

“The Newsletter”

For MARTLESHAM & BRIGHTWELL

Sunday 10 May 2026



Unchanging and abiding God

I had a conversation today where we drifted in to talking about funerals. I mentioned that this is an issue for clergy – get a few of us together in a room and that is something we often end up talking about. Partly for support, partly because a lot of our time can be taken with them and it's good to share ideas and ways of making them more personal and God focussed. But also to share the highs and lows. It is a privilege to walk with people through challenging times and to bring God to their grief – and if you want to plan for your own funeral, do let me know. This is something I have done with a number of people.

One of the common hymns that are chosen for funerals is that great hymn by Henry Francis Lyte 'Abide with Me'. It calls on the unchanging God to be with us when everything else is disrupted. When we are struggling to process the change. Some of my favourite lines from the hymn are:

*Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

And

I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Over the next few months there will be change in our benefice. Some will be welcomed, some lamented. But through it all God is sovereign and he will be with us all, whatever we go through, giving us his peace and his comfort.

Hebrews 13:8 reminds us that: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

May the faithful unchanging God of peace be with you through any change that comes.

Toby

Sunday 10 May

10:00 am - Morning Worship - St Michael's

6:30 pm – Evensong – St John's

Monday 11 May

8:30 am - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Wednesday 13 May

10:00 am - Holy Communion - St Michael's

Sunday 17 May

10:30 am - APCM* - St Michael's

Monday 18 May

8:30 am - Morning Prayer - St Mary's

Sunday 24 May

10:00 am - Holy Communion - St Michael's

6:30 pm - Evensong - St John's

Monday 25 May

No Morning Prayer this week

Wednesday 27 May

10:00 am - Holy Communion - St Michael's

Sunday 31 May

10:30 am - Benefice service - St Michael's

* APCM - Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Christian Aid Week is here!



We have 7 whole days to make a difference to vulnerable people living in poverty and need.

In the newsletter 2 weeks ago you can read about Christian Aid's campaign this year, highlighting their work in Kenya with their partner Beacon of Hope, and the difference that Christian Aid's help has made to the life of people struggling with hunger and housing security in the crowded informal settlements of urban Nairobi. (You can find out more about the campaign at caweek.org.) Now this week we all have an opportunity to help them, and other people around the world, who benefit from the work of their local Christian Aid partners!

With 7 days to make a difference, from 10th-16th May every gift, act and prayer counts. So how can we help?

We can all consider giving – everyone's finances are stretched these days but every donation counts to demonstrate the unstoppable power of hope, and help fund vital training and support so people like Fridah can set up an urban 'farm', feed their families and earn an income.

- £5 could buy the seeds that kickstart a family's nutritious vegetable garden.
- £10 could pay for the pair of chickens that produce fertiliser for an urban farmer.
- £15 could purchase the hand tools that mean an urban farmer can tend their crops.
- £30 could buy the trio of cone garden planters that host hundreds of plants in a tiny city

space.

Donating is easy. Pick up a donation envelope from church (or you may get one through your door) fill with cash or a cheque and return to the Runway, St Michael's, or your local collector. Or give securely online to our benefice e-envelope,

<https://caw.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2026/martlesham-benefice>
or scan the QR code.



We can all pray – pick up a daily devotional leaflet at church and join in with 7 days of readings, reflection and prayer.

We can all act – prayerfully looking at whether we use our planet's resources thoughtfully, and how we can use our personal resources lovingly to give hope to those in need.

It is easy to feel powerless when faced with such need in the world. But together we can do something about world poverty and want! Christian Aid say they won't stop until everyone can live a full life, free from poverty and hunger, but they can't do this without funding. Please consider giving this Christian Aid week. On behalf of the poor and vulnerable people of the world, thank you.

Carolyn Smith

Prayer Diary May 2026

- 1 for all volunteers
- 2 give thanks for the joy of birdsong
- 3 thank you Lord for being alongside us
- 4 for safe travel on the bank holiday
- 5 for children and young adults being bullied
- 6 for the residents of Hilton Road
- 7 for the smooth running of the local elections
- 8 for wisdom for all newly-elected councillors
- 9 for farmers and those working in agriculture
- 10 Lord, help us to share the hope we have in you
- 11 Christian Aid Week: for the work of Christian Aid
- 12 for hospital, GP surgery and workplace nurses
- 13 for the residents of Holfen Close
- 14 Ascension Day: may we seek and serve our risen Lord
- 15 for all taking exams
- 16 those working for reconciliation and peace
- 17 for our Annual Parish Church Meeting today
- 18 for comfort for the lost and lonely
- 19 for Home-Start and the families they help
- 20 for the residents of Holly End
- 21 for all new families
- 22 for those with memory loss, their families and carers
- 23 those working in the legal profession
- 24 Pentecost: thank God for the gift of his Holy Spirit
- 25 give thanks for times of relaxation and rest
- 26 for our neighbours
- 27 for the residents of Horseman Court
- 28 for all who are living in fear
- 29 for young people unable to find paid employment
- 30 for prisoners, prison workers, and their families
- 31 Trinity Sunday: Praise God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

Annual Meeting Sunday 17th May. 10.30am St Michaels

As part of our service on the 17th (note the time!) we will have our annual meeting. This is a chance to look back on what God has done in our benefice over the past year and to ask for his blessing on the coming year. We will also have elections for the deanery synod, churchwardens and the PCC(s).

If you are on the electoral roll and wish to stand for any of these roles, please collect a form – or print the one attached to the email. If you want more details about what this involves, please speak to our current members. The main criteria for standing are that you want to help the church to flourish and have some time to help with this – with God's guidance.

I would love there to be a real election this year where we have to choose who serves because so many people step up. Are you one of them?

Toby

Malcolm Rittman

I know it was a shock for all of us when Malc suffered his stroke, but he is beginning to show tiny steps of progress which is great. It is going to be a long and rocky road ahead but with the continued support and prayers of so many of you, we know we are in God's hands. His responses to prayer may seem small, but they are immensely significant to me: the support worker who happened to phone me on a particularly low day and dropped everything to come and talk to me; happening to be visiting when Malc sat unsupported for a couple of minutes; even having a staff team who trust me to help with some aspects of his care; the right people being available when I've needed help. The list goes on. So thank you and know that your prayers are being answered.

Margaret

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