

AUG / SEP 2017

SPIRE

HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE YOUR FREE COPY

INSIDE IRAN

Can they really be that friendly?

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

HERE TO HELP

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 or cycle ride. He is happy to be contacted at any time other than on Fridays (his day off).

Telephone: 020 8241 5904

Email: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

CURATE

The Revd Jacky Cammidge

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales. She is a self-supporting minister, ordained in July 2015. During term time she runs the Hampton Hill Nursery School owned by her family and housed in our church hall.

Telephone: 074 9677 0505

Email: curate@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

PARISH OFFICE

Nick Bagge

The administrator deals with all enquiries, including baptisms, weddings and funerals, and hall bookings. The office is open weekdays.

Mon, Wed and Fri: 9.30am-12.30pm

Tue and Thu: 12.30pm-3.30pm

Telephone: 020 8941 6003

Email: office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

Address: 46 St James's Road, Hampton Hill TW12 1DQ

CHURCHWARDEN

Gwynneth Lloyd

Gwynneth is a retired nurse who loves travelling. She has a son, who lives in Edinburgh.

Telephone: 020 8943 0709

Email: glloyd274@btinternet.com

TREASURER

Nick Harris

Nick is the chief technology officer of a finance company, based in the heart of the City of London. He is married to Minnie, with a son, William.

Telephone: 020 8943 2025

Email: nicholasjharris@gmail.com

ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER

Mark Blackwell

Mark is an accomplished parish organist with 40 years of experience of playing in churches and cathedrals. He also puts on concerts and recitals. During the week he runs his own accountancy company.

Telephone: 077 6814 6879

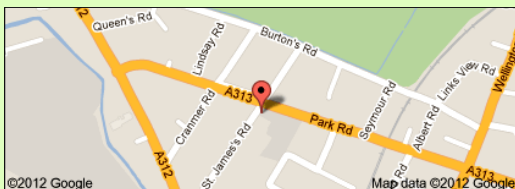
Email: organist@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

WE NEED YOU!

St James's relies on volunteers to run a busy church. If you have any spare time do join us!

FINDING US

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



WHO TO CONTACT

Ark Playgroup Debbie Nunn 020 8979 3078

Bell Ringers Susan Horner 020 8979 9380

Book of Remembrance Recorder Janet Nunn 020 8979 6325

Brownies and Guides 0800 1 69 59 01

Charities and Links Team

Ann Peterken 020 8891 5862

Children's Champion

Linda Webb 020 8783 1515

Church Cleaning Team

Debbie Nunn 020 8979 3078

Flower Arranging Team

Coryn Robinson 020 8979 6786

Churches Together Around Hampton

Ann Peterken 020 8891 5862

Churchyard Records

Janet Nunn 020 8979 6325

CMS Mission Partner Link

Liz Wilmot 020 8977 9434

Deanery Synod Representatives

Clive Beaumont 020 8943 4336

Electoral Roll Parish Office 020 8941 6003

Eco-Church

Derek Winterburn 020 8241 5904

Hall Bookings Parish Office 020 8941 6003

Mozambique / Angola Link

Laurence Sewell 020 8977 2844

Music and Worship Team

Martin Hinckley 020 8979 0528

PCC Secretary Nick Bagge 020 8941 6003

Pew Sheet Parish Office 020 8941 6003

Planned Giving / Finance Team

Carol Bailey 020 8783 0633

Properties Team

Bryan Basdell 020 8979 2040

Safeguarding Officer

Jane Newman 020 8979 6154

Scout Group Richard Moody 020 8286 6918

Servers Lesley Mortimer 020 8941 2345

Shell Seekers (Sunday School)

Stuart Richardson 020 8890 4854

Social Team Parish Office 020 8941 6003

St James's Hospitality / Parish Breakfast

Clare Ryan and Kirstie Craig 079 6413 1135

St James's Players

Martin Hinckley 020 8979 0528

Tools with a Mission

Janet Nunn 020 8979 6325

Theatre Club Peter Hale 020 979 9287

Visitors' Team Liz Wilmot 020 8977 9434

Welcome Team Janet Taylor 020 8979 0046

THIS ISSUE

JANET NUNN

This edition always falls in the summer holidays so we try to feature appropriate articles. The cover and centrespread tell the story of Gwynneth Lloyd's visit to Iran last year. Many said they were surprised she chose Iran, but as you will read she had a fascinating time.

On the back page, Prill Hinckley has written about her favourite foreign cathedrals visited on holiday or, in some cases, with choirs who have had the privilege of singing there, which must be very special.

I recently received an email from Kirstie Hird about her travels on their boat, *L'escale*. It doesn't seem possible it is a year since Kirstie and her husband Neil left Hampton Hill not for pastures new, but for 'waters new'. They have spent the time sailing around the coast of Britain while their son Will settled into university life. They have bicycles on board and also walk a lot. You can read about their travels on Page 4 and follow Kirstie's blog — when she can get a signal!

