

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
29 th October Last Sunday after Trinity Bible Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion	Leviticus 19 vv 1-18 p121 I Thessalonians 2 vv 1-9 p1186 Matthew 22 vv 34-45 p991	
Thursday 2 nd November All Souls	9.30 Holy Communion	I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 6 vv 37-40 p1070	
5 th November 4 th Before Advent Blythswood Shoe Boxes	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Daniel 7 vv 1-18 p892 Luke 6 vv 17-31 p1034	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Micah 3 vv 5-12 p932 I Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 p1186 Matthew 24 vv 1-14 p993	
12 th November 3 rd Before Advent Remembrance Sunday	10.50 Holy Communion & Act of Remembrance	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Judges 7 vv 1-22 p249 John 15 vv 9-17 p1083	
19 th November 2 nd Before Advent	11.00 Holy Communion & Stop! Look! Listen!	Zephaniah 1 vv 7-18 p944 I Thessalonians 5 vv 1-11 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 14-30 p994	
26 th November Christ the King	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Ezekiel 34 vv 11-[24 p865 Ephesians 1 vv 15-23 p1173 Matthew 25 vv 31-46 p995	
3 rd December Advent Sunday Gift Service Year B	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Isaiah 1 vv 1-20 p685 Matthew 21 vv 1-13 p988	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 64 vv 1-9 p750 I Corinthians 1 vv 3-9 p1144 Mark 13 vv 24-37 p1019	
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
29 th October Last Sunday after Trinity Bible Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Leviticus 19 vv 1-18 p121 I Thessalonians 2 vv 1-9 p1186 Matthew 22 vv 34-45 p991	
Thursday 2 nd November All Souls	7.30 pm Holy Communion	I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 6 vv 37-40 p1070	
5 th November 4 th Before Advent Blythswood Shoe Boxes	9.30 Family Communion & Holy Baptism	Micah 3 vv 5-12 p932 I Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 p1186 Matthew 24 vv 1-14 p993	
12 th November 3 rd Before Advent Remembrance Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion & Act of Remembrance	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994	
19 th November	Trinity 23	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP
	2 nd Before Advent	9.30 Holy Communion	Zephaniah 1 vv 7-18 p944 I Thessalonians 5 vv 1-11 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 14-30 p994
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Our candidates for Confirmation will be confirmed at S Francis Strood on 19th November at 6.30 pm. Please remember them in your prayers and you are very welcome to attend.

Boxes for Blythswood will be collected at services on 5th November. Our gift services are 3rd December. Contributions of tinned, packeted and dried goods for the food bank are always welcome.

Copy date December magazine: 10th November 8.30 am Rectory.

You may be interested to know that we have collected a total of 848.7kg of good for the food bank. Donations of tinned and packeted goods may be brought to either church.

Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 @ St Michael's		Holy Communion Thursdays 9.30 @ St John's	
1 st November All Saints	Readings BCP All Saints Revelation 7 vv 2-12, Matthew 5 vv 1-12	2nd November All Souls	I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 6 vv 37-40 p1070
8 th November	Romans 13 vv 8-10 Luke 14 vv 25-33	November 9th	Romans 14 vv 7-12 Luke 15 vv 1-10
15 th November	Titus 3 vv 1-7 Luke 17 vv 11-19	16 th November	Philemon vv 1-25 Luke 17 vv 20-25
22 nd November S Cecilia	Revelation 4 vv 1-11 Luke 19 vv 11-28	23 rd November	Revelation 5 vv 1-10 Luke 19 vv 41-44
29 th November. Day of prayer for mission.	Daniel 5 vv 1-31 Luke 21 vv 12-19	30 th November S Andrew	Romans 10 vv 9-21 Matthew 4 vv 18-22

The Problem on St Matthew's Day.



This year, St Matthew's Day (21st September) fell on a Thursday. So we had our normal Thursday morning Communion service at St John's. Being an important day, him being an apostle and all, it was embarrassing. There were

so many Halling people wanting to attend the service that we had to turn a number away because the church was so full. Meanwhile, at Cuxton, I had received a petition with hundreds of names on it asking for a St Matthew's Day service at St Michael's and I felt so guilty that I wasn't in a position to lay one on.

So what is it that we believe which is so life-transforming that it is worth giving up everything in order to become a Christian?

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We don't believe that God exists or not just that anyway. We believe in God. That means that we live by faith in Him. God cannot disappoint. He is the maker of heaven and earth. Anything you can think of depends for its existence on God and that includes you and me. There is nothing God cannot do and there is no limit to His love. It is life transforming to know that we live by faith in Almighty God.

