

St Mary's Church, Bromley
Parish Magazine
April 2023
61 College Road Bromley BR1 3QG



www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk

Minimum donation 75p

Holy Week at St Mary's 2023

Palm Sunday 2nd April to Easter Sunday 9th April



Join us as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus through Holy Week and celebrate the Resurrection on Sunday 9th April at 10.30am. We will follow in his footsteps, together throughout this week of betrayal, suffering, injustice and death, and then greet his Resurrection together on Easter morning.

It is summed up in worship in several dramatic acts.

Palm Sunday 2nd April: 10.30 am Family Communion
Jesus enters Jerusalem and we read the Passion Gospel

Monday: 8.00 pm Compline - Bethany

Tuesday: 8.00 pm Compline - Betrayal

Wednesday: 8.00 pm Compline - Denial

Maundy Thursday: 8.00 Maundy Meal -

we commemorate the Last Supper followed by Communion

Good Friday: 2.00pm An Hour at the Cross Forgiven,
Forsaken and the Future

4.00pm Messy Hot Cross Bun Service some practical
worship and refreshments

Easter Sunday 9th April Celebrate the Resurrection

9.45am Continental Breakfast

10.30am Holy Communion after service Fizz & canapes



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



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Welcome to the April 2023 edition of the Parish Magazine.

Welcome to our April magazine – another fascinating read thanks again to the talented members of our Church.

Various themes seem to be running through this issue -as well as articles relating to Easter, we have experiences overseas (including an article written and sent to us from Egypt), and nearer home, Spring arrives with articles about flowers and gardens.

Please keep the contributions coming in!

Our beautiful cover photo this month was provided by Anne Yolland.

Jill Atkinson



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Memorial Book

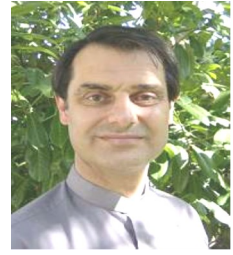
St. Mary's Church has a memorial book in which may be inscribed names of people associated with the parish. If you would like to know more details please contact Alan or Jean Read on 020 8402 0886.



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.

The new creation



I imagine most people live with an expectation of heaven. This might be something fairly ordinary and to do with everyday life. For instance looking forward to the weekend. The week might be full of rewarding activity. But it is still hard work and exhausting. It is also quite often done on other people's terms. The weekend is ideally a release from all of this with more time for oneself and the activities that bring refreshment. This might not be Saturday and Sunday but somewhere in the week there is time that has this sense of heaven.

Another similar sort of expectation is to have The Holiday. This is an opportunity to really get away from it all and see life in a very different way. People speak of a bucket list which means a number of activities you truly want to do before you 'kick the bucket'. This might be about travel, seeing very different parts of the world and understanding life from quite a different perspective. I like the idea of travelling north for holiday to see the Northern Lights. They may truly be heavenly.

People might have a hope of something truly outstanding happening. They may play the lottery and hope to win a sum of money which is almost unimaginable. They hope their lives will be transformed in every way possible and all their worries will be over.

There are also the deep and human experiences such as getting married. People enjoy putting a great deal of planning into producing a perfect day which expresses love and being surrounded by all those dearest to them. Indeed one of the descriptions Jesus has of heaven is that of a wedding banquet. Matthew 22.1-14

Each of these tastes of heaven means a great deal to us. But we also know somehow they fall short. The weekend may be where domestic chores have to be done. The lottery has not turned up the vast wealth we expected. The great holiday still had a tummy bug to spoil it.

But more than this we know it is not really the heaven we longed for. This is not to be disappointed but to be realistic. In a strange way the initial wonder or seeing great sights like the Northern Lights begins to pall as we spend more and more time looking at them. For some people they may become rather jaded and conclude that all hopes are disappointed even when fulfilled. But for other people they accept that these things are shadows of a greater reality. Our initial appetite might not be satisfied but that just points us to something deeper being promised and our hope still burns bright.

In this month of April we have the great celebration of Easter Day. This is the great promise of heaven. It is about death being defeated. As the first disciples saw the risen Jesus they were filled with a whole new vision of what God intends for humans to experience.

For Christians, Easter is about heaven taking place. We remember it as an historical event. It is not just an idea or metaphor to conjure with. Early Christian writers expressed it as a new creation. They believed that God had made the heavens and the earth which were not there before. On Easter Day God created the defeat of death and showed us the victory in Jesus' resurrection.

In no way would I wish to take away people's hopes and experiences of heavenly events now. But the Christian faith is not like them. God has acted and shown us a more sure and certain reality. The first creation is bound to bring us disappointment and death. But this second creation is called eternal life and has a life and energy about it which will not be defeated. God has shown us this in Jesus Christ and we are invited to know this as a reality for ourselves.

Best wishes and a very Happy Easter

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Keeler". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

The Vicar's Day off is Friday

Alleluia Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed!



If my timing is right, you will be reading this around Easter time, when we joyfully proclaim again the Risen Saviour. It always reminds me, as I am sure I have said before, of my Pentecostal colleague in a prison I once worked in, who never tired of telling us to be more joyful, as now, since the first Christmas, the first Easter and the first Pentecost, we could celebrate them *all* every day.

