

APRIL / MAY 2017

SPIRE

HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE **YOUR FREE COPY**



Celebrate the king!
Happy Easter to all our readers

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

VICAR

The Revd Derek Winterburn

Derek, pictured right, was born in Orpington, Kent, and ordained in 1986. He has served in several London parishes. He aims to grow the church by reaching out to the community, and in particular to young families. Derek is a keen photographer, which he combines with a daily walk. He is happy to be contacted at any time other than on Fridays (his day off).

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Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales. She is a self-supporting minister, ordained in July 2015. During term time she runs one of two Hampton Hill nursery schools owned by her family. Jacky is a trustee of the charity running the Greenwood Centre.

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Nick Bagge

The administrator deals with all enquiries, including baptisms, weddings and funerals, as well as hall bookings. The office is open every weekday.

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ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER

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Weekly Pew Sheet 020 8941 6003

This year, Easter is in the middle of April and so this edition lists all the events leading to this important occasion in the church year. We hope to see many of you at our services; you will be most welcome.

Music plays an important part of our celebrations at Easter, and our choir will perform Stainer's Crucifixion.

The centrespread this month has been written by our organist, Mark Blackwell. Over the next year the organ is being lovingly restored, a mammoth project that will ensure its future. We are lucky to have such a lovely instrument and an accomplished organist to play it!

Mark is celebrating his 40th year as a church organist, and his involvement also includes a choir that tours cathedrals.

Breaking with tradition we have 12 favourites this month instead of 10 as Derek wanted to use one of his photographs for each month of the year.

Derek is a very keen photographer as you will see from his excellent pictures.

This edition also includes our annual Spire appeal, where we encourage our readers to make a contribution towards the production costs.



This year, you can also pay by bank transfer (BACS).

Best wishes

Janet

Editor

Cover picture: The Shell Seekers prepare for the Palm Sunday procession

The SPIRE is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James.

We make no charge for this magazine, but we hope that you will contribute towards the production costs to enable us to expand our important outreach across the parish.

If you are a regular reader please consider making an annual donation. Cheques should be made payable to The PCC of St James and sent to Spire Appeal c/o the Parish Office.

Vicar's View



'...the good news is that the property group have made a great start by pressure-washing the east window'

STORIES, FEATURES

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WEBSITE / YOUNG SPIRE

If you would like to receive the magazine by email, please contact Prill Hinckley. She also manages the website and Young Spire page. Email: p.m.hinckley@blueyonder.co.uk

CIRCULATION

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NEXT ISSUE / COPY DATE

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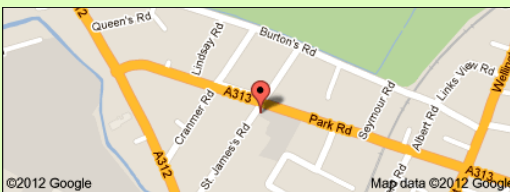
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FINDING US

St James's Church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road with ample parking in the road.



Easter makes sense of life



Someone asked me a few weeks ago why I was a Christian. I was slightly taken aback because I am more usually quizzed about why I am a vicar or what the Archbishop of Canterbury has just said! I might have replied in a number of ways, but given the person I was talking to, I said, 'Christianity helps me to make sense of the world – it gives me a framework to explore life.'

Perhaps non-religious people think that religious people have 'closed minds', and it is generally thought that 'open minds' are to be preferred. I don't think a Christian can ever claim to have everything settled and possess all the answers. Jesus, after all, very definitely disturbed the ideas of the religious people of his time.

Still, no one has a genuinely blank mind; all of us have a 'mental map' of life. Comparing it to others, I think the Christian view of the world has much to commend it. It has withstood to scrutiny for a very long time and is more popular than ever.

Three ways of making sense of life

Here are three ways that I find that being a Christian makes sense of life:

- We live in a lovely part of the world. Just now, each week brings a new unveiling of spring flowers: snowdrops, crocuses, daffodils, and bluebells. My photos (on the back page) only hint at the beauty of nature. I want to say that a carpet of crocuses is beautiful, not just I find it pleases me.

As Genesis says about each stage of Creation 'it was good.' Jesus speaks about how it is God who clothes the wild flowers.

I want to do more than merely note the complexity that evolution has produced by random mutation and natural selection, and do more than just wonder at the marvels of the natural world.

I find my place in the order of things, when I worship the One who made everything.

- Secondly - as well as spring, it is nearly Easter. Here's another great vantage point to view what's important in the world: the outcome of Jesus's life. Bare history tells the story of a leader dying an ignominious death – a victim of blind hatred and a cruel state: a failure.

