

February cheer

Has anyone got anything good to say about February? No, nor me - and yet there are some positives, not least of which is that January is over.

We start still in the season of Epiphany - meaning a moment of sudden and great revelation - when the wise men acknowledged the divinity of the baby Jesus. We celebrate Candlemas, when Christ was presented at the Temple. Simeon, an old and faithful man, undergoes his own epiphanic moment as he holds the infant Christ in his arms and declares that Jesus is the way of salvation for all peoples of the world. We then hear in Luke's gospel that Mary, Joseph and Jesus returned to their home town of Nazareth where Jesus grew up and became strong.

In our own family we have recently celebrated the birth of several babies, with the prospect of more to come later in the year. We none of us know how these little children will develop or what they will achieve but Jesus' childhood and nurturing were crucial to God's ultimate plan for Him.

By the middle of February we fast forward to the penitential season of Lent which starts on Wednesday 18th. (Make sure you have your lemons and pancake batter ready for the 17th!)

The tone is now much more sombre as we move

towards the end of Jesus' life and crucifixion: the received wisdom is to give up something for Lent to echo in some small way the sacrifice which Jesus made for us. Chocolate and alcohol are often used as an example: I will not be giving up either!

An alternative might be to take up something instead. It puts a more positive emphasis on Lent if we can achieve a goal such as looking out for our neighbours, spending more 'quality' time with our children, giving a little more to charity or just being aware of how we respond to others by giving encouragement rather than criticism.

All of these things can help to cheer up what can still be a depressing winter month. We can look at the parks and gardens to see signs of spring and new life and as we look towards the crucifixion we need to remember that Easter Day brings the resurrection message of salvation for us all. Happy Lent to everyone and as a friend once said, press on...

Marion Westropp

Stay in touch!

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



St Mary's sing at Rochester

On Saturday 3rd January our choir sang the office of Choral Evensong at Rochester Cathedral. A packed coach took the choir's children and adults, plus a very supportive congregation, for what turned out to be a very rewarding afternoon.

We sang Sanders' responses, Sumsion's setting of the Canticles in A and 'There Shall a Star' by Mendelssohn.

I was so proud of the choir. The little ones were so well behaved and what a fantastic experience for them to sing in our own Cathedral Church. We were made to feel very welcome by the Cathedral Clergy, and they have invited us back to sing again.

Our assistant organist, Daniel Beach was superb as ever, despite playing a temporary organ in the nave where I couldn't see him.

Thank you to our amazing congregation for your support. The Clergy mentioned that they have not seen numbers like that for Evensong after Christmas for a while!

I hope to plan more tours in the future. If this has inspired you to join the choir, please call me on 020 8460 7368.

Canon Claire Tillotson

Special Events and Services

Sunday 1 February - Candlemas

10.30am Family and Parade Service

With the help of Tuesday Guides

There will be a Traidcraft stall after the service

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Responses: Aylward

Canticles: Stanford

Anthem: The Spirit of the Lord - Elgar

Wednesday 18 February - Ash Wednesday

10.00am Holy Communion Services

& 8.00pm With the Imposition of Ashes for those who wish it

Sunday 15 March - Mothering Sunday

10.30am Family and Parade Service

With the help of the Scouts

Including the blessing and distribution of posies



From the Registers

Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

14 Dec Fred Arthur Campion

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Brenda Giddins 8 Dec aged 80

Irene Fisher 23 Dec aged 96

Anne Yeulett 2 Jan aged 78

Sylvia Greener 2 Jan aged 98

Remembering

Anne Yeulett

Anne was thoughtful, caring and kind to everyone she met, a determined lady who knew how she wanted something done. She was the dear mother to Alison, Mark and Ian and grandma to seven grandchildren.

Anne was born in 1936 to Percy and Belle, and in her early life she lived in Hayes, attending Beckenham convent during the war. During the late 1950s and early 1960s Anne worked in an office in London.

