

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith • open in thought • reaching out in service

July/August 2015

The journey's end and beginning

'All change please. This train terminates here. All change please. Will passengers take all their personal belongings with them.' This announcement, or something like it, will be familiar to regular travellers on London Transport, and in carriages where up to that moment barely a word has been exchanged, there is very often a chorus of groans before everyone starts to get off. Sometimes the announcement is accompanied by helpful advice about how to continue the journey, at other times travellers are left to work out their own way of reaching their desired destination. Sometimes even, at this point strangers begin to talk to one another and offer suggestions. Always there is that stern reminder not to leave anything behind; or do they really mean: we don't want your rubbish, take it away?

During the last twelve months parish life at St Mary's has continued remarkably smoothly. With the generous help of visiting clergy we have largely been able to maintain the normal round of Parish life: principal services have been maintained, and baptisms, weddings and funerals have all taken place. Sunday School and Little Lambs have continued to operate, and we have even managed to maintain our tradition of Advent and Lent study. By and large there have been no unscheduled interruptions, and although we did take a difficult decision to suspend the twice monthly Parish Choir we have already begun to try out, with some success, alternative 'turn up and sing' days.

As we come to the end of the interregnum, it is more important than ever to remind ourselves that just like our own lives, Parish life has its own cycle of seasons. The same season cannot last for ever. Times of transition, when what lies ahead is unknown, can be dangerous and uncomfortable, but they can be exciting too and offer opportunities for new and enriching experiences. In the words of a song I heard

recently (as I can best recall), do we recognise that 'Adventure is calling in the wide open spaces inside me, there is something I would like to be.' Or has movement in our spiritual journey ceased? Has our mission to the world dried up? Has our faith become more like an insurance policy, taken out at confirmation and then placed for security in the back of the drawer? Despite our best intention to review it, have we long since lost touch with the detail of the small print, but take comfort from the fact that the premiums are up to date, aren't they? This may be a tangle of difficult questions and mixed metaphors, but they point in the same direction. When time is called at the end of one season in our parish life, are we ready to move on? The longest part of the spiritual journey, it is said, is the journey inwards, but the hardest part is keeping it moving and alive, reconciling internal dreams and aspirations with the hard facts and challenges of the world in which we live.

'All change!' on London Transport means that travellers scatter and go their own ways to their various destinations. Yet when our interregnum ends, our destination and our mission remain the same: we journey into the heart of God bearing witness to the great commandment to love God with all our hearts and minds and strength, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. With a new leader in Christ we look forward to a rewarding journey, and new and creative ways of achieving our mission. So: 'All aboard! All Aboard!'

Prayer in Interregnum

God of love and joy and peace
strengthen our rootedness in faith
kindle our openness in thought
And renew our reaching out in service
As we discern the life and mission of the parish
Individually and together and under the
guidance of the new Vicar
through Jesus Christ Amen

Interregnum Update New Vicar

We have appointed a new Vicar for St Mary's The Revd Dr. Sarah Archer. The date for Sarah's Induction and Licensing is **Monday 7 September (time to be confirmed)**.

Sarah's first service will be the Patronal on Sunday 13 September.



In Memory of My Darling June

It is now just over four months since my darling June died on 10 February and not a day goes by when June, the love of my life, my constant

companion for nearly 50 years and my wife for almost 40 years (22 March would have been our anniversary) is not constantly in my thoughts.

As many of you will know, bereavement is an extraordinary journey with so many layers of emotion, which I may try to write about in due course in the hope my words may help others, but for now let me just say that I am constantly reminded of Ginny's initial wise words that grief takes a long time, which I would be advised not to hurry.

Over 160 people attended June's funeral. The support that I and my daughter Amanda, my sons Ashley and Alex and June's mother Vi have all received from condolences, both written and spoken, and ongoing acts of kindness, has been overwhelming.

Due to the generosity of donations received at the time of the funeral in June's memory, just over £2,900 has in part and is in the process of being given fully to the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity to support the incredible work they do to find new treatments for this terrible and complex disease.

June would have been astonished at the outpouring of love for her and for the help and

care that we, her family, have received, and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.
Richard Brudenell

Report of Thursday Lunch on 11 June

The Thursday Lunch provides an opportunity to enjoy a delightful meal among the congenial company of friends, and concludes with a talk on a wide variety of interesting and sometimes challenging subjects. On this, our last meeting before the summer break, we were fortunate to have Jessica Wanamaker as our guest speaker.

