

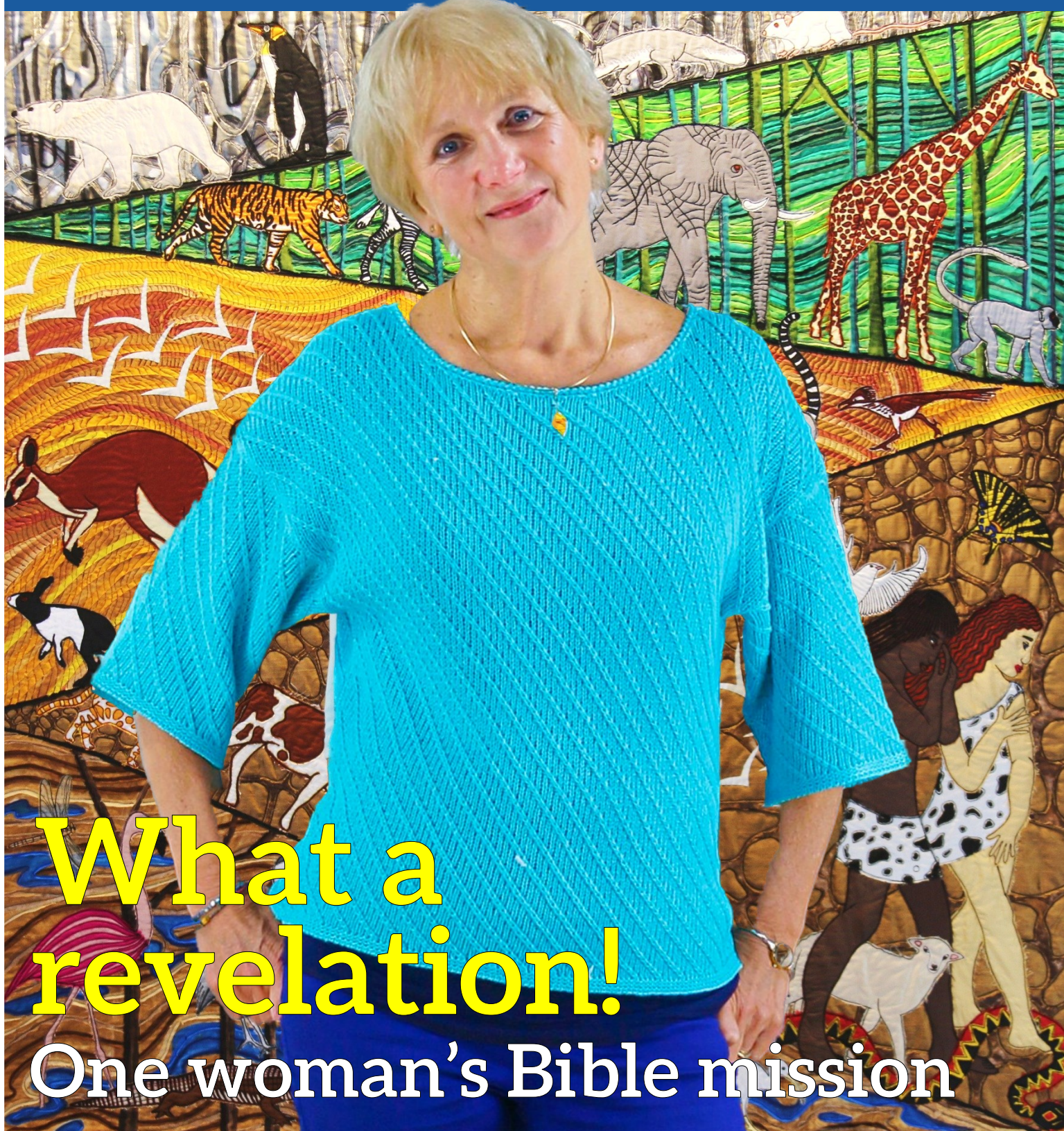
OCTOBER 2025 TAPESTRIES

SPIRE


St James
Hampton Hill

HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

YOUR FREE COPY



What a
revelation!

One woman's Bible mission

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

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



Supported by



ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood

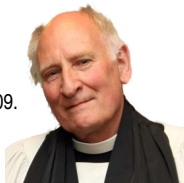
Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time hospital chaplain. Married to Jane, a former headteacher, Tim supports Harlequins RFC and England cricket.