Wall to wall celebration like that in difficult times is very hard to sustain, but that deep joy that is like a 'spring of water welling up to eternal life' within us is what can sustain us in such times.

The aria from Handel's 'Messiah' called 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' has long been an internal consolation. Hearing it in my head many times, even when I am thinking it through clenched brain cells helps to deal with some very tragic and distressing situations. Somehow, still, *I do know*, that my Redeemer lives and am able to hold on to that truth. The unfortunate reality is that the times remain very difficult for many people; joy is in short supply and sustaining hope is an uphill struggle.

We have through Lent been reading the Psalms together daily, and they remind us amongst other things that all our human life, joys and sorrows, is in God's hands and covered by God's concern and that we can ultimately depend on God, remembering as we do so that we cannot always have what we want when we want it.

We have just had a holiday in Lent, unusually for us, as I like to be at home, or at least in a Christian community, to have the moral support of friends and colleagues in keeping the disciplines of simplification, prayer and study. So, to travel to Egypt with a group of people I had never met was a completely different form of discipline, and unexpectedly challenging.

Making short term smooth relationships with 12 strangers is hard work, but we were reasonably successful. One of us had an accident, and another a bereavement, and at least one other, not including myself, had a difficult temperament, each in our different ways needing generosity of

action, of affection and of spirit from our temporary community.

We had daily prayers in strange places, but singing the Lord's songs in a strange land was very rewarding, for we were not in exile, though we prayed for those who still are. There was also a vast quantity of new learning opportunities, of history going back thousands of years, of fresh connections being made and of new experiences. The dry, hot dustiness of Egypt, so heavily dependent on the river Nile, would always have contrasted with flowing coolness of the streams of Psalm 23, but we appreciate much better now, how much they were needed and how valuable is both a cool shaded place, and the fertility that the Nile enables.

The endless stretches of desert in Egypt are remarkably similar to the wildernesses of Jordan and the Palestine of Jesus's day, and 40 days of hunger, heat and thirst are perhaps more easily imagined here, than at home in England, likewise the high mountain and the pinnacles of the enormous Egyptian temples, which were already very old at the time of Jesus. He could well have seen some of the same temples that we visited.

The trip was to follow in the footsteps, as far as they can be known, of the holy family on their flight into Egypt. The Coptic church of Egypt (orthodox in its practice and one of the earliest), focuses on several places where Jesus, Mary and Joseph are thought to have stayed as it is believed they kept moving around initially, due to the dangers of pursuit by Herod's men.

We were accompanied most of the time by internal security personnel, or local police, as tourism, on which Egypt depends, is a frequent terrorist target. It was unsettling at first, but it gave me a fresh insight into how precarious Jesus's life often was from his arrival in the world, and not just during Holy Week and just how many other people around the world live in similar precarious situations.

We will be trying to bring together our different fresh insights from the Lent groups on the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer, and from all the other different study and prayer we have practiced during Lent in order to really focus together on Holy Week, as a unified account of Jesus's last days before his Crucifixion, so that we who have journeyed to the Cross with him by Good Friday, really will have something to celebrate on Easter Sunday. When we come to Palm Sunday, I will though, I suspect see palms just like the date palms along the banks of the Nile.

The times will, I think, remain demanding, it is difficult to see any quick changes ahead and Holy Week in one sense is a good preparation for expecting the unexpected.

I hope that as we come to the end of Lent we will have lots of new things to share, and when Easter comes I wish for all of us the joy of Christ's Resurrection.

Alleluia Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed!

Alison Tyler

Easter Prayer

Thank you, Father, that you raised Jesus from the dead on that first Easter Day and that He is alive now and forever. Thank you that whoever believes in Him and turns away from selfish living and towards you can be forgiven through His name. Thank you that Jesus is the same today as He was then and will always be.

Thank you for the Bible - your inspired, unchanging, and living Word to guide us. Help us to hold fast to Your teaching and not to be led astray. Your Word is truth. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, Lord, that we might be Your faithful, fruitful Resurrection People.

In the name of our living Lord, Jesus.

Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



All the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of mankind on this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life. – *James Allan Francis*

MOTHERS' UNION MATTERS

I accidentally wrote “Maters”, omitting a “t”.

Quite appropriate really.

We were delighted to welcome Rev. Elva Sullivan, of the Larder Church, to address our Lent meeting. Members were greatly encouraged by her words and found them a valuable resource for their journey through Lent. Later in the month MU members were busy on a Saturday assembling posies of daffodils for distribution in church the following day, Mothering Sunday.

There have been various opportunities recently for MU members to visit, support and care for those who have struggled with short- (or longer-) term problems. This is a valuable service that goes unseen, and unremarked on, but does immeasurable good. St Mary's MU members always strive to live up to the standards set by Mary Sumner, MU founder, and encouraged by the four million members in 84 countries world-wide. Working at grass-roots level, they bring hope and practical support through parenting, literacy and community development. At heart we aim to bring hope and practical support, fighting poverty, inequality, and injustice. We target real change for family life, women's and girls' rights and the protection of children.

