



Building the future together

It was a joy to celebrate Easter together. To celebrate the resurrected Christ who brings life to all creation. The first witnesses experienced the astonishment of Easter morning and a joy they could never have anticipated.

I was licensed as Vicar here at St Mary's on 6th May last year, and my first year at St Mary's has been an absolute joy, far beyond anything I could have imagined. Thank you so much for welcoming me and my family to Shortlands and helping us feel at home so quickly. It has been a privilege to minister among you in all of life's events, and it is with real joy that I look forward to the years ahead.

May is also a time when we look back over the previous year in a more formal way. On Sunday 3rd May we hold our Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), when we review our church's life, elect key officers, and look ahead together to the mission God is calling us to share. It has been an encouraging year at St Mary's as we continue to explore how we can grow together in number, in relationship, and in our service to the parish of Shortlands.

This year I will be sharing an update on our Future Generations Project, which has a vision rooted not only in our buildings and plans, but in faith. Its heart is our longing to ensure that St Mary's continues to be a place where the love of God is known, shared and embodied. Our buildings matter because they are places where people meet Jesus: in worship, fellowship, teaching, being welcomed, and sent out. We want these spaces to speak of God's hospitality, beauty and love for the community we serve. We long for them to be future-proof, sustainable and accessible, to be gifts for those who will come after us.

So I invite you to come and see what God is doing at St Mary's. Come and share in the hope and vision shaping our life together, and join us on the journey ahead. And come expecting that the risen Christ who met His disciples will meet us too, surprising us again with His joy.

Rev Dave Edmondson

PLANT SALE

Saturday 16 May 11am-1pm

In the church grounds

Refreshments from

St Mary's

Community Cafe

Special services and events

Sunday 3 May

12noon Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Come and hear what we've been doing and plans for the year ahead

Sunday 10 May

4.00pm Tea Time Together

6.00pm Youth Club

Wednesday 13 May

10.00am Holy Communion for Ascension Day

Sunday 17 May

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Preceded by the AGM of the Friends of St Mary's

Sunday 24 May – Pentecost

10.30am Holy Communion



From the Registers



We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Memorial Service: Bob Norfolk-Thompson 18th April

St Mary's Pre-School



Shortlands

No Mow May



Our flowery meadows are one of the great joys of late spring and summer. After a wet and grey winter, the sight of colourful flowers, buzzing with pollinators, lifts our spirits. Soon our meadows will be alive with oxeye daisies, birds-foot trefoil, knapweed, orchids, hay rattle and much more. The flowers will attract bees, hoverflies, butterflies and other insects which, in turn, will benefit the birds feeding their young.

Grasslands also have a huge potential for locking up carbon, not only due to the plants we can see on the surface, but also to the relationships between the plants, fungi, bacteria and other species which help enrich the soil with carbon.

We are lucky in Bromley to have, within easy reach, wonderful meadows. Look out for the red haze of sheep's sorrel and the attractive hare's foot clover on the acid grassland of Martin's Hill; visit the neutral meadows of Jubilee Country Park full of the white umbellifer, corky-fruited water dropwort and the blue flowers of chicory; or venture to High Elms Country Park to enjoy the species-rich chalk grassland of Burnt Gorse with its many species of orchid.

Several 'blue' butterflies (Common Blue, Brown Argus), Marbled White and the rare Dark Green Fritillary can be seen on sunny days. But the 'meadows' in our own gardens can bloom like those of the wider countryside if we allow them to. Embrace No Mow May and sit back and enjoy your lawn and the surprises it will bring you of flowers long forgotten and overlooked. (Picture copyright Ben Jarvis).

Ishpi Blatchley



EASTER CELEBRATIONS:

Thank you to all of those who came together in workshops led by Cecilia Willatt to create new Easter decorations to replace those which were lost when asbestos works were required in St Mary's basement.

We have space available at our vibrant Ofsted registered pre-school. We offer the 15-hour funded childcare each week and enrol children from two and a half years old until they start primary school. We are dedicated to creating a safe, stimulating and happy environment that inspires and encourages every child's individuality to blossom and grow, enabling them to become happy, inquisitive and confident children. We constantly challenge children to explore, learn and progress by offering a rich and varied range of exciting activities.

We are the only pre-school in Bromley to hold the Gold Healthy Early Years London award. It shows our commitment to improving the health, wellbeing and development of the children.

We also hold Gold standard Millie's Mark Accreditation, awarded for exceptional achievement to childcare settings, going above and beyond minimum requirements in keeping children safe. All staff are paediatric first aid trained.

We offer Forest Play sessions in the summer term with many exciting activities such as tree climbing, mud painting, nest making and mini beast hunting. Our website is updated every week with new information about what we have been doing that week.

If you would like to arrange a visit or have any questions please contact us on 020 8290 6704 or email st.marys.preschool@hotmail.co.uk. If you would like to register your child for a place please do so at www.stmaryspreschoolshortlands.co.uk.

PARISH PICNIC

ST MARY'S SHORTLANDS

Sunday 28th June

ALL AGE CHURCH SERVICE

Starts at 10.30am

Picnic starts straight after

Bouncy Castle, Ice Creams, Activities, Tuck Shop, Donation Bar, BBQ food for sale or bring your own picnic and much more

HOMEMADE BAKING CONTEST
All are welcome to enter!

