



# the arena

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## newsletter

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OCTOBER  
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Dear All,

## A HARVEST OF EVENTS...

As the weather begins to turn a bit colder in the mornings, the schools are fully back into action and summer holidays are a dim memory, St James' has a series of celebrations to share with you:



**THIS COMING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, IS HARVEST.** This year we are following up on our meditation last week when we asked why we are so unwilling to think about the challenge of climate change? Our answer: like Jonah we tend to prefer to think about other, happier, things! Sadly the crisis in Northern Africa, in Egypt and in Morocco in particular, serves as a wake-up call. So this Harvest we are going to look at the science of what is happening there - and hopefully will be able to respond generously to their appeal for help. There are gift envelopes on the back table and I hope we can send a good donation to the Disaster Emergency Committee as we did to help the people of Haiti.

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 8th - a different kind of Harvest!** Over the last month or so it has been a real pleasure to have both Mohammad Bagheri and Ethan Faloppa working as servers in the Sanctuary. They are learning their various new roles really quickly and as a result we are going to be able to re-introduce the use of incense after the gap left by the retirement of Kingsley Lewis. To begin with, this will be on 2nd Sundays - the week when we have our Second Sunday Choir singing for us. I am very hopeful that both Mo and Ethan will be ready to receive their servers crosses before the end of November.



**FIRST COMMUNIONS** Over the last ten years we have admitted over 50 people, adults and children, to receive Holy Communion before Confirmation: St James' was one of the first in the London Diocese to adopt this policy when it first became possible. And we have reaped the rewards as a generation of young people know that they are welcome at the Table of the Lord whenever they are in Church. We are now delighted that Charlie Green and Olive Murphy are following their Mums Jade and Sophie who were admitted in 2016 and 2020 respectively. Charlie and Olive are working their way through the preparation course on Tuesday afternoons and they will receive Holy Communion for the first time on Sunday 22nd October. And this will be a double celebration as we will also be baptising Charlie's younger sister Rosie on the same occasion! Our policy of only Confirming people who are 18 and over makes real sense: we baptise as soon as we can; we offer Holy Communion as soon as our young people understand what it means but we leave full commitment to Christ to mature adults!



**THE ISLINGTON PROMS** were a real success again this year with some quite sensational concerts. The Beaufort Singers brought some of the finest singing we have ever heard at St James' while an early music consort and jazz musicians David Chew and Blas Rivera were just extra-

ordinary. Yoon Chung's romantic piano playing was just so sensitive and the Greenwich Trio revealed just why they are making so many friends - including Professor Julian Jacobson (left, with Heather Tuach and Yoko Misumi), who had played a stunning four hands piano recital here with Mariko Brown in 2013! The Youth Prom revealed some hugely talented young musicians and there was a great deal of interest in the talk by Jonathan Wober describing the houses in this part of Islington. Caroline Griffiths' paintings, hung throughout September in Church, have sold really well. It was also good to have Bishop Michael Marshall preach for the Festival Mass on Sunday 17th. Two more concerts to come: the Irish Night with Oisin Kavanagh on Friday and 'The Last Night of our Proms' on Saturday. Thanks to everyone who has made it possible to stage such a successful Festival.

**SAVE THE VICARAGE!** The jury in the 'Save the Vicarage' case is still out but the current omens from the Archdeacon are not encouraging. The current debt in the Episcopal Area is such that selling off Vicarages seems to have an energy all of its own. Such a waste.

**THE PARTING OF FRIENDS** The time is fast approaching when Maria, Sinead and I will be leaving St James'. Our final Sunday is November 26th, the Feast of Christ the King. Vicky Bellamy our administrator and the Churchwardens are currently planning three celebrations:

- 1 Parish Party in the Church Hall, 6.30-9.30pm on Tuesday 21st November. Please RSVP.
- 2 A 'Book of Memories', pictures and messages which recall our time together since 2009. Contributions to this are warmly encouraged - in whatever format suits you best.
- 3 A final Parish Mass at 5pm on Sunday 26th November. This will be a big service with a special choir and the Mass will be followed by refreshments in Church. Everyone welcome.

**STILL TO COME...** A big Parish Directory is currently being prepared with details of all the activities that take place at St James', a list of all our many contacts - and a very detailed 'how to do it' section (eg how to turn on the heating!)

But there are some training sessions and some discussion sessions still to be arranged - for Eucharistic Ministers, for those willing to write Intercessions and for the recent Confirmation Group members. Look out for dates.

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

John

**PS** Harvest that Sunday is another chance to throw a paper aeroplane in Church! If you've never done it before, come and give it a try!

## 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.