

Services at the Parish Church 1st Sunday 10.00 am Morning Praise
 Sundays 8:00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 10.00 am Sung Eucharist (CW)
 Thursdays 10.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 3rd Sunday 10.00 am All Age Service

Christmas at St Andrew's Church



#GOD with US

Sunday 3 December	4.00pm	Christingle Service
Tuesday 5 December	3.15-5pm	Messy Church
Sunday 10 December	2.30pm	Christmas Concert in church with Soham Comrades Brass Band.
Tuesday 12 December	7.30pm	Taizé Service for Advent.
Thursday 14 December	6.30pm	Uniformed Carol Service.
Sunday 17 December	6.30pm	Traditional Candlelit Carol Service.
Wednesday 20 December	6.30pm	Soham Community Carols in the churchyard with Soham Comrades Band.
Christmas Eve	10.00am	Sung Eucharist
	4.00pm	Crib Service.
	11.15pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP).
	10.00am	All Age Eucharist for Christmas Day.

SOHAM COMRADES BRASS BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT

IN AID OF ST ANDREW'S CHURCH FUNDS



Sunday, 10th December, 2017
 2.30pm at St. Andrews Church,
 Fountain lane, Soham

Tickets: £5 (under 12s free)
 available from: 01353 721920 /
 01353 721543 or 'Soham Books'
 38 High St, Soham, Ely CB7 5HE
 and also on the door

School Report

Dr Carin Taylor



As I write it is still November. The days are shortening and we anticipate the lights of Christmas with a mixture of pleasure and the anxiety that goes with a long to do list!

Rehearsals are well underway for the Soham Village College Christmas concert at Ely Cathedral on Wednesday 13 December. As many of you know, the quality and range of musicians who perform is remarkable and, for many of us, the concert marks the start of Christmas proper. As ever, we are pleased to welcome a large number of local singers who have joined the community choir for this year's performance. It promises to be a wonderful celebration.

At The Weatheralls and The Shade, some of our youngest children are learning their lines ready to perform their first nativity play in school. We know how much that Christmas performance means to our parents and carers. Christmas gives us the opportunity to create truly special occasions and to lay down precious memories for our schools, our children and the wider community.

Christmas is a good time to say thank you to all those people from the wider community, and our churches, who support our schools and our children. We have a growing number of volunteers working in our primary schools. Many come into school to read with children, particularly with children who do not have the chance to listen to stories or to read out loud at home. Others come into school to support learning in our very busy reception classes where every extra pair of hands makes such a difference. Some volunteers come in to support children in our breakfast club or to provide nurture in a lunchtime club. There is no end to the talents of our volunteers: Mrs Radcliffe has just told me that we have just enlisted the help of a couple of grandparents who answered our request to run a den building club at lunchtime! A huge thank you to you all.

If you have a few hours a week and would like to join the hubbub and joy of a busy primary school, you could really make a difference to the lives of some of the children in our community. Please do get in touch with us if you would like to discuss how you might contribute. We wish you all a very happy Christmas.

Dr Carin Taylor, Staploe Education Trust

Neighbourhood Cares

Neighbourhood Cares is a project which aims to help people over 18 to find the support they need locally to help them live independently.

This might mean helping someone to find support to live with the effects of a stroke, or putting someone who is lonely in touch with a friendship group or social club. It could mean finding support for carers, or helping those who are struggling with bereavement. Neighbourhood Cares workers will help to create and develop new services where they are needed.

The Neighbourhood Cares worker will meet with the person to find out what they need help with, and what they want to achieve, and identify local groups and services which can help. They will then support the person in any way necessary to take up the support: by completing applications, assessments, or by accompanying them on first visits for example. This could also include working with health services to provide the support needed to prevent someone going into hospital.

Please contact the team for more information.

Neighbourhood Cares Soham, Soham Library, 7 Clay St, Soham, CB7 5HJ

01353 613 000 Email: neighbourhood.cares-soham@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Lucy Frazer's Year

I wanted to take the opportunity to wish all my constituents a very merry Christmas and a happy new year to come. 2017 has flown by with so much to do and an unexpected election on top! I have been pursuing with vigour the roll out of superfast broadband across the constituency regularly meeting and speaking with all involved pressing for more, quicker! I am also pursuing a campaign to get South East Cambridgeshire selected as a testbed for the trialling of the next generation of digital infrastructure through industrial 5G pilots.

As most of you will know by now, education is a passion of mine and I am relentless in my efforts to pursue fairer funding for our schools. I take every opportunity to engage with both schools and the Secretary of State for Education to ensure our requirements are front of mind. I welcome the recent announcement of £3.1 million more for our constituency and I will continue on this mission to pursue funding wherever it is available.

Other projects I am involved with around education include encouraging businesses to work with schools with specific reference to STEM subjects and building pathways to future careers in local businesses. I am also driving a project to reduce the costs of teacher recruitment through an online government website.

