



St Denys Bulletin

The church is open daily from 9am

September 2025

Services at a glance:

- Every Sunday 10am
Sung Eucharist
- Every Wednesday 10am
Said Communion
- Mon, Tues and Thurs
8.45am Morning Prayer
- 5th Sunday 6pm
United Service at one of
the Sleaford churches.

Directory:

Vicar of Sleaford and Rural Dean

The Rev'd Philip Johnson
01529 304354
revdphilip@aol.com

The Parish Office

Parish Administrator
Paula Ireland
Market Place, Sleaford,
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admin@sleafordparishchurch.co.uk
01529 413607
Mon, Weds, Fri 9-11am

Churchwardens

Richard Clash
07714 565678
Sarah Stentiford
07707 513225

Safeguarding Officer

Angela Clash 01529
410065 or 0303 003 1111

Director of Music

Lee Mitton-Rooke
lee.rooke@googlemail.com
St Denys Bellringers
sylvia.bird860@gmail.com

PCC Treasurer

Brenda Hitchcock
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Letter from the Vicar, Rev'd Philip Johnson

In the middle of September the Church celebrates the feast of St John Chrysostom. John was born in Antioch in 347. He was a brilliant preacher which accounts for his 'surname', which was actually a nickname, given to him posthumously in the 6th century. 'Chrysostom' literally means 'golden-mouth'! He is one of the four Greek Doctors of the Church. (John Henry Newman was recently declared a Doctor of the Church, that is, someone of great holiness whose teachings and wisdom are authoritative and timeless.) Against his wish, John Chrysostom was made Patriarch of Constantinople in 398 and he set about reforming the church and exposing corruption among the clergy in the Imperial administration. He fell foul of the Empress Eudoxia and in spite of support from the Pope (Innocent I) he was exiled twice. He died of exhaustion and starvation in September 407.

During August I visited Constantinople – well Istanbul as it is now known – but there is little to be seen of this golden-mouthed preacher. This great city (and it is a fantastic place to visit) was once the centre of the

Christian church and home to several popes. When much of Rome was a malaria infested swamp Constantinople, a city founded by Constantine (a Roman Emperor who converted to Christianity and declared his new religion as the religion of the Empire) became the most important city of the Empire and by extension the church. Hagia Sophia – the great mosque that dominates the skyline – does have the remains of a few Christian icons and murals. Far from the city centre, in the shadow of the ancient city wall, there is a Byzantine Church, later a monastery, and now converted to a mosque. Its origins were in the 4th century so would have been known by John Chrysostom. The difference here is startling compared to Hagia Sophia. In 1945 the site was designated a museum, and Byzantine scholars took part in a restoration program that revealed many of the original wall paintings which are fantastic to behold. There are images of Jesus healing a leper, feeding the five thousand, and turning water into wine. In 2020 the site returned to use as a mosque but all

apart from the central prayer room remain with the Byzantine Christian images revealed for all to see. In fact, to enter the prayer room you must pass underneath an icon of Christ.

It was strange to visit this ancient Christian site in a city that was once the centre of the Christian world but is now a post-Christian city. Apart from the in the Archaeology Museum and a handful of other places, evidence of its great Christian past was virtually non-existent. It is still a religious city – there are hundreds of mosques and the call to prayer regularly echoes through the city – there is little evidence of Christianity, past or present. I wonder about our country, or the rest of Europe, where huge cities are now largely secular with no time for religion (and especially Christianity). I wonder what the religious landscape might look like in another century. I wonder what the fate of all the church buildings might be. But I think of John Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed preacher and am reminded that the calling of the church is to proclaim the faith afresh in each generation. And that is how we stop becoming a post-Christian society.

Fr Philip

From the Churchwardens

Hope you all have had a lovely summer, and enjoyed the various visiting priests who have led the Sunday Holy Communion service throughout the month of August, including the special visit of Stephen, Bishop of Lincoln. As far as we are aware all the priests have enjoyed their visit to St Denys and this is due to the warm welcome everyone of us offers. So a big pat on the back to all of us.

