

Out of the comfort zone

Our thoughts may be beginning to turn to Lent and Easter; we have seen Easter eggs in the shops since the Christmas decorations came down. The church marks Lent as a time of reflection and repentance.

Easter is what is known as a 'moveable feast' and as it falls late this year, the season of Lent is also late. I'm sure many of us will eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday (4th March), before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday on 5th March.

Lent is a time that is traditionally used for prayer, repentance, giving to the poor and self-denial in the period leading up to Easter. Many churches don't have flowers in them at this time.

During Lent, many people commit to fasting or giving up certain types of luxuries as a way of showing their repentance. Often members of churches add in extra times of study to their existing pattern at this time.

Lent lasts for forty days (not including Sundays) and could be described as a way of moving out of our comfort zone. This links with the ministry of Jesus: his journey was not one of comfort but of doing God's mission.

God's Church, the church to which we belong, is called to be part of this Mission. To love with that same costly love that was seen in Jesus.

God calls us to come out of our comfort zone, to find out what He wants of us and to journey with Jesus. We may find this costly and uncomfortable, as Jesus did. In the end, we are called to bring the knowledge of God to those who do not know him, and that may take us to unfamiliar places.

Rev Morag Finch



Pictured with Bishop Brian are Rev Morag and Peter Brown from St. Mary's, and Father Paul Keown and confirmation candidates from St. Michael's, Beckenham.

Special Events and Services

Wednesday 5 March – Ash Wednesday

10.00am & 8.00pm Holy Communion Services

with the Imposition of Ashes for those who wish it

Sunday 9 March

6.30pm Evening Worship

with the Music Group and Pathfinders

Sunday 16 March

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Responses: Smith

Canticles: Morley

Anthem: If ye love me - Tallis

Sunday 30 March - Mothering Sunday

10.30am Family and Parade Service

with the blessing and distribution of posies with help from the Beavers

Afterwards, a Cake Sale in the Church Hall in aid of the Guides' international trips

Holy Week and Easter Services

Sunday 13 April - Palm Sunday

10.30am Procession of palms and Eucharist for Palm Sunday

6.30pm A choral service for Passiontide

Thursday 17 April - Maundy Thursday

8.00pm Washing of Feet, Eucharist of the Last Supper and the Watch

Friday 18 April - Good Friday

10.30am Family Service

2.00pm An Hour at the Cross

Sunday 20 April - Easter Day

8.00am Sunrise Eucharist

10.30am Eucharist of the Resurrection

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

Stay in touch!

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

Don't forget our website

www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk





Confirmation

Confirming their Christian faith:

16 Feb Peter Brown



Remembering

Peggy Lyle

We were sorry to hear of the death in Worthing of Peggy Lyle, just two months before her 99th birthday.

Peggy had lived in Beckenham all her married life, moving to South Hill Road with her husband Gordon in the late 1980s when he retired.

Born in Cheshire, she first became involved with youth work at her boarding school in North Wales: it was through that youth work that she met Gordon. They married in 1940, living at first over his dentist's surgery close to Beckenham station. Peggy assisted Gordon in his surgery and together they were part of the Beckenham Red Cross during World War II.

Peggy and Gordon adopted Mary as a baby, and nine months later Peggy gave birth to Jane.

Peggy and Gordon were both deeply involved all their lives with the Beckenham Blind Club and 'Club Land' - a Methodist Youth Club in Camberwell. They were also deeply committed to the Rotary Club of Beckenham.

Soon after Gordon's death in 1999, Peggy moved to Blenheim Court where she stayed until she moved to be nearer her daughter a few years ago.

Peggy was a much-loved friend to many people, and a faithful member of St Mary's Shortlands for many years.

Mission of the month



Bromley Mencap

Bromley Mencap is a small local charity, formed over 60 years ago by a small group of parents who came together for mutual support and to campaign for services for their disabled children.

There are now around 1,700 members and the charity provides a wide range of services and activities for disabled people of all ages with their families and carers.

Bromley Mencap provides a telephone advice service, childcare facilities, respite and short breaks, leisure and school holiday activities, help for elderly carers, employment training and support and help in finding and sustaining jobs. In response to rising needs, support has been increased for older carers and also carers who themselves have a learning disability.

Although the charity is small, they have recently been recognised by four national award schemes and in 2011 won a Guardian Public Service award.

