

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



December Services

Sunday 7th	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
Sunday 14th	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
Tuesday 16th	6.30 pm	Carol Service for Uniformed Organisations
Sunday 21st	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00am	Family Service (Common Worship)
	6.30 pm	Candlelit Carol Service
Christmas Eve	4.00 pm	Crib Service
	11.15 pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	9.30 am	Family Eucharist
Sunday 28th	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
January 4th	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
	3.00 pm	Messy Church

Children Society Boxes

Could all those people who have a box please return them to church by the end of December. If you would like me to collect them I will.

If you don't want your emptied box back please let me know on 01353 723134 as I have paperwork to complete. Thank you, *Dawn Laver*

A Christmassy Recipe

Gluten Free Christmas Cake

Ingredients

125g Butter	100g Glace Cherries
125g Soft Brown Sugar	100g Mixed Peel
3 Free range eggs	100g Flaked Almonds
1 tsp Mixed Spice	200g Marzipan
2 tbsp Brandy or Fruit Juice	2 Free range egg whites
1 Lemon, rind and juice	400g Icing Sugar
150g Doves Gluten Free Plain Flour	1 tsp Vegetable Oil
400g Mixed Dried Fruits	1 Ribbon

Method

- Cream together the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy
- Beat the eggs and add to the mixture with mixed spice, brandy and lemon rind and juice.
- Mix in the flour.
- Stir in the dried mixed fruits, cherries, mixed peel and almonds.
- Push the mixture into a deep lined and greased 20cm or 8" round cake tin.
- Bake in a pre-heated oven (160 degrees C or Gas 4) for 1 hour and 50 minutes.
- Allow to cool in the tin for 12 hours.
- Remove the cake from the tin and carefully remove the lining paper.
- NOW..... This is where you can keep feeding your Christmas Cake with brandy every few days until you are ready to ice it.

For the Topping

- Warm the apricot jam and spread it over the whole cake.
- Roll out the marzipan and lift it onto the cake. Press the marzipan around the cake and cut off any excess.
- In a bowl beat the egg whites until stiff.
- Beat in the oil and icing sugar a little at a time.
- Spread the icing over the cake.
- Decorate with your ribbon.

NOW..... I have got to the feeding with brandy stage so I cannot guarantee the success of this cake, but to have any cake which is gluten free is a luxury, especially a fruity one which smelt delicious whilst cooking. Keep it in an air tight container before and after icing. Then if you are the only "free from" person in your household, you would seem to have a whole cake to eat over Christmas! Yum! *Jo Sturgeon*

STAFFAN DAWKINS

Last month we printed a short biography of one of the two ordinands who are on placement with us; here is the second.

Staffan Dawkins writes:

I was raised in Jamaica by my grandmother who is a devout Christian and I credit my strong faith to her. I was baptised a Catholic but grew up an Anglican so have had the fortune of experiencing other traditions of church during my formative years. It was perhaps at the age of 12 following my confirmation that I recognised my strong love for God and the church but was not sure about how I would serve the church.

Many years passed and after graduating secondary school - I secured a job in the bank while attending college in Jamaica. I then moved to England 13 years ago, and worked as a Mental Health and Learning Disability Advocate in London - for some of our most vulnerable. It was 6 years ago that the call on my life to the ordained ministry became more apparent. My job as an Advocate and those I worked with and for confirmed this within me. Six years ago I started exploring ordained ministry - three years ago I started my training at the South East Institute for Theological Education (S.E.I.T.E.) and now I am in my final year of training at Westcott House in Cambridge. The process of formation has not always been easy for me because I have been challenged to think (more deeply) about things - particularly some difficult personal life experiences and I have been challenged to see God at work in every situation - however painful.

On a much lighter note, I enjoy many things in my free time, I love to laugh because I've discovered laughter is one of the best medicines ever and I try not to take myself too seriously. I enjoy reading a good and inspiring book, cooking for friends and playing a game of tennis. When I am able to - I enjoy travelling to other countries and meeting people from different cultures. *Staffan Dawkins*

ONE YEAR OLD

A Retrospective View

The Parish church of St Andrew's in the town of Soham has stood proudly in the centre of the town since the late 12th Century, though Christianity was first brought to the town many centuries before in the 630s by St Felix, who used to be buried here. When Soham was in the media spotlight back in 2002, it was to St Andrew's Church that people came in their hundreds and thousands and it was this fine Grade 1 listed building which featured on the television screens.

