

A questioning faith

We will welcome one another to our service on Easter morning using the words 'Alleluia, Christ is risen; He is risen indeed. Alleluia!'

We reach Easter having journeyed through Lent and reminded ourselves of the events leading up to Jesus' Crucifixion during Holy Week.

The Easter story shows us how when things seem at their worst, when everything has gone wrong, we can often find signs of new life and new hope - if we are open to being surprised.

The message is mind-blowing! This is not the story of an appearance of the risen Christ but of the disappearance of a body. No one witnesses the actual resurrection. We don't hear the ending of the story, but rather a beginning. The gospel account of the first Easter morning is left open-ended. The key person in the narrative is not there!

The Gospel account of Easter morning may leave us with more questions than answers. Here we see, in the absence of God, something of the mystery and unknowability of God. Here faith and doubt are not opposite extremes but part of a process, a journey - a journey that values questions. Does our faith have to be certain or is it strong enough to allow for questions? Are questions to be seen as threatening or could they be God's way of challenging us to think more deeply about our faith?

It is good to question and explore our faith. It is only by doing this that we can come to our own understanding and belief. Maybe we have questions about the resurrection that we have never dared to ask. The disciples certainly had their doubts and questions, yet these were the people who witnessed to the good news and on whom the Church was founded!

What is our response to the story? Are we willing to be part of it? To become part of it means not just hearing but living the story. Why not come along to St Mary's one Sunday morning to find out more?

Rev Morag Finch

Special Events and Services

Sunday 6 March - Mothering Sunday

10.30am Family and Parade Service

With the help of Junior Choir
Including the blessing and distribution of
posies

Sunday 20 March - Palm Sunday

10.30pm Procession of Palms and Eucharist for Palm Sunday

6.30pm A Passiontide Service of Readings, Anthems and Hymns for Holy Week

Thursday 24 March - Maundy Thursday

8.00pm Washing of Feet and Eucharist of the Last Supper

Friday 25 March - Good Friday

10.30am Family Service

2.00pm An Hour at the Cross

3.00pm Half an hour for private prayer

Sunday 27 March - Easter Day

8.00am Easter Communion

10.30am Eucharist of the Resurrection

Including the renewal of Baptismal Vows
and the Easter Egg Treasure Hunt



CHEERS! A good time was had by all at the St Mary's dinner and dance in January

Stay in touch!

To keep up with news from St. Mary's in between editions of SPAN, you can like our page on Facebook or follow us on Twitter – search for 'St Mary's Shortlands'.

Don't forget our website
www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk





From the Registers

Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

24 Jan Stella Nightingale
Gregory Nightingale
Angus Nightingale

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

James Watson 29 Jan aged 84

Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Alan Stone 31 Jan

Get decorating!

Allow your creative juices to flow and decorate an egg this Easter. Bring it to church on Easter Morning and we will judge the eggs after the 10.30 service.



Either boil or blow your egg before decorating it (if you prefer not to use a real egg you can buy egg shapes in craft shops). You can use paints, felt pens or natural dyes and if you wish you can stick things to your egg too.

Our theme is 'the Bible'. You can interpret this in any way you choose - whether a Bible story, a person or perhaps an animal.

I look forward to seeing your ideas, whether it looks like a Faberge creation or one that I made! Please include a label indicating which part of the Bible your egg illustrates.



Rev Morag Finch

Remembering

David Townshend

David was born in Rawalpindi in 1924. His father was an engineer on the Indian railways. He joined the Royal Engineers in 1943 and was later sent to Bombay to be part of the Indian army. He remained with the Royal Engineers for 27 years and enjoyed postings to Libya, Malaya, Cyprus and Germany. On Remembrance Sunday, he wore with pride the medals he had been awarded.

In 1954 David married Clare and they had four children. He was a caring family man, fondly remembered for hurrying home early if one of the children was sick and buying doughnuts as an unexpected treat. He was a patient father who gallantly helped all of his children learn to drive and willingly helped clarify maths homework.

In 1971 David left the army and (after a brief spell in business, cut short by the recession), began working for Southwark Council as a Principal Administrative Officer, working first in the Architects' and then the Property Division. It was at this point that the family moved to Shortlands and soon began attending St Mary's.

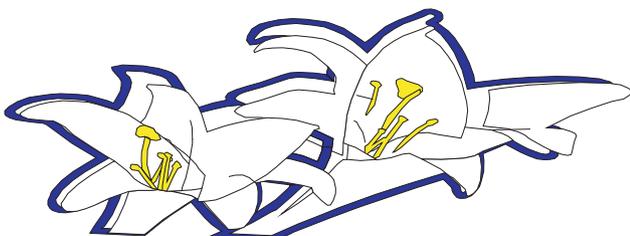
In retirement David became increasingly active in the life of St Mary's. He became a Sidesman, was elected onto the Parochial Church Council and Deanery Synod, and served for three years as a Churchwarden. He also became involved with the services at Durham House, taking on a leading role when it looked as if their continuation was uncertain.

