

From the Rector

For most of us early December is a special time of the year. I know it's far too busy and we feel under an increasing pressure to get organised for Christmas; that we haven't enough time to get it all done and that it must be just right this year – but it is still special. Perhaps it is because there is a certain optimism associated with the mid-winter festival that lifts our gloom and pierces the shortest days of the year. Of course the Church has something else to say about the hope that is offered to the world at the birthday of Jesus Christ – the one whose arrival signals a new chance for freedom, redemption and a life of love. But as we dash through these early days of Advent filling our spare time with getting ready for the forthcoming celebration I wonder just what kind of spiritual preparation we need to also undertake? I am reminded of a children's assembly I co-led with Fr Mike Sheffield, now Vicar of St Alban's Church, when I was newly ordained. I found myself dressed in my cassock in front of some 300 children as he talked about getting ready for Christmas. My part in the service was to remove my cassock to reveal running shirt, shorts and training shoes! His idea was to illustrate that the preparation required to become a runner involved lots of training runs and that preparation for such an event takes much time and energy. But as I reflect upon that assembly I also see that it gave another message – that there is a multiplicity of preparations – or that we prepare ourselves at many different levels. In our spiritual preparation for Christmas we remember the visit of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary and her unqualified "Yes" to the proposition that she will bear the Son of God. Mary's response was not just a yes to the conception that took place in the stable all those years ago – but a daily "yes". Her commitment was to be the mother to God's son on every day of her life. In the same way a part of our preparation needs to be a reminder that we have said "yes" to the love of God in Christ. We have taken on a commitment to love and to serve God and this demands a daily renewing of our commitment. Each morning can begin with the prayer – *"yes – I will love the Lord my God and my neighbour as myself"*. A 2 second commitment that will demand us for the whole day! And our night-time prayer will start: did I keep my promise today? Such an endeavour will not happen without heartbreak – but let's not be slaves to guilt and by remembering Mary God's grace will bless us our efforts of Christian loving. May your preparations be full of joy and the love of God shine in your heart. With every blessing,



Fr. David

About The Parish

Christmas will soon be with us again; a very nostalgic time when we remember family and friends, the Christmases past and so much more. I remember one Christmas during the War seeing the film "Casablanca" which had its 60th anniversary last year. It was originally a play called "Everybody comes to Rick's" by a Murray Burnitt. The Studio Head, Hal Wallis, gave the story to two scriptwriters, Wally Kline and Aeneas MacKenzie, and then to Howard Koch to dramatise. He then brought in his favourite writer, Casey Robinson, to write the love scenes between Bogart and Bergman. (Casey wrote all the love scenes for Bette Davis and was the highest paid scriptwriter in Hollywood at \$2,500 a week and this in 1942!). Still Wallis was not satisfied so finally he gave the script to two brilliant writers, the brothers Julius and Philip Epstein, who eventually won an Oscar for their wonderful screenplay. Take this for an example of their writing. The French policeman, Renault, played by the English actor Claude Rains, has the following dialogue with Rick (Humphrey Bogart):

Renault *"I have often speculated on why you do not return to America. Did you abscond with the church funds? Did you run off with the President's wife? I should like to think you killed a man. It is the romantic in me."*

Rick *"A combination of all three."*

Renault *"And what in Heaven's name brought you to Casablanca?"*

Rick *"My health. I came to Casablanca for the waters."*

Renault *"Waters? What waters? We are in the desert."*

Rick *"I was misinformed."*

The Epsteins were rewriting the original script just a day or two before the actual filming, giving the actors hardly any time to learn their lines. Ingrid Bergman went to them demanding to know whether at the end of the film she would go off with Bogart or Paul Henreid. They said, *"When we know, you will be the first to be told!"* Eventually, they anguished over the ending. Driving to the studio one morning, they simultaneously shouted *"Round up the usual suspects!"* and the end of the film was decided. Rick would shoot the German Commander to enable Bergman and Henreid to escape and Renault would protect him by having a bogus search for suspects. We in St Faith's, along with the whole Christian Community, have a far greater story than Casablanca unfolded to us in the Bible. The wonderful Nativity story reaches out across the centuries to all of us, from the very young to the very old. We sing the wonderful carol *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*:

*"The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more."*

Do have a lovely Christmas.

Roger Bryant

Parochial Church Council Reports

PCC Meeting 3 November

A new computer had been installed in the Parish Office. Clive Mercer Associates (Architects) were to be appointed in respect of the First Stage of a proposed development of Churchfields. Budget Holders for 2004 were identified. The Nationwide could not provide us with Internet access to our Restoration Account and so it was to be transferred to Lloyds. Southern Electric Contracting, who had undertaken similar work at St. John's, Portsmouth & also Chichester Cathedral, were to be engaged to rewire the church electrical system and to upgrade the lighting. The work would be done in stages. Pam Bowley told the PCC that she intended to resign for personal reasons from her post as Treasurer in April. She had been five years as Treasurer during which time her work had increased substantially. There was appreciation of Pam expressed by everyone at the meeting, summed up by the Chairman who thanked Pam for all her excellent work.

Building Management Committee Meeting 16 October

Gravel had been delivered to No 2 Churchfields for the construction of a driveway. A new backdoor for the Church Shop in Coach House was being made. The ceiling in the small Meeting Room in Church House was close to collapsing and quotations were being obtained to put in a new ceiling. Following a gas leak, disused gas pipes in the minor hall of Church House had been capped. A fridge freezer had been donated and installed in the kitchen of the Hall. A section of fencing at Christ Church Centre had been repaired. Barry Hudson was now acting as proxy landlord for the church. Quotations were under consideration for essential repairs to the electrical system in the church and for the upgrading of the lighting. A new firm of heating contractors was being sought to take over the servicing and maintenance of the church heating system, following the retirement of the previous contractors.



Toy Service on 7th December

Please bring gifts, preferably wrapped, that can be given to children in hospital this Christmas. The gifts will be blessed during the service and placed under the Christmas tree. In the week they will be collected and transported to a hospital locally, nationally or even abroad. Please mark your box if there are items that need to be used before a certain date! Thank you in anticipation of your generosity.



