



St Denys Bulletin

The church is open daily from 9am

April 2025

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
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of action)
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The Parish Office

Parish Administrator
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Mon, Weds, Fri 9-11am

Churchwardens

Richard Clash
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Safeguarding Officer

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Director of Music

Lee Mitton-Rooke
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PCC Treasurer

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

On Palm Sunday (weather permitting) our service will begin on the Market Square. We will lift our palm crosses high, and we will process, singing the traditional hymn, around the church before finding our usual seats. It will be orderly and civilized, but much as I enjoy this service it bears little resemblance to the original entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Like so much of our retelling of the story of Jesus the context is sanitised and Westernised. We probably think of the crowd as people like us; our idea of 'rowdy' is probably drawn from a rowdy football crowd.

Jerusalem is an Eastern city, and the culture is quite different. Modern day Jerusalem is actually quite Westernised – the Jerusalem of Jesus' time would probably be more like modern-day Iraq or Afghanistan. It was edgy; it was volatile. Unrest and violence were never far below the surface of every-day living, and it could flare up very quickly.

Jerusalem was under Roman occupation, which many resented. There were numerous rebel groups and factions which organised regular up-risings and insurrections (what we might call today terrorist activities). But these various factions were only united in their loathing of Rome – on their other objectives, or what they wanted in place of Roman control, they could not agree. The streets were patrolled by Roman peace-keeping troops in an attempt to create a safe environment for normal life to continue.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem he was greeted with cheers and shouts of joy, but what those who greeted him expected (or hoped) from him is more ambiguous. We all tend to assume that others think pretty similar to me (unless it is obvious they don't)! I doubt anyone was

surprised when Jesus went straight to the Temple, but I equally doubt that anyone expected he would cause havoc in the Temple courts as he drove out the money-changers.

As we look at our world today, especially the lands that Jesus knew, we may reflect that nothing much has changed. Insurrections, violence and terror are still used by numerous factions to destabilise governments and impose their views or culture on a population. And through it all normal life continues as best it can: children are educated, families are fed, the elderly are cared for.

As we journey through Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Good Friday we learn once again what it means to walk the way of the cross. It means learning to set aside selfish ambitions and listening for that still, small voice of God that calls us to follow him. That is the only route to true and lasting peace.

Fr Philip

HOLY WEEK AT ST DENYS

During Holy Week, The Bishop of Grantham will be leading most services, starting with Stations of the Cross on Wednesday, 16th April at 7pm.

Bible Reading

Luke 19. 38 (NRSV)

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!

From the Churchwardens

EASTER SERVICES

During the lead up to Easter Sunday the majority of our services will be led by the Bishop of Grantham, Dr Nicholas Chamberlain, who will start by officiating at the Stations of the Cross ceremony (16th April). He will also be helping with the Maundy Thursday vigil, taking part in the Walk of Witness during Good Friday morning and sunrise service on Easter Day. Our vicar recently remarked that a bit like buses you wait for one for ages then two turn up in succession recalling the recent visit from the Bishop of Lincoln. Currently the Church of England and bishops in particular are not getting the best of presses and so it is hoped our parish can offer Dr Nicholas a warm-hearted St Denys welcome.

CHURCH LOG

One of the responsibilities of a Churchwarden is to maintain a log of church activities - other than services which are recorded in the Register. It is one of those "must do" responsibilities but over a long

period of time there have been gaps where the log has gone "absent without leave". The current log book for St Denys starts with 2015 and should anyone feel the need to view its contents then please speak to Richard Clash. To illustrate the variety of items which gain an entry the following are some examples.
23 January 2015: DAC Heating Adviser visit. Richard Taylor came to review and compile a report regarding possibility of installing under-pew heaters.

18 March 2015: Civic Trust AGM/ Award Ceremony, Solo Club. SD was awarded top honour for the new toilet pod. Had to hand the plaque back to CT while a new one was being prepared.

9 April 2016: Removed overgrowth in churchyard adjacent to Vicarage Court property.

6 September 2016: New pew cushions delivered and set in position.

18 January 2017: Meeting with Quarrington and Silk Willoughby parishes re future of parish magazine.

20 May 2017: Cleaning in church - good turnout.

18 March 2018: Bishop of Lincoln to lead 10am service - cancelled owing to inclement weather.

24 August 2018: Top Vestry alarm set off at 2:50am.

31 August 2018: Top Vestry alarm set off at 4:20am.

16 February 2019: Wholesale clearing of accumulated rubbish.

18 July 2019: Solar panels professionally checked.

27 February 2020: Archdeacon visitation: all silver reported present and correct.

17 March 2020: Worship is suspended until further notice. Instruction from Archbishop of Canterbury and York.

12 July 2020: Church worship was allowed to take place with various limitations ...

AND FINALLY ...

A man went to see a psychiatrist. He said: "It's odd, but I feel that I'm a zebra. Everywhere I look on my body I see black stripes." The psychiatrist said: "Take one of these pills every day for a week and it should get rid of the black stripes." He came back in a few days and said: "Doctor, I feel great. The black stripes have gone. Have you anything for the white ones?" - *Tommy Cooper*



The Alternative Collect for Palm Sunday Common Worship

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. Amen.

An even older burial? by Douglas Hoare

In the floor near the nave organ is a slab with the matrices of a cross and two figures. They might be from the 1270s and could be Thomas Blount and John de Brecham, merchants 'of Lafford'.

They founded the chantry of St Mary in 1271. For its upkeep, its revenues came from innumerable plots and properties in and around the town, and the foundation charter mentions over 120 people whose lands lay near them.