Tel: 073 6928 0040 Email: 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



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

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

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smhomer5@yahoo.co.uk



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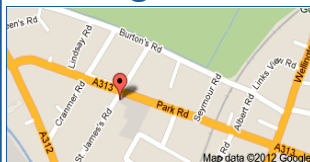
CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST



Thom Stanbury

Email: 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 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

The year is passing quickly. We are approaching harvest and the autumnal colours. While traditional Harvest celebrations are still held in country churches, we have swapped collecting autumn produce for support for people less fortunate than ourselves. Food and money will go to The Upper Room project in Shepherd's Bush, which helps homeless people. Local schools also support this project.

The cover and centre pages this month feature Jacqui Parkinson, who has made some remarkable tapestries of Bible stories. They are truly amazing and you can see them in Guildford Cathedral until 3 November. They are a real labour of love, and definitely worth a visit.

The back page focuses on Chris Coates, one of our bellringers, who volunteers at Hampton Hill Theatre. The building is also used by local groups. I go to a Carers' Café run by Crossroads every Thursday lunchtime.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our annual appeal. We have already reached £1,600 and it's not too late to donate (see below)

Best Wishes

Janet

Editor



Cover photo: Jacqui Parkinson and her stunning tapestry, *Goodbye to Eden*.

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

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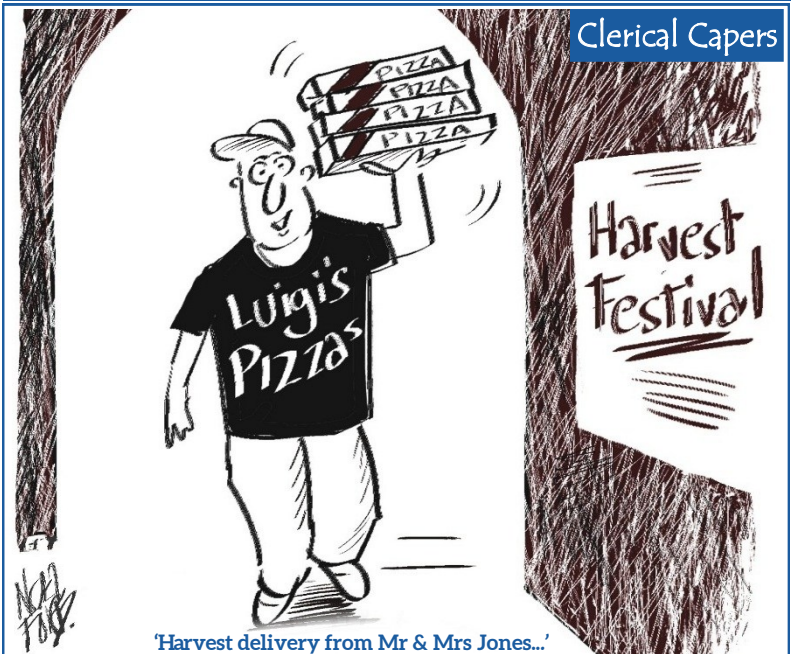
NEXT ISSUE / COPY DATE

The November issue is published on Friday 24 October. Copy by: Tuesday 7 October.

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'Harvest delivery from Mr & Mrs Jones...'

DEREK WINTERBURN

Sasin Tipchai/Pixabay



One of my earlier memories, and probably my earliest memory of being at school, is being told about not taking things for granted. I am not sure why I can remember this more than anything else. (I also remember dropping a glass milk bottle - and it smashing on the floor. It's not hard to see why that was memorable!) For some reason the teacher was trying to impress on us that we should not 'take for granted' water coming from the tap.

She sketched out how water was held behind a dam and how there was a pipe leading all the way to the Reception classroom! Perhaps before then we imagined that the water was made mysteriously somewhere close to every tap?

Water companies

Water has been in the news recently. We have been concerned about the lack of rain and so the water companies have been keen to tell us to avoid waste so that restrictions can be avoided in the summer months.

On the other hand, many of the water companies have consistently had bad press over wastewater treatment (including Thames). Additionally OFWAT is to be abolished and replaced with a new regulator. Nevertheless, in the UK we have some of the best tap water in the world. We may have concerns about the quality of water in our rivers, but our drinking water is superb: the UK water industry treats just under 16 billion litres per day and supplies it directly to almost every household across the country.

This water is treated to some of the strictest levels in the world and passes over 99.97% of tests.

Don't drink the water!

When one stops and considers all the hard work that brings pure water to our kitchens and bathrooms, it is right to teach that we should not take it for granted. Of course, that lesson is underlined if one travels to another country. In some countries, even with domestic supplies a visitor is advised to stick to bottled water. Further afield people share wells and boreholes and have to carry water to their home. Clean water at home is truly precious and something to be grateful for.

