

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

# **NEWSLETTER**

**NOVEMBER '24**

**Remembrance Services:**

**10 November 8.30am & 10am, St. Michael's**

**11 November, St. Michael's Square, 10.55am**

## Who's Who at St. Michael & All Angels

70 Sycamore Road  
Amersham HP6 5DR

Church Office: 01494 726680  
Office@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk  
www.stmichaelsamersham.org.uk  
(10 am—1 pm Monday—Wednesday & Friday)



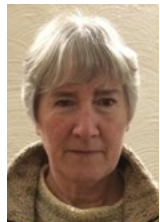
### Ministry Team

Vicar  
The Revd. Debbie Oades  
revdebbieoades@gmail.com



Associate Priest  
Fr. Peter Binns  
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### Churchwardens

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*While the standing committee were discussing which of them were most worthy to gather up the crumbs under the table the church mouse got to work...*

From Saturday, 2nd November, The Royal British Legion will be selling poppies on St. Michael's Square.



### 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).

Please email material for inclusion in the next issue to communications@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk, for the attention of Rebecca, by 21 November.

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**FROM THE EDITOR...** November is a month for remembering, firstly we remember all the Saints, and then all the souls that have passed through death into the fullness of God. Then just one week later we remember those who have died in service. It seems apt that Kenneth Prideaux-Brune has offered an article on 'Tubby' Clayton, an army chaplain in the First World War, and Adele Brazier touches on staying at Toc H in Ypres, founded in 1915 by Reverend Phillip "Tubby" Clayton during World War I as a rest house for soldiers in Poperinge, Belgium, when she recalls her memories of St. Michael's from bygone days. Pieces on Remembrance conclude with Janet Gibbs' poem, 'Remembrance'. Of course we must not become stuck in the past. We must also confront our spiritual present, which Jo Harrington does on page 4, and look to the future in Fun Raising Funds on page 5. **-Rebecca**

## **'Tubby' Clayton** **By Kenneth Prideaux-Brune**

The Rev Philip Clayton was universally known as Tubby, a slightly unfair nickname as tubby implies flab and, although short and stocky there was no flab on him. He had a very large head, a very deep voice and twinkling eyes.

He made his name as an army chaplain in the First World War, when he



### **Talbot House in Poperinge.**

ran a soldiers' club called Talbot House in the town of Poperinge, about 10 miles behind the front line of the Ypres Salient. It was unique in that it was for both officers and other ranks. Over the door to Tubby's room was a sign that said: "Abandon rank all ye who enter here". It was a place where unlikely friendships were made.

Tubby ran the place almost entirely on humour. He stuck silly signs on the walls. In the hall was a sign that read: "if you're in the habit of spitting on the carpet at home please spit here" – more humorous and probably more effective than simply saying don't spit.

In the loft was the chapel where many made their first Communion, having been baptised and confirmed during the war, and many more made their last Communion. The chapel is indeed, in the words of historian Richard Holmes, "heavy with the presence of the thousands who knelt here to pray that their cup might pass."

Talbot House has been preserved very much as it was in WW1 (though with modern plumbing!) and now operates as a highly atmospheric B&B. Over many years I led groups to tour the Ypres Salient (on one occasion many years ago a group from St. Michael's) and we always stayed at Talbot House as the trips were as much about experiencing the unique atmosphere of the house as they were about visiting the WW1 sites in the area.

Following the war he was vicar of All Hallows by the Tower and there were always guests at his dining table for lunch and supper, an eclectic mix of people, from city grandees to Toc H members up from the country. The food served was unimaginably awful, so no one came for the cuisine. They came to listen to a master raconteur. He brought Bible stories vividly to life. He shared extraordinary stories from history (though as he never let dull fact get in the way of a good story, many were fables).

