

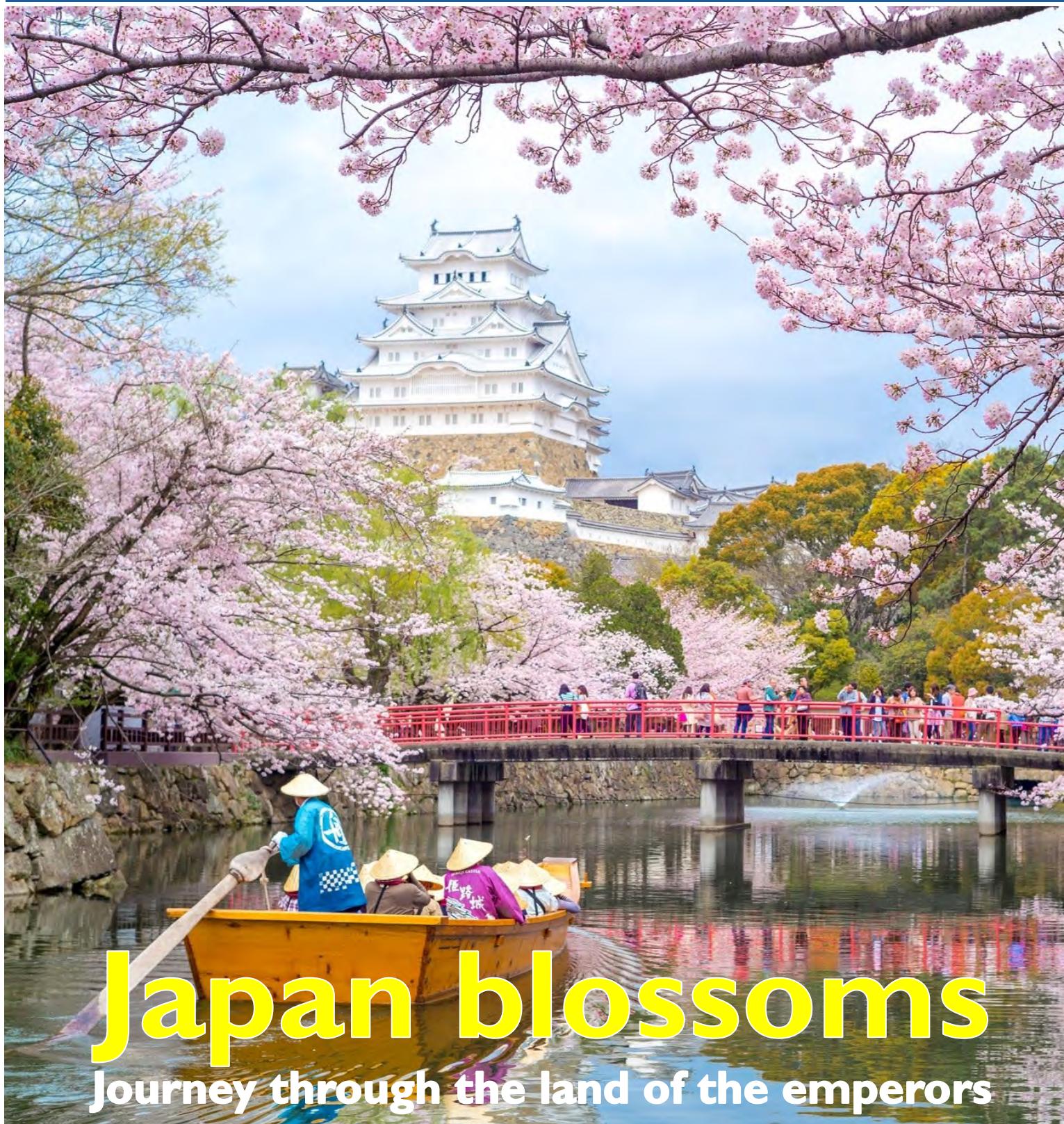
AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2018

SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

YOUR FREE COPY



Japan blossoms
Journey through the land of the emperors

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk or find us on



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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CURATE Rev Jacky Cammidge

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister and has been at St James's since starting her ordination training. Jacky is 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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ASSISTANT PRIEST 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, often out and about on his trademark red scooter. Julian is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren and nine grandchildren.

