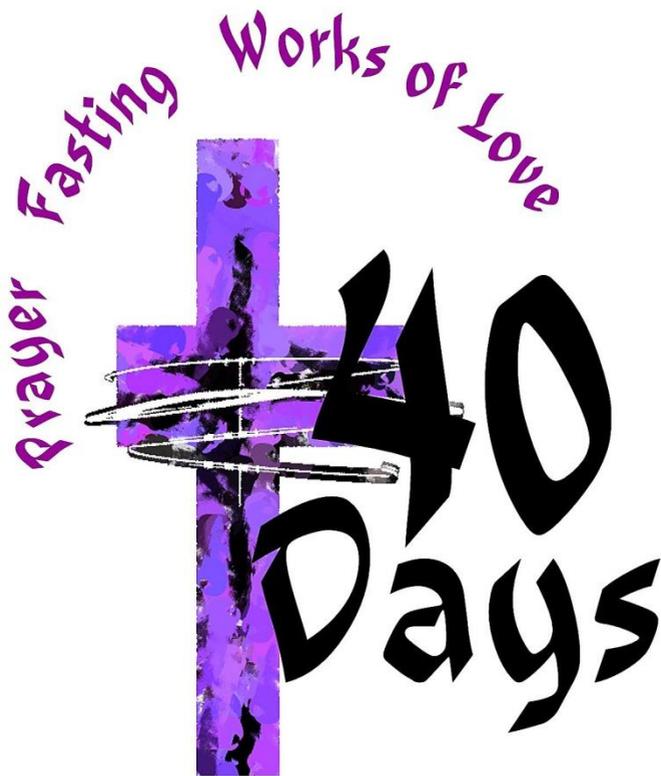
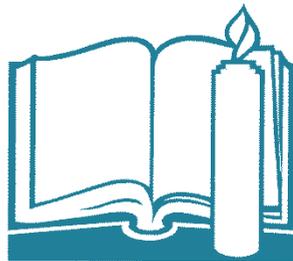


# Newslink



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

# Worship at Saint Faith's



## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

**11.00 am** SUNG EUCHARIST and Children's Church  
Holy Baptism by arrangement  
**6.30 pm** Compline for Lent with Address

## **WEEKDAY SERVICES DURING LENT**

### The Daily Office

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

**Tuesday:** 6.30pm: Evening Prayer, followed by 'Doxa' course

**Thursday:** 8.00am: Morning Prayer

**Friday:** 6.00pm: Evening Prayer

**Saturday:** 9.30am: Morning Prayer

### The Holy Eucharist

**Tuesday:** 7.00pm; **Thursday:** 11.45am; **Friday:** 6.30pm (with Stations of the Cross)

*Please see the weekly online bulletin for full details 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 3342/07976 901389 to arrange this, or to arrange a visit to someone in hospital or at home.

## **IN A PASTORAL EMERGENCY**

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



## From the Ministry Team - March 2015

Dear Friends,

I've been reading a book by the political philosopher and 'enthusiastic amateur theologian', as he describes himself, Simon Critchley. An earlier book of his is called *The Book of Dead Philosophers* – and a few of them, as well as a couple of very much alive and kicking bishops, stalk through this letter, but bear with me, please!

The book I've been just been reading though is called *The Faith of the Faithless* (Verso, 2012) – and it's an attempt to analyse the problematic relationship that is, perhaps, THE problematic relationship of our age, that between religion, politics and violence.

Whenever I read Critchley, I am almost always immensely entertained and stimulated – he is an engaging and witty writer, and an astute thinker who raises important questions – and I also almost always disagree with him profoundly!

In the case of *Faith of the Faithless*, Critchley returns to Rousseau's ideal of democracy in *The Social Contract*, summed up in the phrase, 'association without representation.' This is the starting point of his remedy for the vexatious triangle between religion, violence and politics, and also his ideal of the church – which he sees in forms of association that make room for 'the faith of the faithless. Critchley, that is, thinks that taking Rousseau seriously means rejecting the Western liberal ideal of democracy as, precisely, 'representation of the people,' in favour of forms of association that are more directly democratic – forms of association in which people directly represent their own interests.

He makes his argument compellingly: after all, representation is about claiming to speak on someone else's behalf. Critchley's ideal, which he gets from Rousseau, is of association of people who speak only for themselves, who represent their own interests, without mediation. And, of course, there is something right about this – representation or mediation, responsibly re-presenting the views of others, is never without risk of power, distortion or manipulation.

Yet I think Critchley is fundamentally wrong in what he argues. Theologically, his view of the church equates to a kind of Protestant congregationalism; as a good

catholic, with a sacramental view of the theological, I think that re-presentation, or mediation, goes ‘all the way down.’

We can never, entirely, represent our own interests – since we see them not, as Rousseau hoped, through the innocent eyes of benevolence, but through the distorting lens of – well, of self-interest! This is true of all of us – we are all at times pulled out of shape by what Simone Weil called ‘the big fat ego’.

Also we can never entirely represent our own interests – for our interests are partly shaped by the selves we are yet to become, the selves we do not yet know. Our faith insists that, this side of eternity, we are all works in progress! The good society also needs to ensure the structures are in place for representing those who cannot represent their own interests – those who are very young, or very old; those who have disabilities; those who are ill, physically or mentally, or otherwise vulnerable. And there is a need to consider how the views of dissenting minorities are expressed appropriately, and never dismissed.

Two events are coming on apace for which this is very relevant: the General Election, on 5th May, and our own APM/APCM on 8th March. Our elected representatives have not had hugely good press recently – but perhaps ‘press’ does not often equate to good news in our time; and I would want to affirm the many MPs, MEPs and Local Councillors of all political stripes who go quietly on representing the interests of their constituents, including giving a voice to the voiceless and vulnerable, often at great personal cost.

