MARCH 2023 LENT

SPIRE

St James Hampton Hill

HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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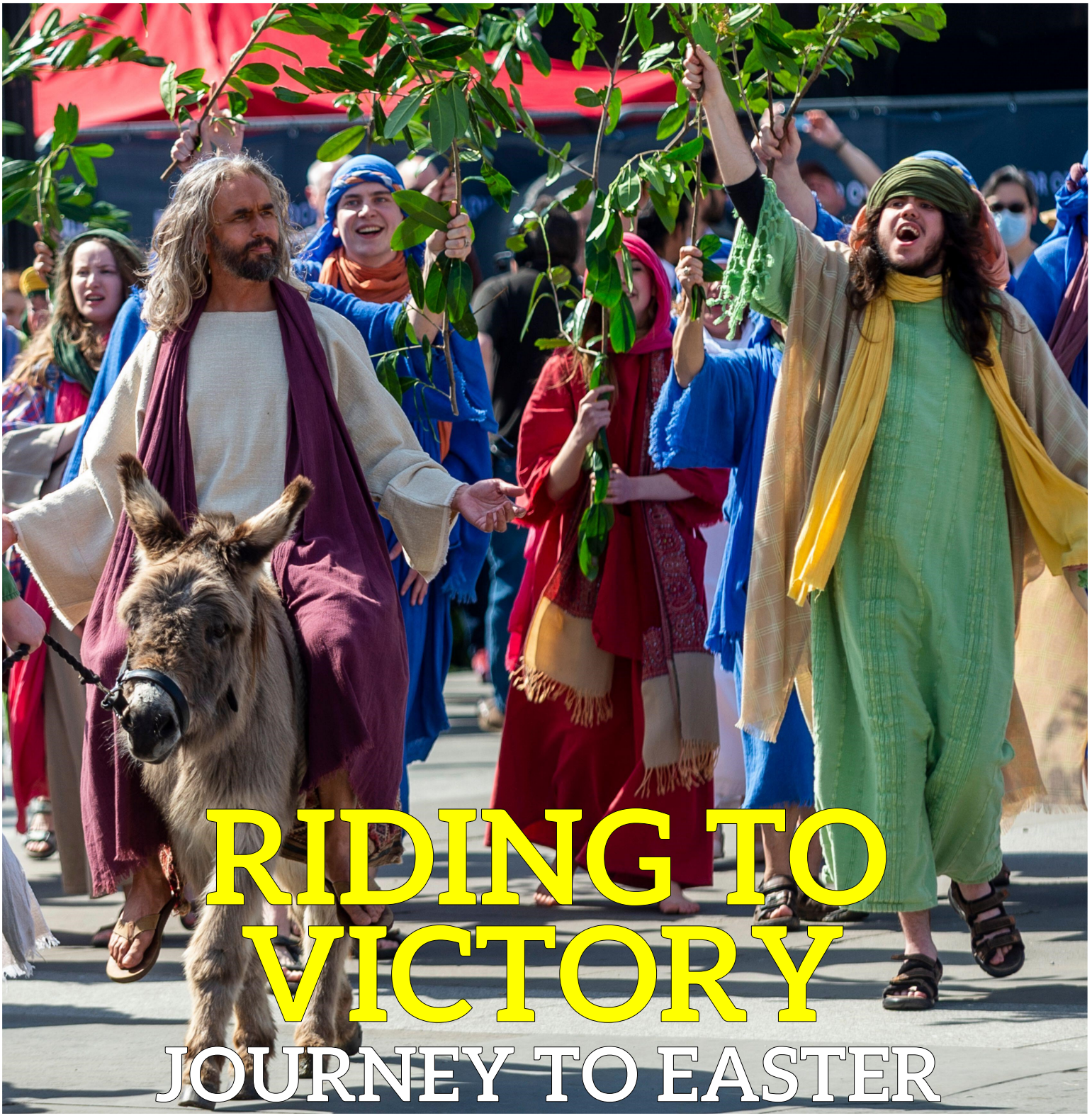

RIDING TO VICTORY

JOURNEY TO EASTER

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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 Mondays (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, 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 Rev Canon Tim Marwood
Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. Tim is married to Jane, a former headteacher. He supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket and walks his brown labrador, Ruby.
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ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev 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, is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren, and nine grandchildren.
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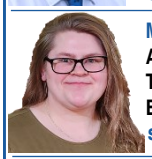

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FROM THE EDITOR...

