

# SHINE

*St Peter's*

90

Years

*Anniversary*  
Celebration

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## FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

*Much of this issue of Shine is devoted to memories of the past 90 years since St Peter's church was opened. As well as being a place to meet and celebrate the sacraments, a church building itself is an act of faith for those who built it and maintain it. St Peter's has become a familiar sight on the Hazel Grove landscape and a place where all can feel truly welcomed by the Lord.*

*The past few months have been, shall we say 'different' but we are slowly getting back to the 'new normal'. People are slowly beginning to come back to Mass and we should soon be able to increase the numbers allowed to attend in both of our churches. Your co-operation and support over these months of lockdown are greatly appreciated.*

*We look forward to John McKay's ordination to the diaconate at the end of July and we also look forward to the implementing of Pope Francis' request for us all to journey together to the 2023 Bishops' Synod on Synodality in the Church. This is a way of all members of the church having a say and having their contribution valued by each other. I would like to think that we have already begun that journey in some small way but the next few months will see us going further.*

*Yes, as we look back in gratitude over the past 90 years, we realise there is much to look forward to as we build on the faith, hope and charity of those who went before us.*

**Fr Peter**

*News from the parish communities of  
St Peter's, Hazel Grove and  
St Philip's, Offerton.*

## Contents

**4-6**

Flower arrangers  
Janet's early memories  
Bereavement group  
Farewells and welcomes

**6**

Some parishioners' thoughts  
Our Refugee project

**7**

A memory of Lourdes



**8-17**

Our former clergy remember



**18-20**

Brendan's travelogue

**21-25**

More parishioners' memories

**26**

Carmel Derryhouse looks back



**27**

St Peter's choirs

**28**

Virtual Teas and Coffees

**29**

Carmel's miracle in the car park



**30-31**

St Peter's Helpers

**32-33**

Mary's Corner

**34**

Book Club review

**35**

Who's who in St Peter's

## Where we are . . .

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Our joint website is [www.stpeterscatholic.church](http://www.stpeterscatholic.church)



## Let us pray it with flowers

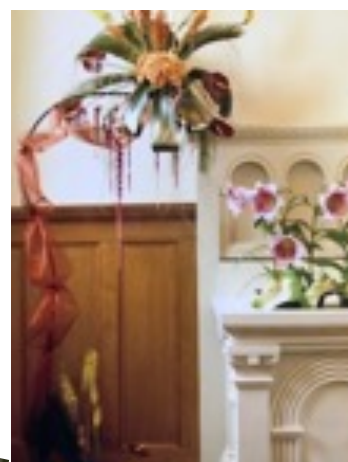
**Colette Christie** leads the flower arranging teams.

Arranging church flowers is both satisfying and relaxing. The flower arrangers, via a rota system, ensure that there are flowers at every service, except during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent when the church is bare of decoration.

We all take great pride in our work and especially enjoy arranging the flowers for Christmas and Easter when all the teams get together to create some spectacular displays. One of our most memorable events was the flower festival in June 2006 to celebrate St Peter's 75th anniversary. It

was a spectacular display of 13 huge floral arrangements, decorating the entire church. The event took a week to arrange.

The parishioners and the public were invited to walk around the church over the weekend, to admire the displays and spend time reflecting on the various themes. Afterwards they were able to enjoy refreshments on the church lawn. Everyone who came along agreed that it was superb and well worth the visit. It was a very magical and spiritually uplifting experience for all.



Janet's parents were married at St Peter's in 1943.

## Early memories

**Janet Mullen** recalls her memories of the parish.

I probably came first to the parish when I was about three and a half. I remember the inside of the church was very grey (it was more recently painted a lighter colour). The present entrance porch is a lot bigger than the original and the baptismal font was in the corner where the shop is now.

My other very early memories are Sunday School and May processions. I wasn't at a catholic primary school so I attended catechism lessons on a Sunday afternoon. There were two classes run by two of the nuns from the Holy Family Convent. We were taken through our catechism and preparation for Holy Communion. The classes were held in the parish hall (actually a large wooden hut).

Later on in my young life there was the Guild of St Agnes, Children of Mary and most exciting parish dances!! My mother was present when the foundation stone was laid, and then she and my father married here in 1943.

## Bereavement Group

The Bereavement Group has continued to meet on Zoom every two weeks throughout the pandemic and had many memorable services, talks, games and quiz times.

In May we had a virtual Treasure Hunt, which took us around Hazel Grove and High Lane. Everyone got the clues and was given a letter each time to make an anagram which they could solve in their own time and then Email the answer. This proved a little more difficult but David Young was the first to sort it followed by Pat Knox and Jean Marsh.

Perhaps you would like to have a go. Here's the anagram:  
HIROECWEYSUESDRSB

We'll put the answer in the parish newsletter on Sunday 25 July and for the following two weeks. Good luck!

If you'd like to join us at any time, just let Rachel know at [rachelmckay@icloud.co.uk](mailto:rachelmckay@icloud.co.uk).

## Farewells and welcomes

Since our last issue at Easter, the following parishioners have gone to their rest:

**Eileen Jones**  
**Patricia Taylor**  
**Graham Hancock**  
**Cecilia Ratcliff**  
**Maureen McConville**  
**Joan Ruby Knott**  
**Mary Carol McCumiskey**  
**Robert Michael Carter**  
**Michael Longden**  
**John Ready**  
**Christine Bartley**  
**Margaret Bowden**  
**John Hand**  
**Tony Byrne**  
**Michael Fogarty**  
**Kathleen Pollitt**  
**Mary 'Moyra' Ivory**  
**Irene Darcy**  
**Ann Sharples**  
**Alan Bell**  
**Veronica Burgess**  
**James Cox**  
**Tricia Ann Wilcox**  
**Margaret Barrow**  
**Tom Dolan**  
**Norah Henaghan**

**May they rest in peace.**

We have welcomed the following people into the church through baptism:

**Torin Michael Woodcraft**  
**Nevaeh Blossom Johnstone**  
**Edward James McGrory**  
**Luke Anthony Vallooran**  
**Lucas Paulo Slater Vaz**



## Looking back

**A priest who was here in the 1950s was Fr John Roper. It was his first appointment as a newly ordained priest and he was here with Fr Frederick Walsh with whom he built a good relationship.**

His sister remembers how on a Monday – his day off – he would go by train to his home town of Birkenhead to visit his parents and family. Fr Jack Hoskinson was a curate in Our Lady's and Fr Tom Hurley was in St Joseph's so the three travelled together. In those days they had to be back in the presbytery by 11pm or they might be locked out! They had it to a fine art of leaving home at 9 pm to get back from Birkenhead to Stockport by 11 by train and bus. You probably could not do it now by public transport.

Fr John, who died in 1993, always remembered the kindness of the Begley family towards him and other curates as well as his ministry in Stepping Hill. In those days the curates got around by bike whatever the weather. Now, of course, we don't have curates!!

## How things have progressed

*A parishioner remembers some key moments over the years.*

**When we arrived at St Peter's, Fr Russell would only have been a few months as parish priest and had instigated House Groups. We met regularly on a Sunday evening with him. Our group consisted of three families from each of the two schools and with similar ages, to discuss different aspects of religion.**

It may have been from these house groups that the Advent services on a Sunday developed and the Stations of the Cross at 11 o'clock on Good Friday. This was to give the children an opportunity to take part instead of at the full Passion at 3pm as at that time it was standing room outside. Since then, the children have progressed and now play a much more meaningful part in miming the Passion while the dialogue is read with appropriate prayers. That service, usually at 11am Good Friday, is now looked forward to by all parishioners.

On his arrival here, Fr Rafferty introduced the church cleaning rota to save Alice Kelly having to do it each week on her own. This has developed many friendships in the teams so much so that there are octogenarians still wielding a feather duster!

## A true church

*A parishioner reflects on what the parish has been to her.*

**St Peter's has been a true church to me since 2000, when my second child was born and we moved into the parish.**

I was greeted in the choir gallery, after a busy and difficult Mass trying to keep a very young baby from crying, by a mum who said hello and told me there were lots of others with small children and she made me welcome that first time. It made me come back.

It's a church of people who have become my friends, my mentors, my support, my counsellors, my prayer friends, my guides and my role models, in good times and bad.

It's a church where my children have been schooled, have made friends, gone to cub camp, discovered God's love for them, had opportunities for music, friendship, laughter and for building their own faith with other young people, at camps, youth days and Lourdes.

It's a church where I have discovered my own relationship with God, not just 'gone to church'. I have learned to be more open.

It's a church where my children have been baptised, made their first sacraments and confirmation. There are photo memories of these for generations to come.

It's a church where my children want to get married.

It's a church made up of some of the most genuinely caring people I have ever met. It opens its arms to me, if I ever forget where I belong or who I am.

Thank you St Peter's, to Fr Pat and Fr Peter who have looked after us and to the community which always 'has my back'.

## Update on our Refugee Project

**The borders are now open again and our team are now looking for a 3-bedroomed property to rent along the A6 corridor. As soon as we have a property, we will be able to complete the application and we should expect our refugee family to arrive six weeks later. So, watch this space! We'll continue to post updates in the parish newsletter.**

## A memory of Lourdes

*Trish Byrne's father, Tom Farnell, wrote this poem after his first trip to Lourdes in the 1950s. He was a great poet, always recording family events in verse and Trish was his typist. Tom had a great devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes and was always keen to go there in person, especially after his wartime years in Burma. His joy at being there is quite apparent in the following verses.*

Some scenes in your life you remember,  
There are others no doubt you forget  
But the village of Lourdes is the fairest  
I've seen in my travels as yet.

It was here in this Pyrenean village  
Where nature with beauty has smiled  
That Mary, our heavenly Mother,  
In a vision appeared to a child.

A child, who so pure and so holy  
Yet humble and lowly of birth,  
Was chosen by God in His wisdom  
To fulfil a great mission on earth.

Your thoughts as you gaze at the Grotto  
They turn back the pages of time  
To that day in an ecstatic vision  
Bernadette saw the Lady sublime.

The wise men of the world were mistaken  
When ridicule at you they hurled.  
Now the wise men are dead and forgotten  
While your name is known to the world.

It is here where all nations assemble –  
The rich, the poor and the lame  
As they kneel at this wondrous Grotto  
Invoking the sweet Lady's name.

You feel as you kneel there in silence  
That heaven is not far away  
As the bells they ring out o'er the valley  
That beautiful hymn, the Ave.

It is here that this world is forgotten –  
You long for the one up above  
Where Mary, our heavenly Mother  
Looks down on each pilgrim with love.

The sick I have seen them assembled  
In the beautiful Rosary Square  
Where the host, it is raised in a blessing,  
Then to heaven each offers a prayer

That from pain and disease be delivered  
If it be for the good of their soul.  
Their cry, it is echoed in heaven,  
Lord, if Thou wilt, make me whole.



Oh faith! What a wonderful treasure  
Can be found in this beautiful word;  
More precious than riches or pearls or  
Of all that this world can afford.

Lourdes! Could I ever forget you?  
The fairest of places I've seen;  
I shall keep in my memory forever  
Your shrine of our heavenly Queen.

God willing, some day I'll return there.  
O Mary, Thou Light of the Grave  
And place myself under Thy mantle  
As I kneel on the banks of the Gave.





# Anniversary greetings from some familiar faces

*Many former priests of the parish wanted to record  
their memories of St Peter's.*



## Fr Bernard McDermott



In 2001 I returned home from a four year mission appointment with the Columbans in Australia and, at my request, was seconded to the diocese from the Columbans for five years. Bishop Brian Noble asked me to go to St Philip's in Offerton and assist Fr Peter at St Peter's to replace Fr Jonathan Brandon who was going to Rome for further studies.

I lived at St Peter's for some time until the small house attached to St Philip's was re-furnished. It gave me an opportunity to 'find my feet' again in a home parish setting having been in non-parish overseas assignments with the Columbans for a number of years.

I enjoyed those few years at St Philip's/St Peter's; the parishioners in both parishes made me welcome and I felt at home from the beginning. My memories from those years are mostly positive but I had some memorable moments/occasions, which I can recall.

Margaret King often had to come to my aid on Saturdays when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed during confessions before 12 noon Mass. I could never manage to open the other door of the tabernacle to bring out the monstrance and I always struggled to get the monstrance back - and then felt a little foolish when Margaret had to come up on the altar to rescue me ... yet again!!!

I remember too, an occasion after one of the Sunday Masses when I was 'confronted' by a young man as I stood at the back of church greeting folks as they left church. I didn't recognise him as a parishioner of St Peter's and never saw him again. Anyway, Fr Peter and I had agreed that we would not read the bishop's pastoral letter that Sunday, but that we would leave copies at the back of church for people to read or to take away. "Weren't you supposed to read the bishop's letter this morning?" this young man said in a loud voice which everyone passing couldn't fail to hear! I was taken aback at his anger and I mumbled a response which he clearly felt was inadequate... "Do you mean to tell me that what you had to say this morning was more relevant than the bishop's message?" I had recovered my composure at this stage and so I replied forcefully, "Yes it was!!!". Quite a few people who had overheard the incident quietly applauded my response which made me feel quite relieved. I never came across him again.

Those years were a privileged time in my ministry and I'm so grateful to the communities of St Philip's and St Peter's. Congratulations to everyone connected with St Peter's, including those wonderful souls who have gone before us. You have much to be proud of and I wish you many more years of love and accompaniment of those who make up the parish community of St Peter's, Hazel Grove.



