

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
31 st May Trinity Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 6 vv 1-8 p690 Romans 8 vv 12-17 p1134 John 3 vv 1-17 p1065	
7 th June Trinity 1	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Romans 9 vv 1-13 p1135 Luke 7 vv 11-17 p1035	
	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Genesis 3 vv 1-15 p5 II Corinthians 4 v13 – 5v1 p1160 Mark 3 vv 20-35 p1005	
14 th June Trinity 2	11.00 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 17 vv 22-24 p844 II Corinthians 5 vv 6-17 p1160 Mark 4 vv 26-34 p1006	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Jeremiah 7 vv 1-16 p764 Romans 9 vv 14-26 p1136	
21 st June Trinity 3 Poverty Sunday	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Job 38 vv 1-11 p538 II Corinthians 6 vv 1-13 p1161 Mark 4 vv 35-41 p1006	
Wednesday 24 th June Nativity of S John the Baptist	7.30 Holy Communion & Confirmation (Bishop Michael)	tba	
28 th June Trinity 4	11.00 Holy Communion	Lamentations 3 vv 22-33 p826 II Corinthians 8 vv 1-24 p1162 Mark 5 vv 21-43 p1007	
5 th July Trinity 5	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Judges 14 vv 1-20 p257 Luke 18 vv 1-14 p1052	
	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Ezekiel 2 vv 1-5 p831 II Corinthians 12 vv 1-10 p1165 Mark 6 vv 1-13 p1008	
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
31 st May Trinity Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Isaiah 6 vv 1-8 p690 John 3 vv 1-17 p1065	
7 th June Trinity 1	9.30 Family Communion & Holy Baptism	Genesis 3 vv 1-15 p5 Mark 3 vv 20-35 p1005	
14 th June Trinity 2	9.30 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 17 vv 22-24 p844 II Corinthians 5 vv 6-17 p1160 Mark 4 vv 26-34 p1006	
21 st June Trinity 3 Poverty Sunday	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP	
	9.30 Holy Communion	Job 38 vv 1-11 p538 II Corinthians 6 vv 1-13 p1161 Mark 4 vv 35-41 p1006	
28 th June Trinity 4	9.30 Holy Communion	Lamentations 3 vv 22-33 p826 II Corinthians 8 vv 1-24 p1162 Mark 5 vv 21-43 p1007	
5 th July Trinity 5	9.30 Family Communion & Holy Baptism	Ezekiel 2 vv 1-5 p831 II Corinthians 12 vv 1-10 p1165 Mark 6 vv 1-13 p1008	
Holy Communion Wednesdays at St Michael's 9.30 am		Holy Communion Thursdays at St John's 9.30 am	
3 rd June	I Peter 1 vv 18-25 Mark 12 vv 18-27	4 th June Corpus Christi	I Corinthians 11 vv 23-26 John 6 vv 51-58
10 th June	II Corinthians 3 vv 4-11 Matthew 5 vv 17-19	11 th June S Barnabas	Acts 11 vv 19-30 John 15 vv 12-17
17 th June	II Corinthians 9 vv 6-11 Matthew 6 vv 1-18	18 th June	II Corinthians 11 vv 1-11 Matthew 6 vv 7-15
24 th June Nativity of S John the Baptist	Galatians 3 vv 23-29 Luke 1 vv 57-80	25 th June	Genesis 16 vv 1-16 Matthew 7 vv 21-29

Copy Date for July is June 12th 8.30 am Rectory

Sir Peter Medawar: Only humans find their way by a light that illuminates more than the patch of ground they stand on.

William Inge: Rationalism tries to find a place for God in its picture of the world. But God...cannot be fitted into a diagram. He is rather the canvas on which the picture is painted, or the frame in which it is set.