Jessica is the Chief Executive of the Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea, founded in 1969 by Lady Anstice Goodman (a former member of the parish). Its object is to encourage business, and to support local charities and their service users directly through volunteering or other support. It looks to engage people of all backgrounds, help build communities and develop individual potential. As a result of cuts in public spending, a further increase of 50% over the next four years, Kensington and Chelsea will increase their number of volunteers and are looking to develop existing specialist programmes.

The award winning, InsideOut Resettlement programme supports prisoners due for imminent release, and also ex-offenders. Jessica explained that there will be pioneering work and support for older offenders and those with mental health issues. These are generally men over fifty, which is the fastest growing cohort in our prisons today. There is a Volunteer Centre located at Wormwood Scrubs, which is dedicated to giving particular support when prisoners are released and their sense of disorientation and isolation is immense.

Stepping Stones, also an award winning programme, promotes access and inclusion for people with physical and learning disabilities. Jessica described this as an extraordinary way of giving back and how important it is for the participants to contribute and do something for the community.

New Opportunities engages long term unemployed and people on low pay and those

who wish to gain qualifications through volunteering and training. It involves action-plan monitoring with short term and achievable objectives, giving one-to-one care and support.

Jessica then went on to explain the benefits of the Business and Community Together Programme, which works with the Kensington and Chelsea Foundation. Through work in this area, businesses are encouraged to support local charities and their service users, sharing time and skills. Examples of success in these areas are teams of people of all ages volunteering via Harrods, Meeting and Greeting at local and regional events, and assisting with visitors to museums in Exhibition Road during school holidays and on-site talks about the historical development of Portobello Road.

Jessica, a lively and informed speaker, spoke with dedication and passion concerning the above programmes, and she explained how volunteering made a valued difference to these people's sense of engagement. Interestingly, older volunteers were described as 'the most precious'. Volunteers came forward via word of mouth, social media and network.

This was a challenging and enjoyable talk, in which there was much 'audience' participation and everyone who enjoyed the lunches would like to thank the team who prepared the delicious and well presented food and secure such a wide variety of guest speakers.

Ann Mulcare

What brought us to St Mary's

One morning in 1998, shortly after moving to the area, Chris and I decided we needed to find a local church to attend. As I had grown up relatively close by in Fulham, Chris asked me if I knew of a church. I did. I said there was a church in the middle of The Boltons. Only once as a child was I taken to Sunday School: I was staying with a school friend who lived in the Little Boltons, and we went to the Sunday School at St Mary's.

That Sunday in 1998, a good 20 years after my last visit to the church, we went. Gerald Beauchamp was vicar at the time. We were impressed: his sermon was rooted in the Bible, and we enjoyed his intellectual analysis of the

language, yet his topic was contemporary and relevant. On the way out, we said hello, introduced ourselves and headed off, sufficiently inspired to want to return.

Three weeks later we were back. If we were impressed the first time, we were amazed the second: after the service, as soon as Gerald saw us, his face broke into a smile and he said immediately, 'Katie, Chris, welcome back, nice to see you again'. We were hooked.



Seventeen years, one wedding, two christenings and literally hundreds of Sunday School and junior Sunday School sessions later, we are still here. I like the symmetry that what drew us to St Mary's in the first place was the Sunday School, and now we share in leading it, and our children attend. I also like to think that one day, in 20 years' time, someone who as a child once visited St Mary's will return, because they remembered coming to Sunday School.

Katie and Chris Fowkes

The Summer Fair

As the week leading up to the Summer Fair progressed, the weather forecast deteriorated, but fortunately experience triumphed over hope and the weather was fine on the day itself. So many things made this year's fair just fall into place. There was a huge amount of effort and energy put in to, and very many thanks to everybody.

Special thanks go to TLC Estate Agents who gave us two hospitality packages for Chelsea FC, pay for the musicians and provide and run

the brilliant Apple Bobbing and festoon the skies with balloons, AND also appeared like magic on the morning with a wonderfully willing team of volunteers.

Six Splendid Hampers were put together, Pastiche musicians opened the afternoon with the most perfect performance of music and strawberry cream teas and Pimm's Tent (which had been sponsored by Budokwai) did roaring business. Knight Frank, the estate agents had kindly sponsored the costs of the barbecue and joined in the fun with their Guess the Garden Square game too.