As we write, work has commenced on the second phase of the roof repairs. This includes the north transept and nave. It is hoped when the inclement weather of winter arrives nobody should experience an impromptu shower! Thus far, the work carried out on the south transept roof have passed the ultimate test when we experienced a couple of severe storms during July with no signs of water ingress. As we have reported in the past the roofs of St Denys are complex and prone to various ailments. Once the current work is complete we should be able to look forward to a period of stability and wet free pews, pulpit and such like.

Also, during the summer period the Yarborough Room in the Parish Centre had a new heating system installed. The old gas heaters have been replaced with five radiators which are serviced by a new gas boiler in the Parish Centre kitchen. One of the advantages of the new system it is now possible to have greater control of the heating controls eliminating the need for individual hall users having to adjust the old gas heaters during the winter period.

Coming up. There are some fund raising events planned for the autumn. The first of these is Puzzles in the Pews being held on 27th September, 10am till 1pm, hosted by the Rotary Club of Sleaford. The jigsaw puzzle proceeds go towards St Barnabas, whilst the proceeds from accompanying teas, coffees and cakes will go towards the upkeep of the church. If anyone can donate a cake please let Sarah know. In addition look out for a Quiz Night and annual Harvest Lunch.

The due process on the TV screens is still ongoing. A faculty application has been submitted to create a secure area for storing the screens when they are not in use. Faculties can take a while to process, and at times become quite frustrating, but they do ensure we act responsibly when making changes to the fabric of the church building. Best described they prevent a PCC removing an ancient, but rather tired looking, high altar with a flat-pack equivalent. Applying for a faculty does protect the heritage and tradition aspects of our Grade I listed status. Hopefully more information on the progress of this application will be available in the October Bulletin.

... and finally:

Hotel humour: I said to the porter, "What's the idea of giving me one black shoe and one brown shoe?" He aid, "I'm sorry sir. That's the second time that's happened this morning!" - Tommy Cooper

21st September, 1884, and all that.... by Douglas Hoare

We all know that lightning struck St. Denys's during morning service, that the tower's foundations were inadequate and that the tower was rebuilt. (Note the mixture of old and replacement stone.)

Less well-known is that summer, 1884, was notorious for its many thunderstorms. Symons's Monthly Meteorological Magazine records strikes at Grimsby Docks Station, Waltham and West Marsh (Grimsby) on 12th August, and on 21st September at Worlaby Top

(Brigg) and a fodder stack locally, as well as this church. St Denys's was not unique: New Mills Catholic Church, Glossop, was also hit that Sunday.

Nationally that summer, there were 35 fatalities. We must be grateful that, despite the frightening experience for our congregation - see The Sleaford Gazette - there was none at St. Denys's.

GET FIT FOR LIFE ^{NK}

Why not enrol on a 10-week course that will not only teach you about health, nutrition and exercise, but also encourage you to change your lifestyle.

North Kesteven District Council's Health Trainer is looking for people who want to:

- Lose weight
- Be more physically active
- Learn about food that is good for them and how to cook healthy meals
- Try different types of exercise
- Change their lifestyle!

WHO CAN COME:
Anyone over the age of 18 who lives, or works in North Kesteven, has a BMI of over 25, and would like support/motivation/encouragement to make healthy lifestyle changes

VENUE:
St Denys Community Room Sleaford

WHEN:
NEW GROUP STARTING Every Thursday 9.30-11.30am 2nd Oct - 11th Dec

FREE

INTERESTED IN ATTENDING?
To book your place call 07733368676 or email deborah_chessum@n-kesteven.gov.uk

North Kesteven DISTRICT COUNCIL




William Alvey School Bishop's Visitor Update

The new term and new school year begins in the first week of September. All the children change classes and move up a year and new children join the Reception year and become "Alvians". There will also be a brand new Nursery opening with children aged 3 and 4. Welcome to all who are new!

