

Thursday 30 January 2025

Dear Friends,

Today, the church remembers Charles I, on the anniversary of his execution. This is the closest I come to a name day (no Charlottes in the church calendar) and I feel a little ambivalent about it. In the church calendar he is called Charles, King and Martyr, which is an explanation of his place there, and reflects the idea that his execution in 1649 was a martyr's death.

In the context of prevalent puritanism, Charles I advocated for High Anglican worship, for maximal ceremony and vestments, and for episcopal church governance, and was accused of bringing the Church of England too close to Roman Catholicism.

Of course, Charles was also battling descent on another front: his government demanded greater powers. Charles believed absolutely in the divine right of kings, and that it was his sole right to make laws. He was stubborn, and determined to maintain absolute power. He's also described as shy and kind and lacking charisma, which made him appear haughty and arrogant.

Ultimately, the royalists lost the civil war.

All of this, of course, in a context where religion and politics were wholly intertwined, in parliament and the privy council, and in daily life of the king's subjects. The concept of religion as something which can be hived off and put aside from the rest of our lives being a relatively new and secular idea.

'No politics from the pulpit' is wisdom which many preachers receive, but I have been reflecting on that maxim today, on Charles I's day and in the wake of one of the finest political sermons of our age.

Last Friday, 21 January, the day after the Inauguration of the 47th president of the United States of America, The Right Rev Mariann Edgar Budde delivering an astonishing sermon at the national prayer service at Washington National Cathedral. If you have not read or heard her [sermon in full](#), I wholeheartedly recommend it to you.

She spoke about the need for unity: not unity which is weary conformity, but "a way of being with one another that encompasses and respects differences, that teaches us to hold multiple perspectives and life experiences as valid and worthy of respect," and calls all who pray for that unity to live it out as well, by honouring the inherent dignity of other human beings, and by living honestly and with humility.

You may have seen her final plea, addressed directly to President Trump: "In the name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now." She asked for mercy for LGBTQ+ people, and for immigrants and refugees in America.

We are not called to be partizan, but we are called to be political. Because, to be political means to advocate for the marginalised and to defend the weak. To be political is to stand with Christ at the edges of society, to seek the lost, and to love our neighbour. Our faith is unavoidably political.

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

This letter was written by The Revd Charlie Middleton

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** - Liz Velluet, Marc Cranfield-Adams, Barbara Adamson, Epp Jones, Sarah Pryce
... **the departed, may they rest in peace** - Alfred Davies, Terence Abel, Gill Doling, Isabelle Szmigin, Marianthe Conway, Valerie Llewellyn

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: World Day of Prayer – Friday 7 February

2:30pm at Our Lady of Loreto & St Winefride Catholic Church, Kew TW9 3HB

"Our sisters in The Cook Islands welcome us and lead us for the Day of Prayer 2025. This group of 15 islands in the South Pacific Ocean has a rich and colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature. Join with us as we pray together and reflect on the theme 'I made you wonderful'."

Reflective Walks 2025

Rev'd Anne will be leading the first of this year's reflective walks on Friday 31 Jan. If you have walked with Anne and the group before then you will automatically receive information to confirm meeting time and place, but if this is your first time joining the walk, or you would like some more information, then please email Anne anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org

Joint services in February

As is our tradition we will be celebrating Candlemas together as a team. This year, that service will be hosted by St Mary Magdalene's.

As a team, we have made a decision to begin celebrating our patronal festivals together: St Matthias on 23 February, St John the Divine on 1 June, and St Mary Magdalene on 20 July.

So, we will enjoy two joint services together in February:

2nd February, 10:30am, Candlemas at St Mary Magdalene's.

23rd February, 10:30am, St Matthias' Patronal Festival at St Matthias'.

Discussing the Vacancy

After the joint Parish Candlemas service at 10:30am on Sunday 2 February at SMM, there will be a short meeting held in church to outline the process presently being considered regarding the appointment of the new Vicar of St Mary Magdalene and Team Rector. It is very much hoped that this will be as inclusive a process as possible with all three churches having the opportunity to express their thoughts and wishes as to how that process might be undertaken (recognising that there will be certain ecclesiastical legal requirements to be considered including input from the Area Bishop, Archdeacon and PCC as well of course as our Patron, King's College Cambridge). A box will also be placed at the back of each church in which people will be invited to express their thoughts privately if they would prefer not to do so at a meeting. We strongly invite all who are interested to so express their views - as well of course as making those views known to the Churchwardens and to the Conversation coordinators at each of the three churches. In the case of St Matthias', these co-ordinators will be the Churchwardens, Sally and Alison, while in the case of St John's we are grateful to Cathie Kozeluh for offering to help in this regard. At St Mary's, they will be David Powell and Bleddyn Phillips. Thank you - and we look forward to receiving all suggestions which will of course be treated in strict confidence.

Embracing Age Classical Concert, Friday 7 February, 8pm

An uplifting evening of solo and ensemble classical music.

St Stephen's Church, Richmond Road, TW1 2PD. Raising funds for Embracing Age – a local charity befriending care home residents. Booking essential at embracingage.org.uk/concert

Gill Doling – Service of Thanksgiving

We will join together to give thanks to God for Gill and all that she meant to us and to the life of the Team and our community, with a Service of Thanksgiving at St Matthias on Thursday 13 February at 1.45pm. All very welcome.

Calling all teenagers!

We are starting a new Dinner and Discussion group for teens. Our first session will be on Sunday 16 February, at 6pm.

We will be cooking and eating together – and chatting about all manner of things (big and small). Nicky Holt and Charlie will be leading the group, together with a different host in a different house each month.

Please contact Charlie for more details: charlie.middleton@richmondteamministry.org
07746 695637

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

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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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