

Services at St Michael and All Angels Cuxton			
2 nd September Trinity 14	9.30 Family Communion	Deuteronomy 4 vv 1-9 p182 James 1 vv 17-27 p1213 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010	
9 th September Trinity 15	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 35 vv 1-10 p719 James 2 vv 1-17 p1214 Mark 7 vv 24-37 p1010	
16 th September Trinity 16	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP	
	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 50 vv 4-9 p737 James 3 vv 1-12 p1214 Mark 8 vv 27-38 p1012	
23 rd September Trinity 17	9.30 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 11 vv 18-20 p770 James 3 v13 – 4 v8 p1215 Mark 9 vv 30-37 p1013	
29 th September Michaelmas	9.30 Holy Communion followed by brunch in church hall	Genesis 28 vv 10-17 p30 Hebrews 1 vv 5-14 Revelation 12 vv 7-12 p1242 John 1 vv 47-51 p1064	
30 th September Trinity 18	9.30 Holy Communion	Numbers 11 vv 4-29 p147 James 5 vv 13-20 p1216 Mark 9 vv 38-50 p1013	
7 th October Trinity 19 Dedication Festival Harvest Festival	9.30 Family Communion	Genesis 2 vv 18-24 p5 Mark 10 vv 2-16 p1014	
	6.30 Harvest Praise followed by Harvest Supper in church hall	I Kings 8 vv 22-30 p345 Luke 8 vv 1-25 p1037	
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
2 nd September Trinity 14	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Galatians 5 vv 16—24 p1172 Luke 17 vv 11-19 1051	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 4 vv 1-9 p182 James 1 vv 17-27 p1213 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010	
9 th September Trinity 15	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Isaiah 35 vv 1-10 p719 James 2 vv 1-17 p1214 Mark 7 vv 24-37 p1010	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	II Kings 19 vv 1-37 p391 Mark 9 vv 30-50 p1014	
16 th September Trinity 16	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Isaiah 50 vv 4-9 p737 James 3 vv 1-12 p1214 Mark 8 vv 27-38 p1012	
23 rd September Trinity 17	11.00 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 11 vv 18-20 p770 James 3 v13 – 4 v8 p1215 Mark 9 vv 30-37 p1013	
30 th September Trinity 18	11.00 Holy Communion	Numbers 11 vv 4-29 p147 James 5 vv 13-20 p1216 Mark 9 vv 38-50 p1013	
7 th October Trinity 19 Dedication Festival Harvest Festival	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Ephesians 4 vv 17-32 p1175 Matthew 9 vv 1-8 p973	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 2 vv 18-24 p5 Hebrews 1 vv 1-12 p1201 Mark 10 vv 2-16 p1014	
Holy Communion 9.30 am Wednesdays @ Cuxton		Holy Communion 9.30 am Thursdays @ Halling	
5 th September	I Corinthians 3 vv 1-9 Luke 4 vv 38-44	6 th September	I Corinthians 3 vv 18-23 Luke 5 vv 1-11
12 th September	I Corinthians 7 vv 25-31 Luke 6 vv 20-26	13 th September	I Corinthians 8 vv 1-13 Luke 6 vv 27-38
19 th September	I Corinthians 12 vv 12-31 Luke 7 vv 31-35	20 th September	I Corinthians 15 vv 1-11 Luke 7 vv 36-50
26 th September Wilson Carlile, Ember Day	Proverbs 30 vv 5-9 Luke 9 vv 1-6	27 th September	Ecclesiastes 1 vv 1-11 Luke 9 vv 7-9

21st September is St Matthew's Day, Holy Communion at St Michael's at 7.30 am.

Copy Date October Magazine 14th September 8.30 am Rectory

Forthcoming Attractions

15th August 2.00: Teddy Bears' Picnic Rectory Garden. Bring Teddy if you have one. Food will be provided. There will also be stalls and games.

19th September 10.45 church hall: MU open meeting to learn about fostering and adoption.

29th September (Michaelmas) 9.30 am Holy Communion at St Michael's followed by brunch in church hall.

29th September: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm Christian Aid Quiz, tickets £7.50 include ploughman's.

7th October Harvest Festival: 6.30 pm Harvest Praise at St Michael's followed by Harvest Supper.

17th October 10.45 church hall: MU meeting with the subject Outreach.

