

# Easter Joy



St. Mary's was packed for the Family service on Easter Sunday which was a great joy and celebration. Apart from the traditional Easter Egg hunt where the young and the very old received Easter eggs, there was teaching about how we can dare to believe the message of Easter, that Jesus died and rose again from the dead.

Reverend Jane spoke about the differences in the four gospel accounts of the experiences of those who met Jesus, apparently alive after his death and burial. She explained that even four people in the same family will experience an event very differently and that these seeming discrepancies are in fact the nearest we have to proof that something

quite extraordinary did happen. All four accounts, written by men, show women as witnesses of Jesus' resurrection: 2,000 years ago women weren't even allowed to testify in a court of law. Had the early church made up the stories, women would not have figured as the first witnesses and the stories would have tallied.

Highfield Infants' School held their Easter Fair on a cold and snowy day at the end of term. Governor Brian Dunk, Deputy Headteacher Nicola Williamson, and Reverend Jane Peters had the hard task of judging the Highfield Bake Off - a task which they took very seriously!

## Special Services & Events

### Thursday, 9 May - Ascension Day

8.00pm Holy Communion with hymns followed by drinks and the lighting of the Ascension Day Rocket  
- Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley,  
The Venerable Dr. Paul Wright

### Sunday, 19 May - Pentecost

10.30am Family Communion  
- Reverend Jane Peters

6.30pm Choral Evensong Dedicated to Bob German  
- Reverend Jane Peters  
Address: Peter Stotesbury  
Responses: Sanders  
Canticles: Murrill in E  
Anthem: Strengthen ye the weak hands by Harris

## Prayer Visiting in Shortlands

For the last five years, 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 when 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 pm and 8 pm. Most visits last just a few minutes – some a little longer. Over the years there has been a

huge response to the visits. The team hopes that its visits will remind people that St. Mary's is there for everyone. Many conversations that start out 'oh, I'm not a church goer' or 'I don't believe any of that' end up with people asking for prayer for loved ones or difficult situations in their lives. Confidentiality is respected, and for many prayer requests first names only 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. Perhaps one of our teams has visited you in the past, or will be knocking on your door this summer. 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.

*Susie Shelton*

# Healing Prayers

In last month's SPAN we were reminded that healing prayers take place at St. Mary's on a monthly basis, usually the third Sunday of the month, during the 10.30am service. Those wishing to receive prayers for themselves or on behalf of someone else can come to the back of church where a two-person team will pray with them. Those taking part in the church's ministry of healing do so with the co-operation of the incumbent and after training. In the New Testament we hear often of the healing miracles of Jesus and the early church. When we read about the life of Jesus we learn that his ministry was very much about preaching and healing. Including healing prayers within our services recognises that this is part of our church life.

Members of St. Mary's prayer team have attended a Healing and Wholeness course run by the Diocese of Rochester. We studied alongside people who had come from churches around the Diocese. Sharing our experiences and training with each other was very

helpful. Sessions ranged from the foundations of healing and examples of New Testament healing, to asking 'how well do you know yourself?' in preparation for offering healing prayers to others. We also came to understand the biblical principles of healing: that healing is about 'wholeness' in mind, body and spirit, and not necessarily just about physical healing.

The main aim of prayer ministry is to offer prayer to those who are feeling the need of a touch from God about a particular issue in their lives. During his earthly ministry Jesus made a difference to people physically, but the difference went much deeper than that. Lifestyles were transformed; aims and attitudes were changed. There was a new relationship between people and God. Those who met Jesus were different afterwards. This is still the essence of today's Christian healing ministry. Christ is risen, and if we can encounter him in our lives we will be changed.

**Susie Shelton**

# South Hill Wood Heritage Plaque



Photographed by Mark Lee.

*Dr. David Dewey unveils the blue plaque to honour Sir Thomas Dewey at 1 South Hill Road.*

**On a freezing March Friday, a Heritage Blue Plaque was unveiled at 1 South Hill Road to honour Sir Thomas Charles Dewey by Dr. David Dewey, his great grandson.**

The unveiling was attended by some of Sir Thomas Dewey's descendants, members of the Friends of South Hill Wood and Kingswood Glen (FSHWKG), many other representatives of the local community, and residents of the house itself. While the former home of Sir Thomas Dewey is in the parish of St. Mark's, it is in the Shortlands Ward. The commemorative blue plaque was instigated by the FSHWKG group with the support of local Councillors Ernest Noad and David Jefferys, Cllr. Peter Morgan, Bromley Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation, Patrick

Philips, Head of Parks & Greenspace, and Community Forester Pherenice Worsey-Buck. Cllr. Morgan said "A blue plaque is an appropriate way of celebrating the important

achievements of Sir Thomas Dewey, who made significant contributions to the local area". The Charter Mayor of Bromley in 1903-4, and President of Prudential Assurance, he was a philanthropist and a community action man.

