

Thursday 15 October 2026

Dear Friends,

Monday of this week saw the opening night of previews for the Orange Tree Theatre's production of T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* at St John's. There was much excitement and anticipation as weeks of preparation gave way to the arrival of an audience. Our familiar church has become an extraordinary theatrical space, and it has been a privilege to watch that transformation unfold.

Over the last few weeks, I have loved getting to know some of the cast and crew, and seeing at close quarters how a theatre works. Most of us encounter a production when the lights go down and the actors appear. What we rarely see is the remarkable network of people, skills and relationships that makes those moments possible. There are those who build, those who light, those who organise, and those who notice the detail everyone else has missed. There are practical problems to solve and countless decisions whose success means an audience never needs to think about them. What has particularly struck me is the kindness, helpfulness and joy with which the cast and crew interact. Alongside the seriousness of their work, there is warmth and laughter. I admire the Orange Tree team's approach to finding solutions: identifying what someone needs to do their job well, and working together to make that possible. Enabling each person to thrive serves the whole production.

It has made me reflect on our habits in the Church. We can be very problem focused. Suggest something new and we quickly produce a catalogue of obstacles: expense, inconvenience, precedent, the possibility that somebody might object. Occasionally, we have identified seventeen reasons something cannot happen before anybody has finished explaining the idea! Of course, difficulties deserve attention. But the questions we ask shape the possibilities we see. "How could we make this work?" opens a different conversation. It invites imagination, shared responsibility and the discovery that someone else may have precisely the gift we need. Here, St Paul's description of the Church as the body of Christ comes alive: one body with many members. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." Our life together depends upon people whose gifts differ from our own.

That is true of our three churches too. Each has its own charism: a particular gift through which God's grace is shared. At St Mary Magdalene, I see the gift of presence at the heart of Richmond, where parish life meets the town's civic and everyday life. At St Matthias, I see the gift of neighbourhood and belonging on the Hill, with opportunities for connection across generations, with schools and with those living in residential care. At St John's, I see the gifts of sacramental worship, contemplation and hospitality, expressed through beauty and practical care for our neighbours. These gifts overlap and continue to grow. Our Team Ministry flourishes when we cherish each church's character and ask how its particular gifts can enrich our shared mission. Unity makes room for difference.

We worship a creative God, whose generosity is expressed in the beauty and astonishing variety of creation. Made in God's image, we too are given imagination: the capacity to make, to tell stories, and to discover fresh ways of seeing. The arts therefore have a rightful place in the life of the Church. They help us explore truths that resist easy explanation, give voice to difficult questions, and become more attentive to God and one another.

Murder in the Cathedral explores power, the cost of faith, and moral courage. What does faithfulness require when conviction becomes uncomfortable, when powerful interests demand compliance, or when doing the right thing carries a price? Eliot also probes our motives, exposing how even apparent courage can become entangled with pride. These are searching questions for the Church today. Anxiety can tempt us to imagine ourselves besieged by the armies of secularism. We tighten our boundaries, protect what remains, and begin to mistake survival for our calling. Our diocesan vision of being "Christ Centred, Outward Focused" offers a more hopeful direction. Centred on Christ, we receive the love and courage that sustain us. Focused

outwards, we turn towards the people among whom God has placed us. The Christ we worship sends us into the world he loves.

The Church's future is one of boldness, presence and invitation. We are called to be attentive to our neighbours, generous with our buildings, and willing to enter conversations whose outcome we cannot control. There is moral courage in opening a door, sharing something precious, and making room for an unexpected encounter. Thousands of people will cross St John's threshold during this production. They will encounter a working church through a play that takes faith seriously and refuses easy answers.

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

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 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, Sabine Staton, Loïc Burn, Vrouwkje ten Klooster, Ian Rainsford

... **the departed, may they rest in peace**

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 usually at 8.00am, 9.30am, and 6.30pm, but Sun 11th Oct are at 8.00am, 9.15am (for families with young children), 10.30am (choral eucharist) 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:

NEW: The Big Sleep Out

Annie would like to thank everyone for very kindly sponsoring her for her recent Big Sleep Out for the Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness which raised almost £1000 towards their Winter Nightshelter.

Thankfully it didn't rain and the temperature wasn't too bad, but fireworks over the river at 4am were quite a surprise!

