



St Peter's Parish

e-newsletter

24th July 2020

www.stpeterrealing.org.uk

The Vicar's Letter I am...the bread of life (John 6.35)

Bread, the basic food of life. Evidence has been found of bread being a staple throughout human history, ever since crops have been grown and before. The earliest evidence suggests wild grain was harvested by nomadic peoples 14,000 years ago (Guardian 16.07.2018) to make bread probably offered in ritual.

In offering this staple the people offer of the core of themselves. They offer of the source of life. Other offerings have come and gone, animals, other humans, figures and amulets. Bread has stayed.

To say 'I am...' is a powerful statement. To describe yourself, to take on a label allows others to make several assumptions and conclusions about you. They need not always be right. To say 'I am a policeman' raises in people assumptions, good or bad. They may have an image of you upholding the law, walking the beat, defending the community. They may have an image closer to that we have had portrayed in the media through the BLM campaign. To say 'I am a doctor' may lead others to make decisions about medical training or the capacity to diagnose, when in fact you may be a Doctor of theology.

What assumptions then are made of someone who says, 'I am the bread of life'? Insanity perhaps. He clearly cannot be eaten. What does it mean to be bread of life? Jesus is the sustenance of existence. The hunger he speaks of in the next verse is that of the uncertainty of life, the forces that drive us for the unobtainable or unnecessary. With him comes all that is necessary for living. Jesus is using the staple of life to express how integral he can be to a fulfilled existence. Imagine what life would be without faith in God through Jesus Christ. Empty, drifting and purpose-less maybe. In some schools of Buddhism, as part of the wheel of life the idea of hungry ghosts is held. These are beings in the cycle of reincarnation that are driven by intense emotional needs, their existence is purposeless, driven solely by their desires that are not fulfilling in any way. It is an image recognised in most faiths.

'I am the bread of life' takes us to the Eucharist, that place where bread is placed into our hands. A small morsel, never enough to assuage our physical hunger. Yet it is here we receive Jesus and know Jesus. Here, the bread of life is broken not to be made incomplete but made to be shared so that all may be full. It is in the breaking that the bread brings healing and wholeness in God's presence. We do not believe the bread becomes Jesus' actual body, but it is in that same bread that we become the body of Christ. As we receive together, we witness to this bread of life, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. In him we are made whole, we are sustained in life for ever. In him we are given our purpose and meaning, we are complete and capable of anything in life. For he is the way, the truth and the light. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life". Allow him to feed you by receiving him into your life.

Fr David

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We are open ~ Can You Help?

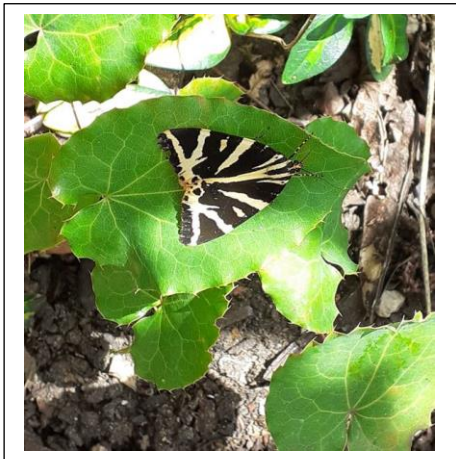
Opening St Peter's for private prayer requires a team of Church Sitters. Unattended the church would require a deep clean after each session. To have members of St Peters sitting in church is also a great ministry of welcome, receiving guests into our building. Volunteers are needed to help welcome and monitor the building. Whatever time you can offer will be greatly received. Please contact Fr Adam if you can help.



Testing, testing, testing!

We are being told testing and tracing is going to be vital for this next stage in our community's release from lock down. Faith Leaders have been asked to make sure their members know how to get tested if necessary. Firstly, it is necessary if you think you are coming down with the condition no matter how mild the symptoms may be. Advice on getting tested can be found on the Government website (www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested) or the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus>). Call 111 for further advice or check with your GP. This is important and could save lives.

Nature Notes



This is a Jersey Tiger Moth having a snooze in my garden. You can't see its underwings, which are a brilliant red.

