

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:

info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

A WARM WELCOME

This month as part of meeting the people who make up St Mary's, we meet the Warm Welcome Space team, which has been going now for over a year.

We are all called to 'shine [our] light before others'. Warm Welcome Space is one way that St Mary's can reveal the glory of our 'Father in heaven' (Matthew 5.16) and share in fellowship with our congregation and local community.

Rev'd Amanda

Our Warm Welcome Space has now been running successfully for the last 15 months and continues to go from strength to strength. We have 25-35 attendees each week including a fantastic team of committed volunteers without whom we couldn't run the sessions.

Particular thanks go to June, David, Madeleine, Jenny, Melita, Kelly and Denise. Each week we set up the meetings rooms together, prepare and serve the food and refreshments, chat with our visitors and then clear away and tidy the rooms afterwards.

We're also extremely grateful to our wonderful team of weekly soup and cake makers who without fail provide a delicious selection of food to keep our guests happy.

**COME AND JOIN US
Warm Welcome Space
St Mary's Church meetings room
Every Wednesday 12.30 – 3.00pm**

Everyone is welcome. All ages. You don't have to attend St Mary's to join us and you don't have to bring anything but yourself. The lunch, refreshments and fellowship are free! Over the winter months and up until the end of May we've been having homemade soups and rolls for lunch followed by homemade cakes with coffee and tea. From the beginning of June we will be reverting to our summer months menu. Last year was our first year and the summer lunch started off as a ploughman's type lunch but soon evolved into a bring and share feast, as many people brought lots of extra delicious foods to share.

Each week you can try your hand at our fun quiz and we have daily newspapers you can read or games you can play. Also there are books, magazines and puzzles you can borrow. If you require a quieter area to work we can provide that too and free wi-fi is available.

Why don't you give us a try? You will be very welcome.

Mary Stannard & Stuart Spence



HOME GROUPS ARE COMING TO ST MARY'S

In June two home groups will be starting to meet fortnightly. One will meet on a Friday afternoon from 2.30 - 4pm and the other will meet on a weekday evening (day to be finalised) from 7.30 - 9pm. Meetings will take place in someone's home.

What is a home group? It is an opportunity to meet in a small group (probably around 6 to 10 people) to look at a Bible passage and discuss what it means and how it is relevant to our lives today. Home groups are an opportunity to learn from each other and encourage us to live out our Christian faith in our daily lives, whatever our situation. They are also a great opportunity to ask questions and share what is happening in our lives so we can pray and support each other.

Why do we need home groups when there is already a Tuesday morning Bible study? The new home groups will run

alongside the existing Bible study. Tuesday mornings don't suit everyone as a time to meet so the idea is simply to offer more opportunities to meet during the week and grow in our faith.

Who are home groups suitable for? Anyone over age 18 is welcome whether you're exploring the Christian faith, are new to faith, have been following Jesus for 60+ years or anything in between!

What is the commitment? Come when you can and be open to share and learn with others. We hope to run meetings fortnightly.

What if I don't know much about the Bible? You are welcome to join whatever your knowledge of the Bible. No one will be required to share their thoughts or doubts but we hope you will want to and feel able to.

How can I find out more? If you want to join one of the groups or have any questions about whether a group is suitable for you, please contact Allan Evison (Friday afternoon group) or Jo and Colin Gale (evening group) via the Church office, or speak to Rev'd Amanda.

You'll find a warm and friendly welcome at a St Mary's home group and so we hope you'll join us.

Jo, Colin and Allan

AI – A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED

There has been much in the media recently about Artificial Intelligence (AI). Last year a few hundred experts from around the world voiced their concern at the potentially catastrophic risks from AI and signed a call for stricter controls on its development. It has been a centre-piece of the Prime Minister's recent pre-election addresses. At the same time the Archbishop of Canterbury has just signed the Rome Call for AI Ethics (introducing us to the concept of algoethics – you read it first here!).

