

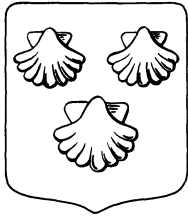
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
Sunday 5 th July Trinity 4	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Romans 14 vv 1-17 p1140 Luke 10 vv 1-20 p1041
	11.00 Holy Communion & Baptism	Ezekiel 2 vv 1-5 p831 II Corinthians 12 vv 2-10 p1165 Mark 6 vv 1-13 p1088
Sunday 12 th July Trinity 5 (Sea Sunday)	11.00 Holy Communion	Amos 7 vv 7-15 p921 Ephesians 1 vv 3-14 p1173 Mark 6 vv 14-29 p1008
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Job 4 v1 & 5 vv 6-27 p511 Roman 15 vv 14-29 p1141
Sunday 19 th July Trinity 6	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion & Baptism	Jeremiah 23 vv 1-6 p782 Ephesians 2 vv 11-22 p1174 Mark 6 vv 30-56 p1009
Sunday 26 th July Trinity 7	11.00 Holy Communion & Baptism	2 Kings 4 vv 42-44 p372 Ephesians 3 vv 14-21 p1175 John 6 vv 1-21 p1069
Sunday 2 nd August Trinity 8	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Hebrews 11 vv 17-31 p1209 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045
	11.00 Family Communion & Holy Baptism	Exodus 16 vv 2-15 p74 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
Sunday 5 th July Trinity 4	9.30 Family Communion	Ezekiel 1 (paraphrased dramatically by Rector) Ezekiel 2 vv 1-5 p831 Mark 6 vv 1-13 p1088
Sunday 12 th July Trinity 5 (Sea Sunday)	9.30 Holy Communion	Amos 7 vv 7-15 p921 Ephesians 1 vv 3-14 p1173 Mark 6 vv 14-29 p1008
Sunday 19 th July Trinity 6	8.00 Holy Communion	Hebrews 2 vv 5-18 p1202 Luke 10 vv 38-42 p1042
	9.30 Holy Communion & Baptism	Jeremiah 23 vv 1-6 p782 Ephesians 2 vv 11-22 p1174 Mark 6 vv 30-56 p1009
Sunday 26 th July Trinity 7	9.30 Holy Communion	2 Kings 4 vv 42-44 p372 Ephesians 3 vv 14-21 p1175 John 6 vv 1-21 p1069
Sunday 2 nd August Trinity 8	9.30 Family Communion & Holy Baptism	Exodus 16 vv 2-15 p74 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070

Wednesday Communion @ St Michael's 9.30 am		Thursday Communion @ St John's 9.30 am	
1 st July	Genesis 21 vv 5-20 Matthew 8 vv 28-34	2 nd July	Genesis 22 vv 1-19 Matthew 9 vv 1-8
8 th July	Genesis 41 vv 55-57 & 42 Matthew 10 vv 1-7	9 th July	Genesis 44 vv 18-34 & 45 vv 1-5 Matthew 10 vv 7-15
15 th July	Exodus 3 vv 1-12 Matthew 11 vv 25-27	16 th July	Exodus 3 vv 13-20 Matthew 11 vv 28-30
22 nd July St Mary Magdalene	Song of Solomon 3 vv 1-4 John 20 vv 1-18	23 rd July	Exodus 19 vv 1-20 Matthew 13 vv 10-17
29 th July Mary, Martha & Lazarus	Hebrews 2 vv 10-15 John 12 vv 1-8	30 th July	Exodus 40 vv 16-38 Matthew 13 vv 47-53

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Copy Date August Magazine 10th July 8.30 am Rectory.

On Thursday afternoons we have a **Mother & Toddler** service at Halling at 2.00 and at Cuxton every Wednesday also at 2.00. **Saints Alive!** (formerly Sunday School) is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays or school holidays). **After School Club**, Thursdays @ St John's.



Two Great Days and a Tenth

The second great day in the week commencing 17th May was Friday 22nd. As most of you know, Halling Fire Station put on a biennial Christmas pantomime which is much enjoyed by everybody. As well as being a lot of fun, it is also a great fundraiser. Naturally, the bulk of the money accumulated is for the benefit of fire service charities, but our fire fighters also very generously donate a significant part to village organisations and charities. They put on an excellent reception at the Jubilee Hall and invited guests received cheques on behalf their organisations. The Church was very grateful for the sum of £250. Thank you fire fighters. (This pays off about 1% of our debt!)

