

Services at the Parish Church

Sundays 8:00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 10.00 am Sung Eucharist (CW)
Thursdays 10.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 3rd Sunday 10.00 am Family Service

Services for December

Sunday 8th 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)

Wednesday 11th 6.30 pm Uniformed Organisations' Carol Service

Sunday 15th 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am Family Service (Common Worship)

Wednesday 18th 6.00 pm Carol Singing at Millbrook House
7.30 pm Staploe Rotary Club Carol Concert

Sunday 22nd 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
6.30 pm Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve 4.00apm Crib Service
11.15 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
9.30am Christmas Family Communion (Common Worship)

Please note the slightly earlier time than normal Sunday services.

Sunday 29th 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)

January

Sunday 1st 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)

Ely foodbank at Soham

It's getting colder and darker so not surprisingly the demand for the local foodbank has increased. We are feeding up to forty-five mouths for three days with around a quarter of a ton (about 200kg) of food which gets distributed in an hour.

Why do people come to the foodbank? A wide variety of reasons but mainly because the social service benefit and welfare system is not working for them, for whatever reason. There are often associated mental or physical health issues.

We have clients from most of the villages south of Ely, the Three Rivers Group, Burwell district and as far away as Bottisham.

The foodbank is not just there to hand out free food, it is a place where people can come and have a cup of tea and a biscuit and simply talk with someone confidentially who is completely non judgemental. We don't give direct advice but point people towards the appropriate welfare organisations.

How can you help? There are collection points at the local Co-op or Budgens or you can drop things off at the local churches. Any contribution is welcome although we have rather a lot of beans, pasta and soup. For that reason we will be having a "swap shop" at St Andrew's Christmas fair where we will swap value for value the excess items for things like sugar, instant mash, cereals, sponge puddings, coffee, and long life orange juice. Think about it, if you are a bean, pasta or soup eater it will cost you nothing!

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A Councillor's Comments

There was no Public Comment Time at our November meeting so the chairman began with his announcements of forthcoming meetings.

Shape Your Space: This item was presented by Beth Green from the Cambridgeshire County Council. She was there to explain what Shape Your Space was about and to encourage people to sign up and use this facility to express their concerns about community matters. Although it had been running for some time it has now been highlighted as a possible alternative to Neighbourhood Panels, which are being disbanded. Neighbourhood Panels were very good in principle because at every meeting local people could come and have their say about any concern they had within their community. Their concerns were recorded and responded to at the next meeting, or they were given on the spot answers by representatives from various authorities present at the meeting. The failing was poor public attendance and also the distance between meetings should an important issue suddenly arise and the next meeting is weeks away. These meetings were costly although they did provide the police with priorities to tackle what problems and in which area. Now the meetings will cease the question was raised how to replace them. It was suggested that town and parish councils hold a half-day conference to discuss issues in their area with public sector organisations. Not all councillors would be willing to give up a Saturday and would local residents attend these conferences in the light of their lack of attendance at the neighbourhood panels? This is where Shape Your Space could provide the answer, from the comfort of one's home with no need to turn out, if there was a burning issue anyone had they could use this facility to register it and it would be channelled to the appropriate body to deal with it and they would get feedback in a few days. Councillors have been asked what alternative to the panels would they prefer. Shape Your Space offers one alternative and users can also link up with others on the same issue. The police however still welcome public guidance on the priorities for their operations and in which areas.

Litter and Street Cleaning in Soham: This item was planned to be addressed by a representative from East Cambs but he was not present to do so.

Community Facilities Working Party: They met on 4th November and approved the proposed funding for the project, and this was brought to the full council for approval, which was given. So this is another step forward in the re-modelling of the pavilion. *Councillor Ginn*

LodeSTAR

Items for the February edition of LodeStar should be submitted by Friday, 24th January, 2014. E-mails should be sent to peterdscott@btopenworld.com or printed copy left at 22 Sand Street, Soham CB7 5AA. Note that there is no edition in January.

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We also could do with a few more volunteer helpers. There are a variety of equally important tasks to be done from making tea and sorting food to dealing directly with clients. Nobody is expected to do anything outside their comfort zone so if you can spare a couple of hours on a Thursday morning please call 01353 662396 or visit <http://ely.foodbank.org.uk/> Many thanks, *Howard Laver*

PS. if you think you know someone who may need the foodbank but is afraid to ask, also let us know.

School Report

Dr Carin Taylor



There is plenty about education which is challenging. Cambridgeshire is now the worst funded county in the country. All schools are anxious about shrinking budgets in the face of ever increasing accountability and late changes to curriculum and qualifications. But for all the political policy and grim bottom lines, schools remain about people: adults and young people working with each other and with their peers with the common purpose of learning. Our schools are vibrant communities; places rich in energy and creativity.

