

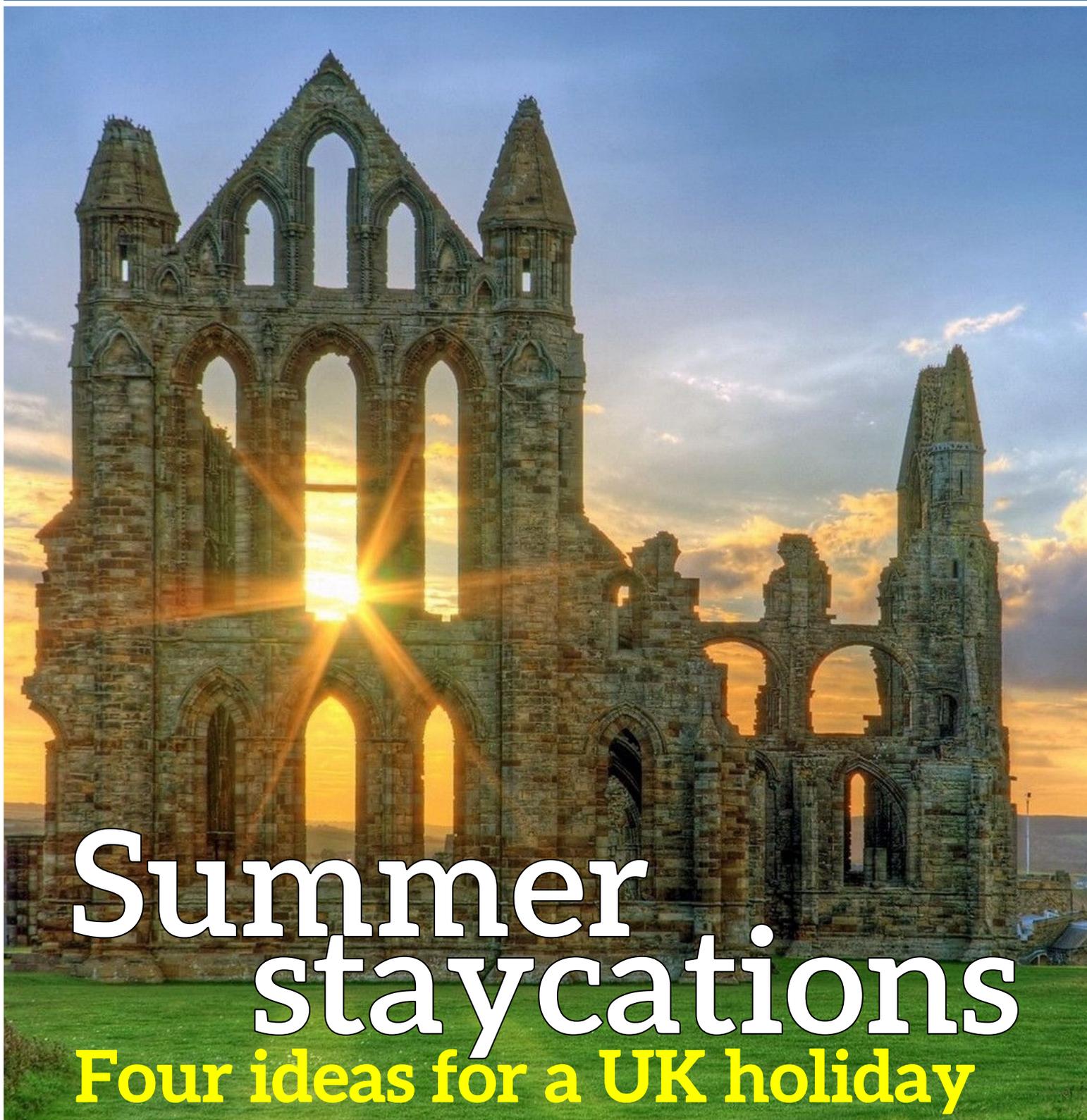
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022 HOLIDAYS

SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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Summer
staycations
Four ideas for a UK holiday

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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 Wednesdays (his day off).
Tel: 020 8241 5904
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.
Tel: 079 5012 2294
Email: jackycammidge@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk



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.
Tel: 020 8614 6800
Email: julianreindorp@outlook.com

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 lab, Ruby.
Tel: 073 6928 0040
Email: frtimmarwood@hotmail.com



CHURCH OFFICE
Church & hall bookings
Nick Bagge
Nick deals with enquiries and Church and hall bookings. Open: Mon, Wed, Fri 0930-1230; Tue, Thu 1230-1530
Tel: 020 8941 6003
Email: office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk
Address: St James's Church, St James's Road, Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ.