Anne met Peter through the local tennis club: they married in June 1960 and lived in Kenwood Drive. Anne devoted her time to the children and the house became the rock for the family.

Throughout her life Anne always had very close links to the church, worshipping at St. Mary's since the early 1960s. For Anne it was more than 'just going to church' – she was true to her faith in her everyday life. When Peter fell ill she ensured that he was able to stay at home and cared for him until he passed away in 1997.

When the children were in a tough spot, Anne would say 'oh you just have to press on', meaning, just keep going and things will sort themselves out. They normally did.

We rarely nowadays talk about someone making a good death. We may even say of someone that a sudden death was 'lovely for her or him' because s/he knew nothing about it. And that can bring comfort.

For Anne, there was no pretence, and no need for it. Despite the medication being latterly very strong, her thoughts were those of a faithful servant of the Lord and concerned with those who shared her life. Right up until very near the end she was asking about how others were. She continued to serve God in her love and prayers for others. Her death was borne with stoicism and with deep faith.

A joyful, well-attended service of thanksgiving for her life included a number of former members of St Mary's in the congregation.

Gary Logue

St Mary's was very saddened to hear of the death of Gary Logue at the age of 46. Gary lived formerly in Kingswood Road opposite the church and was a regular attender until he moved to Clapham. Gary lit up the church when he was here.

Although his life was sometimes troubled he brought us joy in knowing him and had the deepest compassion for those with whom he worked. He was a Nurse Specialist in Oncology working particularly with those affected by bowel cancer. Appropriately, the charity 'Beating Bowel Cancer' has announced that an award has been set up in Gary's honour as acknowledgment of his personal contribution and his dedication to those affected.

This young man's life was one which made a difference for the good and our thoughts are with his partner and his family. May he rest in peace.

Beavers face closure

At the end of the summer term in July 2015 the current leaders of the St Mary's Beaver Colony, John Westropp, Pat Chase and Karen Pleasance, will all retire after a combined total of 64 years' service. Although some of the current parents are happy to help, there is an urgent need for an overall leader. Unless a new leader can be found, the unit will be forced to close.

There are currently 24 Beavers aged 6 and 7 who meet in the Scout Hut for an hour every Wednesday evening during term time. The Colony began in 1990 under the leadership of John Westropp - otherwise known as Polar Bear. During this time hundreds of boys have enjoyed fun and friendship and progressed into the two Cub Packs.

With nearly two terms left this is an ideal time for a new leader (or leaders) to join and see what goes on at a meeting - the sooner you start the more experience you can pick up in advance. John has 25 years of programmes with associated literature to share!

Please contact us as it would be a tragedy if Beavers at St Mary's were forced to close. Please talk to John Westropp on 020 8650 5178 or the Group Scout Leader, Charles Wood on 020 8658 1825.

Archbishop Janani Luwum

16th February is the anniversary of the death of Archbishop Janani Luwum. Why is this of particular interest in Shortlands?

Janani was born in 1922 in Uganda. As a boy he would herd cattle: his father couldn't afford for him to go to school until he was ten but then Janani worked hard and went on to teacher training. He converted to Christianity in 1948 and, following training, became a priest in 1956. His leadership skills quickly became clear and he was chosen to do a one year course at St Augustine's College in Canterbury.

At this time St Mary's supported missionary work in Uganda, and Janani was invited to give a sermon to say thank you. He returned on several occasions, staying with the then vicar Rev Neville Sugden during vacations, and was known as Honorary Curate in Training.

In 1969 he was consecrated bishop of Northern Uganda, and was presented with a pastoral staff by the parish of St Mary's. In 1971 Idi Amin deposed the President of Uganda, establishing a military dictatorship. In the years that followed, thousands were arrested, beaten, imprisoned without trial and killed, and 50,000 Asians were expelled. Janani worked to get prisoners released.

