

St Peter's Parish Magazine



December 2025
& January 2026

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From Fr Jonathan

Dear friends



I am finding that, the older I get, the faster annual observances seem to come around. And so it is that we find ourselves, having celebrated the great Solemnity of Christ the King at the end of the liturgical year, we are now beginning the holy season of Advent, as the vestments and hangings in church change to the preparatory colour of purple.

The new liturgical year A begins when in common with most of the Western Church, our Gospel readings on Sunday will be broadly taken from the Gospel according to St Matthew.

As this Advent commences, we find ourselves in the context of a world which seems ever more bellicose and where the precious and infinity of human life is treated in so many places with such scant regard. It can seem as though the darkness is even more pervasive than ever. But at the heart of the Christian season of Advent is the theme of HOPE. Not some superficial surface-level of hoping that something will turn out the way we want it to (such as winning the lottery), but a hope which is rooted and grounded in a real and profound waiting on and abiding in Christ. One of my favourite books for Advent is Maria Boulding's "The coming of God". Maria Boulding (1929-2009) was a nun in the Benedictine tradition of Stanbrook Abbey and she speaks evocatively in her book of the charism of "hope" being at the heart of the Christian vocation to wait upon God.

I frequently speak in Advent of the three comings of Christ. The first is well known and versed in our waiting alongside the great prophets of the Old Testament who so faithfully waited upon the coming of the Messiah in the often challenging situations of their lives and the lands they inhabited. During Advent we shall hear in the wonderful readings from the Old Testament at the Daily and Sunday Eucharists texts which are so frequently etched onto our consciousnesses through their musical settings in Handel's "Messiah" and elsewhere.

The prophets were those who waited with such eager and pregnant hope for him who is “mighty God and Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6) and the great “Desire of the Nations” (Haggai 2:7) to be born in David’s City of Bethlehem.

But our Advent hope moves us on to focus on the Second Coming of Christ in glory at the close of time to bring all things to perfection. Our forebears in the early decades and centuries of the church arguably had a much more acute sense of Christ’s second coming than we do today. One of the ways in which we can understand some of the writings of St Paul’s which do not – at least at surface level – seem to question some of the conventions of the time was because he had such an imminent sense of Christ’s return in glory and there was no time to do so.

Two millennia later it seems as though the Church of our time has lost that sense of being in the last days and with it in many places, its prophetic vocation both to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. Throughout the last two thousand years Christians have seen specific times and signs of the end of the world in the cosmos shifting events of their own day – and yet the earth and humanity seems to struggle and crawl on. For Christians, the fact is that we should all be living our lives as though these were indeed the last times, not putting off until tomorrow the things that we should be doing today in order to make the values of kingdom of compassion, mercy and justice a reality today. St Paul reminds the young Christian community in Rome at the height of his thinking and teaching: *“Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light”* (Romans 13:11-12).

Lest all this seems a little dark, this is paradoxically and wonderfully good news which enables us to speak of a third coming of Christ into our own human hearts – to set them ablaze with the fire of God’s love – and to kindle that flame in the hearts of others. That kindled flame in our hearts is the flame of the incarnation – of God’s taking our human form in the babe of Bethlehem – the “word which became

flesh and dwelt among upon us” (John 1:14) – so as nevermore to lay it aside.

Here at St Peter’s, we will observe the season of Advent as fully as we can and enable the hope which flows from it to fill our hearts. On Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday (Advent 3 - December 14th) we shall, as is our custom, be wearing rose coloured vestments, as we look forward to a group of ordinands from St Augustine’s College helping lead us in a Christingle-Mass during the 9.30 am Family Eucharist. We shall be celebrating the light of the world coming among us and collect funds for the invaluable work of the Children’s Society. These are people in training to be ordained in the Church of England and they are undertaking a short mission placement with us here at St Peter’s.

All our other Advent and Christmas services are listed elsewhere in this magazine. We very much hope that you will be able to join us for these and bring along your families, friends and neighbours so that St Peter’s Church continues to be a bright beacon of light and hope at the heart of our local community and so that we as the People of God in this place may grow both in faith and number and in our knowledge and love of God and one another.

Building and Restoration Project

As mentioned in previous letters, we have been spending much the last eighteen months undertaking major and pressing issues inside the building to do with fire safety and legal compliance. This had a particular urgency given the complicated nature of our building and the four residential units on the roof. The final parts of the emergency lighting are now being installed and the new fire alarm systems and compartmentation fully in place. These, together with essential electrical work identified in the last quinquennial inspection in the urgent categories of C1 and C2 had to be addressed immediately.

Architects

I know that a number are concerned that we have not obviously seemed to have made more progress in the work to the tower and

the portico. However, much important early work has been done in moving towards the major works. This work has included an open and transparent process of procurement for our new architects which is an essential requirement of any bids for funding. As you know, we invited six firms to tender, shortlisted three for interview and then appointed Kathryn Harris of Nick Cox Architects. Kathryn is a highly skilled architect and her portfolio includes being the Cathedral architect for both Bristol and Birmingham Cathedrals, as well as here in London locally as architect for St Mary-le-Strand and St Martin's-in-the Fields.

Preventive Measures

Kathryn and her colleagues have been undertaking an updated state-of-the-building inspection as we chart the way forward, both in terms of renewing what further protective measures we need to undertake with the netting and crash decking in the portico before we start the major project and begin the fundraising work. Since the crash decking in the portico is going to be there for a while we are looking at ways of opening it out and raising the level of the decking and boarding it in so that we can use much more of the portico in the short-term.

Faculty Jurisdiction

In the last magazine I spoke a little about an important issue which will make the historic permissions we need for any major works much more streamlined and a simpler process. When the beautiful new St Peter's was opened after the fire, it was decided that it best met the needs of the parish at the time for simply the footprint of the worship space to be put under faculty jurisdiction through the ecclesiastical exemption and the rest of the building de facto came under Local Authority Listed Building Consents. Broadly speaking, this has served St Peter's well for the last three decades because there has not been major structural work to undertake in that time.

Now that major works have to be carried out, this mixed economy of needing both faculty permission and listed building consents has made applying for the permissions we need to undertake the work very complex. With the support of the Chancellor and Registrar of

the Diocese I have been having to undertake a complex consultation with Westminster City Council, who have now consented for the whole of St Peter's building to come under the church's internal faculty jurisdiction through the Diocesan Consistory Court whilst retaining all the practical local latitude which we need with the residential accommodation on the floor. It has been a time consuming process but one now which will bear fruit in all that we have to do and which puts us in line with every other church in the Church of England.

