

## A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens' classic Christmas story has been portrayed in different ways over the years including heart-rending Victorian poverty and the humour of the Muppets. It introduces us not only to Scrooge, huge Christmas dinners, white Christmases and the trappings of a Victorian Christmas, but also to the idea of *Christmas Past*, *Christmas Future* and *Christmas Present*.

But these three aspects of Christmas have always been at the heart of the Christian understanding of Christmas and reflected upon during Advent, the four-week build up to Christmas Day. We started this period of hope and anticipation with our Advent Carol Service.

*Christmas Past* is the birth of Jesus, over two thousand years ago, in a manger in Bethlehem which we celebrate on 25 December with our nativity scenes, giving of presents and Christmas dinner.

The birth of Jesus had been predicted by Old Testament prophets, such as Isaiah, over 700 years beforehand. Jesus told his followers that in the future he would return to earth and establish a New Creation; a Kingdom of justice and peace. Without the nightmare scenarios of Charles Dickens, we look forward to this second coming of Jesus: *Christmas Future*.

The life changing experience for Scrooge, and his rediscovery of what Christmas is about, is shown in *Christmas Present*. Jesus invites us all to meet with him, rediscover him and reflect upon our perspectives this Christmas.

We hope that, through the different services on offer at St Mary's this year, as well as singing Christmas carols, we will offer opportunities for you to experience Jesus: through the peace and reflection of our **Taize Service**; the sense of joy and wonder of our children's **Christingle** and **Crib Services**; the overview of the Christmas story, and glorious singing, at **Nine Lessons and Carols**; the sense of fulfilment and wonder of **Midnight Mass**; and the joyful family celebration of **Christmas Day**.

In a dark, confusing and often lonely world we hope that our services will offer light, purpose and fellowship. Please join us and find opportunities to meet with Jesus and with us this Christmas.

**Stuart Buchanan**

### Special Events and Services

**Sunday 12 December**

**4.00pm Christingle**

**Sunday 19 December**

**6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols**

**Friday 24 December - Christmas Eve**

**4.00pm Crib Service**

**11.30pm Midnight Mass**

**Saturday 25 December - Christmas Day**

**10.30am Holy Communion for Christmas Day**

Services will take place in church and will be streamed via Facebook. All activities may be subject to change based on government COVID restrictions. Any updates will be shared through [www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk) and [www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands](https://www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands).





## From the Registers

### At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

David Deagle 3 Nov Age 92

### Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Joan Austen 13 November



### Ann Gramlich

Born of Welsh parents, being Welsh was a cornerstone of Ann's life. Her father instilled in her a love of music and singing, as well as rugby.

He sadly died when Ann was just 13 years old and this tragedy marked Ann for life. She also had to grow up quickly as her mother – just 40 years old at the time – relied heavily on Ann for mental support.

Ann studied for a degree at University College Cardiff and met Dieter (from Mannheim, Germany) during her year as an English Assistant in Lille from 1963 – 64. They got engaged in Mannheim in 1966 and married two years later in St Thomas' Church in Neath, where Ann's maternal family lived.

After her degree Ann started teaching French in Ystrad Mynach until 1970 when Dieter joined Midland Bank International in the City of London. They moved to Bromley and Ann taught in a Croydon school until their daughter Jane was born in October 1972. The family moved to St Mary's Avenue in 1975.

In September 1977 Dieter was posted to the bank's office in Frankfurt / Main for nearly 4 years. Ann meanwhile taught English to adults and became fluent in German.

Returning to the UK in April 1981, Ann taught French and German in various secondary schools in Croydon. She retired from teaching in 2007 but continued one day a week as a Counsellor until 2010. She also spent eight years as a Governor at Castlecombe Primary School in Mottingham.

Apart from teaching her main interest lay in music. For 30 years she was a member of the Wandle Ringers handbells group. Her other interests included needlework in general, quilting, cross-stitch and collecting vintage china and art.

Above all her love for her family, especially her two grandsons Ned and Clyde, dominated her later life.

Ann had always been a Christian at heart, albeit only practising again in the last three years. She was delighted when Revd Gary gave her the opportunity to become christened and confirmed two years ago.

Ann was a dedicated and inspirational teacher for over 40 years and touched many peoples' lives in her career.

### A Winter Concert

A French Horn recital  
featuring David Tillotson

Friday 17th December

1:15pm

St Mary's Church  
Shortlands

£5 Tickets (on entry)

Light refreshments to  
follow

All proceeds will go to the  
Peter Westropp  
Memorial Trust



### My day job

It has been an interesting journey to St Mary's Shortlands for Adrian and me.

Not long after qualifying in medicine we went to work overseas and spent 20 years abroad in Jamaica, Trinidad, Saudi Arabia and Oman. The hardest time of all for a Christian was in Saudi Arabia where the practice of any religion other than Islam was brutally forbidden. To worship, Christians met in each other's homes, which were rotated regularly to avoid detection – reminiscent of the very first Christians.

In Oman we could worship freely but with just one Protestant church it had to meet the needs of a very varied multicultural population from Syrian Orthodox through to Pentecostals. This taught us a tolerance for different Christian practices.

As our two sons were coming up for university and GCSEs, we took a family decision to move back to the UK in 1994. Adrian and I started work back in the NHS and we lived in Hertfordshire in a village with a very ecumenical village church. When we retired we moved to London where our grandchildren were growing up.

We are so glad to now be attending St Mary's which has a wealth of warmth, fellowship and humanity. Above all it is a place of joy - the Christian message of love and joy is an important one to share and St Mary's shares this in abundance.

