

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

MEET THE TEAM AT ADVENT!

This year, for advent and Christmas 2025, the Church of England's theme is Follow the Star: Calm and Bright, which draws on the world-famous carol, Silent Night:

*Silent Night! Holy Night!
All is calm, all is bright...*

This is a popular carol, the way it invites us into the still centre of the Christmas story, to contemplate Mary holding the new-born Jesus, the Light of the World. St Mary's Church hopefully will be a place that also invites us all into the Christmas message of peace, hope and joy.

There will be varied services for all, where this Christian message is shared in word, song and prayer. But also, as we approach Christmas through the preceding time of Advent, there will be an Advent Trail in church during most of December and an Advent Course, Wednesdays, 7.30pm-9pm, 4th, 11th, 18th December at St Mary's Church, exploring the theme of **WAITING** in three significant songs of praise (Canticles) in Luke 1 and 2, Mary's Song of Praise, Zechariah's Song of Praise and Simeon's Song of Praise.

Our Craft Group will again be sharing the love of God, for St Mary's by scattering stars throughout the community; see if you can follow and find one!

The church will also be decorated for Christmas, as it has been throughout the year, so I invited the Flower Group to share their thoughts on this ministry at St Mary's.

I was a member of the Hayes (Kent) Flower Club and got to know Sue Rogers there; she encouraged me to help with the church flowers and to join the Guild of Church Flower Arrangers. The friendly and enthusiastic group of people with a shared interest helped to develop my interest and, to a certain degree, skill with a variety of designs and colour combinations, as well as teaching the basic principles of arrangements both for pleasure and competition. I thoroughly enjoy doing what I can do now, within the limits of my mobility, but there is always somebody to help when needed, and the pleasure of decoration God's house with the beautiful flowers and foliage He has given.

Barbara Jarvis

'Consider the lilies of the field' is one of my favourite Bible quotations, written in Greek in Matthew 6:28 and in Luke 12:27.

Thinking about these verses gave me food for thought. It's not really known if the flowers are lilies. As the temple of Solomon was decorated with anemones (wind flower) it could be interpreted as such. Lily comes directly from Latin. And something else that I didn't know: Matthew is written in clumsy, (colloquial) Greek and Luke is written in sophisticated Greek! There's always something new to learn. And it's all Greek to me!

However, we cho

ose to interpret the word - please come and join us in decorating our beautiful house of the Lord with flowers. (I think that gentlemen are welcome, too?)

Susie

As well as the Sunday flower arranging rota for the altar flowers, the flower arranging team usually decorate the church for Christmas, Easter and Harvest. It is lovely to be able to do this together, and normally there is a cup of coffee to keep us going. Our creator God has made an infinite variety of beautiful flowers and foliage and it feels like a worship opportunity to be able to decorate the church with his creation. We don't have to be experts and there is always willing advice and encouragement available. We would very much like to grow the team and would welcome more people to join us.

Hilary Burtonshaw

Church Flower Arrangers' Prayer

May God grant that our hearts, our eyes and our hands receive His inspiration, enabling us to glorify His house with the beauty of the leaves and blossoms which He has created. **Amen**

We are grateful for all who contribute to the church, especially at the busy time of Christmas. During the time of Advent may we also find peace and calmness to truly welcome the Lord into our lives. And in this season, let us follow the star — a symbol of hope, shining brightly in the darkness and guiding us through. And may we be light, shining in our community.

Wishing you all a peaceful and blessed Advent season.

Rev'd Amanda

An ADVENTure trail at St Mary's!

This Advent, why not have an ADVENTure at St Mary's and take part in our free Advent trail! This self-guided trail, set inside historic St Mary's church, is a chance to take some time out from the busyness before Christmas and think about what Christmas means to you.

Simply pop into St Mary's and follow the directions around the church to find the different trail markers, where you will find different activities. You can light a candle, hang up a star on the Christmas tree, and call for change on the Action Wall. It is suitable for people of any age, and open whenever the church is open – most mornings during December and often at other times too.

Where will your ADVENTure take you this Christmas?

Rev'd Tim Aldred

CHARITY FAIR

On Saturday 16th November the St Mary's Community came together in style once again to host our Charity Fair at The Old Church Schools. We thought it would be difficult to match the success of last year's event but I actually think we went one better this year. It was fantastic to see so many people come through the doors and at times we were barely able to move in the main hall! Our visitors were a lovely mixture of the St Mary's church family, the wider Hayes community and also travellers from further afield.

