

SERVICES AT THE PARISH CHURCH

Sunday in the Month	8am	9.30am	5.00pm	6.30pm
FIRST	CW HC	Family Worship & HC with children - Choir -	CU@5 - Church Centre -	Evensong
SECOND	CW HC	Morning Worship - Music Group -	CU@5 - Church Centre -	CW HC - Choir
THIRD	CW HC	10.30 Processional Service on Green	CU@5 - Church Centre -	Evensong
FOURTH	BCP HC	Holy Communion - Choir -	-	Festal Evensong
FIFTH	CW HC	Matins - Said	CU@5 - Church Centre -	-

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, 9.30 a.m. in Church Centre

except on first and second Sunday when in Church

SUNDAY CLUB 3-7+yrs, 9.30 a.m. in Church Centre

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 the Parish Church Office.

SIDESMEN and WOMEN

Messrs Bailey, Beasley, Brackett, Dunning, Finley, Fleetwood, Grogan, Howie, Johnson, Lattimer, Lea, Matthews, Sherwood, Vigis, Wickham, Wood, Worssam, Wragg, Mrs Ambrose, Mrs Beasley, Mrs Dunning, Mrs Fleetwood, Mrs Johnston, Mrs Kelsey, Mrs Marchant, Mrs J. Matthews, Mrs Mills, Mrs Richardson, and Mrs Wood.

PARISH MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

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MARCH 2008

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2 – The Fourth Sunday of Lent: Mothering Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion (CW) (Revd. David Casiot)

9.30am Morning Worship with children (CW) (Dawn Hallam)

5.00pm **CU@5** (Revd. David Casiot/Brian Raynor: Church Centre)

6.00pm **FROGS** (Church Hall)

6.30pm Evensong (Robin Long)

- 3 – 7.45pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 4 – **Morning Prayer will be said in church on Tuesdays each week at 8.15am**
8.00pm Lent meeting (4): The Police Station: Mr Andrew Hill
- 5 – 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
8.00pm PCC meeting (Church Centre)
- 7 – 2.00pm Women's World Day of Prayer (St Bartholomew's)
Speaker: Fr. T.J. O'Connell
- 8 – 9.30am onwards Churchyard Working Party
- 9 – **The Fifth Sunday of Lent: Passion Sunday**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW) (Revd. Dennis Mihill)
9.30am Morning Worship (CW) (Revd. David Casiot)
5.00pm CU@5 (Mags Southgate: Church Centre)
6.00pm Holy Communion (CW) (Revd. Paul Francis, Vicar of St Mary's Church, Riverhead)
- 10 – 7.45pm Coffee & Chat (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 11 – 2.30pm Homegroup (5 Colets Orchard)
8.00pm Lent meeting (5): The Counselling Room: Mrs Maureen King
- 12 – 9.30am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist New Hall)
10.00am Holy Communion (BCP) (Revd. John Goulding)
- 13 – **Material for the April magazine by today, please, to David Matthews, 'Beech Coppice', London Road, Dunton Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.**
matthews.dg@lineone.net
- 15 – 9.00am onwards **Spring cleaning of the Church for Easter**
- 16 – **Palm Sunday**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW) (Revd. Peter Flynn)
10.30am Palm Procession (commencing at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, Otford)
5.00pm CU@5 (Bill Lattimer: Church Centre)
6.30pm Evensong
- HOLY WEEK**
- 17 – 7.45pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 19 – 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP) (Revd. Dennis Mihill)
- 20 – **Maundy Thursday: No Bellringing practice**
8.00pm Holy Communion (CW) (Ven. John Cox)
- 21 – **GOOD FRIDAY: 9.30am Informal Service for All Ages**
12-3.00pm Three Hours of Devotion at The Cross (Ven. John Cox)
- 22 – 9.00am Decoration of the Church for Easter
- 23 – **EASTER DAY**
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
9.30am Morning Worship for Easter Day with Holy Communion (CW)
(Canon David Grimwood)
6.30pm Festal Evensong (Margaret Lidbetter)
- 26 – 9.30am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist New Hall)
10.00am Holy Communion (BCP) (Revd. David Casiot)
- 30 – **The Second Sunday of Easter**
8.00am Holy Communion (CW) (Revd. David Casiot)
9.30am Matins
8.00am Ministry Team meeting (Church Centre)
- 31 – 7.45pm Focus Group (17 Leonard Avenue)
8.00pm Finance Committee ('Lorien', St Michael's Drive)

