

## SPEAKING MY LANGUAGE

Are you heading off abroad this summer? It's so easy these days to do that. Here in Kent it's quicker to go to continental Europe than it is to get to some of the holiday hotspots in our own country, like my home county of Devon which is a long and tedious drive or rail journey from here.

Part of the attraction of going abroad is the fact that you get to sample another way of life, a different culture. "A change is as good as a rest," they say, and it's always fascinating to see how others live, to try out different foods, and get to know about different customs. There's a downside to going abroad, though. When you get there, you're very likely to find that the inhabitants talk "foreign". Some of you who are reading this may be fluent in a multitude of languages, but I bet I'm not the only one whose ability to speak any language but my own is severely limited. I'm not too bad if it's written down. I have A levels in Latin and Greek, which give me a lot of clues about modern European languages. I can often get the gist, providing the words are sitting quietly on the page so I can puzzle them out at leisure. It's coming up with the right words in conversation that always has me stumped; my brain just doesn't work fast enough. I speak as one who, in my O-level French oral exam, told my examiner with great confidence that I was born in 1660... Even when I do manage to come up with some spoken "foreign", it is often a mixture of several European languages. They all seem to blur into one in the heat of the moment so that the result is equally incomprehensible no matter what the nationality of the person I am talking to.

I'm a bit embarrassed to have to admit to this linguistic ineptitude, though, because I do believe that language is important. Learning at least to say "please" and "thank you" in your hosts' language seems to be a basic courtesy, and visitors to this country will certainly feel more welcome if you can at least try to talk to them in their own tongue. It matters to us that we can understand and be understood. It makes us feel at home.

It would all be so much easier if we could just rely on the miracle that Jesus' first followers experienced on the day of Pentecost. As they gathered together after Jesus had ascended into heaven they felt bereft and alone, faced with what seemed like the impossible task of taking his message out into the world. Suddenly, though, they became aware of God's presence – his Holy Spirit – and, filled with confidence, they spilled out onto the streets and began to talk about what Jesus had taught them. Despite the fact that the crowd they were talking to came from all around the known world, they discovered that everyone could understand them. "*In our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power!*" say the crowd (Acts 2.12). Of course the writer of the book of Acts wasn't really talking about a short cut to language learning here. Whatever we think about this strange experience, the message he was trying to get across was that whoever you were, wherever you came from, whatever your background or nationality, God spoke your language like a native speaker, as fluently as you. God was for you and with you, at home where you were at home, whether that was in Judea, or in the mountains of Turkey, or Egypt or wherever you were from. The boundaries that some had tried to put around him, insisting that he was "their" God, defined by them however they understood him, were an illusion.

That seems to me to be a message that is as important today as it was then. God doesn't belong to any group or nationality. He doesn't belong to the church, or to those who call themselves Christian (or any other religion, come to that). No one has the right to claim that they and they alone can understand or define him. Whatever we encounter on our travels this summer, whatever new places we explore, I hope we will all discover the God who speaks our language, who is at home with us and with others too, wherever we are.

