





St. Gabriel

The Parish of The Good Shepherd,



Ashton-under-Lyne



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

August 2016
Price 50p

Editorial

The migration of refugees across Europe is consistently headline news, in all forms of media. The prevailing story seems to be that the UK cannot accept any more refugees. That to do so would be a drain on our economy. That we can't afford - economically or politically - to welcome more people. If this is the story that is given the most column inches, that gets told most loudly, that is repeated without question, then this is the story that becomes the prevailing consciousness. So starting this July, Christian Aid want us to tell a different story (see page 8). They want us to communicate a story that celebrates the contributions that refugees make to our society, that demonstrates the hospitality of those who offer a welcome. That upholds those who have been downtrodden. As Revd Roger Farnworth says in his article, "Just as Jesus challenges racism and hatred, so we as Christians need to challenge unacceptable views and start to change the narrative."

If you would like to submit an article, we would love to hear from you!!

The views expressed in articles in the magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.

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The Parish Prayer



Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

www.goodshepherdashton.co.uk

Registered Charity Number 1134826

The Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Since 23rd June, this country has been going through turbulent times. It is an emotional time for many. If we are to find a good future for our country, we need to spend some time focussing on healing, we need to take time out. Those grieving need to have space to do so, those rejoicing need to be allowed to do just that – but the future that we need to keep eyes fixed on is one where we can be reunited. This is not going to be easy – neither campaign prior to the referendum was particularly honourable – and some unpleasant stuff was said on both sides, so there is work to be done by us all.

In July we heard, once again in our churches, the story Jesus tells of a particular Samaritan. The Jews were strongly prejudiced against the Samaritans. The Samaritans were a mixed race - their ancestors were Jews who had remained in Palestine at the time of the exile to Babylon, and who had intermarried with other people groups who had been settled in the area as part of the Babylonian policy of ethnic cleansing. There had been a number of disputes between Jews and Samaritans down the years. We have a record of one in the book of Nehemiah were Sanballat opposes the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

However, by the time of Jesus, there were no grounds for prejudice. Jews and Samaritans were just two different people groups, sharing similar DNA and similar religious practices, living beside each

other. But Jews hated Samaritans, saw them as unclean, and



would have nothing to do with them. It is important to understand this if we are to understand what people would have heard as Jesus told the story in the Gospel of Luke.

I wonder how this parable might have gone if Jesus had told it in Oldham or Ashton. In the early years of this century we heard quite a lot about perceived 'nogo' areas in Glodwick and elsewhere. We've even heard of white people walking round the outskirts of an area, so as to avoid crossing Asian territory. Election results have shown a startling support for the more extreme right wing parties, even in Tameside.

If Jesus has told this story in the white communities of central Oldham or to members of the EDL, who might his Good Samaritan have been? Perhaps a knife carrying Asian youth. Or if Jesus spoke in the midst of the Asian community, the Good Samaritan may well have been an over-weight skinhead with union-jack tattoos who belongs to the EDL. In Jewish culture the words 'Good' and 'Samaritan' just did not belong together. And in some of our communities it is nigh impossible for people in one area to think well of those in another.

Jesus challenges prejudice and hatred by making the perceived enemy, the saviour in the story. ... You might not know, but 8 to 10 years ago St. James' Church was very close to being burnt down. Someone set a bin fire against the wall of the vestry. Who was it that dealt with the problem? It was a local Asian Muslim lad who with his bare hands dragged the bin away from the vestry wall. And you know what he said to me. 'Someone is trying to burn down my church!'

Even if we think there is little of overt racism in our neighbourhood, or among us, actually, we all need to acknowledge our own personal prejudices. It is so easy, to think in terms of them and us, so easy to harbour negative thoughts about those we perceive as different from us. And we do make those comparisons, and so often when we make them, we compare our best with the other's worst.

