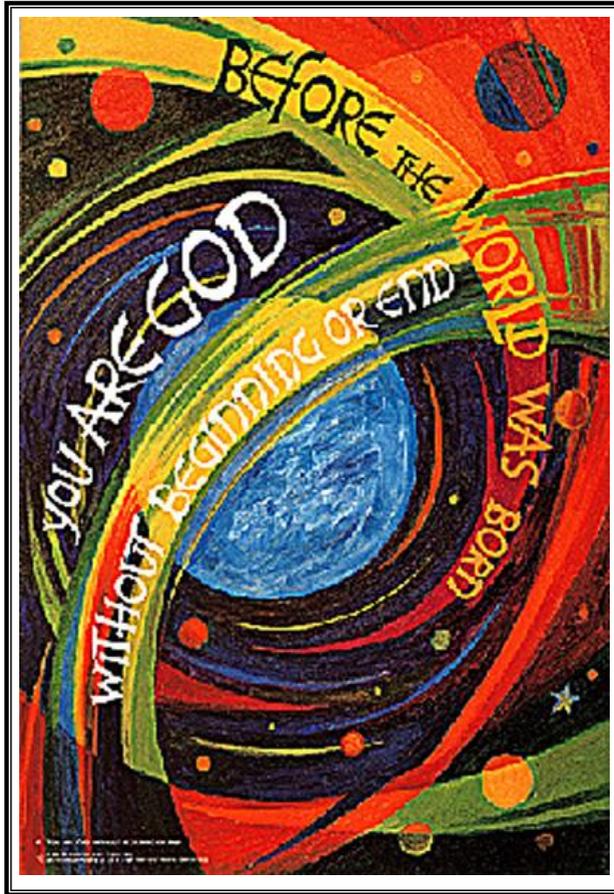


# Newslink



**St Faith's Church, Great Crosby  
Parish Magazine  
February 2015**

# Worship at Saint Faith's



## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

**11.00 am SUNG EUCHARIST and Children's Church**  
**Holy Baptism by arrangement**

## **WEEKDAY SERVICES**

### **The Daily Office**

**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday:** 9.00am: Morning Prayer

**Tuesday:** 6.30pm: Evening Prayer

**Thursday:** 8.00am: Morning Prayer

**Friday:** 6.00pm: Evening Prayer

**Saturday:** 9.30am: Morning Prayer

### **The Holy Eucharist**

**Tuesday:** 7.00pm; **Thursday:** 11.45am; **Friday:** 6.30pm

*Please see the weekly online bulletin for any variations.*

## **SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION**

The Clergy are 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.

## **HOME VISITS to the sick and housebound and those in hospital**

If you, or someone you know, are unable to get to church and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, the Eucharistic Ministers are happy to undertake this - please call 928 3342/07976 901389 to arrange this, or to arrange a visit to someone in hospital or at home.

## **IN A PASTORAL EMERGENCY**

Please telephone as for home visits, or a member of the ministry team.

# From the Ministry Team



Dear Friends,

A Happy and Blessed New Year to you all.

I've been involved in education so long in one way or another – 20 years or so as a teacher, and some of that time also as myself a student and then research student – that I'm tempted to think that the year really begins in September and that January 1<sup>st</sup> is just a date. However, it is one of those times in the year when we are in what, theologically, we might call a 'liminal space' – an 'in between time,' where the past still is a palpable presence, but seems to be moving away; and the future, whether it is dreaded or longed for and hoped for, has not yet emerged.

Perhaps it's that sense of a 'liminal' space that encourages many of us to make New Year Resolutions – even if some of them perhaps do look a bit stale already by the end of January! I don't think it matters that we stumble over some of our best intentions – but I do think it matters that, as Christians, we are shaped above all by hope.

The letter to the Hebrews says, 'faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.' Not a bad thought at the start of a year is it?

The great Christian thinker, Augustine, was puzzled by time; 'what is time?' he asks in the *Confessions*; 'when no-one asks me, I know, but as soon someone asks me I no longer know.' Past and future seem to slip through our hands; yet, the quotation from the Hebrews reminds us that all our moments are in God's hands, and come from God; there is nothing that falls out of God's providence – or, what is the same thing, his relentless, committed love for each of us – love that is not earned, that can't be manipulated or controlled, but which is utterly gratuitous; but love like this calls forth a response 'love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all.'

So, on New Year's Day – the Feast of the Holy Name – the day when we remember Jesus, by circumcision, becoming one of the people of the Covenant – we renewed our own Christian Covenant – perhaps the Christian equivalent of New Year Resolutions, but somehow both more challenging and yet less oppressive than a diet at the end of January! It derives from the Methodist tradition, and its powerful words remind us what it means to belong to Christ:

Beloved in Christ,  
let us again claim for ourselves  
this covenant which God has made with his people,  
and take upon us the yoke of Christ.  
This means that we are content  
that he appoint us our place and work,  
and that he himself be our reward.

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 inclinations  
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 to us in Christ,  
who strengthens us.

**I am no longer my own but yours.  
Your will, not mine, be done in all things,  
wherever you may place me,  
in all that I do and in all that I may endure;  
when there is work for me,  
and when there is none;  
when I am troubled and when I am at peace.  
Your will be done  
when I am valued and when I am disregarded;  
when I find fulfillment and when it is lacking;  
when I have all things and when I have nothing.  
I willingly offer all that I have and am  
to serve you, as and where you choose.  
Glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours.  
May it be so for ever.  
Let this covenant now made on earth  
be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.**



It is a piece of liturgy that has always meant a great deal to me. We began the New Year with it when I was training on the Northern Ordination Course, and it always gave me pause for reflection on my own past, present and future. When I was Head of RE and Community Liturgist at a Church of England School in London in the 1990s, I

felt I was serving Christ in a way very ‘suitable to my natural inclinations and material interests’; when I subsequently went to work in a huge, secular comprehensive, I felt it was ‘contrary to both’; yet, in retrospect, the grace of God was richly at work in all of it.

