

SPRING 24

# PARISH MATTERS

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3-16 YEARS



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# PARISH MATTERS

SPRING 24

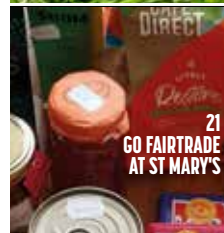
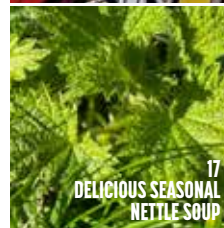
Springtime hopefully brings warmer weather, and our main feature encourages our readers to don their walking shoes and explore the Wandle Trail. But if you're looking for a more energetic pursuit, why not try tennis? Find out how Wilton Tennis Club, one of the local businesses which regularly support Parish Matters, can help on page 25.

Eastertide is a key springtime focus for Christians, and on page 6 we explore the tradition of the Easter Garden and list our Easter services.

The next in our series of guitar recitals is on 11 April, with another opportunity to hear the hugely talented Pavel Ralev. Find out more, including a 'save the date' for our June guitar recital, on page 19.

The popular monthly St Mary's Film Club has spread its wings and is now the weekly Wednesday Club. Find out what's on offer on page 23.

Happy Easter from everyone at St Mary's!



Vicar: The Revd John Hayward 020 8543 6192 vicar@stmarysmerton.org.uk  
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# Walks Along the Wandle Trail

David Reeves is your guide

Passing alongside Watermeads

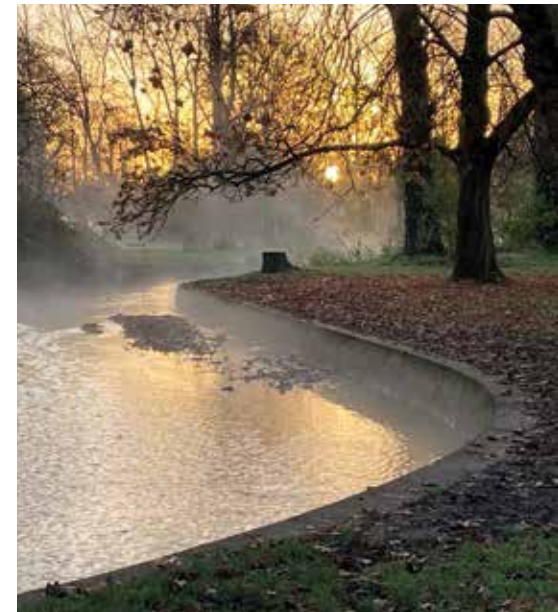
Many Merton residents will be familiar with the beautiful stretch of the River Wandle that drifts lazily through the National Trust's Morden Hall Park. Indeed, some of our readers may be enthusiastic Wandle Trust volunteers, helping to keep its waters and banks clean and clear.

The Wandle is a chalk stream tributary of the Thames, running about 15 miles through the boroughs of Croydon, Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth. Locally it is of huge historic significance, as many notable industries came to Merton as a direct result of the river from Roman times right through to the 20th century, including famous names Liberty and William Morris. New Merton Board Mills only closed in the 1970s, the site of which is now the Sainsbury's store in Colliers Wood.

At its industrial height, 68 water wheels drew power from stretches of the river. Merton Priory was built on its banks in 1114, while Emma Hamilton renamed the stretch of the Wandle running through the grounds of Merton Place, the home she shared with Lord Nelson, the 'Nile' to mark one of his naval victories. Older Wimbledon FC fans will recall the Wandle Bank uncovered terrace, which backed onto the Wandle before the river passed south under Plough Lane (AFC Wimbledon's new Plough Lane stadium is a stone's throw from the opposite bank of the Wandle).

Industry has long departed from the Wandle, but the river has become important for both leisure and environmental reasons. The Wandle Trail is now a popular route for thousands of walkers every year, opening up fascinating and, at times, surprisingly tranquil vistas as the river winds its way across the four boroughs. Much work has been done in recent years to make the Trail – in part or, for the more adventurous, in full – easily accessible.

Online maps are freely available (useful websites are listed at the end of this article) and, although there are sections where it's necessary to divert onto local roads, much of the river can be followed along its banks. If you haven't explored the Trail, then you might like to consider the walk that St Mary's Walking Group undertook recently, and which is detailed overleaf. Or for a shorter, local trail, follow the river as it leaves Morden Hall Park by the Surrey Arms and reappears after diving under Morden Road and returns to meander through Ravensbury Park.



