



. Newslink .

St Faith's Church, Great Crosby
FEBRUARY 2010

Worship at Saint Faith's



SUNDAYS

10.30am Morning Prayer

11.00am SUNG EUCHARIST and Children's Church

1.00pm Holy Baptism (2nd Sunday)

7.00pm Compline and Benediction (1st Sunday)

WEEKDAYS

Monday 1030am Holy Eucharist

Tuesday 9.30am Holy Eucharist

Wednesday 10.30am Holy Eucharist in St. Mary's

Friday 6.30pm Holy Eucharist

Saturday 12.00noon Midday Prayer

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

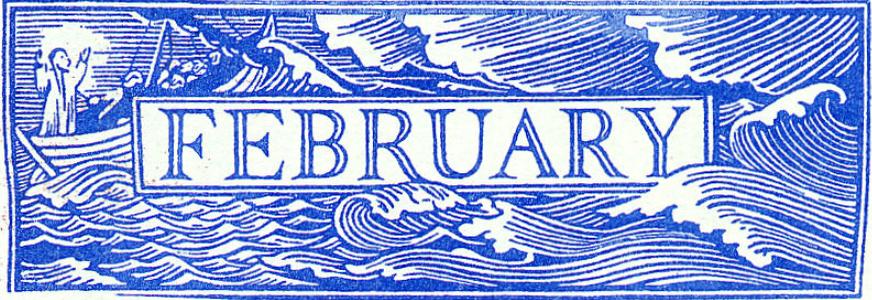
A member of the clergy team is available by appointment to hear confessions or to talk about any matter in confidence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available in preparation for Christmas and Easter and at other advertised times.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND DYING

Please ring the vicarage number at any time, day or night, if someone is ill and requires the ministry of a priest.

HOLY COMMUNION to the sick and housebound and those in hospital

If you, or someone you know, would like a visit from a member of the Church, please ring the vicarage number to arrange this. The Eucharistic Ministers are always happy to bring Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. If you are unable to get to church and would like to receive Holy Communion at home please contact Joyce Green (931 4240). If you, or someone you know, would like to be visited in hospital please ring the Vicarage number or contact a member of the Ministry Team.



From the Ministry Team: February 2010

It's hard to believe how quickly time flies. We have not long had Christmas when we celebrated Christ's birth, and now, during February, just a relatively few short weeks from the Christmas festivities, we begin the Season of Lent, where we recall Jesus' time in the wilderness when He fasted and prayed, and we also partake in a period of self denial and prayer, taking a look at our lives, our way of life, and we try to focus more on Jesus and endeavour to become more like Him, in thought, and word and actions.

Our forty-day pilgrimage of prayer, self-denial, and charity will have begun. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who trod the path that we now start, wants to mould our hearts so that we become as He is, that is, more devout, temperate and generous. Prayer, penance and "giving" undertaken with the assistance of the Holy Spirit will lead us to a greater likeness to Jesus. Every Christian should use this time well, to focus on Christ, and refocus our lives.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God draws us to Himself, urging us to choose Him over all the distractions that cloud our minds. He pleads with us to allow Him to unshackle the stubborn chains of sin and those things which distract us from Him and draw us away from Him and the Christian way of life which he asks us to undertake. The Lord's invitation to us couldn't be clearer, "return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, praying, and giving."

True, as Christ reminds us in the words of the Holy Gospel, our Lenten efforts are to be seen by God, they are not meant to impress other people. Yet, it may be that someone may notice our fresh fervour in prayer and self-denial, and our kindness towards those who suffer, and be encouraged to assess their own relationship with others and with God.

The Season of Lent is forty days and forty nights, and yes, the time will probably fly by, but we should make the best of it and exclaim in union with those who have gone before us.

“A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit. Do not drive me from your presence, nor take from me your holy spirit. Restore my joy in your salvation; sustain in me a willing spirit. (Psalm 51:12-14)

In partaking of the solemnity of Lent, we become more aware of the joy of Easter.

With my love and prayers,

Jackie



LENT 2010

Wednesday 17th February

ASH WEDNESDAY – the First Day of Lent

8.00 pm SOLEMN EUCHARIST and imposition of ashes

Preacher: The Right Reverend Richard Blackburn, Bishop of Warrington
followed by Baked Bean Supper (SF)

Fridays in Lent in S. Faith's or S. Mary's at 6.30 pm

Stations of the Cross and Holy Eucharist

19 February	S. Mary's
26 February	S. Faith's
5 March	S. Mary's (*)
12 March	S. Faith's (*)
19 March	S. Mary's
26 March	S. Faith's

(*) these services will take the form of a meditation on the Way of the Cross with poetry, visual imagery and music, both classical and contemporary

Sundays in Lent in S. Faith's at 7.00pm

Devotional Meditation and Benediction led by Fr Neil

The February Diary

Tuesday 2nd		CANDLEMASS (THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE) 8.00 pm Solemn Eucharist by candlelight with Procession of Light Preacher: Revd Janet Bissex (Bootle Team Ministry)
Su	7	11.00 am Family Eucharist and Parade Service
Tu	16	7.30 pm Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Party (Vicarage)
M	22	5.30 – 6.15 pm First Holy Communion Class Session 1 - Baptism

School of Prayer

at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral

led by the Reverend Judy Hirst (Diocese of Durham)

“Food for the Journey 2010”

