

ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS — Parish Church of Amersham on the Hill

NEWSLETTER

MARCH '24



**(East Window - All Saints, Tudeley, Kent)
see pg 4 for a meditation on this stained glass window**

Who's Who at St Michael & All Angels

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(10 am—1 pm Monday—Wednesday & Friday)

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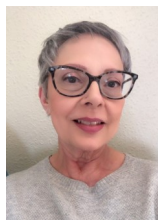
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(See Genesis 37:3-36)

JOSEPH!!!

05-05-2014

Saturday, 16 March, Messy Church will be on in St. Michael's from

11.30am to 1pm, including fun activities on the theme of Moses and the story of God's rescue; lunch, which is provided for all, and more. No need to book, just turn up. All welcome. This activity is free but donations are welcome to cover costs.



St Michael's Vision Statement

As a Christian community, we seek to engage with the world around us and to be a place of welcome and acceptance for all on a journey to God – believers, doubters and those who are seeking.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Vicar, PCC or the official policy of St. Michael's Church.

The Newsletter is published monthly
(with the exception of January and August).

The next issue will appear on Thursday, 1 April. Please email material for inclusion to communications@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk, for the attention of Rebecca, by 21 March.

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From the editor... As Lent progresses to Easter and we remember the great sacrifice Jesus made for us, it seems apt that the articles in this edition of the newsletter contain a host of information about helping those suffering or in need of help, spiritual or practical.

2024 Easter Services at St. Michael's are as follows: Passion Sunday, 17 March—8.30am & 10am; Palm Sunday, 24 March—8.30am & 10am; Maundy Thursday, 28 March—8pm; Good Friday, 29 March—10am; Easter Vigil, Saturday, 30 March—8pm; Easter Sunday, 31 March—8.30am & 10am.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this the newsletter this month. If you would like to contribute to the April edition please send your contribution to me by 21 March. **Rebecca**



Don't throw away – repair it at the Repair Café!

by Jenny Newton, member of Sustainable Amersham

Since July 2022, St. Michael & All Angels Church has been hosting the Amersham Repair Café which runs bi-monthly. Started as a collaboration between the FCC (one of the UK's leading waste and resource management companies) and the Bucks Waste team, the first Repair Café was run with the help of Sustainable Amersham, who then took over the project.

People can bring broken objects to the volunteer repairers to see if they can be mended by the repairers who can tackle electrical, sewing, gluing and woodworking repairs. Since the first Repair Café, a wide variety of items have been saved, from a wooden mirror to a sewing machine, a radio and a hedge trimmer! These are items that may have otherwise been thrown away, so repairing items is an important way to help build a sustainable future.

While you wait for one of the wonderful volunteer repairers, there is coffee and cake, an information stand on recycling, and Orca and Bee (<https://orcaandbee.com/>) - a refill stall offering a wide range of home and personal care items. St. Michael's has been instrumental to the success of the Café by providing Sustainable Amersham with the perfect venue and offering their support for the scheme.

The next repair café is on Saturday, 2 March 2024 from 10am to 1pm. Repairs are free of charge.

Sustainable Amersham is a group of residents who are working with local organisations to raise awareness of climate change issues and to take action in our everyday lives. There are a range of different projects including, Green Energy, Plastic Free Amersham, Wild Amersham (focusing on local biodiversity), Learn and Act (to share information about sustainable living) Book Club, and Green Families (a community for parents interested in living sustainably). There are also regular social meet-ups to share ideas. Come and join us!



Anyone can support us and get our monthly newsletter. It's free! Find out how at <https://sustainableamersham.org>



Follow us on social media for details of local and national events

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/sustainable.amersham>

X - <https://twitter.com/SustainAmersham>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/sustainableamersham>

TikTok

A little kindness can go a long way with people sleeping on the street

By Peter van der Sluijs

The sight of someone in a sleeping bag in a shop doorway or begging on the streets or the trains is sadly becoming increasingly common. A recent study showed that rough sleeping in London is up 23% to its highest level in a decade. It is always distressing to see someone in that condition. Why are they there, and how should we respond?

