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NEWS

No 13 Summer 2019

news and features from St Margaret's

ORDINARY TIME

Passing Ordinary Time

It is a hard art to learn,
catching quiet
by palms raised
cupped in
air shifting location
here and there like
trying to guess the pattern of falling leaves,
and hoping to feel
the soft descent of moments
when silence slips
between sounds.

This ordinary time is
gifted with days,
weeks of mundane grace
routinely following the liturgy
of hours anticipating creation
tuning its prayer and praise to the
rhythms of incarnate love.

I am used to the uproar,
the Holy drama,
the appetite's gnarled discord
of fasting and feasting on borrowed time,
the knocking of angels,
the blubbery piety of waiting,
appointed seasons for guilt and grief,
tears of joy and disbelief,
the birth of miracles, the passion of virgins,
the mourning of a love so divine.

This ordinary time is
gifted in its quiet, marked passing
Christ slips about
calling and baptizing,
sending and affirming,
pouring his Spirit like water
into broken cisterns,
sealing cracks and filtering our senses,
that we may savor the foolish
simplicity of his grace.

~ Enuma Okoro

From: *The Still Point: A Literary Guide to Prayer in Ordinary Time*, compiled by Sarah Arthur, Brewster, Paraclete Press, 2011

WHAT CAN WE DO?

St Margaret's role in the Church of England initiative on modern slavery

Modern slavery is an umbrella term for all forms of slavery, trafficking and exploitation. At its core is a trail of deception, control and often violence that is estimated to affect 136,000 victims in the UK alone, and 40.3 million worldwide. Survivors, often vulnerable individuals, tell of offers of opportunities and a better life, only to find themselves in an isolated and restricted environment, with little or no pay, with threats of harm to themselves or their families.

The National Crime Agency's statistics show that domestic slavery – always hidden and difficult to detect – is very prevalent in Westminster. In recognition of this, collections at Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's go to support a local hostel (in an undisclosed location, of course) which supports those who manage to break free or are rescued from this type of slavery.



Last year, St Margaret's also hosted an NCA display on human trafficking and modern slavery outside the church where striking photographs brought the issue to the attention of visitors to Westminster.

The Church of England is supporting actions across Dioceses through the Clewer Initiative, founded by the retired Bishop of Derby, The Right Reverend Alastair Redfern. Locally, the

initiative encourages networks to detect modern slavery and help provide care for victims; nationally it is working on models of best practice providing evidence based data for engagement with statutory and non-statutory bodies.

On 29th September, we will welcome Alastair Redfern as our preacher at our service of Sung Eucharist. He has spoken about the potential of Christians to "go the extra mile" and work with others to spot evidence, and will no doubt be touching on both the problem, and how we and our church might make an impact. There will be an opportunity for us all to engage with him after the service at St Margaret's, when we hope to host a question and answer session before he continues on to the Abbey where he will also preach at the 3pm Evensong that day.

The Bishop's sermon will form the final session in St Margaret's next Explorations in Faith series taking place over the four Sundays in September. This series will focus on Marion Carson's book *Human Trafficking, The Bible and the Church: An Interdisciplinary Study*. Dates and details are in the diary on page 3.

Further information on the Clewer Initiative, modern slavery and a nationwide app-based project on safe car washes in which we could all participate can be found on the website: <https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/>.

MAX RAABE CONCERT

An audience of nearly 300 were treated to an evocative rendition of the music of Weimar Berlin of the 1920s and '30s on 19th June. The popular German singer Max Raabe (right, with pianist Christoph Israel) generously presented the concert to help raise over £1000 for the new north window.



GARDEN PARTY

As showers lifted and a little sun appeared, the congregations of St Margaret's and the Abbey gathered with clergy and staff for the annual summer lunch in the Abbey gardens on 16th June. In his final address at this event, the Dean praised the fellowship and contributions to the life of the community.



PATRONAL FESTIVAL

As is our tradition, we celebrate the dedication of this church in c. 1090 to St Margaret of Antioch both on her feast day, this year Saturday 20th July, with 8.30am Holy Communion in the Abbey, and on the nearest Sunday, this year the 21st, with Sung Eucharist in the church. Details are below left.



RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS: HEAVEN IN ORDINARY

Following Trinity Sunday we enter into the long period of what the Book of Common Prayer calls 'Sundays after Trinity' – or Ordinary Time as it is often called nowadays. This is the Church's opportunity to take stock, to remind itself that God is with us in the everyday routine of our lives and worship.

