

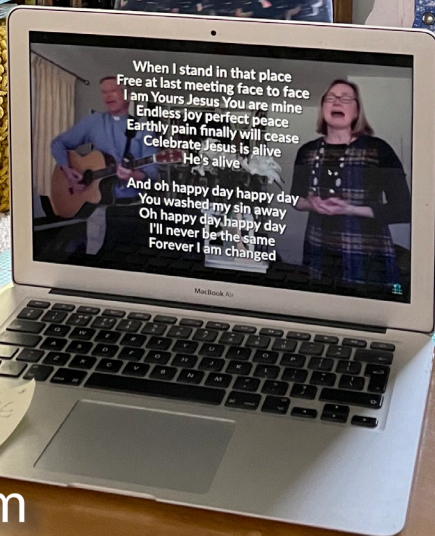
JUNE - AUGUST 2021

# DENHAM PARISH NEWS

GOD AT WORK

WALKING BACK IN  
TIME

IT'S BUSY  
ONLINE



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**Front Cover:** Matilda and Agnes dancing along to a lively song during our online Sunday service

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As the Lockdown restrictions in the UK continue to be lifted, I wonder what aspects of the pandemic we will keep, change or stop doing. I hope that the positives such as looking out for our neighbours and a greater awareness and appreciation of the beauty of nature and the environment will remain strong. The pandemic has given us time to step back and reassess how we live and what we do. At Denham Parish News (DPN) we too have been reviewing how we move forward - what it is good to keep, change or possibly stop doing. To help make DPN more accessible, during the pandemic we made it available online ([www.denhamparish.church/magazine](http://www.denhamparish.church/magazine)), and we will keep that change, continuing to include it as an important part of our church website.

We also increased the number of pages from the standard 32 to a bumper 36 pages and we plan to set 36 pages as our new standard format. However, we are changing the number of issues from five to four, to tie in with the seasonal calendar and enable us to continue to provide you with high quality content. The issue cycle will therefore now be:

**Spring/Easter** (March - May)

**Summer** (June - August)

**Autumn** (September - November)

**Winter/Christmas** (December - February)

The price for Subscribers will remain at £5 per year, with free local delivery, however if you are not a Subscriber then the cover price will rise to £1.50/issue. If you would like to save some money and become a regular Subscriber, please contact [magazine@denhamparish.church](mailto:magazine@denhamparish.church). Subscriptions will continue to be due during the Winter edition of the magazine.

I would like to thank our fantastic team of 28 distributors who have continued to play a vital role in enabling Denham Parish News to reach people during this past year. A particular thank you to Margaret Adams and Les Jermy who are now stepping down. If you would like to help distribute DPN, please contact me, I would love to hear from you.

This issue includes a variety of articles around the theme of 'God is at work' as well as the next chapter in 'Walking back in time' and a new series 'Nursery Cottages' based on the memories of Jessie Sims. Enjoy!



Blessings,

*Cathy Macqueen*

[magazine@denhamparish.church](mailto:magazine@denhamparish.church)



## GOD AT WORK

### MESSAGE FROM CHRISTOPH LINDNER, RECTOR



*"God is dead."  
"No, he isn't."  
"How do you know?"  
"I just talked to him a few minutes ago."*

### *Dear Friends*

This (slightly flippant) conversation raises one of the most important questions we could ask: What is our concept of God?

**Our answer to this question will determine how we lead our lives!**

Some believe there is no God (atheists) and therefore it is up to us to make it up as we go along and to somehow agree as a community what is right and wrong and how we want to live together in harmony.

Some believe that we cannot know whether there is a God or not (agnostics) and they are largely in the same boat as atheists, although they are happy to borrow insights from the great religious teachers of the past, and they might even pray (without necessarily expecting an answer). Some believe there is a God who set everything in motion, established the universal laws of nature (and maybe even ethical principles), but then left us to our own devices – a 'clockmaker god' (deists).

