



HAMPSTEAD PARISH CHURCH



MAGAZINE FOR JANUARY 2023

**BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF
CHRISTIAN LOVE, FAITH, WITNESS AND ACTION**

IN THIS ISSUE

Are Christians too polite?

The vicar explores
the need for us to
speak out

Charity News ALMA

An update on one of
our charities
And news of the
Hamper Appeal

Music

Concerts &
Organ Recitals
for 2023
The Choral Evensong
website
and
This month's music

Reviews

Blithe Spirit
Christmas Lights



HAMPSTEAD PARISH CHURCH

[Registered Charity No. 1129264]

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Website: hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk /

Facebook: Hampstead Parish Church / Twitter: Hampstead_PC /

Instagram: @HampsteadPC

Youtube: youtube.com/c/hampsteadparishchurch

Sundays:

8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.30am Choral Holy Communion (Common Worship)

5.00pm Choral Evensong (BCP)

(All these services can be found on Facebook live and Zoom)

Weekdays:

please check the weekly email—sometimes we have to
make changes to this pattern*

Wednesdays at 10.15am Holy Communion in church

Mon – Fri 5.00pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

Thursdays at 8.30am Rosary prayer on Zoom

Saturday 9.00am Morning Prayer in church

For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals please contact the Vicar

Jeremy Fletcher 0207 435 0553

vicar@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk

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Contents

Diary for January	5
The Vicar writes	6
January – <i>Judy East</i>	8
Tell it like it is – sermon – <i>Jeremy Fletcher</i>	9
Christmas Hampers – <i>Rosemary Loyd</i>	11
Book Review: Reel Life Behind the Screen – <i>Nick Scudamore</i>	12
Music Section	
Choral Evensong website – <i>Rupert Sheldrake</i>	13
Music for January - <i>Geoffrey Webber</i>	15
Music List	16
La Nativité du Seigneur	20
Future Organ recitals	21
The Hampstead Collective	22
Reviews	
Blithe Spirit – <i>Suzanne Pinkerton</i>	23
<i>Moragh Gee</i>	24
Christmas Lights – <i>Judy East</i>	27
ALMA – one of the charities supported by the parish	29
Readings for January	31
The 2 nd epistle of Joseph to the Corinthians – <i>Robert Salter</i>	32
Children’s Page	34



Diary for January

Sunday 1st – Christmas 2

10.30am Holy Communion (this is the only service today. No children's groups or choir)

Mon 2nd 7.00pm The Hampstead Collective "New Beginnings"
– see page 18

Wed 4th 10.15am Holy Communion

Thu 5th 8.30am Rosary Prayer on zoom

9.45am HPS Epiphany service

Fri 6th 6.30pm La Nativité du Seigneur – see page 16

Sat 7th 10.00am Gardening morning

Sunday 8th – Epiphany

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Choral All Age Communion
with Blessing of the Chalks
Followed by Traidcraft Stall

5.00pm Choral Evensong



Mon 9th *The Baptism of Christ*

Wed 11th 10.15am Holy Communion

Thu 12th 8.30am Rosary Prayer on zoom

7.45pm Community choir

Sunday 15th – Epiphany 2

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Choral Holy Communion

5.00pm Choral Evensong

Wed 18th *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*

10.15am Holy Communion

3.00pm Creative Community session

Thu 19th 8.30am Rosary Prayer on zoom

7.45pm Community Choir

Sunday 22nd – Epiphany 3

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Choral Holy Communion
5.00pm Choral Evensong

Wed 25th *Conversion of Paul*

10.15am Holy Communion

Thu 26th 8.30am Rosary Prayer on zoom

7.45pm Community Choir



© 2019 The Revd Canon Peter H. Jones, M.A., Canon of Salisbury Cathedral

Sunday 29th – Candlemas / Presentation of Christ in the temple

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Choral All Age Communion
5.00pm Choral Evensong followed by Friends of the Music AGM in the Crypt Room.



Speaker Lord Wallace of Saltaire, a chorister at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth: ‘A Royal Peculiar – the place of Westminster Abbey in the life of the nation’

Advance Notice: February 8th – the first in what we hope will be the reinstatement of the Hampstead Players’ popular Wednesday Literary Hours. Time to be confirmed but either 2.30 or 3pm in the church. “Re-awakening the Muse”, compiled by Barbara Alden, will be followed by a chance to chat over tea.

From the Vicar....

I write in the days following a splendid celebration of Christmas. Through December we welcomed six schools and two organisations for Carol Services, and hosted both a Hampstead Collective concert and a “Jazzy Christmas”. Thankfully people were able to attend our services in large numbers too – that was a relief after the pandemic-hit Christmases of 2020 and 2021. Simply having the church open for

visitors at this time is a joy: the decoration and the remarkable crib are much appreciated – and candle after candle is lit.

Thank you to everyone who has opened the church, prepared the worship, welcomed, tidied, decorated, streamed, hosted, sung, played, preached, prayed, read, stewarded, recorded, posted on the website and social media...and so much more. Your church has been a place of light and life – just as it should be in this season of light and hope.

We move into 2023. Recent events have taught us that we should be ready for the unexpected. Our Christmas was observed during what can only be seen as a national and international crisis. The no.1 single for Christmas was a plea to “Feed the UK”. It was a humbling privilege to meet people from Ukraine who came with their hosts to worship, and we cry out for peace. Bishop Rob reminded us that there are tragedies unfolding in Angola, which he saw at first hand in November. And Covid and its effects continue to influence us. The NHS is under massive strain. There is uncertainty everywhere.

