

Parish Magazine

JUNE 2024

61 College Road Bromley BR1 3QG



www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk

Minimum donation 75p



Certificate of Thanks

This Certificate is presented to all those who have donated to Bromley Borough Foodbank:	St Mary's Bromley
Date of donations:	March-April 2024
Total donations given to help support the work of Bromley Borough Foodbank:	24.00kg

*With our Grateful
Thanks*



FUNCTION ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

Warwick Hall - £40.00 per hour
Buchan Hall - £28.00 per hour
Front Room - £17.00 per hour



St Mary's Church House and Hall

61 College Road, Bromley BR1 3QG
Email: stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com
Phone: 07951 748 155

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Paul Tomlin.

Home Maintenance and Handyman
Services:

Plumbing, Building, Decorating,
Roofing, Patios, Fencing, Drainage,
Jet washing, Gutters to dripping Taps,
Flat packs to Tiling.

All trades covered. No job too small.

0208 460 6007. 07743680919
plumbpaul@hotmail.com



Welcome to the June 2024 edition of the Parish Magazine.

Welcome to the June issue of our magazine, and articles by our “Regulars”; “Occasionals” and by a “New Contributor” – a wonderful mix as usual, so thank you all very much. It was also very helpful to receive everything in good time to make it easier for Atlanta to add her magic to the layout and the production of paper copies. Time to put your feet up, enjoy the read, contemplate on the issues raised (& maybe take action?) and then - whether you contribute regularly, occasionally, or have yet to do so - put “pen to paper” (does anyone do that anymore?) in good time for the next issue. The next editor is waiting to hear from you.

Jill

If you wish to make payment for the magazine online the bank details are:

Sort Code 09 01 51

Account 27769404 (St Marys Plaistow Parish Magazine)

Monthly cost 75p

Annual cost (10 months) £7.50

Postal service (10 months plus 2nd class postage cost) £14.10

A free pdf copy is available from the website at admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk.

This month's editor: Jill Atkinson

Editor for July/August: Atlanta Topham

Copy date:

Please support the editors by giving articles and notices to them by the copy date.



Table of Contents

Revd Alison Tyler	6
A View from the Pew	9
Choir Notes.....	11
A Time to Celebrate Male Role Models	12
Fainting to Fearless and Fruitful Fullfillment.....	13
Deanery Confirmation	15
Mothers' Union Matters	17
St Mary's Chancel Murals and Ceiling Panel... ..	19
Contacting an old friend can be nerve-wracking	21
Bible Bites.....	22
Mouse Makes	23
A Guiding Weekend	24
Watching birds is positively good for you	25
A Tour of Biggin Hill Airport	26
Looking Back.....	28
Warrior with Shield.....	30
Worship Diary.....	31

Memorial Book



St. Mary's Church has a memorial book in which may be inscribed names of people associated with the parish. If you would like to know more details please contact Alan or Jean Read on 020 8402 0886.

Disclaimer

The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various participants in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Editors.

Precarious living?



It seems that one of the side effects of Covid appears to be an increased awareness of the precariousness of life, although the reality is that life has always been precarious, and that has not changed much. We cannot ultimately protect ourselves against death, and especially from fatal accidents, just as the ancient world could not protect people from plague, volcanic eruption or accident, and death; neither can we.

We can though, through medical research, developing vaccines and improved treatments, reduce some of the issues around disease and death. Tragically, recent news indicates that a combination of complacency on the one hand, and conspiracy theorists discouraging vaccinations by defining them as threats of some kind on the other, have led to reductions in vaccination levels. So whooping cough has killed several newborn babies in England because their mothers did not get a booster before their babies were born, and rates of whooping cough vaccinations are at a record low, so the disease is spreading again. We should, if we can, protect others in our community from disease by doing everything we can to stay well.

The poet Mary Oliver raised a similar concern when she wrote in her poem *The Summer Day*:

Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Watching the recent BBC 2 programme about excavating Pompeii, I was struck by the head of the excavation, who said that finding the preserved sprawled bodies of those who died where they fell, killed in mid-flight from the lava and the ash, and called 'the fugitives', teaches you about the precariousness of life, and the need to 'pay attention so that you don't lose a moment of your life'.

It took me right back again to the death of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny in prison - he who carried on opposing the state, knowing that his life could be taken at any moment.

He was almost at ease with the precariousness of living and the continual taking of risks with his life. But I doubt that he wasted a minute of his life; he filled every moment.

It also pointed me firstly to the writings of Simon Boas in 'A Beginner's Guide to Dying' - a series of joyous articles for his local newspaper on the joys of his life whilst living with terminal cancer, which have gone viral on the internet and may yet become a book.

Then it sent me to the bravery of Dame Deborah James and Kris Hallenga, two women who both died recently, and relatively young, of cancer; they both founded charities to raise awareness in younger people that they too, now more than ever, could be at risk from bowel cancer or breast cancer. All of them have shared their diagnoses and each of them did all that they could do, to encourage us to live inspirational lives, joyously and fully, until death.

Simon is still living as I am writing this, knowing that he will die younger than he might have hoped, but certain that the gift of life is not to be wasted, but savoured in all its fullness. He reminds me of the person who said to me, when speaking of Jesus walking on the water, that although it may have been miraculous in that context, the real miracle is that anyone walks at all.

