

Dear All,

May is yet another busy month in the life of our new Parish of six churches. **Services follow their usual pattern** punctuated from time to time by minor changes, so please keep a close eye on the Diary. There are a wide variety of services in the Parish, hopefully something for everyone. There is a **Holy Communion service every Sunday** somewhere in the Parish, always led by a priest. There are also many lay-led services such as the **Family Services at Brabourne, Smeeth and Stowting** on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Sundays of each month. Always relaxed, informal, and interesting in their approaches and the messages they convey, these services are great for bringing the local community together. Then there is **Morning Praise at Mersham** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. These services are usually led by one authorised lay minister (ALM) while another gives the address. **Morning Praise at Smeeth** on 4th Sunday is also lay-led, usually by Di Dawson, and at **Sellindge** two contemporary services on the 1st and 4th Sundays, **Celebration Praise and Party Praise**, are led by John Selden and Sarah-Marie Collins respectively. Informal and engaging, these services always have a strong and clear Christian message. If you enjoy evening worship then there's **Evensong on the 3rd and 4th Sundays at Brabourne and Monks Horton** respectively, and as you will see from the Diary there is always **Morning Prayer on a Monday at Mersham**. If, perhaps, you were put off going to church in your youth, please consider giving it another go. Church services are very different now; much more accessible – and friendly.

Regarding social events in May, we start on 2nd (and 16th) with **Mersham's Craft Mornings** where craftwork is made for sale in aid of Mersham Church. In addition to making a valuable contribution to the church there is much camaraderie at such occasions so why not join in? Details in the Diary. Friday 4th is **First Friday at Brabourne** (6-7pm), **kindly hosted by the Armstrong Family**. This will be a first for Sophie and Jonathan so please come along and support them – and have a great evening. On Saturday 5th there's **Churchyard Tidying at Brabourne** from 9.30 am, and from 10-12 noon a **Coffee Morning in Mersham Church**. Catch up with friends, bring and buy, and have a thoroughly good morning.

On Friday 11th **Knit and Natter meets in Smeeth Oak Room**. Come with, or without your knitting or craftwork and help put the world to rights. On Saturday 12th make sure you get to **Smeeth's Coffee Morning at South Port, Pound Lane, courtesy of Ron and Jenny Cooper**. If it's a lovely day chatting over coffee in the garden is pure delight. What an excuse for supporting a good cause!

Wednesday, 16th is the **annual Ploughman's Lunch in aid of Brabourne Church**. Held at Brabourne and Smeeth Scout and Guide Hut, lunch is always excellent and a great social occasion so please get tickets soonest if you haven't got them already. Just let me know how many you'd like....., and please bring your friends. On Saturday 19th **Mersham is having a Churchyard Clean Up** so all help welcome there.

At Fridays@3 on 25th, Paul Dawson will be giving a talk entitled "Baa Baa Black Sheep; how does your garden grow?" Sounds intriguing and the source of much to chat about at the lovely tea that always follows. If you'd like to attend but need transport please contact Di Dawson (01303-813398). And finally, on Sunday 27th **George Jessel will lead a Farm and Vineyard Walk round part of Penstock Farm: £2 per adult, no charge for children and 50p each for well-behaved dogs**. Tea at the farm after the walk. All proceeds to Brabourne Church.

Very much hope you can make it to some of the services and the events as your support for our local churches is invaluable.

Thank you for reading this and all good wishes,

Kathy
Kathy Embleton-Smith