

The

CRAYFISHER

August 2015

40p



The parish magazine of the Cray Valley Benefice

No. 3

CONTACTS

Vicar: Rev. Paul Prentice (01689 823775)

Curate: Rev. Jane Winter (01689 872282)

Reader: Elaine Chapple (01689 874325)

Pastoral Assistants: Jill Renwick (01689 825582)
Muriel Unsworth (01689 835275)

Churchwardens: Colin Chapple (01689 874325)
Malcolm Hubbard (01689 601827)

Child Protection Officer
Parish Administrator: Suzanne Diamond (01689 823775)
Tuesday and Thursday Mornings

Magazine Editor: Brenda Smith (01689 829556)
Email: brendaknicknock@gmail.com

St Mary's, High Street St Mary Cray: BR5 4NL
www.stmaryatcray.com

St Andrew's, Lower Road St Mary Cray: BR5 4AL
www.standrewatcray.com

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Front cover picture: St Mary's Church by Rev. Jane Winter

PARISH LETTER



August! It's the time of school holidays, long summer nights, barbecues and vacations. Or, it's the time of too much heat, sunburn, scorched lawns and struggling to know what to do with the kids. What some see as a curse, others see as a blessing! Additionally, whether you like it or not summer is also the halfway stage of the year. We certainly don't want to think about Christmas, but if we glance over our shoulder it's not far off!

Summer also includes the longest stretch of Ordinary Time, the Sundays after Trinity that lead us to the Kingdom Season. Although it could be argued there is nothing 'ordinary' about the summer, especially if you are going to embark on a well-earned holiday. However, one of the features of Ordinary Time is the emphasis of growing in faith and Christian living. It is a time away from the great celebrations of the Christian year to look more deeply into our faith.

When you think about it, summer is the perfect time to do this. Yes the kids are off and life never really stops for us all. But our minds are not drawn to contemplate the mystery of the incarnation or the thought-provoking theology of the atonement in Easter. Often, a summer break allows us more space to think a little more deeply into our lives, not least issues around faith.

On a trip to Kefalonia a few years ago I got up early to watch the sun rise over the sea. I walked the short distance to the deserted beach and found I had the choice of any sunbed I wanted. There, parked on my pew, I waited for that great orange ball to appear on the horizon. Slowly, the sky started to change, splashes of red and orange scattered the skyline before a great blinding flash appeared between the sea and the sky. The sun's rising happens every day and yet there was something about that everyday experience that occurred on that particular day that was both moving and special, because I had the time and the space to fully appreciate it.

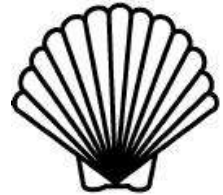
Enjoy what the summer brings. You will undoubtedly complain about the heat, flies, and various other things that the warmer months bring; but enjoy in the moment the most simple of things. They are more than likely free, and they are given to us by God's grace.

*Yours in Christ,
Paul*

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH
A GOOD DAY OUT OR A PILGRIMAGE?

This month a group from our benefice travels to Walsingham in Norfolk. Walsingham has been a place of pilgrimage since medieval times. The shrine is reputed to be the place where Mary, mother of Jesus, appeared to a devout English noblewoman; Richeldis de Faverches, in 1061. Whether we hold that to be true or not, the place itself has become holy through the countless prayers and petitions made there for centuries. It has always been a place of welcome. Walsingham is a place of beauty, history, story and faith. How we approach it determines whether it is just a good day out or a place of pilgrimage.

We have thought a lot about pilgrimage this year as we prepared to become a single benefice. Now that has happened we are learning to grow together day by day. Prayer is central to our growing well. Pilgrimage - a journey of faith gives us a time apart to discover God in a new place together. Of course we do not need to travel all the way to Walsingham to be on pilgrimage, our churches are places of beauty, history, story and faith, and the Christian life is a pilgrim life.



Pilgrimage is an act of prayer and as we journey together in our single benefice we do so in a spirit of pilgrimage bound to God and each other by prayer. We will only become what God intends us to be as the Cray Valley Benefice by spending time together as pilgrims in prayer. The post communion prayer for the sixth Sunday of Trinity is a good prayer for our shared pilgrimage.

