

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
July 3 rd St Thomas	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	II Samuel 15 vv 17-21 p320 John 11 vv 1-16 p1077
	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 Ephesians 2 vv 19—22 p1174 John 20 vv 24-29p1089
July 10 th Trinity 3	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 55 vv 10-13 p742 Romans 8 vv 1-11 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 1-23 p978
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	II Samuel 7 vv 18-29 p311 Luke 19 v41 – 20 v8 p1054
July 17 th Trinity 4	11.00 Holy Communion Stop! Look! Listen!	Isaiah 44 vv 6-8 p729 Romans 8 vv 12-25 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 24-43 p979
July 24 th Trinity 5	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	I Kings 3 vv 5-12 p338 Romans 8 vv 26-39 p1135 Matthew 13 vv 31-52 p980
July 31 st Trinity 6	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Isaiah 55 vv 1-5 p742 Romans 9 vv 1-5 p1135 Matthew 14 vv 13-21 p981
August 7 th Trinity 7	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	I Kings 11 v41 – 12 v20 p351 John 6 vv 35-51 p1070
	11.00 Holy Communion	I Kings 19 vv 9-18 p361 Romans 10 vv 5-15 p1137 Matthew 14 vv 22-33 p981
Services at St Michael and All Angels Cuxton		
July 3 rd St Thomas	9.30 Family Communion	Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 Ephesians 2 vv 19—22 p1174 John 20 vv 24-29p1089
July 10 th Trinity 3	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 55 vv 10-13 p742 Romans 8 vv 1-11 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 1-23 p978
	2.00 Holy Baptism	
July 17 th Trinity 4	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP Trinity 3
	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 44 vv 6-8 p729 Romans 8 vv 12-25 p1134 Matthew 13 vv 24-43 p979
July 24 th Trinity 5	9.30 Holy Communion	I Kings 3 vv 5-12 p338 Romans 8 vv 26-39 p1135 Matthew 13 vv 31-52 p980
July 31 st Trinity 6	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 55 vv 1-5 p742 Romans 9 vv 1-5 p1135 Matthew 14 vv 13-21 p981
August 7 th Trinity 7	9.30 Family Communion	I Kings 19 vv 9-18 p361 Romans 10 vv 5-15 p1137 Matthew 14 vv 22-33 p981

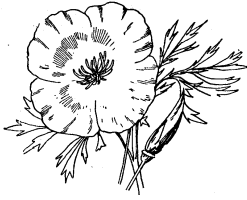
Wednesday Holy Communion @ St Michael's 9.30 am		Thursday Holy Communion @ St John's 9.30 am	
6 th July	Genesis 41 vv 55-57 & 42 Matthew 10 vv 1-7	7 th July	Genesis 44 v18 – 45 v5 Matthew 10 vv 7-15
13 th July	Exodus 3 vv 1-12 Matthew 11 vv 25-27	14 th July	Exodus 3 vv 13-20 Matthew 11 vv 28-30
20 th July	Exodus 16 vv 1-15 Matthew 13 vv 1-9	21 st July	Exodus 19 vv 1-20 Matthew 13 vv 10-17
27 th July	Exodus 34 vv 29-35 Matthew 13 vv 44-46	28 th July	Exodus 40 vv 16-38 Matthew 13 vv 47-53

roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk>

On Thursday afternoons we have a **Mother & Toddler** service at Halling at 2.00 and at Cuxton on the last Wednesday of each month also at 2.00. **Saints Alive!** (formerly Sunday School) is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays or school holidays). **After School Club**, Thursdays @ St John's. **Copy Date** August Magazine: 15th July 8.30 am Rectory.

Church Hall May Draw: £5 to Dave Maxwell, drawn by Buffy Maisey.

St John's Draw May: £25 to Mrs Chidwick (30), £10 each to Miss L Thorne (24) & Mr Pratt (98) – drawn by Mrs Smitherman.



The Rule of Law

On 16th May I attended the Annual Lecture of the English Clergy Association at St Giles in the Fields (behind Centre Point, at the bottom of the Tottenham Court Road). The speaker was Rt Hon Dominic Grieve MP QC, the Attorney General, and his subject was the Rule of Law. His starting point was the work of Dicey whose entry in Wikipedia I quote here.

