

Arena Weekly

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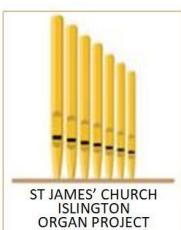
Dear All,

LOCKDOWN BLUES As we wait for Boris to announce a timetable for the next few weeks, it doesn't look as if our current state of isolation is going to end any time soon. For those of you who have barely been able to leave the house, this won't be good news and we hope being part of the St James' community will go a little way to remind you that you are not alone. As a small contribution I am copying the birthdays/anniversaries and also the Prayer rota from the Weekly News into the Arena Newsletter so that all of us keep individuals in mind on any particular day. Please do continue to feed in information by phone or by text; it was great to see Brian and Oscar Yeats on my doorstep (socially distanced of course) the other day after they had spent some time in Arlington Square. No (one) is an island...

OF COURSE! Sadly nobody recognised Hugh Grant from the photograph in last's weeks' edition of Arena! Dionne Carter had a stab but thought it was some filming that took place in Church in 1997. The picture was actually taken during the shooting of Richard Curtis' short sequel to 'Four Weddings and a Funeral' in December 2018 (if you remember they had to remove our Christmas tree for two days!). The aim was to raise heaps of money as part of the Comic Relief TV fundraiser in April 2019. Also in Church: Andie MacDowell, Rowan Atkinson, Kirsten Scott Thomas and Lily James. Perhaps you would have got it had I showed this picture! I suspect the piece of our archive below will be easier.



LOCATION, LOCATION There were several (deliberate?!) mistakes in the map in last week's edition and we needed to make corrections in City Road, Burgh Street, Bevan Street and College Mews. Well spotted.



ORGAN PROJECT The full file of papers were sent to the Chancellor a month ago so I wrote to the admin team at the Diocesan Registry to ask what had happened. Apparently no response was expected: no progress will be made until the staff return to their offices after the shut-down. Presumably they are all 'working from home' like so many of us. Is there a different understanding of what this means in the legal world?



FROM THE ARCHIVE While I suspect lots of you will be able to identify the three people here, can you recall what the very special occasion was?

Calendar and Daily Prayer themes

Sun 10 *EASTER 5* Maria Flavius; Ros, Chris, Beatrix and Sebastian Ford
Mon 11 *DEL Easter 5* Nick, Felicity and Eleanor Fryer
Tues 12 *Gregory Dix* Mark, Shireen Gilbert; Mostyn, Nieve, Ilaria Goodwin
Wed 13 *Feria* Karena and Amariah Greenaway; Lucy Haire and Sam
Thurs 14 *St Matthias, Ap* Jill Hetherington; Paul Hills; Mark, Norah Hodge
Fri 15 *Feria* Rebecca, Rob and Eve Holtom; Alastair and Diane Hume
Sat 16 *Caroline Chisholm* Kris Hyde; Matt, Nicole and Eve Jean-Baptiste
Sun 17 *EASTER 6* Barry, Hayley, Theo and Freddie Jenkins

Birthdays

Many Happy Returns to Arnold Carter who will 7 tomorrow; to Charlie Green who will also be 7 but on Wednesday; and finally to Jane Kilgannon, working from home in a house which includes Luigi, Luca, Francesca, Matteo and Gloria! Happy days all.

PHOTOGRAPHS It is nearly three years since we pasted up the current photographs of the congregation. Since then our children have grown, some families have moved away and some of our members have died. At a practical level we are also finding that thick photographic paper doesn't adhere very well to these old boards and pictures regularly find themselves on the floor! So I am appealing for new photographs of each individual member of your family to put into a new database file which we will then print out on our new colour photocopier. With luck these will stay in place much more easily. So many people have valued these pictures - and visitors are always amazed by it - so can I ask you to send in your pictures during this period of lock-down so that when we are able to go back into Church the new display will be ready? Many thanks.



James', Islington rather than to 'AN Other' Church which happens to take your fancy! The word on the street is that people still wish to be in touch with their own (local) Church which is why we continue to record these services but for obvious reasons the more people who are involved the better. With an i-phone it really is very easy to record short Scripture passages and Sinead does a great job stitching all the verbal and musical contributions together. New this week: with a new CCL license designed for churches wanting to stream, we can now include hymns and other recorded music too. The debut of our own Second Sunday Choir is awaiting the backing track from South Carolina!

NOW WITH HYMNS Thanks to all those who have braved the technology and recorded items for our Sunday streamed services. Although these 'Services of the Word' keep to a fairly simple format (and try not to be too long!) we have tried to introduce prayers and readings which are not completely familiar so that there is some reason to tune in to St

James', Islington rather than to 'AN Other' Church which happens to take your fancy!



A GREAT NEW INITIATIVE *Julia Maile* writes: I have joined up with two other local mums to create a small new charity called MerryGoRound. We collect donations of quality second hand children's clothes, shoes and books to gift for free to local families in need. So it's a bit like a food bank, but for children's items.

We started collecting clothes earlier in the year but then put things on hold due to Covid-19. We realise the need for the service is now greater than ever so we are looking to get up and running while complying with social distancing requirements. We are fast running out of space (our spare room is overrun with donations!) so with support from St James' we are - at least temporarily - able to store the items on the stage in the Church Hall. We are delighted as this means we can start ramping up our collection efforts and would welcome donations of new or secondhand clothing and shoes (in great condition) for children from newborn to age 16, along with children's books.

We want the bundles we give to families to feel really special so we kindly ask donors to please only donate items that they would use with their own children or give to ones they love. No stained, ripped or torn clothing or books please! We've set up a website with lots more info here www.merrygoroundUK.org If you would like to donate items, we would love to hear from you! Please drop us an email at hello@merrygoroundUK.org and we will be in touch to arrange contactless collection/drop-off.

Julia has set up a really good website so please take a look - and tell others about the scheme.

Keep safe!

Best wishes as ever,
John



May God bless every £1 we give so that St James' will be here, not just for today and for tomorrow, but for the future he wants to create.