

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
3 rd July St Thomas	9.30 Family Communion	Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 Ephesians 2 vv 19-22 p1174 John 20 vv 24-29 p1089
10 th July Trinity 7	9.30 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 9-14 p209 Colossians 1 vv 1-14 p1182 Luke 10 vv 25-37 p1042
17 th July Trinity 8	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP
	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 18 vv 1-10a p17 Colossians 1 vv 15-28 p1182 Luke 10 vv 38-42 p1042
24 th July Trinity 9	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 18 vv 20-32 p18 Colossians 2 vv 6-15 p1183 Luke 11 vv 1-13 p1042
31 st July Trinity 10	9.30 Holy Communion	Ecclesiastes 1 vv 1-14 p668 Ecclesiastes 2 vv 18-23 p669 Colossians 3 vv 1-11 p1184 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
3 rd July St Thomas	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	II Samuel 15 vv 16-21 p320 John 11 vv 1-16 p1077
	11.00 Holy Communion	Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 Ephesians 2 vv 19-22 p1174 John 20 vv 24-29 p1089
10 th July Trinity 7 Michael Hudson of the Bible Society will join us for tea and Evening Prayer at the Jubilee Hall and tell us about the Bible in Cambodia.	11.00 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 9-14 p209 Colossians 1 vv 1-14 p1182 Luke 10 vv 25-37 p1042
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Genesis 32 vv 9-30 p36 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010
17 th July Trinity 8	11.00 Holy Communion Stop! Look! Listen!	Genesis 18 vv 1-10a p17 Colossians 1 vv 15-28 p1182 Luke 10 vv 38-42 p1042
24 th July Trinity 9	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 18 vv 20-32 p18 Colossians 2 vv 6-15 p1183 Luke 11 vv 1-13 p1042
31 st July Trinity 10	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Ecclesiastes 1 vv 1-14 p668 Ecclesiastes 2 vv 18-23 p669 Colossians 3 vv 1-11 p1184 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045

Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 at Cuxton		Holy Communion 9.30 Thursdays at Halling	
6 th July	Hosea 10 vv 1-12 Matthew 10 vv 1-7	7 th July	Hosea 11 vv 1-9 Matthew 10 vv 7-15
13 th July	Isaiah 10 vv 5-16 Matthew 11 vv 25-27	14 th July	Isaiah 26 vv 7-19 Matthew 11 vv 28-30
20 th July	Jeremiah 1 vv 1-10 Matthew 13 vv 1-9	21 st July	Jeremiah 2 vv 1-13 Matthew 13 vv 10-17
27 th July	Jeremiah 15 vv 10-21 Matthew 13 vv 47-53	28 th July	Jeremiah 18 vv 1-6 Matthew 13 vv 47-53

Copy Date August Magazine 8.30 am Friday 8th July

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him.

Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. St. Matthew 11.28

So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. St. John 3.16

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 St. Timothy 1.15

Hear also what Saint John saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 St. John 2.1



Feedback

In the last few months, I've enjoyed more feedback from readers of this magazine than I usually receive. Maybe it's because I've tackled subjects which some people might regard as less religious than usual: nuclear war, the EU, and motor vehicles, not to mention the church hall heating. Feedback is good. Sometimes it feels like I'm writing or preaching or teaching into the void. In fact I once found myself talking to a group of teenagers who were so determined to be unimpressed that I forgot the name of the German philosopher I was talking to them about. [It was Nietzsche whom I believe to have dismissed Christianity as a milk and water religion which undermines humanity's potential for global mastery. Given what human beings are capable of, that would actually be a very good thing, cf the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11!]

Anyway, feedback is good for both the magazine and sermons even if it is complicated. The preacher's job isn't to please his audience; it is to serve them. The preacher serves his hearers and readers by bringing them the Word of God, which is not necessarily what they want to hear. In fact, they crucified Jesus for telling them the Truth and there are thousands of martyrs down through the ages, testimony to humanity's unwillingness to listen. Someone once asked me if I liked being congratulated on preaching a good sermon. I had to be honest and admit that I do, but that really isn't the point. People might or might not like a sermon or a magazine article. That is relatively unimportant. What matters is that it is the truth, the Word of God, certainly in the case of a sermon, though not necessarily a magazine article, in which there is much more room for mere opinion. It is fair to complain if you can't hear or read or understand or that it is irrelevant to your life. It is not a valid criticism that you just don't like it. Where you don't agree, say so.

