

Hampton Hill's Parish Magazine

DEC 2011 / JAN 2012

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thespire

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

please take a copy



Happy
Christmas
to all our
readers

FULL DETAILS OF OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES PAGE 7

thespire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James.

We make **no charge** for this magazine, but we hope that you will contribute towards the production costs to enable us to expand our important outreach across the parish.

If you are a regular reader **please consider making an annual donation**. Cheques should be made payable to **The PCC of St James** and sent to **Spire Appeal** c/o the Parish Office.

Thank you.

GET IN TOUCH

➔ **STORIES, FEATURES**

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➔ **AROUND THE SPIRE**

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➔ **WHAT'S ON**

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➔ **WEBSITE / YOUNG SPIRE**

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➔ **CIRCULATION**

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➔ **NEXT ISSUE / COPY DEADLINE**

The February issue is published on 29 January. All copy must be with us by **Mon 9 January**.

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When you have finished with this magazine, please recycle it.

Welcome
Dec 2011 / Jan 2012



The Countdown to Christmas seems to get earlier each year and it is hard to go into any shops and not be surrounded with the fripperies of the festive season! No doubt the Christmas music and jingle bells will begin very soon!

Several members of the congregation sold Charity Christmas cards for a couple of Sundays and at The Ark, raising £600. Thank you to everyone who supported us.

Christmas has always been celebrated in Hampton Hill in a special way with the parade and all the decorations in the High Street. Our church also becomes a very active focus of the local community with a wealth of carol services from local schools, the Voluntary Care Group and our own celebration of lessons and carols. All the Christmas services are listed on Page 7 and you will be very welcome at any of these.

A very Happy Christmas and New Year to all our readers from thespire editorial team.

Best wishes

Janet

Janet Nunn,
Editor

For the latest news: stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

➔ **CHURCH AND OTHER CONTACTS**

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➔ **AMENDMENTS** to the Editor, please.

OUR CLERGY



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Revd Peter Vannozzi
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➔ **BAPTISM AND WEDDING ENQUIRIES**

These should be made in person in church on a Saturday morning from 10-10.30am.

PARISH OFFICE



➔ **PARISH ADMINISTRATOR**
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SERVICES FOR DEC / JAN

Sundays
8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Parish Communion

4 December — 2nd Sunday of Advent
Christingle Sunday
8am and 11am: Isaiah 40.1-11; 2 Peter 3.8-15a;
Mark 1.1-8
9.30am: John 1.6-14

11 December — 3rd Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-end; 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24;
John 1.6-8, 19-28

18 December — 4th Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7.1-11, 16; Romans 16.25-end;
Luke 1.26-38
6.30pm: Carol Service

24 December — Christmas Eve
4.30pm: Crib Service
11pm: Midnight Mass
Isaiah 9.2-7; Titus 2.11-14; Luke 2.1-20

25 December — Christmas Day
Hebrews 1.1-14; John 1.1-14

1 January — Naming & Circumcision of Jesus
Numbers 6.22-end; Galatians 4.4-7; Luke 2.15-21

8 January — Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

15 January — 2nd Sunday of Epiphany
1 Samuel 3.1-10; Revelation 5.1-10;
John 1.43-end

22 January — 3rd Sunday of Epiphany
Genesis 14.17-20; Revelation 19.6-10;
John 2.1-11

29 January — Presentation of Christ in the Temple - Candlemas
Malachi 3.1-5; Hebrews 2.14-end; Luke 2.22-40

Mondays-Fridays (but not Tuesdays)
9.15am Morning Prayer

Tuesdays
9.30am Holy Communion
1st Wednesday in month
7 December / 4 January
7am Holy Communion

1st Thursday in month
1 December / 5 January
2pm Holy Communion



Leader Column

THE SPIRE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE, PLUS AN EXTENSIVE ARCHIVE

Let's get back to the future this Christmas



Wednesday 17 August — that was the date I saw my first Christmas advert! This was in a pub in the New Forest with the Revd. Debbie

Oades. It encouraged us to 'Book soon for your Christmas party'. The music being played in the pub was a mixed bag of styles, and I hope it was a mistake, but when a Christmas song came on, I felt rather ill!