He, Simon, says *"Life is inordinately precious, unlikely, and beautiful. You or we are exquisite. When you say – as you do, 20 times a day – "I'm fine", realise that you don't just mean "I'm adequate". You are FINE. Refined. Unique. Finely crafted; fine dining; fine china! You really are fine in that sense too. We say it all the time, but unknowingly we speak the truth. We should be dazzled by our good fortune – dancing on the tables every day. And I mean to keep dancing in whatever time I have left here, and (who knows?) perhaps afterwards too."*

I am writing this at around the time of Christian Aid week, just before Pentecost, and I always remember the old Christian Aid advert which said, "We believe in life **before** death".

We also believe that God's first great gift to us is life itself. The Spirit brooded over the waters of Creation, when God spoke all things into being, and God breathed the breath of life into the first humans that he made from the dust of the ground.

Our lives are God's astonishing gifts to us, gifts rather like the parcels in the children's game of Pass the Parcel; each layer of paper removed reveals new gifts.

He followed up the gift of life with the gift of himself, in the life and death of his son Jesus, whom God raised from the dead so that we might have new life with him for ever. Our earthly lives, long or short, it seems are to be fully lived and appreciated as amazing, unlooked for, precarious but infinitely precious gifts.

As we wait for the coming of the spirit at Pentecost, may God awaken in us again the joy of living our precious and precarious lives, and encourage in us all the fruits of the Spirit that Paul speaks of to the Galatians, that we need to build up the community. The fruits of the spirit are, he says, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Clearly, confronted with that list, we can tell that Paul is expecting it to be a very hard task for the Galatians to live by the spirit and to build up the community of faith. As for the Galatians, so for us, the future holds a life of learning how to live our precarious lives joyfully in love and service to each other.



Careplus aims to provide free local volunteer support for older people locally. Their needs are met for befriending, social support and practical assistance. This is undertaken by volunteers who give support in the form of befriending, shopping and transport.

Please consider helping Careplus. It will also be wonderful if there could be a representative of St. Mary's Church to be on the organizing committee which meets three times a year. To know more please speak visit <http://www.careplusbromley.org.uk>

A view from the pew



Where was I?

Oh, yes! Flaming June!

We are a nation steeped in “in-jokes”. We snigger at words and phrases that baffle everyone else (not only the foreigner!). And this is becoming serious. More English-speaking people are now from outside the UK – and most of them originate in north America.

“During a holiday in the US I had more problems with people understanding my English than I do with my colleagues and customers on mainland Europe,” said Ray Gloster. “In Europe, I find it helps to tailor your choice of words, selecting Latin or Germanic origin words from the English vocabulary.”

British and American English are full of confusing examples, spoken ones such as “torch” versus “flashlight”, and written ones such as “centre” versus “center”. “Two cultures separated by a common language” is very appropriate.

There are also the idiomatic niceties. For example, where we use a negative question, e.g. “you didn’t go to the office today?” Answering “yes” or “no” is confusing for outsiders, so perhaps we should try and use a phrase such as “that’s correct”. English phrases, such as “rule of thumb”, are not entirely self-explanatory and could be replaced with e.g. “guideline”.

However, it is not only British speakers of English who find it difficult to be understood abroad. Australian, is a language, not just an accent! Also known as “Strine”, you will find Australians shorten their words, because they “don’t have time for all those letters”! They also have a habit of adding -ey or -ie to words, which can sometimes sound like kindergarten talk, such as “Bluey”, or “lappie” (for laptop!).

One of their more cunning constructions is use of the word “as” at the end of a sentence, to “maximise” an adjective – a bit like starting a simile and not finishing it. e.g. description of a nice girl – “She’s sweet as”. And we can add to that, their use of the word “but”.

This often appears at the end of a sentence with no apparent meaning, or any additional value to the meaning of the sentence. “We spent the day at the beach; it was right hot, but.” And sometimes it is at the end *instead* of at the beginning of the sentence. “We haven’t got enough time, but.”

Common phrases from Oz are creeping into UK English, such as: “G’day, mate.” “Good on ya.” “No worries.” As are casual words to replace formal ones, such as “reckon” instead of “think”, “believe”, or “figure”. “Chuck” instead of “throw” or “make”: and word blends like “gotta”, “gonna” and “shoulda”. However, Australian English is closer to British English than American English in terms of general word usage – which is something Americans need to be aware of!

Finally, don’t assume that Aussies are asking a question when they raise the pitch of their voice at the end of a sentence. “You already know what this sounds like?”

“Good on you, mate!”

Peter Fall



**Oven
Wizards®**

We clean your oven...so you don't have to

Rob Hadgiyianni
Tel 01689 253525
Mob. 07957 325452
robhadgiyianni@ovenwizards.com
www.ovenwizards.com

**Call today to have your oven,
hob, extractor or Aga
professionally cleaned**

Choir Notes

What does it take to be a member of the St Mary's Church Choir? This is not a question that I am often asked, but thought that it might fun to try and answer it.

Perhaps a good place to start - apart from "the very beginning" (for those of you who know your "Sound of Music") – a good place to start is with those who are now part of the choir.

All of them can sing. Perhaps that is assumed, but it is not always the case with choirs like ours, whose members have not been auditioned.

All of them can read (words). This is an essential for singers, especially in church.

All of them are prepared to wear the choir uniform when appropriate.

All of them work hard in practice and preparation to deliver the music in church.

All of them are happy to work as a team in musical worship of God.

No mention of reading music.

No mention of voice range.

