

### Services September 2022

September 4 <sup>th</sup> Trinity 12	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling.	Deuteronomy 30 vv 11-20 p209 Philemon 1-25 p1200 Luke 14 vv 25-35 p1049
September 11 <sup>th</sup> Trinity 13	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling.	Exodus 32 vv 1-14 p90 I Timothy 1 vv 12-17 p1191 Luke 15 vv 1-10 p1048
September 18 <sup>th</sup> Trinity 14	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling.	Amos 8 vv 4-7 p922 I Timothy 2 vv 1-7 p1192 Luke 16 vv 1-15 p1050
September 25 <sup>th</sup> Trinity 15	9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton 11.00 Holy Communion Halling.	Amos 6 vv 1-7 p921 I Timothy 6 vv 3-19 p1194 Luke 16 vv 19-31 p1050
29 <sup>th</sup> September Michaelmas to be arranged at Cuxton		
2 <sup>nd</sup> October Harvest Festival to be arranged at both churches		
9 <sup>th</sup> October Vaughan Williams Commemoration		
Holy Communion Cuxton Wednesdays 9.30		Holy Communion Halling Thursdays 9.30
31 <sup>st</sup> August	Job 16 v 1 – 17 v2 Mark 4 vv 1-20	1 <sup>st</sup> September Job 17 vv 3-16 Mark 4 vv 21-34
7 <sup>th</sup> September	Job 23 vv 1-17 Mark 6 vv 1-13	8 <sup>th</sup> September Nativity of the BVM Mark 6 vv 14-29
14 <sup>th</sup> September	Job 31 vv 13-40 Mark 7 vv 24-37	15 <sup>th</sup> September Job 32 vv 1-22 Mark 8 vv 1-19
21 <sup>st</sup> September St Matthew	II Corinthians 4 vv 1-6 Matthew 9 vv 9-13	22 <sup>nd</sup> September Job 41 vv 1-34 Mark 9 vv 30-37
28 <sup>th</sup> September	Amos 4 vv 1-13 Mark 10 vv 35-45	29 <sup>th</sup> September Michaelmas Revelation 12 vv 7-12 Matthew 18 vv 1-10

Copy Date September Magazine 5<sup>th</sup> August 8.30 am Rectory

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### Daily Prayers

I wrote last month about prayer and the usefulness of the Book of Common Prayer and the importance of daily prayer. These are prayers for morning & evening which you could use daily at home.

#### Morning

**O GOD**, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

**O LORD**, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day; Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy

governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

#### Evening

**O GOD**, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

**LIGHTEN** our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*



## Pudding Pie

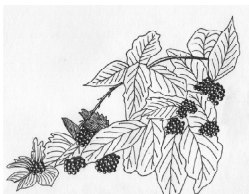
Pudding pie is a delicious traditional Kentish dessert which seems to have gone out of fashion. Both my grandmothers and my mother used to make it, but it is years since I have eaten it. Encouraged and supported by friends and neighbours, I decided to have a go at making my mother's recipe.

8 oz short cut pastry,  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz ground rice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint milk, grated rind of a lemon, 1 oz butter, 1 tbsp sugar, 1 egg beaten, 2 oz currants (I used sultanas which I like better), a little grated nutmeg (I didn't have any nutmeg.).

Roll out the pastry and use it to line a greased 7" tin. Mix the ground rice with a little of the cold milk. Heat the rest of the milk with the lemon rind over a low heat.

Add the butter and the rice mixture to the hot milk. Continue to heat gently and stir till it thickens. Add the sugar and stir in till it has dissolved. Cool slightly & whisk in the beaten egg. Pour mixture into the pastry case. Sprinkle currants & nutmeg on top. Bake for ten minutes at gas mark 6, 400F, 200C. Bake for a further twenty minutes at gas mark 2, 300F or 150C till golden & set. Serves 5 or 6.

We often used to feature readers' recipes in this magazine. Have you any favourite recipes you would like to share? If so, please send them to me at the Rectory.



## Truth

Once upon a time there was a row of pretty little cottages. A broad river washed the lower slopes of the bank which marked the end of their attractively planted and productive gardens. At the top of the bank was a row of privies, one each to serve the needs of every house. As time went on, one by one, these primitive arrangements were replaced by indoor water closets and the long trek to the bottom of the garden ceased to be necessary. There was, however, one exception. The owner of one of the cottages, much to the chagrin of his ten year old son, declined the expense of modern plumbing. One night, when he thought his parents were safely in bed, the boy slipped out of the house, down the garden and pushed the privy into the river.