Thank you so much to everybody involved – everyone who donated, baked, cooked and created for the stalls, all the helpers on the day and everyone who came along to support us. At the time of going to print we had raised just over £2,000 and still counting. Various charities



were represented on the stalls but the main proceeds will be shared between the following great local causes - Hayes Community Foodbank, CASPA, Welcare in Bromley and St Christopher's Hospice.

We already have plans to run a similar event next year and hopefully it'll become a regular fixture in the St Mary's calendar! See you next year 😊

Stuart Spence

MAKING MIRACLES - THE BIG KNIT 2024

A group of us from the St Mary's Craft Group went down to Rochester Cathedral on Saturday 26th October. We took all the knitted squares, about 200 plus blankets and hand knitted baby clothes.

We had a lovely morning meeting the organisers and knitted a few more squares while drinking our coffee and eating some delicious cake. The cathedral was beautifully decorated with knitted poppies which has given us all ideas for next year.

Keep knitting for next year.

Thank you everybody who has donated wool to the group.

Pauline Muggridge



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

We wish all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year, and that we can continue to grow in our faith and in promoting family unity and love.

I woke this morning to find our car covered with a heavy frost, the screen needing scraping before we could go. Autumn is over and winter is here. At the moment I am watching a program on Iona and appreciating the beauty of God's world.

I have just heard that Pam Cahill has sadly been called home to Our Lord. Our condolences go to her family. Pam was a faithful member of Mothers' Union, rarely missing a meeting, and indeed she belonged to 'Young Wives' before that. For years she ran the playgroup in The Old Church School as part of Mothers' Union outreach. The children would always flock to her, and parents were always grateful for her wise counsel. Pam was always there to give advice and help. Pam was very artistic and enjoyed both needlework and flower arranging, and would willingly share her skills. For over 60 years I have known Pam as we both attended prayer and Bible study groups, and she will be greatly missed.

It was lovely to have so many members at our last meeting to hear Rev'd Tim Aldred talk about 'His Journey'.

Tim has led an interesting life both abroad and at home. He illustrated each part of his life with an artefact. He showed us his baptism certificate which represented the early part of his life. A picture of the Iona cross by his daughter - represented his connection to the Iona Community. The Afghan carpet was really interesting as woven into the design were tanks, missiles, guns and other weapons of war, which represented his time in war-torn Afghanistan. This was the most dangerous and life threatening experience. He showed us a picture of a woman in Sudan filling water from a tap - from his work with CAFOD (The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development). A jar of Fairtrade coffee represented his work with Fairtrade. Tim spoke of the advantages the countries gain by the good

work that these agencies do selling their products abroad. A picture of two missionary saints to the UK - St Augustine and St Hadrian of Canterbury - recalled his theological college days. Finally, he showed us his beautiful ordination stole which had very meaningful embroidered designs on it. There were 20 members at the meeting and he quickly captured our interest from beginning to end. Tim has rapidly immersed himself into life at St Mary's!



Last month Michael Douglas, trustee and founder of The Chartwell Cancer Trust, gave us a very interesting and captivating talk about the trust and how it all started. Through personal experience he could see where one could make critical improvements to the treatment and care of adults and children living with cancer and leukaemia. For the last 20 years, he has been raising vital funds for cancer patients across South London, North Kent and East Surrey. Through a variety of fundraising initiatives, the charity has helped to transform healthcare and services in our local communities. Michael gave us an insight into the work of charity, how much it has achieved in helping cancer and leukaemia patients and the oncology community over time, leaving a lasting legacy.



Thank you to Pauline who has had this beautiful poppy kneeler made to



commemorate Jenny Groves.

Thank you to all who helped with the Mothers' Union stall at the charity Fair, especially to Christine Leonard and Barbara Carter. The 'Teddy Bear Tombola' took £52.50, which we shared with the other four main charities.

We are looking forward to our Christmas meal at The New Inn on **Monday 9th December 12.00 for 12.30**. We will meet at The New Inn for coffee

on **Tuesday 3rd Dec, Tuesday 7th January and Tuesday 4th February**. Our next meeting in the Meetings Room will be on **February 17th**.

On Saturday 30 November Mothers' Union launched its **16 Days of Activism** with the Global Day of Action for Mothers' Union. Every year, we use this as an opportunity to take a stand, wherever we are in the world, for gender equality and justice. Can I suggest that we get involved by praying every day throughout the 16 days.

