

The Creeksea Chronicle

More than 12TH Night

IT WAS A COLD, damp evening, but still they came – more than 20, adults and children – to celebrate the end of the 12 days of Christmas and the beginning of Epiphany.

The church, still full of greenery, but minus the tree, was warm and welcoming.

The King cake, wonderfully decorated, looking like a multi-coloured turban, held, concealed within its depths, a tiny china baby. The person who received it in his or her slice of cake became King for the evening – as did the one who found a china baby in his king-sized cup cake. So Harry & George took over the evening. Harry judged the parade of Kings, won by David Watson who managed to add more than a foot to his height with the deft application of shards of gold [card] to a flowerpot. George stepped up to the pulpit and delivered a Christmas Cracker Joke stand-up.

Ian Harvey had prepared a 12th night/ Epiphany quiz which took us all round Europe and everyone enjoyed the array of food, much of it from different traditions, such as the Stollen cakes made by Eva McNeil who drew on her Austrian background for Christmas recipes.

And to remind us of the reason for this super evening – the fundraising teams' first event of 2017 for the Annexe Fund – the newest drawings of the annexe were unveiled. Pride of place in the display

goes to the memorial window for Iain and Richard House, featuring St Francis in the background of our riverside home. These displays will remain in Church over the summer.

The background work on the annexe continues. Potential contractors will be asked to tender for the work in early February and by March we should be able to assess the final costs and the amount of money needed to be raised. Using the estimate given by the Architects, Shenstone & Partners, we need to raise a further £65,000. Some of this may be available through grant funding, but we will still need to raise money for our beautiful new facilities. The Fundraising Committee will shortly be producing a diary of events for the year, please check pew sheets, webpage or Facebook to keep up to date.



A wonderfully enjoyable evening was had by all – guess William Shakespeare would approve too?

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Fixing Easter

WHEN'S EASTER? It's a question that springs to mind once Christmas is over. The Clergy usually have one eye on that date even as they prepare for the round of services in December. Teachers are always interested – it determines the length of their terms. If Easter is early the spring term will be impossibly short and the summer term drag on interminably - if late, it's a slog through winter weather and then after the holiday it seems just a few days before the GCSEs start.

So why does Easter move around so much? For the answer to that we need to go back into another country and another culture, where the calendar of religious events depended upon the cycles of the moon. The first Christians were the Jewish followers of Jesus who, knowing that the crucifixion and resurrection took place at the Jewish feast of Passover, observed Easter at that time. But Passover was observed on the 14th day of the first month of the Jewish lunar year – Nisan, which could be any day of the week. Later Christians, knowing that the Resurrection took place on a Sunday, decided that Easter should be celebrated on the first Sunday after the Passover. This meant that if the Feast of Passover was on a Sunday Easter was held back for a week. So it was always observed between the fifteenth and the twenty-first day of Nisan.

Even this did not achieve harmony within the Christian Church- the Celtic Churches of Western Europe did not delay Easter – so occasionally they would be a whole week ahead of the Roman Church's Celebration of Easter. Eventually, at the Synod of Whitby these two branches of the Christian Churches reconciled some of their differences and adopted the Roman Church's formula for the date of Easter. However they still

remained steadfast to the lunar calendar and therefore Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal [*spring*] equinox – which for simplicity is calculated as the 21st March. That means that Easter can be on any date between the 22nd March and the 25th April. In 2008 Easter was on the 23rd March – the next time Easter is on the 22nd March will be in the year 2285. It was on the 24th April in 2011.

In old editions of the Book of Common Prayer there are also tables with the date of the Paschal full moon, Sunday Letters and Golden Numbers to determine the date of Easter for years ahead – but if you want to try it a calculator would be handy. Modern Common Worship just lists of the dates of Easter until 2030 [*it will be on the 21st April*]. That's just for the western Christian churches though, the Eastern Orthodox Church follows a different calendar – but that's another story.

Observing Lent

LENT IS A TIME for reflection and is marked by the change of colour in our churches - from green, a colour representing creation and the triumph of life over death, to purple, a colour which in contrast means penitence and mourning.

It's a time to think about the ministry of Jesus, of what it meant to the people around him and what it still means to us today; a time specifically to think about his journey towards the cross.

In the past it was time to engage in a Lenten Fast. Only a few decades ago the papers and magazines would all be producing recipes for meat-free days. It was accepted that during the 40 days of Lent everyone would know that for six days of the week the food on the menu would be austere, unembellished, without the luxuries of fat and sugar and

Observing Lent - continued from page three

cream. On top of that one would be expected to give up the little luxuries of life, sweets, cakes, or perhaps alcohol.

