

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
1 <sup>st</sup> July Trinity 4	9.30 Family Communion	Lamentations 3 <sup>22-33</sup> p826 II Corinthians 8 <sup>7-24</sup> p1163 Mark 5 <sup>21-43</sup> p1007	
8 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 5	9.30 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 2 <sup>1-5</sup> p831 II Corinthians 12 <sup>2-10</sup> p1165 Mark 6 <sup>1-13</sup> p1008	
15 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 6	9.30 Holy Communion	Amos 7 <sup>7-15</sup> p922 Ephesians 1 <sup>3-14</sup> p1173 Mark 6 <sup>14-29</sup> p1008	
22 <sup>nd</sup> July S Mary Magdalene	9.30 Holy Communion	Song of Solomon 3 <sup>1-4</sup> p679 II Corinthians 5 <sup>14-17</sup> p1161 John 20 <sup>1-18</sup> p1089	
29 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 8	9.30 Holy Communion	II Kings 4 <sup>42-44</sup> p372 Ephesians 3 <sup>14-21</sup> p1175 John 6 <sup>1-21</sup> p1069	
5 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 9	9.30 Family Communion	Exodus 16 <sup>2-15</sup> p74 Ephesians 4 <sup>1-16</sup> p1175 John 6 <sup>24-35</sup> p1070	
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall			
1 <sup>st</sup> July Trinity 4	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Romans 13 <sup>1-10</sup> p1140 Luke 9 <sup>51-62</sup> p1040	Upper Halling
	11.00 Holy Communion	Lamentations 3 <sup>22-33</sup> p826 II Corinthians 8 <sup>7-24</sup> p1163 Mark 5 <sup>21-43</sup> p1007	
8 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 5	11.00 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 2 <sup>1-5</sup> p831 II Corinthians 12 <sup>2-10</sup> p1165 Mark 6 <sup>1-13</sup> p1008	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Jeremiah 20 <sup>1-11</sup> p779 Romans 14 <sup>1-17</sup> p1140	
15 <sup>th</sup> July Trinity 6	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion	Amos 7 <sup>7-15</sup> p922 Ephesians 1 <sup>3-14</sup> p1173 Mark 6 <sup>14-29</sup> p1008	
22 <sup>nd</sup> July S Mary Magdalene	11.00 Holy Communion	Song of Solomon 3 <sup>1-4</sup> p679 II Corinthians 5 <sup>14-17</sup> p1161 John 20 <sup>1-18</sup> p1089	
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5 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 9	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Job 28 <sup>1-28</sup> p529 Luke 12 <sup>13-21</sup> p1045	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Exodus 16 <sup>2-15</sup> p74 Ephesians 4 <sup>1-16</sup> p1175 John 6 <sup>24-35</sup> p1070	
Wednesday Holy Communion at St Michael's 9.30 am		Thursday Holy Communion at St John's at 9.30 am	
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Amos 5 <sup>14-24</sup> Matthew 8 <sup>28-34</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> July	Amos 7 <sup>10-17</sup> Matthew 9 <sup>1-8</sup>
11 <sup>th</sup> July S Benedict	Hosea 10 <sup>1-12</sup> Matthew 10 <sup>1-7</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> July	Hosea 11 <sup>1-9</sup> Matthew 10 <sup>7-15</sup>
18 <sup>th</sup> July	Isaiah 10 <sup>5-16</sup> Matthew 11 <sup>25-27</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup> July	Isaiah 26 <sup>7-19</sup> Matthew 11 <sup>28-30</sup>
25 <sup>th</sup> July S James	Acts 11 <sup>27-12<sup>2</sup></sup> Matthew 20 <sup>20-28</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup> July Anne & Joachim parents of BVM	Jeremiah 2 <sup>1-13</sup> Matthew 13 <sup>10-17</sup>

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> is St Thomas' Day: HC Cuxton 7.30 am

**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 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month in term time. **St Michael's Angels** meet at Cuxton Church at 2.00 as announced for a short service for pre-school children, followed by refreshments and toys in the Church Hall.

There is a parish lunch to which all are invited every first Wednesday at 12.00 in the Church Hall.

If you are prepared to **gift aid** your monetary contributions to the Church, please use one of the envelopes provided.

**Copy Date** August Magazine: 13<sup>th</sup> July 8.30 am Rectory.

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### 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service

I'm very much looking forward to St Bartholomew's Day (24<sup>th</sup> August) when we are celebrating the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer at a service of Holy Communion for St Bartholomew's Day, conducted in accordance with the 1662 rite, at 7.30 pm at St Michael's Church – with refreshments to follow. First of all, I must say what this is not. It is not a historical reconstruction. It is an act of worship – the highest activity open to human beings. A few years before I came here the parish laid on a wonderful Mediaeval Fayre at Halling and the then Bishop of Rochester, Dr David Say, was asked to preside at a traditional Communion Service. He would only go back as far as the 1549 prayer book, however. If he had gone further back and used one of the rites from the Middle Ages he would have been using words some of which imply beliefs which the Church of England rejected at the Reformation.

I think it is very important that we mean what we say and sing in worship. *Amen* indicates assent to what has gone before and I feel quite uncomfortable if I'm asked to sing hymns or choruses or to use forms of words which seem to me to fall short as expressions of Christian faith. Obviously, you can't expect everyone present at a service to agree with every word. If people leave and form new churches over every difference of opinion, there is no end to the division of the Body of Christ, even its dismemberment.

There may be people present at services who are seeking the Truth and have not yet made a Christian commitment. Those of us who have accepted Baptism in faith must acknowledge that the wonderful mystery of God infinitely transcends our understanding. So no human words can be adequate for worship. There is infinitely more of the beatific vision than what we have so far comprehended. Moreover, most of us don't fully understand even what, in principle, is capable of being understood by human beings. Those of us who have found are still seeking.

