

NEWSLETTER

November 2024

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,

We held two brand new services last month; our first Pet Service and our first Taizé service, two very different services!

The Pet Service drew many dogs, a rabbit and a tortoise (not to mention their owners). Pictures speak louder than words so here is a photo taken on the day...



To view the video, click this link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/dRKnGzV5vYqbHvdTA>

Our **Taizé** service introduced us to the contemplative style of worship pioneered by the Taizé Community in France <https://www.taize.fr/>
<https://youtu.be/IZdAYqsp6wc>

Thomas Henley (from our choir) who is exploring the path towards Ordination was able to attend Taizé this summer with a group from Oxford Diocese led by Bishop Olivia. Andy Medicott and Thomas planned and led the service in the chapel at St Michael's and our next Taizé service is on Sunday 24th November at 4.00 pm. All are welcome.



Revd Canon Ainsley Swift

November: A Month of Remembrance

November, with its crisp air and fading light, holds a special place in the calendar as a month dedicated to remembrance. It's a time when we pause to honour those who have passed, to reflect on their lives, and to express gratitude for their contributions.

Religious Observances

For many, November is a period of spiritual reflection. All Saints' Day (November 1st) commemorates all saints, known and unknown, while All Souls' Day (November 2nd) is a day of prayer and remembrance of the departed. These days encourage us to remember loved ones and to offer thanks for their eternal rest.

Remembrance of the Fallen

November is also a time to honour those who have sacrificed their lives in service to their country. Remembrance Day (November 11th) marks the armistice that ended World War I. It's a day to remember the fallen soldiers and to commit to peace and understanding.

Personal Reflections

Beyond religious and national commemorations, November is a personal time for reflection. It's an opportunity to revisit memories, to express gratitude for the lives of loved ones, and to find solace in shared grief.

Ways to Remember

There are many ways to honour the memory of loved ones during November:

- **Lighting Candles:** A simple yet powerful gesture, lighting candles can symbolize hope and remembrance.
- **Visiting Gravesites:** Spending time at the graves of loved ones can offer comfort and connection.
- **Sharing Memories:** Sharing stories and memories with family and friends can keep the spirit of loved ones alive.
- **Donating to Charity:** Giving back to a cause that was important to a loved one can be a meaningful way to honour their memory.

November, with its blend of religious observance, national remembrance, and personal reflection, invites us to pause, to remember, and to cherish the lives of those who have gone before us.

Events at St Michael's, Bray

All are welcome!

- Saturday 30th November from 9.30 to 12.30 **Table Top sale** in St. Michael's Hall

- Sunday 1st December at 4.00 pm in Church - **Advent Carol Service** with St Michael's Choir (Not an early Christmas Carols service but a special selection of music to begin Advent)

- Saturday 7th December at 3.00 pm **Christingle Service** - For children of all ages! The Christingle oranges will be distributed.

- Sunday 8th December at 3.00 pm **Community Carol Service** - a sing along with carols and Christmas songs in aid of Thames Valley Adventure Playground

- Sunday 22nd December at 4.00 pm **Traditional Carol Service** with St Michael's Choir - Carols and Lessons

- Sunday 24th December at 3.00 pm **Blessing of the Crib service** - for Children of all ages! Carols and stories around the crib, about 40 minutes

- Sunday 24th December at 11.30 pm **Midnight Mass with carols and choir**

- Sunday 25th December Christmas Day 8.00 am Communion (about 30 minutes, quiet and reflective) and at 10.00 am **Christmas Communion with choir and sermon** (bring your Christmas present to show everyone)!

Curate Andy Medlicott Reflects on the importance of kindness and goodness

It is a Friday morning. Here I am, a Christian minister wearing a dog-collar, being helped by a Sikh gentleman, in a community hub run by volunteers, supported by The Lions Club with help from companies such as Centrica and Greggs, looking for sandwiches for a muslim couple who are asylum seekers whom I have brought. Google Translate comes in handy as I speak no Arabic, and their English is limited!

What a mix of people! All mucking in with a desire to help. I see God working through all these people. We leave with some warm clothes, bedding and essentials... but equally important; everyone treats them with dignity and respect.

That morning driving to meet them to take them to the hub I was praying, "Lord, please help me, I feel so unable to help." I can act as a taxi service, offer a smile and a kind face... and perhaps offer to get some food... it doesn't feel like much compared to what I imagine they have gone through. They did not choose to leave their home. But I don't need to do this alone. My prayer was answered through the kindness and generosity of others. This is God working, through all people, not bound by the walls of church buildings or theological ideals. The God who is creator and sustainer of all we see, and all that we don't see.

For me this is a perfect antidote to the doom and gloom of the daily news... there is kindness and goodness around - all we have to do is look. Knowing kindness and goodness is already present can encourage each one of us to also do acts of kindness and goodness.

So a shout out to everyone involved. Those who helped me by suggesting where we could find help. Those volunteering at, donating to, and organising, The Windsor Homeless Project. And to the church community which helps me to be available to help in the ways I can.

Church Christmas cards are on sale.

The design of the card is from an original painting by Felicity Abbott, one of our Church members. All profits sales go to the church

Advent Calendars

As in previous years, we would welcome donations of Advent Calendars for Foodshare families up until Sunday 24 November!

Thank you!

Thank you for Another successful Craft Fayre

St Michaels Bray with Braywood held its Craft fayre, on Saturday 26th October.

The crafters were set up in both the Church and St Michaels Hall with 12 different stall holders selling various crafts. From hand made metal decorations and silver jewellery to Penny's pots, Maggie's flowers and Pam's Vintage, and lots more besides.

We raised in total £446 . A Big Thank you to everyone involved and all who came along to support us

We will be holding a table top sale on November 30th in St Michaels Hall with tea coffee and mince pies.

Hope to see you there.

An Update from The Friends of St Michael's, Bray

The Friends have been involved in three events over the last few months. We are very grateful to all those who supported us by either coming along, donating, contributing, joining in, helping and buying.

The first was the Summer Teas which raised £129. Home-made cakes and scones continue to go down well and we were pleased to welcome friends, old and new.

The return of Bray Village Fête, after a gap of ten years, lived up to everything that the organisers hoped for; a delightful community event held on the Village Green, run by local people, for the local people. One of their aims was to allow Bray charities to promote themselves and raise funds. The Friends ran a stall selling second hand books and jigsaw puzzles, along with our newly designed tea towel, cards and other Bray memorabilia. The weather stayed dry and warm, much to everyone's amazement and we were delighted to raise £529.63.

Finally, we held our second talk in the church at the beginning of October with guest speaker Hugo Vickers. The title of his presentation was "Q2 to K3" – a slightly enigmatic title referring to the transition from Queen Elizabeth II to King Charles III. His easy style and humour combined with his knowledge of the royal family over many decades, reminded us what an amazing lady the late queen was. Two messages remained with me. Duty and service to the country was apparent throughout her reign and brought her much happiness along with her belief that you couldn't change the past but maybe you could influence the future for the better. Those present thoroughly enjoyed the talk and the refreshments afterwards. We raised £658.50.

The total raised therefore from these three events amounts to £1317.13. If you have finished those books you bought at the Village Fête, there is the chance for you to replenish your stock at the Table Top Sale on Saturday 30th November from 9.30 – 12.30 in St Michael's Hall. Thank you again.

Julie Graham

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