

St Michael's News February 2013

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Render to Caesar?

It used to be considered impolite to talk about religion or politics – at least, if you want to avoid disagreement between people. Putting the two together can be an explosive mix. Jesus, of course, lived at a time when ordinary people were not encouraged to have an opinion about politics. John the Baptist lost his head for criticising a ruler. In today's democracy, however, we are supposed to be allowed freedom to express our opinion about both religion and politics, and our Church even has reserved seats in Parliament.

The Church has been called the conscience of the nation. But increasingly it seems politicians would prefer religion to be relegated to the private sphere. Parliament will decide what's good for people, and the Church can concentrate on looking after souls (if they exist).

The Bible, however, reminds us that 'the Earth is the Lord's and everything in it', and that God cares about individuals, families and society. Being like 'salt and light' therefore requires us to get involved in issues that affect people – including poverty, the protection of the environment and marriage. We are called to pray, to speak and to act – whether or not it makes us popular.

John Castle



Please pray for those on the prayer board and for those who died recently: Betty Hutchins and Eric Lane.

Church Activities

February Coffee Rota Reminder

3rd February	Joy Alexander	Marion Blackmore
10th February	Jenny Piggin	Ruth Eve
17th February	Ann Clough	Peter Clough
24th February	Ann Weston	Jennie Hulbert

Prayer Meetings. Prayers for Pastoral Care are on the second Wednesday each month (13th February), 7.30–8.15 pm in church.

House Groups meet each week at these homes:

Monday	tbc	1 Spring Woods (Linda Lemmon & Christana Clayton)
Monday	8.00pm	11 Sylvan Ridge (Rupert & Sheridan)
Tuesday	10.15 am	6 Crowthorne Rd (Doris Saunders)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	28 Wiltshire Avenue, Crowthorne (Elizabeth Ritchie)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	2 School Hill (John & Sue Campbell)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	34 Albion Road (Linda Lemmon)
Tuesday	8.00 pm	25 Templar Close (John & Stephanie Martin)

If anyone would like to join a group, please speak to John White (01344 774349) for more details.

Crèche. A crèche facility is now available for under threes in the Pastoral Centre lounge area. Please arrive prior to the 9.30 am service to settle your children, signing them in on arrival. Unless you have arranged otherwise, please collect your children after the service at coffee time. Ofsted registered child-minders will be caring for your children. If you are interested in helping, please contact Angela on 07932 333619 for details. (CRB checks will be required.) During school holidays, please check with Lesley in the Pastoral Centre that the crèche will be running.

Kidz Church is part of the 9.30 Parish Communion Service every Sunday for children aged 3–10. Please register your children at 9.20 am in the Pastoral Centre. The children join the adults towards the end of the church service. Parents interested in their children receiving Holy Communion are asked to speak to Rev. John Castle.

REACH, for children in year 6 and above, runs parallel to the Parish Communion service, at 9:30–10:45 am, and starts in the upper room in the Pastoral Centre.

What does it mean to be a member of St Michael's?

Membership and the Electoral Roll

This year we are required, as we are every six years, to create a new church membership roll, known as the 'Electoral Roll'. Membership enables you, among other things, to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and, if you wish, to stand for membership of the Parochial Church Council, as a Deanery Synod Representative or as Churchwarden. To join or to continue as a member, you will need to fill in a 2013 application form.

As part of 'Our Journey' we thought that this year, rather than just dishing out forms, we should take a little time to consider what being a member of a church means. We are therefore inviting everyone who wishes to be, or continue to be, an official member of St Michael's to attend an *Exploring Membership* meeting. These will be held on different dates and times, with childcare provided at some, and will be partly a social occasion and partly an exchange of information and a chance to ask questions about the running of the church. We will share our vision for our church, and we would also like to receive suggestions and comments. Forms for joining the new electoral roll will be available at the meetings and must be returned by 6th April.

