

Thursday 25 November 2021

Dear Friends,

I love Advent. I love its themes of hope and expectation, its call to stay awake and prepare. I love the vastness of the vision it holds out for our pondering - creation renewed and reconciled; justice, peace and mercy met together; and all flesh seeing God's salvation. In this season I imagine our forebears, including Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, gathered together in the dark and cold around glowing firelight: singing and telling stories, dreaming and watching in the night. Advent stirs our hearts' longings, from the deeply personal to our yearnings for the whole human family and our planet itself.

What are you yearning for this Advent? The news is full of violence and greed, environmental devastation and human cruelty. The demands of the season often stir our personal griefs, losses and estrangements too. We pray, we work, and we hope for the coming anew of Emmanuel, God with us. We hope for the joy and wonder of Christmas, and the birth of love in our lives and our world.

What a gift it is to come together in our churches in Richmond in this beautiful but sometimes difficult season - to watch and prepare, to sing and pray, to keep Advent in community. And then, what a gift to welcome Christ among us. For Christ comes, whether we are ready or not, whether our shopping is done and our tree decorated, whether or not our feelings reflect what the world thinks they should be. Christ was born in a time of anxiety, oppression and danger, to a poor family far from home. Christ is born among us, tender and vulnerable, in a world in need of a Saviour.

I do not know how the mystery happens, but by God's grace, it does. The incarnate Word, God with us, is born anew, and dwells among us, loving us immeasurably and inviting us to love with all our hearts. Christmas comes once more.

Advent and Christmas are lovely, and deeply meaningful as we worship, wait and then celebrate together. Join us if you can, for the Advent service this Sunday evening at St Mary Magdalene to share in readings and music for this beautiful season. Or come to the Advent course (on Zoom), each Wednesday in Advent. More information about both of those can be found further down the newsletter. However you will mark Advent, may it be holy, which is just another way of saying may be it be focussed on God!

God of hope, who brought love into this world,
be the love that dwells between us.
God of hope, who brought peace into this world,
be the peace that dwells between us.
God of hope, who brought joy into this world,
be the joy that dwells between us.
God of hope, the rock we stand upon,
be the centre, the focus of our lives
always, and particularly this Advent time.

With our prayers and Advent blessings,

Anne, Charlie, Neil, and Wilma

This week the letter has been written by Revd Canon Wilma Roest

Please pray for:

...**Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank and the Anglican Church in Beirut; also for the peace of Jerusalem

...**Christ's School**, for all staff, students and governors

...**Glass Door staff** and for all volunteers, those who are working to provide hot soup and sandwiches, and those helping to plan our involvement in the next winter season

...**the sick and those in need** – Hermione Lockyer, Ron Bond, Madge Thorns, Joy Clarke, Pat Mygind, Veronica Huci, Penny and Michael Carleton-Smith, Megan Vaughan-Jones, Claire and Peter Day, Charles Stiller, Keith Hogan, baby Peter, Suzie and Mark Cox

...**the departed, may they rest in peace** – Robert Bailey, Angela Carpenter, Claudia Boulton, Harold Gill, Marion West

Church Services:

At St John the Divine this Sunday, the 11.00am service will be both in-person and live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#).

St John's midweek service is currently an hour of contemplation, between 6.30-7.30pm on Tuesdays, with the Blessed Sacrament as the focus. If you would value a time of quietness, thought and prayer, you are welcome to drop in for as long as you like during the hour.

From the beginning of the new Church year in Advent, we will revert to the pre-pandemic pattern of Tuesday evening services. So, from Tuesday 30 November, there will be half an hour of silent contemplation at 6.30pm, followed by the Said Eucharist at 7.00pm.

St Mary Magdalene will be holding in-person Sunday services at 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.30am (third Sunday only) and 6.30pm. The 9.30am service will also be live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#) (not on 28 November). During the week St Mary Magdalene will be holding an in-person service at 10.00am on Wednesdays.

St Matthias' 9.30am Sunday service will be both in-person and online via Zoom (please [contact Revd Anne Crawford](#) for log-in details). The midweek Eucharist at St Matthias is held on Thursdays at 10.00am.

This **Sunday, 28 November**, the 8.00am and 9.30am services at St Mary Magdalene will be services of Communion by Extension taken by Ruth Martin. There will no live stream from St Mary Magdalene this week.

In the evening you are invited to a service at St Mary Magdalene marking the beginning of Advent, through readings and music. The Advent Procession begins at 6.30pm.

Orders of service and readings can be found here <https://www.richmondteamministry.org/orders-of-service-readings>

Private Prayer:

St Mary Magdalene will be open for private prayer on Saturdays between 10.00am and 12.00noon when you will be able to light a candle, and reflect or meditate. The church is also open Monday – Friday, from 8am till lunchtime.

St John the Divine is normally open on Tuesdays between 9.30am and 12.30pm, Saturday mornings between 10.00am-12.00noon, and at various other times when Fr Neil is working in the office.

Morning Prayer, Monday – Fridays, at 8.30am:

Morning Prayer is now taking place in church and via Zoom. We will meet at St Mary Magdalene on Mondays, on Tuesdays we will be at St John the Divine, Wednesdays and Thursdays are at St Mary Magdalene and Fridays at St Matthias.