We can recognise how he shaped community organisations and local institutions that are still in existence today. I think he would have approved of the efforts of FSHWKG volunteers and London Borough of Bromley. He would have been heartened by the sense of community between those who organised and attended the ceremony.

Though most of the Deweys live far away, their ancestor and heritage brought them back into the community that he had served and they stood together under the plaque after it was unveiled.

Before the event ended, Janet Dewey (great granddaughter-in-law and St. Mark's parishioner), Dr. David Dewey and I cut a cake, a carbon copy of the plaque, and we all had a slice or two, with lovely hot coffee and tea.

**Rachel Bailey**

## Mission of the Month Christian Aid Week 12th-18th May

*'They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away'.*

This is not just biblical rhetoric: it is a daily reality for nearly 900 million people worldwide. We simply cannot sit back and let the scandal continue!

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They need your financial support, but also your active help as a Street Collector. If you are able to give an hour or two to help us, please contact: Tricia Braithwaite (8460 4152) or Sara Craggs (8464 4379).

You can also find information on the notice board at the back of church.

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# Olivet to Calvary



On Palm Sunday the combined choirs of St. Mary's, St. Mark's and St. Peter & St. Paul sang, at St. Mark's church, the sacred cantata Olivet to Calvary by Maunder. In the past we have combined forces to sing choral evensong but agreed that this would be a refreshing change and an appropriate way to begin Holy Week. The performance was conducted by Andrew Wilson, Director of the Choir at St. Mark's, and the organ was played by John Eagles, organist at the church.

Frank Roddy



## 'At home' at St. Mary's

Home groups are gatherings of people (between 3 and 12) who meet together, usually in someone's home or sometimes a church room. Their purpose is to study the bible together, in order to understand how to apply it to our everyday living as Christians. They are also a good opportunity to meet people from the church who you may not know very well: friendships are forged and better understanding of each other grows.

5 different home groups run the whole year through, with usually a couple of extra ones in Lent. These groups cater for all intellectual abilities and tastes, and are informal, friendly and supportive. It doesn't matter if you are just starting out on your Christian journey or are well down the road, hopefully you can find a group that helps you.

Currently there is one Wednesday afternoon group, and four others meeting on various evenings. Groups meet fortnightly

or monthly. All the evening groups start at 8pm with coffee/tea and socialising. The afternoon group finishes with refreshments and cake!

All groups include some time for prayer, and 1-1½ hours of group study and discussion using bibles and sometimes study materials. Some groups end their terms with a social gathering or meal out.

In all groups the topics are discussed in relation to today's world and how to apply what is learnt to Christian daily living. As well as studying books of the Bible, home groups have studied the Lord's Prayer, the 39 articles, books such as The Shack and Chocolat, and themes such as God's Love, Jesus' disciples, prayer, and women of the New Testament.

If you are interested in joining a home group please chat to Sue Slaney, one of the house group leaders or Rev. Jane Peters and we will try to match you up with a group.

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## Just William in Shortlands

ONCE UPON A TIME in the Seventies, on the opposite side of the road to me in Shortlands, lived the fascinating William Brown. Well, that is if what I have always believed to be the case is true; that the character of William was based upon Richmal Crompton's nephew, Thomas, and indeed her first published story (for the Girls' Own Paper) revolved around a certain Thomas - like William a rebel against authority.

Tom Disher was Richmal's nephew, and the relationship is strengthened by reference to "Growing up with Just William" by his sister, Margaret Disher, in which 'Richmal Crompton's niece tells the inside family story.' (Outlaw Publishing Company 1990). In 1917 Richmal, at the age of 27, had moved to Kent to be near her married sister - mother to Margaret and Tom. The latter I found difficult to reconcile in later life as being responsible for the antics of William; but then boys are known to grow up!

It was hard to associate my erstwhile friend Tom, whose seeming less- than- glamorous working life in a bank seemed more suited to his then-revealed personality, than with his former representative character as the irrepressible William. As also to some extent was his Lay Readership in the Church of England (although his addresses at St. Mary's Shortlands were often unintentionally humorous and certainly unforgettable).

Nevertheless, loveable quirks of character remained strongly in evidence, and as young William himself would doubtless have put it: "Bein' someone else would be more fun than anythin'."

David Alston



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- 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.*

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**PARISH OFFICE Tel/Fax 8460 5682**

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com  
Open 9.15 am - 12.30 weekdays. Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

**ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS**

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Cubs (Mon.)	Mrs. J. Garvey	8249 8785
Cubs (Tues.)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers/admissions	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178

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**LOCAL NUMBERS**

Highfield Infants' School	8464 7804
Highfield Junior School	8460 2597
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

**SPAN INFORMATION**

Website [www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk](http://www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk)  
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