God of our pilgrimage,
you have led us to the living water:
refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Rev. Jane Winter

REGULAR EVENTS

REGULAR WEEKLY SERVICES AND EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S

- Sundays** 09:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel.
10:30 Sung Parish Eucharist.
(On the first Sunday of the month, the 10:30 service is an All Age Family Eucharist.)
- Mondays** 17:00 Rainbows in the hall, excluding school and bank holidays.
- Tuesdays** 09:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel.
Please note: 14th no 09:00 Eucharist at St Andrew's this will be at St Mary's at 11:00 followed by Open Door Lunch.
- Wednesdays** 09:30 Funshine Club in the church excluding school holidays.
- Thursdays** 19:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel with homily.
- Fridays** 12:00 Said Eucharist with Healing and Wholeness, followed by the opportunity for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.
- Saturdays** There are different regular Saturday events throughout the month. See the following 'What to look out for this month'.

**NEXT DEADLINE FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER WILL BE
17 AUGUST
PLEASE GET YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN BY THEN OR EARLIER**

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH

Mon 3 rd	12:00	Singletons Lunch at Petts Wood. Speak to Jill Renwick
Thurs 6 th		The Transfiguration of our Lord
	08:00	Trip to Walsingham. If you have booked your place check the notice board and see Jill Renwick
Sat 8 th	14:00 -	'Puttin' On The Ritz'. Get your ticket in church for a really nice afternoon tea. Only £3. See notice board
	16:00	
Wed 12 th	15:00	Afternoon Tea at Apsley Court. Please join us
	19:45	Home Group. Speak to Malcolm Deering or Jean Pailing
Tue 18 th		Going Places trip to Knole Park. Speak to Trevor Taylor or Brenda Smith and see notice board
Mon 24 th	09:00	BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE Eucharist St Andrew's
Sat 29 th		Quiet Day at Bishops Court - see supplementary service sheet and church notice board.
Mon 31 st		Allotment Community Open Day - Speak to Rev. Paul Prentice or Rev. Jane Winter for details.
Bank Holiday		

READINGS AND GOSPELS FOR AUGUST

Sunday 2 nd	THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY ALL AGE FAMILY EUCHARIST Ephesians 4: 1-16 and John 6: 24-35 (Good News Bible)
Sunday 9 th	THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 1 Kings 19: 4-8, Ephesians 4: 25 to 5: 2 and John 6: 35 and 41-51.
Sunday 16 th	THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Proverbs 9: 1-6 Ephesians 5: 15-20 and John 6: 51-58.
Sunday 23 rd	THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Joshua 24: 1-2 and 14-18, Ephesians 6: 10-20 and John 6: 51-59.
Sunday 30 th	THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Deuteronomy 4: 1-2 and 6-9, James 1: 17-27 and Mark 7: 1-8, 14, 15 and 21-23.

REGULAR WEEKLY SERVICES AND EVENTS
AT ST MARY'S

Sundays	10:00	Holy Communion
Mondays	09:00	Morning Prayer
	17:30	Evening Prayer
Wednesdays	12:00	Midweek Eucharist (except the second week of the month, when it is on Tuesday at 11:00)

MOTHERS UNION

First Sunday of the month - 11:30 in the church centre (hall).

First Tuesday of the month - 13:30-16:00 at various venues. Please listen to notices and see the notice board.

9 August 15:00 Evensong at Rochester Cathedral with tea afterwards in Bishops court, St Margaret's Road at 16:30

ADVANCE NOTICE

17 October 09:30- Autumn members meeting at St Columbus School
14:30 Bexleyheath (bring your own lunch)

OPEN DOOR LUNCH

Second Tuesday of the month at 12:00 (Cost £5.00)

11 August 12:00 Ploughman's lunch with desert. £5.00 with your reservation by Sunday 9th. Please inform Rosemary Lathey 01689 872742. Thank you.

SOCIAL CLUB

Second Tuesday of the month 13:30 to 16:00

COFFEE MORNING

Second Saturday of the month 10:00 - 12:00 (Cost £2:00)

ADVANCE NOTICE

8 September **BLESSED VIRGIN MARY** Patronal Festival - please see Rev. Paul and/or Rev. Jane for details.

OTHER NOTICES

WELCOME TO RORY

Rosemary and Tony Lathey have the pleasure of announcing the safe arrival of their first great grandchild, Rory, born 8 July weighing 8lbs 13 oz.

Congratulations to Rosemary and Tony from the editorial team.

