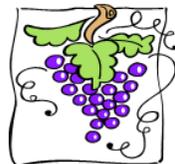


# GRAPEVINE

4th Sunday of Easter  
25th April 2021



Letting people know about the love of Jesus Christ



There are quite enough sheep already - be a shepherd: be somebody who's bold and who leads. Matt Bevin

## Welcome to St Peter & St Mary's Church

Have you ever been in that situation where you just wish the ground would open and just swallow you up?

When I was Team Vicar in Northampton, about 30 years ago, I also looked after a couple of small villages. I'd not been there long and while preaching at Evensong in Mears Ashby (pop. 420) I asked if anyone knew anything about sheep? The subject for my sermon was Jesus the Good Shepherd and, as a 'towny' I knew nothing about the animals and hoped that no one else in the congregation would either.

As soon as I had asked the question everyone in the Church turned and looked at an elderly gentleman who just smiled.

In a split second, I realised that I was in the heart of rural Northampton and the fields surrounding the village were full of sheep. From the smile on this man's face and the knowing looks on everyone else's, I could tell that I was in the presence of a bovine expert.

Then all eyes were on me. I'd never had such an attentive congregation. At the end of the Service, as everyone left, he shook me by the hand and I said to him "You know about sheep, don't you?" It turned out that the sheep farm he owned had been in his family for generations and although he was retired now, he had been a shepherd all his life. That was the point where I wished the ground would open and swallow me up?

He was very gracious and confirmed that sheep do indeed follow each other, that's why they need a Good Shepherd.

Today is our Annual Parochial Church Meeting and it's time to ask yourself whether God is calling you to take on a responsibility and be like a Good Shepherd in our Church here in Stowmarket.

*Michael*

**Vicar:** The Revd Michael Eden - theedens@talk21.com Tel. 678623

**Curate:** The Revd Richard Stretch - richardstretch@btinternet.com Tel. 676219

**Church Wardens** - churchwardens@stowmarketparishchurch.co.uk

Mrs Marion Gray 07835 246995; Mr Dan Sparks 07702 196268

**Church Office** CLOSED office@stowmarketparishchurch.co.uk

 Stowmarket Parish Church  @stowmarketcofe

**Website:** www.stowmarketparishchurch.co.uk **Regd Charity Number 1132857**

### ZOOM LOGIN DETAILS

<https://zoom.us/j/9658283398?pwd=SjN2V252VGxSSngrSnBOM1JETk1Bdz09>

Meeting ID: 965 828 3398 - Passcode: 615182

# **This Sunday - 25th April**

The service will start at 10am and will include Holy Communion. We are meeting in our Church building and Covid restrictions are still in place with handwashing, mask wearing, social distancing and no singing.

If you can't get to Church you can join with us in worship from 10am on Sunday, on YouTube: [https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCUjH\\_zTFVjMe1XckXQ0II\\_A](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCUjH_zTFVjMe1XckXQ0II_A)  
A link can also be found on the Church Website along with the Service Sheet.

## **Annual Parochial Church Meeting.**

The Vestry Meeting & APCM will start at 11:15am on Zoom only. This is the meeting where we elect Church Wardens and new PCC Members. There is one vacancy for Churchwarden, 4 for the PCC and one for Deanery Synod. If you are interested fill in the appropriate form (available from Church) or contact the Vicar for more details.

## **Keeping the Church Open**

We are planning to open up the Church building on Monday and Thursday for private prayer from 10am until noon. If you can help with welcoming mid-week, please contact Michael 678623. We will not be able to serve refreshments yet so duties consist of, sitting in Church and being welcoming.

## **Prayer Meeting**

We meet on the Church Zoom at 6:30pm on Wednesday evenings for half an hour. The first 15 minutes focus on a specific subject then opening up for other areas of concern or thanksgiving.

You are invited to come along. To increase the amount of prayer in our Church. There is no pressure to pray out loud, just the desire to meet with others and pray for our Church, friends, our town, the world and in fact anything. It is informal and a most enjoyable and rewarding time. Why not give it a go?

If you don't have the computer technology you can also join on even the most basic of phones. Just call 02039 663 809 and follow the instructions. Meeting ID which is 965 828 3398 # and if asked, dial in with meeting password 615182.

## **George Akers**

Long standing member of our Church and former school teacher, George Akers, has moved to Cambridgeshire to be closer to his family. If you would like to wish him well in his new home his address is The Gables Care Home, 1 East Park Street, Chatteris, Cambs. PE16 6LA.

# Diary

## Sunday 25th April

10:00am Holy Communion in Church & Live streamed on YouTube

10am Messy Church in St. Peter's Hall

11:15am Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Zoom

## Monday 26th April

10am-noon Church open for Private Prayer

7:30pm Mission & Outreach Meeting

## Tuesday 27th April

6pm Boys Brigade & Girls Association Meeting

## Wednesday 28th April

6:30pm Prayer Meeting

## Thursday 29th

10am-noon Church open for Private Prayer

## Sunday 2nd May

10:00am Family Service in Church

& Live streamed on YouTube



## May 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2021

### How can you help?

We are encouraging church members to see if they can do something extra to raise funds on behalf of St Peter and St Mary's Church.

The last year has shown us how important it is to come together as a community and have some fun together. So, you might like to do a garage or garden sale, sell unwanted goods online and donate the funds, host a virtual party, dinner or bingo night, or host a Christian Aid quiz over Zoom (questions can be provided).

### Quiztian Aid

If you prefer to take part in a nationwide quiz, Quiztian Aid is back on Saturday 8th May at 7pm. The quiz was a smash hit last year raising almost £7000. This year's quiz is hosted by Death in Paradise stars, Tobi and Prisca Bakare with special guest hosts including Rhidian Brook, Kate Bottley, Kris Marshall and Rowan Williams. Sign up now and invite your friends, family or church to join and help Christian Aid transform lives in Kenya. To sign up, go to:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week/virtual-events>

Contact Jane Stretch if you have questions or need resources.