

JUNE 2025 CELEBRATING JANE

# SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

YOUR FREE COPY



*Jane Austen*  
A LOVE LETTER

[stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](http://stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk) or find us on



 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).

Tel: 020 8241 5904

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

### ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge

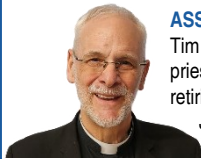
Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister, married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.

Tel: 079 5012 2294

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



## Supported by



### ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood

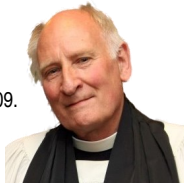
Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time hospital chaplain. Married to Jane, a former headteacher, Tim supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket and walks his brown labrador,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

Tel: 073 6928 0040 Email: [rtimmarwood@hotmail.com](mailto:rtimmarwood@hotmail.com)

### 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](mailto:julianreindorp@outlook.com)



## 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

Tel: 020 8941 6003 Email: [office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](mailto:office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk)

Address: St James's Church, St James's Road, Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ.

### CHURCHWARDENS



Susan Horner

Email:

[smhomer5@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:smhomer5@yahoo.co.uk)



Nick Bagge

Email:

[office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk](mailto:office@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk)

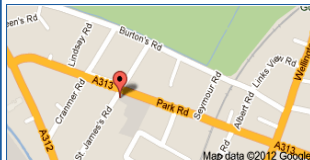
### CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST



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

This year is proving to be quite a momentous one with the VE services and celebrations and the new Pope announced the same day. It is also the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen, who is featured on our cover. In the centre pages Genevieve Bagge, a great fan of the author, writes about her visit to the Austen family home.

This month's volunteer is Graham McHutchon, a Bushy Park ranger. June is a special time in the park with the deer birthing and skylarks, and Graham has taken some amazing photographs. Freda Evans, a former curate at St James's, is a fellow ranger.

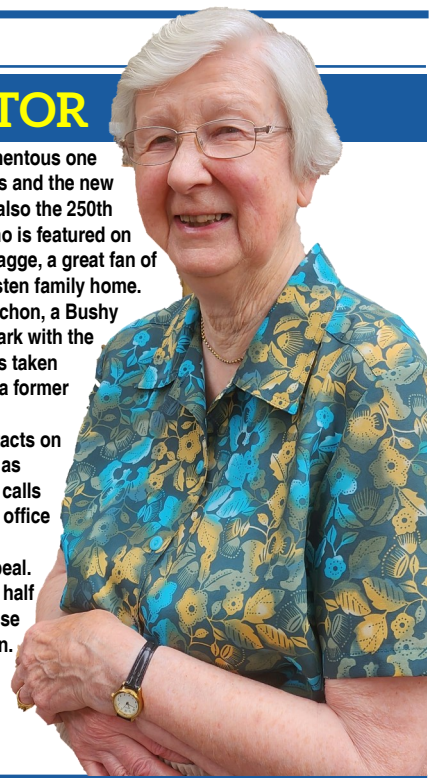
We have made some changes to the contacts on this page, removing many personal details as scams and unwanted emails and telephone calls are on the increase. The clergy and church office are unaffected.

This month marks the start our Spire Appeal. Last year you we raised over £2,000, nearly half our printing costs. We are grateful to all those who responded and hope that you will again.

Best Wishes

Janet

Editor



Cover photo: A coloured engraving of Jane Austen from a family portrait © Ian Dagnall/Alamy

**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

### EDITOR

Janet Nunn contact via Church Office

### SPIRE POSTAL ADDRESS

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

### WEBSITE

Prill Hincley [p.m.hincley@me.com](mailto:p.m.hincley@me.com)

### CIRCULATION

The Spire is available in church and local shops, and is distributed across the parish by volunteers.

For more information contact Susan Horner.

[smhomer5@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:smhomer5@yahoo.co.uk)

### PRODUCTION

Design Nick Bagge

Proof readers Catherine Gash, Susan Horner

### PRINT

Peter James Printing Limited 01932 244 665; email: [PJP123cards@aol.com](mailto:PJP123cards@aol.com)

