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| 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 |

Holy Week and Easter Services



Palm Sunday 9 April

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.45 am Palm Sunday procession from the war memorial to St Andrew's
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist

Monday 10 April

- 6.30 for 7.00 pm Churches Together Seder Meal at Soham Methodist Church Berrycroft

Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 April

- 7.30pm Night Prayer with Passion readings at St Andrew's

Maundy Thursday 13 April

- No 10.00 am Holy Communion
- 7.30pm Eucharist with washing of feet at St Andrew's

Good Friday 14 April

- 10.00 am Churches Together Walk of Witness starting at Soham war memorial, ending at Berrycroft
- 12.00 - 2.00 pm Prayer stations at St Andrew's
- 2.00 pm The Last Hour reflection and prayer at St Andrew's

Holy Saturday 15 April

- 8.00 pm Easter Vigil, Baptism and Eucharist at St Andrew's

Easter Sunday

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) at St Andrew's followed by Easter Breakfast
 - 10.00 am All-Age Eucharist at St Andrew's
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Annual Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meetings and elections of Churchwardens for Soham and Wicken will be held on Thursday 27 April beginning at 7.30pm. This will include elections of PCC members and Deanery Synod reps and the annual reports including our accounts. Copies of the reports will be available in church before the meeting.

Little Library @ The Shade

A new adult lending library has opened for the community in the north of Soham, at The Shade Primary School.

Community Participation Officer, Louise Aldridge, from the Cambridgeshire Library Service and Lisa Radcliffe, Headteacher of The Shade, opened Little Library @ The Shade on Monday 6 March with the support of parents and pupils at the school.



The mini library has a number of adult books donated by the library service and the English Faculty at Soham Village College. All members of the local community are welcome to borrow these books, by simply signing them in and out of the Little Library located in the

main reception of The Shade Primary School, with no tight deadlines for returning them. The Little Library will be accessible for members of the public between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm, Monday to Friday.

The Staploe Education Trust has already launched a number of initiatives to promote its Reading Matters campaign. Large numbers of books have been donated to its school libraries, new book clubs have been started in the schools and volunteer adults have come forward to listen to children read in school.

We hope that adults who might find it difficult to get to the main library in Soham, on a regular basis, will enjoy browsing and borrowing books from the Little Library @ The Shade and, above all, that even more people are able to share their love of reading with their families and neighbours by talking about the books they have read and enjoyed from the shelves of Little Library @ The Shade.

St Andrew's School Parliament Trip

Lucy Frazer, our MP, was delighted to welcome a group of children from St Andrew's Church of England Primary School in Soham, when they visited the Houses of Parliament recently. Lucy visited St Andrew's last year during National Storytelling Week. At



the time she got to listen to lots of short stories, written and read by the pupils themselves. She hopes that the stories she was able to tell them about life in Parliament were as entertaining! The pupils also got to sit in on a debate and ask Lucy lots of questions which included 'what the best thing about the job was' and 'how much she earns'!

St Andrew's School pupils also visited the church recently to learn about Olaudah Equiano, a freed slave who helped to bring about the end of the British slave trade and who was married in the church. You can see some of the work they produced on a notice board in the church.



☆ **Winners of the Draw** of the St Andrew's Church 200+ Club on 21st March were:-

Francis Watson £5
Max Palmer £10

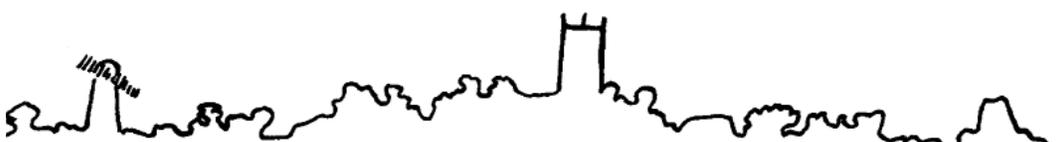
☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Morning** on the first Saturday of every month, from 10.00 am -12 noon at Soham Library. Find out more about our local history, chat with genial people and have a cuppa!

☆ **Soham History Group: 7.30 pm, Thursday May 4th**, at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft. The Old Fenland Story Tellers – Dr Maureen James. Museum Friends free admission, £2.50 visitors on the door. Refreshments provided, raffle and bookstall.

☆ **Easter Coffee Morning Saturday 8th April**, 11.00 am - 12.30 pm at Soham Lodge Care Centre (on the bypass). Cakes, raffle, cards, Easter hat competition and music by the Rocking Ukuleles

☆ **Items for the May 2017** edition of LodeStar should be submitted by Wednesday, 19th April. Please send material to 50 Mildenhall Road, Fordham, Ely, Cambs, CB7 5NR or email to alison.evans7@btopenworld.com.