But that apparent defeat was overturned on Easter Day when Jesus was raised to new life. I believe the documentary evidence for the resurrection stands up to scrutiny; this is one clear point when reason supports faith (for example see *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel).

Jesus shows us what life can be, and what is of ultimate value



But alongside that isn't it striking that some of the greatest humanitarians of recent history were directly inspired by the way Jesus faced hardship and outright evil with love and compassion (Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela)?

Countless RE projects are written about these outstanding leaders (I have a son who teaches RE...) but the pattern that these heroes took for *their* life was Jesus's.

God gives us purpose and courage

His conviction was that he could trust his heavenly father. No matter the circumstances he would be upheld by God – that gave him purpose and courage.

The example and teaching of Jesus moulds what I think life can be, what is important and what is of ultimate value.

- And so the third element must be a confidence of the future. The resurrection of Jesus is not just about him. The Bible teaches that what he experienced can be true for those who follow him.

Death need not be the end of everything for me either. Making our peace with God now means that we need not dread the grave.

I meet many people who are dying or are bereaved. I note that those who have a firm grasp of the Christian hope are not overcome by the prospect of their coming end. And although Christians truly grieve for those they have lost, I witness a gentle trust that they will meet again, in Christ.

So springtime, Good Friday and Easter Sunday are all tremendous occasions to reflect again on three key dimensions of the Christian life – our creation by a good God, Jesus's willing offering of himself for us all and the hope of life beyond this life – evidenced by the risen Christ.

These are some of the riches that are open to us, when we live in the Christian faith. Happy Easter.

WHAT'S ON IN CHURCH

You will receive a warm welcome at any of these church services or events

Sundays

0800-0830
Holy Communion
0930-1030
Parish Communion

Mothering Sunday 26 March

All-age non-Eucharistic service at 1100 instead of 0930 for Mothering Sunday with a free gift

Mon-Fri

(but not Tuesdays)
0915-0930
Morning Prayer

Tuesdays

0930-1015
Holy Communion

Lent Course

Wednesdays during Lent
1900-2130
Continuing to learn about prayer

Film Club: Florence

Saturday 8 April
1800 for 1830
The story of the world's worst singer, starring Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant

Palm Sunday

Sunday 9 April
0930
Join us as we process with palms to mark the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem.
1600

Stainer's Crucifixion

This English choral work vividly portrays the events of the Passion of Christ.

Compline

Monday 10-Wednesday 12 April
2000 Night prayer during Holy Week

Maundy Thursday

Thursday 13 April
2000 Liturgy of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday

Friday 14 April
0930 All-age worship
1400 Liturgy of Good Friday

Easter Day

Sunday 16 April
0600 Sunrise Service
0800 Morning Prayer
0930 Parish Communion

Ascension Day

Thursday 25 May
2000 Holy Communion

New churchwarden and PCC members



NICK BAGGE is stepping down after six years as churchwarden. This creates a vacancy to be filled at this year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) on Sunday 23 April.

In addition to this key role, four members of the Parochial Church Council retire at the completion of their three-year term, and there are three vacancies on the Deanery Synod.

This is an important time in the life of St James's as the PCC considers the best ways to grow the church. If you would like a voice in the discussions and have something to offer, please complete a nomination paper, available from church.

Good Governance

No one should doubt the need for good governance of charities. The tragic failing of Kids Company has woken up many to the vital importance of charities, including churches, being run well. The key people are the trustees (in the Church of England that is the PCC members) who set the overall vision of the organisation, oversee the charity's resources (including money, people and building) and collaborate with (in our case) the vicar.

At the church's annual meeting the PCC reports to the wider church on the past year, and sketches out plans for the future.

The church has an opportunity to elect new PCC members (trustees) and in particular two key leaders — the churchwardens.

Are you on the Electoral Roll?

If you count St James's as your church then you should consider being on our electoral roll, so that you can participate at the meeting.

The church's electoral roll should not be confused with the local authority listing of those eligible to vote in local and parliamentary elections.

Our roll is an indication of how healthy the church is. Also, the number of Deanery Synod members we can elect is directly proportional to the size of the roll.

You can join the electoral roll quite easily by completing a short form, available in church on Sundays and from the parish office. A copy can even be emailed to you if you contact the office.

So, there is an important legal aspect to the APCM. But there is key spiritual aspect to the APCM as well. We will celebrate what God has done through us this year. Then all of us are accountable to Him for the use of our gifts.

Mission Action Plan

Finally the developing Mission Action Plan, presented at the meeting, will not simply be about human ambition, but a response to God's calling for us to be the body of Christ in Hampton Hill.