Anti-Wrinkle Formula

There seem to be plenty of advertisements on the television for anti-wrinkle cream. I don't know if any of them work. I haven't tried them. Thinking back a few years, however, to when I was in the first year at junior school, I remember our teacher telling us that our faces would become lined as we got older, but it was up to us whether we developed laughter lines or frown lines. In other words, we should get into the habit of smiling. Somehow smiling actually makes us happier as well as reflecting the joy which is already inside us and, of course, our smiling faces make other people happier. We all feel better if, walking down the street, we see a lot of other people looking happy. Even when we are sad with good reason, a kind smile from another person can make us feel better. If we can manage a smile when we are not very happy ourselves, maybe we can cheer up our friends and family.

What is the secret of happiness? A good start is to be thankful. We live in a wonderful world, a beautiful world. Most of us have more than we need to eat and drink, nice homes and decent clothes to wear. Many of us have kind families and good friends. If we enjoy good health, we may be thankful for it. Some of us, of course, may not enjoy good health. Some of us may be lonely. Even in Cuxton and Halling, there are people who are not well fed, well clothed or well housed. Even so, there seems to be no direct correlation between how well off we are and how happy we feel. It seems to be much more a matter of our attitude to life. Are we thankful for what we have? Or, if we were honest, would nothing satisfy us?

Some people might be surprised that I am encouraging you all to smile and to be happy. People think that the Christian religion is all about giving up the sort of things you might enjoy in the hope of escaping hell and entering heaven. Maybe some religious peoples are like that.

Some pleasures are in fact sinful. That is not because God is some petty tyrant who wants to stop people enjoying themselves. Sins (even if they are pleasurable in the short term) in the long

term are destructive of human joy. When we stop and think logically, it is only too obvious that everybody would be happier if we all kept the commandments of God.

It is also true that some things which are not sinful in themselves will undermine us if we turn them into idols. My grandmother used to distinguish between eating to live and living to eat. It would be just as true of working, shopping, drinking, playing sport, getting fit, dieting, studying, music, art, hobbies, TV, reading. Do we do these things in order to live? Or do we live in order to work, shop, get fit, get thin, pass exams and pass the time? Then what would we do, when we'd done all these things? Someone once told me that having given up living in town and an office job and having moved onto a smallholding in the countryside and working to become self-sufficient, he had got very fit. Fit for what he didn't know!

Sins, even if pleasurable, are destructive. There are plenty of ordinary things in life which we receive with thankful hearts, but they are not the reason for living. They cannot in themselves satisfy us.

If we thank God, for all the good things we have, that makes us feel good. We smile a lot because we are happy. If we acknowledge that everything we have comes from God, we don't feel the need to cling on to it. Our life doesn't depend on our possessions, our status or our appearance, our wealth or even our health. Our life depends on God. Once we acknowledge that, we are free to be generous. *Freely ye have received. Freely give.* Giving makes us feel good because it is better to give than to receive. Our generosity makes things better for people who might be less blessed than we are in some ways. Very likely we are less blessed than they are in other ways and, if we are generous enough to allow them to share their blessings with us, they too will enjoy the further blessedness of giving.

Finally is the reflection that all the joys of this life are but a foretaste of the joy which is to come if we love Jesus. So, in the words of the old song, *Smile, smile, smile.* Roger.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

12 th April	Myles Brodie Graves	Gillingham
2 nd May	Leanne Elizabeth Tapson	Gillingham
3 rd May	Oliver David Goodwin	High Street
3 rd May	Katie Ann Goodwin	High Street

Wedding:

11 th April	David Michael Christopher Odds & Keely Amanda Davis	Cuxton
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Funerals:

28 th April	Lynne Michelle Tolley (60)	Strood
29 th April	Roger Henry Ebdon (64)	High Street
30 th April	Susan Lomax	Bush Road

We remember Sue Lomax's sterling work as parish treasurer for a number of years and her friendship with gratitude and affection.

Tricia Vousden RIP

Parishioners were sorry to learn of the death of Tricia, wife of Canon Alan Vousden, formerly Rector of Cuxton and Halling. Tricia made many friends in the parish and will be much missed. Our prayers are with Alan and their family.

