

Glass Door

Elspeth Fearn

Richmond Team Ministry's Mission Action Plan for 2017-2019 contains, as part of its Vision Statement, 'We celebrate and share God's love for all people by living out God's care and compassion for everyone'. An action point for the Team under this heading is caring for local homeless people in our area, working with organisations such as Glass Door to provide food and shelter during winter months.

Glass Door, in partnership with churches, provides an emergency winter shelter in church buildings from November to April. Specialist workers from Glass Door supervise admissions, the running of the shelter overnight and getting guests breakfast in the morning, whilst volunteers from the church provide food for the evening meal and talk to the guests. Dedicated care workers also offer advice and practical support to help find solutions and to get people back on to their feet. RTM is exploring the possibility of working with Glass Door.

As part of their fundraising Glass Door holds a Big Sleep Out each year. The latest was on 6 October when 350 people slept overnight at Duke of York Square in Chelsea. An amazing £207,000 was raised which means that more people will be able to find shelter this coming winter.

Over £1,000 of that sum was raised by the efforts of our own Helen Williams and James Rushby who took part in the Sleep Out.

Speaking to **TEAMtalk** Helen said, 'On the night of the Sleep Out James and I were fortunate to have a mild dry night. Having had some time to prepare I looked something like a 'michelin man', dressed for the coldest of nights, which in the event, was probably a little bit of overkill.

'James and I learnt much that night; we had the benefit of a safe place to sleep (a fenced off area with people providing security), we had food and drinks and toilets available to us throughout the night. We had the company of one another and knew there were many like-minded people around us, ready to offer friendship and support. I also learnt about how selfish others can be, with one group being very noisy until the early hours, frustrating many others trying to sleep. However, the

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GLASS DOOR

Glass Door partners with churches to provide shelter and support to at least 100 people experiencing homelessness. They operate from November to early April. Guests of their emergency shelters also receive a hot supper and breakfast in the morning.

For more information see www.glassdoor.org.uk

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The Advent Tradition of *Los Posadas*

Revd Anne Crawford

This year Richmond Team Ministry will be taking part in a new Advent experience which comes to us from South America: *Los Posadas*, or Travelling Crib.

The idea is that every evening during Advent a small group of pilgrims re-enacts Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, dressing up as the Holy family and travelling by pre-arrangement to find shelter for the night, visiting homes around their village. On Christmas Eve the pair reach their final destination – the parish church – where midnight mass is celebrated and the Christ-child is placed in the crib.

We are invited to take part in *Los Posadas* this year, not by dressing up, but by taking knitted figures of Mary, Joseph and donkey on a journey around the parish. Night after night the figures will journey from one host home to another: hospitality, the lighting of a candle and a very simple act of worship are shared. The little figures may seem naïve, but their ability to bring a sense of the holy and numinous into homes is surprisingly powerful, and brings a welcome relief from



One of the Posadas

Helen Williams

the usual frantic activity which surrounds the days leading up to Christmas Day. It's a great way to get to know people and anyone can take part whether they come to church or not.

I hope you enjoy travelling through Advent with Mary, Joseph and their little donkey, and find that it enhances your anticipation of Christmas and the excitement of receiving again the new life which comes to us in Christ.

Happy Advent !

Glass Door . . . *continued from page 1*

biggest thing we were aware of, was that at the end of our night of 'sleep' on the streets (6am) we had a sense of joy, "we had completed it" we could go back to our respective homes, wash the night off in a warm shower and crawl into a cosy bed and put on clean clothing.

Furthermore we knew that with the brilliant and generous support of Richmond Team Ministry we had raised over £1,000 – much to celebrate (Thank you!). Of course this is not the reality for most sleeping rough, those who

know that an undetermined amount of nights lie ahead of them, full of unknowns and fears, what a stark contrast to our sense of achievement.'

James said, 'It was hard, people were talking all night and we could hear the rustle of rubbish which made it difficult to sleep. It made me more aware of how homeless people must feel and I felt really lucky when I came back home to my warm shower and safety of home.'

Harvest Supper at St John the Divine

Revd Neil Summers

At St John's, we usually hold a bring-and-share lunch after the Eucharist on Harvest Festival Sunday. This year, for a change, we opted for a harvest supper on Saturday evening instead, and were very pleased that over 40 people came. The range of food was as impressive as ever; it's always amazing how well these things come together!

As desserts were served and glasses topped up, our home-grown programme of entertainment began – great fun and well-received by the audience. Our very versatile



After Harvest Supper

Neil Summers

and talented director of music, Mark Laflin (with no advance rehearsal!) accompanied the soloists – Graham (*Comedy Tonight*), Gill (*All in the April Evening*) and Neil (*A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*) – as well as leading a short community sing-along (think *Doing the Lambeth Walk*, *Down at the Old Bull and Bush*, etc.). Paul accompanied himself on the guitar (*Blowing in the Wind*).