Fundraising

Colin and I have met with the Diocesan fundraising advisors so that we can begin to put together a fundraising strategy and appoint a professional fundraiser as we look to raise the £5 million the project is likely to cost. We have also met with Stephen Escritt of an organisation called Counterculture to explore project routes available and the engaging of professional bid-writers to organisations such as the Heritage Lottery. I was also glad to be given a couple of pages in the Belgravia Journal to bring our forthcoming fundraising strategy into tighter focus for the wider local community.

NCIL bids

As mentioned in the last magazine and with the help and support of Monica Lucas, Chair of the Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum, we have submitted a formal application for Community Infrastructure Levy funds which are available now in the short term to replace the old and unreliable lift, the kitchen in the Parish Hall and works to the Hall itself. We have also met with members too, such as the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum, with local councillors and other stakeholders and have made the case that the Parish Hall and Kitchen and the access to it via the lift are an important community resource available to the whole local community in all its diversity. There is certainly competition for these public funds. We now need to wait for a month or so to hear whether or not we have been successful. If we are successful, it will enable us to undertake these works as a discrete project in advance of the main building project.

WiFi throughout the church

We have now extended the public WiFi throughout the church so that is available in all the meeting rooms (Parish Hall, Meeting Room and Committee Room) as well as in the church itself. We have been finding that more of our hirers need access to reliable WiFi for their presentations and the events they put on. If you wish to access the guest WiFi in the Church you can do so with the following:

Name of network	Guest – St Peter's Church
Password	EatonSquare

Increased Security

We have also installed more security cameras in the Church grounds so that both sides of the carpark are now covered. This follows a spate of vandalism to cars and occasions when vehicles have bumped into another vehicle causing damage without leaving any further details.

Clean for Good

We have moved the church cleaning contract to a company called Clean for God, having followed all the statutory TUPE processes. Clean for Good were founded in the Diocese of London and have their offices in the Church of St George-in-the-East. They have the contract for the Bishop of London's Office and many London churches, and they guarantee to pay all their workers at least the London Living Wage, contribute to a pension scheme and everything else we would expect from a responsible employer. Having made this change we will be signing up to the Living Wage Foundation as we aspire to be ethical employers.

Renewed Crypt leases

Just after the previous edition of the magazine went to press and after an extended process of legal negotiation, we entered into new seven-year leases with both our crypt tenants – the Knightsbridge Kindergarten and the Bodydoctor gym. These provide a vital and ongoing source of income to the church in all that we do and we are glad to be able to continue with our two existing tenants with leases which will take us up to 2032.

New self-supporting curate for St Peter's.

As this magazine goes to press, I am delighted to be able to announce that Carlos Remotti-Breton, currently serving a placement with us during his formation for ordination at St Augustine's College, will be staying with us after his ordination next Petertide in St Paul's Cathedral. Many of you have got to know Carlos during the past year that he has been with us on placement and I am glad that he will be joining the clergy team with Mother Jennifer and myself when he becomes in due course Fr Carlos.

New Archbishop of Canterbury

We were delighted to hear the announcement that the new Archbishop of Canterbury is to be our own Bishop of London, the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullaly DBE. We will miss Bishop Sarah very much in London but assure her of our prayers and warmest good wishes as she begins in her new ministry in the new year

Thank you- hope and renewal

As we approach Christmas and the good news of the birth of Christ there is so much to celebrate in our life together at St Peter's and as we seek to renew and grow the life of the people of God here, continuing as a beacon of light and hope at the heart of the local community for many generations to come..

With my grateful thanks for all that each and every one of you brings to the life of our church community and with my love and prayers,
as always,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "R Jonathan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

From Mthr Jennifer

The **O Antiphons** are a series of short, ancient liturgical texts sung or recited during the final days of Advent, traditionally from December 17 to December 23. The “O” Antiphons each speak of a biblical title of the awaited Messiah. These titles are drawn from the prophetic imagery of the Old Testament, especially the Book of Isaiah, and each reveals a different part of Christ's identity and mission. The antiphons form a rich tapestry of hope and longing, and expectation as Christmas draws near.

Each antiphon begins by addressing the Messiah with a symbolic name: **O Sapientia** (O Wisdom), **O Adonai** (O Lord), **O Radix Jesse** (O Root of Jesse), **O Clavis David** (O Key of David), **O Oriens** (O Dayspring or Morning Star), **O Rex Gentium** (O King of the Nations), and **O Emmanuel** (God with us). These titles reflect the many prophecies of a saviour who would bring justice, wisdom, and freedom to humanity. They do not merely recall past promises; they express a living hope for the future.

One of the most striking features of the O Antiphons is the hidden acrostic formed when the initial letters of each title - taken in reverse order - spell the Latin phrase **Ero Cras**, meaning “I will be there tomorrow.” When the final antiphon, O Emmanuel, is sung on December 23, the full sequence retrospectively forms a divine promise. This literary structure suggests that the longing of the people is already answered, that the God they seek is indeed on the verge of arriving. It is a subtle yet powerful example of the artistry woven into medieval liturgy.

The antiphons also serve as the basis for the well-known Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” Each verse of the hymn paraphrases one of the antiphons, culminating in “Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee.”

Historically, the O Antiphons are generally attributed to the early 8th century, though some scholars believe they may be even older. They were traditionally sung during Vespers before and after the Magnificat, placing them in a dialogue with Mary's own song of anticipation. If you go to Westminster Abbey's website (www.westminster-abbey.org) and search for "The Great O Antiphons" you can hear recordings of the O Antiphons sung in English and Latin with written translations.

The O Antiphons invite the reader or listener to reflect and each antiphon is an invitation into contemplation, offering a way to slow down, to listen, to prepare for the coming of the saviour at Christmas.

O Sapientia: O Wisdom

O Wisdom names Christ as the divine understanding that orders creation with justice and love. Rooted in Scripture's wisdom tradition, this antiphon calls on the Messiah to guide humanity with insight that transcends human limitation, bringing clarity where there is confusion and harmony where there is disorder.