On the subject of money, I am grateful for the contributions that have come in to pay for the cutting of the churchyard grass. We shall need contributions (large or small) throughout the growing season. They may be handed to the churchwardens or rector. Any cheques should be made payable (like any donations or fees for any purpose), please, to "Cuxton and Halling PCC." If you wish, you can write on the back the purpose of the donation.

Time, talents and money are among the resources we need. Someone commented that we had got a bit behind with church cleaning. It is all done by too few volunteers. If you feel you could help with church cleaning (or in any other way) please speak to the churchwardens.

Thursday 21st May was Ascension Day and, full of the enthusiasm generated by the Bognor Conference, there was the suggestion that we process through the village to the service at Cuxton at 7.30 pm. We had had some big processions and very successful open air services in the past, but numbers had tailed off to the point where they had hardly seemed worthwhile and there wasn't much enthusiasm. On the other hand, the message of Ascension Day is to tell the world about Christ and we can hardly do that if we stay safely in our own buildings and don't do anything to proclaim the good news outside or to invite people in. So we decided, with trepidation, to go ahead.

At 6.45, I found myself standing alone outside the Co-op, wearing my vestments and carrying bags full of hymn books, prayer books and a Bible. A couple of lads got talking, asking me what I was doing and telling me a bit about themselves. Gradually, a handful from the Church joined us and I started handing out hymn books. The two young men took books, ready to sing, and about eight of their mates thought it looked like a good laugh and started videoing us on their mobiles. I suggested putting it all on You Tube, though I don't know how to find out whether they did or not! Anyway, all of them joined in too and the entire group of us walked through Cuxton, singing hymns and saying psalms and pausing for readings from the Bible. It was quite an experience!

When we got to Church, nearly everybody came in and stayed for most of the service, including the sermon. I hope they found it useful. It was all rather wonderful. Any suggestions for a repeat performance? How about Michaelmas?

If any of those who joined us are reading this, be assured that we have prayed for you. You are welcome to join us at any of our services – normally 9.30 am on Sundays at St Michael's. If anyone would like to talk to me individually about the Christian faith or as part of a small group, come and see me at the Rectory. You can ring me on 01634 717134. I'll take e mail enquiries on roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk and there is quite a lot of Christian teaching, as well as other information, on our webpage <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk> Look under "Beliefs" and "Teaching" for sermons and Bible notes.

Incidentally, some busy Mums were asking me whether they could come to our 9.30 Communion at Cuxton on Wednesdays or 9.30 Communion at Halling on Thursdays because they are so busy on Sundays with their families. Of course they can. Everyone is welcome and there is coffee afterwards.

Ascension Day is the 40th day of Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost the 50th. I thought there might be a wider readership for this year's Pentecost sermon than the number who actually came to Church. So, if you missed it or would like to read it again, here it is. Roger.

Pentecost 2009

Ezekiel 37 vv 1-14 p868, Acts 2 vv 1-21 p1093, Romans 8 vv 22-27 p1135, John 15 v26 – 16 v15 p1083

The red stole I am wearing today was made for me at my ordination by the lady who ran the youth group I attended in my late teens. She was a Pentecostal by denomination and it seemed appropriate that she should make the red stole worn on this day and generally for feasts of the Holy Spirit and for the Blood of Jesus and His holy martyrs. A few weeks ago I felt very honoured to be asked to take her funeral at Blackburn. Although it is always a sad thing to lose a friend, there is nevertheless a deep joy in conducting a funeral in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. I confess that, when I take funerals, there are some people I am more confident about having gone to the right place than others. What one looks for is a lively faith, manifest in good works, but *only God knoweth the number of his elect*. Today's sermon is based on the address I gave at Jessie Butcher's funeral.