But I'm ahead of myself. It is my task as a priest, a minister of religion, to proclaim the Word of God. But most of what I say or write is not the Word of God! I hope that whatever I preach, teach and write are not inconsistent with the Word of God. I hope that is true for you too, that whatever you say or write or do is consistent with the Word of God. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed,*

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him (Colossians 3¹⁷). It is only when I preach from the Bible (God's Word written), in the Name of Jesus (God's Word made flesh), in the light shed by the Holy Spirit (Whose Temple is the Church of God), in accordance with my vocation from God the Father, prayerfully, rationally and knowledgeably, that I can claim to be preaching the Word of God. Even then, like every other human being, I am highly fallible and you need to interpret and to check what I say in the light of what you know of God through the Scriptures, through your membership of the Church, through your own individual relationship with Him and through your prayerful and rational consideration of the world. And I need you to share your insights with me and to pray for me in my task as rector – as worship leader, minister of the sacraments, preacher, teacher, pastor, evangelist and as, like you and all the rest of us, a responsible member of the community.

The rest of the time (when I'm not exactly preaching), I'm advancing my own ideas, encouraging debate and generally trying to advance our understanding by encouraging people to think and to share their thoughts. That's what I try to do in this magazine. For example, I was recently preaching on the EU referendum. I tried to bring God's Word to the Church about how individuals participate in the life of the collective [We are *every one members one of another* (Romans 12⁵.)], how we should conduct ourselves towards people who disagree with us [treat them with respect], how we should make our own case [humbly, honestly and with integrity], and the ultimate aim of our politics [the coming of God's Kingdom of justice, mercy and peace]. I said I wouldn't say from the pulpit which way I would vote. I don't think the Word of God said clearly Leave or Remain (at least not at the time of preaching). But I said I would happily tell people which way I would vote when I wasn't in the pulpit. My support for Leave was the word of Roger, not the Word of God. By the time you read this, we'll probably know - one way or the other – what the British people have decided, which may be more or less the Will of God, depending on how open we all are to the Gospel message of universal brotherhood and divine love.

Where was I? Getting more feedback when I write about less obviously religious subjects. It

reminded me of when I was curate at Orpington (and much younger than I am now). I was a bit miffed that the local lads seemed to be more impressed that I could run from Orpington to Dartford and back than with my efforts to explain the creed to them. They hadn't seen how feebly I ran. And they possibly didn't know about the time when I got carried away, ran over to Dartford, decided to return via Woolwich and had to borrow the bus fare to get home from Shooter's Hill police station! They probably didn't listen sufficiently either when I was trying to expound the creed.

Some people might say that it would be better to talk about non-religious subjects to a larger audience than to try to talk about God in a country where apparently there are now more non-believers than Christians and thus to find myself in the position of the vicar who had to begin the service, "Dearly beloved, I am gathered here today." Well, I think they're wrong for two reasons. The first is that people who aren't at all interested in God aren't going to read what the rector writes or come to Church and listen to the sermon even if he does leave God out of it. Moreover, if the rector leaves God out of it, he is letting down those who do seriously want to explore Christian belonging and belief. We have to present the Gospel intelligibly and attractively, but we have to present the Gospel. What we do at religious services is that we worship God. If we also educate and entertain, those are by-products of worship, not our principal reason for taking part.

The other reason they are wrong, however, is that you just can't separate God and the world. There is no area of life from which God is excluded. If we try to exclude God from any aspect of our lives, we are courting disaster. Because God is the source of all life, the One upon Whom our very existence depends (and the universe's). There are no subjects which don't come under the purview of faith. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* That obviously includes running. We run in God's world. We run because God gives us the health and opportunity to do so. Running (like everything else in life) can be, should be, an aspect of worship. Don't push that as far as to say, if I run

in the right spirit, that substitutes for prayer or reading the Bible or going to Church. Psalm 147¹⁰ says of God, *He hath no pleasure in the strength of a horse: neither delighteth he in any man's legs.* St Paul says, *For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come* (I Timothy 4⁸) – worth thinking about if you think you've got time to go to the gym but not to go to Church. Nevertheless, like the man in Acts 3 (and Tommy) there is a time for walking and leaping and praising God!

