

daughter of Sophie & Benjamin Cullen; Jack William, son of Amanda & Daniel Thomson
4th December: Noah Anderson, son of Laura Hirvonen & Dominic Fry
11th December: Edward, son of Lucy & Tom Goy

Funerals – *We remember with thanksgiving the life of:*

7th December: Jeremy Delahay, aged 38

Exploring the Christian Faith

This is a new course, offering an opportunity for people to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, without pressure to conform or commit. The course will be convened by members of the congregation, with the vicar present to offer thoughts and reflections. It will run on four Thursdays in January and February. The first meeting will take place on Thursday 12th January at 8pm in the Mina Hogan Room in the Parish Hall.

It is hoped that subsequent meetings will take place in the homes of parishioners and the venues for these will be advertised nearer the time.

The topics we will be covering each week are as follows:

12th January – *What does faith mean to you? Who is Jesus and how do we work out our faith in practice?*

19th January – *Christianity and other religions*

26th January – *Church and today's society: money, sex, war and science*

9th February – *Prayer: what happens when we pray?*

(Please note that there is no meeting on 2nd February as it is Candlemas and there will be an evening service.)

If you would like to come to this course, or if you would like any more information, please contact Cathy Randall on 07712598721 or Caroline Halmshaw on 07803 007533. Alternatively, you can email Cathy on crr1@btinternet.com. If you have already told us that you wish to attend, there is no need to do so again.

Cathy Randall

Vicar's Guide to the Church

for young children and families on
Saturday February 11th at 2pm
Followed by a party in the hall from
3-4.30pm for children who've been
baptised in 2011 along with
our regular Scuttlers

Vicar:	The Rev Joe Moffatt, Parish Office, St Mary's Parish Hall, Langham Road, Teddington. TW11 9HF (8977 2767), e-mail: vicar@stmarywithstalban.org
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NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2012

Vicar's Viewpoint

When the protestors arrived outside St Paul's Cathedral last October, my sympathies were with the Dean and Chapter. Yes, they made a dubious decision in closing the Cathedral. But I know them to be diligent priests who care passionately about the Cathedral's mission to the diocese, the city and the thousands of tourists who come through their doors. They suddenly found themselves having to react to a very complex event with conflicting advice coming at them from various angles, and all in the glare of the world's media. They have since been working very hard to engage with the protestors.

It has reminded me how important it is to have a clear sense of purpose, so that when unforeseen events happen, an organisation like a cathedral or a church can be guided by a set of clearly worked-out priorities. I am greatly encouraged that our own Parish Church Council has done this recently, setting out a clear vision for the next few years. I trust that this will guide us in our planning and keep us fixed to our gospel moorings if and when storms brew up.

Our Vision for 2012-15 is as follows:

***We aspire to be
an open and welcoming church
engaging with the wider community
fostering faith and friendship
and bringing people of all ages together
for the glory of God.***

I trust this is a vision in tune with what our local community would like to see in their parish church. I firmly believe in it and we've received a lot of positive feedback from the congregation. At its heart is the conviction that faith and friendship go hand-in-hand. Without friendship faith rarely flourishes. When friendships are formed, faith is often deepened. A vision is only good, however, if it leads to

StMARYwithStALBAN PARISH CHURCH of TEDDINGTON

actions. The PCC have worked out five priorities that put the vision into practice. These involve fostering faith and friendship in a wider variety of services and courses, reaching out to individuals in our wider community, developing links with other organisations and making our church building more welcoming. In the coming months, we'll be letting you know about the projects that we've planned in each priority. They won't happen all at once. But as they unfold over the next two or three years, we hope that that the vision will describe the reality.

Finally, let me encourage you to think about your own personal vision and priorities. What helps you to flourish as an individual? Do you have a sense of 'the me who God wants me to be'? What needs to change for this to happen?

If you want further reading on this theme try *The Me I Want to Be* by John Ortberg (Zondervan, 2010) – a recommendation from the Bishop of Kensington.

Best wishes

Joe Moffatt

Candlemas Christingle Service

Sunday January 29th at 4pm

with Guide and Scout Groups

*Christingle oranges given to all children
Candles lit during the service to light up a
darkened church.*

All are welcome to join us.

New Church Mice Sing & Rhyme.

Please join us for a fun new morning singalong for pre-schoolers, starting Thursday 12th Jan 9.45am in the Mina Hogan room. £1 per child, refreshments provided for children. For more information contact Anne McTear on 07973 911820.

A Life of St. Francis by Paul Alexander

A rapt audience, gathered in St. Mary's Parish Hall on Saturday 19th November, was treated to a real tour de force as Paul Alexander presented his one-man-version of the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Whilst conventional wisdom might have us believe that Francis was primarily the patron saint of animals, Paul showed us that he was so much more: a man of single-minded determination, often regarded as mad, and yet his unshakeable faith in his calling drew many followers.

As well as giving us a real sense of who St. Francis was, Paul also communicated fascinating nuggets of information such as the fact that, originally christened Giovanni, the name Francesco was given to him later in honour of his French mother. We also gained a clear sense of the phases of Francis' conversion to his devout and austere way of living and the development of the Franciscan movement.