His huge personality meant that if you met him you didn't forget him. It seemed that he was friends with everybody who mattered, from President Eisenhower to the Queen Mother. Whatever project was occupying his attention he knew who to go to get help and they usually rallied round. But it wasn't just the high and the mighty; he had friends among the fish porters of Billingsgate and the street sweepers of Tower Hill.



### **Tubby with his dog, Chippy**

Tubby's greatest contribution to the Church of England was the number of people he helped to recognise their vocation to the priesthood. I remember one morning in the late 1950s a Lambeth Conference had brought together Anglican Bishops from around the world and four Bishops came to All Hallows at 8 am to receive Communion from the man to whom they said they owed their vocation.

After he had met someone for the first time he would turn to those around him and ask: "What can we ask him to do? He believed that the faith made sense to people when they could relate it to their own experience. They needed first to have the experience of working for a cause bigger than themselves, of creating friendship with people quite different to themselves. Then, as they reflected on these experiences, the faith would begin to come alive.

# **We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under your table**

**By Jo Harrington**

Oh, dear! Another forgotten password. A deadline missed. We spend a lot of time trying to get things right. To do worthwhile things.

Societies and faith groups world-wide respond to this human urge to live a life where achievements are valued. Where worth is acknowledged.

In the time of Jesus, they thought that the right path involved observing the laws of Moses about physical and spiritual cleanliness. Foreigners, Gentiles and the non-observant were no more worthy than dogs.

Jesus showed that worth could not be earned. What matters is your inner self. Your trust in God to heal and forgive our shortcomings, because none of us are worthy.

Across the Lebanese border, a foreign woman from Syro-Phoenicia fell at his feet asking for her daughter to be healed. She reminded Jesus that even a "dog" like herself could feed on the scraps of food from a rich man's table. She recognised that she was no more, or less, worthy to be "fed" than anybody else. It was simply trust in him that mattered. Her child was instantly healed.

Some of the parables give the same advice.



The Prodigal Son, returning in faith, admitted that he was not worthy of the welcome-home meal that his forgiving father offered.

Poor Lazarus, who had longed for crumbs from the Rich Man's table, was "received into Abraham's bosom " on death because of his faith.

Even the super observant St Paul came to realise that all people, regardless, were welcome in God's presence. It wasn't your good deeds, rule keeping, (or these days, skill in remembering passwords and deadlines) that made you worthy. Love of God and humanity is the true worth.

So simple and yet so challenging!

All we can do is remember the Gospel story of the man at prayer in the Temple. Unlike the observant Pharisee, he simply hid near a pillar and said "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!"

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| <p><b>IF YOU WOULD LIKE A<br/>LOVED ONE REMEMBERED<br/>AT OUR ALL SOULS<br/>SERVICE AT 4PM ON<br/>SUNDAY, 3 NOVEMBER<br/>PLEASE CONTACT THE<br/>CHURCH OFFICE ON<br/>01494726680.<br/>YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A<br/>MEMBER OF ST. MICHAEL'S<br/>FOR YOUR LOVED ONE TO<br/>BE INCLUDED.</b></p> | <p>A service to remember, give thanks and light a candle before God for the lives of the saints and those whom we have loved, who have passed through death into the fullness of God.<br/>All Welcome!<br/>Sunday 3rd November 2024 at 4pm</p>   <p>St Michael &amp; All Angels Church, Amersham. HP6 5DR</p> <p><b>All Souls Service</b></p> |
|--|---|

## Fun Raising Funds

The end of November sees the beginning of the Big Community Christmas Tree Festival at St. Michael's. As usual Kiki has spent months contacting groups within the community and promoting this event, which is paired with the Choirs, Coffee and Cake event early in December. Both events raise money to help the Wycombe Homeless Connection and both bring a lot of joy to St. Michael's and the whole community.

Choirs were chasing Kiki for a spot in the programme this year and sadly this meant several choirs were turned away. Those who were lucky enough to be given a slot however make a fantastic line-up and well worth coming to listen to on 7 December.

