

✙ ST GILES' Ⓜ St Margaret's



Rev Dr Stephen O'Connor, our new Associate Priest designate (see page 8)

BENEFICE NEWS

June 2022

Free

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Contents – June 2022	
Vicar's Letter – <i>Daniel Walters</i>	Page 4
Canon Paul Iles, last Vicar of St Philip and St James	Page 5
Selective Bird Feeding – <i>G R Evans</i>	Page 5
Interfaith Friendship Walk 2022 – <i>Daniel Walters</i>	Page 7
From the new Associate Priest (designate)	Page 8
St Giles' Choir Tour to Bergamo – <i>Nicholas Prozzillo</i>	Page 9
Simon Stubbings, 1945-2022	Page 10
St Giles' Choir Essay Competition – <i>Freddy Chelsom</i>	Page 10
Simon Preston CBE, 1938-2022	Page 14
May Morning Ringing – <i>Geraint Jones</i>	Page 15
International Conducting Competition, Bertie Baigent	Page 17
Christian Aid Week – <i>Helen Dodd</i>	Page 17
Our Benefice – <i>Daniel Walters</i>	Page 18
Bellringing News (2) – <i>John Pusey</i>	Page 19
St Giles' Promises Auction – <i>Mary Whitlock</i>	Page 20
New Library at Phil & Jim School – <i>Eva Walters</i>	Page 20
Later, at 15 Banbury Road – <i>Margaret Pinsent</i>	Page 21
100, 80, 40 Years Ago, from St Giles' Parish Magazine	Page 22
St Margaret's Congratulations Corner – <i>Eva Walters</i>	Page 24



The stall at Oxford Pride 2022

VICAR'S LETTER

WELCOME to the new-look, relaunched, *Benefice News* magazine! This is the first issue in a number of years to feature contributions



from St Margaret's as well as St Giles'. No doubt we'll tweak and adjust things as we go, but if you have any feedback please send them to our Benefice Secretary, Anne Dutton, at the new office email address: office@StGilesStMargarets.org (although the old email address will still work too).

In recent weeks I have been struck by how much any church community gains by recognising that it is not alone or self-contained, but part of a wider whole. At the **Interfaith Friendship Walk** last month, various Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith communities walked together, and spoke movingly of our interdependence.

And at the wonderful **Oxford Pride** event at the beginning of June, it was great to be able to share a stall with other inclusive and affirming Christian groups – Baptist, URC and Methodist, as well as Anglican friends from the Cathedral and University Church (*see picture page 3*).

It is one of the most profound truths of the Christian faith that, as individuals, we are not entirely autonomous, self-reliant individuals. Rather, we are reliant on the loving care of God, our creator and sustainer – who has in turn made us to be in relationship not only with Godself, but with one another.

However, as communities it is all too easy to forget that. True, each parish in the Church of England has wider connections – in our Deaneries, for example, or in local ecumenical networks such as Churches Together. And yet these links often have little impact on particular parish church communities.

In my experience, few parishes are ever enthusiastic about joining together with another. Most people prefer to have “their own” Vicar who they don't have to share; there is always concern that their own traditions will be watered down or trampled over, or that they will be regarded as the “poor relatives” in the deal.

There is another way to view being part of a joint benefice however, which is that it is a *gift*. Next year will mark 40 years since the two churches were brought together (although not formally constituted

as a joint benefice until 1985), and at the time it was not an altogether happy union.

However, joining the benefice so many years later, I have been struck by how much the two parishes have to offer one another. Not only in terms of events (concerts, talks, exhibitions and the like) but more importantly the opportunity to share in the diversity of approaches to worship and faith.

And perhaps above all to help us to truly recognise that, whether as individuals or as communities, we are not atomised silos, cut off from all else, but part of a wider whole, a whole which is made holy and blessed by the love of our God.

Daniel Walters

THE REVD CANON PAUL ILES

FATHER PAUL ILES, who was the Vicar of St Philip and St James with St Margaret from 1979-1983 (the last Vicar, indeed, before the



parish joined with St Giles' to create the new united Benefice) died at home in Cheltenham, after a short illness on 12th May 2022, aged 85 years.

Amongst other things, Fr Paul was instrumental in restarting the choir at St Margaret's, which has continued to be a major part of parish life ever since. He would later be precentor of Hereford Cathedral and, more recently, assisted at St Mary's Prestbury, in Gloucestershire.

SELECTIVE BIRD FEEDING

FEEEDING the birds seems to raise complex questions about charitable selectivity, especially at this time of year when periodic batches of new sparrows arrive, accompanied by their parents, to learn how to feed themselves at the available outlets.

