

# The united benefice of St. Faith, Great Crosby & St. Mary the Virgin, Waterloo Park



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Dear Friends at St. Faiths and St. Mary's,

Summer has been a long time coming this year, with the rain and the cold in May the roses flowered several weeks late. With lock down and other regulations that have curbed our usual freedoms, we may feel it has been a very long winter. After the mass vaccinations, the promise of freedoms restored is tantalizing, but warnings from various people in the media suggest we may have to wait some more.

Life at St. Mary's has continued with services on Sunday and Wednesday. Coffee after the service has recently started. The Bible study on zoom has continued. The annual meeting brought a change of Church Warden. Ray Bissex stood down after six years in the post, and Howard Pate stepped forward. The groups that used to use the hall have begun to return and new groups have started. We now have a mother and toddlers group. The sale of the church building has moved forward, but the final stage of the sale depends on planning permission which could take another year. We have plans to adapt the hall entrances, but the finance is linked to the sale. We wait in faith for the next step forward.

St. Faith's continues with the Sunday Parish Eucharist and the Thursday Eucharist. Evensong took place last Sunday for the first time since March 2020. The new Director of Music Joe Watson has lots of enthusiasm, to comply with Government rule of six choir practices began with a reduced number. The mini choir began singing in services at the start of June. Plans are afoot for recitals in July and August. There are plans for a parish lunch in the hall on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, after the successful brown bag afternoon teas of last year we know the food will be good, and good company will add to the experience. Proceeds will go to Christian Aid.

Several days of the week The Church hall has become a COVID 19 vaccine centre. There are large queues of people every time they are open. Slimming world now uses our premises twice a week. The Beavers and Cubs have returned to face to face meetings. After lockdown numbers were reduced, since then, the Cubs have welcomed new members most weeks. I look forward to the return of the other young peoples groups. The Kind Hearts Café that used to meet at St. Nicholas Blundellsands, during lockdown was looking for new premises. They open every Thursday between 12.00 and 2.00 pm for teas, coffees, soup, snacks and cake. Most of all you will get a warm welcome.

The Gospel reading for this week talks of tiny Mustard seeds, it's the smallest seed you can see. Seeds that can form bushes that are big enough to provide nesting space for birds. As shrubs grow its not terribly exciting to look at, and would not attract the RHS Award of Garden Merit. But from a tiny beginning it reaches out to give safety to the birds of the air and their young. Jesus reminds us the Kingdom of God is like this, growing in unexpected places, with unexpected benefits for others.

Archbishop Runcie would always begin a Eucharist with a Bible verse; on several occasions I heard him use this one from 2 Corinthians; "The love of Christ urges us on..." The shortened verse reminds us that what we do is in Christ's name, and not just on our own behalf and conveys a sense of urgency. The rain and cold was followed by sunshine, and nature responded with a sense of urgency. The garden was late in flowering this year, but all around the flowers declare time has been made up.

Keep safe, take care and take care of others

Fr. John Reed

Priest in charge