GRATEFUL FOR EVERY LAST DROP

Food from land and sea

At harvest time we usually think of how the food we eat comes to us from the fields or the sea. The Harvest Festival has an agricultural origin after all. But where would we be without water?

Harvest reminds us that a good harvest of food or a clean supply of water is a blessing from God.

It is remarkable that the Bible begins with water and creation proceeds by water being divided and subdivided. Shortly

On average in the UK we each use 150 litres of water every day. Essential for life, its availability is an enormous blessing. Don't take it for granted. Instead, be grateful for the people – and God – who bring it to us!

Just as we won't take farmers and the fishing industry for granted, we should also appreciate the tens of thousands who work in the Water Industry. It is true that much more must be done by the companies to manage our water with more sensitivity to nature, and with the prospect of climate change that is not an easy task.

Average water use

Consumers too have a role: it amazes me that the average person in the UK uses between 140 and 150 litres of water every day. And the equivalent of 109 litres per property is lost through leakage every day — that's almost as much as we use!

after that, there is the story of Noah and the flood. Elijah prayed for the end of a drought (and Ezra had to cancel a meeting because of the heavy rain!)

Then if we jump to the end of the Bible, Revelation pictures 'the River of the Water of Life,' running through the Heavenly City.

Give thanks for water

So God is quite aware of our need for water, and a predictable water cycle. Water is an essential part of life, and the quality and availability of water that we have is an enormous blessing, so let's not take it for granted. And be grateful for the people, and the Lord, who bring it to us.

St James Services Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am **Not 12 Oct**
Livestreamed on Facebook

Together 3:30pm **Not 12 Oct, 2 Nov**
Our shorter, all-age service.

Messy Church 3:30pm **19 Oct, 23 Nov**

Tue-Fri (not Wed)
Morning Prayer 9am

Wednesday
Midweek Communion 9:30am

Mondays **Not 27 Oct**

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.

Wednesday Life Groups

Faith in... 2-3.20pm

8 Oct *Politics*, 22 Oct *The Church*, 29 Oct *Work*,
12 Nov *The Earth*, 26 Nov *Christ*

Lectio Course 7.30-9pm
10, 24 Sep; 8, 22 Oct; 5 Nov

Harvest Festival

Sunday 12 October 11am

An all-age service for Harvest. During the service we will be collecting food and essential supplies for homeless people, and money donated today will also go to The Upper Room.

In Loving Memory

Sunday 2 November 3:30pm

Our annual service to remember much-missed family or friends. Their names may be read, and candles lit in their memory.

Charlie Dore

Saturday 8 November

7:30pm (doors open 7pm)

Award-winning songwriter Charlie

Dore is heading to Hampton Hill

to perform a genre-defying

collection of music that delights in reinvention.

Joined by longtime friend Julian Littman, from

Steeleye Span, the duo craft an intimate, fast-

moving show filled with music and storytelling,

perhaps explaining why her music

continues to captivate new audiences.

With licensed bar. Tickets £15.

Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJCharlie>



Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 9 November 9:30am



The service moves from church to the war memorial in the churchyard just before 11am for two minutes' silence and the laying of wreaths and poppies by groups and individuals.

25

MILLION

STITCHES IN TIME

Last year I went to Southwark Cathedral to see *Threads Through Creation*, an exhibition of 12 enormous tapestries depicting the Creation story from the first moment to the Garden of Eden. The stunning works of textile art, created from silks on painted and dyed cotton, are the work of Jacqui Parkinson.

Now living in Devon, she lived for some time in London, where she set up the Lantern Arts Centre in Wimbledon and taught drama in Kingston.

She drew on her Christian faith, her training as a Methodist lay preacher and her career as a drama teacher, performance artist and storyteller. The Creation series had pictures of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and birds, animals and fish, all sewn in great detail.

In the beginning

One panel contained nearly 300 stars and another 200 birds. Some of the creatures were in black boxes forming a border, but Jacqui liked to build in a sense of fun with, for instance, a flying fish leaping out of its box and escaping into the ocean.

Jacqui started her extraordinary project in 2013, being inspired by seeing the large paintings of Marc Chagall on a trip to France. Over ten years the project has developed in three parts: *Threads through Creation*, the *Cross*, and *Revelation*.

She started with *Threads Through Revelation*, because she loves the book. This resulted in 14 panels, giving visions of hope.

Jacqui said, 'Having done the "All is good at the end", I thought I'd do "All is good at the beginning". This became *Threads through Creation*.

'But "All is not good at the present", so I decided to do *Threads through the Cross*, connecting the beginning and the end.'

The result is the final series of 18 panels depicting the life of Jesus from his birth to his death, resurrection and ascension. Jacqui's intricate stitching



The Shepherds
Do not be afraid



and vibrant designs bring the story of Christ to life.

