

St Mary's Shortlands

News Sheet for April 2021

Celebrating Easter in Church

We are once again able to hold services in church, while following the usual rules for wearing face coverings and maintaining social distance. All our services are also live-streamed for those who are unable to attend in person. Please go to www.facebook.com/stmarysshortlands or follow the link on our website www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk.

Sunday 4th April **Easter Day**
10.30am Holy Communion

In the church grounds after the service there will be a Traidcraft stall and refreshments, and activities for children.



Regular services

Sunday 10.30am Holy Communion

During April there are no refreshments after services but, following current guidelines, we can talk in small groups in the church grounds.

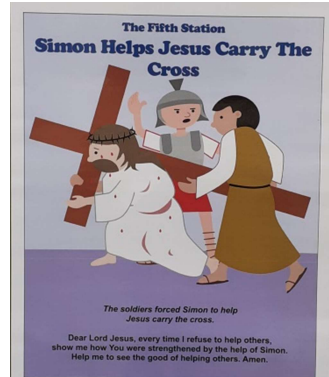
The Coffee and Chat on Zoom is now at 12 noon. The link is available from the parish office - office@stmaryshortlands.church

Monday to Saturday, 9am Morning Prayer
Wednesday, 8.30pm Compline

The Church is open for private prayer and reflection
from 10am to 3pm on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday

The Easter Story

It has been good to take our celebration of Holy Week and Easter out of the church building this year with the family-friendly display of Stations of the Cross. With such lovely weather during the week, the display certainly caught the eye and was visited by an encouraging number of people. We hope that it helped to guide both children and adults through the Easter story. Many thanks to Sue and Mike Harrison for organising and setting up the display.



Seeing more clearly

The new audio-visual equipment has now been installed in church and is fully operational. The image quality is greatly improved with the new cameras, which also allow different angles and zoomed shots, and we are looking forward to using the mobile screens in a creative way. A huge thank-you to the volunteers who have taken on the task of operating the equipment during services and have already got to grips with the technology. If you would like to join the team - currently Adolph Williams, Mick Scott, James Hollingdale and Mark Fox – please speak to Revd. Gary or email vicar@stmaryshortlands.church

Discussion Groups

More than 30 people took part in our recent Lent course on Zoom. The course, “Opening the Scriptures”, explored the relationship between God and human beings through stories in Genesis and Exodus. We thought about God’s glory as revealed in creation, human relationships looking at Jacob and Esau, and love and sacrifice through Abraham and Isaac. The course offered interesting paintings, videos and music to aid our reflections. It was helpful to consider some questions in small groups, to explore and learn together and to get to know each other a little better.

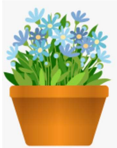
Following on from Lent there are plans for a variety of groups for discussion and fellowship once we are able to meet freely indoors. Please look out for more details.

St Mary's Annual Church Meeting

The APCM is on 2nd May and will be held in person as well as online this year. For those who wish to attend virtually please contact the office for the login details; office@stmaryshortlands.church (020 8460 0262). Anyone on the electoral roll can attend and vote. This year we will be electing six PCC members and two churchwardens. The churchwardens are elected on an annual basis and PCC members are elected for three years. If you are interested in standing for either post please speak to Revd Gary or email stephanie.howarthmaurel@yahoo.co.uk for an application form. For both roles, you will need to be nominated and seconded by a member of St Mary's on the electoral roll.

There is still time to add your name to the electoral roll before the APCM. If you have moved into the parish, joined the church, or reached the age of 16, please email stephanie.howarthmaurel@yahoo.co.uk for a form to be added to the roll. These need to be returned to Stephanie by *Sunday 11th April*.

Plant Swap/ Sale



In the church grounds, **10am – 12 noon**
Saturdays **17th April** and **15th May**.



A chance to swap 'extra' seedlings with other gardeners or simply to buy plants for your garden

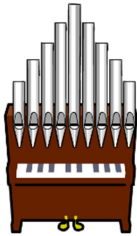
Douai

Once again Covid has kiboshed plans for the weekend to celebrate 25 years of our jumelage/twinning with the Parish of St Francis of Assisi in Douai. Restrictions in France seem less stringent than here - even in lockdown areas people are still allowed to attend Mass at their local church, with masks and social distancing. In the Douai region people are allowed to visit family and friends, with gatherings outdoors limited to 6 people. Our French friends cannot wait to see us again, and the plan is for St Mary's to host the 25th (27th!) anniversary celebrations in April/May 2022, exact dates TBC. Let's hope it's third time lucky.

Gill Dawson

Congratulations

Our congratulations to Tim Aldred who has recently been accepted to train for ordained ministry in the Church of England. Tim is expecting to start training in the autumn, following the ordination course, part-time for three years, while continuing in his day-job with the Fairtrade Foundation. Over this period, Tim and Sally and family will still be living in Shortlands and will continue to be members of St Mary's. We pray for Tim as he continues on this exciting path, and we look forward to finding out more about his training and future ministry.



News of the organ

Our organ is now back in use after major cleaning and refurbishment during the recent lockdown, and it is sounding good! The recent wine tasting event in support of the organ fund was enjoyed by more than 40 people who took part via Zoom. We tasted a Malbec, a Pinot Noir and a Chenin Blanc among other wines. Winners were the Maurels with the Bratts in second place.

Thanks to those who organized the event so well and of course to those who took part. Around £130 was raised for the organ fund, generously boosted by Refreshers giving a contribution based on any orders following on from the event.

Robin Hogg

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week 2021 is from **9th to 16th May**. This year's theme is the devastating effect of climate change on some of the world's poorest communities, particularly the impact of reduced and less predictable rainfall in Kenya. Money raised will help to build simple earth dams close to villages to reduce the long journeys that women make to collect water for daily use. This year at St Mary's we plan to distribute 'delivery-only' envelopes to households in the local area. These give information about how to donate to the appeal by returning the envelope to St Mary's Church, or via the website. As usual we will be looking for volunteers to help deliver envelopes (but not to collect them). Thank you for your support of Christian Aid.

Kate Buchanan

*Please send any items for the May News Sheet to Kate Buchanan
kateinww@btinternet.com by Sunday 25th April. Thank you.*