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Letter from the Editor

We do seem to suffer from extremes with the weather! Lovely as the high temperatures and sunshine are, trying to work, travel or even water the garden becomes a challenge at 30°C!

The beautiful weather meant we had a splendid turn-out on both days of the St James's Day weekend last month. I am sure lots of photos will appear from trips up the spire, which proved very popular, as did ringing the bells.

We are now in peak holiday season and this issue has a feature about Japan. Don and Griselda Barrett spent time seeing the real country, not just the tourist trail.

Our favourites features hymns, which Sandra Winterburn has found inspiring throughout her life. Her love of singing certainly comes through. No doubt it will make you think about your favourites and special occasions in your lives.

If you are going away we wish you well and hope you will return refreshed. If you are doing something special we would welcome an article.

Best Wishes

Janet



Cover photo: The spectacular Himeji Castle, part of a world heritage site, in southern Japan

SPIRE

The Spire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James. We make no charge for this magazine, but if you are a regular reader we hope that you will contribute towards printing costs to enable us to expand our outreach across the parish. Cheques should be made payable to the PCC of St James, Hampton Hill and sent to Spire Appeal c/o the church office.

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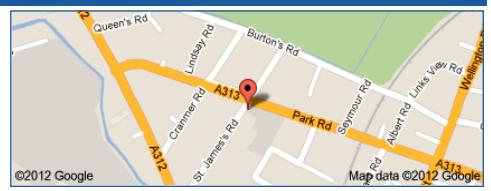
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Clerical Capers



'Hello — looks like the organist and the vicar have fallen out.'

Travelling light and not just when on holiday



**DEREK
WINTERBURN**

enjoy holidays; I just don't like packing. I don't like packing because I am always worried that I might forget something. Sadly there have been notable occasions when I have arrived at various destinations and found I had left behind... my coat, my shoes, a comb, a toothbrush or my pyjamas.

Then there is the particular curse of modern packing - battery chargers. Yes, I have at different times forgotten my phone or my camera chargers.

So that's my first problem: I am usually so distracted when packing, that I leave something essential behind.

My shameful essentials!

But the other reason not to like packing is my shame at having so many 'essential' things. In my head I want to travel lightly.

At the beginning of the movie *Up in the Air* George Clooney moves swiftly through the airport queues because he has packed only what is essential, and nothing that will slow him down at the checkpoints. (*See YouTube: Up In the Air Packing: I am home*).

Yet I end up packing sets of clothes for all kinds of weather, an alarming number of toiletries and pharmaceuticals, various digital devices, and a pile of books.

Some good advice

The Letter to the Hebrews gives us good advice. Although the original imagery is about athletics, rather than travelling, we read: 'Let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us "move on" looking to Jesus.'

Holiday time, whether it involves travel or it is a staycation, whether it is for two weeks or just an afternoon, gives us an opportunity to leave behind some of the weighty 'stuff' in our lives, live with less for a bit, and then return sitting more lightly with what we have.

It is also an opportunity to put down our bad habits, the selfish patterns of behaviour, and try out acting differently in



But going away only underlines what is true at home - how much stuff I have. Having moved home, twice in the past 10 years or so, downsizing each time, I would like to think that everything we possess we recently evaluated and chose to have. But even just looking in front of me on my desk there are: a penny coin, a cassette tape insert and a broken bike-elastic clip, amongst lots of other things... All 'arrived' one day, and have never left.



a different place, so that when we go back to normal we are ready to 'turn over a new leaf'.

Live life with less

I hope, too, that if over the summer the pressure of life is less, then there is an opportunity to 'look to Jesus'. Before decluttering was even heard of he showed us what it was like to live a full life, with very little.

He made the most of his time in the open air. Looking around at the birds and the flowers, he taught that as God provided for animals and plants he would provide for his children. Marking the frailty of life, Jesus said that 'life does not consist in the abundance of possessions'. Watching for the rain to come, he said that our heavenly Father cares for each of us equally.

