

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
Saturday 2 nd November All Souls		9.30 Holy Communion	Revelation 7 vv 9-17 p1238 Matthew 5 vv 1-12 p968
3 rd November 4 th Before Advent / Trinity 20		9.30 Family Communion Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal	Isaiah 1 vv 10-18 p685 II Thessalonians 1 vv 1-12 p1189 Luke 19 vv 1-10 p1053
10 th November 3 rd Before Advent / Trinity 21 / Remembrance Sunday		9.30 Holy Communion	Ephesians 6 vv 10-20 p1177 John 4 vv 46-54 p1068
17 th November 2 nd Before Advent / Trinity 22		8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP Trinity 22
		9.30 Holy Communion	Malachi 4 vv 1-6 p962 II Thessalonians 3 vv 6-13 p1190 Luke 21 vv 5-19 p1056
24 th November Christ the King / Last after Trinity		9.30 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 23 vv 1-6 p782 Colossians 1 vv 11-20 p1182 Luke 23 vv 33-43 p1060
1 st December Advent Sunday Year A		9.30 Family Communion & Gift Service	Isaiah 2 vv 1-5 p686 Romans 13 vv 11-14 p1140 Matthew 24 vv 36-44
Services at St John the Baptist Halling and the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
Saturday 2 nd November All Souls		11.00 Holy Communion	Revelation 7 vv 9-17 p1238 Matthew 5 vv 1-12 p968
3 rd November 4 th Before Advent / Trinity 20		8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Ephesians 5 vv 15-21 p1176 Matthew 22 vv 1-14 p990
		11.00 Holy Communion Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal	Isaiah 1 vv 10-18 p685 II Thessalonians 1 vv 1-12 p1189 Luke 19 vv 1-10 p1053
10 th November 3 rd Before Advent / Trinity 21 / Remembrance Sunday		10.50 Holy Communion	Ephesians 6 vv 10-20 p1177 John 4 vv 46-54 p1068
		5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Daniel 4 vv 1-37 p887 John 1 vv 29-51 p1064
17 th November 2 nd Before Advent / Trinity 22		11.00 Holy Communion	Malachi 4 vv 1-6 p962 II Thessalonians 3 vv 6-13 p1190 Luke 21 vv 5-19 p1056
24 th November Christ the King / Last after Trinity		11.00 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 23 vv 1-6 p782 Colossians 1 vv 11-20 p1182 Luke 23 vv 33-43 p1060
1 st December Advent Sunday Year A		8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Romans 13 vv 8-14 p1140 Matthew 21 vv 1-13 p988
		11.00 Holy Communion & Gift Service	Isaiah 2 vv 1-5 p686 Romans 13 vv 11-14 p1140 Matthew 24 vv 36-44
Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 am Cuxton		Holy Communion Thursdays 9.30 am Halling	
30 th October	Romans 8 vv 26-30 Luke 13 vv 22-30	31 st October Martin Luther	Romans 8 vv 31-39 Luke 13 vv 31-35
6 th November	Romans 13 vv 8-10 Luke 14 vv 25-33	7 th November	Romans 14 vv 7-12 Luke 15 vv 1-10
13 th November	Titus 3 vv 1-7 Luke 17 vv 11-19	14 th November	Philemon 1-25 Luke 17 vv 20-25
20 th November	Revelation 4 vv 1-11 Luke 19 vv 11-28	21 st November	Revelation 5 vv 1-14 Luke 19 vv 41-44
27 th November	Daniel 5 vv 1-28 Luke 21 vv 12-19	28 th November	Daniel 6 vv 1-28 Luke 21 vv 20-28

1st November is All Saints Day: Holy Communion 7.30 am St Michael's. 30th November is St Andrew's Day: Holy Communion 8.00 am St Michael's. Copy Date December Magazine Friday 13th November 8.30 am Rectory.

Thank you to everyone who donated, helped or joined in the fun at the Michaelmas Fayre in St Michael's Church hall on Sunday 29th September. £579 was raised for church funds!



Blythwood Shoe Boxes

We shall be collecting shoeboxes for the Blythwood annual Christmas appeal at services on 3rd November. Ordinary size shoeboxes, please – not sealed. Appropriate gifts include toiletries (not talc), flannels, underwear. Socks, candles, sewing equipment, pens, notepads, rulers, rubbers, new small toys, toothpaste, toothbrush, hats, scarves, gloves, soap. There will be leaflets in church to indicate suitable gifts.

