

Services at St John the Baptist Halling and the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
April 2 nd Passion Sunday	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Romans 5 vv 12-21 p1132 Luke 22 vv 1-13 p1057
	11.00 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 31 vv 31-34 p793 Hebrews 5 vv 5-10 p1204 John 12 vv 20-33 p1080
April 9 th Palm Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 50 vv 4-9a 737 Philippians 2 vv 5-11 p1179 Mark 14&15 p1020
	5.30 Evening Prayer	Isaiah 5 vv 1-7 Mark 12 vv 1-12
April 13 th Maundy Thursday	9.30 Holy Communion	1 Cor 11 vv 23-26 p1152 John 13 vv 1-35 p1081
April 14 th Good Friday	12.00 Three Hour Devotion	
Easter Eve	11.30 Vigil Service	Exodus 14 vv 10-31 & 15 vv 20 & 21 p71 Ezekiel 37 vv 1-14 p868 Zephaniah 3 vv 14-20 p947 Romans 6 vv 3-11 p1133 Mark 16 vv 1-8 p1024
April 16 th Easter Day	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Acts 10 vv 34-43 p1104 John 20 vv 1-18 p1089
	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 25 vv 6-9 p708 Acts 10 vv 34-43 p1104 John 20 vv 1-18 p1089
April 23 rd Easter 2	11.00 Holy Communion	Exodus 14 vv 10-31 & 15 vv 20 & 21 p71 Acts 4 vv 32-35 p1096 John 20 vv 19-31 p1089
Services at St Michael and All Angels Cuxton		
April 2 nd Passion Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion	Hebrews 5 vv 5-10 p1204 John 12 vv 20-33 p1080
April 9 th Palm Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion	Mark 11 vv 1-11 p1016 Isaiah 50 vv 4-9a 737 Philippians 2 vv 5-11 p1179 Mark 14&15 p1020
April 13 th Maundy Thursday	7.30 pm Holy Communion around the Lord's Table	
April 14 th Good Friday	10.00 Family Service & Passion Play	
April 16 th Easter Day	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 25 vv 6-9 p708 Acts 10 vv 34-43 p1104 Mark 16 vv 1-8 p1024
April 23 rd Easter 2	9.30 Holy Communion	Exodus 14 vv 10-31 & 15 vv 20 & 21 p71 Acts 4 vv 32-35 p1096 John 20 vv 19-31 p1089
April 30 th Easter 3	9.30 United Parish Eucharist & Holy Baptism	Zephaniah 3 vv 14-20 p947 Acts 3 vv 12-19 p1094 Luke 24 vv 36-48 p1062

There will be an additional celebration of Holy Communion at 9.30 am on Monday in Holy Week (10th April). During Easter Week, Holy Communion will be celebrated daily at 9.30 am at St Michael's, except Thursday 20th when it will be at St John's. There will be no other services in Easter Week.

Copy Date May Magazine: **7th April** 8.30 am Rectory.

On Thursday afternoons we have a Mother & Toddler service at Halling at 2.00 and at Cuxton on the last Wednesday of the month. Sunday School is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays). After School Club, Thursdays @ St John's from 27th April.

<http://hometown.aol.co.uk/rogerknight/myhomepage/newsletter.html> and
<http://hometown.aol.co.uk/RogerKnight/index.htm>



From the Rector

A friend of mine recently attended an event in a theatre in which a medium gave a demonstration of his powers. She told me that the evening was a sell out and that it made

a change not to be the youngest person there. There were a lot of young people, people whom you would not expect to see in church. Yet what they were there for was the sort of reassurance that you might expect to receive in an Easter sermon – that there is life after death. So why go to the medium when you wouldn't be seen dead in church?

I gather that the demonstration was quite impressive. What the medium claimed to have been told by the spirits was information which it is hard to see how he could have known in any other way. People were impressed and some of them, no doubt, were comforted. So why didn't they turn to the Church?

The reason that immediately occurred to me was that the medium is offering them what they want, whereas the Church offers them what they need. What people very often want is the assurance that everything is OK. Things will work out, no matter what. After this life, there is a certainty that we go to a better place.

The Church, on the other hand, certainly believes in eternal life, but the Church also challenges us. Jesus, on the night before He died, promised that He was going to prepare a place for us. He has also told us to take up our cross and follow Him. The Christian life is a life of total commitment to God and to other people. If we really want to follow Jesus, we have to make radical changes in our lives. We have to make sacrifices, even the sacrifice of self. The Christian Gospel is that this is the only way truly to live on earth and in Heaven.

