

✚ ST GILES' St Margaret's



**Ordination of Revd Siân Grønlie, our Benefice Deacon,
at Christ Church Cathedral, 1st July 2023**
(L-R: Siân Grønlie, Daniel Walters, Claire Browes, Bishop of Oxford, Anne Holmes)

PARISH NEWS

Autumn 2023

Free

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IVY AND HEDGEHOGS

OUR very grateful thanks go to a local resident, Paul Westoby, who volunteered to cut back the very heavy ivy growth on the

south grave-yard wall, (Woodstock Road side). This was vital to keep the wall intact, and to reduce growth over the pavement



area. It has been a huge job, long overdue. And in the course of his work, he has rescued a family of four baby hedgehogs, which were curled up in leaves under the ivy on the pavement side.

Well done Paul!

Helen Dodd, July 2023

REVD CLAIRE BROWES

CLAIRE was licensed as Associate Priest to our benefice on 31st August 2023 by Ven Jonathan Chaffey, Archdeacon of Oxford, in St Margaret's Church. She was previously Curate at Cowley St John. In the picture, Claire is being given some tuition in handbell ringing during St Giles' Fair.



NEW BENEFICE MANAGER



Billy Morton has now taken on the role of Benefice Manager. He previously worked in a secondary school, where he carried out a number of administrative and support roles. Billy succeeds Meg Peacock (Benefice Manager) and Anne Dutton (Benefice Secretary). To contact Billy, please email manager@stgilesstmargarets.org

PARISH MEETINGS

THERE will be an Extraordinary Parochial Church Meeting, open to all members on the **St Giles'** electoral roll, on **10th September** after the 10:30am service. This is to receive the finalised accounts and to elect new PCC members. There will be a meeting of **St Margaret's PCC** on **13th September** at 7:30pm in the Baptistry. **St Giles' PCC** will meet on **20th September** at 7:30pm, in the Parish Rooms. Please contact Daniel (vicar@StGilesStMargarets.org) if there is anything you would like the PCCs to discuss or approve.

ST GILES' CHOIR TOUR TO ITALY, 2023 (1)



TRENTO is a picturesque city in Northern Italy, which was most famous for hosting the Council of Trent - until it hosted the St Giles' Choir tour in July 2023! The weather in Trento was both a literal and figurative breath of fresh air in comparison to the 2022 tour in sweltering Bergamo, and the choir was certainly grateful for this fact once they had donned their cassocks, and in the case of the trebles, ruffs.

The singing itself was a resounding success, thanks in part to the wonderful acoustics in the many splendid venues the choir visited. The highlight for many was the concert in S. Maria Maggiore in Trento; the choir was in fine voice and the audience continued to swell as the evening went on. A visit to Pietralba, a pilgrimage site high in the mountains, was impressive both for the spectacular scenery and the logistical flair on display. The choir sang Mass, accommodated under the dome in the small, but very beautiful choir loft, at the west end of the chapel.

After the final dinner, the whole choir community expressed their grateful thanks to the many people who work so hard every year to make the tours a success. Once again, I would like to thank Dr Prozzillo for so expertly crafting such a wonderful experience for us all.

Freddy Chelsom

ST GILES' CHOIR TOUR TO ITALY, 2023 (2)

OVER the last ten years, the combined choirs of St Giles' have seen it all and done it all: we have celebrated Mass in St Peter's Basilica in the heart of the Vatican and in the medieval splendour of the Duomo di Orvieto; we have performed concerts along the northern seaboard of Sicily and on the azure coast of Italy's heel; we have eaten polenta in Bergamo and ragù in Pistoia; we have visited the Colosseum in Rome, a lakeside villa in Sirmione, a theatre in Volterra; we have enjoyed more swimming pools, diving boards and waterslides than you could shake a six-foot foam pool noodle at.

For 2023, St Giles' boys, girls, teens, adults, friends, family and supporters ventured further north than we have ever travelled before, to the Alpine region of Trentino-Alto Adige. The summer heatwave that greeted us at Verona airport was happily left behind, and we felt increasingly grateful for every cloud we spotted from the coach window as we headed into the Alps.

Our base for the tour was Trento, a magnificent palimpsest of a city where the architectural styles of many centuries and several different cultures are woven together. Our day of culture took us underground to enjoy the subterranean Roman city of Tridentum, and then uphill to explore the Castelvechio, the history of which stretched from its construction in the 13th century to its role in the Great War as the site of the gruesome execution of the local patriot and war hero, Cesare Battisti (whose name is honoured by streets and piazzas up and down the Italian peninsula).

The musical component of our tour comprised two concerts and two masses in four separate venues. Our Friday concert was held in the 16th century San Giorgio in Braida church, built on a bend in the river Adige in Verona, with the second taking place the day after in the historic centre of Trento, in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. We celebrated Mass twice on the Sunday, first we sang in Trento's Cathedral, the Duomo di San Vigilio, after which we boarded the coaches and travelled up into the mountains to the convent in Pietralba, a popular site of pilgrimage (though one whose chapel struggled to contain all 95 of us!). The hills were truly alive with the sound of music.

As a veteran of these tours, what I enjoyed most about this iteration was seeing the success of the model that St Giles' has developed for its choirs over the last decade. The original choir of boys and men which we took on our first tour remains, but we have added our parallel Girls' Choir and recruited adult female singers.

Most significant, however, has been the creation of our *Schola Cantorum* – a choir for teenage singers which can serve as the next step for the choristers who joined us as children. This year, our teenage choir played its biggest role yet in our music making. As well as providing us with their vocal skills in solos, they also strengthened the sound of the ensemble and provided the younger singers with an idea of what they can achieve at St Giles'. They were the life and soul of the social aspect of the tour, and although many of them will be heading to university next year, we hope to see them again on future tours.

Trento 2023 concluded with a fantastic group meal, overflowing with all the joy and community that one has come to associate with these tours. Professor Chelsom, whose son Freddy has been on every St Giles' choir tour and will soon take up a Choral Scholarship at Merton College, formally thanked those in the church who have encouraged and supported the development of the choirs, reminding us that the success of St Giles' is precious and not to be taken for granted, and that continuing its development will require engagement and investment from all in the church community.

