



July 2021

*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we
can bring you an Offshoot*

1871 - 2021

Welcome



Poynton Parish Church


St Martin's
Higher Poynton


St George's
Poynton

We've recently seen some lovely sunny days, and for sports fans there has been cricket, football, and now Wimbledon! Despite continued uncertainty regarding coronavirus restrictions we have been making plans for summer in the parish – worship, fellowship and fun. We believe that we should be a church for all ages – and there are great opportunities in the coming months to gather together across the generations, as well as some events more suited to children and teenagers.

There will be a change to our service pattern for August:

9.30am All-Age Service, particularly aimed at children and families (but open to all). This will have band led music, craft, interactive prayers and we'll be exploring some of Jesus' parable (with the help of some cartoons!).

11.15am Holy Communion service. This will usually have music led by members of our choir (however many the restrictions allow!), a sermon series from the Psalms (focussed on Psalm 103), and familiar liturgy.

There are a whole range of other events planned, including activities to children and youth, and opportunities to share food together. I'm particularly looking forward to gathering to sing our favourite hymns on the afternoon of 15th August on the field at St Martin's!

In my first year here I've missed out on many of the opportunities of 'normal' church life to get to know the congregations and the wider community – I'm looking forward to getting to know you better through the coming year, particularly through time to chat at some of the events we have planned.

August also sees us say goodbye to Joe Hadfield, our Youth Minister, who has been selected for ordination training. His last Sunday with us will be the 22 August; in the services that morning we'll have a chance to pray for him and his family as they begin this new chapter.

I do hope, if you are able, you might join in with some of the services and events planned for the coming months!

Yours in Christ,
Matthew



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

30th June 2021 Marianne Flint aged 86



Poynton Christian Aid Week 2021

A big thankyou to everyone who supported Christian Aid week this year, particularly to those who delivered the new delivery only envelopes . A total of £3,363 was donated which will become £3,889 once the gift aid is reclaimed. 63% of the total came from envelopes returned to either the Methodist or Baptist churches and the rest was donated through our Just Giving site.

The total is 45% of the average for the five years prior to the pandemic. Given that only two of the four churches felt able to participate in delivering envelopes, that we relied on the delivery only envelopes, and that many people have had less to give as a result of the pandemic this is really encouraging figure. The bottom line is that the Christian Aid now has nearly £4,000 more to support its work supporting the very poorest people in our world than it would have done without the collection. On behalf of them, a heartfelt thankyou to all of them.

The experience is also a strong indication that the new way of delivering envelopes is an effective way of encouraging giving. It will be good to build on this and work towards more widespread delivery of envelopes next year.

Richard Baker - Chair, Poynton Christian Aid Group

PS The Just Giving site will remain open for donations throughout the year:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/poynton-christian-aid>.

Summer 2021

AUGUST SERVICES

Sundays

9.30am - All-Age Service

Band led music, informal, craft activities, interactive.

Aimed at children and their families

11.15am - Communion Service

Choir led music, sermon series from Psalms.

Midweek

Wednesday 10am - Communion Service at St George's

Thursday 10am - Communion Service/Service of the Word at St Martin's

Specials

4th July afternoon- Families/Teens Social (St Martin's Field).

18th July evening- Matthew's Induction and Installation (St George's).

8th August evening- Pathfinders and Pulse BBQ.

15th August 4pm- 'Come and sing your favourite hymns' (and picnic!) (St Martin's Field).

22nd August 12.30pm - Picnic at Poynton Pool.

22nd August 3pm - Civic Service (St George's).

5th September 1pm - 'Back to Church BBQ' (St Martin's Field)

**For more information visit:
www.poyntonparishchurch.org/summer**



“Here today, gone tomorrow” ...

This phrase is certainly one I am feeling right now, as it seemed only yesterday my family and I arrived in Poynton on that summer of 2018 where the long-lived heatwave gave me a false idea of what the weather is normally like in this part of the UK, (I learnt for sure not long after when our house came millimetres away from being flooded).

But now I am on the verge of finishing my time here as Youth minister of St. George’s church, and will be going on to begin my training for Ordination in the Church of England.

If you were to ask me to paint a picture of our last three years here in Poynton, I would probably draw you one which closely resembles a rollercoaster you might find at Alton towers – “Spin ball Whizzer”. If you have been on this ride, you will know the joy it gives you with all its twists and turns, highs and lows, and that very real sense of tumbling down backwards.

