

The remaining **Annual Parochial Church Meetings** take place throughout April. Nomination lists will be up in the churches about a fortnight before each one, if you wish to stand either as a Churchwarden or as a member of the PCC during the elections at those meetings. It is probably worth reminding everyone that you must be on the Electoral Roll in order to vote; and also that –

If you are thinking of standing for election, you must:

- be on the church's Electoral Roll
- have received communion at least three times during the past year
- be aged 18 or over
- not be disqualified by law from being a charity trustee

Also – if you *are* thinking of standing for any of our PCCs, or as Churchwarden in any of our parishes, don't forget that nominations have to be **in writing**, and in Selwyn's hands before the relevant Annual Meeting begins.

Copies of the parishes' Annual Reports & Financial Statements, and the Agendas for those meetings, will be available in church at the same time.



Easter Vigil



Easter Day 2009

St John the Baptist, Alderford

6:00 am

As people arrive, a bonfire is lit near the church door, to enable the Paschal Candle to be lit from newly-kindled fire. Weather permitting, please gather round outside so that all that follows may take place publicly.

The priest greets the people in the usual way:

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, on this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members throughout the world to come together in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which through word and sacrament we share in his victory over death.

The new fire is blessed:

Eternal God,
who mad this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of thy one true light:
set us aflame with the fire of thy love,
and bring us to the radiance of thy heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Paschal Candle is marked with a cross, the letters Alpha and Omega, and the figures of the year:

Christ yesterday and today,
the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever. *Amen.*

The Candle is decorated with five grains of incense in the form of a cross:

EASTER WEEK

*The normal daily services will take place in each church;
except that there will be no service on Easter Monday morning,
and the morning service on other days will be a Eucharist*

Next Sunday: EASTER 2

8:00 am The Eucharist at Swannington
9:00 am Holy Communion (1662) - Canon Peter Halls
10:00 am Holy Communion (1662) at Great Witchingham
6:00 pm Evensong at Alderford

Future Events

Mon 20th 7:30 pm Weston Longville APCM
in the Parson Woodforde
Tue 21st 7:30 pm Swannington APCM in church
Wed 22nd 7:30 pm Benefice Eucharist with hymns
for **St George's Day** at **Great Witchingham**
Sat 25th 10:00 am Annual plant sale at Ringland church

We are proud and grateful to announce that the **re-opening of Attlebridge church will take place on Sunday 26th April, beginning at 10:00 am.** This is three years, almost to the day, since that church had to be suddenly closed because of the perilous condition of the roof. Since then

- the entire nave roof has been re-boarded
- the porch has been repaired and painted
- the medieval carving found many years ago has been installed at the entrance
- the whole building has been completely re-wired and new light fittings provided
- and we are waiting for much of the north aisle floor to be renewed, new tiles laid, and the old font replaced by the more elegant one from the disused St Faith's church, Lenwade.

So on Sunday 26th there will be a Eucharist of Re-Dedication and Celebration, led by Bishop Graham James, bishop of Norwich, and followed by refreshments suitable to the occasion (almost certainly in the garden of The Old Rectory next door, by kind invitation of the brand-new owners). There will be no other services anywhere that day; please do come and join in the re-birth of the sixth church in our team!

*Keep us firm in the hope thou hast set before us,
so that we and all thy people shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise thy name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The Blessing

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.
*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
Let the Church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting:
*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
Life is nought without thee: aid us in our strife,
Make us more than conquerors though thy deathless love;
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above:
*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia:
In the name of Christ, Amen: Alleluia, alleluia!

All this week we pray particularly for all who live and work around **Spring Farm** in Attlebridge, and in **St Faith's Close** in Great Witchingham.

Please continue to pray for the sick & those in need:

*Alic Bowen; Anne Dunn; Annette; Janet; Jo & Brian; Margaret; Kath Medlar; Val;
Enid Warnes*

By his holy and glorious wounds
may Christ our Lord guard and keep us.

Finally the candle is lit:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds. *Amen.*

Please move into church and find your place, **remaining standing**.
The priest raises the Paschal Candle and says:

The light of Christ.
Thanks be to God!

and the candles of those nearest are lit from the Paschal Candle. All this is repeated twice as the Candle moves down the nave. The light of Christ is thus spread throughout the building.

