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<b>Services at the Parish Church</b>	<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

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## Bread Basket Breakfast

This all came about through a group of women having the same vision: having an opportunity to bring together Community and Church in such a way that would be comfortable for everyone and where we could build relationships with each other. What better way than eating together? And so the 'Bread Basket Breakfast' was born.



We meet once a month on the third Saturday of the month

in Church at 10am until 12. We serve anything that will go in a toaster! Tea and Coffee are served in individual teapots and cafetieres and brought to the table along with orders of toast, crumpets, muffins etc. The atmosphere is welcoming relaxed and friendly and is such a good opportunity to bring the family out too for a very reasonably priced breakfast at £1-50 per person. Food bank clients are welcome and can have a complimentary breakfast.

Set up by donations, it is now self-funding and produces a small surplus which is sent to the Mothers' Union to fund Away From It All holidays for disadvantaged families (see below). We also recently hosted a successful charity coffee morning and provided refreshments for the Soham Winter Fayre.

Other MU branches in the Diocese may take up the idea in their own communities.

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## Away From It All

Away From It All (AFIA) is a Mothers' Union holiday scheme, primarily funded by Mothers' Union members, to help people who are experiencing stress in their family life. Mothers' Union normally helps with part of the cost of a holiday or with travel expenses, but sometimes can pay for the whole trip.

Those hoping to have a holiday don't have to be a member of a church or organisation and can apply for themselves or recommend someone else for a holiday. The holidays take many different forms. Some are specially organised family weeks where a number of families and a team of volunteers go away together with activities and outings arranged.

Other holidays might take place in mobile homes owned by Mothers' Union, usually sited near a beach. Some holidays take the form of day trips. We usually try to find the most suitable holiday, because everyone is different.

On average, Mothers' Union helps 2,500 people to have a holiday each year. Families are able to spend time together away from their stressful situations at home, engage in activities together and have fun. They often experience healing in their relationships by spending this quality time with each other.

## Messy Church

Messy Church is for all ages! From toddlers to teens with an adult: carers, mums, dads, grandparents... Everyone can have fun at Messy Church.

Messy Church takes place in St Andrew's Church every 5 weeks or so on Tuesday afternoons from around 3.15 pm (or whenever you can get there after school). We usually start with refreshments and a chat about the theme for the day - there will be different craft activities to try and a short service including a song, a story and a prayer). We end with a simple meal together and finish at around 5pm.



Messy Church dates for 2017 are: 28 February; 28 March; 2 May; 20 June; 19 September; 7 November; 5 December.

All welcome!

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## Lent

Lent begins with our Ash Wednesday service on March 1st at 7.30pm – Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes.

We will be running a Lent Bible Study Course in conjunction with the Methodist Church. There will be a number of times and venues where you can join in. Look out for details in next month's issue.

We will also be running a series of workshops on Monday evenings at St Andrew's called Exploring Prayer.

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## St Andrew's Quiet Morning - 11th February



'Yes God! – space to explore God's hidden treasure for you in 2017'

Time: 9.30am for 10am start – 12.30pm finish

Place: Millbrook House

All welcome. Tea and coffee and biscuits provided.

Please see Lynne Turner for further details, ring 01353 722146 or email [turnerlynne7@aol.com](mailto:turnerlynne7@aol.com)

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. (John 10:9.)

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## ALM Re-authorisation

Congratulations to Bridget Buchan, John Cole, Alison Evans, Margaret Fisher, Jo Sturgeon and Delia Tickner who will all be re-authorised as lay ministers of St Andrew's Church by Revd Mike Banyard, our Rural Dean, at our 10am service on Sunday 5 February. The service will be followed by celebratory refreshments in church, and everyone is very welcome to come along. We hope to see you there!

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## Foodbank Reminder

Cold weather puts extra pressure on people with a very low income who may have to choose between eating and keeping warm. The Foodbank urgently needs donations of the following: Tinned meat or tinned fish; sugar (especially smaller 500g bags); tinned soup; long life fruit juice; tinned puddings. Please consider buying something from this list and donating it at the Co-op, the church, or ASDA. Thank you.

# Just a few words

Ruth Dennigan

Dear friends,

As I write, the world has just witnessed the inauguration of the latest president of the United States. Donald Trump has provoked mixed responses across the globe, prompting reminders from church leaders to pray for him, and to refrain from judging him prematurely. Within a short time of his inauguration, however, Trump has caused controversy by his criticism of the media's coverage of the event which contradicted his own claims about the size of the crowd which attended. His presentation of what have been termed 'alternative facts' reminds me of those who see truth as subjective, as decided by the best argument, most popular opinion or loudest voice.

