

The LINK digital

October 2022



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

A BUSY OCTOBER!

Dear Friends,

It has been great to be doing more things in person at St Michael's Church and thank you to those who specifically responded to the "Back to Church Sunday" invitation – it was great to see you again. In October, there are a number of things happening that you may wish to join in with.

Coffee@StMichael's (Thurs 6th Oct) is now happening each month – do please join us in church at any time between 10am & 12noon for drinks and first-rate snacks & refreshments!

We have Trish Ellse, a guest speaker from **Samaritan's Purse (Operation Christmas Child)** (Sun 9th Oct, 10am) inviting us to be part of their "shoebox" appeal, which shares gifts and the love of God with children who may never have received a Christmas present. (See the next article in the LINK for details of how to contribute a shoebox).

Men@StMichael's are having a meal out at the Toby Carvery on Wed 19th Oct, 6.30 for 7.00pm start.

Oasis@StMichael's (Thurs 27th Oct, 2.00-3.30pm) is a bereavement support group – the opportunity to spend some time with others who have lost someone they love and includes a short thought and prayer.

We have our **Light Party** (Sat 29th Oct, 6.00-7.30pm) for primary school aged children, including games, activities and songs and being reminded that, "*The LORD is my light and my salvation*" (Psalm 27:1)

A team are coming from “Teen Challenge” to our **United Service** (Sun 30th Oct, 6.30pm at Christchurch, Braintree). Although “Teen” is in their name, they are seeing amazing success with addicts aged 18-50, helping them find freedom through their rehabilitation centres. Teen Challenge will be leading our churches in a month of outreach in Braintree in Feb 2023.

All are most welcome to join us for any of these, and other things happening at St Michael's.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel



MISSION OF THE MONTH

SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Samaritan's Purse is an evangelical Christian relief organisation that provides aid to suffering people throughout the world who are victims of war, famine, natural disaster, poverty and disease.

One aspect of their work is *Operation Christmas Child*, (OCC). They collect and distribute filled shoeboxes to children living in poverty particularly in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Boxes are distributed to children where needed, regardless of background or faith. The shoeboxes give children a present, for some, probably the first they receive. This is a practical way of showing God's love to children.

Children receiving boxes are given the opportunity to take part in a 12 session course called The Greatest Journey, with their parent or guardian's consent. This enables them to find out who Jesus is, begin their own journey of faith and share it with others.

St Michael's Church has been involved with this project for many years, with the exception of 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This year (as we did last year), we are able to collect shoebox gifts in person and online. The shoeboxes donated in person will be delivered to our nearest processing centre during national collection week. Please bring completed shoeboxes to the church welcome area by **Sunday 13th November 2022**.

National collection week for 2022 will be between 14th-21st November.

If you are not able to donate a shoebox in person, packing a shoebox online is a great alternative. Please go to Samaritan's Purse UK, Pack A Shoebox Online - Operation Christmas Child.

You can either choose your gifts online via the Pack Your Shoebox option or you can choose to send a pre-packed shoebox which is even easier! Either option costs £20 which includes £5 for project costs. Please then add it to our St Michael's Church, Braintree, Operation Christmas Child Online Shoebox Goal Page and help us to reach our target of 30 online shoebox gifts for 2022! Please find the link below:

<https://shoeboxonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/goal-pages/7730e605>

You also get a bit longer to do your online shoeboxes, with the deadline being **21st November 2022**.



How to pack a shoebox

Step 1 – Find a shoebox

Find an empty, medium sized shoebox and wrap the box and lid separately in colourful wrapping paper. Alternatively use a pre-printed shoebox. There are some pre-printed Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes available in church, along with some plain ones, if you wish to wrap them yourself. Attach the appropriate boy/girl label, marking if your gift is for a boy or girl. Select an age category, 2-4 years, 5-9 years or 10- 14 years and attach the label to the top of your shoebox. These labels are also available in church.

Step 2 - Fill with suitable gifts

What goes into a shoebox?

Toys: This can include any of the following: soft/cuddly toys, a toy truck, toy cars, doll, small musical instrument, yo-yos, skipping rope, balls (a deflated football with a pump can be included), small puzzles or cards. From 2021 4 suit playing cards can be accepted.

School Supplies & Creative Activities: E.g. pens, pencils, sharpeners, crayons, felt tip pens, solar calculators, fun stamps with ink pad sets, notebooks, colouring books, solid paint palette and brushes, stickers or stencils.

