

St. Mildred's Church Newsletter



February - March 2024

- **Never too late to learn**
- **Lifelong learning**
- **Using God's gifts**

Three articles from three remarkable women. What do they have in common?

Page 4-6

Architects for action

Read about our Guides' innovative designs for the church hall.

Pages 8-9

Christmas at St. Mildred's

A time of celebration at St. Mildred's.

Pages 10-11



**Three remarkable stories of learning ..
pages 4-6**

The call of God on our lives at St. Mildred's is to make and equip disciples of Jesus Christ locally and globally in the power of the Holy Spirit.

www.stmildreds.org.uk

Tom writes...

During the recent day of fasting and prayer we were reflecting on these verses from Jeremiah 29:11-13:

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.’”

These verses were written in a letter by Jeremiah to God's people in exile in Babylon. Their situation seemed desperate and they were equally desperate to return to their own land in Israel quickly. Indeed some over zealous, self appointed prophets were already telling them that this would happen.

But such stories were a false hope. Instead Jeremiah instructed them that it would take 70 years and so they should settle, for the time being, in Babylon and seek its welfare.

It is normal to want a speedy end to circumstances that we find difficult. We all do. A pupil keen for schooldays to pass; a sick person longing for recovery to come; a weary traveller eagerly anticipating their journey's end. It is not surprising that the Israelites of old should want their exile to end.

God gave two things to his desperate people at that time: a great promise and a significant responsibility.

He promised that he had plans for them, that he'd not forgotten them, that he was with them and that he would lead them into a bright future.

This is wonderfully encouraging and explains why these verses from Jeremiah are well known. It is amazingly consoling, in the midst of our trials, to know that God is with us and has our future in his hands.



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Newsletter Articles

Anyone who regularly attends St Mildred's can contribute articles to the newsletter.

The next Newsletter will be the April – May 2024 Issue. The deadline for contributions is 20 March.

Any queries regarding newsletter:
Email: newseditor16@gmail.com



For we know that seeking him is not in vain. We are pursuing the only one who can lead us to a hopeful and blessed future. Our God constantly invites us to seek him and promises that doing so is not in vain.

Over Lent we are going to look at the Prayer Course by 24-7 Prayer (see advert below). This is a great opportunity to be encouraged in the wonderful privilege and responsibility of seeking God in prayer. Do join us if you are able. May the Lord inspire our prayers through the amazing promises he has given us. Amen.

But they were also given a significant responsibility: the responsibility of seeking him with all their heart. God's promises don't rule out our responsibility; they encourage and invite our responsibility. It is because of his promises that we have hope and encouragement to seek him with all our heart.

**Tom Lake -
Vicar**



the
prayer
course

For Lent this year we are going to run the Prayer Course by 24 -7 prayer. This will be an online course on Zoom as it is difficult to find a time to use the church building.

The course will run at 8pm on Mondays on Zoom for 1 hour.

As it is 8 weeks, it will conclude after Easter.

The dates it will run are:

26 February

4, 11, 18, 25 March

15, 22, 29 April

You can watch a trailer for the course here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNLiFYkoBfY>

Never too late to learn

Feb - March '24



Daphne Clifton BA (Hons)

During the first Covid lockdown, although I was extremely busy, my brain felt as if it was going to mush and not being stretched. After a conversation with one of my college tutors, he said I could elevate my Diploma in Theology, Mission & Ministry to a Bachelor of Arts degree, through the Durham University Common Awards Programme. Thus, the essay marathon began, as well as my Extended Project which was centred around our launch of Warm Space and our thinking about local mission.

After completing the first year of study, as the world came out of lockdown, it became clear that I would do the course in three, rather than two years. THANK YOU to St. Mildred's PCC and congregation for supporting me with my college fees for the last year and a half of study at St. Augustine's College of Theology. I really appreciated that support, which was a great encouragement to

keep going. I also benefited from a tutor at St. Augustine's College who taught me how to prepare and write essays, she proofread them for me, as well as celebrating my success along the way.

As a teenager, I wanted to be a P.E. teacher but was told I couldn't because I couldn't pass exams, therefore university was not an option. About 50 years later I am absolutely thrilled to have graduated from Durham University with my 2-1, BA (Hons) in Theology, Mission & Ministry, surrounded by some of my close Christian brothers and sisters. This is only the second prize I've ever won in the world of education; my first being for leadership (called 'effort' in the 1980s if you were a female in the W.R.N.S).

Please know, it is never too late to learn and stretch your brain. In my coaching practice we say to our clients that 'outside your comfort zone is where the magic happens'. I agree!