Andrew Sillett



ORGAN RECITAL IN ITALY

NICHOLAS Prozzillo gave a recital on the Vegezzi-Bossi organ in Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, on Sunday 27th August. The programme included works by J S Bach, Frescobaldi, Couperin and Widor.

Please see the back page for a review (in Italian) of the concert.

After the summer break, choral services at St Giles' restarted in September.

JAZZ AT ST GILES' – A REVIEW OF AUTUMN 2022

OUR VERY SUCCESSFUL Autumn 2022 *Jazz at St Giles'* (JASG) series (our 10th) raised £4,200 for St Giles' PCC funds which will be applied appropriately to our fund raising efforts.

Our loyal jazz-enthused patrons occupied 444 seats over the course of the five concerts from September to December. That brought in a net profit of around £4,200 after taking fees and costs into account. The splendid total also benefited from generous sponsorship organised for us by the ever-resourceful Jane Finnerty, who made sure that the licensed bar was well stocked and that the 'Green Room' was fully supplied with nourishing nibbles on the night for the artists.



We heard a variety of musical styles. The Dominic Alldis Piano Trio played in September; virtuoso guitar duo playing from our old friends Pete Oxley and Nick Meier followed in October; along with London-based vocalist and educator. Brigitte Beraha, making her Oxford début with us later that month. It was delightful to discover one of her talented jazz singing students from the Guildhall School of Music, 'Phoebe Blue', in the audience, bringing her friends along to enjoy her teacher's concert. We met Phoebe again as an outstanding jazz singer in her own right with the Oxford University Jazz Orchestra (OUJO) on 12th November. OUJO is always a superbly well-presented band, crystal clear and precisely articulated. Finishing the Autumn series, the Budapest Café Orchestra gave us a sell-out night and huge appreciation was shown by a very enthusiastic audience.

We welcomed a number of evening door, stewarding and bar helpers from the Oxford area, none of them church members, but all very enthusiastic and supportive about what we are doing here. Mention also has to be made of the cheerful assistance in scheduling and organising the events around our busy church life provided by Meg Peacock, our Benefice Manager, and by Joanne Russell in co-ordinating activities for us, especially at the Budapest

Café concert in December where the MC duty was ably performed by our own Jonathan Mitchell.

JASG has brought the church much recognition as a well-organised jazz venue in Oxford, and as ever, we celebrate and continue to give thanks for the late, much missed, Jean Darke's pioneering and guiding hand in making JASG a sought-after feature of the Oxford Jazz scene. Her own grand piano, bought by the church from her estate, is used at nearly every performance and draws praise from our musicians. It helps in a small way to perpetuate our cherished memories of her, and her late husband Geoff's, love of jazz.

A report on our Spring 2023 (series 11) sessions will follow in the next edition of the Benefice Magazine.

We are looking forward to another Autumn of fine jazz, with a further five concerts. We have David Gordon on **16th September**, Philip Clouts Quartet on **7th October**, Donut Kings on **28th October**, Ewan Bleach – The Saxophone on **11th November**; and Brickwork Lizards on **2nd December**. For full details of all the concerts, please see the website: www.jazzatstgiles.com

David Clover, On behalf of the JASG Team, May 2023

OF LOVE AND ANGELS

A RECENT American student of Gerard Greenway (of St Giles' Church), published in April 2023 a first collection of poetry. *Of Love and Angels: Poems for my Fiancée* by Christian Barkman features a foreword from Gerard, who also provided some editorial work.

For more information, please visit the publishers' website: <https://wipfandstock.com/9781666768978/of-love-and-angels/>

"MORE TEA, VICAR?"

THE following letter was published in a recent edition of *The Times*:



Sir, I reckon Catholic priests do better than vicars (leading article, Aug 21). The one who visits us is given an open sandwich with smoked salmon and caviar and a cappuccino laced with Southern Comfort. He's usually happy to accept more.
Elizabeth Longrigg
Oxford

Alexander Scriabin's Ragtime Band

**Tickets
£10-£20**

**David
Gordon
Trio**



**16 September 2023
St Giles Church Oxford**

www.jazzatstgiles.com



CARING FOR CREATION

OUR CHURCHYARD brings the spectacle of countryside in all its glory; what a place for people to rest and feel refreshed. May was “No Mow Month”, and the City Parks Department, in all its wisdom, furrowed little paths through the voluminous display of cow parsley (Queen of the May!) for pedestrians to wander through and not disturb other habitats within the undergrowth. So the rather unkempt appearance of the graveyard had a good reason for being so!



Four bird boxes and three insect houses, all kindly donated, have gone up in the southern graveyard; activity in these will likely take a year or so to establish. A large fallen log at the end of the southern path to the War Memorial is rapidly developing its own ecosystem.



The gardens to the right side at the front of the church have given us beautiful displays of bulbs, from crocus to tulips and daffodils. Daffs have also been planted in the rose garden and crocus in the grass on that side too – we patiently wait for a good



display next year.

Of course, so much growth means more gardening, and we are always in need of more volunteers. We meet on the third Saturday morning of each month. Do join us, if you can, whatever your level of gardening expertise! Caring for Creation includes eco gardening. Studies show it is good for your mental health too, so why not get your hands in some soil and have a go!

Helen Dodd, May 2023

FROM ST GILES' PARISH REGISTERS

WEDDING

15th April

John Day and Jennifer Jones

FUNERAL

28th March

Herman Bell



The poster features a vibrant, abstract background with warm tones of orange, red, and yellow, overlaid with silhouettes of jazz instruments like a saxophone and a double bass. In the center, a black and white photograph of the Philip Clouts Quartet, consisting of four men, is displayed. The text 'Great Musicians of World Jazz' is written in a large, bold, black font on the left. The website 'www.jazzatstgiles.com' is written vertically on the right. At the bottom, the band's name 'Philip Clouts Quartet' is prominently displayed in a bold, black font, followed by the ticket price 'Tickets £10-£20'. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner, and the date and venue '7 October 2023 St Giles Church Oxford' are printed in the bottom right. A small logo for 'Jazz at St. Giles' is in the bottom left corner.