Biblical teaching on how prayer can change our lives and our world

Friday 26 February 5.30 to 8.30 pm; Saturday 27 February 8.00 am to 4.00 pm

Crosby Symphony Orchestra Concert

in St Faith's: Sunday 7th February 2010 at 7.30pm

Elgar *Introduction and Allegro for Strings*

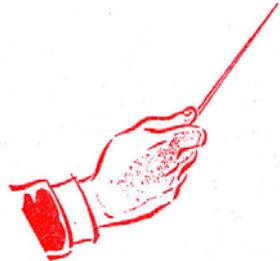
Rodrigo *Concierto d'Aranjuez for Guitar*

Soloist *Morgan Szymanski*

R.Strauss *Serenade in Eb for Wind*

Haydn *Symphony No.31 in D (Horn Signal)*

Conductor *Robert Sells*



The Tale of the Trees

A look back at one of the highlights of 2009 at St Faith's

A good many months ago, a small group of the usual suspects sat down to think up ways of raising funds to reduce the church overdraft and meet the ever-increasing demands of the Diocesan Parish Share (or Quota, as we used to call it). That meeting resulted, in the fullness of time, in the resurrection of the Talents Scheme, of which you will have read in past months, and which as the year ended was fast approaching the £2,000 mark.

The Talents idea was not new... but Margaret Houghton's idea of a Christmas Tree Festival was, at least to us. The plan was to invite local charities, churches and individuals to sponsor a tree to adorn the church for a week in Advent, collecting money for their chosen good causes, and at the same time raise some money for the church. The idea was explained and enthusiastically adopted (worth a go, although who knew how successful it might be?) and the rest, as the cliché has it, is history.

In the event, the ten days or so of concentrated activity leading up to and including the week of the actual Festival proved to be just about the most worthwhile, enjoyable and all-round excellent thing to have hit St Faith's in this writer's (long) memory. The full story of the event, from the arrival of the trees to sweeping up a million fallen needles on the day after we closed, is recorded in the form of a sequence of pages, illustrated by this writer's photographs, on the church website. If you haven't visited it, and have the means to do so, go to www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/treestale.html and take it from there. Last month's *Newslink* carried some pictures as well. What follows are a few impressions of some of the highlights of a colourful week of outreach and celebration.

Seeing St Faith's back in its normal spacious mode, it is already hard to envisage forty trees, festooned with lights, tinsel and baubles, attended with collection buckets and appropriate literature, thronging the nave (six-a-side on platforms on the pews up against the pillars) and every part of the church (at the back, in both side chapels, in serried ranks flanking the nave altar, the choir and below the high altar). They came, they were de-netted, they were positioned, and an army of volunteers transformed them into a festival of colour and light. All were a delight, and all attracted admiring comments and donations. Wrong to single any out, perhaps, but the 'Dentistree', hung with molars and dentures and topped with a giant tooth (fairy) deserves honourable mention! At the back, food and drink was served and there was just room for tables for folk to relax and enjoy the view and the refreshments. On sale also were the products of the ubiquitous St Faith's Jam Factory (with suitably seasonal tops), other food items and an enticing range of decorations, jewellery, scarves and other goods.

At the Sunday morning services just before the Festival opened and on the day after it closed, priests, choir and people manoeuvred happily round the arboreal obstacles impeding their liturgical spaces (i.e. dodged the trees). Throughout the week, to the accompaniment of soft background music, and some batches of visiting school parties providing occasional choral entertainment, a stream of visitors came and went in every corner of the church, and pronounced themselves well pleased with what they saw. The entries in the visitors' book say it all...

'Great idea... spectacular... absolutely fabulous... loved every minute... a beautiful start to the season... such a lovely atmosphere... how different the church looks... magic...very moving... well done and thank you... so generous of you... what a good way to involve the community and young people... amazing and uplifting... you MUST do it next year!'

So what was special about the week? A strong and uplifting sense of fellowship among all those who helped in so many ways: stewarding, selling, welcoming, erecting, cleaning up or just being there: the St Faith's 'family' feeling has surely never been so strong. An astounding effort of organisation by Margaret Houghton and Maureen Madden, her right-hand woman. A very real outreach to the thousand or so people who visited during the week, many of whom had never been inside our church, and more than a few who wished their churches could do something as adventurous and worthwhile. Goodly sums of money raised for the various good causes, and a share for us. A very definite feeling of belonging to and doing something for our community rather than being a gathered congregation set apart although in its midst.

And a place of prayer for many. We set up a prayer tree in the Chapel of the Cross and invited people to write a prayer and hang it on the tree, not knowing if it would see any use. By the end of the week it was festooned with petitions, ranging from children's Christmas wishes to heartfelt prayers on behalf of sick friends and relatives. One in particular touched our hearts and stands as a testimony to the value of our Christmas Tree Festival, our place in our parish, and its needs. 'Thank you God for all these lovely trees,' it read. 'Please help all those who are suffering from the terrible floods in Cumbria. And please look after my Daddy in heaven.'