It is easy to think that God is only involved in big life-changing occasions. But much of the Gospel story is focussed on the ordinary: eating, drinking, paying attention to people in need, being kind to children, and courteous to neighbours, telling jokes, listening carefully, making a little go a long way, saying the same prayer that Jesus teaches. It is about learning how to do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. It is discovering what the poet

George Herbert describes as 'heaven in ordinary'.

There are still twenty-one weeks ahead of us until the beginning of the new Church year on Advent Sunday. Some celebrations lie ahead – the patronal festival for St Margaret's, the 750th anniversary of the founding of the present Abbey – and there will be some major Services of Thanksgiving too: for Professor Mary Warnock amongst others. Celebration and solemnity will still occasionally punctuate the onward flow of ordinary time.

But Ordinary Time is fundamentally marked by the quiet heartbeat of the Church's worship. Here on the Abbey site, 365 days of the year, we hold services of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer or Evensong, and the Eucharist. Every

day the word of God is attended to, prayer is offered in faith, bread and wine shared, and lives quietly enriched. There is a calm healing rhythm to our worship in Ordinary Time. And all are welcome to make this rhythm their own and to rest in the simple, unfussy grace of God in our midst.

The incarnation of God in Jesus Christ is fundamentally about redeeming the everyday. God is at work among us in Morning Prayer on a dark wet Thursday, quite as much as in the wonder of a solemn liturgy on Christmas Eve; in the washing-up and the weeding quite as much as at a glorious wedding. The extraordinary truth is that the grace of God abounds in the ordinary for us all, whether we know it or not.

Canon Jane Sinclair

SEASONAL SERVICES AND CONGREGATIONAL MILESTONES

Festal services

Saturday 20th July, St Margaret of Antioch,
8.00 am: Holy Communion in honour of St Margaret will take place in St Faith's Chapel in the Abbey this year

Sunday 21st July, 11.00 am: St Margaret of Antioch Feast of Dedication
Festal Eucharist followed by party in St Margaret's Church

Ordination

Saturday 6th July 11am: Christopher Rogers, for 15 years an active member of St Margaret's, will be priested at St James Bermondsey – all are welcome. Chris will celebrate his first Eucharist on Sunday, 7th July, at St John the Baptist in Catford where he continues to serve the parish. The Rector is arranging for Chris to return to preach at St Margaret's in the near future.

Death

Peter Samuel, who contributed to the life of St Margaret's over many years, died on 16th May 2019. He was Deputy People's Warden and then, from 1985 to 1997, People's Warden. An antiques dealer, Peter split his time between London and Wales until settling full time in Tenby. He continued as a reader until just a few years ago. Edward Osterwald represented the congregation at his funeral.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Explorations in Faith

Sundays 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th September
12.45pm – 1.45pm

With bring and share lunch after the service. All are welcome for the new series exploring *Human Trafficking, The Bible and the Church: An Interdisciplinary Study* by Marion L S Carson.

St Margaret's Congregational Forum meetings

Tuesday 9th July; Mondays 16th September and 11th November; all 6pm

St Margaret's Poetry and Arts Group

Saturdays 28th September, 26th October, 30th November at 7pm

Details of these sociable meetings can be found in weekly service sheets, or from Alan Stourton. All are welcome.

Annual meeting of St Margaret's sidesmen, readers and lay assistants

Monday 18th November; 6pm at the church

Brass on the Grass at St Margaret's

Two of the summer brass band concerts will take place in St Margaret's this year
Wednesdays 4th and 11th September:
12.30 to 2 pm.

Greg Morris joins St Margaret's

Our new Director of Music will conduct the choir for the first time on Sunday, 7th July, when he will be introduced to and welcomed by the congregation at the monthly wine reception.

