



Parish News

St Michael, St Albans with St Mary, Childwick Green

April 2018

Memorial Cross at Mount Macedon, taken by Sandie North

LETTER FROM THE VICARAGE

My epistolary tour of the parish's stained glass is spending a third month in St Michael's Lady Chapel. Here we find a vivid and timely snapshot of Holy Week, a picture that says so much about Jesus' last week that we have used it more than once on our Easter publicity. On the left-hand side, Jesus carries the cross to Calvary. On the right, the angel greets the women at the empty tomb.



There are hidden details within this nineteenth-century stained and painted glass by Ward and Hughes. Jesus approaches his death against the greys of the city wall and the hard brown earth beneath. A few stones lie at his feet, recently aimed at him by the mocking crowd. The officer to Jesus' right carries a torturous hammer and pincers. Behind him, a club is raised in violence. By contrast, on the right, a spring flower – emblematic of new life – blossoms at the foot of hopeful Mary Magdalene. The two women in the background are more timid, frightened of the execution and too fearful yet to believe in the resurrection.

I love this picture because there is so much that it doesn't show. Neither half captures the most climactic scenes of Good Friday and Easter Day. On the left, Jesus is on his way to the cross. On the right, he has been raised already, the lid lifted from the tomb. This only adds to the drama; our imaginations are needed to fill in the blanks. And because the most important action takes place 'off stage', the holiness of the events is emphasised.

As we journey once more through the days of Jesus' Passion towards his amazing resurrection, we are doing nothing less than walking afresh – like an artist in new paint – through the greatest days in human history. Journey with us through prayer and praise this Holy Week. Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. You are the saviour of the world.

NB I will be on extended study leave from 1 April to 1 July 2018. For information about the details of this sabbatical, please see my extended article in February's *Parish News*.

Kenneth



On 11 November 1918 the armistice was signed, ending what was named the Great War, the bloodiest conflict then known. In common with many others, St Michael's will be commemorating the centenary of this momentous occasion by holding several events over the weekend of 7-9 September 2018, to raise money for both the church and the Royal British Legion.

In 2014 an exhibition was mounted in the church to mark the centenary of the outbreak of war, to raise funds for internal restoration of the church and the Royal British Legion, and the idea of producing something similar in 2018, for the centenary of the signing of the armistice, began to take shape.

During the spring of 2017, a small group of like-minded people started to make plans for a commemoration event in 2018, using the original exhibition in 2014 as a basis for an updated event that would focus on the war years and the aftermath. Various ideas were put forward as to how something memorable could be produced that would provide a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives, as well as those who returned home – some with stories of unbelievable loss and courage and many who were never to be the same again.

After several deliberations, it was decided that the programme of events over the course of the Heritage Weekend (7-9 September) would be:

- An evening of First World War poetry, prose and music (7 September)
- An exhibition covering the history of the Great War (8 and 9 September)
- A flower festival (8 and 9 September)
- A traditional-style church fete (Saturday 8 September only)

Over the coming months, as our plans are completed, we will be able to provide more information about each of these events, so please look out for our regular updates in the magazine and on the website: www.stmichaels-parishchurch.org.uk

The first of these updates is from the organiser of the flower festival element of the weekend, and she makes a request for help in producing some poppies for the event in the article that follows this one (page 5).

Additionally, during her research for an unrelated First World War project, our archivist and local historian, Ann Dean, discovered the names of five local men who were not listed on the current memorial in St Michael's. So that these men could be included, permission was sought from the diocese for the production of a plaque, sympathetic in design to the original, on which their names could be inscribed. Permission was granted and, thanks to many donations from various sources, a local craftsman, Geoff Warwick, along with an expert calligrapher who works with gold leaf, John Sarnham, have been commissioned to create the plaque. The dedication of this plaque, by Bishop Stephen Venner, will take place during the 9.30 a.m. communion service on Sunday 9 September. The church will be filled with flowers - a fitting tribute to these 'forgotten men'.

We do hope that you will be able to visit us in September to join our commemoration of the ending of the Great War, either by attending the events over the weekend or by joining us at the service of dedication on the Sunday morning.