Whether you are going away or having a 'staycation', as it is called, we hope you have a restful and happy summer holiday.



If you have been anywhere special perhaps it would make an article for the centrespread next year? We are always looking for inspiration!

Best wishes

Janet

Editor

Cover picture: Tehran children sending their love to the world

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



'...Alan, I've been meaning to have a word with you about your carbon footprint!'

STORIES, FEATURES

If you have ideas, or would like to write for the magazine, contact the Editor, Janet Nunn. Telephone: 020 8979 6325

Email: janunnhh@btinternet.com

AROUND THE SPIRE

If you have any news, contact Susan Horner: Email: smhorner5@yahoo.co.uk

WHAT'S ON

If you have an event contact Nick Bagge. Email: Nickbagge1@aol.com

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

The **SPiRE** is available free from church and local shops. It is also delivered across the parish and posted further afield. Further information from Susan Horner: Telephone: 020 8979 9380 Email: smhorner5@yahoo.co.uk

NEXT ISSUE / COPY DATE

The October issue is published on Fri 29 Sep. The copy deadline is **Tue 5 September**.

CREDITS

PRODUCTION

Design Nick Bagge

Proofreaders Susan Horner and Dick Wilde

PUBLISHING

Printer Justin Hollingsworth 020 8686 4481

The **SPiRE** magazine is printed on paper that is sourced from well-managed forests, as laid down by the Forest Stewardship Council.

© St James's Church 2017. Unauthorised reproduction in whole or part is prohibited without written permission from the editor. Manuscripts, photographs and artwork are accepted on the basis that The Spire does not accept liability for loss or damage to them. We cannot print anything subject to copyright. Views expressed in The Spire are not necessarily those of the PCC of St James.

Please recycle this magazine after use



A tale of two churches



At our St James's Day service, Bishop Graham Tomlin spoke powerfully about how he and the churches in the area around Grenfell Tower responded to the terrible fire. As part of a mosaic of community groups they were 'first responders' (St Clement's opened its doors at 3am on 14 June) and still continue to care for those who suffered terrible loss.

When I climbed our spire I was surprised to be told that one could see Grenfell Tower. It was true; through the heat haze, to the right of Regal House in Twickenham the blackened monolith stood out. We are accustomed to thinking that Kensington is well away from here - we talk about 'going to London' - but tragedy brings us close.

Our connections to Kensington

But there is a strange similarity between St James's and St Clement's, Notting Dale. The latter was built and paid for by the Revd Arthur Dalgarno Robinson, a philanthropist vicar with deep pockets and a compassion for the poor. The area at the time was occupied by families who survived by working in a pottery or farming pigs - there were 1,000 people and 3,000 pigs. There was no sewerage system and cholera was rampant. It is said that the life expectancy was less than half of the average for the rest of London. Dalgarno Robinson built a church in 1862 and a school in 1866.

In the same decade 'New' Hampton was growing on the edge of Hounslow Heath. You may be familiar with this early description: it was a 'wilderness with a number of habitations of the most wretched kind, inhabited by a still more wretched class of people'.

'Tragedy brings us close, but there is also a strange similarity between St Clements and St James's'



Bishop Graham greets Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn in Kensington

St James's opens a school

Another enterprising clergyman, with a private income, was appointed - the Revd Fitzroy John Fitz Wygram. St James's Church was opened just a year after St Clement's. In 1867 the church school was founded; only 13 children out of a population of 1100 were previously in education. Such is the heritage of our churches.

As I told the children visiting the church in July, the building is first for worship. There are no two ways about it - it has decoration, furniture and equipment for praise and prayer.

Working for the kingdom

But although Dalgarno Robinson and Fitz Wygram built first places of worship, that was just the beginning of a wider campaign to improve the lives of the parishioners.

Worship should lead to witness to Christ and working for the kingdom (to adapt a line of Bishop Graham's).

Worship draws people together into a body, and builds them up in the Faith so that they are equipped to make a difference in God's world.

As we heard, the churches in Kensington prepared for their time of testing - over many years of parish ministry they had won the reputation for being islands of generous kindness, able to pass on hope in the darkest moments of life.

Worship of God is an end in itself. But a religion that is only about 'me and my God' is not true to the Bible or the Victorian church founders.

This is a lesson we need to learn anew in every generation.

WHAT'S ON IN CHURCH

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

Sundays

Holy Communion (said)
0800-0830

Parish Communion
0930-1030

together at eleven
1100-1145

From 10 Sep
followed by crafts and refreshments

Mon-Fri

(but not Tuesdays)
Morning Prayer
0915-0940

Tuesdays

Holy Communion
0930-1015

15, 22, 29 Aug; 5, 19, 26 Sep
(except 1 Aug, Morning Prayer 0915)

Holy Communion and Coffee
1000-1100
8 Aug, 12 Sep
(every second Tuesday of the month)

pop-up cinema

1800

Saturday 5 August
Mamma Mia

Saturday 30 September
Passengers

Sci-fi starring Jennifer Lawrence

St James's Ramblers

1000-1300

NEW Saturday 19 Aug

Inaugural walk in Guildford, finishing with pub lunch. Transport available. Contact the office for more information.

