

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
5 th August Trinity 10	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	I Corinthians 12 vv 1-11 p1153 Luke 19 vv 41-47a p1054	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Exodus 16 vv 2-15 p74 Ephesians 4 vv 1-16 p1175 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070	
12 th August Trinity 11	11.00 Holy Communion	I Kings 19 vv 1-9 p361 Ephesians 4 v25 – 5 v2 p1176 John 6 vv 35-51 p1070	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	I Kings 19 vv 1-21 p361 Matthew 22 v41 – 23 v12 p991	
19 th August Trinity 12	11.00 Holy Communion & Stop! Look! Listen!	Proverbs 9 vv 1-6 p642 Ephesians 5 vv 15-21 p1176 John 6 vv 51-58 p1071	
26 th August Trinity 13	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Joshua 24 vv 1-18 p240 Ephesians 6 vv 10-20 p1177 John 6 vv 56-69 p1071	
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
5 th August Trinity 10	9.30 Holy Communion	Exodus 16 vv 2-15 p74 Ephesians 4 vv 1-16 p1175 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070	
12 th August Trinity 11	9.30 Holy Communion	I Kings 19 vv 1-9 p361 Ephesians 4 v25 – 5 v2 p1176 John 6 vv 35-51 p1070	
19 th August Trinity 12	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP Trinity 12	
	9.30 Holy Communion	Proverbs 9 vv 1-6 p642 Ephesians 5 vv 15-21 p1176 John 6 vv 51-58 p1071	
26 th August Trinity 13	9.30 Holy Communion	Joshua 24 vv 1-18 p240 Ephesians 6 vv 10-20 p1177 John 6 vv 56-69 p1071	
Wednesday Holy Communion @ 9.30 @ St Michael's		Thursday Holy Communion @ 9.30 @ St John's	
August 1 st	Jeremiah 15 vv 10-21 Matthew 13 vv 44-46	August 2 nd	Jeremiah 18 vv 1-6 Matthew 13 vv 47-53
August 8 th St Dominic	Jeremiah 31 vv 1-7 Matthew 15 vv 21-28	August 9 th Mary Sumner (founder of MU)	Jeremiah 31 vv 31-34 Matthew 16 vv 13-23
August 15 th BVM	Galatians 4 vv 4-7 Luke 1 vv 46-55	August 16 th	Ezekiel 12 vv 1-12 Matthew 18 v21 – 19 v1
August 22 nd	Ezekiel 34 vv 1-11 Matthew 20 vv 1-16	August 23 rd	Ezekiel 36 vv 23-28 Matthew 22 vv 1-14
August 29 th Beheading of St John the Baptist	II Thessalonians 2 vv 1-17 Matthew 23 vv 27-33	August 30 th	I Corinthians 1 vv 1-9 Matthew 24 vv 42-51



24th is St Bartholomew's Day: HC St Michael's 7.30 am

Copy Date September Magazine: 10th August 8.30 am Rectory

The 10th of August is also St Laurence's Day. There have been two churches dedicated to St Laurence at Upper Halling. The mediaeval St Laurence is the building at the bottom of Chapel Lane, now converted into houses – though retaining some ecclesiastical features. Older readers will also remember the “tin tabernacle” St Laurence, roughly where the Jubilee Hall now stands. It is just visible in this picture. Many Upper Halling children were christened there and it had a lively congregation and a flourishing Sunday School. I'm sure some of you have very happy memories of worshipping there. We hold services at 8.00 am on the first Sunday of the month and 5.30 pm (after tea at 4.30) on the second Sunday of the month in the Jubilee Hall, maintaining the tradition of worship at Upper Halling. Everybody is welcome of course and equally so at St John's and St Michael's. Jesus came to bring us life and joy in abundance. What a joy it is to share that joy!



Does this Seem Strange?

This young man tells his story in a magazine* I receive. He says he was christened, but there was very little Christianity in his family. He wasn't prayed with or sung to or taken to Church. However, he kept coming across the Church in the history he read and decided that he ought to find out more about it. So he started going to Church sometimes. He realised that faith was something that he wanted to take more seriously. The only resource he found at home was an old copy of the Book of Common Prayer, which had belonged to a long dead great aunt and was on a shelf of old books which his parents had never got round to getting rid of. The prayers for the Royal Family included Queen Mary! Nevertheless, he read the book and prayed the prayers, especially Mattins and Evensong. He speaks of "the imagery of the psalms, the honesty of the confession and the twin jewels of the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis".

I had never heard of anyone being converted by reading the Prayer Book. I've heard plenty of stories of people being converted by reading the Bible. That's just what you would expect. The Bible is the Word of God. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Hebrews 4¹²). The Bible is dynamite. Probably, that is the reason that so many people are afraid of it.

