Newslink

St Faith's Crosby Parish Magazine

JULY 2012

Worship at Saint Faith's

SUNDAY SERVICES

11.00am	**SOLEMN MASS and Children's Church**
1.00pm	Holy Baptism (2nd Sunday)
6.00pm	Evening Service and Benediction (1st Sunday)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monday	10.30am	Morning Prayer
Tuesday	9.30am	Holy Eucharist
Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist (in S. Mary's)
Thursday	6.30pm	"Reflections Prayer Group" (in S. Mary's)
Friday	6.30pm	Evening Prayer
Saturday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist

Please consult the website or weekly sheets for any variation in service times, particularly for weeks where there is a Holy Day.

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 to arrange this. Likewise to arrange a visit to someone in hospital or at home, please call 928 3342 to arrange this.

IN A PASTORAL EMERGENCY

please contact a member of the ministry team directly or call **07986478846.**

From the Ministry Team – July 2012

Dear friends,

The end of June is commonly known as "Petertide" (the Feast of St. Peter the Apostle falling on 29th June) and most ordinations take place at this time. From our former organist Ged to several ordinands from Mirfield and the Diocesan non-residential course, we will have prayed for those being ordained and, in some instances, supported them by our presence at their ordinations and first masses.

For those of us who have been ordained a while it is a time for us to recall the promises made at our ordinations when we dedicated ourselves to Christ and the service of His Church.

Listen carefully to the words said as candidates are presented to the Bishop:

Reverend Father in God, I present N to be ordained to the office of priest in the Church of God.

Note the words do not say 'priest in the Church of England' but Church of God! These words remind us that priests are not ordained to serve in one particular parish only, but wherever God calls them. For catholics and anglicans, this potentially may mean serving beyond a particular diocese or even country.

I for one am glad that when I was ordained at Petertide 1991 it wasn't to stay in just one parish for twenty or thirty years. I have been privileged and delighted to serve in a variety of parishes in both the northern and southern provinces of the Church of England.

The men and women we have prayed for this Petertide cannot possibly know how God wishes to deploy them as their ministry develops. That is – potentially - an exciting prospect. But God's call isn't simply to those to be ordained. He calls all of us to share in His work and serve His Church by virtue of our baptism.

Let us pray for those to be ordained this Petertide that they may be richly blessed as they offer their lives to Christ and for the service of His Church.

With my love and prayers,

Father Neil

A Hard Act to Follow...

…….is the phrase which has been heard so frequently since Fr Neil announced his departure to the congregation earlier this year.

Fr. Dennis paid a fitting tribute to our soon to be ex-incumbent in last month's 'Newslink' and although it is not really possible to improve upon his sincere and dignified words, we would, at least, like to add to them.

The skill, sensitivity and flair that Fr. Neil has brought to worship in our two churches have indeed made us stand in awe at "the beauty of holiness" on so many occasions.

Everyone will have their own particular memories but one which will surely be shared amongst so many of us will be of Fr. Neil singing unaccompanied as the procession winds its way slowly back down the aisle at the conclusion of the Solemn Liturgy of the day on Good Friday.

In a completely different context: who, having witnessed her, could ever erase the memory of that very convincing, very professional and very well-endowed Pantomime Dame of erstwhile fame?!

It has been documented in the pages of this publication before of course that our incumbent has not always been entirely honest…. The 'big fat lie', as Maureen once described it, about being Churchwarden "only involving about four meetings a year" must be one of the most outrageous understatements known to man.

Being outrageous however is not something Fr. Neil has ever shied away from; indeed one could almost say it is something of a trade mark of his. It is certainly true to say that none of us could claim he had ever been boring: a testimonial of which we are sure he will be proud.

On behalf of the congregation of St Faith's and your parishioners, we thank you for all you have done for us: for the guidance, the support and the entertainment(!) given to so many. A hard act to follow indeed but, rest assured, the Show will go on!

Maureen and Margaret

The editor is pleased to announce that a recording has just been made of Fr Neil's haunting singing of 'Were you there when they crucified my Lord?' (the Good Friday finale Maureen mentions), together with another of his memorable innovations, the 'Song of Farewell' at the end of the funeral service. These will form part of a fund-raising DVD of St Faith's music to be made available later this year.

