

FEBRUARY 2025 PILGRIMAGE

SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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WHERE AM I?

A voyage of self-discovery in the Himalaya



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 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Meet the clergy



VICAR Rev Derek Winterburn
Derek was born in Orpington, Kent, and ordained in 1986. He served in several diverse London parishes before becoming vicar here in 2016. He is married to Sandra, a teacher, and has two children. A keen photographer, he posts a picture online every day, combining it with a daily walk or cycle ride. He can be contacted at any time other than on Mondays (his day off).
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Email: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister, married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.
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Email: jackycammidge@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk



Supported by

ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood

Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. Tim is married to Jane, a former headteacher. He supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket and walks his brown labrador, Ruby.
Tel: 073 6928 0040 Email: frtimmarwood@hotmail.com

ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

Julian was born in Durban, South Africa, and ordained in 1969. He has worked in parishes in East London, Chatham and Milton Keynes, and was Team Rector in Richmond until retirement in 2009. He continues to lead a busy life, is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren, and nine grandchildren.
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FROM THE EDITOR

Despite wintry weather I can see snowdrops and hellebores in flower outside my window, which means the churchyard will also blossom, signifying that Spring is round the corner.

We have commissioned some interesting articles for the year, beginning with Jon Holloway's trip to Nepal to climb to Everest Base Camp. What an achievement and his story makes fascinating reading.

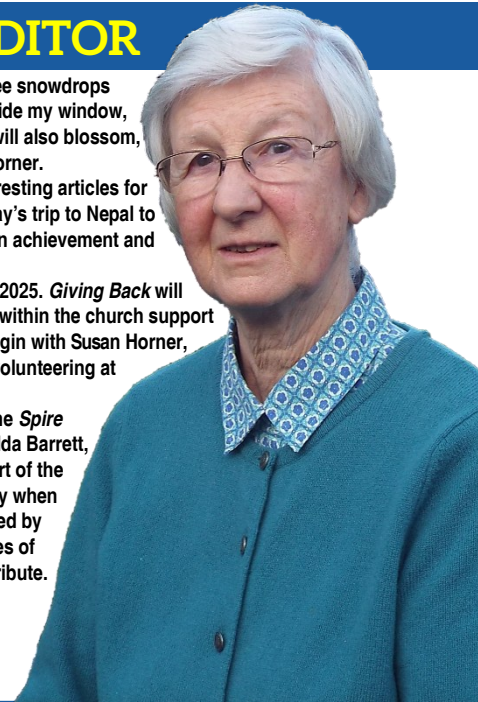
Our back page has a new topic for 2025. *Giving Back* will highlight volunteering. Many people within the church support a local organisation or charity. We begin with Susan Horner, who tells us about her experiences volunteering at Princess Alice Hospice.

We ended 2024 on a sad note for the *Spire* Team with the sudden death of Griselda Barrett, who worked in the office and was part of the magazine for many years, particularly when it was printed in-house and assembled by 'the staplers'. We have fond memories of working with her — see our page 5 tribute.

Best Wishes

Janet

Editor



Cover photo: Jon Holloway on his trek of self-discovery to Everest Base Camp

SPIRE

The Spire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James. We don't charge for this magazine but, if you enjoy regularly reading it, we hope that you will contribute towards printing costs. Bank transfers to: 40-52-40, 00032595, Use Ref SPIRE. Cheques payable to the PCC of St James's Church, Hampton Hill, and sent to the Spire Appeal c/o the Church Office (see below).

I cost **£11.25** A YEAR*
Yes, I'm free, but donations help me to go on being printed. Use the QR code (or see above) to 'buy' a subscription. *£1.25 a copy

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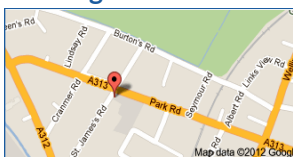
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Finding us



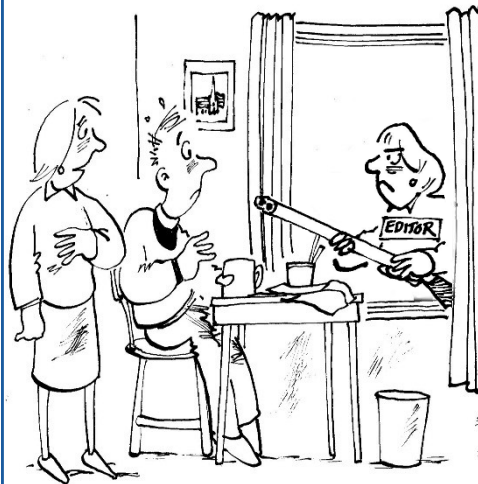
We are on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is next to the church. There is unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R70, R68, 111 and 285.

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Clerical Capers



'Are you late again, dear, with your copy for the church magazine?'