Hygiene Items: E.g. toothbrush, bars of wrapped soap, comb or hairbrush, flannel or sponge.

Other Items: E.g. Hat, gloves, scarf, sunglasses, cap, socks, t-shirt, hair accessories or small handbag.

Home Crafted Items: (Optional) E.g. knitted hats, gloves, scarf or bags etc.

A Note From You: (Optional) This could include a Christmas card, note or greeting, photo of yourself or family.

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE: Toothpaste, lotions or liquids, used or damaged items; war related items, seeds, gum, chocolate, sweets or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, sharp or fragile items. Items packed from this list will be removed from shoeboxes at the processing centres.

Step 3- Make Your Project Donation

A suggested donation of £5 per box is recommended to cover project costs including shipping. You can make the donation online at Follow Your Box. You will need to print out the barcode and place it inside your shoebox on top of the contents. This will enable OCC to tell you which country your shoebox gets sent to. Alternatively you can post your donation, please go to the Samaritan's Purse UK website for more details on this.

Step 4 – Personalise and Pray

If you wish you can personalise your shoebox by including a handwritten note and/or a photograph of yourself/family. You may also like to pray for the child that will receive your gift.

Step 5 – Drop Off Your Shoebox

Place a rubber band around each closed shoebox and please drop off in St Michael's Church welcome area by Sunday 13th November 2022

I'd like to help but can't fill a box

No problem! Donations of any of the above items (fillers) that go into boxes are always welcome. We can make up some 'church boxes' from these and any surplus items can be taken along to the processing centre along with the completed shoeboxes. Donations are used there to help fill up other boxes where needed. Monetary gifts are always welcome to aid with transport costs and other expenses. The requested transport cost per box is £5.

For more information, including further details of what can go into your shoebox go to Operation Christmas Child (samaritans-purse.org.uk).

If you have any queries or if you would like to help with making up church shoeboxes from the donations or to help with transport, please let me know.

Thank you,

Sue Marriott - St Michael's rep for Samaritan's Purse

100 YEARS OF CROSSLINKS

Michael Maclachlan* is the kind of person who succeeds at whatever he turns his hand to.

LEADING CADET.

For instance, in 1962 he finished as the leading cadet at the RAF pilot training school in South Cerney in Gloucestershire. But it was not long before God called to him the ordained ministry of the Church of England. Then the next step for Michael, Kit and their family was to go to the Arctic.

1990s

'We went to the Arctic because we felt we had something to give back for all the wonderful things that God had done for us. And yet, we ended up giving very little, only receiving. It was a privilege to share the Inuit's lives for a little while. We did an ordinary job in an extraordinary place.' **Kit Maclachlan, Canadian Arctic, 1992 – 1998.**



'We learnt that the Lord enables his very ordinary ministers to do new things in unaccustomed ways beyond their expectations. We saw that there is nowhere on earth that Jesus is not present.'

Michael Maclachlan, Canadian Arctic, 1992 – 1998.



Michael and Kit offered themselves to CROSSLINKS and were sent beyond the Arctic Circle. We traditionally think of missionaries as working in the steamy jungle or dry desert places. However, the Maclachlans turned up in this part of the world to help the church among the Inuit people to share the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ in that part of Canada.

70 YEARS BEFORE

In 1924 the Revd and Mrs A. T. Houghton began CROSSLINKS work Myanmar. Bishop Houghton writes, 'Our medical work rapidly broke down barriers of hostility'. A local person asked what the Revd A.T. Houghton's job was. The easiest way to translate what he did was to say that he was 'Assistant to the Lord Jesus Christ'!

1,420 'ASSISTANTS TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST'

Since 1922, when CROSSLINKS was first founded these 'Assistants' have gone to Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the Gambia, South & North Africa, India, Thailand, Belgium, France, Cyprus, Spain and the Czech Republic as well as Chile.

OCTOBER 2022

This October marks CROSSLINKS big birthday. Here in the south-east of England there is celebratory service at 6pm on Thursday 6th October in Dundonald Church, Raynes Park, South London.

THE NEXT 100 YEARS

'We would be honoured if God continued to use CROSSLINKS ...for another 100 years' writes John McLernon (Mission Director). If God should choose to do just that, let it be our prayer that St Michael's, Braintree may be involved in praying, giving and growing.