The first point was that she thought it important to run a Christian youth group at all. Proverbs 22 v6: *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it*. Since Old Testament times it has been recognised that it is the responsibility of every generation to pass on the faith to its children: Who God is, what He has done for us, what we owe to Him. For all sorts of reasons, our generation is failing to pass on its faith to our children. We need more Jessie Butchers, parents committed to bringing up their children in the *fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his name*, people willing to be Sunday school teachers and Christian youth leaders, and people prepared to share their faith with any children and young people for whom they have a responsibility. But this group was not just for Jessie's own family and people who were already Christians. There was a welcome for everyone. Hospitality is one of the great Christian virtues. Those of us who went were encouraged to bring our friends. There was enough laughter and love for everybody. Jesus told us to share the faith with the whole world. You start sharing with loving. Although, it was a group for teenagers, we also attracted younger children and adults. There is no limit to Christian fellowship. We may have our own ideas about mission strategies and what we ought to lay on for which people in the expectation of certain results. But we always have to be flexible and open to God. It is God's Church, not ours, God's mission, not ours. It says in Acts: *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*.

We received a lot of excellent teaching. The basis was always the Bible. Both Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God. They bear witness to Jesus, God's Word made flesh. Nearly 2,000 years ago the Christian thinker Origen taught that, when we read the Bible, the Word of God is reaching out from its pages seeking us, just as we are seeking Jesus as we search the Scriptures. *The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart*. We ought to read the Bible faithfully and frequently. Our lives as individuals should be based on the Bible and so should the faith and activities of the Church. Indeed a church that wasn't Bible-based could hardly be properly described as a church. The Church of England itself teaches the same thing. Our sixth Article of Religion has it: *Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation*. On Bible Sunday we pray, *Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen*.

We were not only a mixed group age wise. We belonged to all sorts of different denominations of the Christian Church. That didn't matter. As Christians, we are members one of another, members of the Body of Christ, whether we are Pentecostals, Adventists, Baptists, Anglicans or Roman Catholics. We seek to agree in the truth of the Gospel. Where we differ, we differ in love as members of the same family. The art is to have a humble, but firm confidence in what we believe and to respect other Christians and what they believe and not to close our minds to the possibility that they might be right. We and they are inspired by the same Holy Spirit!

Our evenings were far from all study. We worshipped. We sang a lot – many hymns and choruses not all that familiar to me from the Church of England. But they were all based in the Word of God in the Bible –

as all good hymns are. Those of us who use prayers, books and liturgies formally authorised by the Church will find that they too are firmly based in the Bible. If they were not, there would always be the risk that they were departing from the Truth of God revealed in Jesus Christ – another point made very firmly in the early Church 1800 years ago. We are most truly ourselves as human beings when we are worshipping. We were made for the glory of God. Truly, our greatest joy is to worship. The eternal joy of heaven is worship and our worship on earth is hugely valuable in itself and is also a foretaste and a pledge of the worship of heaven. I thought it was particularly appropriate at the funeral that we sang one of the hymns we used to sing in that club at Rainham Mark thirty years ago.

When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more,
And the morning breaks eternal, bright and fair;
When the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

Worship offered authentically on earth in anticipation of worship in Heaven.

I mentioned this last week at Halling and said, why then all these empty seats? Why don't people want, above all things, to immerse themselves in the public worship of the Church? And the answer is original sin. I said at Halling, last week, that it is like going to the seaside. A few brave souls are having a wonderful time in the sea while a much greater number are staying on the beach. *It's too cold. I don't want to get my hair wet. I look too fat in a bathing costume.* They're missing all the fun and they won't listen when those of us already in the sea shout, *Come on in. The water's lovely.* But we are meant to swim in the ocean of God's love and it is tragic that people are held back by the hardness of their own hearts. It isn't really like the Sunday School outing to Margate. It's more like when all those little turtles hatch out on the beach and have to make it into the sea. If they get stuck on the beach, they will die of starvation or get eaten by predators. Their natural element is the water and that is where they will be safe, where they will find nourishment and where they will grow into the turtles God made them to be. We human beings are made to swim in the ocean of God's love. It is the only place we can be saved, the only place we receive nourishment, the only place where we can grow into the people God means us to be. Baby turtles have an instinct that draws them to the sea. Human beings are instinctively drawn to God, but our natural instincts are perverted and stifled by the insistent demands of self. And that is why so many of us choose to remain on the beach, unable to develop our potential and always in danger.

