

Thursday 28 November 2024

Dear Friends,

On Sunday we begin a new Church Year.

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (*adventus*) of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement.

Advent mirrors the quiet but soulful longing that grows deep inside where no one sees. We cry for the touch of our Creator amidst the whirlwind of trying to make it through one more busy day. Christmas has become a secularised time in which many do not know that Jesus came because he saw a world that was helpless to save themselves, that they are filled with the disbarring, soul-killing sin that darkens their hearts.

The trouble with the generalised 'festive season' isn't that it is a part of some calculated 'war on Christmas'; it's that it leaves us with no lexicon for longing. It gives us snow and songs, elves and sales, cava and cards...but no vocabulary for grief, for sorrow, for the deep ache in our hearts.

Advent is when the anticipated joy of Christ's first arrival puts us in touch with our anticipated joy at His return. Advent is a joy that helps us hope.

Advent is when we give voice to the ache and pain and longing in our hearts. Advent is also when we confess our own participation in the brokenness of the world. Advent, then, is not only about longing for Christ to come again and put everything back together; it's about repenting and receiving grace so that we get to be put back together *now*. But there's one more piece. Advent is not only about *longing* for Christ to put the world back together, not only about *repenting* and letting Christ put us back together; it is also a chance to participate in bringing wholeness to others.

As we enter the Advent season, could we as the people of God, be a part of the answer to the longing in people's hearts?

On Sunday, we light the first purple candle in the Advent wreath as a symbol of Hope. Whether we sense God or feel a great void or doubt about his presence, we believe He is the hope of the world. The longing we have in our hearts for this world to be set right will come to pass. There are brief glimpses of Joy that remind us of this hope.

Until then...we wait.

With prayers and blessings from the Richmond clergy team,
Anne, Charlie and Joe

This letter was written by The Revd Joe Moore

Please pray for:

... **Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank; for the peace of Jerusalem, release of hostages and for an end to conflict

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

... **Christ's School**, and other schools in the parish

...**Richmond Soup Kitchen**, for all guests and volunteers

... **the sick and those in need** - Gill Doling, Liz Velluet, Marc Cranfield-Adams, Barbara Adamson

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Piers Eley, Joan Skeats (funeral on 9 Dec, 12 noon at Hickey's Chapel), Brigitte Heyne, Alfred Davies

Please note that the **Prayer List is renewed at the beginning of each month.**

If you would like your own name added, simply [email the parish office](#).

If you would like to add someone's name, please ensure you have their agreement, if at all possible.

Church, Community and other news:

NEW: Thank you from Wilma

Words cannot express my thanks for all that has been over the past 8 years and especially the last few weeks. I am so grateful to everyone who came and took part in the final service on Sunday. I hope you agree that the music was magnificent, the wine from Nutbourne Vineyards chosen with great care, and the food delicious.

May I thank you for the incredibly generous gifts I received on Sunday evening? They took my breath away. Once I have moved house, I look forward to spending time at the Arundel Wetlands centre, thanks to the gift of a year's membership. I'm also going to work hard to improve my golf, with a membership to the little 9-hole golf course two minutes from our home. And the plan is to use some of the cheque received towards a new camera to help my wildlife photography. Thank you so much for your kindness!

But above all, thank you for all your love. Although it was hard to say farewell, there was so much love at Sunday's service and so much warmth, which will hopefully keep you going for a long time, or at least during the vacancy!

May God bless and guide you and me, as we begin Advent in different places, yet united in our relationship to the One who loves us.

NEW: A Parting Message from Emma

As many of you know, music is very important to me. Studying it as a degree, singing in Portsmouth Cathedral and often still managing, after a busy Sunday, to sing as part of St Mary Magdalene choir for Evensong. I have decided that it is time to move my career back towards this passion. In the new year, I will be starting a new adventure that includes teaching, making music and hoping to inspire others to do the same through workshops. My final day at Richmond Team Ministry will be Thursday 2 January. It has been such a joy to work and worship as part of this community. A massive thank you to congregations, clergy and the engine room for being inspiring and helping the work that I do. I will cherish the memories and lessons I have gained for many years to come.

NEW: Eaglets Update

Emma and her amazing team of volunteers have done a fantastic job in re-starting and building up Eaglets over the last 14 months. The final session of Eaglets for the term will be Tuesday 3 December. As we move into the new year we have to consider our resources, and with Emma moving on to exciting pastures new, RTM have decided that Eaglets will take a break for now and hopefully start again in the not too distant future. Thank you to all who have given of their time so generously.

