



St Michael  
and All Angels  
Parish Church  
of  
Amersham-on-the-Hill

Please take one

# Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2020



## As One Door Closes, Another Opens

Despite all the pain and anguish the pandemic has caused, Revd Debbie, speaking at the APCM, said that some good things have come out of the strange times through which we have lived. Which of us had even heard of Zoom before this year, much less learned to use it? Many people who never attended St Michael's have appreciated our audio services. And she mentioned someone who had said to her that although he wouldn't be coming to church he need-

ed St Michael's to be there, "If you weren't there I don't know what I would do," he had said.

Once all the restrictions have been lifted, said Revd Debbie, we can't just go back to what we were before. We weren't reaching people like that and we need to think how we maintain and develop those kind of contacts.

Sadly, she said, we haven't been able to hold any of the events we had planned to celebrate our centenary. Do we just let them go, she

asked, or do we plan some way of marking the centenary once the restrictions have been lifted? Any ideas or suggestions should be passed to her or to the church office.

She ended by offering special thanks to the wardens, Roger Leslie and Roland Gillett; to Rachel Wilcox, both as treasurer and for providing the music for the audio services; and to Alan Jarvis, for his technical expertise in putting together the audio services and posting them online.

## Financially in Good Heart, says the Treasurer

In presenting the Annual Report and Accounts to the APCM Rachel Wilcox said they referred to a period now more than nine months in the past but they showed a welcome lessening in the church's deficit. The cur-

rent year, she said, had been an especially difficult one to be a church treasurer, with practically no income from church, hall or square lettings, income which normally covers our expenses, apart from our Parish Share (the money we pay to the

diocese). But she said that the special appeal to the congregation had been a "staggering success", raising no less than £27,500. With this wonderful support she felt that we were nonetheless financially "in good heart".



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**Clergy**

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 The Revd Debbie Oades  
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**Churchwardens**

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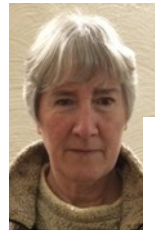
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**St Michael's Vision Statement**

*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 or the PCC or the official policy of St Michael's Church.

**The Newsletter is published monthly (except January and August).**

**The next issue will appear on Sunday November 29. Material for inclusion should please be emailed to the Editor on [pbrune@olcs.net](mailto:pbrune@olcs.net) by November 16.**



## COMMENT

### As Dim As A Toc H Lamp

When the soldiers, who had known Talbot House as a haven from the hell of the trenches of the Ypres Salient, returned home they came together to try to recreate something of the atmosphere of that remarkable 'everyman's club'. And for their new movement they adopted 'light', one of the most ubiquitous religious symbols, and each branch was given an oil lamp whose design was modelled on the lamps used by the early Christians in the catacombs of Rome. They devised a short and very simple piece of ritual in which they remembered the friends they had left behind in Flanders and re-committed themselves to letting their light shine out in service to their local community.



When, all too soon, another world war broke out Toc H established clubs in many of their meeting rooms, serving troops stationed in the UK, and they ran mobile canteens serving the armies as they moved through Burma and Europe. Services Clubs were established in occupied Germany in 1945. It was during World War 2 that troops started using the phrase 'as dim as a Toc H Lamp' to describe

someone (usually a general) who, they felt, was not very bright.

But, while the flame of an oil lamp may not be very bright in comparison with an electric light bulb, or even a torch, it nonetheless can illuminate a dark room. Few of us can hope to shine as brightly as, say, Mother Teresa or Martin Luther King, but, as we have learnt during the current pandemic, the tiniest acts of kindness or generosity can illuminate the world. However comparatively dim our lamp may be, what's important is that we don't let it go out but keep it shining. Dim it may be but, like the widow's mite, it's no less valuable in the eyes of God. Size isn't everything.

**Ken Prideaux-Brune**

# A Special Person

Hazel and Keith Adamson's special person is former St Michael's curate  
**Noel Whale**

Noel was St. Michael's first Curate. He was born and bred in Australia, but as a young man wanted to see the other side of the world, and he left Australia in August 1963. After completing his theological training he arrived in Amersham.

When we arrived in August 1972, somewhat disgruntled with the Church, we said we would play the field. We started with our parish church, wandered in and met, by chance, Noel. He was very friendly and we stood by the North pillar of the Sanctuary chatting for an hour and a half. Metaphorically we have been standing there for the last 48 years.

