

SERVICES AT THE PARISH CHURCH

Sunday in the Month	8am	9.30am	11am	6.30pm
FIRST	CW HC	Morning Worship with children		Evensong
SECOND	CW HC	Morning Worship	Mattins	CW HC
THIRD	CW HC	Morning Worship		Evensong
FOURTH	BCP HC	Morning Worship with HC		Evening Praise
FIFTH	CW HC	Morning Worship		Contemplative Service

CW = Common Worship. BCP = Book of Common Prayer. HC = Holy Communion

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP every Sunday after Evening Service **Sundays**
in Church Hall

FROGS 11-14 years, first Sunday of month 6 p.m. in Church Hall

OTT 8-11 years, 10 a.m. in Church Hall

except on first and third Sunday when in Church

TLC and JAM (SUNDAY SCHOOL) 3-7+yrs, 10 a.m. in Village Hall
except on first Sunday when in Church

HOLY COMMUNION Weekdays

Every Wednesday 10.00 a.m. (BCP)

Saints Days and Holy Days as announced

If you would like to book a baptism or wedding, please contact Rev. Pat Hopkins.

Saturday morning is usually a good time for routine enquiries at the Vicarage.

Please don't hesitate to let the Vicar know of anyone who would appreciate a home visit.

Vicar's rest day: Thursday.

SIDESMEN and WOMEN

Messrs Bailey, Beasley, Brackett, Cheswick, Dilley, Dipple, Dunning, Finley, Fleetwood, Grogan, Howie, Ingram, Johnson, King, Lattimer, Lea, Matthews, Sherwood, Taylor, Vigis, Wickham, Wood, Worssam, Wragg, Young, Mrs Ambrose, Mrs Beasley, Miss Bromley, Mrs Dunning, Mrs Fleetwood, Mrs Johnston, Mrs Kelsey, Mrs Marchant, Mrs J. Matthews, Mrs Mills, Ms Nicholls, Mrs Richardson, Mrs Speer, Mrs Taylor, Miss Waites, and Mrs Wood.

PARISH MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

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MAY 2004

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2 – The Fourth Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion (CW)

9.30am Family Praise (CW) PCC Commissioning and baptism of Amy
Grace Harris, Alec William Harris and Sophie Rachel Parker

- 11.30am Baptism of Mitchell William Day**
6.00pm FROGS (Church Hall)
6.30pm Evensong
- 3 – **Bank Holiday: There will be no Morning Prayer**
 10.30am ‘Walk 1400’
 2.30pm Feba Radio meeting (41 Park Hill Road)
- 4 – **Morning Prayer is held in Church on Mondays and Tuesdays each week**
- 5 – 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
 8.00pm PCC meeting (Side Hall)
- 6 – 2.30pm Ladies’ Prayer Circle (4 Warham Road)
- 7 – 3.00pm Wedding of Richard Owen Leadbeater and Cheryl Louise Payne
- 9 – **The Fifth Sunday of Easter: Christian Aid Week**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW)
9.30am Otford Celebration Service (formerly Civic Service)
6.30pm Holy Communion (CW)
- 10 – 11.00am and 8.00pm Parish Prayer meeting (39 Tudor Drive)
- 12 – 9.30am ‘First Steps’ (Methodist Hall)
 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
 7.45pm Sevenoaks Christian Counselling Service AGM (St John’s URC Church, Sevenoaks) Speaker: Caroline Berry
 8.00pm Deanery Synod (Lullingstone Church)
- 13 – **Material for the June magazine by today, please, to Bernard Worssam, 19 Warham Road**
- 15 – 9.30am Churchyard Working Party (Foreman: Brian Raynor)
- 16 – **The Sixth Sunday of Easter**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW)
9.30am Morning Worship (CW)
6.30pm Evensong
- 18 – 8.00pm Ministry Team meeting (39 Tudor Drive)
- 19 – 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
- 20 – **8.00pm Holy Communion (BCP) for Ascension Day**
- 23 – **The Seventh Sunday of Easter: Sunday after Ascension**
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
9.30am Holy Communion (CW)
6.30pm Evening Praise
- 26 – 9.30am ‘First Steps’ (Methodist Hall)
 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
 10.45am Coffee Club (Ellenor’s)
- 29 – 2.00pm Wedding of Alistair Robertson-Watts and Gilian Siaron Hughes
- 30 – **Pentecost/Whit Sunday**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW)
9.30am Morning Worship (CW) and baptism of Luke Gardner
6.30pm Deanery Evensong at Wrotham Parish Church. Please note that this replaces Evensong at St Bartholomew’s today
- 31 – **Bank Holiday. There will be no Morning Prayer in Church at 8.15am**
 Village Fete

