

NOVEMBER - JANUARY 2021

DENHAM PARISH NEWS



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PRICE £1

FROM THE EDITOR

'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.' (1 Corinthians 13:12)

Never have those words been truer for me than when I walked with my Dad during his final four days, before he slipped gently into his new home - eternity with his Lord. It was beautiful, and a privilege to see someone who had lived a life of deep, personal Christian faith to be still walking that path in such a tangible way. Just a few hours before he passed away, when asked by a doctor how he was, Daddy replied 'I am praising the Lord and seeing angels'. Outwardly his heart, lungs, liver and kidneys were all failing but inwardly his spirit was truly alive. Whilst deeply sad to be leaving us, he was excited at the new adventure ahead of him. When gently told that he wasn't strong enough for treatment and asked where he would like to be, quick as a flash and with a twinkle in his eye he replied 'heaven'. So, without a shadow of a doubt, I know that is where Daddy is now, praising the Lord, face to face.

Remembering can be searingly painful, as well as beautiful. Join us as we explore this theme further in 'Remembering & Trusting' (p.10) and as we reflect on Christmas (p.4) - how God reached down from heaven to earth, through Jesus. We investigate the installation of the St Mary's Church organ (p.26) and have a first-hand account of how we are safely meeting in St Mary's (p.6). Thank you to everyone who took part in the community survey - the results are now in (p.21)! I would also like to thank Carole Wadlow for her faithful support and service as magazine distributor co-ordinator over many years - you are a star!



'My Dad'



Blessings,

Cathy Macqueen

magazine@denhamparish.church

THE BIGGEST DISRUPTION IN HISTORY

FROM CHRISTOPH LINDNER RECTOR



Dear Friends,

Every year, Oxford Dictionaries select a 'Word of the Year'. Last year it was climate emergency. I wonder what it will be this year?

There are of course many candidates: social distancing, pandemic, pivoting, unprecedented. Some have suggested to make '2020' the word of the year and maybe, when we look back in a few decades, 2020 will be synonymous with the crisis that is still holding us in its iron grip.

Another good candidate might be the word 'disruption' - how our lives have changed!

Disruptions are of course nothing new. A little over 2000 years ago a baby was born. Nothing so special about that. To the uninformed observer it looked like just another baby. Although, if they had looked more closely they would have wondered...

- ... why a baby was born in the place where animals are kept.
- ... why shepherds and wise men came to honour him.
- ... why they told tales of angels singing and special stars rising in the sky.
- ... why an angel told his mother that this baby would be called "the Holy One, the Son of God".

And maybe they would have had a hunch that this baby represents the biggest disruption in history, although wrapped in the most surprising way!

As Christians we believe that in Jesus God's world breaks into ours. St John writes, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1. 14). God loves us so much that his rescue plan for our world is to 'empty himself', give up the splendour of heaven, to become one of us and to give his life so that we might be children of God ... forever.

Ever since this baby was laid in a manger, Christmas - and all the events of Jesus' life - have captured the hearts and lives of uncounted people. Today we may be in danger of losing the central message of Christmas in our part of the world, but you and I can recover it ... this Christmas.

Many things will be different. At the time of writing I am not even sure if and how we can celebrate with Carol and Christmas services in our churches. We might not be able to

host large Christmas dinners with family and friends in our homes. We can't be sure whether the pantomime we were looking forward to will be going ahead. Some of us are facing real hardships, which were unimaginable even twelve months ago: We have lost loved ones, we grieve the loss of so many freedoms we took for granted, we have lost our job, our mental health has suffered.

May the current crisis help us see Christmas with fresh eyes and rekindle the wonder and astounding discovery that this baby in a manger is the greatest disruption in all of history – a disruption that leads to hope, healing and wholeness.

I wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas!

Christoph Lindner

Rector

*He was born in an obscure village.
He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty.
Then, for three years, he was a wandering preacher.
He never wrote a book.
He never held an office.
He never owned a home.
His friends ran away.
One of them denied him.
Another betrayed him.
He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves.
He was laid in a borrowed tomb.*

*Twenty centuries have come and gone and today he still is the centre of human history.
All the armies that ever marched, and
all the navies that were ever built, and
all the parliaments that ever sat and
all the kings that ever reigned, put
together, have not affected our world as
powerfully as this one solitary life.*

(Shortened and adapted from "One solitary life" by James Allan Francis, 1926)



"Last year we told the Christmas story with the help of a FaceBoard. Here, Ian, Nnamdi and Christoph were trying on the role of the wise men!"

THE BRIDE RETURNS

BY BRIAN O'REGAN



I doubt that the congregation at St Mary's on Sunday 15th March would have thought that twenty weeks would pass before they returned. Coronavirus was spreading but most believed we would avoid the severe lockdowns already in place in some European countries. The UK had recorded a total of just over 1,000 cases and 28 deaths, and appeared to be succeeding with the containment policy. Just eight days later, lockdown was announced.

With nationwide restrictions being lifted, the doors of St Mary's were open again for a service on Sunday 2nd August. As I reflected on such a simple but joyful event, the image of Christ's bride returning came to me. The bible makes several references to Christ as a bridegroom and by inference, the body of the church as his bride.

