

St Peter's Parish Chest January 2015

Parish Office: 020 8997 3655

e-mail: admin@stpeterealing.org.uk www.stpeterealing.org.uk

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

Suggested Contribution 30p

Letter from the Vicar



Normally I am pretty ambivalent towards New Year's resolutions; mainly because I am one of those who forgets about resolutions almost as soon as they are made. I have made many in the past but few have been kept, which I suppose one might argue is pretty poor show, but then maybe I wasn't committed to the resolutions that failed in the first place. Which is probably more to the point. For a resolution to 'work' we have to be committed to it, we have to really want to complete the resolution.

A friend of ours, a few years ago, made a resolution to see at least one live comedy show a month for twelve months. This may initially seem a little frivolous but it was a serious attempt to improve work life balance for her and her husband. Because she was committed to it she fulfilled her resolution and in the process set up a new pattern of living for herself and her husband. Her New Year's resolution worked.

Whether a resolution works or not is about our commitment to it. Our great friend and patron St Peter seemed to have suffered a bit with this issue. One minute he is declaring his undying support for Jesus, the next he is skulking in the shadows of a courtyard denying he knows Jesus when Jesus is facing his darkest hour. We might want to discuss if this is a resolution issue but Peter did declare his undying support for Jesus. He told Jesus off for even suggesting he would be going to Jerusalem to die. Yet when the crunch came Peter was nowhere to be seen. Admittedly Peter didn't understand the whole story and when he did, when the Holy Spirit blessed him his attitude changed. He understood the nature and purpose of Jesus' ministry. He understood the nature and power of the good news of Jesus and took his part in leading and teaching the early church; which eventually lead to Peter's own martyrdom. Yet even the key apostle can fail to succeed.

Will you be making any New Year's resolutions this year? There is one I would like to ask you to consider. In February we will be launching a stewardship campaign. We are doing this for two reasons. Firstly our accounts are in a pretty poor state. I could throw figures at you that would

probably make your hair curl at least a little. The saddest thing about them is that being the parish we are this should not be the case. We may not be a flush parish but we should at least be paying our way, and we are not. The second, and to my mind most important reason is that stewardship should be seen as part of our Christian ministry, our personal ministry. Giving to the work of God should be something we do with generosity and with joy. We don't charge membership because membership is for everyone but it is important those who consider themselves to be members support the work of the church adequately, even generously.

So your New Year's resolution, if I may be so bold as to suggest, could be to support the work of St Peter's well; to respond positively to the stewardship programme in February and to give as generously as you can to the life and work of this church community. Remember this isn't someone else's problem or issue. This is our church and our church needs you.

Fr David

Speaking of which...



The south side of St Peter's shining in the winter sun

Here is our beautiful church free from scaffolding and revealed in all its new stonework glory! It has been a labour of love, dedication and skill for all involved. It is wonderful now to walk up Mount Park Road and see the real difference the extensive and costly works have achieved. As with all older buildings the work of maintenance and repair is never done, but now is a good time to thank all involved with this phase of keeping us looking forward and in good shape for 2015 and beyond.

Overheard at the carol service...

"I love this place. It is so beautiful – it is so good just knowing it is here."

Welcome home!



From Sherborne with love!

Visitors to the carol service are not the only ones who feel the draw of returning to both the building and the family of St Peter's.

In November we had the pleasure of seeing Hugh and Jo with us again, while in December Julie, Mariko and Tashi paid us a "flying visit" (literally as they were en route back to Singapore via Germany).



From Singapore ditto!

Christmas 2014

This Christmas at St Peter's our new look Christmas card was delivered to as many homes in the parish as possible. (Renewed thanks to Alex for organising this and all "post people".) In terms of the numbers of new faces (and regular returners) it seems that it acted as a timely prompt for many parishioners. It was certainly lovely to see so many at our carol service on **Sunday 21st December** and at the other special services over the Christmas period. Throughout the festive season we have been blessed by wonderful words and music, flowers and hospitality as the Christ Child has been welcomed again to take His place at the heart of all we are and all we do. This was especially powerful as Junior Church led our Christingle this year.