Some early June dates:

- 1 – **Morning Prayer is held in Church on Mondays and Tuesdays each week at 8.15am**
- 2 – 10.00pm Holy Communion (BCP)
- 3 – 2.30pm Ladies’ Prayer Circle (4 Warham Road)
- 5 – 8.00pm ‘The Olive Tree’ dramatic production in church
- 6 – **Trinity Sunday**

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EDITORIAL

On 6th June, at the Family Service, we look forward to welcoming to St Bartholomew's a special visitor. His name is Revd. Roly Bain, and he is a clown. Roly wanted to be a clown from the age of eight. His early career, however, led him to ordination as a priest. Yet the call to clowning persisted, and in 1982 he helped found 'Holy Fools', a network of people committed to clowning in ministry and worship. In 1990 he left his London parish, studied at the circus school in Bristol and has been communicating the Gospel through clowning ever since.

For Roly, the clown is a deeply profound and mysterious figure, whose effect on people, places and institutions can be quite staggering and yet it is enjoyed on lots of different levels at the same time. His gentle anarchy turns the church and the world upside-down.

Brian Raynor, one of our Readers, and I met Roly Bain at a Ministers' School run by the Diocese of Rochester in 1999. Following initial irritation and even anger from the clergy attending, he made a profound impression on us all, and what he taught us about clown ministry related to the Gospel has stayed with us: hence the invitation to our Family Service.

In one of his books 'Fools Rush In', Roly writes: 'my favourite description of a clown is one coined by Colin Morris in his book 'Hammer of the Lord', and that is 'the vulnerable lover'. If you're vulnerable you can allow things to happen and you're never quite in charge of any situation. We love the clown partly because he is who he is. We are able to love him because he loves us. We also love him because he is able to love himself. The vulnerable lover accepts all his imperfections and weaknesses, acknowledges his own absurdity, has discovered and has access to all his emotions, explores his dreams, lives his hopes, knows his strengths, and gets on with it. In loving the clown we are able to love ourselves too, for it is our own self that we see reflected in him.'

Roly goes on to link the ministry of the clown with the love of God in whose image we are made. God revels in his creation and chose to create human beings who were capable

of temptation and of falling – just like the clown. The foolishness of the clown is there in the vulnerability of the way Jesus came into the world, in his hanging on the cross, as the world witnessed the death of the vulnerable lover. Yet three days later Jesus returned and as Roly puts it, 'he had the last laugh on death itself, and the empty tomb echoed with the sound of God's laughter'.

ROLY

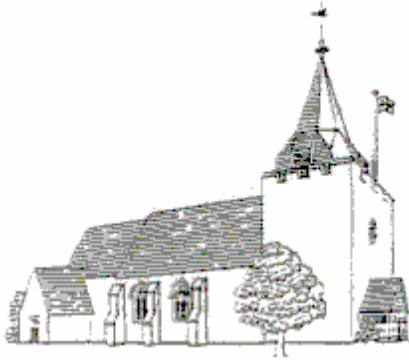
Slapstick, Story
& Circus



at your service ...

The clown figure is reflected in the accounts of the Early Church and not least in the life of Peter, the bumbling clown picking himself up, dusting himself down and starting all over again. The church now as then needs to laugh at itself. As Roly puts it, 'It is good to be washed over with humour, to be teased off high horses and out of self-importance. Holiness without humour can be less than human and far from divine.'