Great Musicians of World Jazz

www.jazzatstgiles.com

Philip Clouts Quartet

Tickets £10-£20

7 October 2023
St Giles Church Oxford

Jazz at St. Giles

RECENT BELLRINGING PERFORMANCES AT ST GILES'

FULL PEALS:

None in 2020 or 2021 (restrictions on ringing because of Covid).
Two full peals in 2022; one (so far) in 2023.

QUARTER-PEALS:

2020: 4 on tower bells, 6 on handbells (all but one of these were rung before Covid restrictions began in March 2020).

2021: 10 on tower bells.

2022: 13 on tower bells; two on handbells.

2023 (up to 10th Sept): 19 on tower bells; three on handbells.

Details of selected ringing occasions and performances:

2021:

Sun 4th April: On Easter morning (after a service recorded for streaming, without any congregation present), handbells were rung outside the church porch, on the first Sunday when meeting in the open air to ring handbells was permissible.

Fri 9th-Sat 17th April: Tenor bell tolled on four occasions, including the days of the death and of the funeral of HRH Prince Philip.

Mon 14th June: Tenor bell tolled on 4th anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire.

Sun 20th June: First tower bell quarter-peal (QP) rung since the Covid lockdowns, in the City of Oxford, and for all the band.

Sun 25th July: First QP for Ella Bentin; First QP of Plain Bob Doubles for Jamie Allport and Sara Jones.

Sun 1st Aug: QP celebrating the announcement of the selection of Rev Daniel Walters as the new Vicar.

Sat 2nd Oct: Tower bells rung before a talk and musical performance publicising fund-raising for *Project 900*.

Sun 7th Nov: QP to congratulate former Deputy Tower Captain Andrew Freer on the birth of a second child on 9th September.

Sun 14th Nov: QP rung half-muffled after the open-air Remembrance service.

2022:

Sat 5th Feb: Full peal to mark the Oxford University Society of Change Ringers' 150th anniversary, on their dinner day.

Fri 3rd June: To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Sat 15th June: Handbells rung at the beginning and after the interval during *Midsummer Music* concert.

Sun 19th June: QP to mark the 75th anniversary of the twinning of the cities of Oxford and Bonn.

Mon 25th July: To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Oxford Botanic Garden.

Sun 15th Aug: John Pusey's 800th QP on tower bells.

Sun 21st Aug: Full peal - Sara Jones's first peal.

Thur 1st Sept: St Giles' bells rung half-muffled before and after the funeral of Metropolitan Kallistos Ware in Oxford Oratory church.

Mon 5th and Tue 6th Sept: Two QPs rung on handbells, downstairs in the church while it was open to the public for St Giles' Fair.

Sun 18th Sept: QP rung fully muffled in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II, on the eve of her funeral.

Sat 1st Oct: QP to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Oxford University Society of Change Ringers.

Sat 15th Oct: Announcing the arrival of the High Sheriff to open the St Giles' Organ Marathon.

Sun 13th Nov: QP rung half-muffled after the open-air Remembrance service.

2023:

Fri 3rd Feb: QP on handbells rung in the ringing chamber; *and*

Sat 4th Feb: Full peal - both rung as part of the OUSCR's dinner day weekend. The peal was Sara Jones's first peal on an inside bell.

Sun 9th April: First QP for Geraint Jones, Deputy Tower Captain.

Sat 6th and Sun 7th May: One QP and two spells of general ringing to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III.

Sun 11th June: First QP of Plain Bob Doubles for Sara Jones as conductor.

Thur 15th June: Ringing to welcome InterFaith Walkers to St Giles' church *en route* from the synagogue to the East Oxford mosque.

Sun 2nd July: QP to celebrate the ordination on 1st July of Siân Grønlie, as a deacon. First QP for Marc Jones, aged 12.

Sun 30th July: QP rung as an 18th birthday compliment to Sara Jones.

Sun 6th Aug: First QP for Jane Bishop.

Sun 3rd Sept: QP of Superlative Surprise Major for the Patronal Festival and to welcome Revd Claire Browes to St Giles'.

Tue 5th Sept: QPs of Kent TB Major and Little Bob Royal on handbells downstairs in church while it was open for St Giles' Fair.

2023 RINGING WORLD NATIONAL YOUTH CONTEST

THE 12th annual Ringing World National Youth Contest took place on Saturday 8th July in York. Twenty-five teams from 23 squads took part in the two contests, with Method Ringing taking place at All Saints Huntington, and Call Changes at St Lawrence's, Hull Road. Teams elected to ring either six or eight bells in the contests. Sara Jones from St Giles' was the Conductor of the Oxford Diocesan Guild team, which was placed seventh equal among the teams which rang changes.



*Oxford Diocesan Guild Plain Bob Doubles
1 Lewis Knowles, 2 Dominic Ellis, 3 Daniel
Watson, 4 Simon Lee, 5 Sara Jones (C),
6 Isaac Davies*

THE UNIQUENESS OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

I HAVE recently fallen into correspondence with a niece, a graduate of another university and making her way as a successful entrepreneur. She had had no idea how old Oxford and Cambridge are, and how different they are from all other universities. I tentatively mentioned some of the ways in which that is true, and she turns out to want to know more.

Needless to say there is no end of colourful intricacies to delight her with. The election of a Professor for Poetry to a post which has had its famous holders since the early 18th century is a current example.

Encaenia is not far off, with a procession preceded by a Creweian centuries-old benefaction, now providing strawberries and champagne for those entitled to walk in it, once they are organised into the right order by the Proctors according to the rules of precedence. Honorands will be offered panegyrics in Latin including inventive solutions to the description of achievements unknown to the classical world. (Cambridge fortifies those in its Honorary Degrees procession only with port and seed cake.)



This rich historic complexity has been in my mind for another reason too. The intricacies have their Cambridge counterparts. 'Incorporation' dates from centuries when Oxford and Cambridge would not recognise each other's degrees. It still allows an Oxford graduate appointed to an appropriate post there to acquire the counterpart Cambridge degrees, and vice versa. That happened to me; so in due course my Oxford degrees became Cambridge degrees too, and I enjoy the graduate privileges of both Oxford and Cambridge, and some familiarity with both sets of oddities.