Thanks as ever to Fr David, Margaret, Harold, Mark, our Director of Music, and the choir, the serving team, Lesley, our administrator, Jane and the flower arranging team, Junior Church leaders and children, Val, our sacristan and provider of mulled wine, minced pies and good cheer, and to Allison and Angus, and everyone on a rota, for keeping all flowing smoothly and happily this Christmas.



Joyful anticipation – beautifully repainted figures. (With many thanks to the painter!)



"Sing choirs of angels..."



Christingling...



Getting ready to "shine as a light in the world"

Night Shelter



Our Advent this year was marked by our joining the host churches of the Ealing Winter Night Shelter. In the article below organisers Elizabeth and Jane, along with some of the volunteers, share their experiences of this very valuable work.

Elizabeth and Jane write:

This year St Peter's joined with 20 other Ealing churches to be part of Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter. The shelter is open during the winter months and provides emergency accommodation for up to 14 guests who would otherwise be sleeping on the streets. On each night of the week, a different church opens its doors to guests, providing a hot meal, somewhere to sleep, breakfast and above all else, companionship and friendship. Whilst the guests are at the shelter, usually for about 4 weeks, ECWNS works with St Mungo's Broadway to help them to find more permanent housing and move forward in their lives.

We ran the shelter once a week for the four weeks up to Christmas. Over the four nights, 16 different guests enjoyed the St Peter's hospitality. In all 43 volunteers made it happen - 32 of us from St Peter's assisted by 11 from other churches.

Three volunteers share their experience of 'a night in the life of St Peter's night shelter':

The Evening Shift

I arrived feeling slightly nervous about what the evening had in store for us! Volunteering for the Night Shelter was all very well, but doing the first shift of the first night in our Church was bound to be full of surprises, and probable logistical complications. Thanks to the organisational genius of Jane and Elizabeth and all those at Night Shelter HQ, that wasn't the case. I think the biggest 'problem' we had was deciding how to form the tables for dinner in the north transept, and making sure that our guests didn't accidentally attend the Tai Chi class in the hall, as they would have missed out on the delicious dinner on offer!

The guests arrived and were shown to their beds, and they seemed pretty pleased to be sleeping in the actual Church, and we had various comments about how special that felt, which was lovely. While half the volunteers were slaving away in the hot kitchen preparing dinner, the other half were welcoming, chatting and providing hot drinks to our visitors. When the food was brought into the Church we all took our places and dinner was served. Sitting and chatting with the guests was very interesting and enlightening. Hearing about their backgrounds, their families, their lives, their plans, their hopes, as well as their journey to homelessness was very humbling. After dinner we tidied up and played some games with the guests over a hot drink. Then we handed over to the night shift.... A/ex



A table spread in welcome...

Night Watch

Clutching my sleeping bag and pillow I made my way carefully under the scaffolding and knocked on the church office door. Once inside I joined the other three on the night shift team, and we decided which pair would do the first stint and which the second. Then we went out to say 'Hi' to the guests, some of whom were already on their way to bed; six in the Lady Chapel and the others at the back of the church. One guy, who had to be up before 5am to get to his job, was already asleep. One or two guests had a final cigarette, and then it was 'lights out'. All seemed quiet, until the peace was interrupted by thunderous snores! We helped move two people further away from the noise; a more sensible solution would have been to move the snorer away from everyone else, but he was already dead to the world. Everyone settled down again. The two of us sat in the office, chatting a bit and then reading quietly, occasionally distracted by stertorous rumblings. At about half-past one it was time for cups of tea and excellent chocolate brownies (left for us by the evening team); soon it was a quarter to three and the other pair emerged from the choir vestry to take over - nothing except snoring to report.

I climbed into my sleeping bag, and the next thing I knew was that a shaft of light had woken me up. The morning shift had arrived and turned on the lights in the hall kitchen. There are no curtains on the choir vestry windows! It was 6.45 and time to get up. Nothing untoward had happened, guests were starting to stir and breakfast was under way.

Margaret

The Morning Shift

I have to admit waking up rather nervous that Friday morning, because I had simply no idea what to expect when I reached St Peter's. I have been into the Church Hall but never into the church itself. But at 6.20am I bid my children goodbye and headed over. I really wasn't sure what to expect and I was surprised by my reaction when I tiptoed into the church at 6.30am to see the 14 slumbering shapes dotted around snuggled deep under flowery duvets. I thought our guests looked warm and peaceful and above all, truly safe. I was actually moved to tears. It seemed so profoundly fitting that a church would provide shelter and rest to the needy on a cold winter's night.