Tombola, cakes and preserves sold out and 40 coconuts were swiped from their stands, and so much more. The TLC team came again in the afternoon, which meant that clearing up seemed so much quicker at the end of the day. We were cleared away from the garden with everything in the south transept for sorting out later just when the clouds opened.

We had taken about £5,000, and after expenses have been taken out, everyone's effort and energy has made about £4,500 for the charities that we are supporting this year. Thanks are owed to the many local businesses who gave us prizes and contributed to the costs involved and everything they gave us has made such a difference to the money that we, as a church, can give to others.

Katrina Quinton



The God of our Deepest Prayer

In the previous three articles I tried to explore what it means for Christians when they say that God is the 'maker of Heaven and Earth'. Seen in the light of scientific knowledge – incomplete as it is – of how the universe has evolved, and within it life on earth, we found a picture of mind-boggling complexity. From it there emerged the notion of a transcendent being, the 'Word' of St John's Gospel (1:1-5), who has created and perpetually sustains all that exists.

‘Without him not one thing came into being’. So far, so good, but how are we to reconcile this God with the one whom we meet in our deepest prayers?

Not all Christians might agree on what our deepest prayer consists of, and to this we will return. I will take as my starting point the mystical tradition that dates back to the earliest centuries of Christianity. I started to explain this in the February issue of *Clarion* and I hope that some repetition can be forgiven. The term ‘mystical’ derives from the title of a short treatise called *Theologia Mystica* (literally the secret knowledge of God), which was purported to have been written by Dionysius the Areopagite, the disciple of Paul in Acts 17:34, but was probably by a Syrian monk, living several hundred years later, who is now known as ‘pseudo-Denis’. This treatise was translated by an English author (whose name is also unknown) writing in the latter half of the fourteenth century and became the basis for his book *The Cloud of Unknowing*. (Both works are in print: the first, edited by Alan Watts, published by Holy Cross Press 1944; the second, by Penguin Press 2001). Together these books were highly influential in founding a ‘Dionysian’ tradition that included such authors as Walter Hilton (1340-1396), St John of the Cross (1542-1591) and William Law (1686-1761).

According to Denis, God is incomprehensible, beyond our language and imagination, beyond anything we can describe. The only language appropriate to address God is silence. Only in silence can we enter into the great mystery we call ‘God’. God is beyond being, beyond our imagination, beyond the limits of our speech. If we want to talk to God, Denis says, do not say anything at all. God will listen. Too often our prayers are projections of our own needs and desires; we give God little room to enter into the conversation. Talking all the time to God without ever listening is like a phone conversation with constant static, it is deafening to God. Silence is a language God can speak without being constantly interrupted because God is a mystery of incomprehensible love, and love speaks for itself. If we could really be attentive to the mystery of God in our lives we would realise that God is both beyond our thoughts and imaginations (though these can

bring us closer to God) and very near to us. Augustine, in his *Confessions* and speaking to God says: ‘You were more inward than my inmost self and superior to my highest being’. (*Confessions of Saint Augustine*, 3.6.11). God is a mystery of silence and intimacy. God is incomprehensible and ineffable, far beyond our wildest imaginations, yet nearer to each of us than we are to ourselves. (Ilia Delio *The Humility of God*, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, 2005, pp. 16-17.) It is on this basis that the whole art and practice of contemplative prayer has been built, and brought alive for our time by writers such as Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941), Bede Griffiths (1908-1993) and Thomas Merton (1915-1968).

How to enter this silence? The problem is that the thinking mind, when not engaged in its primary task of reason, fizzes and boils with inner noise and mental clutter. Try listening to yourself. The resultant cacophony has been variously described as ‘monkey chatter’, ‘some wild cocktail party of which we find ourselves the embarrassed host’ and the ‘wild hawk of the mind’. The art of contemplation consists in finding the inner silence that lies beneath all this. The advice of the contemplative tradition is to give the mind something to do. Give it a short phrase or word to repeat silently. When we pray we give our attention wholly to the repetition of the prayer word. We then find that our attention is being forever stolen by some distraction. As soon as we become aware of this we gently bring ourselves back to the prayer word. The simpler this word is, the better. The author of the *Cloud* recommends ‘Love’ or ‘God’. Others prefer ‘Jesus’ or ‘*Maranatha*’ (pronounced as four separate syllables). My own preference is for ‘love’, ‘joy’, and ‘peace’. The point is to give one’s attention wholly to these words during the time set aside for prayer, not so much reflecting on their meaning as simply repeating them.