Janani became Archbishop of Uganda in 1974. He must have known the risks of standing up to the President, saying, 'I do not know how long I shall occupy this chair... While the opportunity is there, I preach the Gospel with all my might...' He was described as 'a gentle, peaceful and humble man', a determined shepherd, 'capable of searching for the hundredth sheep even if that meant risking his own life'.

On 7 February 1977 he went to the notorious Naguru prison to look for the medical superintendent of Mengo Hospital, abducted from his home by soldiers. Two days before, the Archbishop's house had been raided by soldiers who said they were looking for arms. On 8 February the Archbishop and nearly all the Ugandan bishops wrote a letter of protest to the President about the regime's acts of violence.

President Amin summoned him and other leaders of different faiths to his palace on 16 February. Amin harangued them, asking the crowd: 'What shall we do with these traitors?' The soldiers replied 'Kill him now'. As he was taken away, Archbishop Luwum turned to his brother bishops and said 'Do not be afraid. I see God's hand in this.'

He was not seen alive again. The next day, it was announced that Archbishop Luwum had been killed in a car accident. His supporters believe he refused to sign a confession, was beaten and shot. His body was placed in a sealed coffin and sent to his native village for burial. The villagers opened the coffin and discovered the bullet holes.

The following June, 25,000 Ugandans celebrated the centennial of the first preaching of the Gospel in their country. They included many who had abandoned Christianity, but who had returned to their faith as a result of seeing the courage of Archbishop Luwum.

In 1998, statues of ten twentieth century martyrs were unveiled above the West Door of Westminster Abbey, amongst them Archbishop Luwum.



Mission of the month

Mothers' Union - Away From it All

Mothers' Union (MU) is a Christian charity of some four million members (single, married, male & female) in 83 countries that seeks to support families, and to reinforce family relationships.

Away From It All (AFIA) is a MU holiday scheme, to help people experiencing stress in their family life with all or part of the cost of a holiday / travel expenses. It is not necessary to be a member of a church or organisation, and most referrals are made by clergy, social workers or support groups.

AFIA helps some 2,500 people have a holiday each year - families spending time together away from their stressful situations at home, engaging in activities together and having fun. They often experience healing in their relationships by spending this quality time with each other.

Some AFIA holidays are organised family weeks where a number of families and a team of volunteers go away together, with activities and outings arranged. Others are in mobile homes owned by MU, usually near a beach, or day trips.

Rochester Diocese MU funds AFIA self catering accommodation - and donations from St Mary's will be for that.

For more information, see www.themothersunion.org, www.rochestermothersunion.co.uk or the display at the back of church.

PRE-SCHOOL QUIZ

In St Mary's Church Hall on
Saturday 7th March,
doors open 7.15pm for 7.30pm start
£5 per person for a table of 8

Please contact Orla Penruddocke to book tickets at
email: cummins@yahoo.com or tel: 07818 421182

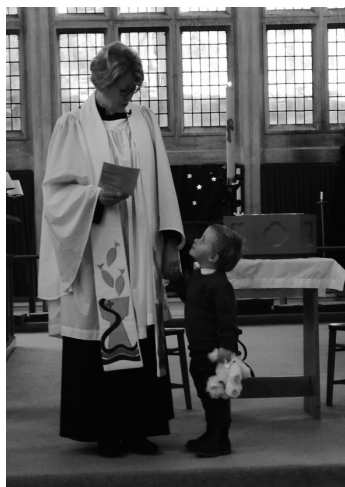
Bring your own wine and nibbles - bar available

In aid of St Mary's Pre-school, Shortlands & The Peter Westropp Memorial Trust.

Beginnings

It was a great joy to baptise 2 year old Fred Campion shortly before Christmas having baptised his big sister Betsey a few years ago. Fred was very keen to help and both he and Rev Jane got quite wet!

Baptism is the means whereby we are able to join the church community and begin our Christian journey of faith. If you would be interested to learn more, please contact the church office on 020 8460 5682 for further details.