Gift Service 1st December

At this service we shall be collecting toys and other small gifts such as toiletries for families and small items of clothing such as socks, gloves or scarves, who might not otherwise have Christmas presents. Gifts should be new and unwrapped, please.



From the Rector

I HAVE written this book for three reasons: For horror of war. I want others to shudder with me at it.

For affection for my husband. When war nearly killed me, knowledge of our love kept me alive.

And for a reminder to my son. I fought one war for him in prison camp. He survives because of me. He belongs now to peace. I remind him that it is better to give more and to have less—and to keep the peace—than to fight.

The Japanese in this book are as war made them, not as God did, and the same is true of the rest of us. We are not pleasant people here, for the story of war is always the story of hate; it makes no difference with whom one fights. The hate destroys you spiritually as the fighting destroys you bodily. If there are tears shed here, they are for the death of good feeling. If there is horror, it is for those who speak indifferently of 'the next war.' If there is hate, it is for hateful qualities, not nations. If there is love, it is because this alone kept me alive and sane. A. N. K.

These words introduce *Three Came Home* by Agnes Keith, which was published very soon after the end of the Second World War and her release from a Japanese interment camp in Borneo. Mrs

Keith was an American married to an Englishman working for the British government in Borneo when the Japanese entered the war and their troops swept through Southeast Asia. The Keiths had a baby son called George. When Sandakan, the place where they lived as part of a small European and other ex-pat community, was overrun, Agnes and baby George were interned together in a women's camp and Harry was interned with the other European and non-native men in a nearby men's camp.

Not being military, their sufferings were not quite as great as those who were actual prisoners of war. They were, nevertheless, terrible. Their living quarters were inadequate to provide decent shelter, verminous and insanitary. There was far too little to eat and, what there was, was generally unpalatable. Any disobedience, insubordination or perceived insolence to the Japanese resulted in severe punishment. Not only Agnes, but several other women had to bring up young children in these frightful conditions. Often they were made to perform back-breaking labour for their captors. Among the internees was a group of nuns, whose faithfulness in their service of God seems to have strengthened the resolve of their fellow prisoners to face their ordeal.

The women, especially the mothers, in the camp learnt cooperation with one another, but dissimulation in front of their guards. They learnt to purloin, to conceal, to get round the regulations. They strove to feed their children in order to keep them alive and fought the system in order to obtain medicines when they were sick. Clothing was always a problem. Some of the prisoners were disloyal to their fellow internees. Some of the Japanese guards showed some compassion. Others seemed to be deliberately cruel. Many of

the rules were arbitrary. The overall commander of the camps was a Colonel Suga. He was far from the worst of the Japanese and he encouraged Mrs Keith (who was already a published writer) to keep a record of their experiences. Paper, pens and pencils, however, were generally forbidden to the prisoners and it was a constant challenge to obtain writing materials and to conceal the instalments of the journal from the guards.

The men's camp was not far away and it added to the burden of the women that they knew that their husbands were facing even worse conditions than they were. The men too fretted over what was happening to their wives and children and their powerlessness to intervene.

What I had not realised was that, even after the official end of the War, the internees were not free. Their lives were for a time at even greater risk as they got caught up in the crossfire between

the victorious allies and enemy combatants who refused to lay down their arms. Eventually, however, they were freed. George had effectively grown up in the camp, with a sketchy education and having learnt survival skills no child should have to learn.



As the title of the book indicates, three came home. It is very moving to have such an account from someone who suffered so much when her recollections were still so fresh. If anyone would like to borrow the book, I have it.

I am not going to try to add to what Mrs Keith says in her introduction above. We are reminded, as we approach Remembrance Sunday once again, of the importance of praying, acting and working for peace. Roger.

Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride

I should put what I did this year down to a mid-life crisis if I expected to live to be 128. My last Church was St Christopher's Newington in the parish of St Laurence in Thanet. By September 1986, I knew that I would soon be moving but I did not know where to. I commented that the riders who came to St Christopher's that year mostly didn't seem to have come very far – only from Margate or other parts of Ramsgate - and, I rather rashly, promised that, wherever I was the next year, I would return to St Christopher's for the FKC bike ride – which I did. I was thirty two years younger then and cycled both ways via Canterbury.