If we persist, the reward can be great. In the words of a contemporary author: ‘The prayer word opens. It reveals not another object of awareness, but the groundless ground that is the core of all being. This typically registers to the mind as an indescribable vastness, streaming in from all sides, streaming in from no side, an ocean full and overflowing with luminous nothing. And so this silence washes onto the

shores of perception, making it stretch to receive metaphors of light, union, calm, spaciousness. (Martin Laird, *Into the Silent Land: The Practice of Contemplation*, Darton Longman and Todd, 2005, p. 66). This book is full of practical advice on such matters as posture, breathing and how to cope with phobias and pain, all necessary for the would-be contemplative, but not immediately relevant to the theme of this article.

In case this seems a bit overblown, here is a more prosaic account by Dom David Knowles, the historian of English Monasticism: 'But beyond these kinds of knowledge (i.e. reason and revealed religion) there is a third by which God can be directly known and experienced. This is recognised by the person concerned as being utterly different and more real than all their previous experience of the knowledge and love of God. It is felt as taking place at a deeper level of the personality than that on which the normal processes of thought and will take place; something wholly distinct from the reasoning mind. And while the experience is completely uncommunicable it brings absolute certainty to the mind of the recipient. This is traditional mystical theology in its purest form'. (*The English Mystical Tradition*, Burns and Oates, 1961, pp. 2-3). (To be continued)
Hugh Beach



Out in the Garden...

Many people use the garden for many different reasons. Some people stop to talk, and the conversations are

often of great meaning. Perhaps the garden lends itself to being in touch with meaning. One lady told me that last year she used to come to the garden with her mother; now she is coming with her granddaughter. One lady makes sure that the bird bath is full. Another lady told me of her husband, in a wheelchair last year (I used to see them and occasionally exchange a few words) and she misses him and then worked alongside me for a good while. When I was clearing the dead bluebells, a lady asked me if she could have a bunch. She would bring the

flowers to St Francis: a statue that a local church had thrown out but that she rescued and now adorned with whatever she could find. A young woman told me that she had been very ill but now finds that sitting in the garden is healing, especially when the sun shines. Then there is a child who is often in the south garden and he calls 'gardener!' when he has a question about what I am doing.

It seems that the garden, the plants and wildlife have a ministry all of their own as part of St Mary's. I think of it as the holiness of the building extending its rays to its surroundings, and way beyond that.

Verena Tschudin

Visiting Clergy

On the last Sunday in June, the Revd David Brooke came to St Mary's to baptise William Hambro. Fortunately for us he had decided that he would like to join us for the 10.30am service. The priest who was meant to be leading the service was delayed, so Revd Brooke jumped into the breach.

Coming from the Durham diocese, it was interesting to learn from his sermon of the financial interaction between the dioceses of the Church of England and how much the Durham Diocese is helped. Learning of the reinvention of Stockton Parish Church as a church for the Iranian Christian community, which was contributing to the diocese and aiming to increase its donation, was inspiring. Many times it seems we are asked to give and yet have no idea what our giving can do and the difference it can make to people that we know nothing of.

He also shared with us a phrase used by a colleague in one of his first congregations when raising money, which I think will stick with me for a long time: 'The good news is that we have the money, the bad news is that it is still in your pockets!'

Another interesting priest during our interregnum and a delightful surprise for a Sunday morning.

Katrina Quinton

July & August Year's mind

Mary Harrington
Lorraine Seely
Robert Hawker
Derek Wood
Jean-Paul Mahieu
Julian Ridsdale
Rosemary Everett
John Harris
Hazel Bosworth
Enid Ingle
Poppy Readman
David Messerlian
Keith Doran
Thomas Harrington
Richard Bond
Harry Parkinson
Olga O'Grady
Joanna Simon
Caroline Redgrave
Geoffrey Bellman
Roland Sutcliffe
Margaret Lake
Alec Skempton
Christa Soell
Nancy Smith
Milosh Gregovich
Zia Ahmad
Joachim von Bethmann-Hollweg
Clarissa Lada-Grodzicki
Adele King
Minnie Warwick
Robert Jackson
Geneviève Maw
Murat Akiner
Peter Canadine
Norah Bowen
Betty Greenland

Sunday Church Flowers

If you would like to commemorate a special occasion – such as a significant birthday, wedding anniversary or the birth of a child/grandchild – one way to do so is to donate the flowers that are by the lectern each week for the Sunday service. If you wish, the donation can be noted in the weekly pew sheet with the words, 'The flowers today are given by... to the Glory of God and in thanksgiving for...'

