

# St Michael's News June 2020

St Michael and All Angels, Lower Church Road, Sandhurst, Berkshire, GU47 8HN

Due to the Government restrictions on movement and social gatherings, the Parish Office, Pastoral Centre and the Church building are all closed until further notice.

Please check our website, [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk), for up-to-date information on live-streamed services and internet-based activities.

For general enquiries: where possible, please e-mail: [office@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk)

For pastoral matters, you can telephone the Rector: **Rev John Castle** on **01252 872168**

For enquiries relating to financial matters, funerals and the churchyard, please contact: **Sunita McIntosh** on **07851 559771**

## OUR PURPOSE AS A CHURCH

*Knowing* God for ourselves. *Growing* as individuals and as a church.  
*Showing* God's love in the world.

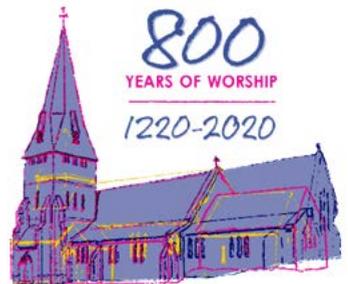
## *O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come*

How has Coronavirus affected you? Each one of us will have a different answer to that question and some of us may be tempted to answer this as a question about our physical health, our mental health, our work life but what about our spiritual life?, how has that been affected? We have been forced to change how we worship as a result of COVID-19, however has our relationship with God changed? While we have not been able to physically meet together, we are also given the opportunity to re-evaluate our relationship with God and to use this time to draw even closer to Him.

In whatever ways our lives have changed and will continue to change; God has not changed and will not change. Our God is the same God who was worshipped three hundred

years ago when Isaac Watts wrote the hymn 'O God our help in ages past', the same God who was worshipped 800 years ago when the first people worshipped at St. Michael and All Angels church. However God is not just the God of the past, He is also the God of the future, He will be with us in the years to come. He is the one we have worshipped in the past, he is the one we worship at the moment and he is the one we will continue to worship in the future. He is the same God who longs for us to draw close to Him.

**Emma Hodge, Churchwarden**



Please pray for all those on the prayer board

Compassion is one of the charities St Michael's supports and is all about the 3 C's of;

- Children – those children living in extreme poverty in the poorest parts of 25 of the poorest counties on the planet.
- Church – who can one trust locally to deliver help to these children? Compassion partners with some 8,000 churches in these countries. Churches who have a heart for children.
- Christ – doing this because we are repeatedly encouraged as Christians to take care of the poor and vulnerable.

Compassion works in two ways – one is to find sponsors in 13 countries (including the UK) for individual children who can exchange letters and follow a child's progress. The other is to fund and deliver what Compassion call 'interventions' that benefit the communities where the children live: examples are the supply of clean water, the provision of pre and post-natal care, nutrition, vaccinations plus critical support and training for mums, initiatives to tackle malnutrition or emergency relief after a disaster. It is these projects that the money St Michael's gives is used. But please also think of sponsoring a child.

The need is huge, it is estimated there are currently nearly 385 million children

living in extreme poverty. This number is expected to rise as a result of the economic consequences of Covid-19.

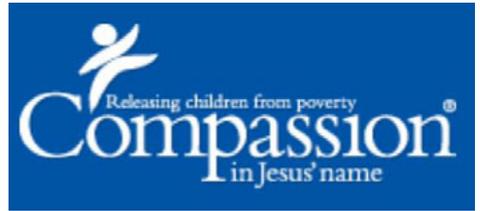
Poverty has face. It's a girl forced to marry because her family can't support her. A boy sent to work on the rubbish heap, rather than the classroom. From the womb to early adulthood, Compassion stands for children, giving those born into the toughest of circumstances the opportunities they deserve.

Much more can be found on the website; [www.compassionuk.org/about-us/](http://www.compassionuk.org/about-us/)

Compassion UK is based locally in Fleet and are often looking for volunteers (but not currently whilst the country is in lockdown).

Thank you for supporting Compassion. Having been to a number of the projects in Kenya, Tanzania, Togo and Peru, I can only say it is really making such a difference to lives of those children.

**Jon Toohey,**  
**Compassion Volunteer**



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### *Sandhurst Churches Flower Non-Festival*

The weekend of 23 May would have been our Flower Festival which was not able to happen in its usual form.

However, we have put together a document of photos, poetry, Bible readings and quotes on a floral theme, which can be downloaded from here: [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/news](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/news).

