

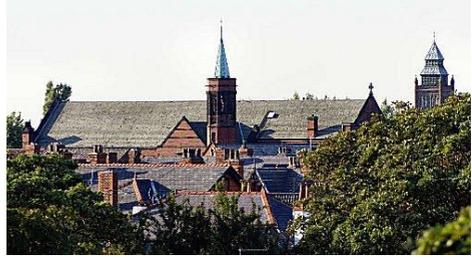


The Parish Church of Saint Faith,
Great Crosby

NEWSLINK

July 2017

Worship at Saint Faith's



SUNDAY SERVICES

11.00 am SUNG EUCHARIST & Children's Church
Holy Baptism by arrangement
6.30 pm 1st Sunday: Evensong

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Interregnum arrangements (only until the autumn, laus deo)

Please consult the weekly service sheet (in church and online) for all information.

Fridays at 12.00 noon: Holy Eucharist.

For regular updates see the weekly church website bulletin:

<http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/bulletin.pdf>

Around Waterloo: The Eucharist

2nd and 5th Mondays & Feast Days as announced - Liverpool Seafarers' Centre 10am;
Wednesdays 10.30 am at St Mary's; Wednesdays 7.00 pm at Christ Church.

See the weekly online bulletin as above for full details of services and 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 5065 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.

JULY

From the Ministry Team: July 2017

If it is at all possible, within a lifetime every Christian should visit the Holy Land and, in the word of one well known writer, “walk in the Master’s footsteps”. To do so is to feel, see and experience the Gospel story in a way that is so wonderful that one never again reads the Biblical narratives without the perspective of the insight and awareness which come from such a privilege.

In the summer of 1976 I was fortunate to be in a group of twelve who spent two weeks touring Israel and visiting many of the places we read about in the Gospel stories. Unforgettable were the three nights we spent at the Franciscan Friary on the top of Mount Tabor. Traditionally, Tabor is regarded as the Mount of Transfiguration, the Feast of which we keep on August 6th. A church completed in 1924, is to be found on the top of Tabor and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of pilgrims visit this beautiful and sacred shrine every year.

The view from my bedroom veranda, overlooking the Vale of Jezreel, was nothing but spectacular, and being awoken at cockcrow early in the morning and plucking and eating the grapes growing on roof top balcony with that splendid vista of Jezreel before me was, indeed one of the most magical moments I have ever experienced.

Despite the large number of visitors and pilgrims who came up the mountain by day in taxis and minibuses, and the accompanying noise and clamour which such activity brought, the lovely Friary in which we stayed exuded nothing but peace and tranquillity. Away from the heat of the day outside, the Friary afforded a cool and refreshing haven and as well as supplying fresh eggs for breakfast, a couple of the Franciscan sisters’ hens provided us with one of our evening meals. The Friary gardens were rich in abundant growth and colourful splendour and to this day the fragrance of the jasmine remains with me.

Luke’s account of the Transfiguration is much the same as that of Mark and Matthew, but it has touches of his own which draw us more deeply into the mystery of what took place. Only John probes the mystery more profoundly. For John the whole ministry of Jesus was a manifestation of divine glory in transfigured human flesh.

Luke, and only Luke, tells us that Jesus ascended the mountain to pray. Luke is inviting us to see what unfolded on the mountain as an act of worship. He wants us to understand that the ultimate purpose of worship is to share in glory, the glory which is creation's goal. Luke, with Matthew and Mark relates that Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus. But it is only Luke who adds that they too appear "in glory". Their work accomplished, they too are transfigured. Transfiguration, Luke implies, is not just for Jesus. It is our destiny too. The transfiguration of our dust is our Christian hope. Our present affliction, St Paul writes, is preparing us for "an eternal weight of glory beyond measure" (2Corinthians 4: 17).

That final transfiguration does not mean the loss of individual identity. Moses and Elijah are "in glory", but they are still Moses and Elijah. They are talking with Jesus about his imminent "exodus", a word which does indeed mean departure, as it is usually translated, but which means so much more – as Moses for one well knew.

Peter, James and John, Jesus's "inner circle", saw Jesus as, one day, every eye shall see him. They "saw his glory." Peter felt he had to say something. He offers to pitch three tents on the mountain top, one for Jesus and one each for the two radiant figures accompanying him. Kind commentators, being nice to Peter, suggest that he was talking sensibly. Peter is insisting, they suggest, that some kind of accommodation must be provided for the glory that has been manifested, just as the divine glory was housed in the tabernacle in the wilderness. Luke realizes that Peter is simply wittering. As he laconically comments "he did not know what he said." As if glory can be bottled or put up for the night.

If Peter was the first clergyman – a suggestion no more absurd than the claim, that he was the first Pope – then it's not surprising that he felt a compulsion to speak, even when it would clearly be better not to, which is powerful in some people. It's in their genes. It's probably the case that many made this way are drawn to professions where they can talk to their hearts' content. They become schoolteachers, say, or members of parliament. Or they get ordained.