British jurist A. V. Dicey popularized the phrase "rule of law" in 1885. Dicey emphasized three aspects of the rule of law: (1) no one can be punished or made to suffer except for a breach of law proved in an ordinary court; (2) no one is above the law and **everyone is equal** before the law regardless of social, economic, or political status; and (3) the rule of law includes the results of judicial decisions determining the rights of private persons.

The first point ought to be obvious. The state can only punish you if it can prove by due legal process that you have broken the law. However, some people believe that this principle has started to fray at the edges with fixed penalty notices now allowed to be issued by parking wardens, community wardens, police officers and even speed cameras for generally minor offences. The principle of the rule of law is saved (at least for the time being) in that you can still challenge these notices in court. One wonders too about the activities of "cowboy" clampers, the private clampers who are allowed to wheel clamp your car because they say that you have broken their rules. You can only get your car back if you pay what they demand. I understand that the government is looking into this situation in which there is often abuse.

More seriously, there is the question of the detaining of terrorist suspects for long periods without their being brought before a court or even charged, and the use of control orders in similar circumstances. The state argues that these men are almost certainly a grave danger to public safety but that there are security reasons for not bringing the evidence against them before a court. It is easy to see why the state should take this line and it is also easy to see the danger that such powers could be abused. The decisions our politicians, judges, magistrates and juries have to take are often very difficult ones and they ought to have our prayers.

But these examples do demonstrate that even a principle as basic as *no one can be punished or made to suffer except for a breach of law proved in an ordinary court* can only be maintained by constant vigilance.

The principle that everyone is equal before the law should be equally obvious. The Attorney General made the point strongly that people in positions of power and responsibility have even more of a duty to obey the law than the rest of us ordinary citizens. If the people who make and enforce the laws don't respect them, what moral authority do they have in imposing compliance on us?

A lot of people think I should shut up about some of the sordid things which go on in local government. I am advised to move on, to accept that council officers can get away with breaking the law, telling lies to cover up, and using the council's legal powers to their own personal advantage rather than in the public interest. To acquiesce in corruption, however, is to acquiesce in the undermining of the rule of law in this country and I have no intention of doing so. A lot of what local government deals with is trivial, but some of the powers councils exercise have enormous effects on individuals and families and it is no more acceptable for council officers to abuse their powers than it is for civil servants or ministers, police officers or judges.

The Attorney General maintained that one of his most important duties was to ensure that government always acts within the law. It is important that we all support him in this and see that it applies to councils just as much as it does to parliament.

Mr Grieve had most to say about Dicey's third point, *the rule of law includes the results of judicial decisions determining the rights of private persons*. This is harder to grasp. The point is this. If we believe in the rule of law, where does law come from? For Dicey in C19 this was English Common Law as interpreted and developed by the courts over the centuries. Its origins in the mists of history, Common Law reflects the customs of the different cultures which made England and the teaching of the Christian Religion which has been dominant for most of our history. The Common Law reflects what most English people believe to be just and fair and the courts have to weigh the claims to justice brought by each party to a dispute. Particularly in the last 150 years or so,

Common Law has been extended and refined by statute, by Acts of Parliament, and Parliament in turn is elected to represent the people of this country.

Particularly since the last World War, British Law and practice have also been influenced by various international commitments such as the Geneva Conventions, the United Nations, the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights. Some of these conventions we observe voluntarily. Some of them are enforceable in our courts. In some cases we accept the jurisdiction of other courts such as the European Court of Justice which enforces EU Law and the European Court of Human Rights which enforces the convention on human rights agreed by the Council of Europe.

Mr Grieve referred to the fact that there has been some controversy recently with regard to possible conflicts between our courts (British and foreign) and parliament, for example over injunctions or prisoners' right to vote, and the Human Rights Act in general, and questions as to whether our elected parliament should submit to regulations imposed by unelected officials in Brussels.

He pointed out that we could opt out of these conventions, treaties and international obligations if we so chose and were willing to accept the consequences of not belonging to prestigious international bodies such as the Council of Europe or the EU and not being protected by international law ourselves.

Mr Grieve was well aware that there is still work to do. We may well have not yet got the balance right between different people's human rights. Ought a Christian hotelier have the right to refuse a double room to a gay couple? Should a Moslem taxi driver be allowed to refuse to take a blind person's guide dog in his cab? Do the rights of religious believers (or property owners or employers) trump the rights of homosexuals, the disabled, women or ethnic minorities? We may have got the balance wrong and we could change the law.