We all know how busy life can be. There is an old song, 'Take time to be holy, the world rushes on... By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be'; that is a sound judgement, that spiritual change needs our attention and God's action.

Perhaps the next few weeks offer the opportunity to 'look to Jesus' in a new way.

Have a great summer!



St James Hampton Hill Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8-8:30am

Parish Communion 9:30-10:30am

Returning from summer break on 9 Sep

Together at Eleven 11-11:35 am

followed by crafts and refreshments

To tide you over there is one date:

19 Aug 11am Summer Special

Mon-Fri

(but not Tuesdays)

Morning Prayer 9:15-9:40am

Tuesdays

7, 21, 28 Aug; 4, 18, 25 Sep

Holy Communion 9:30-10:15 am

14 Aug, 11 Sep

Holy Communion and Coffee 10-11:30 am
(2nd Tuesday of month)

Fairtrade Stall

Sunday 2 Sep 10:30-11:30 am

Stock up on all your Traidcraft goodies and do take a look at the unique craft items. They make perfect gifts!

Connections

Tuesday 4 Sep 11am-12:30 pm
(1st Tuesday of month)

Our drop-in session for older people returns from the summer break with refreshments, games, crafts and exercises

Ark Playgroup

Mondays 10, 17, 25 Sep 10:30 am-12:15 pm
Our weekly playgroup for toddlers and carers returns from its summer break.
£2 per family.

PCC Meeting

Thursday 13 Sep 8pm (Hall)

Pop-up Cinema (FREE ENTRY)

Saturday 15 Sep 6.30 pm

Breathe (12A rating)

The inspiring true love story of Robin and Diana Cavendish, an adventurous couple who refuse to give up in the face of a devastating disease, living life to the full and taking every breath. Starring Andrew Garfield, Claire Foy, Tom Hollander and Hugh Bonneville.



Doors open at 6:00pm. No need to book—just turn up. Snacks and drinks on sale.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hall refurbishment set for summer holidays



THE HALL is to undergo major refurbishment over the summer break.

Wall-mounted radiators will replace the existing ones. All the pipework on the walls will go too as the workings are taken inside the cavities.

The wooden floor will be sanded and re-sealed, giving it a good few more years' use.

The toilets will be decorated and have new lighting and flooring. The carpet on the stairs and in the Upper Room will be replaced.

Derek, our vicar, said: 'The hall is used not only by the church, but also by a large number of community organisations and groups. We wish to provide a safe and

pleasant environment for all.'

The PCC agreed to cover the cost of the work from the legacy fund.

Other PCC actions

■ The PCC also appointed a new cleaning company to take over the hall and church toilets from September.

■ The borough council has approved our plans to replace the two notice boards on Park Road and St James's Road. The cost of this work will be met by Rodney Taylor's legacy.

■ The PCC agreed to increase our contribution to next year's Common Fund by the rate of inflation, 2.5%, and to make a donation to St Richard's Project Grow.

Connections across our parish

IT IS SIX months since the first Connections meeting for older people, and it has now become a popular event, held in church on the first Tuesday of the month.

Coryn Robinson, who had the initial vision, is part of a team of helpers who serve tea, coffee and cakes.

There are regular activities as well as a different craft activity each time. There are books and magazines to take home, games and jigsaw puzzles to complete, gentle

exercises, and the ever-popular carpet bowls!

Recent speakers have included Debbie Nunn, who demonstrated yoga, and we always welcome ideas for future sessions.

We hope to increase the frequency of sessions, so watch this space!

The next meeting is on **Tuesday 4 September** from **11am-12.30pm**. You don't have to be a member of our church to come. There is no charge and no commitment.

Kirstie and the Lenin shipyard

KIRSTIE AND NEIL Hird have sent us news of their travels aboard their boat *L'escale*. They spent the winter in Amsterdam and then toured the Frisian Islands and the NW coast of Germany.



and Finland, plus a two-day ferry trip to St Petersburg.

