

roundabout



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

Issue 570 March 2026

Gold Medal Winners!!



Who would ever believe that the nation would be gripped watching curling on our TV screens. Yet that is exactly what has happened over the Winter Olympics. Like most people I have been mesmerised by the complexities of sliding a piece of stone on some ice, and whether by touching it with your finger after you have let go of the handle, constitutes cheating or not. However, after such intense coverage and explanation of the rules from the commentators I still don't understand the scoring! Yet, although the scoring remains a mystery to me, I did enjoy it.

You may well be thinking what curling has got to do with the Vicar's article in Roundabout? I think it caught my attention because like all sport, especially professional, there is that element of dedication and single mindedness. Perhaps this touches upon how we can approach our calling to worship, especially in this time of Lent. The busyness of life can and does get in the way of how we stand before God daily. Lent I believe affords us the time to seriously re-examine our practices of prayer, reading God's word (the Bible), and of fasting (for some not always possible) which are often seen as the elements of Lenten practice. Therefore, we need our prayer life and our practice of reading God's word to become intentional, not just on Sundays but every day, as if we are in training for a sporting event.

This Lent time we are studying the Church of England's Lent material 'Draw Near, Life-Giving Habits for Lent'. Please do join us - on zoom or in person, as we explore how we can acclimatise our daily lives to seek the voice of Jesus in a world where we can often feel increasingly irrelevant. For if we strive to become Gold Medal Winners of God's word, praising Him daily, then maybe we too can inspire the next generation whose lives are transformed by the love of Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ

Revd Steve Spencer

Revd Steve Spencer - Vicar

As members of St Augustine's with St Luke's we seek to offer everyone in our Parish opportunities to hear, experience and respond to the call of Jesus Christ and to plan and deliver initiatives that will grow our church.

A Life of Service



On 19 January, Sheila and I were invited to attend Gwent Police Headquarters in South Wales to meet the Chief Constable, Mark Hobrough, to be presented with The Elizabeth Emblem.

The Elizabeth Emblem is a national commemorative award introduced in 2024 by His Majesty King Charles. It is to honour public servants in the UK who lost their lives while on duty. The Emblem features a rosemary wreath surrounding the Tudor Crown, inscribed 'FOR A LIFE GIVEN IN SERVICE'.

My father, Peter Griffin, died in a tragic road traffic accident whilst on duty in 1960, where he worked as a Police Constable in Newport Borough Police Force.

I was eight years old at the time and can clearly remember his passing, but it was a great honour to be able to attend the ceremony and receive the Emblem as the oldest surviving member of the family. After the ceremony we visited my father's grave and then, together with my sister and brother-in-law, celebrated his life over lunch in a local pub.



Thank God for people like my father Peter, who risk their lives every day as public servants.

Richard Griffin

Cameo Pancake Party



A couple of days after Shrove Tuesday itself, the CAMEO* group had its annual Pancake party. It was held in the Barnard Room, so we had plenty of space for everyone. Over the course of the afternoon, thirty six pancakes were made and consumed with optional lemon and sugar – some even had 'seconds'!! Much chat as well as enjoyment of the pancakes passed the time very pleasantly.



Amongst a very willing band of jolly helpers, Aimi proved to be an expert at tossing the pancakes.



**CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other) meets in the Garden Room, weekly on a Thursday 2.30 - approx. 4pm. For chat, tea/coffee, cake/biscuits.*
All welcome!!

Carolyn Nield

Quick Update on Hope into Action Bromley (HIAB)

February 2026

Enabling churches to house the homeless

WOW…so much has happened in the last 12 months.

In March we welcomed two new tenants into our second flat. Both had experienced rough sleeping and moving in together has been quite challenging for them. But with love and prayer, great progress has been made with their Friendship and Support teams (F&S) building trust and engagement.

In June 2025 we had our first tenant move on into his own property. He is so pleased to have a home that he has been able to make his own. He regularly keeps in touch with his friends at St Augustine's who have been crucial in helping him make this big step into a new future. Prayers are still needed as he negotiates getting back to work following a family bereavement.

Then in August we welcomed our third tenant of 2025, a young expectant mother. In November she gave birth to a baby girl, and all is well with mother and baby. Unfortunately, it became clear that this tenant did not want to engage with our support as she felt she did not need this. As our purpose is to work with our tenants to prepare them for independent living and give emotional and spiritual support, it was agreed that she needed to move on. We are currently helping her to find alternative accommodation with Bromley Council and look forward to welcoming a new tenant in due course.

We continue to look to the future and pray for new investors and church partners to grow HIAB. We hold a monthly prayer meeting on zoom for F & S and would love to welcome anyone to pray with us for our tenants, staff, trustees and F&S. If you are interested, please email Rebecca Day on rebecca.day@hia.org.uk



Happy 90th Birthday

Mothers' Union at St Augustine's with St Luke's

A newly-founded branch of Mothers' Union opened its doors at the church hall in St Augustine's Avenue in March 1936. The branch moved in 1957 when our present St Augustine's church was completed. Since then, there have been only 11 dedicated Branch Leaders – an amazing achievement.