At breakfast the next morning, there was a dreadful silence until at last the boy's father spoke up and told the story of how the young George Washington had cut down his father's beloved cherry tree and how, when questioned, the youthful future president had said that he could not tell a lie and admitted the misdemeanour. So impressed was George's father by the lad's honesty that he did not punish him.

The boy at the breakfast table then spoke up and admitted that it was he who had pushed the privy into the river and, in those unenlightened times, received a clip round the ear from his father for his trouble. "Ouch!" he exclaimed. "You said that George Washington's father didn't punish him."

"Well," said his paternal relative, "but George Washington's father wasn't sitting in the cherry tree when George cut it down!"

Actually that story isn't true. The *once upon a time* kind of gives it away. Many scholars also doubt the veracity of the George Washington myth, but, historically true or not, it has served for several hundred years as an example of honesty to set before children and indeed adults. Myths may or not be historically true but, whichever, they contain fundamental truths about culture and values and sometimes religion.

We value honesty and integrity. The truth matters. Pontius Pilate asked Jesus *What is Truth?* And the answer was standing in front of him. The devil is the father of lies. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour* is the ninth of the Ten Commandments. *Speak the truth and shame the devil!*

Honestly, I wasn't hugely shocked by the revelations regarding Boris Johnson's casual disregard of the truth. I was disgusted, but I can't say that I was surprised. Twenty years ago, as many of you know, I had dealings with a local authority in which powerful people casually disregarded the law and more senior officers made a series of untrue statements in an effort to cover up their crimes. What shocked me most then was not so much the law-breaking or the lies, but the fact that everyone, including the local government ombudsman, seemed surprised that I made a fuss about it. They even asked the diocesan office to stop me talking about it.

The impression I have is that pragmatism prevails. You do and say what works without too much regard for principles such as honesty and legality – especially if you are in national or local government or if you run a multimillion pound corporation.

Moral philosophers and theologians even offer a get out clause for disobeying the law. Here's St Augustine of Hippo. "For I think a law that is not just, is not actually a law". That takes some thinking about. Obviously, if the law says you've got to tell the Gestapo where the Jewish children are hiding, you are morally bound to disobey it. You might even feel morally bound to lie about the children's whereabouts. On the other hand, if individuals and companies just made up their own minds about which laws deserved to be obeyed, we'd have anarchy and chaos. In terms of what it

does to a society, anarchy is generally worse than tyranny. That is why we are more willing to consider the possibility of a just war between sovereign states than we are to recognise that there could be a just revolution, which would set families and friends against one another and risk destroying the social order completely. You only have to think about what followed the French and Russian revolutions and too many others, which set out to right wrongs, only to dissolve themselves into internecine bloodshed.

But back to our own country. There is a lot of untruthfulness about. I know personally of a case in which a local authority Social Services department falsified the care record of a child whom they had badly let down, taking him away from his family and fostering him in an entirely unsuitable home. They also warned a health visitor that her career would be over if she told the truth. They asked the police to look for evidence against the family and the police lost interest in inspecting it when the evidence I could have supplied actually supported the parents.

In a much more recent case, police falsified their records detailing the way in which they had failed to prioritise the search for a missing young woman who was eventually found dead.

More trivially, *We tried to deliver the parcel when you were out* has replaced *The cheque is in the post* as what is probably the commonest corporate lie in modern Britain. I wonder what excuse firms use for late payment now that cheques are vanishing into history? I guess you have to dial a helpline and wait in a queue to speak to someone whose job it is to fob you off. Or am I being too cynical?

I think it is extremely unlikely that Boris Johnson is the first prime minister to have broken the law while in office. It seems far more likely to me that in earlier, more deferential, times the establishment would have covered it up – just as they did with all those child abuse cases in the Church, in government, in entertainment and sport, in police forces and in children's homes. I also suspect that Boris was unlucky in that there were plenty of important people around who wanted to get rid of him and seized their

opportunity when the truth about the Downing Street parties came out into the open.

But would you always tell the truth? *How do I look today?* someone asks you. Is it always kind to tell them?

If you're their doctor, probably you should tell the truth in such a case. If the person is just going off on a date or for an interview, honesty is probably the best policy. But, if they'd just spent a fortune on a hairdo and a new outfit and are clearly delighted with them and are just walking through the gates of Buckingham Palace in order to attend a royal garden party, what would you say?

As a child, I was told never to say you didn't like the dinner someone had set in front of you. "But what if you are asked and you really didn't like it; surely you shouldn't tell a lie!" I replied. "You must make yourself like it," I was told – which I suppose you can do. You like the fact that someone has been kind enough to make you dinner even if it is lettuce and water cress.

