

Principal Services in the Parish of Cuxton & Halling			
Date	St Michael & All Angels Cuxton	St John the Baptist Halling	The Jubilee Hall Upper Halling
Sunday 4 th December Advent 2	9.30 Family Communion, Gift Service & Holy Baptism	11.00 Holy Communion and Gift Service	8.00 Holy Communion
Sunday 11 th December Advent 3	9.30 Holy Communion	11.00 Holy Communion	4.30 Tea 5.30 Evening Prayer
Sunday 18 th December Advent 4	9.30 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	11.00 Holy Communion (Stop! Look! Listen!)	
	6.30 Nine Lessons and Carols	3.00 Crib Service, Christingle & Carol Service	
Monday 19 th December	7.00 Scout & Guide Carol Service		
Wednesday 21 st December	9.30 Holy Communion (followed by <i>A Feast For Advent</i>)		
	2.00 Nativity For Under Fives		
Thursday 22 nd December	9.30 Holy Communion		
	2.00 Nativity For Under Fives		
Saturday 24 th December (Christmas Eve)	7.45 Mattins, 8.00 Holy Communion		
	5.00 Crib Service & Christingle		
	11.00 Midnight Mass		
Sunday 25 th December Christmas Day	9.30 Family Communion	8.00 Holy Communion	
26 th , 27 th , 28 th , 30 th , 31 st 29 th December	9.30 Holy Communion		
Sunday 1 st January Naming and Circumcision of Jesus	9.30 Holy Communion	11.00 Holy Communion	8.00 Holy Communion
Friday 6 th January Epiphany	7.30 am Holy Communion		
Sunday 8 th January Baptism of Christ	9.30 Holy Communion	11.00 Holy Communion	4.30 Tea 5.30 Evening Prayer
Sunday 15 th January Epiphany 2	9.30 Holy Communion	11.00 Holy Communion (Stop! Look! Listen! RIK)	
Sunday 22 nd January Epiphany 3	9.30 Holy Communion	11.00 Holy Communion	
Sunday 29 th Communion Fourth Sunday Before Lent	11.00 United Parish Eucharist at St John's followed by Pudding Party. (See p4).		

Copy Date February Magazine: 13th January 8.30 am Rectory.

On Thursday afternoons we have a Mother & Toddler service at Halling at 2.00 (not December 29th).

The only services 26th – 31st December are the daily celebrations of Holy Communion indicated above.

Sunday School is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays).

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

<http://hometown.aol.co.uk/RogerKnight/index.htm>

Log on to our home pages for up to date information on what is happening in the parish. In addition to notices etc, other items such as Proceedings of the PCC and sermons are from time to time displayed on the web page. Daily Bible notes are available electronically if you send me your e mail address. These too now appear on the web page.

Bible Study & Confirmation Classes: Please watch for notices or ask Rector. MU Bible Study 25th January 7.30 Rectory.



From the Rector

What do vicars moan about at Christmas? There must be something. After all, isn't that what we do?

Disapprove, criticise, find

fault. Isn't that what the Church is for? If you are enjoying something, if it isn't bad for you in this life, it must be sinful and therefore bad for you in the next. "Killjoys" is a good word for Christians, people who want to spoil other people's fun by trying to impose on them their own narrow-minded, outdated morality.

I suppose there are two main things vicars like to make you feel guilty about at Christmas. The first is forgetting "the real meaning of Christmas" when you squeeze the Bible story of the Nativity out of your busy Christmas schedule and forego attending Church in your haste to open your presents and to get the Christmas dinner on. The second is to make you feel guilty for enjoying Christmas by spending what you cannot or should not afford in order to buy extravagant presents and by eating and drinking more than is good for you, and all in a world in which millions of people are homeless and hungry while we use up scarce resources consuming trivial luxuries and polluting this beautiful planet with our effluent.

It is for you to judge whether such strictures are fair. There is enough truth in them to make us feel uncomfortable.

However, there is something the matter with a vicar if he can't have fun. There is something very wrong with Christians if they can't see other people enjoying themselves without condemning them.

We don't know how Jesus celebrated birthdays, but we do know that He went to at least one wedding. The Gospel says nothing about Him looking disapprovingly down His Nose at the fact that they served wine. When they ran out of wine, He miraculously manufactured a lot more. He attended parties with publicans* and sinners!

He says that He came so that His followers would have joy, joy in all its fullness.