NEW: Safeguarding

Most of you will have been aware of the recent publication of the Makin report - an independent review into the Church of England's handling of allegations of abuse by John Smyth.

The report details many failings over a number of years. It is a deeply distressing read, but an important report.

Bishop Christopher has written to all parish clergy, churchwardens and parish safeguarding officers to try to ensure that all parishes respond appropriately. He is aware that the news coverage is likely to have an impact on survivors, and many more in the community, and asks us all to be mindful and prayerful for victims and survivors of abuse.

Bishop Christopher writes that "it was with sadness that he learnt of the resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby but has respect for the integrity of his decision."

He also says

"It is imperative that we do not miss the opportunity to learn the lessons of this review, especially with regard to diligence in reporting, care for survivors, and the need to continually reflect on and review our culture and practices. It is rightly said that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but church officers and ministers have a particular duty to ensure this responsibility is taken seriously.' He concluded his letter "As we approach the season of Advent, we are reminded that 'the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it'. When we commit ourselves to shine a light in the darkness of this world and the failings of our own Church, when we are willing to face the hard realities, we can be confident that God is with us and will make a way for justice, mercy and peace to overcome"

Within RTM we will be examining our systems and preparing for the Diocesan Audit that will take place in January.

If you have questions about any of these issues please do approach any of the clergy, church wardens or safeguarding officers

NEW: Christmas Fair Saturday 30 November, 1-6pm

Vineyard Community Centre, Richmond, TW10 6AQ – Santa's Grotto, Mulled Wine, Market Stalls, Kids Arts & Crafts & Live Music. All are welcome.

NEW: Green Tips

The latest edition is now available at the back of church or [online by clicking here](#).

"Wounded I sing" Advent Group (Wednesdays at 11am on 4th, 11th, 18th December or Thursdays at 7:30pm, 5th, 12th, 19th December, and 9th January)

'A new book for Advent has recently been published, 'Wounded I sing', a reflection on 24 of George Herbert's poems, especially chosen for Advent. It is written by Richard Harries, formerly Bishop of Oxford. Should you wish to use these next few weeks in Advent to prepare for the coming of Christ as a human babe in the company of George Herbert, this book is a daily treasure and structured for a poem each day and a reflection by Richard Harries.

Sue Eastaugh and Ruth Martin are offering some times in Advent to come together, read and reflect and discuss these poems.

Sue is going to host a group at St Mary's on Wednesdays, at 11am, on 4th, 11th, and 18th December with a fourth and final session in January at a date to be finalised. Please contact Sue at sue@eastaugh.net Ruth is offering to host an evening equivalent at her flat in Kew which is a two minute walk from Kew Gardens station or a 5 minute walk from a 110 bus stop (or easy parking outside). She can offer Thursdays, at 7.30 on Thursday 5th, Thursday 12, Thursday 19th and then in January a final session on Thursday 9 January. Please contact her on ruthtea304@hotmail.com if you would like to attend.

'Wounded I sing', published by SPCK, is very widely available at prices from £8.99-£10.99 (RRP) and also is offered on a Kindle. Please let Ruth know if you would like us to obtain a book for you as she is going to explore a sale or return bulk purchase.

Whether you are already a devotee of George Herbert or this will be your first dip into this 17th century poet who continues to have huge appeal in our own times, you will be very welcome to join a group if you are able.

Advent Reflection Groups

During Advent this year we will be reading the Archbishop of York's Advent Book 2024, Rachel Mann's "Do Not Be Afraid: The Joy of Waiting in a Time of Fear."

This is a book of daily reflections on waiting well, which we will read individually throughout advent and then discuss together.

After the service on Sunday mornings (9:30am at St Matthias, 9:30am at St Mary's, 11am at St John's) each Sunday of Advent (1, 8, 15, 22 December), there will be an opportunity to discuss the

readings from that week and reflect together. Do get hold of a copy, and join with us in reading and reflecting!

Electronic ADVENT Calendar

Rev'd Anne will be creating an electronic advent calendar again this year, with a daily image, reflection and prayer arriving in your inbox each morning throughout Advent. If you have received the calendar in previous years then you will automatically receive again this year (unless you have changed your email address since the end of Dec 2023!). If you haven't received the calendar before and would like to, or would prefer not to receive it this year, then please contact Anne at anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org

Changes at Morning Prayer

There will be two changes to our pattern of Morning Prayer, in the next couple of weeks.

