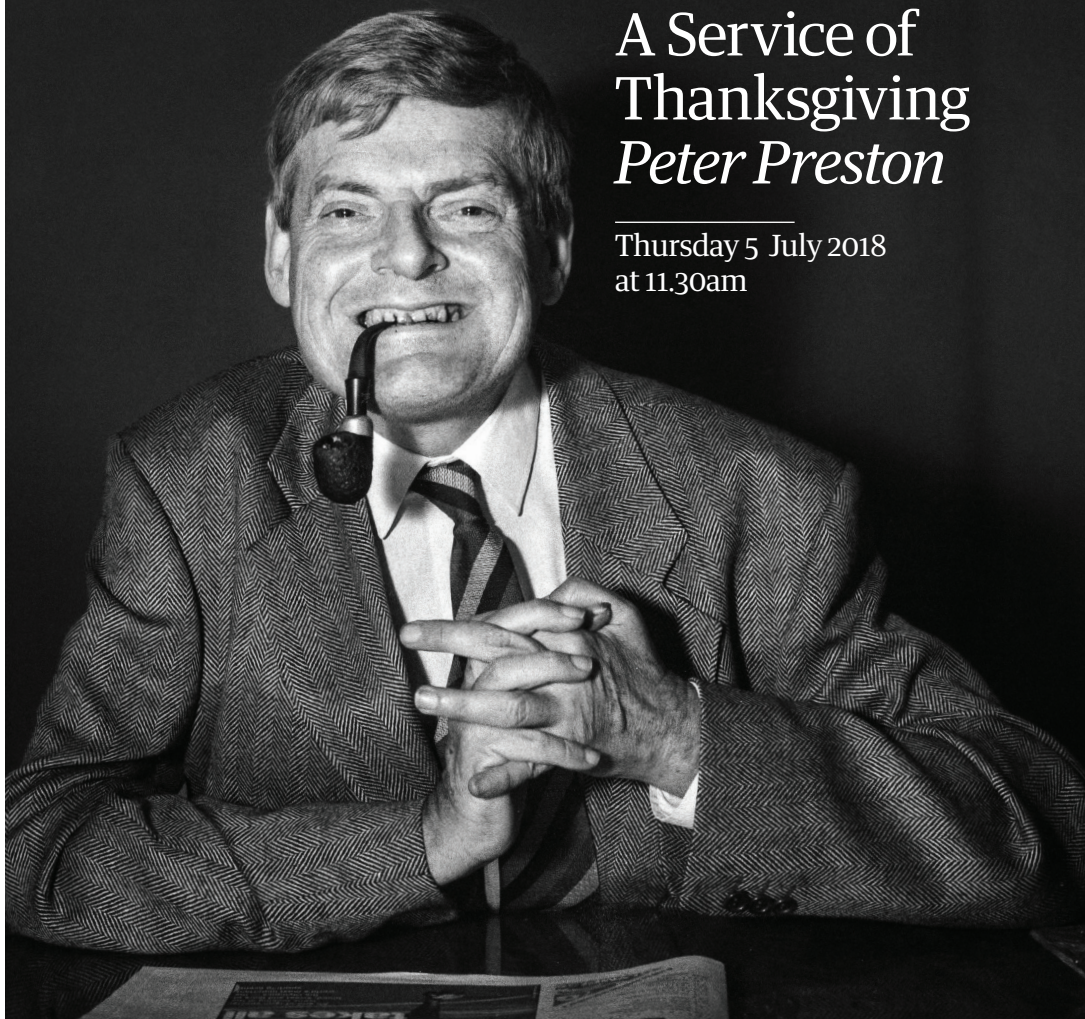


A Service of  
Thanksgiving  
*Peter Preston*

Thursday 5 July 2018  
at 11.30am



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St Bride's, Fleet Street, London EC4

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Rector

*The Rev Canon Dr Alison Joyce*

Director of Music

*Robert Jones*

Organist

*Benjamin Giddens*

Choir

*The Choir of St Bride's*

Head of Operations

*James Irving*



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Choir

*God be in my head – Walford Davies*

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Welcome and Opening Prayer

*The Rector*

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Hymn

*Guide me, O thou great redeemer*

Guide me, O thou great redeemer,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty;  
Hold me with thy powerful hand:  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
Feed me now and evermore.  
Feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain  
Whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fiery cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through:  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,  
Be thou still my strength and shield.  
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death, and hell's destruction,  
Land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee.  
I will ever give to thee.