In earlier years I was enthusiastically generous, setting up all sorts of feeders with many kinds of food. That was highly appreciated by a considerable range of ornithological would-be Food Bank clients. Birds of every kind turned up, not only tits, sparrows and robins, but the next

size up - blackbirds and thrushes - and the next bigger still - pigeons and corvids. The pigeons in Oxford seem to divide themselves into the city-centre town birds to be met at Gloucester Green and apparently requiring periodical visits from a man with a hawk on his wrist; and the wood pigeons which favour gardens. Magpies are not fussy about locations: where there is food, they will find it. They did. The problem was that those with bigger beaks quickly ate what was on offer before the smaller beaks could get a share.

But then the squirrels dropped in, not bothering at all with Food Bank vouchers. Rats are not scrupulous about permissions either, and began to scamper hopefully about. Anything consumable vanished in minutes.

So I cut right back, to a single feeder hanging from a hard-to-reach hook and allowing access only to birds small enough to grip with tiny feet and peck through a close mesh to reach a fatball. That worked fine. The larger visitors disappeared. But not quite. Bolder birds began to try lowering themselves into the container from the top. That was not much of a problem for a little bird, which could extricate itself with a wriggle. But then I found a cock blackbird hopelessly wedged, having lowered himself right down to get at a few crumbs at the bottom. He was so still that I was afraid he had died. I had to dismantle the container to free him, allowing me to see his bright eye wide awake and his feet holding him firmly in place. He let out an enormous noisy protest, without even opening his beak. But when extricated, he flew away. So, not dead then; and he only lost a couple of feathers.

Somewhere in this tale of surely common experience in offering help to needy creatures there is clearly a metaphor or two. Can one be too generous? May one cause harm by trying to be careful? And is one to attempt to enforce rules for the good of the most deserving?

G R Evans



ST GILES' NEEDS MORE PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER AS READERS AND SIDESMEN. PLEASE CONSIDER SIGNING UP FOR THIS. THE – AT PRESENT STILL RATHER EMPTY – ROTAS ARE ON THE NOTICEBOARD JUST INSIDE THE NORTH DOOR OF THE CHURCH.

INTERFAITH FRIENDSHIP WALK: 19th MAY 2022
THE VICAR'S GREETING TO WALKERS AT ST GILES'

THIS IS my first “in-person” interfaith friendship walk – I moved to Oxford just after the last one in 2019. But I did take part in last year’s “virtual” walk, and that got me thinking.

Technology was in many ways a lifeline during the pandemic. However hard the lockdowns were – and for some they were very hard indeed – that technology made it a lot easier for a lot of people. We may have been physically separated from loved ones, but often we could at least hear and see them on our computers or smartphones.



However, that technology can also come at a cost. More and more, in our online communities, in our social media, we hunker down into our own little groups, our own little silos. People who think like us. People who look like us. People who act like us. And this attitude of “us” and “them” is so dangerous, so scary, because once you view people in that way, you don’t have to listen to them. You can just shut them down, or even avoid them altogether.

What is so *wonderful* about this event is that all of us here, with a deep commitment to our own sacred texts, to our own understanding of

the divine, to our own religious practices, all of us have taken the time and effort to *be* with one another. To *listen* to one another. Listening to those from other faith traditions isn't a *betrayal* of our own religious convictions: it is an honouring of the imperative in *all* the major religions to truly and meaningfully love one another. I pray that God will help us all, not to *ignore* but to look *beyond* all that divides us, and bring us closer together in that deep fellowship of love. *Daniel Walters*

OUR NEW ASSOCIATE PRIEST, REV DR STEPHEN O'CONNOR



HELLO EVERYONE. I am delighted to be joining you all in a few weeks from Walmer and Deal on the Kent coast, where I have been working as assistant curate in a two-parish, seven-church benefice in a variety of rural and urban seaside settings. I was ordained deacon in Canterbury Cathedral by Archbishop Justin in 2019 and as priest by Bishop Rose Hudson Wilkin in the midst of the Coronavirus lockdown in 2020. I come to you after what can only be described as a highly unusual and eventful curacy, with most of our worship moving online for a significant part of that time!

I came to the Anglican church relatively late in life, having been born and raised a Roman Catholic before having a 'Damascus Road' experience in the early 1980s when working in a bank. I quickly became involved in a local independent house-church before moving to Senegal as a short-term mission worker for two years, and thence to London where I started nurse training in 1989. I attended St Paul's Church Onslow Square in Chelsea, before moving to South London. There I became very much involved in the ministry of my local Baptist Church for many years whilst working first as a nurse at the Royal Marsden

Hospital, and later as a nurse lecturer at King's College London with St Christopher's Hospice in Sydenham where I continued to work clinically.

