



roundabout



Parish Magazine of St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane with St. Luke's Church, Bromley Common

Issue 544 July 2023

Molly

If you have walked past the vicarage in the last two months, you may have heard a strange noise coming from the garden. It is the sound of a puppy trying to bark. Yes, we have a puppy, an Australian Labradoodle and her name is Molly. She is inquisitive, thinks all food is for her, is full of character and totally dependent on Linda and me, but most of all she is loving.

She has opened up to us a community that we have never engaged with before. Taking her for walks in the morning and/or evening, we have got to meet so many of our neighbours and had fantastic conversations. Of course, those of you who are dog owners already know this, but to us novices it has been an eye opener and has made us wonder why we did not have a 'Molly' before. She often reminds us of when our children were teenagers, and she seems to have that same expression when we call her - that she really can't be bothered, unless we have food.

As we try to work out Molly's wants and needs, I often wonder what God thinks as he looks at us. Does he see rebellious teenagers, that always seem to be hungry? Or does he see something different? My experience of God tells me that when God looks at us, he sees what we see when we look at the ones we love - an amazing person standing before them. I believe God can do this because he looks at us through the eyes of his son, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus' selfless act upon the cross, he has taken upon himself the sins of our lives that have marred our relationship with God.

Molly will always be reliant upon us, but we have an option. We can choose to go our own way, or we can choose to be reliant upon God, and experience the wonders of his Love.

Yours in Christ

Revd Steve Spencer, Vicar



As members of St. Augustine's with St Luke's, we seek to follow Jesus' command—to share God's love with our community.



Helen Baker

Somebody once said ‘When you step out of your comfort zone, God steps in.’ In my years of ministry and in times of big decisions, I have definitely found this to be true. Having spent a few uncomfortable years in Bromley, where I was heavily bullied as a teenager, returning to my childhood town was not something I ever thought would happen, but God obviously had other ideas! I remember that on my second Sunday at St Augustine’s I experienced an infant baptism for the first time and it is true to say that in the last 8 years there have been a lot of new experiences and ‘stepping out’ moments. If you read my front page article in Roundabout in June, you may recognise a theme here!



It has been a privilege to work with people of different ages over the last few years and to be involved in so many groups and initiatives. Life is constantly moving and it’s only when you have a moment to stop, that you start to realise how much things have changed. Since I arrived in 2015 St Augustine’s has experienced some dramatic changes, such as joining with St Luke’s parish to become St Augustine’s with St Luke’s, Andy Hobbs, our previous Curate moved on, Katrina retired, Steve arrived, we had to face a global pandemic, we got a new Curate, Rachel, we started live-streaming services and we learnt to rebuild our lives post COVID. During recent years we have launched and relaunched many new projects and groups, as you can see from Mary’s words below and have reached out to our community in lots of ways, from crafts to fun on the green, holiday clubs, Messy Church, ARK Toddler Group, Welcome Space, Youth Connect, just to name a few! Over 260 children each year have experienced the story of God’s love through Christmas Journey and Easter Experience. All of these projects would not be able to happen if it wasn’t for willingness of the volunteers who have given up their time and energy to be involved. For that I say a massive thank you. You stepped out of your comfort zone and may even have found it not as scary as you thought it would be!

Now it is time for another opportunity to be bold and step out into a new environment. Leaving the community at St Augustine’s with St Luke’s and my friends in Bromley and the Diocese has not been an easy decision but I know that I leave the children and young people in safe hands. In the busyness of life, remember the words of Jesus, when he told the disciples to become like little children because the kingdom of God is theirs. He showed how important it is to care for the younger members of our community and that we have so much to learn from them. Children have a boldness and an ability to be brave that we have forgotten as adults. Be bold, step out of your comfort zone for God is with you, wherever the path leads.

Helen

Brought up in the Baptist tradition, Helen has always looked beyond church walls. She began to grow her relationship with Southborough School right from the start. Together with Spinnaker worker Steve Palmer they contributed to assemblies, but when the new ‘Discover RE’ syllabus was introduced in 2016/17 their remit broadened into interactive and class-based activities. Since that time, Helen became an established and trusted leader there. Trinity, Raglan and Bromley High Schools as well as Southborough, always build the weeks of Christmas Journey and the Easter Experience into their calendars.

Helen’s work with our own children included provision for pre-schoolers and parents and carers at ARK every Wednesday. Having met first in the Garden Room, Helen was keen to use the church as a place where everyone could feel comfortable, hearing Bible stories and seeing our worship environment. It still has a waiting list! Her imaginative ideas for our young adults include Murder Mystery in Jubilee Park, Film nights and LEGO building, and, of course, food.

