

# ***Parish Magazine of St Giles' & St Margaret's, Oxford***



***November 2006***

***Free***

## **The United Benefice of *St Giles and SS Philip & James with St Margaret***

<http://www.st-giles-church.org>

<http://www.parishes.oxford.anglican.org/oxford-stmargaret/>

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The parish magazine aims to provide an opportunity for us to exchange ideas and to share our experience of the Christian life. Publication date is intended to be the last Sunday of the preceding month, so copy should be sent before the previous Wednesday. Please send the editor articles, drawings, book reviews, parish news. The editor is especially grateful for material which has no particular sell-by date and for copy sent by email attachment.

***Deadline for submissions for next issue:  
Wednesday, 22 November, 5 pm (for distribution Sunday, 26 Nov).***

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## **Dear Friends,**

**November 2006**

I was travelling back from Anchorage on a 747 at 3:00am in the morning when I had to face an uncomfortable truth – Life simply couldn't go on like this. It was Saturday morning and it was the end of a busy week of meetings and presentations. I remember leaving the office that Friday, talking business with people as we walked to the taxi that was to take us to the airport. When we got to the airport, we were just in time to check in, but we found the plane was substantially over-booked. The first thought that came to mind when I heard this news was that I had to get back for Sunday because I was due to preach at the 10:00am service. So, when two seats were identified in economy class, I instantly accepted that I would fly, although originally I had been booked in to travel business class.

The moment of decision came several hours into that flight when I woke up to realise that although I had made the plane, I hadn't prepared a sermon to preach. I had no paper to hand, so I remember tearing up some cardboard folder and writing on the back of it. Cramped, in a dark plane with only a few personal lights on, most people snoring around me....that was the moment of decision. It simply wasn't possible for me to continue to try and combine being a member of a family with two small boys, working for an international oil company and being an ordained priest in the Church of England. So, since I had made a promise about my marriage and being ordained, I realised which aspect of my life had to go.

Looking back on that time, I can now see parts of my character which I don't find very attractive. But what I have come to realise is that when God calls you to get involved, he accepts you as you are and works with you from there. He could see something in me that called me to be drawn in, he forced me to face reality and stop trying to be super-human. Life has certainly been increasingly different from that moment on the plane. It was a significant moment when I realised how living life with Christ, causes us to make decisions which can be life changing.

But what I have found out since that date is that letting the Holy Spirit into your life affects all aspects of it, both big and small. What seems to be characteristic of his actions is the way he constantly surprises you with insights and events which were totally unpredictable to you before they happen. A little event at St Giles last week may help to illustrate what I mean.

It was at the end of the 12:30pm Eucharist on Wednesday when I was putting up a poster in the porch. I saw a friend of mine just outside on the path, he hadn't seen me and there was a moment when I could have gone back into the church without making contact. But I didn't do that, I said hello and urged him to come into the church to see the Karl Harrison picture of the inside of St Giles. I thought that it would appeal to him and it did. We talked through our observations, things like... "this is the sort of picture that you would get with a fish eye lens", "this is the sort of picture of St Giles that I see when I look into the filled chalice". But then I noticed something about the picture that I hadn't seen before....the high altar was upside down!

The day before I had been struggling with trying to understand the Gospel for the coming Sunday (Mark 10:35-45) and suddenly, this picture had given me the insight I had been searching for. Yes, it is true coming close to God does turn your life upside-down; it does make you completely re-evaluate your priorities. But if that is the underlying truth about the impact of the Gospel – then isn't God rather perverse?

I kept looking at the picture and noticed something else, at the right-hand side, there was the nave altar lit by a curiously white light from the window above. It made me recall the words of the psalmist that God is at my right-hand and of John's Gospel "I am the light of the world". Yes, although our journey of faith does cause us to turn our lives upside-down, God is there supporting us through the process, guiding us and sustaining us, just so long as we stay in communion with him.

It was then that I realised that St Giles has three altars, so I looked around the picture for the third altar in the Lady Chapel. Although the Lady Chapel is lit by a curiously warm light in the picture, I couldn't

quite see the altar. It was then that it came to mind that when God calls us, he doesn't want us to trumpet our good works around the place; he wants us to do them as if in secret, "the right hand not knowing what the left is doing". So, the curiously warm light from the Lady Chapel reminded me that in our journey of faith, it is the secret acts of love which really bring a warm-glow to life.

