

# Time to grow – and rest

Thank you to everyone who has given Richard and me such a warm welcome since we moved to Shortlands. We seem to have achieved some success at unpacking boxes, although we still have quite a few left.

One of the things that feels strange about becoming Vicar in a new parish is that everyone else knows what is happening and coming up, and at times it feels as though you are the only person who doesn't know what is happening. It can feel strange when we attend a new church. We are not quite sure how the service runs, we may feel embarrassed when we don't know where to go for coffee or who to ask when we need something. It's even worse when you're the Vicar!

And now, for many around us, it's time for a break. We've just come to the end of the academic year. Many clubs and groups close down over the school holidays, giving their members and leaders a break from the usual routine. In the past the long summer holiday meant that children could help

out on farms with harvesting. I remember school friends picking strawberries, raspberries and potatoes.

In the church year, the weeks at this time of year are known as 'ordinary time' – a season of growth. Like most plants, we too thrive best in good growing conditions. We need our equivalent of nutrients and water to allow us to put strong healthy roots in our faith. It is these roots which will support us and allow us to grow into healthy Christians.

We all need a break from some of the busyness that surrounds us. A change of routine can do us all good – even if it only means that we are glad when the school holidays are over and we realise how much we appreciate our normal pattern. And SPAN is also taking a break. This is a double issue – so you'll see the next one at the end of September.

I hope you enjoy a lovely warm summer, whether you're at home or away.

**Rev Morag Finch**



Having fun at St Mary's: Junior Church returns on Sunday 8 September. See [www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/ChildrenYoungPeople/JuniorChurch](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/ChildrenYoungPeople/JuniorChurch) for dates

## Thank you!

As always, this has been a difficult year in many countries around the world. What's different here you may ask? Well, despite economic hardship at home, we in Shortlands have collected the sum of £2,863.09 to donate to Christian Aid.

A big thank you to our diligent collectors and to you, our parishioners, for this heart-warming response! Our uniformed organisations, Junior Church, Pre-school and Mothers and Toddlers all put Pennies from Heaven around the Church, totalling £154.07. Thanks to all these youngsters and their leaders and to Pat Chase who facilitated their visits.

**Tricia Braithwaite and Sara Craggs**

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## Special Events and Services

**Sunday 8 September – Patronal Festival**

**10.30am Family Communion**

Magnificat: Dyson in D.

To be followed by a 'Bring and Share' lunch.

**Sunday 6 October – Harvest Festival**

**10.30am Family and Parade Service**

Includes the presentation of Harvest Gifts.



## From the Registers

### At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

22 June Joanna McArthur, aged 34

25 June Alexander Sheppard, aged 72



### Remembering

#### Joanna McArthur

Joanna Denise McEgan was born in Merseyside in 1978, the second child (of four) to Denis and Patricia.

She was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition and excelled at school. On leaving school she got a degree in Law, then a Masters in Family Law. She was called to the Bar in 2002, completing her Pupillage to become a Barrister in 12 months.

Taken on as a Pupil in Furnival Chambers, she was quickly offered a tenancy and so began a promising career in Criminal Law – both prosecuting and defending – and she rapidly developed a good practice earning the respect of her peers and fellow solicitors.

In her early years she felt her future lay on the stage as her interests were in drama and performance – skills which were useful in her career!

Popular throughout her life, Joanna

excelled at everything to which she turned her hand, apart from her first driving test! She struggled with that failure but persevered.

It was during her pupillage year that Jo met Andy, and because it was frowned upon for young Barristers to date Solicitors in case of ulterior motivation, they kept their relationship quiet. However, from the onset they were more or less 'joined at the hip'. For the next seven years until Jo's untimely death they literally did everything together.

It was our joy at St Mary's to perform their wedding in 2010, and immensely moving given that we knew her cancer was already taking hold of her. Many of their guests on that happy April day were again together for her funeral at St Mary's in June – the church was full.

Throughout her last months Jo continued to be an inspiration to everyone she met, raising funds for research, getting 50 years' worth of marriage out of three short years and bringing laughter and joy to every one of her and Andy's friends, family and those of us who had the privilege of knowing her.

The light which remained in her eyes to the end spoke of a deep spirituality, reverence for God and a real love for life. Jo will be missed beyond words.

#### Alec Sheppard

Alec Sheppard was born 72 years ago in Torquay to where the family was evacuated.

As a child, Alec suffered from a weak heart and it was because of a need to exercise it that he was encouraged to take up boxing.

This stood him in good stead when, years later, his boys were expected to take country dancing and ballet lessons at school. Alec's mind boggled – and he got in touch with the headmaster and demanded to know why there was no football club. The rest is history. He was 'volunteered' to run what became a very successful football team and did boxing training too.

On leaving school he started working for a heating and air conditioning company but went on to become a mechanical engineer.

In 1967 he married Joan and they had three sons: John, Jamie and Robbie. Alec was very proud of his boys. It was a long marriage – 46 years – something quite rare these days, and a marriage of ups and downs, delights and disappointments. A real rather than storybook marriage.

He was also proud of the famous people he met late on in his career when he went to work for Landmark Hotels. One whose company he particularly enjoyed was Rod Steiger!

Alec had some abiding passions. One was Trade Unions: he cared almost too passionately about that kind of justice. And dogs: Shaney, Henry, Charlie, Teddy and Billy.

Alec was Jewish by birth but not Orthodox. He believed in God as God has always believed in Alec and he is now in the fullness of life in his presence.

