

Thursday 8 January 2026

Dear Friends,

This Sunday the Church recalls the Baptism of Christ, with our readings echoing the Epiphany promises of light and salvation for all people. And we will celebrate that promise with a baptism at St Matthias, when Katy, one of the Greville House carers, is reborn by the power of the Spirit and brought to new life in the waters of baptism. I love all baptisms, but when its an adult making the decision to turn to Christ, promising to 'fight valiantly against sin, the world and the devil', bravely witnessing to their fledgling faith in front of a packed church, it's a spine tingling moment, the air charged with a sense of the Spirit hovering over all of us as we welcome a new brother or sister to join us on the Way.

For an adult candidate baptism often comes after years of searching and longing. Many people speak of feeling that something is missing from their lives, although they find it difficult to articulate and it can take a long time to pluck up courage to ask to be baptised. One of the most moving adult baptisms I've witnessed came a few years ago when I was asked to take the funeral for an old lady who had moved away from the village several years ago when her children were small. Her husband was buried in our churchyard and this is where she wanted to be buried too. When I met with her sons to arrange the funeral service, the younger son asked me, rather nervously, whether it was possible to be christened as an adult – his brother had been christened as a baby, but his parents had never got around to 'doing him', and now his mum had died he worried that he'd missed the boat. He spoke very movingly about his quiet faith and how it seemed to him more important now than ever that he plucked up the courage to be christened. And so that's what we did. During the funeral service for his mum, surrounded by his close family and friends and one or two members of our Sunday congregation, we led him to the Font, signed him with the cross, and baptised him with the same holy water we had sprinkled on mum's coffin earlier in the service. It was the most light-filled, peaceful and Spirit-led baptism I have ever experienced, and a privilege I will never forget. A baptism at a funeral may seem odd, but on that particular occasion it felt the most natural thing in the world, and a loving response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

There is so much symbolism in Baptism: the Font represents the womb of God where new life begins, but it also represents the grave - the Font is where all that is not of God is put to death, and we emerge from the waters washed free from sin. The imagery doesn't work too well when it's an infant baptism at a tiny bird-bath sized font, but for an adult it can be strong and incredibly powerful, especially if the baptism is by full emersion. Katy on Sunday will have holy water generously poured over her head, a sign that she has died to sin and is ready to be alive to all that God has in store for her. And she will leave the font a new creation, wrapped up in the love of the God, anointed with perfumed oil as a sign that she is now fully part of the royal priesthood of all believers, and presented to us as a brand new member of our family of faith. And we will welcome her with open arms and celebrate with cake and fizz!

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

*This letter was written by The Revd Anne Crawford*

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**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. For all pregnant women and new mothers in Bethlehem, and all who care for them and their babies in the Holy Family Hospital.

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

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

... **All who work in the media**, especially those who risk their lives working in places of war and conflict.

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

... **Christians of Congo**

... **the sick and those in need** - Epp Jones, Sarah Pryce, Georgina Merchant, Gerald Fearn, Julie Burman, Paul & Caity Manning, Christa Browne, Irene Chalmers, Sabine Staton, Frances Irwin, Pat Pyle

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Jennifer Lock, Gilly Valentine, Gordon Hamilton (Georgina's father), Barbara Adamson, Megan Vaughan-Jones

*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](mailto:richmondprayer.request@gmail.com) or post a request anonymously on the prayer board at the back of church in St Mary Magdalene.*

*If you (or a loved one) find yourself housebound for some reason (even temporarily, after an operation, say) and would like to receive home communion, or if you would welcome a home or hospital visit from one of the pastoral care team, please do get in touch with the church office ([admin@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:admin@richmondteamministry.org)) and we would be happy to arrange it.*

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## **PRAYER & WORSHIP:**

**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. **Please note there will not be Tuesday worship at St John's on the first two Tuesdays after Christmas, 30 December and 6 January.**

**St Mary Magdalene's** Sunday services are at 8.00am, 9.30am, and 6.30pm. 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 for visiting and prayer, on Saturdays between 10.00am and 12.00noon and Monday – Friday 8am until 3pm.