Views of the Vicar

If he visits his flock, then he's being nosey;
If he doesn't, he's a snob.
If he preaches for longer than ten minutes – it's too long;
If he preaches for less, then he hasn't prepared a proper sermon.
If he runs a car, he is worldly;
If he doesn't, he is always late for appointments.
If he tells jokes, he's flippant;
If he doesn't, then he's far too serious.
If he starts the service on time, his watch must be fast;
If he's a minute late, he's keeping the congregation waiting.
If he takes a holiday, he's never in the parish;
If he doesn't, he should get out more.
If he runs a bazaar, he's money mad;
If he doesn't, there's no social life in the parish.
If he has the church redecorated, he's extravagant;
If he doesn't, then the place is shabby.
If he's young, he's inexperienced;
If he's older, then it's time he retired.
But when he finally goes mad or dies of exhaustion
There's never been anyone like him!

No reference to any incumbent living or dead is, of course, implied...!

Coronation Lunch...?

The Diamond Jubilee weekend provided a succession of memorable and colourful events, and a good excuse to forget the gardening and the exercise walks and indulge in several days of TV watching. The whole thing did much to lift the spirits in a damp and chilly Britain, and proved once again that the people of our islands generally love a bit of pomp and circumstance, treasure our monarchy and our national institutions and don't mind risking hypothermia for the sake of a good show. It was one of those few times when it was OK to be proud to be British and to take quiet satisfaction in the undoubted fact that no one in the world can match us when it comes to this sort of celebration.

When it rained on the parade those of us of mature years recalled the rain that fell on the Coronation, sixty years ago. A few of us were sharing those memories in church, and we all recalled the enormous presence of Queen Salote of Tonga, braving the elements in an open carriage to the delight of the crowds. But it was Eric who

reminded us of one priceless comment, hilarious then as now, and satisfyingly free of political correctness. A very small man was seated alongside the fine figure of the queen of Tonga. Someone asked Noel Coward who the queen's little companion was. 'Oh, that will be her lunch,' the great man replied.

Holy Days in July

6 July - Thomas More, & John Fisher, Reformation Martyrs

Born in London in 1478, Thomas More studied classics and then the law, being called to the Bar at twenty-three years old. His clear honesty and integrity impressed Henry VIII and he appointed Thomas as his Chancellor. He supported the king in his efforts to reform the clergy but disagreed over Henry's disputes with the papacy, caused by the king's desire to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and to find another queen who might provide him with a male heir. Henry could stand no such act of defiance and imprisoned his chancellor in the hope that he would renege. Thomas refused to take the Oath on the Act of Succession, which declared the king to be the only protector and supreme head of the Church in England, and was executed for treason on this day in 1535, declaring that he died the king's good servant but God's first.

John Fisher was Thomas More's close friend and ally. A brilliant academic, he had substantially reformed the life of the University of Cambridge, through the wealth and influence of his patron, Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII. He was made Bishop of Rochester and proved himself to be a good pastor to his small diocese. As with Thomas, Henry VIII much admired him at first, but when he opposed the king their relationship deteriorated. Aged sixty-six and in indifferent health, he nevertheless endured the trauma of imprisonment in the Tower of London. He was executed just two weeks before Thomas on 22 July 1535.

11 July - Benedict of Nursia, Father of Western Monasticism

Benedict was born in Nursia, central Italy, around the year 480. As a young man he was sent to study in Rome, but was soon appalled by the corruption in society and withdrew to live as a hermit at Subiaco. He quickly attracted disciples and began to establish small monasteries in the neighbourhood. Around the year 525, a disaffected faction tried to poison him so Benedict moved to Monte Cassino with a band of loyal monks. Later in life Benedict wrote his Rule for Monks, based on his own experience of fallible people striving to live out the gospel. He never intended to found an 'order' but his Rule was so good that it was disseminated and widely followed, becoming the model for all western monasticism. Benedict died at Monte Cassino in about the year 550.

