

Thursday 26 January 2023

Dear Friends,

We are almost at the halfway point between the shortest day and the Spring equinox, the moment when Winter gives way to Spring. The days are beginning to lengthen a little, and the first snowdrops – Candlemas Bells – are already peeping through the frozen earth and in some milder areas of the garden beginning to open. Despite the bitterly cold weather of recent days, spring is in the air, and this weekend as we celebrate the Feast of Candlemas, the Church's focus turns away from the crib and the events surrounding Jesus' birth towards Lent. The readings appointed for our worship on Sunday, and the traditional candle-lit procession to the Font at the end of the service, will point us to the cross and the journey ahead as we enter a new season of the Church's year. It is an ancient and lovely tradition to bless candles during the Eucharist, both those used in church services and those used personally at home, and as we give thanks for the birth of Jesus – the Light to lighten the gentiles - we give thanks too for the hardworking bees who produce the wax to make the candles used in worship. Country folklore has it that if the weather is fine on Candlemas Day (2 February) then the beehives will be productive and healthy for the rest of the year.

Considering the part that bees have played in the Church's liturgical life down the ages, especially at Candlemas, and as we prepare to turn away from the crib and turn towards the cross at our Team Eucharist on Sunday, I am reminded of the beautiful words of the Exultet, the ancient song which accompanies the lighting of the Paschal Candle at the Easter Vigil as we welcome the Light of Christ in to church. The song ends:

*Night truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,
peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth
and all creation reconciled to you.*

*Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering,
This wax, the work of bees and the hands of your ministers.
As we gaze upon the splendour of this flame
fed by melting wax conceived by mother bee,
grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.*

*For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!*

Amen.

Please do feel free to bring candles from home to be blessed during the Team Eucharist on Sunday morning at St Matthias (10.30am start!). It's a lovely thing to do and will make our celebration of Candlemas extra special.

With prayers and blessings from the clergy team,

Anne, Charlie, and Wilma

This week the letter has been written by Revd Anne Crawford

Please pray for:

...**Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank and the Anglican Church in Beirut; also for the peace of Jerusalem

...**Christ Church**, the Anglican Church in Kyiv, and the people of Ukraine

...**Christ's School**, for all staff and students

...**the sick and those in need** – Charles Stiller, Cedric Lee, Suzie Cox, Liz Velluet, Marc Cranfield-Adams, Duncan Ogilvy, Peter O'Toole, Hermione Lockyer, Cath Cook, Jo Carroll, Susan Koehler Gross
...**the departed, may they rest in peace** – Revd John Hambidge

Please note that the **Prayer List is renewed at the beginning of each month**. If you would like to add someone's name, please ensure you have their agreement, if at all possible.

Church Services:

St John the Divine's Sunday service at 11.00am is both in-person and live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#) **(no 11.00am service this Sunday, 29 January – Team Service at St Matthias, please see below)**. St John's midweek service takes place on Tuesday evenings with half an hour of quiet contemplation focused on the Blessed Sacrament at 6.30pm, followed by the Said Eucharist at 7.00pm.

St Mary Magdalene's Sunday services are at 8.00am, 9.30am, **(no 9.30am service this Sunday, 29 January – Team Service at St Matthias, please see below)** 11.30am (third Sunday only) and 6.30pm. The 9.30am service will also be live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#). During the week there is a Said Eucharist at 10.00am on Wednesdays.

From Sunday 12 February, services will be live-streamed on YouTube. This is to make our services accessible to everyone without requiring a login. You will be able to watch services here https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGztGtj9x_Vm5tQw2kwPFfA from 12 February onwards. You can subscribe to the YouTube Channel if you wish to but there is no requirement for you to do so. The link to YouTube will be posted on Facebook on Sunday mornings.

St Matthias' 9.30am Sunday service is an in-person service **(service at 10.30am this Sunday, 29 January, please see below)**. The midweek Eucharist at St Matthias is held on Thursdays at 10.00am.