My First Six Months As A Deacon

At the beginning of December I will have been ordained Deacon for six months. In other words, I will be halfway through my Diaconate year and, if I am good, halfway to being ordained priest. Hasn't time flown quickly? It was just over six months ago that Annie and I moved into our home in Churchfields. I think that to enjoy life and work it is important to have a beautiful home where one can feel comfortable and relaxed; and this defines 1 Churchfields perfectly. It has been very beautifully decorated and it was a very great joy for Annie and I to come here; this is partly because although our flat at St. Stephen's House was very cosy it was also extremely cramped. Although we are now nicely settled into the house, we have also spent some time in the garden over the summer and are beginning to return it to its former glory. Being in and around the parish has been a great joy, ordained ministry is great fun because no two days are the same, one can be doing home communions one day, visiting another, attending meetings, deaconing, preaching, preparing services, the list is endless. But there have been more difficult moments along the way too - and this combination of joy and challenge is what makes such a vocation so interesting. One thing I have realised over the last couple of months is that there are many new experiences in ministry but there are no dress rehearsals first, since every experience is real and genuine. This can be wonderful but it can be a little scary too, especially when you are playing a pivotal role in an important part of somebody's life, during their last moments or officiating at a funeral, for example. This is all worth it to do something so fulfilling in such a diverse and welcoming community as St Faith's. Annie and I feel very welcomed here and it is a great privilege to be part of the life of this vibrant church as we continue to get to know you all better. The last six months have gone quickly, but that is because we feel so at home here already.

Fr. Charles



Christmas Quiz and Grand Draw

Our Christmas Quiz this year is on Sweets and Chocolates - price £1 with a prize of £20. Entry forms are available from me for return by 11 January 2004. £1 also gives you a chance to win a uniquely personalised and framed print of Sarah Butterfield's painting of St Faith's, Havant (*see picture above*) as first prize in our Grand Draw at the Parish Christmas Dinner on 6 January 2004. Please collect from me books of tickets to sell to your friends.

Sandra Haggan

Grandma's Adventure

Here is a story of a trip to the Dominican Republic over Easter this year by one of our parishioners that will make us think when we tuck into the turkey on Christmas Day.

There were twelve of us. We set out from Heathrow at 7.30 a.m. one day just before Easter. There had been a day's briefing back in February, when most of us had met each other for the first time. It was a very diverse group. Nigel, an accountant in his past life, was our leader. There were two young doctors - Chinese Malay girls - doing their first "house" jobs in Bristol, a drama Adviser, a high powered P.R. chief, and Malcolm came with a valuable qualification as a surveyor. The group included Matthias; he is a barrister and a pharmacist both by the age of 42! Lisa, being a Spanish speaker was worth her weight in gold, Colin and Tina. Margaret is even a little older than me, clocking in at 70! Now, after all this diversity, you may be wondering what, if anything, we had in common. Well, we had all volunteered to work for MERCY SHIPS. Mercy Ships is manifestly a Christian charity which exists to bring hope and healing to people who have no access to surgery or medical care. The fleet is equipped with stores and medical supplies while in ports around the developed world. There are semi permanent crews on board who see to the day to day running of the ships. Medical staff, who give up all or part of their holiday, fly in and out of the host ports, where the ships spend several months. A team goes ashore to screen and elect the most suitable/needy candidates for surgery. Many people walk long distances to be given a chance of treatment. Our mother ship was to be the Caribbean Mercy. Here, it may be apposite to explain that we were going to work alongside the ship, rather than on board the vessel itself. In parallel with the eye and dental surgery being done aboard, a Mission Challenge had been issued. The individual members of our party had taken up this challenge. We were to be "attached" to the Caribbean Mercy, at that time moored in Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic. Some people reading this may have visited this country as a tourist. It will be noted on reference to the atlas that the island of Hispaniola lies between Cuba and South America. The Dominican Republic (DR) makes up roughly two thirds of the island, while Haiti takes up the remaining third. Christopher Columbus attempted to create a permanent settlement there. The Haitian people are some of the poorest in the world. Many of them cross over to the Dominican Republic to find employment. They are often exploited and very poorly paid (no minimum wage or pensions exist for them). They have to purchase a passport, which is prohibitively expensive. Any Haitian child born in the DR does not qualify for a birth certificate unless its parents already possess passports. There is therefore many such refugee children who have no access to education or health care of any sort. In our country, we are so quick to grumble and find fault. What accident of birth put us here and not there? It is a long flight to the Dominican Republic. Once landed at Santa Domingo airport, we drove across the island to Puerto Plata. We saw coffee plantation and rice fields. There was me occasional street cart loaded with melons and mangoes for sale. As we climbed out of the air-conditioned minibus, the heat hit us as it does when opening a hot oven door. A sympathetic property developer had reduced the cost of our accommodation. It looked luxurious with a swimming pool and in an idyllic setting. Sadly, the plumbing and electricity did not match this picture, our surveyor was incredulous! However, a swim at the end of a very hot day was wonderful and the moving fans kept the bedrooms fairly comfortable. Now you need to know about the activities of a very good man, Eleo Madonia by name. A native of Sicily, he emigrated to Canada where he became a successful businessman. About fifteen years ago, he and his wife were on holiday in the Dominican Republic. They took a wrong turning, and found themselves among dwellings of absolute squalor. He felt that no human being should live in such conditions and he made up his mind to do something about it. Now aged 74, he is still working to relieve that poverty. He acquires parcels of land and pays a small band of workers to build new villages. Our team was going to help to build a house in the latest village. Ours was the last of five such teams during the Caribbean Mercy's five months sojourn in Puerto Plata. Generous sponsorship prior to our expedition had enabled building materials for two houses to be purchased; (it costs \$1500 per house). When I say "house" don't think of even "two up & two down". The two room dwellings are constructed of reinforced breezeblocks with concrete floors and a corrugated metal roof, which is mounted on a wooden frame. Each house has a toilet with an individual cesspit. On that first morning, we boarded our minibus and went to inspect the site. A big blue notice proclaiming, "Ascension Village, funded by Christians from all over the world," was the first sight to greet us. The little church is finished. Our house is number 21, out of a possible 60! There is to be a larger building which will house a small store with rice and beans at cost price, a clinic, and a flat for a