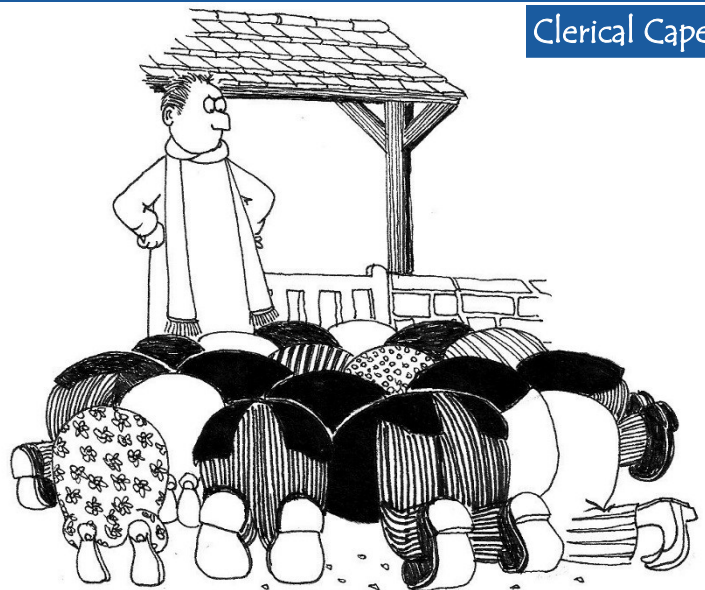
### NEXT ISSUE / COPY DATE

The July Spire is published on Fri 27 June. Copy deadline: Tue 3 June.

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Printed on paper sourced from well-managed forests.



Clerical Capers

The wedding guests had ignored where the vicar allowed confetti.



# DEREK WINTERBURN



**T**he slogan, *What it says on the tin*, was originally coined for wood varnish. It propelled Ronseal to brand leader. It had an obvious appeal as a simple alternative to 'you will get what's promised.'

Perhaps other companies, political parties and churches should similarly describe their 'offer' or foundational documents. The 'Nicene Creed' sets out the Christian Church's core beliefs. Its value is evident; we still say the Creed in church every week, and around the world we are celebrating its 1700-year anniversary in 2025.

## Words to heal divisions

In 325 AD Emperor Constantine, convened a meeting of about 300 bishops from across his empire (and paid for their travel) to draft their common understanding of God and Jesus, so that the Christian faith which he had adopted might also be the means of how his vast domain might be united rather than divided.

There can be no doubt that the presence of the Emperor at the council 'focussed minds', and the outcome of the discussions was almost universally accepted by the leaders of the church around the Mediterranean.

Although the council settled on a way of calculating Easter and various matters of church order, the chief business of the council was to resolve differences over the Trinity and in particular how to describe Jesus Christ.

In hindsight we can see that the bishops were anxious to capture a way of speaking about God and Jesus that upheld the oneness of God and the divinity of Christ. There was clearly only one God, yet Jesus was believed to be 'not just another part of the created order'.

This was important: Christians prayed to Jesus — were they polytheists? Surely not. Jesus revealed God in a unique way — how could he do this if he was not God? Jesus saved humanity — how did he do this if he was human exactly like us?

## Words that go deep

So the challenge was to find some 'words on the tin' that expressed something experienced. The council adopted a technical word, *homoousios*, which expresses oneness at the deepest of levels. The line in the modern English creed that corresponds to this word is 'of one Being with the Father'.

## MORE THAN JUST WORDS

Although *exactly* what the bishops meant was debated immediately afterwards and is still discussed today, they succeeded in spelling out: a) there are not three gods, but one; b) Jesus was not a mere creature, but fully God; and c) the Son and the Spirit were not temporary manifestations of God, but all three persons are co-eternal and co-equal.

## Words to celebrate?

So why celebrate it? Firstly it has united Christians for centuries, across denominational boundaries, and around the world. As such it is a riposte to the casual criticism that the Church is bitterly divided.

Secondly it upholds the divinity of Christ. In our generation there have been great

**The Nicene Creed is 1700 years old this year. Emperor Constantine called the Council of Nicaea to unite his fractured empire, but the bishops were more concerned about the unity of the church, speaking with one voice at a universal level.**

## Words are refined

In the decades that followed Nicaea, debate continued so a second ecumenical council was called in 381 by the Emperor, Theodosius I. It supported Nicene formulation and a further developed version of the Nicene Creed was gradually adopted after the council. This is the version in use today.

The Nicene Creed was formulated in the context of debate about the Trinity and so concentrates on only some aspects of theology. It has almost nothing to say about Creation, very little about Jesus's ministry and teaching, and offers no view on the Church's mission in the world.

It has been criticised by a number of modern theologians for its content, being formed by particular people in the 4th century.

steps taken in understanding the historical background of Jesus' time, and a deeper appreciation of his humanity, but the Church continues to stand for his identity as God.

Because of this, which we believe to be true, we present to the world a faith that does what it says on the tin: 'He came for our salvation...'

Together with other churches in the UK, and across the world, the Church of England will celebrate the 'birthday' of the Nicene Creed from Trinity Sunday (15 June) onwards.

A 24-day devotional guide is available to order and the material is also contained within the free *Everyday Faith* app for iOS and Android devices.

■ At St James's we will reflect on the Creed over four Sundays in July and August.