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Reading

*Proverbs 3: 13-23 read by Alex Preston*

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Choir

*Loquebantur variis linguis – Tallis*

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First Address

*Liz Forgan*

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Choir

*Only in sleep – Esenvalds*

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Reading

*A tribute by Harry Evans, read by Maggie O’Kane*



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Hymn

*Praise, my soul, the King of heaven*

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,  
To his feet thy tribute bring;  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
Who like me his praise should sing?  
Praise him, praise him,  
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour  
To our fathers in distress;  
Praise him still the same forever,  
Slow to chide, and swift to bless:  
Praise him, praise him,  
Glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,  
Well our feeble frame he knows;  
In his hands he gently bears us,  
Rescues us from all our foes:  
Praise him, praise him,  
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;  
Ye behold him face to face;  
Sun and moon, bow down before him,  
Dwellers all in time and space:  
Praise him, praise him,  
Praise with us the God of grace.

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Second Address

*Paul Dacre*

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Choir

*Moon river – Mancini/Mercer arr. Shaw*

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Reading

*In Pursuit of Truth by Peter Preston,  
read by Katharine Viner*

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Third Address

*Ben and Rupert Preston*

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Choir

*Ring of fire – Cash arr. Morley*

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Prayers

*The Rector*

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Hymn  
*Jerusalem*

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?  
And did the countenance divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among those dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!  
I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

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Blessing  
*The Rector*

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Organ Voluntary  
*Prelude and Fugue in C – JS Bach*

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**The family would be delighted if you would join them  
after the service at The Humble Grape, 1 St Bride's Passage,  
London EC4Y 8EJ**

**There will be a retiring collection to be shared between  
St Bride's Church and St Christopher's Hospice**

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# A life in words

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**This letter was written in 1975 to Peter's children by Owen Brown, Peter's stepfather.**

On a cold April day some 27 years ago, a young man returned home early from his office saying he had flu and would go to bed. Two days later he was rushed into hospital but it was of no avail: he closed his eyes for the last time, a victim of polio. The young man left behind a widow and three children, aged two, six and nine years of age.

Seven days later the eldest boy felt unwell. His anxious mother sent for the doctor and her worst fear was confirmed: he, too, had polio. Her son was sent to Markfield hospital, near Leicester, and the iron lung. After the initial crisis and valiant work by the staff and doctors, the boy was taken for more specific treatment to Harlow Wood hospital, near Mansfield. There he spent the next 18 months without complaint, unable to do anything for himself.

Over time he began to learn to walk again. Soon after his 11th birthday he was allowed home. His useless right arm and shoulder, paralysed left hand and weak spine meant that he had to be helped to sit down and get out of a chair. When he fell down – which was very often – someone had to pick him up, and this was no easy task. Climbing down stairs was out of the question, so a bed was made up on the ground floor and the long battle to return to normal life began.

Eventually he could feed himself and thought of returning to school. Fortunately his home was on a bus route, and every morning his mother, helped by the conductor, would get him on to the bus. His schoolmasters soon knew the drill: they would meet the bus, help him off and after school get him back on board. His mother would await his return at the bus stop, and then take him home. ➡





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## A life in words

➡ The school endeavoured to cope with its most difficult scholar. Any class that necessitated access by stairs was out of the question. There was considerable consternation when he fell in a narrow passageway and the combined efforts of three masters were needed to get him on his feet again.

But as time went on he began to rehabilitate himself more and more. After a year of school it was decided that in his summer holidays he would return to hospital to have a piece of bone taken from his leg and grafted on to his shoulder to peg his upper arm and stop it swinging about uselessly.