But the Prayer Book? Well, to be honest, a great deal of the Prayer Book is made up of quotations from the Bible. So it contains a lot of the Word of God. Furthermore, the parts which are not direct quotations are the Church's attempt to put biblical truth into suitable words for *when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul*, as the Prayer Book itself says. As the young man found out, they are also good words to use on your own, speaking to you of God and inspiring you as you seek to talk to God.

So, perhaps it isn't so surprising that this young man was helped to faith by the Prayer Book. I'm sure Archbishop Cranmer (who wrote most of it) would have been very pleased. The young man in question is now himself in training for the ministry in Cambridge, not very far from the place where Thomas Cranmer himself studied.

What surprised him, however, was the reaction of some older Christians, back in his teenage years, when he told them that he was reading the Prayer Book. They told him that it was quite unsuitable for this day and age and that young people wouldn't understand it. As a rebellious adolescent, happily that had the effect of making him all the more determined to persevere with it.

I have some sympathy with him. I was definitely a rebellious teenager! I must be forty years older than he is, but, even when I was young, a lot of older people in the Church thought that the Book of Common Prayer was way past its sell-by date and more a hindrance to mission than a means of grace.

That wasn't my experience. I conceived a great love for the Prayer Book. It does put the teachings of the Bible into words which are good to use both for worship and for teaching. I learnt a great deal about God from the Prayer Book. I should say also that the Prayer Book has helped me to know God, which is something different from and much more important than knowing about Him.

Apart from the contents, what some people love and some people hate about the Prayer Book is the language. It is beautifully written and it is also dated. For some people, it is hard to understand. Of course, God is beyond our understanding and so are very many important truths, not only in religion, but in every area of life. If I wrote you a prayer book which you could totally understand, either you'd already be in heaven, or else I should have sold you short. Having said that, however, is it necessary to make what is already very deep harder to comprehend by using beautiful and out of date language? I think that there is a case for using special language when talking to or about God. He is very special, more special than anything. We approach with awe, even with fear, as well as with love. I also love the King James Bible for the same reasons. They used to say,

* Fergus Butler-Gallie in *The Prayer Book Today* Trinity 2018.

Don't replace God Almighty with God All Matey. Even so, I'm quite sure that God hears our prayers whatever language we use and when we don't even know what to say or how to approach Him. *In him we live, and move, and have our being.*

There is more to English than Maths. The way you say or write something conveys meanings beyond what the words literally mean. Wordsworth, instead of writing, *I Wandered lonely as a cloud That floats on high o'er vales and hills, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host, of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees, Fluttering and dancing in the breeze,* could have put, *I was out for a walk on my own when I saw a lot of yellow flowers under those trees just by the lake.* Literally, it would have meant the same, but it wouldn't really have meant the same and I doubt if we'd still have been quoting him 200 years after he thus put pen to paper.

Those older people were foolish to be prejudiced against what that young man and millions of others have found to be a means of grace to bring them to God. On the other hand, it is equally foolish to be prejudiced against other means of grace which God uses to bring people to know Him. The much more modern Book of Common Worship we mostly use at St Michael's and St John's also contains a great deal of very valuable material and it is probably easier to understand the literal meaning, though it still assumes a reading age of about eighteen. My reservation is that, apart from losing something with the loss of Cranmer's language, I'm also concerned that Common Worship possibly softens religion too much. Anxious to please everyone, it doesn't

sufficiently risk offending anyone and may therefore seem to take less seriously than it ought the seriousness of sin, the consequences of evil, the transcendence, imminence and involvement of God in His creation, and what all that means for God's absolute commitment to us and our absolute dependence on Him and the necessity of our being totally committed to Him in everything we say and do and are. And yet it has a lot of merits that the old Common Prayer doesn't have - such as a more appropriate set of readings for Communion and a much greater variety of material.

The ways in which other congregations and other churches of different denominations worship are also treasures of grace. They open up our understanding and lift up our hearts in unexpected ways. None of them is perfect; we are on earth, not yet in heaven. Yet I'm sure that worship offered in spirit and in truth is always acceptable to God and beneficial for Christians to join in with. We can all learn. The great mistake is to turn off and turn away from whatever we don't understand or don't quite like, whether it is versions of the Bible, different kinds of music, different forms of words for worship. We can all grow. We can all grow in love for God and for one another.

In the end, it is God alone Who can make Himself known to us and it is up to Him how He does so. What's required of us is to be open to the ways in which He is working in our lives and to foster the ways in which He is working in the lives of other people, which might be different from what works for us because they are different people! Roger.

Psalm 63.