People can end up rough sleeping for many reasons. The immediate causes are commonly job losses, eviction or relationship breakdown, sometimes associated with other issues such as addictions, mental health issues or other health problems. Tragically, government policy can directly lead to people becoming homeless. The five week wait for the first universal credit payment is a real problem and some landlords won't accept tenants who are on benefits. Other issues include the fact that the government has reduced the window for successful asylum seekers to leave their Home Office accommodation to just seven days. Once you're on the streets, it can become a trap. It's hard to apply for a job or benefits without a fixed address, and mental health issues and addictions can worsen in the face of the dangers and discomforts they face. In Church, we think about sin as an individual matter, but there is also sin buried in the structures of society. That's why, in one of the world's most wealthy countries, there are people living on the streets.

If you see someone sleeping rough, or you're approached for money, how can you help? It's best not to give money directly. The money you give will usually feed the reason they are on the streets in the first place, rather than address the problem. This also applies to gifts in kind – coffee, food etc. They get many such gifts and often just throw them away.

'Rough sleeping in London up 23% to highest level in a decade', The Guardian, 31 January 2024

You can put an alert on Streetlink (www.streetlink.com) about someone who is sleeping or preparing to sleep rough. They will pass the alert on to the outreach team of the nearest charity who will try to connect them to local support services. If they are under 18, need medical attention or are in immediate danger then call 999.

A step further is to volunteer for, or donate to, a local homeless charity. I've been volunteering for New Hope (www.newhope.org.uk), a Christian charity based in Watford for over two years, working with the Chaplain and with the Outreach Team. You see a lot of sadness, but it's also extremely rewarding. Despite all the challenges that people who are homeless face, their ability to survive is impressive – and the gratitude that they express for the little they have can be humbling. Some manage to turn their lives around, and can be the most effective

supporters for those still trying. Others continue to struggle. Either way, when you spend time with them they change your perspective. They live chaotic lives but they manage – which is instructive for someone like me who can be obsessional about his diary and punctuality. They can be very open about their issues and problems. Being with people who have few possessions has also made me conscious of just how much time I spend taking care of mine: buying them, putting them away, getting them out, maintaining them and eventually recycling them.

'We're going to see people dying on the streets': homeless refugee crisis grips Liverpool', The Guardian,

Volunteering isn't for everyone, but if you can do nothing else, when you see someone on the street just a smile and a good morning can help – with a polite but firm, 'sorry I can't give you anything today' if needed. It can be isolating and dehumanising to sit on the street all day as everyone walks past with their eyes averted, and a little kindness can go a long way.

PS: There is an excellent new film from a director, Lorna Tucker, with lived experience of homelessness, looking at the experience and how it can be prevented. It's called 'Someone's Daughter, Someone's Son' and it's on in London now.

PASSIONTIDE MEDITATION By Neil Lynch (East Window - All Saints Tudeley Kent— see the front cover)

The small rural church of All Saints Tudeley in Kent is lit by twelve amazing stained glass windows, designed by the artist Marc Chagall.

Perhaps the most moving and uplifting window lights the Eastern elevation of the church and is a memorial to Sarah

D'Avigdor Goldsmid who drowned at the age of 21 (1963) in a sailing tragedy off the South Coast near Rye, East Sussex.

Sarah is seen in the lower half of the window drowning among the waves with her grieving mother shown below

and ashore weeping. (A poignant reminder of Mary at the foot of the Cross). Above is the representation of Christ crucified with Sarah climbing a ladder leading directly to the outstretched, welcoming embrace of Jesus.

Ctd on pg. 7

Helping Hand

A host of helpful information

By Katie at Helping Hand



Our **Helping Hand** service offers support to those most in need in Buckinghamshire. Visit: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living)/or call **01296 531 151**
Monday – Thursday (9am – 5.30pm), Friday (9am – 5pm)

If you're in immediate need and your request cannot wait until the next working day call **0800 999 7677**. They will ask you for information to assess the urgency of your needs and whether they can help.