A church that is truly catholic is truly representational all the way down. The Church of England is part of the Church ‘holy catholic and apostolic.’ That is why, in addition to Archbishops and Bishops, ‘authorized and allowed’ forms of liturgy, we have Church Representation Rules, and elect a PCC according to them at the APCM. Now, Church Representation Rules won’t keep you awake at night! They are, however, an important instrument both of unity and of allowing principled expression of dissent; they are, that is, one of the means of creating the structure of synodical government of the Church of England that begins with the representation of the ‘person in the pew’. by the PCC, to the Deanery and Diocesan Synods, and ultimately, the General Synod which votes on the Measures that eventually become not just ecclesiastical law, but ultimately, given the Church of England’s status as the Established Church, the law of the land as well. Representation really goes all the way down, up and back again – and I believe this to be, not necessarily perfect, but profoundly good enough!

We’ve seen its fruits in action just recently in the consecration, one week apart, of Libby Lane as the Bishop of Stockport, and first woman bishop in the Church of England, and Philip North, a traditional catholic who cannot accept women’s priestly orders, as Bishop of Burnley. They represent the spectrum of the Church of England with regard to women’s ministry – those for whom the consecration of a woman bishop was a cause of rejoicing, and those who, in all good conscience, cannot accept this within the church catholic. And yet... they attended one another’s consecration.

They embraced with evident affection on the steps of York Minster, and were seen laughing and rejoicing together. Bishop Philip did not lay hands at Bishop Libby's consecration; so that Bishop Libby was not alone in not laying hands at his, only the Bishop of Chichester, Martin Warner, at the invitation of the Archbishop of York, performed the consecration of Bishop Philip. We saw, that is, enacted in practice, what was worked out in what is rather prosaically called the amendment to Canon 33 that was passed through General Synod last year. What we saw was the best of representation – people who profoundly disagree with one another being enabled, even in that disagreement, to be a very visible, living symbol of belonging to one another as the Body of Christ.

This is why representation goes all the way down in a Church that is holy, catholic and apostolic. Dare we hope that, in trying to work all this out, prayerfully and patiently, the Church – and in particular the Church of England is being what it is supposed to be – a sacrament – an active sign of the joy and hope of the Gospel, to a world embroiled in that troubled triangle of religion, politics and violence?

With my love and prayers,

As ever,

*Sue*



## Anyone for a BAP?

***Jackie Parry gives us the latest news on her ministry training. Go Jackie!***

Dear friends,

Well, my registration papers (following numerous amendments and updates), Diocesan sponsoring papers, references and my written reflection have all now been sent to Ministry Division prior to my attendance at the Bishops' Advisory Panel (BAP) which is booked for 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at Shallowford House in Staffordshire. My feelings are a mixture of excitement and nerves, but with a firm belief that God will guide me, and those whose role it is to discern me, in exploring my vocation.

The Bishops' Advisory Panel is the national stage in the discernment process, which follows on from the local, i.e. Diocesan, discernment process, which involved various stages of exploration to discern God's will in a person's calling/vocation. Apparently, I will be amongst a group of up to 8 candidates who will be assessed over three days by a panel of three Advisers. We will be together for meals and worship, but will be



# A Roof Resurrected!

*Sue writes*



The roof on both the North and South sides of the Church is now more or less complete, and to a very high standard. In total, the Roof Fund stands at over £30,000, which means we have been able to afford the repairs and to maintain our commitment to Parish Share. The rainwater goods – have arrived and, BBR, our contractors, have begun this last phase of the repair.

A huge thanks to all for your generosity, commitment and enthusiasm – we have indeed truly raised the roof!

## Services Support Group Report

Once again our Carol Service during the wonderful Christmas Tree Festival was another outstanding success. A ‘full house’ once again, although as always until the band arrive and tune up, and the pews start filling nicely, I go through all the stages of panic known to man! But it really cannot fail: a crisp dark December evening, a magical setting of beautifully decorated trees, a Military Band all extremely smart in their dress uniforms and carols! What could be better? Prayers, readings, a gentle pertinent homily from Rev George Perera, favourite carols accompanied by an excellent band, a church full of people, some of whom had travelled a distance to join with us - wonderful! All my panicking totally unnecessary as the evening was enjoyed and appreciated by all, as their generosity showed in the retiring collection of £424. 41 - a magnificent sum which has been divided equally between COMBAT STRESS, BLESMA and this year THE BRITISH LEGION, three very deserving charities who do excellent work among service veterans. All I can say is ‘thank you’ and ‘God bless’ - it is very much appreciated and will be put to good use.

We started 2015 meetings in February with a very interesting and informative talk given by Rev George, giving us an insight into the Army’s presence in Sierra Leone and the Ebola epidemic. Many of you will remember Padre Simon Farmer who came along to speak to our group on his deployment in Afghanistan and how we raised funds to help him take some seriously injured servicemen sailing as part of their rehabilitation (there are some photographs at the back of church). Padre Simon is now in Sierra Leone and he has sent back some interesting and moving information about the situation there. As well as helping the sick he is also giving a lot of support to our soldiers, as what they are seeing and experiencing is emotionally unnerving and unlike anything they have witnessed in their past postings. With all the contact he has had with the local people, Padre Simon has come to admire and respect these people, how brave they are when tragedy strikes them, their families or the community, leaving

many widows and orphans behind, all of which is deeply moving and upsetting.

There are some 2,500 service personnel working out there at the moment without the usual NAAFI backup services, so letters and parcels from home are much appreciated and the high spot of the week. There are however some personnel who have nobody back home to send letters and parcels with the usual necessities and treats to them. As you will have guessed, this started my 'little grey cells' working! I have contacted Simon and have asked him if he could send a list of things most needed and how to get parcels out there. So as soon as I receive these details I'll let you know and with your help we could start collecting and St Faith's will have another link to Sierra Leone as well as the Waterloo Partnership.

Our next meeting is 4th March, at the usual time of 7.30pm and our speaker will be Dave Smith who will be telling us about his work with veterans in the Sefton Area, so if you can do come along to join us if you can, you'll be more than welcome and I think you'll find it interesting.

Many thanks for all your interest and support both in the past and I hope the future too.

