Richmond
Team Ministry

TEAMtalk
Summer 2024

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Alban Pilgrimage

The pilgrims at Richmond station

The Alban pilgrimage is held each year in the city of St Albans on the Saturday nearest to the feast day of St Alban on 22 June. It is an event much celebrated by the city and the many people who come from both home and abroad and commemorates St Alban's life (circa 209-305 AD). He was the first recorded British Christian martyr, a Romano British citizen who lived in Verulamium - (modern St Albans). Alban sheltered a Christian priest Amphibalus fleeing persecution and took his place wearing Amphibalus' cloak whilst the latter escaped. Arrested at once and despite heavy pressure, Alban refused to recant on the Christian beliefs that Amphibalus had taught him saying' I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things'. He was sentenced to death by beheading and was martyred on the site of what is now St Albans Cathedral. His shrine became an important place of pilgrimage and all these centuries later continues to provide spiritual inspiration. Roses are the symbol of St Alban ' Among the roses of the martyrs brightly shines St Alban'.

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Alban Pilgrimage - continued

Red Rose - Wiki Commons Library

Bishop Guli and Revd Anne before the service - Jutta Raftery

RTM Pilgrims in the Cathedral - Revd Anne Crawford

The day begins with a large procession through the town stopping to re-enact parts of the Alban story. It includes children dressed as roses, as stained glass windows, as water representing the miraculous springs which welled up as St Alban died and as mini Roman centurions. Also taking part are Cathedral and Diocesan clergy and pilgrims from UK churches carrying colourful tall banners. A major role in the telling of the story are the puppets 12 feet high who represent important people in the story such as Alban, Amphibalus and the Magistrate. This year two new puppets joined the procession representing the Cathedral's own breeding pair of peregrine falcons Alban and Boudica. They have returned to nest in the roof for a third year and have produced three chicks. The procession ends outside the Cathedral where the final part of the Alban story is enacted – his execution. This is followed by the Festival Eucharist service inside the Cathedral, and which ended the first part of the day.

RTM Pilgrims had been to the Pilgrimage in past years but because of covid it could not be held for a while. Although the Pilgrimage went ahead again in 2023, a train strike that year meant that not everyone, including those from RTM, could get to St Albans. So it was with hope for a better outcome that the RTM pilgrims gathered at Richmond station at 8.30 am on the Saturday morning and travelled by train to St Albans via West Hampstead.

Arriving at St Albans the heavens opened but a cafe visit had already been planned and by the time the party emerged the skies had cleared of rain. They then joined the procession walking to the Cathedral.

The sermon for the Eucharist service was given by the Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani, the Bishop of Chelmsford whom many may remember from her days in Richmond when her husband the Revd Lee Francis-Dahqani was vicar at St Matthias. In her sermon Bishop Guli said that the courage of martyrs touches us deeply. It is they not us who have understood what it is to be fully and truly human. In this connection she spoke movingly of her own family's history - part of the small Persian church community devastated by the Iranian Islamic Revolution, her brother Bahram aged 24 assassinated by the authorities as a scapegoat for his father the Rt Revd Hassan Dehqani Tafti Bishop of the Church in Iran. The family were forced to came to this

'The Shrine of St Alban - Revd Anne Crawford

Alban being taken to court - Valerie Reading Kitchen

country as refugees.

During the afternoon our RTM pilgrims were free to have lunch, to explore St Albans which is a very interesting town and there were also various activities in Verulamium Park close to the Cathedral. Finally at 4 pm the last event of the day, the Festival Evensong, a moving service which concludes with the congregation filing either side of the High Altar and in to the Shrine of St Albans over which they throw their red roses in homage to this great Saint. As always it was a very inspiring day.

