

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
Tuesday 29 th September Michaelmas	7.30 pm Holy Communion (reception in hall)	Genesis 28 vv 10-17 p30 Revelation 12 vv 7-12 p1242 John 1 vv 47-51 p1064
4 th October Trinity 18 Harvest & Dedication Festival	9.30 Family Communion	Genesis 2 vv 1-25 p4 Mark 10 vv 1-16 p1014
11 th October Trinity 19	9.30 Holy Communion	Amos 5 vv 6-15 p920 Hebrews 4 vv 12-16 p1203 Mark 10 vv 17-31 p1014
18 th October St Luke	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP
	9.30 Holy Communion	II Timothy 4 vv 1-18 p1197 Luke 10 vv 1-9 p1041
25 th October Last Sunday after Trinity & Bible Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 31 vv 7-9 p791 Hebrews 7 vv 23-28 p1205 Mark 10 vv 46-52
1 st November All Saints Day	9.30 Holy Communion	Revelation 21 vv 1-7 p1249 John 11 vv 32-44 p1078
Monday 2 nd November All Souls Day	7.30 pm Holy Communion	Romans 5 vv 1-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1069
8 th November 3 rd Sunday before Advent & Remembrance Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion, Act of Remembrance & Parade	Jonah 3 vv 1-10 p928 Mark 1 vv 14-20 p1002
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
4 th October Trinity 18 Harvest & Dedication Festival	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Joshua 3 vv 7-17 p218 Matthew 10 vv 1-22 p975
	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 2 vv 1-25 p4 Mark 10 vv 1-16 p1014
	6.30 Harvest Praise Jubilee Hall	Joel 2 vv 21-27 p913 I Timothy 2 vv 6-10 p1194 Matthew 6 vv 25-33 p971
11 th October Trinity 19	11.00 Holy Communion	Amos 5 vv 6-15 p920 Hebrews 4 vv 12-16 p1203 Mark 10 vv 17-31 p1014
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Joshua 5 vv 13 – 6 v20 p219 Matthew 10 vv 1-22 p975
18 th October St Luke	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion	Isaiah 35 vv 1-10 p719 II Timothy 4 vv 1-18 p1197 Luke 10 vv 1-9 p1041
25 th October Last Sunday after Trinity & Bible Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Jeremiah 31 vv 7-9 p791 Hebrews 7 vv 23-28 p1205 Mark 10 vv 46-52
1 st November All Saints Day	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Revelation 7 vv 2-12 p1238 Matthew 5 vv 1-12 p968
	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 25 vv 6-9 p708 Revelation 21 vv 1-7 p1249 John 11 vv 32-44 p1078
Monday 2 nd November All Souls Day	9.30 am Holy Communion	Romans 5 vv 1-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1069
8 th November 3 rd Sunday before Advent & Remembrance Sunday (DS)	10.50 Holy Communion, Act of Remembrance & Parade	Jonah 3 vv 1-10 p928 Mark 1 vv 14-20 p1002
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Isaiah 10 v 33 – 11 v9 p696 John 14 vv 23-29 p1082

Psalm 1: 1 Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners : and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord : and in his law will he exercise himself day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side : that will bring forth his fruit in due season.

4 His leaf also shall not wither : and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.

5 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them : but they are like the chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth.

6 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgement : neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

7 But the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous : and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 am St Michael's		Holy Communion Thursdays 9.30 am St John's	
30 th September S Jerome	Nehemiah 2 vv 1-8 Luke 9 vv 57-62	1 st October	Nehemiah 8 vv 1-12 Luke 10 vv 1-12
7 th October	Jonah 4 vv 1-11 Luke 11 vv 1-4	8 th October	Malachi 3 v13-4 v2 Luke 11 vv 5-13
14 th October	Romans 2 vv 1-11 Luke 11 vv 42-46	15 th October	Romans 3 vv 21-30 Luke 11 vv 47-54
21 st October	Romans 6 vv 12-18 Luke 12 vv 39-48	22 nd October	Romans 6 vv 19-23 Luke 12 vv 49-53
28 th October S Simon & S Jude	Isaiah 28 vv 14-16 Ephesians 2 vv 19-22 John 15 vv 17-27	29 th October.	Romans 8 vv 31-39 Luke 13 vv 31-35

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Marriage With a Splash

I was reading an article about what ideas people are thinking up to make their wedding videos go viral on the internet. The idea is to do something so exceptional at your wedding that everybody, all the millions of people on social media sites, want to see it. They are no longer, the article said, just trying to impress the audience at the ceremony, but the whole of the world wide web. Dancing at the service is one of the most popular ways to do something different and, even a few years ago, I was in a group of clergy who were shown a video of a couple dancing up the aisle, their guests joining in the dance and even the vicar. Of course, if everybody does it, it will no longer be something different and couples will have to think of something else to make their day stand out.

