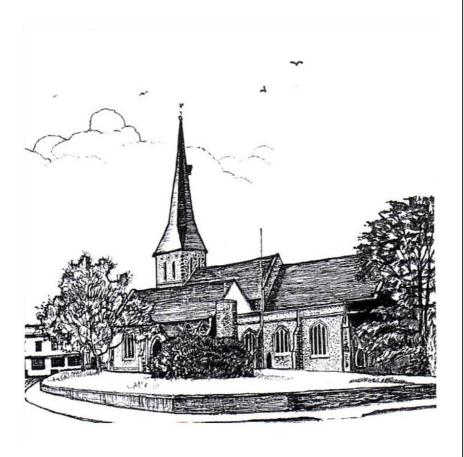
The LINK

30p

March 2018



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

EASTER SERVICES AT ST MICHAEL'S BRAINTREE

Everyone is most welcome to join us for any of these services, which are at

St Michael's Church CM7 IEY

(unless otherwise stated)

Thurs 29th March – Maundy Thursday 8.00pm Holy Communion

Friday 30th March - Good Friday

9.30am United Service at St Paul's Church,
Braintree, CM7 3DY
followed by a Walk of Witness to
George Yard
3.00pm An Hour by the Cross

Sunday Ist April - Easter Day

8.00am Holy Communion10.00am Family Communion6.30pm Evening Service



Dear Friends.

I don't know if you have ever had a time when you have felt particularly close to God. A time, perhaps, when you have come quietly into God's presence and sensed God's love for you.

We are currently in the season of the year that is called Lent. It begins on Ash Wednesday and continues until Easter. It's a time when we remember Jesus going into the wilderness, fasting for 40 days and being tempted by Satan.

Lent is an opportunity to set aside a bit of time each day to read some of the Bible, to be quiet in God's presence and to speak to God in prayer.

It's also the time to prepare for Easter, because Easter is at the heart of the Christian faith. The Bible tells us that Jesus, God's own Son, came and died on the cross in our place on the first Good Friday. His death means that, when we say sorry for the wrong things we do, God forgives us and puts us back in a right relationship with him.

But more than that, Jesus rose to life on the third day. He showed that God has the victory over death. For anyone looking at the claims of the Bible, this is the key question that has to be faced. Did Jesus really rise from death? If he didn't, there is no Christian

hope. If Jesus did rise to life, it is the most wonderful good news. It means that Jesus opened the gate for us to enjoy eternal life – life in all its fullness both now and in eternity.

I hope you will be able to join us for at least one of the services over the Easter period as we reflect on Jesus' sacrifice and the good news that came from his death and rising to life (see p.2 for details of the services). Do please think and pray if there is someone you could invite to church this Easter.

I notice that Easter Day is on 1st April this year, April Fools Day! The Bible speaks in a very specific way about foolishness and wisdom – a fool is not someone who has been conned by some April Fool trick. Rather, "The fool says in his heart: there is no God" (Psalm 14:1)

As we prepare for Easter, my prayer for each of us is that we give up the foolishness of denying there is a God, or the folly of living as if there is no God. Instead, let us, in the words of Isaiah 55:6, our Verse of the Year, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near."

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel

LENT LUNCHES

I2-Ipm every Wednesday

Braintree Baptist Church

Cost £2.75 Adults and £1 children.

St Michaels and St Pauls will be hosts on 14 March. If you can come and help that will be appreciated, but please come and support us each week.

MISSION OF THE MONTH Crosslinks – A history

On 27 October 1922, at the office of the Christian Alliance in Bedford Street, London, a group of people met "with bowed heads, and hearts trusting only in God" to launch what would become Crosslinks.

There were no balloons, no champagne. Instead, the birth of the Bible Churchman's Missionary Society (BCMS) was a quiet affair. The group of believers met "with sadness of heart" as they clung in faith to their deepest held convictions. It was time to leave an older, more established organisation, one they regarded "with affectionate or even passionate devotion".

A new society was needed. It was a serious step.

