

**Services at St Margaret's Underriver
during May 2010**



Sunday	2 May	11:15	Family Service	
Sunday	9 May	08:00	Holy Communion (said)	BCP
		18:00	Evensong (with hymns and canticles)	BCP
Thursday	13 May	20:00	Ascension Day Holy Communion	
Sunday	16 May	10:30	St Margaret's Sunday Club meets in the Village Hall	
		11:15	Short Family Service	
Sunday	23 May	11:15	Parish Communion (with hymns)	CW
Sunday	30 May	11:15	United Sung Festival Communion	CW
Sunday	6 June	11:15	Family Service	

(For details of joint services, bible study, prayer times, etc., please see Page 2)

ST LAWRENCE CHURCH AND VILLAGE CONTACTS

Priest in Charge - St Lawrence Church - Revd Dr Michael Cooke - 761766
Reader - St Lawrence Church - Mrs Gretel Wakeham - 761534

Churchwardens	Hilary Denby-Jones 763883 Celeste Davis-Watling 820190	Sevens District Councillor	Cnclr Peter Coates 762129
PCC Hon Secretary	Richard Glencross 761202	Seal Parish Council	
PCC Hon Treasurer	Tony Webb xd	Chairman	Robin Watson 833930
Electoral Roll	Clive McLintock 452964	Vice-Chairman	Edward Oatley 465905
Covenant & Envelopes	John Morris 810227	Clerk	Lorna Talbot 763488
Organist	Lizzie Veglio 01634 244700	Ward Councillors	Peter Granville 763832 Chris Sutton-Mattocks 762013
Choir Director	John Morris 810227	St Lawrence Village Association	
Bellringers Hon Secretary	Elspeth Cooke 761766	Chairman	Graham Moynes 760640
Sevens Deanery Synod	Gretel Wakeham 761534	Secretary	Carol Smith 763561
	Hilary Denby-Jones 763883	St Lawrence Village Hall Management Committee	
Sunday School	Hilary Darque 453929 Elspeth Cooke 761766	Chairman	Peter Granville 763832
Child Protection Rep	Carol McLintock 452964	Secretary	Peter Wharton 810388
deputy	Gretel Wakeham 761534	Treasurer	Andy Smaggasgale 760552
Church Flowers	Sheila Jackson 811422	Bookings Secretary	Janice Brooker 760843
Memorial Flowers	Annie Scarsi 810864	Crickets Club Secretary	Robin Webster 01892 862017
St Lawrence CE Primary School		Badm'ton Club Contact	Ian Lister 762416
Headteacher	Alison Saunders 761393	Bowls Club	Peter Granville 763832
Chairman of Governors	Sarah Hudson 810050	Tennis Club Contact	Gretel Wakeham 761534
Clerk to the Governors	Sarah Brew xd	Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators	
St Lawrence Pre-School	Mandy McCracken 847990	Stone Street Contact	Janice Brooker 760843
1 st St Lawrence Brownies	Janet Boswell 01959 523953	Seal Chart Contact	Nicola Mitchell 764202

**St Lawrence, Seal Chart Parish Magazine
May 2010**



Priest in Charge
The Reverend Dr Michael Cooke
 St Lawrence Vicarage
 Stone Street
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0LQ
 01732 761766

Reader
Mrs Gretel Wakeham
 The White House
 Bitchet Green
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0NA
 01732 761534

Church Wardens

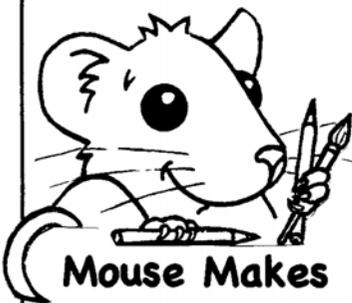
Hilary Denby-Jones
 Broomsleigh Park
 Seal Chart
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 Church Road, Stone Street
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Copy for the next issue should be sent to the editor (or e-mail to brian@bsutton0.wanadoo.co.uk)
to arrive by 08:00 on Wednesday 19 May 2010