So, at the start of the New Year – read again these wonderful words, and reflect on them. And, as you reflect on where they might resonate with your experience and in your life, try to see where, perhaps unseen and unnoticed, the grace of God was always already at work – and always already *is* at work right here and right now. Whatever happens to the New Year Resolutions by the end of January, the ‘steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning, great is his faithfulness.’

May the grace of God be abundantly at work in you, this year, and always!

With my love and prayers,

As ever,

**Sue**



## A Reflection for Candlemass

So the Lord came suddenly to his Temple. Having been circumcised and bearing thus already his appointed name Jesus (Hebrew Joshua, Aramaic Joshua, Greek Jesus, English God saves). He is brought by his mother Mary, accompanied by Joseph, for her purification and her son’s presentation.

How deeply Christ is cradled in Judaism in the established religion of his day! How loyal he was to it, though he grew to criticise it vehemently and drew upon himself the reward of rejection from it.

What need could there have been of such a purification after childbirth, especially when the birth was that of a sinless redeemer? Saint Luke could easily have suppressed this incident with a view to securing theological propriety. But he chose not to do so. No, Christ’s roots are to be found in the religion of his people, even right down in the antique taboos which cling still to the religion of the divine Law. The babe would have approved his mother’s conformity. As he was to say later, “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”

Luke’s pictures of the infancy of Christ are not only exquisite in their depiction, but

subtle and deep in their significance. They are presented so as to allow it to be seen that there is taking place, within what might seem to be normal events, a de-involution of the Eternal. We have here a divinely creative mutation of human life and its potentialities. Luke's own poetic power is itself a token of the germination of this fresh grain which may penetrate the lives of all believers. He shows this seed as an infant starting upon that course which is to issue in such fruitful dying.

Family piety and respect for orthodox religion brought Christ first to Jerusalem. There are hard things to be said about Jerusalem. But it was in Jerusalem, though neither officially nor formally, that Jesus was first recognised. The clergy of the Temple will have heard of the remarkable signs attending the birth of this poor family's child at Bethlehem give weeks before. So Simeon and Anna, the two figures who do welcome the Holy Child, constitute together both the reproach and the justification of organised religion. Its reproach in that only two within the Temple – and those not the Temple authorities – do recognise the Christ within its precincts; justification because nevertheless two did recognise him there. It was within the Temple, the headquarters of the Jewish establishment with its legalised, hidebound religion that two were found watching and waiting – Simeon for the Messiah, Israel's consolation; Anna for the redemption of Jerusalem. It was through the worship and teaching of the Temple that they had learnt to wait and watch. The charismatic life of the Church is undying, but it needs deliberate seeking, respect, care and attention if we wish to prosper by its blessings.

Simeon and Anna are an impressive pair, though perhaps on the elderly side. Some scholars calculate that Anna was a least 105 years old! Simeon, devout, upright, watchful, endowed with the Holy Spirit; Anna, the widowed prophetess, deriving from the northern tribes, but looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

What insight is Simeon's! Shown first in his hymn of thanksgiving, which declared what he sees in the baby in the dayspring of light and deliverance for all men who will believe him as well as the glory of Israel. Then the words to Mary his mother: "A sword shall pierce through your own soul also."

Mary has been realising since the birth of Jesus that her relationship with him has changed. During the months of pregnancy during which she had put her whole substance at his service, his mission and hers had been indistinguishable. But from now on the child's mission is to be independent from that of his mother. This Simeon recognised in the Holy Spirit, comparing the son's mission with mission which was to be his between them recalling the new covenant of intimate love in God which Jeremiah the prophet had promised. By virtue of his vision and his blessing, Simeon helped to inaugurate this through discerning and indicating the new and eternal bond operation already between Jesus and Mary. This new covenant bind us also eucharistically to both son and mother as well as to his Father in Heaven.

Simeon himself belonged to the old covenant. But encountering this child and his mother, he understood how in Messiah, the prophets, especially of Jeremiah, followed by Ezekiel, were receiving fulfilment in newness of life realised in deep personal love for God as known in his children. In Simeon the gift of prophecy comes close to the Christian Gospel as he beholds the new covenant latent in the mystery of Christ with Mary “the Word unspoken and as yet unspeaking.” Simeon’s words to Mary, like his hymn which preceded them are full of echoes of prophetic utterance. He sees the son’s path and the difficulties that will emerge to overthrow each believer till through the son his is lifted up again in Christ. For God must no longer be sought in a far-away heaven distant and majestic, but in a child, as man later suffering among men.

The relations between men will be found to have been by this child truly changed. Until now men co-ordinated only by each man belonging to God’s Israel. The new covenant described by Simeon teaches how freshly and fully we must love another, since the Lord has become man in our midst. Henceforth something of the Eucharist of God’s son, Jesus must be found living in every human relationship. Henceforward none entering into close relationship with another person can know how truly he is dealing with the son of God himself; how far he has slighting or wounding it. For God is near, terrifyingly, tenderly near us and the light of divine love strikes directly upon all that is human.

Though this child, God’s anointed, is to be the one mediator between man and God, Simeon sees that henceforth we have a further in-expendable human liaison or link mediating between us and the Son of God. For such is the mission of Mary his mother.

