



St Mary's Shortlands

News Sheet for Sundays

23rd and 30th August, 2020

Worship at St Mary's

Services are available every day via the St Mary's website or Facebook page. The services are 'live-streamed' but can also be watched at a later date/ time. The relevant orders of service are available by clicking on the link on the website.

Sunday, 10.30am

A celebration of the Eucharist

Monday to Saturday, 9am

Morning Prayer

Sun. 23rd August – 11 th Sunday after Trinity	Sun. 30th August – 12 th Sunday after Trinity
<p><i>Collect</i></p> <p>O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen</p> <p><i>Readings:</i> Romans 12. 1-8; Matthew 16. 13-20</p>	<p><i>Collect</i></p> <p>Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen</p> <p><i>Readings:</i> Romans 12. 9-21; Matthew 16. 21-28</p>

Services in Church from September

We are delighted that St. Mary's will be open for public worship once again from 6th September. The pattern of services will closely follow our normal pattern:

Sunday (from 6th September)

8.00am Holy Communion *live-streamed* from the chapel (*with no congregation*). The service will be available on Facebook and via the St Mary's website, to be watched live or at a later time.

10.30am Holy Communion, held in Church with a congregation and with live or recorded music

Wednesday (from 16th September)

10.30am Holy Communion

We will be following strict guidelines in respect of social distancing, hand sanitising, etc, and communion will be in one kind (bread only). Restrictions have been lifted regarding live music, so services may include contributions from the choir, music group or recorded music, all subject to following government and CofE guidelines.

I look forward to welcoming you all back into our church building for worship and the sharing of the most holy of Sacraments together as one body, present in our church building, another step forward in regaining life as we knew it back into our church and community.

Revd. Gary Best

For our prayers

Lord of heaven and earth, as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer, give us patience and courage never to lose hope, but always to bring our prayers before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We pray for The World

- For all in this country and around the world whose lives are being affected by the coronavirus and the restrictions we all face.
- For medical staff, scientists and researchers who are caring for the sick and finding ways to control the Covid-19 pandemic.
- For the people of Beirut as they cope with all they have lost and try to rebuild their lives.
- For our government and leaders of the nations, for wisdom and clarity in their decisions

The Community

- For all who continue to suffer hardship due to the pandemic.
- For those who serve us in this community and help to keep us safe.
- For young people and teachers as they cope with the turmoil of exam results and prepare to return to schools and colleges.
- That all may find rest and refreshment over this summer period.

The Sick

- For all who are unwell, including: Jane Green; Melanie Jones; Revd Hugh Broadbent; Joan Austen; Paul Corben; Roger Bullen; Ann Dalton; Eric Wills.

The Departed

- We pray for those who have recently died and all who mourn.
- We also remember those whose anniversary we keep at this time: Mary Newland; Archie Brown; William Petty; Isabel Calderon; Philip Cooper; Robert Gras; Brian Rider; Jean Weekes; Eric Dixon; David Pippard; Joan Higgs.

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law; grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Christian Aid Lebanon Appeal

The massive explosion in the port of Beirut on 4th August caused a huge shock wave through densely populated areas of the city. Neighbourhoods were reduced to rubble by the blast, along with hospitals and crucial stores containing 85% of the country's grain and medical supplies. More than 750,000 people have been affected by this disaster, which left an estimated 300,000 people homeless and families without food or access to medical care.

Christian Aid is working with local partners in the most affected areas to distribute food and water, clothes, mattresses and blankets; provide access to medicines and health services; find temporary shelters for families, and provide minor repairs for homes. In times of crisis, all acts of compassion, big and small, can make a world of difference. Please can you help those who have lost everything?

www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/lebanon-crisis-appeal



May the beauty of the gardens of Lebanon be restored. May the peace shattered in Beirut be renewed. May your children taken from this world by the blasts in Beirut be welcomed mercifully into your embrace, and may their loved ones who remain be comforted by all the world's peoples. In God's good name we pray. Amen.

Church opening

St Mary's Church continues to be open for personal prayer and reflection on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, between 10am and 3pm. For those unable to leave their homes or who will struggle to get to the church, our pastoral team is available to talk through any concerns you might have.

Face coverings

Following government guidance, we are now required to wear face coverings when visiting the church for a service or for private prayer, if other people might be present. Please remember to bring a face covering with you when you visit, and note that wearing a face covering is not a replacement for physical distancing and regular hand washing. We have also been asked to encourage people to consider re-usable cloth masks in order to limit the amount of plastic waste.

Our new Curate

As announced some months ago, Revd. Gary and the church of St Mary's have been selected by the Diocese of Rochester to support a curate in training, starting from September 2020. This posting will last for three or more years. Our new curate is to be Mrs Beverley Ejimofe and we look forward to meeting her very soon. Beverley has completed the first part of the diocese's clergy training and will be ordained as a Deacon on September 26th, which may take place via Zoom (online) or in Rochester Cathedral with a greatly reduced attendance due to COVID. She will officially start at St Mary's on Sunday 27th September.

