

Services at St John the Baptist Halling and The Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
Sunday 30 th October 4 th Before Advent	11.00 United Parish Eucharist with speaker from the Gideons.	Micah 3 vv 5-12 p932 1 Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 p1186 Matthew 24 vv 1-14 p993
Wednesday 2 nd November All Souls	7.30 pm Holy Communion	Romans 5 vv 5-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1068
Sunday 6 th November 3 rd Before Advent	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	1 Thessalonians 4 vv 13-18 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994
	11.00 Holy Communion	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 1 Thessalonians 4 vv 13-18 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994
Sunday 13 th November Remembrance	10.50 Holy Communion & Parade Service with Stuart Aitken.	1 Thessalonians 5 vv 1-11 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 14-30 p994
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	1 Kings 1 vv 1-40 p334 Revelation 1 vv 4-18 p1233
Sunday 20 th November Christ the King	11.00 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 34 vv 11-24 p865 Ephesians 1 vv 15-23 p1173 Matthew 25 vv 31-46 p995
Sunday 27 th November Advent Sunday	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 64 vv 1-9 p750 1 Corinthians 1 vv 3-9 p1144 Mark 13 vv 24-37 p1019
Sunday 4 th December Advent 2	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	2 Peter 3 vv 8-15 p1224 Mark 1 vv 1-8 p1002
	11.00 Holy Communion & Gift Service	Isaiah 40 vv 1-11 p723 Mark 1 vv 1-8 p1002
Services at St Michael and All Angels Cuxton		
Tuesday 1 st November All Saints	7.30 am Holy Communion	
Wednesday 2 nd November All Souls	9.30 Holy Communion	Romans 5 vv 5-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1068
Sunday 6 th November 3 rd Before Advent	9.30 Family Communion	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994
Sunday 13 th November Remembrance	10.50 Holy Communion & Parade Service.	1 Thessalonians 5 vv 1-11 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 14-30 p994
Sunday 20 th November Christ the King	9.30 Holy Communion	Ezekiel 34 vv 11-24 p865 Ephesians 1 vv 15-23 p1173 Matthew 25 vv 31-46 p995
Sunday 27 th November Advent Sunday	9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 64 vv 1-9 p750 1 Corinthians 1 vv 3-9 p1144 Mark 13 vv 24-37 p1019
Sunday 4 th December Advent 2	9.30 Family Communion & Gift Service	Isaiah 40 vv 1-11 p723 Mark 1 vv 1-8 p1002

Copy Date December Magazine: 11th November 8.30 am Rectory. (There is no January magazine.)

20th – 26th November is Prisons Week.

During November, shoeboxes may be brought to Church for Blythswood Care to take to Eastern Europe. Please see leaflets for details of suitable contents, packing etc.

On Thursday afternoons we have a Mother & Toddler service at Halling at 2.00.

Sunday School is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays).

<http://hometown.aol.co.uk/rogerknight/myhomepage/newsletter.html> and

<http://hometown.aol.co.uk/RogerKnight/index.htm>

Log on to our home pages for up to date information on what is happening in the parish. In addition to notices etc, other items such as Proceedings of the PCC and sermons are from time to time displayed on the web page. Daily Bible notes are available electronically if you send me your e mail address. These too now appear on the web page.

Bible Study: The next Bible Study is 7.30 pm on Friday 25th November at the Rectory. All welcome.



From the Rector

I usually try to write you an account of the annual conference of the Science and Religion Forum (www.srforum.org) which I attend most years. This may not be so easy in respect of the conference from which I have just returned. It dealt with some very difficult concepts, but I will do my best after a few introductory remarks.

First, I want to say that I think the whole science and religion debate is very important. Science and religion between them shape our world. It is science that has given us the technology to enable us to live in comfort and safety, to provide us with an abundance of food, to enable us to travel freely, and that has provided cures for many diseases.

For its part, religion gives us a sense of meaning and purpose. It provides us with a moral framework. Above all, it gives us hope, hope that our life on earth really matters and hope that our life cannot be extinguished by death.

