



MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE  
PARISH CHURCH OF  
St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, RUNCORN.  
[www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk](http://www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk)

ISSUE 136

SEPTEMBER 2020

***“You couldn’t make it up!”***

Whenever I’m confronted by a seemingly nonsensical situation or a totally unexpected sequence of events, I sometimes get to point of either total exasperation or utter amazement and say... ***“You couldn’t make it up!”***

Back in January when it was announced I’d be moving to St Michael’s, I was given all sorts of advice from other clergy about how to make a ‘good impression’ when I arrived:

*“Meet people after the services and visit them as soon as possible”*

*“Hold an informal PCC meeting to get to know all the members”*

*“Have an ‘Open House’ at the vicarage, let people drop in for a chat and a look around”*

But who could’ve predicted that by June, we’d be in the middle of a pandemic with no services in church, no visiting or meeting socially because of the lockdown and no possibility of moving into the vicarage because it was still a building site.

As I say – ***“you couldn’t make it up!”***



But just look what we’ve achieved in the 12 weeks since my virtual institution by Zoom. We’ve had weekly online services, the church has re-opened for private prayer, we’ve resumed our full pattern of services (albeit with masks and without singing), we’ve been able come together for gathered worship; to reconnect with each other in fellowship as friends and as part of the family of God at St Michael’s and last but not least... I’ve been able to move into the vicarage.

Despite all the frustrating restrictions, delays and setbacks, God has been at work in our church, in our community and in each of us. Through the strong bond of fellowship we share in Christ, through your prayers and your generosity, we’ve done so much. And I’m truly grateful to everyone for your warm welcome, your support, your encouragement and most importantly, your prayers.

But instead of saying ***“you couldn’t make it up!”***, Paul puts it far more eloquently when he writes...

***Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.***

***Ephesians 3.20-21***

So reflecting on this passage, I want to leave you with a little challenge: If God has worked within us during the amazing achievements of the *last* 12 weeks – just imagine what God can do within us over the *next* 12 weeks.

*with every blessing, Karen*

**In GROWING TOGETHER:**

**CHURCH SERVICES FOR SEPTMEBER & OCTOBER  
PUZZLE PAGE**

**HUMOUR**

**CELEBRATIONS**

# SEPTEMBER CHURCH SERVICES

## Wednesday 2nd September

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 6th September (13th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Morning Celebration



## Wednesday 9th September

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 13th September (14th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 16th September

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 20th September (15th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion



## Wednesday 23rd September

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 27th September (Patronal Service)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 30th September

10.00am Holy Communion

**Please note any of these services may be cancelled at the last moment due to Coronavirus**



*September sees St Michael and All Angels Day. Here are a few lines from an ancient Celtic poem about the archangel...*

## Saint Michael

Saint Michael, angel of the sea,  
Lord of the horses he,  
Saint Michael, of the angels king,  
Of war, of shepherding;  
On steed he flies across the skies;  
The first-fruits of the harvest corn,  
The first-fruits of the flock-lambs born,  
Are his, he meets the soul forlorn.

The saints and angels watch o'head,  
Their wings and prayers o'erspread:  
The righteous ones in heaven wait,  
St Peter at the gate;  
In might arrayed they shield and aid;  
Be with us e'er, archangel powers,  
Be with us, angels, life's long hours.

## ANOTHER DAY

Another day beginning, Lord,  
Who knows what it will bring?  
Please keep me strong and cheerful, Lord,  
And let my spirit sing.  
So many are in need of love,  
In need of comfort, too.  
Please let me show them hope and joy,  
A little kindness, too.  
Another day ahead of me,  
With battles I must win.  
Lord, stay beside me all the way,  
And give me strength within.

