

# St Peter's Review

Autumn Edition 2022



*Welcome Fr Ben, Tash and Family!*

*Fr Ben Vertannes, our new curate, cuts one of two welcome cakes with his wife Tash at his first service on 26th June as we celebrated our Patronal Festival.*

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	<p><b>James Furniss-Roe</b></p> <p>Telephone: 07545 120378 Email: <a href="mailto:music@stpeters-streatham.org">music@stpeters-streatham.org</a></p>	<p><b>Disabled Access and Hearing</b></p> <p>St Peter's has permanent wheelchair access from the front of the building. An induction loop is provided for those with hearing aids. If you have any special access requirements, do not hesitate to contact us in person, via telephone or e-mail. All enquiries will be in confidence.</p>
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		<p><b>Items for the next <i>St Peter's Review</i> to</b></p> <p>David Chapman by <b>Sunday 27th November, 2022</b></p>
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# Evensong – Ancient Words, Timeless Meaning

by Fr Steffan



Visiting our choir in Lincoln this Summer, Fr Ben and I attended Choral Evensong in Lincoln Cathedral, sung beautifully by St Peter's Choir. This visit, hearing the choir sing the same words sung in that place for hundreds of years, made me reflect on Evensong.

10 years ago, you could not have dragged me to Choral Evensong. I didn't really 'get it'. Now, our weekly Sunday evening Evensong feels like a weekly balm for my soul. In this article, I wanted to explore a little bit about what Evensong is, its history, and its beauty.

The thing is, Evensong is a bit *weird*. And this shouldn't be a surprise: its words are from 1662, and its roots span three thousand years. The language is archaic, and the way it is sung by choirs in cathedrals and churches doesn't leave much room for the congregation to participate. But it is in this, that its beauty lies.

First, some history. From the earliest days, Churches in town centres would sing morning and evening prayer. Bells would ring, the faithful would enter, and a service of psalms, song and prayer would rise up before God. In monasteries, monks and nuns would meet not twice, but seven times a day for prayer, from the darkness of the early morning to the darkness of night, punctuating each part of their day by offering it to God as they worked and prayed.

Overtime, however, things shifted. The church required all priests to say the prayers seven times a day, and the



*Archbishop Thomas Cranmer  
Portrait by Gerlach Fliche, 1545*

public morning and evening prayer faded from use. The Christian tradition of praying the psalms through the day became something only for "professionals": priests, monks, and nuns. Normal Christians were to attend mass, or pray at home, using prayers such as the Our Father, the Rosary, or the Angelus but as few could read, they didn't get to explore scripture through prayer in the way clergy did.

But in the reformation, everything changed. Archbishop Cranmer brought all the worship of the church together in one book, the Book of Common Prayer. The invention of

*(Continued on page 4)*





(Continued from page 3)

the printing press meant that now every home across England and Wales could have a prayer book of their own, containing all the services of the church. There were a few editions over a century, however 1662 edition because the authorised version we still use today.

As part of this, Cranmer reformed the daily prayers of the church, into two services: Matins (Morning Prayer) and Evensong (Evening Prayer). But these weren't 'new' services; instead, they were knitted together from the ancient traditional prayers for the church. But now they were to be said publicly, in every church, for the clergy and people to pray together. They combined the early morning prayer of the monastery, the prayers throughout the day, the evening prayer, and prayer before bed, into two services.

Evensong has quite a simple format. It is almost entirely words from scripture, said or sung slowly or prayerfully. At St Peter's, we - uniquely among most churches - end Evensong with a period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament - Holy Communion - and a blessing is given.

So, what is beautiful about Evensong? Well, simply, Evensong tells the story of our faith. Let's look at each part in a bit more detail.

**The opening:** The words 'O Lord Open Thou Our Lips: And Our Mouth Shall Shew Forth Thy Praise' take us back to the very beginning of creation, where God spoke the world into being out of love. We are reminded of our place as creatures of God, who God gives voice to. Traditionally, very often the opening hymn would speak of a different aspect, or day, of creation.

**Psalms and Old Testament Reading:** We move from creation to the story of God's relationship with the people of Israel. The psalms are the hymn book of ancient Israel. They are heartfelt cries of the people of God. Some are songs of joy, others

lament; some are songs of searching for God, sometimes when God seems absent.

