



## Christmas in the Team

### Christmas at St Matthias

The 2021 Christmas celebrations at St Matthias began with the arrival of our Christmas tree, delivered and settled in to the stand in spectacular style by two men elegantly dressed in kilts! Despite the ongoing uncertainties of the living through the pandemic, church has continued to cautiously open up little by little, and with a good deal of planning and forward thinking we felt able to welcome Vineyard School back to church for their carol services once again. Christmas just isn't the same without a nativity or two, and over the course of the last week of term the children blessed us with some beautiful singing and a thoughtful re-telling of the Christmas story.



*Christingle making at St Matthias*

Revd Anne Crawford

On the 19 December we held our evening Carols by Candlelight service, and although we had to limit numbers to keep everyone safe the turnout was encouraging, and even in masks it was wonderful to sing carols once again in church. On Christmas Eve we took the decision to hold two



*Marking out the entrance to St Matthias with a piece of blessed chalk*

Revd Anne Crawford

smaller Christingle services instead of our usual much larger single version, and so at 3pm and 5pm we welcomed people through the doors and handed out the carefully prepared Christingle oranges. Preparing for a Christingle service requires a great team effort and fuelled by chocolate biscuits and plenty of coffee, the St Matthias Christingle factory soon got into its stride and there were enough oranges to go around.

... continued on page 4

### In this issue

<b>Christmas at St Matthias</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Christmas at St John the Divine</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Christmas at St Mary Magdalene</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Team Service for Candlemas</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Parish Rooms</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Oxford House in Bethnal Green</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Stir Up Sunday</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Lights at Kew</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>The Queen</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Richmond Team Ministry</b>	<b>8</b>



# Christmas at St John the Divine



*The joys of making a Christingle*

Sarah Percival

well enough in many ways, but obviously had its limitations. So it was really good to be back in person this Christmas, as we heard the familiar story once more - with just a bit of a twist –as Fiona pointed out the Nativity characters in the St John's crib, and we sang some carols, with Ben at the piano. Mary explained the symbolism of the Christingle, and demonstrated how to make one, and then people took little bags away with everything needed to make their own Christingle at home.

In 2020, we had been forced to cancel our traditional Saturday teatime **Service of Words and Music for Christmas**, but it was back this year! There was excellent participation from members of the congregation in reading Bible passages and poems, and wonderful music from Ben and our loyal and talented choir. Although there was no post-service mulled wine or other refreshments this time, it was all very much appreciated by those who came.

The annual **Blue Christmas Service** on 20 December – a small, quiet gathering for people who, for any number of reasons in a particular year, find Christmas a difficult prospect - was the final event before the central services of Midnight Mass (with Ruth Martin as our preacher) and the Christmas Morning Eucharist, both of which were joyful and celebratory.

*A busy season - and a happy one, despite another challenging year dominated by Covid-19. Thank you to everyone for their contribution.*

**Revd Neil Summers**

Although Christmas 2021 at St John the Divine was not quite back to pre-pandemic normality, it was certainly a major step forward over the previous year. We were very glad to be able to hold a range of our own church services as well as hosting a number of Christmas events for local schools (Falcons Prep. for Boys, and Old Vicarage) and other organisations.

The season began early, on 4 December, with a concert by **Concordia Voices**, old friends of St John's, returning for their first engagement here since before the lockdowns. They presented a mixed programme of seasonal sacred and secular music and were joined by members of Surrey Brass.

In a new addition to our regular programme, **Sanders Funeral Directors** asked if they could hold their **Christmas Memorial Service** here this time. They invite families and friends of people who have died during the year to a service of readings and carols, with a brief homily and some time for quiet, prayerful remembrance and the lighting of commemorative candles. There was a good congregation of all ages for this reflective and moving occasion. It was lovely that staff from Sanders read the Nativity story from the Gospels and assisted in the liturgy, and that Gill sang stirring solo descants from the choir stalls!

Our own **Children's Nativity and Christingle** on 12 December was another very special occasion. In 2020, we had been confined to Zoom, which worked



*Nativity at St John the Divine*

Revd Neil Summers



# Christmas at St Mary Magdalene

In the run up to the Christmas services there was a little nervousness because of the new omicron variant of covid and the possibility that, yet again, we could be subject to restrictions. In events all was well, St Mary's Christmas 2021 services, as with those of St Matthias and St John the Divine, were a source of joy, comfort and hope.