I met up recently with Sheila Humphrey, Branch Leader 2004 -2007. Her first task after her enrolment was to organise transport for 35 members to visit to Greensted Church in Essex (circa 1060 AD), then on to tea with Revd Brian and Jean Ash in Clacton. Undaunted by this and other outings, Sheila eventually went on to become MU Deanery Chair.



Revd Brian Ash farewell tea party

Outings have always been part of MU membership – from Founders' Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea as well as several visits to Lambeth Palace and to the building named after the MU's founder, Mary Sumner House. This year the Mothers' Union celebrates its' 150th anniversary.



Our banner, designed and embroidered by Joan Fogg

Our members have served the MU in a variety of ways, and current members are active in many aspects of our Church life here. When Linda Wanniaratchy was MU Diocesan Treasurer, she was part of the initial visiting team to link dioceses Mwpapwa and Kondoa. She also raised £3,000 for MU funds by running the London Marathon.

Branch member Katrina Barnes was also the Central Young Families' Chairman long before she was our Vicar. Revd Eric Heselwood was Vicar when our Branch pioneered membership for men, the first being Revd Norman Tooley.

Liz Carter is our Branch leader now, having spent part of her professional life working or volunteering for the Diocesan Mothers' Union.

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Service is one of the tenets of the Mothers' Union and we have certainly had many members who have lived out that promise.



Thank you to Joan Quick, Daphne Longbourne, Hilary Clancey, Margaret Baker, Liz Carter, Daphne Layton, Betty Dawson, Linda Wanniaratchy, Sheila Humphrey, Mary Margaret Yates (Diocesan President since 2022) and Caroline Lewis, who have all served as Branch leader.

Mary Plummer

A message from the Diocesan President

Congratulations to the Mothers' Union Members at St. Augustine's on their 90th Anniversary. St. Augustine's has a special place in my heart because it is with you that I was able to realise my dream of belonging to Mothers' Union. I was welcomed as a member on 23rd June 1996 by Betty Dawson after Pauline Martin and Mandy James suggested that I join them as Holy Trinity's branch had been closed.

Betty, Daphne, and Sheila had me involved very shortly and I progressed through the stages of Committee member, secretary and then Branch Leader. The whole branch was very welcoming. The Hot Lunch for Overseas was legendary; I hope to attend another later this year.

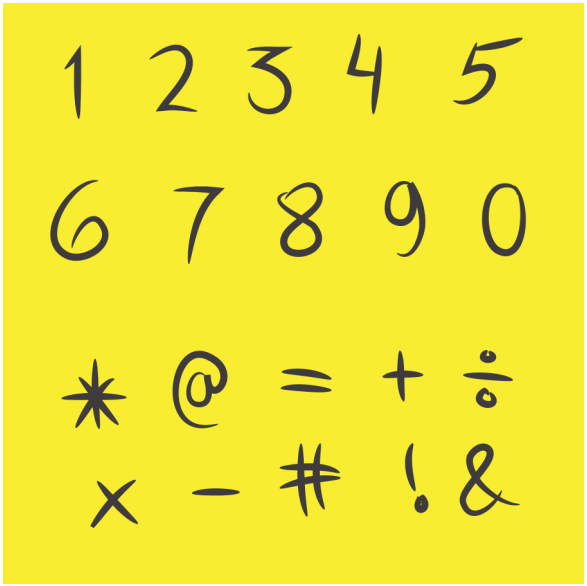
At the 75th anniversary Daphne Longbourne related to us how members of St. Augustine's were invited to St. Luke's for afternoon tea to learn about Mothers' Union with a view to setting up a new branch at St. A's, her mother-in-law was one of those encouraged to start your branch.

This year is the 150th anniversary of Mary Sumner inviting the women of her husband's parish to tea to start the Mothers' Union, as we celebrate the long service of members building the Kingdom of God I wish the members at St. Augustine's joy in their membership and every success in their endeavours. If you want to know more about Mothers' Union at home and abroad just ask the members or contact me, murochester.dp@outlook.com .

Mary Margaret Yates

Numbers

When the schools returned following the Covid lockdown, I landed myself another job - taking A Little Girl I Know to school! The bus route we live on is good, but as the bus is a single decker it was often full by the time it got to our stop. So we drove to school and we would talk about the forthcoming day and I would ask about what lessons she had coming up.



After a few weeks I knew her timetable off by heart as if it were my own. Double maths first lesson on a Monday, the stuff of nightmares for me! A Little Girl I Know didn't seem phased by it. She would often be telling me what they were learning about, although I have to admit I had no idea what she was talking about!

My own education was disturbed by frequent changes of teachers for all subjects as the school's imminent closure meant that the staff would leave to go to more secure jobs. I guess if I had been them, I would have done the same. My friends and I would joke as we walked to the next lesson as to whether we would have the same teacher who had taught us the previous week. Only too often there would be a different face standing at the front of the room with a lesson plan in their hand.

