

Thursday 27 August 2020

Dear Friends,

As I write this, the BBC has decided that orchestral versions of *Rule Britannia* and *Land of Hope and Glory* will be performed at the Last Night of the Proms, leading to some heated reactions in the press and among politicians and commentators. Time will tell if the decision stands, and also whether it proves to be a one-off break with tradition in an untypical year. The words of the National Anthem and William Blake's *Jerusalem*, it seems, have survived!

So....*did those feet in ancient time/Walk upon England's mountains green?* Probably not, though the legend that Joseph of Arimathea had brought Jesus as a child to England when he came to buy tin from the Cornish mines is quite enchanting. (And so is the next part of the legend, that Joseph returned to England after the resurrection, bearing with him the holy grail, and planted his staff in the English earth, where it rooted and flowered in the Glastonbury thorn.) Isn't it intriguing to imagine Jesus in our own country, transfiguring its familiar landscape by his very presence?

Now change the focus from *ancient time* to the present and the future. Jesus **does** come to England, and to every other place, wherever his Spirit is given an opportunity to transform the landscape. All the baptised (the en-Christed) bear Christ with them, but he is to be encountered also in the stranger. The child Jesus may not have made the dangerous crossing from the Middle East to our *green and pleasant land*, but there are plenty of children who have done exactly that, and some are doing it today. It is in the face of a child refugee that we might well see the *Countenance Divine/Shine forth upon our clouded hills*.

In my teaching days, I often worked on Blake's writings with students. While he was considered idiosyncratic, even mad, by many of his contemporaries, he was a visionary who went on to become much more widely appreciated. He was a committed Christian who was also a fierce critic of the Church and institutional religion. I tend to think of *Jerusalem* less as a jingoistic song for little England, and more as an anthem of a renewed vision of how things could potentially be when the Spirit of the Prince of Peace is given the space to establish his reign. It's a vision of a heavenly Jerusalem, whose name means 'city of peace', in England - and in every other place.

The **Sunday services** this week, 30th August, will be at 9.30am at St Matthias and St Mary Magdalene, and 11.00am at St John the Divine. In addition there will be a Eucharist on Wednesday morning at St Mary Magdalene at 10.00am. Although there will be paper copies of the Sunday Order of Service available for those who would like one (these paper copies will 'belong' to you alone – please take it home with you), you will now be able to download a copy of the order of service on to your phone or tablet before coming to church – please go to <https://www.richmondteamministry.org/orders-of-service-readings> and download it - don't forget to bring your device with you. Do remember to wear a face covering in church, unless you are exempt from doing so.

Sadly we are still unable to offer either a crèche area or Junior Church for our young people. We would encourage parents to bring a book, soft toy or other suitable distractions for their own child, if that is helpful. But do know that young people are very welcome and belong to our worshipping community!

Our churches continue to be open on specific days and times **for private prayer**, when you will be able to light a candle and reflect or meditate:

St John the Divine will be open on Saturdays, 10.00am – 12noon and Tuesdays, 9.30am – 12.30pm

St Mary Magdalene will be open on Saturdays, 10.00am – 12noon.

As places of worship have been closed to visitors for several months this year, **Open House London 2020** have asked us to take part in this year's event, so on **Saturday 19 September**. St Matthias and St John the Divine will be open to visitors between 10.00am and 12noon, and St Mary Magdalene between 10.00am and 4.00pm. If you are able to help by welcoming people and ensuring spatial distancing, we'd love to hear from you. An hour or two of your time would be much appreciated!

You are welcome to come to **Morning Prayer via Zoom** from Tuesday 1 September till Thursday 3 September, 8.30am. **There is no Morning Prayer on Bank holiday Monday, 31 Aug. There will also be a break of Morning Prayer between 7 and 21 September; we restart again on Tuesday 22 September.**

Zoom details for September:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84123937911?pwd=MUJlVGRyWTBFUFBtMGxVVVNyMXUrQT09>

Meeting ID: 841 2393 7911

Passcode: RTMSept

Do make sure you are signed in just before 8.30am as we start on time. If you have access to Daily Prayer, that helps, but even without a book or the app you can still join in prayer!

**Prayers for the week ahead.** This week we pray particularly for all involved in education in the UK. After a very disruptive academic year, the new start that September brings, together with the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on everyday life, feels like even more of a demanding prospect than it usually is. Please pray for those charged with leading educational establishments of all kinds, for teachers, support staff, governing bodies, students, and their parents and carers. Locally, pray for the schools and colleges that serve the Richmond area, especially Christ's School, with which we have a particular connection, and also for those who will be leaving home for university this autumn, or taking on new responsibilities.