O Adonai: O Lord

O Adonai recalls God who revealed Himself to Moses and led Israel from slavery. This antiphon addresses Christ as the same saving Lord, mighty yet merciful, who frees His people and writes His law on their hearts; a ruler whose authority heals, liberates, and restores.

O Radix Jesse: O Root of Jesse

O Root of Jesse points to Christ as the promised descendant of David, emerging from the seemingly barren stump of Israel's hopes. He is the shoot that rises when life feels cut down, fulfilling ancient promises and restoring God's people through unexpected growth and renewed possibility.

O Clavis David: O Key of David

O Key of David names Christ as the one with authority to open what no one can shut and shut what none can open. He unlocks the prison

of sin, fear, and despair, granting access to God's kingdom and guiding us into genuine freedom and peace.

O Oriens: O Dayspring / Morning Star

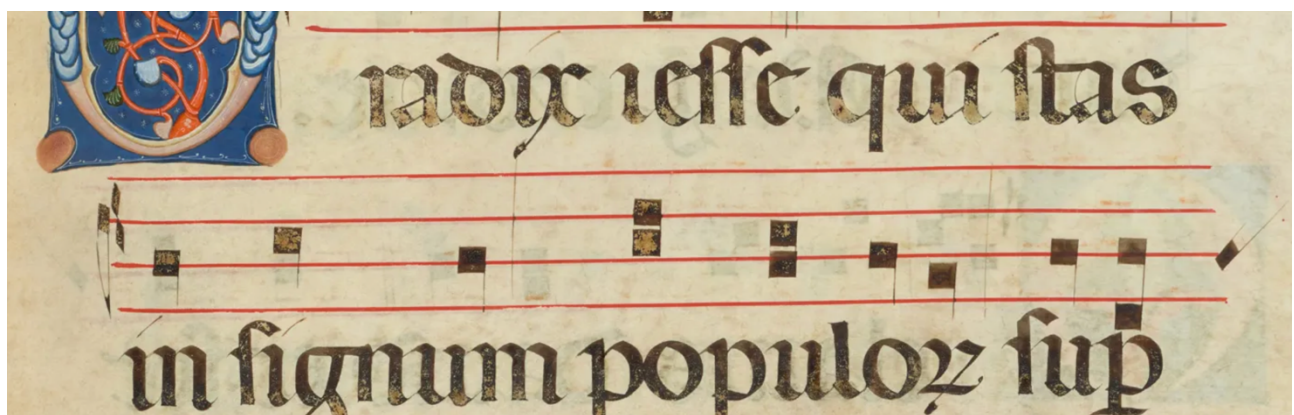
O Dayspring invokes Christ as the light that rises in the darkness. Like dawn breaking after a long night, He disperses the shadows of ignorance, sorrow, and death. This antiphon expresses longing for divine light that renews hope and makes the path ahead visible.

O Rex Gentium: O King of the Nations

O King of the Nations recognizes Christ as the true ruler of all peoples, the cornerstone uniting what is divided. He brings peace not by force but through reconciliation and healing. This antiphon expresses hope for unity; within human hearts and across the fractured world.

O Emmanuel: God with Us

O Emmanuel proclaims the heart of the Christian mystery: God dwelling personally with His people. In Christ, divine nearness becomes tangible: comforting, guiding, and redeeming humanity. This final antiphon completes Advent's longing with the assurance that God comes close in love, not from afar.



From the Parish Magazine December 1935

Remember the Carol Singers

In recent years the singing of carols at Christmas time in our churches has become a part of the season's observance. In Southwark Cathedral the Christmas carol service has grown into an annual event which draws a thronged congregation. In some country districts the choir for a week or so before Christmas makes a tour of the village and outlying hamlets and sings some of the genuine old carols in order to raise funds for some approved purpose. Choirmasters do not always look favourably on such alfresco activities on winter nights. They fear that the voices under their command will not be in good condition when Christmas morning comes round, and the service in church should be the best of which all concerned are capable.

If you are one of those who take an unaffected delight in hearing such old carols as "When Christ was born of Mary free," "God rest you, merry, gentlemen," and "I saw three ships come sailing in," I would suggest that by way of remembrance you give a toast in memory of Wynkyn de Worde, who came to England from Alsace in the 15th century and was apprentice to William Caxton. He afterwards set up for himself and had a shop in St Paul's Churchyard.

The reason I recall his name is that we owe to him the earliest printed collection of carols. The first book of carols came from his shop in 1521. Among its contents is the famous Boar's Head carol, which in a slightly altered form is sung at Queen's College, Oxford, as the boar's head is brought into hall.

Many of the old Christmas carols were very much on the lines of folksongs and a number of quaint legends have been preserved in them. So long as the carols retained their folk song character, they were simple and unaffected. In the 16th century carol-singing became very popular and the household accounts of the Tudor sovereigns show that it was much encouraged at court. As early as 1502 there is an entry in the Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York "for setting of a carrolle up Christmas Day."

The result of such general esteem was that the poets of the day set their hands to writing carols. The saintly George Herbert composed some and there are others by Milton, Crashaw, Southwell and Ben Jonson. Herrick produced more than anybody, but all these efforts lacked the spontaneity of the old carols, and it is quite likely that many of them were not really meant to be sung, but were intended to be read like other verse.

There is no doubt that the unknown ancient writers of carols had a secret which eluded their more sophisticated imitators.

Comment: The best comment on this is surely from GK Chesterton: "It is in the old Christmas carols, the carols which date from the Middle Ages, that we find not only what makes Christmas poetic and soothing and stately, but first and foremost what makes Christmas exciting. The exciting quality of Christmas rests . . . on an ancient and admitted paradox. And it is extraordinary to notice how completely this feeling of the paradox of the manger was lost by the brilliant and ingenious theologians, and how completely it was kept in the Christmas carols. They, at least, never forgot that the main business of the story they had to tell was that the Absolute once ruled the universe from a cattle stall."

From the Parish Magazine January 1936

Good Resolutions

This season of the year is reserved, more or less for the making of good resolutions; an admirable, but perplexing problem for many.

The small boy, who wrote in his New Year diary: - "Resolved not to think so much about things to eat. Nothing particular for tea" – had a profounder idea of this practice, than the devotional instructor, who enjoined an hour's daily meditation, always ending in a definite resolution to be carried out within twenty-four hours. The child sensed the necessity of growth and knew how little of that can be accomplished in an afternoon; but 365 good resolutions formulated, let alone fulfilled, in a single year, would be a breathless scramble up the ladder of rules, daunting the most agile of souls!