DEREK WINTERBURN



BBC/Toffee International Ltd / Tom Jackson

The BBC One comedy *Gavin and Stacey* easily won the festive TV ratings battle, with 21 million of us glued to the screen. The highpoint of Christmas Day's final-ever episode was Smithy's proposal to Nessa, which started with an anguished, 'We're messy and not perfect'. These two characters, in different ways, were the funny, cool, self-contained people in the ensemble. It takes them 17 years (the series began in 2007) to get to this point of honesty in the finale.

Being able to admit one's fallibility is an important thing. Yet our culture often takes unqualified success or perfection as the only goal. It is often said that 'history is written by the victors'.

Short cut to victory

In a similar way we love to hear stories of how successful people have won their prize and are encouraged to think that if only we did what they have done we would be as triumphant. For example, there are countless books, podcasts and YouTube videos that explain how Steve Jobs ran Apple with the implication that anyone could do what he did if they followed his example.

This is a mental shortcut called Survivorship Bias. According to the Decision Lab website, the bias' name comes 'from the error an individual makes when a data-set only considers the "surviving" observations, excluding points that didn't survive.'

The antidote to survivorship bias is generally to ask 'what's missing'? In the business world for every Steve Jobs there are thousands of entrepreneurs whose business fails; rarely are their stories shared. When they are, other factors such as luck, timing, connections, and socioeconomic background are found to be major elements of success or failure. The same, of course, is true for successful actors, athletes, musicians, etc, etc.

Comfort from small victories

When we think of our own lives, and our character, we are wary of looking too hard at our moral or spiritual progress. We are more likely to take comfort from our (small?) victories. We might draw back from saying (as is the current vogue) 'I am proud of myself', but we want to avoid excesses of

NONE OF US IS PERFECT

previous generations that felt preached at, and belittled. Being required to admit to being a 'miserable offender' every Sunday rangles (the *Book of Common Prayer: General Confession*). We might think as Lent approaches that 'here come six weeks

forgiveness, life and salvation belong to us on account of Christ. It is a gift already given: grace. It is not a description of our saintliness, more a shorthand way of saying God accepts us on a totally different level, despite us being sinners.

God accepts us at a totally different level. We are justified and sinner at the same time. He has set about remaking us on account of the love he has for those he has made.

of thinking about our *wretchedness*' (old and new Prayer Books.)

So it is notable that in *Gavin and Stacey*, Smithy has to admit that he's 'messy, not perfect'. Martin Luther and the Reformers taught that people were sinners - morally wrong before God. They traced this idea from common experience, back to the New and Old Testaments of the Bible.

However, they also believed that, in Christ, people were able to be restored to a right relationship with God again. Our nature was 'Simul (both) iustus (justified) et peccator (sinner)'.

Saint and sinner

We are used to reflecting on our identity these days, Luther offers us these twin identity badges. They may sound contradictory: 'saint and sinner'? But that would be a mistake. We are crippled by Sin. Christians, especially, should not be morally proud. None of us is perfect. It is as people say at an AA meeting: 'My name is Derek, and I'm a sinner (rather than alcoholic).'

But there is the other identity - justified or 'right with God'. This one word serves as a declaration that God loves us, and

'Justified' and 'Sinner' are not mutually exclusive, we are both at the same time.

Taking stock in Lent

And that is why we can take stock of ourselves in Lent, even dare to admit our wretchedness, because our heavenly Father has set about remaking us on account of the love he has for those he has made. We have a double identity we would do well to remember: *simul iustus et peccator*.

That is not to say that being 'sinners' we take every opportunity to sin! Rather, since we have been given the great gift of grace, accepting it places an expectation on us to live in allegiance to the giver. We live empowered by God's Spirit, to please him.

Ash Wednesday's Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

St James Services Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am
Parish Communion 9:30am
Livestreamed on Facebook

Together 3:30pm not 2, 16, 23 Feb
Our shorter, all-age service, making way for Messy Church once a month

Messy Church 3:30pm 9 Feb, 9 Mar
Compline (night prayer) 8pm from 9 Mar

Tue-Fri (not Wed, except 19 Feb)
Morning Prayer 9am

Wednesday (not 19 Feb)
Midweek Communion 9:30am

Mondays

Ark Playgroup 10am-12pm not 17 Feb
Our popular playgroup for under 5s and carers includes crafts, music and play.

NHS Hearing Aid Clinic 1-3pm
Free servicing of NHS aids only, while you wait at our drop-in service on 3, 17 Feb; 3, 17 Mar

Tuesdays

Connections Café 10:30am-12:30pm
Join us for coffee, cake and conversation.

Wednesdays

Turning Points in Scripture with Julian and Tim 2-3:20pm.
26 Feb Moses: lawgiver, leader and liberator
12 Mar Isaiah: three prophets in one
26 Mar Jesus: the heart of our faith
9 Apr Paul: church planter and letter writer

Climate Justice

with Derek and Jacky 7:30-9pm.
Lent course with videos from London's bishops.
12 March Humility: hosted by Bishop Sarah
19 March Solidarity: hosted by Bishop Anderson
26 March Example: hosted by Bishop Emma
2 April Accountability: hosted by Bishop Joanne
9 April Hope: hosted by Bishop Lusa

The 48 Saturday 22 Feb 7:15pm

Graham McHutchon talks about his epic road trip: 48,000 miles through 48 states in 48 months. Tickets £10.
Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJThe48s>.