The Annual Meeting will be at 11am on Sunday 23 April in the hall. All those on the electoral roll can collect papers a week before the meeting, or on the day.

New-look High Street takes shape

AFTER ELEVEN months the redevelopment of the High Street is entering its final phase. Most of the pavements have now been replaced, and the remaining work focuses on the section between the medical centre and the crossroads. There will be a new crossing outside the GP surgery, and following a consultation the cherry trees are being replaced outside the parade of shops. There will also be three new lighting columns there.

The area beside Clarence House will be the new home for the annual Christmas Tree. The traffic lights at the crossroads have been replaced and the entire stretch of road has been resurfaced.

Concordia man for the BBC



NEIL FERRIS, a former musical director of Concordia Voices, has been appointed as the new Director of the BBC Symphony Chorus. His first project will be to prepare them for their annual appearance at the First Night of the BBC Proms on Friday 14 July. Neil, who studied at Royal Holloway, University of London, and at the Royal College of Music, led Concordia from 2003-11.

Blessed to be



Mark Blackwell, 40 years an organist, man and boy!

As you may be aware from the weekly news sheets, the organ is currently undergoing a major restoration project. Bernard Whitmill, who has a long association with the organ at St James's, will spend the next year deep in the organ chamber, meticulously repairing or replacing the parts of the instrument that are showing their age.

The work can be split into two parts: the first is to repair the *concussion bellows* (these ensure the airflow is kept constant to the organ pipes at all times) and to move some of the pipes around so that the organ can sound even better than it did — and it was a fine instrument already.

This should be good news for those of you who sit in the north transept as you will no longer be deafened when I use the trumpet pipes that were previously near the front of the organ in that part of the building. These have been moved towards the back of the organ and also higher up in the organ chamber, which is where they would normally be placed in a good organ layout.

This key work should be completed by the end of May, ready for the busy months ahead as the church plays host to weddings. We are lucky to have a restorer who is used to juggling work around church life. Bernie has made sure that throughout the work we will have a working organ — and Easter is one of the busiest times of the year.

Later this year, **Mark Blackwell** marks more than 40 years as a church organist with a concert, yet his passion remains as strong as ever. Here he explains why he feels blessed to be at St James's Church

Two years young

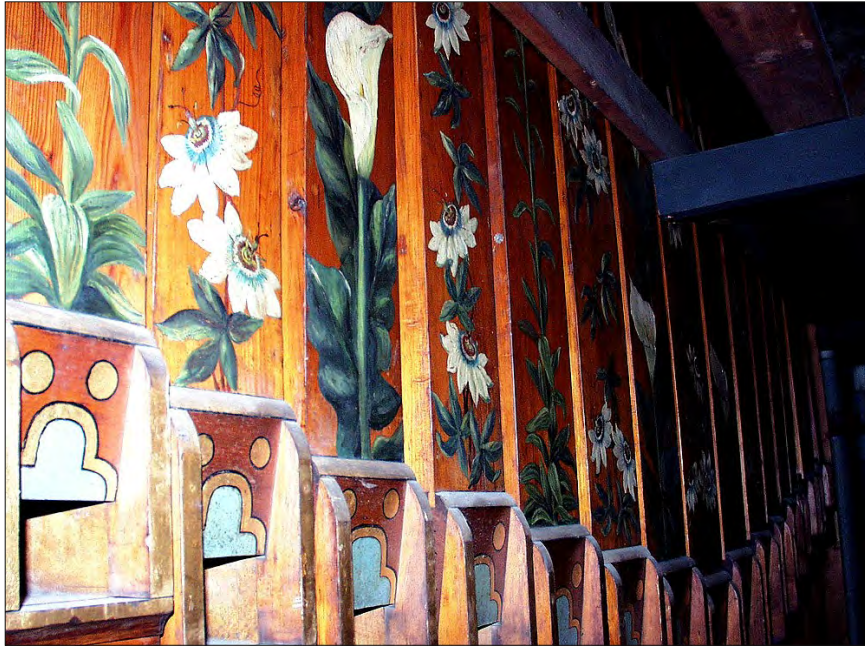
I have been the organist at St James's for just over two years (yes, time flies when you are having fun) and I am still enjoying it as much as the first time I played here as a favour for Debbie Oades (who was your curate and a personal friend of mine) about nine years ago.

St James's is blessed with two very important things for me. Firstly, the choir: They may not be as large in number as we would like, but they are wonderfully enthusiastic about most of the suggestions for music and are lovely to work with.



