

The Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
3 rd September Trinity 12	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall		Acts 18 vv 1-16 p114 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010
	11.00 Holy Communion		Jeremiah 15 vv 15-21 p774 Romans 12 vv 9-21 p1139 Matthew 16 vv 21-28 p984
10 th September Trinity 13	11.00 Holy Communion		Ezekiel 33 vv 7-11 p864 Romans 13 vv 8-14 p1140 Matthew 18 vv 15-20 985
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall		Ezekiel 12 v21 – 13 v16 p839 Acts 19 vv 1-20 p1115
17 th September Trinity 14	11.00 Holy Communion & Stop! Look! Listen!		Genesis 50 vv 15-21 p57 Romans 14 vv 1-12 p1140 Matthew 18 vv 21-35 p985
24 th September Trinity 15	11.00 Holy Communion		Jonah 3 v10 – 4v11 p928 Philippians 1 vv 21-30 p1178 Matthew 20 vv 1-16 p987
1 st October Trinity 16	Trinity 16	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	I John 2 vv 22-29 p1226 Mark 9 vv 38-50 p1013
	Harvest Festival	11.00 Holy Communion	Philippians 2 vv 1-13 p1179 Matthew 21 vv 23-32 p989
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
3 rd September Trinity 12	9.30 Family Communion		Jeremiah 15 vv 15-21 p774 Romans 12 vv 9-21 p1139 Matthew 16 vv 21-28 p984
10 th September Trinity 13	9.30 Holy Communion		Ezekiel 33 vv 7-11 p864 Romans 13 vv 8-14 p1140 Matthew 18 vv 15-20 985
17 th September Trinity 14	8.00 Holy Communion		Epistle & Gospel BCP
	9.30 Holy Communion		Genesis 50 vv 15-21 p57 Romans 14 vv 1-12 p1140 Matthew 18 vv 21-35 p985
24 th September Trinity 15	9.30 Holy Communion		Jonah 3 v10 – 4v11 p928 Philippians 1 vv 21-30 p1178 Matthew 20 vv 1-16 p987
Friday 29 th September Michaelmas	7.30 pm Holy Communion		Genesis 28 vv 10-17 p30 Revelation 12 vv 7-12 p1242 John 1 vv 47-51 p1064
1 st October Trinity 16 Harvest Festival	9.30 Family Communion		Philippians 2 vv 1-13 p1179 Matthew 21 vv 23-32 p989
	6.30 Harvest Praise Followed by Harvest Supper in Church Hall		
Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 am at St Michael's		Holy Communion Thursdays 9.30 am at St John's	
30 th August John Bunyan	I Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 Matthew 23 vv 27-32	31 st August S Aidan	I Thessalonians 3 vv 7-13 Matthew 24 vv 42-51
6 th September	Colossians 1 vv 1-8 Luke 4 vv 38-44	7 th September	Colossians 1 vv 9-14 Luke 5 vv 1-11
13 th September S John Chrysostom	Colossians 3 vv 1-11 Luke 6 vv 20-26	14 th September Holy Cross	Numbers 21 vv 4-9 Philippians 2 vv 6-11 John 3 vv 13-17
20 th September	I Timothy 3 vv 14-16 Luke 7 vv 31-35	21 st September S Matthew	Proverbs 3 vv 13-18 II Corinthians 4 vv 1-6 Matthew 9 vv 9-13
27 th September S Vincent de Paul	Ezra 9 vv 5-9 Luke 9 vv 1-6	28 th September	Haggai 1 vv 1-8 Luke 9 vv 7-9

Copy Date October Magazine: 8th September 8.00 am Rectory



Friends of Kent Churches Bike Ride & Stride
9th September – Sponsor Forms from Rector.





Worship on a Building Site

Those of you who were around when St John's was being re-ordered just over thirty years ago may remember what it was like to conduct services in a building where the builders were still working. With some amusement, I remember one Sunday when we worshipped outside in the churchyard while the firemen investigated the cause of the smoke in the roof. It turned out that a very powerful lamp had been placed too close to one of the roof beams. It was the only time I had the opportunity to ask someone in a 'phone box to end her call, please, because I needed to dial 999! It was the third fire our visiting preacher had been involved with. He is now Bishop of Leicester. I don't know what conclusions to draw from that – if any!

