



ST DENYS BULLETIN

November 2026



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FROM THE VICARAGE

In 1980 Eric Bogle, a Scottish/Australian folk singer wrote a powerful song, performed by many groups including the Pogues and the Dubliners. *The Band Played Waltzing Matilda* tells the human story of the Gallipoli campaign from the First World War through the eyes of a soldier who survived. After being hit by a Turkish shell that took his legs, this amputee discovers his new condition with the words "And when I woke up in me hospital bed / And saw what it had done, well I wished I was dead / Never knew there was worse things than dyin' ". It is a power line that I recall each remembrance tide. But the song gets more poignant. "And so now every April, I sit on me porch / And I watch the parades pass before me / And I see my old comrades, how proudly they march / Reviving old dreams of past glories / And the old men march slowly, old bones stiff and sore / They're tired old heroes from a forgotten war / And the young people ask, "what are they marching for?" / And I ask myself the same question."

We might replace April with November (the Australian day of remembrance is Anzac Day - 25th April) and the men who fought in both world wars are no more. But in this town, there are service personnel who have seen active combat, who have fought in forgotten wars; there are people living locally who have been taken captive as a prisoner of war (by nations who do not recognise the Geneva Conventions) or have seen comrades killed; there are padres who have ministered on the battlefield or in the field hospital to the injured and dying.

As the shadow of war grows darker – Ukraine, the Near East, Iran – this world feels like a more fragile and dangerous place. I wonder if the world of the early to mid-1930s felt similar to today. As we approach Remembrance tide my thoughts are not just about those who have died in conflicts, but those who have carried life changing and life limiting injuries for the rest of their lives. My thoughts drift back to Eric Bogle's song, and the question his anonymous singer-soldier asks – what are we marching for?

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The church is open daily from 9am

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At best it is to remember with gratitude the sacrifice of past generations so that we might learn from history and live in peace and posterity. But the world is not so simple. The world is still a volatile place and after decades of relative peace in Europe that peace feels more fragile than ever. So, what do we march for, what do we fight for? The 'protests' or riots in France only heighten that sense of volatility. Even if the cause is good (e.g. education) the method (destruction and violence) is not. War should be a last resort to protect what we value and hold dear. The great Christian thinkers Augustine and Thomas Aquinas who laid the foundation of a what a just war looks like were very clear - our Christian values and ethos must underpin what we fight for and how we engage in the struggle.

Fr Philip

Prayer from the Liturgy of Remembrance

Ever-living God we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Wisdom of Solomon 3.1-3 (NRSV)

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 'In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more'.



Funerals and Memorial Services

Please remember in your prayers

Pauline Elaine Smith

Aged 71 years

Henrietta Hedwige Jane Priestley

Aged 79 years

Pauline Horton

Aged 91 years

(Former choir member)

ABOVE OUR HEADS

The Stamford Mercury for 29th January, 1875, reports: 'The restoration of the nave roof of the church has been in progress some time, and we are now promised a speedy completion.' As regards roofs, the chancel was reroofed in 1872 – 1873, the transept in 1880, the baptistry in 1885 – 1886 and the south aisle 'by public subscription in memory of Thomas Parry' in 1887. That over St Hugh's chapel must be 1853.

Former roof-lines can be seen in two places. First.

Go down Eastgate and look at the wall over pitched roof over the chancel before the 1430s rebuilding?

Second, look at the wall over the chancel-arch. Again, at the sides are the lines of a roof which preceded the addition of the clerestory. Note, too, the differences in the stonework – bigger lower down and smaller above, indicating again additional work on the clerestory.