Ark Playgroup

1015-1215

Mondays 11, 18, 25 Sep

For toddlers and parents / carers

PCC Meeting

Thursday 14 Sep

1930-2130

For members (in the hall)

Baptismal Tea

Sunday 17 Sep

1500-1700

Annual Tea for Baptism Families (in hall)

Rock Choir

1030-1200

Wednesdays 20, 27 Sep
rockchoir.com

Harvest Festival

Sunday 1 October

1100-1200

Followed by lunch in the hall

1630-1730

Harvest Evensong

NEWS IN BRIEF

Time stands still for church clock repairs

THE CHURCH'S clock is undergoing a major restoration during August and September, falling silent while the dials are taken away for essential maintenance.



The clock, with four dials, is a simple pendulum wall clock and was made in 1893 by J Smith & Sons of Derby, the builders of the great clock of St Paul's Cathedral in London. The company still maintains it for us and won the contract for the restoration.

Scaffolding will be erected around the tower to enable engineers to lower the four clock dials to the ground before taking them to their Derby workshop. There, the dial fixings, which secure them to the tower, will be replaced. At the same time the dials will be restored to their original colours of black and white. The company will also overhaul the clock drive transmission and internal dial motion works and bevels.

Olive trees for retiring wardens



Presentations were made to our former churchwardens, Nick Bagge and Nick Harris, on St. James's Day. Nick Bagge served as warden for six years. Nick Harris was appointed in 2015, but has stepped down due to work commitments. Both will continue to play an active role in church life, Nick Bagge as parish administrator and Nick Harris as treasurer. They were presented with olive trees and vouchers in thanks for their work, and their wives Genevieve Bagge and Minnie Harris received flowers in recognition of their support to their husbands during their time in office. They are shown with Derek and Bishop Graham.

Plans to share clergy announced

Methodists and the Church of England are to discuss allowing ministers and priests to serve in each other's churches. Under the plans, a new Methodist 'president-bishop' would join Anglican bishops to ordain Methodist ministers to serve in the Church of England. Ministers and Anglican priests would then be able to serve in either Church.

Eco Church group reborn

A SMALL GROUP has met to re-launch an environmental initiative at St James's Church. Over the past few years a group led by Catherine Gash



has kept us all thinking about how we can care for God's world and live ethically, with regular *Spire* articles and many specific ideas.

There is now an award that churches can work towards, called Eco-Church. The online resources encourage us to think about five different areas of church life where 'green living' can be improved, including our worship, management of buildings and land, our lifestyles and contact with local and wider communities.

The award has three levels: bronze, silver and gold. Our initial aim is to reach bronze level and we are nearly there in several areas. We have already:

- Met with the contractors who maintain the churchyard and will meet with Richmond council's ecology officer to help us enrich the area for wildlife;
- Considered how the replanting of the area laid bare by the new toilets can fit in with eco-church objectives. This will have to wait for the tower work to finish;
- Planned articles in the *Spire* to raise awareness of how everyone can help;
- Held a car-free *Care for Creation* Sunday.

For more information about Eco-Church go to: ecochurch.arocha.org.uk.

4 If you would like to join the team please contact Derek.

Ticket to the



The Rock tombs of Darius I and II and Xerxes



GWYNNETH LLOYD

Persia has always fascinated me. It was part of our history syllabus at school and it always amazed me that people so long ago could achieve all that they did. Most of the rulers were brave but brutal and fitted in with a teenager's dreams!

I never imagined having the opportunity to visit the country, now called Iran. It seemed a long way away as I grew up in South Africa. Since living in the UK, I have met several doctors from Iran and I wanted to meet more of these charming people. Last year, with 12 others, all interested in the country's history, my dream came true.

Iran is large, with the Silk Road at its Northern border and the Persian Gulf its South Western edge. Civilisations here have come and gone with battles being fought by leaders like Cyrus, Darius the Great and Xerxes.

The wide knowledge of maths is apparent in the incredible domes of the mosques and the precision of all the old buildings. The squares and mosques enhance the beauty of the country and help you appreciate those great builders of many years ago.

The first thing which strikes you about Iran is the parks. Every city has several, all well maintained and used by everybody. Office workers take lunches outside to enjoy the fountains and families escape there from their apartments at weekends for picnics. We made full use of the parks for lunches most

The historic nuclear deal with the West and the loosening of visa rules has opened Iran — the jewel in Islam's crown — to tourism. **Gwynneth Lloyd** ventured to what could be the friendliest country on earth.

days. The picnics consisted of flat bread, cooked everywhere in Iran and consumed in huge quantities, salads and cheese, fruit, yoghurt and something to drink. No alcohol is consumed in Iran.