It made me think of an occasion a few years ago when I was conducting a wedding practice and the photographer asked me if I minded being photographed. I said it didn't really matter; I'm not the focus of a wedding service. The photographer quickly agreed and said that, of course, the focus was on the bride and groom. I responded that even that wasn't correct. I told him that, just like any other service, the focus at a wedding is on God.

The worrying word in the article was "audience". An audience is a group of people come together to listen to something – a concert or a play, a lecture or a man telling jokes. We've widened the word audience (with the same root as audio, audition, etc.) to include people who are gathered together to watch something as well as to listen. (Would you call a group of people watching a silent film an audience? I'm not sure.) My point, however, is

that an audience is a gathering of people to hear or watch what somebody else is doing. What we have in church is not an audience, but a congregation. A congregation is a group of people who have come together to do something together. In the case of a wedding, among other things, we have come together "to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony". First and foremost, at any service, the congregation has come together to worship God. The vicar is not primarily a performer, an educator or an entertainer. The choir is not singing to the congregation; they are singing to God. The people who lead the prayers are not talking to the congregation. Admittedly, the lesson readers and preachers are addressing the congregation, but the point is to do these things to the greater glory of God, not primarily to obtain a reaction from the other people present. That's why what we do as worship leaders and preachers is not invalidated if there is hardly anyone else present or if those who are present are inattentive. Now, of course, it is to the glory of God that His people are led to worship Him, that they are taught the truths of the Gospel and inspired with the Word, that they rejoice in Christian fellowship, but it is a disastrous mistake to treat a congregation as though it were an audience and to attempt to lead an act of worship focussed on the people rather than on God. It is a disastrous mistake because an act of worship focussed anywhere but on God is not really an act of worship at all and therefore lets down the congregation who have come together to worship. The worship leader leads the congregation in prayer. The choir leads the congregation in singing God's praises. The readers and preachers proclaim the Word of God. Whether or not the people in the pews join in out loud with the words of the prayers and the hymns, psalms and canticles, it is their participation in the

worship which is significant. They are in church to praise God together, not to watch or listen to the professionals. This is why one has to be very careful about criticising an act of worship. The responsibility of the people who lead is to please God, not me. If they are leading worship in spirit and in truth, what right have I to criticise? On the other hand, if worship leaders are really to succeed in leading people to the Throne of Grace, it is useful to them to know what the congregation find helpful, not necessarily what they like, but what is good for them, what is helpful for the whole congregation, not just for the most outspoken members of it.

Returning to weddings, what about civil marriages in registrar's offices or other venues? Are the guests at these occasions an audience or a congregation? In a church wedding, the guests who form the congregation, participate in the legal requirement that the marriage is witnessed. They show their love and support for the couple by being there. They join in the prayers for the bride and groom. It is only the prayers which are missing from a civil marriage. So I think that the guests at a registrar's office probably still constitute a congregation rather than an audience. I also think that the absence of prayer is a very big miss, just as it is at a humanist funeral or a local authority naming ceremony, which takes the place of Christian Baptism or Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child.

So how do I feel about dancing at the ceremony (rather than waiting till the reception afterwards)? How do I feel about importing other new ideas to make your wedding stand out? I don't object to dancing in principle. King David danced before the LORD. Dancing may well be an expression of worship. You might well be able to think up other

novel, meaningful ways of expressing the love and joy that you feel at your wedding. All I would ask is that you think about why you want to do these things. Are they to the glory of God? Are they to express how you truly feel? Are they to involve your guests more fully in what the occasion means? Or are they stunts intended more to draw attention to yourselves than to express the way you love God and one another? What would be the motive in trying to make your wedding more special than someone else's wedding? Do you really think that other people are less special than you? Every marriage is special to me.

For the record, if you really insist, I shan't forbid you to dance in church if you really believe that would be an appropriate expression of worship and commitment, but I shan't join in under any circumstances. I can't dance and I've hated being put in the position of being expected to dance ever since I was at infant school. So, personally, I won't even dance at the reception, let alone in church! But I won't object to anything that anyone else does in the right spirit.

Finally, the point is to live our lives in the context of worship. God is not an optional extra. Whether we are single or married, what we do for a living, where we live, how we live, who our friends are, what hobbies and pastimes we engage in, they all only ultimately make sense in the context of worship. If our lives are focussed on God, everything else falls into place. If our lives are focussed on everything else, even anything else, nothing makes ultimate sense.

