

Services at the Parish Church

Sundays 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 10.00 am Parish Communion (CW)
Thursdays 10.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 3rd Sunday 10.00 am All Age Communion

Ash Wednesday 6 March



St Andrew's Ash Wednesday services this year are at 10.30am at Millbrook House (in a change to previously published information) and at 7.30pm in church.

Both include Holy Communion and imposition of ashes.

Lent Lunches

In a change from previous years, the Lent Lunches this year will include a reflection led by Eleanor, Colin Watkins (Methodist Minister) or Howard Laver (Soham foodbank). As usual, lunch will be a simple meal of soup with bread and cheese with a chance to chat. Donations for the lunch will go to Christian Aid.

They take place at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft on Fridays 15, 22, 29 March and 5 and 12 April.

Lunch is served from 12.15pm, with a concluding Reflection at 1.00pm. All welcome.

Reflections will be on the theme of Lent in...

Pictures: 15th March

Song: 22nd March

Action: 29th March (foodbank update)

Word: 5th April

Practice: 12th April



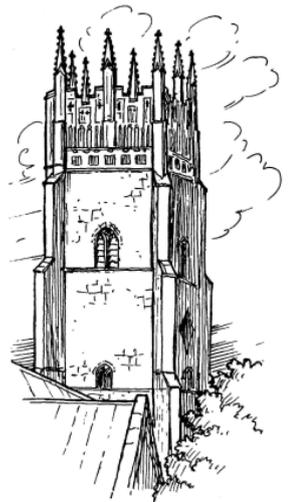
Lent Groups

St Andrew's Lent Groups will meet on Thursdays at 11am in church or Wednesdays at 7.30pm at the Vicarage. The groups will use material based around the theme of pilgrimage, written by Rev Colin Watkins. NB you do not need to be a spiritual guru to join in! ALL are welcome.

Restoration Walk-About

Our church architect, Iain Frearson, will lead a walk around the inside and outside of the church building on Tuesday 12 March, beginning at 4pm. Iain will point out the challenges the building faces and outline plans for addressing them.

All are welcome to come along: Iain is very knowledgeable, and it should be fascinating (If it rains, we'll meet in church and show slides instead).



Coming up in May: 'Wild Weekend'



The grant from the Heritage Fund to fund the recent repairs to St Andrew's Church is also paying for a programme of heritage-related activities in and around St Andrew's. Following the 'Celebrating Equiano' event in April, the next occasion we have planned is a 'Wild Weekend' in May. This will focus on wildlife in churches (and further afield!). We'll kick off with 'Wild about Churches' on Saturday 11th May from 1pm-4pm when St Andrew's Church will host children's activities together with stalls and exhibits from a range of local wildlife organisations. If you would like to run a wildlife-/nature-themed stall that afternoon, or know a local organisation that would like to take part, please contact Claire Halley, our Heritage Project Coordinator on 07523 968 581 or email standrewsheritage@gmail.com.

The fun continues on Sunday 12th May with a duck race on the Lode after the 10am service. You can adopt your duck at the Wild about Churches event on Saturday or on the day. Later on, at 4pm, we'll round off the weekend with a Pet Service at St Andrew's Church to celebrate all the animals which are so important to so many of us. All animals will be welcome – as will be their humans. If your pet is now enjoying its heavenly reward, or isn't easily transportable, you'd be welcome to email a photograph to us so we can include its picture instead.

We'll be publicising the weekend by leaving knitted bees in various locations around Soham, much as happened with the angels for last year's Community Carols. If you're able to help with the knitting, patterns are available at the back of St Andrew's Church or – via email – from Claire.



This'll be a fun weekend for everyone: please spread the word!

Flippin' Marvellous Pancake Party

Shrove Tuesday 5 March, drop in 3.15-5.00pm

Crafts, pancakes, fun & chat

All Welcome!



Mothering Sunday

Calling all children and grown-ups: There is a special service for Mother's Day on 31 March at 10am at St Andrew's Church.

Children are also welcome to come and have fun preparing the service on Friday 29 March between 3.15 and 5pm (drop in and stay as long as you like).



PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals:

4 February

John Smith

25 February

Peter Crick

27 February

Robert Budnik

1 March

Geraldine Castle



- ☆ **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 History Group talk:** 7 March, 7.30pm at Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft. Andy Relf on the History of Medicine. £3 for non-members.
- ☆ **Twilight Tuesday WI** meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Fountain Inn, Soham at 7.30pm. Next meeting: 12 March, British Sign Language.
- ☆ **Soham Sewcial:** A sewing/knitting/crafting club based in Soham. We are a group of like minded people who enjoy crafting , chatting and having refreshments. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at Soham Library from 7:30 pm until 9:30 pm. Cost is £3 per session or £12 for a 5/6 week block.
- ☆ **Diabetes Support Group** The group meet on the third Wednesday of the month at Soham Library, between 10.15am - 11.30am.
- ☆ **Items for the April Edition of LodeStar** - If you have anything you want to publicise or report on please send material to aly-evans@hotmail.co.uk by Wednesday 20 March.