THANK YOU

Muriel Unsworth would like to thank all from St Mary's and St Andrew's for all the phone calls, gifts, visits, shopping and cards she has received after her recent accident at the church centre (hall). Also to Jacky and Jim Cook for taking her to hospital appointments and A&E. Although badly bruised and in a lot of pain she wishes to be remembered to everyone and hopes to see them soon.

Rosemary Lathey

BAPTISM AT ST ANDREW'S



Three sisters were baptised on Sunday 21 June. Emily, Naomi and Victoria. Naomi and Mark are getting married this month at St Andrew's.

**A SELECTION OF PHOTOS FROM THE
FLOWER
FESTIVAL**



SUMMER FAIR AT ST MARY'S

Fortunately, on Saturday 20 June, the promised rain held off until around 15:00 but the raffle draw was in full flow by then.

We would like to thank all the people who helped before and on the day and the people of the Crays who supported us.

In the church Jacky and Rev. Jane Winter were kept on their toes by the large number of children enjoying the various activities on offer. Also in church were the bell ringers and Tony Lathey with heritage talks, and church brasses open to view.

Thank you all for a successful day.

Jacky Cook, Bridget Daley and Joyce Ozsvald

YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY MEAN ME!

I'm not important. I can't speak well.
I'm too young/too old/too busy.
I wouldn't know what to say/what to do.
I'm not good enough/clever enough/wise enough.

You can't possibly mean me!

The boy Samuel said 'Speak Lord, for your servant is listening'.
(1 Samuel 3:10)

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!' (Isaiah 6:8)

Sometimes at church we sing

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

(The chorus to the hymn 'I, the Lord of sea and sky' by Dan Schutte)

You do mean me.
Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go.
(A hymn by Charles Wesley)



Malcolm Deering

(The title and opening are based on extracts from a reflection by Rosalind Selby
The United Reformed Church's Vocation Sunday 2007.)

RAISING MONEY FOR CHARITY AND ENJOYING IT!

On Saturday 4 July, I and the ladies at the bowls club where I bowl held our annual charity fundraising match to raise some money for Breast Cancer Care. We always play for a rose bowl which is kept for a year and then passed on to the winner the following year. This year, I was fortunate enough to win. I scored enough shots to beat the lady who came second by just one. After the game everyone enjoyed a lovely strawberry cream tea and a really good time was had by all. In the photo you can see our club president presenting me with the rose bowl which has all the winners' names around the base on little shields. Mine will be added in due course. Next year I will fill the rose bowl with roses for the next winner.



Brenda Smith



ALLOTMENT NEWS

This is likely to be my last article on the Lower Road Allotment until after the Open Day on 31 August. The summer months are the busiest time on the allotment and I find it personally very difficult to juggle the demands of full time employment, family and home maintenance. I am sure many allotmenters will agree that there are times when we need to consider whether it is worth continuing. Perhaps this is why so many plot holders are over retirement age, where time is not so constrained by the working day. I would like to say that the crops we grow are the reward for such hard work, but in fact I find the journey of growing the crops to be the most rewarding aspect of the work. There is nothing so satisfying as watching seeds become shoots, stems, flowers, fruit and vegetables.

Of course, being a certain age can also bring with it health problems or an inability to work in the same way possible for younger people. For myself, I am constantly amazed at the energy and effort put in by experienced older plot holders, whose knowledge and expertise is evident in the orderly appearance of their plots and the produce they grow.

I always welcome the tranquillity and closeness to nature being on the allotment brings at the end of the working day. I am also reminded at present, that my back injury is making it difficult to maintain the plot as I would wish. In turn, this impacts upon other areas of my life and at times it feels as though I am overwhelmed by an insurmountable amount of tasks requiring completion, which I am unable to manage.



It is at times like these that I thank God that I am only suffering from a temporary disability that will mend and I am able to spare a thought for others more permanently disabled who may never be able to manage so many of the tasks I have taken for granted as part of daily living. That is why I am pleased to support the Lower Road Allotment in the work they do for the community and welcome the plan for the wheelchair friendly path undergoing construction. This owes its funding to Janet and her hard work making, promoting and selling cuddly toys. It is so often the efforts of such individuals like Janet who make such a difference to the lives of others, for no reward other than to contribute to improving the lives of others.

It is also through the hard work of the LRA Committee who all give their time so generously that we have an allotment to enjoy at all.