The next issue of the Parish Magazine will be in Church on **Sunday 30 May 2010**

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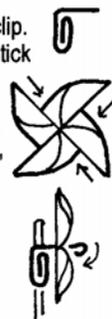
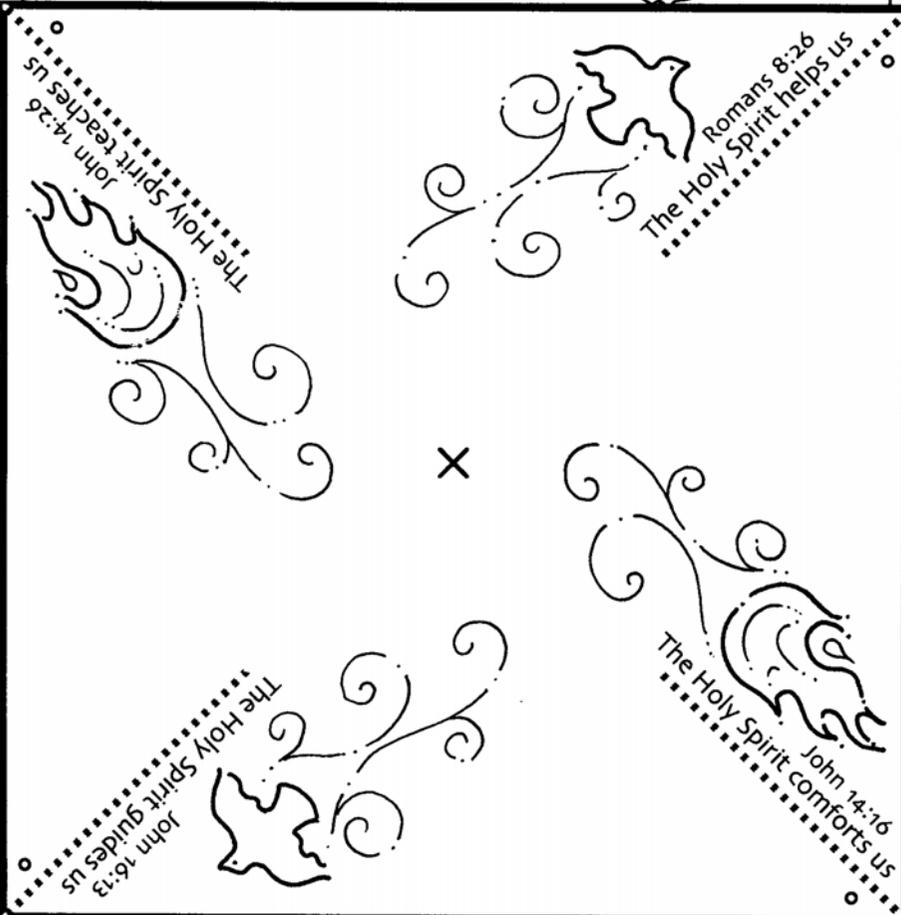


Mouse Makes

What happened at **PENTECOST?**
READ Acts 2:1-42

"They were all filled with the **HOLY SPIRIT**"
Acts 2:4

1. Glue onto coloured paper.
2. Cut out and cut along '.....' diagonal lines
3. Bend out a paperclip. Tape onto wooden stick
4. Push clip end through centre 'x'
5. Bend each corner with a 'o' to centre 'x' and push over end of clip
6. Bend over clip end to secure.

The Holy Spirit teaches us
John 14:26

The Holy Spirit helps us
Romans 8:26

The Holy Spirit guides us
John 16:13

The Holy Spirit comforts us
John 14:16

The Vicar's Page

No apology for writing this month about the forthcoming General Election – as Archbishop Desmond Tutu has said, “if we are to say that religion cannot be concerned with politics, then we are really saying there is a substantial part of human life in which God’s writ does not run.”

