

The stories of Holy Week and Easter are familiar stories, told, for the most part in familiar ways at familiar services. (For more details see the box). Because they are so familiar, though, it is easy for us simply to treat these stories as ancient relics of a time that is long gone, just an “old, old story”, interesting, dramatic, perhaps moving, but having nothing really to do with the world we live in. “Why bother” some people feel, “with these events that are so long in the past?”

The point is, of course, that while this story is an old one, it is one that is endlessly repeated in our world today, and in our own lives too. The fickle crowds that meet Jesus with *hallelujah's* on Palm Sunday but condemn him with shouts of *crucify!* less than a week later could just as easily be those who idolise the latest celebrity, only to hound them when whatever “magic” they offered starts to wane. The disciples who swear they'll stick with Jesus but all run away could be any one of us who fear that our courage will crumble in the face of a threat. Christ's determination to stick to his message of love in the face of the evil of the cross is a reminder of those who suffer injustice in our own world, and a promise that whatever darkness we might face, God faces it with us. The joy of Easter is a reminder that in our lives too there can be new life and a new start.

In the stories of Holy Week we are given the chance to find ourselves anew, to think about our own hopes and despairs, our own triumphs and failures. We are given a chance to re-focus our thoughts, our prayers and our lives, so that the evil which crucified Christ does not continue endlessly to crucify him in the shape of the poor, the abused and the marginalised today, and so that the new life and love of Easter might be found in our lives and our world today.

The services of Holy Week, from the small scale quiet services of Compline each evening in the Lady Chapel and the opportunities for individual reflection on Good Friday to the grand, joyful celebration of Easter Sunday are for everyone – all are welcome as we find today's message in these ancient tales. I warmly encourage you to come along and share this journey with us.

Anne Le Bas

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Readers:	Kevin Bright	01732 458849
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Church Website:	www.sealpeterandpaul.com	

Holy Week and Easter

PALM SUNDAY

10 am	Procession and Parish Communion
11.15 am	Matins
6.30 pm	Breathing Space Contemplative Communion

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

8 pm	Compline (Night Prayer – lasting about 20 minutes)
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MAUNDY THURSDAY

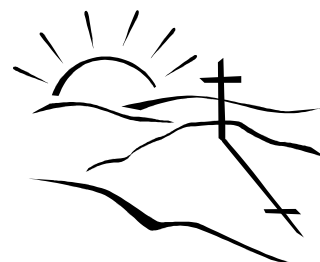
8 pm	Holy Communion ending with Tenebrae (Tenebrae is a short service marking the gathering darkness around Christ as he is arrested)
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GOOD FRIDAY

10 -11.30 am	Children's Workshops in church – Easter Crafts and activities for children and their parents or carers (no unaccompanied children, please).
12- 8pm	Reflective opportunities for adults. Drop in at any time for quiet reflection – there will be various focuses for prayer around the church building.
2.30-3pm	Good Friday service. Hymns, readings and prayers for Good Friday.
8 pm	Compline (see details for Monday)

EASTER SUNDAY

10 am	Parish Communion for Easter Day (Cake stall after service in aid of church funds. Contributions of home made produce welcome)
6.30 pm	Easter Evensong , with special music from the choir



Diary For March 2008		
2	Sunday	MOTHERING SUNDAY
	10 am	All Age Communion
	6.30 pm	Evensong with Sermon
6	Wednesday	
	11am	Holy Communion
9	Sunday	Lent 5
	10 am	Holy Communion and Sunday School
	6.30 pm	Evensong without Sermon
13	Wednesday	
	11am	Holy Communion
HOLY WEEK AND EASTER		
16	Sunday	Palm Sunday
	10am	Palm Sunday Communion and procession
	11.15 am	Matins
	6.30pm	Breathing Space Communion
17	Monday	
	8pm	Compline
18	Tuesday	
	8pm	Compline
19	Wednesday	
	11am	Holy Communion
	8pm	Compline
20	Maundy Thursday	
	8pm	Holy Communion and Tenebrae
21	Good Friday	
	10-11.30 am	Children's activities
	12 noon – 8pm	Self-guided reflective opportunities for adults
	2.30-3pm	Good Friday worship
	8pm	Compline
22	Holy Saturday	
	8pm	Compline
23	Easter Sunday	
	10am	All Age Communion and lighting of the Paschal Candle
	6.30 pm	Festal Evensong
26	Wednesday	
	11 am	Holy Communion
29	Saturday	
	1.30 pm	Wedding: Paul Day/Julia Myers
30	Sunday	Easter 2
	10 am	Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	Evensong

Parish News

POST OFFICE CLOSURE – HOW IS IT AFFECTING YOU?

The Parish Council have asked us to help them discover how people are coping (or not!) with the closure of Seal Post Office. In particular they want to know whether there would be any demand for, say, some sort of regular transport to a nearby Post Office or some alteration to the existing bus services to make it easier for people to get to the Post Office on them. Sevenoaks District Council already runs a door to door transport service twice a month (to town, I think) at a cost of £16 per quarter, and might consider increasing the frequency if there were sufficient demand. Wheelchairs and carers can be accommodated on this service.