Mark also manages a choir that visits some of England's finest cathedrals for evensong

your organist



The now hidden organ pedal pipes painted in 1894 by the Isdell sisters using real gold leaf

I also believe the organ at St James's to be the best in the area; and having played a number, either as resident musical director or as a visiting organist, I would challenge anyone to find a better instrument.

When I first visited in 2007 I was impressed by the quality of the sound of the pipework and the logical way the stops (the controls for the different ranks of pipes) had been laid out — a testimony to Geoffrey Bowyer during the revamp in the late 1980s.

Bernie and I agreed that the only issue was the positioning of the trumpet and clarinet pipes, which were in the wrong place for the best effect. I am delighted that this will be rectified during the restoration work.

Thanks to money from church funds, and a substantial gift from two parishioners, work is well under way. If you would like to contribute towards the cost talk to me or Derek.

Before work could begin, St James's had to apply for a faculty, the Church of England's equivalent of planning permission.

The organ boasts a wide range of sounds. Visiting organists always remark how lovely it is to play. If anyone is interested in 'having a go' or learning more about how it works, do come and see me one Sunday. I would be delighted to show you around and, if there is enough interest, I can open up the organ chamber so you could see the workings inside.

Celebrating with song and music

As I wrote in the Spire in 2016, last year was my 40th anniversary as a parish organist (my first post being at Twickenham URC in 1976).

I have decided to celebrate this with a large concert on 14 October this year at St James. This won't be an organ recital, but will involve a number of people and choirs I have worked with over the years. The programme will include everything from the traditional music we sing in the cathedrals to a youth choir from Staines serenading us with a modern, three-part harmony.

As a dear friend said, 'You should call it a *Hotchpotch Concert*, as there is something for everyone.' Any money raised from the occasion will be split between the Spelthorne Young Voices and Orphans No More, a charity that supports children in Uganda.

Stainer's Crucifixion for Palm Sunday

In just over a month's time there will be a scratch performance of Stainer's *Crucifixion* on 19 April, Palm Sunday, as part of the preparation for Easter. Anyone who wants to sing is welcome to come and

join the choir. Last year we were over 40 in number and it looks like it will be a lot higher this year.

Even if you don't want to sing, I would strongly recommend you to come and listen to this work.

A priest friend once said this work was the 'best interpretation of the Crucifixion' he had ever heard.

I also manage a choir, made up of members of several churches, including St James's, that performs evensong at some of our greatest cathedrals.

We have two visits to cathedrals planned for this year. We'll be at Salisbury at the end of May and Norwich at the end of July.

If the journey to East Anglia is too much, I would encourage you to come to Salisbury for the choral evensong on the Saturday or the Sunday.

The people make St James's so uplifting

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first two years at St James's as musical director (not to mention the previous seven as a relief organist). And although St James's has a fine organ, it is the people who make it such an enjoyable and spiritually uplifting place to be. I thank you for this.



Diamond wedding couple

CONGRATULATIONS to Michael and Pat Futter, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding on 9 March.

Among their cards was one from the Queen. They had a luncheon party with family and friends at The Lensbury in Teddington.

Michael and Pat were married at St Mary's Church, Hampton, in 1957

and lived in Hampton for four years before moving to Pat's family home in Uxbridge Road in 1961. They spent a week in Paris for their honeymoon.

They have both been long-standing and faithful members of St James's most of their married life, attending the 0800 Holy Communion service where Michael regularly served. They now attend the 0930 Tuesday service.



Christingle boxes record new high

MANY thanks to all those who filled and returned the Christingle boxes and to David and Nicky Hetting for organising the collection and counting the money. This year the total was a splendid £306.38, a 30% increase on last year. It will support the work of the Children's Society.

Help us to spring clean the church

AS PART OF the preparations for the Easter celebrations at St James's, the Properties Committee undertakes the annual spring clean of the church. This includes a general dusting of all surfaces, vacuuming carpets, washing, polishing and sealing floors and polishing all brassware. We conduct the work over two weeks, commencing on **Saturday 25 March—Saturday 8 April**. We depend on volunteers to help support committee members. Work can be found to suit most people and at convenient times. If you would like to help, please contact Bryan Basdell on (020) 8979 2040, or bryan.basdell@btinternet.com.

New dementia café group starts

TEA AND MEMORIES, a new group for those affected by dementia will be held on the first Friday of every month from 1030am-1200pm at Hampton Methodist Church. This will include conversation starters to stimulate the memory, puzzles and singing well-known songs from the 1930s to 1950s. Refreshments will be served. For further information contact the Revd Vicci Davidson by email rev.vicci@mail.com or visit the website hamptonmethodistchurch.org.uk.