Douglas Hoare

Church Services

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

NOVEMBER

Sunday, 1st November

10am All Saints Day
3pm All Souls Service

Wednesday, 4th November

10am BCP
7pm Confirmation

Sunday, 8th November

9.30am Remembrance
10.45am on the Market Place

Wednesday, 11th November

10am Said Communion,
10.45am Remembrance

Sunday, 15th November

10am Second before Advent

Wednesday, 18th November

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 22nd November

10am Christ The King

Wednesday, 25th November

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 29th November

10am Advent I,
3.30pm Christingle

Wednesday, 2nd December

10am BCP

FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

ROOF

During October we spent a large amount of time working on the South Transept roof. This involved clearing a lot of debris in the gutter and sealing the joints of lead covering the south-west corner. There is still some work to undertake and this will continue throughout the coming months. One project which we intend to undertake to run a strip of chicken wire along the four edges of the solar panel area. This should prevent the resident pigeons using the underneath area of the solar panels as a local Airbnb facility. They do create a lot of mess and run the risk of causing collateral damage to the main structure of the roof. Fortunately we have a new "young" member of the regular maintenance group who, to quote: "if I can be of any help with maintenance work don't hesitate to ask me".

POPPY DISPLAY

The Sleaford Royal British Legion group have done a marvellous job in creating a stream of poppies which are now on display down the side of the south-west corner of the church. Several people within the local community helped to create the poppies and on Thursday, 22nd October a team from the legion fixed the display to the church building. The display did incur a small amount of damage when storms Austen and Boelo blew into Sleaford but this has been repaired and the display is a tribute to the magnificent skills of everyone who took part in its construction. Many people have remarked how good the display looks.

CONFIRMATION SERVICE

St Denys is hosting a Confirmation Service on 4th November, which is being conducted by the Bishop of Grantham. If you are able please come along to give some visible support to the candidates.

CHURCHYARD

Following an on-site meeting with representatives of Sleaford Town Council we are holding discussions regarding, in our opinion, the poor state of the churchyard. As Churchwardens we are requesting the churchyard is maintained to our specification. We are amenable to helping the council by clearing specific areas of the churchyard and as a consequence are creating a managed compost heap in the north-east corner. Included in this project is a plan to give better access to the "lock up" with a possibility of being able to open this up for organised visits. Also, the original west-end tracery, which is located in the east end of the churchyard, is being cleared of all the surrounding wild shrubbery so it becomes more visible.

FUNDRAISING

Quiz Night, November 21st, 7pm, Parish Centre. Due to restrictions of numbers we are able to have 10 teams, with a maximum of 6 per team. There will be a raffle during the evening. More info in the weekly service sheet.

SLEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL'S CHRISTMAS MARKET

This year's market is taking place on 29th November and, as in past years, we will be putting up the gazebo to serve teas, coffees and soup. New this year we will also be serving mulled wine. The Christmas service, held during the afternoon, will take place within the church.

STALL AT THE CHRISTMAS MARKET

On Saturday 28th November of the Christmas Market weekend, there will be a stall in Church selling a gentleman's unwanted clothing. Good quality and good condition, and suitable for the winter weather.

All proceeds will go to St. Denys' Church

SLEAFORD KESWICK BIBLE MINISTRY

Friday, 13th November at 7.30pm

Riverside Church

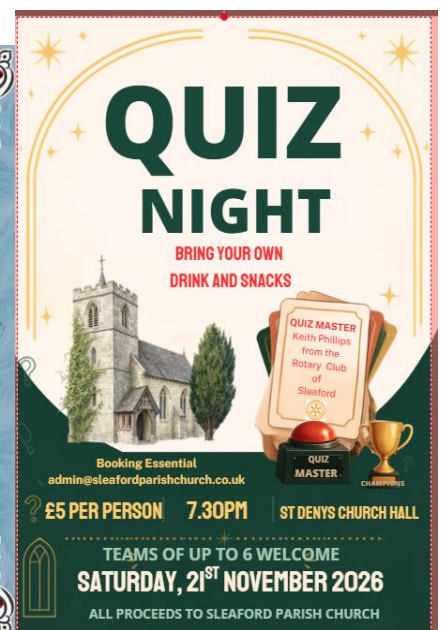
Tim Yearsley

Creative Disruptor for the London Institute for
Contemporary Christianity

COMMUNICANTS' GUILD

We shall be meeting in the Church Room on **Tuesday 17th November at 2 pm**. Our speaker will be Kelly Hughes.

You are most welcome to join us.



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