O GOD, thou art my God : early will I seek thee. 2. My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh also longeth after thee : in a barren and dry land where no water is. 3. Thus have I looked for thee in holiness : that I might behold thy power and glory. 4. For thy loving-kindness is better than the life itself : my lips shall praise thee. 5. As long as I live will I magnify thee on this manner : and lift up my hands in thy Name. 6. My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness : when my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips. 7. Have I not remembered thee in my bed : and thought upon thee when I was waking? 8. Because thou hast been my helper : therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. 9. My soul hangeth upon thee : thy right hand hath upholden me. 10. These also that seek the hurt of my soul : they shall go under the earth. 11. Let them fall upon the edge of the sword : that they may be a portion for foxes. 12. But the King shall rejoice in God; all they also that swear by him shall be commended : for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. **Amen.**

Memories of Halling in the 1940's by Ron Underdown III

(This is the last instalment of Ron's memories in this Summer's magazines. You can see his whole article online on our webpage under magazine. <http://cuxtonandhalling.org.uk/Memories%20of%20Halling.pdf>)

Wartime Events and Incidents

Army personnel built a bridge across the river and the Marsh Road (reference "A" on the map below). At the time the bridge provided the only alternative river crossing to the ancient stone bridge at Aylesford, between Rochester and Maidstone. Only pedestrians and military vehicles were allowed to use the bridge which was removed soon after the war.

As witnessed when living in Manor Terrace in the High Street, whilst standing in the back yard of our house and looking towards the Marsh Road, I saw a Hurricane fighter, in flames, pass low over the houses in a shallow dive heading towards the river. It was a sunny day and one could clearly see the pilot parachuting to the ground. Having climbed on to the top of the air-raid shelter (which was below ground level) I could see perhaps twenty or more people running across the allotments and the 'Rec' towards the crash site (reference "B" on the map below).

A published account states that: *"On Sunday 13 October 1940, Pilot officer Jack Ross DFC, a member of 17 Squadron based in Debden, Essex, was scrambled to intercept enemy aircraft heading for London, over Dartford. Pursuing an enemy plane, in and out of cloud, his aircraft (Hurricane P3536) was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Although wounded he removed his flying helmet, bailed out and parachuted safely to the ground. The aircraft crashed at 13.54 into the east bank of the Medway at Wouldham near Rochester. The pilot, with injuries to both legs, was taken to Gravesend hospital".* Further details available at <http://www.wouldhamvillage.com/hurricanewreck.html>.

There were three other air crashes although details are not verified. A Mosquito fighter bomber crashed and burst into flames in the woods above the 'Warren', adjacent to the path leading to Dean Valley. The smoke plume could be seen from the village (reference "G" on the map below). An American Mustang fighter crashed in a field adjacent to the Pilgrim's Way and the sharp bend in Ladd's Lane at Upper Halling (reference "I" on the map below). A British bomber believed to be a Wellington, crash landed at night in a remote spot on the opposing slope to that at Upper Halling. One could see the path taken by the aircraft, due to slight damage to trees and bushes on the slope, until it came to rest at the edge of the wood. There was some speculation that the site could have been a 'dummy' airfield set up to encourage enemy bombers to drop their bombs where they could do least damage.

After the sites were cleared, boys searched the area for 'finds' such as fragments of metal or Perspex (from which rings could be made), just as, following air raids which were usually at night, they would look for pieces of shrapnel from anti-aircraft shells or other related items.

Bombs fell on North Halling, approximately half a mile north-east of Rugby cement works. An aircraft dropped four bombs. One fell in the hills adjacent to the chalk pit, the second in my grandfather's back garden, the third demolished the end house in Portland Row (fortunately no fatalities or serious injuries) and the fourth fell in a field. (reference "D" on the map below).

Two Doodlebugs or flying bombs fell, close together but at different times, on a hill adjacent to Lingham's farm at Upper Halling, the second, during the day, which my brother and I happened to witness. I was walking across a field next to Marsh Road when the doodlebug appeared to my right from the direction of Wouldham, quite low and its rocket engine firing unevenly. My brother, waiting for me to join him and friends at the 'Sidings', saw the doodlebug approaching head-on and recalls that as the engine cut-out briefly the nose of the doodlebug dropped down a few feet before levelling out again when it re-fired. It was rapidly losing height. Moments after passing there was a huge explosion and briefly a large 'fireball'. It seemed to

The woods retain their appeal however and the views are well worth the climb.

The Chalk Pit. One of a number but mentioned for several reasons.

Towards the end of the war it was used as a training area for soldiers using live ammunition.

Before and after that time it was used as a play area by children.

Noted for primroses and wild strawberries in season.