Kirstie said the northern sky is never completely dark at this time of the year so night sailing is even more exciting. You can follow their progress at www.lescale.me.

FEATURE: TRAVELLING THROUGH JAPAN

Back to the

DON BARRETT

In November last year Griselda and I decided to visit Japan en route to seeing our daughter, who is working in Sydney for a year. Having lived and worked in Indonesia, Thailand and

Vietnam, we were keen to see how different Japan was. We were not disappointed. It is a fascinating country filled with history, customs, amazing food and an easy and safe place to travel around once you get the hang of the system and the rules.

We started our visit in Kyoto, criss-crossing the country, before finishing in Tokyo, travelling on bullet trains, which were punctual, fast and crowded. This did not matter as all seats had to be reserved and there is a marvellous system that enables you to send your luggage in advance.

Kyoto, considered to be the storehouse of Japan's traditional culture, was originally founded as HEIAN-KYO (tranquillity and peace capital) and served as the emperor's residence from 794 until 1868 when the capital moved to Tokyo. It has been ravaged by wars and fires but, due to its historical value, escaped destruction during World War II.

Our first visit was to the Imperial Palace, which sits in a walled complex in the middle of the Imperial Park. Over time the palace has been plagued by fires and reconstructed several times. The present buildings date from 1855.

The complex includes beautiful gardens, the best being the emperor's inner garden which has meandering streams spanned by stone bridges. Every tree, stone and pond has been placed for maximum effect in a perfect combination.

There were vivid autumn colours, a feature of our holiday.



The Genbaku Dome was the only structure left standing in the area where the first atomic bomb exploded on 6 August 1945.

With dense cities, imperial palaces, mountainous parks and thousands of shrines and temples, Japan is a land of contrasts. History looms large, with the oldest continuous hereditary monarchy in the world and the scars of nuclear war. But with bullet trains and technological advances, Japan is today poised for dramatic economic growth.



Shibuya Crossing, said to be the busiest intersection in the world — certainly in Tokyo!

future in Japan



The shimmering Golden Pavilion, Kyoto, is said to represent the Pure Land of Buddha in this world

There are 1600 Buddhist temples and over 400 Shinto shrines in Kyoto. We managed to see eight of them in two days! The first, and one of the largest, was Kiyomizu, built in 798, but reconstructed in 1633 and perched on a hill overlooking the city.

This was followed by a visit to the Chion-in, the head temple of Jodo Shu (Pure Land Sect) Buddhism founded by Honen in 1234. In a time of continuous war and starvation for the people, the mainstream teaching of Buddhism was that only those who completed austere training, or who were wealthy, would be saved.

Honen questioned Buddhism in its existing form and discovered teaching that anyone, regardless of status or gender, who wholeheartedly chanted the *nembutsu Namu Amida Butsu* would be saved. This gave salvation and hope to the masses. Now, 800 years later his teachings are still a source of faith for the largest Buddhist sect. The present temple has the biggest temple gate in Japan and the 70-ton bell is the country's largest. It is struck 108 times on New Year's Eve.

Pure Land of Buddha

Northwest Kyoto contains two of the most famous sights, Kinkaku-ji (the Golden Pavilion) and Ryoan-ji. The Pavilion and its garden, part of the Kinkaku-ji temple, is said to represent the Pure Land of Buddha in this world. The shimmering gold is beautifully reflected in the surrounding lake.

Ryoan-ji is the site of one of the famous rock gardens. A rectangle of sand, 25 metres by 10 metres, has an austere collection of 15 carefully placed rocks, apparently adrift in a sea of sand.

Arashiyama at the base of Kyoto's western mountains is the second most important sightseeing area. Tenru-ji temple has a 14th century Zen garden, designed to match the natural landscape of mountains in the distance.

as if they were part of the garden.

Fushimi Inari-Taisha was the only Shinto shrine we visited. It has been the place of worship for the guardian god of abundant crops, businesses, prosperity and family safety since 711. It is famous for having thousands of vermilion torii (Shinto shrine gates) spread across a thickly wooded



mountain. Walking through them, pictured above, is utterly mesmerizing.