Of course, the time is approaching when the work on these events will be too much for just one person to complete alone and a team of volunteers will join Kiki to ensure their smooth running. If you have time and would like to help out, in a small way or even a big way, Kiki will be beyond delighted to hear from you. Please contact Kiki directly by email: [kiki@akipl.com](mailto:kiki@akipl.com)

This very informal, family friendly event raised over £1,000 last year .

## Community Christmas Tree Festival - St Michael's

Sat 30 Nov  
to  
Tues 24 Dec

10am— 4pm  
Mon—Sat



Raising funds for  
Wycombe Homeless  
Connection

## Saturday 07 December

## Choirs, Coffee and Cake at St Michael's

### each set 45mins—free entry

**10am** Heatherton Singers

**11am** The Ukaholics

**12pm** AmChor

**1pm** Knights of Harmony

**2pm** Amersham Community Choir

Raising funds for  
Wycombe Homeless Connection



# Do You Remember?

By Adele Brazier

In a recent conversation about how long we had been attending St. Michael's, we both realised how much had happened in the last 50 odd years, and how interesting it was to reminisce.

I first came to St. Michael's Church in 1967/68, and I immediately felt at home here and liked the light, airy feel of the building, and the people were friendly (as they still are!). A lot has happened since.

Brian Griffiths initiated much of it originally, and I remember for instance the Myers-Briggs course in Bristol in 1981 (with members of the Free Church); and a retreat in an Oxford Convent, which was so uplifting.

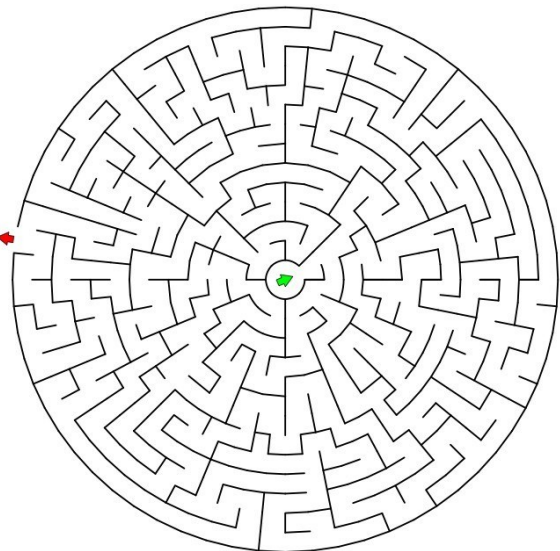
There was a music group (listening to favourite pieces) in various houses. And of course the summer garden parties which were hugely popular. (I'm sure I must be mistaken that it was always warm and sunny). In 2002 Ken Prideaux-Brune organised a trip to Flanders and the Somme which made a lasting impression on me; staying at Toc H in Ypres.

In the early 2000s there were annual Millenium Lectures which attracted people from a large area. I remember talks by Jeffrey John, then Dean of St. Albans; Rabbi Johathan Romain; Michal Mansfield QC., Julia Neuberger, and Yasmin Alibhai-Brown. How lucky we were.

When the Tuesday Club was started it was good to see how popular it was, and over the years the committee and Peter Binns arranged many great trips such as to Winchester, N.T. properties, Derby, Stoke Bruerne etc. and of course those super holidays in Yorkshire, Sudbury and Burgundy (a highlight for me).

So what have I been personally involved with over the years? Helping with the Sunday coffee rota for many years; the transport rota for some housebounds; the rota for reading the lesson at the Tuesday service; Elsie Biermann's weekly big shop; and, (not being a born-cook) being buyer, server, and washer-upper at the Tuesday Club lunches. Oh, and a mercifully short stretch as a Deanery Rep!

I have probably mis-remembered and forgotten so much more. My last



memory: one hot, sunny Sunday lazily watching a butterfly swoop up and around the Tower, along the nave and back, before settling on the altar.

Finally, despite the ups and downs that inevitably occur I have felt at home and at peace here in a way that I cannot explain.