Based entirely on childhood memories (it was quite picturesque and flat) it would make a great recreation area for walks etc.

Old Cement Works. Chimneys and main factory buildings demolished and then left.

The Sidings. An area adjacent to the railway station where, formerly, loaded cement trucks were brought from a then active cement works to join the railway system.

Now overgrown, it was a favourite play area for boys with trees to climb, particularly the beech tree next to the platform, etc.

Lower Rec. Recreation ground and Halling Minor's (under 18's) 'home' football pitch.

The following is an index to numbered locations on the map:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Fissenden's farm. | 20. Root's/Bourne's shop – sold sweets and bottles of pop called Penny (later Penny-Ha'penny) Monsters and sometimes home-made ice cream. | 46. School for infants (5-7 year olds). |
| 2. Twelve Houses – a row of cottages whose front steps stopped on edge of road. | 21. Bill Road's – shoe repairer and shoe sales. | 47. School for older children (8-11 year olds). Head teacher's house was in the grounds. |
| 3. The 'Walnut Tree' – a thatched-roofed off-license | 22. Holme's shop – sold sweets and Wall's ice cream. | 48. Water works – housed a huge 'beam' pumping engine. Wonder what happened to that! |
| 4. 'The Plough' pub | 23. The 'Homeward Bound' pub. | 49. The 'Robin Hood' pub. |
| 5. Feathersone's shop – occupier of house in Hilton Terrace sold potatoes, sweets etc. | 24. Rook's – lending library. | 50. Lingham's farm. |
| 6. Bowling green. | 25. Allen's – dentist. | 51. Wraight's – grocers. |
| 7. Hayward's builders yard. | 26. Sewage treatment plant. | 52. Baker's wood yard – made chestnut paling fencing. |
| 8. Bradley's – shop in front selling sweets and Lyon's ice cream, at the back a transport cafe. | 27. Haye's – school dentist. | 53. The 'Black Boy' pub. |
| 9. Harris's (later combining with shop next door, the CO-OP) – grocers. | 28. Chapman's – butcher. | |
| 10. Barbers. | 29. Hooker's – greengrocer | |
| 11. The 'Five Bells' pub. | 30. Horner's – newsagents. | |
| 12. The ferry. | 31. Railway station. | |
| 13. Shop – empty during war but a number of uses after. | 32. Botten's garage. | |
| 14. The Post Office – also sold ladies' dresses, knitting wool etc. | 33. Squire's – butcher; adjacent shop empty. | |
| 15. Halling Working Men's Club – the 'Institute'. | 34. Beadle's – ironmongers also sold paraffin, candles, kindling wood etc. | |
| 16. Ashby's – butcher | 35. Hearn's – greengrocer. | |
| 17. Yard where the butcher kept pigs. Later became Bert Cook's coal yard who delivered coal by horse and cart. | 36. Tidy's – sold items of household furniture. | |
| 18. The 'Rose and Crown' pub. | 37. Mutimer's (later Wraights) – grocers. | |
| 19. Mid-terrace house converted into Gore's fish and chip shop. | 38. Feltham's – dairy. | |
| | 39. Faucheons farm. | |
| | 40. End of Formby Terrace – Osenten's farm. | |
| | 41. The 'New Town Social Club' ('The Bolshie'). | |
| | 42. Fire station. | |
| | 43. Doctor's surgery. | |
| | 44. Forrester's farm. | |
| | 45. The Vicarage. | |

The following is an index to war time locations on the map:

- A. Army personnel built the bridge and the Marsh Road.
- B. Hurricane plane crash.
- C. Possible anti-glider landing arrangement.
- D. Four bombs dropped.
- E. Doodlebug crash site.
- F. Doodlebug crash site.
- G. Mosquito fighter-bomber crash site.
- H. British bomber crash-landing.
- I. American Mustang fighter crash site.
- J. Barrage Balloon site at bottom of field.
- K. Air-raid shelters built into bank.
- L. Special storage area.
- M. Possible route of PLUTO (speculation only).

PRAYER FESTIVAL

Saturday 22 September Rochester Cathedral 10am to 2.30pm

Experience new ways to pray. Learn how to help others to pray.

Workshops, teaching and time for worship. For more details visit: www.rochester.anglican.org/prayer-festival.php

A donation of £6 per person is requested to cover costs.



The Prayer of a London Bus Driver (following on from our series on buses)

Our Father, Which art in Hendon, Harrow Road be Thy name. Thy Kingston come, Thy Wimbledon, In Erith as it is in Hendon. Give us this day our Berkhamstead, And forgive us our Westminster, As we forgive those who Westminster against us. Lead us not into Temple Station, But deliver us from Ealing. For thine is the Kingston, The Purley and the Crawley, For Iver and Iver, Crouch End.