These goals are so universal that a growing number of men have joined Mothers' Union – including at St Mary's – to help make a difference. There are now prayers broadcast daily on MU Facebook page at midday, with an increasing audience, and a monthly e-Newsletter featuring a round-up of current events and stories from across the movement.

This month our MU will have a talk by Bernard Moss on “Seashells” at their 13th April meeting, but members can also get together on 5th April at Grace Café in the Front Room of Church House (10-12 app.). On 20th April the needles will be out for “Knit and Natter” between 10 and 12 noon in the Front Room.



The quantity of knitted goods for refugees, premature babies and those with dementia grows quickly, and is delivered regularly to “Knit for Peace” and other reliable outlets. Knitting turns out to be very sociable. A great time is enjoyed by those who knit (and by those who natter)!

Peter Fall

You can do this at home, leading up to Easter

Why not put a small cross in your front window as Lent draws to a close, and Easter Week approaches? You can use a Palm cross or a wooden one. A cross is a visible reminder of the death of Jesus, and the Christian meaning of Easter and Resurrection.



More volunteers needed to ring church bells for the King

The Coronation’s ‘Ring for the King’ challenge is still urgently looking for more volunteers – several thousand more of them, in fact.

The new recruits will be needed if all the church bells in the country are to be rung on 6th May, the day of the Coronation.

As we go to press, so far the Ring for the King campaign has attracted less than 500. But there is still time, and organisers remain upbeat.

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) says that new recruits need about 15 hours of training to be able to manage a bell alone. And the CCCBR hopes that once volunteers have discovered the fun of bellringing, “they’ll want to continue to grow their skills and friendships made through this journey of discovery.”

There are 6,000 sets of bells across Britain, containing almost 38,000 bells, which require one ringer per bell. However, there are only about 30,000 bell-ringers across the country, with some teams working across several churches.

Anyone aged eight and over can get involved in bell-ringing. It has been described as “gentle exercise” and does not require a certain level of fitness, although ringers often have to climb a church’s spiral staircase to get to its belfry—<https://ringforthe king.org/>

THE MORTAL ASPECT

The final scarlet sky
cloaks the vestige of
Son Light;
a lowered sun sets
foreboding of a
Temple torn in two.

Threatening crowds gather
below
creating a caustic caldera of
visible voices in the
frosty air.

As flood of tears
soak sinful earth,
birds on
olive branches
bowed:
One
prays
in searing fear and
heavy Heart, yet golden, -
like molten magma
not even hardened
shards of glass, reflecting
fractured
humanity.

A bough lies low -
at odds with the trunk
and saps the strength
of sleeping
fickle friends.

Splinters group,
devoid of Life
and pressures soar.
A tomb lies bare
and misted eyes
remember the myrrh,
as a scattered rock
learns of the
dawn.



Barbara Buckingham



Christian Aid Week 2023

By the time you read this we will be about six weeks away from the start of this year's Christian Aid Week on Sunday 14 May, an annual opportunity for Christians and others to replenish the coffers for the on-going work of the one of the country's largest aid charities.

During the year to 31 March 2022, it had a total income of £78.4 million, and spent £76.5 million

working with the world's poorest people to tackle the causes and consequences of poverty. Our work is centred around our strategic change objectives: Power to change institutions; The right to essential services; Fair shares in a constrained world; Equality for all; Tackling violence, building peace. We work with others as part of a global movement committed to ending poverty and social injustice.

St Mary's has a long history of supporting Christian Aid, both during the Week, but also in response to major tragedies such last autumn's East Africa Hunger Crisis Appeal which raised £212. Despite the recent Turkey-Syria Earthquake appeal we hope that you will support this year's Christian Aid Week collection, for which envelopes will be available in Church from 7 May. In addition, there will be some house-to-house collections in local streets and anyone willing to assist with this is asked to contact Peter Boyden.

To encourage you here is the story of one of many people in developing countries being helped by Christian Aid whose attempts at bettering themselves and their families are being hampered by the effects of global warming:

Jen, a loving mum in Malawi, dreams of her children being able to have the education they deserve. Her hard-working boys have earned places at top colleges – but Jen cannot afford to send them both. 'My heart longs to see our children finish school,' says Jen. 'These dreams are very important to me, because by doing so, I'll be sure that I am creating a good future for the children.'

Her oldest two boys have gained tertiary education places, which is very rare for young people from her rural area. One has a place at a prestigious polytechnic and the other at a well-known college illustrated on one of Malawi's banknotes. Jen works hard to provide for her children. But she can barely scratch a living from the soil. Soaring costs of food, fuel, fertiliser, school uniforms and school fees are crushing dreams and keeping her family in poverty. Now, Jen has had to make a choice, one no mum should be forced to make. Rising costs mean Jen can pay for only one of her sons' college courses.

Jen desperately needs to earn more, so that her oldest son Mathews can study as well. His place at a prestigious college is reserved for a year, so Jen remains hopeful that he'll be able to start his course. But the erratic weather is affecting Jen's profits, 'The result is that our harvest is very little,' she says. But Jen remains resilient, 'We say, let's work hard so that the money will help the children go to school,' she smiles.

