

DECEMBER 2015 - JANUARY 2016



the spire

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

FREE please take a copy



Happy Christmas
to all our readers

AROUND THE SPIRE P5 ■ RECIPE FOR LIFE P6 ■ WHAT'S ON P7

The greatest gift of all



My mother is a very organised person, so it came as no surprise to be informed in early October, 'You'll need to tell me soon what you would like for Christmas! I'm fortunate to have the essentials in life: a house, a job, a lovely wife and an equally lovely daughter, so it often takes me a while to come up with a list that will satisfy her.

The answer, when it came, was perhaps a tad ambitious, even for a resourceful parent. 'What I'd really like is a new vicar!'

It comes as something of a surprise to my non-churchgoing friends that we don't line up a replacement before the present incumbent goes. But, of course, being a priest is not like any other job. Peter did not wake up one day and decide he was bored with Hampton Hill. Nor did promotion motivate his move. He certainly didn't do it for an easier life.

Peter's decision to move came as much of a surprise to him as it did to us. He woke one morning and felt 'called' to a new position in a challenging north London neighbourhood.

Church life goes on

Nick Harris and I have rapidly had to learn all the aspects of church life that Peter did without fanfare. Since Peter left at the beginning of November our diaries have been full with meetings. We are fortunate to have Jacky and Julian presiding at the majority of our services from now on, but even they need some rest. Over the coming months we will be welcoming a number of local clergy through our doors. Some familiar faces, some not.

The process of appointing a vicar

The process of finding a new vicar has also begun in earnest. It is often said that no-one would dream of inventing the process used by the Church of England if it did not exist already. Some find its complexities both anachronistic and frustrating.

The legislation that covers most appointments is the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. Three parties are involved: the patron, two representatives of the PCC and the Bishop of Kensington, the Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin.

So, firstly, who are patrons and why are they there? The answer takes us back to Anglo-Saxon times when landowners

built churches for those who lived on their estates and provided for the clergy to minister to them. Over time, the roles of the bishop and PCC have increased in significance, but patrons retain their rights and responsibilities to nominate a candidate as vacancies arise. Our patron is the Revd Derek Winterburn, Vicar of St Mary's Church, Hampton, who also appointed Peter. This means he knows our parish well.

We all have a voice in the appointment

He won't make that recommendation, however, without a good deal of consultation. It began on 22 November when Derek came to St James's to preside, and continued a week later when Julian asked parishioners to complete a short questionnaire telling the PCC what sort of person they would like as vicar.

The PCC then had the job of writing a Parish Profile, in effect a job description about the vacancy. Derek and Bishop Graham will meet the PCC in January to fully understand our needs before the vacancy is advertised in *The Church Times*.

Then it will be down to Derek to shortlist the candidates he feels best fit our needs. Next come the interviews, involving all three parties. After this, Derek will make his choice. His nomination must be approved by the PCC representatives and Bishop Graham. Only then can the job offer be made, and hopefully accepted. That will most probably be in April.

I won't get my Christmas wish, but then to choose a new vicar we ultimately have to listen for God's voice, not my mother's! The church, after all, is his; and he is not bound by any system that church or Parliament may impose.

A more achievable wish is for us to all pull together during the interregnum. Many of the jobs in our church life — readers, intecessors, servers, sidespeople, flower arrangers, cleaners and visitors to name but a few — are shared by a small band of volunteers. If a few more people volunteered, even for just a few hours a month, it would ease the load on the rest.

Of course, no present can match that which God gave to us 2000 or so years ago — Jesus came to give our lives meaning, as he still does. On behalf of Jacky, Julian, Nick H and myself, I wish you a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Charity Box Spear

This year St James's has given £500 to SPEAR, our local charity that helps homeless people on their journey to independence.

Each year SPEAR manages the street count for homeless people for the Borough of Richmond, which feeds into the government's statistics on homelessness.

The most well known of its services is the hostel near Richmond roundabout, called Penny Wade House after the inspirational lady who did so much to establish a temporary night shelter in 1986. The hostel has rooms for 14 people and its training



SPEAR
homelessness to independence

room enables clients to access services that include cooking, IT, employment support and gardening.

SPEAR's outreach team visits rough sleepers at their sleeping sites, building relationships and assessing needs.

The rough sleeper helpline (020 8404 1481) receives calls from rough sleepers and concerned members of the public.

As expected, the biggest challenge for the team is to find accommodation for the huge numbers of homeless people who approach the service. Volunteer and fundraising help is welcome.

