
Services at the Parish Church	<i>1st Sunday</i>	10.00 am	Morning Praise		
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	All Age Service

Dibley Comes to Soham

We welcome Viva to church for their production of the Vicar of Dibley in May.

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY

In the early days of women's ordination, the villagers of Dibley are surprised and in at least one case horrified to find that their new vicar is to be a woman. However, with the support of dippy verger Alice and her rather eccentric PCC members she wins their hearts and minds.

Performances are Wednesday 16th - Saturday 19th May at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost £12.50 and will be available from the Viva Box Office on 01353 722228 / vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk. You are advised that it is suitable for ages 14+

Before the performance itself they will be filming a 'Songs of Praise' to be shown as part of the performance. If you'd like to come along and be part of the 'congregation' it is at 2pm on Sunday 15 April

Church Fete



St Andrew's Church is holding its annual fete on Saturday 9th June from 1.30 pm – 3.00pm (note different timing to previous years) followed by a Songs of Praise in the churchyard led by Soham Comrades Band who will also be performing at the fete. As usual we welcome stalls from local community groups and small businesses. If you would like to book a stall, please contact Alison Evans on 07738 877765 or email alison-evans@hotmail.co.uk

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The St Andrew's Church annual meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 26th April at St Andrew's Church (not 24th as previously advertised).

We start at 7.30 with the election of Churchwardens. Anybody who is a Soham resident or on the electoral roll of the church is entitled to vote in this election.

We then move on to the rest of the meeting which is open to people on the electoral roll of the church. This meeting is to hear reports of the church's finances and activities in the year 2017 and to elect PCC members (a total of 4 each year). There is also the chance to ask questions or give opinions about church matters not covered in the report.

If you would like to stand for election at this meeting please take a nomination form from the table at the back of church, get it filled in and return it to the Vicar, David Tickner or Alison Evans before the meeting. You must have been on the electoral roll for at least 6 months.

Christian Aid Coffee Morning



Saturday 12th May at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft 10 am - 12 noon.

Come along for coffee or tea and cake and browse our stalls: cakes, bric-a-brac, raffle, tombola and books.

Donations appreciated but please no alcohol.

Christian Aid have more than 70 years' experience of working in partnership to support communities to thrive. We tackle the root causes of poverty so that women, men and children the world over are strengthened against future knocks. And if disasters happen, we get people the help they want straight away.

Women's World Day of Prayer

This year's Women's World Day of Prayer service was postponed due to the snow. It has now been rescheduled for Friday 13th April at 2pm. The service has been compiled by women from Suriname in South America and has the theme: "All God's Creation is Very Good". All denominations are welcome and you don't have to be a woman to attend! Refreshments are served afterwards.

Messy Church

The next Messy Church at St Andrew's is on 1st May from 3.15 – 5.00 pm (there is no April session as it would be in the Easter holidays). Messy Church sessions include craft activities for children, a Bible story and a hot meal. Adults accompany their children. Everyone is welcome!

Prayer Fayre



As part of the 'Thy Kingdom Come' global prayer movement, St Andrew's Church will be holding a drop-in 'prayer fayre' on Saturday 12th May between 10am and 4pm where people can come to explore different forms of prayer.

PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

27 February Reginald Arthur 'Reg' Brown (aged 81 years)
12 March Betty Sarah Mann (aged 83 years)

BAPTISMS

25 March Lola May Shepherd & Oscar Neal

Soham Heritage and Tourism

Soham Tourist Guide - Leaflet (FREE)

The new tourist guide leaflet for Soham is now in the library, shops and local points of interest around the town, Ely and Tesco's Newmarket! This small leaflet gives a purely 'bite size' view of Soham with pointers to our historic buildings, places and Millennium walks.

This publication is the first of a series which we hope will give visitors to our great town, information on our heritage that spans more than 2,000 years. A larger and more extensive information guide will be available, containing in-depth information on our commons, buildings, windmills and famous sons, etc.

Soham is visited by more than 3,000 people each year, so this is our way of engaging them whilst bringing in vital footfall around Soham. It also fulfils part of our function to our community - 'Soham Heritage and Tourism'.



Soham Carnival and Heavy Horse Show



The 65th Soham Carnival and Heavy Horse Show takes place on Monday 28th May from 9am-5pm on the Recreation Ground.

