



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

Please take one

Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2020



COVID

The Service of Lament, Thanksgiving and Restoration

The service on St Michael's Square at the end of July was a lament for all who have died as a result of the coronavirus; thanksgiving for deliverance from the virus and for all who have worked hard (key workers, all who have voluntarily raised money or helped others); and restoration (looking to the future and rebuilding after the pandemic). It was a service for the community with an emphasis on love and working together.



People were invited to place a butterfly on the board in front of the altar, a purple one in remembrance of someone who has died, an orange one in thanksgiving for a key worker or volunteer.

Photos: Rob Oades

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 (Monday – Friday
 9.30 am – 12.30 pm)

Clergy

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Churchwardens

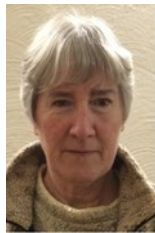
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St Michael's Vision Statement

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 October 3. Material for inclusion should please be emailed to the Editor on pbrune@olcs.net by September 21.



COMMENT

Overcoming Adversity

Many of us have found great solace in gardening during the pandemic; even the most routine tasks, such as weeding, can soothe us and take our minds off life's stresses. It can also be a very frustrating occupation, with plants demolished by slugs, and bindweed running riot. It teaches us that we are not completely in control; we have to work with nature. There is a rhythm in gardening; we follow the seasons. Things can't be rushed and we have to be flexible in our approach. We need patience and forbearance when things do not turn out as we hoped but the rewards are great when we see the first crocuses and daffodils and the riot of colour that summer brings.

Earlier this year we visited Nymans in Sussex for the first time. This was one of the many National Trust gardens devastated in the great storm of October 1987. A large number of very old trees were destroyed, including a huge old monkey puzzle and an ancient cedar, two of the most majestic trees; indeed much of the garden was flattened. For the family and gardening staff this was a terrible disaster and it seemed impossible to imagine how it would ever recover.

However, as so often happens, it soon became clear that something new might be achieved. The garden at the time was overfilled with trees and so this provided an opportunity to take a fresh look and revitalise it. Of course, this took a very great deal of time and effort on the part of many people but it was resolved that 'Nymans would rise again'; and with much hard work it did. Now it is one of the National Trust's most popular gardens.

A great deal of what we learn from gardening applies to our lives. There is only so much we can control there too and we have to be patient and tenacious to overcome adversity, be it bindweed, storms or pandemics.

As Gertrude Jekyll wrote: *A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift, above all it teaches entire trust.*

Di Bacon

“

ANNIVERSARIES

Mary Prince

This year is the 190th anniversary of the publication of the autobiography of Mary Prince, the first first-hand account of slavery by a Black woman and an important contribution to the debate on the abolition of slavery in the British empire.

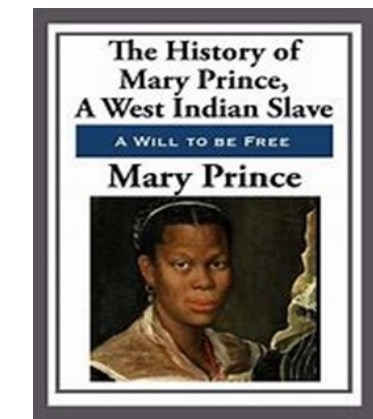
Mary Prince was born into slavery on the island of Bermuda. At the age of 12 she was sold for the first time and separated from her parents and siblings. She would be sold a further three times and she was subject to frequent beatings for the most minor of offences in each household. Initially she worked as a house slave, cleaning, washing clothes, looking after children but in 1806 she was sold to a man who lived in the Turks and Caicos islands and there she was put to work on the salt pans. She worked up to her knees in water, frequently for 17 hours at a stretch, because the owners were concerned that if the workers were away for too long rain would come and spoil the salt.

Mary was taken back to Bermuda in 1810, where she was physically and sexually abused by her master. In 1815 she was sold for the fourth and last time, for \$300, to John Adams Wood, of Antigua, where she was again a domestic slave washing clothes and acting as nanny to a young child. While in Antigua she attended the Moravian church, where she learned to read and was baptised but she became too frightened to ask permission from the Woods to attend church. In December 1826 she married Daniel James, a formerly enslaved man who had managed to buy his free-

dom with money he had earned as a carpenter. When she married, she said, her beatings increased because the Woods were furious at having a free Black man living in their household.

In 1828 the Wood family travelled to England to arrange for their sons' education and they took Mary with them. It is sometimes assumed that the famous case of Somerset v Stewart in 1772 meant that slaves brought to England were automatically freed but that isn't so. The somewhat ambiguous judgement merely intended to make it illegal to transport an enslaved person out of England. And although the slave trade was abolished in 1807 slavery itself was still legal in this country. Unless Wood formally freed Mary she could not return to the husband she had had to leave behind in Antigua without being re-enslaved there.