During November, **Monday – Thursday:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88971696192?pwd=R25LVk4lRUg4T09oOWluYlNCYjRUQT09>

Meeting ID: 889 7169 6192

Passcode: RTMPrayer

And on Fridays:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81983343470?pwd=ejVpVnB4d3VGdkFtWjl2c2tTOC9XUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 8334 3470

Passcode: FriPrayer

During December, Monday - Thursday:

Join Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86999464069?pwd=QkFpVDBSZIN3ck5MSTIxR0FkSIQzZz09>

Meeting ID: 869 9946 4069

Passcode: RTMPrayer

Please note that there will be **no Evening Prayer** at St John the Divine this week, Monday 22 November – Friday 26 November inclusive.

Advent course 'The Family of Jesus'

There will be a team Advent Course this year, on Zoom, just as we did last year. There will be four sessions, each with a reflection and followed by Compline. Here are the dates and the log in details:

Dec 1, 2021 07:30 PM on Jesus' uncle, Zechariah

Dec 8, 2021 07:30 PM on Jesus' aunt, Elizabeth

Dec 15, 2021 07:30 PM on Jesus' earthly father, Joseph

Dec 22, 2021 07:30 PM on Jesus' mother, Mary

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86913030418?pwd=aWlYK3NpOTFRQWJPOlgbzh3T09NQT09>

Meeting ID: 869 1303 0418

Passcode: RTMAdvent

Away Giving for Financial Year 2021 – at the beginning of each year, we set aside a proportion of the previous year's income to donate to Charities and Organisations. We place particular focus on Church-based Charities and give careful consideration as to how much is donated abroad, as opposed to locally. We are also keen to support Charities that members of our congregations are either involved with, or have benefitted from. If you would like to nominate a charity/organisation for consideration for our charitable giving, contact Mary Ricketts (mary.ricketts@btinternet.com) **by Sunday 28 November please.**

Please note that the **Bookings Administrator** is now on annual leave until Wednesday 1 December.

Church, Community and other news:

GlassDoor

Just over a month ago we were told that there would be a delay to opening the GlassDoor night shelters for this coming winter. As the temperature drops this week it brings home how important support is for those who struggle to keep warm and healthy. There is no change as yet to the GlassDoor situation, but the good news is that our local team in Richmond has started a take-away soup and sandwich offering two days a week. It's not a warm place to sleep, but it is warm food and human connection. The service runs from St John the Divine Church in Richmond and takes place on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5-6pm.

If you are interested in being part of our baking and soup rota please contact Sarah Percival:

sarahpercival52@gmail.com and for volunteering and donations please contact Isabelle Swann:

swannisabelle@hotmail.co.uk Many thanks.

Recital at St Mary Magdalene 4 December, 12.30pm

On 4 December we will welcome the organist David Thomas, from Llandaff Cathedral. David was the organ teacher of Alex Knight, Director of Music at St Mary Magdalene. His programme will include music by Widor, Bach and Martorell.

Fran Stafford, one of the Choral Scholars at St Mary Magdalene, will be **performing a recital** entitled *Fantasia: Songs and Arias* this Saturday, 27 November at 7.30pm at Marlow United Reformed Church, Oxford Road, Marlow SL7 2NL. The recital will include: Frauenliebe und Leben by Robert Schumann and Tosti's cycle Consolazione.

Next **Thursday, 2 December**, from 3.30-6.00pm there will be a Christmas Fair at the Vineyard Church in aid of the Foodbank and the Vineyard Project. There'll be all sorts of stalls, dancing, a fashion show and biscuit icing for children. Jill Steed will be looking after the food stall and will be selling marmalade, jam and chutney. Might you be willing to bake something they can sell on the stall and drop it off on the day – scones, cakes, biscuits etc? If you can't bake (or even if you can!) please come along and buy something - it's for two excellent causes. If you've any questions regarding baking please email Jill on jillsteed24@gmail.com

From Parish Rooms to RTM Centre

You are invited to find out what has been happening to the Team property on Church Walk and what may happen in the future. On Sunday 12 December more information will be presented to congregations of all three churches after their morning services and in the afternoon, between 1.00-4.00pm, in the upstairs Parish Room.

Christmas Carol Concert 11 December 2021 at St Mary Magdalene

We look forward to once again welcoming the Band of the Honourable Artillery Company for a fabulous concert of seasonal music and carols. Do join us and bring family friends, neighbours. Time to be confirmed next week, but likely to be around 2.30pm.

The [Children's Book Project](#) – has your child / children out-grown some of their books? The Children's Book Project would very much like to clean, sort and distribute those books via teachers and schools to children in the UK who are 'book poor' and do not have any (or many) books at home. When books are available at home children spend more time reading thereby helping with their literacy. To donate books please send an [email to the Parish Office](#) and, if possible, drop them off at St Mary Magdalene which is now a drop-off point.

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.

With best wishes,
Tina

Tina Roberts
Parish Administrator
Working remotely on Mondays and Tuesdays, 9.00am – 5.00pm
Mobile: 07521 299109
Working in the Office on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9.00am – 5.00pm
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Richmond Team Ministry
St Mary Magdalene • St Matthias • St John the Divine
www.richmondteamministry.org

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