



Being still

Summer can be a season of changing rhythms. At St Mary's, August looks a little different. Some of our midweek activities pause for a few weeks, the choir takes a well-earned break, and many people go on holiday. Others may be busier than ever, keeping children and grandchildren entertained throughout the long summer holidays. For some, summer is a season of waiting. Perhaps for exam results, job application news, the outcome of a medical appointment, or simply an important email. You may have put in all the work you can, made the preparations, and now there is nothing left to do but wait.

Waiting can be uncomfortable: it reminds us we cannot control everything. We often respond by filling our lives with activity, yet the Bible offers a different invitation. In Psalm 46, God says: "Be still, and know that I am God." These words are not a command to do nothing, instead, an invitation to trust. To recognise that there are moments when we have done all we can, and the next step is not frantic activity but patient waiting. Much of what shapes us as people happens quietly and unseen. We notice the big exciting moments, the results, the celebrations, the milestones. Growth usually takes place in the background. A tree puts down roots long before it bears fruit. Friendships deepen through countless ordinary conversations. Character is formed through small daily choices rather than grand gestures.

The same is often true of our faith and character. Some of God's deepest work in us happens not through dramatic events but through ordinary days, quiet moments and seasons of waiting. As we move through the summer months perhaps we can allow ourselves moments of stillness. If you find yourself waiting for something, know that you are not waiting alone. God is present in the quiet as much as in the busy times. My prayer is that this summer you may find peace in God's presence and confidence that, even when little seems to be happening, God is still at work. And wherever you find yourself this season you are always welcome at St Mary's.

Rev Dave Edmondson



Pet and teddy bear blessing service

Sunday 27th September 4:00pm

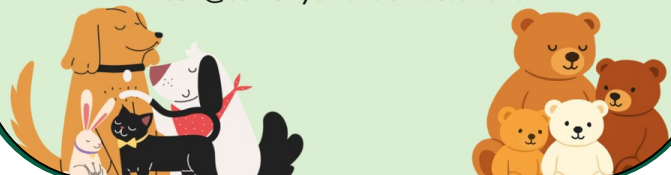
Bring along your beloved pet or teddy bear (furry, feathered, scaled, cuddly or soft) for a short, family-friendly service of thanksgiving.

Refreshments afterwards.

ALL ARE WELCOME

For more info:

vicar@stmarysshortlands.church



Special services and events

Sunday 6 September – Back to School Sunday

10.30am Family Communion

Bring a school/ work bag for a blessing

Sunday 13 September

4.00pm Tea Time Together

6.00pm Youth Club

Sunday 20 September

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Sunday 27 September

4.00pm Pet and teddy bear blessing service

Sunday 6 October – Harvest Festival

10.30am All age parade service

Followed by Harvest Lunch – all are welcome



From the Registers



We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

At Rest:

Heather Donovan 30 June

Regina Claiborne-Dixon 4 July

Interment of Ashes: David Linstead 5 July

Dragons and Damsels

Everyone loves water - the seaside, bubbling brooks, or lakes and ponds! It is not only humans that like water: it is an incredible place for wildlife too. Even the smallest of ponds will increase the biodiversity of a green space.



Ponds are at their most productive in the summer: aquatic and bankside vegetation bursts into flower, pond skaters and water boatmen will engage our attention on the surface, bats can be seen in the evenings feeding on the insects over larger water bodies, while in the depths there are 'other-worldly' creatures - the nymphs of dragonflies and damselflies which are some of the most voracious predators in the pond. Many dragonfly nymphs can live up to three years under the water using their hinged mouthparts to catch their prey. The damselfly nymphs take less time to mature. Dragonflies and damselflies undergo what is called incomplete metamorphosis - unlike other insects such as butterflies, there is no pupal stage. Instead, when ready to become an adult, the nymph climbs out of the pond using aquatic vegetation and the nymphal case splits, allowing the adult to emerge. And what a transformation it is. The beauty of dragonflies - and damselflies with their iridescent wings, is one of the wonders of summer. They all feed on insects and can wander some distance from water to hunt their prey. The four wings can move independently of each other, making these insects remarkably agile. The adults must return to the pond to lay their eggs and so the cycle will start again.

Spend some time just sitting and watching - you may be lucky enough to witness the beauty of these dazzling creatures.

Pictured: a Broad-bodied Chaser dragonfly, photograph by Steven Lofting.

Ishpi Blatchley

Fair Trade Fortnight

At St Mary's, we have been a Fair Trade Church for over 25 years. By selling fairly traded goods on our stall we support thousands of marginalised farmers and workers in over 74 countries.