27th October: 7.30 pm Quiz for Church funds in the Church Hall. £7.50.

11th November: Concert in Commemoration of the Armistice at St Michael's.

21st November 10.45 church hall: MU meeting with the subject the Kenward Trust

1st December: Church Christmas Fayre at 10.00 am in the Scout Hall.

2nd February 2019: 5.00 pm Folk Mass for Candlemas pm at St Michael's followed by refreshments and folk music.

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Quizzes this Autumn in the Church Hall

Saturday 29th September
7.00 for 7.30 pm
for

Christian Aid

Teams 6-8, £7.50 per person
includes ploughman's

Book with Roger 01634 717134
roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk

Saturday 27th October
7.00 for 7.30 pm
for

Parish Funds

Teams 6-8, £7.50 per person
includes ploughman's

Book with Roger 01634 717134
roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk



**The
Children's
Society**

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING: We will be opening the Children's Society boxes on Friday 21st September, starting at 9.30 am. As usual this will be at 204 Bush Road. Please can anyone with a box either give it to me at church or drop it in at my house beforehand. I can also come and collect your box if that would be easier for you. Just let me know on 01634 727424. Thanks, Julia.



Jubilate Deo

I wasn't sure what to write about this month. Tommy gets the fun things to write about in our lives. I encourage other people to write about the nice things we do in the Church. I thought I could write about one or more of the troubling issues in the news at home or abroad and the problems of living in the world today, but I didn't want to. Even if I knew all the answers, which I don't, nobody would listen to me and it's too hot for controversy. I sometimes set out the Christian principles on which we ought to decide things – love, justice, mercy, etc. – but I've done that lots of times and I expect I shall again with real examples. Then a ray of light shone on me at Morning Prayer this morning. So here goes. Jubilate Deo!

Jubilate Deo

Psalm 100

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

That's a great start. Be joyful. There's a message for me and a message for you. Who should be joyful? People of all lands should be joyful. How can we be joyful? We can serve the LORD.

Worship is what human beings were made for. Our lives are fulfilled if we are in a loving relationship with God, not if we aren't. So "Come before his presence with a song." Pray every day. Come to Church. It isn't miserable. It isn't a chore. It isn't boring. Come with a song in your heart.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God : it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

There's only one God. He is the origin of our lives and the end of our lives. He is the reason we

exist and it is only in Him that we truly live. He made us. We belong to Him. All human beings are made to be the children of God, but, if you want to live as a member of God's family, you have to acknowledge that God is your Father. Jesus is your brother. The Holy Spirit makes us family. What we need to do is to turn from everything less than God and to turn to God. Then we know that we are God's people, or sheep who belong to Jesus the Good Shepherd. We know that He looks after us.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise : be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

So be positive. Be joyful. Be thankful to God for all that is good in your life. Praise Him in your daily prayers. Praise Him in Church. Tell all your friends what a great God God is and everything He has done for you.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting : and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

This is the nature of God. God is worthy to receive glory, honour and power. This is the nature of God. The closer we draw to God, the more this is our nature too – gracious, merciful and true.

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.

The Jubilate is Psalm 100. Following the traditional service, we say it on the nineteenth day of every month in the evening and as a canticle at Mattins when we don't use the Benedictus. As with all psalms and most canticles, we finish by glorifying God. To glorify God is the eternal purpose of human beings and it is in relationship with Him that we are complete. Roger.

Prayer Group Halling

For details, please contact Rev'd Ruth Bierbaum on 01622 722180.

House Group Cuxton

We meet at the church hall at 10.45 on the first Wednesday of each month to pray together and to discuss the things which concern us in the light of our faith. All welcome. September 5th: How Christians Decide Issues (Psalm 1). (The psalms are for context, on these occasions, not necessarily for bible study.) Suggestions please for topics for October onwards.

St John's Draw: £5 each to Mrs Head (1), Mrs Baker (46), Mr Mitchell (68) & Mrs Tower (145) – drawn by Mrs Chidwick.

St Michael's Draw: £10 to Mrs Cheesmer (4), £5 each to Mr Haselden (9) & Mrs & Mrs Beaney (5).

FRIENDS of KENT CHURCHES

The Friends of Kent Churches Sponsored Bike Ride and Walk (part of the national Ride+Stride) takes place on the second Saturday in September each year. This year it will take place on Saturday 8th September 2018.