He told us the Church building was new and in good condition. It had an energetic Vicar, Brian, who preached a very good ser-

mon, but rather than sit down, preached another one! The church finances were good.

Noel taught the younger members of the congregation in the hut at the back of the car park. Our son, David, aged 9, enjoyed these times. When Noel suggested Confirmation, David said he would think about it. But at the end of the course David was Confirmed thanks



to Noel's gentle ways. David is still at the heart of his Christian community.

A year after we arrived, Noel's curacy came to an end and he returned to Australia. His love of travel brought him to Europe several times and he always visited Amersham and very happy occasions these were. We have kept in touch with Noel periodically. He has had parochial as well as diocesan duties over the years. When he retired, he was asked to help at a downtown church near Melbourne docks - a job he took on for one year. Nine years later at the age of 79 he is still there. Covid 19 restrictions in Melbourne are more stringent than here so his church is closed. However, he is still giving much pastoral care. 'Good on yer Noel!'

Those who have been part of St Michael's for a long time will remember former curate Noel Whale and will be delighted to know that he has just celebrated 50 years in the priesthood—appropriately on Michaelmas Sunday. Since leaving St Michael's his ministry has been in Australia and a friend writes: "His ministry has touched the lives of so many people during these years. He has

worked tirelessly to enliven the parish communities, and the wider society, in which he has worked. He has poured his particular gifts with great energy and enthusiasm in all that he continues to do. He always combines his unique style and flair with a great zest for life, a robust attitude and a refreshing rebellious spirit." A worthy tribute to a "special person".

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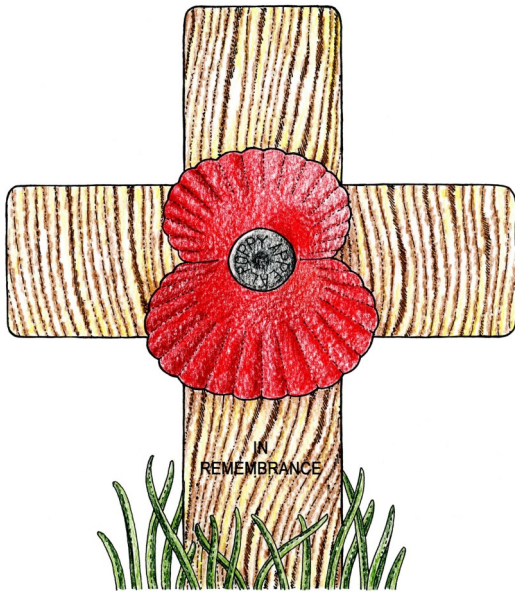
## Traidcraft Christmas Catalogue

There will be no Traidcraft stall this year, but Sue Eames now has copies of the Christmas Catalogue available for ordering cards, gifts and Christmas food items. You can view the exciting range of gift ideas on their website ([www.traidcraftshop.org.uk](http://www.traidcraftshop.org.uk))

and order via Sue from our local representatives. Delivery direct to your home can be arranged. Just call Sue on 725792. Christmas foods are also featured in the catalogue and can make useful gifts to family and friends. We support the Chiltern Food Bank by purchasing

goods from our local representatives. They are inviting us to sponsor milk chocolate Advent calendars which will be distributed to every child in a household receiving food parcels - a real chocolate Advent treat. Again, Sue can arrange this, so please just call and let her know - asap so they arrive in good time!

## Remembrance Sunday November 8



The usual Act of Remembrance will be pre-recorded and will take place at 11 am but clearly we will not be able to gather in the Sanctuary as usual. The British Legion encourages everyone not able to come to church to stand outside their front door and observe the Silence at 11 am on Remembrance Sunday

It is also hoped that there will, as usual, be some form of commemoration in St Michael's Square at 11 am on Wednesday November 11, but obviously we must conform to social distancing regulations. A further update will be given nearer the time in the weekly newsheet and/or on the website.



*Lest we forget. Tyne Cot, with some 12,000 graves, on the site of the Battle of Passchendaele, is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery. King George V said at its opening: "I have many times asked myself whether there can be any more potent advocates of peace upon earth through the years to come than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war."*

**Christmas Is Coming...** Though not quite as we have known it.

But some things will still be the same.

**THE UK'S No. 1 CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARD RETAILER**



Yes, Cards for Good Causes will be back at St Michael's this year as usual, with its normal wide range of charity Christmas Cards, wrapping paper etc. Naturally, current regulations mean that you will have to sanitise your hands, wear a mask and maintain social distancing; and there will be a limit to how many customers can enter at any one time. But you will need to go no further for all your Christmas stationery needs.

