

Being Convinced

Writing on a cold wet day I wonder when summer will arrive. Three factors might convince me of summer's arrival. There is purpose to the seasons of the year: if it is June, it must be summer. At the heart of creation is a pattern of dying and re-birth. Dying vegetation decomposes, enriching the soil; seeds are buried, as if dead, and new growth heralds summer.

I experience summer through my senses: brighter light; vibrant birdsong; the sun's warmth on my skin; the smell of new-mown grass. Hay-fever makes my eyes itch and I sneeze. These feelings, good and not so good, convince me of summer.

Being convinced about God might happen in similar, diverse, ways. The sense of purpose, goodness and order within creation points to a creator God. In today's world I see evil, suffering and aggression. Attempts to overcome evil often cause more evil, suffering and aggression.

Just as dying vegetation leads to seeds' growth, only unconditional love, focused on giving to others, will challenge and break this pattern. This 'self-giving' love overcomes evil, not by fighting it, but by absorbing the bitterness and evil, breaking the downward spiral and making forgiveness and healing possible. When we turn away from our self-centredness and selfishness, we create new opportunities in relationships, like the new growth in creation.

Jesus' life, death and resurrection saved God's creation from that downward spiral, showing self-giving love. Jesus, God's Son, provides the example that I should try to follow. Conviction comes through the Holy Spirit. Through relationships and the wonders of nature, music and art I sense my interconnectedness with God, his creation and people; with something bigger than me, drawing me out of myself towards this greater reality.

As with summer, I can be aware of more intense light illuminating things, or of a warm glow; though sometimes this Spirit of God might communicate with me through irritants, as with summer's itchy eyes and sneezes.

At this time of year Christians celebrate the Trinity, affirming that God is experienced in three distinct ways: God the Father, the creator; Jesus, the Son, who through sacrificial love redeems us; the Holy Spirit, inspiring communication, connection and fellowship.

Stuart Buchanan

Special Events and Services

Sunday 6 June

10.30am All Age Service

Music led by the Music Group

Sunday 13 June

10.30am Junior Church resumes

Children of all ages are welcome

Sunday 27 June

6.30pm Choral Evensong

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.



COMMUNITY CAFE OPENS! More information on page 2

From the Registers

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Zandra Bealer 13 Apr Age 77

Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Marian Parr 17 May



THANK YOU to everyone who visited our Plant Sale/ Swap in April and May and raised £1,600 for the Future Generations Project.

A challenging year

St Mary's held its Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 2 May, with attendees in church and on Zoom.

Revd Gary Best thanked Adolph Williams for his considerable service to the church during six years as churchwarden. Sarah Leonard and Kate Buchanan were confirmed as churchwardens for the next year.

Catherine Bingham, Stephanie Maurel, Tim Dawson, Julie Fox, Mark Fox, Rachel Tillotson and Hazel Leech were elected to the Parochial Church Council.

The Treasurer, Tim Dawson, reported that the church had revised its financial forecast for the year when the COVID pandemic struck, due to loss of income through activities including hall hire. The period of the church's closure had enabled rewiring, the installation of a new kitchen, water supply and sewerage connection and organ refurbishment.

A very successful stewardship campaign, use of the Government's furlough scheme and close management of costs had limited the church's loss for the year to £14,000, even when the costs of building works were taken into account.

An independent examiner of the accounts is needed for future years: anyone interested should contact treasurer@stmaryshortlands.church.

The meeting heard of the church's work to maintain the building and to ensure compliance with safeguarding requirements.

Revd Gary described 2020 as one of the toughest years we will ever face, with challenges to mental and spiritual health and the loss of loved ones. A wide range of church activity had continued and St Mary's demonstrated love and compassion to many. He thanked all who serve the church in so many different ways.

Looking ahead, he was encouraged by the numbers of people joining the church to worship in person and online: St Mary's doors will be wide open, welcoming all visitors.

Reports considered by the meeting can be found at www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk/span/annual-parochial-church-meeting.

SRA update

The AGM of the Shortlands Residents' Association was held virtually at the end of April. Attendees included Col Bob Stewart MP, Sir Bob Neill MP and the two Shortlands councillors.

The Chairman, Mark Dempsey, reported that Shortlands Ward will be increasing in size to include Shortlands Village and part of Copers Cope Ward. As a result Shortlands will be represented by three councillors from the next local elections. A decision was due to be made about Conservation Status for Shortlands Village (and the status has since been confirmed.)

There were some positive developments during the pandemic. People are keeping in touch more through local Facebook pages: eg Shortlands Life, local WhatsApp groups, newsletters and the recently upgraded SRA website.

Rev Gary spoke about the Future Generations Project at St Mary's; there are exciting plans ahead starting with the Community Café.

