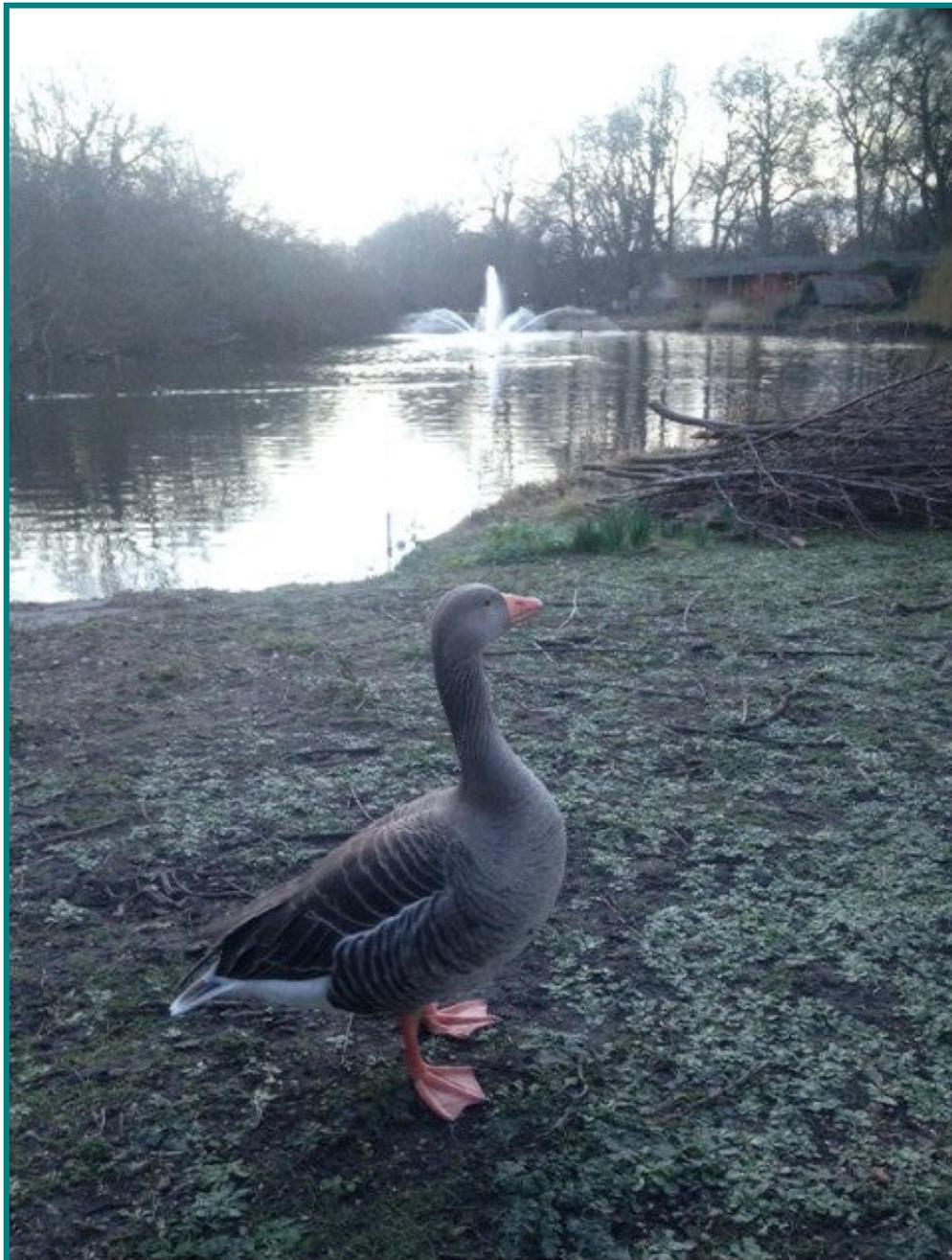


St Peter's
Eaton Square
Parish Magazine



April 2016
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VICAR'S NEWSLETTER



Christian Formation at St Peter's

At the PCC meeting in March, I spoke about 'Formation' - the process through which we grow in faith, and relate what we know about Christianity and what we believe to our daily lives - our discipleship. I thought that it might be helpful to summarise here what we have been doing to help people to grow in faith at St Peter's over the last few months.

We have two Formation Groups which are part of our PCC structure, one for adults and one for young people and children, and these meet to help us to plan and develop what we do to support spiritual growth. The work of formation is at the heart of what we are as a church - along with outreach and worship it is the reason for us coming together as the Body of Christ in our community.

We are doing quite a lot to provide opportunities for learning and for growth in faith, for people of all ages, but more could be done, and I offer some thoughts at the end about ways in which I hope to see our work in Christian formation increasing. This has been the subject of discussion at Formation Group meetings, and ongoing discussion among the clergy. There are constraints which affect what we might offer - constraints of time which affect many people with busy work or family life; constraints of location which make it difficult for us to offer activities for people who need to travel to St Peter's; and limits to our own resources too.

Adult Formation

At the heart of our formation as disciples and followers of Christ is our participation in worship. By attending services we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, and as we do so the Holy Spirit works within us to turn us from darkness to light, to a position of ongoing learning as committed disciples. This is helped by worship which is comprehensible, attractive, welcoming and inclusive, with sufficient time for reflection, explanation and challenge. The readings, prayers and witness of others we meet at church help to form us as we see and hear what discipleship is about. The act of receiving communion brings us into physical contact with the saving work of Christ in our own lives and in the world, challenging the assumptions of the world around us about life, about wealth, power and beauty, about the meaning within human suffering - and this demands a response which is both intellectual and practical. During the worship we offer, clergy or invited preachers explain and help us to engage with scripture, tradition and reason, so that we can grow in faith and Christian maturity. As Christians, we have a duty to worship regularly, not only to offer God the praise and worship which is his due, but to allow ourselves to be *formed* more and more into the image of Christ.

Participation in worship is an important part of our formation - this includes putting ourselves forward as welcomers, readers,

servers, intercessors, LEMs, as singers or in offering hospitality. Faith grows when we are not just observing, but taking part, and feel a responsibility for encouraging others. If coming to church is the equivalent of putting a car into gear, agreeing to help with some aspect of our worship is the moment when we let out the clutch and start to move - the point at which the real learning begins. In the same way, helping in other aspects of the church's life is also part of our formation as disciples as we reflect on what we have done, reconsider new needs and offer our own gifts to God.

Inspiring, challenging and well prepared sermons are vital in helping us to make sense of what we experience, to understand our faith better, and to take steps towards deeper discipleship. We have invited a small number of visiting preachers over the last year, but as both I and Julie are new to the church, it has been appropriate that we have preached very regularly. It is always helpful for clergy to receive feedback about what we preach - please do not feel afraid to tell us how our sermons have been for you. The sermons from the Sung Eucharist are also on the website, and we have consistently encouraged people to listen to them during the week, on a phone or tablet, as a way of reflecting and learning.