## St James Services Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am  
Livestreamed on Facebook

Together 3:30pm 8, 15, 29 Jun

Our shorter, all-age service, making way for Messy Church once a month

Messy Church 3:30pm 22 Jun

**Tue-Fri (not Wed)**

Morning Prayer 9am

**Wednesday**

Midweek Communion 9:30am

**Mondays**

Ark Playgroup 10am-12pm

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

**Tuesdays**

Connections Café 10:30am-12:30pm

Join us for coffee, cake and conversation.

**Wednesdays**

**Hard Questions**

with Julian and Tim 2-3:20pm.

4 Jun What are today's key virtues?

**Heaven**

with Derek and Jacky 7:30-9pm.

Based on Paula Gooder's book

4, 18 Jun What the Bible says about heaven and life after death.

**Summer Ceilidh**

Friday 6 June 7.30pm

Our ceilidh is bigger and better than ever!

A larger band, more dancing time — and tickets from £20. Book at: [friendsofstjames.org.uk](http://friendsofstjames.org.uk)

Snacks to buy, licensed bar.

**Money Course**

Thursdays 12, 19, 26 June 7pm

Do you want to make your money go further and get savvy with your spending? This simple money skills course, will help you stay on top of bills and manage debt. The course is free. Please register at: [themoneycourse.org/join](http://themoneycourse.org/join)

**Community Conversation**

Monday 16 June 6:30pm

Meet your councillors for Fullwell and Hampton Hill, Hampton North, and Hampton, to discuss local issues. With an open Q&A. Free event, but please register (places are limited) at:

[http://richmond.gov.uk/community\\_conversation](http://richmond.gov.uk/community_conversation)

**Open Day**

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>





Chawton The Austen family home

# I'M IN LOVE WITH JANE



Jane Austen was born in Hampshire in 1775. Today, 250 years on, life-long fan **Genevieve Bagge** explains why Jane's enduring appeal lies in her social commentary, believable characters, and timeless themes of love, marriage and human nature. No wonder so many people around the world are gripped by Austen-mania.

**R**omantic, witty and beautiful, Jane Austen's novels are a continual joy for me. I started reading them in my early teens, when I was captivated by her heroines, their high romance and Jane's exquisite lightness of touch. For me, back then, this was pure escapism. Over the years I have read and re-read them, and they bear such re-reading because there is always something new to discover.

She wrote with great precision and wonderful irony, and I only started to appreciate this when I grew a little older. This is her genius – an understated storytelling that operates at many levels. The more you notice, the more connections you will find in her novels and the deeper she will let you dive.

## Jane, the pioneer and equality champion

Jane lived in the Regency era, but she was ahead of her time. It was very unusual for a woman to write at all, let alone to write about women, and even more exceptional to get published. A lot of novels at this time were heavy, large and ponderous. But Jane had a great sense of pace and was such a funny, sharp and witty writer.

Her eye for character and humour transcends time and the glorious subtext in what her characters say carries brilliant social observations. She wrote and rewrote her drafts, whilst sitting at her tiny writing table in the family cottage in Chawton, Hampshire.

Jane was a social miniaturist. We see this in the opening to *Pride and Prejudice*: 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.'

I often imagine that a wry smile spread across Jane's face as she penned these words. It is true that women were reliant on a good income from their husbands. In fact, Jane herself was tempted when she received an offer from a wealthy friend of one of her brothers, as the family had fallen on hard times.

But her sister Cassandra was appalled and admonished Jane as she knew it went against all Jane's beliefs about the importance of mutual love in marriage.

## Pompous clergyman

The clergyman Mr Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* is hilarious. The holder of a valuable living, he is looking for a wife and decides on Elizabeth Bennett, much to her dismay. He doesn't realise how pompous and absurd he is, and Elizabeth can't get away from his proposals fast enough.

The humour is heightened when he approaches her father to ask for her hand in marriage and Mr Bennett calls his wife saying: 'You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr Collins, for she vows she will not have him; and if you

do not make haste, he will change his mind and not have her.'

Such is my admiration for Jane Austen that I suggested to my husband Nick that we call our daughter Emma, after the eponymous heroine of another novel: 'Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich...seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence.'

Austen's Emma is not without her faults. She has a love of matchmaking and manipulates her friend Harriet Smith, a young woman of unknown parentage, viewing her as a project to be 'improved' and 'elevated' socially. Towards the end of the novel Emma learns the importance of genuine connections rather than social aspirations. Throughout, we can chart Mr Knightley's love for Emma, to which she is oblivious until Harriet starts to show an interest and then she realises that she is in love with her lifetime friend. It's a slow-burn romance, which is delicious because we can see it, but the heroine cannot!

and her plots and characters are so resonant today. While she was at Chawton she wrote and edited her six completed novels: *Sense & Sensibility* 1811; *Pride and Prejudice* 1813; *Mansfield Park* 1814; *Emma* 1815; *Northanger Abbey* 1817; and *Persuasion* 1817.

