



Newslink

The online journal of St Faith's Church, Great Crosby

March 2019

Click to follow these website links

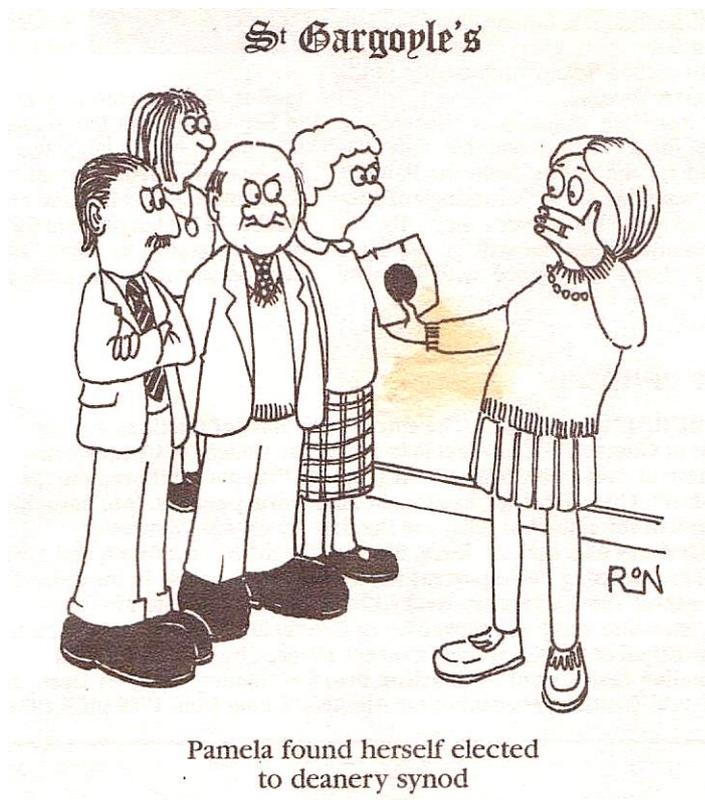
[Directory](#) [Diary](#) [Facebook](#) [Home Page](#) [Magazine archive](#)

Welcome to the March 2019 electronic issue of our new-look church magazine, which features news, reports, announcements, comment and comedy from St Faith's and elsewhere. During the course of the month, material will be uploaded as it arrives and as each month ends, the issue will be archived and a new month opened. The editor welcomes contributions of every kind at any time.: the latest article is at the top of the page.

Contributions, comments or complaints to cdavidprice@gmail.com

March 31st

A very Anglican cartoon to round off the month.



Pamela found herself elected to deanery synod

March 29th



From the Registers: here comes Fr Charles!

This is the latest in a long sequence of articles analysing the stories behind the service registers of St Faith's. The whole sequence, from 1900 to date, may be accessed at <http://www.stfaithsgrearosby.orh.uk/registeringthepast.html>

The sixth vicar of St Faith's certainly hit the ground running. His first services were on 17th July; 1966: the sixth Sunday after Trinity. There were 56 communicants at the 8.00 am: a record for recent weeks an months but one destined not to be repeated. This writer's marginal annotation explains all: 'First celebrations of Rev Charles Alfred Billington, B.A., ex-vicar of St Aidan's, Manchester General Communion at 10.45 sung eucharists commences.'

Thus there were 74 at the altar at the 10.45 service: probably the first time the communicants at the day's principal service had ever outnumbered those at the early one. The pattern set that day changed the shape of St Faith's worship for the years to come. Looking a good many years ahead, we will find the 8.00 am numbers slowly dwindling, until the decision was taken not to provide an early Sunday service. The time-honoured habit of fasting before communicating will have dwindled correspondingly, although there are no statistics to substantiate this.

For the record, the numbers taking the Sunday sacrament for the following few weeks of Fr Charles's reign were 26 (8.00)/64 (10.45), then 39/61, 33/60, 31/53, 25/45 and 35/61.

Weekday services in the opening weeks and months of Fr Charles' incumbency occur with the same frequency as was during the interregnum, but with less predictability. The 10.30 am Monday celebration is a fixture, but the other two weekday masses are on various days and times. and often now include an evening fixture. Holy Days are faithfully observed, with the intriguing dedication on 15th August to 'Assumption of the B.V.Q.' Another oddity is the entry for 18th September, when the 6.00 pm service is simply labelled as 'Service'. Whatever the act of worship, CAB officiated and preached at it.

