

Travelling hopefully

This month signals the summer holidays for children, teachers, and parents, not just across the UK but across Europe. Many will travel to holiday destinations near and wide as restrictions have been lifted. For many families, it is their 'big' holiday of the year; a time of relaxation and refreshment, enjoying family time whilst experiencing a new place or culture.

Here at St. Mary's, a group will be joining churches across Beckenham Deanery to experience the Oberammergau Passion Play in Germany, performed every ten years as a promise to God after the plague which swept across Europe in the 1600s. This will give us the opportunity not only to experience the world-renowned play but to get to know other Christians as we travel on our faith journeys.

Jesus and his disciples travelled on foot around the country that is Israel today to tell God's message of forgiveness and salvation to all who would listen and believe. Pilgrims of all religions have travelled to places of religious significance over the centuries, and still do today - the Holy Land, Mecca, the Ganges, Canterbury, Lourdes come to mind! Pilgrims enjoy fellowship, finding out more about their faith and spending time in the presence of God through prayer, meditation and reading. Now, as in the past, pilgrimage is a way of seeking forgiveness and of showing our commitment to God. It is undertaken as a penance for the wrongs done.

The author, Robert Louis Stevenson, wrote 'To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive'. For Christians our faith journey, our life's pilgrimage with its ups and downs, our striving to follow Jesus' example in our daily lives, is all about the arriving. Eternal life, promised through the death and resurrection of Jesus, **is** the end goal.

If you are fortunate enough to be able to travel this summer, remember and give thanks for the many blessings God has given you.

Ann-Marie Jefferys



We welcome Rev Jane Kustner as our new Interim Priest in Charge – see page 2 for more detail.

Special Events and Services

Sunday 10 July

4 - 5.30pm Tea Time Together

Activities for families of all ages on the theme of self control

6 - 7.30pm Youth Club

A free social club for year 6 and above

Sunday 17 July

6.30pm – Choral Evensong

Responses: Sanders

Canticles: Stanford in G

Anthem: Evening Hymn – Balfour

Welcome to Rev Jane!

After ordination in 2006 in Southwark diocese I trained in Waterloo. My first incumbency was in Lewisham where I was also Area Dean. After 9 years there I moved to a township in South Africa as priest in charge and after 2 years returned to a clergy retirement home in Bromley as Chaplain.

Before ordination my career as a chartered accountant involved business advice and auditing in London and Poole where I became a partner. I have also developed and delivered leadership training and strategy facilitation.

Remembrance Sunday last year at St Mary's was the first service I covered and was appointed interim priest in charge at the end of May this year.

Bible study and theology are my passions shared through teaching and preaching. I take seriously the priest's role as "curer of souls" to bring the good news of God's love to all people including the dark and painful places.

St Mary's is a visible and significant presence of Christ Jesus' body in Shortlands. I honour the contributions of previous incumbents to build the congregation and embrace the local community.

Over the next few months I encourage a time of prayer and reflection about who we are as a worshipping and witnessing church. I bring a deep and persistent faith in the power of God to transform and heal, as well as several decades of business experience, leadership, building development and maintenance, and implementing administrative processes.

I will be in the church most days and look forward to meeting you and listening to God's voice together for his vision and plans for the future of St Mary's.

Plant Sale Success

The 7th May started with a drizzle but that couldn't dampen the spirits of the community's gardeners. They really came up trumps: we had everything from seedlings to young trees, annuals and perennials, fruit and vegetables, a veritable cornucopia of nature's bounty! The many plant donations from members of the community culminated in several wheelbarrow deliveries from one of our generous neighbours.

Although this year's sale was condensed into one main event, the leftover plants were displayed both in and outside church with a request for donations in the 'honesty dish', finally ending at the Jubilee Parish Picnic. We would like to thank everyone for their support in donating and buying plants, assisting on the stall, making cakes and manning the cafe to provide much needed refreshment, helping us raise over £1,200 towards the Future Generations Project.

Pat Chase & Jan Boam



St Mary's uniformed organisations arranged the ceremonial planting of a tree to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee



Christian Aid Week 2022

Many thanks to everyone who helped with and donated to this year's Christian Aid Week appeal. We managed to raise a magnificent total of just over £2,400. In addition to those who distributed envelopes around local streets, the Junior Church ran a successful cake sale after the Sunday service and the Community Café on Wednesday gave all donations to Christian Aid.