This is not a message which everybody wants to hear. It is a myth to say that, if only we could get the message over clearly, most people would believe it. By and large, people rejected Jesus Himself. If we get the message over clearly, there may well be great crowds crying *Crucify*. It requires spiritual discernment to accept the Gospel. It is our

God-given task to proclaim the message of Jesus as clearly as we can. Those whom God is calling will be saved by faithful preaching, but we should never be surprised that many just do not want to know, how ever well we put the message over.

There are of course other reasons why people cannot or will not listen to the Church. Some people have been badly hurt by the Church. Christians, including vicars, are sometimes unkind, thoughtless and hurtful. Christians are human too and we often get it wrong. It is very sad, however, if people are unable to come to God because of the failures of His servants.

There is also a huge image problem. Church just isn't cool in 21st century Britain. I don't know whether we can make it cool. Really sincere seekers after the Truth should set their minds on higher things than coolness.

When we attend church services, we ought to be filled with a sense of the presence of God. Like the Israelites on their way through the desert to the Holy Land, we are accompanied by our God, a God Who cares for us and meets all our needs. We should be filled with joy and Church should be the most important thing in our week, the thing we look forward to, the thing we don't miss except for the very gravest of reasons.

So there is something wrong when a significant proportion of the population feel that taking part in shared worship is a low priority in their lives. Either God is not present in our worship or they cannot perceive Him. If people do not perceive God when they attend St Michael's or St John's, the fault either lies in them or in the whole congregation led by me. Every Sunday and most weekdays, we do four things which the Bible tells us to do. God guarantees His presence when we do these things. So, if people do not discern God in our worship, either they are failing to open themselves to God or we are doing these things wrong.

1. Jesus promises to be present when people are assembled in His Name. Is our coming together truly in His Name, an outpouring of love for God, for our fellow worshippers and for any seekers

who may come? If we do not come in love, we cannot expect to encounter God ourselves or to help others to find Him.

2. God promises to answer the prayer offered in faith. Do we pray in faith? Do we pray at all? Or has the service just become a ritual to be gone through and maybe to be examined and criticised to see if it's what we really want. Does the way we behave in Church create a prayerful atmosphere in which other people may more easily sense the presence of God?
3. We read the Bible together and I do my best, by God's grace, to preach His Word in the sermon. Do we really expect to hear God speak to us in the readings and the sermon or do we just hope they won't go on too long and look for points with which we can find fault?
4. Jesus told us to participate in the Holy Communion in remembrance of Him. St Paul promises that the cup and the bread are a true Communion in the Body of Christ. Do we believe the words we say in our services about our dwelling in Him and He in us or has Communion become a mere ritual, no more significant than any other service and not much more important than catching up on the housework?

If you really want to revive your own personal worship and make St Michael's and St John's places where people can really find God, I suggest the following.

[I do not deny the importance of choice of music, forms of worship, audibility, ordering of

buildings etc, but what really matters above everything else is that worship is offered in spirit and in truth.]

- Before you come to Church, forgive anyone who has hurt you. Ask God to forgive you for your failure to love Him with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself. Be specific in confessing your sins to God.
- Look at the readings before the service (especially if you are a reader). Think about what they mean and why they have been chosen.
- Think about other people in church. Pray for them. Include them in your mind when we say *we* in the creed or the prayers. Don't criticise or judge them. Be sensitive to their needs, whether they want someone to talk to or need peace and quiet to be alone with God.
- Expect to encounter Jesus in the Gospel, the Sermon and the Holy Communion. Open your mind, comport yourself, as someone who is about to receive the King of Kings as a guest in his or her heart.
- Pray generously for other people, the church and the world, not just for yourself.
- After the service, behave like someone who has been in the company of Jesus. Don't go back to the sins of which you were absolved in Church. Share Christ's love with the people you meet.

Roger.

From the Registers

Wedding Blessing:

14th February

Debra & Mark Simmonds

St Michael's

Funerals:

14th February

Allan Smith (89)

Pilgrims Road

17th February

David Francis Hunt (57)

formerly of Halling

17th February

Marion Ray (51)

Dallison Court

1st March

Neville James Simmonds (66)

Browdens Road

The Mysterious Yew by C. Hansford and T. Hills

The mention of yew trees will no doubt conjure up visions of churchyards, and bows and arrows. Some see them as a symbol of death; others may recall using cuttings from the yew on Palm Sunday to replicate the palm.