CHURCHWARDEN
Susan Horner
Tel: 020 8979 9380
Email: smhorner5@yahoo.co.uk



CHURCHWARDEN
Nick Bagge
Tel: 020 8941 6003
Email: office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk



CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST
Thom Stanbury
Email: thom.stanbury@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

- ALMA** Laurence Sewell 020 8977 2844
- Ark Playgroup** Debbie Nunn 020 8979 3078
- Bell Ringers** Susan Horner 020 8979 9380
- Book of Remembrance Recorder** Janet Nunn 020 8979 6325
- Brownies (HQ)** 0800 1 69 59 01
- Care and Contact (Visitors)** Derek Winterburn 020 8241 5904
- Charity Support Team** Dennis Willmot 020 8977 9434
- Children's Champion** Lou Coaker 020 8979 2040
- Church Cleaning Team** Debbie Nunn 020 8979 3078

- Church Flowers Team** via Church Office 020 8941 6003
- Church Safeguarding Officer** Annalea Gratton 077 7576 4419
- Churches Together Around Hampton** Ann Peterken 020 8891 5862
- Churchyard Records** Janet Nunn 020 8979 6325
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- Welcome Team** Janet Taylor 020 8979 0046
- Youth Group** Sarah Richardson 077 9090 0505

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FROM THE EDITOR...

The year seems to be racing away. We are already past Wimbledon and the schools and colleges are on their summer holidays.

In this issue four people have written about places in England that are special to them. Because of the pandemic many people have holidayed in this country.

I have visited two of the places. Many years ago I stayed in Whitby at a hotel just behind the abbey ruins. We could walk along the road and see the view over the harbour and along the coast without having to climb the 199 steps!

I have also stayed for a week near Southwold in Suffolk and my particular memory is walking along the beach to the estuary and down the river to the ferry across to Walberswick. You pass all the local fishing shacks and the ferryman rows you across to the other side. It is so peaceful and unaffected by tourism.

Wherever you are doing this summer, we hope you have time to recharge your batteries, enjoy each other's company, explore new places or visit old favourites.

Best Wishes

Janet

Janet Nunn



Cover photo: The imposing ruin of Whitby Abbey in the morning sunlight

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EDITOR
Janet Nunn
020 8979 6325
janunnhh@btinternet.com

POSTAL ADDRESS
Spire, Church Office, St James's Church,
St James's Road, Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ

WEBSITE
Prill Hinckley
p.m.hinckley@blueyonder.co.uk

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The Spire is available in church and local shops, is delivered across the parish, and posted further afield. For more information contact Susan Horner.
020 8979 9380
smhorner5@yahoo.co.uk

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Finding us



The church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is between the church and vicarage. There is ample unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R68, R70 and 285.

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For the very latest news go to our website or follow us on social media:

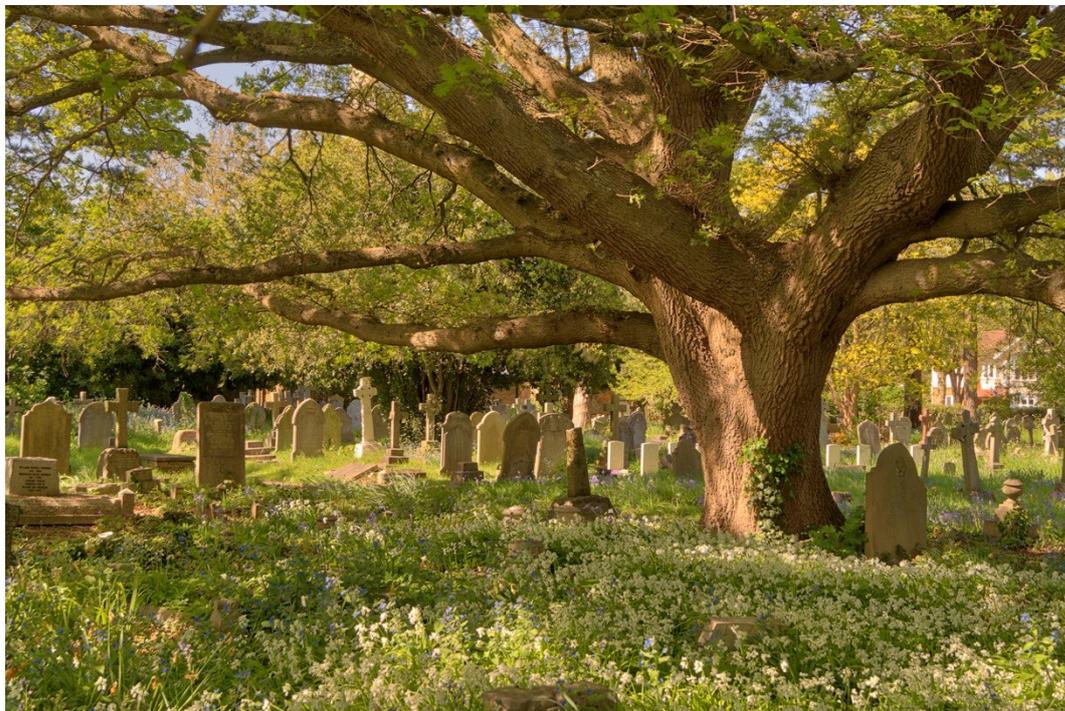
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Clerical Capers



'I'm afraid our organist is away this week, so all the hymns will be sung to the tune of Chopsticks.'