Deists don't expect to get help from God in their day-to-day life, except by consulting his unchangeable laws.

As Christians, we believe in a God who has revealed himself to us and continues to do so – a God who is at work in our world today.

**And that changes everything.**

At the heart of the Christian faith is the person of Jesus Christ. As Christians we believe he is the Son of God, God made flesh – fully God and fully man at the same time. As a man he experienced human life as we do, he knows all the ups and downs that we are going through. After his death he rose again and is now in charge of our world (we say in the creeds that he sits at the right hand of God the Father). And so, as God, he hears and responds when we pray, he is walking with us as we go about our daily lives.

**How does our life change, when we embrace that idea of God?**

- We don't have to somehow 'construct' our own identity, our sense of who we are (as a lot of

our current culture suggests), because we know we are created by a God who loves us unconditionally, who has good purposes for our lives and will never forsake us.

- We have a clear point of reference for what is right and wrong, for what are good and bad choices - in the teaching of Jesus and his disciples and in the Bible as a whole.
- This God is interested in our wellbeing in body, mind, soul and in our relationships. And wellbeing includes rest! God rested on the seventh day of creation - not because he was exhausted, but because he established a pattern for his creation. How we need to embrace this creation model of work and rest again in our restless world!
- This God isn't just interested in our religious activities - going to church on Sunday, saying grace before meals, reading our Bibles, but in all of our lives. And much of our life is spent working! We can bring God's vision for a flourishing life into our work and be a blessing there - no matter what our job is.
- This God has made our beautiful world and given us the task to look after it. Caring for creation, working for justice for those who are oppressed, seeing the image of God in every person, are part of our calling as his children.

In this edition, we are exploring from various angles what it means that God is at work. We hope you find it stimulating.

If you'd like to find out more about God, we'd love to give you some ideas how you could start. An excellent first step is to pray - "God if you are there, I want to know you", and to read one of the biographies of Jesus (the 'gospels' in the New Testament section of the Bible). Do get in touch and we will send you one free of charge.

May we all stay safe, connected and hopeful!

*Christoph Lindner*

Rector

P.S. What do you think? Is there a concept of God I have missed out? Do get in touch ([rector@denhamparish.church](mailto:rector@denhamparish.church) or 01895 834733).



## FAITH AT WORK: THANK GOD IT'S MONDAY!

DOM BIRKBY



A 2018 survey claimed that over the course of their careers, British people will spend an average of more than 3,700 continuous days – or a whopping 90,000 hours – in the workplace. A 21-year-old starting their career today will likely have 7-10 jobs before they retire. All the while, medical treatment gets better, life expectancy gets longer and the pension age gets higher (nearly 70 by 2050!). The time we spend at work is only going one way: a sobering thought for a 31-year-old with possibly four more decades in the workplace ahead of him!

As a Christian working in a secular context (I work for a large UK bank), I have been challenged at times during my career around whether I should be spending all this time doing something that is better aligned to my core values and Christian faith. God has blessed me with some useful skills – so why then am I using them to deliver profit and shareholder value, instead of directly helping the sick, the marginalised, or those in need?

Some recent conversations around this led to a recommendation to read *Thank God It's Monday*, written by Christian and former advertising executive Mark Greene. The title instantly grabbed my attention: for

the past 12 months, I have attended a weekly Monday briefing meeting at work, also called 'TGIM'! This curious parallel drew me in, and over the Christmas lockdown, I read it. The book was a page-turner – which challenged, enlightened and transformed the way I perceive my role in the workplace. By looking beyond my current job and at times yearning for something different, I was missing the point. I was ignoring so much opportunity in the here and now, right in front of me.

Some of us will have examples of God's work in arenas familiar to us: in church on a Sunday, at a mid-week lifegroup, in a food bank, a homeless shelter or perhaps a hospital ward. The main thrust of Greene's book however is that God is equally at work, at work: in the office, the warehouse, the shopping centre, the construction site – even at home. He writes that "God doesn't abandon us at the factory gate like some parent dropping off their child at school. He is there. He is with us..."