Though we do not know what will happen, recent events have also taught us not to be without hope. There is a strengthened sense of community and responsibility among us. There is a greater resolve to respond positively to the energy and cost of living crisis. The Winter Shelter has taught us of the way simple acts of kindness and practical service can make all the difference to the lives of those around us.

We entrust our future, both the next few minutes and the next year and years, into the hands of God. We are not immune from tragedy. Neither was the Son of God, born in uncertainty, forced to be a refugee, and living in oppression and fear, treated unjustly and killed cruelly. In whatever we face we know we are in the presence of the God who knows and the God who cares. May 2023 see us demonstrating that love, care and justice in every aspect of our lives, even as we look to being enfolded of the love of Emmanuel, God with us.

Jeremy

January

Judy East

So. 2023. A New Year. We've survived Christmas at least. For all its attendant problems, we're out the other side. What the year has in store it's too soon to say but we hope, as the Vicar has already said. Because if we don't have hope what are we?

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all –

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb of me. *Emily Dickinson*

There's much to look forward to this year to cheer us up – for me one of the best is that the music department is starting a series of **Organ recitals** on 6th January – you can find details further on in this issue, along with a list of the future dates, some Hampstead Collective dates, and a reminder of the Choral Evensong website – well worth a visit.

And a note at the foot of the diary page indicates that the Hampstead Players are starting up their **Literary Hours** again in February – they were popular before covid and hopefully will build up again. Not at lunchtime though, this time they'll be afternoon performances followed by tea.

I remarked in the December issue that we had four book reviews with a parish link and suggested there might be more. There are!

This month we review Nick Scudamore's recollections of life as a cinema manager, including a period at the Hampstead Classic in South End Green which many of us will remember – including a particularly alarming incident involving two girls, three bottles of pills and the cinema's fortunate proximity to the Royal Free.

Happy New Year!

Telling it like it is

Jeremy Fletcher – a sermon preached for Advent 3 (11th December)
Isaiah 5. 8-30; Acts 13. 13-41

I wonder, sometimes, whether we are just too polite for our own good. We are Christians, after all. Some of us are English Christians, if that's all right with you, if you don't mind me saying so. And of course we should earn our hearing. Of course we should respect other people. Of course we should listen, understand, clarify, put ourselves in their shoes. Of course we should not seek to offend, we should not antagonise. And in the church we should aim to please, we should act in a way which is worthy of our setting and our calling: we should craft acts of worship which satisfy the demands of taste and culture and depth and artistic merit. We should speak with good judgement and sound learning. It is what we do.

But there are times when this degree of politeness, courtesy, good judgement and inoffensive behaviour can itself be an offence to the gospel. The passages which stand out in the Bible are those where the old order is not gently soothed and smoothed, but overturned. Take Paul in Acts 13: he's not speaking to Christians but Jews in the Synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia – and he tells it straight. Paul is all about being zealous, and he minces no words. In fact his hearers would be offended if he did, whatever difficult things they might hear. How else would they know he meant what he said? It is not difficult to imagine his hearers squirming as he tells them that the people of

Jerusalem misunderstood the prophets – and by extension they were in danger of doing the same thing.

Or take Isaiah chapter 5. This is more like a hostile Prime Minister's Question time than a religious leader's address. Isaiah tears into those who in his day oppress the poor, who misrepresent religious faith and practice, who trust in themselves and not in God, who pander to their own needs and pleasures and drag the whole of society down with them. This is a sermon with a snarl, not a homily with a hymn to follow.

Or take John the Baptist, referred to by Paul in Acts 13, and who is remembered on this Third Sunday of Advent as a forerunner of Christ, the one who prepared the way. With great and good standing before him he starts his message by calling them a bunch of snakes. He slams the immorality of his King, attacks the corruption of the religious establishment, tells the ordinary folk that they are just as bad, and gives the occupying Roman forces a hard time too.

There is a time to speak, and a time to stay silent. Isaiah, John, Jesus, Paul, all speak out, and we will fail them if we do not, on occasion. Thank God for those who speak out, who demonstrate, who are zealous and passionate for their cause. Woe betide me if I don't look at the world through the eyes of a prophet and see the injustices. Woe betide me if I fail to act in a way which will bring such injustice to light, and fail to do something to right such wrongs. Thank God for those who have worked and worked to get something done about climate change, or energy, or the gap between rich and poor. Thank God for those who ask how a billionaire Prime Minister is able to lecture the poor about pay rises, or the lack of them. And then ask yourself whether there are some things which require a protest, require a hard word, require us to stand.

The Christ for whose coming we are preparing came to bring peace, and a sword. His coming should not be the occasion of sentimental cooing over a lovely baby. Whatever the carol says, the baby cried.

The baby cries today over Ukraine and Somalia and gross consumption which will kill us with its excess. Christ cries over every injustice and abuse of power, just like the prophets and John said. To prepare for the coming of Christ is to rejoice that a new world will begin, and then to do all that we can to make it happen. And, just sometimes, that might mean saying something challenging over dinner, or sending people away from church worried rather than anaesthetised. Listen to Isaiah. “The Lord of hosts is exalted by justice”. Just sometimes comfort will have to take second place.

