

# *St Mary's Church, Bromley*

## *Parish Magazine*

**September 2026**

*61 College Road Bromley BR1 3QG*



Taste and see that the Lord is good.  
The Lord's words are sweeter to me than honey.  
Ps 34:8, Ps 119:103



# FUNCTION ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

*Warwick Hall - £45.00 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 3QC  
Email: [stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com)  
Phone: 07951 748 155

Made with PosterMyWall.com

## Welcome to the September 2026 edition of the Parish Magazine

This is my *fourth* attempt to edit the magazine, again with much technical help from my husband Paddy. We hope for the best – you know, third time lucky, plus 1!.

I am not convinced that editing the magazine is one of my strengths and I could not do it without Paddy. It would help if the material came in earlier and was sent, where possible, by email to the specified editor. Hunting for it in assorted media is very time consuming. If photographs are sent, take better pictures(!!) decently lit and composed, and send them with your suggested captions and the names of those people in them. Check that people have consented to being included.

Do not ask the editor to write and include information for you at the last minute, as we may get it wrong and it will be too late to correct it. Having said all that, do please keep writing and sending your contributions.

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

<https://www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk/happening-now/parish-magazine/>

This month's editor: Alison Tyler

Editor for October:

***to be confirmed***

Send e-mail contributions to:

***to be confirmed***

Copy deadline for the October edition: ***Friday 18 September***

*Please support the editors by submitting material before the copy deadline.*

## Advertise in our Parish Magazine!

Spaces are available in our Parish Magazine, and we aim to help you share your goods and services with our friendly local community.

It's a great way to support the parish while reaching new clients.

Here are our suggested advertisement fees and the magazine's account details.

**Full page:** (app 200 x 145 mm) 12 Months: £110; Six Months: £60

**Half page:** (app 145 x 100mm) 12 Months: £80; Six Months: £50

**Quarter Page:** (app 75.2 x 50mm) 12 Months £50; Six Months: £30

### Account details:

St Mary's Plaistow Parish Magazine,

Sort code: 09 01 51, Account: 27769404 (Santander Business Banking)

Please contact the Magazine editor for more details.



**BREAKFAST CLUB FROM 8:00am**



**SUNNY KIDS  
• PRE-SCHOOL •**

**ST MARY'S BROMLEY**

**PLACES AVAILABLE**

**Monday-Friday**

**9:30am-4pm**

**extended hrs available**

**AGES 16 months to 5 years**

ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL  
61 COLLEGE ROAD  
BROMLEY BR1 3QG

**ENROL NOW!**

**WE ACCEPT GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

07534 151 862  
sunnykidsstmarys@gmail.com  
www.sunny-kids.co.uk

**B C**

Might your advert go here?

# Table of Contents

|                                                                     |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Vicar's Letter – September 2026 .....                               | 7  |
| Making Connections .....                                            | 9  |
| Peter Meets his Mummy!! .....                                       | 11 |
| Mind how you ask for 'Coffee' .....                                 | 12 |
| Word Search .....                                                   | 14 |
| Was it Fair? .....                                                  | 15 |
| Sunday Club news .....                                              | 16 |
| Mothers Union Matters .....                                         | 17 |
| Flowers at St Mary's .....                                          | 19 |
| Bromley Little Theatre .....                                        | 20 |
| Grace Café - Place of Welcome .....                                 | 21 |
| STOP PRESS : Festival of Creation in Christ .....                   | 22 |
| St James the Least – On what clergy should wear on their feet ..... | 23 |
| Church House Garden Transformed! .....                              | 24 |
| Hair – our Crowning Glory .....                                     | 25 |
| Memories of a Happy Day .....                                       | 27 |
| Where is your Round Tuit? .....                                     | 28 |
| The Eclipse .....                                                   | 29 |
| St Mary's Spire .....                                               | 30 |
| Worship Diary .....                                                 | 32 |
| And finally a few recent highlights .....                           | 34 |
| Contacts at St Mary's (Plaistow), College Road, Bromley .....       | 36 |

## **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.***

# Electrician

info@keswickelectrical.com

## No Job Is Too Small

- ♦ Extra Lights and Sockets
- ♦ **New Fuseboards**
- ♦ Rewires
- ♦ **New installation**
- ♦ Smoke Alarms
- ♦ **Experts on Rewires**
- ♦ Landlord's and Home Buyers Reports
- ♦ **Electric Heaters**
- ♦ Fault Finding
- ♦ **P.A.T. Testing**
- ♦ Garden Lights

- ✓ Fully Qualified, Insured and Registered
- ✓ Lifetime Guarantee
- ✓ Reliable and Friendly Service
- ✓ Flexible Hours
- ✓ Satisfaction Guaranteed
- ✓ Proud to be Local

**Call Calum on**  
**07534 669 513**



**NAPIT**



# Vicar's Letter – September 2026



Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we come into September, I find myself especially grateful for the faithfulness of God. The summer months have given many of us an opportunity to rest, spend time with family and friends, travel, or welcome loved ones who have come to visit. We thank God for His travelling mercies and for bringing us safely through the summer.

We also give thanks for all that has happened in the life of our parish during July and August, including the joy of celebrating an adult baptism and three infant baptisms. What a privilege it is to welcome new members into the family of God! I am also very grateful to everyone who has continued to serve and keep our church going during the summer months. Much of this happens quietly and behind the scenes, but it is greatly valued. May God bless you for your faithfulness.

