

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
July 4 th Trinity 5	9.30 Family Communion	Isaiah 66 vv 10-14 p753 Galatians 6 vv 7-16 p1172 Luke 10 vv 1-20 p1041
July 11 th Trinity 6	9.30 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 9-14 p209 Colossians 1 vv 1-14 p1182 Luke 10 vv 25-37 p1042
July 18 th Trinity 7	9.30 Holy Communion	Genesis 18 vv 1-15 p17 Colossians 1 vv 15-28 p1182 Luke 10 vv 38-42 p1042
July 25 th St James	9.30 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 45 vv 1-5 p807 Acts 11 v27 – 12 v2 p1106 II Corinthians 4 vv 7-15 p1160 Matthew 20 vv 20-28 p988
August 1 st Trinity 9	9.30 Family Communion	Ecclesiastes 1 vv 1&2 p668 Ecclesiastes 1 vv 12-14 p668 Ecclesiastes 2 vv 18-23 p669 Colossians 3 vv 1-11 p1184 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045
Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
July 4 th Trinity 5	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Genesis 29 vv 1-20 p30 Mark 6 vv 7-29 p1008
	11.00 Holy Communion	Isaiah 66 vv 10-14 p753 Galatians 6 vv 1-16 p1172 Luke 10 vv 1-20 p1041
July 11 th Trinity 6	11.00 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 9-14 p209 Colossians 1 vv 1-14 p1182 Luke 10 vv 25-37 p1042
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Genesis 32 vv 9-30 p36 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010
July 18 th Trinity 7	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion	Genesis 18 vv 1-15 p17 Colossians 1 vv 15-28 p1182 Luke 10 vv 38-42 p1042
July 25 th St James	11.00 Holy Communion	Jeremiah 45 vv 1-5 p807 Acts 11 v27 – 12 v2 p1106 II Corinthians 4 vv 7-15 p1160 Matthew 20 vv 20-28 p988
August 1 st Trinity 9	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Genesis 50 vv 4-26 p56 Mark 6 vv 45-52 p1009
	11.00 Holy Communion	Ecclesiastes 1 vv 1&2 p668 Ecclesiastes 1 vv 12-14 p668 Ecclesiastes 2 vv 18-23 p669 Colossians 3 vv 1-11 p1184 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045

roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk>

On Thursday afternoons we have a **Mother & Toddler** service at Halling at 2.00 and at Cuxton every Wednesday also at 2.00. **Saints Alive!** (formerly Sunday School) is at Cuxton Church Hall at 9.30 (not first Sundays or school holidays). **After School Club**, Thursdays @ St John's.
Copy Date August Magazine: 9th July 8.30 am Rectory.

9.30 Holy Communion Wednesdays @ St Michael's		9.30 Holy Communion Thursdays at St John's	
7 th July	Hosea 10 vv 1-12 Matthew 10 vv 1-7	8 th July	Hosea 11 vv 1-9 Matthew 10 vv 7-15
14 th July	Isaiah 10 vv 5-16 Matthew 11 vv 25-27	15 th July St Swithun	Isaiah 26 vv 7-19 Matthew 11 vv 28-end
21 st July	Jeremiah 1 vv 1-10 Matthew 13 vv 1-9	22 nd July St Mary Magdalene	Song of Solomon 3 vv 1-4 II Corinthians 5 vv 14-17 John 20 vv 1-18
28 th July	Jeremiah 15 vv 10-end Matthew 13 vv 44-46	29 th July	Jeremiah 18 vv 1-6 Matthew 13 vv 47-53

St John's Draw: £25 each to Mrs Chidwick (27) & Mr Smith (113) and £10 to Mrs Mitchell (67) – drawn by Mrs Hayward



www.prayereleven.org.uk

Prayer is the point of this website and it was sent to me as something to commend to you. It is a good website and you might find it very profitable either to use on your own or to form a group to work it through. It wouldn't suit everyone, however, and not everyone has internet access or the patience to download all of it. Nevertheless prayer is a very important subject. So I thought I would say something about it here.

