

JULY 2025 OPEN DAY

# SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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## INSPIRING

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 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



## CLERGY



### VICAR Rev Prebendary Derek Winterburn

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

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### ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge

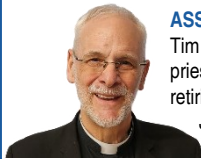
Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister, married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.

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## Supported by



### ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood

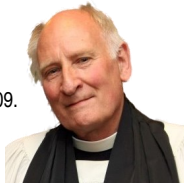
Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time hospital chaplain. Married to Jane, a former headteacher, Tim supports Harlequins RFC and the England cricket teams.

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### ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

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

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## How to get in touch

### CHURCH OFFICE

Church & hall bookings, and all general inquiries

Nick Bagge

Nick deals with general enquiries as well as church and hall bookings. The office is open: Mon, Wed, Fri 0930-1230; Tue, Thu 1230-1530

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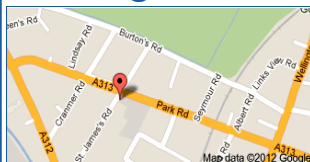
### CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST



Thom Stanbury

Email: [thom.stanbury@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](mailto:thom.stanbury@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk)

## Finding us



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

## Follow us

For the latest news go to our website [stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](http://stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk) or follow us on social media:

[@stjames-hamptonhill](https://www.facebook.com/stjames-hamptonhill)

[@stjameshamptonhill](https://www.instagram.com/stjameshamptonhill)

## Church and Hall Hire

The church and hall are available to hire. The church is used for concerts and public meetings. There is also a small meeting room to hire.

The church is equipped with a modern audio visual system, a projector and large screen, and a range of microphones. A five camera mixer desk can be used for livestreams or recordings. The church has extensive stage lighting.

The hall is available to hire for one-off parties or events, or for regular community classes. For all enquiries contact the Church Office (above)

## Support us

The church is a charity registered in England and Wales (1129286). It does not receive grants to cover its running costs. Instead it generates money from supporters and by hiring the buildings.

Support our work:

<https://bit.ly/Give2StJas>



## FROM THE EDITOR

July is a special month for St James's as we celebrate our patron saint and have our annual Open Day when you can climb the spire and see some of London's landmarks. The booking details are on page three.

Our centrespread this month features the very old craft of making church kneelers. Twenty-five years ago a band of local women made us a lovely set of kneelers. I discovered some fascinating facts about the origins of kneelers.

The summer months are a time when many of us enjoy a swim or water activity. When things go wrong, the RNLI plays a big part in saving lives. We have a lifeboat station at Teddington with two inshore boats to cover the River Thames. The RNLI is very visible at seaside locations, both at sea or on beach patrols. Jill Goddard tells us on page 8 about volunteering for the charity locally.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Open Day on Saturday 5 July and the St James's Day service and lunch the next day.

Best Wishes

Janet

Editor



Cover photo: A commanding view of Hampton Hill's tallest building — the church spire.

**SPIRE** The magazine is published nine times a year. We don't charge for it, but, if you enjoy reading it, will you help towards printing costs?

Bank transfers to: 40-52-40, 00032595, Ref Spire. Cheques payable to the PCC of St James's Church, Hampton Hill, and sent to the Spire Appeal c/o the Church Office (see below).

I cost £11.70 A YEAR



Yes, I'm free, but donations help me to go on being printed. Use the QR code (or see above) to 'buy' a subscription. \*£1.30 a copy

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## Clerical Capers



The amateur dramatic club's rehearsal of *Murder in the Cathedral* hadn't gone as well as expected.



# DEREK WINTERBURN



**R**ecently, I visited the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. I had read that the gallery had been rehanged and I was curious. The main entrance has now been shifted, and all visitors enter through the Sainsbury Wing entrance (bag check... cafe... shop). I started at the 'beginning' and spent an hour looking around the paintings in the Sainsbury Wing (Medieval and Early Renaissance).

