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* from *Parish Pump*

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

I'm delighted that already we have contributions from parishioners in this, only our second issue! At a time when many people are setting off on holiday the Braithwaites write about their very different experiences of religion in USA and Estonia. We also have an article about a former parishioner 'He worshipped at St Peter's' about Francis Tremlett and Matthew Fontaine Maury, and the sermon William Morris preached on 20th July which set everyone talking.

And if the idea of everyone disappearing for the summer is depressing take comfort from the thought that it won't be long before they're back, and school will start again and all the other activities we look forward to. In September we have Holy Cross Day, Racial Justice Sunday, International Day of Prayer for Peace *and* London Open House Weekend. And Tokens of Trust starts on 16th September - see Father Paul's letter for details.

This is your magazine and we welcome submissions for consideration. Please send them by email if possible to judy.east@blueyonder.co.uk, or by post to 48 Southfleet, Marsden Street, NW5 4DD, or give them to Father Paul.

DIARY FOR AUGUST and SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3rd Trinity 11
11.15am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Alternative Worship

Wednesday 6th - The Transfiguration of our Lord

Sunday 10th Trinity 12
11.15am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Celebration of Healing and Wholeness

Friday 15th The Blessed Virgin Mary

Sunday 17th Trinity 13
11.15am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Alternative Worship

Sunday 24th Trinity 14 / Bartholomew the Apostle
11.15am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 31st Trinity 15
11.15am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Evening Prayer

The Gallery choir will be taking a rest during August.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 7th Trinity 16
11.15am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School
6.30pm Alternative Worship

Sunday 14th Trinity 17 / Holy Cross Day / Racial Justice Sunday www.ctbi.org.uk
11.15am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School
6.30pm Celebration of Healing and Wholeness

Tuesday 16th
8.00pm Tokens of Trust - see Father Paul's letter for details

Wednesday 17th
8.00pm PCC meeting

Saturday 20th - Sunday 21st London Open House Weekend

Sunday 21st Trinity 18 / St Matthew / International Day of Prayer for Peace
<http://overcomingviolence.org>
<http://www.invitationtoprayer.org>
11.15am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School
6.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 28th Trinity 19
11.15am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School
6.30pm Evening Prayer

Monday 29th St Michael and All Angels

FATHER PAUL WRITES.....

Welcome to St Peter's Magazine – our second issue, which this time has much more material from St Peter's own people. I hope it may encourage *you* to consider contributing something for a future magazine yourself!

Another inclusion in this issue is the text of a sermon, by Will Morris, which attracted much interest and comment when he visited St Peter's in mid-July. Will is an Ordinand and Reader at St Mary's, Primrose Hill, and his sermon raised an issue very close to his heart – the honouring of the 'day job' in the life of the Christian, which so often seems not to be embraced, or even acknowledged, by the church. It's very easy for 'church' to be wrapped up in its own little world, and its particular timetable of weekly events and services, without a thought for what its members actually 'do' the rest of the time.



whether in paid work, as volunteers, or in running their homes. This is a dangerous weakness, which runs a real risk of trivialising the Gospel we stand for, and making it seem relevant only to 'leisure time'.

We sometimes make rather heavy weather of the Christian doctrine of God-the-Holy-Trinity, but one very clear implication of The Trinity is that it integrates into the One God attributes which other belief systems might compartmentalise into different gods (whether few or many). Belief in One God who is at the same time Creator, Pain-bearer, and energising Presence (traditionally *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*) carries with it the conviction that our own compartmentalised lives – of mind, body and spirit, or 'public', 'family' and 'private' can, and should, be integrated into wholeness. Hearing Will's sermon certainly brought this need for personal wholeness and integration back to the forefront of my own life of faith, and I hope it rewards you to read it.

Work on St Peter's Halls is well under way now and should be completed close to the beginning of the Central School's new academic year in October. We look forward to being able to hold Sunday-School there, and coffee after the Parish Eucharist, as well as some mid-week events, from then on. Look out for further news!

