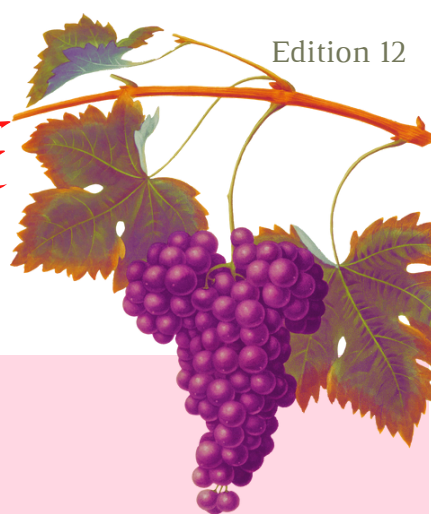




THE GRAPEVINE

The Newsletter of St. Mary and St. John the Divine, Balham



Beloved I am writing to you on the eve of my second week. I feel so welcomed amongst you but even more than that I feel settled. I know that sounds foolish to say after a week but I mean it. We calculated that over the twelve years of our marriage we have moved ten times so by the time we arrived here at the start of January we were ready to lay down roots and see them fossilise! With each passing day we have a stronger sense that this is where we are meant to be. Thank you for receiving us so warmly. As you will have heard me say several times by now my vision for these first months is that our church may live through a season of love. We look forward to growing in knowledge and love of each of you.



--COLLATION OF FR. JONATHAN --



We are delighted to welcome Father Jonathan as our new vicar with his wife Helen and children Caspar and Lois to St Mary's. Father Jonathan's service of collation led by Bishop Christopher was a joyful event supported by friends, family, neighbouring clergy and local councillors.

The choir was boosted by members of Jonathan's previous churches and gave a rousing musical reception. We look forward to helping Jonathan to settle in and to having many happy years with the MacNeaney family in Balham.

--COMMUNITY HEROES CELEBRATION --

BATCA (Balham and Tooting Community Association) is hosting their annual Community Heroes event on Thursday 16 March (venue to be confirmed). This is the first award ceremony since the pandemic.

This year they are emphasising two specific categories: (1) Promoting sustainability and the fight against climate change and (2) Fighting poverty and social exclusion, but also they are taking nominations for any activity involving service to others that doesn't fall into these two categories.

Do you know someone who has made a difference at St Mary's or in the Balham or Tooting area and feel that they need recognition? If so, you can nominate them here: <https://batca.org/community-heroes-2023/> The nominations need to be in by Tuesday 14 February. In previous years we have nominated tireless volunteers who have received awards at the celebrations – perhaps we can again this year!



From the Kitchen of St. Mary's

Ingredients

150g caster sugar
200ml sunflower oil
2 eggs
1 tsp almond extract
350g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt
100g ground almonds
For the icing and topping
150g morello cherry conserve
75g flaked almonds, toasted
To decorate
75g icing sugar
--plus extra for dusting
8 glacé cherries, halved



Method

Heat the oven to gas 4, 180°C, fan 160°C. Line 2 large baking trays with nonstick baking paper. Beat the sugar, oil, eggs and almond extract until combined. Sift in the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt. Then stir in the ground almonds until the mixture is just combined. Roll heaped tbsps of the dough into even balls and put on the lined baking trays, leaving enough space between each ball for spreading. Gently flatten each one with the palm of your hand. Bake for 14 mins, or until puffed and golden. Leave to cool on the trays for 5 mins before transferring to a wire rack. Once completely cool, spread a teaspoon of cherry conserve over each biscuit. Then scatter with the toasted almonds. To make the icing, mix the icing sugar with 2-3 tps of cold water, until you have a thick but runny paste. Drizzle over the biscuits and top with half a glacé cherry and a dusting of icing sugar.

--CANDLEMASS AND EASTER--

In St Mary's we keep up the Christmas tree until Candlemass to continue to remind us of the wonderful celebration of Christ's birth. A strong working party sawed, chopped and bundled up most of the tree, leaving the top few branches for the burning brazier at the Easter vigil.



--CULTURE CORNER--



Would you like to tell us about an arts event that lifted your spirits, brought a tear to your eye or was really funny? Today, I recommend 'Cezanne' at the Tate

Modern - <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/ey-exhibition-cezanne> You can just feel the warm sun of the south of France as you take in Cezanne's paintings of the Mediterranean coast, bathers and still-lives of apples and pears. Feel free to share your recommendations of theatre, art, dance or music for our mutual enjoyment – just contact Sarah.

--THE WARM HUB IS WAITING 4 U!--



The Warm Hub is a welcoming and warm place in the Narthex every Wednesday and Saturday morning 10-12. Come along for a chat, companionship, hot coffee & biscuits and fun activities. See you soon!

--WHERE IS THIS?--

Do you know where this is in the church?



--PROFILE OF ANDY STANFIELD:

CO-ORDINATOR OF BALHAM GATEWAY CLUB--

We would like to introduce Andy Stanfield, who is not a member of the congregation but has an important role in the parish. He runs the Balham Gateway Club, a social club for adults with learning difficulties that is held in the TSM school hall on Monday evenings. Our link with them was established by Mtr. Berni a couple of years ago. Andy has been in charge since his retirement in 2020, and is assisted by Kirsten. Andy was already a volunteer, following in the footsteps of his two sons who had been volunteers at the club a number of years before. The Stanfields have lived in Wandsworth for over thirty years. His wife, Suzy, has a nursing background and became a lecturer in Nursing at King's College. Andy's main interests are silent films and hiking and camping in wild places. In the autumn he escaped to Morocco for a cycling holiday. Andy's father is Polish and, through his cousin in Poland, Andy made contact with a Ukrainian family who have settled happily with the Stanfields. Andy trained as a

graphic designer at the Central School of Art and, with a fellow-graduate, started his own branding business, which is still going today. For some years, Apple was his biggest client. From 2007 to 2012, Andy worked for London as the host city for the Olympics. He bought tickets for his company and for the members of Gateway, to visit the Games and the Paralympics. He later



became the club's treasurer and, when Wandsworth's grant for rent and transport was cut, Andy sorted out the club's finances, acquiring a concessionary rent and abolishing "subs". Andy made arrangements for the different homes to use their own buses to take their residents to the club. Fund-raising events are arranged from time to time.

Some members of the club have been attending for many years. There are a few wheel-chair users. There are two married couples, otherwise individuals living independently or in sheltered housing or communal homes. There might be as many as thirty attending on a Monday night. They enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles, colouring and painting, sewing or playing table tennis, with music in the background. They are lovable people who find security, safety and a warm welcome at the club. There's a lot of chat and it is like a large, extended family. Andy and volunteers took them to the pantomime at Wimbledon before Christmas. Great excitement! Andy and Suzy generously provide refreshments and fun at the Christmas party every year.



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Please note that issues of "The Grapevine" are now available on the church website:

<https://tinyurl.com/StMaryGrapevine>