It is fairly obvious what it means when it says that God made what is seen, but what does it mean when it says that God made what is unseen? I suppose it could mean that He made microscopic organisms, atoms and subatomic particles, which we can only discern under microscopes or using other instruments, or that He made galaxies too far

away for us to see without telescopes, optical and radio, or perhaps too far away for us to detect them at all. I think that the things unseen in the creed are the angels and archangels and other spiritual beings. God made them too. One lad in a confirmation class, however, suggested that the unseen things God made were abstracts like love and justice and wisdom. I am sure that he also was right. God made everything that is.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. God is awesome. God is infinite, infinitely holy, infinitely greater and better than anything we can imagine. It might seem to us that God is utterly unapproachable for us mortal men, women and children. The prophet says that when God looks upon us it must be to Him as it is for us when we look down on insects. Yet the nature of God is love. God is three persons and one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is one in love and love is utterly unselfish and unself-centred. So the love of God flows out into creating and sustaining the world and especially into loving us and inviting us to love Him because we are made in His image, made to be His children.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. This is the unbelievable miracle. God Who is infinite and eternal enters our universe, the world that He has made, and becomes one of us. This is what Christmas is all about. Jesus is the eternally begotten Son of God and He is the son of Mary born on our earth at a particular time and in a particular place. This is how close God is to us

human beings and in order to know Him we have only to put our faith in Jesus Christ.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. This is how much God loves you and me and the whole human race. He died for us. He died an excruciatingly painful death for us. Without God we cannot live. We alienate ourselves from God by disobeying His commandments to love Him and to love one another. This is sin and the wages of sin is death. We all die. Yet God does not desire the death of a sinner. He desires that we should turn from our wickedness and live. How can we do that? We can do that because God reaches out to us in love, because God the Son, Jesus, dies on the cross for us. *There was no other good enough, To pay the price of sin. He only could unlock the gate Of heav'n and let us in.* We shall sing this on Good Friday. Just think on what it means.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; So how do we know that all this is true? How do we know that the hideously cruel death of Jesus atoned for sin and overcame the power of death once and for all? Well, God raised Him gloriously from the dead. We know that because the Bible says so. We know it because the risen Christ lives in His Church in every age and in every generation. Those of us who are Christians know that it is true that He is risen because He lives within our hearts.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. There is so much more good news to share with you today. Jesus the man, Jesus the God has ascended into heaven. Heaven is open to human beings through Him. Our prayers come into the presence of God through Jesus. Jesus prays with us and for us. He understands all our troubles because He is fully human and was tested in every way as we are tested. He meets all our needs because He is God. There is nothing He cannot do. There is no limit to His love.

He has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. When our time on earth is over, we shall go to be with Him for ever in heaven. All we have to do is to repent of our sins, to believe in Him and to be baptised in His Name. He has done

everything that is necessary so that we should have eternal life in the eternal love of God.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. There are times when we despair of this world. Its problems seem to be intractable. Sometimes it all just seems too much for us to bear. But this world has an end. It won't go on for ever. God has a purpose for His creation. Jesus will return in glory. This world of sin and death will come to an end. We shall all be judged. The standard is Jesus. How do we measure up when compared to Him? We shall all be judged. The wicked will receive what is coming to them. Their victims will get justice. But how are the justice and mercy of God to be reconciled? Justice and mercy are reconciled in love, the supreme expression of which is the Cross of Jesus, the upright linking heaven and earth, the arms uniting redeemed humanity in the family of God.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. Especially at Christmas, we think of Jesus as Emmanuel, which means *God with us*, and so He is. When He ascended into Heaven, He did not leave us comfortless. Through Jesus, the third person of the Holy Trinity, God the Holy Spirit, fills the world with His love. The Holy Spirit works in the world in every generation, teaching us to acknowledge God as our Father and Jesus as our Lord. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we know that God is with us and it is by the gifts of grace which the Holy Spirit gives us that we are enabled to live out our Christian calling in the world.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. The Church is not the building. She is not a human institution. The Church is made up of human beings but she is the Temple of God, the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ. The Church exists to worship God. The Church exists to enable us to live as Christian people. The Church's task is to bear witness of the Gospel of God to the whole world. The Church's calling is to bring in Christ's Kingdom of justice, mercy and peace. If you are a Christian, you don't go to

church; you, with all the other Christians on earth and in heaven, are the Church. Being the Church, our calling is to worship as members one of another, members of Christ, to celebrate the Sacraments, to proclaim the Word of God, to fulfil His purposes in the world.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. There are two Gospel Sacraments – Holy Communion and Holy Baptism. In Baptism we receive the grace to become what we are. In Communion we receive the grace *that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in.* To be baptised is to offer your life to Christ as He offered His life for you. It is only in offering our lives

