

The

CRAYFISHER

November 2015

40p



The parish magazine of the Cray Valley Benefice

No. 6

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 and
Parish Administrator: Suzanne Diamond (01689 823775)

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday Mornings

Magazine Editor: Brenda Smith (01689 829556)

Email: brendaknickknock@gmail.com

St Mary's, High Street St Mary Cray: BR5 4NJ

www.stmaryatcray.com

St Andrew's, Lower Road St Mary Cray: BR5 4AL

www.standrewatcray.com

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Front cover picture: Autumn in The Crays by Tony Lathey

PARISH LETTER



We all have memories of our childhood and one of mine most definitely is conkers. At the present moment in time these small brown signs of autumn are everywhere to be found. My recollection of them is always in the context of school, when I was the proud owner of a *forty-niner* a conker that had taken-out forty opponents usually at break time between classes.

The fact that there are so many around is a mystery to me. When I was a boy they were quite often hard to find. If you were fortunate enough to come by some you would consider yourself very lucky indeed. But now they are everywhere, signs of a bygone era when children were not enticed by X-boxes, mobile phones and tablets. Their availability suggests that children are no longer swayed by the excitement of smashing your conker into another, indeed my children thought I was pulling their leg when I told them of my playground antics.

My article this month is being compiled on Whale Island in Portsmouth. I am here for four days training in my capacity as a chaplain to the sea cadets. Amusingly I have been offered two more jobs to consider, one as district chaplain and another as a chaplain to the navy! Both of which I politely declined. I did however engage in some interesting conversations with my fellow chaplains regarding the decline of faith in society and how to make church relevant to people in this modern age. There were no easy answers, as you will not be surprised to read.

Yet the passion for the gospel still remains, from both those willing to preach it and those willing to receive it. Times change, like conkers, things which once mattered soon become redundant while new technologies escalate at an alarming speed. The challenge for us is how to keep the good news of Jesus Christ ever fresh and challenging in an ever changing world.

It is easy to feel downbeat while lamenting the past, but it is worth noting that faith still strikes a chord with many people. Articulating this in a modern world is difficult at times but by no means impossible. Jesus said 'heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away'. Conkers, climbing trees and river jumps may be childish activities of the past that have been replaced by modern forms of entertainment. Like these activities we are often seen to be producing new ways of doing church. But the fundamental message of the gospel, the words of Jesus, are timeless and thank God for that!

*Yours in Christ,
Paul*

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Remember, remember the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th of November... and beyond!

November has become the month of remembrance. Not just for celebrating Remembrance Day on the 11th, or Remembrance Sunday on the Sunday closest to the 11th but for remembering more widely. It is often the month when churches hold annual services to commemorate departed loved ones. This is no chance happening, it fits well into our liturgical season called the Kingdom Season. This begins with All Saints on 1 November and runs through to Advent Sunday, which this year is on 29 November. We celebrate All Saints on the 1st and then on the 2nd All Souls: all the faithful departed whether they have been recognised by the church as saints or not. All Saints is preceded by Halloween, now a secular festival in its own right with an emphasis on trick or treating that increases the coffers of local traders. Halloween just means the eve of All Hallows, the evening before we remember those made holy, the saints.

Remembering is an essential part of what makes us who we are. Remembering connects us to our history; personal, family, community and country. That is why Remembrance Sunday is such an important national festival. It is also why the remembrance of departed loved ones is deeply powerful and to be encouraged. Why should we forget those we love once they have died? We shouldn't. They still influence how we live.

Jesus asked his disciples to remember him every time they ate bread and drank wine. In a very simple and domestic way he gave them a way of remembering not because he needed to be remembered but because he knew that remembering helps to shape identity. Every time we eat bread and drink wine together at the Eucharist we remember Jesus. We are shaped a little bit more to be like Jesus. We take on something of his identity because we believe that he chooses to live in us through the Holy Spirit.

Remembering lies at the heart of the Kingdom season, a time for celebrating that God's kingdom comes on earth through those who seek and identify with Jesus and live that out for the world to see.