One of the disconcerting things about going to Mrs Butcher's on a Friday evening was that she was prone to announcing that we were having a special guest speaker. Then that speaker would turn out to be you, only it was the first you had heard of it. Mrs Butcher certainly honed my preaching skills. St Peter tells Christians: *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.* Jesus tells us that when we are persecuted: *take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.*

Mrs Butcher encouraged all of us, young and old, all very different people, to make use of the gifts God has given us. God has made us all members of Christ's Body, the Church. Each one of us has gifts and, if we do not use them, the Church is that much the poorer, and a poor Church is that much less use to the world and to the God Who made the world.

I spoke about the importance of hospitality. Jessie Butcher formed the idea that we should keep the feasts mentioned in the Bible: Passover, Weeks (or Pentecost) and Tabernacles. There was always a table groaning under the weight of good food. Wine for the older members. Telling the Bible story of the events commemorated at the feasts in an atmosphere of laughter and fun, love and praise. Who God is, what He has done for us, what we owe to Him. Participating in festivals is a way in which communities both express their identity and develop that identity. We are the Easter people. We celebrate together. Our national identity as a Christian country has slid simultaneously with our downgrading of the Christian feasts in our national life.

What has happened to our community festivals as Christians? We've separated the (bank) holiday from the holy day at Whitsun. Church is seen as an optional extra in the festival of consumption which is the secular

Christmas. People are too tied up in holiday events to come to church on the holy day of Easter. The weekly community celebration on Sundays has become a low priority even for many who call themselves Christians. So we don't mark what God has done for us. We don't participate. We don't celebrate our identity as the people of God. And the result is that we have a feeble Church, which can barely sustain itself, let alone fulfil its God-given mission to the world.

What was affirmed in Jessie Butcher's teenage youth group was that church is joyful and loving. It is about belonging, belonging to Christ and to one another. It is about personal development. It is about keeping the faith and passing it on. It is about growing the Church in stature and number. It is about welcome and hospitality, sound teaching and effective preaching. The Church is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

From the Registers

Baptism:

31st May

Liam Scott Chalker

Bush Road

Confirmation:

14th June

Denis Hills

Pilgrims Way

14th June

Patrick Mitchell

Browndens Road

14th June

Sylvia Mitchell

Browndens Road

Funeral:

9th June

Richard Jago (93)

Littlehampton

Thought Provoking

R M Benson: God appointed prayer, not because he had any delight in our formal homage, but because he desired, by forming in us the habit of prayer, to draw us to himself, the fountain of all good.

William Temple said that the trouble with the human condition is that the world is like a shop which has been broken into over night and some trickster has swapped all the labels so that high prices are put on things of little value and the most valuable items are priced very low. Repentance is re-labelling the goods in life's shop window.

BIBLE: Best Instructions Before Leaving Earth.

A date for your diaries – A murder mystery party, Sat. 17th October at 7:30pm.

St. Michael's Players proudly present a play in two Acts:

"Murder"

By Helen Bradshaw

Watch Act one and then sit back and enjoy a meal. In teams, decide who is the villain.
Watch Act two, when all is revealed. Small prize for the winning team

Tickets limited – first come, first served, available from Sept 1st from Shirley and Peter 724997, Julia and Matthew 727424

Church Hall Draw: April, drawn by John Bogg: £40 to Laurence Curnow, who only joined in January. Beginner's luck!
May, £5 to Shirley Houlan, drawn by Dave Maxwell.

St John's Draw: May, £25 each to Mr Mattingley (66) & Mr Pratt (98) 7 £10 to Mrs Ballard (35) – drawn by Mrs Mattingley.

Please contact Mrs Maisey if you would like to join the church hall draw or Mrs Head for the St John's draw.

News from Cuxton Community Infant School

Dear Friends of our School,

We have had a very busy few weeks in school. Many of you will have seen whilst passing the school that the building work began after the Easter weekend. I am pleased to say that the children have not been affected and the school day is able to run as normal. The building work has meant though that the staff, particularly us folk in the office, have moved rooms several times! The main office has been affected and because of this is only open at the beginning and end of the school day whilst the building work is taking place.