The website suggests you take time for prayer each day. That makes sense. You need to make time for eternity! It talks about centring yourself on God and that too is something we need to do often and regularly. Prayer is like eating and drinking properly. If you don't do it, you don't thrive.

The website suggests ten minutes of silence! For some of you, that would be Heaven! Many of us could no doubt practise until such silence became Heaven. On the other hand, I guess some of you are like me. To sit (or kneel or stand) still, to say nothing and to try to still my mind would be a kind of torture. I like to be doing even when I'm praying – which is quite possibly a sign of my spiritual immaturity.

So, if silence doesn't appeal, how can you focus on God? I find that saying the Lord's Prayer slowly and meditatively is an entry into the presence of the Lord. My main daily prayer in Church (sometimes with somebody else, generally alone with God) consists of saying the Morning and Evening Prayer (Mattins & Evensong) of the Church. This includes Bible readings, praise, thanksgiving, intercession and an opportunity for confession. There is no reason why you should not use all or part of these services at home (or join me in Church). You can use any prayer book – the traditional one or a more modern one. If you don't want to buy them yet, look at <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/monworship/texts/daily/dailyfront.html>.

I find the Bible readings often open my thoughts to God, to the things I ought to be praying about and to what God is saying to me. So, for me, Bible reading is an important part of my prayer time. I don't think we grow spiritually if we just read through our favourite passages again and

again. So use a reading scheme or a lectionary which will guide you into unfamiliar territory. I provide suggested daily readings with commentary which you can obtain in Church or from the parish web page. The Bible suggests things to pray about as it deals with the realities of life on earth: family life, hardship, celebration, justice & mercy, warfare, friendship, loyalty, betrayal, the nature and life of the Church. You might cross reference what you read in the Bible with what you read in the paper, events in the village or things that are happening to you and people you know. What the Bible says about God is a basis for your adoration. The Bible is God's Word and it may well turn out to be God's Word to you if you are reading attentively.

Whether you start with silence, use prayer books or use your own words in talking to God is not, in the end, all that important. God knows all your thoughts anyway. Prayer is aligning your mind with God's Mind. You can talk to Him about anything because He knows all about you and He cares for you and every detail of your life.

So relax about centring yourself on God. Sometimes all of us find that we just can't focus in prayer. Our minds wander off on to all sorts of topics. If you are excited about something or worried about something, God knows that you are. Maybe start your prayer time by telling Him about what's most on your mind. Entrust it to Him. Maybe you will then be able to focus more on other things. There are times, I admit, when I still just can't concentrate at all. I think it's worthwhile to carry on praying and reading the Bible even when you feel like that. God knows how you feel and the Holy Spirit is praying on your behalf even when your efforts are pretty feeble.

Sometimes distractions might be part of your prayer and the answer to your prayer. Maybe you are praying about someone who is ill, for example, and your mind wanders off thinking about how you could visit him or her in hospital. Maybe God is Himself speaking to you in what feels like a distraction.

I do think it is important to be relaxed about prayer. The Bible (especially the Book of Psalms) teaches us that we can say pretty well anything to God. He knows and He understands. It is vital to be honest. There is no point in pretending either

to God or to yourself that you are holier than you are. It is most likely that in recognising your needs as they truly are in the presence of God you will begin to find those needs being met.

So what should we be doing when we pray? Let's be honest. Most of us spend most of our prayer time asking for things. That's OK. God is concerned about every area of your life and knows what you need before you ask Him. If you feel ashamed to ask God to give you something (say because it's greedy or selfish to want it) then ask yourself whether you should be going after it anyway. In the same way, if you don't feel you can ask God's Blessing on what you are planning to do, you shouldn't be doing it anyway.

Ask God for whatever you think He would want to give you in His Love, but don't forget He knows best. Sometimes God's kindest answer to prayer is "No"! Or, at least, "Wait".

