

Thursday 16 April 2026

Dear Friends,

When you officiate at a service at St Mary Magdalene, you are often standing in the middle of the nave looking outwards; you look initially at people in the pews, and then people near the back and then finally there's a last group who you don't get to see in most churches; because ST Mary Magdalene has glass doors, and because there's a pedestrian path outside, you also see the people on the pathway outside the church. Some are just walking straight past, but others linger a little and look in; among those looking in, there are some people clearly just checking out what is happening out of curiosity, but then there are others who linger, and are looking more closely and with greater engagement.

At this stage, from the front, you can't actually say or do anything to encourage them; you might be halfway through the eucharistic prayer, or just sitting listening to a reading, but you can't help but long for them to step through the doors into the church. I suspect that some of them are secretly hankering to do so too, but not many make it; on most occasions, they look for a bit and then move on. For to enter a church for the first time so isn't easy for most people.

For a lot of people, perhaps for most people, churches are intimidating. A bit like gambling shops for people who never place a bet; or gyms, for people who don't exercise. They are places that have rules that you know you don't know. In gyms, you might not know how the machines work or what the etiquette is for doing your stretching. For churches, it might be when is it right to stand up and when to sit down? What clothes is it appropriate to wear?

I think more people are interested in church, faith and God than is the number who actually actively take part. There are a whole host of people who are the equivalent of the hesitant passers by on the pedestrian path outside St Mary Magdalene.

It has got me thinking about how we in church can make it easier for the nervously curious to try out what it is we have to offer. For to create a more porous entering space is surely the key to growing well.

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

This letter was written by The Revd Robert Stanier

Please pray for:

... **Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank; for the peace of Jerusalem 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

... **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, Christa Browne, Irene Chalmers, Sabine Staton, Jo Carroll, Peter O'Toole, Rebecca Fitzjohn

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Hazel Gattegno

If you would like your own name added, simply [email the parish office](mailto:richmondprayer.request@gmail.com).

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.

From April to early June, Tuesdays will be open for prayer from 6.30pm with Said Eucharist at 7pm with no exposition.

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:

All sorts this week from the reopening of St John's Hall to a new altar, unwanted bras, a litter pick, trying out evensong, the return of Little Chicks and baked items for a summer fair. Scroll through to see what you want

St John's Hall

After closing for refurbishment in January, the Hall at St John the Divine reopens fully today. We have replaced the old floor, which was in poor condition, with a beautiful new semi-sprung floor. The breeze block walls have been plaster-boarded and the walls, beams, ceilings, cupboard fronts and doors have all been redecorated in brighter colours. Old plug sockets have been

replaced with new ones that include USB and USB-C charging points and new radiator covers have been installed. We hope the fresh, attractive space will continue to be enjoyed by existing bookers and will entice new hirers. For all queries about hiring the Hall please email:

bookings@richmondteamministry.org

New altar table at St Mary Magdalene, and other furniture

Some years ago, a new altar table was commissioned for St Mary Magdalene. This has now been built and delivery is expected on Thursday (today). Assuming all goes well, it will be dedicated and have its first use at the services on Sunday morning. Don't miss out on being there.

Litter pick at St Mary's – This Sunday (19 April), after Sunday church service at St Mary Magdalene

As our contribution to Earth Day, the Green Team will be organising a litter pick after the 9.30 am service in the churchyard - all welcome and tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided (plus hand held litter pickers). Could be fun for all ages.

COME AND SING EVENSONG – This Sunday (19 April)

St Mary Magdalene is a church that does Choral Evensong most weeks and for those who take part in it, it's often a highlight of their spiritual week. Some of the greatest English music ever written has been written specifically for Evensong. For those of us who haven't sung in a choir before, it can feel too intimidating to try, but this Sunday, it's a chance for anyone. You'll need some kind of musical background to take part (e.g. to be able to read music, but those of us who have reached the dizzy heights of Grade 2 piano (ahem) are able to do that), but you don't need to have sung in a choir before. It may be that you have never sung Evensong, but you'd like to try; it may be that you've sung when you were a child but not in decades; whatever your motivation, think about coming along this Sunday afternoon. Seb is a very friendly (and also brilliant) musical conductor to ease you in. If you find you enjoy it, you can come again; or it may just be an enjoyable one-off.