If you or your organisation would like to enter a float, book a stall or sponsor the horse show details can be found at <http://www.soham.org/index.php/soham/soham-carnival> or email carnival@soham.org.uk or phone 01353 624493

Carol Sennitt is doing teas and coffees in the Pavilion on carnival day. She is trying to raise money to open a day centre in Soham. It will run one day a week and if funding allows it will be increased. Any donations of cakes/ sausage rolls gratefully received. Please contact Carol on 07762645579



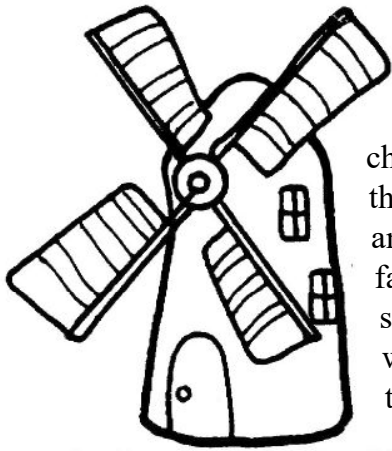
- ☆ **Winners of the St Andrew's Church 200+ Club** for March were: £5 - Marie Brown; £10 – Jim Loveday
- ☆ **Soham, The Fen and Barway WI** meet on the first Friday of each Month at 7.30pm at Millbrook House in the coffee lounge. The speakers are: 6th April, Rex Freeman 'Growing Old Disgracefully', 4th May 'A hanging basket demonstration'.
- ☆ **Twilight Tuesday WI** meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Fountain Inn, Soham at 7.30 pm onwards. April's evening will be our Annual Meeting and quiz night.
- ☆ **Soham Phoenix Club** meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (April meeting being the 11th) between 9.30 am - 11.30 am at The Causeway Community Room, Soham. Each month we have a speaker, raffle, refreshments and a warm welcome. All for £2
- ☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Mornings** – First Saturday of each month at Soham Library, 10 am – 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 History Group talk** - May 5th 7.30 pm, 'The History of Sweets' at the Methodist Hall, Berrycroft. Free to members, £2.50 guests. Book stall, refreshments and raffle. All welcome!
- ☆ **Love on the Rocks Soham** are hosting a non profit community Easter egg hunt on the 1st April 12.00-15.00 at the scout hut in Soham. On 4th April they are teaming up with Neighbourhood Cares for a rock painting event
- ☆ **Soham Sewcial** – meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month - Sewing Room - Soham Village College (use Lodeside reception entrance) 7 - 9 pm - £3 each. Bring a project and a mug!
- ☆ **Over 60s Club** meets at the Pavilion on the Recreation Ground every Friday from 2 - 4 pm.
- ☆ **Coffee Morning** at the Pavilion Tuesdays from 10am-12noon. Open to all.
- ☆ **Soham Community litter pick** will be meeting again on 21st April 2 pm. Meeting down Kingfisher drive by the main play park.
- ☆ **Neighbourhood Cares** weekly drop in sessions on Wednesdays 10 am - 2 pm at Soham Library and monthly coffee and cake from 10 am - 12 noon with a chance to meet organisations who can help adults live independent lives.
- ☆ **Items for the April edition of LodeStar** should be submitted by Wednesday 21st March. Please send material to aly-evans@hotmail.com or ring 01638 721534 for short pieces.

Thrift Community Land Trust for Soham

The AGM of Thrift Community Land Trust is on 25 April at 7.30pm in the Pavilion. Come along and find out more about the CLT and the homes soon to be available. There will also be a chance for members to vote for the trust board members.

Community Land Trusts (or CLTs) are when people from a village, street, neighbourhood or town get together to create a charitable organisation for the good of their community. Run completely by volunteers, the management trustees are voted for by its members. A CLT strives to meet the long-term needs of its community, for example building permanently affordable housing, workspaces or acquiring pubs, gardens and shops; these then stay owned by the community forever.

Soham Playgroup



Soham Windmills

Soham playgroup, locally known as Windmills playgroup was started by a group of parents who thought that their children needed a playgroup experience; an environment in which children could learn through play. 35 years on and the playgroup has gone from strength to strength and has stayed true to its aim of providing for the families of Soham and the surrounding villages a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment within which children can learn through play. A lot of this is due to our committed staff. Some of them have been with the playgroup since 1993! It is still run by a committee of parents and is a registered charity.

Over the years, Soham playgroup has had many homes including the Moat house, the Methodist church at Berrycroft with a second group at the Lode centre on the college grounds. The playgroup finally settled at their current homes in 2009: one at the Children's Centre and one at St Andrews School. We have been very happy at our current site but have been successful in securing the exciting opportunity to move to a portacabin on the St Andrews School site. The unit will be just for our use from September 2018. This will enable us to purpose design the unit for the children who attend, helping them to reach their full potential during their journey with us at Windmills. It will also offer parents greater flexibility and an extended service. We aim to make the portacabin into a stimulating space internally and externally. We need to make the necessary adjustments to the outside area so the children are secure whilst playing and have a safe playground with exciting sensory areas to maximise their learning development.