16 Days of Activism Intercession

Dear Lord,

Give us strength to shine a light on the horror of abuse,

Give us strength not to hide the truth,

May we show understanding and compassion,

To be involved, to care,

to encourage hopes of a new life,

moving into the future with confidence.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

If you have any requests for speakers for next year, or indeed know someone who would be willing to talk to us, or you would be willing to speak to us, please let me know as I am beginning to put together a programme for next year. Thank you.

Avril Ashford

ST MARY'S COMMUNITY SURVEY

St Mary's are currently doing a community survey, to get the views of the community. All are invited to take part and we would value the views of our congregation, community groups and all the residents of Hayes. We would be grateful if you could complete the survey and please pass on to any who would like to share their opinions. Copies are available in church or this QR code below takes you straight to the survey.

Responses will be collated in January and the results shared and used to support our work with the community.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY

DECEMBER 2024

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom* and Monday to Friday in Church (10am on Saturday) throughout the year, except Bank Holidays.

ADVENT 1

Sunday 1st	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise Sunbeams** (age 3-6)
Tuesday 3rd	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
Wednesday 4th	10.30am	Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own**
	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship in OCS
	7.30-9.00pm	Advent Course**

ADVENT 2

Saturday 7th	12.30pm	Churchyard Tidy Up
Sunday 8th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW Blaze Session** (age 6-10)
Wednesday 11th	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
	7.30-9.00pm	Advent Course**
Thursday 12th	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

ADVENT 3

Sunday 15th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise – Fresh Start Christingle Service
	4.00-4.45pm	Carols by the Tower (Churches Together in Hayes)
Tuesday 17th	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**

Wednesday 18th	12.30-3.00pm 7.30-9.00pm	Warm Welcome Space** Advent Course**
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Friday 20th	10.00-11.00am	Twinkles – singing, story, snacks**
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ADVENT 4

Sunday 22nd	8.00am 10.30am 6.30pm	Holy Communion BCP Parish Communion CW Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
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Christmas Eve

Tuesday 24th	4.00-4.45pm 8.00pm	Crib Service First Communion
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Christmas Day

Wednesday 25th	10.30am	Family Service with Communion
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1ST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Sunday 29th	8.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion BCP Morning Praise Sunbeams** (age 3-6)
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*For Zoom link contact the church office

** denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for quiet space on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



A RECENT BAPTISM IN THE PARISH

Arabella Wren Boenke

HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

December already? This year seems to have sped by and our festive break will begin with our meeting on 4 December when, courtesy of the Committee, we shall be sharing mince pies with our members over the usual cuppa, after we have heard the scheduled speaker, actor and author Linda Regan, reminiscing about her background and career in a talk entitled "Acting can be Murder". That will bring down the curtain, so to speak, on our activities until the New Year while we all take a break to celebrate in our own chosen way.

Our recent activities have included an Outing to the Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre in Sussex, and another of our London-based walks, this time in the Regent's Park area, taking in Primrose Hill, Little Venice with lunch at the Pride of Paddington.

At our latest meeting there was an excellent talk by Paul Condon entitled 'Battle of the Nile'. Also known as the Battle of Aboukir Bay, this was a major naval battle fought between Britain's Royal Navy and the French Republic Navy on the Mediterranean coast off the Nile Delta between 1 and 3 August 1798. Our speaker quoted it as "arguably, the most decisive naval engagement of the great age of sailing" and "the most splendid and glorious success which the British Navy gained".

This battle was the climax of a naval campaign that had been conducted by the French across the Mediterranean during the previous three months. A large expeditionary force had sailed in convoy from Toulon to Alexandria under the command of General Napoleon Bonaparte. He had sought to invade Egypt as the first step in a campaign against British India. As Bonaparte's fleet crossed the Mediterranean it was pursued by a British force under Nelson who had been tasked to find out the purpose of this French expedition and to thwart or defeat it. Bonaparte apparently was aware of Nelson's pursuit and enforced absolute secrecy about his destination. He was able to capture Malta and then land in Egypt without interception by the British naval forces. In fact on several occasions Nelson missed the French by only a few hours, and passed them overnight in the darkness.

