

MARCH 2022 COMPANION CYCLING

SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

YOUR FREE COPY



Cycling for two
Opening up Bushy Park to everyone

Meet the clergy



VICAR Rev Derek Winterburn
Derek was born in Orpington, Kent, and ordained in 1986. He served in several diverse London parishes before becoming vicar here in 2016. He is married to Sandra, a teacher, and has two children. A keen photographer, he posts a picture online every day, combining it with a daily walk or cycle ride. He can be contacted at any time other than on Wednesdays (his day off).
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ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister and has been at St James's since starting her ordination training. Jacky is married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.
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ASSISTANT PRIEST Canon Julian Reindorp
Julian was born in Durban, South Africa, and ordained in 1969. He has worked in parishes in East London, Chatham and Milton Keynes, and was Team Rector in Richmond until retirement in 2009. He continues to lead a busy life, often out and about on his trademark red scooter. Julian is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren and nine grandchildren.
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FROM THE EDITOR...

With the days lengthening and life returning nearer to normal we are planning to run all the services and events listed on page 3 in the build-up to Easter.

Derek's Leader looks at the impact Covid has had on church services and congregations and what we can take forward.

One of the few benefits to come out of the pandemic has been the livestreaming of funerals. I was able to view the funeral of a friend in Sidmouth, Devon, along with all her local friends, who couldn't attend the restricted service. It also enabled her nephew in Hong Kong to join, a great comfort to the family. Hopefully streaming is now here to stay and will be routinely offered by churches.

Our feature this month is about Companion Cycling in Bushy Park. Graham McHutchon writes movingly about what it has meant to him to volunteer. I can also vouch for their obvious enjoyment as I have seen them many times out cycling on my walks in the park.

Our new feature on page 8 has been well received. This month Susan Horner shares some of her memories.

Best Wishes

Janet

Janet Nunn



Cover photo: Helen enjoys a side-by-side cycle ride in Bushy Park with service user, Diana.

SPIRE

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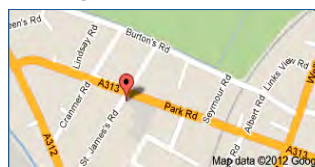
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Finding us



The church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is between the church and vicarage. There is ample unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R68, R70 and 285.

Follow us

For the very latest news go to our website or follow us on social media:

- stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk
- @stjames-hamptonhill
- @stjameshamphill
- @stjameshamptonhill

Clerical Capers



'The fan heater under his cassock was not one of the vicar's better ideas, darling.'

The 'new normal' can be a blessing for us



DEREK WINTERBURN

As the COVID pandemic recedes many people are expecting things to get 'back to normal', which is usually understood to be back to how things were before March 2020. However, a moment's thought shows us that this isn't possible.

Over five-and-a-half million people have died of COVID across the world, and 150,000 in the UK. That's many bereaved people. Many thousands have Long COVID or mental health issues. It is estimated that 800,000 people in the UK lost their jobs due to the virus, and perhaps 100 million people worldwide.

Keeping the masks

But even many of us who have come through the past two years relatively unscathed have learned to be wary about mixing with other people. It seems clear that many commuters would rather work from home. A recent study suggested that 40% of Britons want to keep wearing masks in shops and on transport permanently.

In church, it still seems premature to share the Peace by shaking just anyone's hands. Psychologists talk about some people being ready to 'dive' back into a pre-pandemic lifestyle, others are more inclined to 'dip their toes in the water.'

On the other hand, historians who have studied the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918

say that treating the population as a whole, there was very little 'psychological residue' after a few years.

What Covid has taught us

Rather, it seems to me that we have a chance to 'reset' — having come through turbulent times, we are clearer about what is important. These are some suggestions for our 'new normal':

- We learned that we need people. Although the widespread adoption of video conferencing (Zoom) made keeping in touch easier (and with some enduring advantages), we found that in some almost mysterious ways we missed being in the same room as people.