I found the experience thought-provoking in a number of ways. First, one could not miss that the majority of the pictures were religious, specifically Christian; there were perhaps two predominant themes, the Nativity (or just Mary and the baby) and the Crucifixion.

Then, perhaps as a consequence, most people walked through, not giving anything a second glance. If one did not know (even the basics of) the gospel story, or was not fascinated by the development of art, there was not much to hold one's attention.

## Easy to be snobbish

The chief art critic of *The Times* was very critical of the rehanging. It is easy to be snobbish. He wrote, 'After the record-breaking success of the recent Van Gogh show..., his *Sunflowers* has been given a wall to itself that's perfect for selfies.' I did not make it as far as that in my visit, because I was drawn into the details in the earlier rooms and spotting how the same motifs were being reworked again and again.

Professor Jennifer Roberts (Harvard) requires all her new students to concentrate on a single work of art for three hours, 'If you have not been surprised by your object in some way, you haven't looked hard enough.' I did not spend that much time on even a whole wing, but I did return home with a 'sharper' eye.

There is something to be said for looking beyond the obvious (another picture of the mother and her baby...) and asking is there 'something deeper here?'

## Church artwork

St James's Church is full of art: especially, but not only, stained-glass windows. Although the building is open most days, we make a particular point of showing people around on the Saturday Open Day of the St James's

# FAITHFUL ARTISTS

Weekend (5 July). But I suspect that most of the visitors who come to the church building, even regularly, haven't looked carefully at what is around them. So, for example, how many depictions of James are there? I can count five.

And I have questions. How is it there are more windows with John than his brother James? There is so much stained-

There is something special about following your own curiosity, rather than being directed by teachers or bosses.

## Story beyond art

Visit our art gallery at St James's this July, even join a tour - you will be very welcome. But I hope you look beyond the colourful windows to the God who inspired them.

**Visit our 'gallery' during the St James's Day Festival – you will be very welcome. But I hope you will look beyond the colourful windows to the God who inspired them.**

glass — there are no plain panes — but (unlike at the National) no crucified Christ!

## Middle-aged apathy

What is true for art appreciation applies to Christian faith. Putting on one side my hunch that the myriad of (foreign) tourists in the National Gallery have very little knowledge of the Christian story, I am more worried by those who on the basis of a shallow knowledge dismiss the Faith.

The very popular Alpha Course's tag line is now *Stay Curious*. Perhaps those in the middle years have sorted their life. So the recent report, *The Quiet Revival*, highlighted that older people and younger people are more likely to go church than the middle-aged.

But there are those who advocate not shutting down questioning, or seeking new understanding. Dr Mithu Storoni writes, 'When we stop learning we descend into age-related degeneration.'



## St James Services Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am **Not 6 Jul**

Livestreamed on Facebook

Together 3:30pm **13 Jul**

Our shorter, all-age service, takes a break during the school holidays

**Tue-Fri (not Wed)**

Morning Prayer 9am

**Wednesday**

Midweek Communion 9:30am

**Mondays 7, 14, 21 Jul**

Ark Playgroup 10am-12pm

Our popular playgroup for under 5s and carers includes crafts, music and play.

**Tuesdays 1, 8, 15, 22 Jul**

Connections Café 10:30am-12:30pm

Join us for coffee, cake and conversation.

**Open to View**

Saturday 5 July 2-5pm

Come and explore our church as we throw open our doors. Climb the tower for unrivalled views, try your hand at bellringing.

Learn about the building's 162-year history. Explore the churchyard and spot the wildlife.

Plus games, stalls and refreshments.

Book tower tickets (limited places) at:

<https://bit.ly/StJTowerTour25>

**St James's Day**

Sunday 6 July 11am

Our celebration service, with guest preacher Rev Sandy Christie. The service is followed by a barbecue lunch, outside if dry.