On the other hand, as a young curate (in the days before feminism), I used to joke with bridegrooms that if the toast was burnt at breakfast on the day after the honeymoon and they said, "But that's just how I like it, dear," they'd be eating burnt toast for the rest of their married lives.

Prevarication is still dishonesty. "Why is your sister crying? You promised you wouldn't hit her again." "I didn't hit her. I kicked her instead."

"I didn't steal your £100." Actually the speaker only stole £90. The victim must have lost the other ten or miscounted in the first place.

There are sins of omission as well as commission. *We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done.* It can be as bad omitting to say what you ought to say as it is to tell outright lies. The Church of England Clergy Discipline Measure is a horror which would never have been enacted if General Synod hadn't pigheadedly disregarded the sound advice it received while the measure was still under discussion. Briefly, it attempts to take away the accused's rights under Article 6 of the European

Convention on Human Rights to a fair and public hearing. It presumes guilt, assists the prosecution but not the defence, and attempts to use confidentiality as a cloak for secrecy. I remember the horror of a senior church lawyer when I told him that, with regard to a CDM case I was involved in, the public should be told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

The CDM is unfair to the defendant, the accuser and the bishops, lawyers, etc. who have to administer it. Despite its pro-prosecution bias, only 25% cases are found guilty and, given that bias, it is probably fair to assume that some of this 25% are not really guilty, merely that they lack the resources to defend themselves against a system so heavily stacked against them.

The secrecy (passed off as confidentiality) protects not only vulnerable individuals (some of whom would be better served by the full truth being proclaimed to the whole world), but also the institution responsible for introducing and then failing to reform this horror. It is no surprise that the Post Office chief executive largely responsible for the Horizon scandal was also a Church of England minister.

I cannot forbear to mention once again the case of Dr Martyn Percy, formerly Dean of Christ Church Oxford. Between them, the college and the Church spent millions of pounds trying to establish whether Dr Percy was guilty of certain acts of wrongdoing which were alleged against him. This money, by the way, had been donated for educational, religious and other charitable purposes. The hearings have been largely secret. Neither the college nor the Church has been able to prove anything serious against Dr Percy, but they are effectively treating him as though he were guilty anyway. The presumption of innocence seems to be dying out at a rapid pace. The latest twist is that the Bishop of Oxford has said that any clergyman expressing sympathy for Dr Percy would be guilty of inappropriate behaviour, which is an offence under the CDM!

Now, if Dr Percy is in fact innocent (and no-one has proved otherwise), he certainly deserves sympathy. If he is guilty, he is still entitled to sympathy because the proceedings have most certainly lacked due process. Moreover, even if

Dr Percy were guilty and had been found guilty following due process, he would still be entitled to sympathy. God sympathises with sinners, which is just as well for us, because we are all sinners. Romans 5<sup>8</sup>: *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* That's the gospel we proclaim, bishops as well as other clergy and laity.

Confidentiality is a difficult issue. Obviously vulnerable victims, witnesses and even defendants need to be protected, but only too often confidentiality is used to protect powerful individuals and institutions to the detriment of the vulnerable. Just as they used confidentiality to protect paedophiles, so they try to use it to protect perjurers and corrupt or incompetent officials.

Some of you may remember the Rochdale Satanic Abuse scandal back in 1990. It was effectively an outbreak of mass hysteria like the Salem Massachusetts Witch Trials of 1692. Social workers became convinced that five completely innocent families were abusing their children in the most diabolical manner. Seventeen children were taken into care – some of whom were not to see their parents again for ten years. Eventually, the truth came out, but it was not until 2005 that the BBC was able to have lifted the injunctions which prevented the public from finding out what had really happened. Some of the social workers involved went on to have good careers in Social Services departments. Even when grown up, when they were no longer vulnerable children, until 2005 the victims were not allowed to share their stories or talk about their ordeals. Whom did the confidentiality protect - social workers, council officers and police - or the actual victims of official wrong-doing?

As recently as last year, it came to light that the Church of England had made a victim of racial abuse sign a non-disclosure agreement. If one such case came to light, it is fairly certain that there are others which have so far been successfully concealed.

How often do we read about serious failures in hospitals and other public services which, when they eventually come to light, reveal a culture of lying by senior management, threats made to whistle-blowers and warnings of libel suits against

witnesses who are prepared to speak out? I once had to remind a council solicitor that his task, as an officer of the court, was to advise his employer on how best to obey the law, not how they could get away with breaking it.