No mention of musical training.

However, these things come with some practice and work input. And the church choir does practice (on Thursday evenings and before services), working hard to learn new pieces and to blend individual voices into a choral whole.



So often in life, it is not the genius who is most useful, but the person who keeps turning up. It is the one who puts personal effort into the job. It is the one who works well with other members of the team, thereby also encouraging them. None of the choir claim to be musical virtuosos, but together they can produce a performance that may encourage the church congregation. They may raise the spirits of those who need this, leading the worship of God musically.

In the choir team, they are an encouragement to each other devotionally as well as vocally. When the weather is bad, who doesn't need a little encouragement to turn out? Performing with friends, not letting the side down, an appearance with the team, all of these play a part in pushing choir members out of their home comfort, to come and practice, to lead worship, to sing to the Lord.

Alleluia!

Peter Fall

Choir Anthems in June

2 nd	"God be in my head" Rutter
16 th	"Blessed Word of God incarnate" Pearsall
23 rd	"Bread of Heaven" Somervell
30 th	"The Lord's my Shepherd" Goodall

A time to celebrate male role models

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.

How will you celebrate it this year? If your own father cannot be with you, how about a Zoom meeting?

Fainting to Fearless and Fruitful Fulfillment

In October 1965, I changed career direction from four years employment in offices of the printing industry to engineering. I started as a Technical Assistant with Rank Electronic Tubes at their site on the Sidcup By-Pass adjacent to Crittall's Corner. The site has since been redeveloped for the B&Q Superstore.

I worked in the development laboratory on various aspects of Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT's) for military and commercial applications. There was general chit-chat in the lab at break times and on one occasion in 1967, my work colleagues were astonished to find me slumped across my bench. I had fainted and lost consciousness! The topics of conversation in the chit-chats had been hospital operations, injections, needles and dissecting. After I recovered, my work colleagues discovered from me that I was squeamish from simply listening to their conversation. I was aware of my trait in the past but it didn't worry or affect me to any extent, although I had occasionally fainted.

One of my work colleagues who had been keen on biology at school plus having previously worked in a pharmacy, had unwittingly triggered my fainting episode. She incidentally lived in Morgan Road and was a blood donor. She challenged me to donate blood to try and overcome my squeamish disposition.

I eventually plucked up courage and donated my first pint (now reduced to 450ml) of blood on the 26th April 1967 at Lewisham Hospital during the 21st Anniversary year of the National Blood Transfusion Service, having been formed on the 26th September 1946. I remember nearly fainting part-way through the donation and fortunately, there were staff on hand to help. I continued donating at Lewisham Hospital as it was the closest donation centre from Bromley at that time and sessions were held about every four months for repeat donations. I did however faint during a couple of early sessions but I eventually became fearless!

Over the years, I have passed whole blood donation milestones (which have since changed) as follows:

10 donations, bronze badge and letter; 25 donations, silver badge and letter; 50 donations, gold badge and letter; 75 donations, crystal glass plate; 100 donations, Edinburgh Crystal glass decanter, badge, certificate and dinner with Margaret Beale as my guest at the New Connaught Rooms, Covent Garden and presentation by Carol Decker (singer and musician of the late 1980's and 1990's); 150 donations, certificate.

I have recently completed my 155th donation, thus achieving a lifetime's fruitful fulfillment in helping other people unknown to myself.

Some of you will undoubtedly remember Tony Hancock's The Blood Donor comedy sketch, which was first shown on BBC TV on the 23rd June 1961. It is still available to watch online in full or in excerpt form for those who are too young to have seen it. From my experience, I guess that I came close to Tony Hancock's dilemma but I didn't require a blood transfusion after fainting! Tony received his own pint of blood back because it was a rare blood group AB-, whereas I have a common blood group of A+.

It became an obsession to continue blood donating to try and overcome my squeamish fear and more importantly make a difference to other people's lives. There will be a time in months or years ahead when I will no longer be able to donate.

The NHS Blood and Transplant, being the rebranded name, urgently requires new donors to come forward and sign up. On average, 4,300 blood donations are required daily in England but only 2% of people who are eligible to donate actually give. 30% of blood donors stop donating each year, so 140,000 new donors are required to replace those who can no longer donate. Every new donor helps to make the supply of blood stronger and more dependable to ensure people have a better chance of getting the blood they need.

I would encourage anyone who is between the ages of 17 and 65 who is fit and healthy and meets the health and eligibility criteria to donate. It is so simple but so worthwhile and you have free refreshments after donating! There is lots of information at www.blood.co.uk or call 03001232323, so why wait any longer you youngsters?

Roger Benoy

Deanery Confirmation

These photos have been shared by Sheila Crimmin, who was confirmed at the Deanery service which this year was held on 19th May at St Mary the Virgin, Hayes. She spoke most movingly of her faith journey, which added greatly to a lovely service





Great North Swim

Emily Yolland is once again in training to take up the challenge of swimming a mile in Windermere on 8th June. This time Emily will be raising funds for Bromley Little Theatre, who are endeavouring to raise £85,000 by the end of this year for a major re-development project. If you would like to support Emily in her efforts to raise her target of £850 please go to her fundraising page at <https://www.justgiving.com/page/emily-yolland-greatnorthswim24> or use the QR code on the poster at the

Mothers' Union Matters

“.....And an excellent time was had by all!”

That was one verdict on St Mary's Mothers' Union Plant Sale last month.



