

Regular Events in the Benefice of Linton, Coxheath, Hunton, East and West Farleigh

Every Monday (see front page oOo)	4.20 for 4.30pm	'Wellsprings' silent prayer – The Vestry, St. Nicholas Linton. Details from 'Cilla 741318 (Not during School Holidays or Bank Holidays)
Term time only: First four Tuesdays in the month	10.00 - 11.30am	'PSST'- Fellowship and Bible study. (Contact Becky Pamham 07949 646865)
First and Third Wednesdays in the month	7.30 - 9.00pm	The Next Step - A group that meets for study and prayer. (Contact 1 st Wed – Jean 726248: 3 rd Wed – Anne 745702)
Every last Wednesday in the month	12 noon	A said Communion Service at St. Nicholas, Linton.
Every Thursday	10am 1.30-3 pm 3.30pm	Holy Communion (1662) Holy Trinity, Coxheath. "Up and Running" Toddler Group, Holy Trinity, Coxheath. Contact David 741474 for details. Seekers (6 – 11yrs) Holy Trinity, Coxheath. (Further information from Becky 07949 646865)
Every Saturday	10-11am 10 – 10.45 am	Meeting for prayer and short Bible Study. (Details from Peter 747570) Ladies Prayer Tme – All welcome (Details from Eileen 236170)

The Rector: Revd Peter Walker
747570 - Marriages,
Thanksgivings and Baptisms (Not
available Mondays)

Revd David Jones - 741474 (Not
available Fridays)

Churchwardens
Mr Roger Bettle 743278
Mr John McKenzie 741318
Items for January Parish News
by 14th December to Harold
Pounds 745303
h.p.pounds@btinternet.com

AND FINALLY

*We wish you a Happy Christmas
and a Peaceful New Year*



St Nicholas Parish News

Issue 95 December 2010

Services in Linton Church in December

Sunday	5 th Dec	9.30am	Holy Communion
		4.00pm	Christingle Service (see below)
Sunday	12 th Dec	9.30am	Family Service
		4.00pm	Carol Service
Sunday	19 th Dec	8.00am	Holy Communion (1662)
Friday	24 th Dec	11.30pm	Christmas Eve Holy Communion
Saturday	25 th Dec	9.30am	Christmas Day Service followed by Holy Communion
Sunday	26 th Dec	10.30am	Benefice Service Holy Communion at All Saints East Farleigh

Sunday, 5th December 2010

A Christingle Celebration in aid of The Children's Society at St. Nicholas Church, Linton

Come along and join in this special celebration.

At 2.30 come and make your own personalised Christingle, adults and children together, with lots of other fun activities and tea.

At 4pm a special Celebration Service follows with carols and Christingle procession around the Christmas Tree.

Contact Jean (747571) or Kath (741494) to let us know if you will be coming at 2.30 or, if you would only like to come at 4pm, let us know and we will have a Christingle made for you.

Carols at The Bull On Friday 17th December from 7.00pm onwards you are invited to come along to the Bull Inn, Linton to join in singing the old Christmas Carols.

oOo (see back page) There will be NO Wellsprings meetings on 20th and 27th December 2010 or 3rd January 2011.

The Freighter Service will be at Wheelers Lane/Cornwallis Ave Junction on **Saturday 4th December 13.40 to 14.20 hrs.** Please note that garden waste, bulky items, electrical items and hazardous waste will not be accepted.

Centre Pages: Peter's Letter; Nativity Poem; Linton Park Almshouses and M.S.O.
Back Page: Regular Events; Who's Who.

Dear Friends,

'Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us' (St.Luke 2)

How do you respond to an exciting and memorable event or activity? A very simple (and somewhat mundane) recent example from home was the fact that we were thrilled to get some new lounge room furniture; well, not 'new' but it looks it! Just as was Betty when she inherited the furniture we no longer wanted. It was a simple swapping around of furniture which in fact pleased three lots of people and all achieved in one evening!