# Remembrance

At the altar

I turn and face the empty pews,  
Their oaken backs  
Stroked by sunlight;

The roof, above me, curves  
Its rafters thick with bosses  
New minted with gold leaf;

My song trembles as it  
Rises up stained-glass  
Windows, hovers briefly

On marble slabs which  
Line the walls, droops  
Against an organ's

Slender pipes – up, up, it  
Soars, where once,  
Mothers' voices lifted

Sadly, mourning sons  
Fallen in  
The Great War;

It mingles with melodies  
Centuries old, and  
Twines

Round hearts that leapt,  
Once, in cloud-bursts  
Of Joy.

And after, cadences cling and  
Drape a fond remembrance  
For friends,

Whose Souls now shine  
And smile in peace  
High up –

I leave, the heavy door  
Bangs shut behind me,  
My song

Encased forever,  
Clasped tenderly along  
A Church's dusty beams.

By Janet Gibbs

## WORSHIP

### WARDENS

3 Nov Alan Bacon  
 3 Nov 4pm Andy Connor  
 10 Nov Claire Sinclair  
 17 Nov Roger Leslie  
 24 Nov Roland Gillott

### 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.

### Special Services:

All Souls Service, Sunday, 3 November, at 4pm

Remembrance Sunday, Sunday, 10 November at 10am

Remembrance Day, Monday, 11 November at 10.55 in St Michael's Square.

**Messy Church:** 16 November '24 (The third Saturday each month 11.30am—1pm, EXCEPT AUGUST)

St. Michael's is usually open to ALL for private prayer from 10am—4pm Mon– Fri. <https://www.youtube.com/@stmichaelandallangels/streams>, will access live-streamed services.

## ACTIVITIES AT ST. MICHAEL'S & BEYOND

**POP IN & PAINT— 8 November (nb. change to usual date) —10.30am-12.15pm, St. Michael's, Main Church**  
 Join Jenny Thompson and Liz Grammenos from Simpatico. No experience needed. Materials provided.

**A CRAFTY CUPPA—8 & 22 November — 10.30am-12 noon—St. Michael's, Wheeler Room**  
 A drop-in session for everyone who wants a cuppa and some company. Feel free to bring a craft with you.

**WISE CHOICES FILM CLUB— 1 November—2pm-4pm—St. Michael's, Wheeler Room**  
**SORRY WE MISSED YOU** A film from Ken Loach. A powerful exploration of the contemporary world of work. The challenges faced by one family trying to hold it all together. Running Time 1hr 37mins

**LEARN MODERN JIVE— 1, 8, 15, 22 November—7.30pm-9pm—St. Michael's Church Hall—FREE! Just turn up.**

### LUNCHEBREAK – 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** 11am (Tel: 07809 157 428)  
**Mature Movers** 1.45pm-2.45pm  
**Stay Steady, Stay Strong** 3pm-4pm (Tel: 07951 294178)  
**Amersham Dance Studio** Children from 3+. 4pm-10pm  
 (email: emma@amershamdancestudio.co.uk)

Tuesdays **Tuffney Performing Arts Academy** 5pm-6pm  
 (Email: office@tuffney.com)  
**Yoga with Shiv** 6pm—8pm (Science based approach, open to all. Tel: 07815132157).  
**Amersham A Capella** 7pm-11pm (<https://www.amershamacappella.com/>)

Wednesdays **Karate Club** 6.30pm-8pm (Tel: 07951 024 397)  
**Badminton Club** 8.15pm-10.15 pm (Tel: 01923 264791).  
**Tuffney Performing Arts Academy** 4.45pm-5.45pm

Thursdays **Badminton** 1.30pm-3.30pm  
**Amersham Dance Studio** Children from 3+. 4pm-7pm  
 (email: emma@amershamdancestudio.co.uk)

Fridays **Stay Steady, Stay Strong** 1.30pm-2.30pm (Tel: 07951 294178)

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

Please see [stmichaelsamersham.org.uk](http://stmichaelsamersham.org.uk) if you would like to book the hall.

