

Welcome to Christmas at St. Mary's



May I take this valued opportunity to welcome you and your family to celebrate Christmas at St. Mary's Shortlands. Christmas is a wonderful festival and we are providing a number of opportunities for you to come to church, to sing carols and to hear again the Christmas story.

2008 has been a year in which we have been reminded of the fragile nature of our world. The financial crisis in our banking institutions has rocked us all. I used to laugh at my grandmother who kept her savings under the mattress, but perhaps she was right after all! We continue to see wars, famine and displacement of peoples grip the peace of our world and we are constantly reminded that nothing in this world is certain.

It was into this fragile and disturbed world that God entered in the birth of a baby in Bethlehem. The Christmas Carol 'Once in Royal David's City' describes so well what happened:

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all,
and His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And, through all His wondrous childhood,
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms He lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.

For he is our childhood's pattern;
day by day, like us he grew;
he was little, weak and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above,
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.



It is worth reading this carol through and reflecting on it. It helps me to see how much God cares and how much he has given us. It helps me to connect earth and heaven and to see that there is more to life than what we experience on earth. We have come from God and are made in his image. And in an uncertain world we have the security of life after death in the promise of heaven.

The town Bethlehem is itself an example of how God's presence can be encountered in an uncertain and unstable environment. In the centre of the town is the oldest Church in the world, the Church of the Holy Nativity. It is built over the place where Jesus was born. It is visited by thousands of pilgrims every day - it must be one of the most prayed-in places on earth! But the town is surrounded by a security wall, and although tourists come and go, the residents have restrictions and are hemmed in by the Israeli security forces. They often feel they have little hope, but there are some wonderful things going on in that town in the cause of reconciliation.

by Canon Paul Miller

Special Events and Services

Sunday, 30 November

6.30pm - Advent Carol Service
Including music by Malcolm Archer, Ravenscroft and Richard Shephard,
as well as popular congregational carols.
Organist and Director of Music - Frank Roddy
Assistant Organist - Claire Tillotson

Saturday, 6 December

2.00pm to 4.00pm - St. Mary's Christmas Fayre
Come and enjoy the fun of the festival! Proceeds will be given to Bromley
Welcare and St. Mary's, Shortlands.

Sunday, 7 December

10.30am - Toy Service
You are invited to bring one new, unwrapped toy, which will become a gift
for a local child in need of support through Bromley Welcare.
3.00pm - Christmas Concert by the XBY Concert Band

Friday, 12 December

10.00am - Highfield Infants' School Nativity Play

Sunday, 14 December

6.30pm - The Christingle Carol Service
Come and see the children's faces glowing in the light of the candles, and
support the work of the Children's Society.

Tuesday, 16 December

11.00am - St. Mary's Pre-School Christmas Service

Wednesday, 17 December

9.45am - Highfield Junior School Carol Service

Thursday, 18 December

12 noon - St. Mary's Toddler Group Christmas Service

Sunday, 21 December

6.30pm - The Traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas
with music by Harold Darke, John Rutter and Giles Swayne.
Organist and Director of Music - Frank Roddy
Assistant Organist - Claire Tillotson

Christmas Eve: Wednesday, 24 December

3.30pm - Nativity Play and Crib Service
led by Canon Paul Miller and Fiona Bratt, Junior Church Co-ordinator. All
children and adults are welcome to take part, and if you wish, come
dressed as angels, shepherds or wise men.

11.30pm - Procession by Candlelight, Midnight Mass of the Nativity of
Our Lord and Carols for Christmas
The Choir will be singing carols from 11.15pm to welcome you.

Christmas Day: Thursday 25 December

9.00am - Holy Communion
10.30am - Family Communion for Christmas Day
You are invited to bring a newly opened present!

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS !



From the Registers

Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

- 16 Oct Raya Haj-Assad
- 26 Oct Isabella Hampton
- Emilie Thomas

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

- 28 Sept Paul McKinnon, aged 82
- 15 Oct Lilian Goodwin, aged 97
- 22 Oct Jennifer Loades, aged 68

Interment of Ashes

- 12 Oct Robert Jones



Remembering

Lilian Goodwin

Lily was born in the Walworth Road in 1911. She met her husband Bill at a wedding. They had two children Alan and Sylvia. As a hobby Bill and Lily spent many years with a group of friends entertaining for charity, visiting residential homes, and performing at the seaside.

Lily had a great sense of humour, which helped to sustain her when Bill died. She moved into Franklin House and enjoyed all the activities there – she became a member of the darts team and entered any competition she saw.

She loved her family – her two children, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Lily has been described as a 'real character'. She was certainly someone who lived life to the full, she will be greatly missed.

A Service of Thanksgiving was conducted at Beckenham Crematorium by the Reverend Alison Newman, attended by family, friends and residents of Franklin House.

SPAN THANKS

We record our thanks for donations during October of £24.

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Jenny Loades

Jenny was born in Ebbw Vale in Wales. She was one of three girls, educated in Gravesend before commencing her nursing training at the Cheyney Hospital, West Wickham where she met David, who she married at Swanscombe in 1962. They had three children, Phillipa, Stephen and Christine.

Jenny loved the outdoor life and shared with David his love of Scouting and camping. She took a great interest in the community, she was one of the original delivery team of SPAN, she served on the Committee at Franklin House, served Meals on Wheels, assisted at the Bromley Welcare shop in Penge and led the Young Wives and Mothers' Union at St. Mary's.