The church looked beautiful. Nests of candles and flowers greeting one at the door, more candles down the nave, the Christmas tree beside the high altar sparkling and magical, the crib in front of the nave altar, and colourful flower displays. Soaring high across the church were individual small stars of gold and silver card with messages and prayers that people had written on the back – stars of hope. Shimmering and glowing these reflected all the colours and lights in the church like a large kaleidoscope.

Getting into the Christmas spirit our old friends the Regimental Band of the Honourable Artillery Company came to St Mary's on Saturday 11 December to give a concert of Christmas carols and other festive works. This was preceded by the band playing carols outside Richmond Station. A further musical treat was the service of Nine Lessons and Carols on 19 December beautifully performed by the choir and Choral and Organ scholars. The power of music during all these months of covid has really helped us to get through difficult times. And on both 18 and 19 December St Mary's continued its new tradition of outdoor singing in the churchyard by singing carols and collecting for the Children's Society.

Two Christingle services were held on Christmas Eve at 3pm and 5 pm, again with a collection for the Children's Society and much fun was had in making the Christingles. It was such an improvement that unlike 2020, these services were in person ones.

Despite heavy rain worshippers turned out later that day for Midnight Mass which was a very moving service, and followed the next morning by the All Age Eucharist service on Christmas Day. Through live streaming people far and wide were able to follow these services and those who were physically at the services were very conscious of the greater congregation and our sense of community with them. Looking back at all these services Canon Wilma Roest said *"Christmas 2021 brought us glimmers of hope, of love and of community. The reminder that God Emmanuel came into a messy,*

*complex, uncertain world 2000 years ago spoke strongly to us, as our world today is equally messy. Yet, we were able to receive once again the Light of the World, even in the present darkness. For that we say, 'Thanks be to God'."*



*Christmas Tree and Stars*

Revd Canon Wilma Roest



*Crib and Stars*

Revd Canon Wilma Roest

# Team Service at St Mary Magdalene for Candlemas

On 30 January the congregations gathered for a Team Service at St Mary Magdalene at 10.30 am to celebrate Candlemas or The Presentation in the Temple. The church was still vibrant with all the Christmas decorations as these had been kept all through Epiphany. The Presentation in the Temple tells the story of how, at the age of 40 days. The



*Simeon in the Temple by Rembrandt van Rijn 1669*  
National Museum, Stockholm

This painting was the last of Rembrandt's works and was unfinished at his death. Subsequently a member of Rembrandt's studios painted a woman standing next to Simeon but it is not clear whether this figure is Anna or Mary, the mother of Jesus.

baby Jesus was taken by his parents to the temple in accordance with Jewish custom, to give thanks for his birth. It was also customary to make a sacrifice, usually of a lamb or a young goat, or, if the parents were poor like Mary and Joseph, a pair of turtle doves. An old very devout man Simeon was visiting the temple that day and it had been revealed to him in the past by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Taking the baby Jesus into his arms he gave thanks and said the words which now begin the Nunc Dimittis 'Lord now let Thy servant depart in peace according to your words for my eyes have seen your salvation'. Also in the temple was Anna, an elderly widow who lived there permanently, devoting her life to prayer, and who, seeing baby Jesus, praised God for the child and spread the news of his birth.

The congregation had been given a candle as they entered the church. At the end of the service the candles were lit and blessed, the clergy processed down the nave to the font by the West Door as the choir sang the Nunc Dimittis. Then, holding up the lit candles the congregation joined in with the final responsory prayers. Finally the organ played Widor's Toccata, that well known but always exhilarating piece of music. Afterwards the congregation met for coffee, greeting friends from across the three churches, many of whom they had not seen for some time. It was almost like pre-pandemic times and we hope that the move to normality will grow stronger in the weeks and months to come.

The theme of Candlemas also reminds us of the important role of the elderly members of our congregations and all that they have to offer from their experiences of life and their wisdom.

## Christmas at St Matthias - continued

We continued our Christmas celebrations with a not-the-midnight Mass at 9pm on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day we worshipped together in Eucharist at 10am, grateful that we were all together and unlike last year, able to celebrate with our loved ones around the table.