The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is: the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein (Psalm 24¹). Everything that exists is the creation of God. Everything we have is the gift of God. It is God Who made us. What follows from that is that in our whole lives we ought to be thankful to Him for everything we have and all that we are, for the people we love and the people who love us. Again, St Paul says, *Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you* (I Thessalonians 5¹⁶⁻¹⁸). We should be thankful in everything. To give thanks is to bless. We are stewards of God's Creation and that determines how we ought to treat everything. It is a moral issue if we wantonly destroy what God has made and entrusts to us. It is a moral issue if we waste what we have, though what we actually need is debatable. St Paul again, *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content* (I Timothy 6⁸). Most of us would feel that we need more than that bare minimum and would not, therefore, accuse ourselves of waste if we possessed more. Is that right? Given that all life is God's, we have to treat all living things with especial reverence, never killing unnecessarily, nor inflicting avoidable suffering on obviously sentient creatures. Pure science can be an act of devotion if we realise that we that we are seeking understanding of what our Creator has created. Applied science, medicine, engineering are using what we know of what God has made to serve His purposes in the world. Art and music are to His glory. I could go on! The humanities seek to understand people made in the image of God to the end that we may serve them better, learning the lessons of history, geography and the social sciences.

Finally, all our relationships with other people are in the context of our relationship with God. The brotherhood of man is a consequence of the Fatherhood of God. This is true in the Church where we are indeed *members one of another*. It is true of our family life. Husband and wife are one flesh. Children are our own flesh and blood. It is true of our friendships, the friendships we choose. But there is no religious or private compartment, Church or home, where the rules are different. The commandment to love your neighbour as yourself doesn't apply only in your home life and in the Church community. The point of the Parable of the Good Samaritan is that we are all neighbours. Back in the days of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link campaign, I stirred up controversy by saying that it is just as wrong to tell lies on behalf of your employer or in your professional or political capacity as it is to tell lies in your private life. The commandments of God (summarised in the command to love) apply in every situation – Church, home, social life, work, shopping, hobbies, whatever, with people we dislike as well as with people we love, with strangers, customers, employees, employers, clients and the general public, as well as with our own familiar friends. There is no part of our lives which does not come within the context of faith. Whatever we are doing, God is our judge and our saviour. His justice and mercy are universal. They fill the cosmos.

Incidentally, when I was so much involved in the Rail Link campaign, lots of people used to say that with a vicar so involved in the community they

would come to Church. Only they didn't! We do and say what we believe to be right not because we hope that it will produce some desirable result, but simply because it is right and that's all there is to it.

The fact that there is no aspect of our lives which is outside the purview of faith does not mean, however, that we can neglect what might be thought of conventionally as religious. We need to pray and to read the Bible. We need Christian fellowship. We need the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. These are not optional extras. They make sense of everything else in our lives, whatever befalls us, whatever we attempt to achieve. Even Theology is faith seeking understanding. It is making sense of the world in the light of our faith in Him Who created, redeemed and sanctifies it. It is thinking about God without which nothing makes ultimate sense. Not for nothing does the Bible say (Hebrews 10^{24&25}) *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* Roger.

P.S.: Thank you those of you who suggested how we could control the church hall heating and save hundreds of pounds each year. I will honour my promise to donate £5 in respect of each helpful suggestion. There are controls. I have been promised that the heating will be switched off in the Summer and turned down in the Winter when the hall is not in use. Apologies. The correct figure for the profit on the hall last year is £991.56.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men; [*particularly to those who desire now to offer up their praises and thanksgivings for thy late mercies vouchsafed unto them.] We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. **Amen.**
*This to be said when any that have been prayed for desire to return praise.