Religion in Europe provided the environment in which Science could develop. It was the belief in a Creator God that led people to look for order and meaning in the universe. Yet Science and Religion are often portrayed as being in conflict. The absolute certainties of Science are contrasted with the blind faith of religious people. Such commendation of Science and criticism of Religion is based on ignorance, ignorance of the genuine humility of honest Science in acknowledging the immense difficulties in being absolutely sure of anything and ignorance of what faith truly is. It is certainly not blind and it is based on what knowledge we have.

In reality, Science and Religion are both in trouble in C21 Britain. People do not trust scientists. Blind faith in Science evaporated somewhere between the atom bomb and bovine spongiform encephalitis (bse), not to mention fears of MMR inoculation and genetic

engineering. People instinctively feel that the scientific view of the world cannot be the whole story and turn to superstitions such as astrology and all the paraphernalia of the New Age. Traditional science subjects, taught with genuine academic rigour, are displaced from the school curriculum in a world in which the quantity of qualifications matters more than their quality.

And poor old religion! On the one hand, we have the mad fundamentalisms, which think that God will reward a man for killing and maiming innocent people, and, on the other hand, an apathetic indifference to religion, which is in danger of leaving our society without a moral compass, drifting aimlessly towards a hopeless death which will still surely come, how ever good we get at putting it off.

So I think the Science and Religion Forum is important, bringing together two great human endeavours to seek the ultimate Truth which is our only salvation.

This year's conference was held at Oxford in the Clarendon Laboratory in the Department of Physics of the University. This is next to the University Parks, which run down to the River Cherwell and the fields beyond. This was certainly significant for me. I also visited the Botanic Garden in Oxford, which was at its autumnal best. Nature speaks to me very powerfully of God and the more human beings discover about plants and animals, planets and stars, subatomic particles, the more deeply I feel the wonder of God's presence and activity. It is not only that these things are marvellous in their organisation and activity; it is also that they are beautiful in themselves. Science makes us appreciate God more.

I think there is something to the notion that serious thinking is best done in beautiful environments. It is no accident that the great universities of the world are often in lovely surroundings and that a great deal of expense and effort has gone into their architecture and to providing works of art to be enjoyed by those using their facilities. It is, of course, possible to come up with great ideas anywhere, but it is much harder to do so if the circumstances are uncondusive. It is as

possible to worship God in a dirty dive as it is to worship Him in a gothic cathedral, but you would need to be a much more spiritual person.

Anyway, our conference title was *Einstein, God and Time*. It was in 1905 that Albert Einstein published three papers which changed the way we see the world. This was the centenary. Some of the issues raised were very hard to grasp and some people might ask why bother to try? We get on perfectly well in our daily lives without understanding these things. So why not just rely on common sense? I think there are three answers to that.

- Human beings have a God-given curiosity which prompts us to want to understand.
- What one generation calls “common sense”, future generations recognise as blind prejudice – for example the notion that black people were naturally inferior to white people and destined for savagery or menial work.
- Much of what we take for granted we only have because brave pioneers of thought challenged “common sense”. We’d never have got to Australia if people hadn’t challenged the notion that the earth was flat. Without quantum theory we wouldn’t have personal computers.

We began with Professor John Brooke talking to us a bit about what Einstein himself believed. In some ways, he was a profoundly religious man. He said that science without religion was lame and religion without science was blind. He believed that the reality which he uncovered as a theoretical physicist, the universe scientists study, was a part of the ultimate reality which is God. Einstein’s experience of scientific insight was of the same character as revelation in religion. It was an inspiration which he just knew was right. Einstein was an accomplished musician and prized highly the mathematical order of what he thought of as the world’s greatest music. One is reminded of the Greek Pythagoras who, more than two and a half thousand years ago, found a mystic harmony in religion, mathematics and music. What a pity he is mostly known only for the square on the hypotenuse! Einstein looked for beauty in the

equations he worked out to describe the world as it is. He expected an intrinsic beauty in the very pattern of this God-made universe.