A selection of sermons can be found on our website – hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk

Christmas Hampers

Rosemary Loyd



Thank you to everyone who so generously contributed funds for our annual project of providing small, useful and fun presents for some of the elderly in our local community. This year we have included a magnifying glass and a pack of cards for everyone, and forty mugs provided by an outside donor. There were approximately sixteen wrapped items per person together with the Christmas bumper edition of the Radio Times.

You will see that our ‘hampers’ have morphed from baskets to cotton tote bags, which makes for easier delivery and provides a useful shopping bag afterwards.

Thank you too to Tammy Tan and Rosanna Aruta for much of



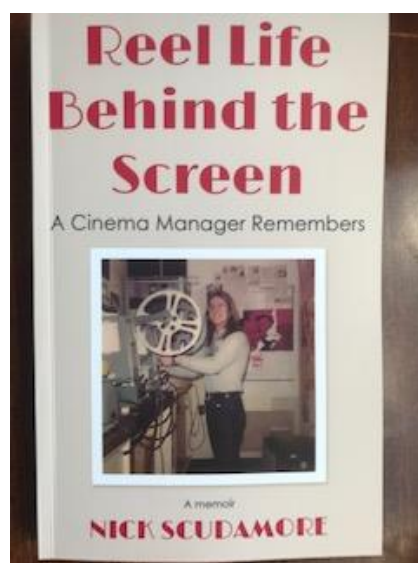
the purchasing, and to the packing team, seen below. In the centre of the 'team photo' is Annabelle Williams from the Hampstead Good Neighbours scheme: she had come along to collect our parish contribution.

Book review

Reel Life Behind the Screen: A Cinema Manager Remembers

A memoir by Nick Scudamore

A nostalgic tome dedicated solely to subjective recollections of the thrilling drama of a cinema manager arranging cinema usherette rotas and checking choice deliveries might not be expected to attract many readers. Yet weird stuff kept happening to Nick Scudamore doing just this. Here he offers a memoir of sticky seats and of scary situations, dead bodies, robberies, audience near riots, bizarre public misbehaviour, even the occasional celebrity. And remarkable movies from the 1970s and 1980s, from high end art-house all the way through to soft-core smut and teen-trash. Both as a memoir and as social history, this autobiography provides much of interest for both the contemporary film enthusiast as well as for the historically curious general reader.



From 1979 to 1987 Nick served as manager to a series of art-house cinemas in London, *the Screen on Islington Green* and the *Paris Pullman in Chelsea* to name but two. The operational and economic context of films and the film business as a whole has changed so very much in the forty years since the events he remembers that it seems now worthwhile to record just a little of this pre-internet history before it fades from his memory.

Nick has lived in Hampstead since 1997. The book includes recollections of his time working at *The Classic Cinema*, later the ABC, on Pond Street (and now M&S and a block of flats).

Publisher: Troubador Books / Released: 28/11/2022

ISBN: 9781803133324 / eISBN: 9781803133645

Format: Paperback/eBook

Copies of this book can be ordered at local bookshops or online

<https://www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/autobiography/reel-life-behind-the-screen-a-cinema-manager-remembers/>

Available as both softcover book £12.99 and e-book £5.99.

For more information or a copy of the book please contact Nick Scudamore nickscudamore@gmail.com

Music Section

Finding Choral Evensong

The relaunch of the world's only online directory

Rupert Sheldrake

Before lockdown saw churches scrambling onto Zoom and Facebook live, a small charity, The Choral Evensong Trust, made waves for taking a traditional church service into the digital era. Choral Evensong is a beautiful, calming service of music and prayers that has been celebrated in Anglican churches since the sixteenth century. The charity's first website was launched on the Feast of St Cecilia (patron saint of musicians) in 2015, when churches across Britain and Ireland blessed laptops, tablets and smartphones, each of which had access to a database of Choral Evensong services on choralevensong.org for the very first time.

Now, seven years later, a freshly designed and reinvigorated website is set to be launched on St Cecilia's Day – Tuesday November 22nd (22.11.22). A small team has spent hours trawling through websites, social media and music sheets to pull together an up-to-date

database of Choral Evensong services on offer across the British Isles in time for this relaunch, when the website will again be blessed at Choral Evensong in a range of cathedral and college chapels, including Ely, Lichfield, Southwell and York Cathedrals, and Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin.

During its seven years of existence, choralevensong.org has had 30,000,000 hits from 600,000 visitors, accessing services on offer at over 350 churches and cathedrals on Sundays, and also every weekday in most cathedrals and many college chapels in Oxford, Cambridge and elsewhere. The website has grown to incorporate live streamed services, a 'Choir of the Month' feature and has begun to share services of Choral Evensong as far away as Australia. It also includes a listing of the comparable service of Choral Vespers in Roman Catholic churches, cathedrals and monasteries.

QUOTE (Dr. Guy Hayward): "Choral Evensong offers everyone a free moment of inspiration, a chance to reflect on beauty in the gap between a day's work and dinner. It is the most accessible service, because the music is so uplifting and there is little liturgy. In London alone, every day of the week at 5pm, one can enter Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral free of charge and listen to world-class music for 45 minutes."