Bromley Mencap does not receive any financial support from the Mencap national charity, and has to raise over £700,000 this year just to maintain the current service for these vulnerable people. Due to the current financial climate, local government cuts and increasing competition, it is becoming extremely difficult for smaller charities to raise much needed funds.

St Mary's was due to welcome Jane Barnes to talk about Bromley Mencap at the 10.30am service on Sunday 2nd March.

Easter Lilies



If you would like to remember a departed loved one at the Great Festival of Easter, we invite you to make a donation to the Flower Fund as a memorial to that person.

A list of the names of all those to be remembered will be placed on the altar on Easter Day, to affirm our hope in the resurrection to eternal life and the Christian's eternal security in Christ.

My day job: Rev Richard Finch

From Monday to Friday (and on the occasional Sunday) I work at Forest YMCA, based in Walthamstow. My job title is 'Senior Chaplain and Faith Support Manager' and I head up a small team that consists of another Chaplain, volunteer assistants and part-time staff.



Forest YMCA is a large charitable organisation providing accommodation, support and training for over 300 men and women who were homeless.

There is also youth work, children's pre and after school clubs and community sport and leisure facilities. We have a total of about 150 staff.

My day consists of a varying pattern of activities. The most important is the pastoral support for the residents, staff and visitors. Sometimes just an informal 'I was just passing ...' type of chat will lead to an opportunity to support a person prayerfully in a time of need.

We have a pattern of daily and weekly prayer and we celebrate the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter. I also help to form links with various faith communities in the area so that we can provide appropriate faith support as required.

As a manager I have to attend meetings and training courses so that I take my part in the organisation of Forest YMCA.

A very different part of my work is coordinating the links between Forest YMCA and Togo YMCA. We have formed a partnership providing some financial support to their Justice and Rehabilitation Project. This encourages legal support to prisoners, and training and work opportunities for former prisoners. I was able to visit the project in 2012 and since then several staff have visited Togo and two Togolese staff have stayed with us.

Most importantly, from the Chief Executive Officer to the Housekeeping assistant, I am there so that we can have a 'chat' - sometimes to give a person a chance to open their heart.

My job is to say - 'go in the love and peace of Christ'.

Rev Richard Finch

THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S, SHORTLANDS

invite you to a

QUIZ NIGHT

in the Church Hall, St Mary's Avenue

on

Saturday, 22 March

7.15pm for 7.30pm



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available after Sunday services or from the Parish Office

Planning ahead

On 1st February, members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the ministry team met together to develop plans for the future.

We considered how best to reach out to and serve the local community, and how to use the buildings and resources we have to greatest effect. Rev Morag also made time for us to sit quietly and listen to God – reflecting on what we'd learned, and how we will work together to make it happen.

We had fun - and lots of ideas. We started to prioritise the ideas which will help us in meeting St Mary's mission: to bring the love of God into the everyday lives of the people of Shortlands.

So what happens next? More detailed plans will be developed and considered by the PCC, with the aim of having something to share at the Annual Parochial Church Council meeting on Sunday 27th April.

Heather Wills

French Connection

Curious about the St Mary's link with Douai? Find out more below...

The Douai Link is a twinning between the Parish of St Francis of Assisi in Douai, Northern France, and St Mary's Shortlands which was set up in 1995. So this is the 19th year of our Link.

We alternate our visits, with us visiting them one year and them coming to visit us the next, which they will be doing 3rd - 4th May this year.

Anyone can join in – it's not a cosy clique, but a great opportunity for anyone to come along and share in a weekend of activities and 'fraternité' with our brothers & sisters in Christ from Douai. New people are always welcome.

You don't even need to speak French as a number of our group and theirs can get by in each other's languages. We try to ensure that there is always someone in any group who can help keep the conversation flowing. A glass of wine over dinner also works wonders!

Families in Shortlands offer home hospitality on a bed & breakfast basis, just as when we go to France. On the Saturday evening, 'cluster' dinners are arranged where several French people and their host families get together to eat, drink and be merry!

This year, we will meet them in Greenwich, have a picnic lunch together, visit the National Maritime Museum and the Cutty Sark. Then it's back to Shortlands to the host families and dinner. On the Sunday morning we share worship together and then have a buffet lunch in the Church Hall before our guests depart on their homeward journey.

When young families come over, we match them up with families here. The Guides have also been involved with the Link from the beginning and are looking forward to welcoming the French Guides and offering them home hospitality.

Sign-up sheets will be posted at the back of the church for different aspects of the weekend, so take your pick. Or for more information contact Gill Dawson: tel 8460-5884 or email gill@gill.dawson.name Come and join in the fun!