15 July - Bonaventure, Friar & Bishop

Born at Bagnoreggio in Italy in about the year 1218, Bonaventure became a Franciscan Friar in 1243 and his intellectual ability was soon recognised by his Order and by the Church. At the age of thirty-six he was elected Minister General of the Franciscans and virtually re-founded the Order, giving it a stability in training and administration previously unknown. He upheld all the teachings of St Francis except in the founder's attitude to study, since Francis felt the Order should possess no books. He clearly saw, with Francis, that the rôle of the Friars was to support the Church through its contemporary structures rather than to be an instrument for reform. He also believed that the best conversions came from the good example of those anxious to renew the Church, rather than by haranguing or passing laws. He was appointed a cardinal-bishop against his will, and kept the papal messengers waiting while he finished the washing up. He brought about a temporary reunion of the churches in the east and the west but, before it was repudiated, he died on this day at Lyons in the year 1274.

23 July - Bridget of Sweden, Abbess of Vadstena, 1373

Bridget's father was governor of Uppland when she was born in about the year 1303. She married at the age of fourteen, had eight children and often attended the royal court, where she continued to experience the mystical revelations she had known since childhood. These increased in intensity after her husband's death and, three years later, she responded by founding a monastery for nuns and monks at Vadstena in 1346. Bridget's daughter Catherine was the first abbess of the so-called Brigettine Order, which became very influential in northern Europe. After travelling to Rome to obtain the pope's approval for her plans, Bridget never returned to Sweden but spent the rest of her life as a pilgrim, an adviser to rulers and church leaders, and a minister to all in need. Her Revelations were recorded by her confessors before her death, which occurred on this day in 1373.

100 Club draw winners June 2012

1	12	Judy Taylor
2	179	Jackie Williams
3	7	May Clark
4	10	Mari Griffiths

We welcome new members to the Club – the odds are good and the benefit to the church likewise. See Gareth Griffiths if you would like to join and remember, of course, that ‘you’ve got to be in it to win it’.

Funny You Should Say That...

An old Italian priest lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was hard. A member of his church, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. So the old priest wrote a letter to his parishioner and described his predicament:

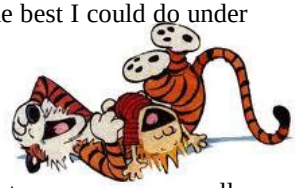
Dear Vincent, I am feeling pretty sad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days. I remember you in my prayers!
Fr Louis

A few days later he received a letter from his parishioner.

Dear Fr Louis, Whatever you do, don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried. Thanks for your prayers.
Vinnie

At 4.00 a.m. the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old priest and left. That same day the old priest received another letter.

Dear Fr Louis, Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances.
Vinnie



A fundamentalist Christian couple felt it important to own an equally fundamentalist Christian pet. So they went shopping. At a kennel specialising in such things, they found a dog they liked a lot. When they asked it to fetch the Bible, it did it in a flash. When they asked him to look up Psalm 23, he complied equally rapidly. They were impressed, bought the animal and left.

That night they had friends over. Proud of their fundamentalist dog, they called it in and showed off its skills. The friends were duly impressed, but asked if it could do the usual dog tricks as well.

They hadn't thought of this but decided to experiment. They called the dog and loudly and clearly pronounced the command, Heel!. Quick as a flash, the dog jumped up, put his paw on the man's forehead, closed his eyes in concentration, and bowed his head...

Please pray

...for Lucy Frances Davis (Nye)

To be ordained deacon in St. Albans Cathedral Abbey on Saturday 1st July 2012; to serve her curacy in the parish of St. Mary, Redbourn.

Poems for Corpus Christi

No longer bread, no longer wine,
His body and His blood
Through sacrifice are mine.
Without such nourishment
My soul would be
A wasting headland
Above a raging sea,
A rootless acreage
With neither leaf nor tree.