Alban at the High Altar in the Cathedral - Revd Anne Crawford

Children dressed as red roses - Jutta Raftery

Peregrine Falcon puppet - Valerie Reading Kitchen

The Magistrate on the Balcony condemning Alban to death' - Jutta Raftery

My Faith Journey

Emma Smellie - Children and Young People's Ministry Leader

This year has been full of new things: new community, a new place to live, a new job and new friends. It's been such a blessing. I am aware, however, that due to my often-busy schedule, some people don't know much about me. Therefore, when I was approached to write an article, I thought that it was important that as well as discussing my work, I said a bit about me especially in my experience in church as a young person. I hope when you read this you find out something new about my faith, my work, and my hopes for the future.

What did faith mean to me growing up?

My family had always been church goers when I was young and then my brother started sport and as a result, we could no longer go to church. As a curious child, I asked why we no longer went to church and upon asking if we could return, I got the response: 'yes'! We (my little sister, mum and I) were welcomed

Eaglets Art Flowers - Emma Smellie

Emma at Eaglets - Emma Smellie

by the community and later we took the decision to get baptised. I was 7 at the time. While we sang 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' (an interesting choice by my brother, who got to choose our baptism hymn) I remember feeling really at home within this space and amongst these people. Upon reflection, I can see the number of lessons my childhood in church taught me. Through junior church, I was given the foundations of my faith – stories and moments that have formed core memories in my childhood. I was also taught wider lessons including: the value of women in leadership (especially in the church), and the power of faith to get you through the tribulations of life. For a long time, my faith meant safety, feeling loved, and the privilege of being part of something special. Later, the church hired a young people's worker who continued to inspire me and other young people to come to faith. Through many years, she gave me room to question, doubt and meet other young people of faith. I was introduced to a project called the 2:67 project which continue to support youth work and young people in and beyond the Diocese of St Albans . Faith, for most of my youth meant joy, community and questions.

The past year:

What a blast this past year has been?! This is my first job in ministry, and it's taught me a few things. Instead of giving you a full brief of what we have been able to do (I've written about it in the APCM report, if you would like a full run down) I wanted to tell you about a couple of my highlights:

One of my favourite memories were the two Christingles at St Mary Magdalene on Christmas Eve. I was given the challenge of telling the story of the Nativity in the first and explaining the Christingle in the second. The church was packed and to be honest, I was a little nervous. Christingles are a big part in family's traditions for Christmas and to be leading it felt like a privilege as well as a pressure. We had such a fun time telling the Christmas story together and it was so special to me to mark the beginning of Christmas in such a loving community. I'm thinking about whether this year's Christingles could include costumes….

Over February, I met with each of the 1 st Richmond Scouts who have a special connection to St Matthias. We spent evenings looking at St Matthias, the sacraments of Communion and Baptism, and Sunday morning worship. A lot of them had never been in a church before, let alone around an altar. From feedback we found they really valued having that space to ask questions in a space they were unfamiliar with. They were insightful, curious and joyous. It truly reminded me of the value of youth in places of worship.

Eaglets continues to grow and develop each week. We've watched little ones grow, from not walking at all to striding around the space with extreme confidence. This group of volunteers find a space for every young child and carer who walks through the door, and I'm always inspired by their kindness. However, it's a process to prepare for Eaglets and one of my other highlights is amusing John (our Parish Administrator) with the activities and art we're doing each week. Each week has a new thing to teach me and that is the beauty of working with children. Plus, so many school visits… each community has taught me about education and inspired future work in the church.

The year to come:

If you truly reflect on how much our young people and children's ministry has changed, it is impressive. We can keep growing in such exciting ways if you can offer this mission your support and prayers.

My faith story at the beginning was so you could get to know me, yes, but it was also so you could appreciate the impression that everybody has on a child's faith and life. The foundations laid by the volunteers at my junior church were unshakeable so that when I returned to faith as an adult, I could look at the lessons they had taught me. Paid workers are often temporary people in a child's life, but a member of the congregation could watch the child grow in life and faith through generations and it's this consistency that has proven invaluable in faith development.

Did you know it takes 5 people in a church community to know a child's name for their faith to develop? I'm sure it's similar for adults as well. Take that moment to ask a child how their day has been or about their favourite tv show? You could just be one of those adults that shows them that they have a place in our community.

