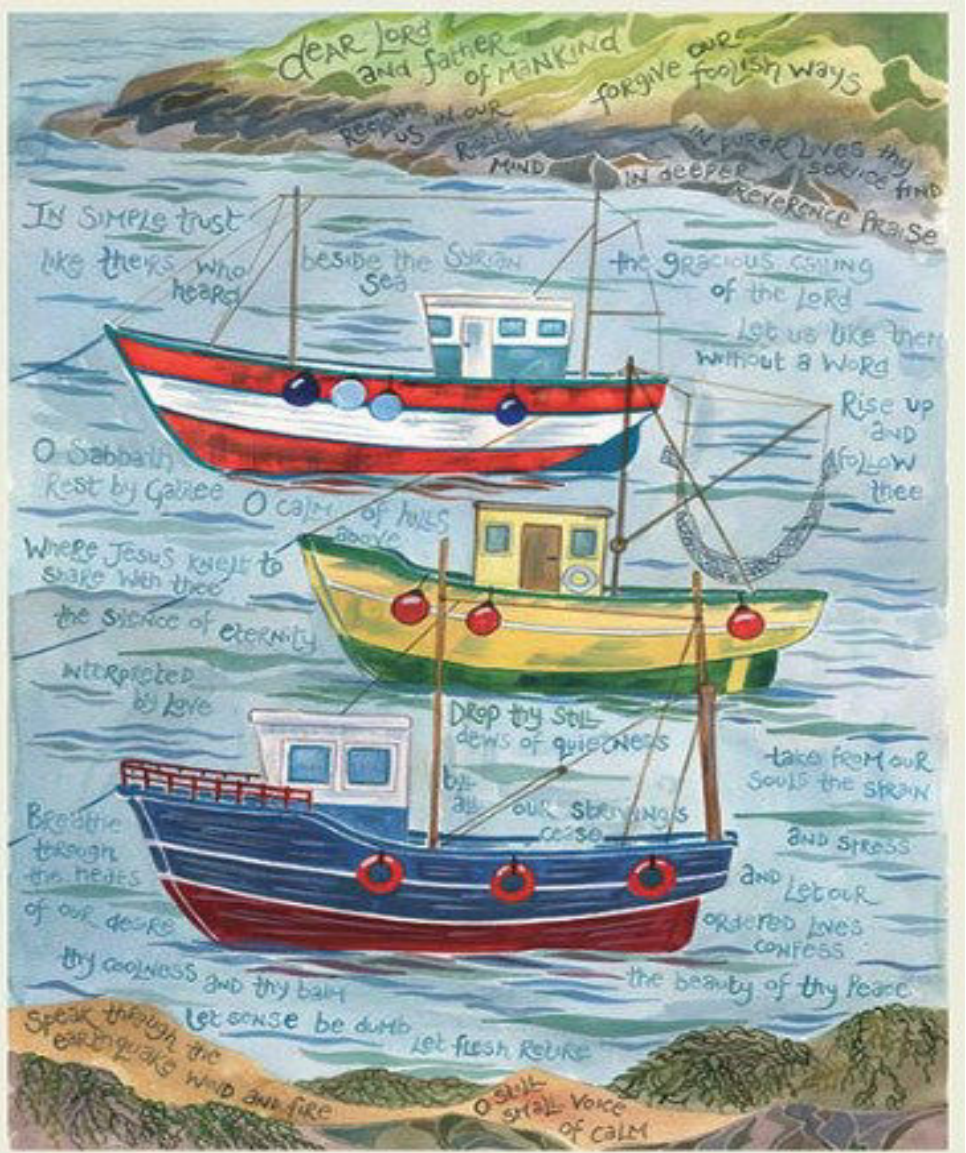


St. Faith and St. Laurence Harborne



2026



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
BIRMINGHAM

SILVER AND LOVE

178 High Street, Harborne, B17 9PP

07823456222

Silver Jewellery, Fairtrade gifts

Cards, Piercing

Jewellery Repairs

Shop local

Est 2004

To place your advertisement here,
please email Corinne Treacy at corinneftreacy@gmail.com



A lifestyle
tailored
to you

Residents' quality of life is at the heart of everything we do, enabling each individual to lead an independent and fulfilling life.

If you're considering a care home, call **0121 392 6706** or visit careuk.com/metchley-manor

Inspected and rated

Good

Trusted to care

Care Quality Commission

Metchley Manor care home
Edgbaston

care UK

**Abigail Kelly
Soprano**

*Available for weddings,
parties, funerals and any other
special events.*

www.abigailkellysoprano.com

info@abigailkellysoprano.com

07890 585 143



*Since 1920, The Taylor Family Has Provided, Personal, Professional
and Dignified Funeral Services Let us help you in your time of need*

A.B. Taylor

Funeral Services Limited
**Rolls-Royce and Mercedes
Hearses and Limousines
Pre-Payment Funeral plans
24 Hour Emergency Service**

0121 4344340

info@abtaylorfunerals.co.uk

49 Wolverhampton Road South, Birmingham, B32 2AY

Queens Park Store

*230 Court Oak Road
Opposite the 'Court Oak Pub'*

Selling Furniture, DIY Bathrooms
Come and see!

Open 7 Days a week

Tel: 0121 428 2164

Aspects of life at St Faith and St Laurence

Morning Prayer – is normally said Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 8.30 am in the Lady Chapel. We use Common Worship Daily Prayer, all are welcome to come and join in.

Task Groups – The church has a number of task groups enabling areas of church life. These are listed on the inside cover of the magazine with the contact details of the chairs. If you would like to be a part of a groups please contact the relevant chair. All are welcome to join.

Stay and Play meets on Thursday between 9.30 and 11am in the Hall to give a chance for people with young children to meet and the children to play. All are welcome. Cost £2 per family.

Planned Giving In order to continue, the church relies on the financial support of the congregation and parishioners. It costs over £1500 per week to operate. We encourage people to give regularly through some form of Planned Giving, and to Gift Aid their giving if they pay income tax, so the parish can reclaim tax on the donations at no extra cost to the donor. Each person must decide how much they can afford to give.

The recommended method of planned giving is by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme as this reduces bureaucracy and improves our cash flow but still leave the giver in control of their contributions. Some people prefer to pay by Standing Order or using weekly or monthly envelopes. Details of all these methods are available from Loleta Atkinson or Corinne Treacy.

Choir and Music Our church has an excellent musical tradition. Mark Lawrence, is our Director of Music. Please speak to Mark if you would like to support the music in any way, particularly if you are able and interested to sing with others whilst we find new ways to keep our tradition going.