My teaching career took me to Belgium (Brussels) and then to Maastricht in the Netherlands before returning to the UK in order to discern my calling to priesthood in the Church of England - which was as much as a surprise to me as my earlier conversion. I worked at Canterbury Christ Church University during this time, and I was actively involved in the life of St Paul's and St Martin's churches in Canterbury, one of them being the oldest continuously used church in the English-speaking world. It was a great pleasure to lead worship in the same place where St Augustine once stood to preach to Queen Bertha and King Ethelbert of Kent, and I have had a growing love of Anglican tradition and liturgy since then.

I will be joining you with Pascal, my partner, who is a self-employed consultant IT analyst programmer currently working for a client in Brussels, and our cat Toby. It will be lovely to be back in what I have always considered to be my 'home' diocese, having been born and lived for some years in Amersham in the Buckingham archdeaconry, and completed my studies for the priesthood at Ripon College Cuddesdon.

Steve O'Connor

ST GILES' CHOIR TOUR – 21st-26th JULY 2022



We are delighted to announce that the choirs of St Giles' will be visiting Bergamo again this summer.

Nicholas Prozzillo

SIMON STUBBINGS (1945-2022)

SIMON STUBBINGS, who will be remembered by many as a former Churchwarden of St Giles' until 2013, died in March this year. In his time as Churchwarden he secured financing for the refurbishment of the Parish Rooms garden area, as well as the underfloor heating system in the church. He was also a faithful and supportive Churchwarden to the congregation. His funeral took place at St Michael at the North Gate.

ST GILES' CHOIR ESSAY COMPETITION

What are the distinctive features of Tudor sacred music?

THE TUDOR period began at the Battle of Bosworth Field, when Richard III was defeated by Henry VII, bringing an end to the turbulent Wars of the Roses. The following 118 years saw immense economic, religious, and societal change, but it was also a time of great prosperity and optimism, more so than any time since the Roman occupation. Tudor sacred music was influenced by these changes, and the historic context in which such works were written is what I believe constitutes a great part of their distinctive features. It is through examination of the period and its own features that we can endeavour to understand and explain the defining aspects of Tudor sacred music.

In the Tudor period, sacred music was intrinsically tied up with the monarchy. This is due to the close relationship between Church and State, which only grew more ambiguous after the break with Rome. Before the Reformation, Henry VII was still a Catholic monarch, and the style of early Tudor music reflected this. Henry VII also had a keen interest in the Arts and gave patronage to many individuals and organisations. Notably, he hired Robert Fayrfax (1464-1521), who has been described as the leading figure in the musical establishment of his day. Fayrfax greatly influenced the English Renaissance style and inspired later Tudor composers such as Thomas Tallis and John Taverner. His surviving works include six Catholic masses, and many of his most famous works were sacred pieces commissioned by the Tudor Royal Family. Fayrfax created the first parody mass, which was a prominent style of mass throughout the Renaissance period, involving the use of fragments of pre-existing pieces of music as part of the melodic material of the new composition. Starting with Henry VII, the Tudor monarchs prized musical education very highly, and it was their interest that

encouraged Tudor music to flourish. Increasing numbers of foreign musicians in the royal court during the reign of Henry VII led to an elaborate style which balanced the many influences of different movements across the continent. The relative geographical isolation of Tudor England allowed the English Renaissance to be unfettered from prevailing continental styles, and meant that the English tradition perhaps developed more independently than in the other major European countries.

Henry VIII was a highly respected musician and composer; the power that the monarchy had over society meant that he also had immense power over the taste and musical style of his time. Sacred music was by no means untouched by this permeating influence: the religious beliefs of the King or Queen greatly affected what music was not only popular, but permitted. Tudor sacred music was similarly constrained and defined by the technological advances of the time. The range of musical instruments available greatly affected the breadth of music that could be conceived. Sacred music predominantly consisted of only voice parts, although some works included parts for limited instruments such as the organ or virginal. The simplicity of this style of music was in contrast to increasingly extravagant and gaudy secular music. The Church wished to distance sacred music from such displays of excess, which were often seen as ungodly and sacrilegious.