Early morning in Morden Hall Park

A favourite stop of mine on the Trail is Wilderness Island, where the Wandle branches into two, with one arm going towards Croydon and the other towards Carshalton. The island is a nature reserve owned by Sutton Council and managed by the London Wildlife Trust. There you may be lucky enough to spot a variety of wildlife including woodpeckers, kingfishers and butterflies. In the 17th century it was the site

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*Whatever your experience, we would love to hear from you!*

For those of you with elderly loved ones, we also have a range of fun weekly activities, including chair-based exercise class Love to Move at the Wimbledon Library on Mondays and Love to Sing at the Quaker Centre in Kingston on a Friday.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Care Professional, coming to one of our events or you are interested in receiving care for yourself or a loved on please call **0208 942 4137** or email [clare.jefferies@homeinstead.co.uk](mailto:clare.jefferies@homeinstead.co.uk)

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of copper mills, and later a branch terminus of the Surrey Iron Railway. Taking the route from the Island to the finish at Carshalton Ponds offers you the reward of a range of cafés and pubs before catching the train from Carshalton back to Merton stations on the Thameslink line.

Several tram stops and train stations are reasonably convenient for exploring the Wandle heading towards Carshalton and Croydon. These include Phipps Bridge, Wandle Park, Carshalton and Hackbridge.

Equally interesting, although more built up, is the Trail heading towards Earlsfield and finishing at the Thames in Wandsworth. Haydens Road, Earlsfield and Wandsworth

Town are reasonably convenient train stations for parts of this stretch. Although there are more occasions when it's necessary to divert away from the river, nonetheless there are pleasant green spaces to explore, such as King George's Park. The river passes through the former Young's Brewery site, the recent redevelopment of which is well worth exploring, as some of the original brewery buildings have been sensitively restored. From there it's a short stroll to the Thames and a well-earned pint in the nearby Ship, or back to The Alma opposite Wandsworth Town station, from where you can catch a train to nearby Clapham Junction and then to Wimbledon.

**Useful links**  
**Download a map**  
[wandlevalleypark.co.uk/map](http://wandlevalleypark.co.uk/map)  
**Wandle News**  
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**Find out more**  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/wandle\\_trail](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/wandle_trail)

## Wandle Trail walk

The St Mary's occasional walking group enjoyed a pleasant summer afternoon stroll of about 6¼ miles along the River Wandle a couple of years ago. Take the tram to Wandle Park tram stop and then follow the waymarked Wandle Trail, picking up the river just after Waddon Ponds, and continuing along the trail all the way through to Morden Hall Park, where a well-earned cup of tea and cake await at either the National Trust Potting Shed or Stableyard cafés!



Judith Bersweden explores its history and purpose

# The Origins of the Easter Garden

It's not clear how the now popular custom of creating an Easter Garden began, perhaps as early as the Middle Ages. Churches of many different denominations now create one during Holy Week as a visual representation of the Easter story.

Often gardens are quite simple: one part of the garden represents Golgotha, the hill where Jesus was crucified – this will be bare except for three wooden crosses. A gravel path leads from here to the tomb where Jesus's body was placed, with a stone in place across the entrance between Good Friday and Easter morning, when it is rolled back to reveal the empty space inside. On Easter Eve, usually as the rest of the church is being filled with Easter flowers, the garden will also be decorated – a burst of colour and spring greeting the Resurrection.

Some medieval English churches have an 'Easter sepulchre', a recess in the north wall behind the altar where the consecrated bread and wine of the reserved sacrament was placed between Maundy Thursday

and Easter Day. These too were decorated with branches and flowers – creating a small Easter garden. Examples can still be found at Holcombe Burnell in Devon, and Gillingham in Dorset.

Other churches have the tradition of an Easter tableau where different scenes with numerous figures are created to represent all the significant events of Holy Week, including the entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, and even Jesus appearing before Pilate.

The St Mary's Easter garden is kindly provided by our local uniformed organisations. In recent years, the garden is left simply prepared for the start of Holy Week, containing just the crosses and the tomb, and then added to on Easter Eve and Easter Day so that it becomes a true celebration of new life and hope. It then remains in place for the six weeks of the Easter season, the flowers and plants refreshed accordingly, until Ascension Day.

Do come and see!



Left: St Mary's Easter Garden  
Top: St Mary's Holy Week Garden  
Below: Jesus in the upper room with his disciples and praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. St John's Church, Malmö, Sweden.

