

Ash-cum-Ridley and New Ash Green

CHURCH NEWS

April 2006

The Rectory, The Street, Ash, Nr Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 7HA

Tel: 872209

My dear friends,

TREES

I sit in my study and look out over a large number of trees. At the moment the sun is shining but we are between showers. Nevertheless spring is on the way. Buds are beginning to swell, and birds to pair off. Last week we sorted out the log pile so that is now looking tidy – although two sawn up Christmas trees waiting for next winters fires look sad.

It always saddens me to see a cast off Christmas tree sitting by the roadside in mid – January, no longer a thing of beauty, unloved and almost bare of needles. Christmas over. In church we now look forward to an even barer tree. The tree of life of Christmas is now a tree of death. No beauty at all. Two rough-hewn pieces of timber nailed or tied together, and on them hangs Him for whom there was so much promise but a few weeks ago. The (Christmas) tree of life has indeed become a tree of death, and all is lost.

Yet we will gather on the Church tower on Easter morn at 6 a.m. We will not do it mourn His death, but to celebrate His life.

The trees in my garden, which seemed a while ago to speak of death, now speak instead of the promise of new life. That cross on which He died spoke of His death, but speak of our life. We will acclaim that 'He is alive' and so He is. His resurrection promises us and ours resurrection. Death will be but the beginning of a second and far greater adventure. We are told that unless a seed falls to the ground and dies it cannot live again – and so is the case for us.

The (Christmas) tree of life did indeed become a tree of death, (His death) but only so that it might again become a tree of life (Ours.)

Thank God for the promise of Easter. May you all find assurance and hope in that promise.

Yours very sincerely,

John A Peal.

SERVICES AT ST. PETER & ST. PAUL'S ASH

<u>Time</u>	<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>When</u>
8.00	Holy Communion	Every Sunday in month
10.10	Junior Church meets in Ash Village Hall, age 3 and over	2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays during term time
10.30	Family Worship	First Sunday in the month
10.30	Family Eucharist	2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays

SERVICES AT ST. PETER'S RIDLEY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>When</u>
9.15	Parish Communion	Every Sunday in the month
6.30	Evening Prayer	Second Sunday in the month only

diary dates

Full details can also be found on the website.

Apr.	4 th	Prayer meeting Ash P.C.C.	- The Rectory	7.15 p.m. 8.00 p.m.
	9 th	Palm Sunday Blessing and distribution of palm crosses at morning services Holy Baptism		3.30 p.m.
	10 th – 12 th	Daily: Compline for Holy Week		8.00 p.m.
	13 th	Maundy Thursday Sung Communion. Followed by the stripping of the Altars and vigil Compline		8.00 p.m. 10.00 p.m.
	14 th	Good Friday Children's Project at Hartley Walk of witness Closing service for both at Hartley Church Centre Service of hymns and meditation for Good Friday The Cross of Christ		9.00 a.m. 9.45 a.m. 11.15 a.m. 2.00 p.m. 8.00 p.m.
	15 th	Lighting of the Easter Candle		8.00 p.m.
	16 th	Easter Day Dawn service All other services at the usual times	(Easter eggs @ 10.30 a.m.)	6.00 a.m.
	17 th	Easter Monday – Davison Walk – pm from Meopham Green		
	25 th	Ash Church APCM and election of Churchwardens		7.45 p.m.
	26 th	Ridley Church APCM and election of Churchwardens		8.00 p.m.
May	2 nd	Ash Church Standing Committee		8.00 p.m.
	3 rd	Covenanting Churches Committee meeting		8.00 p.m.
	8 th	Ash Fête 2006 Man. Comm. Meeting	- 5, Manor Forstal	8.00 p.m.
	21 st	Confirmation Service Ash Church		10.30 a.m.

FROM THE REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM

Mar. 12th Zi Xue O'Neill-Byrne

HOLY MATRIMONY

Mar. 11th Leonard James Stokes & Lavinia Amy Lucy Campbell

EASTER

We have, as usual, a wide variety of services over the Easter period. At Ridley you would be guaranteed a warm welcome to one of our more traditional services. At Ash there are the short Compline services in Holy Week, the remembrance of that first Communion on Maundy Thursday, and The Cross of Christ (Rather like an Easter version of Nine Lessons and Carols.) For personal devotion the service on good Friday afternoon, or the vigil the night before; for outreach the Tower service or the walk of witness. For youngsters, the Good Friday project at Hartley. Do join us if you can.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Your chance to see how we are doing, and to share your thoughts, to elect – or to be elected! Again, please join us if you can.