Moving on to Fr Charles's first Patronal Festival at St Faith's, the preacher at the 8.00 pm Sung Mass and Procession on Thursday, October 6th, the actual feast day of our patron saint, was Robert A.K.Runcie. Our most famous 'old boy' and one-time server at St Faith's was at that time Principal of Cuddesden College in Oxford. Before long his upward journey would take him to the bishopric of St Albans before ending up as Archbishop of Canterbury. The following Sunday saw Franciscan Brother Christian S.S.F.(Raymond Clark) preaching at the 10.45 service. He addressed us again on the following Sunday morning. The preacher

that evening is the vicar of St Paul's, Southport: his church is recorded more clearly than his signature. Forward a week, and the 6.00 pm slot is marked as Service in Hall.

Forward another week and the preacher is Ian Bunting, vicar of St John's, Waterloo: a very different churchmanship than that of St Faith's. November 13th welcomed Revd R. Daintith of St Paul, Tranmere to the evensong pulpit.

Your archivist's marginal notes later that month record a significant change. November 20th sees the final Sunday afternoon Children's Instruction, and the following Sunday is recorded as 'first session of Junior Church join 10.45 service'. Under this new dispensation the children met in the hall at 10.45 for their classes, and were summoned into church at the consecration to receive a blessing at the altar rail before sitting in the front pews for the rest of the service.

Just before Christmas the Bishop of Warrington, Laurence Brown, a stalwart supporter of our church over many years, presided over a Sung Mass and Confirmation on the evening of December 21st. There were 102 communicants and 27 candidates. Their details are recorded in our online archives, and contain many familiar names. For the record, the bishop laid hands on Edward Brian Godfrey, Peter Snailham, Graham Stuart Burns, Roger William Lacey Breckell, Peter Latham, Alan George Barwise, Brian Roberts, Edward Robert Powell, John Turner, David Nigel Pierce Dunlop, Paul Turner, David Morgan, Karen Anne Smith, Elizabeth Anne Coote, Christine Elizabeth Ronson, Margaret Susan Thomas, Ruth Elizabeth Mynne, Helen Joan Hodges, Angela Marguerite Woodley, Joyce Smith, Judith Anne Taylor, Wendy McDowell, Deborah Marion Martin, Barbara Joan Creer Andree Elizabeth Marshall, Rosemary Bithell and Ann Jackson.

The Bishop returned for the midnight mass on Christmas Eve, accompanied by 250 communicants. There were 66 more on the Day itself. St Stephen's Day saw the unexpected reappearance of William Hassall celebrating at the 10.30 am service.

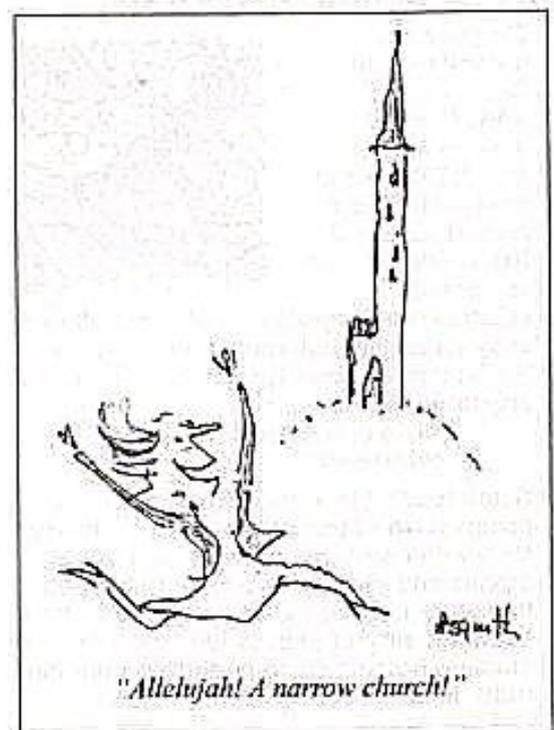
The total at the altar for 1966 was 6,206, as the page turns and 1967 beckons. Fr Charles was already making his mark in no small measure, and there will be many more signs of his unique presence in the weeks and months ahead.