Nearby is another slab - whose? The inscription has disappeared except for the '8th of the month of September' - in which year? P.S. The issue of the site of the Carre vault still has to be resolved.

THE BAND OF THE RAF COLLEGE

Lunch Time Concert

ST DENYS'S CHURCH - SLEAFORD

FRIDAY 25TH APRIL 2025

12:10^{PM} - 12:50^{PM}

Performed by Ensembles of the Band of the Royal Air Force College
(The Ensemble plays by permission of the Air Force Board of the Defence Council)

FREE ADMISSION

ROYAL AIR FORCE



William Alvey School Bishop's Visitor Update

Since Half Term in whole school assemblies we have been re-visiting the theme of "Courageous Advocacy" and being reminded of what it means, what it involves and how we can all endeavour to make it work in school every day. We remembered collecting crisp packets a while back and turning them into waterproof bivvy bags to help homeless people who regularly sleep outdoors in all weathers. We were told that nine members of the school staff were to sleep out at Peterborough Football ground in aid of the homeless on the night of 14th March to raise funds. A cake sale was held in school and a "guess how many sweets in the jar" competition for the children. The staff involved would be sleeping outside in the open with only cardboard for a mattress and blankets and sleeping bags.

The night in question was very cold and turned very wet and only two staff members managed to remain dry all night because they had a "crisp packet" bivvy bag to keep off the wet!! The others were

all soaked through. What a brave effort by everyone and they raised £1395 for the homeless charity. Some of the children had slept on their bedroom floors or on a sofa the same night in solidarity with those outdoors and reported it was very uncomfortable compared to their bed and all were glad it was only for one night! They are all heroes! On 6th March I attended a Bishop's Visitor Training Meeting held at the New Life Centre in Sleaford with members of the Diocesan Board of Education staff. These are opportunities for us to meet other Bishop's Visitors in the area and share our thoughts and ideas about our work in the church schools. I also received my brand new updated lanyard/identity card which I wear in school during visits and events, a replacement for the one I have had since I began this ministry in 2013.

Recently the school hosted a netball tournament with five other local schools. The Alvey team won 4 of their 5 matches and drew 1 so they were the Gold Medallists. Well done and congratulations to the team. This week we have had the Rotary Club visit again and present more

Rotary Star certificates and badges to children who were recommended by their teachers or parents for putting service of others before self either in school, at home or the wider town, one from each year group in school. Well done every one of them – heroes all. We also sang the Alvey Song, whose chorus is "Once an Alvian, always an Alvian (sung, 3 times) The William Alvey School." which the children really enjoy singing. Then we finished with the Alvey Blessing. These are the words

Blessing and laughter be yours,

The love of a great God Who names you and holds you,

While the earth turns and the flowers grow,

This day, this night, this moment and forever. Amen

Term ends next week for the Easter holidays and we will welcome the whole school into church again for a celebration service on 1st April and I will read the Bishop's Letter sent to all church schools in the Diocese.

From the newspapers

23rd April 1881

Restoration in the Parish Church - It will be seen by advertisement in today's Gazette, that aid is being solicited towards completing the restoration of our Parish Church of St Denys, Sleaford, in memory of the late Mr Parry, who had this work so much at heart. There are, to meet the wishes of some friends, two subscription lists opened - one to contain the names of those who desire their gifts to be applied to the cost of erecting a highly ornamental roof over the Baptistry - the other to record those who give their aid towards the expenditure on the North East and South Aisles. It is hoped that the amount - about £500 - will be readily contributed. Subscriptions will be received, duly acknowledged, and advertised by the Vicar.

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, 30th March

10am Lent IV (Mothering) Rev'd David Woods)
6pm CT at the Methodist church

Wednesday, 2nd April

10am BCP

Sunday, 6th April

10am Lent V (the Archdeacon of Lincoln will be presiding), 5pm Compline

Wednesday, 9th April

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 13th April Palm Sunday

10am Sung Eucharist, 5pm Evening Prayer

For Holy Week Services please see separate entry We will be joined by the Bishop of Grantham.

Wednesday, 23rd April

10am Mid-Week Communion

Sunday, 27th April

10am Easter II, 5pm Evensong

Wednesday, 30th April

10am Said Communion

Sunday, 4th May

COMMUNICANTS' GUILD

The next meeting of the Guild will be held in the Church Room on **Tuesday 15th April at 2 pm**. Our speaker will be Philippa Peach from The Children's Society.

Do come and join us – our meetings are open to everyone.

What would you have us do Lord?

Oh please, reveal our task for today.

Show us those in need Lord.

Equip and set us on our way.

To effect oh Lord, your will for us on earth.

But, we can't always discern it Lord,
however hard we search.

We're hungry Father, tho' our plates be full.

Longing for that which is other,

your sweet, strong heavenly succour.

Manna raining on earth each day.

Food divine and holy, oh feed us Lord we pray.

Jenny Whybrow

(published with permission of the author)

Submitted by David Birks

Easter Services at St Denys

Palm Sunday

10am Sung Communion, 5pm Evening Prayer

Holy Week

Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th April

8.45am Morning Prayer, 7pm Compline

Wednesday, 16th April

10am Said Communion,

7pm Stations of the Cross

Maundy Thursday

8.45am Morning Prayer

7pm Holy Communion with stripping of the

altar and vigil

Good Friday

11am Walk of Witness - meet on Station Road,
ending with a short service on the Market Place,

12pm First hour meditation

1pm Second hour meditation

2pm Liturgy of Good Friday

Easter Day

5.30am Sunrise Service

8.30am BCP

10am Sung Easter Communion

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.