But never being at a loss for words is not an asset in a Christian minister. When we speak of God our words invariably mislead. If we experience God, the saints testify, our words utterly fail. On the feast of St Nicholas in 1273, in a church in Naples, the Dominican Friar Thomas Aquinas said Mass as usual before beginning a day of lecturing and writing. During that Mass, something happened to him. He experienced an overpowering mystical vision. Afterwards, he ceased writing his great "Summa Theologiae"/ "All that I have written," he said, "appears to be so much straw after the things that have been revealed to me."

In the end garrulous Peter shuts up – if only for a time. Luke adds a final comment, a detail that Matthew and Mark don't mention and one that we too, alas, often overlook. Luke's last word is of the first importance. "They kept silent and in those days told no one of any of the things they had seen." What took place on the mount of Transfiguration was an experience of worship beyond words.

But if nothing can be said about such an experience, there is everything to be done about it. The word of God from the cloud, the symbol of glory, is “This is my son, my chosen; listen to him!” “Listening” in the language of the Bible always means obeying. At the summit of the mountain the disciples witness the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. At the foot of that mountain, they are confronted by a disabled child. They are not required to speak of what words cannot describe. A more practical testimony is demanded.

A Quaker with a glorious name, Professor Ben Pink Dandelion, has written, “Our testimony is what we do from our experience of God, not what we say. Testimony is not creed, but action.” (Celebrating the Quaker Way, Quaker Books, 2009). It is what we might call “the transfiguration cycle”, the cycle of worship, silence – and then getting on with what must be done. It is a cycle, not a sequence, for we usually find that what we do is not much good. Then we must go back and wait on God.

With my love and every blessing,

Fr Dennis



White smoke up the vestry chimney at last!
Habemus Vicarius!

After the customary many months of waiting, rumours and counter-rumours, expectations and disappointments, it is with much relief that we are able to announce the appointment of a new priest-in charge of the United Benefice of St Faith, Great Crosby and St Mary the Virgin, Waterloo Park. **Rick Walker** made the long-awaited announcement from the lectern of St Faith’s at the end of the Sung Eucharist on Sunday, 9th July.

His text is reproduced below, and is followed by biographical details of our new incumbent. The editor could not resist the sub-title for the latter, and offers his apologies, where deemed necessary for this and other flippancies.



The Great Announcement

We are delighted to be able to announce that we have accepted the recommendation of our Patron and the Bishop of Liverpool, and agreed to the appointment of a Priest in Charge for the Joint Benefice of St Faith’s and St Mary’s.

As you are aware, the process for selecting a new parish priest is long and wearisome, and in fact it is nearly two years since Sue Lucas announced that she would be leaving us, and the process started.

However, after much thought and prayer, the post has been offered to and accepted by Fr John Reed, who is currently Associate Rector (Team Vicar) of the Lowton and Golborne Team. Prior to that he was Priest in Charge of one of those parishes - that of St Thomas's Golborne.

Fr John has considerable wide and varied experience, having worked initially in the Church Army and since ordination in churches of differing traditions. He will fit well into the styles of worship in the Joint Benefice.

He has worked especially with children's projects, and in currently an Assistant Cub Leader. Importantly also, he has dealt with the problems of developing kitchen facilities at the back of his present church!

He is musical and has great pastoral strengths. With a gentle personality, he is a good listener and is full of ideas. We are sure that he will give us the lead that we need to move the Joint Benefice forward.

We look forward to welcoming Fr John, his wife Ruth and their grown-up family to St Faith's and St Mary's in a few months' time, at a date yet to be decided. This will give both him and us plenty of time to prepare for the start of what we are sure will be a happy and joyous time for everyone.

In his statement regarding the appointment, our Archdeacon, Pete Spiers, gives his commendation, adding that John believes strongly in releasing the gifts of all God's people and listening to the community to discover their needs and concerns so that the church can minister more effectively. Pete confirms that the interview panel had a strong sense that God was calling John to this role.

Watch this space and the parish magazine for more details over the coming months, and share with us the anticipation of working and worshipping alongside our new priest, Fr John Reed. **PS see final page update!**



Reed: all about him!

The Revd John William Reed was born in 1957. After graduating from Sussex University in 1979, he trained for the priesthood on the Northern Ordination Course in 1995, and was priested in 1998. He served as curate in Padgate, then at St Margaret's,

Orford, Warrington before becoming vicar at the latter between 2001 and 2008.

From 2008-2013 he was Priest in Charge at St Thomas, Golborne, Wigan, becoming team vicar when the Lowton and Golborne group of churches was formed in 2013.

This information comes by courtesy of Crockford's Clerical Directory, as supplied by Fr Dennis, who also highlighted the many links with St Faith's worth noting. Fr Dennis himself trained there from 1974-1977, followed a good many years later by Revs. Michael Finlay, Peter Roberts, George Gilford, Denise McDougall and Martin Jones, all priests whose vocations were nurtured at St Faith's. Mike Finlay was a curate at Padgate and was vicar of St Margaret's Orford, where Graham Atherton, one-time organist at St Faith's, also served his title. It's a small world.

Thank you for a lovely time



What a good idea to put on a Victorian Tea Party for some of us older members of Saint Faith's last month!

The hall seemed to be full of colour and light, and the food was just lovely! Little sandwiches and delicious cakes – just what we needed to brighten up a rather dull day. Judging by the chatter all around me, I think we all had a good time. Can we have another one, please?