It was at this point that I parted company with the Attorney General. He asserted that law is human law and therefore fallible and susceptible to improvement. So far so good. But improvement with respect to what? By what standard do we judge whether our laws are good or bad and whether they can be improved? I couldn't resist

pointing out that Mr Grieve was standing in front of a copy of the Ten Commandments fixed to the eastern wall of the church behind the altar and I said that ultimately law comes from God. We can only measure the quality of our human laws against the standard of God's Law – which is the perfect Law of Love.

Mr Grieve (a Christian himself) said that it was difficult to privilege any particular religion in a multicultural society. If we do not, however, believe that God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ and that Jesus (the personification of love) is the standard for human behaviour, where do we get our laws from? What is the standard by which we judge our human laws if law does not come from God? Where does law come from? Do we just make up our laws? And if so by what authority do we enforce them? I cannot see how we can know whether or not our laws are just, unless we know what justice is, and I do not see how we can know what justice is unless it is revealed by God. Neither can I see how human beings can presume to enforce the Law unless they believe that Law comes from an authority higher than themselves. Otherwise we are in danger of simply saying *might is right*, whether might is derived from force of arms, control of the courts and police service, or even from democratic political processes. Majorities are not always right as we saw only too clearly in Germany under Hitler, but by what standard do we judge Hitler to be wrong? He came to power through the democratic process. The democratic process obviously got it wrong, but by what authority do we say so? Surely by the authority of Holy Scripture.

Finally, and this was not raised by Mr Grieve, it is my belief as a Christian that good people do not need Law – or rather that they do not need to be compelled to keep the Law by threat of punishment. Insofar as our human laws approximate to the Law of God, our laws are good and good people will obey them because it is their nature to be good. Even when our human laws are less than good, good people will normally obey them because it is good to respect authority and to preserve law and order. It is only when laws are actually bad (as in Hitler's Germany) that civil disobedience becomes the duty of the good person.

It was a very interesting and stimulating talk as these lectures always are. Roger.

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Tragedy or Farce?

I must tell you the latest on the Rectory Tree Preservation Order. (For those who don't know, Medway Council imposed a woodland TPO on my garden nine years ago in the Summer of 2002. Three of the officers involved in the determination had a personal interest in the case. Officers illegally came into my garden and more senior officers, including the Chief Executive, made a series of untrue statements in an

unsuccessful effort to conceal what had gone on. Tree officers then failed in their duty to inform all the neighbours of their right to make representations, but even so nearly 60 people signed up in opposition to the order and there were none in favour of it at the official closing date. Seven weeks after the closing date for representations, the council accepted one more representation, this one in favour of the order. They then illegally tried to conceal the identity of the person who made it, but it turned out that he was a council officer masquerading as an ordinary member of the public. Judging by what he wrote, he too had been illegally roaming round my garden at night! Despite all the legitimate representations being against the order the council went ahead with it anyway. The council's decision was published on the front page of the local paper the day before the meeting at which the decision was supposedly made (complete with a quotation from officers' advice to councillors, which anyway contained a falsehood). The legal paperwork was atrocious. According to the council senior solicitor's letter the order came in to force on 31st May 2001, which just can't be true because no-one even suggested a TPO till 2002 and the committee didn't decide the issue till May 16th 2002, the day after its decision was published in the paper! The same senior solicitor threatened to sue me for libel if I said the council was corrupt. So I'm not saying it! You judge.

If you're like me, you'll probably think it odd that Medway Council put a preservation order on the sycamore trees in my garden at the same time as it was recommending the removal of sycamore trees from the woodland next door on the grounds that sycamores are detrimental to the goals of conservation.)