Chris Price



It was certainly not possible to have foreseen the success of the Christmas Tree Festival. Initially, when the approximate number of trees had to be ordered around the end of September, it became apparent I knew nothing about how to organise this event. However, with a considerable amount of footwork introducing myself and the idea to local charity representatives, and subsequently to local businesses, we were off. The idea was embraced with much enthusiasm by all the people approached to sponsor a tree, followed by a tremendous input by the members of St. Faith's who gave their all to make the event a success. A committee was not formed, this was too formal for the requirements, but a group of six ladies met, pens and paper at the ready and from then on there was no stopping us. We could hardly think of anything else, such was our determination to have 'a good show'.

From the day the trees were delivered spot on time by the suppliers, Tony Almond, to the day of the dismantling was like a dream. Some trepidation was experienced as to whether all the publicity had been enough: what had been forgotten? But from the moment the first visitors came through the doors at 12.55 pm, the festival opening at 1 pm., I felt a thrill of excitement and knew it was going to be a very special week. From comments written in the Visitors' Book many people were visiting the church for the first time, others after a long absence, comments about the delightful atmosphere and warm welcome, what better way to bring our church to the community; on top of which over £4,000 was collected, enabling £2,700 to be distributed to the charities and nearly £1,500 being given to the church.

Overall an incredible occasion, made possible by the tireless support by the aforementioned ladies, without whose help the event could not have been the fantastic experience it was. Thank you all so much. Also my thanks to the gallant band of good humoured gentlemen who arrived each evening to help count the takings.

Margaret Houghton



A Christmas Letter from the Vicar

As circulated to the congregations of the United Benefice at Christmas. We will be welcoming Fr Neil back for the beginning of Lent.

Writing to you at this halfway point of my sabbatical I'm very much aware that the end of my sabbatical is not too far away! I watch the news regularly to see if any disaster has befallen the United Benefice but the only things I am told from those I have heard from is that everything is fine! Which is how it should be! The students here at the start of my time away asked what was happening in my absence. When I explained the make up of our Ministry Team most of them felt I was surplus to requirements anyway! Seriously, one of the difficulties which often prevents many priests taking a sabbatical is the worry of what will happen if they are the sole priest in a parish and there is no regular assistance. Such worries have no place in our set-up!

Many thanks to those who sent birthday wishes and cards, it was lovely to hear from you all. Part of my birthday was spent in Wakefield Cathedral as I attended their monthly "Missa" - a service which is self explanatory as you will see. In addition to the reading I am doing and lectures I am attending, I am also taking the opportunity to visit different churches and people to see what is going on and talk with people who are responsible for creating alternative liturgies or "catholic fresh expressions". I have met some fascinating people, though I haven't yet got a blueprint for changing everything in St. Mary's or St. Faith's, you'll be pleased to hear!

Meeting these people and attending different types of services of course reminds me that we, in our two churches, are not alone in the task of seeking to be a church both rejoicing in its rich heritage yet wanting to connect more with the world as it really is.

The second week of next term at Mirfield is focussing on new forms of priestly ministry and 'fresh expressions'. Part of the week includes a visit to the Diocese of Liverpool to meet our team of Pioneer Ministers and hear from them. (I have excused myself from that visit!) It is a great credit to such ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool that students in theological formation are being brought to Liverpool as an example of good practice in this field.

It does show though that a place like Mirfield - with the quasi-monastic tradition that the College has - is very much wanting to resource priests for today's Church. The College of the Resurrection has a website so do 'google' them and see what the place is about, if you haven't done already. It was lovely to be present when Archbishop Desmond Tutu laid the foundation stone for the new monastery access last month and I was here for the celebration of the College's Foundation Day when, after the Mass, there was a formal dinner followed by a party. I also joined the College in keeping a two-day retreat over the weekend of Advent Sunday.

I have also visited York Minster to attend a "Transcendence" service. Transcendence: An Ancient Future Mass, is a Multimedia Eucharist held in York Minster. The service is a collaboration between York Minster and the Visions Alternative Worship arts collective. Once a month they gather to celebrate a service of Holy Communion which contains all the elements of Common Worship, expressed in a cultural form which makes the most of contemporary forms of imagery and technology. Transcendence is registered as an Anglo-Catholic Fresh Expression: the ministers wear traditional vestments; there is incense and other ceremonial, and the aim is to provide a place where the tradition can be renewed for our contemporary situation. A key element of Transcendence is the mixing up of old and new - plainsong chants over ambient beats, live video mixing using ancient iconography, beats and DJs working alongside Palestrina sung by the Minster's musicians. They named the service Transcendence because they wanted to express a sense of awe; to inhabit a space where someone would want to fall on their knees in adoration of the majesty and mercy of God. If you visit the York Minster website you can read more about it in the 'worship and spirituality' section. One of the people responsible for bringing this about, Sue Wallace, took part in the "Liturgy, Culture and Context" course that I did this term so it was good to meet her and talk with her about her work.

Before Christmas I hope also to visit another 'fresh expression', this time in London with the 'Moot' community. Moot says of itself on its website ([www. moot, uk. net](http://www.moot.uk.net)):

- Moot is a developing community of spiritual travellers who are seeking to find a means of living a life that is honest to God and honest to now.
- Moot seeks to make connections and find inspirations in the meeting of faith, life and culture.
- Moot looks to the Christian call for justice, equity and balance as a means of living politically and ethically, we recognise the inspiration of saints, mystics, philosophers and artists throughout the centuries.
- Moot seeks to live a Christian spiritual rhythm of life through practising presence, acceptance, creativity, balance, accountability and hospitality.

By the time you read this I hope to have experienced a celebration of the eucharist with them.