*Eunice Little*



**Christian Aid Week 2015**  
**May 10th - 16th**

**Christian Aid's Ethiopian partner HUNDEE is the focus for this year's Christian Aid Week Working in the rural south of the country, Hundee staff deliberately seek out the poorest in the community and transform their lives.**

Loko is one of the poorest women in her community. She has a daily battle to stop her children starving. Loko walks alone for eight hours a day, in shoes so thin that thorns repeatedly pierce through to her feet, to gather and sell firewood so she can feed her children. But Loko's life will soon be transformed by the gift of a cow from Hundee. Just £150 will raise her and her children from poverty and give her dignity. This gift is passed on. When a calf is born she will in turn give this to another woman in poverty.

## What can we do in Christian Aid Week to support Hundee in their inspirational work?

- Be a **house to house collector** Last year our collectors raised over £900.
- **Circle the City:** Saturday April 25th 10.30 am. Join the sponsored walk in Liverpool. Help fight poverty step by step.
- Ask your friends to answer the **North West quiz** for £1. Prizes of Fairtrade Goody bags.
- **Be a souper hero!** enjoy a bowl of soup after the Eucharist on Sunday May 3rd and give a donation.
- **Pray for Loko** and women like her. Thank God for the privileges we enjoy and give generously in gratitude using the **Count your Blessings Lenten Reflections.**

For details of all these please contact **Kathleen Zimak** on 0151 286 2117.  
[zimak@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:zimak@blueyonder.co.uk)

With your help, we can provide cows to vulnerable women in Ethiopia - just £150 is enough to buy a female cow and a promising future for someone like Loko.

**Do something however small for women like Loko this year. Your gift will grow a hundred fold.....**

---

*Veteran of the back pew, John Chapman, passed away recently at the ripe old age of 95. Below, John Woodley writes in his memory. See the centre photograph pages.*

**‘Thank God for the long life I’ve had’**

**R.I.P. John William Chapman 9<sup>th</sup> February 1919 – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015**



Such were the words spoken by John Chapman during our conversation last year. In March and April 2014, I had the privilege of meeting with John at his neatly kept home in Queensway.

Chris Price had suggested that John would be an interesting subject for interview and that, coupled with my son’s need to create a short film for his university course, led to

8

our meeting. And so we called one bright March afternoon and proceeded to set up camera equipment to set the film rolling.

As we settled into place, John on his sofa set against the backdrop of his fabled poppy print wallpaper, the next hour or so of conversation went quickly and easily. John provided many anecdotes from his long life that flowed seamlessly and rapidly traversed the decades.

John was born in Swadlincote in Derbyshire in 1919 and was brought up by his grandparents who owned a fish and chip shop in the town.

As he grew up he became keen on cycle racing and would rise early on a Sunday morning to take part in long rides throughout Derbyshire and the Peak District, in so doing gaining an appreciation of the geography of the local area.

In 1939 he was called up and stationed in Cambridge before being trained as a driver for an armoured vehicle regiment. He served across the various theatres of war, Italy, Austria and the Middle East and remembered the many cities he passed through.

John took pleasure in remembering the technical features of the vehicles he drove, in particular the four-wheel steering of the Daimler Scout cars to the intricacies and deficiencies of the fluid flywheel!

Whilst on leave, he met his wife to be, Joan, in 1942 at a dance hall in Burton on Trent and in 1943 they were wed. John was to begin his lifelong association with Liverpool, spending his honeymoon in Waterloo, staying with his Aunt Alice.

After the war, John retrained as a colliery worker, working in the pits for three years. He remembered the technical challenges and processes faced when working underground. His mechanical experience was to prove useful in his later work as a fitter of building plant equipment.

Recalling the birth of his girls, Rosemary and Annette, John chuckled as he remembered being telephoned by the doctor to inform him that his wife had given birth to a daughter. An hour later, the doctor called again to say that his wife had given birth to a second daughter and that he now had twins! The doctor offered to buy John a suitable pram, given that the twins were the doctor's first such birth.

John and Joan went on to have two further daughters, Yvonne and Cosette.

Our conversation touched upon what was possibly the saddest moment in John's life, the death of his beloved wife, Joan, in 1996. Married for 53 years, John recalled that he remained true to his wedding vows, describing Joan's death as the worst moment in his life. Over the course of the following year, John grieved for his loss, drawing upon his resolve. His voice faltered as he said quietly, "It took a bit of fighting back". A year elapsed before his wife's ashes were committed.

Following Joan's death, John became a regular worshipper at St. Faith's and a familiar figure at church, occupying the rear pew. He enjoyed many of the social

activities of St. Faith's, in particular the parish meals and lunches in the church hall.

He was generous and took delight in bringing sweets and chocolate to church to distribute to children at the end of the Sunday service, gaining many young friends, eager to dip their hands into his bag of sweets.

As our conversation came to a close, John remarked, "That's how my life's been. It does make interesting reading doesn't it? To me it's never been a dull life."

It seems appropriate and timely to reprint the following item which was first printed in the Church magazine in 2001 and was one of several clippings supplied by John, showing his love of gardening.

*John Woodley*

## How to Plant a Garden

For the garden of your daily living...

Plant three rows of peas

- 1 Peace of mind
- 2 Peace of heart
- 3 Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash

- 1 Squash gossip
- 2 Squash indifference
- 3 Squash grumbling
- 4 Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce

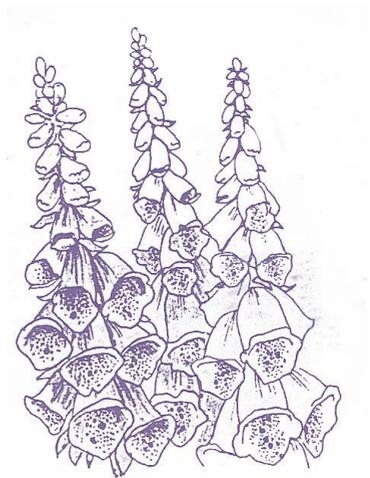
- 1 Lettuce be faithful
- 2 Lettuce be kind
- 3 Lettuce be patient
- 4 Lettuce really love one another

No garden without turnips

- 1 Turnip for meetings
- 2 Turnip for services
- 3 Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme

- 1 Thyme for each other
- 2 Thyme for family
- 3 Thyme for friends



Water freely with patience and cultivate with love, there is much fruit in your garden, because you reap what you sow. And remember spring is here, so start planning your garden of daily living - be happy.