An adult baptism candidate recently said to me that she had thought until recently that she could live a good life without participating in worship. Now she knows she can't. Roger.

Adoption Criteria

A circus family approached Social Services to say that they would like to adopt a child. Social workers were concerned that a circus might not be the best place for a child to grow up, but the prospective parents were able to show them a luxurious caravan in which the family would be living and explained that staff from the best public schools would be responsible for his education and that Harley Street doctors would be on call to look after his health. This all looked so good that the social workers felt they needed to ask just one more question. "How old a child would you like?". The reply came. "It doesn't matter so long as he fits in the cannon."

One Wise Thought and a Silly Joke.

Stressed reversed is desserts.

A little boy flicking through his mother's bible found a pressed leaf. "Is this Adam's underwear?" he asked.

We Will Remember Them

Last year, when we commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War, we asked for personal stories about the people commemorated on our war memorials. We realised that it would have been better to have undertaken this project earlier. So we are asking now for stories about the people commemorated on our Second World War memorials. If you are prepared to share any information, we shall publish it in this magazine. If there is enough, there might be a separately printed booklet.

Halling War Memorial

James Angus
Bertram Ashby
Gordon Bowles
Ernest Castle
Frank Chapman

Eric Harris
Gordon Hollands
Sydney Holmes
Jack Homewood
George Kitney

Eric Martin
Arthur Osborne
Marjorie Startup
William Wretham
Frank Wright

Please accept my apologies for the three errors which occurred in previous publications of this list.

Cuxton War Memorial

James Alderson
Francis Bethel

Percy Squires
Stanley Austin

Brian Wilde

Forthcoming Attractions

September 29th: 7.30 pm Patronal Festival Eucharist at St Michael's, preacher the Archdeacon.
October 4th: Harvest Festival. 6.30 pm Harvest Supper to follow evening service at Jubilee Hall.
October 24th: 7.30 pm: Quiz for parish funds in church hall.
December 12th: 10.00 Christmas Coffee Morning in Church Hall.
December 16th: 12.00 Christmas Parish Lunch in Church Hall.
December 19th & 20th: Christmas Tree Festival at St John's.

Quiz for Parish Funds

24th October

7. 30 pm in the Church Hall, Cuxton.

£7.00 includes ploughman's but please bring your own drink.

Teams 6-8 or come as individuals.

Book with Roger on 717134 roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk

Christmas Tree Festival

This will take place at St John's Church the weekend of 19th & 20th December. Village clubs and societies and individuals are invited to produce and decorate a Christmas tree. Be as imaginative and creative as you like. Trees may be real or artificial. They need to be set up on Friday 18th. On the Saturday, the exhibition will be open to the public and there will be refreshments on sale. The exhibition will also be open on Sunday with our usual service of Holy Communion at 11.00 and our Christmas Carol Service, Nativity Play and Christingle at 3.00. Please contact Phyllis Chidwick or the Rector if you would like to display a tree. It would be nice if you could leave them in church until twelfth night, but, if you need them for your own domestic festivities, you can have them back after the Carol Service. We hope to have an enjoyable celebration with plenty of things to see and to raise something for church funds by way of visitors' donations.

Nature Riddle: Why did the butterfly flutter by? Because it saw the dragonfly drink the flagon dry.

Church Finances

This is a delicate issue which I'm reluctant to raise, in part because a lot of people just won't believe what I'm trying to tell you! However, the situation is this. From Saxon times onwards, English parishes were largely funded by glebe land and endowments, tithes and fees for services such as burials and weddings. Some parishes were richly endowed. Many were not and always struggled to support their rector or vicar, to maintain their buildings and to carry out the Church's mission generally. The only service at which the traditional Prayer Book prescribes taking a collection is Holy Communion and the offerings made at that service were for almsgiving and charitable purposes, not for church maintenance. Over the centuries, England has become much less rural and agricultural land has lost much of its value relative to inflation. Glebe and endowments now generate a much smaller proportion of the revenue needed than they used to. They were nationalised forty odd years ago and represent a significant part of the "Church Commissioners' millions". Nationalising our assets like this was intended to make for a much fairer distribution. (In the old days a tiny village with hardly any inhabitants might have inherited a rich endowment, whereas a teeming town parish in an area of great need might have had hardly any financial resources.) It was also intended to make it possible to manage the Church's money more efficiently. The Church Commissioners also took over other funds such as Queen Anne's Bounty, which existed to subsidise underfunded parishes. The Church Commissioners do administer millions. That is true. It is also true that some of their investment decisions went badly wrong. In their defence, many other financial institutions acting in good faith have also made expensive mistakes. The Church Commissioners do administer millions and the millions are all spoken for. It costs a great deal to run a national Church. The Commissioners' accounts are published. So you don't have to take my word for it.