When he reached the age of 15, the headmaster asked the boy's stepfather to call to see him to discuss what kind of job he might take up. But his choice and opportunities were rather limited. Nothing where written exams were required: his writing was far too slow. To do so, he had to swing his right forearm, catch it on his left wrist and guide his right hand which held the pen.

No profession where any physical ability was required: while he did not fall down so often, his mobility was still limited. What job could a young chap with all these difficulties do? No one had much idea. The conclusion was that he should go into an accountant's office, where he would learn the basic facts of business life. But maths and figures were not his scene at all.

The only way to do the things he wished to do was to speed up and improve his writing. With willpower he trained himself to write in more or less a straight line. While it was not copperplate, his handwriting became more legible.

The boy began to get ambitious and, when he reached 16, decided that to get what he wished in life he needed to go to university. Someone informed him that one could enter London without O-level Latin. He had missed the first two

years of that subject while in hospital, and consequently had never taken it up. It was another year before he discovered that London did require Latin.

What to do now? After a meeting with his form master, it was decided that if Latin had to be learnt, it could be done in 12 months with private study. And while we were about it, why not try for Oxford University? The year of study began, and at the end of it the great news arrived: he had been accepted at St John's College.

Fine! But what does an independent young man do away from home, when for eight years he hasn't been able to put on his own socks or get into or out of the bath without help or do so many jobs that all of us take for granted? To this young chap these were mere details. He had gained entry to Oxford and he would deal with these problems as time went along.

He did, and this week the young man, Peter Preston, began his new job as editor of The Guardian.

## Next Editor



The Directors of Cherwell have appointed Pete Preston Editor for next term. This term's Assistant Editor, he is in his third year reading English at St. John's, and hopes to make a career in journalism. Previously he held the News and Reviews Editorships.

He describes his political views as radical, and is a past official of the Liberal Club and Editor of Oxford Guardian. Educated at Loughborough Grammar School, he is 21 and lives in Quorn. Of his plans, he said "I don't believe Cherwell is a parish magazine, and I intend to liven things up more than somewhat."

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## A life in words

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### **From 51st State**

A novel by Peter Preston, 1998

Conservative PM Rupert Warner addresses the nation...

“Good evening to you all,” said Rupert. He hated TV fireside chats. Straight to camera was like looking down a black hole. “I speak to you tonight in this way because I have something to say that impacts on the future for everyone, which puts us once more at the crossroads of history.” The teleprompter hovered.

“It is 18 months since the people of this country, you, the sovereign voters, chose to reassert our national destiny by asking us, your servants, to withdraw from the European Union.” Nothing to do with me, Jack. I only took orders.

“I make no pretence. They have not been easy months. We did not expect, and had no reason to expect, the bitterness, verging on malevolence, of some of our former partners, who have sought to exclude us from markets traditionally vital to our fortunes.”

“I want to make one thing clear tonight. Great Britain has never wished, or chosen, to go it alone in the world of increasing interdependence. We believe in partnership. But we can only be partners with friends who respect us and who recognise the role that our wisdom and our past achievements equip us for.” King of the knacker’s yard.

“Our erstwhile friends across the Channel could not come to terms with that. But there is one friend who has always been there when needed, asking nothing, giving generously. Ladies and gentlemen, the United States of America.”

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## **Europe is our shared story – and what's made me what I am**

by Peter Preston, The Observer, 25 June 2017

Europe isn't just one more tick on some routine policy list. It is history and emotion ... even for newspaper editors.

Take me: I grew up in the east Midlands through the 40s and 50s. Sundays featured a grandparents' vigil at the local Baptist church. Holidays featured Hunstanton and Skegness. Europe? Well, there was always the Hotel de Paris, Cromer. I look at my grandchildren now – three of them Spanish in Barcelona – and pinch myself. Their worlds begin early at Heathrow or El Prat. My world ended at Dover.

For me, the lands over the Channel assumed an almost exotic fascination, an escape. At university I drove right across to Zagreb with three friends in a 1924 Morris, cheered as we wound through countless village streets.