Rev. Jane Winter

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.
- 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'. **COFFEE MORNING held in the narthex (porch area) at St Andrew's is on the LAST Saturday of each month.**

In addition to the above, St Andrew's church is open from 08:30 Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays for coffee providing a warm waiting place for those attending the preschool.

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

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH

Sun 1 st	10:30	ALL SAINTS' DAY All Age Family Eucharist
Mon 2 nd	12:30	SINGLETONS LUNCH at Petts Wood. See Jill Renwick if you wish to attend
Sat 7 th	10:00	SAID REQUIEM EUCHARIST
	16:45	PRE FIREWORKS CRAFT ACTIVITY
	17:30	FUNSHINE FIREWORK PARTY See notice board and Sarah Rideout or Malcolm Hubbard for full details
Sun 8 th	10:30	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY Sung Parish Eucharist
	14:00	HAVE YOUR SAY - an opportunity for everyone from both churches to discuss how our new benefice is developing. See Rev. Paul Prentice for more details
Wed 11 th	15:00	AFTERNOON TEA at Apsley Court - Please join us.
	19:45	HOME GROUP - See Malcolm Deering and /or Jean Pailing for full details
Mon 16 th	TBA	GOING PLACES - visit to Red House, Bexleyheath see Trevor Taylor for details.
Sat 21 st	TBA	ST MARY'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE - COME AND JOIN IN ALL THE FUN! Please see Rev. Jane Winter and/or Jackie Cook for more details
Sat 28 th	11:00	ST ANDREW'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE - Lots of Games, raffle, food, tea and coffee etc
	14:30	COME AND JOIN IN ALL THE FUN!
Sun 29 th	18:30	OAK COMMUNITY CHURCH Churches Together in the Crays, Advent Service
Mon 30 th	19:00	ST ANDREW, APOSTLE Sung Parish Eucharist

ST ANDREW'S READINGS FOR NOVEMBER

- Sunday 1st **ALL SAINTS' DAY**
ALL AGE FAMILY EUCHARIST
Isaiah 25: 6-9, Revelation 21: 1-6 and John 11: 32-44.
(Good News Bible)
- Monday 2nd **ALL SOULS' DAY**
Lamentations 3: 17-26 & 31-33 Peter 1: 3-9 and
John 5.19-25
- Sunday 8th **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**
THE THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT
Micah 4: 1-5, 1 Corinthians 15: 50-58 and
John 15: 1-7
- Sunday 15th **THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT**
Daniel 12: 1-3, Hebrews 10: 11-14 & 19-25 and
Mark 13: 1-8.
- Sunday 22nd **CHRIST THE KING**
THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT
Daniel 7: 9-10 & 13-14, Revelation 1: 4-8 and
John 18: 33-37.
- Sunday 29th **THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
Jeremiah 33: 14-16, 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13 and
Luke 21: 25-36.
- Monday 30th **ANDREW THE APOSTLE**
Isaiah 52: 7-10, Romans 10: 12-18 and
Matthew 4: 18-22.

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

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM ST MARY'S

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to two of our regulars at Open Door Lunch, Jean and Bob, who were married on 8 September. The Open Door Lunch Group wish Jean and Bob every happiness.

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.

St Mary's October meeting was held at Jacky Cook's home. Jacky and Jim put on an audio talk with poster illustrations about Brownsea Island, a beautiful place they often visit. The usual prayers were said and general notices given out. Jacky and Jim made everyone very welcome and provided a nice afternoon tea.

OPEN DOOR LUNCH

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

At the October Open Door Lunch thirteen people enjoyed a fish 'n' chip lunch. The November lunch is on 10 November. Cold meats, garden peas and chips with desert and tea or coffee followed by the Tuesday Social Club where we will probably have a film. The meal is £5 payable in advance to Rosemary.