The idea of paying tithes goes back to the Bible. Jacob promised God that he would offer back to God a tenth of whatever he received. Many churches today practise voluntary tithing. Members voluntarily give back to God a tenth of their income to the Church, to missions and to charities. I have done this since I was a teenager and, personally, I believe it is the right thing to do. However, for many centuries, paying tithes was compulsory in England and they came to be very much resented. Why should a farmer whose crops haven't done very well in a particular year give 1/10th to the rector? Why should people who aren't even members of the Church of England pay 1/10th income to support a church they never go to? So the tithe system has largely lapsed or been absorbed into other payments.

You may remember an elderly clergyman who used to help out here. He told me that back in the 1950s a farmer refused to pay his rent to him as the rector, leaving him struggling to make ends meet. When he complained to the bishop that he could no longer afford a car to drive round his large country parish, the bishop advised him to get a bike.

I've always been uncomfortable about charging fees for services such as weddings and funerals. *Freely ye have received; freely give.* It is a serious sin (simony) to charge for God's blessing and the fees supposedly represent legal and administrative charges, but it is a fine distinction. In any case, many people no longer come to the church for weddings and funerals.

Other sources of revenue such as church rates, pew rents and chancel repair liability have all understandably proved unpopular and are of dubious morality.

So what we come back to is where other churches have always been and where probably we ought always to have been. The Church must rely on the support (including the financial support) of its current members. If we believe that it is God's Will that we should have a full time minister and fine buildings, it follows that God will provide the means to pay for them. That is the good news. The possibly bad news is that the funds God has provided for the work of the churches of which we are members is in our bank accounts or stuffed in our mattresses. It's not really bad news, because it is better to give than to receive. When we think about our giving, I think there are two things to bear in mind. One is what do we think is appropriate to offer back to God in the light of what we spend on other things? Is God's Church really worth less to us than a ticket

for the cinema or a meal in a restaurant? The other is what realistically do we need to give in order to cover the expenses the Church necessarily incurs?

The Diocese of Rochester appears to be facing a deficit of £900,000 this year. Again, the accounts are published if you doubt whether this money is spent wisely. I'm both a member of diocesan synod and a cynic when it comes to bureaucracy, but I think I can honestly say that there aren't really any substantial savings to be made without cutting back on the mission of the Church. You could argue that we don't need all these mediaeval buildings or a professional clergy highly trained and paid above the national average wage. (In the Middle Ages, many country priests worked alongside their parishioners in the fields and were not much better educated). You could argue that we don't need synodical government, but how else would laity, clergy and bishops meet together to make decisions? I would certainly argue that we are over-regulated and we could do without the costs of compliance, but that is a matter for government to sort out. If we want to carry on as we are, however, and indeed to extend our mission, we need to pay for it.

Here are the figures for Cuxton and Halling. Last year we were assessed to pay £46,400 towards the cost of my ministry and to make our fair contribution to the work of the diocese as a whole. We actually contributed £31,200. These figures do not include what we spend on our buildings and churchyards, fuel, insurance and our giving to missions and charities. Some people might say that we should cut out giving to missions and charities until we can afford it, but I don't believe that we can expect to receive freely if we are not prepared to give freely. You reap what you sow.

This year, instead of being assessed for quota or parish share, plus minister's stipend, we were asked to make an offer of what we thought we could afford. We felt able to offer £16,800. The diocese had hoped for £58,560. In other words, we are receiving an extremely hefty subsidy. Most of that subsidy is coming from the contributions made by other parishes. Some of them are much richer than we are. They have much larger congregations. Why is that? Maybe they practise tithing? Many will have had stewardship campaigns, which very often result in significantly improved financial situations. Many parishes are much poorer than we are. Believe it or not, Cuxton and Halling are well above the national average on most measures of prosperity. (You can check that on line as well, if you want to. Go to Church Urban Fund.) What worries me is that we are one of the parishes which regularly fails to make its proper contribution. Why should this be?

Anyway, there are 86 people on the electoral roll, a rough guide to the number of adults who regard themselves as members of this parish. This is one more reason why I'm embarrassed to bring up the subject of money. It doesn't take much working out that to meet our expenses, we'd need £15-£20 per week from each person. So what do we do? Can we review and increase our individual giving? If you are a tax-payer, it makes a big difference if you gift aid (Contact Jack Payne 716368). Can we increase the number of people who give regularly? Have we any bright ideas for fund-raising? Do we think in terms of cutting back? The obvious big saving would be if I am not replaced when I retire in 2024, but is that what we want? The answer to our problems is in God's Hands. So we'd better start with prayer. Roger.

