

# NEWSLETTER

April 2021

## from the Church of St. Michael's Bray



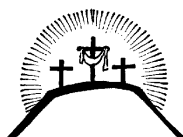
The Parish Church of Bray with Braywood, Holyport & Moneyrow  
Green, Fifield, Touchen End and Oakley Green

website: [www.braystmichael.co.uk](http://www.braystmichael.co.uk)



**Dear Friends,**

**Eastertide – A Forgotten Celebration** - I do not know if you are aware, but some clergy get a bit cross about Advent and Christmas not being kept properly! Advent, the few weeks before Christmas, as you will know, are supposed to be the quiet and thoughtful preparation for the Christmas celebration. Advent is officially a 'penitential season' a time to reflect on what could be better in our lives. What happens these days is we begin to celebrate Christmas with decorations and carol services quite early on in Advent. This does muddle up the liturgical sense of things. Then after Boxing Day, Christmas is almost over... but it has only just started! The Twelve Days of Christmas starting at Midnight on Christmas Eve ushers in 12 days of celebration of the birth of Christ. Anyway, what has this to do with Eastertide? And why is the Vicar talking about Easter which was a month ago?!



Just as the real Advent and Christmas 'time-line' has been forgotten or ignored so to with Easter. Lent holds a similar function to Advent, a penitential season of preparation. We are a bit better at keeping Lent, we may even have given something up, or joined in a Lent course or Bible study. When we get to Easter Day, we tend to think of it as a great feast but that it is a 'one day' event. After 40 days of fasting in Lent, Easter Day ushers in 50 days of celebration! Here at Bray, we do keep Eastertide, we are still singing the Easter hymns and we follow the Lectionary readings which are preparing us for Ascension and Pentecost. The resurrection of Jesus and his ascension prepare us for the coming of the Holy Spirit which brings in the new age of Christ being present everywhere and within each of us.

I do not get cross about a poor keeping of Advent and Christmas or Lent and Eastertide but I do feel we are missing out if we don't have a full sense of the seasons of the Church, which for nearly 2000 years have been the way Christians have prepared and celebrated the key moments of our faith. I know it's 'counter cultural' but let us keep the feast!

**With prayers and blessings, Rev'd Ainsley**

## **MINECRAFT CHURCH**

Minecraft Church has been zinging along well recently. We keep getting new people wanting to sign up and they all bring lots of energy and enthusiasm with them.

We often say it's not growth in numbers but growth in depth we want. It is always nice to be popular though! That said number can overwhelm at times. Minecraft church is an active and lively time with movement and excitement in our game characters and in the Zoom too! We all know what Zooms are like with their pauses, extraneous noises, strange volume levels and internet glitches! It is a wonder we can converse at all!

So the last months we have been splitting up into smaller groups so we can all be heard and can coordinate ourselves better. It takes time to learn this but I have found that our times together get a bit more coordinated!

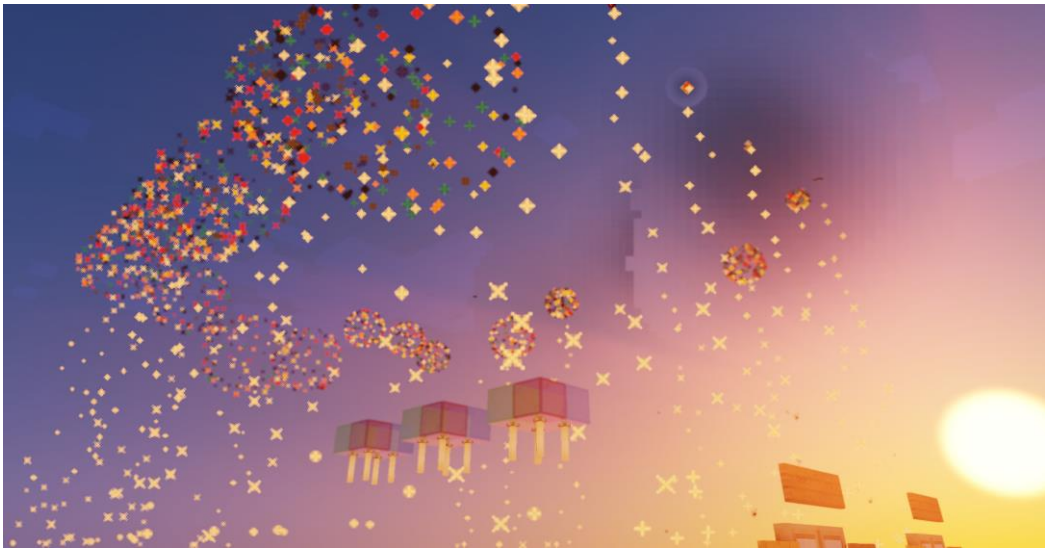
I feel I need to mention the Potato-gate incident though! We have awarded virtual potatoes for fun in the game. Any player can give themselves or others one or more items, such as a potato! One player in a fit of enthusiasm attempted to give us all 999,999,999 potatoes. The server did its best but gradually ground to a halt, booted us all out and restarted! It was very amusing.