Ian Drury

Our Father, Which art in Halling, Allhallows be thy name, Thy Cuxton come, Thy Wouldham done, In Eccles as it is in Higham. Give us this day our daily Frinsted, And forgive us our Trottiscloffes As we forgive those who Trosley against us. Lead us not into Twydall, But deliver us from Elam. For thine is the Chatham, the Paddlesworth and the Gillingham, For Hever and Hever, Gravesend.

A Kent version inspired by the above.



Mission Aviation Fellowship

Bernie Pinner came to both Halling and Cuxton in June to tell us about the important and exciting work carried out by MAF. There are many regions of the world which are quite inaccessible except by aircraft, cutting communities off from medical help, education, missions and other vital services. MAF pilots fly in and out of these isolated and sometimes dangerous places conveying people and packages to where they are required. Bernie spoke of the need for four things, all beginning with the letter P. MAF needs: prayer, people, pounds and postcards. The first three are obvious. If you go onto <https://www.maf-uk.org/> or speak to me, you can ask for MAF's free magazine to be sent to you. This tells you about MAF's work and where your prayers are needed. You may yourself be able to or you may know someone who could offer to work at anything from piloting to paperwork. Pounds are an obvious need. The website or the magazine will tell you where to send them or ask me. Postcards might be less obvious, but there is a big market for old postcards and MAF can make a lot of money from them. Please let me have any old postcards that you have going spare and I'll pass them on. Roger.

Remembrance Sunday 2018

This year is the 100th anniversary of the armistice which ended the fighting in the so called Great War. This makes Remembrance Sunday even more important than usual this year. In the church we shall do things slightly differently from the way we normally do them and both local parish councils will be putting on special events.

Because of the way the dates of Easter have worked out, Sunday 11th November this year is the same Sunday as Sunday 10th November 1918 – Trinity 24. This means that we shall be using the same collect and readings as would have been used in the village as the Armistice was about to come into effect. This gives me a feeling of solidarity across the generations.

Holy Communion is always important. It is the service which Jesus Himself commanded us to carry out. By it we proclaim the Death of Jesus until He comes again. It is particularly apposite on Remembrance Sunday. Thinking of the horrors of which people are capable, I'm very mindful of the words which begin the traditional Communion prayer: **ALMIGHTY** God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by his

one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again; The Death



of Jesus atones for all our sins. We can be forgiven. We are forgiven if we confess our sins to God in faith. Whatever mess we may make of the world, the love of God is more powerful than all our hatreds and our indifference to the welfare of others. His wisdom is infinitely greater than our foolishness. Many, many families have sacrificed their sons, husbands and fathers in war. Many more, men, women and children, have lost their lives in conflict. In Holy Communion we proclaim the truth that God too sacrificed His Son. He sacrificed His Son for our peace. Jesus yielded His life as an atonement for sin. He is there with us on the battlefield. He is there with us wherever we may be. He understands everything about us. He has overcome all the power of the Evil One. He sustains us in our journey through this life with His love and brings us home to be with Him in glory when our time on earth is over.

The stained glass window depicted is in Lower Halstow church.

Halling

There will be a celebration of Holy Communion at St John's at 8.00 am. I shall use the 1662 rite and the service will be substantially the same as it was on this Sunday 100 years before.

At 10.50, there will be a Parade and Act of Remembrance in a service of Morning Prayer. I am inviting village groups and societies to contribute appropriately to this service – possibly with readings, music or drama. Within reason, it is up to them. We shall remember by name those commemorated on the War Memorial and wreaths will be laid. After the service, we shall parade to Forge Green.

The Parish Council are arranging events in the afternoon and, as usual on a second Sunday, there will be tea in the Jubilee Hall at 4.30, followed by Evening Prayer at 5.30.

Cuxton

There will be one service in the morning at 9.30 am. This will be a Parade and Act of Remembrance in the context of Holy Communion. We shall remember by name those commemorated on the War Memorial and wreaths will be laid.

In the evening, the Parish Council are arranging the lighting of the beacon and there will be a Concert in Commemoration of the Armistice in St Michael's Church. The times are not finalised yet, but probably around 7.00 pm.

Both

It is hoped that the bells will be rung at 7.05 pm in solidarity with bells all over the country as they were rung on this day 100 years ago. If you have any pictures or artefacts you could lend us for exhibition, they will be displayed at Cuxton or Halling as appropriate.

Forthcoming Attractions

15th August 2.00: Teddy Bears' Picnic Rectory Garden. Bring Teddy if you have one. Food will be provided. There will also be stalls and games.