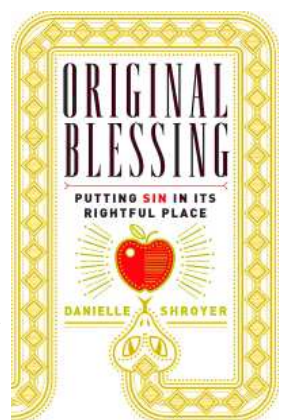
Jesus had a different perspective on truth. He described himself as 'the truth' (John 14:6). He presented his teachings as 'the truth' (for example John 3:3). He declared that 'the truth' frees (John 8:32). To expand on this a little, he said to those who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' (John 8:31-32). Knowing the truth comes from continuing in relationship with Jesus, living out what he has taught both in words and in the way he lived. This is the characteristic of being his disciples (learners, apprentices). 'Knowing' the truth, then, implies more than an awareness of truth, a knowledge which can be ignored. 'Knowing' implies a 'buying into', an intimate knowledge which shapes us. It includes the knowledge that we are deeply loved: that it is love – God's love – which created us, sustains us and gives us our worth. And from this knowledge comes freedom.

Perhaps the question to ask ourselves then, not only as we work out how to react to Donald Trump but also in response to whatever the situation in which we find ourselves, is 'Where is the truth in this?'. Where is Jesus in this? From our knowledge of him that comes from relationship with him - living as his apprentices who daily live out his teachings and his example – what do we know to be the truth? What can we, as loved people – not perfect, but deeply loved – say in any given situation which reflects that truth? It's worth remembering, too, that this questioning – and answering – is a corporate activity. We are not Christians in isolation, but as a body – the body of Christ. It is as we know the truth together, and as we work out – together – what it means, that we grow into being that body.

By the time you read this today's Trump-related headlines will undoubtedly have been replaced by others. We also have our own personal 'headlines' about which we need to ask these questions. Let's not be afraid to take time to do this, together. *Ruth Dennigan, Licensed Lay Minister, Soham and Wicken*

Book Review: Original Blessing: Putting sin in its rightful place by Danielle Shroyer (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2016)

Within Christianity we have grown up with a clear idea about original sin and its place in shaping our identity. In this book the author suggests that it is an idea which has been given too much power. In fact, she argues, the key factor shaping our identity ought to be original blessing. While we can choose not to accept or respond to the never-failing love of God, we cannot put ourselves outside of it. Shroyer gives an overview of the development of the doctrine of original sin, and suggests a different perspective on some of the key passages, interpreting them in the light of the Big Story of the Bible to show that it is love, not sin, which defines us. This book is available to buy from Soham Books.





# A Councillor's Comments

At our December meeting two people made use of the Public Comment 15 minute slot; Mrs. Harlow complained of lack of support from her ward councillors and ECDC planning committee regarding alterations to property 67 Orchard Row. Ms Janet Metcalf had concerns about the presentation on the Eastern Gateway, including lack of notice and no copies of the proposals being available to take away. She also had concerns about the site itself, especially the drainage and sewage system's capacity to cope.

**Eastern Gateway:** Mr. Rob Hasselder Carter Jonas, acting as agents for the County Council, gave a brief update on the proposals and answered numerous questions from councillors and members of the public on a wide range of concerns about what was proposed.

**County and District Councillors Reports:** Councillor Palmer mentioned the proposed closure of a public footpath over the railway line, which he considered unnecessary and encouraged those who felt the same to reply to the consultation. As a result of a vote from councillors the chairman agreed to send a letter on their behalf.

**Soham Wicken Cycle Pathway:** Councillor Warner gave an update on progress so far and it was noted with thanks work by Mr. Jestyn Staples to reuse tarmac removed from refurbishment work to stabilise Soham's end of the project.

**Eastern Gateway Land Agreement:** Richard Janes Savills, Land Agent on behalf of the town council, gave a brief update on the present position and answered councillors questions on the issue.

**Ambulance Station:** The question of the town council purchasing the ambulance station was discussed but this has been deferred until the property has been established by its full registration with Land Registry.

At our January meeting there were four people who used Public Comment Time; Councillor Hunt, who introduced himself as prospective county candidate for Soham next election and gave an update about what is happening now including the start of the long awaited Ely Bypass. Janet and Elizabeth, who were difficult for me to hear as they were seated and spoke from behind in our temporary council meeting situation, and Ken Cranfield who spoke about the consultation process regarding the local plan.

**Chairman's Announcements:** Included a Parish Conference to be held at Isleham 3rd February 2pm-6pm.

**Matters Arising:** Soham Wicken Cycle Pathway: It was noted that a purchase of 200 tonnes of grade 1 Limestone was approved to be placed on prepared areas.