Other participants – Rich, Peter and Mary – brought readings and poems; Paul Bunnage read two of his own compositions; and Stephen Ward read a prayer he had written specially for the occasion. Junior Church presented a sketch, '*Jim, who ran away from his nurse and was eaten by a lion*', one of Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales*. Thank you to Benedict and Caspar Morgan for gamely taking part, and to Helen Williams and Huw Morgan for donning their costumes!



Wheatsheaf

Neil Summers

On the Friday before, Falcons School for Boys, based in Kew Road, held their own Harvest assembly in the church, and Helen and Neil did a ten-minute presentation focusing on why and how we celebrate harvest, also giving the students some information about the Richmond Foodbank and its invaluable work in the community. The boys and their parents (a good number of whom also attended the assembly) brought a large selection of donations for the Foodbank, which were added to by the regular congregation at Sunday's Eucharist, and the whole lot was then transported to the Vineyard in the Falcons School bus on Monday morning. The third year boys presented a traditional Harvest loaf they had made to the church, a central feature of the Harvest display on the Sunday.

All in all, a busy, enjoyable and productive Harvest Festival weekend, and thanks to everyone who made it possible.

Talking Funerals

Revd Anne Crawford

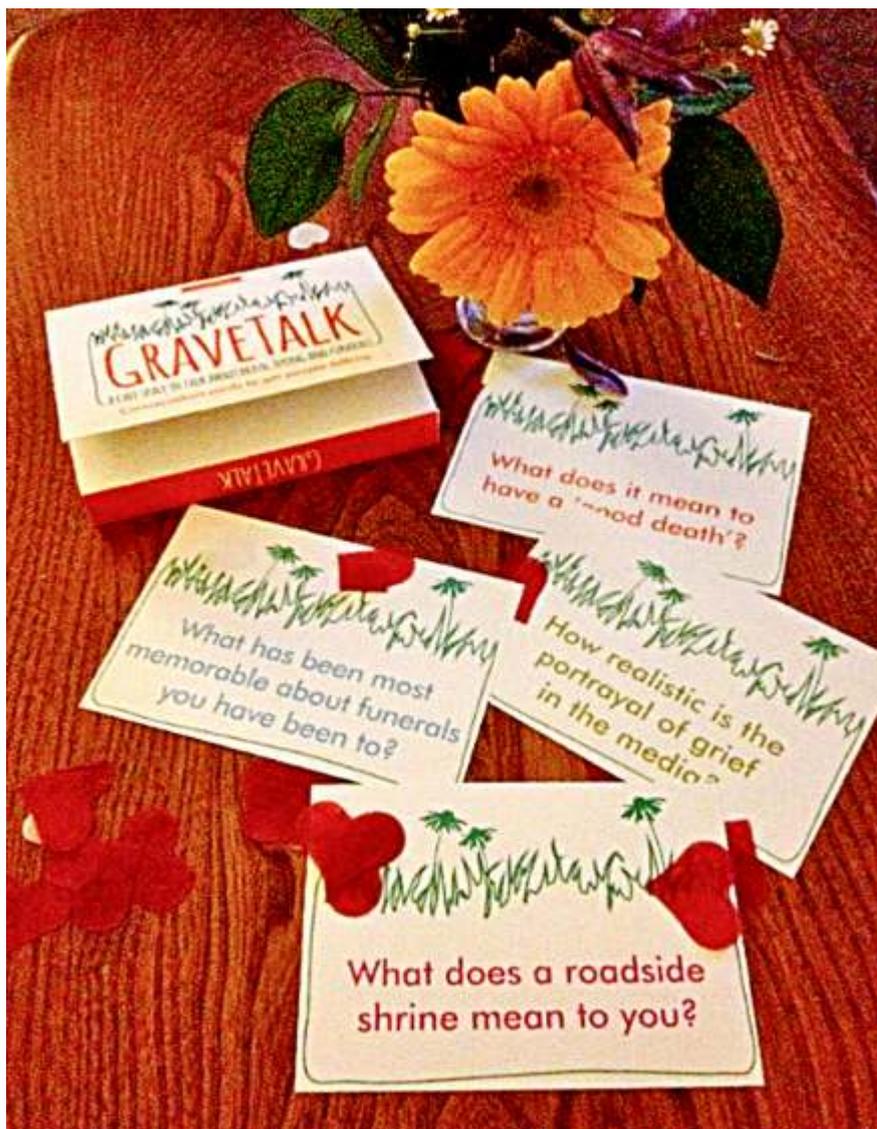
At the beginning of November, as the days were growing shorter and colder, and our minds were turning towards the great autumnal season of remembering, a new café-style event called *Talking Funerals* took place at St Matthias. People were invited to come along and begin to think and talk about subjects we usually shy away from: death, dying and funerals.