## Canon John Rafferty



If the parish community is the place on earth where God can meet his people and the people meet their God, the parish of St Peter's, Hazel Grove, meets the criteria. The years I was there, 1988 until 1996, were the years when I learnt from the community what a parish should be and the role of the priest at the centre and in the service of the community.

The centre of the parish is, of course, the Eucharist, but the centre of operations, so to speak, is the presbytery and a happy presbytery leads to a happy parish. During my time at St Peter's, I worked alongside and lived with seven other priests over the eight years. We did not choose our companions; we were all very different characters but the miracle was that, by and large, it seemed to work. All important were those who made it a home for us: the housekeepers, secretaries, the gardeners and those who were always at hand whenever repairs and maintenance were required. The presbytery was an open, friendly and welcoming place and so was the parish.

The church is the Place of Meeting and I had not been in a parish with so many Sunday Masses - even one at 3pm to cater for the change of shift at Stepping Hill Hospital, but which, like all the others, was full. Servers, readers, Eucharistic ministers there seemed to be in abundance and everything worked like clockwork. The liturgy was enriched by the adult choir, the children's choir and the folk group. I remember the artistry of the flower arrangements and the amazing Harvest Festivals when the sanctuary was transformed into a farmer's barn full of food for the needy. I remember the Rock Passion and the Rock Nativity and Joseph eventually marrying Mary and the policeman, coming to investigate a break-in, being confronted by the angel Gabriel at the back door. There seemed to be no end to the human resources and talents that were put generously to the worthy and joyful celebration of liturgy where God could be found by young and old.

Despite being such a large parish, St Peter's always had a family atmosphere. I always thought that the two parish schools were an important part of the cement that bound the family together, the Family Nights in the parish centre when parents could relax over a drink and children enjoy time with their friends, parish dinners with special speakers, dances galore, youth club and uniformed groups, all were part of the building of community. I remember the wonderful work of the strong SVP Conference with their visiting homes and gathering parishioners for Christmas Dinners and summer outings.

Those years were the years when shared ministry was being explored. The Parish Pastoral Team devised a questionnaire which went out to all parishioners and a general meeting was organised. We received some home truths as well as much support and the Pastoral Team addressed the issues in very practical ways. For example, forming the Lambs Group once a month on a Sunday afternoon, enlisting the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council (now Marriage Care) to train parishioners to run Engaged Couples Courses, or forming a team to run the RCIA group for those interested in coming into the Church and much more.

I have much to be grateful for from my years in St Peter's, not least for its support and encouragement to my own faith and priesthood, for reminding me of the goodness of people and teaching me that, despite the difficulties and mountains to climb, the way to be human as God intended is the way of community and the service of others.



## Fr Pat Munroe



In June 1996 I celebrated my 21st anniversary as a priest and, much to my surprise, Bishop Brian invited me to visit him. He requested that I become the next parish priest of St Peter's, Hazel Grove. A feeling of wonder and awe struck me whether I was up to the mark to follow a priest I held in high esteem. His words of wisdom that I should have a gentle approach, be at home in my own skin and love the people have always remained with me. My ten years in St Peter's were among the busiest, exciting and most rewarding I have experienced. I soon discovered how warm, welcoming and affirming the people were and open to new ideas – the motto being, if something could work in St Peter's it had to be worthwhile.

Shortly before I arrived, Sunday Masses had been reduced from seven to five. Celebrating Mass in a church that was filled with all age groups was a very uplifting experience. The slow decline in people coming weekly was not too noticeable then, the Mass count in October 1996 was 1,350! Though there were many groups and societies, a suitable place to meet in an environment other than a social club was a perennial challenge. However, the Lord always provides and thanks to a legacy, the present Meeting Room provided the ideal setting.

Cliff Metcalf, whom I had previously known when I was Diocesan Youth Chaplain, accepted my invitation to travel to Preston for an Alpha training day. We shared a similar philosophy that identifying potential leaders, training and affirming them was the most effective way to proceed in the long term. The core principles of Alpha are about welcome, hospitality, humour, informal teaching, and sharing in small groups. It was the recipe for success in that many more people got to enjoy being with each other in a cosier setting. Cliff relished leading several Alpha series and was affectionately known as Father Abraham. Alpha became the spring board for a Scripture group, the CAFE series and many other pastoral initiatives.

Having had a long association with the Youth Section of the Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, we launched a St Peter's Lourdes group. Upwards of 30 young people went annually with some becoming key leaders in the Shrewsbury Diocesan Hospitality. Wonderful friendships have been established with some people still visiting me.

Some landmark dates stand out for me, such as the dawning of the new millennium in 2000. The church was filled for the vigil Mass, gathering afterwards in the parish centre. Special medallions were given to the children in school to commemorate the Jubilee. I also celebrated my silver Jubilee as a priest. On the same weekend we celebrated Pentecost Sunday, and as Bishop Brian was sick, parish priests were delegated to celebrate Confirmation.

Jubilees are times for reminiscing and looking forward with faith and hope. In preparation for the 75th anniversary the sanctuary was refurbished, we had a parish mission and a week of guided prayer. A special highlight was the week-long flower festival on the Sacraments which attracted many visitors to the church. Our gifted florists gave a beautiful testimony to the creative power of the Holy Spirit working in the heart of a parish alive in varied ways.

Cardinal Cardijn, founder of YCW (Young Christian Workers) had this motto: 'We are always beginning'. Bishop Brian requested that I go to Northwich to take up a special challenge, with a little sweetener that it would likely be my final appointment! I remember saying during my last homily that, thanks to my wonderful years at St Peter's, I was ready for any challenge. Little was I to know that I would be returning five years later 'next door' to Our Lady's, and would see the seeds sown and many green shoots still bearing fruit.

I am currently parish priest at St Hugh and St John in Timperley. It is a large, thriving parish with an abundance of young families; it is similar to St Peter's in so many ways. I had a stroke two years ago and still recovering. I am blessed in that I have Fr Tomasz a Polish priest, who was with me for one year at Our Lady's. We are very good friends with a similar pastoral outlook and, thanks to him, I can continue with my ministry. I still have the same enthusiasm and joy and will always treasure the fantastic people whose lives have influenced me in the parishes I have been honoured to serve. My door is always open to welcome those who wish to visit.

## Deacon Steve Pomeroy



I joined St Peter's with Fr Pat in 1996 as a fresh deacon of only two years from Southampton. The wonderful welcoming parish helped mould me into my ministry of today in Lowestoft... so it's all your fault! So so many good, or should that be godly, people. Please excuse this ageing brain if I don't mention you by name but you know who you are and your role and friendship in Christ.

The music was so special, led by Eileen Rigg and Steph Leyden and even now, I will often burst into song with a rousing hymn I learnt there. The Lourdes week with a coach full of The Youth and those young in heart, saying the rosary on the M6 and again in the train of 2,000 pilgrims. Laughing til it hurt with the bombard of jokes and quips from John Mercer. The music with the Waltons. My future son-in-law and Mark getting on the wrong train back with all the amplifiers and instruments!

Planning the Advent and Lent liturgies with Eileen Wilcock, the Alpha/post-Alpha group with the Metcalfs and the Dorrians. Fr Philip and the 'three in a row' Fathers Jonathan – and of course Fr Frank with his joke as part of the dismissal at the end of Mass. I love the solemnity of good liturgy but St Peter's taught me that it should not be too solemn!

As for any achievement whilst I was with you? Well, as inferred, all of the above and more (weddings, baptisms, funerals etc, chaplaincy work at the hospital) and getting Fr Pat to have a day off when I managed to get him out for a walk in the peaks! I hear that the birch trees and snowdrops I planted as a thank you continue to grow.

Sadly I only overlapped with Fr Peter by a few weeks before relocating nearer to my original childhood home of the big skies of East Anglia. Yes, you formed me St Peter's and I have so much to be thankful for. I will pray for your celebrations and of course for your own deacon-to-be, John. I would hope that I might get the chance to do a double deacon presence at a Mass before the end of this special year for you. God bless you all.

## Fr Philip McGovern



Bishop Joseph Gray, God bless him, invited me to join Fr John Rafferty and Fr Peter Wright to start my first priestly position in St Peter's in 1995. It was not as daunting as it could've been. I was already a friend of Fr Peter and I knew Fr John from his early days when he was a newly ordained priest and I was teaching at St Hugh's High School in Birkenhead.

St Peter's was the perfect parish in which to experience the many aspects of priestly life. There was Stepping Hill hospital where we three priests were on call 24/7 to visit and bless the sick and dying. There were the two schools that were a constant joy to share the message of Christ with the children. Baptising dolls in the classroom each year was always fun and I hope the children took away some joyous memories. Celebrating the seasons of the year, preparing children and parents for First Communion was always a great time together.

There was the parish centre with a vast array of clubs and activities (and a decent pint). The marriage preparation course gave an excellent chance to share stories with the soon-to-be couples and a deepening their faith. And of course, the day-to-day routine of celebrating the sacraments with the faithful.

There are many events that I look back upon but I think the most memorable was the Holy Land pilgrimage. Visiting the holy places and experiencing the atmosphere and geography of Scripture times was profound. I still have the photographs to refresh my memory and recall the happy pilgrims.

But what I remember most were the parishioners – the resilient, solid faithful who tried to best live out the life of faith with the help of each other. Please keep up the great work.

Now that I've passed my Silver Jubilee and retired into the wilds of the Wirral, I look back with fondness and thanks and I'm really happy to know that St Peter's provided the rocks for my life of priesthood.



## Fr Ned Wall



As I sat down to write this short reflection, a trip down memory lane, I was thinking it's now almost 33 years ago since that August Bank Holiday Monday when I finally arrived at St Peter's in Hazel Grove. I say 'finally' because we got lost and I cannot remember the amount of times we drove up and down the A6 and anybody we asked did not seem to know where the church was. We finally made it a couple of hours later and as we were greeted at the back door by Sally the housekeeper and Fr John (Rafferty), they said to my best friend who had travelled with me "You must be Fr Ned". I quickly responded by saying "I'm your man". That was to be the very beginning of a journey that has been incredible and unexpected and I could not have wished for more.

It has been said that your first parish can be one of the most important appointments in your entire journey and I do tend to agree. It was here that it all began, learning about pastoral care, the importance of the role of the laity, the importance of hard work and listening to the people who truly are the Church. I do not think I could have found a better parish to begin to learn and experience everything, from the Parish Team to all the laity who were involved in and part of my journey.

I could write pages on these experiences and tell thousands of stories during those first five years but I won't bore you all. I will mention a few things that come to mind: the bike rides a few times a week visiting High Lane and doing door to door surveys with parishioners; my driving lessons around the Grove and trying not to mount the pavement; the gatherings of the youth club leaders after Monday night sessions, that laughter and fun, the staging of the Rock Nativity and the Rock Passion, the weekend retreats in Savio House and the youth trips to the Lake District (one trip in particular when, on the way back, we celebrated the freedom of Nelson Mandela); the marriage preparation group, the bereavement group all of which were new for those times, the summer fair shenanigans. So many groups I was part of during those five years and the learning experiences that they were. Of course, the hospital chaplaincy at Stepping Hill, the welcome from the people of St Peter's and their patience and tolerance as they tried their best to guide this 24 year old Irish boy. The laughter, the tears, so many moments that will never be forgotten and yet all helped me to become the person that I am today. The friendships that were formed and still are there 33 years later.

St Peter's will always have that special place in my life: the place where it all began, the place that allowed me to grow, the place that accepted my mistakes and helped me learn from them, the place that educated me to know what a real, true and vibrant community should be.

Not really much more to say, only that St Peter's still seems to be that kind of place, obviously different after 33 years but it still has that aliveness and vibrancy – and to all you who read this, you are truly lucky and blessed to belong to this community.

Congratulations on your 90 years and thank you to all, who in my five years there, crossed paths with me and helped me to be the person I am today.

## Fr Philip Atkinson



I would like to congratulate the parish on this very special anniversary and I send my love and my prayers. St Peter's was my first placement after my ordination in June 1993 and, although it was only a two year stay from September 1993 to September 1995, it left me with many happy memories.

The parish was and still is a big parish, with so many gifted and talented people who give the parish its special quality; as a newly ordained priest with so much to learn it was an ideal first placement.

I have so much to be thankful for but my main thanks are to the people themselves who were so kind, supportive and helpful in those vital first two years of my priestly life and it's a kindness I have never forgotten. Wishing you a happy time of celebrations and all good wishes for the future.

## Canon Jonathan Mitchell



I always find it a strange experience, returning to a parish where I have lived and worked. I was back in St Peter's just before Easter, driving along Green Lane and parking at the back of the presbytery where I used to park. In those days I would be returning from St Simon's, or Harrytown or Aquinas, from sick visits, or, to prevent me from sounding 'too holy', from the cinema with Brendan Kelly or from watching Sale Sharks with Tom, David, Paddy, John, or Fr Peter (on occasion).

I was ordained a priest at Our Lady's Stockport on 21 December 2001 before returning to Cambridge to sit finals, then serving a few months at Sacred Heart parish in Wythenshawe (where I'd been living during studies) and taking up my very first appointment at St Peter's. In those days to be an assistant priest at St Peter's you had to be named

Jonathan! I followed Jonathan Leach and was succeeded by Jonathan Brandon.

