



# St Denys Bulletin

The church is open daily from 9am

April 2024

## Services at a glance:

- Every Sunday 10am  
Sung Eucharist
- Every Wednesday 10am  
Said Communion
- Mon, Tues and Thurs  
8.45am Morning Prayer
- 1st Sunday 5pm Compline
- 2nd & 3rd Sunday  
5pm Evening Prayer
- 4th Sunday 5pm Evensong
- 5th Sunday 6pm  
United Service

## Directory: Vicar of Sleaford and Rural Dean

The Rev'd Philip Johnson  
01529 304348  
revdphilip@aol.com

## The Parish Office

Parish Administrator  
Paula Ireland  
Market Place, Sleaford,  
NG34 7SH  
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  
01529 302775

## Letter from the Vicar, Rev'd Philip Johnson

I am sitting in front of my computer to write this letter on Holy Saturday – the day poised between-Good Friday and Easter Day. After days of torrential rain (much of it coming through the roof of the Lady Chapel) today is a glorious spring day. I have just watched my favourite sporting conflict of the year: the epitome of amateur contests – a boat race on the Thames between two ancient universities. I am a Light Blue man, just in case you were wondering. Although the conditions (sunny, little wind) were in some ways ideal for the contest, in other respects the conditions were far from perfect. Normally the contest is rowed on an incoming tide, but this year the heavy rains in the preceding days meant that the downstream current cancelled the incoming tidal stream. In fact, the end of the men's race (the last race of the day) was rowed against the current. Perhaps this is why the Cambridge Stroke, Matt Edge, almost collapsed in the boat – for the last few minutes of the race his blade was barely dipping into the water and his head was lolling, but by sheer determination he kept sliding back and forth before collapsing

backwards as the boat crossed the finishing line.

The change in direction of the current was not the only issue they had to deal with. The heavy rainfall has caused significant sewage leaks into the river. Several members of the crews had been affected by vomiting caused by the faecal bacterium E. coli, a consequence of the sewage in the river.

The Boat Race is always challenging. The course is 6.8km miles of curving, tidal river, compared to the Olympic courses which are 2km, straight, in lanes, on a still water lake. But this year the challenges were even greater. As I watched the races, I could not help but reflect on the story of Holy Week and Easter. The crews of each boat dedicate months of their life for this one contest. They make

sacrifices, not for great rewards (there is no prize money or medal), but simply to give their all to try and win. The pain that they experience over this gruelling course can be seen in the faces of winners and loser alike. But that pain stretches back over months of training.

I thought of Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying that if there were another way, an easier way, the cup could be taken from him. But there was no other way, no short cut to glory. I thought of the pain that Jesus suffered, in trial, torture and crucifixion when I saw the face of the Cambridge Stroke, who had given his all, collapsed in the boat, saliva dripping from his mouth and incapable of getting out of the boat, needing the help of friends to lift him.

But that was not the end of the Boat Race Story, and neither is it the end of Holy Week. The pain of Good Friday is transformed to joy of Easter and the resurrection. On the banks of the Thames the utter exhaustion of the race is transformed for the victors to utter joy as they lift the trophy. The transformation is remarkable, you might barely believe they are the same rowers who crossed the finishing line 30 minutes earlier.

Perhaps the only way we can really comprehend the Easter story is by making connections with things we know and understand. And perhaps we need to learn something from sportswomen and men of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

## From the Churchwardens

### Easter

One of the busiest and intense festivals in the church calendar is now complete. Bearing in mind the current conflicts around the world Easter presented us with good reason to desire a greater need for peace, calmness and forgiveness. Many thanks and appreciation must go to those among our family of worshippers who took part in the services throughout Holy Week and to those who helped to prepare the church for the climax of Easter Sunday. It was very much appreciated.

### Vicar's vestry

Since the fire occurred in the vicar's vestry last year there has been slow but sure progress in fulfilling repairs to the damage caused. The contents have been deep cleaned and the entire room has been washed down. The next step in this process is decorating the area with masonry paint.

## A Closer Look

### MORE MYSTERIES

#### from Douglas Hoare

Even after 60+ years of coming to St Denys's, I still discover unknown / unexplained features. Here are three:

1. The holes either side of the kitchen door: Why are they there? Did they accommodate some sort of beam that went across to prevent the door's being opened for entry/ exit?
2. The shallow recess in the stonework to the right of the kitchen



When this has been completed then the vestry will be back to its full use. One bonus point in this drama is that it has given us an opportunity to have a tidy up and have an opportunity to declutter some extraneous items which have built up over a long period of time.

### Lady Chapel

Work is continuing on the Lady Chapel roof. Some of the roof tiles have been replaced but the most complex part of the repairs is addressing the poor condition of some of the woodwork supporting the guttering.

### Market Place

It seems to be "all quiet on the western front" at the moment. We understand Sleaford Town Council is applying for a judicial review which, as a consequence, means everything is on hold until the review is complete. Watch this space!

### Quinquennial Inspection

During April the church will undergo a Quinquennial Inspection

door: Was there perhaps a screen here that formed part of the St Christopher (?) chapel?

3. The strange stonework in the north-east corner of the Holy Trinity chapel at the east of the south aisle - this is the most intriguing of the three: Is there a face at the top? Do the carved lines denote wings or vestments? How old is it? Was the damage inflicted during the Reformation / Civil war?