By the time you read this, we shall be into the season of Lent and the centrespread is devoted to all the services which form part of our worship from Ash Wednesday to the climax on Easter Sunday on 9 April. It also includes the origins of Mothering Sunday, celebrated this year on 19 March.

We are really appreciating the renovated church and the flexibility for the Ark, Messy Church and Connections Café, and having the servery for refreshments. If you would like to see inside the church, contact the office to find a good time. We want to share it with as many people as possible.

QR codes are a mystery to me, but we now include one below this letter should you prefer to donate towards printing costs monthly. This code is unique to the Spire.

This year's Lent Appeal is for our link church in the parish of Mercuburi in Mozambique. You can read more about it on page 7, where there is also a QR code for donations. There are also blue envelopes in church — just mark them for the *Lent Appeal*.

Our *Life Stories* on page 8 comes from Canon Tim Marwood and fits in very well with the season of Lent.

Best Wishes
Janet

Cover photo: The Wintershall Passion, which can be seen in Trafalgar Square on 7 April

SPIRE The Spire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James. We make no charge for this magazine, but if you enjoy reading it, we hope that you will contribute towards printing costs. Bank transfers to: 40-52-40, 00032595, Ref *SPIRE*. Cheques payable to the *PCC of St James's Church, Hampton Hill* and sent to Spire Appeal c/o the Church Office (see below).

I cost £1
Yes, I'm free, but donations help me to go on being printed. Use the QR code to give money.

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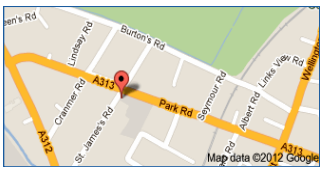

The church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is between the church and vicarage. There is ample unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R68, R70 and 285.

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Clerical Capers

'Next year, I think I might give up Lent for Lent!'

Lent is more than a spring clean of the soul

DEREK WINTERBURN

Is Lent about giving things up? I think that is the view that many people have about the season running up to Easter. Just for fun I asked the chatbot, ChatGPT. This is its answer: '*Lent is a religious observance in Christianity where individuals typically give up certain luxuries or comforts for a period of 40 days leading up to Easter.*'

I think it speaks for many people who like the challenge of giving up chocolate or alcohol at this time of year. Money saved by not drinking wine, for example, is often given to good causes: St James's (and the Diocese) have run a Lent Appeal for many years.

I have tended to resist this way of thinking, not only on the basis that I don't like giving things up, but because I wish people wouldn't see Christianity as 'don't do this, don't do that.' Isn't it better to be positive? So I would prefer to preach about 'taking things up': more space for prayer and reading, more time for helping others or being with family and friends.

Abstinence hurts

It is quite natural for us to be reluctant to give things up. One of the most evidenced psychological biases is 'Loss Aversion'. This doesn't simply mean we don't like losing out. Researchers have found that on average people find the pain of losing is psychologically twice as powerful *as the pleasure of gaining.*

The classic example is if someone is offered a gamble on the toss of a coin. If the coin shows tails, they have to pay up £100, but if heads they win £150. Some people cooly calculate, such as professional risk-takers in the financial markets and are tolerant of losses.

But most people would initially prefer not to take the gamble and risk losing their own money, although the equal chance of winning would bring them a greater reward — and this happens at an unconscious level.

And chatbot's reasoning?

So perhaps I should work harder at my 'take things up' suggestion. Just suggesting 'Give up things' is going to be an uphill struggle. I asked the chatbot, 'Why do people give things up in Lent?,'

It replied with essentially two answers: 1. Giving up something is an action of self-discipline, as Jesus did in the wilderness, and 2. Giving up something is an expression of solidarity and alignment with Jesus's offering of himself on the cross.

Let's work on these two ideas. There has been a great trend in 'self-help' books in the past few years to think about habits.

The non-religious world has woken up to the ancient wisdom encapsulated in Ralph Waldo Emerson's epigram: *Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.*

Mind over matter

Seen this way the little decisions to eat less meat, or *walk* to the shops are small steps to greater self-mastery. For a Christian this is not about achieving some gurulike status, but to grow into the likeness of Christ. Jesus fasted in the wilderness to forge a will that would resist all the blandishments of his time to walk the path his Father willed for him.

