
Services at the Parish Church	<i>1st Sunday</i>	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
Sundays	8:00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	10.00 am Sung Eucharist (CW)
Thursdays	10.00 am	Eucharist (BCP)	<i>3rd Sunday</i> 10.00 am Family Service

December Services



Sunday, 4th December	8.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
	3.00 pm	Christingle Service at the Methodist Church
Thursday, 8th December	10.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday, 11th December	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)
Tuesday, 13th December	3.30 pm	Messy Church
	6.30 pm	Uniformed Groups Carol Service
Thursday, 15th December	10.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday, 18th December	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.00 am	All Age Eucharist
	6.30 pm	Candlelit Carol Service
Christmas Eve	4.00 pm	Crib Service <i>Children are invited to join in by coming dressed up as a shepherd or an angel</i>
	11.15 pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00 am	All Age Eucharist

12 Days of Christmas, The Meaning

When most people hear of “The 12 days of Christmas” they think, of the song. This song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian faith.

From 1558 to 1829 Roman Catholics in England were not able to practice their faith openly so they had to find other ways to pass on their beliefs. The song “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is one example of how they

did it. “The 12 Days of Christmas” is in a sense an allegory. Each of the items in the song represents something of religious significance. The hidden meaning of each gift was designed to help young Christians learn their faith.

In the first line of the song: “On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me...”

“True love” represents God and the Christian is “me” who receives these presents.

The “partridge in a pear tree”

was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.

The “two turtle doves”

were the Old and New Testaments - another gift from God.

The “three French hens”

were faith hope and love - the three gifts of the Spirit that abide (I Corinthians 13).

The “four calling birds”

were the four Gospels which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The “five golden rings”

were the first five books of the Bible called Books of Moses or Pentateuch.

The “six geese a-laying”

were the six days of creation.

The “seven swans a swimming”

were “seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.” (I Corinthians 12:8-11, Romans 12, Ephesians 4. 1 Peter 4:10-11)

The “eight maids a milking”

were the 8 beatitudes (St Matt. 5, 3 - 10)

The “nine ladies dancing”

were nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)

The “ten lords a-leaping”

were the Ten Commandments.

The “eleven pipers piping”

were the eleven faithful disciples.

The “twelve drummers drumming”

were the twelve points of the Apostles’ Creed.

Contributed by Judith Scott

New Editor for LodeStar

From the date of this issue the Mrs Alison Evans will be the Editor of LodeStar.

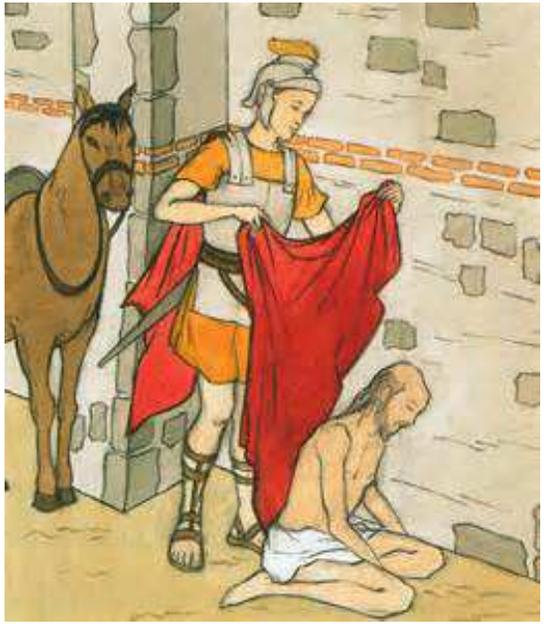
Material for LodeStar should be e-mailed to alison.evans7@btopenworld.com or posted to 50 Mildenhall Road, Fordham, Ely, Cambs CB7 5NR by the penultimate Wednesday of each month. Each edition of LodeStar lists the next copy date.

Please remember that we welcome notices and reports of the activities and meetings of all non-profitmaking organisations in the Soham area.



St Martin of Tours

St. Martin of Tours (316 or 336 – 8th November, 397) was Bishop of Tours, whose shrine in France became a famous stopping-point for pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. He has become one of the most familiar and recognizable Christian saints. As he was born in what is now Szombathely, Hungary, spent much of his childhood in Pavia, Italy, and lived most of his adult life in France, he is considered a spiritual bridge across Europe. His early life was recorded by a contemporary, the hagiographer Sulpicius Severus. He is best known for the account of his



using his military sword to cut his cloak in two, to give half to a beggar clad only in rags in the depth of winter. That night, Martin dreamed of Jesus wearing the half-cloak he had given away. He heard Jesus say to the angels: “Martin, who is still but a new convert to Christianity, clothed me with this robe.” In another version, when Martin woke, he found his cloak restored to wholeness. The dream confirmed Martin in his piety, and he was baptised at the age of 18. He resigned from the army as he could not reconcile his faith with his life as a soldier.