An immediate challenge is that, for many of us, AI is a somewhat vague concept that has floated around in the background of our consciousness for quite a while without us ever having to practically engage with its precise meaning or understand its implications or consequences. Particularly for those of us who are not Gen-Z ers (or even Millennials!) for whom social media and digital interactions are as instinctive as eating and drinking.

The breathtaking advances in AI over the past few years have generated huge expectations about its future for benefiting society; and at the same time grave concern about its potential for misuse and ultimately creating a threat to society as great as pandemics and nuclear

war. And, of course, we all have in the back of our minds the idea of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) (so far fictional!), of self-conscious AI that thinks and acts independently of its maker.

For these reasons I found this short booklet immediately helpful: addressing these concerns (some more imaginary than real!) but also giving a helpful and easy to understand basic overview of AI, with its key terminology and links to follow-up sources. Also, there may be other good introductions to AI but this may be alone in looking at how AI relates to our Christian faith, and what it means to be human.

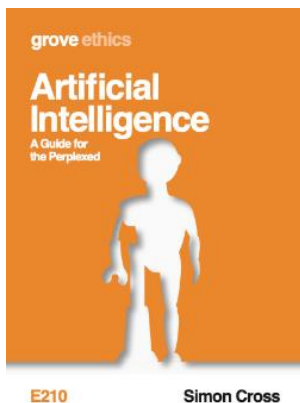
The writer of this booklet, Simon Cross, has for the past four years worked for the Church of England researching technology ethics and the challenges AI poses for society.

I will just mention a few key take-away points that struck me on reading the booklet:

1. Being creative is part of what we are; made in the image of God.
2. Technology is a gift that God has given us. It's up to us to use it wisely.
3. The relationships that matter are with people not machines.
4. We enfeeble ourselves by relying too much on artificial devices.
5. Part of what it means to be human is to exercise the responsibility God has given us in being good stewards of our environment. We retain that responsibility even when allowing machines to make those decisions for us.
6. "The kingdom of God is our primary source of hope and purpose and all of our AI tools should be turned towards closing the gap between God's will in heaven and what is done on earth".

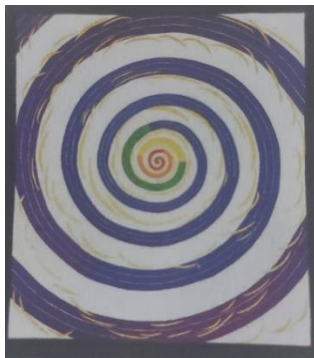
For further details of the booklet - www.grovebooks.co.uk. For a sneak peek – there is a copy on the church bookstall at the back of the church.

David James



Mothers' UNION

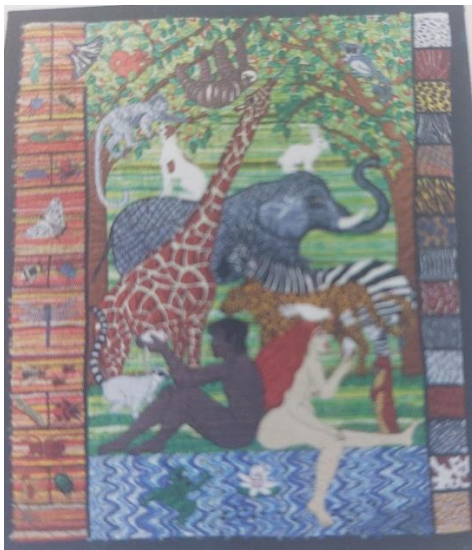
Christian care for families



On Monday 20th May, 20 Mothers' Union members, enjoyed an illustrated talk entitled 'Threads through Time'. Humphrey and Janice Clarke gave a very interesting talk explaining the giant, beautiful panels, sewn by the artist Jacqui Parkinson, which tell the story of the Creation. It took Jacqui three years to make and she used 8 million stitches! Jacqui took weeks thinking of how to describe the indescribable, and how to convey God not only as one but also as three: Father – Jesus – Holy Spirit.