The song was by the pop group Slade from 1973. It was the Number One that Christmas and was entitled *Merry Christmas Everybody*. The chorus goes:

*So here it is, Merry Christmas,
Everybody's having fun.
Look to the future now,
It's only just begun.*

I was not having Christmas fun in August...

Now, though, here it is, 'Merry Christmas!'

The usual cry goes up 'Christmas begins earlier each year'. Whether true or not, the perception is that advertising for Christmas happens too early, and it starts sooner each year. Then the Christmas music starts. There's a bit of me that gets grumpy when I hear a song such as that of Slade rolled out each year. It is infectiously jolly, but I want to ask, *Is everybody really having fun?* Will that be true in the Horn of Africa? Parts of Japan? Thailand? Libya? Tunisia? Will it be so for people in ill-health? Or who are recently bereaved? Or unable to provide for their children the presents they feel they should have? What fun?

At Christmas there needs to be a balance. It would be sad if people did not feel able to celebrate, yet there is a need to remember others for whom this is a tough time.



Peter Vannozzi

That said, I can't also help smiling when I hear the Slade song. Before writing this, I listened to it again on YouTube. In one way, it gets it absolutely right:

*Look to the future now,
It's only just begun.*

Christmas celebrates the beginning of a new future. A child was born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago who came to show to the world what God was like, and hence what the world could be. Jesus is seen in the Christian tradition as nothing less than the embodiment of God. God is not distant, so utterly other that he can never be known at all. Rather, when we look at Jesus, this is what God is like, as far as our limited human minds can understand him. *Look to the future now* —

indeed so. For the future was born in a stable, lived among us, walked with us, taught us, healed us, died for us, and was raised to life and glory. That is the future that makes Christmas *merry*. It has begun now in Jesus's very self. The future is full of promise — what will we human beings do about it?

So indeed *Merry Christmas, everybody*. I do hope you have fun. If you do, along the way please spare a thought for those less fortunate than you. If this is a difficult time for you, I hope that in the midst of it there may be at least a moment which is lighter. For us all, let's look to the future. It's opened up in Jesus — even as we look back at Christmas to a birth in a particular time and place yet let's also look forwards. For Jesus is not back there still in the manger, but here now, beckoning us, into a future rich with possibilities for our world.

In Thought and Prayer

The Dean of Kings College, Cambridge, wrote this introduction in 1918 to the **Service of Nine Lessons and Carols**, held there on Christmas Eve every year and broadcast by the BBC on Radio 4 and BBC Two. It will be used at St. James's for the **Carol Service on 18 December** at 6.30pm.



Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this city [town, village] of ... and diocese of ...

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

Our Father...

May the almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of angels bring us all.

Amen.



Five churchyard trees to be felled

THE CHURCHYARD will soon look dramatically different following the news that five mature trees are to be felled because of safety fears.

All of the trees are either dead or dying due to decay and are at risk of falling. The extent of the problem came to light when an officer from the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, which is responsible for the churchyard, came to inspect a beech tree that has damaged the boundary wall on Park Road.

Following a survey, Paul Cross, the council's arboricultural officer, highlighted five trees affected by disease and in need of felling.

Two beech trees on either side of the war memorial have aggressive root decay caused by fungus, as has the beech tree next to the boundary wall. Also for the chop are a cedar tree with numerous woodpecker holes within its main stem, and a weeping ash.

The essential work will begin



shortly, paid for by the council. Look out for updates on the pew sheets and website.

The council will plant two black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), two tulip trees (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and two field maple (*Acer campestre*) during next year's planting season (October to March 2013). These are all less susceptible to disease.

Curtain up on new Theatre Club maestro!

PETER HALE is taking over the running of St James's Theatre Club from **Ria Beaumont**, who is bowing out after five-and-a-half years as its organiser.