Since arriving here, we have indeed gone through a whirlwind of experiences. The highs of youth and children’s ministry I have experienced are those I am ever so thankful to God for. Seeing God grow his young people, both in numbers, but also in spiritual maturity, has been a real joy and a blessing. Being able to teach the good news of Jesus to many and watching their young minds engage and grapple with the truth of God’s Word, and seeking to put Christ first in their lives, has certainly been a massive highlight.

The youth weekend away was one of the most fun, exhilarating, and memorable times I have ever had. From gathering together discussing the truth of who God is as Father, Son, and Spirit, to campfires in the rain, and watching the curate run and fall over whilst trying to help others from falling over. Good times indeed.

Alongside the high-octane weekend away, I will also look back with fondness at normal day to day ministry with the young people and seeing the fruit of God’s Word being faithfully taught. It has been a real privilege to have been involved with and lead the numerous ministries of the church here. Not just the midweek and Sunday children and youth groups, but also things such as parenting courses, the parent and toddler groups, the children’s and youth leaders training days, the mentoring of the young people, not to mention going into our local schools teaching lessons, giving assemblies, and running lunch time groups. Then there have been the annual events like the light party, pancake party, and holiday club. All these ministries reflect the importance we have as a church to reach the young people of Poynton, but also to help them grow in their faith as they live and speak for Jesus in their daily lives.

One thing to say here is that none of this would be possible without a brilliant and servant-hearted team of volunteer leaders. I will not name them all here, as there have been many, but I will be saying a huge thank you to all those who have partnered with me at some point before I leave, as save the LORD himself, I couldn’t have done the ministry I was called to do here without them.

Just as a rollercoaster has its highs, it also has its lows. Like all work this side of the fall, there are times of weariness and toil, as well as many challenges. Several months after we arrived, we were told by the vicar, Rob McLaren, that he was leaving. This of course was extremely hard news to hear as Rob was not just a boss to me, but a superb mentor and friend. This was followed by a challenging interregnum as we awaited an appointment of a new incumbent. I want to say a huge thanks here to our



wardens, Dave McClelland and Helen Bradley. They worked tirelessly throughout the interregnum and helped with the running of the church alongside the rest of the staff team (Andy, Aled, Christine, Hannah, Lucy, and Brian). I am very thankful for all of the staff team in continuing to serve the church so faithfully, to model to me what it means to persevere in trusting God, whilst navigating ministry during challenging times. The gospel really is to keep being taught and shown in and out of season, and the staff team really did model that to me.

Then just as we were getting used to the challenging time of being without a vicar, a certain virus named COVID-19 came at the forefront of all we did, and overnight the ministry dramatically changed into a virtual one. "Zoom" became a word mentioned in every sentence, along with "*I can't see your screen*", and "*You are still on mute*".

Without saying too much on this, but I am sure you can imagine, doing youth and children's ministry on screen was a difficult and challenging medium. When not in person, it is much harder to gauge people's understanding, as well as knowing how engaged they are with what is being discussed. Along with the limits of what we could do in terms of games and activities, it made running a youth group online quite tricky, especially when the majority of them were in front of screens all week with online school learning.

But in all of this, it was still amazing to see God at work, providing us with a way to still carry on his work, so that the young people could continue to get to know Jesus more.

Although the pandemic caused many periods of sadness, frustration, and times of questioning God's will, even in COVID-19 we can reflect and see how God has still been in total control, and how he is faithful in keeping his good promises to us in Jesus. There have been many who have remained committed to the groups and have grown in their faith.

Nevertheless, I was extremely grateful when we were able to meet back in person again, as I know the young people were too, and we are beginning to see the momentum that was lost be built back up again, and my prayer is that this would continue and grow even more after I have left my role, and the baton I have carried for the last three years, will be passed onto another faithful servant who can continue God's work and bear much fruit with the children and young people.

We, as a family, will miss you all so much, as many of you have become so dear to us. Beth, the girls, and I, have really enjoyed being a part of the church family, and are thankful to God for his goodness to us during our time. It has been a genuine joy to serve amongst you.

Please would you also pray for us. Please ask God to help us to settle quickly into our next venture God has called us to. Pray for me as I begin my training at the newly established Northwest Emmanuel Theological college, and at St. Mary's Cheadle, where my church placement will take place. Pray also for my Beth and the girls (Lydia, Emily, and Tilly) that they would make this transition smoothly as well and figure out what church life will look like for them. Pray for us all that we would keep fixing our eyes on Jesus, growing in our faith, hope, and love in him.