I don't know why I felt the urge to do a repeat performance this year, but I did. I thought I could do some business at the Halifax in Strood on the way, only to discover that, having extensively refurbished it over the last few months, they have now closed it and I had to go to the centre of Chatham. Anyway I notched up St Nicholas' Strood and then St Augustine's Gillingham. It was A2 all the way to Faversham now. St Margaret's Rainham wasn't signing forms but was open, with the organ playing and the bells ringing. I was afraid I might walk in on a wedding. Sticking to the main road, I didn't record any churches in Sittingbourne, Faversham or any of the villages in between. There is far too much traffic on the A2 and too many road works!

Now I deviated from the way I went all those years ago. I carried on down the Thanet Way. Much of the old Thanet Way has been bypassed and I did not expect there to be too much traffic on it. How wrong I was. In fact, I got quite discouraged, battling a strong crosswind coming across the marshes from off the sea and having to put up with lorries thundering past. One forced me onto the hard shoulder. I wished I'd taken something to eat and drink when I stopped for a rest in a lay-by. Then Birchington and happy childhood memories of family holidays to sustain me. I last I could notch up another Church with All Saints, enjoy chatting to the hosts and other cyclists and fill up on biscuits and squash. Next St Saviour Westgate, where I met some people who remembered me from over thirty years ago, and I was pleasantly surprised to find what used to be Westgate Congregational Church open. I told the ladies manning it that I had not been there since I was eight or nine when my grandmother took me there when we were on holiday in a flat just along

the road. I told them I can even remember the sermon. My grandmother made sure that I did. It was about treating your family with the same consideration and courtesy as you treat people you meet at school or work or socially. I missed the turning to All Saints, Westbrook, but made it to St John's Margate, where there were more refreshments and whence there was an easy run to St Christopher's Newington and finally St Laurence in Thanet.

And here comes the shameful part. I caught the train home. I had however had a very enjoyable day out on a nice sunny (if breezy) day!

Meanwhile, Mary and Huw were striding around Tunbridge Wells. The best place, they discovered for cakes, is the Quaker Meeting House. Between us, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we made £335, half for our parish and half for FKC. Roger.



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Forthcoming Attractions

9th November 7.30 pm: Quiz in church hall for church funds.
27th November: 10.45 am: The Church of My Fathers – talk by James Dickenson. Admission free, but collection will be taken for expenses and church funds. There will also be an opportunity to buy the book.
7th December: 10.00 Christmas Fair Scout Hall.
24th June 2020 (Nativity of St John the Baptist): 11.00 Holy Communion St John's followed by pudding party.

Eating in the Fifties

As this is my birthday month, I'll share the following which I was sent.

Pasta had not been invented. It was macaroni or spaghetti. Curry was a surname. A takeaway was a mathematical problem. Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere. Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time. All crisps were plain. Oil was for lubricating; fat was for cooking. Tea was made in a teapot using leaves and never green. Cubed sugar was regarded as posh. Chicken didn't have fingers in those days. None of us had heard of yoghurt. Healthy food was anything edible. Cooking outside was called camping. Seaweed was not a recognised food. *Kebab* was not even a word, never mind a food. Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days and was regarded as being white gold. Prunes were medicinal. Surprisingly, muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed. Pineapple came in chunks in a tin. We had only ever seen a picture of a real one. Water came out of a tap and, if anyone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have been a laughing stock. The one thing that we never ever had on our tables in the fifties was elbows hats or phones.

And also, because my birthday is St Andrew's Day, more seriously.

JESUS, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

ALMIGHTY God, who didst give such grace unto thy holy Apostle Saint Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay; Grant unto us all, that we, being called by thy holy Word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil the holy commandments; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Registers

Baptism:

15th September

Kaiden Eric Thomas O' Callaghan

Bush Road

Diamond Wedding Blessing

28th September

Leonard and Jean Lane

St Michael's

Funerals:

17th September

Irene May Barker

Hillcrest Drive

20th September

Terry Booth

Bush Road

4th October

Lillian Florence Carter

formerly of High Street

All Souls Day

On the 2nd November each year, the Church commemorates the Festival of All Souls. It is a day specially set aside to remember the faithful departed. In the words of the Creed, we believe in *the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body*.