As a young Catholic altar boy, I served at numerous weddings. I recall the happiness and colour of the day, but the enduring memory

was when the processional music was played by the organist. Mostly, it was Handel's rousing sinfonia, *The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*. The bridegroom, waiting for the bride to come to him, couldn't resist turning to catch a glimpse of his bride. She, beaming and beautiful gliding up the aisle, the excitement building as the music reached a crescendo.

The Queen of Sheba had heard of King Solomon's great wisdom and travelled to him to see, hear and learn for herself. Such was Solomon's reputation that the Queen brought him extravagant gifts, including 120 talents of gold (over four tonnes), worth £200 million today. Imagine the carnival atmosphere as she arrived in Jerusalem with her great caravan of camels and horses.

Whilst we didn't have Handel from the organ, the occasion felt momentous and exciting. We journeyed to God's house seeking his company and wisdom. It was a ticket only event with a strict limit on numbers to ensure safe social distancing. Checking the day before, there were no tickets to be had on our website or the online ticket trading platform, StubHub – not even for 120 talents of gold!





Indeed, Christoph announced that we were a full-house (35 people). It was like a masquerade ball; everyone dressed up in their finest Sunday masks, except Jane ("Oh no, masks on Sundays as well!") for whom it was dress down Sunday! Jane wears a mask all week, in fact, full PPE in her dental practice – she must have felt only half dressed with just a simple nose and mouth covering.

Christoph was struggling to see through misted spectacles and so removed his mask, maintaining a very safe distance from the congregation. His sermon was based on the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1-10), despised as a tax collector who practiced social distancing from potentially hostile crowds. Our social distancing is down to a hostile virus, but being together again on this first return of Sunday services at St Mary's Church, more than made up for the inconvenience of masks.

Jane said it was good to see people in church again. She found the service "reflective and uplifting" and was able to focus more. Dexter added that they had missed the social interaction of church. Whilst they both found the online service very good, it lacked

the sense of being physically present with the church family.

The bride returned on 2nd August but where had she been? The truth is that the bride never really left. She was out in the community organising and delivering food parcels, visiting or contacting vulnerable people and helping those who couldn't get out to shops for food and essentials. The rector and his team very quickly set up virtual services online, which are universally appreciated and attract healthy numbers. They are still produced every Sunday as many are unable to get to the service in church and others are joining us online for the first time.

The magnificent old church in Denham is just a building, but it is the house of God and we his people, Christ's bride, were back. We were safe, we were connected and we are hopeful.

Note: You can find the bible reports of the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon in 1 Kings 10: 1-13 and in 2 Chronicles 9:1-12.

Revelation 21: 2 and 9

"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.' "

LITTLE LIONS, NOT SO LITTLE ANYMORE....

(BY KATHY PAINE AND EDDA LINDNER)

*"The Lions roar, the parrots squawk
But they can't say I love You like I do
The pigs go oink and the cows say moo;
The chickens cluck but they can't say I
love You like I do;
I can sing I love You, I can whisper I love
You every day"*

This song by Sarah Pickering became something of an anthem for Little Lions over the past four years – we sing it weekly. *Four years?* Almost, if it had not been for the small matter of COVID-19. We had to press the 'pause' button on 18 March 2020 and then realised as the crisis developed, that there wouldn't be a quick "back to normal" for a long time.

Language, words, especially affirming ones are so vital for the healthy development of a baby into a thriving child. Space to play, explore and hearing words and ideas through songs and stories are therefore key components of every well-run toddler group.

It was in September 2016 that Little Lions opened its doors to any adult and their under 4s, on Wednesday mornings during term time. The aim was to create a fun place to relax, to explore and find friendship. We particularly wanted the group to be for local families, supporting them through the development of a supportive community.



Having a Christian ethos which affirms that everyone is made in the image of our Creator God was important to us. Everyone on the team is a volunteer, giving their time and skills for the greater good of the toddler group, freely and joyfully. It's been so special to see those babies who started with us develop into nursery and even school children!

Why the name?

We loved the Little Lions theme song and were delighted to discover that Saint Mark is often symbolised as a lion. What better connection with St Mark's Hall, our venue, especially as St. Mark's Gospel is one of the books in the bible that tells the story of Jesus's life. Perfect for our Christian ethos.

Why is Little Lions so special?

This is down to the great teams we've had, who have worked together so well, and of course our amazing mums, carers and children who have attended.

Saying goodbye to Sue

Our Little Lions coffee team has been second to none and represents all generations. Our dear friend Sue Fletcher, ably supported by husband Keith, set up an amazing coffee team who were there each week, ready to serve our families and prepare healthy snacks in our kitchen. They always had a ready smile and our mums, carers and children just loved them. We were deeply saddened when Sue died earlier this year and miss her every day. She was like a loving mother to us all and with her great sense of humour and fun certainly kept us on our toes! She didn't miss a trick! She had such a heart for young families and community and was an amazing role model to us all.



Founder members Kath and Suzanne move on

Our set up team grew as time went by but it was the dedication (and muscle power) of Suzanne Hearnden-Smith and the creative prowess of Kath

Sole that made it happen. Early every Wednesday morning we opened the brick shed and transformed St Mark's Hall into a welcoming and thriving space for toddlers. We organised the singing and teaching programme while Sue masterminded the administrative side! You can begin to see how much was involved. We are so grateful to Suzanne and Kath, whose children have just started reception class, for their commitment, constructive ideas and for the huge part they played in shaping Little Lions – not to mention the fun and laughter that went into what we did. We will truly miss them as we miss all our willing helpers whose children have outgrown us.