But what does this really mean? Greene isn't saying that we're failing as Christians if we don't turn up to Tuesday morning's design workshop

with some gospel verses, precede the meeting agenda of Wednesday's budget review with the Creed, or replay Sunday's sermon at after-work drinks (even though after-work drinks seem a bit of a distant memory!).

What he does focus on however is how we can challenge ourselves to be tangibly different as Christians in our working contexts: loving our colleagues with unexpected acts of kindness, displaying a heart for forgiveness for heartless acts, avoiding internal grudges, and avoiding a split personality between Monday-to-Friday and on a Sunday morning. The book forced me to think about work as beyond something that just pays my mortgage, provides for my family and contributes to achieving corporate goals. I am thankful that it does these things, but it can be so much more – a purposeful activity to the glory of God and the benefit of others. Pursuing excellence in what I do does not always need to be just for me, my next promotion, or my boss. It can be for God, too.

I would hazard an estimation that nearly all of us in our parish community work in some form. Some of us in paid jobs – yes – but probably just as many doing some volunteering, sitting on a local social committee, attending a weekly lunch club, or even being a home-maker. All of these contexts are types of working contexts, and all are environments where we can put some of Greene's book into practice.

As we optimistically enter summertime, where I am looking forward to meeting with some of my colleagues again after more than a year of virtual contact, I hope to be able to try and test out some of the things I read in *TGIM*. If any of the above sounded interesting, maybe you can, too.

*Thank God It's Monday can be purchased via Eden Books:*  
<https://www.eden.co.uk/christian-books/careers-and-leadership/thank-god-its-monday/>





## WHITE PLAINS

BY BRIAN O'REGAN

*"What a difference a day made,  
twenty-four little hours.  
Bought the sun and the flowers, where  
there used to be rain."*

The opening lines from Jamie Cullum's 2003 song could be the anthem for White Plains Care Home. It defines the home's ethos, but how does a profit-making business get to be the place you would happily choose as a home for a loved one?

Bill Hughes, a committed Christian, celebrates his 80th birthday this year and maybe will reflect on his life journey as a child growing up in care in Galway, Ireland, learning his trade in carpentry and acquiring his first care home at the age of 34. That was the beginning of the B&M Care Group story. Today the group has 26

care homes in the home counties and is still owned and led by Bill. One of these is White Plains in Denham.

I first encountered White Plains in 2015, accompanying my wife Heather on her search for a suitable residence for her mum. My mother-in-law moved in in March 2016 and was superbly cared for until her passing four years later.

I recently returned to find out the secrets behind the White Plains success story and how they navigated a very difficult year. I talked with Philomena in the beautiful gardens, and she described the Covid experience as initially very frightening for staff and residents. The residents took time getting used to wearing masks, particularly those suffering dementia. Six residents died from Covid during those early weeks, but Philomena thanks God they haven't lost any since. Staff were worried about taking Covid back to their families and with the ceaseless pressure, had no time to grieve for residents who passed away.



Now, the outlook is brighter for White Plains; all residents have had both doses of a vaccine and so have 85% of the staff.

Philomena comes from Newry, Co. Down, given away by her soft Northern Ireland accent. She has managed White Plains for nearly 11 years, having previously been a cardiac ward nurse and then took a year out to care for her sister who suffered from dementia. She believes it was God's work that led her to White Plains and she wants the home to be one she would have happily had her sister reside in. Philomena tells her staff, "Treat each resident as if they're your mother or father".

It's a message that has got home and, right on cue, we are joined by Mary Keating, also with over 10 years service. I was overwhelmed by Mary's story and what this special role means to her. She cared for her mother who suffered from COPD and for her son, who succumbed to cancer at the age of 17. Following the passing of her mum and youngest son, her husband encouraged her when a friend introduced her to Philomena and that was the beginning of a wonderful new chapter of her life at White Plains. Sadly, more tragedy was to follow when her husband passed away five years ago. Mary has known great sadness but found her vocation as she cared for family. As well as two grown-up sons she has a large family at White Plains! Her spirit rises when she arrives in the

morning (usually very early) and sees the residents and staff.

