

LodeSTAR

St Andrew's Church Magazine for the Parish of Soham

30p

February 2010

Services at the Parish Church

Sundays 8:00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 9.30 am Sung Eucharist (ASB)

Thursdays 10.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 3rd Sunday 9.30 am Family Service

OBERRAMMERGAU 2000

Visiting Oberammergau is an overwhelming experience. My mother and I were there in 2000 on a day of such scorching heat that we felt completely involved in our transportation to Jerusalem and the last seven days in the life of Christ. As is well known the residents vow of 1633 has shaped the village ever since. In that year Oberammergau, in the midst of the 30 years war, was stricken by Plague. The people prayed to God and promised to enact the Passion of Christ every ten years if he



stopped the spread of the disease. From that day on no further "black deaths" were recorded and the play was first performed in 1634. The Passion of Christ is "the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ".

Only twice have the villagers been unable to fulfill their promise of a play a decade. Once in 1770 when the Church itself prohibited any staging of passion plays and in again 1940. At that time many of the villagers were in the German Army and the Nazi regime frowned upon the staging of religious plays.

Over the centuries it has changed from a purely local act of devotion to an international media event. There is an emotional intensity about amateur theatre which the professional stage seldom equals. With a cast of more than 1000, not counting sheep, doves and the donkey which carries Christ into Jerusalem - this is amateur dramatics on an epic scale.

It takes 7 hours to perform the play, which is divided into episodes spoken and sung in German (translations are available in the theatre or local shops). After a prologue the action begins with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. After Christ's capture on the Mount of Olives there is an intermission. The timing of the production in 2000 was 9am to 6pm with a 2 hour break for lunch.

As an aside having looked at the official web site for the Oberammergau Passion Play (www.oberammergau-passion.com) I find that in 2010 the performance timings will, for the first time, be different. The play will start at 2.30pm until 5pm followed by a three hour break. It resumes at 8pm and finishes at 10.30pm. This means the play is somewhat shorter than previously. All your questions about this year's performance and Oberammergau in general can be answered by investigating this web site.

Back to 2000: Lunch was organized with military precision as 5000 people in a small village could revolve in circles trying to find food - therefore on entry to the play at 9am every person was given a ticket telling them exactly where to go in Oberammergau for lunch. Of course we had time before, during lunch and after the play to browse in the village, famous for its wood carving industry. For every grocers or ironmongers shop there must be 3 hotels and 5 woodcarver's shops and studios.

The village is small and pretty, a prosperous tourist place with colourful frescoes on the walls of its old houses, and fields full of cowslips. The visitor can never forget that this is not as other villages are because of the beards. The actors despise spirit gum and greasepaint, so they spend the year preceding the production nurturing beards of biblical majesty. In a place so eminently respectable they introduce disorientating overtones of Woodstock! Jesus lopes around in jeans and a headband, St. Peter is a bank clerk, and in the interval in 2000 I saw Caiaphas jump on a bicycle in his robes to go home for lunch.

[to be continued]

WE ARE STILL HERE TO HELP!



Deniva is the name of the Soham Mobile Warden Scheme which offers support, reassurance and services to elderly and isolated or vulnerable people in Soham and the surrounding area. Deniva is run by a local voluntary committee under the umbrella of Care Network and in partnership with Viva Arts and Community Group. Deniva is now two years old and the scheme has gone from strength to strength. Deniva employs two fully trained wardens and offers the following services:

A trained Warden to contact you regularly at home - A daily phone call, Monday to Friday, to check you are OK - Up to three visits per week - Collection of Prescriptions - Collection of Pensions - An emergency contact to come out in response to calls via your personal alarm - Help with form-filling and making appointments - Other practical support (such as emergency shopping or some small domestic tasks) - A reliable link with statutory care services - A social link to Soham life - Reassurance for members and their families and friends

You can become a full member of the scheme and benefit from all of these services for just £3.00 per week plus an annual fee of just £12.00. Alternatively we offer a temporary membership for people to use for a short period of time – maybe when relatives or friends are away or after a hospital stay when you need more help than usual. Temporary membership is just £7.50 a week.

If you would like to know more about Deniva or to sign up as a member please contact our wardens Maureen on 07876401110 or Angela on 07787240291.

Lent 2010

Lent is very nearly upon us; Ash Wednesday falls on 17th February this year. There will be a service of Holy Communion at 10.00 am and a sung Eucharist with the imposition of Ashes at 7.30 pm. Details of Lent groups are not available at the time of printing, but should be available in church.