### Anne Le Bas

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## Diary for July/Aug 09

<b>JULY</b>		
1	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
2	<b>Thursday</b>	
	8pm	PCC
4	<b>Saturday</b>	
	1 pm	Wedding
	3.30pm	Wedding
5	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 4</b>
	10am	Holy Communion & Sunday School
	2pm	Baptism
	6.30 pm	Evensong
8	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
11	<b>Saturday</b>	
	10-12 noon	Coffee morning/sale 17 Zambra Way
	2-4pm	Quiet Afternoon in the Vicarage Garden
12	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 5</b>
	10 am	Holy Communion & Sunday School
	6.30pm	Evensong
15	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
18	<b>Saturday</b>	
	1pm	Wedding
19	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 6</b>
	10am	All Age Worship
	11.15 am	Matins (said with hymns)
	6.30 pm	Breathing Space Holy Communion
22	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>NO WEDNESDAY COMMUNION</b>
26	<b>Sunday</b>	
	10 am	All Age Communion
	11.15 am	Faith and Fun
	6.30 pm	Evensong
29	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>NO WEDNESDAY COMMUNION</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>		
5	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 7</b>
	10am	Holy Communion & Sunday School
	6.30 pm	Evensong
5	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
8	<b>Saturday</b>	
	4 pm	Wedding
9	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 8</b>
	10 am	Holy Communion & Sunday School
	6.30pm	Evensong
12	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
15	<b>Saturday</b>	
	2 – 4PM	Quiet Afternoon
16	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 9</b>
	10am	All Age Worship
	11.15 am	Matins (said with hymns)
	2.30	Baptisms
	6.30 pm	Breathing Space Holy Communion
19	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
23	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 10</b>
	10 am	All Age Communion
	11.15 am	Faith and Fun
	6.30 pm	Evensong
26	<b>Wednesday</b>	
	11am	Holy Communion
29	<b>Saturday</b>	
	4pm	Wedding
30	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Trinity 11</b>
	10am	Holy Communion
	2.30 pm	Baptisms
	6.30pm	Evensong

## Parish News

## QUIET AFTERNOON IN THE VICARAGE GARDEN



**Saturday July 11 2-4 pm**

Time to reflect, time to relax, time to pray. Bring a book or craft activity, or just sit and be! Contact Anne Le Bas or sign up in church to book a place (sign up sheets available at the back of church a few weeks before each session.)

## COFFEE MORNING/ SALE



July 11<sup>th</sup> at 17 Zambra Way in aid of church funds. Donations of plants, cakes or anything else saleable (not jumble) will be gratefully received. If it is wet the event will be held in the church.

Contact Maggie Fox (762840) for more details.

## Seal Parish Council Web Site

Take a look at the New website for Seal Parish Council. The site is up and working, although it still a work in progress and will be improved as time goes on. The website address is

[www.sealparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.sealparishcouncil.org.uk).

It does include details of who is on the Parish Council and their individual responsibilities, plus dates of meetings and past minutes, links to other village organisations (including the church!) and a village calendar – again a work in progress.

If you notice any errors, please do let Lorna Talbot [sealparishc@btconnect.com](mailto:sealparishc@btconnect.com) or Anna Linley [cllr.linley@sealparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:cllr.linley@sealparishcouncil.org.uk) know.

## From the Parish Registers

**We welcome into the church family in Baptism**  
Cosmo Archard Bailey

**We celebrate the marriages of:**  
James Hall and Rebecca Hare  
Andrew Wright and Natalie Tutin

**We entrust into God's keeping**  
Doris Farbrother

## Normandy 2009

Dick & I had a memorable trip to Normandy for the D.Day commemorations. It was only a four day trip but it covered many miles & a gamut of emotions. Sadness, of course, at the lines of immaculately kept War Graves – how very young the occupants were. Sadness and shock when one of our party had a fatal heart attack in the early hours of June 6th having been so excited the day before to find the place where he had landed – mission completed.

High points came at the Service of Remembrance at Bayeux Cathedral where we were ushered into the very best seats to be joined by Prince Charles, Gordon & Sarah Brown, the French Prime-minister and the British Ambassador. Surprise when we were whisked off after the service to a Chateau to be plied with champagne and delicious food all in brilliant sunshine on an immaculate lawn. Gordon & Sarah Brown spoke to us, he looked exhausted (nails bitten to the quick) she was very nice but remarked that it had been quite a week and to cap everything one of her sons had chicken-pox.

Just in case we got ideas above our station we went on to the Ceremonies at Arromanches where we got completely and utterly drenched.

What made the trip for Dick was that at Ouistreham, Sword Beach he found two others who had been in Landing Craft and it all jelled together, they could confirm each others stories, questions were answered that had lain dormant for 65 years – old times relived.