As mentioned, although I will be leaving my role, we will still be living nearby, so please feel free to keep in touch with us. We would very much love that.

God bless.

The Hadfield family.

1871-1971-2021

1871

I was never very good at maths- indeed I failed GCSE maths - but I can calculate that if 1871 is an important date for St George's Church (and the whole of Poynton) then 1971 was a hundred year anniversary, but of what exactly?

Poynton, previously part of Prestbury Parish, had become large enough to stand independently and in 1871 Queen Victoria signed an Order in Council creating the ecclesiastical parish.

Until the 16th century when a public chapel was built here, the inhabitants had to walk almost five miles to the mother church in Prestbury. In the following centuries several chapels were built and it was not until 1787 that the foundation stone of a new church on the present site was laid. Two years later, it was dedicated to St George but Poynton still remained part of Prestbury. Because of structural weaknesses that building was demolished in 1857 and in 1859 our present one was built as a memorial to the 7th Lord Vernon. As Poynton had grown and developed to such a degree that it was possible for a new parish to emerge, it was then that Queen Victoria signed the Order in Council.

1971

The then Vicar of Poynton, Bob Lewis, instigated the idea of a grand celebration to mark the occasion, so a committee was set up to organise a programme. His own thoughts were published in the programme. "One of our great traditions in this country is the close connection between Church and State and between the Christian faith and the life of the community."



The committee soon formed a number of sub groups as more ideas for involving the whole community were developed. By the time the celebrations opened at the end of April there was a "something for everyone" air about the programme. The Church itself was the focus from the first weekend when, on the Friday, there was a morning Communion Service and in the evening a performance by the Secondary School pupils of "Saints and Sinners". The Flower Festival also opened on the Friday, a day of music recitals followed and an Arts Festival followed later in the week. Sunday included a visit from the Bishop of Chester, the Rt. Rev. Gerald Ellison, who not only preached at the morning service but in the afternoon arrived by boat at the Marina to 'Bless the Boats', twenty or more having sailed up from High Lane. This event left us with a legacy in the shape of the shelter built on the canal side by a member of the committee, Mr Burke, who was a builder and lived in Poynton. Designed in case it should rain on the Bishop it had a faintly ecclesiastical appearance but in fact wasn't needed as the sun shone all afternoon, but it still stands there opposite the Trading Post at Higher Poynton as a reminder of a very splendid occasion!

The church was home to an art exhibition for the last weekend (May 1-2) and a Civic Service in the morning and Songs of Praise in the evening on the Sunday.

Cont. on page 7



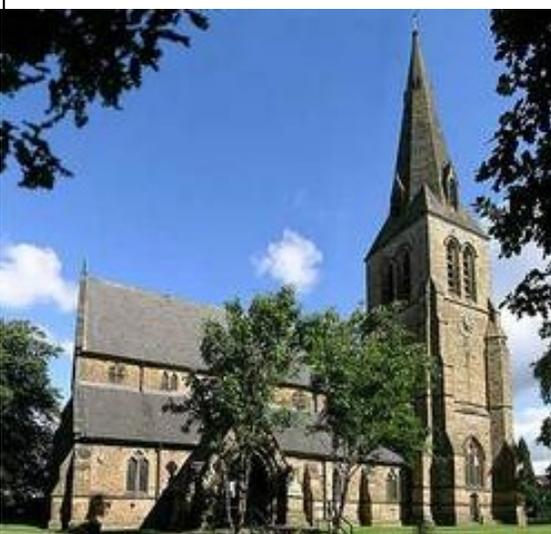
The week between included events at the Civic Centre and the Social and Youth Centre and involved, among others, The Male Voice Choir, the St George's Singers, the Poynton Players and the Adlington Folk Dancers as well as a Folk Music Night, Poynton Band, Scottish Dancers and many children. The Sports Club organised football and tennis competitions and a floodlit Bowls evening. Alan Goode was one of those who worked as a sub group on behalf of the Club.

On May 1st there was a Grand Procession through the village with decorated floats, and fancy dress competitions for the children, culminating in Maypole and Morris dancing in the car park. Meanwhile the Diocesan Guild of Ringers rang a peal of 5,040 changes and there was a performance of 'A Poynton Carry On' a 'short story of yesterday Poynton.'

To me, then the Committee Convenor, now recalling the occasion, the legacy of 1971 is that many of the organisations which were there and took part, happily still exist, and though many of those individuals taking part or organising are now no longer with us it was a real demonstration of community spirit.