For 150 years we managed this site with no problems. Because of the TPO, however, no work can be done on the trees without the council's permission. This meant that a few years ago the Diocese had to spend thousands of pounds of the Church's money hiring professionals to do what volunteers used to do for nothing. The trees grew again and the Church hasn't got any more money to waste on cutting them back. A few years ago a neighbour had a go at pruning them while they were still small, but someone grassed him up and the council ordered him to stop. The result is that the trees have grown far too big. They are overshadowing my neighbours' gardens and the bank has become a haven for rats. We thought of getting young criminals on community service to work on the problem. Then we were told we can't for health and safety reasons. Now I am told this might be possible after all. The council concede we can now coppice some of the trees if we can find the finance and another council department is looking into the possibility of helping to fund this with taxpayers' money. (It would all have been done for free years ago if Medway Council hadn't interfered.) Moreover, we are not allowed to do anything during the bird-nesting season (up to September).

The best bit is that one neighbour asked if he could at least cut back the nettles spreading from my garden into his. The Council spokesman told him he could but only if he bagged them up and offered them back to me! (I know you can cook and eat stingers, but only young ones harvested early in the year if you don't want kidney stones. So I don't really want them, thank you very much.) If I'm dreaming all this, will somebody please wake me up? Roger.



Eve Appeal - Bluebell Wood Charity Walk

I would like to thank all the walkers, those donating on the day, all those who sponsored the walkers and all those who couldn't walk but gave a donation. Over £500 has been donated so far for the Eve Appeal. The final figure will appear in the local press. About 36 walkers enjoyed a lovely morning that day. Thank you all once again.

Pat Lawry 240892.

Riot at the Zoo

The animals are demanding that their cages are placed in alphabetical order. It was the aardvark that started it!

The Dean & Chapter of Rochester,
in conjunction with
Karen Underwood,
invite you to a private viewing of
"RIPPLES"

An exciting and innovative multi-media exhibition featuring an international group of artists who have collaborated with one voice to raise awareness of social injustice issues. British paper-maker sculptor Karen Underwood, creative photographer Rachel Wallace, dancer Thea Soltau in film and Dutch sculptor, Britt Wikström.

Exhibition to be opened by
Jane Williams

Thursday 4th August 2011

6.30pm - 8.30pm

In the Lady Chapel Rochester Cathedral
Rochester
ME1 1SX



Cuxton WI

I bet you never thought that the Ritz would descend on Cuxton. Well, on a beautiful warm summer evening that is exactly what happened. Cuxton ladies arrived at the Church Hall in all their finery complete with hats and fascinators. They sat down to a delicious tea with delicate sandwiches (not a crust in sight), sausage rolls, cheese scones, sweet scones with jam and cream, and a wonderful selection of dainty cakes - everything homemade of course. During the meal Madame Isobel entertained us with a various selection of background piano music from light classics to popular musicals. Then the main entertainment of the evening - Christine Bade - with a truly beautiful voice sang a selection of songs. At the interval teas and coffees were served, the raffle drawn and the results of the table quiz on Kentish Place names which one team won convincingly. And then the highlight with Joan cutting her wonderful

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Development @rochestercathedral.org

Further information available from:
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Rachel Wallace email:
rachel@markjwallace.com
Tel 01494 883025

homemade iced celebration cake. I wish I could do intricate work like that. It was delicious and admired and enjoyed by us all. The evening continued with more songs from Chris and then the girls really got going as up they jumped and started swaying and dancing to the Abba songs. What would we have done without them? I then noticed that about 90% of the energetic dancers were members of my WI walking group. So it shows what a good walk can do for you! A really enjoyable evening and a good omen for Pat as it was her first meeting as our new President. We cannot promise evenings like this every month but we always have some fun and we are always ready to welcome new members so why not come along as a guest and see how you enjoy it.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday July 7th at 7.30pm when we will hear about the life of a couture dressmaker.

Sheila.



Parish Barbecue 9th July
Rectory Garden Gates Open 6.30 pm
£7.00/£3.50

Please bring your own drinks and deckchairs or blankets if required.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

22nd May
29th May
29th May
29th May

Edward James Frost
Jack William Bedford
Aimee Elizabeth Rose Molloy
Callum William Joseph Molloy

Vicarage Close
William Road
High Street
High Street

Funeral:

18th May

Zoe Louise Coleman (35)

Kent Road



Halling WI Annual Meeting 2011.

