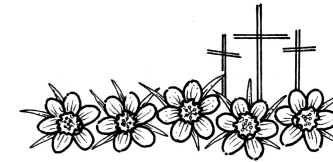


St Peter's Church

Belsize Square
London NW3 4HJ
<http://www.spbp.org.uk>
info@spbp.org.uk



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Priest-in-charge: Revd Paul Nicholson

Tel: 020 7586 6522 / Mobile: 07971 223764

Email: paul.nicholson@london.anglican.org

Churchwarden: Alfonso Vonscheidt and Dwayne Engh

Music Director: Dwayne Engh

Children's Minister: Grant Bolton Debbage

Pastoral Network Officer: Alfonso Vonscheidt

stpetersbp@yahoo.co.uk

Sunday Services: 11.15am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School
[Children start in church, returning at
Communion to receive a blessing]
6 - 7pm PrayerSpace

Weekday Services:

Monday-Friday : 5.00pm Evening Prayer

Thursday: 10.30am Holy Communion

Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals by arrangement with Father Paul.

Magazine material to be sent to judy.east@blueyonder.co.uk or given to
Father Paul, please

* from *Parish Pump*

DIARY FOR APRIL AND MAY

Sunday 1st – Palm Sunday

11.15am Parish Eucharist and distribution of Palms
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Holy Week

Monday & Tuesday 2nd & 3rd Evening Prayer at 5pm
Wednesday 4th 6.30pm – Evening Prayer at Passiontide

Maundy Thursday

5.00pm – Evening Prayer at Passiontide
6.30pm – Eucharist of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday

10.30am – Devotion and Holy Communion

Sunday 8th – Easter Day

11.15am The Service of Light and Easter Eucharist
No Evening PrayerSpace

No Services or activities in Easter Week, except

Thu 12th 6.45pm – Belsize Community Choir

Sunday 15th – Easter 2

11.15am Parish Eucharist
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 16th 3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

Tue 17th 7.30pm Joint Council Meeting of St Peter's and St Gabriel's (Studios)

Thu 19th 10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir



Sunday 22nd – Easter 3

11.15am Parish Eucharist
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 23rd – George, Martyr

3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

Wed 25th - Mark the Evangelist

Thu 26th 10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir



Sunday 29th – Easter 4

11.15am Parish Eucharist
12.30pm Annual Parochial Church Meeting
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace
7.30pm Talk by Doreen Lawrence *at Belsize Square Synagogue*

Mon 30th 3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

MAY

Tue 1st May – Philip and James, Apostles

Thu 3rd 10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir

Sunday 6th – Easter 5

11.15am Parish Eucharist and Baptism of Henrietta Fletcher
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 7th *No Children's Youth Club (Bank Holiday)*

Thu 10th 10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir

Sunday 13th – Easter 6

11.15am Parish Eucharist
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 14th – Matthias the Apostle

3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

Thu 17th – Ascension Day

10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir

Sat 19th 3.30 Wedding of David Harvey and Catriona Fray

Sunday 20th – Easter 7

11.15am Parish Eucharist
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 21st 3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

Thu 24th
10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir

Sunday 27th – Pentecost

11.15am Parish Eucharist
6 – 7pm PrayerSpace

Mon 28th 3.30-4.30pm Junior Youth Club [4-8] in church

Thu 31st - The Visit of Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

10.30am Holy Communion
11.15am Coffee and Croissants
6.45pm Belsize Community Choir

Sunday 3rd June - Trinity

11.15am Parish Eucharist *Celebrant & Preacher:*
Rev. Emma Dinwiddy Smith
6 - 7pm PrayerSpace



Father Paul writes.....