Having said all that, there may be things in our public worship which we think we do understand but with which we still disagree. If that is the

case, first of all I think we have to be humble enough to consider that the Church which has accepted these words (Book of Common Prayer or Common Worship) as an appropriate expression of our faith may have a deeper understanding than you or I have as individuals. If we believe that the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is guided by the Holy Spirit into all Truth as our Saviour promised, we have to accept that the Church will very often be right and we wrong. Nevertheless, as good Protestants, we do not believe that the Church militant here in earth can ever be infallible. No individual on earth, no council or synod, is free of the taint of sin. None has a perfect vision of God. Therefore even bishops, synods and the Liturgical Commission can get things wrong and you, as a bible-believing, Spirit-inspired, Christian may in all conscience have to disagree with them. Even if that is the case, however, we have to ask ourselves whether the issue is so important that it stops us worshipping together. Jesus prayed for His followers that they might be one and schism (division within the Church) is a very serious matter and not to be undertaken lightly. It is a very serious matter to leave a church and more serious still to found a new one. If in conscience we feel forced to do either, we may not, as Christians, stop loving the people from whom we are parted.

So, our celebration on 24<sup>th</sup> August will not be a historical reconstruction, but an act of worship. It therefore requires that we come in the same Spirit as we come to any act of worship. *God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Jesus promises to be present where two or three are met together in His Name. So when we come to a service, we are coming into the presence of God. This means that we need to confess our sins (our failure to love God wholeheartedly and other people as we love ourselves) and to repent of them. *He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Thus we are made fit to come into His Presence. He taught us to pray, *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.* If we expect God to forgive us, we must forgive everyone who has wronged us. Before we come to Church, we need to be in love and charity with our neighbours. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* So we should come to Church at peace with God and with our fellow human beings. If not, we need to ask God to help us to

sort ourselves out. Coming to Holy Communion, we must expect to be nourished in the Sacrament, by Jesus, the Bread of Life. St Paul says, *Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.* It is a serious matter and there is a terrible warning for those who do not discern the Body of the Lord – which I take to mean His Body in the Bread and Wine and His Body in the fellowship of all Christian people, the Holy, Catholic Church, the *communion of the Holy Ghost*.

We ought also to expect to receive Jesus the Word of God incarnate in the Bible readings and in the sermon. It is a good thing to read the readings before coming to the service and to ponder their meaning. On this occasion the readings are Acts 5<sup>12-16</sup> and Luke 22<sup>24-30</sup>. It's easy to be critical of sermons, but it is more profitable and worthwhile to listen for what God may be saying to you through the preacher.

It's also good to think in advance about the things and people you want to pray for and the reasons you have for being thankful. I intend to read the appropriate exhortation to prepare for this service at St Michael's on the previous Sunday at the 9.30 service, as the BCP says I ought to.

So what should we make of the fact we shall be using the 1662 words? For some of you, there might be nostalgia. There's quite a bit of nostalgia for me in this – what God showed me when I was much younger than I am today taking part in prayer book worship in fellowship with churches I used to belong to and with friends and family members, some of whom are now worshipping on another shore within the communion of saints. Speaking personally, I really enjoy and profit spiritually by our monthly 1662 celebrations on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at 8.00. It's the ground whence I was digged (Isaiah 51<sup>1</sup>). I touch base and I'm made to think again about the Common Worship words I say every day and which sometimes lose their freshness in such frequent repetition.

Some of you may welcome this 1662 celebration and wonder why we don't have more of them. There is a school of thought which starts from the undeniable fact that congregation numbers began to plummet when we introduced new services from the 1960s onwards and suggests that we should never have abandoned our traditional

forms of worship and that we should reach out to the nation more effectively with the beauty and dignity of 1662 than we do with what some people consider to be the relative banality of Common Worship. On the other hand there is another school of thought which says that the problem is that we have modernised too slowly and gone nothing like far enough if we want to relate to the rapidly changing world of the twenty first century. For what it is worth, my opinion is that we have missed the point of worship and sold ourselves short if we treat people as potential customers or consumers of liturgical services. We are not offering a product for sale. We are inviting people into the presence of God. Authentic worship has its focus on God rather than on the congregation (or even the potential congregation) and inauthentic worship isn't worth bothering with. Authentic worship will attract sincere seekers after Truth, those whom God is calling.

Some of you may be wondering why I'm dusting off the old prayer books and resurrecting a way of doing things which you thought was quite correctly killed off and buried in this parish 30 odd years ago. Partly, it's because it is a one off to celebrate the specific event of 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Partly it's because we lose a lot if we consign the BCP to the museum. Common Worship is gain, but it isn't all gain. Partly it's because the BCP still stands as one of the standards of our beliefs as members of the Church of England. (We believe that the Christian faith is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, the BCP and the 39 Articles of Religion. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. The rule of prayer is the rule of faith.) That hardly seems to make sense to me if the BCP is never used and scarcely known. So, if you're one of those people who are prejudiced against the BCP, get over it and join us for this one occasion.

Some of you will never have encountered BCP services. It will be interesting to you to participate in the traditional Church of England service. 1662 has a lot in common with the Common Worship we use every Sunday. Where 1662 uses different words to say the same thing, it may make us think again about what can trip off the tongue too readily and without much thought. Where 1662 puts things in a different order or gives them a different emphasis we may wonder why and that very act of wondering may help us towards a deeper understanding of those sacred mysteries which our service books try to put into words.