The summer has also brought its challenges. We experienced some of the warmest weather and drought, and we continue to pray for the rain that our land and communities need. We have also had to face the practical challenge of raising funds for repairs to our roof and spire. Our appeal is still open, and I warmly encourage anyone who is able to contribute to do so. Thank you to all who have already given and supported this important work.

September always feels like a month of new beginnings. I would like us to make this our theme for this month: "A New Season: Rooted in Christ, Growing Together."

We welcome back our groups and ministries that have had a summer break. We also welcome back our children and young people, students, teachers and all school staff as a new academic year begins. Whether you are starting a new class, a new school, a new job or a new chapter of life, may you know God's presence and guidance.

Creation Season also reminds us that we are part of God's wonderful creation and have a responsibility to care for it. Psalm 24:1 reminds us, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." St Augustine of Hippo, *"Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things."* May we take time this season to notice God's handiwork



around us and ask how we can better care for the world He has entrusted to us.

There is plenty to look forward to this month including: visit from school, safeguarding training, a wedding, a baptism, the launch of Messy Vintage, and our new Prayer Breakfast on the second Saturday of each month.. I am particularly excited about the Prayer Breakfast because prayer is the foundation of all that we seek to be and do as God's people. I hope many of us will make it a regular part of our rhythm.

Looking ahead to early October, we will also gather for a Community Worship Concert to mark Black History Month, Deane ray confirmation, Quiet day and many more. Everyone is warmly invited to join us for what promises to be a wonderful evening of worship, celebration and joy.

As we begin this new season together, let us please continue to pray for God's grace, guidance and presence for us all. May we be a parish that is rooted in Christ, growing in faith, and growing together in love.

May the Lord renew us, bless our homes, our schools, our workplaces, our ministries and our community. And may we go into this new season trusting His promise in Isaiah 40:31

“..those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength....”

With every blessing and my prayers,  
Rev Eucharis Asiegbu,  
Vicar

### **Weekly Newsletter**

If you would like something to be included in the weekly

St Mary's Newsletter, please send it to

[Newsletter.StMarys@outlook.com](mailto:Newsletter.StMarys@outlook.com)

Also, if you would like to receive the Newsletter by email each week, please, please send your requests to

[Newsletter.StMarys@outlook.com](mailto:Newsletter.StMarys@outlook.com)

or complete the request form found on the table at the back of the church. Lisa looks forward to hearing from you!



# Making Connections



There is a strand of thought that suggests our life journeys are mainly about problem solving, with many tests sent to try us and build us up. This does not work well in helping to live or understand a Christ based and inspired faith and life journey. So I take an alternative view that life is much more about making connections, serving others in building relationships, networks and communities, basically following in the way of Jesus in love and service which may often involve problem solving as a part of the process.

The first priority is our relationship or our connection with God, and it is well known that if we are in a right and working relationship with God, many, if not almost, all our other relationships will be more smooth running, creative and fruitful.

So growing in our faith is really important helped by prayer, study of the Bible and of the tradition - inviting God into our hearts and our lives is just the beginning, the habits of daily prayer and study firm up and build the relationship day by day.

But there is more - it is also our own experiences of God's spirit at work in us inspiring and shaping our thoughts, our imaginations in company with our Christian sisters and brothers who daily teach us new things about our shared faith.

Having said that, almost anything can inspire connections and focus me on the Gospel, and gospel values.

In May and June Paddy and I visited a lot beautiful gardens open for charity as part of the National Gardens scheme. We were surrounded by such beauty, the fruits of so much hard work that it was simple to make the link between the beauty of the natural world and the glory of God.

God's glory shown in creation, and the garden as a wonderful example of human beings working collaboratively with one another and with God either to make the creation as beautiful, sustainable and fruitful as possible, or to restore the land to health by changing land use patterns and encouraging suitable planting.

The recent partial eclipse led to reflection on both the unexpectedness of God's glory to be seen in Creation, and at same time brought many strangers

to connect together to watch it, to share the special viewing resources, eat ice cream together as it was so hot, all in a friendly, chatty and non-argumentative fashion. What a shame that we not always like that when we meet together.

The drought that we are still experiencing is a very practical concrete lesson or warning to change our ways of living, to live more simply, to thank God for all his gifts and learn to be satisfied with enough.

We might find it helpful to make ourselves aware of two wise statements or phrases which we might find inspiring, one from Christian Aid some years ago which goes “We believe in life before death” and another from the Quaker community “God provides enough for all our needs but not for all our greed”.

Taken together, along with the joy at the beauty and profligate generosity of creation, they inspire in me and many others, both gratitude and sharing as key notes of a Christian lifestyle.

I am often surprised by the unexpectedness of links I suddenly find from one image to another, for example, I went to see the film *The Odyssey* recently and the images of the siege of Troy took me straight back to modern news reports of current wars in Ukraine, the Sudan and Gaza and others. Leaving me shocked and stunned afresh by their brutality. It raised again the whole rationale behind wars, and why they have persisted throughout all of history so far. I was also struggling with the additional question, arising from the fire and destruction involved and shown close up in the film, would people still start wars if they had to do all the killing by hand so to speak, with sword, dagger, spear and bow, as in ancient times rather than mechanically from a far distance by drone or by bomb? There is really no helpful answer, so we still live with pain waste and futility of war.

In the film *Odysseus* himself survived, ending up sickened and saddened by the endless killing, the loss of friends and his responsibility as their leader, so after winning back his throne, and handing it on, he and his faithful wife, Penelope left, they sailed away on a journey to remember the dead and to name them, and make sacrifices to the gods in their honour.