Peter, a regular at the 8am service and a long-time Theatre Club supporter, has lived in Hampton Hill for 50 years. Both his children, David and Caroline, were baptised at St James's and his daughter also married there.

He said: 'I would like to thank Ria for getting the club off the ground and for all her hard work. I could not stand by and let it all disappear, but Ria will be a hard act to follow.'

Ria set up the club in 2006. She has clocked up 50 productions, mainly at Richmond Theatre. With an average of 15 people per outing,



the club has bought 750 tickets.

She said: 'Doesn't time fly when you're having fun! We started with *A Taste of Honey* in May 2006 and this December 33 members will see *Calendar Girls*.'

Jenny Wright, another supporter, added: 'The club is a wonderful chance to be with the Church family in a social setting, and it has been an absolute joy. Thanks Ria.'

Spread a little Christmas



Many of you will know that St James's Church has supported Welcare in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames for many years. The parish always makes an annual donation from its charitable grants budget and the St James's Ark playgroup made its own significant donation this year. Various gifts have also been collected.

You may not know that this local Christian charity is always looking for volunteer help. This feature article may well encourage you.

Welcare is a Christian charity whose mission is to support and strengthen disadvantaged families from whatever background or religion.

St James's Church supports it and

Revd Peter Vannozzi



recently went to its local centre in Twickenham to see how vital the service is and how we can make Christmas a happier time for the many deserving families

The centre supports about 250 vulnerable families through practical help such as food parcels, clothes, courses and outings. It also gives a lot of emotional support and friendship.

Nila (not her real name) was mentally abused from the start of her marriage, and then physically abused as soon as she became pregnant. Her husband's family turned against her, and her own community offered no help. Eventually with the help of a relative she left her home and went to Welcare in Richmond. There she received practical help and friendship, enabling her to recover her self-esteem. Nila's view is that 'Welcare gave me a new life.'

FOCUS ON Rubber gloves from Sri Lanka

Traidcraft's gloves are made from rubber latex from the Firstlight project. It provides a guaranteed income to small-scale farmers and an extra Fairtrade premium for the community. Washing-up, gardening and heavy duty gloves are all available at our stall.



Registers for October

Baptisms

23 Jack Stephen Butter, Twickenham

23 Harrison Andrew Butter, Twickenham

30 Gabriel Michael Charles Smith, Gloucester

30 Matilda Rose Harriet Smith, Gloucester

Wedding

1 Andrew Richard William Woodger and Lauren Stephanie Garrett, Hampton

Funerals

11 Joy Mary Keogh, 87, Hampton Hill

21 (Michael) John Clifford, 73, Hampton Hill

happiness at



Ongoing work

Welcare in Richmond wants to continue helping people like Nila. Its programmes are all geared towards improving parenting skills and self-esteem, providing advice, guidance and support so that families can help themselves.

Some funding comes from the local authority, various trusts and the Diocese of Southwark, but the economic woes mean funding cuts are happening at the very time the workload is increasing.

In the present climate Welcare in Richmond relies more and more on the support of local churches, not only for income, but for volunteers to help with the work, for gifts in kind and, of course, for prayer.

Christmas Party on 15 December

In our well-to-do area it is hard to imagine children for whom there are no presents or parties, but for families invited to this party it is a reality. As well as presents for the children, the centre likes to give the mothers a small gift.

In the days after the party, packages of presents are made up for parents to give to their children on Christmas Day. Toys are also needed all year round.

Why help?

Christmas celebrates the gift to the world of a child who showed God to the world. The compassion of God was seen in human form. There is every reason to demonstrate compassion in practical ways today.



welcare
strengthening families
in Richmond



How YOU can help Welcare in Richmond

■ If you are coming to the **Crib Service at 4.30pm on Christmas Eve** please consider bringing a new toy to donate to the appeal.

The gift is best left unwrapped; if wrapped, please indicate the age and gender it is suitable for. Take advantage of the 3-for-2 offers at High Street stores.

■ Could you help with preparations for the Christmas party on 15 December (from 1pm)?