The final event was Songs of Praise in the Church, which brings us to

2021



I'm better at arithmetic than maths, so I know 2021 brings up the hundred and fiftieth anniversary but Covid still has us in its grasp and any special programme to celebrate our Parish, both ecclesiastical and temporal, has to be restrained. However, the Civic Service, delayed until August, will have a special significance and even if we are not able to sing our praises inside, there is hope that we can all join together in thanking God for his goodness to us and to Poynton, outside in the Churchyard.



Susan Warrington

'St Martin of Tours'

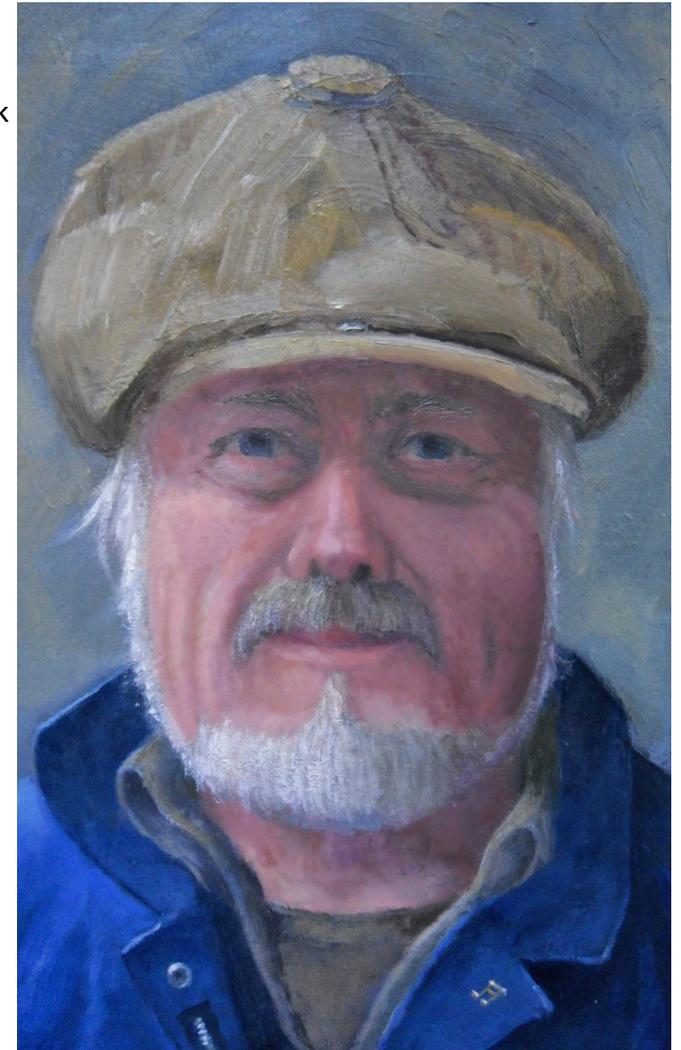
Jenny Cooke finds an unexpected package on her doorstep one dark February morning ...



I flung open the front door and managed to haul the package inside. It was more unwieldy than heavy, so I man-handled it into the front-room, cut through the black plastic packaging and peeled the sellotape away from the bubblewrap. There it was: an enormous painting. There was a message stuck on the back and slowly light dawned. The tutor from Francis' Art Class was moving house today and settling in the Midlands near family. But surely it couldn't be from him...