Orders of service / readings for all three churches can be found on the News page of our website – here: <https://richmondteamministry.org/news/>

This Sunday, 29 January, there will be a **Team Candlemas Service** at St Matthias at 10.30am, all are welcome. There will be no 11.00am service at St John the Divine or 9.30am service at St Mary Magdalene (there will be 8.00am Holy Communion and 6.30pm Choral Evensong as normal).

Private Prayer:

St Mary Magdalene is open for private prayer on Saturdays between 10.00am and 12.00noon, when you can light a candle and reflect or meditate. The church is also open Monday – Friday, from 8.00am until 3.00pm.

During the vacancy period, St John the Divine will be open for the regular services on Sunday morning and Tuesday evening, as well as for Morning Prayer at 8.30am on Tuesdays. It is also normally open to visitors on Saturday mornings between 10.00am-12.00noon.

Morning Prayer, Monday – Fridays, at 8.30am:

Morning Prayer takes place in church and on Zoom. We meet at St Mary Magdalene on Mondays, at St John the Divine on Tuesdays, at St Mary Magdalene on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and at St Matthias on Fridays.

On Zoom, Monday – Thursday:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88554825313?pwd=cVVLdFkrUy95MFU4OTVld3hNNi9tUT09>

Meeting ID: 885 5482 5313

Passcode: 410548

and on Fridays:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81983343470?pwd=ejVpVnB4d3VGdkFtVWjl2c2tTOC9XUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 8334 3470

Passcode: FriPrayer

Church, Community and other news:

Really urgent: We need a Bookings Administrator

We are looking for a Bookings Administrator who will help us with booking enquiries for our churches and halls. The post is for two days per week (around 10 – 12 hours) and requires good computer skills, a willingness to deal with many enquiries and an understanding of the life of the church. If you are interested or would like to know more, please get in touch with either [Tina](#) or [Wilma](#). [The Job description and Application form can be found here](#). If this is not for you, you may know someone who is looking for work? Please pass on the information!

Foundation Governor at Christ's School

Following a recent resignation there is a space for a foundation governor, appointed by the Richmond Team Ministry PCC, on the Governing Body of Christ's School. Do you have a passion for education, young people and a school in our local community? Could you give some time and your own expertise? Please [get in touch with Wilma](#) for more info.

The next **recital at St Mary Magdalene will be on Saturday 4 February at 12.30pm**. Alex Knight, our Director of Music at St Mary Magdalene, will play Johann Sebastian Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G minor (BWV 542), César Franck's Fantaisie in A major and Jean Langlais' Triptyque (1. Melody, 2. Trio, 3. Final).

Preparing for First Communion

We are planning an Admission to Holy Communion course and would love to hear of young people, age 7 and over, who are interested. There will be 4 sessions with Admission on Mothering Sunday, 19 March 2023. The course will take place on 4 Saturday afternoons at 4.00pm.

On 25 February we will talk about baptism. This will take place at St Matthias.

The session on 4 March will have a focus on the Bible. Venue tbc.

The 11 March will be about Prayer and Worship and

18 March will be about the Eucharist and receiving Communion.

Do speak to a member of the clergy for more information or if you want to confirm a place.

St Mary Magdalene Choir on tour

The choir from SMM will be joining forces with the choir of Queens' College Cambridge on Sunday 12 February, in the college chapel. A coach will leave Richmond at 1.00pm and there is space for around 10 – 15 people who would like to come along without singing. The cost of the coach will be £20pp. There may be the opportunity to stay for formal dinner after Evensong, which will cost around £20pp. If you are interested, please let Wilma or Alex know as soon as possible. We will be back in Richmond at around 11.00pm. There will be no Choral Evensong at St Mary Magdalene that day, but Evening Prayer will be said.

Ash Wednesday 22 February

There will be two Ash Wednesday services, both at St Mary Magdalene this year. At 10am and at 8pm, both with Imposition of Ashes. In order to make ashes, we need Palm Crosses – please return them to your church in good time for ash making on Tuesday 21 February.