So, I suppose I was Jonathan II or as Fr Pat quipped "we (St Peter's) had 'young Fr Jonathan' and 'Fr Jonathan the great or large' (me, because of the waistline!) and then 'the new Fr Jonathan'.

I am sure a lot has changed at St Peter's since my time during 2001-2004. The parish centre still had a bar and was open at weekends. There were three priests Fr Pat Munroe, Fr Frank Waters and me, Steve Pomeroy was the Deacon in the parish, and Sunday nights were spent with the SPYDER - St Peter's Young Dynamic Energetic Rabble - (if I remember correctly).

From St Peter's I moved to St Vincent's, Altrincham 2004-2005, then to the Cathedral from 2005-2008, Holy Spirit and St Martin's in Runcorn 2008-2010. Then I went on secondment for six months to Our Lady's Stockport, followed by St Wilfrid's, Northwich 2011-2014, then back to the Cathedral as Dean 2014-2018. I am a believer in the promise of obedience and so I have moved when there was a need and I was asked by either Bishop Brian or Bishop Mark.

I am now serving at St Milburga's Church Stretton and St Walburga's Plowden, in conjunction with being the Episcopal Vicar for Religious, the Bishop's Representative for Civic and Ecumenical relationships across the county of Shropshire, and serving as the Dean of the Shrewsbury and West Shropshire Deanery.

St Milburga's is a small parish in terms of numbers but is 23 miles wide and 27 miles long - mostly hills, wild ponies on the Long Mynd, and sheep etc. Taking Communion to a sick person can take 1.5-2 hours with driving time. I live here with my dog Dickens who is lovely black Labrador-Collie cross from the Dog's Trust. I am studying for a MA in Reformation and Early Modern History at the University of Birmingham. So life is busy but good. Since my time at St Peter's it may all sound rather whistle-stop but I believe priests carry in their heart the parishes in which they have served in their ministry. St Peter's was the first parish in which I cut my baby teeth and for that I apologise for any mistakes; I am truly grateful for the kindnesses and generosity of St Peter's parishioners.

May St Peter's flourish at this the 90th milestone and over the next decade and century to come. God bless you all and please remember me in your prayers.

## Fr Peter Wright



I was at St Peter's for just over twelve months, twenty five years ago!

I remember with great enthusiasm the contemplation group who were growing with such joy in the simple, yet profound prayer of silence. Sharing my love for the spirituality of Celtic Christianity was a joy for me, opening up new awareness of the treasure of prayer of our own islands and culture with new people and witnessing their deepening experience of the Trinity in prayer was wonderful!

Do I remember some wonderful evenings of great fun and sharing in the parish centre as well? Pretty sure of that too!



## Fr David Peters



I was appointed parish priest of St Peter's by Bishop Gray early in 1981. I succeeded Father Joe Russell who had moved to Hoyle. That was a special year for the parish, not because of my arrival, but because 1981 was the 50th anniversary, the Golden Jubilee, of St Peter's church, which was opened in 1931, though the parish had been established in 1923. The building which had been used as the first church (dedicated to St Peter-in-chains) was located in Chapel Street and was still standing in my time. I don't know if it is still surviving. We produced a Golden Jubilee booklet, which was professionally designed and edited. I very quickly learned that there was no shortage of expertise in the parish. When there was need for specialist knowledge and advice, you could rely on finding one or more parishioners who were qualified to provide the necessary information and practical help. I must confess my memory of the actual celebration has faded, but I seem to remember the bishop in his homily going through a list of the main events of 1931.

My appointment to St Peter's was quite a drastic change for me as I had spent eight years in St Milburga's in Church Stretton, probably the smallest parish in the diocese in terms of numbers, though it covered a large part of Shropshire, stretching to the Welsh border. I used to say that I had more sheep in my parish than parishioners. St Peter's, Hazel Grove, was rather different.

Not the biggest parish in the diocese, but with some claim to be the busiest. Over a number of years there had been a great deal of population growth in the area, with many young families, and my predecessor had made it his aim to draw as many people as possible into the church. I inherited a schedule of seven Masses each Sunday, including one in the Village Hall at High Lane, one at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and one in the evening. St Peter's isn't a large church and it tended to get crowded at most of the Masses, creating rather a hectic atmosphere. I tried to introduce more music and hymn singing. Eileen Rigg started a children's choir and I tried to encourage a more personal celebration of the liturgy. I gather there has been a lot more progress in that direction since those days.

I can't imagine how we would have adapted to a pandemic if it had happened 40 years ago. We normally had three priests during my time, but it could be difficult when one was away. Fortunately, I had supportive assistant priests. Two of them are now, like me, retired priests of the diocese: Fr Willy O'Riordan and Fr Robbie Sutton, both of them well experienced and helpful in their advice. Fr O'Riordan was famous for his assiduous house-to-house visiting. I tried to imitate his example, but only got round the parish once by the time I left, though I think I had just started on a second round!

There was no Catholic school in my Shropshire parish, but in Hazel Grove I found myself involved in two parish schools, St Peter's and St Simon's. I was chair of governors for both schools and for a time acted as chaplain to St Simon's, so the parish school activities form a large part of my memory of Hazel Grove. The two schools were quite distinct. St Peter's was more traditional with a school uniform; St Simon's was open-plan and didn't enforce a uniform. I remember arranging a party in the social club for the governors and staff of the two schools, but I don't recall any other combined activity.

There was an emphasis on youth activities. I was on the governing bodies of St James' High School and Aquinas College. We had contact with Harrytown High School and to a lesser extent, St Ambrose and Loreto. We also had lots of Scouts and Guides, Cubs and Brownies; it was in my time that the Scout Hut was built and the leaders played an active part in the life of the parish. The Youth Club met each week in the parish centre and drew support from all the local parishes. It seemed to serve a need and was well organised, with quite a few helpers.

What else do I remember? Stepping Hill hospital occupied a large part of our time and attention. The three priests shared responsibility for visiting the wards and administering the sacraments. I think it was beneficial for us to combine hospital and parish ministry, especially when parishioners were admitted to the hospital. We had the full co-operation of the nursing staff, and at that time there was no restriction on supplying information regarding the religious affiliation of the patients. Catholics had green tape attached to their identification card at the end of the bed, Anglicans had blue tape and Non-Conformists red! We were encouraged, however, to visit all the patients in the ward. There was no lay chaplaincy, but one of the two parish SVP conferences was dedicated to hospital visiting and we worked closely together. As well as co-operation in hospital ministry, I remember a large amount of ecumenical activity, both in Hazel Grove

## Fr David Peters (continued)



and in High Lane, with a warm spirit of friendship shared with the ministers of the Anglican, URC and Methodist churches.

A memorable event during my time at St Peter's was the visit of Pope St John Paul II to this country in 1982. The three priests concelebrated at the papal Mass in Heaton Park, Manchester, helping to distribute Holy Communion and some of the parishioners were in the choir.

At a personal level, I have memories of my Silver Jubilee, the 25th anniversary of my priestly ordination on 13 July 1983. I had three celebrations: family, parish and diocesan which were linked together by the support and co-operation of parishioners. The parish celebration Mass was followed by a reception and presentation in the parish centre, at which I sang "When I'm 64" (many years from now!). The diocesan celebration was shared by my friends, Fr Brendan Hoban and Fr Michael Wentworth, who were ordained with me at Our Lady's in Birkenhead and Fr Jackie Warnock, who was ordained in Ireland. Again, the parishioners rose to the occasion, with an impressive liturgy in church and a lavish banquet in the parish centre.

In September 1987, I moved from St Peter's to Holy Family parish, Sale Moor, where I served as parish priest for 15 years. I was eight years as parish priest of St Pius X church in Alderley Edge and retired in 2010. I have enjoyed 11 years' retirement in a comfortable house in Sale Moor provided by the diocese. I live in walking distance of the Holy Family church and say Mass there on most Sundays and weekdays. When Fr Keith Butterworth retired a few years ago, Holy Family parish was linked to St Joseph's, Sale, where they have four Sunday Masses, all well filled in normal times, so the faithful congregation of Sale Moor have been grateful that I have been able to continue the Masses at Holy Family church. For me it has been a great satisfaction to offer this service and to extend my priestly ministry in this way – for as long as I can.

In 2018, I celebrated my 60th anniversary of priestly ordination, my Diamond Jubilee. I joined with my friend, Canon Brendan Hoban, at Holy Family on 13 July and at Sacred Heart, Moreton on 20 July. I was delighted to welcome old friends from St Peter's at the Mass and reception at Sale Moor and to meet representatives from other parishes at Sacred Heart, Moreton. Fr Brendan was parish priest from 1972 to 1983 at St Philip's, Offerton. I am sure he is well remembered by a good number of the parishioners, with special prayerful remembrance since his death in April this year. We were both invited with other jubilarians to an extended celebration at Palazzola, the Summer villa of the English College, Rome. We attended the weekly audience of Pope Francis in the Vatican, and the diamond jubilarians were given the privilege of a personal meeting with the Holy Father. As he held my hand, he said very warmly "Thank you, Peter." Even popes can make mistakes! I've got used to being called Peter since childhood, so I didn't mind being given the name by the successor of St Peter.

When I look back over my 63 years of priesthood, I have special memories of my years at St Peter's, which were half-way through my priestly life and offered so much variety and challenge. When I was leaving Hazel Grove, one of the parishioners told me "I didn't always agree with what you did, but I know you always did your best." I suppose that was a compliment of sorts. In the final reckoning, I hope the Lord will be no less generous.

## Fr John McManus



"This will be a very special time, your first Christmas in Hazel Grove." I always remember receiving that message on a Christmas card from Mgr Peter Walton. I remember quoting it at Midnight Mass in 1987. Of course, at the time I thought I would be with you for many years to come.

No-one could have guessed it would also be my last Christmas there! I left just four months later, after Bishop Gray asked me to take on the job of Diocesan Financial Secretary. I had been parish priest of St Peter's for just seven months. But it was a memorable seven months!

It is such a wonderful, vibrant parish, with so many talented, generous people. I was really happy and privileged to be your parish priest. Being moved so quickly was a great disappointment, but I am very grateful that I was given the opportunity to work with you. My next appointment as parish priest was to

St Agnes' church in West Kirby, where I remained for 30 years, until my retirement in 2019. Very best wishes to Fr Peter and to all the parishioners – and congratulations on your 90th anniversary!



## Fr Frank Waters SDS



My memories of St Peter's are of happy times spent in Hazel Grove. The presbytery team was Fr Pat Munroe, and included Fr Jonathan Leach, followed by Fr Jonathan Mitchell, and myself. Bishop Brian had asked me to take on the Catholic chaplaincy at Stepping Hill. It was supposedly a 'part-time' post, though realistically I ended up spending about two-thirds of my ministry there. I remember, in particular, two anecdotes when visiting in that place. The first was being called to say prayers for somebody who had just died. When I arrived breathless on the ward, I was directed behind the screens to anoint the departed who was shrouded in sheets, awaiting transport to the mortuary. Having done the necessary, I was just leaving when the person I thought was dead, hailed me from his bed whilst tucking into breakfast. There had obviously been a mix-up over two people with the same name! I hope things were sorted out when the dead man arrived in heaven and the computer had processed his paperwork.

At another time, the chaplaincy team used to organise some training for volunteers from the churches, who would visit on the ward to offer prayer and moral support. Philip Wynne (the Baptist minister) and I used to talk to these 'Chaplaincy Volunteers' and give general advice about some of the things to say or avoid saying. After this training, the volunteers would be sent on their mission, with clearly identified badges, giving their names and roles. On this occasion, one of the new 'recruits' was patrolling around, when she spoke with an elderly lady who invited her to sit in a chair by the bed. This volunteer (let's call her Karen) was explaining about who she was, when another visitor for the patient appeared in the ward. The old lady smiled and introduced the volunteer to the newly arrived visitor as "Karen, the vicar's girlfriend". Obviously, something had been lost in translation. Back in the chaplaincy office, we howled with laughter when the story was retold.

I enjoyed my time at St Peter's, especially in connection with the parish schools, St Peter's and St Simon's. There was also an active RCIA group which met in a large room in the presbytery. Soon after I arrived in Hazel Grove, I remember walking up Kinder Scout with the parish deacon, Stephen Pomeroy, who had a Springer Spaniel called Jarvis. The dog returned with lots of energy to spare; this could not be said for myself. But the cobwebs were certainly blown away.

I was glad for my time in the presbytery too, especially with Tony Martin, who looked after the financial side of things, and with Monica Beckett and Margaret Gresty (Miss Moneypenny) in the office, together with Peggy Saunders, Helen Hook and Moira Giamie on the domestic front. The parish choir was organised under Eileen Rigg and the parish centre bar was in the care of Christine Allen. There were many people I knew then, and I'm sorry if I haven't remembered your names. I am still regaling the parishioners here in St Joseph's, Harrow, with a funny story at the end of Mass, though the jokes are becoming more antique (like myself) with the passing of years! Thank you for all your support during my time at St Peter's.

## Canon Jonathan Brandon



St Peter's was my first appointment after being ordained priest in June 2005. Fr Pat Munroe, the then parish priest, invited me for lunch shortly after my appointment had been announced and before I was due to arrive officially as assistant priest in September 2005. I remember very clearly being warmly welcomed by Fr Pat and Fr Jonathan Mitchell and Peggy Saunders who prepared the lunch.