But is there a Christian line on whether or how to vote? Christianity is nothing if not grounded in reality – so one good starting point is common sense. As an e-mail I’ve recently received puts it: “Whether you like it or not, someone is going to get elected, so better you choose than let some extremist choose someone else for you!” More positively, St Paul wrote “Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.” (Romans 13:1) Which sounds extremely controversial when we remember that at his time Rome was the governing authority, and Rome behaved pretty brutally to those who wouldn’t toe its line. In due course the Emperors would even instigate pogroms against Christians. So how come St Paul can write “submit” to them?

One of God’s gifts to humankind is “dominion” (not domination!) – and just because current governments of whatever political colour don’t get it completely right, doesn’t mean that some authority, however despotic, isn’t better than none. Think what life would be like if there was not law and order. Think what life would be like if everyone took governance into their own hands. Many individuals would do good, but we can be sure that those less principled would wreak havoc. We have seen this in the fledgling democratic parts of the world, be they some African countries, Iraq or Afghanistan. Eventually people need to band together (another gift of God) for a greater common good. Local vigilante groups may appear to solve a local difficulty – but as shown, for example, in campaigns to evict local paedophiles, the bigger problem is not solved, just shifted elsewhere. Nimbyism is no more a Christian virtue than “A plague on them all”.

But what’s the point of voting in a “safe” parliamentary constituency? To vote there is not a wasted vote, as - even if the local outcome is unaffected - one contributes to the nationwide percentages, and so helps the authority of either the government or one of the opposition parties. So, although no political party is perfect, we must vote ... and so need to pick one of the available parties. Can there be any guidance? Certainly our Bishop has stated clearly which party not to support (the BNP – and presumably kindred parties). But from the rest, what helps us to choose?

Clearly, humane and just ways of dealing with the national debt must figure. Here it may be the least bad choice. But there are also principles – one or more parties may be stronger on support for the most vulnerable in our society – the unborn, or the elderly. Of course such driving forces are unlikely to be absolute – there is usually some trade off with practicality, not least the public purse. There are also issues whether as a nation we can or should go-it-alone, or whether (in many ways unjust or not) there is a higher calling to try to work as part of international authorities. Overseas aid and treaties matter for the greater common good, which sometimes will mean to British or English or Kentist relative disadvantage.

So there is lots to ponder and pray about – but please vote, and do it with the highest principles possible and for God’s sake, whose world this is.

With love and blessings,

Michael

UNITED PARISHES GARDEN PARTY
on SATURDAY 22 MAY 2010 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

At Bassetts, Mill Lane, Hildenborough

(by kind permission of John and Heather Clemence)

Please start clearing out your lofts, planting your seeds, preparing your ingredients to donate to the joint garden party!

Stall holders would be grateful for donations as follows

Bric-à-Brac - Books - Tombola - Flowers - Cakes

Plants - Produce - Home Grown Veg - Jams - Savouries

Contact details for stall holders are at the back of church.

We would love to hear from anyone who would be able to donate some time to help out with a stall, or with teas, childrens' games or setting up and taking down the tables etc. If you would like to help, please give Hilary Denby-Jones a call on 01732 763883 or 07776136678 or email her on hdenbyjones@hotmail.com

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***AN ANNOUNCEMENT***

It is with very mixed emotions that Michael shared with the Church Council (and at the Annual Church Meeting) that he and Elspeth believe it is time to move on to the next phase of their life (retirement in Broadstairs), and he has written to the Bishop tendering his resignation with effect from 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010. There is a rule of thumb which says a Vicar is most productive between 5 and 12 years in a parish (we've been here 14 ½ ), and already Michael has stayed longer than his four immediate predecessors. By giving what was almost six months notice we hope the ensuing vacancy period can be reduced to the minimum – indeed the Church Councils of both parishes are already “on-the-job” of drawing up what is known as a Parish Profile. More on this in due course – meantime it is ministry as usual.