STEWARDSHIP

The latest available figures for congregational giving and donations in the three months to end of May 2019 are:

	collections	donations
March	£1,109	£1,565
April	£962	£1,448
May	£1,102	£1,604

LAST CHANCE TO SEE PREVOST PANORAMA

The 20' long panorama of the view from St Margaret's tower, painted in 1815, will be displayed at the Museum of London, on London Wall in the City, until 1st September only. After that, it will be packed away until the museum moves to its new home in Smithfield Market – some years in the future. The panorama featured on the cover of the winter issue of the News: <https://tinyurl.com/y2e8tb72>

LANDMARK APPOINTMENT IN EGYPT

Alexandra Wakid becomes Lay Canon

In honour of her many years of dedicated service to the Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, Alexandra Wakid was licensed by Bishop Mouneer Anis at All Saints' Cathedral in Cairo in April as the first woman Lay Canon in the Diocese. Alexandra has also been a regular member of the congregation at St Margaret's for many years, as was her late husband, Ibrahim "Abee" Wakid. Abee was the first Egyptian Lay Reader to be licensed within the Diocese, and also later served as a Lay Canon at the Cathedral.



Alexandra grew up in Edinburgh and after graduating from St Andrew's joined the diplomatic service. Posted to Cairo, she and Abbe met at the Cathedral, where they were married in 1994. For the past ten years, Alexandra has served as the

Bishop's Advisor for International Affairs, and has been particularly active in negotiating the restoration to the Diocese of the Anglican church in Algiers which had been held by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for 21 years. She's now spending more time in the UK than she and Abbe did in the past, but will continue to be involved in the Diocese in Cairo and Algiers.

CHORISTER RETURNS AFTER 64 YEARS

Birthday surprise

We regularly encounter visitors for whom St Margaret's inspires affection and long-lasting memories, whether marking wedding anniversaries, or returning to 'their church in London'.



In May, we had a visit from a former boy chorister, Malcolm Godwin, whose sister Joy (left, with Malcolm and Senior Verger Nigel Harris), niece Lorraine and great-niece Isobel had arranged a surprise trip to London to mark his 80th birthday.

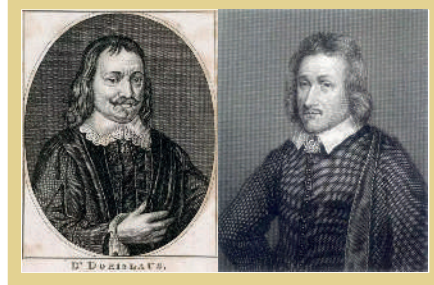
Malcolm sang in the choir as a Westminster City School student from 1950 to 1955, directed by choirmaster and organist Herbert Dawson (who signed his photo, left). He had often told his family how much he'd like to return to the place that held such formative memories. Chatting about his time in the choir, he reminisced about how firm discipline

('with no messing about') was central to the three rehearsals and two Sunday services each week, as well as how proud his family were to hear him sing. Looking around, he also recalled how much he looked forward to the reredos being reopened after Lent, when it lit up the church. The family has thanked the congregation for creating new memories and making Malcolm feel so special.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Reinterment of the Regicides

On the north wall of St Margaret's porch is a tablet installed by the Cromwell Association listing 21 Parliamentarians who were disinterred from the Abbey by Royal Warrant in 1661, and thrown into a pit in St Margaret's churchyard.



Not listed are Cromwell, his follower and son-in-law Henry Ireton, and Judge Bradshaw: their remains were removed from the Abbey on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I, hung from Tyburn gallows and buried beneath it. Their heads were removed and set on spikes on Westminster Hall.

However, four women related to the three men were exhumed from the Abbey and reinterred in the churchyard pit: Cromwell's mother Elizabeth and

sister Jane Desborough; Bradshaw's wife Mary; and Anne Fleetwood, Ireland's widow's daughter.

Most of the other names are of soldiers, sailors and politicians, such as Adm Robert Blake (also remembered in a window in the north aisle), Col Popham and Sir William Constable. However, the Dutch diplomat and council for the prosecution at Charles I's trial, Isaac Dorislaus (above left), was also reburied, as was poet, historian and clergyman Thomas May (above right), and three other ministers, members of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, who had preached at St Margaret's.

CLERGY PROFILE

The Reverend Mark Birch, Minor Canon and Sacrist

As part of the Westminster Abbey community, St Margaret's has the good fortune to be able to call on a range of talented and engaging clergy to join our services. One of these is Mark Birch, who joined the Abbey a Minor Canon in 2015 – the first also to be named as Chaplain. In 2017 he moved to his current role as Sacrist, and with the Precentor is in charge of liturgy and services.

