

The LINK

30p

June 2016



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

Mason farewell luncheon

Sunday 3 July 2016

Buffet lunch



12 noon for 12.30 Church House

Book up by Sunday 19 June

Contact the sides-people or
Helen Bartlett-Rawlings to sign up





My dear Friends

Two recent articles in *The Daily Telegraph* to which my attention was drawn made the same point: Christians like serious sermons, and rank the value of 'Biblical exposition' way above hipness and humour in the preacher. This emerges from research commissioned by the Christian

Resources Exhibition.

Humour in particular is frowned upon, as much of it is toe-curlingly bad – most preachers apparently thinking they are funnier than they are. In fact Biblical exposition comes top of the list (44.3%) of what congregations think is most important in a sermon, with humour way down near the bottom at 1.6%.

Even more surprising, in my view, is that there is still an appetite for longer sermons. We are constantly being told about the diminishing attention spans of this channel-hopping age, yet less than 1% of the survey sample wanted a talk of less than 5 minutes. The most popular length is 10-20 minutes (44%), but as many as 36% favoured 20-30 minutes, which is the most usual length at St Michaels. (Only 10% of those asked wanted more than 30 minutes.)

Only 11% wanted no sermon at all, or to use the language of the survey, considered that 'the idea of a sermon being preached in church each week is outdated.'

In my first parish back in the 1980s there was a Reader who, if anyone complained about a sermon being too long, would retort: 'Sermonettes make Christianettes'. In the 1990s another friend of mine who is big on preaching deplored the constant call for 'little chats'. I sympathised with both of them, but had always assumed that they were fighting a losing battle, and that eventually the sermon would go the way of the dodo. This latest CRE research gives me new heart.

St Michaels Braintree has always – or at least in the last few decades – set great store by the preaching and teaching of the Bible as God’s word, and I personally hope that this will strongly influence the choice of the person who is to succeed me, though of course I hope and expect that they will have many other gifts as well. In his farewell to the Ephesians, Paul said: ‘I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified’ (Acts 20.32).

I believe that sermons really do work, even if you can’t remember much, if anything, from what you heard a week or two ago. I often can’t remember what I had for lunch the previous day, but I know the meal did me good! And though we may not see instant results, look at the worn steps inside and outside our church building, and be reminded that continued exposure to the weather and repeated contact with thousands upon thousands of feet does make a difference, even upon hard stone.

And what about that seemingly-despised humour? Everyone knows, whether as speaker or audience, the embarrassment of a joke that falls flat, and the longer the build-up, the better the punchline has to be to justify the wait. But I do agree with former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey, when he says: ‘A really good joke can link in with the address and give a bit of a breathing space’. Anecdotes and jokes do give the congregation a chance to catch up: a sermon in which an eager note-taker is getting left behind is probably too dense. By the way, it’s great that St Michaels does have some note-takers – they’re such an encouragement.

Don’t settle for anything less than a competent preacher – and keep listening!

Your sincere friend and Vicar

Charles

PCC Meeting 12 May Charles Mason

Andy Carter and David Henfrey were co-opted onto the PCC.



Charles led a time of prayer, with a theme of unity and harmony based on Ephesians 4.

David Henfrey, David Huxter, David Marriott, Lin Terris and John Turton were appointed to the **Standing Committee**.

Following on from a question raised by John Turton at the March PCC (though unfortunately John was absent) there was a substantial discussion of the relationship between **Deanery Synod members, the PCC and the church**, and in particular whether Synod members are delegates of the PCC. It was clear that in law they are not, but are nonetheless expected to represent the views of their parish in Synod. This was particularly relevant with the likelihood that the Synod would discuss the vacancy at St Michaels in the coming months.

Lin Terris presented a report on recent meetings of the **Evangelism Group**, which had been mainly concerned with the celebration of The Queen's 90th birthday on 11 and 12 June, though they were also looking ahead to another Newcomers Tea and Film Afternoon in the autumn.

Charles reported on the **CHIP Group**, which was organizing Street Visitation, starting the following week, and had also discussed how best to recruit people for enquires' courses.

Joel Wicks produced a draft **Parish Safeguarding Statement**; no changes were required since last year. Sue Marriott and John Turton continue as our Safeguarding Reps for Children and Vulnerable Adults respectively.