Psalm 49: O hear ye this, all ye people : ponder it with your ears, all ye that dwell in the world; High and low, rich and poor : one with another. My mouth shall speak of wisdom : and my heart shall muse of understanding. I will incline mine ear to the parable : and shew my dark speech upon the harp. Wherefore should I fear in the days of wickedness : and when the wickedness of my heels compasseth me round about? There be some that put their trust in their goods : and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches. But no man may deliver his brother : nor make agreement unto God for him; For it cost more to redeem their souls : so that he must let that alone for ever; Yea, though he live long : and see not the grave. For he seeth that wise men also die, and perish together : as well as the ignorant and foolish, and leave their riches for other. And yet they think that their houses shall continue for ever : and that their dwelling-places shall endure from one generation to another; and call the lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man will not abide in honour : seeing he may be compared unto the beasts that perish; this is the way of them. This is their foolishness : and their posterity praise their saying. They lie in the hell like sheep, death gnaweth upon them, and the righteous shall have domination over them in the morning : their beauty shall consume in the sepulchre out of their dwelling. But God hath delivered my soul from the place of hell : for he shall receive me. Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich : or if the glory of his house be increased; For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth : neither shall his pomp follow him. For while he lived, he counted himself an happy man : and so long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee. He shall follow the generation of his fathers : and shall never see light. Man being in honour hath no understanding: but is compared unto the beasts that perish. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.



Cuxton WI

We met at our new venue, Cuxton Social Club, on the 7th September. After very many years happily meeting at the Church Hall, the WI returned to its original venue where it was formed in 1945. A very interesting evening learning all about bee keeping from enthusiastic bee keeper, Michelle Ernout. After taking over hives from a neighbouring allotment holder she became very knowledgeable about everything bee and honey

unconditionally to Him that we experience the hope promised in the next and last sentence of the Nicene Creed.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen. There is always hope. God is and because God is we need have no doubts for ourselves or for what will happen to us. All that it is required of us is to have faith in Him. From faith flows love and the greatest of these is love because God is love.

I have to be honest and admit that one paragraph of this month's letter is untrue. The third, fourth and fifth sentences of this article I just made up. But the rest is absolutely true, every word of it. Roger.

and now has honey and other honey related products to sell having given up her full-time job to concentrate of her bees. Our first meeting at our new home worked out well and having had 5 new visitors hope this trend continues as the social club is easy to reach for a lot of ladies. Our next meeting is on the 5th October when a representative of Kent Air Ambulance will be visiting us. Looking forward to seeing new visitors who will be made very welcome by us all.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

10 th September	Darren Keith Law	Strood
24 th September	Ava Georgina Schofield	High Street
1 st October	Finley Samuel Best	The Glebe
1 st October	Arianna Rose Rossini	The Street
8 th October	Austin Richard Attfield	Wainscott

Wedding:

23 rd September	Adam Richard Miller & Sarah Louise Emery	Cuxton
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Funeral:

26 th September	Sidney Henry Whiteway (66)	High Street
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A Mystery

What follows was found on a piece of paper threaded through the door handle of St Michael's.

How far off is this phone conversation? Scary!

- Hello! Gordon's Pizza?
- No sir, it is Google Pizza.
- So, I have the wrong number? '
- No sir, Google bought Gordon's Pizza.
- OK Take my order please
- Well sir, you want the usual? .
- The usual? How do you know me? ~
- According to your caller ID, the last 12 times, you ordered pizza with cheese, sausage, thick crust
- OKI OKI That's it.
- Sir, may I suggest to you this time ricotta cheese, arugula with sun-dried tomatoes?
- No, I hate vegetables.
- But your cholesterol is high!
- How do you know?
- Through the Lab subscriber's guide. We have the results of your blood tests for the last 7 years.
- Okay, but I want my regular pizza, I already take medicine.
- But sir, you have not taken your medicine regularly. Four months ago, you only purchased a box with 30 tablets at Costco Pharmacy.
- I bought more from another pharmacy.
- It is not showing on your credit card.
- I paid in cash.
- But you did not withdraw that much cash according to your bank statement.
- I have other sources of cash.
- This is not showing on your last Income-Tax return, unless you got it from an undeclared source.
- WHAT THE HELL? Enough! I'm sick of Google, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp. I'm going to an Island without WI-Fi or Internet. Where there are no cell phones or satellites to spy on me.
- I understand sir, but you will need to renew your passport, it expired 5 weeks ago!

St Michael's Draw: £10 Julie Patching (40), £5 each Viv Balsom (13) & Pippa McDonald (32).