Junior Church from Sunday 13th June

During the 10.30am service

Organised fun and activities for children of all ages

For more information:

Joanna.eade@hotmail.co.uk or

racheltillotson3@gmail.com

ST MARY'S COMMUNITY CAFE launched on 19th May, with many visitors from throughout the community. Thank you to the helpers and to the charity, Friendly Faces of Kent, who kindly donated cakes. The café will be open in church every Wednesday, 11am-1pm.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Carers' Trust

The Peter Westropp Memorial Trust

was set up in 2012 by Peter's brother, cousins and close friends after his tragic death when a block of masonry

fell on him outside a pub in Clapham. Had he survived the accident he would probably have needed constant care so it was decided that all money raised would be donated to the Carers Trust, an organisation which fills an urgent need in society

So far the Trust has passed to the Carers Trust nearly £200,000 raised through a huge variety of events as follows: a cycle ride from London to Paris, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, Club Westroppiana mini Festival, Budgie smuggling in Central London, carol singing in a pub, cycling all the highest passes in the Lake District, walking up Snowdon, Stropptoberfest, 3 Peaks (in 3 years!), swimming from Land's End to John O'Groats (in a pool), swimming from Gibraltar to Morocco for real and many other remarkable fund raising achievements. Do visit www.peterwestropp.co.uk and take a look.

Carers Trust are a major charity for, with and about carers. They work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. Their vision is that unpaid carers count and can access the help they need to live their lives. For more information see the display in church or <https://carers.org>



Harold Bride

This is the last in our occasional series about blue plaques in and near to the parish.

Harold Bride was the junior wireless officer on the Titanic during its ill-fated maiden voyage.

He was born in Nunhead in 1890 and lived with his family in Bromley: from 1903 they lived in Ravensbourne Avenue.

After primary school he decided he wanted to become a wireless operator: he worked in his family's business to help pay for training which he completed with the Marconi Company in 1911.

After the Titanic struck an iceberg on 14 April 1912, Bride and his senior colleague Jack Phillips relayed messages to ships in the vicinity, which led to survivors being picked up by the Carpathia. The men remained at their posts until the ship's power was almost completely out. Bride was washed off the ship as the boat deck flooded, but scrambled onto an upturned lifeboat and was rescued by the Carpathia.

He then helped the Carpathia's wireless operator, Harold Cottam, send out the large number of personal messages from the survivors.

Bride, who had to be carried off the Carpathia because of injuries to his feet (one was badly sprained, the other frostbitten), was met in New York by the New York Times which gave him \$1,000 for his exclusive, "Thrilling Story by Titanic's Surviving Wireless Man".

He later gave testimony in the American and British inquiries into the Titanic disaster and was considered one of its heroes.

During World War I, Bride served as the wireless operator on the steamship Mona's Isle, and in 1922 he and his family moved to Glasgow where he became a salesman. He died in 1956.



Parish Picnic

Sunday 11 July from 12noon

In the church grounds

Activities for the whole family
All are welcome – come and join the fun!

Bring your own picnic –
barbecue food and refreshments
available to buy

In the church hall if wet

New job!

I was recently elected as a churchwarden at St Mary's and am delighted to take on this role, sharing the duties with Sarah Leonard who has several years' experience in the position.

I would probably be considered a newcomer here. Stuart and I started coming to services at St Mary's about eight years ago and immediately appreciated the style of worship and being part of a large and welcoming congregation.

Being active within a local church has been an important part of our Christian discipleship and, over the years, I have been privileged to take on a range of jobs, including being a churchwarden at our previous church.

The most obvious role of a churchwarden is to ensure the smooth running of church services, working with the sidespeople to get the church ready and offer a warm welcome to everyone arriving at the church doors.

Churchwardens have an important role in caring for the congregation and listening to their concerns, and also in regularly meeting with the vicar and supporting him in his ministry. There is also a legal responsibility for church buildings and property and we are fortunate to have a very able and experienced team of people who do most of the hard work in these areas.

With so much happening at St Mary's, it is an exciting time to be more involved. I am looking forward to working closely with Sarah and Revd Gary in whatever lies ahead.

Kate Buchanan



St Mary's Community Open Day

Saturday 10 July, 10am – 2pm

Come to hear our plans to create space
for community events and activities
in the church building,
as part of our long term aim for St Mary's
to be a community hub for Shortlands



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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

www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands

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

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Revd 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. S. Clark	8464 0696
	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
Assistant Organist	Mr. D. Beach	8289 6510
Safeguarding Officer	Mrs. K. Coleman	07879337567
Electoral Roll	Mrs. S. Maurel	01689 331793
Junior Church	Mrs. J. Eade	3624 0559
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

Toddlers	Mrs. J. Runicles	8402 6599
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

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	Ms. H. Last	8460 1705
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 www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

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