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December 2024/January 2025

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# Parish News

**CHRISTMAS WISHES** - The production team (i.e. Jane and Tom) thank all our contributors, advertisers and readers for making this magazine possible. Without your support, we would not have a Three Towers magazine.

**CONDOLENCES** – to Ethel Brown, her family and friends on the loss of one of Swinstead’s longest and much-loved residents, Mr George Brown, who passed away on Wednesday 13 November. George was a founding member of the committee that formed to run the Swinstead Village Hall, including the licensed bar, aptly named George’s Bar. This community-run facility remains the hub of the village and is a lasting tribute to George and the other 12 founding members of the committee.



**BAPTISM** Margaret Ann Hammond, baby daughter of James and Harriet, on 27 October at St Michael and All Angels Church, Edenham.

**CONDOLENCES** to family, friends and neighbours of Pamela Pohling Brown, who passed away suddenly at home on 11 November after a long illness. Pamela was the only daughter of the late Ellen and Laurie Brown, and had lived in Witham on the Hill for many years. She was a keen bell ringer and supporter of St Andrew’s Church.

**THANK YOU** - to Simon Lawton and his team for another fantastic Toft cum Lound and Manthorpe Bonfire Night. The display seems to get better every year. Thank you too to our cooks and servers and all who gathered to enjoy the evening.

**THANK YOU** - to all who organised and took part in Swinstead ‘s Low Noise Family Fireworks Display. The evening went off with a bang with this year drawing in more families, spectacular colourful fireworks, children and adults enjoying themselves before and after the Fireworks in the hall, hot



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# NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

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dogs in abundance, drinks flowing, and all in all a great evening in the village hall bar – we can't wait for next year's display!

**SAMARITAN'S PURSE** Thank you to everyone who supported this charity. 18 shoe boxes have gone from Witham on the Hill. Well done all!

**RNIB USED POSTAGE STAMP COLLECTION** There will be a box in St Andrew's Church Porch, Witham on the Hill, for used postage stamps. The stamps will be forwarded to RNIB to raise funds for their charity. With the Christmas card season approaching please save your stamps!

**EDENHAM CHURCH DECORATIONS** - This year's colour for Edenham church decorations is blue. Blue or cream candles please and in church for the Christingle.

**CHRISTIAN AID - EDENHAM CHURCH.** There will be a collection for Christian Aid via one Church family Christmas card. Just send one card to the Church family and include a donation and leave by the plate or the hymn books.

## Dates for your Diary

**Sunday 1 December, 5pm - St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill.** Switching on of the Christmas lights, followed by mulled wine, hot dogs, burgers and mince pies. Numbers to Debra McMillan tel 07716 965856.

**Wednesday 4 and 18 December and 15 and 29 January, from 10.30am to noon – Swinstead Village Hall Social Coffee Mornings.** Come and meet some new friends and enjoy some company, accompanied with coffee, tea, scones, cakes and bakes, and a chance to win a great prize with one free raffle ticket, all for £3.00.

**Saturday 7 December, 7:30pm - St Andrew's Church, Witham on the Hill. St Peter's Singers** perform: 'A Ceremony of Carols by Candlelight' music by Benjamin Britten, with harpist Rowena Bass, plus with other seasonal choral offerings. Tickets £12 (children £6), to include interval refreshments. Contact Sue Nicholls (07913 296247) or Frances Plummer (07919 288799).

**Saturday 7 December, 7pm – Swinstead Village Hall 'Rocking Xmas Party'** - Dust down those dancing shoes and come along to the village hall for a **free party** with Galaxy Disco DJ spinning tracks from the 1960's right up to

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# Rocking Xmas Party

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**Sunday 8 December, 2pm and 6pm - Steam Action presents Aladdin and the Wishing Tree - Edenham Village Hall.** Tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/steam-action](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/steam-action). Adults £5, children £3.

**Saturday 14 December, 8pm – Swinstead Village Hall, ‘Ho Ho Ho Xmas Quiz’.** Enjoy an evening of fun and laughter – create a table of friends and test your festive knowledge. Trivia covering Christmas movies, songs and traditions, enjoy mince pies and mulled wine - £2 entry fee - cash prize. The village hall bar opens at 7pm - quiz starts at 8pm. Christmas hamper draw at 9pm - tickets £2.

**Tuesday 17 December, 6:30pm - in the field by the traffic light bridge, Edenham Carol Singing.** Mince pies and mulled wine will be served.

**Sunday 22 December, 6pm - starting at St Andrew’s Church, Witham Carol Singing.** Do come and join us to make a joyful noise! All welcome.

**Tuesday 31 December 7pm – Swinstead Village Hall New Year’s Eve Celebration.** Another free event! Music, great company and celebratory bubbles. Ring in the New Year together and *‘drink a cup of kindness yet, for the sake of Auld Lang Syne’*. Bar opens 7pm. Bring your own party food and nibbles, and drinks to be purchased from the bar.

**Wednesday 1 January at noon - Witham on the Hill village green, Petanque.** See in the New Year on the village green. Mulled wine available! All welcome.

**Friday 14 February, St Andrew’s Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill - Valentine Quiz with fish and chip supper .** More details to follow.

## **Mobile Library Service - 2025 Stops and Dates**

Manthorpe - Main Street - 10:30 to 11:00

Witham on the Hill - East Green - 13:00 to 13:30

### **Every 4th Friday starting on 17 January 2025**

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**Remember!** If your smart device was delivered with a default password – change it!

**2-Step Verification:** Set-up two-step verification (2SV) for added security. 2SV adds an extra step when you log in, usually by giving you a code to enter from an app or a text message.

This makes it harder for a criminal who may know your password from getting easy access to your accounts.

To be secure you should set this up for all your important accounts (email, social media etc) even if you have a strong password.

Find out how to set this up on popular services at: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/setting-2-step-verification-2sv>

**Stolen Password:** To check to see if your details have appeared in a data breach, you can use an online tool such as: <https://haveibeenpwned.com/>. Similar password warning tools may be available in your anti-virus or your password manager.

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# The Wilsthorpe Effigy

In April of 2021 the editor of the Three Towers in his wisdom published an article of mine entitled “Recumbent Effigies” describing the several stone figures of knights in armour, and sometimes their ladies, to be found in churches in our area.



Since then more information has come to light regarding the effigy at St. Faith’s church at Wilsthorpe (pictured). St. Faith’s is one of the smallest churches in South Lincolnshire. It was built in 1715 as a replacement for an earlier church, underwent extensive changes in the 1860s, and is a mixture of classical and gothic styles. The church is in a delightful rural spot, backing onto fields in this very quiet village.

The effigy is to the left of the altar, beyond the rail, in a dark corner of the church up against the north and east walls. In fact it just fits between the altar rail and the east wall. In such a small church there is probably nowhere else to put it. Its position restricts close viewing and photography but that is



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a minor consideration. The legs are crossed, the right foot is missing, the other rests on what appears to be a faithful dog. The shield on his left arm is hard up against the wall. His head rests on a pillow and the right arm is across the chest grasping the top of his shield. He has two swords, one beneath the shield the other on his right hip although this may be a dagger. Sadly, much of the detail on the shield and on his belt is worn, presumably lost to the centuries.

It is interesting that Sir Nikolaus Pevsner in his “Buildings of England – Lincolnshire” (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) claims that the effigy with the arms of the Wake family must be a 17<sup>th</sup> century fake. He says “the crossing of the legs is improbably done, and the surcoat and its carved pattern is also improbable. The way the hand lies instead of holding the shield has no parallel. Finally, although all this tends to convey a date about 1300, the lavish belt and the moustache would spell 1375 or so”. Pevsner does not think much of the church either, using terms such as “cruel alterations” in the 1862 rebuilding, and “the ridiculous shingled broach-spire”. The Shell Guide to Lincolnshire by Thorold and Yates (published 1965) is not a fan of the church either, describing the pinnacled exterior as “comic”. The church is listed Grade II\*, the description of the building describes the effigy as “late 13<sup>th</sup> century, recut”, as does Historic England.