Our year 1 and 2 children had a lovely trip to Rochester Castle and Cathedral, as part of their topic work. The children took part in various workshops throughout the day and looked at the old buildings in the High Street. The weather stayed fine and folk commented how well the children behaved.

Mrs Andrews has been running a very successful multi skills club in school. Children have been learning various multi skills including agility, balance and co-ordination over the past few weeks.

We had a very successful art exhibition in school. Each child produced a picture which was taken away and professionally mounted and framed. Parents were then invited to come into school and look at their children's work in a special gallery. The children were so excited to see their work displayed so well, rather like a mini Tate Gallery!

The Government in conjunction with Medway council funded all children in school to trial a free school meal for a week. Many children have now decided to have school meals as a result of this. The 5 Oclub continue to come into school each week to have their roast lunch on a Wednesday. We always look forward to seeing them. Now the weather is fine the children are picnicking outside under the canopy.

During terms 3 and 4 each class performed to their parents. Year 2 sang the songs they had learnt for the Medway Music festival. Marina class performed Jack and the Beanstalk, Sundridge Class Year one children gave a PE and Dance display and Mays Class told us all about what they had found out about France during our French day in school.

We produced a fantastic book of Jokes for Comic relief and Red Nose day, with many children's contributions published. If you would like a copy do come into school at the beginning or end of the day. Each book cost £2:50 and money will go to comic relief.

The Friends of Cuxton Schools continue to work tirelessly for both schools. The last events at the infants included the Mothers day shop and Egg rolling down the amphitheatre. Today the FCS are meeting to discuss the Fathers day shop and the Summer Fayre which will be held on July 11th from 11am – 3pm. Do come and support us, or if you would like a stall let us know!

This final term is always a busy one. We have sports day and fathers day lunch. Also the year 2 children make their visits to their new classes in the junior school and experience a lunch time and several playtimes. Our new children begin their transition visits and we meet their new parents. The Foundation stage children are going to Reculver and we end the term with a Leavers Assembly and Leavers Lunch for our year 2 children.

I am sure I will be able to write to you about all of these events before we finish for the Summer holiday. In the meantime, take care, and best wishes from the staff and children at Cuxton Community Infant school.

Sandra Jones, Head teacher.

Joke

“Mummy, I don't want to go to school anymore.”

“Don't be silly, dear. You've got to go. You're the headmaster!”



Halling WI

Halling W.I. was all buzzing at our May meeting, (a gentle hum really) in anticipation of the one resolution we were going to discuss later on. Queen Bee Margaret, was in the chair and our May meeting got under way. Jerusalem, minutes, the usual procedure followed. Four birthdays this month; all the best people are born in May. Kept Trudy busy. She is doing a grand job with the buttonholes. Financially, we are not badly off according to our trusty treasurer. Members were reminded of the forthcoming District Conference to be held at the Brassey Center at Aylesford on June 19th. Seems that this year it is having a Japanese theme, as the competition is five handmade cards, Japanese orientated, chrysanthemums, sumo wrestlers or perhaps Mount Fuji, who knows what the girls will come up with?

Now! the resolution S.O.S for Honey Bees. We had very little positive to discuss. 10 million pounds is a lot of money to ask a government, who is very strapped for cash, to put towards bee health. Although I put the resolution to the members as impartially as I could, only six voted for it. The rest, me included abstained. What will

Prayer chain

A new prayer chain has been set up in our two churches with the aim of offering support to Roger's own ministry of prayer. Any villager with something to celebrate or someone for whom prayer is requested, maybe for themselves in trouble or in joy may ring me on 01634 727126 or e-mail me on elizabeth@rabhutch.demon.co.uk. The request will be listened to in confidence and passed on to the 4 members of the prayer group. We have now supported in prayer several villagers and would be pleased to receive further requests. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians, ch.4,v.6.

