

Thursday 15 January 2026

Dear Friends,

January has a particular feel to it. The days are short, the evenings draw in early, and the new year can feel oddly demanding when energy is low and the world feels grey. For many people, January is not a month of fresh beginnings so much as a month of simply getting through. We are still deep in winter, and winter has a way of asking more of us than we sometimes feel we can give.

In the Church's calendar, this makes a kind of sense. We are in the season of Epiphany: a season not of sudden brightness, but of gradual revelation. The light that has come into the world does not overwhelm the darkness all at once. Instead, it appears slowly and quietly, noticed precisely because the darkness has not yet lifted. Faith, like winter light, can be real and present even when it feels faint.

Mental health can feel particularly tender at this time of year. Our routines may be unsettled, social contact can shrink, and the lack of daylight affects both mood and energy. Psychology reminds us that our mental wellbeing is not something separate from our physical selves or our surroundings. We are embodied creatures, shaped by light, movement, rest, and environment. For some, winter brings Seasonal Affective Disorder; for many more, it brings a subtler sense of heaviness or fatigue that is nonetheless real.

One of the gifts of living in this part of London is the abundance of green space around us. Even in winter, time spent outdoors can be deeply restorative. A slow walk through Richmond Park, with its wide skies, ancient trees, and quiet deer, can help us breathe more deeply and feel more grounded. Kew Gardens, in its winter stillness, reminds us that life does not disappear when it is not immediately visible. Psychology increasingly confirms what many of us know instinctively: spending time in nature can reduce anxiety, lift mood, and gently reconnect us with our bodies.

This attentiveness to the body matters. In *The Body Keeps the Score*, psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk explores how experiences of stress and trauma are not only remembered in the mind, but carried in the body itself. Tension, exhaustion, anxiety, and low mood can all be signs that our bodies are holding more than we consciously realise. Healing, therefore, is not just about thinking differently, but about learning again how to feel safe, present, and connected in our bodies, through movement, rhythm, rest, and relationship.

Scripture already knows this truth. The Bible never treats human beings as disembodied souls. The Psalms speak honestly of aching bones, heavy hearts, and faltering breath. "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?" asks the psalmist (Psalm 42.5). This is not a lack of faith, but an act of faith: bringing the truth of one's inner and outer life into God's presence.

Modern psychology echoes this honesty. The psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott spoke of the importance of a "holding environment", a space where a person feels safe enough to be real. Without such spaces, distress often deepens in silence. From a Christian perspective, the Church is called to be just such a holding environment: a community where joy and sorrow, strength and vulnerability, body and soul are all held together before God.

January can also provoke a harsh inner voice. New beginnings can quietly turn into pressure: *I should feel better by now. I should be coping more easily.* The psychologist Carl Rogers highlighted the healing power of acceptance - being met with compassion rather than judgement. This resonates deeply with the Christian conviction that God's love is not conditional on improvement. "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5.8). Grace comes first.

Winter teaches us that growth is often hidden. Gardens look bare, trees appear lifeless, yet beneath the surface roots are strengthening and bulbs are resting. Jesus speaks of seeds falling into the ground and waiting before they bear fruit (John 12.24). Psychology, too, recognises that periods of apparent stillness can be essential for resilience. We are not designed for constant productivity; we are created for seasons.

If you find January difficult, you are not failing. You are human. The invitation of this season may not be to push harder, but to be gentler: with your body, your expectations, and one another. "Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," says Jesus (Matthew 11.28). He meets us not beyond our weariness, but within it.

As a parish, may we notice one another in these winter weeks: listening carefully, checking in kindly, and making space for complexity. Even in the long winter, God is at work, patiently and compassionately holding us, body and soul, in love.

With prayers and blessings from the Richmond clergy team,
Anne 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. 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, Robert Thorp, John Cliff, Simon Grosvenor

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.

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) and we would be happy to arrange it.

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, 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:

UPDATED: Welcoming Rev'd Robert Stanier to the Team – Licensing Service notice

The Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council of
Richmond Team Ministry
request the pleasure of your company at the Institution and Induction of

The Reverend Robert Stanier

as Interim Team Rector of the Richmond Team Ministry and Vicar of St Mary Magdalene Church

by **The Rt Revd Dr Martin Gainsborough**, Bishop of Kingston
and **The Ven Bridget Shepherd** Archdeacon of Wandsworth

at St Mary Magdalene Church, Paradise Road, Richmond, TW9 ISN
on **Sunday 22nd February 2026 at 6.30 pm**

and afterwards for refreshments in the church.

RSVP to: bookings@richmondteamministry.org by 8th of February

Clergy/Readers Please indicate in your reply if you will be robing (Clergy: cassock-alb and white stole -or equivalent- and Lay Ministers Choir Dress)

NEW: Big Clean Up at St Mary Magdalene

We are organising a big clean up at St Mary Magdalene on Saturday 14th of February, one week before the arrival of Rev'd Robert Stanier.

If you are free can you please come to the Church for 10.00 am.

Tea and Coffee will be served

NEW: Richmond Piano Series (begins Friday 13 March)

Tickets are now live for the Richmond Piano Series at St Mary's! A limited number of Earlybird tickets are available, so book quickly!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/music-at-st-marys-120776753351>

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 15th 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

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.

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.

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).

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>

SAVE THE DATE!

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

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

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 later this 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 are leading the fund-raising effort and are delighted to have received sponsorship one some of the five new bells.

Please visit the ringers' website for more information: [HOME | SMM Richmond Bells](#) Or email smmringers@gmail.com or call Jackie Harrison, Bell Tower captain on 07747 111525

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

Anthony Bell – SMMChurchWarden2@richmondteamministry.org

If you would like to speak with a Priest then your Team Clergy - Rev'd Anne Crawford anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org and Rev'd Joe Moore 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 be 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

Community News:

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](#)

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

Registered Charity No 1130018

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