

roundabout



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

Website: www.st-augustines.org.uk

Issue 576 October 2026

Be Still



With our young people back at school, college or university the summer break feels like it has come to a sudden stop. Yet the sun still seems to be shining, for how much longer we don't know, yet already the world around us seems to be gearing up for Christmas.

I am told every respectable Garden Centre already has their Christmas decorations on display and up for sale.

Maybe it's an age thing but time seems to be going faster, so before we get carried away with what lies ahead of us, let's take a moment and slow things down, and concentrate on the here and now and what brings meaning to our lives.

I am guessing you won't be surprised to hear me say that faith in Jesus Christ brings meaning to my life. I believe Jesus brings purpose to our lives, by sharing God's values, God's love, rather than seeking self-importance.

When we know God's grace in our lives it gives us the ability, I believe, to fill that spiritual need in each one of us. This need is often described as a '***God-shaped hole in the heart of everyone'*** which, if we are not careful, we fill with the excess of life, which ultimately can bring a sense of regret and maybe despair.

Yet by taking time with God, we bring that sense of purpose/meaning of life into sharp focus, for the benefit of our mental and physical wellbeing. One of my favourite verses is the Bible is Psalm 46 verse 10 '***Be still and know that I am God.'***

In fact, that verse is framed on my study wall. It reminds me daily the need to be in the here and now with my Lord and saviour Jesus Christ day by day.

So rather than getting carried away going from one thing to another and letting time slip away in front of us, let us enjoy what God gives to us now, His grace, His love and His creation.

Yours in Christ

Revd Steve Spencer

Revd Steve Spencer

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.

Congratulations to

Sue and Alan Skinner who celebrated their Diamond (60th) wedding anniversary on 10th September. They met on a blind date arranged by Janet, who Mum met at church in Orpington when she moved down here aged thirteen, and her husband Brian, who Dad worked with at Orpington Urban District Council.



Mum and Dad were married at St. Augustine's Church by Canon John Barnard who prepared Mum for confirmation, so the first thing they did as a couple was to receive Communion. This they have done on a regular basis ever since.

To celebrate such a special anniversary, my younger sister Nikki, her husband John, and three children, Joe, Kate, and Anna came down from Cheshire for the weekend. Firstly, the ten of us had afternoon tea at Bromley Court Hotel, the venue of my parents' wedding reception, then the following day, lunch at The Chequers, a favourite eating place of Mum and Dad.

The next day Mum remarked that she felt a bit flat now that the planned events were over. Little did she know that a special surprise had been at CAMEO the following Thursday, the day of their actual anniversary.

Firstly, they were surprised when former Curate Revd. Rachel Winn arrived at their home with a card and flowers. Then with the help of my daughter, we managed to arrange a special cake with their photo on it, balloons, a video of some of their wedding photos and others from the previous weekend's celebrations.



Mum and Dad would like to record their thanks to Christine Fisher who was in on the secret at CAMEO and made a speech in which she said that they were married in 1666! Brian Dorrington helped to cut the cake, and Revd Becky Willoughby prayed for them and asked for God's blessing on their continuing marriage.

Jacky and Jess Skinner

Thank You

Alan and Sue have been active members of the St Augustine's community throughout their lives in Bromley Common. When Nikki and Jacky transformed their partnership into a family of four, they were immediately involved in the girls' commitment to church life. Sue, already a member of the flourishing Wives' Group, was one of the founders of the Mother and Toddler group, which morphed into ARK. She was also greatly valued for her culinary skills.

During his working life Alan took on volunteer responsibilities in the church serving on the PCC and as church warden. When he retired he put his considerable organisational skills to good use and became our Parish Administrator. We thank them both for their many years of service at St Augustine's.

Congratulations also to



John Murray, whose 80th birthday in September was celebrated by a very warm and active week with the whole family in Swanage.

There have since followed several get togethers with other relatives and friends.

Mitchell Family News



Verity has gone to study for an M. Litt, (a Scottish master's degree) in Sacred Music at St Andrews University for a year. The course is run by the Divinity school.