And the future?

We are looking for creative and safe ways of meeting again. Rest assured, we will return as soon as we can and though we might need to rethink how we meet, we look forward to that time. Watch this space, and if you would like to join this adventure, please give us a friendly roar...

For further information, please contact Little Lions via the Church Office.



REMEMBERING AND TRUSTING

BY IAN JENNINGS



Remembrance is said to be the 'last gift of love.'

When I became Vicar of St. Cuthbert's Church Firvale Sheffield, I was drawn to a beautiful stained-glass window commemorating the death of a young chorister called Hugh Kelsey - who had been killed in the Great War (1914 - 1918). The window was strikingly beautiful and depicted him in his choir robes, and, standing beside him, was Jesus - loving and welcoming. I thought about the broken-hearted parents who paid to have this beautiful window to be installed. I imagined his voice blending with the others, filling the sacred space of the parish church with the high praises of God. Perhaps he sang the solo of the first verse of Once in Royal David's City before the choir processed at Midnight Mass.

I found an old photo in a little used metal cupboard in the choir vestry, and there he was in football kit, sitting in the centre of the front row clutching the ball. I imagined him dribbling past opponents to score the winning goal to the acclaim of his fellow team mates. Perhaps he even cherished ambitions to play for Sheffield Wednesday or Sheffield United.

When it came to Remembrance Sunday, I referenced him in my sermon. I painted a word picture of Hugh and imagined that fateful morning when the news came through that he had been killed in

action. I wondered if the Vicar had announced the sad news and if the parents had been in the service among people who loved them and shared their loss. Hugh came to embody our remembrance and was a true focus of our gratitude for all those who had given their lives to secure peace and safety for our world. The point, clearly made, was that he was a real person with hopes, dreams and aspirations, surrounded by people who loved him and whom he loved. Every Remembrance Sunday, whilst we remember our national loss in two minutes of silence, we stand wrapt in thought. Pain and pride mingle, here is hurt and heartbreak but hope and healing remain.

Maybe this is always the way with the flood of memories that come at significant anniversaries: there is hurt but healing too, pain mingles with pride, heartache indeed, but tempered with hope. A friend described how bleak October has become for her; many memories spring unbidden to her mind including the sudden downturn in her husband's condition, treatment that brought discomfort but not healing, vivid memories of hospitalisation and desperation; fighting to live and fighting to breathe and losing the fight. Her memories seem to line up like paratroopers ready to drop into her consciousness throughout the month. She dreads those October

blues. We all have stormy horizons to face and during these difficult days of Coronavirus those dark horizons seem to have become all the darker.

I have spoken to many who have found this period very difficult. If you are mourning the loss of a loved one, the pain of that loss seems all the more intense during lonely days of self-isolation. If you have health challenges to cope with, they become

so much more difficult when the complication of living with Covid intrudes into our lives. I really value the way that the church community has embraced the challenge and endeavoured to ensure that everyone is remembered, valued and encouraged and prayer has continued to be the very highest priority. But this has been a difficult journey and remains so. The dark horizons haven't dispersed and difficult days still lie ahead for our world and for our community. My friend Roger has a motto for his church on Long Island at this time, it is "God's got this, and God's got you." It is not wishful self-delusion but rather it is trust in the God who utterly and absolutely loves us. May we daily have the upward look of trustful silence in the presence of the God who loves us.



Whatever your own heartaches at this time, my prayer is that you will encounter the healing presence of God and that your memories will be suffused with the light and love of God and that fresh hope and joy will fill your heart. The Psalmist says,

"I would have fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm 27:13)

May any inclination to faint be replaced by a firmness of faith that enables us always to see the goodness of the Lord that comes to equip and sustain us through every trying time.

CHRISTMAS TREES – WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?

My sister Olivia and I decided to find out. We went to The Big Green Plant Centre, Denham, and spoke to the nursery manager Rob Couser.

First we discussed why Christmas trees were so special. 'The tradition of having Christmas trees originates from a few different cultures' Rob told us, 'but generally they were thought to bring good spirits to the household and keep bad ones away.' Christmas trees were first thought to have been introduced to the UK in the 1800's, though some think it could have been earlier than that. Many believe Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort was responsible for bringing an evergreen tree over from Germany and put it up at Windsor castle starting a trend that has lasted over 100 years.

Are there different types of Christmas tree?

Yes, many! The most popular Christmas tree is the Nordmann Fir- our bestseller. It has very soft needles that are easy to decorate, and so ideal for families with young children. Traditional Christmas trees tend to be Norway Spruces- normally seen in Churches and schools as they are the largest variety of Christmas trees. Noble firs (which have cones) are also prized for their perfect conical shape, centred foliage, silvery-blue colour and pleasant scent. Some other common types are

the Korean and Fraser fir, which both have cones, a nice shape and a pleasant scent, one being slightly lighter in colour than the other. I have an artificial tree in my home, but the Noble fir is my favourite.

What is the best way to look after them?

Leave your tree outside for as long as possible, taking the net off so the branches can 'open', and cut around an inch off the trunk, which will draw more water into the tree. Basically, treat it like a cut flower! The average Christmas tree should last at least a month.

What is the best way to buy them?

Going to an actual Christmas tree farm, where you can pick your own tree and have it cut down straight-away. All of our trees come from Scotland, as it is important to us that our trees are UK sourced.