I didn't renounce those years of growing up, the Saturdays on the touchlines watching Barrow Old Boys play Midland Woodworkers, the table-tennis nights at the Baptist youth club. But I was on a voyage of discovery: to tuna fish and tomato baguettes on the road south of Lyon, to the beer halls of Munich, to new experiences that seemed to define a different existence.

Europe may seem a forbidding home base: too many tongues, too many impenetrable backstories, too many damned complications and bits of bureaucracy. But it was who we are and where we are - especially if our job, as journalists, is finding the ties that bind and define us. It's where history – British history – truly lies. It's where the great wars we religiously commemorate happened, it's where our most obvious trade and political ties exist. That's why the result of this referendum has been so hard to swallow. And when I attempt to explain it all to my Spanish grandchildren and see the confusion on their faces I at least understand one thing. It's personal.

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**Up for the FA Cup Final**

by Peter Preston, The Guardian, 27 May 2004

Nobody on the Millwall train down to Cardiff expected a surprise. The mood seemed benign, decorous, almost resigned. British Transport Police snapped happy pictures of happy fans. It was the day out that mattered, not the match. Which was just as well.

The point about Millwall is that, although we sing “no one likes us, we don’t care”, most of us do care quite a bit and have always cared. We think they’re quite a lovable lot in a rough sort of way. It’s 35 seasons since we first took our six-year-old and four-year-old boys to Cold Blow Lane and stood on the crumbled terrace behind Bryan King’s goal. My wife man-marked the four-year-old, I kept track of the sixer. And now time rolls away.

The six-year-old is 40 now with two little boys of his own. They are the ones waving their blue and white flags on the Paddington platform and threatening the nearest thing to an incident in sight. And the four-year-old of yesteryear? He’s still at the Cannes Film Festival, selling a film he’s produced about Millwall hooligans and Chelsea hooligans to 25 countries. The legend lives.

Except that, apart from a few, forgettable riots, the legend was always overblown. We were safe on the old terraces. Safe in the bosom of a bawling, joking south London community. That scream of abuse from the other end – it was Harry, the nicest and roundest of The Guardian’s middle-aged messenger boys, who always went berserk when Millwall missed an open goal. Football at the old Den was like all-in wrestling – except that the crowd were the stars. In Cardiff, the community has returned indeed, has moved en bloc. Outside the ground, in the war paint, people take pictures of each other. Look mum, I was there. A girl promoting Shrek II gives my grandsons a couple of inflatable donkeys. The war paint take pictures of them too.



Thirty years ago, wandering between Divisions Two and Three, there was none of this. The winds hissed and rattled off the Thames and 7,000 souls shivered and groaned tactics, strategy. Benny Fenton, a whippet cockney, was manager, coach and – for all I know – catering director as well. I remember standing behind him on the 90th minute of a 1-1 cup tie, while Dennis Burnett (who thought he was Bobby Moore) tried a clumsy dribble. “Stop frigging around and move the bloody thing over the stand,” howled Benny. You couldn’t do that at the Millennium Stadium.

“Oh no!” said my six-year-old grandson when he looked at the programme. “See - they’ve got Ronaldo and Paul Scholes...”

But they’ll remember this day in another 35 years: they have the feel of the community already. It’s not, perhaps, high-minded society. We have to sing songs at three down which remind Manchester supporters what effing excreta they are. Things can go sour in an instant but football, on the big occasions, is a time and a place. Football, even when you’re six, is one definition of belonging.



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## A life in words

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### **My daughter is just fine**

by Peter Preston, 31 January 2000

Tolerance. It's an excellently soothing word; one used almost promiscuously by politicians, leader writers and churchmen intent on spreading a little even-handed balm. For who, pray, seeks an intolerant society? We all need tolerance, oodles of tolerance. But what the hell do we mean by it?

The most relevant text, for the moment, flows fresh from the pen of the Chief Rabbi – and concerns that great test of tolerance called section 28.

“Tolerance means treating with respect people whose positions are fundamentally different from your own. It does not mean regarding those views as equally valid.”