Any opportunity for Christians to come together is an opportunity for deepening discipleship and so all our meetings and activities are part of our formation. The Book Group, for example, has great value in helping members to grow in faith, in a very gentle way. The Parish Magazine and weekly email newsletter also help to draw us more deeply into the life of the church and to grow in understanding and commitment. The chance to talk to clergy is also available to everyone, and some people talk to us on a one off basis, or meet more regularly.

We have arranged a number of ways in which people are more directly helped and challenged to deepen their faith, and these

include the Faith Group, Lent Groups, Confirmation Group, and Quiet Day.

The monthly Faith Group met consistently from last Summer, had a break for Christmas and for Lent, and will meet again regularly after Easter. With over a dozen regular attenders in a domestic setting, it has been inspiring and thought provoking for all of us. My intention was to create a space where we could be inquiring, wide ranging in our discussion and personally supportive, while looking at key texts from scripture from the perspective of our own lives, rather than conducting an expository style Bible study. My intention for the coming months is that we will look at one of the gospels and use this as a starting point for our meetings.

The Lent Groups this year have been very valuable, and Julie and I would be grateful for your feed back on how you have experienced them. With approximately twenty people attending each week either on Monday evening or on Wednesday morning, the groups have attracted a wider range of participants than the Faith Group. The content of Paula Gooder's book about Pope Francis' teaching on Evangelism has been a good starting point and helpful structure.

The Confirmation Group met each week for two months and three adults were prepared for Confirmation. We followed the 'Pilgrim Course' and the three candidates are keen to continue meeting after Easter and have asked for more Biblical teaching, which Revd Julie will provide. The course ended with an excellent Confirmation Service at St Peter's on March 6th.

The Quiet Day took place on Saturday 27th of February, and was attended by about twenty people. It included worship together, brief addresses from Revd Ros, Revd Julie and myself, and activities to help our reflection around the church. We shared lunch together and people were very appreciative of the opportunity it provided to spend time quietly in church. It is something we will certainly do again.

Youth Formation

Just as Adult Formation begins with our worship, so does the formation of children and young people. We are very pleased to be able to offer our children a chance to grow up in a community of faith, and to develop as followers of Jesus from an early age. Along with the wonderful encouragement of St Peter's School we provide a framework to support families bringing their children up to know God's love for them, and to make choices and decisions informed by faith and Christian values. We are aware of how significant this experience will be throughout their lives. Children are welcome at all our services. Some children regularly attend the Sung Eucharist very happily, and other families would enjoy this later service if they have children who can make use of its beauty and stillness. The Family Eucharist offers an environment where children of any age are actively welcomed and included. It can cope with toddlers enjoying their own voices, parents with infants, older children who can serve, act and help, and seeks to be a safe and joyful learning and worshipping environment. On two recent occasions the children have gone out of the service during the sermon for particular activities. This pleased many people, and we are likely to do it again from time to time, but we are not convinced that there is a wish for this to be a regular pattern. The inclusive nature of the worship is deeply important to many people here.

St Peter's Poppets takes place on Monday mornings every week. With support from Revd Julie and from Rosa, and leadership last year from Betina Scanlon, and in the last few months from Dana Bahram and Milena Botzova, it is a successful group for toddlers and their parents or carers. For some of those who attend, and who come regularly on Sundays too, it will prepare them for St Peter's School Nursery and then reception class.

The Youth Group began in the autumn and has been very successful, with about a dozen children (about 1/3 boys) from Y7 and one or two from Y8 attending the meetings on alternate Sun-

day evenings. Most of them knew one another well, and they gelled quickly and along with lots of fun activities have had discussions about faith, and about safeguarding, and have used drama as a way of participating in the worship of the church and to think about their own faith. As they grow and mature we hope to increase the amount of spiritual content, while keeping it fun. When they move up a year we might start a younger group too.

At St Peter's Primary School Revd Julie and I continue to officiate and speak each week at the Friday Eucharist for KS2 children, at the Assembly for KS1, and go in to classes each week to help children think about and write the prayers for the Friday service. The school is regularly in church for assemblies and services too, and we make every effort to engage with children, parents and teachers. This ongoing contact, and the many meetings it leads to in the street, the supermarket or playground is invaluable, and leads to important pastoral contact, as well as opportunities to help children to understand faith more fully. St Peter's School has recently appointed one of its teaching staff Sophia Holder (who is also head of RE and Music) as 'Church, Community and Enrichment Leader', to ensure that there is always active contact between the school and the church. As clergy we are also involved at Westminster City School, taking assemblies there each term, and last term Revd Julie was accompanied there by Artemis Kassi, our children's champion. It is a privilege to be able to speak from the heart to hundreds of teenage boys in that environment.

Confirmation classes took place for children in Y5 and we prepared sixteen children including one teenager, at classes held at St Peter's School on Tuesdays and at church on Wednesdays. Thirteen were confirmed on March 6th, and three confirmed at St Stephen Rochester Row, and at St Paul's Cathedral. The classes were fascinating for me, and the children were enthusiastic, enquiring, and thoughtful. There is debate about the best age for confirmation and the admission to communion. What we do here is not the one 'right way', but it has many benefits and I have no desire to alter it.

Looking Ahead

One clear need which we identified at the PCC Away day in 2015 was the challenge of providing teaching and learning opportunities for adults who attend the Family Eucharist, but have little chance to get to anything else, and little free time in general. Because most are already heavily committed in their work and home lives, and often live some way away from the parish, coming to another meeting in church is not possible, except on a one off basis. Attending Quiet Days or courses without children is not going to be possible for more than a few. From the time I first came to meet people at St Peter's, a major question for me has been, 'how do we deliver a meaningful teaching and learning experience for tired and busy parents'.

One suggestion I have made is to try to do something online - like a weekly webpage with the Sunday readings, some explanation, questions and prayers. Now that our website is greatly improved, and we have an established email newsletter, I hope this will be possible, but it will need clergy time to try it, if we can, later this year. It would supplement, not replace, face to face meeting, but might help to keep busy parents engaged with the weekly readings and growing in faith. Any other ideas would be greatly appreciated!

Ralph

FROM JULIE



The other day someone asked me how long I have been at St Peter's. And I answered that it has been about 6 months. They responded with, 'well you are part of the furniture now.' And it's true. I do feel very much part of the fabric of St Peter's. And this is largely because I have had the privilege to get to know many people in a number of ways. The interviews for the magazine have provided a wonderful opportunity to delve a bit deeper into people's lives. And my hope is that readers will be inspired by the inter-

viewee's story, the particular ways they have and are living out their faith. So please do give me suggestions for people I might interview or I may ask you...

