

Breaking the chain reaction

As we move into November we, with millions of others across the world, whatever our beliefs, take time to remember those who have given their lives in the service of others and all victims of war. Remembrance Sunday falls on the Sunday nearest 11th November, the date on which the first World War ended in 1918.

People spoke of that war as the "War to end all Wars," but wars have continued to rage, even when things have seemed relatively peaceful here in the UK. Commentators tell us that in recent years the world has become an even more dangerous place.

The Christian message of peace and goodwill might seem hopelessly optimistic. However, at a time when we see so much hatred openly expressed, including in the name of religion, surely it makes sense to look for alternative approaches?

Jesus said, *"blessed are the peacemakers"* and chose not to lead an armed rebellion against the hated Romans, as his followers expected. He did not resort to violence or express hatred, rather he gave up his life to defeat evil. And then comes the punchline: *"Peace be with you, as the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."* We are called to imitate Jesus, including being peacemakers, in whatever situation we find ourselves.

We will reflect on the sacrifices made, and our call to work together for peace, at our Remembrance Sunday service on Sunday 9th November at 10.00am in church and then at 10.45am by the war memorial outside. Do please join us either for the whole service or at the war memorial.

As Martin Luther King Jr said: *"Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that"* and *"The chain reaction of evil - hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars - must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation."*

Catherine Bingham (Licensed Lay Minister)

Christmas Fair

2-4pm Saturday 22 November

Fun for all the Family!

Father Christmas!

Kids' activities, cakes, crafts, gifts, bric-a-brac, tombolas, books, plants, Traidcraft and much more.

Mulled wine and roasted chestnuts. Donations of soft toys, plants, bottles, books & bric-a-brac very welcome.

Contact Gill Dawson (07767 365318) or leave at the Parish Office Mon – Fri 10am – 12noon



Special services and events

Sunday 2 November

6.30pm Informal service

Led by the Music Group on the theme of Joy in difficult times

Saturday 8 November

10.15am Take Time

Christian meditation

Sunday 9 November – Remembrance Sunday

10.00am Holy Communion

Followed by Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 10.45am

4.00pm Tea Time Together

6.00pm Youth Club

Sunday 30 November – Advent Sunday

6.30pm Advent Carol Service

Sunday 14 December

4.00pm Christingle

Family friendly service

Please see our website for details of our Christmas services



Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved: Ann Parks 9 Oct

8am service

At St Mary's there was previously a Holy Communion service without music at 8am every Sunday. However, several years ago this stopped.

It has come to my attention that there may be those in our community who would still welcome an 8am Holy Communion service. Re-starting a weekly 8am service would be a significant undertaking of St Mary's so we are keen to discern the scale of interest.

If this is you please could you contact me via email or the office, stating your frequency of likely attendance and if you would be willing to serve at this service too. If you know someone else who would like to attend a regular service please pass this message on to them so they can respond themselves. Please can you do this by Sunday 23rd November.

Rev Dave Edmondson

Picture perfect



This year 7th Bromley Scout Group was given a generous donation by Beckenham Art Society. The aim was to encourage our youngsters to foster a wider appreciation of art by producing original works themselves.

Our Cubs were most fortunate to have the professional eye of Helen, a talented local artist, to tutor them in technique, understanding and above all enjoyment of painting their very own version of Harvest. These paintings were then displayed - and much admired - in church at the Harvest Festival Parade service and thereafter will be hung in the Scout Hut.

Our Beavers also produced lovely cards for their parents, under the tutelage of Di, a retired head teacher. We are most grateful for the generous time given by both ladies to this inspirational project! All the children will soon receive their well deserved Artist Badges!