19th September 10.45 church hall: MU open meeting to learn about fostering and adoption.

29th September (Michaelmas) 9.30 am Holy Communion at St Michael's followed by brunch in church hall.

7th October Harvest Festival: 6.30 pm Harvest Praise at St Michael's followed by Harvest Supper.

17th October 10.45 church hall: MU meeting with the subject Outreach.

27th October: 7.30 pm Quiz for Church funds in the Church Hall. £7.00.

11th November: Concert in Commemoration of the Armistice at St Michael's.

21st November 10.45 church hall: MU meeting with the subject the Kenward Trust

1st December: Church Christmas Fayre at 10.00 am in the Scout Hall.

2nd February 2019: Folk Mass for Candlemas pm at St Michael's followed by refreshments and folk music.

Thanks

Thank you to everyone who helped me to celebrate my 50th Birthday. It was a lovely afternoon and was very special – I hope that you all enjoyed it. Thank you for all the lovely cards, gifts, flowers, chocolate and wishes. The bell ringing was a lovely surprise – thank you for the 720 of Plain Bob Minor! The food was wonderful – thank you to Jenny and Chris Beaney. Thank you to everyone for the cake which was amazing with a model of me singing in the choir – thank you Chris. Thank you David, Andrew and Thomas for making it all possible and for all their hard work, especially making the tea! From Dawn.

The Pilates Element

Pilates is a body conditioning exercise programme suitable for all ages and abilities. My classes are friendly, fun and enjoyable.

Emily Pollington, member of FHT, qualified instructor.

Pilates classes are held in the church hall on Tuesdays from 6.30-7.30 & 7.30-8.30 pm. For more information, please contact instructor Emily Pollington, 07940233296, emilypollington@btinternet.com Also on Facebook.

Please book through website

<https://the-pilates-element.pilatesnearyou.co.uk/>

Quotations

Four Religious Principles Without Which Science Doesn't Make Sense.

1. The idea of a single, beneficent, rational agency whose rationality could be expressed in mathematics and read in the humblest aspect of Creation.
2. The idea that this agency could not be identified with anything within the universe, but gave to the whole a law-like character.
3. The idea that truth is not the exclusive property of any single civilization.
4. The idea that truth cannot be imposed by force but involves the right, even the duty, of individual investigation and experiment.

Wagner & Briggs – *The Penultimate Curiosity: How Science Swims in the Slipstream of Ultimate Questions.*

Albert Einstein: *The most incomprehensible feature of the universe is that it is comprehensible.*

John Wesley: *Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can.*

Medical Emergency

I swallowed a dictionary, it gave me thesaurus throat I've ever had.

Christian Aid

A Division of The British Council of Churches



entwine their leads and trip-up unsuspecting walkers! We walked away from Meopham Green and the A227 into the first of many meadows filled with clover, ragwort, buttercups and many varieties of meadow fescue. The bees and butterflies were busy darting amongst the flowers as we descended to White Hill Road. We crossed the road and went through to an amazing field of animals. On first sight it seemed we had chanced upon a zebra amongst a group of horses and ponies, however, on closer inspection it was a horse wearing a zebra stripe patterned rug! The horses were

Christian Aid Walk

Each year we join with friends from North Kent Methodist Circuit to walk in support of Christian Aid. This year we met at Meopham Green on Saturday 30th June for a planned 6.5mile walk in the beautiful countryside around Meopham. After renewing acquaintances we set off full of enthusiasm and vigour as a group of 12 adults and 6 dogs. Well, the dogs were very enthusiastic to meet each other, sort out the order of seniority and set out their secret plans to



friendly and provided great amusement for the dogs, as did the tethered goat near the farm buildings. We followed the footpath into a long meadow towards Foxendown. At the end of this meadow, beside Brimstone Cottage, it was time to re-group and give the dogs some much needed water. The temperature was rising and the sky was without a cloud.

The next section took us up Brimstone Hill Lane. We climbed slowly then turned right at the top onto a lovely flat road. The local car drivers on Oakenden Road were very considerate and all dogs (and humans) walked safely, without incident, on to the next footpath, on our left, leading up through Henley Wood. The wood was refreshingly cool and offered welcome shade through its twists and turns leading up to the Wealdway Path. This path took us to our lunchtime destination, Camer Park.

Camer Park has lots of trees giving plenty of shade as well as open grass spaces which make ideal play areas. One family were entertained by Chloe, a young spaniel, who captured one of their tennis balls and added a new dimension to their game. By contrast, Tommy showed his maturity by ignoring all play balls and sitting under a tree beside his master. Molly, a gorgeous black labrador, ambled along oblivious to all tempting opportunities for mischief. She seemed to suggest that she had walked quite far enough in the heat and it was time for water, lunch and a good lie-down whilst the humans had their lunch and shared snacks. Lunch was a relaxed affair with all participants seated at wooden picnic tables amongst the trees. There were intermittent forays to use the refreshment kiosk and conveniently situated amenities.