It is fortunate that the church authorities are unmoved by any criticism of their church or effigy. They have written and displayed useful information, propped up on the organ, describing the effigy as “a stone figure of a knight believed to be circa 1340 bearing a shield with the arms of the Wake family to which the famous Hereward is supposed to have belonged. An inscription in English around the hem of his tunic reads: “Peace is better than war”. Sadly, none of this detail could be seen as the effigy is badly worn. There is even graffiti scratched on his person. On a visit to Barholm Church in July 2011 I met the then vicar, Carolyn Kennedy, who was also vicar of St. Faith’s.

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She told me that the Heraldry Society have investigated the effigy and have pronounced that it dates from 1340 to 1350 and is in the style of tournament armour.

The Wake family of Lincolnshire claim descent from Hereward the Wake (died 1072) who gained fame by raising rebellion against William the Conqueror. Hereward had a daughter named Turfrida by his second wife, Alfruda. Descending from Alfruda and at the end of a long and tortuous genealogical path comes John (1268 – 1300), created the first Lord Wake in 1295. He served King Edward I, campaigning in Gascony between 1288 and 1297 and against the Scots from 1297 to 1300. He fought in the battle of Falkirk in 1298. John's son Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Wake (1297 – 1349), also fought against the Scots for King Edward II.

Another branch of the Wake family includes Sir Hugh Wake (1202-1241) who fought in Brittany with King Henry III and died on Crusade in the Holy Land fighting the Saracens with Simon de Montfort. His grandson, another Thomas (1280-1347), was present in France with King Edward III, where he fought at Crecy in 1346, and at the siege of Calais in 1347, where he died. There must be other family members of a martial disposition. Members of the Wake family of Lincolnshire were also Lords of the Manor of Bourne, and of Deeping.

It is far too much to expect that the effigy is one of these warriors. And if so, how come he is commemorated in a tiny church in deepest Lincolnshire? Due to his age, he must have been moved from another church, perhaps the forerunner of St. Faith's at Wilsthorpe. The identity remains an enduring mystery. Or possibly a fake, or even re-cut. Surely this is part of the attraction. A trip to Wilsthorpe is highly recommended, and then the visitor can form his or her own opinion.

Dick Mundy



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## The Vicar Writes

“The Word became flesh.” We hear those words so often at Christmas that their true meaning can easily be lost on us. We usually associate them with the child in Bethlehem’s manger (and rightly so) but we all too easily dismiss them without being shocked or surprised by what they tell us. “The Word became flesh” the Gospel writer tells us and we all nod or yawn in passive agreement.

But the Greek philosophers of the first century didn’t yawn. They were appalled! It wasn’t that God couldn’t have become flesh but why would God want to become flesh in the first place? To them, the flesh was bad and the body evil. If they could have lived outside of the body then they would have but they couldn’t! So, they tolerated the body as a necessary vessel to house the soul. The Greek word used by the Gospel writer for ‘flesh’ is the same that St Paul chose to describe human nature in all its weakness and sin. So, when God became flesh, he became acquainted with all the desires, problems and temptations that go with ordinary human life (which is why the Word becoming flesh didn’t seem at all desirable to the Greeks).

After all, who wants a God who’s just like us? What we want is a God who

rules over us, who shows us everything that we can never hope to be, and whose knowledge and goodness are always above and beyond us. But isn’t that exactly what the Gospel writer is trying to tell us? The God whom no-one has ever seen has suddenly become visible! But the Word becoming flesh isn’t a sign that God has somehow been diminished by embracing the lesser stature of humanity, rather, that the God who made everything has come to dwell among us in human form.