Thanks to all the caterers who did us so proud.

Gill Prescott

Proud Moments

A very Reverend Day for Jackie



We all have proud moments in our lives, passing exams, winning an award, having a piece of art exhibited, having children, watching them grow and achieving things in their own right, the cycle then continues with grandchildren. My grandchildren are not of an age yet to give our family the next generation and God willing I will live long enough to see this happen. On June 25th this year I was invited to present Jackie Parry for ordination to the ministry of deacon. This was a very proud moment indeed for me and I enjoyed it all, the service, the choice of hymns, the presentation and particularly the laying on of hands, that was very moving and brought tears pouring down my cheeks, as I looked around I was not the only one affected - the sniffing was audible.

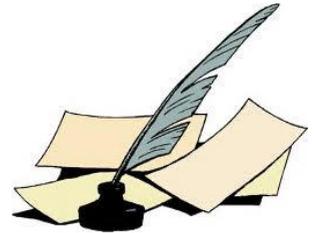
Several weeks before the service, those of us presenting candidates received instructions informing us where to sit, how we were to process and a printed card which was to be read verbatim when addressing the Bishop. Unfortunately, I thought, St Faith's Church was not mentioned, only the church Jackie was going to, which is, as most of us know, St. Luke's church in Crosby where Jackie will spend the next four years on placement.

The big day arrived; we had to be at the Cathedral for 9.15 a.m. When we arrived there was a distinct buzz about the place, The organist was going through bits of music, the choir were practising, families and friends were arriving, being greeted by the ordinands, with much hugging and kissing. We were shown to our seats whilst people "gowned up". I was then asked to get ready to process with Jackie from the chapel to the altar rail, we had been given the order in which to walk. Jackie was nervous but very excited. I presented Jackie to the Bishop and returned to my seat; I had a good view of the full service and found it all very moving.

After the service we boarded our coach and were taken to the church hall at St Faith's where we enjoyed an excellent buffet served impeccably by the catering team (thank you to them) I had the opportunity to meet and chat to some of Jackie's family, friends, colleagues and parishioners from the past. Presents from the congregation and clergy were given to Jackie; she was very moved. She deserves every bit of it, she has waited a long time for this and has worked hard whilst working full time and bringing up her boys. June 25th 2017 will go down as one of my proud moments. Congratulations Jackie, with love and prayers.

Brenda Cottarel

Jackie's Jubilant Jottings



Dearest loveliest friends,

Well, I finally did it! After what has been a long, and often emotional, journey, I'm now ordained Deacon and serving my licence as Curate at St Luke's, Crosby.

It has, indeed, been a long journey, but one that I'm so glad to have travelled on. I feel very privileged and blessed that God called me to this ministry and, although it's only been a couple of weeks since ordination, I'm still feeling on a high and trying to get used to being called Rev!

St Luke's is going well; everyone is very friendly and I believe that I will learn a lot there. The worship style is very different from St Faith's, but works well and is quite warm, friendly and very lively. I will write more about my experiences as I get more involved in the day to day life at St Luke's, and also about my last few months of training, but I just wanted to write first to say how an enormous thank you to you all, both at St Faith's and St Mary's.

I first telephoned Fr Richard early in 1984, to ask if my son Edd could be baptised there, (Jonnie and Jay's baptisms followed, and latterly my granddaughter Scarlett, who journeyed all the way from Australia to be baptised in St Faith's).

Since that first telephone call, St Faith's has been such a huge and important part of my life, and that of my family's. We received such a warm and friendly welcome that we felt this was a church where we could set down roots. Little did I know then that this was to be the first step on my journey in exploring my faith, then Reader ministry, and finally to ordination.

As I reflect back, I can see how truly blessed my family and I have been to be a part of the family of St Faith's. The Christian love and support given to us all over the years has been wonderful; my daughter in law, Bridie, still talks about the warm and friendly welcome she received at St Faith's when she and Edd brought my granddaughter Scarlett to be baptised in St Faith's last year. And the continued love, support and prayers I have received since I started training has certainly helped and encouraged me, and I just want to give a special note of love and thanks to my surrogate "mum and dad" (you know who you are!) for always believing in me.

My ordination was amazing; a truly special moment in my life, and made even more special by being surrounded by my family, friends, and the family of St Faith's. Words cannot express how thankful I am to you all; for the support, the prayers, the encouragement, the cards and gifts, the party afterwards (a most excellent 'do'), the laughter, the love shared, and quite simply, for being there! From the bottom of my heart, thank you so very, very much.

I miss you all, but will be in touch!

Jackie x



Deacons' Delight

The growing number of new Deacons highlights our vocations success, and underlines the hugely encouraging growth in the Liverpool Diocese as the national figures released by the Church of England show a significant increase in numbers training for the priesthood.

Figures released this week from the national Church of England show a 14% increase in numbers training for the priesthood with an increase of 17% in women and that 25% of the cohort beginning training this year are under 32.

Simon Chesters, Director of Vocations & Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Debbie Ellison, Vocations Officer, have seen their efforts in growing vocations within our diocese pay off as we have seen a sharp rise in the numbers here.