St John's Draw: £5 each to Mrs Head (20), Mrs Chidwick (27), Mrs Cheeseman (134) & Mrs Tower (145) – drawn by Mrs Smitherman.

To join St Michael's draw, please ask Mary Pitt. To join St John's draw, please ask Betty Head.



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Flora and Fauna

This year, the mid-Summer flowers seem to have lasted very well both in the gardens and in the wild. Gradually, they are diminishing in number as the year advances. From my kitchen window, I'm admiring the lemon yellow of the evening primrose highlighted by the snowberry's white background. The stinging nettles are at last dying back. Good news for those of us who like wearing shorts.

Much of the abundant blackberry crop rotted well before its normal cut off date of Michaelmas after it got a soaking in some very heavy showers, even though we have not had much rain over all. The hips and haws in the hedgerows have now been joined by sloes, which some of you might use to flavour gin. As for fauna, there are numerous squirrels. The badgers have been digging up my lawn, adding their efforts to those of the moles. I saw a dead specimen of this little gentleman in velvet recently. We don't usually see them dead or alive. I was very impressed when a heron flew low over where I was sitting in my garden and we saw a large bird of prey at the margin of Bush Valley, probably hunting a small rodent for its tea. I'm not too good at identifying birds of prey. Birds of prey are more my speciality.

One wonderful afternoon, the sky over the Rectory garden was alive with a multitude of swallows ducking and diving to feast on the numerous insects which filled the air on a warm and humid day. Presumably, they were storing up energy for their imminent migration to Africa. Does anybody know the name of the beautiful blue flowers which were abundant in the woodland clearings in Upper Halling from August until the beginning of October? The plants are two to two and a half feet high. The leaves are about two inches long and lanceolate. The flowers are a deep blue, perhaps an inch and a half in diameter and rather daisy shaped. I was once told that these are rather special, but I've misplaced my flower book and can't name them.

Last month, we mentioned the changing of the leaves to their autumnal hues and when they might be at their best. I first noticed gold tingeing the green on the trees which form the periphery of Bush and Dean Valleys around the 17th September. Every day after that, there was a change – more gold and the gradual appearance of yellows, reds and browns, until, by the end of the month, Autumn was definitely on the horizon, even though we were treated to some very warm weather in something of an Indian Summer. The first weekend in November is supposed to be the best for Autumn colours. We'll have to wait and see. Roger.



To: All the People of the Diocese of Rochester

Called Together - the new vision and strategic aims of the Diocese of Rochester - will be launched by Bishop James at Rochester Cathedral on Saturday 4 November 2017 in the afternoon. Our new vision focuses on the three themes of Growing Disciples, Enriching our Communities, and Resourcing our Mission and Ministry. This event is an opportunity for us to celebrate and give thanks to God for the work already underway, as well as set out the focus of our shared life for the next five years. We will do this through worship, prayer and sharing stories. This event will be followed by events in early 2018 in each of the Rochester,

Tonbridge, and Bromley & Bexley Archdeaconries.

All Souls Day (2nd November)

On the 2nd November each year, the Church commemorates the Festival of All Souls. It is a day specially set aside to remember the faithful departed. In the words of the Creed, we believe in *the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body*.

In other words, we believe that we can trust God for those whom we love but see no longer. Death is not the end, but a new beginning, a new phase of existence. Our love for them and their love for us continues within the love of God. The things we have done wrong on earth can be forgiven if we ask God in Christ. Our personality, our soul, is not extinguished by death, but finds its fulfilment in God's love. These are the kinds of thoughts to remember when we think about our loved ones who have died.

In this parish, we remember by name on All Souls Day all those whose names are in the Books of Remembrance, those whose funerals we have arranged in the last year and any other individuals we are asked to commemorate.

The All Souls services this year are on Thursday 2nd November at 9.30 am at St John the Baptist's Church Halling Church Cuxton and at 7.30 pm at St Michael and All Angels' Church Cuxton. At both services we remember all those whose funerals we have taken in this last year and people from the parish we have heard about. If you or other members of your family or friends would like to be present at either service, you would be most welcome. If there are other names you would like remembered, please give them in writing to the Rector.



Friends of Kent Churches Bike Ride

The second Saturday in September once again was a beautiful day. Vivien, with support from Ann, manned St Michael's. Matthew and I cycled independently and Mary and Julia walked together. It is safe to say that a good time was had by all.

