

Remembering together

November is a month of remembering: All Souls Day, when many churches hold memorial services to remember those whom are loved but have died; Bonfire night, an English tradition, when we remember an act of treason that was thwarted; Remembrance Day, when many nations remember those who have sacrificed themselves in war.

From the uniquely personal to the national and international, we gather together to remember. Why do we do this? When marking events that have had a profound impact on our nation and beyond, it seems natural that we choose to do this collectively.

In Shortlands, as we gather around our war memorial each year, we acknowledge our collective debt to those who have sacrificed so much on our behalf; we stand together and remember the pain of war and the consequences that resonate in people's lives for many years afterwards. This remembering connects the past with the present and in so doing, can impact on how we live in the future. We are also reminded that we are loved by a God who is no stranger to suffering, and, who stands alongside us in our pain.

It may be less obvious why we gather together to remember those whom we love but who are no longer with us. These losses are very personal. Why gather with others for whom your loss may have very little meaning? I have been to the memorial service at St Mary's for the last couple of years and have sensed some of the reasons why this service is valued.

Firstly, it offers a space to acknowledge our grief; grief that changes over time, but rarely leaves us completely. It is also a space to treasure again what that person meant to us and to be thankful for them. There is comfort too in being alongside others who have experienced similar loss; in recognising that death and grief are common human experiences. In some intangible way, we hold each other and together we can allow ourselves to be held by God. These things are healing.

There is something special about community, at times of both happiness and sadness. Remembering together is a valuable aspect of the life that we share. I hope that you will be strengthened by being part of the community of

Shortlands and St Mary's Church in the months to come.

(At St Mary's we hold our memorial service on the Sunday closest to All Soul's Day, which this year is Sunday November 4th at 4pm).

Sally Aldred

Special Events and Services

Sunday 4 November

4.00pm Memorial Service

We give remembrance and thanks for the lives of those we love but no longer see

Sunday 11 November - Remembrance Sunday

10.00am Family Communion and Parade Service

Including Act of Remembrance, Two Minutes Silence, Laying of Wreaths and dedication of Tommy

(Note the earlier start time - meet in church at 10.00am, and by the War Memorial at 10.45am)

Sunday 18 November

6.30pm An informal service led by the Music Group

Sunday 2 December - Advent Sunday

6.30pm Advent Carol Service

Sunday 9 December

10.30am Toy Service

Toy Service

Advent is a time of preparation to receive a wonderful, life saving gift. Come and help those supported by Bromley Welcare by bringing a gift for a local child to our 10.30am Toy Service on Sunday 9 December. You are invited to bring a new, unwrapped toy or voucher suitable for children aged 8-13 years. Please, no soft toys. Wrapping paper also welcome.

Stay in touch!

The Parish Office email is office@stmaryshortlands.church
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



World challenge

The month-long expedition began on the 18th of July. After a hearty farewell to all at home we departed for Kathmandu, the Nepali capital. Immediately we were shocked by the driving standards and the amount of noise, traffic, and dust there was on the roads.



At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Mary Newland 25 September

Christopher Mezzetti 3 October

Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Geoffrey Webber 1 October

We had two nights at a hotel in order to organise what we were going to do next – we had to find out where to eat, where to stay for the night, and how to book transport for our destinations. Once we had done all of that, we headed off to another major city, Pokhara, in order to start our community engagement.

We were eagerly welcomed to a local school with flower garlands, and had tika placed on our foreheads as a blessing. We spent time digging the foundation for a wall next to the school, and playing with the children. The definite highlight was singing and dancing to both Western and Eastern music at the end of our hard work!

Not long after we travelled to the Rolwaling Valley for 11 days of trekking. We encountered a lot of Buddhist and Hindu culture in the settlements along the way, and at the top of the valley was the beautiful Tsho-Rolpa glacial lake, surrounded by towering snowy peaks. I had an amazing time, meeting truly wonderful people and immersing myself in a different culture.

Oliver Wright-Jones



The University of Greenwich Big Band played songs from the Great American Song Book at St Mary's in October

Come and worship together

The St. Mary's Music Group will be leading one of our popular services of informal worship in the church at 6.30pm on Sunday 18th November.

