

The power of gratitude

Do you want to change your life for the better?

There are lots of ways in which we might try to improve our lives - go to the gym more often perhaps, eat more healthily, get more sleep, drink more water. All of these are good and very worthy things to pursue. But there is something even simpler that can drastically improve your life - gratitude.

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Saying 'thank you' can have a transformative effect on our life and health. A study from Harvard University found that people who implemented regular gratitude practices were not only happier and more optimistic, but they also exercised more and visited the doctor less. Managers who say 'thank you' have harder-working employees and gratitude can enable us to appreciate good experiences, deal with difficult circumstances and build relationships.

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Despite all this, we can sometimes find it hard to be grateful. Elton John sang "Sorry seems to be the hardest word", but the words 'thank you' can often feel just as hard to say. We need a nudge to start us on the road to gratitude.

This time of the year is the season when the church celebrates Harvest. We might not feel that connected with agriculture

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How are you at giving thanks?

and harvest living on the edges of London. But harvest can be an opportunity to recognise the many good things we have and to say 'thank you' for them. It can be the nudge we need to begin an ongoing practice of gratitude.

As Christians we recognise that gratitude is most powerful when we know not only what we are thankful *for*, but also who we are thankful *to*. God has given us good things to enjoy and we make the most of them when we enjoy them, share them and thank God for them.

Why not let this be the start of a gratitude practice that transforms your life.

How are you at giving thanks? Do you find it easy or difficult? Why not come along to our Harvest Service on Sunday 25 September at 10.00? It's a Service for all ages and everyone is welcome, whether you are used to coming to church or not. Why not let this be the start of a gratitude practice that transforms your life.

Rev Dan Wells



Welcome, Ese!

Ese Ntefon joined our church in July this year, and here she introduces herself in her very own words.



Has anyone else had that moment when they look around and realise that, despite the imperfections of life, God has gone above and beyond for them?

Has anyone else had that moment when they look around and realise that, despite the imperfections of life, God has gone above and beyond for them? I've been having lots of those moments recently, when I have thought, "surely our Abba doesn't have favourites, but I sure do feel like one of His right now."

Great introduction, right? Well, for those that have not met me yet, my name is Eseabasi and I'm the new Youth and Children's Worker at Holy Trinity Richmond, which is one of my myriad reasons for feeling like a favourite daughter! I

I would love your prayers as I do so, mainly that the Lord will use me, mould me to be/look/act more like Christ every day, and draw many young souls to Himself through me.

Ese Ntefon

didn't even know jobs like this existed before the Lord led me to it one morning while I was spending time with Him.

You see, for a while, I had been saying to anyone who asked, that although I am currently finishing my Masters, I didn't mind not getting a job in the field I am studying. I was open to wherever the Lord would lead me. How exciting that He has led me to HTR, where I get to be part of a team that draws youth and children to the Lord in ways that this generation is desperate for! That has been my heart's cry for such a long time.

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Ever since the Lord drew me to Himself in a deeper way, in the midst of the silence of the first Covid lockdown in 2020, I have been itching (figuratively, of course!) to let other young people know that there is joy, hope, and real life to be found in living completely for Christ. As our Saviour said, "not as the world gives do I give to you", because He gives so much better, and eternal life as a cherry on top! That's what I'm excited to share and model in this role!

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The fun will be back this Autumn

Following the successful relaunch of our Midweek Youth Group, our popular Children's Club - Glow - will be back shortly! For children in school years 4-6 and meeting monthly on a Friday (7 October, 4 November and 2 December), each Glow evening will have a Christian theme and input, as well as games, craft, sport, art, computer games, chillout, table games and tuck. The fun is guaranteed!



We will be holding a Light Party after school on Monday 31 October, celebrating Jesus as the light of the world, a light that shines in the darkness.

Our popular Children's Club - Glow - will be back shortly!

Activities will include bouncy castles, craft and games. There will be treats but no tricks (no scary costumes, please), with supper and a goody bag.

On most Sunday mornings we have special groups for children and young people, while on other weeks everyone meets together in church for an All Age Service.

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We'd love your children and youngsters to join us for any of our groups and events. Please watch out for further details via our Weekly Update and [website](#), or contact [Ese Ntefon](#), our Youth and Children's Worker, or [Sue Jackson](#), our Youth and Children's Minister.

Youth and Children's team



Ups, and downs, and a faithful God

Nico stepped down as our Worship Pastor at the end of August, and we are hugely grateful to him for serving us over the last seven years. Here are some departing words he wrote just before stepping down.

I heard of someone who reads their personal journal at the end of every year to remember the good and challenging bits, and to reflect on how God has shown his faithfulness through it all. I can reflect in the same way on my time at HTR.

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Through it all, though, God has always been faithful.

There were times of great joy and happiness – celebrating baptisms and weddings, Spirit-filled Services and meetings, eating

(or rather feasting!) together, fun, laughter, encouragement and inspirational staff members who became friends and family, to name but a few. There were also difficult times – the loss of loved ones, friends and colleagues moving away, Covid, dealing with discouragement after trying something new ... and failing.

Through it all, though, God has always been faithful. He has always been good, a solid rock, here with us. He has always been generous, gracious and kind, always kept His promises, no matter what the circumstances, always been a peace-giver, joy-bringer, faith-grower. And He will always be.

