

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

NEWSLETTER MAY '24



Photo taken on Holy Saturday by Robin Hyde

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
peter.binns166@btinternet.com

Licensed Lay Minister
Katherine Hyde
LLM@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk



Church Administrator
Hazel Miller
office@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk

Churchwardens

Roger Leslie
rogerleslie25@gmail.com



Roland Gillott.
roland.gillott@btinternet.com

Safeguarding Officer

Cathy Franklin
cathy.stmichaels@outlook.com



Communications Officer
Rebecca Olsen
communications@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk



A short message from the Editor...

Welcome to the May issue of the St. Michael's Newsletter, which is jam packed! I felt that this photo of Fr. Peter should take pride of place; more photos taken at Fr. Peter's celebration lunch can be found on page 4.

Rebecca

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 to communications@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk, for the attention of Rebecca, by 16 May.

In this issue...

	Page
Who's Who at St. Michael's	2
A short message from The Editor	2
A few words following the APCM	3
How I feel coming to church...	3
What a Birthday!	3 & 4
God's Right Time	5
Now and Then	5
The Lent Study Group	6
Infusion	6
What is God calling you to do?	6
Diary	7
Kids Page	8



...well you cannot fault the efficacy of the new 'Planned Giving' scheme...

A few words from the APCM

by Roland Gillott

to increased energy costs. However voluntary giving has held up well and, since the year end, there has been an appeal to review annual giving. Other ideas for boosting the church's income will be welcomed. Neil Lynch and Rebecca Olsen were elected to the PCC. Nothing untoward needed to be reported in relation to Safeguarding. Referring to buildings, a current concern is the proposed St. Michael's Court development next to the church. Members of the congregation were encouraged to put in comments individually relating to this. The Area Dean, Rev Peggy Ludlow, joined the meeting to read a statement from the Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham, Revd. Canon Chris Bull, about our Vicar, Revd. Debbie Oades. The statement mentioned that Revd. Debbie will begin a very slow and gradual return to ministry, and asked that the congregation be patient with her.

What this means is that anyone wishing to have a meeting can arrange this with her, but to be careful how long they stay. If her available time during a week is already committed, then it will be a case of waiting for a later opportunity. Please also remember that Monday is Revd. Debbie's day off.

It is going to be a while before Revd. Debbie will be ready to lead services again. Taking this into account, and so as to give Fr. Peter assurance that he will be able to have the Sundays off to which he is entitled, and also his annual holiday, in August, the churchwardens have arranged for visiting clergy, or an alternative arrangement, to cover the Eucharists between now and the end of the year for which Fr. Peter will not be around, so that those arrangements are in place if needed.

Now that she will be returning to work, please feel free to email Revd. Debbie, but do not expect necessarily to receive a reply straight away. Alternatively please be in touch with Hazel in the Church Office, and mention to her that you would like to be in contact with Revd. Debbie, when there is an opportunity to do so.

After what has been a very difficult period, it is good to know that Revd. Debbie feels much more positive about the situation, now there is a plan in place to move forward.

Roger Leslie and Roland Gillott were confirmed as churchwardens for the coming year. The number on the Electoral Roll is 107. The annual Statement of Accounts shows a deficit for the year, partly due

How I feel coming to church and joining the choir for Easter

By Kira Leslie, age 9

Being in the church is amazing and I love it, because whenever I walk into it, I always get a warm greeting. But there is also one more thing- I have lots of friends there but the greatest thing is that I feel happy and calm with them. Joining the choir has been one of my dreams because my Mum, Dad and Granny are in it and I've always loved singing. It felt amazing to put on my purple robe for the first time and sing with the choir at Easter. I even got to light the Easter fire on Holy Saturday and sing a duet with my Granny. I can't wait to sing with them again soon!



What a birthday!

I shall never forget my 80th birthday, even though I am trying to avoid admitting that I am that age now!! It was an amazing party with fine food and wine and many memorable moments. It was great when we started by singing part of Psalm 40. As you know, the psalms are very special to me. There were psalms on the

wall and a photo of Halifax Minster. And there was also Roger's lovely and amusing poem! He is always winding me up, so we have a lot of laughs!! (I wind him up as well!!)

There was a wonderful atmosphere that day, as there always is at St. Michael's when we get together; there were banners and decorations, and we sang in French!!

I would like to thank all of you for coming to the party, for all the cards and presents, gift tokens and cash. I should be able to have the best garden in Aylesbury!!

I count it a real pleasure and a privilege to be at St. Michael's as a priest and a friend of you all. I enjoy it all so much. Thank you again for helping to make my birthday such a memorable occasion. It was stupendous!

Fr. Peter (see pg.4 for pictures)





Fr. Peter's 80th Birthday Celebrations. Photo's by Rachel Wilcox

God's Right Time By Jo Harrington

Oh dear! Of dear! I shall be too late, said the White Rabbit as he took a watch out of his waistcoat pocket and scurried down the rabbit hole of Time.

Like the White Rabbit, we are all conscious of scurrying to do things at the right time.