Participants plan their own routes with the assistance of a printed list of churches and chapels open on the day. There are usually some 750 of these places of worship open, scattered right across this big county, and wherever you go you'll be assured of a warm welcome. Don't worry about carrying lots of food or drink as plenty is available at the churches or lots of pubs en route! Ask your relations, friends and colleagues to sponsor you – so much per church or chapel visited between 10am and 6pm on the day. This is recorded on a special sponsor form. Please ask them to tick for Gift Aid if they are tax payers; this increases their donations by 25% with no cost to them.

Welcoming visitors

50% of sponsorship money raised goes to the church or chapel chosen by the participant, with the other 50% going to the Friends, who use it to help the most needy churches in the County. Last year's Ride+Stride raised over £128,000 including Gift Aid, and this represented well over half of the total income of the Friends of Kent Churches. 745 churches and chapels were involved. There were nearly a thousand riders and walkers, who visited an average of 14 churches each. In addition, over a hundred of those who sat in churches to welcome visitors were themselves sponsored. Since it started, Ride+Stride has raised over £2.5 million in Kent and we hope to add to this total in 2017.

T-shirts and polo shirts are available to purchase. Cyclists can purchase Bicycle Flags including pole and bracket for the ride as a fun way to show your support and raise awareness.

To register as a participant, for further information on what's happening in Kent, or to request a sponsorship form from your Ride+Stride Organiser click on the link or send us an email. Otherwise, if you would like to donate please visit www.justgiving.com/kentchurches

Thank-you.

email: rideandstride@friendsofkentchurches.co.uk

web: <http://friendsofkentchurches.co.uk/ride-and-stride/>

Forms also available from local Rector, Roger Knight, 01634 717134 roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk

Poverty and Hope

‘ The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has sent me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.’ – Isaiah 61:1

Time and again, the Bible reminds us that God longs to bring comfort to the most vulnerable people. By giving to our Poverty and Hope Appeal, you are playing a part in this saving work. We believe that the love and grace of God can transform lives – in Kent, and around the world. Your generous gift will bring hope to those who need it most. You'll be speaking up with communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and bringing new opportunities to families living in poverty in Burkina Faso. You'll be improving the lives of people living with HIV in Zimbabwe, bringing hope to children in Sri Lanka, and supporting disadvantaged young people right here in Kent. bit.ly/PovertyHope. There will be envelopes for our contributions in church in September to bring back at Harvest Festival or any time up to Christmas.

Humour

How do we know that Adam could run fast?

He came first in the human race.

A teacher of Botany said to the class, “This term, we've studied the dog rose, the dog violet and the dogwood. Can you think of any other plants beginning with “dog”?”

A child responded, “How about cauliflower, Miss?”

The Riverhill Himalayan Gardens



The Riverhill Himalayan Gardens are a 50 minute drive from Cuxton towards Sevenoaks. The house and gardens were purchased by the Rogers family in 1840 and have remained their home for four generations. The original owner had a keen interest in gardening and wished to create an excellent 12 acre formal and informal garden. Many years ago various species of rhododendron and azalea were collected from the Himalayas. These can be found in the Wood Garden alongside bluebells and primroses in spring.

Upon arrival at the car park I walked down to the ticket office then onto the cafe. The cafe has a fair selection of tempting treats and I chose a latte with a homemade sausage roll to be enjoyed in the sunny courtyard whilst browsing the leaflet guide.

My adventure began with a walk uphill through the Chestnut Wood and onto the viewpoint at 'Little Everest'. The viewpoint is at the top of a wild flower meadow and offers a magnificent panorama of the Weald of Kent. There is a very useful information board that helps to identify some of the landmarks and point out details, such as, Mt Everest is 7,403km (4,600 miles) away or Bidborough Ridge - 6.5miles away. A great spot for a picnic.



I walked down the flower meadow along the path to the Himalayan Hedge Maze. This maze was designed by Adrian Fisher and was based on patterns found in Tibetan wood carvings. It is planted with Hornbeams. From the maze I descended through the Wood Garden surrounded by trees and more especially azaleas and then down into the Hidden Rock Garden. This was a shaded glade with small pools, falling water, ferns and moisture loving plants. The pathways took me out to the Camellia area and the Old Orchard. Family fun activities are run at the bottom of the Old Orchard in an activity tent. The activities for 2018 include bracelet making, face painting, fruit & veg printing, messy art and dream catcher workshops. Lovely, but not for me!