They express every human emotion, and as we sing them, we pray with God's first people, using the hymn book that Jesus himself would have known. We then hear, in the reading, a snippet of the story of ancient Israel, their journey with God, week by week.

#### **Magnificat and New Testament:**

Having walked with God's ancient people, we then come to the birth of Jesus, as Mary sings of God's faithfulness in ages past and everything he is doing in Jesus. The song of Mary takes place as she is pregnant, visiting her friend Elizabeth. It is the traditional song sung at the end of the working day, looking back to God's mercy over the day and in hope for what he will do. As Mary's Song introduces Jesus, it is followed by another snippet of the story of the bible, this time after the birth of Jesus, either from the gospels (stories of Jesus life) or the epistles (writings of the early church after Jesus' resurrection).

**The Nunc Dimittis:** Following the New Testament, we have the Song of Simeon, from Luke 2. The Song of Simeon is traditionally sung before sleep. Its words 'Lord now let your servant depart in peace' are appropriate to this time of day, but they hold a deeper meaning. They remind us that each of our earthly walk will come to an end, and remind us of the hope of new life to come when we pass from this world. It points, mystically, to the time when all things will come to completion in Christ, a new heaven and a new earth.



*The Magnificat -  
Illuminated Manuscript*

**Creed and Prayers:** It is only now, having walked the story of our faith, that we are able to confidently affirm our faith in the creed, and then in knowledge of the story of God and his promises, pray for his Church and World. Alongside the Lord's Prayer, there are short, set prayers which beautifully and succinctly bring before God every aspect of our world, asking for his blessing.

Here, in around 40 minutes, we tell the story of our faith. From creation, through the Old Testament, to Jesus and the church, looking forward to the new creation. Offering before God all that he has made, asking him to bless, transform, sustain his creation.

Overtime, the parts of the service were set to beautiful music, and in places with choirs the ancient words are continued to by sung. This is one of the challenges but also beauties of attending Evensong. At, say, the parish mass in the morning, we are used to participating a lot. But at Evensong, we don't 'do' very much.

This can take a bit of getting used to. But it is also a wonderful opportunity to simply let the prayer wash over you. It doesn't matter how you feel, whether you are full of faith or full of frustration: the words, the readings, the music carry you. One you are used to the rhythm; it can feel like 45 minutes of meditation.

Evensong attendance has – quite surprisingly – grown over the past decade. Many cathedrals have reported much higher attendance. It is perhaps the sense of something ancient, timeless; something that doesn't require us to feel a particularly way or participate in a particular way that has become so appealing in age where flashy consumerism reigns. Evensong transports us through the ages: from the dawn of time, through the story of the people of God; it has an ageless appeal, taking us back to 1662 and beyond. Yet despite all this, it continues to feel fresh, new, and timeless.



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# Grief is the price we pay for love

by Fr Ben Vertannes



Sermon given, by Fr Ben Vertannes, on the occasion of the Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving for the life of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at St Peter's on Sunday 18th September.

'Grief is the price we pay for love'. This is what Her Late Majesty wrote to the people of New York shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks 21 years ago.

Over the past week, the royal family has been grieving the loss of a mother, a grandmother and great grandmother. They are paying that price of love. But for many others, many of us perhaps, the death of Queen Elizabeth has brought a grief of its own. For some of us, we are grieving the loss of a connection with friends and loved ones we hold dear and remembering those for whom we have paid the price of love. 'Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away', as we will sing in our final hymn this evening, and with it, the chapter which contained our own dearly departed seems somehow further away. Family memories in which the Queen stood as a constant fixture of our national life seem just that bit more distant. From Christmas messages to Jubilee street parties, from shared glimpses of the Queen on state occasions to happy memories of Bank Holidays, the Queen's constant story entwined with our own personal and family stories.

Nowhere perhaps have these feelings been more evident than on the banks of the Thames over the past few days. I had the privilege of walking up and down the queues of people on Friday and Saturday as part of a multi-faith chaplaincy team offering pastoral and spiritual care to those waiting. I met some people with extraordinary witnesses to the late Queen's impact on their lives.

I met Sylvie, in her late 70s, who had been on her feet for 7 hours by the time I saw her. She had another 6 to go. She, like so many, was almost affronted at the idea that this might be a trial, or something she had had to endure: 'The Queen', she told me, 'stood on her feet for 70 years meeting us. I can manage a few hours.'