---



## Hear! Hear!

Bert was worried that his wife Ethel was going deaf, so he consulted the doctor and asked his advice.

‘Well, first of all you need to be sure’, said the medic. ‘Stand 50 feet away from her and ask her a question. If she doesn’t answer, try again at 40 feet, then 30 and so on until you get a response.’

Bert thought this was worth a go. Ethel was the local vicar, and he knew she would be in church, so off he went, and sure enough she was up by the high altar checking the order of service.

He stood at the back by the font, and said in a clear voice, ‘Ethel, what time is evensong tonight?’ No answer. He walked part way up the aisle, and tried again, to no avail. He tried by the pulpit, at the chancel steps and finally in the choir stalls. ‘Ethel, what time is evensong tonight?’

Ethel turned round and said, ‘For goodness sake, Bert, this is the fifth time I’ve told you – it’s at 6 o’clock!’

*Adapted from a story supplied by **Fiona Whalley***

## Thank You!

Chris and Audrey wish to thank everyone at St. Faith’s for all the kindness shown to us over the past few months after Chris had a stroke. We really appreciate the cards, letters, flowers, meals, telephone calls and most of all for the prayers said on his behalf. You have helped us to cope with a difficult situation. Thankfully Chris is improving all the time and we are hopeful for a complete recovery.

**Audrey Dawson**



*Keeping  
a Holy Lent*

## The seasonal extras at St Faith's

We welcome back Mirfield students on Sunday evenings 22<sup>nd</sup> February and 1st and 8th March: Compline at 6.30 pm followed by talks and discussions. On Tuesday evenings, after the 7.00 pm eucharist, a new 'Doxa' course starts with the theme of 'Penitence and Prayer'. And on Fridays at 6.30 pm there will be the Stations of the Cross, followed by the eucharist.

Full details of everything that's happening during this most holy season are on the Lent handout in church and may be seen online at:

[www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/lentschedule2015.pdf](http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/lentschedule2015.pdf)

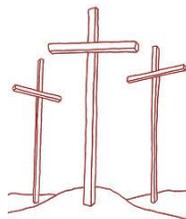
---

Following the death of the sixth vicar of St Faith's, the church website has carried an archive of memories, sermons and photographs of the man who changed so much in our church. Anthony Walker produced a long, affectionate and entertaining memoir, reproduced in full online ([www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/billington.html](http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/billington.html)) and mostly printed below as a final tribute.

## Father Charles Billington, R.I.P.

*21<sup>st</sup> September 1930 – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2014*

### **SOME TREASURED MEMORIES**



In the months following Fr Charles's arrival at St Faith's there developed the "Brooke" group. Membership was open to all St Faith's people aged over eighteen. The group rule of life required members to present themselves at the Brooke pub in Crosby after the main Sunday Eucharist. Thereafter, over a pint, the day's sermon was analysed, the week's church gossip exchanged and the latest national and international news reviewed.

Charles soon learnt about the existence of the group and became an enthusiastic member. Because he was often detained at church after the morning Mass he was invariably the last to arrive at the Brooke. But when he did, his entrance was with a flourish as he went quickly to the bar to order his beer. Straight away he stood out in the crowd, for not many C of E clergy were to be seen in a pub on a Sunday lunch time! And this, of course, was an important aspect of his Christian witness – to be out there in the community rather than closeted in a church building.

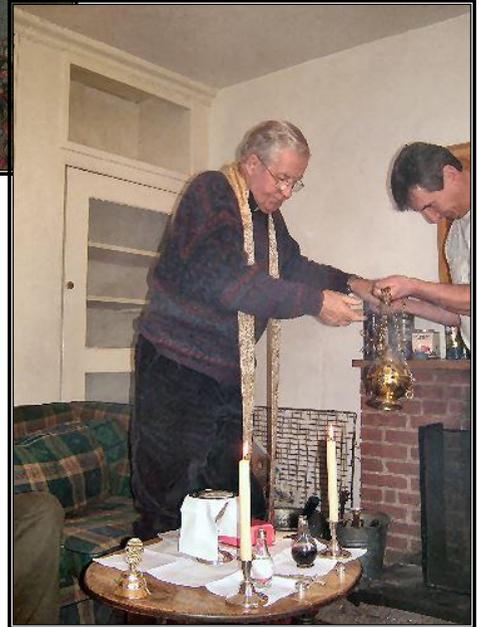
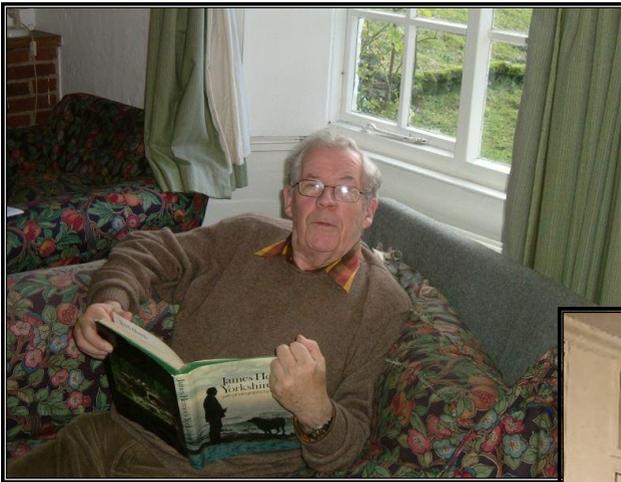
So, the group was 'noticed' by virtue of his presence in it. But importantly, Charles



## R.I.P. John Chapman

One of the best-loved members of our church family passed away recently. John Woodley writes about him on page 8, and our photos here are in affectionate memory of an old friend





## Remembering Charles

Photos in affectionate memory of another old friend. The sixth vicar of St Faith's is remembered by Anthony Walker on page 12 – and there is much more about Fr Charles on the church website







## Candles and Pancakes

Pictures from the Candlemas celebrations (with the final appearance of the crib for the year) and at the Shrove Tuesday pancake party in the church hall



ensured that the discussions focussed on “crunch” matters of faith rather than simply on pub trivia. And over time a lot of evangelistic “work” was accomplished as members aired their doubts and posed their questions. And Charles was attentive particularly to newcomers to the group (and to St Faith’s), listening to their points of view and helping them to understand the mysterious ways of the Anglican Church.