Help with buying or accessing food:

If you're struggling to afford or access food, our Helping Hand team can help and refer you to a local food bank. [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/food-support](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/food-support)

Many local organisations and groups are running free initiatives, from community fridges to hot meal schemes to also support residents. And don't forget! During the Easter school holidays we will provide free digital food vouchers to families with eligible children. Be sure to redeem yours. Find out more: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/digital-vouchers](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/digital-vouchers)

Money management and debt advice:

Money problems can be a real worry, but you do not need to go through it alone. There are many local and national organisations that can offer advice and support to help with making ends meet today, as well as longer term solutions for money management. Visit: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-management](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-management)

Citizens Advice: 📞 0808 278 7938

Age UK: 📞 01296 431911

Household bills and energy:

You can reduce your household bills by saving energy and making your home more energy efficient. We're supporting schemes to help people in Buckinghamshire improve the efficiency of their homes and reduce energy costs.

Better Housing Better Health (self-referrals)

🖥️ [bhbh.org.uk](https://www.bhbh.org.uk)

📞 0800 107 0044

Request a visit from Energy Doctor*

🖥️ [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/energy-doctor](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/energy-doctor)

*eligibility criteria apply.

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills, speak to your supplier in the first instance. For more advice and information visit: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/energy-support](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/energy-support)

Take hold of damp and mould:

Whilst you may be tempted to turn off your heating to save on your bills, a combination of heating and effective ventilation is essential to reducing damp and mould in your home. This will also help reduce the risk of respiratory infections caused by damp and mouldy conditions. For advice on preventing damp and mould and how to report problems with your housing conditions see: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/prevent-mould](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/prevent-mould)

Help your community:

If you enjoy helping others or have excess food, green fingers or free time to donate or volunteer, there are plenty of ways you can support those around you and help make a difference in your community. Visit: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/help-your-community](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/help-your-community)

Are you a keen gardener? For some time now a small team has been sweeping/weeding/pruning plants and shrubs in the Quiet Garden and keeping St. Michael's Sq. looking neat and tidy. However, over the years the number of volunteers has decreased significantly and we are now seeking additional help. There is no need to make a regular commitment throughout the summer season but we would love to hear from anyone who could help occasionally with weeding/pruning and, especially in the Autumn, leaf sweeping. Sadly none of us is getting any younger and whatever extra help is available would be very welcome.

If the idea of spending some time occasionally, gently exercising in the fresh air with friends appeals, Sue Eames would love to hear from you. Please contact the church office so you can be put in touch.



Calculating The Dates of Christian Festivals

Ken Prideaux-Brune

Christianity is a religion based on historical events but precisely when those events took place is unclear. The Gospels give no idea what time of the year Jesus was born, which left the early church free to decide. Their decision to align Christmas with the Roman winter festival means that we still celebrate Christmas on December 25. But fixing the date of Easter is more complex (and on the date of Easter depends the date of Ash Wednesday – 40 days earlier – and the date of Pentecost – 40 days later).

The Gospels are clear that the Resurrection took place the day after the Jewish Passover but the Church didn't want the date of its major Festival to be fixed by Jews and so devised their own formula. Easter would be on the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21. Sounds clear enough but working out when the full moon will be is not that easy. Scholars in Ireland came to different conclusions to scholars in mainland Europe. The result was the first major row in the English church. Much of England had been converted by St Augustine and used the Roman system but the north had been converted by monks from Iona who followed the Irish system. The King of Northumbria married a princess from the south and so for him it was essential that agreement be reached on the date they would celebrate Easter. At the Synod of Whitby in 664 it was agreed that all the Kingdoms of England would join the Continent in using the Roman date, rather than being an isolated island following the Celtic date.

But that wasn't the end of the matter. The world used the Julian calendar at that time but it was increasingly realised that this was inaccurate and in the 16th century it was replaced throughout the Continent by the more accurate Gregorian calendar. England was much slower to make the change but finally in 1752 September 2 was followed by September 14, despite a massive protest campaign, using the slogan "Give us back our 11 days" – the 'fake news' of the time said that everyone's life had been shortened by 11 days!