Nature Notes May 2009

There is beautiful sunshine on the first day of the month and it is pleasantly warm with westerly breezes blowing. In the afternoon, I walk through part of Six-acre Wood where garlic mustard, celandines, lords and ladies, herb Robert and cow parsley bloom. Birds sing melodiously. The sky, across which white clouds drift, is a beautiful blue. The 3rd is bright with north west winds blowing and as I walk to church, I am aware of the fresh green foliage, wayfaring tree flowers and May blossom. Later, when I am in the garden, a collared dove perches on the wall near me as I put out fresh seed and it shows no sign of fear. In the afternoon of the 5th, I walk with Murphy along by the Brookland lakes where on the rippling water, stirred up by quite a strong west wind, seven mallard ducklings glide behind their mother. Two drakes linger near the edge of the lake. The air is redolent with the perfume of May blossom and elder is in bud. Along

Betty and I hear when we attend the A.G.M at the Albert Hall? Thank goodness we have Maureen Lipman as the Guest speaker.

After refreshments, we had a bit of noisy fun with a Bee drive. Some members had never played "Beetle" before and became quite "hooked", even gave the Ann Hayward special quiz a miss so that they could practise the bees. We should have had a prize for the best drawing of a Bee as some looked a bit skinny and definitely needed the resolution. Mary Fennemore judged the competitions. Flower of the Month was won by Ann Graves, and Ann Hayward won the competition for the flower arrangement in a cup and saucer. All in all the resolution meeting was pretty lighthearted, but in my opinion, Bee health would not have been at the top of my agenda. Trouble is Bees make Honey, which for some people makes money. Bumble bees, lacewings and ladybirds do not, but they all do their share of the pollination.

Ah well June sees our 43rd birthday, so a good excuse for a "knees up". How the time doth fly.
Phyllis.

the lush green paths I see buttercups, vetch, hedge cranesbill, forget-me-nots, white dead nettle, hoary Alison, green alkanet white and pink campion and seas of frothy cow parsley. Light grey cloud marches across the sky in the westerly wind but it remains dry and bright. I hear a cuckoo, my first this year, a nightingale and a blackbird. A speckled wood butterfly hovers in front of us. My spirits are always lifted by such scenes. On the 7th Murphy and I walk the river path where the grassy banks are full of flowers including crosswort, vipers bugloss and yellow rattle then we walk round the ponds where May blossom looks like snow. The skies are bright with sunshine on the 9th but north east winds bring a chill to the air. The next morning the skies are grey but eventually the sun breaks through. I walk to the village through Six-acre Wood where the cow parsley is so beautiful. The evening skies become grey and the strong wind

causes the trees to sway. The 14th is grey with fresh breezes blowing off the river where I walk with Murphy. A graceful swan flies down river and I hear the beating of its wings against the water. The morning of the 15th is grey and damp and westerly winds drive black clouds across the sky. In the afternoon, when we walk by the river, white horses are whipped up by the wind. We are bowled along the path near the flower clad banks then the wind drives into our faces as we return. During the afternoon of the 17th I watch blue tits taking food to their young in the nest box on the garage wall. A wood pigeon balances on a seed tray as it pecks seed from the feeder. A sparrow hawk is seen hovering over the main road during the early part of the day. On the 19th the wind is not so strong as on previous days but it still blows the trees and ripples the lakes where we walk in the afternoon at Snodland while grey clouds march across the sky but eventually sunshine and blue skies reappear transforming the grey rippling water to blue. We climb the cow parsley filled bank and take another path leading down to the river where the water is low. We then take our usual path where the short grass, trimmed by rabbits is a beautiful green. Speedwell, forget-me-nots, red and white deadnettle, dandelions, buttercups and daisies bloom. Most of the May blossom has faded but I see one hawthorn bush covered in creamy blossom. Elder is in flower and dog roses are now in bloom. I hear the cuckoo's song again.

The weather is beautiful again on the 22nd with warm sunshine, blue skies and billowing white clouds. As Murphy and I walk through long grass at the Brookland lakes, damselflies rise up into the air in front of us. They are delicate creatures. In the late afternoon a jay visits the garden feeder. On the 24th I watch great tits feeding their young. Two collared doves and a jay come to feed on the nuts and seed then I see a sparrow hawk flying overhead. Butterflies, a holly blue, a small white and an orange tip flutter across the garden. A chiff chaff's constant call can be heard and in the early evening, I listen to the strident call of a great tit. On the 25th the jay makes several visits to the feeders. By late afternoon grey clouds have covered the sky and there are a few drops of rain. The 27th is a cool blustery day when I walk round the lakes at Dartford with my niece and her baby. Mallards and greylag geese with their young glide on the water. Elderflowers bloom in profusion. The 28th brings warmth, such a contrast to yesterday. I walk along the river path with Murphy where the banks of beautiful flowers are covered with clouds of painted lady butterflies. They are in the garden too. They have been seen throughout the country and featured on the news. We walked round the ponds which sparkle in the sunlight. Later, in the garden, I can hear the chirpings of baby birds. The last three days of the month are sunny and warm despite an easterly breeze.

