

# St Peter's Parish Chest Harvest 2015

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A bulletin of all that is accomplished by and within our church's community

Suggested contribution 50p

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## Letter from the Vicar



### Reflections

I wonder what you think the church is for today. Most of us will admit it's not the same as the church of our childhood or when we first started attending church. We worry about numbers, we have always worried about finances and we struggled to keep up with maintenance. When I was younger it was accepted that the parish church was there for the community. It provided valuable services at important times in our lives. The birth of children, the union of two people, at the end of life and we at least attended church on seasonal occasions such as Midnight Mass and Easter

Of recent years the community's engagement with church or indeed the church's engagement with the community has changed. Though often interpreted as the death of the church; I'd like to suggest it's not the death of the church but a disjointed communication between church and the wider community. The church has continued to tell its story, one it has told for 2000 years. It's just that as the world has changed rapidly since World War II and the church has forgotten how to talk to the community. Throughout the Western world church is having to think again: what is it therefore, what is its message, how best to communicate it?

St Peter's is no different from any other church in this respect. Every so often we need to think about our reason for being. For St Peter's this year began with reflections on our stewardship in giving, continued with reflections on our leadership's strengths and weaknesses. Now we are reflecting on our life, ourselves, and our gospel. Over the first three Sundays in September leading to **our parish study day on 26 September** we will think about these questions both for ourselves as individuals and for our worshipping community.

I know some will find this uncomfortable, some will not see the point but I am sure most will engage and

use the time to reflect on the place of our church in our parish at this time. This will be a great time of exploring, and new beginnings.

When this phase of reflection is complete we will have looked at major areas of our parish life, we will have allowed as many as are able to voice their opinions and engage with our reflections and we will have material which can be used by the PCC to set our Mission Action Plan for the next few years. It will help us to think about growth, development and expansion; about creative ministry and how we can be the people of God in this place in a more meaningful and engaging way. This process will not be a panacea, it will not solve all our problems, it will not have all the answers; it will help us to see in what direction God wants us to go, how God might want St Peter's to proclaim His good news for the people of our parish.

Most importantly the task rests with each of us to hold this process in prayer. To ask God's blessing upon our reflections, to ask for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to discern God's vision for this parish in our discussions and to pray that God will keep our hearts, our eyes and our ears open to hear each other and to hear God; because if our discussions and reflections must be God centred.

The people of our parish want to hear the good news of Jesus. The question today is how do we help them? And what inspires us and helps us to grow in faith and love of God? What do we need from my church too? Not only what can we offer but what can receive?

Come and share in these reflections, so that together we can work to share the good news of Jesus.

**Fr David**

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You will notice from the heading of this issue of *The Parish Chest* that we shall no longer be publishing a monthly version of "all that is accomplished by and within our church's community" but from this autumn will be going quarterly.

Look out for the next edition this Advent (all copy for this to [sipeatfield@aol.com](mailto:sipeatfield@aol.com) by **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November**).

We are still (keenly!) seeking a new editor and more people to write and submit articles to make this a true reflection of all the good things happening at St Peter's. Please speak to Fr David or Susan Peatfield if you feel the call to take *The Parish Chest* forward.

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## Summer Days

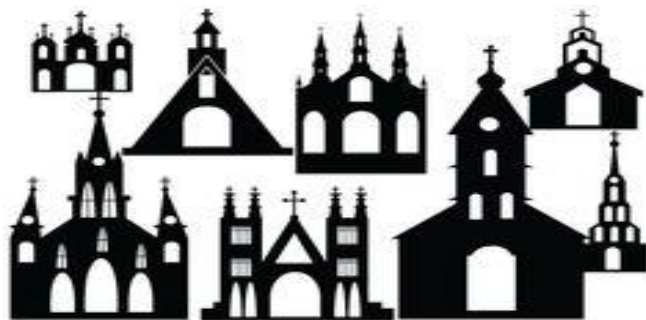


**Junior Church Picnic**

### Alex Pridgeon writes:

The Junior Church had an excellent picnic on the last Sunday of term, and were very pleased to be joined by so many members of Pebbles too! We had a great turn out and the weather was perfect. Thanks to all those who organised the many games - we had running races, an egg and spoon race, a treasure hunt etc followed by more relaxed hula hooping and football, and obviously, a delicious bring and share picnic. Junior Church and Pebbles are now on a summer break until **6th September** and we welcome new members!