Walking uphill I wandered over to the back of the house and found the old tennis courts, now a lush grassed area, and small summer house with outstanding views of the neighbouring farmland. After admiring the view I walked over to the Walled Garden and Rose Walk. The Rose Walk beds underwent extensive work in 2013. The beds were given new metal edging, the paths were re-turfed and many new roses planted. In the same year the walls were repaired around the Rose Walk and in the Walled Garden. I was fortunate to find so many rose bushes in full



bloom, some scented, some not. The Walled Garden is interesting. It contains a delightful water feature, grassed terraces, several colourful flower borders, a vegetable plot and a covered seating area. During this summer there are 'ticketed Walled Garden Events', including plays performed by school and theatrical companies. In and around the gardens are several works of art. Some are very contemporary forms set against natural backdrops or there are sculptures with unusual titles. My favourite features for this visit were the roses and a glimpse of the friendly local Yeti who can be found in the woods most weekends.



A most enjoyable visit. Holly Croft.

The Seasonal Steps of our Seers – September

As the summer draws to an end, so too does the heavy work of getting in the harvest in the English countryside. A good summer harvest is essential to the country as a whole whether people live in cities and towns or in the villages and countryside. It is a time hopefully for thanksgiving; if the crop has been good but with the British weather fluctuating between extremes, only now are we beginning to realise how good the harvest could be in some areas and not in others. Harvest festivals are connected with bringing the harvest home and the timings of doing this vary from county to county. In olden times the festivals were linked to workers being paid for their efforts because mechanical methods of harvesting are really a more modern feature. Scything the crop by hand took the cooperation of many young men who would come together to scythe the fields in line whilst the women and older and infirm men would follow behind to gather and bind the corn into ricks so it could be collected and removed for storage after the crop had dried.

The last sheaf of corn was cut with great ceremony and with special respect, and Corn Dollies or other ornaments were fashioned from it. It was believed that the last sheaf harboured the 'Corn Spirit' and this would bless the land for a bumper harvest in the following years. At the end of a good harvest, the land owner would give a huge supper for his workers and those extra people that helped to bring in the crop. A traditional dish was boiled beef or mutton with potatoes followed by a wheat pudding or newly made bread. As well as a hearty supper, there would be music, singing and dancing, and plentiful amounts of good beer drunk from large pottery jugs.

*Hip! Hip! Hip! For the harvest home, Now we've taken the last load home,
I ripped my shirt and I teared my skin, To get my master's harvest in. (Warwickshire)
A potter fashioned me complete as plainly doth appear
For to supply the harvest men with good, strong English beer.
(Inscription on a North Devon Harvest Jug)*

September 3rd is Nutting Day when traditionally the children would go into the local woods to gather hazelnuts. Nuts should not be collected after September 21st (St Matthew's Day) as they would be past their best and never on a Sunday. St Matthew's is also the first day lace makers would light candles to aid their work until Shove Tuesday. Tired eyes could be bathed in gin to refresh them (but don't try this at home!!)

St Michael's Day (Michaelmas) falls on the 29th of September, one of the quarter days for paying rents and debts and the time for hiring new labourers. These hiring or "Mop" Fairs were held across the country and workers for hire would carry an emblem of their trade – a mop for a maid, a whip for a carter, a straw for a cowman or a crook for a shepherd which could be swapped with a new employer for a token of maybe a ribbon or a shilling to be spent at the fair. St Michael is, of course, the Patron Saint of Cuxton Church and we shall hold our patronal festival on that day. In the Old Testament of the Bible the archangel is known as the protector of the Israelites and in the New Testament as the opponent of the Devil. In Cuxton church he is depicted as a soldier, slaying the serpent and holding the sword and scales of justice. The traditional feast for Michaelmas is goose – as the ancient rhyme goes "*Whoever eats goose on Michaelmas Day shall never lack money for his debts to pay!*"

The quarter days are when rents and/or service charges are payable throughout the year and are actually four religious festivals: Lady Day - The feast of the Annunciation – March 25; Midsummer Day – Feast of St John the Baptist – June 24; Michaelmas – Feast of St Michael & All Angels – September 29; Christmas Day – Feast of the Nativity – Dec 25. As a Somerset Michaelmas songs states:

*And when the tenants come to pay their quarter's rents
They bring some fowls at Midsummer, a dish of fish at Lent
At Christmas a capon, at Michaelmas a goose,
And somewhat else at New Year's Tide, for fear their lease fly loose!*

JGB.