■ Donate spare groceries (non-perishable) any time of year — **Buy one Give one Free!**

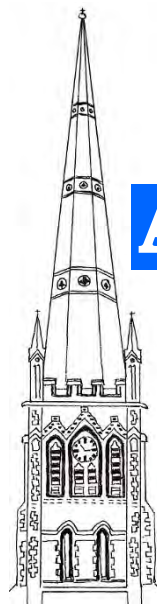
■ Donate spare toys and children's clothes at any time of year — they are always needed.

■ Think of ways to raise money and awareness, such as with a coffee morning.

■ Make a regular monthly donation.

■ The staff always welcome help and with enough notice can help with getting you CRB clearance.

To follow up or to get more information, contact **Jill Clifford, at Welcare (Richmond), telephone 020 8893 9123; or Linda Webb, St James's Welcare Parish Rep, telephone 020 8783 1515.**



If you have some news to share:
✉ smhorner5@yahoo.co.uk

Around the Spire

NEWS FROM HAMPTON HILL AND BEYOND

Celebrations aplenty for 90th birthday

JOHN RAINBOW celebrated his 90th birthday on Sunday 30 October. The congregation joined him for a celebratory drink and birthday cake after Parish Communion. This was followed by a family lunch. Earlier in the week, John and Betty hosted a lunch at the Greencoat Place Centre of Initiatives of Change, at which several of their colleagues over many years joined in similar celebrations. The couple still regularly attend Greencoat Forums. John and Betty thanked everyone for their kind wishes.



We are very pleased to hear of the birth of **William Charles Smith** on 25 October, a son for **Dan and Lisa** and a fourth grandchild for **Prill and Martin Hinckley**. William is seen with his brother, Oliver.

Congratulations to **Dick and Mary Wilde**, who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 11 November. A party for family and friends the following day was attended by four of their children and nine grandchildren; their other daughter and family live in Australia and visited earlier in the year.



GEOFFREY BOWYER has retired as Musical Director of Teddington Choral Society after 25 years. Geoffrey, who served as an organist at St James's Church for many years, remains with the Richmond-based choir, Cantanti Camerati, where he has been musical director since 1974. We extend our best wishes to him.

Keeping it in the family at Butler baptism

TWO OF LIZ BUTLER'S grandchildren were baptised at St. James's on 30 October. Gabriel Michael Charles and Matilda Rose Harriet are the children of Liz's daughter Kirsten and her husband Damian, who were married here at Easter 2005.

Liz made Kirsten's silk wedding dress and velvet cloak for that occasion and she also made Matilda's baptismal outfit from the leftover material.





Join our Sunday School and explore the world!

Young Spire

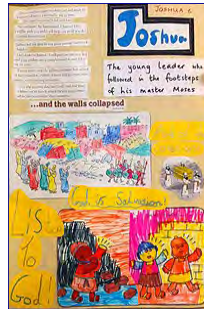
The Shell Seekers

Our Sunday School has a new name and some new ways of doing things to help us to get the most out of our sessions.

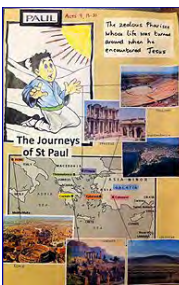
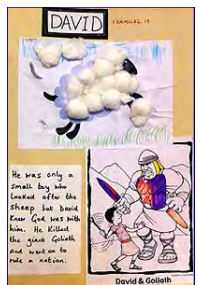
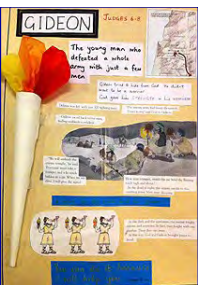


First, *The Shell Seekers* has been chosen as the new identity for our happy band of children – this reflects James's roots as a fisherman when he first met Jesus and was called to be a disciple. It also gives a focus to the children (and the adults that lead them) that we are all searching for the meaning of Jesus in our own lives as we read bible stories, undertake activities and reach out to the community in which we live. In addition, this new name allows us to identify with the fantastic work carried out by *The Ark* team and hopefully enable some children to make the step up to become *Shell Seekers* themselves.