For information about **Little Learners Nursery** please see <https://littlelearnersamersham.co.uk>

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN THE HALL

**REPAIR CAFÉ – Saturday, 2 November – 10.a.m.-1p.m.** Come along to SustainableAmersham.org's pop-up Repair Café. Volunteer repairers will help you fix your stuff for free.

**Saturday, 16 November, Messy Church** will be on in St. Michael's from 11.30am to 1pm, including fun activities from rosemary crushing to picture frame making, and much more. The theme of the session is, 'Remember Me' and is based on **Luke 23: 32 -43**. After all the making there will be a short interactive session about the story behind the activities, followed by lunch, which is provided for all. No need to book, just turn up. All welcome. This activity is free but donations are welcome to cover costs.



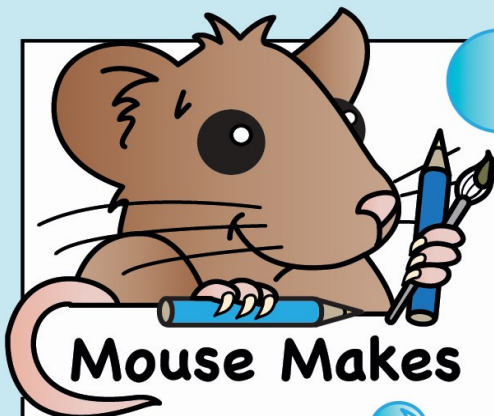
**CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES** will be open every Monday-Saturday, from 10a.m.-4p.m. (16 November and 21 December 1.30p.m.-4p.m.) and Sundays from 12p.m.-4p.m., until 21 December, in the South Transept.

Please see:  
[stmichaelsamersham.org.uk](http://stmichaelsamersham.org.uk)  
 for more details

# DIARY NOVEMBER '24

### Other events at St. Michael's:

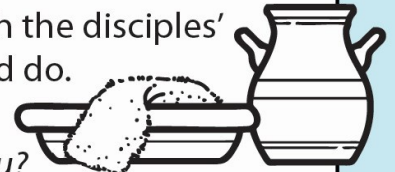
Sustainable Amersham and Bucks Community Energy Event— Saturday, 23 November.  
 AAG Christmas Fair— Saturday, 30 November



## Mouse Makes

### "DO AS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU."

The disciples had met with Jesus in an upper room to share a meal together, but there were no servants to wash their dusty feet. Jesus got up from the table, took off his outer clothing, wrapped a towel around his waist and began to wash the disciples' feet just like a servant would do.



Then Jesus said:

*"Do you understand what I have done for you? Now that I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example, that you should do as I have done for you."*



**READ**  
the story in  
**John 13:1-17**

By washing his disciples' feet, Jesus showed that as God's people we are never too important to serve and care for others.

S C L O T H I N G S  
 N U N D E R S T A N D T  
 G S W I P E T E R E W R  
 W D A U A S E R V A N T A E H M  
 A O R P S C L E A N X O T X O A  
 I U M P H I J E S U S W E A T S  
 S F E E T P A S S O V E R M H T  
 T E N R B L E S S E D L L P E E  
 K E T X T E A C H E R O O L R R  
 B A S I N S C R I P T U R E S P  
 C D A N M E A L O V E D E W  
 C H O S E N F S  
 F E A S T

JESUS  
 DISCIPLES  
 PASSOVER  
 FEAST • SUPPER • MEAL

PETER  
 SCRIPTURES  
 LORD • TEACHER  
 SERVANT • MASTER

GARMENTS • CLOTHING • TOWEL • WAIST • WATER • BASIN • WASH • FEET • WIPE  
 CLEAN • UNDERSTAND • OTHERS • EXAMPLE • DO • LOVED • CHOSEN • BLESSED