Lent Lectures 2023: Doing justice, loving kindness, walking humbly with God

On Wednesday evenings (7.30pm at St Mary Magdalene) during Lent we will have the opportunity to listen to a series of talks about social justice, theology, and hope. Nelly Misenga, The Revd Dr Tina Beardsley, Ash Brockwell, Jack Edwards, and The Revd Canon Tim Goode will be coming to speak to us about racism, poverty, gender identity, ecology, and disability. All are welcome! We'll listen, ask questions, and pray Compline together.

Understanding Islam

Dr Chris Hewer has kindly agreed to give an 'Understanding Islam - the Basics' one day course on Saturday the 11 February 10.00am to 4.00pm at The Parish Rooms, 6 Church Walk, Paradise Road, Richmond TW9 1SN. The course is free but donations will be welcome to help cover costs. Tea/coffee/biscuits will be available but please bring your own lunch. If you are interested please [register with Diana Mills](#), or phone/text 07804 866349.

Richmond Team Ministry Away Weekend 20-22 October 2023 at Wychcroft Retreat Centre.

There will be opportunities for worship, bible study, prayer and reflection, as well as socialising and getting to know one another better. We will be reflecting on the Psalms. Wychcroft is situated in the countryside and provides everything which we will need including a chapel, delicious food, and 23 bedrooms. There are 36 places available. Costs are £200 for the whole weekend, with a £50 deposit required to hold your place. If you would like to join us, please [complete the booking form available here](#) and return it to [Charlie via email](#) or in person. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. So, please submit your form and pay your deposit asap. Sadly, on this occasion, we are unable to offer a children's program. Please contact Charlie with any questions.

Upcoming meetings

PCC Mission Action Planning Day: Saturday 28 January 10.00am – 3.00pm at St Matthias

SMM Church Committee: Monday 20 February, 7.30pm

May Fair is back! On Saturday 13 May 2023

After being absent for a few years, it is good to hear that the May Fair will be back on Richmond Green and that local charities will be once again at the heart of the fair. It will be a community event, for one day only. There will be a satellite venue in and around St Mary Magdalene, where the May Fair started originally. We are looking for a small group of people who are willing to coordinate the event at St Mary Magdalene. The plans are that there will be music in church (organists, soloists, small groups – a sort of open mic event), a book stall, a plant and produce stall and simple refreshments with tables and chairs outside. Can you help? [Do let Wilma know!](#)

Prayer for Martin Gainsborough, Bishop designate of Kingston to be consecrated on Thursday 2 February at Canterbury Cathedral:

Heavenly Father, our Shepherd and Guide
We thank you for the appointment
of your servant, Martin Gainsborough,
as bishop designate of Kingston.

May your Holy Spirit give him
your gifts of wisdom and strength,
gentleness and compassion,
as he prepares to take up his role as our pastor and teacher.
May he be a shepherd after your own heart,
who will love you, walk with Jesus and be filled with the Spirit.
May he be a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth,
Christ centred and outward focussed.

As Bishop designate Martin gets ready to make his home among us,
may we welcome him joyfully into our Diocesan community,
and together bear witness to Christ
and the building up of your kingdom.
We ask this through your Son Jesus Christ,
Amen.

Bishop Martin will be coming to Richmond on **Sunday 5 March**, when we will welcome him in a Team Service at St Mary Magdalene. The service will be at 10.30am (instead of 9.30am).

Planned Giving

Last year we introduced the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). Many thanks to those of you have joined the scheme. If you are still making regular donations by standing order, envelope or GiveALittle, please do switch to PGS if you are able to. This will help us enormously by reducing the amount of administration and significantly improving our cashflow. If you have any questions, please [contact Jackie Harrison](#) or 07747 111525.

With best wishes,
Tina

Tina Roberts
Parish Administrator
Working remotely on Mondays and Tuesdays, 9.00am – 5.00pm
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Working in the Office on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9.00am – 5.00pm
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Richmond Team Ministry
St Mary Magdalene • St Matthias • St John the Divine
www.richmondteamministry.org

Registered Charity No 1130018

Our Privacy Notice can be viewed at: <https://richmondteamministry.org/gdpr/>



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[Click here for St Mary Magdalene's Facebook page](#)



[Click here for the Team Rector's Twitter feed](#)