** It was my privilege to have belonged to the same church and youth group as Michael.*

Stephen Bailey

FARMING SEASON

It's the beginning of a new season and after a hot, dry summer the recent rain has provided us with a good opportunity to cultivate the soil ready to drill next years' crops. Cultivations including ploughing have gone well this year. The ground cracked up naturally because it dried up so much and this help loosen the soil.

At the end of August we drilled our oilseed rape, which has now established well. This is not an easy plant to grow especially when it is first planted, relying on plenty of moisture to make sure it gets growing quickly. This is essential otherwise an insect called cabbage stem flea beetle starts eating the plant as it begins to grow and if the new plant cannot grow quickly enough this beetle will destroy it all together. In the past farmers were able to use an insecticide on their seed treatment which prevented this happening, but because this chemical was banned they are no longer able to do so. Optimum drilling times are now so important, and it is good that farmers can learn to adapt without potentially harmful chemicals so that they can keep producing their crops in a more environmentally safe way. Today we added early liquid fertilizer to the oilseed rape in the form of nitrogen and sulphur to enable the plants to keep growing and be strong before the winter. This will help them survive the next threat in the form of pigeons, who like to graze the plants over the colder months when there are fewer other food sources available.

During September we set about our annual task of muck spreading, which is something we always try to complete as quickly as possible. Our close neighbours are always very tolerant of the smell but we wouldn't want them to put up with it any longer than they have to! This organic manure is an important addition to the fertilizer we add to the soil and it is

rich in potassium and phosphorous as well as nitrogen. As I have explained before artificial nitrogen production relies on natural gas which makes it both expensive and heavily reliant on fossil fuels.

With the cultivations completed our other seedbeds are almost ready for the wheat to be drilled during the first weeks of October. We often use the previous crop to home save our seed for the current year, which is also something we will be doing this week. This involves sieving the grain to take out all the unwanted seeds including weeds and small grains which might be less vigorous during germination. The seed is then dressed with seed treatments, which are chemicals designed to help growth and protect the plant from seed born diseases. Before we start drilling the wheat in the next couple of weeks there is a little time to trim some of the hedges back as they continue to grow and encroach on the field margins. While doing this we will also look to expose field drains in the ditches to make sure they are clear for the winter months. October is always a busy month on an arable farm and it is the farmers job to make sure his new crops get off to the best start possible as this can set the tempo for the strength of the crop for the entire year.



One concerning thing I have noticed this year is the odd sick seagull in the countryside, which is not something I have really noticed before. Often seagulls flock behind the tractor when we are cultivating because they are keen to get earthworms as the soil is freshly turned over. There is not much I can do to stop them from stealing my worms, which are incredibly important creatures for improving the soil quality and structure. There have been reports that many seagulls are dying this year, particularly around coastal areas where they are found in greater numbers, and this has been attributed to avian flu.

During this time of year farming gets mentioned in church harvest festival services, which take place in September or October. Traditionally rural folk would have celebrated with big parties over the fact that the harvest had been safely gathered in, and many villages still have harvest suppers. The mood is best summed up in the following hymn:

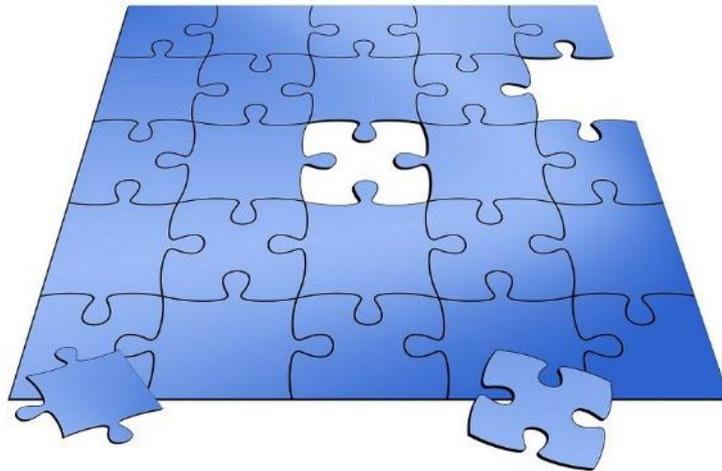
*Come, ye thankful people come
Raise the song of harvest home!
All is safely gathered in,
Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come;
Raise the song of harvest home!*

Adam Grove Smith

ALL PLAYING OUR PART?

