

MBE organist plays 84 hymns on his 84th birthday to raise money for local charities

The organist at Leicester's oldest church is celebrating his 84th birthday by playing 84 hymns to raise money for local and national charities.

Ian Imlay MBE has been the organist at St Nicholas Church for over 60 years.

Inspired by Captain Tom, he hopes people will support his efforts to benefit those in need and enjoy his music too.

“I was impressed with Captain Tom and wondered what I could do for my birthday and what I could offer. So I came up with 84 hymns I could play for my 84 years. I hope to see a lot of old friends and raise a bit of money for charity,” Mr Imlay said.

Donations will go towards supporting LOROS, the Rainbows Hospice and AKT a national charity that works with LGBT+ young people dealing with homelessness and debt. St Nicholas is part of the Inclusive Church network that advocates for the full inclusion of people regardless of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Mr Imlay continued saying he was shocked at how much support he was getting already: “The money that comes in will go to all these charities and I’m surprised how much money is come in. It's hundreds of pounds. Stunning. I couldn't believe it.”

The priest at St Nicholas, Revd Canon Karen Rooms said: “Ian is a much-loved musician who has directed choirs at St Nicholas for many years dating back to when the church was the University of Leicester chaplaincy church. Ian played at graduation ceremonies for over 30 years and was made a Distinguished Honorary Fellow of the University of Leicester in 2013 and received his MBE in 2017. We are delighted to celebrate Ian’s special day with him like this and I know he loves welcoming visitors to the church, so please join us.



University chaplain to complete 83 half marathons to raise money for chapel organ

A priest at St Mary's University, Twickenham is aiming to run 83 half marathons by the end of the year to raise money to replace a chapel organ.

Prof Monsignor Vladimir Felzmann, also known as Fr Vlad, is hoping to complete 52 laps of the university’s Sir Mo Farah athletic track to raise £500,000.

“My aim is to give back to our Chapel its voice so that the beauty of its music may, once again, awaken and open hearts to our Creator, God,” Fr Vlad said.

The two numbers are particularly significant for Fr Vlad. 52 laps to commemorate 52 years as a priest and 83 to celebrate his 83 years of life. Speaking to Premier, Fr Vlad said the idea came about during a walk in the park.



“I went for a walk, as I did most days to Ravenscourt Park and my prayer was that of Bartimaeus: ‘Lord that I may see what you want me to do now’ and what came very quickly was that I could help St Mary’s University.”

“I thought, well, I'm 83 on this planet, 52 years a priest. So how about me walking 52 laps of the running track at St. Mary's 83 times? And that is what I went to and suggested to them. And they said: ‘that’s a brilliant idea’,” Fr Vlad continued.

Students, members of staff and even the vice-chancellor of the university have joined Fr Vlad during his laps. He aims to finish every lap in just under four hours.

He has completed 19 laps and raised £40,000 so far.

Fr Vlad went on to say what he is hoping to do with the new chapel organ.

“My dream is that, with the organ, we’ll be able to form a choir of disadvantaged children from the area, a bit like Gustavo Dudamel in Venezuela, but also in Leeds Diocese up in the North of England, they've set it up and it's worked very well because if we can get kids involved in something which is creative, rather than drug addiction or violence, it helps them identify themselves and perhaps keep in touch with the church and realise that liturgy can be life-enhancing immediately,” Fr Vlad concluded.

'A refuge for refuse': Cornwall's Cross of Rubbish for the G7 summit

Christians in St Ives are hoping a controversial depiction of the Cross will help start conversations around faith during this week's G7 summit.

Locals have decorated crosses in the area with rubbish to symbolise Christ taking away our sins and they're handing out leaflets to the thousands of visitors in the area.

Local preacher, William Thomas, tells Premier some people may be shocked at the image:

"The cross is a refuge for refuse. And Christians recognise that each of us have items of refuse in our lives. You know, the parts that we cannot dispose of like fear, anxiety, jealousy, unforgiveness, hatred, bitterness, selfishness, all these kinds of rubbish that turn our lives to waste. And so, as we look at the cross, the cross we normally look at is empty, because Christ has taken our rubbish - he has borne it, he has buried it forever."

The G7 comprises of the largest advanced economies and regards itself as a "community of values" and is meeting in Cornwall between 11th and 13th of June.

The leaders will set out to deliver on three key areas; COVID-19 pandemic recovery; tackling climate change; and prosperity through free and fair trade.