This is where the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) comes into play: Jesus said, *'For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?'* Mark 9:35f

Small sacrifices bring us closer

The second idea is that setting aside some luxuries or conveniences draws us closer to Christ, who sacrificed everything on the cross.

It encourages us to be deliberate about offering our sacrifice (small though it may be) to God as worship. It also suggests that whatever we save (money, time, energy) in Lent should be devoted to God's things. This is less about being like Christ and more about being with him.

Then Jesus said to them all, *'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.*

'For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.' Luke 9:23f

Invitation and challenge

We might see Lent as a mild lifestyle challenge, a light spring clean of the soul. But if our touchstones are Jesus's 40 days in the wilderness, and his three hours on the cross, he is placing a greater invitation and challenge before us: 'Follow me!'

St James

Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am
(not 19 Mar) Livestreamed on Facebook.

Together 11:15am (not 19 Mar, 9 Apr)
Our shorter, all-age service, including a story, singing and crafts. All ages welcome!

Compline 8pm (26 Feb-2 Apr)
Also Mon-Wed 3-5 April

Mon-Fri

Morning Prayer (not Wed) 9am
Holy Communion (Wed) 9:30am

Ark Playgroup

Mondays in March 10am-12noon
Friendly playgroup for carers and under 5s.
£2.50 for first child, 50p for others.

Connections Café

Tuesdays in March 10am-12noon
Join us for coffee, cake and conversation, with a free, walk-in NHS Hearing Aid Clinic on he first Tuesday of the month .

World Day of Prayer

Friday 3 March
11am St Michael & St Martin, Hounslow
2pm St Francis de Sales, Hampton Hill

Pop-up Cinema

Saturday 18 March 4pm
DC League of Super Pets (PG)
Krypto, Superman's dog, enlists the help of a rag tag of strays to rescue the Super Heroes

Mothering Sunday

Sunday 19 March 10am
An All Age service, with a free gift for every lady!

Messy Church

3-5pm Sunday, 23 April
(See also Good Friday, below)

Palm Sunday Sun 2 April

9:30am Parish Communion, including the parade of palms around the churchyard.
11:15am Together

Maundy Thursday

Thursday 6 April 8pm
Liturgy of Last Supper and Washing of Feet

Good Friday Fri 7 April

10am-12noon Messy Church
3pm *At the Foot of the Cross*

Easter Day Sun 9 April

6am Dawn Service
9:30am Parish Communion

We've got Easter

DEREK WINTERBURN

Easter Day Younger members hunt for chocolate eggs

Easter Sunday is the most important day of the year for Christians. It's when we celebrate that, three days after being killed, Jesus rose from the dead and defeated evil. Services draw many people, some for the first time, to see what all the fuss is about! But, as Derek Winterburn explains, racing to the big day would mean missing out on some important parts of the Greatest Story Ever Told.

When I welcome people to St James's, I am struck by just how many have never crossed the threshold of a church before. That means, I suppose, they can have only the haziest idea of what happens in a service.

I can quite imagine that apparently doing the same thing Sunday by Sunday might sound deadly dull. And to be honest, *Christmas* services can be like that! Unlike Sunday services there is a limited number of carols and readings that can be used. However, Lent and Easter are not like that at all.

It starts with Ash Wednesday

After Lent is started on Ash Wednesday (complete with being marked with ash), the Sunday services are deliberately low key for a season. We don't sing the exuberant *Gloria*, or songs with words like *Hallelujah*.

The coloured hangings in church are swapped to purple. In the ancient world purple was a very costly dye (coming from sea snails) — and wearing it was a mark of prestige. When Jesus was fitted with a crown of thorns he was dressed by the soldiers with a robe. It is very unlikely that this was a purple robe because of its cost; more likely, a second-hand red one and it was clearly being used to mock Jesus's claim to be a king.

Clergy robes were white until at least the 13th century. However, as churches grew in wealth, coloured vestments and church decorations came into use; but quite different patterns in different places.

Church's use of colours

The current sequence of colours was only standardised in the 19th century. It has been suggested that purple (no longer outrageously expensive) was selected for Lent as an echo of Jesus's supposed purple robe; pointing forward to his humble but kingly passion.

Also during Lent, we say or sing Compline, or night prayer, on Sunday evenings. In the earliest centuries Christians experimented with a variety of ways of structuring the day around prayer, inspired by what was inferred from their reading of the Bible.