As if to mark the beginning of St Peter's collaboration with the Central School of Speech & Drama, the School's Second Year students gave their end of year performance – of Shakespeare's *King Lear* – over four evenings in June within the Church building and grounds. It was thrilling to see this imaginative production in the setting of St Peter's, which clearly inspired the performers, as well as those of us watching and listening. The PCC have agreed that we will host more such performances for the School in the future.

Another, more long-standing relationship is that between St Peter's and *The Hall School*, and one of the several 'perks' of this for St Peter's, and certainly for me, is the occasional service of *Choral Evensong* sung in the church by the Hall School's choir of boys and men. One of these was just before the end of term on July 3rd - a rare treat!

Looking ahead, the autumn will see an Introduction to Christianity made available at St Peter's in the form of *Tokens of Trust* – a series of power-point presentations, based on a book of that name by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, to be given on Tuesday evenings starting on 16th September at 8pm. As well as the presentations there will be refreshments, and general discussion. People from St Peter's and St Saviour's preparing for Confirmation will be attending also, but *Tokens of Trust* is open to all – with no obligation!

Wishing you every blessing,

Paul Nicholson

FAITH IN THE WORKPLACE

A sermon preached at St Peter's for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity (20 July 2008)

I actually like my job – in fact, I really like my job. But I have to tell you, even I have some days when I just wonder what it's all about. And I had one of those days this week. First, inevitably, there was the nightmare journey on the tube, where the average temperature seemed to be 100 degrees inside a slow-moving sardine tin. Then, when eventually I got to work, in what can only have been a cruel joke, the air conditioning had turned the office into an enormous deep freeze. I looked at the pile of work from yesterday, together with the 50 overnight e-mails, and groaned. And the day got no better. A frustrating meeting at which absolutely nothing was achieved, was followed by a series of e-mails which unpicked what I thought I had achieved the day before. The list of things that I had to do, instead of diminishing, actually grew, and, eventually, tired and a bit fed up, I dragged myself out of the office at 7.30 and only then started to think about the tube journey home. And what had I achieved, what had I done? Had I advanced God's kingdom, had I saved the planet, had I found a cure for cancer? No, no and no. So what had I done? Had I just shuffled paper and earned a bit of money? That's what it felt like – and that's a bit of a problem. Because if most of us feel useless, alienated, unfulfilled in what we spend the majority of the time in most of the days of our life doing, then that's going to impact the way we think about ourselves, the way we interact with others, and the way we interact with God. And that doesn't seem right. So where do we turn for help? Who has the answers? Well, I suppose that as Christians our instinct would be to turn to the church.

But, speaking personally, when I turn to church for help, I don't really get any – because, generally, the church seems to ignore, or even actively devalue, work. Let me give a couple of small examples. Quite often you will hear a church describe itself a "Good Friday" church, meaning that they are at work in the brokenness of the world; or as an "Easter Sunday Church", meaning that they seek to bring the message of the hope of resurrection, the great Alleluia; or as a "Sabbath church", meaning that they consecrate the

Sabbath to God, as a day set apart for worship, for rest, and for refreshment. And, obviously, all of those are incredibly valuable and important. But does something get missed out? What you don't hear very much is "we are a Monday church" or a "Tuesday church". Yet all of us, you, me, Paul, we have to live on Monday and Tuesday, or Wednesday and Thursday. And there are a lot more of those than there are Good Fridays, and Easter Sundays, and even the weekly Sabbath. Yet what goes on on those days doesn't seem worthy of notice by the church.

Or think of our prayers in church. We pray for the ministry team, for the youth group, for the PCC, for the parish retreat, for the flower arrangers, for the sick, and in more abstract terms for the whole church and the world. But how often do we specifically pray for those in the workplace? Do we pray for accountants in the congregation at the end of the tax year, or for the people who mend our roads, or even for bankers trying to make loans. No we don't.

But why not? Why not? Well, I think, in the church, as in many areas of life, we have a very divided, a very us-and-them view of the world. There's body and there's soul; there's church and there's the world; there's spiritual work and there's secular work. And in each case one has to be up and the other down; one right and the other wrong. We seem unable integrate them – and so, in each case, secular work comes off worse by comparison. And, we have been taught, all too often, that the things of this earth are temporary, transitory, and imperfect; and it is our inner spiritual development through contemplation, through worship, and through spiritual work, which is important. So Monday through Saturday comes to be seen as – spiritually speaking – dead time, something of a waste, just clock-watching until we can get to the important stuff on Sunday, in church.