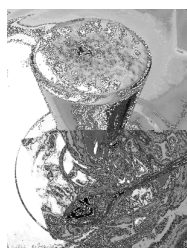
Spring is a time of new birth in nature so I have chosen **"The Vixen" by John Clare.**

Elizabeth Summers

Among the taller wood with ivy hung,
The old fox plays and dances round her young.
She snuffs and barks if any passes by
And swings her tail and turns prepared to fly.
The horseman hurries by, she bolts to see,
and turns agen, from danger never free.
If any stands she runs among the poles

And barks and snaps and drives them in their holes.
The shepherd sees them and the boy goes by
And gets a stick and progs the hole to try.
They get all still and lie in safety sure,
And out again when everything's secure,
And start and snap at blackbirds bouncing by
To fight and catch the great white butterfly.

Social Committee Notes



The Social Committee have lots of plans for your summer enjoyment which you will find listed below. They would also like to take the opportunity to thank you all for the support you give to them in helping them to raise our church funds (badly needed) and to help swell the church charity giving. The Easter Egg Hunt was another annual success. Thanks to all who turned out, helping us to raise £350. The *Call My Bluff* and *Mr & Mrs* evening was fun, but could have done with more support. However it raised £75 and the June parish lunch made it up to over £100 for that week.

The concert at St John's will have taken place by the time you read this, but can I draw your attention to our Summer Coffee Pot, Tea Pot & Wine Bottle events in aid of CMS and our link mission partner Andrew Dauntton-Feare?

Our bbq at the Rectory and bbq at Jenny Beaney's – both for church funds – take place on July 11th at 6.30 pm & August 12th at noon respectively. In October a murder mystery evening has been arranged (See p5) and a jazz evening at the Jubilee Hall in September – also for church funds. So please pick up your diaries now and make a few entries as follows.

Saturday 11th July. Bbq in Rectory Grounds from 6.30 pm. (adults £6, children £3.50). Music & fun included. (See p10.)

Saturday August 1st. Cheese & Wine at the Rectory 7.30 pm.

Wednesday August 12th. Bbq @ 95, Pilgrims Rd, N. Halling noon.

Tuesday August 18th. Coffee Morning 10.00 @ 9, The Street Upper Halling.

Friday September 1st. Afternoon Tea 3.00 @ 73, Charles Drive, Cuxton.

Saturday 19th September. Jazz Evening in Jubilee Hall with *Goose Bumps*. 7.30 pm, £6. Buffet included. Bring own drink.

Saturday 17th October. Murder! See p5!



Christian Aid Report
A very good evening was had at our Christian Aid Supper, with a splendid guest speaker, Colin Kemp, from the London Office. We had wonderful food which was expertly put together. Many thanks to everybody who prepared the food and made the evening a great success. A total of £159 was made for Christian Aid.

Christian Aid door to door collection in the parish made a total of £1,566, which is a fantastic amount that will help the world's poorest communities to improve their lives. Thank you to everybody who collected and donated.

Steve Brown.

God of love, who is love,
Melt my indifferent heart of stone.
Open my eyes to your children's suffering
And lift my head to see your perfect love again.
Work a miracle in my life
That through your Spirit
And my softened heart's obedience
I might give my very self to keep hope alive,
And to be the change you require. Amen.

Prayer for Christian Aid Week 2009



CUXTON WI REPORT MAY 2009

This month we celebrated our 64th Birthday. It hardly seems possible that the years have gone by so quickly from our beginnings when we used to meet in the old hutted social club. But we had as much fun then as we do today and have always maintained a large membership. The Committee members met in the afternoon to get the hall ready for the party – we are certainly looking forward to the new smaller tables that we have on order as every year the present ones somehow seem to get bigger! We had organised tasty summer salad platters followed by trifles and fresh fruit salad with cream. With friends from other WIs we numbered 48 this year. Our expert cake maker.