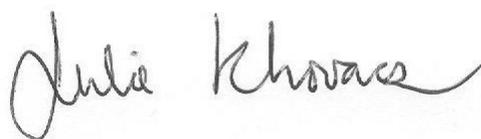
The focus over the last few months for both Ralph and myself has largely been on Formation through the Lent course and preparing candidates for confirmation. Both Lent Courses have produced lively and challenging discussions as we have explored our calling as a community to come alongside God in his mission in the world. I have also greatly enjoyed the time spent with those preparing for confirmation. The courses for both the adults and the young people were inspiring. I was moved on more than one occasion by the depth of faith and insight expressed by the adults. The course for the young people was particularly fun. Their many questions helped me to revisit some of my theological preconceptions and were good material for more than one

sermon. As I often say, I believe children often have a particular wisdom that can speak into our lives when we take the time to listen. We often hear, ‘children are the church for tomorrow.’ But I would say they are also the church today. For the Church, the Body of Christ, is incomplete without them. For they give us a glimpse of the beauty of God in the world.

Last month, as many of you know, was our confirmation service. And before the service the Bishop met with the candidates. He spoke with them about their experience of preparation and asked if they had any questions for him. And there were some great questions, particularly from some of the younger candidates. They asked, ‘When I am confirmed will I change?’ ‘Where do people go when they die?’ ‘What does God look like?’ And the final question was, ‘Where is heaven and what will it be like?’

Now the Bishop began by explaining how we know very little about heaven, where it is or what it will be like. And yet, we do know something. Heaven will be an experience of perfect relationship with God. Heaven is a place of eternal love and beauty. And it is not altogether separate from our present world. For we see glimpses of heaven today in the beauty all around us; in art, music and, most of all, through the signs of generosity and love as we seek to make the beauty of God’s kingdom known in our world.

As I am writing this letter we are about to begin our journey through Holy Week when we walk with Jesus on the road to the darkness of the Cross. And as we do we will walk our own journey to the cross. We will face and embrace our emptiness and we look forward to the empty tomb. And from here we will be ready to see God’s beauty revealed when we come together on Easter morning saying, ‘Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!’

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Khovacs". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered below the main text of the letter.

CURRY & QUIZ NIGHT

**on Saturday 7 May 2016
at 6.00pm
in aid of SAAKSHAR**

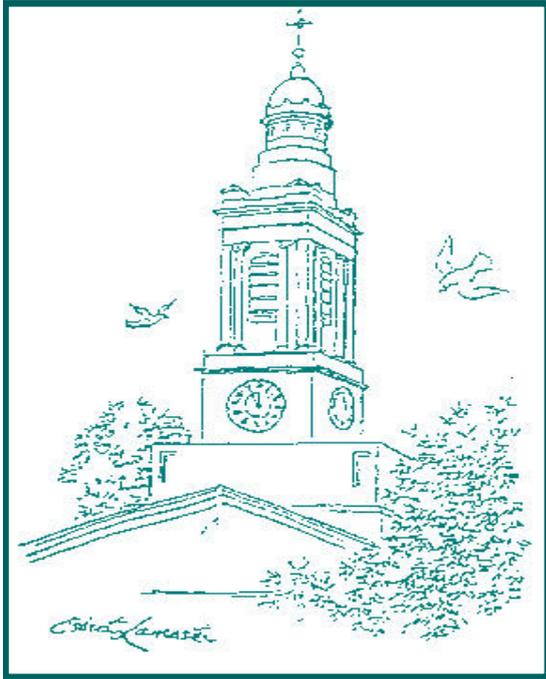
*(Fr Ralph's charity working to
provide education to children
living in the slums of Delhi)*

**An evening of food and fun that will
include a presentation from Ralph
about the work of SAAKSHAR**

Tickets £10.00 each will
be available from April



PARISH NEWS



March was a month of learning at St Peter's, as the article here about Formation indicates. There were Lent Groups every Monday and Wednesday which generated interest and lively discussion leading up to Holy Week and Easter. At the time of writing, Palm Sunday is about to begin our observances of Holy Week with a narrated Passion reading, led by members of the Youth Group, a procession with palms and Bayleaf the donkey around

Eaton Square, and the Sung Passion narrative at the Sung Eucharist afterwards. The full complement of services and liturgies during Holy Week promises to lead us movingly through the last days of Jesus life in Jerusalem, to the victory of the cross, and the joy of Easter Sunday. One innovative addition to our events in Holy Week is the opportunity to shine shoes as an act of service on Maundy Thursday, for those passing through Victoria Station. After Easter the church is closed on Easter Monday and Tuesday of Easter Week, and after that Revd Julie, our staff and I will each take some time off.

Confirmation Groups continued in the weeks before an outstanding Confirmation Service on March the 6th, which was also Mothering Sunday, at which the Bishop of London confirmed thirteen children and three adults. His sermon is available on the website if you missed it or would like to listen again.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Amy Evans earlier this year, who has directed the family Eucharist Choir for 3 years. We are very grateful to Amy for her much valued contribution to our

worship and our life as a church community. We were delighted to appoint Fiona Hymns in March to the role of leading the Family Eucharist Choir and we welcome her warmly.

We held a memorial service for Walter Richards in Church on March 1st. Walter was born in Victoria and was well known as a businessman in Pimlico. Some of his family attend our school and worship at our Family Eucharist, and we have held them in our prayers.

The month also saw the start of our wonderful Eaton Square Concert season, with very successful concerts of a high standard by the Fitzroy Quartet, the London Bridge Trio, and the Choir of Clare College Cambridge, sponsored by Grosvenor, Victoria BID, and the Kennedy Memorial Trust. The concerts continue on Thursday 31 March with Gemma Rosefield, cello, and Tim Horton, piano, playing Beethoven, Strauss, Martinu and Brahms, and then a piano concert performed by Peter Donohoe on 7th April 2016, with works by Scriabin, Beethoven, Brahms and Schubert. Don't forget there are large discounts for St Peter's members.

We were also pleased to host concerts in March for the Hungarian Embassy on 15th, and the Nonsuch Singers on Saturday the 19th of March. Looking ahead, it may be that April is a quiet month... but you never know. For me, the end of April will be an exciting landmark, as I will have been here at St Peter's for a year already.

Ralph

READINGS FOR APRIL

**Sunday, 3 April: Second
Sunday of Easter**

Acts 5: 27-32

Revelation 1: 4-8

John 20: 19 - 31

**Sunday, 10 April: Third
Sunday of Easter**

Acts 9: 1-6

Revelation 5: 11-14

John 21: 1-19

**Sunday, 17 April: Fourth
Sunday of Easter**

Acts 9: 36-43

Revelation 7: 9-17

John 10: 22-30

**Sunday, 24 April: Fifth
Sunday of Easter**

Acts 11: 1-18

Revelation 21: 1-6

John 13: 31-35

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Thursday, 14 April 2016

7.00pm Eucharist in Church

7.30pm A.P.C.M. in Parish Hall

If you are on the Electoral Roll,
please ensure that you attend.

