

March 2026

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
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The Parish Office

Parish Administrator
Paula Ireland
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01529 413607

Mon, Weds, Fri 9-11am

Churchwardens

Richard Clash
07714 565678
Sarah Stentiford
07707 513225

**Safeguarding
Officer**

Angela Clash 01529 410065
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Director of Music

Lee Mitton-Rooke
lee.rooke@googlemail.com

St Denys Bellringers

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PCC Treasurer

Brenda Hitchcock
01529 302775

St Denys Bulletin

The church is open daily from 9am



Letter from the Vicar, Rev'd Philip Johnson

The Winter Olympics are dominating the TV schedules as I write. This has been a fantastic year for Team GB – three gold medals so far. We have only ever won one gold medal in any Olympiad and only 12 winter gold medals in total. This is an exceptional year! I enjoy skiing but could not imagine competing at this (or any) level. I am amazed by the skill and dedication of the competitors. What we do not see is the months, years of hard work, or competitions, of injuries... of picking themselves up and trying to do, whatever it is that they do, a tiny bit better. When I watch a figure skater attempting a Triple Lutz (taking off from one foot and landing on the other but achieving three full rotations whilst in the air) I often wonder how many times they failed, how many times they have fallen and hit the ice, how many bruises they have had over the years. And yet they still continue to strive to be the best.

This level of dedication and practice is not only found in sports.

Professional musicians have a similar regime of practice which requires disciple and determination. Of course, there are always those who imagine that they are better than they are, sometimes with little evidence to support it. Lady Catherine de Bourgh in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* probably speaks for many when she says, "There are few people in England, I suppose, who have more true enjoyment of music than myself, or a better natural taste. If I had ever learnt, I should have been a great proficient."

To learn a skill and then practice to be the best requires dedication and discipline. The word disciple is derived from the word discipline. To be a disciple of Christ means to live a disciplined life. In other words, if we claim to be a disciple of Christ then we ought to be putting as much effort into our spiritual life as a top athlete or concert pianist. During the season of Lent we are

encouraged to reflect on our failures – the stuff that we have got wrong and repeatedly get wrong – and then to try to do something about it. That is what the abstinence element of Lent is all about. There is no point in giving up chocolate for Lent if we are not fussed whether we eat chocolate or not. But what about the things that are harder to give up? Athletes and musicians improve by addressing the small things that are holding them back, often one small thing at a time. And that requires serious self-examination. Each year during Lent we are called to that level of self-examination, not to wallow in self-pity, but in order that we can work at those things in us that need to change. This disciplined life enables us to be better disciples of Christ, reflecting the love and grace of God in our world.

Fr Philip

From the Churchwardens

CHURCHWARDEN'S LUNCH

We would like to thank everyone who were able to attend the Churchwarden's Lunch held in February. Everyone seemed to be very happy the way it all turned out and on the day 51 place settings were catered for - as far as anyone can remember this was a record for such an occasion. On the day over £400 was raised for church funds and this now seems to have become an annual fixture. Get ready to book your place for next year's event. The next lunch event will be in May when we hold our Annual Parish Church Meeting.

TV SCREENS IN CHURCH

It seems a very long time since the PCC agreed for the church to purchase two big TV screens to show proceedings during various church services. One hurdle to overcome was to identify a secure area in church whereby the screens can be stored when not in use. An area has been identified which meant a faculty application to install a door behind the toilet pods was required. This faculty has now been granted and so we move on to the next stage of the project, that is, creating the door and subsequent installation. All that remains to be said is: "Watch this SPACE - or should we say SCREEN".

CHURCH GUTTERS

Every year one of the more mundane jobs to undertake is to clean/clear the various church roof gutters. At the moment no date has been fixed for this but if anyone is willing to help please make yourselves known to us. We usually carry out this task on a Saturday morning - so no excuses about having to go to work. What is involved? Well, for insurances purposes you need to be under the age of 80 and be fairly agile; possess a pair of soft shoes; have a head for heights; and be prepared to dispose of the odd pigeon etc. There is one positive aspect of joining in the fun: you have excellent views of Sleaford. It is hoped a date during the Spring period will be arranged.

FROM THE CHURCHWARDEN'S LOG BOOK

Riveting items from 2020:

February: full electrical check of the church carried out.

March: Covid infection begins to affect the many routines of the church.

March: worship is suspended until further notice.

April: the pages of the Book of Remembrance were maintained for visual purposes only.

April: only one Churchwarden allowed into building to check everything was in good order.

June: church building prepared for opening.

Opened for two hours per day - Mondays to Fridays.

July: Damaged stained glass window repaired.
August: Church opening on Mondays and Fridays suspended.

December: 10am service of Holy Communion commences.

... and finally

During a recent visit to my doctor I was advised to attend the local Yoga Evening Class. What a disaster. All that arm raising, leg stretching, standing up and down and pushing and pulling. By the time I had got my yoga costume on the class had all gone home.