The next question becomes, "where is God leading me now?" I'm not convinced it will include more academic study but I do quite fancy a gap-year as I flourish into the woman God created me to be.



Wren Clifton

Rev. Daphne Clifton - (Assistant Minister)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daphne Clifton".

Lifelong Learning

Only now, in my mid-sixties, have I come to appreciate what my Dad always said: Lifelong learning is the key.

I didn't enjoy school and wasn't sure if I knew what I wanted to do when I left, so I drifted into a job at the Bank of Scotland. A big mistake for someone terrible at maths!

After five years, I discovered where my heart lay: in the theatre. I did a BA in Dramatic Studies at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, which qualified me to work as a Drama Teacher. At that time, I didn't use this aspect and became a Stage Manager working all over the country, eventually finishing at The Barbican and working for The Royal Shakespeare Company.

Life events took over, and the theatre's unsociable hours didn't fit in with three young children and being a single mum. That degree, all those years ago, was now valuable as it allowed me, in my forties, to do a PGCE and become a Primary School Teacher.

I retired from teaching in 2020 after a serious accident and now have time to do something which has always interested me since my days in the theatre - scriptwriting. I applied for an MA with the Open University and passed with Distinction this year.

It's never too late, as my old Dad said. I am now trying to decide if that is the end. Watch this space! My good friend Sylvia Scott said in her congratulations card: "I know the Lord will be opening doors for you and will lead you in the right direction." The Lord has always guided me through my life, whether I wanted that or not, and opportunities that I may not have appreciated at the time have later borne fruit.

The bible verses I repeatedly turn to are in Matthew 6:28-33, encouraging us to have faith. Whenever I feel anxious, I turn to that passage.

Kathryn Chard



Using God's Gifts



Katie receiving her award.

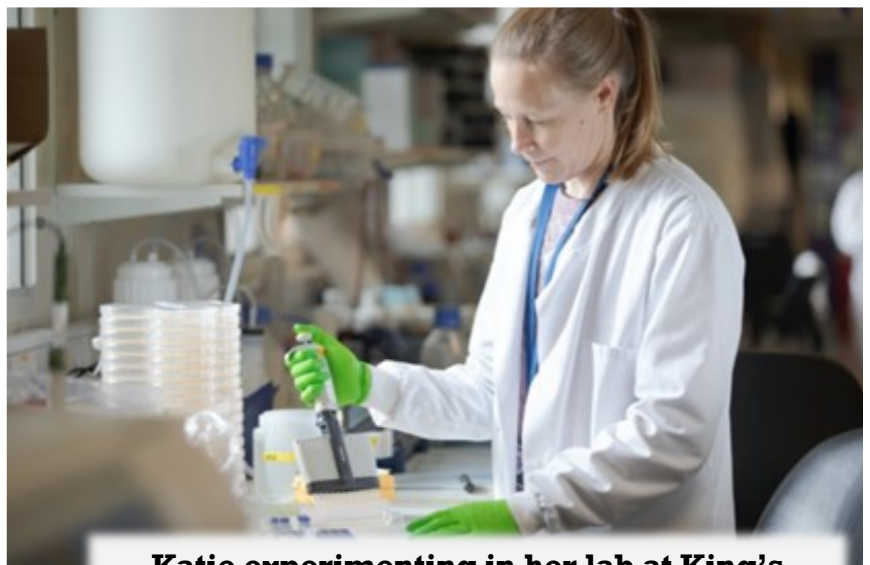
I have always had an inquisitive mind. During my degree and PhD in chemistry, I realised that I loved research as I got to discover new things that no one knew before, and I got to understand the intricate details of God's creation.

After spending my university summer holidays in Uganda working with a Christian charity, I decided I wanted to use my skills in a biomedical setting where my research could have an impact on global health. Therefore, after my PhD I spent 5 years in sunny California working in a team researching into HIV vaccines.

In 2013, we moved to London where I started my own research lab at King's College London. Since then, my lab has been studying antibody responses to different biomedically important viruses, including viruses that can

pass from animals to humans. All this research training led to my team being perfectly trained and positioned to conduct research into antibody responses to COVID-19.

So, whilst many were stuck at home, my team and I were lucky to be able to continue busily working in the lab uncovering how our immune systems responded to this novel virus. I believe that God really used my talents to have a positive impact during the pandemic. In addition to my research, in my job I get to teach undergraduate students and supervise postgrad students. I enjoy training the next generation of scientists and supporting them in their development. All this hard work has recently led to me being promoted to Professor of Viral Immunology. I feel privileged that I can use the gifts that God has given me to have an impact in the world.