Gospel convictions

In 1799, just over a hundred years before, in a noisy room above the City of London's Castle and Falcon coffee house in Aldersgate Street, two-dozen men met to found the Church Missionary Society (CMS).

This society would proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth, sending "missionaries to the Continent of Africa or other parts of the heathen world". It would send out those who had "experienced the benefits of the gospel" and who earnestly wished to make known "the grace and power of the Redeemer".

William Wilberforce, an MP and passionate reformer, was one of its first backers. In Real Christianity, he argued for the authority of Scripture, and for Christians "exerting themselves". Pointing to the saving work of Christ, he urged repentance. Churches must retain gospel convictions.

CMS took the gospel to the furthest corners of the world. A century on, as the First World War ended and theological liberalism took hold in England, the society's leaders pushed for a

new flexibility. In particular, they loosened their requirements regarding the faith beliefs and practices of missionary candidates.

A decisive break

This development led to unease within CMS. While evangelicalism might do well to shed its prejudices, it must not scrap its convictions. A group led by Daniel Bartlett realised that, to retain the original principles and purposes of 1799, they had to make a decisive break. The Bible Churchman's Missionary Society (BCMS) born in October 1922. Today, it's known as Crosslinks.

The new society began fresh gospel initiatives with energy and determination, trusting God to provide resources for a work that honoured His name. It sent off men and women to Burma and the Arctic. In Britain, it established a theological college in Bristol. It became a strong voice, helping disrupt attempts to replace the Book of Common Prayer, and strengthening Anglican churches at home and abroad.

Staying faithful

God has been faithful to those who broke away. Today, Crosslinks is thriving and continues to retain its vision: to bring God's word to God's world.

We celebrate the decision of October 1922, a stand taken for the sake of the gospel. Would we be so brave? The events of that year remain relevant as we strive for loyalty to the Bible within the current worldwide Anglican Communion.

In mission today, we are well aware of our opportunities - and responsibilities. We pray for that same sense of purpose and uncompromising determination, to be faithful in our day and generation.

Lesley & Rod Davey

A MESSAGE OF THANKS from Jack Green, for support received by him and Joyce

People are all that makes life. Partnership creates life and it is important that we develop community life, so that we can support each other. Not only the twenty six digits of computers to solve all our problems when we should defend our communities.

This week I have seen this by the lovely visits from St Michael's and other committed groups which has shown a dedication to this.

Where would we be without these people, committed Christians, who believe in their fellow men and women.

Thank you all Jack

SIGN OF THE TIMES

I thought that our readers might find this article from the Times newspaper of interest.

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES

At a Lambeth Palace event to promote a prayer project, the Rev. Canon Chris Russell, adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury, set out the scale of the challenge facing priests in trying to attract younger worshippers. He was leading some youths in prayer in Reading when the police turned up, looking concerned. "We got reports that something suspicious was happening", they explained. "There was a group of young people going into a church".

Rod Davey

NOTICE OF THANKS

Trevor and Caroline Benbrook would like to express their thanks to the church family at St Michael's for their love and support during the difficult time following the loss of their beloved daughter Lydia, aged 17 years on 10 December 2017.

We were overwhelmed that so many people attended the Service of Thanksgiving for Lydia's life on Saturday 13 January 2018. Over 270 people attended, including many from the church family as well as young people and tutors from Gosfield School and Writtle College.

178 Gideon's Bibles were handed out in Lydia's memory, many being taken by the young people who may have not heard God's word before; what a testimony to Lydia's faith and a legacy to her life.

We hope that in time, the recipients of the Bibles will read them and come to know and love Jesus, as Lydia did.

A heartfelt thank must go to Janet Bamforth and her team of volunteers who worked in Church House before, during and after the service, preparing, serving and tidying away; your service was a wonderful tribute to Lydia; we thank you.

So many people have commented to us on that they felt a sense of love and commitment to Lydia and our family by your tireless service on our behalf. For those people attending the service who were not Christians, this is something they have not experienced before and many were moved by this example of how Christians care for and honour one another.