Mediaeval Compline survived

By the time St Benedict wrote the rules for his community of monks (5th century) there were seven 'offices' — the last of the day being Compline (pronounced com-plin), to be said at bedtime. The name comes from the idea that it **com**pletes the day. It was a short psalm-based sequence of prayers, calming and trusting.

When Archbishop Cranmer began work on the Book of Common Prayer, during the period of the English Reformation, he was inspired by how the Lutheran church had reduced times of prayer to just two: Mattins and Evensong. However, he decided to use material from the mediaeval services, so parts of Compline became part of Anglican Evensong.

In the 19th century Catholic revival, when religious orders were re-established, the fuller sequence of offices came back into the Church of England. In 1928 an 'unofficial' Compline was produced, but it was not until 2000 and Common Worship that Night Prayer appeared in an authorised prayer book. The service remains short (about 10 minutes) and calming. Sometimes we say the words, but often a choir supports singing.

Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday, as we celebrate it today, interrupts Lent. Lady Day (the Annunciation of Mary — 25 March) was a significant marker in the mediaeval calendar, with people ending or beginning employment. As such, it was also an opportunity for people (e.g. women in service, or men who were farm labourers) to return home for the day.

Palm Sunday The congregation walk around the church, carrying palms

cracked!

Experience When schools visited the story was told afresh for young eyes

It is said that some gathered wildflowers, such as primroses, to present to their mothers. This became coupled with a visit to their mother church (i.e., where they were baptised). So, the Fourth Sunday in Lent became Mothering Sunday, with the 'Mother' in question being the Church.

Passion Sunday

The Sunday after Mothering Sunday (5th in Lent) is called Passion Sunday. Anglicans still keep the last two weeks of Lent as Passiontide, the second week also being Holy Week.

The Sunday readings (and those following) move from reflecting on the life of disciples to anticipating the death of Jesus on the cross. It feels that a corner has been turned and the 'end' of Jesus' life is near.

Palm Sunday

Then there is Palm Sunday, seven days later. The main service begins with the short reading about how Jesus rode into Jerusalem in humility on a donkey. As he arrived people waved palms. So, we start the service outside, and walk and sing around the church with our own palms. Some churches have access to donkeys and include them!

When back in church, everything changes and picking up a different ancient tradition we read through the whole passion narrative of Matthew, Mark or Luke. In one sense this practice reflects that many people will not be in church on Good Friday — this is when they hear the sombre story of Jesus's last 24 hours. But even for people who will be in church later in the week, this introduces Holy Week. The liturgical colour now becomes red.

Holy Week begins

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we mark the week by saying Compline each evening.

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday has its own distinctive liturgy commemorating Jesus's last meal with his disciples. There are two significant elements. First, we remember how Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show them how to love one another. We do this by the priests washing the feet of anyone in the congregation. Although this is quite outside our culture, it is a powerful symbol and humbling.

The other element, of course, is the 'Institution of the Lord's Supper' — '*this* is the night in which he was betrayed.' After the eucharist, we follow Jesus out of the Upper Room to the Garden of Gethsemane when we hear how he is betrayed and arrested — the church is darkened, and we spend time in quietness.

Then, symbolising how he was abandoned; we take all the hangings and furniture out of the chancel - it looks very bare.

Good Friday

Good Friday has been celebrated in the Church of England in a variety of ways. As with Compline, there was no 'official' liturgy until comparatively recently.

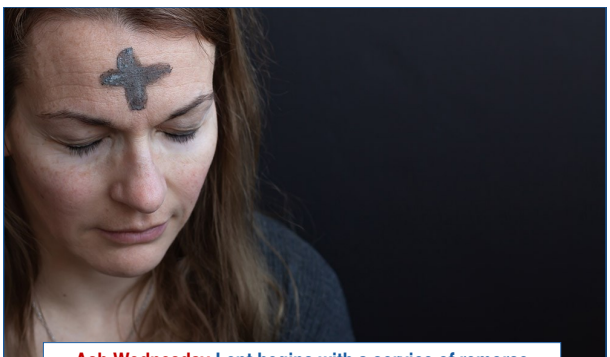
At St James's we have used the opportunity to remember Jesus's crucifixion in a number of ways; reflection on Jesus's last words, a worshipful performance of Stainer's Crucifixion, a meditation on the 'stations of the cross', and the 'Liturgy of the Cross.'