And this elusive Time is not something that we have dreamed up. Einstein and Radio Astronomy show that, after the Big Bang of about 14 billion years ago, our planet is indeed part of that the overwhelming space time which is integral to our still-expanding universe (or multiverse).

Of course, people of all religions and none can't stop themselves from asking what this scurrying, challenging life is all about. We assume that there are answers of a sort out there; that purpose is a valid concept; that human existence is not random.

Some decades after the earthly life of Jesus, the Greek-speaking author of what is known as the book



Picture by Iftikharalam—taken from Veectezy.com

of Acts gave a dramatic account of what had earlier become, for some, a time-stopping experience in a remote part of the universe.

He drew on recent writings and memories to describe a group of Galilean Jews who had been timidly holding together in Jerusalem under the rule of the Emperor Tiberias. For about six weeks they had several times seen and touched for real the resurrected body of their crucified leader, Jesus, put to death by the Romans. Separately, other visiting and multilingual members of the Jewish community had also stayed a bit longer in Jerusalem for the upcom-

ing early harvest, pilgrim festival of Pentecost / Shavuot, before making long journeys back to their dispersed settlements.

Suddenly, while at early morning prayer, the Galileans had had an out-of-time, mind shattering moment. They felt on fire, swept off their feet by the creative wind of the Holy Spirit whose breath had created time itself. *This*, they thought, was the making-sense-of-time moment which they had prayed for.

They rushed out-

side, speaking convincingly to the assorted crowds about Jesus, his death, his resurrection, his living presence among them. It was just as the Jewish prophets had foretold, they said. Now, at God's Right Time, in the creative power of the Holy Spirit, the world made sense.

Belongings, wealth, food, time and prayer were suddenly shared by members of the new community which we see as the Body of Christ.

This was the true meaning of time-space. No more rabbit holes to tumble into.

God's Right Time, in this amazing Universe, is now eternally revealed also to us in our own time.

May we, too, be similarly inspired at this Pentecost.



NOW AND THEN By Neil Lynch

How lucky the disciples were to live at the same time as Jesus!

If I had been there with them – how much easier it would be to believe!

I often find these thoughts drifting through my mind during the Easter and Pentecost season. But I am overlooking the devastation of witnessing first hand Jesus' crucifixion and the fear the disciples surely felt as they

were left leaderless and with a sketchy understanding at best of Jesus message and promises. They knew great things were expected of them in his name but exactly how could they begin?

History is an enormous blessing for us. We know that the Resurrection follows the crucifixion and that Pentecost comes 50 days later. These timings were not known to the disciples though. They went through

the fear and the waiting. Tongues of fire descending onto disciples heads and speaking in many languages is what history tells of events on that Pentecost day.

What could Pentecost mean for me on 19 May 2024?

Rather than flames descending, why not flames arising from inside each of us, celebrating the Spirit within us,

each understanding, enjoying and using our particular God given gifts for the benefit of all.

I'll be on the lookout for our flames!

The Lent Study Group

By LLM Katherine Hyde

Transfiguration: Fifty Pilgrim Steps by Rob Marshall, 2023.
Canterbury Press, London. ISBN 978-1-78622-531-3

The Transfiguration event that took place on Mount Tabor has always seemed very mysterious and difficult to relate to. We started by reading the three separate Gospel accounts of Jesus' Transfiguration as printed in Marshall's book, from Mark 9:2-8, Matthew 17:1-8 and Luke 9:28-36, then adding 2 Peter 1:16-18. This immediately captured our interest because this comparative approach is not one that we often take in church. Why was the Transfiguration so important that all three gospels, with the exception of John, give an individual account of it? The synergy between the three gospel accounts is clearly so evident that the small details that differ between them only add to the richness and humanity of the Transfiguration story. Somehow, it is as if the three disciples had each recorded for us their own personal experiences of the events of that day.

Prof David Wilkinson says that 'The Transfiguration is really puzzling, not quite fitting with the flow of the gospel narratives and not easy to understand. And yet it draws me in' (p.1). The studies drew us in as a group and we were enabled to raise challenging and sometimes uncomfortable questions.

The book is divided into 50 study days, four of them for the week before Lent, four of them at Eastertide and the rest identified by the week of Lent and the subject of the day. The First Week of Lent is called 'The Mountain, the Second Week is called 'being a Disciple,' Week Three is on Tabernacles, Week Four is Clouds, Week Five is Glory and finally for Holy Week, Transfiguration of Suffering. This approach lends itself to reading just one of the reflections at a time, or perhaps one each day.

Peter wants to capture the moment of Transfiguration for eternity, to try to hold onto the Lord and the saints by building fixed, permanent memorial booths. It is possible that actually, he feels spiritually overwhelmed and does not really know how to handle the immense experience that is unfolding before the three of them. Later on, after the resurrection, the disciples will start to try to come to terms with the mysteries of God becoming Man, and the Son of Man returning to God, having won salvation for us. This account of the Transfiguration will prepare Peter, James and John for those days in which they now have the responsibility for trying to explain to the other disciples the significance of the Transfiguration events which they have been privileged to have witnessed. This is a cycle of incomprehension that becomes transformed into revelation, reassurance and hope.