Georgie Ray

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ST MICHAEL'S FLOWER FESTIVAL

Preparations are well underway for the flower festival element of the commemorative event, as described in the preceding article, which is taking place between 7 and 9 September. It is planned as a community event, involving contributions from as many people as possible. If you would like to help with the flower festival by creating an arrangement or just helping out, please let either Wendy or myself know – gentlemen are not excluded from this request: if flower arranging is not your thing, we will still need some help with a few of our constructions!

For one of our designs, we need lots of handmade poppies and are asking our congregation, friends, families and readers of the magazine to make a poppy (or two or three). The poppies can be sewn, knitted, crocheted or made from any material that you like. We can provide a simple template to help with your design if you wish – all you need to do is get in touch with us using the details below. The size of your completed poppy must not exceed 15cm.

We hope that you feel you can help to play a part in this Heritage Weekend. For more information or to offer your help with the flower festival, please contact either Anita Lindeman on 07906 655641, anita.lindeman@ntlworld.com or Wendy Klein on 07815 898512, wendy.klein@btinternet.com.

Anita Lindeman

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LIFE DOWN UNDER: PART TWO

We are now coming to the end of our stay in Australia, and by the time you read this we hope to be safely home. We have a three-night stopover in Singapore beforehand, where we will catch up with the son of a family friend who has been living there for 12 years.

One of the many delights of our Sunday mornings here have been family pancake breakfasts – leisurely meals with good conversations – served with separate dishes of warm mashed banana and butter, frozen mixed berries, lemon, stevia (sugar substitute) and maple syrup. Luckily the service at St Mary’s starts at 11.00 a.m., so we had plenty of time to get ready. Usually Evie, aged four, came with us, but on the last Sunday we were accompanied by two-year-old Hazel. The church has been re-ordered since our last visit and there are new carpet tiles and chairs. There is a small children’s area at the back of the church and one of the young mothers is always there. We were very privileged on our last Sunday to be invited to the front and given a blessing from the Reverend Melissa Clark for safe onward travels from Australia. We are always given such a warm welcome and made to feel part of the St Mary’s family.

Another highlight of our stay here was the sight of ten kangaroos on the property early one morning. It was a real eye-opener; the biggest number we had seen up to this point was six, but this group seemed to consist of two families, with one female carrying a joey in her pouch. They are only seen at dawn and dusk and are well camouflaged amid the natural background of scrub and peppermint gum trees. We also spotted a kookaburra outside the kitchen window – it sat still long enough for me to take a photo.

One of our favourite local places to visit is Mount Macedon, and we always take a walk to the Memorial Cross in honour of those who lost their lives in the First World War (see photo of Memorial Cross on the front cover). From here, on a clear day, one can see right down to Melbourne and the tall buildings of the CBD (Central Business District). The cross is floodlit at night and we can see it from Caroline and Sunny’s house, as it lies directly below Mount Macedon. The cafe there has a resident peacock called Kenneth, who makes his presence felt with loud squawks, but most of the time he is quiet.



Kookaburra

Our stay here has allowed us to slow down from our St Albans life, and recharge our batteries with new experiences and help with the routine of family life. We are now ready to return, having escaped the ‘Beast from the East’, which we have been reading about on the BBC news. The weather here has definitely turned to autumn, with cooler mornings and evenings, but it is still hot during the day (mid 20s). We look forward to seeing all the daffodils and tulips (which we thought we would miss) as we’ve heard the cold weather in the UK has delayed their flowering. Spring and autumn are my favourite times of the year, but it still feels strange to go from one season to another in a matter of days when travelling halfway around the world.



Photos by Sandie North

Sandie and Richard North

DIARY FOR MARCH 2018

25 PALM SUNDAY

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

9.30 a.m. Donkey procession and service

Great for families – bring some greenery from home to wave as we walk from Prae Wood School (AL3 4HZ) to St Michael's Church for the All Age Service at 10.00 a.m.

10.00 a.m. All Age Service

6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)

6.30 p.m. Choral Evensong (St Michael's)

Readings and music for Passiontide

Our Monday to Wednesday evening talks in Holy Week will explore the instruments of the Passion.