Perhaps the greatest influence on Tudor sacred music was the Reformation. Although initially borne out of Henry VIII's desire to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon in 1533, the Reformation was caused by much more fundamental disagreements between the powers of Church and State, as well as the power of Rome over theological doctrine. The creation of the Church of England, of which Henry VIII was made "Supreme Head on earth", established the Tudor monarchs with absolute authority over both religious doctrine, legal disputes, and the finances of the Church. The Reformation served to strengthen the power of the monarch and to firmly establish them as a vehicle of God: a divine authority that could not easily be challenged. This also dramatically changed the nature of sacred music in Tudor England; the music no longer had to conform to the doctrinal expectations of the Papacy, only to the taste of the current monarch. This allowed for greater freedom and expression that had heretofore been solely allowed

for secular music. This increased liberty is particularly evident through the use of the English language in Church music, which previously had been limited to the use of Latin.

The Reformation also brought about a great degradation of musical tradition. The Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 and 1541 saw the destruction of countless manuscripts holding compositions by famous English composers, whose work was, as a result, irretrievably lost. Many choirs and musicians also lost their positions serving in the Catholic monasteries and churches. Although many of these people were able to join the new English Church, countless trained musicians were left without posts to fill. Despite this upheaval, the new Tudor church was able to continue the rich musical tradition that had begun many centuries before, and the following period was one of the most prolific in terms of quantity and quality of sacred music produced.

When Queen Mary I came to power in 1553, the Protestant Reformation started by her father had been underway for several decades. Nevertheless, Mary, a devout Catholic, brought about a series of reforms to bring England back in line with Rome. This included persecution of many Protestant reformers, notably Bishops Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, who were burned at the stake in Broad Street, Oxford. Sacred music at the time was brought back, having been sidelined by her brother Edward VI. Queen Mary believed that sacred music was important for bringing people back to the Catholic tradition, and the encouragement of more orthodox music was a key part of her Counter-Reformation. Although only in power for five years, Mary undoubtedly saved the English choral tradition from a time when it had played a diminishing role under the austere rule of Edward VI. Indeed, Edward had accelerated the reforms of the new English Church, and arguably laid the foundations for the Anglican Church that exists today. Through his strict enforcement of anglicised worship, Edward encouraged a new style of sacred music that was further removed from the Catholic tradition. The introduction of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549 accelerated moves towards standardised and increasingly Protestant forms of worship. Latin elements of the service were almost completely removed, and sacred music became almost exclusively performed in English, setting it apart from anything that had existed up until that time. I believe it is the commingling of these diametrically opposed

governances that gave Tudor sacred music its distinctive features. The increased freedom of expression that came with Protestant thought was allowed to join the more traditional forms of Catholic music, creating a unique style that represented the tumultuous beginnings of the Anglican Church.

The final Tudor monarch, Elizabeth I, reversed much of the Counter-Reformation that Mary had begun. Elizabeth's 45 year reign (1558-1603) ensured stability in the new Church and allowed Tudor music to develop in a more constant fashion. Although she was a Protestant, Elizabeth enjoyed William Byrd's music so much that she allowed him to continue to compose music in a more Catholic style. It was, arguably, English monarchs' partiality for more elaborate sacred music that prevented the Anglican Church from becoming increasingly puritanical. William Byrd was one of the most influential and important composers during the Tudor period. Many of his famous pieces were written in a polyphonic style, which is characteristic of Tudor sacred music. Polyphonic style is where two or more independent melodies are simultaneously played and allowed to interact with one another; this had been an aspect of Catholic sacred music before being incorporated into Protestant Tudor sacred music. Thomas Tallis taught William Byrd and worked alongside him during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Despite being an unreformed Catholic, Tallis was encouraged by the Queen's patronage. In 1575, Elizabeth I granted Byrd and Tallis a 21-year monopoly on the publication of polyphonic music. They were given exclusive rights to print any piece of music in any language, a truly unique privilege at the time. They also had sole use of the paper used to print music and so effectively controlled the music that could be published during that period.

In conclusion, I believe that the distinctive features of Tudor sacred music are its combination of both Catholic and Protestant influences, and the diverse styles that this balance between reform and Counter-Reformation create. Tudor sacred music was shaped by the turbulent political landscape in which it existed; successive Tudor monarchs guided the course of the sacred music tradition both through their personal taste and their enforcement of political and theological doctrine. It is this that makes Tudor sacred music distinctive, and allows it to incorporate both the libertarian ideals of the new Protestant Church

and the traditional musical style of the Catholic Church. It is this freedom and at the same time conformity which allows the distinctive aspects of Tudor sacred music to exist.

