

Looking forwards

Between the fantastical dark creatures of Halloween and the feasting and gift giving of Christmas we sometimes lose the in-between season of Advent. Retailers do a quick turnaround from plastic pumpkin collection tins and black, spidery costumes to glittery evening wear and red and gold table decorations. Their effortless segue from one lucrative offering to another often overlaps with little recognition of the incongruity.

In Advent we enter the earthly and heavenly. The church is dressed in purple as we embrace the great themes of hope, love, peace, and joy. Music is minor key and serious for a while, but soon the joyful Christmas carols, and children's voices enter the space with Christmas trees and decorations.

Let us pause and breathe, put down that mince pie and enter the mystery of Advent, a place of, past, present, and future. We recount the ancient epic journey of the Israelites, led to freedom by the prophet Moses from slavery in Egypt. As we travel through the wilderness, we share the ebb and flow of their relationship with God as it changes and evolves through the prophets and fathers of the church.

We celebrate God's promise of Shalom (peace and order) to heal our world of turbulence and fragility. As beings created in God's image, we reflect and repent of where we individually and together have fallen short.

If we pay attention, we sense that momentous change is in the air and God is working his purpose out with great activity in heaven beyond our imagination. Jesus' birth in Bethlehem is marked by a supernatural light in the sky, and a multitude of the heavenly beings sing 'Glory to God in the highest'. Looking far into the future we perceive Jesus' second coming, bringing reconciliation and justice. According to scripture, He comes back on a great white war horse, accompanied by thousands of heavenly warriors.

The season of Advent is majestic and magnificent – do not miss it!

Rev Jane Kustner



MEMORIES: see page 2 for more news of St Mary's history

Special Services and Events

Sunday 12 November- Remembrance Sunday

10.00am Holy Communion and Parade Service

Meet in church at 10am and by the War Memorial at 10.45am for the Act Of Remembrance

4.00pm Tea Time Together

6.00pm Youth Club

Sunday 26 November

5.00pm Come, Holy Spirit

A service of silence, readings and worship songs

Sunday 3 December - Advent Sunday

6.30pm Advent Carol Service

Sunday 10 December

4.00pm Christingle

As a handy reminder this month's SPAN includes a card with our Christmas services



From the Registers

At rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Jean Osbourne 6 Oct

Remembering

Jean Osbourne

Jean was a woman who enjoyed the finer things in life, perhaps because her beginnings had been relatively humble, born and brought up with her two sisters Joan and Phyllis in Nunhead.

As children, the girls were sent to Sunday School run by the Salvation Army and it was there she first became involved in Guiding, something she would follow for many years.

On leaving school Jean became a secretary, working first for a firm of printers and later for Ron Osborne who, in 1965, became her husband – a marriage which was long and happy.

They built happy homes together and brought up his two daughters from his first marriage. Travel was a delight to both Ron and Jean and they travelled extensively, seeing much of the world together.

At St Mary's Jean was involved in Guiding and became District Commissioner. She also enjoyed the Soroptimists and made many friends there.

Jean never got over Ron's death some years ago.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Crisis

Crisis is the national charity for homeless people. It helps people directly to move out of homelessness, and campaigns for the changes needed to solve it altogether.

The charity is determined to end homelessness once and for all. That means understanding the causes, finding practical solutions for individuals, and building the political will to solve it for everyone, for good. Until that day, it will work side by side with thousands of homeless people.

Crisis' education, housing, employment and health services help people move on from homelessness. They offer one-to-one support, advice, and courses for homeless people in 11 areas across England, Scotland and Wales. The charity is currently building a pioneering centre in London called Skylight to offer dignity, privacy and a place to recover from the trauma of homelessness.

For more information, visit www.crisis.org.uk or see the board in church which displays six pieces of art by people Crisis has helped and booklets containing their individual stories. Art has the power to change lives and re-build them.

Volunteers needed

St Mary's Parish News (SPAN) is distributed to every house in the parish of Shortlands. In order to sort and deliver several thousand copies each month we need more helpers. Please contact the Parish Office if you can lend your support to sort the magazines into batches on one Saturday a month and/or deliver one or more of the batches. We are a happy team, and you will have fun and make new friends.

Looking back

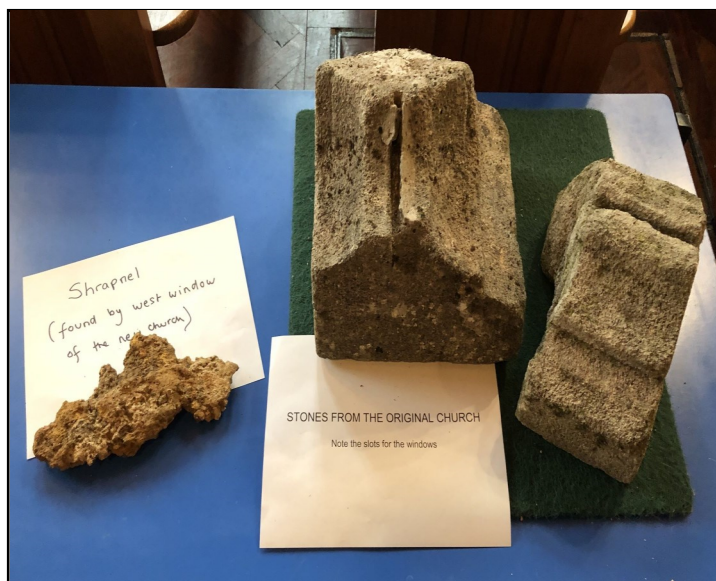
St Mary's welcomed many visitors to the Open Weekend in September, marking the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the church building, built after the original church was bombed during World War II.

In addition to tea, cake and a quiz, there was an exhibition of photographs, objects and plans related to old and new churches, and floral displays illustrating the decades since 1953.