We spent a day at Nara, the first capital of Japan due to the presence of Todai-ji, which belongs to the Kegon school of Buddhism. The main hall is the world's largest wooden building. It houses a bronze statue of Buddha that is 15 metres tall and weighs 500 tons. Each nostril is 50 cm wide.

We next stopped at Himeji to see the White Egret Castle, pictured on the cover. It is Japan's most spectacular castle, surrounded by defensive walls. Attackers faced being shot at through 844 gun holes with a further 153 slots for arrows. It was never taken by siege.

Moved by Hiroshima

Our visit to Hiroshima was moving and memorable. On 6 August 1945 it was destroyed by the first atomic bomb attack. The Peace Memorial Museum houses a collection of articles salvaged after the bomb. The displays are confronting and personal, a child's melted lunch box, a watch stopped at 8:15. In the Peace Memorial Park is

the Flame of Peace, which will burn until all the world's nuclear weapons are destroyed.

From Hiroshima we went north to Takayama in the Hida Mountains. We stayed in a traditional Ryokan inn with tatami mats and futons, where you cannot wear shoes and are encouraged to walk around in Yukata, light cotton robes. The communal hot springs was an experience, but a good place to be when it is sleeting outside.

Everything about Tokyo is big

Our last few days were spent in Tokyo, which is like 10 cities crammed into one. We arrived in the Shibuya area, a mass of giant video screens and the centre of Japanese teenage culture. It made us feel very old! One of the features is the Shibuya crossing. Sometimes more than a thousand people cross at each light change.

The next day we visited the Asabusa district, where an atmosphere of the Tokyo of past decades survives despite the extensive bombing in WW2.

The other wonderful experience was the delicious food and fortunately our guide loved food and was able to recommend fascinating and inexpensive places to eat.

We really had no idea of what to expect of our visit to Japan, but it was altogether a wonderfully fascinating and enriching experience.



Around the Spire

Sun shines for our celebrations

ST JAMES'S DAY became two days this year. Saturday 30 June was rebranded as Open to View with the focus on encouraging the local community and come and visit the church.

We dropped postcards through some 3000 letter boxes, inviting people to discover more about the church, and about 120 people came through the doors to listen to an organ recital, learn about the church, climb the tower and ring the bells. A bottle tombola did brisk business.

Sunday's service was well attended and the Rev Ben Lovell from St Mary's, Hampton, preached.

Afterwards a barbecue lunch, supported by Robson's butchers, was served in the vicarage garden. There was a churchyard treasure hunt. A raffle and auction, supported by local traders, was also held. Over both days we raised more than £900.



Above: Sunday's choir.
Left: our guest speaker, the Rev Ben Lovell;
Below: barbecue team and the lunch options.
Bottom: group photo



Above: left, Saturday's Traidcraft stall; right: spire view
Below: left, one of the flower displays; right, bell-ringers





**KAREN
ROACH**

It has been a busy few months for the children at St James's, with two community events - the Hampton Hill Summer Fair and St James's Day. We had a craft table in Bushy Park next to the ever-popular dog show during the fair, pictured above. Children had the chance to make a 'jumping puppy' as well as sport some canine 'tattoos'. These tied in with our pop-up cinema presentation of the *Secret Life of Pets* back at church in the afternoon. We also awarded the prizes in the fair's Hilly Dog competition.

Two weeks later we once again invited the community to church, this time for our *Open to View* day, where a great many people had a look around, climbed the spire and rang the bells, enjoyed refreshments, did some crafting and watched the film *Swallows and Amazons*.

On St James's Day itself the children participated in a treasure hunt in the



Shell Seeker leaders retire

TWO LONG-STANDING
Shell Seekers leaders retired at the end of term. Linda Webb and Nicky Hetling, centre left and right, were given bouquets of flowers and cards signed by the children on behalf of all of us at St James's.