Jen and her husband have two acres of pigeon peas, but they are struggling with the effects of the climate crisis. The rainfall is unreliable, and there are more storms, flooding and stronger winds. Fortunately, the pigeon pea is a tough plant, able to withstand a lot – just like Jen. But to make the most of her crop, Jen needs to plant good quality seeds and sell for the best price possible, and not to unscrupulous middlemen.

This Christian Aid Week, you can help dreams come true! Your gift could help famers like Jen plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for their crops, and build happier futures for their children. Please give today and help this strong and determined mum provide for her family's future.



Recollections of my Childhood

My father was a civil engineer specialising in re-enforced concrete and his company had sent him out to India in 1937 to supervise the completion of contracts.

In October 1939 his company decided that because of the recent declaration of War with Nazi Germany, my mother and I would join him in India for the duration of the current contracts, if not for the War however long.

My earliest recollection of the preparations for departure were walking along Charing Cross Road with my mother and aunt towards the Civil Service Stores so that we could purchase tropical clothing for Mother and me. All clothes were in cotton Aertex and cheerful coloured dresses, together with the inimitable topee and sunglasses.

The SS Mulbera, a P and O ship of some 9,800 tons, which was bound for Calcutta, Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai via Gibraltar, Malta, Port Said, Suez Canal and Aden, sailed on a dank and cold November day. All began calmly enough, but on entering the Bay of Biscay we met a vicious storm (later called the storm of the century). My mother was very seasick and everybody crept round the ship holding onto railings and furniture to keep upright. Upon arrival at Gibraltar the sun came out. Ashore walking was a bit difficult because the pavement went up and down. At Malta, Mother bought me a beautiful china doll. At Port Said we had to wait for a convoy going down the Canal. No visit ashore but the smell was terrible. We proceeded down the Canal towards the lake in the middle where an "up" convoy was waiting to let us through down the Red Sea, past Aden and into the Indian Ocean. Christmas was celebrated, but rather low key because by this time passengers going on to the Far East were getting worried about the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, the defeat of China and probably invasion of the Dutch East Indies.

We arrived at Calcutta on a very hot and steamy January morning. Trunks and cases were being brought up from the hold and taken through to the Customs Shed and we disembarked into the chaos of Indian porters all wanting to carry your luggage and general hangers on. After a couple of hours in the Customs Shed Mother was concerned as to how we were to get to our destination.

Suddenly a very smartly dressed slim lady dressed in a navy blue spotted long skirt, beautiful white blouse and sturdy brown sandals, carrying a city gent's black umbrella, and followed by an older woman, appeared and spoke to Mother. She immediately organised porters to carry our formidable collection of luggage saying she had a taxi waiting at the front of the Shed to take us to her bungalow. She was Dad's boss's wife. We were whisked to the large bungalow in beautiful grounds in Alipur. The next morning it was found Mother was suffering from severe sunstroke (although she had been wearing her topee and sunglasses) and was confined to bed for several days drinking copious amounts of water and salts. During this time, I was taken to the zoo and generally entertained.

Jamshedpur

As soon as Mother was well again, we joined my father in Jamshedpur. There was an apartment for us at Tisco Hotel and we settled down to tropical life. Because there was no school I used to go exploring in the gardens and found a large number of women doing the Hotel laundry. About 4 p.m. tea was served in the garden where semi-tame kites used to come down to the tables and take bits from the plates. Dinner time for the children was 6 p.m. and at 8 p.m. my parents both resplendent in full evening dress had their dinner. A few weeks later I was taken ill with what at first was thought to be measles, but turned out to be typhoid. This lasted for about 6 weeks then my mother caught Dengue Fever and was in hospital. My father went to Calcutta on business and collapsed and was then in hospital for a month. We were sent to Darjeeling for three months so that he could recuperate. Three weeks later we were on our way to Gauhati.

Gauhati

We arrived in Gauhati late in 1940. My father had managed to rent a bungalow in one of the American Baptist Missionary compounds which overlooked the Bramaputra. Summer temperatures were about 100 degrees with moderate humidity, very high humidity monsoon times. It was a typical colonial bungalow with high ceilings and a large veranda reached from the ground by 4 large wooden steps, so that snakes could not get into the house. My bedroom looked out over the river and when I was in bed sick, I could look out. Our next-door neighbours were the Rev Forbes, Mrs Forbes and children. Meanwhile, Dad worked on bridges across the river at Rangia and came home on the ferry on a Friday night.

Two planks were placed overboard onto the sand and Dad had to drive his rather large Plymouth down to the beach watched by an audience of small boys all waiting for him to fall into the river!! Mother began to teach me to read together with simple arithmetic.

The compound consisted of bungalows for the missionaries and their families, a dispensary staffed by a doctor and nurses from the main hospital, a church modelled on a village parish church but the floor could be pulled back to reveal the baptism pool, a school and thatched huts for the native workers.

Thanksgiving 1941 was very significant because the Rev Forbes had been ill with malaria and the family celebrations were postponed until 6 December. We were all invited to the dinner and whilst waiting for the bearer to announce dinner was ready heard President Roosevelt's speech about Pearl Harbour. Everybody was shocked and worried about friends and relatives. The next day Dad received a telegram sending him to Shillong.