The first four were published in her lifetime, and the others posthumously. She also started *Sanditon*, but was unable to complete it due to her untimely death, aged 41, on July 18, 1817. *The Watsons* is another unfinished novel, probably started in 1803 and considered experimental.

## Written by 'a lady'

*Sense & Sensibility* was the first novel to be published, anonymously, 'By a Lady' on the title page. Jane made a good profit of £140 when the first print run of 750-1000 copies completely sold out within two years.

## Jane was ahead of her time. It was rare for women to write at all, let alone about women, and exceptional to get published

As John Mullan says in his book, *What Matters in Jane Austen*: 'The shrewd reader will regard the final betrothal of Emma and Mr Knightley as inevitable from the moment we know that he is the only person ever to find fault with her.'

## Eye for character

Austen's eye for character and humour transcends time

Thanks to family connections, Jane grabbed one of the final resting places in Winchester Cathedral despite her rise to fame coming some time after her death. Her beloved sister Cassandra was bereft. She was not allowed to go to the funeral, as it was customary at the time for ladies not to attend. She later wrote: 'She was the sun of my life, the gilder of every pleasure, the soother of every sorrow, I had not a thought



**Sisters** The relationship between Jane (Patsy Ferran) and Cassandra (Keeley Hawes) was explored in the BBC drama *Miss Austen*. Picture: BBC





**Source** Most of Jane's novels were written on this tiny desk.

*concealed from her, and it is as if I had lost a part of myself.'*

They were the deepest of friends and when Jane died, Cassandra burnt some of the most personal of her sister's letters to protect her legacy.

#### Unrequited love

*Persuasion* is the most elegiac of the novels and one of my favourites. Anne is an older heroine and there is an autobiographical tone to the novel which is profoundly moving. It's a love story about lost and possibly unrequited love. It is

*when you almost broke it eight years and a half ago... I have loved none but you...*

Anne is overjoyed but terrified that they may be separated again. Yet when they meet, they are as happy as ever they were.

Despite Jane's illness, the amendments she made to *Persuasion*, when Anne and Wentworth finally understand each other's feelings, are some of the most poignant in all her work.

Many TV and film adaptations have brought Austen's novels to a wider audience. Perhaps Colin Firth as Darcy in his wet shirt after diving

## Cassandra called her 'the sun of my life, the gilder of every pleasure. It is as if I have lost a part of myself'.

written so beautifully, sensitively and intimately which suggests that Jane may well have been writing from experience.

Initially Anne and Wentworth "*fell rapidly and deeply in love*". She goes on: "*There could have been no two hearts so open, no tastes so similar, no feelings so in unison, no countenances so beloved*". But the novel is called *Persuasion* because Anne is persuaded by Lady Russell, whom she looked up to as a mother, not to marry Wentworth. She says he has nothing to recommend him – no connections, no prospects and an uncertain profession.

Anne breaks off the engagement and Wentworth leaves the country heartbroken. Anne spends the years that follow full of regret and disappointment. When Wentworth returns, he is a distinguished Post captain, and the couple's suppressed emotions are cleverly hinted at as the story unfolds and the characters speak by proxy.

Finally, Wentworth places a letter in front of Anne renewing his declaration of love: *I offer myself to you again with a heart even more of your own than*

into the lake in the grounds of Pemberley in the BBC adaptation in 1995 is the most famous.

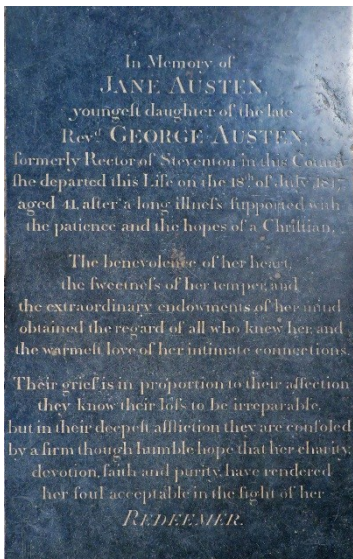
#### The mystery illness

Jane died after struggling with illness for over a year. It was why she and Cassandra moved to Winchester, to be close to doctors. There have been various theories about the mystery illness, including Addison's disease and Hodgkin's lymphoma. It is unlikely we will ever know for sure. Jane was the seventh of eight children. Born in

Steventon, where her father was an Anglican rector, she attended church twice every Sunday. Two of her brothers went on to be priests, so perhaps, not surprisingly, she had firm opinions on sermons. It might also be why she put so much humour into her characterisations of clergy.

The epitaph on her grave says that her family was consoled by a firm hope that '*her charity, devotion, faith and purity have rendered her soul acceptable in the sight of her redeemer*'.