## Holy Week Services

### Palm Sunday. 24 March

9.40am. Blessing of palms at John Innes Bandstand  
10am. Sung Eucharist in church with dramatic reading

### Eucharist with homily and hymns

Monday 25, Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 March.  
7.30pm

### Maundy Thursday. 28 March

7.30pm. Sung Eucharist with washing of feet and Vigil

### Good Friday. 29 March

12pm. Devotions with recorded music of The Passion  
1pm. Service at the Cross: hymns, readings, sermon  
2pm. The Good Friday Liturgy

### Easter Eve. Saturday 30 March

7.30pm. The Easter Vigil – from Darkness to Light.  
Easter Fire, renewal of baptism promises and joyful music

### Easter Sunday. 31 March

8am. Said Eucharist  
10am. Sung Eucharist of Easter Day, followed by Easter egg hunt in the vicarage garden  
6.30pm. Evensong and Easter anthem

## Maundy Thursday

Thursday 28 March 7.30pm

Commemorating The Last Supper. The wafer and wine used on Sundays throughout the year are replaced with ordinary bread and local wine. During the service the priest washes the feet of several parishioners in remembrance of Christ washing the feet of his disciples. The service ends with the altar being stripped back to a simple table, ornaments removed, in preparation for Good Friday. A three hour vigil follows the service until midnight.

## Good Friday

Friday 29 March 12pm to 3pm

This service takes place as the Church recalls Jesus' death on the Cross. It is divided into three sections:

12pm–1pm. Reflection on Christ's Crucifixion while listening to recordings of music on the theme of The Passion of Our Lord.

1pm–2pm. The Service at the Cross: reading, hymns, prayers and sermon

2pm–3pm. The Good Friday Liturgy – commemorating and reflecting on what happened on the first Good Friday.

## Easter Eve

Saturday 30 March 7.30pm

The first service of Easter, The Easter Vigil takes place on the evening before Easter Day with the church in darkness and with the lighting of the Paschal Candle. The church is then brightly lit and joyful music is sung by the choir and congregation who also renew the promises made at their baptism.

## Easter Day

Sunday 31 March 8am, 10am, 6.30pm

A said communion service at 8am followed by family sung communion at 10am. After this service children are invited to go on an Easter egg hunt in the vicarage garden next to the church. The final service is Choral Evensong with special music for Easter Day.



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**MARCH**  
**APRIL**  
**MAY**

**WHAT'S ON**

SPRING 2024

**Regular church services**  
see page 28

**Sunday Club**  
see page 28

**Children First Eucharist**  
see page 28

Parish Matters is distributed to 3250 homes in the parish of St Mary's, Merton, thanks to a goodly number of volunteer deliverers.

A different member of the editorial team edits each issue. We welcome your feedback.

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Design amanda@fourberrys.co.uk

Proofreading Adrian Berry

Delivery coordinators John and Judy Sargeant

Print Impress Print

**Mothering Sunday with blessed flowers and simnel cake**  
Service Sunday 10 March 10.00am

**Holy Week and Easter Services**  
Please see page 7 for times and dates

**St Mary's Sunday Club**  
Palm Sunday 24 March 10am. Parish Hall

**Classical Guitar Recital. Pavel Ralev**  
Thursday 11 April. Please see page 19

**John Innes Society AGM**  
Tuesday 16 April 8pm at Merton Park Primary School.

**Sunday walks from the church**  
7 April, 2 June, 14 July. 10.30am (see pew sheet to confirm dates). Short walks up to 6 miles involving public transport

**Rogation 'Beating the Bounds' Circular Walk and tea**  
Sunday 5 May 3pm from the Church. See page 6

**Ascension Day Sung Eucharist with the Choir**  
Thursday 9 May 7.30pm

**Spring Plant Sale**  
Sat 11 May 10am–12 noon. 5a Sheridan Road SW19 3HW.

**Parish Players. 'When We Are Married' by JB Priestley**  
St Mary's Parish Hall. Thurs 16, Fri 17, Sat 18 May. 7.45pm

**Gaia Singers Concert**  
Saturday 18 May. Please see page 28

**Annual Church Meeting in the Parish Hall**  
Sunday 19 May 10.45am. Reports at stmarysmerton.org.uk

**Fellowship Lunches 12 noon for 12.30pm**  
19 May; 21 July. To book email anita\_simpson44@yahoo.com

**John Innes Society Open Gardens Day**  
Sunday 9th June. Look out for local publicity for times.

**Classical Guitar Recital. Laura Snowden**  
Thursday 13 June. Please see page 19

**Music in the Park at the Bandstand John Innes**  
Sunday 30 June. Afternoon. Look out for local publicity.

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## Can YOUR skills and talents help St Mary's and our community?

Churches throughout the UK rely upon a host of volunteers, who generously offer their time, talents and money in the service of God and of the community. St Mary's, with all that we do, is no exception of course. But inevitably, as people retire or move away, there is a constant need to recruit new volunteers and refresh roles with new blood.

With every square inch of England being within a Church of England parish, we hope everyone can, in their own way, connect, benefit and engage with their local church, serving their local community both now and for future generations.