Freddy Chelsom

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SIMON PRESTON CBE (4th AUGUST 1938-13th MAY 2022)

SIMON PRESTON, the international concert organist who was also at various times Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey and Organist of Christ Church, Oxford, also had a connection with St Giles' choir. He was on the inaugural St Giles' choir tour to Rome (2013), played the organ before Evensong for their first visit to Coventry Cathedral, and accompanied *Stanford in A* in St Giles'. One of his stepchildren was a treble with St Giles' choir.



BELLRINGING NEWS (1): MAY MORNING RINGING AT MAGDALEN

IT being May Day, the invitation was: “If you want to be one of the 20 people getting up at ridiculous o'clock to ring at Magdalen ...”

Most of the people who get up to celebrate May Morning in Oxford will be crowded on or near Magdalen bridge waiting to hear the choristers singing from the top of Magdalen Great Tower. Some will be in punts, or these days on paddle boards, on the Cherwell. Others will of course be with the choir on top of the tower. But someone must be hidden away in the ringing chamber, waiting to ring the bells that sound at the end of the brief service on the top of the tower.



The bells at Magdalen are rung “at the College’s invitation” by the Oxford Society of Change Ringers, who also ring at the Cathedral and other city centre towers. Among them are St Giles’ tower captain, John Pusey (*photo, left*), and on this year’s May Day our young ringer, Sara Jones (*photo, next page*).

The tower, and the hanging of its bells, date from about 1500, towards the end of the reign of Henry VII. It would appear that something in the way of May Morning celebration dates back this far, though perhaps not quite what we know today.

One of the bells in the ring of 10 at Magdalen is probably a century

older than the tower, and must surely have been rung elsewhere. In the same way, the singing of the *Hymnus Eucharisticus* may well date back to the 17th century, when it was written; but by the 18th century, writers were remarking that what had once been a Requiem Mass had turned into a two-hour long merry concert. And the modern version of the tower-top ceremony is, like many of our traditions, possibly Victorian.

Something I had not expected was the loudspeakers. Many of us will remember when at ground level you could barely hear the choristers. So they were amplified, and (as Flanders and Swann have it) “much louder then”. But the loudspeakers are propped in the windows of the ringing chamber! If you have ever wondered why rock musicians wear earplugs on stage - the ringers were all holding hands over or stuffing fingers into ears, to make the bellowing of amplified choristers bearable. But at least there was no danger of the ringers not knowing



when the choristers were done. The first band of 10 had caught hold of their ropes and were ready to ring a touch on all 10 bells immediately the choir finished.

The ringing chamber is furnished with armchairs, a redundant range of choir stalls, and a padded sofa bench, so that while one band is ringing the other ringers can “stand out” in more comfort than the confined space in St Giles’ would allow. One wonders quite how some of this furniture came up the narrow spiral stone stairs in the tower.

A second band rang a second touch, and then - after leaving a gap for the crowds to start to disperse - there was a less ambitious touch to give everyone a chance to ring. And then the College gave us breakfast! If you have been to May Morning you will know how disconcerting it can be to find that after things are over, the morning is still young. It being Sunday this year John, Sara and I were early to ring at St Giles’.

Geraint Jones

(You can see and hear the choir, and hear the bells “ringing up” immediately when they stop, at <https://youtu.be/NhNmeDMXzLg>)

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTING COMPETITION

THE 2022 Rotterdam International Conducting Competition (ICCR), which is open to international conductors between the ages of 23 to 35 years old, concluded on 3rd June. The Grand Prize and €15,000 was awarded to **Bertie Baigent**. He also won the Classical Round and the Symphony Round.

The final rounds of the competition featured each designate winner conducting the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Rotterdam Symphony Chorus, Sinfonia Rotterdam, Doelen Ensemble, and the Orchestra of the 18th Century. The new format, which lasted two years, allowed the young conductors the chance to work with numerous orchestras and test all ranges, specialties, genres, and styles. Each round consisted of rehearsals and a final concert performance, both of which were judged by the jury and open to the public.

“ICCR has been over six years in the making,” Event Executive Director Rob Hilberink said. “It sparked from the notion that very few high-level opportunities for young conductors exist worldwide [] Seldom do you have the chance to work with a high-level orchestra and even then, never does this happen in front of so many influential people from all around the world. It is both a fantastic learning experience and a showcase.”