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EDITORIAL

Just recently one of my colleagues on the Cathedral Chapter got a puppy, a gorgeous golden retriever called Sam with an appealing face and teeth like razors. Now, whenever Paul goes out with his new dog, everyone stops to talk to him. Oh look, isn't he lovely, how long have you had him? says the stranger who he's never met. And in no time they're chatting away like old friends.

It reminded me of when our children were babies, pushing them out in the pram along the streets of London and Sheffield. Suddenly passers-by would stop, lean over, cooing a few coos and before you knew where you were you would be exchanging life-histories.

What is it about puppies and babies which causes cracks to appear in the Great British reserve about talking to strangers?

I think it's to do with purity and innocence. New lives, canine or human, are an open book, an unwritten story, virgin territory. And in a tired and cynical world there's something very appealing about that. It represents a new beginning, something unsullied, full of hope and promise.

I've always liked the month of March. It's close enough to Spring to give you a hint of the warmth that's coming, but it's near enough to Winter to give you a fair chance of a good fall of snow. I love the snow, especially that moment when you open the door on to a new fall that still lies untouched and pristine on the ground. Do you find yourself unwilling, like me, to place that first footprint in the pure virgin snow? There's something magical about an undisturbed snow fall. It resonates with some deep and primeval desire for a perfect, untouched new beginning.

The Parish of Otford stands on the brink of its own new beginning, awaiting the induction of a new Vicar, Richard Worssam, on 28th April. It's an exciting moment. The page is blank, waiting for a new part of your story to be written.

This is a great opportunity for Richard, but it is also a wonderful opportunity for *you*. There are certain natural moments in our lives for making fresh starts – getting married, changing jobs, moving house, retirement, and so on – and the wise traveller through life's journey will grasp those moments and make the most of them. They can refresh you, or take you in new directions, or allow you to shift your focus in life. Sometimes they can simply give you a chance to step back and take stock, to find a fresh perspective on where you are going. They are the natural times of renewal in our lives, part of the rhythms that keep us interested, and interesting.

The arrival of a new Vicar is a very natural opportunity to stop and think about your faith and spiritual life. A new beginning for the parish of Otford is a chance for you to step back and reassess where you are with God, to renew your commitment to the church, or to make changes in the pattern of your life that reconnect you with faith.

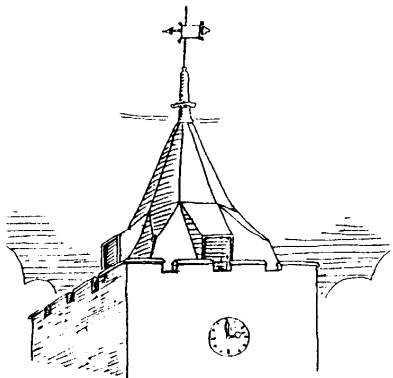
Make the most of this new beginning, and may God unfold a wonderful new story for you in the days that lie ahead.

*Very Revd. Adrian Newman
Dean of Rochester*

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Some early April dates

- 1 – 2.30pm Homegroup (5 Colets Orchard)
- 2 – 10.00am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Chris Noble, Rector of Stanstead with Fairseat & Vigo)
- 3 – 8.00pm Homegroup (51 Knighton Road)
- 6 – **The Third Sunday of Easter**
 - 8.00am **Holy Communion (CW) (Rev. Hugh Thomas)**
 - 9.30am **Morning Worship with children (CW)**
 - 6.30pm **Evensong**
- 7 – 2.30pm FEBA Radio meeting (41 Park Hill Road)



**FROM
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH**

Mothering Sunday falls on Sunday 2nd March. Posies will be offered to ladies in the congregation.