Among the stalwart members of the Brooke group were Graeme Walker, Archie Pattison, Stan Smith, Geoff Holliday, Peter Cotton, Ron White, Peter Roberts, John Rankin, Ken Lane, George Henderson, Alan Murphy, Les and Jean Crossley, Dennis Smith, Ann Finlay, George Smith, John Taylor, Patrick Fitzgerald, Anthony Walker and, of course, Fr Charles himself.

I vividly recall Charles’ love of sport, particularly rugby (he played a couple of seasons for Hightown). But he was enthusiastic about soccer, tennis and bowls as well. Any who took him on at tennis had to beware of his innate ability to convince opponents that contested line decisions always went in his favour! Equally on the bowling green or at the Sunday afternoon football games his determination to win (at nearly any cost!) was never in doubt. Little wonder his opponents quaked.

But just as his visits to the Brooke were an exercise in witness, so too were his sporting activities. This was a man who had enormous understanding of the sacred, yet he saw the importance of building bridges between what was holy and special and the secular environment in which his flock had to operate.

At some point, early in 1969 I think, word was received from the SS Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church Social Club in Crosby, asking if a group of people from St Faith’s would like to attend the Club’s next Sunday night session. Never one to hold back, Charles quickly accepted the invitation and gathered a dozen or so people to accompany him and Heather to the Peter and Paul parish centre.

We didn’t really know what to expect: Charles had been told there would be live music, some singing, some bingo and some refreshments. Other than that we were more or less in the dark.

This is roughly how that night panned out. The compere, Jimmy Leary, gave us a big welcome and quickly pointed us to the club bar. There was a small (four piece) band which provided some background music whilst we settled ourselves in alongside the P&P regulars – about seventy all told. Then it was time for prayers, led by the irrepressible curate Fr O’Callaghan, followed by a bingo session. Our group quickly emerged as bingo enthusiasts with cards at the ready listening intently as the numbers were called.

Now to the evening’s highlight! The MC called on several of the P & P regulars to do a “turn”. A young woman went first, whose dynamic rendering of “Puppet on a String” mesmerised her audience. Then came some older people, who sang various established favourites – “We’ll meet again” and “Sally” stick in my mind. After about

half an hour of songs, and even one or two dances, Jimmy asked Fr O'Callaghan to come to the rostrum. To be fair to Fr O'Callaghan (Michael) he was not blessed with the most tuneful of voices. Nevertheless he delivered an old sentimental number, the name of which I forget, but which had the refrain "down Mexico way". Fr Michael sat down to wild applause.

Of course, we know what's coming! Charles, unable to restrain himself, caught the MC's eye and asked if he too could sing. "Certainly Vicar Charles, please come forward," said Jimmy. And Charles strode to the front of house, had a quiet word with the band leader and then sang that lovely song "Smiling Through". (That's the one that begins "there's a little old mill on the top of a hill"). Charles performed beautifully – I would say tears came to plenty of eyes that night. On finishing many of the audience rose to their feet cheering and shouting. The future of an SF presence at the P & P Social Club was now assured!

The following week our group, headed by Charles, returned to P & P's. The format for the evening was exactly the same as last time. The MC called for volunteers to do their "turns" - inevitably "Puppet on a String" was demanded plus some of the other familiar numbers. Then a fairly elderly gentleman came forward and announced that he had listened to Vicar Charles' version of "Smiling Through" last week with interest. But now he intended singing "Smiling Through" as it was "actually meant to be sung".

This really was a hammer blow for Fr Charles, but he (just about) maintained his composure. Following Fr Michael's standard "Mexico Way", and the expected loud applause that followed, Charles sought the MC's permission to get to his feet. Permission granted! Another quick consultation with the band leader and Charles launched into his own special version of "Sipping cider through a straw". A big hit with the audience – the song has a refrain which everyone sang with relish, along with banging of tables and stamping of feet. As we departed there were shouts of "see you next week".

So, come week three and the SF gang are back at P & P's. The evening followed the now familiar pattern. When we got to the "turns" Charles was quickly called to the front – he clearly had something "up his sleeve". After his usual consultation with the band leader he then turned to the audience and said, solemnly, that he had been very saddened last week when told that his version of "Smiling Through" had not been up to scratch. So tonight he intended making up for any shortcomings by singing a very special song he would dedicate to the people of St Peter and Paul's. He paused for a moment, cleared his throat, took a deep breath and proceeded with a truly amazing rendering of "Ave Maria" – in Latin!

It would be an understatement to say that Charles brought the house down. Not only was he afforded a standing ovation, it was also very evident that in a period of just three weeks he had won the affections (and respect) of the members of the P & P Social Club.

Certainly St Faith's people continued to visit the club over the following weeks, with Charles' inputs supplemented, for example, by Dennis Smith's full frontal version of "The Laughing Policeman". And on one particular occasion Charles and the St Faith's organist, Patrick Fitzgerald, did a hilarious "duo" with their own exclusive version of "On a bicycle made for two".

If ever confirmation of Charles' gifts as a 'mission' priest were needed, his contributions at P & P's was it. The good will generated, not to mention the many belly laughs we all enjoyed, ensured that this venture was an effective exercise in ecumenical relations par excellence.

I would like to think that the friendship engendered between the two congregations at that time was maintained over the subsequent years.

I believe it was in May or June of 1968 that Charles announced at a Brooke meeting that he wanted to have a special discussion with the group. He said he had been thinking for a long time about how St Faith's might mark Pentecost more dramatically than hitherto. So, he had decided that next year (1969) he would organise a massive 'midnight' liturgical event to usher in the festival that marked the founding of the Christian Church.