This magazine will first appear in St Peter's church on Easter Day. Having been immersed in Lent and Passiontide right up to this point, I confess that it's rather difficult to 'switch over' to the atmosphere of Easter ahead of time, for the purposes of a seasonal 'letter from The Vicar' in the magazine! It's not that I'm presently miserable, and dressed in sackcloth and ashes; just that Passiontide is a real season of its own. To talk of 'The Passion of Christ' is subtly different from, though not without connection to, our everyday use of the word 'Passion'. There, it means something that 'takes us over' in some way - like falling in love, or developing a consuming interest in something. In *his* Passion Christ, instead of being the dynamic figure who was previously teaching, healing, and acting in other wondrous ways, is 'taken over' by the events of his arrest, trial and crucifixion. He is 'handed over' to be the object of the action, ridicule, and cruelty of others. For that reason, Passiontide isn't just *information* to be taught, heard or read, but something to *feel*, and *identify* with. This doesn't need to be done in the mawkish, rather self-indulgent, 'bleeding heart' way that I have to admit is typical of some traditional Christian devotion. I find it most helpful to see, in all of the events of the Passion, Jesus continuing the Mystery of the Incarnation we first celebrate at Christmas - standing alongside us and submitting to the worst and darkest of human experience. Of itself this would, of course, be just another of life's sad incidents - Jesus the great wonder-worker, and the hope of so many, going out 'with a whimper'. But because, like other Christians, I know that this is not the end of the story, I find the Passion and Crucifixion a source of great Hope and comfort. Actually, the *Easter* experience works in the same way, but the other way round. It's a great release of joy and an eternal Hope, precisely because of what has gone before - because it still recognises the suffering and the 'passion' at the heart of human experience, but redeems and heals it of its sting through the Resurrection of Christ. Easter, then, is a two-way ticket, in which one side balances and complements the other, and humanity and God are reconciled.

Present-day culture is strangely inconsistent. It worships youth, success and material prosperity, and yet, in its coverage of celebrity fame, bankers salaries and of lawlessness on the streets, at the same it time admits to the disillusionment, futility and alienation that these pursuits so often lead to. Jesus of Nazareth never courted the crowds and popular acclaim. His way was in stark contrast to this culture, and never more so than on the cross, which scandalised people of his own day, and still does now. But Christians continue to talk of his 'hidden majesty', which still wins through despite the shame and scorn of the cross. To St Paul, 'Christ crucified' is 'the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.' (1 Corinthians 1:24-25) This is the Easter hope that inspires me, both individually, and as I seek to lead two small but growing congregations in Belsize Park and South Hampstead. Believe me, I see signs of the hidden majesty and power of the risen Christ in my work every day!

A very Happy Easter to you all,

Paul Nicholson

Sermon

Lent 2 2012

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Mark 8: 31-38

The Cross causes dispute today in a way that might not have been anticipated even 10 or 15 years ago. Christians might once have been offended at the easy way in which some wore a cross round their necks as a kind of fashion accessory; now they themselves run the risk of losing their jobs for exhibiting a cross in the work place – because of their employers' fear of causing offence to others. St Paul in his day acknowledged, in one of his letters, that the cross met resistance from his fellow Jews and from Greeks alike, saying that "Christ crucified" was "a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles". So it's no

surprise to find in today's Gospel reading that when Jesus tried to prepare his followers for what lay ahead of him, it caused the same stir. Mark's description doesn't mince words about the 'frank exchange' provoked by Jesus' prediction, which was 'said all... quite openly'. Peter takes him on one side and 'rebukes him'. If we dare to imagine what Peter actually said to Jesus, it might go something like this:

Stop talking like a loser. Why do you think we all go around following you? Because you have all the answers; you're the great teacher; you heal people of their diseases and demons. Don't go letting us down by going all weak and feeble on us like that. You're invincible, and it's only a matter of time before the authorities come round to seeing your greatness.

But Jesus answers with at least as much vehemence: "Get behind me, Satan" – strong words that perhaps recalled bitterly the great temptations he had had to fight during his 40 days in the wilderness, temptations to imagine himself as a kind of superman who always walked away unscathed, and who simply dazzled the crowds with his powers. Peter, he said, was setting his mind on human fantasies, and not divine truth and reality. It leads him on to summon all his disciples, and the crowd gathered round them (probably much to Peter's horror), and spell out perhaps his most challenging message – then, and now: If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

At our opening Lent Course meeting last week we took the first of five Biblical episodes culminating in the Crucifixion of Jesus. This episode took place in the Garden of Gethsemane, and is sometimes called 'The Agony in the Garden...'. Certain kinds of Christianity have traditionally wallowed in the suffering and the 'agony' of Christ in a quite self-indulgent and gratuitous way; although reactions were varied, some who saw Mel Gibson's film, 'the Passion of The Christ', felt that came somewhat into that category; we've probably all met some outwardly religious people with a 'martyr complex' – always eager to tell us what 'crosses' they're having to bear. Some of the material I saw on the net about these so

called 'Sorrowful Mysteries' we're considering in the Lent Groups, was similarly indulgent, syrupy and romanticised. I must say I can understand all these approaches leading some to shun the cross, and to not want to consider it.