April 25 th	Ash Church APCM and election of Churchwardens	7.45 p.m.
April 26 th	Ridley Church APCM and election of Churchwardens	8.00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY PROJECT

APRIL 14th ALL SAINTS CHURCH CENTRE, HARTLEY
DOORS OPEN 9.00AM
£1.50 per child

Run by the covenanting churches in the area, the Good Friday Project welcomes all school age children for a morning of crafts and cookery. The adults are invited to join us at 11.30am for a service involving the children, which will be followed by refreshments and hot cross buns. 'Phone **Donna Worssam** on 01474 703819 for more information.

We are looking as usual for volunteers to help on the morning and musicians to play at the service. If you can do either/both please speak to Francesca Burgess or Claire Pelham.

To all my friends in Ash Church,

Greetings from Dornoch. I am sitting and writing this with the snow blizzarding down outside - our first snow of the winter here in Northern Scotland (not like Kent!).

Over the last nearly three years I have been working to become a Reader in the Church of Scotland. This has been a wonderful journey of discovery as I am walking hand in hand with God to achieve what He has called me to do. As many of you will know, this has been a very difficult time for me as Walter died right at the beginning of this time. I know that many of you have kept me in your prayers during this time and I have valued that so much. I am now asking for your prayers to continue as I have my final preaching assessment on April 9th. I have completed the academic course via distance learning from Aberdeen University and am now completing my second six month placement in a church other than my own. If I pass my assessment, I can be called upon to take services in any Church of Scotland church within Sutherland (the largest geographical county in the UK with a population of about 13,000!) so there will probably be some long distances to travel.

When I moved here, I expected to continue to serve God within the area of Pastoral Care but He had other plans! I am now at the end of the challenge of the training and will face new unknowns - we never know what God has in store for us, do we?

I enjoy getting your news via the email edition of 'Church News', it is a good way to stay in touch with friends.

I hope that I will see you all later in the year when I 'come south' once more.

With every blessing, **Angela Henderson**

ASH FETE – SATURDAY 24TH JUNE 2006

This wonderful event is fast approaching and we are looking for lots of volunteers to help. Any amount of time that you can spare will be greatly appreciated.

We are amalgamating a number of stalls this year and are planning one for Preserves and Homemade Produce to include all cakes, jams, pickles etc. We would like as many items as possible to sell. If you can make anything, please would you let either Marion Simmons or anyone on the fete committee know in advance, as this makes planning easier. We would also like names of people to man the stall on a rota basis.

GRAVESHAM FESTIVAL SUCCESSES

MUSIC WORKSHOP RECORDER ENSEMBLE retained the Anna Passmore Cup.

LIZZI HUGHESDON won the Brian Long Memorial Trophy in the Oratorio Solo Class, came second in the under 18 years Vocal Solo and third in the under 18 Songs from the Shows class.

MELANIE NURDIN won the Simmons Cup in the 14 years and under Songs from the Shows class.

JULIETTE PELHAM won the Surridge Cup in the grade 1-2 Piano Solo class.

ANTHONY PELHAM won the Swinger Cup in the grade 2-3 Piano Solo class.

PAUL JENNINGS gained a mark of Outstanding in the Brass class Grade 5-8 and was nominated for the Crook Prix a'Excellence. Paul gave the judge of this class of very talented musicians a very difficult task and he was narrowly beaten by a percussionist.

Some wonderful results by our young musicians.

Marion Simmons

GIFT AID SCHEME and WEEKLY ENVELOPES

I am currently in the process of claiming our annual payment from the Inland Revenue. It will be a sum over £5000, and is the tax refund on a single year's Gift Aid giving.

I am sure I need not say much about the benefits of the Gift Aid scheme: briefly, if you are a UK tax-payer you can enable the church to claim from the Inland Revenue the tax you paid on your donation. No cost is involved, and all it takes is a stroke of the pen from you and from me. (It is no longer necessary to make a lasting commitment through a covenant.) Please speak to me if you are thinking about contributing in this way.

(Those who give through Gift Aid will, I hope, understand that I need to keep details up to date. As it is a while since this has been done, I shall be writing to them soon for confirmation or updates, and trust that this will not be unduly troublesome.)

Another aspect of regular giving which I need to tidy up is the list of those who use the weekly envelopes, and for this I need their help in some cases. We have had welcome donations from four people of whose details I have no record, so that I have no means of passing on their envelopes for the new financial year (from 9 April). They are numbers **8**, **17**, **44** and **50**. If one of these is you, perhaps you would let me know your name and address, through a note in the envelope, or at home (62 Knights Croft) or at john.a.harding@btinternet.com or on 874770. (I shall not be in church on Palm Sunday, so I may take a little while to make contact – but it will not be long!)

Many thanks. **John Harding**