Love

Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back
Guilty of dust and sin
Buy quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lack'd any thing.
A guest, I answer'd, worth to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkind, ungrateful?
Ah, my dear, I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?
Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.
You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat.'
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert

Milestones
in a Ministry

Chris Price

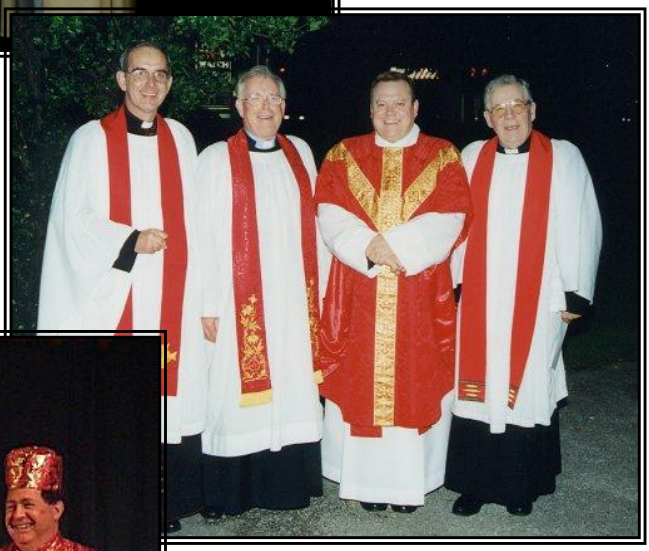
Fr Neil came to us in 1999, at the end of an interregnum lasting over two years and served as vicar of the United Benefice of St Faith, Great Crosby and St Mary the Virgin, Waterloo Park, for 13 years.

To mark this eventful span of time, I have assembled year-by-year pages featuring highlights of Fr Neil's incumbency, recording not only the many innovations for which he has been responsible, but the other significant happenings of each year. These pages are being progressively uploaded to the church website (linked from the home page): they serve as a reminder of how much has happened since 1999 – and in some cases, how young we looked in those early years!

In the extended feature which follows, we offer the first batch of highlights of those highlights in words and pictures (to be concluded next month), offer grateful thanks to Neil for all he has done for us and with us, and wish him every blessing as he continues his ministry in Bushey.

On a warden's sofa during the pre-appointment interview

After the induction service



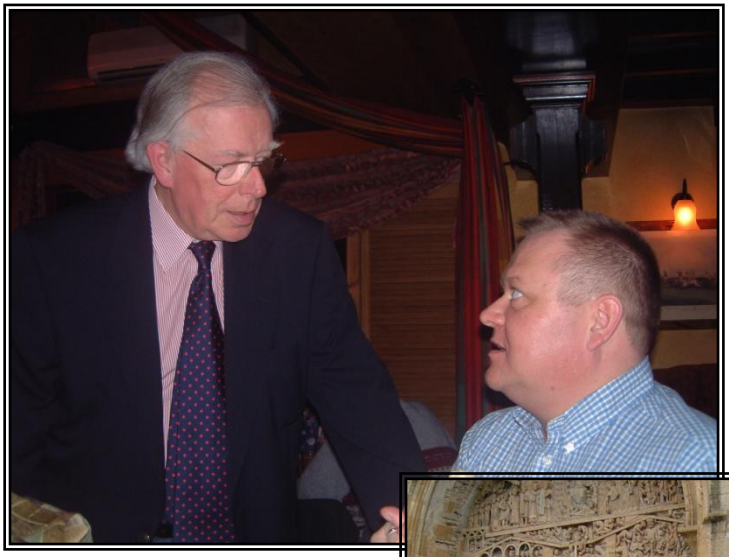
Four vicars in a row... with Fr Richard Capper, Fr Charles Billington and Fr Peter Goodrich

As Widow Twankey in the first United Benefice panto: 'Aladdin'. Rick Walker grins alongside

The first parish pilgrimage to Walsingham

Fr Neil in sprinkling mode after a baptism

At Merchant Taylors', birettas at the ready, before a Palm Sunday procession



Sharing a moment with Fr Peter Goodrich

At Conques: hilarity and devotion

At St Mary's before a 'Last Night of the Proms' extravaganza

Suffering the little children!

Fr Charles Billington's anniversary mass

I'm Fine, Thank You...

There is nothing the matter with me
I'm as healthy as healthy can be.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Sleep is denied me night after night
But every morning I find I'm alright.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is this as my tale I unfold,
That for you and me who are growing old,
It's better to say 'I'm fine' with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape I'm in.

But how do I know that my youth is all spent?
Well, my 'get up and go' has 'got up and went'
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
Of all the grand places my 'get up' has been.