Here's a picture of Annie joined by Rev Michael Stokes - Curate at All Saints Kingston getting ready for a night with 12 others in their Churchyard.



NEW: St Mary Magdalene 'town hall' event last week

"Thank you to all St Mary Magdalene members who stayed on for the 'Town Hall' event last week. For those who weren't there, among the things raised were: the speaker system at St Mary Magdalene; possible ways of replanting the churchyard; arguments for and against shifting service times from 8am and 9.30am in the morning; the dangers of internal admin and buildings work overwhelming spending time on outward focussed mission, and other very sensible things, some of which have no easy answer.

Just to confirm, for this coming Sunday and at least until Christmas, the morning services at St Mary Magdalene will be at 8am and 9.30am in the morning and 6.30pm in the evening. So come along to your 'usual' service time."

NEW: Visiting preacher at St Mary Magdalene this Sunday (18th October)

This coming Sunday at St Mary Magdalene at 9.30am, we will be welcoming the Reverend Kieron Rowley as a Visiting Preacher. Kieron heads up the diocese's 'Youth Ministry In Communion' project or 'YMIC'. This supports youth work in churches of a sacramental/ middle of the road Church tradition to do youth work better through termly events, residential trips and supporting youth workers. Please do speak to him after the service.

Thanks,

NEW: All Souls' – A Team Service on Sunday 1 November, 6.30pm at St Matthias

Lists for names of people you wish to remember in that service will be in each of our churches. Do write names you would like to have read out clearly, to help those who are reading. If you are unable to come to church to write the name, please email them to John Palmer,

admin@richmondteamministry.org

The deadline for submission is midday, Thursday 29 October.

You are of course warmly invited to the service itself, to remember loved ones and light a candle for them. A joint choir will sing the Fauré Requiem.

NEW: All Souls Reflective Walk, Friday 30 October

Come and join Rev'd Anne on a seasonal walk around the Old Cemetery off Queen's Road. We will explore the lives and legacies of some of those laid to rest here, along with the flora and fauna which make this such an interesting place to visit. Meet at the end of Greville Road near the old cemetery chapel at 10am. Nearest bus stop is Park Road (371 bus towards Kingston). We will end our walk with coffee at The Lass pub. The route is a little uneven in places, but not too long and perfect for a gentle reflective stroll. More info from Anne

anne.crawford@richmondteamministry.org

Orange Tree Theatre's production of 'Murder in the Cathedral' at St John's

Very excitingly, the staging and lighting for the Orange Tree Theatre's production of *Murder in the Cathedral* have been installed at St John's over the past couple of days. Large gates now stand in the chancel, and a catwalk stage stretches the length of the nave aisle, giving our familiar church a strikingly different appearance.

Those who came to Morning Prayer and Evening worship on Tuesday were impressed by the transformation. Sunday worship will be something of a fun challenge over the next few weeks, requiring a little flexibility and perhaps some careful choreography! It is wonderful to see this partnership taking shape and to look forward to welcoming so many people through our doors.

The run is currently sold out, but please do contact the Orange Tree Theatre about opportunities to obtain tickets. OT Members receive priority access to the waiting list for returns and further ticket releases. During the run, a limited number of "Friday Rush" tickets will also be released online through the OT website each Friday at midday for performances the following week. Keep an eye on the theatre's website for last-minute returns, too.

There is also a special Saturday Seminar on **Saturday 31 October at 11am**, with former Archbishop of Canterbury **Rowan Williams** in conversation with the theatre's Artistic Director, **Tom Littler**. They will explore the play's spiritual themes and the political world of the 1930s that helped shape it. Tickets are **£15**—a wonderful opportunity to deepen our understanding of Eliot's remarkable work. [Further details and booking.](http://orangetreetheatre.co.uk) (orangetreetheatre.co.uk)

Governor at Christ's School: Vacancy

Christ's School is our local C of E secondary school. There are a number of 'Foundation' places on the governing body reserved for members of the congregation or connected with the church which ensures it keeps its Christian ethos. It's a great way of the Church supporting the wider community, and we currently have a vacancy. If you have an interest in supporting young people in our area in this way, please consider being a governor. Ask Robert for more details. It typically involves a commitment of something like ten evening meetings a year, plus two half days, and some ability to get through paperwork.