Some of this was about touch, and body language, but when everything is 'explained away' there still seemed to be a need to be with people. While we have always said that church was 'people, not buildings', we experienced this more deeply. In the new normal, we must go further in strengthening the bonds between us. Our *Connections* group does exactly this.

- The first lockdown in particular required dramatic lifestyle changes. In particular, because we were not supposed to go out, car use dropped. We remember it being quieter, hearing the birds singing and the air being cleaner.

However, the fall in motor vehicle use was not total — on weekdays it was, at its lowest, still 40% of 'normal' (more at weekends). For the sake of the climate, I really do hope that we will be thinking more carefully about using our cars.

- In a similar way to how so many people became used to Zoom, churches embraced streaming their services online. This was

something we had almost done a few years ago as we had the basic equipment, but the lockdowns forced us to get moving. Now we have four (!) cameras in church that can produce an impressive broadcast.

Different churches have found different solutions. We are streaming our 9:30am service rather than creating a 'for online only' service. This seems to match our resources and what our 'audience' wants.

This is becoming normal practice for us, and offers something for people who would want to be in church but can't attend, and something for those who would just rather stay at home and join in that way.

- Another 'technological' innovation that we developed when we could not be together is the 'podcast' *Time to Pray*. Four days a week a short recording is made available with prayers, a Bible reading and a reflection. An email is sent out each time to 88 people with the link. Of course, not everyone listens every time, but this has become a regular (normal!) part of some people's lives.

Streamline Lent

As we approach Lent, there is another opportunity to enter almost a voluntary lockdown. But this time we can choose more freely how to streamline life, or take up new things. Lent is a season of penitence, prayer, fasting and study to prepare for Easter.

We can choose our own discipline — but here are some ideas: less meat, more prayer, less TV / social media, more giving, fewer cross words, more thoughtful actions, less car-driving, more listening... Maybe it will only be for the 40 days of Lent, or it may become your new normal!



Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am

Come to church or watch live or later on our Facebook and YouTube pages.

Together 11:15am

Our shorter, all-age service, including a story, singing and crafts. All ages are welcome!

Mon-Fri (but not Thu)

Morning Prayer 9am

A short service of daily prayer in church

Thursdays (but not 3 Mar)

Holy Communion (said) 9:30am

Connections

Tue 1 March 10:30am-12:30pm

Join us at the social club for all ages

Pancakes Party

Tue 1 March 8pm

We have seasoned pancake flippers on hand!

Ash Wednesday

Wed 2 March 9:30am & 8pm

Lent begins with Holy Communion and ashing.

The Good Guys

Tue 8 March 7pm

To join the men's group for supper, please email: office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

Pop-up Cinema

Encanto Sat 19 March 4pm

The story of a magical house under threat. PG rating. Free entry. Snacks on sale.

Messy Church

Sun 20 March 3pm

If you have children, join us for a fun afternoon of stories, crafts, worship and food. Please book at: stjameshh.churchsuite.co.uk/events/9mdga6sa

Mothering Sunday

Sun 27 March 10am

Our 9:30 and 11:15 services join for an All Age Service — with a gift for all ladies!

Sun 27 March 2pm

The Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band perform a Platinum Jubilee Concert in honour of the Queen. Tickets £15 on the door. Children go free.

Time to Pray Mon-Fri

If you would like to listen to the weekday podcasts please email: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

Weekly News

If you would like to receive the weekly eFlyers, with details of services and events, email: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

Gearing up for a ride



GRAHAM McHUTCHON



No barriers The park really is accessible to everyone on two wheels or four!

The tyres are pumped up, the saddle heights adjusted, and the brakes tested. It's a crisp, clear morning with not a puff of wind to ruffle the trees. Just before ten o'clock the gate to the Stockyard in Bushy Park rolls back and a minibus full of excited young people drives in.

This is the first of many, bringing 'users' of all ages and abilities from care homes, special needs schools, families and individuals to enjoy the unique facilities of Companion Cycling.