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## Renewing our facilities

### Alex Pridgeon writes:

Led by the Buildings and Grounds Committee, work is underway to identify options for refurbishing our hall and to maintain and enhance the grounds and the interior of the church building. Focussing on securing external funding, the aim is to ensure that St Peter's improves its ability to attract new members (especially young families), provides a more appealing proposition to community users, and increases its income generation potential to secure its long-term future.

This is your chance to feed into the process! We would love to hear your views on how you think St Peter's facilities could be improved, and to discuss with you plans so far. We would also like to hear from anyone interested in supporting the project in other ways. Please speak to the Vicar or Alexander Pridgeon after the service, or email [alexpridgeon@stpeterrealg.org.uk](mailto:alexpridgeon@stpeterrealg.org.uk)

## Making a difference...

### Alison Germany writes:

#### **News from the St Peter's Amnesty International Letter-writing Group Letters from St Peter's making a difference!**

Our hands ache from the unfamiliar activity of writing letters by hand. We write mainly in silence, occasionally asking for help with a word or phrase, or sharing something about the person we are writing for. Addressing the envelopes also takes time, because the officials often have long names and titles as well as complicated addresses. After the meetings stamps are purchased, and the letters go off to Governments around the world and to their Embassies in London.

We also pray for the prisoners, their families, those who imprison them and those who work for their release.

But does all this activity at St Peter's Ealing make the slightest difference?

Over the last six months the St Peter's Group have written letters regarding:

**Alfreda Disbarro:** a torture survivor detained in the Philippines. The latest Amnesty Magazine reports that 'hundreds of letters of solidarity have been pouring in...the prison guards have complained of doing nothing but scanning her letters. Alfreda's family send their love and gratitude to all supporters and say it has given them strength and courage'

**Claudia Medina:** Claudia suffered torture at the hands of Mexican Marines in 2012 and was forced to confess to drug-related crimes. Amnesty now report that the last remaining charge against her has been dropped, as the only evidence against Claudia was found to be a lie. Claudia was seen to 'cry out of joy and relief' when she was finally vindicated.

For many more good news stories please go to [www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/Good-news](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/Good-news)

**Shaker Aamer** is a British resident who has been detained in the US Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Cuba for the last 13 years. He has a wife and four children in London, the youngest of whom he has never seen.

Both the UK Government and Amnesty International have been pressing the US to either charge Shaker or return him to the UK.

At our June meeting we wrote letters to President Obama and to the American Embassy in London.

Then to our great surprise and amazement, in July we received a letter from the Political Officer at the American Embassy, responding to our concerns about Shaker Aamer. The letter points to President Obama's commitment to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay as reaffirmed by him in his latest State of the Union address to Congress. We are also assured that: 'We are continuing the work to close Guantanamo Bay and resolve Mr Aamer's case through collaboration with her Majesty's Government' We copied the letter from the Embassy to Amnesty International, who will forward it to Shaker's lawyers to help progress his case.

If you would like to see the letter please ask Alison G. Or for further information about Shaker Aamer's situation, please see [www.amnesty.org.uk/shaker](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/shaker) .

**If any of the above sounds good to you, please consider coming to join our next letter-writing session: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 8.00pm (after 7.30 Mass) in the Vicarage.**



## Best Feet Forward!

### Details of the St Peter's Walking Group



Resting on a recent walk via Syon.

Linda Foster writes:

#### Thursday, 17 September HAREFIELD CIRCULAR - 6 MILES/ 3.0 HOURS

9:00 am start from Church car park

Leader: Richard Morse

A thirty minute drive to Harefield, with parking in the car park next to the Coy Carp pub. A lovely walk through chalk farmland and along the Grand Union Canal near Rickmansworth. Some stiles and gentle hills. Coffee break at the Aquadrome Café. Optional lunch stop at the end of the walk in the Coy Carp pub overlooking the canal, or bring a picnic. Back in Ealing by 3:00 pm. Booking in advance essential since we will arrange car sharing - **please inform Linda via email by September 10 if you are coming, and if you require a lift or are prepared to offer lifts to those without cars.**

#### Saturday, October 17 RICHMOND PARK CIRCULAR - 2 to 3 HOURS/5 MILES

10:00 am start

Leader: Linda

Meet outside Richmond station at 10:00 am or, if travelling by car, at Pembroke Lodge car park (outside main entrance to House) at 10:35 am. A circular walk of approximately 2 hours, with an optional refreshment stop at Pembroke Lodge at the end. We will explore a new route around the Park and enjoy the autumn colours.