So what are we to do? Is there any hope? Well, a little perhaps. A small group of theologians is trying to integrate faith and work. Their message is that God is actually here throughout the week, in the workplace, and in our work. And one of the key passages they point to to support this is actually this morning's epistle reading from Paul's letter to the Romans [ch 8.12-25]. The key idea in this passage is that God intends to perfect his creation. And it's the use of the word "creation" that's important. Not just our souls, not just our bodies, but everything around us as well. Paul tells us that the physical world as we see it will be perfected. This is not about our souls being whisked up to heaven, but about everything that we see, and do, and have around us – including our work, and all that that creates – all of that being perfected by God. So work, our physical actions, what we do during the day is of significance to God, because it's part of the creation that he made, and that he intends to perfect. A creation in which as heirs of God, and co-heirs with Jesus – as Paul also tells us – we will also share. And just in case this sounds a bit off the wall to you, there's actually lots of stuff like this in the bible, going right back to Genesis and its hymn to God as the worker who created everything.

So that gives us a theological basis for regarding work – paid or unpaid, whether in the office, factory, or home – as being of significance to God. But it's more than just book theology – there's a very practical side to it. If we can recognize that God is present in work, in the workplace, then huge opportunities open up for us. Instead of just being a place where the best we can hope for is that we earn enough money to support our local church, and support our family, work becomes a fertile new area where we can interact with God. And there's no one way of doing this – rather, there are almost limitless possibilities. For some it leads to faithfulness to God, through heightened personal ethics – an understanding that we must adopt the very highest personal standards not just in church, but also at work. For others, it can mean building a time for God into their working lives, and using work as a place of worship. For some work becomes a way of finding fulfillment – of using our God-given gifts to be the best we can be. For others again work can be recognized as a calling from God, as much a vocation as anything church-oriented. And for others still, work presents an opportunity for evangelism. Some will use it as a platform for social justice, helping to make their companies better places inside the business, in the local community, and out in the wider world. And there is no one right answer – there are lots of right answers. The possibilities, the richness to us individually, and as a church, if we recognize that God might somehow be in the workplace, rather than just in here in church are incredible. But if we, as a church, ignore this, then we're simply not doing our job.

So next time you have a rotten day, remember that it is only that – a rotten day. It's not the final proof that we're engaged in some worthless activity that is unloved and uncherished by God. Work is as much a part of God's creation, and God's purpose as this building and all that we do here. And we, the church, really need to start talking about that – and living it.

Amen

William Morris, Reader at St Mary's Primrose Hill

CECIL WILLIAMS, MAN OF GOD

A bright Sunday morning and we had no idea what to expect as we hurried through the streets of the downtown Tenderloin district of San Francisco. We were on our way to the nine o'clock service in the Glide Pentecostal Church. We'd read about it in the guide book and it sounded, well, interesting. We chose the early service because we had been warned the 10.30 one would be very crowded indeed.



There was no mistaking the four storey red brick building. A large group of worshippers were outside on the pavement, greeting each other enthusiastically. We made our way in and were ushered to a lift, with a curtain instead of a door, and taken up to the second floor where the action was. And when I say action I mean it. A hundred people dressed in flowered muu muus were taking their tiered seats on the stage and an orchestra of synthesizers, guitars, harmonicas and drums were practising to one side.

The place filled very quickly. We shared a side pew with a Hawaiian looking lady and her son who was about fourteen. Later we were invited to hug each other as part of the ceremony and we did.

The leader of this church is Cecil (pronounced Seasal) Williams, an eighty year old Paul Robeson lookalike with a magnificent voice. There are no hymn books, no orders of service, a sheet of rolled paper that drops from the ceiling with the words you need when you need them. . The hymn tunes were familiar, not as hymn tunes but spirituals and one, I swear one was Down By the Riverside with the words changed. We all rocked and swayed as we sang. You couldn't help it. A bit like following a steel band in the Notting Hill Festival.

