

NEWSLETTER

July/August 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



Dear Friends,

Two very wonderful, if different, occasions have taken place at St Michael's recently.

Michael Parkinson Jnr gave a presentations in words and music of the life of his Father, Sir Michael Parkinson CBE. Intriguing insights into Sir Michael's life, family and background in a Yorkshire mining town and the lives of some of his many interviewees made for fascinating listening.

The inclusion of some of the songs and music that meant so much to Sir Michael gave an extra dimension to the compelling presentation. Songs included Summertime - Gershwin, The Long and Winding Road – The Beatles, Moon River – Jonny Mercer, The Way you look tonight (dedicated to Mary Parkinson) Tony Bennet, and As Time Goes By – Wilson.

As well as being a wonderful gesture in support of our rewiring and lighting appeal the most wonderful thing to me was Mike's assertion of the importance of the Church and community, the comfort and cohesion the relationship between a Church and wider community can bring and particularly how our church had been a support and comfort to Mike, Lady Mary Parkinson and the family, since the loss of Sir Michael.



On the following day St Michael's was host to a Deanery Confirmation service; our new Bishop of Reading, +Mary, presided over the service. Bishop Mary had this to say (on social media):

"On Sunday afternoon, [St Michael's Church Bray](#) hosted a glorious service in which I had the joy to baptise five people, confirm 41 and receive two people into the Church of England. [#welcomehome](#)."

It was an amazing service, with wonderful attendance, lovely music and overflowing hospitality! A special thank you to Ollie and the Choir for the music and to Pam, Katrin and the Team providing the more than sufficient food, cakes, drinks and hospitality, and to all who helped the service happen (you know who you are!).



With best regards

Ainsley

Nearly eight years ago I had a call from God to become an ordained minister in the Church of England. It was on an ordinary Sunday morning in the church I was leading as an enthusiastic volunteer and I had gone to another service earlier in the day and taken bread and wine to be blessed by a priest which I could then distribute later... communion by extension.

The journey has taken a long time, and involved a lot of changes. I have been here at St Michael's for four of those years, I have spent three years at theological college in the evenings and some weekends, I have finally left software engineering (though I do keep a bit of a hand in it). Last year I was ordained a deacon, allowing me to wear the dog-collar **and be known as Reverend Andy Medlicott**. A few weeks ago I was **ordained a Priest**, in addition to being a deacon, by Bishop Mary as she anointed my hands.



This is a very significant milestone; my call started with communion by extension, and now I am able to consecrate the bread and wine. Of course my journey continues - we never stop learning.

It is my belief that the Christian journey is really only possible through being part of a community. I am conscious that in these eight years I have met and journeyed with many people. Of course Jesus is absolutely central, but also included are my wife (who is also a priest) and daughter, lecturers and fellow students at college, those from my sending church of Warfield, and of course many people at St Michael's, the village and the wider parish!

So on that hot Saturday morning it was wonderful to be surrounded by people who have journeyed with me, and will continue to do so! Thank you everyone.

Take care & God Bless,

Andy

ST MICHAEL'S LIGHTING APPEAL

As explained in last month's newsletter, the PCC is ready to proceed with the replacement of the electrical and lighting installation in St Michael's, before the current system fails, and replacing it with a system which will improve and enhance the environment. Thanks to a lot of hard work from Ian Murray and Lee Brunning, researching and coming to an agreement about what is required, the PCC will be invited at its meeting on 23 July to confirm that the contract be placed.

The appeal to raise funds, in order to ensure that we can afford the work without spending everything we have, got underway in spectacular fashion on Saturday 12 July, when in St Michael's Mike Parkinson junior entertained a large number of parishioners and friends. His presentation "Parky in Words and Music" with wonderful accompaniment from Malcolm Edmonstone on the piano, and vocalist Becky Biggins. told the fascinating story of his late father. We cannot thank the three of them enough.

Next, we have to say "thank you" to the many people who have already responded so generously. The PCC is only too aware that requests for financial assistance come thick and fast from all quarters these days, and the church is no exception. What is exceptional, of course, is the wonderful building in which we are privileged to worship God, and all the benefits the church community gives us. If you can, do please support this appeal, it is for work that is essential on the one hand, and extremely desirable on the other.

The simplest way to donate is by bank transfer (BACS), and the details are:

Account name; St Michael's Bray with Braywood Parochial Church Council
Sort code:309950. Account no:73917663

If you would prefer to donate in some other way, or have any questions, please speak to me, or email me at jimtucker@talktalk.net .

Jim Tucker

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH SUMMER TEAS 2025



Our summer teas are now in full operation each Sunday afternoon from 3 pm until 5 pm until the end of August. Teas are held to support of a number of charities.

This year there will be a tea in aid of a dementia charity, Alexander Devine, Homestart, The Children's Society and the Church lighting appeal and Church funds. We look forward to welcoming you all to a friendly afternoon with homemade cakes.

Church News

The Choir PCC Vacancy

The Parochial Church Council is looking for someone to join its finance team as treasurer. There are four people in the team, and the treasurer's primary role is to process and record transactions using the Xero computer system. Full training will be given in use of the system, which is supported by the PCC's accountants, and team members are always on hand to assist and give advice. The treasurer is not required to take cash or cheques to the bank, and all payments are made electronically through BACS.