We will celebrate the fortnight with a Big Brew, 10.30am - 12.30pm Wednesday 23rd September at the Community Café, and with a stall after the 10.30am service on Sunday 27th September. On 1st September at 7.30pm the stall will be at the Friends Of The Earth meeting held at the Quakers hall in Ravensbourne Road, with a speaker from the Fair Trade Foundation. For more information contact Cecilia on 07511 885941.

MANY CONGRATULATIONS to Cathy Myers on being awarded the Bishop's Certificate in Christian Ministry. This significant achievement reflects two years of study, prayer and practical ministry experience, helping equip her for Christian service and exploring God's call on her life. We give thanks for all she has learned and for the gifts she offers to the life of our church.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

August - Médecins Sans Frontières

Dr Yazid Sanni is a doctor in Gummi, northwestern Nigeria. He explains that malaria is one of the deadliest killer diseases there. The parasitic disease is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitos. In mild case patients experience a fever and headache. However, it can quickly become more dangerous, especially if affecting the brain, liver and kidneys. While some people do recover, others are more vulnerable, particularly pregnant women and young children. Without proper treatment, malaria can kill within hours.

This is just one troubled region in one troubled country. Who is on the frontline helping those in crisis, not just in Nigeria but all around the world? The answer is MSF. It's Malaria Anticipation Project is aiming to transform how humanitarian teams prepare for malaria season. Using AI and a lot of number crunching, the team will produce a forecast of when the malaria peak will start and how long it will last. Médecins Sans Frontières, known in English as Doctors without Borders, is an international humanitarian medical organisation of French origin. It is best known for its work and projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic diseases.

Over 30,000 personnel, mostly local doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, as well as logistical experts, water and sanitation engineers and administrators, provide medical aid in more than 70 countries. The vast majority of staff are volunteers and 90% of MSF's funding comes from private donors. In 1999 MSF received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its members' continued efforts to provide medical care in acute crises, as well as raising international awareness of potential humanitarian disasters. To find out more visit www.msf.org.uk or see the display at the back of church during August.

September - Memory Box Dementia Café

Memory Box Dementia Café has been running for just over ten years, based at Emanuel United Reformed Church in West Wickham. Their aims are to reduce the impact of loneliness and social isolation and improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and their carers, friends and families; provide a relaxing, non-judgemental environment in a low-key social setting, and to raise awareness of dementia and encourage the community to become dementia friendly.

They offer free drop-in sessions on a Friday afternoon from 2-4pm for those living alongside dementia and their carers. On the first and third Fridays they run a café with activities which range from crafts to visiting musicians, from bingo to dancing. On second and fourth Fridays they hold Move With Memory Box, a chair-based exercise session designed specifically for people living with dementia, with a trained leader. Refreshments and fun are part of all the sessions, which are open to everyone.

The Café is funded solely by donations and local supporters. All staff are volunteers and they are always looking for extra pairs of hands, on a rota basis. For more information, see the display at the back of church or visit www.bromleydfc.org.uk/partner-listing/memory-box-dementia-cafe.

Work experience

My name is Isaac. I sing tenor in the choir at St Mary's and I go to Langley Park School for Boys. I wanted to work with the community and connect to people. I've been working with Rev Dave on my Year 10 work experience, and I want to tell you more.

I helped make a service sheet on Monday and went to a meeting about SPAN. On Tuesday I peacefully had prayer with Glo and Dave then after I joined in on Craft and Chatter. On Wednesday, I helped lead the Communion, and then I went to the service at Durham House. On Thursday, I helped the toddler group morning and afternoon. I helped with gardening around the church on Saturday, and on Sunday I did the prayers for the parade service before the parish picnic, where I helped with the treasure hunt.

What surprised me most is that Dave is really busy. He works a lot behind the scenes and it's the same with Elizabeth in the Parish Office. It's quite surprising just how much goes on in and around the church that we just don't always know about.

Now I am back at school, I appreciate everyone who works to support us; the teachers, the dinner staff, safeguarding, everyone on site, support staff, cleaners, etc. Having seen how much goes into making up our church, I notice how much goes on at school, too.

I felt that God was with me every step of the worship experience, especially in the Wednesday Communion, and on Sunday. Thank you to Dave and Elizabeth, Robin and Glo the churchwardens and everyone at St Mary's.

Isaac Myers

Safeguarding: everyone's responsibility

At St Mary's we take our safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Creating a church that is safe, welcoming and supportive for everyone is a key part of our Christian mission and witness. Safeguarding is not simply a policy or a procedure; it is about caring for one another and ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults can flourish in a safe environment.

As part of the Church of England's safeguarding requirements, all those serving on any church rota are now required to complete safeguarding training. This training gives us a shared understanding of what safeguarding is, why it matters and how we can all play our part in recognising concerns and responding appropriately. Even for those who have served faithfully for many years it provides a valuable common foundation for our ministry together.

