



Newslink

**St Faith's Church, Great Crosby
Parish Magazine
JULY 2011**

Worship at Saint Faith's



SUNDAYS

11.00am SOLEMN MASS and Children's Church

1.00pm Holy Baptism (2nd Sunday)

6.00pm Evening Service and Benediction (1st Sunday and as announced)

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday 10.30am, Tuesday 9.30am, Wednesday 10.30am (*1662 Book of Common Prayer in S. Mary's*), Thursday 9.30am (*Holy Days only*), Friday 6.30pm, Saturday 10.30am

For the last two weeks of July and the month of August Morning Prayer replaces the Eucharist on Tuesdays and Evening Prayer replaces the Eucharist on Fridays.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

Fr. Neil and Revd. Denise 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.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND DYING

Please contact Fr. Neil at any time, day or night, if someone is ill and requires the ministry of a priest.

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, or be visited in hospital or at home, please ring the Vicarage or another member of the Ministry Team. We are always happy to make home or hospital visits to the sick and housebound so please call us to arrange this



From the Ministry Team

July 2011

Our Bishop James has set out this mission:

“A sustainable, led and transforming Christian presence in every community in the diocese to enable all to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.”

What a wonderfully inspiring challenge that is: we would do well to pray daily for its fruition.

If we share Bishop James’ vision, we also need to give some thought to whose responsibility it is to spread the Gospel in our parish, and make a commitment each to do our own share, for God has no hands but our hands.

At our recent P.C.C. Away Day we considered the “Marks of a Healthy Church”. The first mark requires us to be energized by faith (rather than just keeping things going or try to survive). Our regular worship and sacramental life may move us to experience God's love, but if we feel that the whole world needs God, that church is not just a club where we preach to the converted, then we must not stop there, for that was not the way Jesus did things.

Fortunately he also knew that we would need help, and has blessed us with the Holy Spirit so that we do have the power to spread the Gospel, and we can renew our dedication to do so as we celebrate this Whitsuntide.

We can be energized by faith by praying for knowledge of God’s will for the world, and for the power to carry this out in our community - and following this prayer with actions suggested by God as we listen to him in prayer.

There is much wrong in our society today. Within our own parish boundaries there will be households who live with domestic abuse, violence, theft, addiction, greed, poverty, neglect and many other evils. These are not just the prerogative of other suburbs or the third world; they happen here in a road near you.

Do not doubt that we, as Christians, are empowered by God to bring the love of God to this world, love which will overcome evil. If anything we do furthers the Kingdom of Heaven then it will grow in time. We only fail when we hear God's word but follow our own self-will.

Take some time, in a quiet place, to look into a positive future. Visualize, in your mind's eye, how the Kingdom of God could transform the lives of all who are burdened with sorrow and despair right here in Crosby and Waterloo. Not only global heroes like Martin Luther King can say "I have a dream". If we bring our hope and faith - and action - before God in prayer, we can succeed. We too are disciples.

Yours in Christ,

Cynthia

The Waterloo Partnership is delighted to present ...

Barbershop and all that Jazz!

An evening of Barbershop close harmony singing and the exciting music of a Jazz orchestra on Friday September 23rd in St Faith's Church.

Come and hear the Wayfarers Chorus with their unique sound of true Barbershop singing and the contrasting sounds of a Jazz orchestra playing both modern and traditional tunes to suit all tastes.

Tickets available soon - but book the date NOW!

Rick Walker



Sam's Swansong...



Fr. Neil writes:

Parishioners were sorry to hear that Sam Austin will be leaving the United Benefice on July 24th to prepare for a move to Aldenham School, Hertfordshire, as Assistant Director of Music. In the three years that Sam has been with us he has done much to develop the musical tradition in our two churches, not just by building on the excellent work of his predecessors but in bravely encouraging us in a few new directions too. The Patronal Jazz Mass, even more Graham Kendrick and a latin requiem mass for Remembrance Sunday are just three different strands of Sam's truly catholic musical tastes. Compline by candlelight with orchestral accompaniment and Christmas Handbells are also highlights which spring to mind. Sam's easy manner has made him a joy to work with. Unusually perhaps, for Vicar and Director of Music, we have not had one difficult moment in the whole time we have worked together!



Whilst we are sorry to bid farewell to Sam, we are naturally pleased for this development in his career and wish him and Sian well in their new life 'down south'. Both churches now have to take stock of the situation and, following consultation with both choirs, we hope to find a way forward which continues to build on the musical excellence of the past whilst being realistic to the resources we have – both musical and financial – neither being what they were even 10 years ago. However, I am confident that with open and honest consultation, and prayer, we will be able to recommend to the PCCs in both churches a way forward which is both financially manageable and musically sustainable.

Sam's last Sunday will be Sunday 24th July and following the 11am Eucharist there will be an opportunity to say farewell to him.

