



# the arena Issue 107 2022-8 newsletter

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JULY 2022

Dear All,



Everyone has been doing it - playing cat and mouse with COVID. But after two years this latest variant has really struck home at St James' and our 'luck' finally ran out. Churchwarden Isabel Nisbet and then all of the Vicarage family have tested positive this month.

The next question then became: how can we limit the damage to our usual summer programme?

Sadly we have had to close Sunday School for three weeks and also postponed the Vicarage garden party.

## ~~SUMMER GARDEN PARTY AT THE VICARAGE~~ ~~Sunday July 10th, 12 - 3.30pm~~

We very much hope to rearrange this for the late summer

Receiving  
First Holy  
Communion  
SUNDAY 17th JULY



**DO COME AND SUPPORT OUR CANDIDATES ON SUNDAY 17th JULY!**

Despite all the difficulties of trying to fix a six week programme into the lives of six very busy young people, we are still planning to admit Anita Losito, Arnold Carter, Hope Dixey, Matteo Falcioni, Theo Jenkins and Zuri Kasella to Holy Communion on Sunday July 17th at 10am. They will also be joined by Mohammad Bagheri who was baptised at St James' at Pentecost on June 5th. This is always a great day in the life of the parish and we do hope that they will be supported by as many 'old' First Communicants as possible for a very interactive Mass, followed by a party. *Details of preparation sessions to follow by text.* Quite a lot of these classes involve playing games.



One of these is Jenga where the pieces are gently removed one by one until the brick tower topples over. *No Church can survive if many of the congregation are missing for most of the time!*



**WELCOME TO SIENNA PAYNE** We are very used to welcoming families to St James' for just a short while before they move away from Islington. The Home Counties are filling up with those you have made their home here for a few years and left again! So it was a great joy to recall that Louise Ahmet has been part and parcel of our Church since 2011. In that time she was baptised and confirmed, was bridesmaid at her sister Lisa's wedding and we have been able to host the baptism of Benjy and now Sienna on June 26th.

**MADDY** One of the many stories about Maddy the Vicarage cat describes how she forced her way out of her carrying box on the long drive from Bradford in 2009 and proceeded to wander around the cabin of the car as we made the long journey down the M1! Maddy has been a very familiar part of the Vicarage ever since and has pushed her way into many conversations – most notably coming between couples rehearsing their wedding vows for the first time! Sadly she has been suffering from kidney disease for some years and we are very sorry indeed to be losing her after almost 20 years in the family.



**JILL HETHERINGTON** Thanks to the very generous bequest of Jill Hetherington we have asked Carlos Diaz who completed the boarding out of the Organ platform and the creation of the new organ store cupboard, to repair and restrain each of the benches in Church this summer. They have become very shabby over the years. This work is being started the week beginning 25th July (St James' Day) and will take approximately two weeks.

But the PCC has also agreed to explore putting a Sum-It card reader into Church. New technology, drawing on our broadband connection, means that our many occasional visitors - as well as those of us who don't carry cash so much these days - are able to contribute to the cost of running St James'. These devices are very simple to use and are increasingly seen in Churches around the country. Again Carlos will be able to make a suitable permanent cabinet for us, to stand somewhere near the entrance.

As we all know, inflation is now a 'fact of life' and looks like being with us for some time. Susan Sorensen has done a brilliant job as our treasurer, managing to all but balance the books despite the massive fall in income because of Covid. At the recent 'Common Fund' meeting at St James', a Diocesan spokesman said that the increased payments we make to cover the cost of having a priest, training, pensions, housing and other support services, will go up by 3% in this coming year. That is an increase from £85,200 to £87,775. We will need to think seriously about how we can meet this challenge in 2022/3.



Sunday  
3rd July  
2-5pm

Despite Covid, Maria was able to open the Vicarage gardens for the National Gardens Day last Sunday. About 150 visitors took advantage of the good weather and £380 was raised in refreshments alone! Ticket sales from the

seven open gardens raised £2000.

Looking forwards to seeing you in Church for the First Holy Communion celebrations on July 17th!

Very best wishes for a great summer.

As ever, John

## 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.