Cambridge is about to appoint a new Vice-Chancellor, Deborah Prentice. Where Oxford's new Vice-Chancellor has matchless lifelong familiarity with the University, Cambridge's Vice-Chancellor-to-be has spent her career entirely at Princeton, having graduated from American universities, so she arrives with no knowledge of UK higher education, and knowing nothing about Cambridge and its ways. Those may take her some time to master. She is to be admitted to her office in a low-key ceremony on 5th July. Only black gowns are to be worn, no tickets issued. It will take half an hour in the Senate House. She will be admitted to the MA degree 'as recommended by the Council'. That is historically proper, though no longer required. It respects the ancient origins of both universities which began as 'corporations' of their Masters of Arts.



It is a reminder that the heirs of those Masters of Arts still run things in both universities: Congregation in Oxford, the Regent House in Cambridge. So as she finds her way into the fine detail of Cambridge as a 'collegiate University', she will discover that the advertisement for her post was misleading when it spoke of 'leadership'. The uniqueness of Oxford and Cambridge lies above all in their preservation of that medieval democracy in their governance. Attempts at leading the University never end well.

I was prompted to look up the governance of Princeton. There it seems an 'authorized institution official' may serve as the 'sponsor and/or steward' of a 'policy' which will be 'owned' and 'administered' by an 'office, unit or department'. The new Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge will have to acquaint herself with Statutes and subordinate legislation not only for the University but also for the colleges, all sitting cosily close up under the law of the land. As

she sorts through the considerable pile of current controversies awaiting her on her desk she might be forgiven for sighing for a system involving less historical complexity, even in the making of its internal rules.

Underneath all this lies an important question. Maintaining tradition may be colourful and enjoyable but is it a strength or a weakness in the lives of Oxford and Cambridge? Self-congratulatory it may sometimes seem, but it has certainly not lowered either in global 'ratings'. And my niece certainly finds it good fun.

G R Evans, May 2023



BE SPACE

IN the week commencing 8th October, St Margaret's will be running **Be Space** prayer spaces for a full week at Phil & Jim School. We need volunteers (from St Margaret's or St Giles') to commit to a morning or a day in school. It sounds like a lot of fun and Eva will be leading it, so will make sure that we have nice treats along the way! For more information or to sign up, contact Eva – eva@stmargaretsoxford.org



PATHWAYS MAGAZINE

THE Summer issue of the Diocese of Oxford's magazine is now available. Pick up your free copy from St Giles' or St Margaret's, or download the electronic version from their website:

www.oxford.anglican.org/pathways



CARVE THEIR NAME

OPENING a 1948 Home Service broadcast, John Betjeman opined: 'I know no greater pleasure than church crawling. You never know what you are going to find.' And sometimes worthy names can be recognised on memorials within a church and also on carved headstones and plaques out in the churchyard.

Carving continues but now more usually in flat memorial tablets: at St Giles' either on the pathway running south through the churchyard (which are difficult to decipher, even if relatively new), or outside at the east end. The tablet for Betty Couldrey is a recent example, in Welsh slate.



Within St Giles' there is the Bosworth Monument above the choir vestry door (1635; Henry Bosworth having been a Mayor of Oxford in 1625). The substantial Townesend memorial in the churchyard commemorates a later Mayor and family of builders involved in many college and university buildings. Sir Kenneth Wheare - Rector of Lincoln College and Vice-Chancellor of the University - and his family are commemorated in tablets to the south of the church in front of the Rose Garden.

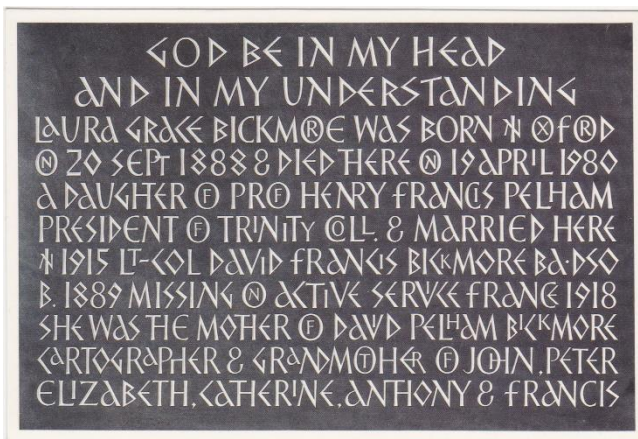
There are many members of the congregations over the centuries carefully documented in the Illustrated Guide prepared by Catherine Barrington-Ward. But just to the right of the Wheare tablets is another in Welsh slate (*see illustration overleaf*).

What an exuberance of scripts, mixing upper and lower case, italic, serif and sans serif, Greek 'E' and uncial 'a', 13th century 'O' and runic 'N'. Its creator? David Kindersley (1915-1995), who carved this memorial when 75 years old, was a stonecutter and typeface designer who trained under Eric Gill and established his own studio outside Cambridge in 1946. Hundreds of works in various materials and at different scales are in the colleges and around Cambridge (from bookplates for private individuals to the street sign alphabet visible to all). Here in Oxford there are two

dozen examples around the county, and a similar number within the city: the plaque to the left of the main Blackfriars entrance being closest to St Giles'.

The workshop which Kindersley founded continues, and

there are two 21st century commissions at the east end of St Giles' – Green slate in memory of Simon Price; and Elterwater Light Green slate engraved with the lines of a hill for Peri Sandor:



How many more churchyard memorials may be carved by hands only known to stonecutter enthusiasts? Even in St Giles' there are some, but the Parish News Editor's deadline approaches so they must await any further edition.

[The Kindersley name may be familiar from the publishers Dorling Kindersley who transformed non-fiction illustrated publishing from the mid-1970's – David's son, Peter, was the co-founder. "Cutting it in Oxford" and companion volumes on various topics including work in Cambridge and elsewhere – e.g. the British Library Gates – are available from the Cardozo Kindersley Workshop, Cambridge, CB4 3DZ and via the kindersleyworkshop website.]

