

Thursday 19 February 2026

Dear Friends,

I am writing this on Ash Wednesday afternoon, at the beginning of our Lenten journey. This morning, along with Rev'd James Marsden from the Barnes Team Ministry, I had the privilege of offering 'Ashes to Go' outside Richmond Station. In the space of just forty-five minutes, more than thirty people stopped to receive the sign of the cross traced on their foreheads.

Some had clearly planned to come. Others paused on their way to work, drawn by curiosity. A few asked thoughtful questions: What does this mean? Why ashes? What is Lent about? There were commuters with coffee cups in hand, people navigating the ordinary busyness of the morning rush. And there, on the pavement, in the middle of everyday life, we marked foreheads with ash and spoke ancient words of truth: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." What struck me most was the gratitude. Again and again, people said thank you - not politely, but sincerely. They were thankful that the Church had met them where they were: on their way to work, in the middle of an ordinary weekday morning. There was something deeply moving about that. Lent did not wait inside church walls; it stepped onto the street.

Ash Wednesday confronts us with our mortality and our need of God. It is honest, bracing, real. Yet it is also profoundly hopeful. The ashes are not a sign of despair but of belonging. They remind us that we are fragile and finite, yes - but also loved. Held. Claimed. Lent, at its heart, is about renewal. It is about turning again to God. The biblical word for repentance simply means to turn around. To reorient. To change direction. All of us, in different ways, know what it is to drift. Life is busy. Attention is fragmented. Prayer becomes sporadic. Faith becomes background noise rather than living relationship. Without noticing, we can find ourselves slightly off course. Lent is God's gracious invitation: Come back. Begin again.

The ashes on the pavement outside Richmond Station were a reminder that this invitation is not reserved for the obviously devout. It is offered to commuters and passers-by, to the curious and the uncertain, to those whose faith feels strong and to those who are not sure what they believe. It is offered to us all. The Church traditionally encourages three practices in Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (charity). These are not about religious performance. They are about making space. Prayer creates space for God's voice amid the noise. Fasting loosens our attachment to the things that crowd our hearts. Generosity stretches us beyond ourselves and towards our neighbour. Perhaps this Lent you might set aside ten minutes a day for stillness. Perhaps you might read a Gospel slowly, attentively. Perhaps you might give something up - not as a test of willpower, but as a way of rediscovering what truly sustains you. Perhaps you might give more generously, in time or resources, as a sign that love is always outward-facing.

In the life of our Richmond Team Ministry, this Lent also unfolds at a moment of transition and hope. We look forward to the induction and installation of Robert Stanier as Interim Team Rector and Vicar of St Mary Magdalene. It feels fitting that his ministry among us begins in a season shaped by reflection and renewal. Lent reminds us that the Church, too, is always turning again. Always reforming. Always being drawn more deeply into the life of Christ. Times of change can feel uncertain, but they are also fertile ground for growth. I hope you will hold Robert, his family, St Mary Magdalene, and our whole Team Ministry in your prayers as he takes up this new role. May this season strengthen our shared life and deepen our common purpose.

This morning, as I traced the sign of the cross onto familiar and unfamiliar foreheads, I was reminded that faith is not something we manufacture. It is something we receive. Gift. The cross marked on each person was the same cross traced at baptism - the sign that we belong to Christ, in life and in death.

Over thirty people in forty-five minutes paused long enough to remember that they are dust - and that they are loved.

Lent offers each of us that same pause. If you have been distant from worship, come back. If prayer has faltered, begin again. If faith feels fragile, bring even that to God.

May this holy season be for you a time of gentle honesty and deep renewal. May you discover again that God meets you in the ordinary pathways of your life. And as we journey together towards Holy Week and the joy of Easter, may we find ourselves changed, renewed, and strengthened in faith, hope and love.

With every blessing for a holy and fruitful Lent.

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** – Gilly Valentine, Robert Thorp, John Cliff, Susan Cox, Margaret Myatt

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: The SMM prayer group meets regularly to pray in confidence over specific prayer needs. Please send your prayer requests to: richmondprayer.request@gmail.com or post a request anonymously on the prayer board at the back of SMM.

If you (or a loved one) 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)

PRAYER & WORSHIP:

St John the Divine's Sunday service at 11.00am is both in-person and live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#). 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 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 on someone else's behalf.

St Mary Magdalene's Sunday services are at 8.00am, 9.30am, and 6.30pm. Midweek Said Eucharist at 10.00am every Wednesday, followed by coffee and biscuits.

St Matthias' Sunday service is an in-person service at 9.30am Midweek Said Eucharist at 10.00am every Thursday followed by coffee and biscuits.