These moths have only made it to England in the last few years and are gradually making their way northwards as the weather gets warmer. My daughter tells me that there is a thriving colony at Waterloo Station – presumably saving energy by taking the train!

Margaret Joachim

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Stewardship and Giving

“All things come from you, O Lord, and of your own do we give you” (1 Chronicles 29.14). Prayers at the preparation of the communion table.

These are words used by King David in prayer to God as the people of Israel were exhorted to make offerings for the foundation of the first Temple in Jerusalem. They are also words we would be familiar with from the Parish Mass.

As the offerings are prepared for the eucharist we use these words to remind ourselves that everything belongs to God, that we are simply trustees of the many gifts God showers upon us. In some ways we cannot give anything to God because everything belongs to God. David’s prayer also reminds us, again used in the Mass, “Yours, Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty” (1 Chron 29.11). It is in what we are prepared to give to God that we witness to that power and wonder and glory.

Stewardship covers all our lives. We are encouraged to be good stewards of all we have as a witness to God’s love for us. It is also in our giving to God that ultimately we give of ourselves. And so, we should give joyfully and generously knowing that we receive in the same way.

Bishop of London’s Lent Appeal – you may remember as our Lent Appeal this year we were supporting the **Bishop of London’s Lent Appeal, ‘Wheels for Climate Change’**. The object is to raise money for the Dioceses of Angola and Mozambique to provide vans that would be able to respond to crisis, initially caused by climate change, but now more than ever caused by coronavirus. We are now hoping to close the appeal and ask, if you have any monies you wish to donate could we have them by Sunday 26th July. These can be given either by cheque or BACs transfer referenced ‘Lent Appeal’. We have £263 already, can we double that? More info here: www.london.anglican.org/mission/lentappeal

Fr David

Now we are open for worship, because anything touched is a source of possible infection we are discouraging cash collections. The danger of doing this is loss of income. We are then encouraging the following methods of payment for your stewardship in our parish:

- BAC transfer
- Standing Order.
- Contactless payments using a card reader we have now purchased.

To make BAC and Standing Order payments please use these bank details:

Bank: HSBC

Account Name: Parochial Church Council of St Peters Ealing Parish

Account Number: 60377082 Sort Code: 40 11 58

Please do not leave this until tomorrow, tomorrow has a strange habit of never coming.

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Finding Your Way Round Your Bible: Letters 3

Last time we spent our time amongst the Corinthians looking at the some of the letters Paul wrote on his third missionary journey, described in Acts chapters 19 – 21. Putting this together with the letters to Galatia and Thessalonica we can start to notice the following hallmarks of Paul’s approach:

He cares deeply for the communities he has visited.

He knows the key people and difficulties they face.

His overriding concern is for the truth of the good news of Jesus “as I have received it” not to be twisted or diluted.

For this reason he offers encouragement and teaching coupled with frank criticism.

He often shares parts of his own story to emphasise a point or to remind the young churches of all he has suffered for the sake of the gospel they are compromising.

On a literary note* we can see the “template” of 1st Century correspondence as the structure of the letters follow a conventional pattern:

Letters begin with the name of the writer and then the name of the person they are writing too.

Next there is a greeting – often just a single word but Paul often adds the Hebrew word “shalom” – peace.

Third section is a thanksgiving for the good health of the recipient – Paul usually extends this into a thanksgiving to God.

Next is the main body “meat” of the message of the letter. Paul often divides this into two sections:

1. doctrinal teaching - usually prompted by questions or worries of the recipients.

2. general plea for Christian living – changed attitudes and behaviours.

Personal news and other greetings come next – Paul often includes news of other churches here.

Often in Paul’s letters this is followed by a plea or a blessing in his own handwriting (rather than that of the person he is dictating his letter to) this is to prove that it is an authentic communication.

Ancient letters then just ended with a simple farewell, but Paul almost always expands this into a full blessing and prayer for his readers.

*John Drane gives this structure in his book on Paul, Lion 1976 – old but good!)

It is well worth bearing this convention in mind when reading Paul’s letters. It is fascinating to see just how much he is able to say within its confines.