Few people are aware of Kent's status as the English county with the greatest number of ancient and veteran (500 years plus) churchyard yews. Kent has some fine specimens as old as 2000 years in places such as Ulcombe, Thurnham, Boxley, Eastling and Molash, to name but a few. Church yews of this age pre-date the church to which the churchyard is attached and so, it could be said, were adopted by the churchyard rather than grown in it.

But what of yews outside of churchyards? Anecdotal evidence suggests there are dozens of unrecorded ancient yews; in woodland and parkland; along ancient track ways; marking out old parish boundaries; and in particular on land adjacent to the Pilgrim's Way. Help us locate these old trees so that we can build a more accurate picture of our yew heritage.

On behalf of the Ancient Yew Group, we would like to appeal to readers who have or know of significant yews within and outside of churchyards to contact us via the Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre (KMBRC) with details of the yew's location and accessibility.

How will you know whether you have found an old or ancient yew? Some say if it looks ancient, it probably is, but it is not always that simple. We would like to hear about trees of 12' (3.6m) girth and above. 15'-16' (4.5-4.9m) trees may well indicate a tree of 500 years + and if you are lucky enough to find a 20'-25' (6-7.6m) girthed yew you might even be looking at a tree over 1000 years old.

The Ancient Yew Group's website (www.ancient-yew.org) contains details of 837 yews of ancient, veteran or significant status along with 170 documented 'lost yews' and a whole variety of information on the subject of these enigmatic trees.

Contact the Ancient Yew Group's Kent co-ordinator through KMBRC by emailing info@kmbrc.org.uk or telephoning 01622 685646/780. KMBRC's website (www.kmbrc.org.uk) contains details of this and other ongoing projects around Kent.

Hi Roger

Thought I had better get this report to you, I wasn't too inspired this month ,but here goes.

Nature Notes February 2006

On February 1st a pair of jays made a brief visit, one to the garden and the other on to a branch of a sycamore tree just over the fence. A chaffinch looked on from a lilac branch. The sky was grey and the air cold although there was only a slight breeze. I took Murphy to Halling Marsh where he gambolled along the paths where flotsam lay and which he investigated. Canada and greylag geese and lapwings were to be seen along the bank. The tide was ebbing and in one place, in the middle of the river, mudflats were exposed and gulls foraged there. In all the years I've been walking there, I've never seen the level of water so low. The skies were grey and misty as we returned.

Two grey days followed, then there were a few glimpses of the sun on the morning of the 4th and it was not quite so cold. Sycamores on the embankment and part of our holly tree were lopped allowing more light into the garden, Blue tits and a blackbird came to investigate after the work was done. In the afternoon, I took Murphy through Six acre Wood where young elder leaves had burst from their buds and delicate catkins hung from their boughs. We met up with a friend, skirted the oil seed rape field, then made our way up into Mays Wood and our secret paths. There was stillness. Finally we crossed Church Fields from where we could see the mirror-smooth river.

On the 5th, I saw snowdrops blooming in the churchyard and later watched chaffinches hopping among the lilac branches in the garden. There was a beautiful sunset on the 7th.

The 9th was beautiful with blue skies and golden sunshine. The wind was cold but this did not deter me. I walked through Six acre Wood from where I viewed the village lit up by the sunshine. As I climbed up by the rape seed plants, I noticed a floret of golden budded groundsel and a plant of flowering red deadnettle. As I crossed Church Fields I saw the sun lighting up the Medway Bridge, the tower of the castle and the cathedral spire. The river reflected the blue of the sky. A blackbird flew out of a hawthorn bush where a blue tit called and hopped among the boughs. A magpie flew over the stile.

A slight easterly breeze blew on the 11th when there were a few glimpses of sunshine. In the afternoon, I took Murphy to the lakes at Snodland where wildfowl glided and called. I noticed that some hawthorn boughs were covered in green lichen. The paths were relatively dry for no rain had fallen. As we came back home into the garden, I looked across the embankment and saw a fox with a rabbit. The screams were quite pitiful. Some much needed rain fell on the 12th. I was aware of lively birdsong the following day. While walking up Wood Street on the 14th, I found wall speedwell. There was wind and rain that night then birdsong and sunshine the following morning when it was pleasantly mild.