The end of term in July was busy and exciting as expected. I went to the Y6(aged 10/11) Leavers Show dress rehearsal. All the leavers took part in songs and energetic dancing from shows including "Oliver", "Wizard of Oz" and "Mary Poppins"

The whole school came into church for the Alvey Day service, to commemorate William Alvey, founder of the school in the 1700's, to lay flowers on his grave in the chancel and to wish all the leavers well. In another old tradition the Headteacher gives the Vicar £2 in coins!! There was lots of

wonderful singing and music from children of all ages to enjoy and I read Bishop Stephen's end of term letter to all church schools in the Diocese.

I also went to a whole school Assembly to say farewell to Mrs Browning, deputy headteacher, who is retiring after 37 years teaching at the school. What a fantastic milestone to achieve! Best wishes to her for a long and happy retirement. I look forward to visiting the school again shortly and finding out how everyone is after the summer holidays.

Beryl Risdell



Funeral and Thanksgiving Services

Please remember in your prayers

Doris May Tebb
Jamie Mawer
Roderick Carlyle

Bible Reading

Proverbs 24. 23-25

These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. He that saith unto the wicked, Thou are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.

The Collect for John Chrysostom

O God, who gave your servant John Chrysostom grace to proclaim your righteousness and to bear witness to your Name, grant that we, like him, may speak the truth with power and serve you faithfully all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PUZZLES IN THE PEWS

Sale of
jigsaws, games and
children's books

Saturday, 27th SEPTEMBER
10am - 1pm
in Sleaford Parish Church,
Market Place, Sleaford, NG34 7SH

Raising funds for St Barnabas
Supported by the Rotary Club of Sleaford
and Sleaford Parish Church
Tea, coffee and biscuits available
Cake stall

Please ring 07989 993287 if you have any puzzles,
games or children's books to donate

St Barnabas
Rotary Sleaford

CAKE STALL



The church are having a cake stall at 'Puzzles in the Pews'.

Donations of cakes will be gratefully received.

Proceeds from the cake stall are for church funds. Thank you.

Church Services

(Morning prayer is usually said at 8.45am on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday)
Said Communion every Wednesday at 10am
(1st Weds of the month is BCP)

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, 3rd September

10am BCP

Sunday, 7th September

10am Trinity XII

Wednesday, 10th September

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 14th September

10am Holy Cross

Wednesday, 17th September

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 21st September

10am Matthew

Wednesday, 24th September

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 28th September

10am Michael & All Angels

Wednesday, 1st October

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 5th October

10am Harvest

HARVEST LUNCH

Sunday, 5th October in the Church Hall.

More details nearer the time.

MIRABILE VOCAL ENSEMBLE PRESENTS EARTH & SKY

A choral journey through nature, from celestial wonders to earthly beauty

With special guest appearance by Lee Mitton-Rooke,
Director of Music St Denys, Sleaford

Artistic Director - Anthony Rose
Accompanist - Richard Cox

Saturday 11th of October 2025 | 7:00pm
St Denys Church, Sleaford, Lincolnshire,
NG34 7SH

Tickets available

via QR code or

via website:

Full Price: <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q7MWMR9Y>

Concessions: <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q393QAYZ>

Full Price: £12

Concessions: £10



No more weeping, tho' the world is troubling.
Chiefly man made, but I'll go to a quiet glade
where choirs of birds render a happy song
filling our woodlands - and hills the day long.
Butterflies a' tumbling way, in hedgerows play.
Dragonflies & damselflies flit o'er a stream
totally absorbed in their dancing dream.
Perhaps here, I may find a kindred mind - and
together we'll leave the inhuman world behind.
Sharing a glimpse of paradise, our new eden
once seemed lost, but now no longer tossed
o'er stormy seas. Oh with hearts set free
Joyously we'll gladly respect on bended knee.
Jenny Whybrow
(published with permission of the author)
Submitted by David Birks

COMMUNICANTS' GUILD

The Guild will be meeting **in Church at 2 p.m.**
on Tuesday, 16th September for a service of
Holy Communion.

You are very welcome to join us.

Disclaimer: Please note that the opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors.
They do not reflect the opinions or views of St Denys PCC.