Last time I suggested that we would not be looking at bookshelves this time but on the mantelpiece, as we consider the “postcards” of some of Paul’s shorter letters to the churches. This is a misrepresentation, as each of Paul’s letters has generated and deserved many shelves of commentary; it is just that they are shorter!

For these church “postcards” then written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome, we are going to ask three main questions:

Who are they to?

What is their problem?

What is Paul’s solution?

Ephesians

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Who is the letter to? This is an interesting question as it is thought that this is a “circular” letter and was intended for distribution to a number of different churches. Some commentators have questioned whether this is indeed from Paul or rather a distillation by another hand of the main themes of Paul’s teaching.

The church at Ephesus (in modern south-western Turkey) shares some preoccupations with the church in Corinth. Instead of Corinthian Aphrodite they have Artemis/Diana of the Ephesians, a vibrant pagan cult to the goddess, running counter to the call of Christ-like living.

What is their problem? Perhaps not an individual problem but one affecting all the churches of the time (and ever after!) – disunity.

What is Paul’s solution? To truly live and understand what the gift of Christ is – freedom from all that holds us back and tears us apart.

Have a look at:

Chapter 2 verses 11 – 22: Unity in Christ.

Chapter 3 verses 14 – 20: Paul’s prayer for all to be “rooted and grounded” in Christ’s love.

Chapter 5 verses 6 – 20: Renounce pagan ways.

Chapter 6 verses 10 – 18: “The whole armour of Christ.”

Colossians

Who is the letter to? Colossae is inland and east of Ephesus. In prison in Rome Paul meets Epaphras, the man who founded the church there and who tells him of their struggles. The Colossians also had to contend with some of the inherent difficulties of living within an (attractive) pagan culture. (You might like to read the letter to Philemon which Paul wrote at the same time to shed more light on Colossae.)

What is their problem? In Colossae the different demands of Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians had led not to division but to a kind of religious “pick and mix” (Nick Page’s description). So there was an adoption of Jewish dietary laws alongside moon festivals and angel worship. The Colossians were deeply confused and were looking for guidance in the wrong places.

What is Paul’s solution? To root themselves in Christ and not to dabble in theorising and trying to know before they truly believe. The great distinction of Christianity is that it is based on a personal relationship.

Have a look at:

Chapter 1 verses 15 -20: The supremacy of Christ.

Chapter 2 verses 20 -23: Beware of false teachers.

Chapter 3 verses 1 – 4: Focus on Christ – “set your minds on things above.”

Chapter 4 verse 18: What a sign-off!

Philippians

Who is the letter to? Philippi is in northern Greece, east of Thessalonica. Paul founded this church himself and its people are very close to his heart. Hearing that Paul is in prison in Rome they have sent him a gift, and this is his thank you letter. Some believe this is the last letter Paul ever wrote.

What is their problem? From the evidence of Paul’s letters this church seems the least troubled by division or dilution, but there is a danger that they become complacent.

What is Paul’s solution? Keep running – the race is not over yet!

Have a look at:

Chapter 1 verses 3 – 10: Paul’s favourite children.

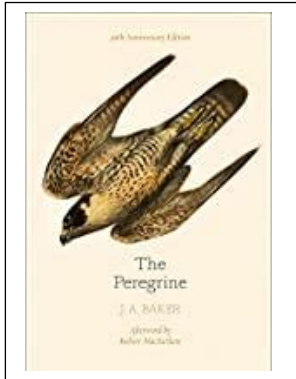
Chapter 2 verses 1 -11: The mind of Christ – “at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow” (verse 10).

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Chapter 3 verse 12 – 4 verse 1: Running the race and receiving the crown.
Chapter 4 verses 4 – 9: The very best advice of all.

I am hoping to be away for the next couple of weeks and so you will get a little break from Paul. He will be back with a vengeance – as it were! – in August, when we shall dart around his letters to look at his much-contested attitude to women.

Susan Peatfield



Book Review

The Peregrine by J A Baker published by William Collins 1967, 50th anniversary edition 2017

J.A. (John Alec) Baker (1926-1986) has proved to be a controversial character. Set on the flat marshes of Essex J.A. Baker spent long winters looking for and writing about the visitors from the uplands – peregrines that spend the winter hunting the huge flocks of pigeons and waders that share the desolate landscape with them.

