

From the Vicarage,

Last month I wrote of a lot of busy-ness since the previous edition and life doesn't seem to have calmed down much since. We have held our Annual Parochial Church Meeting in the past month, a time to express our gratitude to all those who have worked hard with us over the past year, and to review what has happened. It is also a time to plan for the coming year and we have elected our various officers for the next twelve months. This has also been the time of year when the Christian festivals seem to come rather bunched together. Following Easter there has been Ascension Day, Pentecost, and finally Trinity Sunday. Those responsible for changing the coloured hangings in our churches always breathe a sigh of relief when we reach Trinity, for it all turns green then for 'ordinary time', and stays that way right through to Advent, just four Sundays before Christmas.

The seasons are not just about changing colours, though, and those colours are much less important these days than they were in the past when they helped to act as a visual aid when many people were not literate. Lovely as our regular Christian festivals are – and important too, we can't live on mountain-tops all the time and it is good to have an extended period of 'calm' when we can concentrate on other things. This is the period in which most of us take our major holiday, of course, but in the Church year it is also a time when we can embark on other more major projects – Alpha courses, perhaps, holiday clubs for the children, the planning of new major initiatives or changes that need to be made to regular patterns.

Thinking of this last, when we linked with Great Doddington and Wilby last June we began a new pattern of services which we said would be reviewed in a year. It was always recognised that Ecton had (very cheerfully) accepted the most of the change, while Doddington and Wilby had seen relatively little difference from what had gone before. That process of review is now just beginning. I cannot predict what the outcome will be, but it may be that we will need to accept some further change in the light of the past year's experience. Do let P.C.C. members know your thoughts on how things could be improved. We cannot, of course, promise to please everyone, but we are committed to finding the best pattern to suit the largest number of people.

One thing we certainly need to do is develop a new work among the children of our village. Since I began in Ecton last summer I have concentrated upon developing our relationship with the village school and that has been very successful, but now we need to look at the provision we make within the Church. Our Church council recently had an excellent meeting with the Diocesan Children's Missioner, Rona Orme, who gave us plenty of advice, and we hope we shall soon be able announce details of a new initiative to begin in the Autumn Term. One thing that has become clear through our experience in the other churches is that Sunday morning is no longer the best time to provide work with children and young families as there is so much else going on at that time. We may well be looking at some kind of mid-week Church for families that takes place after school.

Many readers will remember a few months ago, the passing of John Beasley, who used to live and farm in the village until his retirement some ten years ago now. A couple of weeks ago we were delighted and privileged to dedicate a new Communion chalice in his memory, purchased with money given at his funeral. This was urgently needed and we were delighted to have a number of members of the Beasley family with us for the occasion.

Readers will also be aware that in the past month we have lost our dear friend Tony Weddle. Tony had only lived in the village for a relatively few number of years, but he had become very much a part of the community. His funeral on April 30th was a wonderful and very fitting occasion. Tony had served not only the village and the local Church very faithfully, but also the Diocese of Peterborough for very many years and as a result we were privileged to have with us the bishop, The Rt. Rev'd Ian Cundy. Tony was particularly known for his affirming and encouraging attitude to those who met him and many had great cause to be grateful for the impact his life had upon them.

Looking more widely in the world we seem to have been through a time of yet more turbulence. There have been natural disasters both in the cyclone in Burma and the earthquake in China. At the time of writing the details of the latter are still unfolding, but we have all been very concerned to learn of the difficulties in ensuring that the necessary aid really does reach the people it needs to in Burma. There is also the awful political situation continuing to cause much anguish in Zimbabwe, as well as yet more ongoing trouble in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and its surrounding neighbours, and so the list goes on. We continue to pray urgently about all these matters and trust our God who really does act as a result of faithful people coming to Him to intercede.

As we begin to enjoy the rather better weather, we wish all our readers every blessing and time to relax as well as to work,

In Jesus' name,  
Chris Pearson

Church Cleaning Rota		Brass Cleaning	
Week	Team		
June	7th		Marlene Green & Ingrid Cartwright
	14th	C	
	28th	A	
July	5th		Walter & Gwenda Barty

Coffee Rota			
June	6pm	1st	No Coffee
	9.15am	8th	Dorothy Creed & Christine Murray
	11.00am	15th	Nick & Mary Greene
	9.15am	22nd	Angela Allen & Rita Ward
July	6pm	6th	No Coffee

Sidespersons		
June	1st	Mick & Pauline Cook
	8th	David & Mary Dicks
	15th	
	22nd	Marian Gleave & Nick Greene
July	6th	Brian & Sylvia Saunders

CHURCH LOTTERY	
May	
£50	Sophie Heyworth
£10	Mrs. hector
£10	Mary Aveyard
£10	Des. Barham
£10	Angela Crabtree

**ECTON FELLOWSHIP**  
Our next meeting, which is the last of the Summers Programme will be held at  
Dorothy Austin's in West street at 2.30pm on Tuesday July 8th  
Please bring a favourite poem or story to read and share with the group

**Joan Dickins**