Over the years the playgroup has helped over 1700 children on the start of their journeys into friendship, confidence and learning. Were you one of those children? Soham playgroup is a charity and we need your help. Are you a mum, dad, grandparent, Auntie or uncle of a past or future child of the playgroup.

Soham playgroup is a charity and we need your help. If you feel you have skills or materials to help achieve our dream, please contact us on sohamplaygroupcommittee@outlook.com or via our facebook page. You can also make a donation via our just total giving page @ totalgiving.co.uk/sohamplaygroup - portacabin appeal.

Rubbish Collections

East Cambridgeshire District Council is taking the rubbish collection service back 'in house' to save costs having previously contracted it out to Veola. The collection days will remain the same.

A new feature is that you can request a second blue bin for a one-off administration fee of £25 - with no additional cost for it to be emptied. Collections will start from April, and any additional blue bin will be collected alongside your normal blue bin collection.

Residents of East Cambridgeshire are encouraged to take up the offer of the second blue bin to help the council achieve its 60% recycling rate target:

- Please ensure that when you order your bin you have space to store it.
- There is a one-off charge of £25.
- Bins will be delivered in advance; however they will not be emptied until your first blue bin collection after April 1st 2018.

You can also get an extra garden waste bin for £48 per year. To apply for either of these go to <https://self.eastcambs.gov.uk/> or ring the council on 01353 665555.

A View from the Vicarage



Who knows?

When I was a child, I remember playing a game where the challenge was to link apparently unrelated words or images: ‘Hedgehog’, ‘rugby ball’, ‘rainbow’; ‘carrot’, ‘fisherman’, ‘spaceship’ – that kind of thing. My friends and I dreamt up stories where disparate elements hung together: they kept us busy for hours.

Today, I’m grateful for the training that gave me. Being a priest – being a Christian – it seems to me, involves finding (or at least trusting in) a thread between things that might seem unrelated; believing that, whether we perceive it or not, God holds all things in his scope: ‘In Christ all things hold together’, wrote St Paul (Col. 1: 17). With that in mind, I turn to Easter... and to our church tower...

Those of you who have walked through St Andrew’s churchyard recently will have noticed that our tower has been cordoned off. If you’d stopped to read the notices, you’ll know there’s a risk of falling masonry – hence the need to keep clear of the area in question. On Sunday 4 March, spurred on by an uncannily appropriate line in the Gospel for that day - ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up’ (John 2: 19) - I outlined the status quo. You’ll find my sermon on our website, and that’s the place to go if you’d like a more details about how and why things are as they are (and, indeed, information about how to contribute financially to the associated fund-raising effort). In a nutshell, we’ve an enormous challenge before us – about £1.5M of urgent work needs doing to the building – and a strategy for taking things forward is currently hazy at best (albeit becoming clearer by the week, thanks not least to support and advice from Ely Diocese’s Church Buildings Department. Watch this space for opportunities to get involved).

And so - apparently unrelatedly – to Easter. Whereas John’s account of Mary Magdalene’s visit to the tomb is always given as a possible reading for Easter Sunday morning, the alternative reading changes year on year. This year’s alternative is Mark’s account. Pleasingly for a pedant like me, only the first 8 verses of Mark 16 are on offer, ie. the verses which scholars agree were almost certainly written by Mark himself. Debate continues in the scholarly world, I’m told, about whether Mark’s Gospel used to stop here. Some think the rest of chapter 16 was added later - added either because whatever ending Mark originally wrote got lost, or because Mark’s readers couldn’t cope with the ending he left them with: the ending that is verse 8, where the women run in fear from the tomb and say ‘nothing to anyone, because they [are] afraid’. Personally, I like to think this is how Mark ended his Gospel: I like to think he ended it on a note of confusion; of incomprehension verging on terror; with a sense that even Christ’s closest friends were left at a loss as to what to do next. And there – for me – is the link with our tower. How will everything pan out? Who knows? There have been moments this last month when I, too, have been at a loss; I’ve also been a trifle afraid. Maybe you’ve been worried too.

‘Who knows how things will pan out?’ How does faith respond? The answer, of course, is God knows (and I don’t say that flippantly). God does know, I believe, and that is our faith. God knows, and God will surely call us (in our fear, our faith and our bemusement) to play our part in rebuilding his temple. He’ll call us like he called Mark’s women on that first Easter Sunday – he’ll call us to witness to his Life in the world. *Eleanor*

*The Revd Eleanor Whalley, Priest in Charge of Soham and Wicken
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