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12)

As members of the body of Messiah, we can be compared to pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece has protrusions and indentations. The protrusions represent our strengths (gifts, talents, abilities), and the indentations represent our weaknesses (faults, limitations, shortcomings, undeveloped areas). The beautiful thing is that the pieces complement one another and produce a beautiful whole.



Just as each piece of a puzzle is important, so each member of the body is important and can minister to the other members of the body. And just as when one piece is missing from a puzzle, it's absence is very obvious and damages the picture, so also is the whole weakened when we are absent from the body of Messiah.

We have the privilege of being a little part of God's big picture! Let's not shy away from being a piece! Go forth and serve the Lord in wonderful ways this week.

Supplied by Peter Schaad from "The Worthy Brief"

COFFEE@ST MICHAEL'S



Coffee@St Michael's has restarted in St Michael's church – it runs on the first Thursday of the month from 10am-12noon.

The dates for the Autumn Term will be Thursdays 6th Oct, 3rd Nov & 1st Dec.

Everyone is very welcome.

Jo Adams

WOMEN@ST MICHAEL'S

We are glad to announce that we are coming back together so
some dates for you!

Christmas Prayer Lunch on Tuesday December 6th.

Soup and Christmas treats and drinks

Saturday November 12th

Saturday School in Church House. 9.30 Bacon Rolls and Drinks.

Sessions from 10.00 – 12.30 pm.

**Watch and listen for details of a meal at the White Hart, a
Christmas Event, and plans for 2023.**

Jennifer Bailey

MEN@ST MICHAEL'S

You would be most welcome to join us for any of our events this term:

Meal out at Toby Carvery, Notley Cross

Wed 19th Oct, 6.30 for 7pm

Men's Breakfast at Yummy's

Sat 12th Nov, 8am – Roger Cooke will be speaking

Men's Christmas Cracker

Sat 3rd Dec, 9.30am-12.30pm

We will be looking at John chapter 1 and what it teaches us about why Jesus came to earth

We will be giving more information about each event

Tiddlywinks

**We are back at Tiddlywinks
Tiddlywinks is for pre-school children
and their parents/carers
We chat, listen to Bible stories, sing songs,
plan and enjoy craft activities.
We run on Tuesday 1.15 - 2.45 in term time only
in St Michael's Church House, CM7 1EY**

Katie Whitlock

BELFRY BULLETIN

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 8th September 2022.

In line with the request from the Royal Family the bells at St Michael's, and church bells worldwide, were rung to commemorate the Queen's life and the accession to the Throne of Prince Charles to King Charles III.

Here is a record of what was rung and who rang it.

Friday 9th September 2022 at 12 noon

Clare Gray and Peter Smith tolled the 9th and tenor bells.
Peter tolled the tenor 96 times for Her Majesty's age.
Clare rang the tenor 70 times for length of her reign.
Clare and Peter rang the 9th and tenor bells together 74 times for the years of the Queen and the late Prince Phillips marriage.

Sunday 11th September at 11.30am

Rounds and call changes to Queens and Kings on our front 6 bells by

1, Lin Ould, 2, Kath Downs 3, Rosie Gray,
4, Clare Gray 5, Maurice Downs 6, Richard Ould

This was 9 year old Rosie's 1st service ringing Daughter of Clare and Granddaughter of Lin and Richard.

Monday 12th September

To celebrate the Accession of Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, to the Throne as King Charles III

240 changes of Plain Bob Doubles on the back 6 in 7 mins.

1 Kath Downs 2 Clare Gray 3 Lin Ould
4 Maurice Downs 5 Peter Smith [c] 6 Richard Ould

Rounds and call changes on the front 6

1 Kath Downs 2 Richard Ould 3 Rosie Gray,
4 Lin Ould 5 Maurice Downs 6 Clare Gray



This is a picture of those ringing (L to R)
Richard, Rosie, Lin, Peter, Clare, Kath and Maurice.

We rang three Quarter Peals to commemorate the Queen's reign
and her life.

