

the arena

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newsletter

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Dear All,

We were a little nervous about opening up St James' for live worship last Sunday but even with the webcams in place, everything worked out perfectly and we were able to welcome Ava, Ivy and Bella Wilson into the family of the Church after a five month wait!



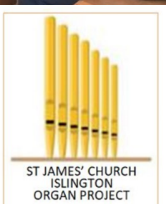
At the last count there were nearly a dozen more waiting to be Christened over the next few months. First come first served...

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK! This Sunday (Passion Sunday, 21st March) we resume our normal pattern of services - just in time for Easter! But that also means we are looking forward to the return of our Sunday School. After three months of home based craft sessions Maria, Sinead and Laura are looking forward to welcoming our children back - and getting to know some new members like Jacob and Rio who have been waiting for Sunday School to re-start to come to St James' for the first time! Social distancing is all in place and we do hope you will take advantage of the re-opening: 10am in St James' Church Hall.

MUSICAL VESPERS Just a few times each year we invite some very talented musicians to come and play for us as part of a quiet service of Evening Prayer (Vespers). This Sunday the soloist is the cellist, Milo Karuse, a student at the Junior Department of the Royal Academy of Music. We hope this will be a helpful way to start Passiontide. The service starts at 6pm and lasts for about 40 minutes.



ORGAN PROJECT I am sure that everyone is aware that this is the week that we hear the outcome of the recent Consistory Court case on the redevelopment of our organ. We don't anticipate a delay in the ruling and the PCC will meet on Monday week (29th March) to discuss the next stage. If we do go ahead as planned it will mean major disruptions for at least seven months!



THIS WEEK

Sun	<i>PASSION SUNDAY</i> 8am Mass. 10am Streamed PARISH MASS. 10am Sunday School re-opens. 6pm MUSICAL VESPERS with Milo Karuse, cello.
Tues	8.30am Morning Prayer. 9am Mass.
Wed	10am Mass. 6pm <i>Grace Church, Alvin: zoom prayers.</i>
Thurs	6pm Evening Prayer. 6.15 Basic Christianity course looks at St Mark
Fri	11-4pm <i>Palisander rehearsal.</i>
Sun 28	<i>PALM SUNDAY</i> 8am Mass. 10am Streamed PARISH MASS and SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Calendar and Daily Prayer themes

Sun 21 <i>PASSION SUNDAY</i>	Sophie Duffy, James, Reggie and Olive Murphy
Mon 22 <i>DEL Lent 5</i>	Amy Eldon-Richier, Scott, Freddie and Callum Kinch
Tues 23 <i>Feria</i>	Will Ellsworth-Jones; Weini and Ethan Faloppa
Wed 24 <i>Oscar Romero</i>	Luigi, Jane, Luca, Francesca, Matteo and Gloria Falcioni
Thurs 25 <i>Annunciation of BVM</i>	Lisa and Sonny Follett; Wendy Fisher-Gordon
Fri 26 <i>Feria</i>	Maria Flavius; Ros, Chris, Beatrix and Sebastian Ford
Sat 27 <i>Feria</i>	Jennifer and Auryv Franich; Clem, Pierre, Alex and Emma Friry
Sun 28 <i>PALM SUNDAY</i>	Nick, Felicity and Eleanor Fryer; Mark, Shireen Gilbert

The easiest way to access our streamed services is by typing *St James Islington YouTube* into your browser.

HOLY WEEK A wonderful request has come from Epiphoni (the choir of which Ros Ford is a member which has sung with such success here, not least at last year's Christmas Carol service) who want to sing three services for us during Holy Week! We are now agreed they will sing Compline at 9pm on Wednesday, Tenebrae at 7.30pm on Good Friday evening and a pre-Easter service of music at 7.30pm on Holy Saturday. Each will also be streamed to a wider audience and the Compline service will include the Lamentations by Alonso Lobo, a contemporary of Vittoria. What a great way to "keep the Week!" This will be widely publicised; do come if you can.

NAZANIN ZAGHARI RATCLIFFE While we share Nazanin's excitement in being released from her five year jail term in Iran and having her ankle tag removed, we are also anxious about the outcome of the second trial she underwent last Sunday. We suspect it is all to do with the huge unpaid debt the UK government owes to the Iranians but this is no way to treat an innocent dual-national caught like a pawn in a fight not of her making. Please pray for the immediate return of her passport so that Nazanin can fly back to Richard and their daughter Gabriella.

HELP PLEASE! With the end of the more intense Covid restrictions and the welcome appointment of Vicky Bellamy as interim Parish Administrator, life changes at St James' yet again! As I have said elsewhere, the Church doesn't feel quite the same as it did before lockdown, and part of the reason for that is because we continue to attract new people into the Church who don't know how things work - or remember what it used to be like! While we can try to help everyone to feel at home, inevitably the way we arrange things will change as newcomers bring new skills and insights into our Church life - which then need to be married to those that our regular members are already sharing. There are now four roles which I really would be grateful for help with:

- 1 *Church 'occasional offices' verger:* Not surprisingly the number of weddings this year is already higher than in 2019 and the numbers of Church funerals, while not huge, is also increasing. I really could do with an extra pair of hands to welcome people into Church and to tidy the Church up again afterwards.
- 2 *Sacristan* A church is a bit like a theatre! It has props and ornaments which change season by season. Candles need to be replenished, oil candles refilled, heating put on for those using the building for rehearsals and lots of general tasks which make sure Church services operate smoothly.
- 3 *A webcam operator* While Adam very kindly controls the webcams when he is here as our organist, more and more people are asking if they can use these facilities at other times - at funerals and evening services when there isn't an organist, and for recording music for auditions and concerts. This would only be occasional but I don't want the webcams to become a technical burden which takes attention away from the leading of our services.
- 4 *A gardener!* Not a big job but someone to keep the area around Church clean and tidy and to care for the planters would be much appreciated.

PRAYER BOARD/NOTICES Requests for prayer welcome

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.

John

BIRTHDAYS Many Happy Returns to Teresa Pereira, Mom to Mae and Ivy and wife to our current photographer-in-residence Richard, whose special day is on Monday.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY Warmest congratulations to Nick and Felicity Fryer whose 'leather' anniversary falls on Wednesday.

SICK Christopher Browne, Jennifer Franich, Mariolina and Peter Freeth, Emily Grainger, Kris Hyde, Hayley Jenkins, John, Kingsley Lewis, John Scott, Charlie Sharpe, Vera Taggart, Lyn Thompson and Melanie Toogood.

ANNIVERSARIES 23rd: Jennifer Harvey (2016); 27th: Valerie Huxley (2000).

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. Japan: Fr Sebastian and Yuki Naniwa serving in Ehime near Hiroshima.

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Our prayers continue for Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe who awaits new of her last court trial last Sunday. We pray for her parents, for Richard and for Gabriella, all awaiting news.



NEXT SUNDAY AT 10am
PALM SUNDAY

Donation to St James



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.