

Wednesday 18 June 2025

Dear Friends,

I'll be honest with you: I'm not very good at switching off.

I find it hard to say no. I want to be available, responsive, present for people. And like many of you, I live with a constant background noise - emails, texts, WhatsApp groups pinging at all hours. Some days it feels as though the moment I've finished one thing, three more have appeared. Even the supposed "quiet moments" get crowded out by notifications and to-do lists.

Maybe that's just modern life. But I've begun to wonder - what is all this doing to us?

Over the past few months, I've been thinking more deeply about Sabbath - the biblical practice of sacred rest. Not just having a day off but deliberately creating space to stop. To listen. To breathe. To remember who we are, and who God is.

In Genesis, after six days of creation, we're told that God rested - and then blessed the seventh day (Genesis 2:2-3). That's striking: the first thing in Scripture to be called "holy" is not a place or an object, but a day. A rhythm. A pause. Sabbath is built into the very fabric of creation.

Later, in the Ten Commandments, it's made explicit: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). That word remember matters - because we're so quick to forget. We forget that we are more than our output. We forget that we are loved regardless of how much we get done. We forget that it is God who sustains the world, not us.

The writer and pastor John Mark Comer says it simply:

"If you want to experience the life of Jesus, you have to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus." (The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry)

Jesus didn't live in a constant rush. He walked. He withdrew to quiet places. He said no. He honoured the Sabbath. And he invites us to do the same:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

The challenge, of course, is that most of us are deeply conditioned not to rest. Even when we stop physically, our minds race on. I recently revisited Bessel van der Kolk's book *The Body Keeps the Score* - a landmark study on trauma, stress, and healing - and was struck again by the truth that our bodies register what we refuse to acknowledge. Chronic stress, fatigue, anxiety, and burnout don't just pass through us - they settle in us. And without regular rhythms of rest and renewal, we carry that burden long after the tasks are done.

Van der Kolk writes:

"Trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body."

Even if we wouldn't describe our lives as traumatic, the truth remains: our bodies tell the truth about our pace. The hurried life catches up with us eventually. And yet Sabbath offers a different way - a holy, healing rhythm.

John Mark Comer again puts it helpfully:

"A day off is when you do chores and errands. Sabbath is when you rest and worship."

It's not about collapsing into the sofa out of exhaustion. It's about stopping before we reach breaking point. It's about delighting in God's goodness, enjoying the world, reconnecting with ourselves and each other. It's about stepping out of the endless loop of activity and remembering that grace does not require exhaustion.

And what's interesting is that secular research increasingly affirms what Scripture has always taught. Sabbath, or some intentional rhythm of stopping, leads to improved mental health, deeper relationships, and greater clarity of mind. Even large companies are now offering sabbaticals and digital detox schemes - not out of religious conviction, but because they work.

So here's the invitation - for you, and for me:

Could this summer be a time to practise Sabbath - not as a duty, but as a gift?

Could Sundays become not just a church day, but a holy day?

Could you try switching off the notifications, stepping outside, lighting a candle, picking up a book, sharing a quiet meal, saying no to the unnecessary?

It won't be perfect. You may forget. I will too. But we keep coming back. Because the God who created us knows what we need - and He calls us to rest not just for His sake, but for ours.

May your summer bring stillness in the noise, rest in the rush, and peace in your body, mind, and soul.

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

... **Christians of Congo**

... **the sick and those in need** - Marc Cranfield-Adams, Epp Jones, Sarah Pryce, Peter O'Toole, Elisabeth Lourandos nee Chalmers, Philippa Morgan, Georgina Merchant, Gerald Fearn, Julie Burman, Paul & Caity Manning

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Joy Pinnington, Peter Hallwood

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: the Feast of Corpus Christi

You are warmly invited to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi - The Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Communion.

Join us at St John the Divine, Richmond on Thursday 19 June at 7:30pm for a Sung Eucharist as we give thanks for the gift of the Holy Communion - Christ's abiding presence in bread and wine, shared around the altar.

This beautiful and reflective celebration of our Eucharistic life will include music, prayer, and incense, followed by a glass of fizz as we rejoice in the mystery and joy of the Sacrament at the heart of our faith.

All are welcome

NEW: Clean Air Day

The GREEN TEAM invite you all to Walk to Church next Sunday 22 June - this is our contribution to mark National Clean Air Day which is Thursday 19 June. Do send in pictures of your walk to church or if you come on your bike or scooter or take a bus - anything that helps cut our carbon emissions! Here is a link for more info <https://www.actionforcleanair.org.uk/campaigns/clean-air-day>

NEW: Update on The Vacancy

The position for Vicar of St Mary Magdalene and Team Rector of Richmond Team Ministry closed for applications on Sunday 15 June. Interviews will take place on Thursday 10 July. Prayers that God sends the right candidate.

