

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton.		
May 1 st Easter 2 400 th Anniversary of AV All readings from AV today.	9.30 Family Communion	Exodus 14 vv 10-31 & 15 vv 20&21 Acts 2 vv 14-32 p1093 I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 20 vv 19-31 p1089
	6.30 Evensong MU 110 th Anniversary	Daniel 6 vv 1-23 Mark 14 v 46 – 16 v8
May 8 th Easter 3	9.30 Holy Communion	Zephaniah 3 vv 14-20 p947 Acts 2 vv 14-41 p1093 I Peter 1 vv 17-23 p1217 Luke 24 vv 13-35 p1061
May 15 th Easter 4	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP Easter 3
	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 7 vv 1-24 p8 Acts 2 vv 42-47 p1094 I Peter 2 vv 19-25 p1218 John 10 vv 1-10 p1076
May 22 nd Easter 5	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 8 vv 1-19 p9 Acts 7 vv 55-60 p1100 I Peter 2 vv 2-10 p1218 John 14 vv 1-14 p1082
May 29 th Easter 6	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 8 v20 – 9 v17 p10 Acts 17 vv 22-31 p1113 I Peter 3 vv 13-22 p1219 John 14 vv 15-21 p1082
June 2 nd Ascension Day	7.30 pm Holy Communion	Daniel 7 vv 9-14 p892 Acts 1 vv 1-11 p1092 Luke 24 vv 44-53 p1062
June 5 th Easter 7	9.30 Family Communion	Ezekiel 36 vv 24-28 p868 Acts 1 vv 6-14 p1092 I Peter 4 v12-14 & 5 vv 6-11 p1220 John 17 vv 1-11 p1085
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
May 1 st Easter 2 400 th Anniversary of AV All readings from AV today.	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Daniel 6 vv 1-23 p890 Mark 15 v45 – 16 v8 p1023
	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Exodus 14 vv 10-31 & 15 vv 20&21 Acts 2 vv 14-32 p1093 I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 20 vv 19-31 p1089
May 8 th Easter 3	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Zephaniah 3 vv 14-20 p947 Acts 2 vv 14-41 p1093 I Peter 1 vv 17-23 p1217 Luke 24 vv 13-35 p1061
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Haggai 1 v13 – 2v9 p948 I Corinthians 3 vv 10-17 p1146
May 15 th Easter 4	11.00 Holy Communion Stop! Look! Listen!	Genesis 7 vv 1-24 p8 Acts 2 vv 42-47 p1094 I Peter 2 vv 19-25 p1218 John 10 vv 1-10 p1076
May 22 nd Easter 5	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Genesis 8 vv 1-19 p9 Acts 7 vv 55-60 p1100 I Peter 2 vv 2-10 p1218 John 14 vv 1-14 p1082
May 29 th Easter 6	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Genesis 8 v20 – 9 v17 p10 Acts 17 vv 22-31 p1113 I Peter 3 vv 13-22 p1219 John 14 vv 15-21 p1082
June 2 nd Ascension Day	9.30 Holy Communion	Acts 1 vv 1-11 p1092 Luke 24 vv 44-53 p1062
June 5 th Easter 7	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	II Samuel 23 vv 1-5 p330 Mark 16 vv 14-20 p1024
	11.00 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 36 vv 24-28 p868 Acts 1 vv 6-14 p1092 I Peter 4 v12-14 & 5 vv 6-11 p1220 John 17 vv 1-11 p1085

Wednesday Communion 9.30 Cuxton		Thursday Communion 9.30 Halling	
May 4 th St Philip & St James (transferred)	Isaiah 30 vv 15-21 Ephesians 1 vv 3-10 John 14 vv 1-14	May 5 th	Acts 5 vv 27-33 John 3 vv 31-36
May 11 th	Acts 8 vv 1-8 John 6 vv 35-40	May 12 th	Acts 8 vv 26-40 John 6 vv 44-51
May 18 th	Acts 12 vv 24 – 13 v5 John 12 vv 44-50	May 19 th St Dunstan	Acts 13 vv 13-25 John 13 vv 16-20
May 25 th Venerable Bede	Acts 15 vv 1-6 John 15 vv 1-8	May 26 th St Augustine of Canterbury	Acts 15 vv 7-21 John 15 vv 9-11

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** June Magazine: 13th May 8.30 am Rectory.