I had been a bit doubtful about my part in the event this year. The old knees had been playing up a bit and the back had just gone out in sympathy. I thought that I had better attempt only a few churches and those in town near stations in case I needed to catch the train home. Cycling turned out to be wonderful therapy for the ageing joints. I went to S Francis and S Nicholas, Strood Methodist, S Mary's and Grange Road. By the time I got to Frindsbury, I was re-energised and, instead of turning back towards Rochester, I thought Upnor would be more fun. If I could get to Upnor, I could manage Hoo, where the vicar said, Why not Stoke? Having got to Stoke, I might as well take in Allhallows and the redundant church of S Mary Hoo. On the way to High Halstow, I met the peloton from Cliffe and was inspired to carry on to Cooling and to take in Cliffe too. Then why not Frindsbury Baptist Church on the Cooling Road (or Bill Street, one or the other) and the RC church on the Hill? And still there was time for Rochester after all – the Cathedral & St Margaret's and both Borstal churches. I was a bit disappointed that I only filled in 25 boxes out of a possible total of 26, but Matthew did 27. So that was OK.

Between us we made £400 of which we receive half and FKC keep the other half to help churches all over Kent. Thank you to everybody who took part and all those who sponsored us. Roger.

Age Before Beauty

A mature lady discovered that the dentist she had an appointment with had the same name as a boy she'd been to school with. As she was wondering whether it could be the same handsome athlete who'd taken her to the school dance, she was very disappointed when a wizened old man entered the room. Doing the maths, however, and allowing for the passage of time, she realised that he might just possibly be the one. "I think you might have been in my class at school," she said.

"Really," he replied, "What did you teach?"

Finding a Home for Every Child that Needs One

As you read this, there are 115 vulnerable children within the Diocese currently awaiting adoption. Some have been waiting more than 18 months for their forever family. With every day that passes it becomes less likely that a loving home will ever be found for these 'hard to place' children. This is why Bishop James has announced the launch of an exciting new initiative between the Diocese of Rochester, national Christian charity Home for Good and local charity Diagrama Foundation, in response to a serious need within our society to raise the profile of fostering and adoption. The Bishop has shared with Area Deans his desire to see churches 'at the forefront of creating better futures for these children', adding that sharing hospitality and caring for the most disadvantaged in the community has been central to Christian discipleship all down the centuries. This year-long initiative aims to find more foster carers and adopters to care for children who wait the longest to be placed with families – this may be because they are older children, have additional needs, have minority ethnic heritage or are part of a sibling group. Within the Diocese there are, on average, 2,500 children in care - the vast majority within foster care. And every year hundreds of new foster carers are needed within our area to make sure children can be placed with people able to commit to them for as long as required and to enable them to live closer to their school and family, minimalising disruption as much as possible during this inevitably traumatic period of their childhood. Bishop James says: "I want to see churches that are at the forefront of creating better futures for these children and it is already good to know that around 50% of people approved for adoption in England are Christians. I pray that the Church of God in our area will respond with generosity to this opportunity."

Home for Good has a vision to find a home for every child who needs one. They will be playing a key role in the project, working closely with churches within the Diocese to motivate individuals from the Christian community to step forward to foster or adopt. They will also be equipping churches with a range of resources from booklets to video clips to help them offer welcoming communities for foster and adoptive families. Krish Kandiah, Founder and Director of Home for Good, who is also a foster carer and adopter himself, says: "If just one household from every church were to step forward to foster or adopt a child who is considered harder to place, then no child would have to wait for a family willing and able to care for them."

The partnership with Diagrama Foundation, a charity with a fostering and adoption agency (rated GOOD in all areas by Ofsted), has been forged by Rev'd Nathan Ward, a self-supporting minister at Holy Trinity, South Chatham, who is also Head of Children's Services at Diagrama. Diagrama receives dozens of referrals every week for children in desperate need of a loving home. Sadly, says Nathan, they are unable to respond to many of these due to the shortage of foster carers and adopters. He is hoping church communities will respond quickly to ease this crisis. The drive will focus on what churches can achieve together as a community, says Nathan. If we all support one another the impact can be significant. When one church in Yeovil embraced the challenge recently, two new adoptive families had been approved and four additional children were being fostered, after just one year. The initiative will see a series of information events held at church venues throughout the Diocese where those interested in getting involved can go along to meet with representatives from the two charities to find out more. Guests will also receive information packs about the fostering and adoption processes and hear an informative talk about making a difference through supporting fostering and adoption in a variety of ways.

The campaign will culminate in a celebration of foster carers and adopters to be hosted by the Bishop of Rochester in Rochester Cathedral on March 3, 2018. Information events will be arranged in your area over the next few months. To find out more about the initiative and how you can get involved email kent@homeforgood.org.uk, call 0300 001 0995 or visit www.homeforgood.org.uk/Kent



After attending the wonderful celebration of 140 years of the Mothers' Union in Winchester last year, Pippa and I were invited by Annie Beckley, the USA MU President, to attend the USA Conference in Washington. The USA

USA Mothers' Union Annual Conference 2017

Washington Friday 11th August to Tuesday 15th August 2017.

