



Five Alive!



A Monthly Magazine

for the parishes of Michelmersh, Awbridge, Braishfield
Timsbury and Farley Chamberlayne

November 2020

THE UNITED BENEFICE OF BRAISHFIELD

including the parishes of Michelmersh, Awbridge, Braishfield,
Timsbury and Farley Chamberlayne

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Hon. Assistant Priest: The Very Revd. Trevor Beeson

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Items for 5 Alive

may be sent to Sarah at the
Benefice Office by post or
email.

**Deadline for
December edition**

Monday 16th Nov

December edition

of Five Alive

will be available by

Sunday 22nd November

To reflect on

Do you struggle with prayer? - well the good news is that we are not alone!

One of the positives that has come out of our changed way of life is that people are taking the time to look beyond their current circumstances to those that have experienced life before us. Church has been no different. I am gradually learning about heroes of our faith who have left a legacy that is felt down the generations and whose impact is still noticeable today. It is their shoulders that we stand on. Teresa of Avila was this week's discovery.

Teresa of Avila was born on 28th March 1515. To put this in a bit of historical context: twenty-three years earlier Christopher Columbus had set sail on the first of his four Spanish-based transatlantic maritime expeditions to the Americas; two years after her birth, Luther started the Protestant reformation and the eighteen years of the Council of Trent, the embodiment of the Catholic counter-reformation, happened during her life-time. In the midst of these seismic cultural changes Saint Teresa was born. Her family were part of the Spanish nobility, yet despite the patriarchal world around her, she was very much her own woman, entering the Carmelites as a nun, despite strong opposition from her father. She was a mystery of paradoxes: wise, yet very practical; intelligent, yet much in tune with the world around her; a mystic, yet an energetic reformer; a pious woman, yet outgoing and courageous. She founded religious communities across Spain and was used by God to bring renewal and reformation to the Carmelite order.

As a theologian Teresa has the distinction of being declared a Doctor of the Church... but not 'til 1970! Her writings have helped generations of Christians. It has been said of *The Interior Castle*, Teresa's most influential work, "The book provided instruction on a living relationship with God that I have found nowhere else... the finest treatment of the union with Christ and with God that I have found in spiritual literature."

She is known as "a mystic gifted in prayer as Rembrandt was to art, Beethoven in music and Shakespeare in literature". One of the main things Teresa taught her fellow sisters was to think and pray on their own, to cultivate the calm and the presence of God and to concentrate, in order to hear the Lord, on what she called the 'Interior Castle'. She shared with them that the soul is like a diamond in the shape of a castle containing seven mansions, which reflect the journey of faith, through seven stages, ending with union with God...

The thing I find encouraging about Teresa, is that like most of the rest of us, she started out struggling in prayer!

Teresa once wrote, “Over a period of several years. I was more occupied in wishing my hour of prayer were over, and in listening whenever the clock struck than in thinking of things that were good... Whenever I entered the oratory I used to feel so depressed that I had to summon up all my courage to make myself pray at all.”

There is a famous (and endearing) account of Teresa shaking her hourglass in a vain attempt to make her hour of prayer go faster!

Although she is now recognised as a master of prayer, Teresa’s struggles continued over her first *20 years* in the convent. But she persevered and battled her way through the barriers, and eventually discovered her personal pathway to prayer.

Teresa’s description of contemplative prayer debunks so much that surrounds our ideas of this form of prayer, “Contemplative prayer is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.”

The famous “Bookmark of St Teresa of Avila” reads:

Let nothing disturb you
Let nothing make you afraid.
All things are passing.
God alone never changes.
Patience gains all things.
If you love God you will want for nothing.
God alone suffices.

In the following link the Community of Taizé sing (2009) *Nada te turbe* - Let nothing disturb you <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=go1-BoDD7CI>.

On the facing page:

A photo of The Cell of Saint Teresa of Avila, no art, no paintings, no objects...

Carmelite Convent of La Encarnacion, Avila

Revd Jane Thompson, Associate Priest



Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes

This year things are different!

● In Awbridge there will be a Drop Off at All Saints' Church on Sat 7th

November, 10 - 12 noon. Gifts for boxes, and completed boxes, can be left at the church.