Suddenly, quite by surprise, I had been led into a series of discoveries by looking at the picture with my friend. I had been affirmed in my journey of faith and the experiences that I had been through as I have tried to follow God's calling in my daily life. Yes, it is causing me to see things differently. It is causing me to do different things and it is a constant source of change. In the world's terms, having faith in God doesn't give you a greater sense of security but it does give a sense of purpose and direction in life. In this topsy-turvy world, if we stay in communion with God in our daily lives, then we always have the ability of knowing which way is up. Initially we may not choose to take it....but at least we have the chance of finding our bearings when we eventually face the truth.

With love,

*Andrew.*

### ***Praying for Others***

*The following is written by Arthur Clement who has been on our prayer list for the past few months.*

About two years ago, I was told that my kidneys were failing and I would be on dialysis within a year. To my surprise, I have just started my second year. It was difficult to realise that it was not a temporary treatment, but was for ever ....

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, my wife, Jenny, takes me to the Churchill, leaving home at 6.20, and spending four hours on a machine. If all goes well, I am home by 12.30. I am one of many who are kept alive by the excellent staff at the Churchill, and I am most grateful for their love, kindness, compassion and competence.

I have many people praying for me, and this has been a great help. I thank Andrew and Georgie, and all those who pray for me at St Margaret's.

Whenever I can, I go to 8 o'clock Communion. The words of the service have a particular meaning for me, and I am always lifted by the Sacrament. You often hear people say: 'God, give me strength'. He does for me.

With my dreadful sense of humour, I liken dialysis to the ancient treadmill: you get on, do your four hours, and get off. Nothing has changed, and you will be on again in two days' time.

### ***Christ in my life***

*by David Longrigg, Lay Minister*

A reverend Fallowfield married a Longrigg lady in the nineteenth century, but otherwise there is no indication of a particularly religious background among my ancestors. It is true that a grandfather, and his father, owners of a large country house within the vicinity, bequeathed the reredos of the local church, and had some kind of influence in appointing the vicar of a tiny hamlet near Penrith called Cliburn, where many Longriggs, including my father, are buried. I was brought up as a rather typical middle class Anglican: church on some Sundays, and said prayers in a freezing bedroom beside my bed before inserting myself between sheets and blankets.

It was at school that Christ, the Church, and services, became part of my life. At the first Prep school I attended in WW2 in the cold and snowy depths of Cumberland – a dreadful place with a paedophilic headmaster where the staff were not allowed to marry! – I have no recollection at all of the school chapel, if there was one, or of the local church. But at the second prep school I attended at the age of ten to thirteen, the Christian religion was emphatically preached and taught by a clergyman on the staff. Just about every morning we had an hour's Biblical teaching, two short services daily and two on Sundays in the chapel, where I became

familiar with hymns and psalms, sang solos and read the lessons. There was much emphasis on, and participation in, the Christian faith. I enjoyed starting the day with the Scripture lesson, which was more often than not reading a Bible story, and studying the parables and miracles. The result was that in my Scripture Common Entrance exam I achieved top marks in the 95% range. Christ was certainly a central plank in my life.

I moved to an independent boarding school at the age of thirteen where Christianity also played a large part in school and daily life: a school service in the morning and prayers in the house in the evening, matins and evensong on Sundays, with a third optional communion service before breakfast if one was confirmed which I was at the age of fifteen. There were two resident chaplains on the staff, and housemasters were practising Christians who gave us boys preparation for confirmation. On Sundays, as far as I could see, all the staff seemed to attend the Sunday morning service, and many went to the evening one as well. There was a strong religious tradition in my school, and the impact of Christ in my life was firmly established.

I had little contact with Christianity during National Service, and most weekends were taken up with travelling to and from home, or staying with friends. My grandmother, with whom I was living some of the time, was on the whole not terribly well. My father was a resident schoolmaster at a Public school, while my mother was living in what was then a long way off, Southport. But Oxford days were different. There – here – I was fortunate to be living in an environment that had, on the whole, been formed and framed for the teaching and practice of Christianity. True, my attendance at College Chapel – and other places – was infrequent. But Christ was present, if not in person, at least in spirit. And the study of History also concentrated in my mind the strong influence of Christianity upon individual lives, historical events and literature. My trouble was I wanted proof, a kind of historical proof, I suppose, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. It took me some years to realise that proof of Christianity was – and is – impossible to find; but, most important of all, it didn't matter. The love of God and Christ for us

is here now, was there then, and does not need proof. It just is – and that is what matters.

And, of course, I have been much influenced by my wife's consistent and practising faith. Her faith developed in New Zealand before she came to Oxford, and it was in that country she became a Roman Catholic. I have never considered becoming a Roman Catholic myself, and the width and depth of the Church of England suits my liberal temperament where I am not obliged to defend anything indefensible, or believe in something ambiguous.