St John's Draw March: £5 each to Mr S Head (8), Mrs Ballard (35), Mr Knott (44), & Mrs Rogers (161) – drawn by Mrs Gyde. If you would like to join the draw in support of St John's Church, please contact Mrs Head.

March Church Hall Draw:: £5 to Buffy Maisey, drawn by Ray Maisey. Please ask Buffy if you would like to take part.

400th Anniversary Authorised Version of the Bible
Wednesday 25th May 7.30pm St John's Church Halling
Talk by Pastor Norman Hopkins of Waterhouse Evangelical Church.
All welcome, Retiring collection.



Archaeology Proves/Disproves the Bible

The three BBC2 programmes on the *Bible's Buried Secrets* by Francesca Stavrakopoulou seem to have made quite an impression on viewers. The first programme appeared to cast doubt on the significance of King David. The second suggested that God was married. The third puzzled over the significance and location of the Garden of Eden and the symbolism underlying the serpent. Some people were fascinated. Some thought the programmes were an attack on faith. Others thought that they helped us to understand what the Bible is about.

The relationship between Archaeology and Biblical Studies has always been a sticky one. There are biblical scholars who really don't believe that the Bible has much to do with history. Efforts by archaeologists to prove the historical truth of incidents recorded in the Bible are regarded by such scholars as irrelevant or even misleading. On the other hand, there are other biblical scholars who believe that the Bible does provide an accurate history of the world – in particular of Israel and the surrounding area – and

that efforts by some archaeologists to disprove biblical history are therefore mischievous.

Some biblical scholars look to Archaeology to confirm the Bible. Others believe that Archaeology has very little to teach faith. Some archaeologists believe that their discoveries prove the bible story. Others think that they have demonstrated by their science that, whatever else the Bible may be, it is not a reliable historical source.

So what are we to make of all this? Does Archaeology prove or disprove the Bible? Can Archaeology do either?

For a start, I think we have to accept the limitations of Archaeology. The archaeologist carries out digs and otherwise investigates ancient sites. He finds traces of buildings, human, plant and animal remains maybe, and a collection of artefacts (ornaments, tools, weapons, domestic utensils, pottery, etc. in varying states of repair). He may also find inscriptions on monuments and the remains of documents or books. He may find art work and representations of people, animals, etc. All this material then has to be interpreted.

What is it? How old is it? What was it for? What does it mean? How does it relate to what we know from other archaeological sites or recorded history?

There is an old joke which is especially relevant to Biblical Archaeology. When the archaeologist finds an object whose function he cannot otherwise explain, he generally labels it *religious*.

The point is that there is a great deal of room for interpretation and you will find quite a lot of disagreement between prominent archaeologists regarding the significance of their finds – particularly in the field of Biblical Archaeology. To be frank, there are archaeologists looking to disprove the Bible and there are archaeologists looking to prove the Bible and we all do tend to find what we are looking for. So read these studies and enjoy these TV programmes with a proper degree of scepticism. What do these ancient buildings or ruins, artefacts, writings or art work actually prove clearly and how much is interpretation? Are there other ways of interpreting the evidence? Is the author of the book or the presenter of the TV programme trying to sensationalise the archaeologists' findings? Do the archaeologists themselves have an agenda either to sustain or to undermine religious faith or are they truly impartial if indeed impartiality is a genuine possibility?