The shop will be open daily

**Tuesday November 3—  
Saturday December 12  
Monday—Saturday 10 am—4 pm**

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**Community Christmas Tree Festival  
at St Michael's  
Saturday November 28—  
Wednesday January 6**

The Christmas Tree Festivals have been a wonderfully successful innovation at St Michael's. Clearly, with many of the community groups who have supported the Festival in the past unable to meet because of the pandemic there will be particular difficulties in mounting the Festival this year. If you are in touch with any local groups do encourage them to take part. It's an opportunity for them to promote themselves to the local community as well as raising funds for Wycombe Homeless Connection. And do make sure to visit the Festival yourself.





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## DIARY

### NOVEMBER 2020

The church is now open for private prayer on Tuesday mornings between 10.am and 1 pm and Friday afternoons between 1 pm and 4 pm. The number of chairs in church has been reduced and are now set out at an appropriate 'social distance'. Some are in twos for people from the same household and others are set out singly. People are asked to go in by the main door, and use the hand sanitiser in the Narthex. The way out will be by the fire door at the back of the church, near the Roderick Quiet Garden. There is no access to the Lady Chapel or the toilets.

#### Other activities in November

|               |               |   |
|---------------|---------------|---|
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Nov 1</b>  | <b>All Saints Warden: Alan Bacon (774870)</b><br><b>All Souls service 4 pm. Warden: Roland Gillott (722674)</b> |
| Tuesday       | Nov 3         | Cards for Good Causes opens (to December 12)  |
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Nov 8</b>  | <b>Remembrance Sunday. Warden: Roland Gillott (722674)</b>  |
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Nov 15</b> | <b>2nd Sunday before Advent</b><br><b>Warden: Roger Leslie (726362)</b>   |
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Nov 22</b> | <b>Christ the King. Sunday before Advent Warden: Hazel Miller (773189)</b>                                      |
| Saturday      | Nov 28        | Christmas Tree Festival opens (to January 6)  |
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Nov 29</b> | <b>Advent 1 Warden: Roland Gillott (722674)</b>   |

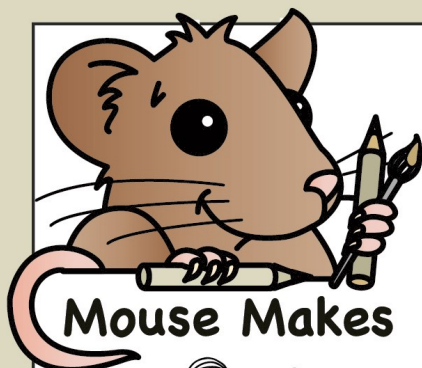


## Michaelmas

We were delighted to welcome Bishop Alan as our Celebrant and Preacher at our Michaelmas service at the end of September. The service marked the centenary of worship at St Michael's.

The bishop is pictured here with the vicar, Revd Debbie, associate priest, Fr Peter, and churchwarden Roger Leslie

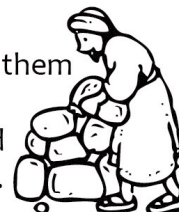
*Photo: Roland Gillott*



## REMEMBERING

How do you remember things?

In bible times God's people would remember what God had done for them by building monuments made of stones and by holding festivals and celebrations to give thanks to God.



**READ** Joshua 4:1-9 and Exodus 12:1-14

Today we too build monuments to remember and hold services of thanksgiving like **Harvest** and **Remembrance Sunday**.



*Is there anything you would like to thank God for?*

W H I T E

R E C A L L

C E L E B R A T E T

O F F E R I N G H R

M V S P I L E O O I

R M I A R O C K B N U D C

M E E C C A D A Y S O M E H

O J M T R I B U T E U P B R

N O O O I S D E B R R H E I

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M C A Y I P E N T E C O S T

E E T L C N H A R V E S T M

N R E M E M B R A N C E E A

T H A N K S G I V I N G R S

- REMEMBRANCE • SACRIFICE • VICTORY • TRIUMPH • MONUMENT  
 ROCK • PILE • OBSERVE • TRIBUTE • COMMEMORATE • RECALL • OFFERING  
 HONOUR • CELEBRATE • PRAISE • REJOICE • THANKSGIVING • DAYS  
 FESTIVAL • EASTER • PENTECOST • HARVEST • CHRISTMAS