#### November – date/time to be confirmed WALK TBD

TBD start

Leader: Margaret Joachim

#### Sunday, December 20 OSTERLEY PARK TO HANWELL - 2 to 3 HOURS/3 to 5 MILES

13:30 am start

Leader: Linda

Meet at Osterley Park tube station for a walk via Osterley Park House and the canal to Hanwell. Return to Ealing either by walking (an additional hour) or by bus along the Uxbridge Road.

Saturday, 16 January

LONDON

#### CHURCHES – 3 HOURS/3 MILES

10:00 am start

Leader: ?

Meet at Ealing Broadway Station; then tube into central London. We will explore some of the fascinating old churches in the City, walking between them. Optional pub/café lunch in the City. Return to Ealing by tube.

Sunday, February 7

BURNHAM

#### BEECHES CIRCULAR

Noon start from Church car park

Leader: David Neno

Depart Church car park at 12 noon. 12.30pm lunch at The Blackwood Arms, Common Lane, Littleworth Common, Burnham Beeches, South Bucks. SL1 8PP (<http://www.theblackwoodarms.net>). Walk will start at 2:00 pm from the pub to and around Burnham Beeches. Returning to Ealing by 5:00 pm. Booking in advance essential since we must book the pub lunch and arrange car sharing - **please inform Linda via email by January 31 if you are coming, and if you require lunch and a lift or are able to offer lifts to those without cars.**

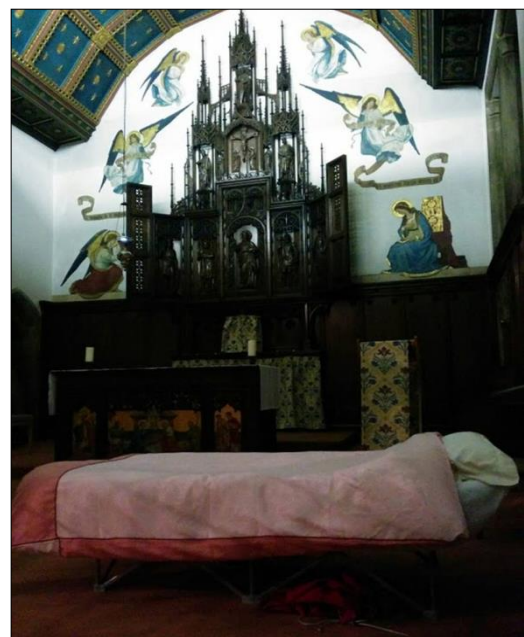
#### Winter is coming....

#### Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter

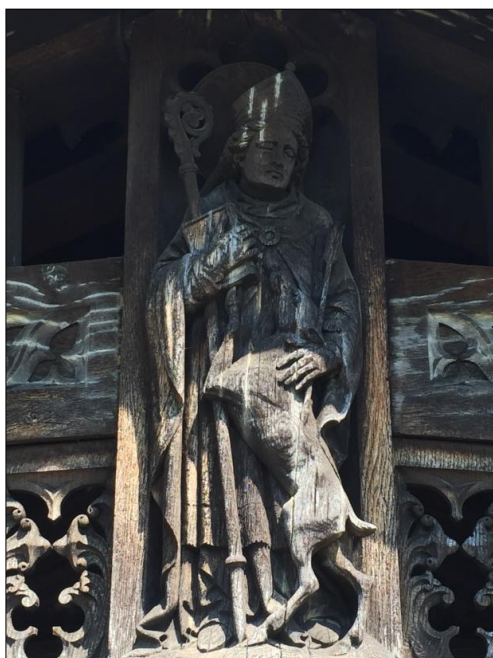
Elizabeth Newton writes:

St Peter's will be taking part in the Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter (ECWNS) scheme again this year and running the night shelter on the four Thursday nights before Christmas. Jane Bradshaw and Elizabeth Newton are continuing as the venue co-ordinators, assisted by Doreen McGovern who will be organising the food this year.