Eventually Jacqui decided on a spiral to represent the 'one' who is 'three'- who lives in all eternity. The spiral has three strands – three beings making up the Trinity. The talk started off with an 'Uncle Mac' tape singing 'All things bright and beautiful' which ironically had Carol Crouch, as a child, singing in the choir!

We were shown pictures of the 12 different panels which Jacqui had sewn to illustrate the first pages of the Bible. It was fascinating to see how detailed the embroidered panels were.



Our next meeting is a social gathering on **4th June at 11.00 am** at 'The New Inn' Hayes.

On **17th June, 10.30am in the Meetings Room**, we hope to have a talk on "M.A.F. – Mission Aviation Fellowship – a Christian

mission organisation that uses planes to overcome these barriers. Their pilots and personnel deliver relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food, medicines – everything that can safely be transported by air. Our supporters give and pray to make this all possible.”

Unfortunately, due to illness, I was unable to attend the Rochester Diocese MU Spring meeting and AGM at Christ Church Milton-next-Gravesend, when the new Safeguarding Policy was adopted into our regulations. The draft minutes of the meeting are on our MU notice board.

If you have any other wishes or ideas for speakers, or for a summer outing, please let me know as I am trying to cover the rest of the year from July on.

Father’s Day – 16th June. A reflection and prayer from the faith desk.

Father’s Day holds a special place in Christian parenting as it honours the role of fathers in embodying God’s love and guidance within the family. Fathers are called to lead with integrity, selflessness and compassion, reflecting the image of God the Father. Father’s Day provides an opportunity to express gratitude for the sacrificial love and steadfast support that fathers provide to their children.

As we celebrate Father’s Day, let us also remember those who may be grieving, estranged, or longing for fatherly love. May this day be a reminder of the profound impact fathers have on our lives and how we are called to honour them.

Father’s Day not only celebrates the role of fathers but also prompts deep reflection on the complexities of family dynamics, especially in the context of brokenness and gives us an opportunity to celebrate all father figures.

As Christians, we are called to acknowledge and respond to the brokenness in families with empathy, compassion, and love. We recognise that brokenness can manifest in various forms, divorce, absenteeism, or strained relationships. As people of faith, we extend grace to those who may be hurting or experiencing this Father’s Day with mixed emotions.

In recognising broken families, Father’s Day becomes an opportunity for healing and reconciliation. Through prayer, support, and acts of kindness we can offer comfort to those who feel the ache of broken relationships. We are reminded of God’s redemptive power to heal wounds and restore what is broken, including familial bonds. Father’s Day, therefore, serves as a call to action, urging us to reach out to those in need, extend forgiveness, and foster healing within our families and communities.

Intercessions for Father's Day (from Worship Words)

Wonderful God, creator, friend, and sustainer; We thank you for nurturing us like a mother and we praise you that your care and protection surround us like a father.

On this Fathering Sunday, we remember all the people who have nurtured us, especially the important men in our lives, those who have seen, not just with their eyes, but with their heart. Hear our prayer for fathers around the world. Loving God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We remember fathers, whose families are torn apart by jealousy, fighting and misunderstandings. We remember fathers who are older, but who still bear the responsibility of raising children and grandchildren. And we remember fathers who mean well but make mistakes. Loving God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We remember men who, because of various circumstances, are unable to become fathers. We remember fathers who have adopted children and fathers who given up their rights as fathers. Loving God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We remember fathers who rejoice in the achievements of their children. Who joyfully watch a new generation take hold. We remember fathers who are single parents, who through personal sacrifice and perseverance provide a loving home for their children. Loving God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We remember fathers who helplessly watch their children suffer from malnutrition or disease because of famine, drought, flood, or war. We pray for the fathers who do everything they can to support their children. Loving God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Nurturing God, thank you for those who have nurtured us. Open our eyes to the plight of so many fathers and mothers around the world for whom life is difficult. Help us share your love and mercy with them. Mother Father God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

In the silence of this moment, hear the prayers of our hearts. [pause] God, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Merciful God, Mother and Father of us all, honour our prayers, spoken and unspoken, humbly lifted to you in faith. Amen.