We would like to thank Lionel Clark who gave his time so willingly to prepare such lovely flower arrangements in the church using pink and white flowers – Lydia's favourite colours.

Thanks also to Norman Plastow who kindly agreed to play the organ for both Lydia's funeral and the Service of Thanksgiving; as a fellow musician, Lydia would have appreciated that.

We would like to thank Jennifer Bailey for leading us in prayers that included and united people from all aspects of Lydia's life and Stephen Bailey for reading such a message of hope from Revelation 21:1-7.

Thanks also go to Andy Carter, our Youth Worker who touched the hearts of so many young people with his reading of 'What is Dying?' by Bishop Brent. We thought it was a lovely gesture that the Youth Church established their identity by sitting together as a group during the service; Lydia would have loved it.

We know that many members of the church family have prayed for us and continue to do so; we thank you for your support. Please continue to give thanks for Lydia and to hold us in your prayers as we struggle to come to terms with this; there is so much we do not understand. At the moment it is sometimes difficult to talk about Lydia but we pray that in time we can talk about her with you and remember the wonderful times we shared with her and the joy she gave us.

Finally we acknowledge the wonderful support and guidance we have received from our vicar, Nigel Adams who has uplifted us with his gentle and caring manner and his steadfast prayers during the bleakest of days. We thank Nigel for his kindness and compassion. God truly blessed us at St Michael's when He sent Nigel and Jo to us.

Trevor and Caroline Benbrook



Church House welcomed a great crowd of women to celebrate ten years since our first Conference day in 2008. We were sad that Liz Jackson was unable to be with us (Liz was our first speaker ten years ago) ... so Jennifer Bailey stepped in!

The Theme

Our theme for the day was The Song of Ascents ... Psalms 120 to 134. These Psalms would have been sung by the People of God as they journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate their Festivals. These Psalms are carefully collected together ... so we have five groups of three Psalms...and we found that the first Psalm in each Group presented a problem, a situation of difficulty...the second Psalm in the group points to where help is to be found and the third Psalm in the group pointing to Praise for arrival in Jerusalem and the security, safety, blessing only found in God... hence the title for the Youngsters presentation at the end of the day From Gloom to Bloom....

Sue Lamprell and Jo Adams.

Everyone enjoyed hearing the stories of their different journeys of faith... amazingly they both 'ended up' at Oak Hill College at the same time and of course now have St Michael's Braintree in common too. It is encouraging and inspirational to see how God is at work in particular peoples lives.

Praise

We make a very joyful noise to the Lord on these occasions and various people had chosen songs... including Blessed be the Lord and My Lighthouse! We so appreciate Pauline Briggs at all our events although we missed the piano!



Celebration Cake.

Our Anniversary Cake was ceremonially cut by Dianne Ellam and Jennifer Bailey, and greatly enjoyed at lunch time. Unfortunately, Janet Bamforth who made it was celebrating out on the high seas not with us. Not even a piece left for her!

Chelmsford Diocesan Bookstall

This was a real highlight of the day and Rachel and Jean were kept busy. So many temptations of things to buy! It was really enjoyed. It is always available on line and worth a visit if you are in Chelmsford. www.chelmsford.anglican.org/bookshop

Food

Always a highlight! Traditionally we began the day with Danish Pastries...later homemade biscuits, lunch was sandwiches, fruit,

celebration cake and left overs! Ten years ago we had a cooked lunch!

It was a marathon for those helping who worked so hard and we plan to review this!

Goody Bags

A tradition but I was forbidden from getting pink ones so yellow this time and as a Ten-Year Anniversary is 'Tin' we found some thumb stones in silver (colour of tin) with the verse 'with God all things are possible' on them carefully packaged in silver bags to mark this occasion.