The second problem with Biblical Archaeology is that archaeologists can't dig in the most interesting places in the Holy Land, like the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, because they are still important sacred sites to three major world religions and to dig them up would be regarded by millions of people as desecration. A secular scientist might well lament the fact that religious sensitivities prevent him from carrying out objective scientific research on holy ground, but it is fair to ask whether anyone can come to a genuine understanding of the significance of such places if he has no sympathy at all with the people who revere them for their importance to faith?

The third problem with Biblical Archaeology is really a philosophical problem. Archaeology aims to be purely scientific. This means that it excludes from its consideration the possibility of any spiritual or divine intervention in or explanation of the phenomena which it investigates. There is no room for God in the scientific method. There is

no place for Providence or for angels. Miraculous explanations cannot even be considered.

The Bible, on the other hand, tells its story on the assumption that God does intervene in history. The destinies of nations and individual human beings are in His Hands according to the Bible story. Not only is divine intervention a possible explanation for something that happens; God is the ultimate explanation for everything that does happen. The miraculous, while rare, cannot be excluded.

Scientists and archaeologists cannot prove that there is no God or that God is not the underlying cause of everything that happens (and many would not want to). For pragmatic reasons, however, they leave God (and every other non-material entity) out of their calculations. And, in its own terms, the scientific method works very well. It is the basis of modern medicine and technology, two things without which the world we live in would be far less pleasant!

The person of faith, on the other hand, cannot prove by reason alone (although faith is the very opposite of unreasonable) that God is the reason for existence. He can, however, point to the pointlessness of existence if existence is all there is, and the thought that existence is pointless is intolerable to most of us, if not incredible.

In most areas of life we sensibly apply both religious and scientific principles. The sick person takes his medicine and prays. The hungry person says grace and eats the food the farmer and the cook provide.

In Biblical Archaeology, however, we have the problem that the archaeologist has to leave God out of his equations (at least insofar as he is practising Archaeology [He might be deeply religious in the way he lives his life.]). The Bible itself, however, tells the story in such a way as to demonstrate how God acts in the world. So the archaeologist begins by assuming that the Bible is wrong in its fundamental proposition (that God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and its guiding Hand) or at least that that proposition is irrelevant. What then can the archaeologist say to the biblical scholar or the biblical scholar to the archaeologist?

(The fourth problem is that many professionals dislike the term *Biblical Archaeology*, precisely

because it does raise all these questions. They would rather regard the Archaeology of Israel as essentially no different from the Archaeology of any other country: same methods, same basic assumptions, same objectivity.)

So can Archaeology prove or disprove the Bible? In my opinion what archaeologists discover about life in the ancient world obviously helps us to understand the context of the bible stories. Sometimes Archaeology may help us to determine whether or not a particular bible story is historically true. What Archaeology cannot comment on, however, is the religious truth of the story and it is the religious truth which matters to the Bible and to the person who reads the Bible seeking God. In that sense Archaeology can neither prove nor disprove the Bible. It can help us to understand the Bible. It can force us to ask new questions of the Bible. But in the end the point of the Bible is not that it is a history book; it is the Word of God. God speaks to us through the words of the Bible and it is only the person of faith or the person genuinely seeking enlightenment who can appreciate its true significance. We are not here to judge the Bible. The Bible is here to judge us. Faith speaks to faith.

And now a quick canter through the issues raised in the three programmes. Programme number one pointed out that the House of Omri (father of the notorious King Ahab, who married the infamous Jezebel) has left far more impressive archaeological remains than the House of David. The inference was that Omri mattered far more than David if David existed at all. It is probably true that Omri and his successors as Kings of Israel were far more successful in worldly terms than David. They may well have been richer, had more powerful armies and built more impressive buildings for archaeologists to find. Worldly success is not what interests the biblical writers, however. David is much more important than Omri because of his relationship with God and that is why the Messiah will be of the seed of David, not Omri. My bible covers about 500 years of history in 110 pages. It's not supposed to be a full, complete and accurate account of everything that happened in the Land of Israel. It sets out to be an account of how God relates to His Creation, how we relate to God and what happens when this relationship goes wrong. This is what we are to learn from reading the Bible for ourselves.