As by her assent to the divine message she had made the Son’s mission possible, so now the Son, her son, makes possible the continuance of her mission, transforming it by virtue of his own. Close though the union between mother and son has been on the plane of physical and human nature, closer yet is their union to be through grace. Mary is to share by anticipation in the work of Jesus, forming a link between the Son and mankind; between the Son in his life-long suffering crowned by his passion and the struggle and suffering of those who are his.

Simeon saw the unity of both Christ’s and Mary’s mission. He saw that the Son would not grow away from his mother. He would, one might even say, continue to need her. He who had constantly drawn upon her substance, on his way to birth, wishes her still to use her whole being for his loving purpose. By serving him in this way, she serves not only her son, but his friends.

There will always be those like John the beloved disciple, who are led by the Son to know and love his mother. Others are led by Mary to the fuller loving knowledge of the Son. The love of every Christian for God is conditioned, qualified, whether he or she knows it or not, by the relationship between Jesus and his mother.

Through her silence, her contemplation, Mary creates the atmosphere through which

we can most fruitfully respond to and receive the Lord's mysteries. Nor can we find entry into the innermost world of the Son save through the hidden silence of her heart. Who that ignores Mary will seek and find the needful time, detachment and calm for converse with the Lord? Prayer calling on her or recalling her introduces us into Mary's contemplation: and this through the Spirit, the one source of her own and all true prayer, draws us into the contemplation of the Son.

In short, Mary's maternal sufferings before and in the birth of her son have had their part to play in bringing us Jesus who is himself their blessed fruit and consequence. Therefore he assigns her a privileged part in his own anguish and in its fruit. That fruit is the family of the new covenant towards which Simeon directs Mary. Into this Mary, whose heart was pierced by a sword, leads all those who participate in the mission of the Cross and Resurrection; all those willing to fill up in themselves for his body's sake that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ. Therein she lives eternally as Mother of the Church – yes, Mother of all living through her son and saviour Jesus, whom here we present and by whom and in whom we are presented to the God who saves us.

*Fr Dennis*



## Christmas in Sierra Leone

***'Sadness is written all over the faces of the people'***

At the start of the New Year it would be wonderful if we could report a dramatic improvement in the Ebola epidemic in Waterloo SL. Sadly, although the situation has improved considerably in much of the country since early December, the number of new cases in Waterloo is persistently high, with about five patients diagnosed every day. Official figures from the National Emergency website show that Waterloo and its surrounding rural district remain an Ebola 'hot-spot', and is one of the worst-hit areas in the country: 110 new cases in the last three weeks, 47 of them during the first week of January alone, and a horrifying total of 1,100 confirmed cases since the start of the local outbreak nearly five months ago. The human cost is unimaginable.

Its usual projects all 'on hold' at the moment, the Waterloo Partnership is continuing to concentrate its resources on providing humanitarian aid to victims of Ebola. It costs the charity about £2,500 a month to feed 60 vulnerable children - including 20 Ebola orphans - and in addition 100 or so people at any one time who have been placed in 21-day quarantine, enforced after an Ebola death or diagnosis in the family. The more cases, the more 'contacts' in quarantine, especially if the Ebola patient lived in a multi-occupied compound.

The Chair of W.P. in Sierra Leone, Badara Mansaray, was busy on Christmas Day, 'topping up' essential supplies of bottled water, firewood, rice, sardines and baby milk to homes in a compound which was starting its fourth consecutive period of quarantine. Of the original eight families living in the compound, two had been wiped out by Ebola. Two residents who were showing symptoms of Ebola had been sent to the UK holding/treatment centre at Kerry Town

on Christmas Eve, and two more in the early hours of Christmas Day, so the 21-day quarantine was starting all over again from the beginning. The charity was also able to supply ten families living in another quarantined compound, fifty people in all, with more than ten children under six, and two nursing mothers. None of these people are allowed to leave their homes to search for food; but the WP is able to supply food quickly to allow quarantine to begin, and to prevent absconding.

Badara described Christmas in the 'other' Waterloo: 'Thank you for thinking about our community during this sad period. Our Christmas was quiet and most people stayed home. A brief church service was held at St Barnabas church next to my house and worshippers returned home just after that. This happened all over the community. A few children roamed the streets but very few adults could be seen. Normally at this time the streets used to be bustling with a lot of activities and celebrations with masquerades dominating. This is the first festive season in my whole life that the streets and the markets have been completely deserted. Today is a different day. Sadness is written all over the faces of people.'

'We will be back to work (delivering food supplies) in the morning', wrote Badara. Thank you for your prayers and support, which enables the WP to continue with this work of feeding the hungry during this grim epidemic.

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**Linda Nye**

*The opening paragraphs of this report have been updated to reflect the current situation. Ed: January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015*



## *A Nice Letter to the Editor*

I had occasion to visit the Saint Faith's website the other evening, and I have to say how impressed I was with its content, and indeed, how easy it is to navigate through its pages.

Judging by the content, there is obviously a lot going on within the parish. I was particularly drawn to the Christmas Tree Festival, and the sight of all those trees, so colourfully decorated, made it feel that Christmas is just around the corner.

The Family Support Group was something else that drew my attention, and Mrs Little has to be commended for all that she is doing to help those who have so valiantly put their lives on the line for their Country.

Originally from the Woolton area of Liverpool, I moved to Scotland in 1987. Although I feel that Scotland is my home now, I do miss the warmth and humour of the Liverpool people. Perhaps you would be kind enough to wish all those associated with Saint Faith's, a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Regards and all good wishes,

## **Eric Dilworth**

Galston,  
Ayrshire,  
Scotland.