But there it is inescapably in the Gospel, doubly reinforced by Jesus not only looking ahead to his cross, but saying that if we are to follow him, we have to take up our own. It becomes ever more clear that if we want to consider the meaning of this cross, both for Jesus and for ourselves as his followers now, we need to strip it of some of the layers of accumulated, gluey, pious devotion that has been added by the church in previous generations, and which has reduced it to a kind of contest of public devoutness.

What does Jesus mean by his insistent call to take up the cross? Certainly not that we should become self-loathing masochists. As we found in last week's Lent Group, the striking thing about Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane is that there he enters the human predicament of fearful agony as he looks death in the face. He prays that, if possible, he may be spared what's to follow, but is prepared to accept whatever is God's will. It's reality that he's facing – as it is in today's scene with Peter and the other disciples. What the cross reminds me – and it's surely the reason it became the great symbol of our faith – is that in Jesus Christ, God took upon himself the pain and the sorrow and the vulnerability of human existence – even unto death – along with all the thrills and the joys. In calling on us to take up our own crosses, Jesus is basically calling us to be real – to accept the bad things that happen in human life, the failures, the losses and the pain. He calls us to suffer these trusting that he is alongside us, as he was at Calvary, and that he will ultimately redeem them, as he did by rising to glory. The cross is our comfort and hope, and it gives an eternal dimension to the call we heard given to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis, to walk before God. In his writings to the first Christian churches, Paul held Abraham up as a model of faith, and fruitful obedience. The cross is the enduring pledge to us that we can all truly walk before God by following Christ's call; like Abraham and Sarah, we will be made

'exceedingly fruitful' precisely as we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him.

Paul Nicholson

A Letter.....

Dear All at St Peter's Church,

I have been involved with St Peter's church for almost four years, arriving to worship just after Easter 2008. I began to sit on the PCC in September of that year, alongside starting my year of pastoral assistance at the church.

I have come to know many of you well and have a great respect for the beautiful and often difficult ministry that you all offer here.

However I have realized that after three and a half years serving the PCC, it is time to step down. The forthcoming AGM is the perfect time to appoint a new member, with the injection of fresh life that will bring.. So, as I leave you here to continue your journey, I pray for the very best in terms of growth, depth and love between you all and offer you my most sincere blessing.

Yours in Christ,

Stephen Hickman

A memory for Jubilee Year

I grew up on the Wirral Peninsula.

On a cold day in February 1952 I went with my teacher across the water to Liverpool University to take part in a Latin verse speaking competition. This much loved teacher was Mary King. A widely travelled lady, she taught Latin and French and my career choice was pretty much down to her. I admired her very much. I wanted to be just like her.

The piece I had to recite was from a poem by Catullus about the death of his brother. Apt, for the news of the death of King George the Sixth had just been announced. On the platform as I spoke I could see her weeping. I didn't win but that was not why she was crying.

At sixteen I was not much affected by the death of a monarch, coming from a republican family. She was totally affected. She wept again on the boat coming back. The memory is still sharp. I had never seen a teacher cry before.

Helen Braithwaite

'His Nibs'

When the war ended I came out of the army in 1946 but couldn't settle down in my home town near Keighley in Yorkshire. So I went to Bolton in Lancashire and spent three years taking singing and guitar tuition. I then set out for London with the intention of getting into a show. Near Victoria Station I got bed and breakfast then applied for work in the nearby Labour Exchange the next morning.

I had been advised until I got properly organised to get live in work in an hotel. In the interview the man said the Charing Cross Road office was the place for hotels. However he called me back and said there was a job going close by and I would be working for "His Nibs". Not knowing Buckingham Palace was just a short walk away I asked, "Who is His Nibs?"