The dress code for women is headscarves, long sleeved tops and full length skirts or trousers, even for tourists.

Beautiful mosques are everywhere

The mosques in Iran are numerous. They are so beautiful that you run out of words to describe them. No two are the same, although they all follow the same principles. There is always a large prayer hall with a Mihrab (a niche in the wall indicating the direction of Mecca) from where the Koran is read during Friday prayers. They are always cool, no matter how hot it is outside. We had an open discussion with an Imam in Isfahan, but we learnt only that many of today's youth are not interested in attending Friday prayers.



The ornate dome of one of the many mosques we visited

jewel of Islam

Schoolchildren about to visit a mosque

We visited mosques and squares in every city and often encountered groups of schoolchildren doing the same thing. The Nasqh Jahan square in Isfahan is unforgettable. It is the second largest square in the world and contains two beautiful mosques.



One of these is known as the ladies' mosque, which is opposite the palace from where this photo was taken. This is the Ali Qapu 'palace', built in the 16th century, and actually a gateway to the palace beyond which is set in beautiful gardens.

It has a music room on the sixth floor with a plasterwork ceiling which looks like bronze. It is said to have very good acoustics. The Shah would sit on the balcony a floor below to watch polo matches in the square and military parades.

Where bodies were left out for the vultures

We visited the Zoroastrian Fire temple in Yazd where the 'Flame of life' is kept. It has been burning for at least 1500 years. This is a very old religion and still practised here.

We also visited the Zoroastrian Towers of Silence on a hill outside the city where the bodies of those who had died were left out for the vultures to eat. Once the bones were clean these were thrown into a deep hole at the top of the hill. This is still a sacred place although bodies now have to be cremated.

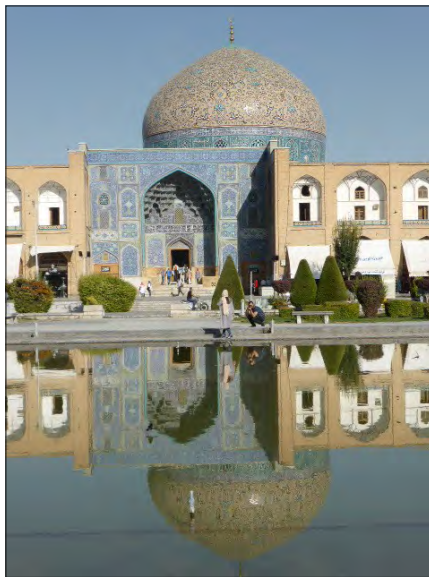
Persepolis, built by Darius the Great, was built as a huge palace complex used by the king to receive royalty and visiting dignitaries. Alexander the Great looted it when he defeated the Persian army and used a thousand pack animals to remove his booty. What remains still gives you an idea of its grandeur.

Buried by the sand over the centuries, it has been excavated since the mid-19th century. There are even graffiti on the columns, including some by Stanley of Livingstone fame! There are some beautiful carved frescoes, many staircases and a sense of something grand which has been lost.

From apricots and figs to saffron

We spent one night on a smallholding where the owner has adapted outbuildings as accommodation. This charming man owns five hectares of land. We walked round his orchards and saw how water from streams deep underground is shared by farmers. It is diverted by closing the main furrow and allowing the water into the farmer's own furrows for a certain length of time. Some of us bought his saffron and his delicious dried apricots.

We were treated to traditional music using a dulcimer. This is a stringed instrument held on the



The ladies' mosque in Nasqh Jahan square

musician's lap. The strings are 'hit' with hammers.

Our host made bread in an outside oven for breakfast. We watched him kneading and shaping little balls of dough into flat rounds before throwing them against the hot walls of the oven.

Most of the places we visited were famous. In Tehran we saw the crown jewels, now owned by the state and stored in the vaults of the National Bank. We had never seen such large emeralds and the strings of pearls, all from the Persian Gulf, were so plentiful they took your breath away.

We visited Abyaneh, a World Heritage Site, which is 2500 years old. The villagers speak their own dialect and wear traditional dress. The mosque dates from 1074AD and is still in use. The buildings are constructed of mud bricks, clay and wood.

Shiraz — but not as we know it

Shiraz is the home of the Shiraz grape but here it is only grown to eat, not to make wine. The grapes are delicious and we bought large bunches from roadside sellers. We had time to visit a group of nomads in the semi-desert who live in tents the whole year round tending their goats as well as weaving the wonderful Persian carpets we admire. Some of us bought them.