We would love it if you would make every effort to get along to one of the following *Exploring Membership* meetings. Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church, or e-mail [emma L Hodge@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:emma.L.Hodge@yahoo.co.uk). The meetings will be on:

Sunday 3rd March, starting at 12.00 noon
Saturday 9th March, at 3:30 pm
Tuesday 12th March, at 8.00 pm
Wednesday 13th March, starting at 8.00 pm
Friday 15th March, at 8.00 pm.

At the two weekend meetings there will be children's activities.

If you have any questions about the electoral roll or the preparation of the new roll, please don't hesitate to contact the Electoral Roll Officer, Rebecca Brown (01344 775185); the Rector or one of the Church Wardens. The details about who can be on the electoral roll is available from the Parish Office or in the church porch.

Retrak expands into Tanzania

With Maggie Crewes' appointment as director of Retrak's work in the whole of East Africa, Retrak has expanded its work into Tanzania in partnership with Mkombozi (<http://www.mkombozi.org/>), a relief agency whose mission is to 'help vulnerable children and youth to grow in mind and spirit and to build a more caring society'.



Mkombozi's investigations have shown that children living on the street are not just economic migrants seeking an easier life, but are in many cases refugees from violence at home. Mkombozi has found a relationship between migration to the streets and truancy. They say that the Tanzanian education system is 'under performing' and is putting children from poor homes at a disadvantage.

Children make up around 50 per cent of Tanzania's population. (Only 17.6 per cent of the UK population is under the age of 15.) Tanzania's laws and institutions, however, don't reflect the high proportion of children in the population and children are poorly protected.

But since the passing of the Law of the Child in 2009 things have improved: children now have legal rights and are protected from, among other things, torture! However, corporal punishment can still be inflicted and girls can be married at age 15. Retrak will work with Mkombozi on a campaign against child abuse. Retrak believes that this partnership will be a 'great opportunity to continue the campaign to offer many more children an alternative to life on the streets'.

Toddler Time is on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 9.30-11.00 am, except during school holidays.

Church groups

Please book all planned events through the office (01252-873030) to ensure there are no double bookings. The office takes private bookings most weekends, so it is essential that dates are checked and then entered into the office diary. A booking form should also be completed giving times required. Please do not ask clergy to take on this responsibility.

Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature

Described as a 'literary festival with a theological slant', this, the second of such festivals, is taking over the whole of Bloxham School (Oxfordshire OX154PE) on the weekend of 15-17 February – the hall, chapel, lecture theatre

and the catering facilities will all be used. The festival's theme is 'Devices and Desires' and promises to explore evil, fact and fiction and Ethics in the City. Other high points are: famous authors, gripping storytelling and home-made afternoon teas. The cost is £10 a head (buy five tickets and get one free). Oh, and Alan Wilson be there. Telephone: 0845 017 6965 and see the [website](http://www.bloxhamfaithandliterature.co.uk/) (<http://www.bloxhamfaithandliterature.co.uk/>).

Family Service

Help is always required for the family service with regards to refreshments, sides persons and technicians. If you would like to volunteer, please email me at kirsty@tcb-arrow.co.uk. Thank you, Kirsty Dunlop

When times are hard

For many people these are hard times financially – many are facing uncertain futures, with redundancy or cuts in income compounding the pressures all of us face from rising prices on many fronts.

While most of us find ways of managing, a personal crisis (for example, illness, redundancy, bereavement, homelessness, etc.) can leave an individual or a family in a situation of severe financial crisis, especially while waiting for medium or long-term solutions to be put in place.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to care of those in need. The PCC has a hardship fund to assist those in such a financial crisis. The fund is intended to help those living within the parish of Sandhurst (who need not be churchgoers) or those who have a current active connection with St Michael's

Church, and is for 'emergency help' rather than for on-going support.

People are often reluctant to seek help through pride or fear that others will know their situation. But if you, or someone you know, are facing really hard times, do please speak to the clergy or the church wardens, who will be pleased to talk through the possibility of financial help, as well as with prayer and other practical help. All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Are you married?

