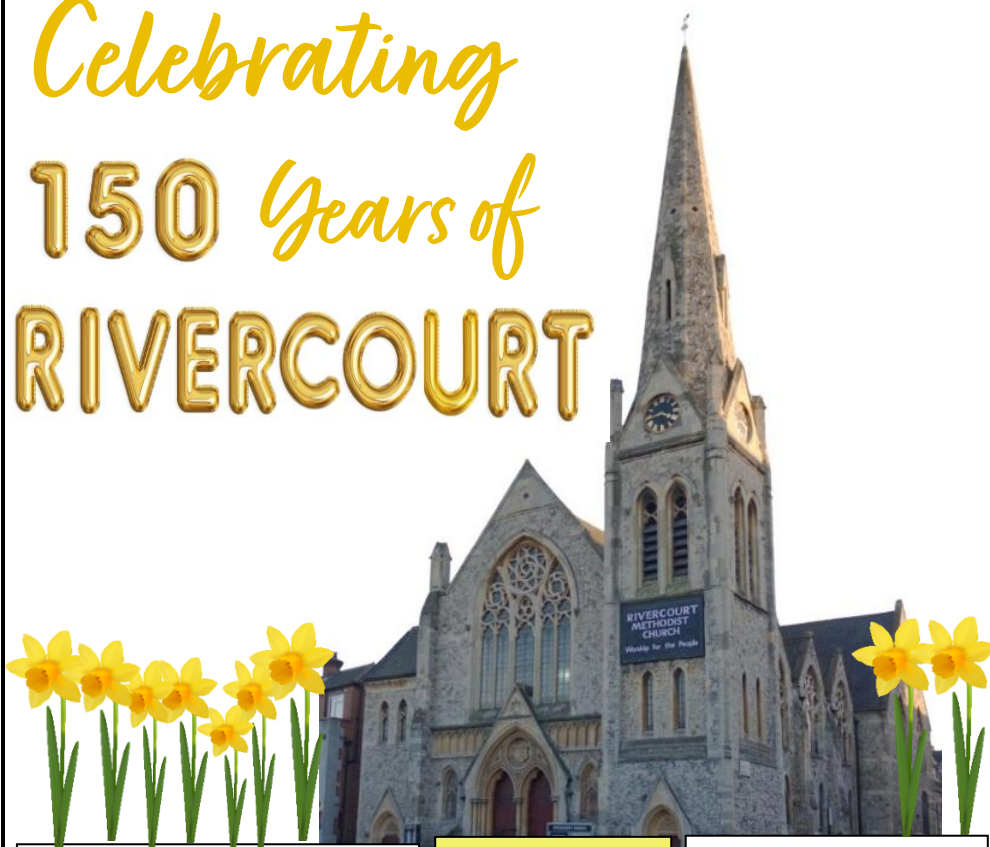


Rivercourt Church Newsletter

April 2025

Celebrating
150 Years of
RIVERCOURT



Rivercourt.ministry@outlook.com

Rivercourt.lettings@outlook.com

**King Street,
Hammersmith,
W6 9JT**

Office: 0208 741 1348

Mobile: 0746 9597186

RIVERCOURT METHODIST CHURCH



Easter services

13th April (Palm Sunday)

11am Worship Service

17th April (Maundy Thursday)

- 12:30pm lunchtime service
- 7:30pm Holy Communion Service

18th April (Good Friday)

- 9:30am Worship Service
- 4pm The Passion of Christ reanactment (Rivercourt/Tongan and Fijian Worship)

19th April (Holy Saturday)

- 12:00pm (noon) Outdoor Worship with BBQ
- 7:30pm Night Candle Light Vigil

20th April (Easter Sunday)

11am Holy Communion Service

Join Rivercourt this Easter!

Message from editor

Hello Rivercourt Family as we welcome in the month of April and look forward to Easter. As you would expect there is much happening in April at Rivercourt and we hope to see you at some of these events.

Kickstarting the Easter celebrations will be Palm Sunday which will be led by Feao Vunipola on 13th April. Thursday 17th April Maundy Thursday 12.30pm service with Mr Monty Grigg. At 7.30pm Maundy Thursday service with holy communion and foot washing with Reverend Singa. Good Friday 18th April kicks off with a service at 9.30am at Rivercourt with Shepherds Bush church joining us. In the afternoon a united good Friday service of worship at 4pm with Rivercourt Methodist church, the Tongan fellowship and Fijian fellowship celebrating and enacting the passion of Christ story at 4pm with a buffet dinner.

