

Thursday 27 March 2025

Dear Friends,

On Sunday we will give thanks for our Mother Church. Mothering Sunday, sometimes called Laetare Sunday (mid Lent Sunday), or Refreshment Sunday, comes as a welcome relief at this half way point in the penitential season, when we are probably flagging a little in Lenten zeal. Unlike the more commercial Mother's Day, Mothering Sunday is an opportunity for us to give thanks not just for our mums, but for all those lovely people, men and women and even children, who have helped to give birth to our faith, who have encouraged and supported us along the way, especially when the path has been rocky. On Sunday I will think about all the people who have supported and continue to support my ministry - the people who minister to me and provide reassurance, encouragement and shelter when I need a helping hand.

The liturgical colour for Mothering Sunday is Lenten purple, or for some churches lucky enough to have them, the priest will wear rose pink vestments (St John the Divine have some very beautiful vestments for Sunday!). But at St Matthias I will don my green stole, because it carries an image of a Mother Hen and her chicks, which seems appropriate not just because its Mothering Sunday, but for this point in lent when Jesus is nearing Jerusalem and the beginning of his Passion. Both St Luke (13:34) and St Matthew (23:37) give us an image of Jesus as a mother hen, a hen who opens her wings of love ready to welcome her vulnerable, wandering chicks back to a place of safety and protection. In the gospel writers accounts Jesus is standing on the hillside opposite Jerusalem, looking out not just at the city but the vast and impressive Temple, the religious establishment which should have offered a place to belong to all who came looking for God, searching for protection and nurture and a place to find comfort, hope and peace. Instead vulnerable people are left to suffer and fend for themselves, the ruling religious elite are neither caring or nurturing, they don't serve God's people, all they are interested in is feathering their own nest. Jesus longs for them to return to God, to walk humbly in the ways of justice and mercy, but they are not willing, they don't want to know. And Jesus weeps for them. The image which Jesus uses of himself, that vulnerable image of a mother hen waiting in vain for her wayward children to return to her, is heartbreaking in many ways. But it's an image I find gives me strength and reassurance when life – and ministry – is tough.

This motherly image of Jesus also provided hope and reassurance to St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093-1109. St Anselm and I have been travelling companions for quite a while now (I love that he was carried kicking and screaming to his enthronement in Canterbury!), his prayers stir the soul and broaden the theological mind. Back in the 11th century he was writing prayers which included the theme of the Christ-mother. After lamenting his own distance from God, he wrote a long prayer expressing his need for comfort and reassurance. The language probably sounds a bit odd to modern ears, but it's worth sharing a little part of it as we reflect on motherly love this weekend, and in particular the love of Jesus our Mother:

Christ, my mother, you gather your chicks under your wings;
this dead chick of yours puts himself under those wings.
For by your gentleness the badly frightened are comforted,
By your sweet smell the despairing are revived,
Your warmth gives life to the dead, your touch justifies sinners.
Mother, know again your dead son,
Both by the sign of your cross and the voice of his confession.
Warm your chick, give life to your dead man, justify your sinner.
Let your terrified one be consoled by you;
Despairing of himself, let him be comforted by you
And in your whole and unceasing grace let him be refashioned by you.
For from you flows consolation for sinners;
to you the blessing for ages and ages. Amen.

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

... **Christians of Congo**

... **the sick and those in need** - Liz Velluet, Marc Cranfield-Adams, Barbara Adamson, Epp Jones, Sarah Pryce, Peter O'Toole

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** - Jo Ryeland, June Smith, Phil Crowther

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.

Prayer needs: Is anything weighing on your heart at present that you would like us to hold in prayer for you? The St MM prayer group meets regularly to pray in complete confidence over specific prayer needs made known to us. Please feel free to send us your prayer requests at: richmondprayer.request@gmail.com or post a request anonymously on the prayer board at the back of church in St Mary Magdalene.

Church, Community and other news:

NEW: British Summer Time

Just a quick reminder that the clocks go forward by an hour on Sunday 30 March at 01:00 GMT.

NEW: The Vacancy: Seeking a new Team Rector and Vicar of St Mary Magdalene

We have been reflecting on and praying for this vacancy, and about the qualities which we would like from a new Team Rector and Vicar of SMM for 4 months, and it is time for us to begin to collate all the thoughts and feedback. We are beginning the process of bringing together common themes, concerns and ideas for how we might best address the issues raised and take matters forward.

To that end, each church will want to convene a congregational meeting as soon as possible to discuss any matters which have not yet been voiced, about RTM and what we are looking for in a new Rector and Vicar: concerns, hopes, reflections, experiences, and joys! Conveners from each of the churches are organising these now. SMM will hold its congregational meeting after its 9:30am service on 6 April, and members of all the congregations at SMM are invited to come. SJD and SMT, notices will be given in church as soon as appropriate dates and times are agreed.

