

Thursday 5 December 2024

Dear Friends,

The season of Advent offers us the chance to remember and celebrate two of my favourite Saints: Lucy, whose day falls on Friday 13th (she was unlucky in love) and Nicholas, whose feast day is tomorrow, 6th December. Both Saints lived for the sake of others, giving away their wealth to support the poor and needy and setting an example of Christ-like service and compassion for others to follow. But it's St Nicholas who stirs the hearts of Christians at this time of year – he is, of course, the original Santa Claus. Later today I will tell his story again to the eager congregation of residents at Greville House, and hopefully someone will volunteer to dress up as good Bishop Nicholas, complete with gold mitre and crozier, and distribute gold chocolate coins to the other residents as a reminder of the bags of gold coins Nicholas secretly left for three young girls threatened with being sold in to prostitution because their father was too poor to provide a dowry which would attract a husband and hopefully a better life.

Women today are still being sold into slavery and so many women and young girls are finding themselves on the streets because life at home has become abusive and unbearable. They are in desperate need of a protector like Nicholas. Advent is a season of longing and waiting for Christ to come again, but it's not a passive waiting, it's an opportunity for us to use this time to work to build a better world, a fairer more just society where women and girls have a fighting chance to make something of their lives and fulfil their God-given potential. As a way of cherishing the legacy left to us by St Nicholas why not search out a charity which reaches out to women suffering the trauma of abuse and homelessness and leave a gift which will help to change lives for the better. There are several working throughout the capital, among them The Sanctuary, part of the Marylebone Project www.maryleboneproject.org.uk/our-work/the-sanctuary; St Mungos www.mungos.org/our-services/women; The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields www.connection-at-stmartins.org.uk/facts-about-homelessness/womens-homelessness-in-london

Bishop Nicholas and St Lucy were lights shining in the darkness of their world, bringing hope to those in need. The need is still there, and so are we - let's shine as lights in the world too and bring the gift of life to those in need of protection, love and care.

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

This letter was written by The Revd Anne Crawford

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** – 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](mailto:parish@richmondparish.org).

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: The Conversation

As you know our Vacancy at St Mary's is about to start. We are so very lucky to have Charlie with us - but we must start planning together for our future. The Church Wardens of St Mary's are proposing a series of progressive discussions starting in January. It is hoped this brief gap over the Christmas Period will give us all some time to settle and reflect.

We propose to call this simply "The Conversation", these will be open forums held here in St Mary's where we can have a wide ranging conversation as to how we see our future together. God willing - we will be aiming to reach as near as is possible to a consensus.

There are of course topics which affect the Richmond Team Ministry - as opposed to St Mary's alone. On these subjects we will be seeking a broader conversation with our close friends and colleagues at St John's and St Matthias here in Richmond. We will be discussing the best way to do this with the other Richmond Team Ministry Church Wardens shortly.

There will be in addition an Anonymous Box where questions can be placed that can be read out and discussed, if people would find this helpful.

There is initially no fixed agenda just an aspiration that everyone who wants to, has an opportunity to talk and that from this we will try formulate a plan, built on consensus. Action points leading on from these meetings will help us formalise the process as we proceed.

Please share this with anyone you think might be interested. We will announce the meetings in the New Year.

In the interim if you have any concerns please don't hesitate to contact your Church Wardens, John Buckingham or Anthony Bell.

NEW: The Children's Society Collection - Feast of Christ the King. A thank you from Revd Joe

Thank you so much to those who gave so generously for The Children's Society at our Team Eucharist on the Feast of Christ the King. Mark Russell very much enjoyed being with us and sharing some of the incredible work the charity does.

We have banked £422.11 in cash from that day! I know many of you have since contributed online - thank you!

NEW: Gift for Emma

Emma's last day at RTM will be Thursday 2 January, and we would like to give her a leaving gift. If you would like to contribute to such a gift please transfer your gift to:

Richmond Team Ministry – No 4 acc

Nat West

Sort code: 60-17-31

Account no: 60595477

Reference 'Emma'

Thank you!

NEW: Junior Choir Showcase Sunday 8 December

Junior Choir are so excited to perform three songs for you after the 9:30 Eucharist this Sunday, including a world premiere. Please come (and there might even be an opportunity to join in!)

NEW: Petersham Messiah: Sunday 8 December 2024, 6pm

The Elysian Singers and Players, directed by Sam Laughton, will be returning to the beautiful church of St Peter's Petersham, on Sunday 8 December at 6pm, to perform excerpts from Handel's Messiah in their annual Charity concert which raises money for Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank. The concert is always popular and you can buy tickets at £15 each online (and make any further donations) at tinyurl.com/PetershamMessiah. To find out more about Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank visit https://linktr.ee/vineyard_community, and to join the friends of St Peter's Music mailing list please write to events.stpeterspetersham@gmail.com. Ben Driver, Director of Music at St Peter's

NEW: Richmond Soup Kitchen Update

Our first month of opening has seen some chilly weather and busy nights, on average we are seeing 25-30 guests each evening. All are welcomed with a friendly smile and a warm meal. As we prepare to open on Christmas Day and Boxing Day this year we are asking for donations of socks to share as a gift- new and in packaging, unwrapped so we can make sure everyone gets the right size. There is a box at the back of St Mary's. Thank you in advance!

We have had some lovely partnerships from the local community including pumpkins from Kew Gardens, packaging from Richmond rotary, a delicious curry donation from tangawizi and another year of the hot drink partnership with the orange tree theatre. You can find out all about these on our social media pages here

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61565925222846>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/richmondsoupkitchen/>

We've seen our food bills almost double this year as need is higher than ever. If you're in a position to support us financially you can do that here

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/richmondsoupkitch>

Thank you all for your ongoing support and prayers, it's means the world to us. As always if you have any questions or are interested in volunteering you can email me at

richmondsoupkitchen@gmail.com

Isabelle & RSK team

NEW: Christmas 2024 Opening Hours

Please note the parish office will be closed from Tuesday 24 December to Wednesday 1 January. Our churches will be closed 26, 27, 28, 30 & 31 December. There will also be no morning prayer on these days.

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

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

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.

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

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