Rev'd Ronald Smith RIP

Parishioners were also sorry to learn of the death of Ron Smith. Ron was brought up in Halling and was of great assistance to the vicar, the Rev'd Bartley Trimble. Ron kept the parish registers (much more neatly than anyone before or since). Subsequently, Ron was ordained himself and his last parish before retiring was St Luke's Bromley Common.

Thanks

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who came to say goodbye when I came home to Halling from hospital before moving the same day to a care home in Dorset. Thank you also for the cards and gifts and your best wishes. As most of you know, I am moving to Dorset to be nearer to my daughter and her family. Lily Hesketh.

Three Good Stories

A young man asked his father for driving lessons for his 17th birthday present. The old man said it would help his case if his grades at school improved, if he had his hair cut and if he read the Bible more. When his school grades improved, he went back to his father who pointed out that the boy still hadn't had a haircut.

"No," came the reply, "But, when I read the Bible I noticed that great men like Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist all had long hair."

"Yes," replied the father, "And they walked everywhere, too!"

A police car pulled over a Morris Minor crawling along the A12. "Why are you going so slowly?" he asked the old lady at the wheel.

"Look," she said, "the sign reads 12."

"No," he replied, "that's the road number. You can do 60 mph, if you like."

Just then he noticed another old lady in the passenger seat looking very frightened. "We've just come off the A132," she murmured breathlessly.

And one for those still in school.

Mother: Why did you fail your SATS this year?

Son: Absence, Mum.

Mother: You mean you weren't there to take the test?

Son: No, the boy who usually sits next to me was absent.



All donations are gratefully received, but stock levels of the following long-life items are particularly low at the moment:

- Dried/powdered Milk
- Fruit juice (UHT long life)
- 'Low sugar' squash
- Instant mash potatoes
- Sugar (500g & 1kg)
- Coffee (instant)
- Tinned & packet custards & desserts

- Spreads (sweet or savoury)
- Food suitable for those that only have a kettle
- Toiletries and Deodorants
- Washing powder (small)
- Washing-up liquid
- Cleaning products

Thank you - your support really makes a difference
info@medway.foodbank.org.uk

Diocesan Day

On 19th July 1pm -7pm we are holding the Big Diocesan Day out at Leybourne Castle. This is a day for all members of the Diocesan family of churches and will have something for all ages. The Dean of Jerusalem, the Very Rev. Canon Hosam Elias Naoum, will be one of our Key note speakers and we are delighted that Dr Rachel Jordan the National Mission and Evangelism Advisor to the Church of England will also be with us. They will be supported by a variety of speakers on issues such as healing, spirituality, discipleship and world affairs. Various workshops will be held based around learning new skills, current issues and taster sessions based on 'try it and see what you can do' themes.

As part of the wide range of activities and sessions taking place during the day there will be age specific activities for children & young people for the 0-18's. These activities include story telling, circus skills workshop, music workshop, holiday club, Godly Play, craft, rock traversing, BMX, survival skills and inflatable fun. These activities will be run and supervised by qualified adults however parents will need to remain with and supervise their children.

There will also be a battle of the choirs event, a Beer Tent for the soon to be famous Rochester Beer and hymns event, a *More tea Vicar tea* session where you can take tea with famous clergy or even treat your own. There will be a BBQ and opportunity to picnic and the event will be summed up in an intergenerational act of worship. Amidst all the fun there will be space in the church for quiet reflection and prayer

It is the Bishop's hope that as many people from the Diocese as possible will come along to this event. Booking is very simple. Either ring Sarah Cabella 01634 560024 or e mail sarah.cabella@rochester.anglican.org. You can either book in as a church giving approximate numbers of adults and children or people can book in as individuals. We want to make this event accessible to as many people as possible. So car parking will be free but entry will be by donation for which we suggest £1 per person.