From Monday 25 November, we are moving from Zoom to Microsoft Teams.

Morning prayer will be here every day:

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 331 749 912 278

Passcode: 96s9Aa

You may already have Teams downloaded on a Microsoft computer. However, if you are joining from an iPad or other device, you may need to download the App.

Please contact Charlie if you have any concerns about this or need a hand with the tech.

Second: from Monday 2nd December, Monday Morning Prayer will be at St Matthias.

So, the weekly pattern will look like:

Monday – St Matthias'

Tuesday – St John's

Wednesday – St Mary's

Thursday – St Mary's

Friday – St Matthias'

Junior Choir

We're preparing for a showcase sometime in December after the 9:30 Eucharist at St Mary Magdalene. Please do invite anyone that you think would like to come and sing with us for 45 minutes on Thursdays from 5:15pm.

Recitals and Concerts at St Mary Magdalene Autumn 2024

All recitals are free entry, with a retiring collection for the St Mary Magdalene Choral Foundation.

Sat 7 Dec, 2.30pm Honourable Artillery Company Band, the annual Christmas singalong! Christmas jumpers optional.

London Tango at Christmas, Saturday 30 November, 7-9pm

Listen to much loved Piazzola's tango music, pieces from The Romano Viazzani Ensemble's album London Tango and many more. Immerse yourself in the world of passionate music whilst enjoying a glass of wine at St John the Divine. For a 20% discount, visit -

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1033386576067/?discount=KRISTYNA20

Pre-teens meet Underground Our new Pre-teens group

We're looking forward to our Christmas Film night Sunday 8 December. If you know anyone 7-13, who would like to come and spend an evening with us, please do let Emma know.

(cypml@richmondteamministry.org)

Parish Rooms update

We now have a rough timeline for the works on the Parish Rooms. The next big step is to appoint the contractors who will do the actual work, which will start in early 2025, with completion in

March 2026. Before that we have still quite a lot to do, including clearing the parish rooms of everything that is currently stored there. If you have things hidden away somewhere in parish rooms, do retrieve it now! The building needs to be completely empty by the end of November.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Richmond Synagogue and Richmond Council proudly invite you to their Holocaust Memorial Day event at 7pm on Sunday 26th January 2025 at Richmond Synagogue, Lichfield Gardens, TW9 1AP. Please register early to be assured of a seat - <https://myus.theus.org.uk/events/117018/annual-holocaust-memorial-day-2025/>

The doors will be open 6.45pm for a 7pm start. The event concludes at 9pm, followed by refreshments and conversation. Please note that the small car park is open only to blue badge holders, but there is plenty of street parking available near to the Synagogue and a car park in Paradise Road.

Giving, one off, regular and planned

At the end of each service you will find a plate at the back of church for your cash offering. Gift aid envelopes are available if you are a UK taxpayer. You can also give by using the card machine. If you can, would you consider making a regular gift to the Richmond Team, for the upkeep of our churches and the work of the Team?

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.

Church Services:

St John the Divine's Sunday service at 11.00am is both in-person and live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#). 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. The last Tuesday of the month our regular Said Eucharist at 7pm is a Eucharist for Healing and Wholeness, with the opportunity to receive the Ministry of Laying on of Hands with Prayer and Anointing for yourself or to receive it on someone else's behalf. All are welcome.

St Mary Magdalene's Sunday services are at 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.30am (third Sunday only) and 6.30pm. Our 9.30am service will be live-streamed via [St Mary Magdalene Facebook page](#). You can watch the service live as it happens, or once it is uploaded. There is a Said Eucharist at 10.00am every Wednesday, followed by coffee.

St Matthias' 9.30am Sunday service is an in-person service. The midweek Eucharist at St Matthias is held on Thursdays at 10.00am and is followed by coffee and biscuits. Everyone is very welcome to join us.

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

Private Prayer:

St Mary Magdalene is normally open 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.

Morning Prayer, Monday – Fridays, at 8.30am:

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

We have now moved from Zoom to Microsoft Teams.

Morning prayer will be here every day:

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 331 749 912 278

Passcode: 96s9Aa

You may already have Teams downloaded on a Microsoft computer. However, if you are joining from an iPad or other device, you may need to download the App.

Please contact Charlie if you have any concerns about this or need a hand with the tech.

With best wishes,

John

Parish Administrator

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

020 8940 0362

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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