caretaker/health worker. The water supply is from natural springs in the hillside above. Each street will have three standpipes. Malcolm was able to design a shower block and clothes washing facility -what luxury! That afternoon we visited, with Elio, the places from where some of the new residents would be drawn. Oh dear, one has seen T.V. pictures of shantytowns, but to be there and walk around the poor sorry sights is harrowing. In the tropical climate, it often rains very heavily and mud floors were something for which I had not bargained. Everywhere the children followed us and held our hands. There was no begging and we were met with smiles and greetings. Clothes are washed in the rivers, which often flood. Even when garments are worn threadbare, or even absent, time and trouble are spent beading the girls' and young women's hair. Living close to the earth, the children are subject to intestinal worms and we saw a case of rickets. The American missionary who helps to choose the lucky families, listens for coughs (a symptom of TB), and watches for the swollen tummies, which indicate severe malnutrition. We were sensitive to the situation. We were anxious that the people whom we met did not feel as if they were in a zoo, to be viewed with curiosity. Another day we took part in a feeding programme, where children are given food supplements twice a week. They had already been allocated stainless steel mugs. Each child was given this mug filled with milk, a hard-boiled egg, and a small bag of vitamin enriched cereal. Margaret had asked the pupils in her Devon village school to donate soft toys; so on that day, each child had a precious toy as well. We all found it a very moving experience. One day we boarded a truck, and went to give an iced water drink and a meal of rice and beans to people existing on the rubbish dump! We also distributed clothes here which one member of the group had brought from England. Easter Saturday was a bad day. It rained very hard for most of the morning. Our own labour gang was not working over Easter, so we went to help in the construction of a school in another village. Named Agua Negus (Black Water), it lived up to its name as the floods came up! First, we had to clear rubbish from the ground floor rooms and then I spent time taking the nails out of old, already used pieces of wood, so that they could be hammered flat and used again. Just imagine our chaps doing that! While it rained, we were offered shelter by an old lady who shared the little she had. Over the lunch break, we met the teacher and I gave her the few teaching materials I had managed to take with me. She is trying to teach 96 children who have no birth certificates. What was so little among so many? Elio took us to see several of the villages already built. In one of them he had re-routed the river, so that the village would no longer be subject to flooding. Each family has their house on a five-year tenure. If they look after it, it becomes their own after that time. Some people had managed to improve and embellish their house. Small businesses were starting, and all sorts of activities were going on. One evening we went along to see the showing of a film about Jesus' life. I'm sure our own children would enjoy, and indeed benefit from, exposure to it. The little church was packed to overflowing for such a stimulating experience. We attended lovely Easter services on board the Caribbean Mercy, and I thought of you all in St. Faith's church singing the same familiar hymns as I was in such different surroundings. So the twelve days past, and we returned to our land of plenty. We are more grateful for all we have, and yet very frustrated that it is so difficult to share more of it.

Joan Medley



St. Faith's Women's Group

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; (Psalm 45 - verse 10)

Is an invitation to all of us but here we use it in connection with the women's group. This part of this psalm invites us women to hear the scripture and to worship God as His daughters. Not that we are separate beings from the men but that we are also a part of God's creation, we are gifted in a different way from men. However to better understand our relationship with God and men we need to be able to have space and time to ourselves to discuss these differences. You might ask why are the women a separate group from the men's group? We do not have a clear answer to that but it seems to us that at times our gender paths are diverse and divergent. It is therefore understandable that our individual gender needs are met in separate groups. We believe that in this way we are better able to voice our personal thoughts and understanding and thus bring together to the whole church oneness. Historically until about 6th century, Christian women have enjoyed freedom of spiritual understanding separate from the men. Thereafter women have contributed greatly to the spiritual life of the church but have struggled to be both separate as well as together within the church. But we as a group are not concerned with these issues, we are trying to understand the teachings of Christ by reading great authors and discussing those writings. For instance we try to see how those writings are applicable to our own lives today both within the church and in our personal lives. That discussion leads us to talk about current affairs as well as personal experiences. Often we end up putting the world to rights, not all of our time is taken with weighty serious matters, laughter is heard which sometimes may sound like a party. But that is what we have created, a party to which every woman is invited once a month. Currently we are reading "*Be Still and Know*" by Michael Ramsey (Archbishop of Canterbury 1961-74). This book invites us to be still, (a recurring theme in the Bible); it is in being still and in contemplation that we give space to hear God speaking to us. Together we have learnt from each other how we manage to do this bidding and by reading this book we attempt to grow in our understanding of prayer and stillness. Easy to read book but challenging and contemplative as well. The group is not rigid in any way, people are able to come when they can and apart from the price of any book, the venue is free with a soft drink or coffee / tea served on arrival. Do give the group a try and we would welcome your feedback on the evening. We meet 2nd Tuesday of each month at 4 Pine Grove, Havant at 8pm.

God Bless and A Happy Christmas to all.