By now it was time for our guests to get up and for us to get busy. David put on some choral music to get us going and Elizabeth showed me what to do and we set-to helping the guests to strip their bedding and tidy away their beds. Many of the men were only too happy to help, in fact they seemed keen to help out in return for their comfortable night, and the well-oiled machine of guests and volunteers soon had the beds and bedding organised and ready for the next day's shelter.

Whilst we were doing that a band of people, who were extremely cheerful given the hour, were busy in the kitchen providing a hearty cooked breakfast and gallons of coffee and tea. Not everyone had found waking up easy, but gradually our guests dressed, washed and took their places at the table and tucked in. I took a minute to sit with two of the men and our conversations really were interesting and not at all what I expected. But what seemed clear to me, was that everyone had their own story to tell and that it would take longer than a breakfast time to tell it.

Whilst the kitchen was cleaned and restored to order, the hall needed to be cleared for the nursery and the tables and chairs needed to be stacked, and again, the men very quickly stepped in and did this for me, politely but firmly ensuring that they did all the heavy work.

And then it was time to leave. I was pleased that the weather was at least dry but I did wonder how they would spend the next 12 long hours before they were welcomed into their next shelter. But as one of the guests said to me, it is always easier to face a day 'out there' when you have had a warm undisturbed sleep and good hot food. He said being tired and hungry means you can't do anything all day except snatch some sleep and try to find food, but when you are rested and fed you have the energy to do something meaningful to help yourself. I really hope they did.

So we waved them off, their thanks was genuine and when one of them whispered in my ear 'God Bless You' as he left, I was deeply touched. *Cate*

At the time of writing, two of the guests who stayed with us at the beginning have found jobs and accommodation and we pray that the others will take steps to move forward. We would like to thank all the members of St Peter's who have supported this initiative - it has been great to help others in such a practical way.

A Church Calendar of English Flowers

This lovely poem was put in the editor's pigeonhole a little while ago, but is very suitable for publication as a new year begins and we greet again the flowers and seasons of the church's year. My thanks to the anonymous contributor – it is a gem!

The Snowdrop in purest white arraie
First rears her hedde on Candlemass Daie;
While the Crocus hastens to the shrine
Of Primrose love on St Valentine.
Then comes the Daffodil beside
Our Ladye's Smock at our Ladye's tide;
Aboute St George, when blue is worn,
The blue Harebells the field adorn.
Against the daie of the Holy Cross,
The Crowfoot gilds the flowrie grass.
When St Barnabie bright smiles night and daie,
Poor Ragged Robin blooms in the haye.
The scarlet Lychnis, the garden's pride,
Flames of S. John the Baptist tide;
From Visitation to S. Swithin's showers,
The Lillie white reigns Queen of the Flowers,
And Poppies a sanguine mantle spread,
For the blood of the dragon St Margaret shed.
Then under the wanton Rose agen,
That blushes for penitent Magdalen,
Till Lammas Daie, called August's wheel,
When the long Corn smell of Cammomile.
When Marie left us here below,
The Virgin's Bower is full in blow;
And yet anon the full Sunflower blew,
And became a star for St Bartholomew.
The Passion Flower long has blowed,
To betoken us signs of the holie rood;
The Michaelmas Dasie among dede weeds,
Blooms for St Michael's valorous deeds,
And seems the last of flowers that stood,
Till the feste of St Simon and St Jude,
Save mushrooms and the Fungus race
That grow till All Hallowtide takes place.
Soon the evergreen Laurel alone is greene,
When Catherine crowns all learned menne;
Then Ivy and Holly berries are seen,
And Yule Clog and Wassail come round agen.



*If you have a poem or other contribution you would like to share with readers at St Peter's please send it to sipeatfield@aol.com. Deadline for the February Parish Chest is **Wednesday 21st January 2015**.*

Looking Forward...

Make sure you have the date of our **Candlemas Barn Dance** in your diaries!