But I find the discipline of worship put Christ where he should be, and is, in the centre of things. Morning office I say every morning with my tea before my jog, prayers at 5:30pm at St Giles on weekdays, and Sunday services. I attempt to make my relationship to secular life with people, and in my environment, God based. I do my best to be the servant of God, and, as Paul would say, In Christ.

### ***Christ in our daily lives***

*by Martin Henig*

For most of my life relationships with formal religion (mainly Judaism) were somewhat tenuous. Like my parents I saw the demands of maintaining various ritual laws as pointless (even if of anthropological interest) and in our family the noun defining the sort of person who insists on imposing their own religious ideas on others was a 'bugger'... I am afraid I have carried this attitude on. Amongst the 'religious buggers' of our day are those who seek to impose their own definition of faith or their own narrowly prescriptive sexual morality on others, whether they are Jews, Muslims ... or Christians. And yet, and yet ... Christ was *there* in our world from the beginning as the *Wisdom* of God, in his message to love one another. I found him, especially, through growing up with (mainly Anglican) friends for whom our own inadequacies did not bar us from access to a God, both transcendent and immanent.

From a very early age indeed I was interested in nature and I especially enjoyed studying animals in all their variety, seeing them as worthy of our respect and care: I have always been very ambivalent towards the idea that mankind is at the apex of creation, and I feel it natural that our prayer life should embrace everything that lives, not just human beings.

But when I was 9 or 10 archaeology and history became an abiding passion. How did people live in the past? I could not see them coldly, but an object in a museum case would make me wonder at how the owner spent her/his day. Churches were special places and before I had even heard the word, they were for me *numinous*, but then so were prehistoric or classical temples. Later, I came to quote the late Pagan writer Symmachus, to the effect that 'Everything is full of God. Not by a single path can one achieve so great a mystery'. But that was after, at Cambridge, encountering Platonism. In those great dialogues, notably the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* I again as in the words of Christ encountered the nature of love, and in a form I found far more acceptable than that generally espoused by the formal ethics of the Church or, indeed, the Synagogue.

In contemplating the wonders of Creation, in gazing on works of art or archaeological finds, in viewing mankind through the mirror of anthropology and history and Greek philosophy I found myself coming up against a Being who was just there, from whom nothing could be hidden and when the time came I knew that it had been Christ calling me the whole time.

There is no way in which I can separate my faith life from daily life, because historical and archaeological research can be a way of fulfilling the demands of the spirit. We affirm a faith that is rooted in history; it was formed in the Iron Age of Palestine and in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and in the centuries since we have seen how women and men interpreted and (alas) all too often abused the Gospel message. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on us to show understanding towards others, whether in this world now or not. A few years ago (before I was formally a Christian) I thought I would write a book about the people of Roman Britain, entitled *The Heirs of King Verica* (2002) trying to

imagine them as living and loving individuals. The book gathered momentum and I found that it ended where I suppose it had begun, with the realisation of God's presence.

Occasionally the actual life of the church and my archaeological passions come very closely together: for instance I have been very keen – actually for over 30 years – to see St Giles' 13<sup>th</sup>-century chancel roof dendro-dated. Usually of course it is something very different, finding out as much as I can about the artistic themes engraved on Roman signet rings or carved in stone sculpture, but these too take me back to ideas about the divine. The greatest element though is opening up to others, friendship which often begins in a teaching experience. I love teaching, which often results in me learning more ... and not just about what those sent to me are meant to be studying. I don't know what one is meant to do (though I have never cared much about that), but one so often finds that a tutorial consists of two people witnessing to each other in all sorts of ways. So often I find like thoughts and intimations to my own, and often I find I am talking to someone who fills me with awe by the way in which s/he has been living the Christian life by helping in an orphanage or doing something for the environment ... or the church. There is no doubt that my daily life has made me ever more aware of a community of faith, and of a new generation of astonishing commitment.

What I do on Sundays and what I do on other days are not in separate boxes. Sunday is special because it reminds us of the Incarnation and God's salvation, but it is a day in which going to church, generally to evensong at St Giles as well as to the Eucharist, often at St Margaret's, is interspersed with talking to and drinking with friends. Other days can be special too, and mixing my intellectual life with church services is a constant reminder of God in our midst. My enthusiasms range from the British Archaeological Association (which admittedly has a bias towards medieval church art and architecture) to other societies interested in antiquity. I enjoy campaigning on behalf of the Natural World and for animals in captivity (especially opposing vivisection) and also care deeply about human issues such as Lesbian and Gay rights (the Jeffrey John affair was actually an event which was very important to

me, bringing me to seek baptism). All these are for me reflections of what Christ wants of me, and cannot be divided into sacred or secular activities. Just as God and his son are in everything, and none of us can hide from God, so the Church should be there, proclaiming eternal verities, and each of us as an individual has to speak for the Church – our Church, Christ's church – at whatever cost.