We will need to elect five new
PCC members.

PICTURE FOR APRIL

*Congratulations to Her Majesty on her
90th Birthday - 21 April*



REVD JULIE INTERVIEWS RAANA, MEHRDAD, MEHRAD & ARIO

During my time at St Peter's I have been struck by the ways in which Raana and Mehrdad, along with their bright and happy children Mehrad and baby Ario, impact and influence the life of our community. Raana is very involved with the social committee, hospitality and always seems to be lending a helping hand to someone who needs it. Mehrdad is often seen lending his hand to many practical projects around the church, such as helping George put up notice boards, assisting Jim with maintenance and helping Raana with refreshments.



A number of people have mentioned to me how much they appreciate both Raana and Mehrdad, that they have an interesting story and are an example of people who take seriously their journey of faith. I had picked up bits of their story and, wanted to

know more, I thought they would make the perfect family for the next magazine interview. And so Mehrdad, Raana and I enjoyed a lovely conversation. And I must add that Ario was also with us and contributed much to the conversation with his contagious smile!

Raana and Mehrdad were both born in Tehran, Iran and grew up together as neighbours. After not seeing one another for fifteen years, Raana's brother stopped to help a man whose car was broken down. And this young man turned out to be Mehrdad. And the first thing Mehrdad asked him was, 'Is Raana married?' When he learned that she wasn't yet married Mehrdad completely forgot about his car and went to visit Raana's family. Raana at this time was in her first year of University and she remembers a somewhat nervous Mehrdad asking her out for a lovely dinner. They were married less than a year later and have now been married fourteen years.

Raana and Mehrdad both grew up in Muslim families and Islam was practised in society and taught in school but neither considered themselves practising Muslims. Both had a favorable view of Christianity growing up and Raana, in particular, was influenced early on by Christian neighbours. And so, after moving to England they both decided to visit various churches in order to look more closely at the Christian faith. And when Mehrdad was accepted to St Peter's school, it seemed logical to visit the church. And they soon felt very much at home. St Peter's for them was the beginning of the journey into Christian faith. They both spoke to me of a deep faith birthed and nurtured by people in the St Peter's community. They are particularly grateful for the Glen family, thankful for the way Jim has been a dedicated godfather to Mehrdad and how both Jim and Claire are loving godparents to Ario. Mehrdad is deeply grateful for his friendship with Jim and said, 'anything I say about the Glens is not enough. We love the Glen family!'

Raana and Mehrdad both spoke of their gratitude for the way Fr.

Mark nurtured them in their faith. He helped to give them a foundation, explaining the faith to them slowly and with simple language. He patiently listened to their ‘1000 questions’ and helped them to make faith in Christ their own. And so, with guidance from Fr. Mark, Mehrdad, Raana and Mehrad were soon baptized. And significantly, their date of baptism is the same day as their wedding day and Raana’s birthday. Both feel strongly and deeply that ‘they will be forever grateful to Fr. Mark and for the rest our lives he will always be in our prayers.’

Both Raana and Mehrdad describe a profound sense of the joy and love of God in their lives. I was struck during the interview with the depth of their faith and the movement of God in his calling of them, first to belief and then to the joy of new life. Raana shows the depth of her wisdom saying, ‘my faith and the bible is not a story. It is my life.’ For them both St Peter’s church is their family. And an important part of embracing the church as family is that they want their children to grow up free from guilt, to understand forgiveness, to give to others and to know the grace of God. And Raana and Mehrdad both seek, with the help of God and the church, to impart in their children an understanding of the love of Christ. ‘Jesus,’ says Raana, ‘prayed for his enemy. This is love. This is what I’m looking for and this is what I want for my children. I can’t say I am a Christian and then not do as Jesus told me.’ As Raana’s surname means ‘one who forgives people’ I think this is a good note on which to end. Mehrdad and Raana have a profound depth of faith in the love and forgiveness of Christ, the type of faith birthed in experience, through an understanding of what it means to ‘forgive as we have been forgiven.’

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia Khovacs". The signature is written in dark ink on a plain white background.

“LITTLE BEN” IS BACK

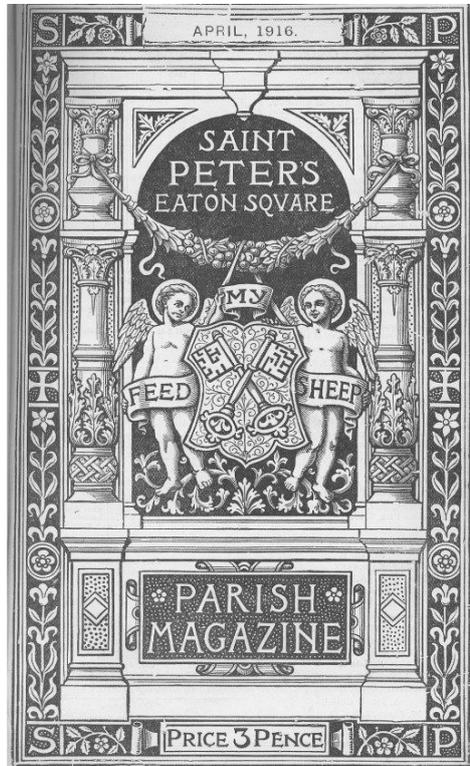


The listed clock tower known as “Little Ben” has been reinstated back to its original position at the intersection of Vauxhall Bridge Road and Victoria Street. The tower, erected in 1892, was removed temporarily in 2012 to allow for the upgrades to Victoria Underground Station.

Little Ben was manufactured and was designed to mimic the famous Big Ben located at the other end of Victoria Street.

The clock is permanently on Daylight Saving Time.

FROM THE MAGAZINE -
APRIL 1916



All through the land a terrific and irresistible power is at work. From the reticent little violet in the woods, so small, so delicate, to the great centenarian trees, hard and twisted with experience, nothing can hold back or restrain the Divine Magic of the Spring, it pours through nature, and realises itself in many ways. Only the broken branch and the severed roots know it not.