**Louise Ratcliffe,**  
**Sandhurst Churches Together**





Find us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst](http://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst)



Find us on Twitter @StMichaelShurst  
[www.twitter.com/#!/StMichaelShurst](http://www.twitter.com/#!/StMichaelShurst)

If you have any comments, events, news or updates for the website, please email David Hunt on [david.hunt@bcs.org.uk](mailto:david.hunt@bcs.org.uk)



## Contact us

Do you have something else you'd like to appear in the newsletter?

Please send emails to: [newsletter@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk). The deadline for entries in the July edition is **Monday 22 June**.

You can view or download a colour copy of the newsletter on the website. If you would like to receive that version via email, please contact David Hunt at: [david.hunt@bcs.org.uk](mailto:david.hunt@bcs.org.uk).



## ECO CHURCH



Although the church is still closed, thoughts have been turning to the big clean that will be needed when we can reopen. It is an ideal time to reassess our cleaning products and see what we currently use and where we can change to more environmentally friendly alternatives. Whilst looking at products it is important to take into consideration not just their eco-credentials, but availability, effectiveness, and how easy they are to use. There is no point in having a wonderfully green product if the poor people on the cleaning rota are having to spend more time scrubbing and polishing.

Currently under trial is a brass cleaner. Emma Hodge writes...

'We all like shiny brass and the standard cleaner for years has been *Brasso*. This comes in a metal tin (which is not recyclable) and the main ingredient in it is white spirit. White spirit is derived from petrol and needs to be used in well-ventilated areas, it is also toxic to aquatic wildlife as well as posing a risk to people if it is inhaled.

Natural cleaners, often include lemon juice which poses an additional risk of etching the brass as you clean it, and as lemons are not native to the UK, then you need to look at how far they have travelled.

An alternative product made by a company called *Delphis* has been tested with similar results to a similar amount of elbow grease in the same time and this is available from a national chain with local shops and an online business. It comes in a 100% recycled bottle and is plant-based, it is also made in Britain.'

We have asked members of our brass cleaning rota to give this polish a try and will keep you posted on the findings. If anyone has any suggestions or recommendations for eco-friendly cleaning products, please let me know. I am hoping that at some point we might be able to set up some sort of display on the subject where people could try some products out.

**Catherine Wilkins,  
 Churchwarden**



Last summer, Sarah and I took some very good friends to visit Sandham Memorial Chapel. As the weather was lovely we decided to make a day of it, go for a walk in the country and have a pub lunch before visiting this National trust property to see Stanley Spencer's wonderful First World War murals. Our walk from Beacon Hill took us past the church of All Saints at Old Burghclere. From 1160 until 1838 this was the Parish Church for Burghclere. After the centre of population moved north it was replaced by the Church of the Ascension in Burghclere. All Saints fell into disrepair and would probably have become a ruin if the Carnarvon family had not had it repaired in 1861. Nowadays, it only holds a regular service on Christmas Day but is available for weddings. As a consequence

there are no paths to any of the church doors and the churchyard has been allowed to become wild. On the day of our visit, the churchyard was full of wildflowers, gently waving in the summer breeze.

For many years I have been one of the team of Peter Hulbert's helpers who keep the St Michael's Churchyard looking neat and tidy throughout the growing season. This largely involves simply strimming or mowing an allocated area with the occasional weekend working party to undertake the heavier tasks of trimming hedges, lopping branches and the like. Our summer walk last year set me to thinking whether it would be possible to encourage an area of our churchyard to develop into a wildflower area. Coincidentally, others had also been toying with this idea, notably

*Yateley Green wildflower area*





Catherine Wilkins, so when I raised the possibility with Peter, I discovered fertile ground (though not too fertile as we shall see a little later).

There are two ways to develop a wildflower area in any plot. The first is the 'instant' approach which involves removing the current top layer of vegetation and then either sowing a wildflower seed mix or laying wildflower turf. This is the approach used nearby on Yateley Green where there is a small but spectacular wildflower meadow, now in its second year. The other method which takes longer allows nature to take control. Effectively, the grass is cut once in early spring and all the clippings removed so as to reduce nutrients getting back into the soil as the clippings rot down (wildflowers do not like fertile soil). The grass is then left to grow for the summer to create a mini jungle through which beetles and other small creatures can wander and where sparrows and goldfinches may come to

feed on the seeds. The grasses will set seed, wildflowers already in the soil will grab their opportunity to bloom, and the longer stems will create a sheltered microclimate. At the end of the season when seeds have set, the vegetation is again cut and left for a week or two for the seeds to fall off. The dead clippings are then removed again. Over time the soil condition will deteriorate making ideal conditions for wild flowers to proliferate. This is the approach we have decided to take in a patch towards the east ends of the churchyard, though we shall help it along by seeding some small areas as well.