*Iris Hesselden*

## BIBLE READINGS FOR

### SEPTEMBER

#### 6th September

Romans 13: 8-14  
Matthew 18: 15-20

#### 13th September

Romans 14: 1-12  
Matthew 18: 21-35

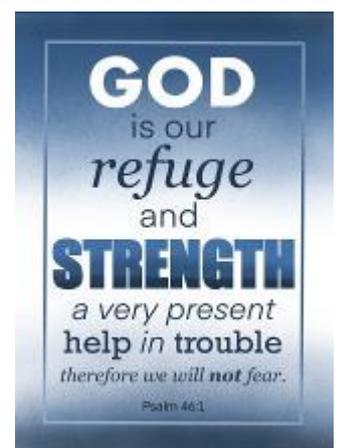


#### 20th September

Philippians 1: 21-30:  
Matthew 20: 1-16

#### 27th September

Revelation 12: 7-12  
John 1: [43-46] 47-51



# CHURCH SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

## Sunday 4th October (17th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Morning Celebration

## Wednesday 7th October

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 11th October (18th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 14th October

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 18th October (19th Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 21st October

10.00am Holy Communion

## Sunday 18th October (Last Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion  
10.00am Holy Communion

## Wednesday 28th October

10.00am Holy Communion

**Please note any of these services may be cancelled at the last moment due to Coronavirus**

## 29<sup>th</sup> Sept Michael and All Angels

Michael is an archangel, whose name means ‘who is like unto God?’ He makes various appearances throughout the Bible, from the book of Daniel to the Book of Revelation. In Daniel, he is ‘one of the princes’ of the heavenly host, and the special guardian of Israel. In Revelation, he is the principal fighter of the heavenly battle against the devil. From early times, Michael’s cult was strong in the British Isles. Churches at Malmesbury (Wiltshire), Clive (Gloucestershire) and Stanmer (East Sussex) were dedicated to him. Bede mentions him. St Michael’s Mount in Cornwall was believed to commemorate a vision there in the 8th century. By the end of the Middle Ages, Michael had 686 English churches dedicated to him. In art Michael is often depicted as slaying the dragon, as in the 14th century East Anglican Psalters, or in Epstein’s famous sculpture at Coventry cathedral. Or he is found (in medieval art) as weighing souls, as at Chaldon (Surrey), Swalcliffe (Oxon.), Eaton Bishop (Hereford and Worcester), and Martham in Suffolk. Michael’s most famous shrine in western Europe is Mont-Saint-Michel, where a Benedictine abbey was founded in the 10th century. The ‘All Angels’ bit of this feast-day was added in 1969 when Gabriel and Raphael were included in with Michael.



## CONGRATULATIONS

to

**David & Muriel Walker**  
are celebrating their  
**Golden Wedding Anniversary**  
is on **September 24th**

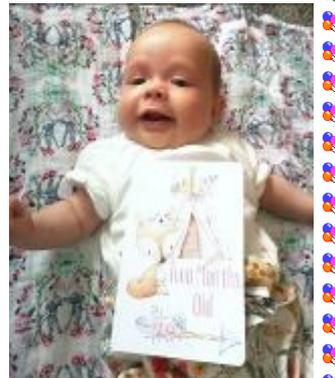
## CONGRATULATIONS

to

**Chris & Ruth Lawton**  
whose **Wedding Anniversary**  
was on **August 14th**  
to  
**Roy & Ada Barlow**  
whose **Wedding Anniversary**  
is on **September 20th**

## CONGRATULATIONS

Bob & Helen Browne are pleased to announce the birth of their new granddaughter, Luna Rose Browne, born on **30th May**, weighing **6 lbs 3 oz**. Peter & Sarah are proud parents. Luna is thriving and bringing lots of joy to all who meet her.



## Writing home

A boy was sent by his parents to a school a long distance from home. He had been strictly enjoined to write home regularly and tell them all about himself and his new life. At the end of the first week, his first text arrived: “There are 370 boys here. I wish there were 369.”

Recently Bryn Knott's wife Barbara died, and she used to write a blog for the church magazine. So I thought I would use this one from June 2013 in her memory. I hope you like it.

### **Barbara's June Blog**

It is May 10<sup>th</sup> & I am sitting up in bed wrapped in a blanket with my winter pj's on & woolly socks! No, I'm not feeling poorly, it's just that after two lovely days of summer last week, winter's back! I apologise for always going on about the weather but I am sure that fellow joint sufferers will understand how painful it is to have a different weather season every week. That's it, rant over!!