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PRAYER TOPICS FOR THIS MONTH

- For **politicians** in the run-up to the General Election: for honesty and leadership; for the resulting **new government** to be true to its word, and wise in its legislative programme
- For the worldwide work of **Christian Aid**, and its house-to-house collection Week (9-15 May)

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bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route - at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation as said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At one point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for ‘beating the bounds’ - still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know yours today?)

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IN THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

750 years ago: - on 5th May 1260 that Kublai Khan was elected ruler of the Mongol Empire. (wonder what he would have made of the current General Election campaign?!)

700 years ago: - on 12th May 1310 that 54 members of the Knights Templar were burned at the stake for heresy in Paris.

350 years ago: - on 29th May 1660 that the English monarchy was restored with Charles II on the throne after several years as a Commonwealth under Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell.

250 years ago: - on 10th May 1760 that Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle, the French army officer who wrote ‘La Marseillaise’, the French national anthem, was born.

100 years ago: - on 1st May 1910 that Halley’s Comet began a spectacular show in the sky as the Earth passed through part of the comet’s tail on 18th May.

80 years ago: - on 24th May 1930 that British aviator Amy Johnson became the first woman to fly solo from England to Australia.

75 years ago: - on 19th May 1935 that T E Lawrence (‘Lawrence of Arabia’), British soldier and writer, died in a motorcycle accident.

60 years ago: - on 21st May 1950 that a violent storm and tornado swept across south-eastern England, killing two people and injuring many others.

40 years ago: - on 8th May 1970 that The Beatles released their final album ‘Let It Be’.

THANK YOU

Dear Friends

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the very generous gift of the Easter Sunday collection to the vicarage household. It is much appreciated in helping to maintain the house and garden.

The garden seems to have survived the hard winter remarkably well, with just a few casualties. A large Pittosporum garnettii fell over in the snow, but is still rooted in the ground, so with a good stake should be fine. Choisya was not so fortunate with branches broken under the weight of snow. As I write, the camellias are just coming into flower – a little later than usual but looking very promising. I think the wet autumn was just what was needed as the buds were forming. When we first moved into the vicarage, the beautiful pale pink formal double camellia outside the front door was the highlight of the garden. It is still doing well, having recovered from an attack of sooty mould two years ago. I am delighted that I now have two ‘daughters’ of this plant which have reached flowering size. One is planted in the sunnier part of the garden and is flowering profusely now. The other is in a pot which means that I shall be able to enjoy it when we retire to the coast in the autumn. Going from the acid peaty soil here to the chalk of our new garden, I shall have to develop a garden with a different range of plants, so it will be very special to have this camellia as a reminder of our time in the vicarage.

Many thanks again and love to you all, *Elsbeth*

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**ROGATION SUNDAY**

Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. The wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

About 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, ‘beating the bounds’ became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century, and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the

**GRANDPARENTS: UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRANDCHILDREN**

Would you like to understand better the world of your grandchildren, and be more effective in communicating with them both spiritually and in other ways? Church Army in conjunction with Brierley Consultancy are running a practical seminar for Christian grandparents on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October at Holy Trinity Church, Redhill. Cost is £25 (includes food for the day and handout of talks by the speakers; special offer £40 for 2 people.) More details from Michael or from the Church Army’s Laurence Keith (Telephone 0114 272 7451, or e-mail l.keith@sheffieldcentre.org.uk )

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SPECIAL SERVICES AND EVENTS IN MAY

Thursday 13th is Ascension Day – one of the four highlights of the Christian Year: the service for both our parishes is held this year at St Margaret’s at 8pm, so helping (we trust) even those who work to attend.

Our united Garden Party is due to be held at 2pm on Saturday 22 May at Bassetts, Mill lane, Hildenborough. Please ensure that you come and help make the day even more enjoyable for all.

Sunday 23rd is Pentecost – called by some the “birthday” of the church; in straightened times we need more than ever the gift of God’s Spirit.