A quick history lesson. In the reign of King Henry VIII, there were many people in England who thought that the Mediaeval Catholic Church had gone astray. It needed to be reformed. The Bible and the Sacraments were for all baptised people, not just the clergy and members of religious orders. Salvation was by God's grace and freely available to everyone of faith. Every human being stands naked before God, but all, through faith in Christ, may be clothed with the garments of salvation and enter into the presence of Almighty God. The reformers' programme was to make the Bible and Prayer Book available in English, to preach and teach the Gospel to all sorts and conditions of men and to invite everybody to participate fully in the Christian life of the Church. Henry's quarrel with the pope led to the English Church becoming independent and therefore able to reform itself. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer began the reformation process under Henry, but was not able to make much progress until Henry was succeeded by his son Edward VI. In 1549 he issued the first complete English Prayer Book. In 1552 he issued another more thorough-going revision. When Edward was succeeded by his sister Mary, she reintroduced the Roman rites, but Elizabeth I was a Protestant and restored Cranmer's English Prayer Book (with a few modifications) to general use. James I added prayers for the royal family (Elizabeth having been unmarried and childless). When Charles I was deposed by Parliament, the Prayer Book was abolished and it became illegal to use prayer book prayers even at home. At the Restoration of Charles II, it was decided to reintroduce the Anglican prayer book into English churches. Sadly, agreement could not be reached with everybody and a large number of ministers left the Church of England and became Congregationalists. The 1662 book is effectively a slightly modernised version of Cranmer's prayer books as updated under Elizabeth and James. With very few further revisions 1662 then remained the only legal prayer book in the Church of England until the 1960s. Since then we've had Series 1 (which largely authorised services from the prayer book as proposed in 1928 which never gained parliamentary approval), Series 2 (which kept much of the 1662 language but revised the order to simplify services and to bring them in line with C20 liturgical scholarship, recovering the *Shape of the Liturgy* as it was believed to have been in the early Church as explained by Dom Gregory Dix in a widely read book of that title) and Series 3 (which updated Series 2 and put it

into modern language, using modern texts agreed with other Christian denominations for the Creed, Gloria, etc.) In 1980, the Alternative Services Book gave us the best of Series 2 and 3 in a further updated and expanded format. In 2000 this was replaced by Common Worship, which I hope you know too well for me to have to describe it here. Officially, however, 1662 remains the standard.

Finally a note on what we shall be doing on 24<sup>th</sup> August. In the Middle Ages, mass was celebrated daily and everybody was expected to attend at least on Sundays and other major occasions (feasts of obligation), but mostly only the clergy actually took Communion. The reformers believed that all baptised people should participate fully, not just the clergy. Daily prayers were reduced to Mattins and Evensong (instead of the basically seven monastic hours) and Holy Communion was appointed for Sundays and holy days. The hope was that all baptised people would participate fully in this reduced round of services. The shape of 1549 is not dissimilar to the mediaeval mass and John Merbecke set it beautifully to music. By 1552, it was felt that there should be a more complete break with what had gone before. The service was to be said rather than sung. The communion table (which had come to be thought of as an altar) was to be removed from the east wall of the sanctuary and placed longways in the chancel, more like a supper table. The priest stood on its north (long) side, instead of facing east with his back to the congregation. What happened in practice was that most people wouldn't participate in Holy Communion every Sunday and Communion came to be celebrated only perhaps three or four times a year on special Sacrament Sundays which could attract great crowds and inspire considerable devotion. Merbecke's music was largely forgotten. William Laud (Archbishop of Canterbury under Charles I) put the communion tables back against the east wall. This left the clergy in the rather odd position of presiding on the north (short) end. When Laud's martyrdom (10<sup>th</sup> January) fell on a Sunday, we did try having the table longways in the chancel (Laud having also been Rector of Cuxton) and one Maundy Thursday we gathered round the table in that position as Cranmer intended in 1562 and said the service, using the 1662 words, pretty much as set.

On 24<sup>th</sup> August this year, we shall use the BCP as it was restored during the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries. I'm hoping we shall sing Merbecke. We shall certainly have hymns which were introduced into the Church of England only in C19. We'll follow the example of the churches which readopted the traditional coloured vestments dating back to Roman times (the vestments I normally wear on Sundays) rather than the black and white academic dress worn by Protestant clergy from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries and (in many churches) to the present day. (A lot could be said about whether the clergy should dress differently from other Christians to indicate a different roll or status and, if so, what and how!). We'll put the altar back against the east wall and I shall celebrate facing eastwards. *North end* is awkward and I don't really see why anyone persists with it these days. Many churches returned to eastward facing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the latter part of C20 many churches did what we have done and moved the altar forwards so that the president stands behind it and faces the congregation. Most people prefer seeing my face to my back and they can probably hear better. On the other hand, I sometimes wonder if facing the congregation contributes to their being downgraded to the status of an audience. I'm not talking to you when I celebrate Holy Communion. I'm leading you in talking to God!

Many of these alterations in forms of words, ritual, dress, posture, reflect different understandings of what we are doing when we celebrate Holy Communion. At one end of the scale, some people think of Holy Communion as a memorial service for Jesus. Memorial services are good. We want to remember people, to thank God for them, to learn from their examples. All that is true of Jesus. But you hold memorial services for dead people. Jesus is alive! Holy Communion is more than a memorial service. At the other end of the scale, some people interpret the words *This is my Body, this is my Blood*, so literally that they risk idolatry, worshipping the consecrated Bread and Wine, rather than Jesus. He did, however say, *This is my Body, this is my Blood*, and His words are not meaningless. Jesus is present with us, He does come to us in the Sacrament. St Paul says, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* In Holy Communion we certainly remember Jesus and all that He has done – especially the Cross. We proclaim His Death until

He comes again. The Risen Christ is present with us in the breaking of Bread. We are nourished by Him, the Bread of life. We are made whole by the great Healer. We are washed clean in His Blood. We drink from Him the Water of Life and imbibe His Holy Spirit. We receive the pledge of eternal life. It's probably unwise to try to define how Christ comes to us in the Eucharist and certainly unchristian to fall out with those who disagree with us about it. Queen Elizabeth I puts its very well. *'Twas God the word that spake it, He took the Bread and brake it; and what the word did make it; That I believe and take it.*

Given Maundy Thursday and Easter Day, I am sure that we all ought to participate in Holy Communion every Sunday. With Thomas Cranmer I think we can add other great festivals such as Christmas and Ascension and major saints days. I also think we can justify daily Eucharists on the grounds that sacrifices were offered daily to God in the Old Testament and Holy Communion is a bloodless sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and of our souls and bodies as a living sacrifice (*Take up your cross daily.*). Also daily Communion can be justified on the grounds that the early Church met daily for the breaking of bread and by the subsequent practice of by far the larger part of the Church.