*So, then, when we think about the two chief Parochial events of the year, the imagery comes to mind. **The Confirmation** on the 7th June, and the **National CALL to Repentance and Hope** in the Autumn, in both these we can expect to see the outpouring of a new Life, a new Power. Confirmation is to give the young life a new Gift, a new Spring of the most Holy Spirit of God, and to bring that life into closer relationship with Grace and Power in the Holy Sacrament of his Divine institution. Those who belittle or are careless of such age-long Institutions would do well to*

ponder the parable of the broken branch and the severed roots. Life robbed of belief is like a bird whose nest has been stolen. It tries every tree, but finds no twig to rest upon. A distinguished, though agnostic, writer in one of his books makes his chief character say: "I can think of no self-indulgence so wanton, so complete in its cruelty, as bringing children into the world, and giving them no faith to guide them. It would indeed be making a tragic toy of affection, to let it lead one into blowing soap-bubbles of conscious fretful vanity. Happy unconscious matter! The man is worse than a murderer who informs it with aimless wretchedness."

We would appeal to parents and all who have authority in other people's lives not to hold their hands in this matter. We are God's Husbandmen, as well as His Husbandry.

* * * * *

*With regard to the **CALL**, we must follow the suggestions that will be put forth time to time.*

Comment:

The insistence here on the absolute necessity of grounding children in faith is at odds with the current wish to "let them choose for themselves when they are older" and certainly with the Dawkins view that it constitutes child abuse.

The "Call to the Nation" aimed to ensure that throughout the country people should all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. It is interesting that the role of "confirmed communicants laymen and laywomen" is emphasized as much as that of the priests and bishops; each diocese is left to decide how exactly the call to Mission should be implemented in its particular circumstance.

Extract chosen and commented by Valerie Smith

APRIL CALENDAR

This is the Church's liturgical calendar for the month ahead. It shows the holy days that we will be celebrating in common with other Christians throughout the world. In the right hand column is indicated the particular focus of our prayer each day at St Peter's. You might like to incorporate it into your own prayers even if you are unable to join us here.

F 1	Friday of Easter Week	With thanksgiving for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
Sa 2	Saturday of Easter Week	With thanksgiving for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
Su 3	Second Sunday of Easter	For the Parish
M 4	The Annunciation	For women
T 5		For the homeless
W 6		For medical professionals and carers
Th 7		For the Bishop of London and his staff
F 8		For our Prayer Board Requests
Sa 9	Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1945	For Christians facing persecution
Su 10	Third Sunday of Easter	For the Parish
M 11		For volunteers
Tu 12		For the Emergency Services
W 13		For peace and reconciliation on our world
Th 14		For our new PCC
F 15		For our Prayer Board Requests

CALENDAR CONTD

Sa 16		For Westminster Street Pastors
Su 17	Fourth Sunday of Easter	For the Parish
M 18		For all who mourn
Tu 19	Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1012	For the Archbishop of Canterbury and his staff
W 20		For St Peter's Primary School
Th 21	Anselm, abbot, archbishop, teacher of the faith, 1109. The Queen's Anniversary	For Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family
F 22		For our Prayer Board Requests
Sa 23	George, Martyr, Patron of England c304	For England
Su 24	Fifth Sunday of Easter	For the Parish
M 25	Mark the Evangelist	For our willingness to proclaim the Gospel afresh in our generation
Tu 26		For the Zacchaeus 2000 Trust
W 27		In penitence for our sin
Th 28		For the church in Angola
F 29	Catherine of Siena, teacher of the faith, 1380	For all teachers
Sa 30		For farmers and farm workers

Please note that requests left on our Prayer Board will now be prayed at the 12.30pm Eucharist every Friday.

ST. PETER'S WAR MEMORIAL

Who were the 146 men whose names are recorded on the First World War memorial in the portico? I have been trying to find out something about them, looking in The Forces War Records and Ancestry and a parish magazine of the time. Of the 146 names I think about a third were officers. It is difficult to identify the person if he has a common name such as James Jones for there are over 150 James or J Jones in the Forces War Records. However some men are easier to trace.

The first name on our memorial is Eustace Abadie (Major Eustace Henry Egremont Abadie). He came from a military family. His father joined the 9th. Lancers as captain in 1873 and retired as colonel in 1887 having commanded the Cavalry Depot at Canterbury 1894-97 and been Lt. Governor of Jersey 1900-1904. He died in 1915. Eustace's three brothers also served in the army. Henry Bertram took part in North West Frontier Campaign where he was twice mentioned in Despatches. Then he fought in South Africa, where he was awarded the DSO. He died of enteric fever before being presented with the insignia of the Order. The second brother George Howard, a captain in the 16th.Lancers, died of fever in West Africa 1904.

Eustace, the third brother, was born in 1877 in Sialkot, Punjab. He was educated at Charterhouse School. In 1897 he was commissioned into the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers as 2nd Lt. and fought in the Boer War. He was mentioned in Despatches, received the Queen's medal with 8 clasps (a great distinction) and the King's medal with 2 clasps and was awarded the DSO in 1901. He wrote a book about his experiences called 'A soldier in South Africa'. Acting as Lt. Col. he was commanding C Squadron at Moncel, near Messines, during the first battle of Ypres in 1914. Heavy German artillery hit all of the 9th. Lancers' position. After the attack three quarters of the officers and one third of the other ranks were casualties. Eustace remained among the

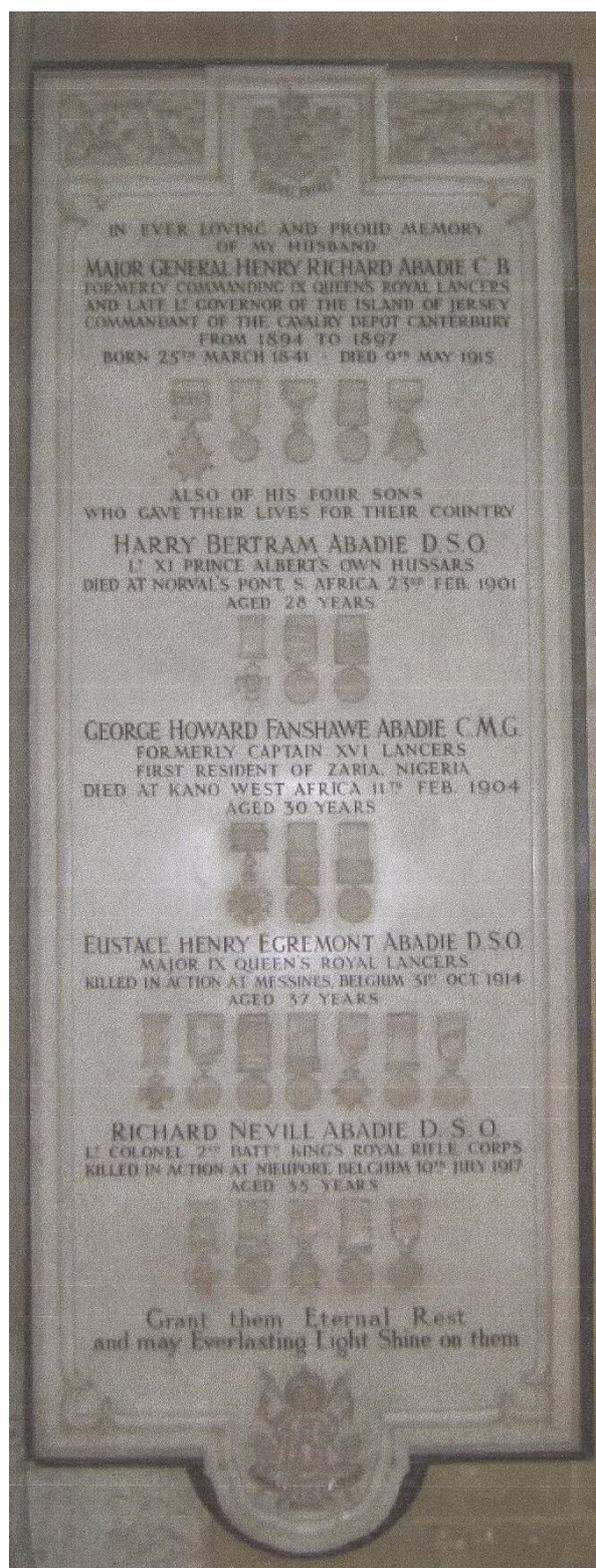
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The 9th. Queen's Royal Lancers was the only regiment of the British Army to operate as a cavalry unit during 1914. They were dismounted during the main period of trench warfare from early 1915 onwards.