Lent Course

'Uncomfortable Places, Uncomfortable Questions' continues on Tuesdays 4th and 11th March, 8.00pm in the Church Centre. The speaker on 4th March is Andrew Hill, an officer with the MET Mounted branch and on 11th March Mrs Maureen King, Director of Counselling, will speak. All are welcome.

Women's World Day of Prayer

The service for 2008, prepared by ladies from Guyana, will be held on Friday 7th March at 2.00pm at St Bartholomew's Church. The theme of the service is 'God's wisdom provides new understanding' and the Speaker will be Father T.J. O'Connell. The service will be followed by refreshments in the new Church Centre. EVERYONE is welcome to this ecumenical event.

The first **Churchyard Working Party** of 2008 will take place on Saturday 8th March from 9.30am. Please come and join in the fun!

Palm Sunday

This is on Sunday 16th March, and there will be the usual united churches' Procession, beginning at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church at 10.30am and ending with an act of worship on The Green, followed by refreshments in the Church Centre. Palm crosses will be available at all services on that day.

Maundy Thursday is on 20th March, and there will be a service of Holy Communion (CW) at 8pm. This service commemorates the Last Supper and will be led by the Ven. John Cox.

Good Friday

This is on 21st March. There will be a service for all ages at 9.30am on that day and also the Three Hours' Meditation on The Cross, lasting from 12 noon to 3pm, led by the Ven. John Cox. There will be hymns and times of silence as usual within the service.

Easter Day is on Sunday 23rd March, and there will be services of Holy Communion at 8 and 9.30am, the latter being more informal. The preacher and celebrant at this service will be Canon David Grimwood, Bishop's Officer for Church in Society. There will be a service for Festal Evensong at 6.30pm on that day. Do join us!

St Bartholomew's Church Fair – Forward Planning!

Looking forward to the summer, the Church Fair Committee is keen to hear from anyone who might be able to provide space in a garage or garden shed to store the White Elephants prior to the church fair on Saturday 21st June 2008. If you think you can be of any help whatsoever, please contact Margie Torry on 01959 524463. She would love to hear from you!

Thank you from 'Bartholomew' Wind Players

That was such a good evening. You were a wonderful audience and we did enjoy playing for you again. Together we raised £510 which will be divided between Hospice in the Weald and church funds. Thank you to the team of helpers who made the event run so smoothly, and to Plumstead Recorder Consort who were our guests on this occasion. We shall entertain you again at St Bartholomew's Fair on June 21st. 'Bartholomew' is for musicians of any age, and if you are a woodwind player we'd love you to join us. Please phone Jean Kelsey (01732 462409) for more details.



FRITH THE FUGITIVE

John Frith, with his knowledge and understanding of the Bible, soon became one of the leading lights of the Reformation in England. This also meant that he was near the top of the list of those that Thomas More wanted imprisoned and burnt at the stake. John Frith, like William Tyndale, spent most of his life on the run. On one occasion, in 1531, when Frith returned to England (possibly to encourage some of his friends, who were being persecuted) he was arrested in Reading, where it is recorded that he was:

'taken as a vagabond and set in the stocks. When the local schoolmaster arrived, Frith began to bewail his captivity – in Latin, then he began to recite passages of Homer's Iliad. They conversed together for some time. Then the schoolmaster went with all speed to the magistrates, complaining that a mistake had been made. Frith was set free.'