The early morning of the 16th was grey but eventually the sun shone enabling Murphy and me to have an enjoyable walk from the Brookland Lakes to Leybourne along the main track. The sun beamed down on us from a blue sky brushed with some grey clouds. A pair of graceful swans, coots and moorhens glided on the rippling stream and gulls flew over one of the lakes from where a heron flew out of the reeds. We walked down the road full of puddles and across some of the heath land, which led back to the track. I noticed some pussy willow flowers beginning to burst from their brown sheath as I made my way back to the car. The 17th was dry but less mild and the

wind felt quite sharp at times. In the middle of the morning, I took Murphy along the top path of Six-acre wood then skirted the oilseed rape field where I found some tiny blue speedwell flowers. We then took the path up into Mays Wood where underfoot it was very muddy. I noticed new grass and dog's mercury plants. Horses grazed in part of Church Fields. Murphy looked with interest at these large animals and decided that they were too big for him. Great tits and blue tits hopped in the hawthorns and I could hear their calls. The next day, I watched a flock of jackdaws arrive amongst the branches of a leafless sycamore tree beyond the embankment. They cawed loudly.

Cold north-easterly winds blew on the 20th and grey clouds marched across the sky. While in Station road with Murphy, I heard a greenfinch calling and watched a robin hopping in the branches of a tree. I found celandine buds in the grass. The 23rd was wet with some snow and sleet accompanied by cold east winds. I took Murphy along Pilgrim's Road where twigs held droplets of water. Later in the day, as the daylight was beginning to fade, I listened to the pinking of blackbirds.

The sun shone brightly from a clear blue sky on the 25th. The northeast wind was strong and bitterly cold, but this did not stop me from going for a walk. Having made my way through Six acre Wood I went down to Purty's Shaw to look for coltsfoot flowers but there were none to be seen, not even the plants. By the 27th, the east wind had dropped and it was dry and bright. A beautiful song thrush came to the garden in the early afternoon. Grey clouds gathered and became thicker as day progressed and took Murphy for a walk to the village and back up the path of Six acre Wood. During the day, I had heard melodious birdsong. In the evening I could hear rooks calling. The last day of the month was cold and sunny with occasional snow showers in the afternoon. We drove over to Wouldham with Murphy for a training session. Fortunately we were sheltered from the cold easterly wind. The skies cleared in the afternoon which was beautiful with golden sunshine. By the evening the wind had veered to the northwest.

Elizabeth Summers

EASTER EGG HUNT

Why not hop along to our annual Easter Egg Hunt in the rectory gardens, Cuxton, on Easter Monday, (April 17th)? We are delighted to announce that this year's event will be opened by the Mayor and Mayoress of Medway, Cllr Ken Webber and Mrs. Anita Webber, who will also be staying to judge our Easter Hat competition. The egg hunt starts at 2.30 pm and there will be plenty of activities on offer. Firstly, there is the chance to search for eggs to fill your basket. Refreshments will be on offer in the church hall so that mum and dad can relax whilst children take part in craft activities. Colouring competition entries will be on display and the winners announced. Our new event, the Easter Hat Competition, will then be judged by our very special guests. This competition is open to all ages so let's see what you can do! We are expecting some weird and unusual entries. Make sure you arrive with some interesting headgear and see if you can win a prize! There will also be a raffle and other attractions. Only £1 per child.



Halling WI

At our February meeting we had a goodly number despite the very cold night. Mary welcomed two guests and presented Ann Heaseman with her birthday flower, the only one this month. The minutes were read and signed and at last the competition cups were able to be presented. Jean Mattingly won the competition cup and I won the Flower of the month silver vase for 2005. The correspondence dropped the bombshell of this years subscription going up to £26, but members would receive 8 magazines a year whether they wanted them or not sent directly to their homes. This did not go down too well with the members and it was agreed to send a letter to the National Federation regarding this increase. It is not going to do the W.I. any favours. Eileen Buss would be the delegate at the Annual Council Meeting at Tunbridge Wells on 15th March. Phyllis and Betty have agreed to turn the pages of the Millennium Book, also at this meeting. Names were taken for the county outing to France in May and the Royal Engineers Band concert also in May. We had enough members to have a team in the District Quiz on 28th February, (we didn't win, the questions were too hard)

Our speaker for the evening was Mr Moore, who enlightened us all on the craft of Silversmithing. He was entertaining and acted out what it must have been like to be an

apprentice to a silversmith possibly in Victorian times. One thing he did mention was, don't throw out your E.P.N.S. cutlery. Some of it could be collectable. I've looked at my tablespoons and they are well pass there sell by date. Mr Moore didn't have any tips on how to keep silver shiny without polishing it. He was warmly thanked by Jean.