What is the average size of a Christmas tree?

Most Christmas trees I sell range from 6-7 feet tall, and grow about a foot per year. The largest tree I've



ever sold was 16ft tall. It was for the Queen's Speech a few years ago!

How many do you sell?

We're hoping to sell around 170 trees this year- either pre-ordered or picked on site.

Why is a real Christmas tree better than a fake one?

The scent; especially when it's damp or with the heating on because that will allow the sap to rise to the surface.

How should people dispose of their tree?

If possible, find somewhere that

will recycle it. Most councils run a disposal service after Christmas.

What does Christmas mean to you?

Definitely kids having a great time. I have four, plus two cats and two dogs. One of our Christmas traditions is to hang decorations made by the children on the tree after they have gone to bed, although sometimes quite a lot of chocolate ends up on there as well!

By Sophie Clements, age 13

Editor: This interview was taken in 2019 prior to the need for social distancing and face masks!

THE LEGEND OF ST BONIFACE

RETOLD BY ALAN BARKER

Forests can be frightening places, especially when you are alone and it's getting dark. But Boniface wasn't frightened. He was a Christian who believed that God would keep him safe. Boniface wanted others to trust in God as well. So he journeyed across Germany teaching people about Jesus.

Often his journeys took him through forests. One winter's day the wind shook the branches of the trees so that they looked like long arms reaching out to grab him. Boniface shivered and drew his cloak around him. The shadows were getting darker. Soon it would be night. Boniface often travelled the forest by the light of the moon. He had often heard the howling of wolves and the screeching of owls. But suddenly he was startled by a

different kind of cry.

Above the noise of the wind he heard a terrified scream, and the sound of voices chanting. Boniface drew back into the shadows as the voices came nearer. A group of hooded figures dragged a struggling boy along the track. They stopped beneath a large tree. The chanting grew louder. They pushed the boy to the ground and Boniface was horrified to see one of the figures raise an axe high in the air. The boy screamed again in terror.

Boniface could stand it no longer. Racing from his hiding place he seized the axe and helped the boy to his feet. The figures surrounded him menacingly. 'You shall die for this,' they hissed. 'The spirits of the trees demand life, and they will now take yours.'

'I am not afraid', replied Boniface, 'and you should not be frightened of the spirits of the trees. Look! I will show you that they have no power.'

Taking the axe, Boniface began to cut at the trunk of the ancient oak tree that the people worshipped. They drew back, believing he would come to harm. Eventually, the tree crashed to the ground and Boniface stood there wiping his brow and smiling.

Everyone was amazed. 'What is this new magic?' they asked one another.

'It's not magic,' said Boniface. 'It is the strength that comes from faith in God. God, who made the trees, has sent his Son so that we need never be afraid.' As he sat on the upturned tree telling the story of Jesus' birth, Boniface noticed a tiny fir tree growing in the soil around its roots.

He paused and pointed to it. 'Look,' he said. 'If you wish to have a sacred tree, here is one. Its branches point to heaven and to God who has made the world. Its leaves are evergreen and a sign of eternal life. It is the tree of peace for you to make homes from its wood.'

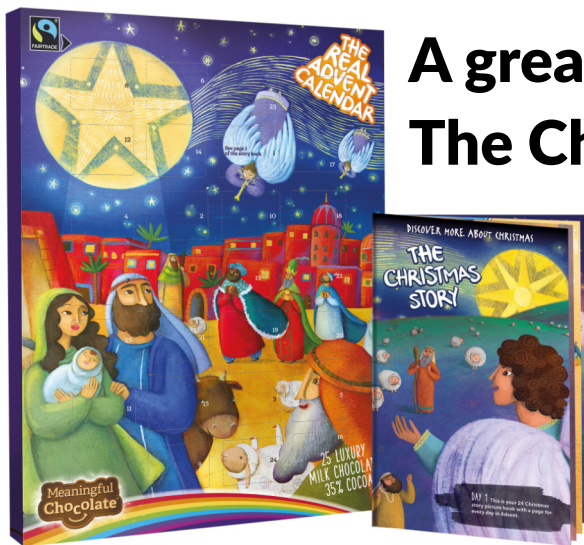
It was now night and the moon was shining. Quietly they gazed at the tiny tree bathed in silvery light. The wind had stopped and everything in the forest was still.

We don't know whether this legend about St Boniface actually happened. What we do know is that he was born as Winfrid around 675 AD in the Devon town of Crediton, and that he was a leading figure in the Anglo-

Saxon mission to Germanic tribes. He was martyred in Frisia in 754 AD and soon venerated as a saint in both Germany and England. In 2019 Devon County Council officially recognised St Boniface as the Patron Saint of Devon.



A great way to share The Christmas Story



With a new 24-page Christmas story-activity book which is designed to be used every day in Advent.

The new design Real Advent Calendar is the UK's only Fairtrade calendar which comes with a free 24 page Christmas story-activity book and which supports charitable causes.

There is a Fairtrade chocolate and a line of the Christmas story behind each of the 25 windows. The free book has a page for every day of Advent expanding on the Christmas story and includes some fun challenges. No other calendar enables parents and children to experience the Christmas story in this way.

Why we need a Real Advent Calendar

2020 was a year unlike any other. To protect lives our society was put on hold. This autumn it is more important than ever that, as we make our journey towards Christmas, we find ways to share the story of the birth of Jesus.