■ Go to spearlondon.org for information and a contact phone number if you feel this is something you could offer.



Thought & Prayer

Taking time to talk to God



A Prayer for Christmas

Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth, may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us.

As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart.

May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. Amen.

For Christmas Morning

The day of joy returns, Father in Heaven, and crowns another year with peace and goodwill. Help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the doors of hate and open the doors of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil, by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children.

And the Christmas evening bring us to our bed with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for the sake of Jesus. Amen

Robert Louis Stevenson

For when I am grumpy!

Lord Jesus, please forgive me for being so grumpy as I trudge through the never-ending tasks set before me this Christmas.

My to-do list seems to keep growing with shopping, church services, and family gatherings — and I'm running short of time!

Restore the joy of Christmas to my heart and help me to relax each day and make time for you — my one true Source of Joy.



Shining a light on

Peter bids farewell with thanks

THE CHURCH WAS packed on Sunday 1 November for Peter's last service as our vicar. We sang one of Peter's favourite hymns and the choir performed a special piece during communion.



At the end of the service, Jacky spoke on behalf of the three curates he has guided through ordination: Debbie Oades, David Bell and herself. Penny Sewell read a poem she had written and Bill Jerman, Executive Headteacher at Hampton Hill Junior School, and Carole Atkinson, a trustee of the Hampton and Hampton Hill Voluntary Care group, paid tribute to Peter's work in the community. The Shell Seekers presented Peter with a card they had made. Lesley Mortimer thanked Richard for his contribution as server. Churchwardens Nick Bagge and Nick Harris presented cards and gifts on behalf of the congregation to thank Peter for his eight-and-a-half years with us.

Afterwards there were refreshments in the hall when individuals expressed their own personal thanks and good wishes to Peter for his new parish in Highgate. Peter thanked everyone for their good wishes and paid tribute to the parish. He said not many parishes were as good as St James's and he felt privileged to have served as its vicar.

Thank you for your harvest gifts

THANK YOU FOR the generous gifts of food and toiletries from our congregation, Hampton Hill Nursery and Hampton Hill Junior School which have been gratefully received by the Upper Room in Hammersmith and the Food Bank in Feltham. The Harvest Festival plate collection of £440 helps the Upper Room to buy essential items that are not so commonly given.

Miles better for Milo hospital

LAST YEAR St James's gave £5000 from Betty Stewart's legacy towards the purchase of a suitable vehicle for Milo hospital in Tanzania. This Toyota Land Cruiser was handed over to the hospital staff on 18 October.



The funding and purchase of the vehicle was managed by the Diocese of St Asaph, which has a partnership link with the Diocese of South West Tanganyika. By opting for a very carefully selected used vehicle, the overall cost was £12,500.

Your Christmas traditions

DO YOU HAVE any Christmas customs and traditions passed down through your family? If so, we'd like to know about them for a feature we are planning for next year's Christmas issue. It may be decorations on your tree which your children made at school and you still hang up each year. It may be a nativity scene which you always use or a special candle. It could also be an event your family always goes to over Christmas.

Please think about it and put a reminder on the calendar for this Christmas to send a few words and a photo to Janet, our editor. We'll use as many as we can. Email janunh@btinternet.com.

Remembering Gary Hide



GARY HIDE passed away on 23 October, two years after he was diagnosed with leukaemia. Throughout this time he always remained so brave and positive. Gary was the son-in-law of Wendy and Brian Baker and had been married to their daughter Karen for 31 years. They were married at St James's Church and all four of their grown-up children, Laura, Matthew, Thomas and Emily, were baptised there too. They have lived throughout their married life along the road from Wendy and Brian.



The Children's Society

Although the images of Victorian poverty may have gone away, official figures show that 3.5 million children live in poverty, a number that is set to rise in the coming years. David Hetling

reports on the work of The Children's Society, who believe this is neither acceptable nor necessary. With our continued support they will continue to work towards a society free of child poverty

The Children's Society stretches back over 130 years to its founding by Edward Rudolf, who, as a young Sunday School teacher, was moved by the poverty in which some of the children in his area of south London were being brought up.

Through his tireless efforts, and with the support of Archbishop Tait, Rudolf encouraged the Church of England to place itself at the forefront of social action for children and The Children's Society was established.

Although the extremes of poverty that Rudolf witnessed are thankfully behind us, there remains as strong a need as ever to address the varied needs of disadvantaged children in our society today.

The problems faced by young people may have evolved with the times, but the need is no less great – the challenge is for us to continue responding now as Rudolf did back then.