Epic achievement

The complete project of 44 panels, each almost three metres high, would stretch for 80 metres if placed end-to-end. It is probably the largest textile project for 600 years.

When I saw *Threads Through Creation*, I thought that each huge panel must be made of smaller elements stitched together, but this is not the case.

Each starts with an old bedsheet, preferably a rough-textured one, possibly patched and darned, placed on three long tables. Each sheet is quilted and sometimes a grid drawn on top. Jacqui draws the design on paper and enlarges it using a computer to produce a full-size version, which is painted onto the sheet. Once the background is complete, various forms of appliqué are used.



Hosanna Jesus is Lord

My House A house of prayer

Threads through the
declaration of God's

Bible is a
love in

panels – possibly the largest textile project by
one person ever. Susan Horner saw some of it.



Fine silks are used and then cut back to reveal lower layers. Jacqui also uses some gold leaf and metallic layers.

Challenges

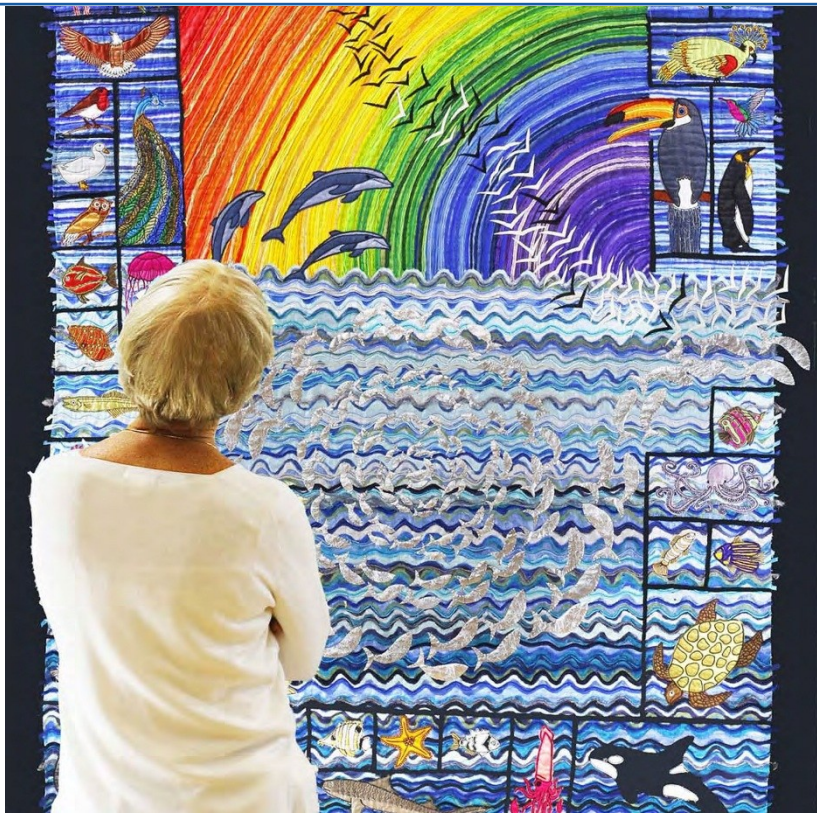
The three series have thrown up different challenges. *Revelation* lent itself to abstract imagery, *Creation* required depiction of plants and animals, and the *Cross*, on display in Guildford Cathedral, has people and faces.

Jacqui found that using fabric, it was impossible to get detail of emotion into the faces and so she went back to icons, with large eyes and stoical faces.

The final panel in the *Cross* exhibition, Pentecost, shows the risen Jesus in the centre of a circular rainbow, with flames made from gold leaf coming from his body.

Jacqui's overall aim is to bring Bible stories to all kinds of people through accessible art. I think she

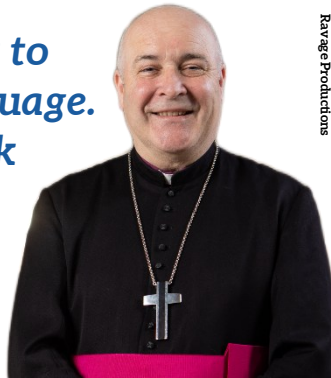
Threads through the Cross
He shall be called Jesus



Threads through Creation **Water and Sky—splash with colour!**

'The church has to speak to people in their own language. This astonishing artwork engages with everyone, whatever their age or background'

Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York



Ravage Productions



Threads through Revelation **New Creation.**

presents core Christian beliefs clearly in a unique way, which encourages people to stop, chat and come away enriched and inspired.