On the final Saturday a small group of walkers did an 8-mile sponsored walk around the Beckenham churches and enjoyed looking inside several of the 10 churches on the route. The highlight was calling in at the Big Brekkie at the Baptist Church to have lunch. The money will be used by Christian Aid to help communities in Zimbabwe grow drought-tolerant crops and build store-rooms to preserve food during dry seasons.



THANK YOU to Stephanie Maurel and Sarah Leonard who recently stepped down from their roles as Parochial Church Council Secretary and Churchwarden respectively.



The weather didn't stop the community coming together to celebrate at the Platinum Parish Picnic

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Mines Advisory Group

Since 1989, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) has helped over 19 million people in 68 countries rebuild their lives and livelihoods after war by finding and destroying landmines, cluster munitions and unexploded bombs.

Now MAG is set to deliver explosive ordnance risk education in Ukraine with operations to clear landmines and other munitions to commence later this year.

This charity has partnered with the non-profit [Ukrainian Deminers Association \(UDA\)](#) that will see long-term collaboration between the two organisations, prioritising the education of vulnerable communities about the inherent dangers.

This furthers MAG's ambitions to work closely with and complement the expertise available from local non-government organisations and state institutions. It will require hundreds of millions of pounds and decades of difficult work to clear such devastation.

Meanwhile, MAG has launched its 'Unlock the Land Appeal' to fund its vital work in Laos where for nine years, the equivalent of a planeload of bombs was dropped every eight minutes, day and night! Donations received before 24 July will be doubled by our Government.

For more information, visit www.maginternational.org or see the display at the back of church.

Sitting comfortably

Regular readers will remember that the Future Generations Project aims to upgrade our church building with improved heating and flexible seating, enabling it to be used for a far wider range of community and church activities, and benefiting the people of Shortlands for generations to come. This will also help us to provide space for church services and for local groups during any future development of the church halls.

We have already moved some pews at the back of the church so we could open the Community Café and have welcomed a range of other community activities into the church building.

Plans are being developed, for the next phase of the project which will include gaining formal permission from the Chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester to replace all of the pews with flexible seating. We estimate that the cost of this new seating will be at least £100 per chair – and we'll need 400 of them, so St Mary's 'Donate a Chair' campaign is aiming to raise at least £40,000.

We know that these are difficult financial times for many – but every £100 will help. Chairs will not be personalised, but there will be a list on display in church recording all donations.

A cheque, payable to St Mary's PCC, in an envelope labelled 'Donate a Chair' may be left with the Parish Office. Other payment options appear at: www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/future-generations.



Meet the new churchwarden

John and I moved to Shortlands in January 1986 and started worshipping at St Mary's shortly after. We both became involved in church activities including uniformed organisations, Beavers and Brownies, before I moved on to join the choir and the music group. I trained as a pastoral assistant in the 1990s, a role which I have much enjoyed over the years.



So what led me to stand as churchwarden? Well, I'm still pondering that one and had I read through the stipulated roles and responsibilities beforehand I might have run a mile! I would like to say that I felt God was calling me to stand. In a sense that's true in that, when I was approached, I did ask members of the congregation what they thought and the response was positive. Maybe they were heartily relieved that someone was willing!

What I hope to bring to the role are transferable skills acquired throughout my working life as a nurse, health visitor and manager in the health service. In other words, trying to navigate a way of caring for the church as a building but much more for the church as a community of people with all our quirks and foibles. I'm particularly keen to work with others in welcoming more of our wider community into St Mary's.

It says in Proverbs 3 5-6, 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths'. While none of us knows what the future may hold, I remain optimistic that St Mary's will thrive and I want to play my part in ensuring that we follow the right path for that to happen.

Marion Westropp



CONGRATULATIONS to Isaac Myers who was awarded the Friends of St Mary's Chorister of the Year Award. Isaac has been in the choir only since last year but has made a huge contribution. His enthusiasm is infectious and he is always up for any challenge given to him. Well done Isaac! (Pictured: Rev Jane Kustner, Robin Hogg from the Friends of St Mary's, Isaac and Canon Claire Tillotson).

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Wednesday 10.00am - Holy Communion

You can access these services online at:

www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands

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

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Cubs (Mon)	VACANT	
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

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Guide (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Thu)	Mrs S. Tight	8460 8122
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LOCAL CONTACTS

Clr. A. Cuthbert	(E: aisha.cuthbert@bromley.gov.uk)	
Residents Association		8460 0395
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood		8721 2614

SPAN INFORMATION

Website www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

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