

the arena

Issue 99 2021-17

newsletter

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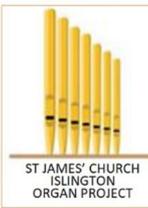
CHRISTMAS 2021

Dear All,

Sorry there was no November edition of the monthly Arena e-newsletter but being ill and then taking a scheduled few days off to celebrate my birthday meant that the small window of opportunity just vanished! So here's the Christmas edition - with a quick round up of some of the things that have been happening at St James' since the end of October!



HARVEST THANKSGIVING this year focused on the work of 'Christian Aid' around the world. Eight posters in Church described some of the disasters Christian Aid has helped with from Myanmar to Lebanon, Haiti to Kenya. With supporting videos we then invited people to 'vote' for the cause they felt most strongly about before we received your gift envelopes which raised over £1135 (even before we reclaimed the tax through Gift Aid!). Thank you very much indeed.



EVERY LITTLE HELPS As we plan the new platform to support the organ when it is returned in 2022, we managed to 'find' some spare wood for the joists at a fraction of the usual cost. But the timber came in 17' lengths and was incredibly heavy! The steel survey is taking place on Wednesday 1st December and we look forward to seeing some visible signs of progress on the organ rebuild in early January.



BAPTISMS We are always pleased to see our Church family growing! In October 17th we welcomed Rocco and Cecily Falconer's son Leo; on December 5th we welcome Mostyn and Nieve's son Arlo and on Boxing Day, December 26th, we will be staying open for the baptism of Stu and Joemil Taylor's daughter Siena. Confusingly, we are also delighted to welcome Sienna (with two ns!) Payne, daughter of Vinny and Louise, who arrived on Tuesday 2nd November.



NUPTIALS And to finish the year, two very happy days - for Ian and Jennifer Pierce and for Neil and Katherine Sampson. Five wedding celebrations this year - including those of Lebbly and Sarah - under the new registration rules. Each one of them an absolute delight though two of the couples were refugees from other churches and one wedding should have been in Australia!

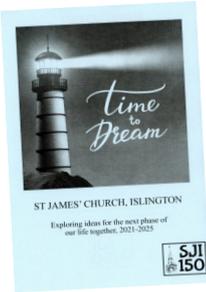


PACK-UP managed to survive during the pandemic and has recently bounced back with hot lunches for well over thirty members of the Street Community each Monday. We have been very grateful for support from several organisations, especially the Arlington Association and this year Pack-Up has built up a really good relationship with the ARC Food Bank in St Peter's Street. The annual Christmas Lunch is scheduled for Monday 20th December and we aim to send

each guest away with a present. There is a large (and so far, empty) crate underneath the signing-in table in Church. Donations of toiletries and small gifts would be very welcome and if the crate is not available they can be handed in on Sundays or at the Vicarage in Arlington Square. Toni Parker the Pack-Up coordinator will be grateful for anything you can give.

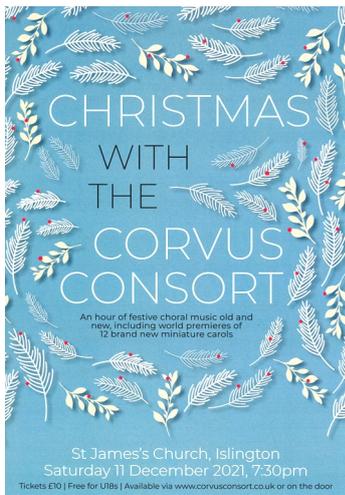


PULPIT SWAP We are now able to set up visiting preachers with real ease - at least virtually! On October 21st, Suzanne Smith from Grace Church, Alvin, Texas, seamlessly delivered her sermon here in Islington and everyone appreciated the story of how she stumbled across St James' back in 2018 after a tour of the Emirates stadium! On Advent Sunday the screen was again in use as we looked at pictures illustrating the Bible story read by six of our young people.



TIME TO DREAM These sessions are proving so worthwhile as we get back in touch with one another after the pandemic restrictions. Thank you to all who have given time so far; please can I encourage everyone else to make a date with me as soon as you can as we begin to plan the future of our Church. From suggestions made so far there is to be a meeting of those whose children are 10+ on the evening of Monday January 17th. The first plenary session for everyone is after the 10am Mass on Sunday 30th January and at least a first draft of the 'Time to Dream' proposals will be up for discussion at the Parish AGM on Sunday May 1st 2022.

NEW THIS CHRISTMAS...



Sing along carols

in

PACKINGTON SQUARE

Saturday December 18th at 4pm - 4.30pm

in aid of the ARC Food Bank

led by members of St James' Church,

Prebend Street

FORWARD DATES IN DECEMBER

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Sunday 5th | ADVENT 2 Masses at 8am and 10am with the Baptism of Arlo Goodwin |
| Monday 6th | 7pm "Raising the Christmas Tree" in Church |
| Wednesday 9th | 7.30pm Finsbury Park Singers in Concert |
| Saturday 11th | 7.30pm Corvus Consort with Freddie Crowley, 7pm. (see above) |
| Sunday 12th | ADVENT 3 Masses at 8am and 10am. 6.30pm Carol service with refreshments |
| Wednesday 15th | 7pm North London Cares showing of the Muppet Christmas Carol |
| Saturday 18th | 4pm Singalong Carols in Packington Square (see above) |
| Sunday 19th | ADVENT 4 Masses at 8am and 10am |
| Friday 24th | CHRISTMAS EVE 6pm Crib Service. 11.30pm MIDNIGHT MASS |
| Saturday 25th | CHRISTMAS DAY 8am Mass. 10am Christmas Day 'House Party' Mass |
| Sunday 26th | ST STEPHEN/BOXING DAY Masses at 8am. <u>11am</u> Baptism Mass |

Happy Christmas everyone!

Donation to St James

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.
Please keep in touch.

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.