Peter Lockyer remembered

PETER LOCKYER, a resident of St James's Road and long-term member of our congregation at the 0800 service, died on 27 February, aged 95.

Peter was born in Ealing and won a scholarship to Mercer's school, after which he worked in a bank.

He served in the army during the war and enlisted for a few more years afterwards. Peter then returned to banking, eventually becoming manager of Lloyds Bank in Twickenham.

He married his wife Monica in 1956 and they shared a love of music. Monica died in 1995.

Peter was active in the community, being a councillor for the Hampton Hill ward from 1982-86 and Deputy Mayor in 1983-84. He was also a member of Probus and for many years a member of the Twickenham Rotary Club, serving as President in 1984, and still active in the club until a few days before his death.

Peter's funeral service was held at St James's Church on 22 March.





From triumph to tragedy



PRILL HINCKLEY

Palm Sunday comes at the beginning of Holy Week which marks the final week of Jesus' life on earth. It celebrates the day Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on a donkey. Just a few days later he was betrayed by the disciple Judas Iscariot, put on trial and sentenced to death by crucifixion.

The story of Palm Sunday Going to Jerusalem

Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish feast of **Passover**, the time when the people remembered the story of Moses. Men, women and children from all over the country flocked to Jerusalem for the biggest holiday of the year.

The donkey



As Jesus and his disciples walked towards Jerusalem, past a village called Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, he asked two of his disciples to go on ahead. He told them that when they saw a donkey and her colt tied up, they were to untie them and bring them to him, explaining they were needed by the Lord and would be returned. He chose to ride on a humble donkey, rather than a horse, as a symbol of peace.

Palm branches

As Jesus rode, people ran towards him and laid their coats on the road in front of him. Others cut palm branches and made a long carpet out of clothing and palm branches, reaching into Jerusalem.



Crowds gathering

By the time Jesus entered Jerusalem, a huge crowd had gathered to welcome him, cheering and shouting, calling him the Son of David. It seemed the whole city was shouting *'Hosanna to the Son of David!'*

In the temple

When he arrived at the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus drove the money-changers out and healed the blind and the lame. But the chief priests and scribes were angry at the attention he was getting and began to plot against Jesus.

Palm Sunday at St James's

Each member of the congregation is given a palm leaf folded in the form of a cross. As we gather with the palms, the service begins with a triumphant procession with children carrying large palm leaves, while the congregation sing a hymn of praise and wave the palm crosses. As part of the service on Palm Sunday there is a reading about Jesus' suffering and death, his 'passion', laying out the sequence of events of Holy Week.

Our Sunday School, the Shell Seekers, starts in church from 0930 every Sunday during school terms and parades into the hall, except for once every month when there is an all-age service in church. We welcome new members. Come along for a trial visit, or ask one of the clergy about it and find out how much fun it can be.

A city lost in biblical times



The spectacular church of Bet Giorgis, in northern Ethiopia



LAURENCE SEWELL

One of the world's most astounding sacred sites is found at Lalibela, in northern Ethiopia, some 500 miles north of the capital, Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia was one of the earliest nations to adopt Christianity in the first half of the fourth century, and its historical roots date to the time of the Apostles. Lalibela is one of Ethiopia's holiest cities and a centre of Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, second only to Aksum.

Here are the famous 11 monolithic rock-hewn churches carved out of the granite rock with the roofs at ground level providing an extraordinary site in what is otherwise an inconspicuous mountainous part of the country.

They are truly an architecturally unique sacred site. They were excavated in the late 12th century by King Lalibela, who set out to create a 'New Jerusalem' after the Muslim conquests of Saladin in the Holy Land halted Christian pilgrimages prior to the Crusades.

As a member of the Zagwe dynasty, Lalibela also wanted to create a sacred city to rival powerful Axum with its Ark of the Covenant, and sought the support of the powerful Ethiopian Orthodox Church by building the churches in this small city.

The Rock-Cut Churches of Lalibela

The churches of Lalibela were not constructed — they were excavated. Each church was created by first carving out a wide trench on all four sides of the rock, then painstakingly chiselling out the interior, providing beautifully carved features forming doors, windows, columns and various floor levels.

The largest church is 40 feet high, and the labour required to complete such a construction with only hammers and chisels can only be imagined.

This huge work was further complemented by an extensive system of walkways across sheer drops and ceremonial passages, some with openings to hermit caves and catacombs.

The interior pillars of the churches have been worn smooth by the hands of supplicating worshippers.