Jean Kerr - Director of Mission and Community Engagement.

DEANERY QUIET DAY AT AYLESFORD PRIORY - SATURDAY 6TH JUNE 2015: 10am – 4.30pm

This year the day will be led by The Revd Callan Slipper, an Anglican priest, who lives in a community of the Focolare Movement, an international project to foster Christian unity. There is no charge for the day, only donations for teas/coffees. Bring your own packed lunch. We shall be using the St Therese Room.

To book a place please contact the Revd David Green by phone (**01634 719052**) or by email:

revdavidgreen@blueyonder.co.uk David will get back to you confirming a place. If by phone, please leave a message on the answerphone if he does not pick up.

Forthcoming Attractions

June 24th (Nativity of St John the Baptist) 7.30 pm: Holy Communion & Confirmation at St John's.

July 11th: from 6.00 pm *St Benedict's Day Barbecue in Rectory Grounds.

July 16th: 7.00 for 7.30 pm at St Michael's Prayer and Praise for Foodbank/CAP.

September 19th: 7.30 pm Christian Aid Quiz in Cuxton Church Hall.

September 26th: Musical Evening in Church Hall

September 29th: 7.30 pm Patronal Festival Eucharist at St Michael's, preacher the Archdeacon.

October 4th: Harvest Festival. Harvest Supper to follow evening service at venue to be announced.

December 12th: 10.00 Christmas Coffee Morning in Church Hall.

December 16th: 12.00 Christmas Parish Lunch in Church Hall.

*The monks at Halling were Benedictine. As we are celebrating their founder's day, this counts as a religious occasion and is exempt from the strictures of the Licensing Act. We shall therefore be able to have music for the first time since 2009.



Halling WI

Our April meeting proved to be a bit more lively than our March one. I am not really into all things Supernatural, but I did want to know what I might be coming back as and not if I had been here before. Our April speaker was funny (peculiar, not ha ha). Mr McRory came to talk to us about Weird Wonderful and Quirky people of Kent. I told him he wouldn't meet anyone more weird wonderful or quirky than the people he was about to talk to. He started by telling us about his new book (not written yet, but it has a title "War, Women, and Weather of Kent"). I could write three books with those titles. His will be a very long read. His first story was about a Doctor who lived and worked in Tonbridge, an atheist, who befriended and took into her home alcoholics, druggies and baddies in general to help them get back on the straight and narrow. She was loved by all of her patients and in my opinion she wasn't an atheist. Surprisingly, his next weird person was the Red Dean Dr Hewlett Johnson of Canterbury Cathedral. The funniest story that he told us was when he went to meet the last Powell-Cotton who owned the Powell Cotton Museum at Birchington. This museum is full of stuffed wild animals that the Powell Cotton family shot on their big game hunts many years ago. Mr McRory went to see this old man, who was well into his 80s. On entering the darkened room, the old boy was slumped in his armchair. Mr McRory's first thoughts were, He's stuffed. He went on to tell us about the very important collection of dried wild animal skins kept in drawers at the museum and used by scientists from all over the world. It is a good place for a visit if you have never been. I

could have added a few more better known characters to his talk, but he was good to listen too.

He judged the competitions before he left. Flower of the Month was won by Sylvia with a single Magnolia flower, untouched by the frost. Our other competition, something, peculiar to Kent, was well won by Betty. She had made a Kent Lent Pie albeit without the currants. Her family don't like them. I must admit I could have eaten a slice of it, just like my mum used to make many years ago.