Home Communion There are several people who are unable to get to church, either permanently or temporarily, and to whom David or Sally take communion in their homes. If you would like to receive communion at home, or know someone who might, please speak to David or Sally.

'easyfundraising'

Next time you shop online, think of St Faith and St Laurence and raise free donations with 3,000+ retailers:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stfaithandstlaurence>

Women's Fellowship meets on the first Tuesdays of the month from March to December. Meetings are held in the Committee Room at 2pm. We have talks on a variety of subjects.

Prayer Ministry Team

Prayer ministry is offered during the 10am Communion on the 1st Sunday of each month. People can receive prayer for themselves or for any situation that is important to them. It takes place in the Lady Chapel during the distribution of communion.

Foodbank

We collect food for the Quinton Foodbank. There is a box in church and food can be placed there at any time. The list of things that are needed is in church and in the hall. Food is distributed from St Boniface Church on Wednesdays. Vouchers are required to receive food.



Call in for Coffee time together over a cuppa on a Wednesday morning from 10.30 - 12.00. if needed we can arrange for someone to collect you and then take you home. If you are passing, do call in, or bring a friend, all are welcome.





I'm writing this on a sweltering bank holiday – it's the start of May half-term week, and the forecasters are predicting that new temperature records will be set. Of course by the time you read it, everything may be completely different. The British weather changes so rapidly – only a week ago I was shivering in a bitterly cold wind. Personally I find these sudden changes in temperature hard to cope with – my body needs longer to adjust.

Other changes, even though they are slower and are entirely predictable, still catch us out. I spent yesterday afternoon at my grandson's 2nd birthday party (where unfortunately the strong sunlight had made the surface of the bouncy castle uncomfortably hot!). Where did those two years go? It seems hardly any time at all since I announced to the congregation (during a sermon on Trinity Sunday about the importance of relationships, and the Holy Trinity as the ultimate example of loving relationship) that I had just become a grandfather.

Since then we have been blessed with a second grandchild, though as she lives in Dundee we don't see her nearly so often. Things change in ways we cannot predict. In the 4 years since I was first asked to support this parish many things have changed, both for my family and in the world, and often in very unexpected ways. Some changes are pleasing, while others are bad and can leave us anxious or traumatised, but somehow we carry on.

Sometime in the next few months there will be a further change, when the time comes for me to make way for my successor. Since we don't know how long it will take to appoint a new vicar, I don't know when I shall be leaving, though I expect it won't be for quite a while yet. I have enormously enjoyed my time here, for which I thank God, the church hierarchy, and all of you (not necessarily in that order). Having had some time to reflect on the present situation, I find I am perfectly content to leave the future in God's hands.

REPORT OF THE CHURCH ESTATE TASK GROUP



Although the church guttering and downpipes have been replaced, as with most large building projects there are often some outstanding issues to be addressed. These 'snagging' jobs are to be carried out in June. The leakage from the Committee Room roof unfortunately continued and this required re-examination by specialist contractors. Further remedial work has been undertaken and the ceiling can now be repaired and decorated.

The Community Garden and patio have been weeded and the box hedging, severely damaged by box blight infestation, has now been removed.

David Arkell (Chair)

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

are holding an event
in the CHURCH HALL

on SATURDAY the 27th JUNE at 4PM

This will be a SUMMER SALAD AND DESSERT ENTERTAINMENT
from professional singer MAGGIE O'HARA

Tickets are £15pp (byo drinks, tea/coffee will be available)

The proceeds will go to CEREBRAL PALSY MIDLANDS,
the charity we are supporting this year.
We look forward to seeing you there.

Helen Hayward.
07940133941

Parish update

The last 3 months have been quite full. The Holy Week and Easter services were well-attended; the flower arrangers made the church look really beautiful for Easter, and our worship continues to be greatly enriched by the Singing Group.

Just before Easter, Sally Griffiths was re-licensed as Reader for a further 3 years during an evening service, and that same morning I authorised Bronwen Jones as an occasional preacher following her completion of the Growing Gifts training. The PCC has also enthusiastically supported Helen Setchell's application to train as a Reader, and this is slowly but surely working its way through the Church of England's discernment process. The ministries (and potential future ministries) of Sally, Bronwen and Helen are a great blessing to the parish.

The new heating burner (installed in February) has worked perfectly. Unfortunately the leak in the Committee Room roof (which we thought had been fixed in February) recurred – the cause baffled even the experts, but after investigation by a specialist leak-tracing company further repairs have been made which we hope have now solved the problem (all this work has been done free-of-charge by the company who installed the roof in 2017).

At the end of March, after the initial 6 month trial, the contract with Birmingham Jesus Vision Church allowing them to use our buildings on Sunday afternoons was renewed: they have proved excellent partners and I am delighted that we can support their mission in this way.

At the Annual Meetings, held on 26th April, David Glanvill and Caroline Mosley were re-elected as churchwardens, Caroline Mosley, Alex Robertson and Corinne Treacy were elected to the Deanery Synod, and Lesley Arkell, Loleta Atkinson, Dee Coyne and Bronwen Jones were elected (or re-elected) to the PCC. The accounts for 2025 (copies still available) showed a deficit of £6,105 on the general fund, much of which could be attributed to the unexpected extra costs due to the heating failure in November.

We are now working on producing the parish profile document which is needed in order to advertise for a new vicar. As part of this process we have carried out a consultation, the results of which are reported elsewhere in this magazine.

David

Consultation on priorities for a new vicar

A consultation on Priorities for a New Vicar was held over 4 weeks in April/May. Respondents were invited to answer the three questions:

What do you value most about our current church life?

What would be your one priority for the church in the future?

What do you want from a new vicar?

In total, 20 responses were received, and these are being used to help shape our parish profile (used in recruiting the new vicar). A brief summary of these responses is set out below; the full list is available from David Parker on request. To the question “what do you value most about our church life?”, a remarkably large number of responses referred to “friendship” or celebrated that the church is inclusive, welcoming and supportive. Several mentioned the beautiful building and the fact that it is kept open during the daytime. The wide involvement of different people in activities was also valued. Several people referred to the balance of traditional and modern worship, and the music was mentioned by many.

As regards their priority for the future, unsurprisingly many people highlighted the need to attract new and younger people into the congregation. A desire to engage more closely with (and to serve) the local community was mentioned by several people. A number of the responses stressed the importance of retaining the church’s current strengths, for example in fellowship and worship – one person wrote “more of the same”.