Volunteering with St Mary's can be either on a regular basis or occasional (ie. available to be called upon). If you think you can help, we'd love to hear from you, in particular in any of the following spheres of work:



### Caring for our Grade II listed church?

Practical DIY skills and hands-on work, or assisting the Building & Works Committee with knowledge and expertise.

### Joining the Hall Committee?

Managing and maintaining our Parish Hall for hire to the local community.

### Tending the Glebe Fields?

Keeping them open for people to enjoy, while preserving species and habitats.

### Joining the Parish Hall Garden Team?

Meeting monthly to look after the front garden of our hall in Church Path – weeding, clipping, sweeping and, of course, coffee, homemade biscuits and chat! If you'd like to join us, contact Hazel Abbott, [abbotthazel@hotmail.com](mailto:abbotthazel@hotmail.com)

### Using your skills?

In fundraising, IT, social media, administrative, finance or HR to assist the PCC and Finance & Personnel Committee.

If you're interested in any of these activities, email as above or [vicar@stmarysmerton.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmarysmerton.org.uk)

Incidentally, quite often I hear people say 'if only I had been asked, I would have loved to help'. Hopefully this article may go some way towards a reply to that – I am asking now!

John Hayward, Vicar



Frauke Rieher from Pixabay



# The St Cecilia window

**Simon Hillson**

The north aisle of St Mary's church houses three pairs of stained glass windows of saints. The window which shows St Cecilia (together with its neighbour depicting St Catherine) is part of a memorial to members of the Marsh family: Annie Nora Marsh and 'her infant daughter Cecelia', and Rowland Marsh. Rowland was a well-known local builder who, in partnership with his son Cyril, was responsible for the development of large parts of Merton Park, Morden and Cannon Hill in the couple of decades before the Second World War. Cyril, to whom there is a memorial plaque next to the window, went on to a prominent career in local government, becoming the first Mayor of Merton in 1965, before his death in 1970.

It is probably a reasonable conjecture that St Cecilia was chosen as the subject of the window in memory of young Cecelia Marsh. The saint's honour stands high, particularly because of her association with music as the patron saint of musicians. However, little can be said about her with any degree of historical certainty. At some time probably in the late second or early third century, a woman called Cecilia was martyred in Rome and buried in the catacomb of Callixtus on the Appian Way. The Basilica of St Cecilia is believed to have been constructed on the site of her house, and her body was transferred there in 821.

By the middle of the sixth century, these bare facts had been considerably elaborated in popular devotion, as reflected in the document known as the Acts of St Cecilia dating from around 500. This records that Cecilia, a member of a noble Roman family and a secret Christian, took a vow of virginity. On her wedding day, to a young pagan named Valerian, she persuaded him to respect her vow and be baptised as a Christian. Valerian went on to preach the faith openly and was martyred, along with his brother Tiburtius, who had also converted. When Cecilia herself refused to commit an act of idolatry, she was sentenced to death, which she suffered in a particularly gruesome way. An initial plan to kill her by stifling her with heat and steam in her bathroom having unsurprisingly failed, she was then subjected to three unsuccessful attempts at beheading. These left her with severe injuries from which she died after lingering for three days.

Cecilia's association with music (usually symbolised by her holding a small pipe organ, as she does in our window) is a much later development which seems to date from the 16th century and whose origin is unclear. It is sometimes suggested that it derives from the story in the Acts that at her wedding feast, Cecilia was singing to God in her heart while instruments were making music. Whatever the source of the connection, the



first music festival recorded as being held in her honour was in Normandy in 1570, and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome (one of the oldest musical institutions in the world) was founded by Pope Sixtus V in 1585. From that time through to the present day, St Cecilia's feast day on 22 November has become the occasion for concerts and festivals, and many 'odes', 'hymns' and other works have been composed in her honour (English-based composers who immediately come to mind include Purcell, Handel, Howells and Britten). It is fitting that she is honoured in our window in St Mary's Church, which has such a strong tradition of musical excellence.

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# Wimbledon Community Orchestra

## Simon Hillson writes

**If you walk past St James's church on Martin Way on a Saturday morning, you are likely to hear the strains of the Wimbledon Community Orchestra playing at its weekly rehearsal. Founded by a small group of parents as a spin-off from Merton Music Foundation in 2012, the orchestra has since expanded substantially and now has over fifty regular members.**

The 'community orchestra' ethos is central: we do not have auditions, and the emphasis is on having fun making music together. We welcome adult players of all ages from about Associated Board grade 4 level and above. Current members include a number of highly accomplished and experienced musicians, as well as many others who want to refresh a skill learned as a child, or who are 'late starter' adult learners.