My final thoughts on this and every celebration of Holy Communion come from the BCP Prayer of Thanksgiving. Roger.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

## Forthcoming Attractions 2012

June 30<sup>th</sup> 6.00: Parish Barbecue in Rectory Grounds

July 21<sup>st</sup>: 2.00 Grand Sports Day in celebration of the London Olympics – Sports Field, Bush Road

July 21<sup>st</sup>: 7.30 Concert at St John's featuring Marlowe Singers & ALMA saxophone quartets from Armenia.

August 8<sup>th</sup> 12.00: Barbecue 95, Pilgrims Rd, North Halling.

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

September 2<sup>nd</sup>: 11.00 am Bishop James presides and preaches at St John's – followed by buffet lunch.

September 29<sup>th</sup>(Michaelmas): 11.00 am HC at St Michael's preacher Canon Alan Vousden - followed by lunch in church hall, church tour @ 3.00

30<sup>th</sup> September Back to Church Sunday 9.30 & 11.00

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

October 13<sup>th</sup>: 7.30 Quiz in Church Hall.

October 27<sup>th</sup>: 2.00 Sale of Work Halling Church.

December 7<sup>th</sup>: WI District Carol Service at St Michael's.

December 8<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Minimarket Church Hall 10.00.

<b>GRAND SPORTS DAY</b> In celebration of the London Olympics <b>Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm</b>  Sports Field, Bush Road, Cuxton. Races, fun and displays for all ages Refreshments Tug of war.	<b>CONCERT AT ST JOHN'S</b> <b>Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July 7.30 pm</b>  Features the Marlowe Singers & the ALMA and ALMA JUNIOR Saxophone Quartets from Armenia.
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### Halling WI

Our "Annual" May meeting wasn't very exciting but very sociable. We sang Jerusalem with gusto, not many of us but we do sing it well. One of our birthday May birds sent her apologies, but Betty and I had our birthday buttonhole. The minutes of the April meeting were read and signed. Correspondence consisted of forthcoming District events and party invites. Kings Hill W.I. are hosting a Best of British Party at Ryarsh on Friday 6th July, a red white and blue do, to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics, Ploughman's supper "afters" and musical entertainment. The questionnaire regarding the centenary of the National Federation in 2015 was dealt with. It seems along way off, but it will be with us in no time at all. If I am still on this planet and fairly upwardly mobile, I wouldn't miss it for the world wherever they decide to have it. Our June party is the next event and who can believe we have been going as a W.I. for 45 years? This year's cream tea will take place on Saturday 6th July at Ann and Jemma Graves home at 2.30pm. Keep your red, white and blue handy as it will also be in honour of Her Majesty. The next part of the

evening was the "Annual" meeting, Margaret Sutherland, President, Ann Hayward, secretary, and Betty Head Treasurer for 30 years all agreed to continue for another year as members were reluctant to take on these offices (I don't like that word). If you are not able to find these officers you can't have a W.I. and most of us would not like to see ours close. After refreshments we discussed this year's resolution for the Annual meeting of the National Federation at the Albert Hall this coming week "Employment of more midwives". Don't think this one will need much discussion, give us more time for the Great British KNIT-IN, to try to break the world record for the most people knitting together. "I'm going to cast on before I go," says Betty. Mary Fennemore judged the Flower of the Month. Ann Graves won it with a tulip. We did have some pretty unusual plants this month. Jemma Graves won the Competition, something beginning with the letter E. with a decorated egg.

I must report about a recent district meeting some of us attended at East Malling. As one who has not been able to whip up any enthusiasm for the forthcoming Olympic Games (I am not very

sporty) it was a real eye opener and I am now very enthused. The speaker was Stephanie Holt, Kent manager for the 2012 Games, for the Kent County Council and the impact the games will be having in Kent. The Australians athletes will do their training at Tonbridge School, and Medway are hosting two African countries and a contingent from Turkey. She told us how the schools were getting involved and said even if we can't go to the games, get involved, put up your bunting, have a barbecue and get together with your neighbours. I suggest you leave your Jubilee bunting up. It will be along time before you put that up again. East Malling then organized the Mini Malling

Olympics. What fun! Shooting, Putting the Shot, Basketball and Tennis. Our Jemma won the gold for basketball. She was as tall as the basket; she only had to lean forward. Ann Hayward won the Shot Put, middle age ladies slinging a bean bag right down the room, what a laugh. I only managed the silver in the shooting but you didn't see what we were shooting at. We ended the evening with tea and CAKES. I have never seen so many and such a variety. Mr Kipling eat your heart out. Talk about a good time was had by all. East Malling, all 100 members of you, Well Done, and Thank You,

Phyllis.

St Michael's Draw: £20 Trevor Harris, £5 Lorraine Demery, £5 Iris Crew - drawn by John Bogg.