The theme of the service is 'Who do you say that I am?' We will explore the different ways in which people experience God and the different names for God in the Bible, such as Saviour, Teacher, Shepherd, Love. All are welcome.

Our own VC - a story of bravery

On 27th January 1918 the commanding officer of HMS Submarine E14, in harbour on the Aegean island of Lemnos, received orders to sail to the Dardanelles and attack the German battle cruiser 'Goeben', which had been reported crippled and aground in a narrow channel.

Despite an extensive search the battle cruiser was not located and E14 turned back (in fact, the 'Goeben' had been refloated and towed away for safety and repair). On its return E14 attacked a merchant ship firing two torpedoes.

Tragically, one exploded as it was released, causing major damage to the bow and a total loss of lighting. Due to extensive flooding the submarine was forced to surface when it came under heavy fire from Turkish artillery. With a defective air supply, the captain decided the E14 should continue on the surface, even though subjected to constant bombardment.

Although within half a mile of open sea the E14 was so badly damaged the order was given to make for the shore to give the crew some chance of rescue. It sank after running aground. During the whole action the captain remained on deck controlling operations until killed by shell fire. His last words, as reported by a survivor, were 'We are in the hands of God' – his body was never recovered.

The captain of the E14 was Lieutenant Commander Geoffrey Saxton White VC. He was born in Shortlands on 2nd July 1886 where he spent his early years at 'Leecroft' in Durham Road (now demolished). He was baptised in Bromley Parish Church.

Lt Cdr White was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross by King George V for 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty'. He is remembered on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial and on a plaque on the Bromley War Memorial – perhaps St Mary's should add his name to our own?

Keith Mills

Welcome to 'Tommy'

You may have noticed that we have a new addition to our Church grounds. To commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War a 'Tommy' silhouette has appeared on the grass, bowed in reverence towards the War memorial.

This was purchased from the There But Not There charity by kind donations from the Shortlands Residents' Association, a parishioner and the Friends of St. Marys.

Tommy Atkins or Thomas Atkins has been used as a generic name for a common British soldier for many years. The origin of the term is a subject of debate, but it is known to have been used as early as 1743, was well established in the 19th century, and is now synonymous with First World War soldiers.

This will be a permanent reminder of all those who fought during the 1914-1918 war, and subsequent wars, who gave their all for our freedom. We thank God for their sacrifice and ask for blessing on those in our parish who serve today in our armed forces.

Ann-Marie Jefferys



The St Mary's Church
Christmas Fair
Saturday 24 November
from 2-4pm
in the Church Hall
 Come and share in the fun!

Please donate nearly new toys, books, raffle prizes, soft toys, bric-a-brac, books, unwanted gifts or other clean saleable goods to the Parish Office Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 12.30pm

Mission of the month

Bromley Homeless Shelter

The Bromley Homeless Shelter is a project run by Bromley churches to help homeless people, in particular those who have a connection to Bromley Borough. The shelter is supported by a number of local churches, businesses and many local residents.

Every Thursday the United Reformed Church in Widmore Road, Bromley hosts a welfare advice session, advising on benefits and homelessness.

During the coldest and most difficult time of the year (November to March), a night shelter is operated for homeless people in central Bromley (at Bromley Parish Church). In the evenings a meal is shared following which the guests sleep overnight in a warm, safe hall, and in the morning are served a hot or cold breakfast. During the mornings, opportunities are created for guests to access other support and advice services. Guests who find accommodation are offered Starter Packs which provide them with basic household items such as a duvet, bed linen, crockery, toiletries and kitchen items.

Donations are always needed. It is hoped that an additional shelter scheme will be set up this winter in the north-west of the borough.

The night shelter scheme relies on many volunteers: those who cook, serve the food, wash up, stay overnight with the guests, and serve breakfast. The winter season is organised on a rota system, and volunteers are always welcome.

More details about the work of the shelter, a list of items required for the starter packs, and a short film of a typical winter night at the shelter can be found on www.bromleyshelter.weebly.com, or see the display at the back of church in November.