### Epiphany Blessings

St Matthias brought its Christmas celebrations to an end at the Feast of the Epiphany with a joyous celebration of the Eucharist and the traditional blessing of chalk. At the end of the service the congregation gathered outside at the West door, and Emma, a member of our Junior church, marked out the entrance with a special prayer, using the chalk blessed earlier in the service. People were invited to take home a piece of blessed chalk and mark the doorway of their homes with the same prayer and blessing:

20 + C + M + B + 22

This is an ancient custom which until recently has been more-or-less forgotten in Anglican churches. As it

becomes more popular an explanation of the marking is helpful: The year is marked at the beginning and end of the blessing, along with three letters C, M, B, the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Those same initials also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, which means "May Christ bless this house."

The prayer of blessing was especially relevant this new year as we learn to live with covid uncertainty and so many of us continue to work as well as rest and worship at home:

Visit, O blessed Lord this home  
with the gladness of your presence.

Bless all who enter here with the gift of your grace,  
and grant that we may manifest your love to each other  
and to all whose lives we touch.

May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you;  
guide, comfort and strengthen us in peace  
O Jesus Christ our Lord, now and for ever. Amen.



# The Parish Rooms - Their History and their Future

by Elspeth Fearn

At the Sunday morning services on 23 January across the churches, a leaflet was available giving an update on the plan to convert the Parish Rooms in Church Walk into a Parish Centre for RTM. In the afternoon the Parish Rooms themselves were opened up for three hours so people could revisit them in the light of the latest plans which now reflect input from heritage consultants and the Borough Conservation Officer amongst others.

There is a connection between the Parish Rooms and St Mary Magdalene going back to at least 1786. Mr Clement Smith, the then owner of the bow-fronted house which contains the Rooms, was a former clerk to the Parish Trustees and also clerk to the Vestry to whom he let some of the rooms. At this stage they were known as the Church Rooms. The Vestry later moved out to their own building, but Mr Smith's successors, as owners, continued to let the property to a wide variety of tenants on through the nineteenth century. For example, tenants included a savings bank, a boot and shoe repairer, a saddler, the Salem Baptists, and the Parish Beadle. One of the first and longest occupants was the Office of the Richmond Bridge Commissioners who administered, under a tontine scheme, the tolls payable by travellers using Richmond Bridge. The rooms were also used by many schools including infant schools run by Dr George Charles Julius and Mr Charles Bean in the 1830s and 1840s.



*The Parish Rooms have a long history and connections to many interesting people over nearly 240 years. Their future in the years ahead looks bright*

Elspeth Fearn

In 1904 major works were completed at St Mary's in memory of a much-loved priest, Canon Charles Tickell Proctor, Vicar of Richmond from 1867-1900. These works were the rebuilding of the east end of the church with a new chancel, side chapels and stained glass windows. It was also hoped to build a new choir vestry but funds ran out. The area around the churchyard, its alleyways and nearby Red Lion Street were by this time very rundown, full of lodging houses and other poor properties. So, in order 'to protect the integrity of the church' as the then vicar Revd Max Binney described it, the Parish in 1905 purchased the Church Rooms and houses to the side. Having spent everything on the Proctor memorial, the purchase money had to be borrowed on mortgage from a wealthy parishioner Mr Dalgarno Robinson. It was at this stage that the name of the rooms was changed to the Parish Rooms and began to be administered by the Church Walk Trust.

In the mid-1930s the Trust and the Parish was at last in the financial position of being able to modernise the Parish Rooms and to demolish the adjoining houses. At No 8 Church Walk, what is now Church Cottage was built, and it and the refurbished Parish Rooms were dedicated in October 1938. The Parish Rooms were later modernised again in the 1960s and now we look forward to further changes.

The Parish Centre will include space for the Parish Office, which will move there once the Ormond Road Vicarage is



*View in 1901 of the old houses in Church Walk, next to the Parish Rooms, which were bought up by the parish in 1905. They were demolished in the mid 1930s and replaced by Church Cottage*

Richmond upon Thames Local Studies Library LCF/14

sold by the Diocese. The centre will include large and small meeting rooms which will be open for hire for meetings, a kitchen, and also toilets on both floors. There will be full accessibility to all areas and disability compliant facilities. A very important part of this will be a lift to the first floor. Many of us remember the difficulty some parishioners had in the old days climbing the stairs to have coffee after church. The use of the front courtyard will also be maximised through folding glass doors with tables and chairs for use during the day for a whole range of social activities. The facilities provided by the modernisation of the Parish Rooms and their central location will have immense benefits, not just for RTM but also for the community of Richmond as a whole.