## **100 Club Draw Winners**

**December 2014**

1	148	David Jones
2	53	T Cleary
3	171	Judith Moizer

## **Parson Woodforde's Diary, 1777**

**Eric Salisbury** has supplied a scan of two pages of extracts from Parson Woodforde's Diary, published in 1924. Apart from the interesting description of St Faith's Fair (the excuse for printing these extracts), the later and almost matter of fact account of abominable sexual behaviour shows, should any proof be needed, that there is, sadly, nothing new under the sun.

“Oct. 17. We then set forth and Mr. du Quesne with us for St. Faith's Fair which begins to-day, and going there the road was crowded with People. St. Faith is about 4 miles North of Norwich. It is a very large Fair for all things and lasts for a fortnight—a great concourse of People there. Sir Harbord-Harbord and Sir Wm. Jernegan we saw there, the latter is a very handsome young Man. We rode about the Fair till 2 o'clock and then went off. We had some oysters for which I paid 0. 0.6. (*i.e. 6d in old money*) Sir Wm. Jernegan overtook us and rode with us some way— he is a mighty agreeable man. Mr. du Quesne went home with Sir Willm by Promise. Sir Willm's coach and four there with the children. Mr. du Quesne being deficient in cash I lent him 1.1.0 (*i.e. a guinea.*)

Oct. 26. Gave poor John Grant this morning 0.0.6. Upon yesterday's Norwich Paper the Revd. Benjamin Russen Master of the Charity School at Bethnal Green and who has a Wife and six children, was tried at the Old Bailey for a Rape on the Body of one Ann Mayne only ten years of age, of which he was convicted and received sentence of Death. Three more indictments found against him on other children. I read Prayers and Preached this afternoon at Weston.”

By way of footnote, our patron's association with Norfolk is well documented. The Fair presumably takes its name from the village of Horsham St Faith, whose story – and connection with our patron - is recorded on our website (put Horsham St Faith into the search engine). The nearby airfield bears St Faith's name, as does Norwich crematorium, where the editor's father's body was cremated. And a further footnote: another entertaining snippet from Parson Woodforde's diary, a couple of weeks before he visited St Faith's fair. Not very ecumenical!

“Harry Dunnell behaved very impertinent this morning to me because I would not privately name his child for him, he having one Child before named privately by me and never had it brought to Church afterwards. He had the Impudence to say that he would send it to some Meeting House to be named etc. – very saucy indeed!”

## Christmas Tree Festival 2014



### HOW DID WE DO THAT?

Another most successful and happy Tree Festival closed its doors before Christmas, having enjoyed welcoming many visitors and well wishers, all happy to support our colourful festival. Yet again this year is professed to be the 'best yet' according to the many enthusiastic entries in the visitors book (*extracts on the next page. Ed.*). Not only have we at St. Faith's had the opportunity to welcome people into our church during this delightful time, but also have pleasure in knowing the event has raised over **£6,500** for charities and church. Our thanks to all who visited and who gave so generously.

It never fails to amaze me how well St. Faith's responds to the call for duty at the time of the Tree Festival. This year without doubt has proved that the optimistic, positive and energetic way our congregation turns its talents to the occasion has most certainly been eagerly received and appreciated by our many visitors. Cubs, Beavers, Rainbows, Brownies, schools, choirs and music groups have worked together to promote our festival with resounding success. Although there is financial reward, it is the sheer pleasure of knowing how much our efforts have been appreciated by so many people, some of whom have never before visited St. Faith's, but all so thoroughly enjoyed their time with us.

Well done and special thanks to all those who once again gave so generously of their time, talent and enthusiasm; it could not happen without you.

**Margaret Houghton**

## Our visitors said....

First visit – great! Will come back next year  
Love it – Indigo Vibe and the Florentines  
Lovely afternoon in fantastic church. Feel like Christmas now  
What a lovely idea – beautiful  
Nice lunch and seeing people I know. Lots of hard work by very caring people  
What a lovely warm atmosphere  
Very beautiful display and all for good causes. Praying for God’s blessing on you  
First time here – really inspiring. So moving and beautiful  
Gorgeous as ever - gets better every year  
Very inspiring – makes me appreciate the voluntary sector  
Wonderful to see so many worthy causes – a beautiful visual display is a bonus!  
Memorable carol service – superb!  
A very good departure – interested customer  
Quickly becoming a family tradition. Always so beautiful  
Can’t wait to be blessed in this lovely church  
A great as ever - a lovely Advent tradition. Every year gets better, all so deserving  
So enjoyed the community of the church and whole experience  
The jazz orchestra was excellent and the trees and refreshments superb  
Lovely displays in a beautiful church  
Brilliant! Creative and heart-warming!  
Epic!!



www.digitals.com 4/2017

## Picture Parade

Six pages of photographs this month, reflecting a busy and colourful Advent and Christmas season at St Faith’s. They mostly speak for themselves, but here’s a key.

**Page 1:** the trees arrive, shrouded and mysterious, ready for their unveiling and adorning. They are lovingly decorated, as the fruits of the labours of St Faith’s Jam Factory arrive. The opening event is the Toy Service, with the cubs in evidence.

**Page 2:** the first Advent candle is lit and the altar is wreathed in holy smoke. A child poses by a tree, and Rick poses by his street organ.