There has also been a service provided in the morning to include children.

Easter

The following day, Easter Eve (Holy Saturday) is deliberately a quieter day. This is in keeping with Jesus's time in the tomb. Jesus was raised during the night, and the women discovered the empty tomb early in the morning. So some churches begin celebrating Easter with a sunset vigil. Others, including St James's, begin their Easter celebrations just before sunrise on Sunday, with the lighting of the Easter or Paschal Candle outside. Then we enter the darkened church and recall the sadness of the disciples being turned into joy as they met with Jesus, alive again.

All the church furniture and hangings have been replaced — and everything is golden or white. Later in the morning there's a more typical Sunday service — but both the services repeat again and again the acclamation — *Christ is Risen; He is Risen Indeed!* After the long season of Lent, it is wonderful to celebrate Easter!



Ash Wednesday Lent begins with a service of remorse

Around the Spire

OUR VITAL LINK WITH SCHOOLS

Drawing on faith in the classroom

Eagle Agatha's drawing of the lectern

ONE FRIDAY in February we welcomed three classes from Carlisle Infant School into the church.

A visit to a church building is part of the Richmond Agreed Syllabus. The vicar, Rev Derek Winterburn, explained a little about Christianity being a world faith, and the largest religion in the UK. He also sketched the history of St James's and pointed out the special features of a church.

The children were then free to explore and draw. There was a wide variety of subjects, including the organ pipes, some of the stained glass windows and, a particular favourite, the brass lectern.

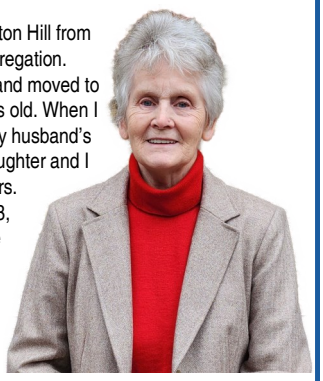
Another subject that the children had been covering was *mythical creatures.* So Derek had to frequently explain that the lectern was not a *gryphon*, but an eagle. (A gryphon has a lion's body and an eagle's head.)

The visit finished with a question and answers session. The vicar was asked 'Why do we need a church building?', 'Who owns the church?, 'What is the oldest church building?' and 'What is the most famous church?'

Traidcraft collapses

TRAIDCRAFT PLC, a Christian group that spent years campaigning for fair trade, has gone into administration. The stands were familiar to many churchgoers, with almost 3,000 churches in the UK, including here at St James's, selling Traidcraft products at some point in their 40-year history. The brand blamed Covid, the war in Ukraine and high energy prices for its demise.

Rewards of a warm welcome



VALERIE JONES moved to Hampton Hill from Wales in 2022 and joined our congregation.

She writes: I was born in Bristol and moved to Wales in 1955 when I was 10 years old. When I married, we moved to Fishguard, my husband's birthplace. We had a son and a daughter and I was active in my church for 60 years.

After my husband's death in 2008, my children kept asking me to move nearer to them, but it took me until 2022 to make up my mind. Now, I cannot understand why it took me so long!

I had always come to St James's when visiting my daughter. I am now a regular member and have been made very welcome. I feel this is where I am supposed to be. Thank you, everyone for helping me settle in.

They came to serve us

First vicar Fitzroy John Fitz Wygram

JANET NUNN

Five of our past incumbents are commemorated in the churchyard. Three have memorials which are still in good condition, but sadly those of Rev Henry Bligh and Rev Frederick Harvey, are either broken or in a bad state of repair.

Rev Fitzroy John Fitz Wygram

The first vicar began work in 1863 and died on 13 August 1881, aged of 55. The parish was then called New Hampton. He had proclaimed the good news of Christ in word and mouth and did a lot of good work improving the local community, helped by his wife Alice.

His grave was refurbished in 2013 for our 150th anniversary and stands proud with a cross on a plinth on the corner as you walk between the vestry and the church hall. Several of his family, including his wife Alice, who died in 1912, are buried with him.

Rev Henry Bligh

Henry was the second vicar, from 1881 to 1893, and carried on the work that Fitz Wygram had started and settled down to the day-to-day running of a busy church. He sought to beautify the building to try to draw people in — rather as we are doing today with our refurbishment.

He died at the age of 70 in 1905, and his grave is next to Fitz Wygram's, but sadly only the base remains, as the cross has fallen off.