I met two ex-service people, their medals glistening atop pristine uniforms, who proudly reflected on the times they had met the monarch. 'I wouldn't be anywhere else but here', Andrew told me.

I met Chris and Nathan, two young lads from Warrington, best mates on their first ever trip to London. Taking in the cityscape while charming everyone around them. Getting lost each time they stepped out of the line to buy a coffee.

And I met countless children and





grandchildren accompanying older parents or grandparents, some of whom admitted they would not otherwise have been in the queue, but felt it important to help their Mum, or Grandad, see it through.

Some found themselves having permission to grieve more openly than the world sometimes allows. Meera told me how she felt like she was finally catching up with the pain she had felt at the loss of their Mum two years ago, at the start of the pandemic. 'I never really grieved my Mum, she said, but I am grieving now.'

There was a bit of everything on show. Young, old, dressed up, dressed down, some tourists and David Beckham. Some were tired, some emotional, many in good spirits. Even that famously quirky British humour was on ample display: one woman I spoke to asked for directions to the nearest train station so she could get home. She had queued for six hours but, in her words, 'had a big trip to Homebase tomorrow' and needed to be sensible.

What tied so many of these encounters together in the queue was a strong sense that the Queen stood as a constant in both people's lives, the lives of their loved ones, and in a world of tremendous change. In her first Christmas speech, the Queen reflected on the 'grave problems and difficulties' which confronted the nation at the end of two devastating world wars. She spoke then of having 'a new faith in the old' and 'strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past' in order to confront those problems and difficulties. These words are as true now as they were then. Time and again, throughout her reign, we saw how she embodied this faith in the old with the strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past, from an age-old tea with Paddington to a meeting with James Bond. Through this constancy of presence, it is clear that the Queen's life seemed to point so many people to something bigger and beyond, as



*The queue for the lying-in-state snakes its way to Westminster Hall*

well as something quieter and inside.

But it would be easy to remember her only as a type of national character, a kind of never-ending fairy tale, and to ignore the woman herself who embodied the role of monarch for these past 70 years. To do so would be to miss the character of the person whom we came to know as the Queen.

In 1947, aged 21, she declared that 'her whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to service.' This life of dedication to duty, this life of commitment to service, this life of giving nothing less than the whole of ourselves is a way of life from which we can learn whatever or whoever we are called to be. The constancy of this life is all the more astonishing given that it wasn't until she was ten years old, following her

(Continued from page 7)

uncle's abdication, that she became heir to the throne. Hers was a vocation which she did not expect. Ours may be a vocation we do not expect. God may call us in ways we cannot imagine or for which we do not feel prepared.

Whatever we are called to do, and however unexpected our vocation, the life of Elizabeth II models for us how to live out that to which we are called: in service, with duty, and giving nothing less than the whole of ourselves. And her vow of service is now fulfilled. Beyond all the pageantry and tributes and crowds, she will tomorrow receive the same funeral service offered by the Church to any of us. She is at rest and, we believe, in the loving embrace of her Maker.

For the Queen herself knew better than most that her long presence among us had at its heart its own constant - one that will never change and never pass. In recent years, the Queen spoke more and more about the importance of her relationship to Jesus Christ. In her 2014 Christmas address she described this relationship: 'for me, the life of Jesus

Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.' Jesus was her 'guiding light' she said 'because Christ's example helps me see the value of doing small things with great love, whoever does them and whatever they themselves believe'.

As she reflected on Christ's example, during her life, so we can, at the end of her life, reflect not only on the example she has given all of us of constancy, of duty, of service, of giving nothing less than the whole of ourselves whatever we are called to do and to be. But, like her, we can also find inspiration, hope and trust in a God whose love we need pay no price for, because it has already been paid. To look ahead, as she did, to a kingdom where there is no longer any grief, no longer separation - only that love that never ceases.

May Her Majesty rest in peace. Amen.



### THANK YOU!!!

Recently, I asked for donations for the charity 'Little Village', where I volunteer, and you really delivered. You donated cash and feeding equipment, toys, clothes & books.

All of these fabulous gifts have already been allocated to families with children under 5, making their lives a little easier at a tricky time.

Thank you for your incredible generosity. It takes a village!

**Anthea xx**

For more information on the work of Little Village check out their website

[www.littlevillagehq.org](http://www.littlevillagehq.org)





# News from the Pews



## Sad News

It is with great sadness we share the news the Cynthia Greenwood, one of our longest serving congregation members, died on Tuesday morning – 27th September. Cynthia served St Peter's in many capacities over the years. Details of her funeral will follow. May she rest in peace.