The organisation was inspired by the Cobbett family, whose daughter Jo, had viral encephalitis at the age of six. The charity was formed in 2000 in collaboration with other experts from the voluntary sector.

Now, in excess of 4000 rides take place each year, all supervised by a team of volunteers.

Stockyard base

The Royal Parks kindly grant use of facilities in the Stockyard to store and prepare the wide range of cycles, park the specialist vehicles used to transport the users and an office to administer the daily operation.

Companion Cycling provides a range of safety equipment and wet weather clothing. Everything is regularly checked and maintained by a dedicated team.

There is even a picnic area available for use after cycling in the park, with tables and benches that afford tranquil views across the paddocks used to graze the horses

When the first Covid lockdown put paid to travelling across America, Graham McHutchon found himself on another journey of discovery closer to home. Companion Cycling is a charity that enables people in challenging circumstances the chance to explore Bushy Park in all its glory. The charity's army of volunteers are ready to help others experience nature and the great outdoors – whatever the weather.

from the City of London and Metropolitan police forces.

Regardless of the weather, it is delightful to see the bikes setting out down Lime Avenue each morning towards the Diana Fountain, or hear the excited shouts as riders pedal hard to get over the Brick Bridge between the Woodland Gardens.

I am sure anyone who frequents

Bushy Park will have encountered these groups and been on the receiving end of some energetic bell ringing! There are designated routes that keep users west of Chestnut Avenue and away from the traffic.

The best bike

The volunteers who run the

operation each day help the users to choose the bike that best suits their needs, whether that be a trike, a two-wheeler, or the more specialist machines with dual controls including one, the Velo, that can carry a wheelchair on a ramp at the front.

This means that even those not able to cycle for themselves are given the opportunity to ride through the park, enjoy the beauty of nature and experience the variety of wildlife safely.

The therapeutic benefits of this are obvious to see. The specialist facilities offered by Companion Cycling mean the users come from far and wide.

Some live within the parish of St James, Hampton Hill, others come from central London and as far as they are concerned, they are out in 'the country'.

Acid grasslands

I enjoy accompanying these groups and sharing my knowledge of the life cycle of deer, or talking about the importance of anthills to the acid grasslands, which provide a habitat for insects, spiders and plants, including fungi. On

occasions we have had a kestrel hovering just a few feet from us.

Most of the users come regularly and although verbal communication may be limited, as each week passes a rapport is established and built up, enabling the sharing of individual needs and enjoyment.

Companion Cycling ensures that one designated carer is always present with each of the users, competency to use the equipment is checked and training provided where necessary to maintain the safety of everyone using the park.

Shared special experiences

Riding on the same bike as a user, like the Twin-rider or Side-by-side, is a special experience. I think of one young man who has difficulty with strength and co-ordination in his legs, but loves to be set challenges, like getting over the Brick Bridge or sprinting for an imaginary finish line.

The joy on his face brought on by his achievement is infectious. Another user has a particular interest in the history of World War Two and the role that Bushy Park played in planning for the D-Day landings.

For many of the users the enjoyment comes simply from the independence and freedom that being out on a bike that they can control brings, coupled with some valuable exercise.

Covid inspiration

When Covid put paid to my plans to continue travelling in America, I started looking for possibly more meaningful ways to use my time!



Choose your bike A range of vehicles enables people of all abilities to enjoy the park

in the park



Sheer Joy The freedom to roam Bushy Park is life-enhancing

Becoming a volunteer

Although I was aware of Companion Cycling, it was only when a friend told me more about it that I was persuaded to volunteer my services.

Six days a week a group of enthusiastic people from all walks of life give of their time, as and when they can. The atmosphere is convivial and there is a strong sense of teamwork when dealing with

unpredictable and enthusiastic groups. I always look forward to my days there. Since I joined the Wednesday team I have gained a further understanding of the challenges some people with disabilities face in their daily lives. Despite this, they are cheerful, energetic and determined.