Please consider whether you would be willing to serve on the committee for Mothers' Union. We need to have more helpers to set up the meetings room, ideas for planning programme. If you would like to join Mothers' Union, please contact me on **0208 468 7785**.

Avril Ashford

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY JUNE 2024

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom* and Tuesdays to Fridays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).

Saturday 1st 12.30pm Churchyard Tidy Up

TRINITY 1

Sunday 2nd	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise
		Sunbeams session** (age3-6)
Tuesday 4th	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
Wednesday 5th	10.30am-12.00noon	Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own**
	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship in OCS

TRINITY 2

Sunday 9th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
		Blaze session** (age 6-10)
Tuesday 11th	10.00-11.00am	Prayer Group
Wednesday 12th	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
Thursday 13th	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

TRINITY 3

Sunday 16th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Monday 17th	10.30am	Mothers' Union**
Tuesday 18th	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
Wednesday 19th	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
Friday 21st	10.00am-11.00am	Twinkles – singing, story, snacks**

TRINITY 4

Sunday 23rd	8.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion BCP Parish Communion CW Blaze session** (age 6-10)
Tuesday 25th	10.00-11.00am	Prayer Group
Wednesday 26th	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
Thursday 27th	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

TRINITY 5

Sunday 30th	8.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion BCP 'Songs of Praise'- style service Sunbeams session** (age 3-6)
-------------------------------	-------------------	--

*For Zoom link contact the church office ** denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email ocs.hayes@hotmail.com

HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

As we move into June, we must correct our previous assumption about the certainty of what **may** happen in the next month, as the speaker we had anticipated discovered at very short notice that he was double-booked and asked to defer until June. Luckily, our June speaker was willing and able to swap slots. So, Joe Mendell will now be regaling us with "US Presidents – Bits and Pieces" at about the time you are able to read this article. Read on below for the talk on "The Samaritans" by our very own member, Ted Venables.

Without further ado, here's what we have been doing recently, starting with our visit to a Secret Nuclear Bunker and Chelmsford. It turns out that the Bunker in Essex is not very secret at all with clear signposting off the main road! We were greeted on arrival by Mike Parrish the owner of the farmland on which the three-level nuclear bunker had been built

during the early 1950's. It was one of a chain of 17 across the UK maintained during the Cold War as potential regional government headquarters. It was intended to accommodate up to 600 people and provided with food, water and medical supplies for up to



three months following any nuclear attack. Their task was to organise the survival of the population and continue government operations.

Since being decommissioned in 1992, this bunker has been open to the public as a tourist attraction, with many original features and photographs. There were two particularly notable facts in the guided commentary from Mr. Parrish: 1. There were only limited beds, so "hot bedding" was the rule whereby someone coming off duty would locate and occupy a bed just vacated by someone coming next on duty; at least dormitories were single sex and each person was issued with a personal linen sleeping bag! 2. Any display of mental instability would be dealt with by isolation and even, in extremis, by shooting!

An interesting and thought-provoking visit as an experience rather than enjoyment. After some two hours we set off in our coach for Chelmsford for lunch and visits to the Cathedral and/or the Museum.

Chelmsford Cathedral stands at the heart of the city in a largely pedestrianised area and surrounded by beautiful gardens. Originally a parish church, the first recorded service dates back to 1223 and the earliest stonework discovered here is from Norman times. The church was rebuilt in the 15th century but what you see today of the exterior dates from 1800 after the building had partially collapsed through excavations which undermined the original structure. The Cathedral has a number of specially commissioned pieces of art, including "The Bombed Child" a bronze sculpture by Georg Ehrlich, himself a victim of war who fled his native Austria in 1938, and Mark Cazalet's stunning painting on 35 birch wood panels, fitted together in the style of a stained-glass window and depicting the "Tree of Life".