The second programme suggested that religion in ancient Israel was not as it is depicted in the Bible. According to the Bible, there is only one God and He is the only God human beings ought to worship. The archaeological evidence, however, suggests that people made images of God (also forbidden in the Bible), that they worshipped other gods such as Baal and even that they thought that the LORD (Yahweh, יהוה) had a wife. There seems to have been some confusion between Yahweh and Baal in the minds of many ancient Israelites and also uncertainty as to the precise relationship between El (the great God of the ancient world), Elohim and Yahweh (the God of Israel). None of this, however, ought to have surprised anyone who has read the Old Testament carefully. It is perfectly clear in the pages of the Bible that, while the LORD is the only God, and that, while we ought to worship Him alone, and that, while to worship the LORD is to act morally, people have always had false gods and wrong ideas about the one true God and have always declined to obey His perfect Law of love, and that the consequences of this rebellion have always been disastrous and that the only hope for the human race is God's faithfulness to us in the face of our faithlessness towards Him. This is perfectly clear in both the Old and New Testaments and it is illustrated rather than proved or disproved by Archaeology (and indeed by the whole of human history!)

I'm not sure what significance the third programme might have for Christian faith. The time and place of the Garden of Eden are irrelevant to its spiritual significance. The point of Eden is that God makes us in His own image. He makes us of the dust of the ground, but it is He Himself Who breathes into us the breath of life. We are thus both of the earth earthy and the children of God. He gives us everything we have. He gives us one another. He makes us free to walk with Him in His perfect Law of love or to reject Him. The consequence of our rejecting life is death, but that is what we do and we can only depend on God's faithfulness in the face our faithlessness to undo the consequences of our wickedness and folly and to restore to us the gift of eternal life. The symbol of the snake as a sign of craftiness and evil is too deep to go into here, but I suggest that the snake in the Garden of Eden should be interpreted in the light of Numbers 21 vv 4-9, John 3 vv 14&15 and Revelation 12 vv 1-17 with greater confidence than we can have in any interpretation based on comparison with

pagan religious beliefs – not that they are entirely irrelevant. [If anyone asks me I'll try to explain the significance of these passages next month.] So Archaeology may help us to understand the Bible but it has nothing to say either way on the

Bible's principal point – that God is the Creator and Sustainer of everything and that our life depends entirely on our relationship with Him. Roger.

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. 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.



Cade Quintet

After an interval of 18 years we are delighted to welcome back the Cade Quintet to perform at St Michael's Church Cuxton on Saturday 21st May at 7.30 pm.

Forthcoming Attractions 2011

1st May: 6.30 pm Evensong to celebrate 110th anniversary of Cuxton (now Cuxton & Halling) Mothers' Union. Preacher Rev'd Kenneth Clark, Vicar of Stone and Archdeaconry Chaplain.

25th May: 7.30 pm Pastor Norman Hopkins of Waterford House Evangelical Church to speak on 400th anniversary of the Authorised (King James) Version of the Bible at St John's. (Pastor Hopkins has already attracted notice as a speaker at Halling Historical Society.)

24th June (Nativity of St John the Baptist): 7.30 pm Confirmation and Patronal Festival Eucharist at Halling.

25th June: 7.30 pm Brook Orchestra Concert at St John's
{Also this weekend a Halling Exhibition is planned to take place in the church.}

26th June: Andrew Daunton-Feare preaches at 11.00 service at Halling and gives a slide presentation of his work, also at St John's. Event to include tea.

9th July: Parish Barbecue (We've decided to go ahead with this but not include music as part of the entertainment. So that represents a win for Medway Council and for the person who contacted them in confidence to alert them to their opportunity to force us to cancel last year's event. There are, however, I am glad to say still some ways left you can legally enjoy yourself without the prior permission of the local authority and that is what we shall do.)

