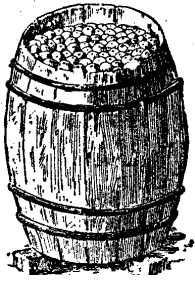


Services at St Michael and All Angels Cuxton			
2 nd October Trinity 15 Dedication & Harvest Festival		9.30 Family Communion	Isaiah 5 vv 1-7 p689 Matthew 21 vv 33-46 p990
9 th October Trinity 16		9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 25 vv 1-9 p708 Philippians 4 vv 1-9 p1180 Matthew 22 vv 1-14 p990
16 th October Trinity 17		8.00 Holy Communion	Collect, Epistle & Gospel BCP Trinity 17
		9.30 Holy Communion	Isaiah 45 vv 1-7 p731 I Thessalonians 1 vv 1-10 p1186 Matthew 22 vv 15-22 p990
23 rd October Last Sunday after Trinity		9.30 Holy Communion	Leviticus 19 vv 1-18 p121 I Thessalonians 2 vv 1-8 p1186 Matthew 22 v 34-46 p991
30 th October 4 th Sunday before Advent		9.30 Holy Communion	Micah 3 vv 5-12 p932 I Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 p1186 Matthew 24 vv 1-14 p993
Wednesday 2 nd November All Souls		9.30 Holy Communion	I Peter 1 vv 3-9 p1217 John 6 vv 37-40 p1070
6 th November 3 rd Sunday Before Advent Blythswood Collection		9.30 Family Communion	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 I Thessalonians 4 vv 13-18 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
2 nd October Trinity 15 Dedication & Harvest Festival		8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Proverbs 2 vv 1-11 p636 Mark 10 vv 2-16 p1014
		11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 5 vv 1-7 p689 Philippians 3 vv 4b-14 p1180 Matthew 21 vv 33-46 p990
		6.30 Harvest Praise	Deuteronomy 28 vv 1-14 p205 II Corinthians 9 vv 6-15 p1163 Luke 12 vv 16-30 p1045
9 th October Trinity 16		11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 25 vv 1-9 p708 Philippians 4 vv 1-9 p1180 Matthew 22 vv 1-14 p990
		5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Proverbs 3 vv 1-18 p637 1 John 3 vv 1-15 p1126
16 th October Trinity 17		11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Isaiah 45 vv 1-7 p731 I Thessalonians 1 vv 1-10 p1186 Matthew 22 vv 15-22 p990
23 rd October Last Sunday after Trinity		11.00 Holy Communion	Leviticus 19 vv 1-18 p121 I Thessalonians 2 vv 1-8 p1186 Matthew 22 v 34-46 p991
30 th October 4 th Sunday before Advent		11.00 Holy Communion	Micah 3 vv 5-12 p932 I 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 p1069
6 th November 3 rd Sunday Before Advent Blythswood Collection		8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Judges 7 vv 2-22 p249 John 15 vv 9-17 p1083
		11.00 Holy Communion	Amos 5 vv 18-24 p920 I Thessalonians 4 vv 13-18 p1188 Matthew 25 vv 1-13 p994
9.30 Holy Communion at St Michael's Wednesdays		9.30 Holy Communion at St John's Thursdays	
5 th October	Jonah 4 vv 1-11 Luke 11 vv 1-4	6 th October	Malachi 3 v13 – 4 v2 Luke 11 vv 5-13
12 th October	Romans 2 vv 1-11 Luke 11 vv 42-46	13 th October	Romans 3 vv 21-30 Luke 11 vv 47-54
19 th October	Romans 6 vv 12-18 Luke 12 vv 39-48	20 th October	Romans 6 vv 19-23 Luke 12 vv 49-53
26 th October	Romans 8 vv 26-30 Luke 13 vv 22-30	27 th October	Romans 8 vv 31-39 Luke 13 vv 31-35

Tuesday 18th is St Luke's Day. Holy Communion at St Michael's at 7.30 am.



The Church is Always After Your Money!

I usually prepare the readings and hymns for services a few months in advance. This gives other people time to arrange for sidesmen and readers and the choirs the opportunity to practise the music. If you would like to help in any of these ways, I am sure you would be most welcome. Just mention your willingness to assist to the churchwardens or organists.

When I prepare the autumn quarter it always strikes me that there are a lot of gift services. The first Sunday in October we keep as Harvest Festival. We invite contributions of packeted and tinned goods to be brought to our services for distribution to the homeless. Blankets, decent second hand clothing and dog food are welcome too. There is also *Poverty & Hope*.