What pleased me was that on the way home on Monday June 8th, which happened to be Dick's 87th birthday, we had a brief 15 minute stop at a service station before Calais, whilst I frantically searched for souvenirs for grandchildren an elderly French lady came up and asked if he was a Veteran, when he said yes, she shook his hand and said 'Thank you for saving us' That was better than any birthday card.

Our trip was arranged by Poppy Travel who looked after us very well, as did the British Legion. We also owe our thanks to the Lottery fund who gave us a generous grant and indeed to two of our own children, one of whom saw us up to London lugging our bags from Waterloo East Station down the stairs to the Union Jack Club and the other, with her family who met us on the return and carried the bags up those 78 steps. And so home to Sevenoaks.

**Stella Hale**

## Those We Support

### The Children's Society

#### Did you know The Children's Society did this ?

No matter who they are young refugees who have escaped war and conflict, only to be refused help in this country. They are forced to fend for themselves, many resorting to prostituting in order to survive. We defend, safeguard and protect the childhood of all children. We speak up for children when they face difficulty. We stand by them when they face danger. Through our pioneering research and lobbying we influence decision makers to create real change. This commitment, and your support, recently succeeded in the Government making young runaways a priority.

Your donations to The Children's Society are much needed and gratefully received, Thank you.

**Christian Aid Week**

I am very pleased to say that the residents of Seal raised £785.00 during **Christian Aid week** in May. Some of this was also gift aided so the final total will be more than that.

I would like to thank everyone who had a few coins to spare for those in greater need.

I would especially like to thank the people who so kindly gave up their time to deliver and collect envelopes. This is not always the most rewarding of activities but every little helps and I hope you are pleased with the overall total.

I do not yet have a total for the entire Sevenoaks branch of Christian Aid, though I do understand that it is somewhat down on last year.

Thank you. Sally Thompson.

## Faith and Thought

### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH – Quiet Peace

O Lord, my heart is all a prayer,  
But it is silent unto thee;  
I am too tired to look for words,  
I rest upon thy sympathy  
To understand when I am dumb;  
And well I know thou hearest me.

I know thou hearest me because  
A quiet peace comes down to me,  
And fills the places where before  
Weak thoughts were wandering wearily;  
And deep within me it is calm,  
Though waves are tossing outwardly.

*Amy Carmichael 1867 – 1951*

## Parish Organisations

### Seal Mother's Club

We had thought rain could stop our outing again, but it was a pleasant afternoon at Penshurst. After looking at some of the lovely old buildings in the village we had a good look at the Church. There were similarities with our Church here at Seal, but their pulpit has the heads of Christ and Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, I believe, set in panels around the base. Of course the Sidney Chapel is interesting and the decorated ceiling beautifully coloured. The ring their eight bells from the ground level, but the area is open – no screen or doors.

We then went for our tea and scones and/or cake, with or without cream. A very satisfactory afternoon.

Next month we are off to have tea in Ightham Moat.

**Eileen Burgin**

## Seal Over 60's Club

We enjoyed a delicious cream tea with home made scones at our June meeting. We all had a quiz sheet to study and fill in while having our tea. It caused a lot of amusement. The answers as always were in the clue but so many of us could not work them out!

Our next meeting in the Village Hall will be on **August 8th** when we have **'Summer Madness'** with Tony Francis. We start **at 2.30pm** –

Why not come and join us

The July meeting is a coach trip to Hastings.

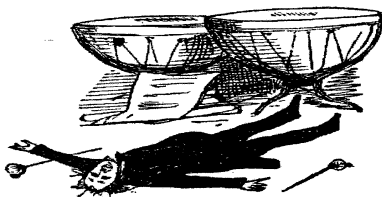
## WordSearch

As it is St. Swithun's day on 15<sup>th</sup> July, we've compiled a puzzle which contains words associated to the saint and the legends which surround him. About St. Swithun

Below are the words hidden in the grid. You can find them spelt forwards, backwards, straight, across or diagonal. Good luck!