Advent Giving

As we enter the Advent season, our thoughts begin to turn to the greatest of gifts given to us by God at Christmas and, with our Christingle service taking place on **Sunday 6 December**, also to the small ways in which we might be able to change the stories of some young people for the better.

Christingle was instituted by the Children's Society over 40 years ago – this vibrant event raises millions of pounds each year through the thousands of churches and schools that organise a Christingle celebration.

Money is collected at Christingle celebrations, both during the event itself and afterwards with the candle collection boxes handed out to attendees, and this has become a hugely important source of income for the charity.

Where Your Money Goes

The money raised at Christingle is used to support abused and exploited children through a national network of programmes and services that focus on:

- Alleviating child poverty and neglect;
- Eradicating child sexual exploitation;
- Supporting children affected by adult substance misuse;
- Overcoming exclusion among disabled children; providing relief to young refugees;
- Supporting young carers and their families; and
- Delivering advocacy services to children in care.

The Children's Society also lobbies central and local government to bring about changes to laws affecting children and young people, helping to stop



the mistakes of the past being repeated in the future. This means that not only does the charity directly influence the lives of thousands of children through their programmes, but also improves the lives of hundreds of thousands more through changes to policies affecting the treatment of the young.

A Children's Society party for lonely children in hospital in the 1940s

modern-day poor



Here to listen: the charity pays for counsellors to help abused children

Giving throughout the year

At St. James's, we have a long history of supporting The Children's Society. As well as our Christingle giving, we have a loyal and generous group of box holders who collect their loose change in Children's Society collection boxes which are gathered in and counted each summer and the money sent to the charity – this year we raised nearly £600, a tremendous amount and a significant improvement on last year's total.



Runaways are protected from exploitation

What More Can We Do?

Sadly though, the news this year was that income from collection boxes is falling in general. The Children's Society has witnessed a drop in income from the collection box scheme of almost £200,000 since 2009 – this puts pressure on resources as the charity seeks to offset this decline through additional fundraising activities.

We have therefore been asked by The Children's Society to encourage new box holders to come forward if they are able to – the charity is looking for an increase in giving via this method to reverse the decline and grow income generated via this simple method. It's not an onerous task to have a box and may even help you in getting rid of the spare change that accumulates in all of our homes!



Christmas cheer: The Children's Society sings for your money

CHILD POVERTY FACTS

- ◆ More than six out of ten children living in poverty are in working families on low incomes
- ◆ Children living in low-income households are three times as likely to have mental health problems as their more affluent peers
- ◆ Children in lone parent families are twice as likely to live in poverty
- ◆ By 2020 one in three children in the UK will be living in poverty

If you feel you would like to take up this challenge, please speak to Nicky or David Hetling and we will provide a box for you. If you're a taxpayer, we will also be able to arrange for your donation to benefit from Gift Aid so do come forward if you're looking for a place to put all that loose change!

Finally, a big thank you to all our regular box holders for their generous contributions once again this year. With Christingle upon us, we look forward to raising more money through the candle collection boxes for the genuinely life-changing work conducted by The Children's Society.



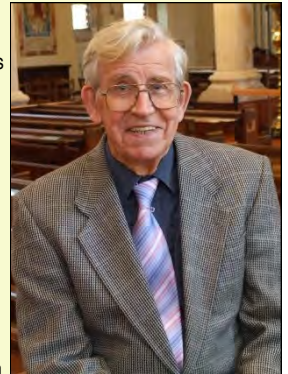
Victims of bullying are given a voice



A major figure in our church's life

Jack Gostling died peacefully on 11 October, aged 91. He lived a very full life, leaving us many memories of his skills, his warm friendship, and his support for those in need of counsel or practical help.

He was an active member of the Anglican Church for the whole of his life since his childhood, when at the age of 11 he was a treble chorister in St Martin's Church Twickenham. His love of music, and his splendid bass-baritone voice, made him a highly-valued choir member almost to the end of his life, singing in St James's Church and other choirs.



Jack's wartime service in the RAF was a temporary interruption of his choir membership, though he remembered this period with no regrets.

After leaving the RAF Jack married Ruth in 1945 in All Hallows Church, Twickenham. They lived in a small house on the old Fulwell Park estate; while living there daughters Heather and Gillian were born. The arrival of son John necessitated their move to a more spacious house of their own build, in St James's Road in 1956.

Jack and Ruth became active members of St James's Church, Hampton Hill, in 1961. At that time the church finances were in a very poor state, and the vicar, Rupert Brunt, led the PCC to initiate the Stewardship Scheme.