Does Anyone Remember?

The tug *Silverstone* sank close to Cuxton on 5th March 1941. Walter James Shrimpton lost his life and a memorial service was conducted by the Bishop of Rochester. Does anyone have any memories or information to share about this event? If so, please contact me. This is for a publication about war losses at Chalk, where Walter Shrimpton came from. Roger.

St Michael's Draw: Emma Hills £10, Jeanne Harris £10, Pam Schofield £5 – drawn by David Gates.

St John's Draw: £25 Miss J Heighes (88), £10 each Mr R Mitchell (69) & Mrs K Garrett (123) – drawn by Mrs Tapson.

These draws are a fun and sometimes profitable way of contributing to church funds, Why not join? Mrs Harris 722773 or Mrs Head 240889.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

23rd August

Leo Stanley Charlie Crook

Snodland

30th August

Arthur David Leach

High Street

Marriage Blessing:

30th August

Anthony and Claire Leach

High Street

Funeral:

Died 13th August

Cecily Georgina Hoare (94)

formerly of Vicarage Close

18th August

Dudley Thomas Brown (82)

formerly of Cuxton

“Like Francis? You’ll Love Jesus”

The Francis in question is the pope, but shouldn't the quotation be equally apt for any Christian name?

Harvest Festival

4th October

Services of Holy Communion will be celebrated at 8.00 in the Jubilee Hall, 9.30 at St Michael's and 11.00 at St John's. Gifts may be brought for the Foodbank. Generally speaking, tinned and packeted goods with long use by deeds are what is needed. Always required are sugar, UHT or dried milk, custard, tinned or packeted deserts, instant mash, pasta, spreads, washing powder, toiletries, lavatory paper and maybe sweets for the children. Small or medium packet sizes are easier to process than giant economy. There will also be envelopes for contributions to the diocesan Poverty and Hope Appeal supporting projects in Argentina, Burkina Faso, India, Kenya, Tanzania and Kent. <http://www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/poverty-amp-hope>

There will also be a service of Evening Praise in the Jubilee Hall at 6.30 pm, followed by our annual **Harvest Supper**. This will be professionally catered this year. Tickets are £7.00. Any profits will be for the diocesan Poverty and Hope Appeal.



**The
Children's
Society**

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING

We will be opening the boxes this year on Friday 16th October from 9.30 am at 204 Bush Road, Cuxton. It would be a great help if box holders could either drop them in at my house or give them to me at church before that date so that they are ready for counting on the day. Alternatively, I am quite happy to collect them from your home if you let me know beforehand. Just give me a ring on 727424. Thank you. Julia.



Halling WI

For me, W.I. at Halling over the "Summer" has had it's ups and downs. Most of the time I have been incapacitated and haven't been able to go, hence no reports. Here are a few events that have been going on though. I was able to attend the 48th birthday party in June. 48 years, how have we managed to last that long? As usual it was a happy affair with old friends from other institutes and plenty of food. We agreed not to have a meeting in July but from what I have heard a lovely cream tea which was held in Jemma's garden was much enjoyed. On

the hottest day of the year some of the girls travelled to Lullingstone Castle to see the W.I. scarecrows, all 90 of them, which different W.I.s around the county had made to celebrate the 100yrs anniversary of the National Federation. It was nice for me to be able to see 30 of them at Court Farm Upper Halling guarding the magnificent field of sunflowers. Well done to all of the girls around the County who made them. They have given a lot of pleasure to a lot of people.

One occasion that I did manage was our lovely get together in Betty's car port for our annual Ploughman's Lunch, a lovely way to spend time with friends. Thanks must go to Betty for a lovely lunch and a smashing Victoria Sandwich and tea, When is somebody going to invent an Elizabeth Cake? That brings us almost up to date except for our August meeting.

Our August meeting was very apt with the contrasting weather we have been having. Mr Ian Currie, a well known weather man, came to talk to us about, yes, you've guessed it the weather. His talk was titled "Gales, Greenhouse Gases and Global Warming". It was extremely interesting and he came dressed the part. His jumper had a map of the British Isles on the front with weather symbols all around it. He started his talk by saying, eight million years ago Upper Halling was under the sea, then a slide of a great glacier. All of us at this point pulled our coats around us as it felt freezing in the Jubilee Hall. It got colder. The ice was 2 miles thick in Scandinavia, so he said, but, by the Roman times, the rains came and another Ice Age, even the contents of the bedpans froze, the start of frozen peas. This made us all laugh and laugh. In 1703, the greatest storm ever

recorded, managed to blow Eddystone Light house away. Well it was only made of wood, I believe. What he was trying to tell us was that it isn't all of our fault that we experience climate changes and in the 21st century we are warming up, but we haven't seen the last of the ice and rain.

