

A step on the Christian journey

On Pentecost Sunday we admitted six of our young congregation members to Communion after they had completed a course of preparation.

Since that famous journey on the road to Emmaus, when two bereaved friends invited a stranger to share their family meal and recognised the risen Lord, groups of Jesus' followers have met him in the breaking of bread. At Communion, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is recalled and it is the way in which the vast majority of Christians obey the Lord's command, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'

Many will be more familiar with children being confirmed, so why this change? The Church of England recognised that children were being confirmed at younger and younger ages, often as young as eleven, and for a variety of reasons. Some chose to be confirmed because their friends were or their parents thought they should.

When people are baptised, they are initiated as members of the Church. When people start to receive Communion, it is seen as a stage in their Christian journey.

Children who already receive Communion will ideally be confirmed during their late teens, so it becomes an



LEFT TO RIGHT: Rev Morag Finch, Rev Richard Finch, Sally Aldred and Rev Jane Peters with the young people recently admitted to Communion at St Mary's

adult affirmation of faith as well as the reception of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is a confirming of the promises made for them at their baptism. This becomes a decision made when they are older and able to answer for themselves, knowing their faith to be their own.

This has been happening in the Church of England since just before the turn of the century and at St Mary's since 2008.

When children are admitted to Communion, it means that the children share in the bread and wine: they join in the family meal. It is a demonstration of grace: God's generosity to us and our response to him. This expression of God's love can change lives. It cannot be earned and is not a prize for being good.

When we nurture children in the Christian faith, we share experiences and examples with them, as well as teaching them about this faith. **Rev Morag Finch**

Special Events and Services

Sunday 12 June

10.30am Family and Parade service

Followed by the Parish Picnic, celebrating the Queen's birthday

Sunday 19 June

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Responses: Saunders
Canticles: Stanford in B flat
Anthem: Greater Love - Ireland

Stay in touch!

The Parish Office email is now office@stmarysshortlands.church
To keep up with news from St. Mary's in between editions of SPAN, you can like our page on Facebook or follow us on Twitter – search for 'St Mary's Shortlands'.

Don't forget our website
www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk





From the Registers

Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

8 May Charlie Salliss

Children Admitted to Holy Communion

Amongst those welcomed to God's table on 15 May were:

Stella Nightingale

Gregory Nightingale

Angus Nightingale

Amelia (Milly) Hollingdale

Cheyenne-Sky Blair

A word from our new churchwarden

I have been an active member of St Mary's for eight years along with my family.

I was asked by the then vicar to take on the role of Server with responsibility for the servers' rota, assisting with Communion, reading the Gospel and helping at weddings and baptisms.

I have been a member of the Parochial Church Council and Deanery Synod, been involved with Prayer Visiting and Christian Aid, helped on various fund raising committees and am also a member of a Home Group.

When asked recently to consider the church warden position, my initial reaction was to refuse but having mulled it over I felt that as I knew the majority of the congregation, and enjoyed the worship and great fellowship it entailed, I could rise to the challenges associated with maintaining our wonderful church.

My aim is to continue to work cooperatively and to support the parish clergy, help the congregation enjoy and participate fully in the services, be a consistent example of worship, and do things as best I can in order to influence and encourage others.

Coreen Corbin



C'est magnifique!

21 years and still going strong... The visit of our French friends from our twin Parish of St Francis of Assisi in Douai over the May Day weekend was a great success. Despite long delays in Calais, they arrived in time for refreshments at the Church Hall prior to our visit to Down House. The French particularly enjoyed the beautiful gardens bathed in afternoon sunshine, and the delicious cakes in the tearoom.

After a warm welcome in parishioners' homes, families joined together for 'cluster dinners' - a convivial evening of eating and drinking, and overcoming the language barrier. The younger members of both parishes enjoyed a swimming barbecue, thanks to unexpectedly mild weather and excellent hospitality.

On the Sunday morning everyone gathered at St Mary's for a great celebration of our 'togetherness in Christ'. We were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Bromley who read a lesson and who was guest of honour at the lunch afterwards. She paid tribute to the two founder members Canon Doug Redman and Marcel Brevers who set up the 'Jumelage' 21 years ago, which she said is a shining example of friendship and faith across the frontiers of countries and churches.

After many fond farewells, the French set off on their homeward journey, after promising a warm welcome for Shortlanders in Douai in 2017.