In these days when man-made machinery is the crown of effort, and the increase of speed its final test, it is hard to realise that "the mills of God grind slowly," and that His measurements are not of quickness or quantity, but of life and its gradual growth. "Faster! Faster!" cried the Red Queen. And when Alice sank down exhausted after the frantic race, she found they were in exactly the same place as that from which they started. "Which things are an allegory."

There are many who have forgotten the resolutions they made only a year ago; but, nevertheless, they are conscious of, and thankful for, the working of the law of growth within their spiritual selves. They know they care a little more for the things that matter, and correspondingly less for the things that don't.

Comment: Resolutions made on New Year's Day are famed for hardly surviving the month and it is a comfort that gradual growth may be discerned even if our planned timetable is not met. The anxiety about life speeding up remorselessly is evident today, but also seems to be perennial. Matthew Arnold writing in 1853 laments "this strange disease of modern life, With its sick hurry, its divided aims, Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts". And the Red Queen's Advice, 1871 is something that has continued to resonate: "It takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

The Advent Wreath

During Advent we prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas by lighting the traditional Advent Wreath. The candles are by tradition three purple, one rose and one white and special prayers are said at the lighting of each candle representing the stages of God's purpose for his beloved people in looking forward to the coming of the long-awaited Messiah. The candles with their traditional prayers are as follows:

Week 1 - The Patriarchs and Matriarchs (Purple)

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors: to you be praise and glory for ever. You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment. May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Week 2 - The Prophets (Purple)

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever. Of old you spoke by the mouth of your prophets, but in our days you speak through your Son, whom you have appointed the heir of all things. Grant us, your people, to walk in his light, that we may be found ready and watching when he comes again in glory and judgement; for you are our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Week 3 - John the Baptist (Rose)

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever. Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light. May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages.

Blessed be God for ever.

Week 4 - The Blessed Virgin Mary, the God-bearer (Purple)

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle: to you be praise and glory for ever. Your light has shone in our darkened

world through the child-bearing of blessed Mary; grant that we who have seen your glory may daily be renewed in your image and prepared like her for the coming of your Son, who is the Lord and Saviour of all.

Blessed be God for ever.

Christmas Day - The birth of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, King of peace: to you be praise and glory for ever. The new light of your incarnate Word gives gladness in our sorrow, and a presence in our isolation. Fill our lives with your light, until they overflow with gladness and praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

Prayers are Copyright © Times and Seasons (The Archbishops' Council)

Prayers and worship for the Church of England (2006)

Searching for St Peter

Glance quickly at the two pictures and you'll see St Peter's, right? Well yes, but not our St Peter's.

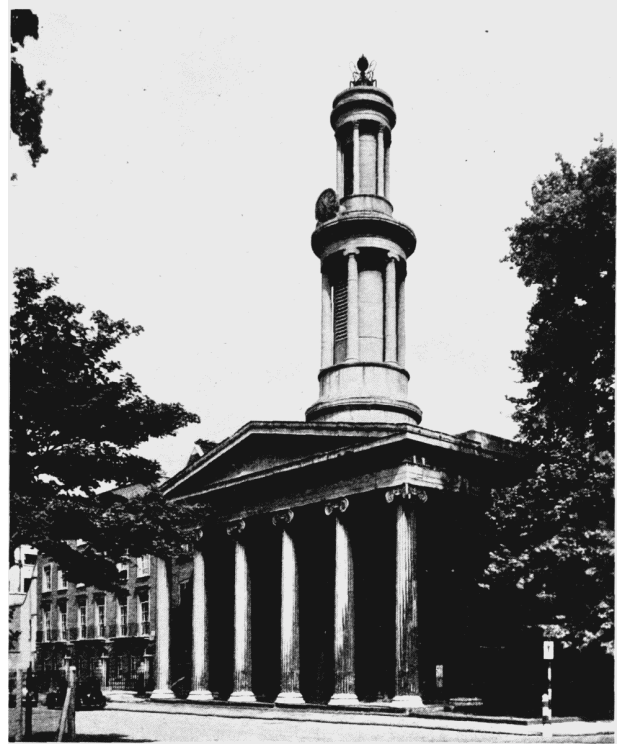
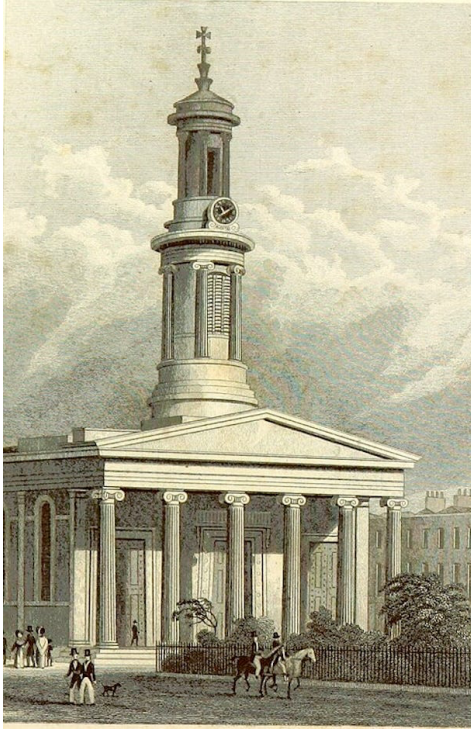
The picture is of St Peter's REGENT Square in Bloomsbury. It is no longer standing sadly. It was repeatedly damaged during the Second World War and after 1942 never re-opened. As one history of the area records: the shell of the building stood "*with its columned portico and pillared tower resembling the Grecian ruins its architects had originally been inspired by*". The parish was united in 1954 with Holy Cross in St Pancras just up the road.

Those architects were father and son, William and Henry Inwood. Like their most famous work, St Pancras New Church – the big one opposite Euston station – it was designed in Greek Revival style. The Regent Square St Peter's was built between 1822 and 1826. The cost was £26,000. Our St Peter's was built at exactly the same time. But ours is still going strong. The one in Regent Square was replaced with flats in the 1950s. The only link to the church is the name of the block – St Peter's House.