“Thank you for your generous gift of over £1,000”

And that is the expected response from MU “Away From It All” holiday charity, to whom was given the proceeds from our famous annual Plant Sale.

It was a great event. The Buchan Hall was filled with plants in small pots stacked on tables, or in large pots on the floor. There were seed packets, gardening utensils and other outdoor items, available as well, and clearly did excellent business. Meanwhile, vegetable plants, plus strawberries and herbs were outside

The Front Room became a tea-house filled with happy gardeners discussing their bargains and what they would soon be planting, while tucking into home-made cakes, washed down by a “nice cuppa”. With more than 120 people visiting during the morning, it was no surprise that the plants virtually sold out, the cakes all disappeared, and the takings were at a pleasing level.

The Mothers' Union members who made it all happen, had been preparing for months. Some of the plants were grown from seed, while others had been divided and grown on. It was a labour of love by a small group of amateur gardeners, keen to share the output from their horticultural expertise. The usual bedding plants were available, such as Busy Lizzies and French Marigolds, while geraniums came in a range of sizes. But much attention was focussed on vegetables – beans, courgettes, cucumbers, and especially tomato plants, dozens of them in a number of varieties.

Part of the fun of the day was recognising people out of their regular habitat. Neighbours and locals mixed with out-of-town relations, who were “up for the day” to come to the sale! St Mary's MU has built an enviable reputation for its annual Plant Sale, and it was no surprise that some visitors had travelled so far to attend. Despite some claiming that it was “just for the tea and cake”, their bulging bags going home testified to a worthwhile time spent around the tables of plants on display.

As with all Sales, “a few items were left” at the end. These were taken to the church porch where they enticed the Sunday morning congregation. All in all, a great event by St Mary’s MU had raised enough money for a number of families to have a holiday at a Haven Holidays resort. And, perhaps as importantly, had continued to forge friendly links with their neighbours.

Peter Fall

MU Programme June 2024

Thursday 13th June Cream tea at “Jams on the Hill”, Beckenham.
Cost £7.25, meeting there at 3 p.m.
(227 bus to St George’s Church Stop)

Thursday 20th June “Knit ‘n’ Knatter” in Front Room from 10 a.m.

The recent Bromley Mothers’ Union Lady Day Service held at St Augustine’s Church, Bromley Common.



St Mary's Chancel Murals and Ceiling Panels

The chancel murals date from 1893 but became badly damaged due to water penetration from an external wall. It took some time to identify the source of the water. Initially it was thought there had been movement from the boiler chimney, which is tied to the chancel wall. Later investigations identified inadequate guttering and downpipes. However, by then the plaster had become very wet, causing salts to blister out and lift paint on its surface. After the guttering had been fixed the plaster needed time to dry out. This was helped by removing plaster covered with non-porous paint in the choir vestry, behind the murals. Nevertheless drying took many months. We were advised to consult specialists to restorer the paintings.

The church architect, Paul Sharrock, of Thomas Ford and Partners arranged for Tom Organ, of Arte Conservation Ltd, to visit and advise us on how to proceed. The first phase was to examine the extent of the damage and stabilise the wall and what remained. He also found damage to some of the painted paper panels in the chancel ceiling. Stabilisation cost £6,500. A grant from the Church of England Church Care Fund provided £4,000 towards this, the remainder came from church reserves. Stabilisation removed the loose paint and salts then treated the remaining plaster to stop further deterioration and prepare the surface for repainting. It does not look pretty but is a necessary step before recreating the original images.



There are very colourful painted panels fixed to the chancel ceiling



Close inspection from scaffolding found that the ceiling panels above the chancel were also damaged. These are painted on paper, glued to hessian, in wooden frames, fixed to the ceiling. Over the years the glue has weakened and the hessian started to rot, acid has also attacked the paper. Holes, tears and decay will require repairs. This work will involve a separate specialist. It is planned to clean, stabilise and then protect the images with tissue. Some will require removal and replacement of the fabric backing in a studio.

The cost for the second phase, on the wall paintings and ceiling panels, including scaffolding and VAT is estimated at £64,000. A fundraising campaign was started in March 2022, to raise this amount. Initially progress was slow. However, especially in 2023 funds arrived more quickly. We were successful in applying for three grants worth £12,000 in total. £4,500 was received from the Society of Antiquaries in December, but the other grants: £2,500 from the Friends of Kent churches and £5,000 from the Church Buildings Council, will not be paid until after we settle the restoration bill.

Numerous fundraising events were held: concerts, a dance demonstration, a table sale, cream teas, a book and puzzle sale. Individual donations were encouraged by the offer to match amounts raised up to a total of £10,000; half of this amount has already been received. Gift aid on most of the donations, including some very generous individual ones, will enable us to recover an expected £6,000 from HMRC. We have also been told to expect a bequest of £5,000.

The restorers have a full order book but tells us that they expect to be able to start work in September 2024. We have told him that funds are now available and that an early start would be appreciated.

John Beale

Contacting an old friend can be nerve-wracking

Have you been wondering about an old friend with whom you have lost contact? Do you feel a bit hesitant about contacting them again?

You are not alone.

It seems that rekindling an old friendship can be as nerve-wracking as speaking to a stranger, according to the findings of a recent study by the University of Sussex.

