
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

Focus on Prayer

Join the national 'Thy Kingdom Come' call to prayer from Ascension to Pentecost 2017

Across the country people are responding to the national prayer initiative, Thy Kingdom Come, which runs from Ascension Day (25th May) through to Pentecost (4th June). Here in Soham we're offering our very own **Focus on Prayer**, with some special services and activities to help us explore and deepen our prayer life and our relationship with God.



Many of us struggle to find a regular way of private prayer that suits us, and we're often reluctant to talk about our prayer. We may assume other people are 'better' at it than we are, or we think we can't pray, or just haven't worked out how... But there's no such thing as an expert at praying – there are just people who pray. This is a chance to experiment, try new ideas, experience an encounter with Jesus or a fresh touch of the Holy Spirit.

During **Focus on Prayer**, there'll be some services at St Andrew's that all are very welcome to just turn up and join in. Do join us! There's also **Focus on Prayer in Daily Life** - an invitation for up to twelve people to meet a 'prayer companion' for a half-hour daily over the Sunday to Thursday period. This is also open to anyone, but booking ahead is required. The prayer companions will encourage different ways of praying, and listen carefully and confidentially as the participant shares how they are getting on. There will also be opening and closing sessions for the whole group of participants and prayer companions, including refreshments.

You'll see in Eleanor's message elsewhere in this Lodestar that she's taking part in this **Focus on Prayer in Daily Life**, and she's encouraging us to take the chance too. So why not give it a go? And/or join in some of the other events? Here's a summary of what's on offer throughout the whole **Focus on Prayer** period.

Thursday 25th May, 7.30pm - Taizé service

St Andrew's Church, Soham - all welcome. Taizé-style worship service with guided prayer.

Sunday 28th May to Thursday 1st June - Prayer Focus in Daily Life

Opportunity for 12 people to have daily guided prayer, including a 30 minute one-to-one conversation with a trained prayer guide. For participants this includes:

Sunday 28th, 4pm - Tea and introductory meeting and Thursday 1st June 6pm - Light buffet meal and closing meeting.

Monday 29th May to Friday 2nd June - Morning Prayer

9am daily at St Andrew's Church, Soham - all welcome.

Wednesday 31st May, 7.30pm - Prayer evening

St Andrew's Church, Soham - all welcome. An evening of meditative prayer and worship.

For more information:

School Report

Dr Carin Taylor



Reading Matters

Did you know as many as 1 in 3 children do not have their own book at home? We know how important reading is to develop the literacy skills young people need to succeed in schools and to gain good employment after. But more than that, reading is a source of enjoyment and lifelong learning.

The Staploe Education Trust (Soham Village College; The Shade; The Weatheralls and Kennett Primary School) has launched a new drive to encourage more young people and their families to read and to enjoy books.

There are many book-related events planned for all the Trust schools. A new book club has started at Soham Village College with over 300 new books provided for students aged 12 and 14 to enjoy over the next year. 'Epic Adventures in Literature' book club will give students a taste of a broad range of classic and modern literature. The new book club gives students the chance to read and discuss works by authors such as Arthur Conan Doyle, Lewis Carroll and Oscar Wilde. Some students will also have the chance to read all the books on the Carnegie Book Prize shortlist as part of a Carnegie Shadowing Project.

In the primary schools, the 'Read It Again' Picture Book Competition has generated a lot of excitement. Soham library launched the competition in assemblies during the week of World Book Day. The Shade pupils also went out and read in the community, at a residential home for the elderly, which was very successful.

We are particularly pleased to have launched the LittleLibrary@The Shade for adults living in the north of Soham who might want to borrow books from the school reception. Do pop in for a browse some time.

It would be wonderful if you could spread the word and support Reading Matters.

Do you have good condition books at home that you no longer need? We are particularly looking for children's books (fiction and non-fiction) for Primary School library. Perhaps your children have outgrown them now but you want them to go to a good home? We would also welcome books for older readers at the Village College or appropriate adult books for the LittleLibrary@The Shade. Please drop books to any of our school receptions.

Do you know any adults with some spare time who, with a little bit of training, can listen to young children read? We are looking for volunteers who can go into our primary schools and support young readers. This could be hugely rewarding for both the volunteer and the child. If you know of someone interested in volunteering, or finding out more about supporting our young readers, please leave your name and contact details with any of the school receptions or email jwhittle@soham-college.org.uk. (The Staploe Education Trust is committed to equal opportunities, to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure.)

Viva news

Viva had a fantastic day at the NODA Gala Awards in April. Educating Rita won not one but two awards: Best Play and Best Production for 2016! Evita and The Little Mermaid were also nominated and Joseph Beach was awarded NODA District 4S Young Performer of the Year for his performance in Evita.

Viva celebrated its 20th anniversary in style by holding a fund-raising ball in March. We are pleased to announce that in total we raised £7146.49! This total will go towards future Viva shows to help with the overall running costs.