Andy Warren

ST MARY'S RESTORATION NEWS

Each month we hope to provide an up-date on the progress of the restoration committee. Currently we are working on the development stage of our heritage lottery funding. This in effect is part one of the project.

The development stage covers preparatory work for the repair of the tower and for the opening up of the church to enable people to enjoy its history.

To date we have had inspection visits from various agencies. We can report that we have no bats sharing the spire with the bells. The belfry has been cleaned of pigeon guano and later in the year temporary netting will line the inside of the spire to prevent pigeons roosting or nesting. We had a cherry picker in Main Road stretching across the river so that close pictures could be taken of the spire to gauge the level of work required. An inspection of the church for any traces of asbestos is to be undertaken as we are unable to definitively say no asbestos exists in the church.

In terms of opening up the church, work is being done to prepare signage. We will have some pop-up banners which will promote the church and signs explaining special features inside the church. The local church council has approved the idea of developing the website. This will mean we can add far more information about the project. The committee is currently reviewing what kind of capacity we want and what kind of site would best suit the project. We are also looking into the possibility of CCTV cameras.

We have had our first tours thanks to Tony Lathey, and our current website generated a request from someone from Brazil who had family connections with the Manning brasses to come and visit. We had great fun brass-rubbing with her.

There is a huge amount to do for this project - and a job for everyone, so if you would like to be involved please contact Peter Moyle, to whom we are all very grateful because he chairs the restoration committee and works tirelessly on the project. Thank you Peter.



*Rev. Jane Winter
Photo by Thos Ford & Partners*

MANY ARE THE AFFLICTIONS

A few brief reflections on the subject of suffering

The world is immersed in suffering and the pages of scripture are literally awash with it! Synonyms abound: suffering, tribulation, affliction, trouble, travail, pain. Here are a few reflections on some notable biblical references.

Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. Job 5:7

Suffering is inevitable. There is no magic wand to wave it away. Denial is not an option.

He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his scourging we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

The Suffering Servant: the prophet? The Messiah? The corporate prophetic witness of Israel? The Church? All or nothing. And indeed nothing will spare us from partaking in our share of suffering.

In this world you will have tribulation. But take heart. I have overcome the world. John 16:33

Further confirmation on the inevitability of suffering. The Lord Jesus encourages us to bear it bravely. He will help us to do this. He is the ultimate overcomer!



I am in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you. Galatians 4:19

The apostle Paul telling us clearly that our suffering actually bears fruit. Our travail results in something being brought to birth.

Our light and momentary afflictions are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 2 Corinthians 4:17

St Paul again. No pain no gain - no gory no glory! Suffering somehow being redemptive in a way we can scarcely imagine. A profound mystery.

Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill-up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. Colossians 1:24

More Paul. There is no room for sadomasochism, but this is a mystery even deeper yet. All the same I'm convinced it's absolutely true!

I want to experience Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings. Philippians 3:10

Probably my favourite scripture from possibly the best book in the whole Bible! So, we need to embrace and share in the true partnership (koinonia) of Christ's suffering.

Although he was a son, he learnt obedience from what he suffered. Hebrews 5:8

Our anonymous epistle writer referring to Christ. What's good for the goose..? It seems our faith involves learning the hard way. There are no viable shortcuts.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivers us out of them all. Psalm 34:19

Bill Willis

T.E. LAWRENCE (1888 - 1935) A HERO INCOMPLETE?

Have you ever visited the tiny church of St Martin's in Wareham, Dorset? If you do, you will likely find many other visitors inside the cramped and largely unspoiled interior of this charming little 11th century church. The main attraction is the stone effigy of T.E. Lawrence - the legendary 'Lawrence of Arabia'. He is carved lying in repose by Eric Kennington. He is wearing Arab robes. On the plinth a short poem of tribute contains these lines penned by James Bramwell in 1936



He lies - so would a hero lie
At rest from being incomplete.

The word 'incomplete' was applicable in two senses. Lawrence was killed in a motorcycle accident near Wareham in 1935 at the tragically early age of 46. By that time he had attempted and/or accomplished many different challenges: archaeology, canoeing, cycling, diplomacy, engineering, map-making, training in the Royal Air Force and the Royal Tank Corps, travel in the Far East, writing and publishing. Who is to say that he wouldn't have extended his range of restless adventuring into many more fields of activity, if his life had been spared?