If you would like to talk about the possibility of taking on this role, please talk to Ainsley, or Jim Tucker.



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 holiday during the school summer holidays and we take a week off after Christmas and Easter. For further information please contact our Director of Music Oliver Gooch ollie@musicatbray.co.uk



'We're looking for someone who could be our [DBS & Safeguarding Training Administrator](#). If you're interested in this role please email Helen Pearson - helenpearson52@btinternet.com'



If you would like to co consider joining the [Bell Ringers](#) please contact

Maggie Ross maggieross@live.co.uk



Can anyone spare an hour or two to sit in the Church and show visitors around?

Time & days to suit, preferably Thursday - Saturday. Contact

Lynnolney21@yahoo.co.uk

The Friends of St Michael's

A date for your diary and a request

Following the success of last year's Bray Village Fête, the organising group are arranging a similar and even bigger event to be held on Bray Village Green on Sunday 7th September from 11.00 am until 4.00 pm. The Friends of St Michael's will be taking one of the stalls offered for free to charities. We would like to ask for your help once again in collecting items for sale. This year we are concentrating on soft toys and small plants.

Do you have any soft toys that you no longer need? Have they been put away somewhere in a cupboard or loft? Now is the opportunity to provide them with a new home where they can be loved all over again. Ideally, they need to be washable so that we can ensure they are as clean and smart as possible. Perhaps you could do this for us or, once donated, we can give them a wash.

Alternatively, you may be crafty and would like to make us a soft toy or two that we can then sell.

What do you do with all those extra cuttings and off shoots that you acquire when splitting a plant, particularly perennials? Maybe you are moving things around and no longer have a need for certain plants. I am sure other people would be delighted to buy and grow them in their own gardens. If you wouldn't mind nurturing them over the summer then we can sell them on at the Fête. I have already put a few hellebore seedlings in pots and they are sitting in the greenhouse.

We had a fantastic response last year with all your books and jigsaws. The books we were unable to sell were given to charity. We hope that you will help us again. If you have any questions, please talk to Lynda Jones, Sarah Pallot or me.

Thank you so much.

Julie Graham

01628 778054

Pam's Race for Life

“Get that body pumping” shrieked the diminutive person bouncing on the balloon festooned stage. Normally at this point on a Saturday morning I’d be enjoying a second cup of tea whilst surveying the green fly on my tomatoes.

However, somehow here I was at a very warm Windsor Racecourse, surrounded by hundreds of pink clad beings, adorned with wings and head boppers, energetically punching the air whilst leaping to the sound of the beat of the music. After this sudden burst of activity, I was ready for a sit down and a cup of tea. How wrong can you be! This was just the preamble to the start of my 5K run!

Cautiously, Elaine and I joined the end of the ‘joggers’ queue and quickly found our companions were out for a leisurely stroll! Not having signed up for that, we determinedly meandered through the crowd till we could comfortably start jogging, albeit at a very steady pace! It got to about the 3k stage when it suddenly dawned on us that what we thought in practice was 5k, the actual distance was considerably longer! That last 2k was hard going!

“We’ve just overtaken someone” gasped Elaine as we passed another competitor with a cheery wave and a congratulatory “You’re doing well”. What she failed to mention was that the person was probably either on crutches or in a wheel chair! No chance of cheating as one of the Marshalls was Katrin who had her phone on hand to film us at various stages of exhaustion!

What seemed like hours when in fact was about 45 minutes later, we joined hands to pull each other over that very welcome finishing line! I think we must have been some of the more senior joggers that day, because they mentioned our names as we surged forward to collect our medals and a drink of much needed water!

Why put myself through this? As most of you know I had Stage 3 breast cancer diagnosed in 2023 and it’s only because of the medical advancements that I am still here. So, I decided when I was well enough, I would fund raise for Cancer Research UK. With the very generous support from my friends at St Michaels, I have raised £1185.



So, a big thank you to you all

CONTACT LIST

The Vicar: Rev. Canon Ainsley Swift 633113
Curate: Rev'd Andy Medlicott 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 "

The Churchwardens:

Helen Pearson 07979 756409
Lynn Olney 07966906092

Deputy Churchwardens:

Jim Tucker 673685
Penny Murray 623041
Mary Wiles 635000

Sacristan & Lay Funeral Minister:

Lynda Jones 635178
Verger: Jim Tucker 673685

Parochial Church Council:

Hon Secretary:

Katrin Brunning: katrin.brunning@btinternet.com

Hon Treasurer:

Richard Severn richarddb7@outlook.com

Gift Aid Officer :

Vicki Henley
vicki@henleyclan.co.uk

Electoral Roll Officer:

Penny Murray

Director of Music:

Oliver Gooch

Assistant Director of Music:

Lindsay Bramley

Parish Safeguarding Officer/Sunday School:

Natasha Teeder 674469

Bellringers:

Tower Captain:

Maggie Ross
maggieross@live.co.uk

Friends of St. Michael's

Lynda Jones 635178
Church Flowers: Maggie Jans 07774484308

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>