Rev Richard Coad-Pryor

Richard was vicar from 1914-1923 and unusually his grave is found in the corner of St James's Road and Park Road in the new garden. His ministry was overshadowed by the First World War and its aftermath. There would not have been a street in the parish untouched by casualties, and then post-war economic problems.

Illness affected the last few years of his incumbency and church activities were curtailed. He was only 56 when he died.

Revd Frederick Harvey

Frederick served from 1923 to 1950, from the aftermath of one world war, through another, and to the consequences of them both. His was a solid, quiet ministry with great events swirling around an apparently stable church community. He died in 1954, aged 76. His stone is subsiding and also the wording is difficult to read.

Rev Rupert Brunt

Rupert was vicar from 1951 until his retirement in 1980. His ministry reflected the times in which he lived, with considerable change in both church and society. His tenure saw the introduction of Parish Communion as the principal Sunday Service and a temporary altar placed at the front of the chancel so the clergy were facing the congregation.

Rupert died in 1989, aged 79. His ashes were interred in the Garden of Rest, subsequently with those of his wife Connie, who died in 2011, and their son Francis, who died in 2022. The plaque, below, is dedicated

to the memory of all whose ashes are buried in the Garden as well as the Brunt family.

Third Rev Richard Coad-Pryor

They came and had fun!

Ready, steady The Ark is all set to go!

ASH WAKEFIELD

On Monday 9 January, we relaunched the Ark Playgroup for under 5s and their parents, grandparents and child-minders. This followed a massive thank you to Debbie Nunn and Lou Coaker for everything they did for the group. They have left us with a delightful legacy to look back at, an abundance of toys and books, and joy to see what is next on the horizon.

Our team of volunteers — Linda, Carol, Liz and Dee — have been amazing. They have worked really hard to bring the Ark back to life for pre-schoolers. Each week, they put

out the toys, prepare the kitchen and tidy up!

They have tried and tested various different arrangements for the group and have now found the perfect set-up! Our volunteers have transformed our church into an area which is fun for children and adults alike to attend. It looks fantastic.

A great response

The turnout at our relaunch was as high as we had hoped. It was an absolute pleasure and joy to see all of the adults talking and the children playing. The group has been running for two months now, with lots of families

attending. The feedback has been very positive and we are excited to see what comes next!

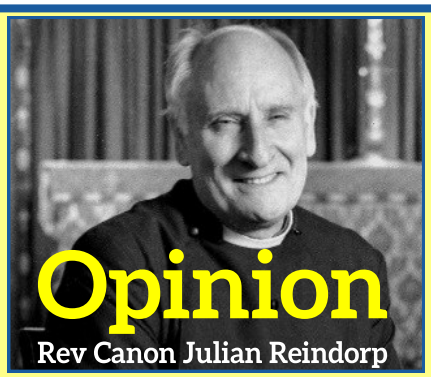
So far, we have encouraged our little humans to colour pictures with multicoloured fireworks, to build Duplo train adventures with egg deliveries, to create funny faces with playdough, and to paint pictures of rainbows and boats!

Planet Earth

In March, our craft activities will be focused on planet Earth, including learning how to plant cress seeds in pots; making underwater scenes, like that above, and painting trees and flowers.

The playgroup runs every Monday (term-time) from 10am to 12noon. It costs £2.50 for the first child and just 50p for any others. We look forward to seeing you!

Training Future railway workers, perhaps?



Opinion

Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

CARE DESPITE CRISIS

No one doubts the crisis in the NHS, yet over the Christmas period three generation of our family received exceptional care in A & E, and ongoing medical care, including from our chemists. A friend in the North echoed our experience, and asked how do they do it?

But at the same time, 7,000 doctors are leaving the NHS every year — the same as are being trained. One in eight posts in the NHS is unfilled. The Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, admitted last year that social care cuts while he was Health Secretary were a 'silent killer'. Our paramedics are outstanding, but ambulance response times have become legendary and are sometimes fatal. Some 13,000 people are waiting for places in care homes. Continental models of healthcare are often quoted, but they cost a great deal more: in Germany 30% more per person, and France 21%.

WHAT ABOUT TAXES?

