



ST MICHAEL'S BRAINTREE

www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk



Today

**22nd March 2020 - 4th Sunday of Lent
Mothering Sunday**

An update from Rev Nigel Adams

Dear Friends,

You may be aware that, due to the Government's call for social distancing, the Church of England is suspending all Sunday services and mid-week gatherings.

The staff team at St Michael's Braintree have been busy planning and praying how we should respond. Sadly, all church services and mid-week groups at St Michael's Church will stop for the time being. This is necessary to prevent the spread of coronavirus, particularly to protect those who are most at risk. From Friday 20th March, Church House (our church halls) will be closed to groups that meet there. Wherever possible, we will try to find other ways to stay in touch, while we cannot meet together. We will be having "Worship on the Web" online services each Sunday (see next page).

As a church family, we are not defined by buildings or events. We are a community of people who follow Jesus. We are clearly going to have to find other ways to support one another, spiritually and practically, in these very difficult times.

These times are both a challenge and an opportunity for us, as Christians, to show God's love. Please be alert to the needs of neighbours and others who may be self-isolating, some by themselves. Even if we can't physically visit people, we can phone them.

The coronavirus, and the restrictions now placed on all of us, remind us our fragility and of the stark fact that we do not have control of our world. It reminds us as well of our need of God and our need to pray. I hope and pray that you know God's presence, power and love at this time of challenge and change.

We will keep you updated as things change and develop.

With our love & prayers,

Nigel

General Information

Vicar	Rev Nigel Adams	01376 807662
	<i>(Nigel's day off this week will be Saturday)</i>	
Churchwardens	Lin Terris	01376 322870
	David Marriott	01376 349257
Honorary Curate	Rev Stephen Bailey	01376 619347
Children's and Youth Worker (part-time)	Rachel Grove Smith	07713 566667
Pastoral Assistant	Jo Adams	01376 807662
Vicar's Personal Assistant	Helen Hopkins	01376 321248
Treasurer	Lesley Davey	01376 326969

- Contact Margaret Kinniburgh to add items to the Notice Sheet (by noon **Thursday**) email: notices@stmichaelsbtree.co.uk. Telephone 01376 330013.

Worship on the Web @ St Michael's

Instead of our Sunday services, we will have, on our website each Sunday, things to help you worship at home. We will be starting a series on the character of God – in these uncertain times, we need to remind ourselves of our loving, unchanging God, who sent his Son Jesus to save us. There will be a variety of items, including worship songs, Bible readings, prayers, a sermon as well as a service and activities for children & families. This is new for all of us, so please give us feedback and suggestions, as things develop.

Bible Reading Group: this week's readings are Psalm 22, Leviticus 20 to Numbers 1 and Proverbs 5:1 to 5:14. We are not currently meeting together, but most of the group members wanted to continue as a 'virtual' group, so if you want to join us, please let me know and I will make sure to keep you updated with the readings for each week.

Dave Terris

(email: daveterris@uwclub.net)

Practical and spiritual support

We are very conscious that people in high risk groups will need to self-isolate. As a church family, we would like to do all we can to support people who are in need.

If you are in a high risk group, please do what you can to stay safe. If you and your family are not in a high risk group, please be looking out for friends, family & neighbours who need help.

Groups & activities

All of our groups that meet face-to-face will stop for the time being. This includes our children's & youth groups, Home Groups, Coffee @ StMichael's, Men's & Women's groups, Talking Jesus, PCC and PCC sub-groups, First Priority prayer meeting, countryside walks and all other groups. We are also having to postpone our Food for Thought Weekend.

Wherever possible, we will be looking for innovative ways of providing support and will be letting you know more about this over the coming weeks.

For your prayers:

Unwell: Iris Smith, Elizabeth Johnson, Jenny Chapman, Alan Bass, Ron Smith, Alison Davey, Elaine Stoodley

Bereaved: Jack Green and family, following the death of Joyce on Friday, 20th March and Derek Chapman and family, following the death of Jenny on Saturday, 21st March.

Housebound: David and Ann Harvey

Mission of the Month: Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS) are patrons of our church along with 700 other evangelical churches. Their mission is to help everyone in this country to hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ. They provide courses to develop leaders, training for clergy and lay leaders, helping in times of vacancy, and resourcing 1000's of leaders (PCC's included) to be more effective. They give over 4,500 8 to 18 year olds, the fun, faith, and friendship on camps and houseparties.

Keeping in touch

We will be sending out email updates from time to time. If you didn't receive one from Nigel this week, and would like to be added to the circulation list, please send us your email address – to admin@stmichaelsbtree.co.uk.

Please contact us if you need to. Our Church Office can be contacted by phone (01376 321 248) or email (vicarspa@stmichaelsbtree.co.uk), but will not be open for callers. It is open Mon, Tues & Thurs from 9am to 1pm.

St. Michael's Church website is on the following link - <http://stmichaelsbtree.co.uk/website/> (If this does not work, you might need to clear your browsing history/web cache from your browser. In most browsers this can be done using Ctrl+Shift+Del.) On this page you can see our Magazine, Notice sheets, Annual reports and other details and will be able to access our Sunday online services.

Our Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelschurchbraintree/>.

Make Jesus Known

Tim & Charissa Cooke and team have a helpful website and an iPhone app (iTruth) – they are putting on daily thoughts and other useful material. It can be accessed via <https://makejesusknown.com/itruthapp#/>