D Day Commemoration

The recent commemoration in June of the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings in Normandy was profoundly moving. There are now very few surviving veterans of the biggest seaborne invasion in history and this year's anniversary was the last opportunity, for us as a nation, to really say thank you to them.

Our local area played an important part in the run up to D Day 'Operation Overlord'. In Bushy Park General Eisenhower and the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) moved into the US base there, Camp Grifiss, in December 1943 to work on the extremely complex plans for the invasion and liberation of Europe. When sufficient progress on the landings had been made, SHAEF's entire HQ moved to France and onwards towards Germany. In addition, the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington also played a very important role in D Day, developing the Mulberry Floating Harbours and the PLUTO oil pipeline. both so vital in establishing beachheads in Normandy.

At a smaller level Richmond was home to the GHQ Liaison Regiment known as 'Phantom'; a special reconnaissance unit. Its HQ was in the Richmond Hill Hotel and the Officers' Mess and billets were at Pembroke Lodge. The regiment's task was to travel around Normandy, day and night, to locate where all the British, Canadian and American units were, then marking their location on maps which were passed to the main HQ.

News of the invasion initially reached the newspapers during the day on 6 June and more extensive reports appeared in the evening editions. It was a fast moving situation on a scale that was almost too difficult to take in and there were immense constraints on security and intelligence about what the public could be told in those very early days. Looking back at RTM's 1918 parish magazines at the time of the November 11 Armistice there was great anxiety for some time that this ceasefire was very fragile and would not hold. However, in 1944 on D Day itself the Bishop of Southwark the Rt Revd Bertram Simpson (himself an MC in the First World War) that evening sat down and wrote a letter to all the worshippers in the Diocese, which had a more optimistic tone.

'I am writing this letter on the day when the long awaited opening of the Western Front by our land troops begins. All along we have been conscious of what happened to us and as it happened to our neighbours on the continent, from which we have been mercifully spared. Give prisoners the welcome home they deserve and the help they will need when the glad news comes of their hour of release.' A little later the Vicar of St Mary Magdalene Canon G H M Gray wrote 'At last that for which we have been waiting has begun in earnest, with an initial success for which we must be deeply thankful. All our thoughts are with our men whether they be in France, or in Italy in Burma or New Guinea. The King's call to prayer 'A Day of Prayer' gives the right directions to these thoughts and sets the high purpose of all our endeavours so clearly before us.' (The King, George VI, had called upon people everywhere to stop what they were doing and engage in 'earnest, continuous and widespread prayer.'). Despite the hope brought by the invasion there were still many challenges for the population at home, not least the onslaught of the V 2 rockets, the first of which exploded in Kent only a week after D Day with the barrage lasting through the summer and autumn.

The SHAEF emblem. This consists of a flaming sword representing liberation from Nazi oppression (the black background). Above is a rainbow of colours found in the Allies' flags and at the top a blue band representing peace and tranquillity.

Heidi Munn's Ordination

After the ordination service - Revd Heidi Munn

On 30 June Heidi Munn, an ordinand from St Melitus theological college. who had been attached to Richmond Team Ministry from Autumn 2022, was ordained deacon at Chester Cathedral. Jane and Colin Marsh were at the service to support Heidi, who will be working in a parish in the north west - Norbury Church in Greater Manchester - as a part time curate. It was lovely to see Heidi return to St Mary's on the Sunday a week after her ordination to say a last goodbye to everyone. We wish Heidi and her family all the very best in the future.

Heidi and Jane Marsh - Revd Heidi Munn

Heidi wearing the stole gifted to her by Richmond Team Ministry – Revd Heidi Munn

Easter St Mary Magdalene Dawn Service

The RTM Easter Dawn Liturgy and Service of Light was held at St Mary Magdalene this year beginning at 5.30 am. The service coincided with the clocks going forward first thing that morning for British Summer Time, so it was an extra early start. We think of Mary Magdalene on that Easter morning as she approached the tomb with great heartache, still feeling the first raw emotions from having witnessed the Crucifixion. But that same morning she was the first person to see the risen Christ, the first to proclaim the Resurrection.