After suitable refreshment and a photo-shoot we moved on. Out by the car park, left up the lane then right across a field of wheat to the little tunnel leading to the churchyard of St John's Church, Meopham. A few walkers took time out to investigate the church and found it to be beautiful, light and airy. We moved on out from the front entrance and crossed the busy A227 in order to walk down Shipley Hills Road to Langley Grove. The final trek home took us back up hill through cereal and hay fields to emerge at the top of Pitfield Road and onto Meopham Green. A lovely walk and very enjoyable day with good company - both human and canine! Holly Croft.



St John the Baptist's Birthday 2018

As planned, we enjoyed an open air tea in the churchyard before Evening Prayer in the church. It was a lovely, sunny day. There was a good crowd and an abundance of food – sandwiches, cakes and cream scones. Thank you to all those who suggested and arranged an excellent event, which was enjoyed by all.

From Mary Acott

Thank you, everyone, for making me so welcome to the tea & Evensong at St John's. I so enjoyed meeting you all again and apologise to any I did not at first recognise. It was very emotional for me to sit again in the church in which I had spent so many happy hours. God bless you all and the work & witness you are carrying out in the village.

Rock of Ages

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure.

While I draw this fleeting breath, when mine eyes shall close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown, see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.

The Reverend Augustus Toplady is believed to have been inspired to write this hymn, when sheltering from a storm at Burrington Combe in the Mendip Hills under the rock depicted in this old postcard.



From the Registers

Baptisms:

23rd June

8th July

Elsie Lola Feraday-Fields

Zoe Nadia Pender Jerrom

Los Angeles

Kent Road

Halling's VC

Sergeant Thomas J Harris VC MM 1892-1918

Thomas James Harris was born at 79, High Street, Halling, Kent on 30 January 1892 to William John and Sarah Ann Harris, the seventh of nine children. He attended Halling Board School (Infants) from 7 July 1896 and possibly worked at Hilton & Anderson's Manor Cement Works as a labourer after leaving school.

He enlisted in the 6th Battalion, Queens Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) on 4 August 1914, at the age of 22, and after training was sent to France on 1 June 1915. He was wounded on 2 occasions in 1916, and was sent back to England for a short period before returning to France in 1917. He reached the rank of Sergeant in 1918, during which time he saw action on the Somme and was awarded the Military Medal.

On 9 August 1918, Sergeant Harris took part in an attack close to the small village of Ville-sur-Ancre, near Albert. He led his section under heavy fire in an attempt to capture and destroy machine gun posts to allow the 6th Battalion to advance — the first two attempts were successful and he showed immense gallantry and devotion in killing the enemy single-handed and capturing the guns, but during his third advance he was killed by machine gun fire. However, his example had inspired his men and the advance continued. Sergeant Harris was later posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty in attack". Thomas was buried at Dernancourt Communal Cemetery Extension, France — in a village 3 kilometres south of Albert — in plot VIIIJ 20. An oil painting depicting him was held at the Black Boy Public House, Upper Halling, until this became a private residence. A German field gun was also placed next to the Lych Gate in the grounds of Halling Church as a memorial to Sgt Harris, but this was removed during World War 2. His name was subsequently honoured in the naming of Harris House which provided sheltered accommodation and in Thomas Harris Close, which now occupies the same site.

St Michael's Draw July: £10 Miss Holdsworth (23) & £5 each Mrs Haselden (15) & Mrs Booth (5).

St John's Draw June: £5 each Mr Mitchell (68), Mrs Bridges (82), Mr Pratt (97) & Mrs Watts (117) – drawn by Miss Heighes.

The Seasonal Steps of our Seers – August

Almost forgotten now is the old church festival Lammas Day – 1st August. Going back to the time of the Celts and its ancient origins, it was originally called Lughasad Day after the Celtic God Lugh and relating to harvest. Out of the first harvest of the year, loaves were made and blessed, and the word Lammas could be a corruption of 'loaf mass', or else from the dedication of sheep to the church by the farming community called 'lamb mass'. Large sheep fairs were held at this time and semi-common grazing was opened up until Candlemas (2nd February). It was also a time for foretelling marriages, and the trying out of partners who would agree to a 'trial marriage' whilst the fair ran its course, maybe many days.