**A Pocket Opera**

Saturday 20 September 7:30pm

Carmen Co's show follows the story of Bizet's opera *Carmen*, but told from her point of view. Full details on page 7. Tickets £20.

Book: <https://bit.ly/StJCarmen>



**Charlie Dore**

Saturday 8 November 7:30pm

Award-winning songwriter Charlie Dore is heading to Hampton Hill to perform a genre-defying collection of music that delights in reinvention. Known for writing songs for Tina Turner, George Harrison and Celine Dion, to name but three, Charlie still

thrives on live performance. Joined by longtime friend Julian Littman, the duo craft an intimate, fast-moving show filled with music and storytelling, perhaps explaining why her music continues to captivate new audiences.

Tickets £15. Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJCharlie>







# SAY A PRAYER FOR KNEELERS



Kneeling has been a part of worship for centuries. Many churches, like ours, still provide these ornate cushions. While some view them as outdated and irrelevant, **Janet Nunn** says kneelers offer us a reminder to focus on what matters most.

I have always been fascinated by kneelers in churches and make a point of admiring them and looking into any history about them whenever I am visiting churches. They give you a warm feeling and connection to the past people of the church, as is the example of the kneelers in the small village of Branscombe in East Devon.

Many churches that remove their pews also do away with kneelers. During my research, I read that they would probably be redundant by 2050 and end up in landfill! Thankfully this does not apply to our church. Despite changing our seating, we have retained many of them.

## Millennium project

Several firms supply kits for making kneelers with all sorts of designs, but many churches, like ours, designed their own. Twenty-five years ago, three friends, Margaret Lawrance, Margaret Taylor and Tina Bunce, organised a group of people from the parish to make kneelers to celebrate the millennium.

All the designs were based on the tiles on the floor or the stained glass windows, and are still as good as new today. I can do no better than repeat what Tina said in February 2000: 'It was lovely to come into the church and see new kneelers at the ends of the pews. It was something we had imagined and worked towards for a year.'

A total of 34 kneelers were completed, but the plan was to make 50 and many were still in the process of being made.

'From a small seed planted by Margaret Taylor grew a group of wonderful women from Hampton Hill who used their talents and artistic energy to give something lasting to St James's. But, more importantly, they created a sense of community to add to the parish.'



My kneeler Susan Horner

'From a small seed planted by Margaret Taylor grew a group of wonderful women who used their talents to give something lasting and they created a sense of community'

'Those who thought they couldn't sew discovered that they could. It helped some to stop smoking; strangers met and became strangers no more; churchgoers and non-churchgoers not only made their kneelers but also generously donated the cost of the kneeler to the project.

'From the many conversations it seems we shall continue. You may want to be a part of what, for me, was a great experience.'

What a wonderful legacy these inspired women gave to our church at the beginning of the 21st century.

## One I made earlier...

Making a kneeler is not for the faint-hearted. In fact, it is labour-intensive. The canvas has to be attached to a frame, the design is either printed on the canvas or you have to follow a pattern (as ours did). There were four designs and six colours to choose from. And following a pattern involves a lot of counting! Going wrong was unthinkable. Once completed the canvas had to be stretched and stitched round a cushion, which is not the easiest of jobs.

Many, many hours go into the making of one kneeler.

## Designs

Kneelers mostly come in three categories: designed by church embroiderers depicting parts of the church, as ours do, events in history, and local scenes. We have four kneelers depicting Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, and several with Girl Guide badges on them for anniversaries. There is even a design, pictured, to celebrate the Coronation of Charles III.

## Where it all began

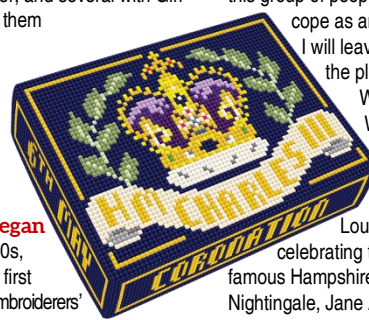
In the early 1930s, Louisa Pesel, the first president of the Embroiderers'

Guild, was invited by the Bishop of Winchester to train volunteers to produce kneelers. The designs were based on the cathedral's many medieval tiles - perhaps this is why we did the same thing. Working with 160 embroiderers, she created 365 kneelers and numerous other cushions and carpets. They are still on display at the cathedral today.