The congregation gathered outside the west door of St Mary's to see the Paschal Candle lit with the new fire of Easter, the bright flames piercing through the darkness, then. following the Candle, all processed in to church. This service has so many important and moving elements - the Exsultet, the Old Testament Readings and the Easter Acclamation. Afterwards, a shared breakfast and then light from the Paschal Candle was taken in lanterns to St Matthias and St John the Divine to light their Paschal Candles.

Lighting the Paschal Candle—Fiona Morgan

After the Dawn Service Emma and Joe take the light from the Paschal Candle to St John the Divine - Emma Smellie

Bells for your birthday?

Church bells are the most historic things that many of us ever hear. The bells ring to call us to worship on Sundays and also as a joyful celebration of weddings and more sadly when tolling for funerals.
Here at St Mary's we offer you the opportunity for a unique gift for those special people in your lives. We will ring to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, births of children and grandchildren and any other special occasions you can think of.
We can also offer a personal tower tour as part of the gift.
Contact Jackie Harrison, Tower Captain for more information and an indication of proposed donation jackieharrison456@gmail.com

Easter St John the Divine

Revd Joe Moore

Easter Flowers at St John the Divine - Revd Joe Moore

I was very pleased to begin the season of Lent administering 'Ashes to Go' with Charlie outside Richmond Station during rush hour on Ash Wednesday. We were able to minister to several people on their way to work and offer a prayer of blessing. It certainly attracted attention and sparked conversation. It was great to be part of the Ash Wednesday mid-morning service at St Mary's and the Team Service at St Matthias. The Stations of the Cross were faithfully led on Saturdays throughout Lent using the beautiful carved Stations at St John's.

One of the personal delights of my first Easter season at St John's was the Easter Garden , which Gill Gregorowski creates. It is a fabulous combination of plants, flowers and animals. It's a very good place to hide some of the eggs for the children's Easter Day egg hunt ! Easter flowers were stunning thanks to very dedicated and talented arrangers. Donations are collected in the weeks leading up to Easter, and those in whose memory they are given are named in the intercessions on Easter Morning.

This year, we were pleased to hold the Team Good Friday Meditations and Liturgy of Good Friday . The Meditations were given by The Rev'd Nathan Mulcock, Chaplain at Mansfield College in Oxford and were beautiful and thought provoking. The Music on Good Friday was particularly poignant and made the devotional time of Veneration of the Cross even more special. The First Eucharist of Easter which was celebrated at St Mary's was very joyful with the rousing chorus at the end of the service of Thine be the Glory - Christ was risen indeed! It was very moving to take the light from the Easter Candle, via a lantern back to St John's to continue celebrating the hope of the Resurrection.

Easter Junior Stations of the Cross

Emma Smellie

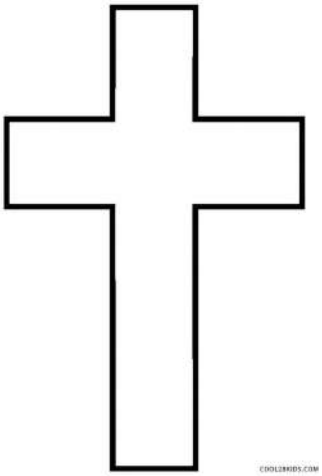
On Good Friday, 40 people from across the team walked the way of the cross at St Mary Magdalene. Together, we walked from the Upper Room to the Tomb. Through different activities, we used our senses to think about the different events that happened at different points on our journey, including: the Upper Room, The Garden, The Court Room, The Cross and the Tomb.
A particularly impactful moment happened at the foot of the cross as Heidi recounts: 'At the cross we were reminded of the words of the thief: "Jesus, remember me when I come into your kingdom." *Whilst singing this in Taizé, everyone was invited to bring the stone they had been carrying and place it at the foot of the cross and make their own prayer. All the children went quiet and thoughtful as they and their adults took part. It was a Spirit-filled moment in God's presence.'*
Both children and adults commented on how impactful the service was, but also how important it