Humbling work

It also has deepened my admiration for those who give so much as professional carers. To witness the love, care and understanding that they have for the people they work with is humbling.

Some users require two carers to be with them whilst they are out. As a volunteer, with little previous experience of working in this field, I find it is one of the most rewarding ways to spend my time — and it is in my favourite park!

■ To learn more about the charity, and perhaps join the volunteers, go to: companioncycling.org.uk



Care Volunteers are dedicated, caring people.

Award (Right) The Queen's Award given to the charity.



Around the Spire

Making it easier to cycle to church

Investing in green forms of transport

WHILE WE welcome all the visitors to the church or to the hall, we are particularly pleased when people walk or cycle!

We have a car park, but the secure and safe parking for cycles is inadequate.

We have lots of railings, but securing bikes to them is not easy, and they can become hazards to people (including children) passing by.

The Parochial Church Council has agreed to the principle of a new weatherproof cycle shelter and to fund up to half the cost. So we are running an appeal for £700



Would you like to contribute? You can leave a donation in the church (in a blue envelope, marked *Cycle Appeal*) or make one online by going to: <https://bit.ly/StJBikeShelter>

What a West End musical can teach us during Lent



Main picture: *Hamilton*. **Inset:** Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, the author of *The Room Where it Happens*.

THIS YEAR'S Lent Course is *The Room Where it Happens*, written by the 61-year-old Bishop of Dover, the Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, and inspired by the multi award-winning stage musical *Hamilton*.

The course should appeal to all ages and uses discussions about what the Bible and the Christian faith teach us about some of the big issues faced by Alexander Hamilton in the musical.

It is his responses to injustice, adversity and temptation, his search for identity, that leads to the realisation that he (and all of us) can make a difference in the world.

The course has five weekly sessions, exploring the themes of:

- Identity and Belonging
- Ambition and Temptation
- Forgiveness and Redemption

- Love and Sacrifice
- Hope and Courage through Adversity.

Each session includes suggestions for inspiring songs from the musical to watch, with relevant Bible passages and discussion questions.

Bishop Rose has written a personal introduction to each theme, exercises and reflections, and provides opening and closing prayers for each chapter.

The course will run on Mondays in church at 7.30pm on 7, 14, 21, 28 March and 11 April. You can sign up in church or email Derek: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

A prophet for our times



JULIAN REINDORP

Jeremiah is my favourite depressive in the library of books we call the Bible. A prophet, his father a priest, he wrote from about 630 to 560 BCE. He was a man of deep emotions — the word of the Lord is 'like fire burning deep within me, I try my best to hold it in but can no longer keep it back' (20. 9) and to be a 'Jeremiah' is to describe someone who always sees the worst in situations. This may be unfair to the great prophet, but he clearly knew what 'Black Dog' meant, to use Winston Churchill's description of his depressive episodes.

Too young to speak?

When first called by God, Jeremiah felt he was far too young, and 'I don't know how to speak,' but in time God called him to be a prophet not just to his own people but to the surrounding nations (1.4). He reminds me of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who started life as a young teacher but became not just a peaceful advocate against apartheid in South Africa, but a prophet to the nations about human rights, including gay rights.

Milton Keynes message

Jeremiah's famous letter to the exiles in Babylon (605-587) became an inspiration to all of us who lived in the new city of Milton Keynes (our home 1984-92). 'Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you, ... for in its welfare you will find your welfare... build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat what they produce' (29.7). Wherever we move to can we respond by playing our part in the life of our local community?