Jim Smith, June 2023

As we mark the first anniversary of the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II and the accession of King Charles III on 8th September 2022, we remember and look forward.

From Faith and Worship, Michaelmas 2022 (Prayer Book Society):

THE NEWS of the death of Queen Elizabeth was received just as the Prayer Book Society conference began. It was extraordinary to think that the opening Evensong was the final time any of us would sing 'O Lord, save the Queen'. Those present swiftly annotated their Prayer Books to make sure they now prayed for a King and, by the end of our time together, we had prayed for the new King at Morning Prayer, the Litany, Evening Prayer and Holy Communion. It gave a liturgical continuity to the belief that the throne is never vacant. *[Reprinted with permission.]*

BELLRINGING AT THE TIME OF THE CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

WE were very pleased by the number of ringers present to ring around the time of the Coronation, especially recent recruits, some of whom had joined us specifically in response to the *Ring for the King* campaign. We hope that most of them will also continue to ring in the future.



John Pusey

1953 CORONATION MEMORIES (1)

MY FATHER, Ron Peacock, came from Strood, in Kent, and sang in the choir of Rochester Cathedral before moving to Oxford, where he spent the next 33-odd years as a lay clerk at Christ Church, until his retirement in 1965. In 1953 he, along with many men from cathedrals around the country, was selected to sing at the Coronation of Her (late) Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

I don't remember having a conversation about it with him as a young child because I suspect it didn't rank as "interesting"; but as time goes on and anniversaries have been marked, I would have loved to know more about the whole experience. I do remember that he said the choir was up in the rafters, far from public view, and they saw nothing; but I doubt it deterred anyone from participating in such a once-in-a-lifetime event: he may have seen nothing, but he was there!



SINGERS

THE SONG SCHOOL,
THE CHORISTERS,
WESTMINSTER ABBEY, S.W.1
March, 1953

CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
JUNE 2ND, 1953

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to invite you to sing in the Choir at the Coronation Service.

You will, I am sure, take this invitation as an honour, carrying with it the obligation to do everything in your power to make the Choir worthy of so great an occasion. This will necessarily involve much hard work for all concerned.

It must therefore be understood that if you accept this invitation, it is essential that you attend and remain throughout all the rehearsals specified below. Anyone not fulfilling these obligations will automatically forfeit his place in the Choir. No deposits are allowed.

You will be allowed to claim up to **£5.5.0** for expenses.

The rehearsals are as follows:-

IN ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER			
Tuesday,	May 12 at 3.30 p.m.	Boys only	
Wednesday,	" 13 - 3.30 "	" "	" "
Friday,	" 15 - 5.10 "	" "	" "
Tuesday,	" 18 - 3.10 "	" "	" "
Monday,	" 19 - 3.30 "	Full Choir, 2 hrs. approx.	
Wednesday,	" 21 - 3.30 "	" "	" "
Friday,	" 23 - 3.30 "	" "	" "

IN THE ABBEY

Tuesday, May 26 at 3 p.m. Full Choir and Orchestra, 3 hrs. approx.

The Final Rehearsals are sponsored by the Earl Marshal and will be:-

Possibly Wednesday, May 27, in the morning, is the Abbey, and Friday, May 29, in the morning, in the Abbey.

Every singer must provide himself with a tunic and surplice, without which he cannot be admitted on June 2nd.

Kindly fill in and return to me the attached form before March.

Mr. Gerald H. Knight has kindly consented to help me in the organisation of the Choir.

The service is to be broadcast, televised, recorded and filmed. Your acceptance of my invitation by signing the attached form involves also your acceptance of this B.B.C., the Gramophone Company, etc. I have covered a temporary committee to consider any problem that may arise, which will make its recommendations in due course.

Yours very truly,

Director of Music for the Coronation Service.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY CORONATION CHORUS

G/O Incorporated Society of Musicians,
48 Gloucester Place, London W.1
17th July 1953

Dear Sir,

At the first full rehearsal of the above Choir, it was reported that the Choir Committee had allocated one-third of the sums to be received from the I.S.M. and the News-film Companies to be for benefit of professional lay-clerks; this decision was ratified by the Full Choir, and a special Sub-Committee of Lay-Clerks was appointed to make specific recommendations. The sub-Committee has recommended that the lay-clerks included in the Choir, and this advice has been accepted by the Choir Committee. On their instructions I enclose cheque in your favour for £5,16.6d, and shall be obliged if you will return the enclosed receipt.

For your interest, the full distribution so far made is as follows:-

I.S.M. Benevolent Fund:	2200. 0. 0
Musicians' Benevolent Fund:	100. 0. 0
Organists' Benevolent Fund:	100. 0. 0
Organists' Benevolent League:	100. 0. 0
Royal Society of Musicians' Samaritan Fund:	
Evilian Musicians' Pension Society	30. 0. 0
Redi Home:	30. 0. 0
27 professional Lay-clerks at £5.16.6d each:	332. 0. 6
Carried Forward for postage, cheques, stamps and future distribution:	7.19. 6
Aggregate sums received from I.S.M. and News-film companies:	£1000. 0. 0

Future receipts, from the Gramophone Co. Ltd. or any other source, will be divided equally between the I.S.M. Benevolent Fund, the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, the Organists' Benevolent Fund, the Organists' Benevolent League, and the Choir Benevolent Fund.

Yours sincerely,
H. A. C. C. Committee
Hon. Secretary to the H.A.C.C. Committee

I have a rather battered copy of the Order of Service he used on the day, together with a letter from the *Director of Music for the Coronation Service* which outlines the rehearsal schedule in St Margaret's Westminster and details of the expenses which could be claimed – a princely Five Guineas (just over £113 in today's money)! There is also a letter agreeing to pay all 57 professional lay clerks £5.16.6d each, as agreed by the Westminster Abbey Coronation Choir Committee, together with details of other payments from the BBC and news film companies.

My parents hadn't met in 1953 so even though my mother, like many others at the time, crowded round a tiny black and white television, she only knew of my father's part in the Coronation when they met and married, some three years later.