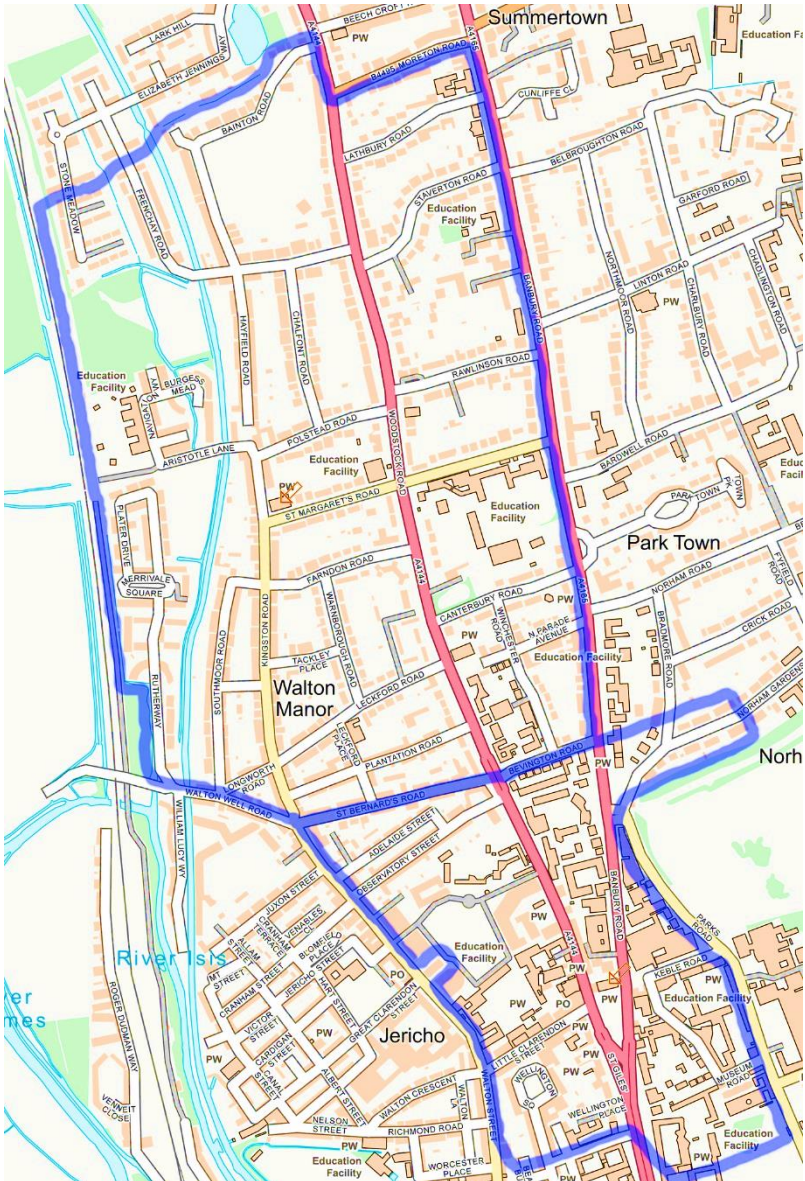


CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

ST GILES' Church raised a total of £750 including money from church collections, QR (e-envelope) donations, giftstar donations and house delivered, returned envelope donations, and Gift Aid. Thank you to all who contributed to this splendid sum for the continued work of Christian Aid in these difficult times.

Helen Dodd, Christian Aid representative

OUR BENEFICE



NOT everyone knows where the boundaries of our two parishes lie, so here is a map with the approximate boundaries highlighted in blue.

(NB: Not included - the large chunk of Port Meadow which is still technically part of St Giles' parish.)

Parish boundaries are always a mixture of common-sense and bizarre - often because they followed the route of old streams or footpaths, long since disappeared (and now cutting across more recent residential developments). In other cases there are historical reasons. Freud's on Walton Street, when it was still St Paul's Church, was part of the parish of St Barnabas Jericho – and still is, despite other properties on the same side being in St Giles'!

One curiosity - if you ever find yourself living in a house which crosses parish boundaries, which parish do you belong to? Turns out it's not the parish where the front door is located, but where the principal table is - where the family can gather together to share food and companionship together. There is something pleasingly Eucharistic about that ...

Daniel Walters

BELLRINGING NEWS (2)

BELLRINGING is one of the ingredients particularly associated with occasions such as the Jubilee, and readers may have heard bells ringing all over the city at various times during the first week of June. Great Tom, at Christ Church, was swing-chimed (rather than struck with mechanical hammers), something which only happens once every few years. Six of St Giles' bells were sounded for half an hour at noon on Friday 3rd June, and the ringing included another rarely-heard special effect: the bells were rung so that they all struck at the same time. This produces a sound rather like cannons being fired, and is actually known as 'firing'. We rang seven bursts of firing, each time about ten strokes, representing the 70 years since our present Queen came to the throne. We also managed to have all eight bells ringing before morning service on Sunday 5th June.