The schoolmaster's name was Leonard Cox, who may well have been one of those imprisoned with John Frith in Oxford. So, by being an anonymous vagabond, Frith was able to avoid arrest and make contact with a group of 'Lutheran sympathisers' that existed in Reading. However, his freedom did not last long, a few weeks later he was caught by Thomas More's spies. This event was recorded by Chapuys, the Spanish Ambassador, who wrote to the Emperor Charles V, informing him that the finest of the Lutheran preachers had been caught. He was soon released, as Henry VIII had heard of Frith's reputation and demanded to see Frith and question him. When Frith at one point said that 'the Pope was not the head of the Church – it was Christ', Henry responded by saying 'this is not the statement of an heretic' he must be released. He was and returned to Antwerp as quickly as possible, where he re-joined Tyndale, who encouraged Frith to write.

FRITH THE WRITER

In 2001 a copy of John Frith's *A pistle to the Christen Reader* was on sale from an Antiquarian Bookshop in London. The price was £5,000. The catalogue commented that the high price reflected the rarity and importance of the book. It was the first of 17 books to be published by Frith. *A pistle* was published by Frith in July 1529. It was rare because most of John Frith's early publications were publicly burnt at St Paul's Cross, like William Tyndale's first editions of the New Testament in English. *A pistle* was important because it was the first 'rigorously anti-papist book to be printed in the English language and as such was a landmark in the English Reformation'. William Tyndale encouraged John Frith to write because of his knowledge of Scripture and his clear logical mind. This is especially evident in one of his major works, *A Disputacion of Purgatorye*, published in Antwerp in 1531. It was Martin Luther who initiated the debate on purgatory in his

Nintye-five Theses in 1517. It was John Frith who summed it up 14 years later. Professor Daniell recently wrote 'The English reformers had found no doctrine of purgatory in the Bible, or in the early fathers up to Augustine, and even after. The ablest reforming theologian, the young John Frith, had published a definitive book in the summer of 1531 to demonstrate just that point.'



OTFORD GARDENER'S SOCIETY meets on Tuesday 4th March 2008 at 8pm when Heather Fooks will talk on 'Keeping Gardeners Growing', advising us on how to stay active in the garden despite losing flexibility. Meetings take place in Otford Village Memorial Hall. Admission costs 50p for members and £1.00 for non-members, with refreshments included.
Janet Finney

OTFORD OAST W.I. meets on the third Thursday of each month from 9.30-11.30am at Otford Village Memorial Hall. The next meeting is on 13th March when Pat McCann will give a cookery demonstration of how to make some of her favourite recipes, with a chance for us to sample some of them, too! Please come along to any meetings that are of interest. There is a free crèche. The first visit is free, second visit £3.00 and annual membership £27.00.
Patsy Groom

OTFORD EVENING W.I. Twenty members enjoyed a visit to the Brighton Exhibition Centre in February to see, primarily, a display of beautiful needlework done by W.I. members from all corners of the country. We all came home marvelling at the work we had seen.

We are looking forward to hearing speaker Brian Doe's talk on gardening in prisons at our February meeting and on 13th March there will be a talk and presentation on Denman College. 'Denman', as we know it, occupies what was once Marcham Grange, a Georgian mansion near Abingdon. Residential and day courses take place there and many W.I. members have discovered a latent talent on a Denman course, which very often has been turned into a lifelong passion or full-time occupation. Courses are now open to non-W.I. members and bed and breakfast and overnight accommodation can also be enjoyed there.

We are always pleased to welcome newcomers – come along on 13th March at 7.30pm if you would like to be with us for the evening.

ST JOHN PASSION, ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SEVENOAKS. SATURDAY 15th MARCH AT 7.30pm. J.S. Bach's setting of the Passion according to John is dramatic and fast-paced. The work will be performed by The Cantate Choir, a Sevenoaks-based chamber choir, together with Vivace!, an orchestra of professional musicians specialising in baroque music. The conductor will be Robin Walker, a Royal Academy-trained conductor and organist.

The narrative of the Easter story is carried by the Evangelist (narrator) with Jesus and Pontius Pilate being the main characters, all sung by international soloists. Appropriately, the concert is being staged the weekend before Holy Week and will be sung in German with English subtitles.