The Real Advent Calendar is a proven way to do this. ***Please consider giving it as a gift to friends and neighbours to help them discover the real story of Christmas.***

Saving lives

This year the calendar features a rainbow to remind us of the importance of working together in inspiring ways, for the common good. The Real Advent Calendar supports these values by using Fairtrade chocolate - giving producers a fair price as well as a 'top-up' cash bonus. Money raised from the sales of the calendar will also help provide care and support for mums and new babies in African villages.

The Real Advent Calendar costs £3.99. Retailers stocking it include larger Tesco stores, Traidcraft, Eden and others. You can find out more and order it at **www.realadvent.co.uk**

BOOK REVIEW: THE LITTLE PRINCE

BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

The Little Prince is a timeless and classic story or even fable, which appeals to the child within us all, and encompasses themes such as friendship, love, isolation, and human empathy. In many ways the tale is paradoxical, appearing at first sight to comprise a simple children's book, but at the same time possessing an underlying deeper meaning, and an almost mythological symbolism, directed towards adults.

The book begins with a summary of the differences in perception between children and adults, and how many adults often fail to perceive important things, while some can see through a child's eyes and have imagination. This is a central theme throughout the remainder of the story.

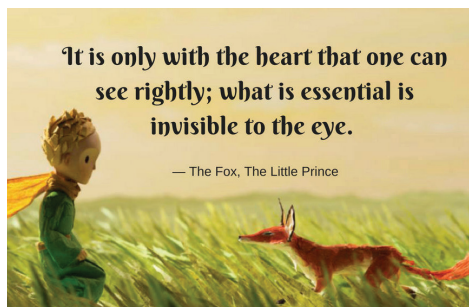
The plot describes how an aircraft pilot (the narrator), becomes stranded in the barren Sahara Desert, when his aircraft engine suddenly breaks down and he crashes, and is befriended there by a young boy, the Little Prince, who

comes from another planet, and whilst the pilot attempts to make the necessary repairs, the Little Prince tells the pilot the story of his life.

The Little Prince has travelled from an Asteroid called "B612", which is "scarcely larger than a house," and which was discovered by a Turkish astronomer in 1909. The Little Prince describes his Asteroid, as well as his profound love for the beautiful and enchanting solitary rose in his garden.

The Little Prince then goes on to tell the pilot, stories about the characters he has met on his travels, each teaching him a valuable lesson or secret. For example, the Little Prince meets a fox who wants the Little Prince to tame him, and by being tamed, the fox becomes special, and different from other foxes, just like the rose which the Little Prince loves back in his garden on the Asteroid becomes special as she is the object of the Little Prince's admiration and adoration.

As the story progresses, the Little Prince becomes sad over his recollections, and seeks to return home to see the rose on his Asteroid again, who has somewhat taken the Little Prince's love for granted; but the Little Prince has since learned he was too young to know how to love her.



The Little Prince then tells the pilot that he must reluctantly say farewell and when he leaves it may look as if he has died, as his body is too heavy to take with him, but this is not the case.

The underlying theme of the novella is the overriding importance of love: The Little Prince initially finds the love of his rose too challenging through his lack of insight, and leaves to explore the galaxy in search of self-knowledge.

The story is fantastical but also has a certain logic when seen through the imagination of a child, but also there is an element of an as yet untold story that the reader's imagination

and interpretation must provide. Given that the story was published in 1943, amidst the Second World War, it appears that the author is also seeking de-politicise human emotion, and to raise the importance of love and empathy as paramount and uniting factors.

The Little Prince is a beautiful and engaging moral allegory to remind adults through a child's eyes of what counts in life, the need for open-mindedness and curiosity, and as the fox tells the Little Prince, "One sees clearly only with the heart. Anything essential is invisible to the eyes."

Reviewed by Andrew Walker.

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Christmas will not be cancelled this year!

At the time of going to print we cannot give you a list of all Carol and Christmas services yet, but we are making plans – for events at St Mary's Church, online and outdoors.

Please go to the web page below for the latest updates.

Our regular Sunday services at present:

9.30am Morning Worship at St Mary's

(Please register at denhamparish.church/events)

10.30am Sunday Worship Online

tinyurl.com/youtube-denham

Weekly service on your telephone

Available any time for a week, Sun to Sat:
01895 714013

www.denhamparish.church/christmas



FAMILY REGISTER

CREMATIONS

- 17.06.20** Royston Burke (85) Denham
01.07.20 Jonathan Govan (81) Denham
14.08.20 Jennifer Marshall (83) Higher Denham
12.08.20 Kerry Harrison (54) Datchet
12.09.20 Thelma Mann (94) Chalfont St Peter



Jonathan Govan



Thelma Mann

WEDDINGS

- 05.09.20** Andrew Walker to Dionne Gachette, New Denham



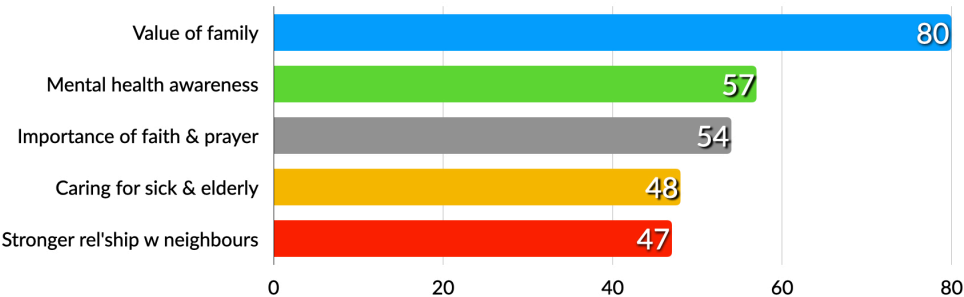
COMMUNITY SURVEY: The results are in!