Prayer Network

A group of us commit to praying for particular people and their needs. We keep in contact by 'phone or e-mail and undertake to pray for those for whom prayer has been asked. It is wonderful to be able to support one another and to thank God for the answers we receive. If you would like to join the network, please contact Buffy Maisey. It's something you can do without even leaving your own home. If you have a prayer request, please ask Buffy (elizabeth@rabhutch.demon.co.uk, 727126) or the Rector or leave a note in the box provided at the back of St Michael's Church.

Court Farm, Upper Halling
(Advertisement Feature)

PASTURE REARED, GRASS FED - WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Halling & Cuxton villagers who visited the Butchery & Country Larder recently might have noticed a certain air of excited mystery. Perhaps some piglet squeals and free range chicken squawks. Calves mooing and twin lambs bleating...Summer has brought Court Farm's new livestock and new methods of grazing, rearing the animals, fattening them and preparing them for slaughter. It is called "pasture reared, grass fed only" when working out how to give them the healthiest life possible before they themselves enter the food chain. The sustainable agricultural benefits of letting the sheep and beef cattle eat grass roaming around the pastures and not feeding them grain anymore should be obvious. The animals are more active, happier in their original environment and eat the fresh green grass of Kent.

The land itself is made far more productive, a type of grazing system that improves soil health and soil biology. This also makes the meat taste better! General studies have shown that the grass fed, pasture reared beef and lamb even have more minerals in it, Omega 3 & 6 and less of the bad fats and more of the healthy fats you need in your diet. Scientists say pasture reared meat contains CLAs which can help the human body to fight cancer. It is a win win for the livestock and consumers and it has helped Andrew Lingham, the farmer at Court Farm, to reduce winter housing and feed costs.

The new native breeds at Court Farm are hardier and can stay outdoors all year round if needed. The same goes for the new pig enterprise we now have with our two share farmers Roger Savage and Lee Youseman. They have worked hard to bring home grown pork to Court Farm and they are already taking orders for it in the Butchery! Supplies are limited so get in early. Demand is growing for our free range eggs which will go into production in our innovative, self-built egg-mobile by mid-June. The hens are being trained to get themselves out of the mobile caravan they live in overnight and to go back inside on their own in the evening. The floor of the egg-mobile is mesh wire. So during the night the poultry are fertilising the ground below with their excrement. Every few days, Lee and Andrew pull the egg-mobile to a new spot in the field with the tractor. This fertilises different parts of the pasture where the cows were grazing not long ago.

This innovative American farming method is called mob or rotational grazing where cattle and sheep are paddock grazed using electric fences mimicking the grazing patterns of the buffalo across the northern plains of the USA. So the mystery at Court Farm has been the development of a self-contained ecosystem, including getting the pigs to burrow into their bedding for grain thus aerating the bedding to produce nutritious compost to be spread on the land. The lambs and calves meanwhile are happy to lounge about and chomp on lovely grass and silage which keeps them healthy, happy and well-rested.



Annual Barbecue

Rectory Grounds

9th July

6.00 pm

£7.00 & £3.50 for children.

Please bring own drink and chair if required. Food, music and grass for sitting on provided.

Forthcoming Attractions

9th July: Barbecue 6.00 pm Rectory

10th July: 4.30 pm Michael Hudson of the Bible Society will join us for tea and Evening Prayer at the Jubilee Hall and tell us about the Bible in Cambodia.

17th August: 2.00 Teddy Bears' Picnic Rectory.

31st August: 2.00 Strawberry Tea for Church Funds at 95, Pilgrims Road, North Halling.

17th September: 7.30 Quiz for Christian Aid at St Nicholas.

29th September 7.30 pm St Michael's Patronal Festival – preacher the Rural Dean.

2nd October: 6.30 pm Harvest Praise at St Michael's, followed by Harvest Supper in Church Hall.

15th October: 7.30 pm Quiz for Church Funds in Church Hall.

19th October: Mothers' Union Tea in Church Hall.

10th December: 10.00 Christmas Coffee Morning in Church Hall.

A Tale of Two Patients

I was told this story about two patients. Both developed painful limps. One was seen the same day and referred for surgery which was successfully performed the following week. The other waited a week to see a GP, a further six weeks to see a consultant and a further 18 months for an operation. The first was a golden retriever.