After a visit to the Chelmsford Museum, it was time for home after yet another super day out with good weather, excellent organisation and comfortable travel.

Our latest walk was in the Knole Park area with good weather. Starting from a side gate to the park near Fawke Wood they followed Chestnut Walk to Duchess Walk, checked out an ice house on a slope just out of sight of the front of Knole House, then through a golf course and wood to Godden Green. Lunch was at the "Buck's Head" where the 8 walkers were joined by one "rider".

For our May meeting, as mentioned above, member Ted Venables had brought forward his talk about the Samaritans. He explained he was not one of the official panel of speakers for the organisation and this was the first time he would speak to the slides he had been given. In fact, he proved so eloquent, informative and entertaining, that he was approached afterwards by members with requests to speak to other groups!

Samaritans was the first 24-hours a day, 365 days a year telephone helpline in the UK. The organisation was founded in 1953 by Rev. Chad Varah, a C of E vicar in the Diocese of London. Chad found there was no support for those experiencing difficult times, or having suicidal thoughts, and following the experience of taking the funeral for a 14 year old girl who had taken her own life because she believed she had contracted an STD when in reality menstruation had begun and she had no prior instruction or education to enlighten her that she was not mortally ill, he decided to act. Samaritans is now a registered charity aimed at providing support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide throughout the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Each branch responds as required to the free access telephone number 116123.

Ted told us that he had been a Samaritan for 27 years, 22 of them as a “listener” (on the telephone) but nowadays he was a Branch Trustee and supporter helping in the administration of the Bromley and Orpington branch, no longer answering the phone. Like everyone else he had undergone a 6 - 8 weeks training course followed by 6 months on the phone under supervision, after which he was awarded his Samaritan number TED798. This was to avoid revealing the actual identity of each “listener” but provided a unique reference to the organisation for any follow up which might ensue. It is important to note that there is a strict code of caller confidentiality, even after the death of a caller. Unless the caller gives consent to pass on information, confidentiality will only be broken in rare cases, such as when Samaritans receive bomb or terrorist warnings, or when there is a safeguarding concern particularly with calls from minors. The expressed aim of every listener is to try and help those in need without judgement or telling them what they should do or not do in their struggles to cope with their life. Volunteers are unpaid and do not provide counselling or advice. There are some 6,500 suicides every year and, as with every call received, confidentiality is only breached if it is believed the caller intends to end their life and has given their location during the call. If this was not the case the Samaritan could be breaking the law by assisting a suicide.

The main “Outreach” activities of the volunteers in the community are in prisons where they train inmates as “Samaritan Listeners”. They give talks in schools; attend music festivals and Crisis at Christmas venues; and give training and post-incident support in a funded Network Rail Partnership to support Network Rail staff.

Ted gave details of his Bromley and Orpington branch, which is located at a house in Orpington (directly opposite Tesco). It has 100 volunteers, received 22,000 calls last year and costs £20-£25,000 a year to run and there is no Central or Local Government financial support. The agreed fee for this excellent talk has been donated to Samaritans.

We are a friendly bunch of retired or semi-retired men, of any faith or none, who enjoy getting together free of the busyness and pressures of regular working life. Why not join us at one of our meetings and enjoy a free cup of tea as you make up your mind to join for the bargain subscription of just £20p.a.? Contact details below.

Allan Evison, HMF Chairman **Graham Marsden**, HMF Secretary

e-mail: Secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org

website: www.hayesmensfellowship.org

HAYES VILLAGE BY JACK CROSS



At the end of April a piece of Hayes history, a painting of Hayes Village by Jack Cross, was gifted to the Old Church Schools by Geoff and Toni Cannell and their family.

'Hayes Village' is a painting by Percy John Cross known as Jack Cross. It was a gift from Geoff's father to his mother on their silver wedding anniversary and now hangs in the foyer of the Old Church Schools. A short unveiling ceremony was performed by Geoff and Reverend Amanda after prayers and a blessing.

