

Spring 2026

**ST BARNABAS CHURCH**

St Barnabas Road, Sutton, SM1 4NP

[www.stbarnabassutton.uk](http://www.stbarnabassutton.uk)

[www.achurchnearyou.com/sutton-st-barnabas](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/sutton-st-barnabas)

**BAPTISM, WEDDING, FUNERAL AND OTHER ENQUIRIES**

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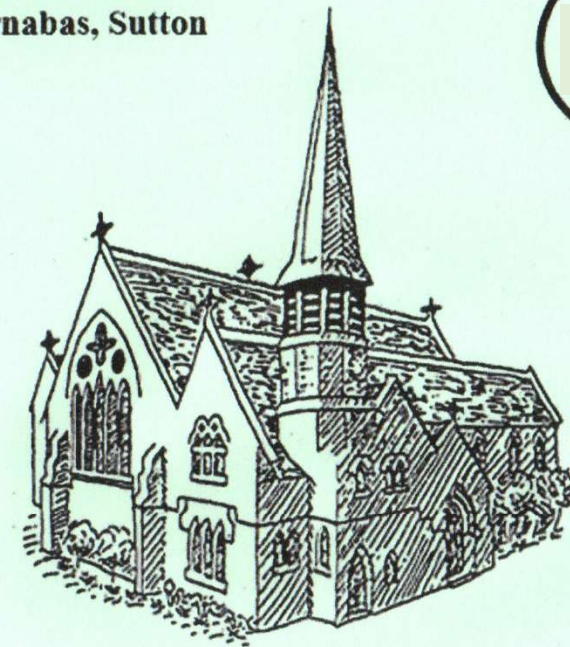
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Paper copies of the Magazine are available to purchase in Church, price £1.00. Digital versions can be emailed (cost 50p each; £2.00 per annum) - please contact the Editor.

# St. Barnabas news

The Magazine of  
The Parish of  
St Barnabas, Sutton

DIGITAL  
VERSION



## SUNDAY SERVICES IN CHURCH

### 10.30am Parish Communion (Common Worship) with a Bible Story for Children in the Halls

Children, accompanied by their parents or carers, are read a Bible Story in the Halls during the 10.30am Communion Sunday Service. Everyone goes into church at the time of the Communion **except on 15<sup>th</sup> March [Mothering Sunday] when there will be a special service and on Easter Day [5<sup>th</sup> April].**

### "WEDNESDAY WALK-IN"

The Church is open on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month from 10.00am to 12 Noon. It is for everyone and is a community initiative which aims to open the church building which is a warm, welcoming space. It is a lovely sociable, friendly and enjoyable event; refreshments are available. **EVERYBODY WELCOME**

### OPEN SATURDAYS IN CHURCH

The Church is open on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of each month from 9.30am to 12 Noon; Morning Prayer is said at 10.00am.

### BIBLE STUDY

A Group meets for Bible Study at 10.15am in the Lower Vestry in the Church on the **FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday. EVERYBODY WELCOME.** Currently the Group is studying the Gospel of St Mark. Each session is a stand-alone one and so attendance is not necessary every month if that is not convenient.

## ST BARNABAS ACTIVITIES & ORGANISATIONS

**The St Barnabas Mothers' Union** meets regularly throughout the year  
*Contact: Janice Clarke (020 8661 1016);*

For details of **Scouts, Cubs & Beavers** linked to St Barnabas:  
[www.scouts.org.uk/groups/10011871?loc=SM1%204RY&slug=5th-Sutton-%28St.-Barnabas%29](http://www.scouts.org.uk/groups/10011871?loc=SM1%204RY&slug=5th-Sutton-%28St.-Barnabas%29)

For details of **Guides, Brownies & Rainbows** linked to St Barnabas:  
*Contact:- Zöe Crimmings 07740 704068*

Additional notices can also be found at [www.churchinsutton.net/news.htm](http://www.churchinsutton.net/news.htm)



## THE REVD KAYODE OYEBODE WRITES

Dear People of St Barnabas,

As winter slowly loosens its grip and as we look forward to the first signs of spring, we are reminded of the quiet, yet powerful, faithfulness of God. The bare trees, the longer evenings, the fragile shoots breaking through cold soil — all whisper the same truth: after every season of barrenness, new life comes. Scripture assures us of this rhythm of God's grace: **"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."** [Ecclesiastes 3:1]

**Life application to consider:** If you are in a difficult or waiting season, do not rush it or resent it. Ask God, "What are You teaching me here?" Every season has purpose. These months carry us through the depth of winter into the sacred journey of Lent and toward the joy of Easter. Winter can feel long. The days are darker, the air colder, and at times our spirits may feel the same. Yet it is often in these quieter, stripped-back seasons that God does His deepest work within us. As the prophet Isaiah reminds us: **"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"** [Isaiah 43:19]

**Life application to consider:** Stay spiritually attentive. Make space daily — even five quiet minutes — to notice what God may be beginning in your life. Lent offers us a holy invitation — not merely to give something up, but to take something up. To take up prayer more intentionally. To take up generosity more freely. To take up forgiveness more courageously. Above all, to take up our cross and follow Christ more closely: **"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."** [Luke 9:23]

**Life application to consider:** Choose one practical step this season — perhaps reconciling with someone, committing to regular worship,

or serving in a new way — and follow through faithfully. This season calls us to return to the Lord with sincerity and hope: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." [Psalm 51:10]

**Life application to consider:** Invite God to search your heart. Where there is resentment, ask for healing. Where there is weariness, ask for renewal. Thank you all individually and collectively as a family for your support over the past few months. Let us be encouraged to remain steadfast in fellowship. The Church is not simply a building; it is a living body, joined together in Christ. In a world that often feels uncertain, our shared worship and prayers become a testimony of hope: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together..." [Hebrews 10:24–25]

**Life application to consider:** Be intentional about connection.

- Attend worship regularly.
- Encourage someone. Send a message.
- Offer to pray.
- Small acts strengthen the whole body.
- So help us good Lord.

Spring then arrives not just as a change in weather, but as a proclamation: resurrection is real. Easter assures us that no winter — however harsh — has the final word. The stone was rolled away. Light broke into darkness. Life triumphed over death. "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." [John 11:25]

**Life application to consider:** When facing discouragement or loss, anchor your hope in Christ's victory. Resurrection power speaks into every situation. And again: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." [Lamentations 3:22–23]

**Life application to consider:** Begin each day with gratitude. Before checking your phone, thank God for His new mercies.

As we journey through this season together, may we be people of warmth in a cold world, light in dim places, and hope where despair seeks to settle. Let us look out for one another, pray for one another, and continue building a welcoming, vibrant, and Spirit-filled community here at St Barnabas.

May this Winter and Spring be for you a time of deepening faith, renewed strength, and fresh beginnings. And may the God who brings blossoms from bare branches bring new joy and purpose to your heart.