'Explore' – an educational charity – is looking for married couples who would be willing to be interviewed by a group of students (15+) in schools, enabling young people to get a better idea of what it is really



"We don't know what you're doing in here, but we've been waiting five minutes to talk to you about the broken hand dryer in the ladies' room."

like to be married. You don't need to have a particular sort of marriage, just an openness to respond to the respectful curiosity of young people. Events take place during the school day and involve either a morning or an afternoon in a school a little distance away (Wokingham or Reading, for example). If you value married life and like young people, then this is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference. For more information contact Liz Percival on 01344 779658.

Children's Society

In the run up to Christmas, carol singing, Christingle services, etc. made £1102.34 for the Children's Society. The breakdown is as shown:

Sandhurst pubs	£254.71
Carol singing	£263.63
Day Centre	£24.87
Christingles	£369.37
Sandhurst Lodge	£82.35
Nursery carol service	£107.41
Total	£1102.34

We also received a CAF voucher for £150. Thank you to all who took part.

Prayer and Justice

The Next Generation Conference is an opportunity to consider the issue of justice in our world and to pray for God's kingdom to come on earth. This is an annual all-age gathering to seek God's face in worship and prayer; to be taught the word of God and to listen to His voice as we reflect upon it; and to



The mysteries of the adult world – the American Evening on 26th January.

Lent Appeal 2013

For our lent appeal, we are supporting the work of St George's Church in Baghdad. You will remember in October Canon Andrew White gave the first of our winter talks. I, for one, found it jaw-dropping. Canon Andrew has been described as a combination of a quote-a-day preacher, Martin Luther, Terry Waite, and a Vicar for all Seasons, all rolled onto one. Andrew works tirelessly for Muslim-Christian reconciliation and is currently President of the [Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East](http://frme.org/) (<http://frme.org/>).



He is also the Anglican Chaplain to Iraq, which in reality, he says, is being the vicar of [St George's Church in Baghdad](#). 'Here the Church includes far more than just church. Within our compound we have one of the largest clinics in Iraq, with four doctors, two dental surgeries, haematology and stem cell units, pharmacy, laboratory and X-ray unit. So this acts as a comprehensive health care centre and all treatment is free.'

St Michael's is delighted to have the opportunity of assisting in this work and encourages all to give generously to the cause. Envelopes for the purpose will be available at the back of the church during Lent.

Jim Somerville

highlight works of justice and so challenge ourselves to live in a way that is just. Date and time: February 22nd, 4.00 pm – February 23rd, 7.00 pm. Place: St Aldates Church, Oxford. Cost: £30 (£15 concessions). <http://www.asknetwork.org.uk>

Volunteer Wanted – Data Entry

We have an urgent need for a volunteer who is comfortable with entering information on to a computer database. The hours are flexible, to suit you. We are looking for someone methodical and with some familiarity in entering data. We will show you how to use the package concerned. Please contact Rev. John Castle, the Parish Office or one of the churchwardens if you think you might be able to help. Rector@stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk, 01252 872168.

The Real Easter Egg

Out of the 80 million chocolate Easter eggs sold each year in the UK, the Real Easter Egg is the only Fairtrade chocolate egg and the only one to explain the meaning of Easter. It's a fun and unique way to share the Easter story.

This year there is a free activity pack in the box, which includes the Easter story, an activity poster, a free iTunes download and a sticker set. The resurrection text from Mark's gospel can also be found inside the lid, along with the greeting 'Happy Easter!'. Each Real Easter Egg contains a 125g milk chocolate egg and includes the free activity pack in the box and a 15 pence donation to Traidcraft Exchange per egg sold. There will be some eggs on the Traidcraft stall for sale, but if you want to be certain of yours please let the stall know. Jill White

Bird in Hand. The next Sunday lunch will be on 17th February at 12.30pm at the Bird in Hand in Little Sandhurst. For those of you who haven't been before, it is a great opportunity to get to know others from church over a scrumptious roast lunch.