Coffee morning – Wednesday 26th August

Do join us in church **from 10.30am** on Wednesday 26th August and enjoy fellowship with friends from church over a cup of tea or coffee and cakes. Tables and seating are suitably spaced, and there is 'waitress service' to bring you refreshments at your table.

There will be a *Traidcraft Stall* selling the usual selection of Fairtrade foods and other goods; a sale of items by the *Craft and Chatter Group*, and a 'swap table' for *Jigsaw Puzzles*.



SPAN

The Shortlands Parish Newsletter, has been part of the life of Shortlands for the past 34 years but sadly we have not been able to produce and distribute it during the recent crisis. Planning is now underway to produce SPAN again from November onwards. Delivering the newsletter to every household in the parish is a large undertaking and we are looking for some volunteers to join the team. If you would be able to deliver to a street or part of a street once a month, please contact Pat Chase, chasecrew@btinternet.com. Many thanks.

Friends of St Mary's

As you will be aware, the current unusual circumstances have, amongst other things, played havoc with our forward planning and arrangements. Our Friends AGM and Choral Evensong were to be held in May, but sadly had to be postponed. We have decided to hold an electronic AGM at 6pm on Sunday 6th September to ensure officers are elected and due process is followed. We are planning a couple of events in the Autumn and further details will be available in the next issue of the News Sheet, so watch this space! If you are not already a Member do please consider it – you can join us for as little as £10 pa. If you would like information about becoming a Member or, even better, joining the committee - it is not onerous or demanding - do email me on foxsearth@btinternet.com. Stay safe and I hope to 'see you' very soon. *Julie Fox*

Church Groups

The Craft and Chatter Group and the Mobility Group are both meeting again, currently outside (weather permitting). For further details please contact Jan Boam. janboam@hotmail.co.uk

Time to talk

The coffee morning on Wednesday 19th August to launch the new temporary kitchen at the back of church was a very successful and enjoyable event. More than 30 members of St Mary's came along and were able to meet together in a safe environment, to talk again face-to-face (suitably distanced) and to enjoy some delicious home-made cakes. There was obvious delight in seeing people again after so many months, and it was an important step towards resuming our life together here at St Mary's. The new kitchen made life much easier for the team of servers and will be a huge asset to us when we serve refreshments in church. There is another coffee morning from 10.30am on Wednesday 26th August – all are very welcome.



Stewardship

I would like to thank everyone who has kept their stewardship pledges during these difficult times and also all who have joined the scheme or made an additional donation following our "lockdown" stewardship campaign earlier in the year. This has helped cover the hole in our finances created by the need to cancel all hiring of the hall during lockdown, and helped us maintain our payment of the Parish Share. A big thank you! If you would like to know more about the stewardship scheme please call or email our Treasurer, Tim Dawson, on 07774 633333 or treasurer@stmaryshortlands.church. We have also added a giving button on our website which you might want to try out.

Congratulations!

We are delighted to welcome baby Jack Dawson to the family of St Mary's. Jack was born earlier this month and is a brother for Rupert, now 19 months old. Congratulations to parents Andy and Tracy.

Bromley Foodbank

The items most needed at the moment are: *long life fruit juice, custard, rice pudding, squash, jam, packet mashed potato, cold meat (tinned), biscuits, shampoo, men's shower gel, men's deodorant, nappies size 5 or 6, washing detergent.* (They have plenty of beans, pasta, soup, rice, tomatoes.) There is now a collection box for the Foodbank in the church porch so items can be left there.

St Mary's Site Development - Update

Back in February and March we received very positive feedback about the extra space at the back of church that we created by removing the last two rows of pews on a trial basis. This helped us to see how we could make the space in church more flexible. Having heard this feedback, the PCC decided that we will retain this space and look to develop a greater range of activities during the week. Once we are able to meet together again we will reschedule the postponed meetings so that members of the congregation can hear what we've researched and ask questions about options for seating and flooring in church. We will listen to feedback about this before moving forwards and will continue to hold this project in our prayers as we seek to understand what God is asking us to do here in Shortlands. We have also started to consider whether there is potential to make greater use of audio-visual facilities in church once we are back in church (for example, streaming services to a wider audience) and to support our wider mission. If you have any questions about the site development, please email futuregenerations@stmaryshortlands.church.

Supporting others

St Mary's has a team of people available to provide both pastoral and practical support to any members of the congregation and the wider community who may be in self-isolation, unwell or feeling alone at the moment. If we can help in any way, please contact Revd. Gary by e-mail at vicar@stmaryshortlands.church (020 846 0262)

If you have suggestions for items to include in the next News Sheet, please send them to Kate Buchanan (kateinww@btinternet.com) by Monday 31st August.