MU has only been going for 2 years but my word what they have managed to do in that time is astounding! The itinerary of the Conference was full on. The day started with morning prayers at 7.00 a.m., lunch time prayers at 12.00 noon and ended with evening prayers at 9.00 p.m. We really

enjoyed the fellowship of the prayer sessions and they were closely linked to the topics we were discussing.

The opening session was Friday evening when about 80 ladies met together so congenially and it stayed that way for the whole of the conference. We enjoyed meeting our National President, Lynn Tembey in a different part of the world. Different branches, represented at the Conference, had brought displays of their MU work. Valerie West was there with three friends from Trinidad and there were representatives from Canada. Each gave a talk on their MU work. We were asked to give a presentation on the work of the Rochester Diocese. The conference was very well organised and the issues were profound and highly topical. On Saturday we listened to the speaker, Dr Kimberly Mehiman-Orozco, a top lawyer, talk on "Human Trafficking", defending girls who had been manipulated through drugs and kidnapping. She explained the difficulties of trying to prosecute the men and women involved. After a thought provoking session, we had a fun workshop of packing bras, which we were all asked to bring in order to create gift packs for the 'Blue Campaign' which reaches out to the needy and vulnerable girls.

On Sunday we enjoyed a lovely service in Washington Cathedral. We were taken on a sight-seeing trip of Washington. There were many

statues and the same message kept coming over to us "Human Rights".

Whether this is adhered to is another matter! The lady Rector Kim, organised a visit to the Theological College where she trained. We enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea on the patio. (very English) In true Anglican style, glasses of wine were also offered.

We were overawed by the wonderful sculpture of Elizabeth and Mary which stood in the grounds of the Seminary. The next day we had a talk by the artist herself. She was interested in our thoughts as the statues depicted Elizabeth and Mary as black women. Monday's talk was on "race relations". This was very eye opening and we began to understand what it was like to experience racial prejudice. Many ladies present did say that they had not experienced prejudice in England. We made collages depicting aspects of people coming together and seeing the face of God in each other. The last evening was a Banquet in the Ballroom. Lynn, our National President, made a lovely speech and led the dancing.

The issues we discussed at the conference were almost similar to those Mary Sumner addressed all those years ago "Sex Trafficking" etc. It was like turning the clock back. I am proud to say that the MU has always been a voice to address these important issues. Jenny and Pippa, Cuxton & Halling MU in the Rochester Diocese.

For Your Diary

Saturday 9th December:

10:00 am: Christmas Fair and Coffee Morning in the Church Hall.

There will be a variety of stalls, including old favourites and some new, beverages and pastries, a grand raffle and a visit from you know whom.

7.30 pm: Christmas Music in the Church Hall.

An evening of light-hearted Yule-tide entertainment. All welcome.



please contact Julia Wells 727424.

The Children's Society

The total was £293.30 for this year. This was lower than previously by we have recruited another three people to have collection boxes in their homes already! If you would like a Children's Society box,

Smart Graffito

A notice outside a maternity ward read, "The first two minutes of life are highly critical."

Underneath someone had written, "And the last two are fairly dodgy as well!"

A certain bishop claimed that he could find a biblical text appropriate to any occasion. Asked to open a new maternity hospital, he chose I Corinthians 15⁵¹: *Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.* But, what did St Paul mean by these words? Answers on a postcard or by email.

Help!

We are very grateful to Norman Blow, who has, for a number of years, taken consignments of this magazine to the people who deliver it on the streets of North Halling and Cuxton. Is there someone with a car, please, who would be kind enough to pick them up monthly from Halling and take the bundles to the houses of the distributors? If so, please contact rector or Anne & James Watts. We should be most grateful.

Also, please encourage your neighbours to subscribe. The income helps the church. We hope that the content is interesting and informative. If you have a business in Cuxton or Halling, you can advertise with us at very modest rates (£40 or £80 per year, depending on size of advert). Contact rector on 717134 or, better, email roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk. We're also pleased to publish contributions from the public.

Christian Aid

A Division of The British Council of Churches



Christian Aid Quiz

Unfortunately, we were not able to enter a team this year, but you will be pleased to know that the Strood Area taken together raised £630.

Medway Street Pastors

We patrol Rochester High Street which is steeped in history and culture. On our nights out we pass Rochester Castle, Rochester Cathedral as well as old inns, pubs and historic buildings. We love Rochester and patrol the High Street to make sure people have a good time and most importantly get home safely.

