

God with us

I started writing this after taking down the Christmas decorations on 6th January or 'Twelfth Night'. This date is associated with the three Wise Men bringing gifts to the baby Jesus and is the beginning of the season of Epiphany in the church calendar. The word 'epiphany' means 'manifestation' or 'appearance' and people may talk about having an 'epiphany moment' when they are suddenly struck with a life-changing realisation.

The season of Epiphany continues through January. In the Church of England the season ends at the beginning of February, for some other churches it continues until just before the start of Lent. In all cases there is a theme of 'epiphany' as individuals begin to recognise something of who Jesus is and try to get to grips with what that means. For the wise men he is the Messiah, God's anointed one. For John the Baptist, urging people to transform their lives, the adult Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. For Simeon and Anna the baby Jesus, brought to the temple by his parents just like any other first-born son, is a light for the whole world, the fulfilment of what they have been waiting for all their lives.

It is easy to assume that these moments of realisation were immediate and complete, but I suspect the reality was very different. None of these individuals would have understood fully who Jesus was and what his coming really meant for the world, but in all cases they marvelled at God being present, 'God with us', rather than some remote abstract concept.

'God with us' or 'Emmanuel', one of the names given to Jesus, reflects the amazing claim at the heart of Christianity that Jesus is both human and divine, vulnerable and yet all powerful, present alongside us, loving each one of us, understanding our struggles and confusion as well as sharing in our joys.

This claim applies here in Shortlands just as much as 2,000 years ago in Palestine. At St Mary's church, placed as it is in a central position in the Shortlands community, our prayer is that we may live out our mission, shown at the top of this page. May this help us all in our individual 'epiphanies' as in the words of St Paul in 1 Corinthians: 'For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as I am known'.

Catherine Bingham

SAVE THE DATE!

Douai 25th Anniversary

Celebrating 25 Years of St Mary, Shortlands'
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2-3 May, 2020

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For further information

please contact Gill Dawson
gill@gill.dawson.name or 07767 365318



Special Events and Services

Sunday 2 February - The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

4.00pm Choral Evensong

Responses: Smith

Canticles: Walmsley

Anthem: When to the temple Mary went

Sunday 9 February

10.30pm All Age Service

*A service for the whole family with live music
and activities*

Wednesday 26 February - Ash Wednesday

10.00am Holy Communion services

& 8.00pm With the Imposition of Ashes



From the Registers

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Iris Barnes 23 Dec

Ena Saward 9 Jan

Raymond Wilson 16 Jan



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

My day job

I tend to keep a low profile so I have surprised myself by agreeing to make this contribution.

I was born and brought up in Batley, Yorkshire – as a Methodist – in the early 50s. I attended local schools before studying at the School of Pharmacy, University of Bradford in the early 70s and I had actually completed the course before meeting Caroline, my future wife.

She had a further year of her teacher training course to complete before we married and moved to Bournemouth where I worked for Boots the Chemist. Although I did register as a Pharmacist in 1974, I pursued a career mainly in management with Boots. This indicated moves to Cheltenham and Sutton Coldfield before finally to Bromley in 1982.

Along the way we were blessed with three lovely children – Helen, Paul and Ruth. Paul had a lovely voice and joined St Mary's Choir and Ruth was a server.

Caroline joined the staff at Highfield and taught infants for around 20 years. She would be better known than me, as she was an enthusiastic member of the choir for many years. Tragically she was diagnosed with cancer in 2012 and had a courageous five-year battle. I am left with very many happy memories and seven grandchildren – two of whom Caroline never met.

I enjoy all sports. I was an active tennis member of the Parklangley club until arthritis became troublesome. I do still play golf at nearby Shirley Park and I am a keen gardener.

I help look after the Church's Memorial Gardens. I find the congregation at St Mary's very friendly although there are many of you that I don't know – please say hello if you see me.

Bob Farrar



BINGO NIGHT

Saturday 29 February

7.30pm for 8pm start

St Mary's Church Hall

Tickets: www.ticketsource.co.uk/stmaryspreschoolbingonight

Bring your own drinks

All proceeds will go to St Mary's Pre-School to enable the purchase of some exciting new resources

Desert Island Discs

A final outing for our series based on the Radio 4 programme featuring people from the parish with the eight tracks of music they would choose to have with them if marooned on a desert island, and why.