Rosemary Cubberley

To be continued in our May edition

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A view from the pew



Do you ever wish that you could have been born into a different age? A time of crinolines and frock coats, or bow and arrow warfare, or Roman civilisation? Or perhaps living in the future would be your choice. Flying cars, holidays on Mars, a time when thinking becomes action without effort?

I wonder why we are so often dissatisfied with what we have and yearn for something different – something more. Of course, this is a main driver of human progress. Ambition, forward-thinking, experimentation; all these mark us out as a species that seeks knowledge. We want to know, and thereby to control, everything. But does that mean that on a personal level we have to strive and push for more? Is our experience superior to everyone else's? Or is there also a quiet, contemplative and communal side to the human experience that is equally valid?

We clearly need the scientists and engineers who continually strive to make sense of the universe, and from whose work we benefit in everyday life. We rightly value the people who “make it happen” – from the politicians to the doctors. We try to keep up to date with the latest advances, join the trends, master the new vocabulary, understand the science, consider the possibilities.

But is this all there is to human experience? Can we only measure success in terms of intellectual or material gain? Were not the ancient Greek philosophers as bright as we are? Weren't the Roman builders as good at engineering? Didn't the pre-Christian Chinese have a depth of knowledge about illness and treatment?

Advances made down the centuries have been used for the good of civilisation. But many improvements have also been used in a destructive way, usually by selfish individuals and groups, out for power and prosperity. This resort to violence continues, despite the obvious benefits of peace and quiet. When will we be bright enough to realise that co-operation is superior to coercion? And that working together is superior to conflict?

When “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.” - Isaiah 11:6 KJV



Peter Fall

Sea of Galilee



A vicar planning an Easter pilgrimage to the Holy Land was shaken when he found it would cost him £50 an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

He protested to the travel agent that the cost was ridiculous. “That might be true,” replied the travel agent, “but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord Himself walked.”

“Well,” said the vicar, “at £50 an hour for a boat, I am not surprised!”

Miscellaneous observations on daily life

You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance.

In order to keep a true perspective of one’s importance, everyone should have a dog to worship him and a cat to ignore him.

The biggest lie I tell myself is “I don’t need to write that down, I’ll remember it.”

Marathon runners with bad footwear suffer the agony of defeat.

Getting older is just one body part after another saying, ‘Ha ha, you think that’s bad? Watch this!’

The good thing about becoming forgetful is that you can hide your own Easter eggs.

CHOIR NOTES AND MUSIC

Easter in April; a chorister's delight.

There are so many wonderful and familiar Easter hymns and anthems that it is hard to fit them all in! Hence each year a choice has to be made over what to include – and what to leave out. This year the choir has made the difficult decision not to perform an Easter cantata, such as Stainer's "The Crucifixion", at Easter. Choir numbers and availability have played a part in this move, but it is hoped that it will be only a temporary hiccup after 25 years of singing the Passion narrative.

However, this year the church choir is looking at descants in some services, to liven the singing on the last verse of a well-known hymn. Much as the choir would prefer to sing a descant to the last verse of the last hymn in the service, as a resounding crescendo of worship, the choice of hymns means that frequently the last hymn is a song that is not suitable for a choral extravaganza. The congregation (and organist) therefore have to put up with the choir's unexpected variations during an earlier hymn in the service. You can get some fun out of this by guessing in advance which hymn might receive "the treatment" from our soaring sopranos! The descant can be spotted by hearing the ladies sing a different tune to the hymn, and going a bit higher than expected. Please don't be put off. The rest of the choir will continue singing the normal tune with the congregation.

As mentioned last month, the choir has acquired copies of the new anthem written by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange for the King's Coronation "Sing for the King". This was commissioned by the Royal School of Church Music, to which St Mary's Church choir is affiliated, and is intended for use by church choirs across the world. The words are from the Psalms, and the music is noble and warm. However, it is also quite strong ("loud" in ordinary speak!) so not entirely suitable for use during the giving of communion. It will therefore be sung later in the service on Sunday 7th May, the day after the Coronation. Practising of the piece has started, and occasional members of the choir are warmly invited to join us for this event if at all possible. We wish to make as joyful and tuneful a noise as possible to celebrate this rare royal event.

Peter Fall

Choir anthems in April 2023

2nd (Palm Sunday) Introit – “Hosanna to the Son of David” by Hutchings

Anthem – “O Saviour of the world” by Somervell

9th (Easter day) Introit – “Christ is risen from the dead” by Elvey

Anthem – “This joyful Eastertide” by Wood

16th Anthem – “O taste and see” by Goss

23rd Anthem – “All in the April evening” by Robertson

30th (APCM) Anthem – “The Lord is my Shepherd” by McFarren

7th May Anthem – “Lead me Lord” by Wesley

Coronation anthem – “Sing for the King” by L’Estrange



*Among their demands were bourbon
biscuits, double fees for weddings, and
Sundays off*

It's a Gardeners' World in May

For those who are able to enjoy getting out and about and visiting gardens of all varieties here's a tip that may help you do this more cheaply. The May edition of Gardeners' World magazine is published annually with a card and accompanying booklet that gives entry to a wide range of gardens on a 2 for 1 basis throughout the UK and Northern Ireland for a year. The time to get a copy of this great and very popular offer is around **14th April** and it sells out fast. It's available from supermarkets to smaller newsagents etc. The magazine for May often comes in a deluxe or standard version, with the 'deluxe' version usually including a range of seed packets and /or gardening gloves also.