QUOTE *John Rutter, composer for the Royal Wedding and conductor,* says "Choral Evensong gladdens the heart, ravishes the ear, and restores the soul – my favourite way of spending an hour with glorious music in a glorious building. I'm rather proud that my son Nick started the Choral Evensong Appreciation Society on Facebook – almost 23,000 members at the last count.

Visit www.choralevensong.org to discover what you may have been missing!" and to sign up for the newsletter.

This article also appears on Church Chat – if you haven't looked at this section of our website do check it out – most of the articles are unique to CC, and often include photos

Music for January

Geoffrey Webber

This month we are pleased to welcome two new members to the Choir of Hampstead Parish Church, both of whom will be regulars at our morning as well as evening services: mezzo Rebekah Jones and baritone James Geidt, replacing Cath Backhouse and Malachy Frame. You can read about Rebekah and James on their personal websites, but there will be updates on our own website soon. Malachy sings his final service with us on the Feast of the Epiphany which will be followed by drinks kindly provided by the Friends of the Music.

As I write, uncertainty surrounds the music to be sung at the Christmas services given the continued problem of bad colds and covid, which leads me to observe that two Mass settings on the Music List for January have reappeared from previous lists since we had to abandon plans to sing them due to illness, only once in the case of Wood's *Missa Portae Honoris* but twice in the case of the Latin Mass for Four Voices by Thomas Tallis. Third time lucky for Tallis, I hope.

On the Feast of Epiphany we sing a little-known Mass for the season of Christmas by the Austrian composer Josef Gruber (1855-1933). Apparently unrelated to the composer of *Stille Nacht* Franz Gruber, Josef Gruber was a pupil of Bruckner who worked in Linz; his Mass is a charming and festive work. Evensong naturally features the musical talents of Malachy Frame, singing both the 'Three King's' and the *Nunc dimittis* of Stanford in G. The anthem by Britten *Chorale after an Old French Carol* was chosen for a carol service by Malachy back in 2020; copies were purchased but then covid struck. The French carol is the tune known as 'Picardy' and the work was originally intended to be part of a Christmas Oratorio being planned by Britten with W. H. Auden. Those unable to attend Joshua's recital on Friday 6th will be able to hear two movements of Messiaen's cycle *La Nativité* played as voluntaries on the 8th.

John Bull's verse anthem *Almighty God*, which by the leading of a star sets one the Collect for Epiphany. Bull was a leading keyboard virtuoso of the early seventeenth century who, like several other musicians at the time, moved to the Catholic Low Countries for religious reasons. His anthem was extremely popular even after he left England and was known as 'the star anthem'. The accompaniment was probably intended for viols, but organ parts also survive. William Child lived almost the entire length of the 17th century, serving as Organist at St George's Chapel Windsor both before and after the Civil War. He enjoyed composing pieces highlighting unusual combinations of voices, and his Evening Service for Four Means is a noted example. The word Mean refers to boys' voices, and it seems that boys often sang both the top line of the music and also what we would now call the alto line. The four soloists sing together throughout the setting, set against the tutti chorus, and Child employs several changes of time signature alternating between duple and triple time.

The final piece worthy of special mention this month is the verse anthem by Orlando Gibbons, *Grant, O Holy Trinity*. We sing this piece at Evensong on the 29th, which besides being the Feast of the Presentation / Purification is the Eve of the Anglican celebration of Charles I, King & Martyr. We will perform the anthem in a new reconstruction and arrangement that I hope to make public this month along with new editions of other pieces that served as prayers for Charles I and Charles II, given the forthcoming coronation of Charles III. The text refers specifically to King Charles, and appears to have been written for performance in Canterbury Cathedral on Trinity Sunday (hence the title) on 12th June 1625 as Charles awaited the arrival of his new bride the 15-year-old Princess Henrietta Maria from France. Gibbons and the other royal musicians came to Canterbury at the end of May, but tragically Gibbons unexpectedly died of a seizure on Whitsunday, June 5th, so it seems unlikely that he ever heard the piece performed.

Music List

The choir are taking a well-earned holiday on 1st January

Sunday 8th January – Epiphany

10.30 am. All-age Holy Communion

Organ Prelude *Andante tranquillo* (Sonata No. 3) Felix Mendelssohn

Opening Hymn 'We three Kings'

Mass setting (GI/S&B/AD) *Missa de Nativitate D. N. J. Ch.*

Joseph Gruber

Gradual Hymn 'The Virgin Mary' / 'This little light'