In the early days of my sabbatical it became clear that the timetable I had initially hoped to follow in going to the USA was not going to be possible. So after talking with

Bishop James I'm off to Rome instead! Not many Anglican clergy can claim that their bishop has "sent them off to Rome!" Yes, it will be really hard to put up with two weeks in Rome, but someone has to do it...! In truth, I am really excited to be going there 'officially', particularly as I will be there only a few weeks before Anglican clergy who wish to 'go to Rome' at the Pope's invitation have to declare their hand! It should make for some interesting dinner conversations!

My friend, Monsignor Andrew Wadsworth, who is the Executive Secretary to ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy), is arranging for me to attend some seminars and lectures at the Venerable English College, to meet people at the Collegio Sant' Anselmo and to meet one of the four papal liturgists. In addition, another friend, The Venerable Jonathan Boardman (Chaplain to All Saints Anglican Church, Rome and Archdeacon of Northern Italy and Malta) is arranging for me to attend events at the Anglican Centre where he is Senior Tutor. Whilst I promise to come back, I can't promise not to bring some ideas with me!

The staff and students could not have made me more welcome here at Mirfield, and it is a privilege to share in their common life together. I have even had the odd 5.45am run with one of the priests from the community - not as often as I ought to though! But it's New Year resolution time soon! The 'Red Letter Days' are observed not only with Solemn Matins, but with a cooked breakfast too!

I will be thinking of you all over Christmas and hope that the Christmas celebrations go really well, as I know they will do, thanks to the dedication and hard work of so many of you (not least the members of our Ministry Team). It will be the first Christmas since 1988 that I have been with the family so I am grateful for that opportunity.

In the meantime please remember me in your prayers as I remember you daily in mine.

Fr Neil

College of the Resurrection
Stocksbank Road
Mirfield
WF140BW



A Letter of Thanks

Dear Friends,

Four years ago I was unfortunate to be diagnosed as having a tumour in my lung but then very fortunate indeed in that a biopsy was not able to be taken owing to the siting of the tumour and also that the scan somehow did not show that the tumour was also

growing into the bone of my spine. The surgeon, after the operation, informed Cynthia that, had he known that the tumour was a very aggressive T4 cancer-type tumour, he would not have performed the operation that saved my life. Also had he known that the tumour was growing into my spine then again he would not have performed the operation. I was so grateful for so much prayer support at that time. There has been no recurrence of the cancer to date.

Later, I was again taken into hospital, this time suffering from a sub-arachnoid haemorrhage. I was very lucky indeed that the haemorrhage had sealed itself and I was allowed home after only three days. It seems, I am told, that this type of haemorrhage can happen to anyone at any time for no apparent reason.

On each occasion of my illnesses prayers were said for me in both Churches. I wish to thank you all for your prayers which I am sure aided and speeded my recuperation to good health on both occasions. And thank you also for the get well wishes and many cards that I received on each occasion.

May God bless you all for your kindness.

Barrie Johnson

Winter Draws (On)

Two months of winners in the St Faith's 100+ Club

December 2009	1	42	M Madden
	2	119	J Crooke
	3	162	J Tudhope
	4	153	H and D Whitlow

January 2010	1	187	E McGovern
	2	176	G McFadyen
	3	73	V Shillitoe
	4	80	M Harrison



There are a few balls available to replace ex-members. Please see Gareth Griffiths or Brenda Cottarel if you would like to join the club and help to boost the church's finances while enjoying excellent odds of winning. As we say from time to time: "You've got to be in it to win it!"

A Reflection for Candlemass

From the writings of Fr Henry Wansbrough, OSB

Light is such a universal image of hope and relief from strain, fear or depression that it needs no comment. The darkness and gloom of sin and bondage are to be dispelled by the light of God's messenger. Simeon sees that this light is to spread also to the non-Jewish peoples, who traditionally among the Jews were considered to be benighted and wrapped in impenetrable darkness. It was a great break-through in the appreciation of God's love for all men to realize that his care and salvation were destined for all nations, not only the Jews.

But in biblical terms the image of light was acquired more than its general significance; it has particular connotations too. God himself is described in terms of dazzling, inaccessible light. In the visions of God his presence is made known by fire or light, as at the burning bush or in the great opening vision of Ezekiel when he appears concealed in flashing fire. In many visions of the prophets, too, and in the conversion of Saul it is blinding light which intimates God's presence. The light of God is, then, the revelation of God and his presence. When light comes to the gentiles it is God himself who is given to them. Christ as the light is God. In Northern climates it is perhaps only the awesome power of the lightning which gives us an image of sufficient intensity, but in the desert the concentrated, fierce and uncompromising glare of the inescapable light can give a frightening experience of God.

As so many images of God, then, light is a two-edged weapon. Light gives security, knowledge, confidence, warmth. But it is also possible to be afraid of the light, for it is searching and often reveals what we would prefer to leave unseen. God's light searches the depths of the heart, and we may prefer to shun the light rather than allow ourselves to see in his light some of the darker corners of our being. To come to the light of Christ we need a certain purity and sincerity, an ability to face ourselves.

For Paul there is a further dimension of this image of light. In 2 Corinthians he compares the two covenants: the first revelation of Sinai was accompanied by such brightness that Moses' face thereafter had to remain veiled; but the brightness of the new covenant far exceeds this. 'This light has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ' (2 Cor. 5:6), and a little earlier he says that we are being transformed into the likeness of him whom we behold. There is a communication of this light, and if we remain open and faithful to it we are transformed gradually into the light of Christ.