There may be some restrictions to the card's use but generally it offers excellent value and more than covers the cost of the magazine with one garden visit. Many of the gardens are National Trust, historic houses or famous gardens such as Hever or Penshurst. One example is the Hever Tulip Festival which runs from 17th to 23rd April and is still the standard entry on a 2 for 1 basis making it excellent value and a great day out. Eltham Palace gardens are a delightful local treat that can be reached by bus.



So, if you love walking, photography or simply admiring wonderful gardens of all varieties I warmly recommended a copy as a very good deal indeed. The magazine release date is already on my calendar!



Flowers in Church

During the 40 days of Lent it is customary not to have any flowers in church, with the exception of Mothering Sunday, when daffodil posies are distributed. On Easter Sunday the church will be decorated with beautiful flowers to glorify this most joyous festival. Typically for Easter the flowers used will predominantly be in shades of yellow, white and green.



Every flower colour has its own meaning behind which makes it extra special. Although red flowers are most commonly associated with feelings of true love and passion, they can also be used to convey respect, desire, and courage.

The colour yellow is primarily associated with spreading happiness and joy; however, it is also the ideal colour for symbolising friendship. With their bright hue and cheery personality, yellow flowers can be used to better someone's day and increase the positive energy in a room.

Similar to red flowers, pink flowers have also grown to be a symbol of love, though they can also mean happiness, gentleness, and femininity (this last one may be why you see so many pink flowers in Mother's Day bouquets).

Orange flowers are bright and bold, and they are known to symbolise feelings of excitement and enthusiasm.

White flowers are traditionally used in bridal bouquets or during memorial services. White flowers range in meaning from purity and innocence to sympathy.

The soothing blue hues that many flowers possess are said to symbolise tranquillity and peace. Ultimately, this colour is known to spread feelings of relaxation in order to help people release any negative feelings or feelings of stress!

Purple flowers are said to symbolise success and even royalty, although feelings of admiration and tradition may also come through in purple flowers. Although purple and lavender may look similar to the eye, their meanings differ: Lavender flowers typically symbolise grace, elegance, and youth.

There are countless green plants you can use to surround yourself with these positive feelings.

As you may be aware, the cost of fresh flowers continues to rise and any donations would be most welcome to help with this. It may be that you would prefer to contribute to the flowers for a special personal remembrance (at least one member of the congregation has done this recently). This could be for a birthday, special anniversary or another occasion. If you would like a favourite type of flower or particular colour, these can usually be accommodated, upon request. Donations may be made to Anne Yolland, Flower Co-ordinator or online through the St Mary's website via the giving page. If the latter method, please put 'church flowers donation' as a reference. Thank you.

Anne Yolland

Share the Easter story – with an Egg

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

All Real Easter Eggs come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions. So, buy a 2023 edition Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

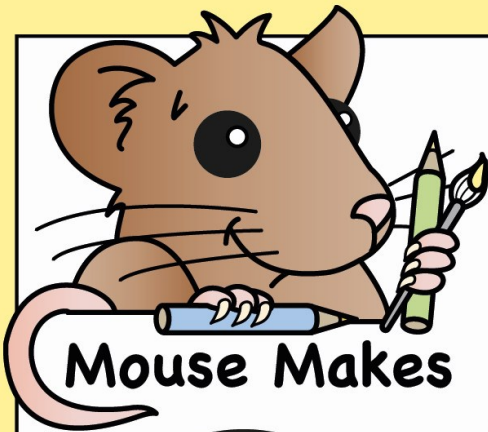
Where to buy

The 2023 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets and Traidcraft has recently gone into Administration. Order through Fairtrade rep at St Mary's, Anne Yolland.

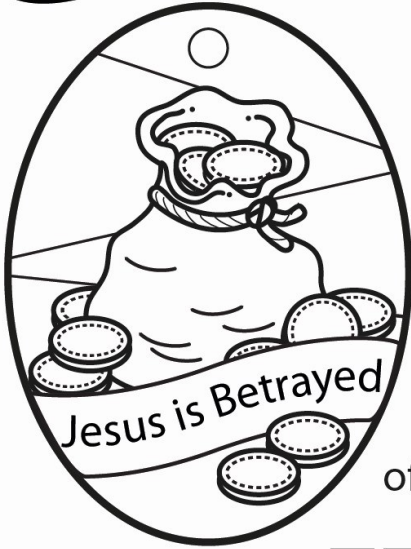
About the Real Easter Egg

The Original and Dark eggs include a 24 page Easter story-activity book. They are Palm Oil and plastic free, and include a competition.