This was almost a revolutionary change to church giving. A small team of dedicated church members was formed to call on members on the electoral roll in their own houses to explain the church's financial situation and need, asking them to 'pledge' a meaningful weekly sum to give to the church.

It was not an easy task; about a dozen church members, including Jack and Ruth, joined the team. Their hard work, sometimes difficult and needing gentle diplomacy, succeeded in transforming the church's finances and its ability to repair its fabric and give to needful charities. It has become our present Planned Giving scheme, which enables our own church not only to maintain itself, but to help other churches and many charities.



Jack was one of the directors of the family firm of Gostling Builders. He was trained as a builder, carpenter and plumber, and used his skills unstintingly and freely in the service of the church fabric. He repaired and constructed many things for the church, usually purchasing the materials himself. Cupboards, shelves and the staging were designed and built by him, many of them still in use.

For some major church construction work Jack worked with Alan Taylor, a senior member of a construction firm, then a member of our church.

Together, they formed a powerful, like-thinking team, in particular instructing the architect who designed the Fitz Wygram Church Hall.

Among other community activities Jack served as a governor of Hampton Hill Junior School.

Jack and Ruth celebrated their 70th (platinum) wedding anniversary on 15 September. Together, they were loyal friends of all who knew them. Their friendship included hospitality and practical help where it was needed.

This was extended to some of the very needy members of the community, some of whom were not fully aware of the help that they had been given. Ruth and her family have our sincere sympathy for their loss.



Dick Wilde



What's in a name?

When Mary and Joseph found out that they were going to have a baby, they didn't go to a bookshop or go online to choose a name. In fact, they didn't choose his name at all! God chose it for them!



God sent an angel to tell Mary what to name her baby. The angel said to Mary, 'You will have a son, and you will call his name Jesus.' The name Jesus means *Saviour*. The Bible tells us that there is no other name that can save us from our sins. (Acts 4:12). Jesus is the same name as *Joshua* in the Old Testament. Jesus is known by many names. See if you can find these other names in our word search.



- ABRAHAM = father of many
- ADAM = man
- ANDREW = strong man
- AMOS = burden bearer
- ANNA = gracious
- BENJAMIN = son of the right hand
- DANIEL = God my judge
- DAVID = beloved
- DEBORAH = bee
- ELIZABETH = fullness of God
- ESAU = hairy
- EVE = to breathe
- GABRIEL = man of God
- GAD = fortune
- HANNAH = gracious
- ISAAC = laughter

- JESUS = God is saviour
- JOHN = God is gracious
- JOSEPH = increase
- JOSHUA = saviour
- MATTHEW = gift of God
- MOSES = deliverer
- NAOMI = beautiful
- NATHANIEL = gift of God
- PAUL = small, humble
- PETER = a rock
- PHOEBE = bright, pure
- RUTH = friend
- SARAH = princess
- SHEM = name
- STEPHEN = crowned
- TAMAR = palm tree
- THOMAS = twin
- TIMOTHY = valued of God

FACTS ABOUT JESUS

- 1 Christ is not actually a name, but a title. Both Messiah and Christ mean anointed one. Jesus was anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit and was the promised redeemer. The word Christ appears in the Bible more than 500 times.
- 2 Jesus said he was the bread of life and the living bread. He was the light of the world. Jesus was the good shepherd. He said he was the Son of God. He also liked to call himself the Son of Man. He said he was the way, the truth and the life.
- 3 Jesus ate bread and clean meats such as lamb and fish. He may have eaten eggs because of his statement that they are a good gift. The Old Testament says that Jesus ate butter and honey. He ate broiled fish and honeycomb after his resurrection.
- 4 Jesus was known to be a carpenter. This indicates that he worked in the trade at least long enough that people knew him to be a carpenter too.
- 5 Although his birthday is celebrated on 25 December, the Bible does not tell us exactly when his birthday was. Various scholars have put the Birth of Christ sometime in winter or early spring.
- 6 John the Baptist was his second cousin. His mother, Mary, and Elisabeth, John's mother, were cousins. It is likely that they were often together as children.
- 7 Jesus had several half-brothers and sisters. At least some of his brothers were named James, Joses, Simon and Judas. His sisters are not named in the Bible. History says that James became the head of the church in Jerusalem.
- 8 Jesus is often portrayed as being distant, hanging around to solve problems.



However, the Bible says he was moved to tears at the news of Lazarus' death.

Our Sunday School, The Shell Seekers, meets in the hall from 9.25am during school terms, except for one Sunday in most months when there is an all-age service in church. We welcome new members. Come along for a trial visit and see just how much fun it can be.