### **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.

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 John Palmer if you have any concerns about this or need a hand with the tech.

**Evening Prayer at St Matthias each Wednesday at 5pm**

## **CHURCH NEWS:**

### **NEW: A Message from Ruth Martin**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Many of you will know I retired from formal employment at the end of the summer after 47 years, but only my family and a few others know that for a considerable time, more than a year, I have been praying about how I might mark the new season of my life by making a significant change. I have lived in Kew for two long stretches of my life but never been an active part of the community there as my employment roles in the City, internationally, and then in the Diocese rather suited the workaholic in me! I have decided this is the time and season for me to move to St. Anne's Church Kew, within easy walking distance of where I live, and to play a part in the community in Kew. I will preach for the last time as your RTM Team Reader on 15<sup>th</sup> February at St Mary Magdalene and will also officiate at the Choral Evensong that evening.

It was a huge privilege to have been sponsored by you to train as a Licensed Lay Reader for the Team, some 15 years ago. Thank you for all the opportunities I have had to serve and contribute to the Richmond Team Ministry.

I have delayed announcing this move whilst we have been in the current Team Rector vacancy - initially I was asked by the PCC to be interim Team operations lead in the parish office. It has been a special honour in the vacancy for me to be able to do more to serve with the loving team at St. Mary Magdalene, who for so many years – some 33 years - have supported me.

I am delighted that with the appointment of the interim vicar and Team Rector, Robert Stanier, just a few weeks away, a new season of hope begins for you all. I am sure Robert will be excellent. I will be praying for you and I hope you will pray for me as this new season unfolds.

With Love in Christ, Ruth

### **NEW: Great News about Rev'd Charlie Middleton**

Dear friends,

You will all be delighted to know that Charlie has a new role, as P/A to the Bishop of Southwark, dealing with all aspects of clergy administration.

This is brilliant news for Charlie, and we will all be delighted for her. Everything that she learned here with us will be so useful to her and to the clergy that she will be dealing with - and we know how hard she works. Let us hold her and Bea in our prayers as she starts this new role, best wishes, Ruth Martin.

### **NEW: Recycle your Christmas cards**

Donate your old Christmas (and birthday) cards - the Richmond Soup Kitchen will turn them into gift tags to fundraise. There will be boxes at the back of each church for three weeks in January. The Soup Kitchen would also be grateful for any pieces of ribbon from your Christmas wrapping. Thank you all for supporting this Green initiative.

### **NEW: Toilet Twinning**

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

As you will have read in previous newsletters, 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.

Thanks to funds raised by a talk given by Jutta Raftery about her trip to the Antarctic and a very successful Team Beetle Drive held at St Matthias, we are delighted to announce that we have been able to ‘twin’ two toilets for each of the three churches. We have twinned with a toilet in Cote d’Ivoire, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Tanzania and Zambia. You will see posters displayed in each church.

Very many thanks from the RTM Green Team to everyone who donated for this very worthy cause.

If you would like to be involved with the work of the RTM Green Team, please contact Emma ([emeredit@ctpa.org.uk](mailto:emeredit@ctpa.org.uk)).

### **NEW – Movie Night at St Mary Magdalene, Friday 6 February at 7pm**

Excitement is in the air! Join the Richmond Bell Ringers for a MOVIE NIGHT - someone is killing off all the bellringers in the week before a big bell ringing competition. John Nettles and Hugh Bonneville star. Join us for fizz and canapes and the film for only £20 per person.

Tickets can be booked using the following link - <https://www.zeffy.com/en-GB/ticketing/movie-night-68>

### **NEW: Recital Saturday 10 January, 12.30pm**

The lunchtime recitals at St Mary's resume this week, with a solo piano recital given by Rebekah Tan, a Masters' student at the Royal College of Music. This will be the first full concert outing for the new piano at St Mary's.

