

## NOTICES & FUTURE DATES

### MIDWEEK SERVICES

A said service of Holy Communion will begin again on **Tuesday mornings** every week at 10.00am from 10 September. Please do join us for this quiet, reflective service.

### HISTORIC CHURCHES "RIDE & STRIDE" DAY

**Saturday 14 September, 10.00am to 6.00pm**

The annual national sponsored event for cyclists and walkers organised by the Historic Churches' Trusts. More details at [www.camhct.uk](http://www.camhct.uk). Volunteers are required if we are to welcome cyclists and walkers to St Peter's.

### FESTIVAL SERVICE IN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL

**Saturday 21 September at 5.30pm**

Members of St Peter's Singers will be taking part in this service. All are welcome in the congregation.

### HARVEST SUPPER

**Friday 27 September, 6.30pm for 7.00pm**

Please sign up to join us for our annual Harvest Supper evening in St Peter's House. There is no charge for this event but donations may be made on the day.

### ST PETER'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Sunday 6 October at 11.00am immediately after the 9.30am Eucharist**

A chance to comment on reports and participate in the election of Chapel Wardens and a new Congregational Committee.

## CONTACT DETAILS

**Priest-in-Charge** The Revd Canon Dr Paul Andrews

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**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/elystpeters](http://www.facebook.com/elystpeters)

**Sunday 1 September** *11th Sunday after Trinity*

**9.30am SUNG EUCHARIST**

*Hebrews 13.1-8,15-16; Luke 14.1,7-14*

**Sunday 8 September** *Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**9.30am SUNG EUCHARIST**

*with Holy Baptism: Walter Henderson*

*Micah 5.2-4; Matthew 1.18-23*

**Tuesday 10 September**

10.00am HOLY COMMUNION

**Sunday 15 September** *Holy Cross Day (transferred)*

**9.30am SUNG EUCHARIST**

*Philippians 2.6-11; John 3.13-17*

**Tuesday 17 September**

*Hildegard: abbess & visionary 1179*

10.00am HOLY COMMUNION



**Sunday 22 September** *Harvest Thanksgiving*

**9.30am SUNG EUCHARIST**

*with St Peter's Singers*

*Philippians 4.4-9; John 6.25-35*

**Tuesday 24 September**

10.00am HOLY COMMUNION

**Friday 27 September**

6.30pm for 7.00pm HARVEST SUPPER

**Sunday 29 September** *St Michael & All Angels*

**9.30am SUNG EUCHARIST**

*Genesis 28.10-17; John 1.47-end*

## PRAYER OF THE HEART & THE COMMUNITY OF ST ETHELDREDA

*The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going and they had no leisure even to eat.*

A brief passage from St Mark's Gospel that certainly speaks to me and, I suspect, speaks to many of us as we come and go and rush about the place madly trying to fit in all the things that need to be done in this modern complex world. Our Lord was well aware of the pressure to be always doing, always active, always at other people's service. There are many places in the gospels where we see him withdrawing even from the company of his disciples, taking himself off to a quiet place to think and to pray and here in Mark 6 we find him advising his followers to do the same.

As a priest I am only too aware of the danger of being so pressured by the demands of the job that time and space for personal reading and reflection, for thinking and prayer that isn't directly related to next Sunday's sermon or tomorrow's meeting or the next ordinand or this afternoon's visit, is often all too elusive. I also know that if I don't find time for recharging my spiritual batteries then all these activities and many more suffer as a result. I am not able to give of my best and perhaps God is not able to work through me in the most effective way.

Church life is a great generator of activity and not just for the clergy. There are always things to be done and it's possible to fill every minute of the day with busy-ness and believe that the purposes of God are being served but, sometimes, filling all our waking moments with activity can be a barrier to God. We are so preoccupied that he hardly has a chance to speak to us directly and we can avoid even thinking about him even while seeking to serve his Church. As Jesus reminded his disciples, the life of faith, if it is to be effective, needs to preserve a balance between doing (busy, busy, busy) and being, particularly being in the sense of placing oneself for a time consciously in the presence of God and simply stopping and waiting, watching and listening. This is the stillness that for some leads to a vocation to the contemplative life but which is essential to all of us in our life of faith.

When did you last take part in a Quiet Day? Have you ever taken part in a Quiet Day? Do you feel a need for space, 'sacred space', in your life when you can put aside everyday busy-ness for a few hours to focus on God and on building your relationship with him. I believe that many of us need to seek out the "deserted place" that Jesus valued so highly, a place of quiet beauty and stillness, a place of open hospitality and refreshment.

Quiet Days are sometimes guided by someone who gives some short talks or meditations which focus our thinking and prayers. Others involve the simple provision of a silent space in which to think and pray and to give one another permission not to have to speak. Usually there is the sharing of hospitality, of food and drink and of simple worship and we can read or think or simply rest in God for a short while. This is the essence of being on retreat and it is a valuable, indeed I would say, essential element of true discipleship. I would very much like St Peter's to become a centre for this kind of spirituality in Ely and I have recently been having some conversations about the Community of St Etheldreda.

I guess that many here will know about the Community of St Etheldreda started some years ago at the Cathedral by Canon Alan Hargrave with the aim of gathering a group of people who were drawn to the idea of making and keeping a rule of life and exploring personal spirituality in an intentional and disciplined way alongside others. This began with studying the Rule of St Benedict, the rulebook for living a prayerful life in community written by Benedict in the sixth century, containing a set of precepts that have guided monastic communities over the centuries. However, you don't have to become a religious - a monk or nun - in order to live in the spirit of Benedict's rule and there is much good sense in it that can be adapted to life lived in families and relationships in the modern secular world. Alan's hope was that the Community of St Etheldreda might become a community of people meeting together periodically for shared hospitality, study and prayer who would make a commitment to support the work of the churches in Ely and open up a space specifically for anyone to engage in that exploration of faith and spirituality to which I referred earlier.

Canon Alan retired and Canon Vicky Johnson and the Revd Natalie Andrews from the Ely team ministry have been organising the Community's activities. Recently, Canon Vicky told me that she always thought that St Peter's would be the ideal centre for the Community's meetings (it has met here a few times). This chimes in with my vision to develop St Peter's as a centre for spirituality and we both think that this church would be a fantastic base from which the Community and all that it has the potential to do and be could flourish, opening up that rare opportunity that is almost completely absent from mainstream church life.

I am sure that this lovely sacred space can become something quite unique, something very new but drawing on something very old, building and growing God's kingdom here in Ely. This is a key part of my vision for what we can do here at St Peter's. I hope that you will share it with me.

Yours ever in Christ, Fr. Paul