You might have gathered that I am pretty dissatisfied with the high level of dishonesty in our world today, but let me finish with one more example and leave it to you what you think about it, whether you think dishonesty can be justified by the outcome? Does the end justify the means?

A major landmark on my journey from the naïf young man who believed that England was basically a Christian country, with a moral code based on the Bible and a Common Law founded on the Ten Commandments, to the hardened cynic you see now before you, who is only too tempted to believe that we have become a nation of amoral, secular pragmatists, was the Channel Tunnel Rail Link – now called HS1. Younger people may not realise this, but the construction of the Channel Tunnel was, at the time and for over a century before its construction, a very controversial project. Our island status mattered atavistically to a large proportion of the English population. John of Gaunt's speech in Shakespeare's *Richard II* resonates with very many of us.

This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm,  
this England,

The Channel had protected us from the Armada and Napoleon and, in living memory, Hitler. For us particularly, Kent is the Garden of England – a land of hop gardens, orchards, corn, and sheep on the downs. All around the Kent coast, there are fortifications dating from Roman times almost to

the present day designed to protect us from invasion. Romantic folly, maybe, and perhaps hard to believe now, but a lot of people really loathed the idea of a Channel Tunnel, especially if it involved gouging the face of this green and pleasant land to create new railways and roads.

I think it is perfectly possible that the Channel Tunnel Bill would not have been passed and that therefore there would have been no Channel Tunnel had not both the government and British Rail promised that there would be no need for a Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Once the Tunnel was under construction, however, there was a new set of projected figures produced which sustained the case that there had to be a Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Maybe new information had come to light. Maybe they had known all along that they would build the CTRL even when they were reassuring the public that they wouldn't. Either way, promises were broken.

I thought that the Government should keep its word and that, whatever justifications it might come up with for breaking its promises, honour and honesty required that there should be no

CTRL. The vicar of a neighbouring parish told me that people would think that I was very naïf if I expected politicians or businessmen to keep their word – and that was more than thirty years ago.

So here's my question. I guess most people no longer resent or even notice much the Channel Tunnel and HS1. Many of us use both, though I personally have only so far used the high speed line in England (but it is handy when you're in a hurry) and I've never been through the Tunnel. Nobody much under fifty even remembers a time when there was no Tunnel, no HS1, no M25, M26 or M20. Very few people would now say that we should fill in the Tunnel, grass over the motorways and terminate the high speed trains this side of the Channel. So, if the only way to get the Channel Tunnel Bill through parliament was to make a promise that would be subsequently broken and if you think that the Tunnel and its associated high speed railway are good things, are you saying that it is legitimate to tell lies and break promises in order to achieve worthwhile goals? And, if you are saying that, how many lies would you be prepared to tell and what promises would you be prepared to break? Roger.

#### Percy Pigeon's Perceptions

Good day to you all. I hope you are all well and have enjoyed your summer - whether at home or away. We are now back in the crazy ash tree. We had a lovely holiday but there's no home like your own roost, is there? We know which way our tree sways and we bounce along on it. We both put on some weight on holiday. Perhaps you know that feeling too - but I doubt yours is caused by a surfeit of mealworm, sandwich crusts and popcorn. Philippa says we must diet, and exercise so we are doing more hops and bounces and race each other between C.A.T. (Crazy ash tree) and D.O.G. (Dirty old garage). We found a good supply of peanuts in Harold Road ....the bird feeder for littl'uns must have broken.

We are getting really cross with those pesky squirrels. Philippa calls them rats-with-bushy-tails. I know you find their acrobatics amusing, but don't forget that they dig holes in your gardens to bury the food they steal from us. Despite their best efforts, cats and dogs can't catch them. The local foxes seem particularly scrawny this year, and they too filch our food.

The local pair of ravens cast long shadows over our patch and everyone seeks shelter. A young boy, obviously keen on dinosaurs, was seen pointing at one of the ravens and shouting joyously, "Look mummy, a baby pterodactyl". If you get them on your TV aerial, you'll not be watching the Eurovision Birdsong Contest"

I have been asked how we pigeons navigate our way around. It's not easy to explain. We have our own GPS of course (Global Pigeon System) which takes us where we want to go. We can recognise your letters so know our Low Meadow from our Essex Road, our Whiteleaves Rise from our Poplicans.

I know that you tend to bring back souvenirs to remind you of your holidays. We avians need no such trinkets, although Philippa did return with a briar on her head which took a while to remove.

We went to look at the Bush Road Open Gardens. They were all splendid and quite immaculate ..... not a crumb in sight. I hope this omission will soon be rectified.