Offertory Hymn 52

Communion Motet *Born under starlight* Rupert Jeffcoat

Post-communion Hymn 47

Organ Postlude *Les enfants de Dieu* (La Nativité) Olivier Messiaen

5 pm. Evensong

Organ Prelude *Les mages* (La Nativité) Olivier Messiaen

Introit *Three Kings from Persian lands afar* Peter Cornelius

Preces & Responses Richard Ayleward

Psalms 98 Martindale Sidwell

Canticles *Evening Service in G* Charles Stanford

Anthem *Chorale after an Old French Carol* Benjamin Britten

Hymn 49

Final Amen Richard Ayleward

Organ Postlude *Postlude in D minor* (Op. 105) Charles Stanford

Sunday 15th January – Epiphany II

10.30 am. Holy Communion

Organ Prelude *Intrada* John Ireland

Opening Hymn 232

Mass setting (GI/S/AD) *Missa Portae honoris* Charles Wood

Gradual Psalm 40. 1-12 Tone vi

Offertory Hymn 294

Communion Motet *Tantum ergo sacramentum* Maurice Duruflé

Post-communion Hymn 343

Organ Postlude *Prelude in G minor* (Op. 10) Johannes Brahms

5 pm. Evensong

Organ Prelude *Clarifica me Pater* Thomas Tallis

Introit *O Lord, the maker of all thing* William Mundy

Preces & Responses Richard Ayleward

Psalm 96 Percy Buck

Canticles *The Short Service* William Byrd

Anthem *Almighty God, which by the leading of a star* John Bull

Hymn 55

Final Amen Richard Ayleward

Organ Postlude *Ciacona* Georg Muffat

Sunday 22nd January – Epiphany III

10.30 am. Holy Communion

Organ Prelude *I give you a new commandment* John Sheppard

Opening Hymn 374

Mass setting (GI/S&B/AD) *Mass for four voices* Thomas Tallis

Gradual Psalm 27. 1-11 Tone v/3

Offertory Hymn 498

Communion Motet *Ave verum corpus* William Byrd

Post-communion Hymn 415 (ii)

Organ Postlude *Basse et dessus de trompette* (Suite No.1)

L.-N. Clérambault

5 pm. Evensong

Organ Prelude *Toccata per l'Elevation* (Messa della Madonna)
Girolamo Frescobaldi

Introit *Almighty and everlasting God* Orlando Gibbons

Preces & Responses Richard Ayleward

Psalm 33 David Maw

Canticles *Evening Service for Four Means* William Child

Anthem *Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is* William Child

Hymn 360

Final Amen Richard Ayleward

Organ Postlude *March* (Scipione) Handel, trans. Rawsthorne

Sunday 29th January – The Presentation of our Lord

10.30 am. All-Age Holy Communion

Organ Prelude *Duo* (Suite No.1) L.-N. Clérambault

Opening Hymn 234 (ii)

Mass setting (GI/S&B/AD) *Missa brevis in D* (K194) W. A. Mozart

Gradual Hymn 'Shine Jesus' / 'This little light'

Offertory Hymn 'Longing for light'

Communion Motet *Senex puerum portabat* William Byrd

Post-communion Hymn 408

Organ Postlude *Te Deum laudamus* Jean Langlais

5 pm. Evensong

Organ Prelude *Vesper Voluntary* (Op. 14/1) Edward Elgar

Introit *Grant, O Holy Trinity* Orlando Gibbons

Preces & Responses Richard Ayleward

Psalm 132 Edward Elgar

Canticles *The Gloucester Service* Herbert Howells

Anthem *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace* S. S. Wesley

Hymn 499

Final Amen Richard Ayleward

Organ Postlude *Fugue in B minor* (BWV 544/ii) J. S. Bach

Joe Hyam *Organ Scholar*

Aidan Coburn *Director of the Junior & Community Choirs*

Joshua Ryan *Organist & Assistant Director of Music*

Geoffrey Webber *Director of Music*

Sign on door of music shop:

Gone Chopin, have Liszt, Bach in a Minuet. – Anon

Olivier Messiaen

LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR

(The Nativity of the Lord)

An Epiphany recital
with
devotional readings

Organist
Joshua Ryan

Friday 6th January 2023
at 6.30 pm

There will be a retiring collection in aid of AgeUK Camden

HAMPSTEAD PARISH CHURCH
CHURCH ROW, NW3 6UU

Tube: Hampstead (Northern Line) Buses: 46, 268

Parking is difficult in the immediate vicinity

fom.org.uk

Information 020 7794 5808



Future Organ recitals

Fridays (to start at 6:30)

17th February – James Johnstone

17th March – Kyoko Canaway

14th April – Geoffrey Webber

Sunday (to start at 4:15)

7th May – Laura Silva Mendes

4th June – Gerard Brooks

2nd July – Ophelia Amar



The Hampstead Collective

Programme for the New Year

'New Beginnings'

Monday, 2 January 2023 19:00 - 20:30

Rebecca Hardwick (soprano) sings *Exsultate Jubilate* by Mozart

Ruairi Bowen (tenor) sings *Dies Natalis* by Finzi

with orchestra conducted by Aidan Coburn

Wine will be served

Tickets **£15.00**+£1.76 online booking fee

Free entry for under 18s

Thehampsteadcollective.com

'Small Matter for Wonder'

Monday, 6 February 2023 19:00 - 20:30

American and English songs of identity, home, and longing, with piano and string quartet.

Christine Buras, Patrick Terry, Aidan Coburn and Malachy Frame sing with The Hill Quartet and Chad Vindin (piano) in the beautiful and intimate setting of Hampstead Parish Church.

So Many Things - Nico Muhly
Knoxville: Summer of 1915 - Samuel Barber
Dover Beach - Samuel Barber
On Wenlock Edge - Ralph Vaughan Williams

Wine will be served

Tickets **£15.00**+£1.76 online booking fee
Free entry for under 18s
Thehampsteadcollective.com

'From Nightly Fears and Fantasies'

Monday, 6 March 2023 19:00 - 20:30

Music for compline and vespers

Works by Tallis, Sheppard, Gabrieli and Monteverdi
professional vocal sextet directed by Malachy Frame

Wine will be served

Tickets **£15.00**+£1.76 online booking fee
Free entry for under 18s
Thehampsteadcollective.com

New Year Sales: The science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it. – *Stephen Leacock*

Reviews

Blithe Spirit

No less than TWO reviews of the Hampstead Players' recent offering. First the "official" commissioned one from Suzanne Pinkerton, and then a tribute from Moragh Gee, herself a member of the Players.