Richard Abadie 1881-1917, (Lt.Col. Richard Neville Abadie) the fourth brother whose name is also on our memorial, was the only infantryman in a cavalry family. Like Eustace he went to Charterhouse School. He served with the King's Royal Rifle Corps and became a Lt. Colonel. He too fought in the African war and was awarded the Queen's medal with one clasp. In 1916 he was appointed Commanding Officer of the 2nd. Battalion and received a DSO. His death came in Nieuport, Flanders, when the German bombardment demolished the bridges, cutting off his party from the main body of British troops. Only 76 men managed to escape by swimming the river.

The Abadie family, father and four sons, are commemorated on a plaque in Canterbury Cathedral.

There are of course many men whose history is not accessible.



Towards the end of the memorial are four Winters: Frank, George, Herbert and John. Frank, according to the Naval and Military archive, was born in Pimlico and Herbert lived in Pimlico. Were they related? If any reader can suggest lines of enquiry for the Winter family or other men on the memorial, please let me know.

As I learn more about the men who died from our parish and they become people rather than names - people who may have been regular worshippers at St. Peter's - It is a poignant reminder of how many were killed even from a small community, how young most of them were (some the Records refer to only as 'boy') and the heartache of their loss to their families and friends. May we indeed remember them.

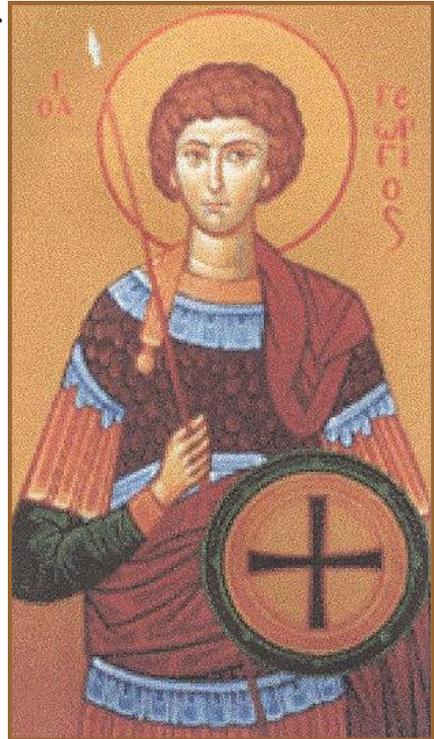
Further stories next month.

PHOEBE HILARY

SAINT FOR MARCH

George

Historians have argued the exact details of the birth of **St George** for over a century, although the approximate date of his death is subject to little debate. The 1913 Catholic Encyclopedia takes the position that there seems to be no ground for doubting the historical existence of St George, but that little faith can be placed in some of the fanciful stories about him. Pope Gelasius stated, in the late fifth century AD, that George was among those saints "whose names are justly revered among men, but whose actions are known only to God."



The work of the Bollandists Daniel Papebroch, Jean Bolland, and Godfrey Henschen in the 17th century was one of the first pieces of scholarly research to establish the historicity of the saint's existence via their publications in *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* and paved the way for other scholars to dismiss the medieval legends.

The traditional legends have offered a historicised narration of George's encounter with a dragon. The modern legend that follows below is synthesised from early and late hagiographical sources, omitting the more fantastical episodes. Chief among the legendary sources about the saint is the *Golden Legend*, which remains the most familiar version in English owing to William Caxton's 15th-century translation.

Saint George likely was born to a Christian noble family in Lydda, Syria Palaestina, during the late third century between about 275 AD and 285 AD. He died in Nicomedia in Asia Minor. His

father, Gerontius, was from Cappadocia, an officer in the Roman army; his mother, Polychronia, was a native of Lydda (Eastern accounts give the names of his parents as Anastasius and Theobaste). They were both Christians from noble families, so their child was raised with Christian beliefs. They decided to call him 'Georgios', meaning "worker of the land" (i.e., farmer). At the age of 14, George lost his father; a few years later, George's mother, Polychronia, died.

George then decided to go to Nicomedia and present himself to Emperor Diocletian to apply for a career as a soldier. Diocletian welcomed him with open arms, as he had known his father, Gerontius — one of his finest soldiers. By his late 20s, George had been promoted to the rank of Tribunus and stationed as an imperial guard of the Emperor at Nicomedia.

On 24 February AD 303, Diocletian (influenced by Galerius) issued an edict that every Christian soldier in the army should be arrested and every other soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods of the time. This formed part of the last great Roman persecution of Christians. George objected, and with the courage of his faith, approached the Emperor. Diocletian was upset, not wanting to lose his best tribune and the son of a favourite official. But George publicly renounced the Emperor's edict, and in front of his fellow soldiers and tribunes he claimed himself to be a Christian and declared his worship of Jesus Christ. Diocletian attempted to convert George, even offering gifts of land, money, and slaves if he made a sacrifice to the Roman gods; he made many offers, but George never accepted.

Recognizing the futility of his efforts and insisting on upholding his edict, Diocletian ordered that George be executed for his refusal. Before the execution, George gave his wealth to the poor and prepared himself. After various tortures, including laceration on a wheel of swords during which he was resuscitated three times, George was executed by decapitation before Nicomedia's city wall, on 23 April 303. A witness of his suffering convinced

Empress Alexandra and Athanasius, a pagan priest, to become Christians, as well, so they joined George in martyrdom. His body was returned to Lydda for burial, where Christians soon came to honour him as a martyr.

