

ST FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY & PARISH  
CHURCH  
YARMOUTH ROAD, STALHAM NR12 9PG  
Tel: 01692 580552  
COMMUNITY PROGRAMME  
JUNE 2021



*Pentecost*

*Troparion*

**BLESSED** art thou, O Christ our God: who didst shew the fishermen to be most wise by the sending them of the Holy Spirit; and didst use them to draw the whole world into thy net. O thou that lovest all men, glory be to thee.

**BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS  
COMMEMORATED IN  
JUNE.**

See selected lives of Saints on another page.

- 01 Wistan of Evesham, Martyr  
Wite of Dorset, anchoress and Martyr  
02 Oda the Good, Archbishop of Canterbury  
04 Edfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne  
Petroc, Abbot and Missionary  
05 Boniface of Crediton, Apostle and Patron-Saint of Germany and  
his 52 Companion-Martyrs  
Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester  
10 Herebald, Hermit in Brittany\*  
11 Edburgh of Winchester, Virgin  
15 Botolph and Adulf, Confessors  
17 Briavel, Hermit  
Nectan, Hermit and Martyr  
20 Edburgh of Castor, Virgin  
21 Engelmund, Abbot and Missionary\*  
22 Alban of Verulamium, Protomartyr of Britain  
23 Audrey, Abbess of Ely  
25 Adalbert of Egmond, Archdeacon and Missionary\*  
Cyneburgh of Gloucester, Martyr  
29 Peter and Paul, Holy Apostles.

**TROPARION OF ST. FURSEY.**

Establishing thy monastery in a Roman fortress  
thou didst teach men that the Orthodox Faith is  
a true bastion against the onslaughts of every evil  
force O Father Fursey.

Wherefore pray to God for us that we may all be  
bastions of the Faith standing firm against the rising  
tide of falsehood that our souls may be saved.

**KONTAKION OF ST. FURSEY.**

Thou didst need the walls of stone to defend the Faith  
against its pagan enemies, O Father Fursey, but pray  
for us that we may have a spiritual wall around us to  
defend the Faith against its enemies. Following thee  
and praising thy eternal memory we stand firm against  
every error ever singing; Rejoice beloved of God,  
our Father Fursey.



**ST FURSEY'S CHURCH COMMUNITY PROGRAMME**

**SERVICES IN JUNE 2021**

(In the Parish Church unless otherwise stated)

<b>Sat June 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Vespers 4pm (St Boniface).</b>
<b>Sun June 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha (The Blind Man). (Second Ecumenical Council 381) Divine Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Wed June 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Leave Taking of Pascha - Forefeast of the Ascension Vespereal Liturgy 7pm. St Cyril of Alexandria (444) St Columba of Iona (597)</b>
<b>Thurs June 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Ascension of Our Lord &amp; God Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Sat June 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Vespers 4pm. (St Peter of Athos).</b>
<b>Sun June 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha (Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council 325). Divine Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Sat June 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Vespers 4pm. (St Jude Brother of God)</b>
<b>Sun June 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha: Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10am. Vespers of Kneeling 12 Noon.</b>
<b>Wed June 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Nativity of St John Baptist Vespereal Liturgy 7pm. (St Alban Protomartyr &amp; St Etheldreda of Ely).</b>
<b>Thurs June 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Nativity of St John Baptist Divine Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Sat June 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Vespers 4pm. St David of Thessaloniki 540.</b>

<b>Sun June 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost All Saints Divine Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Mon June 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><u>Beginning of the Apostles' Fast.</u></b>
<b>Tues June 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>All Praised Apostles Peter &amp; Paul Divine Liturgy 10am.</b>
<b>Wed June 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Synaxis of Twelve Apostles TYPIKA 9am.</b>

## **Daily Services at St Fursey's Chapel**

### **Neville Road**

These are done Reader style and safe distancing with two or three people. Daily services at the Parish Church there will be our normal daily services in St Fursey's Chapel. These are usually 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am with a reading from the Fathers.

**Vespers 4pm.** Local readers are welcome but please ring if you wish to come to make sure the service is still on. (Ring 01692-580552).

## **COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTICES**

### **Building an Orthodox Church in Stalham**

Last year we were very disappointed at having to stop the building work in September (2020) but praise God, we are about to restart again. The existing structure will be taken down and a fresh start made, with a new builder, thanks to a grant from the Archdiocese. The site and garages have been tidied up by Father Stephen and Isaac and they look a lot better. More news about this in July.

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The COVID situation has hit us very hard financially: no market stalls, no coffee morning, no conferences, sales and Icon sales much reduced. Hopefully, the situation will improve during the summer. We hope to make a start with an Icon and book stall outside the church. This was delayed due to the need to tidy up the church car park area and garages, prior to the building work starting and Isaac being able to help. Many thanks to him for all his help.