One nice thing I remember from those times was the lady who said how much it meant to her that the sanctuary lamp continued to burn whatever else was going on in the building. God is what it's all about! In the same way, after Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest re-established the altar on the temple site at Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile, worship continued to be offered on that altar throughout all the building work of the next few decades and the rebuilding which took place centuries later under King Herod. Worship in the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem only finally ceased around forty years after the Crucifixion of Jesus. Christians believe that the temple and its sacrifices were no longer necessary because Jesus had fulfilled all that was needful on the Cross and, by faith in Him, anyone can come into the Presence of God in prayer and worship. When Jesus died on the Cross, the temple veil was rent in twain, symbolising that we all have access to God the Father in Him.

But what about worship on a literal building site? Can you worship God among JCBs and cement mixers, with men digging trenches, building walls, fitting doors and windows, installing gas and electricity, laying roads and burying pipes and cables? Of course you can. God is everywhere and we can worship Him anywhere. How would I worship God if I were working on a building site? I'd thank God for my being out of doors on His good earth creating something useful for people. I'd thank God for my skills and my health and

strength to do the work. I'd thank God that I was achieving something. I'd treat my fellow workers with respect and pay due attention to their health and safety. I'd consider the neighbours. I'd think about the people who would be living or working in the buildings I put up and make sure I did a proper job. If there were other things on my mind, I'd commend them to the Lord in prayer. Anything we do, we can do as an act of worship. As an act of worship, anything we do has ethical implications. Are we treating other people – workers, customers, neighbours, shareholders, the environment – right? Colossians 3¹⁷: *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

That's not what I meant either by my title "Worship on a Building Site." There's a lot in the Bible about building the Church. There's a lot about building the temple at Jerusalem, but the temple at Jerusalem was literally a building. It was made of stone and wood and precious metals. A lot of hard, physical work went into building it. The Church, however, in the biblical sense is not a building. Acts 7^{48&49}: *Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?* God dwells in Jesus. The people of God are the Body of Christ. God, therefore, dwells in us if we are Christians. He dwells in us as individuals. He dwells in us as a body, a congregation, a church. He dwells in the Church which is the sum total of all Christian people on earth and in heaven. Thus our bodies are described in the New Testament as being temples of God. The whole Church is also described as the Temple of the Holy Spirit and we are like stones – living stones – which make it up. Everyone of us has his or her place. We all fit in. We are all part of the whole. We are missed if we opt out of our Christian calling. Of course, God can manage without us, but we can't manage without Him.

So what does the Bible mean by building the Church? The Bible doesn't mention church buildings at all. In New Testament times, the Church didn't actually own any buildings for worshipping in. Christians worshipped in the temple and in synagogues as long as they were allowed to. They also worshipped in people's houses and in hired halls, but not in specially built

buildings of their own. So what does the Bible mean by building the Church? I think it would be fair to say that one meaning of building the Church would be for it to grow bigger. The Great Commission is (Matthew 28^{19&20}): *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* We're supposed to tell the world the Good News of Jesus. Everyone who hears and believes becomes one of us. They are baptised in the Name of Jesus and they become members of the Church, limbs of His Body, stones in the temple, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus came to proclaim the Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom is the kingdom of justice, mercy and peace. Jesus is the King of Love. *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* This is the vision for the future (Revelation 11¹⁵). It will surely be fulfilled. It is God's promise to us, which is certain to come about as a result of the sure mercies of God. Jesus teaches us to pray for the fulfilment of this vision – *Thy Kingdom come.* He teaches us to work for the fulfilment of this vision. We are part of the plan. Believers in Jesus are the salt of the earth, the light of the world and the leaven which leavens the lump, in other words, the yeast which turns flour and water into dough for making bread. It is a tremendous privilege to be part of God's purposes for the whole of Creation. God can manage without us, but we can't manage without Him.