Lord, light of the world, you shine in the darkness and the darkness cannot comprehend you, for your light is penetrating, firm and uncompromising. Give us the courage and objectivity to come and stand before your light, that we may see our shadows and you may dispel them.



Dinner Time!
The traditional December Saturday saw the traditional United Benefice annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner in St Faith's Hall. It is plain to see that everyone, clergy included, and even the food preparers and washers-up, thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



Meanwhile, at the back of church....
Some time earlier, an ad hoc group of handbell ringers were practising to perform at the Christingle service on Christmas Eve.

Reflections between Christmas and Lent

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry
To release the prisoners,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

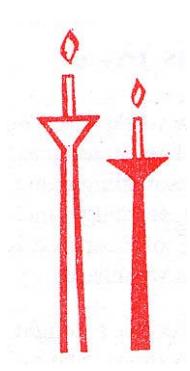
'Christ has many services to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some bring honour, others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural instincts and material interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves, in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is given us in Christ who strengthens us.'

From the liturgy of the Baptism of the Lord

Father, here we bring to an end our celebration of the Saviour's birth.
Help us, in whom he has been born, to live his life that has no end.
Here we recall the baptism of our Lord.
Help us, who are marked with the cross, to share the Lord's death and resurrection.
Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.
Help us, for whom Lent is near, to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.
Here we bless one another in your name.
Help us, who now go in peace, to shine with your light in the world.

Truly dust we are, and to dust we shall return;
and truly yours we are, and to you we shall return.
Help this to be a time of turning round and beginning again.
Through the forty days of Lent, help us to follow you
and to find you: in the discipline of praying
and in the drudgery of caring –
in whatever we deny ourselves,

and whatever we set ourselves to learn or do.
Help us to discover you
in our loneliness and in community,
in our emptiness and our fulfilment,
in our sadness and our laughter.
Help us to find you when we ourselves are lost.
Help us to follow you on the journey to Jerusalem
to the waving palms of the people's hope,
to their rejection, to the cross and empty tomb.
Help us to perceive new growth amid the ashes of the old.
Help us, carrying your cross, to be signs of your Kingdom.



Jan Sutch Pickard ('Eggs and Ashes')

Put it This Way...

Thanks to a fellow church magazine editor, who clearly shares a taste for the trivial and obscure, I have discovered <http://www.anagramfun.com/>. Fellow web-crawlers will recognise this as a website address — one which, just for the fun of it, rearranges names, or indeed any word or words, into anagrams: thousands and thousands of them.

A recent wet afternoon saw me feeding in such phrases as **S(ain)t Faith's Church** (with and without Crosby), **(Fr) Neil (G...) Kelley** and, of course, **Chris(topher) (D) Price**. If you, too, have nothing better to do, enjoy this list of bizarre and occasionally appropriate anagrams, before, if so inclined and equipped, feeding in your own words.

Church Anagrams: this scarf hutch ... scratch fish hut .. ah hunt rich fascist (let me know when you identify him and we'll touch him for a few quid) ... tin hut arch (a nice thought) ... huh, fit thin carcass ... huh, frantic ass itch (sorry about that one) ... shifty rich hub ... fishy church abstraction ... and (my favourite, I think) sacrosanct fishy rib hutch.

Vicar Anagrams: Go feel, kill greenery (don't tell the flower ladies!) ... lily leg knee ... ken ill elegy ... elk eel groin elegy ... like one yeller egg ... leer fleeing gory elk and (most surreal of all?) fiery leg knell.

The Editor: chic hips reporter (rather fetching, I thought) ... rip porch heretic (most unfair, that one) ... hi crotch, perspire (well, I ask you!) .. or he chic stripper (no comment) and ... cries chirp! After which, it's time to sign off ...

Rich Heir Prospect (I should be so lucky)

Book Review: *The Church Hesitant*

Chris Price



A few weeks ago, another retired warden lent me a book with this intriguing title, and I have been entertained and fascinated by it ever since. It is the work of a journalist with the resounding name of **Ysenda Maxtone Graham**, and is the pickings of a year she spent, seemingly in the early 1990s, travelling through the highs and lows of the ‘Good Old C of E’ and collating anecdotes, facts and impressions of the venerable institution which we inhabit.

The book is a delight: full of penetrating insights, sharp portraits and gentle but shrewd observations. She pulls no punches and spares no blushes, but the emerging picture is in the end a good and generous one, and made this reader, at least, happy to be an Anglican and part of the quirky but faith-filled heritage which we uniquely enjoy.

You need to read the book (**ISBN 0-340-56906-9**) to get the full picture, but here are a few extracts that struck me as particularly choice and may well bring a smile of happy recognition to readers.

Here she is contemplating her mission, wondering whether ‘a year spent living and breathing the life of the C of E would make me join the women who make twenty pounds of lumpless marmalade and then make covers for the lids of jars by cutting circles of cloth with pinking shears.’ Oh yes indeed!

