

## CHURCH NEWS

APRIL 2007

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

**Tel: 872209**

My dear friends,

There was a time when to be regarded as a Christian one had to attend church at least three times a year. I wonder what the present day definition might be. Perhaps for some, the old 'four wheeled Christian' (Four wheels to the Baptism, four to the wedding and four for the hearse, but nothing in between!) The number of folk who claim to be Christians is vast when it comes to filling in a census form or entering a hospital – yet, on any given Sunday under a million of them will be found in an Anglican church. Even when you add on all of the other denominations and those who worship in hospital or at home there are still a vast number who claim Christianity, yet do not appear to join in worship.

Does this mean that they are failed by organised religion – we do not fulfil their worshipping needs, our worship boring or irrelevant? Is it, perhaps, the stupidity of statistics – how many actually worship three or more times a year? It might be interesting to find out. Does it, perhaps mean that a lot of people are kidding themselves and really have no idea of what Christianity or its' commitment really mean?

I realise I am going over much trodden ground but I have, today, had a long conversation on the telephone with a lovely sounding lady about the Baptism of her Granddaughter. It seems as if her local church had refused Baptism (NOT actually legal – but I am not, of course, in full possession of the facts.) NO member of the family attends church or has any apparent intention of doing so and yet they are still prepared to make solemn commitments and promises to their baby – promises they know they have no intention of keeping. Obviously the Vicar has let this family down. Should he or she have simply granted their request in the hope that something may rub off? Are we denying the power of the Holy Spirit? (Though some would argue that He can work just as well whether or not a child has been Baptised and never taken to church.)

I do not know what the Vicar said to this couple. It may well be that they were let down and an opportunity missed. Certainly we should ALL use every opportunity to help people to move forward in their faith and never be a stumbling block to their progress. On the other hand it may be that the real meaning of faith is being continually watered down towards a point of meaninglessness. If we do not need to go to church, study the Bible, pray – or even keep our promises what is there left to define us as Christians?

What does Christianity mean to you? Where will you be as we celebrate the real meaning of Christianity this Easter?

Think – and pray – about it.

**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.	1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>	Compline	8.00 p.m.
	5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	
		Sung communion followed by Stripping of Altar and Vigil	8.00 p.m.
		Compline	10.00 p.m.
	6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Good Friday</b>	
		Children's project at Hartley	9.00 a.m.
		Walk of witness	9.45 a.m.
		Closing service for both at Hartley Church Centre	11.15 a.m.
		Service of hymns and meditation for Good Friday	2.00 p.m.
		The Cross of Christ	8.00 p.m.
	7 <sup>th</sup>	Lighting of the Easter Candle	8.00 p.m.
	8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EASTER DAY</b>	
		Dawn Service at Ash Church Tower	6.15 a.m.
		All other services usual times ( <i>Easter eggs @ 10.30 a.m.</i> )	
	10 <sup>th</sup>	Ash P.C.C. Meeting at The Rectory	8.00 p.m.
	21 <sup>st</sup>	Barn Dance - details below	
	24 <sup>th</sup>	Ash Church A.P.C.M. Our annual meeting to discuss where we are and where we are going, and elect Churchwardens and a Church Council. If you are not there we might miss your input. - Ash Village Hall	8.00 p.m.
	25 <sup>th</sup>	Ridley A.P.C.M. - see comments above	
May	1 <sup>st</sup>	Ash Church Standing Committee	8.00 p.m.
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Covenanting Churches Committee Meeting	8.00 p.m.
	9 <sup>th</sup>	Lance Pierson at Meopham - details below	7.30 p.m.

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### FUNERALS

Mar. 7<sup>th</sup> Elsie Emily Hawkins aged 85  
15<sup>th</sup> Thomas William Siggins aged 70

May they rest in peace

(As we go to press we have just heard of the death of Len Cullen. Our condolences to Win, to Linda and Bryan, and to all of Len's family)

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### **PARISH WEEKEND**

In preparation for the Parish weekend we need to find out something about our church community and also the community we live in, so in the near future you will be asked to fill in a short questionnaire. There are separate ones for the three different age-groups, children, young people and adults. It would be really helpful to our planning if you could fill yours in as fully as possible.

Later in the year we will also be asking people in our community, regardless of whether or not they attend any church, to fill a slightly different questionnaire in, so that we can have some idea about what is happening locally, where we might be able to help, and where things are going well.

For regular updates on the Parish Weekend, PLEASE WATCH THIS SPACE.

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## NOT 2 B MISSED!!!

Lance Pierson

is an entertainer who brings words to life.