The restaurant offers a large plate of roast dinner for £8.95 or, if you can manage it, there is a three-course option for £12.95 – you needn't decide which until the day, but I need to know numbers to book your place by Sunday 10th February, please. Email me at king4kings@aol.com or ring me on 01344 750285. Thanks. Jan King

Unwanted Christmas Presents.

If you have any Christmas presents that you do not need we would love to have them for the quiz raffle. The quiz is being held on March 2nd. This is a big fundraiser for the church. Please give your donations to John or Jill, or leave them in the office. Thank you, Jill White

Are you good at designing posters and publicity?

Are you proactive? Would you like to help spread the messages of Easter and Christmas? If so, read on. We would like someone to promote our services at Easter and Christmas around Sandhurst. For more information please speak to a churchwarden (Dave or Emma) or to John Castle.



Annual Quiz March 2nd

In previous years the Fairtrade Committee have produced an excellent supper for our quiz. However, the committee has folded. as we felt that we had introduced Fairtrade to enough people. So we need *you* to help us to provide supper for the quiz. Please can you help? Please speak to John White.

The Social Committee. As some of you may know, Jill has to have further treatment and so we may not be around so much to take a very active role in the Social Committee. We would like someone or even two people to help out for six months, until we are over this. Please speak to Jan King or myself about what is involved. We meet every six–eight weeks. John White



Bishop Andrew gave the January winter talk, entitled 'Fully alive - in the image of God'.

The social committee consists of John Martin, David Hunt, Jan King and Jill and John White. We attend either the 8.00 am or the 9.30 am service and therefore the main social events tend to be organised around them. We need to cater for the younger age group, those who attend the family service, for example, and would welcome new younger members on to our team. We meet six or seven times a year, starting at 8.00 pm and invariably home by 10.00 pm. If you would like to join us please speak to one of the committee.

Our Winter Talks Series

We still have some interesting people to introduce. The series is based on Building up our Christian Faith.

Tuesday 19th February 2013. Rev. Keith Lowder (Methodist Minister): 'New Testament - is it a reliable witness?'

Tuesday 19th March 2013. Canon David Hodgson, Area Dean: 'Living the Gospel of peace'

Tuesday 16th April 2013. Rev. John Castle: 'Making sense of the Bible in the Modern World'

100 CLUB DRAW

1st Prize: Mrs Janet Pilbeam No 37 £20

2nd Prize: Mrs Rebecca Brown No 57 £10

3rd Prize: Mr Graham Steele No 75 £5

£34 has been passed to church funds. Rosemary Dobson

Blue Envelopes

Please use the gift-aid envelopes for even small amounts of cash if you are a taxpayer and have paid enough tax to do so. This is free money from the government and worth doing because it all adds up!

Church Calendar

Date & Time	Venue	Event	Contact
Fri 1 Feb 8.00 pm	Upper Room Pastoral Centre	Churchyard workers thank-you party	John Martin
Sun 17 Feb 12.30 pm	Bird In Hand	Parish Lunch	Jan King
Tue 19 Feb 8.00pm	Church	4th Winter Talk by Keith Lowder	Church Office
Sat 2 March 7.00 for 7.30 pm start	Pastoral Centre	Quiz Night	John and Jill White*
Sun 3rd March	Church	'Supermarket' Quiz launched.	Jan King
Sun 17th March 8.45-9.30 am 10.30-11.15 am	Pastoral Centre	Home produce stall	Jan King*

If you could help with a social event (* = helpers needed) or would like to make a suggestion, please contact John White (01344 774349) or Jan King (01344 750285 or king4kings@aol.com)

Used Postage Stamps

Please keep collecting used stamps as this is a way we can easily help several charities. We currently support the British Kidney Patients' Association, the Star and Garter Homes, Research into Cot Death and The Leprosy Mission.