(Revd.) Pat Hopkins



FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Easter Thanks. We are grateful to all those who made our Holy Week and Easter services so special. The Palm Sunday procession was a very happy and united occasion, and we were delighted to see so many folk joining the 'walk of witness'. We were so pleased to join our Methodist friends for their thoughtful service on Maundy Thursday. We thank David Matthews for his organisation and leading of the Three Hours' Service on Good Friday.

Ascension Day. The Easter 'season' ends with the celebration of Ascension Day on Thursday, 20th May. We hope you will join us for the service of Holy Communion in church at 8pm on that day.

First Steps

This popular group for babies and pre-school children and their carers is run by Otford churches and meets on alternate Wednesdays in the Methodist Church Hall from 9.30 to 11.30am. There are bible-based activities and stories, and the chance for parents and other carers to meet up and compare notes while their children play together. The subject for Wednesday 12th May is 'Friends' and for 26th May 'Butterflies'. Details are available from Alison Crawley (01959 525128) or Katherine Coffin (01732 456338).

Change in the Time of the mid-Morning Service

From the beginning of May, the time of the service at the Parish Church changes from 10am to 9.30am. This is likely to be experimental but we hope that the experiment will be permanent, paving the way for the arrival of the Church Extension. The service at 9.30am will have a similar structure every week but as now, the service will have a slightly different emphasis on the first and fourth Sundays: **the first Sunday of the month will continue to be a Family Service, with children in mind. The service on the fourth Sunday in the month will include Holy Communion.** The service will be based on the Common Worship material and the worship will sometimes be led by our Organist and Choir and sometimes by our informal Music Group. In addition, **on the second Sunday in the month, starting in June, there will be a monthly service of Mattins, as now, based on the Book of Common Prayer at 11am.**

We hope that the 9.30am service will increasingly be seen as the main service of the day and serve to unite the congregations. Its format is designed to welcome both present church members and those who may be visiting our church. Please note that the 8am and 6.30pm services remain unchanged.

We hope that you will enjoy and support the new pattern and pray with us that God will guide us as we seek to move forward.

A Gentle Stroll in the Country. We would love you to join us on Monday 3rd May, Bank Holiday, for the first of three local rambles planned for the summer. The walks are open to anyone who would like to come, young or old, Otford resident or not. This first one commences in the Church car park at 10.30am, gently perambulates round Shoreham and Otford and returns to the Church Hall for a lunch produced for you by us. For catering purposes, it would help us to know if you are coming: just ring the Parish Church Office (01959 523185) and leave a message. The walks are part of our own celebrations for the Diocesan 1400th anniversary: hence we have dubbed them 'Walk 1400'.

Otford Celebration Service

The Otford Celebration Service, formerly named the Civic Service, will be held on Sunday 9th May at the new time of 9.30am, and will be followed as usual by refreshments. It has been renamed because we understand that some people think that the service is designed primarily for office-holders of village organisations, and that you have to be a 'civic dignitary' to attend. The service is of course for everyone in Otford, designed to celebrate our life together, and pray for village and other needs. We are pleased to welcome members of other Otford churches and members of village clubs and organisations but also individuals who'd like to give thanks for the privilege of living in this lovely part of Kent. If you are one of them, we'd love to see you!

1400th Anniversary of the Diocese: Celebration Deanery Evensong

This will be held on Sunday 30th May, Pentecost, at 6.30pm at Wrotham Church. There will be no evening service at St Bartholomew's in order to enable us to go and affirm our unity in the Deanery in this special Evensong which will be led by the Deanery Choirs, including our own. If you need transport, please ring the Parish Church Office on 01959 523185. Please do come!

A Special Weekend. There are two special events occurring on the weekend of Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th June. The first is the Christian drama production 'The Olive Tree' which is being staged in local churches and comes to Otford on Saturday 5th June at 8pm: there will be a retiring collection for the church.