Chris Price



March 25th

'Broad and Narrow...'



March 22nd

'The Person in the Pew'

These verses first saw the light of day a good many years ago, and were written in tribute to the enduring witness of the laity of our church and, by extension, throughout the Anglican parishes of this and every land. The 'Person' who came to mind when the muse came visiting was faithful layman and co-churchwarden George Smith of blessed memory. Happily, the poem has found favour in a number of other contexts, most notably on a tea towel at Wakefield Cathedral, thanks to Bishop Nigel McCulloch. More recently, the poem has undergone gender change through the efforts of a correspondent from St Francis, Bournville. He is using it at their forthcoming A.P.C.M, thus giving me an excuse of parading it again a few days before our own meeting.

I hail a quiet hero, the champion of the age,
Unknown to fame and fortune, no strutter on life's stage;
The humble representative of folk like me and you:
I sing an unsung champion - the person in the pew.

He'll never hit the headlines; he'll rarely cause a stir
(Forgive me, ardent feminists, if I say 'him', not 'her')
But faithfully on Sundays you'll find him on his perch,
Upholding the traditions - a pillar of the church.



He sits where he has always sat while, all around him, change
Brings odd new prayers and modern hymns and service orders strange;
He pays his dues discreetly, signs covenants on cue:
What would we do without him - the person in the pew?

Though prelates may pontificate and curates come and go
The layman's there to hold the fort, and it was ever so.
Should you seek a staunch supporter, you'll not have far to search:
His presence keeps the roof on - he's a pillar of the church!

On High days and on holidays you'll find him in his place,
In sober dress and countenance, and Church of England face.
But mock him not nor spurn him, but give the man his due:
He's the ultimate survivor - he's the person in the pew.

Chris Price

October 1996

March 19th

Meeting People: the 2019 APCM is almost upon us...



St Faith's Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place after the morning service on Sunday, 24th March. The full text of the annual report and accounts is to be seen at:

<http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/APCMAnnREP19.PDF>

The 'State of the Nation' report by the incumbent is a central part of the annual report: it is reproduced in full below.

Report of the Priest-in-Charge

I have completed a full year as the Priest-in-Charge of St. Faith's, a year in which I have been getting to know people, understanding how things work and becoming aware of what issues are important for the future of St. Faith's as a worshipping community.

The Stewardship Renewal Campaign early in the year received a good response, additional revenue was also raised from the Recitals and the Christmas Tree Festival. That is to be celebrated, but we are living in a difficult financial climate with both building repairs and the parish share making extra demands on hard-won resources. Against this climate under Rick Walker's leadership the PCC have begun looking at the Back of

Church Project; this will include disabled access, toilets, a kitchen facility and a new lighting scheme.

The link with St. Mary's as part of the United Benefice is important and we need to support each other's social events. The links through the Waterloo Group with St. John's and Christ Church are important too. Pastoral re-organisation has involved a lot of meetings and discussions over the past year. The PCC of St. Faith's agreed, along with the PCCs of the other three churches, that a Joint Council would be the best way forward. Discussions and meetings will continue in 2019 in the hope we can agree a structure with the Diocese that will enhance our joint mission and not divert time and energy into discussions of structures and finance.

Churches require lots of volunteers and it is important to recognise the work that is done by many. Some are very obvious public contributions and others are more discreet and hidden from view. All contribute invaluablely towards the life of the Church. The Ministry Team: Dr Fred Nye, Paula O'Shaughnessy, Rev. Denise McDougall, Fr. Dennis Smith and we welcomed a new member Fr. Bill Matthews at the end of October. As Incumbent, I am grateful for their continued contributions to the ministry of St. Faith's.

St. Faith's enjoys a good reputation for music and hospitality. This past year, Robert Woods, our Organist and Music Director, co-ordinated some fine performances during the recital season and memorable worship assisted by the Choir. Working in the background were the social committee who provided hospitality for the Vicarage Garden Party, several parish lunches and the Christmas Tree Festival.

The Christmas Tree Festival is going from strength to strength with a record number of volunteer helpers in 2018. The Festival makes a big impact on the local community. Our church is a place where local schools come for special occasions, before Christmas there were around 1,500 children present in Church. This year's Church of England "Follow the Star" campaign led to Mike Carr making the illuminated star that hung from the bell tower all the way through December. It certainly got some comment both within church and in the local community and, in a small way, spoke of the hope of Christmas to many.