Here she analyses priestly body language. ‘Clergymen and women, trained in waist-high pulpits, use their arms a great deal while speaking. The wide arm-span gesture it used in argument, to demonstrate the vast distance from the extreme evangelical to the extreme Anglo-catholic wing of the church. ... Extreme evangelicals fall off and go to house churches in school gyms. Disgusted Anglo-Catholics ‘go over’ to Rome. Extreme liberals gradually find that they don’t believe anything any more...’ We have all met some of these.

She is excellent at revealing details which pinpoint the extremes of churchmanship in the C of E: ‘The vicar in one London parish is all too visible – standing on a huge central platform and reproduced on eight hanging TVs in the galleries – and in the next he is totally lost to view in a cloud of incense.’

Here is a longer extract which hits several targets. She spends time with a country vicar with two churches, one formal Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion, the other one, which she describes here, growing and far more evangelical. ‘The lay preacher gave ‘the talk’. It was addressed to the children and she had a large supply of visual aids – seeds, an avocado stone, wellington boots, an anorak. ‘What was the sower *like*?’ She asked. The children didn’t answer. A grown-up churchwarden had to: ‘Prolific.’ *‘That’s a big word,’* said Ann.

‘When we try to have a family service at the other church,’ the vicar told me later, ‘either the old ones stay away or they sit there stiffly, hating every minute.’

And here she is, having commended the sanctity and dedication of most Anglican clergy, redressing the balance. ‘There are few ordained villains in the C of E. If I try to think of any, my mind alights on one particular bishop in London, who has a poisonous relationship with women at all levels, and won’t allow them into the sanctuary; a sad and disastrous rector of seven parishes in Leicestershire, who has nearly emptied his churches and alienated his parishioners; another bishop, now retired, who filled his churches with what are known as ‘the scented clergy’ – ones in the best black clothes, who use the most expensive incense and are, like him, pathologically opposed to women priests; and a suffragan bishop in the north, who seems to lack all the pastoral skills required of a bishop.’

An insight into clerics in retirement: ‘Godly, righteous and sober lives go on for a long time. The country is saturated with retired clergymen... they cluster round cathedral cities. They are useful to retired clergy who need to go on holiday, and to undertakers who call on them to take funerals. At consecrations of new bishops at Westminster Abbey, crowds of retired bishops appear to lay on hands. They get a good lunch afterwards. (You can never see much at consecrations. Unless you are very grand you are put in row P in the south transept. All you can see during the procession are fifty mitres going past. They look a bit sinister, like open jaws...)’

Back with the Jam Factories. ‘At parish level, women make marmalade. The C of E is an institution where money is raised in a thousand tiny ways. Its character is moulded by this. Christians make marmalade; atheists buy it, dragging their children to the church fete. Kind women give prizes to the bazaar: it is heartening that in this supermarket age you can still come across the sight of a middle-aged Anglican woman at a hoop-la stall, aiming for a single bottle of salad cream and clasping it to her bosom in victory.’

Finally, in this instalment, some of Y.S.G’s images of the Church of England. They are, as ever, perceptive and affectionate: there could be worse institutions to belong to than this...

‘If you shut your eyes and think ‘Church of England’, what do you see? I see the following: the red and white flag on St George’s Day fluttering from the top of a glinting Norman tower. A large woman in stretchy leggings holding her arms in the air and singing with her eyes shut. A tiny vicar in his car driving along a narrow lane from one of his seven churches to another. A coach full of grey-haired parishioners on their parish outing to York. A photocopying machine saying ‘add toner’. A thermometer sign showing how much money there still is to raise. A woman doing the church flowers and talking to another woman about whether it is better to bite the stems, stamp on them or try to slit them with your secateurs.’

Floreat ecclesia Anglicana, I say.

What the Papers Say



Three nuns were pulled over on a road near Turin after they were clocked travelling at more than 110mph in a Ford Fiesta. The driver, Sister Tavoletta, 56, explained that they were hurrying to see the Pope after hearing that he had fractured his wrist in a fall. 'We were on our way to make sure he was OK,' she said. 'Hopefully Sister Tavoletta will confess to her bad driving next time she goes to confession,' said a police spokesman. 'But in the meantime she will have to pay the speeding fine.'

A confectionery firm came under fire for featuring fruity characters apparently engaging in sexual acts on its wrappers. Simon Simpkins of Pontefract said he was shocked by the 'porno' poses when he bought the sweets for his children. The lemon and lime are locked in what appears to be a carnal encounter,' he told The Sun. 'The lime, who I assume to be the gentleman in this couple, has a particularly lurid expression on his face. I demanded to see the shop manager and, during a heated exchange, my wife became distressed and had to sit in the car park.'

Police hunting Ireland's most dangerous driver finally uncovered his identity. Computer records showed that Prawo Jazdy had clocked up no fewer than 50 offences, but each time his licence was registered to a different address. Finally, an officer worked out that 'Prawo Jazdy' is Polish for 'driving licence'. Officers had been writing it down as the driver's name.

The St Faith's Talents Scheme 2010

Talents Still For Sale!

Are you making use of the wide range of goods and services still very much on offer? The scheme has now been going for four months, and has already raised over £1,900. The up-to-date list below shows what is on offer into the New Year. Grateful thanks to all who have helped us get this far!

Goods

Angie Price, Audrey Dawson, Mary Crooke and Linda Nye: The Jam Factory. Home-made preserves and pickles on sale in church every few weeks.

