



Please take one

Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2022



The Magic of Christmas on St Michael's Square



Christmas at St Michael's. Photo Roland Gillott.

On page 6 Roland comments on how the Square links the Church to the community of Amersham-on-the Hill..

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Churchwardens

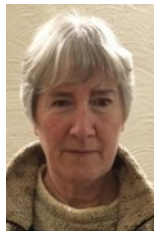
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St Michael's Vision Statement

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 February 28. Material for inclusion should please be emailed to the Editor on pbrune@olcs.net by February 18.



COMMENT

Hope

This is the time of year when I peer closely in the garden for the first sign of snowdrops, the first hint that life is coming back as usual. Friends also start passing the word round about where the best public display is this year. And hope is in the air.

What a precious and challenging thing is this idea of hope. It can only exist in the present and the future. To wallow in errors and omissions of the past is indeed to dwell in hell. The poet Dante rightly imagined in his Divine Comedy that over the entrance to Hell would be written “Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.”

Dictionary synonyms for hope include trust, expect, anticipate, look to the future. The Bible uses the word hope 167 times, pointing us, in the letter to the Hebrews, to faith as “the assurance of things hoped for”. Paul, writing to the persecuted community in Rome, prays “May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing.”

So this business of living hopefully does not assure an easy ride, nor does it expect us, like Alice in Wonderland, to believe six impossible things before breakfast. It does involve being realistic, looking squarely at the challenges of life, however tough or terminal. Perhaps Paul should have written to the Corinthians that there abide faith, hope and love; and that the hardest of these is hope.

A Google search tells me that one of the Hebrew words for hope is TIKVAH which can also mean a cord which marks out one’s territory, one’s lot of land or, metaphorically, the pain or sorrow which can bind us. It was also used in the Book of Joshua for the cord which Rahab hung out of her window to assure her safety from reprisals when the walls of Jericho came tumbling down.

This led me to re reading about Kathleen Kenyon the archaeologist who lived for a while in High Wycombe and did the definitive dig on Jericho in the 1950s. She took back the earliest evidence of a human presence on the Jericho site to the nomadic visitors of around 10,000 BC, who left offerings there in the hope of inducing the arrival of Spring. So, humankind, living and worshipping in hope, go back to one of the earliest human settlements. What a wonderful, hopeful world we live in!

Jo Harrington

“

Introducing...

Renseikan Amersham Dojo

Renseikan Amersham Dojo was founded in January 2018. From an initial membership of two students, we have grown steadily to our current strength of 23, with students and teachers also visiting from our associated dojos at Farnham Common and Northwood. We moved to St Michael's Church Hall in April 2020, following the first Covid lockdown, and have continued to grow since we arrived.

We practice Traditional and Contemporary Shotokan Karate, which developed in Japan during the early part of the 20th century, from older and more traditional self-defence disciplines originating in Okinawa and China.



Like all Martial Arts, we aim to develop the physical strengths and competences of our students so that they become confident in the use of their bodies and able to defend

In the first of a new series introducing some of the groups that use St Michael's Hall Sensei Andy Hunt introduces the karate club.

themselves. To this end, we teach basic striking, blocking and kicking skills which students practise in formal exercises (called KATA) and in sparring.

Of greater importance, Karate aims to develop the character of the student, focusing upon the personal qualities of courtesy and respect for others, Perseverance in the practice of their art, faithfulness and sincerity in their dealings and the discipline to refrain from violence.

We are a family-oriented Karate Club, accepting students of all ages and abilities and will always give new students a warm welcome. We meet on Wednesdays and Fridays, beginners and juniors from 6-7pm and seniors from 7 – 8 pm.

Lent Appeal for Friends of St Anne's, Liuli

As usual we are invited to mark Lent by making a gift to Friends of St Anne's Hospital in Liuli, Tanzania.

The Friends are endeavouring to bring the hospital up to current standards. They have ensured that the hospital has a secure water supply. The need now is to modernise the internal plumbing, which is currently primitive and totally unsuitable for a hospital in the 21st century. Anything we are able to contribute this year will go towards that.

Last year's appeal raised no

less than £5,325 (including tax recovered), a very significant contribution.