In 1966 the previous organ had been installed by Norman Sykes and Peter Scott, who was then the assistant organist, with the help of some boys from the Village College who worked on it during their woodwork lessons. One wonders how that would square with today's National Curriculum! The organ was remarkable for its extremely heavy action; visiting organists usually complained if they had to play something like the Widor Toccata with the Swell coupled to the Great. Although it had a more limited number of stops, it spoke along the main axis of the church and its full tone meant that it was certainly up to the job. It was in need of some attention and we needed the space at the foot of the tower for a WC and kitchenette in order to bring the church into the 21st century.



We said 'goodbye' to the old organ towards the end of January 2010 knowing that we would have to make do with an electronic instrument until the new one arrived. I must confess that our organist made the electronic Viscount sound so plausible that I wondered whether some of our congregation might not notice when the new one was installed. I need not have worried.

The new instrument is truly magnificent both in its sound and its appearance. It stands at the back of the church under the tower arch and fits in with the architecture very well indeed. It looks as if it belongs there. The light from the clerestory windows falls attractively on the display pipes with their very high tin content. As the vicar, I am fortunate to be able to see it every time I stand at the altar, while everyone else only gets to hear it. The beautiful European Oak seems to glow in an understated, Anglican way.

The variety of sounds which the new organ produces are truly wonderful. The full-blooded sound of full organ, with the powerful reeds and bright mixtures is uplifting. The Great Trumpet and the 16' Swell bassoon are particularly spectacular but the quieter tones are equally impressive. The Swell strings are just lovely and the steps from pianissimo to fortissimo are very well graduated with an interesting build-up of volume and tone. The Great has two delightful mutation stops as well as the Contra Dolce and the new and much more effective Dulciana. There is a great variety of colours and sounds available and we enjoy hearing them.

Since the arrival of the new organ we have introduced a new feature to our Sunday liturgy. After the sermon we now listen to a Chorale prelude, which gives us a chance to reflect on the message of the sermon but also to hear some of the quieter registrations. I think it is a shame that congregations do not always give attention to the music at the end of the service, but we now have a minute or two when everyone hears the new instrument without people talking.

We had our opening recital in November 2013, when Andrew Lumsden from Winchester Cathedral showed off the instrument and delighted the audience. We plan to have a series of recitals and, to judge from the reaction of visiting organists, there will be no shortage of people to play. We have already enjoyed successful concerts with Alexander Berry and Chris Parsons on Organ & Trumpet in September and the recent Anniversary Recital by Andrew Lumsden last month.

As well as being pleased with the workmanship of Richard Bower and his team, I would like to pay tribute to our organist Peter Scott who has played in Soham with distinction for over 40 years and continues to do so. The new organ at St Andrew's is a worthy addition to our historic parish church and future generations will be able to benefit from it for many years to come.

Tim Alban Jones

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School Report

Dr Carin Taylor



Every first Saturday in October, the Soham Grammarians meet for a school dinner in Beechurst Hall. It is a fine occasion which every year impresses as 'old boys' make long journeys from overseas (Canada and Nigeria this year) and others of greater age manage shorter journeys to gather, to remember school days and to enjoy the company of old friends.

The Grammarian's speaker this year was Rev Gwyn Murfet, who had been at the Grammar School 1956 -61. He described himself as a Railwayman; Teacher; Country Vicar and magician; a combination which reflected an array of talent and fascinating reflection upon aspects of local and social history.

On 11 November at 11.00 a.m., the Village College was touched by its local history as we read the long list of names of Soham Grammar School boys who lost their lives in the two world wars of the twentieth century. We remember the past and reflect on the very different lives of those who have learned in Soham for generations.

Inevitably, each year, the number of Old Grammarians diminishes. Please, if you are a Grammarian, or you know of anyone with connections to Soham Grammar School, do encourage them to get in touch via the Grammarian's excellent website - www.sohamgrammar.org.uk Next year's annual dinner is at lunchtime on Saturday, 3rd October, 2015. It would be lovely to see the numbers attending grow as, once again, the community comes together to remember its past and to renew the friendships which sustain us all for the future.

