

## Reflecting - and celebrating

As I write, we are in the first week of Lent, the period in the Christian calendar which represents the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry.

Lent starts on Ash Wednesday – ashes symbolising mortality and repentance – and traditionally ends on Easter Saturday or 'Holy Saturday': the day after Jesus was crucified but before the joy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Day. Although Lent lasts for more than 40 days, this is because Sundays, as days when Christians celebrate the resurrection, are not included in Lent.

For Christians, Lent is a time for reflection and encouraging each other to take time to think about our priorities in life. At St Mary's we have been following a series called the 'Rhythm of Life' created by the diocese of Leeds. It is inspired by the work of religious communities and a paraphrase of Matthew 11.28: *'Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.'*

The series is an opportunity to re-align and keep Christ at the centre of our daily lives, focusing on both our own wellbeing and practical commitments to the good of others. If you are interested to find out more there are booklets in the church which give a bible passage, questions to think about and prayers on each of the five themes we have been looking at: resting, creating, sharing, encouraging and celebrating.

As we come toward the end of Lent, the final theme – 'celebrating' – focuses not, as you might expect, on Easter Day but rather on the Last Supper, when Jesus celebrated the Jewish Passover with his friends before his crucifixion. This brought together the celebration of the liberation of the Jews

from slavery in Egypt, many centuries before, with Jesus offering the bread and wine of the Passover as his body and blood to be a strength and stay for his disciples in years to come. He is present with us as we remember his sacrifice and seek inspiration in both the suffering and the joy. To learn more, do please come along to any of the services and events at St Mary's as we look forward to Easter and beyond.

**Catherine Bingham**



SPRING IS HERE! We have been enjoying the Spring flowers in St Mary's garden.

### ***Special Services and Events***

**Thursday 17 April – Maundy Thursday**

**8.00pm Holy Communion**

**Friday 18 April - Good Friday**

**2.00pm An Hour at the Cross**

**Sunday 20 April - Easter Day**

**10.30am Family Communion**

*With an Easter Egg Hunt*

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Come along to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in church on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May after the 10.30am service to find out more about what has happened at St. Mary's over the last year - and our plans for the next year. Papers for the meeting will be published on the website at least a week in advance:

[www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk)

## Change, serve, grow

St Mary's is part of Beckenham Deanery, a group of 12 churches in the local area. Each Deanery is headed by the Area Dean, and the Deanery Synod is the overarching decision-making group of clergy and laity. On 10<sup>th</sup> March our previous Area Dean, Rev. Jeremy Blunden of St George's, stepped down and Rev. Richard Jones of Christ Church and St. Paul's Anerley was commissioned to the role for the next five years.

On the same evening, Bishop Jonathan, the Bishop of Rochester, addressed Beckenham and Bromley Deanery Synods on the Vision and Strategy of the Diocese. These have three strands: Change, Serve, and Grow. They are underpinned by 'Seeking first the kingdom of God', which is the basis of all that your parish church does.

After the Covid pandemic when many people started to 'do' church differently and church attendance fell, and then the global situation which is scary for many, there has been an increase in the number of people seeking spiritual answers, resulting in a rise in attendance as was evident at the Christmas services at St Mary's.

Now the Diocese wants to enable and continue that growth through its appointment of missional leaders, such as our new incumbent Revd David Edmundson who we are welcoming on 6<sup>th</sup> May. The work includes training and equipping volunteers so that we can build our outreach groups to share the love of God with the community and ensure that our churches are safe and nurturing environments where growth can take place, and where all are welcome.

We hope that you will be part of this exciting vision for our diocese and parish, and that our church will be the centre of our community as we seek to show God's glory here in Shortlands.

*Ann-Marie Jefferys*

## Commemorating VE Day

On May 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be opening the church to a display of memorabilia related to the events of World War Two and how it impacted the residents of Shortlands. The exhibition is scheduled to coincide with the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory in Europe Day on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945.

As we are delighted to be holding the Installation of our new Vicar, Revd David Edmondson on May 6<sup>th</sup>, only part of the display will be in place between May 3<sup>rd</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>. The rest of the display will be erected on Wednesday May 7<sup>th</sup> and will remain until Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup>.