St Augustine's Monastery



**LAURENCE
SEWELL**

St Augustine to the area to carry out their work of evangelism. In 1537 they sent Fray Andres Antonio de la Roa to run a mission amongst the people and in 1553 began the construction of the earliest monastery in the area. This was one of a series of monasteries designed by Fray Andres de Mata combining religious and defensive characteristics into a fortress-like building with crenellated walls and buttresses, common to the architecture of the missions and churches at this time, in what was termed 'New Spain'.

The monastery was inaugurated in 1557. Some 10 years later and again in 1587, the buildings were attacked by the hostile Chichimec tribes from the north-west and destroyed. The Augustines abandoned the area to be replaced by the Dominican order in the 17th century who were no more successful with overcoming the hostility of the surrounding Indian tribes.

Only finally, a century later, did the Franciscans succeed in establishing a permanent missionary presence under Fray Junipero Serra. Over this period of history the buildings suffered despoliation from various uses, including serving as a barracks, a gaol and stables!

Xilitla today

Today the monastery serves as the Catholic Church and, given its historic significance, has been declared a national monument. Much of the interior and exterior structure was in a poor state of repair, so in 2004 a large restoration project was started under the foundation *Pro Ex-Convento Agustino de Xilitla* and the National Council of Arts and Culture (CONACULTA) that undertook major works until 2008.

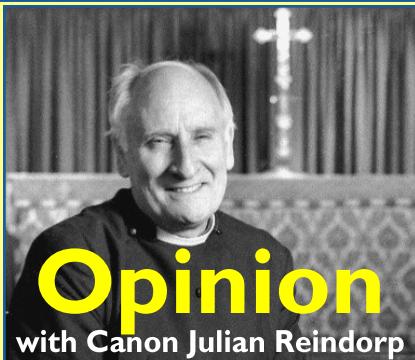
Xilitla is known for its celebrations each year on St Augustine's day, 28 August, when a Mass is celebrated accompanied by processions, fireworks, dancing, and bull-riding.

Interestingly, Xilitla has an association with the UK. The eccentric English artist Edward James (1907-1984), established a garden on the outskirts of the town, called *Las Pozas*. Here, he created a series of waterfalls and pools in a subtropical garden together with towering surrealist sculptures.

The garden is still open to the public. His erstwhile house in the centre of Xilitla, known as *El Castillo*, is now a hotel.



Part of the garden of surrealist Edward James



Opinion with Canon Julian Reindorp

BABIES NHS COSTS

I was amazed to read that NHS maternity hospitals pay nearly £1000 insurance premium for every baby they deliver to protect staff against the soaring costs of medical negligence cases. Last year 651,000 babies were delivered and £613m was paid in premiums. Each week about 25 babies are injured during birth, of whom between four and five have lifelong brain damage.

Last year maternity and other accidents claims cost the NHS £65bn compared with £26bn in 2014. The amount is almost seven times the UK's annual payments to the EU and UK's second biggest debt after nuclear decommissioning.

AFTER THE FIRE

Alan Everett, the parish priest of St Clements, Notting Dale, the parish that includes Grenfell Tower, has written a book of reflections about his experience. He got up at 3 am to open his church to welcome those escaping from the fire. Alan Johnson, the former Labour Home Secretary, says, 'Alan tries to find words for Grenfell and does so better than anyone else I've read.'

His book, *After the Fire*, published by Canterbury Press at £12.99, and widely available, has the powerful reflections of a parish priest who has spent 30 years in working class communities.

GENDER FLUIDITY

Vital as they are for our Christian faith, I have never believed the Old and New Testaments have revealed all of what God has to say about the issues of our time. The battle to end the slave trade was a long struggle in the 18th century, and there is clearly much modern slavery.

I have long believed that the church needs to respond both more positively and pastorally to gay marriage. Transgender issues are more complicated. It seems clear that gender fluidity is on the rise.

I appreciated the view of Justine Greening MP, when Equalities Minister, that gender reassigning should be fully 'de-medicalised'. The present Minister, Penny Mordaunt, said to a House of Commons select committee, 'We need to address people's concerns, but fundamentally I think that discrimination and bigotry is very much like what gay men faced in the 1980s... We need to set the tone for the debate we are about to have, and to show our complete solidarity with the trans community as we do it.'