Fr Pat then took me on a whirlwind tour of the parish and I was impressed but more than slightly daunted by the breadth of the activities taking place at St Peter's. In fact, I remember saying to Fr Pat when he dropped me off at

Stockport station that I felt quite overwhelmed! With his usual kindness, he reassured me that it would all be alright. After a few months of finding my feet, it was more than alright, and I was incredibly happy to be involved in such a vibrant parish.

At the end of my first year at St Peter's, Fr Pat was asked to undertake a new appointment as parish priest of St Wilfrid's in Northwich. With his usual generosity Fr Pat agreed to go and Fr Peter was appointed in his place. I am sure I am not breaking any presbytery secrets by saying that Fr Peter is quite different to Fr Pat. My experience of Fr Peter up until that time had largely been social and seeing him point loudly at people in Lourdes who were not in the right place for processions – and so I prepared myself to be pointed at loudly! When Fr Peter arrived, we worked extremely hard on our relationship. We engaged in important bonding exercises which had the additional positive effect of draining the EU wine lake.

I think it was Fr Peter's first Christmas when whoever usually took charge of decorating the Christmas tree stepped down and Fr Peter and I stepped up. I thought the resulting decoration was a wonderfully avant garde interpretation on the Christmas tree tradition. The parishioners were not impressed. Some uncharitable souls even suggested that we had tackled the task after a good dinner and a few bottles of wine. We were never asked to do it again. Never before or since have I had the experience of parishioners volunteering for a job with such alacrity.

On a more serious note, St Peter's was an excellent parish for my first appointment. I learnt so much from being in a parish that is so warm and vibrant, that manages to balance the spiritual and social to form a truly Christian community at the service of the Gospel. I have been fortunate to meet so many good and holy people in all the parishes that I have served including St Vincent's where I am now. But St Peter's was my first parish as a priest and so it holds a special place in my heart because it is where I learnt to how to be a priest from the people and of course from Fr Pat and Fr Peter. There is a saying that you become like your first parish priest. I always considered myself lucky to have had two first parish priests. I will leave it to others to judge who I am most like!

## Fr William (Bill) O'Riordan



I came over from Limerick to England in 1971 and spent my first nine years at St Mary's in Crewe. I moved to St Peter's, Hazel Grove in 1980 and was here for two years whilst Fr Russell and Fr Peters were the parish priests.

I found St Peter's to be a really interesting parish and I remember the beautiful church and all the music. The parish was full of life, full of fun. I recall all the Masses and all the activity around the church. I remember with great affection Stepping Hill Hospital and the schools – St Peter's and St Simon's – and taking Holy Communion to the sick. I remember the great crowds at church who were always very kind and welcoming. I particularly enjoyed visiting parishioners in their home and always found people to be so warm and welcoming and they treated me with great love and affection. That was all 40 years ago now!

I'll be celebrating my Golden Jubilee on 12 June this year. I'll be thinking of you all and your great parish priest, Fr Peter. Nowadays, Fr Peter is serving two parishes. When I was at St Peter's we had three priests at St Peter's and another at St Philip's – so Fr Peter is actually doing the work of four priests and he deserves great respect for what he's doing.

I'm retired now and I'm only up the road from you in St Benedict's parish in Handforth. Fr Tony McGrath is the parish priest here now. I'm still saying some Masses and taking Communion to the sick.

I'll be praying for you and thinking of all you beautiful people at St Peter's as you celebrate 90 years. I think St Peter's is a lovely place and I have tremendous regard for you all. Best wishes to everyone.

*We record our sincere thanks to  
all the priests and deacons who  
served in St Peter's parish  
over our 90 years.*



# Brendan's travelogue

Join **Brendan Morrison** now on his adventures in 2004 with his wife Sue and two other parishioners from St Peter's, Kath and Dave Emsley who've since moved south.

Brendan wrote this poem afterwards to record their achievement and he shared it with the Sunday morning Virtual Teas and Coffees group on Zoom (see page 28). It went down very well – as have all his travelogues.

Over the year, we've been treated to splendid photographic holidays in far flung places such as Bhutan, Botswana, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Jordan, Laos, Namibia, Nepal, Peru, South Africa, Thailand, Zambia and Zimbabwe – all from the comfort of our own homes!

## The idle jottings of a Wainwright's 'Coast to Coast' walker

'Twas a morning like all others, when night-time greets the dawn  
That our intrepid Coast2Coasters woke up with a stretch and a yawn.  
At St Bees we started our journey, dipped our toes in the Irish Sea  
And set off on our crossing to Robin Hood's Bay, that's Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

The pace we set was cracking; the adrenaline was rushing through  
But after a while we were knackered, so we stopped to admire the view.  
The journey account might have ended right then when, for our lives we had to flee,  
Chased by a mob of thuggish cows - that's Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

When day two began it was raining but our spirits were still running high  
As we walked around Ennerdale Water, which reflected the darkening sky.  
The scenery was somewhat limited; we didn't have a view  
In fact it was blowing a bloomin' great gale and we were all soaking wet through.

We lunched at Black Sail youth hostel cos the weather by now was fine  
And scrambled up over Dub's Bottom and down to Honister slate mine.  
The night was spent at Seatoller with never a sight of the sea  
For the heroic Coast2Coasters - that's Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

Now the route had toilets a-plenty, be it drystone wall or fern  
And Kath was an expert at finding them, though Sue had something to learn.  
Below Grisedale Tarn she needed to go but a warning right now needs a tellin' –  
"Whatever you do, don't go to the loo in sight of the most photographed view of Helvellyn."

By now we had several companions that crisscrossed our path every day  
And we'd chat for a time and admire the view before each going our own separate way.  
There was the Beverly Sisters, The Girlfriends, and the Yank with ice cream on his lip  
And Kath got a shock when she spied the Milky Bar Kid in a tarn going for a 'skinny dip'.

From Patterdale on day four we ascended, after campers disturbed us all night  
But we were soon wonderfully rewarded with views from The Knot and Kidsty Pike.  
It was there that we bade farewell to the Lakes and set our sights on the ruined Shap Abbey  
And skirted the rock-strewn shoreline of Hawswater - that's Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

The old Packhorse Crossing at Naddle Bridge was a setting heaven-sent for a picnic  
But this was a long and tiring day so we made do with the scent of wild garlic.  
A local farmer was engaged in conversation, "how old was the bridge" could he tell?  
"Nope". "Older than you". "Yep" was the extent of the chat, so we thanked him and waved a farewell.

Leaving the Lakes far behind we started day five the terrain was now flatter and even  
We crossed the M6 took the obligatory pics, set off towards Kirby Stephen;  
Passed Robin Hood's grave, Sunbiggin and Lousy Brow, twenty-one miles of limestone and plane  
And the campsite it's true played music in the loo and we showered til we felt human again.



It has to be said that we were regally fed at the hostels we frequented each day's end  
And a fresh cooked meal washed down with real ale helped the most tired of bodies to mend.  
Then back to the tent with intentions well bent of a journal to write of our touring  
But try as I may to record the events of the day, the night air was soon filled with my snoring.

From Kirby Stephen across the moor to where Nine Rigs Standing rest so proud  
Where for miles they appear, as the walker draws near, to reach out for the wandering cloud  
And as the sun set over Keld's sleepy hamlet we ended our sixth walking day  
And celebrated with feeling on cake and Darjeeling, cos at last we'd made it halfway.

With Keld far behind we passed through abandoned lead mines which portrayed every shade of gloom  
So desolate there with the landscape laid bare, that it looked like a scene from the moon.  
And what once was a moor is now blistered and raw with shale and rugged rock piles  
But it was another occasion for a quiet celebration because now we'd walked 100 miles.

From Reeth we departed and that's when it started, Kath's Achilles tendon to ache  
And with the walk just begun under a blistering sun we still had 18 miles to make.  
The Nunnery Steps were climbed, Marrick Priory bells chimed and there was Richmond to charm,  
Catterick Bridge was still far, but we made it, hurrah, and camped at Laylands dairy farm.

But the damage was done. Kath couldn't walk, let alone run and a visit to hospital was paid  
Where the medical advice, given not once but twice, meant a painful decision was made;  
The walk was suspended, but definitely not ended, four weeks would surely bring good news  
Dave and Kath went to Madeira, but we ended nearer and spend a week at St Andrews.

The walk was restarted from where we had parted, and ahead 23 miles lay  
Footpaths were few, so roads had to do as we passed through the Vale of Mowbray.  
The view as you go is the nearest hedgerow and then the one after that  
Please pardon this outpouring, but it was interminably boring and so incredibly flat.

But each cloud has a lining and soon we were finding light relief to help pass the time in a wisp  
When two lads asked of me, they were on the C2C, if there was a hostelry in Danby Wiske.  
You see, they carried no water, even though they oughta, so the record books I vowed to trawl  
For this alcohol-fuelled swagger from one coast to t'other could easily be the longest ever pub crawl.

Ingleby Cross to Clay Bank Top introduced the delights of the heather-stained North York Moors  
And the views from Cringle End and the Wainstones demand that every walker should pause;  
Below, the view painted in all shades and hue spread a carpet that reached out for miles  
Where the harvested field and the small hamlets reveal mosaic of a million coloured tiles.

It was another hot day and at the Secret Café I began to doubt if they would ever finish -  
The Manchester pair with never a care were sat in front of six pints of lager and Guinness.  
And no, we weren't bitter cos we felt much fitter as we supped our lukewarm coffee  
But our temperance soon ended when night-time descended on Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.





## The idle jottings of a Wainwright's 'Coast to Coast' walker

The moors in their glory hold so many a story that cover the eons of time  
Where ancient burial mounds on once sacred ground border the abandoned Rosendale railway line;  
And Old Ralph and Fat Betty offer comfort to the weary and bid them to rest tired bones  
Like sentinels they stand surveying the land and guiding the walker safe home.

In true Olympic fashion and undying passion Tai and Bodi upheld the great aims  
Of Longer, Higher, Faster, as they tried to master the events of their own special games;  
Tai chased butterflies through Yorkshire's blue skies and got top marks for artistic appearance  
But Bodi came up short and to the doggy paddle had to resort when attempting a peat bog record clearance.

And stuck in the back of Sue's rucksack was the much-travelled Barnaby Bear  
Though carried across the land I just can't understand how he managed to get a blister.  
But all our aches old and new disappeared with the view of the cliffs and the sun-kissed North Sea  
It was a momentous occasion and time for a celebration for Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

It's hard to describe the feeling inside as we paddled in Robin Hood's Bay  
190 miles of mountain, moor and stiles and together we had made it all the way;  
And at Wainwright's bar in other Coast2Coasters we saw the delight of each other's own victory  
They had exorcised their demons, for whatever their reasons, just like Kath, Dave, Sue, and me.

**Brendan Morrison, 2004**



## My early parish memories

**Tom Horan** traces his moves around the parish where he was an altar server.

I was born into St Peter's parish via 26 Poplar Grove (the original address for Stepping Hill Hospital), 30 Cooke Street (my paternal grandparents' house), 46 Hazelwood Road (our first family home and one of the new council houses in an area known as 'the valley' and finally 6 Commercial Road (when my beloved Mum and Dad decided they'd had enough of walking up and down the said Commercial Road).

I was an altar server at St Peter's for approximately 19 years. In the early days you served Mass weekly. You can imagine the time of the morning I had to leave home on Hazelwood Road to arrive at church, get changed and have the altar prepared for the priest to start Mass at 7.30am!

On one occasion at the age of 14 I was the only altar server for a wedding. Just before Fr Roper and I were about to

leave the sacristy, the groom appeared and told Fr Roper that his best man hadn't arrived from Ireland.

Fr Roper asked him if he had an alternative choice and he said he hadn't but asked if the altar boy could step in as best man! Fr Roper enquired of the altar boy and of course I replied "Yes!" That was to be the first of five requests to be a best man.

## The 'mini parish' at High Lane

Our first visit to St Peter's was in June 1964. We were in a 'strange land' having moved house from Liverpool to High Lane. Our parish priest then was Fr Osbyrne, assisted by Fr Denis Marmion.

At the time there was an extra number of Catholics in High Lane due to the additional new builds. As there was a limited bus service, it was a huge help to have Sunday Mass celebrated in the Village Hall by one of the priests from Hazel Grove. During the summer months, residents' visitors increased the congregation and, on some Sundays, Mass attendance exceeded 100.

The candlesticks, linen cloths and the heavy altar stone containing a saint's

relic were stored in a suitcase; the altar, a trestle table, was set up on the Saturday night (unless there was a dance!).

Some children made their First Holy Communion at Mass each year. We were a very happy 'mini parish' and enjoyed our monthly coffee mornings.

Then Fr McManus was appointed parish priest and, at the same time, attendance at Mass was reducing. Sunday Mass in the Village Hall became impractical. For some

time afterwards Fr John Rafferty arranged for a taxi to transport some parishioners to Mass at St Peter's.

In St Peter's church at that time the interior walls were just as the church was built, showing all the bare brick. All walls were subsequently plastered and painted – a great improvement. The lower part to the sides of the altar was beautifully panelled in carved wood.

It is a pleasure being a part of an active, caring community

## Bless us

The first time we went to Mass at St Peter's, just having moved over 46 years ago, Fr Russell invited anyone new to the parish to see him later, introduce ourselves and register with the parish.

