

**The LINK**

**30p**

**March 2017**



**The Parish Church of St Michael Braintree**

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

# St. Michaels events in Lent & Easter

## **Ash Wednesday - 1st March**

7.30pm          Communion Service - St. Michaels Church

## **Lent lunches – Starting 1st March**

12-1.15pm      every Wednesday, 1st March to 12th April

Braintree Baptist Church

Cost £2.75 Adults and £1 children.

Proceeds to Braintree Foodbank and BYPC

## **Maundy Thursday – 13th April**

7.30pm          Communion Service - St. Michaels Church

## **Good Friday - 14th April**

12-2.00pm      Church Café open for congregation and visitors

2.15pm          Easter Meditation

## **Easter Saturday - 15th April**

10-1pm          Church Café open for congregation and visitors

## **Easter Sunday – 16th April**

8.00am          Holy Communion

10.00am        Holy Communion

6.30pm          Evening Worship

Dear Friends,

The calendar we chose to put up in the kitchen this year is from the London School of Theology. Above the usual numbered dates for January are the words spoken by Jesus and reported in Matthew 28:19-20a generally referred to as the "Great Commission." They are very appropriate for the opening of a new year where we reaffirm our commitment as Christians to reach out to the whole world which is lost without Christ. I have deliberately not written out those words in this letter, instead encouraging you all to prayerfully open your Bible, read those words that actually come from the mouth of Jesus and consider how they are working out in your life right now.

The message on the January page of our calendar then goes on to tell us a bit about the Evangelical Alliance (perhaps best known to most of us through the work of our TEARfund reps) and the LST. They are passionate about Jesus and seeing people come to know Him. There is a website which inspires a passion for evangelism in our communities, empowering individuals and churches to talk about Jesus and show God's love in words as well as deeds. They offer a wide range of resources intended to inspire and equip Christians not only to reach out but also pray for those who don't yet know Him. We are reminded that we are "Good News" people and as such should tell our story with confidence. And just before they offer some prayer points there are these sentences. "It is our belief that the Church is most effective in mission when we're united in purpose. So let's join together and make Jesus known." (Hey! Where have I heard those last 3 words in inspirational service?)

But then something strange happened on 1st February. I was at a prayer breakfast when one of my fellows said, "the church often talks about the Great Commission, but what about the "Great Omission"? A play on words that made my ears prick up. The

colleague went on to say that he thought the church often made a great thing about getting people in from outside but how much time did we spend getting to know the people already there? I don't think he meant just knowing the names of all the congregation. How much do we really know each other and how concerned are we for each other? Are there people in our congregation who are in need (of any kind) or feeling isolated and neglected?

As I listened to him I tried to resist feeling a little smug. I have seen a great deal of personal, practical help and concern for others from many of our parishioners who seek no public reward or acclaim for their good works done in the Name of Jesus. Equally people are entitled to their privacy and we must always respect that. On the other hand St. Paul lists gossip and gossipers in the pantheon of sins that spoil a church. However, don't let us be complacent, I know that I had to wipe out that smug feeling and accept the challenge that if there are those who do not feel able to share their hurting, where am I going wrong? After all, is it a proverb or just something my dear old mum used to say, "a burden shared is a burden halved".

So to the many of you who help others, thank you. To those who are hurting, we know Jesus loves you but can we help in any practical way? And to those who feel their present circumstances prevent them from opening up, our prayers are with you because our God knows and loves you.

Yours  
*Cyril*

## **MISSION OF THE MONTH**

### **The Leprosy Mission**

#### **An extract of some of the work of the Leprosy Mission:**

In late 2016, Kate Gent visited Purulia Hospital in West Bengal to see how Leprosy Mission staff are dealing with a huge rise in patient numbers there. Here, she shares her story.

I've been told it's a busy outpatients' department here, with up to 300 people coming in every day.

It's Monday morning and it seems like all 300 people have all turned up in the past half hour, but even more keep streaming in.

Mornings in Purulia begin before the sun rises, with people travelling from miles around to come here. For me the sun is a low hazy glow on the horizon by the time I join the road.