### ***Living as a Christian***

*by Margaret Hollis, LLM*

In his famous book "Honest to God" Bishop John Robinson wrote of himself: "I belong by nature to the 'once-born' rather than to the 'twice-born' type. I have never really doubted the fundamental truth of the Christian faith - though I have constantly found myself questioning its expression." This is true of me too; I grew up in a Christian family in a Christian culture - the Christian faith pervaded life at home and at school. We were not a pious or excessively devout family - religion was more a matter "doing one's duty" to God by leading a decent life than of saying prayers or attending church, but God was definitely part of the framework. I cannot remember ever being without the awareness of God. What I did have to do as I grew up and asked myself what the Faith meant to me, was to work out what God wanted of me.


Some people have a very clear sense of vocation from childhood onwards. If you ask them what they want to do when they grow up, they can give you a firm answer. I could never do that; most of my family were dedicated teachers, but teaching was really the last thing that I wanted to do! But I did want to find out what God wanted me to do. In so far as I have had an answer, it has been more about *being* than about *doing*, and that is quite hard to cope with, for one reared in the Calvinist work ethic. Life has been about being open to the working of the Holy Spirit, about being not conformed to the world but transformed by the renewing of the mind, as St Paul has it. The Benedictines call it *conversio morum* - conversion of life, not in one blinding Damascus Road experience, but in the slow movement of the daily round, the common task.

Marriage is a great "instrument of salvation". The Orthodox describe marriage as a form of martyrdom - no cynical sniggers, please! They are using the word in its original meaning of "witness" - a Christian marriage is a significant witness to the love of God. But there is also the idea of denying oneself, giving up one's individual will for the sake of spouse and family. I have often thought of marriage as well illustrated by the old-style pair of horse ploughing together, with the Lord as both the ploughman and the mark at the end of the furrow.

Finding a spiritual home in St Margaret's as an LLM has given me work to do where I can make a contribution to life of the church while being encouraged to grow both in knowledge and, I trust, in grace.

The Christian faith gives meaning and purpose to my life. Within this framework the ups and downs are seen in perspective - good things are enhanced, the less good becomes bearable and often instructive. I have an awareness of being somehow held within the community of the Holy and Blessed Trinity. As the football anthem puts it: "You'll never walk alone!" There is a rather more poetic Celtic version:

*"Saviour and Friend, how wonderful art thou! My companion upon the changeful way, the comforter of its weariness. My guide to the eternal town, the welcome at its gate."*

<p><b>Ceramics for Christmas at St Giles</b></p> 	<p>A selling exhibition to include work by <b>Jane &amp; Dylan Bowen and Jane Hanson</b> Saturday, 11 November to Saturday, 2 December Weekends 2-5, Mon-Fri 12-2</p>
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## ***Living as an Anglican abroad***

*by Alice Keller*

Growing up in Switzerland with a Swiss father and a British mother meant that I gathered first-hand experience of two cultures and traditions during my childhood and adolescence. I was christened in the Anglican Church of Geneva and confirmed in the Swiss Reformed Church in Stallikon, Zurich. However, as a young adult I found it difficult to settle in the Swiss Reformed Church and preferred the Anglican style of worship.

St Andrew's Church, where I worshipped before moving to Oxford, calls itself the Anglican Episcopal Church in Eastern Switzerland. Located in Zurich it serves a very large geographical area and brings together English-speaking Christians of many different nationalities, cultural and denominational backgrounds. This diversity within the congregation is typical for the Diocese of Europe, which also includes Morocco, Turkey and the whole of the former Soviet Union. In the latest issue of the church magazine the chaplain raised the interesting question whether St Andrew's, Zurich, considers itself primarily an *Anglican* or an *English-speaking* church. (He goes on to remind the reader that most Anglicans worldwide do not have English as their native language, and that most English-speaking Christians are not Anglicans.)

Churches in the Diocese of Europe are financially totally self-supporting. St Andrew's does not receive any income from the Swiss church tax system, from the diocese, or from the Church of England as a whole. This requires a high degree of commitment among the members and means that many of the activities surrounding the church are intended to raise funds. The Annual Bazaar in November is the main fundraising event and provides the Expats with invaluable Christmas cards and crackers, marmalade and fruit cakes, knitted tea cosies and cheap English paperbacks.

The main act of worship is the Sunday Sung Eucharist. On Sunday evening the clergy also offer a service in one of the three Daughter Communities which serve the wider area of Eastern Switzerland. Due to

the very scattered nature of the congregation (and parking problems in the centre of Zurich) it is often difficult to bring people together for discussion groups or services during the week. But there are also fellowship groups outside Zurich which bring people together in a more informal environment.