Mary fits Philomena's staff profile perfectly; "It's kindness and the human touch I look for, far more important than qualifications." Not that training and qualifications are ignored. For example, B&M group sent a mobile unit to the home so staff could undertake "virtual dementia" training - a realistic simulation of what it's like to have dementia.



Pre-Covid, our Rector Christoph held a monthly communion service at the home. Now they tune in to St Mary's Sunday services online, which are enjoyed and appreciated. And watching these is church member Joy, who moved to White Plains over a year ago. Philomena said she has brought joy to residents and staff alike.

Chairman Bill Hughes leads by example, visiting every few weeks. He has a great sense of fun and

always does something practical on his visits. In the last two years he built a traditional cottage for residents to enjoy and installed three life-sized giraffes for the garden.

Before Christmas, there was great excitement when a 40-strong BBC film crew spent the day preparing for The One Show, live with Jamie Cullum. Although Covid rules meant the crew had to stay outside, residents were well positioned to watch, and how thrilled they were. The BBC team gave cameras to staff members to take indoor shots. One resident looked so happy on TV, but sadly died three weeks later. A poignant illustration of the highs and lows of life in a care home. Search "The One Show Jamie Cullum" on YouTube and look for Joy doing her moves on the dance floor! So ended a hectic but rewarding day for all, but tomorrow, staff will arrive for work with the same philosophy: play it again Jamie –

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(December, March, June, September)

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or phone Cathy on 0759 9934173 for more information



*What a difference a day makes .....*  
White Plains is where care meets home; where every day is the same but all days are different. A recent review posted by Jill, cousin of a resident, described the ethos perfectly: "There is not one person that works in this care home that is not 100% committed to making the lives of residents the best experience it could possibly be." No wonder then that the Care Quality Commission rated White Plains "outstanding" in their most recent report.

*"Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord."*

**Leviticus 19:32**

To find out more:  
[whiteplains@bmcare.co.uk](mailto:whiteplains@bmcare.co.uk)



At the beginning of this year, Denham Parish Church went on "The Wellbeing Journey" - a holistic course that explores a wellbeing mindset and our physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, financial and vocational wellbeing. Over the course of seven weeks we featured the theme in our Sunday services, offered small groups during the week and daily emails.

The course is presented by Joanna Adeyinka-Burford (TV presenter and author) and sports TV pundit Simon Thomas. Joanna said, "The way different aspects of our wellbeing are connected made the journey definitely something I've got to take hold of." Simon explains how to start the journey: "Firstly we need to be honest with ourselves about where we are at. But then we need to be honest with others - those we trust - that's not always easy. This journey's a marathon, not a sprint." Simon's key take-home lesson came from the spiritual wellbeing session: "When it comes to our overall wellbeing, particularly if we do have a faith, developing our relationship with God means carving out time, being disciplined when it comes to listening to him." Our busy lives can get in the way of that! The best way to make time is, firstly, to show up! Set a time and get into a pattern. Secondly, study the Bible and talk with God about what you read. No matter

where you are, a word of comfort from God makes all the difference. Many of us find the Lectio365 app helpful to establish a rhythm.

All of the participants who gave us some feedback afterwards found the course highly or very relevant. We asked what people's key take-away was. Here are some of the answers:

- "Our mindset is key."
- "God is interested in all aspects of our lives."
- "It is important to be there for others and in turn that heals me."
- "Being honest about my wellbeing can be painful to begin with."
- "Slow down. Find time to connect with what really matters."
- "Change one thing at a time."
- "Generosity is the key to financial wellbeing."
- "Knowing myself better and the wonderful group friendship."

Those who took part in a small group commented that they could have easily spent more time on each topic and that they will need "top-ups" from time to time.