The clergy team felt it would be invaluable to offer people an opportunity to articulate their own thoughts and feelings about death and dying, to ask questions, and share experiences in a relaxed environment. We were also keen to highlight the support and care the Church offers when someone dies, to let people within our communities know that anyone can have a Church of England funeral, whether churchgoer or not, and that clergy are happy to take a funeral service at the crematorium, in a cemetery or a woodland burial ground, as well as in church. The *Talking Funerals* event gave us scope to explore difficult subjects sensitively

and to offer hospitality to people who wouldn't normally come through the church doors.

The Church of England's new *Grave Talk* resource material includes a selection of questions which are offered as a starter for conversation in small groups, and on the night they helped generate some frank and honest discussion. The candlelit café-style setting, along with the tea and cakes which were served as we arrived, produced a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere which made it easy to share.

Towards the end of our discussion time we were joined by Amy and Jim, managers from the Richmond branch of T H Sanders & Sons Funeral Directors. As well as giving us practical information on what to do when



Questions considered at the *Talking Funerals* session Revd Anne Crawford

someone dies, they also spoke movingly about the respectful way they care for the body of the deceased person, and the guidance and support they offer to the newly bereaved. Among the many handouts available for us to take away was a helpful booklet published by the Church of England entitled *Ideas for my Own Funeral*. Making our wishes known can be a comfort not just to us personally but also to our family, and the booklet gives space to make notes and begin to think about what we would like to happen at our own funeral.

We plan to offer more *Grave Talk* events in the future, but in the meantime you can find relevant information at www.churchofenglandfunerals.org

Greenbelt

Helen Williams

Greenbelt festival saw 11,000 Christians gathering together over the August Bank holiday weekend and I was thrilled to be able to be part of it, along with eleven others from the Richmond Team. The weather was lovely as we basked in glorious sunshine for the three and a half days. This year the festival's theme was *The Common Good*. The festival is a truly inclusive festival, which has won awards; along with Glastonbury they are the only other mainstream all-age festival in the UK to achieve Gold Standard in Accessibility, and one of just seven UK festivals to be recognised as a 'greener festival' for sustainable practice, finally they achieved a 'Rainbow List award' for being an inclusive space for LGBTi people.

Greenbelt offers a vast array of; worship, seminars, poetry, music, theatre, comedy, the renowned tiny tea tent, 'beer & hymns', circus skills and children's work, across its seventeen venues. The Rushby family enjoyed all the sports and games and this year pompom-making proved a popular choice and was embraced with great industry.



Greenbelt Programme

Helen Williams



Glamping Site

Helen Williams

already set up), others 'glamped' in tents on site, while a few chose the comfort of accommodation offsite and drove in each day.

Some people choose to self-cater, though this brings challenges of carrying all equipment on to the camp site. Others choose to have their main meals on the festival site, with a range of outlets including French, Indian Street food, fish & chips, noodles, pork rolls & pizza.

I returned to Richmond feeling weary but buzzing with enthusiasm and energy (despite the full days!)

It would be great for others to enjoy this event. If you would like to come and join in the fun tickets have been available from 1 September 2017. The earlier you book the better the price! If you would like to know more, any of those

Greenbelt is also a space to enjoy the beautiful surroundings and take time for prayer and reflection.

Many artists performing commented on the exceptional beauty of the festival site, the cleanliness of the toilets (even on the fourth day...!) and the care and courtesy shown to them by guests and volunteers and staff. Others commented on how safe they felt at the event.

Most festival-goers camped (either in their own tents or in tents available to hire, which were



Greenbelt at night

Helen Williams

who went this year would be very happy to answer your questions; The Rushby Family, Sue Eastaugh, Margaret Morrison, Tim Harris & Maria Longley.

AND, should you need any more encouragement then check out the Greenbelt website, which is filled with information and saturated with photos to enthuse and inspire. <http://www.greenbelt.org.uk/>



All are welcome... regardless of age, colour, shape or size!

Helen Williams



The Tiny Tea Tent

Helen Williams



'Beer and Hymns' at the Jesus Arms

Helen Williams

Book Club

Jill Steed

Once a month, in Cedric Lee's cosy, book-lined living room, a group of avid readers meets to discuss the book we have chosen. It's a very relaxed atmosphere, and all three churches are represented. At the end of the discussion we consider various books for the next month.

The choice of authors is wide and free-ranging. Over the past couple of years we have read some 'oldies' such as Charles Dickens, Muriel Spark, Bram Stoker, Henry James, Evelyn Waugh, Laurie Lee, Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. Best-seller writers have included Tracy Chevalier, Pat Barker, Sebastian Barry, and John Banville. International writers have included Isobel Allende, Elena Ferrante and, most recently, Arundhati Roy.