Then in November, people bring to the first Sunday services the shoe boxes they have been filling for Blythswood to take mostly to Eastern Europe where there is still great need even after the fall of Communism and the end of the terrible Balkan wars of a few years ago. Lists of suitable contents for the boxes will be found in church or ask Phyllis Chidwick.

On the first Sunday in December we have our gift services for less fortunate families in the local area. We are looking for toys and perhaps toiletries and clothing in good condition. It's best if the gifts are not wrapped as they have to be inspected before they can be handed out.

Something to Shout About

Every third Thursday of the month a group of us meet in the URC Chapel hall in Bush Road Cuxton at 7.30 pm to discuss some topical issue. Anyone can come. The meetings are open to all. The discussions are quite lively. We even get tea and biscuits! October 20th we shall be discussing whether national service (not necessarily military) ought to be reinstated. See you there?

Quiz Evening

We are holding a quiz for church funds on October 15th at 7.30 in the church hall. £6 includes food. Please bring your own drink. Teams of 6-8. Contact Roger on 717134 if interested.

It seems a lot to ask but Jesus did say *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. We are richly blessed and there is so much need out there. I don't know about cereals and vegetables, but it has been a wonderful year for fruit. I am astonished at the number of apples on my trees and the size of them. I'm certainly celebrating the harvest, even though what looked like a marrow growing wild in Cuxton churchyard turned out be a gourd! All these gift services aren't a burden; they're yet another abundant blessing.

Sometimes people wonder whether we ought to be giving to others when our Church is so hard up itself, but to give really is the point. It is what we are here for, to be mirrors and conduits of the love of God.

In the coming quarter, the year turns. We celebrate the Harvest at the end of Summer. We come to what used to be called the Last Sunday after Trinity but now is the celebration of Christ the King, Lord of all time and eternity. The traditional collect (*Stir up, we beseech thee O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people*) makes some people start thinking about Christmas pudding. Anyway it will soon be Christmas when God made a new start, Jesus being born so that we could be born again. I imagine, we'll be richly blessed again with the giving and receiving of presents. Then the eve of the secular new year with its coming opportunities and challenges. And not forgetting Advent (Please don't forget Advent) not just getting ready for Christmas but a preparation for our new life in eternity when Christ comes again to judge the living and the dead. Roger.

Nature Notes August 2011

I've been very aware of the trees as I've walked therefore I begin my notes with the following poem.

"Woodman, Spare That Tree" *George Pope Morris*

Woodman, spare that tree!	That old familiar tree,	My heart-strings round thee
Touch not a single bough!	Whose glory and renown	cling,
In youth it sheltered me,	Are spread o'er land and sea-	Close as thy bark, old friend!
And I'll protect it now.	And wouldst thou hew it down?	Here shall the wild bird sing,
'Twas my forefather's hand	Woodman, forbear thy stroke!	And still thy branches bend.
That placed it near his cot;	Cut not its earthbound ties;	Old tree! The storm still brave!
There, woodman, let it stand,	Oh, spare that aged oak	And, woodman, leave the spot;
Thy axe shall harm it not.	Now towering to the skies.	While I've a hand to save,
		Thy axe shall harm it not.

The first of the month is very hot. I walk with Murphy in Cobtree Manor Park where the trees show signs of stress through lack of rain. The leaves on some trees are quite brittle while horse chestnuts, bearing fruit, have succumbed to disease indicated by the rust coloured leaves. Selfheal blooms in the grass. The day becomes increasingly hot. Even the birds seek shelter rather than the food. I watch a blackbird bathing in the pond then a comma butterfly stretching its wings on the patio wall. The following day reaches temperatures of 29 degrees and the 3rd is very hot. The 4th is a very different day with heavy rain and lower temperatures although it is still warm. Rain falls throughout the morning and early afternoon. When the rain ceases I put seed out for the birds. A collared dove has been watching me and flies across from the other side of the road. Dunnocks, a blue tit and a robin follow. The skies brighten and there are a few glimpses of the sun. The next day I walk round the lake with Murphy at Bluewater. Grasses are straw-coloured and some flowers are fading. There are signs of Autumn in the trees for the leaves are beginning to change colour displaying reds and yellows. Hazels are revealing the first Autumn tints. The brightest part of 6th is the morning when I walk up the church path to Six-acre Wood where lords and ladies grow on the ivy-covered banks. Herb robert and hedge woundwort is in flower. As I skirt the field full of tall grasses and the remains of flax flowers, I'm aware of Autumn nudging at the end of Summer. Gate keeper butterflies hover over the array of wild flowers down the banks of Dean Valley and hawthorns display bright red berries. Hips adorn the wild rose bushes. I take the bridle path to Bush where I see nettle leaved bellflowers, and notice that field maples are displaying a few Autumn tints. There is no birdsong but I listen to the westerly breeze sighing through the trees. Peace reigns in Bush Valley from where I take the path through part of North Wood. I decide to return and retrace my steps back to Dean Valley and finally home. On my journey I had seen so much beauty, flowers sky and woodland. I treasure these scenes and recall them in the Winter months. The next day I was