As we look forward expectantly to Pentecost, let us all pray to receive a new revelation of the living Jesus, like the revelation at the Transfiguration that the disciples recorded for our encouragement. Let us be united in love, in this encouragement in our own church, St Michael and All Angels, Amersham.

Infusion

Each day is a gift
Each moment a pearl
Each breath speaks of Life
Each touch sends a glow,
Each look a fond giving
Each kiss a caress;
Each flower is a joy
Each bird on the wing –
A glorious thing!

Each raindrop a river
Each tear a wise knowing
Each smile a bright ray –
This bouquet of Blessings,
Tied up in a muslin
Infuse as a tea – and
Sip – constantly!

By Janet Gibbs

(also known in St. Michael's as Janet Lynch)

What is God calling you to do?

By Rebecca

If you were at the Gathered Round service in April, you will have seen me called by the Holy Spirit to speak in tongues.

Until recently I was dubious about people speaking in tongues. I felt it was often (not always) ingenuine. However, I can assure you that it is very real, and a very pure form of communication that bypasses the desires and requests of the ego.

It is so easy to sit back and think that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for others, that perhaps to connect to them you have to attend a Pentecostal Church, or maybe we have never encountered them beyond what is written about them in the Bible, or we ignore them altogether. But the Holy Spirit came for us all and is waiting for us to be ready to receive his gifts to use for God's glory.

As followers of Christ we are called to trust when we are asked to do something for God—even if it feels strange to us. It may feel easier to ignore a calling, thinking that it is just our imagination fooling us, but to ignore God is to invite darkness into our hearts, darkness that we will have to plead to God to forgive us for. So, listen carefully this Pentecost, what is God calling you to do?

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: 18 May '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

WARDENS

5 May Claire Sinclair
12 May Alan Bacon
19 May Roger Leslie,
26 May Roland Gillott

Please see:
stmichaelsamersham.org.uk
for more details

ACTIVITIES AT ST. MICHAEL'S & BEYOND

POP IN AND PAINT—3 May —10.30am-12.15pm

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

A CRAFTY CUPPA—10 & 24 May — 10.30am-12 noon

A drop-in session for everyone who wants a cuppa and some company. Bring a craft with you or come and find out more about International dolls and dolls clothes with Audrey and Katherine.

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 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 4.30pm (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 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) Stay Steady, Stay Strong 1.30pm—2.30pm (Tel: 07951 294178)
Fridays	Karate Club 7pm—8 pm (Tel: 07951 024 397)
Saturdays	Popstars Academy 9.30am—12pm (email: hazel@popstarsacademy.com).

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN THE HALL

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

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

Saturday, 18 May, Messy Church will be on in St. Michael's from 11.30am to 1pm, including fun activities based on Joshua 6, 'Nothing is impossible for God'; 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.



Weddings, Births and Deaths

RIP

Gerry Griffiths

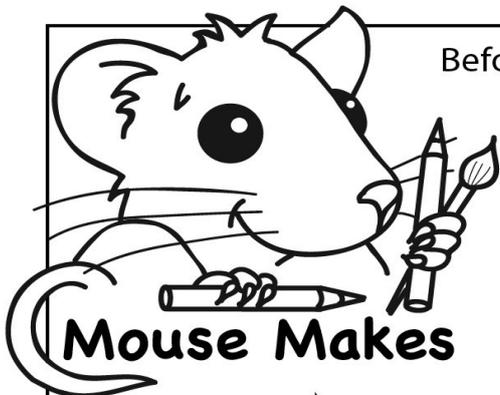
The spring edition of Pathways magazine

celebrates 30 years of women priests. But how far have women really come in church leadership? Bishop Olivia and Associate Archdeacon, Liz Jackson, give some surprising answers. This edition also features how to open yourself up to the gift of joy, and much more.

Take your free copy home today.

Copies are in the Narthex.

DIARY MAY '24



Before Jesus ascended to heaven he told his disciples
 "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit
 has come upon you, and you will be my
 witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea
 and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"...

...When the day of Pentecost arrived,
 they were all together in one place,
 and they were all filled
 with the Holy Spirit."


READ the story
 of Pentecost
 in Acts 1-2
 Look up the Bible
 verses to find
 the answers to the
 crossword clues.

How many
 words can you
 make from
 the letters of:
 DAY OF
 PENTECOST

- 1 After Jesus ascended into heaven, which city did the Apostles return to? *Acts 1:12*
- 5a What did the Apostles devote themselves to? *Acts 1:14*
- 6 Who was chosen to replace Judas? *Acts 1:26*
- 5d Which special day was it? *Acts 2:1*

- 8 What rushing sound came from heaven? *Acts 2:2*
- 2 What appeared? Tongues of ...? *Acts 2:3*
- 4 What were the disciples filled with? *Acts 2:4*
- 9 What did they start speaking in? *Acts 2:4*
- 3 Who spoke to the crowd? *Acts 2:14*
- 7 Who had prophesied this? *Acts 2:16*