

St Peter's Parish Chest June 2015

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

Suggested Contribution 30p

Letter from the Vicar



A Spiritual House, A Royal Priesthood

In the first letter of Peter we read: "Come to him, a living stone...and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, a royal priesthood...for you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people...Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people, once you had not received mercy, but now you receive mercy" (1 Peter 2:4&5, 9&10)

Easter was great at St Peter's, wasn't it? Of course it is always great but this year had a real buzz. It wasn't about numbers (attendance figures were not great for some services and great for others); it wasn't just about the decoration (the flowers were stonking though, thank you flower team); it wasn't just about the liturgy (though Good Friday was reflective, the Dawn Service atmospheric and the joy of Easter Mass fantastic, thank you to everyone who took part, particularly the choir and the breakfast providers). It was the deep sense of God's presence and the movement of the Holy Spirit with us as we worshiped and prayed. The whole thing felt up-lifting and full. The visit of new faces on Easter Day was wonderful. The sharing of St Peter's people. I am sure this is the case really for every Easter, yet each new arrival seems to surpass the preceding. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

What next? In Peter's words here are living stones; it is no accident we are dedicated to St Peter, Petros, the Rock. So what next? How are we built into a spiritual house, a royal priesthood? It is not enough to say, "well of course we are St Peter's". It's not enough to say we had a good Easter. We have to be asking what next AND coming up with suggestions. However, to be that royal priesthood, that people of God we have first to give that question to God and listen for the answer. We must ask God in prayer, "What next Lord?" That prayer must be yours and mine. We must own that prayer and expect an answer.

The question "what next?" has been knocking round in my reflections and prayers for a while. As I write this piece I am on the eve of the third anniversary of my arrival at St Peter's, a good time (I am reliably informed by a number of sources) to be asking the question (I'm not planning on leaving by the way). There are a couple of ways we will do this, and it needs you to be part of it.

The first has already happened. The stewardship campaign asked the first question of us all: what next in our finances, offering of time and talents? Over eighty contacts were made, just over half made a response, half of those increased giving with seven new mandates. The result, an increase in giving of £455 a month and a raft of offers of help and support being sent around to relevant leaders and organisers to be accepted and used. There is still time for those who have not had a chance to make a response; always happy to receive a pledge card. It would be good after all to hear from all of us.

The second is "what next for our leadership?" which I suppose is mainly about the Vicar as I'm paid; though I am sure the rest of our leadership team will be keen to what comes out in the wash. To help this part of the programme a questionnaire is being prepared based upon the Twelve Competencies of Ministry as identified by the Diocesan Director of Training. It will ask how you feel these competencies are being done. The outcome will help us think about where leadership needs to go or develop, what leadership is doing right and what can be done better and there will be space for comment. My prayer is we will all take this seriously and prayerfully, wisely and justly.

The third stage in asking the question "what next of the living stones?" and that means you. We'll do this through a parish study day using material taken from Revd Dr Canon Richard Impey's book 'How to develop your local church'. Richard was Bishop's Advisor on Ministry in the Diocese of Sheffield and he has done a huge amount of work on this. For this part of the discernment a big ask will be made of you; to give up a Saturday (probably 10am-3pm) so that we can work together on exploring who we are, what we think of our church and where we believe God is calling us. In discovering our thoughts; hearing our words; reflecting on leadership, community and church; seeing how we are living stones we can listen for God's answer to "what next in becoming a royal priesthood and spiritual house built to the glory of God?"

In listening we must pray. Our prayer is that this programme of reflecting and discerning is blessed and guided by God and that we will be open to hear what God is saying to us; that we will respond to God with an open and receptive heart; to be a royal priesthood that 'may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' (1Peter2.9)

Fr David

Iona Pilgrimage Report



Mike Tiley writes:

It feels as if much more than a month has passed since our group of 13 'spiritual travellers' (plus one who joined us at Oban) met just after 11pm on Sunday 19 April (APCM day at St Peter's that morning!) at Euston Station to begin our 16 hour journey to the holy and remote western Scottish island of Iona. I managed to catch some sleep in my surprisingly comfortable Caledonian Sleeper bunk before being awoken with a welcome cup of tea and biscuit shortly before we arrived just after 7 on Monday morning at Glasgow Central station. Fortunately Fr David knew the way and guided our bleary eyed group over to Glasgow Queen Street station to begin our beautiful (once we got away from Glasgow) three hour journey to Oban with many fine Highland views on the way. I was delighted to board our Caledonian MacBrayne ferry to Mull with its familiar red and black funnel remembered from childhood ferry Journeys to Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis back in the 50s. An elderly bus carried us across the moorlands of Mull to a small jetty and ferry which swiftly took us to arrive on Iona at last! We were met by some of the friendly staff from Bishop's House to relieve us of our luggage so that we could walk there in 10 minutes unencumbered! Our elegant retreat house was founded by the Episcopal (ie Anglican) Church of Scotland (often referred to locally as the 'pisceys') in 1894 as'a place of prayer, study and Eucharist' which is open to groups and individuals from April to September each year. It has a beautiful Chapel of St Columba which offers you an immediate warm welcome as you come through the main door. We soon found our comfortable single rooms each named after Celtic saints (mine was named St Ternan with a memorable sea view) and then we found our way to the spacious sitting room and library for a welcome cup of tea and homemade cake followed by a delicious supper in the dining room.

We decided to keep silence in the house each day after our Night Prayer in the chapel until lunchtime on the following day so that we had sufficient time to attend to our own devotions during this self guided DIY retreat which was framed by a supportive structure of meals and services with the main focus on our morning Eucharist at 8am ably celebrated by one of our five (yes 5!) participating clergy including David and Harold from St Peter's and Revds Helen Askwith, Margaret Macpherson and Wilson Gill who are friends of David. Our members from St Peter's besides me were Trevor, David (Rowe), Linda and Moira. During my retreat time I managed to hear a

unique series of highly illuminating interactive seminars on my CD player given by Thomas Merton on silence and the inner life to a group of lively novices at Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky in the mid 60s not long before his untimely and unexpected death by accident in Bangkok.



Out and about on Iona

We had plenty of time to engage in outdoor activities on the island and most of us participated in the island pilgrimages on foot with suitable boots led by members of the Iona Community. Some of us took an open boat trip northwards to the uninhabited island of Staffa to clamber along a narrow cliff walk to see the famous Fingal's Cave which inspired Mendelssohn to write his famous music bearing that name. We were fortunate to see puffins seals and a few dolphins on our way. On most evenings we attended the 9pm services 10 minutes walk away with the Iona Community in the Abbey which had different themes such as peace, healing and on our final night a communion service where we all sat around a long white covered holy table running North to South along the chancel and we served communion to each other from a large loaf of home made bread and some cups of wine. I was pleased to find the grave of John Smith MP, a former leader of the Labour Party, whose fine tombstone had been designed and carved by our friend Chris Hall who also designed and carved the beautiful replacement pairs of piers in the Abbey Cloister over 30 years from 1967-1997.



A time of refreshment...

It is important to describe briefly the history of St Columba and the Abbey to understand the context of this holy and 'thin' place where many sensitive souls can feel much closer to the spiritual atmosphere between earth and heaven. St Columba was born in Northern Ireland in 521 or 522 and he travelled to Iona in 563 where he was led to set up his Celtic Monastic community as a place of prayer and

withdrawal where he intended to create 'a perfect monastery as an image of the heavenly city of Jerusalem'. He proceeded to set up a network of churches and monasteries in Scotland and Ireland before his death in the monastic church on Iona in 597. In 634 his monks were invited by the local King to form the monastery at Lindesfarne where we had our retreat in 2013. Iona became a major place of pilgrimage for people to visit St Columba's Shrine which was built in 700. In the late 600s Adoman was Abbot of Iona and he wrote Columba's biography 'The life of St Columba' which contained many accounts of his miracles of:

1: prophesy and predictions, 2: healing and raising of the dead, 3: heavenly apparitions including Angels and heavenly light.

I did not realise until this visit that The Great Gospel Book of St Columba AKA The Book of Kells was lovingly and skilfully made by monks in Scriptorium at Iona Abbey in around 800 possibly to commemorate the 200 anniversary of Columba's death in 597. This precious book had to be removed from Iona shortly after it was completed to the monastery at Kells in Ireland to keep it safe from Viking invaders. The book contains beautifully illustrated pages of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke with a portion of the Gospel of John which can be seen in the library at Trinity College Dublin.

The present Abbey buildings were mostly built in about 1200 when a Benedictine Community was established to replace the Columban community which in turn was dissolved during the Reformation. The most recent restoration of the Benedictine Abbey was begun in 1938 after the establishment of the Iona Community by Revd (later Lord) MacLeod as an ecumenical Christian community working for peace, social justice and the renewal of worship. The Community receives guests from Easter to October it in can accommodate about 90 guests in the Abbey cloister and at the MacLeod Centre.



Pilgrims on wheels!

I was able to borrow the Golf Buggy used at Bishop's House for our last day and took Revd Wilson Gill who is Vicar of Emmanuel Church in Southall for a delightful two hour final drive over all the roads on the island enjoying the mild sunny weather that remained with us during all of our stay except for a few misty mornings. We were able to return to London during daylight hours on Friday 24 April starting with the early ferry from Iona at 9am and arriving back at Euston Station 12 hours later at 9.30pm. I was delighted to be able to fit in a quick one stop trip on the Glasgow Subway system on our

return journey between the two Glasgow train stations. The Glasgow Subway has 10 stations on its own version of London's Circle Line with smart white/orange carriages which are about half the size of our Circle Line carriages. Although we were a bit weary from our long journey home we felt the benefit of our spiritually and physically refreshing pilgrimage to Iona and began to discuss some possible retreat destinations for 2016 with Fr David: Bec or Taize in France? Assisi in Italy? Or somewhere closer to home such as West Malling in Kent? Do let Fr David or one of us know if you have any ideas and want to join us.

PS I can recommend the new Taize CD 'Taize- Music of Unity and Peace' which has just been released by Deutsche Gramophon for the 75th anniversary of the community with some new music alongside the old for £10.99 from HMV or less online



"The seal of approval" for the St Peter's Pilgrims.
(With many thanks to David Rowe for the pun and the photographs.)

If reading this encourages you to make a journey with some friendly fellow travellers then why not make a start with the **St Peter's Walking Group?**

Best Feet Forward!



Linda Foster writes:

Greetings members of St Peter's Walking Group!

Our next walk is on **Sunday June 14 and our leader will be Mike Tiley. 2:00 pm start at Notting Hill Gate Tube Station.**

Discover some delightful London gardens as part of the London Squares open weekend. Admission £12 on the day (allows access to gardens the entire weekend) or buy ahead of time (£10 and discounts for NT and Kew Members) and go under your own steam on Saturday.

More details at: www.opensquares.org.

The Keys of St Peter's



Handing on...

(Thanks to Alex Pridgeon for capturing the moment)

Sunday 17th May saw a very important ceremony in the life of St Peter's, when the churchwarden's keys were handed on from Allison McAllister to Moira Babary. Allison has served St Peter's "above and beyond" since 2011 wearing many hats from stonework to microphone battery tester and just about everything in between. We wish Allison and her family well in their new pew!

Moira joins Angus McAvoy in continuing this valuable ministry of caring for the building and people of St Peter's. We consider ourselves very blessed to be in such good hands. Thank you, Moira and Angus.

Christian Aid Breakfast



Sausages - donated and delicious!

On **Saturday 9th May** the aroma of fried bacon and sausages filled the church hall. Although not very many people were able to come along to enjoy them, this was a lovely occasion and a good family-sized tableful sat down to enjoy their cooked breakfast and to support Christian Aid. Special thanks to Anne Reilly for a master-class in sausage turning and to Angus for organising the event. Proceeds of £75 from the breakfast were given to Christian Aid. Next year we shall make sure it is everyone's diaries in good time.

Next month's Parish Chest will hopefully contain accounts of our Petertide events and activities. Please do think about writing a piece and/or taking some photographs such as the one shown on the right. All copy very gratefully received as are offers to take on the role of editor for future issues. Deadline for the July issue is **Monday 29th June** - later so that we can include St. Peter's Day. Please send all material to sjpeatfield@aol.com.

Looking Forward...

The big event on the horizon is our **St Peter's Day Festival on Sunday 28th June**. The service is at 10am followed by drinks and then lunch at 12noon with an organ recital at 1pm. Please see posters in church for more details.

Final preparations are being made for this and you are heartily encouraged to **sign up for the lunch** if you have not already done so. There is a choice of poached salmon or mushroom tartlet, both served with salads, dessert and a glass of wine or soft drinks. A children's "lunchbox" option is also available. A minimum donation of £7 per person is suggested with children under 16 free.

Looking Further Forward...

Harvest Fayre
Saturday 3rd October 2015



This is new venture for St Peter's to celebrate the season of harvest with an event open to all in the parish and beyond. We are now into full planning mode for this and there will be a meeting for stallholders and helpers after church on **Sunday 5th July**. Please do get in touch if you would like to be involved and have not yet been "harvested"!

And on the same note...**Harvest Sewing Bees!** Christine Bates is busy sewing items for our Harvest Fayre and would be grateful for offers of remnants of cotton fabrics including curtain material. Christine has also offered to host some Sewing Bee evenings, so if you are a handy with a needle or would like to try why not join in with this. Please speak to Christine or contact sjpeatfield@aol.com.



Keeping an Eagle Eye on our altar...

Parish Matters

Stewardship Campaign 2015 Update

Ellena Jamie writes:

The Finance Team would like to thank everyone who responded so generously to the recent Stewardship Campaign. As a result, we have 8 new members in regular stewardship, 24 existing members who have pledged increases in their regular stewardship, and 4 new Gift Aid declarations. This should bring St Peter's an additional £5,463 per year, plus Gift Aid tax rebates where appropriate.

While this is an encouraging response, we fell some way short of our target. A shortfall of income over expenditures is expected in 2015, so the Finance Committee will be developing a plan to close the gap. If you didn't complete an updated banker's order form to accompany your stewardship pledge, please don't forget to amend your standing order as soon as possible, if you haven't yet done so!

If you pay Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at the basic rate or above, and have not signed a Gift Aid declaration allowing St Peter's to claim a tax rebate on your donations, please consider doing so. It costs you nothing extra (you have already paid the tax) and makes a big difference to St. Peter's income. Higher-rate tax payers can also reclaim the difference between basic and higher rate tax on their donations.

Around the Parish

8 Castlebar Hill, Edith Whetnall Remembered

Mike Tiley, well known to us at St Peter's, has recently played a key part in an important addition to the local history of our area. On **Friday 22nd May** a plaque issued by the Ealing Civic Society was unveiled on the front of 8 Castlebar Hill to remember the life and work of Edith Whetnall. Dr Whetnall FRCS (1910- 1965) was "a pioneer and world authority in paediatric audiology...setting up an experimental hostel for deaf children under school age, in which their mothers could live with them during their training at 8 Castlebar Hill." For many years the current owner of the house along with Mike have campaigned to have Dr Whetnall recognised. The plaque unveiled by a former colleague, Dr Peter McKelvie, in the presence of the Mayor of Ealing, Steve Pound and Rupa Huq MPs, certainly does this.



Mike with Professor Alan Gillett, whose childhood home was 8 Castlebar Hill, before Dr Whetnall's clinic

St Peter's Old and New



The rarely photographed east end of St Peter's.

The Editor writes:

A walk around the corner of Mount Park Road to the right takes you on to Montpelier Road and then a further quick right brings to St Peter's Way. These blocks of flats were built in the 1980s, following the sale in the late 1970s of this land and that in Hillcroft Crescent where the former church hall stood. With the proceeds of this sale our current church hall was built. This difficult decision is described by Richard Hayes, Vicar of St Peter's from 1982 to 1991, in his history of the church *New and Old*. The old church hall had been built as "Thankoffering" for the peace following the 1914-18 War. This had been instigated by the Reverend J Bertram Kite, Vicar from 1916 to 1939. This appeal had been very generously responded to by his parishioners, not least perhaps because Mr Kite had lost his son during the conflict. By the late 1960s though the world had moved on and the move to share coffee and conversation after Mass, coupled with the rising costs of repairs to the original hall made action necessary.

Richard Hayes in *New and Old* writes:

Voices were raised in protesting that in the "old days" people walked to the hall in all weathers. But the appeal of the past cannot stand up to the desires of the present, if these are soundly based. It was clear that the hall was not serving the needs of the congregation in its primary task of building a caring worshipping community.

I know that many at St Peter's have fond memories of the old church hall. I have searched in vain for a proper photograph of the building but I think there are some in existence. If you have a copy I would love to hear from you, and to hear about those old hall days.



All that is left - "Hall Close" tells its own story.