We know that we ought not to be selfish and that applies as much to our prayer life as to anything else. So pray for other people. I expect you will pray for the people you love every day. That can be the main focus of a family prayer time or prayers with your children. But pray also, sometimes, for people you know less well and people you've only heard about, things you see on TV etc. Pray for our nation and people of all nations. Pray for the Church – our own parish and the people in it, and the worldwide Church. You might choose to use prayers that organisations like the Church Army, Mothers' Union and CMS supply or to respond to the prayer requests you read in the Diocesan newspaper or receive from the missions and charities you support.

So quite a lot of time can be spent in prayer asking for things or perhaps, as we grow spiritually, thinking about people in love and holding them in your love in God's Love. Such prayers can be offered any time and anywhere, as you are sitting on the bus thinking about what you've got to do at work, or worrying about your child whom you left at home with a sore throat, or if you see someone being loaded into an ambulance, or if you pass a church or a hospital or the council offices, where good work is done on behalf of the community.

One kind of asking prayer is asking for guidance. What should you do? If you believe that your life is in God's Hands and, as a Christian, you want to

put your life at God's disposal, ask Him what you ought to do in little things and in big things.

Obviously prayer is not just about asking, however. It is very important to be thankful. St Paul says we should be thankful in (not for!) all things. If we have a positive disposition, we are much happier people and we have a much better relationship with God and with other people. Thank God for your dinner, for your wife and children, for that beautiful landscape, for your job, your Church, a dry day for the barbecue, for life itself.

Naked praise and adoration are also indispensable. If your relationship with your husband or wife or parents or children were nothing more than asking for things and returning polite thanks when you got them, your family life wouldn't amount to much. Similarly our love for God is much more than a contract!

Finally for what we say to God, I want to talk about confession. We admit to God who we are and what we are doing with our lives. We measure ourselves against the standard of Jesus. Where we fall short, we repent. Above all we acknowledge that we cannot be forgiven unless we are willing to forgive. It is all about love, God's love for us, our love for God, our love for one another. Without love we are nothing. If there is no love, eternal life is meaningless.

We measure ourselves against the standard of Jesus. What is that standard? That is a hard question with a hard answer. Jesus' example is to accept everyone even the really worst sinners. Jesus excludes no one, including the people normally avoided by decent people. Our Lord's acceptance of the worst sinners brings them into the Kingdom of God. But He is no soft touch. What Jesus demands of those who love Him is not mere conventional morality. It isn't good enough to refrain from stealing, violence and fornication. Christ's people are not covetous, angry or lustful. It isn't good enough to be kind to people who are kind to you. Christ's people are kind to the unkind. It isn't enough to do your human duty. You have to walk the second mile, turn the other cheek, take up your cross and follow Him. Everyone is acceptable to Jesus but His Will for everyone of us is perfection. Our confession is in the light of that astonishing Truth – which is more thought-provoking for the conventionally good, perhaps, than it is for the outright villain.

I have alluded to the importance of listening to God as well as talking to Him. The website is very hot on this. After all, a one way conversation isn't much. But how does God talk to us? Very few people hear voices or see the writing on the wall. When people claim to do so, the possibility of mental illness has to be considered as well as the possibility that they have been granted a special revelation. I can only speak from my own experience. There are times when I feel guided how to pray. Quite often I feel inspired in preaching. I sometimes feel strongly that I ought to visit someone or to do something else. When I'm not sure what to do about something I ask for guidance and sometimes I find I know the answer. Sometimes I feel that what I'm reading in the Bible applies particularly to me personally.

You have to be cautious. You can convince yourself that God is telling you to do what you want to do anyway for purely selfish reasons. Some masochists convince themselves that God is telling them to do what they would really hate to do. A good guide is love. God is always telling you to act in the most loving way. The Bible will guide you as to what God's Will is likely to be in any given situation. So will the teaching of the Church. Christian friends can help. But certainly be open in your life and in your prayer time to the possibility that God is consoling or encouraging you, guiding you in a particular direction or warning you that you are going seriously wrong!

Spend time in prayer. Spend time in the context of eternity. God is love and prayer is our relationship with Him. Roger.

Oil of the Sick

This year, on impulse, I brought home from the Cathedral after the Chrism Mass¹ a quantity of *Oil of the Sick*. This blessed oil is used to anoint the sick and the dying, sometimes in association with the laying on of hands. It is not magic; it is prayer. Magic is the foolish idea that we can somehow manipulate the world to our advantage. Prayer is faithfully placing our concerns in the Hands of God and trusting His loving Providence for our lives. The sick who come to Him in faith may find that their physical or mental illnesses are healed. They may find strength to bear them. It may be that their time on earth is ending and that what they need is reassurance that they will be looked after by God in all eternity.

If you would like to come for anointing or you would like me to come to you for this purpose at home or in hospital, please get in touch. Similarly if you would like to receive Holy Communion at home or if you feel the need to make a Confession.

The practice of Anointing with Oil had rather fallen into disuse in the Church of England, though it is used by Roman Catholics and the more adventurous evangelicals. The revival of the practice is potentially a good thing for some people in great need. It is entirely biblical!

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. (James 5 vv 14&15.)

The Church at the Fun Day

Halling Fun Day falls on a Sunday this year – 1st August. The plan is to join the procession after 11.00 service, to hold a short service in the recreation ground to inaugurate the event and maybe a stall to show off what we do, but not to sell anything.

September Celebrations

Have you ever celebrated something special at St Michael's? Maybe you were married here or had your children christened. Maybe there is something else special which has happened in your life here. Perhaps you have photographs or other artefacts to remind you of these occasions. 26th September is *Back to Church Sunday*. 26th September is also the date of the Festal Evensong and concert to celebrate the fact that John Bogg has been our organist and choirmaster for 20 years. 29th is Michaelmas. 3rd October is Harvest Festival.

¹ On Maundy Thursday all the clergy gather in the Cathedral. We renew our commitment to our ministry. The Bishop presides at the Eucharist and preaches to the Church's ministers. Oil is blessed for use in the parishes of the diocese throughout the year at Baptisms, Confirmations and for the anointing of the sick.

We want to make this week a celebration of what St Michael's means to you and we'd be glad of anything you are prepared to lend to us for an exhibition in the church and hall that week. There will definitely be a Patronal Festival Eucharist on the Wednesday and a Harvest Supper on the Sunday. So please note these dates in your diaries, turn out any old snaps or whatever and put on your thinking caps for ideas for a celebration. We are hoping people might lend precious things like wedding dresses and christening robes for other people to see. And who knows what else?

Confirmation 2010

I am planning to take our candidates for confirmation on 21st November to Frindsbury. Please let me know if you are interested. Roger.

Christian Aid

A Division of The British Council of Churches



Quiz in the Church Hall

September 11th (for Christian Aid) at 7.30 pm. Teams 6-8. £6 entry includes food but not drink. Please contact Rector for details and bookings.



Halling W.I. May

Sorry I missed April. My poor pain wracked body couldn't make the meeting, so I will never know where the Ghosts of Kent do their haunting, but here we are into May.

May, oh dear, Resolution month. Now the powers that be have decided that it should also be WIs in West Kent Annual meetings, So "Where do we start?" Margaret, our president asks. Jerusalem is our obvious choice, our ordinary meeting. Five birthdays this month, including, Lily Hesketh, just turned 90, me, just turned 80, and Betty Head fast catching us up (sorry Betty). Minutes were read and signed. On to correspondence, "Not much, this month," says Ann "it will all come in tomorrows post. Harvel WI are having their Open Garden's meeting on 9th July and the District Conference is on 25th June at Ryarsh village hall. We have been approached by the school to see if we could help teach the children traditional simple crafts, such as knitting and sewing. Some members were willing. It is difficult to arrange suitable times to suit everyone. The National Federation is having a JAM competition towards the end of the year at Denman College. I wouldn't like to have to judge that; there will be hundreds of jars. We then moved on to the reports of the AGM at Tunbridge Wells, and the Home Economics Annual Day, four brilliant entertaining speakers, the flower arranging lady, the girl who played and made expensive chocolates, Ann Widdecombe M.P. and the lady bailiff and her digger boys, both meetings money well spent.

