

The Parish of

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A SPECIAL SERVICE TO REMEMBER THOSE WE LOVE

I hope that you are well. I am writing to invite you to the All Souls' Service that we will be holding at St. Mary's. This service is for us to remember those who have been such an important part of our lives but we have now been separated from by death. We will also remembering the experience and loss that the Covid pandemic has brought.

It is an opportunity in our busy lives to stop, remember and reflect. The loss of a loved one has many dimensions and grief can take longer than we or those close to us realise. In the busyness of our lives this service is a time, with others in similar situations, to acknowledge our loss and know that God is with us in all we experience.

Our service will take place on Sunday 1st November at 3.30 p.m. You are welcome to bring family and friends with you. If you are coming, you are invited to do three things to mark the occasion:

- Bring a card on which is written the name of the person whom you wish to remember. This will be taken from you at the door by a helper. we will read the name out at a special point in the service
- Bring a flower which we will place on the altar for you during the service
- To light a tealight which you can then place in the church

With the restrictions brought by Covid St. Mary's has been live streaming its services by the internet. You will be most welcome to join us on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbromley/>. You can access this through any internet browser. You do not have to 'do Facebook'. The service will be available from 3.25 p.m. and as a catchup shortly after it finishes.

During this service we will reflect on the nature of loss and the gift of Christian hope in words and music. The Bible has many ways to speak of the presence of God in the difficult parts of our lives. In John's Gospel Jesus hears of the death of his beloved friend called Lazarus. His response is famously the shortest sentence in the Bible 'Jesus wept'. In Jesus we see how God is profoundly moved by the loss of a loved one. It is not the number of words but the passion and presence that express the value of life. God is with us in our grief and All Souls' is a time to share together and know God's support in our loss.

I hope you will be able to attend this event or follow us online. If you are unable to be present and would like a person remembered in the service please let me know using the details above. Sadly we are having some difficulties with our church heating. If the weather is cold please do wear something warm!

Yours sincerely