The question “what do you want from your new vicar?” drew the widest range of answers, so that it is harder to summarise these. Energy, enthusiasm, and a commitment to the parish and to inclusivity were each mentioned several times. Several people said “someone who listens”, and several “a sense of humour”.

We thank all those who contributed to this consultation, which has been instructive and encouraging.



Community Garden

At its May meeting, the PCC confirmed that the Community Garden behind the church should be open to all during the day throughout the summer months.

Thanks to the hard work of the gardening team, the garden is looking beautiful, so do drop in.

Beaver Scouts lend a hand in the Church Garden



In the Autumn term, our enthusiastic Beaver Scouts rolled up their sleeves and took part in a fantastic community project in the church garden. Armed with gloves, trowels, and their boundless energy, the Beavers worked together to transform the outdoor space into a tidier, brighter, and more welcoming area for everyone to enjoy.

The first task on their mission was clearing away the overgrown weeds and ivy that had begun creeping across the garden. Working in groups, the Beavers showed brilliant teamwork as they pulled, trimmed, and collected the unwanted greenery—revealing the trees, borders, and pathways hidden beneath.

Once the garden beds were cleared, the Beavers moved on to one of their favourite activities: planting bulbs. With care and excitement, they planted a selection of spring bulbs that will bloom into colourful flowers in the coming months. These new plantings will help bring fresh life to the garden and serve as a lasting reminder of the Beavers' hard work and community spirit.

The final job of the day was giving the church patio area a good clean. Brushes in hand, the Beavers swept away leaves, dirt, and debris, leaving the space looking neat and ready for visitors and gatherings.

Their effort and enthusiasm throughout the project were outstanding—and as a result, the Beavers proudly earned their Community Service Badge. This achievement recognises their commitment to helping others and contributing positively to their local community.

The leaders were incredibly proud of the Beavers' teamwork and cheerful attitude. Not only did the children make a visible difference to the church grounds, but they also demonstrated the true spirit of Scouting: caring, cooperation, and service.

A huge well done to all our Beaver Scouts for their brilliant contribution—we can't wait to see the garden burst into colour thanks to their hard work!

Emma Cawsey

COVER STORY

This is the artist Hannah Dunnett's interpretation of the hymn, '*Dear Lord and Father of mankind*'

This is a hymn we sang many times in school assembly. I liked it then and I still do. I find it reassuring, and it gives us focus. When I look at the picture, I picture the sea and fishing boats, prompted by the verse about the disciples responding to Jesus' call. The words call us away from busyness and the general clamour of life and all its demands. They encourage us to seek time and space; to find a place where we can hear the voice of God and be refreshed.

For me, the hymn can be said as a prayer. It is a reflection on ourselves and our constant need to realign our minds and thoughts. It is a call to find the will of God in our lives and to follow in his ways.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence praise, in deeper reverence praise.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity
interpreted by love, interpreted by love!

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire
O still small voice of calm, O still small voice of calm!

This hymn is constantly voted a favourite by *Songs of Praise* viewers — partly, I'm sure, because the combination of John Greenleaf Whittier's beautiful poetry and 'Repton', the soaring melody by Sir Hubert Parry, creates a perfect partnership, providing congregations with a vehicle for worship that lifts heart and soul. More than that, every line of this hymn seems to hit the spot, touching raw nerves, guilty consciences and homing in on our longing to be at peace with God.

Many people have the hymn sung at their wedding, which might seem strange as it includes the line, 'forgive our foolish ways'.

The line, '*O Sabbath rest by Galilee*' reminds me of singing it with fellow-pilgrims on the shore of the Sea of Galilee on a Holy Land Pilgrimage.

I'm sure you're familiar with the very last verse, which talks about God's '*still small voice of calm*' bringing coolness and balm. When we're struggling with the burden of our own wrongdoing, or with resentment about what we feel are the failings of others, the idea of God's forgiveness bringing 'coolness and balm' sounds wonderful - like a long, cold drink on a hot summer's day.

It also shows that an American Quaker's hymn sung to a Welshman's tune, still has the power to help us as we try to find that '*still small voice*'

Some questions for us to ponder.

What images or memories does this hymn hold for us?

Do we long for stillness and peace?

How do we find an opportunity in our day for time to reflect or think?

Peter Stokes

MUSIC

It is good to report that the Church Singers continue in enthusiasm and provide us with singing support and short anthems each week. Numbering around 10 at full strength, the Singers take part when they can. So we have room for a few more - members of St. Faith and St. Laurence take note!

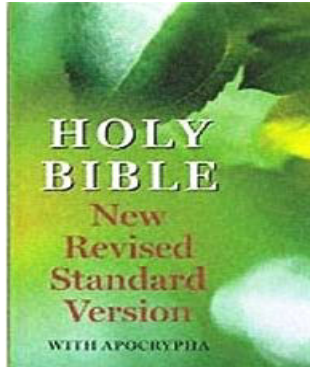
We recently decided that it works best when the Singers sit together in any given part of the church - they support each other this way. Another development that could happen is to start singing in more than one part as some are sopranos but some would be more comfortable in an alto register.

We will take a rest in August as regards anthems but generally keep going the rest of the year. As I have said before, we would welcome male singers as well (of course) and children from Year 3 provided their parent / responsible parent remains in the vicinity.

Lastly, many thanks for all the support received from members of the congregation at both 10.00 am and 6.30 pm services (as well as from the Singers).

Mark Lawrence, Director of Music, May 2026

READINGS FOR JUNE



June 7th 1st after Trinity

10am Holy Communion Hosea 5:15-6:6, Romans 4:13-end,
Matthew 9:9-13 and 18-26

6.30pm Evensong 1 Samuel 18:1-16, Luke 8:41-end

June 14th 2nd after Trinity

8am Holy Communion Exodus 19:2-8a, Romans 5:1-8, Matthew 9:35-10:23

10am Service of the Word Readings As at 8am

June 21st 3rd after Trinity

10am Holy Communion Jeremiah 20:7-13, Romans 6:1b-11, Matthew 10:24-39

6.30pm Evensong 1 Samuel 24:1-17, Luke 14:12-24

June 28th 4th after Trinity

8am Holy Communion Jeremiah 28:5-9, Romans 6:12-end, Matthew 10:40-end

10am Service of the Word Readings As at 8am

6.30pm Holy Communion Readings As at 8am



Environmental & Sustainability Calendar for your diary June, July and August 2026

June

- * June 3rd – **‘World Bike Day’** – A day to draw attention to the benefits of using a bicycle.
- * June 5th – **‘World Environment Day’** – One of the world’s largest international days for the environment to encourage awareness and action to protect our environment.
- * June 6th to 14th – **‘Churches Count on Nature’** – A week to focus and admire the brilliant wildlife surrounding you.
– **‘Great Big Green Week’** – A week celebrating the community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.
- * June 7th – **‘Open Farm Sunday’** - A wonderful opportunity to discover the world of farming and all that farmers do producing food, nurturing nature, and protecting the environment for future generations.
- * June 18th – **‘National Clean Air Day’** – An annual event aiming to help drive a positive shift in public knowledge and action around air pollution.