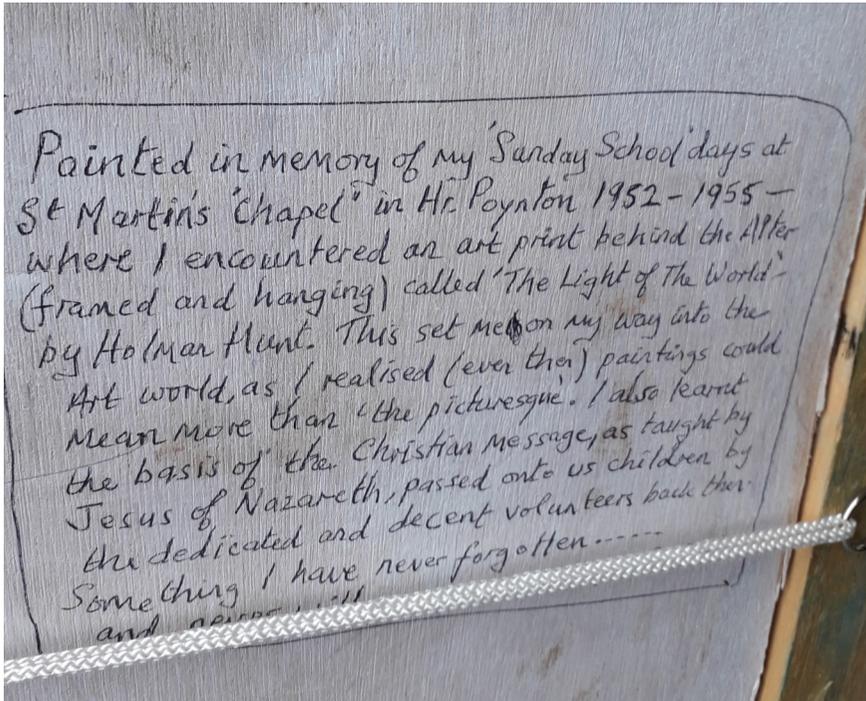
'I'm sorry,' the message read, 'but it's turned out to be too big to move and I thought you both would appreciate it, it took months to paint, it's of St Martin of Tours and I wondered if the local vicar would like to accept it for St Martin's church in Higher Poynton...' 'Chris Beard,' I thought, 'en-route to his new home in the Midlands.' It was a gift from Chris Beard, the local artist and well-known to many in Higher Poynton.

Eventually I researched St Martin, patron saint of soldiers amongst other things. He lived in the fourth century mainly in Italy, came from an army family where his father was a senior officer, or tribune in the roman army. Aged 15, St Martin joined the roman cavalry in Gaul. No one knows when he began to attend a Christian church, but it must have been after Emperor Constantine had his famous vision in 317AD. Later St Martin said that he'd switched allegiance to a new commanding officer: Jesus Christ. He ended up as Bishop of Tours, France in 361AD.



Chris Beard

Cont. on page 9



The legend of St Martin's cloak is what our friend, Chris, had painted. St Martin, the cavalry soldier was riding towards Amiens in France when he saw a beggar on the roadside, shivering and almost naked. Martin took off his cloak, sliced it in half with his sword and gave one half to the down-and-out man. That same night Martin dreamed that he saw Jesus wearing the half-cloak he'd given away. It was because of this dream that Martin was baptised as a young man.

Chris wrote on the back of the painting, 'Painted in memory of my Sunday School days at St Martin's chapel in Higher Poynton 1952 – 1955 where I encountered an art print behind the altar (framed and hanging) called 'The Light of the World', by the Pre-Raphaelite painter Holman Hunt. This was in the old St Martin's church building. It set me on my way into the Art world as I realised, even then, that paintings could mean more than "the picturesque". I also learned the basis of the Christian message, as taught by Jesus of Nazareth, passed onto us children in the Sunday School by the dedicated and decent volunteers back then, Something I have never forgotten and never will, CJB Jan 2021.'

A few weeks later he added this in an email to us: *Seeing 'The Light of the World' in St Martin's church made me appreciate that painting could be more than picturesque, even though I was only eight years old at the time. I was compelled to paint this picture, 'The Charity of St Martin of Tours' because of this experience when I was eight. I hope that one day a child might, like I did, do the same, look at my picture and be inspired.*

We've let Chris know that his picture is now hanging in St Martin's church. He is more than delighted.

Jenny Cooke

New Address

Julie and Simeon Briggs
Tirley View
Clotton
Tarpoley CW6 0EG

Remembering Princess Diana

Lady Diana Spencer – later Princess of Wales – was born 60 years ago, on 1st July 1961 at Sandringham in Norfolk. Twenty years later, on 29th July 1981, she married Prince Charles at St Paul's Cathedral in London. She died in a car crash in Paris in 1997.

Diana was not an academic child, but concentrated on art, music and sport. She was widely admired for her beauty and style, and during her time as Princess of Wales achieved a great deal in her charity work, particularly in the unexpected areas of AIDS and landmines. Partly because of this she was believed to have strong Christian beliefs, but this is not something she spoke about, though a special episode of *Songs of Praise* on the BBC saw it as the motive for her charity work.

Her marriage to Charles suffered because of their obvious incompatibility and their affairs. They separated in 1992 and divorced in 1996. Their two sons, William and Harry, suffered as a result and have reacted in markedly different ways.

Diana was the first Englishwoman for more than 300 years to marry the heir to the throne. She was also the first royal bride to have a paying job before her engagement.