Thank you to the **95** people who completed our community survey, inviting us to reflect together on the impact of the coronavirus crisis.

The following pages summarise the results and give all of us an opportunity to reflect. 34 respondents were over 65, 29 were 51-65, 25 were 31-50 and 3 were 18-30 years old.

Family has become a lot more important to you.



These themes have become a lot more important as a result of the crisis.
(Multiple responses possible. Numbers represent percent of responses.)

Least important:

1 Fighting Racism **2** Fighting Homelessness **3** Fighting Poverty

My lifestyle has changed for the better in these ways:

church time reflect exercise Closer taking drive walks others enjoying
Spending time life also family Spending time slower pace life
less help home commuting things reading work better change relaxed
neighbours Appreciation regular

(word cloud generated from all answers)

Examples:

Enjoying the natural world | Learnt how to Zoom | Daily walks
More willing to ask for help | Not taking things for granted
More time with family | Sunday has become a day of rest
Gardening | Lost weight | More time to reflect and pray
Slower pace of life | Watch less news | Living more simply
More home-cooking | Re-evaluate priorities | Slower pace
Saved money (no eating out) | Time to talk to neighbours
Enjoying solitude more | No need to commute to work

My lifestyle has changed for the worse in these ways:

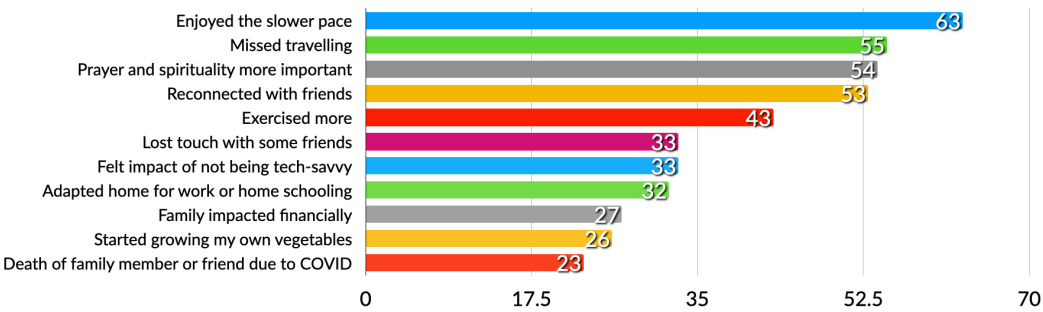
see feel inadequate useless feeling members go change work see family
family travel less due missed home exercise friends
able attend time Mental health much

(word cloud generated from all answers)

Examples:

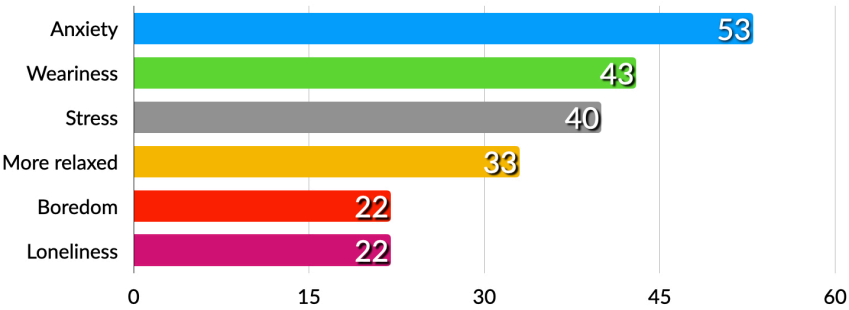
Continuous worry | Feeling inadequate | Mental health | Home working
Work load increased | Unable to attend regular events
Not seeing friends and family in person | Friends are struggling
Waste of car tax and insurance | Missed my church family
Not exercised due to shielding | More alone | Income reduced
No travel | Less intimate conversations with friends
No hugs | Not able to do some sports | Loss of freedom
More feelings of distrust and anger towards leaders in power
Loss of routine | Tensions with family about COVID | Lost my job
Less support with child care | Worries about finances

The slower pace has impacted you most.



How you have been impacted personally?
(Multiple responses possible.)

Anxiety is the most common emotional response.



“I am experiencing the following emotions as a result of the crisis.”
(Multiple responses possible. Numbers represent percent of responses.)