## My Day Job

This January I started a new job working on policy issues for the Fairtrade Foundation. Our main role is to make sure that Fairtrade products really are fairly traded, to encourage more people and companies to support Fairtrade, and to argue against unfair trade practices.

Nearly 20 years ago I worked in a rural area of Afghanistan as a development worker. The area grew a lot of fantastic grapes, but the farmers were only able to sell a few locally. I still find it amazing that you can now buy Fairtrade raisins from the same farms in supermarkets in Bromley – as well as direct from organisations like Traidcraft and Tropical Wholefoods.

'100% Fairtrade' companies, like Cafedirect and Traidcraft, were first set up when it was realised that farmers in poorer countries weren't able to meet the cost of producing their crops. This meant they weren't able to invest in their farms, pay proper wages, or access education, health or other services.

From these small beginnings, Fairtrade has now crossed over into the mainstream, with more than £1.5 billion spent on Fairtrade products in the UK alone last year, and big companies switching products over to Fairtrade.

The Fairtrade label, which has its 20th birthday next year, guarantees that a jar of coffee (or a jar of honey, clothing

– or even a wedding ring) has been produced in line with Fairtrade standards.

Part of my job is to research Fairtrade – is it working on the ground, and where does the system need to be improved? We publish all our research, and use the findings to advise on improving the Fairtrade standards and procedures, which are periodically reviewed and updated.

Many people don't know what Fairtrade actually stands for. It varies depending on the product, but it includes the need for farms to pay fair wages and uphold labour rights; to prohibit child labour and enforce child safety; and good environmental management, including restrictions on pesticides.

Companies who buy from Fairtrade farms must guarantee to pay a minimum price – or the market price if that is higher. They also have to pay a 'Fairtrade premium' which is put to a use decided by farmers themselves – usually a combination of investment back into the farm and support for community projects like education or health.

There are lots of ways to support Fairtrade. Buying Fairtrade products is obviously important (especially if you do so from the Traidcraft stall at St Mary's!). From our London office we also support schools, churches, and towns who want to apply for Fairtrade status, or individuals who want to take part in Fairtrade campaigns. Do I enjoy my job? Obviously it is very busy and challenging, but I would have to say unequivocally 'yes'!

**Tim Aldred**

# Mission of the Month

## August: Tools for Self Reliance

You can't work without tools. African artisans – builders, blacksmiths, seamstresses and more – make farm tools, build schools and homes, sew school uniforms and make desks for students.

Tools for Self Reliance works with experienced local organisations across Africa to provide the tools and train the people who need to earn a living and build their communities.

A guest speaker from this small charity will be at the 10.30am service at St Mary's on 18 August – please come and join us! For more information see the display at the back of the church, or go to [www.tfsr.org](http://www.tfsr.org)

## September: Demelza Hospice Care for Children

Demelza Hospice Care for Children supports almost 800 life-limited children and their families across Kent, South East London and East Sussex. Demelza has two residential hospices, in Eltham and in Sittingbourne, as well as a community nursing team based in East Sussex.

Jordan, who is 16 and was diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy at the age of three, has been coming to Demelza since he was six. "I probably had an idea it was going to be like a hospital but it was more like a big house. Demelza is my place, it feels better than home."

Sadly, last year Jordan lost his close friend who had the same condition. "He was my best friend and partner in crime. It hit me really hard, but being able to go to Demelza and just talk to the staff about him was really good and helped me a great deal. I still keep in contact with his mum which also has helped."

Demelza has to raise almost £9 million a year to maintain the standard of care to the children and their families. Parents regard Demelza as an absolute lifeline, a haven of peace where they can recharge their batteries and seek support, enabling them to continue with the very high demands of caring for a child 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year after year.

For more information, see the display at the back of the church, or go to [www.demelza.org.uk](http://www.demelza.org.uk)



On 30 June, St Mary's hosted the Civic Service, marking the start of Cllr Ernest Noad's year of office as Mayor of the London Borough of Bromley

## Iron rations

Shortlands is a desirable place to live. I can say that from experience, having been born in Meadow Road, off Beckenham Lane, having attended the Valley School at the outbreak of the Second World War, and having known the place for more years than I care to recall.

So many people live here now who will look back on their years of residence with varying degrees of affection and attraction. For me, it is a notebook of memories.

Our school bomb shelters were excavated from the soil of the school land adjoining Beckenham Lane, and the weary repetitive strain of the air raid siren would signal our disappearance into the depths of the concrete bunker dug for us. We were not expected to stay for any length of time, and were told that the iron rations (Mars bars etc), which we had been asked to supply, could be put to good use after half an hour of confinement.

Invariably, just prior to the expiry of the magic 30 minutes, and just as we eagerly anticipated the promised snack, the all-clear siren would sound. It always did. So much for good fortune; I never did get my Mars back.

David Alston

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## Date for your diary

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## Well Done Mowgli!

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- 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 Priest	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	07531 617302/8460 5682
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Junior Church		

**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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Friends of St. Mary's	Miss J. Rambridge	8650 0947
Scouts GSL (Fri)	Mr. C. Wood	8658 1825
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 telephone 08001695901 or go to [www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested](http://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. A. Watson	8650 0184
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**LOCAL CONTACTS**

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Highfield Infants' School	8464 7804
Highfield Junior School	8460 2597
Residents' Association	8460 4060
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**SPAN INFORMATION**

Website	<a href="http://www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk">www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk</a>
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