David also attended adult education classes and with his newly acquired word processing skills produced his memoirs, aptly entitled 'Humour Guides the Pen' and later, 'Whither Religion?'

David was a kind, thoughtful and practical man: he held regular coffee mornings to bring friends together and welcome newcomers, and over many years he gave less physically able parishioners a lift to church. As Clare's illness progressed he became her full time carer and showed immense fortitude and kindness.

In September 2014, David's declining health meant that he moved to Cheshire to live with his elder daughter Gemma. It gave him pleasure to keep up with news of St Mary's via SPAN.

David is survived by Clare, their four children and nine grandchildren.



Jumelage Ocuménique - the French Connection!

Since 1995 St Mary's Shortlands has been twinned with the Parish of St Francis of Assisi in Douai, Northern France. Each year there is a weekend together, so when we visited them last year in Douai we celebrated our 20th Anniversary of the Twinning or "Jumelage". Their visit to Shortlands this year will be the second leg of these celebrations, and you can be part of it!

The date is Saturday 30th April - Sunday 1st May, the Bank Holiday weekend, so there is the Monday after the visit to recover!

We are looking for people who would like to offer home hospitality for the Saturday night on a bed & breakfast basis. We are always warmly welcomed into French homes when we go to Douai, so it is lovely to be able to reciprocate. On the Saturday night you would be invited to a 'cluster' dinner, where several French people and their host families get together to eat, drink and be merry!

On Sunday morning there is a great celebration at our 10.30am service, to which the Mayor has been invited, followed by luncheon in the Church Hall. Our guests will then depart on their homeward journey by coach via the Shuttle.

New people are warmly welcomed, so why not get involved and enjoy a great weekend with us? You don't need to be able to speak French, as a number of our group and theirs can get by in each other's language. We try and ensure there is always someone in any group who can help to keep the conversation flowing. Fluency also tends to improve after a glass of wine!

Sign-up sheets will be posted at the back of the church for different aspects of the weekend, so you can take your pick. Or for more information do contact Gill Dawson: telephone 8460-5884, text 07767-365318 or email gill@gill.dawson.name. Come along and have a really great time!

Gill Dawson



Paroisse François d'Assise

My Day Job

I have been following family Armed Forces or Diplomatic postings all my life and, although disruptive, the need to find work wherever I have found myself has offered some interesting opportunities! My parents' insistence that I did secretarial training was a Godsend in this respect, opening many doors. I later insisted, however, that the stage was where I wanted to be, so trained in performance and continued to pursue that profession as well.



My 'proper' jobs have included PR for Interflora, Holiday Inns and Suffolk Lawnmowers, selling for Rover Deutschland, writing Visas for the British Embassy and Administrating for Pitcairn Island – also St. Mary's Parish Office, where I spent six very good years – the only time I had, to date, lived in one place long enough to keep a job for more than 18 months!

But my favourite jobs have been the 'improper' ones, in performance. I have managed to pursue this throughout (on and off!) working in cabaret, repertory theatre, film, TV and radio in the UK and overseas, including tours with local theatre companies in Croatia and New Zealand.

Now I am PA to the Principal of Queen's Gate School, Kensington, supporting whatever goes on in the working life of the Principal, and forming an active link between her and the School Office. No two days are the same. It is a wonderfully stimulating working environment, with regular contact with parents, Governors, academics, politicians, police, councillors, the local community, the local church and vicar, etc. Never having worked in connection with education before, I have developed a deep respect for the teaching profession. I don't think I have ever worked harder in my life, but I enjoy it immensely.

When I 'retire' I shall get back to performance – I have 'rested' for a while now and it will be time to 'don the motley' again...

Suzie Evans

Mission of the month

LIVING WELL

Living Well began in 2011 in response to growing numbers of people calling at the vicarage of Holy Trinity Beckenham church in Penge, asking for help. Since then over 600 people from across Bromley and South East London have taken part in Living Well. Services are free to all and include a foodbank, a community lunch, mental health support, debt advice and help with addiction.

Living Well's founder, Rev. Nick Read, states its aims thus: 'to build together a caring community where people feel accepted, loved and valued. Our name, 'Living Well' expresses both our intention and hope for the people who turn to us. It is also a reminder of Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman (John 4:10). He met her at a well and talked of giving her 'living water'.'