The channel to enter Alexandria was considered too narrow and too shallow for the largest of the French vessels, and they anchored instead in Aboukir Bay just 20 miles northeast. The bay seemed to offer a good defensive position with extensive rocky shoals at one end. These would inhibit the safe passage of larger warships and the French positioned their largest vessels end-on in so-called line of battle whereby each ship would be secured bow to stern by heavy chains to the next to

form a supposedly impregnable barrier with immense combined firepower to repel attack from the open sea.

There were two vital shortcomings which Nelson discovered. Not every ship had secured chains to their neighbour, to allow supposed manoeuvrability in battle! Also, a gap to the rocks was inadvertently left at one end. In addition the gun ports facing on shore were blocked out of use. Some of the British ships headed through the gaps and, with those remaining on the seaward side, were able to attack the French vessels from both sides. To try to ensure that the British would not open fire on each other, identifying lights and flags were positioned on their masts.

After three days total victory was achieved. British casualties were recorded as 218 killed and approximately 677 wounded including several officers and of course Nelson himself. French casualties are harder to calculate but were significantly higher, ranging in estimates from 2,000 to 5,000, including more than 1,000 captured wounded and nearly 2,000 killed, half of whom died on the French ship *Orient* which exploded when ammunition caught alight. News of the victory reached the Admiralty in London on 2 October. King George III addressed the Houses of Parliament including these words: "...By this great and brilliant victory.....the British Empire has, in the first instance, been turned to the confusion of its authors, and the blow thus given to the power and influence of France, has afforded an opening, which, if improved by suitable exertions on the part of other powers, may lead to the general deliverance of Europe."

Before our Christmas break we also have another outing. Quite a topical one as it follows close on the heels of Armistice Day, with a trip that includes a guided tour of the Poppy Factory in Richmond, and now as much of a Museum as a factory. We will also spend part of the day in glorious Windsor. You can read more about this outing and the talk by Linda Regan, in your next edition of the Hayes Herald.

If you are a retired or semi-retired man of any faith or none (or someone in your life is) feel free to consider joining our convivial and friendly membership for the continuing bargain subscription of £20.

Meanwhile, we wish all our readers the joy and spirit of Christmas and a socially enjoyable 2025.

Allan Evison, HMF Chairman Graham Marsden, HMF Secretary
Contact details: secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org
or phone 07764 153383

HAYES SCHOOL ART PROJECT ST.MARY'S CHURCH



It was a joy to welcome Year 10 students to St Mary's as they completed their project for their coursework. Here is some of their work and comments about their experience. **Rev Amanda**

It was an amazing experience, really peaceful there and very calming. A location our artist Ian Murphy would definitely appreciate.
Freya Elbourn

I loved the architecture and the atmosphere; we were very respectful and appreciative of the opportunity to draw within the church grounds.
Bella Evans

I enjoyed visiting St. Mary's Church. I had never been in the church before but because it was raining Reverend Amanda kindly let us take cover inside the church building.



I was totally awestruck by the beauty of the stained-glass windows and sculptures. Noah Colpitt

Dear Reverend Amanda,

We thank you so much for the opportunity to visit St. Mary's Church. it was the perfect location for our project and so close to Hayes School.

Ms C McKenna, Head of Art

SAFEGUARDING: SPOTLIGHT ON SAFE SPACES

Safeguarding Sunday within the Church of England took place on Sunday 17th November 2024 to help to highlight the need for safeguarding within our community. Safeguarding is the need for everyone to be aware that, unfortunately, abuse can take place within our local community and Church community and can happen to anyone. It is everyone's responsibility to help to ensure that people remain safe and to report any concerns that they may have.

There are various forms of abuse that take place, including, but not limited to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, domestic abuse and psychological abuse, which includes spiritual abuse.

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse which occurs when someone uses religious or spiritual beliefs to control, dominate, or manipulate another person. Examples of this include forcing someone or refusing someone to participate in religious or spiritual practices, using religious teachings to excuse, blame or encourage violence or abuse and using beliefs to force someone to stay in a relationship or marriage.

Safe Spaces is a service set up for anyone over 18 who has experienced Church abuse; it is a free and independent support service which provides a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church, or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church in England and Wales, or the Church in Wales.

Safe Spaces is for anyone has experienced any kind of abuse within the Church, not just spiritual abuse. There are no waiting lists and the incident does not have to have been reported to the Church or the Police for someone to access support. You also do not need to be a current active member of a Church.