Please contact the Parish Office if you would like to do this, to discuss the Sunday date and also the flowers you would like.

Alternatively, the choice of flowers can be left to the team of volunteers who arrange the flowers each week.



Passes for St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey

We have four free passes to get FREE entry into St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. If you would like to pick up the tickets please call or e-mail John at the parish office.

Upcoming in August 2014

Saturday 22 Wedding of Nat Harper & Laura Bolt

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Eucharist, 10.30am Sung Eucharist
The meeting room at the back of the church is available for people with pre-school children. There is a baby changing facility in the wheelchair accessible toilet in the hall.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Usually Morning Prayer is said daily at 8.30am (Eucharist on Feastdays); except Public Holidays.
Wednesday 7.00pm Eucharist

Readings in July 2015

Sunday 12 Sixth Sunday after Trinity All

Age worship

Readings at 10.30am 2 Samuel 6. 1-5, 12b-9;
Ephesians 1. 3-14;
Mark 6. 14-29

Sunday 19 Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am 2 Samuel 7. 1-14a;
Ephesians 2. 11-end;
Mark 6. 30-34, 53-end

Sunday 26 Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am 1 Samuel 11. 1-15;
Ephesians 3. 14-end;
Mark 6. 1-21

Readings in August 2015

Sunday 2 August Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am 2 Samuel 11. 26-12.13a;
Ephesians 4. 1-16;
John 6. 24-35

Sunday 9 August Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am 2 Samuel 18. 5-9, 15, 31-33;
Ephesians 4. 25-5.2;
John 6. 35, 41-51

Sunday 16 August Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am *1 Kings 2. 10-12; 3. 3-14; Ephesians 5. 15-20; John 6. 51-58*

Sunday 23 August Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am *1 Kings 8. 22-30, 41-43 ; Ephesians 6. 10-20; John 6. 56-69*

Sunday 30 August Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am *Song of Solomon 2. 8-13; James 1. 17-end; Mark 7. 1-8, 14-15, 21-23*

Sunday 6 September Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am *Proverbs 22. 1-2, 8-9, 22-23; James 2. 1-10, 14-17; Mark 7. 24-end*

Parish Office

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Director of Music John Ward

07853 406050

boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Verger / Caretaker David Iretton

020 7244 8998 / 07881 865386

Day off: Tuesday

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Leo Fraser-Mackenzie 020 7384 3246

Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

Members of the PCC

Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie

Mr Richard Brudenell

Mrs Tania Caubergs

Ms Julie Crutchley

Mr Craig Drake

Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod Representative)

Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary)

Mrs Ann Mulcare (Deanery Synod representative)

Mr Edward Quinton

Mrs Judy Rydell

Mrs Katrin Roskelly

Ms Camila Ruz

Ms Kelly Webb

Safeguarding Officer

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Julie Crutchley. Her role is to help us to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. She is the first point of contact for children, adults at risk and other members of the congregation regarding suspicions of abuse and other safeguarding concerns.

If you have any concerns, please contact Julie on [07764497413](tel:07764497413). Alternatively, speak to:

Sheryl Kent, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: 020 7932 1224

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) helpline: 0845 120 4550

Family Lives: 0808 800 222 (Previously Parentline) Childline: 0800 111

Children's Champion

The St Mary The Boltons' Children's Champions are Chris and Katie Fowkes. Their role is to ensure that the voices and needs of the children and young people are heard and reflected in parish life. They can be contacted via: Katie.Fowkes@talktalk.net / [07810 831505](tel:07810831505)

Treasurer Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

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Gift Aid Secretary

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Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Clarion Editor

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Readers & Intercessors Rota

Mary Meeson (call Parish Office)

Reading at St Cuthbert's and St Matthias' School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

Thursday Monthly Lunch

Ann Tait 020 7352 5127

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School Parish Office

Contributions for the September Clarion should be sent in to the church office by 26 August 2015

The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a Registered Charity, No 1133073

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