With nine Anglican chaplaincies, Switzerland is comparatively well served. Although clergy meet regularly, there is very little interaction between members of different congregations. This means that you can feel very insular as an Anglican in Switzerland. You realise that you are part of a larger organisation, but there is actually very little evidence. On the other hand there is a great sense of belonging to your local congregation.

Looking back, this feeling of being 'insular' was actually very significant to my faith life. Belonging to a denomination which is a tiny minority means that your friends don't know anything about your church, that you never hear or read anything about your church in the media (is this good or bad?) and that the number of events where you can meet or interact with other Anglicans is very limited. I suspect this makes the congregation more introspective and less aware of church politics and faith issues relating to society as a whole.

From this point of view, moving to Oxford has been very valuable. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of churches and choose from a wide range of Anglican styles of worship. I have the opportunity to attend events, lectures or study days and discuss issues relating to my faith. It is always comfortable to belong to the majority.

But equally I recognise that belonging to the majority denomination means that I need to take on more responsibility and formulate an opinion regarding issues facing the Church of England today. I cannot hide behind a label which none of my colleagues or friends understand. Nevertheless if all fails, I can always claim to be Swiss and remain different. That's always an easy way out – and it works surprisingly well "in allen Lebenslagen".

## ***St Margaret's Youth Pilgrimage to St David's - August 06***

We left for St David's only slightly behind schedule, amid a chorus of "Goodbye!", "Have Fun!" and the all-important "*Behave!*"

After a long but uneventful journey we arrived at Caerhafod Lodge, our accommodation for the rest of the week. We then spent the rest of the afternoon settling in, nabbing top bunks and making a short trip to the nearby beach. The beach: it was rather rocky so the first afternoon all of us spent clambering around on the rocks. The second night, though, all of us decided to brave the Irish Sea and had a great time being crashed into by waves. The first evening when we sat down to supper we knew we were in for a week of absolutely sumptuous food. Michele whipped up such delicacies as black forest cake, Eton mess and mango mousse. An added bonus this year was the ice-cream maker which tickled our taste buds with flavours including Nutella, fudge and good old strawberry. For those with a more savoury tooth there were delicious first courses such as spaghetti bolognaise or burgers from champion Welsh butchers, while the vegetarians munched on scrumptious cashew-nut balls.

Each day we learned about a different religious symbol, and an example of it was placed on a plate in the evening before Compline. These symbols, or signs of life, included the cross, bread and wine, light, water and rocks. We would study readings that had relevance to the symbols and contribute thoughts of our own. At the end of the week we knew a lot more about the significance of these symbols to the Christian faith.

Each night we sang Compline, which was led by a different person each time, and throughout the week we had three Eucharist services: one on Sunday, one in the middle of the week, and finally a particularly special one in a chapel in St David's Cathedral. This year we were joined by two brand new pilgrims, Lucy and Matthew. We really hope they enjoyed their time and made lots of new friends. They made a great addition to the group. In fact, there were quite a lot of first times on this year's pilgrimage. One example of this was that we had to abandon the walking one day because of the rain, and we turned up to shelter in a

church hall. To our surprise we found it full of belly dancers. It was quite an experience, especially when we joined in.

The rain limited our walking a bit, but the walking we did do was along a beautiful coastal path; undulating would be an understatement so at times it was quite tough. All the walking created great opportunities to talk and get to know people really well, and a lot of friendships were formed or strengthened.

We finally arrived at St David's itself and had a lovely service in a private chapel, singing Rachmaninov's "Ave Maria", "O Sacrum Convivium" by Tallis and "The Lamb" by John Tavener.

To sum up the pilgrimage in just a few words is extremely hard. To really know what it felt like you would need one of Michele's cookies in your mouth, the background hum of hymns in your ear, and the sight of yet another looming cliff. You would need to know the smell of the Irish Sea, the feel of raindrops running down your nose and take comfort in the fact that you are surrounded by trusted friends. And that's what really brought the "pilg" together: a combined use of the senses to create an extremely enjoyable week with a thoroughly good time had by all.

Lastly we would like to thank Michele and David for creating this opportunity and caring for us entirely throughout the week. Whether it was providing three slap up meals for us every day or merely rather a lot of blister plasters we are eternally grateful and hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. Thank you.

*Mimi Goodall*

### ***Impressions of a first pilgrim***

What do you get if a pilgrimage party is composed mainly of singers? Impromptu Taizé chants on public footpaths, much to the surprise of Italian tourists; perfect community singing of rounds; taxing choral works performed at the drop of a hat; organized harmonization of "Happy Birthday to You". What food fuels such melodious endeavours?