Tolerance has its boundaries.

But now the phone rings. It's one of our daughters and she's pretty upset. She wants to talk about tolerance, too.

We have two daughters. They are identical twins, born 10 minutes apart. Suckled at the same breast, tended side by side in adjacent cots. They grew up together, played together, made friends together. They played the same games and sang the same songs. Two peas from the same pod. Same genes; same everything. One is gay and one is not.

It is my elder daughter who calls. She's listening to another radio debate about section 28 and the familiar liberal defences being trotted out there are just so feeble. A “tolerant” society? An excuse for not thinking, for the denial of human identity.

And that, of course, is right when you pause over her distress. Right from where she sits – and right for us, the witnesses who

never seem to get called when the tide of purse-lipped toleration starts running again, the parents of gay children we respect and love.

When our twins are home for a family birthday party, what do we say? Do we echo the Chief Rabbi and affirm that one daughter, happily married with a baby, is secure in “moral judgment” whilst her identical twin is deserving of “tolerance” but not of equality?

Do we sing along with the Archbishop of Canterbury and “resist placing homosexual relationships on an equal footing with marriage”? How would he draw his lines in our home at Christmas?

Section 28’s language speaks, coldly, for itself.

What is the “promotion” of such values? And what is a “pretended family relationship”? My daughter found nothing to help or to guide her at school. She had damn all in the way of information, let alone the illusion of town hall propaganda. She was left alone to struggle through the most difficult years.

The repeal of section 28 won’t transform society. There will still be vicious playground bullying. There will still be prejudice and fear. Bits of law do not, in themselves, change our world. But the fight, for all that, has a momentous symbolism attached. It forces every one of us to look into ourselves and decide what’s right. It allows no political weaselings. No hiding place.

My daughter isn’t some notional stereotype invented to scare elderly cardinals. Nor is she a visitor from an alien place. She is like millions more in the world around – and we, in turn, are like millions of other parents. This is our flesh and blood; part of us, a reflection of us. We don’t have to say she’s equal. She IS equal. And no drizzle of incomprehension, no fear fostered in ignorance, no puny section, can alter that. It isn’t tolerance we need. It is knowing what makes our hearts beat.

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**Journalists cast as villains need  
to recall their heroes**

Peter Preston's last column, The Guardian, 31 December 2017

If there is one compelling challenge for journalists and their rough trade in 2018, it lies in re-establishing some modest degree of public respectability: in short, a measure of trust. For without a doff of the cap as big news breaks, there is only a shrug of the shoulders - which really means nothing at all.

And shrugging, when you contemplate the media wasteland of 2017, has been the pervasive reaction. Trump tweets across fields of cultured, East Coast derision. In Politico's view, he defines the press as his "prime adversary", not a foreign power, or terrorism, or an energy crisis; "he has changed the way we view the press and the way the press views itself".

And increasingly, for Britain, these echoes resound, as a series of Brexit buffoons decide to send in the clowns. There is no steady, sober state of governance: and, all the while, the messengers get shot.

Everything, with only the most cursory examination, is deemed fake news. Nothing has the validation of truth.

This, of course, is deadly for the ebb and flow of information. It casts malignant shadows wherever it goes. But it is worse, indeed worst of all, for journalism. And the essential challenge is knowing what to do about it.

One answer is cleaning the stables. Perhaps British journalistic integrity leaves America in the shade; or perhaps, bizarrely, this is a challenge we haven't risen to yet.

The usual buzzwords - rigour, transparency - rise as usual for scrutiny and pursuit. Transparency because newspapers

launching investigations into their own behaviour is the best answer to public cynicism. Rigour because, edition after edition, such targets cannot be allowed to slip away.

We remember Watergate, the Pentagon Papers and similar triumphs. They burnish our business. But they are not, by any means, the whole of the business: a business that means treating readers in a jam like human beings, identifying distress, becoming a functioning part of society rather than commentators at its edges. In short, seeking to be worthy of trust in the hole where admiration ought to be.







**Peter Preston**

23 May 1938 – 6 January 2018