
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



Lent in Soham and Wicken: Engage... Grow... Deepen

We are joining with our friends from Soham and Wicken Methodist Churches during Lent 2017 to host a number of (friendly and relaxed!) Lent Groups.

Most of the groups will be looking at 'All Loves Excelling', which has been produced by the Diocese of Ely (<http://www.elydiocese.org/worship-and-services/lent17/lent17-resources/>). The Wednesday evening group meeting in Wicken will offer a Scripture Union course.

Groups will meet weekly for 5 weeks, beginning in the week beginning 5 March. Groups work best if their members come to all the sessions, but if you need to miss the odd week, or dip into another group once in a while, that will be fine. Here are the groups on offer:

- Tuesday 10am at 5 Millcroft, Soham 'All Loves Excelling'
- Tuesday 10.30am at 15 the Crescent, Wicken: 'All Loves Excelling'
- Tuesday 7.30pm at 42 Gimbert Road, Soham: 'All Loves Excelling'
- Wednesday 7.30pm at 39 High St., Wicken: 'From the Ram to the Lamb'
- Wednesday 7.30pm at 27 The Oaks, Soham: 'All Loves Excelling'
- Thursday 11am in St Andrew's Church, Soham: 'All Loves Excelling'

Everyone is welcome to join in!

In addition we will be running a series of workshops exploring prayer. These will take place on Monday evenings at 7.30-9pm in the Garden Room at Milbrook House, Lode Close.

- 6 March Noticing God in all things
- 13 March Praying with Scripture 1: Encounters with Gospel stories
- 20 March Praying with Scripture 2: 'Holy reading'
- 27 March Eyes wide open!
- 3 April Prayer with music

The Methodist Church in Wicken are running a quiet day on Saturday 25th March from 9.30am – 3.30pm. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea, coffee and biscuits provided. There will be no charge for the day but to secure a place, please leave your name and contact number at 01353 722008 or email julie.rash@metronet.co.uk

Just a few words

Ruth Dennigan

Dear friends,

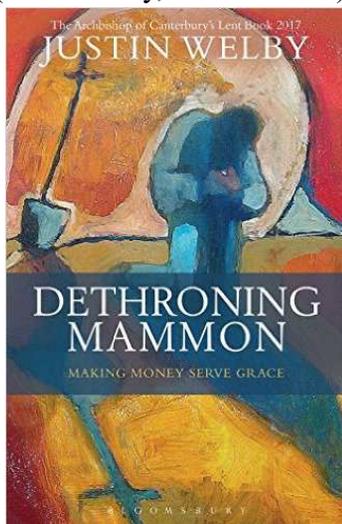
It's that time of year again: dustpans and paint brushes at the ready, boxes for the charity shop and tip – all around me people are spring cleaning. And the Church's calendar provides us with an opportunity for a spiritual spring-clean: until Easter we are in the season of Lent. It is a season for taking stock and making changes (we might call this "repenting" – that is, making changes to the direction of our life).

There are lots of opportunities. This year Christian Aid is challenging people to "Give it up for Lent" – to be sponsored for giving up chocolate, TV or whatever seems appropriate in order to raise money to fight poverty (see <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/fundraising/give-up-for-lent>). Closer to home are a range of opportunities for growing in faith: the Monday evening "Exploring Prayer" sessions; the "All Loves Excelling" Lent Course taking place on various days and evenings at a range of venues in Soham and Wicken; the "From the Ram to the Lamb" Lent Course on Wednesday evenings in Wicken; and the Quiet Day "The Kingdom is within" on 25 March at Wicken Methodist Church. For something more individual, consider reading one of the books reviewed below.