Following his initial disclosure, Charles subsequently briefed the PCC and regularly shared his latest proposals about the service with the Brooke fraternity. He didn't exactly seek our views about his idea – in reality I think we understood that whatever our own opinions about his 'special service' for Pentecost, it was definitely going to happen.

As was his style, Charles soon had us caught up with his own enthusiasm. Tasks were delegated, the format of the service agreed, rehearsal dates arranged, media publicity organised, the Bishop informed and the congregation put on "ready".

The "big day" was to be Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May 1969, starting at 10 30pm I think. Charles and the writer had been interviewed live on BBC Radio Merseyside on the Friday before, we had written press releases for all the local and regional papers and alerted neighbouring churches. So perhaps it was not surprising that on the night there was a "full house".

In the build-up we had described the service as being a kaleidoscope of word, teaching, music and drama incorporated within a traditional High Mass celebration. Emphasis would be on the coming (and power) of the Holy Spirit within individual believers and within the corporate Body of the Church.

The service, which was to last for two and a half hours (!), commenced with a hymn and the usual confession and collect. Either before, or immediately after the Gloria came a series of teaching homilies about the Holy Spirit. These were provided by

a local Baptist Minister, by an Anglican priest from the newly emerging charismatic movement, by a Jewish Rabbi and by Father Walker, a curate from SS Peter and Paul's.

The New Testament reading (from Acts 2 chapter 1) "... and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty, rushing wind" was accompanied by a mime performed by a dozen or so SF men dressed in white robes. The Gospel, from the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of St John beautifully sung by Fr Charles followed by the main sermon from the Bishop of Liverpool (Stuart Blanch). And then came the central part of the Eucharistic rite – incense, very dignified yet spectacular ceremonial, and importantly, the occasion impregnated with an immense sense of joy.

Most of us I suspect left church exhausted, but almost certainly exhilarated. We had, I think, participated in a Eucharistic celebration that would imprint itself in our memory for years to come. 'A Celebration of the Holy Spirit' was how Charles described the service both before and after. It will, I think, stand out as one of the landmark liturgical events in the history of St Faith's. For me, it was evidence of the imaginative mind of Charles Billington: evidence of his great energy and enthusiasm for the Lord he served: evidence of the importance he attached to bringing the "good news" in dramatic form to those around him: and evidence of his skill at master-minding and co-ordinating a big occasion. Furthermore, it emphasised the true effectiveness, and the true potential, that good liturgy has in impacting on the minds and souls of those who participate.

So there we have it – five specific aspects of Charles' life as Vicar of St Faith's that come to my mind. Inevitably, I recall others as well – as when he celebrated Mass in a remote Welsh valley one morning with a small group of adults and young people. His altar was an old mangle purloined from a nearby derelict cottage, the chalice a wine goblet, the bread a loaf from the Co-op. No books; Charles recited the liturgy from memory. We sang a hymn chosen by the children – "All things Bright and Beautiful". Somehow, first thing of a morning in a beautiful and peaceful bit of Wales, that hymn had a special resonance. Oh, and one other thing. Because Charles had his dog Toby with him, it was necessary to secure Toby in some way during the service: the chosen method was to tie his lead to the legs of the mangle – our altar!

Charles I recall was a heavy smoker: a fast talker: the possessor of a first class mind: a very kind (and compassionate) man: he loved a good anecdote, nothing smutty though. But probably most of all, I recall his lovely grin and his dancing eyes: when he smiled it seemed his whole face crinkled with pleasure as when he reached the top of Helvellyn in the Lake District as he accompanied the St Faith's walking group on its first outing.

Through its history the CofE has produced some notable priests of outstanding ability. Charles Billington was certainly one of that group. Larger than life, he could both inspire and infuriate; at times he could be obstinate, obdurate even; unpredictable

and occasionally controversial; an amazing gift for outreach to his fellow humans; restless and anxious to push his parishioners into new areas of experience (he was quite clear that the Christian faith should not equate with believers relaxing in their various comfort zones); very definitely committed to the notion that being a disciple of Jesus should bring a lot of fun (and much laughter). But he understood, too, that the path of faith also entailed pain (and he had his fair share of this). Sometimes his good intentions were misunderstood and he had to withstand criticism from some of those close to him. Despite the fact he was built like a lumberjack, Charles was extremely sensitive and the criticism hurt him, occasionally very deeply.

My prayer now is that the man from Tranmere may rest in God's eternal peace. I count it a privilege to have known him on the earthly part of his pilgrimage and, like many others I am sure, to have had my heart touched by him.

*Anthony Walker*



## Concert News

The **Amadeus Chamber Choir** presents an evening of light music at St. Faith's in aid of the Waterloo Partnership, on Saturday 28th March at 7.30pm.

Admission £8.00 including wine and nibbles. Tickets available from Pritchard's Bookshop, or 924 2813.



## Adrift in the Snow

For over 25 years, the Men's Group has visited a remote cottage in North Yorkshire called David's House. Owned by a friend of Richard Capper, and an ideal spot away from neighbours, Wi-Fi and even mobile phone signals, we have debated issues long into many small hours and put the world to rights!

We have often seen the first snow of the year, built snowmen, thrown snowballs, and many of us remember John Taylor sliding down the grass on a tea tray sledge, but never before have we had to dig our way along the track to even reach the house! One car was temporarily abandoned and the occupants 'delivered' by a local farmer, while another car took over half an hour to complete the last 200 yards.

Indeed the snow kept us housebound for the next day, when we were due to visit Ripon Cathedral for their mid-day Eucharist, and we were reduced to trying our hand at ice carving for entertainment – not quite as easy as we thought, and proof positive that size isn't everything.

Saturday saw four of us heading out to visit Middleton St George. Although now the 'Durham Tees Valley International Airport', 60 years ago it was home for Ron Rankin who spent part of his RAF service there. Many of the original buildings were still being used, and I suspect that it was not just the biting wind that brought a tear to his eyes as he walked around. We then headed for Hartlepool and HMS Trincomalee. Although nearly 200 years old, the ship is afloat and wonderfully restored to show how life was in the Royal Navy of the time.

