

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
26 th February Lent 1	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 9 vv 8-17 p10 I Peter 3 vv 18-22 p1219 Mark 1 vv 9-15 p1002	
2 nd March Women's World Day of Prayer	7.00 Service All Welcome.		
4 th March Lent 2	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Hebrews 11 vv 1-16 p1209 John 8 vv 51-59 p1075	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 17 vv 1-16 p16 Romans 4 vv 13-25 p1131 Mark 8 vv 31-38 p1012	
11 th March Lent 3	11.00 Holy Communion	Exodus 20 vv 1-17 p77 I Corinthians 1 vv 18-25 p1144 John 2 vv 13-22 p1065	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Exodus 5 v1 – 6 v1 p61 Philippians 3 vv 4b-14 p1180	
18 th March Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen & Family Communion	Numbers 21 vv 4-9 p159 Ephesians 2 vv 1-10 p1174 John 3 vv 14-21 p1066	
25 th March Passion Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 31 vv 31-34 p793 Hebrews 5 vv 5-10 p1204 John 12 vv 20-33 p1080	
1 st April Palm Sunday	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Isaiah 5 vv 1-7 p689 Mark 12 vv 1-12 p1017	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 50 vv 4-9 p737 Philippians 2 vv 5-11 p1179 Mark 15 vv 1-39 p1022	
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
4 th March Lent 2	9.30 Family Communion	Genesis 17 vv 1-16 p16 Romans 4 vv 13-25 p1131 Mark 8 vv 31-38 p1012	
11 th March Lent 3	9.30 Holy Communion	Exodus 20 vv 1-17 p77 I Corinthians 1 vv 18-25 p1144 John 2 vv 13-22 p1065	
18 th March Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	8.00 Holy Communion	Collect, Epistle & Gospel BCP Lent 4	
	9.30 Family Communion	Numbers 21 vv 4-9 p159 Ephesians 2 vv 1-10 p1174 John 3 vv 14-21 p1066	
25 th March Passion Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 31 vv 31-34 p793 Hebrews 5 vv 5-10 p1204 John 12 vv 20-33 p1080	
1 st April Palm Sunday	9.30 Family Communion (Procession from Hall)	Mark 11 vv 1-11 p1016 (at hall) Isaiah 50 vv 4-9 p737 Philippians 2 vv 5-11 p1179 Mark 15 vv 1-39 p1022	
Wednesday Holy Communion 9.30 St Michael's		Thursday Holy Communion 9.30 St John's	
February 29 th Ember Day	Jonah 3 Luke 11 vv 29-32	March 1 st St David	Isaiah 55 vv 6-9 Matthew 7 vv 7-12
March 7 th St Perpetua	Jeremiah 18 vv 18-20 Matthew 20 vv 17-28	March 8 th	Jeremiah 17 vv 5-10 Luke 16 vv 19-31
March 14 th	Deuteronomy 4 vv 1-9 Matthew 5 vv 17-19	March 15 th	Jeremiah 7 vv 23-28 Luke 11 vv 14-23
March 21 st Thomas Cranmer	Isaiah 49 vv 8-15 John 5 vv 17-30	March 22 nd	Exodus 32 vv 7-14 John 5 vv 31-47
March 28 th	Daniel 3 vv 1-30 John 8 vv 31-42	March 29 th	Genesis 17 vv 3-9 John 8 vv 51-59

Thursday's Children for pre-school children takes place at St John's at 2.00. There is an **After School Club** at St John's on Thursdays at 3.45. **Saints Alive** (formerly Sunday School) meets in the Church Hall, Cuxton at 9.30 on 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays of the month in term time. **St Michael's Angels** meet at Cuxton Church at 2.00 every last Wednesday for a short service for pre-school children, followed by refreshments and toys in the Church Hall.

If you are prepared to **gift aid** your monetary contributions to the Church, please use one of the envelopes provided or speak to Jack Payne for a longer term arrangement.

Copy Date April Magazine: 9th March 8.30 am Rectory.



Community in Medway

On 7th January I attended a Community Seminar at Christ Church University's Medway Campus. It was organised by the MP for Gillingham, Rehman Chisti, together with Cllr Rodney Chambers OBE JP, Leader of Medway Council, and the Rt Rev'd Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, formerly Bishop of Rochester. It was attended by the present bishop and other clergy from a number of churches, plus leaders of other faith communities in the Medway area, other members of Medway Council, academics and leaders of various community organisations and services. The purpose of the seminar was to review what builds community, especially in the aftermath of last Summer's riots, though we were all pleased to note that Medway had suffered much less badly than some other areas. [My inner cynic might have suggested that Medway youth were too apathetic even to riot, but the real reasons why we experienced relatively little trouble, we hope, are more positive. The speakers certainly thought so]. In trying to summarise what the speakers had to tell us, I haven't always been able to resist adding my own observations. I've put these in square brackets[].

Cllr Chambers started us off with a review of the consequences of the closure of the Naval Dockyard a quarter of a century ago. The dockyard had been the major employer in the Medway Towns for generations. Its presence also supported other industries. Boys trained in the dockyard and many completed their working lives there, while others took their acquired skills into other areas of employment. Whole families – grandfathers, fathers and sons - were dockyard employees. So it was a major blow when the dockyard closed. We lost our major source of employment. There was so much less money to spend in the local economy that other businesses came under pressure. Families were broken up as people moved away to look for work especially in other naval dockyards. Some of those who moved soon found that they once again faced redundancy. It was a very difficult time for Medway people. [I suppose he could have added that the presence of the dockyard had made the Medway Towns a target in time of war and that many of the jobs were not all that pleasant to do, but all that was behind us when the dockyard eventually closed.]

Particularly since the closure of the dockyard, the Medway Towns have been in need of regeneration. The main areas of regeneration are: commercial developments to provide employment; residential developments to house a growing population and to replace some of the substandard housing which is only too prevalent in Medway; better communications and transport links; and improved opportunities for education, especially higher education. We have also seen dramatic improvements in our hospital provision and in other services required by the community. Cllr Chambers pointed out that Medway is a community of communities - geographical, ethnic and religious. [You live and work in the Medway Towns and probably have your own opinions about what has been done and what should be done. This kind of seminar is one more opportunity to make your voice heard in addition to the existing channels of writing or talking to your MP or councillor, writing to the local paper, attending public enquiries, etc.]

Bishop Michael then went on to speak about the foundations of community not only in the Medway Towns, but also in contemporary Britain. Human nature, he said, is really about belonging, belonging to one another, belonging to the community, [belonging to God.] What is destroying our sense of community is actually also destroying us as individuals. It is selfishness, the autonomy of the individual, the sense that I alone really matter to me and that I somehow exist and can be fulfilled as a human being apart from my relationships with other people. In fact, that is nonsense. To be human is to relate, to be a member of a family, to have friends, to belong to a community, [the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God].

To relate to one another we need ethics or morals, law and conscience. Bishop Michael pointed out that all human societies have worked out their ethical beliefs in the context of their religious beliefs. [That is not surprising if religion is true. God is the source of all that is and we cannot make sense of life without God. I heard one of the panellists on "Any Questions" the other day claim that *Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you* is a pre-religious human value. As a matter of historical fact, that cannot be true. There are no pre-religious human values as archaeology demonstrates that human beings have always been religious at least as far back as they leave any intelligible record of their thoughts. That is not to say, however, that there might not be post-religious human values if we are foolish enough to discount God!]

In Britain, the bishop added, the religious values which have formed our social values stem from the Judaeo-Christian tradition. The implication was that it might be at our peril that we tamper with this, but he was quick to point out that people of other religions and people of no religion may have very high moral values and live extremely virtuous lives. [Maybe in a multicultural society we need to harness the good in all religions and philosophies in the cause of social cohesion, but of course no-one can stand outside all religion and all human philosophy in order to judge what is good in any given religion or philosophical system.]

Anyway, human beings have to understand that their personal fulfilment and their worth derive from their relationships and churches, faith groups and all kinds of organisations which promote community (especially among the young) ought to be fostered and encouraged by the government and local authorities.

No-one should just be a taker, happy to receive benefits he doesn't need, living at the expense of others – though, of course, there should always be as much help as is needed for those who genuinely do need it. Neither should the rich and powerful exploit their position to secure for themselves enormous salaries or bonuses or pensions which they neither need nor deserve. There should be integrity in public life from the very top to the very bottom of society.

Family too is extremely important and, while, said the bishop, single parents and people living in all kinds of relationships may care for one another and their children very well, the best family is one based on the unconditional life-long love of a couple in marriage, with the support of the extended family of grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, etc. [Family ties do matter a lot, important as are other relationships like friendship, membership of clubs and societies, loyalty to a firm or a regiment or a trade union or political party, patriotism, internationalism, etc.]

Education is about nourishing the whole person, not simply about learning facts or acquiring paper qualifications. History should be taught as a narrative which inculcates a sense of identity and human values. Science too needs to include relationships and responsibility along with experimental results and the equations which purport to explain them. [We can teach children to build an atom bomb, but what they really need to know is whether they should!] RE is about faith and values, not just customs and ritual.

Churches and faith groups have a very important role in transmitting values, supporting marriage and parenthood, providing safe places for young people to meet and experiment, places where we can find help when we need it and places where we can be encouraged to give something back.

In summary, we ought to be building a society where people don't see themselves as selfish individuals, responsible only to number one (*because I'm worth it*), but members one of another, members of society, with mutual relationships and responsibilities.

The other speakers were all much briefer. Even so, the meeting ran on for more than an hour longer than it should have done, but nobody minded because it was all so interesting and potentially useful.

Bishop James reminded us that it is no use adopting a hectoring tone and lecturing people whose lifestyles we don't approve of. Life was never perfect. It isn't perfect now, but we can make it better. We need to value more the contribution of grandparents in these days of families split apart either by divorce or by physical distance when people move far away from home. While recognising that genes and our family background have a big influence on the way we grow up, we ought not be deterministic, to think that people are necessarily trapped by their past. We can aspire to be better! The Church can be of great value to communities because (in England) we are present everywhere in the parish system. [It was pointed out later that sometimes the Church of England does seem to be withdrawing from communities because of shortage of clergy and money, but that is our fault. All we Christians ought to be more committed to our local Church. Then there would be no doubts about its survival!] Bishop James also pointed out that churches can and should engage in work which is beneficial to the community (e.g. youth clubs, drop in centres, shelters for the homeless, etc.) which may not bring more people to sit in our pews on Sundays but which are worth doing in themselves. This has resource implications!

Cllr O' Brien spoke about the role of the police. We need to keep a sense of proportion about the amount of crime. There is much less of it about than many of us imagine. In particular the majority of young people are NOT criminals. The police are there to deter crime and catch criminals when it occurs, but it is also important to support vulnerable families and young people at risk before they become the victims or perpetrators of crime. Restorative justice (where the convicted criminal has to apologise to his victim and try in some way to make amends) is often more effective than custody in preventing re-offending and leaves the victims feeling more satisfied than they often feel when the criminal just goes off to prison and everyone forgets about the victim. We live in a society in which it is normal for young people to go out and drink a great deal too much for their own health and for the good of everybody else. This is highly regrettable, but street pastors (who go out and mix with the crowds coming out of pubs and clubs) are effective in protecting youngsters from the consequences of their own actions and averting more serious trouble.

One thing Cllr O' Brien mentioned which also applies in other areas was that the system is too slow. There is too much bureaucracy. A few months is for ever in the mind of a child or a young person and any delay undermines the effectiveness of any help offered or any punishment imposed. It should be easier to volunteer and young people ought to feel encouraged to do so.

Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults, learning and caring, spoke about pride, progress and participation. We are entitled to self-respect. We can do better in our lives. We do belong. She quoted the principle *Never leave anyone behind*. We all matter. We are all one another's responsibility.

Several speakers talked about the importance of education. There was a general feeling that too many people in the Medway Towns lack aspiration. They don't use their talents, because they don't believe they'll ever be any good. Some families seem to bring up their children to think about themselves that way. This is wrong. We all belong. We all have a contribution to make. Education is part of the process, whether it is at school, to degree level, vocational training or apprenticeships. Education makes us employable, but it does a lot more for us than that. It builds our self-respect and our sense of belonging. There was naturally some talk about funding – tuition fees, education maintenance grants etc. What can and should be afforded by the taxpayer for individuals is of course debatable, especially in the light of the present financial situation. Sue McLeod, Vice Principal of MidKent College promoted the virtue of hope.

Professor Alan Stevens based his talk on research which shows that social cohesion depends on prosperity, equality and trust. A lot of the above is about the first two, but trust too is vital. Without it, research shows, people are unwilling to pay taxes to support communities or to engage in voluntary work to the same end. In modern Britain you can expect to live 17 years longer if you live in one of the richest council wards than you could expect if you lived in the poorest. There is a mandate for support from pre-school to old age in the spirit of us all belonging to an interdependent society. [Trust has suffered a number of blows in recent years with the banking crisis, MPs' expenses, various political scandals, phone hacking, benefit fraud etc. Trust needs to be rebuilt which I believe requires not only that people act in a more trustworthy manner, but that we are all more ready to take the risk of trusting others. St Paul says *Suffer yourselves rather to be defrauded* rather than take a fellow member of the Christian community to court.]

Presentations from a Hindu community and an evangelical Church spoke about how in their different ways they promote the well-being and health of their members, through worship and pastoral care and the values they seek to embody in their individual and common life, as well as reaching out into the wider community. Naturally in C21 Medway, the evangelical Christians are much more concerned about outreach and the Hindus about nurturing their own community, but the underlying principles are very similar.

Finally Sylvie Aboa-Bradwell Executive Director of African Peoples Advocacy reminded us [from her African experience, but it applies to all of us] that communities have their own voice. We all want to be partners in development, not patronised by other people who think they know what's best for us. We know our neighbourhoods better than anyone. So if they don't listen to us, they'll get it wrong. And even if "they" are right, they won't get our support for their plans if they patronise us!

We'll see what the seminar leads to. Roger.

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Off to a New Start But More Help Wanted Please

The Watts and Tapsons took over the printing of the magazine for the February issue and everything went swimmingly apart from a few teething troubles. Thank you all for all the hard work of moving the printer and all the supplies and running off the new issue so quickly. Zoe Tapson will be administering the advertising pages. So please contact her via Halling Church or via me if you would like to advertise in this magazine.

We do need someone, please, to take the magazines to the people who deliver them round the streets in Cuxton and North Halling. This needs to be someone with a car who can spare an hour or two once a month.

Also we need people to deliver the magazines to part of Rochester Road, Cuxton (16 magazines, 20 minutes work) and the James Road area (11 magazines, 15 minutes work.) Please contact me if you can help. (Dog and bike optional.)

Generally speaking, we could probably do with more help taking the magazines round in both villages. It would also be good to boost circulation (which I think is now about 480). How about interesting your friends and neighbours in becoming subscribers? They can also access the magazine on the parish webpage - <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk>. You get the magazine quicker that way (usually it's posted on copy day) but it's not so much fun to read on screen and we don't get your 30p towards paying off our £40,000 deficit. Roger.

Church Hall Draw: £40 to Dawn Gates, drawn by Mary Morren.

St John's Draw: £5 each to Master Head (16), Mr Tower (146), Miss Thorne (24) & Mrs Fallows (184) – drawn by Mrs Chidwick.

NATURE NOTES JANUARY 2012

I have chosen the poem "*Old Year Leaves*" by Mackenzie Bell which Edith Holden who wrote "*The Diary of an Edwardian Lady*" chose as her introduction to January.

The leaves, which in the autumn of the year
Fall auburn tinted, leaving reft and bare
Their parent trees, in many a sheltered lair
Where winter waits and watches, cold, austere,

Will lie in drifts; and when the snowdrops cheer
The woodland shadows, still the leaves are there,
Though through the glades the balmy southern air
And birds and boughs proclaim that Spring is here.

The first day of the month and the New Year is grey, wet and mild. I watch two large gulls fly across the garden. There are still red berries on the holly tree because field fares and redwing have not come to devour them as the weather is, and has been so mild. Steady rain falls throughout the afternoon and into the evening. The morning skies of 2nd are a clear blue and a light wind whispers in the branches of the trees from where can be heard the trilling song of a robin. The sun rises over Bluebell Hill filling the garden with a golden glow. Later in the morning I walk along Pilgrims Road beneath a clear blue sky and golden beams of sunlight. The next day, strong westerly winds drive billowing grey clouds across the sky. Heavy rain falls as the trees on the embankment sway backwards and forwards. In the afternoon, the rain

moves away and shafts of sunlight spear their way across the sky. The evening skies, from which the moon shines, are clear. On 4th, and in the afternoon, as west winds drive billowing grey clouds across the heavens, I walk through Six-acre Wood where my gaze is drawn to thick and curving "feet" at the base of trees. I look across the valley before walking round the edge of the fields where badgers' setts are in view. I continue up into Mays Wood where I hear squeaking branches and the wind rushing through the tops of conifers. Once in the fields, I see hips, haws and spindle berries still clinging to bare twigs. A tiny white feather twirls on the end of a twig while hawthorn branches are covered in golden lichen. The river meanders through the valley. After a stormy night, when calmer conditions prevail, we are able to

take Murphy to Bluewater where I walk him round the lake. Despite blue sky and sunshine, I have to battle against a strong wind. Hazel trees are displaying beautiful catkins and wavelets form on the lake. It is an enjoyable time. By 8th the evenings have lengthened by 15 minutes. On 9th skies are grey the air is mild and it is dry. While looking out at the garden, I watch a small fox walking along the embankment just the other side of the fence. Murphy dashes up and down the garden for he has picked up the scent. Later we drive to Cobtree Manor Park. Along the route I see catkins and bright, golden gorse flowers. The skies remain grey all day. Mild days follow until 13th when it is cold, frosty and bright. When I walk with Murphy round the lake at Bluewater I see catkins, a single pink clover, some yarrow flowers and a dandelion, the petals of which are almost closed. The blossom has almost finished flowering but willow twigs glow red in the sun's light. When we return home, I need to feed the birds for collared doves are waiting for their seed. As the sun eventually sets in the western sky, the tall sycamore trees stand tall against the golden glow. In the evening stars shine brightly. The next morning, I wake to a frosty scene and the grass, trees and shrubs sparkle in the sunshine as it rises over the hill. Some of the grass remains covered in frost for the sun's rays have not penetrated through the holly leaves. The 15th is another sparkling, frosty morning and the air is very cold. This is winter as it should be. Frosty days continue with golden sunshine. And we enjoy the lakeside walks watching mallard ducks gliding on the mirror-smooth water. By 19th it is light at 4.40pm. It becomes grey and damp again on 20th. I watch squirrels racing round the garden and one of them is scrabbling among the pansies making unwanted holes in the soil. By 21st a variety of flowers are blooming in the garden-crocuses, snowdrops, elephant's ears, roses and pansies. A hen pheasant makes an appearance in the garden but soon flies away when I open the door. On 23rd I walk with Murphy in Cobtree

Manor Park The morning is grey and breezy. Along the M20 I see golden gorse while in the park there is the contrast of green grass and dark tree trunks. The next day, I watch, from the kitchen window, a robin disappearing into the ivy on the fence. Wood pigeons and magpies come to the garden for food while moles have been busy producing their brown earth hills. At Bluewater on 25th I see droplets of sparkling water on clover leaves even though there is no sunshine. More beautiful, delicate snowdrops bloom on the banks. By late afternoon, as the light fades, the bare trees stand black and still as statues against the grey sky. I stand outside listening to the cacophony of rooks as they fly home to roost. When I walk home from the village the next evening, there is a red and gold glow in the western sky and a crescent moon hangs in the heavens. On 27th, the sun shines brightly and the frost glistens on the grass. I drive to Addington beneath clear blue skies. Later in the morning I listen to birdsong and there is a feeling of Spring in the air. When I go into the garden to feed the birds, I feel the warmth of the sun on my face. The next day cold winds blow from the east That evening, as the sun dips down the sky, the bare branches of trees on the embankment appear to be made of gold. I watch the sun's beams breaking through the sycamore trees. On 29th, temperatures have dropped and frost lies on the grass in the morning. The skies are grey but I hear birdsong. The following day is grey and cold after overnight frost. We take Murphy to Cobtree Manor Park where the grassy paths are wet and muddy dead leaves strewn the way. There are still some red berries on various shrubs. The final day of the month is a real Winter's day when the skies are grey and dreary. Powdery snow falls, just covering the soil and plants in pots on the patio. The air feels quite raw when I go out to feed the birds. The afternoon brings some brightness but greyness soon returns. More cold weather is forecast and so the first month of the year closes. Elizabeth Summers.

The Diamond Jubilee

We celebrated this at St Michael's on the actual day, 6th February. We became a bit anxious as the snow and one or two other hitches threatened to spoil the event, but everything went splendidly. We had a traditional Evensong with a cornucopia of splendid hymns. The Deputy Mayor and his consort, Cllr and Mrs Ray Maisey, represented the borough. The Venerable Simon Burton-Jones preached an excellent sermon, mentioning some of the changes our country has seen in the 60 years of our queen's reign. He mentioned the growing emphasis on the individual rather than society, the consumer rather than the producer, and rights rather than responsibilities. Maybe these changes are storing up trouble for the future, but Simon also talked about our queen's personal dedication to duty and the importance of her faith as an example to us all and a sign of hope for the future.

After the service, many of us repaired to the church hall for a splendid banquet of soup royale, crown of turkey with all the trimmings, imperial and regal desserts, wines from the Commonwealth, a jubilee cake and champagne in which we toasted her majesty.

Thanks to everyone who worked so hard on the service and the food, on setting out the hall and washing up, and, not least, on clearing the snow. In my prayers that night I remembered how blessed we are to have so much good food and all the necessities of life in this country and prayed for those who don't have enough. I remembered with thanksgiving how blessed we are as a Christian country and prayed for missionary work in places where the Gospel has not yet been heard or is denied and opposed. I was conscious too of the danger that England is drifting away from God, sleep-walking into agnosticism, materialism, selfishness and atheism and I prayed for the revival of the Church in this country. Roger.

From the Registers

Baptism

22nd January

Anne-Marie Ellen Hioni Gilbert

Upper Halling

Funerals

4th January

Ernest Compton (80)

London

11th January

Grace Smith (90)

Cliffe Woods

19th January

Christine Margaret Ashford (90)

formerly of Halling

30th January

Terence Thomas Edward Sutton (74)

Bush Road

8th February

Emily Sarah Mayo (89)

Wigmore

9th February

Jean Edith Stevens (81)

East Malling

Dear Friends of our School

Cuxton Infants' School

In January Bush class (year 2 children) entertained us in their class assembly by sharing some of Aesop's fables - the boy who cried wolf, the sun and the wind, the town mouse and the country mouse, and the stork and the fox. The children had spent a great deal of time in classes writing stories, making puppets and finding out about the true meanings behind these famous tales.

The children were entertained by M&M Productions, who performed Sleeping Beauty. They had a wonderful time. I think even the staff had to participate a little, and all enjoyed a lovely end to a hardworking week.

Sundridge class (year 1 and 2) told us all about London in their class assembly. They showed us models they had made of the Tower of London, the London Eye, Buckingham Palace, Big Ben and Nelson's Column. We think the Queen would be most pleased and we now have various ideas as to how we are going to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

Of course the snow, whilst pretty, has caused slight worries, but fortunately we have managed to stay open, with all classes functioning as normal, the only problem being playtimes. After an initial run around and snowman fest (!) we are now inside as it is too icy. My thanks though to Lance our lovely caretaker who has worked so hard at clearing ample paths for adults and children.

This week we have parent/teacher consultations to discuss children's progress and general attitude to school. Following the half term break we welcome parents into school to see how numeracy and literacy are taught throughout the school, and progression and expectations in those subjects. We also have more class assemblies and Mother's day celebration.

Do look at our website if you have access to a computer for more information about what we get up to! In the meantime, take care. Sandra Jones, Headteacher.



Cuxton WI

It was a bitterly cold evening but 35 brave souls arrived at the church hall for our meeting and a very interesting meeting it was. Mr Donald Ball told us the history of the London coffee houses. Nobody was allowed to import coffee from Arabia in the 1600s but a man eventually purchased some and got his manservant to brew up for him each morning in his London hotel. Before long people were attracted by the enticing smell and his room became a regular meeting place for coffee drinking. Realising the commercial potential of this he set up coffee houses in the city area of

town. No ladies allowed - strictly clubs for gentlemen. At one time there were about 3000 coffee clubs in London. Gradually these establishments began to evolve into other areas of commerce. We had Whites of St James being the biggest gaming house in town and indeed still is today. The Lloyds building started off as a coffee club and diversified into shipping trade. The Royal Exchange began life with coffee drinking. In fact when you realise the history of, in particular, the 17th and 18th centuries the largest part of the "City" trading revolved around the coffee houses. And then came Tea - but that is another story.

After the talk business started and we were sad to hear that several members are not too well and that Sandra has left us to live in the Yorkshire Dales. Several members had been to the Icon Theatre history days in the village school and these were really interesting - showing our village in past times. Quite a few members are going to the Council meeting at Tunbridge Wells, about 16 going to see Carousel at the Hazlitt Theatre, 14 to a craft session at Bluewater, 20 for a history walk around Hailing and about 12 going to the Home

Economics days at Ditton. It is lovely to see so many people eager to get out and enjoy themselves as well as attending the monthly meetings. But our next monthly meeting is on Thursday March 1st at the Church Hall at 7 30pm This will be our Phyllis talking about Cookery Disasters but knowing her level of talent I really cannot think of many she could possibly have had! See you there - we love to have visitors any month. Sheila.

Forthcoming Attractions 2012

March 23rd 7.30: A Question of Sport at Cuxton Social Club.

April 9th 2.00 Rectory: Easter Egg Hunt.

20th April 7.30: Christian Aid Supper at Strood Methodist Church.

28th April 10.00: APCM at Church Hall.

June 24th (St John the Baptist's Day): 11.00 HC at St John's preacher will be the Archdeacon. At 3.00 there will be a presentation by Philip Jones of the Bible Lands Society, followed by tea at St John's church.

August 24th (St Bartholomew's Day): 7.30 BCP Celebration HC at St Michael's to mark 350th anniversary BCP.

September 2nd: 11.00 am Bishop James presides and preaches at St John's.

September 29th(Michaelmas): 11.00 am HC at St Michael's preacher Canon Alan Vousden - followed by lunch in church hall.

October 7th Harvest Festival: 6.30 St Michael's Evening Service and Harvest Supper.

October 13th: 7.30 Quiz in Church Hall.

October 27th: 2.00 Sale of Work Halling Church.

December 7th: WI District Carol Service at St Michael's.

December 8th: Christmas Minimarket Church Hall 10.00.

Every first Wednesday, lunch in church hall 12.00-2.00.



Halling WI

We started the new year on an upward beat with almost all of last year's members rejoining, and although our speakers (two for the price of one) were from the Samaritans it turned out to be informative and more than interesting, but very hard to write about. We had a speaker from this charity many, many years ago (I was asked then if I had ever considered being a Samaritan.) Ann and Richard, they never use surnames, told us how and who started it in 1953. Now, people who need their help can get in touch with them day and night at any time every day of the year all over the country.

The Flower of the Month was won by Ann Heaseman and the competition, Something beginning with the letter A was won by Gemma Graves with an Artichoke (the kind you make the soup with). I won the Flower of the Month silver vase for 2011. My mum gave the W.I. this little vase which is shaped like a crocus in 1967. Next month, weather permitting, Ann Heaseman and Trudy Fenton Scott are going to teach us how to make something. It involves cutting. So please remember a small pair of scissors. Competition, something beginning with the letter B. There are loads of things beginning with B. So no excuses girls.

Phyllis.

Request for Funds



As you know, we are hoping to support Paul and Charitas Cho working with the Church Mission Society in the Philippines. Before they can set out, they need a certain amount of financial support "up front". If you would like to help to raise this money, could you please let me have your contribution or send it direct to CMS, clearly marked as in support of the Paul & Charitas Cho?

Please make your cheque payable to **Church Mission Society** . If your gift is for a specific area of work, please tell us this in a covering note.

Please send cheques and/or GiftAid forms to: **CMS, Watlington Road, Oxford OX4 6BZ**