We got our own back later as we had planned a little treasure hunt with clues. When they had got back and assembled the answers into a phrase we told them to go and ask their parents for a special prize we had prepared. They all shot off thinking they would get a nice Easter Egg. They all came back with a potato, carrot or root vegetable which we had planned with their parents to give them!

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## ***MINECRAFT IMAGES***



Making sure we all have a lot of fun has been healing and healthy for all of us who have been struggling with isolation and lacking the opportunities for interaction and laughter. Nehemiah 8:10 reminds us "The joy of the Lord is your strength." We do that as part of Minecraft Church; we have made sure that we both have fun and we celebrate and rejoice in the God who makes laughter possible. Rev'd Kevin

## ***A SHORT CHRISTMAS BREAK AFTER COVID 19***

***Wednesday 17th Thursday 18th Friday 19th November 2021***

### ***Norfolk and Christmas Spectacular November 2021***

It is time we planned to safely enjoy ourselves, so it is with Hope and Optimism, that we are pleased to inform you that we have arranged for us to enjoy a short' after Covid 19 break'. At last' something to look forward to, Time to relax and be with friends.

During our last Christmas visit in 2018 many of you suggested that it would be good to spend an extra night, and include a further visit, so that's just what we have done.

This three day visit will of course include a visit to the Thursford Christmas Extravaganza, and will also include a visit to Anglesey Abbey.

**Day One:** As on our previous visits we will be staying at the Wensum Valley Hotel, this time for two nights. Departure as usual is from Braywick Car Park SL6 1DX. at 10.00 am, for our journey to Norfolk, with a comfort stop on route, and dinner at the hotel.

**Day Two:** A morning coach tour, before arriving at the Thursford show for the afternoon performance. Then back to our hotel for dinner.

**Day Three:** We will depart for our visit to Anglesey Abbey, Gardens and Lode Mill. Anglesey Abbey is a National Trust property so if you are N T Members make sure you have your Membership Cards with you. Non Members - we will collect your admission fees on the coach so that we can enjoy the Group Price. We plan to depart Anglesey Abbey around 3.30 pm returning to Maidenhead around 6.00 pm.

***To secure your place on this visit please complete the booking form on the next page and send to Roy Gardner***

*Price includes Coach, Hotel Dinner and Breakfast, Admissions and Gratuities and is based on 35 passengers.*

**PAYMENT PLEASE BEFORE 1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2021**

*Please ensure that you have insurance cover for the visit. Crusader Holidays can provide this for £28 per person if required.*

Name.....

Contact Phone Number.....Mobile

phone.....

E mail

address.....

*Please reserve.....places @ £305 each Twin/Double*

*Please reserve ..... places @ £343 Single room*

*Travel insurance £28 pp if required.*

*Total-----*

**PAYMENT PLEASE BEFORE 1<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2021**

**PLEASE PRINT YOUR ADDRESS ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS BOOKING SLIP**

**Your Social Committee**

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## ST MICHAEL'S ROCKS

Andy Giles has been in contact with Rebecca Earl about producing some stones to place around the churchyard such as the one pictured below. .

Rebecca's group 'Holyport Rocks' has been producing decorated stones and hiding them around Holyport village with the idea of people being pleased to find one and then moving it on for someone to find in a new location - and if possible taking a picture of the stone. This has been really successful particularly with children. Rebecca and her group accepted the challenge to produce some specially designed stones for St. Michael's and hide them in the churchyard. If you find one please enjoy the moment and then place it in another part of the churchyard for someone else to find - Happy hunting!



## CONTACT LIST

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Wenda Fowles	629538
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