When we told him that we had just moved two days before, he asked, with great resignation, "You don't want me to come and bless the house, do you?" No. Neither of us had ever heard of a house blessing. He immediately cheered up, welcomed us warmly and took our details.

The other day, we made a birthday

visit to some friends who had recently moved to a new house. In passing, they mentioned that Fr Peter had come to bless their house. We both then remembered our long forgotten non-blessing.

Happily, we have felt blessed in both our old house and our new bungalow!

**Eric and Eileen Wilcock**



# My journey to St Peter's

My journey to St Peter's started many years ago since, at a few days old, I was taken to St Patrick's church in Dungannon for baptism. Over my life I have been a member of many churches: in Belfast, Glasgow, Penicuik and Paisley. In 1981 I then came to live in England.

I came to Stockport and became a member at St Philip's and worshipped there for three years. I worked for Fr Brendan Hoban as his cleaner/ housekeeper and have many happy memories of that time. My sons went to St Philip's school and two made their first Holy Communion. I was also a member of the parish committee and I introduced Fr Hoban to Mass for the housebound, which had been held in my last parish in Paisley.

Then I moved house, came to St Peter's and the children transferred to St Simon's school. I worked at that school for a short time and the boys spent many happy years there. They were altar boys, joined the scouts and

## Liz Hirst travels back to trace her journey to the parish.

enjoyed going into the parish centre after Mass.

At that time the priests were Fathers John Rafferty, John Thompson and Ned Wall – they were called 'the dream team'. My youngest son made his first Holy Communion at St Peter's and my oldest was married here. Neil is married to Wellie, who is Chinese and a few of her family came over for the wedding. For me the highlight of the service was when Fr Peter greeted them in Chinese.

I have been involved with many aspects of parish life – helping in the parish centre with the suppers for the dancers on Saturday nights and providing and serving food after funerals, sending cards to the bereaved as part of the first bereavement group and helping with Churches Together.

Several years ago I had cancer and underwent surgery. I strongly felt that the congregation at St Peter's and all the churches were praying for me and my recovery and surrounding me with love. Several people took me to weekday Mass at that time including Margaret King, Anne Gregg and Maureen Goulden. (Sorry, if I've missed anyone.)

When I came to England and Stockport I didn't expect to be here more than a few years. My first impressions were not great – I thought people were nosey and wanted to know my business! Now more than 40 years later, I feel so at home here at that when I moved house some months ago I knew I just had to find a home within the parish.

I feel at peace when I come into church. It feels welcoming and friendly.

## How we became part of St Peter's parish community

Thirty-five years ago in May 1986, I started a new job at British Aerospace in Woodford. It meant moving the family down from Freckleton, a village on the Fylde coast not far from Lytham. It was the right time to move because Adam, our oldest, was just coming up to school age and we wanted to avoid any disruption to his early years' learning.

I was staying in digs in Poynton. We had had an offer accepted on a house on the Bosden Farm estate and I had been tasked by my wife Susan to find a school in the area for Adam. One sunny evening I more or less stumbled

across St Simon's school. Teaching had finished for the day, but I had a friendly chat with the caretaker who said it was a lovely school and that I could find out more if I called at the church. He directed me to St Peter's.

A few minutes later I was ringing the doorbell, which was answered by a slightly flustered looking priest. We introduced ourselves and I asked if we could talk about St Simon's and the parish.

He said he was busy but nevertheless still invited me in for a quick chat. An hour and a half and two cups of tea later, I left to find a phone (no mobiles

then) to tell Susan I had found the perfect school and church for us.

Both Adam and Liam loved their time at St Simon's and Susan ended up teaching there for 20 years, finishing as Deputy Head. The school and church have played a huge part in our lives and continue to do so for me.

I owe a big debt of thanks to Fr Robin Sutton for finding 90 minutes in his busy schedule to paint such a lovely picture of the parish and community of St Peter's. The picture constantly evolves and changes, but it is still just as beautiful as it was 35 years ago.

**Brendan Morrison**

December 1981



## Parish snippets

**We came to the parish in 1986 when we moved from Holy Family parish in Sale Moor. We've enjoyed many parish events over the years and being part of this lovely community. Here are a few short snippets.**

I remember hearing about Fr Ned saying a Mass at St Peter's school and how one little boy at the start of the Consecration just got up from his place and made his way up to the altar with a sad look on his face.

He looked up at Fr Ned, down at his shoe then back up to Fr Ned. They understood each other completely, without a word. Fr Ned just bent down and tied the little boy's shoe lace which had come undone. The little boy smiled and went back to his seat and Fr Ned continued with the Mass. What a lovely moment.

We had a series of creative penitential services. At one of these inspiring nights, we had been invited to write on a piece of paper that we'd each been given, a particular sin that was troubling us, then fold it up.

The plan was that we would go up to the altar and place the folded paper in a large metal container which would then be lit in our midst – a symbolic penitential service. I was there with my husband Phil and we both set to, as everyone did, writing so that no-one nearby could read it! As the music

started and people began to process up to the altar, Phil turned to me and offered to take mine up with his.

Of course I trusted him implicitly (though I'm quite sure my eyes never left him til he got to the altar!!) and he came back and quietly sat down again. I thanked God for Phil's considerate action – but part of me knew it wouldn't be as simple as that. I was right. A few minutes later he just turned and quietly whispered to me, "You don't spell it like that!"

Phil and I decided to join Fr John Rafferty's offer of a parish trip to Rome in 1996. We made so many friends on that trip and had laughter and fun for the whole time.

After several days in the hustle and bustle of Rome we headed down to the hills to Villa Palazzola, the country retreat house for the English College in Rome. There was a swimming pool and many took advantage of this refreshing dip, including Fr John. Some people decided to move his clothes while he was swimming and leave him with just a sarong.

He sportingly paraded around the pool in his sarong, and I offered him my sunhat to complete the outfit. It was only a few months ago in a conversation with Fr John that he thought I had been behind the scheme, which I truly hadn't.

**WALKERS  
RAISE  
£300**

NEW ramp and hand rails at St. Peter's, Hazel Grove, church entrance now allows easier access for the disabled and elderly.

More than £300 towards the cost was raised by a sponsored walk last month, organised by their Guides and Scouts.

This carefree group was pictured about to leave the church en route to Pott Shrigley College and back about 25 miles pity we didn't find a picture of a returned group.

Further endeavour at Hazel Grove is reserved car parking for the elderly and disabled.

You ladies know who you are, but I didn't tell on you! The friendships we made with fellow parishioners on that trip have been so long lasting and many of us still reminisce about some of our fun times there.

Fr John had arranged for a student from the English College to be with us, Paul Mason. He was from the North East, so we had some common ground – and then we realised we knew each other from having both worked at Hewlett-Packard.

Paul is now a Bishop and has his own page on Wikipedia! We've been on other parish trips to Rome and the Holy Land and thoroughly enjoyed them too. Such a great parish!

**Anne-Marie Bailey**



# The 3pm Sunday Mass

**I arrived in Hazel Grove in 1967 and started attending St Peter's church when I was a student nurse at Stepping Hill hospital.**

At that time there was a parish priest and two curates and occasionally a third curate if one was visiting. We had Masses at 8am, 10am, 11.30am and 6pm every Sunday. Doctors and nursing staff, including all other staff, worked various hours of duty during the week and on Sundays. For example: 7.30am til 1.30pm, then off for 3 hours, then back on duty from 4.30pm till 8pm. (Some weekends you were off.) So you could not get to Mass.

As you can appreciate, we missed Mass fairly often due to our working duty. In those days in the seventies we had a lot of Irish nurses many of whom were Catholic, so we all felt very unhappy missing Mass frequently.

There was a new parish priest appointed at St Peter's, whom I think may have been Fr Joseph Russell. I had an idea, I would go to see him and explain our situation, to see if he could come up with a solution – before he had time to make any new rules!

Fr Russell was brilliant and made arrangements with me a number of times with a view to solving our problem. Between us, we decided to introduce a 3pm Mass on a trial basis. This was hugely successful and extremely popular with the entire congregation. It suited the older people to give them time to get organised for Mass, and it suited the younger people who were out the night before and wanted a lie-in.

It lasted for a number of years and, as the number of priests decreased, the

number of Masses had to be reduced. But my claim to fame was being the instigator of the 3pm Mass!

I also recall that there had been attempts to update the church interior from our traditional red carpet to a calming sage green colour, which worked so well it had a few parishioners snoring during Mass.

Fr David Peters, our parish priest at that time, decided he would change it to royal blue and even had the walls round the altar painted a dusky pink. Several parishioners complained of headaches and found the colours very stressful. When Fr John Rafferty arrived, he reverted to the red carpet and cream walls around the altar. The congregation was much happier – we are creatures of habit!

**Rita Kress**

# Our first encounter with the parish

**We knew there was a place called Hazel Grove because we'd driven through it one Friday evening on our way to the greyhounds at Bellevue.**

The reason we were 'going to the dogs' was that Rachel's Dad had been collecting tickets for us to go one evening. Sadly, he died before we had the chance to go. So it was a special and poignant trip when we finally did get to go. I used to come through Hazel Grove on my way from Liverpool to visit Rachel in Macclesfield. I used to come along the M62, then the M63 and up through Stockport.

Fr John Thompson was due to marry us at St Edward's in Macclesfield on

*John McKay recalls his and Rachel's time in the parish.*

7 October 1995. Sadly Fr John died before the wedding had taken place but whilst we were chatting to him about getting married, he told us about his previous parish, St Peter's, Hazel Grove. We also heard stories about St Peter's from a lovely St Edward's couple called Les and Elsie Pace, whose son and daughter-in-law David and Ann were parishioners in Hazel Grove.

We lived with Rachel's Mum in Macclesfield for three weeks after our honeymoon. Rachel had applied for a District Nurse job in South Reddish – the interview was the day before the wedding! She got a call the evening before the wedding offering her the job, which was now going to be based in Great Moor. We both felt Hazel Grove would be a good place to live – handy for Rachel's Mum in Macc, who was recently widowed and for the motorways to Liverpool, where my parents lived – and we wanted to be part of a good parish. I was locuming at the time and was fairly confident there would be work locally.

So, having made Hazel Grove our preferred location, we set out one Sunday afternoon (!) in October 1995 from Macclesfield for the far-flung destination of Hazel Grove to find a house – like you do. We were young and not very well versed in the finer points of house hunting. To start with, it was Sunday, so all the estate agents were shut! So, having driven around for a bit we decided to head to St Peter's church. Surprisingly on a Sunday afternoon there was a Mass going on (3 pm!) and Frs John Rafferty and Peter Wright were greeting the parishioners as they came out. We had a chat with

Fr John and told him we were looking to move to Hazel Grove. He suggested we consult Anthony Sheehan, a parishioner and local estate agent so, relieved to have made some local contact, we promptly headed back to Macc.

We moved to Hendham Close on the New Farm Estate a few weeks later in late October 1995. We walked up to St Peter's for the Sunday 10 o'clock Mass and afterwards Eileen Rigg was doing breakfast in the parish centre. We wandered in and enjoyed the breakfast – and the opportunity to meet some new faces.

In the next few weeks, in the bulletin, house Masses were offered to anyone who would like to have one, so we signed up. Fr Philip McGovern came and said a Mass in our house to which other parishioners came. That's how we met Phil and Maureen Horton.

They came to the house Mass, invited us to dinner and introduced us to Mike and Carmel O'Malley. We got involved in the confirmation programme from there, met James and Anne-Marie Gallogly and the Thompsons. Mike and Carmel introduced us to Tom and Pat Dorrian and on it went from there... the rest, as they say is, history!

That was the start of us getting drawn into this amazing web of relationships that is St Peter's, Hazel Grove. We celebrated our silver wedding last October – time flies! We're so grateful for all the love and kindness of the parish that has sustained, supported and guided us and our kids, and put up with us, over the last 25 years. What a great parish to belong to!

# A long association

**My mother, Celia Hallworth, her parents and eight siblings lived in a small terraced house on Cooke Street just off the A6.**

Her first memories of going to church were walking to Our Lady's there and back twice on a Sunday (yes!) – in the morning for Mass and the afternoon for Benediction (remember that?). A church was eventually opened at the top of Commercial Road and then the present premises on Green Lane were built. She married my father, Harry Westhead, an Edgeley man, at St Peter's a couple of years before the war I think and they settled in foreign parts in Great Moor! My mother was in the Union of Catholic Mothers and my father in the St Vincent de Paul Society and both gave a lot of time to various activities in the church.

*Monica Pickles looks back at her family's association with the parish.*

For myself I have lived in the parish all my life and the actual church building is little changed. However, instead of the parish centre we have now, there was an old, wooden church hall with steps leading up to it with a small stage and a kitchen. This was where most of the parish activities took place such as sales of work, sodality meetings, social occasions and where the processions (of which there seemed to be many) formed up – May processions in honour of Our Lady, and for Corpus Christi when the men chosen to carry the canopy over the Blessed Sacrament wore evening dress. Throughout all the years, the

ladies of the parish toiled tirelessly with the refreshments.

I remember St Peter's school being built and becoming so popular that within a few years the older children had to be taught in the parish centre – and then St Simon's school opened to take off the pressures of the high pupil numbers.

I married Colin (a good Methodist) at St Peter's church in 1969 following in my parents' footsteps and our children attended St Simon's school. It has been a long association, taking in many, many parish priests along the way, and a happy one.