New life surrounded by vestiges of death



DEREK WINTERBURN

their dead (so Jesus was buried, in Joseph of Aramathea's tomb). The first Christians in some cultures probably continued with the customs of their culture, but with the example of Jesus and the central belief in his victory over death and resurrection, the predominant custom became burial.

So in Rome, for example, because burial was not allowed in the city, Christians bought land on the outskirts and dug out the catacombs. It seems that even after a deceased relative was left there, relatives continued to visit the place where they lay, for worship and for memorial meals. The strong belief in the

Churchyards were first consecrated for burial after Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, obtained permission from the Pope in 752.

It became the pattern for a parish church to have an acre around it set aside for burials.

At first a lack of space

When St James's Church was opened in 1863 not very much land was assigned to a churchyard. Burials were still being accommodated at St Mary's, Hampton.

However 20 years later, when the Hampton Churchyard was full, the borough opened the cemetery in Holly Bush Lane, and the Vicar of St Mary's provided another acre to the St James's Churchyard. A further piece was added from the Vicarage field in 1924.

Taboo around death

I know from talking to children that some people find a churchyard 'spooky'; there is an innate taboo around death and graves. The easy availability of horror or ghost stories (especially at Halloween) sustains this.

However as I have written above, we should see a cemetery as a hopeful, not a dreadful, place. In fact, cemetery originally meant 'dormitory', a place for sleeping.

As Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life

next life took away the fear of death, and sustained a bond with the departed.

It started with a Pope

It was Pope Gregory the Great (590AD) who recommended churchyards as burial places, so that worshippers walked past graves and remembered the dead in their prayers.

In June when we conducted the *Churches Count on Nature* survey of the churchyard, I spent more than the usual amount of time in the area around our church. Shortly afterwards, I fielded an enquiry about the grave of John Templeton. I began to wonder about the reason why some churches have churchyards.

Apparently visitors from China are surprised to encounter cemeteries in cities. The distance from the central railway station to the nearest cemetery in Berlin is five kilometres; for Wuhan it is 25 kilometres. This contrast holds true for 10 European cities and 10 major cities in China.

Fear of death

One reason for this is the fear of death. A team at Beijing University has found that Chinese people are typically more fearful of death than Europeans, Chinese non-Christians more than Chinese Christians and Western non-Christians more than Western Christians. So, they suggest, cemeteries in China are removed from everyday life because they affect people too much.

That may explain why some cultures avert their gaze, but why are churches so often surrounded by graves? Although Ancient Greeks and Romans conducted cremation, Jews in the first century buried

St James Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am

Streamed live on Facebook

Together 11:15am

Resumes 31 Aug

Our shorter, all-age service, including a story, singing and crafts. All ages welcome!

Mon-Fri (but not Thu)

Morning Prayer 9am

A short service of daily prayer in church

Thursdays

Holy Communion (said) 9:30am

Messy Church

Sundays 14 Aug & 18 Sep 3-5pm



Join us for a fun afternoon of crafts, music, stories, worship and food!

To book go to: <https://bit.ly/StJMessyAug22>

Ark Playgroup*

From 12 Sep

Mondays 10:15am-12:15pm



Our popular group for carers and under 5s, with singing, crafts, stories and plenty of play. It's a great place to make new friends. £2 per family, including refreshments!

Connections Café*

Tuesdays 2 Aug and 6 Sep

10:30am-12:30pm



Join us at the social club for all ages, with coffee, cake, games and puzzles, and time to meet and make new friends.

Alongside the café there is a walk-in hearing aid clinic for servicing and advice.

Big Green Weekend

Sun & Mon, 26 & 27 Sep

If you would like to play your part in tackling climate change, come and discover how you can make a difference. At Sunday's 9:30am service we will have a speaker, while on the Monday climate experts will debate ways of confronting the problem. See p7 for details.

THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

* Dates subject to building work (check website)

Going away, but



SUSAN HORNER

Saltaire, West Yorkshire

Now a World Heritage site, this fascinating village is named after Titus Salt, a nineteenth century industrialist, and the river Aire.

