

Does Ordinary Time exist?

As I started to write this, I had recently changed the cloths on the church altar, pulpit and lectern to green, the colour we use before (dare I say it) we move into the seasons of Advent and Christmas. We call the current season 'Ordinary Time'. But is there such a thing as ordinary time in church life, or any of our lives for that matter?

It doesn't take a lot of living to realise that life is more than simply a series of highs and lows. By and large, existence as we know it is not a display of moments marked either by excitement or despair, by hope or tragedy. It is, in fact, basically routine.

Largely uneventful and predictable, life is generally more commonplace than exciting, more usual than unusual.

And so, not surprisingly, is the liturgical year.

It is what we do routinely, not what we do rarely, that determines the character of a person. It is what we believe in the heart of us that determines what we do daily. It is the daily, the way we act ordinarily, not rarely, that defines us and gives clarity to the essence of our real selves.

It is hard for us to consider Ordinary Time during the times in which we currently exist, with the anxieties and uncertainties around us, but consider we must. Whether we go to church or not, for each of us the period of Ordinary Time provides a time to reflect on our own lives, a time to reflect on who we are. If we find time for reflection we might just be surprised at what we find out about ourselves in the routine and uneventful times of our lives.

*Love and Blessings,
Revd Gary Best*

Special Events and Services

Sunday 11 July

10.30am Family Communion

Followed by Parish Picnic

Sunday 18 July

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Services will take place in church and will be streamed via Facebook. All activities may be subject to change based on government COVID restrictions. Any updates will be shared through www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk.

CONGRATULATIONS!

29 May 2021 was a very long-awaited day for Robert Howe and Julia Hart, scout leaders at St Mary's. Back in 2014 Robert and Julia became friends while organising a 3 Peaks Challenge to raise funds for the 4th Bromley Scout Troop, where Julia had been an Assistant Cub Leader.

After completing the challenge, Julia decided to join Robert's team at the 7th Bromley as a Scout Leader. From here on the pair became pretty inseparable and after numerous camps, district events and one re-arranged wedding date, Rob and Julia became Mr and Mrs Howe.





From the Registers

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Rosemary 11 May Age 84
Rowan

Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Anthony Norris 15 June



Remembering Bill and Elsie West

For over 35 years there has been a bench near the entrance to the church commemorating my parents. It has recently been refurbished and a new plaque attached.

Bill (1902 - 1985) and Elsie (1907 - 1985) were committed members of this church, Bill becoming a Reader in the 1960s and often preaching to a full church. His grandson, Antoine, now in his 50s, remembers his grandfather's ecumenical approach. Bill and Elsie would offer hospitality to anyone visiting the church from this country or overseas.

My father had spent his working life at The Marine Insurance Company Limited in Leadenhall Street, becoming the manager. He enlisted and received a commission. I found two menus among his papers from the celebrations of both VE Day and VJ Day listing Bill among those attending. These events were held in the officers' and sergeants' messes in 727 P.W, Labour Company in Wildshausen, Germany. He must have seen the true horrors of war.

Bill marked significant events in his life with poems and drawings, displaying his sensitivity and the importance of family. Following their marriage in June 1937, Bill and Elsie lived at 28 Den Road, which was destroyed by enemy action in 1940. After the war they moved back to Den Road, later moving to 5 Whitcroft Way and their final years were spent at 84 Bushey Way.

Roger West

Bidding for success

Our Future Generations plans will cost several hundred thousand pounds and we have been hard at work developing a wide range of fun ideas to raise funds. Thanks to the generosity of our congregation we have raised £120,000 to date.

This includes single donations as well as fundraising such as the plant and recipe book sales. With slightly more freedom now offered by the Government roadmap, the fundraising team has more things planned.

In the lead-up to our Parish Picnic on 11th July the fundraising team is offering you the opportunity to bid in our Silent Auction. Members of St Mary's have been fabulous, donating their time, skills and belongings. The items are amazing and range from photography lessons, gardening hours and language support to meals out, cream teas and dinners cooked for you.

There are posters in church listing all the 'lots'. Each item has a short description, a picture and a place for you to write in your contact details and how much you can bid for the item.

You can place your bid on the days that the church is open and on the day of the Picnic itself. Don't forget to keep checking back as well in case you are outbid by the next passer-by! We will contact the successful bidders on Monday 12th July.

Stephanie Maurel

Keep dancing!

Small businesses have been hit hard over this past year throughout the pandemic and Langley School of Dance is no different. Owning a small business is more than just a job, it's a lifetime of commitment, passion and dedication poured into something you believe in. So when the global pandemic hit and we had no choice but to close our doors it left us worrying not just about our livelihood but about the future of the industry which we love so much.



We have been offering dance classes to children aged 2.5 years upwards at St Mary's Church Hall for many years. I have had the pleasure of teaching some of these children throughout most of their school life, providing not just an education in dance but creating a safe space for children to come after school and be creative and active, create friendships and feel a sense of belonging.

In March 2020 we closed our doors for what we hoped would be a few weeks, moving some of our classes onto Zoom, a new experience for staff and students. Although Zoom has been a great tool in being able to keep our children dancing, we all breathed a sigh of relief when the restrictions were lifted and we were able to dance together again in person!

It has been a tricky time navigating our way through the restrictions still in place. Making sure that we are keeping everyone safe and still offering our children the chance to participate in dance classes has always been at the top of our priorities. The meticulous planning has all been worth it though. We have successfully completed one full half term this year and are just beginning another. It has been a great boost to both staff and students to be back dancing together in St Mary's Church Hall.