The Perils of Pretension

A newly married couple has social pretensions. They contrive an invitation to a posh dinner party where the conversation turns to Mozart. Not to be left out, the young wife remarks on how much she admires Mozart. "Why?" she says, "I saw him only last week on the 151 bus to Gravesend."

There is an embarrassed silence. On the way home, her husband says through gritted teeth, "Why did you have to show me up like that? Everyone knows that the 151 doesn't go to Gravesend!"

From the Registers

Baptism:

15th July

Kaylee Olivia Adams

Hong Kong

Funerals:

2nd August

David William Constable (79)

Charles Drive

7th August

Maureen Wormleighton (83)

Halling Bellringers

I thank everyone for the cards I have received for my 80th birthday. Also thanks to Cuxton ringers for a very enjoyable trip to Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Thank you. Peter Silver.

Why the Old Testament is Wiser than “Love Island”

I had better admit that, while I have read the Old Testament, I haven't watched “Love Island.” I am aware, however, of a lot of concern about the perfect bodies on view in the latter. It is feared that too many people – boys and girls, men and women – are feeling stressed out because they don't think that they match up to present day standards of beauty. Clothing and cosmetic companies make a great deal of money out of people who are worried about their appearance. Stupid people mock others for being unfashionable or for being less than perfect and perfectly decent people, youngsters and adults, then feel demeaned and devalued. It's not new, but perhaps it is made worse by the mass communications we now enjoy.

So let me tell you a story from the Old Testament. Old King Saul had turned into a tyrant, at odds with both God and man. So God told the prophet Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint a new king, choosing one of the sons of a man named Jesse. Jesse presented the oldest of his sons, who was a fine looking young man, and Samuel thought, at first sight, that this must be the one. But God said, “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” Samuel reviewed seven of Jesse's oldest sons and not one of them was chosen. Eventually, they sent for the youngest – David, who was looking after the sheep. It was David whom God told Samuel that He had chosen and, of course, David went on to be Israel's greatest king and the progenitor of Jesus. Actually, David was good looking too, but that wasn't the point. It's what you're like on the inside that matters, not your appearance; it's the person you are, not what you look like that matters – the Old Testament, not “Love Island.”

Moreover, the whole ethos of “Love Island” undermines the preciousness of human intimacy, which is not meant to be a show or a competition or a means to a selfish end. Rather, when a man really loves a woman and a woman really loves a man, it is truly an unconditional lifelong relationship expressed in care for one another no matter what and the establishment and nurture of a new family. Roger.

A Stray Yeti



This yeti's proper home is the Riverhill Himalayan Gardens, but the computer refused to include his picture there. Commonly seen in his natural habitat near Sevenoaks, the abominable snowman is remarkable for his ability to endure the intense heat of this English Summer. Maybe the thick coat of hair keeps out the heat. Despite his fearsome appearance, the creature is capable of human speech and will engage visitors to the gardens in pleasant conversation. We have no recommendations to supply concerning an appropriate diet, but it seems likely that the offer of a large ice cream would not be unwelcome in the heat of the day. We have no information regarding his living arrangements, but it is suggested that, despite his benign nature, it would be unwise to disturb him if he is located in any kind of den, cave or nest, especially if he appears to be asleep or eating a meal or with young.

Interesting but Cynical Thought

The Law treats rich and poor alike. Neither is allowed to beg for bread or sleep under railway arches.

Church BBQ in the Rectory Garden – Sunday, 29th July

Mad dogs and English men are said to go out in the mid day sun but they also go out in the pouring rain! Forty people attended the Church BBQ plus three dogs! A big “Thank you” must go to Julia and Matthew Wells for all the catering and for quickly erecting a huge Gazebo in front of Roger’s house, which accommodated us all. Thank you also to Alan Osborne for his brilliant cooking skills, to Malcolm Curnow for the raffle and to Dawn and David Gates for the music, despite not being able to have a live performance. These are some of the comments which flew back and forth on all our computers.