BIBLES REMOVED

The Gideons donated 344 New Testament Bibles to the new Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, but the hospital decided to remove them after someone claimed they gave Christianity 'preferential treatment,' reported the *Daily Express*.

The hospital trust said, 'All 344 Bibles remain available to patients, but we took the decision to halt the direct provision of them into social areas and single bed rooms in order to consider the most accessible yet appropriate locations, consulting with the Person-Centred Health and Care Committee.'

The Bucks Health Care NHS Trust have appointed a humanist chaplain to lead a team of three Christian chaplains. One journalist described this as an overdue acknowledgement of the changing religious nature of Britain. How much has the church contributed to this by our failure to witness to the truth and practical application of our faith in the public sphere?

WOMEN PRIESTS and RCs?

Retired Roman Catholic Bishop John Crowley, formerly of Middlesbrough, says the time has come to re-examine the issue of women's ordination to the priesthood. In 1965 when ordained a priest he 'sensed on a purely instinctive, subjective level that whether someone was married or single, male or female, should not be determinative in admitting someone to the priesthood.' He was responding to a cardinal who said the church's teaching definitively excludes women from the priesthood.

CHARITIES WE SUPPORT UPPER ROOM

Hungry for a second chance



DENNIS
WILMOT

St James's has supported the Upper Room for many years, in recent times, mostly through Harvest appeals for food as well as cash donations.

The Upper Room's vision is very simple – a society where the underprivileged and destitute can have their self-confidence restored to enable them to rebuild their lives and make positive contributions to society.

The charity supports socially excluded and economically disadvantaged people across London, including the homeless, ex-offenders and destitute migrants.

The fundamental assumption is that by meeting basic needs, such as sustenance and clothing, it is possible to move on with support to improve confidence, employability and life chances. This support can mean better outcomes for the wider community, such as fewer victims of crime. Ex-offenders who have been through The Upper Room's programmes have much lower re-offending rates than the national average.



Free driving lessons can kickstart a new future



Fancy meeting you here... this inflatable was a shady place for youngsters to hang out during St James's Day celebrations in the vicarage garden. With the sun beating down, they weren't the only ones trying to stay cool!



Serving hot meals remains the single most important service

The Upper Room's most important service is the free meals it serves to 60-80 people, five days a week (over 26,000 hot meals per year), as well as free toiletries, clothing and bedding (though not accommodation), as well as free haircuts, and referrals, including to Foodbanks.

Employment support is another area of help, providing skills training to improve people's chances of securing employment. In the past three years the Upper Room has helped 200 disadvantaged people to secure employment, and improved the employability of hundreds more.

The UR4Driving project helps people pass their driving test and is open to those with a criminal conviction who want to overcome the barriers this poses.

A driving licence is often the key to gainful employment. Since 2010 over 190 ex-offenders have obtained a licence through The Upper Room's project.

The Upper Room also provides one-to-one and telephone advice. Free counselling sessions are also provided for a broad range of emotional and wellbeing issues including anxiety, depression and addictions.

Support the Upper Room on 7 October

As in previous years the Harvest Appeal will be supporting The Upper Room by asking you to donate mainly non-food items (details nearer the time), plus the plate collection on 7 October.

REGISTERS

JUNE

BAPTISM

17 Alexander Oscar Condon, Teddington

MARRIAGE

23 Ben Alexander Stark and Chelsea Irene Theresa Kerr, Hampton

FUNERAL

27 Robert Frank Hampton, 77, Hampton

INTERMENT OF ASHES

26 Annabelle Genevieve Johnson, 59, Hampton Wick



Our lives seen in song



SANDRA WINTERBURN

I grew up in Surbiton, not so far away. In fact, the 281 bus went past the end of my road. It often said Fulwell on the front – I had no idea where this was! But now I pass the bus garage on a regular basis, travelling from St James's vicarage to work as a maths teacher in Twickenham. My passion is explaining truth to young people, whether at church or in a classroom.