Something New

We invited all the Young Women from Next and Focus to join us and spend time with the main part of the programme but also to spend time with the same theme working with Ruth Ellam. 100% take up from them! Obviously enjoyed but there are some comments from them:

"This year many of us from youth church attended the Women's Day on Saturday 27th January, all for the first time and we all thoroughly enjoyed the day. Our day differed from that of the rest of the ladies, with our sessions being conducted by Ruth Ellam and our sessions all contributing to the creation of a song. It was lovely to visit the Christian bookstall, run by the Christian Bookshop in Chelmsford, during our breaks and lunch and to each receive a cute, little 'squidgy' cross as a gift from the Women's Day organisers. It was a very enjoyable day which gave us an opportunity to spend time with fellow Church family members who we don't always have the opportunity to talk to and to delve deeper into the Bible amongst other women. Thank you to all the ladies who organised and contributed to the day."

Emma Nash

"It was a lovely experience to see the women of St Michael's united together to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the women's conference. With all ages attending, and an enthusiastic atmosphere, it was a joyous event. As we parted from the main group throughout the day, it was special to showcase our song 'Gloom to Bloom', which focused on the Psalms 120-123, to everyone at the end. I would like to thank Jennifer Bailey for organising this event and Ruth Ellam for leading the young women group and helping us create our song. "

Megan Wells

"Ruth led our group and I found it inspiring and informative. It was interesting to listen to Jo and Sue talk about their experiences of being Christians. It was thought provoking and thoroughly enjoyable. It was fun performing the song we wrote as a group about the struggles of youth. I would definitely do it again. "

Lisha Lingesh

Comments

After our first Conference ten years ago it was said that it was rather hectic!

This time lots of people said they enjoyed how much we did but with such a relaxed atmosphere! Our caterers may not agree!

We began ten years ago with words from:

Psalm 63 verse I: O God you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you...

In 14 Saturday Schools, 6 Conference Days, and in Prayer Breakfasts and more recently Prayer Lunches this is what we have been doing together. We have looked to introduce others to the Christian Faith in meals at Fellowship Afloat, Craft Evenings and Family Craft Afternoons and always enjoy the White Hart for a meal together!

Liz Jackson has promised to be our Speaker at our next Saturday School probably in the Summer but before that watch LINK and the notice sheet for events that we will be planning and have planned.

Huge thanks to everyone who contributed to the day but LINK not large enough to list you all!

Suggestions always welcomed





Jennifer Bailey

MARCH DIARY

I Thursday

3.30pm ASK

7.45pm The Identity Course – Church House

2 Friday

10.30am Women's Day of Prayer at St. Michael's5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

4 Sunday 3rd of Lent

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Church Family Worship – The Gate6.30pm Evening Worship – Samuel judges Israel

7.30pm Focus

5 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing 8.00pm Badminton

6 Tuesday

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

7 Wednesday

9.45am Meeting Point Bible Study

12.00pm Lent Lunch – Braintree Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts7.25pm Elders Meeting – Church House

7.45pm Bible Reading Group – Church House

8.30pm SuMMiT – Beer and chat – Wetherspoons,

Fairfield Road

8 Thursday

3.30pm ASK

7.45pm The Identity Course – Church House

9 Friday

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

II Sunday 4th of Lent - Mothering Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Morning Worship – Mothering Sunday6.30pm Holy Communion – Israel demands a King

7.30pm Focus

12 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing 8.00pm Badminton

13 Tuesday APRIL LINK SUBMISSION DUE

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

7.45pm First Priority – Church House

14 Wednesday

9.45am Meeting Point Bible Study

10.00am Holy Communion

12.00pm Lent Lunch – Braintree Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.45pm Bible Reading Group – Church House

15 Thursday

7.30pm PCC

16 Friday

2.00pm Bradbury House Service

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

18 Sunday 5th of Lent

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion – An open door

6.30pm Evening Worship – Saul chosen to be King

7.30pm Focus

19 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing 8.00pm Badminton

20 Tuesday

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

21 Wednesday

9.45am Meeting Point Bible Study

12.00pm Lent Lunch – Braintree Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.25pm Elders Meeting – Church House