At the moment, the greatest need for people is...

safe feel safe need one church open keep looking
community go people help support
connected know neighbour places strong community feel
(word cloud generated from all answers)

Examples:

A post office | To understand that the love of Jesus is for all
Keeping the environment nice to be in | Social provisions
Fellowship & friendship | Walk with Jesus | More parking
Help to relax - attitude is everything | Open covered areas to meet
Discover that God is with us | Support each other in the community
A place that is a beacon of hope, information and support - parish church?
Keep communication with neighbours open | Volunteers for litter picking
Financial, practical, social, spiritual support | Wear masks, keep others safe
Faith, renewal and healing | A safe place to experience community
HS2: Loss of countryside | Visit the lonely | Knowing St Mary's is there for them

I could support our community with my talents:

time Making people community helping need enjoy find one
(word cloud generated from all answers)

Examples:

Helping people who don't understand technology | Fight for justice
I'd love to help but difficult to find the time | Financial contributions
Checking on people regularly to make sure they're ok | DIY skills
Help fill in complicated benefits forms | Start a cycle club
Phone or video chats with isolated people | Cooking
Visiting the elderly | Tutoring children | Expanding knowledge of WWI
Contribute to the magazine | Photography | Collect prescriptions or shopping
Provide meals | lend a listening ear



St Mary's churchyard

Spaced around the churchyard are prayer points where you can pause for a moment and reflect.

We hope you find it helpful.

Look out for the Christmas trail coming soon!

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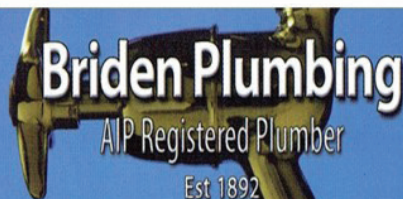
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AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT

BY REV PETER CRICK (RECTOR OF
ST MARY'S DENHAM FROM 1975 TO 1988)



This picture shows a sight that for most of the past - what, 175 years? - nobody will have seen. The bellringers see the window, and have done for about 40 years, but we don't get to see it from a further perspective as in this photo.

So how did it come about?

One day our doorbell rang. When I answered it there was a lady who asked if I could help her daughter. She explained that her daughter was hoping to gain entry to the Royal Academy of Music, and her chosen instrument was the organ. The vicar's wife in their own parish church had complained that her organ practice disturbed the flower arrangers. Could she practise at St Mary's?

I could hardly believe it. Of course we would help. The musical life at

Denham was in fact going through its own issues at that time. For a variety of reasons we had changed organist a couple of times so the young lady was suddenly an asset, and the choir liked her too! Then she went to college and ultimately became the organist. You have probably guessed she now is, of course, Mrs Louise Hardy.

The organ we then had was located where it now is, but the console was in the chancel and stood where the digital piano now sits. The link between them was electrical, and problems were becoming constant. The advice we were given was that we had the choice between a complete rebuild and modernization of the current instrument, or to replace it entirely. Initial enquiries gave us the surprising information that we would probably get a new organ for much the same cost as a rebuild, and if we chose wisely it





would be a better instrument.

Opposite the Church lived Stirling Moss' manager. Hearing of our crisis, he very generously offered to donate the organ completely if (he was a modern techie) we got a high-grade electronic one. The PCC, Rector, and Organist were extremely grateful, but felt such a historic building really required a wind instrument. So we ruefully declined.

In the end, guided and advised by Louise, we selected the design and quotation submitted by one Nigel Church. A Shepherd, he was also organist for his local Parish Church in Otterburn, Northumberland. He had begun servicing his own, and then other organs, till in the end he decided to build them. Louise and I travelled to Otterburn to see



our instrument when it was mid-construction. The workshop was a beautifully converted stone barn. It was a captivating visit which doubled our eagerness to see this beautiful oak creation in Denham.

It was to be a Tracker organ; which means that all the valves that allow air into the pipes are activated by rods, not electric contact breakers. They are very light and can easily be repaired if necessary. The wind box interested me as a sailor. It was built of marine grade plywood, which would never warp or split as the previous 19th century one of thin wooden sheets, had. The organ also was divided into two separate units. The smaller section, called a "Chair Organ" was located behind the organist - fascinating.





Finally – installation

It was decided to support the chair organ by steel beam cantilever into the main nave and make room behind for the bellringers, and use the door in the tower as the main entrance. We had many hands to achieve all this: Bernard Collins was Bell Captain, he was also a carpenter and a director of a construction company. He not only directed the work, he also acted as Clerk of works. Alongside him was another ‘chippy’ – Church Warden Ron Udell – one of the best Church Wardens God ever created: a mainstay of my ministry in St Mary’s. He was also head of set construction at Pinewood, and a mainstay of 007! One of his finer touches was that all the balusters of the safety rail of the new organ loft match the pew ends. Have you ever noticed that?

These two worthies also spotted that the largest pipe of the old organ was made of good wood. It is still in the tower to this day – it is the staircase by which one gains access to the bell tower and organ. Serendipity.

The choir were uncertain about this new instrument. It meant the organist was far away, and communication might be difficult. Then they discovered what fun it was to sing some choral works from above and behind the congregation, and this brilliant young choir mistress and musician soon had their musical quality rising to new heights, musical, as well as physical. What is certain is the spiritual enhancement that musical contribution has made to the worship at St Mary’s.

Incidentally, that distancing probably helped prepare the choir for coping with “virtual choir practices” this year!





GIVE & SHARE

An Umbrella Charity of Denham Parish Church



CALLING OUR COMMUNITY

So many of you have helped us for the last few years with Operation Christmas Box but this year it's slightly different. We are now a charity, how exciting is that? In order to help people all year round, we have had to change our name so we are now known as Give & Share formerly Operation Christmas Box. It's the same people, same community aim, just a new name. We are proud to say we are now a charity under the umbrella of Denham Parish Church, Denham Village,

Now comes your part and how you can help this year. Below you will see a list of items we include in our boxes, if you can help with donating anything we would be so grateful. Remember your gifts help many families that otherwise would struggle during this holiday time.

