

Thursday 7 May 2026

Dear Friends,

In the week of local elections, there will doubtless be a lot of coverage and pontificating about how well or badly the government is doing. Democracy is mostly a gift, but it does lend itself to the side-that-is-not-in-power lobbing easy grenades at the side-that-is-in-power with a confidence about how much better things would be if they were in control.

And that may be true, but the less exciting thing to preach is this:
government is hard, especially at the moment.

The economy has been increasing by roughly 1% a year for a decade or so, but public sector requirements have been increasing by roughly 3-4% a year. I don't know why there are increasing numbers of children needing special needs provision, but it seems to be the case; and that provision is costly. We've got an ageing population and given that health needs increase with age, that means that more people are in need both of health care, and of social care (i.e. good residential home places etc.) And that is costly.

People can argue the case about the level of economic hit from leaving the EU, but what is unarguable is that Covid, the Ukraine war and Trump's foray into the Straits of Hormuz area all drags on the global economy and that drags back economic growth.

So being in government is hard.

In this, I wonder if the Church has some experience. For most of modern times and certainly the first eighteen years of my ordained ministry, the general tide of the culture has been at best apathetic towards faith and sometimes positively antagonistic. So being at the heart of a parish church is a hard job. And I therefore have sympathy with those in government, trying to be ingeniously effective at a time when their resources are limited. As it happens, my sense in the last two years is that the culture is shifting; I have never known so many people happy to articulate a faith, young and old, in all sorts of public squares. So there's the chance it's going to get easier for us in the Church.

But for whoever gets to be in power in government, it will be very hard. It's just how it is, and we shouldn't expect them to be miracle workers.

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** - Sarah Pryce, Georgina Merchant, Gerald Fearn, Julie Burman, Christa Browne, Irene Chalmers, Sabine Staton, Rebecca Fitzjohn

... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Peter O'Toole

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.

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 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 4pm, 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:

The May Fair is finally upon us! The excitement doesn't end there with the APCM just a week away.

NEW: ST ALBANS PILGRIMAGE - Saturday 20 June

Rev'd Anne will once again be leading a group from our Team's churches on Pilgrimage to St Albans. Each year, thousands journey to the city of St Albans to honour a story that took

place 1700 years ago and continues to inspire Christians all across the world today. The city comes to a standstill as the story of St Alban, Britain's first Christian martyr, is retold through a vibrant procession of giant puppets which weave their way through the city's streets to the ancient Cathedral built on the hillside above the old Roman city of Verulamium. As the story comes to a close, pilgrims make their way in to the Cathedral for a festival Eucharist – the guest preacher this year will be Ruth Dearnley OBE. Ruth is former CEO of Stop the Traffik, the global anti-human trafficking charity she helped to establish in 2008. After a break for lunch (picnic on the Abbey orchard, or in one of St Albans many pubs and restaurants) we will gather for the festal Evensong, sung by the Cathedral choir, followed by procession to the rose-filled shrine of St Alban. We will travel to St Albans by train, an easy journey from Richmond which takes about 45 minutes. If you would like to join Anne on 20th June then please email to register your interest anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org More details to follow.

NEW: Farewell to our bells at St Mary's

On Bell Sunday - 17th May there will be one last full peal attempt on our current bells starting at 1pm - a full peal lasts about three hours!!!!

The Bell Ringers will run a coffee and cake cafe in church from lunchtime to about 3.30pm to raise funds but also to encourage you all to come and listen to the bells during their last full peal. No need to stay for the full three hours!!!!

This will not be the last time our bells will be rung. There are Quarter Peal attempts on the 31st May, 6th and 14th June as well as a wedding on the 12th June and ringing at the 9.30 service on the 14th June. Our new bells should arrive well in advance of Christmas.

NEW: Richmond Piano Series @ St Mary's - Sunday 7 June, 3pm

The series continues with a recital given by two astonishing young artists, clarinettist **Joseph Shiner** and pianist **Keval Shah**. Their programme takes a journey through both repertoire written for the clarinet and arrangements for the instrument, including iconic music by Rachmaninoff, Weber and Reena Esmail. Tickets available at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/richmond-piano-series-joseph-shiner-keval-shah-tickets-1980038150409?aff=oddtcreator>

NEW: ACM's

The Annual Church Meetings of St Mary Magdalene and St John the Divine will be held this Sunday after their morning services.