We have been encountering these issues for real in recent weeks. Since the Brexit vote, hate crime and religiously motivated crime has risen five-fold (So the Sun tells us:

https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/1372072/hate-crime-reports-of-abuse-up-500-percent-since-brexit-official-figures-show). It is as though a vote to leave the EU has given many an excuse to let rip with unacceptable views. All we have actually done, whatever our motivations, is voted to leave the EU. We remain a part of a global community, we continue to need those who have moved to live in this

country over many years whatever their origin. If we could trace our ancestry back we would find that we originate from outside this island – all of us do. 10,000 years ago at the end of the last ice-age there was no one living here. We are all immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, all of us.

In a speech in the House of Lords, Archbishop, Justin Welby recently reminded us that it is unacceptable to refuse to guarantee the rights of EU nationals living in Britain, speaking of the "unacceptability of treating people like bargaining chips". He spoke of the tenor of the referendum debate creating "cracks in the thin crust of the politeness and tolerance of our society, through which... we have seen an out-welling of poison and hatred."

Just as Jesus challenges racism and hatred, so we as Christians need to challenge unacceptable views and start to change the narrative. Whether it be about EU nationals resident in the UK, or refugees and asylum seekers, we need to heed Jesus' challenge to be those who welcome and accept the stranger. We need to be those who see the stranger as our 'neighbour'. We also need to be storytellers, like Jesus, who allow other people's stories to be heard. Whether it be stories of the value of EU nationals in our country, or of their industrious contribution to our economy. Or stories that celebrate the contribution of refugees and asylum seekers.

These groups are often portrayed negatively in our media. It is this negative narrative that is accepted by many in our country. Let's commit ourselves to be those tell the stories of the life-affirming contributions made by EU nationals, and refuges and asylum seekers, and how historically immigration has enhanced our

society. Let's also tell the good stories of welcome offered by communities in our own town an neighbourhood. Let's be good neighbours.

Please also read Christian Aid's short article later in this magazine to hear about what we might choose to do.

Ask, Seek and Knock

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)

Please choose one focus for each week of the month or pray for all of the following issues throughout the month, as you prefer. There is a prayer at the end to draw it all together if you're unsure how to start or finish your prayers.

This month:

- Please pray for our schools, the staff and children over this summer period. Pray for them to be safe, rested and ready to return in September. Pray for our year 6 children leaving to go to high school.
- Please pray for those countries around the world that are affected by terrorist outrages. Pray for those who have lost somebody close to them. Pray for God's peace to descend on our world.
- Please pray for our clergy team at this time of transition. For Rob and Louisa as they plan for their move to the North East, for Pat to regain full health, for Rachel on her road to recovery after radiotherapy, for Roger as he contemplates his knee operation over the summer and George as he works through what God has for him as he comes to the end of his curacy.
- Please pray for those in our community that are ill or in pain. Pray also
 for those carers, doctors and nurses who work so diligently in our
 hospitals, care homes and rehabilitation centres. Pray for God's blessing
 to be on them.

Lord, we offer you our prayers. Hear us as we bring our concerns to you and help us to place them into your hands in confidence that you will hear us.

Amen

News from St James CofE School

Year 4 exhibit at the RHS Flower Show - Tatton Park 2016

Preparation for Tatton started many months ago. The children from Class 4, at St James' Church of England Primary School - Ashton, have worked hard planning and creating their garden. They have grown plants from seeds, and nurtured their plants ready for the challenge they faced.



As a class, the children decided that the theme of the garden should be based on 'The Jungle Book'. With the back-drop for the lush plants and water feature, King Louis' temple.



AArtist, Adrian Holt, visited St James' to work with the children of Class 4 in the planning and making of 3-D sculptures for their garden. In keeping with the theme of the garden, children made coil pots and lizards from clay, and pebble bugs.

The result is amazing! The children from Year 4 have shown commitment to the task and real enthusiasm. St James' Primary School is proud of their entry to this year's Tatton Flower Show; it is a well worth a visit.



What's happening?

St. Michael's Open Days

St. Michael's is open every Thursday from 10.30am to 3.00pm The Eucharist will take place as usual at 11.00am on Thursdays Café Church
at Costa Coffee,
Ashton
3pm - 4pm
Sunday 21st August



Café Church at St James' Church

There is no St James' Café Church during August

Friends of Ashton Parish Church

Heritage Open Days

Friday September 9th and Saturday September 10th

St Michael's Church will be open on both days between 10-00am and 4-00pm with Guided Tours at 10-30am and 2-00pm on both days There will be the usual attractions, souvenirs, refreshments and children's corner.