Just a few words

Ruth Dennigan

We have just celebrated Easter, marking once again the triumph of life over death, light over darkness, love and forgiveness over fear and hate. A tremendous, life-changing event – but I wonder how it has changed us. “Christ is risen!” we declare – but so what? What happens next? What implication does this have for us now, in 2017, as we go about our daily lives? The answer is that as Christians, disciples (apprentices) of Christ, we are to be resurrection people, living out the reality of that Easter triumph. In other words, we are called to be Easter People.

People sometimes feel uncomfortable with the idea of “calling”, associating it with a particular view of faith or a feeling of being “put upon”. A more helpful way of looking at it, perhaps, is as realising our potential – being who and what our Creator had in mind for us to be from the moment we came into being. As such, our calling is four-fold:

- We are called to be disciples – to be apprentices, living our daily lives alongside Jesus, learning to live as he did in our relationships with God and each other
- We are called to be the body of Christ – to operate as one rather than as a collection of individuals who might sometimes meet together in the same venue
- We are called to be holy – belonging to God, a space within which God can dwell and move
- We are called, by name, to be ourselves – as unique individuals to be the best you/me that you/I can be; and to fulfil a specific role or task, which may be different at different points in our lives, and which may be inside or outside the establishment of the Church.

The weeks after Easter are a time when people are particularly encouraged to think about this last point. In the Church we sometimes talk about this specific calling as “vocation”, but this can be off-putting as it has come to be understood in a very narrow way, focusing just on a few roles such as ordination, nursing or teaching – in fact we all have a vocation, a calling. This year Sunday 7 May is the Sunday set aside for reflection on our call to be ourselves, and to consider what specific role or task we are being called to fulfil. The following weekend, on Saturday 13 May, is an opportunity to explore calling in more detail at the regional East Anglia Ministries Fair in Norwich Cathedral (for more information see here: <http://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/event?id=9128> or the poster in church). There will be stands, workshops, demonstrations and presentations from a range of organisations, projects and charities from inside and outside the Church – last year’s Fair included information about fostering, counselling, teaching and prison visiting as well as a range of charities and church-based roles.

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, said:

“God does not create human ciphers, a pool of cheap labour to whom jobs can be assigned at will. Each human being called into existence by him exists as a distinct part of a great interlocking web of identities. Each is a unique point in this great net. To be is to be where you are, who you are, and what you are — a person with a certain genetic composition, a certain social status, a certain set of capabilities. From the moment of birth (even from before that) onwards, you will be at each moment that particular bundle of conditioning and possibilities. And to talk about God as your creator means to recognize at each moment that it is his desire for you to be, and to be the person you are. It means he is calling you by your name, at each and every moment, wanting you to be you.” (<https://www.trinitywallstreet.org/blogs/news/rowan-williams-your-calling-you>)

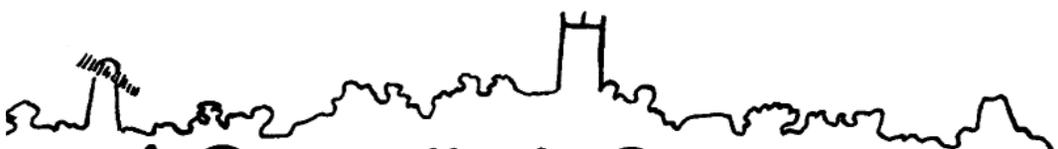
I pray that this Easter season will be a time of discovery – and re-discovery – for us all. *Ruth Dennigan, Licensed Lay Minister, Soham and Wicken*



☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Morning** on the first Saturday of every month, 10.00 am – 12 noon at Soham Library. Find out about local history, join us for a chat and coffee!

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

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



A Councillor's Comments

At our April meeting Janet Metcalfe spoke in Public Comment Time about the development that was going on and also all that was being planned. She expressed concern as to whether there was adequate infrastructure to cope, drainage and sewerage and whether it would damage the ecology.

County & District Councillors Reports: Questions were put to the councillors as to whether the proposed Soham Rail Station was dependent upon the size of development. Because this was what was thought to have been expressed at a recent meeting. But the station we were told again, was not an if, but a when it will become a reality.

Eastern Gateway and Allotments: The council gave approval to the council's representative to the sale of land, but he will come back to the council with the final deal. Councillor Woodbridge and other councillors were congratulated in their efforts in an arrangement with allotment holders to clear a build-up of rubbish on the Weatheralls allotments.

Retirements: Mrs. Gloria Walker the deputy clerk has retired after 23 years of loyal service to the council. She was given a presentation gift of appreciation on leaving. Mick Hobbs, who has worked for the council for a number of years is also retiring and plans to replace him are now in place.

Annual Town Meeting: This will be held on 15th May 2017 at 8pm in the Pavilion. Light refreshments will be served after the meeting. The public are warmly invited to attend, when the report of the council's work over the past year will be given by the chairman, and reports from District and County Councillors will also be heard. There is also an opportunity for members of the public to join in the open forum to express their aspirations for the life of our town.