Prophetic investment

He warned his contemporaries and pleaded with them to return to worshipping the true God. He was shocked how 'everyone great and small tries to make money dishonestly, even the prophets and priest cheat the people' (6. 13). He warned them about the coming exile, so they plotted against his life (11.18), they even left him in a well to die (38.50). But he went on reminding the people of God's deep love for

them, 'Israel you are my dearest one, the child I love best' (31.20). And then to illustrate his faith in God's future he bought a piece of land and proclaimed, 'One day God will bring back the people to Jerusalem, and they will be my people and I will be their God.'(32.38)

Post Covid Vision

Covid has shaken so much that we had taken for granted in our daily and national life, and in the life of the church. Masked and socially distant relationships are never easy and there have been difficult periods of isolation. Now, when the temptation is to want everything to go back to what it was, Jeremiah is a prophet calling us into the future.

There has been the challenge of keeping in touch but services by Zoom have meant that people around the world have joined in worship, weddings and funerals. The almost miraculous speed of vaccine development has been matched by a remarkable NHS-led national campaign to get everyone vaccinated, although there is still a sense that we can only be reasonably safe as a nation when the whole world is largely vaccinated. We have faced huge challenges and now we need to face the climate emergency with similar determination and resources.

A new heart

One of the great promises of God given by Jeremiah was to a people weighed down by all that was wrong in their lives and in the life of their country — a promise to renew the covenant between God and his people, and this relationship will be deeply personal: 'I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts'(31.33). I am reminded of Isaiah's image of how God has our names written on the palm of his hands (49.16). I know some of us are wary of too much emotion in worship — the waving of hands, (though we accept kneeling and making the sign of the cross!) But it is surely the sense that we can talk to God, reveal feelings that we cannot to anyone else, that is a powerful part of our faith. It is often difficult to put into words, but expressed through hymns that mean a great deal to us.

Jeremiah's depressions

But above all it is Jeremiah's prophecies spoken often when deeply depressed and seemingly surrounded by his critics that have echoed down the centuries, spoken to people at their time of need. They speak to us with a depth that is Christ-like.

Making friends, having fun



CORYN ROBINSON

It has become a place to meet with old friends and to get to know new acquaintances.

NHS Hearing Aid Clinic

One of the most welcome developments has been the NHS Hearing Aid Drop-in Clinic. It is run by David Thompson, a fully-trained volunteer who has regularly turned up and offered advice and practical help with hearing aids — absolutely invaluable for a number of people who have become regular visitors, having a welcome cup of coffee and cake whilst waiting at the church.

David is currently working out how he can continue to help people within the constraints of the current NHS guidelines.

Connections has recently resumed and will run on the first Tuesday in the month from 10.30am-12.30pm. The only change to that will be the Christmas Connections session that will need to fit in with a busy time in church.

The wider community

We are still trying to ensure that we meet the needs of both the church congregation and that of the wider local community and would appreciate being informed of anybody who might like to attend and needs encouragement and /or help.

We have tentative plans to develop and extend our Connections community and would welcome anybody who can come along with ideas, enthusiasm, energy , or just to enjoy a chat over a cuppa!

It has been hard to 'connect' during Covid, with the many restraints and restrictions that we have all had to learn to cope with. All church activities have, of course, been affected and the church building was closed for a time, for any gatherings, including *Connections*.

We had only been running for about a year and were steadily developing activities that were the choice and requests of the regulars who had attended every month.

By the time Covid struck we regularly welcomed up to 20 people, meeting in the church for a wide range of activities.

Favourite regular activities included a game of Scrabble (or other tabletop games) and a jigsaw.

Christmas and Harvest

Christmas and Harvest focused on a seasonal activity — making table wreath decorations, seen above, is always popular — and instead of delicious homemade cake and coffee (or tea), we instead served homemade soup and bread.

Carpet bowls became generally popular and appealed to those who were more energetic and competitive!

Animated, lively, intense and interested conversations could be heard around the church, sometimes with the click of knitting needles, with first attempts at watercolour painting, perusing old photos and historical artefacts, or just because there was a general interest in current affairs.

Each meeting introduced something different to be tried, and sometimes shared with others who were interested.