St Faith's Women's Group



St Bartholomew's Church

Last month we read in "*Faith Matters*" about the Church of the Holy Spirit and how it served the parishes of St Matthew's and St Bartholomew's. So what became of St Bartholomew's Church and why is it viewed with special affection by two of us at St Faith's? But first, some background. In 1858 a Mr. Butcher from Norwich bought a piece of land in the heart of Southsea, bordered by what is now Fawcett Road. He was a great supporter of the British Empire and he named the roads on his land after heroes of the Indian Mutiny - Campbell, Havelock, Lawrence and Outram. Now come on Annie Keay; you often wonder about the origins of these road names! Not surprisingly, in the early days it was called "*Little India*". However, our interest is in Outram Road. Also in 1858, Butcher had a wooden "*Crinoline Church*" built in Outram Road with 20 sides and seating 550. It cost £800 and was named after Bartholomew who had been a missionary in North West India. It was decided two years later, to build a more permanent church, which was consecrated in 1862. The new church was something of a disaster. As someone unkindly wrote, "*The Architect, if there was one, is unknown!*" It was described as the ugliest church on Portsea Isle, cheap and barn-like. When the east end of the church was collapsing, the then Vicar, The Reverend A.G.M. Meugens, proposed to have the church rebuilt in an attractive Italian Romanesque style and it was completed in 1896. At the risk of giving Father David ideas, I can report that in the early years, pew rents (!!) paid the stipend of the incumbent and for the maintenance of the church. The congregation was very much against "*Popery*", so much so that when the Lady Chapel was built, it was called the "*Morning Chapel*"! High Altar candlesticks given to the church in 1893 were not lit until 1919, except for once in 1913 when they were bravely lit by the incumbent. However, this had a disastrous effect on the economy of St Bartholomew's because this perceived act of Popery led to the paid pews being vacated in favour of the free ones. Happily, the Incumbent was eventually given a Stipend by the Diocese of £400 a year, which was above the norm for the times. When St Matthews was gutted in 1941, the congregation moved to St Bartholomew's and in 1948 the Bishop of Portsmouth decided that the two parishes would be one, with a rebuilt St Matthew's becoming the parish church. Sadly, in 1958 St Bartholomew's was demolished to make way for a small housing development. Many fine parts of the church were moved to St Matthew's including the Kempe glass, a carved Spanish Mahogany war memorial and the windows of the "*Morning Chapel*", depicting women saints. Peter Appleby and I both went to Esplanade House School, affectionately known as Chivers College after its founder (Chivers, not College!) and both started there in 1943, midway through the War. The original school premises in Cottage Grove, off Elm Grove, were destroyed, along with the shopping centre of Kings Road, in 1941. The school re-opened in the major and minor halls of St Bartholomew's Church. Although the blitzes had finished, there were still sporadic air-raids, when we vacated the school and went to neighbouring shelters until the All-Clear sounded, when we reluctantly returned to our classes. I think we preferred the danger of the air-raids! There was still the occasional bombing but it was more random. I lived in Eastney but Peter travelled by bus each day from Fareham. Detours were often necessary because of bomb craters in the road from the previous

night's bombing. He well remembers having to leave the bus in Fratton Road because the driver could not go any further. This was because the road was covered in debris from the Froddington Arms public house bombed during the night. When a building was bombed, a list would be put up of the casualties for people to check up on friends and relatives. Peter remembers walking over and reading the list which, sadly, included the pub landlady, her husband and an unidentified corpse. He then had to walk the rest of the way to school! Peter tells me that the Froddington was rebuilt after the War and is still there in Fratton Road. Well there you have it, that ends the trilogy which started with the Reverend Bruce Cornford, whom turns up again next month with our Churchwarden, Sandra Haggan, in a very unlikely venue. For that, you must wait for next month's *"Faith Matters"*. **Roger Bryant**

Show Boating!

What have John & Peggy Bradey, Don & Shirley Caunter, Colin & Beryl Carter, Sheila Creech, Audrey Currie, John & Evelyn Freeston, Bob & Joyce Harvey, Beatrice Mockford, Bill & Jenny Sagrott, Peggy Sparks and Roger & Joy Bryant in common? They all boarded a coach in Havant to go with Sandra Haggan to the King's Theatre to see a superb production by the South Downe Musical Society of the Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein musical "Show Boat". All that wonderful music. *"Birds gotta swim, fish gotta fly!"* (The words sounded different on the night. I wonder why!) Joy, mindful of the length of some of our meetings, said, *"They're playing the PCC song- 'He can come home as late as can be!'"* Sandra had a hectic 24 hours. The previous evening, with Father David ill and Colin Warlow working, she had to chair the PCC meeting at less than an hour's notice. This evening, coming straight from work, her train was late, so she got off at Havant, dashed to Audrey's and wheeled her to the coach at the old Post Office. On the coach, she explained that only 14 tickets had been posted to her instead of 19, an answer machine was the only response to her calls to the Box Office, so arriving at the Theatre, she dashed off to sort our tickets out. During the interval, she got 19 ice creams for us, ushered us on the coach at the end of the show, and wheeled Audrey home before Joyce Harvey dropped her home approaching midnight. Our grateful thanks to a remarkable lady. In the words of Father David, *"The girl done well!"* **RHB**

A Christmas Story – Guest of Honour

This all happened some seventy years ago, in a fair-sized country village in Yorkshire. The local station was a junction on the main line, where people changed trains if they wanted to go along the branch line to the market town ten miles away. From a railway point of view the station was a busy one, and the Station Master was, locally, a Very Important Person. Under him was a large staff of railwaymen - porters, signalmen, booking clerks, lamp boys, shunters, cartmen, foremen, inspectors, and many more. Joshua McNulty presided benevolently over them all. He had started work at that very station at the age of fifteen as a telephone lad in the signal box, and worked his way up as porter, yard foreman, and station inspector, until at the age of forty-eight he had aspired to the supreme position of Station Master. Highly respected in the village as well as by his staff, there was no task any of them had to perform in the course of their duties which he could not do

himself equally competently. On the day of his sixty-fifth birthday, which fell in the week before Christmas, he was due to retire from the railway service, and the leading members of his staff put their heads together to decide on something special to mark the occasion. Harry Thompson, the Foreman Porter, was entrusted with the task of arranging it all. To begin with, a collection was made among the station staff, the regular passengers, and some of the leading people in the village. There was a good response, and it was decided to buy him an easy chair and a gramophone to help him enjoy his days of leisure. These gifts would be presented at a grand party. The Church Hall was booked, the village baker and his wife undertook to do the catering, entertainers promised to give a concert following the feast, and the local Silver Band was to play, whilst the Church Choir undertook to sing Christmas Carols, as well as "Happy Birthday". The Divisional Manager himself, no less, agreed to come down from Headquarters to make the presentation. Of course, all this was very hush hush, as it was meant to be a great surprise for Joshua, so invitations and all arrangements were done by word of mouth only. The great day arrived at last, and everything was ready for seven-thirty that evening. There was a sumptuous spread laid out on the groaning tables, the entertainers, the band and the choir were ready to perform, and every place was taken with the invited guests. At twenty-five to eight, someone said, "Wheer's t' Gaffer?" They gave him a few more minutes, but quarter to eight came and still no Guest of Honour. "What's oop wi' t' Gaffer?" someone asked. An awful thought dawned on poor Harry Thompson, the Foreman Porter, as his face turned a bright red. He had made all the arrangements, but had been so concerned to keep them secret from the Station Master that he had forgotten to invite him to his own birthday party! He rushed along to Joshua's house, but a neighbour said he and his wife had gone out for the evening with his brother-in-law. So there, in the Church Hall was a wonderful feast and celebration, and the honoured guest was not there!