The main thrust of building the Church in the New Testament, however, seems to me to be building one another up to be better Christians. I Thessalonians 5¹¹: *Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. Edify* means build. A building is an edifice. We're to build one another up. What does that mean? Sometimes it's easiest to come to the meaning of things by looking at the opposite.

I shan't tell you who she is or which church she's a member of, but a lady was telling me lately about how, as a church officer, she's continually bombarded with complaints from members of the congregation she belongs to. This gets her down.

Many of the complaints are trivial. Many of them she can do nothing about. Some of them, if she tried to do something about them, might plunge her into conflict with other people. We are called to build one another up, but it's only too easy to tear down.

I'm sorry to say that we criticise one another. We gossip about one another. We find fault with one another. We make invidious comparisons between people. We draw attention to one another's failings. We show insufficient appreciation for what other people do. We're inadequately grateful for what people do for the Church. We forget to thank God for one another. Jesus says, (Matthew 7¹⁻⁵): *Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye,* but we don't take much notice of Him. Why is it always so much easier to see the grain of sawdust in somebody else's eye than the whopping great plank in our own? Yes, and I do know that I am at fault as well here. 'Twas ever thus. Even in the story of the Exodus, when God redeems the people of God from slavery in Egypt and brings them through the Red Sea to the Mountain of God and ultimately to the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the consistent theme is the murmuring in the Wilderness. No matter how good God is to us, the people of God, never seem to stop complaining!

They complained about God and they complained about Moses and it wore Moses down too. Church leaders don't have some special grace which makes them immune to personal criticism. We offer ourselves for ordination for a variety of reasons. Some of us have such a sense of the beauty of holiness that we long to pray and to conduct public worship. Some of us have a fervent desire to preach the Gospel and to teach the faith. Some are deeply compassionate individuals who try to be with people in all their sorrows and joys. Some have a burning sense of justice and long to transform society into

something more like the Kingdom of God. It is frustrating enough that it is necessary to worry about administration and money and meetings and buildings as a prerequisite of doing what we were really ordained for without finding ourselves the object of the modern equivalent of the murmuring in the Wilderness. Other Christians feel the same too. It's not just the clergy. All we Christians have a Gospel to proclaim and we should support one another in proclaiming it, not deprecate and diminish other people and their efforts to please the Lord and to serve His Church.

Tearing down instead of building up. It's obvious that continually putting other people down is bad for them. It discourages them. It makes them feel unloved, unappreciated and perhaps unnecessary. It is the opposite of building other people up, encouraging them, comforting them, helping them, valuing them.

It's also bad for the Church as a whole. People who are continually devalued and demoralised by the criticisms of others and general lack of appreciation get discouraged and don't play their full part in God's work: sharing the faith, building the Church, serving God's world. Furthermore, if people seeking the love of God come into a "fellowship" where the existing members don't

seem to love one another very much, they are likely to seek God elsewhere or else to give up on God altogether. We have a responsibility as a Christian congregation to live on earth as citizens of heaven - which we are by the grace of God.

Finally, of course, a complaining spirit undermines the person who is always complaining. St Paul says (I Thessalonians 5¹⁵⁻¹⁸): *See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* If we're always negative about everything, we not only depress other people; we depress ourselves. We tear ourselves down instead of building one another up. If you want to be happy, be positive. If you want to be useful, be positive. Be joyful. Jesus came so that we might have joy in abundance, so that we might live! I'll conclude with some words of St Jude (his epistle vv 20&21): *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

Every blessing, Roger.

Psalm 127: Except the Lord build the house : their labour is but lost that build it.

2 Except the Lord keep the city : the watchman waketh but in vain.

3 It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early, and so late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness : for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

4 Lo, children and the fruit of the womb : are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.

5 Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant : even so are the young children.

6 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them : they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING



As there is still some uncertainty about when banks will stop accepting the old-style pound coins, we have decided to open the boxes a few weeks early this year. Friday 22nd September will be the day, starting at 9.30 am as usual, at 204 Bush Road. You can either bring your box to church and give it to me there, drop it in at

my house or I am more than happy to collect it from you. Just give me a call to arrange this. Thanks.