A simple question: Are we prepared to pay more for an NHS service that is increasingly challenged by our population growing older? Surely increasing taxes, especially wealth taxes, is one key response to this crisis? Mervyn King, former Bank of England Governor, is one of many arguing that we cannot have European levels of spending and services with US levels of taxation. Satisfaction levels with the NHS, dubbed 'a national religion', have reached a 25-year low. Once there for people in a crisis, the NHS is now locked in one of its own.

ARCHBISHOPS' LEAD

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, after a 20-month enquiry, have published an NHS-style social care scheme, part of a 'national care covenant'. It includes a social care scheme, with a universal entitlement similar to the NHS, rather than 'rationed by the meanest of means tests'. The £15 billion cost should be shared between wealth and income taxes, businesses, and households.

Archbishop Justin Welby recently received the *New Statesman's* Positive Impact in Politics award for speaking out in the House of Lords against the government's Rwanda deportation policy (in fact, he initiated a whole day's debate in the House of Lords), and for the pointed sermon he gave at the Queen's funeral last September on what it means to be a public servant.

SOBERING FACTS

Council Tax bills are 20% higher in the North of England than in London, even though homes in the capital are nearly three times more expensive. Chelsea & Kensington has the lowest Council Tax in London. Living standards are forecast to fall by 7% over the next two years — the biggest drop since records began in 1956 (Office for Budget Responsibility).

Average real wages are not expected to return to their 2008 levels until 2027.The UK has the worst access to healthcare in Europe, and the third highest childcare costs in the developed world. In 2018-19 the number of social homes in the UK fell by 17,000. One of the largest British independent care home providers, Four Seasons, caring for over 10,000 people — and controlled by a Connecticut hedge fund — pays wages of £9.50 an hour. Yet at the time of writing the London stock market is approaching record levels. The *Financial Times* said that between 2010 and 2020 there was the largest transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich since records began.

BORIS AIRBRUSHED OUT?

When the planned space flight took off from Cornwall in January, a photo later appeared of Grant Shapps, then Business Secretary, with two of the pilots and the launch plane in the background. Shortly afterwards, the original photo appeared with Boris as PM in the foreground. The January version had airbrushed Boris out! I suspect we will not be able to get rid of Boris so easily in the future.

Support to heal the memories

DENNIS WILMOT

Since 2017, over a million people living in northern Mozambique have been displaced by a violent insurgency and 4,000 have been killed. This is a population who are now deeply traumatised. Many professionals have said that their need for counselling and support is as great as their need for food, but agencies and organisations do not have funds for this.

The Anglican Diocese of Nampula has been working with internally displaced people for two years, supporting them with food, education and training via their community development work. So many of those they work with have witnessed horrific actions, including family members killed, and fled in atrocious conditions. The Diocese wants to widen their community development work and to create a trauma support project.

The Diocese of London's 2023 Lent Appeal will raise money to train leaders in Mozambique who can provide pastoral care and support for those in desperate need.

Challenges for our link church

Our link church in Mecuburi, northern Mozambique, is in the Diocese of Nampula. This comes under the ministry of Bishop Manuel, who was instrumental in creating the link with St James's, and who was involved in creating this year's Lent Appeal.

Our link church is St Luke's, which is led by Father Mauricio Namillo, whose Portuguese is considerably better than his English, which does present challenges. Luckily, Bishop Manuel is often around to provide a translation. The local language is called Emacua.

Father Mauricio met Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, during the ceremony for the new IAMA province.

Archbishop Justin Welby, left, meets Father Mauricio

Last year, St James's made its first financial contribution to Mecuburi by supporting emergency repairs to the roof of the current church, damaged by a cyclone.

There is an ongoing project to build a new church, but progress is slow. Other fundamental needs include access to drinking water, medical care for the priest and his family, and an education for children — and the list does go on.

■ Please give to our Lent Appeal, supporting both these causes in Mozambique. Use a blue envelope in church, this QR code, or go to: https://bit.ly/StJLent23.

Building better Progress on the new church is slow

Heavy lifting in the big build

THE FINAL stages in the church building project called for heavy lifting equipment. The large panes of toughened glass in the new meeting room required some delicate handling as they were transported inside and then lifted into position.