Old age is golden', I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder when I get into bed
With my ears in the drawer and my teeth in a cup,
My eyes on the table until I wake up.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits
And pick up the paper and read the 'Obits'.
If my name is still missing I know I'm not dead
So I have a good breakfast and go back to bed.

Apologies for the lack of fresh material in this edition: contributors doubtless have had other things on their minds! Regular readers will recognise several items in this issue as being recycled from the magazine archives. The poem below is one of them, but is relevant to the Open Gardens event, which took place recently despite the weather.

The Gardener's Hymn

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

But what we never mention,
Though gardeners know it's true,
Is when He made the goodies,
He made the baddies too.

All things spray and swattable,
Disasters great and small,
All things Paraquatable,
The Lord God made them all.

The greenfly on the roses,
The maggots on the peas,
Manure that fills our noses,
He also gave us these.

The fungus on the goose-gogs,
The club root on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce
And chew the aubergines,

The draught that kills the fuchsias,
The frost that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings,
The blight that kills the spuds,

The midges and mosquitoes,
The nettles and the weeds,
The pigeons in the green stuff,
The sparrows on the seeds,

The fly that gets the carrots,
The wasp that eats the plums:
How black the gardener's labour,
Though green may be his thumbs.

But still we gardeners labour,
'Midst vegetables and flowers
And pray what hits our neighbours
Will somehow bypass ours.

Letter to Dr Laura

On a radio show some years ago, Dr Laura Schlesinger said that, as an observant Orthodox Jew, homosexuality is an abomination to her, according to Leviticus 18:22, and cannot be condoned under any circumstance. The following response is an open letter to Dr. Laura, penned by a college Professor, which was posted on the Internet. It's funny, as well as informative. It was originally supplied by **Brian Worster-Davies.**

Dear Dr. Laura,
Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your show, and try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination - end of debate. I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some other elements of God's Law and how to follow them.

When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odour for the Lord (Lev.1:9). The problem is my neighbours. They claim the odour is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?

I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?

I have a neighbour who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself?

A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination (Lev. 11:10), it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this? Are there degrees of abomination?

Lev. 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some 'wiggle room' here?

Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev.19:27. How should they die?

I know from Lev.11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev.19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary

that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? (Lev.24:10-16). Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev. 20:14).

I know you have studied these things extensively and thus enjoy considerable expertise in such matters, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Liturgical Colours

A lady in the parish once decided to ensure
That the Church's ritual colours matched the underclothes she wore,
And so for Christmas, Easter and the Saints' Days pure and bright
The priest and congregation knew her lingerie was white.

For all the holy Martyr band whose precious blood was shed
And for the Feast of Pentecost she took the colour red.
In Advent and in Lent the lady competently strove
To choose the penitential shades of violet, purple, mauve.

Good Friday was a special day and so upon her back
She bore with pride — and some panache! — a set of smalls in black.
At other times throughout the year her underwear was seen
To complement the natural world in various shades of green.

At last on Maundy Thursday (your indulgence I entreat)
They stripped the church of colours — so this line remains discreet!
Besotted by her underwear the rector always knew
The colours of the Church's year — he'd seen them through and through!

They brought a sparkle to his eye,
Excitement to his life,
But judge him not too harshly, friends,
The lady was — his wife!

Quiz Night

Friday 6th July.... a Quiz Night in aid of Woodlands Hospice at St. Michael's Church Hall, Blundellsands. Entrance (by advance ticket only) £6 to include supper. Tickets may be obtained from members of the Committee or from Doreen Thomas.....phone no. 928 6747.