But the classical gods of Greece and Rome, are very much the creations of their human worshippers, made in the human images of violent emotions and uncontrolled appetites, our God is not like that. God created us - not the other way around, and seeks to help us grow more like him.

Jesus comes to us as the Prince of peace, he lives a life of love and service, and suffers death that we might know forgiveness and new life. The fruit of God's Holy Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" and our work as his followers is to follow Jesus in love and humility as a peace makers and builders of the community of faith.

Alison Tyler

## Peter Meets his Mummy!!



I recently visited 'The Ramses and the Pharaoh's Gold Exhibition' at the Battersea Power Station site for a birthday treat. Anne and I spent a good two hours wandering around the exhibition looking at items that took us on a journey through Egypt's golden age from the temples of Abu Simbel to the Valley of the Kings and came face to face with 180 priceless treasures on rare international loan from the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Ramses II ruled Egypt for around sixty-six years and during this period, he expanded the size of the country, its wealth and its status. Ramses liked self-publicity and had multiple statues and temples honouring him.

The projects including building the temple at Abu Simbel, which I remembered from seeing films at primary school of the incredible project where the temple and statues was carefully removed block by block to higher ground before the creation of the Aswan Dam.

Egyptians thought gold was sacred and during the embalming process after removing the internal organs, covered the skin of dead pharaohs with it. Silver was a scarcer mineral and was thought to be the bones of Gods.



We listened to an audible guide narrated by Dan Snow showcasing some of the exhibits when viewing gold masks and silver coffins from the royal tombs

of Tanis, beautifully preserved animal mummies and amulets, dazzling and intricate jewellery alongside colossal sculptures, carvings and stone heads.



My interest in Egypt and the pharaohs was kindled by Agatha Christie who wrote two novels based in Egypt; 'Death on the Nile' and 'Appointment with Death'. Plus 'Akhnaton', a rarely performed play set in ancient Egypt.

After the exhibition we wandered around the transformed power station site but decided to leave going up the lifts in the

chimney stacks for another visit in the future.



Peter Yolland

## Mind how you ask for 'Coffee'

In 1974 I was on holiday in Bulgaria, on the Black Sea coast, with three friends. I was 21 and the oldest of the group.

We stayed in a nice hotel, and the staff were very efficient and polite. The large, light and airy restaurant had a garden theme to it, and the atmosphere was convivial and informal. However, there was a table pulled out from the corner with three gentlemen in dark suits and equally dark wrap-around sunglasses, just sitting there watching over the diners, seemingly trying to look inconspicuous - but in my opinion achieving just the opposite! They didn't speak, to my knowledge, and no one spoke to them.

Bear in mind that in those days Europe was in the grip of the 'Cold War' (but at least the weather was much warmer).

After our very enjoyable meal, I asked our waitress if we could please have four coffees. She looked horrified, nearly dropped her tray and rushed back to the kitchen. Other waitresses gave us black looks and certainly avoided walking past our table. Our original waitress (they were all young ladies) had

an extensive, almost furious, debate with an older lady who seemed to be her supervisor, both of them frequently looking at us with seeming anger. I wondered what was going on - other people seemed to be having coffee.

Eventually one of the dark-suited gentlemen came over and said in excellent English, with no trace of an accent, “We don’t do [slight pause] **coffee** [spoken as if it were an expletive], but you may drink **Nescaff**” (pronounced as such, and not as Nescafé with the French acute accent). What a relief! - I was getting worried.

So the next night, “Could we have four Nescaffs please”; answer, “Yes, right away”. That was definitely communism!

B B

### Commandments

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five- and six-year-olds. After explaining the commandment to ‘honour thy father and thy mother’, she asked “Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?”

Without missing a beat one little boy answered, “Thou shalt not kill.”

### Typeface

We’re working on a new typeface to be used for future editions of the Parish Magazine. It’ll be called **Baptismal Font**.

# Word Search

The wordsearch for September 2026 is about it being *right* to do *good*.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| i | s | v | p | g | z | k | u | s | c | j | q | g |
| l | d | p | w | a | c | l | r | q | c | e | a | h |
| m | p | i | o | h | r | z | u | u | s | s | l | a |
| c | l | c | r | i | p | p | l | e | d | u | l | r |
| v | a | k | t | p | r | i | e | s | t | s | o | v |
| s | n | e | h | m | a | s | s | t | a | w | w | e |
| x | s | d | q | d | i | s | c | i | p | l | e | s |
| h | h | s | b | r | e | a | k | o | m | p | d | t |
| t | e | w | a | n | b | b | y | n | n | e | a | i |
| r | e | h | d | i | r | b | u | h | l | o | v | n |
| i | p | n | w | h | e | a | t | a | a | p | i | g |
| c | i | f | m | k | a | t | e | n | w | l | d | o |
| k | x | o | o | b | d | h | b | d | s | e | t | q |

allowed

healed

harvesting

sheep

kindness

plans

question

wheat

disciples

Sabbath

break

people

rules

trick

Jesus

priests

crippled

bread

Pharisees

David

picked

hand

worth

laws

Solution on Page 33

## Was it Fair?

The Gospel reading at a recent mid-week service just happened to be the parable often called “The Labourers in the Vineyard”. I’m sure you know the one I mean. The vineyard owner goes to the market place early in the morning, recruits some casual labour & agrees terms. He returns again several times more during the day, recruiting extra employees. At the end of the day, he pays all of them the same amount, at which point those who had worked all day grumble that it isn’t fair (& to be honest, we might be inclined to agree with them!) Assuming I understood correctly, the homily which followed was on the lines of those who convert to Christianity at the end of their lives will receive the same rewards as those who might count themselves as “Cradle Christians” – i.e. those who, like me, were brought up within the church from an early age.

