

Services at the Parish Church

Sundays 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 10.00 am Parish Communion (CW)
Thursdays 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) Tues-Fri 9am Morning Prayer

Services & children's activities are also available on our

St Andrew's Church YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTN2wLO8SA964mSgDpX5_bg

Thank You

Two longstanding members of the church congregation were thanked with a presentation of an engraved bowl and flowers on the last Sunday in September. Peter Scott is celebrating 50 years as organist at St Andrew's and his wife Judith has recently retired after more than 30 years as church cleaner.



They moved to Soham in the 1960s where Peter had up a teaching post at Soham Grammar School. After playing in various local churches he was appointed organist and choirmaster at St Andrew's in 1970. He has served with four vicars and numerous choir members. He assisted in moving an organ from a Peterborough church to St Andrew's in 1965 and led the design of its replacement, a new, more comprehensive, instrument incorporating much of the old pipework, built by Richard Bower in 2013. Peter's playing has been much appreciated in our post lockdown services as we haven't been able to sing. As well as using his musical talents for the church he has also edited Lodestar and produced countless service sheets. He has also dealt with boiler engineers, electricians, etc and every so often turns his hand to minor repairs in church. Both Peter and Judith have served on the PCC (church council) many times and Judith has also been a Deanery Synod Rep.

Judith is a faithful member of the choir and organises our carol services. In the past she has run Mothers' Union and organised the flower arrangers rota. She continues to produce the prayer leaders rota and clean the church brass and you may have been greeted by her if you attended a funeral here. We thank them both for all they have done and hope that they continue to play a large part in our church life for a long time to come.

A New Look...

...other than the hairstyle (for which all credit to Sheila, my friend, neighbour, hairdresser. Maybe she's also a magician!)

Quite often since I've been here, some of you have shown me parish magazines produced by other communities – sometimes from places you've been to on holiday. One came in by email a few months ago. All these magazines have been glossy A5-sized booklets, quite thick, and part-funded by adverts included within them. Like Lodestar, but on a bigger scale, they include not just church news, but news from right across the communities they serve. Everyone who's contacted me has suggested we re-design Lodestar along on similar lines.

I've been really grateful for these suggestions, but the truth is that producing and distributing a magazine on that scale – let alone managing advertising – is a really big job. It's part of what I used to do before I became a vicar: I loved doing it, but boy did it take up a lot of time! It's not something we as a church have the capacity to take on now.

However... the great news is that help is at hand! You may already know that for the last 18 months, Soham Community Association have been producing Jigsaw, a magazine just like the ones I've been describing. Jigsaw is full of local information and news, including news about what's going on at St Andrew's Church. I think it's fantastic. Edited by Jenny Fletcher, Jigsaw comes out every 2 months and is produced and distributed by volunteers. Soham Community Association have invited us to join with them, meaning that from January onwards '*Jigsaw*' will become '*Jigsaw incorporating Lodestar*'. St Andrew's Church Council (PCC) agreed to this at our September meeting.



On a practical level, if Lodestar distributors are happy to continue delivering, everyone who gets Lodestar delivered to them now will receive Jigsaw from January. Jigsaw is free, so there'll be no subs to pay – or to collect. On a symbolic level, joining with Soham Community Association to produce one magazine to serve the whole community will be a really good sign, I hope, of us all pulling together, especially during this difficult time. 'I get by with a little help from my friends' goes the song – and it's true.

November and December Lodestars will be delivered as usual, and after that we'll move to this new look. We hope you like it!

Eleanor

St Andrew's Community Events

A BIG thank you to all of you who came to the Mini Market on Saturday 12th September in St Andrew's churchyard. Cakes, plants, bird boxes, honey and numerous household and gift items were on sale. We even had an unexpected but very popular attraction: a three week old kitten currently being cared for by Ely Cats Protection. The weather was glorious and it was wonderful to see so many friends and neighbours again.