Infrastructure projects occupy a lot of my time, fighting for necessary funding and maintaining a presence where projects are underway to ensure where possible they remain on schedule and on budget. I am extremely pleased that we now have confirmation that the County Council has begun to adopt roads on the Kingfisher Estate where the required street works have been completed. This is something I have been working on. The start of works on the Ely Southern Bypass in March was the culmination of a great deal of work and lobbying by a great many people including myself and I'm delighted work is now underway. I am very much behind the Greenways initiative to introduce more cycle and multi-purpose routes into Cambridge.

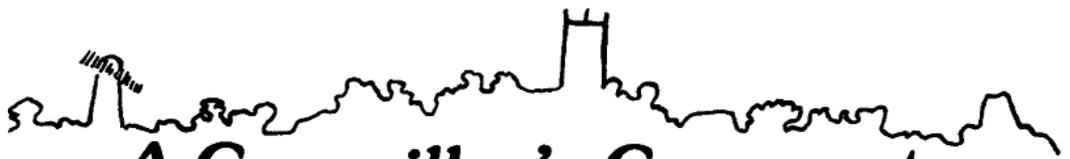
The range and diversity of businesses across the constituencies is vast. I maintain a close dialogue with the business community as I do with the farming community and very much enjoyed my time spent in this past year visiting the Innovation Hub of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany and also Barcham Trees. I was also pleased to be able to join a workshop led by the Soham Friends Project on diversity and equality.

I enjoy every opportunity I have to meet with constituents from all walks of life and of all ages. I never like to pass up the chance to exchange views and hear any issues constituents may have. I have particularly enjoyed welcoming the Twilight Tuesday Women's Institute, the Soham Staploe Rotary Club and staff and pupils from both St Andrew's Church of England Primary School and The Shade Primary School to Westminster in the last year.



I have also enjoyed several visits to Soham Village College, to congratulate them on their Ofsted turnaround, to present prizes on their Celebration Evening in July and, most recently, to watch the Year 11 students taking part in the 4th inter schools annual debating competition. I first set up this competition when I became a Parliamentary Candidate in 2014 and am so thrilled by its continued success. I am so grateful for all the support I receive from constituents young and old and I look forward to working as hard as I can on your behalf in the coming year.

To keep up with what Lucy is doing, you can sign up for her newsletter at www.lucyfrazer.org.uk or follow her on Facebook: www.facebook.com/FrazerLucy



A Councillor's Comments

There was no one available to make use of Public Comment Time at our November meeting, so we began at 7.15pm with a presentation by one member of a group called "Neighbourhood Cares". On their introductory card they state "Would you like to know what's available to keep you happy and independent in Soham" They also invite interested people to talk with them at the library on Wednesday's between 10 -12pm. They say they are here to help people in Soham over the age of 18 who may feel they need help. They have a small team made up of people with different caring skills. They want to get to know the community and hope to revive the community lunch which will be held at the library.

County and District Councillor Reports. These covered a number of points: Children Centres (Soham) - It is proposed to use the library for this venue and also for greater use to be made of the library. Rail Station - funding has been secured and it is hoped the station to be in place by 2020. There was also going to be an endeavour to provide youth facilities in Soham for the 14 to 18 year old young people.

Minutes of standing committees: Cemetery and Allotments; There was on show the plaque that was presented to Soham by the US forces, which shows the position in the cemetery of the war graves, this will be erected in due course in a suitable location.

Community Amenities: The re-vamp of the play area will now be put back until after Christmas.

Planning: The Cherry Tree site has produced problems that Anglia Water has got to address.

The good news from this meeting was the positive news regarding the rail station. On the 19th of October 2000, a signed petition was presented at Shire Hall with 1648 signatures, but at that time local authorities were very sceptical about the possibility of restoring a station again, but in the recent few years they have taken this project on, and their work on this is appreciated.

sohamscene



☆ **Winners of the St Andrew's 200+ Club** for November:
Colin Smalley £5; Jamie Rutter £10

☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Mornings** – First Saturday of each month at Soham Library, 10am – 12 noon. Bring along any items or photos of local historical interest you may have, or just join us for a chat and coffee. All welcome.

☆ **Soham Museum presents: Donna Martin on "The History of Soham through its Artefacts"** at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft on Thursday, January 4th, 7.30pm. £2.50 admission, members free

☆ **Volunteer for Soham** - Friday 8 December, 10am-12noon, Soham Library. Meet the Neighbourhood Cares team and find out about volunteering opportunities in Soham

☆ **Items for the February edition of LodeStar** (there is no Lodestar in January) should be submitted by Wednesday 24th January. Please send material to alison.evans7@btopenworld.com.

PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms

October 29th

Kayleigh Ayesha Sarah Fuller
Tommy John Darren Lyes
Amelia Georgina Clark

Marriage

October 21st

Mark Hopkins and Natalie Collins

Funerals

October 27th

Phillip Henderson (aged 65 years)

November 14th

Gordon Richard Barber (aged 83 years)

November 16th

Gay Fordham (aged 80 years)

November 17th

Baby Alex John Mitchell

November 20th

Alice 'Mary' Ashman (aged 94 years)

Bread Basket

In a change from previous advertising there will be a Bread Basket breakfast cafe in church on 16 December. All are welcome for a continental style breakfast washed down with a hot drink for just £1.50



St Andrew's School OFSTED report

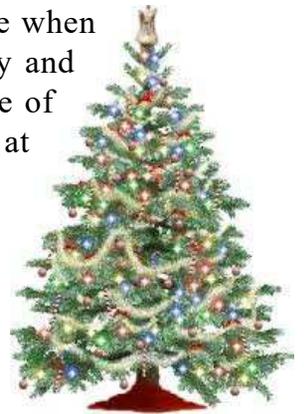
Congratulations to all at St Andrew's School on achieving a 'Good' in their recent OFSTED report. This was a significant improvement over their last report which ranked them as requiring improvement. Inspectors praised the school for the effectiveness of leadership and management, good quality of teaching, learning and assessment; good personal development, behaviour and welfare; good outcomes for pupils and good early years provision

Christmas Giving Tree (Co-op)

Christmas is the Season of love and goodwill - a time when family and friends come together to celebrate the joy and blessings in our lives. For many, it can also be a time of loneliness and isolation, a time of hardship and dread at not being able to provide.

The Soham Christmas Giving Tree in the Co-op aims to provide a present to all those children within the locality whose families find themselves in need of a helping hand.

While shopping for gifts for your loved ones this Christmas, please consider purchasing an extra one for a child or setting aside part of your budget to support The Soham Christmas Giving Tree.... If you are unable to get out shopping or would prefer to help financially, a donation would be gratefully received and used towards any shortfall of presents. Any amount you can share will be put to good use right here in Soham. (Please use the donation boxes at the till points) We aim to make a difference this Christmas and reassure those families they are not alone.



NB. PLEASE AVOID SHOE BOX DONATIONS AND EDIBLES (WE RECEIVE SELECTION BOXES FROM OUR FANTASTIC SPONSORS THE CO-OP)

A View from the Vicarage



Presence

As I sit down to write this (late, again...), news is breaking of the latest IS terror attack, this time on the al-Rawda mosque in North Sinai. Some 300 Sufi Muslims have lost their lives, some of them children. They were killed during Friday prayers. Tomorrow, or at least by this time next week, the story will be yesterday's news; though far from it for the families and communities affected. Who can begin to imagine their pain? And so it has been with many of the rest of this past year's news headlines: the world moves on, but for those touched personally, the grief and the turmoil remain. The world forgets; they – and we – remember. Life will never be the same again.

So what does Christmas have to say to all that? What we're given, it strikes me, is an image: the image of a child, lying in a manger. The image comes first; the words come later. 'The Word became flesh', wrote John, around 100 years afterwards, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth' (John 1: 14). 1700-or-so years on, the Victorian poet Edward Caswall put it another way: 'Sacred Infant, all divine/What a tender love was thine,/thus to come from highest bliss/down to such a world as this'. That's the last verse of my favourite carol. We'll be singing it in St Andrew's churchyard at 6.30pm on Wednesday 20 December, accompanied by members of Soham Comrades Band as part of Community Carols. It'd be great to draw a crowd: do come and join us.

Back to Edward Caswall... Whilst his carol, you could say, 'tells the story', and with all the excesses of 19th century sentimentality at that, John in his Gospel keeps the tale of Christ's birth to a minimum. He jumps from the poetry of the prologue (his 'In the beginning...', which we'll hear again on 17 December at our carol service) to Jesus as an adult, pacing the banks of the. John leaves out everything that might trip us up: the shepherds, the wise men, the star and the virgin birth don't get so much as a mention. John's Gospel, like the God of whom it tells, gets straight to the point; right to the heart of things; it tells us all we need to know: 'The Word was made flesh'. God was born a baby, with all the vulnerability that brings. God came to our world, and to a part of our world which then, as now, was torn with hatred and terror. God knew our joys and our pains from the inside, because we were the people he lived among; and God relied upon us for a welcome.

May you know his presence with you this Christmas. *Eleanor*

The Revd Eleanor Whalley 01353 725948 sohamwickenvicar@gmail.com
www.sohamandwicken.org.uk

Soham Community Carols Wednesday 20th December, 6.30pm

Singalong with Soham Comrades Band

Christmas refreshments afterwards in St Andrew's Churchyard, Soham
(in church if too cold/wet/windy)

Bring a torch if you have one!

Organised by Soham Town Team & Churches Together in Soham with thanks
to Soham Co-op for the refreshments