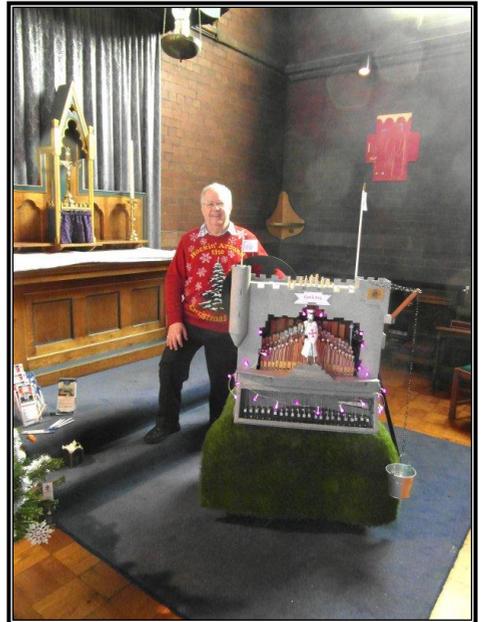
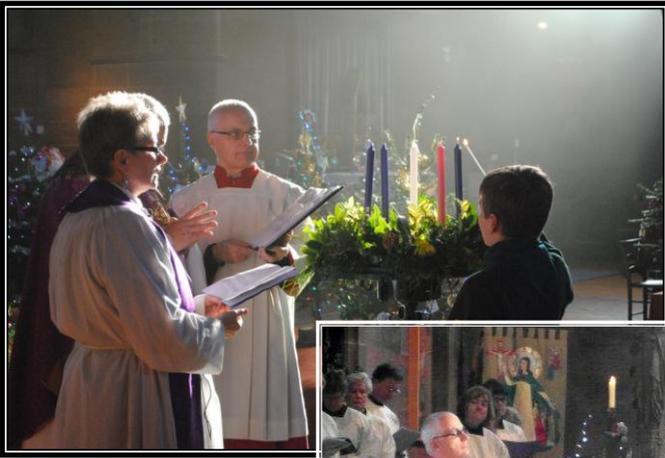
**Page 3:** Margaret mans her stall; Stanfield choir sings to us; the church is crowded for the Military Band Services’ Support Group carol service.

**Page 4:** Excited uniformed children – and a contemplative Ruth manning Ranees’ stall; Merchant’s music: a (not so) Little Drummer Boy and a senior choir on song.

**Page 5:** When it’s all over, the trees depart and the brooms come out. Soon time for making Christingles for the children who come on Christmas Eve.

**Page 6:** Jesus bids us shine; at the Midnight the crib awaits, then receives, the baby Jesus. Finally, a relieved-looking Brenda after preaching her first sermon at St Faith’s.













# 'We Will Remember Them'



Our last issue carried an introduction to the ongoing research into the lives and deaths of the men from St Faith's who gave their lives in two world wars. The church website (accessed from the 'In Memoriam' link on the home page) now carries the latest information and a growing sequence of brief biographies. Below, **John Woodley** tells how he tracked down one elusive name.

## Jesse Hutchinson

A casual remark at the end of the Remembrance Sunday service by Rev. Sue set me on a time consuming and challenging puzzle to the origins and format of the commemorative record of the fallen men of St. Faith's Church. Why had the names been put together in the way that they had? Who had compiled the list, and, more importantly, who were the men listed and what was their association with St. Faith's.

The commemorative record takes the form of a hand written list of the fallen in the two world wars. I realised early in my research that the list had been compiled in chronological order, the first death occurring in 1916 and the last in 1945. Many hours poring over a hot computer late at night has been done and the results of this research are available on the church website for all to see in the form of short biographies on each of the men.

There are still several names to complete but one (Jesse Hutchinson) had been particularly difficult to fathom out as I couldn't find any records of him. There was a record of a Jesse Hutchinson having lived in Somerville Road in the 1911 census, but at the age of 39 at the outbreak of WWI, I thought it improbable that he would be the right man, being too old to be involved in conflict. Another source of information is the Commonwealth Graves Commission, which lists all known casualties in the major conflicts of the 20th century. Searching their online records failed to produce a match. Further research found the death of a Jesse Hutchinson in the West Derby registration district in 1923 and so with this I spent a memorable afternoon in Waterloo Library looking through microfilmed copies of the Crosby Herald. Finally, a result! A transcript of the article relating to his funeral appears below.

“The funeral of Mr. Jesse Hutchinson, of 28, Somerville-road, Waterloo, who died from wounds contracted at Gallipoli, on Sunday, January 4th, took place on Wednesday morning. A special service was held at St. Faith's Church, Waterloo, before the interment at St. Luke's Church, Great Crosby. The deceased gentleman had always been associated with church music. He joined St. Margaret's Church choir, Burton-on-Trent, in 1884, where he stayed until 1895, when he went to St.

Paul's Church, in the same district. He next joined All Saints' Rangemen (*Rangemore?*) in 1899 and concluded his musical career at St. Faith's, Waterloo, where he first appeared in 1906. He served with distinction in the great war, "joining up" in 1914, and served throughout the Gallipoli campaign at Salva Bay in the Royal Naval Air Services and was invalided out of the service in 1916. For sixteen years he was a popular member of the Marine A.F.C. and the Victoria Park Bowling Club.

The service was conducted both at the church and the graveside by the Rev. T. H. Florence, M.A. (curate of St. Faith's Church, Waterloo)."

**John Woodley**

## Christmas isn't over yet!



On the fifth day of Christmas, it may be pushing it a bit to say that the festivities really don't last long enough. Quite a few family cooks may feel that they've done their bit already, and then some. But for many Britons, the Christmas spirit only lasts until the end of Boxing Day, even though this year the country won't fully get back into working gear until January 5th. That's when we get all those guides in the papers about "New Year, New You" (yeah, right), and the shops go into Spartan mode, with a chilling emphasis on diet and exercise products. Can I just say: this is wrong, wrong, wrong!

We are, folks, only approaching the middle of the Christmas season, properly considered. Because the real feast, the Christian one, begins on Christmas Eve and goes on for 12 days - remember the carol? - right through until the Epiphany, on January 6. We shouldn't even be considering putting away the fairy lights. Christmas should only be getting properly under way now, in a crescendo of festivity until Twelfth Night, when the Three Kings come to baby Jesus.