Well, at Christmas, we are celebrating a birthday. We are celebrating the birthday of the greatest Man Who ever lived. We are celebrating our Friend's birthday. We are celebrating the fact that God became one of us. We are celebrating, not only His Life, but His Death and Resurrection, which brought us the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of eternal life. At Christmas we are celebrating the birthday of Someone Whom we love, Someone Who loves us, Someone Who changed the world and transforms our prospects.

So, don't let anyone tell you that you shouldn't enjoy Christmas, not even a vicar. Especially not a vicar. A vicar should know more than anyone that we've really got something to celebrate at Christmas.

It is very easy to start from a genuine love for people and to be genuinely concerned that their unthinking lifestyle is ultimately self-destructive, but to move on from concern to condemnation and then to a feeling of moral superiority which experiences a grim satisfaction in beholding the awful consequences of other people's sins. That was not the way Jesus was. With His Heavenly Father, He takes no pleasure in the death of a sinner. He weeps because men and women refuse to hear Him and keep going on the broad way that leads to destruction. Jesus came that we may have life. He came that we may have joy in all its fullness.

He celebrates Christmas with us and our role as the Church (Christ's Body on earth) is to make His Birthday Party go with a swing.

All I would say is that if sharing in the Christmas Communion isn't naturally the most important part of enjoying Christmas**, then you've missed the point of Church, and if you don't get pleasure out of showing love to other people (and to God), and you're only happy when you're being greedy, you know nothing at all about how to enjoy yourself.

Roger.

* Roman tax-collectors, not innkeepers!

** 25th December is Christ Mass Day!

Christianity Is The Antidote To Religion

In the mindset of St Paul the distinctive and liberating feature of Christianity, is that psychologically, it is the opposite of religion. Paul was steeped in religion and became a passionate extremist killing people in pursuit of his religious ideals. The message of Jesus, which he famously encountered, was that no amount of religious fervour could gain him acceptance from God. Only by receiving the grace of God through repentance and faith could he experience the freedom of peace with God, his neighbour and himself. For Paul religion came to stand for the vain attempt to reach God through human effort and Christianity for the free gift of God's grace. As the centuries have rolled on the temptation to turn Christianity back into a religion has been ever at our door.

The Bishop of Barking (in *East Window*).

Christian Aid



A Division of The British Council of Churches

Give gifts today that last beyond tomorrow

Got a Christmas crisis? Run out of ideas for presents? Can't bear the thought of endless wrapping? Can't stand the thought of all those unwanted gifts but not sure what to ask for? Then you're in need of

Present Aid....

Present Aid is a great way to give gifts with real meaning this Christmas. The catalogue is full of items used by Christian Aid's partners to change lives in the world's poorest communities – from tools in Angola to goats in Bolivia. For each item you choose to buy for friends or family members, Christian Aid will send you an attractive card to give to them, explaining how their present is making a difference. And why not hand out catalogues to friends letting them know what you really want this year.

You will find copies of this year's Present Aid catalogue at the back of the church and you can go to www.presentaid.org or call 0845 3300 500 to order gifts or more catalogues. Orders for Christmas must be received by 15th December.

200th Anniversary of Trafalgar

The Quarter Peal rung at St Michael's on Sunday 23rd October was part of the nationwide celebrations on the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar.

Quiz

Thank to all who supported our quiz evening on 22nd October. It was great to see the hall packed as it was. I think we all had a good time. It is certainly easier when you have the answers in front of you (as I did this time!) We made £440 for the Church. Thanks to those who set out the hall and ran the raffle, those who prepared and served the food and all of you who came and enjoyed the evening. Roger.

Confirmation 2006

We normally hold confirmations on alternate years in this parish. The other year we are invited to go to Higham. If anyone, therefore, is interested in Confirmation in the near future, I shall start classes after Christmas with a view to presenting you at Higham on May 10th. Candidates are normally 12 years old or older (no upper limit). They may be seeking Baptism. They may have been baptised already and now wish to reaffirm their baptismal commitment and to receive the sacramental grace of Confirmation. If you are not yet sure, but want to study the matter further, you are most welcome to attend the classes and explore the faith with no obligation to be confirmed at the end. Roger.

Joke

A man arrived at the Pearly Gates and St Peter remarked that he appeared to have lived a pretty harmless life but asked if he had ever done anything he felt proud of. The man explained that just once he had shown real courage. He had come across a woman about to be assaulted by twelve thugs. He had marched in and ordered them to stop at once. The thugs had drawn knives and, fearlessly, our hero had taken the woman by the hand and led her away. "When was this?" asked Peter. "About two minutes ago," replied the man.