1st QP Saturday 17th September

1260 changes of Plain Bob Royal half muffled in 52 mins

1 Pat Cresshull 2 Peter Chapman 3 Debbie Hill 4 Jim Green
5 Peter Smith 6 Vicki Elliot, 7 Simon Ward 8 John Taylor
9 Ian Cresshull 10 Bradley Hill [c]

2nd QP Saturday 18th September 2022 at 5.30pm

1344 half muffled changes of Plain Bob Major in 49 mins

1 Lin Ould 2 Kath Downs 3 Debbie Hill
4 Jim Green 5 Peter Smith 6 Maurice Downs
7 Simon Ward 8 Bradley Hill [c]

For the service of dedication to Queen Elizabeth II

3rd QP Monday 19th September 2022 at 10am

Rung half muffled for the Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II

1260 changes of Plain Bob Minor on the front 6 in 42 mins

1 Lin Ould 2 Simon Ward 3 Peter Smith
4 Ellis Whitehouse 5 Bradley Hill 6 Debbie Hill [c]

Ellis rang the tenor bell up to the start of the Funeral at 11am

It was an honour and a privilege to be part of this worldwide bell ringing tribute to our much loved Queen Elizabeth II and to welcome our new Monarch King Charles III

Peter Smith

COFFEE CHAT WITH ROGER COOKE

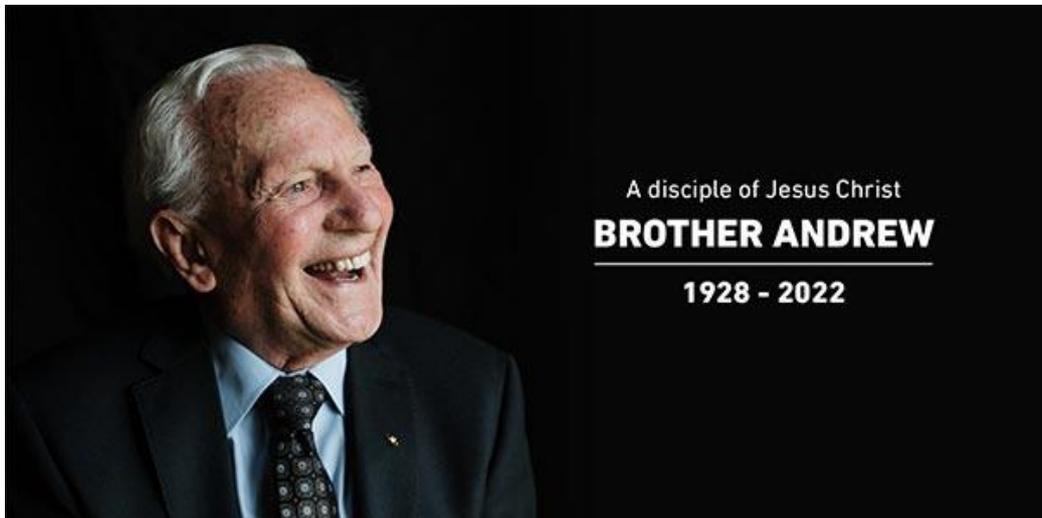


Third Monday coffee and conversation

I shall be in the Quadrant cafe on **17th October** at **10.30am** so if you'd like to join me you'd be very welcome!

Looking forward to seeing you.

Roger Cooke



Dear friends,

It is with much sadness that I'm announcing to you the death of Brother Andrew, founder of Open Doors, who passed away yesterday afternoon, aged 94, surrounded by his family at his home in the Netherlands.

I'm conscious that, like me, many of you have been deeply impacted by Brother Andrew's life and ministry, and this news will leave many of us with a deep sense of loss. But in the midst of grief, we also have much to give thanks to God for. Brother Andrew keenly believed that 'if one part suffers, every part suffers with it' and devoted his life to supporting his persecuted brothers and sisters. He was a loyal friend to those who suffer – and was, in turn, inspired by their courage and faith.

We are so grateful for his incredible life of service to God, and the inspiration and legacy he has left to all of us to continue the vital work of serving our persecuted family.

Please do be praying for Brother Andrew's family and all who loved him as they mourn his passing. And please pray that the Lord will continue to achieve His purposes through all of us as we continue to serve our persecuted family.

You can read more about Brother Andrew's courageous faith and ministry to God's people, and how he wished to be remembered, on the [Open Doors website](#).

May Brother Andrew rest in peace and rise in glory.

God bless you,

Henrietta Blyth, CEO Open Doors UK&I

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
(2 Timothy 4:7)

Photo credit: Renskemeinema.com

QUIZPAGE

006

Hello and welcome once again! You may have seen in recent editions of the magazine that Jeff will be running a Countdown tournament at Church House on Saturday 5th November (details overleaf), so here are a few letters and numbers rounds this time.