■ You can see *Threads through the Cross* at **Guildford Cathedral** from **25 September-3 November** and admission is free.



Follow the star



Around the Spire

MARRIED 70 YEARS AND STILL HAS THE DRESS!

CONGRATULATIONS to David and Joy Thompson, who celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on 3 September.

David was a member of the choir at St James's and Joy used to attend church with her mother. It was a packed church in those days and you had to arrive early.

Joy was introduced to David at the annual Laurel Dene Fete. Joy and David have four children: Philip, Christopher, Andrew and Linda. They were all baptised by Rev Rupert Brunt and attended Sunday School.

Joy's wedding dress was made by David's cousin and is still in pristine condition. She also has her veil and headdress, and cake decorations. The couple marked their platinum anniversary with a family celebration.



VETERAN OAK DROPS BOUGH

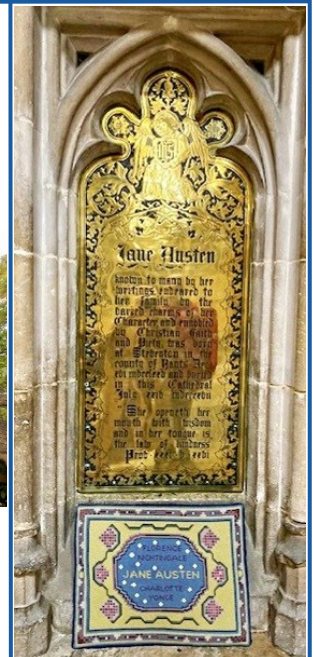


THE veteran oak tree in our churchyard has fallen victim to Sudden Branch Drop Syndrome — losing one of its enormous boughs.

The condition causes healthy-looking tree branches to unexpectedly break and fall, typically when hot and dry weather is followed by rainfall. The condition, linked to water pressure and heat stress, has affected trees across the borough as our climate changes.

Tree experts from Richmond Council, which is responsible for the churchyard, were quickly on the scene and removed 50 tonnes of wood. The tree will need rebalancing over the winter for its long-term stability.

Oak trees can live for over 1,000 years. Ours features in the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory. Ancient trees are veteran trees, but not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient as they are usually only in their second or mature stage of life.



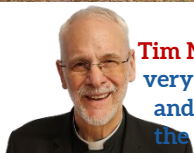
LESLEY Mortimer joined the crowds in Winchester, drawn by the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen, and persuaded the cathedral tour guide to place the named kneeler below the commemorative plaque, close to where she is buried.

Lesley also managed to secure much sought-after tickets to visit 8 College Street, where Jane died on 18 July 1817.

Winchester College, which now owns it, opened the house to the public for the first time as part of celebrations.



YOU'RE INVITED!



Tim Marwood recalls the very first Harvest service and echoes the words of the hymn that extended

The hymn *Come, ye thankful people, come* was written by Rev Henry Alford (1819–71), a clergyman who became Dean of Canterbury in 1857. The first published version appeared in

1844, which makes it almost contemporary with the first Church of England service held to celebrate the harvest, held in Morwenstow, Cornwall, in 1843.

Alford, left, updated the words of this hymn at least three times during his lifetime and the compilers of other hymn books have made amendments too. The tune which usually accompanies these words is *St George*, composed by Sir George Elvey, organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor.

Two parables

The hymn was written by Alford for Harvest Festival services and it remains a popular choice to this day. Two parables in the Gospels are referenced in verse two of the hymn: *The Parable of the Wheat and Tares* in Matthew 13: 24-30, and *The parable of the Growing Seed* in Mark 4: 26-29, which includes *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear* (28).

A hymn that begins with an invitation is so appropriate for a thanksgiving service. There is something very powerful when it begins with the word *Come*, with the implication that all are welcome to join the celebration.

Most of the major world religions hold celebrations that give thanks for the harvest, and this provides an opportunity for dialogue. I have a friend who tends an allotment, and he is invited to share in the

many celebrations by the faith groups in his diverse community.

Here's your invitation!

I believe that an invitation is the best way of including people in a church community. So, here is your invitation! You are most welcome to attend Harvest Festival at St James's Church at 11am on Sunday 12 October!

*Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest-home!*

*All is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come;
raise the song of harvest-home!*

*All the world is God's own field,
fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
unto joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
grant, O harvest Lord, that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.*

*For the Lord our God shall come,
and shall take his harvest home;
from his field shall purge away
all that doth offend, that day;
give his angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his garner evermore.*

*Then, thou Church triumphant, come,
raise the song of harvest-home;
all be safely gathered in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there for ever purified
in God's garner to abide:
come, ten thousand angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest-home!*

REGISTERS

JULY

FUNERAL

9 Antony (Tony) Francis Gerald Scanlan, 92, Hampton Hill

14 Elaine Griffiths, 86, Hampton Hill

INTERMENT OF ASHES

26 Nicola Jane Atkinson, 60, Sunbury

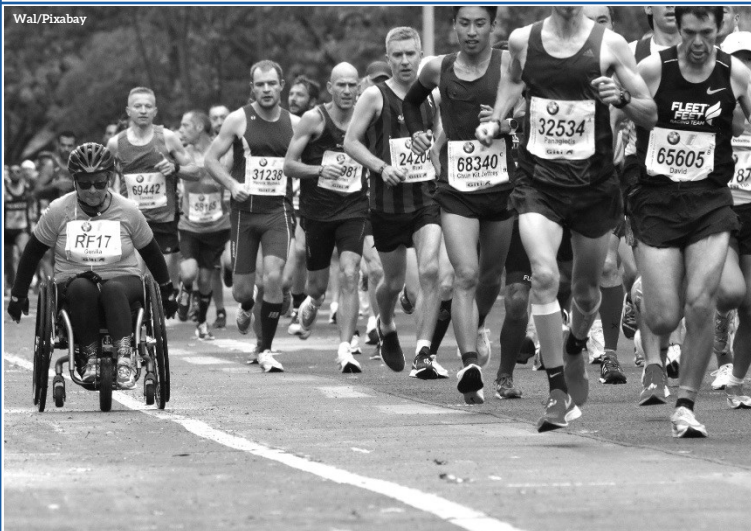
AUGUST

FUNERAL

21 Margaret (Margie) Agnes Gawler, 84, Hampton

INTERMENT OF ASHES

11 Jane McGowan Carmody, 82, Hampton Hill



RUN, WIN OR LOSE



Richard Melville ponders why we measure success in life against a pre-set list of achievements that do not matter to God.

On a trip to Berlin, (London's 'sister or twin diocese' in Germany), Brian said most of the passengers were either entrants in the city's forthcoming marathon, or there to watch. He was in neither camp! He did, however, take part in a service in Berlin's famous Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church the night before.

Dear Friends,

'I had presumed that there might be 40-50 people present. To my amazement there were over 1200 in church, on every



Rev Brian Leathard

windowsill, in every aisle, climbing up the organ, everywhere! The service was full of appropriate liturgy, runners lighting candles, jaunty music and Bible texts galore on the theme of, for example, 'The Lord will not suffer your foot to stumble' (Psalm 121: 3) and from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews, 'Run the race that is set before you'.

A German minister gave a most moving sermon, not least because he was running the marathon (aged 67) for the 21st time. "Because of my foot injury," he added, "I'm running in the full knowledge that I shall, most probably, not complete the course. Now, I see things from a different perspective."

Some Bible texts certainly seem to suggest that it is reaching the goal — in marathon terms, crossing the finishing line — which is the most important thing. But is it? In our success-oriented society very few of us would seem to achieve success in every part. Career, income, physical appearance, sex life, social standing are but some of the many goals which appear to be taken as norms against which to measure ourselves. And yet can we really subscribe to such expectations and assumptions?

In faith, Brian

Sitting pretty

Selling no longer needed church chairs, as we did during the refurbishment, is nothing new. A parishioner from October 2000 wrote: About 50 years ago when we were trying to raise money for repairs to the church, we had

a sale of old seating. I bought two folding chairs for 6d each. My husband repaired and stained them and we still use them today!

Lifeboat milestone

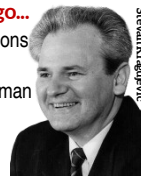
St James's has maintained a connection with the RNLI through Jill Goddard (see *Spire* July 2025). Set up in 1959, she said the Twickenham and District branch had raised £498,000 — £2000 short of the target. Members were determined to raise the final money over the year through events, including a bridge drive, an autumn sale at Teddington Methodist Church, and a quiz at York House, hosted by local resident and *University Challenge* presenter, Bamber Gascoigne. [The target was reached]

Live long and worship

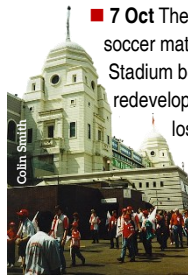
To live longer, skip the gym on Sunday mornings and go to church instead. Analysis of 42 studies involving 126,000 people had revealed that regular attendance at a church could lead to a significantly longer life.

In the news 25 years ago...

■ **5 Oct** Mass demonstrations in Belgrade culminate in the resignation of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milošević, right. It became known as the Bulldozer Revolution.