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

St John the Baptist



An unusually clean-shaven Baptist
by Adam Elsheimer

St John's Feast Day falls on old Midsummer Eve, **24th June**. It is a glorious time of year with days at their brightest to remember this extraordinary man. In art he is shown chiefly in two guises – as the "older baby" in many paintings of Mary and the Infant Christ, and as the strikingly dressed grown man in camel hair, "a voice calling in the wilderness". (There are too some very famous paintings of his beheading at the whim of Herodias.)

St John the Baptist makes his first proper appearance in the Gospel narrative when he leaps within his mother Elizabeth's womb, when she hears her young cousin Mary's astonishing news. From then the Gospel records are silent until we hear of him preaching the baptism of repentance on the banks of the River Jordan. It is he who speaks of Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The one whose sandal laces he is unworthy to untie. After he baptises Jesus, again the records are silent until we hear that Herod has had him beheaded in response to a trivial promise to a dancing girl (in fact his step-daughter). We read about it in Mark chapter 6:

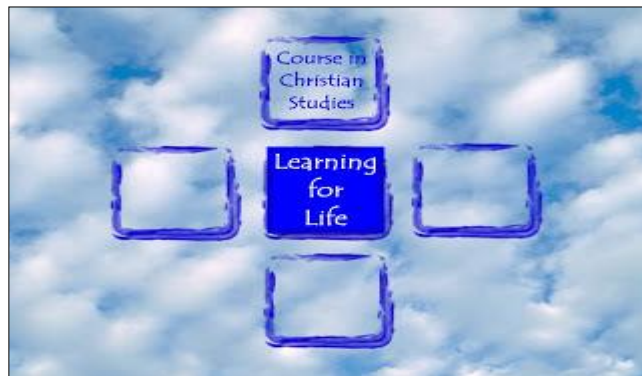
"When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.' And he solemnly swore to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What should I ask for?' She replied, 'The head of John the Baptist'"

Despite John being extremely clear that his ministry ended as Jesus's began, a cult of St John the Baptist continued long after his death. For most though named for him, every John, Jean, Hans, Ivan, Giovanni, Ian, Juan, Joan, Jane and Joanna and who will celebrate his Feast this month, he is the great example of Christian witness: one who lives not to himself or herself, but only to point others to Christ.

Year's Mind

2 June	Edmund Wilson (1988)
4 June	Gladys Gibbs (1980)
	Leonard Tubb (2000)
5 June	Joan Corden (1998)
15 June	Christiana Gordon (1961)
22 June	Sydney Baker (1961)

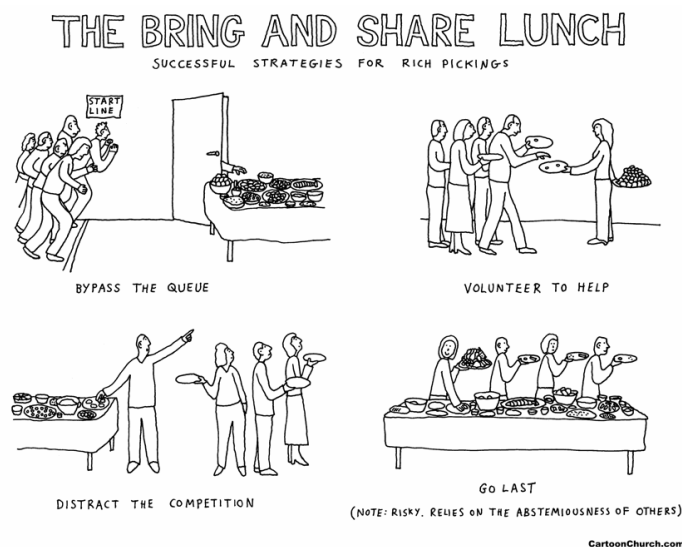
Course in Christian Studies



Do you ever wish you knew your Bible better, or that your church history knowledge could explain the real significance of *Wolf Hall*? Are you interested in why we do and say the things we do and say in church on Sundays? Are you concerned about the many ethical questions facing our world? Could you give an evening a week to learning more and gaining confidence in these areas with like-minded people?

If the answer to some of these questions is "yes", then why not consider getting involved with the Willesden Area's *Course in Christian Studies* this September. Course details will be available soon including times and venues, but in the meantime if you would like to know more about what the course entails please have a word with either Fr David or Susan Peatfield.

And finally...



CartoonChurch.com

We are not having a Bring and Share this year...
but not for any of these reasons!