July

- * July 1st to 31st – **‘Plastic Free July’** – A global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution and refuse single-use plastics for 31 days.
- * July 4th to 10th – **‘Net Zero Week’** – Net Zero Week is the UK’s official national awareness week and the biggest Net Zero conference.
- * July 17th to August 9th – **‘The Big Butterfly Count’** – A UK-wide citizen science survey that helps Butterfly Conservation.
- * July 24th to August 2nd – **‘Love Parks Week’** – The annual campaign, led by Keep Britain Tidy, celebrates the country’s green spaces and the volunteers who maintain them.

August

- * August 10th to 16th – **‘National Allotments Week’** – A week to raise awareness of allotments and the role they play in helping people to live healthier lifestyles. The 2026 theme is ‘Grow to Learn’.
- * August 29th to August 30th – **‘30th International Bat Night’** – An annual event that celebrates bats and raises awareness about their importance, particularly in Europe, and their conservation needs.

Churches Count on Nature & Great Big Green Week

Saturday June 6th to Sunday June 14th 2026

Love Your Church grounds: Saturday 6th June at 9:30am

Join us to celebrate the start of Churches Count on Nature and Great Big Green Week! We are hosting a litter-picking and working party around SF&SL grounds. This is a wonderful opportunity to care for 'God's Acre' and discover the brilliant wildlife making a home in our grounds.

We will meet in the car park at 9:30am. A well-deserved break with refreshments starts at 11am (feel free to bring your own if you prefer).

Litter pickers, disposable gloves, and bags are provided. Please wear sturdy shoes, and feel free to bring your own gardening gloves or equipment. We look forward to seeing you there!



Churches Count on Nature

Running at the same time as Love Your Burial Ground Week, this event focuses on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards.

This wonderful event is a joint initiative supported by Caring for God's Acre, The Church of England, The Church in Wales, and A Rocha UK.

Over the past few years, passionate visitors have submitted more than 27,000 wildlife records during this dedicated week.

When you visit the premises, surroundings, and community gardens of SF&SL, we invite you to take a moment to admire our brilliant local nature.

We would love to log everything you spot - from the smallest ladybird to the tallest tree!

How you can get involved:

- Record your sightings: Fill out the paper form located in the church porch.

- Share your pictures: Snap a few photos and email them directly to ssfaithlaurence@gmail.com

**THE GREAT
BIG GREEN
WEEK** 

Great Big Green Week

Is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.

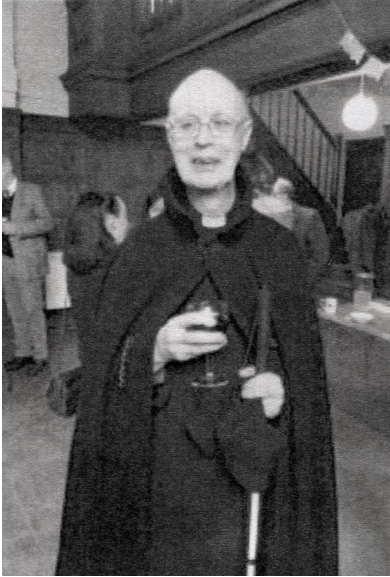
From June 6th to 14th 2026, people are coming together across the country to unleash a wave of support for our planet.

Tens of thousands of people in every corner of the UK will celebrate the heartfelt, brave, everyday actions being taken to stand up for nature. Under this year's theme, *Together for Good*, we can all make small swaps, large swaps, and choices that change the system to improve our local areas.

By uniting, we will send a message loud and clear to politicians and decision-makers that we need to swap old ways for better ways now. Find local events or sign up at

<https://www.greatbiggreenweek.com/>

Canon Ian MacRae Michael, Priest (1940-2026)



Ian served his curacy at All Saints, Kings Heath from 1979-82. He was Vice- Provost of St. Paul's Cathedral, Dundee from 1982-88 before being appointed Vicar of St. Faith and St. Laurence that year. He retired in 2003 and was appointed Honorary Canon of Birmingham Cathedral.

He retired to live in St. Andrews and kept in touch with several members of our congregation, and always looked forward to reading our Parish Magazine.

After a short illness, Ian died peacefully in the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy, on the evening of Monday 9 March. He was accompanied by friends in his final hours, and received the last rites shortly before his death.

Ian's instructions were for his Requiem to be celebrated at All Saints, St. Andrews. His body was received into church, on 9th April at 4.30 pm. The Funeral Requiem took place on Friday 10th April at 11 am. Ian's ashes were interred at Banchory Church at a later date.

'A thoroughly wonderful man, who was also a very close friend from his early days in Harborne, through to the end of his life. He lived life to the full, and really knew how to maximise retirement. He kept so busy that we used to get tired just hearing about his trips around the UK and beyond.

In latter years, we would often meet Ian at the 3 Choirs Festival, go for a meal and attend a concert. We used to look forward to these meetings very much. Ian was fascinating company who always had an incredibly intelligent viewpoint on pretty well any topic / subject. He was always thoroughly good company and had a wonderful sense of humour.

At this year's 3 Choirs Festival, we shall raise a glass to Ian and hope he is with us in spirit. May he rest in peace and rise in glory'.

Darren Hogg

One of Ian's favourite hymns was from a 20th century Methodist hymn writer, Fred Pratt Green. *'When in our music God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried – Alleluia!'*

Priest walks 192 miles for 192 feet of spire.



A priest who completed the 192-mile Coast to Coast walk has said that, while undertaking the challenge, he was “more reliant on Jesus in a different way”.

The Vicar of Ranmoor, in Sheffield diocese, Canon Matthew Rhodes, walked the route from the Irish Sea to the North Sea in 11 days to raise money for the Save Our Spire appeal of St John’s, Ranmoor, which has a target of £1 million. “I felt very supported by the prayers of my congregation and wonderful friends, and it made me more reliant on Jesus in a different way,” he said.