Since the shake-up of the Federation, May is now our Annual meeting and, as it has always been, our Resolution meeting. This doesn't allow much time for any social activities. Where to start? Let's start with our ordinary, regular monthly meeting. We did a very good rendering of Jerusalem which got us in the right mood. We had numerous apologies. I wonder why? They weren't all on a cruise. The minutes were read by me in the absence of Ann Hayward, who really was on a cruise around the British Isles. Correspondence was dealt with. An invitation for two members to attend Cuxton W.I. party on 2nd June. In fact three of us went dressed up to the nines as it was to re-enact "Tea at the Ritz". Betty, Margaret and myself all had a good time almost winning the table quiz. We just could not think of an answer to the question, Did the Vicar have only one eye? The answer was a village somewhere in Kent. Minster, Get it! Minister, leave out one I. Easy when you are told the answer. A second invitation from Halling school for members to go into school to talk to the

children on various subjects regarding days gone by. *What it was like in the war time ?* and my subject was *What was it like when I went to school?* I had to talk to the 5 year olds and did I get some funny questions to answer? The funniest one was *Did you have an X box?* Couldn't answer that one because I don't know what an Xbox is. It was all good fun to have the rapport with the little ones. I love it. West Kent Federation is arranging an outing to NEW-ZEALAND, a good idea but beyond most of us, perhaps all of us. Financially we are keeping our heads above water, just, according to our treasurer Betty Head. We then continued with our annual meeting. Betty had prepared a good financial report for all of us and Mary Fennemore proposed a vote of thanks especially for Betty for keeping our books in order. I read the Annual report. Margaret Sutherland will keep her position as President. Nobody was falling over to take the job on. Betty and Ann Hayward would stay on as treasurer and secretary respectively. Sandra Finch agreed to join the committee. So you see we muddled through the vast amount of business, but we got there in the end. Trudy judged the competitions, I won the flower of the month with my clematis and Betty won the money Box competition.

After our well earned refreshments we went on to discuss the two resolutions. 1st The closure of Public Libraries and 2nd Mega Farms (or not to allow them). Our members voted "for" for both of them. The idea of thousands of cows squashed into large sheds, never to feel or see grass didn't go down well with any of us, and my farmer friend said it was positively cruel, but I expect we shall get more facts on the subject when Betty and I go to the Annual Meeting of the National Federation in Liverpool next week. Hooray! June is Party time, we can let our hair down.
Phyllis.

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Nature Notes May 2011

The first day of the month is glorious with golden sunshine and clear blue skies but the north east wind persists. Elderflower is in full bloom beyond our fence and the lilac is paler than when it first produced its beautiful perfume. Comfrey and charlock bloom along the edge of the grass which has grown quite long again. Birds feed and butterflies hover over the flowers. The glorious weather continues the next day but still with the strong north east wind. I walk with Murphy at Bluewater beneath clear blue skies and golden sunshine which causes the rippling water to sparkle. Vetch, buttercups, ox eye daisies and dandelions bloom along the edges of the mown grassy paths. Along the motorway golden broom is beautiful and the fresh green of the trees complements the deep blue of the sky. Bluebells brighten the woodland floor of Shorne Country Park. In the afternoon, while I'm in the garden, the wind becomes stronger. The sycamores on the embankment bend and bow and petals fall from the lilac tree. In the afternoon of 4th, I drive to The Brookland Lakes at Snodland. The rippling water reflects the blue of the sky and frothy cow parsley adorns the banks as far as the eye can see. It is so beautiful. May blossom and elder flower bloom. I hear warblers in the reeds, a chiffchaff, a cuckoo's Spring song and the glorious songs of nightingales as I make my way along the grassy paths. I see white dead nettle, hoary Allison, forget-me-nots, dog roses, garlic mustard, pink campion, yellow iris buds by the water, vetch, buttercups, gromwell, bramble flowers, rosebay willowherb plants and carpets of ground ivy. Gulls circle the water, a magpie flies out of the hedge, rabbits and a squirrel scuttle across my path. Two small white butterflies dance on the air in front of me and the sun remains glorious. The sky is overcast the next day and there is a chill in the air. I watch a wren hopping among the flower pots on the patio. Two magpies forage from the feeders. Few birds come to feed for they are probably caring for their young. The weather becomes warmer on 6th when I walk with Murphy in Cobtree Manor Park where the trees look beautiful in their pale green foliage. We see a tree with web-like shrouds hanging from grey twigs. It is, in fact, a bird cherry tree affected by the ermine moth. Rain falls on the night of 7th. The next day is bright and breezy. The beautiful lilac flowers are now turning brown and the falling petals float on the pond. Magpies and collared doves come to feed. Billowing white clouds drift across the sky the next day when we go again to the park and we see the bird cherry tree which reminds me of the trees in "Narnia" from "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" by C S Lewis. Other trees bare beautiful blossom but the ground is dry and cracked. On 10th I see poppies along the motorway verges. The skies become grey the next day but still no rain falls. I find a cockchafer beetle in the