LodeSTAR



A Councillor's Comments

At our March council meeting there was no one present to take up Public Comment time but Mr. Rose had sent in a comment on the subject of speeding in Townsend and Broad Piece, which was read out by the chairman. It went on at length explaining of the increase of traffic passing through Broad Piece and Cotes rather than using the A142 into Soham. It requested that the council take this letter along with any scheme to address the speeding in the Shade.

Cemetery and Allotments: The report on the recent committee meeting was given by its chairman. Allotment transfer as a result of the Eastern Gateway development: it was noted that there were no updates. This is still under discussion and when updates do become available these will be brought to the full council. Another matter was the public toilet in the cemetery which is now closed and will continued to be shut until the committee or full council make a decision.

Community Amenities: A report on the recent committee meeting was given by the chairman, which included updates on the Soham/Wicken Cycle Path and the children's play areas. The work on the cycle path is progressing and meetings with parents are going to be arranged to discuss some proposals for new play area equipment.

Sale of Council Land: At the close of the meeting the public and press were excluded from the meeting, when Mr. Richard Janes, who is representing the council regarding this sale put forward his proposals about the sale to the council.

This meeting took place in the refurbished meeting room, somewhat different from the rather cramped conditions in which we had held our meetings in the last few months, and in which the council staff had wonderfully maintained the ongoing work of the council.

Councillor George Ginn

Just a few words

Ruth Dennigan

Dear friends,

I have been much moved recently by a book by Pope Francis: ‘The name of God is mercy’ (reviewed below). It has long troubled me that so much of the language we use in our faith is (a) not used outside a faith context, which means it can be meaningless to others and requires them to learn a new vocabulary when coming to church; and (b) has changed in its meaning over time – or in our perceptions – so that the understanding of God that we end up with is far removed from that which Jesus demonstrated. Sin is one example of this. Does ‘sin’ equate to ‘crime’? Does ‘sinning’ make one a bad person? Are there degrees of sin? (The answer to all those questions, by the way, is ‘no’!).

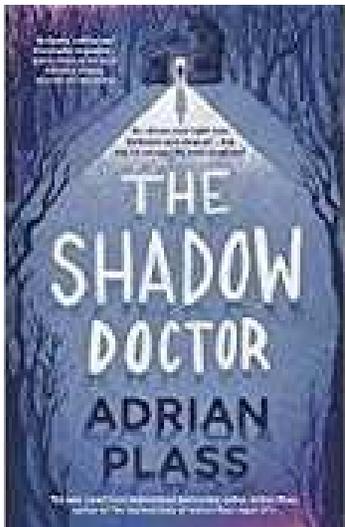
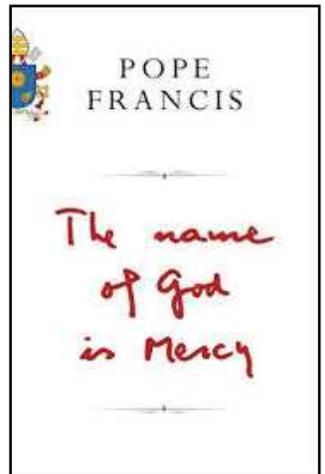
Pope Francis describes sin as a wound. It is not just a black mark, a falling short, a missing of the target. Sin is more than that. It is a wound: the one who sins is wounded, those who are sinned against are wounded, and as a body we are wounded, when we fail to live as a community of people who are loved by God, loving each other and ourselves as God loves us. We are wounded when what we think, decide, do or don’t do, is shaped by too little love.

God’s response to that wound is mercy. Not a mercy which makes punishment slightly more lenient, or which – by begging and pleading – will perhaps let us off the hook altogether, but a mercy which lovingly accepts us, forgives us, brings healing and lets us try again.

As we draw towards the end of Lent in the first part of this month, and then move through Easter, we celebrate this loving mercy demonstrated in the love and power of God which defeats death and sees Jesus return to his heartbroken followers to bring healing to their wounds of abandonment and denial. For them, and for us, Jesus demonstrates the mercy which provides a way forward when we have lived with too little love. Two questions for us to reflect on then: When have we lived with too little love? – there is value in confessing this and receiving God’s mercy. And when have we been wounded by thoughts or actions shaped by too little love? – there is value in showing God’s mercy in response. Jesus came, he said, to bring life in all its fullness – maybe this is where it begins. Ruth Dennigan, *Licensed Lay Minister, Soham and Wicken*

Book Review: The name of God is mercy by Pope Francis (Bluebird, London 2016)

2016 was designated by Pope Francis as the Holy Year of Mercy across the worldwide Roman Catholic Church, and in this book he explains why. Mercy, which he sees as Jesus’ most important message, is God lovingly giving himself to us, accepting us, forgiving us and bringing healing for the wounds of sin. The role of the Church in the world is to make possible an encounter with this living mercy. If you read no other book this year then I recommend this one.



