

BROMLEY & SHEPPARD'S COLLEGES



February 2026



St Blaise's Well

Bromley's Historic Chalybeate Well – being blessed and dressed on Sunday Feb 1st – *Photo by Mark Vernon*

Welcome

Dear Collegians and Friends,

This week, the first bunches of daffodils were available in the shops, and snowdrops are appearing. Candlemas soon. Christmas seems a long time ago. However, here there are great photos of our Christmas Party, and a certain Mysterious Visitor.



There are holiday pictures, from Rob's trip to India – more to be seen on another occasion.

We are beginning to look forward to Lent, with Paulos and our Crib, and with a Lent book to study from our Chaplain.

We have Colin, a new collegian joining us. Welcome, to Colin.

The next Herald will be for March 2026 and the deadline is Saturday February 28th 2026. Please send contributions to me, preferably by email to: therrevvedbee@hotmail.co.uk.

Thank you to Jo for printing and distributing them, to Rob for his support, and to all our contributors!

Brandy Pearson

From the Chaplain's Window

Dear Friends

As I write this I feel I am in the middle of a King & I song (...getting to know you....) - it is good - as I continue to settle into the rhythms and enjoy the connections of our life together.

Alongside this - In January I had the opportunity to take part in a 4-day training led by The Psychosynthesis Trust which led participants through the dynamics and principles of this method of psychotherapeutic counselling. The founder of this method was Roberto Assagioli - a student of Freud- who like Jung felt that there was more (a lot more) to be said and worked with by considering our lives influenced though the spiritual, metaphysical realm than the analysis model that Freud allowed.

And so hence the name Psychosynthesis. Rather than the pulling apart – or isolating – of different elements of personality that Psychoanalysis requires, there should be a proper regard for the processes of awareness, development and synthesis of experience – particularly in regard to our spiritual lives.

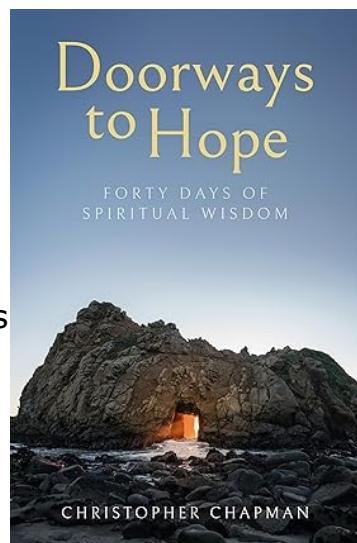
Of course I learned a lot – and much of that is still to be felt and understood, and worked within me. There were insights - particularly of the dynamics present in times of life changes, and developments. It was good, for example, to have the model of a Venn diagram – the area of overlapping circles that enables reflections – and for us to be able to locate where we are now – in the

moving towards or shying away from the inhabiting of a new set of circumstances and hopeful growth. A reflection of behaviours and ways of being that might lead us to a new synthesised place – enabling us to recognise that we are now more at home, or feeling settled, or on the way to healing perhaps – or simply freer.

In the 'staying with and learning from' we might find the confidence to make changes or moves which can enable us and root us. This all sounds very theoretical of course, and dry, but I found it fascinating, helpful and hopeful.

Alongside my work here - I am continuing to offer Spiritual Direction to outside folk who I work with as part of the network of the London Centre for Spiritual Direction (LCSD). I also find this work hopeful and helpful, and the people I work with and accompany online feel held and nourished in their spiritual lives amid the practical concerns of their lives.

During this Lent I am going to read 'Doorways to Hope' by Christopher Chapman who may be known to some. Subtitled 'Forty days of Spiritual Wisdom' it seems a good book to read – and perhaps together, and so I will be inviting others who would like to read it and informally meet weekly during Lent to reflect together on what might have been found helpful. I



will advertise that separately, and how we might gather for an hour a week together - if that's your thing.

It was wonderful to watch the award-winning animated film 'The Flow' - as Brandy's film choice in January - I find that it has stayed with me not just because of its technical prowess or its charm but because of its encouragement to see the life-energy present that we can feel and celebrate (and learn from ?).

Like you - we are noticing the longer days, and looking forward to spring and - who knows - we might find ourselves '.....suddenly bright and breezy.....' ('The King & I 'again). A vital element for us amidst the craziness, horror and pain of the world at present.

With warm wishes and prayers,

Nick



from The King and I (1956)



Our Charity Coffee Morning for February 19th

My daughter Sophie works for a charity in Sheffield called the Snowdrop Project which supports victims of trafficking and modern slavery. They do get some funding from grants but the bulk of the money they need to run the project has to be raised every year.