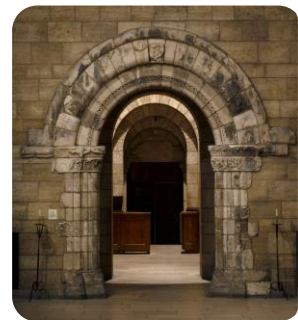
Baker is now acknowledged generally as one of the most important British writers on nature in the twentieth century. When published in 1967 this book revolutionised nature writing, changing it for ever; intimately associated with the resurgence of literature on nature and landscape, influencing the so-called New Nature Writing of authors like Tim Dee and Robert Macfarlane.

This a book not without controversy. There are those who challenge the accuracy of Baker's observations, even the plausibility of his descriptions. Yet his grasp of English and the poetry of his prose takes the reader on a journey of discovery in which Baker shares his love, his passion for this bird and all that is associated with it. Baker paints a vivid picture in literary water colour that leaves the reader enthused to go out and discover this landscape of nature for themselves. It is also a book that can dipped into. Presented as a diary each small section is self-contained and can be reflectively read, returned to and skipped as the reader wishes. I really enjoy reading this book and am so pleased it is more readily available.

Fr David

Contemplative Prayer – some reflections.

In the Catechism of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America prayer is described as 'responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words.' In St Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians he exhorts the faithful to 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing' (1Thess 5.16&17). In the Middle Ages, monastics thought they should pray 24 hours a day 7 days a week. It soon became evident such a task was quite impossible. To pray without ceasing seems a joyless task, at least for most of us, so how can Paul exhort us to always rejoice in God?



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When first I became a Christian I realised prayer was important. I was sad because praying for longer than 10 minutes bored the pants off me. How could I be a good Christian if I could not pray? It has taken me a long time to realise what Paul is telling us. Prayer without ceasing is not being on our knees all day long. It begins with rejoicing in God's love. We begin to pray by celebrating God, praising God, rejoicing in God in what ever way we can. By seeing the world through positive eyes, seeking creativity in creation, by celebrating the blessings we receive, however small, is how we begin to pray without ceasing.

Fr David



Thank you for continuing to support ealing foodbank with food donations. During COViD19, we have made 1000 deliveries to families in need. Thank you for your help to make this possible! Please find our July shopping list below:

Savoury biscuits/crackers; Tinned fruit & vegetables; Peanut butter; Ketchup & mayo; Baked beans; Cooking oil – 250ml or 500ml or 1litre; Feminine hygiene – towels are more popular than tampons; Shower gel/hand wash/bars of soap; Shaving foam & razors; Nappies - sizes 2 and 6

We have got plenty of:

Pasta; Meat; Fish; Uht milk

This foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, facilitated by Ealing Foodbank. Registered charity number 1156369 | Registered in England and Wales

A quick note about Zoom and Sunday Mass

We got the message that many of you valued watching Parish Mass, but the sound was rubbish...to varying degrees. Just to let you know we have a sound engineer on it and hope to have the sound improved by next Sunday. We have our quotation and a generous offer to pay for it. We have also decided on an interim measure as the best option will take a while to sort. The interim measure costs £600. Might you be able to offer to help with this. Donations will be warmly welcome.