In other words, we believe that we can trust God for those whom we love but see no longer. Death is not the end, but a new beginning, a new phase of existence for Christian people. Our love for them and their love for us continues within the love of God. The things we have done wrong on earth can be forgiven if we ask God in Christ. Our personality, our soul, is not extinguished by death, but finds its fulfilment in God's love. These are the kinds of thoughts to remember when we think about our loved ones who have died.

In this parish, we remember by name on All Souls Day all those whose names are in the Books of Remembrance, those whose funerals we have arranged in the last year and any other individuals we are asked to commemorate.

The All Souls services this year are on Saturday 2nd November at 9.30 am at St Michael & All Angels' Church Cuxton and 11.00 am at St John the Baptist's Church Halling. At both services we remember all those whose funerals we have taken in this last year and people from the parish we have heard about. If you would like to be present at either service, you would be most welcome. If there are other names you would like remembered, please give them in writing to the Rector.

Expression of Appreciation

I understand that it is widely known that I have been undergoing an extremely unpleasant ordeal this Summer. Some of you know a lot about it and some little or nothing. It is not over, yet, but when it is over I hope to be able to tell everyone all about it. You have the right to know.

For now, what I want to do is to thank the very many people who have helped me with their prayers, their emotional support and the practical tasks they have carried out to make sure we get the right and fair outcome. I have been so moved that it is almost worth the pain to experience the love. Roger.

St Michael's Draw (October): £10 Denis Hills (31), £5 each Charlotte Payne (13) & Julia Wells (7)

St John's Draw: £5 each Mrs Burr (12), Mrs Winter (14) & Mrs Mitchell (66) – drawn by Mrs Smitherman.

Quiz

9th November 7.30 pm. Proceeds for church funds. Teams 6-8. £8.00 includes ploughman's. Please book as teams or individuals with Roger 717134, roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk

Shorne Woods Country Park



Shorne Woods Country Park is owned by Kent County Council. The park offers so much, including, an eco-friendly visitors centre and cafe, car parking, a sensory garden, mobility vehicles, an orienteering course, fishing lakes, streams, a trim trail, picnic and play areas as well as 292 acres of woodland, wetland and meadows. Much of the park can be explored via an extensive network of carefully way-marked trails for horses, cyclists and pedestrians. These trails are colour way-marked and vary in length and difficulty.



My adventure begins at the car park close to the entrance in Brewers Road just off the A2. The car park has a good number of cars with visitors ranging in age from a few months to even older than me.

There are families with toddlers in push chairs, youngsters on scooters and tricycles, older children and adults on bicycles, as well as walkers, dog walkers and joggers. First I walk to the cafe for a latte and a chance to peruse the park map leaflet. The leaflet shows the whole park and eight marked routes. My choice is the red route - medium difficulty, including steps and 3.1km in length.



From the visitors centre cafe I walk north west towards the fishing lakes. To my right is a large play area. Here there are children climbing the walls of a large wooden fort, running around the ramparts and swinging on ropes. The lakes are quiet. Perhaps the fish are having a mid-morning snooze. Moving on I encounter the start of the trim trail which has ten exercise stations. The stations include leap frog, step ups, monkey bars and chin ups. Every Saturday there is a friendly park run. I note that there are plenty of



benches en route.

From the fishing lakes and the trim trail I wander along the marked footpath through beautiful woodland and over little wooden bridges. The vegetation is lush although there are clear signs that summer is moving away rapidly and autumn is taking over. Trees are shedding their leaves, bracken is starting to die back, horse chestnuts, acorns and beech nuts are littering the ground whilst the recently hard dry earth is giving way to mud. I walk around the edge of Randall Wood then up hill to the Knoll and enjoy the splendid views.



At the view point I turn to walk down hill towards the Fairie Ring. There are many steps on my way and I meet only a few dog walkers and some people running around a competitive orienteering trail. This part of the park is much quieter. At the bottom of the hill is a rather marvellous fairie ring. It is made out of carved wooden seats. Each seat has different distinct markings.

After close inspection of the Fairie Ring and surrounding woodland I follow the trail up hill. I walk across small wooden bridges and find some delightful wooden sculptures on my way back towards the visitors centre. To my surprise I came upon a lady carefully manoeuvring a mobility scooter through this part of the parkland.



My final port of call is the Sensory garden. In this area there are many flowers,



with whistling reeds beds and small birds then return to the car park and home.

A lovely experience at a developing park.