The Wellbeing Journey is based on the book "God's Plan for Your Wellbeing - 50-Day-Guide" by Dave Smith. The book is easy to read and a great way to get "top ups" or to start the wellbeing journey on your own. [www.eden.co.uk/emotional-health/gods-plan-for-your-wellbeing](http://www.eden.co.uk/emotional-health/gods-plan-for-your-wellbeing)



## WALKING BACK IN TIME

### PART 2: FROM THE CHURCH TO MISBOURNE COTTAGE

#### THE DENHAM COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT

In the last edition of the Parish Magazine we met Joseph and Elizabeth Birch on their way to St. Mary's in 1901 from their home on the road we now know as Old Mill Road. Let's revisit them ten years later in 1911. Joe is now 74 years old, his wife 69. But Joe is still working as a farm labourer, presumably on the large Andrews Farm which stretched all the way up to the Oxford Road to the south and bordered Court Farm across to the Grand Union Canal to the east. Elizabeth, who once used to take in washing, no longer works outside their home. Their son George is also without work and is noted on the 1911 census report as an invalid.

It's Sunday 2nd April 1911. The morning is a cool 6 degrees, but sunny with a light breeze. Let's assume that Joe and Elizabeth have been to morning service at St. Mary's and have stopped to chat with neighbours in the churchyard after the service.

There is much to talk about. Things have changed quite a lot since we last encountered Joe and Elizabeth. The 1902 Education Act has created local education authorities and there is a new emphasis on free education for children up to 12 years old. More and more secondary schools are being established. The country has had reforming Liberal Party governments since 1905. Old age pensions have been introduced, greatly reducing

the threat of workhouse life for the elderly poor and agitation for women's suffrage has escalated into militant action. Closer to home, the railway line into London through Denham Junction station had opened in April 1906 with a branch line from Uxbridge to Denham a year later providing employment for village residents Ernie Timms, the signalman, and overseen by leading engineer for the Great Western Railway, Neville Leckonby Phipps at Wrango Hall.

The weather being springlike that morning in 1911, we can imagine that Joe and Elizabeth may have taken a walk around through the village to take a long route home up Cheapside and back along the lane behind Hancock's Mead.



Their village walk would have taken them first past Hill House, looking empty and uncared for, and behind it Bowyer House, until 1877 a charity school originally established by Sir William Bowyer of Denham Court in 1721, but by 1911 the private

home of the Thomas family. Across the road, behind the 18th century high brick wall, stood The Cedars. We know it now, much extended, as The White House. No other buildings interrupted the Birches' view over the River Misbourne and through the orchards all the way to the Oxford Road until they reached the two cottages we recognise now as Jasmine and Fuchsia next to Mr. Rance's bow windowed general store.

The home of Mr. Hoffman the coal merchant was on the other side of the alley that Joe Birch would have remembered as Brook Street and, past the alley, the Post Office and sweet shop, now Remo's restaurant, and on to The Falcon where Arthur Weaser presided over the bar. Opposite were Mr. Weaser's rival hostelries, the Swan Inn where they held the local auctions and the occasional inquest and Edward Harbour's beer house, the Green Man. Beyond them, the builders yard and joinery business of Messrs. Cherry and Carter.

So many gardeners living in these village houses, but then so many fine gardens to be tended including that of Denham Place the mansion hiding behind the high wall and the grand iron gates, home for almost two centuries to the Way family of village squires and clergy. Beside the gates stood the oldest building in the village, the three cottages and shop making up the Old Bakery, once long ago the local sheriff's residence but in 1911 the supplier of bread and cakes to the community. Between the bakery and the wall of Denham

Place ran The Pyghtle, that strange old word that means a small farm, but now no more than a path, in 1911 leading to Nurse Scott's Yew Tree Cottage.

No village green, not in 1911. Instead, starkly contrasting with the opulence of Denham Place on the threshold of which they stood, were the five Island Cottages, the smallest of them having no more than the footprint of the garage that stands there now.