Christmas Cake



The traditional Christmas cake is the merger of two dishes usually eaten around the Christmas period: plum porridge or pottage and the Twelfth Night cake. The plum porridge was first cited in 1573 and was traditionally eaten on Christmas Eve. It was also the origin of the Christmas pudding.

During the 16th Century the oatmeal in the porridge was replaced by butter, flour and eggs. This mix would still have been boiled and it was not until richer families had ovens in the home, that the mix was baked. Dried fruit was added and it was finished with marzipan.

Traditionally it would have been eaten at Easter. The Christmas cake evolved when dried fruit of the season and spices were added and then eaten at Christmas. The spices were symbolic of those brought by the Magi.

The cake was originally eaten on Twelfth Night, the Epiphany, thus the Twelfth Night cake. Oliver Cromwell banned the feasting on that special day in the 1640s, complaining that there was too much excess.

Christmas Day remained a public holiday and some feasting was allowed, so people simply made their cake and covered it in marzipan instead, and so the Christmas cake was born.

With this shift Victorian bakers started to decorate the cakes with winter snow scenes. They became very popular and by the 1870s were not recognisable from their pottage roots.

There are traditionally two types of Christmas cake: the classic fruit cake layered in marzipan and icing, or the Scottish Dundee cake with no marzipan or icing but instead made with whisky and decorated with almonds.

There are a couple of traditions surrounding the Christmas cake. The first is the 'Stir Up' which takes place on the last Sunday before Advent (now more associated with Christmas pudding). The second is the 'feeding of the cake' when alcohol is added.

Ingredients

- Feeds 12-16
- 500g sultanas
- 250g raisins
- 250g dried apricots, quartered
- 170g cut mixed peel

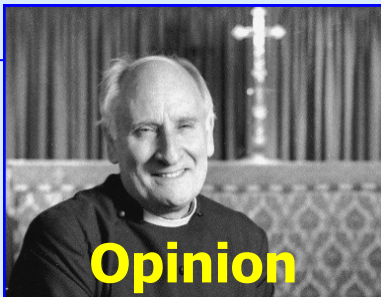
- 200g glace cherries, halved
- 100g glace pineapple
- 100g blanched almonds
- 100g walnut pieces
- Juice and grated rind of 1 orange
- 100ml brandy
- 250g unsalted butter, softened
- 200g dark brown muscovado sugar
- 5 eggs (medium), beaten
- 300g plain flour, sieved

Method

- 1) Place all the fruit and nuts in a large bowl, stir in the orange juice, rind and brandy. Cover and leave overnight.
- 2) In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs a little at a time, beating well between each addition. If the mixture begins to curdle, add a little of the flour.
- 3) Add the soaked fruit, nuts and any liquid and stir well. Fold in the flour.
- 4) Prepare a 23cm round cake tin by lining the base and sides with three thicknesses of greaseproof paper cut so they come 5cm (2in) above the edge of the tin. Spoon the mixture in, spreading it evenly, leaving no air pockets. Level the top. Tie a double band of brown paper round the outside of the tin.
- 5) Stand the tin on several sheets of newspaper and place in a preheated oven at 150°C, 300°F, gas 2, for 3½-4 hours, or until a fine skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Cover with greaseproof paper during cooking if the cake begins to brown too much.
- 6) Leave to cool completely before turning out on to a wire rack. If needed, slice off the top for a smooth surface. Feeding the cake ensures that it will be moist at Christmas time. Prick the surface with a fine skewer and spoon over 30ml (2 tbsp) brandy. Store in a cool dry place, wrapped in greaseproof paper and a double thickness of foil.

Icing the cake

- 2 x 500g white marzipan
- 1kg pack bought icing
- 3 tbsp apricot jam, warmed
- 1) Brush the tops and sides of the cake with the jam. Roll out the marzipan to 8mm (3/8in) thick. Place over the cake and smooth into place. Trim any excess around the base. Leave for 24 hours. Roll out the icing to 5mm (¼") thick. Cover the cake as with the marzipan. Decorate as you wish.



Opinion

with Canon Julian Reindorp

WHERE TO SLEEP

Away in a Manger, No Crib for a Bed. We'll sing these words many times over Christmas. Jesus had times when he had 'nowhere to lay his head'. Of course, we need to build more homes, but one commentator suggests that the major cause of our housing crisis is 'the spectacular failure to tax those who own property'.