With every blessing, Kayode Oyeboode,  
Your friend and Priest, St Barnabas Church Sutton

## THE BISHOP OF SOUTHWARK ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT

*On Advent Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025, the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun sent us the following letter:-*

To all who hold my licence or permission,  
and to the faithful



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we begin the Church's year and the wonderful season of Advent, so full of promise and hope, I share with you that His Majesty The King has graciously consented to my request to retire on my seventieth birthday in August next year. I have had the privilege of serving this Diocese for over twenty years in two episcopal roles, and of sharing the cure of souls with the many excellent clergy who hold my licence. I am mindful of all that you have given generously and sacrificially, as clergy and lay people, to strengthen partnerships in the Gospel in the parishes and ministries to which you have been called. I thank God for you daily, and ask for your prayers in these concluding months.

I shall be nominating Bishop Rosemarie as Acting Bishop of Southwark, to work with the Diocesan College of Bishops. A year ago, when I was convalescing, greatly encouraged by your prayers and good will, Bishop Rosemarie convened the College of Bishops with authority and grace in an uncertain time. I ask for prayers for her during the Vacancy in See, and also for my esteemed colleagues Bishop Martin and Bishop Alastair. I shall hand the Diocesan crozier to Bishop Rosemarie at my final service at Southwark Cathedral on Saturday 18 July 2026 at 12 noon and I am confident that she will lead a senior team that is well prepared for this change – it is a brilliant and effective team.

During my time in Southwark, I have very much enjoyed leading diocesan and co-leading ecumenical pilgrimages, particularly to the Holy Land. In recent years I have a very strong sense of how important the reality and metaphor of journey and pilgrimage is in the Christian Faith. It is the Way, as we seek together to understand God's loving purposes for us, to speak well of each other, and to honour our Baptism and participation in Christ.

I have a heartfelt desire, God willing, to continue to serve Christ's Church, but my own personal sense of pilgrimage is captured in Walter Raleigh's poem, 'The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage':

Give me my scallop shell of quiet,  
My staff of faith to walk upon,  
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,  
My bottle of salvation,  
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,  
And thus, I'll take my pilgrimage.

It has been a privilege to make my pilgrimage with you over these years. You have been hearty companions. I am confident that in God's providence there will be joy and sustenance for each and every Southwark pilgrim in the faithful years to come, the Lord himself being our helper.

*H Christopher Southwark*

## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST BARNABAS

### CHRISTINGLE

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November, St Barnabas Church held its annual Christingle Service in aid of The Children's Society. We were joined by the Guides and the Brownies.



As Christingle is not a Nigerian tradition, Eleanor Holley led the service, explaining all about the parts of the Christingle and their meaning. She was excellent.

Then everyone went to their stations in the church to make their Christingle. Oranges were given to any members of the congregation who had not brought their own. We then all made a circle around the church with our lighted Christingles and sang the Christingle Song; as there was scaffolding still in the church, the circle went down the Centre Aisle and up the North Aisle. £77.08 was raised for The Children's Society.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November was also Advent Sunday. What an appropriate way to begin Advent!

### MOTHERS' UNION COFFEE MORNING

As part of the Mothers' Union Big Give Challenge, the Mothers' Union held a coffee morning and raffle to raise money for their Christmas Appeal. In Rural Uganda, poverty often means more than just going without. It means living each day on the brink. For families, a bad harvest, a child's illness or a sudden rise in food prices can tip them into crisis. Without savings to fall back on or access to fair credit even a small setback can be devastating.

The Mothers' Union's new Saving Project will support 1,200 participants, mostly women, in four dioceses in Uganda. The women

will form 60 self managed saving groups where they can save small amounts weekly, access fair and flexible loans, and gain vital training in financial, literacy and budgeting; small business and entrepreneurship; and climate resilient farming techniques.

On Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2026, a former Mothers' Union Worldwide President, Rosemary Kempzell, will be coming to St Barnabas Church at 7.45pm to tell us how she set up Literacy Development Circles in Malawi, Burundi and Sudan. This illustrated talk will be open to everyone.

There was lots of friendly chatter at the Coffee Morning and the raffle raised £152.00

### **SUTTON WOMEN'S REFUGE**

The United Nations' "16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence" is held between 25<sup>th</sup> November (International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and 10<sup>th</sup> December (International Human Rights Day). During this time, the Mothers' Union tries to work alongside communities to help end domestic violence and support those affected. Did you know that every 3 days, a female is killed by domestic violence in the UK!!

At St Barnabas Church we had a red chair to remember those who have died from domestic violence. Telephone numbers of where victims can get help were displayed on the Red Chair and in the ladies' toilets. If you are a victim of Domestic Violence or know someone who is please ring 020 8092 7569 or ask for Sanjay Patel at Sutton Pharmacy (86, Westmead Road) as he is also trained in dealing with domestic violence problems.



The Mothers' Union branch had daily prayers for the 16 days and the Midday Prayers at Southwark Cathedral on 25<sup>th</sup> November were also for 16 days of Activism.

The Sutton Women's Refuge also gave members a list of items needed for the women and children in the Refuge for Christmas. We had a magnificent response both from members of St Barnabas Mothers' Union and the wider St Barnabas congregation, including £75 of Sainsburys' £5 vouchers [see photo]. Some of the items were donated by parents at All Saints' Carshalton Primary School. It only goes to show that Father Christmas really does exist!!!!



Rosemary Walsh, Mothers' Union Diocesan Secretary also accompanied Hazel Brown, the Mothers' Union Sutton Deanery Representative to the Refuge to help decorate the donated Christmas tree at the Refuge. They also helped the women make mince pies.

The following letter from the Sutton Women's Refuge Team was received just after Christmas:-

This Christmas your generosity helped made something truly meaningful possible - love, warmth and hope for survivors of domestic abuse. For many of the woman and children who come to our refuge, the festive season can be a painful reminder of what they have lost, or what they have fled. Your kind donations offered reassurance, dignity and the powerful message that survivors are not alone and not forgotten.

From everyone here at the refuge and from every survivor whose life you have touched, thank you for standing with us this Christmas. Your kindness has made a lasting difference. With heartfelt thanks, all the team at the Refuge."

## THE ROCKY ROAD TO BETHLEHEM

During the morning service on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December the children made Rocky Road cakes to illustrate the journey to Bethlehem. The cakes included cooking chocolate representing the darkness waiting for Jesus, the light of the world, Haribo rings to represent the engaged couple, Mary and Joseph, Maltesers representing the sandy, rocky path 90 miles long that they travelled along, raisins to represent donkey poo!, Haribo hearts representing the hope and love Jesus brings, marshmallows to represent the fluffy sheep, Milky Way chocolate bars representing the 100 billion stars in the Milky Way which guided the Wise Men, Mars Bars which have three layers, to represent the Wise Men and their three gifts and edible gold spray representing angels that filled the sky rejoicing at the birth of God's son.