### **Hedgehog Survey in Cuxton**

I would like to thank all of those who contacted me with sightings of hedgehogs in the village. There have recently been conservation reports that the hedgehog population is rapidly declining but there has not been any real scientific evidence to substantiate this. Therefore, a scheme was devised to monitor their movements. In 1983 Pat Morris wrote an in-depth review book of research into hedgehogs, which used radio-tracking and markings to track certain individuals. This showed that males tended to roam further than females (up to 2 miles sometimes) and that the males are not territorial but even share nest sites. It was also noted that hedgehogs who "regularly visit a garden" are not one individual but can be several different ones and that when natural food is available (as opposed to those who kindly put out cat meat etc to feed them) they may not visit that same garden for a space of 2-3 weeks or more. Contrary to what you might expect only around 3% of their diet is slugs and snails so you still need to hope thrushes etc visit your garden! Those of you who have experienced hedgehog behaviour will be aware of the "grunting and snoring" sounds. So, the scheme included a comparison to see which of 3 methods was best for checking if hedgehogs are in an area. The first was from the number of road kills, but this is not really a successful way of determine the density of a population. The second was by spotlighting after dusk for 6 nights, using a million candle power lamp, and I tried this recently - as some of you householders are aware - but only saw foxes, badgers and rabbits in Cuxton. The third method was to use 1 metre long black triangular tunnels, with dye pads at each end and food in the centre. The hedgehog walks through the dye pad, onto a piece of A4 paper, leaving its tracks, eats the bait (tinned hotdogs!) and walks out the other side! The survey asked that the density of the tunnels be changed from 10 to 20 to assess which, if any, would be the best for detection. The survey was carried out in 3 phases: a Spring, Summer and Autumn session for maximum detection. The tunnels were placed within a 1km square of a countryside/urban area and needed to be at least 100 metres apart. They were pinned down and checked every day for any tracks left on the paper inside, which were replaced, as necessary, and re-baited. Our rector was kind enough to allow some tunnels to be put into his garden and the churchyard, sadly without any positive results. The Summer phase did not even show any poor church mouse tracks in the 2 churchyard tunnels!!!! The spotlighting was successful only on the very last night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> survey, when I spotted a hedgehog in the Rec. So both the road kill and spotlighting methods have been discontinued. However, I am pleased to report hedgehogs were detected by the tunnels in the Glebe, Sundridge Hill, Demelza Road and the recreation ground and it appears that, as it is easier to use only 10 tunnels (there being no difference between detection using 10 or 20 tunnels), that this is the preferred method to use. One major observation was that hedgehogs do not generally appear till after midnight. So, it seems, they might be more wary of cars and humans and wait till the sounds of human activity are reduced. It was also very noticeable that if the tunnels were in a rural area (fields and woods) there appeared to be no tracks and yet tracks were detected in urban areas regularly. If you do happen to see a hedgehog in the daytime I am afraid it is likely to be infected by lungworm, which is extremely difficult to cure. I am carrying out further surveys this year. So do please let me know if you spot any, or hear of any, in the village. You can contact me on 716334. New surveys will be carried on, outside Cuxton. So if you have friends who have seen hedgehogs perhaps you could let me know and I could survey their area. Many thanks. This is part of a national census, necessary to rescue the species from its current decline. Ian Gray.

## From the Registers

### Baptisms:

20<sup>th</sup> May  
3<sup>rd</sup> June

Lilly-Ann Negus  
Jude Frank Michael Gordon

Scholey Close  
Larkfield

### Wedding:

2<sup>nd</sup> June

Lloyd Wilson Benger & Dawn Marie Fraser

Halling

### Wedding Blessing:

20th May

David and Dawn Gates

Cuxton

### Funerals:

17<sup>th</sup> May  
18<sup>th</sup> May  
24<sup>th</sup> May  
30<sup>th</sup> May  
31<sup>st</sup> May

Rosetta Irene Jeffrey (96)  
Nellie May Blake (89)  
Albert Ronald (Ron) Wright (81)  
Winifred Josephine Powell (73)  
Allan Frederick Parker (63)

Downsland House  
formerly of Cuxton  
Poplicans Road  
Reginald Avenue  
Essex Road

### Extract From Rochester PBS Newsletter

#### **A WELL TRODDEN PATH – 350 YEARS OF THE 1662 BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER**

The Book of Common Prayer represents the return to biblical truth of the English Reformation. It evolved over five versions produced during a period of 100 tumultuous years. During this time the country briefly returned to Roman Catholicism under Queen Mary and the book was banned. The principal author, Thomas Cranmer, was burnt at the stake for heresy. Later Charles I was beheaded for treason and there followed 10 years of extreme Puritanism, when the book was banned again. Many generations have had their faith strengthened by its use and have been baptised, married and buried by its rites. It has seen an empire rise and change into a Commonwealth of Nations. It has helped to spread Anglicanism and the use of the English language across the world. You are warmly invited to turn the pages of history on “A well trodden path,” the exhibition of Prayer Books charting the remarkable history of the 1662 Book and its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over seventy Prayer Books from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day will be on display at **St Botolph's, the church in the grounds of Lullingstone Castle.**

On **Saturday 14th July** the exhibition will be open from 11am to 5pm and **Sunday 15th July** from 12 noon to 5pm; entry is free of charge.

The Archdeacon of Tonbridge, Ven. Clive Mansell, will preach on **Sunday 15th July** at the 11am BCP Holy Communion service, before the exhibition re-opens. All welcome.

#### **ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CUXTON**

St Michael & All Angels Cuxton will be marking the 350th anniversary with a BCP celebration of Holy Communion at 7.30 pm on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> August, St Bartholomew's Day. It was on that day 350 years ago that every parish church in England had to start using the new Book of Common Prayer as directed by the Act of Uniformity issued by King Charles II.

St John's Draw: £25 to Mrs Chidwick (30), £10 each to Mrs Buss (15) & Mrs Garrot (123) – drawn by Mrs Hayward.