Einstein was born a Jew and had a Christian education, but, after early religious enthusiasm, ceased to be a conventional believer. He did not see the need for religion as a framework for ethics and believed that every event that happens is pre-determined, leaving no room for intercessory prayer or for personal responsibility or indeed for quantum mechanics.

It is ironic that Einstein did so much to pave the way for Quantum Theory, which insists that certain things are indeterminable, because Einstein firmly insisted that everything that happens is fully determined by the Laws of Science and Mathematics.

That evening Professor Russell Stannard attempted to explain Relativity Theory to us. The main point is that, just like height, breadth and length, time is a dimension. Space did not begin at a particular time. Space and time co-exist. Space can be bent. So can time. The world we think we understand by “common sense” is much more complex than we mostly imagine. There is no before or after the Universe. Before and after only exist within the Universe. A clock in a fast-moving space craft really would advance more slowly than a clock on the ground and an astronaut would age more slowly than those left behind.

Next morning, Professor Antje Jackélen talked about eschatology. Eschatology is the study of what happens at the end. People speak about the “last things”: death, the end of the world, judgment, heaven, hell. Maybe we should think of the last thing, better still the ultimate person, Jesus. Our thinking needs to take seriously what we now know about the age of the Universe and the huge number of stars and planets it contains. We cannot speak as if only the earth mattered and as if human beings were the only important thing on earth. Professor Jackélen reminded us that traditionally Christians have thought of God as eternal – outside time and space. It is nothing new to us to say that time and space came into existence together, when God created them. Christians

have always spoken about the importance of seeing everything *sub specie aeternitatis* (in the light of eternity). Sometimes, however, this leads us to treat present reality as unimportant. If what really matters is eternal, why bother about the time-bound material world? This is obviously wrong because God created and cares for this time bound universe. Some thinkers over-react by putting all the emphasis on time and losing the concept of eternity as ultimate reality. This is worse than the first error. What we need is a broad understanding which takes account of God's purpose for the whole created Universe within the perspective of His eternal love.

After the coffee break, Professor Harvey Brown's title was *Einstein and Time*. He developed the theme of time as a dimension like breadth and height. It is not possible to speak of absolute time which could be measured by an ideal clock. Different parts of the world are in different time zones. Time seems different to different people. To you, my sermons may go on for ever. I think they are very short. The clock will tell you they are mostly 15-20 minutes. Time is always relative to something: our heartbeat, the movement of a pendulum, the rhythm of the universe, the oscillations of particles in an atomic clock. These different clocks have to be related to one another. We have already seen how time goes more slowly at high speed because time and space bend. There are therefore no absolute measurements of distance either and no ideal rulers. It is really hard to grasp mentally the way the world really is. For me this makes it all the more marvellous that God not only comprehends all this; He invented it!

That evening, Professor Jurgen Moltmann spoke on the resurrection of the body. In our rejection of the world's values, we sometimes forget that God so loved the world. As we fear the temptations to which the flesh is subject, we too readily forget that God made us flesh and blood. God made the material time-bound universe. He made us human beings as bodily creatures. Jesus became one of us. The Word became flesh. He promises that He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh. St Paul describes the resurrection in terms of our having a

spiritual body. The Church's creed teaches us to believe in the resurrection of the body.

This has implications for ecology, how we care for this God-made world. It has implications for holistic medicine, treating the whole person, not treating bodies as simply vehicles for carrying the soul. It has implications for feminism, recognising that God has made us male and female because the insights and experiences of both are essential to the well-being of the human race.

It is a message of hope. God is in the process of redeeming the whole creation. Everything is caught up in the redemption God brings through the death and resurrection of the Body of Christ. We can trust Him for our own future and the future of our loved ones. Judgment of the wicked is part of that redemption, but it is God's purpose that the wicked should repent and be saved rather than be punished eternally. We did not come to a satisfactory answer to the question whether God respects our freedom to the extent that we can ultimately reject Him and therefore not be saved.