The second is on Sunday 6th June, Trinity Sunday, at the 9.30am Family Service when we shall be welcoming Maisie Ward in baptism, the daughter of Gary and Lindsey Ward who founded The Enchanted Florist in the village. Another special visitor will be involved in our service on that day. He is Revd. Roly Bain, a full-time free-lance professional clown as well as being an Anglican priest. He performs in churches, cathedrals, prisons, schools, at conferences, as well as in hospitals, theatres, circuses and open air events. He was 1994 Clown of the Year, won the Clowns International Slapstick Award in 1999, and in 2001 in the USA was given the Impact Clown Award. Roly is based in Bristol, covers around 35,000 miles a year, has written three books and produced two videos of his work. He relies on donations as his main source of income. We hope you will come along and enjoy Roly's ministry and join us if you can for refreshments after the service.

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SUMMER FAIR SATURDAY 19th JUNE



The Fair will be held as usual in the highly attractive grounds of Castle House, by kind permission of the owners. Preparations are now well under way. Please consider how you would like to get involved. The theme this year is celebrating 1400 years of Rochester Diocese and the Children's Art Competition is on the subject of Castles and Cathedrals, to reflect the theme. Perhaps you could use the half term to make something using any medium you wish.

Now is the time to turn out those books, White Elephant items, toys, CDs, and DVDs, to take cuttings, split up your herbs, bake for the freezer (small and large cakes), and work on those craft items. The Children's Stall, Bottle Stall, Tombola and Raffle would welcome donations of new items.

If you have not already volunteered to help (or have not been approached) please contact Margy Torry on 525563. She would love to hear from you whether you want to run a stall or just help on one for an hour or two. If you can help with setting up on the Friday night or Saturday morning or clearing away on the Saturday afternoon please contact Vanessa Nicholls on 569649. Watch out for full details of stallholders and more about the Fair, in next month's magazine.



ROUNDABOUT

OTFORD OVER SIXTIES SOCIAL CLUB. Our friend Babs Watson gave us a very entertaining afternoon with her husband Ted, at our meeting on 31st March. On May 12th there will be a visit from the Eleanor Foundation, and on May 19th, a week early, we have an outing to Hall Place, the Jacobean manor at Bexley, together with its award-winning nursery.

We would welcome any suitable items for our table at the WI sale on May 15th. All enquiries to Jill or Ed on 01959 527755.

THE OTFORD GARDENERS' SOCIETY'S next meeting will be on Tuesday evening 4th May in the Village Hall, to hear a presentation by Jean Bowles on 'The Scented Garden'. All are welcome.

Advance Notice – all FLOWER ARRANGERS are invited to take part in the new Open Class at the Society's Summer Show on 10th July. The title of the class is 'A Summer's Day' – to fit an alcove size of 20 inches overall. For details and an application form please contact Sheila Dickerson on 01959 524183.

GLAUCOMA SUPPORT GROUP. There will be a Coffee Morning on Wednesday 19th May in the Club Room at the Village Hall from 10am to 12 noon. If you suffer from glaucoma, have a family member who has the condition or would like to know more about the work of the International Glaucoma Association please come and support us.

The speaker will be a local member who will give a short talk on 'Family Glaucoma and Genetic Research'. For more information contact Hilary Johnson on 522917.

OTFORD EVENING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE. At our April meeting we celebrated the Institute's 45th birthday. After being warmly welcomed by President Brenda Ash over eighty members and guests sat down to enjoy a delicious, hot three-course meal, accompanied of course by a high decibel-level of chat and laughter! It was good to see, amongst the guests, Barbara Jennings who moved from the village some time ago. The birthday cake looked splendid, beautifully made and iced by Heather Porter.

We then sat back to be entertained by the four members of 'Tap Happy' who tap-danced their way through many well-known numbers. Katie (the second on the left in their line-up) bridged the time taken in changing costumes with a leisurely and amusing line of chat. All the costumes were made by one of the group and were superb. A high-kicking, exuberant Can-Can ended their show – they had no breath left for an encore!

The Birthday bursary was drawn and Judy Cardinal was the lucky winner who will choose a course at our Organisation's Denman College in Oxfordshire.

We look forward to welcoming lots of customers to our **Boot Sale on Saturday 15th May in the Memorial Hall. Doors open at 9.30am and the 50p entrance fee also entitles you to a cup of tea/coffee.** Get there early to snap up the best of the bargains.