After our refreshments we had to finish our business. I had received a thank you letter from Blythwood Care and some reactions from the recipients of the 2005 Christmas boxes. Our competition letter this month was B, we had boots, babies, bikes, and a beautiful Battenberg cake. Mrs Doris Hooper's Big Brass Boot was this months winner. Flower of the Month was one with a delicate Blue Iris, but I can't remember who's garden it came out of, sorry about that, but I do remember Betty was third with her hellebore.

Next months speaker, guess who? Me, on my recent travels to the other side of the world. I expect I will have to do it in episodes, starting off with High Adventures in Hong Kong. Come along for a fun evening, you will be very welcome. Competition for March is C for Cat, sort your cupboards and draws out to see what you come up with. A Crocodile, a Coconut, a Cabbage there's a few ideas, it's more likely to be a CUP, bring it anyway.

PHYLLIS.

???!!!: The ship hit the rocks. "What shall we do?" said the captain. "I can pray," said the Christian. "Good," said the captain. "You pray. I'll take the life jacket!"



Cuxton WI

Our March meeting was well attended and, after singing Jerusalem, Dorothy Drew gave out one birthday for the month – Kath Dove. The business having been dealt with, we were pleased to welcome Dr Simon Charlesworth from Donderry Lavender, which is based near Hadlow. He gave a most interesting talk with slides, telling us of all the many species of lavender there are. We were very surprised to hear that lavender comes from various parts of the world, but not England. Some of the more unusual plants were very pretty and, when grown en masse, are very eye-catching. He gave us tips on pruning, growing and propagating. He and his wife own the National Collection of Lavenders and you can visit, walk round and have a cup of tea at any time during the Summer. After the official close of the meeting, his wife sold several varieties of lavender to members. A very enjoyable evening.

Members were again reminded to bring an item for the Tombola in May.

On a bleak, cold, wet and windy morning, the walking group ventured into Rochester. Luckily the rain stopped as we arrived and, after coffee in the Information Centre, we had a

tour around various sites and buildings, including the Cathedral, which for once actually felt warm inside!! Our group leader had a guide book and she pointed out places of interest and their history. There is a recently painted mural in the Cathedral, which is well worth a visit, beautifully drawn, and the colours are really vibrant (not like older murals). We finished up with a warming soup lunch at the Cathedral Tea Rooms. Next walk will be along the River Medway at Teston on Wednesday 22nd March, 10.30am.

We had two teams in the District Quiz, held at Snodland, and much to our surprise and delight came first and second. Our brains were really in gear that night!!

Apologies for the error in last month's report. Home Economics outing will be in November/December to Thanet College with Christmas shopping in Canterbury after lunch. Unfortunately the trip to Tilbury has had to be postponed.

Next meeting: Thursday 6th April at 7.30 at the Church Hall. Speaker: *Humour in Verse*, Marianne Martin.

Ann Harris.

Proceedings of the PCC 7th March 2006

We began with prayer, consideration of the minutes of the last meeting and apologies. The **Financial Report**, revealed a healthier looking bank balance, but this is only because we decided at our last meeting not to pay about £13,000 we owe the Diocese and not to put money away against possible work on the church buildings. There has been, we were very pleased to hear, some increase in giving. People were begged to speak to Marie Hendey about **Gift Aid** as this adds 28% to the value of their contribution.

We accepted the Treasurer's and Secretary's reports for the **Annual Meeting** on 29th April. You will have to come and hear them for yourselves. We learned that several people who would normally be giving reports will not be able to be present. We cannot alter the date. So their reports will be read by others and all the lay members of the PCC will answer any questions you might have, no matter how difficult.

Social Committee, Church Hall and both **Churches** were getting on with their business. The Social Committee and hall are raising money. We have a concert at the Jubilee Hall on 6th May and we are looking for volunteers to host fund-raising social events in August like last year. General minor repair work continues on the churches, much money being saved by the willingness of the wardens to do this work themselves.