I'm sure that the families of all those who participated in the Coronation of King Charles III will talk about it and treasure the memories for a long time to come.

Meg Peacock

1953 CORONATION MEMORIES (2)

DURING 1952, rooflines along the streets had begun to change very slowly as a few chimney stacks had "H" shaped aerials fixed as high up as possible to catch TV signals. My grandparents invested (as did many others) in order that the family could gather round for the Coronation in the living room.

The screens were small, the picture grainy; and the men in the family smoked: cigarettes, a pipe or two and, given the occasion, perhaps a cigar. That ambience I can recall but really not much else: certainly not TV images with any certainty. The crowning, music, procession through the rain and the exuberance of Queen Salote of Tonga all that came later: from Pathé news (the voice of Bob Danvers Walker) and TV documentary programmes. Implanted memories all. And I cannot remember the food, either!



Jim Smith

CORONATION MEMORIES (3): LOCKED IN THE LIBRARY!

I WAS 13 years old at the time of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (Tuesday, 2nd June 1953). I was away at boarding school, and the school's normal policy was only to allow boys out for the occasional day during term, to visit their homes or to meet relatives, but never to stay away overnight. In my case, home was too far away, but I used to meet my parents in Oxford - which was about half-way between home and school - at my grandmother's house at the northern end of Parks Road. However, at the time of the Coronation, an exception was made.

My first priority when I got home to Stourbridge was to make sure that I had something to read, so I made a visit to the local Public Library, just before it closed. I was all alone in one of the reading rooms, reading one of the newspapers or magazines which I didn't normally see at home, and one of the library staff came into the room. She looked at me, but without saying anything; I looked at her, also saying nothing. She went out of the room again, and I went on reading.

When I finished what I had been reading, I slowly realised that there was no-one else in the library, and that the staff had locked up and gone home - for what was going to be a longer than usual weekend. Luckily, I discovered one of the staff rooms was unlocked, and I found a telephone there, and rang my father, who was fortunately at home. What to do next? There was obviously plenty of reading material available, so I just went on reading, quite enjoyably. Meanwhile, my father must have been making a series of rather desperate phone calls, trying to find his way through the local government network to reach someone who would have keys to the Library, and could come and let me out.

After an hour or more, a rather flustered man showed up, bringing keys, and trying not to express his obvious annoyance at having been called away from his planned weekend - I think it was the Deputy Chief Librarian - and I did my best to explain my view of what had happened. He insisted on taking me round to check several parts of the library to make sure that I had not interfered with anything sensitive or valuable while I had been alone in the building, and then ushered me out.

I suppose I listened to the Coronation service on the radio, but there was no television available to me, either at home or at school. However, a film of the Coronation ceremony and processions came round to local cinemas a week or so after I got back to school, and we were allowed to go into the town centre to see it.

I only started ringing bells a year after all this happened, so the Coronation of King Charles III was the first one to take place during my ringing career*.

My interest in reading and in libraries was perhaps part of what eventually led to me spending the second half of my working career back in Oxford, in the Bodleian, and I was able to tell this story again in a speech which I made at the party which was given for me when I left.



John Pusey, May 2023

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

WE WILL be collecting donations of long-life food and toiletries/clothing for *The Gatehouse*, the charity which supports the homeless and vulnerable in Oxford. (You can bring them when you come to church, or drop them off at St Giles' between 12-2, Monday-Friday.)



Tinned tuna

Mayonnaise/Salad cream

Tomato ketchup

Baked beans/Cup A Soup

Cake/Individual cartons of juice

Instant coffee/Hot chocolate

Bottles of squash

Sugar

Baby wipes

Shampoo/Conditioner

Deodorant/Toothpaste

Pocket tissues

Disposable razors

Body wash/Soap

New men's and women's socks

New men's and women's underwear

* See *Ring for the King*, p 20; *Recent Bellringing performances*, pp 13-15

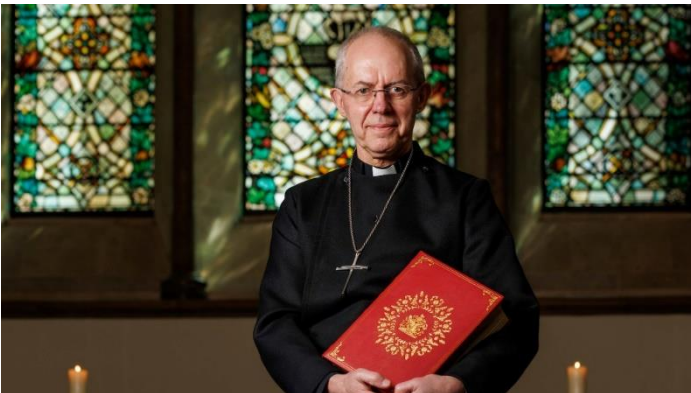
THE CORONATION BIBLE

OXFORD University Press (OUP) was commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury to produce the Coronation Bible used by His Majesty King Charles III at Westminster Abbey on 6th May 2023. The Coronation Bible played a significant role in the ceremony, with the King placing his hand upon it while reciting the Coronation Oath. OUP also had the honour of producing a Coronation Bible for Queen Elizabeth II, in 1953.

The Bible produced for His Majesty's Coronation features typesetting based on the Quatercentenary Edition of the King James Authorized Version, published by OUP to mark the 400th anniversary in 2011. The Quatercentenary Edition was chosen to celebrate the significance of the translation, as well as to highlight its pivotal role in the histories both of the English language and of the United Kingdom.

Hand-bound in leather and decorated in gold leaf by renowned bookbinding company, Shepherds, Sangorski & Sutcliffe, the intricate design of the binding draws inspiration from both historic Coronation Bibles and His Majesty's love of the natural world.

The Coronation Bible used in the service will be retained by the Archbishop of Canterbury and placed in Lambeth Palace's archive. OUP will then produce three identical copies: the King's personal copy, which will be given to him as a gift, and a further two to be placed in the archives of Westminster Abbey and Oxford University Press's head office in Oxford.