The joy of it is that even if you don't enjoy a particular book, there will be enough enthusiasts to help you see **some** virtue in it. And there's always the hope that the next one will captivate you!

The evenings invariably end with animated discussions about almost anything – the wide range in our ages and backgrounds ensures a thoroughly enjoyable evening as we get to know each other better.

We are all grateful to Cedric for his generous hospitality and ever-open door.



Some members of the Book Club

Jill Steed

What is Messy Church?

Revd Anne Crawford



Messy Church is a different way of being church. Just as an 8am BCP congregation differs from a Common Worship 11am congregation, so a

Messy Church congregation has its own distinct identity and way of worshipping. Messy Church began in an inner city church in Portsmouth in 2004 as a way to encourage people to give church a try. There are now over 3,000 Messy Churches spread over 20 different countries around the world, with an estimated 500,000 people attending a Messy Church every month.

What makes Messy different? Well, first of all Messy churches don't tend to meet on Sundays. Working parents and sports commitments make Sunday church attendance difficult for many people, so a weekday church after school, or on a Saturday, is proving to be a good alternative.

The Messy brand is also an encouragement to parents who perhaps have no church background and feel uncomfortable visiting a traditional church service, which can feel quite intimidating if you've never been to church before. Most Messy Church congregations are learning together, everything is a new experience, and no-one is seen as 'the expert'. One young mum, when visiting a Messy Church for the first time told me, 'I always thought Church was for people whose lives are sorted. I was wrong. I now see that church is for people like me, people with messy lives and lively children.' That mum went on to be baptised and

confirmed and is now a member of her church's PCC!

How does it work? Each Messy Church centres around a biblical theme which is explored through a variety of craft, games, cooking/baking etc. Each activity provides an opportunity to discuss the theme a little more, and this exploration is taken a step further with a short time of celebration (worship) in church. Songs, prayers and a bible reading are all included in the celebration, but in a more experiential way so that everyone, young and old, can join in. And then, at the end of the worship, everyone gathers to share a meal (pizza, jacket potato etc). There are prayers to take home, along with the things we have made. It's a lot to pack into two hours, and Messy Church demands high levels of energy, enthusiasm and creativity from its leaders, but God is at work and faith is being deepened, new disciples are being made, and the community is slowly being transformed by people who have a new-found confidence that God is in the messiness of life.

To discover more why not come along to Messy Church at St Matthias – we would love to welcome you!



Quiz Night

Heather Montford

For a couple of years now, in order to promote social interchange between the three churches in the Richmond Team Ministry, a Barn Dance has been held at St Matthias Church. Although much enjoyed it was thought that perhaps a little brain-tapping rather than foot-tapping might appeal to a slightly different group and so a Quiz Night was organised at St John's. Participants were asked to divide themselves into groups of 5. Questions were circulated on a series of sheets of paper to each group and passed to the adjoining group for correction when the Quiz Master gave the answers. Each sheet (10 altogether) had a different heading on subjects as diverse as 'That was the Christmas that was', 'Men and Women', 'London', 'Back to School' and carried 10 questions, often cryptic. For the crossword enthusiast there was even one on anagrams, and questions appeared designed to cover all age groups from pop to classical in every sense. While adults struggled for answers, children enjoyed films and drawing and in the interval there were baked potatoes with salad and delicious fillings, cakes and ice cream and an opportunity to circulate with drinks from an excellently stocked bar. A great evening was had by all, for which much thanks to Helen Williams and her team who were involved in the organisation and catering for the evening. Thanks also go to Maia Rushby and her parents – Keith Bennett the excellent quizmaster, who also devised the questions, and who was ably supported by his wife Maureen. The trouble with Quizzes is that they can leave one feeling somewhat depressed by one's lack of knowledge and, for those of us at a certain age, memory. Still, one doesn't have to be a pop music expert or have good memory to know that the winner of the 2003 Eurovision Song Contest if it comes under the heading of 'That was the Christmas that was' happened to be Turkey!

Altogether a very enjoyable evening, an opportunity to meet those from other churches in the Team Ministry, even to learn, or to be reminded of, a few interesting facts. I'm sure we would all look forward to another Quiz next year.



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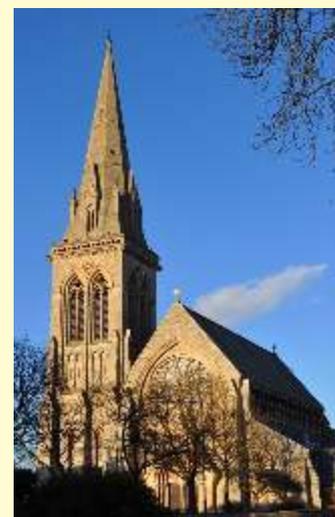
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St John the Divine



St Mary Magdalene



St Matthias

Our Churches