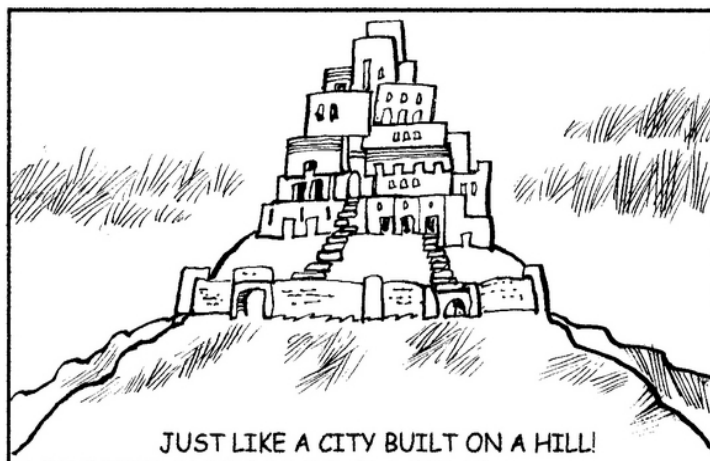
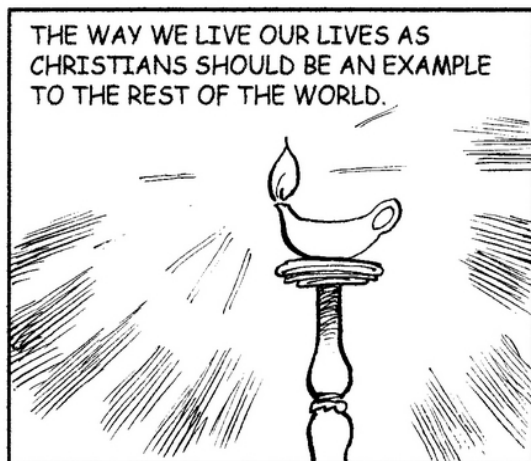
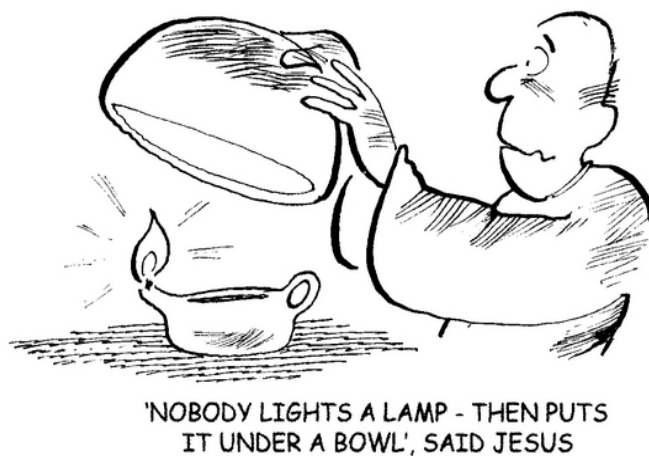
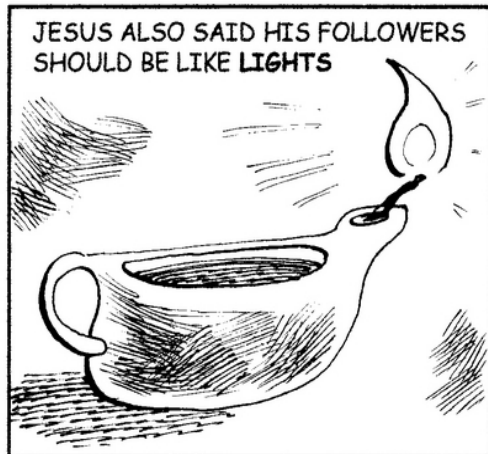
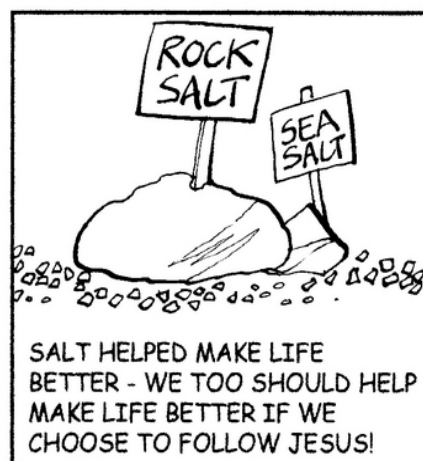
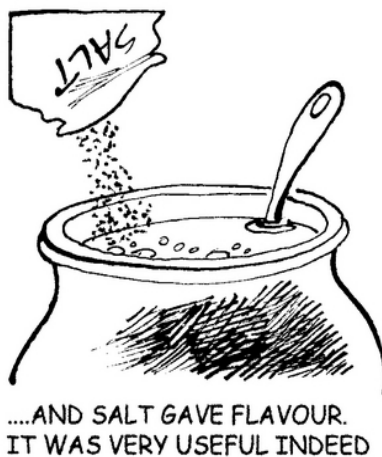
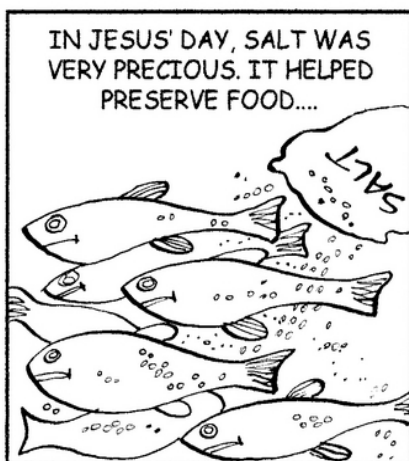
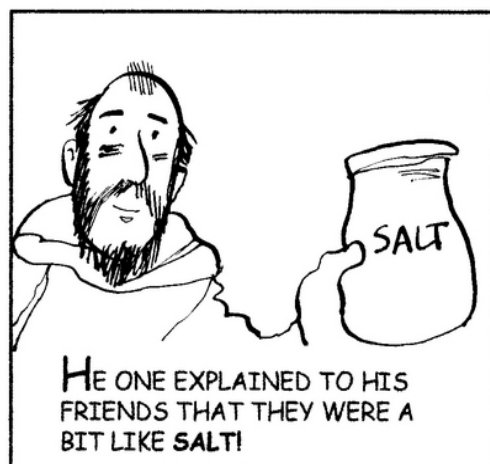
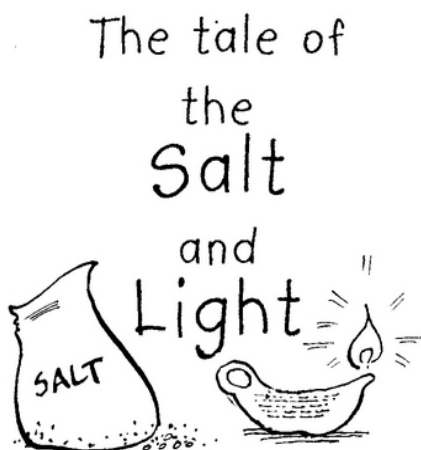
The study found that although nine in ten of us have lost touch with an old friend, and although we would greatly welcome a message from them, we personally feel nervous about making the first move.

