

Welcome

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

April 30th 2023 Fourth Sunday of Easter



Today's Services

9.30am 'Celebration of Spring'

11am Holy Communion, St Nicholas Wells
6.30pm Celtic Worship



In our prayers this week we remember....

- those who need our prayers: Mary Woolgar, Laurie Bryett, Richard Cracknell, Angela Fennell, Keeley Tipper, Evelyn Waits and Amanda Newton
- all those who have died recently: Lucy Gould, John Rout, Angela Martin, Michael Sidwell.
- those who died at this time in years past: Jenny Pickering, Betty Emerson.

This Week

Mon 1st, 12-1.30pm, a warm space and welcome waiting for you at the Community Lunch, Congregational Hall. Donation
Tues 2nd 3pm, Concert: Duos with a Difference (see opposite)
Wed 3rd 10.30am, Holy Communion, Methodist Church
Wed 3rd 3pm, Funeral of Lucy Gould, St Nicholas Church
Wed 3rd 6pm, Warham Annual Parochial Church Meeting, All Saints, Warham.
Thurs 4th 1.45-3pm, Little Fishes, Quaker Meeting House
Fri 5th 12noon, Wells Primary School Piano Recital (see opposite)
Fri 5th 4pm, Churches Together Choir Practice, St Nicholas Church

TODAY & TOMORROW WIGHTON SCARECROW FESTIVAL

Children's scarecrow competition at 2.30pm takes place on the common opposite the Carpenters Arms. Voting for the village competition, refreshments & raffle each day in the church.

Next Sunday, 7th May

9.30am Holy Communion, St Withburga Holkham
11am Worship for All, St Nicholas Wells
5pm Churches Together Choir Practice, St Nicholas
6pm Coronation Songs of Praise, St Nicholas

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YouTube link: St Nicholas Church Wells <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCbV-ISQ1HQ1jZvnESfrY2A>

Dates for your Diary

May 8th, NO Community Lunch at the Congregational Hall
May 9th 3pm, Concert: Amamusica, St Nicholas (see programme)
May 10th 1.30pm, Funeral of John Rout at St Nicholas followed by burial at the cemetery
May 10th Wed 3.30pm, Churches Together AGM. Methodist Church Hall - please come and support this meeting, hear about events and share your ideas.
May 11th 2-4pm, Coastal Community Supermarket, St Nicholas
May 12th 2pm, marriage of William Hey and Selcan Ayyun, St Nicholas
May 13th-20th, CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
May 13th Sat, 10.30am Coffee Morning & Bring&Buy Stall, at The Priory, Todd's Lane, Walsingham, in aid of Christian Aid
May 13th 2.30pm, Marriage of Thomas Maxwell and Troi Baxter, St Withburga, Holkham
May 14th 4pm, Rogation Service, All Saints Warham (outdoor weather permitting)
May 16th Tues, 3pm Concert: 'Amamusica' St Nicholas
May 20th Sat, 10-12am, Christian Aid Coffee Morning, Caprice,

St Nicholas' Spring Concert Season

Tuesday May 2nd

Duos with a Difference: Steve Bingham and Brenda Stewart (violin, viola, electric 5-string violin + bass pedals).

Friday May 5th, 12noon,

Music Recital performed by Wells Primary School pupils with music teacher, Matthew Preston followed by Soup Lunch (£5)

All afternoon concerts followed by Tea & Cake. Donations for St Nicholas Church. Please distribute programmes among friends, family and neighbours.

Supporting Mission for Seafarers....some incredible statistics: We operate in over 200 ports, 365 days per year, encounter 273,476 seafarers, 69,743 visits to our Seafarers' centres, 4,978 cases assisting Seafarers and their families, 1.4 metric tons of knitting!! (thank you for your contribution of knitted hats to the last statistic)

A display about the restoration of our fine 150 year old Forster & Andrews organ is now in church. Do take a look and you will see wonderful photos and detailed information on the history of the organ and its present state of decay demonstrating the urgent need for its refurbishment.

We are very grateful to Chris, our organist, and Christine Hey for assembling the display.

Many thanks to Geoff Finkemeyer, Mens Sheddars and Kevin and Tessa Thatcher for making and mounting the six bird boxes in the old churchyard. This was a one of the Conservation Activities run by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust (part of the Heritage Lottery Programme).



TODAY'S READINGS

COLLECT

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
raise us, who trust in him,
from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
that we may seek those things which are above,
where he reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

POST COMMUNION

Merciful Father,
you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be
the good shepherd,
and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again:
keep us always under his protection,
and give us grace to follow in his steps;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Acts 2.42-end

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were

1 Peter 2.19-end

For it is to your credit if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, where is the credit in that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.'

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Luke 10.1-10

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Our daughter was given a cade (bottle -fed) lamb to look after when she was about 10. Guess who the job mostly fell to. Every lunch time when I went over the road to feed her she gave a little bleat and ran across the field to meet me. She knew my footsteps (and my voice). Sheep aren't actually stupid, that reputation's a slander. Jesus refers to this instinct in his parable and goes on to apply it.

The sheep are God's flock, Jesus is the good shepherd, but there are many power-hungry pretenders, especially the Sadducees and other hangers-on of the Romans, hoping to grab what power the occupying forces leave for them. On the opposite hand are the Zealots, seeking to seize power by force of arms. These are the wolves and robbers. They are self-seeking and deluded and have no true care for God's sheep.

The idea of shepherds as those who have care for the people goes back to (possibly) David, in the 23rd Psalm - 'the Lord is my shepherd'. Here the good shepherd is God. The bad shepherds can be found in Ezekiel 34, where they are those leaders who care only to exploit the people. Jesus alone will give his life for the sheep.

It is often pointed out that I AM is God's answer when Moses asks for his name, so where Jesus begins a sentence in John's Gospel, with 'I am', as he does twice in today's reading, he is revealing who he really is.

He cares for all God's people because he is God. Trust in him, he is the true shepherd.

Speaking of TRUST, if possible, listen to Thought for the Day, Radio 4 April 26th, on Sounds and hear Sam Wells, St Martin in the Fields Rector