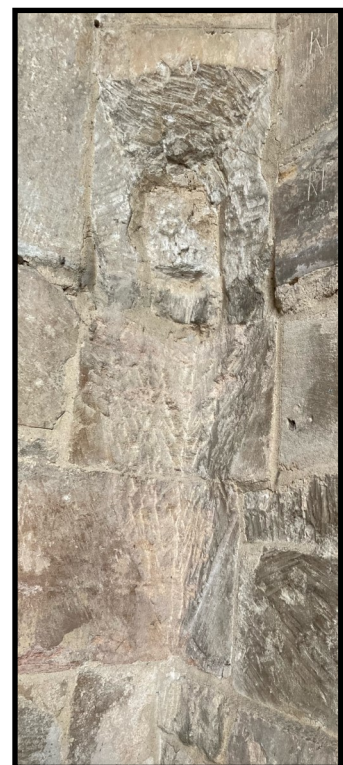
(Concerning the rood screen, history records : "On Tuesday, 31 October 1559, 'the roode, Marie and Johne.....were burned in the Markett Place of New Sleaforde.'" Was this image defaced / damaged then?)

As ever, please, any information from any source would be very welcome.

(QI). This is a comprehensive inspection of the fabric of the church building and is carried out by a qualified architect. As the name implies the inspections are theoretically carried out every five years, though in practice the time scale is somewhat extended. The last QI report was carried out in 2015 so we are a little overdue. As always with these reports there will be various building works that will need addressing. They are normally classified as Urgent, To Be Address in xx years, Advisory. More details will be published in the May Bulletin.

### Nominations for Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The APCM is being held on 28th April, 11:30 am. At this meeting nominations are received for membership of the PCC. This year anyone who wishes to be on the PCC, with the exception of ex-officio members, must complete a nomination form and these are available by the notice board on church. The PCC is an important body within the overall management of the church. We appeal to all who regularly worship at St Denys to seriously consider if you would agree to stand for PCC nomination.





## William Alvey School Bishop's Visitor Update

As we moved through Holy Week we arrived at the end of term and holidays again. I reached the milestone of 11 years as Bishop's Visitor, with the third headteacher since I began. I can hardly believe it!

Early in March we had visitors from the Rotary Club of Sleaford Kesteven in assembly to present Rotary Stars awards to children who had proved themselves good citizens and been recommended by their teachers for various activities, good deeds or acts of kindness. One child from each year group was rewarded and their parents were there to see and hear why they were selected.

When the Vicar visited he told the Bible story of Jesus feeding the

5000. He asked the children who they thought had provided the boys small picnic of loaves and fishes which had been shared and fed so many. The children thought his mum had so the story neatly fitted Mothering Sunday the previous day! We've also heard more "ow" "wow" and "now" moments from children brave enough to stand in front of the whole school and tell of them.

The Y1 classes (aged 5/6) spent an afternoon exploring the church and finding out all kinds of things about the building and why they are there and the stories they tell. This was all part of the RE curriculum.

On the Wednesday of Holy Week the whole school came to church to hear the story of Jesus and the disciples from Palm Sunday to the Resurrection on Easter morning and we enjoyed singing some wonderful hymns and songs. I was able to read Bishop Stephen's termly Letter to all the church schools in the Diocese. A great way to end the term for me!

*Beryl Risdell*

### Know your PCC Who am I?

1. I started going to church in my late teens when I became a helper with the Brownie pack, first as Tawny Owl and then nine years as Brown Owl. I was also a member of the church choir for over 40 years as well as several other involvements!
2. I have enjoyed many holidays in Scotland, including pony trekking and white water rafting.
3. I moved to Lincolnshire in 2006 where the scenery and landscape is totally different from the county I moved from.

Answer next month  
March - Philip Starks  
February: Sarah Stentiford

### Bible Reading

#### Colossians 3.1-3 NRSV

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.



### Alternative Collect for Easter (Common Worship)

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.



### Funerals and Memorial Services

*Please remember in your prayers*

John Ivor Lewin 15th March 2024  
Aged 92 years

### From the newspapers

#### Easter 1854

In the week before Easter a Fund amounting to the magnificent sum of £78 1s. was collected and then applied by the Vicar and Churchwardens to the following payments, viz: - for gas and coke, for lighting and warming the church, and for Easter dues and salaries, to the Organist, Choristers, Clerk, Sexton, and Sexton's Wife, &c, &c

The Fund to be annually provided has been aided by the following subscriptions: -

Donations ranged between 1 shilling and two pounds. Among those who gave £2 were the Vicar of Sleaford, Mr Moore, Mr Peake, Mr Snow, Mr Kirk and Mr Parry.

# 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)

## **Sunday, 7th April**

10am Easter II, No evening service

## **Wednesday, 10th**

10am Said Communion

## **Sunday, 14th April**

10am Easter III, 5pm Evening Prayer

## **Wednesday, 17th April**

10am Mid Week Communion

## **Sunday, 21st April**

10am Easter IV, 5pm Evening Prayer

## **Wednesday, 24th April**

10am Mid-Week Communion

## **Sunday, 28th April**

10am Easter V, 5pm Evensong

## **Wednesday, 1st May**

10am BCP

## **Sunday, 5th May**

10am Easter VI, 5pm Compline

The clock ticks quietly from the mantle shelf,  
a small bird sings out happy songs.  
And a kettle boils on the homely hearth.

Snug and warm this tiny place,  
hidden away from a world gone mad,  
A secret sanctuary  
where a sad heart may rest awhile.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,  
here, those words ring true as in the stable long ago  
was love, simplicity and peace.

Jenny Whybrow  
(published with permission of the author)  
Submitted by David Birks

## COMMUNICANTS' GUILD

The next meeting of the Guild will be held in the Church Room on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 2 p.m. Our speaker will be Jane Wright from Mary's Meals, who encourage education in poor communities through the provision of a daily meal. Do come and join us – our meetings are open to everyone.

## APCM and ELECTORAL ROLL

The APCM will be held in church on **Sunday, 28th April** after the morning service.

If you are not already on the **Electoral Roll** but would like to join, please ask Angela Clash or a Church Warden ~There are also some forms at the back of church.



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.