In the peace and quiet of Wednesday nights in the Barnard room, Helen helps us to relax and learn via Bits and Pieces, a craft evening with chat. As I write this I realise that I am using the present tense: on 13 August, that will change. Thank you for all you have done Helen.

Mary Plummer

Mwaikisabe Visit 2023

We are privileged as a parish to have a link with a parish in the diocese of Kondoa in Tanzania, called Mwaikisabe – you can read more about this link in the April issue of Roundabout.

A group from the church will be going on our first trip in four years to visit Kondoa and Mwaikisabe, in July. This will be the first trip for our vicar Steve and his wife Linda, and they will be joined by another newbie, Debbie Tilley, plus returning visitors Nigel and Ann Pope.

We have a draft itinerary for the trip but, having experienced African time and planning in the past, we know this is likely to change – we will need to be prepared to go with the flow. We fly on Thursday 27 July, arrive 24 hours later in Kondoa, and, after shopping for supplies with Lilian, Bishop Given’s wife, in the morning (an experience in itself), will drive to Mwaikisabe on Saturday. We will spend two nights there, worshipping with the Mwaikisabe churches on Sunday and sharing fellowship with others in the village the rest of the time. We return to Kondoa on the Monday and then are in the Bishop’s hands – he will likely suggest we visit many other villages and the school run by the Diocese - until the weekend, when there will be a special service at the new Kondoa cathedral. On Monday (no doubt exhausted by this point!) we will leave for a couple of days of safari before flying home on Wednesday 9th August.



Ann from 2019 visit

We will be taking some gifts with us and will seek donations soon – please do not bring anything until we have worked out what they need and what we can carry. We are all very excited and look forward to bringing back blessings and news from Tanzania. Please keep us in your prayers.

From the Tanzania Travellers

P.S. When I visited in 2016 the Mothers Union in Mwaikisabe were involved in planning the building of a hostel in Kondoa where visitors could stay. I am therefore delighted to learn that the group visiting this year will be staying there.

Ann Hanrahan

Knitting for Mwaikisabe

The congregation in Mwaikisabe in Tanzania, on our last visit there, gave us a hand-made altar cloth with a Bible text appliquéd onto it. This is used in many of our services.

Ann Pope suggested that we might like to knit some brightly-coloured flowers which could be made into wall hangings for the churches in Mwaikisabe and its surrounding villages. Tanya Wardley and I knitted 130 flowers, which have been in storage for three years due to Covid restrictions. We have now completed the four wall hangings, one large and three smaller ones, with the flowers sewn, in the shape of a cross, onto a thick fabric and hung by a dowel rod in the top. They will be rolled up and taken to Tanzania in suitcases, together with six single blankets, two cot blankets and ten knitted hats. When members of our church visited Mwaikisabe in 2018 gifts were given to the women and children, but not the men. It was more difficult to find gifts for the men and because of this we have now knitted beanie hats for them.



Sue Goodger

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Mothers' Union

On a warm evening in June, members of St Augustine's with St Luke's Mothers' Union enjoyed a wine and cheese evening organised by the committee. We were joined by guests who were not MU members but were interested to find out the scope and nature of their projects.

The first speaker, Mary Margaret Yates, is the President of MU in Rochester diocese. She gave us a well-rounded snapshot of the great variety of enterprises that MU is involved in worldwide. Mothers' Union is present in 84 countries and - in past years - most of the funding and planning had started from their headquarters in England. This is no longer the case as local communities have now been able to build the infrastructure to initiate and run their own projects. However, the God-led nature of all MU gatherings always emphasises building resilience in individuals, communities and families. We learned how current focus on domestic violence and modern slavery highlights how destructive and isolating they are to individuals and to communities.



After a break for time to chat over a glass of wine or juice and tasty cheeses, our second speaker, Jocelyn Wright, explained how one of the MU schemes, AFIA, works. Away From It All is a recognition of the extreme stress that affects the lives of some families. It is a holiday scheme funded by Mothers' Union members to help people who would not otherwise have a holiday or even a day trip. Anyone can apply. It is not restricted to church members and just needs to be supported by a doctor, headteacher or social worker. A short break can give families time to create positive memories, build relationships and strengthen family bonds.

Mothers' Union normally meets on the 3rd Wednesday every month in the Garden Room at 2 pm. You are most welcome to join us.

Mary Plummer

Traidcraft



After reading the piece on Traidcraft in Roundabout I thought I would give a brief history of it at St. Augustine's (I was not the first to run it). It was started after the Last family went on a holiday and saw the conditions on a tea estate in India and announced that we should do something.