Volunteers are needed both to act as street pastors, helping the mainly young people who may be in some kind of trouble, and to support in prayer those who are out on the streets. You might be surprised that people travel for miles to Rochester which has become something of a centre for evening entertainment and that it attracts large crowds of young people. The work is valued and supported by Medway Council, the police and some of the proprietors of places of entertainment. They would like Medway Street Pastors to extend the work in other parts of the Medway Towns and the hours they can cover.

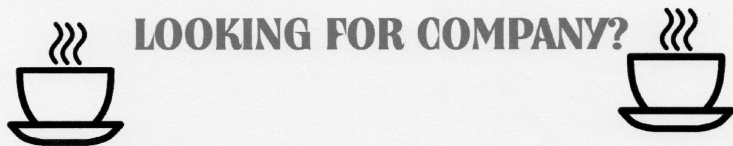
We are always looking for any volunteers to join our team – if you are interested we would love to hear from you. Call 07933 172888, email medway@streetpastors.org.uk or go onto medway.streetpastors.org.uk or look on Facebook.

The Pilates Element

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

Emily Pollington, member of FHT, qualified instructor.

Pilates classes are held in the church hall on Tuesdays from 7.00-8.00 pm. For more information, please contact instructor Emily Pollington, 01634 256942, 07940233296, emilypollington@btinternet.com Also on Facebook.



LOOKING FOR COMPANY?

Why not try eating and drinking with other villagers at:-

The "Parish Lunch" on the 1st Wednesday of the month at noon in the Church Hall. This is a 3-course meal followed by tea or coffee. Bring your own drink, if you wish, but squash is available.

The excellent food is prepared by our resident caterer Christine Eede and is available to all for a donation. You would be most welcome to this friendly gathering.



Fellowship Meal

and/or

The coffee morning every Thursday from 09.30 am till 11am at the Cuxton Community Church hall, Bush Road. Drop in at any time between these hours for coffee, tea and biscuits. We chat, put the world to rights, laugh and reminisce and occasionally have a moan! Why stand chatting on the pavement, when you can sit down, relax and meet new people?



A Joke For Autumn

What's the difference between a railway locomotive and a deciduous tree?

One leaves its shed while the other sheds its leaves.

Harvest Festival

Harvest is always a glorious occasion. The churches are beautifully decorated. We had an abundance of hops at Cuxton this year. We have our harvest loaves with their rich symbolism of bread and fish (a foretaste of heaven in this material world) and the eternal Trinity upon Whom everything depends for ever. Then there are the glorious harvest hymns and harvest anthems. The bells ring out across the fields to summon the parishioners to join in the celebration. Then there is the Harvest Supper, which this year took the form of a casserole. Thanks, as always, to all those people whose hard work makes this and all we do throughout the year possible. Roger.

Phone Scam

Like most people who get caught, I never thought I'd fall for it, but I very nearly did. Perhaps I was more vulnerable than usual. I'd been doing my accounts that morning and thinking that my phone bill seemed an awful lot for the little use I make of

the phone. So when, as I was cooking my dinner, the phone rang and a nice lady, claiming to be from BT, told me that I was paying too much and that, as such a good customer, I should receive a substantial discount, I almost fell for it. Perhaps I wasn't paying as much attention as I should have, because I was half afraid that the dinner was burning while I was talking on the phone and I didn't want to be rude to her. She gave me a long spiel about the good deal I could have. She just needed to check my details, she said. It was only when she asked me the number on my debit card and its expiry date that I realised that I was on the verge of being conned. **Reputable companies will never ever ring you and ask for your bank details.**

I informed BT, thinking that they might be able to trace the call and inform the police. I was, however, disappointed with their reaction. It was quite hard to find out how to report the attempted scam and they made no response when I did manage to contact them. The cynic in me wondered whether they cared. After all, so long as the caller pays for the call, BT does as well out of criminals ringing up to con people as it does out of friends ringing up for a nice chat. Roger.



Tommy's Talking Points

Last time I told you that we had walked the Saxon Shore Way from Cliffe to Gravesend. That's as far as it goes westwards, it turns out. So we decided that next time we would catch the bus to Cliffe again but this time head east through Cooling and High Halstow to the Fenn Bell, which is famous for its good food, beer, zoo and miniature railway. This was the first change of plan. The Fenn Bell is closed on Tuesdays and Mondays, the only day we can go.