Julia Wells Tel: 727424.

Jokes With a Yorkshire Accent

A yorkshireman asks the vet to take a look at his cat. The vet says, "Of course, is it a tom?" The yorkshireman replies, "No, I brought him with me."

The same Yorkshireman goes to the jeweller and asks about getting a gold statue of his prize whippet made. The goldsmith asks, "'Do you want it eighteen carat?" to which he replies "Nay, I thought chewing a bone would be good."

Biblical Names Quiz

How Many of these Can You Get Right?

- 1) In which Thomas Hardy novel did Bathsheba appear?
- 2) Which Ezra was an American poet (born 1885)?
- 3) A lady farmer who appeared on TV in the 1970s?
- 4) Which Isaac was an American sci fi writer?
- 5) This saint shares his name with a Star Wars character?
- 6) Christian name of Mr Sowerby's apprentice in David Copperfield?
- 7) Christian name of the Countdown numbers lady?
- 8) In which Dickens's novel did Jacob Marley appear?
- 9) This Timothy played Winston Churchill in the King's Speech
- 10) This rabbit often got into trouble with Mr McGregor

Answers to Quiz

- 1) Far From the Madding Crowd
- 2) Ezra Pound
- 3) Hannah Hauxwell
- 4) Isaac Asimov
- 5) Luke
- 6) Noah
- 7) Rachel
- 8) A Christmas Carol
- 9) Timothy Spall
- 10) Peter



Walkers from this parish raised £300 on the Christian Aid walk on 10th June. The

total for the area was £517 plus £60 from a barbecue the Methodists ran. Thank you to all who took part and to all who sponsored the event.

Jokes From the School Plays

Two tremendous jokes in the school plays this year. At Halling, in *Ali Baba*, the camel swallowed an abacus. Its keeper responded, "It's what' inside that counts."

At Cuxton, in *Robin Hoo*, the villagers of Sherwood complained that their houses were so small that they had to have condensed milk.

And one more for lovers of TV quizzes. For the million pound question the contestant had to say which bird doesn't build a nest – a cuckoo, a thrush or a swallow? He phoned a friend and got the right answer and won the million. The next day he saw the friend in a pub and asked how he knew that. "It was easy", said the friend. "A cuckoo lives in a clock!"

Forthcoming Attractions

9th September: Friends of Kent Churches Ride & Stride

6.30 Harvest Praise at St Michael's followed by Harvest Supper in Church Hall

14th October: 7.30 pm Quiz for Church funds in church hall.

4th November: Diocesan Gathering. Details to follow. Watch this space.

9th December: 10.00 Christmas Fair (nee Coffee Morning aka market) in church hall. ALSO evening Christmas music event.

Grand Quiz for parish funds

14th October 7.30 pm Church Hall

Tickets £7.00 from Rector. Includes ploughman's. Please bring own drink.

01634 717134, roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk

From the Registers

Baptisms:

22 nd July	Amelie Rose Hoy	Vicarage Close
23 rd July	Hallie Evelyn Smith	Holborough

Weddings:

22 nd July	Nicholas Jonathan Hoy & Lisa Jane MacTaggart	Halling
11 th August	Philip John Badman & Susan Irene Saint	Halling

Wedding Blessing:

20 th July	Norman and Betty Head Diamond Celebration	Halling
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Funerals:

18 th July	Eileen Carol Feakins (64)	Bush Road
25 th July	Mark Stephen Phillips (49)	formerly of Cuxton
25 th July	Jane Ann Webb (69)	Halling
3 rd August	Michael Yates	Vicarage Close
8 th August	Margaret Rose Guest (80)	Rochester Road Cuxton

Flora and Fauna

The months roll on. The days are getting shorter. There's a chill in the mornings but the sun is still powerful later on in the day. I'm writing this on Lammas Day, 1st August. Traditionally, this was the day when the first of the grain harvest was made into a loaf for a celebration of Holy Communion. Eucharist means thanksgiving. We thank God for all His good gifts to us. Lammas is loaf mass. The harvest tends to be earlier now than it was in the Middle Ages. Wheat is often planted in the Winter, rather than the Spring and modern varieties are faster growing. The yields are much higher too, with better varieties, improved soil fertility and better control of pests and diseases. We have a lot to be thankful for, but we must also keep an eye out lest our more intensive farming methods result in damage to the environment and possibly food shortages in the long run.