He answered, "The King. They want a coal porter to attend to the fires." (The Palace was not centrally heated then.) He gave me an official green card to present at the side entrance to the palace. When inside I was directed to a large room that dealt with staff duties and was informed by a uniformed footman that a Colonel Somebody would interview me. He was however engaged at the moment at a garden party in the palace grounds. He would be along shortly and I was directed to a seat until he arrived. There was much activity and after a while a tall heavily built man in a double breasted suit entered the room. He went to a drawer close to me, took out a revolver, slipped it into his pocket and left. I remarked to the head footman about the incident and he said he was accompanying the Queen on a trip to Belfast. More time passed and the head footman asked me if I was hungry. I replied in the affirmative and he took me out into the corridor and directed me to the staff canteen with instructions to return after having a meal.

It was a large dining hall with a cafeteria service that dealt with all staff members of the Palace. Gardeners, chambermaids, valets, page boys etc. I remember having fish and chips, apple tart and custard and returned to the staff room. There the head footman had been in conversation with another footman and said they had been discussing me and would I be interested in being a footman? There were eleven of them and there should have been twelve and the required height was five foot eight, which I was. Footmen served meals at the table and at banquets and escorted carriages on ceremonial occasions. When the household moved to Sandringham, Balmoral or Windsor Castle they moved with them. I remarked that I would be nervous in their presence but he said no, they were very friendly and asked about our families. I imagined the Queen asking about my brother's grocery shop and saying, "Has he short changed anyone lately?"

And me replying,

"Lately? He does it all the time."

The footman gave me a leaflet with conditions of service. These included full board and lodging in Buckingham Palace, a uniform, a new civilian suit every year, four weeks holiday a year and a salary of four pounds a week.

I was given the job on a month's trial. Dependant on whether "we like you and you like us." He asked for my address and when I said I did not have one, he phoned a hostel in Notting Hill Gate and said, "Stay there until I contact you."

After a couple of days in the hostel, I phoned the head footman to say I could not take the position as my intention was to get into shows.

Three years later at the Queen's coronation I was with my girl friend Doris (who was later to become my wife) in Whitehall. We had slept overnight on the pavement with other sightseers waiting for the procession from Westminster after the crowning. As it eventually passed, there walking alongside the coach were the footmen in their livery. I pointed to them and said to Doris "Any one of them could have been me!"

Irwin Lee

60 years ago.....

Princess Elizabeth became Queen, and the next year she was crowned. I have a few scattered memories of her Coronation.

Watching it in a friend's monochrome television was not enough. I took the 5.00 a.m. coach from Oxford to Victoria, the nearest vantage point. Roads in suburban London were deserted, but tube stations along the A.40 were besieged by parked cars.

As we walked down Victoria Street, an official Humber, with an Oriental looking passenger pulled out of a side-road. 'That's him!' whispered someone. Akihito, Crown Prince of Japan. Letters had poured into the Press, asking angrily how we could welcome the representative of a ruthless enemy. No one wondered how he felt hob-nobbing with the head of one of the states which had incinerated two Japanese cities.

There was already a crowd in Victoria Place opposite the Palace, in for a long wait, but we had diversions. A cavalryman, resplendent in scarlet tunic and bearskin, seemed to be blocking our view. 'Shoot that horse!' shouted someone. Another 'Shoot him too!'. Later a Ministry of Works lorry drove past, cheered by the crowd.

The workman on the back of it waved and bowed back.

The morning papers came out. One French paper commented on the weight of the crown to be borne by our frail young Queen.- it nearly fell off during the ceremony.

The British press broke the news, kept back until that day, that we had conquered Everest. A new Golden Age!

Eventually the procession started.. A special cheer for the Queen of Tonga with her grass-skirted warriors. She alone braved the 'Queen's weather' in an open coach. After that, all the other coaches, even our Queen's, seemed almost an anti-climax.

The ceremony was broadcast to us by loudspeakers. After the Royal Coach came back to the Palace, barricades came down, and those of us who had stuck it out surged up to the railings and I got my first live view of the Queen, her mother and her sister. Their freshness, colour and complexion were something TV could not show. Whatever I felt about Monarchy as an institution, I was looking at three lovely women.

What did I feel? I had none of my present doubts about hereditary monarchy. I resented a cartoon in next day's Guardian carping at the expense. I was not deferential, but loyal. But the point was, I had to be there...