Our repertoire is varied, ranging from film and show music to light classical music, with the occasional more challenging heavyweight item from the standard classical repertoire. Each term we work towards a concert, usually held on a Sunday evening, although our summer concert is offered as a Saturday afternoon family-friendly event. A feature of recent programmes has been the inclusion of pieces which give some of our more talented (and braver) members

the opportunity to play a concerto or other accompanied piece.

We have also premiered several new compositions by local composers. One of the most memorable of these was a work by our conductor, Peter Longworth. Peter, an up and coming composer who lives in Wimbledon and is a professor at the Guildhall conservatoire, played with us for fun as our principal trumpet for several years. We were delighted when he agreed to take on the role of music director last year.

We are always looking for new members, at the moment particularly for violins, violas, double basses, French horns and trumpets. If you might be interested, contact [wcomembersecretary@gmail.com](mailto:wcomembersecretary@gmail.com). More information can be found at <https://www.wimbledoncommunityorchestra.org.uk>.

And if you aren't a player, do come to our next concert (admission free) on 17 March at 7 pm, at St James's church. Amongst other items, the programme will include Walton's march Crown Imperial, a James Bond film medley, and two pieces with a particularly Scottish flavour: a striking arrangement of Amazing Grace which includes a prominent part for bagpipes, and Hamish MacCunn's famous evocation of the Highlands, The Land of the Mountain and the Flood.



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Vicar John Hayward invites you to

# 'Beat The Bounds' with St Mary's

On Sunday 5 May we shall be walking our parish boundary, from St Mary's Church, Church Path SW19 3HJ at 3pm and back to the Parish Hall in Church Path for tea and cake. The total length of the walk is approximately 3.5 miles.

We'll be revisiting an ancient custom when parishioners would beat along hedgerows and fields to mark the extent of their parish boundaries, keeping them clear and the knowledge of them alive for successive generations.

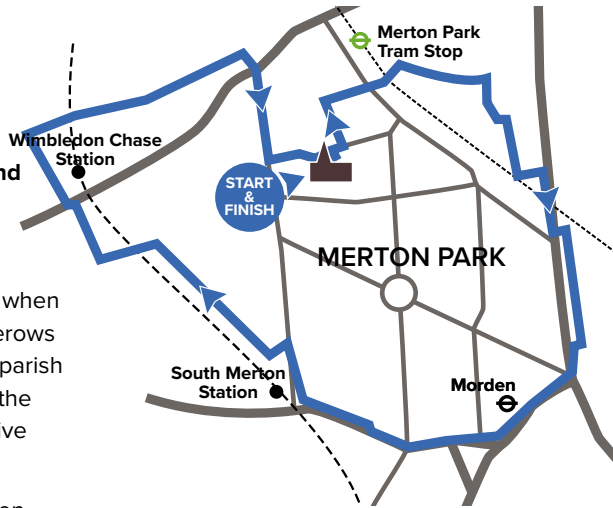
Our walk, making as much of the green spaces as possible along the route, will include short prayer stations for those who wish to join in, praying for God's blessing upon the people of our parish.

For those who'd like to stay on for Choral Evensong led by our choir, this sung service starts at 6.30pm and lasts around 50 minutes. We'll be celebrating 'Rogationtide', an appreciation of the growing cycle and the traditional time of year for beating the bounds.

In similar fashion, I undertook this journey back in the early days of Covid on my bike. The video of that, accompanied by choral music, can be viewed on YouTube at [tinyurl.com/4ap7b4s9](https://tinyurl.com/4ap7b4s9)

It's not necessary for you to book a place, although it would be helpful to know numbers for catering purposes.

Contact Simon Hillson on [simonhillson@me.com](mailto:simonhillson@me.com) or 07970 165907 or just turn up on the day.



**GSB Wimbledon**  
Contact: Glenn Smith  
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A nutrient-rich traditional soup prepared from stinging nettles, ideal during spring and early summer when the tips of young nettles are abundant and at their freshest.

Stinging nettles were once regarded as a valuable crop, and they contain high levels of vitamins A and C, as well as protein. The Romans used them as a warming treatment for rheumatism; Mary Queen of Scots preferred sheets of nettle linen to those of flax; Samuel Pepys enjoyed a nettle porridge on 25 February 1661, and Sir Walter Scott's gardener in Rob Roy raised nettles under glass as 'early spring kail'. In the Second World War hundreds of tons were used in the production of dye for camouflage nets. Clumps of nettles often mark sites of previous human habitation and they are a valuable habitat for butterflies and other insects.

## Ingredients

4 large handfuls of young nettle tops, rinsed and stems removed.