*Monica in the May procession for Our Lady*





# Blessings, *not* coincidences

After we left school and college, my friend and I decided to have a holiday together in France. It was, perhaps, 1947/8. We had previously been to the Isle of Wight and thought we could get on together, so off we went to our first stop, Paris. I think we only stayed one night and the main thing I remember was the end of dinner in our hotel that evening when the waiter brought the cheese.

It was a really large chunk, by far bigger than the week's ration that our family of five had been allowed during the war years! And this was just for the two of us. Needless to say, we certainly didn't finish it.

The next day we got the train to Lyon, where we had arranged to stay at a students' hostel run by the Ursuline Sisters, who had educated us at school in Chester. They made us welcome, but the attic room was a bit spartan and the loo was away down at the end of the garden. The hot weather meant we provided a feast for the many mosquitoes all night. But we had a good time exploring Lyon, especially the shrine of Our Lady on the hill overlooking the town: Notre Dame de Fourvière. I note that after seven years studying French we could barely manage more than "deux bières, s'il vous plaît". But I did notice that one of the Sisters, a refugee from Poland, spoke French with a different accent.

After a few days my friend said, "we'll go to Lourdes". I was not particularly keen, but she said her mother would kill her if she went to France without visiting Lourdes! Her mother had gone there on pilgrimage for years.

So we spent about 24 hours trundling south and then along the coast, seeing the varied scenery and changing trains till we got to Lourdes about four in the morning. My friend announced that we would go straight to Mass at the Grotto. So there began an argument with me saying that no one says Mass at that hour and she insisting that this was

*Carmel Dwerryhouse looks back in time.*



Lourdes. She won! She was right and although we were more on holiday than on pilgrimage, we did, in the following days do all the usual things, omitting only a dip in the baths. We also had several trips to places like Gavarnie.

But the main thing was during the torchlight procession on the first evening. As we wound our way along in the crowd of unknown people, another bit of the procession was passing us a few yards away in the opposite direction. And as we looked, there was Miss M who used to teach us maths at school! She signalled for us to join her. It turned out that she was with the diocese of Southwark. It was really such a pleasure for us to meet and we probably had a coffee or something together after. I don't remember seeing her another day, so perhaps her group went home.

A few years later, I think 1950, which was a Holy Year, I decided to go to Rome. I was working in the Midlands, but there wasn't any organised pilgrimage near me, so I arranged to join one leaving from London. There was some difficulty with my passport I think, perhaps renewing it, but all I remember is that it wouldn't arrive in time for me to join the other pilgrims. So, I must have gone to a travel agent and asked for a flight to Rome to catch them up! They got me on one going to India, a Comet,

which was quite special in its time, that made a stop in Rome. Actually, I arrived in Rome ahead of the others and made my way to where we were to stay and settled to wait for them in the foyer. It was evening and the wait seemed to go on for ever. Suddenly, as I looked around, I saw a person go to the lift and she turned to look at me. It was Miss M. She had called the lift, so we just said hello and she went up. As it was now very late I asked where I was to sleep. It was dormitory style accommodation and I was really tired.

In the middle of the night I heard a lot of noise as my companions all arrived. It turned out that the trains had been delayed and even that someone had died on the journey.

In the morning, Miss M found out where I was and invited me to join her group for the rest of the time. It seemed to offer much more than the group I was with, so I saw various catacombs and lots of churches and had a marvellous time. Of course, when it came to going home, I had to go back with my lot, who were strangers to me! There must have been problems with the railways because we took so long and tracked to and fro alongside tracks and then there was a bad channel crossing.

But thinking back, meeting Miss M really was a blessing. I never saw her again.



## St Peter's *choirs*

*Music maestro Eileen Rigg looks back at music making in the parish.*

**The history of St Peter's choirs - it sounds like a boring school essay, doesn't it? But please read on ...**

For me, working with the choirs is most enjoyable, rewarding, exhausting, exciting, frustrating, challenging, worrying, uplifting - but never boring (well, hardly ever!).

I formed the junior choir in 1982, needing a choir to work with. The then parish priest, Fr David Peters, was delighted and very supportive. The adult choir was formed six years later to sing for an ordination, after which we felt it was so good we wanted to continue.

Obviously the junior choir's membership is very fluid (some of those early members are now in their fifties!) but three of the original members of the adult choir are still singing with us, and one former junior choir member is a stalwart of the adult choir!

The main part of the choirs' work is singing at Mass, leading the music and hopefully enhancing the liturgy. There are also many special Masses and services, Christmas and Easter being our busiest times. The Carol Service is always a special occasion presented by both choirs.

Over the years we have given many concerts, sometimes with an orchestra and with guest soloists or soloists from within the choir. We have performed several well-known choral works: Vivaldi's Gloria, Faure's Requiem, Pergolesi's Magnificat, Handel's Zadok the Priest, and Horowitz's Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo. There have also been several special meditations, most notably in recent years Remembrance Day centenary presentations in 2014 and 2018.

The junior choir has frequently been invited to sing at special celebrations at the Methodist church, where their singing has been much appreciated at Flower and Christmas Tree festivals.

Both choirs have competed regularly in music festivals over many years, especially our local Hazel Grove Festival, the junior choir winning a trophy on many occasions. The adult choir always has stiff competition from other choirs but they always rise to the challenge and perform very well. One adjudicator said, "Goodness, your church is lucky to have you. I hope they realise!"

Of the utmost importance to any choir is the accompanist - and have we been lucky! In the choirs' earlier

years our accompanist and organist was Bernadette McNicholls. She was excellent and we were devastated when she moved to Wales. Then followed a few years in which we didn't have a regular accompanist and things were very difficult. Then we hit lucky again in 2005 when we acquired the superb services of Christopher Ellis. Chris is a concert pianist, wonderful accompanist and organist who has brought so much to the choirs. We really struck gold when he came along!

We are also extremely grateful to Fr Peter, who is always very encouraging and supportive. Of course the recent COVID regulations have put a stop to choir activities, and although several of the choir have been recording music for use at Masses, it is going to take some time to sing together again confidently and regain what we had. I think the junior choir will have to be rebuilt, as it were, after such a long time and with some of the older ones having moved on.

New beginnings ... perhaps this is a good time for new members to come and join us. There's no audition - just come along on a Thursday (adult choir) 8-9.30pm, or Friday (juniors) 5.45-6.30pm. You will be made most welcome.

In the words of St Augustine of Hippo: "Qui bene cantat bis orat" - Who sings well prays twice.





## Virtual Teas and Coffees

Gathering in the parish centre after Sunday's 10am Mass was always a great event for adults and children alike.

Different groups of three or four parishioners would set up and serve the hot and cold drinks; sometimes the young adults from the Lourdes group would offer the most tempting bacon sandwiches; there might be a cake sale to tempt us; biscuits would always appear from somewhere and invariably there was birthday cake, songs and candles to be blown out. It was rare that no-one was having a birthday that week!

For everyone who came, it was a fun time and a great event in the parish community. New parishioners were welcomed, new friendships made, money was raised for Mary's Meals and many other causes. Ah yes, we've missed those weekly gatherings. But, ever resourceful, St Peter's has risen to the COVID challenge and not even that has stopped some people enjoying themselves.

If you haven't been, welcome now to our Virtual Teas and Coffees, which are held via Zoom at 11.15am each Sunday. It isn't that we can't get enough of each other, it's just that the community spirit is undiminished and the joy of being in

### No two weeks are the same on Zoom!

company with others is too good to pass by. So we meet as usual, but we make our own drinks and sit at home.

No two weeks are the same at our virtual meetings, except that Rachel McKay is usually the 'hostess with the mostest' and keeps us all on stream and on time! Other than that, we thrive on variety. For example, one week Martin Kipling will challenge us with a fun quiz. Another week Paul Livesey could test our knowledge of some Latin phrases. Invariably there are groans, oo's and ah's from people – and we can be really very competitive! Julie Williams might share a poem or reading – her daughter Alexandra has sung for us. Matthew Oates and his son Joseph have entertained us with their expert musicianship.

Brendan Morrison has often taken us 'on holiday' to a whole host of destinations – you can read more about that on pages 18-20. He's shared some wonderful songs with us, including his own compositions – that's how privileged we are. Anne-Marie Bailey shares some fun with foreign languages in her lingo bingo. Alison McGarr has kept us up to date with the Refugee

project, Fr Peter sometimes pops in to join us though he's often at the TOAST session with the youngsters. We used to play "Guess the reader's voice" when we could only have recorded voices in an otherwise empty church. Now we can have actual people on the altar to read from the lectern, so that's stopped that fun!! Sometimes we do "Guess the singer's voice" for the sung psalm...

Whatever happens, we all have a good natter – conversation is never absent because people always want to share a memory, a joke or some news, or just listen to the voices and see the friendly faces. And of course, we still celebrate any birthday we know about – even to blowing out candles, which happens as if by magic! So, if you haven't enjoyed a Virtual Teas and Coffees, you now know what you've been missing. If you'd like to join us, 'while stocks last', just send an Email to Rachel at [mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com) and she'll gladly send you the link to our Zoom session each week.

Ideally it won't be too long before we can meet again in person in the parish centre, but until then, do come and join us. But be warned, the drinks are on you!

## A miracle in the car park

*Carmel O'Malley recalls a miraculous experience in the parish car park.*

**I have a memory of St Peter's church from about twenty years ago that had absolutely nothing to do with a memorable liturgy or a marvellous community response, (though I have had experience of both of those of course). But this memory is of a very scary event that could have ended in a family bereft of one of its most endearing members... me!**

My husband was away from home and I had picked up my daughter from one of her many activities. We were on our way home to cook the evening meal. It was 28 June and I suddenly realised it would be necessary to go to Mass the next day, for the feast of St Peter and Paul – our parish feast day and in those days, I think a holy day of obligation. So, I called into the church en route to check the times of the Masses.

I left the car right in the centre of the car park facing the church (there was no other car in the car park at the time) and, leaving the door open, I scooted round the building to the front of the church to see what was available.

When I got back, the car door was still wide open but my daughter had left her passenger seat and was now sitting in the driver's seat gently turning the wheel to and fro. "Mum," she said, "I'm 17 now and will soon be able to do my driving test. Will you just show me the very first things you need to do when you start the car?"

It was a lovely sunny evening; there was nobody about and we had nothing else to do that evening except eat, so I thought "Why not?" and carefully instructed her what to do.

I remained standing, leaning against the open car door. Once the engine was turned on I stupidly got her to put the car in reverse gear, since if anything should go wrong, I did not want her to go through the church wall. Hence her first instruction was going to be to move like a snail backwards! How mad was that decision? However, she began very gently to press one foot down and lift the other up. I was instructing her to listen carefully for the sound that told her the gear was engaging when the next second I was propelled backwards with ever increasing speed. I tried to keep up with the reversing vehicle by running backwards as fast as I could, holding the open door and yelling all the time "Stop! Stop!". But we hadn't got to that lesson yet so she hadn't a clue how to stop!

Then, I could run no more and I fell backwards flat out on the ground, banging my head resoundingly. Next, I felt the air whoosh from the moving open door passing over my head and lifting the front of my hair and then for a split second, light disappeared. Then another whooshing sound came right up against my face. The whole episode was over in a few seconds, but I lay there on the ground in a complete daze.

I don't know how my daughter stopped the car but the next thing she was by my head crying piteously and saying "Mum, Mum, shall I get the priest?" No thought of an ambulance! She really thought I was on the way out and the state of my immortal soul would be more important to me than the state of my body.

Gradually I came back to the present and was able to stand up. I had a huge lump on the back of my head but the

rest of me was entirely unscathed. The only things missing were my shoes, which now stood as though placed on a shelf, side by side about ten feet in front of us. I was obviously lifted out of them as I fell backwards, or my guardian angel righted them once they were off my feet.

This event was a miracle really for two reasons. Firstly my daughter, who had never before driven a car in her life, had kept the reversing car in an exact straight line. How remarkable was that? I find it hard to reverse and stay straight even after years of driving. Then also by a miracle I fell flat on my back in an exact straight line, but beside the car so that my head wasn't hit by the open door – and my straightness meant I avoided the wheels running over me.

After some while I drove the car home. Then I was not allowed to lift a finger for the rest of the evening and was made to go to bed early by my 17 year old. During the night I was awakened by a light shining in my eyes. It was my anxious daughter yet again, following instructions she had read up on the internet to see if I was suffering from concussion. Who would care about their sleep being disturbed when woken to such loving attention?