Certainly, that's how Christmas used to be done. December through to Christmas Eve is, was, should be, Advent, or a time for preparing for the feast. And that means that, come December 24, we're up, or should be, for 12 days of having fun. Today you should be winding up, not winding down. Twelfth Night should be when the party season reaches its climax, not when we pack away the decorations.

The problem is, the secular calendar at this time of year is pretty well the opposite of the traditional way of doing things. The office party season started at the beginning of December; the Christmas sales began with Black Friday (the day after Thanksgiving - an American import to the festive season, thanks for that) - and so by the time we get to Christmas itself, we're partied out and up for abstinence.

It has a lot to do with the commercialisation of the season; obviously, getting people

in a festive mood early is a great strategy for retailers. A dispiriting survey by the Salvation Army before Christmas, reported in this paper, suggested that for most Britons, the real festive activity is shopping - not carols, and not churchgoing.

Well, there are good reasons for keeping the celebrations going for another week. One is that New Year's Day is a terrible time to be starting diet and exercise regimes. It's the coldest, bleakest time of the year, a time for starchy carbs, plum pudding and fairy lights if ever there was one.

The historian Nick Groom, in his book *The Seasons*, put his finger on the problem. "Today, decorations can go up alarmingly early - even in the first week of October - although there seems to be a common consent that after Bonfire Night is an appropriate time. But they also come down much earlier, too. The season of Christmastide has, in other words, shifted forward as if it now expresses an impatient and premature desire for gratification. The result is that there are two cold months of winter following Christmas."

Dead right. Our forebears were more in tune with the psychology of winter, when they insisted that Christmas should be in full swing for 12 days, and then carry on in a muted form through January until the feast of Candlemas, on February 2, when we celebrate the feast of the Purification of the Virgin after the birth of Christ.

January is, when you think about it, a time for hunkering down around the fire - or whatever our equivalent of the fire is - and making the most of indoors and having people round for dinner. The Victorian guide *Gunter's Oracle* (1830) observed: "January is perhaps of all the months in the year the most favourable to enjoyments of the table: then it is, that the gastrologist, vigorous, in high spirits, and with a voracious and insatiable appetite, is a most welcome guest... at the tables of the rich."

The very least we can do is to keep up the celebration of the twelfth day of Christmas, the Epiphany, including the evening before, when people used to go to town with entertainments - Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is so called because it was written for this very time. The French serve galettes du rois on the night - kings' tart - with a bean in the middle, and whoever gets the bean is the queen or king, and can boss everyone else around. I try to have friends round then, to see out the season with party games.

So, let's keep the fun going. This is only the middle of the real Christmas season. There's plenty of time for winter gloom afterwards.

**Melanie McDonagh**

*The Sunday Telegraph*



# From the Registers 1939-40



Our last dredging ended in April 1939 as the Second World War loomed. Sunday April 2nd was billed as Sunday Next Before Easter, rather than Palm Sunday: there were 257 at the 10.45 Sung Eucharist, and three priests, but just the one communicant. John Brierley came to take the Three Hours on Good Friday, following which there was an impressive total of 1,094 attendances at the seven services on Easter Day.

Low Sunday is so termed for what seems to be the first time; in the weeks succeeding, the even tenor of worship and statistics is maintained, with little to catch the browser's eye. Ascension Day boasts four Holy Communion, and a week or so later 'S. Faith's Guild' is squeezed in on a weekday, although what form the service took, then and on another occasions, is unrecorded. There are three celebrations of Corpus Christi; the Guild makes another appearance, and in early July a service simply bears the name of C.E.M.S (Church of England Men's Society, one supposes).

On Sunday July 30th, the vicar entered 'D.F.(p)', and David Ford scratched this out and signed his name in full to enshrine what was presumably meant to be his last service at St Faith's. However, he then signs in again as celebrant a fortnight later, before being seen no more.

War was declared on September 1st, but the fact is not reflected in the registers. In fact little of any note is reflected hereafter. St Faith is remembered on her day, a Friday, with communions at the early hour of 6.45 am and later at 8 and 10.30.

Amidst the carefully logged but un-illuminating succession of autumnal and winter worship, this writer almost missed a unique entry on the second Sunday in advent. Squeezed in between the now usual 'Children' at 2.15 (led by the faithful Reader George Houldin) and Evensong at 3.15, Mr Schofield officiates at a clearly very brief service at 3.00 pm, intriguingly labelled merely as 'Decorators'. Pausing to look at communicant and attendance figures for that and surrounding Sundays, we find that the traditional 8.00 am celebration now pulls in far fewer than was once the case (between 35 and 80), as does the 6 pm evensong (usually not much above 100 and sometimes lower). The 10.45 sung eucharist attracts larger numbers, but is still well down on the glory days. The Houldin church history puts this down to the effect of the war, which was also responsible for stopping the Christmas midnight service (blackout restrictions). Whatever the reasons, Christmas Day (including the substitute Christmas Eve Festal Evensong at 3.15 pm, with 251 present) had a total of 505 attendees over the daytime services but only 286 communicants.

As the first year of the war ends, Mr Schofield records a total of communicants for 1939 as 6,026: down by nearly 1,000 over two years. The high water mark for any

recorded year would appear to have been 1934, with a grand total of 7,981 logged. And so to 1940. A familiar name appears for the first time on Wednesday, January 10th when the preacher at an afternoon 'EMS' service is H.M. (Hyam Mark) Luft, eventually to become headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School.

At Easter, there were 365 communicants and a respectable 868 attending at the day's services. The steady and unremarkable procession of worship continues, until the signing in of Eric Olaf Beard on May 1st - a new curate, arriving already priested, he took his place as a regular celebrant at once.