■ **7 Oct** The last competitive soccer match at Wembley Stadium before its major redevelopment saw England lose 0-1 to Germany. It was probably an omen. The new stadium opened four years late and cost a whopping £798m.



■ **11 Oct** The 100th Space Shuttle mission (STS-92) took place. The Shuttle was the first orbital spacecraft designed for reuse and operated from 1981-2011. It was retired after the building of the international space station was completed.



OPINION

Canon Julian Reindorp



DESPAIR ABOUT GAZA

We have all watched scenes of hunger and war over the decades, perhaps experienced them ourselves. But Gaza — defined as a middle-income country with high levels of literacy — has been destroyed before our eyes, and hunger inflicted in the most deliberate way possible, limiting the needed 600 lorries of food a day to a trickle. How much have the people of Israel known of all this? How have we been united against Russia's invasion of Ukraine but not against Israel's invasion of Palestine, long before Gaza? And how will this contribute to the latent antisemitism that is so much part of our history?

We are living in a world where the United Nations, a product of the Second World War, and all its worldwide agencies for supporting people in need, seems to be ignored. It's a familiar proverb in our scriptures 'where there is no vision the people perish'. (Prov 29:18)

THE TIMES PREJUDICES?

Tony Gallagher, editor of *The Times*, used to edit the *Daily Telegraph*, which makes no secret of supporting the Conservatives. Recently, *The Times* front page read: *1 in 8 of all prisoners born overseas*. But people born overseas make up 16%, or 1 in 6, of the UK population. Those born abroad are likely to be younger than the population, and most criminal offences are committed by young people, so the percentage of foreign-born people offending is even less than the headline suggests. To whom is *The Times* trying to appeal?

In fact one in two builders was born overseas, as are one in three doctors, one in five academics and one in six nurses. Having just had a hip replaced, and someone who often visits care homes, I am deeply grateful for those born overseas who care for us in our time of need. Rupert Murdoch, who owns *The Times*, was born overseas and has a difficult history with his company's failings during the phone-hacking scandal.

POOR MOTHERS

Mothers earn £302 a week less than fathers, in an analysis acknowledged by the Office for National Statistics. Mothers are paid a third less a week than fathers and almost 20% less an hour. And these figures do not take account of the number of women who leave work for caring roles. The gender pay gap is faced by all women, especially young women, but the earnings gap really opens up when women become mothers. How much is it still assumed that women are the carers and men have careers?

GAY ARCHBISHOP ELECTED

The Bishop of Monmouth, Rt Rev Cherry Vann, has been elected Archbishop of Wales. She has been in a civil partnership with Wendy Diamond since 2015 and they have been together for 30 years. She said while serving in the Church of England, she had 'lived in fear', and had been afraid of being 'outed' in the local newspaper. 'In Wales I have felt extraordinarily welcome for who I am'. She says the Church needs to work on what it means by marriage. 'I believe I am married to my partner, partners marry each other, and the church gives its blessing. The civil partnership provides the legal security.'



CHARITIES WE SUPPORT

ST LUKE'S, MILO



FRACTURE HOSPITAL



Our fundraising has enabled the hospital to complete its replacement beds project. Now, as **Lesley Mortimer** reports, they hope to buy a mobile X-ray machine to transform their fracture clinics.

It was a joy to welcome Drs Hilary and Adrian Murray once again to St James's in July to hear about developments at St Luke's Hospital, Milo, Tanzania. When they last visited Milo in January/February 2025 they found newly tiled floors, freshly painted walls and corridors and new toilets. A further five hospital beds had been ordered like those St James's sponsored last year.

Hospital developments

The ultrasound programme has continued apace, although the machine which we helped to purchase developed a fault, was sent back to Holland for repair under guarantee, and was now back in the hospital and functioning well.

In the maternity ward they have constructed four cubicles for sick, newborn babies. Unfortunately, the dental technician is still only able to perform basic tasks, such as extractions, after a mix-up in the delivery of the new equipment for which we raised money in Lent 2024.

Two new projects

Hilary and Adrian flagged up two new projects which we might consider supporting. There are no X-ray services in the hospital, so the aim is to purchase a portable Machine, similar to the one pictured, right, which could also be taken to the outreach clinics. These sturdy machines — used on oil rigs and in war zones — cost about £35,000 plus extras, plus staff training, but it was



hoped that at least half 50% of the cost might be met by a grant from Rotary.

The second project is to find sponsors for Milo students leaving school and moving into Further Education colleges for three-year diploma courses, often in medical-related areas such as radiography. On completion of the diploma, students qualify for a government job.