Mr. and Mrs. Birch would then have wandered past the forge of Mr. Baker's blacksmith's business at the bridge across the Misbourne and on past Misbourne Cottage maybe delighting that sunny April morning in the pleasures of their community.



To find out more about the history of Denham go to: [www.denhamhistory.online](http://www.denhamhistory.online)

## LIFE IN NO.3 NURSERY COTTAGES, NEW DENHAM, 1929-1939

### PART 1: IN WHICH WE ARE INTRODUCED TO THE FLEMING FAMILY

EDITED FROM CHILDHOOD MEMORIES WRITTEN BY JESSIE SIMS

Nursery Cottages were situated by the A40. It was called the Oxford Road but the grand title of the whole road was the 'London to Fishguard Trunk Road'. In those days it was more like a country lane with Wych Elm up the length of it from the Lambert Arms (now KFC) to Old Denham. In the spring we would walk to Old Denham then past the Studios, up Northmoor Hill and pick the Broom flowers. We used to boil this with our eggs to make them yellow for Easter. On both sides of the road up past the Studios, cherry trees had been planted and the trunk of each tree was surrounded by an iron paling to protect it. On each was a plaque to say who had donated them. The only one that I remember was for 'David, Cherry and Jennifer' - I always wondered who they were. I don't know if any of the plaques remain, some of the trees still do.

I, Jessie May, was born in September 1929, the youngest of three children (older sister Jean and brother Jim) to my parents Alexander (Eck) and Winifred (Win) Fleming. Originally from Scotland, my Father had worked on farms from a very early age including Mansfield Farm at Iver Heath and Pynesfield Farm in West Hyde, Hertfordshire before moving to Lea Farm in Denham.

Our home, No. 3 Nursery Cottages, was a terrace of seven houses, all tied cottages for various farms or estates. They were built in the shape of a letter L in reverse, the foot of the L was No. 1 and No. 2 and the others up to No. 7 formed the upright of the L. No. 1 and the part of No. 2 that fronts on to the Oxford Road

are still standing but the other houses have long since been demolished.

The houses all had two bedrooms, one quite large and the other small. There were two rooms downstairs, the kitchen with a concrete floor had a large kitchen range in it. The front room had an open fire with an oven to the side and wainscoting around the walls. The lighting was by gas and we also had a gas ring in the kitchen. We kept coal in the cupboard under the stairs. The garden of No.1 ran out to the Oxford Road and was enclosed with a wall. A path ran past all our front doors and our gardens ran away from the path, each the width of their house and about 30 yards long. At the bottom of our gardens were the



Allotments on the Oxford Road, they are still there.

At the back door of each house stood a large water butt and between the butts at each pair of houses was an open drain made of concrete, about a yard square, tapering to a grating at the bottom, about a foot square. Across the gravel yard, about 20' wide, was a row of washroom brick-built sheds and bucket lavatories - three sheds, four lavatories, then four sheds and three lavatories.

Across the end of the sheds and No.1 was a passageway, this was about 4' wide and enabled us to get to the pump at the back of the wash-houses. This pump was our water supply, serving the seven houses and a small house that was attached to the Lambert Arms.

Our wash-house was a place of wonderment and pleasure, it was about 12' by 12', with parts of old bikes, tools and cobwebs hanging from the ceiling. In one corner was a massive brick-built copper, piles of logs and coal in other corners, tools and an old table stood under the window to double as a workbench and wash stand. The floor was of uneven bricks, a fancy shaped enamel bath with arm rests and other baths of zinc hung on the walls. On a winter's night, it was out of this world, the flickering flame from the massive copper fire and a guttering candle on the window-sill, we never even noticed the draught from the door!

On a wet day, my dad used to sit in the wash house 'snobbing', that is shoe or boot mending. He used a 'foot' with 3 different sizes on it.