But even that is not the end of the story. The Orthodox churches still use the Julian calendar so their Easter frequently differs from ours. We might think it would be simpler to give up the slightly esoteric calculations and agree a fixed date for Easter – say the second Sunday of April – but I guess getting the churches to agree would be impossible. But (or is this too heretical a suggestion?) the government could risk the wrath of the churches and fix the date of the Bank Holiday. It doesn't have to coincide with Easter any more than the May Bank Holidays normally coincide with Pentecost.

Hope Hour By Laura Evans



Some of you will remember me from the Card for Good Causes shop at the end of last year. It was really lovely to get to know new people, be reacquainted with others, and to spend some time in the church itself. I have lived in Amersham for most of my life and even attended the nursery out of the back of St. Michael's. Yet, I had never really gotten to know the wonderful community that there is at the church until the shop brought me inside the doors. It was inspiring to see all that is happening in the life of the church, such as events like the Christmas Tree festival or regular meets up like the Crafty Cuppa. It reminded me that we do not see all that is going on in God's wide and diverse family, and yet there are so many faithful and encouraging things happening.

At the beginning of 2024, I started the Hope Hour blog—<https://www.hopehour.org/story-so-far>. The aim is to send out a different story each week of how God is connecting with or speaking to his people this year. Please do subscribe to the blog if you would like to receive these stories of faith each week into your inbox. The stories have so far been focused on that still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12) with which God comforts and guides His people. The stories are an acknowledgement that God is working in the midst of our everyday lives and the challenges we see around us. They praise God and His goodness towards His people. They are a witness to all the different ways that God moves and how He meets us in our individual needs and circumstances.

Some of the stories have come from afar (thanks to friends of mine in Guatemala and Honduras). It is amazing to share how God is the same, from beginning to end, and across the world. He is obviously at work whether these stories are shared or not. Nevertheless, I find it so encouraging that, as the Body of Christ, we get to witness this to one another. I hope it gives those recounting their stories both an opportunity to reflect on how God is present in their lives and is also an opportunity to give thanks to God by sharing this with other people. No two stories are the same and it is my joy both to hear where God is moving and to be able to share this with others too.

If you would like to receive these stories each week, please do consider subscribing at www.hopehour.org/blog or by following Hope Hour on Instagram: www.instagram.com/Hope.Hour

If you would like to contribute to the blog, please contact hopehourcontact@gmail.com.

I am so looking forward to seeing what stories of God people share this year!

Grace and peace, Laura

Eucharists:

Sundays 8.30am and 10am
(Gathered Round on the second Sunday of each month is especially designed for families)

Tuesdays 10.30am

Morning Prayer:

Tuesdays 9am in the Lady Chapel.

Messy Church: 16 March '24

(The third Saturday each month 11.30am—1pm, except Aug)

St Michael's is usually open for private prayer from 10am—4pm

Mon– Fri. <https://www.youtube.com/@stmichaelandallangels/streams>, will access live-streamed services.

WORSHIP

3 March Roger Leslie
10 March Andy Connor
17 March Roland Gillott
24 March Alan Bacon
28 March (8pm) Roger Lesley
29 March (10am) Andy Connor
30 March (8pm) Claire Sinclair
31 March (Easter) Roland Gillott

WARDENS

Please see:
stmichaelsamersham.org.uk
for more details

ACTIVITIES AT ST. MICHAEL'S & BEYOND

POP IN & PAINT— 1 March—10.30am-12.15pm

Join Jenny Thompson and Liz Grammenos from Simpatico. No experience needed. Materials provided.

WISE CHOICES FILM CLUB — 1 March— LIVING—2pm-4pm—Wheeler Room

Mr Williams receives a shattering health diagnosis and realises he's not living his life to the full. 1hr. 40mins.

A CRAFTY CUPPA—8 & 22 March— 10.30am-12 noon

A drop-in session for everyone who wants a cuppa and some company.

MODERN JIVE CLASS— (no class on 2 March), 9, 16 & 23 March—7.30pm.

Drop in class open to all from St. Michael's and beyond. Classes are free, donations are welcome.

LUNCHBREAK— Amersham Free Church

Every Tuesday — 12noon-2pm Tea, coffee and soup available **1.10pm-1.30pm** Music, a talk, or short service.

