

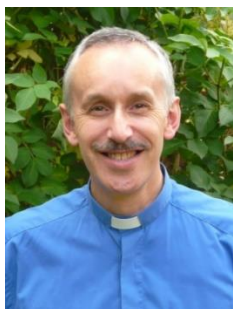
**The LINK**

**30p**

**October 2017**



**The Parish Church of St Michael Braintree**  
**[www.stmichaelsbtrees.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelsbtrees.co.uk)**



## **Please pray**

Dear Friends,

It's a privilege and joy to join you at St Michael's Braintree. Can I begin by thanking you for the warm welcome that Jo and I have received – we have really appreciated it. A particular thanks to everyone who did so much during the interregnum, not just to keep things running, but to build on God's work here in Braintree. I would also like to thank Charles Mason, my predecessor, who committed so many years of his ministry to the Lord's work at St Michael's.

May I take the opportunity to tell you a bit about myself and our family. I was brought up in Enfield, North London and my sister and I were taken to church regularly. Each summer, our family went on holiday to Norfolk. From a young age, we got involved in the Sheringham Beach Mission, a Christian mission which ran activities on the beach and in the town.

I must have heard the gospel, the good news of Jesus, many times, but it was only when I was 13 that I really understood it. I realised that Jesus, God's own Son, had come to earth. He had taught with a unique authority and performed amazing miracles, but at the end, people turned against him and he died in agony, tortured to death on a cross. Yet that wasn't the end. On the third day, he rose to life.

As a teenager at Sheringham, I realised that I had done wrong things – what the Bible calls sin. As a result, I deserved to spend eternity apart from God. But if I said sorry for the wrong things I had done and trusted in Jesus, I could be forgiven and enjoy eternal life – life in all its fullness, both now and in eternity.

On my final day at the mission, I prayed to God, saying sorry for all I had ever done wrong and committing my life to him. I still remember the great sense of joy, that came from knowing that all the wrong things I had ever done had been completely forgiven. I knew as well, that God had a purpose for my life.

The verse I particularly remember from those days was **John 3:16**, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

I was still in my teens when I sensed that God was calling me to ordained ministry. As a result, I studied Theology at Durham University. At the end of my degree, I didn’t feel ready, either spiritually or in terms of maturity, to go forward for ordination, so I joined the Metropolitan Police, just expecting to stay for a few years.

However, whenever I prayerfully “pushed on the door” regarding ordained ministry, it either didn’t seem right, or didn’t seem the right time. My few years in the police became 30 years, starting as a PC in Tottenham and finishing as a chief inspector in Westminster.

Jo and I met in the 18-30s group at Christ Church Barnet, where we worshipped for many years. We have two sons, Tim & Chris – the photo is of Tim and Kat’s wedding last year. Tim & Kat work as engineers and are very involved in St Mary’s Maidenhead. Chris graduated this year at Moorlands Bible College and is working as an assistant youth worker for two churches in Reading.



It was late in my time in the police that I heard God calling me again to ordained ministry and, since leaving the police, have been to theological college and served as curate in Barton Seagrave (near Kettering).

We very much look forward to what God has planned for St Michael’s over the coming months and years. Anything of lasting value, of eternal value, will not be as a result of the quality of the preaching, our passion for the gospel or our dedication and hard work. It will depend on God’s work, by his Holy Spirit.

I was really pleased to see that you have recently had a term of preaching about prayer. Our first priority, before we seek God’s vision for where he wants St Michael’s to be, must be to seek God in prayer. I agree with Cyril Bamforth’s observation in the July magazine, that “going forward always starts with prayer”.

For that reason, we will be meeting to pray as a church, starting on Tuesday 17 October. We have called it, “First Priority” and I

would very much encourage you to join us. It will be from 8-9pm. We will start with a short time of sung worship, then look at God's word, but most of our time will be praying in groups. We need to pray for our nation, for the wider church, for those in need, but particularly for God's leading for us, here at St Michael's. I hope you will be able to make it your first priority. Jo and I very much look forward to meeting you all.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel

## **LADIES MEET AND SWEET**

(aka Pudding club)

TUESDAY 3 OCTOBER

&

TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER

From 7pm  
CHURCH HOUSE

Please come along and bring a pudding for others to share, enjoy a cuppa and chat.

