



St Mary's Shortlands News Sheet

29 November – 6 December 2020

Sunday 29th November – Advent Sunday

Services will be streamed through Facebook. Please go to www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands or follow the link on our website www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk. The relevant orders of service are available by clicking the link on the home page of the website.

10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 6th December

We hope to be back in church for services on Sunday 6th December, adhering to the current guidelines on face coverings and distancing.

10.30am **Family Communion** *in Church but also live streamed.*
It is also possible to take part in the service from the Millennium Chapel.

6.30pm Advent Carol Service – *live streamed only*

Services during the week

Monday to Saturday

9.00am **Morning Prayer** – *live streamed*

The Church is open for **private prayer and reflection** from 10am to 3pm on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Pastoral and practical support

St Mary's has a team of people available to provide both pastoral and practical support to members of the congregation and the wider community. If we can help in any way, please email Revd Gary, vicar@stmarysshortlands.church

Preparing for Christmas

While we are not able to host all of our usual pre-Christmas activities this year, there will be special events in the church grounds on

Saturdays 5th and 12th December from 3pm to 5pm



There will be a nativity tableau in the church grounds as the focus for reflection on the message of Christmas. The Church will also be open and decorated for Christmas, with a special Prayer Tree with stars. Our Choir will be performing music for Christmas during the afternoon of Saturday 5th and the Music Group on Saturday 12th. This is a wonderful chance to take the Christmas message outside of the church building in these difficult times, and to share it with people in the community.

Sermon Series and Discussion Groups during Advent

On Sunday 29th November in the 10.30am service we have the second sermon in a series based on the Characters of the Nativity. The sermons consider the following characters: Mary (22nd November), Joseph, Angels, Shepherds and Wise Men. Running alongside the sermon series there are weekly discussion groups, meeting online via Zoom. The groups have only met once and anyone wishing to join in the coming weeks would be very welcome. The Zoom meetings are at 8pm on Tuesdays (Dec 1st to Dec 22nd) or 10.30am on Wednesdays (Dec 2nd to Dec 23rd). Please email Revd Gary vicar@stmarysshortlands.church to be sent the link for the meetings.

Organ Fund

Many thanks for donations to the newly established organ fund, in response to Annabelle and Joseph's ascent of the O2. They have raised almost £1,500 for the fund (including Gift Aid). Thank you for your generous support.

Christingle 2020

This year we are not able to hold the usual Christingle service at St Mary's but will be using Christingles and recognising the work of the Children's Society as part of our 10.30am service on Sunday 13th December. The Children's Society will also be hosting an online National Christingle Service at 9am on Sunday 13th December, for which you can register on their website.



There is a Christingle kit to use at home in preparation for these services. The kits are available from Jay or at the back of church from 5th December. Whatever contribution you can make to the work of the Children's Society will have a huge impact on improving a child's life.

Please donate by bank transfer to St Mary's Shortlands PCC, Sort code: 30-84-51, A/c no: 47608468, Reference: "Christingle". Or donations can be made by posting a sealed envelope marked "Christingle" through the door of church house.

Jay Sharma, jay@joelkibazo.com

Future Generations Fundraising

The fundraising team can now unveil the **2021 St Mary's Calendar** and the **St Mary's Congregation Recipe Book**. These will be on sale after the 10.30am service from 5th December, costing £6 each or two for £10. If you aren't able to buy them at church, please contact Rachael Bratt rachael.bratt@gmail.com to place an order and we will arrange to get the items to you.

If you are shopping on Amazon you can now donate to St Mary's by using the link <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1130802-0> or search on Amazon Smile for "St Mary Shortlands". The church will receive 0.5% on eligible purchases at no extra cost to you.

The online **Treasure Hunt** will be on Saturday 9th January at 4pm. There is no fixed cost for attending but you are asked to donate what you can. If you want to attend please sign up by emailing annmarie.jefferys@btinternet.com and an information sheet will be sent to you with the join-up details, password and how to donate.

Biggin Hill Romania Group Christmas Appeal 2020

It is around this time of year that the charity is usually busy collecting and sorting donations for the Christmas shoe box appeal. St Mary's has brought happiness to many children and their families over the years. This year, like many things, everything is different. Apart from Covid 19 the BHRG is currently unable to send shoe and family boxes to Romania due to the high cost of transportation. So, how can we all still help the very special children and their families who live in and around Comanesti?

The intention is to help the local economy as well as up to 100 families by raising funds to buy food, cleaning supplies and gifts locally. The purchase and delivery of provisions will be coordinated by the local representative of the charity who has lived and worked in Comanesti from the beginning in conjunction with the mayor's office. It is hard to imagine the level of need and poverty that many families still endure, or their relief and joy when they receive the gifts.

£20 will enable the charity to help a family, but any amount however small will help in some way. You can contribute to this cause using this link: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/christmas-appeal> Alternatively donations can be made via the BHRG's bank account. For further details please contact Susie Shelton on 020 8402 3299. On behalf of the children and families who will be receiving the gifts,
THANK YOU.

Susie Shelton

Christmas Services

Sunday 13 Dec, 10.30am All-Age Service (with a Christingle talk)

Sunday 20 Dec, 6.30pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Thursday 24 Dec, Christmas Eve - 11.30pm Midnight Mass

Friday 25 Dec, Christmas Day - 10.30am Holy Communion

Further details of Christmas Services will follow.