The most spectacular church is Bet Giorgis (St. George's). Located on the western side of the cluster of churches, it is cut 40 feet down and its roof forms the shape of a Greek cross. It was built after Lalibela's death (in about 1220 AD) by his widow as a memorial to the saint-king.

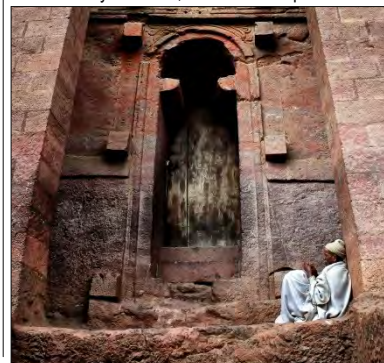
It is a magnificent culmination of Lalibela's plans to build a New Jerusalem, with its perfect dimensions and geometrical precision. Unlike some of the other churches St. George's is plain inside. A curtain shields the Holy of Holies, and in front of it usually stands a priest displaying books and paintings to visitors.

The world's largest monolithic church

In the 'northern group' across the main road from St. George's, the most notable church is Beta Medhane Alem, home to the Lalibela Cross and believed to be the largest monolithic church in the world. It is linked by walkways and tunnels to Beta Maryam (St. Mary's), possibly the oldest of the churches.

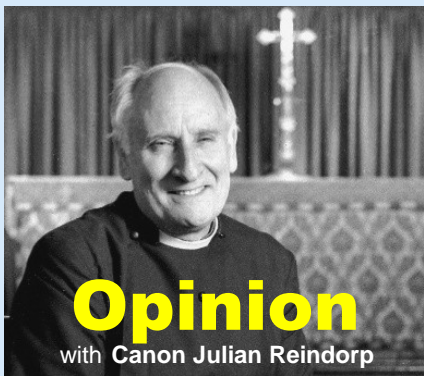
In this church is a stone pillar on which the king wrote the secrets of the construction. It is covered with cloths and may only be viewed by the priests. Next door is Beta Golgotha, which has carvings of saints on the walls, and is home to the tomb of King Lalibela, over which is a gold-draped Ark.

After overseeing the work over 20 years, the king abdicated, converting to a religious life as a hermit, living in a cave. To this day, Ethiopian Christians regard him as one of their greatest saints. The churches have been in continuous use since they were built in the 12th century. Religious ritual is central to the life of the town, with regular processions, fasts, and crowds of singing and dancing priests. The city has a distinctively timeless, biblical atmosphere.





Make their lives better



Opinion

with Canon Julian Reindorp

PRAYER FOR TODAY!

Dear God, so far today I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, I haven't lost my temper, I haven't criticised or moaned. I haven't been snappy, grumpy, nasty or selfish or over indulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes Lord I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm probably going to need a lot more help.

COST OF NO MIGRANTS

Britain's economy would take a £328 million hit if all migrant workers downed tools for a day, according to the New Economics foundation. The nation's GDP would fall by four per cent if all non-Brits stopped work for 24 hours, and institutions such as the NHS and care homes would be unable to function. Migrant workers in the UK make up 10.9 per cent of the total workforce.

JIHADI STRAIN

The President of Germany recently said that Islam needs to confront the 'jihadi' strain in Islam that can lead to violence. In the past *jihad* has meant armed struggle against unbelievers, but its real meaning is our struggle to be more moral, more devout people. Islam means 'submission' to Allah/God.

Recently, *jihad* has been used by terrorist groups, and the new American administration has used these fears to temporarily exclude people coming from seven Muslim countries. This has aroused international condemnation, but what is our response to this challenge?

RAGE NOT RELIGION

Liam Byrne, the former Labour Cabinet minister and MP for Birmingham, which has the largest Muslim population in the UK, has penned *Black Flag Down: Counter-Extremism, Defeating Isis and Winning the Battle of Ideas*. He comments that as well as recognising that Islam is a 'faith of beautiful diversity' it may be that rage rather than religion is the starting point for radicalization (the sense of exclusion). As MI5 said in 2008: 'Far from being religious, a large number of those involved in terrorism do not practise their faith regularly'.

As well as warning about Islamophobia and social exclusion, we need to argue for the values we have in common; above all, tolerance. He quotes a 12th century Sufi/Islamic mystic who says, 'God cannot be confined to any one creed.'

HUMAN PROBLEM

Baptist minister Steve Chalke has also tackled the above subject in *Radical: Exploring the Rise of Extremism and the Pathway to Peace*, echoing many of Byrne's themes. If we are going to overcome the escalating problem of extremism and terrorism that our world faces, we need a different answer. We need to find a narrative that is radical enough to turn the tide. Radicalisation is not an Islamic problem, it's a human problem. Conservative fundamentalist views within Christianity often fuel mentalism, exclusion and oppression, and in extreme cases leads to violence. Both Byrne and Chalke recognise the tensions within Islam, the Sunni/Shia divide stretching back to the 7th century.