J.S. is away for all of August; soon after he returns he makes a rare marginal entry for a very significant event on September 23rd: 'St Faith's damaged by high explosive bomb.' George Houldin's history tells the story of this happening and our narrow escape from more serious damage.

*"In 1940 the fabric had a most miraculous escape, for a bomb fell a yard or two from the north wall of the Nave, buried itself in the soil and blew up the heating-pipe gratings, dislodged one or two pews and the flooring thereabouts, upset the foundations supporting the north wall and damaged the pulpit. Outside all looked well, for not a window was broken and only the cross on the roof at the west end was missing, which fell so complete that the impression is there in the asphalt below to this day. Tribute for the care of the Church during these anxious days must be paid to the Vicar and Rev. Eric Beard, the assistant priest, who were out at all hours during an "alarm." Both they and Jim Burgess must have put in countless hours of overtime before the coming of 1945 and of peace."*

Apart from the bomb, and a later passing note of a collection for Earl Haig's Fund, you wouldn't know there was a war on nationally or at St Faith's ('Don't mention the war!', as Basil Fawlty might have said). The pattern of faithful daily worship never falters, although the slow but steady decline in attendances continues. So it comes as a real surprise to your scribe to see, as 1940 ends, Mr Schofield recording the year's attendances as 7565. An increase of some 1,500? Surely not!

Next time: creative accountancy unmasked as a discrepancy of nearly 2,000 is uncovered through diligent and somewhat tedious ferreting.

**Chris Price**

## The Ordinands of St. Faith's

Most folk at St Faith's are, however vaguely, aware that our church has fostered a goodly number of vocations to the priesthood since its foundation, but until now there has been no formal tally of them.



So now, based on what can be gleaned from a century of records and, more importantly, memories of those of us who've been around a while, we have begun to put together a list of the men, and more recently, women, who in one way or another, can trace their call to the ministry to their time here.

The total is already an impressive 34, but this is a work in progress, and changes and additions seem likely. Watch this space – and feel free to make suggestions or amendments! We aren't aware of any central records in existence, and wonder whether there are any names missing from the early decades of St Faith's existence.

Nicholas S F Alldritt  
Graham Bryson Atherton  
John Edwin Bebb  
Robert Clarke (Bobby) Bell  
Gerard (Ged) James Callacher  
Raymond Clark  
Derek G Clawson  
Lancelot Hepper Cradock-Watson  
Myles Cooper Davies  
Lindsay Ramsay Davies \*  
Lucy Davis (née Nye)  
Paul Dawson  
Margaret Dixon (née Goodwin)  
Michael S Finlay  
Martin Freeman  
Henry Lionel Gibbs  
George S Gilford  
Elizabeth Halbert (née Prothero)  
Nicholas Henshall  
Grant Holmes  
Martin Jones  
Frank Lee  
Nigel McCulloch  
Denise McDougall  
Colin Bryan Oxenforth  
Joe French Parker  
Russell Perry  
Brian D Prothero  
Peter Gwilym Roberts  
Robert Alexander Kennedy Runcie  
Peter Ryan  
Dennis Austin Smith  
Frank Wilson  
Jackie Parry \*\*



\* killed during WWI before completing training. \*\* Due to commence training.

## Fr Charles R.I.P.

There have been many milestones in our church's story, but probably none more significant than the coming of Fr Charles Billington as vicar in 1966. His time with us saw many changes and developments, much controversy and more than a little fun. Since his recent death, many tales have been told and anecdotes enlarged upon.



The editor is one of the survivors from those heady days and, like his contemporaries, will never forget Charles. His funeral at Llansannan was attended by a contingent of the Men's Group. There they heard Fr Dennis's tribute to a remarkable priest, who without doubt shaped the church we know and love today. Rest in peace, Charles.



Born on the Wirral on St Matthew's Day, 21st September, 1930, Charles went to Birkenhead School before doing two years National Service and then reading for general arts degree at the University of Leeds. As an undergraduate he lived at the Community of the Resurrection's Hostel in Leeds and then spent two years preparing for Ordination at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield.

In 1955 he was made Deacon and went to Holy Trinity, Carlisle, to serve his title. Priested the following year, he remained in Carlisle until 1959 when, wanting to test his vocation to the Religious Life, he returned to the Community of the Resurrection and spent two years in the novitiate before taking First Vows. During his five years at Mirfield he undertook the usual tasks and responsibilities of C.R. brethren – going out to parishes on Missions, leading Retreats, preaching Holy Weeks and giving spiritual direction. Life Profession of C.R. wasn't to be, and Charles left the Community in 1964 for a three month curacy spell at his childhood parish of St. Paul's, Tranmere, where, whilst under the mentorship of Fr. Richard Daintith, he met Heather, was married and at the invitation of the bishop of Hulme took up the challenging and difficult appointment of St. Aidan's, Bradford, Manchester – a tough down town parish.

Two years later, St. Faith's having been in interregnum since Fr Hassall's retirement in November, 1965, Charles accepted the invitation of Laurence Brown, Bishop of Warrington, to come to St Faith's as Vicar. In July 1966 he was inducted to the

living and those of us here at the time were privileged both to witness and to participate in what was a total transformation of the church's life and fortunes. With characteristic jollity and infectious enthusiasm Charles regenerated and revitalised a moribund St. Faith's into a lively exciting and inspirational place to worship God and experience the warmth, encouragement and support of the Christian family. Looking back now, some forty five or more years on, the six years of Charles' incumbency were, for some of us, amongst the happiest and most memorable experienced at St. Faith's and it was indeed a blessing that in our hour of need God gave us a priest of such spiritual depth and vision.