Well we went on to our business after our tea and biscuits and we had lots, especially correspondence. Bulb forms for 2016 are still coming out. Parish Councils' Open Afternoon - Cakes please. Scarecrows at Lullingstone Castle, 10-30am – 6.00 pm, open to all (till 1st July). District Conference Ryarsh July 10th speaker and demonstration, Kent Fine Foods, should be good, (not open to all). Lastly Visit to Harrogate 3rd-6th September, £380 Dare I put my name down? It will be very enjoyable but a lot of walking. Jemma gave a good report of the recent Annual meeting held at Tunbridge Wells. Seems that the two speakers lived up to their reputations, especially Mandy Hickson the first lady pilot to fly a Tornado aeroplane in a war zone. With some of our girls desperate to learn how to crochet, I showed them some of my blankets and shawls which I had made since our last meeting. My mum taught me how to crochet when I was 11 yrs old. It's easy when you know how. Of course I will teach you. Come along to see me during the next month or two when I can't get to see you. Please don't bring a hook. I have got a box full. Phyllis.

St Michael's Draw: £10 each to Mrs Harris & Mrs Pitt, £5 each to Mrs Morren & Mrs Jones – drawn by Master Joyce.

St John's Draw: £5 each to Mrs Chidwick (18), Mrs Catchpole (79), Mrs Mattingly (65) & Mrs Fallows (184) – drawn by Mrs Baker.

“The church's core practice is her common worship, which unites acts of prayer, praise and thanksgiving, confession of sins, preaching, and sacramental celebration around the public reading of Scripture. Through this regular practice of communicating faith, the Spirit generates, nourishes, strengthens, and purifies faith, incorporates the faithful into the fellowship of Christ's resurrection life, and makes available to them, individually and collectively, the spiritual benefits of their redemption. Common worship is the first practical obedience of faith and, moreover, the archetype or generating pattern of all obedient action, of every 'good work'.” Thomas Cranmer's thinking explained by Joan Lockwood O' Donovan in the *Expository Times* May 2015.

Silver Jubilee

John Bogg reminds me that at the Scoutana 1995 I mentioned to him that we needed a new organist at St Michael's, Maureen Harrison having just tendered her resignation. John kindly undertook to perform the duties of organist and choirmaster on a temporary basis and everybody is delighted that he is still with us twenty five years later! The anniversary will be marked at a special evening service and reception on Sunday 5th July. Please make a note in your diaries. Roger.

CUXTON'S BIG LUNCH.

ON JUNE 7th THE PARISH CHURCH AND CUXTON COMMUNITY CHURCH FRESH EXPRESSIONS GROUP WILL BE HOLDING A TOMBOLA STALL AND CHILDREN'S LUCKY DIP. We would be very pleased to receive donations for this stall, unwanted presents, mistaken purchases, intentional purchases from e.g. Pound store, anything suitable for a tombola or lucky dip. The Big Lunch is a good opportunity for us to promote our faith at a large village gathering. Donations to Buffy Maisey (727126) or Roger please, and/or join us on the day.

St Benedict's Day Barbecue

11th July 2015 6.00pm

Cuxton Rectory £7.00

Music by

Tuning Fluid

Ukulele Band

NATURE NOTES APRIL 2015

"The Cry of the Children"

By E B Browning

The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing in the shadows,
The young flowers are blowing towards the west
Go out children, from the mine and from the city
Sing out children, as the little thrushes do,
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow cowslips pretty
Laugh aloud to feel your fingers let them through.

The 1st of the month is bright and sunny but with a strong wind blowing. The afternoon becomes cloudy. Rain falls during the night but brightness returns in the morning. I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. A pair of mallards and two magnificent swans glide on the water which is rippling in a light north west wind. The early morning of the 3rd is grey

but eventually the sun shines with warmth. At mid-day, I listen to the beautiful song of a blackbird. Later in the day the sky becomes overcast with grey clouds driven from the west by a light wind. Rain falls in the evening. The 4th is overcast when I watch a pair of swans fly over the lake at Bluewater. I watch a mallard duck which is head first in the water while its partner