But there were increasing tensions between Mary and the Woods and eventually they told her to leave. She found herself with no home and no employment. She sought sanctuary with the Moravian Church in Hatton Garden and she found occasional work for Thomas Pringle, an abolitionist writer and Secretary to the Ant-Slavery Society. In 1829 Pringle hired Mary to work in his household and encour-



aged her to write an account of her life. Although she had learnt to read, she couldn't write and Pringle arranged for a woman called Susannah Strickland to transcribe her story. The book was published in 1831 and was an instant success. Three editions were produced in that year and, even though her name is little known to most of us, the vivid retelling of her terrible treatment was an important contribution to the campaign to finally abolish slavery throughout the Empire.

Unfortunately, we have no idea what happened to Mary Prince after the publication of her book. She completely disappears from the historical record a couple of years later. We must hope that, after the Abolition Act was passed, she was able to return to Antigua and re-join her husband, as she wished.

The Act to abolish slavery was passed in the British Parliament in 1833 but only after the Government agreed to compensate the slave owners financially for the loss of their 'property'. Needless to say, the slaves themselves received absolutely nothing to help them embark on a life of freedom.

Ken Prideaux-Brune

Our Harvest Appeal

Hospice of Saint Francis Berkhamsted



As usual we are invited to make a thank-offering, as we celebrate Harvest Festival, in gratitude for all the good things we have received. This year we are invited to support our local Hospice, the Hospice of St Francis in Berkhamsted, a charity which St Michael's has supported through our Missionary Giving since 2000.

Helen Robinson, Fundraising Volunteer at the Hospice, writes: "As you may know, all

of our care is free and takes many forms, from caring in our 24/7 In-patient unit; at home; and in our health and wellbeing hub, the Spring Centre, which offers a range of courses, workshops and complementary therapies such as massage and reiki. (Your) support has been put to good use, helping transform the lives of ... local men and women living with a life-limiting illness by helping them to live their precious lives well,

from improving symptoms, managing pain and achieving personal goals again. The Community Nursing Team are working hard to ensure that no-one dies alone. Your kindness has meant resilience, hope and optimism. Your kindness is making a difference". The Hospice provides "support and reassurance for patients and those close to them when they need it most."

This year's Harvest Festival will be celebrated at the Gathered Round service on Sunday October 10. A speaker will come to tell us about the work of the Hospice during our Patronal Festival service on Sunday September 26.

The Church's income is still heavily reduced due to Covid and the PCC has reluctantly decided that our Missionary Giving this year should once again be limited to £1,250. It is proposed that this sum be divided equally between the Leprosy Mission, USPG and New Hope in Watford.

The Roderick Quiet Garden In Its Summer Splendour



Thank you to Claire Cooper for this lovely picture of the Roderick Quiet Garden, with the roses in full and magnificent bloom in July (and to Sue Eames for forwarding the photo to us).

The garden is an oasis of calm in the middle of the once-again bustling Sycamore Road—a fitting reminder of former vicar Philip Roderick and his launching of the Quiet Garden movement.

It is wonderful to see it looking so beautiful at the height of its summer splendour. A thing of beauty is, indeed, a joy for ever.

Live Streaming Is Coming Your Way!



Earlier in March this year, it was decided that the audio recordings of our church services on SoundCloud should come to an end, making it 52 weeks of audio recordings. We also made the decision that these services would continue to be available for another year as an archive, believing that people might want to dip back in to listen to an earlier recording. But what were we to do with broadcasting services in the future, as we thought there was a need? We looked around in the diocese at the various imaginative ways people had found to continue to keep in touch with those who were unable to come to Church. I visited St Mary the Virgin University Church in Oxford who seemed to be able to broadcast their services in quite an imaginative way. They were very willing to show me what they had

put together. At first glance it seemed to be quite complicated with wires going everywhere - literally. Anna-Marie went through their configuration, how they came to the decision to use the particular technology, the overall costs and some very useful tips.

Their system was "just what we needed", I then went about gaining approvals to spend the money, which was granted. The next step was to source all the bits we needed and rather than buying everything new we have had some very generous donations. The main unit that controls everything is a device called an "ATEM Mini Pro" which was sourced from Germany.

Everything has now been connected, configured and tested. Roland has found a

small group of people who are willing to be trained and will form the nucleus of those operating the system.

From an operational point of view, not all services will be broadcast; we have to respect people's wishes for them to be on camera (or not), and some services are just not appropriate.

The aim is to start broadcasting in September 2021 with users being able to watch services on YouTube. Predominantly those in the Sanctuary will be the only people seen. During communion we will not be showing any members of the congregation.

I will arrange for the details to be included within the weekly "notices". A sample can be seen on the following YouTube search:

<https://youtu.be/eY8ZH98ksII> This was a "test run" and starts around 30 minutes into the Sunday morning service.