Between 2005 and 2015 the Diocese of Liverpool sent an average of 10 people a year to national selection panels for ordained ministry but last year we saw that grow to 16 and this year the figure has risen to 26 people to national selection panels.

It's a hugely encouraging growth, especially alongside the people going into Reader Ministry, Local Missional Leadership and other types of ministry in church and in daily life.

Liverpool Diocese online bulletin, June 2017

100+Club winners

July 2017 draw

1	121	John Knight
2	52	Revd Denise
3	19	Peter Lunt



Remembering!

Having, for almost forty years, had the priestly privilege and joy of celebrating the eucharist at the altars of St Faith's, I am probably more familiar than most with the small purple-backed book kept in the Chapel of the Cross, known as the Remembrance Book.

I think probably introduced by Fr William Hassall early in his incumbency (1948 – 1965), the Remembrance Book or Chantry Book records the death not only of a great many past worshippers and clergy of St Faith's, but also of numerous others including fringe members, friends, national statesmen and women, religious and clerical dignitaries.

Invariably remembered in the Sunday mass intercessions by whoever is rostered for the task, the names of the departed are also generally recalled at each of the midweek celebrations. Having been part of the family of St Faith's since a boy of ten, it's naturally the case that, perhaps more than anyone else of our number, my knowledge of many whose names are recorded in the Remembrance Book is greater than most.

Some years ago, at the request of the Editor, I wrote a series of articles for 'Newslink' based upon my personal memories of a number of men and women at St Faith's who had been a great source of encouragement, inspiration and support not only to me, but to others, including the many ordinands whose calling to Ministry was cradled and nurtured at these altars.

With the Editor's approval, even encouragement, it is now my intention to systematically journey through the Remembrance Book, beginning with the month of August, selecting the names of those whom I know something about and, hoping that by so doing, others who journey with me may also enjoy being reminded of some of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have passed beyond the veil.

August 2nd: Barbara Ronson

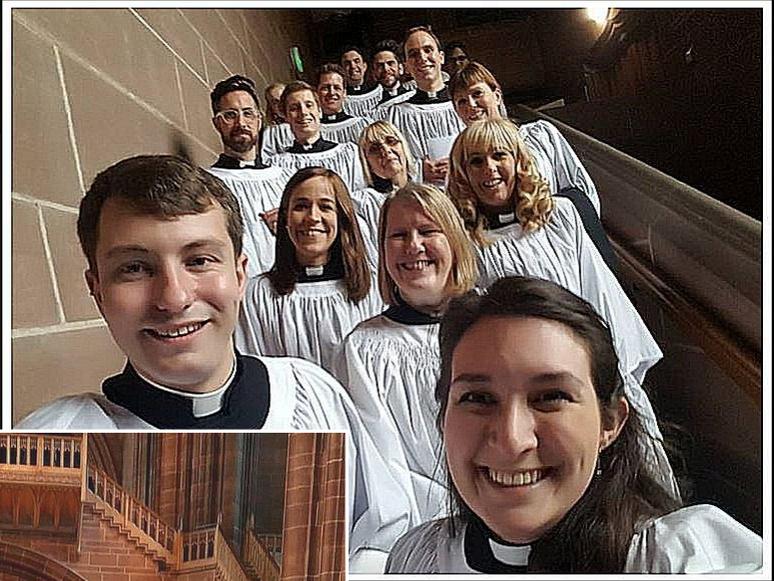
In 1960 it was my friend and next door neighbour, Ken Ronson, who, having joined St. Faith's Wolf Cub Pack, invited me to go along with him to a Thursday evening meeting. So began what has been a fifty seven years' relationship with the church which has played such a central part in my Christian formation and priestly ministry.

Lovely Barbara, a speech therapist by training, married Ken Ronson in the late 1970s. They had one child, Kate, who only last month gave birth to a son. Very sadly Barbara became ill with breast cancer and, although enjoying remission for short time, died in 1998. Barbara came from a church-going family in Surrey and was greatly missed by Ken, Kate and all who knew her and loved her. Ken found it very difficult without Barbara and died from septicaemia a few years later. Kate found herself parentless before the age of seventeen but went on to achieve university success in Edinburgh and, thankfully, in addition to a happy marriage to husband Michael, has now been blessed with a baby boy. Barbara and Ken would be so happy and proud. May they rest in peace and be raised in glory.

August 2nd: Frank Sharples

Proud of his roots in Wigan, Frank started worshipping at St Faith's when he came to live at the Masonic home, the Tithebarn, in Moor Lane. A widower for some years Frank was almost, if not, totally blind. He was physically a big man and greatly enjoyed being able to worship with us on a Sunday and also attend some of the Saturday summer concerts. Ada Slater was a great friend to Frank who, apart from his trips to church, seldom got out of the small room he occupied at Tithebarn.

In several years of visiting Frank it was always a joy to hear him reminisce. He had, for years, been a very active mason and, by profession, a senior policeman with a lot of responsibility. He was never short of stories and accounts of his earlier life, and much valued and appreciated his visitors taking the time to go and see him. It was my privilege to give the address at Frank's funeral, held in Wigan Parish Church. A testimony to the great respect and high esteem in which he was held was borne out by the large congregation who, were present. A lovely gentleman indeed. May he rest in peace and be raised in glory.