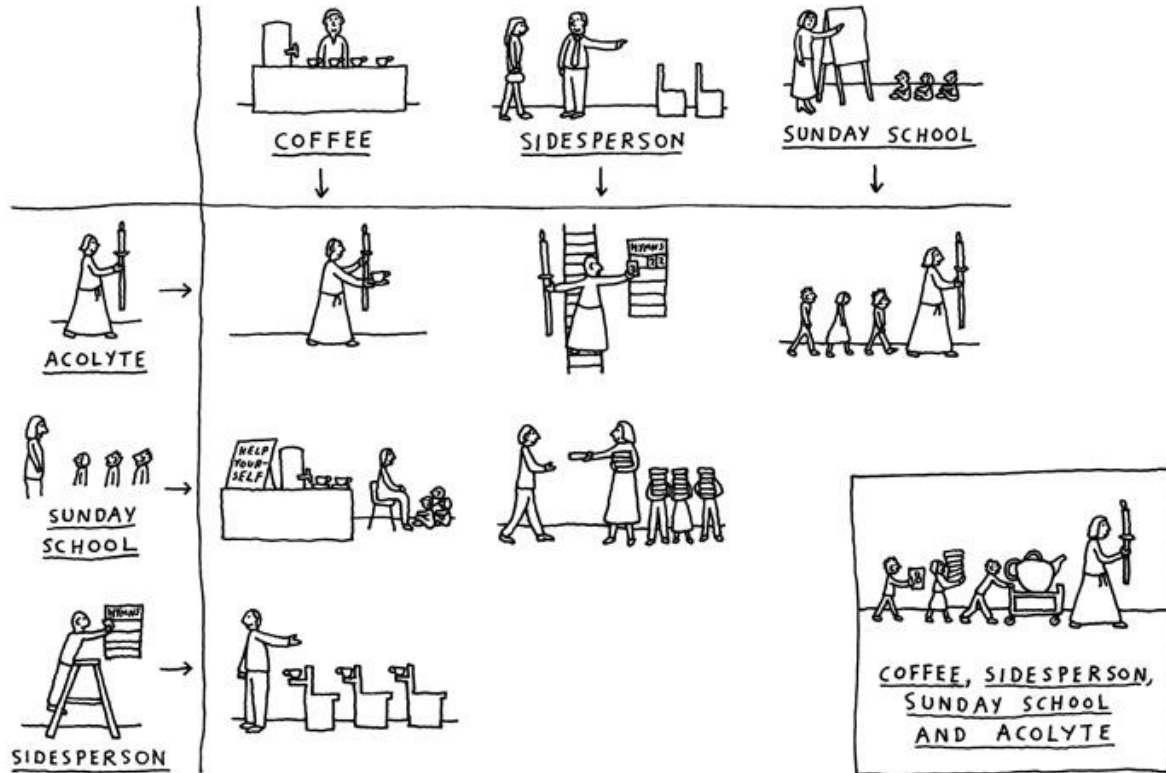
Please remember, for August, we are using a recurring Zoom booking. This means you use the same credentials each week. Please keep your Zoom invitation safe. You will need it to join us in worship. Fr D

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Dave Walker Cartoon

ROTAS

HOW TO COPE IF YOU ARE ALLOCATED MORE THAN ONE DUTY



CartoonChurch.com

Prayer requests:

Please pray for:

Suzi; Cicely Pratt; Elaine Dunkley; Keith Win; John Pullan.

Madeleine Anthony; baby Peter Spagnolo; Marlene Sladen; Cornelia Harding; Frederick Harding.

Recently deceased: Mercena Campbell

Parish Family: Linda Foster; Huw & Jenny Foxall; Sophie Foxhall;

Roseanna & Richard Fullerton; Stan, Jane & Tyler Gee.

(If you would like names added to this list please send them to Fr David)



Keep us, good Lord,
 under the shadow of your mercy.
 Sustain and support the anxious,
 be with those who care for the sick,
 and lift up all who are brought low;
 that we may find comfort
 knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
 in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

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Worship this week:

Sunday 26th July – Trinity 7

10.00 a.m. Parish Mass

(Church & Zoom)

5.30 p.m. Evening Prayer (via Zoom)

Monday – Friday

9 a.m. Morning Prayer (Church)

Monday-Tuesday, Thursday – Friday

5 p.m. Evening Prayer (Church)

Wednesday

5 p.m. Contemplative Prayer (Zoom)

Tuesday & Thursday

9.30 p.m. Compline (via Zoom)

Sunday 2nd August – Trinity 8

10.00 a.m. Parish Mass (Church & Zoom)

There will be no midweek worship during August.

Please remember the Zoom credentials for Sunday Mass are the same each week and therefore will not be sent out.

You can download Zoom onto your device, or you can call in by phone, dialling the number given in the email.



Contact Details:

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Susan Peatfield	sjpeatfield@aol.com	020 8997 8376

Contributions.

A big thank you to those who have already contributed pieces to this newsletter. It is so great (and makes my life easier) to have contributions from our readers. It would be great to have more. Material to me at the email below by Wednesday would be great.

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