### **NEW: SAVE THE DATE!**

Friday 13 March, 7.30pm - St Mary's New Piano Grand Opening - Celebrity Recital: JOANNA MACGREGOR

### **Team Talk**

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

### **Epiphany Afternoon Tea**

Come and celebrate the season of Epiphany on Saturday 10 January 2026 at 3pm in St Mary Magdalene church. All are welcome for this special Epiphany afternoon tea with delicious cakes & scones, beautiful music and a chance to meet new friends, chat with old friends and enjoy the light of Epiphany together. If possible, please RSVP by Thursday 8 January to [admin@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:admin@richmondteamministry.org) so we have an idea of how many cakes to bake!

### **Recycling stamps and postcards to help the world's working animals**

I can recycle used postage stamps and postcards to raise funds for SPANA, a charity which relieves the suffering of working horses, mules and donkeys, toiling under impossibly harsh working conditions, often without food or water, in some of the world's poorest communities. Stamps should be cut from envelopes, leaving a small margin of paper around them. Postcards can be new or used.

SPANAs website link is - <https://spana.org/>

Please leave any contributions at St John the Divine Church, marked for the attention of Sylvia Browning - 07981 925529.

Thank you very much.

### **BIBLE STUDY – PHILEMON**

There will be a one session Bible Study on the Paul's letter to Philemon on Tuesday 27 January 2026.

Morning: in person 10am-11:15am, Evening: in person and online 7:45pm-9pm. Contact me to express interest and let me know which one you are coming to. Bibles will be available in church.  
Rev'd Joe – [joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org)

### **Welcoming Rev'd Robert Stanier to the Team – Licensing Service notice**

The Team are delighted to announce that Rev'd Robert Stanier will be Licensed by Bishop Martin as Team Rector of Richmond Team Ministry and Vicar of St Mary Magdalene at 6:30pm on Sunday 22 February 2026 at St Mary Magdalene. Further details will follow, but in the meantime please put the date in your diaries.

### **Murder In The Cathedral**

Some very exciting thespian news for Autumn 2026. RTM is delighted to share the news, recently announced by the Orange Tree Theatre, that our wonderful church St John the Divine will host a new production of T.S. Eliot's 1935 religious play MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL next October. The renowned verse drama explores the timeless questions which dominated much of Eliot's work: of worldly and spiritual authority; faith and doubt; and temptation and martyrdom. Award-winning actor, local resident and RTM parishioner, David Suchet will return to theatre to play Thomas Becket. Besides his iconic TV role as Hercule Poirot, the Emmy Award winner's five-decade stage career includes *Amadeus*, *Oleanna*, and *All My Sons*. We look forward to hosting this sweeping, atmospheric drama, which will include live choral music, in our very own St John's. Tickets are now on sale via the Orange Tree website.

### **The bells of St Mary Magdalene**

The bells of St Mary Magdalene are to undergo a dramatic transformation. The three most historic bells dating from 1680 are to be incorporated into a brand-new ring of eight bells that will be faithful to the presence of centuries past while bringing a new sound to the town. The work, that is planned to begin next year, will help future-proof the art of bell ringing and maintain the unique music of church bells in Richmond.

With a target of £200,000 the Richmond ringers will lead the fund-raising effort and are hoping that some benefactors will be prepared to sponsor one of the five new bells that will have the potential to be inscribed with names and messages that could last for hundreds of years. Please visit the ringers' website for more information: [HOME | SMM Richmond Bells](https://www.smmringers.org)

Or email [smmringers@gmail.com](mailto:smmringers@gmail.com) or call Jackie Harrison, Bell Tower captain on 07747 111525

### **Little Chicks at St Matthias – Fridays 9.15am to 10.45am**

Our newly launched toddler group is taking a break over Christmas, and will return on Friday 9 January at 9.15am.

### **St Mary Magdalene in Vacancy, Special Notice**

If as a St Mary's worshipper you have any pastoral concerns or worries during the vacancy, whether your own or on behalf of others, please contact either of the Churchwardens in confidence. Our emails are below. Alternatively contact John Palmer in the Parish Office. One of us or a member of the Pastoral Group will get in touch with you.