Looking at their website I was most impressed to see how many amazing volunteers raise large sums of money through running half marathons, climbing Kilimanjaro and parachute jumps! Well, we are not likely to do any of those things, but we can support this charity in our own way. Sophie has done a parachute jump herself but so far hasn't climbed Kilimanjaro!

Clare Preston

About the Snowdrop Project

The Snowdrop Project is a Sheffield-based charity which supports and empowers survivors of modern slavery and exploitation in South Yorkshire to recover from their pasts and rebuild their futures.

Snowdrop provides holistic, long-term, community-based support to survivors so that they can reach a place of independence. Our approach covers all key support needs, including independent living, physical and mental well being, community engagement, education and

employment. We achieve this holistic support through our casework programme, which is based on social work principles, our in-house counselling service, house renovations and community activities.

"Long-term support is crucial for any survivor's recovery. Without it, you may as well not have been rescued at all." – Sabah, Snowdrop Client.

What is modern slavery?

Modern slavery is when an individual is exploited by others, for personal or commercial gain. Modern slavery can include human trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage. Anyone can be a victim of modern slavery, but some people may be more vulnerable than others, due to poverty, health issues or their immigration status.

This is not a historic problem. It's happening here and now in the UK, often hidden in plain sight. People may be being exploited in clothing factories, car washes, nail bars, agricultural jobs or private, domestic settings.

Children can also be exploited. Child trafficking is a crime and a form of child abuse, which should be treated within the context of child protection and safeguarding. Find out more about our work with young people on their website.

It's impossible to know the full extent of modern slavery in the UK, but it's estimated that more than 130,000 people are trapped in slavery in the UK today.

Visit their website for more information.

The Christmas Party

Our Christmas Party took place on December 19th – just before Paul Allton went off to Spain for Christmas, so that he was available to take so many lovely photographs.

We start with pictures of the great variety of “turns” – songs and poems, comic pieces, from Michael Hewitt, Richard Martin, Andrew Grant among other:



On the end wall, we can see the beautiful college Advent Calender, made by Janet Woodger.



Towards the end of the party, the Mystery Visitor arrived. It was Father Christmas, or possibly Santa Claus, with presents for everyone. Personally, I'm sure I've seen him somewhere before?



As well as those who provided the entertainment, there were so many people who provided the refreshments, set up the tables and aided Santa in his work.

Thank you to everyone who made it such a success.

Brandy Pearson



The Story of the Nativity

Saint Francis of Assisi created the first Christmas Nativity scene, or crib, in a cave in Greccio, Italy, on Christmas Eve 1223, using real people, straw, and animals (an ox and ass) to bring the humble birth of Jesus to life for villagers, a living re-enactment meant to inspire deeper devotion to the Incarnation.

Mary Kemp knitted our set of crib figures, including wise men, camels, sheep and donkey. For the last few years, Paul Jenkins has arranged them for us, on the front seats in the chapel. This year, He has been particularly creative, and is culminating with the Candlemas visit of the Holy Family to the Temple in Jerusalem.

It has been such a joy to follow the Holy Family from Christmas Eve all the way to Candlemas.



The stable at the inn, where the innkeeper stores his stock, awaiting the Holy Family.



The three wise men following the star. Making their way across the desert on the other side of the chapel.



As we approach Candlemas, Paulos has recreated the Temple in Jerusalem, and the Stable has been

reimagined as a carpenter's workshop – where crosses are made – looking forward to Lent

Thank you to Paulos, making such imaginative use of Mary Kemp's lovely knitted figures,

Brandy Pearson

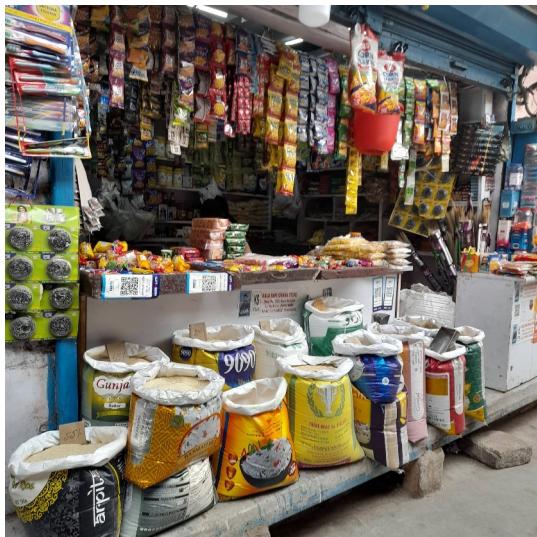


Rob's Indian Adventure

During January, Rob and our daughter Alex went to India with "Intrepid Travel", visiting various places in North India.

Here are a couple of photos: a market in Delhi, the bank of the Ganges at Varanasi, and, on the back cover, the Taj Mahal.

Brandy Pearson





The Taj Mahal photo by Rob Pearson

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