In 2019, author Tracy Chevalier, wrote a novel, *A Single Thread*, featuring the making of a kneeler at Winchester Cathedral. In it, Violet Speedwell, a lonely single woman, moves away from the family home to Winchester and is drawn into a society of broderers (the ancient name for embroiderers), who make kneelers for the cathedral, carrying on a centuries-long tradition of bringing comfort to worshippers.

Violet finds support and comfort with this group of people and learns how to cope as an independent woman. I will leave you to discover how the plot develops.

When Tracy visited Winchester Cathedral after writing the book and viewed the original drawings by Louisa Pesel, the one celebrating the lives of three famous Hampshire women - Florence Nightingale, Jane Austen and Charlotte







**Tradition** St Winifred's, Branscombe, c995, is one of the finest churches in Devon

Yonge (novelist) - was never made up.

Tracy made a donation to the cathedral and the embroiderers have now completed the kneeler to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen.

Little did I know when I started the investigation how it would turn out and be linked to our lovely kneelers! They certainly help to make our church look welcoming and celebrate the enthusiasm of parishioners 25 years ago.

Let us hope they survive another 25 years at



least and honour the past parishioners who made them. When visiting churches do take a look at their kneelers as they give you an insight into the history of the church and the people who made them.

#### Be thankful for kneelers!

And as a final thought, be thankful for those cushioned comforts. Kneelers are a relatively modern creation because prayer was not intended to be comfortable. Worshippers were taught with a sense that the holiest of outcomes involved a degree of self-sacrifice and subjugation in the face of unheated and cold stone floors. Therefore, no comfy intermediary between the supplicant, floor and their God was offered. Times have changed!

**In the *Book of Common Prayer* people are asked to make their confession 'meekly kneeling upon your knees.' Bishops and princes may have knelt on velvet cushions, but ordinary people had kneelers, developed from tussocks, stuffed with grass or straw**



**Four Seasons** at St James's



# Around the Spire

## CELEBRATION OF BRIAN'S MINISTRY

ON 11 May hundreds of people gathered in St Luke's, Chelsea, to say farewell to their Rector of 19 years — and our former vicar — Rev Prebendary Dr Brian Leathard.

Among the congregation were parishioners from Seaford in Sussex, where Brian had served his curacy, and a group of 20+ past and present parishioners from St James's.

It was a real family affair. Brian celebrated and preached, his wife Ramani led the intercessions, and daughter Anusha sang soprano solo in the Benedictus from Haydn's *Little Organ Mass*.

Guests of honour were two senior clergy from London's partner diocese



**Good humour** Brian and Ramani

of Berlin-Brandenburg.

The service concluded with an anthem specially composed for the occasion, sung by the joint choirs of St Luke's and Christ Church, the two churches which together form the parish. We wish Brian and Ramani a long and happy retirement.

Lesley Mortimer

## SARAH ADDS UP

**SARAH** Selvanathan has been appointed Treasurer of St James's Church. She replaces Dawn Miller, who has stepped down after seven years in the role.

Sarah has considerable experience in financial management, including as Strategic Director and Deputy Chief Executive at Elmbridge Borough Council and as a non executive director of a number of charities.

The Financial Team will meet quarterly as it works to deliver a balanced budget. Income from social events is playing an increasing role in this.



## WHAT A VIEW



**IF** you have a head for heights then why not climb the spire on our Open Day on Saturday 5 July and see how many landmarks you can count. It might surprise you. To guarantee a place, book now. The booking details are on page 3.

## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS' MINISTRY

**IT'S** ten years since Jacky Cammidge was ordained a deacon in St Paul's Cathedral by the Bishop of London.

She celebrates the occasion on 29 June with cake and prosecco.

Since completing her curacy, Jacky became an Associate Priest at St James's.

During the week she helps run the family's nursery school.



**Ordination** June 2015



Bishop Emma at a Confirmation



## GROWING IN FAITH



**Tim Marwood** recalls a Venetian Confirmation service as he explores a popular hymn often sung at the occasion.

**O**n a recent visit to Venice I was walking through a square one afternoon when my way was blocked by an excited group of young people and their parents milling about outside a church. The youngsters were scrambling into church robes of a simple, modern design, and I realised that they were preparing for a Confirmation service.

Photos were taken with family members, also looking very smart, a bell tolled, and everyone disappeared into the church for the start of the service.

### Choice for confirmations

This happy occasion reminded me of the hymn *O Jesus, I have promised*, which is a popular choice for confirmations in the Church of England, referring as it does to the promises made in those services.

The hymn was written by Rev John Ernest Bode (1816-74) for the confirmation of his children. Over time the hymn has become a popular choice for worship in many different churches and it is sung to several tunes. My favourite tune is *Wolvercote*, composed in 1910 by Rev William Ferguson (1874-1950).

Much of the appeal of this hymn lies in the personal nature of the writing. The promise in the first two lines sets the tone and is repeated in the fourth verse.

The many descriptions of Jesus in the hymn as Master, Friend, Guide, Guardian, Saviour, provide a number of opportunities for the singer to affirm their commitment to him.

### Promises repeated

Confirmation is the service in which a person repeats the promises that were made on their behalf by a Godparent at their baptism.

It is a sign that you have taken responsibility for your growth in the Christian

faith. The local bishop conducts the confirmation service.

### The first steps

If you feel ready to take this step, then contact our Church Office and one of the clergy will contact you to arrange a meeting so that you may learn more about your preparation for confirmation.

*O Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end;  
Be Thou forever near me,  
My Master and my Friend;  
I shall not fear the battle  
If Thou art by my side,  
Nor wander from the pathway  
If Thou wilt be my Guide.*

*Oh, let me feel Thee near me;  
The world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle,  
The tempting sounds I hear;  
My foes are ever near me,  
Around me and within;  
But, Jesus, draw Thou nearer,  
And shield my soul from sin.*

*Oh, let me hear Thee speaking,  
In accents clear and still,  
Above the storms of passion,  
The murmurs of self-will;  
Oh, speak to reassure me,  
To hasten, or control;  
Oh, speak, and make me listen,  
Thou Guardian of my soul.*

*O Jesus, Thou hast promised  
To all who follow Thee  
That where Thou art in glory  
There shall Thy servant be;  
And Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end;  
Oh, give me grace to follow,  
My Master and my Friend.*



## COMMON WORSHIP



**Richard Melville** recalls the changes to services that rolled down to St James's as part of Common Worship.

**J**uly 2000 marked several significant milestones, including the worldwide statement about debt-relief for poor nations. Nearer to home there were changes to our services, and Freda Evans led her first communion service following ordination.

### Dear Friends,

'We just do the normal service' is the remark which greets the unsuspecting visiting priest when asked to lead worship in another church. My heart always sinks when I hear it because one churchwarden's 'normal' is another's 'extraordinary'. New service orders will be introduced throughout the Church of England this year. These are called Common Worship.



Rev Brian Leathard

When the C of E was trying to stamp its own theology and worship in every parish, it did so through the Acts of Parliament which sought to enforce uniformity. The *King James Version* of the Bible was authorised by law and the Book of Common Prayer dictated the only forms of worship which could be used.

If we were to keep to the Book of Common Prayer there would be no harvest festival or carol service, no Mothering Sunday or Christingle services, no Easter vigil or informal services.

Our understanding of and communications with God do change. Therefore, our worship must be adapted. Hence, the variety of services which we now accept as normal.