The last government introduced the 'bedroom tax' (it was called 'the spare room subsidy'.) They suggested that all those who own homes should also face a 'spare room subsidy tax' since 69% of all homes are under-occupied with one spare bedroom and half of these had two or more spare bedrooms.

When he first suggested this, home owners were appalled, but they seemed to agree with the bedroom tax for the very poorest.

RETIRED and WELL OFF

Pensioners have benefited from an 'amazing' period of rising living standards relative to the rest of society according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies. The £12bn of welfare cuts are set to fall mainly on working age households over the next five years. Pensions, however, will rise in line with whichever is the highest: earnings, inflation or 2.5%. This 'triple lock' as it is called may in time become unsustainable.

The IFS says, 'The worry is that people in their 20s, 30s and 40s end up being worse off than this generation, and paying for older people through taxes and in other ways.'

I suspect that many of us now retired realise that ours has been a spoilt generation in many ways.

TAX CREDITS

Tax credits were set up to provide help for the poorest members of our society — more than half of them in work. The major criticism of them is that as well as growing dramatically, particularly through the recent period of austerity, they are very complicated to administer and they subsidise employers paying very low wages.

The Government has introduced a package of measures both to reform tax credits and save £4½ bn. The snag is that the package of measures is being introduced over five years, and the cuts are starting in April 2016.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies warns that these cuts will leave over three million of the poorest working families more than £1000 worse off over a year. All this at a time when the threshold for inheritance tax will gradually rise from £650,000 to £1m.

WHICH DOOR?

As an adult visiting South Africa, where I was born, I had my first experience of apartheid at Johannesburg airport. There were two toilet doors: Blankes and Nie Blankes (White and non-white). This came back to me as I read about protesters outside One Commercial Street, a 21-story block of flats in east London. The block has two entrances, one for private tenants and one for social-housing tenants.

WHOSE BIRTHDAY?

A 2014 survey showed that 36% of five-seven-year-olds did not know whose birthday we celebrate at Christmas. Some 72% did not know Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Just over half of adults say that the birth of Jesus is irrelevant to their Christmas. So, I urge you to buy the Real Advent Calendar from our Traidcraft stall and prove them wrong!

What's On

with Nick Bagge



Barnes Choir

Saturday 5 December, Christmas Concert, 7.30pm, St Mary Magdalene Church, Church Walk, Richmond TW9 1SN

The traditional festivities include Rutter's *Gloria*, Patterson's *Magnificat*, and carols for choir and audience. Tickets £12 / £10 concessions and children under 12 are free. Tickets from Pauline Gore on 079 7990 4910 or tickets@barneschoir.org.uk or online at wegottickets.com.

Christingle Service

Sunday 6 December, 9.30am, St. James's Church

This is a great family occasion when we remember the work of The Children's Society and encircle the church with our lighted Christingle candles, set in an orange and complete with sweets. After the service they may be taken home to enjoy. Children will be given a candle-shaped collecting box to take home and fill by the end of January.

NEW

Rowan Williams

Tuesday 8 December, Light in the Darkness, 6.30pm, St Paul's Cathedral, St. Paul's Churchyard, London EC4M 8AD

Christmas is one of the defining points of the year for all Christians, and one of the most difficult festivals to keep spiritually. Rowan Williams will discuss how to reclaim Christmas and experience anew the birth of Jesus. Tickets are free. Go to agoodchristmas.eventbrite.co.uk.

Teddington Choral Society

Saturday 12 December, A Light in the Stable, 7.30pm, St. James's Church, Hampton Hill

Christmas-inspired music with the title piece by Alan Bullard, John Rutter's *Star Carol* and Bob Chilcott's *For Him all Stars Have Shone*. Tickets £12 / £10 concessions on the door or from infoteddchoral@gmail.com.

Twickenham Choral Society

Saturday 12 December, Rossini, 7.30pm, All Saints' Church, Market Place, Kingston KT1 1JP

Concert features Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*; and Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* (special arrangement by Iain Farrington). With Iain Farrington on piano and Freddie Brown on the organ. Tickets £20 / £10 full-time students on the door or from tickets@twickenhamchoral.org.uk.

NEW

Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band

Sunday 13 December, 2.30pm, YMCA White House, 45 The Avenue, Hampton TW12 3RN

The Band of the Middlesex Yeomanry (Duke of Cambridge's Hussars) present a concert of traditional music, including carols for audience participation. Tickets £10, including mulled wine and a programme. Children go free. For ticket telephone 020 8941 1227 or email judy.morrison1@btinternet.com.