At a recent meeting between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Grand Imam of Cairo, the most influential Muslim world leader, the Imam said, 'Islam teaches us mercy and Christianity teaches us love and peace. If we don't have peace among us as religious leaders, then there won't be any peace.'

HOW THE POPE SLEEPS

Pope Francis revealed how feelings of anxiety he experienced while he was a bishop in Buenos Aires disappeared after he became Pope. His secret for dealing with stress is to write down all his problems in letters to St Joseph. He then places the letters under a statue of the father who brought up Jesus. Francis said, 'Now he is sleeping on a mattress of letters! That's why I sleep well: it is the grace of God. I always sleep six hours. And I pray.'



LINDA WEBB

It is better to die in a camp than to die in a war. That's what Nejebar thinks. It's better to travel for months, in rain and snow, with young children. To walk until you injure your feet. To risk your children's lives in a plastic dinghy. And to leave everything you know behind. When the alternative is bombs, bullets and war, almost anything is better.

Nejebar's husband Noor was a teacher in Afghanistan. Imagine the horror the family felt when the Taliban announced they would kill anyone, like Noor, who worked for the government. Imagine how they felt when the Taliban carried out that threat on another family member, taking out his eyes before killing him.

Almost anything has to be better than that. But now they've arrived in Greece, all they have is a tent. They have no other protection against wind and rain. There's no school for their five children and they have no idea of what will happen to them. They thought they would stay there for 10 days, but six months later there is no end in sight.

Noor said arriving in the camp in Greece felt 'like suicide, but we took the decision that it is better to die here than to die there from war.'

Throughout it all, Nejebar has desperately wanted what is best for her children, but her circumstances make it very difficult. Her youngest, Sudai, is five years' old but looks much younger. 'He hasn't been growing as he should. His tummy is swollen and they don't know what is wrong with him,' she explained. And because the only on-site doctor is Greek, they haven't been able to find out.

Nejebar's strength and steadiness make her the rock at the centre of her family, holding them together. And despite her circumstances, she has welcomed two lost brothers,



PHOTO: CA

Faraidoon and Farzad, into her home. Nejebar said: 'We still have some hope that one day we will get out of here. We only want a peaceful life. We want our children to have an education, to go to school. The most important thing.'

Christian Aid was set up by British churches in 1945 to support the hundreds of thousands of refugees who had lost their homes and possessions in the Second World War. Christian Aid Week began in 1957 to raise funds for this vital work that was still continuing in the long running aftermath of the war.

For 60 years, tens of thousands of dedicated volunteers have come together for Christian Aid Week each May to raise vital money for those most in need. Thanks to you, they have been there for refugees, providing essential food, shelter and legal assistance.

We need your help, both collecting and giving

We are always grateful to our collectors who helped us raise £3603 last year. If you would like to join them in supporting Christian Aid please contact Liz Wilmot or me in church. Remember, your support is vital. Let's not turn our backs on refugees.

Do give generously when you receive the Christian Aid envelope through your door. Alternatively, see one of us in church on Sundays, or leave your donation in the church office.

LOCAL EVENTS

Story of hope set to music

ANOREXIA IS a deadly illness. It has the highest mortality rate of any psychiatric disorder — although most sufferers recover to some extent. A new musical play, *When Strawberries are not Enough*, tells the story of one young person's experience of anorexia.

It is written by Charley Williams, pictured, who suffered anorexia from the age of 18 into her 30s. Its onset happened at art school, and between 1999 and 2009 she was admitted to three hospitals. Now aged 35, Charley has recently moved into a cottage in Teddington and has a young daughter.

With the support of her father Simon (a former headteacher) she is staging the musical at Hampton Hill Theatre from 25-29 April. She hopes her experiences will help others. For tickets, telephone 079 5736 8644.



Traidcraft Stall

Sunday 2 April, 1130-1130, St James's Church

We'll be selling the Real Easter Egg (milk and plain) for £4. Each egg comes with a lovely Easter story booklet and chocolate bar. If you want more than two, please tell Ann or Catherine or leave a note for them in the church office. They can be collected from there too with notice.

The Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band

Sunday 23 April, 1430, The White House Community Centre, 45 The Avenue, Hampton TW12 2LX

Under the baton of Michael Robinson, the Duke of Cambridge's Hussars present *Spring at the Movies*, which includes *Bridge Over the River Kwai*, *West Side Story*, *The Pink Panther* and *Star Wars*.