Gourmet cold lunches unfolding from the back of a Volkswagen; delicious dinners with mouth-watering desserts; chocolate chip cookies to rejuvenate tired walkers. In need of spiritual refreshment also? Daily Compline, the Eucharist celebrated on a kitchen table, and themed hymns and bible readings should suffice. Not bad for a week's pilgrimage.

*Matthew Silverman*

### ***A small pilgrimage by rail, road, and sea***

My first visit to Iona was as a tourist, staying one night and greatly enjoying the evening service in the Abbey. Since then, I had been increasingly wanting to return, but this time to engage more fully in the life, music and worship of the community. I got my chance recently, staying with the Iona Community for the first part of a residential week, encouragingly called "being out and about".

The Iona Community runs two centres on Iona: the Abbey and the Macleod Centre. Each runs a variety of week-long courses from March to October, open to individuals and groups. Occasionally they offer the chance to attend for a weekend, which I leapt at.

Whatever the topic, the emphasis is on living "in Community", founded on their generous and enthusiastic hospitality, plus some structure (such as chores teams) and programmed activities such as a "Big Sing". They gave us plenty of free time and underpinned it all with a living and vibrant faith. To me this was expressed as much in our daily living as in the more formal worship. Mealtimes began with different forms of thanksgiving, offered with enthusiasm and humour. At staff-led sessions I was struck by the clarity and confidence with which they offered their gifts – as if in fulfilling God's purpose there was no room for anxiety or self-consciousness.

I loved the daily services in the Abbey – one at 9am to set us up for the day's "work", and one at 9pm to celebrate the day and its regular weekly theme. Saturday was a service of welcome, Sunday evening a

quiet time, Tuesday for healing – each day is special. I loved the songs – some that I knew well from our own Iona service, some new and easily learnt. Communion is held on Sunday morning and Thursday evening. On Saturday night we were asked for volunteers to assist with the bread and the wine. I really felt my Christian credentials weren't quite up to the job so didn't offer, which I then regretted. But on the Sunday morning I needn't have worried. The homemade bread was enormous (and delicious), the wine in great goblets. We passed each to our neighbour with prayer as we felt fit, something I found very moving and affirming. As we left the Abbey we were handed oatcakes, with the instruction to continue our sharing with someone we hadn't yet met.

This commitment to finding ways to take the energy and faith from the services into our daily life was really exciting. From the start I had the sense of Iona as a mother church, revitalising and supporting its scattered worldwide community of people working for justice and peace throughout the world. The wider Community is organised into family groups – each person makes a commitment to daily prayer, and within these groups are fully accountable for how they spend their money, how they spend their time, and what they support. I found this fascinating – it is a level of openness that I don't even have with my husband. It could be intrusive, but I can see how it can be incredibly supportive in helping someone keep on track when they have difficult work to do.

I've called this a pilgrimage, because that's what it felt like, even more so as I realised the challenges I was to face. I had gone to give thanks for my baby son Leo, and I found that to truly do this I had to accept this wonderful gift in its fullness, which meant facing my fears of losing him equally fully. And in doing so I found my love for Leo was clearer, easier and less blocked by fear. Much nicer for both of us!

The other challenge was about time – or rather being present. With so little time, it was easy to worry about returning and whether I was making the most of my time. Rather like life, I had to learn just to enjoy each moment that was there, and to stop trying, and just be.

And in that stillness I found refreshment and healing. In Iona and its community I have discovered a wonderful resource. I feel very grateful for the St Giles Iona service which introduced me to both Iona and the Benefice. This is a wonderful way to spend 15 minutes on a Thursday morning – come along at 8am and find out!

For more information about the Iona Community see [www.iona.org.uk](http://www.iona.org.uk)

**Kate Graham**

### ***St Giles' choirboy to go New College***

Theo Ross, who is six and has been singing for the past year in St Giles' choir, has just been awarded a choristership at New College Choir by Edward Higginbottom.



Only 3 choristerships were awarded this year, and only one (Theo's) to an internal candidate from New College School, so he is particularly to be congratulated on this achievement. He will start next September, and we are delighted at his success (though of course we will miss him very much - but he does have two younger brothers ...)

**Cynthia Hall**

### ***Date of church beams***

The beams of the Chancel roof of St Giles Church have been dated by Dr Dan Miles of the Oxford Dendrochronological Laboratory by making a count of the tree rings. The beams were cut from wood felled in 1288 probably from the region of Godstow Monastery, Lay rectors of the church at that time. The roof beams are typical for a thirteenth century roof: the timbers are of equal size, the joints are mortice and tenon, not notch-lap joints as in Christ Church chapter house. Since the roof has no crown post to give it lengthwise support, over the years it has come to lean over sideways by about a foot. Had the roof dated from the turn of the fourteenth century, it would have had support which would have prevented this.