In a sense, God is always looking for a place to dwell. God is present (discernible) in the words of Scripture, in the bread and wine of the Eucharist, in the beauty of art and architecture, in the stirring drama of great works of literature. God was present at the Red Sea, on Mount Sinai and in the Temple at Jerusalem. But ultimately, God didn’t choose to become a book, a painting or a building... God took on human form. The Word became flesh.

There’s a song by an American singer Joan Osbourne from the 1990s that asked, “If God had a face, what would it look like?” Maybe that question should be rephrased as a statement: “God has a face and it looks like your face, like my face and the faces of people everywhere.” Consequently, if

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people want to know what God looks like, (and I believe they do) then they're going to have to look at us (his people) to find out more. People who want to experience something of God's presence won't find it in clever arguments, logical thinking or scientific proof. It's much more likely that they'll come to know what God is like through knowing God's people; through getting to know the likes of you and me.

Think about it – people who experience love don't do so by reading about it in a book. They experience love through other people. There's plenty about God for people to read about in the Scriptures but it won't really make sense to them unless they come to know women and men who appear in the flesh in the same way that God appears on the page!

That doesn't mean we have to be perfect (we know that we aren't) but it does compel us to take seriously the fact that God's spirit dwells within us; within our flesh. We can't be perfect people but we can be so responsive to the spirit of God within us that, "the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies" (2 Corinthians 4.10).

Our purpose is not to worship God with our souls, while disregarding our

bodies as if they don't matter. Our earthly life isn't about having a pure heart but paying no attention to our physical selves. Instead, we need to present our whole selves as available to God because we carry the Good News in these bodies of ours, as well as in our hearts and minds.

It's always nice to hear people say, "Isn't your Church beautiful". They're right of course, especially at this time of year but often they only see part of the Church – they only see the building! They miss the best part if they don't see all those occasions when the Church literally becomes the Good News, when the Word becomes flesh in us.

The Word becoming flesh in Bethlehem is a powerful statement about God's presence in Jesus but it's also more than that. The Word becoming flesh also leads us toward one another; pointing us to a new community where we can recognise the common dignity of all God's children. For, if we're all made in the image of God, if we are all distinct revelations of God, then each of us is carrying within us a message and experience that the rest of the world needs to hear.

Every person carries within their flesh something of their Creator. Some reflected truth which could lead us to

a deeper understanding of God, together with gifts which could enhance our mission, strengthen our community and help to make the world a better place.

So, this Christmas, may we be open to receive the Good News which all God's people embody; learning and receiving from them as they learn and receive from us and may the love of God be seen and recognised in our love for each other, both now and always.

Fr Edward

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# Edenham Parish Council

## 12 November - Clerk's Notes

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Mrs P Cranfield (Chairman), Mr A Wilson, Mrs A Treacy.

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs M Avis, Mr D Hawes and Mrs M Marshall.

**In Attendance:** Mrs Carole Sands (Parish Clerk), Mrs L Unwin and LCC Councillor MR M Hill .

**Declaration of interest:** Councillor Mr A Wilson

### **Lincolnshire County Council:**

Councillor Hill confirmed that work to clear the drains of debris along the A151 in Edenham will take place on 3rd December 2024. There has been no further progress made with regards to the flooding seen previously by Pillarwood Farm Pre-school. Investigations are ongoing with regards to the water on the A151 road surface opposite the Five Bells Public House. Councillor Hill will follow this up again with Highways. Anglian Water is carrying out work in local areas to level land previously cleared for the new water pipe.

**Councillor Vacancy:** Mrs L Unwin was co-opted to the Parish Council.

**Councillor Email Addresses:** Parish Clerk reported that due to other workload this has not progressed. This will be added to the next meeting agenda.

**Parking Coal yard:** Parish Clerk reported that the work to add a permanent solution to prevent parking has not progressed.

**Parish Christmas Carols:** Date confirmed 17 December 2024.

Everyone welcome, mulled wine and mince pies will be served.

**Play Area Maintenance:** All areas where concrete was visible and the grass was worn have been filled and grass seed scattered. The play area is currently cordoned off with tape to allow the grass to grow and recover, therefore we kindly ask that the play area is not used until the tape is removed by the Parish Council.