I have formed a working group to consider what we do at Parish Communion. There will be an open meeting at which we will present draft orders of worship.

We have already introduced locally-made service cards, seasonal material and the Revised Common Lectionary, so the changes will be less marked, but there will be changes!

*In faith, Brian*

dream'.

Ann Peterken said that previous promises had already been broken, and the Cologne deal covered less than half of the debt that needed to be cancelled to really make a difference.

### From Deacon to Priest

Freda Evans wrote: As far as most people are concerned, if you wear a 'dog collar,' you are a vicar. But it's not as simple as that. The first step is becoming a deacon, and that is what I have been for the past year. Unusually, I worked full time at a church in Fulham for the three years while training, gaining experience in many areas beyond preaching.

This year I got to know a congregation in a new part of the Diocese. I've visited dozens of parishioners, tasting a wonderful array of cake.

So what does the future hold as a priest? We are called by God to work as servant and shepherd. Just as Jesus sent out the 12 disciples, so the bishop sends us to a parish. When the bishop lays his hands on candidates, he is empowering us with the Holy Spirit to celebrate communion, baptism and marriage, and to pronounce forgiveness. We need to go where we are sent. As Michael Ramsey said, 'To be with God with the people on your heart'.

### In the news 25 years ago...

**■ 1 Jul** The Oresund Bridge and tunnel connecting Sweden and Denmark, opens for traffic.

**■ 6 Jul** West Ham United FC pays a record £1.8 million for the late Bobby Moore's collection of memorabilia. There were 79 items in all, including his most precious 1966 World Cup winner's medal

**■ 8 Jul** Venus Williams secured her first Grand Slam title by defeating Lindsay Davenport in the Wimbledon final.

She went on to win seven majors (five at Wimbledon) among 49 singles titles.



Wikimedia



NickEd



Si.robi

## REGISTERS

**MAY**

### FUNERAL

**6** Hazel Devis, 95, Hampton Hill



### INTERMENT OF ASHES

**20** Rebecca (Becky) Joan Farr Jones, 43, Hampton



## OPINION

### Canon Julian Reindorp

#### New Pope's vision

I was encouraged by the election of Pope Leo 14th and his sermon at his Papal inauguration. 'We want to say to the world, with humility and joy: Look to Christ! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles! Listen to his offer of love and become his one family.' Who are his one family? 'The Church consists of all those who are in harmony with their brothers and sisters and who love their neighbour...' and to work with 'our sister churches, with those who follow other religious paths, with those who are searching for God, with all women and men of goodwill, in order to build a new world where peace reigns'.

Along with his degree in maths, his doctorate in canon law (which will help him to cope with the key governance issues of the church), so far Pope Leo has stood up to the US Vice President JD Vance, a Catholic, about a Christian's worldwide responsibilities. Being born in Chicago he will be firm with the American bishops, some of whom were critical of Pope Francis's priorities. (Francis chose Leo to oversee the appointment of bishops, and made him a cardinal).

#### Words matter

I was depressed by the Prime Minister's speech where he suggested native Britons were becoming 'strangers in their own country'. I understand the challenge posed on resources by considerable immigration, and the Reform party plays on people's fears. But this kind of language panders to people's fears, when so many of us in our hospitals, health centres, our care homes and in our Services sector are dependent on people from around our world. Thought-out policies need to be matched by thoughtful words.

#### Gaza & the West Bank

Since my first visit to Israel in 1966 (and seven later visits), I have seen 750,000 people begin living in illegal settlements, and in that time the Israeli Defence Force has increased its occupying forces to 25 battalions (3/4 of the whole IDF). And all of this was before the 251 hostages were taken on 7 October 2023 and the destruction of Hamas in Gaza started.