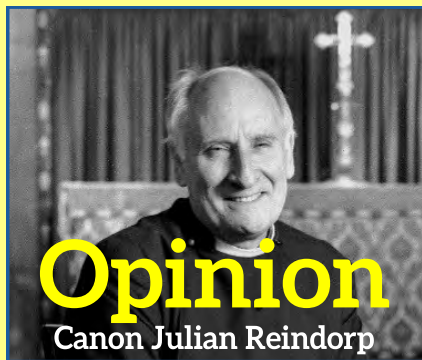
A very warm welcome

Everybody who came along was assured of a very warm welcome, whether a familiar face or someone who had never visited St James's Church before.

If there was a particular request or suggestion for an activity or interest, then this would be investigated and introduced if possible.



Mental health: an unseen illness



Opinion
Canon Julian Reindorp

HEALTH SECTOR NEWS

Good news: in the past two years 56,000 people have signed up for nursing courses, up over a third on pre-pandemic levels, 69% inspired by the needs of the pandemic. Bad news: unfilled posts in the care home sector have doubled in the past nine months, now over 150,000. In 1988 there were 300,000 hospital beds in England, by 2020 there were 141,000. And compare acute beds per 100,000 people in Europe: Germany 8 beds, France 6 beds, UK 2.5 beds.

WEALTH OF RICH DOUBLES

An Oxfam report revealed that global wealth of the world's 10 richest men has doubled to \$1.5 trillion since the start of the pandemic. World Bank figures show that 165 million people have been driven into poverty during this time. A one-off 99% wealth windfall tax would pay enough to vaccinate the entire world, provide resources to tackle climate change, provide universal health care and social protection, and address gender-based violence in 80 countries. Even after this, the 10 men would still be \$8 billion better off than before the pandemic. As Oxfam's CEO, Dr Danny Sriskandarajah said: 'The explosion in billionaire's fortunes at a time when poverty is increasing lays bare the fundamental flaws in our economies.'

SCANDAL OF NINE ELMS

The redevelopment of this part of Battersea offered real opportunities for a mixture of housing. The low-rise industrial sheds and market buildings have gone, instead we have a forest of towers up to 58 floors full of empty flats. When he was London mayor, Ken Livingstone asked for 3,500 homes on the site. His successor, Boris Johnson, having promised to stop London becoming 'Dubai-on-Thames', turned this into 20,000.

Canary Wharf remained in the hands of one developer. Around Nine Elms are a series of international developers. Battersea Power Station is owned by a Malaysian Consortium. It changed hands five times before construction started. The number of apartments is now 4239. The number of 'affordable homes' (up to 80% of market rents) has dropped steadily to its current level of 9%.

Sadiq Khan's aim is to have 35% of affordable homes in all new developments. The original 40-acre site was bought for £1.5m in the 1990s. The developer went bust, the banks sold the development for £10.5m to a Hong Kong developer. He sat on the site for 10 years without building anything and sold it to Irish-owned Treasury Holdings for £400m. As one architect said, 'Nine Elms has pioneered a new model for the destruction of London as we know it.'

SHORTER SCHOOL WEEK?

Forest Gate community school in East London is pioneering a four-and-a-half-day week finishing at 1pm on Friday. The result is happier, more energetic teachers — 98% appreciate the change. Pupils say they enjoy extra time with their friends or stay onsite for extra-curricular activities or homework. Will this catch on?

ASYLUM SEEKERS BACKLOG

Last month I mentioned the 'crazy and cruel policy' in the new Nationality and Borders Bill, making the 28,000 refugees crossing the English Channel illegal. There is a record backlog of 90,000 people waiting for a decision, and the average claim takes a year to process. While they wait, asylum seekers are not allowed to work.

GRANDPARENTS' LEAVE

Workers at Saga, the insurance and travel company for over 50s, are to be given a week's paid leave to celebrate the birth of grandchildren. Saga is the first major company in UK to formally recognise the role of grandparents for its 2,500 employees. Research found that a quarter of working grandparents struggle to balance work with childcare commitments. My wife and I have played a modest role in the lives of our 10 grandchildren, but a key task has been to feed the guinea pigs during holiday time!