The Parish Directory & Church Organisations

VICAR
Vacancy
PARISH OFFICE
32 Brooklands Avenue, L22 3XZ . Tel: 0151 928 9913
Parish Office Manager: Geoff Dunn; email: sfsmparishoffice@btinternet.com
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Revd Denise McDougall, 27 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 2TL. 924 8870
Canon Peter Goodrich, 16 Hillside Avenue, Ormskirk, L39 5TD. 01695 573285
Fr. Dennis Smith, 16 Fir Road, Waterloo. L22 4QL. 928 5065
READERS
Dr Fred Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813
Mrs Jacqueline Parry, 21 Grosvenor Avenue, Crosby. L23 0SB. 928 0726
Mrs Cynthia Johnson, 30 Willow House, Maple Close, Seaforth, L21 4LY. 286 8155
CHURCH WARDENS
Mrs Margaret Houghton, 16 Grosvenor Avenue, Crosby. L23 0SB. 928 0548
Mrs Maureen Madden, 37 Abbotsford Gardens, Crosby. L23 3AP. 924 2154
DEPUTY CHURCH WARDENS
Mrs Christine Spence, 52 Molyneux Road, Waterloo. L22 4QZ. 284 9325
Ms Brenda Cottarel, 6 Lawton Road, Waterloo. L22 9QL. 928 4275
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PCC SECRETARY
Mrs Lillie Wilmot, Flat 7, 3 Bramhall Road, Waterloo. L22 3XA. 920 5563
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
Mr Daniel Rathbone. Tel: 07759 695683
GIFT AID SECRETARY
Mr Rick Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267
TUESDAY OFFICE HOUR: 6.30 – 7.30 pm (wedding and banns bookings)
Mrs Lynda Dixon, c/o the Vicarage. 928 7330
BAPTISM BOOKINGS
Mrs Joyce Green, 14 Winchester Avenue, Waterloo, L22 2AT. 931 4240
SACRISTANS
Mr Leo Appleton, 23 Newborough Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TU. 07969 513087
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
CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER
Mrs Linda Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813
CHURCH CENTRE
1, Warren Court, Warren Road, Blundellsands
UNITED BENEFICE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP
James Roderick 474 6162
CUB SCOUTS
Tuesday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Adam Jones 07841 125589
Thursday 6.30 – 7.45 pm. Mike Carr 293 3416
SCOUTS
Tuesday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. George McInnes 924 3624
RAINBOWS
Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw 928 5204
BROWNIE GUIDES
Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Sue Walsh 920 0318; Mary McFadyen 284 0104
BEAVERS
Thursday 5.00 – 6.15 pm Mike Carr 293 3416
CHOIR PRACTICE
Friday 7.15 pm - 8.30 pm.
MAGAZINE EDITOR and WEBSITE MANAGER
Chris Price, 17 Queens Road, Crosby. L23 5TP. 924 1938

The **July *'Newslink'*** will be distributed on or before **Sunday, July 22nd.** Copy by **Sunday, July 8th,** please - but all contributions are welcome at any time.

Church website: **http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk**
Online edition: http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/magazine.html
Email: cdavidprice@gmail.com

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Liverpool

Online extra...
To make up for this rather thin edition, scroll down for the complete1999 Milestone pages recording the highlights of Fr Neil's first year with us. To see more years in full, go to the home page Milestones index

Milestones in a Ministry

Fr Neil Kelley at St Faith's: 1999-2012

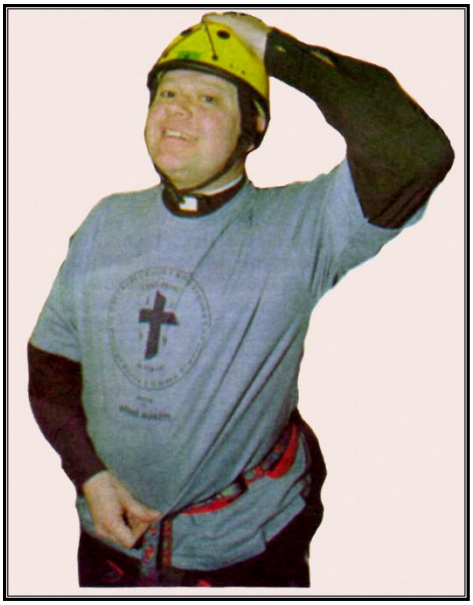
To mark the ending of his 13 years' ministry as Vicar of the United Benefice, we present year-by-year edited highlights, in words and photographs, of each year's events at St Faith's

A.D.1999

In the Beginning....

Fr Neil on a Warden's sofa before his arrival in the parish

And apparently gearing up for a sponsored abseil – definitely not from that sofa... it was in Kirkby!