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## **Church Services**

Readers will notice that these have been resumed as far as the COVID regulations permit. Social distancing, masks, one person singing and good ventilation. Hopefully, we will be back to normal in June but care will still be needed to keep everything safe; BUT we should be assured that we are first and foremost under the Protection of God as the PSALMS CONSTANTLY TELL US. I encourage St Fursey's people to say the Psalms as a part of their daily prayers!

## **SEPTEMBER TALKS**

Introductory talks on the Orthodox Christian Faith will resume on Thursday evenings in September.

**THE BIBLE STUDY RESUMES.**

With the easing of the Covid restrictions there has been a request For the Bible study sessions to be resumed and the best time for These seem to be Thursday evenings at 7pm. So we begin on Thursday June 3<sup>rd</sup> and see how it works. We will start with St Matthews Gospel.

**BLESSINGS TO OUR READERS**

## PENTECOSTARION

## ODE SIX

*Heirmos*

TOSSED by the tempest of the cares of life, and cast into the deep by the sins that sail with me, and being thrown to the soul-corrupting beast, like Jonas I cry to Thee, O Christ: Draw me up out of the depth that bringeth death.

*Troparion*

THOU hast abundantly poured forth of Thy Spirit upon all flesh, even as Thou didst say, and all creation is filled with Thy knowledge, O Lord; for Thou, the Son, didst come forth immutably from the Father; and the Spirit indivisibly proceedeth.

*The Second Canon**Heirmos*

THOU hast shone forth from the Virgin  
As forgiveness and salvation for us, O Christ Master,  
That, like as Jonas was reft from the belly of the sea monster,  
Thou mightest snatch from corruption All the fallen race of Adam.

*Troparia*

O RULER of all, renew within us the cherished, upright Spirit, That we may eternally have Him Who proceedeth from the Father, With Whom He is most perfectly united;  
He is a burning heat, purging away hateful, polluted matter  
And cleansing our minds of defilement.

As for the Apostles in Sion who awaited Thy coming, O Spirit, Thou, with Thy fiery breath, Hast consecrated them with a coveted dignity,  
Even the knowledge of the Word, begotten of the Father,  
Which swiftly exposed the cruel prattle of the heathens' babblings.

*Katavasia:* Tossed by the tempest . . .  
Thou hast shone forth . . .

## KONTAKION

*Plagal of Fourth Tone*

ONCE, when He descended and confounded the tongues, the Most High divided the nations; and when He divided the tongues of fire, He called all men into unity; and with one accord we glorify the All-holy Spirit.

## OIKOS

GRANT Thou speedy and lasting consolation unto Thy servants, O Jesus, when our spirits are despondent. Be Thou not parted from our souls when they be in affliction; be Thou not far from our minds when we are in perils, but do Thou ever anticipate our needs. Draw nigh unto us, draw nigh, O Thou Who art everywhere present, and even as Thou art ever with Thine Apostles, thus do Thou also unite unto Thyself us who long for Thee, O Compassionate One, that, being united with Thee, we may praise and glorify Thine All-holy Spirit.

From the treatise Against Heresies by Saint Irenaeus; bishop

[Lib. 3, 17, 1-3: SC 34, 302-306]

THE SENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When the Lord told his disciples *to go and teach all nations and to baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*, he conferred on them the power of giving men new life in God.

He had promised through the prophets that in these last days he would pour out his Spirit on his servants and handmaids, and that they would prophesy. So when the Son of God became the Son of Man, the Spirit also descended upon him, becoming accustomed in this way to dwelling with the human race, to living in men and to inhabiting God's creation. The Spirit accomplished the Father's will in men who had grown old in sin, and gave them new life in Christ.

Luke says that the Spirit came down on the disciples at Pentecost, after the Lord's ascension, with power to open the gates of life to all nations and to make known to them the new covenant. So it was that men of every language joined in singing one song of praise to God, and scattered tribes, restored to unity by the Spirit, were offered to the Father as the firstfruits of all the nations.

This was why the Lord had promised to send the Advocate: he was to prepare us as an offering to God. Like dry flour, which cannot become one lump of dough, one loaf of bread, without moisture, we who are many could not become one in Christ Jesus without the water that comes down from heaven. And like parched ground, which yields no harvest unless it receives moisture, we who were once like a waterless tree could never have lived and borne fruit without this abundant rainfall from above. Through the baptism that liberates us from change and decay we have become one in body; through the Spirit we have become one in soul.

*The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of God* came down upon the Lord, and the Lord in turn gave this Spirit to his Church, sending the Advocate from heaven into all the world into which, according to his own words, the devil too had been cast down like lightning.