looks on. The sunshine is beautiful on the 5th as I walk to church and the fine weather lasts all day. The 7th is another beautiful day when at the lake I see glorious pink blossom in the car park. Blackthorn flowers are blooming and graceful weeping willows have burst into leaf. The water gleams in the sunlight. The hawthorn hedges are also bursting into leaf. In the afternoon, I watch bees hovering over the rosemary plants. In the afternoon of the 8th, I walk across the fields to Mays Wood. On the church path I see white violets then mauve and elder flowers in tight bud. In the field, dandelions, golden buttercups and red and white dead nettle bloom. In the wood, celandines and delicate wood anemones raise their heads to the sky while speedwell appears among the grasses in the field. The morning air of the 9th is damp and fog hangs over the river. Eventually the sun shines. In the garden a brimstone then a peacock butterfly hover over the flowers on the patio. I hear the calls of a chiff chaff and a woodpecker. The next day, dunnocks and great tits are gathering nesting material which includes some of Murphy's fur which I put in the hedge after grooming him. After some rain on 11th, Sunday is sunny and warm. Our front lawn and parts of the churchyard are beautiful with pale yellow primroses. A fresh wind blows. In the afternoon two jackdaws come to investigate the garden.

The 14th is a beautiful day of warm sunshine and blue skies. I walk up the path to Church Fields where golden buttercups and creamy blackthorn flowers bloom. I walk through Mays Wood where violets, wood spurge, wood anemones, celandines and some bluebells bloom. Trees have burst into leaf plus a sweet chestnut sapling and the leaves hang delicately like butterflies' wings newly emerged from their chrysalises. Ramson plants and dog's mercury grow on

the woodland floor. Squirrels race through dead leaves and up into the trees. I sit on a log among the bluebells in Wingate Wood. Soon the carpets of flowers will spill their sweet perfume into the air. There is a change in the weather on 16th for cold winds blow as I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. For several days, a cold easterly wind blows but there is sunshine to cheer the days. Hedgerows and trees burst into leaf bringing the fresh green of Spring which is so beautiful. A jay comes into the garden on 22nd, soon to be joined by two robins, feral pigeons and a magpie. The next day at Bluewater, wild cherry blossom brightens the banks and blackthorns adorn the chalky slopes. Broom, cut-leaved cranesbill and buttercups brighten the path along my way. The evening and night skies are clear with a crescent moon shining. The 24th is warmer for the winds is from the west. Blue skies are brushed with white cloud and birdsong, including a chiff chaff's call fills the air. After two days of inclement weather, the sun shines again but northerly winds remind us that winter hasn't completely lost its grip. The following day, I see an orange tip butterfly perched on some nettles. There remains a chill in the night air. Skies are grey all day on 29th. The final day of the month is fine and sunny but still the cold wind persists. I walk to the village, noticing the fresh green leaves on trees, shrubs and hedgerows. A clump of garlic mustard takes my eye and birdsong fills the air. In the evening, I enjoy, from the kitchen window, the sun lighting up the oilseed rape flowers on the other side of the river. The sky in the background is adorned with grey, salmon pink clouds and patches of blue sky. The trees on the embankment look beautiful. The sun sets and the light begins to fade; a bright moon shines. Elizabeth Summers.

Trinity Sunday

Isaiah 6 vv 1-8, Romans 8 vv 12-17, John 3 vv 1-17

I promised you a sermon on *αναγωγή* anagogy. It is an ugly word with a beautiful meaning. Anagogy is the process of God leading us up into Himself. In one sense you can say quite a lot about God. Look at the wonders of the Universe. They are the creation of God and they tell us something about the wonder of their Creator. Use your own mind. Contemplate the mystery of God. Meditate prayerfully and thoughtfully. You learn something of the mystery of God. Read the works of other people – spiritual guides and philosophers, including non-Christians because God has made Himself known to sincere seekers after the truth in many different ways. Read the Bible, that collection of uniquely inspired books through which God has made Himself known to Jews, Christians and the world. Experience God in private prayer. Experience Him in public worship Experience Him in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and the other Sacraments. In a sense we can know quite a bit about God both in terms of head knowledge, the facts we could enumerate, and of heart knowledge, that personal knowledge we have of God as we might have of another human being as Father, friend, even lover. Today is Trinity Sunday. God the Father is revealed, He is apparent both in nature and revelation. Supremely He makes Himself known through God the Son – Jesus, both the second person of the Holy Trinity and the child of Mary – and the Holy Spirit, God with us, God within us

and God among us. With Jesus we know God as Abba, Father, because God's Spirit, the Spirit of the Risen Christ resides in our hearts.