Best of all was the sermon. I don't remember it all but he said, "I am not here to judge you for your sins. I am not even here to urge you on to thoughts of heaven. I am simply here to love you with all your imperfections. " Great stuff, eh? Not to mention the people who jumped up in the middle of the service to shout "Praise the Lord." We did know to expect that. We'd been to Pentecostal churches before.

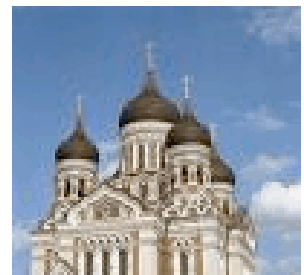
Cecil Williams is a huge man, in every sense. Huge in the service of God. Every day he feeds hundreds of homeless people in what he calls the Banqueting Suite on the ground floor.(Indeed we were asked if we'd like to sign up to help with the Banqueting Suite . We felt ashamed as we had to explain we were leaving soon). On other floors are cubicles with beds for those who have no shelter from the elements. Every night there is a queue on the pavement outside. You may have seen the Will Smith movie, "The Pursuit of Happyness", where our hero waits with his little boy for a bed for the night. All true. How funded? Well, we wondered that. Until the collection time came and we saw the large dustbins being wheeled down the aisles to put in our contributions. Not all of these people were well off but they dug deep. And so did we. Somehow you couldn't not. And Chris Gardner, who wrote the book, The Pursuit of Happyness, and has made it after all those early hardships, digs deep too.

The other thing I remember powerfully is how he began to talk about some adverse publicity he'd had in a local paper that week. It was not claiming he was a crook. Not putting down his work . Just saying there was no one to replace him , he was too old and too ill to go on and oh my goodness they were wrong. He may be eighty but he is a strong and loving Christian man who has as he says still much to do.

CONFESSION IN THE CATHEDRAL

It looks like a giant cake, iced in yellow and white, with five curved domes, that could be marzipan, picked out in bright colours. It is the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Tallinn [Estonia], the nearest church to our hotel. So we go.

At 9 o'clock in the morning we enter through the vast arched doorway. Three stands of candles twinkle in front of us. There is music which instantly transports



us to another, more Eastern world, and a strong smell of incense blasts our noses.

We look around at the other worshippers. Tallinn is a beautiful tourist magnet of a city. This is the height of the summer season. We had expected to see people of every nationality here. There are a few Americans from the cruise ships, who drift in and out but almost all the rest are Russian, or perhaps Russian-speaking Estonians. Estonians are mainly Lutheran, I understand, but, given the history of the country, it is not surprising that there are so many Russian speakers - or that they should use this lovely place, a building begun by Peter the Great in 1720, for their religious needs.

There are no pews, so you stand, or walk about during the service. There are processions by priest carrying rich artefacts. There are at least six priests, dressed in cloth of gold, only one of whom has a hat, like an inverted bowl, with a jewelled cross on top. There is much kissing of holy pictures, much making of the sign of the cross, and much bowing. A woman prostrates herself, banging her head on the floor.

No member of the congregation is required to read or sing or say anything, with the one exception of the confession, which is wonderful to see. A long queue of people waits to walk up the steps at either side of the altar, to where a priest stands. You talk to him for a minute or two, and he talks back. He places a hand on your head, then a gold cloth. This is clearly absolution. It is very moving. Many of the women come away in tears.

We cannot understand much of the sermon, when most people squeeze up to the front in order to hear, still standing. After it come preparations for Eucharist, which, although we stay for over an hour, we never see. One priest carries in a bible in a heavy gold case and intones from it. He has a voice that goes from a rich bass to almost alto. Other than that, all the music is piped.

We feel like strangers in a foreign land, which we are. We feel totally remote from what is going on. But the Spirit is here. It is here, most powerfully, in the confessional.

It is here in a pretty little girl of about eight, with a pink scarf over her hair, who, seeing the queue shorter on the other side, skips across and stakes her confession there. She hurries happily back to her grandmother who is still waiting in the first queue.

