

The Arena Weekly

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newsletter

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Dear All,

So the end of week 1 of the new lock down: how does it feel to you? For many the first reaction is that every day seems the same! We are back to the old routines of home-schooling and not being able to go out. The most exciting topic seems to be wondering when the job will become available...

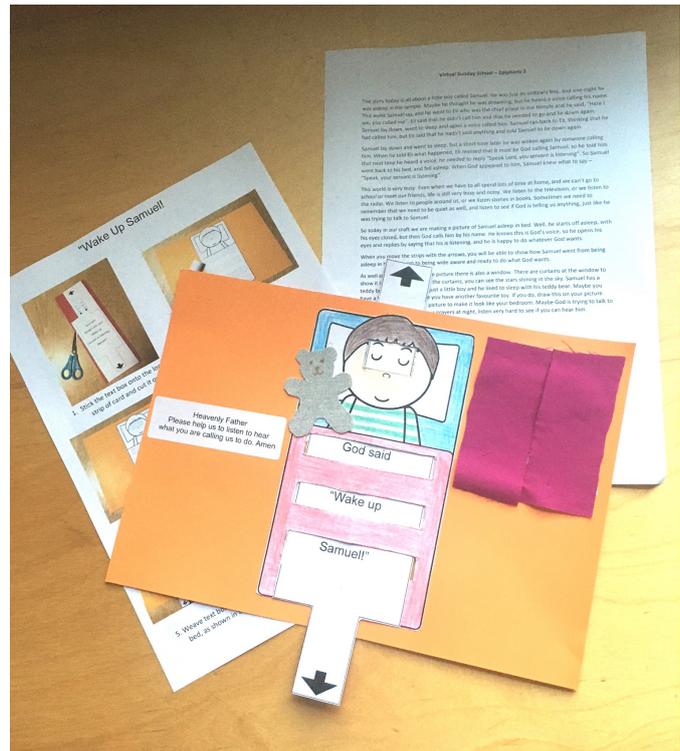
Here in St James' we are still full of plans. While BT failed to show up to install the new broadband connection in Church (we hope that will happen this Thursday instead) we are continuing to explore different ways of presenting our streamed services so that we take advantage of the flexibility of being able to include stuff you have recorded for us.

This coming Sunday (24th) for example is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. As well as Joe Ammoun's sermon I thought we might also take a short look at the history of Christianity in England and ask: what difference does it make what Church we were brought up in? Does it matter if parents belong to two different churches? What about Church schools, and baptism and First Communions?

What is encouraging me at the moment is that 99 people checked into our 'Service of the Word' at some point last Sunday!

The PCC will be discussing all these developments at their meeting on Monday evening. One of the proposals is a weekly zoom service so watch this space!

St James' will be closed for private prayer on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week as it will become a 'green room' for a local film shoot. This will certainly help to ease our financial losses because of the pandemic.



SUNDAY SCHOOL PACKS are back! Thanks to Maria and Sinead, another ingenious craft activity will be arriving through "a letter box near you" this weekend! The theme this week is the call by God to young Samuel and with luck a very sleepy Samuel will turn into a very awake and excited boy - all ready to listen to whatever God has in mind for him...

THIS WEEK

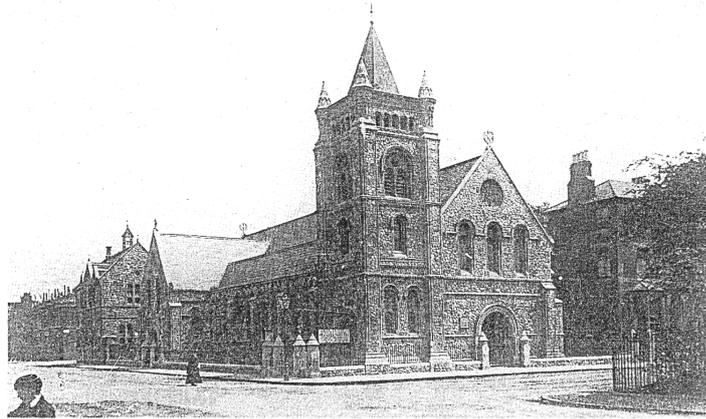
- Sun *EPIPHANY 2* Streamed 'Service of the Word' at 10am.
- Mon 7.30pm PCC meeting by zoom.
- Tues 8am-10pm Use of the Church for filming. Church closed.
- Wed 8am-10pm Use of the Church for filming. Church closed. 11am Joe Ammoun seminar day. 6pm Grace Church, Alvin, Texas: zoom prayers.
- Sun 24 *UNITY WEEK* Streamed 'Service of the Word' at 10am.