This month Lynn Best, wife of Revd. Gary, chooses her music:

I love music and have a wide-ranging taste, so only choosing eight was very difficult. All the songs shown have a very personal meaning to me and are songs that I could listen to any time of the day.



1. Man in the mirror (Michael Jackson) - I like all Michael Jackson music but this track is certainly my favourite. The song is about making changes in the world and reminding us all that if we truly want to make changes, it has to start with ourselves, something I really believe.
2. Truly, madly, deeply (Savage Garden) - this was the first dance song played on Gary's and my wedding day. It is a very special song for both of us.
3. Beautiful (James Blunt) - this song was popular when my daughter, Olivia, was born and I feel that it reflects her beauty.
4. Amazing Grace - this is just my favourite hymn of all time.
5. Sweet Caroline (Neil Diamond) - my Dad has always sung this at family parties and get-togethers with friends. Wonderful memories.
6. Hey hey we're the Monkees (The Monkees) - crazy fun song enjoyed by my family and reflects our house...most of the time!
7. Supermarket flowers (Ed Sheeran) - it was hard to choose just one song from Ed but this song is just beautiful and a very personal favourite of mine.
8. Amazing (Bruno Mars) - this song reflects how I feel about my children. They are all different, but they are also all amazing!

Time for a Big Brew!

You are invited to join the Craft and Chatter Group who are hosting this year's Traidcraft Big Brew to help celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight.

Enjoy delicious home-made cakes made with fair traded ingredients, quizzes with prizes, and a selection of fair traded goods for sale from biscuits to bags. There will be a chance to find out more about the work Traidcraft do around the world.

As a registered Fairtrade church we have supported Traidcraft and Traidcraft Exchange for many years now: there is still a lot of work needed to make trade fairer and more just around the world.

We will be celebrating on Shrove Tuesday, February 25, from 10am to 12noon, in the Choir Vestry, Church House.

All are welcome!



St Mary's choir was joined by Bishop James Langstaff when it gave a Christmas concert at St George's Bloomsbury in aid of Action Around Bethlehem Children with Disability (www.abcdbethlehem.org).

Lent Course 2020

This year, St. Mary's will be hosting its own Lent Course entitled 'The Mystery of God'. This is a Lent Course that was created by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and I am grateful that they have allowed St. Mary's to use the course within our own church.

The course will take place over six weeks and we will be looking at the following topics:

- February 25 + 26 (Week 1): The Mystery of Good and Evil
- March 3 + 4 (Week 2): The Mystery of God's Glory
- March 10 + 11 (Week 3): The Mystery of Sin, Suffering and Hope
- March 17 + 18 (Week 4): The Mystery of Relationship and Reconciliation
- March 24 + 25 (Week 5): The Mystery of Love and Sacrifice
- March 31 + April 1 (Week 6): The Mystery of Joy and Salvation

This course will help us to rediscover what it is that draws us so deeply in our search for God. We will follow Jesus through the Lenten readings, allowing him to bring us in love and wonder into a greater understanding of God's plan of salvation.

In each session there will be opportunities for discussion: an inspiration to those who are perhaps wanting to learn and understand more about their own faith and for those who are looking and searching, with challenges too for those who are well used to studying scripture.

The sessions will take place twice a week, Tuesday evenings at 8pm and Wednesday lunchtimes at 11.30am in the Millennium Chapel at St Mary's.

Revd Gary Best

Mission of the month

Traidcraft Exchange

In its simplest form trade should be beneficial for everyone involved. Goods and money are exchanged and everyone is better off. Sadly this is not always the case for millions of small producers and people in bonded labour around the world.

Traidcraft Exchange (the sister charity to Traidcraft plc) works to help the people around the world who are exploited when trading with others, trapping them in poverty. Traidcraft Exchange's mission is to challenge the way global trade works, to use the power of trade to create lasting solutions to poverty, helping producers and their environments.

A fair and just income gives you freedom, security and hope for the future. It allows you to feed your family and educate your children. It gives people dignity and reduces the need for charity. For more information about Traidcraft Exchange visit www.traidcraftexchange.org or see the board at the back of church

At St Mary's we are signed up to be a Fairtrade Church. We serve fairly traded refreshments whenever possible. We also hold a monthly stall stocked with fairly traded goods, foods, cards, crafts and gifts: please see the notice board in church for dates and times or ring 020 831 30246.