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.)

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.

The Parable of the Good Social Worker

A man goes down from Brixton to Stockwell and falls among thieves. They take everything he has and leave him naked and bleeding to death in the gutter. A priest passes that way going to a meeting at Church House. He is far too busy and important to help and passes by on the other side. A policeman comes along, but, remembering his health and safety regulations, he hurries by in case the thieves are still around. Then a social worker comes down that way. He sees the man robbed, naked and dying and his heart fills with compassion. He says, "The people who did this really need help."

From the Registers

Funerals:

23rd March

4th April

Cynthia Eileen Trevethan (89)

Wilfrid Chambers (90)

Snodland

Snodland

Bill Clifton RIP

(19/9/35-12/3/11)

Bill died in Spain after a short illness. His sister Margaret joined his wife and many friends for his cremation.

In his younger days he had many friends in Cuxton. He was a founder member of the Scout Group, sang in the church choir, played cricket with Ian Swaisland and was an active member of the Social Club.

Margaret Clifton.

Nature Notes March 2011

On the 1st of the month I walk beneath grey skies with Murphy at Bluewater. Cold breezes blow. Catkins brighten an otherwise bare landscape of trees. Skies lighten later in the day. The next morning is grey, damp and cold. When I drive to Addington in the afternoon, the sun is shining and the pale blue sky is brushed with white clouds and the air is a dry cold. In the garden, the lilac buds are becoming quite fat, looking ready to burst when some warm weather comes. The night air is cold. A number of cold days follow until, on 7th, there is glorious sunshine with clear blue skies and light north easterly winds. A great spotted woodpecker comes to the feeders where other birds forage. The grass is now putting on Spring growth and will soon need to be cut. In the afternoon I walk along Pilgrim's Road with the sun beaming into my face. I take the narrow path which leads down to the main road. Clumps of primroses bloom along the edges of the path and four fungi raise their heads from within the undergrowth. Night skies are clear and a frost is forecast. The next day frost lies on the grass and over the tops of shrubs on this morning of welcome sunshine. Birds hop among the holly branches. The whole day is beautiful and it feels warmer because of westerly breezes. The following day as I walk along Pilgrim's Road I watch a heron in graceful flight above the roof tops.

On the 10th the skies are grey and there is a brisk wind. In the late afternoon I walk through the churchyard where primroses are in bloom. I take the top path of Six-acre Wood and on the banks I see daffodils in bud and clumps of delicate white violets and listen to the beautiful song of a chaffinch. Fox trails meander up the bank to the fields. As I skirt the field where new crops are growing I notice spindleberry shrubs in leaf, a badgers' sett and more white violets. Bluebell plants have emerged through the woodland floor, while many catkins have become brown. Hawthorns along the hedgerows have burst into their beautiful green. As I gaze across the valley, I

watch grey clouds drift across the pale sky and I see a few glimpses of the sun. I continue up into Mays Wood and along to my secret paths where dog's mercury plants have emerged through brown leaves. A few celandines and wood anemones are in bloom. I enter Church Fields where daisies, buttercups, shepherds purse and chick weed raise their tiny heads to the sky. Golden lichen covers many hawthorn branches. I watch and listen to rooks circling and calling above bare branches in the wood. Then I make my way home. I have enjoyed my experiences. The 11th is bright when I walk at Bluewater with Murphy where, on high banks, blackthorn is in blossom and almond blossom adorns trees along the roads. Various shrubs, including hawthorns are bursting into leaf, weeping willow branches are a delicate green and speedwell flowers peep out from among the grass stems. The 12th is a beautiful day of warm sunshine and blue skies brushed with high white cloud. I watch a brimstone butterfly flutter across the garden. Rain falls the next day. The morning of the 14th is bright with pale sunshine. I walk with Murphy along the grassy paths at Bluewater and I hear the woodpecker's yaffle. The 15th is grey and misty and it lasts through the day and into the darkness of the night. The next few days are grey and cold. Then, on 19th, frost lies on the grass in the early morning to be followed by glorious sunshine. I walk across the sparkling churchyard grass where celandines and primroses bloom. Ivy has been cleared from the wall and undergrowth in the copse is now open to the sun. Daffodils bloom on the bank and violets peep through young cow parsley plants. In Church Fields I see speedwell, red deadnettle and buttercups. On the hill brambles and hawthorns are breaking into leaf while a few of last year's hips and haws remain. A blackthorn sapling blooms. I tread the muddy paths of Mays Wood where I hear the great tit's call and where celandines and wood anemones are closed before being awakened by the sun. A butterfly which I don't identify hovers over the woodland floor. Bluebell