"I've made my confession already" I almost hear her say, although I wonder what she could possibly have to confess. She is shining. It's a lovely moment.

Bob and Helen Braithwaite

HE WORSHIPPED AT ST PETER'S

For a long time I have been interested in our first vicar, the Revd Dr Francis Tremlett, whose bust near the vestry door is, I think, one of our treasures. Tremlett was virtually responsible for the building of St Peter's and was a supporter of the Southern States in the American Civil War, though he also petitioned Parliament to intervene in that horribly bloody conflict.

I knew that he had associations with the University of Tennessee where one of the early halls of residence was named after him. One evening "googling" away (as one does) I put in the University of Tennessee and was interested to find they hold a lot of Tremlett's letters. Many of them were letters to Matthew Fontaine Maury, who has a monument in Richmond, Virginia, celebrating him as the pioneer of oceanography. Following up Maury's biography, I was interested to see that he came to England in March 1866 where he joined the congregation of St Peter's where his friend Dr Tremlett was vicar. He returned to America in 1868. He was therefore one of the earliest worshippers at the new church, which had only been consecrated on November 11 1859.

Maury was born in Virginia, but the family moved to Tennessee when he was four. He joined the navy when he was nineteen and in 1836 published a treatise on navigation which was favourably reviewed by Edgar Allan Poe. He did a survey of the southern US harbours and in 1842 he was given charge of the Depot of Charts and Instruments in Washington and four years later published a pioneering work on astronomy. He made a map of the North Atlantic Ocean, advocated daily weather reports, and lectured all over America and Europe. He received many degrees from universities, including an LL.D from Cambridge (on which occasion Dr Tremlett helped to organise a testimonial dinner for him to which the scientific, military and political

establishment came) and honours, including medals from the Pope. When the Civil War broke out he urged intervention, resigned from the US navy and left the National Observatory. Eventually, however, he gave his support to the Southern States, helped to fortify harbours and worked on submarine and torpedo deployment. He died in Lexington in February 1873, his works on geography and oceanography having gone through several editions. Several universities in the USA named buildings after him, a destroyer was also called Maury and a Maury prize was established at the US Naval Academy.

This was the man who worshipped at St Peter's for a brief period. The article on Dr Tremlett in **Belsize 2000: a living suburb**, published by the Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee, has more details of Maury's time in England. His address was 3 Belsize Square – but which was his pew?

Perhaps as part of our celebrations next year to mark the 150th anniversary of the dedication of St Peter's we could ask a member of the Royal Geographical Society to come and give us a lecture on such a distinguished parishioner?

Mary Shakeshaft

Bishops' concern over fuel poverty

Bishops have called on government to take the number of people experiencing fuel poverty into account when setting policy on increasing renewable energy generation. The direct cost to the UK of meeting the EU's current 15 per cent target will be at least £5 billion per annum by 2020, in addition to indirect costs in the form of higher energy prices.

No holidays for some children this summer
News that child poverty rates in the UK are still rising has come at just the wrong time, says the chief executive of a leading Christian children's charity.

"According to government statistics released this month, two out of five families in the lowest income bracket won't be able to afford even a week's holiday this year," says Tim Jeffery, chief executive of Spurgeons. With over 100 current projects in the UK and internationally, Spurgeons works with local authorities, children's centre schemes and churches to reach vulnerable children and young people. "Without any kind of holiday to look forward to children can be deeply affected, emotionally," maintains Jeffery. "Those living in poverty often suffer from a lack of self-confidence and, eventually, lose hope. We have to reach them before that happens."

In 1999 former Prime Minister Tony Blair announced the target of halving child poverty by 2010 and eliminating it by 2020. But Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) figures released this summer revealed 3.9 million UK children were classed as living in poverty in the year 2006/07, an increase of 100,000 on the previous year.

COMMEMORATION: AIDAN the man who brought Christianity to England

Statue by Katherine Parbury

August 31st is the feast of St Aidan, who brought Christianity to northern England. He is a strong contender for the title of the first English bishop. Not that honours meant a great deal to this austere but captivating character.