The rape is safely gathered in and so is much of the corn. In the field where there were those beautiful scabious flowers a few weeks ago, there were also some sunflowers coming up, but most of them seem to have rotted before flowering, which is a pity because the sunflowers were beautiful at Court Farm last year. There is a wonderful crop of cooking apples in my garden, though the eaters are somewhat disappointing. There are blackberries in abundance out in the countryside and in the garden. The other day I saw a rather ungainly pigeon devouring elderberries. It was really too heavy to perch where the berries were best. I notice a large crop of sweet chestnuts in the woods. We used to pick them up and eat them on the way to school when I was a child – though I don't really like them raw. They make your mouth go all furry inside! There are now haws growing on the hawthorn bushes where the may flowers flourished a few weeks ago. I believe you can eat the flesh but possibly not the seed of haws, but I'm not going to try it. The internet says you can make jam out of them. I think you can also eat the young hawthorn leaves in Spring, but I can't say I fancy them either. The internet says that's OK too and reminds me that my grandmother said she ate them as a child and they used to call them bread and cheese.

I've seen the first damsel flies on the margin of the woods and I'm hoping to see dragon flies in my garden again this year. Sometimes they settle on you when you're reading in the garden – extremely beautiful, large insects with two clearly defined sets of wings. There have also been little blue butterflies and little brown butterflies and little white butterflies and the more easily identified red admirals.

In my semi-wild garden, the evening primrose has done especially well this Summer. Have you noticed,

how, just before it gets really dark, the pale yellow flowers seem to luminesce? The same is true of my neighbour's white hydrangeas and the snowberries in my own garden. They are vivid in the dying light. Evening primrose of course comes out at night. Hemerocallis or day lilies are supposed to come out in the day time, but this year mine haven't much. The orange of the Montbretia and the purples, pinks, reds and whites of the fuchsias are brightening up the garden but seem somehow to presage the coming of Autumn. It has, however, been a remarkable year for roses and the Hypericum and Weigela are bravely producing a second flush of blooms. The Buddleia is especially fragrant, notably at night, and attracts the butterflies, while the stinging nettles provide food for several varieties of caterpillar. There ought to be hedgehogs in a garden like mine and there used to be, but I think the badgers have eaten them all. Nevertheless, there have been fewer slugs and snails than normal. I think this is because the weather was so dry in June. Dry weather also sends the moles deeper hunting for earthworms which seems to result in fewer molehills in the lawn – always a good thing. I have remarked that the really spectacular displays of carpets of one colour which we get in the Spring, flowers such as bluebells in the woods and primroses in the churchyard, don't really occur so much later on in the year. There are, however, plenty of individual plants flowering in July and August and on into September. I'll try to name some of them in a moment. A friend much the same age as me and I were reminiscing about how our mothers took us for nature walks when we were young and told us the names of these flowers. Her father (my grandfather) had told my mother and so the knowledge was passed on. People don't seem to walk much these days. A report in the paper suggests that the average Briton walks less than a mile distance or 20 minutes time each day. Given that many of us walk or run, five, ten or even more miles a day, some people must be getting almost no walking exercise at all. Yet walking is one of the best forms of exercise. You don't have to be especially fit to do it. It doesn't strain anything. It costs nothing. You can do it whenever you want. You don't need any special equipment. Another newspaper article suggested that people are happier if they get plenty of fresh air. So what's stopping you? Are all the labour saving gadgets we have nowadays keeping you too busy? Is it that our risk averse society has left you scared of the outdoors? Or have you just got out of the habit? Personally, I can't understand people who exercise at gyms or on machines in their own homes if they are surrounded by such beautiful countryside as we are. Of course, having a dog gets you out in all weathers. If it's public policy to get people to take more exercise, far from councils thinking up more and more regulations to limit where you can walk your dog, they ought to be making puppies available on the NHS!