Nearer the time we will be putting together a rota of volunteers for a variety of roles both working with guests and behind the scenes. If you would like to be involved, please speak to Elizabeth or send her a message via the office. Last year many members of St Peter's took part and found it to be a most rewarding and enjoyable experience.



## Monthly Martyrs (who are not always martyrs...): St Giles



Statue on the parish church of Chalfont St Giles.

### John Peatfield writes:

St Giles, the patron saint of beggars, cancer patients and those who are afraid of the night among other things, has his feast day on the 1st of September. He is said to be an Athenian nobleman (he was fabled to be the son of King Theodore and Queen Pelagia of Athens) born in 650AD, and because he was so admired and lauded for his piety and knowledge at home, he moved to the wilds of France to live a quieter life.

In France he lived in complete solitude and was said to converse only with the Almighty, however he did befriend a red deer who sustained him on her milk. Giles lonely paradise would not last long though, as the hunters of King Wamba (an anachronistic Visigoth - whatever that means) whilst chasing the saint's friendly doe, accidentally shot St Giles with an arrow, wounding him and so making him the patron saint of cripples. The King upon hearing of the humility and holy solitude of the saint, held him in very high esteem and decided to build him a Benedictine monastery. Giles collected some disciples and lived happily, dying in the 8th century, with the highest repute for sanctity and miracles.

There is also a legend that when St Giles was holding a mass to atone for the sins of Emperor Charlemagne, an angel came down and placed a letter on the altar which contained a sin so grievous that Charlemagne had not confessed it. We are not told what this sin was, as they weren't quite as into Royal juicy gossip as we are nowadays, but suffice to say the legend is probably more of a myth as St Giles died 40 years before Charlemagne was born.

*Thank you, John. An article on visiting John Milton's Cottage in Chalfont St Giles will appear in our Advent issue.*

## Year's Mind: September to November

- 2 September Michael Cowdrey (1959)  
Nora Ensor (1975)
- 8 September Gordon Bryant (2001)
- 14 September Mavis Emery (1967)
  
- 15 September Lina Rogers (1963)  
Rita Tyrie (1965)
- 16 September Edmund Dufty (1968)
- 17 September David Bowland (1975)
- 18 September Ken Daley (2009)
- 20 September Patricia Matthews (2006)
- 27 September Edith Smith (1968)
- 28 September Naziha Khouzam (2006)  
Margaret Williams (2010)
  
- 3 October Terence Simpson (1978)
- 6 October Stan Strangeway (2006)
- 12 October Roger Robinson (2003)
- 17 October Maudy Austen (2003)
- 19 October Winifred Wilson (1967)
- 22 October Betty Bland (1992)  
Patricia Rosemary Palmer (2014)
- 24 October Caroline Small (1958)
  
- 2 November Julian Malpas (1958)
- 6 November Winifred Ruston (1958)
- 13 November John Cowdrey (1975)
- 15 November John Kippen (1993)
- 16 November Elizabeth Taylor (1960)  
Arthur Hodgson (1962)
- 17 November John Burton (2004)
- 18 November Dorothy Simpson (1986)  
Peggy Gibbs (2001)
- 22 November Joan Sadd (2007)
- 23 November Blanche Francis (1986)
- 24 November John Sheldon (1996)
- 26 November Sybil Pollard (1973)
- 27 November Molly Shephard (2006)  
Bryan Blake (2014)
- 30 November Charles Staden (1960)  
Ada Bryant (1964)  
Peggy Craft (2008)

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## *St Peter's Harvest Fayre!!*



**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 10am – 2pm**

By now we are just counting down to the big day. Please take a poster to display and some leaflets to distribute, beautifully designed by Alex Pridgeon – thank you!

We really want to make this a successful and enjoyable day for the whole parish community, so please do all you can to support this event.

Proceeds will go towards hosting the Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter this December.