Joint PCCs' Away Day 2011

“Going for Growth”

Geoff Dunn

(Parish Office Manager for the United Benefice)

This year's joint PCCs Away Day was held at the Seafarers Centre in Waterloo on 21st May. The theme was “Going for growth” which is very much in accord with the Bishop James' mission for the Diocese of Liverpool (read more on the Diocese website: <http://www.liverpool.anglican.org>).



The day was opened with prayer and an introduction by Fr Neil.

This was followed by a look back at how we had done with the actions agreed at the last away day in 2010. A number were agreed as needing to be brought forward for continued attention this year:

1. *Back to Church Sunday* (see www.backtochurch.co.uk).
2. *Ritual & Tradition explained in "plain English"* – to go on SF website.
3. *Healing Services – Ministry Team to agree how to incorporate into 1st Sunday of month 6pm service.*
4. *Mission groups at SF & SM – should they be a joint group?*
5. *How can we grow numerically? – Subject of 2011 Away Day.*

The second session of the day was dedicated to assessing our churches' well being i.e. just how "fit & healthy" do we judge ourselves to be. "The Seven Marks of a Healthy Church" that were used in 2009 were discussed and agreed as still relevant, however an eighth mark was added which was felt to be of vital importance for our own situation. This was that a fit and healthy church "Is Financially Self-Supporting"

Those attending then broke into four syndicates and scored each of the eight marks between 0 and 10 (where 0 = poor, 5 = satisfactory and 10 = perfect). The scores were averaged and produced the following result:

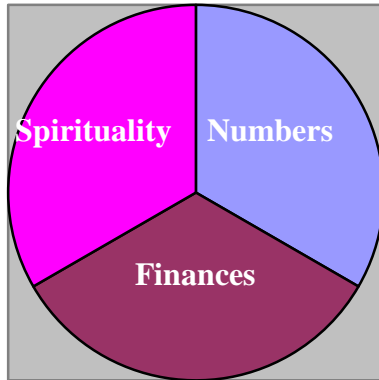
Our Scores for Marks of a Healthy Church

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Energized by faith										
2 Outward-looking focus										
3 Seeks to find out what God wants										
4 Faces the cost of change and growth										
5 Operates as a community										
6 Makes room for all										
7 Does a few things and does them well										
8 Is financially self-supporting										

The group then discussed what was meant by "growth" and it was it was agreed that this should apply equally to:

- Spirituality*
- Numbers attending church*
- Financial well being*

All three have to be in balance so that each area can thrive.



With this agreement on what growth means to us, the group split into the same four syndicates and brainstormed actions for each of the eight marks which would enable us to score them more highly if the actions were successfully implemented

The syndicates brought back their suggestions for action and shared them with the whole group. Everyone was then given 6 votes to place against the actions in order to provide a clear focus of what should be the priority actions during the next 12 months. The voting is summarised in the tables below.

Summary of scores for the Marks & the Suggested Actions

Mark		Score out of 10	Total Votes for Suggested Actions
1	Energised by Faith	7	5
2	Outward Looking Focus	5	7
3	Seeks to Find Out What God Wants	5	5
4	Faces the Cost of Change and Growth	6	31
5	Operates as a Community	6	24
6	Makes Room for All	6	24
7	Does a Few Things and Does them Well	7	0
8	Is Financially Self-Supporting	5	43

Top Scoring Suggested Action (6 or more votes)

Suggested Action	Votes
More publicity about financial situation (put simply)	12
Youth: more events – musical, theatre, activities with young leaders	10
Strategy for “fit for purpose” buildings	8
Revamp/redesign website – more user friendly	7
Land evaluation	7
Welcome badges	6

Fr Neil closed the event with prayer and by thanking all of those who took part and so willingly gave up their Saturday morning.

Following the meeting, it has been agreed that three groups will be formed to take forward these actions:

Financial Well-Being (including buildings & land)

Youth Development

Public Appearance/Publicity

Many of us are already working in these areas and have already agreed to be members of the groups. However, membership is open to anyone who would like to contribute – if you would like to join, please just let Fr Neil know.

The groups will be meeting very soon to establish action plans for the coming 12 months and these will be submitted to the Ministry Team for agreement prior to implementation.

All in all, the Away Day has produced an excellent set of suggestions and we must now ensure these are taken forward to produce real benefit for St Faith's and St Mary's.

Lord, Teach me to Pray



I cannot pray **‘Our’**, if my faith has no room for others and their needs.

I cannot pray **‘Father’**, if I do not demonstrate this relationship to God in my daily living.

I cannot pray **‘who art in heaven’**, if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.

I cannot pray **‘hallowed be thy name’**, if I am not striving, with God’s help, to be holy

I cannot **pray ‘thy kingdom come’**, if I am unwilling to accept God’s rule in my life.

I cannot pray **‘thy will be done’**, if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life.

I cannot pray **‘on earth as it is in heaven’**, unless I am truly ready to give myself to God’s service, here and now.

I cannot pray **‘give us this day our daily bread’**, without expending honest effort for it, or if I would withhold from my neighbour the bread I receive.

I cannot pray **‘forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us’**, if I harbour a grudge against anyone.

