

Thursday 22 January 2026

Dear Friends,

Some of you will know that, like a good many people across the nation (and perhaps a few who insist they only have it on “for background noise”), I have found myself drawn into the strange moral theatre of *The Traitors*. On the surface, it is deliciously over the top: a Scottish castle, portentous music, breakfast tables where the absence of one chair is treated with the gravity of a minor funeral, and a presenter who could probably read the parish electoral roll and make it sound ominous. And yet, beneath the melodrama and the dramatic cloaks lies something surprisingly theologically rich. At heart, *The Traitors* is about trust and betrayal. The “Faithful” cling to the hope that honesty, cooperation, and discernment will eventually reveal the truth. The “Traitors”, meanwhile, survive by lying with impressive sincerity, often while saying things like, “I’m just being totally honest here.” Scripture would raise an eyebrow. The psalmist knew this dynamic well: “Even my close friend in whom I trusted... has lifted the heel against me” (Psalm 41.9). Betrayal, it turns out, predates reality television.

One of the most striking features of the programme is how quickly suspicion eats away at community. Once doubt is introduced, every cough, glance, or slightly odd tone of voice becomes incriminating. Someone votes you out because you blinked at the wrong moment, or because you stirred your porridge “too aggressively”. St Paul’s warning rings painfully true: “If you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another” (Galatians 5.15). Watching it, one is grateful that most PCC meetings, mercifully, do not end in banishment. This atmosphere of suspicion inevitably draws us to Judas Iscariot, Scripture’s most famous traitor. Judas is often reduced to a cardboard villain, but the Gospels give us a far more uncomfortable figure. He is called by Jesus, trusted with the common purse, shares bread and wine at the Last Supper - and yet becomes the one who hands Jesus over. His betrayal comes not from the outside, but from within the inner circle. Which, if nothing else, should make us slightly cautious about assuming we would have behaved better.

Theologically, Judas confronts us with difficult truths about human freedom and moral failure. The Gospels are clear: betrayal is real, and it matters. Yet they also show us a man overcome by remorse, returning the silver and unable to live with what he has done (Matthew 27.3–5). Judas is not portrayed as cackling with glee; he is tragic, conflicted, and broken. In him we see the unsettling possibility that being close to holiness does not automatically make us holy. In *The Traitors*, some of the most painful moments come when contestants realise that to survive, they must lie, manipulate, or sacrifice someone else. We hear the familiar refrain: “It’s just a game.” Judas, too, may have told himself a story - that he was being practical, forcing events along, or doing what needed to be done. Sin, as Christian theology reminds us, rarely announces itself as villainy. It usually turns up sounding reasonable, sensible, and terribly grown-up.

Yet there is a crucial difference between the logic of *The Traitors* and the logic of the Gospel. The programme offers exposure and exile, but not redemption. Once unmasked, you are gone - no second chances, no awkward reconciliation over breakfast. The Gospel, by contrast, insists on the possibility of restoration. Peter, who also betrays Jesus (three times, no less), is met not with banishment but with a gentle, repeated question: “Do you love me?” (John 21.15–17). Judas’s deepest tragedy may be not only that he betrayed Jesus, but that he could not imagine forgiveness as something real for him.

So perhaps this wildly entertaining programme invites us to ask some serious questions. How do we live truthfully in a world addicted to suspicion? How do we resist the temptation to protect ourselves at the expense of others? And what kind of community are we shaping: one that thrives on accusation and expulsion, or one grounded in truth, mercy, and grace? If nothing else, *The Traitors* may make us grateful for the Church at its best: a place where honesty is encouraged, betrayal is named, forgiveness is possible, and breakfast tables are (usually) less tense. And that, surely, is good news worth tuning in for.

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,

... **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, Patricia Pyle

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.

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.