Gill Dawson

Annual meeting held

Over 50 people attended St Mary's Annual Parochial Church Council meeting in April. The meeting elected Adolph Williams and Coreen Corbin as churchwardens.

239 people are now on the electoral roll, a slight increase on last year. Thanks were given to Nick Stoffel who had been Electoral Roll Officer for many years, and to Margaret Shaw who has taken on the role.

The meeting received Rev Morag's report of the last 12 months, listing many and varied events throughout the year, including the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the church building.

Tim Dawson, the Treasurer, presented the accounts. Overall, there was a comparatively small shortfall for the year. Expenditure was higher than in 2014, mainly due to works to repair the roof, and annual planned giving was slightly lower than previously. More work will be done on the roof this year, once better weather arrives, but the cost will be less than had been feared.

The meeting heard of various activities throughout the year to repair and maintain the church buildings, and thanked all those who contribute to this work.

Leaving the Parochial Church Council (PCC) as their terms came to an end were Derek Cooper, Susie Shelton and Adrian Bingham: the meeting thanked them for their work. Sally Aldred, David Jefferys, Kay Coleman and Tony Wright-Jones were confirmed as joining the PCC.

Rev Morag thanked all those who do so much in so many roles to keep the church going: it is much appreciated. She looked forward to an awayday in May at which the PCC would be thinking about how the church will move forward, listening to what God is calling us to do, to include our vision for the use of the church halls and site.



THANK YOU: Rev Morag made presentations to Cllr David Jefferys and his wife Ann-Marie as David recently completed his service of seven years as churchwarden.

Parish Picnic & Barbecue

Sunday, 12 June

in the church grounds following the 10.30am Family and Parade Service

Come and Celebrate the 90th Birthday of the Queen

Bring your own picnic -
barbecue food and refreshments available to buy
Bouncy castle and games crafts and competitions

In the Church Hall if wet

All are Welcome



What is prayer visiting?

Since 2008, during the summer months, a small team of people from St Mary's has been visiting homes in the parish. Introductory letters are delivered in advance to a number of roads asking people if they have anything they would like the church to pray for. This is then followed up a few days later with a brief visit, where the team collect any prayer requests and bring them back to the church for inclusion at Sunday services and daily prayers. The team has visited nearly every home in the parish; they are only unable to gain access to gated communities.

There is no praying on doorsteps or anything like that! The team goes out for an hour at a time, usually between 7 and 8pm. Most visits last just a few minutes – some a little longer.

Over the years there has been a very positive response to the visits. Many conversations that start out 'oh, I'm not a church goer' or 'I don't believe any of that' end with people asking for prayer for loved ones or difficult situations in their lives. Confidentiality is respected, and for many prayer requests only first names are used.

As Christians we believe in the power of prayer. It is our experience that prayer releases God's love into the world and into our lives. If you don't share our belief in prayer, or don't want to share personal matters with us, then we won't bother you any longer than it takes to say 'No thank you'. Otherwise we look forward to seeing you either on the doorstep or at St Mary's.

Haven't seen us, but you would like to make a prayer request? Do feel free to pop in to the church porch any weekday morning, where you can leave a short message on our 'Prayer Tree'. These requests are also offered up during our weekly services.

Susie Shelton

Saint of the Month St Peter – 29 June

St Peter was one of Jesus' twelve apostles and a leader of the early church. Peter started life named Simon. He and his brother Andrew were fishermen and lived in Capernaum on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.

He was married – we know Jesus healed his mother-in-law. He owned a house in Capernaum and the boat that Jesus used to preach to the multitudes who were pressing on him at the shore of the Sea of Galilee. He seems to have been quite fiery and liable to get carried away by his temper, as, when Jesus was arrested, Peter cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest. Jesus changed his name to Peter (the rock) saying that on this rock he would build his church.

Jesus also said 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven', thus giving rise to the idea of Peter at the pearly gates.

After Jesus' resurrection Peter was an extremely important figure in the early church. He went to Lydda, Joppa and Caesarea, Antioch, Corinth and Jerusalem where he was briefly imprisoned. Tradition has it that he finished up in Rome, where, with St Paul he founded the Christian church and became the first Pope. He was martyred and is buried under St Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Today the expression 'For Pete's sake' refers to St Peter, while St Peter's fish – a form of tilapia – referred to in Matthew's gospel as the fish with a coin in its mouth, makes a tasty, if bony, dish when caught in the Sea of Galilee.

