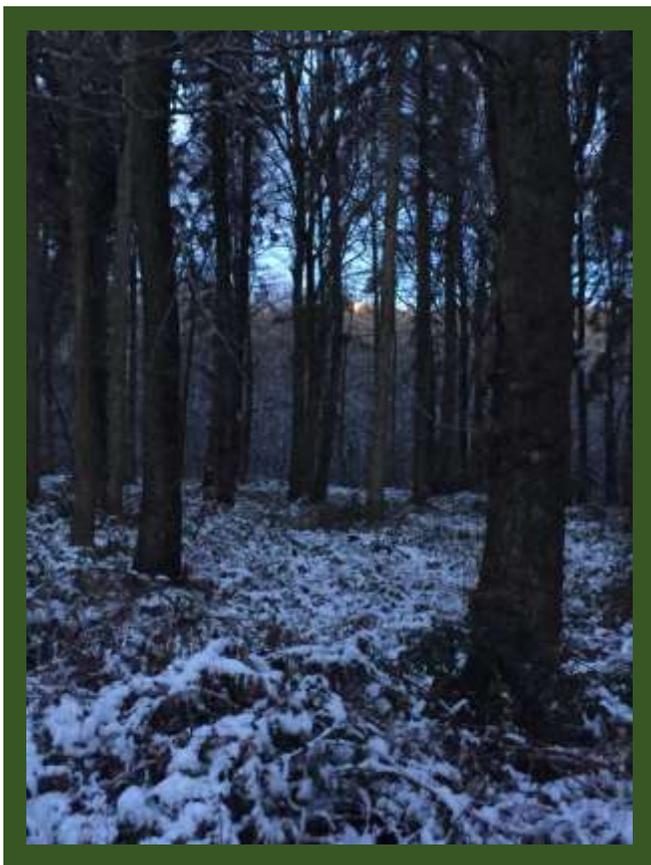


The

CRAYFISHER

February 2017

50p



The parish magazine of the Cray Valley Benefice

No.21

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

Social Committees Contacts

St Andrew's: Dalaine Crane (07958 228671)

St Mary's: Bridget Daly (01689 830955)

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

www.stmarysatcray.com

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

www.standrewsatcray.com

The editorial team reserve the right to edit, and condense
if necessary, items submitted for publication.

Opinions expressed by contributors, and services offered by advertisers, are not
specifically endorsed by THE CRAYFISHER magazine or the Cray Valley Benefice.

Front cover picture: *Early Morning Snow in Andrew's Wood* by Kevin Smith

PARISH LETTER



It's bitterly cold at Waterloo Station on an early Tuesday morning, and I am waiting for the doors to open on the Eurostar. It's the third of January and I am about to board the train to begin my journey to Bruges in Belgium where I will be staying at a Benedictine Abbey. This will mark the beginning of my two weeks of study leave. A report of the whole experience will be presented to the Benefice at a later date, but I thought it might be helpful to illustrate exactly what I mean when I talk of study leave.

There were two areas of study I wished to look at. The discernment process for oblates (those who follow the monastery's rule of life outside the Abbey) and how we meet God in the silence. My second week consisted of six days spent in a log cabin on the edge of a forest (all 200 acres of it) in what was to be complete isolation. I never saw or spoke to another human being all week.

Faith can usually be understood corporately. What I mean by this is that we are often within a community of like-minded Christians when we engage in worship, study etc. Even when we are alone we know that we will see family, friends and church members again. I am talking within the context of the church here.

But what happens when all this is removed and we are enveloped by silence? Complete and utter silent stillness. Silence can be a blessing and a curse. To some it is a joy, a welcome intervention from the busy noisy world. For others, it can be oppressive and even frightening. My two weeks allowed me to look deeper into how we encounter God when all that is familiar is stripped away.

It's good to do something different, and dare I say challenging, in the same way perhaps that Jesus was challenged when he set foot into the wilderness. Candlemas, the service that calls us to turn from the crib to the cross officially marks the end of Christmas and the journey through Lent to Easter. Perhaps through the coming season of Lent we could take the opportunity for more periods of quietness and reflection. Or maybe doing something a little bit out of the ordinary that brings us closer to God? Perhaps like Jesus, we could step out into our own wilderness experience.