As Mr Currie had spoken first, we had our business part of the meeting after tea. Not much business in August. The Autumn Day will be held on Sat 24th October at Snodland Community centre, and Mrs Tania Lingham invited us to Court Farm, along with Sheila Miles our County chairman, to celebrate the Sunflowers and Scarecrows. Maureen Burren judged our flowers competition this month. My little Cyclamen was the winner. It was out a bit early. Put it down to climate change.

Next month's speaker will be Mrs Sandy Sharpe who will tell us about British Calendar Customs, sounds intriguing. Come and have a listen., The competition will be a JUG, any kind of jug, glass plastic, tin, or even a little brown jug. I think every one has got a jug. Bring it full if you like. Phyllis.

Cuxton WI



We had a most enjoyable evening in September as it was our Produce Show. This event only comes along every three years and the last one was not very well supported at all. But, this year, nearly every member put something into the different classes. Chris had worked hard to organise these as well as sorting out the prizes and points for the winners. So it was good to see that most people had tried to support her by taking part. Colin and Sheila kindly came down from Cobham to act as our judges and by the time they had finished, they were glad of a cuppa to wash down all the pieces of lemon drizzle cake they had tried! It was a wide range of different classes so that most people could enter something they had produced – water and china paintings, seaside themed homemade cards, poems, cakes, herbs, bunches of flowers, single roses, and some juicy looking tomatoes. Joan was

our overall winner and Jean won the cup for best bloom with Val taking the cup for best in show. Every year we give a Bursary from our funds for someone to study a course of their own choice. Wendy had used hers to attend day courses in painting and brought along three beautiful landscapes that she had painted. They really were lovely and to achieve one of these in just one day meant some very enjoyable but concentrated work. I still find it hard to believe the talent that is hidden away in this village and which is suddenly revealed when we have shows or little exhibitions. If you have a hidden talent or, like me, just enjoy other people's efforts, do think about joining us whenever you like.

Next month we meet on Thursday 1st October at the Church Hall at 7 30pm when we will be entertained by Ann Hall who will show us some exotic dancing from Egypt. Sheila.

Another Riddle (appropriate for Autumn)

What is the difference between a railway locomotive and a deciduous tree?

One leaves its shed; the other sheds its leaves.

Kent Savers breaks the record

Kent Savers Credit Union is going from strength to strength with growing membership, new branches and record breaking demand for its fair and affordable loans.

The rise in loans coincided with the launch in May of the Credit Union's lowest-ever headline representative loan rate of 4.9% APR and the opening of a new branch of Kent Savers Credit Union at Newington, near Ramsgate

Most people probably think that credit unions are primarily about savings but Martin Kingman, chairman of Kent Savers Credit Union, pointed out, "Only through the interest we earn on the loans we issue can we ensure the success of the credit union. A healthy loan book allows us to provide savings and other accounts and services to assist people in better managing their money and to offer affordable alternatives to pay-day lenders and unregulated loan sharks."

Kent Savers Credit Union was set up in 2010 as a financial co-operative, owned and controlled by its members on a not-for-profit basis to provide fair, ethical and affordable financial services to the people of Kent. It now has 2,400 members, and holds £1,181,000 in savings accounts and has loaned out £1,809,000 in its five-year history. Members from all walks of life are helping one another through saving and borrowing.

Whether for a new car, or to replace a broken washing machine, a Kent Savers loan carries no early repayment charges, and allows for flexibility according to ability to pay. The Credit Union is, like the banks in the UK, fully regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority and is part of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Credit unions are member-owned financial cooperatives operated for the purpose of promoting thrift, providing credit and other financial services to their members. The Archbishop of Canterbury is encouraging all churches to support credit unions as fair and ethical alternative to doorstep lenders and payday loans, helping people struggling with finances or unexpected household costs.

Gordon Hunt, for Rochester Diocese CreditWise

[For more details about saving with or borrowing from Kent Savers Credit Union, please go on to the website

<http://www.kentsavers.co.uk/>, call 0333 321 9050 write to Kent Savers Credit Union, Community Support Unit, 39-48, Marsham Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1HH. Credit unions can help both savers and borrowers where banks and building societies can't and are an ethical response to the debt crisis.]

Nature Notes : August 2015

"Music"

Walter De La Mare

When music sounds, gone is the
earth I know,
And all her lovely things even
lovelier grow;
Her flowers in vision flame, her
forest trees
Lift burdened branches, stilled
with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the
water rise
Naiads whose beauty dims my
waking eyes,
Rapt in strange dreams burns
each enchanted face,
With solemn echoing stirs their
dwelling –place.