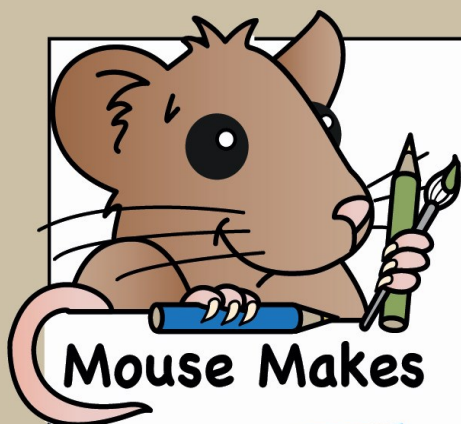
The most common reasons are fear that the old friend might not want to hear from us, that it would be 'too awkward after all this time', and that we feel guilty that we had not been in touch before.

But Dr Gillian Sandstrom, a psychologist and Director of the Sussex Centre for Research on Kindness, said that the people who pushed past their hesitation and did reach out to an old friend reported feeling happier.

She said that past research suggests that old friends appreciate you reaching out, even more than you expect.

PP





Mouse Makes

Change each letter in this bible verse to the letter **before** it in the alphabet.

TFF XIBU LJOE PG
MPWF UIF GBUFS
IBT HJWFO UP VT
UIBU XF TIPVME
CF DBMMFE
DIJMESFO PG HPE
POF KPIO UISFF: POF

WHO IS MY FATHER?

Who was created by God
and became
the first father?

Genesis 2:20

Who had a son
when he was very old?

Genesis 21:5

Shem Ham and
Japheth's father built
a huge boat, who was he?

Genesis 6:10-14

Who gave his son Joseph
a robe of many colours?

Genesis 37:2-3

Solomon's father defeated a giant
and became a King. Who was he?

1 Samuel 48-50

Whose daughter was
healed by Jesus?

Mark 5:21



This Roman puzzle square
reads the same from the top,
bottom and sides and translates:

*"Arepo the sower
guides the wheel with skill."*

ROTAS
OPERA
TENET
AREPO
SATOR

If you rearrange the letters it
can spell **PATER NOSTER**
which means **"Our Father"**.

A
P
A
T
E
R
N
O
S
T
E
R
O

A G A D A U G H T E R E G
V A S E Z E C H A R I A H
J M O S E S A J A C O B O
A Z L I B O F A T H E R P
I J O S E P H J A N O A H
R O M A D A V I D G E H N
U B O A E I D A S O N A O
S V N C E E Z E A D A M A

Look up the Bible verses
to find the fathers then
look for them and the words
below in the word search.

FATHER • GOD
SON • DAUGHTER
JOSEPH • ISAAC
MOSES • JOB
SOLOMON
ZECHARIAH
ZEBEDEE

A Guiding weekend:



The Whitsun weekend was a busy one for the members of Girlguiding based at St Mary's. Carol, who leads the ranger group, organised and offered a camp at Cudham to all the guides & rangers in the Bromley area – and not surprisingly, some of “her”

group – the 1st Plaistow Rangers - were amongst those taking part, as were some of “Sally’s Guides” – the 3rd Bromley.

Not to be outdone, the Brownie group – 13th Bromley – was well represented at an Adventure Day at Leeds Castle, where they joined a group of around 1,400 Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and leaders who arrived in twenty-eight coaches from all over the Bromley and Bexley boroughs. As well as watching a Falconry display, playing in the Adventure Playground and meeting Henry VIII, the girls demonstrated their care for each other by pooling their money to ensure everyone could buy an ice cream, and guiding (literally) the smaller brownies (and the adults) to the centre of the maze, and out again.