Charles read out thankyou letters from Alan Radford, CMS, and The Christian Institute.

The next meeting of the PCC is scheduled for 21 July. **Bishop Roger** is due to attend on 8 September.

MISSION OF THE MONTH
CHURCH PASTORAL AID SOCIETY
Mission at Home



making disciples, developing leaders, growing churches

A very important mission to us at St Michaels. CPAS is our Patron and will be supporting us during the coming months of the interregnum. They are responsible in seeking to appoint evangelical mission minded leaders. This year so far they have 70 vacancies to fill. Finding the right person for a Church has a massive impact not only for the congregation but for the parish as a whole.

PATRONAGE CHURCHES
LEADERSHIP



VENTURES

They are actively involved in summer camps and children and young people have a wonderful time of fun and fellowship and are taught daily of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for their young lives. Members of our congregation have been on camps as leaders.

CPAS also provide help in many other ways.

MENTORING

DISCIPLESHIP

Further details may be found on the mission table in Church or www.cpas.org.uk

Rosa Read

LADIES GROUP

Margaret Buston from our own Church family came to speak to us in May. Margaret told us a little about homeopathy, a subject she has been interested in for many years. Homeopathy is a traditional form of medicine using natural ingredients which mimic the symptoms; for example, using the juice of an onion to counteract a runny nose or applying snow to frostbite. The basic natural ingredient is diluted with liquid in parts of 1-99 several times and can then be administered. Margaret had many remedies she and her family had taken over the years, often with very quick results!

Next month Sharon Gould will tell us about her life with her daughter who has Downs Syndrome.

Helen Kemp

Missionary Boxes Opening

If you collect change at home for one or more of the mission societies we support, thank you.



Please bring your box or boxes to church on **Sunday 12 June** or pass direct to the church rep for the relevant society on or before that date.

VERSE OF THE YEAR 2016

Whoever would be great among
you must be your servant.

Mark 10.43

GARDENING TIPS

The start of June brings to my garden one of my favourite things, blackcurrants. These simple fruit I find so easy to grow and so tasty. The small bushes of Ben Sarek just seem to produce with almost no effort and the smell you get from simply touching the leaves makes me think of stewed blackcurrants over a nice bowl of ice cream. I thus will be going out and harvesting them, and freezing all that I have spare ready for a winter's day.

I am still watching the Chilli experiment, although all seems quiet as they are now re-potted and starting to flower. I will I think be finding some good tomato food to lift their spirits.

Last month the boys and I planted a number of different sorts of sunflower, 6 different varieties in all. Some short and some tall. They germinated in about a week in the small polytunnel I had sitting on the veg patch. So now I will look to plant them up, to attract the wildlife and to hide the fence.

One of the key things I enjoy about this time of year is making time to sit and reflect in the garden. My personal favourite flower the Aquilegia will be in full flower and I am always amazed at the colours that they bring. It might be hard work keeping the weeds at bay, however it's really worth spending the time to see the beauty we have been given stewardship over.



Dave Marriott



**Celebrating The Queen's 90th Birthday
and 90 years of life in St Michaels Parish**

An Exhibition

Saturday 11 June and Sunday 12 June 12.00 - 4.00

In church, with refreshments

Including:

Civic Service Saturday 11 June 11.00

**Open air celebration service Sunday 12 June
10.00**

Church family 'street' party Sunday 12.00

Please contribute:

**...items for the display... help ...food for the
party...prayer...**

Sign the lists in Church or call Lin Terris



Churchyard 'street' party
Sunday 12 June 12.00
For the whole church family,
friends and neighbours

- **Barbecue**
- **Cake and ice-cream**
- **Bouncy castle**
- **Garden games**
- **Face painting**
- **Crafts**

**Celebrating The Queen's 90th
Birthday**





St. Michael's C. of E. Primary School



Summer Fete

Friday 1 July
6-8pm

- Stalls
- Balloon Release
- Raffle,
- Rides
- BBQ
- Entertainment

Please come along and join the fun!
See you there?