William Thomas says the cross of rubbish will also symbolise the importance of tackling these issues:

"We all know the devastating worldwide impact of COVID-19 and inequality. We are also aware of climate change and the effect it's having on our world. Here on the coast, we feel the impact of rubbish and landfill washing up on our shores."

Speaking to Premier, he says looking at a cross covered in rubbish is difficult:

"We struggled with this at first, the cross for us is a symbol of forgiveness, it's a symbol of hope. It's just a symbol of sacrifice of repentance, and to nail rubbish to it seemed to contradict all that we stood for. But it was a place of sacrifice."

Along with other local preachers and churches in St Ives and Carbis Bay, William hopes the

Cross of Rubbish will encourage conversations about Christianity:

"Real Hope is found at the Cross of Rubbish. This cross symbolises us being able to give our rubbish to Jesus, who lovingly takes away our unwanted burdens. He is like the ultimate dustman. In the place of our rubbish, He heals and restores to bring life in all its fullness. During this G7 year the church of Carbis Bay and St Ives would not only like people to experience the beauty of God's creation but also share in the new hope found in Jesus Christ."

Dear Lord,

We thank You for bearing our rubbish and taking away our sins.

And we pray that all those who see this depiction of the Cross come to recognise afresh Your Love for us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Iona Abbey reopens after multimillion pound renovation

Living areas at the ancient Iona Abbey have reopened after they were renovated following a multi-million-pound fundraising campaign.

The Princess Royal visited the Hebridean island this week and spoke at a special service at the 13th-century abbey to celebrate the refurbished community and living spaces.

The Iona Abbey Capital Appeal raised £3.75 million from around 2,500 donations, which came from people in 22 different countries.

The new facilities in the living quarters include modernised and retrofitted bedroom and community areas, a completely renovated refectory, a new kitchen and scullery with dumb waiter, comprehensive rewiring, insulation and a new plumbing system.

The island of Iona has been described as the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland after St Columba and 12 companions went there from Ireland in AD 563.

Speaking in Iona Abbey during the service of blessing on Monday, the Princess Royal said she was pleased to be there “to celebrate that the life of work and worship in this ancient place has been secured for many years to come”.

She said: “Access is vital because the people who come to stay at the abbey are the life of the building, forming a community committed to justice and peace.

“1,500 years since St Columba’s birth, and almost a century since Iona Abbey was rebuilt in the shadow of the Great Depression, now, in the shadow of a world pandemic, the Iona community is standing once again on its ancient foundations to meet another moment of historic crisis and deep need.”

The Princess Royal received a freshly-baked loaf of bread from the new kitchen and a special posy from a local schoolboy.

She was piped around the Abbey cloisters by three young bagpipers from the island.

Each donor to the fundraising appeal has their name etched in a special book that has been designed in a similar way to the Book of Kells, which the Princess Royal signed during her visit.



Iona community leader Ruth Harvey said: “This is a landmark moment in the history of Iona Abbey. Dedicated and visionary volunteers devoted so much time, effort and shared wisdom to make this happen.

“The mystery of faith is evident in the sheer hard work and determination of individuals. People who come to the abbey can expect a warm welcome, beautiful space to live and to join with us in community.

“Our movement is now more sustainable, more open and more accessible than ever before, for all who seek a world of justice and peace through community.”

The abbey will now also be able to tap into the Iona Ground Source Heat Project which is part of the island's low carbon initiative which will deliver sustainable heating for the abbey, hotels, village hall, school, businesses and homes.

Christine Jones, who led the Iona Abbey Capital Appeal, said the reopening is “a sign of hope for the rebuilding of individual lives and of community in Scotland and beyond”.

During her visit, Anne also spoke to BBC Songs of Praise for a special episode due to air on BBC One on June 27 and visited the Iona village hall, which has also been rebuilt following a major fundraising effort.

Interview: Eileen Eggington, project officer, Malawi Association for Christian Support

‘People who've worked in Malawi have a huge love of the place’

I first visited Malawi in 2006, with friends from St Alban's, North Harrow, where I'm a licensed lay minister [LLM]. The trip was organised by the Malawi legend Bishop Donald Arden, and his wife, Jane. In every village, we were met by a sea of blue and white — members of the Mothers' Union — who came out to greet us in song and dance. I lost my heart to them all, and vowed to return with young people from our church.

People don't forget Malawi. It's very poor, and the governance has always been problematic; but people who've worked in or been brought up in Malawi have a huge love of the place. It's known as the “warm heart of Africa”.

I've worked for MACS [Malawi Association for Christian Support] for the past



decade, working closely with our Malawi representative, Grafiud Tione. We laugh and talk together several times a week on WhatsApp. We've got an active group of trustees, and about 100 regular donors — many former colonial families. We concentrate on the two central and most highly populated Anglican dioceses: Lake Malawi and Upper Shire.

We've funded school blocks, staff houses, medical facilities, solar support, medical-training initiatives, church roofs, and so on, over the years. We also administer about 60 secondary-school bursaries, more than half of which are for girls. We've responded to flood and famine appeals, and there's a Bishop Donald Arden secondary-school bursary fund for

clergy children and ordinands at Leonard Kamungu Theological College.

Eighty-five per cent of Malawians are subsistence farmers. Sixty per cent of the population are Christians, ten per cent Anglicans. Parishes have a dozen or more congregations — some with a strong church building, others a church with mud-brick walls and grass roofs — and many Anglicans still gather under a tree to worship. Where a congregation has built firm foundations — with white-ant protection and strong walls — we sometimes fund a good church roof. The single priests or catechists travel around their vast parishes on foot or by bicycle. An archdeacon may have a vehicle, but few resources to maintain it.

I've always had a love of people, and I'm always up for a challenge. Perhaps I've a tendency to take a lead and step in where angels fear to tread. Maybe that helped me to thrive in the police service — though current extreme media scrutiny might have led to my speedy downfall.

I joined the police out of desperation to escape from my first job as a junior clerk at the Pearl Assurance Company, in High Holborn. I didn't think I'd be tough enough, and, in the 1960s, there was a ceiling of 600 women in the Met, but I was selected.

I loved it all. The camaraderie among colleagues surprised me most. My first posting was to Paddington Green Police Station — of *The Blue Lamp* and *Dixon of Dock Green* fame. I'd grown up with three sisters in leafy suburbia, and was educated at a girls' grammar school; so I wasn't well prepared for a world of drunks, prostitutes, and neglected children, but I learnt fast from experienced colleagues, and my compassion grew for lives blighted by poverty and violence.

The work that women police did then was more an extension of social services. I loved it, but my sense of adventure led me into the Special Branch at New Scotland Yard, gathering intelligence to counter terrorism, espionage, and subversion. It was a world of secrecy, intrigue, and endless fascination. I served for over 30 years, and rose from detective constable to detective chief superintendent. In 1997, Her Majesty presented me with the Queen's Police Medal, which was a huge surprise and a great honour.

Because of concerns about corruption among plain-clothes detectives in the CID, you had to do a year back in uniform on promotion. Suddenly, I was high-profile — the first woman inspector at West Hendon Police Station in charge of a "relief".

I'd been a WPC before the Sex Discrimination Act stopped women's specialist work in dealing with children, young people, and women prisoners, and then I'd moved to Special Branch. Suddenly, I was responsible for 30 police on uniform duties. I'd absolutely no experience of day-to-day uniform policing, and I hadn't worn uniform for over a decade. I was terrified, but also comforted by words from Joshua 1.9: "Be strong and very courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

I was the most senior officer for the whole of the division on night duty after a week,

which was even more terrifying. My month-long training to prepare me didn't start until after I'd taken over. That wouldn't happen, now.

At the first morning “parade”, I invited the guys to sit down, explained my lack of general policing experience, and asked for their support. They looked totally shocked, but they didn't let me down. I had a great year out on the streets. I also taught them how to track down missing persons: a skill I learnt as a young WPC at Paddington Green.

I retired 20 years ago, soon after the Lawrence report had labelled the Met Police as “institutionally racist”. That hurt, because it didn't chime with my lived experience. But diversity training opened my eyes to unthinking prejudice in me, in colleagues, and systems that clearly disadvantaged those from minority-ethnic communities. It's important that we're willing to learn.

I pray for Cressida Dick, a good woman whom I know and respect, that she may be given wisdom, courage, and support from politicians to deal with professional political agitators as well as peaceful protesters.

I was the second of four girls. Our parents were loving and hard-working, and we lived in small house near Dollis Hill. Church was important, and I joined the large robed choir at the age of eight. During my teens, we moved upmarket along the Metropolitan Line to Northwood Hills.

When I was six, I had scarlet fever. I was taken by ambulance to Neasden Isolation Hospital, where I then caught chicken pox. I was there for six weeks. Although my parents visited daily, they were allowed only to wave through a glass window. The Victorian-style wards were long and dismal, and the milk of human kindness was somewhat lacking among the nurses, but every night before I fell asleep, I quietly prayed the Lord's Prayer. That's when God became real to me.