Absurd? Perhaps, but each year thousands of Christmas Parties are held, yet in so many of them the One Who gives His Name to the occasion finds no place.

(Adapted by **Trevor Hopkinson** from an idea in a 1970s 'Prayer for the Day' broadcast by Rev. John Jackson).

Some Christmas Turkey Cracker Jokes!

Mum, Can I have a dog for Christmas?

No you can have turkey like everyone else!

Who is never hungry at Christmas?

The turkey - he's always stuffed!

We had grandma for Christmas dinner

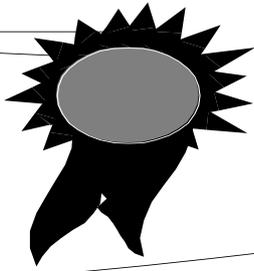
Really, we had turkey!



From the Registers – November

1st Baptism of Jonny Alan Sadler Lang

2nd Baptism of Harrison Lee Wareham



Have You Bought Your Christmas Presents Yet?

We're off to buy FASCINATING FOOD FROM ST FAITH'S. It only costs £3 and is full of good soups and savouries. The Sunday Club illustrations are great. Why not get one for yourself and one as a gift? All the proceeds go to the St Faith's and St Nicholas' Restoration Fund. Copies are on sale in the Parish Office or from the Tourist Information Office in Park Road South.



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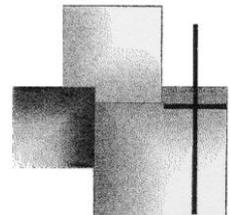
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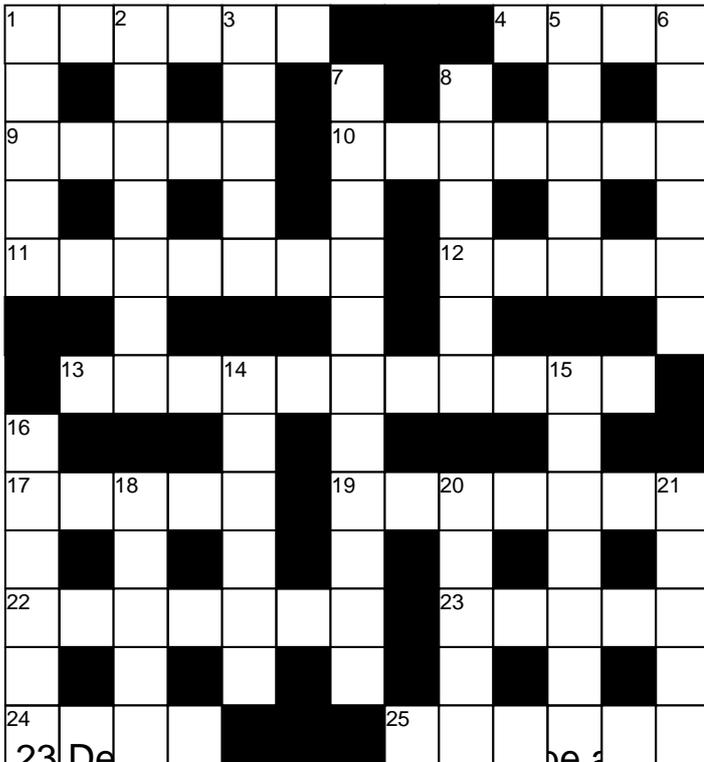
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St Faith's December 2003 Crossword Puzzle



Across

1. Arrive extremely dirty – it makes you laugh (6)
4. No worry with leasehold (4)
9. Vents his opinion, perhaps with some heat (5)
10. Relax after night before to reach peak (7)
11. Authorise person to appointment (7)
12. Could make a nasty impression – and receive likewise (5)
13. Solemn Australian provides resting place (11)
17. "Who hating dogs, yet wanted to save their -----" (5)
19. Not reacting as front of precious vase is damaged (7)
22. An outside line to ring (7)
25. Agent to take in second performance (6)

Down

1. Hundred disabled, we hear, demand compensation (5)
3. A dream about perfect skin (5)
6. It's complete in French flag (6)
8. One for the pot? (3,3)
14. Only skin deep (6)
16. One who alleviates nuisance perhaps, or reduces cost (6)
20. Piece of music pleasant to the ear (5)
2. A very old one delayed wedding guest (7)
5. A nice chap does my business (5)
7. Mere chance may cause decrease in composure (11)
15. Editor provided one church building (7)
18. Proclaimed gun law (5)
21. In his fields farmer got plant disease (5)

Compiled for St Faith's by *Sisyphus*

Answers to the editor by 15th December please!

Answers to November 2003 Crossword

Across: 1. Diddle, 4. Salt, 9. Tiles, 10. Apostle, 11. Humerus, 12. Turns, 13. Hand in Glove, 17. Tenet, 19. Droplet, 22. Amazing, 23. Learn, 24. Trim, 25. Opener.

Down: 1. Ditch, 2. Dilemma, 3. Loser, 5. Alter, 6. Tsetse, 7. Cats and Dogs, 8. Portal, 14. Detain, 15. Villain, 16. Strait, 18. Naafi, 20. Orlop, 21. Tuner.

The first correct answer out of the hat this month was from Angela Collyer, with other correct entries from Mary Harfield and Joy Utting. Other incorrect entries put *Adoptee* for 10. Across and *Tenor* for 21. Down.