We also celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight: this year it is from 24 February to 8 March. Please see page 2 for information about our Big Brew on 25 February.



Dates for Holy Week and Easter

Please join us at St. Mary's as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter:

- April 5th - Palm Sunday** 8am & 10.30am Procession of Palms and Eucharist at the 10.30am service
- April 6th, 7th, 8th** 8.00pm Compline and Reflection
- April 9th - Maundy Thursday** 8pm - Eucharist of the Last Supper
- April 10th - Good Friday** 10.30am - Family Communion; 2.00pm - An hour at the Cross
- April 12th - Easter Day** 8am Easter Eucharist; 10.30am Family Communion with Easter Egg Hunt



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WORSHIP

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- 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 Tuesday

- 17.30 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

- 10.00 Holy Communion

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

PARISH DIRECTORY

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Vicar | Revd Gary Best | 8460 0262 |
| (day off - Friday) | | |
| Vicar@stmaryshortlands.church | | |
| Licensed Lay Ministers | | |
| | Mrs S. Aldred | 8460 3978 |
| | Mrs C. Bingham | 8460 0324 |
| | Mrs A-M. Jefferys | 8460 6030 |
| Readers | Mr P. Stotesbury | 8650 3259 |
| | Mr S. Buchanan | 8777 8008 |
| Pastoral Assistants | Mrs S. Harrison | 8464 0284 |
| | Mrs M. Westropp | 8650 5178 |
| | Mrs D. Speller | 07941415082 |
| Parish Administrator | Ms N. Blake | 8460 5682 |
| Assistant | Mrs E. Parker | 8460 5682 |
| Churchwardens | Mr A. Williams | 07914343495 |
| | Mrs S. Leonard | 07725313432 |
| Deputies | Mrs P. Chase | 8464 6188 |
| | Mr S. Clark | 8464 0696 |
| | Mr D. Cooper | 8460 0682 |
| | Prof M. Fox | 8650 3252 |
| | Dr D. Jefferys | 8460 6030 |
| PCC Secretary | Mrs S. Maurel | 01689 331793 |
| Treasurer | Mr T. Dawson | 8460 5884 |
| Assistant Treasurer | Mr R. Hogg | 8290 0613 |
| Organist and Director of Music | | |
| | Canon C. Tillotson | 8460 7368 |
| Assistant Organist | Mr Daniel Beach | 8289 6510 |
| Safeguarding Officer | Mrs Kay Coleman | 07879337567 |
| Electoral Roll | Mrs S. Maurel | 01689 331793 |
| Junior Church | Mrs J. Eade | 3624 0559 |
| Stewardship | Mr J. Westropp | 8650 5178 |

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

ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Toddlers | Mrs J. Runicles | 8402 6599 |
| Craft and Chatter Group | | |
| | Mrs J. Boam | 8460 7101 |
| 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 | Ms E. Hay | 07932758801 |

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

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Guides (Tues.) | Ms N. Blake | 07773986337 |
| Guides (Fri.) | Mrs G. Dawson | 8460 5884 |
| Brownies (Mon.) | Miss K. Higgs | 8462 3285 |
| Brownies (Thurs.) | Mrs S. Tight | 8460 8122 |
| Rainbows | Ms H. Last | 8460 1705 |
| Pre-School | Mrs C. Hall | 8290 6704 |
| | or 07960 988552 | |
| The 2WW's | Mrs A. Swatton | 8650 1114 |
| Church Flowers | Mrs C. Willatt | 8313 0246 |
| Mission Chairman | Mrs S. Shelton | 8402 3299 |
| Douai Link | Mrs G. Dawson | 8460 5884 |
| Fair Trade | Mrs C. Willatt | 8313 0246 |

LOCAL CONTACTS

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Cllr M. Cooke | 07912 649058 |
| (Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk) | |
| Cllr A. Cuthbert | |
| (Email: aisha.cuthbert@bromley.gov.uk) | |
| Residents' Association | 8460 4060 |
| Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood | 8721 2614 |

SPAN INFORMATION

Website www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk
Editorial Parish Office 8460 5682
Distribution Mr. M. Harrison 8464 0284
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