From the Registers

Baptism:

6th November

William Clay Underdown

Chatham

Funerals:

2nd November

Brenda Iris Waring (60)

Acre Grove

9th November

Rose Catherine Crowhurst (80)

formerly of Halling

16th November

Ian Walton Cunningham (77)

Huntsman's Corner

October Church Hall Draw:- £40 to Di Maxwell drawn by Jenny Beaney.

St John's Draw:- £5 each to Mrs Swatton (6), Mrs Warman (56), Mrs Mitchell (67), Mr Silver (67), Mrs Clark (180) – drawn by Eileen Knight.



Halling WI

Halling W.I.'s annual general meeting has come and gone and everything stays the same. Try as she might, our president, Mrs Mary Fennemore couldn't twist anybody's arm to take over from her for the coming year. Thank you Mary for being willing to do another year. Mrs Jean Mattingly kindly presented the W.I. with a silver president's badge of office, perhaps next year it might persuade another member to wear it. Minutes were read and signed and there were quite a few members who sent their apologies, either because of illness or late holidays. A thank you letter was read from Mrs Ann Seager who is recovering from a recent operation. The report of the 2004 annual meeting was read, although it only seemed like yesterday. How time flies! The annual report for 2005 was presented. We've not had a bad year.

As October is also our Produce and Craft show Mrs Margaret Barrow from Wrotham was with us once again to judge our efforts. She remarked an absents of craft items this year, but considering our entries were from about half a dozen members the standard was very good. The edible pictures all looked good enough to eat (a windmill in a snow storm from Jean) but Evelyn's bouquet of flowers, daisies made from glace cherries and split almonds, and a frame of crisp bread or toast must have been the best in show and have taken her ages to make. She insisted she did it in a matter of minutes. The salads on a plate (some were like

banquets). One looked as if it had a pile of blue plums on the top, turned out to be "Purple Spuds". The Scones (oh dear, the Scones). None of us liked the Duchess of Devonshire's recipe. Even our Scone Queen, Mrs Betty Head, couldn't make them rise much more than half an inch, 'nuff said. Jean Mattingly's photograph of a very cheeky robin won the Pam Amos Silver Vase for best photograph. The overall winner of the show was Mrs Phyllis Chidwick. The monthly competition, an item beginning with the letter P was won by Mrs Margaret Sutherland with a fine pencil portrait of a young girl and Evelyn Low's lovely quilled pink pig was second. Flower of the month was won by Jean with a lovely big fuchsia.

Halling W.I. had a very good Art and Craft Exhibit at the District show at Ryarsh. Our embroideries, quilts, quilling, painted glass, leather work and knitting were a delight to the eye, as I've said before. There are still a few of us "crafty ladies" about. Evelyn Low and Ann Heaseman did a grand job with their cards and plants in the selling department, and sent a goodly donation to both the District and our own W.I. Well done Girls.

What have we to look forward to in the coming weeks? Mr Peter Shirman with his talk "All the World's a Stage", in November, The District Carol Concert at West Malling, the Christmas lunch at Trottiscliffe and the Christmas Party. Ah well, bang goes another year. Phyllis.

Pudding Party

After the United Parish Eucharist on 29th January (11.00 St John's) there will be a pudding party. There will be a light first course of soup, followed by the opportunity to enjoy a selection of favourite puddings. Please contact the Rector if you would like to bring your favourite pudding to share. Participants will be invited to make a donation to Church Funds and it would be helpful you could indicate your intention to come.



Cuxton WI

In October, our Annual General Meeting went smoothly. We were please to welcome four new members on to the Committee and our new President, Mrs Dorothy Drew, will take office in January as she has only just returned from Canada. Meanwhile Ann Saunders is continuing as President.

Some of us met up with West Tilbury WI at Gravesend and caught up with all the news over lunch at the Three Daws pub, overlooking the River Thames. There were 22 of us altogether and I hope the chattering and laughter did not put off any other customers! A thoroughly enjoyable day.

This is the time of year when various groups have their annual or Christmas meal – not good for the waistline! The Gardening Group started October with a nice meal and six bottles of free wine. The Committee had a lunch at a pub in Upnor on a beautiful sunny day. Much enjoyed. The Poetry Group had an evening meal at the Golden Lion and livened up a fairly quiet night. Last but not least, the Painting Group had a fantastic lunch at the Beeches, Seven Mile Lane. It can be thoroughly recommended. The food was wonderful.

