

CHURCH NEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

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Tel: 872209

My dear friends,

They were a very private family. We exchanged greetings whenever we met - but, with a high fence between our gardens that was fairly infrequently. In fact, after several years we never knew the names of all of their children - or even how many there were still at home. Yet, for some years, they were our next door neighbours! I know that they had their group of friends, and, being middle-aged, possibly did not need the constant attention that some older folk need, but ours was a typical community.

One of the subjects brought up at the Parish Weekend was that of caring for our church family. This is not as easy as it may seem. Some people are private, some attend different services to their nearest neighbours, some are the sort of people (with no fault on our, or their parts) with whom we share little in common - apart from the same church. How **do** we keep an eye on them - without being overbearing or overnosey? How do we know when someone is missing for a couple of weeks because they are unwell or have family problems, rather than because they are on some lovely sunny island?

Different churches have come up with different solutions to this question. Some have a badge system. You pick up your badge when you enter the church, wear it, and then put it in a box when you leave. This helps us to know each other's names and lets us know easily when someone is missing, but it does not give a reason for absence and may threaten those who prefer to remain fairly private.

Some churches have a cell structure - you are a member of, say, a group of eight or twelve people who care for each other. This is easy if the church has numerous study groups but it can be very artificial if it is imposed or very cliquish if self selective (as well as leaving some folk on the outside looking in).

I do not know the answers - only the questions. It would be good to hear from you if you can think of ways to care better. In the meantime, though, can I ask two great favours? Firstly, get to know those who sit around you in church. If people are the sort who like to talk at least they might have the comfort of knowing that they are welcomed into the church family - that we do indeed care.

Secondly, please tell someone (Rector, curate, Churchwarden or Ministry Team) if someone is missing. Please let **ME** know if someone is depressed or unwell, if there is a death or a celebration in the family. Someone suggested that there are times when our church behaves like the Ash Secret Society. I am not sure about it being that bad BUT

there are times when important information is simply not passed on. I would rather ten people told me something than nobody. There was a situation when nobody thought to tell me something last year - presumably because everyone thought I would know. A lovely old lady was aghast years ago when I asked people to tell me about folk being ill or needing a visit. 'I don't know what the clergy are coming to these days. You didn't used to have to tell them. They knew.' I am not sure if she was thinking of small communities where everyone knew everything about everyone, or thought that I ought to have some sort of hotline to God. Sadly neither of these seems to be true. Let us know how we can better care for our church family - but please help me by passing on information that I ought to know!

Yours very sincerely,

John Peal

ASH WORSHIP BOOKLET

We introduced our booklet some years ago and would like to make sure that it is working. Following the Parish Weekend we have changed some of the services around and will probably be rewriting at least one of the services in the booklet. Have you any thoughts, positive or negative. Do we need to change the booklet, and, if so how?

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
10.30	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.

Jan.	Tue.	13 th	Ash Church Affairs Committee	
	Thu.	15 th	Deanery Synod Standing Committee	
	Thu.	22 nd	Covenanting churches united service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – Hartley Parish Centre	8.00 p.m.
	Sat.	31 st	Posh Frocks Ball – N.A.G. Youth Centre (details below)	7.30 p.m.
Feb.	Mon.	2 nd	Ash Fete Meeting – 5 Manor Forstal	8.00 p.m.
	Sat.	7 th	Deanery Communion and Deanery Synod – Snodland	9.00 a.m.
	Tue.	10 th	Ash P.C.C.	8.00 p.m.
	Tue.	24 th	Ash Standing Committee	8.00 p.m.
		25 th	Ash Wednesday Communion with imposition of ashes	8.00 p.m.
	Sat.	28 th	F.O.A.C. AGM and Curry evening – Ash Village Hall (details below)	7.30 p.m.