Meanwhile, the news of our friend, the Revd Dr Sam Ndimbo, formerly the doctor at the hospital, is good. Last year we reported that he was desperately ill and we contributed towards the cost of his journeys to Dar-es-Salaam for treatment. But he phoned Marjorie Redpath in December saying he was feeling very well indeed and sounding his usual lively self, so it appears that his cancer is in remission, which is great news.

We are asked, if possible, to make our donations by bank transfer to: Friends of St Anne's—
Sort code 52 21 18
Account: 22627804
Please tag it: St Michael's Appeal.

Alternative you can send a cheque to the Treasurer—
Mrs Madeline Cole,
64 Porteous Crescent
Chandlers Ford
SO53 2DH

We give thanks for the life of
Valerie Jones

A Stimulating and Refreshing Advent Course

When we were planning an Advent course, Revd. Debbie and I thought that it would be a good idea to try something different this year. We therefore looked at "A Chequered Legacy, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly of the Church" by Nick Fawcett. The sessions for Advent focussed on The Good; The Bad and The Ugly will be studied in Lent. The meetings are all on Zoom, which means that you can attend and contribute from the comfort of your own home without having to go out on cold, dark nights!

The first section, for Advent, contained five sessions, each focussing on a person who was instrumental in bringing about change: William Wilberforce (slavery

and freedom); The Earl of Shaftesbury (justice, child labour and the Factories Act); Florence Nightingale (the sick and conditions in hospitals); Martin Luther King (racism and the voiceless); and Nelson Mandela (peace and reconciliation).

Each part gave information about the person who was the subject of the session. We were invited to consider some biblical quotations and to assess their value, and there were some discussion questions, which drew out an interesting response from those who attended. We were encouraged to relate what each of these people had achieved to problems in our day, and this proved to be the most interesting and fulfilling part of

the course. We were invited to consider the role of the Church in history and today, seen by the author as a chequered history, but in this part trying to see the good, which came out of it.

We are intending to follow the second section in Lent. All are invited to join us on Zoom. Each session lasts about an hour, so it is not too long, but in Advent it was amazing how much we got out of it in that time.

So, do join us. I think that you will enjoy it and find it helpful and stimulating. I certainly did - and I had a cup of tea while we were talking!!

Peter Binns

Christmas Tree Festival

This year's Christmas Tree Festival, raising funds for Wycombe Homeless Connection, grew to a total of 25 trees inside and outside the Church, bringing together local community groups, small businesses and individuals who sponsored and decorated the trees, and many visitors supporting the event in true and generous Christmas spirit.

The grand total raised during the event was £2,250 which included £670 from sponsorship donations; £300 collected at the Angel Tree during the AAG Christmas Festival; £1000 on the Street Collection during the Music Event on the Square; and £280 from the

on-going bucket collection in Church.

Wycombe Homeless Connection offered great support by decorating a tree and sending eight volunteers to boost the St Michael's team of street collectors throughout the day. The following is an extract from their letter which gives us an idea of how they spend their funds:

On December 1 we opened our winter emergency accommodation and in just a couple of days, 12 people have been settled in. We're supporting them with food, clothing, other essentials as well as advice and tailored support so our guests can find a more permanent

home. Our homeless health worker has been ensuring all our guests have registered with GPs and is arranging all sorts of health care, like dental and chiropody appointments. Our homelessness prevention hotline continues to be very busy. Our advocacy team is working with people who are facing homelessness, struggling with rental debt, and facing unfair and illegal evictions.

Should anyone still wish to make a donation, it's not too late to do so online <https://wyhoc.org.uk/winter-appeal>.

Kiki Connor

St Michael's Square

Roland Gillott outlines some of the ways in which St Michael's Square links the church with the local community.

In the period before Christmas, the Square was used for a variety of community activities: Making Change Together, an event about climate change arranged by Amersham Town Council on Saturday November 13; the launch of Chiltern Voice FM, a new local radio station, on Saturday November 27; the Amersham Christmas Festival arranged by Amersham Action Group on Saturday December 4; Music on St Michael's Square organised by St Michael's on Saturday December 11, featuring four different choirs, including our own, singing festive songs and carols; and Amchor singing carols on Sunday December 19.