- **Choice Plants** is an official drop off point. You can pick up a leaflet with details of appropriate contents and leave a completed box there by Saturday 16th November.
- Remember, this year, no toothpaste or sweets may be included, but homemade toys made with new craft materials can be.
- If Farley Chamberlayne is your parish and you would like to help with shoe box filling, please contact Chris Chisholm: cookchris@aol.com 01794 368120
- A donation of £5 per box, to cover transporting the shoe boxes, is essential.
- The need of the world's children is as great as ever, so please do what you can to put a smile on a child's face! A fairly small box can have a huge impact in the life of a child living in difficult circumstances.
- You will find more information at: <https://www.samaritans-purse.org/uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>



Michelmersh Prize Draw

OCTOBER 2020 Winners

1st Prize Name withheld £53.20

2nd Prize Sue Hanson £26.60

3rd Prize Peta Hunt £15.20

Contact Mr Peter Hill 01794 523364 or the Benefice Office if you would like to join in the monthly draw which raises funds for St Mary's PCC.

Thank you from the Romsey Foodbank

The Romsey Foodbank were extremely grateful for all the gifts donated at the Farley Chamberlayne and Braishfield Harvest Thanksgiving services and have asked for their thanks to be passed on to everyone who contributed. Current needs remain as below:

WE DO NEED

Laundry / Washing powder and liquid

Tins of dog food

Sponge puddings

Instant Mash

500g bags of sugar

Sweet treats / chocolates

Donations can be dropped in to Romsey Abbey between 11am and 3pm each day, (providing there is no service taking place) or put in the bin at Waitrose

WE DO NOT NEED

Soup Pasta

Rice Tea

UHT milk

Tinned tomatoes

Baked beans Biscuits



A reminder that there is a wide range of Christmas cards on sale at OASIS bookshop in Church Street, Romsey. Also Advent Calendars and items which would make lovely gifts.



Whatever the media may try to tell us, Christmas will definitely take place this year - but maybe not with all the rituals and events we have come to think of as usual. Christians will still find ways to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Perhaps we will become aware of new aspects of the festival, or rediscover some which have been lost in recent years.

Sending Christmas cards can be a good way of keeping in touch with those we haven't been able to see this year. With so many events cancelled we may find we have more time to write them!

No-one has so far been in touch about Angie Nelson's offer of arranging samples for people who can't go shopping to browse through at home. Angie is the manager of OASIS. An order can be placed and the cards will be delivered free of charge. Payment may be made by cheque or over the phone, using a card. Contact Sarah at the Benefice Office (01794 878020) if that would be helpful for you and she will drop off a sample pack for you to look through.

OASIS is currently open as below:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10am - 4pm

Wednesday 10am - 1pm

Saturday 9am - 1pm

www.oasisromsey.co.uk and look on Facebook

The Times we Live in

Well, we're now beyond six months of this strangest of times. Something none of us saw coming till, perhaps, February. I suppose there might be some who would try to say that somehow, really, it's the "best of times" but I don't believe that for one minute. It's pretty grim for millions of people in the UK alone. However, I think that it is not *all* doom and gloom.

I just offer you these thoughts of mine: I have no monopoly of the truth, nor do I possess great insights, but maybe you will find something interesting here and maybe you will have had some similar thoughts yourself?

1. As we're not spending money on holidays, eating out etc, we realised that we could and should be giving more to charity; and so we have. Particularly we felt that Food Banks would be a good cause to contribute more to at the moment, as well as some charities whose income will have dropped as a result of Covid. You might decide to clear out the wardrobe if you haven't done so already, and give the clothes to charity shops. There's some wonderful stuff in those places. I've bought things there that I might never have thought of otherwise. It's recycling at its best.
2. There's much less pollution of the air from aircraft and ships. (And even driving in our case.) I guess this is a case of "Be careful what you wish for....". It wasn't that long ago that we were being castigated for our profligate travel habits, but now we have stopped, it seems to be a disaster in other ways. Anyone who has been to Bournemouth recently will have seen several billion pounds' worth of cruise ships sitting idly at anchor.
3. We have more time to reflect on things, read, study and pray. The wonder of "Skype" means I am continuing with three different foreign languages now. I have more time to listen to music, and make new discoveries. Who'd have thought, pushing 64 with a short stick (I'm almost an Old-Age Pensioner for goodness' sake!) that I'd have discovered that I like Trance music and the Pet Shop Boys, and various other genres! I should be sitting by the fire with my pipe and slippers thinking about watching Coronation Street, shouldn't I? (Rhetorical question: the answer is an emphatic "NO", of course!) Ralph Vaughan-Williams, shortly before his death, said this, "I believe that all the arts, and especially music, are necessary to a full life... It is necessary to know facts, but music will enable you to see past facts to the very essence of things in a way which science cannot do. The arts are the means by which we can look through the magic casements and see what lies beyond." And how right he was!