John Buckingham - [SMMChurchWarden1@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:SMMChurchWarden1@richmondteamministry.org)

Anthony Bell – [SMMChurchWarden2@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:SMMChurchWarden2@richmondteamministry.org)

If you would like to speak with a Priest then your Team Clergy - Rev'd Anne Crawford [anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org) and Rev'd Joe Moore [joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org](mailto:joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org) – are available and more than happy to meet in person or via a telephone conversation.

### **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.

### **Parish Safeguarding Team:**

The Richmond Team Ministry takes its responsibility to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults very seriously. If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact our Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Representatives

[Jo Kitson](#) - St Mary Magdalene

07880 500528

[Gertrude Seaborne](#) - St Matthias

[Helen Peatfield](#) - St John the Divine

Or, [contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor](#)

### **Diocesan News:**

#### **Lay Minister Taster Day**

Saturday 31 January, 10-2pm at Trinity House (SE1 1HW)

Come and find out more about the different types of ministries including Pastoral, Reader, Pioneer, Church Army and Children and Young People. With guest speaker Adjoa Andoh MBE – actor, writer, director, and Licensed Reader (Parish of Herne Hill).

For more information and to book your place, email [learning@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:learning@southwark.anglican.org)

### **Community News:**

#### **NEW: Vacancy: Foodbank Manager - Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank**

Role: Foodbank Manager (Part-time, 30 hours per week)

Location: Richmond-upon-Thames

The Vineyard Community Centre & Richmond Foodbank is seeking a new Foodbank Manager to lead this vital ministry, supporting individuals and families facing food insecurity across the borough. This is a key leadership role, and the postholder will need to be a practising Christian.

If you sense a calling to this role, or know someone who might be interested, please visit the Charisma Recruitment website for further details and how to apply:

<https://www.charismarecruitment.co.uk/jobs/7641-Foodbank-Manager/>

Closing date for applications: Thursday 22 January 2026

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day at Richmond Synagogue, Sunday 25 January, 7-9pm**

Please register early to be assured of a seat. The event concludes at 9pm, followed by refreshments and conversation.

Please note that our small car park is open *only to blue badge holders*, but there is plenty of street parking available nearby as well as Paradise Street car park. We look forward to welcoming you to a meaningful evening.

Registration Link [HERE](#)

#### **Richmond Soup Kitchen – Winter Appeal**

A heartfelt thank you to Richmond Team Ministry.

As we step into the coldest months of the year, Richmond Soup Kitchen is preparing for our busiest winter yet - and we could not do this work without the extraordinary support of Richmond Team Ministry.

Your hospitality, encouragement, prayer, practical help and generosity have been fundamental to our ability to serve those most vulnerable in our community. From hosting our services on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, to welcoming our volunteers and sharing in our compassion, you have helped create a space that offers dignity and hope to hundreds of local people.

This winter, the need is greater than ever. Many of our guests are facing bitter weather, financial hardship, loneliness and poor health. A hot meal, a warm drink, a kind word and a non-judgemental welcome make a profound difference.

This year we have expanded our offer to include:

- The Help Hub – providing hygiene items, warm clothing, extra food and gentle signposting
- Saturday Breakfast Service – the only Saturday food offering in the borough

Both are becoming essential lifelines for guests.

If you feel able to support our Winter Appeal, we would be deeply grateful.

Ways to give:

Set up a monthly donation via our website: [richmondsoupkitchen.org](http://richmondsoupkitchen.org)

Give to our Winter Appeal via Crowdfunder: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/richmond-soup-kitchen-winter-appeal>

### **Community Choir at St Mary Magdalene**

#### **Wednesdays (starting 14 January) 11am-12pm**

Come and join our free Community Choir at St Mary Magdalene - fun, relaxed, and informal, no experience necessary! We will sing a wide range of music, from folk and traditional songs, to modern music, as well as music to mark the seasons. For more info, contact Seb on 07933024101.

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](http://www.richmondteamministry.org)

Registered Charity No 1130018

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[Click here for St Mary Magdalene's Facebook page](#)