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing difficulties, please would you let Seal Parish Council know your views, or send them to me, and I will pass them on. **Anne Le Bas**

A Feast of Spirituality Rochester Cathedral

19th April 2008

12.30 - 19.00

Workshops on ...

Celtic, Franciscan, Benedictine Ignatian Spirituality, Silent prayer, Poetry and prayer, Healing ministry Spirituality and Dreams.

Space for Reflection

A chance to meet others

Taize worship to end the day

Organised by the Rochester Spirituality Network within the Ministry and Training Department.

Everybody is welcome (though I am advised that the day has not been designed with children in mind.)

Suggested donation of £5 per person on the day. Booking is advisable – fill in a slip on the red table at the back of church or download from www.rochester.anglican.org

I am hoping that we might take a group from Seal and co-ordinate lifts. Please send in your own individual booking form, with your preferred workshops but sign the list on the red table to say that you are going and to indicate whether you can offer, or would like, a lift.

Anne Le Bas

YEW TREES

The yew trees lining the path to the church door are in urgent need of pruning. As well as obscuring the view of the church, they are also making it hard for coffins to be carried up the path. This work is due to be carried out in late Feb/early March, and may have already taken place by the time you read this.

Because the church is in a Conservation Area any work on trees needs the permission of the Council's Arboricultural Officer. He has permitted the tree pruning, but has specified that this must be done in two stages, with each tree being pruned on one side of the tree this year, and the other side the next.

We know that this will mean that the trees will look rather odd – lopsided as well as a bit bare – but we have no choice but to follow the guidance we are given by the Arboricultural Officer ! Rest assured, however, that the trees will recover – they are very tough.

Anne Le Bas

QUIET AFTERNOONS – CHANGE OF DATE

I have had change the dates of the Quiet Afternoons as advertised in the Spring and Summer leaflet. These will now take place on **May 17th, June 7th, July 5th and Aug 9th.**



SAINT JOHN PASSION

at St Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks
Saturday March 15, 2008
at 7.30pm

J.S.Bach's setting of the Passion according to John is dramatic and fast-paced. The work will be performed by The Cantate Choir, a Sevenoaks-based chamber choir, together with Vivace!, an orchestra of professional musicians specialising in baroque music. Sung in German with English surtitles.

Tickets are available from Sevenoaks Bookshop, 147 High Street, Sevenoaks and from the Cantate Box Office on 01892 545799

ECOTHINK

A small group from the PCC met last month with a facilitator from the "Every Action Counts" initiative – a government scheme to help community groups consider their environmental impact. The facilitator concerned happened to be my daughter, Ruth, who has just taken on this role and felt she could use the practice! The session was a great help, however, in its own right and provoked many ideas.

There was much we were already doing. As far as possible we use recycled paper for printing and we recycle the paper we use, for example. We use real mugs for after-church coffee, rather than disposables, and are gradually replacing light bulbs with low-energy alternatives wherever possible.

But we have come up with some new ideas to help the church reduce its energy use, recycle and generally live in a more environmentally friendly way.

For example:

- There is now a dustbin in the churchyard for non-compostable waste, in the hopes that we can encourage people not to put plastic etc. on the compost heap.
- We are planning to investigate the possibilities of more car-sharing for those who come to church by car, and installing a bike rack for those who cycle.
- We are hoping to organise a trip to Shipbourne farmer's market (Thursdays in Shipbourne Church), to encourage people to be aware of the wonderful local produce we have in Kent.
- We are considering putting up some nest boxes in the churchyard - perhaps you might like to sponsor one? - and thinking of ways to enhance the churchyard as a habitat for wildlife.

We'll keep you posted on these and other ideas – if there is anything you can help with, or any thoughts you have, please let me know. As the title of this initiative says "Every Action Counts!"

Anne Le Bas

FLOWER ROTA

Chris Rampton (763585) is organising the flower arranging rota for the rest of the year. If you would like to help by signing up for a two week slot, please contact her. Money to buy flowers if wanted, and helpful advice are on offer if you need them. Any offers are welcome – don't feel you have to be a floral expert!

Wanted

Seal Church 700 Year Commemorative Glass

Has anyone got a Church 700 Year Commemorative Glass that they no longer require and would be willing to sell? Sadly due to an unfortunate accident ours has broken.

Brian and Margaret Horridge:

Telephone 01732-458465

Those We Support

Churches Together in Sevenoaks & District

"The Seven Sayings on the Cross"

7.30pm on Good Friday 21st March

at The Drive Methodist Church

All Singers Welcome

Contact Valerie Ruddle on 01732 450355

Silent Witness Walk

Good Friday, 21st March

10.45 at junction London Road & Pembroke Road, walk up to Bligh's for a short act of devotion at the clock tower at 11am

Faith and Thought

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH –

Give me a pure heart – that I may see thee,
A humble heart – that I may hear thee,
A heart of love – that I may serve thee,
A heart of faith – that I may abide in thee.