26 MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

8.00 p.m. Address and Compline: The Spear (St Michael's)

27 TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

8.00 p.m. Address and Compline: The Crown of Thorns (St Michael's)

28 WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

9.00 a.m. St Michael's School Easter Service (St Michael's)

10.00 a.m. Stations of the Cross (St Michael's)

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

8.00 p.m. Address and Compline: The Dice (St Michael's)

29 MAUNDY THURSDAY: Remembering Jesus' Last Supper

8.00 p.m. Holy Communion and Watch (St Michael's)

30 GOOD FRIDAY: Giving thanks for Jesus' Cross

12.00–1.00 p.m. The Liturgy (St Michael's)

Readings, music and prayers

1.00–2.00 p.m. Children's activities (Parish Centre)

If possible, please let us know you are coming:

pwiley@stmichaels.herts.sch.uk

1.00–2.00 p.m. Sermons and Silence (St Michael's)

Reflections on the Cross

2.00–2.30 p.m. Children's Service

Outside – St Michael's porch. Inside if raining. Followed by hot cross buns.

8.00 p.m. Compline (St Mary's)

31 8.00 p.m. Easter Vigil (Cathedral)

Please support candidates from the parish being baptised and confirmed at this service.

DIARY FOR APRIL 2018

- 1 EASTER DAY: Celebrating the Resurrection
- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Festival Communion and Baptism (St Michael's)
Followed by chocolate egg hunt.
- 11.15 a.m. Festival Communion (St Mary's)
- Kenneth will be on extended study leave (sabbatical) from 1 April to 1 July 2018. During this period he will not be undertaking any parish duties. While you are likely to see him socially, around the parish and town, please direct all pastoral enquiries through the Parish Office.
- 4 During Kenneth's sabbatical, the Wednesday 10.00 a.m. service will continue in church as normal (St Michael's)
- 8 SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)
- 6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 15 THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER
- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)
- We look forward to welcoming Rev'd Canon Tim Lomax, Diocesan Director of Mission, as preacher at the 9.30 a.m. service. Tim will be speaking to the renewal of our Mission Action Plan later in the summer and talking about exciting developments of Fresh Expressions of Church in the diocese.
- 6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 17 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)
- 18 During Kenneth's sabbatical, the Wednesday 9.00 a.m. service will be held in top school, St Michael's Primary School, between April and June.
- 22 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)
- 6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- We look forward to welcoming Rev'd Canon Martin Banister at the 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. services. We are particularly grateful to Martin for leading a number of services on Sundays and Wednesdays during Kenneth's sabbatical.
- 6.30 p.m. Choral Evensong (St Michael's)
- 24 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

29 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

9.30 a.m. All Age Communion (St Michael's)

We look forward to welcoming Rev'd Canon Dr Tim Bull, Diocesan Director of Ministry, as president and preacher at the 8.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. services.

10.00 – 11.00 a.m. Annual Meeting (St Michael's) – see article on p.13

6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)

DIARY FOR MAY 2018

1 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

6 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)

6.00 p.m. Holy Communion (St Mary's)

8 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

10 ASCENSION DAY

8.00 p.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

We look forward to welcoming Rev'd Ruth Goatly as president and preacher at this service. Ruth, a priest living and working in the St Albans area, will be taking weddings in the parish during Kenneth's sabbatical.

9.00 pm. onwards Men's Night (Six Bells)

Ladies are welcome to come along too after the service!

13 SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)

9.30 a.m. All Age Communion (St Michael's)

We look forward to welcoming Rev'd Jos Perris as president and preacher at the 8.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. services. Jos is in her second term as chaplain at Aldenham School, having formerly served at St Peter's Church in St Albans.

6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)

15 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

16 8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (Parish Centre)

17 8.00 p.m. onwards Ladies' Night (Portland Arms)

INTERCHURCH QUIZ

- i Question: How big a team could St Michael's Church muster for a table at the St Albans annual interchurch quiz?
- i Answer: Such a big a team that it had to be split into two tables!

Yes, St Michael's fielded not one but two teams at this year's interchurch quiz. It was held in Homewood Road's ever-useful hall space, where 13 teams managed to fit in with room to spare.