Yet, in another sense, we do not really know God at all. Everything we think we know of God is bound to be inadequate. We think we have grasped something of the truth, but then we realise. God is infinitely more. He is the Creator of the Universe but He is infinitely more than that. He is the One we talk to in prayer and He is infinitely more than that. He is present with us in public worship but He is infinitely more than that. He is with us in the pages of the Bible and He is infinitely more than that. Now this is where it gets hard. What we know of God in Jesus falls so far short of the reality that the most profound spiritual guides say that it is as if we knew nothing. Likewise, what the Holy Spirit reveals to us is such a small portion of the immensity of God that is as if we knew nothing. We rightly think of God as Father, Judge, Creator, as good, just, merciful, yet these words are such a pale reflection of God's light, a candle lit from the sun, that their light is totally swallowed up in His brilliance. If God's worth is infinite, our worship is insignificant. Human words, even good words, reflect the limitations of our thought. Our thoughts are so limited with regard to God, that our words must be wrong, that they are as nothing.

This is the hard part, but there is relief – anagogy . God is drawing us onwards and upwards. He is drawing us up into Himself. The initiative is His. The power is His. It is by His grace that we are saved. As we are drawn into Him, it becomes increasingly clear that God is in everything and everything is in Him. He truly is Father, Judge, Creator, good, just, merciful. He epitomises these things. He epitomises everything. All things find their fulfilment in Him. Which brings us to the mystery of the Word made flesh. In Jesus the divine nature and human nature are united in one person. Humanity is caught up into Deity. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we are redeemed; we are saved; we are restored in God's image; we come into our inheritance as the children of God. Our humanity is caught up in His divinity. We become one with Him and He with us.

Today I am preaching on the hard Greek word anagogy. Nineteen years ago, you may remember, I preached on another hard Greek word - θεοποιεσις theopoiesis. It means making human beings divine and it is part of the same process as anagogy. Through the shedding of Christ's Blood, everything that divides us from God is washed away. We are one with Him and He with us. We are led up into the fullness of God. We are made divine. In Jesus, the human and the divine nature meet. In Christ, the human and the divine nature meet in us. We have God's Holy Spirit.

Please grant me one more hard Greek word - perichoresis. This is a dance around. Can you think of the three persons of the Holy Trinity as united in an eternal dance of love? They hold hands, change places, cross in and out of one another, perpetually together, eternally one in infinite love and bliss. Now think of us caught up in this perichoresis, this eternal dance of the Holy Trinity. Led up into God by God, anagogy, transformed into His Nature, theopoiesis, we are caught up into that eternal unity of the Holy Trinity, perichoresis. How can this be? Well it is all of God. He leads us up into Himself, but I am sure that we have to co-operate. He has given us free will to choose Him or reject Him. Will we let Him take us by the hand? Will we let Him lead us up into Himself? As St Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

I preached this sermon in 2006. The etymology of perichoresis is somewhat stretched, but the theology is sound. So it can stand here. RIK.

Good Advice for a Young Person Starting out in Life

Remember. It is not who you know; it is whom.

Halling Historical Society

The next meeting will be 18th June at 7.30 pm in the Jubilee Hall, Upper Halling. The speaker will be Captain Brian A Briggs and the subject SHIP TOWING AND SALVAGE at sea and on the River Medway. Visitors and new members always welcome.



