

# @St James'

Issue 40: February 2017

## Hermitage Choir of St Petersburg - 27th March, 7.30pm

With just two weeks to go to the first Prom concert of the 2017 series, we are greatly looking forward to the visit of the Hermitage Choir. As part of the UK-wide tour, this hugely popular choir made up of seven singers from the top opera houses and cathedrals in the city will treat us to a programme of both traditional Russian choral music and folk songs. Anyone who has heard them before will be sure to want to return. Tickets are available from the St James' Parish Office ([admin@stjamesislington.org](mailto:admin@stjamesislington.org)). Publicity will be Islington-wide and there are just 180 tickets, so be sure to get yours very soon.

There's lots of information about the choir, including profiles of the singers and their programme of music at the choir's website [here](#).



## Children's Mardi Gras Party

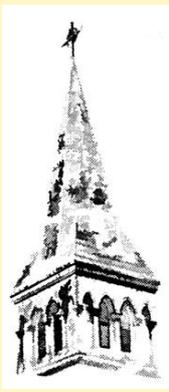
It was great to see over half of our young people (and their parents) in the Hall for the Mardi Gras Party on the afternoon of 26th February. There was lots of fun and games, magic and loads to eat!



## Kitchenette

After a series of delays, the work on the kitchenette the work finally got underway. Over the last two weeks, Ami Hitcham has worked incredibly hard to complete the job. And the result is quite a transformation! There is instant hot water, a small two ring hotplate and microwave included, and the tiny space feels miraculously more roomy. A very generous £4,500 grant from the Richard Cloudesley Trust has helped to make the long-overdue upgrade possible.





## Farewell

We say farewell to Jill Hetherington, one of our most long-standing congregation members, at the end of the month as she moves across London to Chiswick. We will miss her greatly, but wish her every happiness in her new home.



## Diary Dates

**Sunday 19th March LENT 3**  
Masses at 8am and 10am. (Fr David Addison).

**Wednesday 22nd March 7.30pm**  
PCC meets in the Vicarage.

**Sunday 26th March LENT 4 MOTHERING SUNDAY** Masses at 8am and 10am to include the baptism of Saffron Bentley

**Tuesday 28th March 7pm Arlington Association AGM**, Church

**Sunday 2nd April PASSION SUNDAY** Masses at 8am and 10am.

**Sunday 9th April PALM SUNDAY** Masses at 8am and 10am.

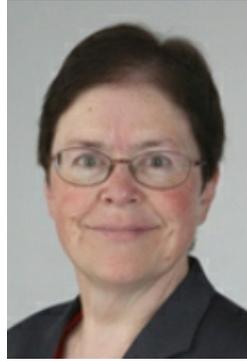
**Thursday 13th April MAUNDY THURSDAY 7.30pm** Mass and Watch to Compline at 10pm.

**Friday 14th April GOOD FRIDAY 2pm** Liturgy for Good Friday.

**Sunday 16th April EASTER DAY** Mass at 8am. **10am PARISH MASS and EASTER CEREMONIES** together with the Baptism of Alfie Dodd.



## Getting to Know You - Isobel Nisbet



**Birthday:** 9th May

**Place where you were born:** Although I am from a Scottish family, I was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. When I was a toddler my family moved back to Scotland and I lived in Glasgow with them till I was 22. I think of myself as a Glaswegian, and my accent tends to revert pretty quickly when I go back.

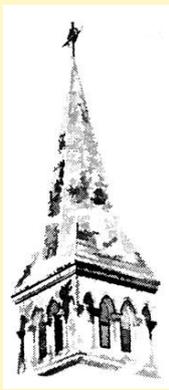
**Where did you go to school and university?**

I went to school and university in Glasgow. I enjoyed school very much, and did a bit of everything, particularly music, which became a life-long interest. At Glasgow I combined academic interests with continued music-making, as I was a choral scholar and organ student there. Academically, I became very interested in philosophy and after graduating I did a postgraduate degree in philosophy at Oxford (St Anne's College). I sang with Schola Cantorum of Oxford, and that proved a springboard to many other opportunities later.