(Let me be)
righteous in thine eyes,
With thy courage,
Within thy peace.

Parish Organisations

Royal British Legion – Seal Women's Section

We held our meeting in the Village Hall on Wednesday 23rd January.

We had hymn and exaltation after the business part of the meeting. We had a bring and buy sale. Thankyou to those who gave some very nice goods and all who bought. The money we made is going to the purse fund. Members were able to sit and chat and have tea, and the raffle was drawn.

On 17th January eight of us went to the Orpington branch for their party. We had a very nice buffet lunch and were entertained by a pianoacordianist and had a nice time.

Our meeting on March 26th will be a group meeting in the Village Hall at 2.30pm.

Pat Walking

Seal Mothers' Club

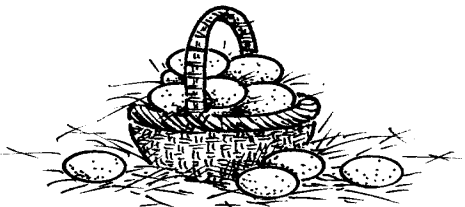
The first meeting of the year, our AGM, was held on 13 February and what a lovely sunny afternoon we had with a good attendance.

The main offices were returned – Chairman/Treasurer, Pat Walking and Secretary/Programme Organiser, Eileen Burgin. Committee: Helen Fox, Freda Martin and Valerie Whittingham. Mary Cox was proposed as our new President and her election was carried unanimously. We look forward to having another Cox at the helm!

Mary cut our anniversary cake and while enjoying it with a cup of tea we all took part in a short quiz.

At our March meeting we will be welcoming Joy Collins from the Volunteer Centre. Visitors are welcome, price is still the same - £1 including refreshment.

Eileen Burgin



Coming Events

- 8 March Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust Quiz Night
Sevenoaks Community Centre
- 15 March Christian Aid Silent Auction & Coffee Morning
- 21 March CTSD Good Friday Evening Music Event
- 26 April Bingo Knight
- 30 May – 1 June Engaging Spirituality @theGathering
- 29 June Strawberry Tea
- 13 Nov CTSD Annual Open Meeting

Two for the children

Mouse Makes

Mary talked to Jesus by the empty tomb.
Read: John 20:10-18

Cleopas walked with Jesus on the Emmaus road.
Read: Luke:24:13-35

Thomas saw Jesus and touched his wounds.
Read: John 20:24-29

Peter ate with Jesus by the Sea of Galilee.
Read: John 21:1-14

Thank you Jesus for being my Saviour and my friend.
Amen

Jesus is alive!

Colour this picture then carefully cut out. Glue onto card to make an Easter greetings card or a window hanging.

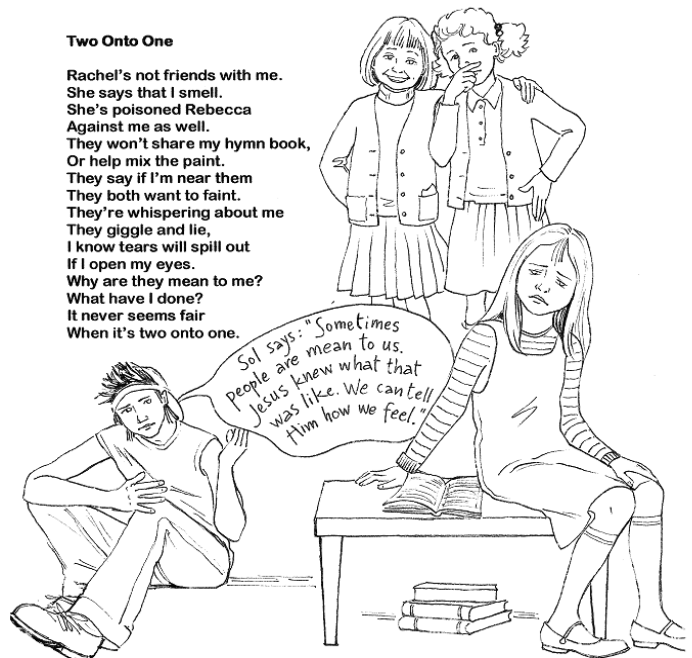
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Rainbow Rhymes

Poems and Promises to cut out and collect.

Two Onto One

Rachel's not friends with me.
She says that I smell.
She's poisoned Rebecca
Against me as well.
They won't share my hymn book,
Or help mix the paint.
They say if I'm near them
They both want to faint.
They're whispering about me
They giggle and lie,
I know tears will spill out
If I open my eyes.
Why are they mean to me?
What have I done?
It never seems fair
When it's two onto one.



Do for others what you would like them to do for you. Mt7:12(NLT)

Poem by Daphne Kitching, Picture by Elaine Hill, Coloured by

Dates for the Next Issue

The April Magazine will be published on Friday 28th March 2008. 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 23rd March 2008.