The cost to the sponsor is £450 - £900pa for three years. If you would like to learn more please contact me.

Hilary and Adrian hope to return to Milo next winter, this time for three months. We look forward to hearing more encouraging news from a hospital and community that St James's has been supporting for almost 50 years.



Upgrade The remaining replacement beds have now arrived

COMING SOON

PITCH PERFECT

With word spreading, tickets are being snapped up for a concert by the award-winning singer-songwriter Charlie Dore. Joined by longtime friend Julian Littman, the duo have crafted an intimate, fast-paced show filled with instrument-swapping, storytelling and razor-sharp humour. Find out why her music captivates audiences.



Saturday 8 November
7:30pm. Tickets £15.
Book at:
<https://bit.ly/StJCharlie>



Duo The genre-defying duo of Charlie Dore and Julian Littman

Book tickets at: friendsofstjames.org.uk

GIVING BACK

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



THERE are many reasons why Hampton Hill is such a vibrant and pleasant place in which to live — a flourishing High Street, good transport links and Bushy Park to name a few — but not many similar-sized places can boast a purpose-built theatre at its centre. Hampton Hill Theatre, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2024 and continues to go from strength to strength.

I have been volunteering as a Bar Steward since around 2017, with a break during Covid when the theatre was dark. This role is one of many opportunities available, all of which enable the theatre to remain open and to offer top class productions, both home-grown TTC productions and from visiting drama groups, and a mix of classic productions, new plays, musicals, and children's groups.

The theatre also hires out spaces, such as for corporate events in the main auditorium, meetings or family celebrations in the more intimate upstairs Coward Room (named after former Teddington resident Noel Coward), or a safe space for local health and wellbeing charities. It really is a versatile building, available to and for the community, with a stated aim of strengthening its role as an arts and community hub.



Where it all began

Teddington Theatre Club (TTC) was formed in 1927, originally to stage Shakespeare for schools and going on to stage a wide repertoire for the general public. TTC was granted a 25-year lease of part of the then council-owned Hampton Court House. Two years of conversion work resulted in the club finally opening a theatre there in 1971.

As that lease ended the current site was secured. Years of fundraising, a grant from the National Lottery, building and fitting out followed and the first performance was in 1999.

TTC produces 10 productions a year, either in the main auditorium, seating 197, or the Coward Studio Theatre, seating up to 50, many of which go on to win awards. It acts as a receiving house for another 20 shows. The theatre also presents film nights, stand-up comedy, and an annual Christmas grotto! All of which add up to 20,000 tickets sold every year.

Back in the college bar!

I get much enjoyment from working behind the bar, reliving my student days behind the college bar! No experience is necessary as full training is given on all aspects of the job, and there is always support. Almost without fail during a shift I see a familiar face in the audience, a result of the theatre's location and community support. Chatting to the audience either before the performance, during the interval or sometimes afterwards is a highlight of the job.

An online rota makes signing up for shifts easy, and text messages are sent when new shifts become



Classic **The Great Gatsby**
Photos: Steve Sitton

JUST DON'T PUT ME ON THE STAGE!

You don't need to be a performer to volunteer at Hampton Hill Theatre. As Chris Coates explains, there are plenty of off-stage roles and without people to fill them, the show would not go on. They just come with less drama!



Service with a smile Chris Coates behind the bar

available or there are gaps to be filled. There is no required regular commitment, just a willingness to support the bar, a vital income stream for the theatre — particularly now that an ageing theatre requires increased maintenance. Don't we all!

My place is definitely off-stage

I very much enjoy watching performances in the theatre, but I have no desire to perform on the stage. This is no hindrance to volunteering as a bar steward, or in any other voluntary role: you always feel a valued part of the team. A recently introduced 'perk' for volunteers is the chance to watch the

final dress rehearsal of a TTC production. The theatre is also home to the Youth Action Theatre for 16-25-year-olds, who sometimes perform at the Edinburgh Festival.

Social events for volunteers and members are held throughout the year, reinforcing the sense of belonging to a flourishing and inclusive venue.

Open mornings are held on the first Saturday of most months, from 10-12, when people can visit the theatre to see how things work and to find out about the range of activities and voluntary options available.

These include everything one associates with a theatre — costumes, props, set design and builders, lighting, sound, bar, and duty managers. Do go along to find out how you may contribute and get involved.

In walking distance

I am fortunate in that I can walk to the theatre for performances or bar shifts. What a luxury! No waiting for buses or trains after an evening performance, but time to linger in the foyer chatting to friends and neighbours. We are so blessed here in Hampton Hill.

■ For more information go to hamptonhilltheatre.org.uk, or email office@teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk