

We're carrying on with Holy Communion at Cuxton at 9.30 am on Wednesdays and Sundays and at Halling at 9.30 on Thursdays and 11.00 on Sundays. Cuxton Church is open for personal prayer Wednesdays & Sundays. Please sanitise and socially distance. I'm saying daily Morning & Evening Prayer at home still. Please give me any prayer requests.

For now, we shall be producing the magazine online only. It can be found on my webpage <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk> and I can email it to anybody who asks. There will be no charge until we are back on paper. I'll carry on with the advertisements in the online edition, but I shan't charge advertisers for 2021 unless and until we can return to paper copies. Copy date for July is June 11th 8.30 am at the Rectory. I'm sending out a weekly email newsletter and a weekly sermon which can also be found on my webpage. If you would like to be added to the list of those who receive these, please let me know. Please also feel free to share the contents, forward them, print them, pass them on in any way you would like to. The thing is to keep in touch and to support one another.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do for you. Please contact me for christenings, weddings, anointing the sick, etc..

It may be that we shall be able to return to normal soon (or more normal anyway). If so, I'll do my best to let everyone know. I'm looking forward to choral singing, bell ringing and coffee and parish lunches and teas and not having to wear masks for anything and maybe the resumption of social events and daily services in church.

Services June			
6 th June Trinity 1	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling	Genesis 3 vv 8-15 p5 II Corinthians 4 v13 -5v1 p1160 Mark 3 vv 20-35 p1005	
13 th June Trinity 2	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling	Ezekiel 17 vv 22-24 p844 II Corinthians 5 vv 6-10 p1160 Mark 4 vv 26-34 p1006	
20 th June Trinity 3	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling	Job 38 vv 1-11 p538 II Corinthians 6 vv 1-13 p1161 Mark 4 vv 35-41 p1006	
27 th June Trinity 4	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling	Lamentations 3 vv 22-33 p826 I Corinthians 8 vv 7-15 p1163 Mark 5 vv 21-43 p1007	
Holy Communion Cuxton 9.30 Wednesdays		Holy Communion Halling 9.30 Thursdays	
2 nd June	Joshua 3 vv 1-7 Luke 8 vv 40-56	3 rd June Corpus Christi	Joshua 4 v1 – 5v1 Luke 9 vv 1-9
9 th June	Joshua 9 vv 1-27 Luke 9 vv 51-62	10 th June	Joshua 24 vv 1-28 Luke 10 vv 1-6
16 th June	Judges 7 vv 1-25 Luke 11 vv 14-28	17 th June	Judges 9 vv 1-21 Luke 11 vv 29-36
23 rd June Ember day	Judges 15 vv 1-20 Luke 12 vv 22-31	24 th June Nativity of S John the Baptist	Isaiah 40 vv 1-11 Luke 1 vv 57-80
30 th June	I Samuel 3 vv 1-19 Luke 13 vv 10-21	1 st July	I Samuel 4 vv 1-18 Luke 14 vv 1-11

Elizabeth Barret Browning:

Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with God
But only he who sees takes off his shoes
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

Thomas Stevens Trust: Cuxton's Own Charity

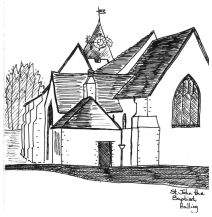
We really are living in challenging times, with permanent and temporary jobs disappearing overnight (often with no alternative employment options), heavily reduced hours for those in employment because of reduced ordering of products, severe stress and tiredness because of the worry of providing for oneself and family, or acting as a carer for someone in extra need. Even self-employed family people suffer in these hard times, and needs do not respect race, colour or creed. Often, there are essential low paid jobs, which benefit the local community and individuals at risk. We are here, as a benevolent charity, to provide some support against food and fuel poverty, especially now winter is upon us,

During 2020, we were able to alleviate a number of support issues by releasing nearly £800 to worthy causes. We welcome more confidential requests in early 2021.

If you have lived in Cuxton for 2 years, and believe we can help out in any small way, please contact us in full confidence by emailing: thomasstevenscharity@hotmail.com Ian Gray, Trustee.

Local Government

Following a consultation by the Boundary Commission, our new local government ward is called River Ward and it includes Halling, Cuxton & Temple Wharf Strood. We shall be able to elect two councillors to serve on Medway Council



From the Rector

A slightly unusual view of Halling Church which celebrates its Patronal Festival on 24th of this month. As it falls on a Thursday, I expect the principal part of the celebration will be the Thursday morning service of Holy Communion. What else might be possible (including singing some hymns maybe) remains to be seen.

I don't like attempting to foretell the future. Even writing it like that conveys to my mind a faint hint of paganism – soothsayers and magicians claiming special powers by which they can foresee what is to come and thereby exert personal power over or receive payment from those people credulous enough to believe them. Biblical prophecy is something quite different from soothsaying, just as prayer is different from magic. Magic is an attempt to get your own way, to make the universe conform to your will. When we pray, we seek to align our will with God's Will in order to enable us to work with Him to achieve His purposes. Granted that His purpose is love, there is nothing better that we could ask for than *Thy Will be done*.

Similarly, prophecy is not about the power or the self-interest of the prophet. Some prophets don't even want to be prophets. The prophet's task is to be God's messenger, to pass on to humanity what God has to say to us. Sometimes, God's message is about the future, whether a warning or a promise of deliverance, but the essence of

prophecy is that it requires a response from the hearer now. Given that this is the Word of the LORD, what are you or I going to do about it today? Is it a word of consolation, a demand that we repent of our sins, a commission to go out and do something towards the coming of God's Kingdom? What is God saying to us today – through the Bible, through the Church, through particular people whom He is calling to speak on His behalf? What is God saying to us through Jesus, the Word made flesh?

I've been hoping and praying for a prophetic word from the LORD with regard to the COVID pandemic. Maybe, I've been deaf to what He is saying or maybe God hasn't yet spoken about the corona virus, but, if He has I am not yet aware of what He has said. Some people have suggested to me that it is God's way of reducing the population of an over-crowded earth. Others have put forward the idea that it is a wake up call on the environment. We've polluted the atmosphere and now we are dying from a virus which attacks the respiratory system. Millions of people and vast quantities of goods are travelling all over the planet every day and are now carrying with them a tiny thread of ribonucleic acid with a protein coat which is capable of causing serious illness and death. People concerned about animal welfare and what is "natural" in our diets think that we are getting what we deserve because humanity permitted "wet" markets in China where species not normally consumed by human beings were kept in cruel and unhygienic conditions before

being served up as food. And some people suspect that human beings artificially created COVID 19 as an experiment, possibly a biological weapon, which went wrong, when the virus escaped from the laboratory.

I'm not absolutely convinced by any of these hypotheses. Scientists think that the notion of an experiment which went wrong is not very plausible. Everything we eat was new to human beings once and we did catch diseases from some of the animals we domesticated historically. We caught measles from goats, for example. We wouldn't have been able to colonise most of the globe and support such large numbers of human beings as are alive today if we hadn't been prepared to domesticate wild animals and to try new foods. Plagues managed to spread rapidly across the globe for centuries before we invented global air traffic and they were still able to kill us in our millions even before we had polluted the planet to the huge extent to which we have now defiled it. We shall all die of something, all the 7.9 billion of us currently living on earth, whether of COVID or of something else (unless Jesus returns in our lifetime). It is true, however, that we should be giving due to consideration to all these possibilities: the dangers of warfare and the development of horrifying new weapons; the damage we are doing to our planetary home by our reckless consumption of resources; the risks associated with extended supply chains whereby we depend for vaccines, medicines and other essential goods on distant and possibly unfriendly suppliers; animal welfare; food hygiene; and the reality that our lives are in God's Hands.

Previous generations would have assumed that COVID is some kind of punishment for our sins. I should say at this point that I am not necessarily saying that the pandemic is a punishment for sin or, if it is a punishment, what particular sins we are being punished for. There is plenty of wickedness in the world today, but I'm not sure that we're worse than our parents' generation and they didn't suffer a global pandemic. I cannot believe, however, that COVID 19 is not within God's providence. Given that God does not act arbitrarily, there must be a reason for the pandemic. Given that God is love, that reason must be a good one. I acknowledge that I am out of my depth on this and long for a prophetic voice

to proclaim God's Word to our current situation. I fear, however, that we are in the same position as Israel was in the time of Eli and again in the time of Amos. *And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.* (I Samuel 3¹). (Amos 8^{11&12}): *¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: ¹² And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.* We have perhaps for so long turned a deaf ear to God that for now He is no longer speaking to us. That would be a chilling thought. The only possible response that would make sense would be for us to return to the LORD and to be attentive to what He is saying to us.

Although this is the June magazine, it will be published (online only) on 14th May. As I write, things are looking up on the COVID front, at least in this country. The vaccination programme is proving a success. Restrictions are being lifted. So I'm hoping that, as you read this, and in the weeks and months to come, we shall be returning to something more normal. Government spokesman are saying that we should be able to continue to ease the rules, but there is some suggestion that mask-wearing and a degree of social distancing will have to continue for a while longer. A third wave is a distinct possibility, though scientists believe that it will not be anything like as severe as the first two waves. The dangers seem to be the possible arrival of new variants against which the vaccines are less effective, the fact that the vaccines don't seem to work so well on a very small number of people and the reality that not everybody can be vaccinated and that some of those who could be vaccinated prefer to exert their right to decline a medical intervention which they do not trust.

I am actually much more optimistic than that last paragraph sounds. Although there have been some serious cases of COVID in this parish and some deaths, we have been spared the worst and, as the number of cases nationally continues to drop dramatically, we are decreasingly likely even to meet people from whom we could catch the disease, and, even if we do encounter the virus, most of us will be protected by having been

immunised. But I'm not a soothsayer or a fortune teller and I wouldn't want to be. I don't have the gift of prophecy, though I do pray earnestly that God will make His Will known to us in this present situation.

I was taught as a child, on the one hand, not to worry, and, on the other hand, to be cautious about planning for the future. "We know not what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future."

Jesus said (Matthew 6): ³³*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* ³⁴*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* The apostle James wrote in his epistle (4): ¹³*Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:* ¹⁴*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

Many years ago, we had a preacher at St John's, an old college friend of mine who called in at Halling on his way to the continent. He told us to resist pressures even from the diocese to produce detailed mission plans for the future. He pointed out that, apart from a general movement towards Jerusalem, Jesus doesn't seem to follow any particular itinerary in the Gospels. He wanders from place to place, stopping to meet the needs which He encounters. My friend is now a bishop and I still think he was right.

Do your best every day and trust God for the outcome. Plan where you must, but always be ready to change your plans if it becomes apparent that God has other plans for your life. "Man proposes but God disposes." I worry sometimes when I hear young people speak as though they had their whole lives mapped out. Obviously, you need some forethought, whether as a young person choosing subjects to study or jobs to apply for, a business thinking about how it can develop its product and its markets, or a Church considering how best to do God's work in a particular place. "Without a vision, the people perish." But it's arrogant and foolish to forget that all our plans are contingent on God. It is a very serious mistake to

close our minds to the possibility that He has other plans for us. His plans are infinitely greater than ours, as He closes one door and opens another.

I'm quite proud of the fact that we've carried on having services at St Michael's and St John's all the time we have been allowed to do so by the government. I'm also proud of the way people in both churches have kept everything going. Understandably, it hasn't been safe for everybody to attend or for any of us to do all of the things which we usually do, but those who have been able to come to Church have been amazing – laying out the churches to preserve social distancing, keeping everything clean, providing sanitizer and masks, carrying out routine maintenance, reading the lessons, preparing the altar and the rest of the church for public worship, providing as much music as we have been allowed to have, arranging flowers for special occasions, making an Easter garden at Cuxton, carrying on with the long term business of the Church and so on and so forth. The Mothers Union Zoom meetings have also been excellent for non-members as well as members. Ask Jenny Beaney about taking part if you don't already.

But what will happen in the next few months? I do have hopes of resuming bell-ringing and singing in Church and conducting our services more normally. Hopefully we'll continue to see the opening up of businesses and leisure activities and fewer restrictions placed on travel and meeting other people. But how will we respond? What will the new normal be like?

If it turns out that we shall still have to practise some degree of social distancing and wear masks, speaking for myself, I think I'll probably stick to doing what I'm doing now – attending Church, shopping for essentials, going out in the countryside mostly on my own and reading or watching TV when I'm indoors and not working. I can't imagine taking part in any kind of leisure activity masked and socially distanced – or travelling on a bus or train. It would be no pleasure whatsoever. If many people are thinking the way I am thinking, that will be a bit of a dampener for everyone, including those who would enjoy our company if we would go out with them. The new normal won't be normal at all. Perhaps, we ought to make the effort to go out to

pubs, etc. even masked to support the people whose businesses have been so badly damaged by the pandemic and who have very often continued working extremely hard for the benefit of the community with little financial return.

There is the broader question of whether individuals and institutions really want to go back to the way things were before the pandemic hit, or even whether they will be able to. For example, some furloughed workers may find that they no longer have jobs to go to when furlough ends. If people have been unemployed for a long period, it can be hard to get another job. Some youngsters might have decided to give up on sixth form studies or college and take a different route from the one which they had originally planned. Some people have decided to move to nicer, bigger houses. Others have found themselves trapped in places they would much prefer to leave. Then, there are all those lockdown puppies! They will still need looking after.

For many people, the last fifteen months or so have been horrendous. But for some of us they have not been too bad and we have got used to a less pressured existence. Speaking again for myself, I have been fully occupied during the pandemic, but I've had much more control over my timetable. I have been frustrated by not being able to do some of the things I usually do - like pastoral visiting and school visits and by the restrictions placed on christenings, weddings and funerals and public worship generally, and the suspension of the Church's social life. I haven't, however, minded that there have been far fewer meetings than usual. Not being on the clock, so to speak, if Tommy and I have been especially enjoying our walk, we've not had to hurry home. Similarly, there has been more time to speak with people I meet out and about than there usually is. I might have seen less of our church regulars, but I've seen more than I usually do of other parishioners, which is nice and important. I've enjoyed producing weekly newsletters, which has given me the opportunity to discuss serious and interesting matters with a wider range of people than I usually do and without being constrained by the formal roles of preacher and teacher.

[God is the creator and preserver of all things. Jesus is the redeemer of everything which God has

made. The Holy Spirit permeates the whole of creation (as well as being infinitely greater than the sum total of all that exists). It follows that there is nothing which is off-limits for religion. Whatever we study ultimately to God. For whatever we do in our lives, we are responsible to Him. So it is legitimate for Christians to take an interest in everything and often it is our duty to do so. God is interested in every aspect of human thought and behaviour. So we Christians can have opinions about everything and there are many things regarding which we ought to form views. I divide these ideas or beliefs into three categories. Number one is what may be proved from Holy Scripture. We must believe these things and, as a preacher and teacher, I must preach and teach them. Number three is beliefs, opinions and conduct which are in opposition to what may be proved from Holy Scripture. No Christian should hold beliefs contrary to what God has revealed to us nor behave in ways which we know to be contrary to His Will. But there is also a very large second category of subjects on which it is perfectly legitimate to devise theories and form opinions and, in some cases, important that we do so, which are not clearly enjoined or forbidden by our Christian faith. Examples might be politics, science, the arts, the environment, the justice system, commerce, etc.. It is vital that what we believe about these things is not inconsistent with what Jesus teaches, but there is quite a lot of leeway. For example, Christians can legitimately (though not unconditionally) support most of our mainstream political parties, but couldn't support anything like the Nazi party or Stalin's brand of communism.]

What I'm saying is that going back to what was normal in 2019 would mean giving up some of what I am doing now, returning to doing some things I'm less keen on and accepting the discipline of the calendar and the clock. How far am I willing to do this? How far should I do this?

The same will be true for many people and there has been a great deal of discussion about whether people who have grown used to working from home will return to the office and whether those who've been doing most of their shopping online will return to the shops. I'm a little concerned that some of the people I speak to say that they have got so used to staying in all the time that they no

longer really want to go out at all. They'll be missing a lot if they don't change their minds.

Finally, there is the question of whether the world in general should go back to "normal". Things were far from perfect in 2019! The pandemic has shown up the inequalities and poverty in our own country and reminded us of how desperately poor so many people are in the world at large. I, for one, have been shocked to realise just how many children there are in Britain who don't get enough to eat, are dressed poorly and who live in very substandard accommodation, without the facilities most of us have come to take for granted these days, including our increasingly necessary access to the internet. I hadn't realised just how much welfare work is required of schools in many parts of our country. We've seen the problems in our care homes and been made to realise how many of those who work in them - as well as those who provide care in the community - are very poorly paid. We've been rightly proud of the NHS but we've seen the strain under which doctors and nurses and other staff labour. The first couple of weeks of the first lockdown drew to our attention the damage we are doing to the environment with our busy roads and crowded skies. Nature recovered amazingly quickly, but the clean air and the blessed peace didn't long survive the return to our old ways.

We surely don't want to go back to 2019. In the prime minister's words, we need to build back better. What does that mean in the context of the Church? Speaking for ourselves here in Cuxton &

Halling, I should say that it means reaching out much more into the community. These last months have demonstrated the strength of the core of our two churches – the way a small number of people have bonded together and kept things going, looking after one another and our friends and neighbours who might otherwise have become isolated. But we have a Gospel for the whole world – Good News for everyone – and we need to reach out to the whole parish. How are we going to do that, to get to know the huge numbers of people who have moved into the parish over the last few years (especially in the new housing which is a bit cut off from the rest of the parish), to keep in touch with long-standing residents of Cuxton and Halling and their families, to play our part in community affairs and to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with such institutions as the other churches in the parish, the schools, voluntary organisations, the parish councils and businesses? We are, every one of us, ambassadors for Christ in all these contexts. So think and pray about what you can do as an individual and what we can do as a Church to commend the Gospel to our families, friends and neighbours. The Archdeacon, Andy Wooding-Jones, is coming to give the PCC some training on 19th June – the first of what will probably be two sessions.

Roger.

Emmetts Garden

2021 is progressing and so the beautiful yellow daffodils fade and die whilst other favourites burst into leaf, bud and flower. One of my favourites is the bluebell. They form majestic 'carpets' in woodlands. This year is no exception. The woods around Cuxton have bluebells in abundance. One of my favourite places of interest to view bluebells (and other plants) is Emmetts Garden at Ide Hill, Sevenoaks. Emmetts is approximately a half hour drive from Cuxton. I booked my ticket on-line, in advance, and checked in with my National



Trust card on a dry sunny morning. From the entrance I walk along the designated path and one-way system passing the rock garden, rose garden, tulip and cherry tree garden. I arrive at the cafe and collect a coffee which I enjoy in the outdoor sitting area. I can see the early flowering rhododendrons standing next to trees full of leaf buds. The picnic and children's play areas are quiet. I read the notices reminding visitors to refrain from picking flowers or removing bulbs and to keep to designated pathways in order to avoid damaging the bluebells

which, once damaged, could take up to 4 years to regrow.

From the viewpoint at the top beside the café I descend and view the magnificent banks which are crowded with bluebells. There are some random white bells and two beautiful magnolia trees.

The spectacle is quite breath-taking and my photographs do not do it justice.



I stroll along the footpaths and gaze at many young flowers peeping out from the undergrowth. Birds fly in and out of the bushes and trees. In a field, near the boundary of Emmetts, are ewes with their lambs. I wonder down the well signed paths and find a tranquil pond which was built in support of a 1906 water system for the house and garden. The path leading away from the pond goes into the local woodland. I follow it and emerge at the top of a hill with a lovely view cross the valley towards St Mary's church at Ide Hill. There is a bird of prey swooping around the valley. It fixes its gaze on something near

the corner of the field, then one sudden dive, grab and it is off! Perhaps lunch is served!



I wander back through Emmetts and look at the azaleas and rhododendrons in the borders. They are neatly pruned and nurtured. Soon they will be a mass of colourful flowers. The tulips are not all in flower as yet but there are two roped protected areas awaiting the moment for a spectacular floral display. One of the nearby information posters states that the local badgers particularly enjoy eating tulip bulbs, especially the bulbs of red tulips. How can they tell which are going to be red?

The rock garden is full of colour, even now, and there is promise of more to come.

A lovely day out and a venue to be recommended.

Holly Croft

Tommy's Talking Points



These pictures were taken on Ascension Day, the day before this magazine will be published. As you see, Lolly is staying with us again for a few days and you can also see how Master's rose bed is carpeted with forget-me-nots. He used to be a purist and only allow roses in the rose bed, but he has become more eclectic with pleasing results. Master was quite pleased to get us both in the picture. He was having trouble getting us close enough together and not moving. He kept muttering about how unsurprising it is that, in some of Max's photos, he is on his lead!