It focuses on the history and theology of sacred music which she is very interested to learn more about. She hopes to get involved in some music making while she is studying there.

Marina Mitchell announced her engagement to Lawrence Schofield at September's cafe church. They met at university playing in the orchestra. They are planning to be married next year at St Barnabas church in Cambridge where he helps to lead the music. They hope to settle near Norwich where Marina is in her second year of a PhD in plant science.

Men in Church

Whilst 'Men in Church' may not be the most innovative title for our new group it certainly would not be challenged by trade descriptions. On the last Friday of each month local men come together at St Augustine's church at 7.30pm to enjoy a couple of hours of informal social time together.



You don't have to be a member or formally join anything and all are welcome. The pool and table tennis facilities are well used by some whilst others prefer board or card games or just having a chat. Food is offered during the evening, either a buffet or a simple cooked meal in exchange for a donation if people are able to make one. You can bring your own beer if you wish.

The activity is open to men from the church and local area and there is a representation of both. 'Men in Church' has been running since last autumn and on average fifteen people come to each session although not always the same people so in total about thirty people have participated.

Sometimes there is a short talk given by one of the group on a hobby or interest for a few minutes. We have enjoyed short talks on classic minis, the Crystal Palace and CB radios since we started. Originally the idea came from an awareness that far more ladies than men take part in church activities although the activities are open to all. This led to us developing this activity to encourage men to come out and socialise.

We are keen to welcome new people and your hosts Jonathan, Mark and Jeff look forward to welcoming you.

Jeff Blyth

23rd Bromley Scouts - Jumble Sale

Our next Jumble Sale is on Saturday 2nd October. Doors open to the public at 2pm and entrance is 50p per adult.

We will not be selling furniture, microwaves TV's etc, just Bric a Brac, clothes, shoes, toys, books, small electrics/electronics and jigsaws.

Items can be brought to the HQ from 3pm to 8.30pm on Friday 1st October and also 10am to 12pm on Saturday 2nd October. Please contact frc@23rdbromleyscouts.org if a collection needs to be arranged before Friday 1st October so arrangements can be organised.

Linda Lawn

Prisons Week...inside...

Prisons Week became a charity in 1993. Its aim is to raise awareness and generate prayer among the Christian community, through individuals and churches. October is set aside as a month when we are asked to pray particularly for the needs of all those affected by prisons; prisoners and their families, and victims of crime and their communities. Prisons Week began as a Roman Catholic initiative started by Bishop Victor Guazzelli in 1975 and it quickly gained oecumenical support.

Prisons Sunday is the second Sunday in October and throughout the following week we are encouraged to support in prayer, people who are less visible in the justice system; prison and probation staff, voluntary agencies such as Mothers' Union, charities such as 2Makeit and all people who care for those who are out of sight.

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support, with your love, prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the activities of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another. To act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ, in His strength and in His Spirit, now and every day. Amen

...and out...Langley Trust

I first heard of Langley Trust when I was Rector of St Mary Magdalene church, Longfield. For over 65 years the charity has been supporting people with convictions to transform their lives, through rehabilitation and preventing re-offending. In the Medway Towns there were two halfway houses, one for men and the other for women, who were making the transition from custody in prison, to life in the outside world. The PCC decided to donate the Harvest Festival gifts to the project as their food budget was very small. I will never forget the welcome each year when I arrived with my car full to bursting with bags and boxes of donations.

When I returned to St Augustine's as the incumbent in 2006, it was decided to continue to support the Trust. As well as items of non-perishable goods we also donated gifts of toiletries or make-up, which we may regard as everyday items. For the women they are luxuries and a wonderful morale booster. Some of us wrote prayers on post-it notes and attached them to the gifts - a tangible way of sending God's love to those we have never met but care and pray for.

Today Langley Trust has eight housing projects around the country. The Medway Towns Project is now called Kadesh and has grown. There is a 27-bed service - an all-male hostel, plus nine houses in the community, two of which are for women and all are furnished and self-catered. Kadesh is a biblical Hebrew word meaning holy, sacred or set apart, relating to a desert oasis. In other words, a safe place, a sanctuary and a reminder that no-one should be disadvantaged because of their past. God's love is for everyone.