Rosemary Lathey (01689 872742)

SOCIAL CLUB

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

Tony Lathey (01689 872742)

COFFEE MORNING

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

A JAR OF JaM

It seems apologies are in order. Last month the item on The Blessed Virgin Mary was attributed to Jacky Cook and Francis Aylgabo. Francis's surname should read Akhigbe. My apologies. *Editor*



CONGRATULATIONS TO REV. JANE WINTER

The children wrote their best wishes to Jane to show their appreciation of her work in St Mary's past and future. Some drew pictures whilst the older ones wrote letters. One said, 'To Jane, Thank you for brightening up our days with your lovely smile, kind words and humour every Sunday morning. We love you from JaM children'. The children sat in the chancel and watched whilst Jane took her first Eucharistic service.

Thanks to Francis, the children were able to have their JaM sessions whilst I was on holiday. They had lots to do, filling in the Harvest crossword from September's Crayfisher, writing letters and decorating their bags for The Harvest Festival, which they then filled with tins of food for Orpington Food Bank.

Our name competition wasn't ready for choosing, but soon will be.

At Harvest Festival, the children wrote a *thank you* prayer to God decorating it with autumnal coloured leaves. They made shakers to accompany their singing of *Harvest Samba* helped by the choir.

Jacky Cook

ST MARY'S RESTORATION NEWS

As I write this the committee are preparing for their next meeting. This past month has seen us active in promoting the concert. I hope you enjoyed it.

We have carried out a feasibility study on the church to assess the risk in having it open during the day. This has led to us considering CCTV cameras, having conversations with the local police and contacting the diocese and our insurance company for advice. All very helpful and positive.

Peter spent a long day in the church with a brass expert who was delighted to find such a wonderful collection of brasses, some of which were on his *bucket list*. His work in recording brasses takes him across the country. His advice for us has been invaluable and we got it all for free. Thank you to Peter for spending so long in church along with support from Tony Lathey and Colin Chapple.

Peter has also organised a photo shoot. We now have a collection of stunning professional photos which we can use to promote the church. These will be used on publicity and on the web site as well as being used in our publications.

Tony has finished the new church history guide, so watch out for that. It will be published in due course once our able band of proofreaders have checked it. The guide is an excellent resource for people visiting the church. It will also form

the basis of the information we give through guided tours and for presentations we make within the community.

The applications and notices for a faculty to begin the restoration building work have been submitted and you may well have seen the notices relating to this at church.

The second round application to Heritage Lottery is nearing completion which means we are on track for submitting by the end of the month.

So you can see that the committee have been very busy. Our only disappointment and setback is that we haven't had anyone respond to the opportunities we offered in last month's magazine to train as guides. This is a very exciting role, it is not difficult, everything you need will be provided for you. It is a wonderful opportunity to share the love of God for our community through his faithfulness over centuries of worship represented in our church building. We also need one person to keep a record of our maintenance work; again this is not a difficult task so if you know of someone with good organisational skills please speak to Peter or Jane Winter. We are hopeful that you will want to volunteer having read about all that we have been up to.

Rev. Jane Winter

ST MARY'S AND ST ANDREW'S HOUSEGROUP MEETING TO DISCUSS GENDER AND SEXUALITY

On Sunday afternoon 23 September a group of us met at the vicarage to drink tea, eat cake and discuss issues relating to gender and sexuality. After talking about various aspects of this subject we concluded that because we now realize that people do not choose their sexuality but are born *that way*, our church should strive to be inclusive and not discriminate against or drive people out because of their sexuality. Furthermore, we should not rigidly apply old pre-christian ideas to the 21st century without considering their original context.

The biblical prohibitions against same sex behaviour were, in both old and new testament times, a condemnation of people taking part in idolatrous quasi - religious activities practiced by pagans where there would be a great deal of exploitation and coercion of unwilling victims. The idea that a same sex relationship could be caring, egalitarian, committed and loving would never have been envisioned by the biblical writers.

The next meeting of the group is on Sunday 6 December and we discuss 'What relevance has the creed for us today?'

Look forward to seeing you there!



FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

Here is the solution to last month's Sudoku

2	1	5	6	9	7	8	4	3
7	3	8	4	2	5	1	9	6
9	6	4	1	3	8	2	5	7
5	9	2	3	1	4	7	6	8
4	7	1	8	5	6	9	3	2
3	8	6	2	7	9	5	1	4
6	2	9	7	4	1	3	8	5
1	4	3	5	8	2	6	7	9
8	5	7	9	6	3	4	2	1

ANDREW - FIRST DISCIPLE OF JESUS

Andrew, whose feast day ends the Christian year on 30 November, is probably best known to us as the patron saint of Scotland, though his only connection with the country is that some of his bones were reputedly transported in the 8th century to Fife and preserved at a church in a place now named St Andrews.

In fact, there are so many legends about him all over Europe and the Middle East that it's safest to stick to what the Gospels tell us - though the strong tradition that he was martyred by crucifixion is probably true and is perpetuated in the 'St Andrew's Cross', the 'saltire' of Scotland.

The Gospels record that he was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and the very first to bring someone else to Christ - his own brother. Like many fervent Jews at the time Andrew and an unnamed companion had been drawn to the desert, to be taught by the charismatic prophet known to us as John the Baptist. Many thought that he was the long-promised Messiah, but John insisted that he was not. 'I am the voice crying in the wilderness,' he told the crowds. 'Prepare the way of the Lord! One comes after me who is greater than I am.' So when one day John pointed out Jesus to Andrew and his friend and described him as the 'Lamb of God', the two young men assumed that the next stage of their spiritual search was about to unfold. So as Jesus made off, they followed him.



All the more strange then (though, on reflection, very true to human nature) that when Jesus turned and asked them what they were 'seeking', all they could

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come up with was a lame enquiry about his current place of residence: 'where are you staying?' Or, perhaps, they were hinting that what they were seeking could not be dealt with in a brief conversation. If they could come to his lodgings, perhaps their burning questions might be answered.

The reply of Jesus was the most straight-forward invitation anyone can receive: 'Come and see'. Come and see what I'm like, what I do, the sort of person I am. What an invitation!

The results of their response were in this case life-changing - for themselves, and for many other people. Andrew brought his brother, Peter, to Jesus. The next day Jesus met Philip and called him to 'follow'. Philip then brought Nathaniel. The little apostolic band who would carry the message of Jesus to the whole world was being formed. They came, they saw, they were conquered! And right at the front of the column, as it were, was Andrew, the first disciple of Jesus.



*With proper ceremony, they laid it to rest
with its ancestors*

Courtesy of www.Parishpump.co.uk

MAGAZINE PRINTING

The Crayfisher is fast becoming a great success and for that I'm extremely pleased and grateful but the printing of it is becoming a bit of a problem. It is taking five hours or more. Is there someone who would be willing to learn how the printing is done and take on some of the workload? I can do about half the quantity needed on a Wednesday, but the rest is the problem. Please let me know if you would be willing to help me. Many thanks.

Brenda Smith



Nov15 @deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

Courtesy of www.Parishpump.co.uk

THE FORE Rs!

Foreword

In last month's issue of Crayfisher I contributed an article called The Four Rs! (Not to be confused with the R4s. These are single-decker buses which run from Locksbottom to St Paul's Cray!)

To briefly recap I mentioned the three Rs of the school curriculum: Reading, Riting and Rithmatic and added a fourth important subject i.e. RE. I then went on to talk about four Rs in the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament. Four notable women: Rachel, Rahab, Rebekah and Ruth.

This month I want to redress the balance and focus on Four Fortright Fellows. Maybe not the foremost characters in the Old Testament but still important and interesting nonetheless. (This is my lame excuse for including them; the fact is there aren't too many men in the Hebrew scriptures whose names begin with an R.) The uncanny thing to notice is that these names all start with RE!