I have given you a brief idea of a wonderful country. The people of Iran are proud of their country but friendly, keen to hear about Britain, and anxious to practise their English. Everyone smiles and is welcoming. One gets the feeling they try to live peacefully avoiding officialdom.

Iranians have just re-elected their moderate president. Many people questioned my decision to visit Iran but every country in the world has problems. The country's conciliatory approach to the West and the nuclear treaty will, hopefully, continue.



Walking up the hill of *The Towers of Silence*, which holds a sombre history



All at sea for Kirstie

IT IS A YEAR since Kirstie and Neil Hird retired and set off on their boat *L'escale* to see the world. Kirstie has sent an update of their travels so far.

They have covered 2,000 miles from Aldeburgh in Suffolk to South West Scotland, sailed the entire length of the English Channel from Dover to Land's End via the Channel Islands and the Scilly Isles and from there to Ireland and the Isle of Man.

Kirstie said they were spending the summer exploring the west coast of Scotland. Earlier, one of the highlights was spending two nights at sea on the way to the Scilly Isles with the company of a pod of dolphins for over an hour.

Both love not having to spend the day at work in an office. They are enjoying the freedom to go where they want, visiting new places and old favourites. Kirstie said they know how precious life is and feel privileged to be spending theirs doing something they love every day.

They plan to continue their tour of Scotland until the autumn and hope to spend the winter in Amsterdam. You can read their blog at: lescale.me.



Ray Leathard dies at 89



LAST MONTH we reported the death of Ramani Leathard's mother, Thilaka Hitchcock. We are sorry to record that, two days after Thilaka's funeral, Brian Leathard's father, Raymond, died in hospital in Scotland at the age of 89, after a fall.

Ray was born in County Durham and worked across the UK and the world as a civil engineer. On retirement he moved to Berwick upon Tweed. When his mobility became limited, he moved to Auchlochan Garden Village, near Glasgow.

Ray was a frequent visitor with his wife Ella (who died in 2002) during Brian's incumbency. He regarded it as the ideal parish for him to stroll around, chatting to all and sundry, while acting as 'builder's mate' on projects. We send our sympathy to Brian, Ramani and the whole family.

Welcome Maxwell

CONGRATULATIONS to Kristian and Hayley Fitchett, who were married at St James's last September, on the birth of their first child, Maxwell Thomas, on 1 July, a fourth grandchild for Paul and Carol Fitchett.

The new arrival is pictured with his parents and paternal grandparents.



What makes a church?

CHILDREN are the future of our church — and we are making strides to attract more young families to worship here — so it was good to hear that Derek recently welcomed three schools, Hampton Hill Juniors, Hampton School and Jack and Jill, to St James's for a visit.

Although most of the children had been to church before for a Carol Service, the visit gave them an opportunity to look around them. The teachers wanted them to be able to label a 'font', a 'pulpit' etc., but Derek was keen for the visit to be more than a visit to an empty building. So he explained who St James was, and how the church and two schools were founded to reach the poor people settling here 160 years ago. They also discussed why there was a table in the centre of the church and why Christians remember Jesus by 'eating a meal'. Two groups were fascinated by the hymn number boards while another saw the Good Samaritan window. Our building is a fascinating resource and Derek was pleased to deepen their understanding. Entering it shouldn't be a trip into the unknown!

Sun shone on our open day



Bishop Graham surrounded by the congregation of this year's celebrations

Our luck with the weather continued for this year's patronal festival on 9 July, attended this year by the Bishop of Kensington, the Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin.

In his sermon, Bishop Graham reflected on his involvement in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster, in which some 80 people perished.

Bishop Graham said there were no words to console people who had lost loved ones, but through providing food, clothes, and in some cases, temporary shelter, the local churches in Kensington showed their support; that support would need to continue in the weeks and months ahead.

He said that listening to people who had lost everything apart from the clothes they were wearing, it was a reminder that it was

life, not possessions, that mattered.

As a church our job, he said, was to offer hope for the future. Just as Jesus taught us that death was not the end, he gave the families and friends mourning loved ones the message of eternal life.

Following the service the congregation spilled out into the vicarage garden where drinks were served. They were then challenged to compete in a quiz before a barbecue lunch was served.

The day continued with the chance to climb the tower and ring the bells and take part in a churchyard scavenger hunt. There was face painting for children and a giant inflatable slide to help them run off energy in the vicarage garden while their parents chatted with friends.



Our Sunday School, the Shell Seekers, starts in church from 0930 every Sunday during school terms and parades into the hall, except 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.



Mysteries of Neolithic sites



The Stones of Stenness, similar to Stonehenge, but on a smaller scale



LAURENCE SEWELL

This time we return to our own shores and the Orkney Islands, visiting the famous Neolithic sites known as the Stones of Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar. These are stone megaliths found five miles northeast of Stromness on the mainland of the Orkney Islands in Scotland. Both are classed as 'henge' monuments; that is, a roughly circular or oval-shaped stone circle and flat area enclosed and delimited by a boundary earthwork - usually a ditch with an external bank.