Edward Gibbon argued that George, or at least the legend from which the above is distilled, is based on George of Cappadocia, a notorious Arian bishop who was Athanasius of Alexandria's most bitter rival, and that it was he who in time became Saint George of England. According to Professor Bury, Gibbon's latest editor, "this theory of Gibbon's has nothing to be said for it." He adds that: "the connection of St. George with a dragon-slaying legend does not relegate him to the region of the myth".

Eastern Orthodox depictions of Saint George slaying a dragon in Beirut often include the image of a young woman who looks on from a distance. The standard iconographic interpretation of the image icon is that the dragon represents both Satan (Rev. 12:9) and the monster from his life story. The young woman is the wife of Diocletian, Alexandra. Thus, the image, as interpreted through the language of Byzantine iconography, is an image of the martyrdom of the saint. This is perhaps the most theologically satisfactory interpretation.

The episode of St. George and the Dragon was a legend brought back with the Crusaders and retold with the courtly appurtenances belonging to the genre of Romance. The earliest known depiction of the legend is from early 11th-century Cappadocia (in the iconography of the Eastern Orthodox Church, George had been depicted as a soldier since at least the seventh century); the earliest known surviving narrative text is an 11th-century Georgian text.

In the fully developed Western version, which developed as part of the Golden Legend, a dragon or crocodile makes its nest at the spring that provides water for the city of "Silene" (perhaps modern Cyrene in Libya or the city of Lydda in the Holy Land, depending on the source). Consequently, the citizens have to dis-

lodge the dragon from its nest for a time, to collect water. To do so, each day they offer the dragon at first a sheep, and if no sheep can be found, then a maiden is the best substitute for one. The victim is chosen by drawing lots. One day, this happens to be the princess. The monarch begs for her life to be spared, but to no avail. She is offered to the dragon, but then Saint George appears on his travels. He faces the dragon, protects himself with the sign of the Cross, slays the dragon, and rescues the princess. The citizens abandon their ancestral paganism and convert to Christianity.



The dragon motif was first combined with the standardised *Passio Georgii* in Vincent of Beauvais' encyclopaedic *Speculum Historiale* and then in Jacobus de Voragine's "Golden Legend", which guaranteed its popularity in the later Middle Ages as a literary and pictorial subject.

A church built in Lydda during the reign of Constantine I (reigned 306–37) was consecrated to "a man of the highest distinction", according to the church history of Eusebius of Caesarea; the name of the patron was not disclosed, but later he was asserted to have been George.

By the time of the Muslim conquests of the mostly Christian and Zoroastrian Middle East and in the seventh century, a basilica dedicated to the saint in Lydda existed. The church was destroyed by Muslims in 1010, but was later rebuilt and dedicated to Saint George by the Crusaders. In 1191 and during the conflict

known as the Third Crusade (1189–92), the church was again destroyed by the forces of Saladin, Sultan of the Ayyubid dynasty (reigned 1171–93). A new church was erected in 1872 and is still standing.

During the fourth century, the veneration of George spread from Palestine through Lebanon to the rest of the Eastern Roman Empire – though the martyr is not mentioned in the Syriac Breviarium – and Georgia. In Georgia, the feast day on November 23 is credited to St Nino of Cappadocia, who in Georgian hagiography is a relative of St George, credited with bringing Christianity to the Georgians in the fourth century. By the fifth century, the veneration of Saint George had reached the Christian Western Roman Empire, as well: in 494, George was canonized as a saint by Pope Gelasius I, among those "whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to [God]."

In England, he was mentioned among the martyrs by Bede. The earliest dedication to the saint is a church at Fordington, Dorset, that is mentioned in the will of Alfred the Great. He did not rise to the position of "patron saint", however, until the 14th century, and he was still obscured by Edward the Confessor, the traditional patron saint of England, until 1552 when all saints' banners other than George's were abolished in the English Reformation.

An apparition of George heartened the Franks at the siege of Antioch, 1098, and made a similar appearance the following year at Jerusalem. Chivalric military Orders of St. George were established in Aragon (1201), Genoa, Hungary, and by Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor, and in England the Synod of Oxford, 1222 declared St George's Day a feast day in the kingdom of England. Edward III put his Order of the Garter under the banner of St. George, probably in 1348. The chronicler Froissart observed the English invoking St George as a battle cry on several occasions during the Hundred Years' War. In his rise as a national saint, George was aided by the very fact that the saint had no legendary connection with England, and no specifically localized

shrine, as that of Thomas Becket at Canterbury.

The establishment of George as a popular saint and protective giant in the West that had captured the medieval imagination was codified by the official elevation of his feast to a *festum duplex* at a church council in 1415, on the date that had become associated with his martyrdom, 23 April. Wide latitude existed from community to community in celebration of the day across late medieval and early modern England, and no uniform "national" celebration elsewhere, a token of the popular and vernacular nature of George's cultus and its local horizons, supported by a local guild or confraternity under George's protection, or the dedication of a local church. When the Reformation in England severely curtailed the saints' days in the calendar, St George's Day was among the holidays that continued to be observed.

In Sweden, the princess rescued by Saint George is held to represent the kingdom of Sweden, while the dragon represents an invading army. Several sculptures of Saint George battling with the dragon can be found in Stockholm, the earliest inside Storkyrkan ("The Great Church") in the Old Town.

He is something of an exception among saints and legends, in that he is known and revered sometimes by some Muslims, while being venerated by Christians throughout the Middle East, from Egypt to Asia Minor. His stature in these regions derives from the fact that his figure has become somewhat of a composite character mixing elements from Biblical, Quranic, and folkloric sources, at times being taken to be Al-Khidr (a mystical figure believed by some Muslims to be described in the Quran as a righteous servant of God possessing great wisdom or mystic knowledge).

In the General Roman Calendar, the feast of Saint George is on 23 April. In the Tridentine Calendar of 1568, it was given the rank of "Semidouble". In Pope Pius XII's 1955 calendar this rank was reduced to "Simple", and in Pope John XXIII's 1960 calendar to a "Commemoration". Since Pope Paul VI's 1969 revision,

it appears as an optional "Memorial". In some countries, such as England, the rank is higher. In England, it is a Solemnity (Roman Catholic) or Feast (Church of England): if it falls between Palm Sunday and the Second Sunday of Easter inclusive, it is transferred to the Monday after the Second Sunday of Easter.