10 rounds of questions – with subjects ranging from places with the word 'port' in their name, food, Hertfordshire, news in the year to-date and 'odd one out' – saw a very hard-fought few hours, combined with much frivolity and, in my case, wine. Our £10 entry fee covered a slap-up fish supper and the rest of the money went to charity.

The final scores were all very close, with roughly 12 points between the first nine teams (barely a point per round). Discretion forbids me from saying which of St Michael's teams did better, but I did take a nice close-up of the results board in case anyone is especially curious about it. Feel free to ask me – I've been using it as a screen saver ...

Kerry Wells



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ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS

Each parish in England has an Annual Meeting (APCM). Ours will take place on Sunday 29 April. That morning there will be a short all-age communion service in St Michael's, beginning at 9.30 a.m. The APCM will then be held in church between 10.00 and 11.00 a.m. We are very grateful that during this hour there will be provision for children in the Parish Centre. It is important to keep the APCM crisp because there are lots of elections. To help with this, should you wish to ask questions of the contributors to the Annual Report (available in advance online or in hard copy in each church), please submit these in advance to the chair (Graham Willey). Strong coffee will be available in the Parish Centre after the meeting has finished!

A number of posts are elected at the APCM. Involvement is ownership, so do think about whether you would like to stand for office in 2018–19, especially if you have not done so before. The elected posts are:

Churchwardens

These are the senior non-clergy parish officers. The two churchwardens serve a one-year term, renewable for up to six years. Churchwardens are involved in the smooth running of the Sunday 9.30 a.m. service, take a lead on maintenance issues at St Michael's and do a small amount of record keeping. The diocese provides a half-day training course for new churchwardens, plus other opportunities for those who need upskilling in specific areas. At a local level, St Michael's is blessed with a welter of former wardens who can help new wardens with anything they need to learn.

Parochial Church Councillors

The trustees of St Michael's and St Mary's form the Parochial Church Council (PCC). We have five posts to be elected for a three-year term. The PCC meets six times a year. In the intervening months, most PCC members serve on a sub-committee.

- The Mission and Community Committee is our 'Foreign Office' – looking at how we engage those beyond the edge of our worshipping communities.
- The Pastoral and Worship Committee is our 'Home Office' – asking how we can strengthen our services, care and education of regulars.
- The Stewardship Committee is our 'Treasury' – making best use of our people, money and buildings.

Can you lend experience and interest to one of these areas?

Deanery Synod Representatives

We have three places on the Deanery Synod, elected for a three-year term. These people represent St Michael's and St Mary's at the next level up in Church government. Together they explore how we can be more missionally effective with the other Anglican churches in St Albans, Radlett, Aldenham, Shenley, London Colney, Colney Heath and Frogmore. Although we are in the middle of a triennium, two of our places on the Deanery Synod are vacant.

Stewards

Stewards assist the churchwardens with welcome and the smooth running of our services. Stewards are elected *en bloc* at the annual meeting.

What do I do now?

To express an interest in any of these opportunities please sign one of the nomination forms available in both churches, or talk with one of us for further information.

Kenneth Padley, Graham Willey, Steph Rainbow

The County Club St Albans

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CHRISTINGLE: PART TWO

Last month saw the final celebrations of the Christmas season with our Christingle service at St Michael's (see article in the March edition of *Parish News*). Henry, aged six, has written the following words about the service:



There were four sticks sticking out of the oranges and I think they probably mean north, south, east and west or also the seasons, and also the red ribbon is because Jesus died and there was blood, and there was a candle there to help you pray and also for the light of Jesus. Jo was dressed up as an orange and that was really funny. She had a big necklace of giant sweets!

Kenneth said 'Where did I put my big orange?' and then she came out and I laughed!

Then I helped Pauline with setting up, which I really like because sometimes they have big breads there after church and it's nice to feel helpful.

Henry

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MARGARET BAYNTON: A TRIBUTE

We are all here this afternoon to say farewell to our friend Margaret, a lady who appreciated life and made the most of it. Whenever you spoke to Margaret she would always tell you exactly what she thought. When you got to know her you realised she had a wicked sense of humour.