The pinks and oranges filter through and paint the fields as amber. From the guest house I see the steady flow of travellers increase, many trundling past the gate wrapped up in shawls and blankets. They were nearing the end of their long journeys.

I walk down the dusty track towards the hospital. A bullock cart trundles by; a couple arrive; a mum with a small baby, an elderly man barely able to walk, weary already from the night of travelling.

Before me, the waiting room is abuzz with people. It's not even 9am and the place is nearly full. I struggle to get past. There are queues and queues of people – the queue is snaking out of the door. I'm amazed at the patience of the staff.

There aren't enough seats and so many people are sat on the cold stone floor. This is the reality of the outpatients' department of West Bengal's specialist leprosy hospital in Purulia.

Later, it's mid-afternoon and I hear a doctor call out "Quick, quick, come quick!" There are over 50 people in the queue. "It's out of control!" she says.

At the back of the pharmacy queue are the mum and baby who I had seen sitting on the floor hours ago. They look exhausted. The little girl wants to go home. Her mum strokes her head and soothes her as best she can.

I make my way to a consultation room where an examination is taking place. The doctor does his best in the circumstances but it's a shared space and there are no curtains or a quiet area to talk confidentially.

Wrapped in a shawl, a young woman looks around to see the queue behind her is now a swarm spilling out the door. It makes me feel uncomfortable as they lean on the low partition peering over while her leg is examined.

I then meet Lavanya. She's travelled such a long way to get here, starting her journey in the dead of night. She travelled 60 miles by bus and on foot all to get to this place of healing. I try to hide my shock as she comes into the consultation room, avoiding all eye contact.

She's beautiful, wearing a bright orange cardigan and a green sari.

She was diagnosed with leprosy recently, and is now coming to Purulia to start her multidrug therapy – the course of drugs that will cure her.

To follow her story please follow the blog on:

[www.leprosymission.org.uk](http://www.leprosymission.org.uk)



## **JUST WHAT IS THE NAME OF OUR CHURCH? 'ST. MICHAEL' OR 'ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS'**

The answer from an article written by a previous vicar, possibly for the church magazine of his day - circa 1899

The Dedication Festival will be a continuation of the Harvest one – Thursday, September 29. This will be a proper occasion to write a few words respecting the ancient saintly name bestowed on Braintree Church. This church was dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, and although we rightly and appropriately keep the feast of the dedication on the day of “St. Michael and All Angels,” it is a mistake to call it “St. Michael and All Angels’ Church” as far as can be ascertained this is a recent designation. In the book called ‘*Liber Regis*’ – the King’s book – in the time of Henry VIII, it is entered “Braintree Vicarage, St. Michael,” the vicar has found the following note entered in the Parish Records of last century – “Braintree Church dedicated to St. Michael.” This note is of interest as shewing what the then vicar and parishioners understood the name of the church to be. All the county Histories both ancient and modern call this “St. Michael’s Church, Braintree.” Traces of a Warrior-angel’s head are seen supporting the south-west arch of the nave; this figure is 700 years old. The stained glass window in the tower is occupied by a full figure of an Angel bearing the red cross shield of St Michael, copied from the Church roof – where there is an armour clad effigy representing the Archangel, with a lifted-up sword and the great dragon under his feet – this carving is 450 years old, is on the roof of the North chancel aisle. Churches of St. Michael invariably occupy elevated situations – standing on the high ground, or on mounts, St. Michael being the highest of the heavenly host. The Angel guardian-warrior, St. Michael, was connected with castles and places of eminence and defence and he appears to have been chosen by the Bishop of London, William De St. Mary who built a castle and

resided in Church Street, Braintree, he re-built and re-founded the church in the year 1199 – nearly 700 years ago.

Although there are many Churches in different parts of the world dedicated to St. Michael, there appears to be but four other ancient churches of that name in Essex – Theydon, Alveley, Kirkley, and Woodham-Walter – We need hardly add that the old name in the church calendars is “Michaelmas Day” and the “All Angels” was not added until hundreds of years after Braintree Church was built.