When music sounds, all that I
was I am
Ere to this haunt of brooding
dust I came
While from Time's woods break
into distant song
The swift-winged hours, as I
hasten along.

The first day of the month is warm and sunny as I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. Grasses are straw-coloured. Young willows, having been pollarded, have now begun their new growth.

Knapweed and some vetches are still in flower. A pair of moorhens glide on the lake. At home, I watch a young blackbird hopping about in the garden, while a garden tiger moth flutters by the greenhouse

windows. Later I watch the moon rise over the tree line in the east. The next day, while in the garden, I watch ants coming out of their nest. Hazy clouds drift across the evening sky. When the sun sets the next evening, the skies are a pink and golden hue. There is warm sunshine on 5th with blue skies and wisps of cloud drifting across from the west. More cloud comes in the afternoon when a few drops of rain begin to fall. The 6th is a warm, breezy day with high cloud and blue skies. Feral pigeons come to feed on some crusts. The afternoon remains warm and sunny; then clouds gather in the evening. I walk round the lake with Murphy on 7th when I see a holly blue butterfly hovering over the grasses. Bird's foot trefoil blooms along the way. I pick my first blackberries on 8th. Warm days follow. Then on 11th it is grey. At home, I listen to magpies cackling in the holly tree but other birds remain silent. After a sunny 12th, the 13th is dull and damp; then there is heavy rain and thunder and lightning in the afternoon. I watch tits and dunnock then blackbirds as they forage in the garden. Darkness has fallen soon after 8.30pm. On 16th the sun emerges. I walk Murphy round the lake. There are areas of tall straw coloured grasses which look beautiful in the sunlight. A grebe glides on the water. There are some dark clouds in the sky but no rain falls. The morning of 17th is glorious with blue sky brushed with white clouds. I walk by the lake with Murphy as a warm westerly wind blows. The afternoon remains warm and sunny but, by the evening, high, light grey cloud covers the sky but the air is balmy. The 18th is grey but quite warm. In the afternoon, I walk up the church path to the fields. Blackberries, elderberries, sloes and haws have ripened. Hips are beginning to ripen. I walk across the fields where grasses are straw

coloured. There is, however, a dullness which indicates the coming of the end of Summer. I walk along Six acres upper path where I see herb robert flowers and a single hedge woundwort flower. There is no birdsong. The skies remain grey and a few drops of rain fall. The 19th is another bright, warm day with warm, westerly winds blowing. I walk round the lake with Murphy. There are fewer flowers now among the tall yellow grasses. Some of the hazels are showing signs of Autumn. Clouds build up during the afternoon when I sit in the garden for a while. There is more cloud cover during the evening. We walk round the lake again on 21st beneath beautiful golden sunshine and blue skies brushed with white and a few grey clouds. I walk round the lake where I see a coot gliding along the rippling water followed by a grebe. After a grey beginning on 23rd, the morning becomes sunny continuing into the afternoon. A blackbird hops across the grass looking for insects. It is dark by 9.00pm. There are periods of heavy rain the next day. The morning of 27th is grey and damp but gradually the skies clear and the afternoon is sunny. A fresh breeze blows. A misty moon shines in the night sky. The next morning, mist hangs over the hedges. Eventually, the sun shines when I walk Murphy round the lake. A westerly breeze blows and the sun brings welcome warmth. A few wild flowers continue to bloom, particularly bristly ox tongue. Bird's foot trefoil grows in small clumps. The afternoon remains sunny and warm. After morning sunshine on 29th, clouds gather in the afternoon and the air cools. The evening is grey and eventually rain falls. The 30th is grey with no sunshine. The 31st is a wet day. Autumn appears to be on its way. Leaden grey clouds fill the sky. Elizabeth Summers.



Tommy's Talking Points

If it comes out right, you'll have a much more up to date picture of me this month. If it doesn't, I expect you'll have to make do with the old one. The picture Max used right up to the end of his life was one taken when he was still quite young. If you had looked carefully, you could have seen that he was on his lead. Photographing dogs is not always easy. We won't keep still. Also, to come out in the magazine, the photograph has to be in black and white and the dog has to be standing still on a contrasting background, such as the kitchen floor. It is because digital photography is so easy that they were able to keep on taking pictures until they got one which Master thinks will come out. Digital photography is easy. He's got more photos of me at seven months than he has of all his other dogs put together, but they are mostly on disc. You don't see pictures of me around the room, like you do the others. Master says that many of you will remember the nice lady who took Max's photograph. She took lots of photographs of parish events. He can't remember whether that one was in the church hall or the Jubilee Hall, but

So, how am I doing? I'm still enjoying what he calls my puppy summer. Being born in January means that, my first months out and about have been spring, summer and autumn. This has meant lots of running about in the garden and the woods and fields on long, light days. There's been lots of dry weather, even if

you are all saying that it hasn't been as warm as some summers. Now, however, the evenings and mornings are drawing in and it's quite dark when we go out first thing. So that's another reason, as well as my bad habit of running off, why I've been kept on my lead more. Master thinks I will have great fun in the winter if we have snow. Max used to like rolling in the frost. Only the other night, he said it had turned so cold that he was glad when it was time to go to bed.