We considered the possibility that we might have to close **Cuxton Churchyard** in order to preserve the wildflowers. We have not yet received formal legal advice, but we do not think we are doing anything wrong in cutting the grass and digging graves. We do not know of the presence of any plants listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act and we are desperately hoping nobody finds any. So we are carrying on looking after the churchyard as we have done for over a millennium unless and until some bureaucrat tells us we can't! So your grave plot is safe unless some meddling official interferes!

Halling Parish Council no longer feel able to cut **Halling Cemetery**. There was some discussion as to whether we, as a PCC, are responsible for that. If we are, we can only think we might employ contractors, but that would be expensive and the money would soon run out. We wondered if we could get a grant from the Halling Association or if village people might make donations towards grass-cutting as they already very kindly do at Cuxton. The problem is that everybody who lives and/or dies in the parish is entitled to be buried by the Church (whatever their religious beliefs) but only the regular churchgoers pay for the maintenance of open churchyards and church cemeteries (in addition to paying their clergy, supporting the Diocese and maintaining the church buildings).

The **Deanery Synod** had not met since our last meeting. The **Diocesan Synod** meeting had largely been taken up with the aftermath of the Bognor Conference, Proclaiming the Faith Afresh. This conference had been a real inspiration to those who attended and there is a determination that the blessings received will be shared with the whole diocese.

Under **Any Other Business** we were reminded of the need to have a child protection policy as we expand our activities with young children. The after school club at Halling Church starting after Easter will be for children accompanied by their parents or other carers, just like Thursday's Children (every week at St John's at 2.00) and the new Mother & Toddler service (last Wednesdays 10.45 at St Michael's). What may happen if there is a summer holiday club at St Michael's remains to be decided.

It was mentioned that the heater at St Michael's sometimes blows unbearably hot air and sometimes freezing. Whether or not anything can be done about this remains to be seen.

It was also pointed out that Christian Aid Week begins on 15th May. Mary Acott would really like to hear from prospective collectors. Unfortunately, the deanery Christian Aid Supper at St Francis is the same night as our concert in the Jubilee Hall – 6th May. You will have to decide which to attend. They will both be good and raise money in worthy causes.

Finally, we looked into the possibility of a **sound system** for St Michael's. I think it was generally agreed that, unless we could install an absolutely top quality system, we were better off without one. As it does not seem reasonable to spend the sort of money that would be required in order to do this, given our current circumstances, we decided that, on special occasions such as children's plays, we would set up temporary sound amplification. This would be confined to the area at the front of the church, no cables under carpets or draped round the building, and it would be removed directly after the service for which the Rector had granted permission for its use. It is hoped that such a system could be set up using equipment the PCC already owns (purchased some years ago in memory of Brian Morley). For the foreseeable future, at least, we will continue to depend on the naked voice at most services. RIK.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 10.00 Church Hall, 29th April.

Come and choose your wardens and PCC. Nominations for warden must be received before the meeting. Voters in PCC elections must be on the Church Electoral Roll. Hear what has been going on and have your say.

Cuxton Community Infant School News

Dear Friends of our school,

This week sees the 100 year anniversary of our school. We opened officially on the 9th March, 1906. We will be marking this occasion on Thursday by having a celebratory lunch and dressing up in clothes folk would have worn at that time. On Friday 10th March we hope to launch over 100 balloons at 10:30 am – weather permitting!! These are just some of the special events happening in our school this Centenary year. Others include- Maypole dancing, an old fashioned sports day, a Circus workshop day, a book week with visiting author and puppet theatre, school trips to the sea side, and an open afternoon with special centenary cakes. We will endeavour to keep you informed through school newsletters and posters of these events, some of which you are very welcome to attend.

Recently we have been entertained by Sundridge Class and Bush Class in their assemblies to parents. Sundridge Class delighted us with the models of vehicles they had made, whilst learning about modes of transport. Bush Class informed us of how to keep healthy and fit, made us healthy biscuits and told us about the various food groups. These are lovely opportunities for Parents and Grandparents to visit school, see what their children have been up to and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and chat with staff and friends. We look forward to Ranscombe Class Assembly on the 16th March.

This will also be the second week in school that we are trialling Parents coming into have lunch with their child. So far very positive feedback! Year 2 children visit the Central Hall Theatre on Thursday 23rd March, for the Medway school's Music Festival and we look forward to seeing our Mums and Grans, for Mothers day Assembly on Friday 24th March. The last week of term is a book week for us in school with a visiting author and Puppet theatre!