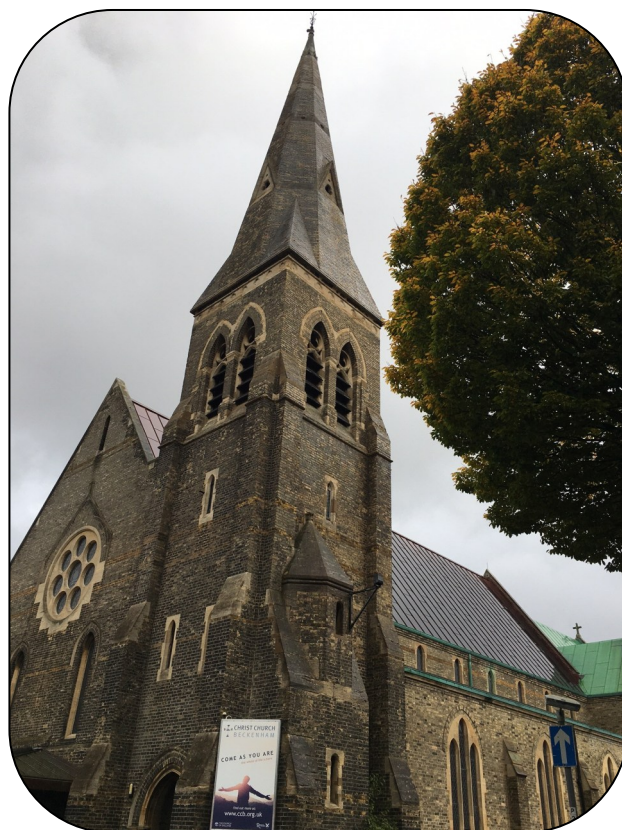
Advent carols

In the busy-ness of the run-up to Christmas, begin your Advent with a time of reflection at this beautiful service. Join us at 6.30pm on Sunday 30th November for Bible readings, carols and music led by our fantastic choir.

Carol concert

St Mary's choir will lead the annual carol concert and thanksgiving event for the charity ABCD (Action around Bethlehem Children with Disability) at St George's Church, Bloomsbury on Wednesday 10 December at 6.30pm. Tickets £10 from www.eventbrite.co.uk

Christ Church Beckenham



Following the arrival of the railway and a rapid rise in Beckenham's population, the vicar at the parish church of St George's asked a friend to take charge of a new, 450 seater, iron church rented for seven years, known as Christ Church the Avenue. Only 45 people attended the first service in 1873 but in only a year the congregation had outgrown the iron church and the congregation decided they needed a new site.

Mr. Cornelius Lea Wilson gave £2,000 and a parcel of land on the 'Fairfield' on which to found the new church. The foundation stone was laid by the social reformer and evangelical Christian, Lord Shaftesbury, in April 1875. After some legal wranglings, the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed that Christ Church should have its own parish and a small, poor area of Beckenham was allocated to it. A member of the congregation and architect, Francis Hooper, designed the former vicarage and the church halls and his talents extended to executing the carving around the pulpit. In 1900 a new organ was built and a famous organist of the time, Edwin Lemare of St. Margaret's Westminster, gave an opening recital.

In World War 1 Christ Church's halls were requisitioned for a military hospital, with over 800 soldiers treated and only six deaths. By the time of its jubilee in 1926 the church had acquired some more land around the church building. As the widening of the High Street meant the loss of some buildings, the new Jubilee Hall was built. In January 1945 Christ Church was badly damaged by flying bombs, homes were destroyed and residents were killed or injured. Amazingly the spire stood tall and services continued in the Institute in Fairfield Road. In May 1945 a memorial and thanksgiving service was held in the church ruins. Through the 20th and 21st centuries Christ Church has continued to evolve: Bromley Council has recently approved a redevelopment of the halls complex, an innovative design where the recognisable frontage remains but the interior will become an exciting series of rooms, halls and modern facilities accessible to all.

News from Kenya

You may remember that St Mary's supported Zoe Elliot in her fundraising for a trip to Kenya earlier this year. Here's an update from Zoe on how she got on.



Wow. What an absolutely incredible, magical and life-changing experience. If you don't already know me, my name is Zoe and I was selected to represent Girlguiding UK in Kenya this summer.

During our three weeks there, we went on many safaris, including on horseback and canoeing, met local children and most importantly spent time supporting the Napenda Solar Project. This involved two days of training on how to install the solar panels and how to do the wiring. Then we got to work installing cables, switches, bulbs and the panels into people's homes. This was hard work but with patience, determination and teamwork we were able to install full working systems into four families' homes, changing their lives.