Second, the shell seeking begins a little earlier each Sunday than before. To gain a few extra minutes for our activities, we now start in the Church Hall at 9.25am and aim to come back into church in good time to share communion with family and friends. We often try to provide a 'show and tell' of activities (depending on the success of our creativity) during the notices at the end of the service too.



This past year, as well as using a church calendar-based Sunday School programme for inspiration, we have celebrated the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible by looking at some heroes of the bible and also a few of the many people that contributed to its writing.

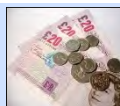


We have also expanded our team of leaders to six – although sadly saying farewell to Louise Rawstone, whose family has moved to Australia for a couple of years. Catherine Gash and Nicola and David Helling have now been joined by Jackie Cammidge and Sarah and Stuart Richardson. They are warmly welcomed, as are any children that would like to join in whenever they come to church.

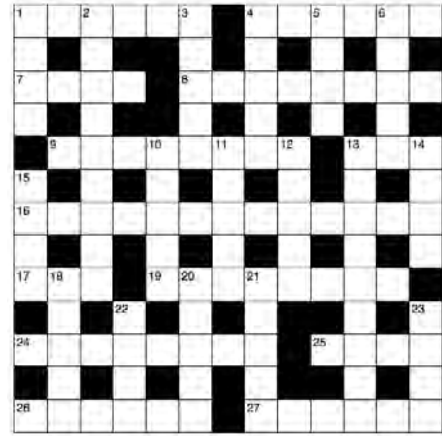
Thanks to all the parents who support this important part of the life of our church – and to the congregation for always showing their appreciation for our activities. Look out for news of our timetable for the New Year which will include a fund-raising activity in the Spring – you have been warned!



Shell Seekers will be hosting a charity fund-raising sale after church on **Sunday 11 December** in the Church Hall. Do join us — and please bring your purses and wallets!

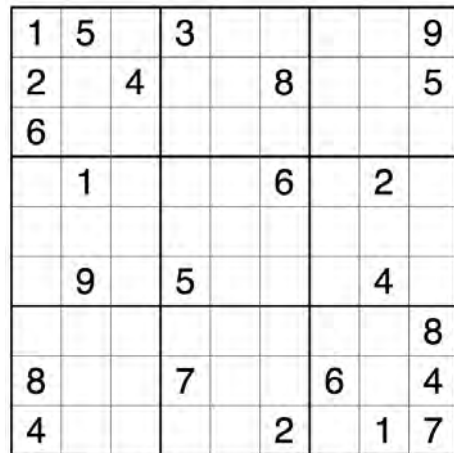


Crossword



- Across**
- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
 - 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
 - 7 In what did the dove carry the olive leaf, when it returned to the ark? (Genesis 8:11) (4)
 - 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
 - 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
 - 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
 - 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
 - 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the US) (1,1,1)
 - 19 Popular New Year's Eve song Auld — — (4,4)
 - 24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
 - 25 The number of stones David chose for his battle with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
 - 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variation' (6)
 - 27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)
- Down**
- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
 - 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
 - 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
 - 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
 - 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
 - 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
 - 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
 - 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
 - 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
 - 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
 - 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
 - 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
 - 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
 - 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
 - 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
 - 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
 - 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)

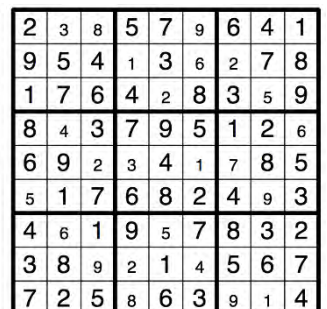
Sudoku



Complete the grid so that every row, column, and each 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 once.

Solutions to both puzzles will appear in the next issue

Solutions to November's puzzles





What's On



opinion

Canon Julian Reindorp

God in the way?