This month I have been reading a book of morality tales which have truly inspired me & given me a lot of food for thought so I would like to share one with you this month & relieve you from my weird sense of humour. I hope you enjoy it.

#### **The story of a woodcutter:**

Once upon a time a very strong woodcutter applied for a job in a timber yard & was successful. The pay was really good & so were the work conditions. For those reasons, the woodcutter was determined to do his best. His boss gave him an axe & showed him the area where he was to work. The first day, the woodcutter chopped up 18 trees. "Congratulations," the boss said. "Carry on that way!" Very motivated by his words, the woodcutter tried harder the next day, but he could only cut down 15 trees. The third day he tried even harder, but he could only cut down 10 trees. Day after day he was cutting fewer & fewer trees. The woodcutter thought he must be losing his strength. He went to the boss & apologized, saying that he could not understand what was going on. His boss asked, "When was the last time you sharpened your axe?" The woodcutter replied, "Sharpen? I had no time to sharpen my axe. I have been very busy trying to cut trees".

#### **Reflection:**

Our lives are like that. We sometimes get so busy that we don't take time to sharpen the "axe". In today's world, it seems that everyone is busier than ever, but less happy than ever. Why is that? Could it be that we have forgotten how to stay "sharp"? There's nothing wrong with activity & hard work. However, we should not get so busy that we neglect the truly important things in life, like our personal life, taking time to get closer to our Creator, giving more time to our family, taking time to read etc.

We all need time to relax, to think & meditate, to learn & grow whatever our age. If we don't take the time to sharpen the "axe", we will become dull & lose our effectiveness.

Wouldn't the world be a happier place if we could all slow down?

Until next month,  
Keep calm & relax.  
Barbara x

### **Psalm 23 - a psalm for the pandemic**

There are few psalms as personal and real as Psalm 23. It records David's experience of God as his Shepherd going through dark times. In the midst of the effects of a global pandemic, this psalm speaks to the fears that can overwhelm us.

**He Knows Me:** *'The Lord is my shepherd...'* Just as a good shepherd knows every sheep in his flock, so God know each one of us intimately.

**He Provides for Me:** *'He makes me lie down in green pastures...'* Just as the shepherd knows the needs of his sheep, so God will provide what we need in our lives and circumstances.

**He Guides Me:** *'He guides me along the right paths...'* Just as the shepherd leads the sheep to the best pastures, so God provides the best for us, as we listen and follow Him.

**He Protects Me:** *'Even though I walk through the darkest valley...'* Just as the sheep have no need to fear danger when following the shepherd, so we live knowing God's presence and protection.

**He Comforts Me:** *'your rod and your staff, they comfort me.'* As the shepherd's rod defends the sheep, and the staff enables him to control the sheep, so God comforts us through His Word and discipline.

The final verses of the psalm (v5-6) offer the security of knowing that our lives are in His hands, even through death, as He leads us to the home we've been looking for all our lives. Some years ago, a great actor was asked to recite Psalm 23, but asked one of the other guests to do the same. His remarkable rendition was followed by the other man, an older Christian speaking from the heart.

Afterwards the actor said: *'The difference between us is that I know the psalm, but he knows the shepherd.'*

## HYMN: The story behind ... ABIDE WITH ME

One of the most famous hymns in the world came out of Brixham, near Torbay, Devon, in 1847.

In those days it was a poor, obscure fishing village, and the vicar was the Rev Henry Francis Lyte. It was a discouraging place to be a pastor, but Henry felt that God wanted him there, and so he stayed, though it was lonely work, and he suffered constant ill health. By the time he was 54, Henry had contracted tuberculosis and asthma, and he and his family knew he was dying. It would have been so easy for him to look back on his life and feel a complete failure. What had he ever much accomplished? And yet – and yet – Henry knew that in life it is not worldly success that matters, but how much we respond to Jesus Christ, and how much we follow Him. In September of 1847 Henry was preparing to travel to the south of France, as was the custom for people with tuberculosis at that time. One day before he left, he read the story in the gospel of Luke about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were met by Jesus on the day of His resurrection, and they invited Him to stay with them because it was getting late. “Abide with us”, they said “for it is towards evening.” “Abide with us - for it is toward evening.” These words struck a chord with Henry, who knew that it was getting ‘towards evening’ in his life. So, he sat down and wrote this hymn as a prayer to God – (*the following are just some of the verses*)

### *Abide with me*

*Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

*I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.*

Shortly after Henry wrote that hymn, he preached his last sermon. He was so ill he practically crawled into the pulpit to do so. A few weeks later, in Nice, France, he died, and so of course he never knew that his hymn would go on to become greatly loved the world over.