I first got to know Margaret and Geoff (for one always thought of them together) a long time ago, when their son Peter was a lad and went to church youth groups with our two boys. Margaret and Geoff loved church and often went to different services: Holy Communion at 8.00 a.m. here at St Michael's and evensong at Childwick, when Geoff played the organ, but I would always know when Margaret was in the congregation as I could hear her lovely singing voice.

I got to know them better in recent years when I started visiting Geoff after he became ill. Looking out of their living-room window, it was obvious that Margaret had been a great gardener, and she knew all the names of the plants and all the songs of the birds. Looking around the lounge, one couldn't help but notice a spinning wheel and a sack of wool; when I asked Margaret about this she said that she picked the wool from the fences in the countryside and would spin it and make a jumper (as you do). I also noticed a cello standing there; Margaret said that she had thought it would be nice to be able to accompany Geoff when he played the piano, so she had taught herself to play.

Alas, Geoff passed away and, soon afterwards, Margaret was told she would have to start dialysis treatment three times a week. After a while, she decided that accepting lifts from her friends was not on (although we were all pleased to take her), and she resolved to drive herself again and to get a car – not any old car, but a new-fangled electric car. Now she was mobile, so after dialysis on Fridays she went to supper with one of her friends, and then to practise with the choir, which – to the delight of the other members – she had recently joined.

Margaret was a brave lady, and with her faith in God she was determined to make the most of the life he had given her. And she did. It is our good fortune to have been her friend.

Geoff Goodall (who gave this tribute at the memorial service for Margaret on 16 February 2018)



NEWS FROM ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Building Works

The builders were very busy over the recent half-term, preparing the site for the archaeologists to begin their investigations this month. This included laying matting to protect the tree roots whilst the building works are taking place.

We are looking forward to the archaeologists visiting the school towards the end of the month, to talk about the artefacts found at the recent works on the lower-school site. This will be a starting point for class research into our local area.

New fire doors have been installed in the hall as well as in one of our classrooms, bearing in mind the original fire doors are now out of action. Now that the side of the school is out of bounds, the children enter and leave through the main front door at top school. We have also introduced staggered playtimes, due to the reduced play space available. The children have adapted quickly to all these changes.

World Book Month

This year, World Book Day falls on 1 March. Every year we mark this event with a range of exciting book-related activities that celebrate and nurture our children's love of reading. Having a staff with such a wide range of expertise and creativity, we decided not to limit our activities to just one day this year, so we are running World Book Month!

We will be organizing Super Story Week at the beginning of the month. Each class will be contributing to a whole-school St Michael's story. The children will have the opportunity to build on characters, create new settings, solve dilemmas and create new ones for another class to solve. Teachers are also planning story-writing competitions in class, allowing children to explore their creativity. Teachers will then share their class sections of the whole-school story at an assembly, when everyone will hear it in its entirety for the first time.

To celebrate the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Week, teachers will prepare an exciting week of activities based on the plays and poetry of William Shakespeare. Children will be exploring a range of texts and languages, celebrating the life of our most famous bard.

The book fair will be arriving in school at the beginning of the month and will be open for one week when the children can spend their World Book tokens. This always proves to be a very popular event in the school calendar and helps raise extra funds, which will keep our library well stocked.

The month will end with an Easter challenge; children will be given details of how to take part in this whole-school event, which is entitled 'Reading in Unusual Places'!

THE BACK PAGE

A friend bought his wife a Fitbit for Christmas. She proudly announced that she had completed 10,000 steps.

‘What! This week?’ her husband exclaimed.

‘No,’ replied the wife.

‘Since you gave it to me.’

From the *Herald Sun*, Melbourne, Australia. Contributed by Sandie North

Articles for the Parish News

If you have an article or notice for the *Parish News*, the deadline for production for our May edition is **Saturday 14 April 2018**

Please send contributions to the magazine’s editors

Sandie North – sandrich2@btinternet.com

Linda Withington – lmwithington@gmail.com

with a copy to

Katherine Crowdell – parishnewscopy17@gmail.com

Or leave them for our attention at the Parish Office.

If you or anyone you know would like to advertise in the *Parish News*, please contact Sandie North – sandrich2@btinternet.com

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