It was an email from a young mother who wanted her small baby to have a moral and ethical upbringing without 'God getting in the way'. I replied that God was about seeking the truth and finding a spiritual basis for our lives. I liked the remark of Ed Miliband, an agnostic, who said, 'We should be brave enough to find the truth whatever it is.' I wanted my children to experience faith at first hand, for then they would understand more naturally people from other world faiths. I wanted them to belong to something wider than just our family. The church with people from all backgrounds is worldwide and through its community life they would grow up at ease with people of every kind.

As my rabbi friend ended a sermon at our church: 'Do remember at the heart of my faith is duty, at the heart of Islam is submission, at the heart of your faith is love. We Jews have been very good at looking after ourselves, after all historically we have had to be. It is you Christians who feel called to care for the whole world: that is because of Jesus of Nazareth. Never forget your calling or your Lord.'

Why Academies for all?

There is a great deal of pressure being put on our local schools for them all to become academies by January 2012. The speed with which these proposals are being rushed through means there has been limited opportunity for public consultation. This would dismantle the valuable support provided to our schools by our council.

In the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames we need to hold on to the long held ideal of a 'family of schools' supported by the local authority. This model is both accountable and efficient and leaves teaching and well-being to properly trained staff and governors.

Many vital services to schools, including special needs provision, curriculum support and help with pupil admission arrangements will be put in jeopardy through this agenda. All schools go through difficulties from time to time, and that is when the support of the local council is particularly vital. Having been a governor of infant, primary and secondary schools I am left feeling the Government is playing ideological football with our children's futures.

Fewer paid Anglican Clergy

The number of Anglican clergy retiring is on the increase and there are expected to be 10% fewer paid members by 2015. Yet the number being ordained is on the increase: last year it was 563 (266 women and 298 men). However, about half were self-supporting, often continuing with their daily paid work. When I was ordained in 1969 there were about 600 ordained a year, but all were paid by the Church.

Women priests now make up more than one in five of the Church's paid clergy. Since women were first ordained in 1994, the total number ordained has increased. By comparison, in the Roman Catholic Church the northern dioceses are expected to lose 40% of their priests by 2020. The former rector of the English College seminary in Rome said allowing married clergy to join the priesthood was one of the long term answers to the shortage.

Rise in Collections

Some good news to end 2011. The Church of England saw a rise in the average donation from its 616,000 regular 'Planned Givers', breaking the £10-a-week mark for the first time. The bad news is that income from dividends, interest and property dropped by a mighty 40%.

Christingle Service

Sunday 4 December, 9.30am

This service supports The Children's Society. Money raised at this service and from children taking away collecting boxes will go to the charity.

An extra Holy Communion service follows at 11am

St James's Carol Service

Sunday 18 December, 6.30pm

Christmas begins with our popular service, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Christmas Eve

Saturday 24 December

4.30pm Crib Service

Young and old are warmly invited to join us as we tell the story of the Nativity. Please consider bringing a new toy to donate to charity.

Advent Course *Jesus — Who? What? How?*

Continues on Mondays, 5 and 12 December, 8pm, 32 Uxbridge Road, Hampton Hill

Celebrate Christmas at St James's Church



11pm *Midnight Mass*
Celebrate in traditional style with readings and hymns.

Christmas Day

Sunday 25 December
8am Holy Communion
9.30am Parish Communion
Celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

New Year's Day

Sunday 1 January 2012
9.30am Parish Communion
There will be no 8am service

stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

Advent is a time when we prepare to greet the coming of Jesus. All are welcome to join a short course at Alan and Jackie Cammidge's home to consider the identity and actions of Jesus, led by Peter Vannozi and David Bell.