caught in a heavy shower on my way home from church. On 8th, along the Halling by-pass I notice many stressed trees. At Bluewater on 9th I hear the call of a woodpecker and see lime fruits ripening on the lime trees' slender twigs. In the afternoon of 10th I walk along Purty's Shaw where hazels are denuded of their nuts which have probably been taken by the squirrels. Wild clematis, with its sweet perfume straddles the hedges. The next day I see house sparrows in the garden the first time for many weeks. The 12th is a humid day with grey clouds drifting across from the west but with glimpses of the sun. At Bluewater, flowers are fading and grasses are straw-coloured. White umbellifers, pink and white yarrow, clover, lucerne, goats rue, ragwort, hawkweed, bristly ox tongue, viper's bugloss, buddleia, purple loosestrife, hemp agrimony and bird's foot trefoil bloom. Hazel nuts are beginning to ripen and oaks bear green acorns. On 13th, darkness has fallen by 9pm. In the afternoon of 14th I walk across the fields, and through Mays Wood to The Warren where I am rewarded by a wealth of wild flowers especially marjoram, ragwort, vervain, birds foot trefoil and knapweed. Two tiny harebells peep up from among the short grass stems. I drink in the beauty and enjoy the warmth of the sun. On 16th, when darkness has fallen, I watch a large orange moon rising in the east. On 18th, five young green finches come to feed on the seed. They are fascinating to watch. I find feathers in the garden, possibly from a collared dove caught by a cat. The next evening I watch a cricket hopping over geranium leaves. Warm weather continues then rain falls on 23rd which continues into the afternoon. Birds make fleeting visits to the feeders. In the afternoon of 24th I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. Two fountains beautify the lake as the water rises high in the air creating rainbow colours. I feel droplets of water on my face as they are blown by the wind. I'm very aware of the light fading earlier each evening. The following day I go, with a friend to the Turner Contemporary Gallery at Margate and I am very impressed. In the afternoon we walk on the sand where rock pools are full of seaweed. I pick up a piece

of feathery seaweed a tiny piece attached to a small pebble. The colours in the sky and sea are beautiful, colours which Turner, many years ago appreciated and I can see why. The 26th is a showery day and darkness has fallen by 8.30pm. On 28th, when westerly breezes drift over the sun, there is an Autumn chill in the air. Heavy showers fall in the afternoon and it remains overcast and cool. At Bluewater on 29th I watch a small white butterfly and a gate keeper

hovering over the grasses while a pair of cormorants glides on the lake. The 30th is a grey day but the last day of the month is bright, better than was forecast. We walk round the lake at Bluewater where many of the flowers have finally faded. Umbellifers have formed seed heads and grasses are dry and brittle. The afternoon is dry and bright with warm sunshine.

Elizabeth Summers.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING

This year's box opening will be held slightly earlier than in recent years as it was slipping gradually closer to Christmas every year! We will therefore be counting the contents of our boxes on Thursday 13th October at 11.15 am at 204 Bush Road, Cuxton. I would be very grateful if box holders could either bring their boxes to church, or drop them in to me. Alternatively, I am perfectly happy to pick them up from your house as some of them do get very heavy. Just give me a ring on 01634 727424. Many thanks, Julia.



Halling WI

August here again, soon be rehearsing carols. Halling W.I. were a few members short this month, most holidaying somewhere or other. Margaret was with us and took the chair and soon dealt with the ordinary business, minutes, birthdays and the like. Correspondence, Next year's annual meeting of the West Kent Federation at Tunbridge Wells on 28th March, and this year on 4th November at the Jubilee Hall a talk on Military Medals, bring any along that you might have, VCs and the like. Ann Hayward read an article that she found in the Telegraph, "How you know when you are getting old" one answer was "You join the W.I." I don't think some of the new W.I.'s in London will take kindly to that, most of them are 18-30. That's not old. 23rd September, Flower Arranging at Ryarsh.