DENNIS
WILMOT

St James's is supporting two causes in Lent this year: the Diocese of London's Lent Appeal for mental health, and St Luke's Hospital in Milo, Tanzania, where our involvement began almost 40 years ago.

Mental health and isolation

The Diocese of London focuses on mental health and isolation. Those in need of support here have been particularly badly affected by the events of the past two years, with a dramatic increase in mental health issues since pre-Covid days. People living in London are at greatest risk. One out of every ten Londoners say they feel lonely.

To tackle the problem, the diocese will be channelling support to three charities:

- **Renew Wellbeing** will help and equip churches to offer quiet safe spaces and to promote positive emotional and mental wellbeing. Churches are often well-placed in their communities to offer help and support.
- **Restored** will help churches to end domestic abuse and create a safe place for survivors by being a shining light in the darkness and providing safety.
- **Be Headstrong** will support young people by providing a great place for talking, sharing and reading about all kinds of topics including Covid, anxiety, stress and panic. Our Associate Priest, Rev Jacky Cammidge, has signed up for *Mental Health First Aid* training.

St Luke's Hospital

St Luke's has benefitted from the placement of two volunteer doctors, Adrian and Hilary Murray, and most of



Renew Wellbeing Positive thinking can help all of us, and is part of this year's Lent Appeal focus on mental health

our donations have gone into projects which they have launched, including a biomedical analyser, X-ray equipment and the refurbishment of the paediatric ward. Adrian and Hilary visited us in pre-Covid days and the benefits of that personal face-to-face touch have endured. The village of Milo is three hours' drive from the nearest small town of Njombe. St Luke's in Milo is an Anglican mission where people come from a radius of 40km, sometimes walking for two days to reach the hospital.

Quick ways to donate to the Lent Appeal

Please support these two good causes. You can give online at <https://bit.ly/StJLent22>, or by using this QR code on your smartphone, or in church by using a blue envelope, marking it *Lent Appeal*.



Churches carbon pledge



ALL 42 dioceses in the Church of England have signed up to become an 'eco diocese' as part of a commitment to reach net zero carbon by 2030.

The scheme, developed by the charity A Rocha UK, sees churches and dioceses awarded bronze, silver, or gold status depending on actions taken to improve their environmental footprint. St James's has already received its bronze award and is working towards the silver. Derek, our vicar, is the Kensington Area Lead for Creation Care.

Graham Usher, lead bishop for the environment, said: 'We must make real differences to our lives to care for God's creation and limit the impact of the climate crisis.'

REGISTERS

JANUARY

FUNERALS

12 (Gerry) Hubert Gabriel Girou, 93, Hammersmith
18 Ronald Robert Best, 79, Staines-upon-Thames



St Edward's to St James's

Susan was born and brought up in north Staffordshire. After graduating, she moved to Hampton Hill for her first job and has lived in the area ever since. She is now a churchwarden at St James's and also volunteers for Princess Alice Hospice and as a befriender for the Lullaby Trust.

1 ST EDWARD'S, LEEK

My parents were married at this church and I was baptised there. I started to attend services regularly from the age of 12, joined the youth club and took part in many church activities, including 12-15 mile walks (could not do that now!) and even a church working holiday on the Isle of Cumbrae.

Michael and I married there in 1967 and all our children were baptised there. The children gave us this painting for our 40th wedding anniversary.

2 WAR MEDAL AND LETTERS

My father fought in the First World War, returning home a few days after his 21st birthday. Like so many others, he never talked about his experiences, and it was only some while after his death that I found his medal and letters which he had written to his mother whilst a prisoner-of-war.