The PCC at their recent meeting has now approved unanimously the revised proposals and a planning application will be made in due course to the Council.

# Oxford House in Bethnal Green

by Elspeth Fearn



*Reredos at Oxford House Chapel*

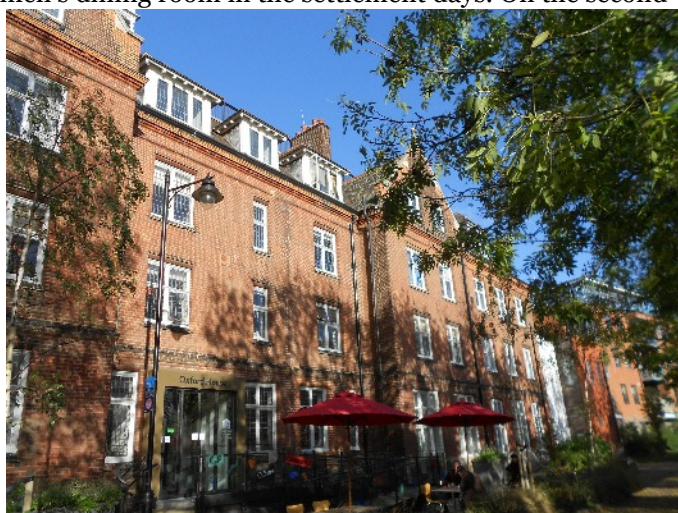
Elspeth Fearn

The Team Talk edition for Spring 2018 contained my article called 'Going Slumming: The Settlement Movement and the East End of London'. This Victorian movement encouraged young Oxford undergraduates to settle in the East End for a year at a time, undertaking social work, running youth clubs, boxing clubs and labour exchanges, and providing soup kitchens - essentially early welfare state provisions - all to help the local destitute population. Oxford House off Bethnal Green Road was a leading settlement house founded in 1884 in association with Keble College, Oxford, who sought to revive the Catholic heritage of the Church of England and encouraged High Church spirituality alongside social care. Many of the young men were considering ordination.

By 1891 sufficient funds had been raised for purpose built accommodation which was designed by architect Sir Arthur Blomfield (who also carried out major works in our St Mary Magdalene in 1865-66). The Grade II listed building is in 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> century style domestic architecture with mullion windows and diamond paned leaded lights and attic dormers.

Oxford House carried on with its work into the twentieth century but the First World War resulted in the effective end of the settlement movement as all the young men who might have been involved had gone to war and many had died. So Oxford House developed new links and activities in the local area. Gandhi came to the UK in 1931 for the Indian Round Table Conference and visited Oxford House, making an impromptu speech through a mullioned window to the crowds below. In the Second World War the basement became an air raid shelter. Bethnal Green being heavily bombed in the Blitz. After the war the building was used for various purposes for many years but eventually money was raised to restore the building.

'When I wrote my 2018 article, Oxford House was closed for this work, but has opened since the end of the last lockdown.. Before Christmas I went on a guided tour of the building, which is owned and run by a charity. It now houses a community arts space with a theatre, dance studios, a cafe, and facilities that can be hired including meeting rooms. The tour began in the cafe, which had been the young men's dining room in the settlement days. On the second and third floors were corridors of single rooms which had been their bedrooms. The building is topped by an open air roof terrace with stunning views of the tall buildings of the City of London in one direction and those of Canary Wharf in the other. We also looked at items from the Oxford House archive. The most inspiring part of the day for me, however, was visiting the largely hidden third floor chapel noted for its art and craftsmanship. It has a painting of the Crucifixion by Alford Usher Soord (1868-1915) which is set into a brightly painted Gothic tracery reredos and a fine Neo-Jacobean oak screen. The chapel has a very special atmosphere and I felt privileged to visit it. In conclusion, Oxford House has served East End needs from its very beginning. That role continues now but in a more modern way to suit our changing times.