Don't feel obliged to bring a pudding, please feel free to come along for the chat.

For further details call Christine Hart  
(lifts can always be arranged, so don't miss out!)

## **MISSION OF THE MONTH**

### **A ROCHA – CHRISTIANS IN CONSERVATION**

When God created the earth, it was good: he said man was to have control over all the earth.

Sometimes, it feels we are making a right mess of this!

It is vital that we are good stewards of this earth: that we take care of it and enjoy it.

We live in an amazing area – fields, streams on our doorsteps and the coast an hour away.

For a moment imagine living where there is no living thing – how poor our lives would be!

A Rocha is a Christian conservation organisation (not just in the U.K. but worldwide) who provide training in conservation from a biblical perspective.

It is important in this cost cutting time that we continue to support a resource which is vital to our quality of life.

We in Braintree are 30 minutes' drive from A Rocha's newest reserve in Foxearth meadows just outside Sudbury. It is a small but vitally important site for 21 species of dragon and damselflies.

The reserve is still very new but please make a note to visit in 2018 – the dragonfly season will be almost over when you read this article.

You might be lucky enough to see otter spraints (poo), or a water vole, but you will see dragonflies and hear birds.

More information on Foxearth and other A Rocha projects can be found in the display and magazine at the back of the church. Please take a copy.

*Ann Mahood*

# Reformation 500

A celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation

Talks by Roger Cooke

**Monday 30 October, 7.30**

7.30pm. – 8.15pm: The revival before Luther

Refreshments

8.30pm – 9.15pm: Luther's step further

**Monday 6 November, 7.30**

7.30pm -8.15pm: Tyndale, Luther & Henry VIII

Refreshments

8.30pm – 9.15pm: Cranmer, Elizabeth I & the

people in the pew

Epilogue: The value of the Reformation today

**Venue: St Michael's Church House**

Dr. Martin Luther. Nach einem Gemälde von Lukas Cranach.

## **A CHALLENGE**

While I visited my daughter in America, I stayed with her friends Jim and Diane. Jim loves to tell about his experiences, one that he shared really challenged me. While Jim was in seminary one of his projects was a survey of his fellow church members. On average, the members had been Christians for 8 years; the question (and response) that Jim commented on was the number of people who had read the whole bible. Of 272 church members, only 12 had read the bible once, and only one had read it more than once.

I wondered how St Michael's would fare with the same questions. I have read the bible through once, but I have not read it through again (although I have made a couple of attempts), but now I feel challenged to try again. My challenge to you is this; would anyone like to join me, either on your own or as part of a group?

If you want to read the bible, there are many reading schemes that are available for free on the internet, if you have trouble finding one please let me know and I will help. The timing on the schemes varies from 90 days to 2 years, this means reading up to 12 chapters a day, depending on the scheme, but it is the reading that is important, not the timing. It's better to take 2 years than give up after 3 months because you are a couple of weeks behind.

I thought it might be an interesting project to get together once a week for about an hour and a half to read the bible aloud, if we meet every week, we should be able to read the whole bible in a year. I'm still thinking through how we might arrange this, so if you are interested please get in touch.

Jim had another comment about excuses for not reading the whole bible, "it makes no sense to say that you haven't read the bible because you can't understand it, you can only say that you can't understand it if you've tried to read it". The answer to this

is obvious really, if you don't understand what you've read in the bible, ask someone about it. There are enough people around the church, (clergy, lay readers, bible study leaders) who can answer questions, even if it takes them a little research.

The bible is the basis of our faith, as professing Christians we should at least have read the bible right through once, not just so that we can say we've read it, but to give us a better understanding of the basis of our faith.

A final thought, if you are currently using daily bible reading notes, please don't stop, they don't take you through the entire bible, but they do provide valuable insights into and application of biblical principles.

Just to close, a few references for you to consider:  
Nehemiah 8:1-3, Isaiah 55:10-11, 2 Tim 3:16-17.

*Dave Terris*

## **MARY HALES**

Thank you to all who made a donation in memory of Mary.

The total received was £189.20, which has been divided between St. Michael's Church and Tearfund, one of the societies which Mary regularly supported.

## VOLUNTEERING IN KENYA JULY 2017

As we sang the hymn, 'Bless the Lord O my soul' at St Michael's on Sunday 10 September 2017 I was transported back to a church service in Kenya in July 2017 where I heard it sung by about 200 people.

I was on a school trip volunteering at The Hadassah Mission School in Nakuru, Kenya, which offers schooling and food to about 250 boys and girls aged between 3-15 years of age. We helped with teaching, marking school work, organising games, working in the kitchen handing out food for the children and general building work including painting.



The children were provided with breakfast and lunch each day. Breakfast was a form of porridge and lunch was rice and beans, beans and rice or any combination of the two. Food was basic but the children were grateful for what they were given, often the only food they had that day.



On the last day, we gave the school money to buy 'treats' for the children and for their break time, when they normally have porridge they were given biscuits. For lunch, the children chose to buy carrots and potatoes and other food they would not normally have.

The children have so little materially yet they were so happy and it made me realise how privileged my life is here in Braintree. During the trip, we had the chance to visit Nakuru National Park – a highlight for me – and we saw giraffes, baboons, zebras, waterbucks, buffalo, impalas, a Thomson's gazelle, flamingos, a hippo and 3 white rhinos (an endangered species). I fell in love with the wildlife and the country and I hope to go back again.

Now back to that church service; my lasting memory of Kenya was of about 200 people, singing and dancing to 'Bless the Lord O my soul, O my soul', which of course I remembered from our own church services (but we don't dance!). In Kenya, their joy in the Lord was evident and they were not embarrassed to show it.

*Lydia Benbrook*



## OCTOBER DIARY

### **1 Sunday**

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.00am Church Family Worship  
6.30pm Evening Worship  
7.30pm Focus

### **2 Monday**

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

### **3 Tuesday**

1.15pm Tiddlywinks  
7.00pm Ladies Meet and Sweet – Church House

### **4 Wednesday**

9:45am Meeting Point Bible Study  
10.00am Holy Communion  
6.30pm 4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts  
7.25pm Elders Meeting – Church House  
8.00pm Lifebuilder Bible Study  
8.30pm SuMMiT – Beer and chat – Wetherspoons,  
Fairfield Road

### **5 Thursday**

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

### **6 Friday**

5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

### **7 Saturday**

10.00am Operation Christmas Child Coffee morning -  
Church House

<b>8 Sunday</b>	<b>17th after Trinity</b>
8.00am	Holy Communion
10.00am	Morning Worship
6.30pm	Holy Communion
7.30pm	Focus
<b>9 Monday</b>	
12.15pm	Spotlight
5.30pm	4th Braintree Beavers
7.30pm	Bell Ringing
7.30pm	White Horse Tavern – Church House
8.00pm	Badminton
<b>10 Tuesday</b>	<b>November LINK SUBMISSION DUE</b>
1.15pm	Tiddlywinks
<b>11 Wednesday</b>	
9:45am	Meeting Point Bible Study
6.30pm	4th Braintree Cubs & Scouts
8.00pm	Lifebuilder Bible Study
<b>12 Thursday</b>	
3.30pm	ASK
7.30pm	Rose Hill Bible Study
8.00pm	Carry on Exploring Bible Study
<b>13 Friday</b>	
5.30pm	4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts
<b>15 Sunday</b>	<b>18th after Trinity</b>
8.00am	Holy Communion
10.00am	Holy Communion
6.30pm	Evening Worship
7.30pm	Focus
<b>16 Monday</b>	
12.15pm	Spotlight
5.30pm	4th Braintree Beavers
7.30pm	Bell Ringing
7.30pm	White Horse Tavern – Church House
8.00pm	Badminton