All this had its origins in scripture – fasting showed God that his people realised that they were not fulfilling his law of love. It was a way of showing outwardly that they were sorry for wrongdoing. But it could also be a way of putting off all the complications of life, the worrying about what to eat and drink and how to prepare it, and living as simply as possible for a time. During the period of fasting one would make time to sit and be with God, undistracted, quiet, listening. This is exactly what Jesus did. He dedicated his life to his ministry when he received his baptism at the hands of John the Baptists and then, the Gospels tell us, he went straight out into the wilderness to spend 40 days and 40 nights with God. which is why Lent is 40 days and 40 nights long

But how can that thoughtful, penitential season be observed in our hectic lives. Whether we are retired or working, life has a habit of filling up with so many different things that must be done. When we add something to our diaries we are aware of weekends, public holidays, family holidays and birthdays – but rarely do we see a notification of the Church's seasons except for a reminder of Easter and Christmas

We see the traditional coverage on TV of the chorister's pancake race and remember vaguely that it is Shrove Tuesday – but probably don't remember that 'shrove' means that apologising to God for sins committed and being 'shriven' or forgiven. And we're not always aware that on the Wednesday morning following Pancake Day the season of Lent begins – with the traditional Ashing service.

Every year – beginning with Ash Wednesday, there is a service of communion at All Saints, beginning at 9.00am. There is

music and a reflective reading and at the communion we stand in a circle to offer the bread and the wine to each other, remembering the closeness of the disciples as they gathered with Jesus to hear his stories and witness his healing. Joining in this community of prayer is one way of marking Lent and thinking about what it means.



Mothering Sunday - Refreshment in Lent??

WE OBSERVE LENT for 40 days and 40 nights – but if you count the days between Ash Wednesday – the first day Lent and Saturday after Good Friday – you'll see there are 46 days. So – just what is happening? Well, if you look at the diary again you'll find that there are 6 Sundays between those days. Every Sunday is a mini-Easter – it's a feast of the resurrection of Jesus. So Lent excludes Sundays. Every Sunday is really a festival.

On the fourth Sunday in Lent the Church has included an extra celebration – Mothering Sunday. It began many years ago as the day in which congregations from outlying communities would travel to their 'Mother' Church, the church where they were baptised. This meant that people working away from home – apprentices and servants particularly – had the opportunity to visit family and friends as well as attending the church service. It became the custom also to take home a gift for mothers – a posy of flowers or a Simnel cake. And so

Mothering Sunday became recognised as a day to celebrate mothers.

This year Mothering Sunday is on 26th March – a fourth Sunday. There will be a family celebration in the morning – for Play & Praise at 10.15 and a Songs of Praise in the evening at 6.00pm

If you or your children were baptised at All Saints on Mothering Sunday it would be a lovely opportunity to revisit your Mother Church, celebrate mothers and collect a posy of flowers for Mum.



Palm Sunday - April 9TH **Parade and Procession**

THE DONKEY'S READY, and the crowds are ready to roar – it's the Palm Sunday parade and procession from Elmwood stables to All Saints' Church.

Meeting at Elmwood stables at 9.45am we will walk down to the church for our Family Service for Palm Sunday. There we'll sing the story and hear of the joy and excitement of the people as they welcome Jesus as King.

Voices raised in triumphant praise *Hosanna, Hosanna!?*
whilst whispers threaten peace!?

AS THE CROWD raise their voices to sing Hosanna to the Son of David so behind the scenes plotters begin to seek the weak link among the friends of Jesus. This is the start of Holy Week. Even as Jesus is riding into

Jerusalem his enemies are plotting behind closed doors and they are baiting a trap.

The lawyers, the great and the good from the Temple, the Pharisees, really thought they had trapped him as they encircled Jesus, dragging their bait with them. They thought this woman deserved the death penalty – she had been caught in the act of adultery. So they brought her to Jesus – to test him, to force him into condemning her. They were challenging everything he had ever said about their Law – his interpretation that God wanted them to love and not judge each other.

It was a pivotal moment – his judgement would confirm his authority. If he let her go he was no prophet of God, if he condemned her he would be denounced as a hypocrite. What would he do?

This is where the Palm Sunday evening service begins. This is where the Pharisees and the Temple authorities show their hand against Jesus. His words, his decision, set a seal on the events of Holy Week.

In a dramatic re-enactment that brings together the Scriptures, Holy Week Diaries and a medieval morality play, we find ourselves enmeshed in the story. Aware of the vested interests protecting themselves, we see the inevitability of the trial and execution. We share the devastation of the disciples even when we know their sorrow will shortly be turned to joy.

With the wonderful voices of the Creeksea Choir, powerful drama and the evidence from the scriptures we hear the story unfold from that ecstatic welcome on the first Palm Sunday to Pilate's decision.