Mondays
Tiny Talk—Baby Signing 10am (Tel: 07809 157 428)
Mature Movers 1.45pm—2.45pm
Amersham Dance Studio Children from 3+. 4pm—10pm
(email: emma@amershamdancestudio.co.uk)
Stay Steady, Stay Strong 1.30pm—2.30pm & 2:45pm—3:45pm (Tel: 07951 294178)

Tuesdays
Tuffney Performing Arts Academy 4.30pm (Email: office@tuffney.com)
Yoga with Shiv 6pm—8pm (Science based approach, open to all. Tel: 07815132157).
A Capella 7pm—11pm (<https://www.amershamacappella.com/>)

Wednesdays
Oakden Pilates 9am—12pm (oakdenpilates@gmail.com)
Karate Club 7pm—8pm (Tel: 07951 024 397)
Badminton Club 8.15pm—10.15 pm (Tel: 01923 264791).

Thursdays
Badminton 1.30pm-3.30pm
Amersham Dance Studio Children from 3+. 4pm—10pm
(email: emma@amershamdancestudio.co.uk)

Chiltern Spirit Combat 7.30pm-10pm
Fridays
Karate Club 7pm—8 pm (Tel: 07951 024 397)

Saturdays
Popstars Academy 9.30am—12pm (email: hazel@popstarsacademy.com).

Please see stmichaelsamersham.org.uk if you would like to book the hall.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN THE HALL

Ctd. from pg.4

You cannot help but feel this as symbolic of Sarah's resurrection through the Cross; death conquered; God's love transcending all. At the top of the ladder Sarah prays opposite a winged angel.

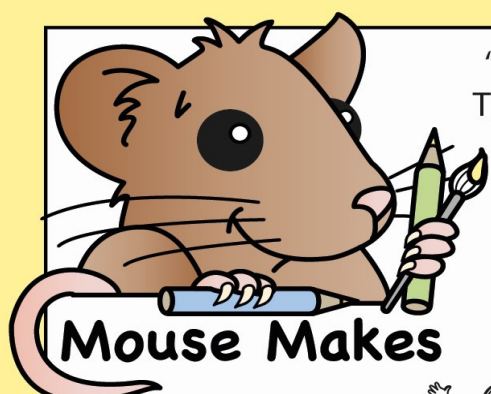
Chagall was believed to use the colour blue to represent love and red, joy. Below the feet of Jesus Sarah rides a red horse.

These stirring representations of resurrection through the Cross of Christ are the creative out-pourings of an artist who was born and lived in the Jewish Faith.

If you have the opportunity, do visit All Saints Tudeley and bathe in the most uplifting light from these windows. Be sure – you will be moved beyond words.

February Crossword Puzzle Answers





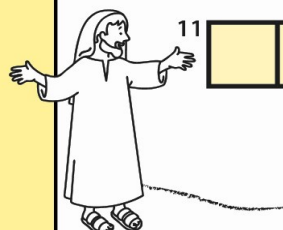
Matthew 21:1-11

1. Which city did Jesus ride into?
2. What did he ride on?
3. What did the crowd shout?
4. What did clothes did they put down?
7. What did they cut down to spread on the road?



Matthew 26:17-29

15. What feast did Jesus celebrate?
12. Who did he celebrate it with?
11. What did Jesus break to eat?



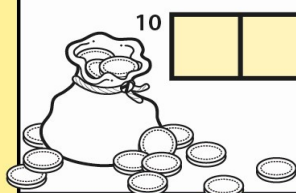
Matthew 26:36-75

6. What did Jesus go to do at Gethsemane?
18. Who denied Jesus?



Matthew 26:14-16

- 8d. Who betrayed Jesus?
10. How many silver pieces was he paid?



"I am the **resurrection** and the life.
The one who believes in me will live
even though they die."

John 1:25



READ the Bible
passages to find
the answers to the
crossword clues



Matthew 27:27-61

17. What was Jesus' crown made of?
9. What was Jesus crucified on?
14. Who's tomb was Jesus buried in?
13. What did they wrap Jesus' body in?
16. What did they roll in front of the tomb?

Matthew 28:1-10

5. Who descended from heaven?
19. What had happened to Jesus?
- 8a. Mary was full of fear and ...?