Over the many years I have been involved with Guiding at St Mary's (& that is how both Sally & I were first introduced to the church), I have worked alongside many other brilliant leaders, and made great friendships. I have also had so many opportunities I would otherwise have missed, and have mastered countless new skills - you should see Sally's skill in packing her car with camp equipment. St Mary's is unusual locally in that it still offers Brownie, Guide and Ranger groups, but we could all do with some extra help.

It was always a bit of a joke that you volunteer for “just one and a half hours a week” – which stretches to mean rather more. Quite probably, that used to be true. However, we are now trying to be more flexible, and although, ideally, new volunteers with time to share in planning and preparation would be brilliant, I am so grateful to a whole team of “Mums” (and teenagers) who have helped me out at brownies on a rota system – two of them came to Leeds Castle - and I know that Sally, in particular, would appreciate another adult or two prepared to assist with a meeting, even on an occasional basis. If that could be you – or someone you know – please talk to us, or check out the website – www.girlguiding.org.uk.

And if you know a girl aged between seven and eighteen interested in Guiding – the website is also the place to go.

Jill Atkinson

Watching birds is positively good for you

So says a new study out of North Carolina State University. It goes on to say that watching birds is even more beneficial to us than watching other forms of wildlife.

The new study found that birdwatchers’ recorded ‘distress’ levels dropped by 13.7 per cent, compared to that of nature-walkers’ at 6.9 per cent.

The study suggests that the reason may be that birds provide their own narrative and sense of drama, which can be enough to lift someone watching them out of the everyday.

The author and presenter Kate Humble agrees. “There is something reassuring about life continuing and nature just getting on with it, even if it feels like the rest of the world is falling to bits. Birdwatching makes me feel part of a bigger, richer, beautiful picture.”

“Birds give me an excuse to explore and find some solitude and calmness away from the bustle of life,” says James Lowen, author of *52 Wildlife Weekends*. “It helps put me in my place.”



PP

Tour of Biggin Hill Airport

In April we were taken on a tour of Biggin Hill Airport. I went along not really expecting much, but it was really interesting.

We were first taken on a tour of the airfield itself. They still have one runway, several hangars and other buildings. At least one of the hangars is being re-roofed with solar panels, as Biggin Hill Airport aims to become carbon neutral as soon as they can do it. They already pay extra for fuel with a lower carbon footprint.

Biggin Hill used to have one of the longer runways in London, joint third with Farnborough after Heathrow and Gatwick, until they closed the 1.6 mile runway in 2017. Runways need special surfaces to allow the water to drain quickly and stop the planes from stopping and the cost of upkeep for the extra long runway was too great.

Nowadays, Biggin Hill is a commercial airport, catering for company and private planes. There is still a link with the Royal Airforce, but they stopped using it as a base over 25 years ago.

Apart from the obvious use of Biggin Hill as somewhere to fly planes from, Biggin Hill has a major role in repairing and maintaining planes. Bombardier is a Canadian company which maintains company jets. These have to be maintained to a high standard, both to look good (very important for prestige) and also because the private, company jets have to fly 10,000 feet above the bigger commercial jets from the giant companies like BA, Easyjet and Wizz. This means that they need to be able to withstand a much greater air pressure difference and also have significantly longer wings. Biggin Hill is one of the main Bombardier maintenance hubs and employs about 5000 people. Although the planes were very impressive and shiny, we were not allowed to take photos in the Bombardier hangar, so I cannot show you that area

The other main engineering area is the classic plane maintenance hangar where they maintain older planes, mainly Spitfires with the odd Hurricane and Focke and Messersmith. They have the largest collection of Spitfires, with over 50 of them at any one time. This also provides jobs, including 15 apprenticeships. Hurricanes were made mainly of linen stretched over a

wooden frame work with an engine and propellers.



The linen was treated mainly by painting it, but it felt like metal when I knocked on it. Hurricanes were quick to manufacture, but not very strong and they stopped making them after the war, but the Spitfires were manufactured until 1953 and are still thought of as one of the best

small aircraft for the pilots.

The Spitfires had a variety of histories, including the one which the Royal Airforce uses in displays which was in for its regular service.



There are not many tours of Biggin Hill, so do go, if you are offered one.
Trine Hevezi

Looking Back

I came to St Mary's for the first time in 1985 and it was only when Peter Henwood died at the beginning of the year that I realised that was nearly 40 years ago. This set me thinking of some of the events that have taken place in these years.

My first time at St Mary's was to take up the post of Church Community Worker. Peter Henwood had been approached by the Director of Social Services to see if the area of two parishes could be encouraged to be more community minded by finding out what the needs were, set up projects and support them. Social Services paid for this post and it was shared with St Johns for the first few years. I worked with other churches, schools, organisations and individuals and the many Warden-Assisted blocks of flats that were springing up. From my point of view the most important thing to come out of this was "Bromley Community Bereavement Service" which was in so much demand that it became an independent charity. Another project was the Care Group which flourishes today under the name of Careplus. Part of the deal was that as the two churches were managing me, I should worship with them. In time I became the sole responsibility of St Mary's and so, when I retired in 2000, I was firmly rooted in this congregation where I continue to worship and enjoy the friendship of many today.

As we wait for a new Priest, I have been recalling some fantastic and imaginative projects that have happened at St Mary's in the last forty years.