Just one week away from the most glorious Sunday of the year – Easter – we hear the reasons for God's actions in our story – in history.

This is the Palm Sunday 6.00pm service.

This is our Palm Sunday service.

VOICES RAISED IN TRIUMPHANT PRAISE

whilst whispers threaten peace

Words and music combine to tell the story of Jesus, acclaimed by the crowds as King and then sent to his death by the manipulations of evil men.

Sunday 9th April, at 6.00pm

Mothering Sunday Services

Play & Praise

At 10.15am

Followed in the evening by

SONGS OF PRAISE

At 6.00pm

Sunday 26th March at All Saints

SERVICES FOR HOLY WEEK - APRIL 10TH - 16TH

Monday 10 th	7.30pm	Film night, <i>film to be confirmed.</i>
Wednesday 12 th	9.30am	Holy Communion, Lent reflection.
Maundy Thursday 13 th	7.30pm	The Temple and the Garden. A service of quiet reflection based on Compline.
Good Friday 14 th	2.30pm	Voices in the dark - reflection for Good Friday - We hear the voices of friends and enemies alike as the darkness disguises their faces.
Sunday 16 th Easter Sunday	8.30am 10.15am	Holy Communion BCP. Easter Celebration - Family service with communion and bread of friendship.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

30th April after the 10.15am service

THIS IS THE MEETING IN WHICH YOU, the members of the church who are on the Electoral Roll, elect the Churchwardens and the members of the Parochial Church Council. During the meeting the report and accounts for 2016 are presented and reports given.

The PCC are responsible for the stewardship and good governance of the church day to day in support of their minister and Churchwardens. Their vision and commitment have made the construction of our new annexe possible. It is thanks to their dedication and hard work that we have the wealth of services and activities that we enjoy.

This meeting is part of the wider governing system of the Church of England. We have two lay representatives on the local deanery Synod who are able to vote in the election of members to the diocesan synod from the diocesan synod representatives are elected on to the general synod which meets twice each year to consider and vote on church law.

Do please make an effort to attend and support this body of volunteers in their work. If you do not think you are on the PCC please check on the electoral roll on the door. If you are not a full church member there is time to join – just ask for an application form.

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Rev Vera can be contacted on **01621 783963**

Insert Page

Please save for future reference

Services and Events for MARCH 2017

DATE	TIME	SERVICE
1st March <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	9.30am	Holy Communion with reflection for Lent
3rd March <i>Friday</i>	10.30am	Women's World Day of Prayer - all welcome for this international service from Churches Together
5th March Lent 1	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
6th March <i>Monday</i>	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Holy Communion
8th March <i>Wednesday</i>	7.00pm	Film Club - film to be confirmed
12th March Lent 2	9.30am	Holy Communion with reflection for Lent
15th March <i>Wednesday</i>	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
18th March Lent 3	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Family Service
22nd March <i>Wednesday</i>	8.30am	Holy Communion with reflection for Lent
26th March Lent 4	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
<i>Mothering Sunday</i>	10.15am	Mothering Sunday Special
29th March <i>Wednesday</i>	6.00pm	Songs of Praise for Mothering Sunday
	9.30am	Holy Communion with reflection for Lent

Services and Events for APRIL 2017

DATE	TIME	SERVICE
2nd April Lent 5	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
5th April	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Holy Communion
9th April	9.30am	Holy Communion with reflection for Lent
PALM SUNDAY	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
10th April <i>Monday of Holy Week</i>	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Family Service
12th April <i>Wednesday/Holy Week</i>	6.00pm	Palm Sunday Special
13th April MAUNDY THURSDAY	7.00pm	Film Club – Film to be confirmed
14th April GOOD FRIDAY	7.30pm	The Temple & The Garden, service of reflection
16th April Easter Sunday	2.30pm	Voices in the dark
23rd April Easter 2	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
	10.15am	Easter Celebration family service with communion and bread friendship
	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
	10.15am	Play & Praise
	6.00pm	St George's day service
30th April Easter 3	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
	10.15am	Sunday Worship followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Services and Events for MAY 2017

DATE	TIME	SERVICE
7th May	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
Easter 4	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Holy Communion
8th May	7.00pm	Film Club film to be confirmed
14th May	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
Easter 5	10.15am	Sunday Worship Family Service followed by communion
21st May	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
Easter 6	10.15am	Sunday Worship, Holy Communion
25th May	9.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
Ascension Day		
28th May	8.30am	Holy Communion <i>BCP</i>
	10.15am	Play & Praise
	6.00pm	Choral Evensong Summer Series Begins with Guest Speaker, details to be confirmed



*Christ has Risen, Alleluia
He is Risen indeed
Alleluia, Alleluia*