Listening to many St. Faith's people speak about the past we have much to celebrate, and there are some other things that are best left in the past. We do not have the large number of people at this time to emulate the glories of the past, and age is catching up with many of our congregation. The past should not be there to make us feel our contributions in the present are of less value, but we need to be realistic about what we can do with what God has given us in the present. We need to be faithful to our Catholic inheritance, as a parish church in a community as committed disciples of Jesus.

Fr John Reed



March 16th



A Lenten message from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

Some years ago we visited Italy and in the course of our holiday went to one of the great cathedrals. Attached to the cathedral was a museum in which all the sacred objects that were no longer used were displayed: they were old, broken, faded and superseded. One in particular was very memorable, it was a life-sized crucifix. The crucifix was broken, Jesus's left hand had become detached from the cross, and the arm had twisted at the shoulder so it looked as if he was beckoning people to come towards him. The face of Jesus was very sublime and smiled.

You could almost hear the comfortable words from the Book of Common Prayer: "Come unto me all who are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

But a crucifix holds a message of suffering too; we are all called to pick up our crosses and deny ourselves. Yet the paradox of this happy accident in a museum is that the crucifix speaks of both coming to Jesus to share in his grace and taking a disciple's part in bearing the cross.

The discipline of Lent goes beyond giving up our favourite luxury and giving the money we have saved to charity. It is about becoming closer through prayer and study of God's word to the one who shoulders the whole world's sin and suffering. It is about accepting the invitation to come and share with Jesus in a journey. A journey that takes us beyond our own small world view with its supposedly very important concerns into the world of a gracious loving God, a world that is populated with all God's other children. A world where hands reach out to other hands to give assistance; instead of hands forming fists to protect by threatening and inflicting suffering on others.

"Put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the water.....take a look at yourself and you will look at others differently."

May God bless you this Lent.

Fr. John

March 13th



God save us from Twitter: a Secular Rant

One in 10 British adults still has no access to the internet, says a new report. Its authors make it sound like a terrible hardship. And I can see what they mean.

Imagine what it must be like. Having to take your news only from reputable sources of information. Oblivious to all the latest anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Deprived of endless abuse and threats from total strangers. It must be a nightmare.

Lord knows how these people manage to fill their evenings. I suppose they have to read books. or go out, or have hobbies and stuff. Or even just talk. As in, talk to people they actually like, rather than people they hate, like we do on the internet. Then, of course, there's work. I wonder what I would do at work, if I didn't have the internet. Work, probably.

It must be weird, being able to read more than two paragraphs at a time without your mind, you know, doing that thing it does after you've read two paragraphs. And being able to walk down the street without bumping into someone coming the other way because you're glued to your screen and they're glued to theirs. And being able to cross a busy road without quickly checking for new tweets half way. And then quickly checking again on the other side.

That poor 10 per cent. I wonder how they stop themselves getting bored when they're on the train, or on the bus, or at the dinner table, or in bed, or anywhere else. I suppose they just have to have thoughts. In a way, it is probably quite interesting, having thoughts. I think I used to have thoughts myself, occasionally, although I'm not completely sure what they were. If only I could have tweeted them, as a reminder. But I couldn't, because we didn't have Twitter back then. All those years ago, before my brain turned into a patch of permanently scorched grass.

Anyway, the fact is: we need to help these people. Because until every single person in the country is online, we won't be able to completely destroy our high street shops, our mental health, our children's innocence, and our democracy.

Let's get this final 10 percent online – and finish the job.

Michael Deacon

The Daily Telegraph

As ever, the management welcomes comments on either side of the argument of this and all other rants, sacred or secular. It is assumed that all Newslink readers are capable of concentrating for far more than two paragraphs - or 280 characters, which as I'm sure you all know. Is the maximum permitted tweet length. Ed.

March 10th

Horsfall Father and Son



Thanks to fellow archivist Paul Laxton of St Margaret of Antioch, Prince's Road in Toxteth, for this fine reproduction of part of the west window at that resplendent Anglo-Catholic shrine. The principal figure is Robert Horsfall, Liverpool stock-broker, founder of St Margaret's and father of our own founder, Douglas Horsfall,.