Correspondence Column – Homosexuality – Another Point of View

I have deliberated a long time over whether to write but I believe there is a deep unease over the way part of the Anglican church is moving towards the acceptance of practising homosexuality, sodomy, anal sex or, to give it the proper legal term, buggery. I have hesitated to write because I do not wish to offend those who in one way or another may find themselves caught up in a very difficult situation. For example those whose children or friends are homosexual. But at times of moral perplexity our only recourse is to the Bible and what it teaches us. (1) *“The Bible is clear that the only legitimate context for sexual intercourse is in marriage and marriage can only take place between a man and woman (Genesis 2:24). Sexual acts between men and women before marriage (fornication) or outside marriage (adultery) are also condemned (Matthew 5:27-28).”* In Leviticus Ch8, in which unlawful sexual relations are defined, verse 22 states explicitly *“Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.”* I am aware that some will feel that Christians are just outdated bigots for opposing homosexuality. Most will agree that sexual practises such as paedophilia are wrong. Who then makes a judgement between right and wrong sexual practice? Is it majority opinion? Or is it God, our Creator, who alone has the authority to declare something right or wrong? In Romans 1:24-27) St Paul speaks out strongly against all depravity and says *“God gave them over”* - in other words their sinfulness would reap the consequences of their behaviour. I am not saying that homosexuality is worse than the other sins and in Corinthians 6:9-10 St Paul lists several others: stealing, lying, swindling and greed as they are all incompatible with what God wants for us. We come to church because we want to worship God but also to seek absolution from our sins which we recognise and for which we are genuinely repentant. If buggery is not deemed to be sinful there is no requirement for repentance and so I wonder, are we denying that person the chance of God’s redemption? I believe that (2) *“Christians must act both pastorally and publicly. The Church must care pastorally for those facing homosexual temptation, but must also teach publicly that homosexual practice is always wrong. There is no contradiction between the two. Both are needed.”* By this time many of you may be wondering why I should be so concerned. After all I have been greatly blessed in my life, but in talking with others the debate has hinged on whether buggery is sinful and I hope I have shown, very sketchily, that I believe that to be the case. But of great importance is the message that society sends out to adolescents that these practices are acceptable. Their sexual orientation is yet to be determined and most parents would prefer their children to grow up, marry and have children of their own. *“God blessed them and said to them ‘Be fruitful and increase in numbers’”* Genesis 1:28. Quotations are from NI.V of the Bible. (1) and (2) are from The Christian Institute briefing - Homosexual Age of Consent. **Rosemary**

Thomas

Dear Editor,

The Rector and Colleen (*Faith Matters, November*), both reveal more than a touch of the political correctness and relativism which permeate society today. Father David says that he is not shying away from expressing his personal view, but with

inferred approval, comments that Colleen's letter expresses a popular view of homosexual behaviour and that those who object to this are homophobic and ignorant. His final appeal for inclusivity could be taken to mean that a priest who lives a homosexual way of life should be acceptable to the Church. Colleen writes of a homosexual friend – but she uses the euphemism, gay – who is kind, generous and compassionate. This may well be so, but it is not the essence of the matter – the basic issue is behaviour; what we do in life. Life cannot be lived fully and honestly in separate compartments; we are the sum total of all our parts with actions in one area impinging on and influencing those in another. Unless one uses convoluted sophistry, homosexual behaviour is clearly contrary to the Scriptures; and, on a practical level – as I understand it – the initial spread of AIDS in the USA and Europe was the result of promiscuous homosexual activity, causing misery, illness and death. The Church does not exclude any individual; but a priest is not just “any” individual. A priest is not just someone with “expertise” “no questions asked”, to use Colleen's words. A priest by nature of his or her calling, is a person to look up to, someone to trust and emulate; someone who by the way of his or her life is bringing the Gospel to us and helping us on our pilgrim journeys.

Yours sincerely,

John Bradey (aka JB)



Church Bells

We ring the bells on Sunday
And call all folk to pray.
A few will heed the message,
But more will stay away.

"The bells they sound so lovely,
We hear them all quite near.
They're part of our tradition
And maybe more, that's clear"

God's bells give Him much pleasure,
And we enjoy them too.
So when we sound our message
What does that mean to you?

The bells can speak of Jesus
And what he came to do.
There's blessing there for all of us
And for our children too!

So when you hear our ringing
Just offer up this prayer: -
"Lord Jesus, please bless me and mine
And keep us in Your care"

David Smith (The Ringing World)

Word Search – Christmas Day

Can you find the words associated with Christmas Day? On completion, some of the letters remaining make up the words we say during the Parish Eucharist. Can you find them? Words may be read forwards, backwards, up, down or diagonal and are in straight lines. Where a “/” is shown the words are not contiguous in the grid.

Colin Carter

ANGELS
BELLS
BIRTH/OF/CHRIST
CARDS
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS/TREE
CHURCH
CRACKERS

FAIRY/LIGHTS
FAMILY
GREETINGS
HOLLY
IVY
MINCE/PIES
MISTLETOE
NATIVITY

PRESENTS
PUDDING
PUNCH
SHEPHERDS
STAR
TINSEL
TOYS
TURKEY



From the Editor

I was going to do this review for next month's edition, but my wife, Beryl, said it should be done in December as in January you should be looking forward, not back. She is, of course, quite right. This has been an interesting and busy year for parishioners and organisers who worked so hard - it is nice to look back on the events that took place and that we all enjoyed. Since February, the whole year has been devoted to 'A Vision for the Future', with 6 working groups meeting and making their proposals for the benefit of the Church. In addition, there has been a very successful Stewardship Campaign. Not only were new pledges of Planned Giving increased in a year, but it also resulted in additional church members offering to add their names to the members who already give their time and talents to serve the Church in



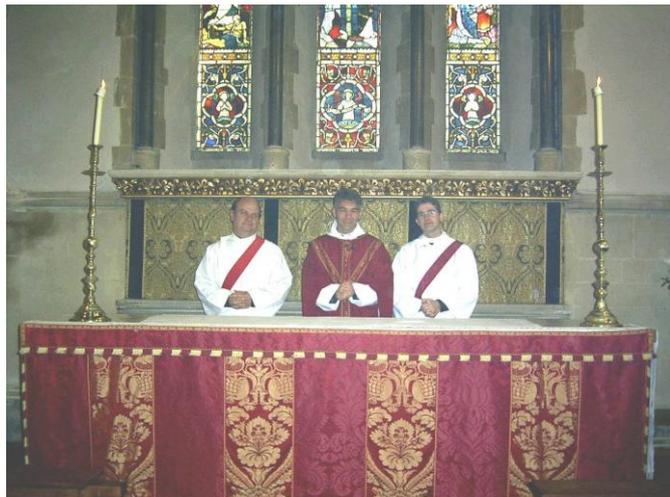
various ways. Parishioners have worked tirelessly throughout the year to raise money for the Restoration Appeal - Burns Supper, Murder Mystery Dinner, Flower Festival, Town Fair, Summer Serenade, Charities Market, coffee mornings, book sale, recipe book, etc. (see page 21). There were well-supported social events organised by Sandra Haggan, including outings to the King's (Carousel, Showboat, and

don't forget the panto), and Mayflower (Miss Saigon) Theatres, and to Wisley RHS. Once again, Edna Gomersall and her band of helpers have had a marvellous year in raising over £12,000 in the shop. We welcomed two Assistant Curates, Charles Keay (see his article on page 4) and David Williams in June. We walked from Havant park to St. Faith's Church on Palm Sunday, remembered those who lost their lives in HMS HAVANT in June and in wars on