What Fenn Corner does have is the bus stop for the 191 and we thought that would be a good way to get to somewhere where there would be some food for after our walk. So the day came that we were to meet Master's friend at Strood Station and catch the Cliffe bus from what used to be Winget's and before that Aveling and Porter. When we got up that morning, the rain was just leaving off and, for an hour or so, when I had my early walk in the woods, it looked like it might be a bright, sunny day. Soon after we got back to the Rectory, however, down came the rain again and it looked as if we might have to find something else to do that day, but it stopped by nine. So that was OK. Down we walked to Cuxton Station. Master bought the ticket from the machine, only to discover that our train was cancelled. He thought we could just about make Strood in time if we walked fast. So we met our friend at the station after all, but there was too short a time to catch the bus in the High Street. Master thought we might head it off at the pass, so to speak, if we cut through the back streets of Strood. We were just in time to see it disappear up Cliffe Road. Master complaining that, if the Cliffe bus still went up Frindsbury Hill and still had an open platform at the rear, we might have caught it, was several decades out of date. So this led to the second change of plan. Anyway it had stopped raining and come out quite warm, even if was muggy and a bit misty.

We walked the back way round Frindsbury to Frindsbury Church (where Master was christened and his parents, grandparents and sister were married) and turned left past the churchyard to Parsonage Lane and, after crossing the tunnel road, the riverside path along Whitewall. This brought us to Upnor where we went down to the shore and walked through some sticky mud till we got to Upnor Castle and had to turn back. Walking through the pretty village of Upper Upnor and inland of the castle, we came to Lower Upnor where there used to be the Arethusa training ship moored and houseboats and, many years ago, a pleasure resort and a barge yard, where the men sawed planks by hand, one on top, one in the pit below. Now it is just quiet and pleasant and we enjoyed walking through it very much, but past all those pubs and eating places long before dinner time! As the tide was low, we were able to walk along beside the river to Hoo Marina. They enjoyed the open skies, looking at the boats, the views across the river, murky as it was, and the cries of the seabirds. I enjoyed the opportunity to bound around and explore the shore. This is part of the Saxon Shore Way. So we can mark off that section as done. At Hoo, the path led through some industrial premises and then back onto the river wall. We followed this to Kingsnorth, passing a large herd of cows which ignored us and I ignored them. There was plenty of space for me to run and play, while the men stolidly plodded on along the footpaths and what was just about passable but possibly not designated right of way! We cut back inland to Hoo where the men had a pint. We found the 191 bus stop and took the bus into Rochester, where Master expected to find the tables set out outside a couple of pubs in the High Street for al fresco, dog-friendly dining. The early rain, however, had obviously put off their proprietors and he was disappointed to find the tables and chairs still piled up and unused, which led to a third change of plan. We turned up Boley Hill and found Ye Arrow, which must have the pub garden with the best view in the country, looking out on both the cathedral and the castle. They dried off the chairs as best they could. I slept under the table while they dined on what Master thought was appropriately called a Knight burger – a sumptuous confection of meat, bacon and cheese in a roll, accompanied by salad and chips and topped off by their both getting their just desserts. And so, back across the bridge to Strood Station and the end of another perfect day. This time our train was running and on time.

Three weeks later, I had my first proper trip to the seaside. We called for another of Master's friends at Ramsgate and drove to Minnis Bay. I've been there before, but in the Summer, when dogs aren't allowed on the beach. There used not to be any such restrictions, Master says. [I'd better not tell you what he thinks of a world in which all kinds of unethical behaviour on the part of the rich and powerful are permitted, but it's a crime to let your dog run on the beach!] Anyway, never mind him. It was great to run on the beach, bounding across the sand, running into and out of the sea, up and down the shingle banks, leaping the breakwaters. He also took off his shoes and socks and had a paddle and a wade, but not a swim. Then we were up on top of the sea wall to walk to Reculver. There were lots of people about – walkers with and without dogs, cyclists, bird watchers. As usual, I ran up to and greeted them all and they made a big fuss of me. When we got to Reculver, we saw the ruins of what had been a Roman fort and then a Christian Church (swords beaten into ploughshares, says Master). Having passed through the grounds, we came to the King Ethelbert Inn. Master had been there once before for a drink at the end of the parish trip to Herne Bay one year. Max was his canine companion in those days. There was a great menu. Master's companion was served with far more liver and bacon than she could handle. I was pleased to be able to help her out. And so, back to Minnis Bay and the car and a pleasant drive round the coastal road, which for Master brings back many happy holiday memories, to Margate where he hoped in vain to see the container ship which had run aground the previous day right by the Turner Gallery. It must have been refloated on the high tide. We dropped Master's friend at Ramsgate and then endured a traffic jam on the M2 before making it home just about in time for tea.

Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.

P.S.: The sparrow shaped bird with a speckled breast we saw last time between Cliffe and Higham was probably a duncock.