Pancakes Tuesday 4 Mar 7pm

Join us for cottage pie and pancakes and a glass of Prosecco for £15. Profits go to our Lent Appeal.
Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJPancake>.



Ash Wednesday 5 Mar

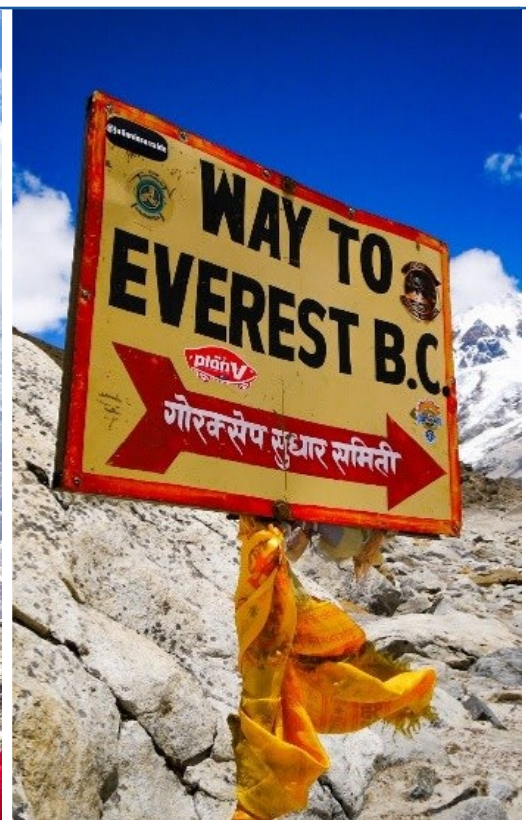
Holy Communion 9:30am and 8pm
The evening service will feature the choir.

World Day of Prayer 7 Mar

United Reformed Church, Hampton Hill, 2pm
This year's service comes from the women of the Cook Islands, using *Psalm 139:14*, 'I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made'.



Climb Acclimatising at 5000m with the peak of Makalu in the background



CONQUERING MY EVEREST



Seeing Mount Everest had long been an ambition of **Jon Holloway**, but it was so much more than a bucket list achievement, as he came away with a new sense of purpose and unlocked the path of forgiveness.

Did I find myself? It's a question that regularly comes up when I speak of my visit to Nepal, and it was certainly a genuine journey of discovery and personal growth, and a chance to reflect. It had long been a desire to visit the Himalaya and to see Everest and some of the other 8,000m peaks, and there's something about the draw it has for so many people that fascinates me.

A change in personal circumstances brought a window of opportunity last year, and with the support and well-wishes of my family I packed up and packed off for the month.

Entirely aware of my own physical limitations and minimal climbing experience, I've never entertained the idea of an actual Everest ascent, but was pretty certain that Everest Base Camp (EBC) at 5,364m and some other local routes were within my grasp.

Well-worn path

The EBC trek is generally quite straightforward. Granted, there's a lot of uphill and traversing of hilly valleys, but it's a steady and pretty well-worn undulating path similar to what might be found on Snowdon, and there is a need to put this level of work in for up to 10 days depending on the route.

What really adds to the toughness is the altitude. The lowest point of the route is around 2,450m, but from about 4,500m elevation I found myself increasingly short of breath, with everything slowing down and taking more time — even bending over to tie my laces. On the steeper sections I could sometimes only manage 10 steps before resting, repeating this until things levelled out a bit.

An extended trek

I had taken on a trek covering EBC and an extra climb up Kala Patthar, topping out at 5,550m to get the best views of Everest, followed two days later with the Chola Pass ascent, finishing with a climb of Gokyo-Ri the day after, each a similar altitude to EBC, before heading back to Lukla and then Kathmandu.

The days and nights spent above 5,000m were probably the most challenging — and not only the trekking. Steady sleep was difficult. I was waking

every few hours to take deep breaths. My appetite dropped off, not great when burning so much energy. Then there's the cold. Even in May, once the sun went down the temperature crashed below zero. Staying warm then became the sole focus.

But enough of the hard work, what of the less tangible experience? The whole trek took 14 days, and to add to the challenge I elected to go completely off-grid, surprisingly difficult when mobile signal was available almost everywhere, and Wi-Fi on offer at the tea houses and lodges.

For a few days it was incredibly difficult to maintain the will to stay offline, but it gave me time to properly reflect. It also helped that I was in a tour group of one, accompanied by my guide, Bhimsen, a gentle man with a tremendous knowledge of the mountains who understood that I was trying to disconnect for two weeks.

Back at church...