Also

A man with a poor reputation for DIY is painting his lounge, his wife walks in and can't believe how well he's doing, but the sweat is dripping off him. She says "Why are you wearing a leather jacket and a parker!?" He replies, "Read the tin! It says for best results put two coats on!"

Stone Age Cuxton

(The Stone Age lasted for over 3,000,000 years until 6,000BC? It is divided into Palaeolithic (the oldest), Mesolithic and Neolithic.)

The late afternoon of 18th December 2011 and the 22nd May 2016 are occasions related to the Ranscombe nature reserve that I will always remember. The first occasion was when using a track on the Ranscombe nature reserve damaged by forestry works that I saw and picked up what appeared to be worked flints, not then realising the presence of a Mesolithic site of county if not regional importance beneath my feet.

The second occasion was that of a conference at Oxford University where with some trepidation, made worse by me being the only amateur to speak, I had the honour and privilege to talk of the Ranscombe nature reserves Mesolithic site found almost 4½ years earlier.

Boxing Day 2011 afternoon on digging an exploratory test pit a superb axe was found followed by another several days later. In both cases the timing of arrival home at about 5.45pm was hardly appreciated by Margaret. With the New Year and the realisation of something important being present the Kent County Community Archaeologist initiated and supervised subsequent investigations.

Now 4½ years and after various investigations later, over 14,000 worked flints have been recovered and appropriately processed by myself. Amongst the items are a good selection of various types of tools which give interesting information in that the site has been used and reused (almost certainly intermittently) over an extended time period of possibly exceeding 5,000 years from perhaps as early as, or even earlier than, 7,000BC.

The Ranscombe site has a most distinctive feature in that it has yielded a total of 113 re-fitting groups which is apparently the highest number in the UK for any Mesolithic site. These latter re-fitting groups are partial reconstructions of flint nodules broken apart by human knapping activity. From data of finding individual pieces it is obvious that almost no horizontal scattering and very little vertical movement has occurred over the millennia. Whilst the re-fits might sound uninteresting it took some 8 square metres of my roof space to lay out a large proportion of the flints and several thousand hours of investigations. Manchester University now have loan of the assemblage where a mature student is utilising it for her doctorate research of which part is undertaking PXRf (portable X-Ray fluorescence) measurements to establish trace element composition. This should help establish the site's flint sources. Another student who will be utilising the assemblage for their doctorate research will be undertaking LAMSS (laser accelerated mass spectroscopy) measurements. In return for the loan it has been agreed that an 'expert' examination of the assemblage will be undertaken gratis which otherwise could command a fee of approaching 4 figures.

Comparing the Ranscombe Mesolithic site to the Acheulian one in and around Roger's garden is difficult not least, for the 200,000 year age difference. A similarity between both sites is axe manufacturing with the Cuxton Rectory having a considerably larger output than Ranscombe. The Cuxton Rectory site is thought to have had about 3 to 5% of the UK population when it was occupied whereas Ranscombe would have been unlikely to have exceeded 0.25% of the UK population at any time. Both sites have the similarity of having a good outlook with, in Ranscombe's case (if it were not for the 18th century planted sweet chestnut) a 10 mile skyline to the south and the Thames at about 15 miles to the north east. David May.

When I learnt that David had been asked to speak at the conference in Oxford, I asked him to write up something of these discoveries for our local parish magazine as they would be of much local interest. This part of the world perhaps offered comparatively easy living in the Stone Age. There was water and fish in the rivers, which could also be used for transport. The Downs are relatively free-draining when areas of heavier soil such as the Weald were likely to be water-logged. The woods, therefore, would have been less dense here and presumably better for hunting. Tracks such as what we now know as the North Downs Way and the Pilgrims Way have followed the ridge for millennia, providing access to the channel ports and to such major settlements as there might have been in the places which grew into cities such as Winchester and Canterbury. When farming began to be developed, it was much easier on the relatively light chalky soils of the Downs than on Wealden clay. Pockets of flint in the chalk provided the raw material for Stone Age tool-making. Along the North Downs Way are several monuments such as the Coldrum Stones, probably early Neolithic. So this was an important place in those distant days. I've hopelessly generalised what might be millions of years of history. So there is a great deal more for us to learn! Roger.