Following that, all three churches will meet together again, with a view to beginning work on a Parish Profile which reflects our wonderful Team Ministry, each of our churches, and the whole community in Richmond.

NEW: Goodbye to the Vicarage

The Vicarage on Ormond Road has been a place of meeting and eating, working, praying, learning and growing for decades!

We're going to have a short service mark the end of an era as the Vicarage goes on the market; to remember all that building has meant to the life of the church.

The service will be on the front steps of The Vicarage, Ormond Rd TW10 6TH on Saturday 12th April, at 12.15, followed by drinks and cakes in the garden. All are welcome!

NEW: Parish Office on the move

The parish office will be functioning as normal through to Easter and the week after Easter, but we have also started the first phase of the move to St Matthias Church.

The parish office meeting room, and the offices themselves already look much clearer!

The phone lines are continuing and the office is open the same times as before and our parish administrator John Palmer is still based in the basement office, as is Denise our bookings administrator. The timeline for the final phase of the move will be confirmed in our newsletter but is likely to be Monday 28 April.

New: Electoral Roll Revision

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting and the three Annual Church Meetings will be held on 18 May this year and it is then that the church officers will be elected. Church officers are the Wardens, Deanery Synod Representatives, PCC lay members and Church Committee lay members.

As with national elections, we have to have an electoral roll for this. As our existing roll is now 6 years old it is no longer valid, has to go into the bin and we have to create a new one. This means everyone who would like to vote has to enrol; your name will not be brought forward from the old roll.

Creation of the new roll will start this Sunday 30 March. To enrol you need to complete an application form which will be available at the back of each church. The completed form should be left in the collection post box provided for these. Enrolment will continue up to and including Sunday 27 April.

NEW: A Scrubbie for life!

Jutta is crocheting long life scrubbies which save plastic and will also raise money for the piano fund. The beautiful scrubbies will be on sale during coffee at SMM from this weekend and also at the May Fair - don't delay, get your order in asap! - jutta@uwclub.net Colours to suit.

NEW: Save the Date: Beetle Drive – Friday 27 June, St Matthias Church

The RTM Green Team continues to explore ways to help us all on our sustainability journey, in particular with our goals under [Eco Church](#).

One aim of the Green Team is to “twin a toilet” for each of the three churches within the Team. <https://toilettwinning.org> is a charity that offers the twinning of a toilet which helps fund a project in a community that helps families to build their own basic toilet, access clean water and learn about hygiene.

To help raise funds for this, RTM is holding a **Beetle Drive at St Matthias on Friday 27 June, 7-9pm**. Please put the date in your diary. More details to follow!

RTM Green Team needs YOU!

As you will hopefully be aware, RTM has a Green Team, created to help us all on our sustainability journey, in particular with our aims under [Eco Church](#). The group is small but perfectly formed, representing the three churches but we are always looking for new and enthusiastic congregation members - young and not-so-young - to help with our current plans and of course to bring any new ideas. We meet three-four times a year, in person but also online - which is very green as no transport is required at all! If you would like to talk about joining us for one off projects or coming onto the Team, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Emma Meredith (emeredith@ctpa.org.uk). Many thanks.

Servers and Sacristans at St John the Divine

St John's is looking for those who might be willing to act as servers on Sundays at the I am Eucharist. There are various roles that all contribute to the worship, including acolytes, thurifer and crucifer. This could be as often or as little as you're available. If you would like to find out what these roles entail, please do contact Rev'd Joe: joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org We are also looking for Sacristans, those who might be willing to help prepare the church for worship before Sunday services, including laying out the silver plate and vessels for Holy

Communion and lighting candles. We are also looking for those who might be willing to clear away after the service too. Training and guidance will be offered.

Again, please contact Rev'd Joe on the email address above. Thank you!

Welcoming at St Mary's

St Mary's is open each weekday until 15:00 and on Saturday mornings between 10:00-12:00. Two people are present to welcome for two hours during these times. The lovely Welcomers are a quiet presence in church, and are very much appreciated by those who enjoy popping into St Mary's, whether by design or happy chance. It is an extremely important ministry.

If you feel moved to welcome for two hours during the week or on a Saturday morning, please contact Emma Meredith (emeredith@ctpa.org.uk).

There is also the opportunity to welcome at Choral Evensong on Sunday evenings at St Mary's, 18:30-19:30. Evensong is a beautiful service of quiet contemplative words and exquisite music. If you would be interested in welcoming at the service, again please contact Emma (emeredith@ctpa.org.uk). Thank you.