**NB.** Wear protective gloves when you pick them – washing up gloves work well.

1 large onion, chopped

50g/2oz butter

2 medium potatoes, sliced thinly

1 leek, washed and sliced

1 litre/2 pints vegetable stock

Salt and pepper, pinch of grated nutmeg and milk to taste

Cream or crème fraiche and chopped chives (optional) to serve



## Home-made Nettle soup

## Method

Melt the butter in a pan and simmer chopped onion until softened. Add the nettles, leek and potatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring continually.

Add stock and simmer for 10-15 minutes until potatoes are soft.

Cool slightly, season and blend until smooth.

Reheat, adding a little milk if desired.

Adjust seasoning, serve with a swirl of cream or crème fraiche.

## Also, nettle tea, which aids digestion.

Put some young nettle leaves in a tea strainer over a cup or mug and pour freshly boiled water over them. Infuse for 2-3 mins.



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## Nights of the Guitar

A recital series bringing some of the most talented classical guitarists in the world ... to St Mary's

THURSDAY 11 APRIL. 7.30PM

## Pavel Ralev Concert No 2. Spring

We are delighted that award-winning guitarist Pavel Ralev is returning to St Mary's to give another evening of classical guitar music.

Those who came to his last recital were privileged to listen to a spellbinding concert of virtuoso playing in an acoustic ideally suited to the guitar. In his next concert, the London based Bulgarian guitarist will play a wide range of music from well-known composers, including Bach's Partita for violin transcribed by Pavel for the guitar to modern day composers.

Described by John Williams as "a poet of the guitar" Pavel has built a strong international presence, winning International Guitar Competitions in Australia and Brazil. He became an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in the 2023 Honours, in recognition of his contribution to the music profession.

### Thursday 13 June. Laura Snowden

The guitar recital will be given by Pavel's colleague the British-French guitarist Laura Snowden who has appeared at festivals in Europe, China and the US. She will be playing arrangements of Celtic folk music, music by the Paraguayan composer Agustin Barrios as well as her own compositions.



**Tickets £10 on the door**

**Interval refreshments**

St Mary's Church, Merton,  
Church Path, London SW19 3HJ

Series continues...

Thursday 13 June 2024

Laura Snowden



## Gaia Singers

St Mary's Church. Saturday 18 May

See page 28 for details

# When We Are Married

J. B. Priestley



16–18 MAY 7.45PM ST MARY'S PARISH HALL CHURCH PATH SW19 3HJ

After starting 2024 with a very successful pantomime, Parish Players are now busy rehearsing for this year's play, "When We Are Married" by J. B. Priestley. Although it was written in 1938, the play has been popular ever since, and was seen in the West End with an all-star cast as recently as 2010.

Parish Players have assembled a cast of local performers, experienced members appearing alongside newcomers. The play is directed by Chris Abbott and produced by Roger Birtles.

It's a light-hearted comedy and tells of three Yorkshire couples meeting up for an anniversary celebration, having all been married at the same time. Enjoyment turns to panic as they discover that they might not have been legally married, and this leads several of the couples to reconsider whether they even want to be married after all!

Hosts for the evening, Alderman and Mrs Helliwell, are played by Paul Mannix and Toni Conyers, with Richard Warner and Maggi Chick as Councillor and Mrs Parker.

**Tickets £15 and £12**

Available from 1 April at [parishplayers.net/now-booking](http://parishplayers.net/now-booking) or by phone 07546 065267

Completing the trio of married couples are PP newcomers Mike Norman-Smith and Caroline Dempsey as Herbert and Clara Soppit.

The Parish Players tradition of family involvement is kept up with three members of one family in the cast: Nick Roberts as photographer Herbert Ormonroyd, Sebastian Roberts as reporter Fred Dyson and Ellie Roberts as Ruby Birtle, housemaid to the Helliwells. Also in the Helliwell household is Mrs Northrop the devious and no-nonsense housekeeper, played by Ann Carroll, and Sally Hopkins is niece Nancy. Nick Carroll is organist Gerald Forbes, with Caryl Court as Lottie Grady, a figure from the past of one or two of the characters. Completing the cast is Pete Ranford as the Vicar.



## Go Fairtrade at St Mary's

Judith Bersweden explains how

At St Mary's we aim to hold a regular Fairtrade Stall in the Parish Hall after the monthly 9.30am Children First Eucharist, usually on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Please check our website's Next Services calendar for dates – [stmarysmerton.org.uk](http://stmarysmerton.org.uk)

A range of items is available for sale, including store cupboard staples, coffee and chocolate and household cleaning products. There are also cards and a variety of gifts, depending on the stock carried by our local supplier, St Mary's Wimbledon.