Orders of service / readings for all three churches can be found on the News page of our website – here: <https://richmondteamministry.org/news/>

Morning Prayer, Monday – Fridays, at 8.30am:

Morning Prayer takes place in church and on Teams. St Matthias on Mondays and Fridays, St John the Divine on Tuesdays, and 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 Wednesday at 5pm, St Matthias

Private Prayer:

St Mary Magdalene is normally open for visiting and prayer Monday – Friday 8am until 3pm and Saturday 10.00am until 12.00noon.

CHURCH NEWS:

NEW: Green Tips - Spring Issue

Please do read our latest newsletter about all things GREEN. We have lots of events planned and news about our previous successes. A small number of copies are available at the back of church, or you can visit - <https://richmondteamministry.org/get-involved/>

NEW: Message from Hannah Paul - Church of England Project Lead - INEQE's Independent Safeguarding Audit Team.

As you may be aware INEQE Safeguarding Group have been commissioned to conduct Independent Safeguarding Audits of the Church of England to make sure they are doing all they can to create environments where everyone feels safe, valued and respected. As part of the audit process, we hope to engage with parishioners and members of the parish community through an online survey. The survey is both anonymous and confidential. We would therefore ask you to be open and honest with your responses. The survey is now live and will close at 11.30 pm on Wednesday 8th of April 2026. To access the survey relevant to you please visit:

www.ineqe.com/churchofengland/Southwark/

NEW: Message from Ruth Martin

Dear friends thank you so much for the flowers and extraordinarily generous gift that I received when I preached and officiated for the last time as Team Reader at services in St Mary Magdalene last Sunday. I was also utterly astounded at the gift of money from the collection that was made for me, thank you so much. I will be joining you on Sunday night to welcome Robert Stanier as the next Team Rector and vicar of St Mary Magdalene and wish you God's blessing in the next season of your worshipping life together, with love and prayer, Ruth.

Another GREEN project

Recycle your Birthday cards - please do drop these into the boxes at the back of the three churches. Richmond Soup Kitchen volunteers will recycle these into beautiful gift tags for fundraising - thank you

Recital+Choral Compline (6.30pm) at St Mary's

Following on from our successful pilot in Advent, the following two Sunday evensongs will be replaced with a recital followed by Choral Compline.

Sunday 1 March - Biber/Bach - Violin Sonatas
Maxim Del Mar (Violin)
Seb Gillot (Harpsichord)

Sunday 8 March - Scholars and Friends
Music from SMM Choral Scholars to mark both the penitential season and International Women's Day

The late Susie Cox RIP

The memorial service for Susie Cox, much loved member of St Mary Magdalene church who died very recently, will be held at St Mary Magdalene on Wednesday 25 March. Details will be announced later but it is expected to be at 2pm. Please hold Mark and the whole family in your prayers as they prepare for Susie's private, family only funeral on Thursday 19 February.

Lent Groups to discuss the book 'Easter in Disguise'

To accompany this book, we will be offering two Lent Groups:

- Rev'd Anne will lead a daytime Lent Group on Mondays at 10.00am at St Matthias, beginning on Monday 23rd February.
- Rev'd Joe will lead an evening Lent Group on Tuesdays at 7.45pm at St John's, beginning on Tuesday 17th February.

Both groups will run for six weeks and will be open to all. If you are planning to come along, please do email us to let us know:

- Rev'd Anne: anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org
- Rev'd Joe: joe.moore@richmondteamministry.org

Installation of Rev'd Robert Stanier as Interim Team Rector and Vicar of St Mary's – Sunday 22 February, 6.30pm

Please rsvp to bookings@richmondteamministry.org

JOANNA MACGREGOR CBE - 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>

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:

Community News:

World Day of Prayer. Friday 6 March 2026, 2.30pm, The Barn Church

Our sisters in Nigeria invite us to join them for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6 March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme, "I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28-30).

The World Day of Prayer is an international, women-led, ecumenical movement that shares the hopes concerns, and prayers of women from around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggle and anxiety.

With over 120 countries across the world taking part, this is a powerful demonstration of global solidarity. The day begins in Samoa and moves across the world in a continuous wave of prayer, finishing 38 hours later in American Samoa. It truly is a worldwide day of prayer!

The Richmond and Kew World Day of Prayer Group hosts a service every year, and this year the service is being held at

The Barn Church, St Philip & All Saints, Atwood Avenue, Kew, TW9 4HF on Friday 6 March 2026 at 2.30pm, followed by refreshments – tea/coffee and cake. All are welcome.

Getting there:

The Barn Church is located on the corner of Atwood Avenue and Marksbury Avenue.

Buses R68, 190, 419 from Richmond Station stop at the end of Marksbury Avenue (8 min walk to church approx.)

District Line/ Mildmay (Overground) Line stop at Kew Gardens Station – down North Road, left into Atwood Avenue (approx. 10 mins walk).

On street parking may be possible.

For further information and resources, please visit the World Day of Prayer website: wwdp.org.uk

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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