The cakes had to be set in the fridge for two hours and they were then all eaten up by the children at the tea party after the Nine Lessons and Carols Service in the afternoon.

For the simple, no-cook recipe to make the Rocky Road to Bethlehem the children needed:

- 2 x 200g chocolate bar (melted)
- 1 cup of mini white marshmallows
- 1 cup of shredded wheat (broken up)
- 2 x Mars Bars - sliced into chunks
- 2 x Milky Way chocolate bars - sliced into chunks
- 1 cup of raisins/sultanas
- 1 box of Maltesers (broken up)
- 1 large bag of Haribo sweets - the rings & the hearts
- Edible gold spray



The full 'no cook' recipe is available at:

<https://www.sunhatsandwellieboots.com/2020/12/rocky-road-to-bethlehem-tell-christmas.html#more>

## THE TRADITIONAL NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE

A new idea this Christmas at St Barnabas was to have the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols Service in the afternoon of Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00pm followed by a tea so that everyone could join in, adults, children and the elderly. The service was very successful and warm and friendly and, afterwards, everyone sat at tables to enjoy tea together. Included in the fare was a beautiful Christmas cake made by Sue Davis.



## WALK IN WEDNESDAY

The Walk in Wednesday knitting, chatting and craft group had a craft sale in the Church to raise money for the Roof Fund. There were many knitted items for sale including Sally Bramdaw's famous knitted nativity sets. The sale at St Barnabas raised £82.50 but some Muslim ladies who visited St Barnabas Church during Walk in Wednesday took some of the items and sold them at their mosque at Morden (the one which the Mothers' Union visited in 2019 for their Big Iftar) raising another £40 for St Barnabas. Well done everyone!



The photo above shows Sally Bramdaw's knitted Nativity sets which she sells to raise money. Sally has knitted and sold 120 Nativity sets over the years.

The Walk in Wednesday Group meets in the Church every two weeks on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 10.00am. Everyone is welcome either to do knitting with the guidance of expert knitters or just to come along to have coffee and chat.

### A HOME CAROL SERVICE FOR JOHN CHILD

After the Mothers' Union Advent service on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December, five members of St Barnabas visited John Child at home for a "mini carol service". They sang two carols and had the Christmas reading and prayers. John and his son, Andrew were each given a Terry's Chocolate Orange in a knitted snowman head for a Christmas present and a piece of Sue Davis's Christmas cake from the tea party the day before.

### HANDBELLS

In the Autumn it had been suggested to Humphrey Clarke that he should try and revive the St Barnabas Handbell Group which he had originally set up 30 years ago in 1995.

#### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 1995

Left to right: Elizabeth Barnes, Rosemary Walsh, Shirley Tillman, Sonia Dodson, Helen Reed, Chrjs Penpraze, Humphrey Clarke, Janice Clarke playing "We wish you a Merry Christmas" after the St Barnabas Carol Service.



He recruited Pam and her two secondary school aged children, and they had their first practice in October with Humphrey's elder daughter, Elizabeth and his granddaughters who were visiting at that time from Nottingham. They weren't all able to practise again together until Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December but, on the very next day, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, they played three carols, just before the end of that Sunday Morning service. Everyone was delighted to hear the bells!

Well done to the five new ringers who gave a lovely performance under very difficult circumstances.



### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE NATIVITY SERVICE

After a lot of difficulties, Eleanor Holley managed to get time off work to lead the St Barnabas Children's Service again which she first led in 2012 and had done so every year since, even during Covid. The service was very informal and used some of the Wiggly Nativity songs. A dog and two babies attended the service! The children had props to indicate the characters and dads joined in as innkeepers and Wise Men. There was also a very enthusiastic donkey! Alfred Walsh did a short reading and Gracie was Joseph with her cousin as Mary. At the end of the service, Gracie led everyone in *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, even including the verse beginning, "So bring us some figgy pudding".

### CHRISTMAS SERVICES

The Midnight Service on Christmas Eve was a joint service at St Barnabas with St Nicholas as they are still in an interregnum and did not have a priest available for their own 11.30pm service.

There was a Christmas Day Morning Eucharist Service at 10.30am for those who are not night owls!

### NEW YEARS DAY

On New Year's Day, there was a special Holy Communion service to mark 2026. It was also the Feast of the Naming and Circumcision of Jesus. Although the weather was inclement and it was still holiday time quite a few people attended. At the end of the service there were delicious cheese nibbles provided by Sue Davis and lots of chatter. A very successful innovation at St Barnabas.



## **SALLY WAS ASKED TO TALK FOR FIVE MINUTES ABOUT CHRISTIANITY TO THOSE OF OTHER FAITHS**

*On Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January, there was no priest available to conduct the service as Kayode was on holiday, so Sally Reed, as Churchwarden, led us in Morning Worship. Instead of the sermon, she gave the following very interesting talk about her experiences the previous week.*

Two things have happened to me this week.

Last Sunday evening, we hosted a service here in St Barnabas for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on behalf of Churches Together in Sutton (Ed. - see Page 14]. The theme of the evening was 'One Body, One Spirit'. In this service, we were invited to think about the different Christian denominations and reflect on their shared heritage. It stressed that Christians everywhere, despite differences in culture, geography and tradition should be united as one body through the Holy Spirit. It was a lovely service, attended by 60 or so people who all seemed to thoroughly enjoy their time together, including the refreshments afterwards. So, thanks to everyone who was involved that night.

Then yesterday I attended an inter-faith event hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association under the title of 'Tolerance in Faith'. A couple of the ladies from that sect have been attending our Walk in Wednesdays and had asked if there is anyone from St Barnabas who would go along and talk for five minutes on Christianity. I somehow got volunteered!

I have to say I was a bit daunted – wondering how on earth I was going to do justice to the subject and in only five minutes! I then got started on planning what it was that I wanted to say, and resorted to good old Google, which came up with some interesting suggestions. It talked about numbers, demographics and the different denominations and the basic tenets of the

Christian belief. But, what was it that I could fit in to my five minutes?? Hmm.

I have to say, if you haven't done it for a while, I would recommend that you also try to do it. Imagine having to explain to your possibly non-Christian family why you go to church every Sunday. I found it a good way to re-centre myself.

At the event yesterday, a young woman sang some verses from the Koran and then read the translation. There was a lady from the Hindu temple in Neasden explaining about Hinduism, me on Christianity and, then, a Muslim girl who is studying the Koran at some higher education establishment.

It was amazing how all three messages came out basically the same. The motto they used was 'Love for all, hatred for none' which chimed with me talking about the second commandment 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. And all of us spoke about tolerance.

And then there were some lovely refreshments afterwards and various interesting displays, including a set of Koran's in different languages, a demonstration on how to tie a hijab and I had my name written in Arabic. All in all, a lovely event.

So, I suppose that I shouldn't really be surprised but I was particularly struck by the sentence from the passage from Corinthians which we had today for our second reading:- [Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. \[1 Corinthians,1, v 10\]](#)

Last Sunday evening we prayed for Christians of every tradition, that they grow in mutual understanding and love. So, I would like to expand this prayer so that it includes people of any faith everywhere.