**Interim Internal Audit Report:** This was circulated to the Council members in advance of this meeting. An action plan to be progressed to



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## **WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL CHURCH AND SCHOOL ESTATE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

Witham-on-the-Hill Church and School Estate Educational Foundation is able to make grants to those residents of Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound who are undertaking courses at colleges and universities and also those who are on apprentice schemes.

Applications for educational grants can be made by submitting a request via email. The request should explain the type and duration of your course and how you would propose to use the grant during your studies.

Applications to:

**The Clerk to the Trustees**

Email: [withamtrust@gmail.com](mailto:withamtrust@gmail.com)

cover points raised.

## **Financial Matters**

**Receipts:** Community Street Cleaning Grant (Oct 24 to Mar25) £463.32

### **Expenditure:**

ROSPA Annual Inspection: Play area £93.60

HMRC PAYE and 2nd Qtr Salaries: £422.66

Parish Council Admin Costs: Folders/ plastic wallets £6.20

Maintenance Grant: Village Hall £300

PC Admin: Ink cartridge payable to the Parish Clerk £21.99

Heavy Duty Matting payable to the Parish Clerk £17.98

Red and White Barrier Tape payable to the Parish Clerk £9.83

Storage box for archive files £7.99 payable to the Parish Clerk

Grass seed £5.99 payable to the Parish Clerk

Salaries & HMRC payments (Dec 24) to include the new rate of pay for the Parish Clerk.

**Bank Report:** Treasurers Account £3,472.25, Business Account £496.07

The Parish Clerk reported that the

current bank used by the Parish Council is changing the account 14th January 2025 to a new Community account. This account will have a monthly account maintenance fee of £4.20 as well as a number of other potential charges. The provider is also closing the Business Banking Resolutions Service as of 13th December 2024. The Parish Clerk is to look into other banks and building societies to see what other providers are offering.

**Budget 2025/2026:** The Council members asked for additional time to review and discuss the play area budget for proposed maintenance work in 2025.

### **Parish Council Policies and**

**Procedures:** The Council accepted the updated Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Communications protocol documents. Parish Clerk to publish these on the Parish Council website.

**Next Meeting Date:** 14 January 2025 at 19:30 hours. Please note that the March 2025 meeting has been postponed until 8 April 2025.

# Witham on the Hill WI

## November 2024

The speaker, Rosemary Sneath, a former Norland Nanny, told us she was born in Moulton with an older brother to parents active in the community. Aged 10, she went to the cinema with her aunt to watch “Mary Poppins” and decided it sounded like fun, so decided to be a nanny! At 16 she went for an interview and was accepted. She received a grant from the Council as it was a fee-paying college: £200 per term in 1970s!

Trainee uniform was from Harrods – brown check overall, brown cardi, brown raincoat and headscarf. The course was 5 terms, which included needlework, cooking, working in playschools and hospitals – maternity and children’s wards, and learning about childhood illnesses like croup and leukaemia.

Nurses were taught to speak properly, expected to have meals with children to show them how to eat correctly and she had to do their washing and ironing.

While in training she cared for children in the College – respite care, diplomats’ children, the homeless and those left there while parents went on holiday. Small babies slept in

the nanny’s room.

She took her exam for NNEB on 14 November 1973 (the day Princess Anne married Mark Phillips!) Once qualified, she was measured for her uniform at Harrods – including hat and gloves which had to be worn when outside, hair always tied up. Then she had to find a family – advised not to go for an Arab family, or Royalty (no time off!).

As Rosemary was keen on horses she found a stud farm in Newmarket with 2 children. She had good fun taking the children to lots of places and became part of the family. After 3 years the children went to boarding school – time for her to move on to another family in Bury St Edmunds. Eventually she married a farmer and had her own family. She started her own playschool, then worked as a teaching assistant in Spalding. She has worked with children all her life and loved it.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 3 December at 7.30pm in St Andrew’s Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill. It is our Christmas party with gin tasting from Redsmith Distillery. Please bring a small plate of food to share. Visitors and new members are always very welcome - entry fee £5. For more information contact Jane Clark, Secretary, tel 01778 590232.