Faith In Ageing Poetry Competition

Embracing Age's poetry competition is back and open to anyone over the age of 50. For more information visit <https://www.embracingage.org.uk/poetry.html>

The closing date is Friday 9 May.

A New Piano for St Mary's

We are raising funds for a new piano for St Mary's. This will help with our ambition to make St Mary's a cultural hub in Richmond and a musical centre of excellence.

Full details can be found on our website - <https://richmondteamministry.org/news/>

Booklets are also available at the back of church.

Reflective Walks 2025

Rev'd Anne's next reflective walk is on Friday 28 March. 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

Glasses, specs and sunglasses

As part of our Green efforts we are collecting all your old prescription (or otherwise) glasses and sunglasses. We will be sending them off to the Lions Club who use them to improve the sight of children and adults living in other less developed countries. All donations are washed and regraded then sent directly to those in need throughout the world. There will be boxes from now until the end of March in all three churches - please hunt through those desk drawers and bring all those unwanted spectacles to church.

Choral and Organ Scholars 2025-2026

St Mary Magdalene, Richmond, seeks to appoint an Organ Scholar and four Choral Scholars (SATB) for the academic year 2025-2026 (September till end of July).

The Organ Scholar receives an annual honorarium of **£1,500 - £2,000** (depending on experience) and generous extra fees may be available for any weddings/funerals throughout the year.

The Choral Scholars are each paid an annual honorarium of **£1,500** plus extra fees for any weddings/funerals as available through the year.

The deadline for all scholarship applications is **12 noon, Tuesday 1 April 2025**. Auditions will take place on **Sunday 6 April and Friday 11 April**.

For an application pack, or for more information, please email

music.stmarys@richmondteamministry.org

Upcoming Funerals

Phil Crowther – The celebration of Phil Crowther’s life will be held at Christchurch in East Sheen (SW14 7AW) on Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 2.30pm. Dress smart, or as you wish, with colour. Family flowers only.

Donations to Princess Alice Hospice or Cancer Research. (Condolences to Shirley Crowther – 25, Connaught Avenue, London, SW14 7RH)

Henry Leighton-Crawford – Henry’s funeral will be held at St Mary Magdalene, Richmond, on Tuesday 15 April 2025 at 12pm, followed by tea and coffee. All are welcome.

Lent Talk

Sunday 6 April 4pm at St John the Divine.

‘Wings and Whispers: The Silent Battle Between Angels and Demons’

Joe Gunby, Director of Operations at St Elizabeth of Portugal RC Church, Richmond will give a talk exploring beliefs about angelic and demonic forces. All are welcome. Followed by Q&A.

Petersham Passion

Jeremy Summerly, conductor, musicologist, and broadcaster, returns to St Peter’s church to direct a talented team of singers and players in a one hour charity concert on **Sunday 6 April 2025 at 5pm**. They will perform music from JS Bach’s St John Passion and St Matthew Passion, with words read from the King James Bible by Stuart Turnbull, and all proceeds will go to supporting St Peter’s & local community projects.

Suggested donation £15

Tickets: tinyurl.com/PetershamPassion

Enquiries: events.stpeterspetersham@gmail.com

Underground

The next Preteens (for 8-13) meet will be Sunday 13 April, 4-6pm: treasure hunt and BBQ at SMT.

Calling all teenagers!

We have started a new Dinner and Discussion group for teens. Our next session will be on Sunday 25 May, 6-8pm.

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

Lent Book Recommendations

‘Why Church? Christianity as it was meant to be’ by Scott Cowdell

Church Publishing Inc £14.99

(978-1-64065-736-6)

This is a refreshing and positive book for those of us who like to learn from history - and from the Christian faith globally - as we ponder the Church in our own times. Cowdell passionately argues that the Church is essential to Christianity: Christ is the Vine and we are the branches. It is thoughtful, positive and encourages church in church buildings with the Eucharist at the centre. It is encouraging in approach and is good for Lent study with questions after every chapter.

‘Healing Wounds: the 2025 Lent Book’ by Erik Varden

Bloomsbury £12.99

(978-1-3994-1040-3)

Eric Varden is a Cistercian Monk and the book is based on a 13th Century poem by a fellow Cistercian monk who focussed on Christ’s wounds (the hymn ‘O Sacred Head, sore wounded’ is thought to be derived from this poem). It is deep, unflinching in its description of Christ’s wounds and invites us to consider our own woundedness, with a final chapter on Flourishing. Eric Varden prayerfully unwraps all of this, encouraging us to see that by Christ’s wounds we are healed.

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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