Coffee Morning

This will be held at the Vicarage on Tuesday, 9th February from 10.00 am till noon. Last year St Andrew's became a Fairtrade church – as did the diocese of Ely. One of the things that we undertook to do was to hold an event in Fairtrade fortnight (which actually begins the following week). Please come along and find out more about how the type of coffee we drink makes such a difference to the people who grow it. Our family service in February will also focus on the Fairtrade theme; it is called a Tea Service. Come along to our Family Eucharist at 9.30 am on Sunday 21st to find out more.

Calendar for 2010

At the January PCC meeting, we discussed the calendar of events for this year. The list below represents the highlights of our extra activities, in addition to our regular events and services. I do hope that there is something in the list for everyone. Further details of the events will appear in forthcoming editions of *Lodestar*.

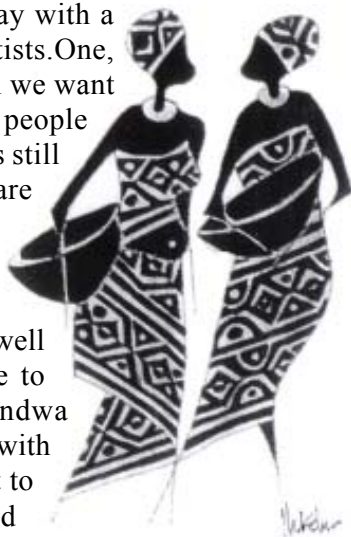
Here are some of the highlights of the calendar for the year ahead:

Tues 9 Feb	Fairtrade Coffee Morning at the Vicarage	Sat 3 Jul	Cambridge Concert Orchestra in Church
April	Easter egg-related fun...	Sun 8 Aug	Duck Race – perhaps with a new course...
Sat 15 May	Quiz with Bring & Share Supper at St Andrew's School	Sun 5 Sep	Church Barbeque – at a venue to be confirmed
Sat 12 Jun	Church Fete in the churchyard	Sun 3 Oct	Harvest Festival followed by Harvest lunch at St Andrew's School
Sat 26 Jun	Pudding Evening & Silent Auction at St Andrew's School	Sat 23 Nov	Church supper at St Andrew's School.

Stunning exhibition of African Art and Candlelit Service to mark World Aids Day

Fordham and Quy Deanery marked World Aids Day with a debut art exhibition of work by three Ugandan artists. One, Lukandwa Dominic, wrote, ‘through the exhibition we want to show that despite the suffering inflicted upon our people by AIDS, we are able to create and show that God is still reigning in our lives through our talents and we are showing this to the whole world to see.’

Our connection with the artists comes through Judith Goddard, who has worked for the blood transfusion service in Uganda. She lives some of the year in Burwell and has brought paintings home with her for sale to friends and in Centrepeace. Judith knows Lukandwa Dominic particularly well. As a small boy he drew with sticks in the dust in his rural village. When he went to secondary school his teachers recognised and encouraged his talent. He stumbled across a batik artist and taught himself the process of painting with wax. Through sales of his art he has been able to pay his university fees and pay for his siblings to go to school.



Doors opened at 3.30pm and within ten minutes Reach village Centre was full of people buzzing with excitement at the vibrancy of the pictures. By the end of the day over £2,200 worth of paintings had been sold. Thank you to everyone who came, who enjoyed the paintings, who bought paintings, who wrote of their delight in the exhibition visitors’ book. The artists were thrilled at the response shown to their work.

For the service we gathered by candlelight in St Etheldreda’s church. The service began with pupils from Soham Village College, just back from Capetown, South Africa, singing and drumming as they walked up the aisle. The beauty of their singing, the beat of their music and their willingness to give up their time set the tone for the service. Judith Goddard illustrated the impact of HIV/Aids in Uganda: there are two articles about HIV/Aids in every daily newspaper, and before retrovirals were available about 10% of the staff of companies and organisations were dying of HIV/Aids. Judith told stories of staff greeting the New Year with, “thank God I am alive”. The availability of retrovirals is giving people diagnosed as HIV positive a much better quality and length of life, but now there is a rise in new infections, which may be due to complacency. Judith also told us of Lukandwa Dominic’s excitement when he googled his name and found the exhibition featuring his work written about in the Lodestar.

Since the event Lukandwa Dominic has sent us this message: “I wish to extend my thanks to everyone who came to Reach. This was a rare exposure of our work to the UK and the world. To the organisers, Judith, Jo, Sue and others I thank you. To the people who came to the service to remember and pray for the families of victims, thank you. To those who allowed us into their homes by buying our work that will permanently be displayed there, thank you. I pray for the Lord’s blessings to each one of you who in some way contributed to the success of the exhibition, I’ll always remember you.” Further examples of Lukandwa’s work can be viewed at www.batikartist.blogspot.com. A few paintings remain available for purchase. If you are interested in viewing them please contact Jo Jones, 01638 743131.