John Pusey

ST GILES' GARDENING GROUP

Saturday 18th June, 10:30-12 noon *(includes coffee and cake time!)*

NEWCOMERS are warmly welcome for help with clipping, clearance or coffee making! The meetings are always on the third Saturday of the month. For further details, contact Helen Dodd - 01865 512607.

ST GILES' PROMISES AUCTION

THE Promises Auction, held in May to raise funds for Project 900, was a very enjoyable event. It was an opportunity to come together, after the postponement due to Covid, and take part in a challenging and informative quiz, indulge in excellent food and wine, and part with money to buy some interesting promises that catered for all tastes. Bids were taken on over 25 promises and items including holidays in France, a ride in a Ferrari and meals out, not to mention home-made marmalade, cake and bespoke knitting. As a result we were able to raise £3,143 - a fantastic result. Thanks go to all those who contributed promises and helped on the evening.

Mary Whitlock

THE NEW LIBRARY AT PHIL & JIM SCHOOL

JUST OVER three years ago, Phil & Jim school unveiled their brand new, custom designed library. The library was paid for in part by a generous grant from the Oliver Heaton Trust after a request was made via the St Margaret's PCC. The other half was donated by the Phil and Jim Parent and Teacher Association (PTA).

Before lockdowns, the space was proving to be a much-loved space for children to go both at lesson time and in break times to immerse themselves in stories and information. This gave them the opportunity for both guided and individual exploration of factual and fantasy worlds on offer.

Then Covid hit, bringing lockdowns and then class bubbles. The school found successful ways of keeping the children safe and in school but unfortunately this meant that for a time the children were unable to visit the library as often. The situation was helped in part by an online library, again provided by the PTA.

In the past few years, we've all had to find different ways of working and Ms Vanessa Velez, the part-time school librarian, has risen to the challenge brilliantly. Since restrictions have lessened, the children are getting used to more time in this brilliant space and, as with so many things, the teachers and Ms Velez have had to come up with new ways of recapturing some of the enthusiasm that had been built up around reading.

At the moment, Ms Velez is working on "Reading Nooks" in the shared areas between year groups. She hopes that by bringing the

books to the children, and by making them more accessible, they will be able to excite the most reluctant of readers and nurture the most eager imaginations. She writes:

The Library at Phil & Jim is a magical place in our school. Children flock there during morning break and the lunch hour keeping is buzzing with curious energy. They appreciate a quiet space when they do not want the activity and noise of outdoor play.

Here is a photo of the early days; the shelves are now teeming with wondrous books. We treasure all the book donations from school families and the wider community. The children are always excited to see new titles on the shelves. I am grateful for all the continued support in getting the library to be what it is - truly a central hub, and the heart and soul of our school.



We're so proud to be able to support our parish school of Phil & Jim in so many ways. We look forward to showcasing more aspects of this much-appreciated part of our community. Please continue to pray for Ms Awuye, the teaching staff, the governors and all those families connected to the school.

Eva Walters, Children's Worker

Margaret Pinsent got in touch after last month's Blue Plaque article, and has sent in the following interesting additional information:

LATER, AT 15 BANBURY ROAD

WITHIN 10 years of Andrea Angel's heroic death, another Oxford University chemistry don had moved into 15 Banbury Road – my father, Edmund John Bowen, with his wife Edith. In June 1927, I was born there, and lived there for six years before we moved to my present

address in Park Town. This house also has a Blue Plaque [to Sarah Angelina Acland - "*The First Lady of Colour Photography*"] but, like Angel's, it does not relate to my family.

There was a row of shops, including Cousins Thomas chemists, opposite 15 Banbury Road. Our neighbours were the Chestermans and the Folignos. A jessamine hedge ran along the path to the front door. The drawing room was at the front, and there was a tiny kitchen between the dining room and the back garden. I never entered the cellar, which was probably a coal store, and is now part of a brilliantly-lit computer centre stretching under the entire block.

On the first floor, a landing connected three bedrooms and a bathroom. More stairs led to the two servants' bedrooms, where we children were not allowed. The servants were sisters from Worcestershire, probably in their teens, Rosie the cook, and Mary the maid, who had only to look at us children for us to follow obediently up to bed after playing up to our parents. When we moved to Park Town, they came with us, and we had servants until World War Two. Much of the furniture in the Park Town house was originally in 15 Banbury Road, which speaks for its durability.