Holy Saturday 19th April - outdoor worship and mission with a BBQ starting at 12noon. Easter Saturday 7.30pm a candlelight vigil will take place at Rivercourt. Easter Sunday worship with holy communion at 11am with Reverend Singa with lunch afterwards. This service will also see Baby Joseph, Singa's newest grandson getting baptised the whole of Easter week 13th April to 19th April the church will be open from 9.30am for prayer. Open doors will be shut for 2 weeks over Easter to give everyone a break 24th April and 1st May.

We hope to see you over the Easter period, **Scott**

Congregation Questionnaire

1) What do you think makes Rivercourt special? Eg: Sunday services, community events?

2) What activities would you enjoy doing at Thursday Open Doors? Eg: Quizzes? Arts?

3) How can we make Rivercourt more inviting to the public/ new faces?

4) Would you be interested in collaborating with the Church users occasionally? Eg: inviting the Line Dancing/ Zumba group to give the congregation a class during Open Doors?

If so, is there any particular group/skill/class you would be interested in learning?

5) Do you feel spiritually satisfied at Rivercourt? Why/ why not?

As Community and Worship Administrator, it is my role to connect with the congregation and keep finding new ways to build and nurture Rivercourt. I have designed a questionnaire for church members to fill out, with the interest of collecting feedback and to further brainstorm new ideas for RMC outreach!

There is an insert of the questionnaire included in this newsletter and a digital copy attached in the newsletter email. Please fill it in and hand in to the office. (Please also find larger prints questionnaire at the back of the church).

All the best, Marina

C&W Administrator

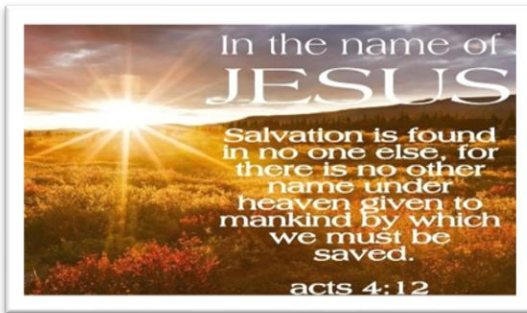
Join Rivercourt this Easter 2025:

***Easter Greetings to Friends & Family of
Rivercourt Methodist Church***

From Revd. Singa

Let's us Growing Deeper in Faith This Easter! [Acts 4:12]

Easter is here again.



We reveal to ourselves and others what is important to us by the way we celebrate. Is the season before Easter

mainly a hassle to get to the mall and a strain on our budget, as we purchase clothes, candy, cards, and groceries for a big dinner? Or is it several days or weeks of considering God's work in our lives through Jesus, along with special activities to help us think about Jesus' death and resurrection? Over the course of the Lenten and Easter season, we are remembering the lowest points of sin and the highest peaks of what God has done for us through Jesus. We have a way, the only way, to the Father through Jesus. That's worth celebrating!

And yet every year it's so easy for Easter to slip up on us, and suddenly we're saying, "Oh, my goodness, it's Palm Sunday already!" If that's the case for you, here are a few ways you can begin today to prepare your heart for Easter.

Easter is a treasured time when families come together in celebration to prepare and eat special dishes, share stories, and make memories together. For followers of Christ, it's especially meaningful when we remember the Cross and what Jesus accomplished on it for our eternal



Salvation. In celebrating Easter throughout the years, its meaning, and our understanding of it most likely have deepened from childhood to adulthood, where we may keep discovering it anew each year, possibly in surprising and unexpected ways we didn't foresee. For me, growing up in catholic church and a preacher's

daughter, Easter was always a busy time, full of activities for our family, with days and weeks of preparations for our church's commemoration and celebration, including Good Friday and Easter Sunday. As far back as I can remember, I knew Easter focused on the death and resurrection of Jesus. Yet even though I knew the story and the importance of accepting Jesus into my heart and receiving Salvation, understanding the depth keeps growing. Although I grew up singing and believing that "Jesus Loves Me," the realization that my sin was why His

death needed to occur took time to comprehend. Like me, many of us are not sure at times that our sin really motivated God to send Jesus, seeing it more as a universal problem, like in John 3:16 which states that God so loved the world.