The Resolution, only one this year, and not a very controversial one at that. The WI must be scraping the bottom of the barrel with regards

resolutions as we had some very good ones to choose from, such as "Save our Pubs" and "better Flood Defences" but the one that was most popular in England and Wales was "That all meat and poultry products sold in UK stores should have the country of origin plainly labelled." or words to that effect. Not much discussion, a few questions. Will it put the price up? Of course it will. Our members voted for it as did the other three WIs that I will be representing at Cardiff. It will be passed by a majority of 99% as I shall be the only one against it. If the meat and poultry looks good, smells good and isn't too expensive then I don't care where my produce comes from. Then I am a bit of a rebel after all.

That part of the meeting over, on to the Annual meeting. How can you have an Annual meeting in May when you had one six months ago, very difficult. It was decided, or the members decided for them that our hardworking President, Treasurer and Secretary would continue as before, only they will now have to carry on until May of 2011, if we all last that long. We had our refreshments and Mary Fennemore judged the competitions. Jemma Graves won the Flower of the Month with her little Aquilegia and Betty won the Pie in a Saucer. As for me I'm off to Cardiff with Betty to the National Federation Annual Meeting to chew over the resolution and listen to the excellent speakers, Lady Durrell from the Jersey Zoo Foundation, John Burcow Speaker of the House of Commons and Tim Smitt, Founder of the Eden Project in Cornwall, and be entertained by "Only Men Allowed", but most of all to catch up with like-minded ladies from all around England and Wales whom we haven't seen since this time last year.

Phyllis.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

23rd May Reece Gareth Shadick Cliffe Woods
23rd May Matthew David Shadick Cliffe Woods
23rd May Joshua Edward Shadick Cliffe Woods
30th May Harrison Jonathan William Wells Rochester
30th May Isabella Florence Daisy Wells Rochester
30th May Olivia Scarlett Fearn Snodland
6th June Reece Brosnan Chatham
6th June Jessica Maye Brosnan Chatham

Silver Wedding Blessing:

5th June Rod & Julie Kinslow Cuxton

Wedding:

29th May Oliver Charles Shaw & Louise Stevens Halling

Funeral:

21st May Gwendoline Pankhurst Low Meadow

An Inspired Idea or A Stupid One?

£5

Last month I mentioned that it had occurred to me that we could probably pay off our £22,000 parish share debt to the Diocese if every adult in the parish simply donated £5. I suggested that if you thought this was an inspired idea, you could hand your donation to me, to a



churchwarden or to the treasurer, saying what it is for. I was delighted with the response and in the first two weeks we have collected £265. Obviously there is still a long way to go and we should be very grateful for any further contributions. Any cheques should be payable to "Cuxton & Halling PCC" and gift aided donations mean that we can claim back the tax you've already paid. Roger.

Sorry about the error last month re barbecue date. It is in fact Saturday July 10th as stated below.

Annual Rectory Barbecue

Saturday 10th July

6.30 pm onwards.

Music by Sarah Eede

Admission & Food (2 courses with veggie option) £7.00/£3.50. Ticket line 01634
727424

Please bring own drink and chair or blanket to sit on if required.

Thank you to everybody who collected and gave money for Christian Aid Week. Our parish raised a massive **£1816.60**. Some of this money will go to help people in places like Matopeni in Kenya where they live with sewage rising to the level of beds when it rains. It takes £16.00 to build five metres of new drainage to prevent sewage flooding. Well done everyone!

Many thanks, Steve.