If we are not to be scorched and made unfruitful, we need the dew of God. Since we have our accuser, we need an Advocate as well. And so the Lord in his pity for man, who had fallen into the hands of brigands, having himself bound up his wounds and left for his care two coins bearing the royal image,

## SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

**WISTAN** (Wynstan, Winston), prince of the royal family of Mercia, murdered 850. Grandson of Wiglaf, king of Mercia 827-40 and son of Wigmund who died in 839, Wistan was chosen as king in 840 on his grandfather's death, according to his Legend, but asked his mother Eifleda to rule as regent. Berhtric (Brifardus), Wistan's cousin, wished to marry her and seize power, but Wistan refused to allow the marriage, which he regarded as incestuous. Berhtric then murdered him at a place called Wistanstowe (probably Wistow, Leicestershire): three of Wistan's followers fell with him. Wistan's body was buried in the royal monastery of Repton with those of his father and grandfather.

In 1019 Alfwaerd, abbot of Evesham (later bishop of London) asked King Cnut to give him Wistan's relics. From then on Evesham was the centre of the cult. It is of special interest because some of Wistan's miracles were suspected and verified twice over. In Lanfranc's time, his former chaplain, Walter of Cerisy, was abbot of Evesham and subjected Wistan's relics, especially his head, to an ordeal by fire, from which it emerged unscathed. Over a century later, according to Thomas of Marleberge, the supposed miracle of 'hair' growing at Wistanstowe on the ground where the martyr fell, each year on his feast day, was verified by a commission sent by Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury. Whatever the substance may have been, there was no doubt of the extraordinary phenomenon. Three ancient church dedications to Wistan are known, including Wistow and Wigston (Leics.). The Shropshire village of Wistanstow has a less convincing claim to be the site of the saint's death. Feast: 1 June.

**ETHELDREDA** (Æthelthryth, Ediltrudis, Audrey) (d. 679), queen, foundress and abbess of Ely. She was the daughter of Anna, king of East Anglia, and was born probably at Exning (Suffolk). At an early age she was married (c.652) to Tondberht, ealdorman of the South Gywas, but she remained a virgin. On his death, c.655, she retired to the Isle of Ely, her dowry. In 660, for political reasons, she was married again, this time to Egfrith, the young king of Northumbria, then only fifteen years old and several years younger than her. He agreed that she should remain a virgin, as in her previous marriage. But twelve years later he

normal; Etheldreda, advised and aided by \*Wilfrid, bishop of Northumbria, refused. Egfrith offered bribes in vain. Etheldreda left him, became a nun at Coldingham under her aunt \*Ebbe (672), and founded a double monastery at Ely in 673. Egfrith married again: Wilfrid, some years later, was exiled from Northumbria.

Etheldreda meanwhile restored an old church at Ely, reputedly destroyed by Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, and built her monastery on the site of the present Ely cathedral. For seven years she lived an austere life of penance and prayer, eating only one meal a day, wearing woollen clothes instead of linen, watching each morning between Matins and dawn. In this wealthy family monastery, where she was joined or succeeded by sisters and nieces, she died of a tumour on the neck, interpreted as a divine punishment for her vanity in wearing necklaces in her younger days. It was the result of the plague, which also carried off several other nuns in her community.

Seventeen years later her body was found incorrupt: Wilfrid and her physician Cynefrid were among the witnesses. The tumour on her neck, which had been cut by her doctor, was found to be healed. The linen cloths, in which her body had been wrapped, were as fresh as the day when she was buried. Her body was placed in a stone sarcophagus of Roman workmanship found at Grantchester and translated by \*Sxeburga on 17 October 695. Her shrine was much frequented and she became the most popular of the Anglo-Saxon women saints.

Ely was refounded by \*Ethelwold in 970 as a monastery for monks only; it was so lavishly endowed by him and King Edgar that it became the richest abbey in England except Glastonbury. Etheldreda's shrine remained and was presented by Emma, wife of King Cnut, with a purple cloth, richly worked with gold and jewels. After the Norman Conquest a new choir was built, which made necessary a new translation. This was eventually accomplished in 1106 and involved the relics of the other Ely saints: Sexburga, \*Ermengild, and \*Werbunga; also. Ely became a bishopric in 1109, and the shrine was rich enough for it to be stripped in 1144 by bishop Nigel to pay a fine of 300 marks. It was restored by bishop Geoffrey in 1225 and yet another translation took place in 1252, with some supposed relics of \*Alban; when the cathedral was consecrated. The shrine

# ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

## Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

**"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."** (Matthew 5:6) Strictly speaking, this beatitude of the Lord blesses, not the righteous, but the seekers of righteousness. It is those who are hungry and thirsty for what is just and good who receive the blessings of God who also says:

**Do not be anxious, saying "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we wear?" For the heathen seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first His kingdom and its righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.** (Matthew 6:31-33)

Man's life consists in seeking, in hungering and in thirsting for righteousness. This is the spiritual teaching of the scriptures and the saints. The satisfaction and rest comes from God, but is a satisfaction and rest which itself always and for eternity becomes the basis of a new hunger and thirst. This is not in contradiction to Christ's teaching that **"he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst."** (John 6:35) It is rather the affirmation that the "inquiet" of man's heart, as Saint Augustine (5th c.) has said, is created "toward God," and that the "rest" which is found in Him is itself, as Saint Maximus (7th c.) has said, an "ever-dynamic rest," always growing and developing in ever greater union with the uncontainable and inexhaustible richness and fulness of divine being and life.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa (4th c.) said it this way:

**. . . the human mind . . . constantly flowing and dispersing to whatever pleases the senses . . . will never have any notable force in its progress towards the True Good. (i.e. God)**

**For it is impossible for our human nature ever to stop moving; it has been made of its Creator ever to keep changing. Hence when we prevent it from**

**using its energy on trifles, and keep it on all sides from doing what it should not, it must necessarily move in a straight path towards truth.** (*On Virginity*)

**Thus, in a certain sense, it (our humanity) is constantly being created, ever changing for the better in its growth in perfection; along these lines no limit can be envisaged, nor can its progressive growth in perfection be limited by any term. In this way, in its state of perfection no matter how great and perfect it may be, it is merely the beginning of a greater and superior stage.** (*Commentary on the Song of Songs*)

This spiritual teaching means that the truly spiritual person will not merely move from unrighteousness to righteousness, but will move for all eternity in God to ever-greater righteousness and perfection. The hunger and thirst in this way is an essential characteristic of the living soul of the righteous person; it is the essential dynamic of spiritual life. The Apostle Paul has given this very doctrine.

**. . . But one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature be thus minded . . .** (Philippians 3:13-16)

**And we all, with unveiled faces, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the spirit.** (2 Corinthians 3:18)

*There is no satisfaction for man's spirit but God. It is the satisfaction of perpetual growth in union with God. To hunger and thirst for God, "for the living God" (Psalm 42:2) is spiritual life. To be filled and contented with anything else is death for the soul.*

# Mercy

**“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matthew 5:7) To be merciful is to be like God, for “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” (Psalm 103:8)**

**The Lord passed before Moses and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . .” (Exodus 34:6-7)**

This also is the teaching of Christ in His Sermon on the Mount:

**. . . love your enemies and do good and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:35-36)**

To be merciful does not mean to justify falsehood and sin. It does not mean to be tolerant of foolishness and evil. It does not mean to overlook injustice and iniquity. God is not this way, and does not do this.

To be merciful means to have compassion on evil-doers and to sympathize with those who are caught in the bonds of sin. It means to forego every self-righteousness and every self-justification in comparison with others. It means to refuse to condemn those who do wrong, but to forgive those who harm and destroy, both themselves and others. It is to say with utter seriousness, **“forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” (Matthew 6:12)**

According to Jesus, the spiritual person will be merciful because he himself is in need of mercy. The spiritual person will be merciful because he knows that he himself is a sinful man in need of God's mercy and help. There is no one without sin, no one who can claim righteousness before God. If one claims to have no sin,

says Saint John, he is a liar, and makes God a liar as well. (1 John 1:10, 2:4) The spiritual person, because he is in union with God, acknowledges his sin and his need for forgiveness from God and from men. He cannot condemn others for he knows, but for the grace of Christ, that he himself stands unworthy and condemned.

**If Thou O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayst be feared. (Psalm 130:3-4)**

The merciful person is merciful toward himself as well as others. This does not mean that he makes light of his sins and takes God's forgiveness for granted. It means rather that he does not plague himself with neurotic guilt and remorse, surrendering to sinful scruples which are the death of the soul. It means that he trusts in the loving-kindness of God and knows, as Saint Paul has said, that no works of his own will ever deliver him from the need of God's mercy and love.

**For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)**

Thus it is the continual reception of the mercy of God and nothing else, which empowers the soul to good works. And it is only the merciful who attain mercy from God. For all eternity man will be at the disposal of God's mercy. At whatever stage of development he will reach, man's prayer will always remain the central prayer of the Church: Lord have mercy on me a sinner! The holier the person, the greater is his sense of sinful unworthiness, the stronger is his dependence on the mercy of God, and the more he is merciful to the weaknesses of others.