Canon Rhodes began the walk on 7 April and finished on 17 April, covering between 13 and 22 miles a day. His previous walking experience is more modest, having walked part of St Columba’s Way to Lindisfarne for a few days. While walking the Coat to Coast challenge, which was devised by the guidebook author Alfred Wainwright, Canon Rhodes meditated on the story of the road to Emmaus. “For Cleopas and his companion, things hadn’t turned out as they had expected, but Jesus came alongside them, and I felt that very much as I went along,” he said.

His wife, Cathy, drove between the different drop-off points, and was “chief encourager, navigator, sandwich-maker, and general ‘wing man’”. Getting lost in the Lake District was “a bit scary”. Although the route had had a lot of investment recently in that particular area, there wasn’t a lot in terms of signposts, Canon Rhodes said; so he walked further than he needed to that day. “Also, one leg fell down a little hole, and it jarred my legs. Then my knees swelled up that night, and I thought I wasn’t going to be able to continue. But, fortunately, my wife’s a doctor; so, with some ice and various other things, it was OK the next day.” Finishing the challenge, Canon Rhodes felt “relief, exultation, really tired, and a great sense of achievement”. Following tradition, he carried a pebble from St Bees-Ennerdale Bridge, and threw it into the sea at Robin Hood’s Bay, which was quite emotional, he said.

Canon Rhodes celebrated with a shandy at Wainwright's Bar, near the end of the route, where he signed the book to mark the completion of the walk. With "rather painful shins and some blisters", he returned to St John's on the following Sunday to take the morning service. The church's building group identified several challenges for Canon Rhodes to partake in, but decided on the Coast to Coast challenge, "because our spire is 192 feet tall and the walk is 192 miles long: it sort of fits together quite well." The church's spire was built in 1879, using limestone and sandstone, but the limestone is causing it to shatter on the inside, requiring repairs. Canon Rhodes has already exceeded his fund-raising target of £5000, and has raised a total of £15,117 towards the spire project. "People have been amazingly generous, both within the church and in wider circles," he said.

Supposing him to be the Gardener...

He listed gardening as one of his hobbies, but the green-fingered prowess of the previous Bishop of St Albans, Dr Alan Smith, so impressed an onlooker that he was given the chance to turn it into a full-time job. Dr Smith told his Diocesan Synod that, while visiting an aunt's house, he decided to sort out her somewhat messy garden.

He had spent the morning gardening, and while he was working, noticed a woman walking past a couple of times and watching his progress. Then the same woman's head popped up over the wall and said: "Excuse me, but I'm looking for a gardener." He said: "So I suddenly feel my prospects are looking up, but I said to her, Thank you, it's very kind of you, but actually this isn't my full-time job. I have a full-time job."

"She says: 'Are you sure you can't fit it in?'" "I said: 'No, I'm sorry?'" "And she said: 'What do you do?'" "I looked up, and said: 'Well, actually I'm the Bishop of St Albans'." "She looked at me in total disbelief, and said: 'Oh yes, and I'm the Queen of Sheba.'"

Gardening

According to a recent study conducted by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and two universities, people who garden every day have well-being scores 6.6 per cent higher, and stress levels 4.2 per cent lower than those who do not garden at all. Dr Lauriane Chalmin-Pui, RHS well-being fellow and lead author says, "The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the more frequently you garden, the greater the health benefits. "In fact, gardening every day has the same positive impact on your well-being as undertaking regular, vigorous exercise like cycling or running.

WELL DONE COVENTRY !



In April, Coventry City F.C won promotion back to the Premiership after 25 years. As in 1987, when they won the FA Cup, the city went wild with delight. It was said that a quarter of a million people were out on the streets to celebrate.

Coventry was awash with sky-blue. Back in 1987, the newly-hung cathedral bells, not yet formally dedicated, rang out for the first time to celebrate.

Now, thirty nine years later, Coventry is once again walking tall. Also, the city was named UK Capital of Culture 2021. It deserved the honour.

I can remember visiting Coventry in 1962, when it was celebrating the golden jubilee of the consecration of their "new" cathedral. I can vividly recall my impressions on that late spring day, most of all the Graham Sutherland's huge tapestry of *Christ in Glory* and John Piper's marvellous coloured glass in the baptistry. I was both stirred and moved by that great building. It seemed to speak beyond itself to something bigger and more expansive than I think I'd ever known. Looking back, I guess it was one of my early spiritual experiences, an intimation of resurrection.

On that day, the Head Verger who was showing us 'his' cathedral, walked us up the nave towards the Graham Sutherland's tapestry. Then he turned us round to reveal the array of colour in the aisle windows hidden on the eastward journey; then drew our eyes westwards towards the Hutton glass screen, and beyond that, to the ruins. This, he said, is how Christ on the tapestry sees the world: not as lost in pain and conflict, but transfigured by the reconciliation grace brings. He drew our attention to the figure of the human being held between Christ's feet. That figure, he said, is also looking out to the world, and is seeing it as the risen Jesus sees it. This diminutive figure represents us. If we see the world in this new way, the task of reconciliation becomes possible, and this has been demonstrated in the history of Coventry Cathedral.

You go into this wonderful building, surely one of the great achievements of 20th century architecture, and you are strangely stilled and excited at the same time. The Cathedral puts you in your place, like the human figure between the feet of Christ, which is a safe, restful place to be. Then it lifts your vision and stimulates you to reflect before God on who you are, and who you might become. It is both moving and transformative. As the verger said, it helps you see in new ways.

Coventry is a city of paradoxes. There is something homely and familiar about its medieval streets, so Warwickshire, so quintessentially England.

Yet the pre-war planners (quoting Tennyson's "the old order changeth, giving place to new") had already laid waste to Butchers' Row, what we would now regard as a priceless piece of heritage townscape. What they didn't destroy, the Luftwaffe made swift work of, on that terrible night of bombing on November 14th 1940, codenamed "Operation Moonlight Sonata". What does it do to a city to have been reduced to ashes, to be the only one in Britain whose cathedral was destroyed by enemy action?