Mission of the month

Christians Against Poverty

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) was started in 1996 by John Kirkby. After his own personal experience of debt, he believed that God was calling him to sacrifice his career in finance and use his knowledge of the industry to help the poor, and in particular those whose lives were crippled by debt. Beginning with a small donation, John began to work locally with parents who couldn't feed their children, people facing eviction and others living in fear caused by debt. He used his expertise to negotiate with creditors, set up budgeting systems and offer a lifeline.

Realising the need for such support across the country, he began to replicate this work across the UK by partnering with churches and training debt counsellors. Since then, CAP has grown rapidly. There are now 301 CAP Debt Centres across the country with over 16,000 people helped each year. CAP provides debt counselling through home visits and offer personal support to people as they journey to become debt free.

In recent years, CAP has expanded its services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty. CAP Job Clubs help people into employment, CAP Release Groups help people get control of their addictions and CAP Life skills equips people to live well on low incomes.

John Kirby writes, 'I am overwhelmed by what God has done. To see thousands of lives changed every year is truly wonderful... Jesus met people's needs with love, compassion and practical help. Our desire is simply to do the same.'

For more information on how to be involved or to access help with debt, see the board at the back of church or visit the website: www.capuk.org



Our new font was dedicated for use by the Archdeacon of Bromley and Bexley, the Ven Dr Paul Wright on Sunday 1 May. It was made for us by David Merritt and was used for the first time on 8 May for the baptism of Charlie Salliss.

Can you help?

Beaver Leaders Helen Ashford and Evette Martins will be standing down at the end of this term due to other commitments and priorities. We are extremely grateful to Helen and Evette for their talented and enthusiastic leadership.

Is this something you could do, perhaps as a small team of two or three? Plenty of assistance and training are available as well as help from other parents 'on the night'.

If no-one comes forward, it will be necessary to close Beavers with effect from the end of this summer term.

To find out more, please contact Charles Wood, Group Scout Leader, charleswooduk@yahoo.com, Tel 020 8658 1825.

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WORSHIP

Every Sunday

- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion, except when notified. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 0-18.
- 18.30 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday in the month)

Every Monday

- 17.00 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

- 10.00 Holy Communion

Further information about all services can be obtained from the Parish Office.

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev. M. Finch	8464 8065
(Sat - Thu)	revfinch@btinternet.com	
Associate Vicar	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	07531 617302/
(Sun, Mon, Wed)		8460 5682
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	Mr. S. Buchanan	8777 8008
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	Mrs. M. Westropp	8650 5178
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Assistant	Mrs. E. Parker	8460 5682
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	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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	Mrs. P. Chase	8464 6188
	Miss A. Parks	8464 1157
	Mr. S. Clark	8464 0696
	Mr. D. Cooper	8460 0682
	Mr. B. Waring	07957 186027
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Assistant Treasurer	Mr. R. Hogg	8290 0031
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Assistant Organist	Mr Daniel Beach	8289 6510
Electoral Roll	Mrs. M. Shaw	8460 9681
Stewardship	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178
Junior Church	Mrs. S. Aldred	8460 3978

PARISH OFFICE Tel: 8460 5682

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.church
Open 9.30am - 12.30pm weekdays.
Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

Mothers & Toddlers	Mrs. J. Runicles	8650 4553
Mothers' Union Fellowship Group		
	Mrs. P. White	8460 9357
Friends of St. Mary's		
	Miss J. Rambridge	8650 0947

For admissions to Beavers, Cubs & Scouts please contact email: 7bromleyadmissions@gmail.com

Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mrs. P. Braithwaite	8460 4152
Cubs (Tues)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers	Mrs H. Ashford	07979 504079

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies & Guides please tel: 08001695901 or go to www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

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Guides (Fri.)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon.)	Miss K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Wed.)	Mrs. R. Kateshwaran	
		8249 0984
Brownies (Thurs.)	Mrs. S. Tight	8460 8122
Rainbows	Ms. W. Keeping	8466 1599
	Mrs. S. Tight	8460 8122
Pre-School	Mrs. P. Chase	8290 6704
		or 07960 988552
The 2WW's	Mrs. A. Heayberd	8460 9537
Church Flowers	Mrs. M. Parr	8249 7127
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Douai Link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	8313 0246
Mobility Class	Mrs. Jan Boam	8460 7101

LOCAL COOKS

Cllr. M. Cooke	020 3665 0357
(Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Cllr D. Jefferys	020 8460 6030
(Email: david.jefferys@bromley.gov.uk)	
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

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