Print of St Peter's Regent Square 1827

Photograph taken before the Second World War

St Peter's House today



Picture for December

Massacre of the Innocents



The Virgin and Child Surrounded by the Holy Innocents by Peter Paul Rubens

Picture for January



St. Hilary 315-367 'The hammer of the Arians (who declared Christ was not truly divine)'

Sunday's Calling Will You Read or Pray?

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Revelation 1:3

Each Sunday, our Choral Eucharist service is an expression of our faith, community, and shared purpose. The music from our amazing choir lifts our hearts, the Word nourishes our spirits, and the prayers connect us with one another and with God. But what makes our worship truly special is that it is a shared act and not just something we attend, but something we willingly do together.

This is where YOU – yes YOU! come in.

You'll have noticed certain members of the congregation, choir and servers go up and read the lessons and lead the intercessions in the service. Are they specially trained or specially nominated? No! Taking an active part in the Service in this way is open to all, whether you attend church every Sunday... or just once in a month of them. We're inviting all members of our congregation to consider taking part in the service by doing a reading or leading the intercessions. These are simple yet powerful ways to serve and to be part of the rhythm of our worship life.

If you've never stepped up to a lectern to read before, don't worry — - you don't need to be a professional speaker! All that's required is your voice, a willing heart, and just maybe a few minutes of practice beforehand – there'll always be a name or place name you might stumble over, but you're amongst friends, there's no test and no-one is judging. Reading the Scriptures aloud allows you to share God's

Word directly with all of us, and because we each have our own unique voice and style, helping others to hear it in a fresh and personal way.

We work on a two-month rota, with volunteers usually reading or leading prayers approximately once in that cycle, but it isn't a fixed commitment – life happens, and some months you might not be able to participate – we understand. Some people find that reading regularly helps deepen their understanding of Scripture, introducing them to passages they've never encountered before. It can be both a spiritual discipline and a joyful discovery.

If you'd like to try reading, please do speak to me in Church, I'm around most Sundays.

Leading the prayers of intercession is another really special part of the service. It may seem a little daunting, but in those moments, you give voice to the hopes, needs, and gratitude of the whole church. It's a deeply moving experience to stand before God's people and from your heart, help shape our collective prayer.

If you're feeling even a little curious or would like to try leading prayers once, please speak with John Hilary, who's also around in church most Sundays. He'll be delighted to explain the format, what's always included and where you can add your own personal touch – in short, he'll guide you and give you as much help as you might need to feel comfortable.

Worship is richer when many voices are heard — not just from the choir or clergy, but from the whole community. You matter. Your voice matters. So why not make it part of our worship this season – we'd love to hear from you.

Ekanem Peers
(Church Warden)

ST PETER'S EATON SQUARE



The joy of Christmas

*A beautiful and inclusive church, renowned for our music,
choir and all-age welcome,
at the corner of Eaton Square and Hobart Place.*

We can be found just a few minutes' walk from Victoria Station.

We warmly invite you to join us to celebrate

CHRISTMAS 2025

119 Eaton Square, London, SW1W 9AL
www.stpetereatonsquare.co.uk 020 7235 4482
Registered Charity No. 1133033

St Peter's, Eaton Square

We wish you the joy and peace of the Christmas season

Sunday 21 December – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Morning services at the usual times

6 pm Parish Carol Service

*With traditional Christmas carols, readings and music,
followed by mulled wine and mince pies*

Wednesday 24 December – Christmas Eve

4 pm Christmas Crib Service for all ages

11 pm Midnight Mass

*Music: Missa Sancti Leopoldi – M. Haydn
Laudate pueri, op. 29 - Mendelssohn*

Thursday 25 December - Christmas Day

8 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

9:30 am Family Eucharist

11 am Choral Eucharist

*Music: Missa Quaeramus cum pastoribus- Morales
Quaeramus cum pastoribus - Mouton*

Sunday 28 December – First Sunday of Christmas

8 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

10:30 am Parish Eucharist with carols

Sunday 4 January 2026 – The Epiphany of Our Lord

8 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

9:30 am Family Eucharist

11 am Choral Eucharist

*Music: Missa Parvula – Maxwell Davies
I wonder as I wander - Britten*



Calendar of Intentions December 2025

Date	Day	Mass intention
Mo 1	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Benenden School carol service tonight
Tu 2	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Westminster City School
We 3	<i>Francis Xavier, missionary 1552</i>	St Peter's School Governors
Th 4	<i>John of Damascus, monk, teacher of the faith c.747</i>	Kids for Kids Carol Service tonight
Fr 5	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Gurkha Welfare Trust Carol Service tonight
Sa 6	<i>Nicholas of Myra, bishop c. 326</i>	All children
Su 7	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish and People of God
Mo 8	<i>Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Breast Cancer Now Carol Service tonight
Tu 9	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Westminster Abbey
We 10	<i>Advent weekday – Ember Day</i>	Ordinands/Seminarians
Th 11	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Inclusive Church
Fr 12	<i>Advent weekday – Ember Day</i>	Theological Colleges and Courses
Sa 13	<i>Lucy, martyr, 304</i>	The Church of Sweden
Su 14	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish and People of God
Mo 15	<i>Advent weekday</i>	International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP charity)

Calendar of Intentions December 2025

Date	Day	Prayer Intention
Tu 16	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Amnesty International
We 17	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Sapientia (O Wisdom)</i>	Lancing College Carol Service tonight
Th 18	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Adonai (O leader of the House of Israel)</i>	Embrace the Middle East
Fr 19	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse)</i>	The City of Bethlehem
Sa 20	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Clavis David (O Key of David)</i>	The Guards Chapel Wellington Barracks
Su 21	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>O Oriens (O Morning Star)</i>	The Parish and People of God
Mo 22	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Rex Gentium (O King of the Nations)</i>	King Charles III
Tu 23	<i>Advent weekday</i> <i>O Emmanuel (O God with us)</i>	Cleveland Clinic Hospital
We 24	CHRISTMAS EVE	The Passage
Th 25	CHRISTMAS DAY	Praise for the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Fr 26	St Stephen, Deacon Protomartyr	St Stephen's, Rochester Row
Sa 27	St John, Apostle and Evangelist	Biblical translators and commentators
Sun 28	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS THE HOLY FAMILY	The Parish and People of God
Fr 29	Thomas a Becket, archbishop, martyr, 1170	Canterbury Cathedral
Sa 30	In Christmas Octave	Centrepont
Su 31	John Wyclif, reformer, 1384	Caxton Youth Project