St James's Theatre Group

Friday 2 December, 7.30pm, *Calendar Girls*, Richmond Theatre, The Green, Richmond TW9 1QJ
The hit show's final tour. Tickets £24 (saving £5.50).
Please add your name to the lists in church or telephone Ria Beaumont 020 8943 4336. Transport can be arranged.
COMING SOON: Look out for new productions for 2012

Annual Leaf Sweep and Gutter Clean

Saturday 3 December, from 9.30am, St James's Church
This important maintenance work needs YOUR help! All gutters of both the church and the hall need to be cleared of leaves. The courtyard and car park will also swept of leaves. If you can help, please telephone Bryan Basdell on 020 8979 2040 or 078 6782 9196, or email him at bryan.basdell@uk.fujitsu.com.

Concert of Christmas Music

Saturday 3 December, 3pm, St Mary Magdalene Church, Paradise Road, Richmond TW9 1SN
Children in Richmond sing in support of the children of Guguleto in Cape Town. Free entry with retiring collection.



Vicar's View

'Nice idea, Amelia, but I don't think the Angel of the Lord texting the shepherds would have the same dramatic effect.'

Fairly Traded Products for Christmas

Sunday 4 December, 10.30am, St James's Church Hall
Our monthly stall with food and gifts and cards

Visitees' Tea Party

Tuesday 6 December, 3pm, St James's Church Hall
The Visiting Team invites you to catch up with some of our longer-standing friends who are no longer able to attend regular services. There will be tea, sandwiches and cakes.

Christmas Community Service

Wednesday 7 December, 6.30pm, St James's Church
This annual concert, organised by Hampton and Hampton Hill Voluntary Care, features carols, readings and music. Admission is free, with a retiring collection.

Teddington Choral Society

Saturday 10 December, 7.30pm, *On Christmas Night*, St James's Church, Hampton Hill
A musical celebration of the Christmas story, presented as a sequence of eight original carols. The programme will include other carols for choir and audience, accompanied by organ, harp and chamber ensemble. Conductor: Patrick Martin; organist: Geoffrey Bowyer. Tickets £10 (concessions £10, accompanied children under 14 free) from Albert's Music Shop, Twickenham; or on the door.

Cantanti Camerati Concert

Saturday 17 December, 7.30pm, St Mary Magdalene, Church Walk, Paradise Road, Richmond TW9 1SN
Tickets from ABC Music, Kew Gardens; Albert's Music Shop, Twickenham, 020 8898 8020; or on the door.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Sunday 22 January, 6pm, St James's Church
This service is organised by Churches Together Around Hampton. The theme comes from churches in Poland, who have reflected upon how they have been changed and transformed by the many upheavals of their history.



An Evening with Baroness Williams

Thursday 26 January, 7.30pm, The Barn Church, (St Philip & All Saints), Atwood Avenue, Kew, Richmond TW9 4HF
A supper and talk by Baroness Shirley Williams in aid of the Rainbow Fund for South Africa. Tickets £26, including supper and wine, from David Martin, 020 8948 1053.



Your Voice

Sarah English explains what she gets out of attending St James's weekly Ark

Fun, socialising and sanity!



I have always believed that a church not only provides the congregation with a place of worship, but a body of support and friendship, and this is certainly true of a Monday morning at St James's Church. On 17 January this year I woke up to face a challenging day – after four weeks off my husband Chris was returning to work, leaving me alone with our one-month-old daughter Abigail for the whole day. And not only that day, but the next day, and the next day... and so on.

Whilst I loved my new role as Mummy I was not sure how I would cope without support and the day loomed ahead. If it had not been for the prospect of going to *The Ark*, St James's club for toddlers and carers, I think we would probably have spent the day in bed and crib respectively. As it was, I had a reason to get up and out of the house!

The warm welcome which greeted me that first week is what has brought me and many others to St James's every Monday morning. It gave my confidence a boost when, on arrival, the ladies of the committee welcomed me warmly, and, furthermore, appreciated just how much of an achievement it was for me and Abigail to arrive clean, clothed and smiling (well, perhaps smiling is pushing it, but at least I was not fully crying!)

They are always friendly and take time to chat with all who arrive, getting to know all the 'pram pushers' and their young charges. Peter often visits to chat with the adults and make a fuss of the children and the atmosphere within the church is warm and friendly. I would agree with others I've heard commenting on what a lovely playgroup it is.