We'd buy the leather from Webbs in Windsor Street where all sorts of sizes would be hanging up with the price written on each piece in white chalk. He also had a solid round block of a brown/black substance which he melted and then ran around the edge of the sole and heel in order to make it waterproof. I was fascinated by the assorted shapes and sizes of Blackies that were hammered into the toes and heels of newly bought shoes to make them last longer.

I loved the Rickyard, just across the allotments. You could climb the steps up into the Granary which was divided into sections for the different kinds of animal feed. I loved running my hands through the corn and flaked maize and watching Dad put the cow cake through the Grinder and turning the handle to break it up for the cattle.

*To be continued...*





## GOD AT WORK - NEAR AND FAR

### LiFT Orphanage Home, Nigeria

In our Christmas appeal we invited you to give towards an orphanage home in Gombe State (North East Nigeria), run by LiFT (Living Stream Impact Foundation). LiFT has been very effective in responding to the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria, which has received very little attention in the Western media.

In January we were able to give the sum of £1,000 to their work. The director of LiFT, the Ven. Peter Okparaji wrote to thank us: "The Orphanage Home just acquired an uncompleted property close to where we are currently located. The money your church gave us will be used to dig borehole for drinking water at the new site. God bless St Mary Denham Parish and prosper your ministry among God's people."



### Bibles in Bassar (Togo)

Our mission partner Samuel Kpagheri works for Wycliffe Bible Translators as a translation consultant in West Africa. The complete Bible translation in the Bassar language was completed a few years ago, but many people do not have the money to buy them. Our donation of £1,224 will enable Samuel to give away or subsidise 150 Bibles and to maintain and start literacy programmes, especially for women who are the main agents of change. In his thank-you note, Samuel writes, "I pray the Lord to bless all of you abundantly. I will make sure that the Bibles are distributed in remote areas among Christian communities, especially to women."



## GIVE & SHARE

In February and March we distributed about 45 "Afternoon Teas in a Box" to local residents, many of whom live on their own or were shielding. It was a little encouragement at a time when days were short and the pandemic was at its height.

In April we distributed "Easter bags" through the local schools to support families that are finding it hard to put food on the table.

Find out more about Give & Share:



# SUNDAYS AT DENHAM PARISH CHURCH

9.30am

Sunday Service at  
St Mary's Church,

Denham Village

A short service (35-50 minutes) – Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sunday.

At the time of going to press our capacity is still reduced due to social distancing rules. Please register before you attend - either by contacting our church office or online: [www.denhamparish.church/events](http://www.denhamparish.church/events)

10.30am

Sunday Service on Youtube  
and Facebook

On most Sundays, this service comes live from the Rectory and is led by Christoph and Edda Lindner, with contributions from many other members of our community. You can post messages on the live chat during the service. All services are available for streaming afterwards.

After the service (11.15am)

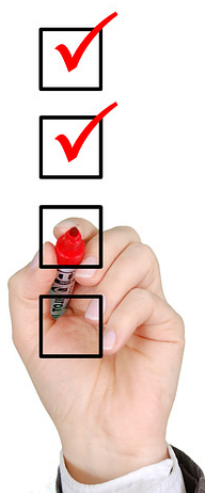
Church Coffee Online – on  
Facebook/Youtube or on  
Zoom

(30 minutes).

Find out more about our online services on page 27.  
[tinyurl.com/youtube-denham](http://tinyurl.com/youtube-denham)  
[www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church](http://www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church)

Please take part in our survey to help shape the future of our services:

Online at [www.denhamparish.church/survey/](http://www.denhamparish.church/survey/) or contact our church office for a paper copy.



## Save the date: St Mary's Festival

This year we had to cancel our Denham Village Fayre for the second year.