Titus Salt, a committed Christian, built a huge woollen mill in the Italianate style, and the village next to it, including houses for his workers, wash-houses, a hospital, a school, a church and recreational facilities — far more than mill-workers in other towns enjoyed.

The former mill is well worth a visit, now housing artwork by Bradford-born David Hockney, as well as areas selling books, jewellery, furniture, clothing and other goods.

The church, formerly Congregational and now United Reformed, has the appearance of a temple with Corinthian columns. The streets, which are still lined by the workers' houses, modernised inside, but retaining their original outward appearance, are named after Salt's wife and children and other family members.

Oldest cable tramway

Roberts Park, by the river, has a bandstand where weekend concerts often take place. Beyond the park is the Shipley Glen Tramway, dating from 1895, the oldest working cable tramway in Britain, which is open on Sundays to take visitors up the hill. From there you can walk over the moor to Ilkley.

A walk along the canal will take you to the famous Five Rise Locks, or you can follow the Aire Sculpture Trail, a 40-minute walk by the river passing 15 sculptures. Short cruises

The pandemic gave us all the chance to rethink our holidays, particularly if we want to cut our carbon footprint. It doesn't mean never heading to the airport, but with Great Britain attracting millions of foreign tourists every year, perhaps now is the time to see what our home nations have to offer. Here are just four ideas for a staycation that doesn't involve queuing at the airport or buying any foreign currency.

on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal are available in summer.

As well as being a centre for walking, Saltaire has good

transport links to Leeds and Bradford, the latter housing the National Science and Media Museum.

It is only a short drive to Haworth, former home of the Brontes, and the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway for steam train rides.



Historic Saltaire The beauty of the industrial age can be seen in all its glory



DEREK WINTERBURN

Whitby, North Yorkshire

One of the wonders of travelling is seeing a place only heard about, in the flesh. There are many reasons one may have heard of Whitby, such as the setting of the Dracula story, Captain Cook and (not least for a cleric) the Synod of Whitby.

Whitby is a seaside town and more, in that it has a beach and fish and chip shops, but it is also a working fishing port, with a swing bridge and two great harbour piers, furnished with lighthouses. Here Cook learned to sail.

The eastern side of the town is dominated by St Mary's Church, and the ruins of Whitby Abbey. To reach these historic buildings there is a steep climb of 199 steps.

The church is a Grade 1 Listed building and is largely Georgian. There is no electricity in the building! The abbey was founded by Hild in AD657, although the ruins on the East Cliff are only 800 years old.

At the Synod, King Oswiu established how Christianity in England was going to be practised, not least establishing when Easter was going to be celebrated.

Within easy reach of Whitby are other places to visit, such as Castle Howard, North Yorks Moors National Park, Robin Hood Bay and Staithes.



'Church Stairs' 199 steps down from Whitby Abbey to the harbour

staying UK



Yesteryear Southwold is a thriving seaside town that manages to be different



NICK BAGGE

Southwold, Suffolk

Southwold was mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 and has an Anglo-Saxon name, *Sudwolda*, meaning 'south forest'. A visit there is a bit like being in a 1950s time-warp (so I'm told!).

Some 12 miles south of Lowestoft, where I was born, it is regarded as the jewel in the crown of the East Suffolk coast.

It remains a thriving market town, and its expansive sandy beach, backed by sand dunes, never feels overcrowded. Its colourful beach huts, despite having no electricity or running water, can sell for £250,000!

The prominent lighthouse sends its beam 24 miles out to sea and is open to visitors. Another focal point is the pier, opened in 1900 and stretching 190 metres into the North Sea. It has shops and cafes and don't miss the famous water clock which 'performs' every 30 minutes!

Southwold is also home to Adnams brewery and not one, but three theatres (one outdoors in the woods nearby). It has long been a favourite of the royal family and celebrities, and Aldeburgh and Ed Sheeran's Framlingham are nearby.



CATHERINE GASH

West Penwith, Cornwall

We go to Cornwall on holiday. And by 'Cornwall', I mean the *real* Cornwall, the West Penwith, as far South West as you can go towards Land's End.

My mother, father and stepmother all came from that area, with both sets of grandparents living in the same village. I have photos of five generations visiting the same beach over the years.

Cornwall as a whole is a wonderful county, proud of its heritage, and filled with so many things to see and do. If you want beautiful beaches, it's got them, including Sennen Cove.

Spectacular scenery? Got that too. Are you interested in history? West Penwith is *the* place for pre-historic remains, and throughout the county there are castles and stately homes to visit too, as well as the old tin mine workings, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

There are gardens a-plenty, which are especially beautiful in the spring. And let's not forget Truro Cathedral and many other ancient parish churches (ours in St Just has some remarkable medieval wall paintings). In the past 70 years, I've probably visited them all!