Traidcraft had just launched the WDM leaf tea and Deaconess Blanche Clancy was the first to have a Traidcraft stall at the back of the church, followed by Myra Adams. When Myra wanted to give up, my dad, Kenneth, was on the PCC and suggested I took over. At the same time Traidcraft was introducing new foods and St Augustine's was fundraising for the new church rooms with a big fair in 1988. That was when I took over and expanded the stall to every Sunday and brought it in a trolley and rucksack. Mary Margaret started a few year later selling at Holy Trinity and soon after that there was a stall at Petts Wood Methodist church. When they both gave up I took over their stalls.

Mark Gill

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John Blunden on life backstage

40 years and counting:

Many of you will have seen me in my black sweatshirt that says 'D.S.M. to the Stars' on the back. What does D.S.M. mean? Deputy Stage Manager. You may ask "What does a D.S.M. do?"

The D.S.M. will sit at the prompt desk during the technical rehearsal, dress rehearsal and the show itself, following the script and calling every technical cue plotted to make the show come to life from what the Director, Designer and Sound and Lighting designers have imagined. This involves facilitating communications across all creative departments, acting as the Director's right hand person. It is also likely that it will be the D.S.M. who runs the Understudy calls.



Long before this, rehearsals will take place in the rehearsal room and the D.S.M. records everything into the script (this will become the Prompt copy). Actors' moves on stage and the movement of props and scenery are all recorded. After each performance the D.S.M. writes out a Show Report, detailing everything that has happened at that performance.

As you read this, I will have rehearsed 'Horrible Histories' opening at the Garrick Theatre, London from 28 July – 2 September. Then, before long, the first rehearsal will begin for 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Broadway Theatre, Lewisham. "Oh yes it will!!" 13 - 31 December.

How very lucky I am to be celebrating 40 years in show business and to have worked with so many Stars during those wonderful years.

John Blunden

Congratulations

How to celebrate a special birthday: **John Bruce**

Congratulations to **John** who celebrated his 80th birthday in two stages. Firstly there was a family birthday party at the Bromley Court Hotel, but part two was much more ambitious. Together with his youngest son **Matthew**, who had organised the whole schedule, the two of them set off for Japan. The whistlestop tour included tea with a Geisha, a Samurai lesson and a practical session making sushi. They visited Tokyo, staying in a 'ryokan' (hotel) at Mt Fuji and there were trips to Kyoto and Hiroshima. It may take John some time to get the photo album together!

Top of the Pew

On the evening of 18 June our Top of the Pew team played their first round for 2023. The team of Liz Carter, Helen Baker, Richard Jones and Andrew Gurney were drawn against United Reform Church Petts Wood and it was held in their church.

The first few rounds were tight with just a few points between the teams but by round 6, halfway through, URC had pulled ahead by 14 points, leading 38 - 24.

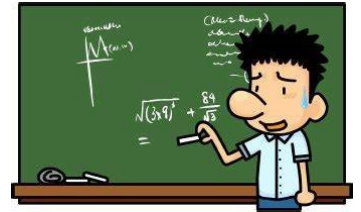
The next six rounds saw us needing nearly three points a round to win. This seemed an impossible task. The team were brilliant and did exactly that, in the end winning 68 - 66. Congratulations to you all for a brilliant result. Keep an eye out for the next round and come and support the team.

The competition this year is raising funds for Every Breath, a charity supporting those with lung cancer and their families.

Karen Palmer

Covid Hair

A little while ago as I walked towards the staff room of the school I work in I was greeted by a child. Nothing unusual about that, there are over 800 in the building day by day. This particular boy I have to admit holds a special place in my heart. You see during the days of Covid when nearly everyone worked from home our school and others offered a provision for the children of Key Workers. We had a bubble of the same year group taught together for the first time. I was privileged to learn about their lives outside the school building. They told me that their parents were doctors, nurses, postmen, teachers, supermarket workers, and even a highly respected gynaecologist.



The children spoke openly about their fears that their parents might become infected with The Virus whilst they did their bit to support the country at such a difficult time. As I told A Little Girl I Know about this recently she told me that night after night, she prayed that I would be kept safe as I worked away from home, shopped for us and other friends and family, and walked daily for the good of my health and wellbeing.

A Little Girl I Know laughed as she reminded me of her constant request for me to dye her hair ginger, and how there are still traces of it in her hair now. It looked so good. I wanted to do the same although I hadn't had the courage until last night.

A simple process and a wait overnight to see what colour it would turn out. Next morning as I showered, the colour appeared to come out onto the shower tray. I was pleased to hear that this is normal and to expect it to happen every time until my hair returns to its natural colour.

I was reminded that God has counted every hair on our heads, and how we are made in His image both male and female. I am grateful for God's protection for my family and friends during The Pandemic ever mindful of those who lost loved ones, and those whose lives are changed forever. I am grateful for those dear children and adults I worked with during that time. I always smile and blow a silent kiss to them as we pass in the corridor.