A Tea Party will be held on Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. All are welcome: you are encouraged to dress in 1940s-style clothes if you wish. Tickets will be available at the beginning of April from the church office.

We are still seeking memorabilia and memories from World War Two, especially anything concerning residents of Shortlands and it is hoped to display these in the church.

Please do contact Kay Coleman on 07879 337567 if you would like to offer anything on loan or write/talk about any memories.

## Time to be counted

The electoral roll is the register of electors who can vote at St Mary's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). Those on the roll can also stand for election to the Parochial Church Council and/or any other church bodies such as the Deanery, Diocesan or General Synod. People who live outside the parish but are on the electoral roll also enjoy all the rights and privileges that go with living in the parish (for example baptisms, funerals and weddings).

Every sixth year the roll has to be compiled from scratch: this is the case in 2025. Everyone will need to reapply to be on the electoral roll - even if you were on last year's list.

To be included on the roll, people who are not ordained ministers must be 16 or over by the date of the APCM and have been baptised and submitted a signed application form. They must also be a member of the Church of England, or of a church in communion with the Church of England, and live in the parish; or, if not living in the parish, have habitually attended public worship in the parish in the previous six months.

From 10<sup>th</sup> March you can collect an application form from the back of church or email [secretary@stmarysshortlands.church](mailto:secretary@stmarysshortlands.church) to request a form. Completed forms can be dropped into the Church House letterbox. Alternatively, visit [www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/news/annual-parochial-church-meeting](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/news/annual-parochial-church-meeting) and complete the online form. The closing date for applications is 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025.



Looking for a place to meet with friends or family?

A place where adults and children are welcome?

Why not call in to St. Mary's Church Community Café, open every Wednesday from 10.30am-12.30pm, in the main church building.

Free refreshments, including great cake!



**PLANT SALE**  
**Saturday 17 May**  
**11am - 1pm**  
**in the church grounds**  
**Refreshments from**  
**St Mary's Community Café**





**LADIES NIGHT:** In February, 42 ladies from St Mary's Church went for a meal in Beckenham. It was an evening full of laughter and fellowship.

## Bowled over!

If you have ever thought about trying your hand at bowls, come along to South Hill Wood Bowling Club on Saturday 3 May between 10.00am and 12.00noon. We are one of the most popular bowls clubs in Bromley and very local, with our green being in an attractive public park on Tootswood Road. Currently we have around a hundred members – roughly equal numbers of ladies and men.

Through the summer the green is available for playing bowls every day. There is always a full programme of activities to suit those who simply want a casual game of bowls through to club competitions, friendly matches against other local clubs and more competitive matches. There are also club knock out competitions – for novices, men, ladies and mixed – culminating at Finals Weekend around the beginning of September.

While playing bowls is the club's core activity, there is a varied programme of social events too which take place all the year – suppers, lunches and quiz evenings are always hugely enjoyed. We are a very friendly and welcoming club!

Anyone interested in bowls is welcome to come along and watch members play. At the open morning on 3 May prospective members will have a chance to try their hand at bowling with one of our expert coaches. All we ask is that you wear flat soled shoes to play on the green.

Visit our website at [www.southhillwoodbowlingclub.co.uk](http://www.southhillwoodbowlingclub.co.uk) for more information.

**Mark Dempsey (Club Chairman)**

Beckenham Rotary Club has organised a sponsored Swimalong at Beckenham Leisure Centre from 10am to 12noon on Sunday 11 May in aid of the charity Bromley Homeless. More swimmers would be very welcome - contact [peter.braithwaite45@gmail.com](mailto:peter.braithwaite45@gmail.com)

To donate, please use this QR code:



## MISSION OF THE MONTH

### SPANA

SPANA – originally the Society for the Protection of Animals in North Africa - was established in 1923. The charity has worked towards improving the welfare of working animals in vulnerable communities across the world through three key areas: Treating, Training and Teaching.

The fortunes of working animals and people go hand in hand: in low income countries just one working animal can support an extended family of up to 30 people. SPANA provides practical, professional and sustainable solutions to the welfare of these working animals.