Although a bucket-and-spade family holiday is wonderful in the summer, we love our visits in January or November, when it's often warm enough to sit out and there are no crowds.

Walking along the coastal path is a delight at any time of year, maybe spotting seals or even a basking shark. Take a pasty with you for lunch and on your return, enjoy a cream tea, or better still, some saffron cake – delicious! Who needs to holiday abroad when we have such delights on our doorstep?



Sennen Cove Beach Big, bold and cool, the most westerly surf spot in the country

Around the Spire

THE ST JAMES'S DAY WEEKEND

Delivering a first class open day



EACH YEAR we open our doors to the community to give people the chance to learn more about our church.

For some, coming through the doors can be daunting. 'This weekend is our chance to break down barriers and show visitors that we are normal people,' said churchwarden Nick Bagge.

One of the most popular parts of the open day on Saturday 2 July, was the chance to climb the spire and have a go at ringing the bells. Among the first to ascend the tower were Dave and Rachael, our local Royal Mail delivery team. 'It's amazing,' said Dave. 'It all looks so green. This afternoon we keep recognising people we deliver to — we feel part of the community.'

Elsewhere, there was an appreciative audience for Thom Stanbury's organ recital, and church tours proved so popular that guide Penny Sewell added extra slots. Outside, there was a churchyard nature trail.

At Sunday's service our guest preacher was Rt Rev John Went, a former Bishop of Tewkesbury (see story below).

Afterwards, a barbecue lunch was served in the vicarage garden. The weekend raised over £1000 for church funds, which will go towards building work.

Bishop among friends

OUR GUEST preacher, Rt Rev John Went, was Bishop of Tewkesbury from 1996-2013. He was invited by Derek, our vicar, who has known him from his time at Oxford.

Bishop John was Vice-Principal of Wycliffe Hall,

and taught Derek New Testament Greek in 1981 while he studied for his Theology degree and received ministerial training. Bishop John and his wife Rosemary also ran a youth group with Sandra.

But that is not the only connection. In 1966 he was at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge with Julian Reindorp. 'John and I studied theology together,' said Julian, 'and we had the same Old Testament teacher, professor John Bowker.' Meeting for the first time in over 50 years, Julian added, 'We laughed as we remembered, that while he was an outstanding teacher, the prof put the fear of God into us when he asked us to produce essays for him!'



Bishop's new challenge

THE BISHOP of Kensington, the Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin, has stepped down after a service in Hammersmith celebrating his seven years in office.

Bishop Graham is moving to Lambeth Palace to lead Cultural Witness, a new project for the Archbishop of

Canterbury to transform the way we view the Christian faith.

He came to prominence after the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017. Locally, he helped St James's to appoint Derek, our vicar. The process to find a new bishop will now begin.



A fallible, true believer



SUSAN HORNER

started walking towards Jesus, only sinking when he started to doubt.

Drawing his sword

When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper, Peter wanted Jesus to also wash his hands and his head. Later that evening, when Jesus was arrested, Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's slave, but Jesus told him to put away his sword and healed the slave.

After the resurrection, when the women reported that they had seen Jesus, Peter was the one who went into the empty tomb, although John had reached it first.

Peter is also remembered for denying knowing Jesus three times, as Jesus had predicted. He was mortified when he realised what he had done, but after his resurrection Jesus offered Peter the opportunity to redeem himself, asking him three times, 'Do you love me?' and he commissioned Peter to continue his work, while warning him that this would bring him great trials.

Trusted to lead church

It is clear that Peter was a fallible man with normal human frailties, but Jesus could see that beneath this was a man who truly believed in Him, wanted to do the right thing, and could be relied on to lead the future church. Indeed, we read in Acts of how he travelled to many places, including Lydda, Joppa and Caesarea, spreading the word of what he had witnessed.

In spite of his humble background, he was able to speak to the crowd at Pentecost and at the temple after healing a crippled beggar.

He defended his teaching to the rulers and elders in Jerusalem after his arrest. After seeing a vision, he became convinced that this teaching was also for the Gentiles, not only for Jews.

Suffered hardships

Peter suffered imprisonment and great hardships for his convictions but continued to preach what he knew to be true. Early church tradition says that Peter was crucified in Rome in about 64 AD.

Peter is my Biblical hero because he recognised Jesus for who he really was at an early stage and never lost that conviction. An ordinary man, he made mistakes, but was able to learn from them and found the strength to continue to make Jesus known as widely as possible for the rest of his life.

Peter, originally called Simon, was a fisherman in Bethsaida with his brother Andrew. They were the first two disciples to be called by Jesus. At an early stage of his ministry,

Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law of a fever.