March 7th

Musical events at St Faith's

ST. FAITH'S GREAT CROSBY

MUSIC & INSPIRATION

A CONCERT OF CHOIRS · SOLOISTS & MUSICIANS... REFRESH SERVE

FOR LENT & OTHER SEASONS **SAT. 9th MAR at 7 P.M.**

STAINERS CRUCIFIXION SUN. 7th APR. at 6.30 TELL SERVE... GIVE...

This Saturday. Mach 9th, Bishop Chris Edmondson and other members of Archbishop John Sentamu's team will be with us at St Faith's at 7.00 pm as part of the Archbishop of York's 'Tell Serve Give mission in the Diocese of Liverpool.

There will be musical performances from Violinists Rosalin Lazaroff and Edwin Paling; Soprano Jennifer Lee; Contralto Rebekah Pritchard; Mostly Madrigals singers; the Parish Choir of St. Faith's and St. Faith's Organist, Robert Woods.

Admission is free, refreshments will be served during the interval and there's another concert on Sunday, 7th April!

March 5th

A Sonnet for Ash Wednesday



Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.

He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.

But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

Malcolm Guite

March 3rd

A Journey of Faith *Fr Bill Matthews*

Part 2 – Wesleyans, Warships and Student Welfare



When climbing high hills or mountains, there's often a place where the journey up to that point becomes visible and the twists and turns begin to make sense. In Part I of this series, you may already have seen signs I had failed to see. The childhood journey of Faith, encounter with the claims of Christ and my ministry amongst the Independent Methodists, should have given me a sense of direction as well as the earthly destination. This second part of the journey doesn't get as far as my return to the Church of England but, as I look back, that seems an almost inevitable consequence.

In his book, 'Paul a Servant of Christ', F B Meyer writes: 'it was therefore a matter of constant congratulation to the apostle that he had neither to cut nor carve his way but simply to discover the track which God had laid for his path from of old, and when he had found it, not only was it consistent with his place in the mystical body of Christ, but was the very pathway for which his character and gifts were most adapted.' That's how I relate to this next phase of my own pathway.

The years rolled by and Eileen and I, who married in 1971, had three children, several house moves within Stockton Heath and a change from working in business to academia. Having studied for a post graduate qualification in Further Education teaching, I was appointed Lecturer at the Millbank College of Commerce, West Derby. I thoroughly enjoyed the seven years I worked there. So, it was something of a surprise to be burdened with a call to chaplaincy in the Royal Navy.

Even then, my heart was in the Church of England, though the opportunities for service seemed to come through the Methodist Church, who accepted me on transfer from the Independents as IM ministers could not, at that time, be appointed as Forces chaplains. After 12 months full time study based at Luther King House ecumenical ministerial training centre in Manchester, I was 'stationed' in South London and presided over a growing church. With seven years teaching experience in Further Education, and a part time role as College chaplain at Croydon College, the Diocese of Southwark welcomed me as Further Education representative on their Board of Education. In addition, I was asked to be part time 'Officiating Chaplain' to the Royal Artillery in Woolwich. From 1988 – 1989 I was privileged to take a leading role in preparing for and managing the visit of Billy Graham to a five Centre campaign in London. 1989 was a year of huge events and changes – Hillsborough, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the Tiananmen Square massacre – we were all affected by them and it was a particular privilege to minister to people at the centre of those changes in the UK and abroad. Whilst this was in process I took the lead on a £250k project to reorder one of my churches in London.

A year later, the Secretary to the Methodist Forces Board asked me to apply to be a commissioned chaplain in the Royal Navy. Having passed my fortieth birthday by then, it was a surprise to be asked but, once accepted, after very brief 'training' in HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, the Matthews family (including our children Simon, Rebekah and Thomas) moved to Somerset, where I was chaplain to the Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton. Around half-way through my ten year commission in the Royal Navy I became the Senior Methodist Chaplain for the Royal Navy and, along with my opposite numbers in the Army and the Air Force, would interview and mentor applicants for military chaplaincy. Only weeks into my commission, however, I helped a senior Naval officer prepare for his own forthcoming death and funeral, which was held at Martock Parish Church, Somerset, where the churchwardens invited me to become their vicar – despite being a Methodist minister. That conversation remained in my memory though the prospect seemed impossible.