At this point I'll come back to St James's, where we're blessed with the opportunity to listen to a variety of styles of discourse. At the helm is Derek, with a great ability to convey theological knowledge in an understandable way. With him, Julian, who will test morals and political attitudes; Tim, quietly spoken and always finishing with a thought-provoking idea; Jacky, who speaks beautifully on empathy and compassion; and Joy, who brings a new and honest view that is often very moving. Running throughout all their sermons is the importance of the Christian attitudes to forgiveness and love.

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. Two key lines from the Lord's Prayer, which is undoubtedly one of the most well-known prayers, certainly in the UK where we might have learned it at school or at all manner of services or events we attend, whatever our faith. *Love your neighbour as you love yourself.*

Another significant line from Matthew's Gospel, the second of Jesus' much-simplified commandments. Nevertheless, in amongst these words is not just the mechanical act of forgiving, or the traditional aspects of love, but I believe a far deeper meaning and goal. We often hear the phrase 'to forgive and forget'. It's simple to say, and might be achievable, but I believe we should go deeper to forgive from the heart, and *forgive with love*.

True forgiveness

My own Christian journey has been erratic, but I am learning the importance of being able to truly forgive not just the insignificant incidents, but the withheld and deep-rooted matters that bring on uncertainty and create an imbalance between sadness and happiness.

We possibly all have something deep down that we might resent or refuse to think about, I certainly do, and I have struggled for a long time to understand what to do and how to let go. While I can talk about forgiveness with love, I also recognise this is far simpler to say



Trek Setting off across the Cho La glacier



Made it! In case proof was needed

than it is to achieve. To become open to the concept is not something that happened overnight, I had to really want to go there. It is not simply being able to say, 'OK, I love you, I forgive you'. Considerable effort is required to recognise that while there might have been hurt, it is possible to move on. This is as much an act of self-love and letting go, and needs forthright honesty that it is the right thing to do.

When I listen to Derek and his team not every sermon or missive comes with an answer, but there's usually an inspirational nugget to dwell on. With brainwork I can often apply them to my life. Very often these messages relate to how I can become the *forgiving with love* person I want to be.

Moving mountains

Taking this all back to the mountains, I soon discovered that the purity, calmness and peacefulness of the surroundings, along with the self-imposed digital detox, gave me the space I wanted and desired. It became apparent that the mountains meant more to me than just their pure dimensions, rather, it was their sense of presence and steadfastness that resonated in me.

As the trek progressed, I also appreciated that the mountains aren't a place you can just turn up at. They require a set of rules to be followed, and acute mountain sickness and worse awaits the foolhardy. They are there to be accessed and enjoyed, but they have their own strength, and remain in control.

Catching a distant glimpse of Everest on the fourth day was an emotional moment. I'd achieved a long-held goal, but within seconds the

peak disappeared behind the cloud, almost like I was being promised greater and better things to come. Sure enough, in the days that followed I had to really keep that faith as cloud kept Everest hidden. Views of Lhotse and Makalu both towering over 8,000m kept me eager to press on.

With some powerful thought and real reflection, I sensed that the mountains spoke to me about my own desires. The enormity of them mirrored my belief and faith in something equally great. Something that gives me the strength and courage to face up to any challenges that come my way.

I finally got some alone time with Everest at the top of Kala Patthar, spending an hour with Bhimsen, watching the slopes come in and out of view, the peak still an awe-inspiring 3.3km above me. We shivered our way down in the dark to Gorakshep, and by chance that night my room was above the kitchen and the heat from the dung-fired ovens resulted in a warm sleep, a real bonus.

Making progress

After the effort of the trek, and with the respect and faith I had in me, I felt that I had been heard, that I was safe, and that I had the strength to understand and accept, and one day be able to honestly forgive with love.

So, to answer the question of finding myself, I'd say it truly was a personal pilgrimage and great progress was made. In addition to the many photos I have a mind full of thoughts and a journal full of words to remember everything by. Would I recommend it? Undoubtedly, yes.



Peaking Everest revealed from Kala Patthar



Around the Spire

CHURCH TOILETS ARE AT YOUR CONVENIENCE



THE church's toilets are now available to the general public after joining the Community Toilet Scheme.

The scheme, run by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, covers more than 70 free toilet facilities now available through the expanded project. The goal is to ensure that no one need worry about finding a toilet when enjoying the borough.

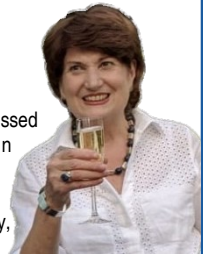
A council official explained, 'Whether you are out shopping, visiting a park, or

enjoying a day out with family, you can plan your outing and stay comfortable whilst exploring the borough by checking out the interactive map.'

The map allows you to view the full list of free-to-use toilets, find wheelchair-friendly facilities and baby changing stations. Keep an eye out for the Community Toilet Scheme window sticker at participating locations.

Go to: <https://orlouk/bNVRg>

GRISELDA BARRETT SHARED LIFE'S JOYS



THE church was packed in November for a thanksgiving service for Griselda Barrett, who died suddenly, aged 71, leaving her husband, Don, daughters Cressida and Venetia, four grandchildren, family and friends in disbelief.