Owing to their young son Chad's asthmatic condition, at the advice of doctors, Charles and Heather left Crosby in April 1972 for a new life in the Diocese of St. Albans, Hertfordshire – the country parishes of Harrold and Carlton. Eight happy years there were followed by a short one year interval at Yeovil Marsh in Somerset, before Charles took up an appointment as Chaplain to Leybourne Grange Hospital in Kent. For four years, during which time Heather was a secretary at Sevenoaks School, Charles carried out pastoral work with the staff and patients of this hospital for the mentally afflicted. I twice stayed with Charles and the family in Kent and will not forget the unique and moving experience of Sunday eucharistic worship in the Hospital chapel.

In 1985 Charles moved north to Todmorden on the Lancashire, Yorkshire border, and became the first priest to be inducted by the newly appointed Bishop of Wakefield, David Hope. A coach party of supporters from St Faith's attended the mid week evening Induction, but within three years Charles was off again – this time to North Wales – to four village churches, including Llansannan, the place of Heather's war time evacuation. Nine years of rural, pastoral ministry brought Charles to the age of sixty seven and to retirement.

Involvement in local politics followed and in 2002 several members of St. Faith's Men's Group, to whom Charles had been Chaplain for a number of years, travelled to Abergel to share in the Mayor making ceremony and festivities of the priest turned politician!

In 2006 at the kind invitation of Fr. Neil Kelley, supported by fellow priests, friends, relatives and former parishioners, Charles returned to St. Faith's to celebrate his Golden Jubilee of Priesthood. A memorable Solemn Mass, at which I was delighted and honoured to preach, was followed by a sumptuous buffet in the parish hall and a good time was had by all.

Over what was a long and varied ministry Charles took a keen interest in Charismatic Renewal. Annual conferences, held at High Leigh, Walsingham and Ditchingham, he participated in with great enthusiasm and commitment. His entertaining disco night organisation on these occasions became both popular and legendary.

Soon after her eightieth birthday a severe stroke necessitated Heather's departure from their bungalow in Abergele to a country Nursing Home some miles away. Charles visited her regularly and I saw her a few weeks before she died, in January 2013. Charles' diabetic condition resulted in the amputation of two toes and a close encounter with death. To the delight and amazement of those of us who had seen him so seriously ill, Charles rallied, returned home from hospital and lived for a further two years before more diabetic related blood problems brought his tenure of life to an end on December 20th, 2014.

When Michael Ramsey was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury he preached on the text: "There went forth a band of men, whose hearts God had touched" (1 Sam:10 v 26). Charles was certainly one such. We give thanks to God for all that Charles gave to the Church he served so faithfully and energetically as an Anglican priest; for his enormous sense of mirth and the love and warmth of his friendship which so many of us were privileged to share and enjoy. May our very dear brother in Christ enter into the joy of his Lord and experience the fullness of the wonder, praise, love and laughter of Heaven.

***Fr Dennis***

## Congratulations

Just room to squeeze in our hearty congratulations to our doughty Treasurer, David Jones, on the award of an M.B.E. in the recent New Year Honours list.

## Christmas Postscript

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.





# Parish Directory and Church Organisations

## **VICAR**

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Tel 0151 928 3342; 07976 901389. Email [revsue85@icloud.com](mailto:revsue85@icloud.com)

## **PARISH OFFICE**

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Parish Administrator: Wendy Trussell; email: [sfsmparishoffice@btinternet.com](mailto:sfsmparishoffice@btinternet.com)

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

Revd Denise McDougall, 27 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby L23 2TL. 924 8870

## **READERS**

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

Miss Paula O'Shaughnessy, 30 Curzon Rd, L22 0NL. 286 2764 / 075823 19440

## **READER EMERITUS**

Dr Fred Nye, 23 Bonnington Ave, Crosby L23 7YJ Tel 924 2813

## **CHURCHWARDENS**

Ms Brenda Cottarel, 6 Lawton Road, Waterloo. L22 9QL. 928 4275

Mr Rick Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 2TL. 924 6267

## **ASSISTANT CHURCH WARDENS**

Mr Bill Dagnall, 14 Duddingston Ave, Crosby. L23 0SH. 928 4997

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

## **TREASURER**

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

## **PCC SECRETARY**

Mrs Lillie Wilmot, Flat 7, 3 Bramhall Rd, Waterloo L23 3XA. 920 5563

## **DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

Mr Robert Woods, [robertwoods1986@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:robertwoods1986@hotmail.co.uk). 07847 251315

## **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, 928 7330

## **SACRISTAN**

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

**SENIOR SERVER**

Ms Emily Skinner, 1 Valley Close, Crosby. L23 9TL. 931 5587

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

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

**VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICER**

Mr Gareth Griffiths, 6 Lawton Road, Waterloo. L22 9QL. 928 4275

**CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

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

**VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICER**

Mr Gareth Griffiths, 6 Lawton Road, Waterloo. L22 9QL. 928 4275

**BAPTISM BOOKINGS**

Mrs Jackie Parry. 928 0726

Mrs Brenda Cottarel. 928 4275

**BEAVER SCOUTS**

Thursday 5.00 – 6.15 pm Mike Carr. 293 3416

**CUB SCOUTS**

Thursday 6.30 – 8.00 pm. Mike Carr. 293 3416

**SCOUTS**

Thursday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. Mike Carr. 293 3416

**RAINBOWS**

Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw. 928 5204

**BROWNIE GUIDES**

Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Mary McFadyen. 284 0104

**CHOIR PRACTICE**

Friday 7.30 pm - 8.45 pm.

**MAGAZINE EDITOR and WEBSITE MANAGER**

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