back porch. It is quite a magnificent creature. The lilac flowers are now completely brown. Cool days follow but there is still no sign of rain for the parched ground. Warm weather with blue sky and bright sunshine returns on 19th. A jay comes to the bird feeders, pecks at the nuts then flies away. Magpies are busy in the garden and other birds join them. Is it in the garden listening to a robin singing and watching clouds drifting across the sky? Some much needed rain falls during the night of 21st followed by a blustery day. In the afternoon of 23rd, I battle against the wind while going up into Church Fields to pick elder flowers in order to make cordial. There is a mass of dog roses flowering much earlier than usual and haws are forming on the hawthorns. A light drizzle falls in the late evening but steady rain is needed for the ground remains dry and cracked. During the early morning of the next day, I notice an obviously sick pigeon perched on the brickwork over the back gate. Later, I find it has died and fallen to the ground. I place it gently, for it is still warm, on the ivy the other side of the fence. It was a sad moment. On 25th, while in the garden, I watch a peacock butterfly as it hovers over the geraniums. There is still no rain for this part of the country. However, some heavy showers fall the following afternoon; it is so good to see them. The following morning is grey and breezy with some drizzle. I watch magpies being chased in flight by jackdaws which have come into the garden. I walk with Murphy at Bluewater along our familiar paths beneath grey skies but eventually there are some breaks in the clouds and I feel the warmth of the sun. The variety of wild flowers brightens the scene. On 28th, I hear the cuckoo's song from across the river. On the evening of 29th, as I return from delivering Parish magazines I gaze across the river to see the beauty of the fields and hills lit up by the evening sun. Baby great tits and blue tits are now coming to the feeders and the pond. On 30th, before we walk Murphy, I hear the chiff chaff's call in the woodland beyond the garden then from over the river, a faint call of a cuckoo. I walk along the flower bedecked paths at Bluewater. Meadow cranesbill and St John's wort have joined the throng of flowers. Ox eye daisies, various vetches, birds' foot trefoil, viper's bugloss, dove's foot cranesbill, clover and lucerne. The sun shines brightly throughout the day. I listen to the melodious song of a blackbird. Light rain falls in the evening. The afternoon of 31st is sunny and warm. At 10.00pm I go outside and looking up at the sky which is almost a clear blue and before the light fades completely, I watch a billowing white cloud which has formed an intriguing shape.

Elizabeth Summers.

Hope is a Thing with Feathers by Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers	And sweetest in the Gale is heard	I've heard it in the chilliest land
That perches in the soul	And sore must be the storm	And on the strangest Sea
And sings the tune without the words	That could abash the little Bird	Yet, never, in Extremity
And never stops at all.	That keeps so many warm	It asked a crumb of Me.

The New Cade Quintet

The New Cade Quintet gave a wonderful concert in St. Michael's Church on Saturday, 21st May. It was a thrill to be serenaded by five distinguished and handsome gentlemen. The excellent programme of songs to suit all musical tastes was supplemented by comic prose including "Albert and the Lion". We were most fortunate to have such a professional group singing in our Cuxton Church which raised £210 for Church Funds. We would like to extend a big "Thank you" to Derek Hurst, Alan Holland, David Littlejohn, David Preston and Frazer Westmorland. Jenny.

Mean Time

Mean Time will be performing "Red Intentions" at St Michael's on Thursday 4th August at 7.30 pm. The programme they describe as follows: *Red Intentions, an imaginative and captivating programme bringing together light and sound. Inspired by the colour red in its many connotations (for example fire, anger and passion) this dynamic programme is sorrowful, idyllic, seductive and fiery, including music by Vivaldi, Purcell and Dowland.*

Is anyone able, please, to put up one or more of the cast of four overnight?