**Margaret Bullard**

## *The Historic Churches Preservation Trust*



The Historic Churches Preservation Trust (not to be confused with the county based Historic Churches Trusts who have similar objectives) is one of the bodies that has given a grant to St Giles' for the recent roof restoration work.

We are most grateful for their grant of £3,000, news of which we received towards the end of our fund raising efforts thus giving us a good final boost. We were pleased and proud to have received a grant from a national body such as the HCPT, who receive about 1,800 enquiries a year and make an average of 350 grants. It was good to be one of the lucky ones.

HCPT was founded in 1953 and is the only national charity offering funds to communities for essential repairs to the fabric of churches and chapels in England and Wales, regardless of denomination or grade. Since 1953 it has given away £23 million in about 11,000 grants. It receives no financial assistance either from government or the church authorities and survives entirely on voluntary subscriptions and donations. According to HCPT the average cost of work per church (in 2002) was £104,000: by coincidence, the work on St Giles roofs will cost just about that figure!

One condition of our grant is that the PCC make an annual donation to the HCPT for a period of seven years, which, of course, we will gladly be doing. In addition some of you may like to become a Friend of the Trust (annual subscription only £15) or make an individual donation to support their work. Their address is:

**Historic Churches Preservation Trust  
31 Newbury Street, London EC1A 7HU**

HCPT leaflets are available in church.

*Alison Bickmore*

**All Souls' Day, Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8pm at St Margaret's**

**Sung Eucharist  
with Oxford Pro Musica Singers**

Byrd Mass for Four Voices,  
Byrd's Propers for All Saints', including  
*Introit: Gaudeamus omnes*  
*Gradual: Timete Dominium*  
*Offertory: Justorum animae*  
*Communion: Beati mundo corde*

**Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 3pm at St Giles**

**Harpichord recital by Peter Ward Jones  
J.S. Bach, The Goldberg Variations**

Followed by tea and patisserie in the Church Hall,  
sponsored by *Maison Blanc*  
£7.50, in aid of the Roof Appeal (tickets at the door)



### **Wanted – Books**

for another St Giles' Book Sale  
on Saturday 25 November 10am – 2.30pm  
in the Church Hall.

**Please phone Alison on  
513100 by Thursday 23 November**  
if you have any to donate,  
she can collect between 19 and 23 November.



**THURSDAY LECTURES: AUTUMN 2006**  
St Giles' Church, 12.30 pm

**Termly lectures:**

***The Seven Deadly Sins in Literature and Life***

**October 19<sup>th</sup>:** Professor Michael Dobson and Dr Nicola Watson:  
*Vanity: the case of Queen Elizabeth I*

**October 26<sup>th</sup>:** Professor Val Cunningham: *Gluttony*

**November 2<sup>nd</sup>:** The Rev'd Mary Bide: *Apathy: all Laodiceans now*

**November 9<sup>th</sup>:** The Rev'd Prof Michael Screech: *Envy*

**November 16<sup>th</sup>:** Margaret Bonfiglioli: *Lust and Law, Sex and the City,*  
*explored in 'Measure for Measure'*

**November 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Dr Martin Henig: *Avarice and the Ancient Romans*

**November 30<sup>th</sup>:** Felicity Blair: *Anger, a force for Good as well as Ill?*

**ST MARGARET'S CHURCH**



**PIANO RECITAL FOR REMEMBRANCE DAY**  
by  
**HUGH PETTER**

'uncommon musical sensibility and seriousness' – *The Daily Telegraph*

**SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2006, 7.30 pm**

Mozart: Two Rondos: A minor, D major.  
Beethoven: Sonata in C minor (the Pathétique).  
Chopin: Two Preludes, Nocturne in C minor, Barcarolle.  
Scarlatti: Two Sonatas.  
Debussy: La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin.  
Granados: The Lover and the Nightingale

Tickets (available on door): **£8 (£5 children)** in aid of St Margaret's  
Institute Lease Appeal

# WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

*Cancer is something that most of us prefer to push to the back of our minds and pray we will never have to deal with. However, more than one million people in the UK today have had a cancer diagnosis. By 2025 this figure will have increased to 3 million. As you read this, one in three of us will be living with cancer.*

*Macmillan Cancer Support is working towards the day when everyone in the UK has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer. Macmillan funds services which include: Macmillan nurses, doctors, and patient information and grants. We have also paid for 100 buildings for cancer treatment and care.*