In some ways, recognizing how sin affects everyone can cause us to have a personal disconnect, preventing us from truly grasping the responsibility our sin plays in Jesus' suffering and death. Even so, the truth is that our sin is exactly why Jesus died, to atone for it and set us free from a very real debt, one that, if left unpaid, brings eternal death and separation from God. As Romans 6:23 explains, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Acquiring insight and growing through our Easters helps us to realize in deeper ways why Jesus died to give us life, making Easter even more meaningful than ever before. As "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though they die'" (John 11:25)

A PRAYER

Dear Father,

Thank you for Your gift of Jesus, sent to save us from our sins and receive everlasting life in Him. Lead us this Easter to a deeper understanding and appreciation for His sacrifice and the blood He shed on our behalf. Help us to comprehend how He died in our place so that we might be reconciled to You and live eternally. Strengthen us to be courageous and bold to tell others how they can be saved, too. In Jesus' name, **Amen.**

Let's make a commitment to Growing Deeper our Faith in this Easter or if we have not accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, the time is now! No more delay. Let us

Prepare Our Heart for the Lord is Coming Soon. How do we do that?

1. Read the Easter story.

Don't wait until Easter Sunday to get reacquainted with the good news of Jesus Christ. Each of the four gospels tells the story a little differently. Here's where you can find the Easter story in each gospel:

Matthew 26–28 Mark 14–16 Luke 22–24 John 18–20

2. Listen to worship music.

Pull out all your CDs or tapes of Easter music. Have them handy to pop into your player.

3. Read books that will deepen your spiritual life and your understanding of what God has done. Ideas might include missionary biographies or *The Pleasures of God* (John Piper), in particular the chapter entitled "God's Pleasure in Bruising His Son". You could use *The Man Born to Be King* (Dorothy L. Sayers), a radio play, for an evening of reading aloud with friends.

4. Find a quiet place to reflect.

Set aside a special place for your family's devotional times or for yourself to meditate to consider how your own understanding of Easter has changed or grown over the years. Go through the years and see where

your heart seemed to grasp more of the truth of His death and resurrection.

5. **Attend your church's services during this season.** Prepare yourself and your children for the focus and mood of each service. If you feel like your understanding of Easter hasn't grown through the years, ask God to open your eyes and heart to comprehend more about His sacrifice on the cross and the significance of His resurrection. Set time aside to read through the events that led Christ to the cross and to His resurrection from the grave.
6. Look for ways to share the significance of Easter with your spouse, family, friends, co-workers, neighbours, and those you meet out in the community. Ask them to share the insights God has given them through the years.
7. **Pray the following prayers each day of Holy Week (here below)**
8. ***Holy week is a time to open your eyes to welcome Jesus in your heart. A time to let His light shine upon you, and to walk the road alongside Him from His suffering to His resurrection.***



Palm Sunday (13/04/2025)

Lord God, I give you thanks, for you are good, and your mercy is endless. Here I stand, at the start of this holy week, this week in which your church remembers Jesus' passion and death, and I am distracted by many things. Turn my eyes now to the one who comes in your name, the one who opens the gates of righteousness, the one who answers when we call. I bless you, Lord, for shining your light upon me, and for sending your son to us, in human frailty, to walk the road we walk. Open my eyes that I may see him coming, may praise him with a pure heart, may walk in the way of his suffering, and share also in his resurrection. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

Matthew 21:1–11 Psalm 118:1–2 Psalm 118:19–29

Monday 14/04/2025

Lord God, Six days before his death, your son sat with Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, and ate

dinner with his friends. Once again, your gospel tells us, Martha served, and Mary knelt at Jesus' feet to anoint them with costly perfume. The disciple who was about to betray him said that it was a waste. He didn't care about the poor, really—he just wanted to fill his own pockets and make Mary feel ashamed. Lord God, often we cannot discern what is best: When to pour out costly perfume for your sake, even if the world thinks it a waste. When to be busy serving, or when to rest at your son's feet and learn. Give us ears to hear you and eyes to see. For the sake of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

Matthew 21:10–17 John 12:1–8

Tuesday 15/04/2025

Lord God, the message of the cross is difficult to take. How can death give way to life? How can weakness be strength? Yet your word says that Jesus, being God, took on human flesh and suffered the worst kind of death. How can this be? This message is indeed difficult to take. But your foolishness is wiser than our wisdom. Your weakness is greater than our strength. Help us to know that none of us can boast before you. It is only in Christ Jesus that we can boast. In his name, we ask you to help our unbelief, that we may love you, and walk in the way Jesus taught us. Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