That led me to thinking. The labourers who didn’t get employment until the last hour weren’t sitting around in the sun with their feet up enjoying a lazy day. They (presumably) spent the intervening hours waiting in the market place hoping against hope that their fortunes might change, worrying where their next meal would come from & how they would feed their families, & experiencing more than once the feeling of rejection at least some of us will remember from our school days when sports teams were “picked”, & others were chosen first. The pay at the end of the day might have been the same, but those who had been employed from the beginning had arguably had a more rewarding day. Likewise, those of us who have been church members all our lives might not ultimately fare any differently to late converts, but what a difference our faith will have made to our lives. Not that they will necessarily have been any easier, or free from troubles, but because we, by faith, have received strength to deal with whatever has befallen us.

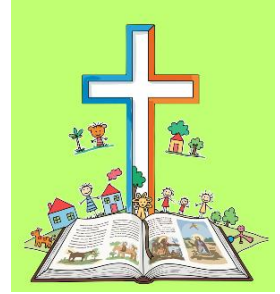
Jill Atkinson



# Sunday Club news

## Sunday Club Garden Church & End of Year Breakfast

Our Sunday Club was able to have a number of sessions in the church garden this year – mainly due to the warm weather! These sessions include a special worship time outside in the garden where we sing songs, enjoy an interactive bible story activity and end with a final song and prayer.



We held a special event on 19 July 2026 to celebrate the end of the school year with a breakfast and played fun outdoor games in the church garden.



We then followed on with a lovely worship time which included the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9). This was acted out using props, a bird puppet, rocks, weeds and a pepper plant to represent what happened to the seeds that were sown by the farmer. The children then planted sunflower seeds in decorated pots to take home to remember to be like the good soil in the bible story.



A big thank you to everyone who helped to make Garden Church (and the breakfast!) a success.

Nina Arcuri

# Mothers Union Matters



The Mothers' Union held another successful yearly Church Porch Coffee morning on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August.



Thank you for your contributions. £125 was raised which will go towards the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Mothers' Union.

## Mothers Union Meetings in September and October

### September

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup>**                      **Grace Café from 10.00am.**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>**                      **Games morning** - Note this is a change from the Programme entry – the Gentle Exercise will now be on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October in the Buchan Room

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>**                      **Knit and Knatter** in the Front Room of Church House from 10.00am, open to all.

### October

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>**                      **Grace Café from 10.00am**

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Knit and Knatter** in the Front Room of Church House  
from 10.00am, open to all

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Gentle Exercise** – this will be run by Sara Cunningham  
from Christ Church, Chislehurst, open to all. **Note:** This will be held in the  
Buchan Room

### APPRECIATION FROM JACQUI

On behalf of the Harney's family, Jacqui would like to express her appreciation  
for all your support and prayers during this difficult time. We share a photo  
taken after Kevin's ashes were laid to rest at St Mary's church memorial  
garden in August May his soul continue to rest in peace and rise in glory.

Amen 🙏





# Flowers at St Mary's

Thank you to everyone who has supported the church flowers, with special thanks to Sue and Jean for all they do on a regular basis. We are also very grateful to those who have donated to the flower fund; it is always an honour to create arrangements for special occasions and remembrances.

This summer's heat has made it especially difficult to keep the flowers looking their best and stop them from wilting. A bit like us, they have needed plenty of water to keep them going in the hot weather!

## Harvest Festival

We will be decorating the church for our Harvest Festival on **Friday 9th October from 10 am**, and we would be very grateful for some extra help with the windowsills.

Please do come along if you can, even if you are not sure what is involved, you are very welcome to come and see what we do. Refreshments will be available.



## Forthcoming Community Events

### ***Battle of Britain Flower Festival***

RAF Chapel of Remembrance, Biggin Hill  
**10th–15th September, 10 am–5 pm**

The Bromley Guild of Church Flower Arrangers and Friends will be decorating St George's RAF Chapel of Remembrance to mark The Battle of Britain.

Further information:

<https://bigginhillmuseum.com/battle-of-britain-flower-festival-9th-15th-september/>



### ***Bromley Flower Club Show — "A Window into Autumn"***

Bromley United Reformed Church, Widmore Road  
**Saturday 31st October, 1.30 pm–4.30 pm**

Admission: £2. Tea and cakes from 2 pm. All welcome

Anne Yolland

## Bromley Little Theatre

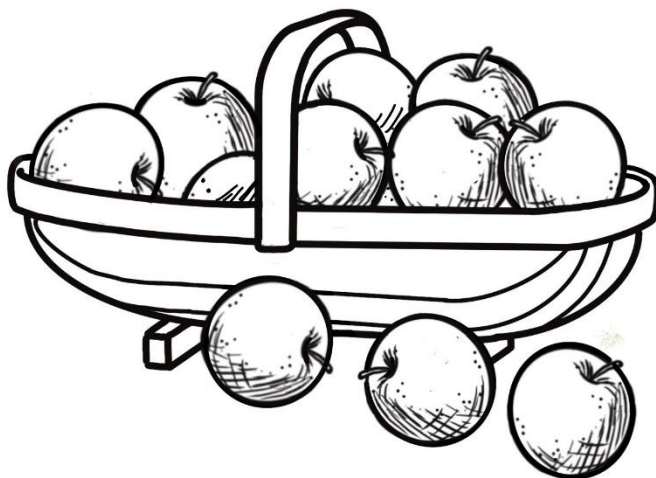
It was such a joy to see *The Watsons*, and even more special to watch our Amaka Asiegbu and Peter Yolland as part of the cast. We are so proud of them and grateful for the gifts and talents they shared.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone from our church who supported them, whether by attending, encouraging them, or simply keeping them in your prayers.