Dance has been proven to improve social, emotional and physical development in children: I can see the improvements to the students' self-esteem already.

I have been extremely fortunate to have a great support network of my family, friends, staff, parents and dancers. I also wouldn't have been able to consider reopening after the first lockdown if it wasn't for the support from Revd Gary Best and the team at St Mary's Church Hall helping me navigate my way back through the new normal.

The pandemic has taught us a lot, but for me personally the value of being together is priceless and I can't thank St Mary's church enough for helping this to happen.

Leanne Coverley

Christian Aid Week 2021

Thank you to all who responded so generously to this year's Christian Aid Week appeal in May. The amount raised by St Mary's was almost £2,200.

Many thanks to everyone who gave their time to deliver envelopes, bake cakes for our cake sale, or take part in the circular walk of Beckenham Churches. Our donations will help to build earth dams and give better access to water for communities in Kenya, where drought is a growing problem.



MISSION OF THE MONTH

Mission to Seafarers

'We are not sure when we will get home...'

This heartfelt plea is from a mariner currently stranded thousands of miles from his home port and in quarantine until global ruling can be established for his and fellow shipmates' repatriation. Seafarers stranded aboard ships due to the Covid crisis face an indeterminate period of detention with closed international borders preventing crew changeovers. This is to say nothing of piracy, shipwreck, abandonment and sinkings – all frequent occurrences!

Key workers indeed! Why are they so overlooked?

Take a look around your home: fridge, TV, dishwasher, cooker, clothing, iPads – do you know how they arrive here? Seafarers worldwide spend months traversing often wild seas to transport these luxuries to our doorstep. What about their needs: their welfare, their families?

Mission to Seafarers to the rescue! A Christian welfare charity serving merchant crews around the world, it operates through a global Mission 'family' network of chaplains, staff and volunteers, providing support 365 days per year regardless of rank, nationality, gender or religion.

200 ports in 50 different countries worldwide – that's quite an achievement, but not sustainable without ongoing financial support. Basic needs such as access to WiFi Internet and SIM cards, a comfortable place to rest and relax, the chance to get food and toiletries, or simply transport to shops and local amenities are welcomed by these crews with open arms.

11th July is 'Sea Sunday'. Please join us at St Mary's in celebration of these unrecognised key workers and to show our appreciation of the hardships they endure for our sakes and to sustain their own families with whom they are often not reunited from one year to the next.

For more information visit www.missiontoseafarers.org or see the display board at the back of church.



Parish Picnic

Sunday 11 July from 12noon

in the church grounds

Activities for the whole family

Family "bubbles" are welcome

Come and join the fun!

Bring your own picnic –
barbecue food and refreshments
available to buy

Fancy Dress Competition

Three marathons in three weeks

Reaching 70 is supposed to be a landmark in one's life so needs to be celebrated appropriately. As my birthday is in April, I had hoped to be able to run the London Marathon again, but Covid put a stop to that!

So, left to my own devices, I decided on three marathons over the three weeks starting on my birthday on 9 April.

In Bromley we are fortunate to have many commons and parks where I run with my younger daughter, Gemma, who joined me for many of my challenge runs. However, Gemma decided that this target was not going to be stretching enough so she signed me up to a 100 mile challenge for April, which I completed!

My three good causes were: the church organ, which desperately needed a major overall; the Community Café at St Mary's which has just started after lockdown; and the EHE Foundation. EHE is a rare cancer that a friend's young daughter suffers from. It affects the cells lining the body's blood vessels.

Many thanks to all my sponsors, I am sure the good causes will be grateful for the more than £3,000 you have donated.

Tim Dawson



Community Open Day update

Following the extension of COVID restrictions until July 19th we have, regretfully, decided to postpone our Community Open Day until later in the year.

We look forward to sharing our plans to create space for community events and activities in the church building, as part of our long term aim for St Mary's to be a community hub for Shortlands.

Watch this space for the new date!



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Monday to Saturday 9am - Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 10.00am - Holy Communion
8.30pm - Compline**

You can access these services online at:

www.stmaryshortlands.org.uk

www.facebook.com/stmaryshortlands

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

PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev'd Gary Best	8460 0262
(day off Friday)	Vicar@stmaryshortlands.church	
Licensed Lay	Mrs S. Aldred	8460 3978
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	Dr. D. Jefferys	8460 6030
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	Mrs. D. Speller	07941415082
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Assistant Treasurer	Mr. R. Hogg	8290 0613
Organist and Director of Music	Canon C. Tillotson 8460 7368	
Assistant Organist	Mr. D. Beach	8289 6510
Safeguarding Officer	Mrs. K. Coleman	07879337567
Electoral Roll	Mrs. S. Maurel	01689 331793
Junior Church	Mrs. J. Eade	3624 0559
Stewardship	Mr. T. Dawson	8460 5884

PARISH OFFICE 020 8460 5682
office@stmaryshortlands.church
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Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS

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Craft and Chatter	Mrs. J. Boam	8460 7101
Friends of St Mary's	Mr. T. Chase	8464 6188

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Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mr. M Chambers	07975944572
Cubs (Tue)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954437658
Beavers	Ms. E Hay	07932758801

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies or Guides please go to www.girlguiding.org.uk

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Guide (Fri)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon)	Miss. K Higgs	8462 3285
Brownies (Thu)	Mrs S. Tight	8460 8122
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LOCAL CONTACTS

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