Matthew 26:36–46 Hebrews 5:7–9

Wednesday 16/04/2025

Lord God, We tremble to think that it was one of Jesus' own friends who betrayed him. One who sat by him, who broke bread with him. Give us strength, we pray, to walk faithfully with Jesus, even when the road we walk is rocky, even when the message of the cross seems like foolishness, and even when we feel betrayed. You, Lord, are always faithful. We stumble. We become lost. But you are steady and sure. Give us the grace to endure our troubles and reveal to us the glory of your kingdom. Through your son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

Matthew 26:27-56 1 Corinthians 1:18

Maundy Thursday 17/04/2025

Lord God, You sent your son into the world and before his hour had come he washed his disciples' feet. You had given all things into his hands. He had come from you and was going to you, and what did he do? He knelt down on the floor and washed his friends' feet. He was their teacher and their Lord, yet he washed their feet. Lord God, help us learn from his example. Help us to do as he has done for us. The world will know we are his disciples if we love one another. Strengthen our hands and our wills for love and for service. Keep before our eyes the image of your son, who, being God, became a servant for our

sake. All glory be to him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

John 13:1–17 John 13:34–35

Good Friday 18/04/2025

Lord God, Jesus cried out to you on the cross, “Why have you forsaken me?” You seemed so far from his cry and from his distress. Those who stood at the foot of the cross wondered where you were as they saw Jesus mocked and shamed and killed. Where were you then? Lord God, we, too, ask where you are when there is trouble and suffering and death and we cry out to you for help. Be near to us and save us so that we may praise you for your deliverance. Lord God, we wait on Friday for the resurrection of Sunday. Sometimes our lives seem a succession of Fridays and we cannot see what “Good” is. Teach us to call your name as Jesus did. Make us to trust in you like little children. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

John 18–19 Isaiah 52:13–15 Isaiah 53 Hebrews 10:16–25 Psalm 22

Holy Saturday 19/04/2025

Lord God, On the Sabbath, Jesus rested. He was in the grave. He had finished his work. To most people’s eyes it looked as if it were all over. He was dead and buried. But only as a seed dies when it is planted in

the earth. Not to decay, but to spring to new life.
Teach us to take refuge in you when we are afraid.
Teach us that death is not our end. Teach us to hope
always in you and in the resurrection, the making of
all things new.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

**Matthew 17:1–6 Lamentations 3:1–9 Lamentations
3:19–24**

Resurrection Sunday

Lord God, You loved this world so much that you gave
your one and only son that we might be called your
children too. Lord, help us to live in the gladness and
grace of Easter Sunday every day. Let us have hearts
of thankfulness for your sacrifice. Let us have eyes
that look upon your grace and rejoice in our salvation.
Help us to walk in that mighty grace and tell your
good news to the world. All for your glory do we pray,
Lord, Amen.

BIBLE VERSES FOR REFLECTION

**Matthew 28 Revelation 5:11–14 Psalm 118:1–2
Psalm 118:14–24**

Many persons love you, Many people
like you,

But there is only one who DIED for you...

That is Jesus Christ

Poet's Corner
A poem for Easter

Submitted by Margaret



**When Easter to the dark world came,
fair flowers glowed like scarlet flame:
at Eastertide, at Eastertide,
O glad was the world at Eastertide.**

**When Mary in her garden walked,
and with her risen Master talked:**

**When John and Peter in their gloom
met angels at the empty tomb:**

**When ten disciples met in fear,
then 'Peace' said Jesus, 'I am here.'**

**When Thomas' heart was hurt and grieved,
then Jesus' wounds his doubt relieved:**

**And friend to friend in wonder said:
'The Lord is risen from the dead!'**

**This Eastertide with joyful voice
we'll sing: 'The Lord is King! Rejoice!'
At Eastertide, at Eastertide,
O sing, all the world, for Eastertide.**

Fancy joining the Methodist Luncheon Club for a delicious three course lunch?

You are warmly welcome at **11:30am on Friday 11th April 2025** to a wholesome three course lunch with fresh, seasonal vegetables served by friendly waiting staff.



There will be an exciting talk by Emmanuel Church's Rev. Paul Tabraham on 'New Vision- a Church for the next 100 years'

Paul is the Methodist Minister of Emmanuel Church, a local Methodist-URC Local Ecumenical Partnership

Church located in Eastbourne Old Town. Emmanuel is Paul's first appointment. He was called ten years ago to the timely development of Emmanuel, which involved the amalgamation of four local churches, the building in spirit and in truth of the new church, and the community centre.