# WITHAM HALL

Michaelmas Term at Witham Hall has been action packed. From success on the sports field to awards for music and drama and much more. The Girls U13s won their Regional IAPS Hockey Championships and are excited about the upcoming National Finals later this month. Year 8 musician Henry has been named Lincolnshire Young Musician of the Year in the Intermediate category and Year 8 pupil, Bella, has been awarded a Sport Scholarship to Marlborough College. **Next up is our Old Withamians Christmas Drinks on Monday, 16th December at The George in Stamford.** Please do spread the word! Tickets are now available via the website [www.withamhall.com/alumni](http://www.withamhall.com/alumni)



For the 2024/2025 academic year, Witham Hall is supporting the Willoughby Foundation, the charitable arm of Willoughby Academy. Based in Bourne, Willoughby is a specialist academy for pupils aged 2 to 19 years with a diverse range of highly complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

On Saturday 22nd March 2025, we will be holding our Charity Easter Egg Hunt in aid of the Willoughby Foundation. This event is open to the public and more details will follow in the New Year.

# Jane's Seasonal Recipe

*Don't waste the inside of your pumpkin – make this delicious casserole! The pumpkin can be replaced with butternut squash. This recipe comes from the Dairy Diary.*

## **Pork and Pumpkin Casserole**

*2 tablespoons olive oil*

*4 boneless pork shoulder steaks*

*1 chopped onion*

*1 teaspoon ground ginger*

*1 teaspoon cinnamon*

*1 teaspoon turmeric*

*1 tablespoon cornflour*

*400g pumpkin chunks*

*600ml chicken stock*

Fry pork in olive oil over medium heat for about 8 mins until brown. Transfer to casserole dish. Fry onion in pan juices for 5 mins, stir in spices and flour. Add pumpkin, stock and seasoning. Bring to the boil, then pour over pork. Cover with lid and cook in oven at 180°C for 1 hour until pork is tender. Serve with mashed potato and green veg.

SERVES 4



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pete@peteshaw.co.uk

Learn at your own pace,  
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## PARISH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2024

	Swinstead	Witham	Edenham
1 <sup>st</sup> December Advent 1		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist
8 <sup>th</sup> December Advent 2	9.30am Parish Eucharist	9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  6pm St John Ambulance Carol Service (Grimsthorpe Castle)
15 <sup>th</sup> December Advent 3		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  4pm Evening Prayer (Stable Chapel)
21 <sup>st</sup> December	7pm Carol Service with Dibley Choir		
22 <sup>nd</sup> December Advent 4		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  4pm All-age Crib & Christingle
24 <sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve		4.30pm Traditional Carols & Readings with Christingle  11.30pm Midnight Mass	9.30am Eucharist (Stable Chapel)  6pm Carol Service (Grimsthorpe Castle)
25 <sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day	8.30am Parish Eucharist	9.30am Parish Eucharist	10.30am Parish Eucharist
29 <sup>th</sup> December Christmas 1 / Holy Family		9.30am Benefice Eucharist	4pm Evening Prayer (Stable Chapel)

## PARISH SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2025

	Swinstead	Witham	Edenham
5 <sup>th</sup> January The Epiphany		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  6pm Epiphany Lessons & Carols
12 <sup>th</sup> January Baptism of Christ	9.30am Parish Eucharist	9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)
19 <sup>th</sup> January Epiphany 2		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)
26 <sup>th</sup> January Epiphany 3		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist  4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)

For Baptisms, Weddings, Banns of Marriage, Confessions or any other pastoral or spiritual need contact:

Vicar: The Revd Fr Edward Martin SSC 01778 591358 - [Edward.Martin@lincoln.anglican.org](mailto:Edward.Martin@lincoln.anglican.org)