On the Wednesday morning, Professor Chris Isham spoke on *Quantum Reality*. Quantum Theory tells us that the behaviour of certain particles (like electrons) is unpredictable. Some physicists (like Einstein) believe that the only reason they are unpredictable is because we do not know enough about them. Most physicists, however, believe that they are essentially unpredictable, that we could not predict the behaviour of an electron how ever much we knew about it. Quantum Theory also gives the observer a key role. Things really are the way they are because they are observed to be so. An electron could be in state A or B, but it is neither A nor B until it is observed to be one or the other. To most people, this sounds like nonsense, but it is not nonsense. It works. If it did not work, I would not be writing this article on a personal computer!

Thinking like this does, however, shake our certainties that the world really is as we perceive it to be. The meaning of the words we use has to be very closely examined (especially deceptively common words like *the*). I suggest that the atheist has to live with a world whose

reality is very indefinite, while the religious believer can only suppose that the universe coheres in the mind of God.

After coffee (and a walk round the park) Dr John Polkinghorne gave us *Space, Time and Causality*. He was much more positive about the possibility of our knowing the world than Professor Isham. Scientific theories may not do more than approximate to the truth, but they do approximate and better theories approximate more closely. We cannot prove cause and effect philosophically but our intuition that the discovery that X always follows Y, suggests that Y causes X is probably reliable.

Finally, Dr Polkinghorne and Professor Isham debated whether the future already exists and is therefore known by God or whether the future

is yet to be decided and is therefore unknowable even to Him. John Polkinghorne thought the latter, Chris Isham the former.

It was a very good conference. It helped me to a greater sense of wonder at the nature of the Universe we live in. Science should be celebrated, but not worshipped. It teaches us a great sense of humility in the face of ultimate reality. Behind all these questions of what things really are and what their destiny might be is the question of Who God is. The Book of Nature (studied by Science) teaches us a lot about God and is ultimately unintelligible without Him. The Book of Revelation (God's Word, Jesus) teaches us much more about God and His purposes for us and for the whole Universe. *Science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind.*

Roger.

Readers' Questions

The Church Survey I referred to in the August magazine indicated that people want more teaching and guidance from their clergy. Three areas were particularly mentioned: apologetics, the demonstration that Christian faith makes sense; guidance in prayer; and how to help other people to come to faith. If readers like to send in their questions on these and other topics, I will happily try to answer a selection of them.

Confirmation 2006

We normally hold confirmations on alternate years in this parish. The other year we are invited to go to Higham. If anyone, therefore, is interested in Confirmation in the near future, I shall start classes after Christmas with a view to presenting you at Higham next May. Candidates are normally 12 years old or older (no upper limit). They may be seeking Baptism. They may have been baptised already and now wish to reaffirm their baptismal commitment and to receive the sacramental grace of Confirmation. If you are not yet sure, but want to study the matter further, you are most welcome to attend the classes and explore the faith with no obligation to be confirmed at the end. Roger.

Shoe Boxes

During November we shall be filling shoeboxes and collecting them in church for Blythswood to take to Eastern Europe at Christmas time. Please obtain a leaflet from church giving details of appropriate contents.

V for Viper

After reading the article in last month's magazine on "Vipers or Adders", I would like to add a warning. To anyone who doesn't know, particularly children, it's bite is very dangerous, poisonous and can even kill. Take care. Peggy Foote.

Big Cats in Cuxton

I was interested to read rumours of big cats being seen around the village, including the churchyard. I probably spend more time than anyone in the churchyard and also walk in the woods nearly every day, often while it is still dark and I have never seen one. I think if there were large carnivores around, they would attack the farm animals in the fields. So I think it unlikely that there are any big cats about. I noted that, if we do see them, we are to regard them as needing protection. Perhaps they do, but so would we! Roger.

Proceedings of the PCC 28th September 2005

We began with the **Collect for St Michael and All Angels** as we met on the eve of the Patronal Festival of one of our two villages. **Minutes** and **correspondence** were swiftly dealt with.