We look forward to booking Charity Nights Tickets in due course for St Mary's Bromley.



## Colour in your own Fruit basket!



# Grace Café - Place of Welcome



St Mary's Bromley  
Grace Café  
is part of the Places  
of Welcome network



## Grace Café

Join us in  
St Mary's  
Church

**Wednesday  
morning  
10 am - 12 noon  
(not in August)**

**Coffee & Cake**

**Play Area**  
Parents & Carers are  
responsible for  
supervising their  
children, including in  
the play area

**All are  
Welcome**

St Mary's Church, College Road,  
Bromley BR1 3QG

Charity No. 631034



Places of Welcome is a growing network of local community groups  
providing their neighbourhoods with places where all people feel safe to  
connect belong and get involved.

Thanks to everyone for their help and support for Grace Café as it resumes in September, every Wednesday.



# STOP PRESS : Festival of Creation in Christ

Earlier in the year, at the July General Synod, the Church announced a new formal celebration for Creation Season on the first Sunday in September, to be called 'The Festival of Creation in Christ'.

The first time we celebrate this Festival will be on 6<sup>th</sup> September and there are some new resources and additional prayers for use in the Eucharist.

"The need for such a festival of prayer is plain. We live at a time when the beauty, abundance and interdependence of the world are both more visible to us and more threatened by us. But a Christian understanding of how to how to react to the challenges of our age must begin with praise for what God has done in creation and in the new creation in Christ. ....".

*From the Introduction to the 2nd edition of "A Time for Creation" written by members of the Liturgical commission. Liturgical Resources for Creation and the Environment*

Below is one of the new Collects for the Festival:

## **Collect**

Holy and eternal God,  
you are the Maker of heaven and earth,  
you are the Word through whom all things were made,  
and you are the Spirit, the giver of life:  
draw us into the mystery of your love,  
that with all creation we may proclaim your praise,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

# St James the Least – On what clergy should wear on their feet

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren

Thank you for sending me the photograph of you having your face painted at your parish's 'Fun Day' – although I can't help feeling that to label an event 'fun' is the most effective way of draining it of all amusement whatsoever. Why on earth can't parishes continue with the traditional title of 'Crowning of the Rose Queen and Fete', equally traditionally grimly enjoyed to the accompaniment of thunder and torrential rain.

However, the one thing that caused me the greatest concern in your photo was the fact that you were wearing sandals. Sandals are *only* to be worn by Franciscan monks (without socks) and holidaymakers on Blackpool promenade (regrettably, generally with socks). I know that you will argue that Jesus wore sandals. This was mainly because reliable pairs of brogues had yet to be invented, but also because He lived in a hot, dry country. We live in a cold, wet one.

The only appropriate colour for footwear for a parish priest is black, and the only appropriate material is leather – although I will concede that can create difficulties. Wet leather shoes and polished marble sanctuary floors are a potentially lethal combination.

I well remember as a curate when old Canon Griffith entered the Sanctuary, having just got drenched coming from the Rectory. His feet moved across the marble floor some miles per hour faster than the rest of his body. Had he landed face down, the congregation may have assumed he was reverently prostrating himself before the altar. But lying in a supine position, staring in a dazed state at the rafters, only conveyed inappropriate indolence, when he should be at work.



However, do not take the alternative of wearing crepe soles. I suspect your present church will be fully carpeted – it seems to go with your sort of theology – and there will be no problem. But crepe soles and any sort of polished stone floor are a truly disastrous mixture. The slightest movement will make it sound as if you are being followed by a swarm of demented frogs.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

## Church House Garden Transformed!

Those who use the front entrance of Church House



for committee meetings or visiting the Parish office will (or should!!) have noticed the amazing beautification of the Church House front garden. It has been a mission of dedication and commitment by our own Sue Cvitan, who has over several months devoted her time and efforts in keeping the flowers, plants and shrubs in full bloom particularly over the recent period of dry weather. Her daily watering and tender care

to the front garden has given Church Hall a bright and welcoming appearance to all visitors to the building.

So **Well Done Sue!**.....your works to the front garden are much appreciated by all.

# Hair – our Crowning Glory

Mammals are the only hairy animals, and hair is one of the main defining features of mammals. Even apparently bald mammals, like whales, have some hair. Insects such as flies and bees do have hair, but they are not vertebrates, so they don't count.

Hair has a surprisingly long history. The first ancestors of mammals seem to have evolved from an early class of land-dwelling vertebrates, the synapsids, who diverged from the ancestors of the reptiles about 320 million years ago, round about the same time that the reptiles developed from the amphibians. This makes mammals much older than previously thought and probably not the descendants of reptiles - and definitely not descended from dinosaurs.

Evidence of hair comes from fossils which have hair-like structures from 265 million years ago. The hairs on these fossils are not very clear and the structure of the hair seen here seems to be much more simple than it became later on. The first clearly hairy fossils came about 125 million years ago, while the dinosaurs were still dominant. These fossils show real hair structure and also different types of hair – guard hair, fur for the under layers and so on, so it seems that the mammals had become quite well developed as a distinct class by then.