More recently we have been alarmed by the felling of trees in Six Acre Wood due to ash die-back. We are quite alarmed but Tommy assures us that our crazy ash tree is quite safe. It is covered by a TPO which seems to mean that we are safe for a while. When the tree bailiffs come, we shall have to find another summerhouse which will be very sad.

I thought I'd share with you a few of my best jokes -

*\*How does a bird with an injured wing land safely? **With its sparrow chute.***

*\*What do you call a funny chicken? **A comedi-hen.***

*\*How do crows stick together in a flock? **Velcrow.***

*\*Why do seagulls like living by the sea? **Because if they lived by the bay they'd be baygulls.***

*I heard some gulls attacked a dog - probably **because it was a pure bred.***

Enjoy autumn with its mists and mellow fruitfulness, and don't forget to scatter good seed on the land.

Coo coo.



#### Ride & Stride

This year's Friends of Kent Churches Ride & Stride will be on 10<sup>th</sup> September. Cycle or walk to as many churches as you like, choosing your own route. I hope to take part again this year and I shall be grateful for any sponsorship. If you would like to take part, please ask me for a sponsor form or go onto the FKC website. You can also be sponsored for staying at our own church (Cuxton or Halling) and welcoming walkers and cyclists.

St John's Draw (July): £5 each to Mrs Booth (44), Mr Tower (146) & Miss Crowhurst (158).

#### From the Registers

##### Baptisms:

10 <sup>th</sup> July	Logan Jamie Michael Waddington	Charles Drive
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Frieda Marie Ross	Kiln Way
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Ida Rose Ross	Kiln Way
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Joshua Eugene Shields	Charles Drive
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Phoebe Shield	Charles Drive
31 <sup>st</sup> July	Lailey Rae Wilcox	Vicarage Close
7 <sup>th</sup> August	William Henry Duggan	Rochester

##### Funerals:

19 <sup>th</sup> July	Martin Graham McCabe	Hollycroft
20 <sup>th</sup> July	Edward Agua	Orpington

#### Autumn Celebration for Children and Adults

St John's Church Halling Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 10.30 – 12.00

All children welcome with parents or carers. All free. Story, Songs, Prayer, Refreshments.



## Tideway Folk Group Charity Concert In aid of the Cancer Research UK Charity

Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022, 7.00pm

Refreshments available after the concert.

St Michael & All Angels' Parish Church, Rochester  
Road (A228), Cuxton, Kent ME2 1AF

Tideway Folk Group warmly invites you to this evening of musical entertainment, together with singer Dawn Gates, in aid of Cancer Research UK - a charity close to their hearts. Many

of us know people affected by cancer - please help us to help more people come through.

Entrance to the concert is free. Places must be booked.

Book your places at <https://tideway-cuxton.eventbrite.com> Donations to Cancer Research UK can be made at the concert or online any time by going to <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org> and searching for 'Tideway Charity Concerts'. Bookings may also be made by personal application to John Bogg or other members of the group or the Rector & Churchwardens.



Thank you.

Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464)

### Quotation

"Jesus does not look so much at the greatness of our actions or even at their difficulty, as at the love with which we do them." St Theresa the Little Flower of Jesus.



### Tommy's Talking Points

That's me in the snow. Only kidding, though who knows with the strange weather we're having this year? This picture was taken a long time ago. Actually, we had a very warm, pleasant day for our return to walks with pub lunches after the constraints of COVID. Our friend came down by train from London and we joined him at Cuxton to travel to Maidstone Barracks. We took the stairs down from the path to Maidstone East to the walk which runs alongside the River Medway. There's too much traffic in Maidstone, but we walked through the town, passing the Archbishop's Palace and All Saints Church, to a point at which the path became very much quieter alongside the water and through the trees. There were plenty of people about – and dogs and cyclists. Some people were fishing and a visitor to England asked us where he might during a break from work. We weren't sure. There were pleasure boats, people living on boats and riverside dwellings. At East Farleigh, Master remembered rowing thither from Maidstone in a rubber dinghy with a school friend back in the mists of antiquity. At Barming, we saw a sign telling us that, if we dived into the river, we'd find the cobble-stoned track of the ford which was drowned when they built the bridge. We didn't try it. At Teston, we saw the lock and medieval bridge and walked through the country park. There were long horned highland cattle, like the ones near the mausoleum. Even in the drought we couldn't quite avoid the mud. And so to Watlingbury, where despite what we were told by fellow walkers, it proved perfectly possible to enjoy a pub lunch in the beer garden of the Watlingbury Arms. It was so pleasant sitting there and setting the world to rights that we came home on a much later train than originally intended.