Katie experimenting in her lab at King's

Katie

Building project update

February 2024

By way of a short update this month, here are a few suggestions about how you might help us towards getting the new church hall built.



Most importantly, you can pray! The issue that feels most daunting at the moment is the funding gap. The overall cost of the project is currently estimated at £4.8 million (in addition to sums already spent). Money available in the development fund plus further gifts pledged by church members totals about £2.4 million and we have been advised that if we are reasonably successful in applications to charitable trusts and (more limited) public sector funding opportunities we might receive grants of up to £600,000. This currently leaves a funding “gap” of about £1.8m. We are currently investigating ways of reducing our costs in order to make the project achievable. Please pray for further miracles in the provision of funds - while thanking our faithful God for the money previously received by his grace through unexpected sources!

There are lots of other prayer needs, too. To sign up for emails setting out prayer updates on the building project, please speak to Stella or contact developmentproject@stmildreds.org.uk.

Financial gifts to the Development Fund – however modest – are obviously useful and will be received with gratitude. There are also lots of ways in which you can help to generate funds without this costing you any money. These can be found on the Church website: click on the “Building Project” bar and scroll down to “How you can help”. There is something for everyone here! Please ask Stella if you would like a paper copy of the booklet.

We can't make any firm commitments to third parties concerning the use of the building until we have a much clearer idea of when it might be completed. However, we are starting to make enquiries about potential uses of the new building by other organisations offering community services and activities. If you know any community groups who might be looking for space please contact Stella or email developmentproject@stmildreds.org.uk.

In order to seek input on community needs – and on what services and activities local people would like to see offered in a new church hall building – we launched a community questionnaire shortly before Christmas. We are seeking views from Lee/Hither Green/Grove Park and the surrounding area, so please encourage your friends and neighbours to participate.

The questionnaire can be accessed via the QR code below, or by using this link: <https://www.stmildreds.org.uk/questionnaire.html>.



Paper copies of the questionnaire are available from Stella. The main focus of the questionnaire is external, but we are keen for church members to share their views as well, so please do tell us what you think! The number of responses has been disappointing so far, so any help that you can provide on this would be really appreciated – thank you!

Stella, on behalf of the PCC and Development Group.

Architects for action



I was invited along by the Guides to view their Architects for Action activity, which the leaders realised tied in perfectly with our community engagement for the hall.

12 girls divided up into 4 groups, first to brainstorm their ideas & then realise them in a 3d model. One of their leaders works as a set designer at the Royal



Opera House, so they were fortunate to have access to quality model making supplies. They had to work together & find ways of visualising their ideas. At the end of the session, they presented their building to a panel, which comprised of the Girlguiding Division Commissioner, a 'member of the public' (the commissioner's husband) & a representative from the development group, myself.



The girls had some great ideas, they spoke passionately & well. The strong themes coming through were different areas for different activities, groups & needs.

They visualised large areas often with a wood floor for physical activity & included ball pools, trampolines, slides & a soft flooring area for gymnastics.

The other strong theme was a relaxation area that could be used by anyone to “chill” but that would prove especially important for those with learning difficulties, neurodivergence & for young children. They visualised soft furnishings, bean bags & soft carpets/rugs, sensory toys, colour changing strip lighting/fairy lights & bubble tubes.





They also included storage areas, bookcases, table areas for working, a pet rock to provide a friend for lonely people & all models included indoor plants.



There were ideas that didn't make it in to the models but that were discussed. Some they realised were too fanciful - an entire soft play filled hall & an F1 simulator.

Some they thought would be difficult to actually provide, such as providing areas for homeless people to sleep, provision for needy individuals and children.



It was a great activity that really engaged the girls with thinking about the uses & needs for the new hall.

Thanks to all involved & to the leaders for inviting us.

Kelly Shimwell



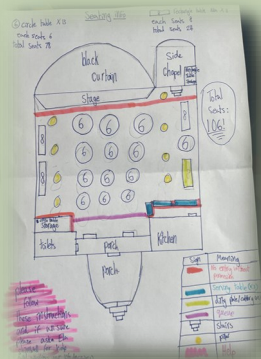
Christmas at St. Mildred's



And so it begins - Choir rehearsals, Christmas Tree decorating, Advent Candles lit, invitations delivered, innumerable mince pies and Mulled wine consumed, sharing, caring and eating perhaps a little more than we usually would!



How many potatoes and carrots were prepared for 96 hungry guests?



Several local businesses supported our Carvery this included supplying the carrots.

There was even a seating plan drawn up just to make sure we were all seated.



Thank you to all who helped make this a special time of celebration by joining to eat together with church family, shopping, preparing, cooking, setting up and cleaning and serving the delicious food.