Francis' selfless life of poverty, hardship and sacrifice perhaps inevitably led to failing health but Paul showed him to be determined to the end. The entire audience was surely moved as Francis, feebly yet resolutely singing Psalms, took his final breaths and died.

Helen Mulcahy

Advent Choral Evensong

Creating a wonderful atmosphere, our individual small candles were lit in a darkened church as the augmented choir commenced our Advent celebrations with the moving introit, *Adam laybounden*, and the processional hymn, *O come, O come, Emmanuel!* This joyful singing set the whole tone of a beautifully prepared service to welcome in the New Year of the church. As the goodly congregation intoned the well-loved evensong liturgy from the Book of Common Prayer, we were seriously challenged by readings from the Old and New Testaments (Isaiah 1.1-20 and Matthew 21. 1-13) and then uplifted by appropriate seasonal poetry readings from the works of Betjeman and Archbishop Rowan.

Our resounding final hymn, *Lo! He comes with*

clouds descending, reminded us that we are now firmly into the season of preparation for the coming of the Messiah.

Christabel Davies

The Christmas Bazaar

The Christmas Bazaar heralded the start of Advent and once again proved to be the perfect kick-start to the church's New Year. The event was strongly supported by the local community who enjoyed the wide selection of stalls.

Children were kept entertained with games run by the Scouts and Guides, decorating biscuits, having their faces painted and visiting Santa's Grotto. Father Christmas reported it was the most elegant Grotto he had visited!

We would like to extend a big thank you to all who gave donations, their time running the stalls and to those who came along to support on the day. The event raised a record £3,900 for the church, which was 20% up from last year.

Nikki Harrison

Christmas Wreath making at Plain and Pearl

The Christmas evening at Plain and Pearl on 6 December was a whopper. Every member made their own, personalised Christmas wreath under the guidance of our special team of floral experts. The music was festive, the hopes were high and the mince pies and mulled wine were tasting good. Each member started with a plain wreath and could decorate it as they wished using a wide range of interesting ornaments, including berries, pine cones, bells, ribbons and even sparkling fairy lights. No matter how basic your design skills, the end result looked amazing. I found it challenging but enjoyable and help was always on hand when the going got tricky. I was delighted with the end result and, best of all, I came home with a beautiful decoration. Plain and Pearl is a great club for all ages. You can't fail to learn some new tricks and make some new friends. Come along and join us in the New Year.

Katie Paling

Parish Registers

Holy Baptisms – *We welcome into Christ's Church:*

20th November: Clara Alice Mae & Fraser
William Andrew, daughter & son of Ann &

Chris Greany; Henry Michael Jonathan, son of Lucie & Jonathan McCord; Mylo Thomas, son of Jo & Matt Spencer
27th November: Holly Amelia, daughter of Katie & Alexander Skrine; Florence Elizabeth,

Diary for January

SERVICES – *Sundays:* Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 8.00am
Family Communion and Sunday School at 9.45am

Wednesdays: Holy Communion at 9.30am

Weekdays (except Mondays): Morning Prayer at 9.00am, Evening Prayer at 5pm

Sunday 1st	Naming of Jesus
Wednesday 4th	First Wednesday Club - Topic: <i>New Year resolutions are a waste of time: discuss</i> , Mina Hogan Room, 12.30pm
Thursday 5th	Silent Prayer in Church, 8.30pm, followed by Compline at 9pm
Sunday 8th	Epiphany Sunday Youth Group in Parish Hall, 6.30-8pm
Tuesday 10th	Plain & Pearl Knitting, Mina Hogan Room, 7.30-9.30pm Baptism preparation at 8pm
Thursday 12th	Parish Pub Lunch, Anglers, 12.30pm Exploring the Christian Faith, Mina Hogan Room, 8pm
Sunday 15th	2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Tuesday 17th	Tea Club, Mina Hogan Room, 2.30-4.30pm Exploring the Christian Faith, Mina Hogan Room, 8pm
Sunday 22nd	3rd Sunday after Epiphany Baptism 12 noon
Tuesday 24 th	Plain & Pearl Craft, Mina Hogan Room, 7.30-9.30pm
Wednesday 25th	Holy Communion for Conversion of St Paul, in church, 9.30am
Thursday 26th	Exploring the Christian Faith, Mina Hogan Room, 8pm
Sunday 29th	4th Sunday after Epiphany Baptism 12 noon Christingle Service, in church, 4pm

18th-25th January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Thurs 19th	Evening Service at Sacred Heart RC Church, 7.30 pm
Friday 20th	Lunchtime Service at Teddington Baptist Church, 12pm-12.50pm
Saturday 21st	Morning Service at Methodist Church, <i>time to be confirmed</i>
Sunday 22nd	Ecumenical Service at St Mark's Church, 4pm
Monday 23rd	Morning Service at St Peter & St Paul Church, 9.00am
Tuesday 24th	Evening Prayer at St Mary with St Alban, 5pm

And looking ahead

Thu February 2nd	Holy Communion for Candlemas, 7pm
Sat February 11th	Vicar's Guide to the Church for young children and families, 2pm Followed by a party in the hall from 3 – 4.30pm for children who've been baptised in 2011 along with our regular Scuttlers
Sun February 12th	Choral Evensong in church, 6.30pm
Tue February 21st	Pancake Supper Talk in the Parish Hall, 7.30pm