It has been a privilege and a blessing to work at HTR

I am eternally grateful to every person who showed me God's character and lived as an example of His grace. It has been a privilege and a blessing to work at HTR.

Nico Marais



The next step of my journey

If I've not yet met you, I'm Louise and on 9 October I will be licensed as a Lay Reader. Readers are people who study the Bible, the Christian faith, what we believe and why we believe it, and

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the Christian community they are part of, feel confident in sharing their faith, and live lives of peace and joy close to God. We do lots in churches, like preaching and teaching, but often

the history of the church; and we do all this so we can share what we learn. We want to help others to get to know God, make sense of the Bible, understand

of, feel confident in sharing their faith, and live lives of peace and joy close to God. We do lots in churches, like preaching and teaching, but often have roles outside the church too, and in my case that means having strong links with Holy Trinity School, which both my children attend. Keith Nurse and Hugh Dunlop are Readers at HTR too.

I've just completed two wonderful years of learning with St Augustine's

College. My Monday evenings have been a joyous treat of worship and learning with fellow trainees. I've always loved learning, but learning about God, digging into the Bible, and thinking about how we can share what we've learnt with others has been the best course I've ever done.

Why did I do this? Well, about 10 years ago I learnt that prayer isn't a one-way conversation. If you ask God a question, He's more than capable of answering! Gradually I've been inviting God into more and more of my life decisions, and He's been leading me step by step into this place, where I have to say I feel the most 'me' I've ever felt.

What's next for me? I've been joining in with many things at HTR over the last two years, from preaching to working with children, and I'm really looking forward to seeing how God wants to use me more at HTR. And if this has made you wonder whether God might be leading you towards something, then I'd love to chat to you.

Louise McFerran

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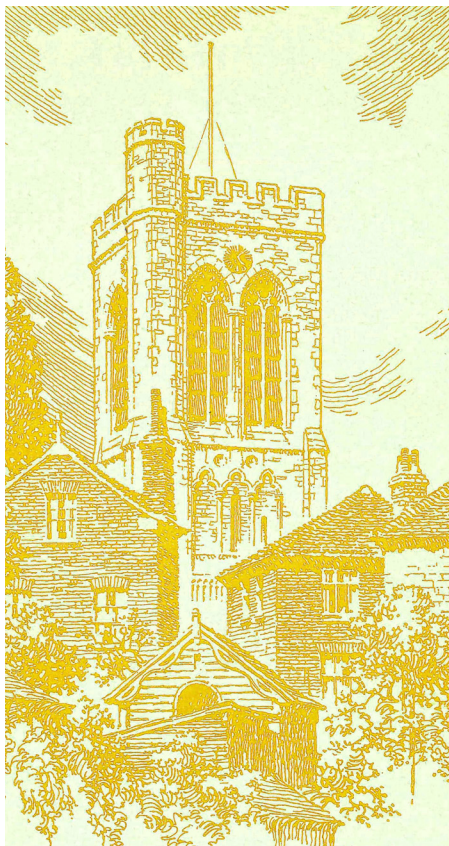
Congratulations to Hugh and Keith, who celebrate 40 years as Readers on 11 October!



Dates for your diary!


Autumn will be a busy and exciting time for our church, beginning with welcoming Matt Osgood as our new Worship Pastor and his wife Eils as our Associate Vicar. We'll introduce them further in a future Edition. Our Weekly Update email will give full details of events and activities over the coming months, so if you don't yet receive this and would like to, then contact the [Church Office](#). We will also update our [church website](#) regularly, where you can find lots of information about how to be involved with us at HTR.

We look forward to welcoming you!



Welcome to HTR

Are you new to HTR? We'd love you to join us at any of our events. Why not come to our Harvest Service? Or how about joining us at any of our regular weekly Services on Sunday mornings and evenings, and on Wednesday mornings? Holy Trinity Richmond is an Anglican parish church, with strong links to the local community.

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Introducing Councillor Grocott

Helen was elected to Kingston Council in May 2022, and we asked her some questions to know what it involves.

What particularly attracted you to this role?

I belong to a Residents' Association where I live in Tolworth, which was particularly active in supporting vulnerable people in many ways during Covid. Although not all those involved in helping are Christians, I remember Matthew 25:40 - "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" - and the Second Great Commandment to love your neighbour as yourself. I felt this was an opportunity to represent my local community further. I asked God to guide the process for me and said that if He wanted me to be elected, I would serve.

What are some of the challenges you face?

Sometimes people aren't always polite and question my motives, because I'm also representing a political party. At these times, I remind myself that my motives are ultimately governed by a higher power!

What do you hope to be able to do through your involvement?



Be a light in the darkness and show God's love in action in local politics. If people ask, I do talk about my faith as being part of my motivation for doing the role.

How can we pray for you?

For protection; as I believe I'm doing God's work, I know the devil will try to sabotage this. For conversations and opportunities to talk about God, and for the Holy Spirit to guide my words.

Helen Grocott



I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge.

(Ephesians 3:17b-19a)

I've always loved these verses, so much so, that they were part of our wedding reading! I love how Paul, who wrote them, sounds like he is getting more and more worked up as he tries to

explain just how huge is the love Jesus has for each of us! There have been times when I've stood on a high cliff looking along the coastline left and right, down to the rolling sea, up to the beautiful, wide blue sky; and then tried to grasp just how vast is Jesus' love for me. It's an ongoing quest to know this love, and this is the same love He has for you.

Catherine Brown