Our speaker for August was Mrs Jean Tallboys.

Jean and her husband came to us many years ago to talk about plants. They were founder members of the Cottage Garden Plants Society. Since Dr Tallboys died Jean has kept up with her talks, not about plants anymore, but about her trips to South Africa, all very plant related. Jean hasn't been to South Africa since 1999. I think she might find it a little different now. Her slides were showing their age, and Jean now has to have a driver to bring her to meeting so I think she may be showing hers. The competitions were judged, Gemma Graves won the flower of the month, and Ann Hayward won the Flower Arrangement. Margaret reminded us all about cakes for the Fun Day and the Ploughman's Lunch. We have now had both of them.

Thanks must go to Betty. We had a lovely lunch, once again under the carport. The weather was very inclement but we all enjoyed ourselves and had a good natter. The good company is what it's all about. Phyllis.

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St John's Draw: £25 to Mrs Crowhurst (158) & £10 each to Mrs Ashford (99) & Mrs Garrot (123) – drawn by Mr Brown
Church Hall Draw: £40 to Pauline Lofthouse, drawn by Julia Wells.



Adam & the Ape

East Peckham Village Hall TN12 5LL
12th October 7.30 pm

Lecture - Evolution – Adam & the Ape

Professor R J (Sam) Berry formerly Professor of Genetics at University College London will speak on human origin and development.

No charge. All welcome. Enquiries 01622 871945 or 871278.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

21 st August	Daniel John Lee	Strood
28 th August	Hannah Louise Buhler	Hillcrest Drive
28 th August	Teddie Hilton	Britannia Close
4 th September	Harry Ronald Botten	Snodland
4 th September	Jack Desmond Botten	Snodland
4 th September	Archie William Botten	Snodland

Weddings:

27 th August	Graeme Peter Owen & Gemma Michelle Stevens	Cuxton
3 rd September:	Jason Robert Stewart & Daniella Hayley Rous	Halling

Halling Historical Society

At the August meeting the speaker was Mr Chris McCooey, author of numerous books about memorable characters of Kent and Sussex. He told us of Dr Dorrit Waterfield and her eventful medical career. Her training began in the London hospitals in the early twentieth century, and eventually she set up a practice as a GP for many years in Lamberhurst.

And of Percy Powell-Cotton, founder of the Quex Museum near Birchington. His trips to India and Africa resulted in the skins of wild animals being stuffed and added to his collection.

One last character, Dr Hewlett Johnson, appointed to the Deanery at Canterbury Cathedral in 1931. His interest in Communism came a few years later and greatly upset his colleagues and the establishment. From then on he was known as the red dean.

Chris spoke of many characters but these are just a few examples – a very interesting and amusing evening.

Next Meeting: October 20th (Jubilee Hall); speaker Mr Gillman; subject *Below Stairs*, servants in great houses.

Mean Time

A group of professional musicians called "Mean Time" gave a most enjoyable concert in St Michael's Church on August 4th. The music ranged from Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque to contemporary and was played on early instruments such as recorder, baroque flute and harpsichord. Afterwards, we were invited to try out instruments and John Bogg enjoyed playing the harpsichord. The piece that impressed us most was a madrigal played on various recorders and sounded just like voices.

I hurried home to seek out my recorder but no way could I begin to emulate the sounds this group made, despite one of the group being called David Beaney (no relation!). The others were Patricia Browne (with a beautiful singing voice), Jennifer Cable and Oliver Smith.

The churches of Cuxton and Halling certainly give everyone an opportunity to enjoy varied music. Thank you Roger for inviting "Mean Time". Mean time, when is the next one? Jenny

Christian Aid

A Division of The British Council of Churches



Deanery Christian Aid Walk June 18th

You will be pleased to know this raised £736 of which £400 was raised by participants from this parish.



Christmas Dinner

Our Christmas dinner in the Church Hall will be on Wednesday 14th December (not 7th) at 12.00.