Jane Austen was a meticulous and determined author who would never have believed that we would still be talking about her 250 years on. She is rightfully revered as a literary genius.



**Dedication** Jane's grave makes no mention of her literary career



# Around the Spire

## HEARING AID CHAMPION RETIRES



**DAVID THOMPSON**, 92, who has run an NHS walk-in hearing aid clinic at St James's Church for eight years, has retired.

*Hear Here* started as a Diocese of Guildford project in partnership with Sight for Surrey and the NHS, where NHS audiology-trained volunteers provide community-based hearing aid maintenance. It was taken up locally in the Kingston area, and David, himself a hearing aid wearer, was one of the first to sign up to run a clinic.

Held in a church or community centre, the clinics offer maintenance, including re-tubing, battery replacement and cleaning, as well as helping with settings and fitting. With no other walk-in clinics locally, David has found high

demand for his services at the fortnightly sessions. Eileen soon joined the team as a receptionist and to share the workload.

David said, '*Hear Here* was, and still is, a passion for me, and to give up helping fellow hearing aid wearers has not been an easy decision, but I have the satisfaction of knowing that I have been able to help hundreds of people since it started in Hampton Hill in 1997.

'I'm grateful for the close support and hospitality of St James's Church, without whom there would not have been a clinic.' There are over 50 clinics in Surrey. David's was the only clinic in Middlesex.

## CHURCHMAN ANTONY DIES



**REV ANTONY BALL**, who for many years attended weekday services at St James's, has died, aged 80. Born in Ham

and educated locally, he gained a mathematics degree from Kings College, London, with an Associate award for additional theological study. Antony taught maths in secondary schools while continuing theological studies. Aged 31, he became pastor of Isleworth Congregational

Church and also preached in other local churches. Antony retired from teaching at 50 to focus on his church work. Until his recent illness, he led morning prayer if our vicar was unavailable. Antony died in hospital on 30 April. We send our condolences to his sister Mary, his niece Leah, and her family.

## LENT APPEAL TOPS £4000

**ST JAMES'S** has raised an impressive £4000 for our Lent Appeal — even more than last year's record.

The money will go to support Christians in Angola and Mozambique who have been impacted by climate change. Southern Angola is facing its worst drought in 40 years, and in Mozambique 17 churches have been damaged by a cyclone, including in our link parish in Nampula Diocese.

## Tea, cake & confetti

**Josh Whale and Hayley Pang's wedding on 12 April at St James's was a joyous occasion. After the ceremony, everyone was invited to enjoy refreshments and cake in the hall and church. The couple and their guests then went on to a reception at the Richmond Hill Hotel, where the meal and speeches were followed by a ceilidh. We wish them every blessing in their life together.**







A 1960 school assembly

## SCHOOLS SING OUT!



**Tim Marwood** recalls how a schools' radio favourite became an enduring classic still enjoyed today.

**W**hen I began teaching in the 1960s, I soon encountered the weekly *Assembly* broadcast for schools by BBC Radio. Typically, all the classes of 7–11-year-olds would be brought together in the school hall to follow the broadcast, led by Geoffrey Marshall-Taylor.

The children would sing hymns from the book *Come and Praise*. An announcement that we were to sing No 18 was greeted enthusiastically as this was *Lord of the dance*, easily the most popular of the 29 songs in the book.

The words were written by Sydney Carter (1915–2004), a London-born poet and folk musician, matched to *Simple Gifts*, a traditional tune from the Shaker community, an offshoot of the Quakers (also known as the Religious Society of Friends).

### Living in a better world

There is an interesting obituary of Carter, written by Canon Paul Oestreicher (a Quaker), on the *Guardian* website. Carter was a teacher who had served in World War Two as a member of the Friends' Ambulance Unit with Donald Swann, the Christian pianist and composer (of *Flanders and Swann* fame).

Like other returning servicemen Carter was determined that the young people that he taught should live in a better world. His activism was expressed through his songs, which gained popularity as part of the folk revival of the 1960s and 70s.

*When I needed a neighbour were you there?* Was based on Matthew 25: 24–25, and *One more step along the world I go* became a staple to end assemblies with the refrain, 'And it's from the old I travel to the new, keep me travelling along with you.'

By referring to Jesus as *Lord of the dance* in 1963, Carter was using an English tradition

which dates from the Middle Ages. The words resonated with the popular culture of that era, appealing to children and adults alike.

### Winning formula

Why has the popularity of the song endured? I think it is the winning formula of a catchy tune and memorable words carrying a powerful message simply expressed. Today, 60 years after it was first performed, it is known more as a 'traditional' hymn than a folksong. I wonder which of today's worship songs will become tomorrow's favourite hymns?