Tommy's Talking Points

I think the main thing about being a puppy is having fun. Oh, and then there is being loved. I am a lot of fun and I love a lot and I love all the hugs and kisses I receive. I'm good for Master because I make him have fun too. Of an evening, he'd just sit still watching TV or reading a book if I didn't make him play with me. We have tug of war and throwing games, biting games and chewing games. I'm afraid I'm still apt to nip when I get over excited and I usually get over excited when I'm overtired. So what tends to happen towards the end of playtime is that he he gets tired of playing and I nip a bit too hard to get his attention. Then he gets cross with me. Then he's ashamed

of getting cross with such an adorable creature. So he picks me up for a cuddle and I go to sleep in his arms. If I can time it right, I wake up and need to go outside about ten minutes before the end of the film he is watching. All day, I have a selection of a couple of dozen dog toys to play with. I prefer playing with them with Master, but I do play with them on my own. I do have strategies, though, for catching his attention. Trying to pull up the edge of the carpet works. So does tossing around the sofa cushion or chewing the buttons on the upholstery. I told you last month that I had learnt to come downstairs on my own. Now I can climb upstairs. I can run up the stairs faster than Master can. So a good way to get him to take notice is to run upstairs and capture a sock or other item of clothing. If he shuts the bedroom door, there is always the bath towel. He'll soon be shutting all the internal doors, which he usually only does in Winter.

The great development since last month is that I have been immunised and can now go out for walks. We go up into the woods nearly every day now. The bluebells are beautiful. So are all the other flowers and the spring foliage. We have had lots of sunny days and a few wet ones. Master says it will be really exciting when I first see snow. So far the coldest weather I have known has been frost. He is really pleased that, young as I am, I can walk quite a long way without getting tired. He's really proud of me when he is walking down the path and I'm bounding along in front with my tail in the air. I like playing him up, however, hanging back or running on a bit too far ahead. If I dance about a bit on my lead, my legs get tangled up and he has to stop to help me. I like my own way, but then I am a springer spaniel and Master says he knows all about spaniels. Nearly everybody we meet stops to make a fuss of me and says how cute I am. I do enjoy that and I like to kiss them back. Most of the other dogs we have met are friendly too. We met some mountain bikers who stopped to make friends. They had known Max and wanted to know all about it. Master said that Max, when he was younger, would have chased mountain bikes. I was pleased to demonstrate that I can do whatever Max could do. I do come back, though. I know that some people would say I shouldn't be allowed to run after cyclists, but, then cyclists aren't really supposed to use footpaths as cycle routes. It's a question of live and let live, Master says. Otherwise we'll all finish up so hemmed in by regulation that life won't be worth living for any of us.

I'm rather afraid of all the traffic when we walk along the main road and resist going that way. Master says that I'm quite safe so long as I stay on the path. I'm not sure that I believe him, but he says we do sometimes have to go that way.

I hadn't been to St John's when I last wrote to you. Since then, on Holy Saturday, he took me there by car when he went to prepare for Easter. I wasn't allowed to stay in the car alone with the leg of lamb he bought for Easter at the farm shop. I did, however, have a lovely meaty lamb bone for my dinner on Easter Monday. For some years, Master has had a tradition of going for a run early on the morning of the Annual Meeting, having breakfast, taking morning service, and taking his dog for a walk through the bluebell woods before the meeting. He can't run any more and this year, because it was St Mark's Day, the Saturday Eucharist was held just before the meeting, but we did walk to St John's through the bluebell woods. I demonstrated that I could behave during a service at Halling as well as Cuxton and I met lots of new people. The meeting wasn't too bad either, with only three contentious subjects being mentioned, and most of the meeting being about appreciating all the good work so many people do.

Finally, let me recommend the Wednesday parish lunch. The chicken pie and the cottage pie were especially good. I can't speak for the salad and neither can Master. Despite his comments about being sealed with a quiche, I didn't have any of that either. Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.