Griselda worked for Rev Brian Leathard for 14 years as administrator when he took on the role of Director of Ordinands for the area. Griselda was also the first Parish Administrator to work in the church office when it was built nearly 20 years ago.

Over the years Griselda had taken on many roles from collecting the coach fares for LEH and Hampton School, to being on the Spire Team in the days when the church produced the magazine in-house with a photocopier and a stapler. She was also a keen Nordic walker and lover of the countryside.

In his homily, Brian described Griselda as 'a parishioner, colleague and friend I

count myself blessed to have known. In Griselda there came to the fore an open humanity, constantly attempting to find that same joy in being truly human amongst all those she met. In book groups, in patients (she acted as medical secretary to a consultant), especially mothers in church, and at her beloved Victoria & Albert Museum, where she volunteered. In SE Asia, every bit as much as in London, or Dorset at their cottage (where she died). And in friends and family supremely.'

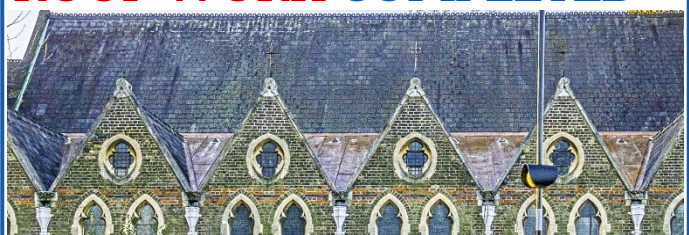
Griselda will be greatly missed by all who knew her, but we thank God for her life and all she meant to so many people. As Brian said in his final words, 'Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God.'

Janet Nunn



TERRY Nicholls and Mary Taylor, who live in Ringwood Way, were married at St James's by Rev Rupert Brunt on 14 November 1964. They celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary with a meal with all their family, including their three daughters and four grandchildren.

ROOF WORK COMPLETED

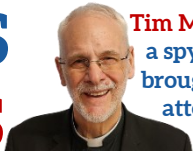


WORK to replace rafters, copper and slates on the north aisle roof is complete. It is now watertight — and continues to be protected by 24-hour surveillance cameras.

Spymaster Alec Guinness in the BBC drama series *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.



CANDLES AND SPIES



Tim Marwood shows how a spy drama and Covid brought old verse to the attention of a new and younger audience.

On 2 February many Christian churches hold a celebration known as Candlemas, named after the practice of burning large quantities of candles at

services held on that day. The formal title of the celebration is *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, as it marks the moment when the infant Jesus was presented at the temple in Jerusalem as part of a purification ritual which took place according to the Jewish custom 40 days after the birth of a first son.

Luke 2: 22-40 describes how Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple where they met Simeon, a devout Jew who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Messiah.

Song of Simeon

Simeon took Jesus in his arms and prayed the hymn of praise which has become known as the *Song of Simeon*. Luke 2: 29-32, also found in the Evening Prayer service in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, reads:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation; which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

These verses are perhaps more widely known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, named after the first words in Latin of what is more correctly called a canticle, rather than a hymn. The *Nunc Dimittis* is used in the evening services of evensong, compline and vespers, they describe Jesus as a 'light to lighten' all nations, as well as Israel, hence the burning of many candles as a symbol in the

Candlemas services. These words have been set to music by many composers and the weekly broadcast of *Choral Evensong* on BBC Radio 3 provides an opportunity to hear many different settings of the *Nunc Dimittis*.

Le Carre's spy novel

On 10 September 1979 a recording of the *Nunc Dimittis* composed by Geoffrey Burgon (1941-2010) was played as the credits rolled at the end of the first episode of the BBC Two series *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, based on the book by John le Carre and starring Alec Guinness as George Smiley.

A new audience was introduced to it through a perfect combination of the right words resonating with the drama, set to a great tune sung by Paul Phoenix, a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral. It's easy to find on the internet.

The farewell tone of the words of *Nunc Dimittis* has led to their use in funeral services such as that held in 2010 for the composer Burgon, and in 2013 for the former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

More recently the proliferation of services broadcast on the internet during the Covid pandemic has led to a re-discovery of the King James Bible and Book of Common Prayer by a new audience of young readers encountering the poetic language of these texts, including the *Nunc Dimittis*, for the first time through recordings such as the excellent podcasts from the Chapel of Trinity College Cambridge.

Extraordinary power

Whether you describe the *Nunc Dimittis* as a prayer, a hymn or a canticle, the fact remains that these four verses of the Bible have an extraordinary power to convey the emotions of Simeon, his life fulfilled, as he holds Jesus in his arms.