Calendar of Intentions January 2026

Date	Day	Mass Intention
Th 1	<i>The naming of Jesus</i>	Committing of our lives to God at the beginning of a new year
Fr 2	<i>Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, bishops, teachers of the faith, 379 and 389</i>	Theologians
Sa 3	<i>Christmastide weekday</i>	Westminster Foodbank
Su 4	THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD	The Parish and People of God
Mo 5	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Chelsea and Westminster Hospital
Tu 6	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum
We 7	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Victoria Neighbourhood Forum
Th 8	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	St Peter's School
Fr 9	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Eaton House School
Sa 10	<i>William Laud, Archbishop, 1645</i>	+Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury elect
Su 11	BAPTISM OF THE LORD	The Parish and People of God
Mo 12	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The House of Commons
Tu 13	<i>Hilary, bishop, teacher of the faith, 367</i>	College of the Resurrection, Mirfield
We 14	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Ripon College, Cuddesdon
Th 15	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The House of Lords

Calendar of Intentions January 2026

Date	Day	Prayer Intention
Fr 16	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Metropolitan Police
Sa 17	<i>Anthony of Egypt, hermit, abbot, 356 Charles Gore, bishop, founder of the Community of the Resurrection, 1832</i>	The Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield
Su 18	SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY <i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18-25 January) begins</i>	The Parish and People of God
Mo 19	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Roman Catholic Church
Tu 20	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Methodist Church
We 21	<i>Agnes, child martyr, 304</i>	The Orthodox Churches
Th 22	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Baptist Church
Fr 23	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The United Reformed Church
Sa 24	<i>Francis de Sales, bishop, teacher of the faith, 1622</i>	Free Churches, House Churches and Pentecostal Churches
Su 25	CONVERSION OF ST PAUL	The Parish and People of God
Mo 26	<i>Timothy and Titus, companions of St Paul</i>	St Paul's Cathedral and St Paul's, Knightsbridge
Tu 27	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Westminster St Margaret Deanery
We 28	<i>Thomas Aquinas, priest, philosopher, teacher of the faith, 1274</i>	University Faculties of Theology
Th 29	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	London Ambulance Service
Fr 30	<i>Charles, King and Martyr, 1649</i>	The Royal Family
Sa 31	<i>John Bosco, priest, founder of the Salesian Order, 1888</i>	For an increase in vocations to the religious life

Diocese of London Deans of Women's Ministry

On Thursday 20th November it was brilliant to welcome Bishop Sarah and around 120 ordained women in the Diocese of London to St Peter's, for a conference titled 'Voices of Grace'.

The evening started with a reflection by Natasha Beckles (St Nicholas, Perivale) followed by the keynote from Lucy Winkett (St James, Piccadilly). We had a break with some delicious food by Rabi from Chamisse, then finished the evening with a Q&A panel discussion with Bishop Sarah, Bishop Emma, Natasha, Lucy, and Laura Jørgensen (St Botolph without Aldgate).



Readings for December 2025 & January 2026

7 December 2025 2nd Sunday of Advent Isaiah 11.1-10 Romans 15. 4-13 Matthew 3.1-12	4 January 2025 Epiphany Isaiah 60. 1-6 Ephesians 3. 1-12 Matthew 2.1-12
14 December 2025 3rd Sunday of Advent Isaiah 35.1-10 James 5.7-10 Matthew 11.2-11	11 January 2025 Baptism of Christ Isaiah 42.1-9 Acts 10.34-43 Matthew 3.13-end
21 December 2025 4th Sunday of Advent Isaiah 7.10-16 Romans 1.1-7 Matthew 1.18-end	18 January 2025 2nd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 49.1-7 1 Corinthians 1.1-9 John 1.29-42
24 December 2025 Christmas Eve Midnight Mass Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	25 January 2025 3rd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 9.1-4 1 Corinthians 1.10-18 Matthew 4.12-23
25 December 2025 Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-4 John 1:1-4	
28 December 2025 First Sunday of Christmas Isaiah 63:7-9 Hebrews 2:10-end Matthew 2.13-end	

Mass Tourism

My holiday this year led me to Puglia, where we stayed in a village called Maglie. Our hotel was an eighteenth-century villa opening onto the town's central square. Arriving on the Saturday afternoon, I had some doubts about whether our programme would allow me to attend



church on the Sunday, but happily I found a nearby church, dedicated to the Madonna delle Grazie with a vigil Mass. When I went in it was clear that the congregation was involved in a recitation of the Rosary; they were at least up to the Glorious Mysteries as I entered. The recitation was well attended, and the numbers increased as the Mass began. The church was quite small and with the priest in the westward-facing position, he was very audible. It gave me a feeling of being at home in the town.

The next day found my group in an afternoon visit to Otranto. The cathedral there has a famous mosaic floor, designed and laid in the 12th century at the request of the archbishop by a priest named Pantaleone. The mosaic covers the whole floor of the church from the west end to the sanctuary and was amazingly completed in two years. It is a mixture of history (Alexander the Great who was a favourite figure of the Middle Ages is prominent), mythology, stories from the Bible and representations of plants, birds and animals. To get a sense of it I recommend this virtual tour:

<https://www.mosaicodiotranto.com/en/l-tessellatum-idruntino/#>

A little compliment was made to the Archbishop whose name was a form of Jonah with a mosaic of Jonah and the Whale in the sanctuary. The whole is worth a detailed examination. In one of the chapels of the cathedral are 800 human skulls of the martyrs of Otranto. It was in 1480 that the Ottoman Empire made its last attempt to overrun Southern Italy by sailing to Otranto. The small garrison and the people of the town fought them off for fifteen days, but the Turks then

entered by blowing a hole in the city wall and broke down the door of the cathedral where the citizens had taken refuge. Inside they were confronted by the elderly Bishop Stephen Pendinelli, in his vestments and holding a crucifix. They demanded that he convert to Islam or die and as he urged his people to remain faithful, he was cut to pieces, and his head put on a stake. The Turkish commander decreed that the women and children be sold into slavery while the men – about 800 – were offered their own and their families' lives if they would convert to Islam. An elderly tailor, Antonio Primaldo defied them and urged the citizens to do the same. The prisoners were led outside the city and with Primaldo at their head, standing upright and fearless, were beheaded. When the heads of the martyrs were recovered, this shrine was made to them. The failure of the Turks to capture Otranto delayed their intended march further into Southern Italy, and this proved their last attempt to conquer the area.