*Oxford House Today*

Elspeth Fearn



## Stir Up Sunday and the Christmas Pudding

People will have enjoyed their Christmas Pudding as part of the festive meal. These days many puddings will have been bought from a shop, but in the past a home made pudding was the norm and the whole family would take part in making it. A long standing tradition in this connection is that the pudding should be made on Stir Up Sunday, the last Sunday in November, which gives the pudding time to mature before Christmas Day and then to be reheated on the day. For similar reasons Christmas Cake and mincemeat would be made at the same time.

Stir Up Sunday takes its name from the beginning of the collect for the day from the Book of Common Prayer 'Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people.' This collect was to prepare the congregation for Advent and to stir them up to be mindful of the season and all it means. Traditionally there would be 13 ingredients in the pudding representing Jesus and his 12 disciples and would include dried fruits, treacle, suet, eggs and dark brown sugar. Members of the family would take it in turns to stir the pudding and make a wish for the year to come and a coin or two would sometimes be added. Stirring was always done from an east to west direction, to signify the journey of the Three Kings. Finally, on Christmas Day the pudding would be served topped up with a sprig of holly to represent Christ's crown of thorns.



---

*Christmas Pudding*  
No-longer here by Pixaby

## Christmas Lights at Kew 2021



---

*'Cathedral'*  
Elspeth Fearn



---

*Tree Decorated by Kew's Horticultural Students*  
Elspeth Fearn

## The Queen



Sunday 6 February 2022 was Accession Day, marking 70 years since the Queen acceded to the throne following the premature death of her father, King George VI. She has now reigned longer than any other British monarch in history. At the Sunday services that day across the Team, prayers were said for the Queen and the National Anthem was sung. The Queen is the Defender of the Faith and also Supreme Governor of the Church of England but it is her personal and very deep Christian faith that has been evident throughout her life. In 1952 for her first Christmas broadcast and anticipating her Coronation the following year she said 'Pray for me that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making and that I may faithfully serve Him and you all all the days of my life.' Her life has been one of immense service for which we give thanks.

---

*HM The Queen visiting HM Ocean at Devonport in 2015*  
Joel Rose, Ministry of Defence and Nagaul Design



Richmond  
Team Ministry

# Who's who?

**Team Rector and Vicar, St Mary Magdalene:**

The Revd Canon Wilma Roest

T: 020 8940 0362

E: rector@richmondteamministry.org

**Team Vicar, St Matthias:**

The Revd Anne Crawford

T: 020 8940 7462

E: anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org

**Team Vicar, St John the Divine:**

The Revd Neil Summers

T: 020 8332 1838

E: neil.summers@richmondteamministry.org

**Curate, Richmond Team Ministry:**

The Revd Charlie Smith

T: 07746 695637

E: charlie.smith@richmondteamministry.org

**Self Supporting Ministers:**

The Revd Dr Andrew Williams

E: andrew.williams.london@gmail.com

**Reader:**

Ruth Martin

T: 020 8948 4458 E: ruthtea304@hotmail.com

**Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary (SPA):**

Sue Eastaugh

T: 020 8943 9137 E: sue@eastaugh.net

**Children & Young People's Ministry Leader:**

Vacant

**Property & Facilities Manager:**

Ronan Mulcahy

T: 020 8948 1725

E: property.manager@richmondteamministry.org

**Caretaker/Verger:**

James Nicholson

T: 07739 975666

E: verger@richmondteamministry.org

**Parish Administrator:**

Tina Roberts, Parish Office, The Vicarage,  
Ormond Road, Richmond TW10 6TH

T: 020 8940 0362

E: admin@richmondteamministry.org

**Bookings Administrator:**

Liz Roberts, Parish Office, The Vicarage,  
Ormond Road, Richmond TW10 6TH

T: 020 8940 4905

E: bookings@richmondteamministry.org

**Safeguarding:**

Judy Wright T: 020 8940 5786

E: judytwright1@gmail.com

**TEAMtalk Editorial Board:**

Elsbeth Fearn, Heather Montford, Mary Ricketts

Any enquiries/comments:

E: teamtalk@richmondteamministry.org

**Website:** richmondteamministry.org



*St John the Divine*



*St Mary Magdalene*



*St Matthias*

## Our Churches