Cuxton WI

Our meeting in May was very busy this now being the new month for the AGM and the resolutions to be sent forward to the National AGM in Cardiff. A committee was appointed with one or two changes and the evening was finished with social time with wine, cheese and grapes.

June saw our birthday party and this year Cuxton W.I. was 65. This was well attended with 41 members and 12 guests and started with Dorothy, our president, announcing the June birthdays and any notices and we all then enjoyed an evening of food, organised by our cookery group, and music from the "Jam and Jerusalem" Jazz Band which included the husband of one of our members so the band was especially named for the evening.

Nature Notes May 2010

On the first day of the month, after early sunshine, the sky is revealed. A west wind blows. By mid day, the sun feels pleasantly warm. Rain falls in the late afternoon and soon the roadside gutters are awash. The next day is wet and cold but as I look out of the kitchen window I am rewarded with the beautiful fresh green of the trees on the embankment. Their branches sway in the wind which is blowing from the north east. As we drive to Bluewater the next day I am aware of may blossom and horse chestnut spikes in full bloom. The following day we drive to Whitstable where it is very cold. Small waves break on the beach, boats are moored and gulls circle in the air. Later we drive through fresh green countryside to Herne. The trees and fields, where sheep graze, are so beautiful and beech woods are carpeted with bluebells. White deadnettle, garlic mustard and hoary alison adorn the roadside verges while dandelions have developed fluffy seed heads. Grey clouds disperse to give a clear evening sky. Having enjoyed some more of the Kent countryside we come home and I take a walk through Six-acre Wood to Mays Wood where I listen to birdsong and enjoy the bluebells and the last of the celandines and wood anemones. Eventually I cross the fields full of golden buttercups. Dandelions have formed seed heads which will later be carried away on the wind. The cold North West wind continues to blow, driving from time to time grey clouds across the sky. We take Murphy to Cob Tree Manor Park in the morning then, in the afternoon, I walk across Church Fields full of buttercups, up through Mays Wood where I see cow parsley, celandines, wood anemones and dog's mercury. Further into the wood, bluebells, sanicle, ground ivy, bugle, herb robert and wood spurge bloom. My desire is to see bluebells in Wingate Wood and I am well rewarded. I marvel at the seas of blue with the perfume scenting the air. I stand just

become cloudy then later the sun reappears and blue glorying in the beauty around me and very reluctant to leave. I look up at a tall very slender ash tree which sways in the light breeze. Then, as I return, I gaze at a beautiful beech tree with the sun's light filtering through the tender fresh green leave. I listen to the great tit's call. The 9th feels like March. The cold weather continues on 11th when we visit Wild Wood where, fortunately, most of the animals are to be seen despite the cold weather. We pay another visit on 13th when the sun shines warmly. The highlight of our visits was to watch beavers swimming and one beaver eating a carrot and then an apple. On 12th I walked on Halling Marsh where cows with their calves were grazing. May blossom is blooming on the hawthorns while others are in bud. A green woodpecker flies across the field as I walk round the river path. As I approach last year's now straw coloured reeds, I am aware of reed warblers chirping loudly within the new reeds. Mallards and shelduck glide on the water while a pair of greylag geese forage on the grass. The sun disappears behind grey cloud. I hear the song of a nightingale. On 14th, at Addington, I see ash trees in first leaf. The next day I watch a jay as it appears in the lilac then feeds on some seed. Then it flies down to the pond to drink. Bees are collecting nectar from the comfrey and a thrush sings as it perches on next door's TV aerial. When I walk in the woods on 15th I notice fading bluebells. The 17th is sunny and warm and as I spend time in the garden I see the lilac heavily laden with blooms which cause the branches to bend towards the bird feeders. The early morning skies of 19th are a clear blue. Birds hop about in the lilac branches and a magpie takes a beakful of bread from the edge of the patio wall and flies away. Later, I watch a tiny lady bird as it crawls over some grass stems. This is the time of white flowers blooming in