NEW: A New Piano for St Mary's - SUNDAY 29 JUNE - **FINAL CALL FOR DONATIONS**

We only need a further £7,000 of individual donations to reach our target of £100,000. We are looking at wrapping up our fundraising efforts by SUNDAY 29 JUNE, so now is the time to give if you haven't yet done so. Please contact Seb for any final gifts/key sponsorships.

Update on the Beam Works at St Mary Magdalene

Next week The investigative work is continuing, but it is not envisaged that this will result in any planned closures of St Mary's. Safety is our primary concern, so our builders are authorised to close the church at short notice if they deem it is necessary. Please avoid the cordoned off areas. We are making progress, working towards a resolution and completion in the coming weeks. We thank you for your prayers and patience.

Best Wishes

Anthony & John - Churchwardens

Christ School Governors vacancy

We are currently looking for a new foundation governor for Christ's School. Four Foundation Governors are appointed by the PCC of the Richmond Team and we have an empty space. If you are interested and would like to contribute to the life and work of this Church of England Secondary School, please have a conversation with Rev'd Joe or Faye Johnstone. A visit to the school is also strongly recommended.

RTM Beetle Drive: Friday 27 June St Matthias Church – Book Your Tickets!

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, and you can book your tickets now for an evening of fun for all the family. £10 for adults and £5 for children. A Ploughman's Supper is included in the ticket, feel free to BYOB. A raffle will also be held. Email Emma (emeredit@ctpa.org.uk) to book.

The RTM Green Team looks forward to seeing you there!

A poster can be downloaded [here](#)

Christ's School Year 5 Open Evening – Thursday 3 July, 5.30-7.30pm

Christ's School is sometimes overlooked by families who assume that distance from the school affects their chances of securing a place. However, for our Christian places, distance is not a factor. Instead, we require evidence of regular church attendance - at least twice per month for two years prior to application. A supplementary form can be downloaded from our website for you to complete - <https://www.christs.richmond.sch.uk/>

We warmly invite you to our Year 5 open evening to experience Christ's School community - rooted in the Christian values of love, justice, and peace - where every student is supported to fulfil their God-given potential.

Booking is not required to attend this event, Headteacher's talks are allocated on a first come, first served basis; arrive early to avoid disappointment. We are unable to offer any onsite parking

Confirmations 2025

+Christopher, Bishop of Southwark, will be joining RTM for St Mary Magdalene's patronal festival on 20 July, and he has kindly agreed to confirm candidates from all three churches during the Team

Service. If you are considering taking this step on your faith journey, please contact Charlie on charlie.middleton@richmondteamministry.org
Confirmation preparation classes will take place over 4 sessions in June and July: dates to be confirmed, based on candidates availability.

Alpha is Coming to the Richmond Team Ministry – Get Involved!

We're excited to announce that a Team Alpha Course will be running on Monday evenings from 22nd September 2025 at St John the Divine.

Alpha is a relaxed and welcoming course that creates space for people to explore life, faith, and meaning. It's especially aimed at those who are new to church, curious about Christianity, or just asking life's big questions. Each session involves a simple meal, a short film, and open, honest discussion in small groups.

There are many ways you can be part of this:

- Pray regularly for the course, for those leading and attending.
- Invite friends, neighbours, and colleagues who might be interested.
- Serve by helping to prepare and serve the meals.
- Set up or pack away the space before and after sessions.
- Facilitate or support a small group discussion.

Whether you've done Alpha before or are completely new to it, we'd love your help in making it a welcoming and fruitful time for all involved.

To offer help, register interest, or find out more, please speak to/email Joe at St John's or contact the Parish Office.

joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org or admin@richmondteamministry.org

As we seek to be Christ Centred and Outward Focused, let's share the invitation of the Gospel together!

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 (emeredit@ctpa.org.uk). Many thanks.

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 (emeredit@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 (emeredit@ctpa.org.uk). Thank you.

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
For all the latest bell ringer news, visit <https://richmondteamministry.org/bell-ringing-news/>

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, St Matthias Church, Church Road, Richmond TW10 6LR
020 8940 0362
Richmond Team Ministry
St Mary Magdalene • St Matthias • St John the Divine
www.richmondteamministry.org
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