I now volunteer in a secular capacity as an Official Prison Visitor (OPV): this means I am not affiliated to any religious group and will see prisoners of any faith or none. The OPVs are key holders which means going onto the wings and into the cells when required. There are three of us at HMP Brixton and two of us are committed Christians.

*Pauline Lambourne*

## Betwixt

*A special seasonal event  
for all our regular visitors*

*St Mary's Community Café*

*Wednesday 29 December  
11am – 2pm*

*Light savoury and sweet treats  
to reflect the festive season*

*The Community Café is open every  
Wednesday 11am-1pm  
except 22 December*





# MISSION OF THE MONTH

## The Children's Society

Christingle is a time of joy and celebration, bringing families and our community together at Christmas time to share in the light of Christ. Last year our Christingle celebration was cancelled due to COVID and the sense of loss was great to all of us.



This year we invite everyone in the parish to join us in our special celebration on **12 December at 4pm** either in person or online. Let's celebrate together and embrace hope and joy and look forward to the possibilities to come.

We at St Mary's Church, Shortlands also use this opportunity to support The Children's Society who provide specialist support that empowers young people to make positive changes and rediscover hope in their lives.

The Society help children who suffer abuse, low self-esteem, or whose families can't afford the next meal, or the next size up in school uniform. They support children caught up in drugs and alcohol abuse or taken advantage of in county lines and who have no one else to turn to and children who have become carers to their parents or siblings because they simply have no alternative.

We at St Mary's stand with these children by dedicating our Christingle collection to The Children's Society to support them. We have special Christingle collection envelopes which can be obtained from the back of the church or anyone can donate using the following details: St Mary's Church, Lloyds Bank Sort Code: 30-84-51, Account number: 47608468, Reference: Christingle.

Every small contribution you can make will have a huge impact on improving a child's life. For more information see the display at the back of church or at [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk).



**REMEMBERING:** The Shortlands community came together on Remembrance Sunday to lay wreaths at the War Memorial and remember the fallen. Pictured: a wreath laid on behalf of the families who attend Tea Time Together.

## Families focus

This Christmas we have two services especially for families.

Our first will be Christingle on 12 December at 4pm. This will be the traditional Christingle service that we enjoy every year at St. Mary's with readings, carols, a short talk and the distribution of christingles.

This is a wonderful service, specially designed for young people. Once all the christingles are given out we stand in a circle around the church and sing a carol all together. For me this service always signifies the start of Christmas!

On Christmas Eve at 4pm we will have an all-age family crib service. You can expect fun, joy and excitement!

It is always a great atmosphere at both these services: people of all ages have a great time and get into the Christmas spirit whilst celebrating the reason why we have Christmas.

*Rachel Tillotson*



Cubs Kim Pack recently welcomed an unusual visitor!

## Future Generations - update

In November the Parochial Church Council gave the go-ahead for fundraising to enable works to the church building which will allow it to be used more flexibly, including replacing the heating system.

Building on the success of the Community Café, the changes planned by the Future Generations Project will help the church to support a greater range of community activities during the week for children and family groups, events of all kinds and special occasions. Flexible seating will also enable our beautiful church to be used for different kinds of worship services.

The changes to the heating, flooring and seating are estimated to cost in the region of £275,000: over £120,000 has already been raised.

We welcome your support:

- Look out for more fun activities in the coming months
- If you would like to donate to our fundraising appeal, visit [www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/giving/ways-to-give-to-st-marys/](http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/giving/ways-to-give-to-st-marys/)
- If you have experience of fundraising and would like to help us achieve our target as part of the voluntary team please contact [treasurer@stmaryshortlands.church](mailto:treasurer@stmaryshortlands.church).

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### WORSHIP

Sunday 10.30am - Holy Communion (in church)

Monday to Saturday 9am - Morning Prayer

Wednesday 10.00am - Holy Communion  
8.30pm - Compline

You can access these services online at:

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

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

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

### PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev'd Gary Best	8460 0262
(day off Friday)	Vicar@stmarysshortlands.church	
Licensed Lay	Mrs S. Aldred	8460 3978
Ministers	Mrs C. Bingham	8460 0324
	Mrs A-M. Jefferys	8460 6030
	Dr. D. 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
Churchwardens	Mrs S. Leonard	07725313432
	Mrs K. Buchanan	07811528181
Deputies	Mrs. P. Chase	8464 6188
	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
Safeguarding Officer	Mrs. K. Coleman	07879337567
Electoral Roll	Mrs. S. Maurel	01689 331793
Junior Church	Miss. R. Tillotson	07503 680612
Stewardship	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884

**PARISH OFFICE** 020 8460 5682  
office@stmarysshortlands.church  
Open 9.30am - 12.30pm weekdays.  
Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

### ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

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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. M. Chambers	07975944572
Cubs (Tue)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954437658
Beavers	Ms. E. Hay	07932758801

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

Guides (Tue)	Ms. N. Critten	07767242920
Guide (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Thu)	Mrs S. Tight	8460 8122
Rainbows	2ndshortlandsrainbows@gmail.com	
Pre-school	Mrs. C. Hall	8290 6704 or 07960988552
The 2WW's	Mrs. A. Swatton	8650 1114
Church Flowers	Mrs. C. Willatt	8313 0246
Mission Chair	Mrs. S. Shelton	8402 3299
Douai link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	8313 0246

### LOCAL CONTACTS

Clr. M. Cooke	07912 649058
(E: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Clr. A. Cuthbert	(E: aisha.cuthbert@bromley.gov.uk)
Residents Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

### SPAN INFORMATION

Website	<a href="http://www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk">www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk</a>
Editorial	Parish Office
Distribution	Mr. M. Harrison 07821 691567

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