*Supplied by Lin Terris*

### **LADIES GROUP**

Alex Bass paid us a return visit in February. His talk was about some of the wonders of nature around the very north of Essex; with the prime focus being, the coastal area of Suffolk. Alex explained that the Suffolk coastline is constantly changing, with the tides creating sandbanks, and thus, at times, islands.

He took us to several nature reserves including Fingering Hoe Wick and Minsmere. We saw many beautiful photographs of the flora and fauna including many species I had not heard of before. These included a pyramid orchid, ling heather, Chinese water deer and a cinnamon moth. Alex also showed us pictures of more common, but rarely seen birds such as nightjar, skylark, and a beautiful golden pheasant. Alex punctuated his talk with demonstrations of birdcalls.

Next month Jim Wild will be giving us a talk entitled “Light, Colour and Confusion”.

*Helen Kemp*

## **RAPTURE**

Faith in the Rapture is a requirement for the Rapture.

First Thessalonians 4 : 14 says:

*“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” (King James version)*

Notice the word ‘if’. This is a clear revelation that those who do not believe in the physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus are not believers. Thus, they will not be raptured.

## **SELF LOVE: BABYLON**

Only a very small minority of Christians would accept the following statement:

**“WE ARE ALL AS AN UNCLEAN THING, AND ALL OUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESSES ARE AS FILTHY RAGS.”**

That is contrary to the teaching of the world and 'professing' Christianity at large.

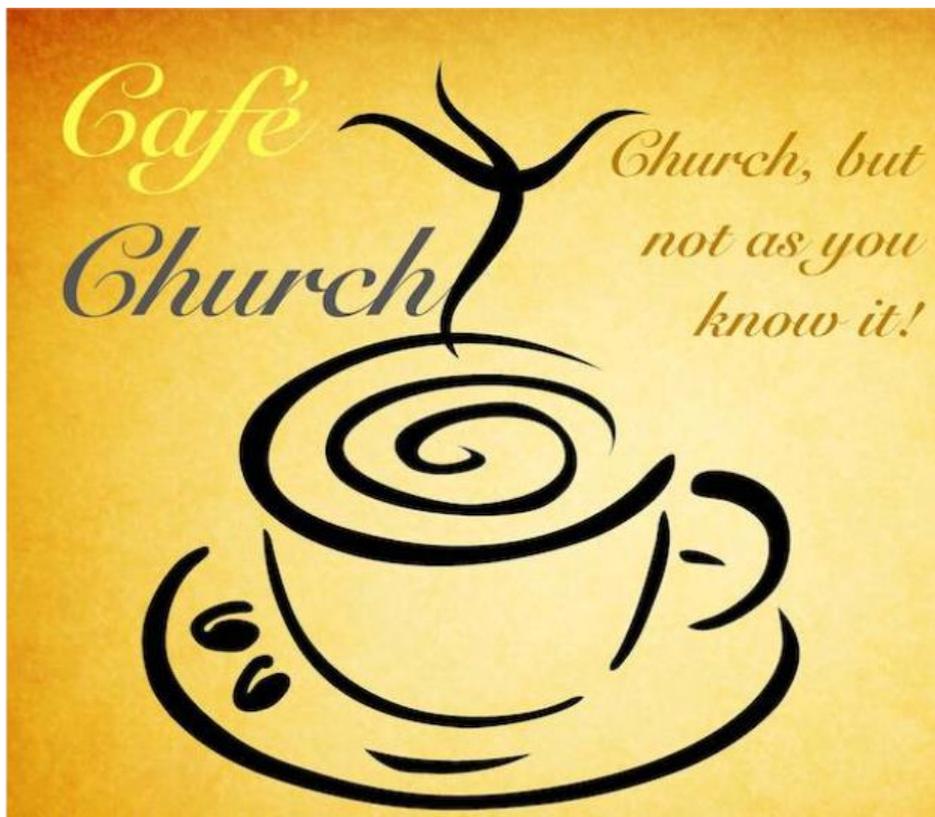
## **BOOK REVIEW**

Book by Arno Froese - How DEMOCRACY Will Elect The ANTICHRIST.