More specifically Lawrence was known to be haunted by the notion that his earnest and committed work for Arab freedom was 'incomplete'. Riding and travelling in their presence he had gained the confidence and trust of the Arabs

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while helping them gain their freedom from Turkish rule during World War One. In 1921 Winston Churchill, as Colonial Secretary, had sent him back to the Middle East, to try and ameliorate the Arab settlement after 1918. But by 1922 he was back in England where today in the reference library in Wareham there are more than fifty different biographies and other books that discuss his adventures, his ambitions, and other aspects of his life.

This year 2015 marks the 80th anniversary of T.E. Lawrence's death. If he were alive today he would no doubt despair of the conflict, turmoil and uncertainty that is destabilising the Arab sector of the globe. For T.E. Lawrence's vision of Arabia was one of freedom, unison and lasting peace.

Jerry Dowlen

The Croft Poetry Club meets at the Croft Tea Room on the first Thursday of every month at 09:30. We are a friendly and inclusive group. Come and join us! Admission is £5 for tea/coffee, cake and poetry.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES

Now is the time for the summer collection of the Children's Society boxes. The boxes can be brought into church during the beginning of August.

Thank you.



Joyce Ozsvald

ADVANCE NOTICE

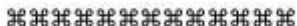
St Mary's Social Committee will be hosting a bring and share evening meal for Harvest supper on 3 October, as Sunday 4 October will be Harvest Festival. Please see Joyce Ozsvald for full details.



FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART**UNLUCKY NUMBERS**

Some people think that the number 13 is unlucky but did you know that other countries and traditions have different 'unlucky' numbers?

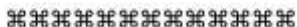
The numbers 4 and 9 are considered unlucky for the Japanese. Why? Because the Japanese word for '4' sounds exactly like the word for 'death' and the word for '9' sounds like the word for 'suffering'. There are no rooms numbered 4 or 9 in many hospitals or hotels in Japan.



JOE: I'm so unlucky; my plastic fruit went mouldy.

JIM: I'm more unlucky than that – my stuffed bird flew away.

JACK: That's nothing. When I went ice-skating the rink caught fire!



Answers: 1.150 2.40 3.3 4.2 5.969
6.7 7.127 8.5 9.14 10.276

BIBLE NUMBERS?

The answer to each of these questions about the Bible, is a number.



1. How many psalms are there in the Book of Psalms?
2. How many days did Jesus spend in the wilderness (Matthew, chapter 4)?
3. How many times did Peter deny Jesus (Luke, chapter 22)?
4. How many daughters-in-law did Naomi have (Ruth, chapter 1)?
5. How long did Methuselah live (Genesis, chapter 5)?
6. How many days did Joshua march around the walls of Jericho (Joshua, chapter 6)?
7. How many provinces did Ahasuerus rule over (Esther, chapter 1)?
8. How many sparrows were sold for 2 pennies (Luke, chapter 12)?
9. After how many years did Paul go again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus (Galatians, chapter 2)?
10. How many people were saved from the ship that Paul travelled on when it was shipwrecked on the island of Malta (Acts 27)?



JAM

(JESUS and ME)

JaM is our Sunday School group at St Mary's

We meet in the church centre (hall) at

10:00

You are very welcome to join us

Every week is full of activities such as art and craft, drama, games and music

Learning about Jesus and the Bible is fun

For more information please contact

Jacky Cook on 01689 810451

Come and join us if you're aged between 4 and 16



Michael Cresswell - Electrician

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Funshine Club

St Andrew's Toddler Group

Every Wednesday during term time

We meet in St Andrew's Church
Lower Road.
Car Parking in St Andrew's Church Car
Park

**£1.00 per Adult,
Children free**

(Includes craft activity, tea/coffee,
squash and biscuit)

Enquiries to: Sarah Rideout 0794 1020724

We are a very friendly group for babies to
preschool children, Mums, Grans,
Dads, Grandads, Childminders & Carers.
Please come along & join in the fun.

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HAVE YOU THOUGHT
OF HIRING ST
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St. Andrew's Church Dinner by Candlelight
with Wine and Music

***BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND OUR NEXT DINNER
WILL BE ON***

Saturday 10th October 2015
Doors open 18:30 –Dinner at 7pm

***Ticket price £25 per person for a
3 course set menu with wine and beer included and
complimentary drinks on arrival***

Live music on the night!

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW IN CHURCH

Tickets available from Fr. Paul, Dalaine, Brenda, Liz and Trevor