On Saturday there will be an Organ Recital at 12-15pm



St James' Church

Saturday 13th August 12noon - 3.00pm

Lots of stalls, games and prizes plus refreshments! Join us for an afternoon of fun - all welcome.



'When did we see you a stranger and welcomed you...? Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Matthew 25:38 - 40

Help Us Change the Story

The stories we hear and the stories we tell are important. They help us shape our thoughts, form our opinions and set the agenda.

The UK has a proud history of supporting refugees. In the 1930s the Kindertransport saved the lives of Jewish children from Germany. In the 1970s the UK welcomed Ugandan Asians fleeing Idi Amin's regime, and in the 1990s we opened our doors to Kosovan refugees.

Today, more than 65 million people are displaced globally. Forced from their homes by violence, fear, desperation, or poverty, each person is made in God's image, and is deserving of safety, freedom and hope. In a society divided over immigration, our message of shared humanity is more important than ever.

Yet, refugees are often portrayed negatively in the media. We are told that they are drain on our economy and that we should be fearful about the impact of immigration on our communities. We hear far less about the positive contributions that refugees make, how historically refugees have enhanced our society, and about the willingness of local people to make refugees welcome.

Here in the UK, faith communities are at the heart of a different story, galvanising local support to find homes for people forced from their countries by violence and conflict and now languishing in desperate situations.

As one of the world's richest countries, the UK has a legal and moral responsibility to protect those fleeing from violence. But so far, the response of our government has not matched the scale of the crisis, nor the compassion of those who have already opened their homes to refugees. Instead, poor countries - like Lebanon and Iraq - are hosting 86% of the world's refugees.

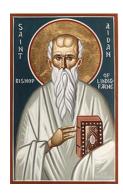
We at Christian Aid believe that everybody deserves a safe place to call home, and we stand for a UK that refuses to turn a blind eye to the suffering of people seeking sanctuary.

We are urging that the UK government must commit to host at least double the number of refugees it has currently promised, and do more to ensure safe and legal passage for those escaping violence to travel to and through Europe.

On 19 September 2016 President Obama will host a high-level meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants, with the aim of bringing countries together behind a more humane and coordinated approach.

Before then, we need to change the story.

Find out more at www.christianaid.org.uk/changethestory and urge your local newspaper to Change The Story about refugees.



Saint Aidan - the man who brought Christianity to England

31st August is the feast of St Aidan, who brought Christianity to northern England. He is a

strong contender for the title of the first English bishop. Not that honours meant a great deal to this austere but captivating character. In 635 he came to Northumbria at the invitation of the local ruler, Oswald. Oswald had spent several years of his childhood on Iona, and when he succeeded to the throne of his northern kingdom he was shrewd enough to realise that the Christian faith would be an ideal unifying force to pacify rival tribes of warlords.

Oswald's invitation was not immediately successful. The first missionary from Iona returned in despair, claiming that the barbarity of the Northumbrians made them unconvertible. But as Aidan listened, he felt the unmistakable call of God to try again. "Perhaps you were too harsh on them," he found himself suggesting to the travel-stained missionary. Shortly afterwards, Aidan found himself at the head of a party of brothers heading for

Northumbria. He was never to see his beloved Iona again.

The monks made the long journey to Northumbria on foot, singing psalms as they went. Their need to ward off the powers of evil with prayer was genuine, for these were dangerous times to travel through remote country unarmed. They arrived safely at Oswald's castle in Bamburgh, where he offered them lavish hospitality and assumed that they would found their community there.

However, the brothers realised that to live under the king's protection would make it difficult to avoid the world's temptations and establish a rapport with the local people. They saw the tidal island of Lindisfarne on the horizon and chose it as their base. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Aidan was much loved as a teacher and evangelist; though stern in his own self-discipline, he was prepared to travel to the most inaccessible villages, where he cared for the local people with compassion and gentleness. In time his influence grew and noble people joined the stream of visitors to Lindisfarne.