hedgerows, fields and woodland - woodruff, stitchwort, garlic mustard, may blossom, elderflower, cow parsley and ramsons. In the afternoon of 20th, I walk along the top path of Six-acre Wood where herb Robert is in bloom. I continue up into Mays Wood where frothy cow parsley blooms as far as the eye can see. I cross Church Fields where hawthorns are adorned with snow-like May blossom and elder is bursting into flower. Buttercups light up the fields. Vetch and speedwell add their special colours of scarlet and blue. The air becomes very humid. On 22nd I watch a magpie and two rooks fly off with their beaks full of bread then watch a comma butterfly as it settles on some nettles. The 24th is a very hot day when we take Murphy to Cob Tree Manor Park. We are careful to stay in the shaded areas. The following day the temperatures fall by ten degrees. North east winds bring a chill to the air on 26th when I watch a

beautiful red admiral butterfly perched on the top of some ivy. Rain falls for most of the morning on 27th but by mid afternoon the sun is shining bringing some much needed warmth. Later in the evening I listen to the call of the chiff chaff. A collared dove flies against the lounge window leaving an imprint of its wings on the glass. Fortunately it does not appear to be hurt. In the evening of the following day, a jay comes to feed having perched on a holly branch surveying the garden. The morning air of 31st is cold and the skies are grey. We take Murphy to Bluewater where we walk swiftly outside the shopping areas. Along the motorway verges poppies, oxeye daisies, hoary Alison and golden gorse bloom. I have not heard a cuckoo this year. The first time that that has happened. The sun makes a brief appearance in the evening. Another month closes.

Elizabeth Summers.

Early Light by Lillian Bowes Lyon

When morning is early, is early, The land lies cool As the delicate floor Of a limpid pool.	The spires of the church rise From the still green meads, Like tapering fingers Of water-weeds.	The farms in the fold of the hill, And the clear, carved trees, Have sunk to the bottom Of crystal seas;	Have sunk into seas of glass, And are drowned so deep No ripple can shatter Their shining sleep.
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Dickens' Country Protection Society

Thank you to all those who supported the Barn Dance in May. I could not attend myself but I hear it was a very enjoyable evening.

Just before Christmas Railtrack closed the SHORNE MEAD CROSSING to pedestrians. They have since welded shut the gates and denied the public access. If you use this crossing and would be prepared to sign an affidavit to that effect, the Society would like to hear from you. Please contact our secretary Mrs P Lippiatt, 135, Heath Lane, Dartford, DA1 2TW, 01322 275389, giving your name, address and telephone number.

Kay Roots.

The Kindest Cut of All?

Regular readers of this magazine know what I think of obsessive political correctness, excessively zealous *health and safety*, over regulation, intrusive official surveillance and petty bureaucratic tyranny in general. I know quite a lot of readers agree with me and quite a lot don't! And some agree with me, but don't think a clergyman ought to express his own opinions! So you may or may not agree with the personal view that follows. However, it has always struck me as doubly unfair that, not only do we have to put up with official intrusion and interference in our lives, but we also have to pay the clipboard wielders' wages (and pensions). It seems to me to add injury to insult. And here we are, confronted with a huge national debt and everybody saying we must either pay more taxes or accept a decline in public services.

So here's a suggestion. When our elected councillors find out about council officers ordering the execution of cocks for crowing too loudly in the mornings, or threatening to prosecute vicars whose churches fly flags depicting the crucifixion in Holy Week, forbidding taxi drivers to display the flag of St George when England are playing, or engaging in any other petty, oppressive, corrupt or vindictive abuse of their power, the said councillors should enquire as to why the said officers have got nothing better to do for the wages we pay them. The officers in question could then be offered a choice of redundancy (which would reduce our tax burden) or a broom or shovel or some other tool with which they could do some useful work for the community and earn their pay and pension. If the recession brings about the end of the nanny police state, personally I shall conclude that it was not all bad! Roger.

BBO's at 95, Pilgrims Road North Halling.