Remembrance Sunday. We had a Celtic Eucharist, a Saints Day service, a Harvest Festival and variations to the 9.30am Sunday services. The Sunday Club continued to entertain us when they reported on their activities. The young boys and girls in our Junior Choir are a credit to Judith Williams and to St. Faith's and were awarded

the first achievement of the RSCM ribbons. We now have a Senior Choir. Two new groups were formed, the Men's Group and the Theological Discussion Group. We had the Mayor of Havant, *Hilary Farrow*, plant crocuses in the church grounds on 21 November. *During the 12 issues of "Faith Matters", parishioners have written fascinating and interesting articles – Roger Bryant has been particularly supportive - opposing views have been discussed on the topics of the moment, and Sisyphus continued to give much pleasure and a challenge with the crossword.* The PCC has re-structured the committees to make them more



dynamic, and has authorised the computerisation of the accounts to make it easier to produce budgets and place the finances on a more business like footing, but giving Pam Bowley extra work. *Rosemary Thomas and her team have continued to provide beautiful flower arrangements in the Church throughout the year.* The web-site provides a lot of information and we have had responses from diverse places as New Zealand and Russia – don't forget you can see the pictures in

this magazine in colour on the web-site. *I have mentioned some names in this editorial, but there are many, many more that help in a lot of ways to ensure the church functions efficiently that also deserve a mention – please forgive me for that omission.* We can look back at 2003 and be pleased with what we have achieved, and look forward to new challenges in 2004. A happy and peaceful Christmas to you all – and please continue to write articles for **your** magazine.



For Your Diary

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Where/Cost</u>
Tuesday 2 December	6.15pm	Christingle Service	St. Faith's Church
Saturday 6 December	9.45am	Finance/Standing Committee Meetings	27 Bellair Road
Sunday 7 December	9.30am	Toy Service	St. Faith's Church
Monday 8 December	8pm	Genetic Engineering and Animal Welfare	Rectory
Tuesday 9 December	11am	Healing Service	Methodist Church Petersfield Road
Friday 12 December	8pm	Men's Group Christmas Curry Dinner	Robin Hood
Saturday 13 December	2pm	Carol Singing with Churches Together	Meridian Centre
Saturday 13 December	7.30pm	Bellringer's Dinner	Church Hall
Wednesday 17 December	7pm	Christmas Concert	Warblington School
Friday 19 December	7pm	Carol Singing in Denvilles	Starting at 71 Rowan Road
Sunday 21 December	12.15pm	Carol Singing	Asda
Sunday 21 December	6.30pm	Nine Lessons & Carols	St. Faith's Church
Wednesday 24 December	6pm	Candlelight Crib Service	St. Faith's Church
Wednesday 24 December	11.30pm	Midnight Mass	St. Faith's Church
Thursday 25 December	8am	Eucharist	St. Faith's Church
Thursday 25 December	9.30am	Family Eucharist	St. Faith's Church
Fri 26 Dec – Fri 2 January 2004	-	Fr. David away	-
Monday 29 December	7.30pm	Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs	King's Theatre/tba
Tuesday 6 January 2004	7pm	Epiphany Service followed by Parish Dinner	St. Faith's Church/ Bear Hotel/£16.95
Monday 12 January 2004	7.45pm	PCC Meeting	Church House
Saturday 17 January 2004	7.30pm	Dinner & Dutch	St. Albans, West Leigh/tba

Sunday 18 January 2004	6pm	Prayer for Christian Unity	St. Joseph's Church
Monday 26 January 2004	7.30pm	Church Together Meeting	Church House
Saturday 21 February 2004	7.30pm	Murder, Mystery Evening	Church Hall/tba
Saturday 13 March 2004	7.30pm	Church Quiz	Church Hall
Fri 16 - Sun 18 April 2004	-	Walsingham Pilgrimage	£85



St Faith's Restoration Appeal

Thank you to all who have given such fantastic support to raise nearly £42000 since January 2002. Roger Simmons, our Appeal Treasurer, has provided these details of where the money has come from. Much work still needs to be done in St Faith's, and £13,334.92 is still needed to pay for the work on St Faith's Tower and St Nicholas Chapel Roof. Please note the significant amount we have received from the Inland Revenue from Gift Aid. Use the pink envelopes for your donations to enable us to claim an extra 28p in every £1 as Gift Aid refund.

Paul Utting

Personal Donations	16,934.76	Gift Aid Tax refund	3,491.33
Havant Town Fairs	5,111.98	Balloon Race	1,212.32
S.Butterfield Painting	2,693.10	Concerts	2,467.42
Flower Festival	2,130.00	Murder Mystery Din.	1,072.24
London Marathon Spon.	985.20	June Morley Cards	669.70
Charities' Markets	644.80	Quiz Night	608.08
Coffee Mornings	591.66	Book Sale	445.95
Green Corner Recycling	436.38	Recipe Books	364.50
Christmas Quiz	215.00	Parish Breakfast	211.97
Churches Bicycle Rides	151.25	Grand Draw (2004)	98.00
Farm Walk	81.00	Other donations	889.27
Bank Interest	97.56	TOTAL (11 Nov 03)	41,603.47

MEMBERS OF PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

Reverend David Gibbons (*Chairman & Incumbent*)

Fr. Charles Keay (*Curate*)

Fr. David Williams (*Curate*)

Dr Colin Warlow (*Churchwarden*)

Mrs Sandra Haggan (*Churchwarden*)

Mrs Pam Bowley (*Hon. Treasurer*)

Mr Roger Bryant (*Hon. Secretary*)

Dr Chris Churcher-Brown Mrs Anne Plater

Miss Peggy Sparks

Mrs Carmen Stuart

Mr Robert Wilson

Deanery Synod Representatives: Prof Jan Stuart & Mrs Shirley Caunter

St. Faith's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibility for the Church and Church Hall of St. Faith's, St. Nicholas Chapel, Christ Church Centre and bungalow, Church House, Coach House, Nos. 1 & 2 Churchfields and via the Church Institute, Nos. 2 & 4 North Street. The PCC operates through a number of committees that meet between full meetings of the PCC.