Many years ago, I used to take small school parties there on a Friday afternoon for 'Recreation

mixed colours, great and small, thoughtfully planted in edged beds, some raised, with flat paved pathways for easy access. I walk

passed a final pond

Studies'. It was amazing to see the transformation from quiet country part to the development of a bustling environment with many attractions and activities yet they has maintained the major brief; that is to be eco-friendly. A wonderful day out for all ages but especially enjoyed by me!

Holly Croft.



THE PENINSULA BIG BAND COMES TO CUXTON

On Friday, 4th October, 2019 the Peninsula Big Band came to Cuxton Social Club to perform a concert in aid of St Michael and All Angels Organ Fund. Fourteen performers plus the conductor Jim Harrison played three sets of music from the 1930s to the 1990s from 7.45 to 10.30pm. The hall was packed with about a hundred in the audience from the village and from further afield and a good time was had by all.

Big Band music came to England from the USA and from Latin American Countries, and was originally an off-shoot of the music of military marching bands but one where the music was played with a Jazz swing which offset the timing slightly. Jazz came from the music of the negro slaves and from New Orleans of the early nineteen hundreds and the moving of music from the small jazz ensembles to the larger bands gave rise to big band jazz and swing music. At the beginning of World War II, an army captain named Glenn Miller was asked to create a military band which would raise the morale of the troops and provide entertainment for money raising dances to provide cash for armaments. He created a different sound by putting tunes on reed instruments (clarinets and saxophones) with accompanying parts on brass instruments (trumpets, cornets and trombones). By adding a rhythm section (piano, bass and drums) he got the "Miller Sound". Other band leaders made similar experiments and with the influence of Latin rhythms from South America, combined with the ballroom dance rhythm, we get a style of music that moves around or 'swings' through the different styles. It is important that those who perform 'Swing' listen carefully to the beat of the music because it is not a regimental style played exactly the same every time.

The Peninsula Big Band is made up of five reed players (normally 2 Alto Saxophones, 2 Tenor Saxophones and 1 Baritone Saxophone) with the players doubling on Clarinet and sometimes Flute. The Brass section consists of four instrumentalists playing a variety of brass instruments including trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn and trombones including a bass trombone. The difference between a trumpet/trombone and a cornet/flugelhorn is that a trumpet has got a cylindrical tube which makes a loud, blasting sound whereas a cornet is based on the conical bore of the horn which make a softer, more mellow sound. The rhythm section is piano, bass and drums and is responsible for keeping the beat in time and providing a foundation for the rest of the band.

The band played three sets of mixed music often from the portfolio of very popular musicians. In the first of these we heard music from Glenn Miller of the 1940s together with older music from Rogers and Hart's "This Can't Be Love" to much more modern Light Rock music "Just the Way You Are" from the pen of Billy Joel (1977). There were also two Tangos from the Latin American country of Argentina. The second set started with a real Swing number from 1936 called "Sing, Sing, Sing" by Louis Prima (who performed as King Louis in the Disney film Jungle Book) and this gave solo prominence to Drum-Kit Percussion. There were three Latin-feel pieces in this section including the Rumba "Livin' La Vida Loca" and a Samba "Mas

Que Nada" together with Barry Manilow's "Copacabana". The earliest composition in set 2 was "As Time Goes By" written in 1931, but it keeps getting reinvented and therefore sounds more modern than it actually is. Henry Mancini's waltz "Moon River" (1961/2) is always popular, as is Stevie Wonder's "My Cherie Amour" (1968).

The final set again included a wide range of music beginning with the signature tune of the TV programme "The Rockford Files", closely followed by "Thriller" made famous by Michael Jackson. Van Morrison's "Moon Dance" is always popular and then the first outing of the newly invented Hammond organ with "Green Onions". The section continued with dance music such as the Samba, Twist, Bossa Nova and slow swing in the famous "Moonlight Serenade", a piece of music actually composed by Glenn Miller which was followed by "American Patrol" actually written in the nineteenth century but revived by Miller as a military march. The evening ended with a Mambo, a song with one word – "Tequila". Most of this music can be sampled on computer.