Next came the **financial report**. At our last meeting we were actually overdrawn. That proved to be a bank error, but it was that close. Following a good Summer with plenty of weddings and some increased giving and a number of fund-raising events, things look healthier. We have £5,620.40 in hand, though this includes £360.50 already allocated for renewing bell ropes and cutting the grass. The real concern is that we only have that money because we have not paid any of this year's parish share to the diocese. We agreed to pay £1,450 towards this, leaving £5,000 to pay. We shall have to look at this in December.

We were concerned that people generally do not understand how much it costs to run the church and where the money comes from. We have two mediaeval buildings, which are basically sound thanks to the good stewardship of our predecessors, but repairs and maintenance to keep them that way literally cost thousands. Neither are they cheap to heat. The parish also pays my stipend. We have to contribute our parish share to the Diocese of Rochester. These are obviously the major expenses, but of course there are others as well. Most of this money comes from our Sunday collections, donations, fund-raising and fees for weddings and funerals and profits on the church hall and magazine. In recent years, the diocese has given us a few thousand in subsidy, the Church Commissioners give us £1,000 per year towards paying me. We can sometimes get grants towards building repairs. Otherwise it all depends on us. Valerie Brown, our treasurer, will be pleased to make our accounts available if you want to see them in detail.

Appropriately, then, our next business was **Christian Stewardship**. David Noakes, the diocesan stewardship advisor spoke to us about this. Despite what we may have heard about stewardship campaigns in the past, the way it is done now there is no hard sell. Neither are people made to feel guilty or embarrassed. A stewardship campaign is an invitation to consider how you can respond to the love of God, to His generosity, by offering back to Him. This includes your money, your time and your talents. If we go ahead with a stewardship campaign, David would come and speak at one of our services. We would make a point of inviting everyone who feels part of our church family to be there on that occasion. There would be an opportunity to respond by making a pledge to join for the first time or to increase your planned giving. There would be no pressure, no expectation that people would pledge more than they can afford, and only one person (not me!) would know what your response was. There might be an opportunity to offer your time and talents as well, but that needs to be considered. Your time and talents are as much needed as your money, but filling in pledge cards is often not the best way to organise this. A small group will meet to take this further.

Some of us had met Andrew Daunton-Fear at tea and Evening Prayer the previous Sunday. Andrew is going out to the Philippines to teach clergy in training for the Anglican Church there. We decided to support him as our **Church Mission Society Link Mission Partner**. We shall receive news from Andrew and send him our news. We shall pray for him and try to raise some financial support as well.

The **Social Committee** reported on the success of the Summer Fund Raising Events and looked forward to the Quiz on 22nd October, manning a refreshment stall at Cuxton Fireworks on 5th November and the Christmas Coffee Morning on 10th December.

Both **church buildings** are in reasonably good condition. The wardens in both churches have been doing some minor jobs to save paying for them to be done. St John's is working through the jobs required under the last quinquennial inspection and St Michael's is preparing for the next. We were dissatisfied with the inspection of the lightning conductor in both churches and we are looking into what to do next. New bell ropes are to be ordered for St Michael's – paid for out of a legacy and from the ringers' own fund. The PCC wished to thank the ringers for their efforts every Sunday.

The **church hall** is doing fine. It has just had a new roof as described in last month's magazine. We are applying for a licence to continue what we were doing perfectly well without one until the new Licensing Act came into force.

Deanery & Diocesan Synods had not met. We decided to have a directory of PCC members and church officers. We confirmed that, with the bishop's permission, we would continue with the existing lay ministers administering the chalice.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

25 th September	Ronnie Todd	Maidstone
25 th September	Oliver William Frost	Vicarage Close
2 nd October	Libby Sophie Tomkinson	Poplicans Road
2 nd October	Ben Christopher Williams	High Street
2 nd October	Paul Alan Townsend	Chatham
2 nd October	Elois Catherine Eede	Gillingham

Weddings:

17 th September	Jolyon Thompson & Fiona Newman	Cuxton
24 th September	Stephen Goodwin & Amy Warman	Cuxton

Funerals:

13 th September	Rosina Holman (80)	High Street
18 th October	Gilbert Richard Snow (79)	formerly of Halling

Food For Thought

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. What food might this contain?" He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap. Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning. "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it." The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house." The pig sympathised, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers." The mouse turned to the cow. She said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone. That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, she returned home with a fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient. But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbours came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember -- when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk. In the book of Genesis, Cain said this about Able, his brother, to our God: "Am I my brother's keeper?" We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

Harvest 2005

We have just had another splendid Harvest Festival. The churches were beautiful with the flowers, produce and harvest gifts. We thoroughly enjoyed the harvest music and the harvest supper. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make all this possible. The tinned and packeted goods were sent to the Strood Family Centre, from whom we received as lovely letter of thanks.

Roger.

Friends of Kent Churches Cycle Ride

We had a beautiful day for this and a much larger number of visitors to the parish than usual, particularly at St Michael's. Val and Steve went one way as a married couple. I went in the opposite direction, receiving friendly welcomes everywhere – except Ryarsh and Trottiscliffe, where I could not find the Anglican churches. They were, however, very welcoming at Ryarsh Baptist Church, which I had not known existed. I am afraid I had to walk up Vigo Hill. Age has wearied this one. At Southfleet, I pointed out the pew where I used to worship as a child and the lady attending wanted to know why I don't go to church there anymore. My excuse was that I am expected to worship in the churches I am rector of. It was a good question, however. Many people have drifted away from worshipping in the places where they grew up. Some, like me, now worship elsewhere, but what about the rest? If God exists, He must be the most important thing in our lives and worship has just got to be the top priority.

Our sponsors gave us £514.70 of which £257.35 comes back to this parish for our general funds. The remainder is for all Kent churches. Thank you all who sponsored, cycled and minded the churches for us.

The next sponsored event I am hoping to do is next year's London Marathon. If I get in, I hope you will sponsor me for this parish and for Andrew Daunton-Fear our CMS link mission partner in the Philippines.

Roger.

“Now Thank We All...”

Thirty years ago Megan Lacey invited as certain David Maxwell to join St Michael's choir. His daughter Heidi, and later his second daughter Trudi, soon followed suit and eventually, after five years, at the invitation of Maureen Harrison, his wife Di completed the family commitment.

Through the years, although the children have married and moved away, we oldies have enjoyed the fellowship of many Cuxton and Halling folk, singing in Cuxton week by week and occasionally with Halling choir. We have been party to aspects of parish history; singing at festivals, baptisms, weddings and funerals. We have entered into numerous friendships, many that have endured when people have left the area.

Getting old does not seem to be much fun, but there are bonuses. Di was delighted when John Bogg, our current organist and choirmaster, shared his intention of acknowledging Dave's years of choir service at the forthcoming Patronal Festival in September. Some special guests were invited to attend and efforts were made to encourage Dave to divulge a list of his favourite hymns. All this was done in secret, and Di looked forward to Dave's surprise. However, in the event, the surprise was twofold, such was the subterfuge employed by members of both our congregations and choirs.

All was not revealed until Di and Dave turned to page 2 of the order of service for the Patronal Festival. It said “Presentation of Royal School of Church Music long service awards to Dave and Di Maxwell for 30 and 25 years service in the choir.” The rest of the service, including an appropriate sermon from Norman Warren, Archdeacon Emeritus of Rochester, took on a special resonance for us.

There was a party afterwards, through which Dave especially remained in a daze, with good friends to cheer us, good food to feed us (including an enormous, beautiful cake), and flowers and the odd bottle to please us. We felt like the bride and groom, doing the rounds and catching up with so many “old” friends. We even had photographs to ponder over. The whole evening was wonderful, almost overwhelming.

We should like to thank John and all who contributed to the happy occasion and Roger, who allowed it to fit so neatly with our Patronal Festival.

Di & Dave Maxwell.