Cuxton Remembered (not quite the Stone Age!)

It must, I think, be twenty years ago that Lilian Bennet, formerly landlady of the "White Hart", wrote a series of articles about Cuxton and its people from 1914 until 1945 for this magazine. These were so much appreciated that the 50 Club re-printed them in one volume. All copies were quickly snapped up. However, given modern technology, it is now possible to print extra copies to order. If you would like one, in exchange for a £1 donation to the church, please let me know. They are really extremely interesting.

Churchyards and Cemeteries

Once again, I am sorry to say, we have begun the Summer with Halling Church Burial Ground and Cuxton Churchyard terribly overgrown. On the positive side, the wild flowers have been beautiful. There were some wonderful blue anemones (presumably at some time planted on a grave) at Halling as well as many varieties of wild flower there and at Cuxton. The unattractively named stinking mayweed made quite a show at the latter (and doesn't noticeably stink). On the other hand, on the negative side, it has been difficult to reach graves and I apologise to those of you who have had difficulty or who have been dismayed by the generally untidy state of what should be well maintained open spaces.

If we had much larger congregations of people who could either maintain the churchyards themselves or give enough money to pay professionals to do so for us, things would be very different. As it is, recently we have relied on the Payback scheme, by which people convicted of various crimes perform useful work in the community as punishment. Some of them have worked really hard and they have done a good job with which we have been pleased. Unfortunately, the government keep changing the way the scheme is administered. The hard part is by no means cutting the grass; it is contacting the scheme managers and getting answers from them. As I write this, I am expecting them to start work in the next few days. In the mean time, thanks to those who have done some work for us on a voluntary basis. Thank you also those of you have made monetary donations. The labour is free, but we still need to pay for equipment and fuel. I was disappointed, however, to learn that the people on Payback are now expected to work on Sundays. How can we reform people, I thought, if we try to compel them to break one of the Ten Commandments? You might be thinking that only a quaint old clergyman like me would worry about keeping the Sabbath in our modern, 24/7 society. So I will take the liberty of telling you some of the reasons why I think it matters.

1) Keeping one day in the week special makes the point that there is much more to life than the everyday routine. What really matters about us human beings is our eternal relationship with God. There must be more to life than going to work, shopping and leisure. There is infinitely more to life than the quotidian round. If these youngsters knew that, they wouldn't look for fulfilment or satisfaction in material goods, cheap thrills or exploitative relationships. Neither would they need to use alcohol or other drugs to escape the reality of their lives. If they knew God in Jesus Christ, many of the reasons for their offending would disappear. Insofar as they may have embarked on a life of crime because of poverty, an inadequate upbringing or poor education, their plight, seen in the light of our faith, would shame us into caring more about our fellow citizens and to do more for their welfare by making this a more Christian country.

2) Human beings are not machines, just to keep on working day after day. We need a day of rest every week. People who deny this for themselves are often trying to cover for an inner emptiness, the result of their inability to contemplate ultimate reality. *Be still then and know that I am God* (Psalm 46¹⁰).

3) We need time to enjoy ourselves, to do what we like doing for its own sake – not to earn money, not to get fit, not to establish the right business or social contacts, not for any ulterior motives – but just for fun.

4) We need time to enjoy our relationships with family and friends and with God.

5) If people were to come to Church, they would learn a powerful moral code, they would join a supportive, loving community, they would discover purpose in life and they would receive the means of grace (such as Bible-reading and preaching, Holy Communion and Baptism, prayer and absolution for their sins, among the many blessings which we receive when we turn to Christ) to enable them to live good, Christian lives.

6) If more people belonged to the Church, freely offering themselves, their time, their talents and their money, in the Lord's service, the Church could do a great deal more to serve the community - from keeping the churchyards tidy, to supporting food banks, to running youth clubs and facilities for the elderly, to providing pastoral care for those who need it, to transforming society. If, as a community, we put God first, we create a better community. If we put the everyday before God, we corrode even the everyday.