Rick Walker makes garden furniture to order 924 6267; rick@17mayfair.com

Irene Taylor makes decorated celebration cakes and frozen meals for one. 476 1310

Chris Price sells notepaper, church Christmas cards and his poetry books 924 1938; cdavidprice@gmail.com

Rosie Walker will cook you apple and mince pies. 924 6267; rick@17mayfair.com
Joyce Green makes personalised cards & notelets 931 4240; joyceEgreen@talktalk.net
Mona Turner is making knitted toys etc to order 931 1779
Jill Deeprose makes lovely floaty scarves 476 3092 jilldeeprose@talktalk.net
May and Dave Clarke will sell plants. Watch this space for the arrival of spring!

Services

Maureen Madden offers a dog walking service, and also airport/railway station taxi runs. 924 2154 m.madden767@btinternet.com
Eunice Little provides aromatherapy, massage, pampering and reflexology. 474 9708
The Catering Team hire out crockery, cutlery etc for events and parties. 474 3633
Denis Griffiths offers basic computer help and troubleshooting. 928 3278; denis.griffiths@gmail.com
Ranee Seneviratne is providing singing tuition: adults and teenage. 932 9173
Corinne Hedgecock offers Reiki Japanese relaxation therapy; also basic calligraphy. 07900095533
Margaret Davies offers her services for ironing, lifts to church and, shopping, as well as house and pet sitting 924 6484; mgtdavies@blueyonder.co.uk
Kathleen & Alex Zimak can lay on a Czech dinner for four with live music, as well as offering Czech lessons for pilgrims and beginners. 286 2117; zimak@blueyonder.co.uk
Fred and Linda Nye provide 'Fred's Beds' – bed and breakfast - also a 'tip run' rubbish disposal service. 924 2813; frederick.nye@googlemail.com
Lillie Wilmot offers copy typing services. 920 5563; lillie.wilmot@talktalk.net
Audrey Dawson will run embroidery classes. 928 2770; audreydawson@forl.co.uk
John Crooke sharpens shears and overhauls manual and petrol mowers 924 5758; jwcrooke@btinternet.com
Doreen Plevin offers company for hospital appointments etc 920 6476
John Woodley offers a photo rescue & enhancement service 284 8228; nhoj@uk2.net

Retreat to Iona

(19th-24th April, 2010)

Led by Dr David Hope, former Archbishop of York



Iona is one of those very special places which are hard to describe. Two steps from the mainland (we travel there first via the Island of Mull), the home of St Columba has a very special atmosphere of prayer, reflection, peace and pilgrimage.

Dr Hope is so keen on the northern saints of England and Scotland that his enthusiasm and leadership is infectious. There will be several talks during the week, regular services on the Island, and plenty of time for walking, painting, laughing and enjoying. Pilgrims gather in York on Monday, 19th April, where we transfer to Glasgow for an

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overnight stay. Tuesday completes the journey to Iona where the pilgrimage continues until early on Friday morning. The journey back to York (arrive there about 7pm) is completed within a day on the final day - Friday 24th April.

The cost in a twin room is £475 (some singles are available) and full colour brochures are downloadable at www.ukltg.com or via 01482 562455.

Equalities Commission / HSE

Guidance on 'festive' songs

(A bit late for Christmas, but these guidelines may be of use next December)

The Rocking Song

**Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;
We will lend a coat of fur,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you:**

Fur is no longer appropriate wear for small infants, both due to risk of allergy to animal fur, and for ethical reasons. Therefore faux fur, a nice cellular blanket or perhaps micro-fleece material should be considered a suitable alternative. Please note also that only persons who have been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check and have enhanced clearance will be permitted to rock baby Jesus. Persons must carry their CRB disclosure with them at all times and be prepared to provide three forms of identification before rocking commences.

Jingle Bells

**Dashing through the snow
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way**

A risk assessment must be submitted before an open sleigh is considered safe for members of the public to travel on. The risk assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly if passengers are of larger proportions. Please note, permission must be gained from landowners before entering their fields. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we would request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.

While Shepherds Watched

**While shepherds watched
Their flocks by night
All seated on the ground**



**The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around**

The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches health and safety regulations to insist that shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements being provided, therefore benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available. Shepherds have also requested that due to the inclement weather conditions at this time of year that they should watch their flocks via CCTV cameras from centrally heated shepherd observation huts. Please note, the Angel of the Lord is reminded that before shining his/her glory all around she/he must ascertain that all shepherds have been issued with glasses capable of filtering out the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and Glory.

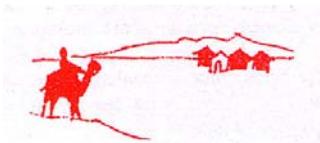
Little Donkey

**Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards with your precious load**

The RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load that a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry; also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four hour plodding period. Please note that due to the increased risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear face masks to prevent inhalation of any airborne particles. The donkey has expressed his discomfort at being labelled 'little' and would prefer just to be simply referred to as Mr. Donkey. To comment upon his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.

We Three Kings

**We three Kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star**



Whilst the gift of gold is still considered acceptable - as it may be redeemed at a later date through such organisations as 'cash for gold' etc, gifts of frankincense and myrrh are not appropriate due to the potential risk of oils and fragrances causing allergic reactions. A suggested gift alternative would be to make a donation to a worthy cause in the recipient's name or perhaps give a gift voucher.