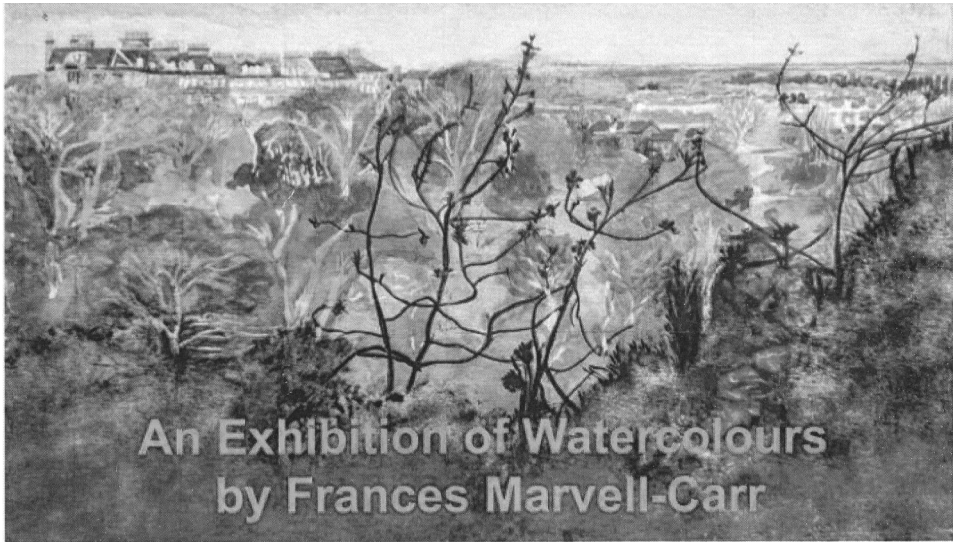
After the war, a brave new city arose like a phoenix. Ancient and modern stood inextricably bound together in both the way the city was re-engineered, and in the experience of its citizens. So much was symbolised by the old and new cathedrals standing side by side, or rather, in these two physical expressions of one single Cathedral. With the exception of the Cathedral, the architecture of the 1950s and 60s has not fared as well as what survives of the middle ages. Perhaps Coventry was rebuilt in too much of a hurry. These days the city is not the gleaming emblem of modernity it once was. Its industries experienced a steep decline from the late 1970s, when unemployment was high and the future of its manufacturing industries looked bleak.

Yet somehow, the spirit of Coventrians was not broken by this turnabout in its fortunes. Yes, they could be good at looking west to us in Birmingham and envying the seemingly unstoppable success of their near neighbour.

I could write about how Coventry has become a symbol of international reconciliation and peace-making that has evoked the admiration of people across the world.

But most of all, it's the people who make the place. When it was announced that Coventry had won their bid to be City of Culture, I was touched to hear ordinary Coventry people speak about their city and why they loved it.

Peter Stokes



**An Exhibition of Watercolours
by Frances Marvell-Carr**

**Birmingham Midland Institute, Art Gallery, B3 3BS
Monday 2nd March to Saturday 11th April 2026**

Frances has been painting Watercolours since 1991. She has also been diverse in her creative pursuits. Her original background in Textile Design led her to industry in the 1980s, when she also developed her ideas in Constructed Wall Hangings, while working full-time (as a Commercial Designer) for Courtaulds PLC.

After a period in India (95-97), she completed a Diploma in Painting at Visva Bharati University in West Bengal. Although she continued to paint, she began developing ideas into Papercuts whilst in India and continued with this until 2005.

Since 2014, Frances has now re-charged her artistic pursuits back into the medium of Watercolour Painting which she is most familiar with. This exhibition at the BMI, includes her most recent paintings done since 2020. 'GARDEN GROVE', was one of her first Watercolour paintings, which was selected to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Hanging Committee in 1991.

25% of all purchases were be donated to a Birmingham charity for homeless people, SIFA Fireside.

The Latest Endeavours of the Church Flower Group

I am sure that many of you are aware that St Peters, Harborne are having a Flower Festival in June and the St. Faith and St. Laurence Church Flower Group has been invited to take part in the event. St. Peters are raising funds to do some urgent repairs to their tower, and they are asking all churches in the area to help by creating arrangements that represent a tower.

Most of the St. Faith and St. Laurence Church Flower Group are very keen to take part, and we have formed a Flower Festival Sub-Group to plan and create our design. The title of our piece is "Christ is our Tower of Strength", an abstract rather than literal piece. We are well underway with our plans.

Most of our largely new team have never taken part in a Flower Festival before, and we are all very excited to be taking part in this one. It will also be very special at the same time to be helping one of our neighbouring churches.

The Flower Festival at St Peters will only be running for 4 days from 25-28 June and I expect that most of the flowers we use should still be reasonably fresh at the end of the festival. Therefore, when the festival is over and we take down the display, we are hoping to recreate our "tower of strength" at St. Faith and St. Laurence. If that's not possible, we may be able to use the remaining viable flowers to place some additional arrangements around our church for the enjoyment of the congregation. **St. Faith and St. Laurence Church Flower Group**



The Starfish Story

One day, an old man was walking on the beach after a storm, which had washed hundreds of starfish onto the shore, when he noticed a young boy who was picking up starfish and throwing them back into the ocean.

The old man asked the boy, "What are you doing?" The boy replied, "Putting starfish back in the ocean so they don't die."

The old man said, "There are hundreds of starfish. You can't possibly make a difference." The boy placed another starfish in the ocean, smiled, and said, "I made a difference for that one."

Adapted from Loren Eiseley's "The Star Thrower"

Thank you for making a difference!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has" *Margaret Mead*

"Do your little bit of good where you are. It's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world" *Desmond Tutu*

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." *Mother Teresa*

Submitted by Dee Coyne

Some tips for our next vicar.

The only people who ring before 9 o'clock in the morning are undertakers, or bishops.

In a PCC Meeting, even those you know well, will say stuff that you wouldn't believe.

Falling asleep during a clergy quiet day isn't a sin, but it's embarrassing if you dribble.

Everything stops in September. You thought that's when it started, but that's when those of your congregation who are retired go on cruises.

Annual Parochial Church Meetings would be enlivened if people could be voted off rather than on. But you might be the first.

Look carefully at the retired clergy-people around you. Find a happy one, and ask them how they did it. Start planning to do the same. You could be retired a long time.

Being on the committee of another organisation is a good way of realising that perhaps the PCC isn't so bad after all. Or recognising that, actually, it is. The contents of the flower cupboard are a mystery, one not to be explored without prayer and fasting. Don't mess with the flower arrangers.

Voicemails are a good idea, but you do need to listen to them.

Gardening is only therapeutic when your parishioners can't see you doing it. When they do, they think you're taking too much time off.

If you have the NRSV on your smart phone, you can update your Facebook profile during worship and pretend you're reading the Bible.