JUNE DIARY

1 Wednesday

- 10.00am Holy Communion – Revd Stephen Bailey
7.25pm Elders – Church House
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road

2 Thursday

- 2.15pm Women's Fellowship
7.30pm Evangelism Group – Church House
8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

4 Saturday

- 8-10am SuMMiT Prayer Breakfast – Church House

5 Sunday 2nd after Trinity

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am Church Family Worship with Baptism –
Getting in the way – David Huxter
5.15pm Evening Prayer – Jesus Chapel –
Tom St John-Coleman
6.30pm Evening Worship – The Lord's commission –
Revd Charles Mason
7.30pm Focus
8.00pm Prayer Meeting – Jesus Chapel

6 Monday

- 12.15pm Spotlight
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers
7.30pm Bell Ringing
7.30pm Good Book College
8.00pm Badminton
8.00pm CFW Planning Group – 10a Marshalls Road

7 Tuesday

- 10.00am CHIP Group – Church House
1.15pm Tiddlywinks
7.30pm Prayer Leaders' Training – Church House
8.00pm Ladies Group

8 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
7.30pm Standing Committee – 2 Kenworthy Road
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Chestnut Grove, Lifebuilder,
Notley Road
8.30pm SuMMiT – Wetherspoons, Fairfield Road

9 Thursday

- 2.15pm Women's Fellowship
3.30pm ASK

10 Friday

- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

11 Saturday

- 11.00am Civic Service to celebrate Queen's 90th birthday

12 Sunday 3rd after Trinity

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am Open Air Service – Revd Charles Mason
12 noon Barbecue Lunch
6.30pm Holy Communion – Sorry I've been too kind –
Cyril Bamforth
7.30pm Focus

13 Monday

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

14 Tuesday JULY LINK SUBMISSION DUE

- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks
7.00pm Street Visitation

15 Wednesday

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

16 Thursday

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

17 Friday

- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

18 Saturday

- 9.30am Diocesan Synod – Cathedral

19 Sunday 4th after Trinity

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Sarah Hayward
10.00am Holy Communion – The parable of the sower –
Revd Stephen Bailey
6.30pm Evening Worship – The boasting game –
Revd Charles Mason
7.30pm Focus
8.00pm Prayer Meeting – Jesus Chapel

20 Monday

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

21 Tuesday

- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks

22 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road,
Chestnut Grove

23 Thursday

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

24 Friday

- 2.30pm Bradbury House Service – Jennifer Bailey
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

7.30pm	Flower Club
26 Sunday	5th after Trinity
8.00am	Holy Communion – Revd Charles Mason
10.00am	Morning Worship – Things hidden and revealed – Roger Cooke
6.30pm	Café Church: ‘Les Misérables – a Christian view’
7.30pm	Focus
27 Monday	
5.30pm	4th Braintree Beavers
7.30pm	Good Book College
8.00pm	Bell Ringing
8.00pm	Badminton
28 Tuesday	
1.15pm	Tiddlywinks
29 Wednesday	
9:45am	Meeting Point Bible Study
6.30pm	4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
7.25pm	Elders – Church House
7.30pm	Deanery Synod – Panfield Church
8.00pm	Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder, Notley Road,
30 Thursday	
2.15pm	Women’s Fellowship
3.30pm	ASK
8.00pm	Carry on Exploring Bible Study

FROM THE REGISTERS

Confirmations

3 May	Sam Allen Lydia Benbrook
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Funerals

9 May	Patricia (‘Pat’) Cooke (66)
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CHRISTIAN AID CONCERT

"Well done!! and thanks to Joel, Jonathan and the band together with all who contributed to the success of the concert on Saturday 30 April. Those who supported by attending and donating raised £214.98 for Christian Aid"



Special thanks to Matthew Hart on his debut public performance for such a great cause.



Jonathan Wicks / Dave Marriott

JEAN BARTLETT RAWLINGS – END OF AN ERA

29 ½ years ago in 1986, Reverend Barney Davies asked Jean if she would take over the cleaning of the church as a temporary measure until someone came forward. Jean said “Yes” and the position was duly filled. She retired at the end of April this year!

During these years she endured the dust and disruption caused by the church being re-wired; its pews being removed; the walls re-painted; the servery and toilets installed; huge gas cylinders in the aisles and finally the porches being built. With a smile, cleaning mops and her team of volunteers the building has always remained spick and span – a testimony to our God.