Book Review: The Shadow Doctor by Adrian Plass (Hodder and Stoughton, London 2017)

This is not the easiest fiction to follow, seeming to be the record of a developing friendship more than a story with a plot line. It is worth persisting, however, for the nuggets of understanding which appear at surprising moments. If anything in the conventional approach to God, prayer, relationships, worship or evangelism just doesn’t quite ring true for you then you may find an ally, and a different approach, here.

Church Fete



St Andrew's Church is holding its annual fete on Saturday 10th June from 10am to 12 noon. As usual we welcome stalls from local community groups and small businesses in return for a small donation. If you would like to book a stall, please contact Alison Evans on 07738 877765

or email alison.evans7@bopenworld.com

Discipleship Course

The Diocesan course 'Growing as a Disciple' will be held at St Andrew's Church on Thursday evenings 7 - 9pm for 10 sessions from 4th May – 20th July. There are Bible passages to read, and guidelines for further reflection and prayer between sessions. Groups are limited to ten participants per group to facilitate good group discussion.

For more information please talk to Lynne Turner on 01353 722146 or visit <http://www.sohamandwicken.org.uk/discipleship-course.php>

Running for Families

Alice Leadbetter, daughter of our Diocesan Mothers' Union President is running the London Marathon to raise money for the MU. As part of her training she has been running 100 miles between MU branches in the diocese. We welcomed her to St Andrew's in early March before she set off for Fordham and Burwell. You can read more about her run on the MU website and can sponsor her at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/running4familiesworldwide>



Wicken May Day Celebrations

Sunday 30 April 3pm: May Day service at St Laurence's Church, Wicken, followed by teas and Maypole dancing outside the church at 4pm on May 1st at 12 noon Maypole dance on Maid's Head Green. Practice for the dancing takes place at St Laurence's at 4pm on April 2, 9, 16, 23.

For more information contact David Pennal on 01353 624295 or dbipennal1@gmail.com



PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERAL

17th March

Patricia Holmewood (89 years)

A View from the Vicarage



Before I get onto Easter... Thank you so much to those of you who have contributed to our hymnbook appeal. The response has been overwhelming, and I am delighted to say that we have now fixed a date for a 'Songs of Praise' style dedication service. This will take place in St Andrew's Church on Sunday 16 July at 4 pm. We'll use the new hymnbooks (of course!) and finish up with tea and cake. Everyone is very welcome to come, regardless of whether or not you've donated a hymnbook. Details will follow nearer the time. If you've yet to join in and would like to, donation/dedication forms are available in church, on bookshelf on the left as you go in (large print or melody editions would be particularly useful at this stage). We've set the date of our church fete (Saturday 10 June) as the deadline for getting forms back to us. Thank you once again for your support.

And so to Easter... As I explained last month, part of the reason for getting new hymnbooks is that they will allow us to increase the variety of hymns we sing in church. We're aiming for a blend of the old and the new: the familiar hymns we've been singing for decades, and those that have been written more recently; the same kind of blend you get on Songs of Praise. The services we'll be holding over Easter are also a mixture of the old and the new. On Good Friday this year, as Christians throughout the world have been doing for millennia, we'll have something on between 12 noon and 3 pm, remembering the length of time and time of day that Jesus hung on the cross. 12 noon to 2 pm will be a 'drop in': please come and go as suits you. A variety of prayer stations (ie. simple interactive displays based around the Easter story) will be set up around the church, and they'll be suitable for adults and children. At 2 pm my colleague Delia Tickner will lead a traditional service to which, again, all are welcome.

Also in keeping with Christian tradition, we'll have a late-evening service on Easter Eve – at 8 pm on the Saturday evening. In the Early Church, this was the time when new Christians (most of them adult converts to Christianity) would be Christened. The Christening ceremony happened at Easter because Christening – or baptism – is all about dying and rising with Jesus Christ; sharing in Jesus's death (the death he died on Good Friday), so as to share his risen 'Easter' life. Christening – like Easter – takes us from death to life and from darkness to light. Come along that Saturday if you'd like to find out more: there'll be a (small!) fire near the porch, lots of candles, age-old words and ritual and at least one man to be Christened (if you'd like to join him, please get in touch). The service will end with Communion. Wrap up warm if you come, because – weather permitting – the first 15-20 minutes will take place outside.

Finally, on Easter Sunday morning, there'll be Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer at 8 am, and an all-age Communion service at 10 am, with breakfast in church in between. As with everything else that goes on at St Andrew's, come to as much or as little of it all as you like / can manage. You'll be made very welcome however long you stay.

And once it's all behind us? Well then, of course, it's back to the business of doing our best to practise what we preach – back to being channels of Christ's life in the world; back to being bearers of his light. As Paul put it in his letter to the Romans: 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.' (Romans 6: 3 & 4).

With every blessing for Easter when we get there, *Eleanor*

Revd Eleanor Whalley 01353725948 sohamwickenvicar@gmail.com