A Service of Thanksgiving, conducted by Canon Paul Miller and the Reverend Alison Newman, took place at St. Mary's Shortlands at which many members of her family paid tribute to her amidst a large congregation. A private cremation had preceded the Service.

Paul McKinnon

Paul was born in Saltcoats, Ayrshire and was proud of his Scottish heritage. He joined the Army as a teenager where he rose to "acting" Major whilst in active combat in Malaya. He met his future wife Monica on New Year's Eve 1949 and they married in 1950. They were married 58 years. After the army Paul started his own very successful business in distribution.

Paul especially enjoyed travel, cars and fine wines. He was very much a family man. He loved his five children - Fiona, Mark, Nicky, Ian and Debbie and playing with his grandchildren. He had a keen sense of humour. The last few years had been difficult for Paul with the onset of Alzheimer's.

A service of Thanksgiving at Eltham Crematorium was conducted by Reverend Alison Newman. A large number of family and friends came to celebrate his life.



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Farewell to Alison

At a farewell service and lunch for the Reverend Alison Newman, tributes were paid and gifts presented in recognition of the ministry of Alison in Shortlands during the past 2½ years.

The children and young people presented to her in Church a candle and a signed card, and the Church and community gave her an olive wood carving of the Holy Family, a basket bouquet and a cheque.

Pictured are some of the young people with Alison and Alison with her husband Mark, who also received a book token in recognition of his ministry as a Reader and Evangelist.



Mission of the Month



the effects of exclusion, ignorance and disrespect.

Young refugees

Helping refugee children rebuild their lives in new communities, surrounded and supported by friends. Providing help with finding accommodation and education, and assisting with language barriers.

The Children's Society provides help and understanding for those forgotten children who are unable to find the support they need anywhere else. Their resources are targeted to four priority areas of work:

Children in trouble with the law
Exposed to bullying, violence and deprivation, some children are driven to crime. The Children's Society seeks to provide preventative support and guidance to lead children away from the cycle of crime and custody.

Children at risk on the streets
Each year in the UK 100,000 children run away from home, and many resort to begging, stealing and prostitution to survive. The Children's Society helps them find solutions to their problems at their point of greatest need.

Disabled children
The Children's Society ensures that individual disabled children are given a voice in decisions that affect them now and in the future, to overcome

This forms the core of their work, and alongside this they also support projects involving traveller and gypsy children, and young people affected by adult drug and alcohol misuse.

The Children's Society relies heavily on donations. This allows them to concentrate their work where the need is greatest and not just in areas where government funding is available.

This makes them a truly independent organisation.

Through working with children and involving them in all their work, The Children's Society has built up considerable experience and knowledge. They are able to work with front-line partners to provide services including training and consultancy, which offers local solutions for local needs.

Shortlands remembers!



A packed Church of over 400 crammed into St. Mary's Shortlands on Remembrance Sunday to remember the 66 young men from Shortlands who were killed in the Great War and all those who have died serving their country and defending our freedom. Councillor George Taylor, representing the London Borough of Bromley, Karen Bigg and Ann Golding from Highfield Junior and Infant Schools, Mark Dempsey of the Shortlands Residents' Association, Sgt Dave Harvey for the Shortlands Safer Neighbourhoods Team, Peter Stotesbury of St. Mary's Church together with representatives from Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Choir Club and Youth Club laid wreaths and posies for remembrance. Before this the Two Minutes' Silence was held after which Philippa Critten played the Last Post and Reveille.

It was a special moment for the community of Shortlands.

Toddlers Leader to retire

Marian Parr, the Leader of St. Mary's Toddler Group for the past 22 years is retiring! Marian has overseen a remarkably successful group where parents and carers of children can come together on Thursday mornings or afternoons to enjoy one another's company and to create a caring and stimulating environment for young children to grow up.



Marian has built up a team of dedicated helpers and provided a much valued resource for the community.

A Farewell to Marian will take place at the Toddlers Christmas Service at 12.00 noon on Thursday, 18 December at St. Mary's Church. Anyone who has come to the Group is welcome to attend. We hope to make a presentation to Marian, and anyone who would like to contribute to this can leave it with the Parish Office.

Commenting on her retirement, Canon Paul Miller said: 'We are enormously indebted to Marian. She has been at the helm for a very long time and now deserves a well earned rest! What is encouraging is that some of the mothers who have benefitted from the Group are now taking over the leadership and they will continue to be supported by the existing helper team.'



New Team for Toddlers

From 1 January the new leadership team for the St. Mary's Toddlers will oversee the running of the Thursday group which meets at St. Mary's.

Pictured from left to right are: Julie Runicles, Tracy King, Fiona Davidson, Zoe Vero and Catherine Wilding.



...no I don't think you're the real Father Christmas!
I think you're up there pinching lead off my roof!!

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WORSHIP

Every Sunday

- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 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 2½-14.
- 10.30 All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
- 18.30 Evening Service

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

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PARISH OFFICE Tel/Fax 8460 5682

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com

Open 9.00 am - 12.30 weekdays. Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

Mothers & Toddlers	Mrs. M. Parr	8460 3871
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Highfield Junior School	8460 2597
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	07920 233848

SPAN

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