A chance to share a meal with old and new friends.

Christmas 2023	Over	Under
	16	16
Blue Christmas	32	3
Evening Carols	67	14
Outdoor Carols	91	29
Family Carols	67	45
Midnight Communion	38	6
Christmas Day	74	14



Diary ~ February 2024

Friday	2	8.30am Prayer meeting
Sunday	4	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	5	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	6	Parent and Toddlers (see website for details) 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	7	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	8	8pm Home Group
Friday	9	8.30am Prayer Meeting 11am-1pm Cuppa and Cake
Sunday	11	10am All Age Worship 12pm-2pm Jesus, Life and Lunch
Monday	12	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Wednesday	14	11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Prayer meeting
Friday	16	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Saturday	17	10am-12pm St Mildred Ladies Meet up
Sunday	18	10am Holy Communion 4pm-6pm Emotional First Aid Course
Monday	19	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	20	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	21	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	22	8pm Home Group

Friday	23	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	25	10am Morning Worship 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	26	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm The Prayer Course
Tuesday	27	Parent and Toddlers 8pm PCC Meeting
Wednesday	28	11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Prayer Meeting

Diary ~ March 2024

Friday	1	8.30am-9am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	3	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	4	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm The Prayer Course
Tuesday	5	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	6	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	7	8pm Home Group
Friday	8	8.30am Prayer Meeting 11am-1pm Cuppa and Cake
Sunday	10	10am All Age Worship 12pm-2pm Jesus, Life and Lunch 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	11	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm The Prayer Course
Tuesday	12	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Standing Committee
Wednesday	13	11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Prayer Meeting

Diary ~ March 2024

Friday	15	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Saturday	16	10am-12pm St Mildred's Ladies Meet up
Sunday	17	10am Holy Communion 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	18	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm The Prayer Course
Tuesday	19	Parent and Toddlers 8pm Home Group
Wednesday	20	10am Daytime Home Group 11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Home Group
Thursday	21	8pm Home Group
Friday	22	8.30am Prayer Meeting
Sunday	24	10am Morning Worship 10.30am Kool Kidz 6pm Sunday@six
Monday	25	9.30am Prayer Meeting 8pm The Prayer Course
Tuesday	26	Parent and Toddlers 8pm PCC
Wednesday	27	11am-3pm Warm Space 8pm Prayer Meeting
Thursday	28	8pm Maundy Thursday Holy Communion
Friday	29	2pm An Hour at the Cross
Sunday	31	6am Sunrise Service 10am Easter Day Service

Bible Reading Plan

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Beginning						
12/02/24	Joshua 24:19-33	Acts 1:1-26	Acts 2:1-21	Acts 2:22-47	Acts 3:1-26	Acts 4:1-22
19/02/24	Acts 4:23-37	Acts 5:1-20	Acts 5:21-42	Acts 6:1-15	Acts 7:1-29	Acts 7:30-60
26/02/24	Acts 8:1-25	Acts 8:26-40	Acts 9:1-22	Acts 9:23-43	Acts 10:1-48	Acts 11:1-30
4/03/24	Acts 12:1-25	Acts 13:1-31	Acts 13:32-52	Acts 14:1-28	Acts 15:1-21	Acts 15:22-41
11/03/24	Acts 16:1-15	Acts 16:16-40	Acts 17:1-34	Acts 18:1-28	Acts 19:1-22	Acts 19:23-41
18/03/24	Acts 20:1-12	Acts 20:13-38	Acts 21:1-16	Acts 21:17-36	Acts 21:37-22:21	Acts 22:22-23:11
25/03/24	Acts 23:12-35	Acts 24:1-27	Acts 25:1-12	Acts 25:13-27	Acts 26:1-32	Acts 27:1-26
01/04/24	Acts 27:27-44	Acts 28:1-16	Acts 28:17-31	Job 1	Job 2	Job 3

Prayer Page

“ But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.”

Proverbs 59:16

We give thanks for God’s blessing and protection for all Christmas services and events.

We thank you Lord for all who organised and served at these events and for all who attended that they will know God’s work in their lives throughout the coming months.

For all those grieving a loved one may You draw near to them, bringing healing to their mind, body and spirit.

Pray for all who are suffering and for those who work to relieve suffering. We pray for those we know undergoing treatment and for their recovery.

Pray for all those who will be attending Alpha.

Pray that those considering doing Alpha would be encouraged and enabled to attend.

We give thanks for the toddlers Christmas Party and for all those who helped make it so special. May the joy and love shown at Toddlers be a blessing to all.