Real Education

Following comments about education in last month's magazine, I was referred to the work of Howard Gardner. You can find a good summary of his ideas on <http://infed.org/mobi/howard-gardner-multiple-intelligences-and-education/>, from which these notes are taken. He says, *I want my children to understand the world, but not just because the world is fascinating and the human mind is curious. I want them to understand it so that they will be positioned to make it a better place. Knowledge is not the same as morality, but we need to understand if we are to avoid past mistakes and move in productive directions. An important part of that understanding is knowing who we are and what we can do... Ultimately, we must synthesize our understandings for ourselves. The performance of understanding that truly matters are the ones we carry out as human beings in an imperfect world which we can affect for good or for ill.* (Howard Gardner 1999: 180-181).

Gardner points out that there are different kinds of intelligence which we all possess to greater or lesser degrees. He identifies eight. Of course, he has to use technical language and you would need to read the original article, but these are what they are: linguistic intelligence (understanding and using language); logical-mathematical intelligence (Maths & Science); musical intelligence; bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence (mind and body working together, I think); spatial intelligence (involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas); naturalist intelligence (enables human beings to recognize, categorize and draw upon certain features of the environment.) These are 1-5&8. 6&7 are the most important. So I'll give them in full.

Interpersonal intelligence is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others. Educators, salespeople, religious and political leaders and counsellors all need a well-developed interpersonal intelligence.

Intrapersonal intelligence entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. In Howard Gardner's view it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives.

Such ideas have profound implications for education which is becoming far too narrowly focussed on passing tests on the basics of what you need to become a good little producer and consumer, when, in fact, education ought to be about helping you to fulfil your potential as the human being God created you to be.

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Closer – Exploring Christian Spirituality

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Cost £15 per session

Closer... Who is this who calls me close? Love calls love: meet me...

The course will offer both exploration and experience of the depth of Christian Spirituality. The participants will: explore and develop their own relationship with God; try new ways of praying; learn about different Christian Spiritualities; explore discernment and decision making.

22 October 2016 What is Prayer? **29 October 2016** Images of God and Self **21 January 2017** Different Ways of Praying **29 April 2017** Different Ways of Praying **24 June 2017** Discernment and Decision Making **9 September 2017** Different Spiritualities **2 December 2017** Deepening and Review. You need to attend all sessions and you will be encouraged to use what you learnt in between sessions.

The Visitation

When the people of the parish vote for their churchwardens at the annual vestry meeting, it is not always realised that the new wardens do not formally take office until they are sworn in at the visitation, usually a few weeks later. When there is a change of warden, this gives a sort of overlap period, during which the new wardens can learn the ropes from the outgoing. New wardens are also offered training. So, if you ever think you might be called to stand for this office, don't be afraid. There is plenty of help. The real reason they have to be sworn in like this, however, is that wardens are bishop's officers and, if they wish to resign, they have to tender their resignation to him, not to the rector or PCC. In fact, there were churchwardens for hundreds of years before there were parochial church councils or parish councils and the annual vestry meeting, at which they are elected, is one of the oldest manifestations of local democracy. Everybody who is on the civil electoral roll of the parish, as well as those on the church electoral roll, may attend and vote at the vestry meeting. In this respect it differs from the annual parochial church meeting, which is usually held at the same time, but is a meeting only for church members. Churchwardens must, nevertheless, be on the church electoral roll and communicant members of the Church of England. For centuries, it was they and the rector or vicar who were legally responsible for the well-being of the parish. For the last hundred years or so, a number of what were traditionally the rights and duties of churchwardens have been shared by or even taken over by the PCC, which like the wardens, is expected to cooperate with the rector or vicar in the mission of the church. The work of a parish Church is to glorify God, to bring unbelievers to faith, to support Christians as they seek to become better Christians, to help people in every kind of need, to make the local community a bit more like the Kingdom of God, and to play our part in doing these things nationwide and indeed worldwide. Obviously, this wonderful privilege, the completion of Christ's work on earth, is shared by all Christians everywhere. Rector, churchwardens and PCC have their part in facilitating the mission of the whole.