We meet to celebrate the true end of the Christmas season by dancing on **Saturday 31st January** and at our Candlemas service on **Sunday 1st February**.

St Peter's Book Club meets tomorrow Monday 12th January. Please 'phone 02089978376 for further details.

New Year Sour Cream "Coffee" Cake

The newspapers and supplements are full of dispiriting suggestions as to how to get fit this January. All very sound we are sure, but in the cold snap this is a warming treat.



This is an American recipe converted to metric measurements. The coffee is not an ingredient but a serving suggestion – it is lovely with a cup of coffee!

Cream 180g of softened butter with 180g of caster sugar until light and fluffy. Add two eggs and 240mls of sour cream until well mixed. In a separate bowl combine 2 tsp of baking powder, ½ tsp of salt, 240g of plain flour and 1 tsp of ground nutmeg and them add to egg mixture and mix well. Pour into a greased (and lined too ideally) cake tin or tray. Now mix together 140g of brown sugar (Demerara is crunchiest) 1tsp of ground cinnamon and 100g of chopped pecans or walnuts. Sprinkle this mixture evenly over batter. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning uncover and cook for c. 35minutes at Gas Mark 4/ 350 degrees Fahrenheit/ 180 degrees Celsius. Good warm from the oven or, allow to cool and decorate with icing as shown in picture.

Baptismal Happy Returns!

We recently shared in these pages our churchwarden Angus's "significant" birthday in October. It seems we jumped the gun with this as Angus invited us to celebrate with him seventy years since his baptism in December. We raised our glasses and toasted Angus, giving thanks for all that he is and all he does for us at St Peter's. A photograph of Angus by the font should accompany this piece but a technical error (editor cannot use phone cameras) has prevented this. Apologies, and renewed congratulations!

Monthly Martyrs (who are not always martyrs...)

John Peatfield writes: Saint Basil



Saint Basil the Great is the patron saint of hospital administrators and has his festival day on the **2nd of January**. Born in Caesarea in 330AD he came from a fairly holy family, seeing as his mother and father were St Emmelia and St Basil the Elder, and was one of ten children many of which are also saints. He was very well educated in Greece, founding a school for oratory and law in his hometown, however eventually decided to become a monk, initially setting up a monastery in Pontus, but then founding many others. While at Pontus he made a famous monastic rule that defined the balance of work and prayer. He was ordained and became the Bishop of Caesarea, and continued to be a man of learning, eloquence and charity, earning him his adjective. In this post he greatly supported the Nicene Creed and pushed for the abolition of Arianism in the Council of Constantinople in 381-382. He remained rigid in his clerical discipline and helped stop the trafficking of prostitutes by excommunicating all those involved. He is most famous in Greece, where he adopts the classic stereotypes of our Father Christmas or St Nicholas, and it is customary to visit the homes of friends on his saints day, sing carols of the New Year, eat a rich form of bread with a coin hidden in it and even to lay a place for the long dead saint. He even brings gifts to children on New Year's Day and is famed for his generosity and kindness.

Year's Mind

1 January	Dorothy Rumboll (1965)
4 January	Percy Clover (1958)
	Robert Dobson (1961)
5 January	Lee Jones (2006)
9 January	Lindsey Pullin (2010)
	Chiquita Harding (2014)
10 January	Tara Crisp (2011)
	Jennifer Higgins (2012)
12 January	Raymond Endersby (1991)
18 January	George Dewey (1958)
21 January	Eleanor McAvoy (2002)
22 January	Gertrude Coleman (1963)
24 January	Peggy Allen (2006)
27 January	Doris Gray (1997)
	Dorothy Clay (2013)
29 January	Betty Hodgson (1987)

**WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.
18th – 25th January**

Opening Taize Service at Ealing Green Church –
Sunday 18th January at 6.30pm.

Closing Service at St Peter's Church – **Sunday
25th January at 6.30pm.** Preachers Dawn and
Gary Lacey from West Ealing Salvation Army.

CANDLEMAS BARN DANCE

**Saturday 31st January,
Doors open 5.30pm - Dancing from 6.00pm.**

Tickets now on sale from the Events Committee to
include supper, please bring your own booze!

£15 adults, £5 children,

RAFFLE PRIZE DONATIONS gratefully received!