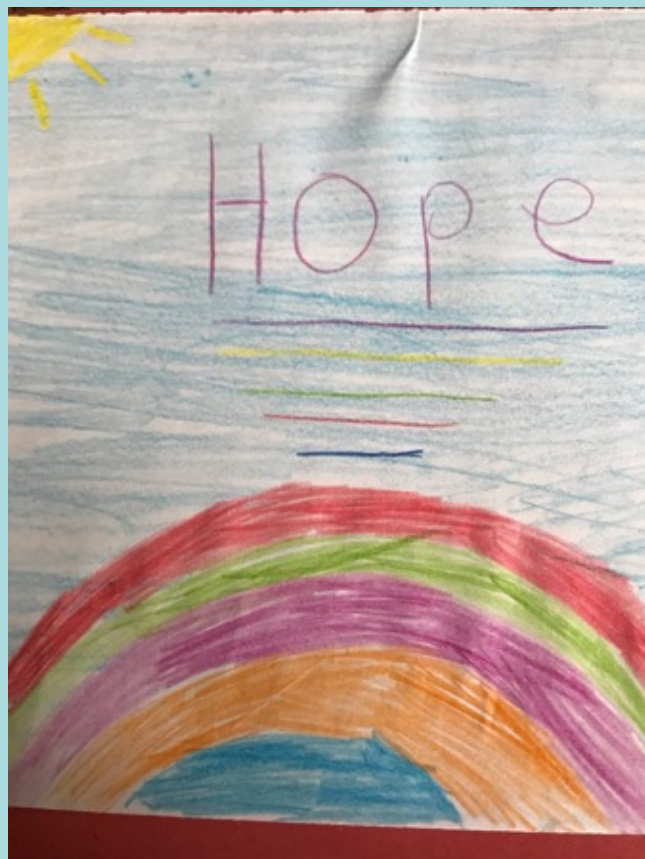
Next morning I could barely climb out of bed I was so stiff and I had the most magnificent bruise that stretched from my shoulder right down in a straight line to my calf. Obviously I must have hit the door frame of the car as I went down. I gradually recovered and my daughter was not so traumatised that she never took up driving. I think she passed her test the second time round.



# St Peter's helpers

## Our mission is to:

- offer emergency practical and friendship support to those in need during the COVID pandemic
- offer friendship, a welcoming community and support to all who need it in our community
- offer signposting to other organisations to help with specific needs
- reduce isolation and enable everyone to contribute their talents and gifts.



*A group of 30 St Peter's Helpers friends had a wonderful afternoon 'cuppa and cake' on the lawn on 16 June. Sun hats not brollies were the order of the day and friends had the opportunity for a socially distanced chat with people they had not seen for many months. A wonderful amount was also raised from the sale of Mary's handmade cards, split between St Simon's school and St Peter's Helpers. Thank you to all those involved with SPH, those who volunteer with us in particular, including the star bakers and those who set up and tidy away events. We hope to have further events in the future. All welcome to get involved! Email us at [stpetershelpers@gmail.com](mailto:stpetershelpers@gmail.com)*



St Peter's Helpers would like to thank everyone for their engagement and support since March 2020. We want to build on our work and our community of friends. People want to help and people need support, so our aim is to provide that mutual aid. Where we see a need, we will try to meet it.

St Peter's Helpers started with a focus on our older parishioners, because they were those isolating in the first lockdown. However, we love being able to help people of all ages, all needs and all groups. Have an idea? Know someone who needs a little friendship or support? Are you a cake maker who would like to help with our next 'goodie bags'? However you would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you, including any of our friends from St Philip's and from our Polish and Keralan communities.

### March - August 2020

Over 50 households supported and over 50 volunteers delivering much appreciated 'friendly telephone calls' and practical 'essential shopping' support.

200+ scones and goodie bags delivered for VE Day.

Linking in with knitting and sewing projects, helping our local community.

Over 80 'Keep Smiling' cards from St Peter's schoolchildren delivered, with many thank you notes received as a result!

### September - December 2020

Over 80 households registered with us, some for occasional telephone 'keeping in touch' calls, 'emergency shopping' (very

Email: [stpetershelpers@gmail.com](mailto:stpetershelpers@gmail.com) or leave a message at church on 0161 483 3476

Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/st-peters-helpers/home>

YouTube: (Praise and Worship videos)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCrFX-HLUfzmYfKpYR7YVww>

### Useful information

<https://my.morrisons.com/doorstep-deliveries/>

Doorstep deliveries the next day (£2.50 charge) for all those isolating.

<https://www.signpostforcarers.org.uk/>

Help, information and support for all people with a caring role.

<https://www.winstockport.co.uk/about-us/wellbeing-and-independence-at-home/>

Support in and around someone's home environment to enable people to continue to enjoy living in their own homes, independently and safely. Focused on short-term support and signposting people to longer term solutions if needed.

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/start/access-coronavirus-support>

Stockport Council's support for vulnerable people in the pandemic 0161 217 6046

seldom used, now that supermarkets are more able to deliver).

'Keep smiling' cards from children and St Peter's Helpers, delivered to people in hospital or in ill health.

Over 85 households received handmade Christmas cards, from St Simon's schoolchildren and from St Peter's parish, as well as a 'goodie bag' – always well received!

More craft projects with the parish's lovely knitted Christmas Tree appeal!

### January - May 2021

Cakes, treats and personal cards delivered to all staff at St Simon's, St Peter's and St Philip's schools to thank the staff for their hard work and commitment.

Latest St Peter's card-making project launched – lots more help welcome!

Lenten deliveries of crosses and palms to over 85 households.

Baby hats and knitted items for Rwanda (and ongoing knitting projects).

Over 20 hand deliveries of church newsletter every week to those unable to get to church or read it on the parish website.

Poems received and shared with school children.

Building stronger links with other groups both in the parish and outside.

### June 2021 and onwards

We hope to have more of our informal 'cuppa and cake' sessions to say hello to our SPH team of helpers and friends. If you'd like to join us and/or come on our Email list, please get in touch.





# Mary's corner

*Time to reflect a little on a gospel passage and learn how Mary Hardiman relates its relevance to our lives today.*

## Luke 12:13-21

A man in the crowd said to Jesus, “Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance.”  
“My friend,” he replied, “who appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?” Then he said to them, “Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for a man’s life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs.”  
Then he told them a parable: ‘There was a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself “What am I to do? I have not enough room to

store my crops.” Then he said, “This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time.” But God said to him, “Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?” So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.’

**In the winter of 1989, my sister and I went on a week’s package tour to Moscow. The highlight of our time there came towards the end of the week when our evening’s entertainment was to visit the home of a Russian family.**

The selection procedure was a bit like speed dating. We all stood in the foyer of the hotel and waited to be approached by a native Muscovite. Fortunately for us, we were picked out by brother and sister team Boris and Natasha, who later told us that they had made a beeline for Amanda and me because we ‘looked fun’. Boris and Natasha took us on the trolley bus to a drab grey apartment block into a one bedroomed flat which they shared with their parents Aida and Viktor. Make no mistake about it, this was a poor family. However, the welcome, hospitality and kindness offered to us that evening was beyond anything we could have imagined.

Having lived and studied in the former Soviet Union, I know from firsthand experience the length of time that Aida would have spent queuing for the food she so generously laid out before us. I know too that Viktor would potentially have encountered problems sourcing the Russian vodka that poured so freely all evening. At the end of the night, Amanda and I were escorted back to our hotel wearing borrowed full-length fake fur coats on the promise that we would return them the following day. Aida was worried that our own coats were inadequate for the bitter cold.

I’m telling you this story because it is in direct contrast with the selfish and egocentric attitude of the Rich Fool in this parable of Jesus. Where our Russian friends reached out to us in generosity, kindness, hospitality and welcome, sharing what little they had, this man concerns himself neither with God, nor with anybody else; he seeks only to satisfy his own desires.

At the beginning Luke gives us a somewhat strange comment made by an unnamed man in the crowd. He asks Jesus to mediate in some kind of financial dispute with his brother. Jesus responds with a very insightful question, “who appointed me your judge?”

When I first read this opening, I felt no small amount of irritation with this man. There are no social niceties, no polite greeting, no inquiries after Jesus’ health, no gratitude for his teaching, just this demand to sort out the disagreement he has with his brother.

However, on reflection I recognise in this, parts of my own prayer life. I wonder if you do too. How often do we simply present our list of needs to the Lord, telling him what to do, how to do it and what the time frame for our request is? Are we more concerned with wanting God to change the hearts and minds of others to suit those of our own?

And maybe this is something we do not just to God but to one another. Are we more concerned with what others would, could or should do rather than with listening and attempting to understand?

I believe that this man in the crowd has failed to understand who Jesus is and what his ministry is all about. Christ came to show us the face of God the Father. He was born into our world to reveal to us how loved we are – infinitely, wholly and eternally. Do we know this?

All too often I’m so focused on what I want God to do in my life that I forget to thank him for what he has already done. I don’t always stop to praise and worship him simply for being God, a loving parent who always has my welfare at heart. I don’t always pause to give God the space to speak to me personally and intimately. All we have is his gift. There is so much love and beauty in our world. We are surrounded by it every day if only we had eyes to see and ears to hear. I know that I don’t always take time to ponder that and to remember that this love is God’s precious gift to each of us.

So perhaps there is a gentle challenge there. Could we spend some time in quiet prayer without asking for anything at all? Or perhaps if there is someone whose attitude we don’t like, do we need to ask God to change in us what we would like changed in this other person? Do we need to ask for the grace to be less selfish, to be kinder, more patient or more forgiving?

## Who or what is on the throne of your heart?



Let me go back to this gospel passage.

I love the way Luke presents Jesus as a tender and loving teacher. Jesus never misses an opportunity to tell us about the Kingdom of Heaven. He is so clever! Look how he turns this man’s demand into a lesson on values, showing us what really matters. He truly is the master life coach!

“A man’s life is not made secure by what he owns.”

So why do so many of us think it is?

Of course, it is true that we cannot take our possessions and wealth with us into eternity. But what I love most about this is how Jesus doesn’t stop there, but goes on to tell a story to illustrate his point.

This wealthy man, we hear, has had a rich harvest from his land. He must have worked hard for this to happen, reaping and sowing, gathering his crops and maybe buying and selling but always mindful of what needed doing and when. We need people like this; let’s not forget that. If we want food on our tables, then an intelligent farmer is exactly what is required. Our food chains cannot survive without them.

However, it’s the man’s attitude to his success that Jesus warns us about. This rich man makes no mention of giving away any of his surplus crops to those who may need them more than he does. I believe that his heart is far from God. There is no spirit of generosity, inclusion, kindness or thought towards those less fortunate than he is.

No – on realising how much grain he has amassed, he begins by tearing down the barns that were already there, probably perfectly serviceable and adequate for the job, then sets about replacing them with bigger ones to house this bumper crop.

This part of the story reminds me of the images we saw on our screens at the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic. Long queues, supermarket shelves stripped bare of much needed goods such as pasta, rice and toilet roll. We witnessed the selfish hoarding of excess food while hospital staff, exhausted after long shifts were left scratching around for basic essentials. What an awful indictment on our society!

Again, is there another message for us in this story? Could we be less wasteful, more mindful of the way we treat one another and our planet?

The man then goes on to promise himself an easy retirement, full of food, drink and good times. Here Jesus doesn’t say that the man isn’t entitled to a rest after all his hard work. No, his message is very simple and it is this: we are not the centre of the universe. Life isn’t simply about us, our wishes and our desires. With wealth comes responsibility. Everything we need is here. But if we ignore the cry of the poor, preferring instead to satiate our own excesses, then we are a long way from the Kingdom of God.

Not only that but this man addresses his soul directly, assuring it of an easy ride. Is the soul not the place within us where God dwells? If so, what need has God of rich food, drink and good times? God looks not on outward appearances but on the heart. The challenge is to listen to the still, small voice that dwells there, moving us to compassion and love.

At the end of the story the demand for this man’s soul is made by God and the question asked, ‘this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?’ And the simple answer is that it belongs to God. All we are and all we have are his. All is gift.

Jesus does not condemn the man for his wealth. He condemns him only for his attitude. When our focus is based on self, we cannot live in the freedom of God.

As I write this piece, our country is preparing to loosen more restrictions placed upon us during the pandemic. I know that many have used the past year to re-evaluate what matters most. We have all seen heart-warming stories of compassion and generosity, of the old and the young raising thousands for charity, of neighbours looking out for one another, of medical staff risking their own safety to care for their patients. We have witnessed communities coming together in a spirit of solidarity and unity, the rich and famous using their status to force social change, and families spending quality time together in the great outdoors. It is precisely in this attitude of heart that God’s kingdom is proclaimed.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta once said this:

“I don’t recall that the Lord ever spoke of success; he spoke only of faithfulness in loving.”

As our society opens up even more, let’s remember this parable and the lessons of the pandemic and continue to work towards a kinder, fairer and more compassionate way of life that makes us rich in the sight of God. **Mary x**





# St Peter's Book Club

We started the year reading a story that had been inspired by the true story of Eyam, a small village in Derbyshire, during the plague of 1665-1666.

The infection spread rapidly throughout the village during the autumn of 1665, slowing down in the winter before a second more virulent wave returned in the spring and summer, eventually peaking in August 1666. Over a period of fourteen months, 260 people died out of a population of 800. **Year of Wonders by Geraldine Brooks** is told through the eyes of a housemaid Anna Frith and it is initially a tale of disease, superstition, witchcraft and murder but through the struggle to survive we witness the indomitable power of the human spirit. This is an inspirational story and well worth a read – and a trip to Eyam if you haven't already been (the village is only 25 miles away).

We then focused our attention on two thrillers: one set in a peaceful retirement village whilst the other opens in New York with the body of a woman who is found in a bath of acid and a public beheading in Mecca and for 700+ pages it just keeps gathering pace... **The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman** follows four septuagenarians as they try to solve a brutal murder in the retirement village where they have all settled – presumably to live a quiet life. It cleverly twists and turns as the ingenious foursome defy all expectations as they try to catch a killer. **I am Pilgrim by Terry Hayes** is a race against time as Pilgrim, the former head of a secret espionage unit, tracks a man who is plotting to destroy America. If you enjoy a good mystery-spy novel with a super hero, you are in for a treat!