The Royal Navy, as we experienced it, required us to risk everything including my life and with terrorists threats to military personnel and families, there were moments of high drama. Our daughter, Rebekah was only a few hundred yards from the Arndale Centre bomb in 1996 – she was a student at the Chetham's School of Music. Our eldest son was by then living and working in London and was never far from the IRA bombs planted in London.

The Naval Chaplaincy role demanded a great deal of separation from one another but God's grace proved more than sufficient for us in sickness and in health, in danger and in celebrations. I had the privilege of being the preacher at services to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Denmark (Copenhagen) and Norway (Oslo). It was particularly inspiring to meet the people who risked everything to liberate the countries – nationals and allies. All of the ones I met were modest about their part but deeply grateful for those who died or received life-limiting injuries. Anything we sacrificed to fulfil this role was put into a very much bigger context. Some people to whom I ministered during my ten years of Naval service and the subsequent decade, when I was an active member of the Royal Naval Volunteer Band service, remain in touch.

Towards the end of my Naval commission, I was invited to become an ecumenical chaplain to the University of Portsmouth and a Methodist Circuit minister. In addition to this, I taught Law at the University, the latter being one of the means by which I sought to engage more fully with staff and students. I take an incarnational view of ministry. Being a lecturer brought the privilege of working with academics and other staff from a range of institutions including being Hampshire's Regional Coordinator for the Access to Higher Education Law courses. During my work with the Portsmouth Methodist Circuit, I became ill (probably burn-out) and had six weeks rest along with therapeutic counselling. I was grateful for that and found my first Spiritual Director. This was a life-transforming choice. Until then, my Theological outlook (church tradition) had no place for, or understanding of Spiritual Direction, but when that began, my ministry was deepened and enhanced. In the past few years I have taken the Liverpool Diocese's course for Spiritual Directors and will be helping to deliver that course in the new year.

Throughout my ministry, I have held a series of governorships in schools (sequentially) – primary and secondary in the public sector and a prep school in the private sector, a foundation governor governorship in both primary and secondary (Canon Sharples and Deanery High School), along with a directorship in a multi academy trust. Each of these are ways that I believe I can be salt and light in the Community and where I continually have the opportunity to be alongside a range of people. This 'total immersion' approach to ministry can only work if there are dependable colleagues and church leaders.

In the last article in the series I will say a little more about how the Church of England drew me back 'home

March 1st

March 2019 Diary

Sunday 3 rd	11.00 am	Quinquagesima
	12.30 pm	Pre Lent Lunch
	6:30pm	Evensong
Wed 6 th	7:30pm	Ash Wednesday Eucharist and Ashing
Thursday 7 th	12.00 noon	Eucharist
Saturday 9 th	7:00pm	Music and Inspiration Concert
		#bishopinmission
Sunday 10 th	11am	First Sunday of Lent and Parade
	1.15 pm	Baptism
	6:30pm	Stations of the Cross and Compline
Monday 11 th	7.30 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St Mary's
Tuesday 12 th	7.00 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St Faith's
Wednesday 13 th	7.30 pm	Deanery Synod at Christ Church Bootle
	7.30 pm	Forces Family Support Group meeting
Thursday 14 th	12.00 noon	Eucharist
Sunday 17 th	11.00am	Second Sunday of Lent
	12.15 pm	Short PCC meeting
	6:30pm	Stations of the Cross and Compline
Monday 18 th	7.30 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St. Mary's
Tuesday 19 th	7.00 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St. Faith's
Wednesday 20 th	7.00 pm	Benefice Service planning meeting
Thursday 21 st	12.00 noon	Eucharist
Sunday 24 th	11.00 am	The Annunciation
	12.30 pm	Sandwich Lunch and APCM/ First PCC
	6:30pm	Stations of the Cross and Compline
Monday 25 th	7.30 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St. Mary's
Tuesday 26 th	7.00 pm	Lent course "Your Shape for God's Service" at St. Faith's

Thursday 28 th	12.00 noon	Eucharist
Sunday 31 st	11.00 am	Mothering Sunday
	6:30pm	Stations of the Cross and Compline'