

# NEWSLETTER

February 2025

## 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,

Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, Christians replicate Christ's withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. Lent is marked by fasting, both from food and festivities.

We come to Lent with our need to seek God's direction for our lives and our Church and our world.

Our Lent course this year is "**Come and See**" more details can be found in this Newsletter.

The Christian churches that observe Lent in the 21st century (and not all do) use it as a time for prayer and penance. There is also a practice of spending time reading and studying Scripture and spending more time in prayer. Only a small number of people today fast for the whole of Lent, although some maintain the practice on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. It is more common these days for believers to surrender a particular item such as favourite food/s or pastime. Whatever the sacrifice it is a reflection of Christ's deprivation in the wilderness and a test of self-discipline and a making space for God to speak to us.

### Why 40 days?

40 is a significant number in Jewish-Christian scripture:

- In Genesis, the flood which destroyed the earth was brought about by 40 days and nights of rain.
- The Hebrews spent 40 years in the wilderness before reaching the land promised to them by God.
- Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the ten commandments on Mount Sinai.
- Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry.

Most Christians regard Jesus' time in the wilderness as the key event for the duration of Lent.

### Why is it called Lent?

Lent is an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. Lent is observed in spring, when the days begin to get longer. **Each Sunday evening in Lent (from Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March) at 9.00pm Compline (Night Prayer) will be on Zoom**

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## The colour purple

Purple is the symbolic colour used in church throughout Lent, for vestments, drapes and altar frontals.

Purple is used for two reasons: firstly because it is associated with mourning and so anticipates the pain and suffering of the crucifixion, and secondly because purple is the colour associated with penitence and reflection, a time of preparation and cleansing to ready us for the celebration of Easter.

### Notable dates:

**Ash Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March (the beginning of Lent) a Eucharist with ashing in Church at 8.00 pm**

**Mothering Sunday: 30<sup>th</sup> March a special service at 10.00 am**

**Palm Sunday: 13<sup>th</sup> April 10.00 am**

The last week of Lent is called **Holy Week** when we recall the last days of Jesus's life and prepare for the great celebration of Easter and resurrection.

**Holy Week a Eucharist with a time for reflection will be held in church at 7:30 p.m. on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April.**

**Maundy Thursday: 17<sup>th</sup> April 8.00 pm Eucharist with foot washing followed by a vigil.**

**Good Friday: 18<sup>th</sup> April 3.00 pm Liturgy of the Cross**

**Easter Day 20<sup>th</sup> April The first Eucharist of Easter 8.00am and 10.00am beginning with the lighting of the Paschal Candle.**



With best regards

**Ainsley**

**“Come and See”** is Jesus’ invitation to Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, who had been following John the Baptist and was intrigued by Jesus.

**“Come and See”** is Phillip’s invitation to Nathaniel’s difficulties in believing Jesus could be the messiah.

**“Come and See”** is the woman from the well’s invitation to those who wanted to know how she had been transformed from a shy outcast to someone proclaiming the messiah is here.

**“Come and See”** is Mary’s invitation to Jesus when he asks where his friend Lazarus has been laid after dying... not knowing Jesus could raise him from the dead!

Rather than have someone try to explain something in words, it’s often easier and more fulfilling to first come and see, to ponder, to mull over questions that pop into your mind, to have conversation, and then possibly to begin to understand.

**“Come and See”** is our invitation at St Michael’s to you, to explore what it is to be human in this day and age, by considering baptism and the elements of earth, water, wind and fire. This is for anyone, whatever age and however much experience of Christianity you have (or don’t have)... I will be exploring as much as anyone!

This invitation runs from Ash Wednesday (March 5th) until Easter week (Palm Sunday is 13th April). The material is produced by the Oxford Diocese, and is available via email - you can get the details at <https://oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see> (or use the QR code). I encourage everyone to sign up.

But we are also offering two in-person sessions **each week**, where we can come, see and discuss. **They will be the same topic**, it’s just to try and make it convenient for as many as possible. They are **7:30pm on Thursdays** and **2:30pm on Fridays** - both in St Michael’s church hall.