Over £1000 was raised for the organ fund and we are very grateful to the audience and the Social Club committee for making our successful evening a memorable event. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

JGB

And Now For Something Completely Different

The quest for meaning plays a determinative part in the history of human intellectual endeavour. Religious people, who believe that the universe is the creation of a rational mind, analogous to ours, though infinitely greater, logically expect to find meaning in the way things are, and are therefore susceptible to being troubled by evidence of contingency, chance, happenstance and randomness. An atheist might attempt to explain our longing for meaning in terms of our evolutionary survival. For some reason, beings who seek meaning in life generally live longer and produce more offspring than those who do not. Longing for meaning may be a heritable characteristic with implications for survival and reproduction. Perhaps there is no need for meaning to mean anything. The evolutionary point is that the quest for meaning has survival benefits. The theist might respond, however, that the reason why questing for meaning has survival benefits is maybe that existence does in fact ultimately have meaning.

So the question of meaning does not go away if we are not religious. Yet any religion, based on belief in an omnipotent and omniscient Deity, is in difficulties when confronted with modern Science, which finds contingency in everything. Not only are chance mutation and survival the driving force of evolution, but Chaos Theory forces us to accept the essential unpredictability of our environment, while quantum uncertainties are apparently fundamental characteristics of the very stuff of which everything is made.

Christian faith requires us both to believe in contingency and in necessity. The Egyptian Pharaoh and the kings of Assyria, Babylon and Persia are treated in the Hebrew Scriptures as morally responsible individuals. They make decisions for which they are answerable. Yet they are also portrayed as effectively the tools of God. The decisions they take inevitably glorify God, punish transgressions and ultimately set God's people free. The way the Bible tells the story, it is not merely that omniscience necessarily knows in advance what Pharaoh and other kings will do; their actions are actually determined by a God, Who is very much more powerful than they are. God tells Moses to demand of Pharaoh that he set the Israelite slaves free, but he also says, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments."^[1] We seem to be expected to believe simultaneously that Pharaoh's actions are contingent (they could have been otherwise) and that what happened was inevitable. It is surely the experience of the Exodus which gives meaning to the existence of the Jewish people and this is not, in the biblical tradition, a meaning only discovered, or perhaps

^[1] Exodus 7 vv 3&4

created, after the event, with the benefit of hindsight, but already determined in the counsels of God, when he called Abraham's family to leave Ur of the Chaldees, centuries before the Israelites migrated to Egypt.

It is worth observing here that it is not only in the Old Testament that we are confronted with this clash of contingency and necessity. Judas Iscariot apparently necessarily plays his pre-ordained part in the story of the Crucifixion, but he is also regarded as responsible for his own actions. Jesus says, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born."^[2] More generally, the New Testament invites men and women to choose to follow Jesus, but insists that God has chosen those who do decide to take up his invitation and that they could not have chosen God unless he had given them the grace to do so!

Christianity classically believes that the human nature of Jesus was in all respects the same as ours, except without sin. Christians have always insisted that his human nature received no assistance from his divine nature in resisting temptation. It has always been one of the difficulties that we are required to believe that the second person of the Trinity became one person with the only human being who has ever lived who has not shared the sinful nature of the archetypal Adam.

In the Hebrew Scriptures it is the Word of God which effects the creation and it is through God's Word spoken by his servants the prophets that God controls human history. The Christian faith in the Incarnation is indeed that Jesus is the Word made flesh.

I cannot not help but wonder whether radioactive decay is a helpful analogy. As I understand it, it is impossible to know when a given nucleus will decay. In that sense every time, say, a Radium nucleus becomes a Thorium nucleus, it is a contingent event. It might not have happened. On the other hand, it is possible to know the half life, to know when half of the nuclei will have decayed, but not which half! This seems to me to make it possible for the nuclear physicist to be like the Old Testament prophet and believe that phenomena are simultaneously contingent and necessary or maybe, if Hegel is useful to us, that necessity and contingency are thesis and antithesis, looking for a synthesis in a great mind, perhaps the Mind of God.

Personally, I can believe in a God Who runs the Universe and who not only foresees the coming of a Messiah of the seed of David but of whom it can be said that Jesus and everything which happens to him is part of his "determinate counsel and foreknowledge"^[4] I can also understand those who either do not believe in God or else believe that God does not intervene in the way the universe unfolds, still less in the lives of individuals. Faith and reason are gifts which God has given to us and our calling as human beings is to make use of them both in our pursuit of Truth. My reason and my faith tell me both that I am responsible to God for what I do with my life and that my life is lived out within God's loving plan for me. The same is true for you. You live out your life in accordance with His plan for you and you are responsible to Him for how you live. Roger.