Unfortunately the arranged walk had to be cancelled because of bad weather, but the next one hopefully will be along the river to Maidstone and back for lunch at the Malta. Food again!

Our November Meeting was fairly well attended and the new Committee members got used to their new roles. Business was short and sweet and, after the break, we were given a demonstration by Evelyn Low of Flower Arrangers for Christmas. She produced six very different arrangements: one in a box, one with candles, another with silver baubles and a two-tier one. We were all amazed at such an amount of greenery from her garden as the weather had been so wet and windy. She very kindly gave the arrangements, minus some props, to be raffled.

Some of the members were going next day for a weekend away to Preston for a *Retail Therapy and Witches* break. More about that next month. Also this month another party are going to Rhineland for the Christmas markets.

Arrangements are being made for our Christmas Celebrations in December. The District Carol Service is at West Malling this year. Cuxton have been asked to read a Christmas poem. We have received three invitations for other WI's Christmas parties and most are going to be well attended by us. I think a lot of us will be going to *Weight Watchers* next year!

Our next meeting is on Thursday December 1st – Christmas Party with entertainment.

STOP PRESS: We were pleased to hear our team came joint third in the Church Hall Quiz.

Ann Harris.

Reflections

Let me do my work each day;
And if the darkened hours
Of despair overcome me, may I
Not forget the strength
That comforted me in the
Desolation of other times. May I
Still remember the bright
Hours that found me walking
Over the silent hills of my
Childhood, or dreaming on the
Margin of the quiet river,
When a light glowed within me,
And I promised my early God
To have courage amid the
Tempests of the changing years.

Spare me from bitterness
And from the sharp passions of
Unguarded moments. May
I not forget that poverty and
Riches are of the spirit.
Though the world know me not,
May my thoughts and actions
Be such as shall keep me friendly
With myself. Lift my eyes
From the earth, and let me not
Forget the uses of the stars.
Forbid that I should judge others
Lest I condemn myself.
Let me not follow the clamour of
The world, but walk calmly

In my path. Give me a few friends
Who will love me for what
I am; and keep ever burning
Before my vagrant steps
The kindly light of hope. And
Though age and infirmity overtake
Me, and I come not within
Sight of the castle of my dreams,
Teach me still to be thankful
For life, and for time's olden
Memories that are good and
Sweet; and may the evening's
Twilight find me gentle still.

Max Ehrmann

Nature Notes October 2005

It was quite sunny and mild at the beginning of the month. In the afternoon, of the 4th. I walked along the top path of Six acre Wood and back across Church Fields where a few flowers still bloomed. I enjoyed the sunshine and the fresh northwesterly breeze. The following day, David and I went to West Malling Country Park, which had been Sam's morning venue for fourteen years. As we approached the car park, a squirrel, carrying a large apple, which it then dropped, scampered across our path. While walking, I noticed another squirrel darting along a branch of a tree. The colours of horse chestnut trees were beautiful while two plane trees had lost many of their leaves. I found birds foot trefoil, pink clover, umbellifers, ragwort, dandelions and a single buttercup. Hawthorn leaves were red, orange and yellow. Round leaved cranesbill continued to bloom. As we drove home, having visited friends, a large golden sun was sinking in the west.

On the 6th. I walked with a friend beneath overcast skies in Ashenbank Wood, the last place where I took Sam. We took The Woodland Trust's red route and along the way we found rosebay willowherb, white deadnettle, bristly ox tongue and yellow pimpernel. I was aware of various fungi, honey fungus, puffballs and large white fungi on fallen logs. Pale green lichen grew on various branches and sphagnum moss grew on others. Ancient sweet chestnuts, the trunks of which were huge, bore fruit, some of which had fallen to the ground where acorns were strewn. We went into a field where we found corn cockle flowers, cornflowers, poppies, and hops twining round tree branches. There was not a breath of wind and the woods emitted the scent of autumn. Silence reigned.