Many of these have been due to ideas man Peter Fall who has been able to gather volunteers to work with him both from within St Mary's and elsewhere. However, many of the latter have come to see St Mary's as a rather special and welcoming place for everyone.

The Biblethon was in 2000, when over ten days we read the whole bible. The readers ranged from the Mayor, to children and many others with an audience of whoever dropped in to listen.

The Christmas Journey was a masterpiece of organisation telling the Christmas Story to 6/7-year-old school children. At least three hundred visited us over a period of four days. Each day needed about thirty volunteers.

The children started in Church House to learn a song for the journey and hear the beginning of the story. They made a Christmas card. The journey took them next to the church where they visited Mary's Kitchen, (they were allowed to sample the bread she was baking, and an angel appeared), the Shepherds on the hillside (lots of woolly lambs and frightening wolf sounds), the Stable, where they met animals (puppets) and then on to the Wise Men's tent (where they dressed up and handled Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh). The Christmas Journey ran for ten years until Covid intervened. A brilliant outreach event.

The Easter and Summer Choral Festival was held with other churches and individuals joining us. Recently there was a performance of "Lest we Forget", a Centenary concert for Remembrance.

For many years the church ran a Fair on the Plaistow Green Roundabout involving local organisations, residents and those passing by.

BATS – babies and toddlers – ran one afternoon weekly where mothers (or fathers) could have some respite and companionship.

Within the Church Premises, Church House was remodelled, changing the Gents toilet into the Buchan Hall and the Ladies into the Parish Office. The Children's area in Church was formed by moving the small altar to the other side. The porch was built to make a welcoming entrance. The most contentious change was to put a toilet in the Church. There was concern that there would be flushing noises during the service!!

Things move on and there are changes again. Sunday shop opening and more activities on Sundays have affected our congregation. Covid had a big effect with some people not returning after it was safe to do so. Some very precious older members have died and we still feel the gap. But new people have come which is a great joy and we maintain a presence for people who need us. We continue to do God's Work with our outreach events such as "Grace Café" each Wednesday.

There are so many other things I could mention here, but it's been fun to be part of the past and I look forward to what lies ahead. If you have an idea, talk to someone about it. It may be another fantastic project.

Mary Mills

P.S. We had a real donkey one Palm Sunday – with someone standing by with a shovel, brush and bag!

Warrior with shield

Henry Moore bronze sculpture



This is a picture of a sculpture made by Henry Moore, said to reflect his love of Florence, and it is displayed in the Palazzo Vecchio, or Town Hall. It is of a man with a shield, who has no other functioning limbs than the one holding the shield. So, either he is only able to use the shield to defend himself against attack or else he knows he has no chance, having lost all his other limbs and is just waiting for the end, as the defeated enemy, possibly symbolic of Siena.

There is no knowing, but it is almost the only completely powerless image anywhere in the surrounding space, other than the infrequent images of raped women. The walls and ceilings are covered in paintings of the war between Florence and Siena which ended in 1554 when Florence finally won the war. They are mostly images of war and, or, of sex and violence.

It is interesting to speculate what exactly the image tells us about Henry Moore's feeling for Florence, to my mind it is an image of desolation and loss – but whose?

Alison Tyler

Worship Diary

We offer a variety of services through the year. They are mostly on a Sunday at 10.30am and are mostly Family Communion. Most months we also have a Family Service which does not include Holy Communion. We hope you will find us a warm and friendly congregation. If you have questions about what we do, why we do it or how you might like to be more involved please do speak with a Church Warden, a sidesman... or anyone really!

Our Sunday Club is a valued provision for our youngest members. They do not meet when we have a Family Service or during school holidays.

Services for June

Sunday 2nd June—First Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club

Sunday 9th June— Second Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am All Age Communion (no Sunday Club)

Sunday 16th June—Third Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club

Sunday 23rd June—Forth Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club

Sunday 30th June - Fifth Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club



Thank you

Shelagh Frankham would like to thank everyone at St Mary's for the lovely card and for all the kind messages to mark her recent birthday. Shelagh sends her best wishes to all.

St Mary's (Plaistow) College Road Bromley

Associate Priest	Revd ALISON TYLER 59 Bishops Avenue BR1 3ET ar.tyler@ntlworld.com	020 8249 8843
Readers	Mr JOHN COX 47 Mooreland Road, Bromley BR1 3RD	020 8464 8269
	Mr MIKE EAMES 4 Powster Road, Bromley BR1 5HF	020 8851 5180
	Dr KEITH NYE 61 Wharton Road, Bromley BR1 3LE	020 8464 9346
Pastoral Assistant	Mrs ANTHIA PAGE 21 Rodway Road Bromley BR1 3JJ	020 8460 1960
Churchwardens	Mr CLEM SUTTON Mrs MARIA STAINES	020 8697 0127 07932 637 002
Parish Administrator	Mrs. ATLANTA TOPHAM e.mail: admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk	020 8466 6969 07951 748 155
Church House	Mrs. ATLANTA TOPHAM	
Bookings	e.mail:stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com	
Concerts & Choir	Mr PETER FALL	020 8464 1239
CarePlus	e.mail:info@careplusbromley.org.uk	

Magazine Committee

Jo Clark	Editor e-mail:joc1947@msn.com	020 8289 6535
Atlanta Topham	Editor, Postal distribution, Advertising e-mail: admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk	020 8466 6969
Jill Atkinson	Editor e-mail: jilleatk@aol.com	
Lesley Speller	Distribution Manager	020 8460 5569