As part of this Orkney Neolithic World Heritage site (designated in 1999) these 'hengess' are an ancient sacred place comprising the Standing Stones of Stenness, Maeshowe, Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar and other nearby archaeological sites.

Astronomical uses

The places are pre-historical complexes of ceremonial significance and throughout the ages have been associated with traditions and ritual practices. Certainly, the Norse invaders that came to the Orkneys in the ninth century with their complicated theologies brought a worship system to these sites.

Other evidence points to these 'hengess' as being built for the astronomical observation of the equinox and solstice. Whatever their historical significance, they are atmospheric and magical places to visit.

The Stenness megaliths on the south-eastern shore of the Loch of Stenness were originally laid out in an ellipse and stand at a maximum height of six metres (almost 19 feet). Only four remain from what were originally elements of a stone circle of up to 12 stones, together with the surviving watch

stone outside the circle. The ditched enclosure has a diameter of approximately 44 metres (144 feet), with a single entrance causeway on the north side, facing the Neolithic Barnhouse settlement on the shore of the Loch of Harray.

Little remains of the ditch today, although traces remain visible around the stone circle. Radiocarbon dating from excavations show that the site dates from at least 3100 BC, making this standing stones complex one of the earliest stone circles in Britain.

More stones at Brodgar

These stones are considerably larger than those found in the nearby Ring of Brodgar about a mile to the north-west, but the Brodgar site is larger and more stones remain visible. Here, the stone ring was built in a true circle, almost 104 metres (340 feet) wide. Although it is thought to have originally contained 60 megaliths, today only 27 stones remain. The Brodgar stones vary in height from 2.1 metres (7 feet) to a maximum of 4.7 metres (just over 15 feet).

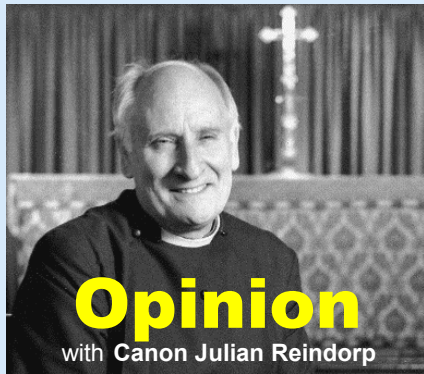
It is the third largest stone circle in the British Isles, covering an area of 8,435 square metres exceeded only by the outer ring of stones at Avebury and the Greater Ring at Stanton Drew in England.

Fascinatingly, the Brodgar ring is exactly the same size as Avebury's two inner rings leading to all sorts of conjecture about communication between the builders of these megaliths. It is enclosed by a massive rock-cut ditch with two entrance causeways, one to the north-west and the other to the south-east.

Earlier this year the BBC presented a series on the secrets of the Orkneys, with Neil Oliver exploring its tombs and monuments which readers may have seen and which provided more information than can be presented here.



The Ring of Brodgar



Opinion

with Canon Julian Reindorp

COURAGEOUS IMAM

How many clergy would have had the courage and presence of mind of the imam of the Finsbury Park Mosque who on 19 June saved the driver of the van who had driven into his congregation? He led worshippers in saving the driver's life till the police arrived.

ISLAMISM

Violent tragedies in Manchester and London raised once more questions around tackling Islamism and extremism. Muhammad Al-Hussani, a senior Islamic scholar, abhors the violence committed in the name of his religion, but he's also clear that a violent tradition does exist within Islam. In criticising the 'liberal media' there's often refusal to engage the theology of Islamic extremists. 'The reality is that for the last 1,400 years, Islam has spilt a lot of blood. But there's an unwillingness to accept theology has any role to play in things we've seen in Manchester and London.' He says Jews and Christians have acknowledged that the violent passages in the Torah and the Bible are 'of their time and culture and do not apply now. But that process has not yet fully happened inside Islam. As one headline put it: 'We must reclaim Islam from extremists, says (Muslim) Met Commander.'

WOMAN IMAM

Interestingly a new mosque was opened recently in Berlin (in the back of a Berlin church) with a woman imam. Men and women sit together, and she has banned the burka. In her first sermon she said, 'We are fighting Islamism with Islam, and extremism with religion.' As one commentator said, 'She is a Muslim leader who openly repudiates both violent extremism and traditional Islam's repressive attitude to women.'

RELIGIONS TAKE BLAME

Archbishop Justin said religious leaders must face up to the justification that their faith provides for atrocities committed in their name. Failing to acknowledge the role played by Islam in recent attacks was akin to failing to accept Christianity's role in the Srebrenica massacres of 8000 Muslims in 1995. He also commented: 'From an outside perspective, one of the issues about dealing with Islam is that there is not much of a structure. There isn't a pope or a bishop who you can say are the leaders.'