1. Rehoboam 2. Reuben 3. Reuel 4. Rezin

1. **Rehoboam**: The name means 'expansion of the people' in Hebrew and his story can be found in the books of 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles. He was the son of King Solomon and became the last king of a united Israel and the first of the southern kingdom of Judah. His name is also mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus which is found in Matthew 1:7.

2. **Reuben**: Another pretty famous bloke. His name in Hebrew means 'behold a son!' and his details are found in the book of Genesis plus seven other books of the Old Testament. He was the firstborn son of Jacob and Leah and became the father of one of the twelve tribes of Israel which are as follows: Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Manasseh, Naphtali, **Reuben**, Simeon and Zebulun. Reuben along with the others is mentioned in Revelation 7:5.

3. **Reuel**: OK, scraping the barrel a bit here! This name in Hebrew means 'friend of God'. Believe it or not (it's true) there are *four* different characters in the Old Testament called Reuel! One of them was the son of Esau. Their stories are found in Genesis, Exodus, Numbers and 1 Chronicles. I'm sure you will all take the time and trouble to look up every one of these references!

4. **Rezin**: Never heard of him? You have now! His name is of uncertain derivation and is found in 2 Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah and Isaiah. He was in fact the king of Damascus and along with Reuel is not mentioned in the New Testament.

Postscript

THE ONE R

There is someone else of importance whose name begins with an R. He is not mentioned in the canonical scriptures neither is he a man! His name is St Raphael. He is an archangel. He is mentioned in the books of Tobit and 1 Enoch.

Bill Willis

GREAT SACRED MUSIC - JOHN BETJEMAN

A packed lunchtime audience attended and enjoyed a wonderful recital of *Great Sacred Music - John Betjeman* at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London on 27 August 2015. The programme of music was chosen from words written by Sir John Betjeman (1906 - 1984) now set to music, or from works that Betjeman hailed as 'the great classical music of our religious heritage.'

Betjeman intrinsically understood what the Church of England is, and why it is central to the people of England. His parents were solid Victorians and churchgoers. After briefly joining the Quakers during the 1930s he came to favour the High Anglican service of the C of E. He stuck to the High Anglican faith. It was Anglicanism's historic broadness and inclusiveness that held him. 'The dear old rumbling C of E,' he once called it.



At the concert in St Martin's the music included settings of Betjeman's poems *Jubilee Hymn* (Malcolm Williamson) and *Is it True* (Ben Parry) from his poem entitled *Christmas*. Also performed were part of the *St John's Passion* (Bob Chilcott) and the *Magnificat in G* (Charles Villiers Stanford). The beautiful singing by St Martin's Voices was directed by Dr Andrew Earls and accompanied by the organist Jemima Stephenson. For Jenny and me, visitors from the Croft Poetry Club, this was exquisite music in a glorious setting.

When asked about the mechanics of composing his verse John Betjeman said that many of his poems followed the rhythms of *Hymns Ancient & Modern*. During his funeral service at St Enodoc's in Cornwall the congregation sang the hymns *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* and *The Church's One Foundation*.

Jerry Dowlen

WHERE IN OUR LIVES?

Coincidence or God Incidence?

The theme for our August quiet day at Bishopscourt was 'Where is God in your life'. The question for us to consider, in our morning session, was 'how do our lives involve God: at the centre, stuck in a corner or outside of the framework?'

I had with me, a book, *The Christian Response* by Michel Quoist, as I find reflective reading helpful during silent periods. I found that the words that I was reading, during that silent session, related to Jill Renwick's question. I read, 'Jesus Christ does not ask you to simply stand in awe of him, or to imitate him or even to become his friend, rather he desires that your whole life be completely transformed in him. St Paul personally experienced what it means for a man to be made divine in Christ Jesus: "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me". A Christian's life must become Christocentric, in its every detail; the Christian is called to cooperate in the realization of the master plan of the Father. The life of Christ in you must transform every aspect of your life. In this way you will be helping to bring the Incarnation of Jesus Christ to fulfilment throughout the breadth and width of time and space. In short, you are in Christ a builder of the kingdom of God.'