Tickets, price £12, are available from Sevenoaks Bookshop, 147 High Street, Sevenoaks (cheques only, made payable to The Cantate Choir), or from Susan Reid, 01959 523234.

OTFORD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY. The next meeting of the Society is on Wednesday March 9th, at 8pm in the Village Hall, when Geoff Hutchinson will give a talk on Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), the poet and novelist. Kipling was born in Bombay, and became known for his stories on Indian life, written when on the staff of the Lahore 'Civil and Military Gazette', which he joined in 1882, as well as being known, by most people, for his famous poem 'If'. Visitors to the meeting are welcome at £1.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SEVENOAKS EASTER EVENTS: 'The Seven Sayings on the Cross', 7.30pm on Good Friday 21st March at The Drive Methodist Church with a united choir. Also on Good Friday 21st March a 'Silent Witness Walk' meeting at 10.45am at the junction of London Road and Pembroke Road (opposite the Council Offices) and walking up into Bligh's for a short act of devotion at the clock tower at 11.00am. All are welcome at these events.

OTFORD-PRECIGNE. We hosted a 15-year-old boy from Precigne, near Le Mans, last autumn for six weeks, in six different families, while he attended a local school. Both he and his hosts enjoyed the experience. Also pupils from St Michael's School have been exchanging correspondence and small gifts with a Primary School in Precigne.

During the weekend of 9th-11th May 2008 we shall be welcoming a group of 12 visitors from Precigne to Otford. If you, your family or organisation would be interested in meeting our visitors that weekend or in visiting Precigne or in making contact in the future please contact Jane Lawrey on 01959 522360, as soon as possible please, so that we may finalise our programme.

The Drive Methodist Church is promoting **VIEWPOINT**, a festival of drawing, painting, photography and digital art for children and young people on March 29th 2008. Brochures and entry forms will be available in Sevenoaks Library and Sevenoaks Art Shop, or download from www.thedrivemethodistchurch.org.uk or phone 01732 456345. Closing date for entries: 1st March.

SPOTLIGHT ON

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Chairman: Mr John Allen

Parish Clerk: Mrs B. Darby. Tel: Otford 524808

Permits for utility companies to work on Highways will be required by KCC from around the end of this year. Payment for these, and if the allotted time is over-run, will be based only on meeting the costs of the system. Of particular note for Otford is the information available on which roads will be pre-salted and, hopefully, the ability to notify the authority of a 'significant local event' such as our fete, so it is not disrupted by road-works. It should prevent roads being frequently dug-up and stop newly resurfaced roads being dug and patched.

The Tree of Light raised £1,339.47 for the Hospice in the Weald, almost certainly the largest amount this special memorial event has raised.

Increase in burial charges. Regrettably it has been necessary to bring our charges closer to other cemeteries in this area. They have not been increased in line with inflation for several years and comparison with adjacent burial grounds shows an increase of c. 20% is required. This is still less than cemeteries in nearby parishes and towns, particularly for residents in Otford.

Hooliganism and crime continues in Otford in many comparatively minor ways – although distressing to those directly affected and sometimes another drain on the precept.

Our PCSO is kept informed and has influenced some young people and others have been brought to court; parish clerks or chairmen in the area meet with police and exchange information. KCC Trading Standards have offered the parish council email alerts for visiting traders offering unsatisfactory goods or services. This information will be included in the Newsletter.

Hedges overgrowing the footways and sometimes blocking the view of the road for motorists are an unfortunate but not uncommon occurrence. Whenever possible the council mentions the problem to the owner but if it becomes a major problem the matter goes to the District Council who have the authority to cut the hedge and recover the cost from the owner.

JGA

IN MEMORY

We offer our condolences to the family of **Thomas Graham Briggs** who died on 4th January. A cremation service, conducted by Revd. Lionel Kevis, was held on Tuesday 22nd January at Tunbridge Wells, followed by a service of Thanksgiving for his life on 23rd January in Church, which was conducted by his nephew, Prebendary Duncan Dormer.