Archidiaconal Anticipations

We are looking forward to two more visits from archdeacons next year. The Archdeacon of Rochester is to preach at Cuxton at 9.30 on 12th March. The Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley is to preach at 7.30 pm at Halling on 12th July for the Silver Jubilee of the priesting of the rector with whom he was at college.

Nature Notes

"There are no Nature Notes this month as David and I had to say goodbye to Sam in the early hours of October 3rd. Sam was a wonderful companion and full of joy right up to the last three hours of his life. It is because of him that I began observing wild flowers and Nature's creatures. Our lives were certainly enriched by him and we shall miss him more than words can express. Elizabeth Summers.

SAM

We have been very moved by the kindness and concern of so many people in the days following the loss of Sam. We have been overwhelmed by so many cards, e-mails, phone calls, visitors and flowers. Sam was very special to us and he seems to have touched the hearts of so many. We miss him greatly. We must move on now. Who knows, there may soon be another companion playing a part in the walks that lead to Nature Notes.

Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

Elizabeth and David Summers.



Halling WI

Our W.I. September meeting was uneventful, with one exception, our booked speaker couldn't come, having realized our meeting was in the evening and she couldn't drive in the dark. So all we were going to learn about gypsies flew out of the window, or caravan. This month, instead of Jerusalem, we sang Happy Birthday to the W.I as it is celebrating it's 90th birthday this month. The minutes were read and signed and we ploughed through a mountain of paper work from the National Federation. (They must see off a forest every other month).

Then, Mary Fennemore stepped in as our Guest speaker. It must have been eighteen or so years ago when she spoke to Halling W.I. about her year as first lady of Rochester, the Mayor. She told us about the perks as well as the enjoyable hard work, her trip up and down the river Medway as Admiral of the River. I'm sure it wasn't Admiral of the Fleet. She's never shown us her uniform but she did wear her Mayoral ribbon and medal. She said she must have attended well over 300 events during her time

in office, and she had the W.I. to thank for giving her the confidence to put her name forward for the job.

All in all it made very interesting listening.

After our usual refreshments, our two competitions were judged. Flower of the month was won by Lily Hesketh, with a lovely Dahlia. It doesn't seem like a year ago when Lily's Dahlias were last at their best. The competition, something beginning with L, was won by my porcelain soup Ladle, yes it has got a tureen to match it, but no it has never seen any soup, just another "dust harbourer".

October brings our Annual General Meeting and our Produce Show, lemon curd, a salad on a plate and a picture you can eat, some of the things on the schedule, and don't forget, the letter P. Malling District are holding an Arts and Craft Show at Ryarsh on October the 20th. Come and have a look to see we still have a few crafty ladies about but they are a dying breed, the exhibition is open from 10am to 4pm.

Phyllis.

St John's Draw: £5 each to Mr Gardner (12), Mrs Buss (15), Mrs Flood (21&22), Mrs Rogers (162) – drawn by Mrs Smitherman.

Church Hall Draw: £5 to Dave Haselden, drawn by Julia Wells; £5 to Jo Martin, drawn by Sam Humphreys?



Andrew Daunton-Fear

Following Sue and Marc's return from Indonesia, the result of health problems, we now have a new Church Mission Society link mission partner. He is Andrew Daunton-Fear, whom some of you may remember from his time as Vicar of Barming. Andrew is teaching at St Andrew's Seminary, Quezon City Manila in the Philippines. The seminary trains ministers for the Church and Andrew's main subjects are Church History and Pastoralia, with a special interest in the healing ministry.

Andrew was born in Malvern and lived as a boy in Gravesend, where his father was Rector. The family served many years overseas. Andrew has qualifications in chemistry and Theology as well as various practical qualifications.

The Philippines are mainly Roman Catholic, but Andrew's work is principally with the Philippine Episcopal Church and the Philippines Independent Church. The main issues for the Church in the Philippines are described as "nominalism*", increasing secularism, poverty, and the need for social action coupled with the gospel. Andrew needs your prayers. There will be information about him and link letters available in church. We shall also be trying to raise funds to help support him.

Thanks

I should like to thank everyone from both Cuxton and Halling who have kindly sent me their good wishes during my recent illness. As you may know I was struck down rather suddenly and spent much of September in Maidstone Hospital. I cannot believe how many lovely cards I have received together with flowers and gifts; there have been so many visitors and phone calls. To all my dear friends, thank you again for all your thoughts and prayers, I appreciate it so much. I hope to be back in my usual pew before too long!

Ann Seagar.

30th Strood (Cuxton) Scout Group

Quiz Night

Sat. 19th November 7.30pm at the Scout Hall, Bush Road, Cuxton

Teams of up to eight people, but if you haven't got a team, we can put you with a team on the night. Please bring your own drink.

Tickets @ £4.50 each, to include a ploughman's supper, available from Matthew Wells 01634 727424

Christmas Coffee Morning

December 10th

10.00 – 1.00 Church Hall, Cuxton.

All are welcome to come and enjoy a cup of coffee and a *Beaney Special Mince Pie* in good company, a time to chat as well as an opportunity to support Fair Trade by buying food and gifts from our "sale or return" stall in aid of such a good cause. There will also be a chance to paint your own Christmas china gifts, meet Father Christmas, enter a bumper raffle and buy dried flowers, decorations etc.

Coffee Time at St Michael's – Sundays and Wednesdays**

When we share a cup of coffee together after our services, we not only have time to listen to one another, which is such a valuable part of our fellowship, but we also learn from each other where help may be needed in the coming week. We also have time on a Sunday to enjoy seeing the children's efforts in the Sunday School. Only this last Sunday they prepared a feast for us – some chocolate sundaes – as they had been learning about the Parable of the Wedding Feast. The other thing we do is to raise a useful fund with the donations given. This enables us to fund the special times we share, like Confirmation parties, Patronal Festivals and mulled wine and mince pies after the Carol Service. Any surplus goes to the General Fund. So having time to share is, in my mind, a vital part of our Church life.

* Calling yourself a Christian but not showing any sign that you are one in your every day life

** St John's Thursdays

Which reminds me of one Wednesday in the Summer when, on coming out of Holy Communion, I met someone in the porch. When I asked if she was here to see the Rector, she replied, "No, I've just come to look round the Church." We said she was most welcome to come to the hall for coffee which she gratefully accepted. While chatting, we found she was walking through the countryside, visiting various villages and churches, in the hope of restoring her memory after brain surgery. As this was also a lunch Wednesday, we invited her to stay. Again she gladly accepted. We hope we were of help to her recovery. Maybe she will remember her half day with us. What a good thing we were having coffee in the hall!

Dickens' Country Protection Society



Thanks to everyone who supported the **barn dance**. It really went with a swing. Here's to the next time.

The Society was interested to learn, together with residents of Grain, that BP are planning to erect some **wind turbines** on the former oil refinery site. Having considered the proposal, the society does not find the scheme objectionable as the land is already industrial and the turbines will be against the power station background. The Society would be concerned about any proposals for **turbines** elsewhere on the Peninsula, where they would have a significant impact.

Kay Roots.

The Baptist Dog?

This Baptist couple felt it important to own an equal Baptist pet, so they went shopping. At the kennel specialising in this particular breed, they found a dog they liked quite a lot. When they asked the dog to fetch the BIBLE, he did it in a flash. When they instructed him to look up Psalm 23, he complied equally fast, using his paws with dexterity. They were impressed, purchased the animal, and went home.

That night they had friends over. They were so proud of their new Baptist dog and his major skills, they called the dog and showed him off a little. The friends were impressed, and asked whether the dog was able to do any of the usual dog tricks as well. This stopped the couple cold, as they hadn't thought about "normal" tricks. "Well," they said, "let's try it out." Once more they called the dog, and they clearly pronounced the command, "Heel!" Quick as a wink, the dog jumped up, put his paw on the man's forehead, closed his eyes in concentration, and bowed his head. They had been deceived! The dog was Pentecostal!