Simon was given the additional name Peter after Jesus asked the disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' They answered John the Baptist or Elijah or Jeremiah or another prophet.

Jesus then asked, 'But who do you say that I am?' and Simon replied, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God'.

It is after this declaration that Jesus said, 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church ...I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'

Peter is from the Greek *Petros*, meaning a rock. In the Bible he is sometimes called Simon Peter, at other times just Peter and also occasionally referred to as Cephias, and the Aramaic *Kepha*, also meaning a rock.

Closest to Jesus

Peter, and the two brothers James and John, were the three disciples closest to Jesus, being the only ones present at the Transfiguration and the ones he took apart to pray with him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Peter was impulsive and often spoke or acted without thinking things through. At the Transfiguration he wanted to build dwellings for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah.

When he saw Jesus walking on the water towards their boat, he left the boat and



Let the children come...



DEREK WINTERBURN

preparation; being monthly gives us time to plan and get ready.

A range of crafts

As one would expect, a major part of the time together is set aside for a range of craft activities.

Some things a child (or adult) might do themselves, other projects need the whole family to work together.

Of course there are also great songs, Bible teaching and active prayer. Every afternoon finishes with delicious cake and a cup of tea (or squash).

Perhaps 'messy' and 'church' are not natural partners: many of us like our visit to church to be calming, tidy, familiar. Mess needs to be tidied up, after all.

But 'life is messy' we sometimes say. And children are messy too! *Messy Church* began in a church near Portsmouth in 2004 as a way of connecting with families who were not finding a place in the more conventional services.

'Messy' had a double meaning — a sort of fuzziness about insiders and outsiders, and activities in a church that were not neat and tidy.

First the UK, now the world!

Messy Churches have sprung up all over the country, and around the world. Each church does it differently, but the key ingredients are: a welcome, a long creative time to explore the biblical theme through getting messy; a short celebration time involving story, prayer, song, games and similar; and food.

All elements are for, and should include, people of all ages, adults and children. Messy Church has spawned other versions, for example *Messy Church Goes Wild*, and *Messy Vintage*.

Before the pandemic

At St James's we had just started a Messy Church before the pandemic. Some 50-60 people came to the first two, and the team were on a roll — but then had to stop!

It took time to re-establish the team and for restrictions to ease. We restarted at the end of 2021, with a slightly different set up to be COVID-secure, and we expect it to continue to develop as the church is refurbished.

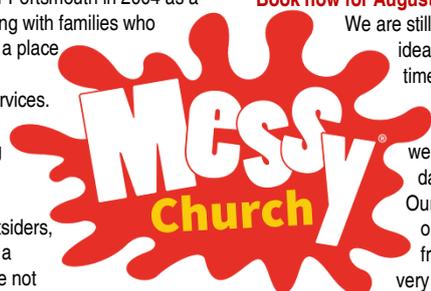
Like most Messy Churches we meet every month, on a Sunday afternoon. It needs a good team of volunteers and lots for

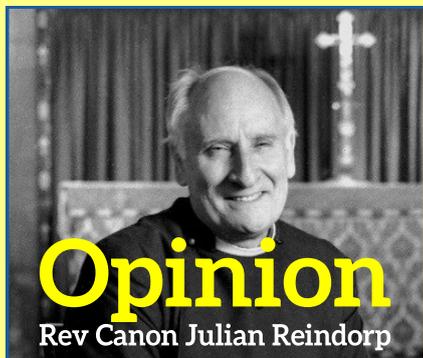
Book now for August

We are still asking families to ideally book in ahead of time, which helps us plan the craft and food; but people are always welcome to come on the day.

Our next Messy Church is on **Sunday 14 August** from 3-5pm. You are very welcome to join us.

To give us an idea of the number of people to cater for, please book spaces at: <https://bit.ly/StJMessyAug22>.





Opinion

Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

TWO ENDS OF A CRISIS

Single parents are some of the poorest people in our country and those not in work but on Universal Credit have not regained the £20 a week they lost after the Covid pandemic.

The policy is to get these parents into work, but according to the Trades Union Congress, child care costs have risen 44% since 2010, from £4,992 to £7,212 in 2021. Only Cyprus has higher child care costs as a percentage of peoples' wages in Europe. The TUC also criticised the mooted plans to cut staffing ratios. 'It would just put more pressure on underpaid and undervalued childcare workers,' said the group representing 48 unions.

Meanwhile the average pay of the stock market's top 100 bosses is nearly back to pre-Covid levels of £4.04 billion in 2017. John Pettigrew, the boss of the National Grid, the privately-owned electricity company, was paid £6.5 million in 2021-2022. And a New Street Consulting Group report last year suggested that female directors of these top firms were paid barely a third of what men received.

DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

The State of the Nation 2022 report said that two-thirds of disadvantaged pupils and more than a third of all pupils fail to get a good pass in English and Maths GCSE.

At a time when both mental health needs and special educational needs have risen, there are fewer special schools than in 2020. In Essex, the average school class size is over 30, while at a specialist school for disturbed pupils, eight children may need up to three teachers.

The Department of Education is planning to open up to 60 new schools, providing 4,000 additional places, but the first ones will not be ready till 2025 at the earliest.

POPE ON UKRAINE

The Pope was heavily criticised for suggesting that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was 'partly provoked.' by NATO, though he did also condemn the invasion as a violation of a country's right to self-determination, describing it as the 'direct intervention of a super power aimed at imposing its own will'.

He commented, 'A couple of months before the war started, I met a head of state, a wise man...he told me he was very concerned about the way NATO was moving. I asked him why? He replied, "They are barking at the gates of Russia. They do not understand that Russians are imperialists and will allow no foreign power to approach them...the situation could lead to war".'

SIR MICK JAGGER

Mick Jagger had to cancel one of his 14 shows on his recent European tour because of Covid. At 78 we are the same age. One Sunday in Richmond when I came out of leading worship at St Mathias, there was Mick Jagger waiting for Jerry Hall, his then wife. Jerry had been in the service. I had to go on to another of our churches, but I should have stopped and thanked him for getting me through my A-levels — *You can't get no satisfaction* — but my courage failed me!

Similarly, Helen Shapiro got me through my O-levels with *Walking back to happiness*, and the Beatles got me through my degree in 1967.

HEY JUDE

I spent Sir Paul McCartney's 80th birthday, on 18 June, playing Beatles records. Many people would agree with Sir George Martin, their producer, who called them 'the most significant music creators of the 20th century'. How many sermons have included their titles *Can't buy me love*, *We can work it out*, *All you need is love*?

I remembered a particular funeral I took last year in Teddington. Judy had grown up with the group and they wrote the song round her. Appropriately we ended her funeral by singing *Hey Jude*.

Expanding needs of the homeless



DENNIS WILMOT

St James's has supported The Upper Room at Harvest time for many years. The big, main support the charity has always provided was, and still is, hot meals for the homeless and needy. This is now at 60-70 servings per day, an increase on pre-Covid days.

However, this is now only part of the story. New timings for delivering meals indoors mean that staff have more time to discover more about those who come through the doors and help them accordingly.

The Upper Room is not only offering help to more deserving people, but has also diversified successfully into offering a larger range of support services.

Growth in counselling

There are now four counsellors, enabling the charity to offer more help for those with mental health issues, typically depression and anxiety, overlapping with the London Diocesan Lent appeal.

There is now an upper 'upper' room, providing new space for the UR4 driving courses. It is here that people such as ex-offenders get help to obtain a driving licence followed, hopefully, by a job, seeing them onto a healthy future pathway. This space is also used for one-to-one counselling and as a hub for the homeless to gain support.



Tasty Hot meals are provided for the many homeless people



Much of their work is about signalling the right path for beneficiaries, with support from other agencies, such as their local council or Citizens Advice Bureau, for example.

Yet more charity

A new service being offered in conjunction with the NHS is Oral Care. Twenty people have already benefitted from treatment. One might imagine the challenges here. Lawstop is another new service that helps tenants to fight unreasonable landlords who often take advantage of tenants. With help they can push back with confidence. Support for immigration claims is also available.

Please support our Harvest appeal, with money and/or goods when the time comes. A list will be available in church in September.

September's going Green

THE GREAT BIG Green Week is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. We will be taking part, highlighting how we can all help to tackle climate change.

On **Sunday 25 September** we will hold a Creation Care Sunday service, with guest speaker Helen Stephens, from the Christian Charity A Rocha, which runs the Eco Church award scheme.

On **Monday 26 September** at 7:30pm we are hosting a meeting of Churches Together Around Hampton, at which speakers from Christian Climate Action will discuss the hot topic and the best way forward. Everyone is welcome.

If you would like to have some more facts at your fingertips, why not become *Carbon Literate*? Derek Winterburn is running the Carbon Literacy Trust's course online in August. Full details are here: <https://bit.ly/StJCarbon>.