## **17 Tuesday**

1.15pm Tiddlywinks  
8.00pm First Priority

## **18 Wednesday**

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

## **19 Thursday**

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

## **20 Friday**

2.00pm Bradbury House Service  
5.30pm 4th Braintree Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

## **22 Sunday 19th after Trinity**

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.00am Morning Worship  
6.30pm Holy Communion  
7.30pm Focus

## **23 Monday**

12.15pm Spotlight  
7.30pm Bell Ringing  
8.00pm Badminton

## **24 Tuesday**

1.15pm Tiddlywinks

## **25 Wednesday**

8.00pm Lifebuilder Bible Study

## **26 Thursday**

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

## **27 Friday**

7.30pm Flower Club

## **28 Saturday**

10.00am Air Ambulance coffee morning – 14 Acorn Ave.

**29 Sunday      20th after Trinity**

8.00am      Holy Communion

10.00am      Morning Worship

6.30pm      Evening Worship

7.30pm      Focus

**30 Monday**

12.15pm      Spotlight

5.30pm      4th Braintree Beavers

7.30pm      Bell Ringing

7.30pm      Reformation 500

8.00pm      Badminton

**31 Tuesday**

1.15pm      Tiddlywinks

**FROM THE REGISTERS**

**Funerals**

5 September      David Henfrey

Operation Christmas Child  
Shoeboxes  
Coffee Morning



Saturday October 7  
10-12 noon  
St Michaels Church House  
Small Hall



## **NATIONAL LIBRARIES WEEK 9 – 14 OCTOBER**

National Libraries Week is a good opportunity to support and learn more about what our public libraries provide. For instance, did you know that you have free online access to the Encyclopaedia Britannica with your Essex Libraries card (adult, student, and children's version) as well as lots of other reference resources?

The library is also a marketplace for all sorts of ideas, including Christianity. As I scanned the shelves this week I spotted books by John Stott, Adrian Plass, Keith Ward, J.I. Packer, John Sentamu and commentaries by Tom Wright. There are also titles from a variety of Christian traditions (Henri Nouwen, Desmond Tutu, Cardinal Basil Hume) or arguing against faith (Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins). And there will be many more you can reserve free from the library catalogue.

Now here's the thing. Books have to earn their keep staying on the shelves. New books are bought in proportion to the loans from that section. So, you can do your part in keeping the Christian message available for our community to explore, as well as building your own knowledge and faith by borrowing those books. If you haven't a library card, what better time to join than National Libraries week?

Find out more about your library at <http://libraries.essex.gov.uk/>

*Jonathan Wicks  
(Development Officer for Essex Libraries)*

## IT'S SHOEBOX TIME AGAIN!



A year has gone by and it's now time to think about packing shoeboxes to send out with Operation Christmas Child. These go to children in need especially in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



Can you help by packing a shoebox this year for a boy or girl aged 2-4, 5-9 or 10-14 years of age? For the children who receive them, this will

probably be the only gift they receive this year or maybe in their childhood. Ideally each box will contain a soft toy and another toy, school supplies, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap and flannel, hats, gloves and scarf and sweets (not chocolate). Full details are on the leaflets which will be on the display at the back of church near the creche room during October and the first week of November.

If you are unable to pack a box we are always very grateful for any of the above items that can be used to create boxes or added to others. A big thank you to all those I know who are

knitting or sewing to help provide additional items. The warehouse in Chelmsford is also pleased to have volunteers to help check and pack boxes ready for transportation.

This year OCC are asking for a dramatic increase towards the cost of transport and raising it to £5. Our coffee morning on Saturday October 7, 10-12 in the Small Hall Church House, will help raise money towards this.

