

St Mary's Shortlands - News Sheet

February 2021

At the moment all St Mary's services are streamed live through Facebook. Please go to www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands or follow the link on our website www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk. They can be watched live or at a later time. The relevant orders of service are available by clicking the link on the home page of the website.

Sunday 10.30am

Holy Communion

Followed by Coffee and Chat (on Zoom) at 11.30am. Please email the parish office to receive a link - office@stmaryshortlands.church

Monday to Saturday, 9am

Morning Prayer

Wednesday, 8.30pm

Compline

Special services this month

Sunday 21st Feb, 6.30pm

Songs of Praise

Please send any requests for a favourite hymn, reading or prayer to canonclaire.tillotson@gmail.com or vicar@stmaryshortlands.church

The Church is open for private prayer and reflection from 10am to 3pm on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday

Pastoral and practical support

St Mary's has a team of people available to provide both pastoral and practical support to members of the congregation and the wider community. If we can help in any way, please email Revd Gary, vicar@stmaryshortlands.church

St Mary's Electoral Roll

The St Mary's electoral roll is revised annually for the APCM. The only people who need to fill in an application form this year are those who have recently moved into the parish, joined the church, or reached the age of 16. Everyone who was on the electoral roll last year remains on it this year automatically. To be newly added to the electoral roll please email stephanie.howarthmaurel@yahoo.co.uk for a form. All forms need to be received by Stephanie by *Sunday 11th April*. This year's APCM will be held on Sunday 2nd May.

Future Generations Project

The PCC has agreed to proceed with purchase of audio-visual equipment to improve the visual and sound quality of services that are streamed for people viewing at home. Quotes have been received from three companies and some of the proposed equipment has been demonstrated. The final choice of supplier should be made soon. We have already raised enough money for the Future Generations Project to cover the cost of this equipment.

Thank you to everyone who has fed in their views and questions via futuregenerations@stmaryshortlands.church

Discussion Groups on Zoom

During Advent we ran zoom meetings to discuss the sermon series on characters from the nativity. Although all of us prefer meeting in person the groups worked well, with more than 20 people joining one or other of the weekly meetings. We were enriched not only by the insights from the sermons but also by the thoughts that we shared at the meetings, and felt newly challenged by how the participants in the nativity responded to events. Meeting and sharing in this way was thought-provoking and also enhanced our sense of feeling part of the church in these strange times. We hope that others will want to try joining a group for the forthcoming Lent course (details below). *Stuart Buchanan*

Jigsaw Puzzles

For all who are spending time in lockdown doing jigsaw puzzles and are looking for a new challenge. There is now a selection of jigsaw puzzles to swap or borrow on the table just inside the main door of the church. They can be accessed on days that the church is open.

Lent 2021

Lent Course. During Lent we will be running discussion groups using Zoom, following a course called “Opening the Scriptures – Setting our hearts on fire”, The course, which is produced by Churches Together (CTBI), uses imagery, music and video to reflect on scriptures from the Old and New Testament to help us explore what they mean to us. Participants are encouraged to discover the Bible with their heart as well as their mind, soul and strength. Within Zoom we will be able to split into small groups for discussion and use screen-sharing to look at other material.



The Lent group meetings will be at 8pm on Tuesdays (Feb 23rd to March 23rd) or 2.00pm on Wednesdays (Feb 24th to March 24th). Please email Revd Gary to be sent the Zoom link vicar@tsmaryshortlands.church.

Lent Reading. If you are looking for some devotional reading for Lent, do feel free to borrow one of the church library books. A number of relevant books have been laid out on a table at the back of church.

You might want to consider buying this this year's BRF Lent book *Trystan Owain Hughes - Opening Our Lives: Devotional Reading for Lent* (£8.99); or the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book *Hannah Steele – Living his Story: Revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways* (£9.99). To find out more or to order a book, contact Kate Buchanan kateinww@btinternet.com (0208 7778008)

Prayer for the Nation

In response to reaching the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from Covid-19, the Archbishops invite all to call on God in prayer. Starting on 1st February we are invited to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love.

*Gracious God,
as we remember before you the thousands who have died,
surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion.
Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair,
and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope
in Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.*

Farewell

On Sunday 17th January we said farewell to Tony Wright-Jones and family who have moved to live near Evesham in Worcestershire. Claire Tillotson thanked Tony for his commitment to the choir over many years and for all he has contributed to our life at St Mary's. She also thanked Oliver for his membership of the choir, from a young treble through to singing bass before he moved on to university. We wish Tony, Gosha and Oliver every happiness in their new home.

Congratulations

Warmest congratulations to Heather Donovan who has recently celebrated her 95th birthday.



Biden's Bible

It appears that there is a connection between our link parish at Douai in France and the huge Bible on which President Joe Biden took the oath of office at his inauguration. Annette German has heard via a friend in Douai that the Bible, which has been in the Biden family for more than a hundred years, uses a translation to English that was made by scholars at the English Catholic College in Douai in the 16th Century. Look out for more on this in the next issue of SPAN.



The Organ

While there are no services in church we have been able to arrange for the first stage of repairs to our organ. Currently the organ is in pieces to allow a thorough refurbishment and repair of the console, soundboard and cabling. This work will resolve the very serious problems that have affected the organ recently and should be completed by the time we return to services in church. There will be further stages of work at a later date to refurbish the keyboards and pipes.

A date for your diary

To raise funds for the Organ Repair Fund there will be a **Wine Tasting Quiz** by Zoom on **Saturday 13th March** from 7.30pm.

Further details to follow

Please send any items for the March News Sheet to Kate Buchanan by Sunday 28th February. kateinww@btinternet.com