**What is (or was) your day job?** After Oxford I entered the Civil Service and for six years worked back in Scotland. That included an enjoyable spell as Private Secretary to Labour and Conservative Secretaries of State around the 1979 Election. In the 1980s I moved to London and worked in several Government Departments there. My career moved into regulation, first of medicine – an eventful time as a Director at the General Medical Council – and then of education and qualifications. I was the first CEO of Ofqual, the exams regulator in England, and after that I spent three very interesting years in Singapore from 2011-2014, working for Cambridge International Examinations. I returned to the UK in 2014 and now combine a clutch of Board appointments with an honorary academic post at Cambridge and a couple of Government advisory committees on ethical issues.

**What about music?** Since university I have been involved in chamber choirs of various shapes and sizes, mainly based in London. I sang for several years with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields under Neville Marriner and the Corydon Singers, but a major formative influence was my work for some 20 years with the composer and conductor James Wood. I have been involved in many recordings, including the soundtrack for the film "Amadeus" and the theme tune for the European Cup, though none of them seem to have earned me any money! Now that I have more time on my hands I have been able to resume singing lessons to try to iron out some of the rough edges. One of my regrets is that I stopped playing the organ when I moved to London, and I would like to pick it up again.

**What is your favourite music?** I listen to a lot of music, as well as making it. And I enjoy the opera and concerts scene in London. Probably my favourite remains the Golden Age of English church music – Tallis and Byrd. *Continued on page 3.*



## Other Upcoming Concerts at St James'

**Friday 17th March 7.30pm**  
**Occasional Concert** - Dimitrina Groueva, Piano.

**Saturday 25th March 7.30pm**  
**Occasional Concert** - 840 group.

**Sunday 26th March 6.30pm**  
**Occasional Concert for Mother's Day** with Adam Dickson and guests.

**Saturday 1st April 7.30pm**  
**Islington Prom 2** Cantallini perform Kodaly's *Missa Brevis* and Cantatas by JS Bach.

**Sunday 2nd April 6pm Concert for Passiontide** Teleman Quartet & Bach's 'A musical offering' with poetry and reading for Passion Sunday (read by Gill Hallifax and Fr John).

**Monday 3rd April 7.30pm**  
**Occasional Concert** by the London Leider Group with Giles Ridley, Director.



## Electoral Roll

Thanks to Vera Taggart, invitations have been sent to all those who have begun to make their home at St James'. Once completed these can be handed in to the Churchwardens or posted through the Vicarage letterbox in Arlington Square. Forms can be returned until 26th March.

**Parish Priest: Fr John Burniston**  
**1a Arlington Square, N1 7DS**  
**020 7226 4108**  
**Email: vicar@stjamesislington.org**  
**Hall bookings: 020 7354 9170**

## Getting to Know You - Isobel Nisbet (continued)

**What churches have you attended?** In Glasgow our family attended the local Church of Scotland (Jordanhill), where I was baptized as a teenager and our family was closely associated with that church for half a century. As a choral scholar I attended Glasgow University Chapel and during that time I became a communicant member of the Church of Scotland. Later, when I was living and working in Edinburgh I was a member of St John's Episcopal Church and confirmed there.



*St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh*

In London I sang for 17 years in the octet at St Mary's Bourne Street, with a rich repertoire of liturgical music, which I loved.

**How long have you been coming to St James'?** I moved to my current home in 2002, but on Sundays I would drive to St Mary's Bourne Street, and that continued until I went to Singapore in 2011. When I returned in 2014 I started coming to St James's and I am quickly feeling more part of the "family" there.

**Do you have any special roles at St James'?** I often act as "cantor", if/when that is required. I shall look forward to being able to assist in other ways, particularly as I am such a near neighbour.

**Do you have a family?** My brother emigrated to the USA with his family in the 1980s, and they live in Santa Barbara, California, which is very nice for visits. My parents are no longer alive, but I have a network of extended family and friends in Scotland (as well as in London).

**What hobbies do you enjoy most?** As well as music, I enjoy walking in the hills and visiting interesting places. Each year a friend and I go for a week to a Scottish island. It's Orkney this year.



*Old Man of Hoy, Orkney*

**Do you have a book you would like to recommend?** I enjoy modern novels and political biographies, but I would put in a special word for Lewis Grassic Gibbon's "Sunset Song".

**What kind of food do you enjoy most?** I was spoiled for choice in Singapore. But I still think it's roast lamb with all the trimmings, which reminds me of Sunday lunches in Glasgow.