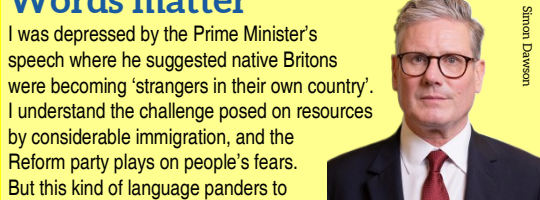
To see the lorries bringing aid shrink from 600 a day to a trickle and hunger used as a weapon of war, is a grim nightly sight on our TV screens. As Yair Golan, pictured, a former IDF general and Israel's opposition leader, said: 'Israel is on the way to becoming a pariah state, like South Africa was, ...a sane country does not fight against civilians, does not kill babies, and does not give itself the aim of expelling populations.' A Jewish journalist added, 'A biblical rage is blinding both sides in the Gaza conflict.'

#### Cricket is changing

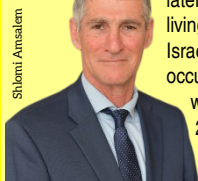
Watching a grandson playing in an adult cricket match, his opponents seemed to have two women supporters acting as scorers and I wondered would they later produce tea, as in times past?

After they had lost six wickets, the women disappeared and reappeared ready to bat. In time both went out to bat and were clearly among their best scorers. The same women opened their bowling. One was a bit wayward, but the other was the best bowler in either team. Fortunately, the other bowlers were not so good, and my grandson's team just won. So much for my sexist attitudes!

Edgar Beltran



Simon Dawson



Shalom Amsalem



Invisible Refugees are often the 'unseen people' on our streets. Tom Parsons/Unsplash

## WHEN HOPE SEEMS LOST



St James's supports a charity that helps refugees make a life in London and contribute to the UK economy. Jon Holloway debunks some of the myths about migrants.

Asking people about immigration is complicated. Recent surveys suggest that over 50% of the population think it should be reduced. But when asked if immigration was a good or bad thing, only 33% said it was a bad thing.

In the year to March 2024, the number of asylum applications to the UK was 69,298. In all, 39,616 people were granted refugee protection or other leave. These figures are dwarfed by the total number of people migrating to the UK, estimated at 948,000 in the year ending December 2024.

Despite the headlines, asylum seekers (often labelled 'boat people') represent just 7% of total migration to this country. And many bring valuable skills, in some cases as doctors or other health workers.

To sustain and expand its support, LCRF engages in various fundraising activities, including monthly and one-off donations. Publicity is key, and its chair, Rev Chris Brice, has spoken at St James's Church in the past.

#### Annual quiz

For several years now, St James's has held an annual fundraising quiz night in the late autumn, a time when those suffering from hardship suffer the most.

This year's event is on **Saturday 1 November** at 6.30pm. We hope to see our regular competitive quiz-goers once again, and any newcomers are encouraged to come and put up a battle! There will be more details nearer the time, but keep the date free.

#### Supporting the destitute

St James's has supported the London Churches Refugee Fund (LCRF) for many years. Charities in this sector don't get much publicity, they don't deliver cute or cuddly images, yet their work is vital to alleviate the hardships faced by destitute refugees and asylum seekers in London.

Operating solely through voluntary trustees and with minimal administrative costs, the charity ensures that nearly every penny raised directly supports frontline projects.

The charity gives grants of up to £1,000 to organisations assisting refugees and asylum seekers. These funds are utilised for essential items such as phone credit, travel cards, hygiene products, nappies, food, and emergency payments. In Spring 2025, the fund opened its 38th grant round, inviting applications from organisations committed to supporting destitute individuals in the London area.



Hope The LCRF helps those with the least Chalo Gallardo/Unsplash

## FRIENDS OF ST JAMES

Book tickets at: [friendsofstjames.org.uk](https://friendsofstjames.org.uk)

### CARMEN INSIDE STORY

Saturday 20 September 7:30pm. Tickets £20.

Carmen Co's show follows the story of Bizet's opera *Carmen*, but told from her point of view. The musicians perform entirely from memory, enabling them to act with each other, and to engage audience members in the show, frequently walking amongst them. They even dance while playing, in a fully



choreographed party scene which wows audiences. A truly captivating performance! Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJCarmen>





# GIVING BACK

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



**MOST** of us are familiar with the orange boats seen on television programmes like *Saving Lives at Sea*, carrying out rescues from cruise liners to paddle boarders. It might surprise you to know that the Royal National Lifeboat Institution is a purely voluntary service with over 15,000 volunteers and 448 vessels, including seven hovercrafts.

It is amazing to think that this national emergency service is run without any government involvement — and this is the way we like it!

My first introduction to the work of the RNLI was collecting at a charity football match between *EastEnders* and *The Bill*. (The ITV series was filmed at Teddington Studios).

### Teddington station

Following the *Marchioness* disaster in 1989, in which 51 people died when two boats collided on the River Thames, an inquiry recommended that London should be served by a dedicated rescue service. And in 2002, the RNLI began its lifesaving service on the Thames, with four lifeboat stations at Teddington, Chiswick, Tower, and Gravesend. Tower is now the busiest station in the UK.

The inaugural meeting at Teddington was chaired by Bob Tough, whose family owned a local boatyard and began fundraising for the charity in 1959. I was present at this meeting, which resulted in an enthusiastic plan supported by local businesses, boat clubs and river users, to pay for our own boat. *Spirit of the Thames* was launched in 2002.

Fundraising can never stop, however. Boats and equipment need to be regularly replaced. Since its formation 66 years ago, the Twickenham, Teddington and District Branch has raised over £1.5m. The boats have launched 1555 times.

### Naming ceremonies

When a station has a new boat there is usually a naming ceremony. I have been to many such ceremonies, held at the lifeboat's slipway, officiated by a priest who is usually the lifeboat chaplain. A similar service is also held to mark Sea Sunday. I find both very meaningful.

The real heroes, of course, are the crew members who turn out day and night, sometimes in terrible conditions. I have had the privilege of knowing many of the Teddington crew and consider them as friends. They are all dedicated,



**Heroes** Padstow's lifeboat crew launch despite the weather RNLI/Nigel Millard



**Rescue** One of Teddington's two lifeboats in action RNLI/Paul Roach

## SAVING LIVES COMES AT NO COST

The RNLI is the fourth emergency service. Over its 200-year history, 146,000 people owe their lives to its crews. 97% are volunteers and, as **Jill Goddard** explains, the rescue service relies on fundraising to cover its entire operating costs.

as are their families — somebody has to pick up home life.

The Teddington branch has attended many events over the years, but here are some of the most memorable to me:

- The naming of the *City of London II*, which was partially funded by my first husband's friends in his memory, followed shortly afterwards by the boat visiting the Tower of London. Later I was able to steer the boat in Dover harbour.
- The *Steamer Trip* was a very popular annual event from Kingston to Richmond and back.
- The many school fetes and bazaars we attended especially in the rain! We even had a mini tornado in Ashford.



### Stormy Sam Popular at Open Day

The stars of these type of events were Joan Catt and Freda Hale. They made a formidable pair.

■ In summer 2000, the Royal Parks held a Millennium fete in Bushy Park with a visit by the late Queen and Duke of Edinburgh. There was a royal enclosure, and we were allowed to pitch there. It was a great honour and we had a great view of the royal visitors.

■ We hold an Open Day every year at the Lifeboat Station when the public can come and see what we do. There are also demonstrations and a bar.

■ We also hold supermarket collections. The crew are particularly good at this. It is difficult to ignore a burly lifeboat crew member.

■ We regularly attend the switching on of the Christmas lights in Teddington, and one of our boats dominates the High Street. Children love dressing up and climbing over the boat.

### Lives on the line

Unfortunately, recent ill-health means that I am not able to be as active as I would like to be, but I take with me many happy memories of my time within the Lifeboat family.

Where else would you find people putting their own lives at risk as volunteers to save others?