He became familiar with St Margaret's in his early days, as Chaplains are responsible for the well being of staff, volunteers and worshippers as well as taking part in services across the Abbey. 'Getting to know the likes of Nigel Harris and Pamela Carrington was a good introduction to what goes on,' he says, smiling. He continues to take part in Sunday Eucharist and special services here (including Lord Snowdon's memorial), and felt privileged to sing the liturgy at St Margaret's moving Good Friday matins this year.

Mark's path to the Abbey was not a standard one. Still, as he was raised in what he describes as 'an idyllic Good Life sort of home' in the Cotswolds, surrounded by goats, chickens and cats, perhaps it's not all that surprising that his first calling was to be a vet. Only once he began his veterinary degree at Bristol did he start going to church and exploring faith for the first time. 'And that changed everything,' he says. He began interrogating the notions of vocation and calling, considering whether he might care for people as well as animals – perhaps become a doctor? – and wondering whether he would survive that.

After two years practicing as a trainee vet, he returned to Bristol, where meetings with the

church finally led him to ordination. He moved to study at Westcott House in Cambridge, and while in his final year was also Assistant Chaplain at St John's College and sang in the choir. 'I adored it,' he says, 'it's almost something I can't live without.' That strong pastoral call led him to further chaplaincy posts, and one of those, at Helen's House children's hospice, clearly moved him very deeply as a pastoral and liturgical challenge. He learnt profound lessons in dignity, resilience, prayer, humanity and humour – from the children, families and staff alike.

Similar inspiration has arisen in particular services at the Abbey: he felt that the Windrush service helped both the nation and the people who came here to understand the importance of their story. And Stephen Hawking's interment recognised how his achievements and humanity emerged alongside his disability.

Mark finds daily inspiration in how all his colleagues, from flower arrangers to vergers to clergy, move together to bring faith to life. And he has 'huge affection' for St Margaret's, and its music, especially when immersed in it, sitting in chancel. And for the future? 'I'm passionate about what great churches can do to celebrate the lives and contributions of all sorts of people,' he says, 'so perhaps a cathedral life one day?'

In the meantime, we've taken the opportunity to pose a selection of our quick-fire questions ...

✦ **What's your favourite hymn?** *From glory to glory advancing.* **Setting?** Howells' Gloucester Service. **Service?** Eucharist: the sum of what we're about.



- ✦ **And your favourite book?** Augustine's Confessions. **Music?** Abba comes to mind. **Film?** *Some like it hot.* **Animal?** Cats. **Holiday?** Venice.
- Flower?** Mock orange. **Food?** Rich fruit cake.
- ✦ **What's your guilty pleasure?** Eccles cakes – is there a theme emerging here...?
- ✦ **What superpower would you like?** Flight, (but perhaps not via the RAF ejection seat above).
- ✦ **In your new time machine, where and when would you travel?** To Bethany, with Mary, Martha and Lazarus: the story is in a proper domestic setting and has real warmth.
- ✦ **What one thing could you not live without?** My garden in the little cottage in the Forest of Dean that I'm trying to renovate. Very consoling to be outside and see things growing.

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN TO BE BISHOP OF DOVER

Rose Hudson-Wilkin becomes first black woman bishop in England

It has been announced that Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, is to be the next Bishop of Dover.

Rose is well known to St Margaret's, participating in many mid-week Services of Thanksgiving, the monthly service of Holy Communion for Parliamentarians, and as a preacher on Sundays.

During a memorable term as Speaker's Chaplain, Rose has provided pastoral support to the Speaker and Parliamentarians during the aftermath of the murders of Jo Cox MP and PC Keith Palmer. Her regular routine has involved leading prayers for the House of Commons daily during its sittings, looking after the services in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, and being available to provide pastoral care in the Palace of Westminster.

In her role as Bishop of Dover, Rose will be responsible for supporting the day to day ministry of Anglican churches in the Diocese of Canterbury, and representing the Church in the wider life of the county.

Rose will be consecrated in a service at St Paul's Cathedral on 19 November and installed at Canterbury Cathedral on 30 November.



BOYS' CHOIR

In April, the Rector regretfully announced the disbanding of the boys' choir at St Margaret' in its current form. It had proved to be too difficult to maintain a viable boys' choir with singers drawn from Westminster Under School alone. She has written to all those on the congregation's mailing list to explain the circumstances, and will be working with the new Director of Music to ensure that children are able to sing regularly at St Margaret's services once again.

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