Soham Foodbank Report

- * 95 individuals and families given 3-day food parcels
- * 1789 kg donated in Soham by local donors in 2018
- * In total, 225 adults and 156 children were fed



These figures relate specifically to families in crises in Soham during 2018.

The foodbank relies on your goodwill and support. Over 90% of the food distributed by foodbanks in The Trussell Trust network is donated by the public – that’s why your food donations are absolutely vital to our ability to give everyone referred to us a balanced and nutritious three day supply of food.

Your donations are received into our store at Soham Distribution at Millbrook House, and the food parcels we pack directly benefit people who are in the local area. Due to space restrictions, we occasionally send overstocked food items to the central store at Ely Foodbank so they can distribute to other nearby distribution centres.

Ely Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust and has distribution centres in March, Chatteris, Cottenham, Haddenham, Ely and Soham.

We work with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, Child and Family Centres (previously known as Sure Start) as well as support workers in various agencies, including housing officers, locality team workers, and health visitors. They will identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher where it can be redeemed for three days’ emergency food.

We are most grateful to all who have donated and supported us, with special thanks to the Co-op and Scampers.

We are thankful that Millbrook House, part of Sanctuary Housing, are happy to accommodate us.

To donate money, please visit: <https://ely.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

A very big Thank You for the significant amount of donations received!

News from Wicken Fen

We've had three new additions to the grazing herds in the last couple of months as three of our newest female highland cows calved. The calves are Flame (female), Tyto (male) and Prospero (male). As you will see from the photo of Prospero and his mum, (image: Ajay Tegala) they are very appealing animals, and have been receiving a lot of attention on social media and in the press. The calves are all doing well out on Burwell Fen, and their mums have formed a calf-minding circle, taking it in turns to keep an eye on the youngsters so they can all get a grazing break! It won't be long now until the first konik foals of spring make an appearance.



The rangers have been hard at work in the Woodland Walk area, clearing the scrub, hedge building and coppicing. It really is looking very smart up there now, especially with the addition of the new path surface, so do take a wander up there soon. Our rangers will be continuing the coppicing for the next few weeks, and are always happy to chat about the latest conservation work on the fen.

Our Mucky Pups sessions for under 5s continue this month with the theme 'Muddy March' on 13 or 14 March from 10:15-11:45am. Join us for outdoor fun, craft and adventure! Wear wellies and clothes you don't mind getting dirty. The cost is £5 per child; to book call 01353 720274.

We've got some great adult events to get you outdoors, or learning something new. We're introducing creative writing workshops exploring fenland themes, the first of which, Writing the Fens, is on Saturday 9 March. Those interested in art might like to try our Painting the Fens watercolour workshop on Saturday 30 March. Our final event celebrates Mother's Day on Sunday 31 March, when we'll be offering our popular Mothering Sunday Boat Trips with a cream tea. Full details of all events and booking arrangements are available in the 'What's On' section of the Wicken Fen website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen

Parkinson's Support Group

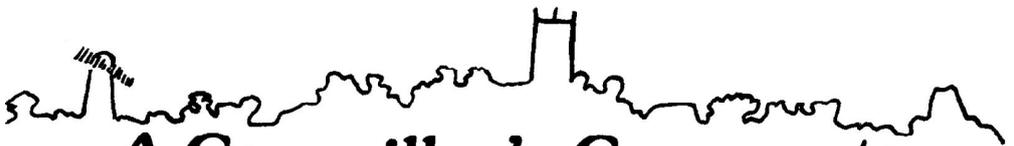
PARKINSON'S^{UK} CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.

If you have Parkinson's you might like to join The Ely and District Parkinson's UK Support Group. The group meets on the third Tuesday afternoon in the month, 2.30pm until 4.30pm, at the Bell Holt Sanctuary Housing Function Room, Lisle Lane, Ely, CB7 4ED. Members enjoy a chat with friends, enjoy some refreshments, can enter a draw, and listen to a speaker. In addition, members have access to current literature and the Parkinson's Local Advisor pops into many of our meetings to provide additional support and advice. Meeting Dates until June 2019 are Tuesday March 19th, Tuesday April 16th, Tuesday May 21st and Tuesday June 18th. If you would like any additional information contact Caroline Nicklinson, Volunteer, on 07718191482 (cnicklinson@gmail.com) or Jenny Lowes, Secretary on 01353 669326 or Brain Hayes, Lead Group Volunteer on 01353 860102. Or come along to one of our meetings, you will be made very welcome.

Meet your MP

An Open Meeting with Lucy Frazer MP will take place on Wednesday April 10th. This is an opportunity for residents to come and meet their MP and discuss any issues they would like to raise in person.