WHAT WE WOULD LOVE TO RECEIVE:

This year we decided on this gift list as it will reduce unusable gifts (wrong ages, likes, ability) and help us to spread the boxes further.

- Luxury Food Items: (no nuts if possible)
- Tins of Chocolates: (Quality Street, Heroes, Celebrations, Roses)
- Sweets & Biscuits: (Haribo Type, Family biscuit boxes)
- Tins of Meat / Tuna / Chicken Breast Roll
- Mince Pies & Christmas Cake
- Snacks (Twiglets, Pringles, Family share bags of Crisps)
- Treats: (Hot chocolate, Marshmallows, Cake mixes, gingerbread houses / gingerbread men)
- Tinned Fruit / Vegetables / Custard
- Toiletries (men and women's / Children's Bubble Bath)
- Selection Boxes Family / Board Games / New Toys

Please can you check dates on items, they need to last until mid January.
Due to Covid, everything must be new, I hope you understand.



WE WOULD ALSO LOVE TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING PLEASE....

- Christmas Activity Sets
(make your own decorations, paper chain packs, crackers, cards.)
- Fluffy Socks
- Scarves / Hats / Gloves
- Rolls of Wrapping paper
- Sellotape

If you wish to donate, but getting out is difficult for you, we would be very grateful of Tesco's, Sainsbury's and Asda Vouchers, alternatively we have an Amazon Wish List set up on our Facebook Group.

The vouchers and any Cash donated will be used to buy items we need to complete boxes prior to delivery.



OUR PRE-ARRANGED COLLECTION POINTS ARE:



Smiths Garden Centre
New Denham

Bites Sandwich Bar
New Denham

Hearnden Smith & Daughters
Harefield

Gerrards Cross
(please call Craig for info)

Iver Flowerland
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Croxley Hardware
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ALL DONATIONS NEED TO BE IN BY 5 DECEMBER PLEASE

If you need any more information or a home collection please call:

CRAIG ALEXANDER on: 07748 973 527

Lastly, Thank you all so much for all your continued help,
let's spread a little love this Christmas to those who need it most.



GIVE AND SHARE is part of Denham Parish Church • Registered Charity No. 1144358
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DAN'S REFILL STORE

PLANET-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS WITHOUT THE PLASTIC



Dan's Refill Store is a pop-up shop in Chalfont St Peter, selling household cleaning and personal hygiene products. The difference is that you bring your own empty bottles and get them refilled.

We are a brother and sister partnership (local residents Daniel Castle and Julia Crellin), who wanted to do something to stem the tide of plastic entering the environment. As Christians we feel strongly that we should be doing what we can to take care of the amazing creation God has provided for us. We know how frustrating it is to be passionate about the global plastic problem and yet have no alternative but to buy our everyday cleaning products in plastic bottles. So when we heard of shops with a zero-waste approach, we knew we were on to something that would be valuable to society and decided to set up our own.

It's a fairly simple process: you just bring us your empty containers and we fill them up again. But simple doesn't necessarily mean easy – you have to remember to keep your bottles once they are empty, and take them

with you when you go shopping. Developing new habits can take a while and often people tell us they'd intended to come but forgotten their bottles. So we do have a pot-luck range of clean bottles for emergency use, donated by customers who no longer need them, but we like nothing better than to greet a customer with a reusable shopping bag full of empties.

For the body we sell a range of quality shampoos, conditioners, hand soaps, shower gels and moisturising lotions. For the home we offer laundry liquids and powder, fabric softener, washing up liquids, dishwasher powder and rinse-aid, multi-surface cleaner, toilet cleaner and window cleaner. These products are all environmentally friendly, and sourced from ethical UK companies. Many of our liquids are supplied to us in 20 litre drums which, when empty, are returned to the supplier for reuse. Biodegradable cloths, washing up brushes and the like complete the household range. People are usually surprised by how reasonable the prices are – it shouldn't cost the earth to look after the planet!

We also stock a range of recycled and fairly traded goods from developing countries. Our excellent backpacks and shopping bags, wallets and purses are made from recycled tyres, motorcycle seats and cement bags from Cambodia, which is also where the recycled bullet-case earrings originate. We have tagua (aka vegetable ivory) jewellery, which comes from Ecuador, as does a selection of irresistible fair-trade chocolate bars! Julia, our very own

silversmith, makes gorgeous rings out of antique silver teaspoons, and charming silver nugget earrings and necklaces.

Our ethos is that everything, including plastic bottles, has value. When we throw stuff away, we not only devalue the objects themselves, but the places they end up, along with the creatures that depend on those places for their food and shelter. If the discarded items are made of plastic, they will not biodegrade and thus could become a hazard for wildlife. The RSPCA gets called out around 5000 times a year to help animals that have been harmed by litter. These creatures are often attracted by the remnants of a bottle

of sweet fizzy drink, and then become stuck. In my own experience, when I go for a walk I often pick up litter. I have found bottles full of dead beetles and even one with baby rodents of some kind.

Plastic bottles have gone through a lengthy and relatively expensive process taking them from crude oil to containers that hold and apply liquids in exactly the right way. Why throw them away?! Even if they do get recycled, this takes a lot of energy, time and space, so should be thought of only as a last resort. Let's give them an extra lease of life and look after the environment and all its dependants.

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*"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."*

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2: 1; 3-12