REGISTERS

FEBRUARY

BAPTISMS

None

WEDDINGS

None

INTERMENT OF ASHES

25 Doreen May Hutchins, 85, Sunbury on Thames



Picture perfect takes time



DEREK WINTERBURN

One of the great advantages of living in TW12 is that we are in easy reach of some wonderful places. For nearly four years I have posted a photograph each day to www.blipfoto.com (that's over 1400 images). Sometimes they say something about family or church, but mostly they are a snapshot of the natural world. Having the commitment to take a meaningful picture each day can feel like an unwelcome pressure. On the other hand, it is a stimulus for creativity and also gets me out of the house for some exercise! Here are 12 photos: one for each month.

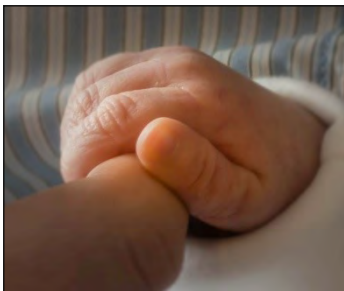
April — Cherry Blossom



Cherry blossom is hard to photograph; I find that from a distance it never is quite so impressive as in real life. One approach is to go close or create the illusion of a close-up in Photoshop! (A long exposure, capturing blossom being blown, is another solution).

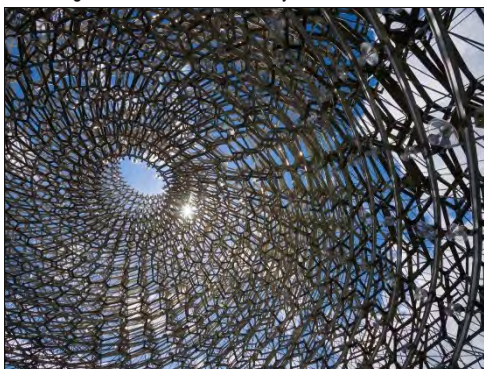
May — Tabitha is Born

On 17 May, our granddaughter, Tabitha, was born in Kingston Hospital. It was a supreme pleasure to visit the new family the next day. This is her little hand grasping our son's finger.



June — The Hive, Kew Gardens

We often visit Kew; there is usually something new to see and photograph. This extraordinary giant sculpture continues to draw crowds. I loved the sound of the bees humming, that one could listen to by bone conduction.



July — Bee Landing

Through the Hive, Kew is keen to emphasise the need to think of the bees' future. I always think a bee nicely sets off a picture of a static flower. However 'freezing' them is not straightforward in the wild (often insect shots are staged with a flash). Although the bee is reasonably sharp in this one, the wings have still moved too fast and are invisible. Truly an amazing creature.



August — Somewhere New

We try to find somewhere new for our holidays each year. Last summer we found a part of Wales that we had overlooked entirely – North Wales, but not Snowdonia. Portmeirion is famous for its fantastical architecture and was a must. The weather was lovely too.

September — Sunset at Hampton Court



Hampton Court Palace and gardens is another of our favourite places. The bridge is a great spot to catch the light at sunset.

October — Garden Fungi

Fungi are relatively easy to capture in the park. In fact, these Shaggy Inkcaps popped up in our lawn. Another time I have caught them slowly dripping ink in great droplets.



November — The Crocodile Bridge



Autumn is a great time to be a photographer. Japanese Maples are famous for their colours, but the various trees in the Woodland Garden in Bushy Park can put on quite a display too – even in November.

December — St James's Churchyard



Sandra walks through St James's churchyard on the way to the bus stop. On this morning, she rang me to say to get out of the vicarage and take a photo of the dawn and the mist.

January — Bushy Park at Dawn



A few times each year, I go to the Park for the sunrise. If it is a clear morning, dawn is much more interesting than sunset – and in winter, it is not too early. It is wonderful the way in which the sky's light changes over a few minutes.

February — Back to Kew

The orchid show is very popular at Kew. I don't feel especially inspired by these most peculiar flowers, but I liked the garlands that dangled over the pond.



March — A Heron Catches Lunch



Hérons are the easiest birds to capture. They are often seen in Bushy Park, are large, and for great periods they are comparatively still or slow. Then, if approached carefully, they don't take flight. Nevertheless when they strike they move very rapidly. This one dangled his catch for just a second or two before swallowing it whole.

I have picked a range of photos of mostly local places. I hope it will inspire you to look out yourself for something beautiful each day. If you would like to see my photos each day they can be found at www.blipfoto.com/DNWinterburn or search for me on Facebook.