7.45pm Bible Reading Group – Church House

22 Thursday

3.30pm ASK

23 Friday

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

7.30pm Flower Club

24 Saturday

9.30am Church House Work Party

1.45pm Countryside walk – Fairfield Church

25 Sunday Palm Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Morning Worship – Neither hot nor cold

6.30pm Evening Worship – Saul anointed

7.30pm Focus

26 Monday

12.15pm Spotlight

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm Bell Ringing 8.00pm Badminton

27 Tuesday

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

28 Wednesday

9.45am Meeting Point Bible Study

12.00pm Lent Lunch – Braintree Baptist Church

6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts

7.45pm Bible Reading Group – Church House

29 Thursday Maundy Thursday

3.30pm ASK

8.00pm Holy Communion
30 Friday Good Friday

9.30am United Service at St Paul's Church, Braintree,

CM7 3DY followed by a Walk of Witness to

George Yard

3.00pm An Hour by the Cross

FROM THE REGISTERS

No entries (tbc)

WALK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

You are welcome to join us for a 5-mile circular walk on Saturday 24th March. We plan to meet outside Fairstead Church from I.45pm to set off at 2pm. Following the Essex Way we head for Terling then on to Fuller Street before making our way back to Fairstead.



If you have any questions or you wish to share transport, then just have a word with us. We look forward to your company!

Terry & Miriam Clark

(Image reproduced from http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/4647195)

Want to flex your DIY skills for a second time this year?

(To continue the great work from last time and to complete many items before the spring growth)

Church and Church House Working Party

Saturday 24 March from 9:00am
Please let Dave Marriott know if you want to make that difference.

Jobs planned include: Church:

Gutters cleaning

Clearing out cupboards

Church House & Garden:

Clearing out cupboards

Transportation of rubbish to recycling

Painting and filling in porch/hallways

Lots of gloss painting - Skirting boards and Internal

Doors

Review outhouse

Removing and testing ladders

New hinge on courtyard door

Lots of pruning

Church House:

Supporting the team with Tea/Coffee Lunch catering

(Feel free to come help in the morning and enjoy the walk in the afternoon after lunch)



BRAINTREE FOOD BANK

Eat Well Spend Less is a six session budgeting and cookery course. Each session is 2 ½ hours long. In each session, we cover two basic recipes as well as activities on the session's topic. Recipes are demonstrated to participants before they make dishes themselves. The session topics cover a range of subjects surrounding cooking and budgeting, including menu planning, portion sizes and money planning.

The course is designed to help people on low incomes. It has three aims:

- I. To equip people with cookery skills and the confidence to build upon these skills in their lives so they are able to prepare and eat healthier food.
- 2. To give an understanding of how to plan meals, both from an economic and a nutritional point of view.
- 3. To teach people simple financial management techniques to enable them to budget more effectively and avoid getting into unintended debt.

The equipment used is portable – so sessions can be run anywhere there is running water, electricity and tables. This enables sessions to be run at venues that people are already accessing and are comfortable in. For example, children's centres, community buildings and schools.

Aside from the physical health benefits EWSL hopes to promote – a better understanding of a balanced diet using the Eat-well Guide, and encouraging and empowering people to cook more of their meals from scratch, cutting out a lot of the salt and sugar

found in ready meals and take-aways. EWSL also aims to address some of the mental health needs that people may be facing. The Mental Health Foundation has collected evidence suggesting conditions such as depression, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease and ADHD can all be effectively treated by better nutrition

In addition to the benefits of people eating healthier, one of the most noticeable differences in people taking part in the course is their level of confidence. This has improved in the kitchen, in their participation in activities, and with willingness to taste new things. By facilitating discussions between people on topics, peer learning is also a really important part of EWSL. This has enabled people to build social networks whilst participating in EWSL.

40p for 40 days helping those in food crisis over Lent.

Lent has become a time when many may choose to give up certain luxuries such as chocolate or wine. However, this year we are asking those who are considering giving something up for Lent to donate 40p over the 40 days of Lent to enable us to keep our service running.

The total cost of 40p for 40 days is £16 which is the amount of money it costs the foodbank to actually supply the food parcels, excluding the food, and this is where your generosity comes in.