In addition to supporting the work of the artists with the money from the sale of his paintings Lukandwa has been able to buy a plot of land to build a house - over £300 was raised for charities working on HIV/Aids in Uganda and 450 beaded Aids badges from Capetown, South Africa were sold round the Deanery. Mothers with children who are HIV positive earn vital income by making these badges in addition to regaining self-esteem and confidence. As we wear the badges they continue to be a visual reminder of all those affected by HIV/Aids in the UK and around the world. Our solidarity and prayers mean a great deal to the huge number of people and communities affected. *Jo Jones, Sue Evans, Jan Frost, Judith Goddard*



A Councillor's Comments

The December meeting was held on Monday the 14th and I was unable to attend as I had another commitment, but I will view some agenda items and report what I know.

The most important item at this time of the year is the setting of the precept for next year. Some figures had been calculated on past and present performance but the council had to consider future commitments such as the redecoration of the Cemetery South Chapel, Joint Minor Highways Improvement Works and Fencing/Security Work on the Allotments. Apart from the costs associated with these the council had to consider, and budget for, the cost of remodelling the Pavilion. The plans that have been presented and accepted by the council are extremely good and when we have a business plan to turn these plans into reality Soham will have a community facility that will be of great benefit to our community. This will not come cheap and so the council has set a precept of £202,000.

Barleyfields Junior Football Pitch and Associated Facilities: This was another important agenda item with a view to try to end this long running saga of the unfinished estate and the promised Junior Football Pitch. Cofton had gone into administration and was unable to complete the final work on the estate to bring the roads up to the standard required by the County Council for them to take over responsibility, but they had also not completed the Football Pitch and Changing Room plus connecting services to it. This had to be done before Soham Town Council could take this facility under their control. This is a great shame because there are young people with leaders available to train them in the sport. This item was put on the agenda for the council to plan a way forward.

Again there was no public comment time so our January Council meeting began at 7.15pm. We had several items on the agenda, so after the usual opening items we moved on to a presentation by the Green Infrastructure Development Officer from East Cambs. Talking about Biodiversity & Conservation Projects in East Cambridgeshire he outlined a variety of things that could be done and said there was some funding to support such projects. Because he was talking here at Soham, he pointed out the lack of trees and woodland in our area and suggested this was one of the things that could be done to improve the quality of our biodiversity. He was asked if this was in any way linked to another agenda item called Woodland in East Cambridgeshire. This was presented in a letter from the Sustainability Officer encouraging us seriously to consider the possibility of creating some form of woodland. He said that the conservation projects were a separate issue but creating woodland could be in line with them.

Soham Vision: We had a report on the final meeting of the working party of the vision, this was when councillors were given a presentation on the draft report of the working party's endeavours. They have come up with some very imaginative ideas and it will be interesting to see how many of them become reality. There will be a final consultation with the public when all is completed. One hopes that the good ideas they have come up with will not be cancelled out by piecemeal development. One could think of a proposed Railway station where the site has a proposed development, and the good use made of the unused spaces behind the shops where yet another house may be squeezed in. It is only when the vision plans are set in concrete that these ideas maybe, will be safeguarded.

Soham & East Area Neighbourhood Panel: We had the usual reports from the police about how they are tackling the priorities set by the panel. One pleasing report came from both the Inspector and the chairman where they both praised the setting up of the youth shelter on the recreation field. The funding was made available for us but the council had to agree to its acceptance and where it could be set up. The police were happy that the young people had somewhere to hang out with their friends and they in turn could know where they were.

The priorities are still about anti-social behaviour but it is hoped this will now be reduced.