REGISTERS

JANUARY

FUNERALS

11 Verle Gloria East, 88, Hampton

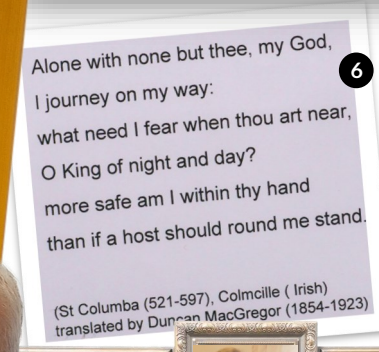
24 George Henry Saunders, 85, Newport

INTERMENT OF ASHES

14 Hilary Alexandra Frier Dryden Tomkins, 71, Chiswick

My go-to prayer tool kit

Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time Chaplain at Kingston Hospital, and helps out at St James's and other Anglican churches. Tim is married to Jane, a former headteacher. He supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket, and walks his brown labrador, Ruby.



Many of us have a favourite church service in which we feel most comfortable saying our prayers. However, there are times when we would like to pray, but do not have the familiar words of a service to guide us and need to get started in prayer with only what comes to hand as an aid. This collection of objects is my simple toolkit for getting started in prayer.

No one way of praying is the 'right' way. Whatever method of prayer works best for you in aiding your prayer conversation with God at that moment is the right way, and you may have to try a few different ways before you make progress in your dialogue.

Take heart from this anecdote. Archbishop Michael Ramsay was asked once in an interview how long he prayed for.

'Five minutes,' he replied.

'Five minutes!' exclaimed the reporter.

'But it takes me half an hour to get started,' continued the archbishop, with a twinkle in his eye….

With Lent in mind, Canon Tim Marwood offers a handy 'box' of prayer resources that we can all use to find inspiration and guidance when praying, particularly when alone. And what works in Lent, works throughout the year.

1 SMALL NOTEBOOK

This is very useful for making lists of people, issues and places to pray about or for copying down prayers seen in passing.

2 A NEWSPAPER or TELEVISION

I 'pray the news' by selecting a world issue, a national concern and a local matter in the newspaper to pray about. This strategy may also be applied to the TV, radio or online news programmes. I know that the world is in a terrible mess and three is a low number, but you can always start again with three different prayer intentions.

3 PALM CROSS

It is amazing how many unlikely locations are found for Palm Crosses, but in a way this proves how accessible the cross is as a symbol which takes us straight to the start of the holiest week of the year and the story of the saving power of Jesus — a lot to pray about.

4 BOOK OF DAYS

This is like a perpetual calendar in which dates of births, deaths and other important anniversaries can be recorded and prayed over as the year turns and the lives of those special to us are remembered.

5 PHOTOGRAPH

One of my late friends kept a 'rogues gallery' of photos of family and friends lined up on her dresser ,she prayed for each person in the photos every evening, her photo was the last in the line.

6 FAVOURITE PRAYER

Some prayers resonate with us as individuals, they seem to fit our lives and circumstances in a special way. The prayer of St Columba is my current favourite, and I am trying to commit it to memory.

Building up a collection of your favourite prayers can be very useful for the times when fresh words of prayer do not come easily and an old favourite can get you started.

7 POSTCARD or GREETINGS CARD

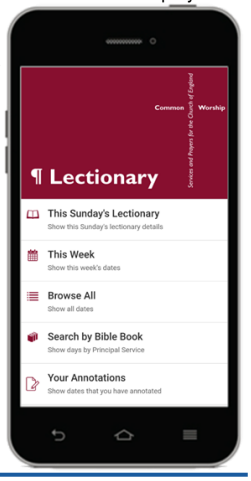
When 'stuck' this is my go-to method of beginning prayer. You might choose the card because of the illustration or because of the person who sent it, or both — you decide.

I have a collection of these cards that I leaf through until I light upon one in particular that reminds me of a prayer need.

8 MOBILE PHONE

Turning off your phone might be a prerequisite to prayer but these devices can be a great help to prayer in so many ways. Two of many possibilities spring to mind. Firstly, you might like to pray with someone over the phone, each of you taking it in turns to pray.

Secondly, there are times when you can remember only a fragment of a prayer that seems especially relevant to your prayer need and, of course, Google will help you find the whole of the prayer in an instant !



A GO-TO BOOK

Where next? The best book I have ever read about prayer is *How to pray alone with others, at any time, in any place,* by Stephen Cottrell (Archbishop of York) published by Church House Publishing www.chpublishing.co.uk £9.95

Wishing you well on your journey in prayer.

IN THE APRIL/MAY ISSUE: Meet Bishop Emma ■ Christian Aid Week ■ Opera's John Templeton ■