was to have a space to remember and understand the events of Good Friday. Helen Kelsey comments on the impact that this service had on her family: *Thought provoking, engaging and accessible are what springs to mind when describing the children's stations of the cross at St Mary Magdalene on Good Friday. The rich array of activities following Jesus' journey to the cross was engaged with and - though it seems odd on Good Friday - enjoyed, by children from babes in arms through to pre-teens. A particular highlight for my three-year-old and our family was choosing a stone to be our burden and carrying it ceremonially around the church yard. It felt like a very real way of showing our witness to the shoppers of Richmond and certainly led to some more meaningful discussions around the Easter table on Sunday.*

We ended each point in our journey with the three reminders of what Jesus asks us to do.

- We will sit and wait with him
- We will walk with him
- We will love one another

We hope that this service will serve as a reminder to those at the service of the true meaning of Good Friday.



Captain Vancouver

Elspeth Fearn

Captain Vancouver's Statue at Kings Lynn - Wikimedia IgorsJeffMove

Vancouver's Grave at Petersham - Wiki Commons Jim Linwood

I recently revisited Kings Lynn after many years. with its fascinating maritime history - a major port for centuries and also a member of that great trading organisation the Hanseatic League. The town has so many old and interesting buildings including the 17 th century Custom House by the waterside. I was reminded of home because in front of the Custom House is a statue of Captain George Vancouver (1757-1798), the famous explorer, who is buried in the churchyard of St. Peter's, Petersham. He was born in Kings Lynn and his father, of Dutch origin, was a collector of customs dues. George left the town to join the Royal Navy at the age of 14 and as a midshipman sailed on two of Captain Cook's expeditions to the South Seas, so exploration was important even in his earlier career. He ascended the ladder of promotion and in 1791-5 led a four and a half year expedition exploring America's North West

Pacific Coast and what is now Canada including Vancouver Island and up to Alaska.

Less than three years after completing this expedition he fell extremely ill, possibly suffering from kidney failure, and was unable to continue in active service. The navy paid for him to have quarters at the Star and Garter Hotel in Richmond where he worked at writing his accounts of some of his explorations. He then moved down into lodgings at Petersham where two of his brothers came to look after him, but sadly he died not long afterwards, aged only 40. Vancouver had been born besides water - beside the Great Ouse River at Kings Lynn - and he died beside water by the River Thames. In between he had travelled thousands and thousands of sea miles. Petersham has an annual Vancouver Day service attended by many guests, including representatives from Canada, at which a wreath is laid on his grave.

May Fair 2024

All the Fun of the Fair - Elspeth Fearn

Richmond Street Pastors at their stall - Elspeth Fearn

'The Plant Stall at St Mary's - Elspeth Fearn

The St Matthias renowned BBQ tent on the Green - Elspeth Fearn

At St Mary's books were everywhere you looked - Elspeth Fearn

Lawrence's Roundabout Well Appeal

Richmond Team Ministry in its Away Giving has for several years donated funds to this charity. Lawrence Prifti was a little boy aged 8 who had a rare degenerative illness Adrenoleukodystrophy from which,very sadly, he died in July 2005. In his memory the Lawrence's Roundabout Well Appeal was established. According to the World Health Organisation 2.2 billion people do not have safely managed drinking water, 4.2 billion do not have safely managed sanitation services and 3 billion lack basic handwashing facilities. As a result all sorts of water related diseases such as cholera, typhus and hepatitis can cause illness and death. Lawrence's Roundabout Well Appeal raises money to purchase the Playpump, a water pumping system made by a South African not-for-profit company and which combines a children's roundabout with a pump. The roundabouts are erected in schools. As the children play on the roundabout, the energy produced powers clean drinking water passing into a tank. Donations come from a variety of sources – wedding donations, cross Channel swims, corporate and individual donations and gifts in memory of loved ones. All the money raised goes towards the purchase of the roundabout pumps and there are now about 175 in South Africa which the charity has funded. Lawrence's legacy is the precious gift of clean safe water.