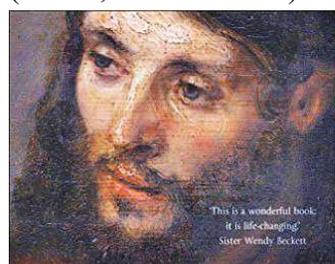
The point, of course, is that it's easy to be overtaken by circumstances; we can lose sight of our relationship with God as other things seem to be more pressing and life in general gets in the way. Lent gives an opportunity to redress the balance. So, what will you do this Lent? *Ruth Dennigan, Licensed Lay Minister, Soham and Wicken*

Book Review: **Dethroning Mammon** by Justin Welby (Bloomsbury, London 2016)

Designated as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book for 2017, Welby asks us to reflect on our values, priorities, and the influences in our lives and decision-making. In a society in which economics and materialism shape personal, national and international systems, Welby asks how we can be distinctive in our approach to money. Each of the six chapters includes questions aimed at supporting the reader to personalise the themes, evaluate their current position and move forwards.



Book Review: **God With us** by Rowan Williams (SPCK, London 2017)



ROWAN WILLIAMS

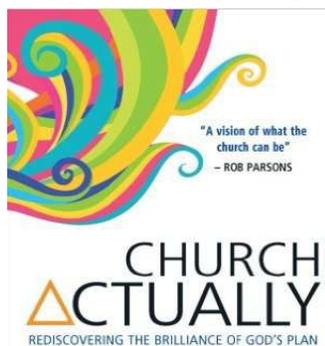
God with Us

The meaning of the cross and resurrection. Then and now.

At the heart of our faith lie the cross and resurrection. Without these we would be nothing more than an Historical Jesus Of Nazareth society. The New Testament in its entirety is written through the lens of the cross and resurrection and it is what these tell us about God and about ourselves that defines us. Williams gives an extremely accessible, and powerful, explanation of how the cross and resurrection shape us. With optional questions for reflection at the end of each of the five chapters, this book would make ideal Lenten reading.

Book Review: **Church Actually** by Gerard Kelly (Monarch Books, Oxford 2012)

You may never have considered the Church as God's Brilliant Idea, but in this book Kelly invites us to do just that. Church attendance is declining, and yet interest in spirituality is not. For many, the dynamism and joy of the New Testament church has long since vanished; this book is an attempt to rediscover that church for today. The book contains a series of short chapters, enough to read one every couple of days during Lent, each ending with a question for further thought.



GERARD KELLY



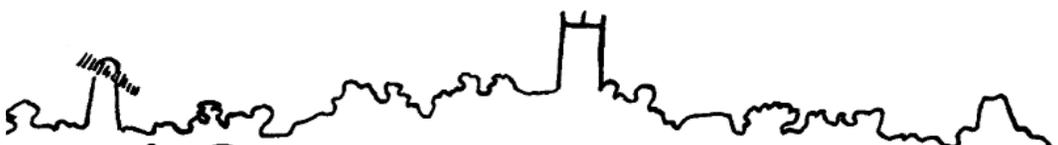
☆ **Women's World Day of Prayer:** Service at The Salvation Army Hall, Bushell Lane, Soham at 2pm. All are welcome including men and children. Refreshments afterwards.

☆ **Soham Youth Café** meets this month at 7.30pm on 7th and 21st March at Cafe Skylark, Churchgate Street. For young people aged 15+.

☆ **Family Fun Disco for the Fitt family.** March 10th, 7.30pm-12 noon at The Brook. Tickets £3 adults, £1 children from Sue Fuller 720329 or from Jak Hibs shop.

☆ **Methodist Wives' Club** meet at 7.30pm on the Third Thursday of each month at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft. All are welcome.

☆ **Items for the April, 2017 LodeStar** should be submitted by Wednesday, 22nd March. Please send material to 50 Mildenhall Road, Fordham, Ely, Cambs, CB7 5NR or email to alison.evans7@btopenworld.com.



A Councillor's Comments

There were two people who took the opportunity of Public Comment Time at our February Meeting: Ken Cranfield made mention of the Local Plan and referred to a past council meeting when someone came and spoke about revitalising the town centre, but he could not see this happening. He had conducted a survey to obtain people's views on different aspects of what was taking place, if anything. Jackie Hibbert made mention of the number of houses being built but nothing for Soham. Her attention was drawn to the refurbishment of the Pavilion, a big improvement to the Children's Play Area and the project of the Wicken Soham Cycle Route.