VICARS OF ST GILES'

CANON REGINALD FRASER DIGGLE CBE, MA, MC (1889-1975) succeeded Canon Inge as Vicar of St Giles' on 8th October 1937. He was the son of Rt Rev J W Diggle, Bishop of Carlisle from 1905 to 1920, and was educated at Marlborough College and Merton College. Ordained in 1913, he was Domestic Chaplain to his father for a year, and then Curate of St Martin's, Birmingham, for a similar period. He returned to be Chaplain to his father in 1915, and held an Army Chaplaincy for a short time. In 1921 he went as Curate to Great Yarmouth, and in 1925 became Rector of St Clement's, Worcester, where was for 12 years. When he came to St Giles' he wrote in the Parish Magazine that he hoped *"readers will be kindly disposed to my shortcomings, musical and otherwise; that they will take the desire for the deed if I do not visit them as soon as I would wish, owing to my being shorthanded, and finding the claims of Infirmary and Parish somewhat overwhelming; and that they will credit me with the intention of trying to carry on as far as my powers permit me, Canon Inge's good work during the past 24 years The thought I would like to be uppermost in our minds is not "changes", but "co-operation"..... In any case, my own rule of life is largely summed up by the three principles of consultation, consent, and co-operation"*.

On Remembrance Sunday 1940 he announced his appointment as chaplain in the RAF for the duration of the war and told the congregation that Canon Taylor and the Staff and Students of Wycliffe Hall would take over responsibility for the parish. *"After trying to play one's little part in the last War, there was the urge to do so again; to be a partaker and not a mere onlooker. There was further the necessity laid upon one, to share to some extent in what one's friends and fellow worshippers of the younger generation are experiencing or enduring. To preach the call to service or sacrifice avails little, unless one be prepared and ready to practise it oneself. I may now reveal that as long ago as May last I was on the very eve of being sent out direct to France on special work, this time under the Army, when the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force took place"*.

After some time in Northern Ireland he became RAF Assistant Chaplain-in-Chief, India. He wrote: *"In these days danger*

may lurk for the traveller by sea or air, infinitesimal and immaterial though it be compared with the risks which our air crews and others face with such calm courage. I would therefore ask for your remembrance in prayer, not so much that I may be kept safe (why should the one expect it more than the other? - that lies in the fortunes of war, or as we Christians say "in God's hands"), but that if danger or even death in war is one's destiny, one may be enabled to play the man and walk worthy of one's Christian profession." (Canon Diggle's letters from India, which regularly appeared in the Parish Magazine, make interesting reading).

After the war, Canon Diggle returned to St Giles' in 1946. He had to resign owing to ill health on 30th September 1960 and was succeeded as Vicar by Rev Stanley Birtwell. Members of the congregation donated £110.4s.1d for a farewell gift (a television set and a pair of binoculars) but he was not well enough for a formal presentation to be made. He died in January 1975 and a Memorial Service was held at St Giles' on 2nd March (there is a report in the April 1975 Parish Magazine.)

ST GILES' FAIR 2023 – FAIRGROUND MODELS DISPLAY

THE IDEA for the show was proposed at last year's fair, when we were approached by a modeller who asked if we would host an exhibition of fairground models to coincide with the Monday of St Giles' Fair. Some 15 participants brought their models, travelling from Scotland, Lincolnshire, Kent and the Midlands. The exhibition was

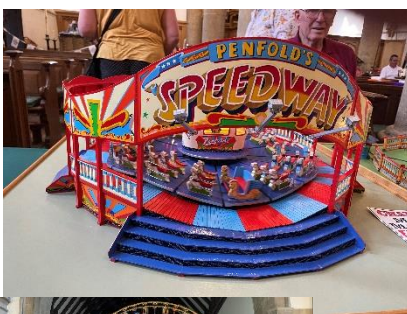


sponsored by J Noyce and Sons, the family who for many years brought the 'galloping horses' roundabout to St Giles' Fair.

The church was busy all day, with visitors both young and old who appreciated the lights and music. A team of volunteers kept

everyone supplied with tea, coffee and cake, and £486 was raised for church funds. The modellers gave their time free of charge, and we are very grateful to them.

Next year's event is already being planned, so put the date in your diary, **9th and 10th September 2024**, and visit St Giles' Church for a bigger and more extensive show, over both days of the fair.



FIRST COMMUNION CLASSES

CLASSES for admission to Holy Communion for children in Year 3 and above will start on **3rd Oct**, running for six weeks at The Vicarage, Church Walk. There will then be a service of Admission to Holy Communion on **Sunday 26th November** at 10.30am in both churches. *(Please contact Daniel for further information.)*

TEN GOOD REASONS TO APPRECIATE ST GILES' CHOIR

1. The music we sing is likely to be the first thing one attaches to: singing four- (or more) part music with the choir is an incredibly rewarding experience.
2. There is both variety in the music we sing – an extensive music library hides away in the vestry – and *where* we sing.
3. As beautiful as St Giles' Church is in its imperfections, wonky architecture and asymmetry (all unintended), the choir get many opportunities to sing elsewhere at annual concerts
4. the most exciting of which is the Italy trip – yearly departures to different corners of the country to eat ice cream, swim in pools and, of course, do our job: sing.
5. The Italy trip would not be so enjoyable if one were travelling with unlikeable companions. It's a good thing, then, that the community is full of so many caring and kind people: people to relax and laugh with as one prepares for the next concert.
6. With such a large community, I'm glad to say there is a choir for all groups: the little trebles will eventually be guided through the next stage of singing with care and attention once their voices break.
7. St Giles' also offers further music-making – training organ scholars, pianists and teaching music theory, all under the watchful eye of
8. Nicholas Prozzillo – one of the best teachers I have ever had. He will ensure you achieve the grade you want with a balance of strictness, warmth and humour, slipping in life lessons along the way (such as the importance of good organisation.)
9. St Giles' is a couple of miles off perfect – it is rare to see a service go without a hitch, and the current organ is falling apart,

giving us all a good laugh as it makes the strangest of noises on its way out.