After a brief history of the Old Church Schools by Julie, Geoff said a few words about his family's connection to Hayes. Geoff's maternal grandparents lived in Hayes Wood Avenue and when their house was bombed during the Second World War they moved to another house in the same road. His mother Susan married John Cannell in 1957 at St Mary's and they lived in St Mary Cottages where Geoff was born. Geoff's parents had met when they were bellringers and were active worshippers at St Mary's where his grandfather was a sidesman for many years. After his death in 1969 the family presented a brass lectern which is still used on the Lady Chapel altar.

Jean Wilson gave some historical context to the painting. Jack Cross (1906-1988) was a prolific artist, particularly of local scenes and commissions, who lived at 121 Baston Road in the 1970s. Jean said that he had recreated an interesting part of the centre of the village in the early 20th century when the butcher's shop was run by Frances Sands. A little artistic license had been shown to ensure that both the cottage where Geoff was born and the main entrance to the Village School were visible.

The painting is detailed and takes you on a walk down Baston Road towards the village. Showing Hayes around 100 years ago, it adds to the atmosphere of the foyer and is a welcome addition to the OCS, which can be shared with many of our community both now and in the future.

Over tea and cake, Geoff shared some of his father's postcard albums of Hayes and Bromley which were most interesting.

Thank you to Geoff and Toni for their generous donation which will be enjoyed by many.

Julie Clark



THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GEORGE MALLORY ON EVEREST

One hundred years ago, on 8th June 1924, the British mountaineer George Mallory disappeared on Mount Everest. His body was found in 1999.

The man who may have been the first to climb Everest went missing with his fellow climber Andrew (Sandy) Irvine after setting off for the summit and encountering deep snow and high winds. It was the third attempt on the summit by that year's expedition.

Another member of the group claimed to have seen them making progress very close to the summit, but doubt was later cast on this: it was extremely misty, and the timing did not seem to fit. There have always been claims that Mallory and/or Irvine reached the summit and fell on the way down: the condition of Mallory's body lent some credence to this, as did the absence of his wife's photograph, which he always carried with him and intended to place on the summit. Sadly, his camera, which could have provided undeniable proof, was never found. Nor was Irvine's body.

Irvine was inexperienced but strong, and an expert on the use of bottled oxygen. Mallory was regarded as the most skilful climber on the expedition, with a "natural, catlike ability". He came from a long line of clergymen, and his first climbing experience, aged seven, was on the



roof of his father's church, St Wilfrid's, at Mobberley, in Cheshire. When asked on a lecture tour in 1923 why he chose to go to Everest, he replied: "Because it's there."

The expeditions in the 1920s were forced to take a more difficult and longer northern route because of Nepal's refusal to grant access to the southern side of the mountain. Everest was officially first climbed – and safely descended – by Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay using the southern route in 1953.

Tim Lenton - PP Community

ON CALL

The telephone disturbs my sleep
And calls me from my dreams.
A child is sick, I need to go,
He's more sick than it seems.

A cold, damp mist catches my breath
As I walk to my car.
The world is dark and silent now,
The patient's house quite far.

Somewhere within the park perhaps
A bird begins to sing.
His song is like a symphony
That seeks a heart to win.

I feel the only man alive
Although that cannot be.
The cold and gloom just disappear
As this bird sings to me.

I'm glad I left my bed that night
And heard this joyful song.
A blackbird's wondrous, liquid voice
Made my weak heart feel strong.

David Langford

From a poem written in 1974

Photo on p.10 by Tony Archer

**Items for the July magazine by 16th June please. Copy to the Editor.
July magazines will be ready for distribution on 30th June.**

Editor: Clare Wickert, 3 Hayes Garden, Hayes.

Tel: 020 8462 7161 wickerts@hotmail.co.uk

Business Manager: Gordon Barclay, 29 Hurstdene Avenue, Hayes

Tel: 020 8462 2568 gcb Barclay@hotmail.co.uk

Church Website: www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk