

# The LINK

**JULY 2023**



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

## SUMMER PLANS AT ST MICHAEL'S

Dear Friends,

I don't know whether you have any particular summer plans, but we are planning what will be happening at St Michael's over the coming couple of months.

For the 6 weeks of the school holidays (23rd July to 27th August) we will be having **family services each week at 10am**. We will be focusing on some of Jesus' parable and powerful images. We will be having another **picnic lunch on Sunday 23rd July, 12noon** in Bocking Public Gardens – please bring a picnic and a chair.

On Sunday 6th August, we will also have a 4pm **traditional Communion service**. We will not be having a 6.30pm service on Sunday 6th or 13th August, but will on the other Sundays.

On Thursdays 6th & 20th July, there will be **Summer Club Nights** in Church House from 7.30-9.00pm. These are for anyone secondary school age (including current Year 6, who are about to start at secondary school).

On Friday 28th July, there will be another **SMASH Extra for Families** event. It will take place from 3-5pm in church, with a variety of craft & games stations around the church that families can visit. At 4.30pm, we will join together for a Praise Party where we will sing SMASH songs and hear a Bible story.

I hope you will be able to join us for some of these services and events and hope you have a really good summer.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel



## MISSION OF THE MONTH



Making Mission Possible

Saint Michael's patrons, Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS) are July's mission of the month. It is an Anglican Evangelical Mission agency, enabling churches to help every person hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ. They have an input into the appointment of ministers, including our church. They train ministers, run courses for churches and PCC groups. They organise and run over 50 young people and children's camps and house parties. In this month of July, we pray especially for the volunteer leaders, and youngsters, who will attend these camps and house parties, mainly held during July and August each year.

*Derek Chapman is Saint Michael's rep for CPAS*

## WHAT WAS GOD DOING BEFORE HE CREATED THE WORLD?

He was enjoying himself.

No, his happiness was not lounging in some sort of heavenly armchair. The Lord God is one Lord, yet he is three persons.

The Father was enjoying the friendship and love of the Son.

The Son was happy in the friendship and love of the Father.

And binding in a three-fold bond of love and friendship was God the Holy Spirit.

## PLANNING

The one and true Lord had a plan in mind. It would give him great pleasure to create a universe. In that vast arena, he made one special planet. It turns out that planet Earth was and is teeming with all kinds of animal and vegetable life. Yet in this precious life, the Lord God created a man and a woman both made in his image.

## WHY?

He did it because it gave him pleasure and displayed his glory. (See Psalm 104). And he took pleasure in all that he created (Proverbs 8:31). He was glad to make men and women.

## FURTHER PLANS.

But the Lord God looked ahead in the life of the planet he had made and saw that the crown of his creation – the humans – would spoil it all by rebelling against their Creator master. So before he even began creating our planet, he planned to save rebel humans whom he loved.

## THE CONFERENCE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

To cut a long story short, there was a divine conference. The Son in full loving agreement with the Father's solution became a genuine human being. He made it possible for humans to come back to God. God the Holy Spirit's involvement meant that he would come to men and women and persuade them to return home in repentance and by trust in Jesus Christ.

## 'THE PURSUIT OF LIFE, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS'

These words from the American Constitution have nearly got it right! Life and, yes, even health and happiness are to be found in finding our Creator and enjoying the happiness he has in himself and in what he has made. But these noble words miss out God.

Christians can add that the pursuit of 'life, health and happiness' can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We can come to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ because he has reconciled us to God by dying for us. The Father has pleasure in welcoming us home (See Luke 15:11-32 - Jesus' story of the Lost, or Prodigal Son). God the Holy Spirit now starts to renew believers inwardly so that one day they will enjoy genuine healthy bodies and full friendship with the one God, taking pleasure with him in a re-born creation.

*Stephen Bailey*

## FARMING SEASONS



On a beautiful day on Saturday 24th June we held the St Michael's Farm Walk in Shalford. The event was well supported with over 80 people attending. By way of an introduction I showed some of my Grandad's vintage film, which he took from around the late 1940s, of life on the farm. Although the film was made some 25 years before I was born we still have some of the vintage machinery which featured on the film and this was also on display.



Afterwards the majority of us set off on the farm walk which took us into Levelly Wood, through Shalford Park and from there down towards the River Pant. From there we visited St Andrews Church where there was a chance to rest and enjoy this highly originally 14th century building. Then we headed back towards

the farm, which is mainly uphill, past the George Pub (where some of us were tempted for another unplanned rest), and finally back through the fields to complete our approximate 3.5 mile walk. Those of us who didn't fancy the walk took the trailer ride around the farm instead before we all finally met back at the barn, from where we started, for strawberries and cream, and cake!



We would like to thank everybody who helped and attended making the event a success.

*Adam Grove-Smith*

## HOW MUCH ARE YOU WORTH?

**“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.” (Luke 12:6-7)**

A good friend sent us this story.

A well-known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of two hundred, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands immediately started going up.

"I am going to give this \$20 bill to one of you but first, let me do this." He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still, hands were up in the air.

"Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" And he dropped it on the ground, spit on it and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now crumpled and dirty. "Still want it now?" Surprisingly, hands still didn't go down.

"My friends, I think we've all learned a valuable lesson here. No matter what I did to this money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was worth twenty whole dollars no matter what I did to it."

Often in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, spit upon and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless.

But here's the kicker. No matter what has happened, we will never lose value in God's eyes. To Him, dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, we are still priceless. The worth of our lives does not

come in who we are but by whose we are! Let's give our lives back to the Lord today, our disappointments, our suffering, our feelings of worthlessness. He is the God of healing. He has made us clean and worthy of our calling in Him!

*Supplied from "The Worthy Brief" by Peter Schaad*

## COFFEE CHAT WITH ROGER COOKE



Third Monday coffee and conversation

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

Looking forward to seeing you.

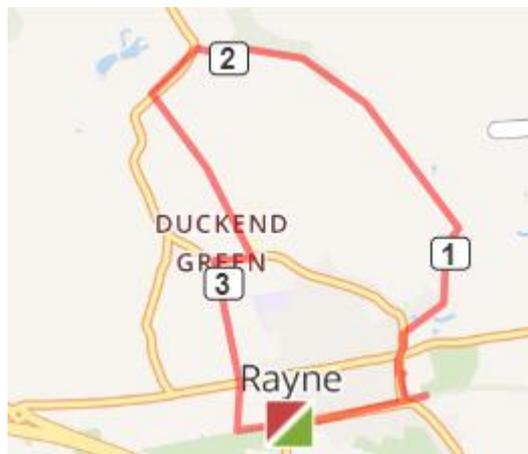
*Roger Cooke*

## THANK-YOU!

I would like to thank all my Church Family for your prayers, cards, support and general love during David's illness and subsequent passing. It has meant a lot to me and my family to know that you have been with us in so many ways.

*Helen Kemp*

## WALK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (RETURNS)



Join us on Saturday July 29<sup>th</sup> as we resume walking in the countryside. David Birch will be our guide. We take this opportunity to say “thank-you” to Miriam and Terry Clark for organising and leading the walks in years gone by.

Everyone is welcome to join in. Please meet at Rayne Railway station at 10:30am, with a plan to set-off at 10:45am. Following the trend set by Miriam and Terry, there will be an opportunity for refreshments at the Rayne station café at the end. Speak to David Birch or Ade Odupitan for more information.

*On behalf of the St Michael's Eco Church team*

A vibrant blue poster for a family event. The top half features a sky with several white, fluffy clouds of varying sizes. The text 'SMASH Club for families' is written in a playful, multi-colored font. Below this, a large red ribbon banner contains the event details in white text. At the bottom, the activities 'Treasure Hunt', 'Puzzles & Games', and 'Craft' are listed in a pink, bubbly font. The final line of text, 'Join us for an afternoon of fun family activities!', is in a green, bubbly font.

SMASH Club  
for families

Friday 28th July  
3pm - 5pm  
St Michael's Church

Treasure  
Hunt

Puzzles &  
Games

Craft

Join us for an afternoon  
of fun family activities!

## WOMEN @ST MICHAEL'S CONFERENCE DAY SATURDAY JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup>

A day when all ages of women met together from our Young Women to our very oldest women! The weather was perfect and from the beginning of the day to the end a real buzz of expectation and excitement was in the air.

Our theme was 'Unswerving Hope' from our St Michael's verse of the year:

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful*

We welcomed Harsha and Charles Mason and Harsha with technical help from Charles used 1 Peter 1:1-12 to speak to us about the Living Hope that we have in Jesus. In the afternoon using 1 Peter 2:4-10, Harsha spoke about how we can live hopefully in the world today as Christian Women.

Ruth Ellam was a treat for the day as she led our music... more later!



During the morning there was time for discussion where we considered in small groups the Hopes that we have and how we can encourage each other to be Christianly hopeful each day.

Refreshments are always a highlight of the day and we were not disappointed.



After lunch Workshops were a highlight ... Rachel Huxter very ably led an Origami Workshop making tulips ... tulips chosen by Rachel because they are a flower that symbolises hope ... and impressive results

Rachel Grove Smith led a group to dramatise Psalm 8 which was movingly presented after only 30 minutes to prepare ...

The small group who decided to go to the Singing Workshop with Ruth surprised us all with a new rendering of Amazing Grace ... all in 30 minutes! Charles Mason contributing skilfully too - video available! There was the opportunity to chill in the sun too.

Each person received a Goody Bag which included a book called Heavenly Minded by Mary Wilson Hannah ... a book which 'captures how fixing our eyes on Heaven will transform our Christian experience here on earth bringing us assurance, hope and purpose,'

**And comments from the day...**

*"Uplifting, good to take time out from a usual Saturday, incredible, I feel empowered, great refreshments, a really great day, fun, lots of food for thought ..."*

Thank you everyone for coming and thank you to everyone who helped to make the day possible.

Watch for a Saturday School in the Autumn.

*Jennifer Bailey*

## BELFRY BULLETIN

It has been rather quiet in the Tower of late due to holidays and other commitments and a Bank Holiday and it has been a bit hot.

Debbie Hill had a fortnight in Egypt, no bells in the Pyramids!

Bradley Hill went to Austria, no ringing - too busy yodelling?!

Peter Smith had a Family weekend, very tiring and no bells.

We did have a visit from the ringers from the Essex Associations Southern District on Saturday 10th June when 19 of their members rounded off their Summer Outing ringing at St. Michael's, from which we received many complements on how good the bells and the ringing chamber are.

We assemble at 10am on Saturday 24th June to ring a Peal. Unfortunately, at the beginning of 8th part of a 12 part composition and after 2 hours ringing it collapsed. As we had time to celebrate Peter Smith's 85th Birthday, we rang a Quarter Peal of 1260 changes of Plain Bob Minor in 40mins, 1 Jodie Hill, 2 Debbie Hill, 3 Peter Smith, 4 David Learmonth, 5 Ellis Whitehouse, 6 Bradley Hill[c].

### AWAY FROM THE TOWER

Bradley Hill has been busy on Handbells, with 2 others he rang 2 Quarter Peals on 6 bells of minor methods on Tuesday 30th May and then on 6th June 1 minor method QP. Debbie Hill joined them on 13th June to ring a QP of Major on 8 Handbells.

Debbie Hill and Peter Smith joined 6 ringers at Wethersfield to ring a Quarter Peal of Major to celebrate David Newton, from

Pebmarsh, 50th Birthday and Debbie and David Hills 34 wedding anniversary

*Peter Smith*

## JULY DIARY

[www.stmichaelsbtree.co.uk](http://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 Church Family Worship

12:00pm Picnic in the Public Gardens

4:00pm Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

6:30pm Evening Worship

### **3 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

7:30pm White Horse Tavern (Church House)

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

### **4 Tuesday**

1:45 - 2:45pm Tiddlywinks

### **5 Wednesday**

10:00am Meeting Point

### **6 Thursday**

10:00am – 12noon Coffee@StMichael’s (in church)

7:30pm Summer Club Night (secondary school age & Year 6)

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study @Rose Hill

### **7 Friday**

7:00pm Men@StMichaels: Crazy Golf @Rivenhall Oaks

## **9 Sunday**

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

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

10:00am Morning Worship

6:30pm Holy Communion

## **10 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

7:30pm White Horse Tavern (Church House)

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

## **11 Tuesday**

1:45 - 2:45pm Tiddlywinks

8.00-9.00pm First Priority Prayer Meeting (small hall)

## **12 Wednesday**

10:00am Meeting Point

## **13 Thursday**

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study @Rose Hill

## **16 Sunday**

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

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

10:00am Morning Worship

6:30pm All-Age Tonight

## **17 Monday**

10:30am Coffee Chat with Roger Cooke @Quadrant

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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

## **18 Tuesday**

1:45 - 2:45pm Tiddlywinks

## **19 Wednesday**

10:00am Meeting Point

## **20 Thursday**

7:30pm Summer Club Night (secondary school age & Year 6)

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study @Rose Hill

## **22 Saturday**

10:00am Church Work Party: Small Hall re-decoration

## **23 Sunday**

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

10:00am Family Service

12noon Picnic in Bocking Public Gardens

6:30pm Holy Communion

## **24 Monday**

7:30pm Bell Ringing

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

## **25 Tuesday**

10:00am Living Without Worry (Church House)

## **27 Thursday (LINK SUBMISSION DUE)**

2:00pm Oasis@StMichaels: informal bereavement support group (Small Hall)

7:30pm Rose Hill Bible Study @Rose Hill

## **28 Friday**

3:00-5:00pm SMASH Extra for families

## **29 Saturday**

10:30am Walk in the countryside

## **30 Sunday**

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

10:00am Family Service

6:30pm United Service @Braintree Baptist Church