4. People are taking more exercise and smoking now seems very rare indeed; even vaping is less common than it was. It may be like in WW 2; it was at that time people were eating at their most healthily. So it might be with the current time that our overall lifestyle is healthier. Maybe that will persist when the pandemic is over? I hope so. At least some will have learned that there is no need for a gym to be active, and yes, cigarettes really ARE bad for your health.

5. Better hand washing etc means I'd be surprised if we were to have a flu epidemic this winter. (You heard it here first, folks!) There is already less Gastroenteritis & Food Poisoning.

6. To some extent we have, for now at least, a better sense of community as people look out for neighbours who may need help in some way. We knew some people who grew up under Communism in the old East Germany. There were many things there that weren't good but they were able to compare their lives now with the more affluent lifestyle they now have after the "triumph" of the West. And they said there were some things they *missed*. People in the old system had seemed much less selfish and were prepared to help each other, and you pretty much had a guarantee of a job. And yes, if you were in need of help, the state was there for you. So, cliché though it is, maybe people can re-evaluate what actually matters?

7. People can start to realise what's really important in their lives. e.g. In the past we've liked to go abroad 2-3 times a year. This year we haven't been able to. Does it really matter a jot? No!! For us, visiting family is the most important thing, and we can't do that at the moment, as they are living and working in areas that are "Tier 2".

8. For a lot of people, working from home at least part of the week DOES work ok. This might have interesting medium-term and long-term effects on the jobs market and the property market. People's lives can be improved by removing the drudgery of commuting.

So, it's a confusing time for many of us now, but.....

Paradox, apparent contradictions, Music and, above all, Mystery, are parts of the "Language of the Soul". We would do well to immerse ourselves in it. Current times may appear like darkness, confusion and paradox, but they can also be Light and Life.

John Glasspool

News of the Very Revd Trevor Beeson

Many people across our parishes have been saying how much they miss seeing Trevor and are wondering how he is. Like many older people, he found the time of lockdown very difficult. The enforced lack of activity and absence of social engagement resulted in him feeling he had slowed down to such an extent that there must be something seriously wrong with him. He says he spent a lot of time dozing, entirely out of character!

We are delighted to know that having had full medical checks he has been reassured that all is well, and he is receiving physiotherapy to help him to become more confident with his walking again. Trevor says that he hopes to return to the state of fitness which he had before lockdown, and with his determined attitude to life we hope that will be the case before long and we will see him back in our churches.

You will like to know that Trevor misses us as well, is always pleased to hear news of people and the parishes, and sends his love to everyone.

Wondering where you can go for a day out without booking in advance?



Winchester Cathedral is open to all visitors every day from 10am to 4pm. There's plenty to explore, including the latest [art installation 'Held in a Burst of Colour'](#).

The [Kings and Scribes exhibition](#) is open from 11am to 3pm Monday to Saturday, and 12:30pm to 2:30pm on Sundays.

Each of our 5 parishes holds six Visitor Passes, enabling parishioners to make a free visit to the cathedral. Ask your churchwardens if you would like to borrow them.

The Refectory is also open every day from 10am to 4pm, offering teas, coffees, cakes, sandwiches, salads and their famous sausage rolls!

NB The toilets in the Cathedral are currently closed, but not at the Refectory!

Old Alresford Place

The Diocese of Winchester has announced that Old Alresford Place will no longer be used as its Diocesan Office by the end of December, with staff relocated to existing offices in Winchester, along with a greater use of flexible and home-working. The decision was made by the Winchester Diocesan Board of Finance, taking into account new working patterns introduced due to the pandemic, and with the Diocese looking to make financial savings as a result of ongoing pressures on churches' income. Old Alresford Place will be temporarily closed whilst the Diocese begins a review of potential future uses for the site.

While Old Alresford Place dates back to the seventeenth century, it was originally a rectory and only began to be used as Diocesan offices in 2008. It has also been used as a local venue for a range of conferences and events, which have had to cease during COVID-19. The Diocese has offices located in Wolvesey Palace in Winchester, and these will now be prepared to accommodate additional staff.



Before it was decided to convert part of Old Alresford Place into offices, the house, which was where Mary Sumner, wife of the then Rector of Old Alresford, founded the Mothers' Union, was for a long time a retreat centre, visited by many.