This week, he has been busy catching up on the gardening. Because it was so cold, with all those early morning frosts, and so dry, things weren't growing much, not even the lawn. He didn't dare put out any tender bedding plants. Then this week everything seemed to need doing at once. It took him hours to cut the grass on Monday. It turned out to have grown more than he had noticed. We were therefore too late and he was too tired for a late afternoon walk. We had to make do with a brief foray into Mays Wood via

Church Hill after half past nine when he'd recovered sufficiently – tea and supper and a long sit down! Amazingly, it still wasn't quite dark. Then the hedge cried out to be trimmed on Tuesday. So now he's done the edges and the hedges. Then he went to the garden centre and got some geraniums and planted them yesterday. I suppose all this horticultural activity was appropriate on the Rogation Days, when we pray for God's blessing on the growing crops and on the people who work on the land. Four out of about twenty of last year's geraniums had just about survived the recent frosts and he's giving them a chance to recover. He also planted twenty more. He's not too worried about any more frost coming now, but last year the badgers came and dug up the geraniums and quite a lot of other things. This year, so far they've confined themselves to scuffing up the lawns. This is me under the apple tree. He is hoping that there will be as many apples as there is blossom and that, as usual, but not last year, there will be a Harvest Supper and that some of this fruit will find its way into the pies.

With all this outdoor stuff, he's had to do his written work in the evenings, like being back at school, he says.

I don't think I've been out of the parish at all since my last magazine article. Apart from the garden centre, he's made three trips: Snodland to get me some dog food; Cliffe Woods to get his second vaccination and Rochester to hand in the old style marriage registers, which we're not to use any more. So I've got the meal I like. He's pretty safe from either catching the disease or giving it to anyone else. Then there's the new system for registering marriages. The registers are now kept centrally with an informal duplicate kept in the parish. Couples, witnesses and rectors sign a piece of paper instead of the books. Master sends the piece of paper to the registrar's office and the couple get the certificate from the registrar some weeks afterwards. If they're going on honeymoon to one of those hotels where they won't give a young couple a double room without a marriage certificate, there could be difficulties.



Apart from all that, we've seen increasing numbers of dogs, walkers and runners in the woods. That's in fine weather. Master says that dog walkers used to turn out in all weathers but now everybody is a wuss apart from us. I think he wished he wasn't out in it, however, when we got caught in a thunder storm the other afternoon with lots of nasty, cold rain. I didn't mind though. We like to see lots of people out and about. One woman told him that she has seen much more of our countryside since COVID. Even though she's lived here for years, when she could travel she did. But why? It's not necessary, as Master & I have proved over the last month. We have four churches and five congregations (including the Bulgarian Orthodox who worship in S Michael's). In normal times, we have three pubs, two social clubs and a library. There are two good schools. There are scouts and guides and a number of other clubs, societies and clubs for older people. We are surrounded by beautiful countryside, most of which is accessible to the general public. Between them, the shops in the parish sell nearly everything any reasonable person could require (except gas lighters, dog meal and bayonet fitting 100W light bulbs). Who, he wonders, has screw fitting light bulbs? People who live in new houses, he was told. What's the point of 60W bulbs, he asked, if you have access to dozens of candle ends, which would surely give more light? So you don't really need to go anywhere at all if you don't have to work, don't go to school and have got people who will get you the few things that are not available in Cuxton or Halling when they go shopping for themselves. We're seeing a succession of wild plants coming into bloom. The bluebells are splendid. The wild garlic has just come out in great splashes of white. There are wild strawberries too in bloom. There also two other low-growing very pretty white flowers, the names of which he doesn't know. See you soon, Tommy, the Rectory spaniel.

Jokes for June

Who invented fire?	Some bright spark.
How does the moon cut his hair?	'E clipse it.
What is an English teacher's favourite spice?	Synonym
How do you get an astronaut's baby to sleep?	You rocket
Why did the retired footballer buy a lighter?	Because he had no more matches
What do you call a country where all the cars are pink?	A pink carnation
Why shouldn't you run behind a car?	You get exhausted
Which is the most musical part of a skeleton?	The trombone
Why did the boy cross the playground?	To get to the other slide
How much space do you need to cultivate fungi?	As mushroom as possible
What starts and ends with e and has only one letter in it?	Envelope

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out.**

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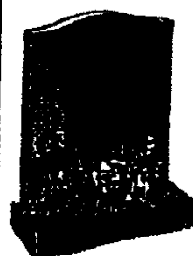
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