After Oswald's death in 642, his

brother Oswin succeeded him as king. Oswin was concerned about Aidan's habit of walking everywhere. The saint was ageing rapidly, his body weakened by years of harsh fasting and exposure to the elements. Oswin wondered what would happen to him one day on the road, and also he felt that such a lowly means of travel was not appropriate for a bishop. So he gave Aidan one of his finest horses, complete with a beautifully worked saddle and bridle.

Aidan did not feel able to risk offending the king by spurning his generosity, but he rode out of the palace with a heavy heart. He knew that people would relate to him differently now that he had the trappings of affluence, and that it would be dangerous to stop and rest with such valuable belongings beside him.

The king had intended to give him comfort, but his gesture had had the opposite effect. Aidan had learnt that possessions, and the need to protect them, make it more difficult to follow God with an undivided heart. The story goes that he gave the horse, complete

with saddle, to the first beggar he met outside the palace gates.

A more pragmatic Christian might have reasoned that keeping on the right side of Oswin would lead to opportunities that were too valuable to risk. Indeed, the king was angry when he heard what Aidan had done. "That horse was fit for a king, not for some vagabond," he protested. "I could have found you an old nag if you wanted to give it away." Aidan's reply was simply, "What do you think, O King? Is the son of a mare worth more in your eyes than that Son of God?"

There was an awkward silence; then the King removed his sword, knelt at Aidan's feet and asked his forgiveness. When he returned to the banqueting table, it was with a beaming smile. Sadly, he too was to perish in battle shortly afterwards; these were violent times. Yet Oswin, whose culture demanded that he should appear all-powerful in the eyes of his followers, had been publicly humbled by the integrity of a simple monk who had challenged his values.

Yum yum

A notice outside Chichester Cathedral advertised lunchtime concerts with the encouragement that: "Sandwiches may be eaten." Someone had scribbled underneath: "So if you are a sandwich, don't come!"

Happy Birthday to Mothers' Union!

This month (August) will see the world's largest lay-Christian membership charity, Mothers' Union, mark 140 years of faithful outreach to families of all faiths and none.

Since 1876, when Mary Sumner first brought together parents in her own parish to build their confidence in bringing up their children in the Christian faith, the MU has grown to an organisation of over four million women – and men – in over 80 countries of the world.

Why celebrate 140th, rather than wait for 150th? In the Old Testament of the Bible, in the first book of Samuel, there is the story of Samuel marking an unlooked for victory against the mighty Philistines by erecting a stone between Mizpah and Shen, naming it "Ebenezer" meaning "stone of help" as a permanent reminder of the leading and guidance of God "Thus far has the Lord helped us".

Over the past 140 years, Mothers' Union has faced, and will continue to face, many challenges. Family life is under increasing pressure and the call on MU's resources is higher than ever. But the MU can look at how it is meeting these challenges and say, like Samuel,

Mothers IN ON

"Thus far has the Lord helped us." The same chapter in Samuel recounts how, throughout Samuel's lifetime, the Lord helped him and Israel meet the challenges they faced. As the MU marks its 140th year, the future is very much on its mind. And so this summer's celebrations are not only about celebrating how God has led and blessed the MU so far, but also how He is leading in future ministry, guiding as the MU seeks to discern the needs in our communities that are necessary for stability for both families and society as a whole.

During 2016 over 500,000 people will benefit from Mothers' Union's support for family life. Many more will know the support of its membership without any tally being taken – because in their daily lives MU members support families in prayer, in voicing their support for policy changes that benefit families and in their practical support.

There has never been a more challenging, or more exciting time to be part of Mothers' Union. Find out more from your local Mothers' Union or by ringing 020 7227 0620 or email

communications@mothersunion.org

As I bow in the quiet room I have made in my heart,

O Lord, let the hush of thy presence fall upon me.

Leslie Weatherhead

Church of England releases new Ministry Statistics

The Church of England has released new Ministry Statistics giving trends in ministry over the period between 2012 and 2015. The statistics show that total ordained ministry over the last four years has remained stable, with over 20,000 ordained people serving the church in various roles.