By the time you read this we should be up and running and the Live Streaming team hope that you enjoy the services.

Alan Jarvis



Stay Steady, Stay Strong

*Do you ever feel unsteady?
Are you worried about falling?
Or do you know an older person who would answer yes?*
Join us in our specialist Strength and Balance Exercise class,
help maintain your independence, keep mobile
and steady on your feet.

St Michael's Hall
Contact Lucie: 07951 294170. Fridays 1.30 pm– 2.30 pm

DIARY

SEPTEMBER 2021

Said 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 4 pm on Tuesdays, following the 10.30 am service, and on Wednesdays and Fridays until mid-afternoon. The votive candle stand has been moved into the Lady Chapel, which has been set aside as a place of quiet.

Weekly church activities

Wednesdays Nappy Days. (drop-in for parents and new babies). North Transept. 1.30—3 pm

Weekly Activities in the Hall

Sundays Tae Kwando.. Hall. 10 —11 am
Mondays Mature Movers. 1.45—2.45 pm (from September 20)
Dance Studio. Hall. Children from 3+. Afternoon.
Tuesdays Pilates Health Physiotherapy. 7.15—8.15 pm. (from September 7)
Wednesdays Karate Club. Hall. Beginners/Junior 6 —7 pm. Intermediate/Senior 7—8 pm
Thursdays Dance Studio. Hall. Children from 3+. Afternoon.
Fridays Stay Steady, Stay Strong.. Hall. 1.30—2.30 pm
Dance Studio. Hall. Children from 3+. Afternoon.
Karate Club. Hall. Beginners/Junior 6 —7 pm. Intermediate/Senior 7—8 pm

Activities in September

Sunday Sept 5 Trinity 14. Warden: Hazel Miller (773189)
Friday Sept 10 Crafty Cuppa. North Transept. 10.30 am—11.30 am
Wise Choices Film Club. *Second Hand Lions*. Wheeler Room. 2.pm
Sunday Sept 12 Trinity 15. Warden: Alan Bacon (774870)
Saturday Sept 18 MESSY CHURCH.. 11.30 am—1 pm
Sundays Sept 19 Trinity 16. Warden: Roger Leslie (726362)
Friday Sept 24 Pop in and Paint. 10.30 am—12.15 pm
Sunday Sept 26 MICHAELMAS. (Patronal Festival) Warden: Roland Gillott (722674)
Speaker from Hospice of St Francis, Berkhamsted.

Thank You From Simpatico

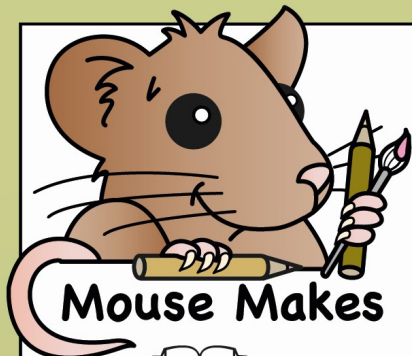
Beverley Parkin, Jenny Thompson, Candy Hackney and Liz Grammenos would like to thank everyone for their support at our recent Bucks Art Weeks art exhibition! Thanks to the generosity of our visitors we managed to raise a considerable amount of money, through the sale of our paintings, for St Michael's and for our chosen charity, Horatio's Garden. We raised £656.50 for each of them! - and Horatio's Garden also received over £50 in their collection box. **And we plan to re-start Pop in and Paint in September!**

Crafty Cuppa

A new monthly opportunity to meet for a chat, maybe bring along a piece of craft work and work on something along with others for an hour. Or just come along for a chat and a cuppa. The first session will be on Friday September 10, at 10.30 am

**We give thanks for the life of:
Lena Pearce**

**We welcome in Baptism
Ellaria Anais Hayward
Lana Emilia Barwell**



Read this story in
1 Kings 17:7-16

The bowl of flour and the jar of oil

It had not rained for months and months, there was a drought in the land. God sent His prophet **Elijah** to the town of Zarephath. At the town gate he saw a widow gathering firewood.

"Please bring me a drink of water and some bread." he asked her.



She answered "All I have is a handful of flour and a drop of oil in a jar, it is our last meal."

"Do not worry." Elijah said, "Make the meal and make a small loaf for me."

The woman did what Elijah had asked and God blessed her ...

... The bowl never ran out of flour and the jar never ran out of oil until it rained again!



Find these words from the story in the word search:

- WORD • LORD • GOD • ELIJAH • SENT • ZAREPHATH • GATE • CITY • WIDOW
STICKS • WATER • DRINK • BREAD • FEED • HANDFUL • FLOUR • LITTLE
OIL • SON • EAT • DIE • FULL • WENT • MAKE • BAKED • ATE • JAR • JUG • MANY
DAYS • LIVE • NEVER • EMPTY