I cannot pray **‘lead us not into temptation’**, if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.

I cannot pray **‘deliver us from evil’**, if I am not prepared to fight evil with my life and prayer.

I cannot pray **‘thine is the kingdom’**, if I am unwilling to obey the King.

I cannot pray **‘thine is the power and the glory’**, if I am seeking power for myself and my own glory first.

I cannot pray **‘for ever and ever’**, if I am anxious about each day’s affairs.

I cannot pray **‘Amen’**, unless I can honestly say: cost what it may, this is my prayer.

100+ Club Draw Winners for June 2011

1	178	P and M Goodrich
2	48	C. Spence
3	121	J.R.Knight
4	8	J. Weston



Funny You Should Say That...

An elderly Italian man, who lived on the outskirts of Rimini, went to his local church for confession. When the priest slid open the panel in the confessional, the man said:

“Father, during World War II, a beautiful Jewish woman from our neighbourhood knocked urgently on my door and asked me to hide her from the Nazis. So I hid her in my attic.”

The priest replied: “That was a wonderful thing you did, and you have no need to confess that.”

“There is more to tell, Father. She started to repay me with sexual favours. This happened several times a week, and sometimes twice on Sundays.”

The priest said, “That was a long time ago and by doing what you did, you placed the two of you in great danger, and two people under those circumstances can easily succumb to the weakness of the flesh. However, if you are truly sorry for your actions, you are indeed forgiven.”

“Thank you, Father. That’s a great load off my mind. I do have one more question.”

“Should I tell her that the war is over...?”





Christian Aid Week 2011

Many thanks to our team of collectors who raised a record total of £1157.71 this year and to those who helped to count. £25 of this came as late contributions, thanks to the persistence of one of our volunteers in visiting neighbours who had returned from holiday, and envelopes posted at the vicarage. It really is worth posting the vicar's address through the doors which are not opened! A significant amount was gift aided, which ultimately adds considerably to the total.

Food for thought... seen by the queue at the motorway cafe on the M6

'In the next 45 seconds a child will die of malaria. By donating £3, the price of the sandwich you are about to buy, you could provide a mosquito net to prevent another child from dying. It will take 45 seconds to text your donation to Christian Aid.'

This gives us some idea of the effectiveness of each £1 we collected on the streets of our parish. Well done everyone!

We should not keep quiet about poverty

Following the Christian Aid joint service at Waterloo United Free Church, we also sent off cards to the Prime Minister urging him to ensure Britain takes a leading role in enabling poor countries to invest in sustainable energy and development in the fight to halt climate change. The cards also asked him to help developing countries to raise revenue by insisting that multi-national companies pay proper taxes on the resources they tap in the countries in which they operate

Collecting is not enough on its own to remove poverty unless we change the systems which keep people poor.

Kathy Zimak



Treasurer's Annual Report 2010

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), a report was presented by me on the financial affairs of the church for the year ended 31 December 2010. St Faith's was formally registered as a charity at the beginning of 2010 and the Annual Report now has to be lodged with the Charity Commission as well as the Liverpool Diocese. All our stationery and cheques have to bear the Registered Charity number.

It was very encouraging to note that planned giving (monthly standing orders and weekly envelopes) passed the £40K level but we are still falling short of meeting the basic level of Diocesan Parish Share. **Our average weekly income of £3,370 did not meet the monthly Parish Share of £3,694** (now £3,731 in 2011). The Diocese has, however, launched a review of the Parish Share – so fingers crossed!!

The reclamation of Gift Aid continues to be a vital source of income for St Faith's but the transitional relief that was applied after tax changes in the 2008 Budget has stopped. This means that we shall have to ask people to review their giving, otherwise our income will drop.

Legacies continue to be another important source of income for the parish and we are always very grateful to those who remember St Faith's in their Will.

Fundraising continues apace and we were grateful for the Talents' Scheme, table sales, jumble sales, social events and, particularly, the Saturday Recitals and the second Christmas Tree Festival. Income exceeded £3,000 for the Recitals and there was a surplus of £1,700 from the Tree Festival after donations to the charities.

As well as looking to generate new sources of income, the church keeps its expenditure under constant review. The cost of church activities (Ministry costs and church running expenses) fell by about 6.5%. There is, however, an outstanding gas bill to be paid.

At the recent PCC Away Day, members expressed the wish for more information about our financial situation – put simply! I hope that this brief report is helpful and gives you a few facts and figures to consider.

Anyone who is not currently in the planned giving scheme – if you would like to give through a standing order or the weekly envelopes – please let me know and we will be happy to oblige! Similarly, if you are a taxpayer and do not currently give under the Gift Aid scheme, please ask for a form. Thank you all for your support.

David Jones

Treasurer

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Never known to fail.

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, faithful Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother, O Holy Mary Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity.

(Make Request).

There are none that can withstand your powers. Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3 Times).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3 times).

Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine. **C.R.**

This prayer must be said for three days and after that the request will be granted and the prayer must be published. 40727

The Power of Prayer

Chris Price

Brought up as a very conventional middle-of-the-road member of the Church of England (country village church, Sunday morning Mattins, communion on special occasions), prayer for me was very much shaped by that pattern of public intercessions and set formal prayers and, in due course, the personal formulas suggested by confirmation training when at university at Oxford. This latter experience led me to a wide range of church practice in that church-crowded city, and the first experience of ‘smells and bells’ in the incense-wreathed, many-altared shrine of St Mary Magdalene’s. There too I became familiar with the concept of prayer not merely in the established post-Reformation style of direct address to God, but to, and through the saints in general and the Blessed Virgin Mary in particular.

In half a century of worship at St Faith's, where Catholic practice is followed and taught, but rightly never insisted upon, I have grown used to this avenue of prayer. I recall Fr Peter Cavanagh, one-time curate here, speaking of Mary as operating the heavenly telephone switchboard of prayer, through which calls to the godhead are routed. Though still thinking in terms of the Protestant direct line, especially for private calls, I was, and am, at ease with the parallel concept of 'to' and 'through' prayer, as used largely in our corporate prayer in worship at St Faith's.

But what of our Roman Catholic brethren? Coming from a background where they were a sequestered minority, it was intriguing to settle in one of the few parts of the country where 'grass roots' Roman Catholic observance was a major, if not in some places *the* major, worship pattern. I have become used to the local habit of prayer requests and acknowledgements of prayers seemingly answered, being featured in local papers, and familiar with the custom of attributing such successes to the direct intercession of a variety of saints and of course, to the Blessed Virgin herself. But the entry above, culled recently from a local free sheet, has given me pause for thought once more.

There is of course the terminology. Mary is the 'most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel' and 'Queen of Heaven and Earth' – common enough avocations, at least in Catholic worship. Then there is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the immaculate conception in the phrase 'born without sin'. But, apart from the passing references to 'the Mother of the son of God', Our Lord plays no part in this prayer sequence as the recipient of prayer and the granter of heavenly favours: Mary most definitely has pride of place.

However, what most engages my attention is the almost threatening level of some of the wording. The intercession is 'never known to fail' (just how this is substantiated is hard to say) and 'there are none who can withstand (her) prayers' (does this mean that some, in heaven and earth, have tried to withstand her prayers and failed?) The ritual must be observed 'for three days', after which the request 'will be granted' and the prayer 'must be published'. To me this smacks of triumphalist dogma and harsh exclusivity, and reawakens the dormant 'middle church' Anglican distaste of such things from my religious upbringing.

It would be entirely wrong and uncharitable to condemn this form of devotion: it does not necessarily reflect official Roman Catholic teaching anyway, and it clearly seems to work for some. If it is viewed as a natural and logical extension to the ultimate extreme of standard Christian doctrine about prayer, how does one draw the line between acceptable belief and dangerous excess. When and where does piety become dogma? I would be glad to learn more and hear other opinions. I may even put in a call to that heavenly switchboard...



Finding Saint Faith (again)

A chance discovery during a holiday in Pembrokeshire is the church in the village of Lamphey, which also houses the impressive remains of Lamphey Palace, one of the palatial properties of the mediaeval Bishops of St Davids.

As the extracts below from websites show, the name of the place and the actual dedication of the church, vary considerably, and I have been unable to find out whether the 'Faith' element in the dedication refers to 'our' saint herself or is merely derived from the description of the place as 'The Church of faith'.

If it is the case that the village itself derives its name from the church's dedication, then it is remotely possible that we have come across the first example of a whole community named after our well-travelled patroness! It seems to be an active and well-maintained building, but locked doors prevented further investigation.

Whatever the case, it seems to be the second establishment in Wales to bear the name of St Faith's. As with all such unresolved puzzles, further information would be welcome.

“LAMPHEY [LLANDYFAI]

A puzzling feature is the name. A sign in the village points to St Faith's and the church is so described on the 1st edition 25 inches : 1 mile map published in 1866. Samuel Lewis in his Topographical Dictionary (1833) even derived the name of the village itself from the believed name of the Church - Llanffydd 'the Church of faith'. It was thought in 1786 to be the church of St Faith. The current accepted designation is St Tyfai and St Faith.” (*contemporary website entry*)

“**LAMPHEY**, called by the Welsh LLANFYDD, a parish in the hundred of CASTLEMARTIN, county of PEMBROKE, SOUTH WALES. This place takes its name from the dedication of its church to St. Fait., The church, dedicated to St. Faith, was thoroughly repaired in 1826, partly by subscription...”
(*From A Topographical Dictionary of Wales, (S. Lewis, 1833)*)

Postscript

If you would like to know more about the list of churches dedicated to or in other ways connected to our patron saint in this country and worldwide, the church website has the full list of all them, in many cases with information attached.