Yours in Christ, Paul

REGULAR SERVICES ACROSS THE BENEFICE

Sundays	09:00	<i>Said Eucharist</i>
	10:00	Parish Eucharist with Sunday School (JaM)
	10:30	<i>Parish Eucharist</i>
Mondays	09:00	Morning Prayer
	17:30	Evening Prayer
Tuesdays	09:00	<i>Said Eucharist</i>
	17:00	<i>Evening Prayer</i>
Wednesdays	08:30	Morning Prayer (term time only)
	12:00	Said Eucharist with homily
	17:00	<i>Evening Prayer</i>
Thursdays	09:00	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	19:00	<i>Said Eucharist with homily</i>
Fridays	09:00	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	12:00	<i>Said Eucharist with Healing and Wholeness, followed by the opportunity for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat</i>
	17:00	<i>Evening Prayer</i>
Saturdays		There are different regular Saturday events throughout the month. See the following pages to find out more details.

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH ISSUE WILL BE
MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY. PLEASE GET YOUR
CONTRIBUTIONS IN BY THEN OR EARLIER IF POSSIBLE.**

ACROSS THE BENEFICE THIS MONTH

- Wed 1 12:30 **EMMAUS COURSE – Last session at St Mary’s Centre (hall)**
19:00 *LCC Meeting*
- Sat 4 10:00 **REQUIEM EUCHARIST**
- Sun 5 17:00 **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN THE CRAYS**
AGM at St Andrew’s followed by
18:30 **TAIZE Service**
- Mon 6 12:30 **SINGLETON’S LUNCH at Petts Wood.**
Please speak to Jill Renwick for further information
- Tue 7 13:30 **MOTHER’S UNION until 16:00 see page 6**
- Wed 8 15:00 **AFTERNOON TEA at Apsley Court.**
All are welcome. Just 30p for tea/coffee and a chat which is much appreciated by the residents
19:45 **HOME GROUP at St Andrew’s.**
All welcome. Please speak to Jean Pailing or Malcolm Deering
- Sat 11 10:00 **COFFEE MORNING with**
14:00 **Jumble Sale.** Please see Tony or Rosemary Lathey for details
12:30 **LUNCH CLUB**
- Sun 12 15:00 **BENEFICE PRAISE at St Mary’s**
- Tue 14 12:30 **OPEN DOOR LUNCH see page 7**
- Wed 15 14:00 **ANGEL KNITTING GROUP –**
16:00 **Please speak to Muriel Unsworth**
- Sat 18 15:30 **MESSY CHURCH with a St Valentine Theme until 17:00**
- Sun 19 14:00 **BAPTISM of Fraser**
BAPTISM of Lewis McLeon
- Tue 21 19:30 **BENEFICE PRAYER GROUP –**
Please speak to Muriel Unsworth
- Sat 25 10:00 **COFFEE MORNING**
All welcome

ADVANCE NOTICE
Wednesday 1 March is Ash Wednesday

Items in **red [normal type]** refer to **St Mary's**, *blue [Italics]* to *St Andrew's* and **purple [all bold]** to the **benefice**. All events are open to everyone.

Regular meetings of Rainbows are in St Andrew's church hall on Mondays 17:00-18:30 during term time. Brownies meet in St Andrew's church hall on Fridays 18:30-20:00 also during term time.
THE CHURCH HALL AT ST ANDREW'S IS AVAILABLE ON TUESDAY EVENINGS – please see page 19 for booking details

BENEFICE READINGS FOR SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY

- Sun 5th** **THE FOURTH SUNDAY BEFORE LENT**
Isaiah 58: 1-9a, 1 Corinthians 2: 1-12 and
Gospel Matthew 5: 13-20. (Proper 1)
- Sun 12th** **THE THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE LENT**
Deuteronomy 30: 15-20, 1 Corinthians 3: 1-9
and Gospel Matthew 5: 21-37. (Proper 2)
- Sun 19th** **THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT**
Genesis 1. 1 to 2: 3, Romans 8: 18-25 and
Gospel Matthew 6: 25-34.
- Sun 26th** **THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT**
Exodus 24: 12-18, 2 Peter 1: 16-21 and Gospel
Matthew 17: 1-9.

