

Editor's Note

Welcome back to Cheam Spirit! It's been a busy Michaelmas season here in the parish, and we can hardly believe that there are only seven weeks left in the year. I wonder, as you look back, what the key events of this year have been for you? Where have you experienced beauty, kindness and grace? And what has felt difficult? Advent beckons, with the chance to press the pause button, and it offers us such rich themes of hope, joy, love and peace. Do enjoy it, while it lasts.....

James, our curate, tells us that his favourite podcast is 'Ask NT Wright Anything.' This is a weekly podcast that connects the listener to Tom Wright's thought and theology by allowing the listener to ask the questions. Check it out, and see if you might enjoy it as well!

News from across the Parish

IGNITE Christmas planning: We met again on 21st September for the next phase of our Christmas planning, and it was great to come together from across five churches to share ideas. We've produced a joint Christmas flyer with all of our Christmas services, and we were able to share this on Remembrance Sunday. Production of our Advent packs is well underway and these will be shared for the first time across all five churches, and with some of our primary schools. We're making sure that each church is well-adorned with Christmas lights and looking forward to building on our progress next year. To that end, we'll be meeting on 8th Feb 4-5.30pm at Christ Church with St Philip to review progress and start planning for 2026! All welcome.

Exploring Hymns: (*Vicky Gray writes*) Over four weeks, a group of us met in St Dunstan's Hall to hear a short talk about a particular phase in Anglican hymnody. We started with the Reformation, then looked at the Wesley brothers' hymns from the 18th century, before moving onto the Victorians (who still dominate our hymnbooks) and finally to the 20th century. After each talk, we sang a hymn and then discussed it. At the end of each session, we sang the hymn again as our closing prayer. The church has always held old and new in tension, but I hope 'Exploring Hymns' has encouraged us to see the merits of both. Thanks to all those who came - and sang!

Hannah's sabbatical in Canada:

(*Revd Hannah Thomson writes*) I had an amazing time on sabbatical. Clergy in the Church of England get a sabbatical every seven years as a time for them to recharge and rest: setting aside time for relaxation, rest and recharging as part of a rhythm of life. I recharge best in nature and so I spent some of my time in Canada exploring many of the National Parks on the Eastern Coast and marvelling at God's creation, as I watched the autumn colours change. Thank you to everyone who kept things going so smoothly here at home.



Upcoming Events



Christ Church with St Philip,

Worcester Park

Sunday 21 December
4pm Carols & Christingles
Christmas Eve
4pm Crib Service
8pm Carols by Candlelight
11.30pm Midnight Communion
Christmas Day
9am Morning Worship



St John's, Belmont

Sunday 14 December
2pm & 4pm Christmas Crafts and Songs
Monday 22 December
7pm Nine Lessons & Carols
Christmas Eve
5.30pm Crib Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day
9.30am Christmas Eucharist



St Dunstan's, Cheam

Sunday 14 December
5pm Carol Service with
St Dunstan's School and She-Sings
Christmas Eve
3pm & 5pm Crib Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day
9.30am Christmas Eucharist



St Alban's, Cheam

Sunday 30 November
5pm Advent Service
Christmas Eve
4pm Crib Service
8pm First Eucharist of Christmas
Christmas Day



St Oswald's, Cheam

Sunday 14 December
5pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve
4pm Crib Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day

Advent Book Club: You are all warmly invited to enter into the spirit of the season by joining us for an Advent Book Club. We will be reading 'Women of the Nativity' by Paula Gooder (you'll need to buy a copy in advance and make a start by the first meeting - we will aim to have finished the book by the time of the second meeting).

You can join the discussion either online with Revd Steph (2nd/16th December 6-7pm - Zoom Meeting ID 320 691 5850 Passcode 170710) or in-person with Revd Beth (8th/22nd December 2-3pm St John's Belmont). If you would find the cost of the book prohibitive, please let Steph know (steph@cheamparish.org.uk).

Christmas events and services: St Oswald's Christmas Fair takes place on Saturday 22nd November 2-4pm, while St Alban's hosts an Advent Service of Light on Sunday 30th November at 5pm.

Spotlight on James Griffin

Since joining the Clergy team at the end of June, I've been made to feel so welcome by people across our three churches and the wider community. Thank you!

As you can imagine, the pace of life as a church minister is very different to my previous life in policing, but the skills I developed over my career to date have been used by God in many ways within parish life, and whilst I'm slowly picking up the practicalities of being a church minister, I'm far more interested in where God is at work in your lives and our community.

Yes, we've got buildings to maintain and heat(!) but far more importantly, we have a powerful message of hope for our families and neighbours and I hope you're aware that all of us have a part to play. However small your sense of faith in God may be, our churches are places where, together, we get to explore and join in with a journey of hope. In Spring 2026 I'll be involved in leading some small groups around Social Justice matters, and I'd love you to come along.... News will follow in the New Year. I'm here if you need me... have a great Christmas!



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