Water Droplet - Wiki Comms Jose Manuel Suarez

Flowers - Elspeth Fearn

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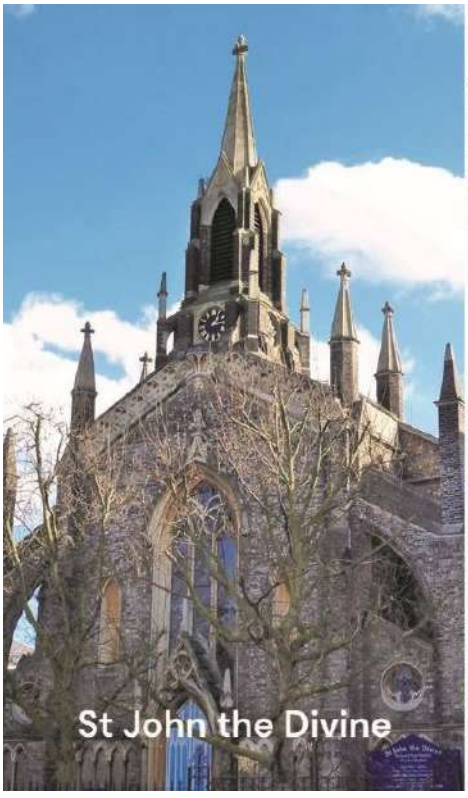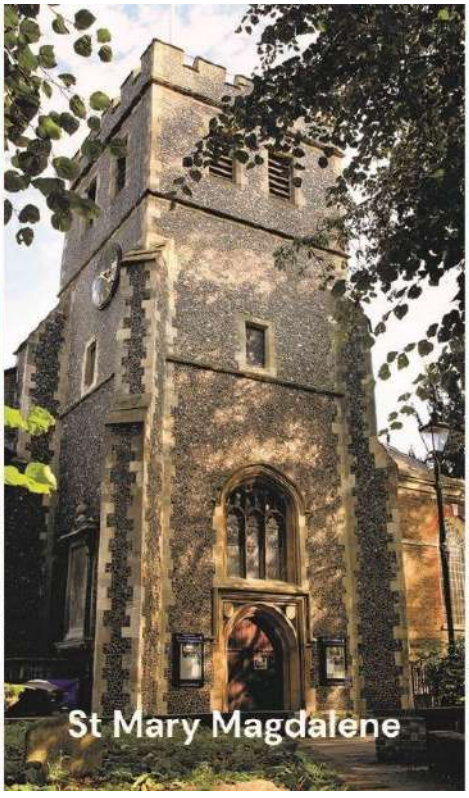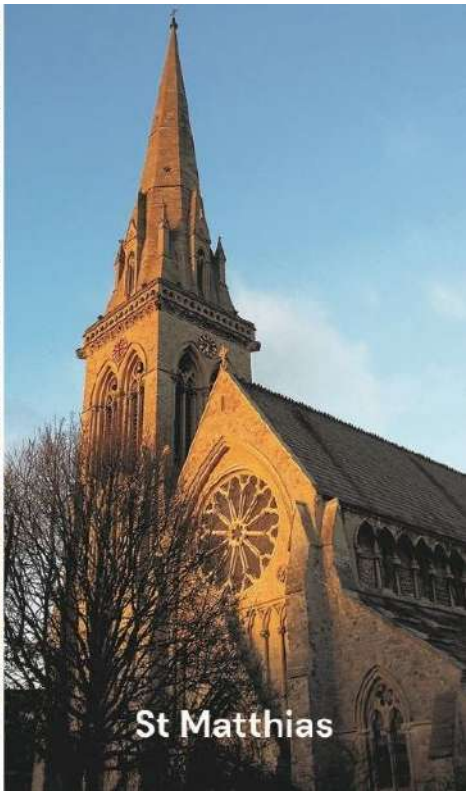
Our Churches