Joan had really excelled herself and produced a wonderful birthday sponge in three colours and decorated perfectly with cream and chocolate slices. Needless to say there was very little of that left over! Dorothy had purchased all the salad items and then had washed, sliced and cut up them all up herself which was such a timesaver for the committee when we came to dish up.

After the feast we were hilariously entertained by Anne Chance who gave a complete one woman show and soon had us all singing to her guitar. She has led a colourful and varied life and is now preparing to go on a covered wagon holiday ride in the USA. She is also an experienced light

aircraft pilot and often flies locally over Kent. She did her show in two parts so that we had time for tea/coffee and the cake in the middle plus a super raffle with many good prizes. In the end everyone went home after a lovely evening which we hope they all enjoyed.

We now look forward to our President's fund raising garden party on Thursday July 9th at 2 30

pm and our Craft Group Dabble Day at Christ Church hall Snodland on July 3rd from 10am.

So, you see we do indeed still have fun after all these years so if any of this tempts you to join us please come along as a visitor for a couple of meetings .We meet at the Church Hall on the first Thursday of each month starting at 7 30pm. You will be very welcome. Sheila.

St Michael's & St John's Churches ANNUAL BARBECUE

Saturday 11th July 2009. Rectory Garden, Cuxton. 6.30pm onwards

Entertainment by Clayton - music to suit all tastes. Pop, songs from the shows etc. and karaoke for those with no inhibitions !

Two course barbecue meal with vegetarian option. Please bring your own drink and a chair or rug to sit on.

Will transfer to Church Hall if wet.

Tickets @ £6.00 Adults
£3.00 Children

Please book via Matthew on 01634 727424 or Shirley on 01634 724997.

Dickens' Country Protection Society

Many thanks to all those members who supported the annual barn dance. The word is that it was an enjoyable evening appreciated by all who joined in the fun. May you all have a cracking summer whether you are on the allotment or in far away places. Kay Roots.



Thoughts From Max the Rectory Spaniel

How do you like these long light days? The sun is shining when we get up in the morning and we go for a walk or Master takes me down the garden and goes for a run. It is still dusk very often when we go to bed. Master has just been reading a book in which somebody says that, if he ruled the world, time would be fixed at the last week in May and the first in June. Certainly, there are many beautiful flowers in the woods and fields – not to mention the gardens – and plenty of wildlife. We see dozens of baby rabbits, whenever we go out early, and foxes. A great big black bird appeared to be attempting to get in the bedroom window the other day and, this morning, we saw a woodpecker apparently mistaking a telegraph pole for a tree.

Last week we arrived at the polling station just as it opened and Master was allowed to vote first, before saying Morning Prayer. That would have been the wrong way round if he had not had time to think and pray about voting previously.

Of course, by the time you read this, the evenings and mornings will be beginning to draw in – though it should still be very pleasant for our barbecue on 11th July and we are hoping that it will be possible for the Cheese and Wine on 1st August to be at least partly al fresco. The days may be getting shorter, but they should also be getting warmer and the progression of the seasons will bring new wonders of nature with them.

Master thinks that there is something good about every season and I am even more consistently filled with enthusiasm for life than he is. You humans seem to be easier to knock off balance spiritually and mentally, but, for a Springer spaniel, every day is filled with joy. As soon as he gets up and puts me on my lead, I throw all my weight (four stone) on my collar and set off, dragging him behind me. He tells me I wouldn't get so tired if I pulled less, but I'm not interested in how I might feel in a couple of hours. I live for the minute. I live for now. In fact, he can't always keep up. He wants to pick his way gingerly through the nettles and cautiously avoid the mud. I just charge on ahead, dragging him in my wake. In fact (I am slightly ashamed to admit) I pulled him over the other day when I caught him off balance when I saw a cat. I think he's jealous that I am so consistently joyful. Admittedly you humans do seem to have a greater depth, more sense of responsibility. I suppose that is why he got to go into the polling station and vote, while I was tied up outside. Nevertheless, Jesus did tell you that you could learn a lot about anxiety from Nature and the way God looks after the world.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?