SAUDI ARABIA

Another question raised by recent events is should we allow Saudi Arabia to pour money into Britain to build mosques that are founded on very conservative Wahhabi theology (a 19th century form of Islam) which underpins conservative Saudi society?

COUNCIL HOUSING

The Grenfell Tower fire raises many questions about the provision of social housing. The story is told that during the coalition government, deputy prime minister Nick Clegg raised the question of building council homes. David Cameron said this would only produce Labour voters!

Lynsey Hanley, author of *Estates: An Intimate History*, wrote recently in the Guardian, 'The right to buy killed off any residue of the idea that council housing was a public asset available to anyone with the need or desire to live in it. Social housing built in the past 20 years has frequently been proved to be of poor quality and "affordable" only in name. We need to make the housing minister a secretary of state with full cabinet presence; require them to treat residents of council estates as full citizens; legislate for empty properties to be used, under threat of temporary acquisition; only permit the right to buy in areas where social housing can be built at the same rate at which it's sold off; and restore the principle of lifetime tenancies on which stable lives can be based.'

With home ownership falling from 75% to 66% of the UK's population, and rents rising rapidly, affordable social housing is vital.

CHARITY BOX

THE UPPER ROOM

Providing food and life-changing help



ANN PETERKEN

Many readers will know that St James's is a long-term supporter of the Upper Room, typically through the Harvest Festival collection. From its base at St Saviour's Church in west Hammersmith, this front-line charity gives a helping hand to homeless people, destitute migrants and ex-offenders, enabling them to improve their lives and conditions. The Bishop of Kensington, Graham Tomlin, is a patron of the Upper Room and commends the fact that this small community-based charity gives a human face to those in need of its compassionate outreach.

The three main strands to the charity's work:

■ **UR4Meals Project** provides free evening meals five days a week to between 80 and 120 people, in a warm and hospitable environment. Annually this comes to around 26,000 meals and 6,000 takeaways.

Andrew, the head chef, is very creative and talks about his work in a video at www.theupperroom.org.uk/ur4meals. Pictured above with a volunteer, the meal service depends on many such helpers from the local community.

■ **UR4Jobs Project** helps to break the vicious circle of homelessness and unemployment, by providing a multilingual and holistic mixture of support, entry level skills training and access to jobs.



■ **UR4Driving Project** helps improve the employability of ex-offenders and reduces their risk of re-offending. Candidates who exhibit the utmost commitment and pass their Theory Test are given free driving instruction and take the practical test to obtain a full driving licence.



Guest speaker on 17 September at 0930 service

Simon Tuke (Chair of Trustees since 2005) will be speaking at our 0930 service and will have first-hand knowledge of all these projects. Please be in church to welcome him.

Harvest Festival on 1 October at 1100

As usual, St James's will be collecting certain long-life food items and toiletries at Harvest. Remember to pick up a leaflet of what is required or phone the parish office. It really helps if people donate what is most needed.

There will also be a money collection at this service to help the Upper Room with their many expenses. Please give generously and use gift aid if you can. If you're not in church that day, please hand in your donation to the parish office by mid-October.



LOCAL EVENTS

HARVEST AT ST JAMES'S CHURCH

Sunday 1 October at 1100

We will be celebrating Harvest Festival as usual on the first Sunday in October with an all-age 1100 service, followed by a bring and share lunch in the hall. Do put the date in your diary and there will be more information in church and on the weekly pew sheet nearer the time. We will also be collecting food for the Upper Room in Hammersmith, along with local schools where Derek will be leading assemblies.

A Friday wedding toast

We send our congratulations to Nadine Rajan and Christian Bassani, who were married at St James's on Friday 14 July. Nadine was baptised there and it remains the family's church. They shared their special day with friends and family, bringing together their mixed heritage - English, Sri Lankan, Irish and Italian.



REGISTERS

JUNE

BAPTISMS

- 11 Toby William Allen, Hampton
- 18 Scarlett Jasmine Peaches McCorry, Hampton Hill
- 18 Albert Brian Fox, Hampton

WEDDING

- 17 Gino Deufemia and Laura Scarborough, Hampton Hill

FUNERALS

- 1 Rodney Hemingfield Taylor, 74, Hampton Hill
- 6 Kathleen Allen, 99, Feltham
- 12 Julia Dorothy Ivy Fisher, 79, Twyford, Oxfordshire
- 17 Hillary Margaret Buckley Austin, 86, Kingston upon Thames
- 30 Daphne Makepeace, 87, Chelsea

INTERMENT OF ASHES

- 26 Patricia Elizabeth Hurst, 86, Teddington



Inspired by the magnificence



PRILL HINKLEY

Christian places of worship reflect the spiritual, architectural and artistic approaches of the times and places in which they were made, and were intended to communicate these to those familiar with them. Modern visitors' reactions to them are shaped by their own backgrounds and interests. I have chosen some because the spirituality they embody made an impact on me; others because they are artistically and architecturally magnificent; a few combine both aspects.