plants are well grown and dog's mercury blooms. I see a clump of light brown fungi. I then approach the beauty of Dean Valley where sheep graze and a pheasant calls from North Wood. Purple silver birch twigs in the hollow glow in the sun's bright light. I make my way down to Purty's Shaw and see the path of a fox. Coltsfoot glows golden on set aside land where I hear the buzz of a bee. A few clouds drift across the sky from the east. Horses graze in Six-acre Field where brown catkins hang. On the top path of Six-acre Wood a carpet of dog violets blooms. The banks are being cleared to allow the light to penetrate the woodland floor. It has been a walk to remember. When I am working in the garden on 20th I watch two bees one a bumble bee and another hovering over the flowering currant bush. At night there is a large ring of vapour round the moon. The next day, a brimstone butterfly and a peacock butterfly flutter across the sunlit garden. Blackthorn blooms along the Halling bypass. We experience some warm days one registering 18C. Lilac buds burst on 24th. On 25th when standing in the car park of St Francis Church, Strood, I watch a small fox making its way across the path. It isn't at all

worried about human beings. Temperatures fall on 26th. When I walk along the main road the next day, I see that small elms have burst their buds. The 28th is bright and mild when I walk in Cobtree Manor Park with Murphy. Carpets of dog violets bloom in the grass and catkins adorn silver birches and poplars. On 29th I hear the chiff chaff's call as I work in the garden. The next day, early bright skies soon become grey and the westerly wind strengthens. By midday, rain is falling and this persists for a few hours. Later there are a few glimpses of the sun but grey clouds soon cover the sky again. I walk along Pilgrims Road where I see dandelions, red dead nettle, garlic mustard, honesty and blackthorn in bloom. As I walk down the alley, at the top of which I see new horse chestnut leaves, primroses and violets bloom. The morning of the last day of the month is damp but there are some glimpses of the sun. The afternoon is pleasant with brisk westerly winds. Birds sing including the strident call of a greenfinch. Squirrels scamper in the branches of shrubs on the embankment. More daffodils burst into flower and the lilac leaves are gradually unfurling. Elizabeth Summers.

"The Rainbow" by William Wordsworth

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old

Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

Halling WI



Our March meeting was Quite a chilly affair. We started as usual with Jerusalem with a goodly number of members present. Minutes were read and signed and correspondence dealt with. The first birthday party invite, Larkfield on 21st April. I may have to be in four places at once as it is Maundy Thursday which is a very busy day. Cuxton Sports and Leisure group have arranged a walk around Leybourne Lakes followed by a pub lunch. Tom Hart Dyke is to speak at the next gardeners' meeting. We have been invited. It turned out to be a very enjoyable meeting. Tickets for the next National W.I. raffle have arrived with a £5000 first prize. Sadly Yorkshire Tea are no longer going to supply us with our free tea bags which they have been doing for 20yrs and it has got nothing to do with cutbacks, but we are still going to drink it.

Our speaker for the evening was Mr Spears, a very jolly man from Ashford, whose ambition in life was to take a trip on CONCORDE. Sadly Concorde has been decommissioned or scrapped.