On the 7th. David and I walked by the sea at Seasalter. The skies had become overcast but I enjoyed the smell of the sea and the waves which were breaking on the shore. Flowers were blooming on the pebbly beach; scentless mayweed, ox eye daisies, vipers bugloss, bristly ox tongue and hawkweed. Pink clover and yarrow were blooming on the grassy banks. Rooks were calling as the light began to fade. As a result of finding forty six species of flowers in a fallow field in Lower Bush, three members of The Cuxton Countryside Group, Ian Gray, Ken Law, Janis Batley and myself made

a feature for BBC Southeast Today on the 11th. Bearing in mind the time of year, it was amazing to find so many flowers and, besides that, we also heard the songs of skylarks. Field pansies bloomed in abundance and, for only the second time, I found blue fleabane. We had beautiful weather that day then the following day, the 12th, heavy rain fell.

On the 15th., David and I went to Hadlow Down in East Sussex to The Kit Wilson Animal Sanctuary and it was there that we met Murphy, a German Shepherd x Labrador and he came to our home on the 18th. We hadn't expected to have another dog so soon. He has not replaced Sam. He is another character who has come into our lives. At the moment, his walks are mainly in West Malling Country Park and at Addington until he has been trained for me to take him further afield.

Throughout this month the weather has been very mild, so that I have been finding a number of flowers such as pink and white clover, herb robert, dandelions, bristly ox tongue, white deadnettle and ragwort. The trees along the Snodland by-pass have been displaying the most beautiful colours and billowing clouds of both white and grey have scudded across pale blue skies. In the evenings, as the light has been fading, I have been aware of the loud cawing of rooks and the pinking of a robin. Thursday the 27th. broke a 187-year record for being the hottest October day; 21-22C. The sun shone gloriously from a clear blue sky and blustery southerly winds blew. I walked through Six acre Wood, skirted the oil seed rape field where I found a single speedwell flower then took the muddy leaf strewn path in Mays Wood. Because the cows were still grazing in Church Fields, I returned through Six Acres. By 5pm the sun had disappeared behind the trees. On the 30th., which was a beautiful morning, we all went to West Malling to walk in the park. The sky was a deep blue and the trees were dressed in their autumn colours. Two whitebeams had lost all their leaves in the strong winds. Pink clover and ragwort bloomed in the long grass. On the last day of the month, rain fell steadily throughout the morning and into the early afternoon and it was very mild. We have been told we'll have a very cold winter. No doubt Nature will reward us with its usual beauties.

Elizabeth Summers.

Thought

For every difficult and complicated question, there is an answer that is simple, easily understood and wrong. (H L Mencken).

**Thursday's Children
Advent Buggy Service**

**St John's Church
2.00 Thursday 22nd
December**

**Come dressed as Crib
Characters
(if you wish)**

**Cuxton
Advent Buggy Service**

**St Michael's Church
2.00 Wednesday 21st
December**

**Come dressed as Crib
Characters
(if you wish)**

Christmas Coffee Morning

**Church Hall
Saturday 10th December
10.30-1.00**

**Fair Trade Stall, Tombola in
Baskets, Raffle, China Painting,
Craft Stall, Dried Flower Stall,
Coffee & Mince Pies.**

Max's Christmas Epistle

I do love children. Yesterday we took a party of school children over St Michael's Church. They were supposed to draw two important things in the building. I am proud to say that several of them chose to draw me. When Master said that he did not think that a portrait of a spaniel was what their teachers had in mind, the children told him that I was the most important thing in church!

Anyway, they made a lot of fuss of me as the children generally do at Thursday's Children and we are all looking forward to Christmas. There will be plenty of fun and games and lots of good food. So I look forward to seeing you at some of the things that we shall be laying on.

A little while ago I was telling you how helpless Master is these days. I've got a few more stories about that. The other day, he went out in the rain and his glasses got all steamed up. When he went into the shop, he started talking to someone and couldn't understand why they didn't seem to know what he was talking about. He took off his glasses to give them a polish and then, of course, he couldn't see the person at all. It was only when she said her name that he realised he wasn't talking to the person he thought he was at all! I gather he embarrassed himself in Oxford in the same way. Out running on a wet morning, he had to ask a total stranger what a huge great road sign said in order to find his way back for breakfast!

Merry Christmas! Max, the Rectory Spaniel.

Spiritual Healing

All healing comes from God. Wholeness, healing and health are closely related concepts. Healing of body must be integrated with healing of mind and spirit if it is to be true and complete healing. The final healing is actually our earthly death when the veil which separates us from God is removed, we know Him as He knows us and we become fully like our Saviour.

We are “fearfully and wonderfully made”. God has so made our bodies that, to a considerable extent, they heal themselves. Cuts heal. Bones knit. Our immune systems fight disease. God has also given medicine skills and materials (drugs etc) to assist the natural healing process. These are to be received by Christians with thanks.