Brenda Young (Oxford 523676)

THE SHOREHAM GARDEN SAFARI, in aid of the Shoreham Church Project, will take place in Shoreham village on Saturday June 12th and Sunday June 13th from 11am until 5pm. Plants and refreshments will be available in various gardens all day, for £4 entrance or a family ticket for four people for £12. A ticket and a programme can be purchased at any of the twenty-one gardens that will be open.

OTFORD AFTERNOON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE. At our April meeting members enjoyed Graham Johnson's informative and illustrated talk on the River Medway from its source to East Farleigh. We were delighted to welcome one new member and a guest who enjoyed the afternoon and has now decided to join as well! During the month of May we have our Ploughman's lunch on the 11th followed by members discussing the Resolutions which have been put forward for the NFWI annual meeting which is held in June. We meet in the Village Hall at 2.00pm. Also during May we will be busy preparing our stall for the Otford Fete. (JCA)

A CONCERT FOR SPRING. German songs of two entirely different types will form the programme for the **Darent Valley Choir** concert at the Mick Jagger Centre, Dartford Grammar School, on Saturday May 22nd, at 7.30pm. Brahms's *Liebeslieder Walzer* (Love-song Waltzes) set texts from Romantic poetry in a melodious, relaxed style, while the main work in the programme will be Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, a spectacular and very tuneful setting of some 13th-century German and Latin poems. Many of the tunes will be familiar through their use in advertising and films. The choir will be joined by pianists Jenny Smith and Rebecca Kincaid for both pieces, and by a group of young percussionists for the spectacular percussion parts in *Carmina Burana*. For tickets (£10) ring 01959 523729.

COUNTRY GARDEN FAIR. Brasted Bell Restoration Project has a garden open day in Chevening Gardens on Sunday 6th June 2004, 2-5.30pm (by kind permission of the Board of Trustees of the Chevening Estate). The most unusual attraction will be The Bell Meadow Belfry – a mini ring of church bells in its own little tower. Anyone, including quite small children, will be able to have a try at ringing them. There will also be many varied stalls including plants and crafts, a portrait artist, a demonstration by dogs from HM Prison at Belmarsh, a bouncy castle, a raffle (win a mountain bike), a slide, teas, etc. The impressive gardens, lake and maze are well worth a visit in their own right too. Further attractions are still being arranged at time of going to press.

SPOTLIGHT
ON PARISH COUNCIL NEWS
Chairman: Mr John Allen
Parish Clerk: Mrs B. Darby. Tel: Otford 524808

Annual Parish Meeting. This was on the 22nd March and attended by about forty people who heard of the wide range of activities performed by this council and were able to ask questions. Statutory annual meetings are for residents to learn about the level of government that has the most effect on their local environment, and I would like to think that the relatively small number attending reflected general satisfaction with the council.

It was clear from the large number of items covered that Otford has more facilities under the care of the parish council than most villages, and this is reflected in its relatively large precept. It seems to me that in this the council meets the object of the central government's aim in creating 'Quality Parish Councils', which was defined at a recent meeting as being 'more active, more willing to spend money (parish councils have no financial limit imposed on their precept by the government) and more professional'. We will find out when we apply for this qualification.

One of the requirements for such councils is to have a qualified clerk. It may not be generally appreciated that a parish clerk, 'should be able to act as a legal and financial advisor to the council, administer the council's business and act as an accountant, produce publications, provide information to parishioners and manage the statutory

functions of local government' (Oxford's clerks do more than this). The basic knowledge requires a minimum of six months training, and becomes more complicated each year because of the increasing flow of government regulations and legislation. Those I meet are dedicated to their work and communities, but perhaps it is not surprising that on average 20% leave each year.

Rubbish dumping. This happens in Oxenhill Meadow and Shaw, Palace Park Wood and the Chalkpit. Please be aware, the maximum fine is increasing to £50,000, plus expenses. Clearing the mess is a charge on the Council Tax, and it is in everyone's interest to stop it happening.