County and District Councillors: A District Councillor spoke of attending the Parish Conference where cyber attacks were discussed, but also brought her concern about traffic speed coming into Soham at the Barcham Junction and wondered if a speed limit could be put in place. County Councillor was asked about Community Care for the elderly and whether the council tax would be raised or another means found. A question was asked whether the expansion of the Fordham School would be available for overspill of Soham Children, the answer was that Soham Schools could cope. Councillor Palmer also said the proposed Rail Station is not if but when. It will happen and the dualling of the track is set for 2020.

Chairman's Announcements: We were asked if we wanted the proposed closure of the footpath over the railway line or for it to remain open, and also if it was closed were we in favour of a planned alternative route. We agreed to keep it open but also approved the alternative route.

Eastern Gateway: There is no movement as yet on the Eastern Gateway, the situation remains the same.

Thanks for the Council Staff: The Chairman gave a warm vote of thanks to the staff who have conducted the council business in difficult conditions with the refurbishment of the Pavilion going on all around them. They had to deal with refurbishment problems as well as the day to day work of the council. It is hoped that the Pavilion will be opened 1st of March

Councillor George Ginn

Bell Ringers' News

Back in November, St Andrew's and St Laurence's had a visit from the descendants of the Tebbit family who were most famous for their bellringing at St Andrew's in 18th century. Amongst the small group was Lord Norman Tebbit who was delighted to climb the tower to see the elaborate peel boards displayed in the ringing chamber.

Fitt Family Fundraiser

Saturday 18th February saw Soham at its best when a fundraising event at St Andrew's Church raised a massive £3106.70 for a local family.



Local postman Darren Fitt and his wife Alison (nee Bysouth) have faced a long and difficult journey with the health of their two sons Charlie, 15 and Alfie, 11yrs old. Both boys suffer from a rare genetic condition. Charlie is currently in Great Ormond Street Hospital having undergone a Stem Cell Transplant. The transplant means a 6 to 8 week stay in London for Charlie. During this difficult time Darren and Alison are sharing their time between London and Soham, meaning Darren is unable to work.



Churchgoers Susan Taylor and Sarah Shorney swung into action and organised a cake sale, raffle and tombola at the church. Soham residents answered a Facebook appeal and donated over a hundred raffle prizes and cakes galore. The church provided refreshments through the monthly Bread Basket cafe and people turned out in force to spend their money.



We continue to hold the Fitts in our prayers and wish them well in their future treatments.

Mothering Sunday

The 10am service at St Andrew's on Mothering Sunday (26th March) will be an All Age Service with posies made by the Mothers' Union being given out to the congregation. The service on the 19th will not be an all age service but a normal sung Eucharist.

Messy Church

Messy Church will be on 28th March at 3.15pm. 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.

Viva Street Life Exhibition



Have you ever wondered what your town was like during WW2? What was happening in your local community? What buildings have changed and how did they use to look? Then our Street Life Tour is for you. We are focusing on Soham, Ely, Littleport and Chatteris from 1939-1945. Creating a pop-up exhibition that will be travelling around East Cambs throughout March and April. The exhibition is FREE to attend and is suitable for all ages with something for everyone. Come along and experience stepping into the past of your local town. After our first successful tour in 2016 we are back with the complete Street Life tour.

The exhibition will be in Soham on the 11th March in St Andrew's churchyard from 10am – 2pm. Refreshments will be provided inside the church

Christian Aid: Can you help?



After many years as Soham's Christian Aid representative, Dawn Laver is preparing to hand over the baton. Could you be the person to take it from her?

Duties involve collecting and banking donations made at Soham Churches Together's Lent lunches and Seder meal, coming to Churches Together meetings (about 4 per year) and anything else you would like to see happen in the cause of Christian Aid. If you're interested, please contact Eleanor at St Andrew's (725948) or Colin at Soham Methodist Church (720347). Thank you - and thank you, Dawn, for all you've done.

Lent Lunches for Christian Aid

Lent lunches will take place on Fridays on 10, 17, 24 March and 7 April at the Methodist Hall, Berrycroft, Soham from 12.30-1.30pm (arrivals from 12.15). Do come and enjoy a simple lunch of soup with bread and cheese with people from all the churches in Soham. Donations for the lunch go to Christian Aid.