Councillor George Ginn

Soham Carnival

The Carnival and Heavy Horse Show in aid of local charities takes place on Monday 29th May from 9am-5.30pm

The horse show is in the morning with the carnival parade starting at 1pm from Townsend. The afternoon continues with music and entertainment and there are stalls and activities throughout the day.

Admission: £3.50, concessions £2.50, children 50p

Christian Aid Week 2017



Churches Together in Soham are holding a coffee morning on Saturday 13th May from 10am – noon at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft, Soham.

We are having the following stalls: draw, tombola, cakes, bricabrac. Items for these stalls would be gratefully received at any of the churches or phone Dawn 723134 who will come and collect.

The proceeds will be donated to Christian Aid for their work to end poverty in the developing world.

We have already had some successful fundraising events for Christian Aid in Lent. The four Lent lunches made a total of £274.50. They were very well attended this year. The Passover service and meal was very enjoyable and made £138.50

Young Adults Group

The Young Adults Group (Youth Cafe) for ages 15+ recently celebrated its first birthday at Cafe Skylark. They meet there every other Tuesday in term time from 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm and would welcome new members. Dates for the next few weeks are: 2nd & 16th May, 6th & 20th June, 4th & 18th July



Pos+Ability

Are you living with Stroke, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy or other long term neurological conditions?

If the answer is yes, we may be able to help and support you.

Pos+Ability provides chair based exercises and one to one personal development programmes for two hours every week for six months which is long enough to really make a difference.

We can help you with your independence, maintain levels of mobility, provide peer support, improve confidence & self esteem, help with memory & cognitive skills, co-ordination, communication & conversation and give Carers a regular two hour respite.

We currently run sessions in Histon, Littleport, Ely and Burwell

A new session is starting in Soham Wednesday 31st May from 10am to 12 noon at the Pavilion Recreation Ground

Come along for a FREE TASTER SESSION

If you are interested please get in touch on ☎ 07565 598 193

✉ posability3@gmail.com

🌐 <https://posability3.wordpress.com/>

PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

6th April

Hilda Murfitt (aged 96 years)

13th April

Alfreda Hedges

20th April

Brenda Doreen Pryke (aged 81 years)

WEDDINGS

8th April

Samuel Richard Godfrey and Natalie Louise Bailey

A View from the Vicarage



Heads Together

I'm writing at the end of the week in which Heads Together, the 2017 London Marathon Charity of the year has become a household name. That – as you won't need me to tell you – is as a direct result of one of its co-founders, Prince Harry putting his money where his mouth is and allowing his conversation with The Telegraph's Bryony Gordon to be broadcast to the nation. Prince Harry didn't talk about mental health in the abstract: he talked about his own experience. He practised what he and Heads Together preach, and in doing so, according to the president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, he achieved more in terms of communicating mental health issues in a 25-minute interview than he (Sir Simon Wessely) had in a 25-year career. It is, as they say, 'good to talk'.

Also this week, in the Church's cycle of Bible readings, the story of Jesus' appearance on the road to Emmaus came round. You'll remember what happened: on the evening of the first Easter Sunday, two of Jesus' followers were walking to Emmaus, a village 'about seven miles from Jerusalem'. No mobiles and no internet in those days – Jesus had risen, but they'd not yet heard the news. Instead, being in possession of only half the story, the disciples walked 'talking with each other about all these things that had happened' (Luke 24: 14). 'While they were talking and discussing', reports Luke, 'Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognising him' (v. 15 & 16). And what did Jesus do? He kept them talking; he asked them questions: 'What are you discussing...?'; 'What things?' (v. 17 & 19). And as his disciples talked, so Jesus talked too. As Prince Harry did this week (dare I say it?), Jesus didn't talk theory, he talked experience: 'he interpreted to them the things about himself' (v. 27). Later, the disciples talked about how they felt as Jesus spoke to them: 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road?' (v. 32). Putting heads together hit the spot.

At St Andrew's, as you'll read elsewhere in this issue of Lodestar, we're working towards 'Focus on Prayer' – an opportunity being offered to us by the Diocese which will enable twelve Soham residents (not necessarily church-goers, please note!) to have a half-hour conversation with a prayer guide every day for four days between 28 May and 1 June. The offer was made on condition that I agreed to be 'one of the twelve' (as it were). What could I do but say yes?! As I reflect on this last week, mindful of these four days ahead, I'm struck by the words with which a lady who took part in a similar event ended a testimony she sent us: 'The most fruitful part of the week was that we started to talk about prayer together. We were all inspired to talk and share with our Church Families about our experience. It always amazes me that to deepen our intensely personal relationship with God we need others. We are not called to do it alone.'

Whatever's on our hearts, and whatever our context, talking together might just bring life and light. How about joining me in giving it a go? *Eleanor*

The Rev'd Eleanor Whalley ☎ 01353 725948

✉ sohamwickenvicar@gmail.com 🌐 www.sohamandwicken.org.uk



St Andrew's Church Fete

St Andrew's Church is holding its annual fete on Saturday 10 June from 10am-12noon. 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@btopenworld.com