Funerals and Memorial Services

Please remember in your prayers

Mr Graham Philip Vickers 69 years
Mrs Janet Nickle Kay Fergus 90 years
Mrs Ann Brown 78 years

LUMOS

**A Hans Zimmer
candlelight experience**

an unforgettable evening of music in an enchanting indoor setting

St Denys Parish Church, E Gate
Sleaford
NG34 7SH
Friday 13th March
2 Sittings: 7-8pm | 9-10pm

SCAN ME

Book tickets now!
www.lumos-experiences.com

**The Collect for Ash Wednesday
and every day in Lent
(Book of Common Prayer)**

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible Reading Joel 2. 12-13 (NRSV)

Return to me with all your heart, says the LORD, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment.

More 'lost' Vicars?

by Douglas Hoare

In the list of vicars of St. Denys's under the tower are several names with dates. Alas, so far, I have been unable to unearth any information about them. The dates come from Yerburch / Creasey's and Trollope's histories of Sleaford.

The relevant reverend gentlemen are 1467: John Walker; 1477; Richard West; 1489: Adam Grafton; 1491: Gilbert Cowell; 1539: William Warre; 1587: Thomas Westcott.


Incidentally, since today curates seem rare, this was the clergy hurter in 1526: vicar: John Godfrey; asst. curate: Robert Walker; chantry chaplains: Robert Reed, William Walker and Robert Bayte (later vicar in 1539).

Spare these past clergy a thought in your prayers and be grateful for their ministry.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday, 6th March 1.30pm Our Lady of Good Counsel
Service prepared by women from Nigeria.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES are due to be opened in March, Brenda will collect if you are not able to bring them to church. Thank you.



The Mayor of Sleaford,
Councillor Alison Snookes,
invites you to a

Charity Quiz Night

on Saturday 21st March 2026,
at St Denys' Church Hall,
Market Place, Sleaford, NG34 7SH

Arrival from 6.30pm for a
7.00pm start.
£5 per person.

Teams of 6 max. Cash raffle.
Bring your own food & drink!
All money raised will go to Sleaford
Cats Protection and Mosaic Youth Hub.

*To book your place, please call
the Sleaford Town Council office on
01529 303456 or email
enquiries@sleaford.gov.uk*



**Sleaford Choral
Spring Concert**
Saturday 28th March
7.30pm
St Denys' Church
Sleaford

Benjamin Britten
SAINT NICOLAS
Sir John Stainer
THE CRUCIFIXION

Conductor: Rowland Lee
Tenor: Chris Why
Baritone: Charlie Trueman
Organist: Ed Wellman

Follow us at: sleafordchoralsociety.co.uk
Registered Charity 518318

Purchase tickets at [Ticketsource](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/L-plizari)
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/L-plizari>
Ticket price £12, U16 free.

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)

MARCH

Sunday, 1st March

10am Lent II

Wednesday, 4th March

10am BCP

Sunday, 8th March

10am Lent III

Wednesday, 11th March

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 15th March

10am Lent IV (Mothering)

Wednesday, 18th March

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 22nd March

10am Lent V

Wednesday, 25th March

Annunciation

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 29th March

10am Palm Sunday

Wednesday, 1st April

10am BCP

Sunday, 5th April

Easter Day

6am Sunrise Service

10am Sung Communion

No evening service



The poster features a stylized illustration of three blue mountains with three crosses on top, set against a light blue background. Below the illustration, the text is arranged in a clean, sans-serif font. The title 'EASTER SERVICES' is in a larger, bold font, with 'Holy Week' underneath it. The schedule is listed for each day of the week, with specific times and activities for each.

EASTER SERVICES Holy Week

Monday and Tuesday
8.45am Morning Prayer
7pm Compline

Wednesday
10am Said Communion
7pm Stations of the Cross

Maundy Thursday
8.45am Morning Prayer
7pm Holy Communion with stripping of the altar followed by the vigil

Good Friday
11am Walk of Witness
12pm First hour
1pm Second hour
2pm Liturgy of Good Friday

Easter Day
6am Sunrise service
10am Sung Communion

A vale of tears, yet a vale of love
Tempests roar and the world is black
Yet if we allow LOVE in, 'He' doth lead us back
To that sanctuary where the sun is warm
Where biting winds wreak less harm
There in designated peace, sad tears may fall
And though your brave heart may quail
Because we really feel so small
Yet in truth, we're never alone
'He' feels our pain
And holds us close, till we're strong again
Walking beside us, though the path be steep
Enfolding and sustaining us, whilst we weep.
Jenny Whybrow
(published with permission of the author)
Submitted by David Birks

**SLEAFORD KESWICK
BIBLE MINISTRY**
Friday, 13th March 2026
at 7.30pm
Riverside Church
Marytn Taylor
Rector of
St George's, Stamford

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.