In the letters games, simply make a long word, and in the numbers, use the principles of arithmetic (plus, minus, times, divide) to reach the target – but use each tile once only!

Either give yourself just the usual 30 seconds for each puzzle, or try a more leisurely pace over a tea break. Answers are on page 28.

D	H	A	O	S	A	R	E	S
E	I	S	R	E	D	O	P	A
50	100	5	6	3	4		783	
T	T	O	E	O	S	T	T	F
I	D	R	I	L	R	O	E	I
75	8	100	4	50	7		716	

What's the
LONGEST
word from
these letters?

S T M I C H A E L

**Remember, remember
the 5th of November
as Countdown comes to
the hall in Church House.**

**Join Jeff for a live, interactive game show
experience with big screen graphics.**

**Find the best words, pick the numbers,
solve those crucial conundrums and
work your way up our leader board!**

www.focalcountdown.co.uk/braintree-2022

Organised and hosted by Jeff Clayton on Saturday 5th November 2022. Doors open at 10:30; the draw for Round 1 is at 11:15. Everyone plays six games from start to finish, concluding by 18:00, with breaks in between. Free refreshments will be available – tea, coffee, squash, fruit, biscuits. All ages are welcome, but under-18s must be accompanied by a participating adult. Full details of the event are posted on the above web page, including an indicative timetable and how to sign up. Registration is in advance, please (confirmed upon receipt of payment). The longest word in the selection is ALCHEMIST.

Jeff Clayton

OCTOBER DIARY

www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk

Our YouTube services can be accessed through the “St Michael’s – Worship on the Web” YouTube channel and are generally updated during the week after the Sunday service

2 Sunday

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Harvest Church Family Worship

6:30pm Holy Communion

3 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

4 Tuesday

1:15pm Tiddywinks

8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

5 Wednesday

10.00am Meeting Point

7.30pm Hope Explored, session 3, on Zoom

6 Thursday

10:00am Coffee@St Michael’s – in church

9 Sunday

8:00am Holy Communion

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)

10:00am Mission Sunday: Samaritan's Purse – Presentation by Trish Ellse

10 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

11 Tuesday

1:15pm Tiddywinks

8.00pm First Priority Prayer Meeting

12 Wednesday

10.00am Meeting Point

16 Sunday

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)

10:00am Holy Communion

6:30pm All-Age Tonight

17 Monday

10:30am Coffee Chat with Roger Cooke @Quadrant

7:30pm White Horse Tavern (Church House)

7:30pm Bell Ringing

18 Tuesday

8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

19 Wednesday

6:30pm Men@StMichael's – Meal @Toby Carvery

20 Thursday

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study (@Rose Hill)

23 Sunday

8:00am Holy Communion

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)

10:00am Morning Worship

24 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

25 Tuesday

8:00pm Zoom Bible Study, led by Cyril Bamforth

27 Thursday (LINK SUBMISSION DUE)

2:00pm Oasis@StMichael's – Bereavement Support Group
(Small Hall in Church House)

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study (@ Rose Hill)

29 Saturday

6:00pm Light Party in Church House

30 Sunday

8:00am Holy Communion

9:00am Next Plus Breakfast (14-18s)

10:00am Junior Church (3-14s)

10:00am Holy Communion

6:30pm United Service at Christchurch, Braintree - Teen
Challenge team re. Feb 23 Outreach



Countdown – top score, 47 points.

One 8-letter word, HARASSED.
Four 8-letter words: AIRSPEED, DIASPORE, PARODIES, PARODISE.
$100+50+6=156$, $156\times 5=780$, $780+3=783$. 10 points for an exact solve, 7 points within five (778-788), 5 points within ten (773-793).
5-letter words were the best here: FOOTS, OTTOS, TOFTS, TOOTS, TOTES.
A couple of 6-letter words: OILIER and ROILED.
$100+4=104$, $104\times 7=728$, $75\times 8=600$, $600/50=12$, $728-12=716$. 10 points for an exact solve, 7 points within five (711-721), 5 points within ten (706-726).

Thanks for playing, and I hope to see you at our tournament on Saturday 5th November. Full details are available at www.focalcountdown.co.uk/braintree-2022.

Jeff Clayton