The success of the event was due to the excellent work of our volunteer stewards and the brilliant co-operation of all our visitors following the one-way system and maintaining social distancing. With this in mind we have decided to go ahead and run a Winter Fayre this year. Like so much at the moment, it will be a little different to previous years, but no less festive and fun.



The Winter Fayre will be on Saturday 21 November from 1.00pm to 4.00 pm. All stalls will be outside in St Andrew's Churchyard. Think German Christmas Market with Soham style. There will be stalls from local businesses and community groups with crafts, gift items, Christmas decorations and refreshments. You can start (or the more organised of you!) finish your Christmas shopping right here in Soham.

If you would like to take a stall please contact Claire Halley at standrewsheritage@gmail.com to find out more.



PARISH REGISTERS



Baptisms:

13 September	Noah James Dennis Bell
13 September	Lance Dennis Bell
13 September	George Wilfred Casey
20 September	Sidney Colin Stearn
27 September	Jacob Aldred

Funerals

17 September	Joan Bailey
22 September	Eunice Fleming
29 September	Peter Drage

Foodbank

Ely Foodbank (who manage Soham's foodbank distribution centre) had such a fantastic response during Covid that our stocks are very healthy. Even with a marked increase in usage our stocks are high from the incredible amount of donations continually coming in.

At the moment, supplies of foodstuffs are far out-reaching demand. We are incredibly thankful for the support but we need to manage our stock. Thank you to everyone who's made donations!

What would be really useful now are household and hygiene products:

- cleaning products eg spray cleaners, dishcloths, washing up liquid, handsoap, washing powder/pods, hand sanitizer, wipes;
- hygiene products eg mens toiletries (including razors, shaving foam, deodorant) and womens toiletries eg deodorants, shampoo and conditioner (we're fine for sanitary products!)

Foodbanks aren't just about food, and these items can be quite costly.

If anyone would rather donate through the Ely Foodbank page - all amounts, no matter how small are gratefully accepted. The funds received go into the Ely Foodbank account and is spent in Ely and the surrounding distribution centres (eg Soham, etc) - it does not go into the national Trussell Trust account: <https://localgiving.org/charity/elyfoodbank/>.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The St Andrew's Church annual meeting (delayed from April) will be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 22 October via Zoom. To get a link to the meeting, please email Hannah via hannahmarysoham@gmail.com

We start at 7.30 pm with the election of Churchwardens. Anybody who is a Soham resident or on the electoral roll of the church is entitled to vote in this election.

We then move on to the rest of the meeting which is open to people on the electoral roll of the church. This meeting is to hear reports of the church's finances and activities in the year 2019 and to elect PCC members and Deanery Synod Reps.. There is also the chance to ask questions or give opinions about church matters not covered in the report but please contact Eleanor at sohamvicar@gmail.com or on 01353 725948 with these before the meeting.



Congratulations

Congratulations to our curate
Revd Hannah Richardson who was
ordained deacon in Ely Cathedral on
25th September.

200 Club

Winners for September: £5 Sam Fisher; £10 Lucy Bearton;
£15 Clare Fisher; £25 Colin Smalley

Church and Churchyard Clean-up

Our next clean-up is on 31st October from 10.30am – noon.

News from Wicken Fen

The Boardwalk and Woodland Walk on the Sedge Fen are now open for pre-booked visitors. There is a one-way route with regular entry slots across the day. We've introduced advanced booking to keep everyone safe and maintain social distancing. To avoid disappointment, we recommend booking in advance, particularly at busier times such as weekends and bank holidays. However, where space is available on weekdays, booking may not always be necessary, so keep an eye on our website and social media feeds for the latest information. Tickets are released every Friday for the following week, and booking details can be found here <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve>

It's not necessary to pre-book to use the car park and walk in the wider reserve. Our café is also open from 10 am and 4 pm daily and you don't need a pre-booked ticket to be able to pick up take away drinks, snacks and ice creams, and take a seat at one of the picnic benches near the boat house. We also have a limited number of seats inside the café.