### **A prayer at the start of a new academic year:**

*God of all, through all time and in all places, in each circumstance and season,  
you welcome us with open arms as members of your beloved family.*

*Each one of us is precious to you and called by you.*

*In this time of great change and uncertainty, you are unchanging and ever faithful.*

*As the challenges of the autumn season begin, let us feel you speaking to us, leading us, teaching us,  
filling us with your Spirit and strengthening us for the journey ahead.*

**Amen.**

We continue our prayers for you and your loved ones, and send our blessings for the coming week,

Anne, Wilma and Neil

*This week the letter has been written by Revd Neil Summers.*

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Please pray for:

...**Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank and the Anglican Church in Beirut.

...**Christ's School**, for all those who received exam results recently, those who are celebrating and those who are re-considering the path ahead.

...**Glass Door Staff**, and for guests, especially those who are sleeping rough.

...**all those who work for the NHS**, for carers and key workers.

...**the sick and those in need** – Hermione Lockyer, Ron Bond, Madge Thorns, Bob Smith, Molly Lambert, John Roberts, Sarah Swanson, Joy Clarke, Chris O'Toole.

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### **Church, Community and other news:**

#### **An organ recital**

You are invited to an organ recital by Karl Dorman, assistant organist at St Mary Magdalene, on Saturday 5 September, at 12.30pm at St Mary Magdalene. Karl will perform music by Bohm, Buxtehude, Bach, Vierne and Guigot. As always there is free entry and the retiring collection will be for the SMM Choral Foundation.

### **Parish Office:**

Please note that the Parish Office will be closed next week, Monday 31 August – Friday 4 September. There will be no e-Newsletter next week, the next one will be on Thursday 10 September.

### **Glass Door:**

As many will know, following advice from Public Health England, it won't be possible to run night shelters this winter as we have for the last three years. Although there are many reasons, the key one is that it is not possible to maintain social distancing and a safe environment when many people are eating and then sleeping together in one shared space. Glass Door is looking at alternative provision, and we are talking with Glass Door about how for our communities can be involved.

We wanted to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers who worked so hard at the Glass Door shelters last season. Your commitment, compassion and adaptability made it possible to deliver a safe, welcoming environment and a delicious meal for 19 weeks.

If you are keen to get involved in other ways then the Glass Door Sleep Out (or In) fundraiser will look a bit different this year, taking place on Friday 2nd October. All the details of how to register can be found here <https://www.glassdoor.org.uk/Event/sleep-out-2020>

We are asking our volunteers to be patient while we work out how to support Glass Door in a way that is safe for everyone. For our Volunteer Co-ordinators the situation is frustrating, but also constantly changing. If anyone has any questions or would just like to have a chat about the current situation please don't hesitate to contact Isabelle Swann on [swannisabelle@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:swannisabelle@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Give A Little**

We are hugely grateful to so many who continue to make their weekly or monthly contribution to the finances of the Team, by standing order or direct debit. Contributions can also be made electronically in church and there will also be a plate for cash collections at the back of each church.

However if anyone would like to make an additional donation to the work of our churches this can be done at <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/5260a080-4ee0-49b6-a1c3-d552ef9a0700> Whilst this is a challenging time for many, financially as well as emotionally, I hope we can continue to count on your support for the work of our 3 churches.

### **Things for our Children and Youth:**

Our children and youth Zoom meetings are taking a summer break.

We plan to re-start Eaglets on Tuesday 8 September, 3.30-3.50pm, via Zoom.

Mary's Little Lambs will restart on Thursday 24 September at 2.30pm, also via Zoom.

As you will know, we have been advertising for a **Children and Young People Ministry Leader** to join the Richmond Team and build on the wonderful work done by Helen in the past 4 years. Although we received a reasonable number of applications and interviewed 3 candidates, we were, sadly, unable to appoint. We have started the process again and will be interviewing in early October. If you know anyone who might be interested in the post please ask them to visit our website:

<https://www.richmondteamministry.org/vacancy-children-young-peoples-ministry-leader> Please pray for the right person to come forward.

### **Where to watch church services or access resources while church buildings remain closed:**

The Church of England have a special page for you to light a virtual candle and make time to pray which you can view here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle>

You can also access more online services produced by the Church of England here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

With best wishes,  
Tina

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