However, it is not until later that the mammals became the dominant class of animals that they are today, and maybe the insulation of the hair was a significant factor in the survival of the mammals when most of the dinosaurs were wiped out about 66 million years ago, leaving only the feathered birds – also small and well insulated.

The amount of hair on mammals varies. Some mammals look almost bald – whales, dolphins or mole-rats for example, but they do have the odd hair, often as whiskers or as sensory organs. Presumably their lifestyles make excessive hair inconvenient, although it is not predictable. Whales and dolphins do not have body hair, but seals have two layers of hair – a thick under layer to provide insulation and an outer water repellent layer.

Of the mammals, humans, surprisingly, have the longest hair of all. We do have fine, short hair all over our bodies, but then we have, as a crowning glory, the mass of long hair growing from our heads.

The longest hair on a living person today belongs to Renu Dhariyal in India and was measured at 8ft 10in in April 2026.

The longest hair ever documented belongs to Xie Qiuping in China and was measured 18ft 5.54in in 1999. Her hair is still growing, but she does not allow it to be measured now, although she has tried to insure it.

Hair growing now seems to have elements of a competitive sport. It is mainly done by preventing the hair from breaking or splitting at the ends, and by ensuring that the scalp is kept clean so that the skin and hair follicles are kept in good health. This does not happen automatically, but requires a strict regime, typically taking several hours a day. You need to avoid harsh chemicals when washing – in fact the owners of the longest hair will typically make their own products for hair cleansing; no hairdryers, perms or other hot-tool processes; de-tangle gently but thoroughly, working from the ends up to the scalp.

Combing also spreads the natural hair oil throughout the hair and helps to keep it supple. It also removes the old hair oils, dust and other unwanted contaminants, so less washing is needed. Even then, many only wash the hair nearest to the scalp.

Once you have long hair it needs to be protected, keeping it away from damage by wearing it in plaits, especially at night, to avoid the hair being stressed when the ends split or break off.



Humans do have the longest hair of any animal. The next is the musk oxen, who have nearly a metre of hair, typically 60 – 90 cm, as an outer layer. In this case, the long hair protects them from the Arctic winter, letting the snow slide off, while the inner hair acts as insulation.

Trine Hevezi

# Memories of a Happy Day

It has been an inspiring time to be part of the St Mary's community as Anthia and Ray Page prepared to move house after many years in their lovely home, and to join with other people from St Mary's who have offered so much help. Coordinated by Debbie Greer, there have been those who helped to pack, those offering storage space, those who moved donations and rubbish, those who helped to clear up, those who are repurposing objects no longer needed, and those who provided food and refreshments. All in all a feast of creativity and helpfulness, Christian community at its best.

And here are some photos of the team in action on the day the skip came to be filled, and again that weekend: labour, lunch, completion and relaxation.



Anthia has said how overwhelming and how moving the generosity of people has been in offering time and space to house and collect and relocate or store



belongings - plants, even trees, furniture, glasses, books and pots. It has been rewarding for all of us to share just a little in their



experience, and to help deal with the stuff and clutter that changes bring.

We wish you both well, and success in finding and making a new home.

We give thanks generous God,  
for friends and family,  
for support and help in so many different ways.  
We pray for your continual blessings for Anthia and Ray,  
as they move forward on the next stage of their journey together.  
And we thank you too for the generosity of spirit  
that has motivated so many of their donations to others.  
Stay close to Anthia and to Ray, may they know your presence  
and your light today and always. Amen.

## Where is your Round Tuit?

Do you have a round tuit? I first got one as a free gift courtesy of my (then) parish newspaper. I might even still have it, but don't know quite where to look. That is a pity as since I retired from full time paid employment, I have needed my round tuit more than ever.

While I was working, I had a regular routine – things that I did every day or every week, and some that I kept for half terms & holidays. Not everything got done, but I managed. I now have much more flexibility in my use of time, and a better work/life balance, but it is difficult to complete all the tasks I need to do and all too easy to put things off until the next day, or the next.

I am prompted to write this because at the APCM in May I set you a challenge. I asked you to sit down, & think about how much you give the church as a regular donor, and how that compares, in real terms, with the amount you gave in 2021. Prices have increased 25% since then – for the church, as well as for everyone else. Now, obviously, your income may not have increased very much, or your circumstances may have changed significantly; which is why I didn't tell you that you should increase your standing orders by the same percentage. But I suspect by the limited apparent response to my challenge – and to my “reminder” in the last magazine – that there are some amongst you who have not yet sat down & thought seriously about revising your contribution to the everyday running of the church, or if you have, you have yet to act upon your conclusion. Now is the time to find your round tuit! Please!

Jill Atkinson

Ps If you haven't a clue what I am talking about, a quick online search will lead you to various retailers of Round Tuits – including, to my surprise, Amazon and Ebay – and to the explanation that “getting a round tuit” is a play on the words “getting around to it”.

## The Eclipse

It doesn't look much as a picture, but as an event it was amazing. The day afterwards many people asked each other if they had seen it and what they thought about it. The moon almost covered the sun and, in some places like Spain, actually did cover the sun.



We needed special reflecting filters to look at it and, where I was watching, we shared the ones we had so that all had a safe glimpse of it. It was a friendly gathering of stargazing, or perhaps moongazing, strangers - all looking upwards, chatting and having ice creams because it was so hot.