#### **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**

**Christian Aid**

A Division of The British Council of Churches



Thank you to everybody who collected and gave money for Christian Aid Week. Our parish raised a wonderful total of **£1351.62**. As well as working all over the world, this year Christian Aid's main project was in Sierra Leone where new tools and techniques are providing a way out of poverty and bringing hope for a brighter future. Well done everyone!

Many thanks, Steve

### Celebrating the Diamond Jubilee

We had a wonderful time celebrating this event in both Cuxton and Halling. I've mentioned before the problem that those who know how to fly the flag at Cuxton can't climb the tower and that those who can climb the tower can't fly the flag, but I thought I had better have a go for the Diamond Jubilee. Well, I can climb the tower and I can sort of fly the flag. It flew all day Saturday, but blew down in the gale that night. Sunday morning it was retrieved from its undignified position draped over the tower window, but the toggle was now jammed in the pulley and sadly it couldn't be put back. However, the ringers rang a celebratory quarter peal to mark the Jubilee (despite two of them having to come home the long way round from Upper Halling because of a fallen tree and 6" water across the road). Bells really lift the spirits. Naturally we especially remembered her majesty and our country and our place in the commonwealth and the wider world in the morning service, although our formal commemoration of the Jubilee at Cuxton had been on the actual day – 6<sup>th</sup> February. Afterwards a number of us joined a lot of other people from the village for the Big Lunch and other activities in the Recreation Ground. Congratulations to the Parish Council, the Sports and Recreation Association and all who helped organise this event. The weather was disappointing but it didn't seem to dampen the spirits of those who attended and we had a great time celebrating her majesty's Jubilee.

It was lucky that Cuxton majored on the Sunday and Halling decided to celebrate mainly on the Monday. We had 60 red roses in St John's Church – one for each year of the Queen's reign – as well as decorating the church for the event in patriotic style. We had a royal crown, which children were able to wear and be photographed. On Sunday, I preached on the fact that all Christians are the sons and daughters of the King and what that means – a Father Who hears all our prayers, thankful hearts which love to share our Father's gifts, and the greatest gift of all, eternal life in Him. On Monday morning we welcomed a good congregation to our Halling Jubilee service. In the absence of "professionals", we conscripted some bell ringers, who *made a joyful noise unto the Lord*, if not a skilful one. At 12.00 we broke the union flag from the replacement flag pole and had our photographs taken to three cheers for the Queen. Then we took the flag straight down and put it back up the right way up! A street party with all kinds of entertainment followed. Congratulations to the Parish Council and all the organisers. Monday the weather was thankfully kinder than Sunday – even though we had woken up to cold and torrential rain. We had lots of visitors in church throughout the afternoon, including many to the tower. Those who made it to the top were very impressed with the views and thought it well worth the climb. I've no idea how many visitors we had, but I am well aware I was up and down those stairs for three hours. No need to go jogging tomorrow!

So a good time was had by all. Well done to all taking part in such a splendid occasion for the whole country and the commonwealth and our place in the world. Congratulations, your majesty.

Roger.

### **Nature Notes May 2012**

There has been an abundance of dandelions this spring so I have chosen:

#### *"The Dandelion"*

I am the sun's remembrance, the boy  
Who runs in hedgerow and in field and garden,  
Showing his badge, a round faced golden joy  
With tips of flame. I bear my master's pardon  
For my long greedy roots. I bring his message  
And pay his sovereign coin for my passage.

by Richard Church  
If any call me robber of the soil,  
Let him but wait on windy weather, note  
How easily, without a mortal's toil,  
I change my gold to silver treasure, float  
The fairy mintage on the air, and then  
Defy the curse of all industrious men.

Rain has fallen during the last night of April and the early morning of the new month is grey and damp. By mid day, the sun is shining and it feels pleasantly warm. I meet up with a friend and we drive to Rochester where, after some refreshment, we walk along the esplanade by the river where boats are moored and the water sparkles in the sunlight. The trees are beautiful displaying fresh green leaves and horse chestnuts are adorned with their creamy flowers. Billowing clouds drift across a blue sky. The evening remains warm. A north wind blows on 2<sup>nd</sup> and the skies are grey. Light rain is falling on 3<sup>rd</sup> when we take Murphy to Blue water. I marvel at the beauty of the trees

and the variety of greens from the dark green firs to the delicate pale green willows. The air is cold and damp and this lasts all day. In the garden, the lilac flowers are revealing their mauve petals. Winter temperatures return the next day. The sunshine returns on 7<sup>th</sup>. I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. Most of the trees are in full leaf, displaying their variety of greens. Along the grassy paths and banks, I see dove's foot cranesbill, buttercups white deadnettle, hawkweed oxeye daisies, vetch and clumps of cowslips. A fresh wind blows from the west. The next day orange tip butterflies hover over garden plants. The skies are blue and golden sunshine lights up the

garden. The 10<sup>th</sup> is a warm grey day after overnight rain. I walk with Murphy round the lake where vetch plants, some in flower, grow in profusion. Buttercups, oxeye daisies and cowslips bring their special brightness to the area. Grey clouds scud across the sky from the south west and the air is warm. The sun shines on 11<sup>th</sup>, lifting my spirits. The garden is bright with flowers and the beautiful greens of grass and leaves. I walk to the village and along the way I see alexanders, garlic mustard, dandelions and daisies. White clouds scud across the sky. The evening brings a strong breeze and clear skies. A squirrel feeds on the nuts and hangs upside down in order to reach the feast. On 13<sup>th</sup>, I walk beneath billowing clouds in a sunlit blue sky at Bluewater with Murphy, where trees are in full Spring leaf, May blossom brightens the cliff faces and flowers of vetch, buttercups, oxeye daisies, hawks beard and cowslips adorn the grassy paths. Starlings fly up from nearby trees and wend their way across the rippling lake. The afternoon remains bright with cloudless skies. The early morning blue sky of 14<sup>th</sup> becomes covered with high grey cloud. We drive to Cobtree Manor Park and for a while, on our way, there is blue sky and sunshine. Hawthorns are adorned with beautiful creamy blossoms and there are so many of them along the route while oxeye daisies, gorse and broom bedeck the roadside verges. In the park, when grey clouds have returned, cut leaved cranesbill, ground ivy and speedwell flowers peep out from among the grass stems and the fresh green leaves bring their Spring freshness. Rain falls on 15<sup>th</sup>. The next two days are quite cool with high grey cloud covering the sky. The jay has begun visiting the garden. On 18<sup>th</sup> when I walk at Bluewater with Murphy, I gaze at the magnificent trees in their Spring greens and the wealth of flowers has multiplied. Buttercups, oxeye daisies, vetch, dandelions, speedwell, and viper's bugloss bloom. A blackbird flies out of a hedge ahead of us and disappears