Different dioceses handle visitations in different ways. When I was curate at St Christopher's Newington (near Ramsgate) in the Diocese of Canterbury, they handled the visitation one year by churchwardens elect coming from every parish in the deanery to my house to meet the Bishop of Dover and the diocesan registrar in pairs, to have a chat with him and to be sworn in. I enjoyed providing tea and biscuits for those in the queue and having friendly conversations with them. In this diocese, all the wardens elect from a particular archdeaconry attend at a nominated church and they archdeacon and registrar handle the legal bits and the archdeacon gives an address. This year he shared some insights from Susan Cain's book "Quiet: the power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking." She divides us into extroverts and introverts which she defines thus:

Extroverts are the people who will add life to your dinner party and laugh generously at your jokes. They tend to be assertive, dominant, and in great need of company. Extroverts think out loud and on their feet; they prefer talking to listening, rarely

find themselves at a loss for words, and occasionally blurt out things they never meant to say. They're comfortable with conflict, but not with solitude.

Introverts, by contrast, may have strong social skills and enjoy parties and business meetings, but after a while wish they were home in their pyjamas They prefer to devote their social energies to close friends colleagues, and family They listen more than they talk think before they speak, and often feel as if they express themselves better in writing than in conversation They tend to dislike conflict Many have a horror of small talk, but enjoy deep discussions.

Flourishing Christian communities, he says, need both types, but there are two challenges. One is to accept that you are the person God made you and not feel deficient because you aren't like someone else. The other is possibly more difficult – to act out of character occasionally because other people need you to do just that. His talk reminded me of something I once read. One of the many problems the C of E faces is that parishes expect their incumbents to be extroverts, up on the stage, taking the lead, partying, dealing with controversial issues fairly and firmly, whereas the people who offer for ordination are mainly introverts who would much rather be praying or reading, or talking one to one and would do anything to avoid discussing anything contentious. So we need to heed the archdeacon's advice.

St John's Draw: £25 to Mrs Parris (54), £10 each to Miss Heighes (88) & Miss Crowhurst (158) – drawn by Mrs Tapson.



Tommy's Talking Points

I'm enjoying these long, light days. The dawn chorus wakes up Master. Thank you, birds. Then we're off up into the woods. Now I'm trusted, I run free, except the morning when it was torrential rain. I wasn't running off anymore than I usually do, but he said he couldn't hear me because of the wind and he couldn't see me because of the rain on his glasses. So he put me on my lead. We still get a pre-Evening Prayer walk if there's time and, once or twice, on these long, light evenings we've been in the woods at cocoa time. The weekend of Trinity Sunday was good. On the Saturday, we went on the Christian Aid walk. We were late getting to the start. Master was incandescent with rage because Microsoft had tried to install Windows 10 on his computer without permission. Microsoft, believe it or not, don't give out their e mail address. So Master had written them a letter. We were going to post it at the box near where the paint factory used to be, but the Saturday collection had already gone at 9.30. So we had to walk round by the post office. (Microsoft have never answered.) We got to the Ranscombe car park eventually, then across the motorway bridge, up the lower flanks of Bluebell Hill, down a lot of very steep steps to lunch at Wouldham. Then back beside the river to the M2 and home. The Methodists went to the pub while we came home to Evensong. I had had a lot of running about and sniffing, however. On Trinity Sunday, the family came over. I had to stay in the Rectory while they went to the pub for lunch, but at least all three family dogs were together at home. Then we had a wonderful time, all of us, playing in the garden – though Master has his thoughts about what Lolly did to one of his fuchsias. On the Monday, as promised, we walked the North Downs Way to Wrotham with Master's friend. We were OK as far as Trottiscliffe, which he knows well. Then we started to get lost. Master would just have carried on walking till he happened on somewhere he wanted to be. This is what pea bugs do, apparently. Master's friend fortunately, however, has a mobile telephone, which brought us off the horrible main roads back onto the footpaths and quiet lanes. So to lunch in the "Bull", Wrotham – good beer and food for them, dogs welcome to the extent of refilling my water bowl even when I had knocked it over and made a puddle on their floor. I would strongly recommend the "Bull". Home by train. Don't know why they call that station Wrotham. See you soon, Tommy.

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