First Suzanne Pinkerton

I was sitting in the front row. I mention this because I had a wonderful view of the splendidly accurate set, and the equally accurate costumes, for "Blithe Spirit" with one of the most professional casts of the Hampstead Players.

It wasn't just the furniture, there were some fascinating effects: Pictures which fell off the walls – and apparently survived four performances – and a large china vase which "fell to pieces" more than once each time! It was a charming tribute that the lady stage hands were dressed in discreet black frocks like the maids'.

The audience was treated to jazzy music of the time, to get us in the mood. The play only had seven characters, and I have to admit a weakness for Edith, the maid who actually spoke – at least she said "Yes m'" to every order from Ruth, the second wife of our hero, played with great aplomb by stalwart of the group, Matthew Williams. Edith was Katie Donovan.

There were eventually spitting fireworks between Elvira, the first wife of Charles (Matthew's character) played by Sophie Alexander, in her encounters with the present incumbent, Ruth, played by Carolina Cabral who, I'm told, is a barrister off-stage. Her last scene hat was quite something!

Dr and Mrs Bradman – James Rossiter and Cara Pennock, added a touch of sanity and, in her case, a lovely dress, to the bizarre situation of Charles' dead first wife being invisible to his second.

How did this happen? Susan Catten, as Madame Arcati, the medium, threw herself into her role quite literally – not only on the sofa, but on the floor too, and she had to stay in both positions for quite some time in her trances.

By the time both wives were dead, and the jokes were getting better and better, as examples of black humour, the audience was ready to show warm appreciation, specially if, at the performance's interval they had been served a nice glass of wine by David Gardner in a very fetching apron.

And, as is said in Hamlet, the Players are here! But in our modern times, it was Girl Power. Both the directors, Sheena Craig and Shereen Abdullah (and Sheena was one of the two set designers as well) had obviously really had creative ideas, so that it was "on with the show".



From Moragh Gee

I was immensely impressed by the whole production which was excellent in so many ways.

It is always said that if you get the casting right, you're almost there. Well, Sheena Craig, the director, did. All the characters were well delineated, and their relationships to and with each other crystal clear and, moreover, they all looked right.

And so to the beginning. As we sat down and looked at the set we were indeed taken into the Condomines' drawing room. The

decorated walls, the fireplace, the furniture, the French window, Charles' and Ruth's personal belongings all fitted.

The music transported us immediately to the earlier era, so even as we sat waiting in our pew, there was a keen anticipation of what was to come.

As to the characters, where to begin? We felt the Condomines, Charles and Ruth, were genuinely at home, confidently and comfortably in command of the situation. We could see a couple in a well-established relationship, at ease with one another, and we were well led into their forthcoming dinner.

Their maid, Edith, was an absolutely splendid character, not only in how she spoke but her vivid and lightning changes of movement depicting either her attention to their commands, or her state of anxiety, or both. A terrific performance.

Then Dr and Mrs Bradman, very different characters, the doctor steady, capable and observant, and a good listener, and Mrs Bradman conventionally charming but, on occasion, unintentionally putting her foot in it. Then o then, Madame Arcati, utterly eccentric in appearance, manner and movement, very much her own woman and completely off the wall. Lastly Elvira, wafting in or drifting about, in her affected, self-centred, deceptively charming manner; immensely watchable.

Part of the success of the production lay in the minutest attention to detail. I've mentioned the set and the music and now come to the beautiful clothes; what lovely fabrics, well cut, fitting and hanging well on each woman, and the men's costumes were excellent as well. Then, add to that the superb shoes and hair dos! Such minute attention to detail and period was really impressive.

That brings us to our three Condomines, Charles, Ruth and Elvira. Their different relationships were vivid, and the changing relationship between Ruth and Charles held our attention throughout, Charles vainly trying to pretend he was keeping a grip on things completely beyond his control or understanding. Ruth is a conventional woman and so less noticeable, but here we had a Ruth who was utterly convincing, not just when speaking but when listening. Her reactions were spontaneous, subtle and truthful, and entirely natural: altogether a quite outstanding performance.

Reflecting later on the whole play my son said Ruth was the only one of the Condomines he warmed to. He thought the play could only have been written by a man! Next morning looking it up online and adding to 'Blithe Spirit', the word misogyny (!), he found quite a bit. He disliked both Charles and Elvira, and felt Ruth was the only one for whom he had any sympathy. This illustrates what a terrific production it was, in that with such a well-known period comedy, we were still discussing it next day.

My only adverse criticism was, to my astonishment, for Coward! The second half felt long. There were moments the play might have ended earlier. As it is still in copyright there is nothing that can be done about that yet. However one day, some judicious cutting will make the second half even better.

Many congratulations to Sheena Craig who directed it, and to everyone, including the whole backstage team. The timing of everything was immaculate, the lighting and sound, the pictures falling off the walls, the characters' freeze frame between scenes - a nice directorial flourish! - everything changed deftly in front of our eyes, all coming together in a most accomplished way.