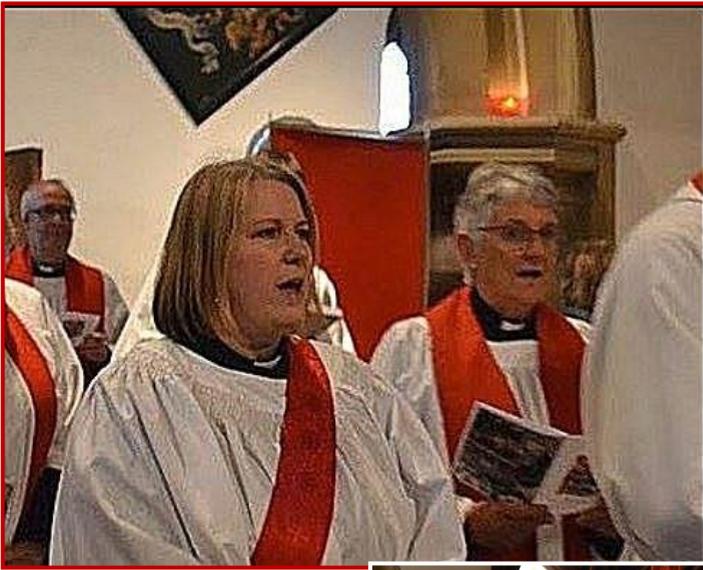
Jackie's Journeys

Jackie wore her blue Reader's scarf for the last time at St Faith, before the final preparations for her ordination at the cathedral. She smiles with her fellow deacons-to-be and even more widely underneath the arches with her new collar and scarf.



Denise was captured sharing the moment and the smiles. Meanwhile a warm welcome and a grand feast awaited everyone back in the church hall. Jackie was presented with speeches and a gift which prompted the editor's groan-worthy caption: 'She stole the show – now see her show the stole'

(See page 6ff)



A few days later, our one-time vicar Fr Neil Kelley celebrated his priestly Silver Jubilee mass at Bushey. Jackie wore that red stole for the first time, Neil processed out in style, and a goodly St Faith's contingent celebrated with him (with Fr Dennis seemingly heading a balloon)





Top

Spot two familiar faces (Christine and Laura) in the Busby tent. (See page 12 ff)

Above

A tempting spread at St Faith's Victorian Tea Party (see page 6)

Left

On the way to Bushey, Rick paid his respects when photographing a very special memorial at St Alban's Abbey

August 9th: Ray Selby

Born in 1922, the Reverend and Doctor Ray Selby trained and practised as a teacher before feeling called to the priesthood. A spell as Vice Principal of Rochester Theological College, under the Principalship of Stuart Blanche, who was later to become Bishop of Liverpool and subsequently Archbishop of York, was followed by his hugely significant contribution to the theological training of ordinands in the Anglican Church. In 1972, Ray Selby pioneered and established the first non-residential training course for Ordination in the north of England.

In 1974, at the age of twenty four, I was privileged to begin my priestly training on the NWOC (North West Ordination Course) being, at that time, the youngest non-residential ordinand in the country! Subsequent to my own ordination, in 1977, others from St Faith's followed in my footsteps – Michael Finlay, George Gilford, Peter Roberts, Denise McDougall and Martin Jones – Sue Lucas too! On his retirement from the course in 1977, having been his youngest ever student, it was with profound thanksgiving that I knelt before him in Manchester Cathedral to be the last to receive his commendation at the “passing out parade.”

Following further appointments as Canon Residentiary of St Asaph's Cathedral, four years in the United States and a two year curacy in Kenilworth, Ray and wife Wynn, retired to the “Old Cider House” in Somerset, and died in 1993 at the age of seventy one. May he rest in peace and be raised in glory.

August 13th: Fr Christopher Gray

The sudden and violent death of Fr Christopher Gray on the doorstep of his vicarage at St Margaret's Church, Anfield, made headline media news in August 1996.

A former theological student of the College of the Resurrection at Mirfield, Christopher Gray was regarded as one of, if not, the most intelligent, talented and able of ordinands, ever to be trained at the College. Academically and linguistically gifted, Christopher could probably have opted for a rewarding pedagogical career among Oxford's dreaming spires, or elsewhere in academia, had he so chosen. It was not to be. Instead, this hugely likeable and personable young priest gave himself to parish ministry and the service of God's people. His stabbing on returning to the Anfield vicarage brought enormous shock, horror and dismay not only to his family and parishioners but also to many, far and wide. May he too rest in peace and be raised in glory.

To be continued.

Fr Dennis





Fr Neil Kelley's Silver Jubilee

"I will go unto the Altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness" (Ps. 43)

On 27th June, 1992 in St. Stephen's Church, Gloucester Road, Bishop John Hughes (RIP) ordained Neil Kelley as a priest. Twenty five years later, in St James's Church, Bushey, friends and colleagues from across the years, gathered together for a Eucharist to thank God for the opportunity and privilege of him serving as a priest in the Church.