The number of stipendiary clergy has fallen from 8,300 to 8,000 between 2012 and 2015.

The proportion of stipendiary clergy who are women increased from 24% in 2012 to 27% in 2015. And 19% of senior staff in 2015 were women, up from 12% in 2012.

Nationally, 13% of parish clergy are aged under 40, while a quarter are 60 and over.

There was an increase in stipendiary clergy from Black and Minority Ethnic communities from 3% in 2012 to 3.4% in 2015.

In his commentary, the Church of England Director of Ministry, Julian Hubbard, writes: "While the number of stipendiary ordinations showed a welcome increase between 2012 and 2015, this is not sufficient to redress the gathering effect of clergy retirements predicted over the next ten years."

"The statistics on the age and ethnicity of clergy show that we still have some way to go to ensure that the whole cohort fully reflects the demographics of the wider community."

"The good news is that there is a growing readiness to meet these challenges."

Mike Eastwood, Director of Renewal and Reform, the Church of England's major response to falling church attendance, said: "These figures support what we have been saying about the need for renewal and reform in the Church of England."

"Renewal and Reform is about a message of hope, through changed lives and transformed communities, as people discover their vocation to love God and serve others."

What we desire our children to be, we must endeavour to be before them.

Andrew Combe

David Winter muses on the whole question of identity.

The Way I See It: WHO ARE WE?

All this talk about Europe and the post-referendum arguments about identity have left me, and probably many people, wondering just who I am. After all, this island is home to people of probably the most mixed provenance in human history.

Way back, we were Celts, until our ancestors were driven back into the mountains of Scotland and Wales. Then came the Romans, the Vikings, Angles and Saxons, some to do a bit of pillaging and others to make themselves at home. Then came 1066 and the French invasion, which changed our language for ever.

Over the ensuing centuries we had various refugees from religious persecution, Irish people in huge numbers when harvests failed, and then more recently people from the Commonwealth, starting with the recruitment of workers from the Caribbean in the nineteen-fifties and then those driven from their homes by Idi Amin in East Africa. And so it has gone on.

Yet here we are, quite clearly a nation, even if we don't all look or sound alike. We may feel at times that it would be nice if everyone was just like we are, but deep down we know how boring that would be. It's a nice quiet afternoon exercise to map out our own answers to the question 'Who am I?' What are the things that really make me who I am? I've done my list. I am, I suppose, first and foremost Christian. Then I'm British (English/Welsh), European (geography/culture), and a member of the wonderful, multi-coloured, argumentative, richly endowed but endlessly flawed human race.

In the words of the old Church of England catechism, which older readers may remember, the answer to the question 'Who are you?' is 'a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven'. Put it all together, and I'd settle for that.





When did television start? I bet you didn't know that it started on 22nd August 1932 when the British Broadcasting Corporation

introduced its first regular TV service in the London area. By the summer of 1949 television began to be available outside London and 1954 saw the first daily news bulletins and weather forecasts. Colour pictures arrived at the end of 1969.

Lots of people moan about what is on television and what a waste of time it is, but there are good things to say for it too. Without the news reports of famine in Africa would we have had Live Aid? And what about Comic Relief and Children in Need?

TV entertains and educates. It helps us to relax, and it can also help us to pray by showing us the world. We see the natural disasters of weather like tsunami and hurricanes. We see people hurt and made homeless by war. And we turn to God and ask Him to help those who suffer and we pray for them, remembering that we are God's hands here on earth.

EYE SEE YOU

All the answers to this Bible quiz are to do with eyes and seeing. Answers at the bottom of the page.

- 1. What is the name of the village where Jesus healed a blind man? (Luke, chapter 8)
- 2. What eye can a camel go through more easily than a rich man? (Matthew, chapter 19)
- 3. Joseph talks about his eyes and the eyes of which one of his brothers? (Genesis, chapter 45)
- 4. What did Moses see in the desert at Horeb? (Exodus, chapter 3)
- 5. Where did Jesus send the blind man to wash his eyes? (John, chapter 9)
- 6. What are the eyes like of the one who rides a white horse? (Revelation, chapter 19)

Why do beavers spend a fortune on the internet?