From the Magazine Archives

The absence of several regular features, as well as of the usual photo pages, has left a yawning gap in this month's issue, which the editor has attempted to fill by recycling two pieces first printed some years ago. The first (and which may turn out to be the beginning of a series) is the opening article in the little book 'Furnishings of Faith', published in 1997 with the intention of describing and commenting upon as many aspects as possible of the building and contents of our church. **ERIC SALISBURY** writes about the architecture and design features of the church itself.

The piece that follows it first saw the light of day in a 1994 magazine, and was also later published from St Faith's, this time under the title of 'Diversions: Outings and Opinions', in which I aired impressions of church-visiting journeys and comments on what I hoped were interesting happenings. The first of these slim volumes is out of print, but may be read online via the church website. The latter, soon also to be uploaded, is still in print and available in church. Incidentally, I'm sorry that my writing dominates this particular issue: the remedy lies in readers' hands...!

Furnishings of Faith



When I first considered writing an article about the architecture of St Faith's I expected that a couple of pages would suffice. However, as I started to describe the building it became clear that to fully understand and appreciate it some b

St Faith's church was founded by Douglas Horsfall and designed by the architectural practice of Grayson and Ould; it was consecrated in April 1900. It is in the Gothic style with a cruciform plan facing east, and conforms to the accepted form of church layout of the 19th century.

It is built in red pressed Accrington brick with Runcom sandstone dressings, and has a slated roof. The building is impressive in its size, which the brick work accentuates, and in its confident use of materials. It is finished off with some pleasing detailing, evident in the decorative carved stone work over the porches, at the apex of the main roof and, of course, the tracery of the windows. Flying buttresses take the thrust of the roof and project over the slated roofs of the side aisles. The composition formed by the south transept, the polygonal bell tower and the vestry and organ loft is

particularly good but unfortunately is now partly obscured by the vicarage and is ill served by the car park. The foundation stone, located near the north porch, was laid in 1898 by the founder's son Robert Elcum Horsfall, who, as a captain in the Liverpool Regiment, was later killed in the Great War in 1917 and is commemorated by the chancel screen. He was 27 when he died as a result of a collapsing parapet causing him to be impaled on a broken bayonet.

The interior reflects the exterior in its use of brick and stone, and has a fine hammerbeam roof over the nave and a barrel vault over the chancel. Its vastness, austerity and dim atmosphere is what immediately strikes the visitor; all this only serving, as intended, to contrast with the splendour of the high altar and the reredos. It is a building that initially conceals its treasures, which only delight all the more on their discovery and familiarity with time.

The broad nave is served by a central aisle and two narrow passage aisles lit by stained glass memorial windows and a few spare plain ones. Additional light to the nave is provided by plain clerestory windows and the large plain west window.

On entering the church one sees the octagonal marble font, raised on four marble legs and protected by a carved wooden lid. Fonts were made of stone to prevent them being moved elsewhere and the use of four legs dates from the 12th and 13th centuries. Fonts were originally covered to prevent the theft of consecrated water for its supposed magical properties. The octagonal shape symbolised the number eight, the sign for a new beginning. The font is at the west end: the entrance to the 'sea of life', of the nave (from 'navis', the Latin for ship), as opposed to the potentially regenerated spirit at the east end.

At the front of the pews is the fine carved sandstone pulpit. It bears a marvellous frieze of a crown symbolizing Christ enthroned and in the company of cherubim with wings on their heads; below the frieze and flanking the crown are the images of St Peter, with the inverted cross on which he died, and St Paul, with the sword, referring both to his martyrdom and his militant work in spreading the gospel, and holding a book indicating the importance of the message. In the iconography of the church they stand next to the evangelists as establishers of the church, and the imagery here is a common representation.

The north transept forms the Chapel of the Cross and is dominated by the Great Crucifix; it contains a simple altar table and also the altar frontal chest. The crucifix was bought in Italy in 1928 in Douglas Horsfall and is a German 19th century work by Stuflesser; the figure is painted plaster on wood. The chapel displays four of the fourteen Stations of the Cross, designed and embroidered at the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral; like the new St Faith's banner they were designed by Sister

Anthony at The Studio.

The south transept forms the Lady Chapel, with its altar and tabernacle containing the reserved sacrament and the votive light. It also contains the 'Rabbit Madonna' by the sculptress Mother Mirabel of Wantage (can you spot its unusual feature?), the book of remembrance, scroll of honour and place for private confession, together with the recently-added 'arbour niche' memorial flower shelf and the fine votive candle stand.

The nave altar dates from the late 1960s and fills the crossing; its location and character are a result of the influence of the liturgical movement, with its revaluation of the corporate nature of worship. The kneelers are removed from time to time for concerts and for certain services. The chancel screen was installed in 1921 and divides the nave from the chancel and, being open in design, does not impede the congregation's view of the High Altar. Pevsner did not consider it an improvement!.

In the chancel, the choir stalls include seats for clergy and readers, backed by a wrought-iron screen to the north and clear glazing to the south choir aisles. The wall of the north choir aisle contains the ashes of four persons held in high esteem at Saint Faith's and a small statue by Liverpool sculptor Arthur Dooley.