Revd Katrina Barnes

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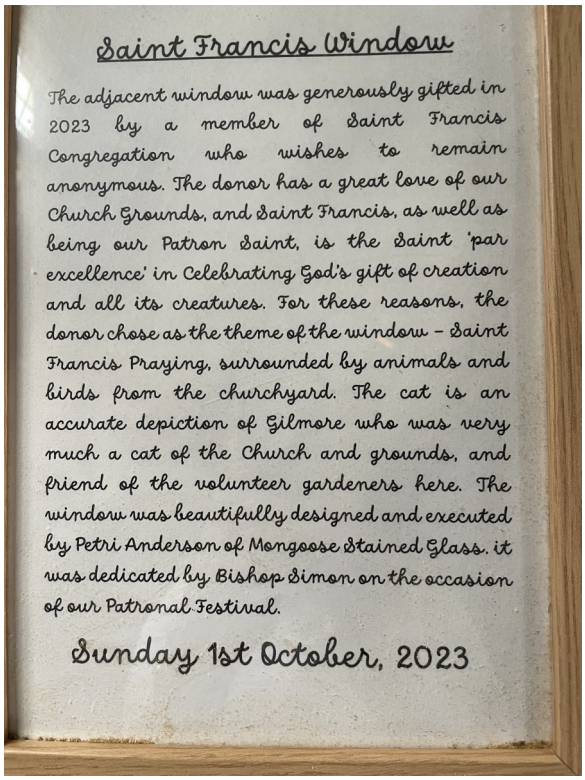
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A Stained Glass Gift

I recently went to the memorial service of a friend's husband at St Francis Church, Petts Wood. As I didn't know John personally, I learned a lot about his life from the tribute.

The words came directly from the autobiography he had composed a few years earlier.



The stained glass window is installed in the south aisle, so during the day, it is back-lit by sunshine.



As a long-standing member of the St Francis community, John's gift will surely be an inspiration to others.

2026 is the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi who died on the night of 3rd October.

As a young man he gave up a life of wealth and pleasure to live in absolute poverty for love of God.

The beauty of the natural world spoke to him of divine providence and the obligation of care towards his fellow human beings and all of creation.

He founded the Order of Franciscans, which grew quickly in Europe and spread around the world.

His image was already being disseminated across Central Italy, performing miracles and preaching to the birds.



He was canonised only two years after his death.

Mary Plummer

Oh no!

Last month I told you about the major tidy up and sort out A Little Girl I Know and I had undertaken during the summer holidays. We managed to get our house looking neat and tidy with everything in the right place. We were proud of our efforts, then things changed and we are currently back in a huge mess!

The bedroom of A Little Girl I Know was long overdue for a refit. A fresh coat of paint, the carpet long overdue for replacement having been in place for over twenty years. More importantly a new bed was required as she had outgrown the current one.



With the help of our friend Uncle Google (the internet) we were able to browse a number of suppliers out of normal shopping hours from the comfort of our front room. Next came my least favourite part of the decorating process, looking for new curtains.

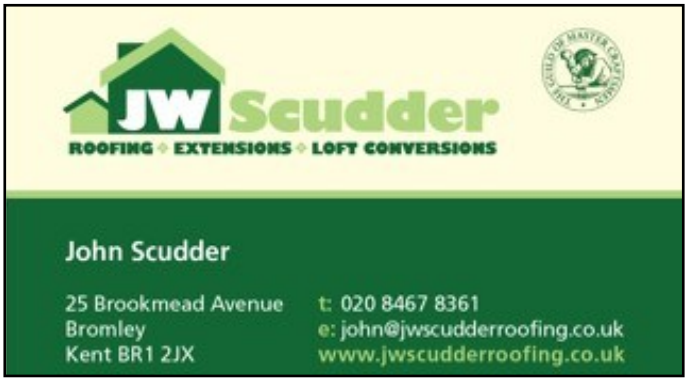
Thank goodness for another friend, Mr Sat Nav who guided us to a large homeware store in the next borough. After a few phone calls to her father to recheck measurements and studying the photos of her walls, curtains were selected. Even better still, they were half price!