10. But oh, how dull would a perfect choir be. You'll far prefer it this way – you'll see!

Max Rutterford

ST GILES' CHOIR TOUR TO ITALY 2023 (CONTINUED)



THE St Giles' tour to Trento was a hit, for both Italian locals and choir members alike. Our choir community seemed closer than ever before, with distinct groups among the choristers, increased by similarly-aged family members on tour. The younger ones among us formed strong bonds, while those in their teenage years assembled a substantial 'mob', to quote the Choir Director himself. At mealtimes, the affinity of these groups became particularly apparent, with tables being crowded far beyond their capacity - mad rushes for bread rolls became standard convention.

This year's choir tour was unusual in that the normally recurring theme of suffocating heat was far less prominent. Nevertheless, the much anticipated waterpark trip was (once again) a staple event of the week, surpassing many high expectations as

daredevil Nicholas Prozzillo took to the slides to ensure they were safe. Later that day, swimming gear was replaced by cassocks; the choir sang a successful and drama-free concert in Verona, featuring an array of excellent performances. A special mention goes to the legendary Nicholas Prozzillo/Zihan organ collaboration, the emotive duet sung by Freddy and Hattie (perhaps for the last time, but perhaps not!) and Shannon's beautiful Pergolesi solo. The trip back to Trento was not quite as drama-free as the concert, with the coaches getting caught in an incredible - and potentially dangerous - storm.

Having narrowly avoided death by lightning strike, the 'business coach' and the 'party coach', as they were so aptly nicknamed (although it shall remain unspoken in this article as to who was on each one) took to the roads once more, weaving their way up into the mountains to picturesque Pietralba. The fantastical *Sound of Music*-esque surroundings inspired bonus musical endeavours, including a charming rendition of *Edelweiss* on the mountainside, and multiple heartfelt ABBA songs, impressively harmonised. The scheduled music, sung at the mass, was also a great success.

By Monday, all our performances were concluded: the accompanying jubilation was felt by all, if not reflected in the uncharacteristically miserable weather. Many members of the choir visited an impressive waterfall, the sight of which was worth the minor inconvenience of getting a little wet. Some had the wisdom to invest in a €2 poncho, which - in addition to looking outlandishly stylish - served them well on the boat ride across Lake Garda.

The final night of this year's tour was celebrated with a group meal, followed by the traditional end-of-tour speeches. In between the tears and the forgettably-named alcohol gifted to our Choir-master, the birth of the 2023 organ pipe was announced - a memory to be stored next to that of Bergamo 2022. This tour also marked the end of some people's time at St Giles' - you will all be sincerely missed and *Schola* will be a shadow of its former self! I think I speak for us all when I express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who made Trento possible, and say that we are all anxious to know where St Giles' will venture when we travel to Italy in 2024!

Mia Middleton

A REVIEW OF NICHOLAS PROZZILLO'S ORGAN RECITAL

Le mani di Prozzillo esaltano il Vegezzi-Bossi

Concerto

Il maestro di cappella della St. Giles Church di Oxford ha chiuso la XXX Rassegna «L'organo in basilica»

Ha chiuso in bellezza la XXX Rassegna «L'organo della basilica». In Santa Maria Maggiore l'inglese Nicholas Prozzillo ha tenuto buon nelultimo appuntamento nel monumentale Vegezzi-Bossi della basilica. L'organista, maestro di cappella della St. Giles Church di Oxford si è proposto in un pro-

gramma ad ampio respiro europeo, passato dal nostro Frescobaldi a J.S. Bach, da Louis Couperin fino a Charles Marie Widor. Un repertorio che il protagonista ha saputo coniugare con freschezza e febbrile alacrità, adattando le differenze stilistiche e geografiche alle magnifiche potenzialità dello strumento della basilica. I due brani di Frescobaldi - la Toccata avanti la messa della domenica e la «Bergamasca» - si sono distinti per l'impaccio sonorous ma privo di enfasi retorica. Una scelta di mirata sobrietà che ha caratteriz-

zato anche la Chaconne di Couperin, dalla ponderata varietà di combinazioni. Analogo gioco di colori ha caratterizzato la Fuga in mi bemolle maggiore BWV 852 di Bach, segnata da un gradale e oculato crescendo di piani sonori e un ritmo incalzante e danzante, sottilmente febbrile.

La parte preponderante del concerto è stata riservata al magnifico sinfonismo tardo-romantico di Carl Marie Widor (1864 - 1937) con la Symphonie VI op.42/2. L'Allegro iniziale, forse la pagina più popolare dell'intera Sinfonia, si caratterizza-



Nicholas Prozzillo al Vegezzi-Bossi in basilica (URI COLLECTION)

va per il piglio sonorous e selenico. Prozzillo affondava la grandiosità della scrittura con vigore e pienezza, grazie anche a un'ottima tecnica manuale e discreta abilità alla pedaliera. Già solo in questo «Allegro» l'interprete metteva in risalto, con naturalezza, il potenziale e sinfonico dell'organo Vegezzi-Bossi, con una retorica possente ma anche molto elegante. Brillantezza e clima festoso venivano ribaditi dall'intermezzo Scherzo centrale e nella gioiosa cavalcata del «Finale».

Bernardino Zappa

OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

IT HAS always intrigued me that there is an image of Our Lady of Walsingham in St Giles', and I have wondered who gave it to the church, and when. (It is on the window ledge behind the side altar.)

I have been on several pilgrimages to the Anglican shrine at Walsingham, with the parishes of Swindon New Town; St Thomas the Martyr, Oxford; and this July with St Silas the Martyr, Kentish Town. I have always found it a spiritually uplifting experience, but it seemed particularly special to be there in July 2021, when they had just restarted resident pilgrimages at the shrine after the Covid restrictions had been lifted.

Following months of mask-wearing; social distancing; live-streamed congregation-less services; only the choir allowed to sing the hymns; and even being forbidden to answer "Amen" when we received Communion, it seemed absolutely wonderful to be free again! I will never forget how it felt to be in the packed shrine church, un-masked, with everyone singing "Solid joys and lasting treasure/None but Sion's children know" (Tune: *Abbot's Leigh*) so loudly that it felt (I imagine!) like being at a major sporting event or the Last Night of the Proms!

Anne Dutton