I would often watch A Little Girl I Know doing her maths homework not knowing if she had got it right or wrong. A few days later she would show me the paper again with ticks on it and a score that I could only dream of ever getting. I was so proud of her.

Although maths has always been my weakest subject, I have a number of certificates that state I am probably not as bad as I think. Having been educated in the 1980s we all sat the Bromley multiple choice numeracy exam. My result was an amazing 70%, higher than many of the girls in higher sets than me. All it proved was that I was a good guesser. I took another exam in the subject following on from a course open to parents to show how maths was now being taught. The result of this was 100%, the highest I have ever achieved in a test. I was disappointed when I collected my certificate some months later that it only said that I had passed. I didn't just pass - a minor miracle had happened. I have to admit that I still shy away from numbers, however my fear of numbers clearly doesn't add up.

Of all the references to numbers in The Bible my favourite has got to be, 'For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them (Matthew 18 verse 20). How lovely to think you don't need the church to be packed for God to be with us week by week.

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March Diary 2026

Sunday Services

Sunday 1st March	St Augustine's Church
10am Café Church	Church Army Guest Speaker
Sunday 8th March	St Augustine's Church
10am Holy Communion	Exodus 17: 1-7, John 4: 5-42
Sunday 15th March	St Augustine's Church
10am Mothering Sunday	1 Samuel 1: 20-28, Luke 2: 33-35
5.30pm Holy Communion	St Luke's Church
Sunday 22nd March	St Augustine's Church
10am Holy Communion	Ezekiel 37: 1-14, John 11: 1-45
Sunday 29th March	St Augustine's Church
10am Palm Sunday	Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29, Matthew 21: 1-11

Mid Week Holy Communion Services

Wednesday 11th and 25th — St Augustine's Chapel, at Midday

Lent Groups

Our theme this year is 'Draw Near: life giving habits for Lent' Each session is run three times a week, either on;

Tuesday Evenings 7.30pm at St Augustines Church, in the Garden Room
Wednesday Evenings 7.30pm on Zoom (4th, 18th, Tuesday 24th)
Thursday Mornings 10.30 at St Augustines in the Godly Play Room

Everyone is welcome to either attend in person or online. The link for the Zoom meetings is https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7454170610?pwd=YXhtZnp0UTV6S1B0TlhCRkd5N1AwZz09

Easter Experience for local year 2 children – **Monday 16 to Friday 20 March**
There will be NO Groups or Children's Activities during that week.

Weekly Groups

Welcome Space & CAMEO – all welcome
Every Thursday 11am – 4pm. Join us for friendship and food.

Why? Group – all welcome
Every Thursday 1.30pm – 2.15pm. Join us in a discussion on the 'whys' of the Christian faith.

Children's Activities @ St Augustine's Church

ARK ~ For Preschool and below
Every Wednesday (including half term) at 10am - 11.45am. No booking required.

Game Station ~ For Primary School children
Every Wednesday (including half term) at 3pm-4.30pm. No booking required, just come along and play games to make you think.

Youth Club ~ For 11-17 year olds
Every Sunday at 5pm -7pm. You need to register at families@st-augustines.org.uk

Messy Church ~ For the whole family
Thursday 26th Doors open at 3.30pm – 5.15pm, party tea at 3.45pm then craft activities, games, time with Messy Gilbert, sing-along. Fun for all the family. Book on Eventbrite or simply turn up on the day.

Staff Contact Details

Vicar:	Revd Steve Spencer	020 8467 1351 or 07778 784331
Curate:	Revd Becky Willoughby	07874 398445
Family Worker:	Catherine Lord	07874 398964
Licensed Lay Minister:	Alan Mitchell	07985 070734
Licensed Lay Minister:	Verity Mitchell	07379 294826
Churchwarden:	Hilary Chittock	07884 195700
Churchwarden:	Jeff Blyth	07557 349279
Parish Safeguarding Officer:	Andrew Gurney	07482 315545
Parish Office:	Victoria Bouwer	020 8295 1550
Open Weekday Mornings	email: office@st-augustines.org.uk	

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

St. Augustine's Church Rooms and St. Luke's Hall are available for hire. To book a room at St. Augustine's, contact Liz Carter on 07906 645140. To book St. Luke's Hall, contact the Church Office on 020 8295 1550

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

Five Elms
Primary Care Network

On the last Friday of every month there is a Wellbeing Café in the Garden Room at St Augustine's church. It is organised by The Five Elms Primary Care Network (PCN).

A group of general practices, namely Southborough Lane Surgery, Bromley Common Practice, Summercroft Surgery, Stock Hill Medical Centre Biggin Hill and Norheads Lane Surgery work together to provide more personalised and coordinated health and social care for people who have been referred by their doctor. There is a range of fun activities to participate in at the Wellbeing Café and refreshments.

23rd Bromley Scouts

The 23rd Bromley Scouts Jumble Sale will be held in the Scout Hut on Saturday 18 April.
Doors open to the public at 14.00. Entrance 50p.

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