They never want to log off.



How do you stop the batteries in your Play Station running out?

Hide their trainers.

Answers: 1. Bethsaida 2. the eye of a needle 3. Benjamin 4. a burning bush 5. the pool of Siloam 6. like a flame of fire.

NEWS FROM POTTER'S VILLAGE





Right time, right person!

We have recently had inspections from the District Health Officer. They



would like to start using the PV patient figures in the national statistics.

This is good news, but it means a lot more registers for recording everything required. Within a few days of the District Health Officers visit, a lady called Ketty came to

PV looking for a job. She has qualifications in keeping health records and she appeared just when we needed her!

It is certainly proving to be a full time job but, like most other staff at PV, Ketty always finds time to multi-task when needed and cuddle a few little ones.

Hostel progress

As you may know from previous newsletters, one of our current projects is the completion of the top story of the Volunteer Hostel. The bottom floor was completed a while ago and is now the Nutrition Unit. We are really pleased that Alan Cook and his family have returned to Kisoro to work on the Hostel and manage the project.

We are incredibly grateful to them. The windows and ceilings are completed and work proceeds at a good pace.

He is also working on building the education/demonstration Kitchen for the Nutrition Unit (more info below). The Mothers are given demonstrations on how to cook for their malnourished children there will also be covered space for mothers to cook for themselves.

We are still actively raising funds for the Hostel project, if you are interested in supporting this project either as an individual, Church or group, please contact Ruth - pottersuk@gmail.com Thank you.

Parish Notices



Baptisms:

We give thanks with the families and friends of:

Kaitlyn Elaine Pollitt Arezoo Jalili Paris Mary Pollitt Masumeh (Mina) Alijany

Weddings:

We rejoice with the families of:

Ella Domsalla and Alan Weatherhead

Funerals:

We pray with the family and friends of:

Greta Garside

Margaret Collings



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United Parish Services during August

10.30am Sundays

31 st July	St Michael's Church
7 th August	St Peter's Church
14 th August	St James' Church
21 st August	Holy Trinity Church
28 th August	St Gabriel's Church

4.00pm Sundays

14 th August	St James on Sunday Afternoon
28 th August	St James on Sunday Afternoon

12.15pm Tuesdays

Throughout August there will be a Tuesday service at St Peter's

11am Thursdays

Throughout August there will be a Thursday Eucharist at St Michael's

Game rules

During the local football game, the coach asked one of his young players:
"Do you understand what cooperation is?" The little boy nodded yes. "Do you understand that what matters is winning together as a team?" The little boy nodded yes. "Okay," the coach continued, "do you also understand that when the referee makes a decision, you don't argue or curse or threaten to attack him, right?" Again, the boy nodded vigorously. "Good," said the coach. "Now go over there and explain all that to your mother."

Reward



A father of five children came home with a toy. "This is a reward for being good," he said. "Who is the most obedient one here? Who never talks back to Mum and does everything that Mum says to do?"

There were a few seconds of silence, and then all of the children said: "You play with it Daddy!"

CONTACT DETAILS

CLERGY: (*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (*Tues.)	
The Vicarage, Union Street, Ashton OL6 9NQ	330 2771
Revd Rachel Battershell, Team Vicar (*Mon)	
2a Hutton Avenue, Ashton OL6 6QY	292 3224
Revd Rob Fox, Minister in Secular Employment	
36 Norman Road, Stalybridge, SK15 1LY	338 8481
Revd George Reeves, Team Curate (*Fri)	

1 Windmill Lane, Denton M34 3RN

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THE PARISH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD:

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PCC Secretary:	Louisa Fox 36 Norman Road, Stalybridge	338 8481
Child Protection:	Julie Collins	
PCC Treasurer:		

Items for the Magazine:

Please give items for the next magazine to Revd Roger Farnworth by the 15th August for inclusion in the next Magazine - address and telephone number on page 18.





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330 2771