We would not advise that the traversing kings rely on navigation by stars in order to reach their destinations and suggest the use of RAC Routefinder or satellite navigation, which will provide the quickest route and advice regarding fuel consumption. Please note as per the guidelines from the RSPCA for Mr Donkey, the camels carrying the three Kings of Orient will require regular food and rest breaks. Facemasks for the three kings are also advisable due to the likelihood of dust from the camels' hooves.

Funny You Should Say That

Notices noticed...

In a Bangkok temple: it is forbidden to enter a woman, even a foreigner, if dressed as a man.

Cocktail lounge, Norway: ladies are requested not to have children in the bar.

Doctor's office, Rome: specialist in women and other diseases.

Dry cleaners, Bangkok: drop your trousers here for the best results.

In a Nairobi restaurant: customers who find our waitresses rude ought to see the manager.

On the main road to Mombasa, leaving Nairobi: take notice: when this sign is under water, this road is impassable.

On a poster at Kencom: are you an adult that cannot read? If so we can help.

In a cemetery: persons are prohibited from picking flowers from any but their own graves.

Tokyo hotel's rules and regulations: guests are requested not to smoke or do other disgusting behaviours in bed.

On the menu of a Swiss restaurant: our wines leave you nothing to hope for.

In a Tokyo bar: special cocktails for the ladies with nuts.

Hotel, Yugoslavia: the flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid.

Hotel, Japan: you are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid.

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel across from a Russian Orthodox monastery: you are welcome to visit the cemetery where famous Russian and Soviet composers, artists and writers are buried daily except Thursday.

Hotel, Zurich: because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose.

Airline ticket office, Copenhagen: we take your bags and send them in all directions.

A laundry in Rome: ladies, leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time.

(Internet circulation - but all of course genuine items...)

Postscript



The editor acknowledges with thanks those readers who now access *Newslink* online. As a result, the print run has been significantly reduced and a bit of the planet saved. Please feel free to let him know of any further such offers. The muddy black and white photos in the middle of this issue may be seen in full colour online...



The Parish Directory and Church Organisations

VICAR (*returning from sabbatical leave during February*)

Fr. Neil Kelley, The Vicarage, Milton Road, Waterloo. L22 4RE

Vicarage telephone (all enquiries) 928 3342; fax 920 2901

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR and CHURCH BOOKINGS

Liz Mooney, Parish Office, 32 Brooklands Avenue

928 9913 (usually Monday to Wednesday 9.30 am – 4.30 pm)

email parishadministrator@btinternet.com

ASSISTANT PRIESTS

Revd Denise McDougall, 27 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 2TL. 924 8770

Canon Peter Goodrich, 16 Hillside Avenue, Ormskirk, L39 5TD. 01695 573285

Fr. Dennis Smith, 16 Fir Road, Waterloo. L22 4QL. 928 5065

READERS

Dr Fred Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813

Mrs Jacqueline Parry, 21 Grosvenor Avenue, Crosby. L23 0SB. 928 0726

Mrs Cynthia Johnson, 30 Willow House, Maple Close, Seaforth, L21 4LY. 286 8155

CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs Kari Dodson, 51 Stafford Road, Southport. PR8 4LX. 01704 565725

Mrs Maureen Madden, 37 Abbotsford Gardens, Crosby. L23 3AP. 924 2154

DEPUTY CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs Christine Spence, 52 Molyneux Road, Waterloo. L22 4QZ. 284 9325

Mrs Rosie Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

TREASURER

Mr David Jones, 65 Dunbar Road, Birkdale, Southport PR8 4RJ. 01704 567782

GIFT AID SECRETARY

Mr Rick Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

TUESDAY OFFICE HOUR: 6.30 – 7.30 pm (wedding and banns bookings)

Mrs Lynda Dixon, c/o the Vicarage. 928 7330

BAPTISM BOOKINGS

Mrs Joyce Green, 14 Winchester Avenue, Waterloo, L22 2AT. 931 4240

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Sam Austin, 42 Arch View Crescent, Liverpool, L1 7BA. 07921 840616.

email samOaustin@googlemail.com

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Stephen Hargreaves, 86 Molyneux Road, Waterloo. L22 4QZ. 07939 119220

SACRISTAN

Mrs Judith Moizer, 1 Valley Close, Crosby. L23 9TL. 931 5587

ASSISTANT SACRISTAN

Mr Leo Appleton, Flat 6, 45 Crosby Rd N, Seaforth. L21 1EN. 07969 513087

SENIOR SERVER

Mr Ken Bramwell, 93 Rimrose Valley Road, Crosby. L23 9TF. 924 9894

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Sunday 11.00 am in the Church Hall. Angie Price 924 1938

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Mrs Linda Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813

CHURCH CENTRE

1, Warren Court, Warren Road, Blundellsands

CUB SCOUTS

Tuesday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Adam Jones 07841 125589

Thursday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Mike Carr 293 3416

SCOUTS

Tuesday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. George McInnes 924 3624

RAINBOWS

Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw 928 5204

BROWNIE GUIDES

Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Sue Walsh 920 0318; Mary McFadyen 284 0104

CHOIR PRACTICE

Friday 7.15 pm - 8.30 pm. Sam Austin 07921 840616

MAGAZINE EDITOR

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Chris Price, 17 Queens Road, Crosby. L23 5TP. 924 1938

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email cdavidprice@gmail.com