REGISTERS

NOVEMBER

INTERMENT OF ASHES
24 (Albert) David Lloyd, 88, Hampton Hill

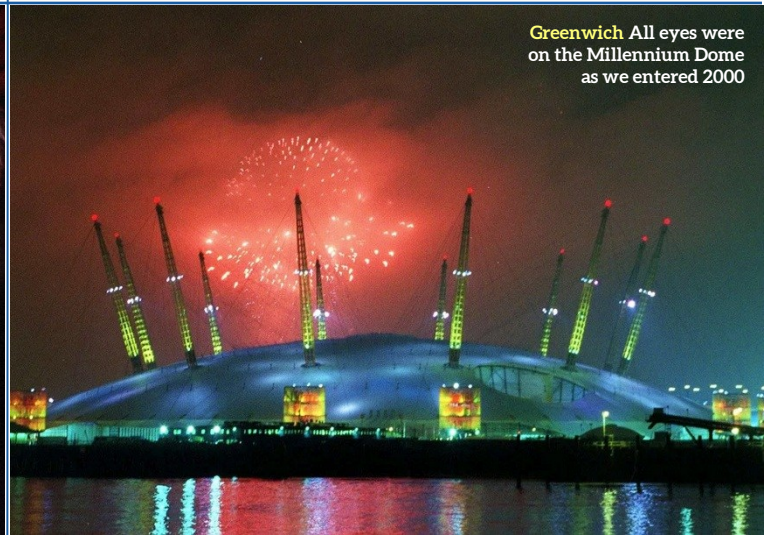


DECEMBER

FUNERAL
30 Pamela Ethel Banks, 96, Hampton

INTERMENT OF ASHES
18 Imani Christina Rigg-Williams, 30, Hampton Hill

Greenwich All eyes were on the Millennium Dome as we entered 2000



A NEW ERA AWAITED



Richard Melville delves into the Spire on a momentous time for the nation and St James's.

This year's look through the *Spire* magazine leaps from 100 years ago to 25. Our vicar in 2000 was Rev Brian Leathard, but in February, his column was authored by Rev Freda Evans,

one of the two assistant priests. The other was Rev Betty Stewart, who left us a generous legacy. The Stewart Room is named for her.

A short read...

Dear Friends,

This year the lectionary focuses on the Gospel of Mark. It is generally agreed that this was the first Gospel to be written and it's by far the shortest, covering only 20 pages of the Bible. It is well worthwhile setting some time aside to read it all in one go! You will find no church history there; no concentration on sacraments or indeed ethics. It is about the story of Jesus. Mark has no doubts that Jesus is the Son of God and while we are not spared any of the pain of his Passion, there is a clear message of hope that in the end all will be well. Though Mark was Jewish, his gospel is to spread the good news to the Gentiles.



Rev Freda Evans

Freda Evans

New Year, new millennium!

On New Year's Eve 30 people gathered in church to celebrate the new millennium. Freda presided, and played the piano. As the chimes of midnight rang out, she lit a candle of hope, peace, love and joy. Worshipers left to the sound of the church bells and an explosion of fireworks from the neighbouring gardens.

Inside the Dome

Two parishioners wrote about their visits to the Millennium Dome. Rose Frier, 84, was one of the first to visit, on Sunday 2 January. 'I thought the Millennium Show was superb and am saying nothing more about it, except that I was on the edge of my seat the whole way through — you must go and see it!'

Elizabeth Gossage reported: 'The dome is huge and impressive. Thankfully we were given a map of what each zone contains — I concluded that this was because they contain

very little. The children, however, loved them. The Faith Zone was more impressive than we had been led to believe, though very politically correct and inevitably superficial.

The kneelers project

Tina Bunce reported that it was lovely to see new kneelers at the end of pews. From a small seed planted by Margaret Taylor grew a group of wonderful women from Hampton Hill who used their talents to give something lasting to St. James's. But more importantly they created a sense of community. Those who thought they couldn't sew discovered that they could; it helped some to stop smoking; strangers met and became strangers no more; churchgoers and non churchgoers not only made them, but also covered the cost.

Brownies' capsules

Two capsules were buried in the churchyard to mark the year 2000, including photographs, train tickets, and pictures of toys and food together with till receipts to show their cost.

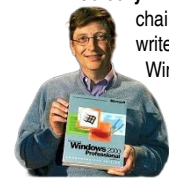
In the news 25 years ago...

- **12 February** Cartoonist Charles M. Schulz died, aged 77. The next day, the original *Peanuts* cartoon makes its final appearance in newspapers.
- **17 February** Microsoft



chairman and chief software writer Bill Gates, left, launched Windows 2000. The operating system was considered much more reliable and stable than Windows 98, which was the operating system of choice for most home PC users. It was quickly adopted worldwide.

■ **25 February** Sir Stanley Matthews, one of England's greatest players, died, age 85. At club level he played for Stoke City and Blackpool, and was twice European footballer of the year. Pélé described him as the man 'who could show us how football should be played', while Sir Bobby Charlton said, 'I loved him. An absolutely magical man'.



OPINION

Canon Julian Reindorp

Social Care – whose baby?