May Fair – Saturday 9 May - in and around SMM

We are excited to be running the May Fair as usual on the Saturday 9 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.

Please sign up to help on the day at one of the SMM stalls - rota at the back of church - just an hour would be really helpful!

URGENTLY seeking Gazebos for the May Fair - if anyone has one they would be prepared to lend for the day please can they contact Jo - johanna_kitson@hotmail.com

THANK YOU
From the Fair Committee

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week this year runs officially from Sunday 10 to Saturday 16 May. It has been suggested we have special Church collections on Sunday 17 as a lot of our energies and £s in Richmond will be directed to May Fair earlier.

A licence has been applied for by the coordinator of the local ecumenical group to allow collecting in George Street, the Quadrant, Kew Road and the Station during Christian Aid Week. Envelopes and publicity have been ordered.

Bella Hobson is liaising with other churches and intends to be out with a collecting tin on Saturday 16 p.m. at least. (after the recital which will be held at St MM at 12.30.) Would anyone be free that morning? If so, you could collect labelled 'tins' and tabards from the Church as Bella is on welcoming duty 10 to 12 that day. If you can help that day or at other times please get in touch with her

bella.hobson@gmail.com

Bella had given her contact details to the charity when she went on the Christian Aid walk last Autumn. Please put this year's date in your diaries Saturday 26th September. It is fun walking in our lovely area raising money for those less fortunate, setting off from St Matthias and finishing at St Anne's Kew via Ham along the riverside with refreshments kindly offered at start, finish and en route.

It would be good if there were volunteers from our three churches who could assist with fundraising for this Charity in May and at other times. Bella is happy to act as link, but it would be helpful to work with those who have more administrative and technical skills!

The APCM at St Mary Magdalene – Sunday 17 May 6.30pm

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on the evening of Sunday 17 May at St Mary Magdalene, beginning with a Team Service of Choral Evensong at 6.30pm with the meeting beginning afterwards. The annual reports can be found on the RTM website in the 'News' section, from where they can be downloaded - <https://richmondteamministry.org/news/>

There are now six of these: Safeguarding, Deanery, Fabric, Secretary's, the Electoral Roll and the Bookings Report as well as the meeting's agenda.

The annual accounts for 2025, both the full set and the shortened financial summary, as well as the draft minutes of last year's APCM are not shown on the website. Hard copies of these, together with hard copies of the six that are on the website, will be available in the churches from Sunday 10 May.

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 Kelsey](#) - St John the Divine

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

Diocesan News:

Digital Storyteller Intern

Bishop Martin is looking for a paid Digital Storyteller Intern to work with him over the summer (to the end of July). If interested, please contact John Palmer (admin@richmondteamministry.org) for the job description.

Those wishing to apply should send a one-page CV and a 250-word statement indicating how they might be suitable to Hannah.Nightingale@southwark.anglican.org by the closing date of 8 May. Interviews will follow soon after.

Community News:

Can you bake for Open Gardens day?

Sunday 17 May – 16 private gardens in Richmond will be open to the public to raise money for charity, including the Richmond Soup Kitchen. Teas will be served at St Matthias, and donations of home-made cakes will be very welcome. The best for sales are the 'old-fashioned' varieties such as coffee, carrot, lemon drizzle, Victoria sponge and chocolate but we are grateful for all donations. Please bring them to St Matthias from 11am on 17 May, and also please tell us in advance so we can send you a form for ingredients and allergens.

Tickets (£12.50 in advance, £15 on the day) are available from

<https://www.richmondhillpengardens.org/>

Seen is recruiting

SEEN is a local charity in Twickenham and is currently looking to recruit an Events Planner for 5 hours per week. SEEN provide a safe space to support those facing unplanned pregnancy and baby loss, and we deliver healthy relationship education to empower and nurture our community. We have over 27 volunteers and more in training. We are looking for someone proactive and organised to develop and deliver high-quality events that raise awareness of our charity. If anyone is interested, please contact John Palmer (admin@richmondteamministry.org) for the job spec.

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.

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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