ST MARY'S MOTHER'S UNION

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

PLEASE NOTE THAT DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL ALL ENTRIES FOR THE MAY EDITION SHOULD BE SENT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AS TONY LATHEY WILL BE A GUEST EDITOR
tonylathey@gmail.com

OPEN DOOR LUNCH

Our Open Door lunches are now on the second Tuesday of the month at 12:30 (cost £5.00). They will run from January to July and again from September to November.

About a dozen of us enjoyed the Open Door lunch in January. The next lunch is on St Valentine's Day, 14 February at 12:30 in St Mary's church centre (hall). We will be having fish'n'chips, a dessert and tea or coffee, still at £5.00 per person (**payment in advance please**). We need to know numbers by 12 February. We would love to see more people this year to enjoy a good meal and fellowship together.

Rosemary Lathey (01689 872742)

Muriel Unsworth (01689 835275)

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

For further details contact Tony Lathey (01689 872742)

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

I am taking the opportunity this month to use this space, to talk about the diocesan programme *Our Conversation, Our Future*. This is the title given to an initiative compiling the story of God's activity across our diocese. The story is discovered through three questions:

1. What may the Holy Spirit be saying to us about our area?
2. What do we currently spend our energy and resources on?
3. What do we need to change about who we are and what we do?

Each parish, benefice, deanery and diocesan group is invited to ask these the questions and to send their response to the diocese. The big picture that emerges will help to shape how we deliver ministry and mission.



'So what?' you might say. So, I say 'this is important, not just for the diocese but for us.' Some twenty months into our single benefice this is a great opportunity to stop and reflect on what God has been doing and to consider the

questions for ourselves in order to help shape how we respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the Crays.

Those doing the Emmaus course were reminded the other week that the church is not the building. It is the people. The church does not exist for itself, but for God and for growing his kingdom. We all have a part to play. We all have a story to tell of how God has been at work. The Holy Spirit gifts us with all we need to do our bit in growing God's kingdom.

A small group of us began to look at the questions in January. We started by asking what God has been doing before asking what the Holy Spirit might be saying to us about our area. You can find our thoughts in the centre pages of the magazine. Please have a read and add your own. We were a very small group and will not have captured everything. Please let me have your contributions to our story by the end of the month.

Please join us at 15:00 on Sunday 19 March at St Andrew's where we will answer the last two questions and identify the task God has for us now in Cray Valley. Please pray for this initiative, for our benefice and the diocese. Here is the diocesan prayer:

Heavenly Father, our beginning and our end who is always more ready to hear than we to pray, be with us in our listening, in our history and in our future that we might see your work in the world about us and seek your face in the communities we serve. Amen

This is our conversation, our future. We can all be a part of it. I look forward to your responses.

Rev. Jane Winter

BENEFICE PRAYER GROUP

The Benefice Prayer group meets at Muriel Unsworth's home, 19:30-21:00 on the third Tuesday of every month. The dates for 2017 are:

21 February
21 March
18 April
16 May
20 June
18 July
15 August



Benefice Praise
Celebrating all we share as
The Cray Valley Benefice

St Mary's Church
Sunday 12 February
15:00

19 September
17 October
21 November
19 December

Everyone is welcome.

OUR CONVERSATION, OUR FUTURE

On Sunday 15th January six people from across our two churches met to discuss what God has been doing and what we think the Holy Spirit is saying to us about our area. We tried to focus on the whole benefice not just on our churches. We were reminded that we are called to serve our whole community – about 20,000 people, in many different settings.

What has God been doing in our area in the last year?

Before we looked to the future we wanted to remind ourselves what has been happening since we became a benefice. We tried to list things under the concerns God has for the well-being of individuals, communities and creation. Here is the list so far:

Education,

Culture Club and lessons, (St Mary Cray St Paul's) school assemblies (St Paul's, St Mary's, Harris Primary)

Christmas gifts for needy families distributed through St Paul's school

Environment:

Park cleaning and trying to get people to take pride in the area they live in.

God works in those dedicated to improve the general environment.

Money available for a riverside walk

We have a friendly community

Good parks

Good community groups who value the church

Our prayer walks through the community

Good relationship with refuse collectors collecting rubbish from St Mary's churchyard

Concerts and bells at St Marys
Daily use of the churchyard at St Mary's
Relationship with allotment society – harvest, barbecue, community lunches

Health:

Housing:

Work:

Foodbank

Other activities:

Remembrances services across the benefice and during the year.