Light is so important to be able to see at night, so the children can study and the family can spend time together. The way the families live together is so phenomenal and indescribable and I am so privileged to have seen that. A highlight of the trip was when the face of a lady (who only spoke Swahili) lit up with joy when the lights were turned on in her house. She spoke and it got translated to me as "I am so grateful, speechless, thank you for changing my family's lives. I am old and will not be here much longer but you have made a positive impact on my future generations."

Another highlight was sleeping under the African stars and waking up to find zebras grazing next to me. We also saw crocodiles, white and black rhinos, hippos, giraffes, monkeys and so much more. A huge thanks to everyone who helped by donating money and attending the cake sale. A thank you especially to Rusty (Gill), our wonderful Guide leader, who made it all possible. I will forever remember this eye-opening project and experience and treasure it in my heart. Thank you.

Zoe Elliot

Senior singles

The '2 WWs' group was started originally by the Revd Doug Redman, who invited six people to tea at the vicarage. The group later became more structured with members going on outings to places such as National Trust houses. People shared the driving, members would visit people in hospital or offer transport for shopping or hospital appointments. Get well cards were sometimes sent to people who were unwell so they did not feel isolated.

Now each year a Christmas lunch is organised: for the past four years members have been to Langley Park Golf Club for lunch which is enjoyed by all.

We feel now that it is time to change the name from 2 WWs to Senior Singles because many people are on their own through divorce or have never married.

It is hoped to be able to organise a get together early in 2026 after the Christmas festivities and when people can talk about their holidays.

Ann Swatton

MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

RNLI lifeboat crews protect hundreds of communities around the UK and Ireland through their 24-hour search and rescue service. To do so, they rely on the safest, most reliable lifeboats and modern stations to launch from: the RNLI does not receive any funding from the Government for these.

The story of the RNLI is one of courage and dedication. Across the charity's 200-year history, RNLI lifesavers have answered the call to rescue, day or night, on calm seas or into ferocious storms. If someone is in peril at sea, the RNLI will do all they can to save them.

Since the charity launched its first lifeboat in 1824, the RNLI has saved more than 146,000 lives at sea. RNLI lifeboats have been operating on the River Thames since 2 January 2002 from lifeboat stations at Chiswick, Gravesend, Teddington and Tower.

The decision for a permanent lifeboat service on the Thames followed the tragedy of the Marchioness disaster on 20 August 1989 when the party boat Marchioness and the dredger Bowbelle collided, resulting in the loss of 51 lives. Today, Tower Lifeboat Station, next to Waterloo Bridge, is the busiest station in the country.

RNLI lifeguards have been patrolling beaches since 2001. They share safety advice, provide first aid to those who need it, and save the lives of those who get in trouble in the water. In 2024, they carried out over 2million preventative actions. In addition, they attended 13,135 incidents, helped 17,068 people, and saved 85 lives. Mick Scott, from St Mary's congregation, has been an RNLI Water Safety Officer since he retired 13 years ago: they offer advice and educational visits to schools, youth organisations and water sports clubs throughout the country. For more information see the display at the back of church or visit www.rnli.org.

Harvest and the Food Bank

After the Harvest Sunday service a car full of food donations was delivered to the Bromley Food Bank.

However, at St. Mary's we don't donate just at Harvest: we have a



dedicated collection box in the church porch all year and a rota of drivers delivers the gifts to the Food Bank every fortnight. Although many supermarkets have donation boxes, we feel at St. Mary's that we are more personally involved with the Food Bank, getting to know those working there, and they in turn recognise us as coming from St. Mary's, Shortlands.

None of us can know the future, whether one day we might find ourselves in need of a helping hand, so we encourage you to think compassionately of those needing to use the Food Bank and generously donate, if possible on a regular basis, little and often. There is a regularly updated list of the most urgently needed items which is displayed by the donation box in the church porch, accessible every morning. Remember, this bank needs deposits 52 weeks of the year!

The Parish Church of St. Mary, Shortlands

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WORSHIP

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

www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

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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Junior Church	Miss. R. Tillotson	07503680612
Stewardship	Mr. T. Dawson	

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. Swinfin	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
Guide (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Thu)	fourthbromleybrownies@outlook.com	
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	07511885941
Mission Chair	Mrs. S. Shelton	8402 3299
Douai Link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	07511885941

LOCAL CONTACTS

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Cllr. F. Bainbridge	Felicity.Bainbridge@bromley.gov.uk
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Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

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