

PARISH NEWS FROM THE ASTWELL BENEFICE

Helmdon, Radstone, Syresham, Whitfield, Lois Weedon & Weston, and Wappenham

Issue 6: 31st May 2020

We would love to feature your 'lock-down' news, stories and photos here! Please send them to Sarah Rudkin at: rectorastwellbenefice@aol.com.

We will also continue to list overleaf all those for whom we pray on a regular basis. If you know of anyone who would like to be added to list, please ask them to contact Sarah or Wiggy.



A picture of how one Churchwarden has used his time throughout the lock-down!

Having animals to look after has meant that we are very lucky in that the normal daily routine has not changed significantly. We were checking on

animals every day and some of you may have seen the Landrover passing through Wappenham. We were lambing, and as such our daily routine was the same as every year (over a six-week period). However, it has meant that we have self-isolated and are not meeting friends and family, as are others in the lock-down.

We are also very lucky that we live in a rural area and can't imagine, and indeed, applaud, those who live in towns, particularly those in high-rise flats etc. We did allow our local builder to re-roof the two porches and vestry, so not all church activity has stopped.

On a lighter note, at the start of lockdown, rather than 'watch grass grow' or 'paint dry', I decided to grow a beard and vowed not to cut it until the pandemic is over - may have to change that, as I shall soon look like Uncle Albert from 'Only Fools and Horses'!

Edwin King, Churchwarden at Wappenham

St John the Evangelist Churchyard

The display of Buttercups in Whitfield Churchyard looks stunning, - cups of golden sunshine swaying in the breeze!

The Buttercup (*Ranunculus*) is not popular with gardeners or farmers, as it's rather an invasive weed! The name *buttercup* may come from a false belief that the plants give butter its characteristic yellow colour (in fact it is poisonous to cows and other livestock). Do you remember the popular children's game, holding a buttercup up to the chin; a yellow reflection meant you liked butter!!

The name '*Ranunculus*' is Latin for 'little frog' This is probably because many species can be found near water, like frogs. Not much water in Whitfield churchyard! But they also thrive in compacted wet soils with low fertility.



Claire Bonner, Churchwarden at Whitfield

TO HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

We bring before our loving heavenly Father those in our villages and others we know who are unwell, recovering from illness and all those who need our prayers for any reason during this difficult time:

From Helmdon: Joyce Beech, Philip Gulliver, Emma, Jon, Ellouise, Lilly & James, Barbara Buxton, Diane Thorpe, Vanessa Vicars, John Thorne, Alison & Cara, John & Janet Snow, and Margaret Reardon

From Lois Weedon: Joan Jacobs, Lis Cockrell, Jeremy "Jez" Wilcox, Ernie Wheeler & Colin James.

From Syresham: Derek Hollyoake, Peter Sims, John & Ann Widdowson & Collette Andrewartha.

From Wappenham: Judy King and Claire Kennett.

For those known to us:

Pauline Collis, Christopher Carr, Evelyn Johnson, Jonnie D'Arcy, James Smillie, Peter Sheen, Dick White, June Brereton, Roger Cane, Penny Bonnymeade, Barbara Whitlock, Ollie Dotterill, Christabel Grant, Marina & Froede Amundsen.

Please pray for those bereaved, and the family & friends of:

Maurice Tucker, David Sheppard, Steve Goodwin, Dorothy D'Alton (nee Abbot), Sally Gore, Teresa Fleetwood, James Gadd, Ron Pratt, Margaret Hinton, Judith Allen, Marcus Durant, Tom Samways, Greg Oles, Mike Durant, Stewart Gundle, Ian Kidd, Richard Tims, Peter Payne, Ivan Hathaway, Robin Oliver, Sue Corbishley, Jason Holt & Shirley Holt, Dennis Hackett, Dick Wilson, Mark Kilby, Keith Hawkins. Also, for the Bearman family, Susan Clarke & family, Kathryn and Peter Oliver, & Geoff and Jo Abbey.

Also, please pray for the work of the Beacon Centre, the Wolverton Mission, the Hope Centre, Katharine House Hospice, Northampton Women's Aid and The Womens Refuge. We also continue to pray for all refugees fleeing persecution, all victims of terror, and all those affected by the Covid-19 virus.

Church Closure

Just recently I have been asked by several people, why they cannot go into the church to pray or to simply sit in a beautiful and peaceful place. So, I thought some clarification would be a good idea.

From the start of lock-down, the only people given authority to enter the church were the Churchwardens, specifically to enable them to check that all was well. Now, ministers are allowed to enter, either for private prayer or to take a service for broadcasting only. The decision was made that, although I am the Reader and as such a minister, I would not enter any of our churches until we are able to have proper services with a congregation again.

At the moment, the rules set by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Council state that should anyone enter the church, namely the Churchwardens, the minister or, if necessary, tradesmen, there should be either 72 hours between each visit or a deep clean undertaken.

Logistically this would be extremely difficult and impractical. We have no desire to prevent anyone entering these amazing buildings, but we do have to follow the guidelines set by the Archbishop's Council and, in the long run, it is for our own safety. Rest assured, that we are preparing for the re-opening of the churches in the Benefice and all the Church Wardens have been notified of the risks and procedures required.

All our churchyards are open, some with seats for contemplation and prayer - please do take advantage of these beautiful places. We will inform you of any changes in the current guidelines and hopefully it will not be too long before the churches can be open to all again. God bless you all and keep safe. *Wiggy*

Dear All

You have been praying for our daughter and her family near York, especially Ellouise who is 3, cannot speak and has had a week in hospital (Wakefield Specialist Burns Unit), after pulling a hot cup of tea over herself. She had second degree burns over her face, shoulder and back. Some of our friends have seen the horrific photographs, and the more recent ones. Ellouise has now been fully discharged from the hospital outpatients today. She will still need the cream on 3 times a day but hopefully will not have any scarring. Her face is still red, but all the dead skin and scabs have gone. Many thanks for all your prayers - it has helped the family, and the result for Ellouise is excellent - thank you so much. *Bill and Judith Elkington*