Saints Alive Summer BBQ

Saints Alive (The Cuxton and Halling Sunday School) will be having their Annual Summer Walk and BBQ on Sunday, 3rd July. The children are encouraged to bring their friends. We start in Cuxton Church at 9.30 a.m. and stay for the beginning of the service. After Roger has given his Children's Talk we file out down to the Church Hall to assemble. We then take a short walk across the field and through the woods to 95 Pilgrims Road, North Halling. The children will play games in the garden. If any of the Church Congregation would like to join us after the services, we will be serving food at 12.00. Jenny

Forthcoming Attractions 2011

9th July: Parish Barbecue

August 4th: 7.30 pm Concert by Mean Time (early music group) at St Michael's. (It is hoped that parishioners will be found to offer group members overnight hospitality.)

Wednesday, 10th August from 12.00 noon: BBQ in Jenny and Chris' garden at 95 Pilgrims Road, North Halling (in aid of Church Funds)

September 29th Michaelmas: 7.30 pm Patronal Festival Eucharist with Rt Rev'd James Langstaff our new diocesan bishop.

15th October: Quiz in Church Hall.

Magazine Can You Help, Please?

We were very grateful for the response to our last request for help with magazine deliveries. Can we ask now, please, if anyone could deliver magazines in the Ladywood Road Area? It's eleven deliveries a year and one new deliverer told me how much fun it was to meet up with the neighbours for a chat. If you can help, please call Margaret on 240644.

Quota Debt

You'll be pleased to see that we have been given another £150 towards our parish debts. Things bring our total to £1,557 so far which is a magnificent effort, though there is still a long way to go. Thanks for what you have done so far. Any further donations, please, to Rector, churchwardens or treasurer. Cheques should be payable *Cuxton & Halling PCC*. If you can Gift Aid your donation, that makes it even more valuable. Roger.



You've helped people in poverty, out of poverty! £1152 has been raised through door to door collections in Cuxton & Halling. Many thanks to everybody. Christian Aid's special project for this year is Nicaragua. Your hard work has helped workers in that country to transform the lives of coffee farmers and their families, enabling them to reach more customers and get a better price for their beans. They are also investing in the future by supporting local schools and youth projects. Thank you. Steve Brown.

News from Cuxton Community Infant School

Dear friends of our school,

It is extremely hard to believe that the final term is upon us and yet there is still much to do. Our year 2 children have now experienced several visits to the junior school and are having a great time. We begin some enhanced transition work today and also have planned visits for our new entrants. All of these will coincide with the remainder of the school visiting their new classes. We have followed this procedure for a few years now and find that come September everyone is settled having previously spent time with their new class teacher and in their new surroundings. Staff are very busy writing an academic end of year report for each child and I am very busy reading them and commenting on them.

The school photographer came and took photographs of us all in class/group poses. We had a dentist visit each class and talk to the children about the importance of looking after their teeth, cleaning their teeth thoroughly and about the sugars in foods and drinks. Later on this term we look forward to a visit from Halling Fire brigade organised by one of our DADS.

Next week we have our annual sports day which is a carousel of activities on the top field. Everyone joins in and we have great fun. At times like this we pray for nice weather – but not too hot! Dads this year are invited to stay afterwards and have their lunch with their child in order to celebrate Father's day.

Lastly, do come and support us at our school fete on Saturday 2nd July. Money raised goes towards both schools and the Friends of Cuxton schools do a great job in organising this and other events throughout the year. The fete is from 11am-2pm and the entrance is via the junior school gates.

Do look at our website for more news.

Sandra Jones, Headteacher.



An Altered Routine – by Max the Rectory Spaniel

On a normal evening the routine is that between 8.30 and 9.00 I'm taken for a walk around the garden as a last chance to stretch my legs before the morning. (I've not been allowed in the garden on my own at night since the time I disappeared up the bank in the dark at 10.00 one evening and came back eventually strongly smelling of fox.) Master then has a light supper and, around ten o' – clock, he'll say "Basket time". At this I jump up into a convenient armchair, if I'm not already in one, and he carries me out to the kitchen and lays me gently in my basket. Sometimes I make him pick me up off the floor, but it's a strain on his back that he's really too old for. Then he covers me up carefully – "tail in, ears out" and goes up to bed himself.