My coat is very fine and silky. So, even when I am out in the wet and mud, I soon dry off and I don't get too dirty. Master is not sure whether this is just my puppy coat and it will lengthen and coarsen when I get older or whether this is how I shall always be. We'll have to see.

Speaking of my coat – and this is quite embarrassing – I got fleas a few weeks ago. Master had a supply of a powerful chemical which goes on the back of a dog's neck and eradicates fleas. It also gets rid of ticks which are much nastier and can cause Lyme disease in people (and dogs). First, he had to find out whether I was big enough to take the doses he already had in the cupboard. That meant I needed to be weighed. The way to weigh a dog at home is to weigh yourself and then weigh yourself again with the dog in your arms. Master is just under 12½ stone. The flea treatment is based on the dog's weight in kilogrammes. So he had to look at the metric scale. Not only that, he is 5' 10" high (whatever that is in metric) which means that, being so short-sighted, he can only just read the dial, which is at foot level. He picked me up. Of course, I squirmed so much that the needle kept moving on the dial. In the end, however, he decided that I was probably 18kg and that it would be all right to dose me up with the flea and tick medicine he had. The next thing was to apply it to the back of my neck. He had just got me to keep still in the garden and was applying it when one of my doggy friends turned up unexpectedly. I, of course, started wriggling very lively, and he didn't really know how much of the stuff landed where it ought to have done. Moreover, while this stuff is supposed to be water resistant after so many hours, I managed to get wet before the specified time. So, all in all, he didn't know whether or not I had received the full treatment. The fleas did, however, disappear. It didn't last though and, after a couple of weeks, he found three more crawling in my fur. Now, the treatment is not supposed to be applied more than once a month. So he didn't think I should have any more yet. So what to do? I do try to get in the shower with him sometimes. So maybe a good bath? Fleas, however, can hold their breath under water for a long time and are not easy to wash off. Back in the days before effective chemical treatments, Master used to take Ben swimming in the sea to get rid of them, but it wasn't very satisfactory. They'd all crawl up to the head end, where it's relatively dry. Ben didn't like being ducked and it didn't do much good. You have to have the washing machine on quite a hot programme to kill fleas, bed bugs, many bacteria and other parasites – a downside to environment-friendly, economy, low temperature washes. Then he remembered an electronic comb he had. This is powered by batteries and is supposed to electrocute fleas. He thought it wasn't much good in Max's day, but it actually seems to have worked on me. Maybe it is because my coat is shorter and finer. I expect I will have the chemical treatment, however, in due course. He really hates those ticks, which have to be removed promptly and with an unscrewing motion to prevent any part of them being left inside.

On a lighter and happier note, I'm still growing fast. He can't really call me tiny Tommy anymore (though he sometimes does). I'm usually tremendous Tommy or terrific Tommy or, sometimes, tumultuous Tommy. Just occasionally, I'm terrible Tommy, but, when he's feeling soppy, I'm perfect puppy. He does like alliteration! I can't say how lovely it is to have so much fuss made of me wherever I go. Especially in church and in the church hall, I'm cuddled and stroked, played with and plied with biscuits. But I'm not a lap dog. You should see me chasing sticks and running round out of doors. I'm pretty strong in the tug o' war games, although he can still beat me when it's dog toys we're playing with. When it's handkerchiefs or socks, he won't pull on his end. I'm just ordered to drop, which I will do – eventually. I can also dribble a football with all four paws and my mouth or, alternatively, play with two toys at once, one in my mouth, one with my forepaws. Now I think we're going to do some weeding. He pulls them out and puts them in the barrow. I take them out of the barrow and scatter them around the garden or knock over the barrow and empty them out. See you soon, Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.

P.S.: Thank you Mothers Union for the trip to Minnis Bay. Master had a good swim. So did another member of the party and another paddled. I had a couple of little walks, a long rest above the promenade (We are not allowed on the beach.) and the remnants of a couple of rock salmon.

Halling Historical Society

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 15th October 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Jubilee Hall, Upper Halling. The speaker will be Mr Jeremy Clarke and the subject Dickens and Medway. Visitors and new members welcome.