Thank you to everyone who is undertaking this training and helping us maintain the highest standards of care within our church community. If you have any questions about the training or safeguarding more generally, please email safeguarding@stmaryshortlands.church or call the Church Office who will put you in touch with our Safeguarding Officer.

I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Pauline Lambourne for her many years of faithful service as Parish Safeguarding Officer. Her wisdom, diligence and commitment have been a great blessing to St Mary's. We are delighted that Carlie Cooke will be taking on this important role, and we assure her of our prayers and support as she begins this ministry. If you have any safeguarding concerns Pauline remains our current contact at the email address above, with Carlie soon taking over this important ministry.

Rev Dave Edmondson

Remembering

Heather Donovan

Heather was born in Peckham in 1926. When World War Two broke out she was evacuated with her brother to Yeovil, where she made a lifetime connection with her neighbour there. This is indicative of her interest in others and ability to make lifelong friendships.

When she was old enough to get a job she joined the Met Office and at one point was part of the team reading the weather forecast on the Home Service. She took up a place at Exeter University to study maths but discovered she did not quite fit in (there were few women and fewer still from similar backgrounds). Heather returned to Peckham, working as a laboratory technician at Samuel Jones, a gummed paper manufacturer in Camberwell. She was extremely upset that women were paid less for doing the same work. When she mentioned to her managers that a new glue did not stick permanently but there might be a use for this, her suggestion was dismissed. She noted this lost opportunity when 'Post-it' notes appeared in the 1980s. She married and had three children: Susan, Mary (who died in infancy), and Iain, living in Beckenham. With a year away in America, she took the opportunity to take up new interests, becoming proficient on the Spanish guitar.

Back in England, Heather worked for the Inner London Education Authority as a Student Education Welfare Officer, having qualified as a Social Worker. Her patch included the Aylesbury Estate which had an unenviable reputation, but she thought nothing of visiting her clients at any time, alone, on the estate. Her approach was: don't ask anyone to do anything you would not do yourself, and lead by example.

In addition to her busy life at home, work and church, she was elected as a councillor on Bromley Council and served as Chairman of the Community Health Council. At the time women were required to retire at 60: she fought to be able to retire at 65, the same as men. She was kept on for a time as a consultant, showing how much her work was valued. Heather moved to a flat around the corner from her son and his family, leading to many fond memories for her grandchildren. The local newspaper recorded her experience when she found a live World War One hand grenade: it took three attempts, travelling with it in her car before the police were persuaded to take it and get it defused.

Heather enjoyed travelling with two lifelong friends, visiting countries as far afield as India and China. Her interests also included U3A groups and gardening. She was a renowned Victoria sponge creator, supplying innumerable cakes for church stalls over many years. When her failing eyesight robbed her of pleasures, including reading and crosswords, she never complained, always looking on the bright side. The virtual assistant Alexa gave access to radio and the ability to phone family and friends. Heather kept herself involved in everything around her and remained a director of the management company for her block of flats, only resigning this year when she did not have the necessary passport/ driving licence required for submission to Companies House. Many of Heather's friends and family came together at St Mary's to celebrate her memory, knowing that she lived life to the full and left a shining example of how we should live ours.



St. Mary's Shortlands You are welcome

Link Parish, St Francis of Assisi, Douai, France

WORSHIP

8 am Sunday Holy Communion in the chapel - the 4th Sunday of every month.
Sunday 10.30am - Holy Communion in the church and online at
www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands

Wednesday Worship 10.00am in the chapel
For more information contact the Parish Office or visit

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev. Dave	07592136421
vicar@stmarysshortlands.church		
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Churchwarden	Mr R. Hogg	
robinwarden@stmarysshortlands.church		

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	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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	Mrs. D. Speller	07941415082
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PARISH OFFICE

Telephone: 020 8460 5682

Email: office@stmarysshortlands.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

Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mr O. Swinfen	07758458077
Cubs (Tue)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954437658
Beavers	Mr. T. Nickalls	
thomasnickalls@gmail.com		

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies or Guides please go to www.girlguiding.org.uk

Guides (Tue)	Ms. E Thompson	07910340908
Guides (Mon)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Thu)	fourthbromleybrownies@outlook.com	
Rainbows	2ndshortlandsrainbows@gmail.com	
Pre-school	Mrs. C. Hall	8290 6704 or 07960988552
Church Flowers	Mrs. C. Willatt	07511885941
Mission Chair	Mrs. S. Shelton	8402 3299
Douai link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Fair Trade	Mrs. C Willatt	07511885941

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Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

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