Anyway, I'm trying to identify the flowers I see when I walk Tommy around the woods and fields of this parish. There's plenty of yellow ragwort – of some concern since it's poisonous to grazing animals, especially horses. There are the red berries of wild Arum (lords and ladies or cuckoo pint) – also poisonous. Wild strawberries are common in my garden and probably elsewhere too. They are good to eat, but too small for us impatient people to bother with. I'm sure I've seen bird's foot trefoil and toadflax next to the lower path across Dean Valley. These, like ragwort, are yellow flowers and it has been suggested that flowers of a particular colour predominate at particular times of year because pollinating insects learn to recognise them. The other common colour spectrum at this time of year is purple, mauve, pink – with ebullient loosestrife and more modest vetch but two examples. There are purple thistles, mauve mallow and pink willow herb at the edge of the field behind Mayflower Heights and the new footpath which leads from there to Dean Valley. There is also pale green spurge as you walk towards Bush Road where the paint factory used to be. There are more delicate relatives of cow parsley on the North Downs Way as it crosses Dean Valley where there are also yellow relatives of the common clover. We may soon see a few wild hops on Cemetery Road, Halling, and at the top of Cuxton churchyard, which I've just discovered come from the same family as Cannabis. No wonder the smell of them drying gives you a good night's sleep. Old man's beard (wild Clematis) is also flowering now. It is sometimes known as traveller's joy – supposedly because it lifts the wayfarer's spirits to see its abundant furry flowers bedecking the hedgerows. There are still plenty of red and white clovers about. I've been looking at the pictures in my wildflower book, but I'm not going to commit myself to any further identifications at this stage. Perhaps I should take the book with me next time I take a country walk. Why don't you take a look yourself? The countryside's free and very beautiful and there are plenty of rights of way. Roger.

By the way, why did the butterfly flutter by?

Because it saw the dragon fly drink the flagon dry.

QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 30th SEPTEMBER

CHURCH HALL, CHURCH GREEN, FRINDSBURY, ME2 4HE

- TABLES of 6 – 8

7 for 7.30 start

- £7.50 includes Ploughman's Supper. Please bring your own drinks & glasses
- These evenings are always popular so please book early to secure your table by contacting Lesley Wright on 01634 725635 or Sue Jones on 01634 296050 or Rec tor 01634 717134.

And Yet There Is More. There Is Always More

We have enjoyed wonderful fellowship with the Bulgarian Orthodox community which has been worshipping at St Michael's. Some of us have shared in their liturgy and more of us have met and made friends with Fr Dobromir and members of his congregation. We have seen how they do some things differently from the way we do them and how they have different ways of looking at some things from the way we look at them. But in the essentials, we are one. We are all Christians, united in the love of Christ. We can all learn from one another. They like our hymns, for example. What follows is an extract from a paper Fr Dobromir sent me about Fr Florovsky's insights into our understanding of the Eucharist or Holy Communion. It's not at all easy to understand, but it would be totally impossible if you hadn't even had the chance to read it. So I'm printing it here. It's very good. I'll try to say something about what I think it's about at the end and I'll also include a Church of England Prayer which you may know and which I think sums it up nicely. It's one of the prayers in the 1662 prayer book following our reception of Holy Communion. If you're interested, I tried to say more about our common faith in a sermon on 23rd July which you can find at <http://cuxtonandhalling.org.uk/Sermon%20Trinity%206%202017%20-%20The%20Glory%20of%20God.pdf> or ask me for a copy.