Sally Reed

## SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY ORGANISED BY CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SUTTON & CHEAM

The Week of Prayer Service for Christian Unity 2026, titled **“One Body, One Spirit”** was been prepared by members of the Armenian Apostolic, Catholic, and Evangelical Churches. Drawing on ancient Armenian Christian traditions, including prayers and hymns dating back to the fourth century, the resources invited Christians to reflect on their shared heritage and deeper fellowship in Christ. Inspired by Paul's teachings in Ephesians, especially Chapter 4, vv 1 – 4, the theme emphasized humility, love, and unity among believers. Using the image of the Church as the Body of Christ, it highlighted that Christians, despite differences in culture, geography and tradition, are united as one body through one Spirit and one shared hope.



On Sunday Evening, 18<sup>th</sup> January, St Barnabas Church hosted the Service for Christian Unity for Sutton. It was the first time this had happened in recent times. Members from many of the churches were represented and 62 people attended. The Service was led by Revd Kayode and ended with everyone forming a circle with lighted candles and saying The Nicene Creed together. The final Prayer was said by Fr Antony James, Priest at St Christopher's Roman Catholic Church, Cheam and the Revd Phil Brooks gave the Blessing. The organisers, Sheila Collins (Secretary) and Colin Iddles (Treasurer) were also ushered to the front to be thanked for their efforts in arranging the service.

After the Service there was tea and coffee at the back of the church and time to have a good chat with friends we know from other churches and also with new acquaintances.

## ST VALENTINE'S DAY TEA DANCE

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February, St Barnabas Church held a St Valentine's Tea Dance in the Church Halls to mark the occasion. The tables were laid with tea stands with sandwiches, cones and cream and cake.



There were heart serviettes and heart shaped chocolates; all very pretty. There was also a selection of whole cakes. All thanks to the hard work of Sue Davis and Jennie Reed.



February 14<sup>th</sup> was also the date of Peter Redding's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and there was a special cake for him in the shape of an 80.

After the tea, there was Valentine Bingo and a secret raffle (All the prizes were in bags so no one knew what the prizes were.) These were all donated by Graham and Jennie Reed. Then there was dancing, mainly to 1950's hits, and Carol and Peter enjoyed a special 80<sup>th</sup> birthday dance together with the rest of the adults and children then joining in.



It was a very enjoyable afternoon and early evening. The whole event raised £ 350 for Church funds.

## SHROVE TUESDAY

On Shrove Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February, the Revd Kayode Oyeboode talked to the Mothers' Union and other members of the congregation about his life and spiritual journey. He said, "My life is not a story of perfection, but a testimony of grace. As written in the Book of Jeremiah 1:5, '[Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee...](#)' When I look back, I see clearly that God was shaping my life long before I recognised His hand. Born in Lagos on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1957 into a Christian family with strong Catholic and Anglican foundations, I was raised in an environment of structured worship, discipline and reverence. My early years at St Mary's Private School and later at King's College, Lagos, formed patterns that would shape my destiny: music, service, structure, and community.



"As a young boy, I served in the school band (*seated 3<sup>rd</sup> from right in the photo above*) and choir and later became a chorister and a Boy Scout. What seemed ordinary at the time was divine preparation. Seeds planted in childhood often bloom in adulthood.

"After earning a BA (Hons) in English and Philosophy from the University of Lagos and completing National Youth Service, I began a 22-year career in corporate leadership, serving in senior management roles in HR, training and general management. I later founded BOD-KARON Training and Consulting and held executive roles in banking and public service. Yet through all professional achievements, the call of God persisted.

"As a teenager, my father prophetically declared that I would become a Reverend. I strongly rejected it. Decades later, that word came to pass. God's will supersedes human ambition.

"I served faithfully in the Guild of Stewards at the Cathedral Church of Christ, Marina in Lagos, eventually becoming Secretary. Service shaped me more than titles ever could. Before God elevates publicly, He elevates privately.

"I was ordained Deacon in 2011 and Priest in 2012 in the Diocese of Lagos. Ministry has taught me that ordination is not about status, but surrender. Grace carried me from: Choir Boy to Steward to Secretary to Deacon to Priest to Vicar and now to missionary service in the United Kingdom. As the Second Epistle to the Corinthians reminds us, '[My grace is sufficient for thee.](#)' [[2 Corinthians, 12:9](#)]

"My journey reflects generational grace, following in the spiritual lineage of Bishop D.R. Oyeboode and the Revd R.S. Oyeboode. Today, I continue serving as a self-supporting priest within the Diocese of Southwark, trusting the promise of the Epistle to the Philippians, '[That He who began a good work will complete it.](#)' [[Philippians 1:6](#)]

"My message to the Mothers' Union and the Church: Stay rooted. Stay prayerful. Stay hopeful. Your prayers shape destinies. Your faith builds generations. Your legacy will outlive you. Great is His faithfulness."

The afternoon finished with pancakes.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

On Ash Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> February, the Revd Kayode Oyebole lead a service of the Imposition of Ashes followed by Holy Communion. His sermon ended with the following statement:



### WHAT TO GIVE UP: A LENTEN REFLECTION

- |                         |   |                                  |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Give up complaining     | — | Focus on gratitude.              |
| Give up pessimism       | — | Become an optimist.              |
| Give up harsh judgments | — | Think kindly thoughts.           |
| Give up worry           | — | Trust Divine Providence.         |
| Give up discouragement  | — | Be full of hope.                 |
| Give up bitterness      | — | Turn to forgiveness.             |
| Give up hatred          | — | Return good for evil.            |
| Give up negativism      | — | Be positive.                     |
| Give up anger           | — | Be more patient.                 |
| Give up pettiness       | — | Become mature,                   |
| Give up gloom           | — | Enjoy the beauty all around you. |
| Give up jealousy        | — | Pray for trust.                  |
| Give up gossiping       | — | Control your tongue.             |
| Give up sin             | — | Turn to virtue.                  |

### PARISH PUMP



**RIP: Valerie Donovan** sadly died on 24<sup>th</sup> November. She was 87. Valerie was well known to our congregation as she had been coming to some of our services since moving to Carshalton Road and she also came to Walk in Wednesdays". She also came to the Mothers' Union Christmas Lunch in 2024. Her daughter, Nicki Richards, said that she had deteriorated quickly after

a fall. Her funeral eucharist took place at St Nicholas Church on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

**Congratulations to Kayode and Ronke Oyebole** on the birth of their third grandchild, a boy named Ovie on 11<sup>th</sup> December to their son Feye and Nina. Ovie weighed in at 3.995 kg (8 lb, 13 oz).



**Congratulations to Barry and Jean Carter** on celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary just before last Christmas. They were married at Holy Trinity Church, Wallington on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1965. When they met, it was love at first sight and they were married within six months. On their Anniversary, they received a congratulatory card from King Charles and Queen Camilla and their three children, Danny, Steve and Sarah took them out for a meal in Burgh Heath.