A dozen members of St. Faith's, including Fr Dennis, Revd Denise and newly-ordained Revd Jackie, travelled down to Bushey in Hertfordshire for the High Mass of the Holy Spirit. Outside the church, a large marquee had been erected – but we learned that it had been left up by the local restaurant following a private event there. It later proved to be valuable as it began to rain quite heavily.

Before the Mass, the organist played a Bach Fantasia and then the entrance hymn was "Angel-voices ever singing". The first reading, from Isaiah, was read by the Mother Superior of S. Mary's Convent, Chiswick and then our own Treasurer, David Jones, read the second lesson from 1 Corinthians.

The sermon which was both entertaining and which spoke of Fr Neil's faithfulness, was given by Fr Michael Wood of S. Bartholomew's, Armley (in the Diocese of Leeds); he started by re-assuring us that "Fr Neil is not dead" – this was in reference to the tone of his sermon not being a eulogy!

Throughout the Mass, the music was beautiful and uplifting. The anthem at the Offertory was Parry's "I was glad" and, during Communion we listened to "Panis Angelicus" and Mozart's "Ave, verum corpus". Music for the soul! The choir was conducted by the Master of the Music at St Albans Abbey.

Afterwards, we adjourned to the marquee for fizz and canapes – it was just like old times! The churchwardens presented Fr Neil with a drawing of St James's Church.

It was a very happy occasion and we thank God for the years of dedicated service at S. Faith's (1998-2012) and many more years of service ahead.

David Jones

Surprise, Surprise...

Only a few days later, on Sunday, 2 July, it was announced that, after five very busy years at Bushey, Fr Neil is leaving to take up a new post as Rector of Chorley in Lancashire, probably starting in October. The announcement reads:

“It is with a mix of emotions that I announce I will be moving on from Bushey in September. The Bishop of Blackburn has invited me to be Rector of St. Laurence, Chorley (Lancashire) and I will be taking up that appointment in October. My final Sunday in Bushey will be 24th September.

After five very busy and rewarding years here in Bushey, the time feels right to accept a new challenge. In the meantime please remember me in your prayers as I prepare for this new stage of ministry. Please pray for the parish of Chorley and for all in the parish of Bushey also.”



Tales of the Unexpected with the Gang of Four

It was January 2017 when word reached St Faith’s, via a feat of modern technology, that at St James Bushey, Father Neil Kelley, Rector of that parish, was to celebrate 25 years as a priest on 26th June. As a result of this excellent piece of news, four intrepid ladies of uncertain age decided that they would make the trip from familiar but darkest North West to the uncharted lands of the South.

A couple of ‘planning’ meetings took place in a local coffee spot and the four, Christine Spence, Laura Caddick, Irene Taylor and yours truly Eunice Little, drew up a plan of action. Christine was in charge of accommodation and I was to organise our train tickets, getting the best price on line. This all duly done, the excitement mounted until the great day Tuesday 26th June arrived. Cases packed, taxi arrived, ladies on board and off we went to Lime Street for our 10.34 am departure.

We arrived in plenty of time, but had not left the taxi for more than a minute when the first mishap occurred, Irene tripped on the poorly-marked kerb and fell. Fortunately she was unhurt, but it was something she could have done without. Into the station, departure board checked, platform found and plenty of time for us all to purchase coffee before boarding our train for the first stage of our journey to Birmingham New Street. This stage went very smoothly and we arrived on time for us to catch our Virgin train, with reserved seats, for the trip to Watford Junction.

Comfortably settled in these reserved seats Stage 2 had begun. As the journey progressed we checked the finer details of our adventure. Oops! A problem was discovered. Our hotel, White House, Best Western, Watford had only been booked for one night, Tuesday, and our return train tickets (all 27 pieces of them) were booked for us to return on Thursday 29th June! Had Irene’s tumble been an omen? Oh well, nothing we could do from the train, we’d have to wait ‘til we arrived and sort it then. So we sat back and enjoyed the rest of the journey.

Announcement made - Watford Junction next stop. We got up, collected our cases and made our way to the door. Train stops, Laura presses for the door to open ... and nothing

happens. No worries - press again ... nothing again. Is there a fault? Third press of the button and the train is beginning its final stage to Euston station. Four ladies astounded, did we panic? not a bit, laugh we certainly did! Christine set off to find a Virgin official to explain the problem and more importantly what we were to do, apart from the mild hysteria, that is. Virgin were very sorry and we found that we were not the only ones, which was a relief. We were to stay on the train, naturally when the train reached Euston, come back to Watford (1st stop) and get off then. It would also be doors on the other side of the train so that was good to hear. As you can imagine we made absolutely sure that this information was correct. And yes it was HUZZAH!

On arrival at Watford our first task was to make sure that Laura could return to Liverpool the following day. Enquiries were made to see if she could transfer her return ticket to Wednesday, which was possible if an eye-watering amount of money was paid! Christine to the rescue, she phoned Jackie Parry and arranged for Laura to return with her. Problem no.1 sorted!