The London Methodist Lunch Club meets in the Lancaster Hall Hotel, 35 Craven Terrace, London, W2 3EL, on the second Friday each month from October-May. **RSVP - Peter +447928016681 by the Monday before the Friday for your £20 three course lunch.** Alcoholic beverages and soft drinks are on sale.



Thank You:

Thank you to Margaret for arranging the beautiful flowers that were given out on Mothering Sunday



Thank you to everyone who attends Open Doors on Thursdays for your ongoing support



Thank you to Steve and Vicky Lawrence for coordinating Sunday Suppers, which season comes to an end this month

Please Pray for:



Please keep Alake and Felix in your prayers



Please pray for the family of Mr Thomas as they mourn his recent passing. His funeral service will take place on Friday 9th May, 10.00am led by Revd. Singa Vunipola



Catherine Lorraine who continues her recovery now in rehab



The people of Myanmar and Bangkok after the devastating earthquake they recently suffered

Preaching Plan:

- **Sunday 6th April- 11am**

Revd. Faith Nyota- Steve's Team

- **Thursday 10th April- 12:30pm**

Revd. Singa Vunipola

- **Sunday 13th April (Palm Sunday)- 11am**

Mr Feao Vunipola- Juliana's Team

- **Thursday 17th April (Maundy Thursday) -
12:30pm**

Mr Monty Grigg

- **Thursday 17th April (Maundy Thursday)-
Holy Communion Service 7:30pm**

Revd. Singa Vunipola

- **Friday 18th April (Good Friday)- 9:30am
Service**

Revd. Singa Vunipola

- **Friday 18th April (Good Friday)- 4pm-**
Rivercourt/Tongan and Fijian Worship
celebration- enacting the Passion of Christ story
- **Saturday 19th- (Holy Saturday)- 12.00pm,**
noon Outdoor worship and Mission with BBQ-
- **Saturday 19th- (Holy Saturday)- 7:30pm**
Night Candle Light Vigil

- **Sunday 20th April (Easter Sunday)-11am-**
Holy Communion service followed by lunch-

Revd. Singa Vunipola- Betty's Team

- **Sunday 27th April- 11am**

Revd. Marilyn Neufville- Steve's Team

- **Sunday 4th May-11am**

Mr Lola Fatogun- Betty's Team

Dates for the Diary!

Saturday 3rd May- 10am House of Prayer

Monday 5th May- Commemorating WW2's 80th Anniversary. There will an outdoors commemoration with refreshments. All are welcome!

Don't Forget!

- **Collection Envelopes-** If you would like to use weekly collection envelopes, please let a Steward know so that they can pass your name to the Gift Aid Secretary.
- **Open Doors-** Every Thursday RMC will be open from 10:30am-2:30pm for fellowship, refreshments and warmth.
- If you are a Rivercourt member and you have difficulty getting to/from a Church activity you can book a taxi and claim the expenses. Please obtain a receipt.
- **Envelopes in the lounge** - If you wish to make a donation for a specific cause,

please put in an envelope – marked with who you wish to donate to and put in the collection- i.e. Ukraine appeal, Rivercourt sinking fund etc.

- If you want Rivercourt to keep in touch with you, please complete the **Keeping in Contact form** at the back of the Church and hand it in to one of us.
- **Would you like the flower display dedicated to you** for a birthday celebration, anniversary etc.? Your donation can cover the cost of the display on your special Sunday. There is a flower rota, calendar on the notice board in the Lounge. Please fill in your name, the date and donation and give to Betty.
- **Stewards**– Betty, Juliana & Scott. Steve Lawrence remains as a stewarding Team Leader. If you are interested in helping out on Sunday e.g. giving out books, serving hot drinks, please speak to a team leader

Sunday Collections – Giving Money to Rivercourt and Gift Aid

As we begin a New Year, I thought I would explain a little more about the Gift Aid scheme and how it helps to boost our funds at Rivercourt.

The Gift Aid scheme enables charities to collect more money from donations. In fact, charities can claim an extra 25% - that is 25p for every £1 donated - at no extra cost to the giver. **So a donation of £20 can be worth £25 to the charity,** . Rivercourt Church is a registered charity so is able to use the Gift Aid scheme.

How it works:- The Gift Aid scheme allows a charity to reclaim the income tax that people who give them money have paid as part of their wages. In this way the charity can increase its income from donations by up to 25% (the same level of basic rate income tax).