Jean's wedding dress was made by her mother and Jean, herself, is a very talented needlewoman, knitter, crocheter and artist who sold one of her paintings in 2025. Barry, a Dr Barnado's boy, was an electrician and put the wiring into the St Barnabas Scout Hut in Westmead Road when it was built by the Scouts in the 1950's.



**RIP Jean Chappell**, a member of St Nicholas Church congregation who often supported St Barnabas Mothers' Union events and also regularly took part in the "Easter Experience" staged by Sutton SchoolsWork each year died in February (see photo).



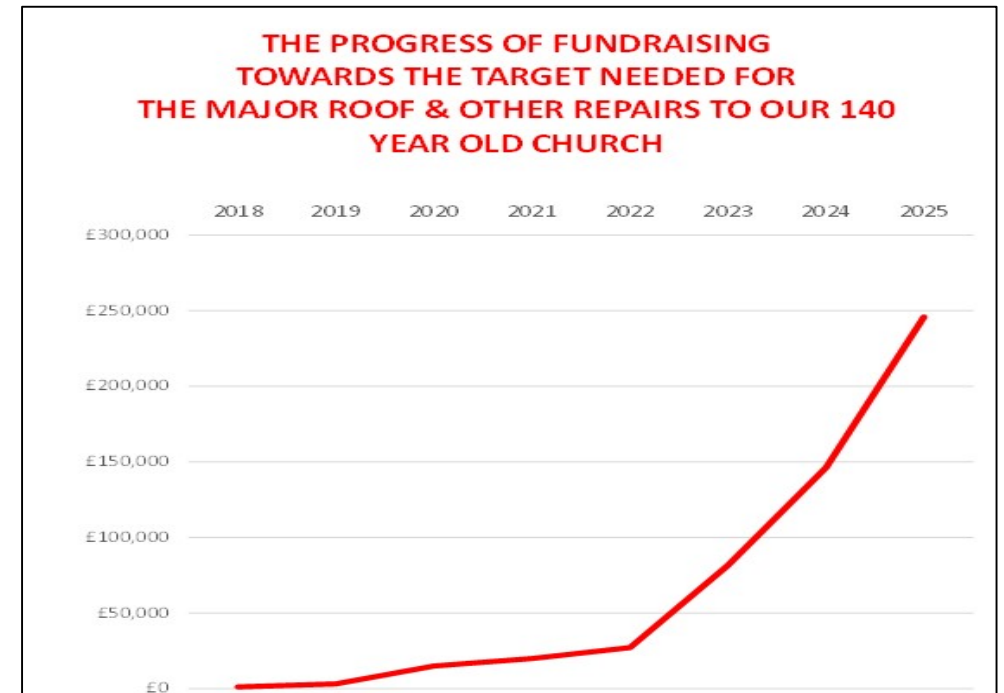
## EIGHT LONG YEARS OF FUNDRAISING FOR THE ROOF & OTHER MAJOR REPAIRS

### INTRODUCTION

The Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund, a UK Government scheme which ran between 2014 and 2018, provided grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 for urgent roof repairs to listed religious buildings as the Government then recognised that early, timely repairs saved money in the longer term. In 2015, I was not able to apply, on behalf of the PCC, for a possible 100% grant to repair the South Valley Roof which had been reported in the 2014 Quinquennial Report as requiring prompt attention at a time when the repairs were costed at around only £100,000.

Upon his arrival in 2019, the Revd Dave Billin grasped the nettle immediately and, not only kick started the process to set the necessary repairs into operation but also, at the same time, set in progress the Narthex Toilets and Served Project which was completed in 2022. Whilst he was prevented from seeing the South Valley Roof and the other works recommended in the 2019 Quinquennial Report get under way due to his illness and subsequent retirement in 2024, it is only right, in this report, to acknowledge the PCC's enormous debt of gratitude to him for his diligent work during his time at St Barnabas for which it will ever be grateful.

It is also right at this stage to acknowledge the PCC's enormous debt of gratitude to Robert Caple who diligently project managed the recommended 2019 Quinquennial Report repairs on its behalf and dealt without delay with the problems that were faced along the way once the project had started, which led to it overrunning, leading to a financial penalty being imposed on the main contractor under the terms of the contract.



### 2019

Within three months of his arrival, after the Revd Dave Billin had been advised that the Archdeacons did not want parishes to draw on their reserves to pay their contributions to the Parish Support Fund, which was what was happening at St Barnabas, he had negotiated a reduced pledge of £5,136 for 2020 which enabled £11,278 at the end of 2020 to be put towards the fundraising for the much needed repairs to the church building which by then had been costed at £168,210 in the Outline Cost Plan. For the next four years, up to the end of 2024, further, but lesser reduced, pledges meant that an overall total of £31,758 was able to be put towards the fundraising.

### 2020 - 2022

From 2020 until the end of 2022 fundraising efforts were concentrated on raising money for the Narthex Toilets & Served Project (cost £73,642).

## 2023

With the church now having facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and able to properly welcome visitors during weekdays, fundraising for the South Valley Roof and the other major repairs highlighted in the 2019 Quinquennial Report started to begin in earnest. At the beginning of the year, a legacy of £40,000 was received which was to prove to be exceptionally useful at that time to pay for the architect's pre contract fees of £15,120 which became due that year.

As well as individual donations for which the PCC was very grateful, there were special collections at major services, sales of jewellery saved from previous Table Top Sales, sale of clothes at 'Walk in Wednesdays', Spring and Autumn Table Top Sales, the surplus from the Harvest Supper, Sponsorship from that year's Ride & Stride Day, a Curry Quiz Night, a Christmas Fun Day, sales at the Christmas Lighting Up Ceremony and donations during a Christmas Afternoon Tea.

## 2024

At the beginning of 2024, tenders for the proposed works sought by our Architects from three contractors were received. With the added costs of architects' fees and provision for such other unavoidable costs such as a Principal Designer's Fees under Construction (Design and Management) Regulations plus VAT plus a 10% contingency necessary to cover unexpected additional work which might have to be incurred as the project progressed, the lowest tender came in at £286,570 so funds totalling that figure had to be secured before any contract could be signed.

The Revd Dave Billin and I launched a major appeal for individual donations for the project to the congregation and to all those who read the Magazine. Soon, donations started to be received, including some from other churches as we had also written to all C of E churches in England dedicated to St Barnabas

to ask if they would also like to make a donation to help us.

On behalf of the PCC, I also applied to nine different bodies to ask if each of them would award us a grant.

Fundraising efforts also continued apace with a Burns Night Supper, a Spring Craft Fair which was attended by the Mayor of Sutton during which a "Raise the Roof" sign was unveiled which had been designed and made by Michael King, a neighbour of Marion Till (Michael and his wife, Angela, were married in St Barnabas Church in 1967), Burgers & Bingo, a St Barnabas Day Afternoon Tea, more Ride & Stride Sponsorship, a Strawberry Tea, a Beetle Drive Fish & Chips, another Harvest Supper and a Christmas Lights Fair as well as further special collections at major services.