Arrival at the hotel was a little later than planned but hey ho - we were there. Now for problem 2. This too was sorted very quickly, a change of room was organised for Wednesday morning and as it couldn't be a family room, but a large double with a single bed and best of all Thursday's breakfast was free. Another huzzah! Now all that was needed was a shower, glad rags on, a bite to eat and off to Bushey! It was a shame about the weather, but we were treated to a wonderful High Mass, wonderful music, lovely buffet, and great company. Back at the hotel we had a last drink with Father Dennis, Jackie, Rev Denise and her husband Bruce, lots of chat and much laughter. A perfect end what eventually became a perfect day!

Wednesday saw Laura return with Jackie and after a very good breakfast the intrepid three, as we now were, made our way to St Albans. This lovely city is just a short train ride from Watford and we were lucky enough to get a group return ticket which was 1/3 the price of 3 separate tickets. Not bad eh! We had a lovely day in this beautiful city, shame it was so cold, which meant plenty of stops for coffee and cake and me being forced to buy a sweater as it was rather cold. Back at the hotel we had a lovely meal and Irene had a hot bath to warm her up before bed and a good sleep before leaving on our return journey.

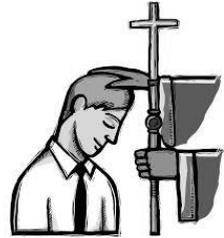
Thursday morning dawned, cases were packed again, another great breakfast eaten and off we went to start our journey home wondering if it would be a smooth one. Watford to Birmingham New Street: no problems, connection to Liverpool arrived on time, we board, find seats at a table, a gentleman joins us as he wanted to use his laptop and didn't mind our chatter. All went well no problems this time. We had gone through Crewe and were nearing our home city when I happened to look up and noticed a sticker on the window. We were in 1st class! Our tickets were not for this elevated form of travel. Here I must add that nobody had come to check our tickets, and apart for the sign on the window nothing was any different or better. Seats the same, legroom as cramped, no hot coffee or snacks, just signs on the windows. Needless to say we were not impressed and very glad we hadn't paid the extra! On arrival at Lime Street our travelling companion said he'd had a delightful journey with three of the most charming

fare dodgers he had ever encountered!

Our adventure had ended. We had a great time, wouldn't have changed anything, well Irene's tumble was not good, and are looking forward to having many more adventures together, and if everyone we meet is as great as this time it will be excellent!

Christine, Laura, Irene and Eunice

Confirming : the Good News



Confirmations are often seen as a rite of passage out of the Church of England for unwilling teenagers soon to become more interested in socialising and sport.

But one diocese is experiencing an uptake in interest after it introduced rock climbing, film sessions and baking bread into its classes, which more often have focused on bible study. The Rt Rev Dr Edward Condry, Bishop of Ramsbury, has been spearheading a project to increase the number of confirmations. As well as young people, he has seen older members of the congregation ask to be confirmed, with one member taking part after coming to the church for 50 years.

Confirmation ceremonies, which traditionally involve children aged 11 to 13, have been in decline for years. Confirmations in the Church of England fell from 29,800 in 2005 to 16,700 in 2015. By contrast, in the same year 44,000 couples were married in the Church and 120,000 adults and children were baptised. In 2014, the Diocese of Salisbury, where Dr Condry is the bishop, was faced with a crisis after years of decline. But since the start of the project, numbers have stabilised. Some 551 were confirmed during 2016, with 546 taking place the year before. And 2017 looks set to be an even better year. "Confirmation was once seen as a graduation ceremony, but now it's seen as a public affirmation and a step on a pilgrimage," said the bishop. He added: "In life, there are not enough rituals. This is something positive that the church can offer."

One groundswell of growth has been among older people. One member in her 90s, who grew up in India, was confirmed by Dr Condry in her care home.



A Sermon for Corpus Christi

Memorable in a writer's recollection was a simple service of the breaking of Bread which he'd shared with a small group in a hotel bedroom in Kiev in what was then the Soviet Union. This was long before the collapse of communism, At that time what the group were doing was illegal.

In that atheist state religious observances were only permitted in registered churches: those churches which were prepared – quite literally – to toe the party line. Had they been caught celebrating their unlawful Eucharist, they would have been put on the next flight home. Had they been local Christians discovered doing the same thing, they might have found themselves spending years in an unpleasant place in Siberia.

Recalling that clandestine celebration one thinks of the most moving words ever written about the mass. Dom Gregory Dix's monumental study of the Eucharist, "The Shape of the Liturgy", was published on the Festival of Corpus Christi 1943.

Towards the end of this great work, Dix's measured prose suddenly takes flight. In a soaring passage of surpassing power he offers his own thanksgiving for the countless different ways in which Christians had heeded Christ's words, "Do this in remembrance of me".

"Was ever another command so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it, to extreme old age and after it, from pinnacles of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth"

Towards the end of this sublime passage, too long to quote in full, there are the words which are poignant in recalling that little service held behind locked doors in a hotel room behind the Iron Curtain. Dix is rehearsing the myriad ways in which Christians have obeyed Christ's command:

"Tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; Furtively by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; Gorgeously for the canonization of St Joan of Arc ..." Why do we give thanks for Holy Communion? We do so for many reasons and to list them is to risk intoning all too familiar pieties.