Registers for October



Baptisms

4 Jacques Alan Cornelius Zietsman, Slough

4 Charles Patrick David English, Hanworth

4 Bertie Lewis Frost, Hanworth

11 Frankie-Jayne Sydney Roberts, Staines upon Thames

11 Bethan Rose Alice Jones, Hampton

Wedding Blessing

3 Bill Jerman and Sarah Meneer

Funerals

13 Gordon Henry Beck, 70, Hampton Hill

13 David John Locke, 88, Kew

14 Edith Irene Paris Hammans, 7, Twickenham

29 John William (Jack) Gostling, 91, Hampton Hill

Christmas

Sunday 20 December
Service of Lessons and Carols 6.30pm
Carols, mince pies and mulled wine

Thursday 24 December
Christmas Eve
Crib Service 4.30pm
The story of the nativity for young and old
Midnight Mass 11pm

Friday 25 December
Christmas Day
Parish Communion 9.30am
(No 8am Communion)

NEW

The Wintershall Nativity

Wednesday 16-Sunday 20 December, various times, Wintershall Estate, Bramley, Guildford GU5 0LR

The play takes place in and outside the Barn Theatre, Holly Barn, complete with shepherds and sheep, donkeys and the three wise men on horseback! The 'inn' opens for tea, coffee and mince pies about an hour before each 90-minute performance. Tickets £16 / £8 children from 01486 892167 or online at wintershall-estate.com

NEW

Surrey Brass

Saturday 19 December, Carols by Candlelight, 7.30pm, Landmark Arts Centre, Ferry Road, Teddington TW11 9NN

Surrey Brass are joined by Harlequin Chamber Choir, conducted by Catherine Beddison, the St Pauls Singers, led by Alison Renvoize, and storyteller Giles Abbott. Mulled wine and mince pies will be on sale. Book now, it always sells out! Tickets £13 / £12 concessions from landmarkartscentre.org

Cantanti Camerati

Saturday 19 December, Christmas Concert, 7.30pm, St. Mary's Church, Church Street, Twickenham, TW1 3NJ

A traditional concert to mark the start of Christmas. Tickets £12, available from Hillsound Musical Instruments, High Street, Hampton Hill, by telephoning 020 8898 8020 or on the door.

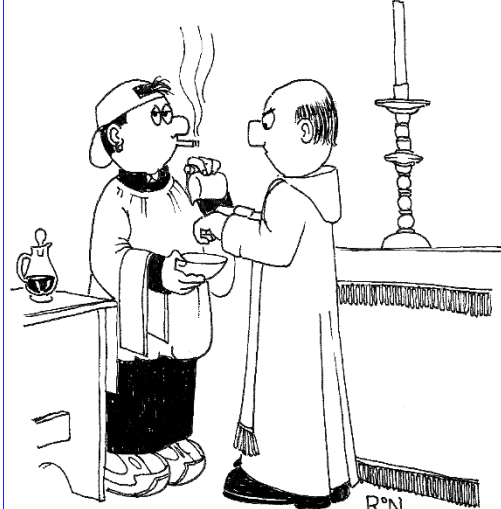
NEW

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Sunday 17 January, 6.30pm, United Reformed Church, 35 High Street, Hampton Hill TW12 1NB

The prayers have been prepared in Latvia, inspired by the verses of Peter's letter and Jesus's metaphors of salt and light.

Vicar's View



Things had become pretty slack during the interregnum



When sacred music meets heavenly voices

My love of music, particularly choral music, came from my parents who were both very musical and extremely good singers. I grew up surrounded by music, accompanying my parents to different venues and joining in when I could. Singers perform music that can be sung either with or without accompaniment (a cappella). A singer can perform alone, as a soloist, or in a choral group. Composers have been writing music for the voice since ancient times with the Western choral tradition having started with composers setting sacred texts to music.

1 **MISSA PAPAE MARCELLI** Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, 1562



The popularity of this mass has endured, partly due to its perfect balance of form and feeling, but also because Palestrina is credited with 'saving' church music after the Roman Catholic



Church's Council of Trent (1545-63) criticised liturgical music that was 'lascivious or impure', for example masses based on bawdy secular tunes, that obscured the meaning of the mass. Palestrina composed the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, providing clear delivery of the natural drama of the text. As a result, composers were allowed to continue to write polyphonic music and music was saved (or so the story goes).