After the trans-Atlantic pace of an international thriller, we settled on **In A Single Thread by Tracy Chevalier** which paints a detailed picture of social change in England during the inter-war years. It is set in Winchester

*Alison McGarr rounds up the book club year.*

**“I have lived a thousand lives and I have loved a thousand loves. I’ve walked on distant worlds and seen the end of time, because I read...”**

in 1932, where 38-year-old Violet Speedwell is deemed to be one of the ‘surplus’ women, a consequence of the huge numbers of men lost in WW1. She is still feeling the loss of her fiancé in the war and stifled by a difficult and suffocating mother she saves up to move to Winchester where she rents a room in a lodging house. On a visit to the cathedral, there is a ceremony for the ‘broderers’ and her interest is captured by the embroidered kneelers. She joins the group of women broderers and as she immerses her life in embroidery, she finds so much more than she could ever have expected.

In fitting with our love of reading about different cultures, we picked a fascinating book that teaches us a chapter of modern history that most of us might not be aware of. **Pachinko by Min Jin Lee** is an historical family saga set in Korea and Japan throughout the 20th century. It follows four generations of a Korean family through the political turmoil of Japanese colonisation, the hardship of wartime and the journey to seek a new and better life in Japan. However, on arrival in Japan many Koreans faced discrimination and disgusting living conditions – they are stranded, unable to return but unable to achieve permanent residency in their new home. This is another tale about resilience and the indomitable nature of the human spirit in the struggle to both survive and thrive. The theme of survival was central to our next read, albeit a bit closer to home – **Shuggie Bain by Douglas Stuart**, winner of

the 2020 Booker Prize, is a coming-of-age story, a bleak and emotionally heart-breaking portrayal of both a beaten, dysfunctional family and an impoverished Glasgow community, suffering the despair of the Thatcher era in the 1980s.

Our next choice **Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** is a book about Africa and the African diasporic experience in the USA and England. It is a love story between two teenagers attending a Nigerian university who want to leave the country for a better life. Ifemelu moves to the States, where she attends an American university and starts a blog dealing with race issues in America, while Obinze moves to England and ends up becoming an illegal immigrant. This is a story which addresses many issues such as race, immigration, the difference between being black in Africa and being black in America and interestingly, the desire and longing to return to a thriving and developing African continent.

In our most recent choice, we have come full circle as we venture back to the effects of the Black Death plague in Warwickshire in the 1580s. **Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell** is the winner of the 2020 Women's Prize for Fiction and is centred on William Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway, their family and the death of their only son Hamnet who died at 11 years of age. This is an imaginative work of historical fiction and a meditation on grief and loss – well worth a read.

So, even though during lockdown, the book club has been unable to meet up in person, we are still thriving and reading our way round the world. We are hopeful that we will soon be getting back together so please do come and join us. Look out for notices in the parish newsletter or contact **Alison McGarr** on [ajmcgarr68@outlook.com](mailto:ajmcgarr68@outlook.com) for further information.

## Here's a list of the parish groups and activities at St Peter's

### Celebrating liturgy

**Altar linen**  
Pat Tomlinson: 0161 456 7627

**Altar servers**  
Fr Peter

**Church cleaners**  
Margaret King: 0161 483 4584

**Eucharistic ministers**  
**Housebound**  
Maureen Horton: 0161 483 1590  
[mary.horton@ntlworld.com](mailto:mary.horton@ntlworld.com)  
**Church**  
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720  
[tony.martin@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.martin@ntlworld.com)

**Flower arrangers**  
Colette Christie: 0161 427 4982  
[colette.christie4982@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:colette.christie4982@hotmail.co.uk)

**Lay-led liturgy**  
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659  
[mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com)

**Adult and junior choirs**  
Eileen Rigg: 01625 872948  
[emrigg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:emrigg@hotmail.co.uk)

**Folk group**  
Steph Leyden: 0161 456 6285  
[stephleyden@icloud.com](mailto:stephleyden@icloud.com)

**Piety stall**  
Denise Noon: 0161 483 0217

**Readers**  
Monica Beckitt:  
[admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk](mailto:admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk)

**Welcomers**  
Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213  
[ambailey@cheerful.com](mailto:ambailey@cheerful.com)

### Creating social activity

**Book club**  
Alison McGarr: 07792 107152  
[ajmcgarr68@outlook.com](mailto:ajmcgarr68@outlook.com)

**Men's group**  
John McKay:  
07715 362403

**Parish newsletter**  
Monica Beckitt  
[admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk](mailto:admin@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk)

**Parish noticeboards**  
Outside – Julie Williams:  
[juliewilliams10@gmail.com](mailto:juliewilliams10@gmail.com)  
Inside – Barbara Goodier

**Parish website**  
Anne-Marie Bailey: [ambailey@cheerful.com](mailto:ambailey@cheerful.com)

**Special events**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072  
[helenlyons1957@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:helenlyons1957@hotmail.co.uk)

**Tea and Coffees, after Mass**  
Sandra Coleing: 0161 419 9083

**Theatre group**  
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720  
[tony.martin@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.martin@ntlworld.com)

**Walking group**  
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720  
[tony.martin@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.martin@ntlworld.com)

### Exploring faith

**Alpha**  
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659  
[mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com)

**Baptism programme**  
Anne-Marie Gallogly  
Karen Haines – [justasec55@hotmail.com](mailto:justasec55@hotmail.com)

**Confirmation programme**  
Fr Peter  
[petersharrocks@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk](mailto:petersharrocks@stpetersshazelgrove.org.uk)

**First sacraments preparation**  
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709  
[terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk)

**Marriage preparation**  
Fr Peter

**RCIA - Enquirers group**  
Tony Martin 0161 483 7720  
[tony.martin@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.martin@ntlworld.com)

**Vocations**  
Fr Peter

*Names and contact details are correct at the time the magazine went to print, but are subject to change.*

### Sharing faith

**CaFE**  
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659  
[mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com)

**Centering prayer**  
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296  
[michaeldomalley@sky.com](mailto:michaeldomalley@sky.com)

**Churches Together activities**  
Maureen/Phil Horton: 0161 483 1590  
[pjhorton@virginmedia.com](mailto:pjhorton@virginmedia.com)

**Footsteps**  
Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213  
[ambailey@cheerful.com](mailto:ambailey@cheerful.com)

**Guided prayer**  
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296  
[michaeldomalley@sky.com](mailto:michaeldomalley@sky.com)

**Holy hour and prayer ministry**  
Laura Small: 01625 876 752  
[lauramsmall@hotmail.com](mailto:lauramsmall@hotmail.com)

**Lending library**  
Ann Bonner: 0161 456 6152  
[anntbar46@yahoo.com](mailto:anntbar46@yahoo.com)

**LPA liaison**  
Julie Williams: 0161 285 0244  
[juliewilliams10@gmail.com](mailto:juliewilliams10@gmail.com)

**Mothers' prayers**  
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709  
[terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk)

**Praise and worship**  
John McKay: 0161 487 1659  
[mckay7897@hotmail.com](mailto:mckay7897@hotmail.com)

**Rosary groups: adult and children**  
Laura Small: 01625 876 752  
[lauramsmall@hotmail.com](mailto:lauramsmall@hotmail.com)

**Scripture group**  
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296  
[michaeldomalley@sky.com](mailto:michaeldomalley@sky.com)

### Supporting families and youth

**Bereavement support**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072

**Childrens' liturgy**  
Janice Ormerod: 0161 449 5840

**Explorers**  
Joe O'Brien: 07976 423 203  
[joe\\_obrien@ntlworld.com](mailto:joe_obrien@ntlworld.com)

**Little fishes**  
Anne Wroe: 07763 387001  
[anne.wroe@sky.com](mailto:anne.wroe@sky.com)

**Marriage and family life group**  
David Small: 01625 876 752

**SPY group**  
David Small: 01625 876 752

### Outreaching in the community

**Hospital chaplaincy**  
Chaplaincy Office: 0161 419 5889

**Hospital Chaplaincy (Emergency)**  
Hospital switchboard will bleep  
0161 483 1010

**Via St Peter's**  
0161 483 3476  
[petersharrocks@stpeterhazelgrove.org.uk](mailto:petersharrocks@stpeterhazelgrove.org.uk)

**Justice and peace**  
Carmel O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

**LAMBS**  
Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348  
Kath Coll: 0161 456 0881  
[kathcoll@btinternet.com](mailto:kathcoll@btinternet.com)

**Lenten lunches**  
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072  
Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348

**Lourdes group**  
Mary Conway-Kelly: 07809 748805

**Missio**  
Margaret King: 0161 483 4584  
Fiona Preece: 0161 456 4319

**Schools chaplaincy**  
**St Peter's**  
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 2431  
0161 483 3476

**St Simon's**  
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 9696  
0161 483 3476

**St James' High School - Via School**  
0161 482 6900, [office@stjamesche.org.uk](mailto:office@stjamesche.org.uk)

**Harrytown High School - Via School**  
0161 430 5277  
[office@harrytown.stockport.sch.uk](mailto:office@harrytown.stockport.sch.uk)

**Aquinas 6th form college**  
0161 483 3237  
Chaplain  
[Carmel.Scanlon@aquinas.ac.uk](mailto:Carmel.Scanlon@aquinas.ac.uk)

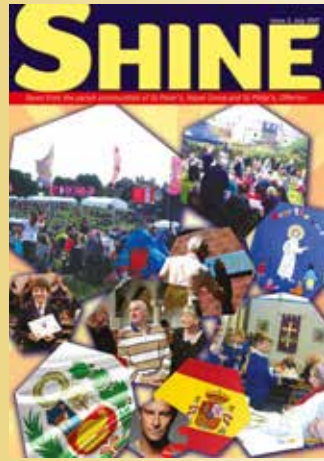
**St Peter's Helpers**  
[stpetershelpers@gmail.com](mailto:stpetershelpers@gmail.com)  
0161 483 3476

**SVP: adult and youth**  
Lorraine Parker: 0161 456 5629  
[lorraineandbobparker@gmail.com](mailto:lorraineandbobparker@gmail.com)

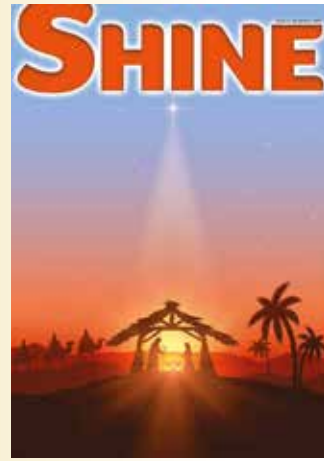




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Issue 2, July 17

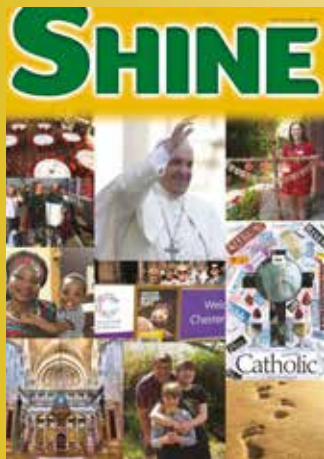


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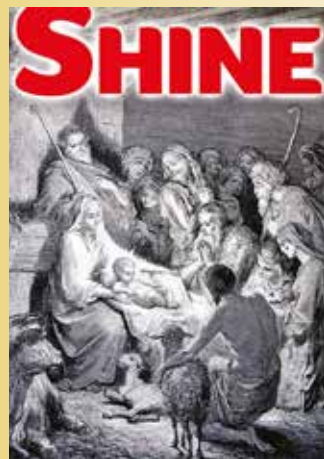


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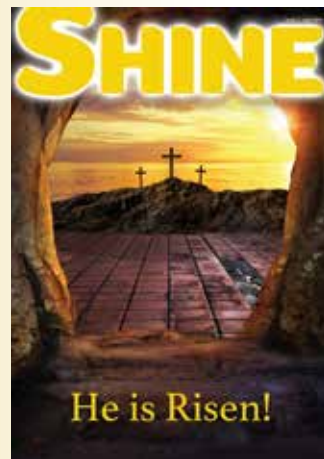
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Issue 5, September 2018



Issue 6, December 2018



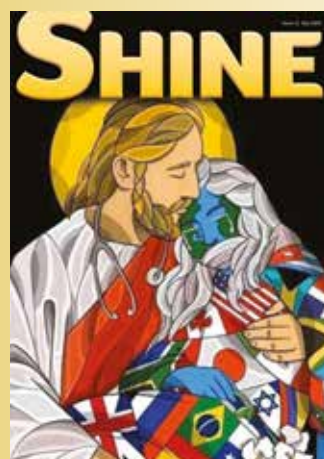
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Issue 8, September 2019



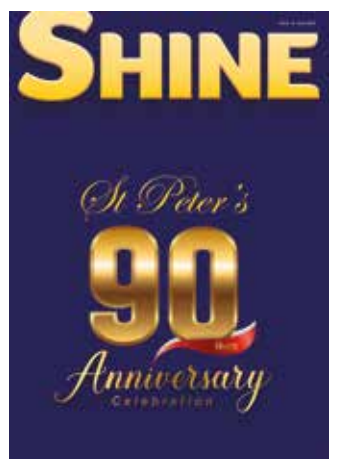
Issue 9, December 2019



Issue 10, May 2020



Issue 11, December 2020



Issue 12, June 2021