Parish Pump

14th July St Camillus de Lellis - patron of the sick

Sometimes those who suffer are best at helping others in a similar situation. Discharged from the Venetian army with an incurable leg wound, St Camillus (1550 – 1614) founded a religious order called the Ministers of the Sick (the Camellians). Both in their Holy Ghost Hospital in Rome, and by travelling to plague-stricken parts of the world, the Camellians dedicated their lives to caring for the sick. Camillus is the patron of the sick and of nurses.

Parish Pump



What Price Childcare in Nigeria?



For more than 20 years Professor Richard Solomon Musa Tarfa has run orphanages for unwanted children in Northern Nigeria.

That came to an end when on Christmas Day 2019, armed police invaded and searched his orphanage in Kano State and transported 19 children who resided there to a state children's home. Both the Professor and his wife were detained for a while and, although Mrs Tarfa was released soon after, Professor Tarfa was kept in prison while further investigations took place. Subsequently, he was made to accompany the officers on a similar raid to the Du Merci orphanage in Kaduna state on 31 December. The building was searched and eight children residing there were transferred to the Nassarawa Children's Home in Kano State while Professor Tarfa was returned to detention.

It appears that Professor Tarfa was initially accused of not having a licence to operate an orphanage. However, once his wife produced documentation proving the orphanage was duly registered to operate, the charges were allegedly changed to criminal abduction of minors. It would appear that the real reason for the police action is simply that he was running a Christian orphanage.

Since 1996 the Professor and his wife have cared for children in their two orphanages. The care they provide has received positive reports and the children and young people view them as their parents. Apart from children the centre accommodates young women who are pregnant out of wedlock, until they give birth, reconciling them whenever possible with parents who had rejected them due to social stigma.

Children from the Du Merci Centres in Kano and Kaduna States in Nigeria published a statement challenging the detention of the co-founder of the orphanages, Professor Richard Solomon Musa Tarfa, on his 55th birthday. In the statement, they condemn the detention of the professor and the charges levelled against him, saying: "The centre provides accommodation for all children brought to the home, we view them as parents and we are educated and cared for until we are able to live successful independent lives... He is not a criminal; his only offence is the love he shows to all of us."

Meanwhile the children remain in the government-run Nassarawa Children Home where conditions are extremely poor. They are reportedly exposed to mosquitos and the cold; they are made to share small beds and they complain of insufficient food. They are not permitted to leave the premises to attend their school or church and have complained of being mistreated on account of their religious beliefs.



Cont. on page 12

On the positive side the Professor has now been released on bail after nearly a year in pretrial detention.

CSW supporters have campaigned for all charges to be dropped. At the same time, as a result of CSW's advocacy, the British High Commissioner in Abuja, and the UK Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, raised the case with the Nigerian authorities.

Professor Tarfa's trial is due to resume on 1 June when it is hoped to have a ruling. In the meantime 16 of the children are still in state custody. Twelve are in the government-run Nassarawa orphanage, three have been sent to another orphanage in a remote location while one (Moses) was transferred to hospital, having suffered first degree burns when his mosquito net caught alight;. CSW is working alongside Professor Tarfa, seeking urgent interventions from the UN and in the UK and US to secure their release.

In summary, please pray for

- All charges to be dropped.
- All 16 of the children to be returned home, particularly the three youngest who were transferred to a remote location (Destiny, Emmanuel and Mercy).
- Moses's healing from burns, particularly on his hands; that he won't require plastic surgery, or be discharged prematurely.

You can get updates on Professor Tarfa and the Du Merci orphanage case at csw.org.uk/dumerci-case.

Keith Davies, Regional Ambassador, CSW.

Friends of St George's



Among the aims of the Friends are "to support the maintenance and improvement of the fabric and fittings" and also "to provide for the upkeep of the stained glass and stonework".

With these objects in mind, and hopefully with the agreement of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, we are purchasing a new altar frontal, to replace a much worn Advent one, and will present it to celebrate this 150th anniversary year.

The completion of a window to honour St George will take a little longer but is still developing.

In the May Offshoot I said that the Committee was considering adding an Antiques Evening to the programme before Christmas, and we are delighted to report that a local auctioneers, Maxwells, have agreed to visit us on Saturday 20th November. Details and tickets will be available nearer the time. If you are interested please contact a Committee member Alice Lees, Membership Secretary (874859) or Eileen Shore, Treasurer (875031) or leave a message at the Church Office (879277)



Susan Warrington