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**COMPUTERS 4 AFRICA**

Don’t know what to do with those computers that you have put in the attic!! Give them a new life in Africa by donating them to Computers 4 Africa. This is a UK charity who not only refurbish the computers and ship them to Africa, but who also have people out there who train the local population on their use and maintenance. To check whether your computer/laptop is “not too old” to be of use, telephone 0845 2008510. I have just delivered my computer to Unit 12A, Mills Road, Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, ME20 7NA. If you would like me to deliver your computer for you please get in touch (01732 763436) and I will try to get a car load together.

*Tony Webb*

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DON’T LOOK BACK

The Sunday School teacher was telling the story of how when Lot's wife looked back at Sodom and Gomorrah, she turned into a pillar of salt. One youngster nodded in a knowing fashion. "My mummy looked back once while she was driving," he confided, "and she turned into a lamp post."

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Rosalind McLaughlin, a Christian Aid Week representative, travelled to Kenya with a group of other organisers and collectors. She saw the work of Christian Aid partner MNU in Kiambiu slum, and discovered what life is like in Matopeni, where it has yet to start work. This is her story...

'The first things we saw when we arrived in Matopeni were the results of the "flying toilets". There's not a single toilet here, so people go, put it in a bag, and throw it over the wall. And there is no official tap or clean running water. People have managed to reach the water pipes below the ground - but the water is really filthy and carries typhoid.

'A lady called Catherine Kithuku showed us around. It was incredible. We were led along a walkway that runs alongside the houses. It was constructed of planks that were half-broken, and directly underneath it ran the community's drainage system. Catherine said when it rains her family home floods with sewage right up to the level of the beds, soaking the mattresses.

### ***WHEN IT RAINS HER FAMILY HOME FLOODS WITH SEWAGE***

'The dignity of the people here and the sense of community are very striking. It's about we, not me. Catherine has already formed a group that has organised rubbish collections and educated people about health and other issues. Catherine said she dreams of an environment fit for humans to live in. She said she believes in change. If MNU works in Matopeni, I believe she will see it.

'By contrast, the people in Kiambiu are living something like a normal life. With the help of MNU, they have built five toilet and shower blocks and they've employed people from the local community to clean and maintain them. They've also got clean drinking water now. ( In the picture we see Catherine Nyaata and her daughter Blessing collecting clean water from the sanitation block)



'But I've also seen that if we're willing to do something, to make an effort, to put other people first, we can make others' lives a lot better. We don't even need a huge amount of money. Relatively small amounts bring massive, massive changes to many, many people.'

### ***SMALL AMOUNTS BRING MASSIVE CHANGES TO MANY, MANY PEOPLE***

£16 could buy the materials needed to build five metres of new drainage in Kenya, to prevent sewage flooding into streets and houses, protecting families from disease.

To find out more about how you can be part of these amazing changes, ask your Christian Aid Week representative, Elspeth Cooke (01732 761766) or go to [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org) Together, we can bring an end to the scandal of poverty.

## **POVERTY – LET'S END IT**

### ***CHRISTIAN AID WEEK COMMISSIONING SERVICE***

Christian Aid Week begins with a service at The Drive Methodist Church on **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 6:30 pm**. The speaker will be Andy Wilson, Christian Aid Campaigns Officer for Economic Justice. At 5:30 pm, before the service, tea and cakes will be served in The Cornwall Hall and everyone is invited to come along and enjoy conversation. There will be an ecumenical choir to lead the singing at the service and all singers are warmly invited to join.

### ***House-to-house Collection in St Lawrence's Parish***

Would you like to be one of the team of collectors in the parish this year? It just involves delivering envelopes to a small number of houses early in the week and then calling back to collect them. An hour or two collecting could raise enough to make a significant difference to the life of someone in a developing country. Please give prayerful consideration to volunteering this year. The more collectors we have, the lighter the task.

### ***Station Collection at Sevenoaks Station***

Could you spare just one hour, during the morning or evening rush hour to collect at Sevenoaks Station?

If you would like to take part in either collection or sing in the choir for the service, please contact me Thank you.

*Elspeth Cooke (01732 761766)*