Margaret Pinsent

100 Years Ago – St Giles' Magazine, June 1922

From the Vicar (Rev Charles C Inge): (1) News of S. Giles', Estevan, our daughter Church – A letter has come from Archdeacon Burgett, who is temporarily in charge of Estevan, and who stayed at the Vicarage when he was in England two years ago. "We had excellent services at Easter - an increase of exactly 40 Communicants over Easter 1921. A beautiful new white Altar Frontal was used for the first time on Easter Day. A very beautiful Antependium arrived on Easter Eve from the Qu'Appelle Association, and was used on the pulpit. The Young Ladies' Guild provided new matting for the centre aisle. At 11 o'clock there was choral Eucharist sung to Merbecke's setting, and 45 communicants. We had a choir of 30. A solemn *Te Deum* was sung in place of an anthem in the Evening Service. We have the little pews and some chairs from the old Church, but new pews are needed. An Altar rail is also needed, and a Litany Desk."

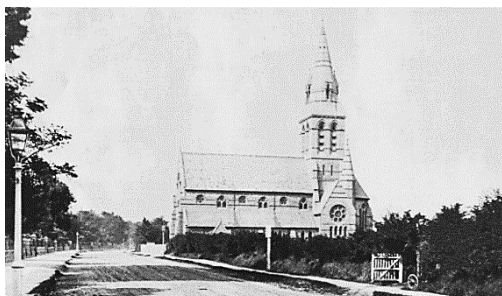


St Giles' in 2013, after renovations

(2) **S. Giles' Boys' Fellowship Club:** Mr Cooper, Chairman of the Football Committee, said the Club had in its first year appeared in the League semi-final, and he was proud to feel that they had won a name for clean play and good sportsmanship. It was announced that Mr Lynam had granted the Club the use of a ground for cricket and swimming. A vote of thanks was passed to Mr Rhodes for allowing the use of his Riding School as a gymnasium during the winter months.

80 Years Ago – St Giles' Magazine, June 1942

From the Acting Vicar (Rev T P Backhouse): We send our best wishes to our daughter Church, St Philip & St James', on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the consecration of the Church. It was the Churchwardens of



St Philip and St James' Church in 1870

St Giles who, in 1854, called the attention of the President and Fellows of St John's College to the lack of Church accommodation. The district was growing but St Giles' had seats only for 620, and almost all the pews were allotted to the larger houses. The promoters of the scheme for the

new Church were leading members of St Giles'; and they carried it through after many delays. There was difficulty in raising the money, difficulty in determining the site, and difficulty in deciding whether the new Church was to be a Parish Church or a Chapel of Ease to St Giles'. At one time there was a dispute between rival plans: Frederick Morrell had obtained designs from G E Street; and Revd G R Bullock, the Vicar, had approached another Architect. But at last, in 1860, the foundation stone of the new Church was laid. The consecration took place in 1862, and the new Parish was formed in 1863. St Philip & St James' has always had a vigorous life, and we wish our daughter Church all that is good in the years to come.

40 Years Ago – St Giles' Magazine, June 1982

From the Vicar (Rev John Gawne-Cain): I have just been to the inaugural service of the Ecumenical parish of Wolvercote with Summertown and in our own neighbourhood we have on 8th June a meeting with the adjoining parishes of St Andrew's, St Margaret's and St Barnabas. Growth and action everywhere, almost like a battle or at least a sailing race, with all the attendant confusion and beating about

Congratulations Corner



Each month, we'll be sharing with you some of the special achievements of those children and young people connected to our benefice. If you would like to share an achievement in the magazine, please contact eva@stmargaretsoxford.org



Annabelle Ronald was made St John Ambulance Regional Cadet of the Year for London and the South in Feb 2022.

As such, she will be attending events throughout the year.

Last month, she attended a dinner at Windsor Castle to celebrate the work of the organisation. The event was hosted by The Princess Royal, The Duke of Gloucester & The Countess of Wessex pictured with Annabelle (fourth person from the right).

Congratulations, Annabelle & we look forward to hearing more about your year.



Congratulations to Amber Bennett (middle of back row on photo).

On the 8th May, Amber's team, Summertown Stars U15, played Witney Vikings in the County Cup Finals. Final score was Summertown Stars 5 Witney Vikings 1 to win the County Cup!

One commentator described Amber's defending as "brilliant"!

Well done to Amber, all her team mates and the wider Summertown Stars Football Club.

We look forward to following the next season!

A huge well done and congratulations to those young people across our benefice who are working so hard at the moment through GCSE and A level examinations and assessments. Many of you will nearly be at the end, a few of you will have a way to go yet but all of you are doing so well.

We are all so proud of you all. Well done and have a great summer!