Far more exciting and life-changing was the event which took place in remote fields over two thousand years ago. Simple shepherds tending their sheep - oblivious to the fact, that evening, that their lives would be changed forever.

What those shepherds saw in the skies that night near Bethlehem was unprecedented in human experience. An angel accompanied by countless numbers of heavenly messengers suddenly disturbed their ordinary existence and gave them the news of the Saviour's birth. Frightened out of their wits they talked among themselves as what to do. 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass'. Since Bethlehem sits on a ridge, the shepherds probably had to walk up the two or so miles from the fields to the town.

To see 'this thing' as reported by Saint Luke. In the original Greek text this means literally 'word' or 'reality'. The shepherds knew that they had received a word from God and the reality of it was that the Messiah had been born that same day. The reality was something that they could confirm tangibly because the angel gave them a sign to look for: a baby wrapped in cloths lying in a manger. Their hearts were without doubt so excited and eager to see 'this thing'.

It is clear that the shepherds had a revelation from God and believed it! Their experience and their obedient, faithful response was really comparable to how people come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation comes by hearing a message from God, by hearing and believing the truth about Jesus. (Romans 10:9-10) We read that they 'came with haste' - literally 'with great enthusiasm and eagerness' as they searched for the mother, father and divine child. 'Has anyone heard of the birth of a child this night?' asked the shepherds as they looked everywhere in that little town. Before long they 'found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger'.

The shepherds' response after finding Jesus continues our analogy of what happens when God saves people. They tell others. Now and again I have witnessed folk who have that life-changing experience being excited and ready to share with others. These shepherds were changed men - we read: 'they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this child'. In reality, these shepherds became the first New Testament Evangelists! 'All those who heard it marvelled at those things which the shepherds had told them'.

So this well loved account, which we will read again soon and sing that carol about shepherds watching their flocks by night, is once more a pattern that illustrates the Christian life. You first hear the Gospel telling of Jesus (for me that was when I was a very small boy) - then you begin to believe it and then you pursue and embrace Jesus. Having become a witness to your conversion, you begin to share that with others and change one's lifestyle in obedience to the Good News and under the power of God's Holy Spirit.

One becomes to realise 'I am a child of God', and study and ponder God's Word so that it changes one in order to attain to that life for which I (you) was created.

We know nothing much else about those shepherds - but we can be sure that their lives were changed forever tending their sheep on that hillside, as Jesus the Good Shepherd tends us his flock today.

My wife Diana joins me in wishing you all a Happy and Holy Christmas and Blessed New Year. Peter

Nativity

Immensity cloistered in thy dear womb,
Now leaves His well-belov'd imprisonment,
There He hath made Himself to His intent
Weak enough, now into the world to come;
But O, for thee, for Him, hath the inn no room?
Yet lay Him in this stall, and from the Orient,
Stars and wise men will travel to prevent
The effect of Herod's jealous general doom,
Seest thou, my soul, with thy faith's eyes, how He
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth lie?
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,
With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

John Donne 1572 - 1631

Linton Park Almshouses (opposite The Bull Inn) is a Registered Charity (No. 262420) that has provided accommodation for older people in this community for many years. Should you be thinking of making or changing your Will, please will you consider supporting this charity by way of a legacy. This is a particularly valuable way of giving and can make all the difference in ensuring the continuance of this landmark in our village. Information about the legacy will not be made public by the Charity, if so requested. If you need any further information please contact the Chairman of the Trustees, Philip Daubeny, tel 01622 743345.

Maidstone Symphony Orch. – Conductor Brian Wright
Saturday 4th December at 7.30pm at Maidstone Leisure Centre, Mote Park. Schubert, Symphony No 8 "Unfinished"; Weber, Clarinet Concerto No 1; and Elgar, Enigma Variations. Tickets £14, £18 and £22. Full time students £5, 18's and under free. Tel: 736392 or Maidstone Leisure Centre 0845 1552277