towards the rippling lake. The pale sun shines into the afternoon then evening skies become grey. The 21<sup>st</sup> is another grey day when, while at Bluewater, I watch a kestrel hovering over the bank and later, a heron flying across the lake. Moorhens glide on the water accompanied by their chicks and I can hear warblers in the reeds. We go to the lake the following day. The grey clouds disperse to reveal blue sky and warm sunshine. As we walk I'm aware of the variety of vetch plants, buttercups speedwell, and cow parsley, broom, cut leaved cranesbill, daisies, hawkweed and viper's bugloss. Coots and moorhens glide on the water. There is a fresh breeze and I enjoy the warmth of the sun. In the afternoon, while walking along the pavement, I see three slow worms wriggling in front of me. Two large black crows come to the garden in the early evening. Temperatures reached 26C the next day. In the evening I listen to the melodious song of a blackbird. A dove and a pigeon have been making regular visits to the garden. They have become inseparable friends. The 24<sup>th</sup> becomes very hot again. Fresh easterly winds blow on 25<sup>th</sup> relieving the humidity. The jay comes to the garden and the pigeon and the dove make several visits. A young turtle dove visits the garden on 26<sup>th</sup>. The days are beautiful and warm but accompanied by a welcome breeze. Storm clouds gather in the afternoon of 28<sup>th</sup>. Then thunder roars in the sky and heavy rain falls. It eventually clears to give a fine, calm evening. The morning of 29<sup>th</sup> is warm with blue skies and bright sunshine. Billowing clouds begin to drift across the sky from the south east. The afternoon becomes cool as grey clouds envelop the sky. Pale sunshine lights up the morning skies of 31<sup>st</sup>. I look up to see a greenfinch calling loudly as it perches on the TV aerial. I work in the garden potting up plants. The afternoon skies become grey but it remains warm. Another month comes to its close.

Elizabeth Summers.

### Jubilee Coda

On Wednesday morning the BBC announced that the four day celebration was over, but they didn't realise that in Cuxton and Halling we invite everybody to lunch in the church hall every first Wednesday of the month at 12.00. The 6<sup>th</sup> June lunch was special. First of all, we had to wait a little longer than usual because the lady who prepares the food had another engagement at Gillingham. Some of us wondered whether we were going to be fed and what would happen to us if we were not. Contingency plans were already being effected when dinner hove into view. The unneeded extra comestibles were then frozen for the tea in the Jubilee Hall on the second Sunday.

In addition to our usual fare Christine had prepared for us a jubilee cake, iced with the union flag, plus a selection of red, white and blue cup cakes. At the cutting of the cake we sang the National Anthem – two verses, plus Rule Britannia, Land of Hope and Glory and as much of There'll Always Be an England as we could remember. So yet another good time was had by all.

All this has set me wondering about the contrast in my feelings regarding the different levels of government in this country? I'm feeling very warm and patriotic around the Jubilee celebration - the very opposite to what I feel about local government. But, it occurs to me that our national and our local constitutions are in fact opposites.

At a national level we have an unelected head of state who is above politics and dedicated to our country and deservedly respected by most people, but we are governed by the MPs we elect and who are ultimately accountable to us. This balance seems to work very well, combining the blessings of monarchy with the blessings of democracy. I am very proud to be British and English.

In contrast, at the level of local government, we elect people whom we respect and believe to be dedicated to our community to serve as members of local authorities (our councillors), where they fulfil a principally formal and

ceremonial function, but we are governed by unelected council officers who are beneath politics and effectively accountable to no-one. Hence the poor turnout at local elections and the petty tyranny so often exercised by local government.

I suppose I've acquired something of a reputation for standing up for the ordinary guy against bureaucratic bullies, but I was surprised how many people came up to me at Jubilee events in Cuxton and Halling to complain about bureaucracy, all the rules and regulations which now restrict our lives, and the contrast between the rapidity with which they can send out a man with a clip board to stop you or me doing what we want to do with our own property and their slowness in sending a man with a tool kit to do a job which actually needs doing for the public good. I guess a lot of patriotic English men and women were feeling the same as I was. The most poignant was the man who told me that all the regulations have taken all the fun out of his job. Human beings are not robots to live out our lives in accordance with a program written for us by bureaucrats. We are meant to be free to do what we want and to want to be good. Roger.



### Lovely Lolly

That's Lolly on the left, when she was a tiny puppy. I'm sorry that's the best Master can do for the picture because Lolly is gorgeous. She's the puppy Master's niece Denise has just acquired. She's only a few months old and she came over to see us. I was so excited. She's mainly black with a white front. She's a cross collie labrador. Some of you remember my predecessor Bobby. He was a cross collie labrador too, but he didn't have much white on him and Lolly looks as if she will be a bigger dog when she's fully grown.