I happened to be in the cathedral with our Italian teacher as the evening mass was due to begin and she expressed a desire to attend but without any pressure on me. It seemed a good opportunity to see the cathedral in action, so I too stayed. With two masses and two sermons, my capacity to follow spoken Italian was no doubt considerably increased, and new words crept into my vocabulary (the gospel was about the disciples' request to Jesus to increase their faith) so that I can now talk freely about mustard seeds, should the need arise.

Valerie Smith

Christmas Charities 2025

Kids for Kids : This charity operates in Darfur in the Sudan, a war-torn region where fighting has horrifyingly escalated recently and which is also suffering with drought and famine. They “adopt” villages (currently 110) discussing with them what they need most and assist with livestock, provision of water, farm equipment, trees to stop desertification, medical care and education. They also train the villagers so that the work can continue sustainably.



Centrepoint Is a charity devoted to fighting homelessness among young people aged 16-25. It was started in 1969 by the Revd Kenneth Leech as a night shelter for young homeless people in St Anne's Soho. It is now a nation-wide charity whose activities include the setting up of hostel and bed sitters, with rent based on the young person's income and the giving of practical advice on moving on from homelessness and getting employment. They work with other charities and local authorities to achieve this aim



Caxton Youth Club: This is a local specialist youth club for those in Westminster with autism and learning disabilities between the ages of 11-25. Their centre is on the Abbot's Manor Estate where there are regular meetings and programmes focused on health, employment support and a range of other topics. In the summer holidays they have numerous local trips and activities at residential outdoor centres.





JOIN US FOR
ST PETER'S EATON SQUARE

CHRISTMAS FAIR

STALLS | FUN | MUSIC | FOOD & DRINK

FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER, 2025

2:30 - 5:30 PM

CUPCAKE DECORATING

FACE PAINTING

MULLED WINE

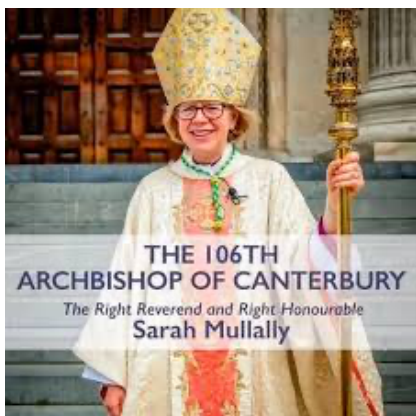
BRACELET MAKING

BASKETBALL

AND MORE!

New Archbishop of Canterbury

From the Diocese of London announcement



The Diocese of London is marking a historic and deeply significant moment as Bishop Sarah Mullally, currently serving as Bishop of London, has accepted the invitation to become the next Archbishop of Canterbury

— the first woman ever to hold the Church of England's most senior position.

In a personal and moving letter to the Diocese, Bishop Sarah shared the emotional weight of this transition. “It is undoubtedly an extraordinary honour and privilege,” she wrote, “yet this moment is tinged with profound personal sadness, as I begin to absorb what I will be leaving behind.”

Bishop Sarah has served the Diocese of London for seven years, and her leadership has been marked by compassion, clarity, and a deep commitment to both clergy and lay communities. She reflected on her time in London with gratitude: “You have shaped my ministry, and prepared me in every way for this moment. I will be eternally grateful for the clergy and lay people alongside whom I have served across the Diocese, in the many communities I have come to know and will continue to cherish.”



New High Court Judge

Many congratulations to The Honourable Ms Justice Norton (better known to us as Heather Papadopoulos) on her appointment as a High Court judge.

Children's Pages

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks
out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough,
they were usually avoided, or overlooked.

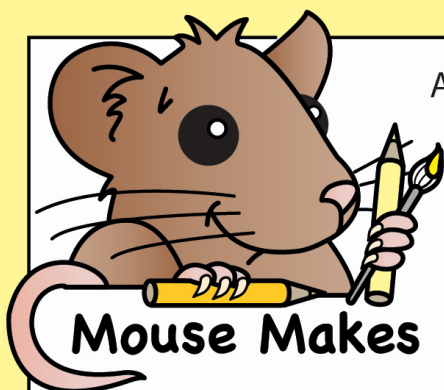


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shepherds
 Christ
 Saviour
 glory
 news
 praising
 hillside
 singing

baby
 message
 night
 carefully
 palace
 flocks
 manger
 good

heard
 sky
 angel
 Bethlehem
 heaven
 Mary
 God
 seen



Mouse Makes

A baby needs clothes
to keep warm like
a snugly sleep suit
or a vest and nappy.

What were you dressed in?

Jesus was wrapped in

.....

read Luke 2:7



A baby needs
somewhere
to sleep like
a crib or a cot.
*What did you
sleep in?*

Jesus slept in a

.....

read Luke 2:7



At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,
God's Son and our Saviour
coming into the world as a baby,
and we look forward to the time
when Jesus will come again,
not as a baby but as the
King of kings and Lord of lords!

read

John 14:3



A baby needs somewhere
to be born like at home
or in a hospital.

Where were you born?

Jesus was born
in a stable in

.....

read Luke 2:1-6



A baby needs
a name.

*What name were
you called?*

Jesus was given
a special name
that had a
special meaning.

read

Matthew 1:21-23



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ★ NOLLAIG CHRÌDHEIL ★ NOLLAG SHONA
JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN

Recipe



Linzer Cookies

Ingredients

- 100g/3½oz skinned toasted hazelnuts (see recipe tip)
- 125g/4½oz caster sugar
- 300g/10½oz plain flour, plus extra for dipping the cutter
- 200g/7oz unsalted butter (cold if using a processor, soft if making by hand)
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp fine sea salt
- 1 large free-range egg, plus 1 large free-range egg yolk, at room temperature, beaten
- icing sugar, to dust the cookies
- 4 tbsp redcurrant jelly
- 4 tbsp seedless raspberry jam

Method

1. If you have a food processor, tip the toasted hazelnuts and caster sugar into the processor and blitz to a fine sandy texture, then add the flour. Cut the cold butter into 1cm/½in dice and add

to the processor, along with the cinnamon, salt, whole egg and egg yolk. Run the processor until the contents start to form a dough; this won't happen instantly, so be patient.