Diocesan Chief Executive, Andrew Robinson, said: "Old Alresford Place, or OAP, has been our home since I joined the Diocese and we've been fortunate to have benefited from its historic character and beautiful location. We're equally fortunate that we have additional offices at Wolvesey we can use. The pandemic, though hugely challenging for us all, has also shown the potential and benefits for home working where possible, and the use of technology to keep everyone fully connected. It's been a difficult decision to leave OAP but it will benefit the future of the Diocese and the church communities we serve across Hampshire and Southeast Dorset."

Appointment of the new Rector

Why did the process come to a halt? When Covid hit us it was quickly realised that the pandemic was going to have a large impact on diocesan income. (See article below). To save money, most of the Diocesan teams were furloughed and all pending appointments were frozen. It appears that as a diocese, we need to substantially reduce the number of stipended clergy if we are to remain financially viable.

Back in late February, once our profile was complete, we had been given the choice of going to advertisement or opting for the “Bishop’s nominee” - someone that the Bishop thought would work well with us. Bishop Debbie had someone in mind so that seemed the better option to take, and was agreed by our five PCCs. Unfortunately, in the interim the person whom the Bishop had in mind finished curacy and needed to be settled in a new post in time for their children to start at new schools in September, so they accepted a post in a diocese which was still able to appoint. Some dioceses have been in a better position to ride out the current financial situation.

We have recently heard that there are only two Benefices whose appointment process has been “unfrozen” and allowed to proceed, and we, very fortunately, are one of them! Bishop Debbie attended a recent Wardens’ zoom meeting and explained that, after prayer and consideration, no one came to mind who she felt would be right for our benefice, so she advised us to advertise the post. We really appreciated her honesty and are delighted that our advertisement will be published nationally within the next few weeks, once interview dates have been agreed with the diocese.

The excitement is building as we look forward again.

Let’s keep praying and looking to God for his guidance.

Winchester Diocese and its finances

Although one of the longest established dioceses in England, Winchester is by no means the richest. The Diocese was historically much bigger than it currently is, encompassing what are now the dioceses of Portsmouth and Guildford. Like all good parents when their offspring leave home, Winchester sent Guildford and Portsmouth off with a starter investment. The result is that Winchester has hardly any reserves, unlike many other Dioceses, so scant investment income. Some dioceses have £4m in investment income, but that is not so in our case. That is why we as a diocese are so reliant on the contributions which each parish makes to the Common Mission Fund, a

contribution which is related to the number of regular worshippers at the church and the wealth of the area. 80% of our diocesan income comes directly from the parishes through their contributions to the Common Mission Fund.

While we have some church members who have been furloughed, are struggling to keep businesses open and have bleak employment prospects, the majority of us are at the moment not adversely affected financially by the pandemic and can continue to make our regular offerings so that our full CMF can be paid. This is not the case in many parishes across the diocese where incomes have taken a hard hit and there is huge uncertainty about future employment. In addition, many churches which were reliant on letting fees from their Church Halls and large fund raising events to break even are facing grim times ahead. For many churches, there is not going to be a quick return to former income levels, even with everyone giving sacrificially. Therefore the decision was taken to review all expenditure across the diocese and to reduce posts, both administrative and clergy, so that next year Common Mission Fund (CMF) requests to the parishes will be 20% less than this year. Parishes able to do so will be asked to give more. The plans will go before the Diocesan Synod in November for agreement.

This is a very tough time: the decision to move the diocesan offices out of Old Alresford Place and to relinquish the building which has been at the heart of diocesan life for a very long time is just one of the many sacrifices which have to be made so that we can continue, as the Church of England, to serve the population of Hampshire and South East Dorset in the name of Christ. Buildings have to be of less priority than keeping clergy in the parishes.

If you are unable to leave your home, or for some other reason can't worship with others in church, a reminder of some opportunities to join in with worship on radio, TV and on-line:

- the Daily Service at 9.45 (15 mins) on Radio 4 long-wave
- Choral Evensong Wednesday Radio 3 at 3pm and Sunday Radio 3 at 3.30pm
- Tim Daykin Radio Solent Sunday 6-9am including a service at 8.00am for 30 minutes
- The Sunday Service on Radio 4 at 8.10am
- Songs of Praise Sunday usually 1.15pm on BBC1

Useful websites offering a range of on-line worship opportunities :

www.romseyabbey.org.uk
www.churchofengland.org
www.winchester.anglican.org

Check for Benefice news on www.asbchurch.org

TOGETHER IN
Prayer

As we aren't currently printing regular Sunday Notice Sheets, we are including some items for prayer here:

- Jane and the wardens, for strength and wisdom in supporting our churches through the Vacancy at this time of pandemic
- National and international leaders as they try to make the best decisions in an unknown situation, for wisdom and a willingness to work together
- Those who find the current situation makes them very nervous. May they turn to Jesus to calm their fears and be aware of his presence as they live each day
- Unity within the local community as discussions continue about proposed developments to enable a car park to be provided at All Saints, Awbridge
- Families coping with illness and bereavement, all made harder by the current restrictions. May they know they are upheld in prayer
- Communities across the world facing situations which to us are unimaginable
- Our diocese of Winchester; for Bishop Tim and the Diocesan Synod as decisions are made about the future path we should follow

● For our benefice, please continue to use the prayer below:
Lord, we thank you for the way you are building your church in us.
We pray for our benefice as we appoint a new Rector.
We ask that your Holy Spirit will lead and guide us.
We thank you that you will bring the right person to us.
We pray that our five churches, filled with God's love, will come fully alive, reaching out into our communities.
We look forward with faith, hope and love.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Bible readings for the Sundays of November/Dec 2020

This information was previously included in the weekly Notice Sheet

Sunday 1st November All Saints Day

Old Testament Revelations 7.9-end

Epistle 1 John 3.1-3

Gospel Matthew 5.1-12

Psalms 34.1-10

Remembrance Sunday 8th November

As chosen locally

Sunday 15th November -2nd Sunday before Advent

Old Testament Zephaniah 1.7, 12-end

Epistle 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

Gospel Matthew 25.14-30

Psalms 90.1-8

Sunday 22nd November - Christ the King

Old Testament Ezekiel 34.11-16, 20-24

Epistle Ephesians 1.15-end

Gospel Matthew 25.31-end

Psalms 95.1-7

Sunday 29th November - 1st Sunday of Advent (lectionary Year B begins*)

Epistle 1 Corinthians 1.3-9

Gospel Mark 13.24-end

Sunday 6th December - 2nd Sunday of Advent

Old Testament Isaiah 40.1-11

Epistle 2 Peter 3.8-15a

Gospel Mark 1.1-8

Psalms 85.1-2, 8-end

* **What is meant by 'lectionary Year B'?** Anglican churches, and many other mainstream churches across the world, share the same 3 yearly system of Bible readings. In Year A, the gospel readings are mainly from Matthew, B mainly from Mark, C mainly from Luke. These are called 'the synoptic gospels' because they cover many similar stories and events. John's gospel, being written from a different stand point, is included at various times in all three years, but most in Year B, as Mark's gospel is the shortest. Each year a range of readings from the Old Testament and the epistles is also included.

Services in the Benefice for November 2020

Please note - for the moment Timsbury and Michelmersh are combining for worship each week and Braishfield and Farley Chamberlayne are combining on some Sundays

Sunday 1st November All Saints Day

- 9.30am Awbridge **Holy Communion** J.Thompson
10.00am Michelmersh **Morning Prayer** BCP Lay led
11.15am Braishfield **Service of Celebration for All Saints Day**
J.Thompson & A.Manners
6.00pm Farley Chamberlayne **Evening Prayer** BCP J.Thompson

Remembrance Sunday 8th November

- 10.45am Awbridge War Memorial **Remembrance Service** K.Taylor
10.45 am Farley Chamberlayne **Service of Remembrance** Lay led
10.45am Timsbury **Family Service and Remembrance** Lay led
10.50am Braishfield War Memorial **United Service of Remembrance**
J.Thompson
6.00pm Michelmersh **Remembrance Service** J.Thompson

Sunday 15th November -2nd Sunday before Advent

- 9.30am Awbridge **Holy Communion** K.Taylor
10.00am Timsbury **Holy Communion** A.Ashdown
11.15am Farley Chamberlayne **Family Service** K.Taylor

Sunday 22nd November - Christ the King

- 9.30am Awbridge **Family Worship** Family Team & J.Thompson
9.30am Braishfield **Holy Communion** A.Ashdown
6.00pm Timsbury **Evening Prayer** BCP J.Thompson

Sunday 29th November - 1st Sunday of Advent (lectionary Year B begins)

- 10.00am Braishfield **United Benefice Holy Communion** J.Thompson

Sunday 6th December - 2nd Sunday of Advent

- 9.30am Awbridge **Holy Communion** K.Taylor
9.30am Braishfield **Family Service** Lay led
10.00am Timsbury **Morning Worship** Lay led
6.00pm Farley Chamberlayne **Evening Prayer** BCP Lay led

Unless marked BCP - Book of Common Prayer - all services follow the Common Worship liturgy