4.15pm-5.45pm rehearsal followed by

Tea and cakes

6.30pm Evensong

NEW: Little Chicks is back

The new stay and play group for pre-school children and their carers takes place at St Matthias every Friday during term-time, from 9.15am – 10.45am. We have lots of age appropriate toys and games on offer including a ride-on train, play house and kitchen, and each sessions ends with a short story, song and a prayer. All welcome.

NEW: Friends of St Matthias BBQ

The Friends of St Matthias will once again be holding their annual bbq as part of the May Fayre on Sat 9 May, along with a cake stall. All offers of help gratefully received – please contact Chris Pearson for more information at cvpearson@btinternet.com

Sunday 3 May, 3pm - Richmond Piano Series: Roderick Williams + Christopher Glynn

In two weeks' time, St Mary's welcomes world-renowned baritone Roderick Williams and pianist Christopher Glynn to the series for a sumptuous programme of English song. These are major artists performing on your doorstep. Absolutely NOT TO BE MISSED! Tickets available on Eventbrite (search "Richmond Piano Series")

NEW: Glasses and Sunglasses collection

Thank you so much for your donations this far. Please bring any final donations to church this Sunday as we will be delivering them to The Lions for sorting and onward redistribution to the Ukraine and Africa next week.

New vicarage for St Mary Magdalene: (good news: alleluia)

News came through last Friday that Southwark Diocese Property Department has exchanged with the owners of 5 Mount Ararat Road for this to be the new vicarage for the vicar of St Mary's. The plan is for completion in the middle of May. Whereas normally a new resident would enter the property straight after completion, the plan is for Robert and his family to move in at the end of June, after two of his children have completed their A levels and GCSE exams respectively. This will be followed by myriad, myriad housewarming parties (or at least one) to which everyone will be invited. In a wild card, it turns out that there are two tortoises resident in the garden in the summers there for the last fifty years. These may now become part of parish life...

May Fair – Saturday 9 May - in and around SMM

We are excited to be running the May Fair as usual on the 9th May in and around St Mary Magdalene.

We will be raising money for the Richmond Soup Kitchen. In order to make this event the usual huge success, we are looking for donations of the following items:

- Books in good condition – both for adults and children
- Children's toys – used but in good condition
- Donations for the Tombola – full bottles (wine, spirits, oil, bubble bath etc), new food items (chocolates etc) unwanted gifts (new)
- Baked items (cakes, biscuits, savouries), jams, marmalades, chutneys – please list ingredients

Please bring books, toys and tombola items to church from this Sunday (note the church is also open everyday Mon- Fri from 10 – 3 and Saturday morning) and baked items either on the day before or on the day itself.

We will also be asking you all to sign up and help – there will be the usual signup sheet at the back of church. And of course, do let friends and family know all about it and invite them to support us on the day. There will be flyers available for you to take and pass on.

THANK YOU

From the Fair Committee

Another Green Team initiative

You may have noticed there are now Bra Banks in all three churches - please recycle your old bras. We are collecting old or unwanted bras to support breast cancer research, damaged bras will be recycled to prevent landfill waste, and those in better condition will be used to provide affordable clothing to developing countries. All shapes and sizes needed! Thank you

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](#)

Community News:

NEW: Trustee vacancies for The Leprosy Mission Great Britain

The Leprosy Mission are seeking to appoint five Trustees. More details can be found [here](#)

Closing date is Wednesday 13 May.

Vacancy at Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank

Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank have an exciting new vacancy.

Role: Community Outreach Caseworker (Part-time, 25 hours per week)

Location: Richmond-upon-Thames

This is a brand-new role, working alongside people facing some of life's most complex challenges - helping them find hope, stability, and a way forward. Full details and how to apply can be found on our website:

<https://www.vineyardcommunity.org/vacancies>

Closing date for applications: 12pm, Friday 17 April 2026

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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