The High Altar itself is of wood, raised on steps which commence at the end of the choir stalls and continue behind the brass communion rail. The use of decorative frontals and priests' vestments follow the Christian calendar. The beautiful reredos (described more fully elsewhere) by Salviati of Venice, who also decorated the Albert Memorial, with its central panel of the Crucifixion, ends the journey through the faith which started at the font.

The seven lamps suspended before the altar have their origin in the words of the Apocalypse, 'And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the Throne which were the Seven Spirits of God'. In the sanctuary to the south side of the altar is the sedilia, the three seats for priest, deacon and subdeacon; it is made of wood with a canopy and set into the wall. Next to it is the aumbry, the recessed stone shelf reserved for the precious vessels of the Eucharist.

Those parts of the church not normally seen by the congregation include the Sacristy, or priest's vestry, where the clergy prepare for the services, and the Choir Vestry, which is also where the flower-arrangers and cleaners have their headquarters. Up the stairs to the Organ Loft which, apart from the quite narrow organist's 'eyrie', is a vast cavern behind the organ pipes containing the bellows and also tempting storage space. Beneath the church is the boiler room, known to a few, particularly when flooding; but with the new heating system, slipping into history. The plain wooden double doors outside the vestry conceal the garden store, again familiar to few - too few, perhaps?

And finally next to that, now unfortunately sealed off because of vandalism, is the church's strangest feature. What flash of vision led Douglas Horsfall to stipulate that a walk-in men's urinal be included, open to the skies, open to all? Obviously a practical man, and with a twinkle in his eye, he brought Clochemerle to S. Faith's and provided great relief to many when they needed it most.

It may be useful to consider the origin of the layout of our Church. Although we may take it for granted, it conforms to the requirements of the 'High Church' Tractarian Movement dating from the 1840s. Earlier church design had focussed attention on the preacher and the sermon, leading to the high boxed pews sometime being placed at angles facing the elevated, ornate pulpit, which was often 'three-decker' to contain rector, curate and clerk. Anglicanism had become the upper-class religion and special prominence was given to family pews of local gentry. The displaying of the Royal Arms in church became compulsory in 1660. And, rather than people stealing consecrated water from fonts, they now sometimes used them for holding their hats!

It was against this secular background that the catholic Tractarians, with their views on the sacrificial nature of the eucharist, rebelled and tried to recall the earlier, more spiritual, roots of the mediaeval Church, symbolically interpreting features that had had practical origins. They believed in a specifically Christian style of architecture: it was 14th Century Gothic and with a plan to match.

Accordingly to the Tractarians the two essential parts of the church were chancel and nave. The spacious chancel had to be one third the length of the nave, and divided into choir and sacarium at the east end. The nave, chancel and sanctuary symbolized the Blessed Trinity; or the nave was the Church Militant and the chancel the Church Triumphant, with the barrier of the chancel arch standing for the faithful death of the righteous soul. The chancel had to be set above the nave; the altar raised above the chancel to dominate the whole church. High pews were out - seating was to be open, all facing east and the High Altar. The position of the font by the door, symbolizing baptism as the way into membership of the Body of Christ, was stipulated, as was the position of the lectern in the nave.

The original use of the chancel was for clergy taking the office; the introduction of a surpliced choir evolved in the 1840s. The actual presence of a choir originated at this time in Cathedral sung services. In non-Tractarian churches music was sometimes provided by assorted musicians and singers from galleries, but it was considered inappropriate for them to be raised above everyone else and could lead to the congregation facing away from the altar.

The idea that the altar alone should be the focus of devotion for any service is largely Victorian. The tiled floor, carved reredos, brass ornaments, flowers, were means to this end. The brickwork with stone dressings, high open roof, high windows, provide an austere background to place emphasis on the resplendent altar. One can see how most churches of this period conform to this rigid style. The Gothic style, superseded

by Classicism in Wren's time, became the norm and is still reflected in church and religious design, for example in the use of Gothic lettering, pointed windows and arches.

Looking now at Saint Faith's it is clear how closely it follows these precepts. It has all the features called for, and high on the north wall of the chancel is the stone of dedication bearing the words: 'This Church of Saint Faith is dedicated to the glory of God as a thankoffering for the revival of Catholic Faith and Doctrine in the Church of England during the sixty years reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.'

The history of church architecture is both fascinating and complex and naturally is interwoven with patterns of liturgy and worship throughout the ages. This is particularly evident when visiting old churches which have been altered and extended to suit the changes in people's thinking. Even in the comparatively short life of Saint Faith's we have seen the major innovation of the Nave Altar. We have also seen the installation of steel grilles and gates to the porches, and the fitting of protective sheeting over many of the windows. All these features reflect the changing liturgical and social scene. Who knows what the next hundred years will bring?

Eric Salisbury

'Warning: church can make you ill' 'Original sin in the Outer Hebrides'



Chris Price

Two recent articles in the Daily Telegraph, from very much the opposite ends of the religious spectrum, illustrate the lovable eccentricity of the Christian church as seen through the eyes of those on its fringes.