The part kept by himself became the famous relic preserved in the oratory of the French kings of the Franks at the Marmoutier Abbey near Tours. During the Middle Ages, the supposed relic of St. Martin’s miraculous cloak, (*cappa Sancti Martini*) was carried by the king even into battle, and used as a holy relic upon which oaths were sworn. The cloak is first attested in the royal treasury in 679, when it was conserved at the palatium of Luzarches, a royal villa that was later ceded to the monks of Saint-Denis by Charlemagne, in 798/99.

The priest who cared for the cloak in its reliquary was called a *cappellanu*, and ultimately all priests who served the military were called *cappellani*. The French translation is *chapelains*, from which the English word *chaplain* is derived.

A similar linguistic development took place for the term referring to the small temporary churches built for the relic. People called them a “*capella*”, the word for a little cloak. Eventually, such small churches lost their association with the cloak, and all small churches began to be referred to as “*chapels*”.

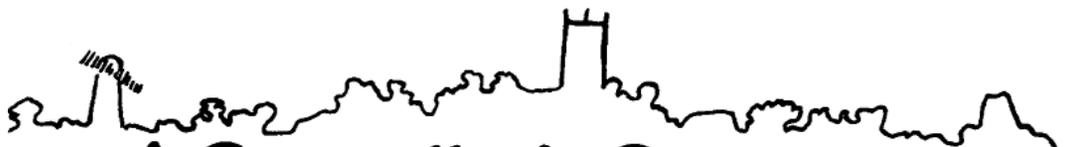
His feast day is November 11th. He is the patron saint of beggars (because of his sharing his cloak), wool-weavers and tailors (also because of his cloak), soldiers (or some emphasise infantrymen), geese (some say because they gave his hiding place away when he tried to avoid being chosen as bishop,



others because their migration coincides with his feast), vintners and innkeepers (because his feast falls just after the late grape harvest), and France.

I find it so curious that a saint from eighteen hundred years ago has given us two common English words, *Chapel* and *Chaplain*.

Delia Tickner



A Councillor's Comments

At the November meeting of the council I was not present, as I was attending the licensing of the new Vicar of Soham, (Eleanor Whalley), which was held on the same evening. For this reason four councillors were absent. So from information received I will do my best to record what took place. The meeting began on a sad note as one of our past councillors had died (Mr. Peter Beer). In his term of office he had not only served the council well, but outside the council itself, served the community with leading roles in Twinning, a Music Society and the Folk Night Group. His passing was marked with a minute's silence.

In the Councillors' Reports, there were complaints about the barriers placed around uncompleted street lights and also pot holes in the roads. It appears that the street lights are at last being completed, but for the holes in the road the meeting was told that residents themselves need to lodge their complaints to Highways on-line, because they no longer travel around looking for various faults.

The refurbishment of the Pavilion is still ongoing and people can see the work going ahead on the construction on a much enhanced road leading to the Pavilion itself, but the total work is not likely to be completed before the end of December.

From the committee for Cemeteries. It was reported that a U.S. team had been engaged in the cleaning of the South Chapel, and also are producing a Plaque which will be erected on the grass island between the two Chapels, which will indicate the location of the War Graves.

The question of the progress concerning the proposed cycle route from Wicken to Soham was brought up, and Councillor Warner is pursuing this matter and hopefully this worthwhile project will go ahead.

Applications for financial support: The annual request for the insurance for the Christmas Lights came before the meeting and was approved, and it needs to be realised that this insurance is not cheap. Our thanks go out to all those volunteers who each year whatever the weather, painstakingly put the lights up and later on take them down.

Soham's Land Heritage (Sites of specific historic interest) this motion was put on the agenda by Councillor Johnson seconded by Councillor Woricker. This was to make sure that special sites are not lost to view and still held in the same value as they always were. And it was moved that the Shade be restored as a Common and a special strip of land be protected as having medieval heritage value.

Councillor Ginn

THE CALL

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life!
Such a Way as gives us breath:
Such a Truth as ends all strife:
Such a Life as killeth Death.
Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength!
Such a light as shows a feast:
Such a Feast as mends in length:
Such a Strength as makes his guest
Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart
Such a Joy as none can move:
Such a Love as none can part
Such a Heart as joys in love.

George Herbert





☆ **The winners for the 200+club for November** are:
£5 - Hazel Kind, £10 - Barbara Ashley.

☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Morning** at the Library,
Saturday 3rd December from 10am – 12 noon. All welcome.

☆ **Items for the February, 2017 edition of LodeStar** should be submitted by
Wednesday, 18th January. Send material to 50 Mildenhall Road, Fordham,
Ely, Cambs, CB7 5NR or email to alison.evans7@btopenworld.com. Please
note that there is no edition of LodeStar in January.