Another legacy of £ 20,261 was received, this one from a lady who, as a baby, had been baptised in St Barnabas Church in 1936 but who had moved away from Sutton with her family in the early 1950's.

Replies to the applications I had made to grant awarding bodies began to be received; although some were negative, which was disheartening, eventually the majority of them (6) were positive. The PCC are pleased to acknowledge with very grateful thanks those grants:

	£
Marshall's Charity	25,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	20,000
Congregational & General Charitable Trust	15,000
Benefact Trust	4,750
Surrey Churches Preservation Trust	2,500
The Archbishops' Council's Buildings for Mission	
Minor Repairs and Improvements Fund	<u>1,494</u>
	<b>68,744</b>

In August 2024 a decision had to be conveyed to the PCC's preferred contractor (the one who put in the lowest tender and the one whom some of the bodies who awarded grants made it a condition of their grant) that the PCC would be appointing him so that a provisional start date for the work could be pencilled into his work schedules and, most importantly, before prices might have risen. As the fundraising target had not been reached at that stage, upon my recommendation, the PCC temporarily re-allocated some of its funds which it was proposing to use for other purposes and also made arrangements to borrow funds interest free as had been done during the previous major roof repair project in 2011. That also allowed the preferred contractor to confirm in writing the provisional start date which allowed me to reclaim the VAT already paid twelve months earlier on the architect's pre contract fees just days before the cut-off date for such claims under the terms of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme for VAT refunds.

## **2025**

Very early in 2025 there was a huge set back funding wise, as the Government decided to limit VAT refundable under the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme to up to only £25,000 per church between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and with no commitment to extend the scheme beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. This meant that at least an extra £20,242 possibly needed to be found/raised in donations and fundraising which had up till then been planned to have come from VAT refunds. Fortunately, as the contractor had agreed to hold to his previous tender price provided the PCC signed the contract shortly, upon my recommendation, the PCC agreed that a further sum of £15,000 be temporarily diverted from funds it had been saving up to be allocated for other purposes. The stage was then set for the contract to be signed which it was and for a start date for the work to be agreed.

Fundraising efforts continued as before with another Burns Night Supper, a VE Day Anniversary Lunch, a St Barnabas Day Strawberry Tea, another Fish & Chip Quiz Night, Harvest Supper and Christmas Tea. The PCC are extremely grateful to all those who organised the various fundraising efforts over the three years, as well as those who contributed their own skills and resources to them and all those who supported those events.

A 21<sup>st</sup> Century method of appealing for donations using the Internet with GoFundMe was also trialled and was moderately successful allowing those with no known connection with St Barnabas Church to make a donation.

The contractor eventually began work on the project at the end of May which meant that the outside roof work could be done during the main summer months and be finished before the autumnal weather arrived.

There was a hiccup in the progress of the work in October when, with most of the roof work completed, the contractor was not able to engage his planned subcontractors for the other works. This presented problems for the PCC's project manager, Robert Caple and he eventually arranged, with the architect, for the PCC to appoint two other contractors to complete the works. As these contractors would be charging more than the original contract prices for those works, a clause in the main contract was brought into play which stipulated that damages of £750 per week would become due from the contractor if all the works were not completed before the date set in the contract. As a result, £5,250 (plus VAT) was deducted from the value of the works already certified by the architect as having been completed.

Due to the overrun, not all the remaining works were able to be completed before the end of 2025. The estimated residual cost of the works not completed by the end of 2025 was accrued in the 2025 Accounts as they were an outstanding PCC commitment. The

remaining outstanding works will be completed during the summer of 2026. The final cost of all the works was £257,725, meaning that not all the 10% contingency in the planned cost of the works had to be used. Total fundraising came to £242,276. How the gap of £15,449 was bridged is shown in the tables below.

Humphrey Clarke

<b>SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>	£	£
Savings from 5 years of low pledges to Parish Support Fund		31,758
Legacies		62,832
Individuals' Direct Donations	23,835	
Individuals' Donations via GoFundMe	<u>97</u>	23,931
Fundraising Social Events		10,765
Special Collections	2,339	
Other St Barnabas Churches' Donations (net of postages)	<u>493</u>	2,831
Grants Received		68,744
VAT Refunded		27,224
Allocated Interest		<u>14,191</u>
		242,276
Balance of Church General Reserve Fund	8,904	
Funds not needed in the Emergency Reserve Fund	3,855	
Transfer from Halls General Reserve Fund	<u>2,690</u>	<u>15,449</u>
		<b>£257,725</b>

<b>AND HOW THE MONEY WAS USED</b>	£	£	£	£
Architect's Pre Contract Fees	15,120			
Architect's Post Contract Fees	<u>10,557</u>	25,677		
Scott White & Hookins (CDM)		2,688		
Premiums for Additional Insurance Risks		<u>1,977</u>	30,342	
Furniture Removal & Return		300		
Covering & Uncovering of Organ		<u>277</u>	<u>577</u>	30,919
<u>Contractors:</u>				
A E Hughes & Sons Ltd & Subcontractors		181,165		
H Goodsell & Son Ltd		42,640		
Jonathan Lecki Associates		<u>3,000</u>	<u>226,806</u>	
				<b>257,725</b>

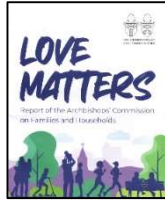
## A GALLERY OF JUST SOME OF THE REPAIRS

Whilst much of the finished work cannot be seen and appreciated, here are examples a just few photographs that were taken during the works.



# LOVE MATTERS

*This is the fifth in our series on the Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Families and Households.*



## 5. THINK FORGIVENESS AND KINDNESS

A more forgiving society recognises that no-one is perfect, we all make mistakes and need to forgive and be forgiven. A kinder society puts relationships at the heart of everything we do, recognises the importance of living well together and working through difficult issues.

The ability to flourish is influenced by the world in which we live and the current issues facing individuals and families. We continue to pick up the pieces following the COVID-19 pandemic which sparked a major health and social care crisis. Normal life was halted and repeated periods of lockdown led to children losing two years of regular education and social connections, and many people experiencing isolation and loneliness, deteriorating mental health, heightened depressive symptoms and negative health trajectories. Our society experiences high levels of inequality, disadvantage, discrimination and racial prejudice.

More than one in three children live in poverty: family poverty and inequality are key drivers of harm and adverse childhood experiences. Children in the poorest neighbourhoods are ten times more likely to be in care than those in the richest neighbourhoods. The pernicious relationship between deprivation, ill-health, poverty, stress and anxiety reduces wellbeing and the opportunity to flourish. Increases in the cost of living since the pandemic have led to food and fuel insecurity - being hungry and feeling cold.