JGA

IN MEMORY

We send our condolences to the family and friends of **Mike Frederick James Stepney** who died on 12th February aged 83. His funeral was held at the Parish Church on 18th February followed by burial at Otford Cemetery.

Mike was born in Canterbury, one of five children. He joined the Army and during the war was a Prisoner of War in Poland and Germany. At the end of the war, he went on to work at local farms, especially at Castle Farm, Shoreham, where he worked for 25 years. Mike was awarded many trophies for his work with hops. He met his wife Joyce and they were married at Chartham, Canterbury, later settling in Coxheath, then Shoreham and finally Otford. They were married for 53 years and had six children, sixteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Mike loved the land, working with hops, apples, and animals, especially cows. He was a quiet, patient family man, loving gardening, the village and holidays. Sadly he suffered from ill-health at the end of his life and was lovingly cared for by his family and at the Betsy Clara Home, Tovil, for which donations were requested in Mike's memory.

We send our condolences to the family of **William Henry Parker** who died on 22nd March aged 82. His funeral was held at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium, followed by interment in the Church's Memorial Garden. Bill, as he became known, was born in West Ham and entered the Army for the Second World War. He was taken Prisoner of War in Italy and later Germany. On his return to the UK he became a Railway Clerk, serving latterly at Sevenoaks. Bill met his wife Mary through the friendship of their parents, and they were married soon after the end of the war. They settled finally in Otford in 1969, moving to Riverhead three years ago. They celebrated the arrival of five children and seven grandchildren, together with one great-grandchild and another soon to be born. Two of Bill's sons spoke eloquently at his service of their appreciation of their father's life and character.

We send our condolences to the family and friends of **Mrs Iris Mary Martin** who died on 15th February aged 76. Her funeral was held on 24th February at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium. Iris was born in Northwich, Cheshire, one of five children. On leaving school she worked in a general store and when the war came, went into the Land Army, serving in Otford, where she was to meet her husband, Ted. They were married in 1948, and settled in Otford. Ted was a well-known plumber in the area. Iris made a comfortable home and was a very good wife and mother. She worked in the Primary School canteen, and later with her husband at Fort Halstead. They enjoyed dancing and often went to Dunton Green Social Club. Ted was to die in 1996. They rejoiced in the birth of their three children, and enjoyed all that family life gave. Iris loved knitting for her ten grandchildren and later for her three great-grandchildren. She made some very good friends who were kind enough to help care for her at the end of her life. She was a quiet person, sometimes stubborn, with a northern clarity of expression.

We send our condolences to the family and friends of **Adela Jane Keell**, who died on 1st March, aged 89. Her funeral took place in the Parish Church on Thursday, 18th March, followed by interment in Otford Cemetery.

Adela, known as Jane to all her family and friends, spent her early years in Lee, then moved to Chislehurst, Petts Wood, and finally to Warham Road, Otford, some twenty years ago. Jane worked for the National Provincial Bank in her earlier years, and married her husband Ken at the age of 22. They had two daughters, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Jane's family was very important to her. She was a very determined, capable lady and her interests were many and varied. She loved her garden, belonged to the WI and to the Sevenoaks Flower Arranging Group, and arranged flowers in aid of Cancer Research at weddings in a number of churches.

Towards the end of her life Jane suffered from arthritis and had heart problems, but maintained an active interest in everything until her final days. She was admitted to the Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough, a week before she died.

God is so Great

God is not what you imagine or you think you understand. If you understand you have failed. *St Augustine*

O God, your intensity fills the earth and the whole universe, but the universe itself cannot contain you, much less the earth, and still less the world of my thoughts. *Yves Raquin*

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part. Then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. *1 Cor 13:12*



Registers



4th April **Baptism (Our Welcome)**
Emilie May **Easton**

18th March **Funerals (Our Sympathy)**
7th April Adela **Keell** (aged 89) – Burial
William Henry **Parker** (aged 82) – Cremation

Church Offerings in March
Open Collections, for Church expenses and charities..... £397.80
Freewill Offerings.....£7,579.00

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