That was the routine for years. Master had a much longer-standing routine of probably fifty years which was to say his prayers in bed before going to sleep. In the last few months, however, he has discovered that he cannot get far into his prayers without drifting off. Now, in one way, it is a good thing to fall asleep whilst praying. You sleep very well "in the arms of Jesus." In fact, if you can't sleep for any reason, it makes a good deal of sense to use the time praying. Prayers helps you to sort out your problems. It brings a blessing to the people you pray for. And it may well help you sleep. He still always says when he gets in bed and turns out the light, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." It is a quotation from a psalm and Jesus quoted it at the crucifixion as did St Stephen when he was stoned. Falling asleep is a kind of foretaste of dying in the Lord with the thought of eternal rest in Heaven. Master doesn't, however, go as far as H.P. Liddon who composed himself in bed as if in his coffin!

Returning to the change in routine, whatever the merits of praying yourself to sleep, you don't want to go off leaving lots of prayers unsaid. So now we have "Prayer time" most nights before "Basket time" and he says his prayers before he puts me in my basket.

There's a lot to be said for prayers at the end of the day, even if it's hard to keep awake. Master likes to go over the day, giving thanks for all the things that have happened and Master does have a lot to be thankful for. He's doing the job he most wants to do in a place where he is very happy living and working with crowds of people a lot of whom are his very good friends. Most of the time, there are only two flies in the ointment: bureaucratic busybodies and parish politics. Master can't really understand why officialdom should have the right to interfere in the lives of ordinary decent people who are just trying to do their best to help other people and otherwise to mind their own business. I try to explain that these diocesan officers and council officers are benevolent experts who are only trying to make his life better, but I don't think he believes me.

As for parish politics, he not only doesn't understand them; he doesn't even understand why there should be such a thing as parish politics. I have to remind him that the Church is a human organisation as well as a divine institution and that her members' human weaknesses make it necessary to have procedures and meetings and office work. He grumpily replies, "I don't suppose there are meetings or paperwork in Heaven." I tell him, "No, probably, but the other place is very likely one long meeting of General Synod, with occasional breaks in which the damned have to fill in self-assessment forms for Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs!" Only joking!

Apart from those two things, Master is very happy with his lot. Almost every day he takes me for a walk and quite often goes for a run as well. He is thankful to God for the beautiful place we live in, with the woods and fields and the hills and the river running by. He is thankful for the health to go out and enjoy these things. And he is thankful for the opportunity to get out. Working from home saves all the time that many people lose commuting and it means that, when there is a lull in the work, he can take a break and take me out. The other side of the coin of course is that he is never really off duty, but he wouldn't want to be. He is a minister of religion, not a religious professional! A lot of his work is planning, thinking and praying and he can often do those things better walking in the woods than sitting at a desk.

Then he is thankful that we go to church nearly every day. I know quite a lot of you reading this think that church is boring or at least that it has a low priority in your lives. If you let him, he'll try to tell you why fellowship with other Christians, reading the Bible, common prayer and frequent Communion are so wonderful, but I'm afraid he's not very good at it. If he were good at explaining, we'd be needing to make our churches much bigger! I can follow the service sufficiently to know when to wake up and often I get a biscuit!

He's got lots of other things to be thankful for as well. He always eats well (some would say too well!) and he lives in that lovely house with its beautiful extensive grounds and fine views of the North Downs on one side and Rochester Cathedral and Castle on the other. He's still very sad at the loss this year of those with whom he used to share his life, but he is very thankful for all the things they shared together when they were alive and he expects to see them again in heaven.

There are times spent in schools and in children's services. He enjoys fellowship groups, teaching opportunities and learning himself, also reading. He likes meeting people in their homes and visiting in hospital, though this aspect of a clergyman's life has been rather squeezed out by modern life. Most days are very good days for him and also for me, except when he has to go out and leave me alone, but he doesn't do that if he can help it.

So, much to be thankful for. Night prayers are also an opportunity to pray for the people we've met during the day, to pray for various situations which have arisen and to pray for God's blessing on plans made. He can do this at Evensong in church each day and/or in the Rectory before bedtime. It's a time to remember everybody he loves and is responsible for praying for.

And then he needs to say sorry to God for the times he might have let God down in the day by being less than the person God calls Christians to be. (That could have us up all night!)

Anyway, daily prayers are good and night time is a good time to say them. Max, the Rectory Spaniel.