Michel Quoist's words did not answer the question of where I allow God to be in my life. However, it was a very timely reminder to me of how I should be accepting and welcoming God into my life, which was, perhaps, the purpose of the question posed.

Malcolm Deering

ALLOTMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

Many churches in the Diocese of Rochester, other than some in rural areas, will have celebrated their Harvest Thanksgiving Services, within the walls of their churches. Next to us, at the church of St Andrew on the borders of Orpington and St Mary Cray in the London Borough of Bromley, is the Lower Road Allotments. Bishop James visited the Lower Road Allotment Society in October 2014.



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Rev. Paul Prentice, vicar of the Cray Valley Benefice, comprised of St Andrew's and St Mary's, agreed with the allotment holders that we would hold the St Andrew's Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist in the allotments. The allotment holders added to their generosity by providing a barbecue and refreshments. I

believe the idea to hold the service on the allotments to be inspired and the enthusiasm with which we were welcomed by and hosted by the allotment holders was appreciated.

One of the allotment holders announced that, amongst the many allotments in the Borough of Bromley, Lower Road Allotments Society had received seven awards, including an award as the second best allotment in the whole of the Borough. Two thoughts occurred to me. My first thought was that success by them in caring for their plots in those allotments requires absolute dedication and commitment. My second thought was that members of St Andrew's might have received a modern day parable, in that we can only be true Christians if we show absolute dedication and commitment by letting God act through us in our lives in the caring of his people and of his gifts.

Malcolm Deering
Photographs by Evelyn Magee

A CHALLENGING PRAYER

God, our companion on the journey,
let us not be so caught up in worldly cares
that we forget that you are with us everywhere.

Open our eyes that we might meet you
in the people squashed against us in the crowded bus;
in the weary shoppers elbowing their way to the counter;
in the sightseers sauntering along the pavements;
in the beggars squatting in their squalid corners;
in the noisy children kicking around an old tin can
and in the lonely pensioner peering out of a grimy window.
O God, our companion
let us never forget that you are with us everywhere.

Jean Gaskin in HUMAN RITES: worship resources for an age of change.

Submitted by Rev. Jane Winter

SUNDAY RAFFLE

Our Sunday raffle is really quite important in raising money for the little things that are very much needed by the church without dipping into the general funds. It has not taken place for some considerable time (apart from the last Family Eucharist). Recently I had a mishap with my computer and nearly lost everything. That includes all the work done on the parish magazine and all the documents for PCC business too. This resulted in the need for an external hard drive. We also had problems with fly tipping in the car park. There too we had to pay out a sum of money for a chain and posts to go across the gateway. If everyone stays after the service on Sundays and buys just one ticket for £1 (not a large sum in the scheme of things) this would help enormously as it could help with the cost of all these *little necessary extras*. So, please make a big effort and support the raffle on Sundays. You never know, you could be a winner and the more people taking part, the bigger the prize!



Brenda Smith

REV. JANE WINTER'S PRIESTING SERVICE

Many of us were up early to either catch the train or drive down to Rochester on Saturday 26 September to be part of the Service of Ordination to Priesthood for our curate Jane Winter.

The Service started at 11:00 but a large group of us arrived much earlier and enjoyed a drink and a chat before making our way over to the cathedral clutching our prized green tickets for seated entry. It was only at the last minute that Rev. Paul Prentice mentioned he had an even more sought after purple ticket affording him a much better view!

We were very fortunate to sit in a block quite close to the front with a large contingent from both churches and coincidentally directly across from Jane's family.

The service itself was conducted by both the Bishop of Rochester and the Bishop of Tonbridge and was very personal and uplifting. There were eleven candidates to be priested and they all made their pledges together and then each took it in turn to receive their personal blessing and gifts from the bishop.



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We were treated to many readings and hymns during the service and a band from St Philip and St James, Chatham played instruments and sang whilst the large congregation received Holy Communion.