## WHAT THE CHURCH CAN DO

- Harness the power of community and interfaith collaboration - to offer care and support in response to the challenges of the world around us.
- Build resilience in families through small acts of kindness, for example through the provision of food banks, warm spaces, and safe places, working in partnership with other faith groups, charities and local organisations
- Encourage an understanding of the role of spirituality in health interventions, working alongside health professionals.
- Advocate for the extension of Family Hubs offering a welcome - and support to individuals, families of all shapes and sizes, children and young people in every community, ensuring that faith groups are partners in the Family Hubs.

## BIBLE PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

### Read Galatians 5.13-6.5.

What will mark our relationships and our society if we live by the Spirit?

## QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

How might church communities promote a more forgiving, kinder society which supports individuals and families experiencing challenges such as loneliness, family breakdown, mental health issues, poverty, inequality, prejudice and discrimination?

## NEXT TIME – THINK DIVERSITY

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February Mark Tomlinson, from Sutton Community Works which has been operating for 20 years, came to our morning service at St Barnabas, along with Caroline, the co-ordinator of Sutton Street Pastors. At the end of the service Mark and Caroline talked and showed a film about the Street Pastors (one of our churchwardens, Sally Reed, was herself a Street Pastor for 8 years), the Foodbank, the Community Foodshop, School Pastors and the Winter Night Shelter. They said there were opportunities for anyone to volunteer, either with their time or their donations—online at [suttoncommunityworks.org/donate](http://suttoncommunityworks.org/donate) or, if by cheque, email [admin@suttoncommunityworks.org](mailto:admin@suttoncommunityworks.org) for details of where to send your donation or to volunteer.

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE



The World Day of Prayer Service, written this year by the Christian Women of Nigeria, was held at the Salvation Army Church on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March. Three of the readers of stories of Nigerian Women in the service were Nigerian, including Ronke Oyeboade, and they were wearing their Nigerian dress. The fourth reader, who was British, read about Leah Sharim. She had been in the protest outside the Nigerian Embassy in London to free Leah Sharim. Leah, a 14 year old school girl, was kidnapped by Boko Haram along with 109 other girls in 2018. Every girl was eventually released except for Leah because she refused to give up her Christian faith. The Revd Kayode Oyeboade lead the benediction at the end of the service.



## A REPORT FROM KAZAKHSTAN

Vladimir is a chaplain at a Christian rehabilitation centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, but he wasn't always a follower of Jesus. From the age of six, he was a gang member, and has spent 28 years of his life in prison for gang-related crimes.

After his last release from jail, he said a group of plainclothes policemen planted drugs in his home. On top of this, his wife had died, and his children had rejected him.

Even though Vladimir wasn't a believer, and felt like he had nothing left to live for, he asked God to give him one final chance. He wanted to say goodbye to his elderly mum. 'My mother and grandmother were believers, and they would pray for me,' he tells us. Vladimir prayed and fasted, and miraculously the prosecutor said he could go free. In that moment, he remembered a Christian he had met in jail who had also been a gang member and had told him that God loved him. Vladimir fell on his knees, where he had gang tattoos with words stating he would never bow to anyone, and he bowed to God. 'God changed me and I wanted to serve him,' he says. Mark 5.19 came to his mind: '[Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.](#)'

Vladimir began to work with ex-criminals in a Christian rehabilitation centre in 2012, and today he offers Bibles and resources to the men in the centre for free because they've been paid for by you.

If you would like to join the Bible a Month Club at St Barnabas, just talk to Sally Bramdaw who runs the scheme.



Court "Wellington", 3449 of Foresters' Friendly Society invites you to a

## Fish & Chips & Charity Fundraiser

A 'Brain Gym' in aid of its National President's appeal for the **Alzheimer's Society**

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

**3.30pm for 4.00pm until 7.30pm**

**in St Barnabas Church Halls, St Barnabas Road, Sutton, SM1 4NP**



A film & talk by Soya Cutts from Alzheimer's Society followed by an afternoon of seated games to help keep your little grey cells fit. For all ages and all abilities.

**£15 per adult (£6 sausage & chips box for children) (includes a dessert and tea/coffee)**

To book your place please speak to Rosemary Walsh or email [court3449@forestersfriendlysociety.co.uk](mailto:court3449@forestersfriendlysociety.co.uk) by 8 March

# The Way of the Cross

A Palm Sunday Choral Service with Trinity Festival Choir

Palm Sunday

29 March

6.30pm

At Trinity Church  
Sutton

The sequence of readings, poetry and music will be based on the Passion narrative from St Mark's Gospel, interspersed with traditional Passiontide congregational hymns as well as anthems by Gibbons and contemporary composers such as Philip Moore and Bob Chilcott. There is also a beautiful and original choral arrangement of "Were you there" and excerpts from Handel's Messiah and Brahms' Requiem.

Conductor Stephen Haylett  
Organ Mark Laffin



There will be a retiring collection, and all donations on the evening will be given to the charity *Aid to the Church in Need*, a charity that supports persecuted Christians globally, targetting aid in what actual local sufferers permanently "on the ground" identify as the most effective way. Please give generously!

All welcome  
No admission charge

[www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk)

## SPECIAL SERVICES

### Mothering Sunday (15<sup>th</sup> March)



10.30am Special Service for Mothering Sunday in St Barnabas Church

### Lady Day, Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March



10.00am Mothers' Union Holy Communion in the Memorial Chapel in St Barnabas Church (All are invited, whether or not MU members)

### Palm Sunday (29<sup>th</sup> March)



10.30am Holy Communion  
6.30pm The Way of the Cross - a Passiontide Sequence of Words and Music in Trinity URC/Methodist Church, Sutton

### Maundy Thursday (2<sup>nd</sup> April)



7.00pm Holy Communion including a frugal agape supper and the (optional) washing of feet in St Barnabas Church

### Good Friday (3<sup>rd</sup> April)



9.45am Walk of Witness (sets off at 10:00am) Meet outside ASDA  
2.00pm A Meditative Service in St Barnabas Church

### Easter Day (5<sup>th</sup> April)



10.30am Holy Communion in St Barnabas Church

### Ascension Day (Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May)



7.30pm Holy Communion in St Barnabas Church

## OTHER DATES TO REMEMBER

### Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March

10.15am

### Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March

3.30 for 4.00pm

### Palm Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> March

6.30pm

### Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April

2.00pm

**Bible Study** in the Lower Vestry

[see inside front cover]

**Fish & Chip Supper in aid of Alzheimer's Society**

in St Barnabas Church Halls [see page 32]

**The Way of the Cross - a Passiontide Sequence of Words and Music** [see page 33]

**"Hymns We Love" – an illustrated talk on "Thine Be the Glory" followed by an Easter Tea** in St Barnabas Church Halls (including MU AGM). All are invited, whether or not an MU Member.

### Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May

10.00am

**Bring & Buy & Coffee Morning in aid of of "Away from it All" (AFIA)**

at 6, The Crescent, SM1 4HU

### Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May

10.30am

**'Thy Kingdom Come' Prayer Walk** in Benhill Recreation Ground (starts at St Barnabas Church) followed by refreshments in St Barnabas Church.

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June

2.00pm – 4.00pm

**Reigate Area Mothers' Union Big Picnic** including a Teddy Bears Picnic in Manor Park, Sutton

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June

4.00pm – 7.00pm

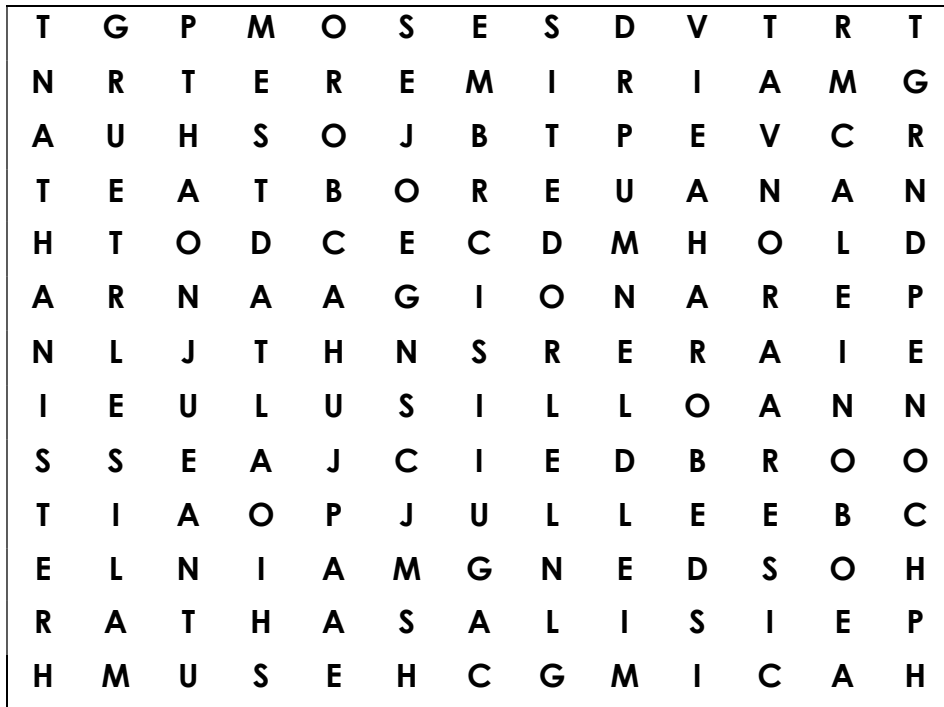
**Tropical BBQ for St Barnabas Day** in St Barnabas Church Halls

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

7.45pm

**"Illiteracy Doesn't Make Sense" – an illustrated talk by Rosemary Kempself, former Mothers' Union Worldwide President on how she started Literacy & Development in Burundi, Rwanda, Malawi & Sudan in St Barnabas Church. An open meeting.**

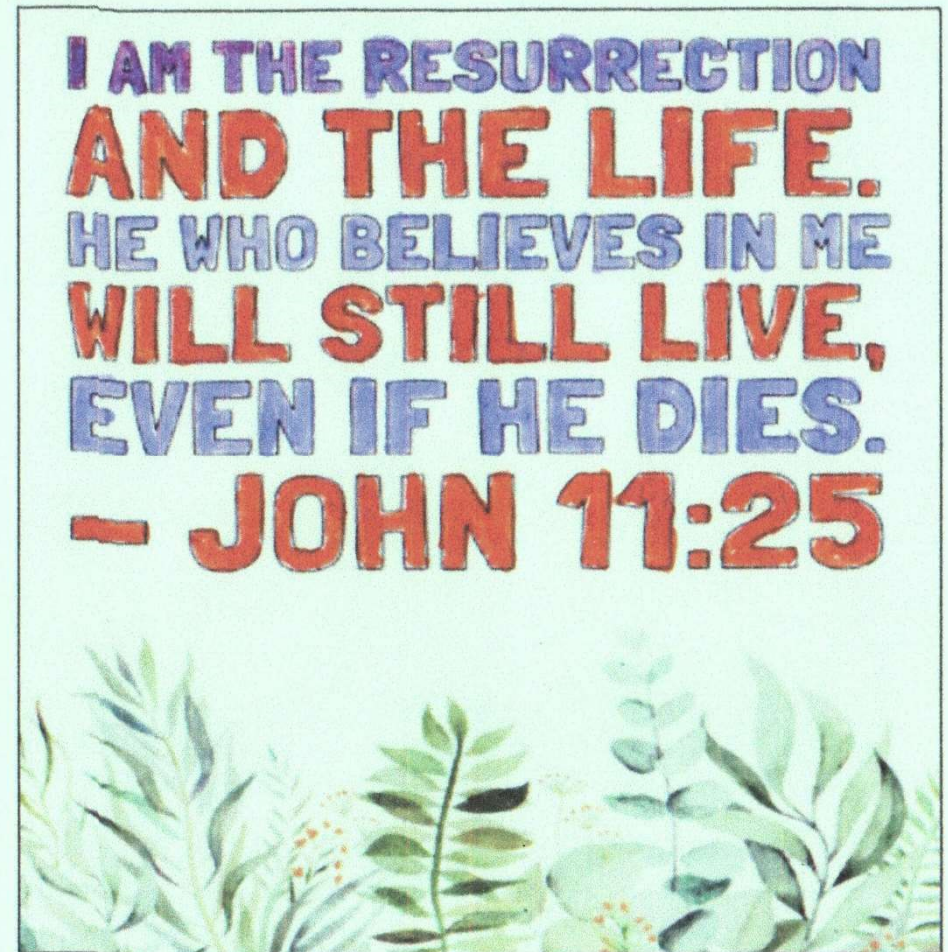
## BIBLE WORD SEARCH



AARON  
AMOS  
DANIEL  
DAVID  
DEBORAH  
ELIJAH  
ELISHA

ENOCH  
GIDEON  
ISAIAH  
JACOB  
JONAH  
JOSHUA  
MICAH

MIRIAM  
MOSES  
NATHAN  
NOAH  
PAUL  
SAMUEL  
SILAS



## ORGANISATIONS MEETING AT ST BARNABAS CHURCH HALLS

St Barnabas Pre School

Contact:- Phone: 020 8661 8927 or email  
[stbarnabaspreschoolsutton@gmail.com](mailto:stbarnabaspreschoolsutton@gmail.com)

Kumon (Maths & English classes)

Contact:- Yumna Joubaily (07941 265988)

Pilates

Contact:- Lorraine Thurlow (07958 356035)

Model Railway Club

Contact:- Dave Smith (01342 712078)

The Bradley School of Chess

Contact:- Wendy Bradley [w.bradley5@live.com](mailto:w.bradley5@live.com)