For more information contact Helen Hopkins

#40for40



40 PENCE FOR 40 DAYS

Can you take part in our 40 for 40 challenge this Lent?

By giving up 40 pence a day for the 40 days of Lent you can raise enough to help support a local family in crisis this Easter.



All you have to do is find an old jam jar, or similar container and start collecting!



4TH BRAINTREE SCOUT UPDATE

Germany Trip

45 scouts and their leaders will be taking part in a 10-day international experience to Germany. We are staying in 'Burg Rieneck' Castle. This was built in 1150 and during its life time has been a Military Hospital and a Prisoner of War Camp. It is now a Scout and Guide Centre with modern facilities. The scouts will be taking part in many adventurous activities, including a 3G swing, a day out in Wurburg and visting the SOS village, which is run by, and for, those with special educational needs

World Scout Jamboree

We are very proud of Caitlin Howat, Joshua Malcolm, Aaron Fisher and Lilymae Dixon, who have all been selected to attend the World Scout Jamboree 2019 in West Virginia, USA! It is a massive achievement, which the whole of 4th Braintree is very proud of. They will be attending with 45,000 scouters from around the world for three weeks in July 2019 I'm sure we will see them doing lots of fundraising over the coming 18 months!



For tickets email Lydia at 4thbsgfundraising@gmail.com James Hopkins

BELFRY BULLETIN

We were pleased to welcome the Black Notley Scouts to our practice night on Monday 22 January to introduce them to the art of Bell Ringing.

We started with a talk giving an overview of how and why church bells are rung and the enjoyment that can be had from bell ringing. We then gave a quick demonstration by ringing 120 changes of Plain Bob Doubles

Having rung the requisite bells down thus making it safe for the Scouts to go into the bell chamber to see the bells and their fittings. A bells clapper was tied to stop the bell making a sound but letting it turn over. Then from the ringing chamber we pulled the bell this allowed the scouts to see a bell working.

After this and under experienced supervision each of our visitors had a try at ringing a bell at back stroke.

We concluded a happy and informative evening with another ringing demonstration.

We also had visits to our practice night from local ringers, Vicki Elliott from Kelvedon, David Learmonth of Felsted and James Lawson of Witham and were glad to help them and us to improve our ringing.

We were hosts to the EACR Northern District's advanced practice where a wide range of methods were rung to a high standard.

Why not make the travelling to new places cartoon in February's LINK a new year's resolution?

Peter Smith

GARDENING TIPS

It is now spring in the garden and you will be seeing the bulbs shooting, the leaves forming and the start of the new year's growth.

Down under the trees you'll see the impact of the leaves, the trees thirst, and its shade. So, what can you grow there?

If you are thinking woodland, bulbs are a natural thing to grow there. They are a full plant in a small package, examples include snowdrops, cyclamen, bluebells, and even daffodils.

For ground cover green, ivy and ground elder will naturally take over if given a chance. These need careful control with digging out or chemical treatment. Choose something that you can control and matches your needs, vinca, for example is a pleasant ground coverer, but needs keeping under control.

For my latest experiment we seeded under the large trees in church house a blend of grass seeds for shade and under trees. This blend is designed to cope with the dry and dark. If you look carefully you will see a new lawn taking shape, where the trees had killed off the previous one as they grew.

So, space under a tree can be used, just think carefully what you'd like to grow.

Dave Marriott

A LITTLE EXTRA HUMOUR

ACTIVITIES THAT ARE FROWNED UPON



PARISH BREWERY TRIPS



FOUL LANGUAGE ANYWHERE IN THE DEANERY



HAVING TOO MUCH FUN



CHOCOLATE BISCUITS AFTER THE IO A.M.

CartoonChurch.com

A GUIDE FOR CLERGY AND CHURCH OFFICIALS





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UNDER A PEW



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IN THE DOG'S BASKET



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IN THE CHILDREN'S MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS Box



WERE THERE EVER



IN YESTERDAY'S CASSOCK



WHEREVER YOU LAST SAW THEM

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