After the service finished (which was approximately two hours long!) we all headed over to the Ye Arrow Pub where Jane had very kindly provided a wonderful buffet lunch and a glass of bubbly to celebrate this special day. Rev. Paul Prentice called for hush and presented Jane with her gift from the Benefice of a new purple and gold stole, which she seemed very happy with.

On the train home (including a bus replacement service from Rochester to Meopham) we all agreed it had been a

lovely day and we all felt very privileged to be able to share the occasion with Jane and her family and friends.

*Suzanne Diamond
Photos by Ayo Fayomi*

MY LUCKY DAY

Starting school was a great experience for me. It opened up a magical world of teachers who smelt lovely, who had flowers in a pot on their desk and who read wonderful exciting stories from the many books in the classroom.

I loved the stories the teacher read to us and one day she read one about an unfortunate girl who met a leprechaun. She laughed at him and said he looked ugly which enraged the little man and because she was so rude to him he began to play nasty tricks on her. He would trip her up when she was running, he stopped her from winning any games and he stole her lunch, spilt her drinks



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and turned the milk sour. He messed-up her writing so that the page was all blotchy and the teacher was always telling her off for being messy. She didn't know what to do to get rid of him. But her mother guessed what had happened and so she said if she found a four-leaved clover and wished that he would vanish then he would and she would have no more trouble. The girl searched and searched until at last she found one and made her wish. From that day she was never troubled by his tricks and lived happily ever after (as people did in those stories!)

I was fascinated by this and for weeks I scoured the school grassy patch for such a plant. I was convinced that if I found one then surely I would be very lucky and would not have any more ink blots in my school book. Sadly, I never found one. Even after I left school I would always look for one. I never gave up hope and when I had my own garden I always examined any clover I pulled out to see if I could find one. I began to think that such a thing never existed.

So you can imagine my delight when, a few weeks ago, I found one, growing in a pot of pansies! I kept examining it, to make sure that there really were four leaves. I was thrilled and amazed to see that that such a thing did exist. And here it is!

I was so pleased with this unique find and I took it to show my friends in St Andrew's. To my surprise, everyone there had already found one at some time and some had found more than one! I think St Andrew's must hold the record for the greatest number of people in a church who have found a four leaved clover! But that didn't take away my delight at discovering this small plant and now I no longer worry about meeting a leprechaun who will play tricks on me!

So the moral of this story is, never give up hope!

Evelyn Magee

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Yes, Christmas is not that far off! Our Christmas Fayre will be on Saturday 28 November, so we are now asking you if you would be kind enough to bring your donations in as soon as possible. We need bottles for the tombola, bric-a-brac, books etc.

Thank you.

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

PCC VACANCY

Due to unforeseen personal circumstances, a member of the current PCC has found it necessary to resign. This has created a vacancy which needs to be filled. Is there anyone from either church who would be willing to take this on? It isn't such an onerous task. We only meet about six times a year. If you are interested please speak to me and I will supply you with the details. Many thanks.

*Brenda Smith
PCC Secretary*

ST ANDREW'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2015

DOORS OPEN 11:00

CLOSE 14:00

**COME ALONG AND JOIN IN ALL THE FUN OF
THE FAYRE AND MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS**



**FOOD, TEA AND COFFEE AVAILABLE
RAFFLE AND FUN STALLS FOR CHILDREN
AND ADULTS**

St Mary's Church

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER

12:00 to 15:00

Gifts, Games, Crafts, Santa,
Refreshments, Cake Stall, Raffle,
Tombola and much much more.

Free entry



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.

HALL FOR HIRE
HAVE YOU THOUGHT
OF HIRING ST
ANDREW'S FULLY
EQUIPPED CHURCH
HALL FOR A
FUNCTION? IF YOU
ARE INTERESTED
PLEASE CONTACT
THE PARISH OFFICE
ON 01689 823775.
THE HALL IS
USUALLY
AVAILABLE
EVENINGS,
WEEKENDS AND
DURING THE DAY
OUT OF TERM TIME

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Church <<**



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