3 WESTWOOD HALL SCHOOL

My grammar school was housed in an old manor house with lovely grounds which we could enjoy at break times. My mother and mother-in-law were both former pupils, the latter joining in the year it was founded. I bought this plate at the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of the school. The 100th anniversary occurred last year, but Covid has delayed any event to mark this.

4 MIKADO PROGRAMME

During my teens I took part in many Gilbert and Sullivan operettas with my local amateur group and the Mikado was my first. We made all our own costumes and scenery and the highlight of the year was when we took over the local cinema for a week for our performance.

5 CAVERN CLUB MEMBERSHIP

I studied for my Maths degree at Liverpool University. My lecture rooms overlooked the Roman Catholic Cathedral, which was under construction at the time. I continued to sing in G&S productions in Liverpool, and the entire cast borrowed the costumes we had made in Leek.

During my time at university the Beatles hit the world. Although by then they were no longer playing at the Cavern, we had to go to see where it had all started. The noise was tremendous!

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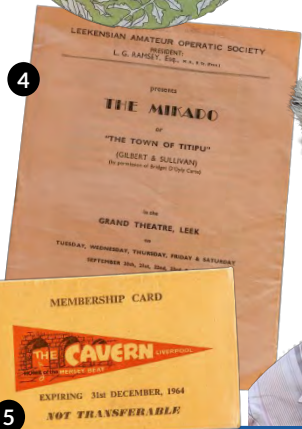
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in various schools and the adult education college, and also two mornings a week for several years at Feltham Young Offenders. I was very surprised on my first day to find peacocks walking round the grounds — it is hardly a stately home! I saw at first hand how prison worked and, sadly, in some cases did not. I still have my prison belt and key-chain.

8 OBERAMMERGAU

This is a carving of the Last Supper which I bought when Michael and I went to Oberammergau in 2000 to see the Passion Play. The play lasted for six hours: three hours in the morning and a further three in the afternoon after a break for lunch. There were tableaux interspersed between the various scenes. It was a very moving and thought-provoking experience: how would I have reacted to Jesus if I had been there during his lifetime?



8

9 GRANDCHILDREN

I now have four grandchildren and treasure many things they have given me or made for me. Painted eggs at Easter are a German tradition and these eggs and flower were given to me by my eldest two who live there. The Christmas tree decorations are from my Yorkshire grandchildren.



9

10 PEBBLES

We had a family holiday on the Isle of Wight in 1985, when our eldest was 14 and our youngest two. Little did we think that, 20 years later, our daughter and son-in-law would be living there. I have spent many happy times there with them. These pebbles are from Freshwater Bay, not far from where they live, where we have often watched the waves crashing against the sea wall.

Susan Horner takes us from church to school, the music of Gilbert and Sullivan to the Beatles, travelling from Staffordshire to Liverpool, Germany and the Isle of Wight, and at the forefront of it all is the importance of family.

6 WEDDING DRESS

Thirty years after I wore this dress for my wedding at St Edward's, our daughter wore it for her wedding at St James's. Michael was very pleased to have walked the dress up the aisle in both directions!

7 FROM ARL TO PRISON

After graduation, I moved to Hampton Hill for my first job as a scientific officer at the Admiralty Research Laboratory, which was then housed at Upper Lodge in Bushy Park, next to where the water gardens are now. I could hardly believe my luck at starting my first job surrounded by a deer park! After our first child was born, I stopped work for a few years and then became a part-time teacher. I taught

11 ST JAMES'S, HAMPTON HILL

St James's has now been a major part of my life for well over 30 years. I have particularly enjoyed my involvement with the bells and the *Spire* magazine. My elder son was the sole bellringer for several years, and when he was about to go to university he taught his mother and his brother to ring. Since then, I have been responsible for seeing that the bells are rung every Sunday and for weddings and other occasions, and for training new bellringers. I oversee the distribution of the *Spire*; the edition shown here features the Stations of the Cross which we visited in caves in Erlangen, Germany. But the most important aspect of my involvement has been the opportunities for worship and study, and being part of the St James's 'family'.