By all means type out emails last thing at night, just don't send them until the next morning.

There should be a misprint in every order of service. Only God is perfect.

You drink more Communion wine than anyone else. You owe it to yourself to make sure it is decent.

Other people's Pet Services look like such a good idea, don't they? But yours will be the one where the snake escapes.

Wars have been fought over the right way to announce a hymn.

You will receive your first complaint about a service you thought was brilliant within ten minutes of arriving home.

There is a 'right' tune for every hymn. It's just rarely the one you chose.

Never smile at the choir. (Singing Group) It only encourages them.

Vicar, rector, parson, or priest.

The term “vicar” comes from the Latin vicarius, meaning “substitute” or “deputy”. One of the Pope’s titles is Vicarius Christi, meaning “Christ’s representative on earth”.

In the Church of England, a vicar was an ordinary parish priest, differentiated from a rector (from the Latin for “teacher”) by the degree of remuneration they were entitled to receive. A rector received both the greater and lesser tithes (from the Old English teoþa meaning “tenth”), whereas the vicar took only the lesser share, the greater going to the lay holder, or patron, of the parish.

The term “parson” was used from the late 12th century and was probably an abbreviation of persona ecclesiae, “person of the church”. “Priest” is a much older term and comes originally from the Greek term presbytes, meaning “age” or “seniority”. This derived from presbys for “old” and which may originally have meant “one who leads the cattle”, from the word bous, meaning ox.

Some more unusual vicars

Poetic vicar

The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924) wrote the hymn *Onward Christian Soldiers*, collected folk songs into books and wrote a book about werewolves. He also wrote the biography of an eccentric Cornish vicar named Robert Hawker (1803-1875). Hawker created the Harvest Festival service in 1843 and went through a phase of eating only clotted cream.

Hawker also built a tiny hut from driftwood (now the smallest property owned by the National Trust) where he composed poems and songs, including the unofficial Cornish national anthem, *The Song of the Western Men*. His regular outfit was a pink fez and yellow poncho. When he died in 1875, everyone at his funeral wore purple instead of black at his request.

Argumentative vicar

A more recent Cornish eccentric, Rev F. W. Densham, drove out his congregation at Warleggan church by continually picking quarrels with them. The final straw came when he painted the inside of his ancient church with garish red and blue stripes.

Deprived of a congregation, Densham filled his church with cardboard cut-outs to represent them and continued to take services. He also built an 8ft-high, barbed-wire fence around the rectory to keep out intruders. Densham died in 1953, having existed for many years on nettles and porridge.

Sporty vicar

The Reverend John (“Jack”) Russell (1795-1883) bred the high-spirited terrier that shares his name. Known as the Sporting Parson, he enjoyed hunting and dog breeding. While a student at Oxford he noticed the milkman’s dog: a little white terrier with dark spots over her eyes, ears and at the tip of her tail. He bought the dog, which he named Trump, and bred terriers designed to dig foxes out of their earths.

The name “Jack Russell terrier” was only adopted after his death, and was used to tell the difference between little working terriers and bigger non-working fox terriers that performed at the Kennel Club.

Russell was a founding member of the Kennel Club, but never registered his dogs there: “True terriers [my dogs] were, but differing from the present show dogs as the wild eglantine differs from a garden rose.”

Comic vicar

Dan Dare, the comic-strip hero, started life as a vicar – Chaplain Dan Dare of the Interplanet Patrol, complete with dog-collar. From 1950 to 1969, Dan Dare was the lead strip in the *Eagle*, the brainchild of an Anglican priest and former RAF chaplain, Reverend Marcus Morris (1915-1989), and a young graphic illustrator, Frank Hampson (1918-1985).

It was only the publisher Hulton’s 11th-hour intervention that spared the children of Britain their first comic strip about a priest. The company felt that Dan Dare – Pilot of the Future was a more commercial proposition, and Hampson and Morris eventually agreed.

Only in jest of course!



A vicar was leaving his parish and was saying farewell to his congregation at the church door. He shook the hand of a man as he walked out, who said to him, “Your successor won’t be as good as you.” “Nonsense”, said the vicar in a flattered tone. “No, really”, said the man, “I’ve been here under five different vicars, and each new one has been worst than the last.”

Some Holy Days in June

June 9 - Columba of Iona

Born in Ireland in about the year 521, Columba was trained as a monk by St Finnian and then founded several monasteries himself, including probably that of Kells, before leaving Ireland to settle on Iona, off the coast of Scotland.

He was accompanied by twelve companions and the number grew as the monastic life became more established and well-known. Columba seems to have been an austere and, at times, harsh man who reputedly mellowed with age. He was concerned with building up both the monastery and its life and of enabling them to be instruments of mission in a heathen land. He converted kings and built churches, Iona becoming a starting point for the expansion of Christianity throughout Scotland. In the last four years of his life, when his health had failed, he spent the time transcribing books of the gospels for them to be taken out and used. He died on this day in the year 597.

11 June - Barnabas the Apostle

Though not named among the twelve apostles of the evangelists, Barnabas emerges in the Acts of the Apostles as one of the most significant of their number. He sold his estate and gave the proceeds to the Church, since all things were to be held in common, and clearly became a leader. He is described as a Levite from Cyprus so, like his friend Paul, was from the Greek world rather than that of Palestine, and he introduced Paul to the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem. He was sent to Antioch apparently to guide the Christians there in their relations with non-Jewish converts, promoting the concept of all being one in Christ. He broke with Paul to go to Cyprus and tradition has it that he was martyred there in the year 61.

22 June - Alban, First Martyr of Britain

Alban was a soldier in the Roman city of Verulamium (now St Albans in Hertfordshire) who gave shelter to a Christian priest fleeing from persecution, hiding him in his house for several days. Greatly influenced by his devotion to prayer, Alban received instruction from the priest and was converted. When the priest's hiding-place was discovered, Alban dressed himself in the priest's cloak and was arrested in his place. Tortured by the Roman authorities, Alban refused to renounce his faith. He was beheaded on this day, probably in the year 250, and so became the first British martyr. His shrine stands today as a place of pilgrimage in the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban.