Funshine club (toddlers)

Youth group

Going places

Home groups

Messy Church in both churches

Inspiring people to attend Good Friday worship on the green

Community links:

Nugent Centre

Community groups

Other churches

Requests for prayer from local residents

Distributing knitted angels at Christmas time

Bringing us together practically through various joint activities

New websites

What else would you add?.....

Then we asked:

What may the Holy Spirit be saying to us about our area? We thought about this remembering God has a concern for the well-being of individuals communities and creation, using the same headings

Education:**Environment:**

People's identity linked to place – their local environment including their church

Disabled access for St Andrew's – something we have been exploring for years and years.

Open church at St Mary's so people can enjoy their heritage

Beat the bounds - get to know the area of the benefice, there is so much we don't know

Offer to work on the riverside walk – maybe extend it to start at All Saints and end at Crayford including all the 8 Anglican churches on the river route.

Health:**Housing:**

People's identity is linked to place:

their home may be local, may be abroad, may be both

Work:

Develop links with Doves funeral services (Carlton Parade) – build on what we have started

Other activities:

Consider Gas heating in St Mary’s Church centre to improve what we have already and make the centre more usable

There is good spiritual provision across the community – a range of different churches and we provide quite a lot of things

Be proactive in ecumenical activities and broaden our horizons

Fund raising for particular needs

God has been faithful through the changes we have faced

Be encouraging of one another

God wants growth in the churches#

Develop prayer visiting

Pray for local streets by name – set up a list of benefice streets and share between the two churches

Include schools/health care/police/community groups in our intercessions

Improve our communication

What do you think the Holy Spirit is saying about our area?

.....

Please pull out this centre spread and add your thoughts and ideas. Please give the form to Rev Jane by the end of February.

Please speak to Rev Jane, Bill, Flo, Jackie, Jill, or Malcolm H if you would like to know more. We would love to hear your views so we have a fuller picture of what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.

We are planning another meeting on Sunday March 19th 3pm at St Andrew's for everyone to discuss how we can best respond to God's invitation to serve Cray Valley Benefice. Please come.

Our Conversation: Cray Valley Benefice Rochester Diocese

TRUE FRIENDS AND ALIBIS

We share the earth
We rent the sky
We live in hope
Until the day we die
We gaze in awe at the stars above
Thank God for simply being alive
We search relentlessly for love
From the moment we're born it's a fight to survive
We take the path of least resistance
Seek true friends and alibis
Try hard to comprehend our existence
But we are finite, our bodies fail us
Urgently called away from life
We leave only detritus, no goodbyes
No longer a player, lungs empty of breath
We give up the ghost, desist, evolve into something else
Begin a personal conquest of death, ascent to our rightful *later*
And on the plains of *Summerland*
We reunite, embrace the *otherness*
Are back in the company of those who once loved us



Stuart Harrison

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOING PLACES CHRISTMAS LUNCH

I must put pen to paper straight away to thank both Janet and Trevor Taylor for arranging another great get-together. This time, a Christmas meal with friends from St Andrew's and St Mary's churches. This was held at the catering college here in Orpington,



known as The BR6 on Wednesday 21 December. You could order a 2-3 course meal being served by the staff and students at the college. Meals came up really hot and plentiful followed by warm mince pies and tea or coffee.

Would we go there again? I do think most of us would!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2017.

Rita Openshaw

WATER AND THE WORD

I've always had a thing about water. Paddling-pools, duck-ponds, boating-lakes, the seaside. The scriptures are simply awash with water. Creation, the flood, the parting of the Red Sea, Elijah at Mount Carmel, Jesus at the wedding in Cana, Baptism. One of my favourite bible passages featuring water is found in Exodus 32:1-34. The story of the golden calf.

To cut a fairly well known story short, the gist of the narrative may be summed up in a few words. Moses, the leader of Israel has been away for a good while and the people have become restless and impatient. They then request Aaron, the brother of Moses, to make an image of Yahweh for them. This is strictly forbidden. Aaron capitulates and manufactures an idol of gold in the shape of a calf. When Moses finally returns and catches them red-handed he is not best pleased! The crux of the story is found in verse twenty which reads as follows:

Moses took the calf they had made and burnt it with fire.
Then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and
made the Israelites drink it.