Some people had brought colanders to use a bit like pin-hole cameras, to project an image of the eclipse onto (say) a piece of paper. There was definitely a knack to that, but someone near us succeeded as you can see here.

The birds went quiet and the evening became darker, until the process reversed, light returned more brightly and the birds looked confused. The stargazers shook themselves slightly and began to drift away, the chatting ceased and the strangers reverted to 'normal', well spaced out, non-contact behaviour.



# St Mary's Spire

The spire was added to the original church structure, along with South Transept and Narthex, by January 1892. It was octagonal, standing on eight oak columns and clad in wooden shingles. It was topped by an ornate iron cross.

The shingles have suffered in 130 years, and repairs were recommended in the routine Quinquennial inspections required by Rochester Diocese regulations.

We had been replacing slates at irregular intervals over many years. However, in 2024 several parts of the roof had lost slates and water had begun to enter the nave of the church. Buckets were needed whenever we had heavy rain. Problems were also found above the choir vestry and organ chamber. One chancel leak was noticed even as the ceiling panels were being repaired as part of our recent mural restoration. The organ chamber has been troubled for quite a few years and plastic sheeting was fitted to protect the organ itself. This needs to be bailed out after each period of rain. Wall plaster and nave ceiling wood has been damaged where the rain has come in.

We decided to embark on a major roof repair project to tackle the obvious problems. It took a few months to agree specifications required for lead valleys and obtain a 'faculty' (permission) from Rochester. Then we had trouble getting a reasonable quotation from a trustworthy roofer. Eventually a price of about £24,000, including scaffolding, was agreed with Ashford and Cranbrook Roofing. Work commenced in the spring of 2026.

One of the early tasks was to replace the spire shingles and investigate suspected leaks where the eight posts met lead on the roof. Unfortunately the oak posts were splitting and the pine framework they rested on was rotting. The whole structure was loose and unsafe!



Spire woodwork requires specialist carpentry skills. Quotations were sought and it was agreed to use Edge Developments, a heritage carpentry specialist. We were advised on the work by a structural engineer recommended by our church Architects. Additional scaffolding was required and the lightning protection temporarily repositioned. The cost of all this work amounts to £37,000. Another faculty was also needed.

The spire with its base has now been dismantled and removed. Work is progressing to carve the elements needing replacement.



The church is facing a very significant series of bills. An appeal has been launched ,grants have been applied for, and we are inviting people to donate. In exchange, their name and/or a message can be added to some of the new shingles that will be fixed to the spire .

Two generous individuals have already donated £1,000 each. More is needed to cover the combined cost of £61,000. Please consider how you might be able to help. We urgently need funds to pay for the restoration of our roof and its spire.

Thank you in advance for your support!!

# 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 an All Age Family Service. 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!

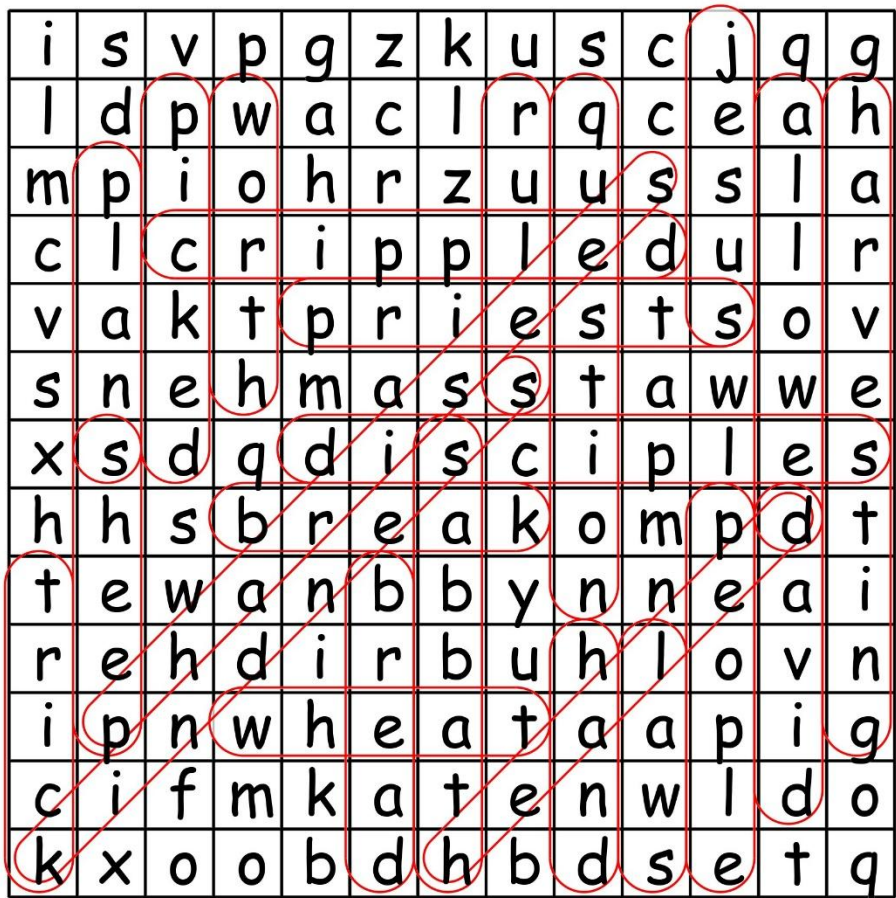
Our Sunday Club is a valued provision for our youngest members. They do not meet during school holidays.