I have read this book and it is very revealing talking about what is going to happen to the Church, the Tribulation, the Rapture, the saving of GOD's people and much more.

If anyone would like to borrow it, please ask me.

*Peter Schaad*



*St Michaels Church*  
*Sunday 19th March*  
*4.00 — 5.30 pm*  
*Suitable for all ages*

## COUNTRYSIDE WALKS FOR 2017

It was good to have other folk joining us last year for five 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! We plan to arrange five more for Saturday afternoons in 2017 during the months of March, May, July, September, and November.

Our first 5-mile circular walk on **Saturday 18 March** will start opposite **The Cross Keys, White Notley**. We plan to meet at **1.45pm to set off at 2pm**.

Details of further walks will be posted on the Notice Board in the Welcome Area and 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

### PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

My grandmother once told me a story about the two wolves fighting inside me.

One is anger, regret, envy, self-pity, nastiness, evil.  
The other is goodness, love, faith, joy, kindness and so on.



I asked her which of the wolves would win. She said "the one you feed"

*Lesley Davey*



## Where?

St Michaels Church House, St Michaels Lane

## When?

18th March, then 4th Saturdays monthly, drop in between 10:00am until 12noon

22nd Apr, 27th May, 24th June

## Who?

Dads, male caregivers and their children

## What?

Table tennis, pool, toys, free morning tea

Toys  
for the  
children  
to play  
with

Tea,  
coffee &  
great  
food

Give  
mum  
some  
time off

Meet  
other  
dads

Who Let The Dads Out? is supported, resourced and enabled by BRF as one of its core ministries. BRF is a Registered Charity.

[www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk](http://www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk)

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## MARCH DIARY

### 1 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study  
12.00pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church  
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts  
8.00pm Holy Communion – Revd Stephen Bailey

### Ash Wednesday

### 2 Thursday

- 3.30pm ASK  
7.30pm Rose Hill Bible Study  
8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

### 3 Friday

- 5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts  
6.30pm Parish Surgery – Church House

### 4 Saturday

- 10.30am Family Gathering – Church House (p17)

### 5 Sunday

#### 1st of Lent

- 8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Beth Bendry  
10.00am Church Family Worship  
5.15pm Evening Prayer – Jesus Chapel  
6.30pm Evening Worship – Before the council –  
Cyril Bamforth  
7.30pm Focus

### 6 Monday

- 12.15pm Spotlight  
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers  
7.30pm Bell Ringing  
7.30pm White Horse Tavern – Church House  
8.00pm Badminton

### 7 Tuesday

- 1.15pm Tiddlywinks

### 8 Wednesday

- 9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study  
12.00pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church  
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.25pm Elders Meeting – Church House  
8.00pm Bible Study Group: Lifebuilder  
8.30pm SuMMiT – Beer, chat and curry – Wetherspoons,  
Fairfield Road

### **9 Thursday**

3.30pm ASK  
7.30pm Rose Hill Bible Study  
8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

### **10 Friday**

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts  
6.30pm Parish Surgery – Church House

### **11 Saturday**

9.00am Women@St. Michaels (p18)

### **12 Sunday 2nd of Lent**

8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Olivia Maxfield-Coote  
10.00am Morning Worship – The tender message –  
Revd Stephen Bailey  
6.30pm Holy Communion – Believers' boldness –  
Revd Jenny Tomlinson  
7.30pm Focus

### **13 Monday**

7.30pm Bell Ringing  
7.30pm White Horse Tavern – Church House  
8.00pm Badminton

### **14 Tuesday APRIL LINK SUBMISSION DUE**

8.00pm Ladies Group

### **15 Wednesday**

9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study  
12.00pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church  
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers  
8.00pm Bible Study Group: Lifebuilder

### **16 Thursday**

3.30pm ASK  
7.30pm PCC

## **17 Friday**

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

6.30pm Parish Surgery – Church House

## **18 Saturday**

10.00am Who let the Dads out? – Church House (p12)