Just before lockdown, pupils from Wellington College helped by clearing out all the leaf mulch in the area and I managed to strim the area and remove the clippings. It will be interesting to see what develops over the next couple of years but we hope for a nice mix of native species and an increase in pollinators and other wildlife.

**Brandon Ashton**

*A small sample of our starting material in the churchyard*



## FINANCIAL UPDATE FROM THE TREASURER

Hopefully you were able to read the 2019 financial review that I planned to present at the cancelled APCM? Thanks to your generosity and good work by the churchwardens (and others) in reducing costs, 2019 was a very good year financially with a modest surplus on the general fund – the first for many years.

That welcome trend continued through the first three months of 2020 and then we hit Covid-19. The health and financial challenges this presents for everyone are huge as we all know. One financial impact has been the immediate loss of income from hiring out the pastoral centre and fundraising activities – over 5k a month and a significant proportion of our income. The remaining income is from your continued generous giving for which we are very thankful.

Unfortunately, despite a rigorous review, costs cannot be decreased at the same rate and we will face a Covid-19 deficit this year that the general fund reserve will be insufficient to absorb. We are blessed to have substantial designated reserves that we have put aside mainly for mission activities but I anticipate some of those will have to be used to fund the Covid-19 deficit – the exact amount simply impossible to predict right now.

Given the Covid-19 crisis is placing financial demands on us all I do not feel it appropriate to launch an initiative to ask you for more giving but please know we are very thankful for the giving you currently do.

The PCC are doing their best to navigate through the health and spiritual challenges, as well as the financial ones, these times bring us.

**Jon Toohey, PCC Treasurer**

### *Audio visual extension*

Three years ago we installed a drop-down screen in the Nave from the arch between the Nave and the Chancel. We are now experiencing the bonus of having this; replacing the need occasionally to hold a service sheet and hymn book and having the text projected on the screen, and to using a Powerpoint in talks or playing videos about the charities we support.

However, many members of the congregation who sit in the North Aisle have found that there are not many seats from where the central screen can be seen, and even then it is restricted.

It was hoped that as soon as we were financially able, we would be able to extend the facility to the North Aisle. This has now been made possible by a very generous donation by Rob Brown which is in memory of Rebecca. And we are pleased



to let you know that the installation has been carried out over the last few weeks with the screen housed above the North aisle arch – see picture above. We are looking forward to being able to benefit from this as soon as we are able to worship in the church again.

**Rupert Cremer-Evans**

## ON THE CRAFTY SIDE



Last month it was angels, this month flower power, nutcracker soldiers and a celebration of fir cones – well there are plenty around!

First, thanks go to Steph Martin who is producing hand-painted sets of cards highlighting flowers. You can find more information, and pictures of these beautiful cards, together with details of how to order them at [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/social-events](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/social-events).

Next, thanks to Jenny Thorn, a rather loveable little Nutcracker Soldier who would make a great Christmas tree decoration or small present.

Finally, a selection of items using fir cones – Christmas trees, tree decorations in the form of elves, and fir cone mice (note: these do not eat cheese!). As before, give Ann a ring on 01252 871881 if you would like to know more about these crafty things. Lots more next month.

**Chris Harris, Social Committee**



### *The Pastoral Centre is still closed*

The building is now (as of Monday 1 June) being used by **Little Sandhurst Nursery Group**, and under Covid-19 regulations cannot be used by any other groups of persons at any time.



Anyone wishing to enter the building for good reasons **MUST** contact Karen Allen on 07730 340734 in advance to make specific arrangements.

June 2020

Dear Friends,

In her sermon on Pentecost Sunday, Rev Jane Kraft talked about change. As we emerge from the current Covid-19 crisis, she said, *'in many ways life will be different from the way it was before. They are calling it the new normal.'*

Change can inspire both fear and excitement, depending on how we view the change in question, and how confident we feel about adjusting to it.

The Covid lockdown was forced upon us, but we have seen individuals and companies responding in many creative ways: factories re-purposed to produce ventilators, home-made masks and other PPE, neighbours shopping for those who are self-isolating, and clergy learning new skills in broadcasting technology!