The autumn budget allocated an extra £22.6 billion for the NHS and £600 million to social care. The Department of Health and Social Care cut £115 million from funding for training and development of adult social care workers. Locally, care homes cost £2,000 a week; the cost of care at home is rapidly increasing to £23-£34 an hour. The minimum wage for a care worker is £11.44 an hour, or £21.325pa. The cost to the Government is £20 billion a year, rising to £30 billion by 2030. Care homes used to be run by councils, now they are largely run by for-profit companies. Sam Freedman, in his book *Failed State*, says: 'The standard model for these private equity firms is to load up companies with debt, slash costs, and then sell up. The five largest private equity-backed care companies are spending 16% of their costs on debt repayment.' Roy Griffiths in his 1988 report concluded 'Social Care is everybody's distant relative and nobody's baby'. As I say at funerals when thanking care workers, 'We will all be in your hands one day!'



Build, build, build

Our housing market is much worse than that of our neighbours. In the UK 7% of all properties have been built since 2000, in France it's 10%, Greece 15% and Spain 18%. We have the oldest housing stock in Europe and one of the lowest numbers of dwellings per head of population.

There is a huge need for more council houses. Last year just 3,000 were built. The rental market needs reforming, not least abolishing 'no fault' evictions and tightening standards for maintenance and repair. Estate agent Rightmove calculates that there are 20 applicants for every rental property that comes on the market.

Appeal or Reform?

As the political party Reform overtakes the Conservatives in their number of members we have to ask: how can this new party be held to account for the simplicity of their policies in response to complex challenges? They want immigration to be largely halted, preferably zero — but what about the catastrophic consequences of this policy for our NHS, for our Social Care services and our economy? In a post-truth society, with social media so influential, and Nigel Farage appearing as a UK version of President Trump, who effectively challenges their promises and their record on Brexit? Bloomberg economics said Brexit was costing the UK £100 billion a year. And the chair of the Office for Budget Responsibility said leaving the European Union had reduced the UK's output by 4%. Will our media hold Reform to account?

Billionaires only

Donald Trump's new cabinet is worth about £270 billion, every one a billionaire or about to become one. Joe Biden's is worth £118 million, yet Trump derided them as a corrupt elite cheating ordinary working class Americans!

I spy with my little eye

Alex Younger, former MI6 chief, was asked if he had ever told anyone in his family he was a spy? Yes, his wife, before their wedding. She married him provided he told his mother his job. 'There's something I have to tell you', he explained when they met. 'What's that, darling?', she replied. 'I'm a spy,' he told her. 'That's nice', came her response. 'So was I.'



St James's Day Rain meant we enjoyed our barbecue meal inside rather than in the vicarage garden.

GROWING OUR GIVING



Last year was our most successful for fundraising since 2020. Dennis Wilmot looks back on the success stories and is optimistic that 2025 will sustain the support for our good causes.

The total amount of fundraising for 2024 was £7,467—the first rise on the previous year since 2020. This excludes the money raised for Christian Aid and The Children's Society. During those four years we faced a global recession, Covid and Ukraine, however I think our congregation were also a little bit more generous this time. Certainly a big thank you is due to everyone.

That success began early when our Lent Appeal raised £3,675, 50% more than in 2023 and this was split between St Luke's Hospital, Milo, and the Christian Aid Middle East Appeal. This included money raised from a Good Guys pancake meal, pictured right.

Roof and heating

St James's Day weekend included many fundraising activities. This went to the church as it faced substantial costs for roofing and heating. A wine tasting in September, the first for some time, raised £850, also for the church.

The Harvest Appeal included a meal where people paid what they could and



£1,215 was raised for The Upper Room. As in previous years, a large collection of goods, both food and non-food, came from the church and local schools and was managed by us for onward transportation.

The Quiz Night in November had bookings for 70 people, well above last year, so we moved the event from the hall to the church, where the moveable seating played a useful role. The £374 raised was split between the London Churches Refugee Fund and our link church in Mecuburi, Northern Mozambique. A further £313 was donated for LCRF.

The PCC again approved £1,500 from church funds being

for Welcare (£1,250) and Bishop Wand School (£250).

Christian Aid Week raised £3,000 an increase on £2,338 in 2023, whilst The Children's Society raised £1,144, 10% up on 2023. £840 came from signing up for direct debits.

The charities all benefit greatly from our support — they write and tell us so. A little bit (more) of your generosity goes a long way.

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES'S WITH CHRISTOPHER CARSON



A BELATED Happy New Year to all our Friends. We hope you and your family had a wonderful Christmas!

Over the festive period

we were delighted to welcome so many new Friends and faces to St James's, not only at the dance, but also to our Carols by Candlelight service and on Christmas Day.

Encouraged by the very positive response to the scheme in the past six months, we will be developing our Friends website (address at the bottom of this column), and if you have not done so already, please do sign up so we can communicate directly with you.

Our calendar of activities has filled up, with exciting events planned throughout 2025. We held a Bridge Drive in January, with thanks to organiser Jenny Breedon.