St Mary's Remembers

Over the past four years we have been remembering those men who died during World War I, who are named on the St Mary's War Memorial and in the St Mary's Book of Remembrance that is placed in the church.

As a result of researching these 56 brave men they have become very real and their loss in many cases so much more poignant. Families who lost all their sons, sometimes their only children. Brothers who died within weeks of each other, children who lost their fathers, wives and girlfriends who lost their loved ones. So many so young, often less than 20 years old when they died. They came from all walks of life, from gardeners to solicitors, those who went to local schools and those who went to public schools. Some were born and bred in Beckenham and Bromley and others came here in later life. In many cases it has been possible to find a photograph of them, increasing their reality.

Many died on the battle fields of France or Mesopotamia (Iraq), or were lost at sea or as a result of flying accidents, some with graves, others whose bodies were never found, remembered on mass memorials near where they were thought to have fallen. Some died in England as a result of their wounds or illnesses contracted in the trenches.

It has been hard to single anyone out but two who were particularly difficult or interesting to research were Kimberley Smith (left picture) and James Cassels Cobb (right picture) who both died in August 1918 exactly 100 years ago.

Divali 6-10 November - Hinduism

Divali, the Hindu festival of lights, is the most popular of all the festivals from South Asia. It is also an occasion for celebration by Jains and Sikhs.

The festival of Divali extends over five days. Because of the lights, fireworks and sweets involved, it's a great favourite with children.

The festival celebrates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance, although the actual legends that go with the festival are different in different parts of India.

In Britain, as in India, the festival is a time for thoroughly spring-cleaning the home, wearing new clothes and most importantly, decorating buildings with fancy lights. The city of Leicester is noted for its Divali celebrations.

Divali' comes from the Sanskrit word dipavali, meaning row of lights. It is known as the 'festival of lights' because houses, shops and public places are decorated with small earthenware oil lamps called diyas. These lamps, traditionally fuelled by mustard oil, are placed in rows in windows and doors and outside buildings to decorate them.

The lamps are lit to help the goddess Lakshmi find her way into people's homes. They also celebrate one of the Divali legends, which tells of the return of Rama and Sita to Rama's kingdom after fourteen years of exile.

In India oil lamps are often floated across the river Ganges - it is regarded as a good omen if the lamp manages to get all the way across.

Fireworks are a big part of the Divali celebrations, although in recent years there has been a move against them because of noise and atmospheric pollution and the number of accidental deaths and injuries.



Kimberley was only 15 when he enlisted in 1914, giving his father's name of Alfred so that his extreme youth would not be easily detected. He was severely wounded in France and died in hospital, having served his country for three and a half years. The sister in the ward wrote to his parents 'he was very brave and good. I think you must be very proud of him'.

James was an actor and published author who had appeared at the Ibsen Club and London Theatres with good reviews before joining up in August 1914. He was accidentally wounded in Egypt and after a year's sick leave was sent to France where he was killed in action aged 33.

We will always remember these men and their bravery and hope that the short record of their lives that will now be kept in the church office will enable future generations to remember them also.

Kay Coleman



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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

- 17.30 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

- 10.00 Holy Communion

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

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Vicar	8460 5682
office@stmaryshortlands.church	
Licensed Lay Ministers	
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Mr. P. Stotesbury	8650 3259
Mr. S. Buchanan	8777 8008
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Mrs. M. Westropp	8650 5178
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Assistant	
Mrs. E. Parker	8460 5682
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Canon C. Tillotson	8460 7368
Assistant Organist	
Mr Daniel Beach	8289 6510
Safeguarding Officer	
Mrs Kay Coleman	07879337567
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Stewardship	
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PARISH OFFICE Tel: 8460 5682

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

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	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	Ms F. Hav	07932758801

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

Guides (Tues.)	Ms. M. Bowman	07885604457
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. Tigh	8460 8122
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	or 07960 988552	
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Douai Link	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
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LOCAL CONTACTS

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(Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Cllr A. Cuthbert	
(Email: aisha.cuthbert@bromley.gov.uk)	
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