1.45pm Countryside walk (p11)

## **19 Sunday 3rd of Lent**

8.00am Holy Communion – Revd Sarah Hayward

10.00am Holy Communion – The certain message –  
Roger Cooke

4.00pm Café Church (p10)

7.30pm Focus

## **20 Monday**

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing

7.30pm White Horse Tavern – Church House

8.00pm Badminton

## **21 Tuesday**

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

## **22 Wednesday**

9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study

12.00pm Lent Lunch – Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.25pm Elders Meeting – Church House

8.00pm Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder

## **23 Thursday**

3.30pm ASK

7.00pm Women @ St. Michaels Meal - White Hart (p18)

7.30pm Rose Hill Bible Study

8.00pm Carry on Exploring Bible Study

## **24 Friday**

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

6.30pm Parish Surgery – Church House

**26 Sunday      Mothering Sunday**  
 8.00am      Holy Communion – Revd Keith Holloway  
 10.00am      Morning Worship – The urgent message –  
                   Revd Stephen Bailey  
 6.30pm      Evening Worship – Signs and wonders -  
                   Jennifer Bailey  
 7.30pm      Focus

**27 Monday**  
 12.15pm      Spotlight  
 5.30pm      4th Braintree Beavers  
 7.30pm      Bell Ringing  
 7.30pm      White Horse Tavern – Church House  
 8.00pm      Badminton

**28 Tuesday**  
 1.15pm      Tiddlywinks

**29 Wednesday**  
 9:45am      Meeting Point Bible Study  
 12.00pm      Lent Lunch – Baptist Church  
 6.30pm      4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts  
 8.00pm      Bible Study Groups: Lifebuilder

**30 Thursday**  
 3.30pm      ASK  
 7.30pm      Rose Hill Bible Study  
 8.00pm      Carry on Exploring Bible Study

**31 Friday**  
 5.30pm      4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts  
 6.30pm      Parish Surgery – Church House  
 7.30pm      Flower Club

### **FROM THE REGISTERS**

**Weddings**  
 2 Dec      Daniel Knights & Natasha Brown

**Funerals**  
 28 Nov      Leslie Fuller  
 1 Feb      Mollie Abbot  
 24 Feb      Tony Joslin



## Family Gathering

- Children, bring your parents
- Bring brunch food to share:  
breakfast, lunch or baking
- Activities and discussion
- Games and toys for children



Saturday 4 March  
10.30 –12.00pm  
St Michaels Church House



## *Women @ St Michaels*

**Come to our next Saturday School**

**With Rev. Sarah Hayward who is going to take us on a journey in Paul's letter to the Ephesians...**

**On Saturday March 11  
St Michaels Church House  
9.00-12.30**

Sarah Hayward is from St Paul's Church and she will be bringing some women from St Paul's Church with her. She is planning to lead two sessions during the morning and plan some discussion and reflection that we can consider.

We are going to interview her about her Christian Faith and how she was called to be ordained into the Church of England ...so she will be working hard!

Alongside this there will be songs, prayer, conversations, refreshments and the opportunity to get to know God, ourselves, and each other better.

Some quotes that Sarah has given to me by others about Ephesians:

**John Stott:** *Nobody can read Ephesians without being moved to wonder and worship .*

**Armitage Robinson:** *Ephesians is the crown of St Paul's writings.*

**William Barclay:** *Ephesians is the Queen of the Epistles.*

**John Mackay:** *To Ephesians I owe my life.*

So do come, especially if you have never been before. Look for the advertising...Cost £3

An added bonus will be:

**Fairtrade Easter Eggs on sale or to order:  
'The Egg that tells the Easter Story'**



*Women @ St Michaels*

Evening meal

Wednesday March 23

White Hart

7.00pm for 7.30pm

Signup sheet in Church

*Jennifer Bailey*

## **BELFRY BULLETIN**

This year the St Michael's Guild of Change ringers held their AGM in the small hall of church house and it was good to have both Churchwardens Cyril Bamforth and Lesley Davey with us.