2 **LAMENTATIONS** Thomas Tallis, 1565



Tallis flourished as a church musician in 16th century Tudor England, and is considered among the best of Britain's early composers. He wrote two sets of *Lamentations*, taking the text from the Maundy Thursday set. They consist of two motets with Tallis showing his skill in the subtle way he uses repetition and antiphony between the voices. Harmonically they are very rich and fluid but they're also carefully created leading up to the concluding line, 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum'

('Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God').



3 **MISERERE** Gregorio Allegri, 1638c



This setting of Psalm 51 was written for the celebration of the Matins during Holy Week, a Tenebrae service which began at dusk, hence the name (Tenebrae is Latin for 'shadows' or 'darkness'). With its soaring soprano parts and compelling melodic style, the work was an immediate hit. It is written for two small choirs and is an example of Renaissance polyphony surviving to the present day. One of the choirs sings a simple version of the original Miserere chant; the other, spatially separated, sings an ornamented 'commentary' on this.



4 **MESSIAH** George Frideric Handel, 1741



My favourite performance was in 2005 at Christ Church, Spitalfields, singing with Concordia Voices. The following is taken from a review in *The Independent* by Howard Jacobson: 'I was so taken with Concordia, so musically kept on the edge of my seat with a Messiah which didn't come alive only in the best bits, that I looked up their website when I got home, still humming 'All we like sheep have gone astray'. In the members' information, among other things, the ladies should wear a 'long black skirt or trousers (or short with black tights/stockings!) Black stockings. Ah, why was I never in a choir when I was young and looking to go astray!'

As a choirmaster and organist, Fauré was constantly looking for ways to create a new kind of church music. He wanted something different from the operatic style which was popular in Paris at the time, and different from the outsized, large-scale Germanic

5 **REQUIEM** Gabriel Faure, 1888

As a choirmaster and organist, Fauré was constantly looking for ways to create a new kind of church music. He wanted something different from the operatic style which was popular in Paris at the time, and different from the outsized, large-scale Germanic



Romantic style which dominated the rest of Europe. Consequently, he helped to establish a distinctive French style which set the stage for the development of the Impressionist style of Debussy and Ravel. The prevailing mood is one of peacefulness and serenity.



6 **I WAS GLAD** Hubert Parry, 1902



This setting is a large scale and grand work written for the coronation of Edward VII in Westminster Abbey and is setting of words from Psalm 122. Parry's reputation today is growing as a result of the revival in interest in English music of the last century, but his name is immortalised as the composer of Blake's *Jerusalem* and the coronation anthem, *I was Glad*.

7 **ALLELUIA** Randall Thompson, 1940



This is a piece for an a cappella, soprano, alto, tenor and bass chorus. The text of the work consists of the word 'Alleluia' repeated over and over again. The only other word in the text is 'Amen', which is used once at the end where the choir also divides into seven parts. The word 'Alleluia' has so many possible interpretations and the music in this particular piece cannot be made to sound joyous. It is a slow, sad piece which has become Thompson's most popular work, being frequently performed today.



8 **MY SPIRIT SANG ALL DAY** Gerald Finzi, 1950

This is from a set of seven part-song settings of poetry by Robert Bridges with a romantic

text celebrating the joys of young love. The joyous energy of the poetry requires great energy and rhythmic clarity in the fast loud sections, contrasting with beautiful line and

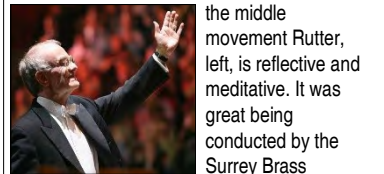


tone in the slower quieter passages. Finzi believed that all text was capable of being set to music. He was always thinking how the different musical elements of melody, harmony, texture, and form could best describe the text.

9 **GLORIA** John Rutter, 1974



This English composer has become a veritable icon of contemporary choral music with the Gloria one of his most ambitious concert works. I was fortunate to sing Gloria with Concordia Voices and Surrey Brass in Landmark Arts Centre, Teddington, above. In the outer movements the brass ensemble with timpani, percussion and organ make an exciting and joyful noise *Unto the Lord*, but in



the middle movement Rutter, left, is reflective and meditative. It was great being conducted by the Surrey Brass musical director, my son Robin Smith! After the concert we all gathered in the pub and a huge cheer went up when Robin entered!

10 **O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM** Morten Lauridsen, 1994

This is a moving setting for text from the Christmas Matins for unaccompanied choir describing the awe and wonder of the animals as they gaze on Christ: *O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger!* Lauridsen said he wanted this piece to 'resonate immediately and deeply into the core of the listener, to illumine through sound'. My husband, Martin, directed our church choir singing this powerful but tender piece during a Carol Service some years back.