As I write, we are looking forward to the Christmas Fayre, to be held in Lodeside this weekend to tempt us into some Christmas shopping! Very few secondary schools have such an event which brings together a growing team of enthusiastic and capable parents, a small number of school staff and a large number of entrepreneurial 12 year olds. We all hope to welcome the wider community to share this special piece of Christmas with us; the beginning of a wonderful few weeks which will culminate in our Carol Concert at Ely Cathedral.

As the days darken, I am often struck by the late afternoon 'buzz' around the school as teachers and groups of students take an extra hour or two to improve the quality of a piece of written work, or as our sporting teams return from fixtures, faces flushed with triumph or cold exhaustion! Good relationships, good humour and the desire to make that extra effort; long after the buses have gone, the school crackles with life.

In the classrooms of the Village College too, there is much excellent work. There are nearly three hundred hours of lessons every day! Just last week, we invited an Inspector to spend a day in the Village College observing lessons and learning. All the teaching she saw was inspirational, and she was particularly struck by the very good behaviour and attitudes of our students. It was heartening to hear her view that learning was underpinned by a very strong school ethos, which she saw in every part of our school.

That same ethos is also strongly evident at The Shade, our newest partner school. With great thanks to our friends at The Weatheralls, that new school and its 31 reception aged children have made a wonderful start to their learning journey. We now look forward to the opening of the new school building, ready for the start of the school term in January. We are planning a series of wider community events during the remainder of this academic year to share our joy and pride, not just in the first class new accommodation, but in the people, adults and children, who will make The Shade, an exceptional place to work and to learn. We look forward to sharing our celebrations, great and small, with you. *Dr Carin Taylor*

PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals

November 14th	Evelyn Kruppa
November 21st	Eileen Stacey

Baptisms

November 3rd	Otis Andrew Hillier
November 17th	Jan Odstricilik and Joseph Odstricilik Sophia Rose Anderson
November 24th	Maisie Louise Cochrane

The Organ - the inside story

Much of a pipe organ is not normally visible and this applies equally to the pipes themselves. The front display (of 98% tin) shows only 37 of the 1856 pipes. The pipes shown on the right *can* be seen at the rear of



the organ. They form part of the Pedal organ and are all played by the feet giving some of the lower sounds on the instrument. The pipes on the left, also played by the feet, are under the Swell box. In front are some of the Gemshorn rank which provides some of the higher sounds on the Pedal organ and are unusual in being tapered. (The Swell box is a large enclosure with shutters on the front to control volume. It contains all the pipes played from the upper keyboard.)



Looking inside the Swell box we can see some of the 58 notes of the Bassoon rank, these sound an octave below normal pitch and as the longest is 16 feet in length has to be folded round itself (like an orchestral trumpet) in order to fit in the space available. These, like an actual bassoon, are reed pipes and have their reed inside the wider lower section - referred to by organ builders as the 'boot'.



Further ranks of pipes are shown in the picture on the right. Many of these pipes, amounting to approximately half the total number, were transferred from the old organ. Among these are the Hohl Flute pipes which are quite rare, being triangular in shape. All this older pipework was made around 1877. Triangular section flutes had first been introduced by Edmund Schulze a few years earlier, notably in his very large instrument in Doncaster Parish Church. which has five keyboards, or manuals.



The picture below shows some of the pipes played from the lower keyboard (the Great Organ). The Trumpet pipes on the left are easily recognisable; of 70% tin, they were made by Carl Giesecke in Germany.



At the lower right of the picture are some of the smaller pipes. While the larger pipes on the Great Organ have a speaking length (the distance from the 'mouth' to the top of the pipe) of up to 8 feet, the smallest of these pipes has a speaking length of about 2cm.

The wooden pipes on the right of the picture are stopped flute pipes. Having a stopper in the top of the pipe causes it to sound an octave lower in pitch and have a softer tone.

Also in the picture can be seen clearly the rows of holes in the rack-board which will support the missing ranks of pipes - a Chimney Flute, Nazard and Tierce ranks. These last two sound 12 and 17 notes above piano pitch and add colour and brightness.

(Note that this article can be seen in colour on our Website - www.sohamandwicken.org.uk)

Volunteering

Volunteering has recently been in the news headlines, with Prince Charles launching a campaign called “Step Up 2 Serve”, which aims to encourage more young people to become involved in community projects, in a bid to tackle unemployment and gang violence.

Many activities in Soham and other communities throughout the United Kingdom are only possible through the time and skills willingly and freely given by volunteers. Such volunteering comes in many shapes and forms. Examples include: St John’s Ambulance, charity fund raising, running sports clubs, youth work, magistrates and school governors. It is estimated that 23% of people in Europe devote part of their spare time to volunteering, compared to 27% in America and 36% in Australia.