Please cut round your stamps carefully to cut down on unnecessary weight, so we can post them more easily and cheaply. See the stamp jar label for examples. Many thanks, Doris Saunders and Jenny Thorn

Church Flowers. Please ring Jennie 01344 775881 for information if you wish to help arrange the church flowers. Thank you.

Church Fundraising. If you would like to organise a fundraising event for the church or make a suggestion, please contact John White (01344 774349) or Jan King (01344 750285).

Pastoral Centre

The Pastoral Centre facilities can be hired at reasonable cost, special rates are available for church members. Please ring the office on 01252 873030.

Food Bank. Thank you for the food donations so far. Please keep them coming. Collection boxes are located in the church and in the Pastoral Centre.

The Triangle Café and Christian Bookshop

The Triangle Café and Christian Bookshop are at 64 Kingsmead, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU147SL (01252 519172, www.thetriangle.org.uk).

Newsletter

Please email William Lee at stmichaelschurch@hotmail.co.uk or leave written requests with the Pastoral Centre office. Deadline for March edition: 18th February 2013.

To help the environment and save paper, you can now receive future editions of this newsletter by email? These are in colour and are normally sent out a few days before the paper copy is available. To opt into this scheme, please contact PCC member David Hunt (david.hunt@bcs.org.uk).

Regular Activities at the Pastoral Centre

Little Sandhurst Nursery Daily! Phone Marian for details 07732-409095.

Line Dancing Every Monday evening in the hall from 7.00 pm. £5 includes raffle. Just come along and have fun. Tea and coffee available or bring your own drinks. Ring Sue or Arron on 01344 485097 for information.

Rainbows meet on Tuesdays: 5.00–6.00 pm (5–7 year olds).

3rd Guides meet on Tuesdays: 6.30–8.30 pm (10–14 year olds).

4th Guides and Rangers meet on Fridays: 7.00–9.00 pm

Pilates takes place in the large upper room, most days and evenings. For more information ring Carl on 01344 762712.

Zumbatomic after-school classes, 4.00 pm on Thursdays – the crazy-cool dance fitness workout for kids aged 4–12 yrs. Packed with choreographed routines to music like hip-hip, reggaeton and cumbia, Zumbatomic classes increase focus and self-confidence, boost metabolism and improve coordination. For more information contact Beth on 07976 231896 or go to www.zumbawithbeth.co.uk.

Karate Club for Children. Friday's 5.45–6.45 pm. Phone Neil on 07816 163845.

February Church Services

Sunday 3rd February – Topic: The Presentation of Christ

Malachi 3:1–5; (p961); Hebrews 2:14–18 (p1202); Luke 2:22–40 (p1028)

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.30 am Parish Communion
- 11.15 am Family Service
- 6.30 pm Contemplative Evening Prayer

Sunday 10th February – Topic: The Calling of the Disciples

Isaiah 6:1–8 (p690); 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 (p1155); Luke 5:1–8 (p1032)

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.30 am Parish Communion
- 11.30 am Baptism of Leah Doyle, Leon Sayers and Ella & Mason Roberts
- 6.30 pm Ecumenical Service: St George's, Owlsmoor

Wednesday 13th February – Ash Wednesday – Topic: True Fasting

Isaiah 58:1–12; (p744); Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21 (p970)

- 8.00 pm Holy Communion and imposition of ashes

Sunday 17th February – 1st in Lent – Topic: The Temptation of Jesus

Deuteronomy 26:1–11 (p203); Romans 10:8b–13 (p1137); Luke 4:1–13 (p1030)

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.30 am Parish Communion
- 11.15 am Family Service and Baptism of Katie Butler
- 6.30 pm No service

Sunday 24th February – 2nd in Lent – Topic: Jesus prophecies over Jerusalem

Genesis 15:1–12, (p15) 17–18 (p16); Philippians 3:17–4:1 (p1180); Luke 13:31–35 (p 1047)

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.30 am Parish Communion
- 11.30 am Baptism of Rosa Batty and Oliver McDonagh
- 6.30 pm Sung Evensong



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