He is coming to

Meopham School

on

Wednesday 9th may 2007

@ 7.30PM

with

## 'The Jesus Story'

Tickets (£2.50) from Francesa Burgess – 01474 874411

Arranged by Cobham Deanery



**Lance Pierson** is an actor and performer who entertains at a variety of events. Among his favourite subjects for entertainment (poetry, music hall and cricket) he has a particular interest in bringing the Bible to life through his Bible performances, Christian poetry presentations and one-man shows. Rob Frost, a presenter of Premier Radio, says of him, 'Lance is a gifted actor... I warmly recommend him.'

As well as being an entertainment for practising Christians, '**The Jesus Show**', which Lance is performing at Meopham School on the 9<sup>th</sup> May, is an evangelistic event, and it is hoped that members of the congregation will bring friends and/or family members along too. This is what it says about the show on Lance's website:

*'This is a show about the most influential person in the history of the world. Lance's aim here amounts to the same as that of the Gospels: to retell the highlights of Jesus' life and death and return to life, to present it as life or death good news for the hearers and to convey a sense of the Lord's living presence. Lance draws a selection of the highlights from all four of the Gospels and the story covers the key moments of Jesus' career: Birth, Baptism, Teaching, Healing, Opposition, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension.*

*The subject matter will obviously do nothing but good to Christian groups who want to celebrate the person at the heart of their faith. But it is also good to use evangelistically. This is an ideal chance to invite friends to think about Jesus and the claims he makes. A short half-hour can fit into a Sunday service, in the place of a sermon or interspersed with songs and prayers. Longer versions provide an 'evening out' in themselves and of course give the fullest coverage of the Jesus story.'*

Ruth Russell of Camberley Baptist Church says about the show:

*'I can guarantee that no-one who makes the effort to attend Lance's amazing one-man dramatic presentation of **The Jesus Story** will have any desire to fall asleep, nor will they leave it without a new spring in their step!'*

Sounds like an event not to be missed, and since there are a limited number of tickets, do ring me or see me in church, and get your tickets soon!

**Francesca Burgess**

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## **THE MIKADO (16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2007)**

Hartley Gilbert & Sullivan Society presents The Mikado or The Town of Titipu from Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Hartley WI Hall, Ash Road, Hartley. Performances begin at 8PM and tickets will be £7.50 available by calling the Box Office on 01474 704188. Come and support your local G&S Society as they put on possibly Gilbert & Sullivan's most famous and loved operetta featuring such famous numbers as 'Three Little Maids', 'I've Got a Little List' and 'Tit Willow'. Whether you're new to Gilbert and Sullivan or a life long fan come and enjoy what promises to be a fantastic show.

**SAT. 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL BARN DANCE NEW ASH GREEN VILLAGE HALL**  
**£6.50 (£5 CONCESSIONS) INCLUDING A PLOUGHMAN'S SUPPER**

Do try and join us for what is always a really fun evening for all age groups.

Dancing to the Pilgrims Way group **7.30 to 11 p.m. B.Y.O. DRINKS.**

**Tickets available in Church, The Book Shop or from Carol Jenkins 872180**  
**Marion Simmons 703440 Ann Aves 873385**

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**ASH FETE SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2007**

This may sound a long way in advance but the fete will be here before we know it. Planning has already started in earnest and once again we need all the help we can get. Please volunteer. It doesn't matter how little you can do or how much spare time you have, everyone will be welcome. It is always great fun – even though we are all worn out at the end of the day. It is a lovely way of getting to know more people and we would like everyone to be involved, young and old alike. There will soon be lists appearing as if by magic. If you would like to know more about anything please speak to Ian Nurdin (873414) or any other Fête Committee member - thanks!

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**GRAVESHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL RESULTS**

New Ash Green Music Workshop Cup	- Ash Green Music Workshop Choir
CEGB Trophy for Recorders	- Ash Green Music Workshop Junior Recorder Group
Bible/Religious Reading	- Marion Simmons
Sight Reading	- Marion Simmons (Equal 1st)
Solo Brass - Grade 5-6	- Paul Jennings
Solo Brass - Grade 1-4	- Mark Jennings
FESTIVAL CHALLENGE CUP	- Elizabeth Hughesdon

The Workshop Choir includes Melanie Nurdin and Paul Jennings from our own Church Choir.

The Mowbray Trophy (Piano)	- Anthony Pelham
The Surridge Cup (Piano)	- Juliette Pelham

Anthony and Juliette are also members of Music Workshop Choir.

Paul Jennings won the Points Cup and Mark the Stan Bond Trophy for their brass classes.

Anne Jennings & Laura Kirk won the Twin Hartzell Cups. (Piano Duet)