Whatever we may think regarding the historical value of this story, I believe the Holy Spirit has something to communicate metaphorically through it. Something of real, genuine and authentic worth. Truth. God is not primarily Mr Yahweh out there somewhere. Some tangible commodity we can get our mucky paws on! We need to experience this unseen God with no name and no image on the



inside. We need hearts of gold. The goodness of God in our middles!
Union with Christ.

O taste and see that the Lord is good. Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood *have* (now) eternal life. The unseen realm of God (his Kingdom) is both within and among us.

The message contained in this story from the Old Testament finds fulfilment in the events of the New Testament. The new is in the old concealed, the old is in the new revealed!

Bill Willis

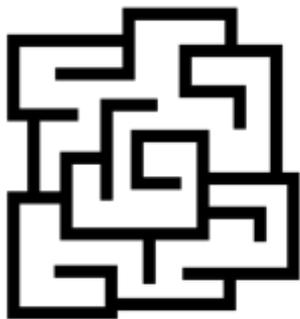
A MAZING GRACE?

The For the Young and Young at Heart section of January's Crayfisher included a diagram of a maze. Apparently, mazes or labyrinths date back over 3000 years.

As adopted by the Christian Church, they can be a spiritual journey or a journey in prayer. Whilst there is no single right way to prayer walk a labyrinth, the walk could be seen to involve three stages, such as those described below.

Entering: This can be a time for letting go of the earthly concerns, cares and distractions (baggage?) of one's life (by giving them to God?) and opening our hearts and minds to God.

Reaching the centre: This can be the time to try to feel free of our baggage and to be close and open to God and to perceive and accept that which God is imparting to us.



Returning: This can be about returning to the world and applying that which we received/perceived at the centre, to action in our daily life.

Malcolm Deering

ST MARY'S IN THE DALES

The Dowlen family decamped to the Yorkshire Dales for Christmas 2016. On the evening of 24 December, we attended the Carol Concert inside the tiny church of St Mary the Virgin in the village of Carleton-in-Craven. The church was packed full. From the pulpit came a recital of the story of Bethlehem when Joseph and Mary went *oop t'stable*. If the pastor had worn a frock-coat and the congregation, tweeds and shawls, it was veritably a scene from Emily Bronte's gothic novel *Wuthering Heights*. The church commands an elevated position in Carleton, near Skipton, looking across farmland to the north and the old wool mill of 1861 to the south. Earlier that day with Storm Barbara clipping the north of the country, St Mary's stood literally on a *blasted heath*. We had seen dark, brooding clouds blow in from the direction of Pendle, crossing the tower and chimney of the mill (now a block of flats). This is a picturesque slice of North Yorkshire. The Ribble valley runs into nearby Lancashire. The local tourist attractions include the Roman remains at Ribchester, the ruins of Bolton Abbey, Haworth (the Bronte family parsonage) and the Liverpool to Leeds canal. St Mary's in Carleton dates originally from 1120. It was rebuilt during the reign of Henry VII (1485 - 1509) and like our own St Mary's in Cray it was partly restored by the Victorians in the mid-nineteenth century. Sheep graze in abundance next to the church grounds. One wonders what sort of life was led by a certain Lawrence Roberts (died 1799) to warrant this rather sombre truism that is inscribed on his tombstone:

If life was merchandise that man could buy
The rich would live, the poor must die



*Sunset above St Marys Carleton by Stephen Garnett
Photography*

Jerry Dowlen

A ONE-LEGGED STOOL

A contributor to the January edition of *The Crayfisher* asserted that a three-legged stool is useless if one leg is removed.

I have to challenge this, as in the mid-nineteenth century even a one-legged stool was used in industry to good effect.

Glycerol trinitrate (commonly called nitroglycerin) was at this time produced in batches by running glycerine into a reaction vat containing a mixture of concentrated nitric and sulphuric acids. The reaction is exothermic (evolves heat) and needs to be continuously monitored to prevent it overheating, leading to an explosion. This was achieved by an operator, sitting on a one-legged stool, watching a thermometer and regulating the flow of glycerine into the reaction vat. This innovation of Alfred Nobel's was to prevent the operator from falling asleep on the job!

The picture shows an operator at work (c. 1870) in Nobel's explosives factory at Ardeer in Scotland.



