

NEWSLETTER

from the Church of St. Michael's Bray

August 2026



The Parish Church of Bray with Braywood, Holyport &
Moneyrow Green, Fifield, Touchen End and Oakley
Green

website: www.braystmichael.co.uk



Dear Friends,

Summer holidays are well underway, although with heatwave after heatwave here in the UK there is hardly any need to travel for better weather!

On Sunday 26th of July it was our pleasure to have Bishop Mary, Bishop of Reading, come to the 10.00 am Eucharist to preach, preside and bless our new lighting system.



The project is now complete, and the total cost in round figures is £117,000. This has been met by withdrawals from long-standing reserves, topped up by an appeal successfully launched by “Parky in Words and Music”, and grants received from the Friends of St Michael’s and from the Duke of Edinburgh’s Trust Fund.

You may be aware that the Listed Places of Worship scheme, under which we hoped to reclaim VAT has closed, which means that the project has cost £20,000 more than anticipated. The effect of this on work that may be required in future is obviously substantial, and if you have not already given towards the lighting, perhaps you would like to consider doing so now

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Please pay by BACS to Barclays Bank, sort code 203883, account no. 80775754, account name St Michael's Bray with Braywood Parochial Church Council, and show "Lighting" as the payment reference.

Alternatively, cheques can be brought to church, made payable to St Michael's Bray PCC, with "Lighting" marked on the envelope.

Donations of any size are welcome and will be gratefully acknowledged.

The new system has cut our energy usage drastically and has brought a warmer and much more flexible lighting with options that we can tailor to the needs of particular types of service; adding atmosphere and welcome to our worship.

Thank you to all who have made this project possible.

With best regards

Canon Ainsley

On the next page please read a summary of Bishop Mary's sermon on the 26th July dedicating the new lighting system



Kingdom People

When Jesus asked his disciples if they understood his parables, they answered with a confident “Yes” (Matthew 13.51). Yet, given Jesus’ kaleidoscope of images—seed, yeast, treasure, net—their response was likely as wobbly as our own. The concept of the kingdom of heaven can feel intriguing yet elusive.

To draw closer to a true “yes,” we must avoid dissecting these parables like specimens under a microscope. Parables are not riddles to analyse intellectually; they are invitations to wonder, play, and engage.

Rather than over-analysing, consider what these parables reveal about the kingdom of God:

- **A Tiny Seed & Yeast (Matt. 13.31–33):** The kingdom grows mysteriously, yet human partnership matters. A tiny act of faith—like a mustard seed or a pinch of yeast—can transform an entire community.
- **Hidden Treasure (Matt. 13.44–45):** It is priceless, offering a kingdom of love, peace, and justice far beyond anything earthly leaders can provide.
- **A Net Cast Wide:** Its scope is vast enough to welcome everyone, yet guided by ultimate discernment where cruelty, injustice, and evil have no place.

What does this kingdom ask of us?

We are not merely passive recipients sitting at the banquet table. We are also called to prepare the feast—to plant seeds, bake bread, and cast nets. As St. David famously advised: *“Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things.”* A warm welcome to a stranger or food for the hungry may seem small, but God multiplies these minor acts into abundance.

Finally, we are pioneers and settlers of this kingdom, building communities grounded in a new way of life (Matt. 6.33).

You are invited into the kingdom, tasked to work for it, and sent to settle it. Be encouraged: even your smallest acts carry great weight, and in the fully realized kingdom, fear and pain give way to enduring Love.

(Summarised with the help of Gemini AI)

CHURCH TEAS

So far this Summer church teas on Sunday afternoons have taken place to support The Children's Society, Breast Cancer Now, The Friends of St Michael's Alexandra Devine and Church Funds.

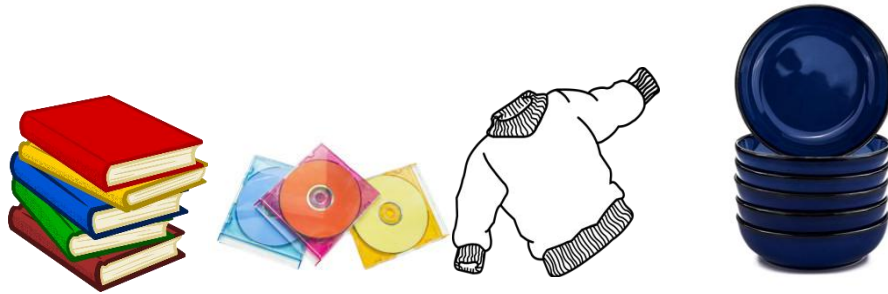
We have three more to go for this season BPAN, the Bell ringers are also supporting Alexander Devine this year and one more for church funds.



Forthcoming events include Hymns with Pymm's - back by popular demand. Hymn nominations will be taken soon. The craft fair will be in November.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon. Thank you for your support.

BRAY FETE – SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER



Thinking of downsizing and therefore in need of a clear out? Or just clearing things you now consider clutter?

S Michael's is having a Vintage Stall at the Bray Fete on Sunday 6th September, so would welcome your pre-loved items!

We would also welcome anything that is in a good saleable condition. This includes clothing, accessories, books, CDs, Vinyl, DVDs, Toys etc. Please only donate good quality items that you yourself would buy. If you are unsure, please ask! Thank you!

For further information contact pamwoodruff@btinternet.com or katrinbrunning@gmail.com

If you could spare an hour or two to help on the stall please contact either Pam or Katrin. We also need volunteers to set up and pack up.

Any help will be very much appreciated! Thank you!

CONTACT LIST

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