Other spin-offs include reduced pollution from traffic, industry and air travel, nature has had a brief respite from some harmful human activities, and people re-connecting with God and/or with church in new ways.

So what could the 'new normal' be like for us as individuals, as a local church, as a country, and globally? Jane observed in her sermon that in the Bible, *'whenever God's Spirit acts, things change'*. If we hoist our sails to the wind of the Holy Spirit, where might he drive us? What kind of 'new normal' would we like to create?

I would like to invite all of us to reflect on the past few months, and to listen to God as we pray about how life might be in the near, medium and more distant future. One area that desperately needs change is our stewardship of the environment. As a church we can do practical things like using more eco-friendly cleaning products, and keeping areas of the churchyard free for wildlife (see pages 3-5). But we also need to change some of our thinking, e.g. about walking or cycling instead of driving, switching to electric vehicles, considering the environmental impact of our lifestyle and travel.

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Our Sunday live-streamed worship services have reached people who wouldn't otherwise have attended church. How can we use technology in the future to reach those who still won't be able to get to our church building for whatever reason, or people who find it hard to attend a house group because of childcare or other issues?

The lockdown prompted us to set up regular pastoral contact with people by phone. It would be great if we can make pastoral care for all members of our church community part of the 'new normal' – and extend this to neighbours and the wider community in our town.

With change comes challenge. We may have to let go of some things in order to embrace others. Jon Toohey's article (*page 6*) explains how our income has been severely hit by the lockdown. St Paul, reflecting on his own experiences of shortage and of plenty told the Philippians that *'my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus'* (*Philippians 4:19*).

The PCC would love to hear from everyone reading this about your experiences of the Covid lockdown, and about your hopes and worries for the future. Please reflect, pray and discuss with others how God might be leading us to carry out his mission as we respond to changes in the world and seek to create a 'new normal' that will reflect the values of God's kingdom. Please send your comments to me, the churchwardens or another PCC member, or comment on my blog [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/rev-john-castles-blog](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/rev-john-castles-blog).

Let's face the future with hope and with confidence in our God whose love is unending and whose resources are infinite.

With every blessing,

**John**

**Rev John Castle**

[rector@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](mailto:rector@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk)

**Tel: 01252 872168**

## THE ADVENTURES OF ABRAHAM (sermon series)

Abraham is known in the Bible as the father of the nation of Israel. He is also described in the New Testament as the spiritual father of all who have faith in God and in Jesus Christ. His example of faith shown in obedience to God and trust in his promises is offered as an example of how we should put our trust in God and obey him. His importance is shown by the fact that the stories of incidents in his life take up nearly half of the book of Genesis.

But Abraham is far from perfect. He succumbs to fear which leads him to use deception and giving up his wife to save his skin, and he shows a lack of confidence and good judgement in family affairs.

The five incidents in our series (taken from the Lectionary, *Propers 5-9*) illustrate a man facing the challenges of life and the call of God. Abraham's story has many connections with our own.

Sunday	Bible reference	Title	Story
7 June	<i>Genesis 12:1-9</i>	The call of Abraham	God calls Abraham to go to the land of Canaan, and promises to bless him and all the earth through him.
14 June	<i>Gen 18:1-15; 21:1-7</i>	The promise of a child	God visits Abraham and promises that Sarah, who is barren, will have a child.
21 June	<i>Gen 21:8-21</i>	A troubled family	Conflict between Sarah and Hagar over their sons comes to a head.
28 June	<i>Gen 22:1-14</i>	The ultimate sacrifice	God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac, but an angel intervenes and a substitute animal is found.
5 July	<i>Gen 24:34-67</i> (abridged)	A wife for Isaac	Abraham sends his servant back to Haran to find a wife for Isaac. God guides him to Rebekah.

## HYMNS OF THE MONTH

Both these hymns are based on *Psalm 103*. They are very different, written almost 200 years apart and yet they are both based on Psalm 103 which has also inspired several others including ‘*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty the King of Creation*’ and ‘*Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones*’ as well as the two mentioned below.

***Praise My Soul the King of Heaven*** was sung at the wedding of HM Queen Elizabeth II’s wedding and was written by Henry Francis Lyte for his congregation at Lower Brixham in Devon. It was first published in 1834.

Rev Lyte, would often visit the fishermen of his congregation on their boats and would supply them with a bible and compiling songs and devotions for them to use at sea.