Preloved / Nearly New Sale

Hunt 4 a bargain!
Saturday 8th July
 12 noon - 2pm

St Augustine's Church
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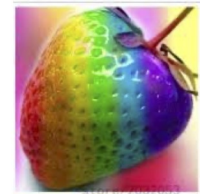
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JULY 2023



These diary dates run alongside our Usual programme of services [overleaf](#) or: www.st-augustines.org.uk

Date	Event	Where	Time	More Details
Sunday 2nd 	Special Café Church Service	St Augustine's Church	10.00am	Magali Van der Merwe will be talking about our gifting and how we use this to engage with the community.
Wednesdays from 5th (Term-time only)	The ARK Toddler Group	St Augustine's Church	10.00am ~ 11.30am	
Thursdays from 6th	Welcome Space and CAMEO	St Augustine's Church, Garden Room	11.00am ~ 4.00pm	A space to meet, chat, enjoy coffee, light lunch, tea & cake, wi-fi & work spaces available
Saturday 8th	Pre-Loved Sale Hunt 4 A Bargain	St Augustine's Church Green	12 Noon ~ 2.00pm	Come and 'Hunt 4 A Bargain.' There will be plenty of: Homeware items, new toiletries, hand-bags, costume jewellery...and much more!
Saturday 8th 	Youth Connect	St Augustine's Church, Barnard Room	7.00pm ~ 9.00pm	Get Cooking. Details to be confirmed by Whats App.
Sunday 9th	Generosity Sunday and Service of Holy Communion	St Augustine's Church 	10.00am - 11.00am	Special presentation by Liz Mullins to think about God's generosity and ours in response.
Wednesday 12th	Ice Pops on the Green	St Augustine's Church Green	3.00pm 	Free Ice Pops to passers-by, (weather-dependent)
Friday 14th 	Merry Pilgrims Walk	Meet at Tent Peg Lane Car park 	10.30am	A gentle stroll on flat paths. Suitable for frames, wheelchairs, buggies - so all are welcome
Sunday 16th	St Luke's Holy Communion	St Luke's Church, Bromley Common	5.30pm	
Tuesday 18th	Forget Me Not Café	St Augustine's Church, Garden Room	1.30pm	
Wednesday 19th	Mothers' Union Lunch	St Augustine's Church, Garden Room	1.00pm	Bring and Share lunch for Summer of Hope Appeal- all welcome; this is not just for mothers or women.
Saturday 22nd	Youth Connect Outdoors	St Augustine's Church	6.30pm ~ 9.00pm	Outdoor Fun with games and barbeque

Staff Contact Details

Vicar:	Rev Steve Spencer	020 8467 1351 or 07778 784331
Curate:	Rev Rachel Winn	07311 330202
Youth and Schools Minister:	Helen Baker	07576 233119
Licensed Lay Minister:	Alan Mitchell	07985 070734
Licensed Lay Minister:	Verity Mitchell	07379 294826
Churchwarden:	Hilary Chittock	07884 195700
Churchwarden:	Jeff Blyth	07557 349279
Parish Office:	(Linda Spencer	020 8295 1550
(Mon - Fri 10:00 - 1:00)	(Victoria Bouwer	email: office@st-augustines.org.uk

You are welcome to join us - our regular Sunday and Midweek Services for July are:

Sunday 2nd July	4th Sunday after Trinity	10.00am	St Augustine's Church Café-Style Service with guest speaker
Sunday 9th July	5th Sunday after Trinity 'Generosity Sunday'	10.00am	St Augustine's Church Holy Communion with guest speaker
Wednesday 12th July	Midweek	12.00 Noon	St Augustine's Chapel Holy Communion
Sunday 16th July	6th Sunday after Trinity	10.00am	St Augustine's Church Morning worship with Baptism
Sunday 16th July	6th Sunday after Trinity	5.30pm	St Luke's Church Holy Communion
Sunday 23rd July	7th Sunday after Trinity	10.00am	St Augustine's Church Holy Communion
Wednesday 26th July	Midweek	12.00 noon	St Augustine's Chapel Holy Communion
Sunday 30th July	8th Sunday after Trinity	10.00am	St Augustine's Church Morning Worship

The 10am service will also be live streamed on our You Tube channel, www.st-augustines.org.uk

St. Augustine's Church Rooms and St. Luke's Hall are available for hire. To book a room at St Augustine's, contact Liz Carter on 020 8467 8155. To book St Luke's Hall, contact the Church Office on 020 8295 1550

Contact details for all church and uniformed organisations are on our website www.st-augustines.org.uk
Our vicar Steve Spencer can also be contacted at revsteve.spencer@btinternet.com

July Edition: Editor - Mary Plummer Layout - Karen Palmer

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