HOLD THE DATE: The Friends of St Mary's are planning a trip to Eltham Palace on 20th June. More details in next month's SPAN

My Monday to Saturday week

My family have been coming to St Mary's for about four years now and you'll often see me, my husband and my two children (18 and 15) robed and in the choir on a Sunday.

My work life is also linked to the Church of England, where I work in the National Lay Ministries Team. Ministry in church is about serving people and God. There are some ministries that we can name like preaching, taking services or serving as a secretary on a committee, but we all have a ministry, our own way of serving. It could be welcoming or encouraging people, taking time to listen, or balancing the accounts. Remembering to pray for people and situations is a really important ministry.

My role involves championing the ministry of people who aren't vicars - that's about 98% of the people who attend church in England. Their ministries range from decorating the church to leading funerals.

My department requested each diocese (similar to counties) to list all lay roles, and this led to the identification of 400 different jobs! Most people who are involved in church wouldn't describe what they do as ministry, but our team's role is to highlight and support all that's done to build up the Kingdom of God.

I can often be found running events that bring people who lead on lay ministries together or working on newsletters or online spaces where people can ask questions and share ideas. It's endlessly interesting work in a great team, and the views over Westminster from the office are really something!

When I'm not at work, at St Mary's or being 'Mum', I love taking photos. If you ever want to talk cameras, I'd be delighted - but be warned: once started I can talk forever!

Cathy Myers



MISSION OF THE MONTH

Embrace the Middle East

Embrace the Middle East is a UK based development charity founded in 1854, originally known as Bible Lands. The charity works to improve the lives of marginalised and vulnerable communities in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine (both the West Bank and Gaza). It partners with local Christians to support education, healthcare and community development projects and is now heavily involved in refugee aid and food distribution.

The mission of Embrace the Middle East is also to tackle poverty and injustice while restoring the dignity of the marginalised, regardless of faith. It provides much needed health provision in the Palestinian territories, especially hospitals which are open to all. The charity operates based on respect for human dignity, compassion for the marginalised, integrity and trust in God

The Al Ahli Arab Hospital is the only Christian hospital in the Gaza strip, offering a spectrum of medicine and surgery, obstetrics / gynaecology and paediatrics to all citizens of Gaza regardless of faith and no faith. Embrace the Middle East helps support this hospital, especially as it was bombed badly in May 2025 and is still not fully functioning. For more information visit www.embraceme.org.

When I was in prison, were you there?

The livery companies are the old craft guilds of London, covering a wide range of professions and skills. Today there are 114 remaining: they run training and education, support apprentices and schools and raise money for charity. The Masters are the elected heads of the companies and I am the Master of the Society of Apothecaries this year.

On 2nd March, ten Livery Masters and the Sheriffs of the City of London walked 7.3 miles from the Old Bailey to Wandsworth prison, accompanied by prison chaplains and an ex-prisoner. Before leaving, the Sheriff's Chaplain recalled Christian teachings on forgiveness and redemption.

Wandsworth prison houses 1,478 prisoners, 70% of whom are on remand, and is the UK deportation centre.

During the extended visit, we met the Governor and the prison council of elected inmates. We walked the wings and visited the gym with the prisoners. The visit was sobering, illuminating but inspiring because of the respect that staff show to inmates, which was reciprocated. We heard about the essential role and ministry of prison chaplains and a new approach giving prisoners more freedom and earned responsibility.

'Listeners' told us how they support prisoners during their first days in jail and when they are in distress or suicidal. The listeners are volunteer inmates, trained and supported by the Samaritans. Through our sponsored walk we have exceeded our target of raising £60,000 and may reach £100,000. The money will support prisoners to re-enter society and find work and will fund innovative violence reduction programmes. My abiding impression was of hope and positivity, seeing restorative justice working.

Dr David Jefferys



Our Friends

The Friends of St Mary's were set up in 1955. They organise or support social events and raise funds for 'extras' that the church is sometimes unable to fund. Details of planned events are publicised in SPAN.

Membership is open to all members of the church and the local community, and new members are always welcome. If you are interested in joining please complete one of the forms available at the back of the church or contact the Secretary at chasecrew@btinternet.com.

The Friends' Annual General Meeting and Evensong will be held on Sunday 17th May. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available in the Friends Room from 5.30pm before the AGM at 6pm. Evensong is at 6.30 followed by drinks and nibbles. We hope as many members as possible will come to the AGM, and all are welcome at Evensong.

The Rt Rev Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Rochester, led one of our Sunday services at St Mary's in March.



St. Mary's Shortlands

You are welcome

Link Parish, St Francis of Assisi, Douai, France

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@stmaryshortlands.church		
Churchwarden	Mrs G. Sherman	07500751265
Churchwarden	Mr R. Hogg	
robinwarden@stmaryshortlands.church		

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	Mrs A-M. Jefferys	8460 6030
	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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Telephone: 020 8460 5682

Email: office@stmaryshortlands.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. Swinfen	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
Guides (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Thu)	fourthbromleybrownies@outlook.com	
Rainbows	2ndshortlandsrainbows@gmail.com	
Pre-school	Mrs. C. Hall	8290 6704 or 07960988552
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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