The evening saw yet another annual event – the testing of various bottled beers (only to ensure that quality and originality is maintained). Under strict 'blind tasting' rules, the winner eventually emerged as a fine brew called "Westmorland", but don't ask for any more details, as memory seems to have failed me.

The visit to the local church – St Edmund's in Marske – was undoubtedly a major highlight. The church is usually only used once a month, but as we normally have a priest in our numbers, and by arrangement with the Rector of Richmond, we have been adopted by the locals (all eight of them) and we have held a simple Eucharist in the ancient church. Sadly, with the passing of Fr Charles just before Christmas, we were priest-less and the message to the Rector had been misunderstood, so it seemed as if we would have to be content with a few hymns and prayers. We bargained without Rev Jennifer, who is a retired priest and lives in the area. She arrived not expecting to preside, but after a chat with us about not being prepared, not clerically dressed and without robes and a prepared sermon, she conducted one of the most moving services we can recall. She remembered Fr Charles, and was pleased to use the communion set he'd given the Group, and which now bears his name on the paten.

Two of the photos on the centre pages show both the paten on the altar and also the dedication above the font that is in the form of a Greek palindrome. The translation will be revealed next month, but for those scholars of Greek amongst the readership of this magazine, try and work it out.

Monday was spent locally at the local railway station that was now a group of small businesses, but sadly the micro-brewery and the fudge making factory were closed. Richmond itself is always worth a visit however and so the efforts of other breweries were tested.

A final mention must be made of the catering over the weekend. The kitchen, known as the Thurible, was Geoff's office, and after many years of destroying joints of beef, he produced a superb roast with just the right degree of pinkness!

Another great weekend full of happy memories and a few new thoughts for those who were able to join us, and, as always, some nostalgic thoughts of former members.



**Brian, Denis, Gareth, Geoff, Mike J, Paul, Rick & Ron**

## **Bishop Paul welcomes "Resourcing the Future"**

*Following some positive discussions at General Synod recently over big issues regarding the future of the Church of England, Bishop Paul made the following comments:*

I strongly support and commend the work of the task group on Resourcing the Future and of the set of task groups more generally. I do this by reason of my faith in Jesus as Lord.

Because we preach Jesus crucified, the survival of our institution is not the focus. But because Jesus is risen, and because the love of the risen Christ compels us, because the risen Jesus calls us to go and make disciples, the growth of the church is a good in itself. Incorporation into Jesus Christ crucified and risen is a good in itself, and if people accept that truth and the Church therefore grows, that is good. Not peripheral, not accidental, not regrettable, not neutral, but good.

We know that for millions of English people, including millions of those in areas of deprivation, the church has moved out of reach and the Gospel is lost and unheard. And in response to that we must be creative. We are called to be intentional about new ways of being the church and about growing the church and shaping the church for its purpose in this generation, and we need not even worry about embracing management theories, if they help us become once again a church that can place the gospel within the reach of the poor. So I welcome the emphasis of Resourcing the Future on growth of the church and bias to the poor. In our diocese these criteria are our priorities; a bigger church to make a bigger difference.

These have been our priorities since long before I came. They are not our priorities because we are pragmatic or even because we like bankers, but because we love Jesus. These reports will help us to grow the church and help the needy; to be conformed to what we believe are the purposes of God for the Church of England. For these theological reasons I commend them most warmly.

## **A St Patrick's Day Reflection**

Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me.



Many will be familiar with the above brief quotation from the ancient hymn called “The Breastplate of St Patrick”, which authorities agree was written by St Patrick himself. A breastplate in time of war gave bodily protection, but for Patrick the term meant a spiritual guard, a protection of faith against the devil, against wicked human beings and vice.

From his writings we can see that Christ was central to Patrick’s spiritual life, that he was filled with the ideals of Christ, the thirst of Christ for the eternal salvation of souls. The longer of his two writings, his “Confession”, gives us some insight into the kind of person he was. Above all he was an ascetic, who started a tradition that lives on to this day in St Patrick’s Purgatory, Lough Derg. He was brought to Ireland as a slave at the age of sixteen and in the harsh existence he endured as a shepherd amongst hostile strangers he acquired a deep humility which comes to the surface everywhere in his writings, a humility which stood him well as he battled to reach an understanding of the future which God had mapped out for him. He speaks of himself as a sinner, the least learned of men. But this was perhaps the pious exaggeration of a man in mature old age looking back on his youth.

What is certain is that he was to acquire a wide knowledge of, and intimate familiarity, with sacred scripture, and modern analysis of his two works has revealed references to the writings of at least twenty of the great theologians of the early Church. But out of this sense of his own unworthiness there developed a tremendous trust in God, something that later stood by him as he tried to cope with a hostile pagan environment. Like the shepherd children of Fatima, the boy Patrick turned to God in prayer, as often as 100 times during the day, he tells us, and as often again at night.

From this rich experience of almost uninterrupted conversation with God his whole character and outlook changed. There developed in him a remarkable nobility of spirit, which made him ignore the hardships he had endured, as well as keenness of spiritual vision which enabled him to gain insight into souls. Deep in the heart of the very people who had enslaved him he became aware of a sense of hopelessness and misery in their search for meaning to life; this had the result of enkindling in him the flame of the crusader for God.

Patrick, who had been kept in bondage for years by the Irish, did not seek revenge, or even just redress for the loss of his liberty. No: his sole aim became that of bringing light where darkness prevailed, of sowing hope where people looked beyond life on earth with nothing but despair. Having made good his escape, Patrick was consumed by a burning missionary zeal for the conversion of his former captors, themselves held captive by the pagan beliefs which governed their lives.

This he felt was given sanction by a vision one night, in which he seemed to hear the people who lived by the Wood of Voclut, near the Western Sea, crying out to him with one voice, “We appeal to you holy youth, to come and walk once more among us.” This wood incidentally, in the 7th century, was claimed to be along the western

shore of Killala Bay. And so it came about that Patrick responded to this call, and returned to win souls for God, to confront unbelievers to travel continuously, to resist the establishment of the day, to spread throughout the land the good news of salvation.