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:

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: The Green Team

We are thinking about the Spring Newsletter - have you got a recipe you would like to offer featuring the humble cauli, broccoli, parsnip or rhubarb? Any pictures to share of homemade Christmas gifts, regifted items from charity shops or recycled Christmas Decorations? Anyone check out their Carbon Footprint having read the last newsletter and prepared to share their commitments? We would love to hear from you. Please send any items to Jo Kitson

johanna_kitson@hotmail.com

NEW: First Aid Training at St Mary Magdalene

A reminder for those that have signed up for First Aid Training in St Mary Magdalene this Saturday 24th. There are two sessions, 9.00am and 10.30am. There may be some additional places on the day if we have any cancellations.

NEW: Ruth Martin's Leaving Collection

We are keen to mark Ruth's leaving the Team and are inviting contributions towards a gift for her. You can either hand cash gifts to Anthony Bell or John Buckingham at St Mary's or you can make a direct transfer to the Richmond Team Ministry No. 3 bank account, sort code 60-17-31 and account No. 27091619, marking your gift 'Ruth'.

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 10.00am.

Tea and Coffee will be served

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.

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.

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

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:

NEW: A Letter from Bishop Christopher

Dearly beloved,

Our life together in the Diocese of Southwark as fellow members of the Body of Christ
In recent months, I have had a number of meetings with groups of clergy who have shared with me their distress and anxiety at developments both in the Church and, to some extent, in our society more generally. This has been particularly true of LGBT+ clergy and their supporters,

following recent developments in the Living in Love and Faith process, and has also included those who have been concerned that the Church of England was moving away from its traditional understanding of marriage.

Whilst I continue to believe that the Church is on an irreversible journey towards the greater acceptance of LGBT+ people and the blessing of same-sex relationships – a journey that I support including a more general permission for clergy and those in discernment to be in same-sex marriages without sanctions – it is clear that the steps that have already been taken in the LLF programme have gone as far as is going to be possible for the time being.

My consistent priority as your Bishop has been to rejoice in the diversity of our Diocese, which I see as God's gift and blessing, to honour, support and uphold the ministry of those who, in good faith, hold a variety of theological convictions, to encourage the people of our Diocese always to speak well of one another and to give to all clergy and parishes the confidence and security to live out their callings to the full. To that end, I have been in discussion with our Area Bishops and others about how we might better support our LGBT+ clergy, lay ministers and congregation members to know that they are safe, valued and cherished in our Diocese. I want to be equally clear that I continue to seek to extend that same affirmation to those who take a conservative position on these matters and I would gladly extend the kind of provision I have in mind to support those who hold this view if there is a sense that this would be helpful.

In the light of recent events, I am considering a range of practical steps to ensure that people who are LGBT+ feel supported and are confident that their concerns are well understood and inform our life together. These are likely to include arrangements at an Area and Diocesan level for LGBT+ chaplains or advocates who would be a source of support, encouragement and advice for those with particular concerns and reflect back to my staff team matters that have been raised with them.

We hope that this provision would also ensure that LGBT+ people continue to feel confident in entering the vocations discernment process for lay and ordained ministry, and also support our schools and chaplaincies as they seek to minister to all. I have also asked our Communications The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun team to consider how they can publicise and signpost a range of resources and activities which seek to offer practical help to those seeking to minister effectively to LGBT+ people.

Finally, I think that this is an opportunity to invite us all to think more deeply, whatever position we personally hold, about how we provide effective pastoral care for those among whom we minister, especially for any who find that they are particularly vulnerable because of these issues. These measures are designed to give reassurance to all God's people in this Diocese going forward.

I thank God for this Diocese, for the many and wonderful signs of hope and renewal across the breadth of its geography and traditions and I truly hope and pray that this will be an encouragement as we continue to work together to share God's love with the people of South London and East Surrey.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15. 13).

With my esteem for you all, as ever in Christ,

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun
The Bishop of Southwark

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 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

Our Privacy Notice can be viewed at: <https://richmondteamministry.org/gdpr/>

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