*I danced in the morning  
when the world was begun  
and I danced in the moon  
and the stars and the sun  
and I came down from heaven  
and I danced on the earth;  
at Bethlehem I had my birth:*

*Dance, then, wherever you may be;  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,  
and I'll lead you all,  
wherever you may be,  
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

*I danced on the Sabbath  
and I cured the lame:  
the holy people  
said it was a shame.  
They whipped and they stripped  
and they hung me high,  
and they left me there on the cross to die:*

*They cut me down  
and I leap up high;  
I am the life  
that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you  
if you'll live in me:  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he:*

## REGISTERS

### MARCH

#### FUNERALS

6 Maud Theresa Husk, 100, Twickenham  
12 Stephen Mullan, 70, Whifton  
19 Ursula Mary Elisabeth Herron, 87, Hampton Hill  
19 John Philip Harrison, 78, Twickenham



### APRIL

#### WEDDING

12 Joshua John Whale and Hayley Hiu Tung Pang, Teddington

#### FUNERALS

2 Mary Christine Sewell, 90, Feltham  
3 Timothy Cresswell Jones, 80, Teddington



St Anne's, Soho, 1940

## MEMORIES STIRRED



**Richard Melville** finds a powerful message of hope and reconciliation during a visit by German Christians to London.

**T**he Bishops of London and Berlin-Brandenburg formed a partnership in 1999, committed to deepening their unity in Christ. London churches, including St James's, have been involved. Brian hosted German colleagues in 2000.

### Dear Friends,

One evening we visited St Anne's, Soho, an unusual church to say the least, surrounded by theatres and tourists, sex shops, film businesses, the Chinese quarter, the centre of London's gay community. Members of their PCC talked to us about being Soho residents and the pressures of pornography, homelessness, fear and alienation in the gay community, of being old and disabled. One of the older men spoke, with real emotion, of it being a liberation to welcome German guests into their new church. The original building was destroyed in the Blitz in 1940 and rebuilt in the 1990s. It was the first time he had spoken to a German since the Second World War. It had taken 55 years to move on. The Christian community at St Anne's had nurtured him for all those years. Only now could he truly live at peace and commit to the mission of the church in his parish of today. This from a man in his late eighties.

*Brian Leathard*

### Children in church

Kath Brooks wrote about children in church and gave thanks for the parents who generally kept them happy and quietly occupied. She was surprised at the number of small children taken to be blessed, not even realising they were in church. It was 50 years since she took small children to church. 'In those days we had Matins and the sermon was at the end of the service, so one could slip out during the preceding hymn. On one occasion, a little girl joined us, glad she could come out as her mouse was escaping from her pocket!'

### All-night vigil at St Paul's

Freda Evans wrote: St Paul's Cathedral conjures up pictures of dramatic and colourful occasions suited to its majestic

grandeur so the idea of a band of pilgrims spending an all-night Easter vigil there was imaginative and certainly different. Given that the vigil followed a service of baptism and confirmation, it was apt that we should begin beside the newly lit paschal candle, where the Bishop of London gave a short introduction. For the rest of the night, we were guided by Franciscans: Brother Damian from North West London, Sister Nan from South Africa, and Brother Seraphim from Egypt.

Each half hour took the form of a pilgrimage to a different part of the building. Our little procession followed the Franciscan cross. As we did so, we gently sang. There is something very moving about singing in the stillness and quiet of the deep night; and here, their voices rose up to the tremendous heights of the dome, full of mystery and wonder.

We lit candles for peacemakers. Videos and slides demonstrated the responsibility we carry to care for the world. Taizé chants and hymns lifted our spirits and prayers brought hope and encouragement. Then we made our way to the Easter Garden for morning prayer. It ended with Matthew's account of Christ's death. At that moment, the purple curtain which hung from the ceiling was symbolically torn into two, enabling us to pass through it to celebrate Easter on the cathedral steps.

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



■ **7 Jun** Tony Blair is heckled and slow hand-clapped at the Women's Institute's conference for talking politics at a non-partisan event.

### ■ 10 Jun

The much-anticipated Millennium Bridge across the River Thames in London opens to the public, but has to close again after it starts swaying.



■ **29 Jun** Eminem's mother goes to court claiming defamation of character in a \$10 million civil suit, after taking exception to the line 'My mother smokes more dope than I do' from her son's single *My Name Is*. She settled for \$25,000.



## OPINION

Canon Julian Reindorp

### The People's Pope...

So ran the banner headline in many papers. There were so many illustrations of his care for individuals. All through the war in Gaza he rang the Catholic church there every night. There was his humour: 'Don't be afraid to go to a bar with your friends, but always keep the Gospel in your back pocket.' And his care for the poor and the outsider: his last act on Maundy Thursday was to visit a Rome prison, and his final words on Easter Day, the day before he died, were once more pleading for world peace. Then there were conversations with journalists where he opened up the debate about gay people, was positive about gay blessings. He appointed the first women to senior posts in the Vatican. He reached out particularly to Islam, to Sunni and Shia alike. He was the first Pope from the Southern hemisphere, from Argentina.