ONE YEAR OLD - *A Retrospective View*

The old 1877 Forster & Andrews organ had very substantial pipework, all metal pipes having been completely revoiced on slightly higher pressure at installation in 1966. This favoured a very prompt attack and bold sound whilst avoiding shrillness. Richard Bower has voiced this pipework to speak in a gentler and perhaps more natural way and this has resulted in a very successful blend with the new ranks.

The original Swell reached up to a quite soft 2' Piccolo and has benefited greatly from the addition of a sparkling 4-rank Mixture. The 8' reed has now been revoiced back to its original Cornopean timbre and is joined by the quite assertive 16' Bassoon, each of the four reeds on the instrument having quite distinctive tone. The addition of a quiet Celeste rank was much needed and with the Salicional is capable of producing its traditional quiet and distant sound within the very effective Swell box. The availability of a 4' Flute on the Swell has been invaluable (transferred together with the 8' Hohl Flute from the Great). Although the triangular Hohl Flute added its own distinctive (and quite loud) contribution to the old Great it cannot compete with the beauty of tone of the Rohr Flute which can be appreciated so much better now unenclosed.

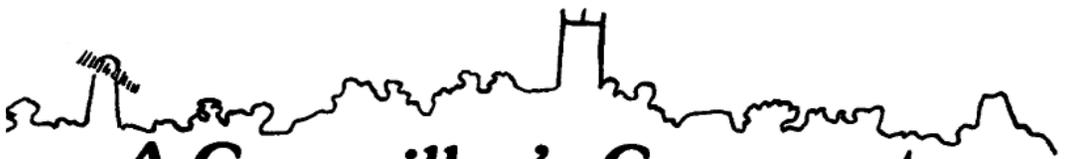
The Great organ has gained immeasurably from the new 98% tin Open Diapason and, of course, from the new mutations. I had particularly wanted the Nazard and Tierce to be available separately and also of full compass. The effect of these with the Rohr Flute has exceeded all expectations, adding greatly to the solo voices available as well as contributing to the Great chorus. The 16' Contra Dolce has fully justified its cost (and considerable space requirements) as it provides valuable gravitas to the diapason chorus - and many softer combinations - without any of the thickening of sound that one frequently hears. The 8' Trumpet crowns Great to Mixture effortlessly as well as providing an effective solo voice.

The Pedal organ has gained a full chorus up to 4' and 4-rank Mixture as well as the 16' Trombone which not only provides definition but adds noticeably to the 16-foot tone. It is now well able to provide an independent bass line to most manual combinations. Musicom Systems have provided the means of controlling registration (choice of sounds) in a comprehensive and effective way. In particular the ability to give visiting organists their own completely independent piston memories has been extremely valuable.

The task of integrating 1877 pipework into a modern instrument cannot have been an easy one and much credit is due to Richard Bower, not only in producing a cohesive and convincing overall sound but also in providing individual ranks which can be played and listened to with interest and enjoyment.

Peter Scott

(Note: 16' 8' 4' 2' indicate ascending octaves of pitch - 8' being normal piano pitch)



A Councillor's Comments

At the November Council Meeting Mr. Ken Cranfield made use of Public Comment Time to voice his concern that council minutes were not displayed on the public notice boards, and not everyone has access to those on the Council's website. The Chairman thanked him for his comments.

Chairman's Announcements: He gave notice and dates of coming meetings which included the meeting of the working party to consider the development of the Pavilion. This will be on Wednesday 19th November at 2.00pm.

Restructuring of ECDC: District Councillor Palmer told the meeting this was being done to make the council more efficient and to save costs. This resulted in 14 redundancies, but those affected had either taken retirement or found new employment.

Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire: A paper concerning this was considered and councils and any member of the electorate were invited to comment on any changes. The council said they would comment when the changes were known, and were also informed that the County Council have plans to reduce their councillors from 39 to 27 from 2017.

Anti Social Behaviour: A new Act regarding this has been introduced and from a recent meeting of ECDC it is considered that it would be easier to implement Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) than previously.