So he and his wife took on the challenge of his next ambition to visit ANTARTICA. Why? No donkeys on the beach, not any decent beaches come to that, no trees, no grass, plenty of rocks, none with Antarctica right through the middle penguins of all sorts, one and a half million seals and lots and lots of ICE. Antarctica has 90% of the world's ice and some of its highest mountains, 17000 ft in some cases, but some of the ice shelves rise to 9000 ft. Mr Spears said the temperature was as low as minus 20, but could go as low as minus 80. I told you it was chilly.

His slides were truly amazing, especially the one of his wife and her friend bathing in a hot spring puddle in their bikinis. Don't think I shall be booking a holiday to Antarctica. It is like the Sahara Desert, the two of the most hostile places on earth. Mr Spears next ambition is a trip to the MOON.

April's speaker will be -----ME, flower arranging, craft some stories, oh and a report of our recent meeting at T.W. Competition next month, an apple pie in a saucer. Come on girls that's easy enough. Phyllis.

Fatal Embrace

On Saturday 14 May at Christ Church, Orpington 9.30 - 3.30 a major day conference on The Middle East. Speakers: Rev Canon Garth Hewitt, Director of Amos Trust and Canon of St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem and Dr Bernard Sabella, Middle East Council of Churches Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees. Chaired by Ven Simon Burton-Jones, Archdeacon of Rochester. Our speakers will reflect on the Christian contribution to finding a lasting settlement and the impact of the conflict on the Christian community. ALL WELCOME. Booking form from training@rochester.anglican.org or 01634 560000 or pay on the door. Bring own lunch.

News from Cuxton Infants

Dear friends of our school,

A busy term for us all and now we are about to break for Easter. All the children have been working very hard and making progress against their targets. Our year 2 children went to the Medway schools music festival at the central hall in Chatham. Great excitement as we boarded the coach and even more when we arrived and took our seats right at the front of the theatre. Our children performed on the stage unaccompanied, a three part song called the Breakfast Song. It was excellent, although I realise I am biased! I am very proud of them all.

We celebrated Mothers Day with a special assembly where children showed paintings of their Mums and also of what our Mums remind us of (kittens, rainbows and vanilla ice-cream come to mind as being said). Songs were performed and sentences read aloud as to why we love our mums. The children all took home a small bunch of flowers and card. The FCS or our PTA were very busy selling Mothers Day gifts to the children who had placed an order and are running an Easter disco.

The children have been focussing on the topic of Animals and the Rainforest and today we have welcomed Chris into our school who is known as 'the bug man'! I have never seen such a large tarantula almost as large as a dinner plate! The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Some held snakes, the spiders, tree frogs, geckoes, and lizards. We have some fantastic photos and a day that will be remembered by all.

We are now receiving confirmation from parents of new entrants that they are accepting the place at our school for their child. Once we have a final figure we can write to parents giving them dates for their child to visit and starting school details. We then begin to organise classes for September. We are also continuing to work closely on our budget the final figure being given by the LA at the end of March.

Soon after Easter our year 2 children start to visit the Junior school for the start of the year 3 transition and we find by doing this gradually over several weeks our children grow in confidence.

Finally we will be celebrating the Royal Wedding day with a small tea party, and lots of Royal activities including looking at the Royal Family tree, designing Kate's wedding dress, making things to eat for our party and making crowns, flags and bunting!

If you have access to a computer do look at our website, if not wait for the next news! Take care, Sandra Jones. Head teacher.

Magazine Delivery

Can anyone please deliver the magazine once a month in Pilgrims Way, Cuxton? Margaret (240644) would be glad to hear from you and so would I as I shall be doing the round if no one else will. Roger..

And Finally

"Most people are bothered by the passages of Scripture they don't understand, but I have always noticed that the passages that bother me are the ones I do understand." Mark Twain.