### ...and his legacy

Two immediate themes stand out. Francis made climate change a moral issue. Perhaps due to his early training as a scientist, his encyclical, *Laudate Si 2015*, widely regarded as an outstanding contribution, was published as *On care for our Common Home*. In the Catholic Church he started the three-year synodical process, insisting that all countries consult their lay people, and opened up decisions to consultative committees with lay people, particularly women, involved. He clearly hoped this would structurally change the whole atmosphere of the Catholic Church worldwide. (His advisers noted the emphasis on Synodical government in the Church of England.)

He will always face criticism about the Church's failure to effectively tackle the clerical sex abuse crisis, but his emphasis on the poor and vulnerable, his obvious humanity and humility, his simple lifestyle, travelling by bus when he could, appealed to people of faith and no faith everywhere. He has made the Catholic Church more open, and the Gospel, the good news of Jesus, more accessible to ordinary people everywhere.

### Adolescence

The Netflix drama series about a 13-year-old boy murdering a schoolgirl has touched a nerve, with the makers called to Downing Street. The drama raises issues about school discipline, about the influence of social media and perhaps, most poignant, the relationship between fathers and sons.

A recent survey by the teachers' union NASUWT highlighted the role of figures such as Donald Trump and Andrew Tate in encouraging misogyny and racism in schools. The survey gave social media as the number one cause of pupil misbehaviour, with female teachers bearing the brunt. Outgoing General Secretary Dr Patrick Roach said restricting access to mobile phones during school did not go far enough. Parents were not taking responsibility for accepting their children's behaviour: 'We now need a plan to tackle what has become a national emergency,' he said.

### Jimmy Anderson

Still playing cricket at 42, fast bowler Anderson's 704 test wickets have only been exceeded by two slow bowlers, Shane Warne (Australia) and Muttiah Muralitharan (Sri Lanka). His skill with the new ball, both in the air and off the pitch, his determination, winning the Ashes four times, and being England's leading wicket taker, are huge achievements. His bowling in partnership with Stuart Broad has given millions of us pleasure (surpassing Freddie Trueman and Brian Statham?) And now the knighthood... Arise Sir Jimmy!



**Caring Dads** Part of the support for families provided by Welcare

## SUPPORT FOR OUR FAMILIES



St James's supports families in two ways by working with a charity and a local school as **Derek Winterburn** explains

**T**he church has been a long-term supporter of Welcare, which is a charity working with parents and children in South London and East Surrey. We are one of 54 churches that give towards the charity's work. It dates from 1894 when the Bishop of Rochester, Randall Davidson, and his wife Edith launched the Diocesan Association for the Care of Friendless Girls, which would eventually evolve into Welcare.

Southwark Diocese was created out of Rochester in 1905, and Hampton Deanery (in London Diocese), is in a London borough which is partly in Southwark - hence the link! One of the four family support centres is based in Castelnau Community Centre, Barnes.

The charity is able to support families (parents and children) who face particular challenges: last year 855 families were assisted. There are any number of pressures on parents and children: mental illness, unemployment, parental conflict, poor housing, domestic abuse. Social workers spend time with families to discover what can make a difference for them. The centres have run parenting courses and developed a 'Caring Dads' 17-week programme.

### Bishop Wand School

Like Welcare, Bishop Wand Church of England School has a heritage that dates to the 19th century. But Bishop Wand was opened comparatively recently, in 1969, to

serve the families of Spelthorne, Hounslow and Richmond. Although there are many primary church schools in the area, there were no secondary schools nearby. The site in Sunbury was chosen because St Paul's Cathedral, who owned the land, gave it to the school.

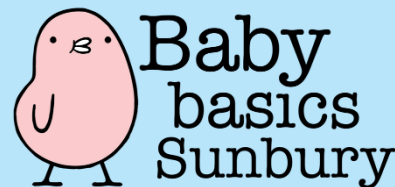
Bishop Wand has recently become part of the Instant Learning Trust - an Academy Trust, which also includes St Mary's Primary School in Hampton.

The Christian Ethos is important to the school; there is a chapel, and a chaplain. There are opportunities for students to be involved in assemblies and other Christian activities. The chaplain runs groups for students who have recently been bereaved, and groups for those who are struggling with anxiety. The gift that St James's makes each year is for the resources of the Chaplaincy.