What fun we had when she came over to be introduced to us! She ran around the room and jumped up and over everything. I followed her as fast as I could, but I'm ten years older and five times heavier! She nipped my ears! Master says I can't complain because when I was Lolly's age I used to nip the ears of Gyp, Bobby's brother, who was quite an old dog by then and didn't like it one bit!

Denise says that Lolly is already better trained than I am because she obeys commands like *Sit* and *Lie down*. Master says that it is just coincidence that sometimes she happens to sit or lie when Denise happens to give the command. As Lolly never stops moving, it is hard to say who is right about this. I'm sure she will soon get Denise and Peter trained up the way she wants them.

Some of you will probably meet her in due course. I'm hoping she'll come to see us again and, very likely, we'll both get taken for walks in the local woods.

We've had some good walks lately, though I'm rather in disgrace at the moment for running on too far ahead. In fact I got so far ahead that I had to go back and look for him. He says I shan't be let off my lead in future, but I don't suppose he'll stick to it. It's more fun for both of us when we're not linked together by a length of leather. The way I pull it's hard for him to stay upright when it's slippery underfoot and he won't wait while I check out the most interesting smells.

I don't think I'm going to get a walk today. It's been so wet lately and yesterday I was soaked to the skin. You could see the pink through the white fur. He went for a run early on round by the paper shop because the paper boy doesn't come as early as Master would like in school holidays. In the unlikely event that it dries up sufficiently he's going to cut the grass this afternoon. If it doesn't dry up, he's still probably not going to take me out. I tell him I don't mind getting wet. He says he knows that's true but it's also true that I don't like being wet. I don't, but I've found that the best thing to do when I'm wet and cold is to climb on to his lap. The damp soaks into his clothes and his body heat warms me up nicely. I'm not sure he's so keen on this, but he generally lets me do what I want to do. He reckons everybody else tells him what to do and there ought to be at least one free agent living in the Rectory.

Well I've nearly got to the end of my column. Master's got to stick on the last page, e mail all this to the printers and hang out the washing in the boiler. I wonder what I shall have to tell you next month if Master can find me any space?

Max, the Rectory Spaniel.

### Don't Get Fined Because Your Information is Out of Date

Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture, Medway Council, very kindly supplied an article on tree preservation orders for the May edition of the *Cuxton Noticeboard*. I was concerned that one thing he said was incomplete to the point of possibly being misleading and, if acted on as it stands, might lead to parishioners being prosecuted by Medway Council. So I asked Neil Curtis to print a clarification in a subsequent issue, but Neil didn't feel he could comply with my request for several reasons.

The first is that new regulations came into force 6<sup>th</sup> April this year and Neil thought it was obvious that Mr Cooper's article in May referred to the situation under the old regulations which applied until April 5<sup>th</sup>. This wasn't obvious to me. Maybe I'm thick! But in case anyone else, like me, thought that Mr Cooper was referring to the law as it now stands, I suggested it would still be a good idea to give parishioners an up to date clarification.

However, Neil points out that the law is very complex and, whereas I was happy to rely on the government booklet *Protected Trees A guide to tree preservation procedures* (obtainable from Department for Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU, Telephone: 030 3444 0000) which Medway Council sent me by e mail, Neil says we ought to read all the relevant legislation and accompanying literature and/or consult a solicitor before coming to a final view as to what the legislation is meant to mean and that, therefore, I ought not to presume to advise you to act on the information in the booklet. I'm printing the relevant sections below. They seem clear enough to me, but by all means consult a solicitor if you can afford one – another expense for householders unfortunate to have a preserved tree in their gardens.

Finally and understandably, Neil says he doesn't want to involve the *Noticeboard* in the long-standing argument between Medway officers and me in which he fears I might have defamed some of them. However, it is precisely because of my bitter experience with the TPO on the Rectory grounds that I know that Medway officers cannot be trusted to act impartially, honestly, democratically or even lawfully. (It is not defamation to speak the truth!) Just because of this, I think anyone dealing with Medway Council needs to be very careful. I would like parishioners to be fully informed with all the most up to date and reliable information. Given what people have told me about their discussions with officers, I would also suggest that you record any meetings you have with Medway officers. While official complaints seldom get anywhere, no matter how strong the evidence against a council officer, you can have the satisfaction of posting the clip on the internet and you have evidence you could bring to court if it came to it. If it is not possible to record conversations, then insist on doing business with council officers ONLY in writing.

To put things simply (Consult a solicitor if you don't trust me.) Mr Cooper is quite right that you don't need the council's permission to cut down a dead or dangerous tree even with a TPO on it. What he does not tell you, however, is that since 6<sup>th</sup> April this year you must inform the council if you do so and you must plant a replacement.

Now I wonder why the council is so unwilling to give you up to date information? Three possible reasons occur to me.

- 1) Given the recent history of parking regulation, a cynic might think that fines are such a useful source of revenue to the council or the government, that they like ordinary people to be in a state of confusion about their legal obligations.
- 2) Public support generally for TPOs might be much diminished if the general public realised how easy it is for TPOs to be imposed on perfectly ordinary trees in perfectly ordinary gardens and that perfectly ordinary people can then find themselves facing a great deal of trouble and expense.
- 3) Medway officers find it easier to deal with members of the public who don't really understand their rights and responsibilities.

Roger.

### **Protected trees A guide to tree preservation procedures**

#### **13. Do I always need the local planning authority's permission to work on a tree covered by a tree preservation order?**

Yes, except for: ....

2) cutting down or pruning a tree:

which presents an urgent and serious safety risk – however you must give written notice (by letter or email) of the proposed work to the local planning authority as soon as practicable after the work becomes necessary;

which is dead – however you must give at least five working days written notice (by letter or email) of the proposed work to the local planning authority;

#### **15. When will I have to plant a replacement tree?**

You will have to replant:

1) if you cut down or destroy a protected tree:

• in breach of a tree preservation order, or because the tree is dead or dangerous;