This may look as if charities can claim lots of extra cash. However, there are rules that must be followed.

The Rules:- There are two ways a charity can boost their donations.

1) Givers sign a Gift Aid declaration – this is a special form that says that all the money a person gives to the charity can be used to claim Gift Aid.

2) Givers give donations of CASH (only notes and coins) anonymously. The charity can claim Gift Aid on this.

That seems pretty straight forward, but there are some other rules.....

3) You can only sign a Gift Aid declaration if you pay income tax. You must pay enough tax to cover the amount the charity will claim from Gift Aid. For example: a person wants to give £450 over the year to charity. $£450 \times 25\% = £112.50$ They check their P60 and see that they pay at least £112.50 in tax. This means they pay enough tax to be part of the Gift Aid scheme. The charities they give to can claim an extra 25% from the scheme.

4) Donations of cash, e.g. the weekly collection at church, must be no more than £30, (£20 notes or less). Charities can claim the extra 25% on these donations from Gift Aid.

Anything else about the scheme at Rivercourt?

A record is kept of the money and cash that is given to Rivercourt. This is used by the Gift Aid secretary to make the annual Gift Aid claim from HMRC. It is very important that the amounts that individuals who have signed a Gift Aid declaration give are recorded separately. Therefore, the Gift Aid secretary knows the details of who gives what

to Rivercourt. This information is held in confidence and the Gift Aid secretary maintains the privacy of everyone. Cash donations are anonymous so the Gift Aid secretary just keeps a note of the totals.

Gift Aid and Envelopes.

Some people like to give their donations in weekly envelopes. The cash given in envelopes is counted with the loose cash in the collection, so it can all be included in Gift Aid. (Please remember, to try avoid using £50 notes!)

What difference does it make at Rivercourt?

This can all seem a bit complicated.... but in normal years Rivercourt is able to reclaim over £2 000 from Gift Aid. This extra money helps to pay for things like our heating bills. So you can see it really makes a difference. Thanks to all of you who give so generously and help to make Gift Aid work for Rivercourt. If you would like to know more about Gift Aid, or want to sign a Gift Aid form, please speak to Fiona, the Gift Aid secretary.

Thank you

PS Bank Charges.....

Our bank (HSBC) has started charging Rivercourt for handling cash. Like other banks these sorts of charges are starting to be made, even on charity

accounts. This means every time the collection is paid into the bank we will be charged a small fee for dealing with the cash. This may make people think about changing the way they give money to Rivercourt. However, it is important to understand that Gift Aid only works on donations of CASH, unless you are able to sign a Gift Aid declaration. We can claim much more money from Gift Aid than we will pay in bank fees, so please continue to make your donations to Rivercourt in CASH.

**Rivercourt is looking for someone to fill the role of Gift Aid Secretary.
Here's what it entails:**

- Maintain absolute discretion - dealing with private information.
- Understand and appreciate legal aspects of Gift Aid scheme - must keep up to date with periodic changes and advise Church Council, Church Stewards of their responsibilities, producing procedures to ensure both compliance, and safeguards against suspicion of wrongdoing.

- Maintain detailed, accurate records - familiarity with Microsoft Excel beneficial - and storage of essential items.
- Liaise with Gift Aid donors including annual returns of data on donations - highly confidential.
- Generate letters to prospective donors explaining scheme; manage donor lists and information - highly confidential.
- Produce collection envelopes for church members, managing envelope number allocation - highly confidential.
- Advertise/explain the scheme - e.g. items for Newsletter.
- Perform analysis of figures in order to compile and submit annual claim - computer literacy beneficial.
- Liaise with Church Treasurer/bookkeeper on Gift Aid claim and receipt of monies.
- Report to Church Council on Gift Aid - periodic written reports, verbal explanations, as appropriate.

Questionnaire- What does the Congregation want to see for Rivercourt's future?

1) What do you think makes Rivercourt special? Eg: Sunday services, community events?

2) What activities would you enjoy doing at Thursday Open Doors? Eg: Quizzes? Arts?

3) How can we make Rivercourt more inviting to the public/ new faces?

4) Would you be interested in collaborating with the Church users occasionally? Eg, inviting the Line Dancing/ Zumba group to give the congregation a class during Open Doors?

If so, is there any particular group/skill/class you would be interested in learning?

5) Do you feel spiritually satisfied at Rivercourt? Why/ why not?