In the first, Jonathan Petrie, the 'Religion Correspondent', is delighted to be able to report that 'Irish Roman Catholics have been warned that church-going could pose a threat to their health because incense contains potentially dangerous chemicals.'

The threat to altar boys and girls was highlighted by Dr Jim McDaid, 'a transport minister' (well this is Ireland we're talking about) in the context of plans to ban smoking in the workplace. He isn't actually against incense as such, but is worried about the carcinogenic agents present in the smoke. A spokesman for the Dublin

Archdiocese dutifully agreed. ‘Obviously anything that sends a cloud of smoke into a child’s face is something we would be concerned about.’ Interestingly, she went on to say that while incense ‘had been widely used in the past during Benediction and High Mass, nowadays it was most often used at funerals.’ Finally, the Master of Ceremonies to the Archbishop of Dublin had his say. ‘In a small church building you have to be aware, particularly if there are servers suffering from asthma.’

The Holy Smoke at St Faith’s is certainly not confined to funerals, so perhaps the sacristan and his acolytes will be putting in for danger money. On the other hand, no-one could call St Faith’s a ‘small church building’ so, as the symbol of our prayers wafts straight up to heaven, it will probably only pose a threat to any lurking pigeons or beetles in the rafters.

As the (Protestant) crow flies it is no great distance to the Outer Hebrides, beloved of this writer but in the north a last outpost of stern and unbending fundamentalist Protestantism a world away from Papish incense-swingers. Columnist Adam Nicholson, who actually owns a clutch of delectable islets, wrote recently about original sin, a concept unknown to free-thinking Britain in general but alive and well in Lewis and Harris. He gives a lively description of a recent Stornoway service at which he was the one man not in a suit and his wife the one woman not under a hat.

‘Some of you may think,’ the minister thundered, ‘that you are here on this earth to enjoy yourselves. Well, I have got some news for you. You are not. You are here on this earth to suffer.’ Nicholson speaks of the ‘shimmer of appalled delight that riffled through the congregation at these words.’ He goes on to analyse the Calvinist theology that makes possible such a statement and has preserved, against a rising tide of erosion, the uniqueness of the Presbyterian Sabbath where reading the Bible is about the only approved activity.

Having experienced the Stornoway lifestyle myself, I rather enjoyed Nicholson’s thoughtful and witty analysis and, in part, his defence of this vanishing way of life. Until, that is, I read this sentence. ‘It was publicly stated, in several Hebridean pulpits, that the two girls from Soham who were kidnapped and murdered last summer would not have met their fate if their families had kept them inside as they should have done’

Two worlds and two Christian denominations, a few miles apart across a northern sea, yet more than a world apart in their interpretation of the Gospel. Each has its absurdities and blinkered preoccupation; they share, also, a continuing decline in their numbers and influence and, in the case of the Roman Catholics, an entirely understandable loss of moral authority in the wake of ongoing revelations of years of institutionalised child abuse. The cautious, lovable ‘via media’ that shelters under the Anglican umbrella accommodates both extremes, thank God: long may it continue so to do. But this writer at least is happier to be a victim of passive holy smoking than to condone the joyless and judgemental puritanism at the other end of the spectrum.

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ONLINE EXTRAS!

Two articles, with the common theme of vocation to the priesthood, not featured in the printed edition

Helen Coffey

An introduction to the Mirfield student currently attached to St Faith's . The editor photographed her on Pentecost Sunday... the church's birthday, not Helen's!



Helen, who is currently training for the ministry at Mirfield College, is spending a month with the United Benefice. We asked Helen to let us know a little of her background and she has kindly written:

Hello everyone – I'm Helen, and I will be joining you for a month mid June to mid July, as Fr. Neil's student. I've been asked to tell you a little about myself. I'm 'forty-something', married to Tony and we have three grown-up children. We live in Orrell, Nr Wigan, which is at the far eastern edge of Liverpool Diocese, and our home church is St Paul's, Skelmersdale. Tony is a dental technician and local magistrate, he loves motorbikes and heavy rock music, and we have been married for 28 years.

Of our three children, none currently live at home – Daniel (27) is a design engineer but is currently in the middle of six months travelling around Australia, New Zealand and Asia. Hannah (25) is a primary school teacher. She lives locally and is counting down the days to her wedding at the end of July. Jonathan (18) is coming to the end of his first year at Liverpool Hope Uni studying primary education and sports science. He plays lots of tennis and is the drummer for the worship band at his church.

My background is in local authority social work. I have worked primarily with older people and adults with mental health issues, and particularly in palliative care and with people living with dementia. I have also worked with voluntary and community groups – accessing funding, raising awareness and building capacity. My last post before starting College last September was managing one of the Adult Social Care Transformation project streams for Warrington Council.