One of the great strengths of St Michael's is that it is a town centre church, in the middle of a busy shopping street. St Michael's Square



The Amersham Jupiter Singers entertain

was designed as a community space, and during the week many people make use of the seats provided to have their lunch or just to take the weight off their feet for a while.

Following the publicity given to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in Glasgow in October/November, climate change has been brought particularly to people's attention. It was good to see so many organisations, such as Friends of the Earth and Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), represented on the Square at Amersham Town Council's event in November.

Chiltern Voice is a not-for-profit community radio platform the focus of which is to help promote local charities and voluntary groups within the Chilterns. So, if you are involved with a local group which has an event to publicise, do be in touch with them, through their website at www.chilternvoice.fm or by email: studio@chilternvoice.fm or by telephone 911922. Their studio is in The White Hill Centre, White Hill, Chesham, HP5 1AG so, if there is a chance of joining one of their presenters on air, it is not far to go. Now that the service is on 107.4FM as well as online, it is available to listeners in their cars, homes and at work.

Amersham Action Group (AAG) has used St Michael's and St Michael's Square, together with Sycamore Road, for its Amersham Christmas Festival for a number of

years. AAG's prime function is to promote and progress revitalisation of Amersham-on-the-Hill, and it is good that St Michael's has the opportunity to take part in their Christmas festival.

Music on St Michael's Square was arranged by Kiki Connor with Alan Jarvis providing 'sound'. The event was in support of the Christmas Tree Festival, raising funds for Wycombe Homeless Connection, with a Street Collection on the Square and along Sycamore Road. With a team of St Michael's helpers and volunteers from Wycombe throughout the day, an amazing £1,000 was raised. Our thanks for their brilliant performances go to the Knights of Harmony, Amersham Jupiter Singers, Amersham Rock Choir and St Michael's Choir.

Amchor is a long-established friendly choir which strives to promote music across the Chilterns and beyond. It is keen to engage with the local community by working with and encouraging others involved in music making.

The St Michael's Square group will be pleased to hear of other ways in which the Square might be used during the year to promote St Michael's and for the benefit of the local community. Please send any ideas to the Church office for the attention of the group by email: office@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk; by telephone: 726680; or by post: St Michael's Church office, 70 Sycamore Road, Amersham HP6 5DR.



St Michael and All Angels
Amersham-on-the-Hill

DIARY

FEBRUARY 2022

Eucharists will be celebrated each week
Sundays 8.30 am and 10 am
Tuesdays 10.30 am

The church is open for private prayer until dusk throughout the week. The votive candle stand has been moved into the Lady Chapel, which has been set aside as a place of quiet.

Weekly Activities in the Hall

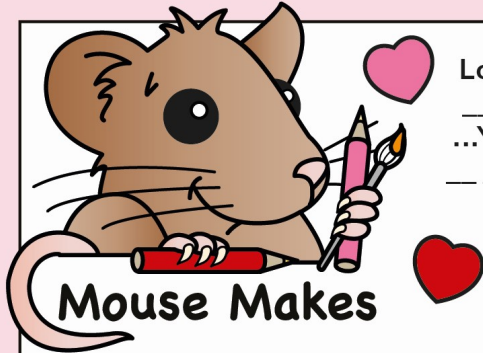
Mondays	Mature Movers. 1.45—2.45 pm
	Dance Studio. Children from 3+.Afternoon. Seniors 7—8 pm
Thursdays	Dance Studio. Children from 3+.Afternoon. Seniors 7-8 [pm
Fridays	Stay Steady, Stay Strong.. Hall. 1.30—2.30 pm
	Karate Club. 6.30 —8.30 pm