St George is very much honoured by the Eastern Orthodox Church, wherein he is referred to as a "Great Martyr", and in Oriental Orthodoxy overall. His major feast day is on 23 April (Julian calendar 23 April currently corresponds to Gregorian calendar 6 May). If, however, the feast occurs before Easter, it is celebrated on Easter Monday, instead. The Russian Orthodox Church also celebrates two additional feasts in honour of St. George. One is on 3 November, commemorating the consecration of a cathedral dedicated to him in Lydda during the reign Constantine the Great (305–37). When the church was consecrated, the relics of the St George were transferred there. The other feast is on 26 November for a church dedicated to him in Kiev, circa 1054.

Comment:

Despite the popularity of St George's flag among football supporters, there is very little celebration of St George in England. Displaying the flag is sometimes perceived as racist rather than patriotic. Choice of a figure with no real connection with Britain but with links to Asian and European countries might indicate a cosmopolitan trading nation but Edmund of East Anglia or Edward the Confessor or even Alban might have been expected to retain a stronger hold on the English imagination.

Saint chosen by Richard Carter and commented by Valerie Smith

VISITORS TO ST PETER'S



A regular visitor on Palm Sunday is Bayleaf the donkey all the way from Spitalfields City Farm, E1 who led the procession around the Square

The local cat who is always seen in and around Eaton Square enjoying the sunshine, The disc around his/her neck says please do not feed me as I get regularly fed!



CHILDREN'S PAGE

The miraculous catch of fish

Read the story in John 21: 1-14

Some of Jesus' disciples spent all night fishing on the sea of Galilee, but by the morning they hadn't caught a thing.

Who did they see on the shore? _____ (John 21:4)



How many fish did they catch after they had done what Jesus said?

Number of fish here

X

Number of fish here

=

(John 21:11)

ST PETER'S CHURCH EATON SQUARE

**We are now a distribution point for the
Westminster Foodbank**



**Please donate tinned food and dry goods.
The box is located next to the outreach
board in the SW corner of the church**



**For more information please speak with a
member of the clergy or outreach group**

Copy of a letter of thanks received by Katherine Stephens
from Westminster Chapel Foodbank

Dear Katherine

Report January/February

The year 2016 has begun and we want to say 'Thank You' to you and your colleagues at St Peter's Church for being a cheerful giver throughout the last year. We hope to feed more people this year and help wherever we can, as a Foodbank and Local Church.

We would like to thank you and your colleagues at St Peter's Church for your kind donation of 113.5 kilograms of food to our Foodbank in the last two months.

*In 2015, we distributed **6,951 kilograms** of food to **752 adults** and **292 children**.*

This is only made possible by the generosity of our donors such as yourselves. Thank you for providing genuine help to those who need it and being an integral part of our mission at Westminster Foodbank.

Best Wishes

Jana Hlava

Westminster Foodbank

Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6BS

020 7834 1731 x 243

foodbank@westminsterchapel.org.uk

www.westminsterchapel.org.uk/ministries/foodbank/

RECIPE FOR APRIL

FISH CHOWDER

Ingredients

- 1 large potato
- 250g/9oz un-dyed smoked haddock fillets, skin on
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 shallot, halved
- 650ml/22fl oz full-fat milk
- 30g/1 oz unsalted butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- 150g/5½oz sweetcorn kernels (thawed, if frozen)
- Handful runner beans, sliced
- 6 scallops, sliced
- 12 steamed clams
- 200g/7oz Pollock fillet, diced
- 150g/5½oz raw king prawns
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Place the potato in a saucepan, cover with water, bring to the boil and simmer for 15-20 minutes until tender. Cut the cooked potato in small pieces and set aside.
2. Place the smoked haddock, skin side up, in a pan with the bay leaf and shallot and cover with the milk. Bring to a simmer for a few minutes, then take off the heat and leave in the milk to finish cooking.
3. In a large pan, gently fry the onions in the butter until softened. Stir in the sliced garlic, cooked potato, sweetcorn, then add a handful of the sliced runner beans.

4. Lift the haddock out of the milk with a slotted spoon and place on a plate. Peel away the skin and tear into pieces. Strain the milk through a sieve into the onion potato mixture and simmer for about 20 minutes.
5. Add the cooked haddock, sliced scallops, steamed clams, Pollock and the prawns and warm through, then stir in the parsley and season with lots of black pepper.
6. To serve, ladle the chowder into bowls and serve with thick slices of soda bread.



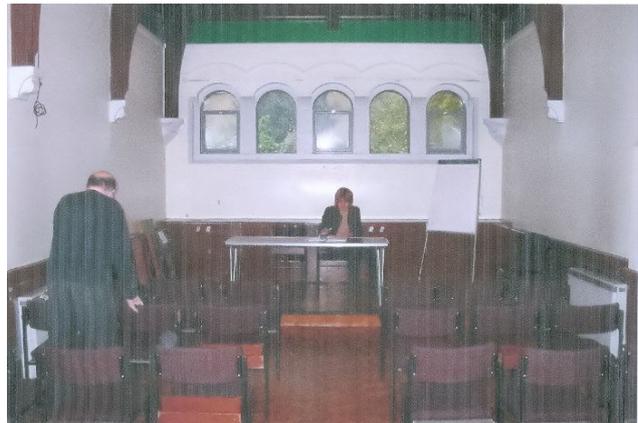
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The Meeting Room is suitable for lectures and formal meetings of a medium size. There is a small kitchen, with tea and coffee making facilities.



The Committee Room is ideal for small formal or informal meetings. It has tea and coffee making facilities.



*For more information, phone the Parish Administrator
weekday mornings on 020 7235 4482,
or email admin@stpeteratonsquare.co.uk
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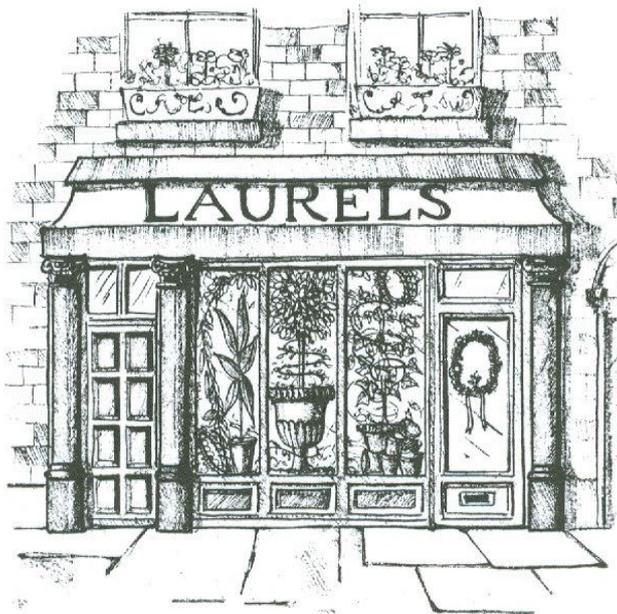
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