“There were forty of us and what fun we had!”

“Thank you for a fun Sunday afternoon, despite the rain!”

“We certainly had a brilliant time.”

“Everyone participated so good humouredly.”

Roger actually sent us a short video of the event and we are all very impressed by his technology.



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52.mp4

We do not have to wait a whole year for the next event, as we have a brunch in the Church Hall on the morning of Saturday, 29th September to celebrate “St. Michael’s Day” after the 9.30 a.m. service. See you there! JAB.



Mothers’ Union Outing – Wednesday, 18th July

Due to such hot weather, we decided not to go to the sea this year for our annual outing, but to engage on a shorter journey to a local attraction. We decided on visiting “Tea Pot Island” at Yalding. Sitting by the river around a large table in the shade, what more could you want! We enjoyed a very pleasant lunch followed by a delicious ice-cream. For some it was their first time to Tea Pot Island and they were amazed at the collection of Tea Pots. For the rest of us, we were trying to remember the last time we visited. It must have been some years ago. Shirley Crundwell first introduced me to this lovely location. Thank you Shirley.

On Wednesday, 19th September at 10.45 a.m. (in the Church Hall) the Mothers’ Union have a talk on “Fostering and Adoption” which will be a most interesting topic. Everyone is welcome. Jenny.

SHORNE CHURCH OPEN DAY

Monuments, brasses, old furnishings and medieval architecture are what most visitors are looking for in country churches. St Peter and St Paul at Shorne has all of these. The building has examples of all periods of architecture from Anglo-Saxon to Perpendicular in the 15th century. Unfortunately, like many churches in this area, it is locked when it is not in use. On Saturday 8th September it will be open from 10 am to 6 pm for anyone to visit and see what it has to offer. In the morning you can guide yourself round using a free leaflet. In the afternoon there will be guided tours at 2, 3 and 4 pm. These are free and there is no need to book. Afternoon teas will be served from 2.30 to 5 pm. This coincides with the national Heritage Open Days and the Friends of Kent Churches 'Ride & Stride'. You can get further information from Andrew Moffat 01474 822280 or aimoffat@btinternet.com or from our web site www.shorneparishchurch.co.uk.

From the “Times” 2nd August

The paper has been publishing archive material from the Monty Python team. It appears that they had initially conceived of the film which became *The Life of Brian* as anti-Jesus, but ‘Palin said that the Pythons never sought to criticise Christ: “[Eric Idle] came up with the wonderful title: *Jesus Christ: Lust for Glory*. Everyone did quite a bit of reading . . . and generally came back convinced that Jesus was a good bloke and a revolutionary of his time and against all hypocrisy and the cant of the official Jewish church of the time and that was the kind of figure we wanted. So that put him in the clear.” So, if you read up on Jesus, you might be surprised!



Tommy's Talking Points

You may have thought that my contribution to the August magazine finished rather abruptly and wondered why I didn't say anything more about our walks along the Saxon Shore Way. Well the truth is that he simply ran out of space and cut me off in my prime. I had much more to say.

So here goes. At the beginning of July, we met Master's friend on the train at Strood to travel to Sittingbourne for the next stretch of the Saxon Shore Way. Previously, we had walked to Swale Station and taken the train from there. It looked like a boring walk if we started from where we left off. So we decided to miss that bit out! We'd done it on the train! Nevertheless, on a very hot day, it was a grim beginning, walking along main roads through an industrial estate. The Saxon Shore Way is not well sign-posted and we missed the main feature of interest on that section – Murston Church.

Eventually, however, cutting through some rough ground, past fierce-looking dogs, we reached the Swale embankment and headed towards Oare. There was a lot of freedom for me and beautiful views across the Swale to Sheppey for them. It was a glorious day, with the wide sky above, the water on one side and the flat marsh land and fields of farm animals on the other. There were wild flowers, including lots of mauve ones actually growing in the marsh – though the mallow (marsh mallow?) seems to grow mainly on the dry bits. There were butterflies and other insects, also lots of birds. There was probably a hen harrier, though neither of them has the visual acuity to be sure. The pub at Conyer looked very inviting, but it was just before opening time, and, while Master's friend wisely suggested waiting a few minutes, Master was impatient to carry on. He's not good at starting again after stopping, especially if it's a pub we stop in. Anyway, he said, the first couple of pints after opening are not always the best.