Tom was born in Peshurst and was the first Briggs to be born outside Barbados since 1640, spending his childhood near Aviemore in the Highlands. Upon leaving The Naval College, Pangbourne, he joined the merchant navy but only one year later World War Two was declared and he was transferred to the RNR. He had an eventful five years. During his naval career there were many postings and at the Ministry of Defence he was responsible for the deployment of Britain's Nuclear deterrent – Polaris. He finally became Captain of the Royal Naval College at Greenwich.

Tom met and married Celia in 1949 and they were to be married for 58 happy years, living in Otford for over forty-five of them. He was a quiet and unassuming man, quite undemonstrative, utterly dependable, a great listener and very supportive. He suffered from cancer for 16 years but was optimistic about the outcome of his illness. Having had two sons he was always interested to know about the next generation and regularly asked about the progress of his seven grandchildren, three of whom read at the Thanksgiving service.

Tom was a much loved husband, father and grandfather and will be missed by all his family. His remains are to be scattered in the Highlands in a place that he loved so much.

We offer our condolences to the family of **Lotus Adrienne Thompson**, who died on 9th January 2008 and whose Thanksgiving Service was held at St Bartholomew's on 28th January 2008.

She was born in Norfolk in 1925, had an idyllic childhood and became a Land Girl during the World War II. She drew and painted all her life, winning Royal Drawing Society prizes as a school girl, spent a year at Brighton Art School and later some time at Hornsea Art School. Later, in Uganda, she was awarded the Gold Medal of the Alliance Francoise.

She married Robin in 1952; Christopher was born in 1954 and Andrew in 1958. Robin's work took them around the world, as well as back home. After his retirement, again they travelled widely together.

Her spare time was spent in reading and painting; she loved nature and painting outdoors. Her great strengths were in drawing and line and she produced powerful figure drawings.

She was a loving wife, mother and grandmother, delighting in her six grandchildren. She also had a great capacity for friendship, with a genuine interest in others. She was a genuine and wise lady, diffident about her art when it won tributes, and her loss will be felt keenly by a much wider circle than her family.

We offer our condolences to the family of **Joan Tapper** who died on 21st January. A funeral service, conducted by her son Canon John Tapper, and Revd. Kath Pawlett, from Otford Methodist Church, was held in Church on Thursday 31st January, followed by burial in the Churchyard.

Joan was born in Beckenham, Kent, in 1916 and was an only child. She loved her holidays spent in a family home in Cornwall and had a great love of nature, was a great walker, swimmer, athlete and loved playing tennis and badminton. On leaving school she went to work for the Prudential in High Holborn. In 1937 Joan met Wilfred whom she married in 1939. She moved to Otford in 1950. She was unaffected, sincere, a marvellous hostess, a discerning person and a great thinker. Joan was a good mother and friend, a person with a gift of friendship and love for all. Two of her seven grandchildren and one of her eight grandchildren gave tributes at the service. Her coffin was proudly carried into church by her four sons and carried into the churchyard by four of her grandsons. Joan will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Treasure in Heaven

The only thing you take with you from this world to the next is your relationship with God.

Naked I came from my mother's womb,
and naked I shall depart.
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;
may the name of the Lord be praised. *Job 1:21*

Lord, you told us that a person's life does not consist of the things he possesses. Help us not to judge others by what they own. Help us not to want more and more things for ourselves but to spend our lives seeking the true riches that will endure to life everlasting. Amen.



Registers



Funerals (Our Sympathy)

18th January	Philip John Trigg (aged 48) – Cremation
22nd January	Thomas Graham Briggs (aged 86) – Cremation
28th January	Lotus Adrienne Thompson (aged 82) – Burial at Greatness Cemetery
31st January	Joan Tapper (aged 91) – Burial in Churchyard
6th February	Grace Mabel Miles (aged 92) – Burial in Otford Cemetery

Church Offerings in January

Open Collections for charities and Church expenses	£1,235.91
Freewill Offerings	£7,128.00