I joined the cleaning team upon my own retirement in 2009 and met her great team. Cleaning was our aim but friendship and fun became the outcome. Our coffee breaks cemented these relationships.

Jill Jackson has now taken up the dusters and hoovers and will, I am sure, welcome anyone who wishes to join her. Please join her rota and have fun too.

Lesley Davey

BELFRY BULLETIN

SPARROWPIT WEEKEND

At our AGM this year we decided to have a social ringing weekend away at the Spring Bank Holiday. Deborah and Gavin Wood kindly let us use their cottage in Sparrowpit, Derbyshire, as our base. So began the planning.



Mid-morning on Friday 29 April the advanced party of Lin and Richard Ould, David Learmonth and Peter Smith left Braintree to set up the sleeping arrangements and to prepare the evening meal. The other car from Braintree with Debbie Hill, Ellie Gray, Bradley Hill and Gareth Davies on board arrived at the same time as the Welsh party, Laura and David Childs, appeared. Now the weekend could start with a delicious chilli (because years ago Laura had a plan).

Mike and Jenny Hastings joined us for our Saturday ringing at 5 churches in The Hope Valley. We started with the unusual shaped 8 bells at Castleton with an almost unique sound. Our next stop was in Hope to ring on the very nice 14cwt 8 bells. It was now time for lunch in Hathersage, the Deputy Master is still drooling over the sausage sandwich see ate. We walked up the very steep hill to ring the 6 bells. We continued our afternoon with the pretty 6 at Bamford these bells had some interesting engineering, they rang very easily. From Bamford we went to Tideswell, not quite in the hope valley, to climb a tall tower to ring the deep throated 13cwt 8. Note to the organiser: please no tower with lots of steps at the end of the day. Evening meal

time so off to The Red Lion Litton for a tasty and satisfying repast with the expected jocular banter.

We split into 2 groups on Sunday morning to enable us to help 2 local Churches, Burbage and Fairfield, to ring for their Sunday morning Service which of course is why we ring bells. We came together at Wormhill where there is a very light, 1cwt, 6 which are rung with one hand, it was an experience for even the most experienced of our group. Ashford-in-the-Water was our next stop where we found the 6cwt 6 quite nice. We had to quickly re-arrange our lunch venue. Bradley used his modern device and soon found us another venue. The afternoons ringing started with the nice light 6 at Elton continued with lumpy 8 at Matlock and finished with the pleasant 8 at Darley Dale, not many steps today.

Back at Sparrowpit we had our traditional Cheese and Port evening, a learning curve for the younger members. We discussed the bells we had rung in the past 2 days and put forward our personal preferences, we then got on to the important issues, like do you have milk in your Red Bush Tea and when lighting a fire do you lay the sticks flat or on their ends. We were also enthused and humbled by the beauty of the countryside, pretty and vibrant villages and interesting buildings we had seen and enjoyed.

We were up early Monday as we had to pack and to tidy the cottage before we left to ring at 4 6 bell towers. Our first were the easy going bells at Chappel-en-the-Frith then onto the good ring at Baslow and then the flighty bells of Gt. Longstone followed by an excellent lunch at The White Lion. We finished our ringing at Old Brampton on probably the best bells of the trip where Bradley had an incident with sally.

The weekend was a huge success and will remain with us for a long time. We had some good ringing, a wide method range, interesting and inspiring churches, good food and cheeky banter

in a lovely setting. One of the bonuses is the progress both Elli and Gareth have made, and they put up with oldies of the party. Well done both of you. It was a high octane 3 days.

We have some thankyou's, to Lin for Fridays delicious Chilli, Bradley for Sundays lunch arrangements, the Vicars and ringers at the churches we visited, but most of all to Deborah and Gavin Wood for letting us use their lovely cottage as our home.

WHAT A WONDERFULL WEEKEND OF CHRISTIAN
CAMERADERY.

Peter Smith

THOUGHTS FOR CHRISTIANS

- I am alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5)
- The moment you are saved you are replanted in Christ
- New creatures in Christ
- To learn who we are in Christ
- The devil offers us stinking thinking
- Where the mind goes, the man follows
- I am free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2)
- I am a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- It is not good for anybody to do it all!

Peter Schaad