Although an increasing number of Fairtrade products are now widely available in the main supermarkets (always check that the Fairtrade logo is authentic), the work of smaller Fairtrade suppliers, such as those we use at St Mary's, is still vital since they offer particular support directly to local communities, through the work of charities such as Transform Trade ([transform-trade.org](http://transform-trade.org)). In this way, the farmers themselves have a say over how the monies are spent, whereas on bigger estates initiatives may well benefit the local community but conditions can often still be very difficult for workers.

Admittedly, it is difficult to assess the claims and counter claims of the effectiveness of Fairtrade, but as with all concerns for trade justice, public pressure can bring about positive change in national and international systems. There are now more than 6,000 Fairtrade products, including flowers and gold jewellery, cotton and fashion, and the Fairtrade Foundation celebrates its 30th anniversary later this year, with Fairtrade Fortnight moving to 9–22 September 2024. [fairtrade.org.uk](http://fairtrade.org.uk)

## Sudoku

			4	5		8	7	
					6			9
			9	8	1	5	4	
1		6			5	9		3
	2						8	
8		9	2			4		5
3	8	7	5		1			
6			7					
	4	1		8	3			

Solutions on page 28

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# Wednesday Club

The Wednesday Club began last autumn and offers a variety of activities and entertainment for people in Merton Park.



Running from 2.30 to around 4.30pm each week, our programme of events for each month is based on an easy to remember pattern of activities:

## Week 1 – Film One

Often a recent film release or vintage action film

## Week 2 – Photo Quiz

based on topics of local interest

## Week 3 – Film Two

Usually a comedy or musical

## Week 4 – Speaker

Illustrated talk given by an invited speaker

There is no membership fee or entry charge, but we encourage a donation of £5 per person towards the cost of interval refreshments.

On film days we offer tea and biscuits in the short interval, and at the quiz and talk sessions there is a more generous selection of homemade cakes and tea, with time to chat with friends old and new.

To give a flavour of our activities since the club started, we have shown a wide range of films including classic comedies such as Some Like it Hot, Kind Hearts and Coronets, The Ladykillers, Cold Comfort Farm, and Mr Hulot's Holiday. Dramatisations of well-loved novels, or films with well-known actors, have also featured or are planned: Room with a View, Sense and Sensibility, To kill a Mocking Bird, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner and Quartet.

We have also shown family-friendly murder mysteries: The 4.50 from Paddington, Charade and North by Northwest – each attracting a full house.

Photo quizzes are based on topics of local interest – local landmarks, general knowledge, garden birds, women in history, and need no special preparation.

Talks by invited speakers cover holiday memories and activities, and personal achievements and have included 'Cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats', local events and history and 'The Secret WWII Air Raid Tunnels under Ramsgate'.

**We welcome adult visitors of all ages, and levels of mobility.** The programme for each month is available on the bell tower notice board in St Mary's Church, or by contacting

**Barbara Moreland** 020 8542 3427

or **Lindsey Jones** 020 8715 6398.

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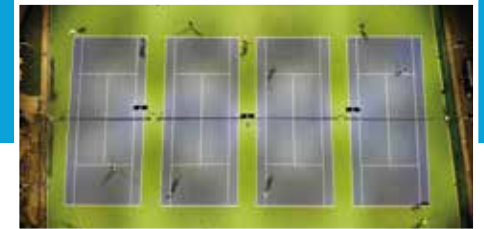
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# Anyone for tennis?

Richard Price talks to Marc Beckles,  
Head Coach at Wilton Tennis Club



With the arrival of lighter evenings, and as the prospect of the Wimbledon tennis championships becomes closer, the idea of playing tennis can seem attractive. However, for many people who have not played tennis they may be put off trying because of the potential cost involved, the perceived difficulty of joining a tennis club with very good players and the burden of an annual subscription which might not be used sufficiently to warrant the expense.

The Wilton Tennis Club, however, believes it has the answer to these concerns. Founded in 1908 it has offered tennis facilities to the local community for more than 100 years and has a strong commitment to opening up opportunities for children and adults to learn and develop tennis skills.

The Club recognises that not everyone will want to become a regular club player. Marc Beckles and his team of coaches offer coaching programmes to enable people to test out whether they like playing tennis and, if they do, provide a pathway to develop and improve skills so that they can then play socially, matches with other club members of similar standard and perhaps later join one of the teams that play in the Surrey league.

The Club in Wilton Crescent has four Macadam hard courts and a mini court for young children. With 400 adult members and about 60 juniors there are five men's and five ladies' teams as well as two mixed teams. Although full membership is not far from capacity, there are opportunities especially for mid-week memberships and a variety of coaching courses and camps in the school holidays.