Wide, Wide as the Ocean



As a child I was taken to Sunday School – dropped off by my parents on their way to church. We spent a fun time singing, hearing stories, gaining stickers and colouring. *Wide, wide as the ocean* was one of my favourite action songs because I knew that it told of how much God loved me. Using my arms to describe how wide, high and deep his care for me is, was so much fun.

Lord of the Dance



Monthly church parade as a Girl Guide was exciting. We marched along the road the mile from the church hall to St Matthew's Church, Surbiton. *Lord of the Dance* was a highlight at these services. It was dramatic hearing the change in tone and pace

talking about Good Friday 'It's hard to Dance with the Devil on your back' compared to the resurrection – 'They buried my body and they thought I'd gone – But I am The Dance, and I still go on'.

Majesty!

As a student at Bristol University in the early 1980s, I came across a whole tranche of contemporary Christian music that had been written over the previous decade. Many young people attended the same church as me, where the worship orchestra helped lift the congregation's eyes and spirits. *Majesty!* made me think more about the kingship of Jesus and the respect he was due.



Praise to the Lord
In 1983 Derek and I were married in Surbiton. Our wedding service started with *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation*.

This was a long-time favourite with its positive flow of words and the call for 'All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!' The wonder of creation brings me back to God's goodness time and again and makes me want to sing His praise.

I the Lord of Sea and Sky



Following time at Oxford, where Derek was training for ordination, we moved to Islington. This was our first experience of ministry. We spent time with a few folk who needed our help. From that time onwards, I have been moved whenever I sing the words, 'Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.' In Islington, Hackney, Hampton and Hampton Hill this has been my prayer.

Shine, Jesus, Shine



In 1989 we moved to Hackney, where we lived in the middle of a council estate. The small congregation raised the rafters with the now well-known Graham Kendrick hymn '*Shine, Jesus, Shine*'. The words help me to look out to the rest of our nation and to pray that we will experience more of God's grace, mercy and light in our world. It also reminds me of my grandmother who, aged 102, chose it for her funeral.

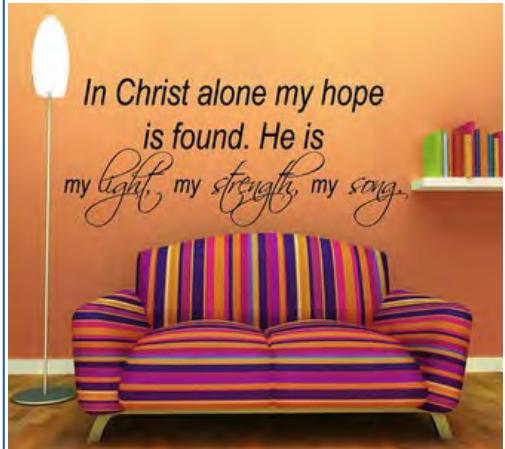
Be thou my Vision

I have chosen this hymn because I have sung it in many different settings, including at my son's wedding, and in a variety of styles: modern, folk and traditional. Moving



to Hampton in 1996 was a joy in many ways, but it was very sad to leave friends who had supported us starting our family. This hymn helps me to keep my eyes on Jesus Christ, wherever I am living and to rely on Him:
Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, and Thou my high Tower;
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power, of my power.

In Christ Alone



I first sang this modern hymn at my Godmother's funeral in 2007. I was bowled over! I have sung it many times since, as well as joining in with the words on *Songs of Praise*. The tune is uplifting and the verses powerful.

This hymn reflects on my favourite Bible passage from the end of Romans 8, where Paul asserts that, 'Nothing in all creation can separate us from Christ's love'.

If you don't know this hymn, use this link to listen to it:
[youtube.com/watch?v=wNRfUmI2ch0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNRfUmI2ch0).

If I could choose just one hymn, this would be it!

10,000 Reasons

I love singing and praising God! This song, written in 2011, starts '*Bless the Lord, oh my soul, O my soul, Worship His Holy name.*' Life has its ups and downs, its joys and sorrows. But whatever life throws at me, I want to be praising God for who is and what he has done for me.

*The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes*