Today it would be a good thing if we could embrace many of these traits which so characterised Patrick, his humility, his honesty and lack of pretence, his energy in a noble cause, his fearlessness in the face of opposition, his loyalty to the gospel he preached, and above all his life of intense prayer and union with God from his earliest years onwards.

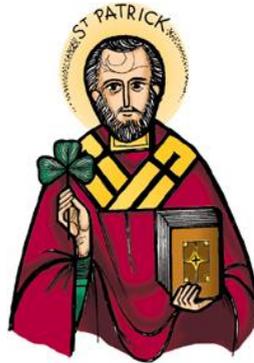
There's a short evening prayer which is attributed to Patrick, and which expresses his quiet confidence in the protection of God:

May your angels, holy Son,  
Guard our homes when day is done,  
When at peace, our sleep is best,  
Bid them watch us while we rest.

Prince of everything that is,  
High Priest of the mysteries,  
Let your angels, God supreme,  
Tell us truth dressed as a dream.

May no terror and not fright  
Sport our slumber in the night;  
Free from care our eyelids close;  
Spirit, give us prompt repose.

We have laboured through the day:  
Lift our burdens when we pray,  
Then our souls in safety keep,  
That our sleep be soft and deep.



*Fr. Dennis*

## The Waterloo Group Council

*Sue writes...*

The Waterloo Group Council met for the first time on 7<sup>th</sup> February. There was a good atmosphere at Sandymount House (helped by the lovely surroundings and plentiful good food!). People spoke very honestly and openly about both hopes and fears for the future. The general consensus was that the day was a good start. Further details will appear in due course.

# 110 Club Draw Winners



## January

- 1 £150 John Chapman
- 2 £100 Rev Denise
- 3 £50 Angela Woodley

## February

- 1 56 Shelagh Mulholland
- 2 74 Hudson family
- 3 24 Cathy Taylor

# Prayers for 2015

Some of you might have read that, in his 2014 Christmas message to the Curia (his senior cardinals), Pope Francis, not to put too fine a point on it, gave them a telling off. I was struck by a subsequent article in the Church Times that turned round what he said into positive suggestions. Many of these resonated with me – and, in fact, challenged me as well! So I turned them into prayers, offerings to God of how I might live my calling (I am very aware that I by no means always do!)

I used them as opening prayers with the Standing Committee this week – and your Estimable Editor (*Who? Me? Ed.*) said that people might like to see them in print. So here they are – like the Methodist Covenant Service, they are in the first person singular – but they are prayers we can also think about saying in solidarity with one another, both as support for our own individual Christian journeys, and as our prayers for this Christian community as a whole:

Teach me, Lord, to work in harmony alongside others and let go of the itch to control.

Teach me, Lord, to plan but gently; not to over-plan, close down, or direct – and always to let the Holy Spirit blow.

Teach me, Lord, to sit lightly to paperwork and to give time, kindness and care to people, and to take the time to see the image of God in them.

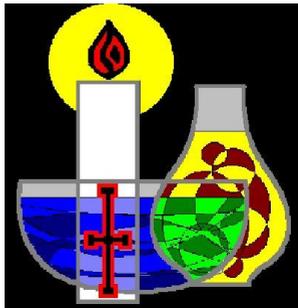
Teach me, Lord, to eschew gossip; to speak plainly, my yea being yea and nay being nay, and to know when not to say anything at all; to sow harmony not destruction.

Teach me, Lord, to rest a little; to know time is your gift, and to steward it with tenderness, to realise that time is to do your will, and to live in the confidence that, in time, your will will indeed be done.

Teach me, Lord, to sit lightly but responsibly to ambition, and save me from my calling's snare.

Sue

# Parish Directory and Church Organisations



## **VICAR**

The Revd Dr Susan J. Lucas, The Vicarage, Milton Road, Waterloo, L22 3XA  
Tel 0151 928 3342; 07976 901389. Email [revsue85@icloud.com](mailto:revsue85@icloud.com)

## **PARISH OFFICE**

32 Brooklands Avenue, L22 3XZ . 0151 928 9913

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

## **ASSISTANT PRIESTS**

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

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

## **READERS**

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

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

## **READER EMERITUS**

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

## **CHURCHWARDENS**

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

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

## **ASSISTANT CHURCH WARDENS**

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

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

## **TREASURER**

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

## **PCC SECRETARY**

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

## **DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

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

## **GIFT AID SECRETARY**

Mr Rick Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

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

Mrs Lynda Dixon, 928 7330

## **SACRISTAN**

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

**SENIOR SERVER**

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

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

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

**VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICER**

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

**CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

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

**VULNERABLE ADULTS OFFICER**

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

**BAPTISM BOOKINGS**

Mrs Jackie Parry. 928 0726

Mrs Brenda Cottarel. 928 4275

**BEAVER SCOUTS**

Thursday 5.00 – 6.15 pm Mike Carr. 293 3416

**CUB SCOUTS**

Thursday 6.30 – 8.00 pm. Mike Carr. 293 3416

**SCOUTS**

Thursday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. Mike Carr. 293 3416

**RAINBOWS**

Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw. 928 5204

**BROWNIE GUIDES**

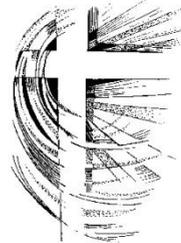
Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Mary McFadyen. 284 0104

**CHOIR PRACTICE**

Friday 7.30 pm - 8.45 pm.

**MAGAZINE EDITOR and WEBSITE MANAGER**

Chris Price, 17 Queens Road, Crosby. L23 5TP. 924 1938



---

The April edition of 'Newslink' will be distributed on or before **Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**. Copy by **Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**, please – but all contributions are welcome at any time. Apologies for the delay in publishing the printed version of this issue (printers' holiday!).

**Church website:** [www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk](http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk)

**Online edition:** [www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/magazine.pdf](http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/magazine.pdf)

**email:** [cdavidprice@gmail.com](mailto:cdavidprice@gmail.com)



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



Diocese of  
Liverpool

Printed by Merchant  
Taylors' Schools'  
Reprographic  
Department