In 635 he came to Northumbria at the invitation of the local ruler, Oswald. Oswald's invitation was not immediately successful. The first missionary from Iona returned in despair, claiming that the barbarity of the Northumbrians made them unconvertible. But as Aidan listened, he felt the unmistakable call of God to try again. Shortly afterwards, Aidan found himself at the head of a party of brothers heading for Northumbria. He was never to see his beloved Iona again.

The monks made the long journey to Northumbria on foot, singing psalms as they went. Their need to ward off the powers of evil with prayer was genuine, for these were dangerous times to travel through remote country unarmed.



They arrived safely at Oswald's castle in Bamburgh, where he offered them lavish hospitality and assured them that they would found their community there. However, the brothers realised that to live under the king's protection would make it difficult to avoid the world's temptations and establish a rapport with the local people. They saw the tidal island of Lindisfarne on the horizon and chose it as their base. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Aidan was much loved as a teacher and evangelist; though stern in his own self-discipline, he was prepared to travel to the most inaccessible villages, where he cared for the local people with compassion and gentleness. After Oswald's death in 642, his brother Oswin succeeded him as king. Oswin was concerned about Aidan's habit of walking everywhere. The saint was ageing rapidly, his body weakened by years of harsh fasting and exposure to the elements. Oswin wondered what would happen to him one day on the road, and also he felt that such a lowly means of travel was not appropriate for a bishop. So he gave Aidan one of his finest horses, complete with a beautifully worked saddle and bridle.

Aidan did not feel able to risk offending the king by spurning his generosity, but he rode out of the palace with a heavy heart. He knew that people would relate to him differently now that he had the trappings of affluence, and that it would be dangerous to stop and rest with such valuable belongings beside him. The king had intended to give him comfort, but his gesture had had the opposite effect. Aidan had learnt that possessions, and the need to protect them, make it more difficult to follow God with an undivided heart. The story goes that he gave the horse, complete with saddle, to the first beggar he met outside the palace gates.

Over a thousand years after his death, a statue of Aidan stands in the churchyard of St Mary's on Lindisfarne, visited by pilgrims the world over. The rector of that church is David Adam, who has brought Aidan to public attention through his excellent biography, "Flame in my Heart", and his well-known books of Celtic prayers. *Flame in my Heart: St Aidan for Today* by David Adam, Triangle Books, 1997



AFTER TRINITY

They knew a lot
About the ordinary, the Dutch masters,
Painting their quiet interiors,
Where boys bring loaves, and little girls
Help mother peel the apples,
While the sun shines on the red tiled floor
And light comes in through latticed panes,
Transfiguring the commonplace.
In the stillness of these scenes
We feel eternity
Has touched the everyday
And made significant
What might seem dull.

Still life of cup and plate,
White cloth upon the table laid,
No change of colour in the altar cloth –
The festivals are over once again,
Excitement past, so now in quietness
We offer up our time, our days
Of needs and tasks and homely things
To be transformed by grace in
Long weeks stretching on
In green and ordinary time.

Mary Shakeshaft

Gospels to be printed specially for Beijing Olympics

Bibles and Gospel booklets printed in China will be available to athletes in the Olympic village in Beijing this summer, despite rumours that Bibles would be banned at the support of the Bible Society, 50,000 booklets are being the event, with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and English. Ten thousand Chinese-English complete Bibles and English New Testaments will also be available. The initiative, which follows controversy earlier this year Chinese authorities would allow Bibles to be made available at the Olympics, has the approval of the Beijing Olympic organising committee. For the first time, the committee is allowing its logo to be used free of charge on the Gospel booklets.



games. With the specially printed for John in Chinese and 30,000 Chinese-

over whether the

Hello, hello?!

What 'stress' are you most likely to take with you on holiday this summer? Your mobile phone separation

anxiety, according to a recent survey by YouGov. It seems that 53% of us suffer real distress when in peril of running out of battery or credit, losing our phone, or not having network coverage. In fact, one in five confessed that they would find being out of mobile phone contact as hard as moving house or breaking up with their partner.

On Ageing

I can manage my bifocals
To my dentures I'm resigned
I can cope with my arthritis
But how I miss my mind
Anon