Bob Braithwaite



Does anyone else have memories of the Coronation they'd like to share? Mine include gathering round a television in the Village Hall and a Fancy Dress competition which I won in a costume my son wore 25 years later for the Silver Jubilee celebrations [It's all right, I went as a Herald].

If you have any for the June/July issue please send them to me at judy.east@blueyonder.co.uk or give them to Father Paul.

St George, patron of England

The Saint of an English Army before he was Patron Saint of England, St George may have been a soldier, but he was no Englishman. He was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23 April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus:

One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lybia, where he found the citizens in great distress. A neighbouring dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner, and when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, where the dragon lived, and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. The Saint charged, and drove his spear into the gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess's girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene herself. The sight of her approaching with the befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. Presently England put herself under the protection of the Saint. His day was declared a holiday in 1222. A red cross on a white field is the flag of St George.

Get back to the core of what you do

Can you remember back to the beginning of any new job or ministry, and how focused you were on what you were expected to achieve? Would you say you still are?

Most of us have allowed our jobs to be overtaken by a mix of modern day issues, like dealing with the constant bombardment of emails, or our inability to say 'no' to people. As a result, when we look at our present workload, we find we have bolted on more tasks and projects to what we set out to achieve at the start.

Let's do an exercise to find out. Take a piece of paper (or a spreadsheet for the tekkies) and draw three columns - two small columns either side of a main column.

Now in the main column write a list of the core activities of your job or ministry.

To define core activities, unless you are the receptionist or in telephone sales, answering the phone is only a tool of the job, it is not a core activity. Amazingly, email is only a tool of the job as well! So they should NOT be on the list. Make sure you break down major aspects of your job into definable parts.

Once your list is complete, then in the left column define in an average week or month what percentage of your time you are able to devote to the important or core aspects of your job.

Unless you have kept very focused, you will probably find that the percentages exceed 100% or that you are just not happy with the times allocated to the important parts of the job. Many sales people who try this exercise and complete the list realise they are not even spending 30% of their time face to face with a customer. Even sadder, there are clergy who say they can't even allocate a percentage to their time with God. They find they are working "so hard for him", they don't have time to spend time with him!

If this is you then it is time to redress this balance and reallocate the percentages the way they should be.

Before you do, remember you can probably only ever allocate 60-70% to your core activities or you won't allow time for the other vital aspects of your work – the phone is still going to ring, and the emails will keep coming. Therefore it is even more crucial that your precious time is correctly allocated and guarded.

May Magnificat

May is Mary's month, and I
Muse at that and wonder why:
Her feasts follow reason,
Dated due to season—

Candlemas, Lady Day;
But the Lady Month, May,
Why fasten that upon her,
With a feasting in her honour?

Is it only its being brighter
Than the most are must delight
her?
Is it opportunist
And flowers finds soonest?

Ask of her, the mighty mother:
Her reply puts this other
Question: What is Spring?—
Growth in every thing—

Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld all
together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin
Forms and warms the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
In sod or sheath or shell.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathising
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

Well but there was more than
this:
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-
dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surfed cherry

And azuring-over greybell makes
Wood banks and brakes wash
wet like lakes
And magic cuckoo call
Caps, clears, and clinches all—

This ecstasy all through
mothering earth
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's
birth
To remember and exultation
In God who was her salvation.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

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Why not visit a website that promises just that? www.agreatread.co.uk is a Wiltshire-based mail order Christian book seller which holds around 80,000 Christian titles of various genres and denominations and everything from liturgical material to Christian fiction, Bibles to biographies, study materials to real-life testimonies, dvds, cds, cards and gift items. Browse to your heart's content!

Agreatread.co.uk will also help anyone wanting to set up a local church bookstall. Church bookstalls can do wonders in helping local Christians tap into the spiritual riches available. For details: phone 01373 823451, or email davidwavre@agreatread.co.uk.

HOPE launches free resources for Big Jubilee Lunch

To mark the 60th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne, HOPE has announced a range of free resources which churches can use as they mark the Diamond Jubilee with a Big Jubilee Lunch on 3 June.

HOPE is partnering with the Big Lunch, encouraging and supporting churches to use this historic moment to build community, reaching out to people in villages, towns and cities. Check out HOPE's Diamond Jubilee video and download free resources – all you need to make your Big Jubilee Lunch a huge success.

www.hopetogether.org.uk