We might call the above “natural healing” and try to distinguish that from “supernatural healing”. I think this is a mistake. God certainly heals bodies and minds by natural processes and a secular scientist or a sceptical atheist or agnostic may not recognise that He is at work. Nevertheless, He is at work in “natural” healing. It is right to pray for healing if that means that our white blood cells destroy germs or our osteoblasts rebuild broken bones. It is right to pray for doctors and nurses as they seek to use their skills to heal (even if they do not themselves believe). It is right to give thanks to God for the effects of a course of antibiotics or for a successful operation.

We may use the word “miracle” to mean divine activity outside (or in contravention of) the laws of nature. Such miracles do occur. I do not believe they are common and they are certainly not available to us on demand, but they do sometimes occur. It is, however, often impossible for us to be sure whether a healing is miraculous in this sense or not. We do not understand the human body well enough to know what is natural and what, therefore, must be supernatural. We simply pray and give thanks for what God does.

Most human cultures from prehistoric times have had a relationship with the divine, religion, belief in God or gods. Prayer is a perfectly normal activity. Human beings have sought God’s favour in all sorts of ways. Some of these ways are perverted (such as human sacrifice or the immolation of heretics or suicide bombings). We need Jesus and the authentic prophets of the Scriptures and Christian tradition to teach us the true way. God is love. Human beings are made in His image. Although that image is spoilt by sin (rejection of God), we are capable of redemption and love. When we are loving people we are fulfilling our human potential as God’s children.

Prayer is our communion (or communication) with God. It is aligning our will with His Will. When we pray we are co-operating with God, in accordance with His divine plan to achieve His purposes. Thus we pray for healing for ourselves, for our loved ones and for the wider world. In our ignorance, we do not always know what is best for them, but we can be sure that prayers offered with faith and in love are accepted by God and are taken up into His purposes for the people we pray for. His answer might be to heal their bodies through the natural processes of recovery or through medical intervention or by what we might call a miracle. Quite often the effect of prayer (and rites such as the laying on of hands) is to bring a healing of mind and spirit, an inner peace which makes bodily pain or disability bearable or even something to be accepted. It may be that a person’s life on earth has come to its proper end and God’s healing is to take them home to Heaven. Our prayers might have a part in this too.

It is not possible to do scientific experiments to test the efficacy of prayer. Most people pray and are prayed for. We cannot demonstrate scientifically whether they would progress any differently if they were not prayed for. If we could construct some cruel experiment in which a group of sick people were prayed for by no-one, the Holy Spirit would still be praying for them and so would Jesus. We cannot cut off the supply of God’s grace to the world. If we could, the world would cease to exist.

In our secular society, there may be people who never pray. If so, I feel sad for them. They have cut themselves off from one of humanity's greatest resources for living. I am sure prayer makes a huge difference because it is part of God's purpose for the human race. RIK.

A Letter From Grandma

The other day I went to a Christian bookshop and saw a "*Honk If You Love Jesus*" sticker and I put it in my car. I'm so glad I did. What an uplifting experience followed! I had stopped at a red light at a busy crossing, just lost in thought about the Lord and how good He is, and I didn't notice that the lights had changed to green. It was a good thing that someone else loves Jesus, because if he hadn't honked, I'd never have noticed. I found that lots of people love Jesus.

While I was sitting there, a man behind me started honking like crazy and then he leaned out of the window and screamed at me to go on. What an exuberant cheerleader he was. Everyone started honking! I just leant out of my window and started waving and smiling at all these lovely people. I even honked a few times myself to share in the love.

I saw another man waving in a funny way with only two fingers stuck in the air. When I asked my teenage grandson (sitting beside me) what that meant, he said it was probably a Hawaiian good luck sign or something. Well, I've never met anyone from Hawaii. So I gave him the good luck sign back. My grandson burst out laughing. Even he was enjoying the religious experience.

A couple of people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and started to walk towards me. I bet they wanted to pray with me or ask me which church I attended. This was when I noticed that the lights had changed. Not wishing to hold anyone up, I gave a cheery smile and waved goodbye to all my new-found brothers and sisters and drove off. In my mirror, I noticed that I was the only car that got across before the lights changed again. I felt very sad that I had to leave them all behind after all the love we had shared. So I slowed down, leant out of the window and gave them all the Hawaiian good luck sign as I drove away.

A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year to You All.