



EXPLORE LIFE • FAITH • MEANING  
[www.denhamparish.church/alpha](http://www.denhamparish.church/alpha)



Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes—and in January we are going to run it **ONLINE!**

A great way to deepen your own faith and to invite others who want to explore the Christian faith to attend with you. **Christoph and Edda will run Alpha online from Monday 25 January.**

**Who can you invite to come with you? To sign up or find out more, go to [www.denhamparish.church/alpha](http://www.denhamparish.church/alpha)**

**Join us from 25 January 2021!**

## SUNDAY WORSHIP: ON SITE

### St Mary's Church:

*During the renewed lockdown there will be no services at St Mary's Church.*

**Online: Sundays 10.30am**  
 Stream any time afterwards:  
[tinyurl.com/youtube-denham](http://tinyurl.com/youtube-denham)



## ONLINE AND ON THE PHONE

### Church Coffee Online:

Sundays, 11.15 on our Youtube channel.  
[tinyurl.com/youtube-denham](http://tinyurl.com/youtube-denham)

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



### Let's pray together ...

- pray with thanksgiving for the world God has entrusted to our care.
- For medical experts, politicians and public leaders – for wisdom, compassion and integrity.
- those who are sick and those suffering from bereavement, especially the family of Harrison Cail and Jessie Sims.

## ONLINE DONATIONS



If you wish to make a donation to Denham Parish Church, please scan this code with the camera or QR app on your smartphone and follow instructions.



# PAROUSIA

Weekly News and Service Sheet  
**10<sup>th</sup> January 2021**  
**The Baptism of Christ**

**Welcome!** To protect one another and help fight the COVID pandemic we are not restarting services at St Mary's Church for the time being. But the life of our church is not being put on hold and God remains active in his world! This news and service sheet is one way of keeping in touch and worshipping together. You can download it from our website or ask our church office to send you a paper version. The inside pages provide you with a simple service so you can worship at home. Please check our website or Facebook page on a regular basis and do contact our church office if we can help in any way. *Christoph Lindner*

## The Baptism of Jesus

In Mark's Gospel the word 'immediately' occurs 42 times. That is more often than the whole of the rest of the New Testament. It's often called the 'urgent Gospel.' Here in the first chapter we read the compelling story of the baptism of Jesus. It is obvious that Jesus did not need a baptism of repentance since had committed no sin - he had nothing of which to repent. But here was the dramatic moment of the beginning of his ministry. Jesus publicly embraces the mission given to him by his Father. Mark wants us to grasp how momentous is this event. He does not just say that the 'heavens opened' but that they were 'torn apart.' The word he uses is '*schizomenous*' - a decisive disruption in the status quo. God's voice disrupts the status quo and announces that Jesus is the 'Beloved Son'. And so it begins ...

Jesus gladly submits to the baptism of John as **an act of identifying** with the people in their movement back to God. John remonstrated with him but Jesus was determined to wholly identify himself with the people he had come to serve. How could he have been effective in his ministry if he stood apart from the people he had come to seek and to save? Harold St John was a fine Victorian young gentleman with a silk hat and frock coat and he felt God's call to the 'down and outs' of London. He took his New Testament and went to preach the Gospel to them. They looked at him in his starched collar and spats and turned their backs.

He prayed and asked God what to do. He put on old and ragged clothes and went and sat among them. He said nothing - he felt their pain, their hunger and their hardships. He lived among them and when he did speak, he spoke with gentleness, love and compassion — and they listened.

The baptism of Jesus was also **a moment of equipping** - 'the Holy Spirit descended upon him.' The Holy Spirit came 'as a dove.' The dove is the symbol of gentleness. John's ministry was as an 'axe laid to the root of the tree.' It was a radical message of terrible sifting and searching. It was an essential message but with the ministry of Jesus came a new dawn. Full of love and compassion he reached out to the multitudes - he still does. Now he does so through us. Are we ready to embrace the challenge?  
*Ian Jennings*

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**STAY SAFE • STAY CONNECTED • STAY HOPEFUL**

## WELCOME

### OPENING PRAYER (from Psalm 29)

Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendour. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters. The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever. May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

### HYMN

O Worship the Lord  
in the beauty of holiness;  
bow down before him,  
his glory proclaim;  
with gold of obedience,  
and incense of lowliness,  
kneel and adore him:  
the Lord is his name.

Low at his feet lay  
thy burden of carefulness:  
High on his heart  
He will bear it for thee,  
comfort thy sorrows,  
and answer thy prayerfulness,  
guiding thy steps  
as may best for thee be.

These, though we bring them  
in trembling and fearfulness,  
He will accept  
for the name that is dear;  
mornings of joy give  
for ev'nings of tearfulness,  
trust for our trembling  
and hope for our fear.

## COLLECT

Heavenly Father, at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognize him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

### BIBLE READING: *Mark 1.4-11*

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

*This is the word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

### REFLECTION (or read page 1)

#### PRAYERS

God of truth,  
you are faithful to the covenant you have made with us; look in mercy on your people.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

We have broken the pledges of our baptism, and failed to be your disciples.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

Though we are saved by Christ and dead to sin through the deep waters of death, we have not witnessed to his grace by our manner of life.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

We have shown indifference to those in need and have been afraid to stand up for justice and truth.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

We have been slow to forgive, and have failed to remember your repeated forgiveness of our sins.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

Today we rejoice and give thanks because your Son humbled himself to be baptized in the Jordan. Through the waters you have given us the mystery of baptism for the remission of our sins.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

Through water and Spirit you give us new life as the people of God, and pour out upon us the gifts of your new covenant.

From all our sins, O Lord:  
**wash us, and we shall be clean.**

Almighty God,  
in our baptism you have consecrated us to be temples of your Holy Spirit. May we, whom you have counted worthy, nurture your indwelling Spirit with a lively faith, and worship you with upright lives; through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**We pray the Lord's Prayer:  
Our Father...**

## HYMN

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song  
This cornerstone this solid ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
What heights of love, what depths of peace  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
My comforter, my all in all  
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh  
Fulness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones he came to save  
Till on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied –  
For every sin on him was laid:  
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground his body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious day  
Up from the grave he rose again!  
And as he stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am his and he is mine –  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from his hand  
Till he returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand!

## THE BLESSING

May God, whose Holy Spirit came upon the beloved Son at his baptism in the river Jordan, pour out his gifts on us who have come to the waters of new birth. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always.  
**Amen.**