What I find most invaluable is the company, advice and support from the other mums there. I do have lots of support from my family and friends, however I feel that there are some elements of motherhood that only other mothers fully appreciate.

The relief I have felt on more than one occasion when another person says 'I know exactly how you feel' makes the adjustment to motherhood all the easier.

I am also aware that those friends in a different position will only have a degree of patience as you bemoan disturbed nights, the trials of feeding, and, perhaps more importantly compare tips on the noise a camel or giraffe makes! We have discussed the former extensively but are



still looking for a decision with sound effects, so if anyone has advice please feel free; my elephant noise is also somewhat lacking!

Perhaps I should also mention the more important member of *The Ark* – Abigail. She has always loved coming to church and greets everyone with a smile when we arrive. Now that she is ten months old it has been a pleasure to watch her grow up with the other children who go. I feel that socialising is really important for babies and children and I can imagine her forming solid friendships with the others she plays with on a Monday morning.

The range of toys is very good and there is always an art and craft activity with Carole Greville-Gittings (one of the organisers).

At the moment Abigail tends to try to eat the play-doh and paint, so we avoid the table, but doubtless it will not be long before we are walking home with masterpieces to adorn the fridge.

A highlight for both of us (and I think, all who go) is the singing – brilliantly led by Debbie Nunn – which has given me a chance to remember long-forgotten songs, rhymes and, of course, the actions. There is a large box of 'shakers' available for the children and, whilst they do not necessarily add to the rhythm, they do add to the enjoyment!

It is much more than just a playgroup

The queue outside church on a Monday morning shows how popular the Ark is locally; it is an excellent way to start the week and gives me something to look forward to. Some of you reading this may be surprised at how much importance I place upon those three hours a week; it is, after all, just a playgroup. However, to me, and many who attend, it is much more.

The Ark provides a safe, friendly environment for our children to play, learn and socialise. For the adults, it provides a warm and, perhaps more importantly, an understanding welcome when we arrive 'in the car this week' or 'almost didn't make it'.

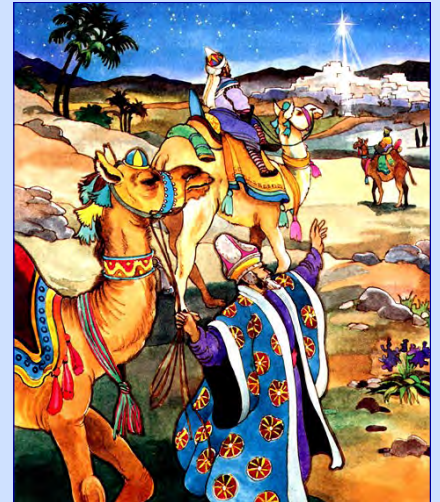
Furthermore, my Monday mornings are now active and social. I have made friends and grown in confidence as a result of *The Ark* and I would like to thank those who established, run and support it.



Songs of Praise

The story behind the hymn

O Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness!



O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
and comfort thy sorrows, and answer
thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
for truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling
and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

In the Church of England the weeks after Christmas are kept as the *Epiphany* season. *Epiphany* literally means *revelation, showing, manifestation*. The season begins on 6 January or the Sunday nearest to it, the *Feast of the Epiphany*, which celebrates the coming of the Wise Men to the infant Jesus. This is a day when Jesus was 'shown' to the gentile world in the person of the Wise Men.

The Epiphany season then presents other 'showings' of Jesus. The hymn above is one for this season and will be sung on the Epiphany, kept at St. James's on 8 January.

The words speak of the 'gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness', two of the three gifts brought by the Wise Men. They were written by John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811-75), son of the Archdeacon of Londonderry, but working in England from 1853.

Monsell was a prolific writer, publishing 11 volumes of poems and about 300 hymns. Sadly, he died after falling from the roof of his church, St. Nicholas in Guildford. The words of the hymn encourage the singer to worship, but with humility and awe.