The Guild Master, Bradley Hill, welcomed Cyril, Lesley and members to the meeting and invited Cyril to start proceedings with a prayer.

Last year's AGM minutes were accepted and with no matters arising it was onto the Officers Reports.

The Master reported another successful year with members making significant progress. Ellie Gray rang her 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Peal, Gareth Davies rang the Tenor behind to a Quarter for the first time and was a member of the District Youth striking competition band, Ellis Whitehouse rang his QP of Grandsire, we rang an all local band QP for many years, Debbie Hill 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter for 2 years, Richard Ould's first on the treble for a long time and Bradley's first attempt to ring double handed.

Two very enjoyable outings were held in 2016. A three day stay in the Derbyshire Peak District ringing at 15 towers was a great success as was a 3-tower outing in Essex.

The Steeple Keeper outlined the rearrangement of the seating in the tower and a major clean that Debbie and Bradley achieved. Bradley has spliced 8 ropes and are now ready for use. A programme of work is mapped out for 2017.

The Treasurer presented a concise and healthy balance sheet.

Debbie Hill thanked Bradley, Richard, and Secretary Lin Ould for their work on behalf of the Guild.

It was with great pleasure that we elected Clare Gray and Ellis Whitehouse as members of the Guild.

The election of Officers went smoothly with Master Bradley Hill, Deputy Master Debbie Hill, Secretary Lin Ould, Treasurer Richard Ould, Steeple Keeper Bradley Hill, Deputy Steeple Keeper Phil Kelly were re-elected unopposed.

Plans are in place for another 3-day outing to Derbyshire and maybe a day in the Canewdon area.

Queenie Brown sent her best wishes to the guild we expressed our thanks to Queenie for her many years of ringing at St. Michael's.

Cyril thanked members for the past years ringing as part of the St Michael's Church Family and continuing the British church bell ringing tradition.

Cyril closed the meeting with a prayer. A meeting that reflected the happy family atmosphere that exists in the Guild.

*Peter Smith*

## **GARDENING TIPS**

March is a time for enjoying the bulbs flowering in the garden. A bright combination of daffodils, crocuses, and maybe some last snowdrops and irises. The colour is a great reminder the winter has passed.

In the greenhouse look to what you wish to plant. Maybe a start on the tomato plants, chillies (yes mine didn't overwinter for the second year) and beans.

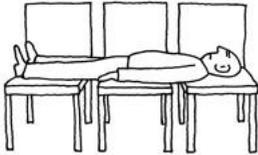
Look after the lawn by giving it a good rake to remove moss, any leftover leaves and to prepare it for feeding. Aerating the ground with a fork will take time, but is best done whilst the ground is soft still.

My last words are a reminder that we are not out of the frost season, so be careful with any tender plants you plan to put out.

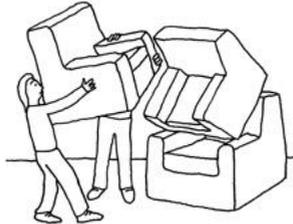
*Dave Marriott*

# A LITTLE HUMOUR CHURCH CHAIRS

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING NEW ONES



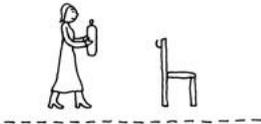
ARE THEY COMFORTABLE?



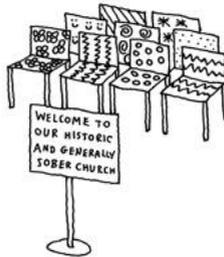
CAN THEY BE STACKED?



DO THEY SHOW THE DIRT?



CAN YOU HANG A  
KNEELER ON THEM?



DO THEY LOOK APPROPRIATE?



WILL THE CONGREGATION  
LIKE THEM?

CartoonChurch.com

## FINAL REQUEST

# 1st April – Church and outdoor working party – Volunteers wanted

This is not a joke as it will continue into the afternoon!

No roundtoits required ;)

Chairs might be though

Details to follow....

*Dave Marriott*