It 'Treats' by providing veterinary care and support. It 'Trains' by building expertise amongst vets, farriers, harness makers and the owners of the animals. It 'Teaches' in schools to develop positive beliefs, respect and compassion towards the animals. In emergencies, they will be on the ground in times of crisis.

Working with some of the poorest people and in the most remote areas of the world, SPANA is improving the lives of the animals that plough fields and transport goods, people, tourists and water. Horses, donkeys, camels, elephants, dogs, and oxen: the SPANA vets are the only vets these animals will see.

One recent project in Zimbabwe is a workshop run mostly by women to make harnesses for donkeys that will not cause injuries. The harnesses are made from more suitable materials for the hot weather the donkeys work in. The sewing machines are powered by solar power as there are long and frequent power cuts in the area. This project not only helps the working animals but provides employment for local people.

For more information about SPANA's work please visit the display board at the back of church or [www.spana.org](http://www.spana.org).



Once again our Community Café celebrated a big birthday for one of its regulars - Richard Leverton had a birthday surprise with Prosecco and a special cake baked by Fiona Bratt.

## The Parish Church of St. Mary, Shortlands

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### WORSHIP

Sunday 10.30am - Holy Communion (in church)

Wednesday 10.00am - Morning Prayer. Holy Communion will take place once a month

You can access Sunday services online at:

[www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands](https://www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands)

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

### PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar		8460 5682
office@stmaryshortlands.church		
Licensed Lay	Mrs C. Bingham	8460 0324
Ministers	Mrs A-M. Jefferys	8460 6030
	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
Pastoral Assistants	Mrs. S. Harrison	8464 0284
	Mrs. D. Speller	07941415082
Parish Administrator	Mrs. E. Woollven	8460 5682
Church wardens	Mrs. G. Sherman	07500751265
	Mr. R. Hogg	8290 0613
Treasurer	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884
Assistant Treasurer	Mr. R. Hogg	8290 0613
PCC Secretary	Mrs J. Sharma	07900971867
Organist and Director of Music		
	Canon C. Tillotson	8460 7368
Safeguarding	Mrs P. Lambourne	8658 0470
Electoral Roll	Mrs J. Sharma	07900971867
Junior Church	Miss. R. Tillotson	07503680612
Stewardship	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884

### PARISH OFFICE

Telephone: 020 8460 5682

Email: [office@stmaryshortlands.church](mailto:office@stmaryshortlands.church)

Open 10.00am - 12.00pm weekdays.

Contact the office for Baptisms and Weddings

### ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

Toddlers	Mrs. J. Runicles	07790 304711
Craft and Chatter	Mrs. J. Boam	8460 7101
Friends of St Mary's Mr. T. Chase		8464 6188

For admission to Beavers, Cubs and Scouts please contact email: [7bromleyadmissions@gmail.com](mailto:7bromleyadmissions@gmail.com)

Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mr O. Swinfen	07758458077
Cubs (Tue)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954437658
Beavers	<a href="mailto:thomas.nickalls@gmail.com">thomas.nickalls@gmail.com</a>	

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies or Guides please go to [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)

Guides (Tue)	Mrs. E. Thompson	07910340908
Guide (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Thu)	<a href="mailto:fourthbromleybrownies@outlook.com">fourthbromleybrownies@outlook.com</a>	
Rainbows	<a href="mailto:2ndshortlandsrainbows@gmail.com">2ndshortlandsrainbows@gmail.com</a>	
Pre-school	Mrs. C. Hall	8290 6704 or 07960988552
The 2WW's	Mrs. A. Swatton	8650 1114
Church Flowers	Mrs. C. Willatt	07511885941
Mission Chair	Mrs. S. Shelton	8402 3299
Douai link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884 8
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	07511885941

### LOCAL CONTACTS

Cllr. G Turrell	<a href="mailto:gemma.turrell@bromley.gov.uk">gemma.turrell@bromley.gov.uk</a>
Cllr. F. Bainbridge	<a href="mailto:Felicity.Bainbridge@bromley.gov.uk">Felicity.Bainbridge@bromley.gov.uk</a>
Cllr. A. Grant	<a href="mailto:Adam.Grant@bromley.gov.uk">Adam.Grant@bromley.gov.uk</a>
Residents Association	8460 0395
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

### SPAN INFORMATION

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

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