Cognisant of that mass offered secretly in Kiev and by the thought of the sacrifice offered – for once the words must carry their full weight – by a bishop in Murmansk – one dwells on another reason for giving thanks for Holy Communion. What we do is always an act of defiance. Holy Communion is rooted historically and theologically in the celebration of Passover. Passover begins when a child asks, "Why is this night different from other nights?"

The Eucharist too is different, defiantly different. It's a defiant enactment of an alternative way of doing things, the counter-cultural way of life which Jesus described as "the reign of God." Those who break bread in memory of Jesus affirm what in every age the world had denied, that "we who are many are one body."

The Eucharist creates, if only for an hour on a Sunday morning a society ruled by love rather than power. By partaking of "one bread" we defy the devil to divide and conquer us. St Paul writes, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free,

there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ.” (Galatians 3 : 28).

Every Eucharist refutes the cynical assumption that it can never really be like that. Sadly, what we assert at the Altar is often contradicted by how we are and what we do. Paul’s words to Galatians would need to be rephrased if addressed to us, with whom there is still Jew and Greek, still slave and free, still male and female - and, we might add, still child and adult – for we are not yet one in Christ.

It’s essential that we pay attention to the context in which Paul describes “the institution of the Lord’s Supper.” If we take that account out of context, as our lectionary does, we draw its sting. Paul mentions the Lord’s Supper, only because he wishes to highlight the scandalous infighting that was going on in the church at Corinth. Such conduct was making a mockery of the meal. Such conduct still does. What we affirm in liturgy must be exemplified in life.

“We thank you that in this wonderful sacrament you have given us the memorial of your passion’ grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruits of your redemption.”



Fr Dennis

To round off a somewhat action-packed edition, and to fill the remaining space, the editor has presumed to recycle a piece he wrote some years ago.

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

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

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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.

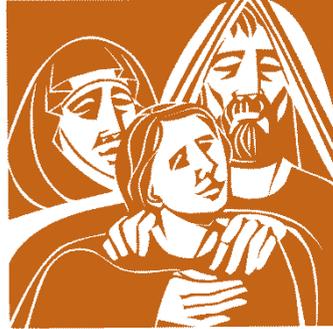
As the (Protestant) crow flies it is no great distance to the Outer Hebrides, beloved of this writer but, in its northern reaches, a last outpost of stern and unbending fundamentalist Protestantism a world away from Papist incense-swingers. Columnist Adam Nicholson, who actually owns a clutch of delectable 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 an entertaining 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 which 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 its blinkered preoccupation; they share, also, a continuing decline in their numbers and influence and, in the case of the Roman Catholics, an 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. And this writer at least is happier to be a victim of passive holy smoking at 'our end' than to condone the joyless and judgemental puritanism at the other end of that colourful spectrum.

The Parish Directory and Church Organisations



VICAR

Appointment to be taken up later this year

For all enquiries ring 928 5065

Parish Administrative Assistant email dunngoeff@talk21.com

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

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Mr Robert Woods, robertwoods1986@hotmail.co.uk. 07847 251315

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VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICER

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CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Ms Helen Kibbey, 17 Oxford Road, Waterloo. L22 3XB. 293 3416

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Telephone 928 5065

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.

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The next magazine will almost certainly be a joint August/September one. We are as ever happy to print (almost) all offerings at any time.

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Online edition: www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/magazine.pdf

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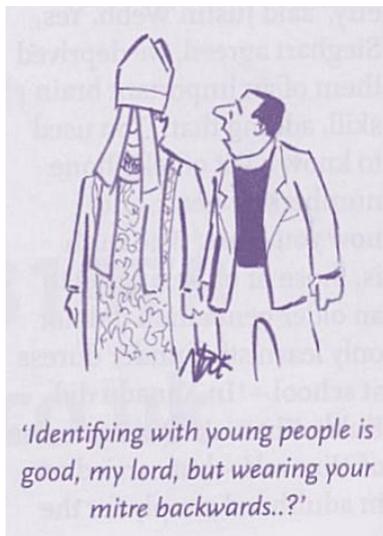
Editorial email: cdavidprice@gmail.com



**THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**



**Diocese of
Liverpool**



ONLINE BONUS!

Just too late for the printed version, but in time for an informative online postscript ...



Fr John has sent the editor this photograph, together with the message below, filling in details of his career and family - and revealing yet more links with churches and clergy familiar to many at St Faith's. We are grateful to our vicar-designate for satisfying our curiosity and look forward to meeting him in the autumn. Watch this space...

The hidden ministry years of Crockford's and links with St. Faith's.

After 3 years training in the church Army college in Blackheath, I was admitted to the office of Evangelist and Commissioned in the Church Army. The admitting was done by Archbishop Robert Runcie in Southwark Cathedral on the 10th of June 1982. Soon after I began my first post in Liverpool diocese at St. Margaret Toxteth; a Robert Horsfall Church and the first high church in Liverpool. The incumbent was Fr. Colin Oxenforth, who too began at St. Faith's.

Ruth and I were married in 1984 after she finished her Church Army Training; In 1987 we moved to the Good Shepherd West Derby. Our two children Alan and Emma were born during these years. In 1996 we moved to Padgate, when I was already training on the Northern Ordination Course.