Or use ready-ground almonds. To make the cookies by hand, mix the ground nuts with the flour, cinnamon and salt and set aside. Cream the butter and caster sugar together. Very gradually beat the eggs into the butter mixture. Add the dry ingredients, a little at a time, and beat in until the mixture forms a soft dough.

2. Divide the dough into 4 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then gently squash to form fat discs. Cover tightly in cling film and put in the fridge for 1 hour. You can leave them in the fridge for up to 3 days.
3. Once your dough has rested, take 2 of the discs out of the fridge and let them stand for about 15 minutes, or longer if either your fridge is very cold or the dough's been sitting in it for a long time. While you wait, preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Get out 2 baking trays and measure out 2 pieces of baking paper the same size as the trays.
4. Put 1 piece of baking paper directly on the worktop and when the dough is firm, but not too cold – roll out 1 of the discs thinly (2–3mm/less than ¼in thick) on the baking paper. If your dough is very sticky, you can roll it out between 2 pieces of baking paper. Using a 6cm/2½in round cookie cutter, dipped first in flour, cut 6 circles in the rolled dough – you don't have to leave a huge gap between the cookies, as the dough doesn't really spread much. Lift away the excess dough, leaving your circles on the baking paper. Carefully place this baking paper on 1 of your baking trays. Form a ball with the excess dough to re-roll later.
5. Repeat the process with the next disc of dough, only this time you're making the top half of the cookies, so once you have your 6 circles you will need to dip your mini cutters in flour and then cut out your shapes – and if the shape you're stamping out doesn't come out with the cutter, use a cocktail stick to help. Add the offcuts to the other scraps of dough, ready for re-rolling. If your kitchen is warm it can really help to put these cookies in

the fridge on their parchment-lined baking sheets for 10 minutes or so, as it will help the cut-out shapes keep a clean edge.

6. Bake the cookies for 9–10 minutes, until they're only just beginning to turn a very light gold at the edges; they will, overall, still be pale. Transfer immediately to a wire rack or, if you'd feel safer, gently slide the loaded parchment on to the rack instead. Repeat the process with the 2 remaining discs and all the squidged-together offcuts, making sure the baking sheets are cold before you load them up.
7. When all the cookies are completely cold, they are ready to be sandwiched. Dust the biscuits you've cut a shape out of with icing sugar and leave on the wire rack. Mix the jelly and jam together until smooth and spread ½ teaspoon of this mixture over one non-dusted cookie half, leaving a pale frame around the edge. Pick up a sugar-dusted cookie, carefully holding the edges only, and place it on top of the jam-loaded cookie! Enjoy

Merry
Christmas!

Our Common Life

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Hon Treasurer John Hilary jhilary@gmail.com	Resources Committee Convenor: Richard Carter
P.C.C. Secretary Valerie Smith Vasmith440@gmail.com	Formation Group Convenor: Fr Jonathan Kester
Verger/Facilities Coordinator Colin Chadwick 07365 002204 verger@stpetereatonsquare.co.uk	Transformation Group Convenor: TBC

Our Common Life

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Hospitality Co-Ordinator Raana Khatabakhsh	Communications Group Valerie Smith
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	Bible Reading Fellowship Please contact Parish Office for more information
P.C.C. Members Maite Boudy Richard Carter Stephen Couttie Robin Duttson Jim Glen Oliver Grant John Hilary Raana Khatabakhsh Alasdair Locke Nicolas Moore Evelyn Olugboja David Propert Ekanem Peers Carlos Remotti-Breton Judith Richardson Valerie Smith James Watson	Deanery Synod Richard Carter 020 76414230 John Hilary jhilary@gmail.com Jim Glen 07970375655 Ekanem Peers empeers@yahoo.co.uk Judith Richardson 020 3268 0055
	Lay Eucharistic Ministers Valerie Smith Carl Muller Jane Booth Raana Khatabakhsh Evelyn Olugboja

Hosting with Housing Justice



Do you have a spare room that you could offer to a homeless asylum-seeker, refugee or other migrant in need? The Compassionate Communities team within the Diocese of London is working in partnership with Housing Justice to provide temporary accommodation for London's destitute asylum-seekers, refugees and other forced migrants while they resolve their immigration status.

Find out more here or scan the QR code below:

<https://www.compassionatecommunitieslondon.org.uk/refugee-response/hostingwithhousingjustice>





Hartbeeps are at St Peter's every Tuesday morning...

9.30am Happy house (Toddler & Siblings)

10.30am Beeps (Sitting - standing)

11.30am Baby bells (Newborn - Sitting)

A musical, sensory and immersive session designed by experts and fuelled with love. Each week is a new adventure with massage, dress up, movement, puppets, parachutes, role play and more.

Join us for a FREE TRIAL for the first 2 weeks of this Winter term 5th and 12th of November with this promo code WIN24WAB.



Book here <https://bookeo.com/hartbeepswestandswlondon>.

Trials are for new customers only.

Our Winter sessions are adorable! Come get cosy with Hartbeeps.



The Westminster Food Bank needs donations more than ever!

There are ways we can continue to help the most vulnerable in our society... Please bring in your non- perishable food for the Foodbank. Contact Fr Jonathan for information on where to leave donations. Our volunteers will deliver them to the Food Bank promptly. Financial support is also appreciated.

I was hungry, and you fed me...
(Matt 25.35)

The Westminster Foodbank is based at Westminster Chapel and provides three days' - worth of nutritionally balanced (non-perishable) food to residents in the Borough of Westminster experiencing financial crisis, through a voucher scheme.

It is part of a nationwide network of Foodbanks.

Sunday Morning Services

Holy Communion BCP	08:00 am
Family Eucharist	09:30 am
Choral Eucharist with our world-class choir	11:00 am

Weekday Eucharist

Each day Monday to Friday	12.30 pm
<i>also</i> Wednesday	08.00 am

Morning Prayer: Monday - Friday at 08:00am
(Excluding Wednesday)

Evening Prayer:
Monday - Friday at 5.00pm

We are open for private prayer Monday – Friday
8.00am – 5.00pm