Living Well works closely with local churches, schools, businesses, individuals and groups to provide a place where people feel welcome. They can enjoy a hot meal, some food to take home, friendly conversation and advice if needed. Recently activities have expanded. There is a community garden where vegetables are grown for Friday lunch. There is a Lottery funded art therapy group, a music group, a benefits advice clinic, a clothes bank and washing facilities. Retired GPs and other professionals kindly give their services.

Living Well is a registered charity and depends entirely on the work of volunteers and the generosity of donors. For more information, see the display at the back of church this month or <http://www.holytrinitybeckenham.org.uk/whats-on/living-well-bromley.aspx>

Saint of the Month

St David - 1st March

St David – or Dewi Sant in Welsh – lived in the 6th century and is the patron saint of Wales. Most of what we know about him comes from a biography written in the late 11th century by a Welsh monk called Rhigyfarch.

Following his education, David went on a pilgrimage through parts of South Wales and the West of England. He was one of the first big names to visit Glastonbury, where he consecrated a church on the site of the future abbey. He became renowned as a teacher and preacher, founding monastic settlements and churches in Wales.

Many miracles were attributed to St David. One miracle often recounted is that, once, when he was preaching to a crowd at Llanddewi Brefi, those on the outer edges could not hear. So he spread a handkerchief on the ground, and stood on it to preach, and the ground rose up beneath him, and all could hear. A white dove, which became his emblem, was seen settling on his shoulder.

He made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem where he was anointed as an archbishop by the patriarch. His principal monastery, where the community was very strict, was at St David's, Pembrokeshire where he died and was buried

As well as Wales, he is also the patron saint of doves, vegetarians and poets.

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WORSHIP

Every Sunday

- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion, except when notified. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 0-18.
- 18.30 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday in the month)

Every Monday

- 17.00 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

- 10.00 Holy Communion

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

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev. M. Finch	8464 8065
(Sat - Thu)	revfinch@btinternet.com	
Associate Vicar	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	07531 617302/ (Sun, Mon, Wed)
Reader Emeritus	Mrs. A. Gimson	8460 6494
Readers	Mr. P. Stotesbury	8650 3259
	Mr. S. Buchanan	8777 8008
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	Mrs. D. Speller	8466 1184
	Mrs. M. Westropp	8650 5178
Parish Administrator	Ms. N. Blake	8460 5682
Assistant	Mrs. E. Parker	8460 5682
Churchwardens	Mr. A. Williams	07914343495
	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
Deputies	Mrs. A. Swatton	8650 1114
	Mrs. P. Chase	8464 6188
	Miss A. Parks	8464 1157
	Mr. S. Clark	8464 0696
	Mr. D. Cooper	8460 0682
	Mr. B. Waring	07957 186027
PCC Secretary	Miss J. Rambridge	8650 0947
Treasurer	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884
Assistant Treasurer	Mr. R. Hogg	8290 0031
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Assistant Organist	Mr Daniel Beach	8289 6510
Electoral Roll	Mr. N. Stoffel	8460 0063
Stewardship	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178
Junior Church	Mrs. S. Aldred	8460 3978

PARISH OFFICE Tel: 8460 5682

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com
Open 9.30am - 12.30pm weekdays.
Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

Mothers & Toddlers	Mrs. J. Runicles	8650 4553
Mothers' Union Fellowship Group		
	Mrs. P. White	8460 9357
Friends of St. Mary's		
	Miss J. Rambridge	8650 0947

For admissions to Beavers, Cubs & Scouts please contact email: 7bromleyadmissions@gmail.com

Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mrs. P. Braithwaite	8460 4152
Cubs (Tues)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers	Mrs H. Ashford	07979 504079

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies & Guides please tel: 08001695901 or go to www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

Guides (Tues.)	Ms. N. Keast	07516 650940
Guides (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon.)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Wed.)	Mrs. R. Kateswaran	
		8249 0984
Brownies (Thurs.)	Mrs. S. Tight	8460 8122
Rainbows	Ms. W. Keeping	8466 1599
	Mrs. S. Tight	8460 8122
Pre-School	Mrs. P. Chase	8290 6704
		or 07960 988552
The 2WW's	Mrs. A. Heayberd	8460 9537
Church Flowers	Mrs. M. Parr	8249 7127
Mission Chairman	Mrs. S. Shelton	8402 3299
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Mobility Class	Jan Boam	8460 7101

LOCAL COOKS

Clr. M. Cooke	020 3665 0357
(Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Clr D. Jefferys	020 8460 6030
(Email: david.jefferys@bromley.gov.uk)	
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

SPAN INFORMATION

Website www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk
Editorial Parish Office 8460 5682
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