Cuxton WI

As our speaker had arrived early we decided to switch the agenda and hear him first. What a good decision this was, as Mr Monty Parkin filled the hall with laughter. He talked about "Yesterdays Papers" mainly with the use of old adverts. For just 2d or 3d people in those days people must have had a very joyful time, whereas nowadays we pay anything up to a pound to read about gloom and doom everywhere. Ladies have you ever tried on an electric corset ? - guaranteed to give you the smallest waist imaginable - except perhaps if there was a power cut! Every gentleman seemed to sport a wonderful large black moustache and treated his hair with Macassar oil -hence the use of antimacassars on the armchairs of the day. The cures that abounded in various bottles and jars were innumerable. Then I suddenly realised that my father used to take Phosferine, my mother Dr William's Pink Pills for Pale People and I was dosed with Bile Beans full of iron. Still we all survived and unfortunately in 1941 the government passed an act forbidding the extravagant claims of some of the adverts -what a pity to spoil the fun.

After all that, and a good cuppa, normal business was resumed. Dorothy's tea party had raised over £100 for our funds so we are now hoping that Pat's coffee morning will also be successful as we are always short of money these days for various reasons - one being that speakers charges have gone up now that the price of fuel is so high. The WI nationally are getting up a campaign for saving libraries - particularly in villages. The WI also has offers on London theatre seats and so Pat is hoping to get enough members to take advantage of this but you do need about eight people at a time. Val has been visiting our sick members and she reported that Shirley is feeling a lot better and is now beginning to get about. Maureen is very frustrated as they have now found that she has broken her foot and so she is plastered up. Ann came to WI after a long absence but she will have to go back into hospital for another operation on her leg. And just before I wrote this report we heard of the very sad and unexpected death of Rene Haden who has been a loyal member for many years. So, a rather sad note to end on this month but we look forward to our next meeting on Thursday October 6th at 7 30 pm in the Church Hall. You are most welcome to come along for an evening of Tales of a Scotland Yard Detective - should be interesting ! Sheila.

Summer Mid-week BBQ

Chris and I would like to thank everyone who came to our Wednesday BBQ lunch in August. The weather was great and Gerry Robinson's lamb kebabs were in great demand. Due to the generosity of everyone there, we made over £400 for the Church funds. Thank you. Jenny and Chris.

And thank you, Jenny & Chris, for such an enjoyable event which raised so much for church funds. Roger.

What Used to be the Christmas Coffee Morning

As this event has grown so much, we are renaming it the Christmas Minimarket. It will take place at 10.00 on Saturday 10th December at the Church Hall with all the usual attractions plus ???



Mothers' Union

Please note that on Wednesday 19th October we are having an open meeting at 10.45 am in the Church Hall to welcome anyone who would like to know more about the Mothers' Union and what we do and how to become a member or just support us in our work. Also at this meeting we will be welcoming a representative from Bible Lands who will be selling Christmas cards, candles and small gifts in support of countries in the Middle East. So please come and have a cup of coffee with us (or tea). You will be very welcome.

NEWS FROM CUXTON COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

Dear Friends of our School,

As we start the term we welcome 50 children into our foundation stage year. They have come into school happily following their visits last term, and we hope they will continue to be happy, confident individuals who are eager to learn and participate fully in the life of the school. We look forward to working in partnership with all their parents. Our Year 1 and 2 children have returned taller, refreshed and eager to see their friends and meet the adults in school once again.

We now have 140 children on roll. Our little school is gaining in number which is good news, as financially the school gains, yet we are still 'small enough' to be a community/family school with all of us knowing the children well, and their little ways!

This academic year will be another busy one. These are just a few of the activities we have planned:

- Literacy and Numeracy workshops for parents
- Harvest and Cake sale
- Environment Day
- Christmas Plays and activities
- Pantomime
- Parents visiting classes to see learning!
- Mother's Day, Father's Day
- School Trips
- New entrants and Year 2 visit to the Junior school.

We look forward this year to expanding our links with the local playgroups, surrounding schools and local community. We also hope to make some additions to our school grounds including, adding to our trim trail and creating a meadow and some vegetable gardens.

Lastly of course we will be celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, and the Olympic Games!

We will keep you posted. Of course you can look at our website if you have access to a computer - www.cuxtoninfantschool.co.uk.

In the meantime, as always, take care,
Sandra Jones, Headteacher.



Max's Tail Piece.

On Monday I was watching Master gardening and I thought to myself, *Why?* He was trying to remove the ground elder and grass from among the Phlox, lungwort and irises. It's a hard job and only a few inches away – across the border of the border, so to speak – he tries to encourage the grass to grow. In a week or two the weeds will be back. So why does he bother to keep pulling them out?

He tells me that irises, Pulmonaria and Phlox are nicer plants to have in the garden than ground elder. He says he likes the smell of Phlox. Well my nose is a great deal more sensitive than his and I can't see it myself. Probably the best smell of all is meat cooking. So I don't know why you humans wax lyrical about flowers or baking bread or percolating coffee. In fact, for all its wonderful smell, coffee made with hot water and fresh beans is nothing like as nice, Master says, as a spoonful of instant in a mug of warm milk! I think that might be called a Latté nowadays. It reminds me of the joke about the man who complained to the waiter that his coffee tasted like earth. *That's not surprising, Sir,* said the waiter. *It was only ground this morning!*

Which brings us back nicely to the garden. What use are Phlox? I eat the long grass that grows at the end of the row. I heard on Radio 4 that ground elder is edible for human beings. In fact some people say that the Romans brought it to Britain for that very reason. Incidentally, had you heard that the Presbyterian Scots call what we call ground elder creeping bishop? That's an ecclesiastical joke.

Apparently you cook ground elder just like spinach. I imagine it can't be very nice or everyone would eat it, considering how easily it grows. But then, the way food prices are going up, maybe you'd better learn to like it. It probably counts towards your five a day. Given the way gas and electricity prices are going up, however, maybe you should eat it raw. I wonder if that would be OK? Some things are more nourishing raw, but some are poisonous.

On the other hand, I think Phlox definitely are poisonous, cooked or raw. Moreover they often need watering in the Summer. With Master's free-draining soil and overhanging trees, if it doesn't rain for a few days, the Phlox plants all wilt and he's out there with the watering can. I believe irises are poisonous too. Lungwort used to be used as lung medicine but I don't know how it was prepared, in what doses it was administered or whether it did you any good. It was more because the leaves look a bit like lungs than for any scientific reason that it was given.

Ground elder never wilts. It grows so easily. Why try to eradicate a plant that grows so well and replace it with plants that struggle to survive?

They say a weed is a plant growing in the wrong place, but it seems to me, that what you really mean by a weed is a plant that grows easily and what you mean by a flower is something you need to plant and nurture lovingly, sometimes for very disappointing results. If a patch of grass is covered in daisies and buttercups, you reach for the weed killer. If there are one or two orchids, discernible only to the trained eye, you go mad about conservation. Surely if daisies and buttercups grow well in Kent and avocados don't, you should encourage the daisies and buttercups and give up on the avocados. Go with the flow!

Avocados do grow nicely from the seed in the middle, but they are killed by the frost as soon as Winter comes.

Which raises another question. What right has Master to say that certain kinds of plant should grow in his garden – roses, fuchsias, apples – but not others – stinging nettles, dandelions, sycamores? Come to think of it, you can eat dandelions and stinging nettles and you can play helicopters with sycamore seeds. Surely all species are equal. How dare you humans encourage some sorts of plants and animals and try to control or get rid of others?

Now he reminds me that I'm on sticky ground here. How many domestic dogs, he asked me, do you think there would be if human beings didn't favour some species over others? And how well would they be looked after? On reflection I don't fancy being outside all the time, out there foraging with the foxes for refuse and small creatures that can't run as fast as I can. I'm grateful to Master for giving me a nice home and three meals a day when I come to think about it.

By the way, Master wishes very much that people wouldn't put food for foxes and other wildlife in his garden. Some of it they even put out in its wrappers. Not only is it a violation of his privacy, dirty and messy, but it is also possible that I'll be choked on a bone or poisoned by something which isn't as fresh as it ought to be. We've even found frozen meat in our garden!

The world is as it is because God has given human beings dominion or stewardship over it. You made much of the world as it is – for good and ill. It's up to you to choose the good and to reject the evil and you are answerable to God for the choices you make regarding what you do with what He has put into your hands. You can make the world better or worse. To a large extent it is up to you and to that extent you are responsible, even *accountable* if you like modern management jargon.

One postscript. Master mentioned in the last magazine that there had been vandalism in Halling Cemetery and that there had been a suggestion that it should be kept locked. He received an e mail today from someone who had noticed in the magazine for 1906 that Halling Cemetery would have to be kept locked because of thieves and vandals and that the key would have to be collected from the post office. Things change less than we might think!

Max, the Rectory Spaniel.