*We have funded over 2,500 nurses, doctors and health care professionals across the UK, and help more than 200,000 people with cancer each year. Macmillan works in partnership with the NHS. All our services are free, and are funded entirely through the generosity of our supporters. We will not give grants for services unless continued funding has been guaranteed by our partner organisation. In this way, we ensure that services become permanent.*

*Macmillan currently fund 33 specialist posts in Oxfordshire. These include:*

- *A new Macmillan Specialist Nurse in Bone & Soft Tissue Cancer based at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre NHS Trust.*
- *A Macmillan Child and Family Support Worker at SeeSaw, the Oxford based child bereavement charity.*
- *Three new posts at the Oxfordshire Befriending Network that have extended the Volunteer Befriending Services.*
- *And of course many Macmillan Nurses throughout the county.*

## *Dates for your diary ... November 2006*

<b>Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>All Saints' Day</b>
12.30 pm	Holy Communion <i>at St Giles'</i>
<b>Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>All Souls' Day</b>
12.30 pm	Lunchtime Talk <i>at St Giles'</i> <i>Apathy: all Laodiceans now</i> Speaker: Rev Mary Bide
4.00 pm	Toddlers' Service <i>at St Margaret's</i>
8.00 pm	Sung Eucharist <i>at St Margaret's</i>
<b>Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY</b>
<b>Monday, 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><i>St Giles' Church</i> closed all day</b>
<b>Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Willibrord of York, 739</b> <b><i>St Giles' Church</i> closed all day</b>
<b>Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Margery Kempe, c1440</b>
12.30 pm	Lunchtime talk <i>at St Giles'</i> <i>Envy</i> . Speaker: Rev Prof Michael Screech
8.00 pm	PCC Meeting <i>at St Margaret's</i>
<b>Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY</b>
<b>Monday, 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Charles Simeon, 1836</b> Ceramics exhibition <i>at St Giles'</i>
<b>Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup></b>	
8.00 pm	PCC Meeting <i>at St Giles'</i>
<b>Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Margaret of Scotland</b>
12.30 pm	Lunchtime talk <i>at St Giles</i>

*Lust and Law, Sex and the City, explored in  
'Measure for Measure'*

Speaker: Margaret Bonfiglioli

<b>Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Elizabeth of Hungary</b>
2.30-5.30 pm	Peal attempt <i>at St Giles'</i>
<b>Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT</b>
3.00 pm	Harpichord Recital <i>at St Giles'</i> in aid of the Roof Appeal - Peter Ward Jones
<b>Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Clement, Bishop of Rome</b>
12.30 pm	Lunchtime Talk <i>at St Giles'</i> <i>Avarice and the Ancient Romans</i> Speaker: Dr Martin Henig
<b>Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Catherine of Alexandria</b>
10.00 am-2.30 pm	Booksale <i>at St Giles' Parish Rooms</i>
4.00 pm	Wedding of John McMaster and Suzanne Baylay <i>at St Giles'</i>
7.30 pm	<i>An Evening of German Song at St Giles'</i> – Cathy Bell
<b>Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>CHRIST THE KING</b>
<b>Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Andrew, Apostle</b>
12.30 pm	Lunchtime Talk <i>at St Giles'</i> <i>Anger, a force for Good as well as Ill?</i> Speaker: Felicity Blair
<b>Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec</b>	<b>ADVENT SUNDAY</b>
3.00 pm	SANDS Service <i>at St Giles'</i>
6.00 pm	Advent Carol Service <i>at St Margaret's</i>

## Weekly Services at St Giles' & St Margaret's

<b>Sunday</b>	8:00am	Holy Communion	St Margaret
	8:00am	Holy Communion	St Giles
	10:30am	Parish Eucharist <i>with Sunday School &amp; Crèche</i>	St Margaret
	10:30am	Mattins & Holy Communion	St Giles
	6:00pm	Evening Prayer	St Margaret
	6:30pm	Evensong	St Giles
<b>Monday</b>	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Giles
<b>Tuesday</b>	7:00am	Morning Prayer	St Margaret
	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Giles
	7:15pm	Eucharist	St Margaret
<b>Wednesday</b>	7:00am	Morning Prayer	St Margaret
	12:30pm	Eucharist	St Giles
	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Giles
<b>Thursday</b>	7:00am	Morning Prayer	St Margaret
	8:00am	Iona Liturgy	St Giles
	10:00am	Holy Communion	St Margaret
	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Giles
<b>Friday</b>	7:00am	Morning Prayer	St Margaret
	1:15pm	Taizé Service	St Giles
	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Giles
<b>Saturday</b>	9:00am	Morning Prayer	St Giles
	5:30pm	Evening Prayer	St Margaret