We look forward to welcoming you again for the anniversary of the consecration of the new church in 2025!



PICTURED: a plan showing the position of the new church in relation to the old church and its vicarage



PICTURED: shrapnel and stones from the original church

A Tale of Two Churches

This history booklet can be obtained from the Parish Office for a donation of £5. We are grateful to a friend of St Mary's, David Merritt, who saw a need for a history of the two churches that have been on the site of St Mary's, one destroyed by bombing and the other rising from the rubble. St Mary's Shortlands is one of many Festival of Britain churches erected as bold monuments of optimism and faith in the future after the Second World War. In particular, David wanted to inspire young people with an interest in the history of the two buildings.

Harvest generosity

Many generous donations to St Mary's Harvest Festival were passed to Bromley Borough Foodbank.

The Foodbank, a registered charity, provides three days of toiletries and nutritious food supplies tailored to each vulnerable family or individual. The vouchers to obtain aid from Foodbank are given out by school welfare officers, social workers, GPs and other organisations who know the recipients and that they are in genuine hardship. Foodbank has also run food aid programmes to cover children's lunches during summer holidays.

The Foodbank is part of the national Trussell Trust network and so benefits from its national campaigns. The Trust's partnerships with supermarkets generate large donations from shoppers. Donations from supermarkets and from school and church events such as harvest festivals generate almost enough food to meet requirements for the whole year.

Donations from churches throughout the year help when supply does not match demand. However, this year supplies have been running worryingly low, so your donations are more valuable than ever.

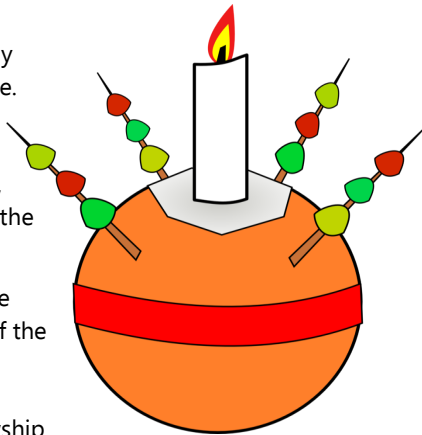
Some people donate money directly to Foodbank and this is very valuable in sourcing bulk purchases and paying for non-food items that are equally needed. One of these items is Bags for Life in which it gives out the donations. It is always very grateful to receive sturdy Bags for Life if you have any spare.

Donations for the Foodbank can be left in the church porch. Keep an eye on St Mary's weekly Pewpaper (available in church and at www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk/news) for updates on items needed by the Foodbank.

Christingle

This annual seasonal service is much loved by adults and children alike. The Guides prepare the oranges for the service with red ribbon, sweets and candles on the Saturday before.

To find out more about the symbolism of the decorated oranges, join us in informal worship, fun and fellowship at 4pm on Sunday 10 December: you will be warmly welcomed.



Tea Time Together

(children aged 2 – 6 and their families)

4 - 5.30 pm

Youth Club

(years 6 -13)

6 - 7.30 pm

13 November, 14 January, 11 February

Contact: racheltillotson3@gmail.com

Thank you and farewell

Kate Buchanan has recently stepped back from her role as churchwarden. She and her husband Stuart were regular members of St Mary's for over ten years. Stuart was a licensed lay Reader of some years standing: he brought a wealth of theological knowledge to his regular bible studies and was also active on a number of church rotas.

Kate brought her professional administration skills to the role of churchwarden and enjoyed the challenge of different aspects to the job, including chairing the Fabric Committee. She was also part of the Vision and Mission team, bringing her love of God and heart for people into that group. Her passion was to welcome new people into the church and make them feel a valued part of the church community whether 1 or 91! Kate and Stuart will be missed as committed and generous Christian people and St Mary's will be the poorer for their loss.



WWDQ

The teenagers of St Mary's will be addressing the difficult questions about being a Christian in our increasingly secular and dare I say pagan world. We are calling this initiative, Wrestling With Difficult Questions – WWDQ.

The next meeting is at 12 noon on Sunday 26 November, topic to be confirmed. Please send your suggestions! If you would like to wrestle with us, come and bring your friends. There will be "posh" snacks and open debate! Contact vicar@stmarysshortlands.church or 07947 778 441 for details of meetings.



Christmas Fair



2 – 4pm Saturday 25 November

In St Mary's church & grounds

Fun for all the family!

Father Christmas!

Gifts, cakes, mulled wine

& roasted chestnuts

Carols in church

Come & make decorations for our Christmas Tree!

Donations for raffle/ clean saleable goods welcome

Contact Gill Dawson (07767 365318) or leave at Parish Office Mon-Fri 9.30am – 12.30pm



The Parish Church of St. Mary, Shortlands

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WORSHIP

Sunday 10.30am - Holy Communion (in church)

Wednesday 10.00am - Holy Communion

You can access Sunday 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	Reverend Jane Kustner	07947 778 441
	vicar@stmarysshortlands.church	
Licensed Lay	Mrs C. Bingham	8460 0324
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	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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	Mrs. D. Speller	07941415082
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Junior Church	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884
Stewardship		

PARISH OFFICE

Telephone: 020 8460 5682

Email: office@stmarysshortlands.church

Open 10.00am - 12.00pm 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 O. Swinfen	07758458077
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. 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 2W'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 8
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	07511885941

LOCAL CONTACTS

Cllr. A. Cuthbert	Aisha.cuthbert@bromley.gov.uk
Cllr. F. Bainbridge	Felicity.Bainbridge@bromley.gov.uk
Cllr. A. Grant	Adam.Grant@bromley.gov.uk
Residents Association	8460 0395

SPAN INFORMATION

Website www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

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