It would be useful if you email me (Andy) at [andymed256@gmail.com](mailto:andymed256@gmail.com) to let me know which session you’d like to come to - helps me get the right number of snacks!

6th & 7th March  
13th & 14th March  
20th & 21st March  
27th & 28th March  
2nd & 3rd April  
10th & 11th April



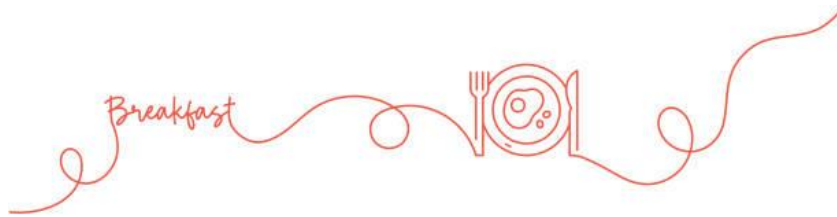
**Rev’d Andy Medicott**



## Church before Breakfast

Just a reminder that on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month we meet for breakfast in the church hall.

Served between the morning services (i.e. 8.45 – 9.45am), enjoy a bacon roll or a continental style breakfast or simply join us for a cup of coffee.



A good chance to catch up with friends and make new ones. The next date is Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025.

## Summer Teas 2025



Once again we will be holding weekly Sunday summer teas to raise money for the church and other local charities. These commence Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June and the first team will be The Friends of St Michael's. Teas will continue throughout the summer, the final being held on the 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Should you be interested in hosting a tea, please refer to the sign-up sheet on the notice board in the church hall. Alternatively contact Katrin Brunning ([katrinbrunning@gmail.com](mailto:katrinbrunning@gmail.com)) or Pam Woodruff ([pamwoodruff@btinternet.com](mailto:pamwoodruff@btinternet.com)).

*The Choir of St. Michael's Church needs to recruit new members of all ages and voice types*



We meet twice a week: on Friday evenings for choir practice from 7 to 8 p.m. and on Sunday mornings with a rehearsal at 9.20 a.m. ready for the for the Parish Communion service at 10 a.m. We also sing at special services throughout the Church year. The choir takes its major hoiday during the school summer holidays and we take a week off after Christmas and Easter.

The church in Bray has been the centre of the village community since 1293, and it is very likely that a near unbroken tradition of choral music has accompanied the liturgy ever since. The choir of St Michael's is proud to uphold this strong tradition.

For further information please contact our Director of Music Oliver Gooch [ollie@musicatbray.co.uk](mailto:ollie@musicatbray.co.uk)





## **Sunday Afternoon Recitals at 3.00pm**

**9 March**

**Andrew Garrido  
(piano)**

Charismatic young pianist presents a Romantic programme to include Fauré and Grieg

**6 April**

**Alex McChrystal  
(piano)**

Award-winning emerging pianist presents Liszt *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la Solitude* and Ravel *Miroirs*

**Retiring Collection and Afternoon Tea**

## CONTACT LIST

**The Vicar:** Rev. Canon Ainsley Swift 633113  
**Curate:** Rev'd Andy Medlicott [andymed256@gmail.com](mailto:andymed256@gmail.com)  
**For general enquiries (Christenings, Weddings etc) in the first instance please contact our Parish Administrator, Richard Severn: 01628 633113 [stmichaelsbray@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaelsbray@gmail.com)"**

**The Churchwardens:**

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Lynn Olney 07966906092

**Deputy Churchwardens:**

Jim Tucker 673685  
Penny Murray 623041  
Mary Wiles 635000

**Sacristan & Lay Funeral Minister:**

Lynda Jones 635178  
**Vergger:** Jim Tucker 673685

**Parochial Church Council:**

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**Hon Treasurer:**

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*Tower Captain:*

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**Friends of St. Michael's**

Lynda Jones 635178

**Church Flowers:** Maggie Jans 635732

**Holyport School Headteacher:**

Mrs Amanda Featherstone 627743

<https://www.holyportprimaryschool.co.uk>

**Braywood School Headteacher:**

Mrs Susan Calvert 623660

<https://braywood-ce.eschools.co.uk>