Henry Lyte was born in Scotland, studied in Ireland and lived in England (Cornwall, Devon, Hampshire) and died in Nice (at that time it wasn’t in France, it was in Sardinia). His other well known hymn is ‘*Abide with Me*’.

<https://youtu.be/mDe0ABw5IHs>

***10,000 Reasons*** was written by Matt Redman and was written with a Swedish friend Jonas Myrin, with whom he’s collaborated with on a number of other occasions, it was released in 2011. The opening words of this song are based on verse 1 of *Psalm 103* and the number 10,000 was drawn from the line in the song *Amazing Grace* ‘*When we’ve been there ten thousand years*’. This modern worship song 10,000 reasons won ‘Best Contemporary Christian Music Song’ at the 2013 Grammy Awards.

[https://youtu.be/DXDGE\\_IRI0E](https://youtu.be/DXDGE_IRI0E)

**Reflective Task:** Read *Psalm 103* and reflect which hymn best fits how you want to respond to the verses.



## CELEBRATING 800 YEARS OF WORSHIP

Date	Time	Event	Details
Sat 2 Aug	Afternoon	West Gallery Workshop	Provisional booking - dependant on restrictions in place.
Fri 25 Sept	7pm	Flower Festival Preview Evening	‘800 years of...’ Flower festival containing entries from several different groups within Sandhurst.
Sat 26 & Mon 28 Sept	All day	Flower Festival	On the Monday, the flower festival will be open only to groups/special needs.

We are still planning on the flower festival going ahead, and have developed a plan to accommodate the safe set up and running of the flower festival. Groups who are having displays in the flower festival will be contacted shortly.

**Emma Hodge, Churchwarden**

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## CHURCH SERVICES IN JUNE

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### Charity : Compassion

Services are currently live-streamed on [www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst](http://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst)  
This is our public Facebook page, and you can access it without having a Facebook account. You can also watch it after the event.

#### Sunday 7 June – Trinity Sunday

- 9:30am Parish Communion (Traditional)  
**Theme: The call of Abraham**  
Readings: *Genesis 12:1–9 (p13); Matthew 9:9–13 (p973)*
- 11:15am Family Service  
**Theme: Judging others**  
Readings: *Matthew 7:1-5 (p971)*
- 6:30pm Contemplative Evening Prayer

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#### Sunday 14 June – 1st after Trinity

- 9:30am Parish Communion (Informal)  
**Theme: The Promise of a Child**  
Readings: *Genesis 18:1–15 (p17), 21:1–7 (p21)*
- 11:15am Family Service  
**Theme: Surprise, surprise!**  
Readings: *Genesis 18:1-15 (p17), 21:1-3 (p21)*
- 6:30pm Ecumenical Service led by the Methodist Church

The Family Service is live-streamed on Zoom at <https://us04web.zoom.us>  
The meeting ID is: 172 324 765.  
If prompted for a password, type 371121.  
You shouldn't need to join Zoom to take part.

#### Sunday 21 June – 2nd after Trinity

- 9:30am Parish Communion (Reflective)  
**Theme: A Troubled Family**  
Readings: *Genesis 21:8–21 (p21); Matthew 10:24–39 (p975)*
- 11:15am Family Service  
**Theme: Where is your treasure?**  
Readings: *Matthew 7:19-21, (p972) 13:44-46 (p980)*

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#### Sunday 28 June – 3rd after Trinity

- 9:30am Parish Communion (Community)  
**Theme: The Ultimate Sacrifice**  
Readings: *Genesis 22:1–14 (p22); Matthew 10:40–42 (p976)*
- 11:15am Family Service  
**Theme: The Two Builders**  
Readings: *Matthew 7:24-29 (p972)*
- 6:30pm Choral Evensong  
**Theme: Giving: a healthy attitude**  
Readings: *Deuteronomy 15:1-11 (p194), Matthew 6:2-4,19-21 (p970)*

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Sandhurst Youth have 3 online meetings, using Zoom:



**Wednesday's, 4pm** : a fun social for any young people connected with St Michael's

**Thursday's, 4pm** : an open youth chat for any young people

**Sunday's, 4pm** : a chat with a more spiritual focus

If you know someone who wants to be on the chats then please let me, or Liz Percival, know. We appreciate your support in prayer and chat.

Mike Gower, Youth Worker <http://sandhurstyouth.org.uk>



**Daily Hope** offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line, which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**, has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.