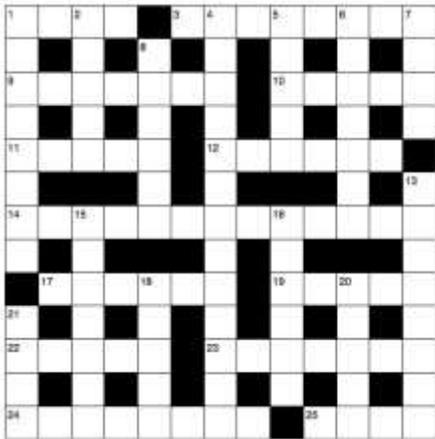
Malcolm Hubbard

FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

WHY NOT TRY THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD

THE SOLUTION WILL APPEAR NEXT MONTH – GOOD LUCK

Across - **1.** Salary (Isaiah 19:10) (4) **3.** Question Jesus asked of those healed of leprosy, 'Were not all ten — ?' (Luke 17:17) (8) **9.** Wide, elevated level area of land (Joshua 13:9) (7) **10.** 'So you also must be — , because the Son of Man will come... when you do not expect him' (Matthew 24:44) (5) **11.** '[He] said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He — — , and his hand was completely restored' (Luke 6:10) (3, 2) **12.** 'Who has gathered up the wind in the — of his hand?' (Proverbs 30:4) (6) **14.** Not born again (13) **17.** 'Again and again he — the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins' (Hebrews 10:11) (6)



19. Mails (anag.) (5) **22.** 'He — — here; he has risen' (Matthew 28:6) (2, 3) **23.** Defeated (Judges 20:43) (7) **24.** Soldiers' quarters (Acts 21:34) (8) **25.** 'Pillars of marble' were how the Beloved described those of her Lover (Song of Songs 5:15) (4)

Down - **1.** Totally destroyed (Genesis 7:23) (5, 3) **2.** What the Philippian jailer was told to do with

his prisoners Paul and Silas (Acts 16:23) (5)

4. Object of ridicule (Job 12:4) (8-5) **5.** In most years, the month in which Easter falls (5) **6.** For example, Caesarea, Joppa, Tyre, Sidon (7) **7.** '[Jesus] was in the desert for forty — , being tempted by Satan' (Mark 1:13) (4) **8.** 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power — to our God' (Revelation 19:1) (6) **13.** Mend dots (anag.) (8) **15.** Purifier (Malachi 3:3) (7) **16.** Attacked (1 Samuel 27:8) (6) **18.** The Good Samaritan to the innkeeper: 'When I return, I will reimburse you for any — expense you may have' (Luke 10:35) (5) **20.** How Matthew described the crowds who followed Jesus (Matthew 4:25) (5) **21.** For example, one of 25 Across (Judges 19:29) (4)

Courtesy of www.parishpump.co.uk



Funshine Club

St Andrew's Toddler Group

Every Wednesday during term
time

We meet in St Andrew's Church
Lower Road
Car parking in the 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
and carers.

Please come along and
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
Tuesday evenings,
weekends and during the
day out of term time

**St Mary's hall is also
available for hire most
days and/or evenings.**

**Please contact Sue
McDonald on
07914360625**

EASYFUNDRAISING.ORG.UK

- **Raise money the easy way – just by shopping online!**
- Shop with over 2000 retailers like M&S, Amazon, Argos and more
- Raise a free donation for us EVERY TIME you buy something
- Completely free
- Lots of money saving vouchers too!

**Sign-up now and start raising money for >St Mary's and St
Andrew's Church <<**

EAL
EMTA Awards Limited

P
PART
Electrical safety

City & Guilds

Michael Cresswell - Electrician

**Please contact me on 07799 767036
or mick@mc-electrician.co.uk**

**All work carried out to BS 7671 2015 17th Edition
Wiring Regulations**

**Inspection and testing - Rewiring - Additions -
Alterations**

Part P registered with NAPIT who provide a six-

CH **CHURCH HILL GARAGE LTD**
76 years of dedicated experience

ata AUTOMOTIVE
TECHNICIAN
ACCREDITATION

MOT's and All Mechanical Repairs & Servicing
Air Con Servicing & Engine Diagnostics
01689 821836
Church Hill, Orpington BR6 0HE
email: info@CHgarage.co.uk www.CHgarage.co.uk

NICE APPROVED