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+ Lent 2015 +

Lent is an opportunity before the great Festival of Easter to take time out and reflect on our journey through life. There are a number of ways to help you to get the most out of Lent

1. Home Groups

The weeks during Lent are a time when we reflect on our faith, and prepare for the joy of Easter to come. Lent home groups are a wonderful way of exploring our faith in more depth and of getting to know each other better.

This year we will be following a course designed by Brian, Bishop of Tonbridge, called 'Challenging Poverty'. This runs very much in line with what Archbishop Justin Welby has been bringing to the attention of the media, and comes highly recommended by our own Bishop James of Rochester.

Jesus showed a special concern for the poor and outcast, which is why, as his followers, we are called to do the same. Over the past year, there has been an increased awareness of the plight of the poor, and the number of people using foodbanks continues to grow.

As local churches focus on Challenging Poverty, this course seeks to raise awareness of poverty (both overseas and at home), understand the reasons for poverty, discover how God blesses the poor, and consider what actions to take in response.

Details of groups being run and the times and dates are available from the church office (0208 460 5682) and on the notice board at the back of church.

Lent home groups offer the opportunity of asking questions in a safe environment and are led by experienced leaders. If you have not joined a group before, do consider it!

2. Lent Lunches

A simple lunch for up to 10 people, providing an opportunity to meet together, enjoy hospitality and support a charity.

Dates and locations are on lists at the back of the church where you can sign up to attend, or please ring the Parish Office on 8460 5682 for more information.

3. Holy Week and Easter

Join with us as we prepare for the Easter celebrations

March 29th - Palm Sunday

10.30am Procession of Palms and Eucharist for Palm Sunday

6.30pm A Passiontide Service of Readings, Anthems and Hymns
for Holy Week

March 30th and 31st, April 1st

8.00pm Evening service with reflection

April 2nd - Maundy Thursday

8.00pm Washing of Feet and Eucharist of the Last Supper

April 3rd - Good Friday

10.30am Family Service

2.00pm An Hour at the Cross

April 5th - Easter Day

8.00am Sunrise Eucharist

10.30am Eucharist of the Resurrection including the renewal of
Baptismal Vows and the Easter Egg Treasure Hunt



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WORSHIP

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08.00	Holy Communion
10.30	Family Communion, except the first Sunday in the month in term time. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 0-18.
10.30	All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
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
	revfinch@btinternet.com	
Associate Vicar	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	07531 617302/8460 5682
Reader Emeritus	Mrs. A. Gimson	8460 6494
Reader	Mr. P. Stotesbury	8650 3259
Pastoral Assistants	Mrs. S. Harrison	8464 0284
	Mrs. D. Speller	8466 1184
	Mrs. M. Westropp	8650 5178
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	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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Assistant Organist	Mr Daniel Beach	8289 6510
Electoral Roll	Mr. N. Stoffel	8460 0063
Stewardship	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178
Junior Church	Mrs. S. Aldred	8460 3978

PARISH OFFICE Tel/Fax 8460 5682

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com
Open 9.30 am - 12.30 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
Scouts GSL (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon.)	Mrs. J. Garvey	8249 8785
Cubs (Tues.)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers/admissions	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178
For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies & Guides please tel: 08001695901 or go to www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested		
Guides (Tues.)	Ms. N. Keast	07516 650940
Guides (Fri.)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon.)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Wed.)	Mrs. R. Kateswaran	8249 0984
Brownies (Thurs.)	Miss. G. Attoho	07946 833576
Rainbows	Ms. W. Keeping	8466 1599
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LOCAL CONTACTS

Cllr. M. Cooke	020 3665 0357
(Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Cllr D. Jefferys	020 8460 6030
(Email: david.jefferys@bromley.gov.uk)	
Highfield Infants' School	8464 7804
Highfield Junior School	8460 2597
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

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