Speaking personally – I like local history and trying to learn foreign languages. I really enjoy walking in the hills and cycling along the canal. I like zumba and salsa classes, and enjoy the gym. Baking cakes is my favourite stress reliever, but leaves me with the problem of what to do with them! I find the safest thing is to give them away as soon as possible, so I'm not tempted to eat them! At home I'm very much enjoying my current role as 'mother of the bride'. I'm enjoying helping Hannah make decisions about her big day; going with her to dress fittings and hair appointments; and am looking forward to her 'spa weekend' hen party!

I've been a Christian for nearly twenty years, and for about half of that time, have felt that God was asking me to consider training for ministry. Although I'd always asked God to direct my life and career choices, I continued to ignore his call even when it was expressed through family, church friends, and even non-Christian work colleagues!

Finally in 2009, I gave in and went to see my vicar about exploring a call to ordination. The next twelve months of discernment and interviews passed very quickly, but the deep core of peace that I was now acting within God's will never left me. In the past, I've often found myself working with people who had deep spiritual needs, but who knew nothing about Jesus, and as a social worker, I could refer them on to someone else, but couldn't speak to them directly about faith in God. It's incredibly humbling, but scarily exciting to think that God's plan for my life may include using my previous experiences and skills in a more direct role within his Church.

This is my first of two years at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and unlike some of the other Mirfield students you have met, I live at Mirfield during the week, and go home to Tony each weekend. For us, this combination works really well, but takes a lot of organising, as you can imagine – and of course, we really miss each other when we're apart!

Finally, I'm really looking forward to spending time with you at St Faith's and St Mary's, worshipping and learning together.

Helen

A prayer for Helen and all students of the College of Resurrection:

O God and Father of us all,
you send labourers into your vineyard:
set on fire many hearts with a sense
of their vocation and with an eager response

to your call, and to those whom you have gathered at the College of the Resurrection give grace to prepare in all earnestness and zeal, that with entire consecration of heart and life they may labour hereafter in your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.



Amen.

Margaret and the Ministry

Margaret Dixon, whose father George was for many years the highly-esteemed sacristan at St Faith's, is being made deacon on Sunday, July 3rd. To mark the occasion, we reproduce the article she wrote for this magazine earlier this year. All at St Faith's, not least those who remember the lifetime of service she and others of her family have given to our church over many past years, wish her every blessing and assure her of our prayers.

Margaret Dixon writes...

Almost three years ago, just as I was about to embark on ordination training in Oxford, Chris asked me to write an article for the magazine. I expect he had given up hope of ever receiving anything, but I thought that as I am only four months away from my ordination I had better rectify the situation.

I am sure that many of you will not even remember me but I was brought up as a child at St Faith's. My father, George, was the sacristan and I learnt much about liturgy from him – all of which has stood me in good stead as sacristan of Great Missenden Church in Buckinghamshire and as Worship Co-ordinator of the Oxford Ministry Course.

I felt a sense of calling to the ministry when I was still a teenager and worshipping at St Faith's and so I still feel very much part of the place and enjoy reading the magazines that Chris kindly sends to me. At that time women could only become lay readers or deaconesses but it was thought I was too young to be considered and began training in youth work. As with many things I got heavily involved with that work, which took me away from the area. I trained and lived in Yorkshire for seven years (never finding another church as supportive as St Faith's), before moving south to Buckinghamshire.

A further eight years in youth work, during which time I met and married Paul, (at St Faith's) before starting a family. It was only in the last five years that I felt another sense of calling to the ministry, which I decided to explore with the help of a vocations advisor and then the Director of Ordinands. Several forms and interviews later and I found myself attending a three-day Bishops' Advisory Panel in Ely – someone once described them as “trial by teacup” as your every move is watched and scrutinised to see if others too feel that you have a calling to the ministry. It is certainly a nail-biting 10-day wait until that phone call arrives to let you know the result.

I was selected for training, which I started in September 2008 at Ripon College, Cuddesdon on their part-time training programme (OMC). The course is academically hard but we have the benefit of brilliant tutors and access to some of the best scholarly brains in Oxford. I have undertaken a community placement, working in a night shelter for the homeless and a recent church placement in an evangelical church in a neighbouring town. The course has also given me insights into pastoral theology, spirituality, preaching and liturgy as well as Biblical studies and doctrine and I have met some wonderful Christian people along the way.

I am due to be ordained in the afternoon of Saturday 2nd July in Christ Church, Oxford and will serve as the non-stipendiary curate of the United Benefice of Ellesborough, the Kimbles and Stoke Mandeville. I am looking forward to beginning my ministry with these three parishes, although it will be hard to leave the parishioners of my existing home parish here in Great Missenden – especially as I have worshipped there for over twenty years.

St Faith's will always be special to me as the place where my vocation began – even if it took another calling nearly 30 years later! I hope that some day I will be able to come and visit you again and meet up with old friends who were and are so special in my life.

I hope that you will pray for me and my future ministry here in Buckinghamshire.

With much love,

Margaret



Parish Directory and Church Organisations



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928 3342; fax 920 2901

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

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

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

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

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

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

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CHURCH CENTRE

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Thursday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Mike Carr 293 3416

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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

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