Calendar and Daily Prayer themes

- Sun 17 *EPIPHANY 2* Lisa and Sonny Follet; Wendy Fisher-Gordon; Maria Flavius
- Mon 18 *DEL Epiphany 2* Ros, Chris, Beatrix and Sebastian Ford
- Tues 19 *St Wulfstan* Clem, Pierre, Alex and Emma Friry
- Wed 20 *Feria* Nick, Felicity and Eleanor Fryer; Mark and Shireen Gilbert
- Thurs 21 *Feria* Luke, Kika, Parker Gillman; Mostyn, Nieve, Ilaria, Arlo Goodwin
- Fri 22 *Feria* Karensa and Amariah Greenaway; Lucy Haire and Sam Lewis
- Sat 23 *Feria* Mark and Norah Hodge; Rebecca, Rob, Evelyn and Alice Holthom
- Sun 24 *UNITY WEEK* Alastair and Diane Hume; Kris Hyde

Streamed services on Facebook

You do not need to have your own Facebook account to be able to access our streamed services on the St James' Islington Facebook page.



ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, LINTON STREET, c. 1905

St. Philip's was built in 1855. The following year a church school was built behind the church (you can see the school bell on the roof in this photograph); it was taken over by the School Board of London from 1901 to 1911, and then became a church hall. The church was closed in 1953 and has been demolished, and the vicarage to the right of the church has been converted into flats.

ST PHILIP features in our readings today and this reminded me there was once a St Philip's Church in our neighbourhood - on the corner of Arlington Square and Linton Street. Built in 1855 it was destroyed by fire in 1953 and all that remains is the Vicarage (to the right of the picture and no longer just flats!) and St Philip's Way. The conversation we hear in today's Gospel could take us in a whole series of different directions not least because the focus soon turns away from Philip to a much deeper conversation between Philip's friend Nathaniel and Jesus himself. The news that Andrew had brought to Peter and which Philip passes on here, is rather quickly dismissed by the rather more intellectual Nathaniel who had been

meditating under a fig tree. *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* he says rather sourly. But when Jesus is there, suddenly Nathaniel is all ears: Jesus praises him as being someone who is honest and true and yet they had never met before. Somehow, the penny drops for Nathaniel and he repeats what Philip had told him but as a statement of faith. Perhaps we shouldn't forget St Philip too quickly...

JOE AMMOUN We are all aware of just how disruptive Coronavirus has been to our students - both those at school and those at College and University. The experience of learning with others is so fundamental that we tend to take it for granted, until that possibility is taken away. This is also the case for Joe Ammoun who is a student for the priesthood, studying at Oak Hill in Finchley and currently on a secondary placement here at St James'. Joe led the Crib Service/Christingle on Christmas Eve and was due to preach, live, for us here next Sunday. Sadly that is no longer possible and so he will record his sermon for inclusion into the Service of the Word for Christian Unity Week. I hope you will feel able to feed some ideas back to me to pass on to him afterwards and that we can invite him back when the Church is open again. In the meantime he is spending much of Wednesday with me. We are having three zoom seminars (at 11am, 2pm and 4pm) on how best to stage Children's services; what are the principles that make a good (adult sermon) and finally how clergy families work best and the need to organize our time.

ISLINGTON GAZETTE I am expecting a feature on how the Church copes in a pandemic in this week's edition. There should be some photographs of St James' in there too!

AU REVOIR Kerry Sabine, until recently our PCC secretary, is finally able to pick up the keys for her new house in Wanstead. The move date is Friday 29th. One of her principle concerns was what her new Church would be like! Christ Church in Wanstead is flourishing: it has FIVE clergy attached to it and there is even a special weekly Mass for the under 6s, at 9am! We look forward to hearing how she settles in but for now we wish her, Chris and Ben every blessing for the coming years.

PRAYER BOARD/NOTICES Requests for prayer welcome

BIRTHDAYS Many Happy Returns on Tuesday to Beatrix Ford who will be 8 and on Friday to Chris Wright.

SICK Christopher Browne, Mariolina and Peter Freeth, Emily Grainger, Alastair and Diane Hume, Kris Hyde, Hayley Jenkins, John, Kingsley Lewis, John Scott, Charlie Sharpe, Vera Taggart, Lyn Thompson, Geoff Turner and Melanie Toogood.

ANNIVERSARIES Today: Joan Williams (2011); 20th: David Lee, priest (1993); 22nd: Caroline Yeats (2020).

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH LINKS In the US: Suzanne Smith, Rector of Grace Church, Alvin, Texas. Suzanne's husband Travis is Rector of Holy Comforter, Angleton, 14 miles away. In Japan: Fr Sebastian and Yuki Naniwa serving in Ehime near Hiroshima.

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Our prayers continue for **Nazanin Zaghari Radcliffe** in the hope that some kind of formula can allow her to return to the UK as soon as possible.

Please keep in touch and let me know if there is anything more we can do for you.

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.