27th June: Saints Alive! (Sunday School) and friends meet at 9.30 at St Michael's. After children's talk in church we walk through the woods to 95 for our barbecue.

3rd August: Barbecue for Church funds at 95 from 12.00. All welcome.



Mothers' Union

Following my article in the June magazine I was asked *What is the Mothers' Union and what do you stand for?* We are here mainly to promote Christian family life and to support those who have met with adversity. Of course we enjoy our fellowship and have fun together whatever we are doing. Membership is open to all who are baptised, male, female, old or young, married or single. In order to carry out our aims and objectives worldwide we need to raise funds now and again. So in order to do this we are having a tea party on Mary Summer Day (the commemoration of our founder) on August 9th in the Church Hall at 3.00 pm. There is no charge but donations are invited. Funds raised will be used to support our Overseas Fund (supporting MU workers abroad), our Emergency Fund (for aid in the aftermath of natural disasters), our Away From It All Scheme (for families in dire need of a holiday) and our Literacy Project (which helps those who have not learnt to read particularly in the inner cities). So if you would like to help us, please come and have tea with us on August 9th. There will be a Bring and Buy Stall too. Shirley Crundwell.

News from Cuxton Community Infants School

I am pleased to say the Foundation stage children had lovely weather for their visit to Tyland Barn and enjoyed themselves immensely. The Year 1 and 2 children were not so lucky with the weather as it was rather wet but it went unnoticed by the children who were thrilled at the various buildings and animals that they saw. Year two visits to the junior school for our transition have been going well. Prior to half term the children experienced a school lunchtime with their parents. Shortly they will be visiting their new class and meeting their new teacher. The majority of children are excited, some nervous, and with these I have promised extra visits, but it is a large step moving on to a new school.

My Deputy, class teachers and myself have been meeting with the parents of the 43 new children who start school with us in September. This number may rise as folk move into the village. The children then come for their visits to meet their new teachers and teaching assistants. In September we have changed admission arrangements slightly in that our children will come into school on a part time basis for a shorter amount of time. I have tried to meet parents part way as many folk in the current economic climate are keen to get back to full time work. However some children will be very young and both parents and ourselves will see if each individual child is ready to cope with full time school. Children do not have to be in school legally until the term after their fifth birthday.

We soon begin new class visits for the rest of the school so all children now have the opportunity to visit their new classes, meet their new teacher and teaching assistant and learn about new routines, make their coat peg, tray label and do some art work etc! This has proved very successful and it means children know where they are going and who they are with in September.

End of year standard assessment tasks and tests are now over for our year two children. Over the last few years these have become less formal and judgements made are based more on teacher assessment. I am extremely pleased to say at this stage our results are looking great, although we have to go to central moderation with other schools at Medway before we can publish our results to parents.

Teachers are especially busy at this time of year, writing each child's end of year academic report. It amounts to about thirty hours work on top of their normal school work and a great deal of thought is put into them as they are all so individually written and cover many subject areas. When I was five I brought home a report that was about five lines long! I then read them all, and make a comment on each child's. I enjoy reading about the progress they have made and seeing how they have grown both socially and academically during the year. The curriculum has changed so much and expectations of children are so high. It will be interesting to see how this new government changes educational policies. Quite often educational matters go full circle!

We have been promised some further building work by the LEA over the summer holiday, which is due to start in July. I am so pleased as two of our classrooms in the oldest part of the school are going to be

refurbished along with a toilet block. Whilst this means more work for us folk in school and possibly a busy Summer holiday moving furniture the outcome will be extremely pleasing for our children and after all they are the little folk we are here for! We have been promised it will all be finished for the start of the new academic year and of course the dreaded unmentionable gas pipe issues we had last year will not feature - I am pleased to say!

The next magazine article will give you news of our sports morning, and end of term activities, including building work news. In the meantime do take care, and enjoy the sunshine!

That's all from the Infants for now,
Sandra Jones. Head teacher.

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Join us for Tea@3

Where Church Hall
Cuxton

When Monday August
9th

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