

The benefice of
St Withburga, Holkham, All Saints, Warham
All Saints, Wighton and St. Nicholas, Wells - next - the - Sea



Sunday 2nd January 2022

2nd Sunday of Christmas

Todays Services

9.30am Holy Communion at Holkham Hall Chapel

This service will be recorded and uploaded to YouTube later in the day

11.00am Worship for All at St. Nicholas, Wells

Please stay for refreshments after this service

6.30pm Taize Evening Prayer at St. Nicholas, Wells
and via Zoom

This Week

Wednesday

10.00am Holy Communion at St. Nicholas, Wells

Thursday

10.00am Quiet Prayer at St. Nicholas, Wells

1.45pm Little Fishes at St. Nicholas, Wells

Saturday

10.30-12.30 Messy Church at St. Nicholas, Wells

Next Sunday 9th January

9.30am Holy Communion at All Saints, Wighton

11.00am Holy Communion at St. Nicholas, Wells

6.30pm BCP Evening Prayer at St. Nicholas, Wells

Unto us a Son is Given by Alice Meynell

Given, not lent,
And not withdrawn - once sent,
This Infant of mankind, this One,
Is still the little welcome Son.

New every year,
New born and newly dear,
He comes with tidings and a song,
The ages long, the ages long;

Even as the cold
Keen winter grows not old,
As childhood is so fresh, foreseen,
And spring in the familiar green.

Sudden as sweet
Come the expected feet.
All joy is young, and new all art,
And he, too, whom we have by heart.

Our Prayers

In our benefice this week we pray especially :-

- for those who need our prayers - Archdeacon Ian Bentley, David Jagger, Chris Beale, Baby Evelyn, Amanda Newton, Diana Claxton and Stella Richardson

- for those who have died recently - Lady Jean Wood and Jean Whitaker

- for those who have died at this time in years past - Frank Bradfield, Mary Sandwell and Derrick Goodman

The funeral of Jean Whitaker will be Friday January 21st 2.30pm at St. Nicholas, Wells followed by burial at Wells cemetery.

"The Wells Churches Together Christmas collection raised £424.60 for St Martins Housing Trust. Marion Perryman says 'this is a very significant amount - a huge thank you to everyone who has donated to the collection.'"



*Alison's New Year Resolution
Don't fill your kettle more than
you need to. According to
theTimes, we are collectively
wasting three quarters billion
£'s a year in energy and 70m
litres of water a day!!*

Wells Churches collect for the Food bank. The collection boxes are now back in St Nicholas' church, Wells hospital and the Co-op are working together and deliveries are made from the hospital to those who need it in Wells and villages. Assistance can also be given to those struggling due to the rising cost of fuel.

Rector :- The Revd. Brenda Stewart 01328 710628 bas@con-brio.com

Churchwardens:

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St Nicholas, Wells Kate Clodd 01328 711312 kate.clodd321@gmail.com

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Benefice Pew Sheet: Rachel Newstead rknewstead9@gmail.com

Website: www.stnicholaswells.co.uk YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCbV-ISQrHQ1jZvnESfrY2A>

Today's Readings

The Collect

Almighty God,
in the birth of your Son
you have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word,
and shown us the fullness of your love:
help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love
that we may know the fullness of his joy;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Old Testament Reading Jeremiah 31.7-14

For thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.' See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.' For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

New Testament Reading Ephesians 1.3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus

Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Gospel John 1. 10-18

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."') From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Post Communion Prayer

All praise to you,
almighty God and heavenly king,
who sent your Son into the world
to take our nature upon him
and to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that, as we are born again in him,
so he may continually dwell in us
and reign on earth as he reigns in heaven,
now and for ever.

John 1.29 - 34. Oddly John refers to the occasion of Jesus' baptism but nowhere says that Jesus was baptised. He goes straight to the words of the Holy Spirit: "The one on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is to baptise in the Holy Spirit" John adds: 'I have seen it and borne witness: this is God's chosen one.'

Jesus' hidden identity as the Son of God is the dominant theme of John's gospel. This morning's passage comes straight after the marvellous gospel opening "In the beginning was the word..." which directs the thoughts of anyone who knows their Old Testament to its opening words and the creation story. Jesus is the Word that said "Let there be light!" and now ordains the New Creation: a world that is moving towards the making of all things new, starting with the renewal of humankind through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and leading up to the total renewal of all Creation at the Latter Day.

This renewal includes importantly for us the resurrection of the dead. In his book Resurrection the well-known writer Tom Wright shows pretty conclusively that in the church in the days of the Apostles and first generation Christians this was understood as a two stage process :- real death through natural causes or violence followed by a period of resting, then the resurrection for Judgment leading to eternal life or a second death, according to how you had performed. This is the normal pattern of the Judaism of the Pharisees, which was certainly St Paul's and probably of most of Jesus' other followers.

The Idea of an immortal soul that goes straight to heaven is not biblical. The word 'soul' rarely occurs in the Bible and usually means little more than a living being. It's best to stay with the group of ideas promoted by Tom Wright and use it to check out the more folklorish ideas that float around. Trouble is we usually come up against them in the achingly painful aftermath of bereavement and they may seem to offer comfort.

I'll know the final truth after I die, if I'm capable of knowing anything at all. Unfortunately I'll not be in a good position to tell you.

Fr. Peter