## Streaming

Since the pandemic we have been continuing to stream the 10.30am Mass. Despite restrictions easing, this continues to be a vital way of connecting with those unable to be with us physically, and has been an important way of people 'trying out' St Peter's before they attend in person. We are proposing to buy a modest laptop, specifically for streaming, which will streamline the process. If you would like to make a contribution, please either be in contact for bank details, or we will have a collection point in church.

We are also looking for assistance with Streaming – would you, or your child or grandchild – like to have a go?

Speak to Fr Steffan or Fr Ben.



## Black History Month

We will have a study of **'The Lives of the Saints'** looking at Saints of Black origin, during the Wednesday mass. If you would like to lead one of these, please be in contact. You can find the guide in our booklet, [here](#). We also have a **Recital: 'I will sing of the goodness of God'**: A gospel recital for Black History Month, by Rámond Mitchell on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October at 11.45am.

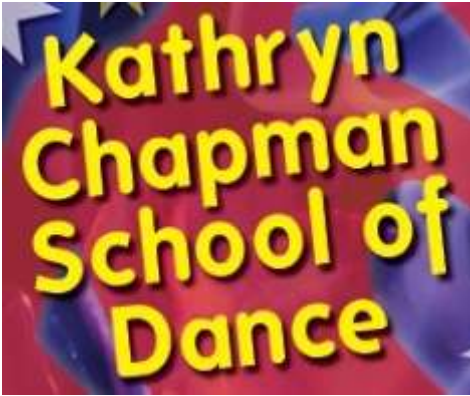
Photograph: Rámond Mitchell

## All age Gardening Afternoon, 16 Oct

There are flyers available on the welcome desk in church for those unable to pick one up last week. Thank you to all who have volunteered to help on the day - we could do with a few more people to help with either refreshments, welcome or supervising craft activities. If you can spare an hour or so on the day, please let Fr Ben know ([curate@stpeters-streatham.org](mailto:curate@stpeters-streatham.org)).



# News from the Pews Continued



## Dance School

The Kathryn Chapman Dance School hosted in the crypt has started a new ballet & general dance movement class on Saturday mornings, 11.30-12.00, for 3-6 year olds. There are still places available and a trial lesson is free. Contact [info@kathryncchapmandance.com](mailto:info@kathryncchapmandance.com) for more details

## Older People's Group, Streatham Library

The Group meets on the last Friday of each month from 10.30-12.00 pm at Streatham Library. Everyone over 50 years of age is welcome to join this friendly Group for board games, crafts, puzzles and much more. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available at a small cost. If you would like further information, please contact Monica, one of the Librarians, on 020 7926 6768.



## Lincoln Choir Tour

The choir returned from a very successful Choir Tour to Lincoln Cathedral in August. Director of Music, James Furniss-Roe, was supported by Liam Condon and Oliver King on the organ. It was a great boost for the choir that Fr Steffan, Fr Ben and Alice King were able to visit whilst the choir were in residence at the cathedral. You can see more on page 14.

## Lighting Project Completion

It is very exciting to report that the lighting installation to replace the church lights has now completed - on schedule! We now have 62 dimmable LED lights covering all of the main areas of the church. The results seem good - but your feedback is important. Let us know what you think.

We will report more fully a little later, but the project has been generously sponsored by the **London Community Energy Fund** and **Veolia**.







**"I WILL SING OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD"**  
**A BLACK HISTORY MONTH GOSPEL RECITAL**  
**BY RAMOND MITCHELL**

Sunday 16 Oct, 11.45am – St Peter's Streatham

Free, with a collection taken for the performer and work of St Peter's

An exploration of sacred music from the African American and Gospel traditions. Through the rich music that speaks messages of hope, joy, love, and perseverance you will see the diverse gifts and backgrounds of people as enriching, not dividing and to join together to build a community in which all are included and respected, and each of us contributes to the common good.