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- ❖ **The Knit and Knatter Group** meets on Thursday afternoons in the Community Room in the Crescent. New members are always welcome to come along from 2-4pm to share knitting tips and patterns and learn new techniques - or even to learn to knit. In addition to our own projects we are also knitting blankets for Macmillan Nurses, and school jumpers for Feed the Children.
- ❖ **The Family Service** in February will be on the 14th of the month, which is Mothering Sunday. The 9.30am Service on the 21st February will be Sung Eucharist.
- ❖ **Home & College Valentine Ball** – Saturday 13 February in Lodeside Hall, 7.00pm - midnight. Tickets, £27.50 each, are now available from John Hickmott on 01353 723308. The price includes a champagne reception, three course supper and dancing to Groove Unltd plus support group. This is always a really enjoyable evening event. Do gather together a group and enjoy your own table for dinner and dancing.
- ❖ **Many congratulations** to all the winners of the St Andrew's Church 200+ Club bumper Christmas draw in December. They are as follows: £10 - Katie Driver; £15 - Mr R Webster; £25 - Mrs K Hobbs; £50 - Brian Fordham; £75 - Sandra Constant; £100 - Neil Pollard. Tickets are now available for this years St Andrew's Church 200+ Club. Call Linda Palmer on 722196 or Lynne Webb on 720155.
- ❖ **Articles for inclusion in the March** issue of Lodestar should be with coordinator, Alison Palmer, Oak House, 41 Sand Street, Soham, CB7 5AA (alisonpalmer@oakhouse24.freeserve.co.uk) no later than 15th February.

Youth Theatre to get beastly with Ely

The award-winning Viva Youth Theatre are rehearsing hard for their next show, Beauty and the Beast. The ambitious and enchanting musical featuring a local cast will take place at The Maltings, Ely at 7.30pm on Thursday 4, Friday 5 and on Saturday 6 February with an extra performance scheduled for 2.30pm

Beauty and the Beast is a musical based on the 1991 Disney film of the same name and it ran for over 5000 performances on Broadway between 1994 and 2007. It tells the story of Belle, a beautiful and intelligent girl, and the Beast who was once a handsome Prince, but was turned into a monster by a cruel witch. The Beast takes Belle's father prisoner and only frees him when Belle agrees to stay with him forever.

Tickets can be booked in person at Burrows Bookshop Ely, Soham Books and at the The Maltings, Ely or through www.wegotickets.com/vivagroup.

For more information about this release contact Frank Crosby on 0759 5119582 or email vivacentre@hotmail.co.uk.

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Barlyfields Junior Football Field: The council are now making a move to take this facility over for the town, but there is work to be done to sort out the pavilion on the field and the field itself. A contractor is being approached to do the necessary work.

Soham Youth Safe Project: There was a written report on a meeting about work among young people. The youth shelter was mentioned and the skate park that will be installed once it has been decided what type to go for and the cost. By providing young people with activities they would like to do we may go some way towards cutting down on youth disturbance.

Community Facilities in Soham: It is hoped that shortly we will have chosen someone to produce a business plan for the re-modelling of the pavilion.

Soham Preservation Trust: The first meeting has been held, and it was very promising. Its aims are to protect and preserve the valuable landmarks in our town.

Just a few words

Tim Alban Jones

Dear friends,

It is with some considerable relief - and possibly a similar amount of trepidation – that we can announce the start of the work to the church. It has certainly taken a long time finally to reach this stage. There have been several false alarms, but we really have made a beginning on the long-awaited re-ordering project.

As outlined in earlier editions of the Lodestar, we are installing a small kitchenette and a loo at the back of the church, which will enable us to use the church more fully during the week, and not just on Sundays. This involves the removal of the organ and the erection of a gallery to support the newly re-modelled instrument. There will also be a re-organisation (though not removal) of some of the pews at the back of the church in order to make a bit more open space under the new gallery.

We are also doing some re-ordering to the east end of the building. The plan is to make the present vestry into a proper meeting room, to return the present Lady Chapel to its original use as a vestry and to install some heating in the Chancel, which will be properly screened off and therefore will become the new Lady Chapel.

Inevitably this will involve a degree of disruption to the day-to-day running of the church. A temporary electronic organ has already been put in church ready for when the existing instrument is dismantled. We hope to keep the disturbance on weekends down to a minimum. We are planning to hold the regular mid-week Thursday morning Communion Service in people’s homes during the worst of the disruption. We will pin a notice up on the church door to notify the members of the congregation or you can ring me at the Vicarage (720 423) and I will gladly tell you in whose house we shall be each week.

Thank you, in advance, for your forbearance. May we also ask for your continued support in the form of prayers as the work progresses.

Yours sincerely, *Tim Alban Jones*

PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms

6th December	Jayden Michael Lee Collen Emma Olivia Godfrey
27th	Halle Ogilvie

Funerals

4th December	Dorothy Esme Morton
8th	Joan Byford (73)
10th	Denis “Jack” Hogg
22nd	George Thomas Langman
8th January	Olive May Palmer (86)
11th	Eileen Fowkes (87)
13th	James “Jim” Barber
19th	Derek Bradley
22nd	Ernest Arthur Eley (83)

Wedding

23rd January	Andrew Willett and Kerry Crisp
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