North Ely Park Consultation: This item is being passed on to our planning committee and the council has said it would not formerly make a comment.

Anlian Water Major Works: This work entails the replacement of the rising main from Stuntney to Ely Railway Station. This will mean that the A142 will be closed between those points from 7.00pm on Friday 23rd Jan 2015 to Monday 26th Jan 2015 till 6.00am, and from the same times on Friday 30th Jan 2015 to Monday 2nd Feb 2015.

Highways Improvements Sand Street 2014/15: The proposed pedestrian crossing in Sand Street has now been delayed because the street lighting is inadequate. Lighting is being upgraded and the crossing will not be installed until this work in Fordham Road and Sand Street has been completed. This means that this is unlikely to happen in the present financial year.

Councillor Ginn

sohamscene



☆ **Winners of the 200+club for October** Richard Palmer £5, Matthew Fisher £10; November David Pope £5, Andrew Fletcher £10.

☆ **On Thursday January 8th at the Methodist Hall, Berrycroft, Soham** at 7.30pm, Soham History Group present Viva's film 'Rich Soil, Rich Heritage', looking at those who have come to live and work in this area over the centuries. This will be followed by Peter Cox talking on 'A Taste of the Fens'. Members free, guests £.2.50. Refreshments, raffle and book stall.

☆ **Items for the February edition of LodeStar** should be submitted by Friday, 23rd January, 2015. Note that there is no edition in January. E-mails should be sent to peterdscott@btopenworld.com or printed copy left at 22 Sand Street, Soham CB7 5AA.

Just a few words

Dear Friends

It's THAT time of year again! We really have no excuse for being unprepared since the build up to Christmas seems to start earlier and earlier each year. And yet it often seems to catch us by surprise! As you will see elsewhere in Lodestar there are details of our Christmas services. We are looking forward to welcoming people at any (or all!) of our regular services in which we recall again the delight and wonder of Christmas.

On the Sunday before Christmas we have our traditional Candle-lit Carol Service at 6.30 pm. In joyful song we have the opportunity of proclaiming afresh the good news of the birth of Jesus in a stable all those years ago and all those miles away.

On Christmas Eve we have our customary Crib Service in which all the younger members of our congregation are invited to take part as we build up the Christmas tableau piece by piece and song by song. Any children who would like to take part are welcome to come dressed as shepherds or angels. (We did have a small child dressed up as a sheep one year – and he was equally welcome!) Later that evening (starting at 11.15 pm) we have our Midnight Mass. There is always a wonderful atmosphere of suppressed excitement at this service as people wait for the clock to strike midnight so that the celebrations can properly begin. The last verse of the carol, Hark! the Herald angels sing, which begins with “Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning” always sounds better when actually sung on Christmas day!

If the excitement is muted at Midnight Mass - that is definitely not the case on Christmas morning at 9.30am! We welcome a church full of excited and excitable children (and their parents and families) who are all eager to tell everyone what they have been given for Christmas. It has become something of a tradition (and a challenge) for the vicar to extrapolate something of the Christmas message from some of the presents which are brought to show! Please note that we will not be having a service at 8.00 am on Christmas morning and that the time of the Family Eucharist is different from our normal Sunday service time (in order to allow me to get to Wicken for a service at 11.00 am.)

I would like also to draw your attention to our Messy Church which, in January, will be held on Sunday 4th at 3.00pm. We usually hold our Messy Church during the week, which often excludes dads from coming along, so during the Christmas holidays, we hope that many more fathers will be able to bring their children along to church for an hour and half of fun, crafts, worship and food.

I very much hope that amidst all the business, excitement and charging around you also have a moment or two to sit and be still to reflect on the mystery and wonder of how God came to us as a weak and helpless child to share our human existence. The God who made the earth and the stars chose to make himself small and vulnerable like us in order to show his love for our human race. This is truly a wonderful thing and it is right and proper that we should celebrate it as much we can.

May I wish you all a blessed Christmas, when it finally comes, and a happy new year.

With every good wish,

Tim Alban Jones

PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms

Nov 23rd

Ethan Thomas Wells

Funerals

12th November

Ruth Eileen Hagley (95)

13th

Rodney George “Jazz” Porter (78)

25th

Anne Graham (70)