Ponder on these

1. If you take an Oriental person and spin him around several times, does he become disorientated?
2. If people from Poland are called Poles, why aren't people from Holland called Holes?
3. If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?
4. Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?
5. When cheese gets its picture taken, what does it say?
6. Why is a person who plays the piano called a pianist but a person who drives a racing car not called a racist?
7. Why are a 'wise man' and a 'wise guy' opposites?
8. Why do 'overlook' and 'oversee' mean opposite things?
9. Why isn't the number 11 pronounced tenty one?
10. If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked, and dry cleaners depressed?
11. What hair colour do they put on the driver's licenses of bald men?
12. I thought about how mothers feed their babies with tiny little spoons and forks so I wondered what do Chinese mothers use? Toothpicks?
13. Why do they put pictures of criminals up in the Post Office? What are we supposed to do, write to them? Why don't they just put their pictures on the postage stamps so the postmen can look for them while they deliver the post?
14. No one ever says, "It's only a game" when their team is winning.
15. Ever wonder about those people who spend more than £1 apiece on those little bottles of Evian water? Try spelling Evian backwards: NAIVE

Food for Thought

People want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the centre of attention.

"Somebody has said that there are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning."

"I felt my heart strangely warmed"

John Wesley was once asked how he managed to attract the crowds when he was preaching. He replied, "I set myself on fire with the Gospel and the people come to see me burn."

The anniversary of John's conversion in 1738 was on May 24th, which this year was Pentecost Sunday.

In a Manner of Speaking

A vicar once said to the actor David Garrick, 'Why is it that I, who speak great truths, deliver them to a half-empty church once a week, while you who speak merely fiction can fill a theatre every night?' Garrick replied, 'Because you speak truth as though it were fiction; whereas I speak fiction as if it were the truth'.

And finally.....A clever person is someone who can lay a foundation with the bricks other people have thrown.

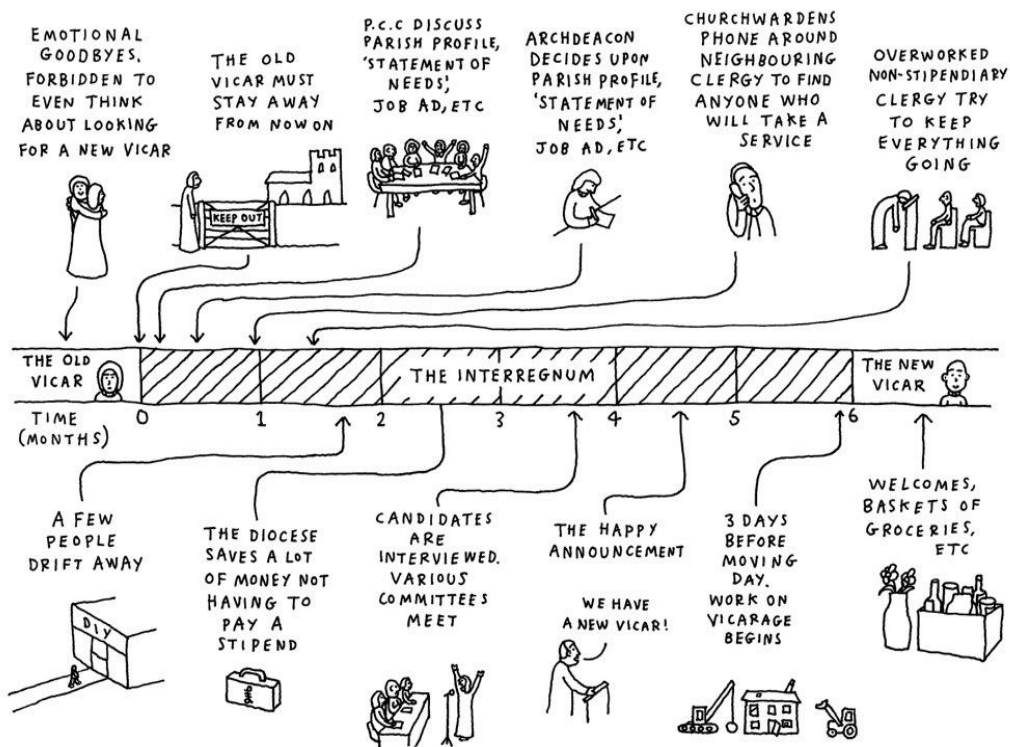
Blessed are those who can give without remembering, and take without forgetting.

Christians should always ensure they keep the faith – but not from others.

During my search for life I considered atheism, but there weren't enough holidays.

God's biggest problem with labourers in His vineyard is absenteeism.

THE INTERREGNUM



Thanks to Dave Walker

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT FAITH AND SAINT LAURENCE
HARBORNE B17 8RD**

At the junction of Balden and Croftdown Road

Registered Charity Number 1134152

SERVICES

SUNDAY 8am HOLY COMMUNION 2nd, 4th and 5th SUNDAYS

10am FAMILY COMMUNION 1st, 3rd and 5th SUNDAYS

SERVICE OF THE WORD 2nd and 4th SUNDAYS

6.30pm EVENSONG and SERMON

1st, 3rd and 5th SUNDAYS

6.30pm HOLY COMMUNION 4th SUNDAY

MORNING PRAYER: 8.30am MONDAYS, TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS-IN LADY CHAPEL

WEDNESDAYS:11am HOLY COMMUNION-IN LADY CHAPEL

CHURCH CONTACT

Mobile: Email: ssfaithlaurence@gmail.com

MINISTRY TEAM

Priest- in-Charge: REVD. DAVID PARKER

Mobile: 07532 338961

Email:davidparker124@btinternet.com

Licensed Reader: SALLY GRIFFITHS Ed.D., M.Ed.

Mobile: 07940 758396

E-mail: sallyegriff@gmail.com

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH:

Churchwardens: CAROLINE MOSLEY Email: caromosley1@gmail.com

Mobile: 07887552123

DAVID GLANVILL Email: davidglanvill@yahoo.co.uk Mobile: 07710 863659

P.C.C. Secretary: HELEN SETCHELL

Email: ssfaithlaurence@gmail.com

P.C.C. Treasurer: LOLETA ATKINSON

471 1248

Electoral Roll:

DEE COYNE

Email: deeb15@hotmail.co.uk

Director of Music: MARK LAWRENCE

Mobile: 07752 900456

Bell Ringers Leader: CORINNE TREACY

Mobile: 07752640151

Church Hall Bookings: Please contact Judith Bennett 07983400846

Email: Judith.e.bennett48@gmail.com

Church Hall may be contacted in an emergency on: 428 2406

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Editor: Peter Stokes Mobile: 07980346350

E-mail: peterstokes@talk21.com

Advertising Manager: Corinne Treacy Mobile: 07752640151

Email: corinnetreacy@gmail.com

PARISH WEBSITE:- www.saintfaithandsaintlaurence.co.uk