The next event is on **Saturday 1 March**. *The 48* is a talk by Graham McHutchon who, following a 40-year career at BBC News, embarked on a tour of the US by RV (recreational vehicle). He drove 48,000 miles through 48 States in 48 months. His talk, illustrated with stunning images, will be followed by Q&As. This is a great chance to plan your US road trip! Tickets are on sale (see p3).

Delighted raffle winner!

Congratulations to Gill Powell, pictured, whose ticket was drawn in the *Win Your Weight in Wine Raffle* at November's ceilidh.

She shared the prize with her family over Christmas. The draw raised £1600, at a very successful event. As a result, we are holding two ceilidhs this year, in June and November!



We'll be running another Shrove Tuesday Supper on **Tuesday 4 March** at 7pm. The two course meal includes cottage pie (meat or veg) followed by pancakes and a glass of Prosecco, all for £15 (see p3).

Easter is a remarkably busy time at St James's, and you may also care to join us on Mothering Sunday **30 March** at 10am for an All Age Service. We are a church where everyone is welcome.

We have many exciting events lined up for the coming months, including two ceilidhs. Watch this space!

website: friendsofstjames.org.uk

GIVING BACK



What it means to be one of the UK's 15m volunteers

PRINCESS Alice Hospice in Esher opened in 1985 to provide care for those with terminal or life-limiting illnesses, including cancer, motor neurone disease and respiratory conditions. Patients can receive care and support for as long as it is needed whether that is a few days, weeks, months or years.

Palliative care includes pain relief, help with maintaining mobility, symptom management and emotional and spiritual support. The hospice also offers support to the patient's relatives and friends.

The hospice has patients from an area covering Virginia Water, East Horsley, Banstead, Richmond, Hounslow, Leatherhead and everywhere in between covering 600sq miles and approximately a million people. It has 24 beds for in-patients, all in ensuite single rooms on the ground floor, with French windows giving views of the gardens, the inner courtyard and the moat. On milder days, the patients' beds can be wheeled directly outside.

Specialist teams also go out into the community to treat patients in their own homes or care setting.

There is a Wellbeing Centre offering a range of outpatient services including arts and crafts, exercise and relaxation, seated yoga, aromatherapy and reflexology, and support and discussion groups for carers. This service has been used by several of our congregation. The hospice also has a small multi-faith sanctuary - one of the most spiritual places I know - and pastoral support volunteers offer spiritual support to those who would like it.

Annual costs

It costs £ 11.5 million a year to provide free care for patients. Only 20 % of this comes from NHS grants and the rest is provided by legacies, which make up about a third of the income, fundraising events and the high street shops.

Princess Alice Hospice has over 1300 volunteers in 70 + different roles, volunteering in the hospice, community, their shops and from home. Shop volunteers are the biggest group with around 560 volunteers across 42 shops.

Compassionate Neighbours offer friendship, support and a listening ear to people living in their local community, sometimes with serious, long-term or terminal illness who often struggle with loneliness. These two roles, together with support at fundraising events, are the areas where volunteers are always particularly needed.

Hospice-based volunteering opportunities include reception duties, the coffee shop, flower-arranging, ward support, gardening, administration, complementary therapies, Wellbeing Centre, Man Shed and pastoral support.

Coffee shop volunteer

I have volunteered in the coffee shop since 2015 (with an



At your service Susan in the café

HOSPICE KINDNESS IN ACTION

Many people think that working in a hospice must be depressing or sad, but as **Susan Horner** explains, that isn't the case. There are laughs as well as tears, and helping families and friends through the most difficult of times makes it all worthwhile.



Teamwork Some of the fundraising volunteers

enforced break during Covid). The coffee shop is open daily and sells tea, coffee, and a range of sandwiches and snacks to staff and patients' visitors, and provides a listening ear if they wish. It is a very flexible role: most of us have a regular three-hour shift, which may be weekly, fortnightly or monthly, and a few are 'floaters' who fill in gaps as needed. An email is sent out every week listing the gaps and any of us who are available offer to do an extra shift.

Permanent hospice staff are available to support and help volunteers as required; in my role the kitchen staff will always answer questions and sort out any problems – nothing is ever too much trouble for them.

Calm and compassionate

People may think the hospice is a sad or distressing place, but it is not so at all. The atmosphere is calm, unhurried and compassionate. It is friendly and welcoming, and staff and helpers all have a smile. Of course, visitors will be sad that their relatives are very ill, but they are invariably grateful and

happy that they are being cared for in such a peaceful and compassionate place.

The whole ethos of the hospice is 'We can...' and there are no unnecessary restrictions. Those visiting patients can bring in dogs and somebody once even brought a horse to look through the window of a patient! Relatives of those receiving end-of-life care can stay overnight.

A privilege

The hospice is a wonderful place to volunteer, and I feel it is a privilege to be a small part of this community. We are very lucky to have such a place so near to us, with dedicated staff and volunteers providing care and support when it is most needed.

■ To find out more, please visit: pah.org.uk/volunteers.