Father Georges Florovsky writes: *"In the Eucharist, invisibly but really there is revealed the Fullness of the Church. Every liturgy is celebrated in connection with and on behalf of the whole Church, not only on behalf of the people present – in the same way as the celebrant has power to celebrate the mystery by virtue of the apostolic succession – and thus by the apostles and by the whole Church, and so – by Christ Himself. Because every ... 'small Church' is not only part, but also a concentrated image of the whole Church, inseparable from her unity and Fullness. This is why at every Liturgy, mystically but really the whole Church is present and concelebrates. The liturgical celebration is a constantly renewed theophany in which we contemplate the God-Man Christ as the founder and Head of the Church, and with Him – the whole Church. In the Eucharistic Prayer, the Church contemplates and is aware of herself as the unified and whole body of Christ."*

"In the Holy Eucharist the faithful become the Body of Christ. Therefore, the Eucharist is the sacrament of the Church, 'The sacrament of the assembly' (μυστήριον συνάξεως), 'The sacrament of the communion' (μυστήριον κοινωνίας). The Eucharistic communion is not so much a spiritual or moral unity, not so much feelings and emotions. It is a real and ontological unity, the realisation of an organic life in Christ. This very image of the Body shows the organic continuity of life. In the faithful, according to the strength and the extent of their union with Christ, there is revealed the united divine-human life – in the communion of the sacrament, in the unity of the life-giving Spirit. The ancient Fathers did not hesitate to speak of 'natural' and 'physical' communion, which was a realistic way of explaining the gospel image of the Vine and the branches (John 15:5)."

What this is about is union in love. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons and one God. God is love. The unity of the Trinity is the unity of perfect love. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of Man. Jesus is one Christ. The divine nature and the human nature unite in Christ, because God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son. The divine nature and the human nature in Christ are the unity of love.

Christ's prayer for Christian people is that we should be one. His commandment is that we should love one another as He loves us. Essentially, we are one with Christ and He with us. This is effected by His love, by His gift to us of faith, by our Baptism into His Church. God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit – dwells in us and we in Him. This is the unity of love. This is our unity with God the Holy Trinity and our unity with the whole of God's Church. The Church is the Body of Christ. There is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, made up of all Christian people on earth and in heaven, the Bride of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. There are local manifestations of that one holy, catholic and apostolic Church, local churches like St John's and St Michael's and Cuxton URC and Halling Baptist Church and our Bulgarian Orthodox community and the Roman Catholic community and other Christian fellowships in the area. We are one in Christ, members one of another. This is the unity of love.

The Eucharist or Holy Communion is an (the supreme?) expression of that unity in love, our unity with God the Holy Trinity; the unity between God and humanity which Christ effects by His Incarnation, His Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension and by His sending the Holy Spirit; our unity with one another as Christian people, as God's Church, one with one another in His love, one with the saints in heaven (and with the angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven), one with *the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth* (all Christian people in the world today), one in our own fellowships, our local manifestations of the Body of Christ, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. The Sacrament of Holy Communion signifies all this, but Sacraments also effect what they signify. They make it happen. It is therefore a tremendous privilege to partake in the Holy Communion. Eucharist is indeed our duty and our joy. We are bound to come and we are bound to come *in love and charity with our neighbours*. Thus the grace of God works in us to declare what we essentially are – the children of God – and the grace of God works in us in order that we should gain our inheritance as members of His family, as co-heirs with Christ of those good things which He has prepared for those who love Him.

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

Mystery Solved

The beautiful flowers in the fields south of Bush Road which died suddenly recently were a cover crop. The intention is to remove pernicious weeds from the ground by treating and cultivating the soil, planting a cover crop and repeating the process. So they were deliberately killed with weed killer and the fields will probably be ploughed and sown with winter wheat in a few weeks.

I was reminded of the traditional advice if you want to turn rough ground into a vegetable garden. Make the first crop potatoes. All the digging and earthing up really breaks up the soil and enables you to get rid of those pernicious, perennial weeds.

St Michael's Draw (August): £10 Mr Curnow (30), & £5 each to Mssrs Crundwell (14) & M^cCabe (8).

St John's Draw (July): £5 each to Mr S Head (8), Mrs Chidwick (9), Mr Pratt (98) & Mrs Shaw (102) – drawn by Joyce Heighes.

A Message from Betty & Norman Head

We would like to thank everyone for the lovely cards and messages of congratulations sent for our Diamond Wedding. Special thanks to Roger for the blessing at the Thursday Communion, and to Jenny and Chris for the lovely cake.