FROM THE REGISTERS

HOLY MATRIMONY

Nov. 22nd Benjamin Luke Gilbert & Claire Andrea Webster

FUNERALS

Dec. 19th Helen Anne (Britt) Ash aged 90
(see tributes on page 4)

Jan. 12th Brian Maurice Smith aged 68 **May they rest in peace**

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

Confirmation Preparation for young people will be starting on Tuesday January 13th and will continue weekly thereafter - exact dates will be confirmed at the first session. Preparation sessions will take place in the Rectory and will run from 6.45 p.m. - 7.45 p.m. The Confirmation service will take place at Ash Church at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday April 19th 2009.

Please could any young person who will be 12 years old by the end of April and who is interested in *thinking about the possibility* of being confirmed contact Jacquie Peal or the Rector on 01474 872209

Coming to the preparation sessions does not commit you to being confirmed; the only commitment you make at this stage is to attend church worship regularly. Nearer to the time of the service you will be given the opportunity to go forward for confirmation if you wish to.

Adult preparation will also begin shortly. Again, please contact the Rector if you would like to think about this.

Jacquie Peal

TRIBUTES TO BRITT ASH (who passed away last December)

“My memories of Britt Ash go back to the very early days of New Ash Green. Keith had already met Geoff. I first encountered Britt watching a fire in a barn where Bovis car park is now situated! We were both involved with Ash Church, Ash Fete, cooking for the Harvest Suppers etc. The four of us spent many happy caravan holidays together. Britt was a very good cook and famous for her curry on the first evening camping. We will miss her as we still miss Geoff. We thank God for her life.”

Loulette McDowell

“I got to know Britt and Geoff when the Bookshop was taken over by some of the local residents including us.

When I started to go to church Geoff and Britt beckoned me to join them on “their” pew. I had only recently started to attend.

From then I sat with them and, after Geoff died, with Britt. Seeing her on Sundays and visiting her fairly often at home, two things struck me about her.

The first was her smile. And that lovely smile was still there when I saw her only a week or so before she died.

The second thing was her quite amazing sense of humour. However much I teased her the more she seemed to like it, and her infectious sense of humour really did keep her going I think.

But I hope her smile will live on and help those who miss her. God bless you Britt.”

Jane Davison

ASH FETE PROGRAMME - 2009

After many years of hard work Bryan and Linda Parlett have asked to step down from the role of putting together the Fête Programme, and we are very grateful to them for raising literally thousands of pounds for the church - last year being no exception.

We do need you to think carefully about whether you would be able to help us with this vital part of the Fête. Bryan’s superb organisational skills means that all of the framework is in place, and the list of contacts up to date – it just needs putting together! It would ideally suit a small group of two or three people, to help share the work. If you would like to know more, please contact Bryan or Linda (873655), for a “no obligation” chat.

Ian Nurdin

POSH FROCKS BALL – SATURDAY 31ST JANUARY 7.30 to 11.30 P.M.
NEW ASH GREEN YOUTH CENTRE

This is a joint social event being organised together with the Friends of Ash Church

Tickets £15 each available from Marion Simmons (703440) or in church. (If you require a vegetarian option please ask when purchasing ticket). This includes a three course dinner and dancing to the Stardust band. Please support Oxfam N.A.G. who will have a good choice of evening wear especially for the occasion. Wine and soft drinks will be available (donation appreciated). Any donations for raffle prizes would be most welcome.

FRIENDS OF ASH CHURCH AGM AND “CURRY NIGHT”
SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 7.30 PM ASH VILLAGE HALL

This is our second AGM (with a difference) and after the formal business meeting we will be holding an authentic “Curry Night” with the food provided by Spice Village in New Ash Green. Tickets for the curry are £15 each. Please contact Ian 873414 or Bryan 873655

ATTENTION ALL MUSIC LOVERS

The Hartley Gilbert & Sullivan Society, which includes many church members, warmly invites you to a Music Quiz on Saturday 7th March in the Hartley W.I. Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Questions will cover various types of music from pop to classics and proceeds will be split between the Society and the Ellenor Lions Hospices. Entry is £4 per head, or preferably book a table of 6 at £20. Participants should bring their own refreshments.

Further details and bookings – **Rick Burrows 873721 or 07792 328651**