**Financial Review and Proposed Budget and Precept:** There was a lengthy discussion on this as we looked at the various services we are called upon, as a council, to provide for our community which is ever growing. There are the children's play areas we need to maintain, which are now monitored so we are told about any improvements required; and of course the Pavilion Refurbishment approaching completion. It was agreed to increase the precept by 1.8%. Next Meeting 13th February hopefully in a refurbished Pavilion

Councillor Ginn

Other council news

To give your views on the proposals for new housing and employment sites in Soham, go to the East Cambs District Council site, click on Current consultations and then on the LDF consultation. You have until 22 Feb to make your comments.



- ☆ The winners for the St Andrew's Church 200+club for 2016 are: £10: Joy Martin; £15: Neve Fisher; £25: Paul Constant; £50: Lee Clark; £75: Colin Murfitt; £100: Barbara Ashley
- ☆ Viva presents 'Shakers': Shakers Cocktail Bar is THE place to be! And in 'Shakers' the four young waitresses reveal the lives of its staff and customers and offer an insight into their hopes, dreams and disappointments. Thursday 9th to Saturday 11th February 2017 at The Brook, Soham. Tickets are £10 and we have set a guidance of 15+. Book your tickets today at the Viva Box Office on 01353 722 228 / 7 Churchgate Street, Soham, CB7 5DS or online [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com).
- ☆ Viva will also be performing Legally Blonde, the Musical from Wednesday 1st to Saturday 4th March at the Brook. Tickets £12. Box office as above.
- ☆ Soham, the Fen and Barway WI meet on the first Friday of the month at 7.30pm in the ground floor coffee lounge in Millbrook House. Come and join a friendly group that has been running for over 70 years in Soham. For more information contact Carol Weyman on 01353 360289 or just come along, we would love to see you.
- ☆ Tuesday Twilight WI meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Fountain Pub at 7.30pm. We have only been established as a group for a few months but already we have had demonstrations on: cake decoration, makeup and cocktail making.
- ☆ Mammoth Quiz Night for MacMillan: 7pm, Saturday 25th February at Ross Peers Sports Centre. Teams of 6. Tickets £5 to include ploughman's supper. Call Susan on 01353 721380 to enter a team.
- ☆ Items for the March, 2017 edition of LodeStar should be submitted by Wednesday, 18th February. Send material to 50 Mildenhall Road, Fordham, Ely, Cambs, CB7 5NR or email to [alison.evans7@btopenworld.com](mailto:alison.evans7@btopenworld.com).

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## PARISH REGISTERS

### FUNERALS

2nd December	Peter Beer (aged 87 years)
5th December	Polly Fuller
9th December	Lauren Danks (aged 22 years)
20th December	Janet Olive Beaumont (aged 80 years) Clive Beaumont (aged 79 years)
16th January	David Malton (89 years)
20th January	Tony Pollard Alan George Gay (67 years)
27th January	Kathlene May Cocksedge (84 years) Peggy May Leonard (89 years)

### WEDDINGS

7th January 2017	John Michael Smith & Joanna Smith
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### BAPTISMS

11th December	Beatrix Higginbotham
18th December	Grace King

# *A View from the Vicarage*

February 2017



*What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.*

*No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.*

*No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.*

*No time to see, in broad day light,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.*

*No time to turn at beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance.*

*No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.*

*A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.*

So – nearly a century ago – wrote the Welsh poet, William Henry Davies. I've had his poem in mind as this year's RSPB

Big Garden Bird Watch approaches. (If you're reading this on or before 30 January, it's still not too late to join in: [www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)). I'm using it as my justification for doing what might seem like nothing for a sizeable proportion of my next day off ...

The Bird Watch began as a 'children-only' activity, publicised on Blue Peter in 1979. Since 2001, adults have been allowed to join in, and the Bird Watch now constitutes the world's largest wildlife survey. Its primary purpose, of course, is to furnish scientists with vital data about the rise and fall in bird numbers across Britain, but it also, I'd say, brings the benefit of encouraging participants to do just what Davies would have us do: we're encouraged to stand - or, more likely, to sit – and stare. Not to stare into space (though there may well be a time and a place for that), but rather to stare with a purpose. We're encouraged to look, to observe, to pay attention; to notice the life and the beauty that surrounds us – the beauty and the detail that the rush and bustle and worries of life so often mean we don't see. 2000 years ago, Jesus recommended the same thing: 'Look at the birds of the air', he told his hearers, 'they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?' (Matthew 6: 26)

So why not try it? Find five minutes (the RSPB hopes we'll find an hour, but many of us won't manage that), sit by a window and see what we can see. Let's carve out a chunk of time, however long or short, and notice what happens. Notice what comes to our garden, or to whatever patch of the Great Outdoors we're looking at. Notice too what arrives in our minds and in our hearts: notice the thoughts and the feelings that are present within us, and give a bit of time to wondering what might they say to us, and to what we might do with all that.

Alongside whatever we notice, let's hold in mind Jesus' promise: his promise to watch over us and his promise to care for us, just as he cares for the birds of the air.

*Eleanor*

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