## Feel the tug

Have you ever wondered how you can be certain about who and what God really is? One Christian put it this way: “I’m reminded of the story of the little boy who was out flying a kite. The wind was brisk and large billowing clouds were blowing across the sky. The kite went up and up until it was entirely hidden by the clouds. Then a man came by and asked the little boy what he was doing, staring up at an empty sky. “I’m flying my kite,” he replied. The man replied: “What kite? How can you be sure it is still there? You can’t see a thing.” The little boy agreed that he could see nothing, “but every little while I feel a tug, so I know for sure that it is still up there and is connected to me!” When it comes to God, you don’t need to take anyone else’s word for it. You can find Him for yourself by inviting Jesus Christ into your life. Then you too will know by the warm wonderful tug on your heartstrings that though you can’t see Him, He is up there, and that He lives in you. You are connected!

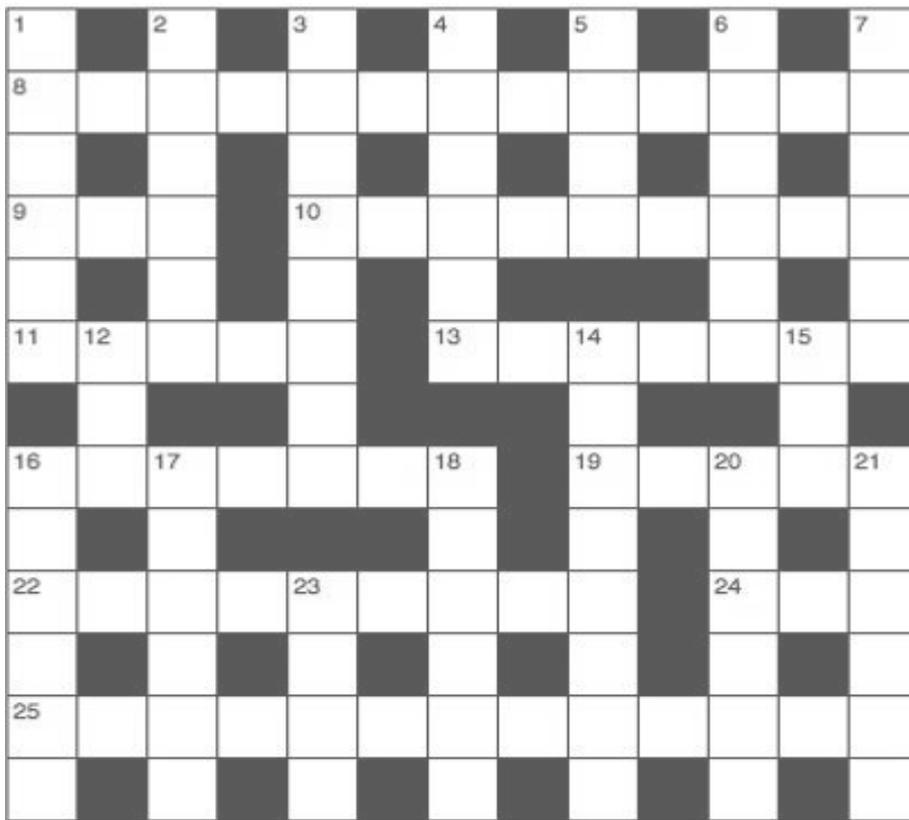
## Operation Christmas Child

This year many churches are not taking part in Operation Christmas Child, but St Michael’s has decided to take part. The boxes will be in church in September if you want to take part. If you don’t want to personally fill a box, you can donate the items into a box that will be at the back of church and we will fill it on your behalf.