Reminder: Friday 16 October

Huw Morgan, who worships and is a regular server at St John the Divine, will be taking part in the Twickenham Stadium Zipwire on Friday 16 October. He'll be flying 150 metres over the pitch and raising money for Skylarks Charity - a local cause helping children and young people with additional needs, and their wider families. His own family benefited from the charity's help when their children were small. Every pound raised helps ensure these services can continue and grow. He, and the charity, would be extremely grateful for financial support. Please follow the link below and do use giftaid if you're able to.

<https://skylarks.enthuse.com/pf/huw-morgan-0ab4e/post/26686904>

Giving to the Church.

The churches in Richmond Team Ministry all face bills and various costs through the year, from fixing a roof to paying an administrator. Beyond this, the churches in Richmond contribute significant financial support to the work of other churches in Southwark Diocese in poorer areas than ours. While we are blessed with investment income, we also depend significantly on regular donations from ordinary congregation members and supportive members of the community. The best way to give to us, which requires the least administration is through 'the Parish giving Scheme'.

Go to: parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/richmond-team-ministry-richmond

If you would consider a regular or a one-off donation, that would be great.

If you have any questions, please [contact Jackie Harrison](#)

(stewardshipcoordinator@richmondteamministry.org) 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:

Mission Conference – Saturday 21 November - St John's Church, Waterloo

The title of this year's conference is *Signs of Hope*, looking at some of the great examples of work that our parishes across the traditions are doing to help not only themselves but others to grow. Across the Diocese, parishes are flourishing through revitalisation, fresh expressions, church planting, and new forms of Christian community. This conference will showcase these signs of hope and help participants explore practical next steps in their own contexts.

By attending, you will:

1. Hear inspiring stories of growth and renewal.
2. Learn practical approaches that can be adapted locally.
3. Connect with leaders from across the Diocese.
4. Discover resources to support mission in your parish.

A major focus of this year's conference will be Southwark's Hub Churches: parishes that have developed innovative and fruitful ministries which can be shared and adapted elsewhere. Through seminars and marketplace stands, you'll be able to explore ideas that are already bearing fruit across the Diocese.

So far, we have the following who have committed to be there:

1. Spring – helping our Estates thrive
2. Lifting Young Voices – developing missional choirs in a church and school setting
3. Growing Younger Together – building a catholic children and youth work from the ground up
4. Youth Ministry in Communion – Sacramental youth work between churches in an area
5. Body & Soul – an integrated approach to wellbeing – fitness and faith
6. Bubble Church - Bubble Church is a puppet-packed, Jesus-centred, 30 minute family Sunday service for families to worship together.

In addition, we will have stands from:

1. Growing Hope – Provides resourcing and training to help churches become more accessible for children and families with additional needs
2. LyCiG – Leading your church into Growth helps equip local leaders with practical strategies for sustainable growth. These gatherings often result in leaders forming actionable plans and renewed missional focus.

We are delighted that Bishop Martin will open the conference. Keynote contributions from Debbie Clinton, Head of Strategy and Vision for the Church of England, and Canon Will Cookson, Director of Mission for the Diocese of Southwark, will explore where hope and growth are emerging across the Church today and what lessons can be applied locally.

Whether you are looking for fresh ideas, practical tools, or renewed encouragement, *Signs of Hope* is a day designed to equip and inspire you.

We'd love you and your team to join us. Book your place today. Tickets are £15 (includes lunch and refreshments). For more information and booking details please visit Diocesan website:

[Southwark Mission Conference 2026 'Signs of Hope' - The Diocese of Southwark](#)

If cost is an issue or if you have any questions, please do contact our team at

[<Mission@southwark.anglican.org>](mailto:Mission@southwark.anglican.org)

Community News:

NEW: Calling all quizzers!

You are invited to join a team from Richmond Team Ministry and Skylarks Charity for a quiz night hosted by the Mayor of Richmond on Friday 30 October.

Join Nancy Baldwin (from St Matthias and local councillor) and Fiona Morgan (from St John the Divine) for a fun evening at York House in Twickenham from 7.30pm. Tickets are £27 and the evening includes food and there is also a raffle and bar. All proceeds go to the Mayor's charities.

Book your tickets here:

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors_charities

NEW: Town Centre redevelopment

This isn't directly church related, but Richmond Council have just launched a website for issues around improving Richmond Town Centre. See here, and add your name to a link within that website, if you want to get emails with updates and news.

<https://improving-richmond-town-centre.commonplace.is>

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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