For further information please contact:

- Jenny Chapman
- Frankie Winning
- Sue Marriott

## **THANK YOU**

The Bartlett-Rawlins family would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support following Katie's accident. She is making good progress but due to the severity of the break it is going to be a long time before she is fully recovered.

As a small token of our eternal thanks to the Air Ambulance medics for their amazing skill, we are holding a Coffee Morning on Saturday 28 October from 10-12 at 14 Acorn Avenue and will also be selling cakes and cards. All Welcome.

Phil, Helen, Katie, Ben and Laura.

## CLOCK TIMES (part 2)

I discovered that there was in Baillie's book a lantern and a 30-hour long case clock in Ipswich.

There were two Thomas Hutley's (father and son) and their house still exists in Coggeshall. Most interesting of all were the dates. Thomas *senior* worked from 1704 until 1726, when he died and passed his tools in his will to Thomas *junior* 1726 to at least 1789 when he bought Goldevers Cottage at Hares Bridge, Coggeshall.

This means that our clock was ticking during most of the important events in recent history – at the time of Trafalgar, Waterloo and during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. This fact just blew my mind!

So, what of the Churchwardens? What if anything did history record of them?

Firstly, we traced a William Searle Peers there were also two of them. Records show that he was a clothier who went bankrupt in 1753. At first, I thought he had gone bankrupt because of the Great Lisbon Earthquake and Tsunami in which between 20 and 30 thousand people died but this was in 1755. This was the first earthquake that proper scientific analysis was made of such a phenomenon and it caused many clothiers to go bankrupt in England because the Spanish and Portuguese market was so important to us. However, there had been lean times before this and 1753 must have been one for him as he was a clothier. There was no social welfare in those days and there had been a riot in Colchester and people had gone from Braintree to Maldon, boarded a ship and stole wheat because they were so hungry.

Regarding John Firmin, research at the Essex Records Office showed that our John Firmin was a Baymaker who made baize cloth. There were several John Firmings at this time. We now know that our John Firmin died in 1723.

Rod Davey

## **BELFRY BULLETIN**

I must start this month with some additions to the details of the Quarter Peal we rang before the communion service on Sunday 20 August. This was Lin Oulds 60<sup>th</sup> QP and her 1<sup>st</sup> of multi methods, well done Lin. We were congratulated by a ringer from Halstead on the quality of the ringing for this Quarter, by listening to it she nearly missed her train.

On Wednesday 6 September as a welcome to Revd. Nigel Adams and his Wife Jo to St. Michael's and before Nigel's induction service, we rang about 720 changes of Plain Bob Triples 1 Ellie Gray, 2 Debbie Hill, 3 Lin Ould, 4 Kath Downs, 5 Ellis Whitehouse, 6 Peter Smith, 7 Bradley Hill[c], 8 Richard Ould. Again, we were congratulated for the ringing. This is very pleasing and encouraging.


In preparation for this service we had extended the Treble rope to reach the floor of the church. This was so Nigel could ring it during his induction and so take charge of the bells.






What a lovely surprise we had on Sunday 10 September. The door of the ringing chamber opened and in comes Gareth Davies, one of our Guild members, who is working near Swindon and was home for the weekend. It was great to have Gareth ring with us again even if it was only for one service.

I am writing this sitting in my garden in the sun on a glorious September morning. Never forget what a wonderful world we live in.


*Peter Smith*

## PATTERN OF SUNDAY SERVICES

The Book of Common Prayer is used for the services marked   
Common Worship is used for all other services

Sunday in the month	8.00 am	10.00 am with crèche	6.30pm
FIRST	 Holy Communion	Church Family Worship (all-age)	Evening Worship
SECOND	 Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Holy Communion
THIRD	 Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Evening Worship
FOURTH	 Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Evening Worship
FIFTH	 Holy Communion	Holy Communion	United Service

## MIDWEEK SERVICES

 Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Wednesday of the month (except August) at 10.00am in the Jesus Chapel.

**The above is subject to change at festivals  
Please check Diary section for exact details**

St. Michaels Church is located in:

St Michaels Lane, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1EY