All Welcome. Organised by Churches Together in Soham

PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

10th February	Keith Harold John Jarvis (aged 84 years)
22nd February	Ellis John Clements
23rd February	Sheila Mary Josephine Leonard (aged 87 years)
27th February	Olive Sylvia Bull

A View from the Vicarage

Making Memories

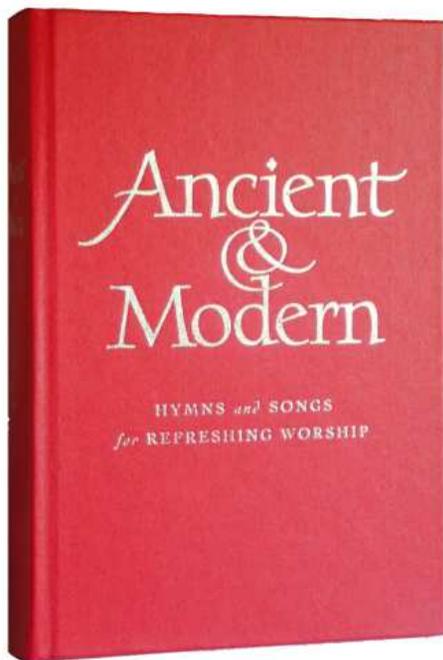


Such has been the pace of life since I got here that it was only last week that I noticed graffiti in one of the church's side-aisles. Graffiti not in spray-paint or biro, rest assured, but carved in one of the pillars: initials of parishoners of yesteryear (let's hope!); the poor man's – or poor woman's – equivalent of the grander memorial tablets set in the surrounding stone walls.

Approach a pillar with a chisel today, and English Heritage (or the vicar) will be on to you. And yet wanting to leave a record of a person or an event is one of our basic human instincts. Think of those paintings in the caves of southern Europe: depictions of the hunts and other events that made up the lives of our ancestors. Look at them, and the intervening millennia seem not so long a time after all. At its most simple, I suppose, it's why we put up photographs: events from the past stay with us in the present. That's what remembering is about – 're-membering' – putting the past and the present together, and so connecting what has been to today. Remembering is a human and a Christian activity. The Bible and the liturgy resound with the command to remember.

Which brings me to the subject of hymnbooks... St Andrew's is hoping to invest in new hymnbooks. Those we have date from the year 2000, and whilst we wouldn't want to drop the old hymns from our repertoire, many a new hymn has been composed since then – some of them a pleasure to hear and to sing! Our aim is to mirror the blend achieved by 'Songs of Praise', and a new hymnbook called Ancient and Modern would enable us to do that. The sticking point, of course, is money. Even with a discount, each hymnbook would cost £9.95. What we are hoping is that St Andrew's parishoners might consider sponsoring a hymnbook, and, if you so wish, including a dedication in the front of it; a dedication which will call us to remember – not only to remember loved ones who have died (though such a dedication would be welcome, of course), but also to remember an event, or perhaps a person still living. The dedication I'm planning will be to my predecessor, Tim Alban Jones. Alongside his name will be the dates he was vicar here in Soham. Pam Cole, a member of St Andrew's congregation and a calligrapher has kindly agreed to inscribe the dedications in the front of each hymnbook.

So how about it? If you'd like to take part, please contact me or one of our church wardens, or send a cheque to the vicarage (27 The Oaks, Soham, CB7 5FF) made payable to Soham PCC Development Fund (this is a restricted fund which will be used solely for the purchase of hymnbooks in this instance). If you would like to donate by bank transfer, the sort code is 20-29-68 and the account number 60786128. Donations can be Gift Aided: let us know your name and address, and we'll send you a Gift Aid form. Most importantly, of course, let us know the dedication you'd like Pam to inscribe: perhaps the date of a wedding, the name and birthday of a child, or the name of a loved one; anything and anyone you're keen to be remembered.



We're setting the date of our Summer Fete (Saturday 10 June) as the target by which all donations will have come in, and details of a thanksgiving service in which hymnbooks will be dedicated together will follow soon thereafter. Thank you in advance to all who'll join in! *Eleanor*