High comedy is the most difficult thing to bring off - and they did it.

Christmas Lights

Judy East

Held on probably the coldest night of the year so far, the Christmas Lights concert appropriately, raised money for St Martin in the Fields Homeless Charity. Long before they moved into their current premises the charity operated out of the Crypt of St Martin's (where the cafe now is). I volunteered there in the early 1990s and got an insight into the depth of poverty then, which sadly still exists to devastating effect today.

But the atmosphere at HPC was all light and enthusiasm as the evening kicked off with the tintinnabulation of "Sleigh Ride" followed by Edgar Allen Poe's "The Bells".

The assembled company consisted of the Community Choir, the Junior Choir, an enigmatic ensemble called perhaps Awe and Wonder or maybe Able and Willing? It wasn't in the programme but seemed to consist of a few members of the Community Choir augmented by singers who don't have time to attend weekly choir practice but enjoy a good sing! They did jolly well. And the Hampstead Players - good to see Matthew Williams fresh from his role in "Blithe Spirit" along with Barbara Alden and David Gardner, and a cameo role from John Willmer lending his authentic legal voice to John Julius Norwich's "Twelve Days of Christmas". This piece never fails to delight audiences and Barbara played the mood of the increasingly frustrated Emily to perfection.

The Community Choir has grown – in numbers as in ability – and gave us a varied and entrancing programme. It wasn't all jollity – "Snow" by Jonathan Dove, was a gentle melody flanked by two poems, Thomas Hardy and Clive Sansom ("The Darkling Thrush" and "Snowflakes") in sombre mode (is Hardy ever anything else?) The Junior Choir held their own, from their newest member, Teddy, singing in his first concert, to Lindsay, back for the holiday and

graduating from Junior to adult Community Choir – lovely to have her there. And who doesn't get a lump in the throat hearing children sing "Away in a Manger"?

During the interval we were refreshed with wine and more mince pies than I've ever seen – we'll be serving them up till Epiphany. "Are we allowed to eat them?" one of the junior choir asked.

The second part began with an admission from choir director Aidan Coburn that he likes Rutter and had included three of his carols – no complaints from me, I love Rutter! And so apparently did the rest of the audience. Aidan has proved a very able choir director, taking over from David Moore sometime in the foggy era known as "before covid". The Community Choir and Junior Choir flourish under his guidance, and somehow he finds time for his Colle Voce Singers and a leading role in the Hampstead Collective – singing, conducting or front of house. And a day job as well of course. Some of us remember that he came to the church as a schoolboy member of the adult choir in Lee Ward's time – and he's remained faithful ever since. I can attest to the fact that choir rehearsals are fun, and that he gets results is evident!

If you'd like to join the Community Choir, or have a child who'd be interested in the Junior Choir, please contact Aidan@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk



Welcome to ALMA **Bem-vindos à ALMA**

*One of the charities supported by
the parish*



What amazing news we have to share of the expansion of the Anglican Church in Angola and Mozambique from four Dioceses to twelve in the space of less than two years plus the formation of the new IAMA Province. Bishop Carlos compiled the Canons for the new Province and it was agreed that the Archbishop - known as the Presiding Bishop - would be from one country then the Dean of the Province would come from the other and that this would alternate.

All the new Bishops were consecrated in time to come to the Lambeth Conference, but due to the risk of COVID, we were unable to meet with most of them. However, it was an excellent time for renewing the ALMA Covenant for the next 10 years. More of that later. Since then the Bishops have returned to their Dioceses and have all now been enthroned. If you follow us on Facebook you may have been able to link on to some of those services and celebrate with our partners.

On the 20th November a number of the ALMA staff together with Bishop Rob, were in Maputo for the Institution of Archbishop Carlos Matsinhe as the first Archbishop of the new province of IAMA (Igreja Anglicana Mozambique & Angola) by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Justin.

So what does ALMA do?

The types of activity which are met out of ALMA's general fund include:

- Payment of air fares of visitors to London from our Link Dioceses in Angola and Mozambique;

- Payment of travel costs in connection with the theological training of ordinands outside of their own dioceses, e.g. in Grahamstown, South Africa;
- Contributing to the audit fees of our Link Dioceses, in special circumstances, to ensure financial transparency and accountability.
- Contribution to ALMA Link Officers' salary and benefits in the Dioceses of Angola and Niassa (and, potentially in future, of Lebombo);

While some of these activities may not seem exciting to fund they are critical to capacity building in our Link dioceses and to enabling parish links to develop. Contact the **ALMA Co-ordinator** to find out how to make your donation.

ALMA's Children

A fund set up in 1999 to promote education and the relief of poverty. Each of our Link dioceses is allocated one-third of the sums raised and details of the grants given are documented in the ALMA annual accounts.

Example projects:

Nacala School, Niassa

Ss Peter and Paul Chihunzuine, Education and Health Project

Magumeto Nursery School, Lebombo, Mozambique

There are links to all these projects on their website

ALMA's Catechists

A fund established in November 2004 to help with the training of lay catechists and re-launched in November 2008.

There is a great shortage of trained priests to service the rapidly growing churches, which means many congregations are led by catechists who fulfil various lay ministry roles.



Training programmes under this fund have been drawn up that not only enable catechists to lead Sunday worship and take funerals, but also develop leadership skills. A [programme](#) in Púngoe Archdeaconry is a good example.