Whilst it can be difficult to find the time with the busy lives many of us lead, everyone can volunteer. With the wide range of activities for which volunteers are needed, there are many suitable matches for anyone, whatever their aptitude, skills and experience. What is important is to have an open mind, a positive attitude and willingness to do whatever is needed. It is relatively easy to see the many benefits to a community through the work of volunteering, for example a successful sports club, a thriving over 60s club, provision of a local food bank. Perhaps surprisingly to some, there are also benefits to those who volunteer, which can include making friends and contacts, learning useful skills and new hobbies, and taking part in enjoyable activities. There has also been research which suggests people who volunteer are more likely to have an above average level of self-fulfilment and wellbeing.

At this point let me illustrate from my own experience how both a community and a volunteer can benefit. For most of my life I have been involved with the Scouting movement. As an eight year old I started as a cub scout, and during the next thirteen years progressed to become a scout and then a venture scout. This experience, as well as being very enjoyable, equipped me, and fellow cubs, scouts and venture scouts with skills and experience for our future adult lives. Not only did I learn how to do fun activities like canoeing, hiking and camping, all of which I still enjoy, but in doing so gained other skills like team work, self reliance and planning and organisation, which were of a great assistance when I started work. All of this was only possible because of the time and effort willingly given by the adult leaders and supporters of the scout group to which I belonged.

Indeed so influential was this experience for me, that as an adult I decide to volunteer to become a scout leader, in order to “put something back”. I have now been a leader for over twenty five years and hope in that time I have made a positive contribution to the development of the lives of those scouts for whom I have been responsible. Throughout my time as a scout leader there have been benefits for me too. Through teaching scouts how to camp, canoe and hike I have been able to continue taking part in those activities, which I enjoy. I have made a number of friends from among the many scout leaders I have worked with. The Scout Association has a comprehensive, structured training programme to equip its leaders with the many skills they need to succeed, a number of which I have also found useful in a working environment, e.g. team work and team leadership.

To everyone reading this article who are volunteers – thank you.

Mark Campbell

Dates for the Diary

- 11th Uniformed Organisations’ Carol Service at 6.30 pm
- 14th Christmas in the Aisles. KD Productions to St Andrew’s for an evening of seasonal entertainment with the stars of the future.
- 18th Carol Singing at Millbrook House at 6.00 pm and
Soham Staploe Rotary Club Carol Concert at 7.30 pm
- 22nd Carols by Candlelight at 6.30 pm

Just a few words

Tim Alban Jones

Dear Friends,

Nearly – but not quite yet...

During last month's letter I was writing in the future tense about forthcoming events to do with the new organ at St Andrew's: the blessing and dedication by the Bishop and the inaugural recital by Andrew Lumsden. Both went very well with a good congregation and audience respectively. But we are still waiting for the last few stops to be finished before we can say goodbye to the organ builder. There is a very strong sense of 'nearly - but not quite yet.'

As we approach the month of December and the season of Advent there is a similar feeling of 'nearly.... but not quite yet.' Although we have had plenty of warning of the date for Christmas (there is always a year's notice of when it is next due!) I have already heard people telling me that they are not going to be ready for Christmas in time. And the other factor is that, in the commercial world at least, Christmas has as good as arrived – there is no sense of having to wait.

Advent is traditionally a period of preparation as we get ourselves ready to celebrate the great mystery of Christmas – how God, the creator of the cosmos, could become human for our fallen race. In order even to begin to comprehend the wonder of such a truth we need considerably longer than a measly month. And we would also need a rather quieter month than December! It seems that there is such a lot going on that we may not actually have the time to prepare ourselves spiritually. And how absurd is that? The whole point of this season of Advent is to do just that!

One of the ways in which we may wish to prepare ourselves is by attending the various carol services which are laid on. Gone are the days when carols are only sung after Christmas (there may still be some 'purists' who keep to this tradition, but they are definitely swimming against the tide of popular culture and practise.) Readers of *Lodestar* may well note from elsewhere that we have at least three carol services going on in St Andrew's in the run up to Christmas. We have one for the uniformed organisations of the town; we have another being arranged by the Staploe Rotary Club; and we have our customary church carol service on the evening of the Sunday before Christmas which is led by our church choir. As a church we will also be going carol singing at Millbrook House

The singing of carols is a very ancient custom and one which we are happy to maintain. In a happy mixture of music and words we are able to tell again the wonderful story of birth of Jesus all those years ago and all those miles away. The words of the traditional carols are deeply ingrained in many of us, and from them we learn some of our theological insights into the Christmas season. In reading from the Bible and from other non-Biblical texts at carol services we are able to glean new insights into the great Christian truth of 'God-with-us.'

May I invite you all to join us this year at one of our Carol services as we mark the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, the babe of Bethlehem. They help us to get through this time of 'nearly – but not quite yet.'

When it comes, may I wish you all, on behalf of everyone at St Andrew's, a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

With every good wish, *Tim Alban Jones*