For children and adults who sign up to an initial term of coaching (normally a course of ten group lessons, costing £13 for each one hour lesson) the Club provides rackets and tennis balls to limit the expenditure involved. Later on, there are junior memberships (£55), Improver memberships (£110), mid-week memberships (£85) and full memberships (£230)

So, if anyone in your family would like to start playing tennis at one of the friendliest and well-run local tennis clubs, then please contact Marc Beckles on 07877 571349 or email: [headcoach@wiltontennisclub.co.uk](mailto:headcoach@wiltontennisclub.co.uk)



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## PARISH TOGETHER



In addition to our services in church, St Mary's offers several activities which are open to all in our local community. You are sure to receive a warm welcome. For more details get in touch with the contact person mentioned.

### Wednesday Club

Meeting in the parish small hall every Wednesday 2:30–4:30pm  
The monthly programme includes two film sessions, an afternoon tea, quizzes and lively topic talks.  
Suggested donation of £5 pp, or £8 per couple/pair.

For further information contact:  
**Barbara Moreland** 020 8542 3427  
[bmoreland43@gmail.com](mailto:bmoreland43@gmail.com)  
**Lindsey Jones** 020 87156398.  
[lindsey6456@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindsey6456@hotmail.co.uk)

### Book Club

Meets monthly in different houses across the parish. About two hours.  
For further information contact John Combs:  
[johncombs46@gmail.com](mailto:johncombs46@gmail.com)



### Pilgrim Group

The Pilgrim Group, which meets on alternate Thursday evenings, offers an opportunity for informal study, prayer and fellowship.  
For further information, contact Simon Hillson  
[simonhillson@me.com](mailto:simonhillson@me.com)

### Fellowship Lunch

Join us for an inexpensive lunch in good company – especially for those who might not cook a Sunday roast for themselves.  
To book call Anita Simpson on 020 8543 3764 or 07960 324 371 or email her at [adsimpson68@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:adsimpson68@yahoo.co.uk)

### Walking Group

The Occasional Walking Group meets five or six times a year after the Sunday Parish Eucharist for short walks (maximum six miles), usually in the Surrey countryside.  
For further information contact Simon Hillson  
[simonhillson@me.com](mailto:simonhillson@me.com)

Saturday 18 May, 7.30pm

# Gaia Singers

St Mary's Church, Church Path, SW19 3HJ  
Tickets £10 on the door

From English classics to contemporary and comic songs, Gaia Singers will have something for everyone. Come along to hear some fantastic music and singing from the trio.



**Sopranos** Elizabeth Howard  
and Natalie Dalcher  
**Alto** Martha Littlehales

Gaia Singers are a new vocal collective exploring traditional and new repertoire set for three voices. Formed of three musicians with backgrounds in performance, teaching and conducting, and united by their love of choral singing, they met whilst training with the choral conducting charity, Sing For Pleasure. They have sung in the BBC Proms, with the CBSO Chorus and BBC Symphony Chorus respectively and have performed a number of large-scale choral works. Gaia Singers sees a return to their roots in chamber music, and they are especially keen to promote the work and arrangements of female composers.

Outside performing they promote singing, including in schools, choral societies, banks and prisons. They are thrilled to be making their performance debut at St Mary's and to share new interpretations of familiar pieces.

## Regular Sunday Services

**8am** Said Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer, fourth Sunday of each month)  
**9.30am** Sung Eucharist ('Children First Eucharist', third Sunday of each month)  
**6.30pm** Evensong  
Midweek Said Eucharists 10.30am (30 mins), third Thursday of each month followed by refreshments in church  
NB. On some Festivals the main morning service is at 10am  
**Sunday Club for children** meets monthly. 24 March (10am), 5 May, 2 June in the hall at 9.30am (except Children First Eucharist days), before joining the end of the service. Children 3+ welcome. Parents/Carers asked to stay with under 3s. [judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org](mailto:judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org)  
**Children First Eucharist** a family-friendly service at 9.30am on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Please check website for details, or contact [judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org](mailto:judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org)



St Mary's Parish Office is open four mornings each week from 9.30am-1pm (closed Wednesdays).

[office@stmarysmerton.org.uk](mailto:office@stmarysmerton.org.uk)  
020 8542 1760



All the production and paper elements of this magazine have been carbon balanced

## Sudoku Solution. Page 5

9	1	3	4	5	2	8	7	6
4	5	8	1	7	6	2	3	9
7	6	2	9	3	8	1	5	4
1	7	6	8	4	5	9	2	3
5	2	4	3	6	9	7	8	1
8	3	9	2	1	7	4	6	5
3	8	7	5	9	1	6	4	2
6	9	5	7	2	4	3	1	8
2	4	1	6	8	3	5	9	7

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