When we arrived home, we were excited to continue with the transformation for her, and for me, the thought that finally her one bed would be replaced by something more in keeping with her pretty feminine taste. We hope to have her back in her newly decorated room in the next couple of weeks. I for one will be pleased to get our spare room back so that I can sit comfortably during the planning and preparation for some groups we are involved in. It is not easy to type with a keyboard on your lap believe me.

We all go through times of change; some difficulties are easier than others. I remember times in the not too distant past when I really struggled with what was going on around me. I forced myself to stop, take a break, go for a walk, make a decent cup of coffee, and then start again. The break helped to change my mindset - often things that seemed almost impossible were clearer. For that I was grateful that my stickability urge had kicked in and the task had been done to the best of my ability.

I know that God guides me in a way that I would find difficult to explain to those around me. I pray now the same God will continue to guide A Little Girl I Know as life changes for her over the next few months. May God guide your path towards Him. In the words of a birthday card, I received a good few years ago 'Onwards and upwards towards life's next adventure.' Amen.





October Diary 2026

St Augustine's Church Sunday Services – at 10am

St Augustine's Church

4th	Café Church	Bible Reading	Matthew 21: 33-46
11th	Holy Communion	Bible Readings	Exodus 32: 1-14, Matthew 22: 1-14
18th	Morning Worship	Bible Reading	Matthew 22: 15-22
25th	Holy Communion	Bible Readings	1 Thessalonians 2: 1-8, Matthew 22: 34-36
			CMS Partner is preaching

Each week there will be Kids' Church in the Garden room for children aged up to 11 years.
On the third Sunday (18th) there is 'Discuss & Discover' aimed specifically at 11-17 year olds.

St Luke's Church Sunday Service – at 5.30pm

18th Holy Communion

Other Services

Wednesday 14th and 28th Holy Communion Midday at St Augustine's Chapel
Sunday 11th Confirmation Service 4pm St John the Evangelist, Bromley BR1 3HJ

Connect Groups

These will start week beginning 5 October meeting on alternate weeks. They will explore the theme "**The truth will set you free**" through the lens of the thought provoking and surprisingly relevant film *The Truman Show*. Ideally please watch *The Truman Show* before the groups begin. You can watch on a streaming platform or join us for one of our church screenings:

Thursday 1 October at 10am or Friday 2 October at 7pm

Sessions will be

Tuesday 7.30pm at St Augustine's Church 6 and 20 October
Wednesday 7.30pm on Zoom 7 and 21 October
Thursday 10.00am at St Augustine's Church 8 and 22 October

The link for the Zoom meetings is
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7454170610?pwd=YXhtZnp0UTV6S1B0TlhCRkd5N1AwZz09

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.

St Luke's Bell Ringers — all levels welcome

Every Thursday 7.45pm – 9.15pm at St Luke's Church. Contact Chris Lawrance, Tower Captain, to confirm on 020 8462 3485 or 07707 944299

Children's Activities at St Augustine's Church

ARK ~ For Preschool and below

Every Wednesday at 10am - 11.45am.

Game Station ~ For Primary School children

Every Wednesday 3pm-4.30pm. No booking required, just come along and play games to make you think. It's for primary school children and their families

Youth Club ~ For 11–17-year-olds

Every Sunday at 5pm -7pm.

Messy Church ~ For the whole family

Thursday 15th Doors open at 3.15pm – 5.15pm, party tea at 3.45pm then craft activities, games, time with Messy Gilbert, sing-along. Fun for all the family.

Contact Details: office@st-augustine.org.uk or www.st-augustines.org.uk

Staff Contact Details

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Licensed Lay Minister:	Alan Mitchell	07985 070734
Licensed Lay Minister:	Verity Mitchell	07379 294826
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

Allotment Show

Richard Coughtrie writes: The allotment show was a great success and the sunflowers won 'Best in Show' (horticultural section).



The Royal Horticultural Society judge was very impressed and said we all deserved a pat on the back for what we managed to achieve.



October Edition: Editor - Mary Plummer: Layout - Tanya Wardley

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