Donations to the ALMA Catechists fund will be split between the Dioceses of Lebombo and Niassa in Mozambique, because of the alternative programme in Angola.

You can support ALMA in prayer - ALMA Morning prayer is held every Wednesday via the [ALMA YouTube channel](#). And do explore their website almalink.org

Readings for January

10.30am

5.00pm

Sunday 1st Christmas 2

No evening service

Hebrews 2.10-end

Matthew 2.13-end

Sunday 8th – Epiphany

Ephesians 3.1-12

Isaiah 60.1-9

Matthew 2.1-12

John 2.1-11

Sunday 15th – Epiphany 2

I Corinthians 1.1-9

Ezekiel 2.1 – 3.4

John 1.29-42

Galatians 1.11-end

Sunday 22nd – Epiphany 3

I Corinthians 1.10-18

Ecclesiastes 3.1-11

Matthew 4.12-23

I Peter 1.3-12

Sunday 29th – Presentation of Christ / Candlemas

Hebrews 2.14-end

Haggai 2.1-9

Luke 2.22-40

John 2.18-22

The Second Epistle from Joseph to the Corinthians by Robert Salter, from *Fill my Stocking, an anthology* by Alan Titchmarsh, BBC Books

Dear Corinthians

I acknowledge safe receipt of your epistle, in response to my epistle (commonly known for reasons that escape me, as the first epistle to the Corinthians) concerning the recent sojourn with my wife, Mary, in Bethlehem or, as your brochure puts it, “The City of David”

For a travel company of repute, both Mary and I find your explanations of the accommodation arrangements far from satisfactory. If we have to make the journey again – which I hope we do not in the light of what occurred once we were there – it will most certainly not be with Corinthians 18-30 Holidays.

I offer the following response to your explanations.

- (1) I have looked again at your brochure. I do not agree that the description of the inn includes the outhouses. The words “travellers with cattle can expect the use of the stables” surely refers to the cattle, not the guests. You may say that there are many worse off than ourselves – unfortunately they all seem to have booked with your company.
- (2) You will have to take it from me that Mary giving birth to the Son of God was totally unexpected, and I can assure you that had I known He was on the way I would have given you the opportunity of bringing your PR people.
- (3) I agree with your proposition that from every point of view the story has more appeal set as it is in a stable rather than in the twin-bedded room with half board that we had booked. I also agree that it was more much convenient for the angel to make his way across the yard and into the stable rather than going through the residents’ lounge. Of course, I accept that the presence of the entire heavenly host praising God along the corridor on the second floor of the Inn might have resulted in complaints from

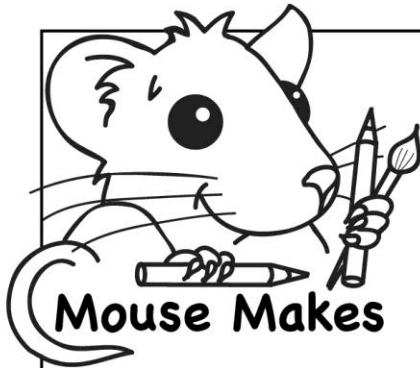
your other guests. But that does not address my main complaint. My wife, Mary, has little in common with shepherds. It was bad enough having to cope with livestock in the stable, but having to face a deputation of local sheep farmers who claimed they were tired of abiding in their fields at night was not our idea of “local colour”. Your decision to include them as an optional extra in next year’s brochure does not impress us.

- (4) I know you are denying you had anything to do with the couriers who arrived from the city bearing gifts, but I still maintain that I had seen one of them in your office when I booked the trip. I do not wish to appear ungrateful, but at a time when I was struggling with a newly born child, an exhausted wife, a group of fanatical shepherds, assorted livestock, an angel explaining that my son was the Everlasting Father, and the entire heavenly host, the arrival of three Corinthian Holiday representatives in fancy dress did little to help. And, by the way, they could have left something a little more practical.

Yours very truly, Joseph



Have you tried turning it
off and on again?



A JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM



When the **Magi** (wise men) came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

The _____

Why did they make the journey?

What did they follow to get there?

A _____

What did they see?

Read *Matthew 2:1-12*



Why did **Joseph** and **Mary** travel to **Bethlehem**?

Read *Luke 2:1-4*

When **Samuel** came to **Bethlehem** who sent him? Who did he go to see?
_____ and his sons.

Who had he come to anoint as king?

Read *1 Samuel 16:1-13*



Naomi and **Ruth** came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

_____ and why?

When did they arrive?

At the _____ harvest.

Read *Ruth 1:22*

E B A O F O O D K J E S S E S
M O A B A I J E I T J I A M E
R R M R A N O I N T O D M E A
U N J E S U S B G N U A U S S
T P B A R L E Y H A R V E S T
H G O D O S P F O O N I L I A
M A R Y B E H N Y M E D I A R
B E T H L E H E M I Y M A G I

The name **BETHLEHEM** means 'House of Bread'

Look up the Bible references to find the missing words, find them and these words below in the wordsearch

JOURNEY
BETHLEHEM • GOD
JOSEPH • MARY
JESUS • BORN
MAGI • MESSIAH
NAOMI • RUTH
FOOD • HARVEST
SAMUEL • ANOINT
KING • BREAD