Winchester	Raindrops	Downpour	St Swithun
Apples	Storm	Umbrella	Grey
Eggs	Patron	Puddles	Wet
Clouds	Anorak	Weather	Torrent
Drizzle	Shower	Cathedral	
Wellington Boots			

r	r	p	r	a	r	n	u	h	t	i	w	s	t	s	d	c	u	w	l
e	s	r	o	i	n	c	m	d	n	h	h	d	p	s	i	s	t	i	o
o	o	r	a	g	n	b	b	a	r	o	l	o	h	n	r	d	o	n	e
w	i	e	r	r	r	l	r	o	r	n	r	w	r	n	e	r	a	c	g
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h	o	a	d	r	l	a	l	e	g	w	o	n	s	s	o	s	n	d	s
a	r	u	t	i	u	c	c	r	p	o	p	d	h	i	w	c	t	o	a
z	p	u	r	z	d	d	r	h	s	h	e	s	o	i	m	u	a	a	e
s	s	p	e	z	e	d	r	c	s	s	s	o	e	s	r	s	e	l	c
d	w	t	l	r	e	r	n	b	t	t	r	t	d	d	p	l	p	e	
c	l	r	e	p	h	a	u	s	l	u	i	a	p	o	w	a	n		
i	o	l	o	t	s	t	i	u	p	s	e	h	t	e	o	d	m	e	u




42 choruses of 'Shine, Jesus, Shine' were just too much for Mr Higgins when he moved up from the tambourine.

## Two for the children ....



**Mouse Makes**




**God hears you**

"The LORD is near to all who call on him" *Psalm 145:18*

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If you make a promise do you keep it?  
**GOD** always keeps his promises!

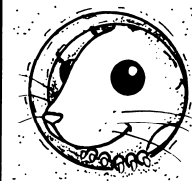
"The LORD your GOD has given you all the good things that he promised. Every promise he made has been kept, not one has failed."  
*Joshua 23:14*




**God knows what you need**

"Your FATHER knows what you need before you ask HIM" *Matthew 6:8*

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**God helps you**




**God cares for you**

"GOD is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble" *Psalm 46:1*

"Leave all your worries with HIM because he cares for you" *1 Peter 5:7*

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**God is with you**



"Be strong and courageous... for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go" *Joshua 1:9*

Cut out and keep these cards to remind you of God's promises.



### CATHEDRALS

It is nice to visit other people's places of worship and see what parts are like our own church at home. But a visit to a cathedral is special.



In a cathedral everything is usually so much bigger – the roof is higher and there are lots more corners to explore.

They were built in stone at a time when most people lived in small houses made of wood and mud or brick. How did those who designed it know that the huge building would actually work?

The architects could imagine the finished buildings but it took a whole army of workers of workers to make the vision come true. Hundreds of people worked for hundreds of years to build these wonderful buildings. Hundreds of people all working together, not for themselves but for the greater glory of God.

### CHURCH BITS

There are lots of things that you will only see in church buildings – do you know what these are? Answers at the bottom of the page.

1. PISCINA  
a) is it a niche in a wall that drains outside the church or  
b) a type of organ?
2. REREDOS  
a) is it a type of column  
b) or a screen behind the altar?
3. PEW  
a) is it a long wooden seat  
b) or the large hinges on a heavy wooden door?
4. APSE  
a) is the curved space at the eastern end of a church or cathedral  
b) or a curved roof
- 5) AMBO  
a) the framework that supports the bells or  
b) a raised platform, a predecessor to the pulpit?



Who are the 2 ice cream firms in the Bible?

Walls of Jericho and Lyons of Judah.

Who was the most popular person in the Bible?

Samson - he brought the house down.



Answers: 1: a 2: b 3: a 4: a 5: b

### Dates for the Next Issue

The May Magazine will be published on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2009. All copy for that issue should be left in the basket at the back of the church or email me at a\_c\_chapman@hotmail.com by **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2009**