Harvest Festival

We shall celebrate the harvest on 1st October at services of Holy Communion at 8.00 at the Jubilee Hall, 9.30 at St Michael's and 11.00 at St John's, and with a service of Harvest Praise at St Michael's at 6.30, which will be followed by Harvest Supper in the Church Hall. Harvest gifts of tinned and packeted goods for the Food Bank (not too near *use by* date, please) will be welcomed at all services and there will also be envelopes for the annual Poverty and Hope appeal which may be returned up to Christmas.



Tommy's Talking Points

We're enjoying the Summer very much. It is still light early and late and it has really been a very dry Summer, despite some heavy downpours and spectacular thunder and lightning and a few days when it seems to have rained all day. Some dogs, Master says, are afraid of thunder, but it doesn't really bother me. Down here, on all fours, I'm not likely to be struck by lightning. Master was disappointed when his lunch date stood him up a couple of days ago but he's quite pleased now, because he took the chance of his missed afternoon out to cut his grass, which he was going to do today, and it is now pouring with rain, which is why I am taking my chance to write up these notes. I enjoyed lolling in the garden in the sun while he was mowing. Speaking of which, the probation boys are doing a wonderful job on St Michael's churchyard and their shift always starts with making a lot of fuss of me.

So, these lovely light, dry mornings we usually get a good, long walk in the woods before Morning Prayer at St Michael's at 7.15. People notice if he rings the bell early or late. Then, if he finishes what he is doing in time, we get another walk before Evening Prayer at 5.00. Sometimes, we meet another person who is coming to the service too in the fields, maybe feeding the horses. We know then that we can't be late. I'm getting better at staying with Master in the woods, but sometimes the chance to catch up with another person or another dog or to follow a trail is just too exciting and I become completely deaf to his calling me.

I said that the dry weather helps, but it doesn't make all that much difference. He can't sit still. He's usually up between five and six and, if it's raining, we still go for a walk. "What else is there to do at the time in the morning?" he says. Again, late afternoon, he gets stir crazy if we've been in all day. It takes pretty rough weather to keep us indoors. So I usually get my ration of walks and more. Yesterday, his knee got so stiff sitting in the afternoon, that we had to walk to Halling in the evening to get it going again. He says that wasn't the only reason. There was Rector's duty to be done. We did follow the new path R201 from Pilgrims Road to the Formby Road roundabout (the one that used to run through the cement factory). We waited a long time for it, but it's brilliant if you've not tried it yet.

On warm, light evenings, we have our tea in the garden. Well, he does. He puts my meat or fish (or dog food if I'm unlucky) in my bowl in the kitchen first. I eat up the best bits, but sometimes save the mixer meal to eat last thing at night when he's waiting to go to bed. He always makes sure I'm comfortably settled in my basket before he goes upstairs. So I keep him waiting a bit when I feel like it. It is nice sitting in the garden, however. The sun is still warm as it gets lower in the sky. I can keep an eye on what's going on and he can enjoy reading his book. I like to know what's happening at the church hall and what our neighbours are up to. They're good for a cuddle too. He likes being out of doors so much that, when he was a curate, his vicar said he didn't know why the Church bothered to provide him with a house. When it was still light at 9.00, we'd have our supper out there – his cheese and biscuits, my dog biscuits. Here's a mathematical conundrum. When I have Shapes, he tells me that the antepenultimate is $\frac{5}{6}$ ^{ths} of my allowance, but, when I have Bonios, the antepenultimate is $\frac{2}{3}$ ^{rds} of my allowance, but $\frac{2}{3}$ ^{rds} is only $\frac{4}{6}$ ^{ths}. So how does that make sense? He says one Bonio counts as two Shapes. So how many Bonios do I get and how many Shapes?

Finally, we've seen a lot of fungi appearing in the lawn and in the woods and some people gathering what they believe to be edible mushrooms. Master's been having a go at identifying flowering plants, but he says the only identification he'll trust with mushrooms is the label on the shelf in the shop.

Our next planned special walk is Cliffe to Gravesend on the Saxon Shore. I'll tell you about it next time. Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.