Streatham Choral presents

# Brahms

## Ein deutsches Requiem

Saturday 12 November 2022 7.30 pm

St Peter's Church Leigham Court Road London SW16 2SD

Tickets available at [streathamchoral.com](http://streathamchoral.com)

**Tickets £10**  
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Charity no. 802195



*Some members of the congregation photographed with Fr Steffan after the Requiem Mass for Fr Peter Andrews (former vicar of St Peter's) on 11th June.*





# Mission Action Plan - An update

On Sunday 10th July, the first of three sessions took place to discuss what we would like to achieve as a Parish under three headings:

- ⇒ **Children and Young People**
- ⇒ **Understanding and Serving our Community**
- ⇒ **Inclusion, Welcome and Hospitality**

During these meetings, the participants were asked if they would like to joining a working group for any of the initiatives. Those who volunteered have been invited to their first workgroup meetings, at the following times:

- ⇒ Children and Young People - Thurs. 20 Oct., 11.30
- ⇒ Understanding and Serving our Community - Tues. 1 Nov., 19.00
- ⇒ Welcome, Hospitality and Inclusion - Mon. 17 Oct., 19.00







*Photographs from  
10th July to launch  
the Mission Action  
Plan initiatives*

*Fr Steffan and  
Mary Newbrook  
led the session on  
10th July*





## Choir Tour - Lincoln Cathedral



The choir, boosted by former members and choir tour regulars, sang a wonderful week of music at Lincoln Cathedral. It was James, our Director of Music's, first Choir Tour.

Non-singing events included:

- ⇒ a Quiz on Saturday evening
- ⇒ a day-off excursion to Mablethorpe Seal and Wildlife Centre (Pippa, Cecily, Michael and Elinor) pictured below.

Pippa (12) commented: "I loved the trip to the Seal sanctuary, even though we all got soaked to the skin."

On Saturday we sang a grand Magnificat by Gerald Finzi. [And we sang it very well].

Elinor (14) said: "I especially enjoyed working on the Finzi all through the week so that I could really enjoy it when it came to the Saturday performance."





One of the now customary activities, is a “Goosechase”. This is a small competition for choir members in groups to complete a set of tasks. This year, the task setter was Matthew Price. Each team needed to find various landmarks, to record songs and poems, to pose as a group at various locations – and much more. All of this evidenced via pictures, film clips etc on a mobile phone app called Goosechase.

Cecily (9) says she really enjoyed Goosechase because she could get involved before we even got to Lincoln - and it was fun.



Nicola Thomas commented: I especially enjoyed the privilege of singing in such a beautiful building. I love that it towers over the town, that it used to be the tallest building in the world, and the stunning stained glass in the sunshine. Photograph above from Nicola.



*The cathedral towering over the city.  
Photograph: Suzanne Walker*



*Emily Scott and Catherine Chapman found an outsized Lincoln Imp to fulfil the Goosechase Challenge “Take a photo of the Lincoln Imp”.*



*Quiz Evening with question master David Bonar (standing).  
Those looking after children took part via zoom.  
The winning team on front table.*

## Dates for your diary

### COMMITTEE DATES

Day	Date	Time	Meeting Group	Venue
Monday	October 17	7.00pm	MAP Group - Welcome, Hospitality and Inclusion	By invitation
Thursday	October 20	11.30am	MAP Group - Children and Young People	By invitation
Tuesday	November 1	7.00pm	MAP Group - Understanding and Serving our Community	By invitation
Wednesday	November 30	7.30pm	PCC	Parish Room

### FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Sunday 16th October

Gospel Recital for Black History Month - Rámond Mitchell at 11.45am

All Age Gardening Afternoon: 2pm to 5.30pm

#### Saturday 12th November at 7.30pm

Streatham Choral Concert - Brahms's Requiem  
Follow link for tickets:

<https://www.streathamchoral.com/>

#### Sunday 13th November at 10.30am

Service of Remembrance for those fallen in war

#### Saturday 19th November at 7.30pm

Opus XVI Concert - German Sacred Music  
£15 with £10 unwaged and under 16s free

#### Sunday 27th November - Advent Sunday

Recital: Oliver Cuttriss (Piano) at 11.50am  
Free entry with retiring collection

Advent Carol Service at 6.30pm

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For more info, contact Father Steffan  
on 020 8769 2922  
or [frsteffan@stpeters-streatham.org](mailto:frsteffan@stpeters-streatham.org)

Online Services:

For access to the live streamed / recorded services on Facebook, you don't need a Facebook account - they are public.

The address is: [www.facebook.com/StPetersSW16](https://www.facebook.com/StPetersSW16)

Copy deadline for Advent & Christmas *St Peter's Review* : Sunday 27th November 2022