Tommy's Talking Points

This is me in the snow. I don't suppose we shall have snow in November. Summer is hardly over as I write. In fact, it is still warm and the leaves are only just tinged with their autumn colours. The only sign of the coming Winter is the shortening of the days and the lengthening of the nights.

This has been the Summer when Master has been stung, literally as well as metaphorically. That wasps' nest I told you about in the extractor fan is still there, right near the back door.

Master keeps hoping that they will pack up and leave home. They don't and the internet says that they

^[2] Matthew 26 v24

^[4] Acts 2 v23

might stay till Christmas. What we have discovered is that they are attracted to the light. Master thought that was moths, but it turns out to be wasps as well. Earlier in the year, they kept finding ways to creep indoors, using tiny gaps between the fan casing and the wall. He kept blocking these with sellotape, but, as soon the light was turned on, they would try harder and break through. You should have seen him just before bedtime standing on a chair trying to swat them so that I wouldn't get stung in the night. He finally sealed all the holes and no more could get in that way, though there are still some wasp corpses in the light fitting, but they probably came later.

You see the next thing that happened was that it was still dark when we got up on a Sunday morning, but warm as well. He flung open the windows as usual and dozens of the creatures swarmed in. He drank his tea in the garden, where it was safer. Then he took me for a long walk and all the wasps seemed to have escaped or died before we came back and he went to church. He had to clear the remains from off the floor. Even dead wasps can sting bare paws or feet. We await developments, but he's lost count of how often he's been stung – about half a dozen times, I think.

Wasps aren't the only natural hazard. One morning, as we were walking in the crepuscular time before the sun rose alongside the edge of the woods, a badger ran across so closely in front of him, that he tripped over it. He said, they are very solid! Not so bad, though, as the morning one actually ran into him and nipped him as it went past.

Yesterday, we did another section of our coastal walk – Hythe to Ham Street. The route was straightforward, following the course of the Military Canal, but the travel arrangements were complicated – four trains to Sandling, then a bus to Hythe, the need to reach Ham Street before the *Duke's Head* stopped serving lunches and the forecast afternoon rain began to fall, then four trains home. Master's friend worked out the itinerary and we were to meet him at Ebbsfleet. This meant us catching the 6.59 from Cuxton. Master insisted on having breakfast before we went. Morning Prayer had to be said. I needed a decent walk before spending all that time on trains and a bus. So we got up just before five (and didn't open the window next to the wasps' nest) and hurried enough to give me an hour's walk. Although it was really still too dark, we rushed around without him falling over and we got back to Rectory with ten minutes to spare in which to change shoes, pick up a coat and my water and bowl. We almost ran to the station, bought a ticket (having taken out a mortgage) and discovered that the train was cancelled. *The best laid schemes of mice and men...*

Back home. Ring friend. Agree till to meet at Ebbsfleet, which we did and the day went as planned only half an hour later. A nice woman on the bus told us where to get off in order to commence where we finished last time. There were plenty of people and dogs about, to some of whom I introduced myself. We walked alongside the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway for a bit and saw one of the little trains hauled by a steam locomotive. The canal was picturesque and I was able to be off my lead most of the time. We saw Lyme Castle, which Master had not known to exist. He discovered that Lyme comes from *limen* – the Latin for shore. We for sure enjoyed the walk. We also walked along the edge of Port Lyme Zoo, but didn't see any wild animals. A sign said to call the police if we did! We saw some old churches, some sheep and cows and expanses of flat land as we approached our destination.

We were in good time. The *Duke's Head* is very dog friendly and I was made a lot of fuss of. They had an excellent meal – three course in Master's case and good beer. And we beat the rain. The station wasn't far and all the connections were good coming home. Fellow passengers on the Cuxton train were especially nice to me. Next time, Ham Street to Rye.

Back here, we've had some adventures in the dark woods. I'm OK, but Master gets lost. We came out one evening in place a long way from where he expected to. Still, as long as he's careful and keeps on eating carrots, I shall get my walks, though we have been starting later as he's not too keen on starting off before daylight and we don't go far of an evening anymore. So I guess it will be afternoons. I hope I shall see you around enjoying the autumn colours, the fresh air, the glorious views & the warmth of the late summer sun.