It would be impossible to mention all that happened in that first year, but equally impossible not to focus first on the Induction service on April 29th, marking the beginning of Fr Neil's ministry, as reported in the following month's magazine.

Here Beginneth ...

We seemed to have been waiting for ever (since February 1997, actually) but Thursday April 29th came at last. Like most big events, it took weeks of planning by a host of people, with concerned folk constantly hoping it would be all right on the night. And it certainly was. The Induction of Fr Neil was one of St Faith's great occasions. Too much happened at Merchant Taylors` afterwards, and again in church on the following Sunday evening, for a full account, but a few snapshot impressions may give the flavour...

Huge processions in and out (one Bishop, two Archdeacons, a plethora of Priests, a representation of Readers, a king-sized Choir) ... 120+ processing in all, with a total of 50 robed priests: is this a record for St Faith's? ... St Chad's Principal in his doctoral dressing-gown ... civic representatives ... a whole pew-full to kneel with Neil and be blessed for service at St Faith's and St Mary's ... chairs filling both chapels and right to the back wall ... a massed congregation featuring large contingents from St Mary's, from Kirkby (Anglican and Roman Catholic), as well as others from Chiswick, Warrington and many other places ... difficult to count but probably over 500 people in church (and most of them also at the Feeding of the Five Hundred afterwards!) ...

... Marvellous music ... Ged and the Choir splendidly sounding forth Parry's 'I was Glad' at the very beginning ... Olivia Blackburn singing Caccini`s Ave Maria to a hushed full house ... Taize choruses, and hymns ancient and modern ... sounding brass from the Merchant Taylors` players and resounding organ music from David Houlder and Mike Foy ... Powerfully symbolic liturgy (the new experimental Diocesan order of service) ... movement to all corners of the church and the handing over of water, oil, holy books and vessels ... simple, heartfelt intercessions from the young people of both churches, with a plea to our new Vicar to stay for a very long time ... an abundance of rich ceremonial, causing more than one comment that it was more like a coronation ... the strong yet relaxed conducting of the service by Bishop John, aided by many others ... the power of moments of silence and the presence of so much prayerful devotion ...

... The walk on a balmy summer night to the fine and floodlit front of Merchant Taylors` ... food and wine in plenty, long and lovingly prepared and expertly dispensed ... a general air of bonhomie and euphoria, with a measure of entertainment from Archdeacon and Vicar ... people staying on long after most people do at post-induction parties ... packs of guidebooks and the magazines of both churches given to all and sundry ...

Festal Evensong, Procession and Te Deum on the following Sunday evening ... a goodly number in the pews and another augmented choir ... the lovely Stanford setting ... more incense (lots more incense) ... possibly the greatest concentration of honourings of the Blessed Virgin Mary at St Faith's since the Lord knows when ... a stirring maiden sermon and a call to service from Fr Neil ... the wearing of three birettas (surely another first?) ... the legendary but well-attested transporting of one of these exotic articles of headgear alone in a taxi from St John's, Tuebrook to grace the head of Fr George (yet another first) ... yet more junketings, this time in the church hall ... exhausted satisfaction all round ...

In brief, Rick Walker and I have been touched and overwhelmed by all the compliments we have received on behalf of St Faith's by so very many people, both from our churches and from elsewhere. We can only pass them on, with our heartfelt thanks, to all those who shared with us the preparation for this great event and who should now share our satisfaction and delight that it went off so well. St Faith's, as always, owes much to the sustained and professional efforts of so many of its people, together with gallant assistance from many at St Mary's (surely the best of omens for the future), which made this extravaganza the memorable event which it undoubtedly was. Everyone at St Faith's gives thanks to God for sending us Fr Neil and looks forward to great things in the months and years ahead. Some of us look forward to a quieter time as well, but we're probably just kidding ourselves...

Meanwhile, in the north aisle...

The celebration of the centenary of the foundation of St Faith's was underway before Fr Neil's arrival, and a stained glass window commemorating past worshippers at the church had been designed and commissioned previously.

It was installed and dedicated later in the year, created round the words from the much-loved hymn 'In our day of thanksgiving': These stones that have echoed their praises are holy, And dear is the ground where their feet have once trod.'

Coming soon... the year 2000

Until then... the home page