Lucy will be at the Walter Gidney Pavilion from 5pm to 6pm.



A Councillor's Comments

February

There were two people who made use of Public Comment Time. Mrs. Woollard spoke about the litter that accumulates in the church alley and is not cleaned up. The chairman said the East Cambs. Cleaners are unable to get equipment in the narrow path to clear it, but the problem would be noted. Ken Cranfield spoke about the two arranged dates and times for public information and display of the proposed plans for the Soham Rail Station. These had been set out by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough combined authority. He thought the times would be when there would be great congestion.

Neighbourhood Plan: The question before us was whether we begin to make a start on a neighbourhood plan now or wait till after the elections for a new council in May. The general consensus was that as there was a lot of work involved and the plan would take at least 18 months that we should make a start now and have a framework set out for the new council to build on. It was said that this plan would not alter the local plan but that there were things that could be done to improve upon it. This led to a lot of discussions about what we would like, but the decision was made to make a start now. Councillors were asked for any ideas and areas they had in mind.

County and District Reports: We had updates on various works taking place and were told the Ely underpass would be completed by the end of February. Man Shed is going ahead as is the meeting at Millbrook. Pot holes are still being filled but work is also being done to pavements as well.

Lack of Police in Soham: A letter had been sent complaining about the lack of Police for Soham and we were told the chief constable decides where police are employed according to crime levels. *Councillor Ginn*

Nellie the Tuk-tuk

Nellie currently lives in Ely and the idea is for the Soham Community to buy her and for local volunteers to provide lifts around Soham – our own unique form of community transport for people who find it hard to get around Soham

Who's involved?

Neighbourhood Cares have teamed up with Viva Arts and Community Group, Soham Men's Shed and other community partners to buy #Nellie4Soham. Neighbourhood Cares are leading the campaign, Viva will own and look after Nellie, and Soham Men's Shed will recruit and organise the volunteer drivers to whizz around town.



The Money

£4000 is needed to buy Nellie. If you would like to make a donation, you can find pink donation pots at the following locations: Soham Library, Viva, Jack Hibbs, Gloof, Sweat Gym, The Causeway Community Room and the Co-op or you can donate online by following the link: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/nellie4soham>

A big thank you to everyone who has already donated!

A View from the Vicarage



Feeling Proud

'I thought this was just a little village, but now I realise it's really important, because loads of amazing things happened

here'. So announced one of St Andrew's School's Year 6 pupils at the end of a year-group visit to church where we talked about Olaudah Equiano, and touched on the heroes of 'The War Incident', and on St Felix and the historical importance of Soham through the ages. It was wonderful to hear, and many of the thank you letters Claire and I received afterwards bore witness to the same discovery: 'Thank you for convincing us that Soham is more than just a small town and for making us feel proud with where we live'; 'Now you have told us about Soham I am very proud to live in Soham now, knowing that a famous person lived in our little town. I really loved it'; 'You made me feel proud to live in Soham... there is so much history here'.

Celebrating Equiano



An Afternoon with The Equiano Society and Vincent Carretta on the 227th anniversary of Equiano's marriage in St Andrew's Church

Sunday 7 April, 3.30pm
St Andrew's Church Soham

Free entry – All welcome



On 6 March this year, anyone attending an Ash Wednesday service will be invited to receive 'the imposition of ashes' – a black cross daubed on the forehead, made from the ash of last year's burnt palm crosses. As each cross is applied, its recipient is instructed, 'Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin, and be faithful to Christ'. Lent, which Ash Wednesday inaugurates, is a season not for pride but for humility; a season for recalling, that we are indeed 'but dust'; we are 'of the earth'; innately designed for far from great things.

And yet there's more to it than that. In the Biblical Creation story, human beings are the only things God makes with his hand. Everything else comes to being through God's word, but when God creates people, he takes earth ('humus') in his hand and shapes it into a human form. When, after the Fall, God banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden, this is the event his words recall 'You are dust, and to dust you shall return' (Genesis 3: 19).

As anyone who's ever played with plasticine will know, mould something with your hand and you'll leave a palm-print on it. Human beings are of the earth, and yet we are made, nonetheless, in God's image. We are called to surpass ourselves – to rise above our earthly natures. God's purpose, as revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – the events whose celebration Lent prepares us for – is, by God's grace, to raise us to higher things; to enjoy the perfect world God had always intended we inhabit. 'Our homeland', writes St Paul to the Philippians, 'is in heaven'.

Despite their human frailty, Felix, Equiano, Fireman Nightall, Signyman Bridges and Engine Driver Gimbert demonstrated the greatness of which human beings are capable. Of them, and of our association with them in the life of this town, we should indeed surely feel proud. *Eleanor*

sohamvicar@gmail.com 01353 725948