Conyer is a very pretty village and we met some other dog walkers. Master remembers, many, many years ago, cycling along there with another friend, who managed to ride his bike into a pile of manure. It was fortunate that, in those days, pubs still had outside facilities, where it was possible to wash, rather than having to go through the bar. There used to be another pub there you could only get to across the railway level crossing. Woe betide anyone who stayed after the signalman had gone home for the night.

We carried on through the Oare nature reserve to where the ferry used to come from Harty. We walked down the jetty and I had a nice cooling swim in the Swale. I was pretty muddy when I came out! There were many more people about now and we took some time in the hide set up for birdwatchers. This was beautifully cool inside, with a lovely strong breeze blowing through it. They even saw some birds – terns Master thinks – and heard a peewit. Master was in peewit patrol as a cub. So he said he ought to be able to recognise one.

We then headed inland along the west bank of Oare Creek. They were getting hot and tired by this time, but I cooled off in some lovely, clean ditches where I lost the mud I had picked up in the Swale. The first pub they came to was closed. The second had stopped doing food, being 3.00 by this time. We should have stopped at Conyer! Anyway, they had some beer and we all had a rest in its nice, shady garden. There were steep stairs to the bar which they had problems negotiating while carrying glasses, but some much younger men doing some work in the garden ran up and down them, carrying far heavier loads!

We walked on to Faversham under a pitiless sun. No food at the first couple of pubs! Then we got to "the Limes". It was only 5.00 and the kitchen wasn't supposed to open till 6.00, but, when Master told the landlord how desperate we were, he took pity on us and opened up early. They enjoyed a very nice meal and we came home by train.

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 6.30-7.30 & 7.30-8.30 pm. For more information, please contact instructor Emily Pollington, 07940233296, emilypollington@btinternet.com Also on Facebook.

Please book through website

<https://the-pilates-element.pilatesnearyou.co.uk/>

Two weeks later, the plan was Faversham to Whitstable. So we took the train from Strood again. I was made a fuss of by fellow passengers at both Cuxton and Strood. Faversham was much more interesting than Sittingbourne to walk through. We passed a garage where they were restoring a Routemaster bus and its even more numerous and quintessential predecessor an RT! There were also more cultural sights to see as we passed various bookshops, the museum and the remains of the abbey – missing out the brewery and the parish church, to both of which Master has been before. We reached Faversham Creek via a boatyard and saw various interesting old boats – including a couple of Thames sailing barges and a Victorian yacht being restored. Back to the Swale and I had to be on my lead for quite a while because of the nesting birds and farm animals – not that we saw any. On this glorious day, even the Swale was blue. They got to discussing a deep theological question and a passer by joined in! Why try to be good and to live a good life, if all the bad things are going to be forgiven in the end anyway? Master thinks that the reason is that good people are happier in this life, even though God has laid up even greater things in the next life for those who love Him.

By this time, all three of us were very hot. Master took me in what was now the sea. That was very

cooling and gave me a new lease of life. Master paddled too and we all three sat in the shade for a bit. There were lots of beach huts, lots of people and some dogs. I enjoyed checking them out, though some were friendlier than others.

We got to the “Neptune” at Whitstable. The pub “garden” is the beach and, unsurprisingly on such a wonderful summer’s day, there were crowds of people. We found a table looking out to sea – Sheppey to the left, Essex on the distant horizon, the end of Herne Bay pier (what’s left of it) and the wind farm to the right. There was a three quarter of an hour wait for food. So we had a long sit down. I drank water and you can guess what they drank. The battered oysters were worth the wait!

This was supposed to be the end of the walk and I was expecting to head for Whitstable Station, but they went mad. They decided we could walk on to Herne Bay. Well, that was fine by me, but I’m sixty years younger than they are. So they grabbed an ice cream, the pub having no desserts, and off we set again. It was all great walking by the water, sometimes on the beach, sometimes a bit inland, meeting people, meeting dogs. Finally we came to Herne Bay and located the station. Even I was glad of the rest – lying under the seat in nice air-conditioned trains. I’m sure we all slept well that night.

Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.

And Finally

Ecclesiastes 12 vv 13&14: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good or, whether *it be* evil.