Abuse can be subtle and many victims and survivors don't recognise or feel justified calling their experience abuse. Talking this through with a supportive person may help to make sense of these feelings and may help to process and understand the impact that any abuse has had. Support can be given to provide further information and signposting, emotional support, understanding needs, helping to create support plans and helping with reporting with you or on your behalf. Full details of support available, resources and victim and survivor impacts can be found on the Safe Spaces website.

Safe Spaces can be contacted by calling the helpline number on 0300 303 1056, by emailing safespaces@firstlight.org.uk or by using the webchat service on the website: safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk

Further information regarding support available from the Church for victims and survivors can be found on the Diocese of Rochester website, which includes a link to the guidance entitled 'Responding Well: A guide to support for victims and survivors of church-based abuse'. <https://www.rochester.anglican.org/safeguarding/supportforvictimsandsurvivors/supportforvictimsurvivors>

Useful contact details:

National Domestic Violence Helpline: National Domestic Violence Helpline: **0808 2000 247**

Bromley Safeguarding Adults (to report a concern): **020 8461 7777**

Bromley Safeguarding Children (to report a concern): **020 8461 7373**

Safeguarding – The Makin Report

You will, no doubt, have been shocked and appalled by the recent Makin investigation into the independent review by Keith Makin into the Church of England's handling of allegations of abuse by the late John Smyth, which has now been published and led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

St Mary's Church will continue to be advised by the Diocese of Rochester into any learning reviews and outcomes that come out of the report.

Over the last week responses have been shared by the Church of England and Bishop Jonathan of Rochester has published his response, some of which is shared below;

I believe there has been huge change in recent years at the grassroots level, where there is fantastic, dedicated work being undertaken by clergy and lay people, by Parish Safeguarding Officers and Diocesan

Safeguarding Teams, to ensure that our churches are safe, healthy and nurturing places for all. And I want to say a huge thank you to all of you who have been working so hard to strengthen the quality of safeguarding in our parishes and Diocese. I recognise that this has demanded a huge amount of time and effort on your part, whether to undertake training or to ensure that people on the ground understand what good safeguarding means and put it into practice week in and week out. Thank you for all that you have done and are doing right here and now.

And the second thing I want to say is sorry. Firstly, and most importantly to all victims and survivors of church-related abuse in this Diocese and beyond, and to all those close to them who have been affected. But I also want to apologise you in the parishes, that while you have been faithfully working so hard to keep people safe, we are still finding that the national leadership of our Church has fallen short – and not just in the past but right up to the present day.

The Makin Report revealed failings in the last decade, and I believe there are still ways in which the senior leadership of our Church risks perpetuating these mistakes, because people still do not fully understand the powerful and insidious nature of abuse and because we still do not have the tools needed to identify and address signs of abuse at their very earliest stages.

If you, or someone you know, has been affected or triggered by this report, you may wish to contact Safe Spaces for free and independent support for someone who may have been abused by someone within the Church community, or as a result of their relationship within the Church.

Clare Scriven, Safeguarding Officer

TWO VISITS

Two experiences in recent weeks have made me aware of how much has been missing from my life as I have grown older. About a month ago I was overwhelmed with joy as I cuddled my first great-grandchild, the three-month-old son of my grandson, whom I so well remembered cuddling when he was a baby. Families, as we all know, are often more scattered nowadays than they used to be, and I was very grateful that

my grandson and his wife had driven from their home in North Devon to introduce the new baby to me.

Not very long after their visit I was chatting to friends in one of the local cafés, a regular Friday gathering of friends from St Saviour's (my local church) when the resident cat chose to spend a couple of hours on my lap. (You may be surprised when I tell you that our chatting can easily last two hours.) She (the cat, in case you've forgotten) is very appealing. She's a small and delicate tabby, gentle and trusting. She has only one eye, the result I'm told of a road accident. With apologies to my grandson and his wife (Elijah is, you will understand, utterly captivating) I am a little ashamed to confess that it isn't easy to decide which encounter gave me the more pleasure. In terms of the time she spent with me and how little she demanded of me I think perhaps the cat won. In my defence I should add that for many years cats were an indispensable part of our family life, and I have sorely missed them since moving to Westgate.

Hilary Abrahams



HALLS FOR HIRE

The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email ocs.hayes@hotmail.com

Items for the January magazine by 16th December please. Copy to the Editor: Clare Wickert, 3 Hayes Garden, Hayes

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