La Sagrada Familia, Barcelona, Spain



This building completely took my breath away. Even with many tourists inside and with building work still going on, the vast space gives the feeling of peace and deep spirituality, brilliantly intertwining nature with the sacred. Antoni Gaudi's visionary masterpiece makes amazing use of natural light entering via the coloured stained glass windows. Each facade highlights a different Christian theme, including carvings telling the stories of the Nativity and the Passion.

St Mark's, Venice, Italy



St Marks Basilica is one of the finest examples of Byzantine architecture in the world. The view across the interior with the walls and ceilings covered with mosaics is outstanding. There are over 8,000 metres of mosaics painted mostly in gold, with a totally astonishing result. The multiple choir lofts gave rise to a style of musical composition in the 16th century that made use of spectacular echo-like effects.

Melk Abbey, Austria



The Baroque church at Melk Abbey dazzles with sunlight and gold. Its highly decorated interior boasts 18th century ceiling paintings, ornate choir stalls, an artistically-carved pulpit and high

altar with figures of the patron saints of the church, St Peter and St Paul. The library is packed with precious medieval manuscripts. Melk is the spiritual centre for its black-robed Benedictine monks whose community is over 900 years old.

The Duomo, Sienna, Italy

Lying above the Piazza del Campo, the Duomo is a great Gothic building. Both the exterior and interior are decorated in white and greenish-black marble in alternating stripes, black and white being the symbolic colours of Siena. Inside it is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cathedrals in the world. Magnificent works of art and design by Pisano, Donatello, Michelangelo and Pinturicchio fill the walls of the church. The floor mosaics and the illuminated manuscripts and music are all stunning.



St Peter's & Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Italy

The basilica stands on the site where Saint Peter is said to have been crucified and buried. His tomb is under the main altar and there are many other popes buried here.

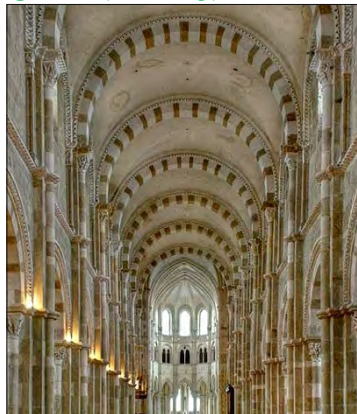


The basilica was founded by Constantine in 324, but was rebuilt in the 16th and 17th century by Renaissance and Baroque masters including Bramante, Michelangelo and Bernini.

The Sistine Chapel has become one of the greatest art treasures of all time. Michelangelo's famous ceiling depicts scenes from Genesis in dramatic and moving detail, while *The Last Judgment* on the end wall is striking and powerful. The side walls are covered with Renaissance frescoes by other artists, depicting biblical scenes and popes.

St Mary Magdalene, Vézelay, France

This Benedictine abbey church dates primarily from the early 12th century and is totally awe-inspiring. Its impact largely comes from its simplicity and lack of gaudy decoration. Its Romanesque and Gothic interior is



breath-takingly full of light with columns in cream and coffee limestone. The basilica contains relics believed to be of Saint Mary and was historically the departure point for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostella. Singing Faure's Requiem here with Hampton Choral Society was an amazing experience with the sound wafting around the soaring vaults.

Cologne Cathedral, Germany

Construction began on this Gothic masterpiece in 1248, but it was not completed until 1880.

The cathedral is dedicated to the saints Peter and Mary and it has the world's largest church



façade. In 1164 the city acquired relics believed to be those of the Magi and these inspired the building of this cathedral. The shrine of the Three Magi is at the end of the enormous nave. Outside, the building is rather menacing; inside it is awesome, with a perfect design and precise craftsmanship.

Esztergom, Hungary

Esztergom is a quiet little town on the Danube and its Basilica, built in the 1850s, is the largest Roman Catholic church in Hungary. Despite its immense size, it has an intimate feel with many beautiful side chapels, conveying both serenity and deep spirituality. The inside is stunning, bright and colourful, decorated with paintings and statues. One of the treasures is its organ, on which Franz Liszt played his own composition at the Basilica's dedication.



Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Berlin, Germany

This iconic building was built between 1892 and 1895, but was partially destroyed during a bombing raid in 1943. The ruined tower was left as a memorial to the futility of war and a new church, representing peace and reconciliation, was built around the ruin.

The striking new hexagonal tower walls were made from over 20,000 panels of stained glass, shimmering in a blue light, being made from the rubble of



the city. In 2006 I was lucky enough to sing there with Concordia Voices the *Little Organ Mass*, by the Austrian composer Joseph Haydn, which was one of my favourites from the two performances the choir gave.