Our services are often livestreamed and can be viewed on our Facebook page.

## Worship Services in September 2026

|                                      |                                |                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup><br>September  | Trinity 14,<br>Creation Sunday | 10.30am Family Communion &<br>Sunday Club                                                |
| Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup><br>September | Trinity 15<br>Creation Season  | 8.30am BCP Communion,<br>followed by breakfast<br>10.30am Family Service – Eco<br>Church |
| Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup><br>September | Trinity 16<br>Creation Season  | 10.30am Family Communion &<br>Sunday Club                                                |
| Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup><br>September | Trinity 17<br>Creation Season  | 10.30am Family Communion                                                                 |

Word Search solution



## And finally a few recent highlights...

We welcomed Olivia and Lawrence into the Church on their Baptism Day this month.



Congratulations to Rev Valerie Pearce on reaching her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. We are always so pleased to see you when you visit us.



Lots of us had a wonderful time at Carole's Barn Dance – here's some of the evidence!



## Cartoon Corner



*Cutbacks to the school budget had somewhat restricted after-school activities.*



*...I take it our local supermarket has a rather good offer on tinned peas at the moment!*



# Contacts at St Mary's (Plaistow), College Road, Bromley

|                                |                                                                                          |               |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Vicar<br><i>Day off Friday</i> | Revd EUCHARIA ASIEGBU<br>74 London Lane BR1 4HE<br>e-mail: Vicarstmarysbromley@gmail.com | 020 3612 0110 |
| Associate Priest               | Revd ALISON TYLER<br>e-mail: alisonrtyler@gmail.com                                      | 07973 457 226 |
| Readers                        | Mr JOHN COX                                                                              | 07751 117 427 |
|                                | Mr MIKE EAMES                                                                            | 07711 421 544 |
| Pastoral Assistant             | Mrs ANTHIA PAGE                                                                          | 07976 385 132 |
| Churchwardens                  | Mr CLEM SUTTON                                                                           |               |
|                                | Mrs MARIA STAINES                                                                        | 07932 637 002 |
| Parish Administrator           | MANISHA SHARMA<br>e-mail: admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk                                   |               |
| Church House                   | Mrs. ATLANTA TOPHAM<br>Bookings: e-mail:<br>stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com                | 07951 748 155 |
| Concerts & Choir               | Mr PETER FALL                                                                            | 020 8464 1239 |
| Safeguarding                   | Mrs LISA MORRIS<br>e-mail: lisa.morris104@hotmail.com                                    |               |
| CarePlus                       | e-mail: info@careplusbromley.org.uk                                                      |               |
| <b>Magazine Committee</b>      |                                                                                          |               |
| Jo Clark                       | Editor e-mail: joc1947@msn.com                                                           |               |
| Alison Tyler                   | Editor e-mail: alisonrtyler@gmail.com                                                    | 07973 457 226 |
| Jill Atkinson                  | Editor e-mail: jilleatk@aol.com                                                          |               |
| Atlanta Topham                 | Editor e-mail:<br>stmaryshouseandhall@gmail.com                                          |               |
| Lesley Speller                 | Distribution Manager                                                                     |               |



**ST MARY'S CHURCH**  
PLAISTOW, BROMLEY

# SAVE OUR SPIRE

**BUY A SHINGLE.  
WRITE A NAME.**



**URGENT APPEAL**

**Target: £37,000**

Help restore our historic spire for future generations.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP



### BUY A SHINGLE

Have your name engraved on a new shingle to be remembered as part of our church history.



### DONATE

Every donation brings us closer to our goal.



### BE PART OF HISTORY

Preserve a cherished landmark.



**DONATE TODAY**

Scan · Donate · Make History



[www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk](http://www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk)



[admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarys-bromley.org.uk)



020 8466 6969

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ST MARY'S CHURCH 

**St Mary's  
Church,  
Bromley**



# Creation

SEASON

Looking after  
God's Wonderful World



Every small action  
makes a big difference.  
Together, let's care for  
the gift of Creation.

## **FAMILY SERVICE**

**Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup>**

**September 2026**

**10.30 am**

**BOOK OF COMMON  
PRAYER COMMUNION  
SERVICE 8.30 AM**



**followed by  
Breakfast Café**



[www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk](http://www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk)



61 College Road, Bromley BR1 3QG

**All are  
Welcome!**



ONE COMMUNITY. ONE CELEBRATION.  
MANY VOICES. ONE HEART.

# ST MARY'S BROMLEY COMMUNITY CONCERT

(ANNUAL)

In celebration of

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA!

Unity • Diversity • Culture • Music • Together



REFRESHMENTS



COME AND ENJOY



DONATIONS  
WELCOME



### 3<sup>RD</sup> OCT 2026

4PM - 6:30PM

*All are welcome!*

**MINIMUM £10**

Support St Mary's Bromley!  
Add an optional donation to  
your ticket to help fund our  
local services.



SCAN HERE  
FOR TICKETS



**ST MARY'S CHURCH**

College Road, Bromley  
Kent, BR1 3QG

[stmarys-bromley.org.uk](http://stmarys-bromley.org.uk)

**CONTACT US**



020 8466 6969



[admin@stmarysbromley.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarysbromley.org.uk)

For event info contact Clem:



[events@stmarysbromley.org.uk](mailto:events@stmarysbromley.org.uk)

**BUILDING OUR FUTURE.  
CELEBRATING OUR PAST.  
EMBRACING OUR PRESENT.**

*Music unites.  
Community empowers.  
Together we shine.*