greetings to St Michaels.

I will shortly bring the Award trophy to church, so that you may all admire it. (Etched glass doesn't photograph very well!)

Charles Mason

BELFRY BULLETIN

Once again we were the hosts for the EACR Northern Districts monthly Advanced Practice, when a wide ranging number of methods were rung to a high standard. A good and productive practice.



Prior to the 6.30pm service on Sunday 20 March, Marian Wood 1, Peter Smith 2, Linda Ranby 3, Di Carpenter 4, Pat Cresshull 5, Peter Wood 6, Ian Cresshull 7, Brian Meads 8, David Childs 9, Andrew Taylor, rang 1259 changes Grandsire Caters in 46 mins; this was Linda Ranby's 1st Quarter Peal of Grandsire Caters.

At our practice on Monday 21 March we were joined by David and Laura Childs, Linda Ranby and Ellis Whitehouse for an extensive and enjoyable evening. This was followed by a planning meeting for our ringing weekend in Derbyshire, more of which next month.

Our Gareth Davies was a member of the District's Youth Band that took part in EACR Northern District's Striking Competition. They rang so well that the other teams gave them a spontaneous round of applause at the end of the test piece. Well done Gareth.

Peter Smith