Whilst today has been crisp, and we had a light dusting of snow, the sun is shining and the daffodils are coming through. The snow drops look lovely in the gardens by the side of the drive, and in the gardens of Arrow Cottage. Have a very happy March, enjoy the Spring Flowers and crisp, bright, sunny days but most of all take care and keep well,

From us all at the Infant School, Sandra Jones, Head teacher.

Mayday Play School

Mayday have enjoyed a very busy half term. The children have settled in happily and we have welcomed some new families. Our daily sessions have been varied and “full on”. There have been two colour weeks, in which everything has been centred on the chosen colour – much fun and a valuable learning experience. The highlight of our first half term was Chinese Week. Children learned about Chinese culture and the Chinese New Year. There was a Chinese banquet, eaten, by some with chop sticks! The children made a life sized dragon and enjoyed dancing round the hall in its body. The accompanying musical instruments were much appreciated.

Time passes quickly. We are preparing to spoil our Mums for Mother’s Day and take part in Easter activities. Term ends 31st March. This will be an Easter Fun Day. Parents, grandparents and friends are invited to join the children in egg rolling, egg hunting and bunny hopping. We have invited Toybox to join us on this day. We start at 10 and finish in time for lunch at 12.00. Do come.

We are strengthening links with the Infant School, visiting for assemblies etc and Miss Jones has allowed us to use the school hall every week after Easter, using the apparatus to foster children’s physical development. We are excited about this and thank Miss Jones for her support and encouragement. We hope this is the beginning of a long and enriching relationship with the school.

We are thrilled to receive £100 grant from the Parish Council. We will use this on resources for literacy, numeracy and listening areas.

If you have a child of 2 ½ do look us up – 9.00-12.00 in Cuxton Social Club. As well as being qualified, we are all mums, nans or both and we take a pride in Mayday being a family centred environment. We wish all our readers a very happy and peaceful Easter and renewed vigour as we welcome the signs of Spring.

The Mayday Aunties (abridged by ed).

St John’s Draw February: £25 each to Mrs Mitchell (67), & Mrs Garrett (123) & £10 to Miss Wells (111) – drawn by Mrs Chidwick. If you would like to take part in St John’s Draw, please contact Betty Head.

Women’s World Day of Prayer

Sign of the Times. This very inspiring service, compiled by the women of South Africa, was appreciated by the 26 people from Cuxton & Halling who came to St John’s on Friday 3rd March. Considering the appalling problems in Africa with AIDs, TB, malaria, etc, all exacerbated by extreme poverty in some areas, their message of hope, love and joy was an encouragement to us all.

Christian Aid



A Division of The British Council of Churches

Christian Aid

My annual appeal! During Christian Aid Week (14th – 20th May) it would be very worthwhile if the collection could cover every house in the parish. So, please, if you can spare a few hours during the week to undertake some collecting, let Roger or me know.

Mary Acott (243223).

This year’s Christian Aid Supper is at St Francis Strood on 6th May.

mothers
union  Christian care for
families worldwide
www.themothersunion.org

Mothers’ Union

Please note our AGM will be on Wednesday 17th May at 10.45 in the Church Hall. This follows our corporate Communion at St Michael’s at 9.30.

On June 14th we are invited to St Francis, meeting at 7.30 am, for a return match of Channel Island Cricket. More about this in the June Magazine.

Kent Music School Choir

At the Jubilee Hall
Upper Halling

Saturday 6th May
7.30 pm

Tickets £6 from Shirley 724997 or Betty
240889.

A hot potato supper is included. Please
bring your own drink.

After School Club

St John's Church, High Street
Halling,

Thursdays from 27th April,
For children with parents or
carers,
Finishing 4.30 pm.

True But Sad

A Church has been told that it must pay for planning permission to erect a cross on its own land. A cross in godless modern Britain is apparently regarded as an advertisement.

Kent Police attempted to fine a teenager for using in public the sort of language children hear every day on TV. The lad was brave enough to refuse to pay and the case was dropped.

An old lady in her eighties was compelled to remove her hat in a public house. She was told she was a security risk if CCTV could not see her face.

A local authority issued an on the spot fine to a man for putting a couple of unwanted letters in a litter bin.

Don't Forget

Copy Date May Magazine: 7th April. Not Good Friday!!!