Other activities in February

Tuesday	Feb 1	LUNCH BREAK. Challoner's Boys in Recital. Free Church. 1.10 pm
Wednesday	Feb 2	Nappy Days. 1.30—3 pm
Friday	Feb 4	Wise Choices Film Club. <i>Personal history of David Copperfield.</i> <i>Wheeler Room 2 pm</i>
Sunday	Feb 6	4th before Lent. Warden: Claire Sinclair (07951 954701)
Tuesday	Feb 8	LUNCH BREAK. Bite-sized Service. Free Church. 1.10 pm
Wednesday	Feb 9	Nappy Days. 1.30—3 pm
Friday	Feb 11	Crafty Cuppa. 10.30 am—12.30 pm
Saturday	Feb 12	Repair Shop (see below). 10 am—1 pm
Sunday	Feb 13	3rd before Lent. Gathered Round. Warden: Ann Jarvis (726078)
Tuesday	Feb 15	LUNCH BREAK. Desert Island Discs. Free Church. 1.10 pm
Wednesday	Feb 16	Nappy Days. 1.30—3 pm
Sunday	Feb 20	2nd before Lent. Warden: Roger Leslie (726362)
Tuesday	Feb 22	LUNCH BREAK. Revd Erna Stevenson. Free Church. 1.10 pm
Wednesday	Feb 23	Nappy Days. 1.30—3 pm
Sunday	Feb 27	Sunday before Lent. Transfiguration. Warden: Andy Connor (723561)

Don't throw away broken items (toaster, bicycle, computer etc.) Repair shop volunteers can help you repair them. Free. No booking necessary. Saturday February 12. 10 am—1 pm

Children & Families Page



Mouse Makes

See what great love the Father has for us that He would call us His

1 John 1:3

Lord, you are a God who shows _____ and is _____
 ...You have great _____ and _____

Psalm 86:1



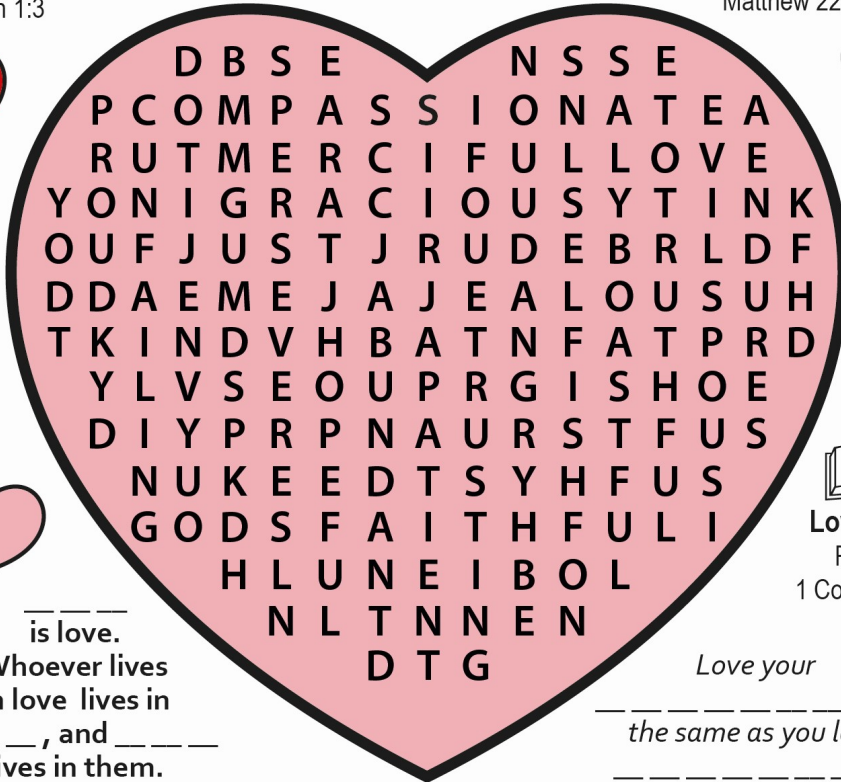
How did God show He **loved** us?
 Read 1 John 4:9

Love the Lord your God with all your

_____ with all your

_____ and with all your

_____ Matthew 22:37



_____ is love.
 Whoever lives in love lives in _____, and _____ lives in them.
 1 John 4:16

Love is ..
 Read 1 Cor 13:4-7

Love your _____ the same as you love _____

Matthew 22:39

Love is:
 PATIENT • KIND • GRACIOUS • JUST • TRUTHFUL • TRUSTING • HOPEFUL
 PERSEVERE • ENDURES • GOD

Love is not:
 JEALOUS • ENVY • BOASTFUL • PROUD • SELFISH • ANGRY • RUDE • EVIL

God's love is:
 LOVE • MERCIFUL • FAITHFUL • UNFAILING • ABUNDANT • COMPASSIONATE