My firm faith in the reality of God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — hasn't ever dimmed, though there were periods of disappointments and disillusion along the way. My LLM training led me to question some of my conservative Evangelical understanding of scripture, and convinced me that much would remain a mystery. I believe God guided me into the police service, and he sustained me in tough and challenging times. I know we're still work in progress: trying to grow the Kingdom of God in a loving, inclusive, and non-judgemental way.

Abuse of power in both Church and State makes me angry.

I'm happiest being with those I love, who accept me for what I am, warts and all. My favourite sound is shared uncontrollable laughter recalling past embarrassing moments.

I'm an optimist by nature, and have hope that the pandemic will result in us becoming a more caring and compassionate nation.

I mostly pray for family and friends both here and in Malawi, especially those who are sick or in special need. For the past six months, I've prayed with our Vicar and church friends on

Zoom for the needs of the Church worldwide and people of all faiths suffering persecution. Prayer remains a mystery, but I believe it makes me more open to the needs of others.

I was introduced to Nelson Mandela in Buckingham Palace in 1996. During that four-day state visit, I was bowled over by his joy and evident love of people. Of course, there was no time to talk, and so I'd love the chance to explore with him how he came to a place of forgiveness and reconciliation with his guards on Robben Island.

Eileen Eggington was talking to Terence Handley MacMath.

www.Malawimacs.org

St Mary Magdalene Church, Littleton Sunday Club Leader



We are seeking to appoint a Sunday Club Leader to support our developing work with children. This is an exciting new opportunity to join us in sharing the gospel with our community.

This is a part-time, fixed-term post from September 2021 to July 2022.

Salary £1700pa

3 hours per week over 2 days to include Sunday.

The successful candidate must be a practising Christian with experience of working or volunteering with children.

Please email irenesmith587@btinternet.com for further information and an application form.

Closing date 21 June

Interviews to be held on 1 July

Sheep and Lambs Together

Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

13th June 2nd Sunday after Trinity

Read Mark 4: 26-34

If you have some seeds, plant them and water them. Cress seeds grow well. Talk about what they might grow into.

When you see the plant growing, because you have remembered to water them and give them light and warmth, you can remember how God's kingdom grows



Maybe you have a small plant in the garden – watch how it grows as the days and weeks go on. And this will help you think about how the Kingdom of God grows.

St Hilda's Parish News

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

Rota's

With the end of lockdown restrictions possibly in sight, we are starting to plan for a sense of normality and will be resuming the refreshments after the Sunday service. We need a number of members of the congregation to help with the serving of tea/ coffee each week. Secondly, we need more volunteers to help with sideperson roles - meeting, greeting and helping members of the congregation as well as guiding any newcomers.

If you are interested in being on either rota, please contact Denise in the Parish Office.

Driving Miss Daisy.....

If anybody is willing to help driving members of our congregation who otherwise would be unable to attend a Wednesday or Sunday service, please let Denise know. Thank you.

Canaan Ministries are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

2 Peter 3:18

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 13th June @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday Eucharist – 16th June @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week's services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office by 5pm Friday for Sunday's service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday's service.

Please remember a face mask must be worn whilst in the church.

Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

W
13
Th
nday

There is no Tea and Chat after the service this week.

- Enter the Meeting id – **x**
- Enter password – **x**

Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

James Bedford	Eileen Gilbert	Daphne Roberts	Philip Willerton
Robb Clarke	Alison Griffiths	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Chick Wilson
Daniel Cohen	Jean Iddiols	Delphine Scrivener	Peter Wilson
Rebecca Cohen	Jane Johnson	Riley Shaw	Jo Wood
Mary Congdon	Pat Kyle	Elsie Stone	Erin
Ann Considine	Libby Mills	Roy Stone	George
Julia Cowley	Raymond Nation	Sandra Swain	Marion
Michael Dixon	Pat Parish	Rev. Peter Taylor	Nic
Peter Garner	June Prentice	Sheila West	

The Recently Departed

Kenneth Wingrove	Alec Holloway	Margaret Reid	Rev John Congdon
Gillian Shepherd			

Prayer

O God,
 the strength of all those who put their trust in you,
 mercifully accept our prayers
 and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature
 we can do no good thing without you,
 grant us the help of your grace,
 that in the keeping of your commandments
 we may please you both in will and deed;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

Amen