Gill Dawson



Happy Birthday Traidcraft!

It is Traidcraft's 35th Birthday this year – and it's Fair Trade Fortnight from 24 February to 9 March.

Traidcraft plc was set up by a group of Christians as a practical response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They help poor producers in over thirty countries to improve their livelihoods, offering the hope of a better future for them, their families and communities.

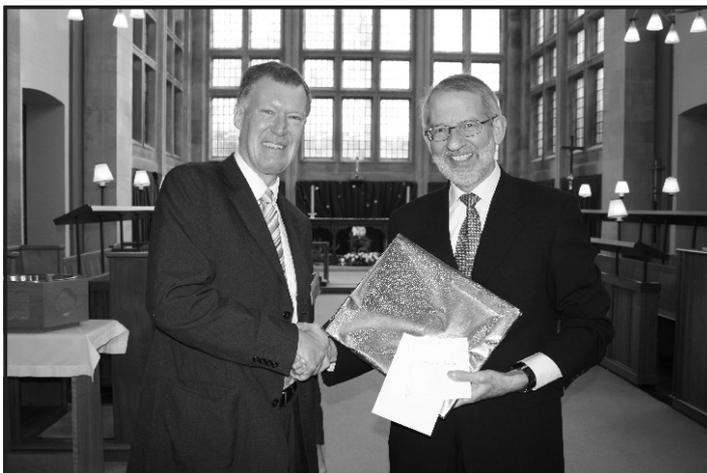
At St Mary's we have been a Fair Trade Church for the past eight years. This means we serve Fairtraided refreshments, and we hold a monthly stall that sells a wide range of Fairtraded groceries, beautifully crafted gifts, attractive handmade cards and household goods.

We also support Traidcraft Exchange, the charity side of Traidcraft, the UK's only development charity specialising in making trade work for the poor. They also lobby governments and work with businesses to deliver policies to ensure a better deal for the world's poor.

The stall is held at the back of St Mary's Church after the 8.00am and 10.30am Sunday services once a month. For more details please ring Cecilia on 0208 313 0246, or look at the website:

www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk

Cecilia Willatt



Farewell and thank you!

In January, St Mary's said goodbye to a very 'good and faithful servant'. Michael Johnson, who started attending the church in 1977, has now moved with his wife to the West Country.

Over those 36 years, Michael performed many roles and tasks for the church including: Churchwarden, Sidesman, Chair of the Premises Committee and organiser of the grass cutting rota and gardening mornings to tidy the church grounds.

All of these roles were carried out with quiet efficiency and dedication: when someone like Michael leaves us, we realise what a difference one person can make!

Current Churchwarden David Jefferys (pictured, left) presented Michael with a thank you gift at his last service.

The Big Brownie Birthday



2014 is the centenary year for Brownies with many exciting activities planned. For 100 years girls have benefited from being part of this organisation and here at St Mary's we have three well established Brownie packs which are thriving and in demand by parents.

2nd Shortlands Brownies are in need of an Assistant Adult Leader to help their existing Adult Leader on a regular basis in order that they can continue having fun and friendship for years to come. They meet on Thursdays from 6.15 - 7.45pm in St Mary's Church Hall.

If you think that you would like to help then please contact Sue Tight on tel: 020 8460 8122 or email: suetight@hotmail.com

images from GirlguidingUK website

SPAN THANKS

We record our thanks this month for gifts amounting to £16.50.

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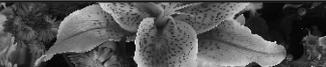
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- 10.30 Family Communion, except the first Sunday in the month in term time.
During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 0-18. All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
- 18.30 Choral 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
	revfinch@btinternet.com	
Associate Priest	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	07531 617302/ 8460 5682
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e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com
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Friends of St. Mary's	Miss J. Rambridge 8650 0947	
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Cubs (Mon.)	Mrs. J. Garvey	8249 8785
Cubs (Tues.)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers/admissions	Mr. J. Westropp	8650 5178
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. G. Attoh	07946 833576
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Douai Link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Fair Trade	Mrs. C. Willatt	8313 0246

LOCAL CONTACTS

Cllr. E. Noad	8462 3295
Cllr D. Jefferys	07944 565455
(Email:david.jefferys@bromley.gov.uk)	
Highfield Infants' School	8464 7804
Highfield Junior School	8460 2597
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

SPAN INFORMATION

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