Just a few words 
Ruth Dennigan

Dear friends,

I am writing this on Advent Sunday – where has the year gone?! As we move into this time of preparation my mind always turns to the memory of a friend waking one morning to find an addition to her nativity scene: alongside the usual characters in the stable her young son had included Fireman Sam! The newly modelled scene was more traditional than she realised: in France, since the late 18th century, it has become the tradition to include in the nativity scene models of the villagers – the blacksmith, perhaps; the baker; a woman with her shopping bags; children; a farmer; a shop-keeper... In modern times perhaps business men and women, lorry-drivers, teachers, builders, property-owners, down-and-outs, policemen, prisoners, pensioners, children... all of the community represented at the manger: Jesus came for all.

I heard, yesterday, a sermon about the calling from God that comes with our baptism. The preacher spoke of how God, in our baptism, calls us by name, calls you to be the best you that you can be, calls me to be the best me that I can be; of how He calls us to be disciples, children of God, Christians; and of how He calls us to know ourselves to be valued. The message that the preacher spoke was powerful. But powerful too, for me, was the visual message that came along with those words – the preacher was 12 years old, and both the writing and delivery of the sermon were all her own work. Her preaching was from her own theology.

These two seemingly unrelated stories produce the same wondering in me: do we recognise children as people who can “do theology”? Do we encourage them to wonder, to reflect, to discuss, to explain? Do we listen to, and learn from, their wonderings? For example: “In the circuit of love God is the battery, Jesus is the fuse (because the love of God comes through Jesus) and the people’s heads are the light bulbs.” [age 6]. And “It’s important that we call God ‘Our Father’ not ‘My Father’ because we are all God’s children together” [age 5]. Reflect on those wonderings – there is something profound in each of them.

Behind my wondering, about whether we recognise children as people who can “do theology”, is another wondering: do we “do theology”? I’m not thinking about the academic study of theology (fascinating as that is!), but about thinking about God, and God-and-us, and what God is like, and relationship with God, and how to make sense of faith in God, and God-and-the-world... Do we wonder, and reflect, and discuss these things? Do we give each other space to do this? Do we do it together? Do we respect the wonderings of others when the thoughts they are having are ones with which we disagree? If we don’t “do theology”, then why not? These next couple of months – Advent, Christmas, New Year, Epiphany – provide plenty of stimulation for reflection. Maybe we could do some theology together?

Ruth Dennigan, *Licensed Lay Minister, Soham and Wicken*

A View from the Vicarage



December 2016

‘We live in an age of transition...’ began Radio 4’s special correspondent, James Naughtie, reporting the outcome of November’s US Presidential election, quoting Harold Macmillan: ‘...as Adam said to Eve as they left the garden’. Standing midst the debris resulting from my own (rather less significant) transition as I listened, I resolved to commit that to memory – might prove useful for a sermon...

Transition, it seems to me, is not only a topical theme on a national and global scale as we reach the end of 2016, a year which has played host to the UK’s Brexit vote, the closure of ‘The Jungle’ in Calais, ongoing devastation and bloodshed in Syria and so many other war-torn parts of our world, the effects of natural disasters and – yes – the US Presidential election; it is also inevitably topical in the lives of most of us: transition brought about or anticipated by changes in family circumstances; by ‘life events’ joyous or tragic; by sickness; by children going up a class, or starting school or college, or moving away, or moving back home; transition resulting from a change of role, perhaps (as in my case) bringing with it a change of address. Transition is part and parcel of human existence: ‘We live in an age of transition, as Adam said to Eve as they left the garden’.

This year, on Advent Sunday, the Church begins its corporate reading of Matthew’s Gospel, the book of the Bible from which most of our Gospel readings will come at 10am Communion services at St Andrew’s Church on Sundays between now and Advent 2017. In Matthew’s Gospel, the notion of transition is, I think, an important thread. In Matthew’s first chapters, Jesus has barely been born before he finds himself on the move - whisked from Bethlehem to Egypt, to escape Herod’s massacre of children aged ‘two years old or under’ like him. When Herod dies, still in Chapter 2, an angel tells Joseph to take his family back to Israel, and thus, off they set... The adult Jesus, too, journeys widely, spreading the Good News of the kingdom of heaven, until the Gospel’s concluding paragraph, where he commissions his disciples to continue to do likewise – to ‘make disciples of all nations’, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to ‘obey everything’ he has commanded his followers.

And Matthew’s punchline? His Gospel’s – and his Jesus’s – final sentence? ‘And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’. Matthew’s Jesus, the Jesus whom Joseph was told before his birth would be “Emmanuel”, which means ‘God is with us’, is, we are promised, ever and always with us: with us ‘to the end of the age’; with us through every transition this business of living brings with it.

May we each know his presence this Advent- and Christmas-tide.

With my prayers and warmest wishes, *Eleanor*



PARISH REGISTERS



Funerals

24 November Brian Charles Barrett (73 years)
30 November Leonard Tom Webb (92 years)

Baptism

27 November Jake Ethan Rose