REGISTERS

JUNE

WEDDING

25 Charles David Shelley and Clare Victoria Jane Chidgzy, Shepperton

FUNERAL

21 David Veitch, 89, Hampton Hill

INTERMENTS OF ASHES

4 Trevor John Wright, 78, Hampton Hill
26 William (Bill) Joseph Breeden, 75, Hampton



Rising to the challenge

Carol was born in 1960, one of natural triplets. She and her brother and sister were local celebrities as multiple births were a rarity in those days. They grew up in Barnes with an older brother. Paul was born in 1961 and raised with two older sisters in Richmond. Carol was a natural athlete, Paul much less so, but they both joined rowing clubs. In fact, they met at Twickenham Rowing Club in March 1977 and quickly bonded over their sport and a shared love of music. They became engaged in 1980 and married at St Michael & All Angels in Barnes in 1982 after Carol's childhood church burnt down. Thankfully, this wasn't an omen.

1 Cat people

We are cat people, quickly installing moggies in our flat in Twickenham when first married, having many a puss over the years. Our favourite was our last cat Charlie, a great big, soppy boy with a huge character. He liked to sit at the table with us at dinner time and had a specific meow as he came in the cat-flap, sounding just like 'hello'. We lost him early on during Covid and wondered if we'd ever replace him, but now have a six-year-old rescue cat called Purrdy, who has big paws to fill but is a lovely lady. She shares her home with this large cushion of Charlie though.

2 Family

Our greatest blessing has been our family, this school photo of all three of our children is from St Mary's & St Peter's. They changed our lives significantly as Carol became a Sunday School teacher, Paul became involved with Scouts and this just would not have happened otherwise. Our children brought us back to our faith as members of St James's, all three being baptised and confirmed here, Kris married here too, and now with five grandchildren, the baptisms continue. A new skill was learnt in bellringing, something we really enjoy especially at weddings and when we ring the old year out and the new in at midnight on 31 December.

3 Scouting

Scouting has given us many gifts, one being our annual Family Camp. It started as a pub conversation about how great it would be to camp with our extended family and as we were discussing where we could hold it, the penny dropped — our own Scout HQ. We get together over a summer weekend, enjoy some fun challenges and a big meal before settling around the fire, playing games and talking into the small hours before falling into our tents. It is absolutely fantastic to have all our family around us and keeping everyone connected, but the highlight is always the massive fire-cooked breakfast.

4 Baptisms

We were baptised in 2013. Yes, that's correct, we retook our baptismal vows in the River Jordan as part of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Julian Reindorp and our then vicar, Peter Vannozi. This was Carol's first ever flight. She's not a



6 Scotland

The bike trip introduced us to the beauty of Scotland, and especially the west coast, so when Carol spotted a 'basking shark safari' the die was cast. We booked a seaplane trip from Loch Lomond and gifted a beautifully clear day, the beauty of Scotland from the air had to be seen to be believed. The take-off and landing were unique experiences. As for the basking sharks? We spent four separate days afloat in a small boat with no loos, and didn't see a single one — but we did swim with seals and visit a puffin colony, a comical experience we highly recommend.

7 Walking

One of the joys that Carol introduced Paul to was walking, and for many years now we've made a different pilgrimage, to walk the fells of the Lake District. This picture is of our successful ascent of Scafell Pike, England's highest mountain. As we ascended, those coming down were being very polite in stopping to allow us to pass. It was only when we began our descent, we found out why — oh, our poor knees!



8 Come dancing

We enjoyed learning Latin and Ballroom dancing for many years in our 50s, starting as absolute beginners and developing into capable, if not accomplished, social dancers of the waltz, quickstep, tango, rumba and paso doble. We left when things got way too serious with absolute precision being necessary, but we left on a high at the annual ball where it felt like we flew round the dance floor.

9 Canoe

Not strictly one from the memories box, but one for it — a belated retirement gift we always wanted and we look forward to lots of paddling once it arrives.



10 Celebration

To celebrate our 60th birthdays, our youngest daughter's 30th and Paul's retirement we planned a huge Christmas get together for December 2020; however lockdown got in the way of that and deferred it to 2021. When this finally could go ahead it was all the more poignant, especially as we'd gained another grandson in the intervening year, one that

the pandemic had kept us apart from. Held in a big house in Cornwall with all our children, their partners and our five grandchildren it was an exceptional, if tiring week — as the photo shows!



Paul and Carol Fitchett have tackled all manner of experiences: climbing mountains, touring the UK by bike, Latin and ballroom dancing, and giving back through Scouting and church. And retirement does not mean taking it easy!

naturally good traveller, but when she whooped as we took off I knew she was fine. It was a hugely emotional trip for us, visiting many sites from Christ's life from the Sea of Galilee to Bethlehem, ending in Jerusalem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Via Dolorosa. This Jerusalem Cross is a powerful reminder of our time there.

5 Motorbikes

Paul has had motorbikes since 16, these becoming an essential form of transport once he started work in central London, but also great on holidays before we had children. In 2012 we fulfilled a dream: a bike tour around the UK where we spent three weeks on the road seeing us travel the length and breadth of the country.