Pray for all our young people that their families, friends and schools be secure, happy places in which to flourish in mind, body and spirit.

O God of all hope and peace, we bring to you the needs of our broken and hurting world.

We pray for an end to violence and warfare in Israel and Palestine so that the challenging work of rebuilding may begin.

Help us, O Lord, to affirm our common humanity so that in our differences we may build together for justice and peace. In Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Pray for Keiko and family and their way forward that the Lord’s plan and His authority be over them. Pray for her dad, mum and sister especially after she returns to the UK.

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

1 Peter 5:7

We give thanks for all Your financial provision for the building project.

We ask that you will continue to provide for us and guide us.

We pray for all suffering in mind, body or spirit.

Please, Lord bring hope and miraculous Interventions.

We pray for all Homegroups that they will be places of encouragement and growth.

We ask you Lord to step into situations of conflict in our families, work places and wider world. That we might all be your peacemakers.

Lord, we thank you for AWM

Please, show us where and how we can share your good news.

We pray for the protection of AWM workers and for all they reach through media and in person ministry.

Be lifted up, O God, higher than the heavens, let your glory be over all the earth.



Fridays 8 February and 9 March
From 11am to 1pm (in church)

Cuppa & Cake

Tea & coffee. Chat. Homemade cakes.
Scrabble & Dominoes available.

Everyone is welcome.

Date for your diary:

Wednesday 10th April

Cuppa & Cake

moves to the
second WEDNESDAY of each month
becoming part of the
Warm Welcome Space

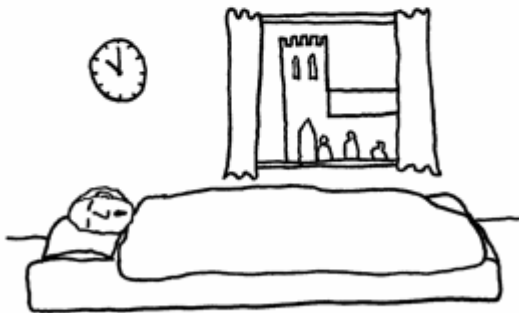
LENT



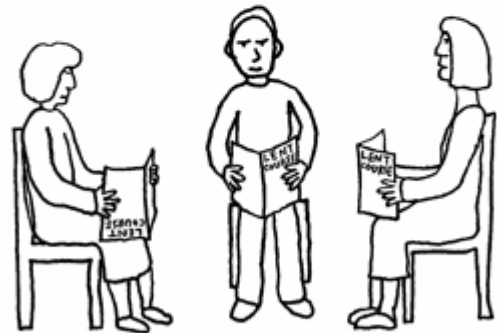
LENT IS A TIME FOR QUIET REFLECTION AND CONTEMPLATION



IT IS A SEASON OF ABSTINENCE AND FASTING



SOME CHRISTIANS GIVE SOMETHING UP DURING LENT



OTHERS CHOOSE TO CARRY OUT ACTS OF PENANCE

CartoonChurch.com

Used with Permission. Article can be found at:
<https://cartoonchurch.com/cc/dwg-small/lent.gif>

St. Mildred's Church Welcome Space

Warm ♦ Safe ♦ Welcoming ♦ Free



Every Wednesday @ 11am - 3pm the church is open and warm.

The kettle is on!

You're welcome to sit, chat, work or pray.

No pressure, just a warm welcome.

Free Wi-Fi

www.stmildreds.org.uk

Businesses to pray for



**February
to
March 2024**

Please continue to pray for our local businesses

Baring Road School
Beaumont Beverages
Bijou Nails
Blackheath Station
Brewers Decorator Centres
Bright and Beautiful Cleaning
Brockley Brewery
Brindishe Schools
Burnt Ash Ceilings
MSD Food (was Lyca)
Morleys
Movo Insurance
Masala Mix
Naturbit UK
P & S Tyres
The Summerfield Pub
The Sun (Bottle & Basket)
NEWS AGENTS The Sun
(Bottle & Basket) NEWS AGENTS
Burnt Ash Super Store
Burnt Ash Vet
Café Lokum
Cafes of Good Hope
Capital Hair and Beauty
Choice Homecare
Carribean&European Cuisine
City Electrical Factors
City Pumbing Supplies
Predominantly Office
Primrose House
R C hair Solutions
RGIS
Rose Chinese Take Away
RTN News / Candid Lace
The Kitchen
The Lord Northbrook Pub

The Back Page

Christmas news from The Ronver Homegroup



*Christmas bring and share ...wonderful food
and company for all ages with a joyous
welcome to our youngest member Reuben.*



Cuddles all round!