We've just brought back the popular Wicken Fen Stick Adventure Trail for families to enjoy. Bring your own stick from home or choose one when you arrive and take on our new stick challenges! This trail is on the Boardwalk on Sedge fen, so don't forget to book your slot online. If you'd rather just park and walk on Adventurers' Fen, you can try our new geocache puzzles, available on Saturday and Sunday between 10 am and 2 pm. Go to cycle hire to pick up a GPS device and follow the route; the hire of the GPS unit is £2 per device. At half term we'll be offering a new family trail 'Batty About Spiders' - more details to follow on our website.

Our Cycle Hire has reopened for pre-booked slots on Saturdays and Sundays. We've just taken delivery of new ebikes too, so if you'd like to more information or to book any of our bikes, please send us an email at wickenfen@nationaltrust.org.uk. We've also got details about cycling at Wicken Fen on our website <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve/features/cycling-adventure>

We hope to see you at Wicken Fen soon.



Image of the windpump on Sedge Fen by Rob Coleman

Items for Lodestar

If you have anything you want to publicise or report on please send material to aly-evans@hotmail.co.uk by Wednesday, 21st October.

A View from the Vicarage

Zooming around



Until the end of March, I – like many of the rest of us, I’m pretty sure – thought Zooming meant what I do up and down the High Street when (surprise, surprise) I’m late for a meeting.

Little did I know...!



Now, 7 months on, ‘Zoom’ features on quite a few pages of my diary. That’s not to say I always remember what it means. Last month, I was invited to a friend’s ordination in Wisbech. I checked my diary found ‘Zoom Race Course’ written in for that evening. What on earth’s that? I asked myself. Something in Newmarket, maybe? A St Andrew’s School staff party I’ve forgotten about (I’m always invited, and they’re always crazy: see the photo for evidence...)? It turned out to be a course about race delivered via Zoom. It took ages for the penny to drop.

Technology, as many of you know, really isn’t my thing. I’ve got a birthday card stuck above my desk with a picture of a man walking down a street on the front of it. He’s on his mobile. The caption reads, ‘Can you hang on a sec? I think I just took another picture of my ear’. As the friend who sent it knows, it could easily be me.

But here we are in October facing the restrictions imposed by Coronavirus. One of my favourite things about being a vicar is the contact with our local schools. For the moment at least, it’s not possible for me and my colleagues from Soham’s other churches to go into our schools. At least not on foot. The way we can and do go in is by means of technology. Hannah has set up YouTube channels for The Shade and The Weatherall’s Primary Schools’ church assemblies – we ministers upload videos to them every week. Meanwhile, St Andrew’s Primary School’s assemblies happen via Zoom. For me, sitting in front of the iPad trying to work out which buttons to press is fifty times more difficult than creating the universe (something we accomplished with the children’s help in Assembly No. 1 a few weeks ago: Genesis 1 as you’ve never seen or heard it before), but it’s working! We’re finding ways to involve different children week by week (the last thing I want to do is sit and preach at them...), and Mike Harrison tells me that when he walked round St Andrew’s School last Wednesday afternoon, classfuls of children were glued to their assembly screens, all beaming.

This doesn’t just happen because of the children, fabulous though all of them are. Nor does it happen just because of the timeless magic of the Bible stories we’re telling them. It happens because of the dedication, team-spiritedness and generosity of the teachers and support staff in all our schools who’ll stop at nothing for the sake of the pupils in their care. I can’t praise and thank them enough. In all my zooming around Soham, I try to stop and ask our children how they’re finding things. I ask how they’re finding being back at school. Every single one of them has told me they’re happy to be back, happy to be learning, and happy to be reunited with their friends.

Three cheers for their teachers who carry so much and make it all possible, and A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to them all! *Eleanor*

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