The 5th August is St Oswald's Day. King of Northumbria from 634 until in c.642, he was described by the Venerable Bede as a saintly king who was the most powerful ruler in England at this time. There was a particular cult to him in the Middle Ages as he promoted Christianity within his kingdom which stretched from the Scottish border to the Wash. The little church in Grasmere, Lake District, is dedicated to Oswald and at his festival, choristers and children used to parade rushes and floral tributes around the parish and then decorate the church, the rushes helping to soften the sound of feet on the paved floor and they scented the interior of the building. At the end of these proceedings everyone was treated to gingerbread stamped with an image of the saint. In the churchyard of St Oswald's the poet William Wordsworth lies buried.

The Game Season begins on the glorious twelfth of August. This is when top restaurants rush to provide the first grouse of the season to their tables, and the hunting and shooting season begins and the discerning animals look for suitable hiding places.

In London, a great fair used to be held in Smithfield, dating back to 1133, in honour of the neighbouring St Bartholomew's hospital founded by King Henry I's jester on August 24th, for this is St Bartholomew's day. Bartholomew lived in Palestine in the first century and was reputedly flayed (or skinned) alive, a slow and painful execution where skin is removed from the body, keeping the whole intact. He is, amongst other things, the patron saint of butchers and tanners. There has been a meat market in London since Roman times. The market traders of Smithfield provided much needed income for the hospital, but the fair was shut down in 1855 as there were questions raised about morality. However, some good things emerged from the fair as the first known toffee apples were made and served there. These were usually windfall apples, skewered on sticks and dipped in thick honey. This tradition came from the fact that St Bart was also the patron saint of bee-keepers and honey-makers. The industrious bee inspired many poets and writers as a maxim against the sin of idleness and mischief. Hymn writer Isaac Watts wrote these lines:

How doth the little busy bee Improve each shining hour, And gather honey all the day, From ev'ry opening flower!

Throughout August many feast days were held in honour of local town saints of various parish churches as an excuse for summer holiday revels. Some of these were called Wakes, some were called revels, and some just feasts. It was an excuse for the village or parish to get together to celebrate. It was a time when locally popular food dishes were made and consumed. These wakes however died out in most areas because unfortunately bad behaviour became more prevalent than the feast itself. JGB



Tommy's Talking Points

I like the Summer. It's light in the morning. It's light late in the evening. He leaves the doors open and I go in and out of the garden as I please. I get longer walks and I don't come home muddy and I still meet lots of people out of doors, in the church, in the hall and wherever we go.

We had an adventure the other morning. We were approaching Dean Valley and we heard an agitated bleating on the part of the whole flock of sheep. I ran on ahead and barked through the fence, which I don't usually do, and Master caught up quickly to see what it was all about. A lamb had got caught with its horns stuck through the fence. Maybe it thought the grass was greener. Anyway, it couldn't get back. The rest of the sheep were upset, but congregated on the other side of the field as far away as possible. Master to the rescue. He managed to manoeuvre the lamb so that it could extricate its horns from the wire mesh. He didn't want to hurt it and it was quite strong and struggling, but he succeeded in the end. The lamb ran happily off to its mother and took a drink of milk and all the other sheep seemed very pleased. Master said that he was doing his job as a pastor, which is Latin for shepherd. He said that Jesus is the Good Shepherd Who looks after us all and that all Christians are like mini-shepherds supposed to look after one another. He was very pleased when our people did act like that when we faced three medical emergencies in succession in our congregation.

The incident also reminded him of a bible story about a ram caught with its horns in a thicket. (See Genesis 22). That ram stands for Christ crucified. He sets us free from sin and death and fills us with joy. Like the sheep rejoicing over the freed lamb, there is joy in heaven over every sinner who repents.

Last month, I said that Master couldn't understand why I love to sniff out the smells of the countryside. He protests that there are plenty of scents which he enjoys. There are the obvious ones like lilac and honeysuckle and some roses and Philadelphus (mock orange, sometimes misleadingly called Syringa). He also likes some of the less obvious perfumes of flowers, like elder, and especially privet, which he really enjoys. You don't get privet flowers if you cut it as a hedge, but it produces an abundance if you let it grow.

He's still working on naming the flowers we see on our walks (not yet having found the key). We've seen pyramid orchids. There's ragged robin. There are different colour clovers. There are several species of vetch. He noticed a clump of tall, yellow spike flowers at the entrance to Dean Farm from the lower path. He wondered what they might be and then we saw some in a neighbour's garden. On enquiry, he learnt that they were of the genus *Lysimachia*, which contains many plants from creeping jenny upwards. He says it's funny that flower colours don't clash like paint or fabric would. Yellow and orange paint together would look very garish, but he says that our orange day lilies growing out of a carpet of yellow St John's wort look just right, especially in the sun. Tommy.