When the Paschal Candle has been placed in its stand, the priest intones the Easter Proclamation - an ancient hymn of thanksgiving for the light of Christ's resurrection. While this is being sung all the other candles in the church are lit, signifying the light of the risen Christ filling the world:

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
Exult all creation around God's throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendour!
Be radiant in the brightness of your King!
Christ has conquered! Glory fills you!
Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Saviour shines upon you!
Let this place resound with joy,
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

For it is truly right that with full hearts and minds and voices
we should praise the unseen God, our all-powerful Father,
and his only son, our Lord Jesus Christ:

For Christ has ransomed us with his blood,
and paid for us the price of Adam's sin to our eternal Father.

This is our Passover feast,
when Christ, the true Lamb is slain,
whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night
when first you saved our fathers,
you freed the people of Israel from their slavery,
and led them dryshod through the sea.

This is the night
when the pillar of fire destroyed the darkness of sin.

This is the night
when Christians everywhere,
washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement,
are restored to grace and grow together in holiness.

This is the night
when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death
and rose triumphant from the grave.

What good would life have been for us,
had Christ not come as our Redeemer?
Father, how wonderful your care for us!
How boundless your merciful love!
To ransom a slave you gave away your Son.
O happy fault,
O necessary sin of Adam
which gained for us so great a Redeemer!

During Communion we sing:

Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:

*Love is come again,
Like wheat that springeth green.*

In the grave they laid him, Love whom men had slain,
Thinking that never he would wake again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:

*Love is come again,
Like wheat that springeth green.*

Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
He that for three days in the grave had lain,
Quick from the dead, my risen Lord is seen:

*Love is come again,
Like wheat that springeth green.*

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Thy touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts, that dead and bare have been:

*Love is come again,
Like wheat that springeth green.*

The priest alone says a prayer of thanksgiving. We then say together

*Father of all, we give thee thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
thou didst meet us in thy Son and bring us home.
Dying and living, he declared thy love,
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share his Body, live his risen life;
we who drink his Cup, bring life to others,
we whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world.*

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

*Though we are many, we are one body
because we all share in one bread.*

*O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world:
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world:
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world:
grant us thy peace.*

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

*Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my
roof, but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.*

Most blest of all nights, chosen by God
to see Christ rising from the dead!

Of this night scripture says:
"This night will be as clear as day:
it will become my light and my joy."

The power of this holy night dispels all evil,
washes guilt away, restores lost innocence,
brings mourners joy:
it casts out hatred, brings us peace, and humbles earthly pride.

Night truly blest,
when heaven is wedded to earth,
and man is reconciled with God!

Therefore, heavenly Father,
in the joy of this night,
receive our sacrifice of praise,
your Church's solemn offering:

accept this Easter Candle,
a flame divided but undimmed,
a pillar of fire that glows to the honour of God.
Let it mingle with the lights of heaven
and continue bravely burning
to dispel the darkness of this night!
May the Morning Star which never sets
find this flame still burning,
Christ, that Morning Star who came back from the dead,
and shed his peaceful light on all mankind:
your Son who lives and reigns, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

After the Proclamation **please sit**. Guard your flame carefully as you will need it to follow the Psalms between the readings from Scripture. Please join in just with the **Response** where indicated; the choir will sing it twice at the beginning of each psalm, and will then sing the verses on their own.

First, the priest introduces the readings:

Let us now hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer; and let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun.

FIRST READING: Genesis 1, 1-5 & 26-end

After each reading:

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 136, verses 1-9 & 23-26

Response: *For his mercy endures for ever.*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is gracious,
(Response)

Give thanks to the God of gods,
(Response)

Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
(Response)

Who alone does great wonders,
(Response)

Who by wisdom made the heavens,
(Response)

Who laid out the earth upon the waters,
(Response)

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

The priest praises God for his mighty acts and concludes . . .

Therefore, with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we laud and magnify thy glorious name,
evermore praising thee and saying:

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

The priest continues with the Eucharistic Prayer over the bread and wine, recalling the Last Supper . . .

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

At the end of the prayer

Amen.

Please kneel

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

The peace is exchanged, and we sing the offertory hymn:

Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
First-begotten from the dead,
Thou alone, our strong defender,
Liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Jesu, true and living Bread!

Here our humblest homage pay we;
Here in loving reverence bow;
Here for Faith's discernment pray we,
Lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Thou art here, we ask not how.

Though the lowliest form doth veil thee
As of old in Bethlehem,
Here as there thine angels hail thee,
Branch and Flower of Jesse's stem.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
We in worship join with them.

Paschal Lamb, thine Offering, finished
Once for all when thou wast slain,
In its fullness undiminished
Shall for evermore remain,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Cleansing souls from every stain.

Life-imparting heavenly Manna,
Stricken Rock with streaming side,
Heaven and earth with loud hosanna
Worship thee, the Lamb who died,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Risen, ascended, glorified!