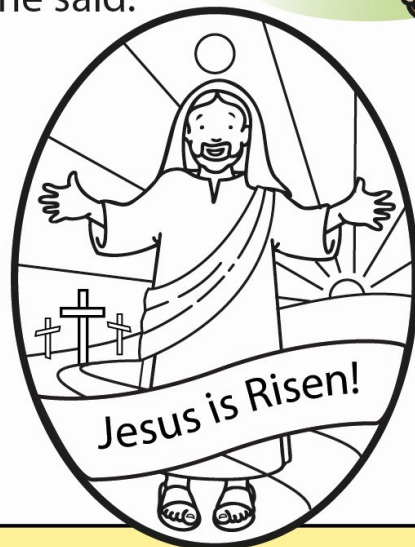
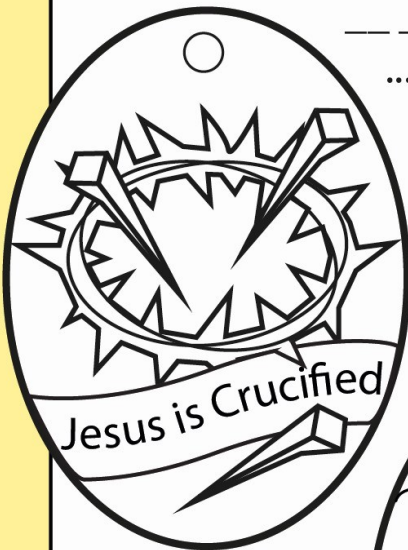
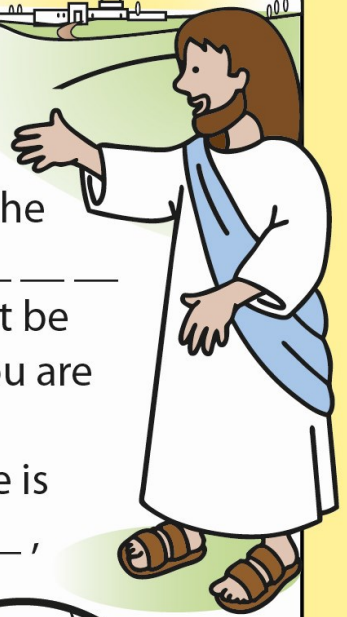




HE IS RISEN!
Read the story of
The Resurrection in
Matthew 28:1-20



An _____
of the Lord came down from
_____ and going to the
_____ rolled back the _____
... the _____ said, "Do not be
_____, for I know you are
looking for Jesus who was
_____, He is
not here; he has _____,
just as he said!"



Glue this page onto
card. Cut out the
ovals then colour in.
Punch a hole at the
top and hang up
for Easter

WHAT'S ON IN OUR HALLS

Monday

9.15am—12.30pm	Ready Steady Go! Pre-school	Warwick Hall
3.45pm—6.45pm	Ballet Belles	Warwick Hall
6.45pm—8.45pm	3rd Bromley Brownies	Warwick Hall

Tuesday

9.15am—12.30pm	Ready Steady Go! Pre-school	Warwick Hall
4.15pm—6.45pm	Ballet Belles	Warwick Hall

Wednesday

9.15am—12.30pm	Ready Steady Go! Pre-school	Warwick Hall
2.00pm—4.30pm	Wednesday Club	Warwick Hall
5.15pm—6.45pm	Harlequins Theatre School	Warwick Hall
6.00pm—7.30pm	Bromley Boy Singers	Buchan Hall
7.00pm—9.00pm	Group Therapy	Front Room
7.30pm—8.30pm	Bromley Shotokan	Warwick Hall

Thursday

9.15am—12.30pm	Ready Steady Go! Pre-school	Warwick Hall
4.00pm—6.00pm	Harlequins Theatre School	Warwick Hall
5.00pm—7.00pm	Harlequins Theatre School	Buchan Hall
6.15pm—7.45pm	13th Bromley Brownies	Warwick Hall

Friday

9.15am—12.30pm	Ready Steady Go! Pre-school	Warwick Hall
6.45pm—8.15pm	18th Bromley Cub Group	Warwick Hall
6.45pm—8.45pm	1st Plaistow Rangers	Buchan Hall
8.15pm—9.45pm	18th Bromley Scout Group	Warwick Hall
7..30pm—9.30pm	Group Therapy	Front Room

Saturday

8.30am—12.00pm	Little Kickers	Warwick Hall
7.00pm—9.30pm	Group Therapy	Front Room

CHURCH NEWS

Grace Café



We are pleased to be able to continue with the weekly café in the Front Room of Church House on a Wednesday between 10am and noon (closed 5th April). There is always lovely coffee, delicious cake, a warm welcome and good conversation. Please do come and join us.



St. Mary's publishes a weekly newsletter with information about our worship, events and people to pray for. You are welcome to have your name added to the distribution list; if so please let Atlanta know your contact information. Copies are emailed at the end of the week. If you do not have email we are happy to post. There is also a copy on the website. Please let Alan know about notices you would like to be included.

APCM – in the church following the morning service on 30th April

Please make a note of our Annual Parochial Church Council, it will be good to have your company. If you are not on our Electoral Roll please think about joining. This is a list of people in St. Mary's who are entitled to vote at the meeting. There will be positions to fill as we are looking for people to stand as Church Wardens and serve on the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Deanery Synod. To find out more do speak to Alan or present members of the PCC. Details on the PCC church notice board. There will be forms available to join the Electoral Roll and nominate people for the positions to be filled.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's

In the weeks leading up to the March PCC meeting the congregation was asked for its thoughts about the current practice of Holy Communion. This has been adopted since Covid has been a part of our experiences. Many thanks to everyone who contributed their thoughts. As you can imagine there were a variety of views.