Standing Committee is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. Members: **Rector, Churchwardens, Treasurer, Secretary.**

Finance Committee oversees the general financial affairs of St. Faith's by monitoring income and expenditure, budgeting and co-ordinating the annual review of the Christian Stewardship of money through planned giving. Members: **Standing Committee & Alan Hakim** (*co-opted*).

Buildings Management Committee attends to the use, repair and development of all parish buildings, including St. Faith's church. Members: **Jan Stuart** (*Chairman*), **Robert Wilson** (*Deputy Chairman*), **Peter Appleby** (*co-opted Secretary*), **Sandra Haggan, Anne Plater, Peggy Sparks, Barry Hudson** (*co-opted*), **Lisa Roonan** (*co-opted*), **Paul Utting** (*co-opted*).

Structural Planning and Restoration Committee oversees the implementation of the Quinquennial Report and improvements to the church. It is also responsible for the organ. Members: **Chris Churcher-Brown** (*Chairman*), **Carmen Stuart, Colin Warlow, Robert Wilson, Peter Appleby** (*co-opted Secretary*), **Derek Freeston** (*co-opted*).

Restoration Appeal Committee. Members: **Paul Utting** (*Chairman*), **Ken Bracher, Mary Bracher, Ann Buckley, Joan Burrows, Kevin Edwards, Sara Freeston** (*Secretary*), **Sandra Haggan, Anne Plater, Martin Poliszczuk, Roger Simmons** (*Treasurer*), **Joy Utting.**

Parish Office: - Church House, The Pallant, Havant, PO9 1BE.

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Office Open:- Monday & Friday 9am - 12 noon

WHO'S WHO

Rector	Rev. David Gibbons	023 9248 3485
	<i>The Rectory, 5 Meadowlands, Havant, PO9 2RP</i>	
Curates	Fr. Charles Keay	023 9247 0817
	Fr. David Williams	023 9246 7597
Lay Deacon	Dr Trevor Hopkinson	023 9246 2350
Verger, Sacristan & Hall Mgr	Mrs Vickie Mockford	023 9247 1398
	<i>2 Churchfields, South Street, Havant, PO9 1BY</i>	
Organist	Mrs Judith Williams	023 9234 3020
Parish Office Administrator	Ms Georgie Black	023 9249 2129
Churchwardens	Dr Colin Warlow	023 9247 5447
	Mrs Sandra Haggan	023 9245 5161
Hon. Secretary PCC	Mr Roger Bryant	01243 376863
Hon. Treasurer PCC	Mrs Pam Bowley	023 9248 3524
St Nicholas Wardens	Mr Edward Manning	023 9248 3500
	Mrs Anne Plater	023 9245 1075
Child Protection Officer	Mrs Fiona Hedley	023 2949 8229
Stewardship Secretary	Mr Alan Hakim	023 9247 1681
Captain of Bellringers	Mrs Barbara Skilleter	023 9225 3802
Church Shop	Mrs Edna Gomersall	023 9248 4104
Social Activities	Mrs Sandra Haggan	023 9245 5161
Bible Reading Fellowship	Mrs Hilary Deadman	023 9247 1241
Flowers for High Altar	Mrs Rosemary Thomas	023 9248 3836
Missions to Seafarers Sec.	Miss Peggy Sparks	023 9245 0309
Mother's Union Advisor	Mrs Liz Gilbert	023 9245 2321
Children's Society Boxes	Mrs Shirley Caunter	023 9248 1231
Electoral Roll Officer	Mrs Audrey Currie	023 9247 9937

Confessions, Baptisms and Marriages

Contact the Rector

Bookings for St. Faith's Hall & Church House

Contact the Verger

Prayers for the Sick

Please notify the Rector, any member of the PCC or Parish Office Administrator

Parish Magazine of St Faith, Havant with St Nicholas, Langstone -

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023 9247 8499

*Articles, notices, letters or other items for inclusion in our magazine are always welcome and should be sent to the Editor, 'faith matters', Parish Office, Church House, The Pallant, or **Email:** editor@stfaith.com. The magazine is published on the 1st of each month, with a print deadline 15th of previous month.*

St. Faith's Web-site: <http://www.stfaith.com> (**Email:** webmaster@stfaith.com)

SERVICES

Tuesday 2nd December	6.15pm	Christingle Service
Sunday 7th December	8.00am	Eucharist
ADVENT II	8.00am	Eucharist at St. Nicholas, Langstone
	9.30am	TOY SERVICE and FAMILY EUCHARIST
	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 14th December	8.00am	Eucharist
ADVENT III	9.15am	Children's Sunday Club in Church House
	9.30am	PARISH EUCHARIST
	6.30pm	Evensong
Wed 17th December	7.00pm	Warblington School Carol Service: "The Other Wise Man"
Sunday 21st December	8.00am	Eucharist
ADVENT IV	9.15am	Children's Sunday Club in Church House
	9.30am	PARISH EUCHARIST –
	6.30pm	Nine Lessons and Carols
Wed 24th December	6.00pm	Crib Service
CHRISTMAS EVE	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Thurs 25th December	8.00am	Eucharist
CHRISTMAS DAY	8.00am	Eucharist at St. Nicholas, Langstone
	9.30am	CELEBRATION EUCHARIST
Sunday 28th December	8.00am	Eucharist
CHRISTMAS I	9.15am	Children's Sunday Club in Church House
	9.30am	PARISH EUCHARIST
	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 4th January	8.00am	Eucharist
CHRISTMAS II	8.00am	Eucharist at St. Nicholas, Langstone
	9.30am	FAMILY EUCHARIST for EPIPHANY
	6.30pm	Evensong
Tues 6th January	7.00pm	Eucharist
EPIPHANY		



MIDWEEK SERVICES:

Monday	9.15am	Morning Prayer & Eucharist
Tuesday to Friday	9.15am	Morning Prayer
Thursday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Saturday	9.00am	

For changes or additions to the services on this page, please see the church notice board, the weekly bulletin or our web-site (<http://www.stfaith.com>).