## ARK PLAYGROUP SUPPORTS FAMILIES IN NEED LOCALLY

**THE ARK** playgroup has been very busy over the past year and, as a result, has been able to donate £838 to Baby Basics, a charity that works with midwives and health visitors to provide vital items for vulnerable groups such as teenage mums, families in poverty, refugees and asylum seekers, and women fleeing domestic abuse. The local branch has been based at Sunbury Methodist Church since 2014. In that time they have provided 2028 starter packs and 455 Christmas parcels.



## FRIENDS OF ST JAMES

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

### CEILIDH IN THE CHURCH

**OUR** next big event is a summer ceilidh. If you came to our last dance, in November, you'll already know how much fun it was! We've listened to feedback and can promise a bigger live band and more time to dance. Rather than provide a meal we will instead have snacks to buy along with a well-stocked licensed bar. And the best news of all: **tickets are just £20!**

We sold out last year, so don't delay in grabbing your tickets for the **Summer Ceilidh** on **Friday 6 June**. There may even be a nod towards the D Day anniversary!





# GIVING BACK

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



**EAGERLY** I opened the email. It read: 'I'm sorry to inform you that your application has not been successful.' Initially I was livid, but that quickly turned to 'I frankly don't care!' I had applied to be a volunteer ranger in The Royal Parks. Rejection hurt because I really did care about Bushy Park. Two weeks later I was invited to reapply and this time I was successful. It is a role that I love.

Seven minutes after I hop on my bike at home I enter the second largest of the Royal Parks, sometimes there are stags just inside the gate, other times it is the 'yaffle' or laughing sound of a green woodpecker that greets me. I am on my way to meet a fellow ranger for a two-hour shift.

Dressed in orange we always work in pairs and are asked to do a minimum of two shifts per month. I try to do two or more a week.

Regardless of the weather it is a delight to witness the daily changes of this outstanding park. Here, centuries of history has played out. There is evidence of medieval farming alongside trees that witnessed the Tudor times and everything since.

The variety of habitats and wildlife is exceptional. Even after years of being in the park several times a week I can still find something I hadn't seen before.

### Engaging with visitors

Rangers comprise people from all walks and various stages of life. Many are retired, some have flexible working, and others give of their spare time to come out and share their love and knowledge of the park with visitors. Many visitors come regularly, some are paying their first visit.

Rangers do not have law enforcement powers, for which I am very grateful. Our power comes from engaging with people, informing them about the life-cycle of the deer or the role of yellow meadow ants, entertaining them with stories of Dora Jordan and The Duke of Clarence, or educating them about ancient, veteran and champion trees.

I believe the more people are aware of the beauty and power of the natural world on their doorstep, the greater their desire to respect and protect it. When in conversation my favourite response from visitors is still, 'I never knew that!'

There are times, however when we have to advise people not to feed the wildlife or to try to place their child on the back of a stag for a photo opportunity.

### Down memory lane

Occasionally we are on the receiving end of verbal abuse, but the vast majority of our conversations are helping visitors



## AN EYEWITNESS OF NATURE

From historic herds of deer to protected anthills and ancient woodlands, Bushy Park has it all. And **Graham McHutchon** gets to watch it and marvel. But there's more to the life of a volunteer ranger than you might imagine.



**Resident Deer** A buck in velvet

with directions, talking about the variety of resident birds or hearing people's memories of the park over the decades.

Last year I had a conversation with a gentleman on a bench by heron pond. He reminisced about when the pond was covered in camouflage netting. He and his mates would come into the park after school and the soldiers would lift the netting to let the boys go swimming. As he was talking it crossed my mind that this was during the Second World War, the events he referred to happened 80 years ago! Another told me how he used to take a 'sack of ferrets' to the park to catch rabbits, not something I expect to encounter now.

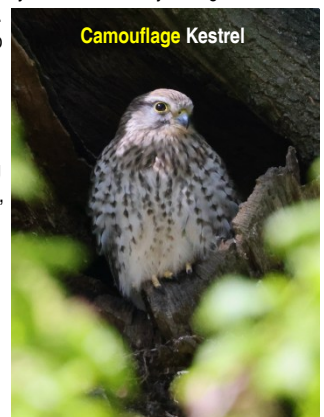
There have been funny moments. On one occasion I had chatted to some people about the differences between fallow and red deer. They nodded politely and then asked, 'But where is the palace?' It was at that point I realised that they thought they were at Hampton Court.

### Privilege of being a ranger

I feel slightly guilty writing this under the heading *Giving back*. You might argue that I am freely giving up my time for the benefit of others, but I have the privilege of sharing my knowledge and love of an extraordinary place with people who travel miles to experience such natural beauty.

The ranger community has become very strong with regular social events.

The Royal Parks also organises many excellent training sessions, led by experts in their field, whether that be dung beetles, bats or fungi, so I continue to learn on a regular basis. It's a two-way process: the more I give to the park, the more it rewards me with rich and diverse experiences.



**Camouflage** Kestrel

### Benchmark