Covid remains part of life although we are grateful that its impact has been greatly reduced. We will have to continue to be vigilant in case the situation becomes threatening again.

The precautions that St. Mary's has taken have been greatly appreciated and hygiene remains an important matter. In particular the use of small cups remains a valued practice.

The tradition of restoring the use of chalices is hoped for along with communion being distributed at the altar rails. There no longer seems a necessity for gloves and masks to be used for celebrating or distributing communion but gelling hands should remain good practice.

With these thoughts in mind the PCC are happy to support Alan in taking our services of Holy Communion forward with the following practices.

From the beginning of April gloves and masks will not to be used for celebrating or distributing communion. Gelling hands will take place immediately before celebration and distribution.

A new pattern for distributing bread and wine will begin on the Sunday after Easter. It was felt major changes should begin after the larger services have taken place. The congregation will be invited to the altar rails but not shoulder to shoulder. Communicants will be welcome to receive standing at the head of the aisle if they wish. The bread will be given from the ciborium. The wine will be offered from both chalice and small cups, the communicant to indicate their preference.

There had been a practice known as intinction where the communicant takes the wafer and dips in the chalice. This is no longer thought to be acceptable as hands can be unhygienic and if they touch the chalice could present a risk.

Making these changes might take a while for us all to feel comfortable. The aim is to include a number of desires with as little complexity as possible. Hygiene is paramount but it is important to enable this precious aspect of our worship to be as meaningful and inclusive as possible.

Please do continue the sense of reflection and discussion that lead up to the PCC meeting. After a month's experience we will determine what we have valued, what lessons have been learnt and if further changes should be made.

Alan Keeler

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

You agonised recently over your ecumenical service: who should be invited? Who should preach? What about the order of service? If you had attended our recent combined churches' choir festival, your own dilemmas would have seemed a little less acute.

At the pre-meeting, there was heated discussion about whether those choirs who normally wore robes would be comfortable standing among those who didn't. The more aesthetically sensitive worried whether St Agatha's pea green cassocks may clash with our red ones. Intending to be helpful, but phrasing it rather badly, someone suggested that the normally robed choirs should wear nothing. Colonel Wainwright was a little too quick to chuckle.

I began to wonder if a prize was to be awarded to the person who raised the greatest number of concerns: Should the choirs stay separate? Would the tenors be next to the altos or the basses? Where would extra seating be placed? Would the heating be on for the rehearsal? Then came what you would call the 'elephant in the room': of all the choirmasters, *who would conduct and who play the organ?* Tension mounted, and expressions grew grim. But before the committee started to dig trenches in my carpet and position howitzers under the desk, I briefly left the room, turned off all the electricity and claimed we'd had a power cut. This is a useful device for truculent committees; sadly, it can be used only rarely.

Come the day, an uneasy truce lasted while everyone adopted the traditional solution to disagreement within congregations, and simply did exactly what they wanted. Some were robed, some were not, some choirs congealed in their own huddles, while others joyfully sat next to people from other churches – mainly so they could point out their neighbour's wrong notes. Some sang in the right key, some sang in the wrong key, some sang what sounded like quite different songs altogether.

The service ended with one choir thinking that the organist had played too loudly, while another choir thought that the conductor wasn't up to much. Everyone agreed afterwards that we must do it again, while firmly stating that if their own choirmaster didn't conduct next year, they wouldn't be there.

Thankfully, one fundamental thing on the day united them: they all said that our church was too cold, and they all went down to the pub afterwards to warm up.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

Worship Diary

Covid is in many ways in the background at present but the situation could well change. We are offering worship with less restrictions but conscious that a degree of caution is still both wise and appreciated.

Our Sunday Clubs are a valued provision for your youngest members. They do not meet when we have a Family Service or during school holidays.

Our services will continued to be live streamed and can be viewed on our Facebook page unless otherwise stated:

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbromley/>

The words of the service can be found on our website:

<https://www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk/lockdown/st-marys-worship/>

Services for April

Sunday 2nd – Palm Sunday

10.30 am Family Communion

Monday in Holy Week

8.00 pm Compline

Tuesday in Holy Week

8.00 pm Compline

Wednesday in Holy Week

8.00 pm Compline

Maundy Thursday

8.00 pm Maundy Meal

Good Friday

2.00 pm An Hour at the Cross

4.00 pm Hot Cross Bun Service, in the Warwick Hall

Sunday 9th – Easter Day

10.30 am Family Communion, with Sunday Clubs

Sunday 16th – 2 Sunday of Easter

10.30 am Family Communion, with Sunday Clubs

Sunday 23th – 3 Sunday of Easter

10.30 am Family Communion, with Sunday Clubs

Sunday 30th – 4 Sunday of Easter

10.30 am Morning Worship, with Sunday Clubs

followed by the APCM in the church

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	4 Powster Road, Bromley BR1 5HF	
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