Who made the great lights,
(Response)

The sun to rule the day,
(Response)

The moon and the stars to govern the night,
(Response)

Who remembered us when we were in trouble,
(Response)

And delivered us from our enemies,
(Response)

Who gives food to all creatures,
(Response)

Give thanks to the God of heaven,
(Response)

The priest reads a **Collect**.

SECOND READING: Genesis 7,1-5 & 11-18; 8,6-18; 9,8-13

PSALM 46

Response:

The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains tremble in the heart of the sea;
Though the waters rage and swell,
and though the mountains quake at the towering seas. *(Response)*

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place of the dwelling of the Most High.
God is in the midst of her; therefore shall she not be removed;
God shall help her at the break of day.
The nations are in uproar and the kingdoms are shaken,
but God utters his voice and the earth shall melt away. *(Response)*

Come and behold the works of the Lord,
what destruction he has wrought upon the earth.
He makes wars to cease in all the world;
he shatters the bow and snaps the spear
and burns the chariots in the fire.
"Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth."
(Response)

The priest reads a **Collect**.

THIRD READING: Exodus 14, 10 - 15, 1a

As the reading ends, we join in the words of praise of Moses and his people:

...Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord:

(Response):
I will sing, I will sing to the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously.

Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and my might,
and he has become my salvation; *(Response)*

this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.
The Lord is a warrior;
the Lord is his name. *(Response)*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?
I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?
I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?
I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.
This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Almighty God, we thank thee for our fellowship in the household of faith with all those who have been baptised in your name. Keep us faithful to our baptism, and so make us ready for that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As the priest returns to the front, the congregation are sprinkled with water from the font in commemoration of our baptism. As the Paschal Candle is replaced in its stand, please extinguish your candles.

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. The peace of the risen Christ be always with you,
Alleluia, Alleluia!

And with thy spirit, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Mark 16, 1-8

At the end the reader says:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.

Then **please re-light your candles from the servers, and turn slightly to face the font.**

The priest asks the blessing of God's Holy Spirit upon the water of baptism, and lowers the Paschal Candle into the font. As it is taken out:

*Springs of water, bless the Lord;
Praise him and magnify him for ever.*

Together we now renew our baptismal promises:

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism, so that we may rise with him to a new life within the family of his church. Now that we have completed our observance of Lent, we renew the promises made at our baptism, affirming our loyalty to Christ, and our rejection of all that is evil.

Therefore I ask these questions:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you renounce evil?

I renounce evil.

And now I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

Pharaoh's chariots and his army he cast into the sea;
his picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea.
The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.
Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power -
your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy. *(Response)*

You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them.
In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed;
you guided them by your strength to your holy abode. *(Response)*

The priest reads a **Collect.**

FOURTH READING: Isaiah 55, 1-11

CANTICLE: Isaiah 12, 2-6

Response: *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation*

Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the Lord God is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation. *(Response)*

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.
And you will say in that day:
Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted. *(Response)*

Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.
Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. *(Response)*

The priest reads a **Collect.**

FIFTH READING: Ezekiel 36, 24-28

PSALMS 42, 1-5 and 43, 3-4

Response:

Put your trust in God, for he is our help and indeed our God.

As a deer longs for the water brooks, so longs my soul for you, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, even for the living God;
when shall I come before the presence of God? *(Response)*

My tears have been my bread day and night,
while all day long they say to me, 'Where is now your God?'
Now when I think on these things, I pour out my soul:
how I went with the multitude
and led the procession to the house of God,
With the voice of praise and thanksgiving,
among those who kept holy day. *(Response)*

O send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me,
and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling,
That I may go to the altar of God, to the God of my joy and gladness;
and on the lyre I will give thanks to you, O God my God. *(Response)*

The priest reads a **Collect**, after which the organ immediately begins the following hymn. All remaining lights in the building are turned on, and in the light and joy of Easter Day we move into the Eucharist:

*Glory be to God in heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing:
Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Lord, we thank you, Lord, we bless you,
Glory be to God our King.*

*Lamb of God, who on your shoulders
Bore the load of this world's sin,
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within:
You, O Son of God, are holy,
You we praise with one accord;
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored.*

The priest reads the **Easter Collect**, after which we sit and extinguish our candles.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Romans 6, 3-11

After the reading:

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the Cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the Cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains that he endured, Alleluia!
Our salvation have procured; Alleluia!
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!
Where the angels ever sing, Alleluia!

Please remain standing, and turn to face the reader at the back of the church. The Gospel of the Resurrection is symbolically proclaimed out into the churchyard.

*When the Gospel is announced:
Glory be to thee, O Lord.*