Or if you want you can go to their website [www.samaritans-purse.org.uk](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk). When you are the website, click on Shoebox online and you can donate £20 (which includes the £5 project costs) and they will pack the shoe box for you, as it says ‘**PACK A SHOEBOX ONLINE**’. If you do a box this way please let Wendy Sefton know so she can add it to our total boxes

Wendy Sefton



## CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by September 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

### Across

- 8 Where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)  
 9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14–17) (3)  
 10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4) 11 ‘Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have — ’ (Malachi 1:3) (5)  
 13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)  
 16 ‘Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger’ (John 8:6) (7)  
 19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)  
 22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)  
 24 and 2 Down ‘Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the — ’ (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)  
 25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

### Down

- 1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)  
 2 See 24 Across  
 3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)  
 4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)  
 5 The Bible’s shortest verse: ‘Jesus — ’ (John 11:35) (4)  
 6 ‘Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?’ (Isaiah 49:15) (6)  
 7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)  
 12 ‘Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem’ (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)  
 14 Second city of Cyprus (8)  
 15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)  
 16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)  
 17 Braved (anag.) (6)  
 18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)  
 20 ‘Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight’ (Isaiah 5:21) (6)  
 21 ‘Neither — nor depth... will be able to separate us from the love of God’ (Romans 8:39) (6)  
 23 What Jesus shed in 5 Down (4)



July/August  
Crossword answer

### ROLL OF HONOUR

Two people got the crossword answer to me and they were Stan & Wendy Sefton & Jim & Shelagh Goffin

## Garden Competition

As you know, I asked members of the congregation back in May to email me pictures of their gardens. If you can email me with your vote, of what you think is the best garden, that would be greatly appreciated. You will have to the 1st October to send me your email vote and the result will be in the November Edition of this magazine.

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8

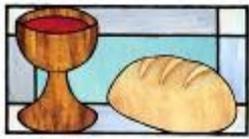


**Thank you to the people who contributed by sending in a photograph of their garden.**

God doesn't want our success; He wants us. He doesn't demand our achievements; He demands our obedience.  
*Charles Colson*

I believe in loyalty to the local church. I don't believe in that view of the invisible Church that makes you invisible at church! – *Vance Havner*

A Christian is never in a state of completion but always in a process of becoming. – *Martin Luther*



September  
2020



"But did they plough the fields  
and scatter at a safe distance?"

### ARTICLES

News or articles for the next edition of *Growing Together* should be given to Colin Keam by September 22nd. I am looking for articles for the newsletter like people's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, praying for people who are sick or in hospital or any interesting or funny anecdotes.

**THANK YOU**

### INFORMATION

#### Vicar

**Revd Karen Brady**

Mobile: 07419820864

e-mail: [revkarenbrady@gmail.com](mailto:revkarenbrady@gmail.com)

#### Churchwardens

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Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

**e-mail: [warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk](mailto:warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk)**

**If you want to book  
a wedding, baptism or funeral  
please phone this number**

**07722470940**

**and ask for Robbie**



## *Please Pray*



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

**Romy & Linda Tiongco**

**José Colley**

**Liz Adams**

**Graham & Nicola Aylett**

**Norah Gamon**

**Maureen Holden**

**Robbie Littler**

**Dorothy Lees**

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you please let the Vicar know. Or if you would like the Pastoral Care Team to visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

...and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

**Robert Williams**

**Kevin Manning**

**James Street**

### All Saints Parish Church Runcorn Bell Restoration Appeal

The bellringers of Runcorn are appealing for your help in the full restoration of the eight 1851-cast bells. The overhaul will cost around **£75,000**.

The ringers have already raised (and spent!) nearly £2000 on new pulleys, but this will only help in the short term. The bells will fall silent in just a few years if they are not rehung by specialists, so your support would be much appreciated.

#### Contact Us

If you would like more information or to make a donation, please contact either:

**Rich Westman** (Ringing Master):  
27 Dale Street, Runcorn, WA7 5PF  
[rich.westman@gmail.com](mailto:rich.westman@gmail.com),

**Bill Allman** (Tower Captain)  
10 Curzon Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PG

(Please make cheques payable to Runcorn Parish Bell Ringers)

Or "Like" us on Facebook  
at [www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration](http://www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration)