However, we are planning a fun and engaging community weekend for

*Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th September*

We hope you will join us. More information nearer the time at: [www.denhamparish.church/festival](http://www.denhamparish.church/festival)



## CREMATIONS

- 30.01.2021 Celia May Yorke (86) Denham  
10.02.2021 Peter Kirwan (79) Denham  
01.03.2021 Graham Martin Saunders (70) Langley  
08.03.2021 Joan Elding (97) Denham  
27.03.2021 Sean David Ryde (54) Denham

## BURIALS

- 26.12.2020 Jessie May Sims (91) Denham  
07.01.2021 Geoffrey Newell (75) Denham  
19.01.2021 John Stanley (75) Denham  
30.01.2021 Paul Stapleton (86) Northolt  
14.03.2021 Doris Ann Booker (87) Denham  
04.04.2021 Jean Margaret Frost (87) Denham

If you would like to include a photo of a loved one on this page, please contact the Editor.



Geoff Newell



Jessie Sims



Peter Kirwan



Doris Booker



Joan Elding



Sean Ryde

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.  
Psalm 23

People may think that the waterways are quiet uninhabited backwaters, largely disused, but recent years have seen an increasing number of people moving onto the waterways. Where once canals were used solely for transport purposes, they now attract a larger variety of people: boaters, walkers, anglers, cyclists and businesses, as well as those seeking a floating home offering a calmer, less stressful existence. Typically, 4.5 million people visit the inland waterways every fortnight and there are about 36,000 boats currently in use, more craft than at the height of the industrial revolution.

### Being a Boater

People live and work on the waterways, some use their boats for recreational purposes but many choose to live aboard their boat. Those who live aboard either rent long term moorings or have a cruising licence. Without a permanent mooring the boat owner must obtain a 'continuous cruiser' permit, requiring them to move every 14 days. This means that as a live-aboard boater they will not have a postcode and without a postcode it is difficult to register with a GP, claim benefits, tax a car or open a bank account.

Choosing this way of life does not always give access to schools, medical facilities or other amenities and these

problems are compounded when bereavement, depression, illness or unemployment occurs.

Even though boating communities are very good at caring for each other in times of trouble, the network of Waterways Chaplains are placed to respond to the needs of those who are most vulnerable, responding to concerned community members, providing pastoral support, care and guidance.

### A Boaters Tale

*Life was great on our boat. We were out of the rat race. Then the Covid pandemic struck and we both lost our jobs and income. We had fuel, food, heating and boat licence to pay for. After a time of wondering what to do next another boater suggested we contact the Waterways Chaplaincy. This seemed a good idea and when we contacted the Waterways Chaplaincy via their website, a Chaplain made contact with us. With the Chaplain's assistance we applied for help with our*



*bills and they put us in touch with the local food bank. The Chaplain supplied us with sacks of coal to keep the boat warm. The Chaplain has stayed in contact to see if we are ok and has helped us get back on our feet.*

### Being a Waterways Chaplain

Waterways Chaplains are volunteers from local churches, who are part of the local community. They share good and bad times and are supportive and encouraging of all, regardless of religion, orientation or race. They support people of all faiths or none, and are always happy to discuss spiritual and practical matters if invited to do so.

Waterways Chaplaincy is an ecumenical activity of Workplace Matters, providing a listening and support ministry to those who benefit from and use the inland waterways.

Waterways Chaplains walk the towpaths within a certain geographical patch e.g. The Grand Union Canal from Watford to Uxbridge. They are trained volunteers, who are assigned a mentor for the first few months and are from a variety of different

backgrounds. Chaplains may be retired, Church members, perhaps GP's or anglers who want to help their community, or maybe they just like to walk their dog along canals or rivers and see a need along their "stretch".

### A Waterways Chaplain's Tale

I have been a Waterways Chaplain since 2019. I enjoy all aspects of the canals – as a boater, cycling and walking the towpaths and meeting people. This gives me great opportunities to help people who need assistance or help. If you would like to join or support the Waterways Chaplaincy, please get in touch via the website.

### Waterways Chaplains offer:

- **Listening:** listening and confidential ear
- **Directing:** signpost those in difficulty to local support services e.g. foodbanks, doctors, boatyards
- **Advocates:** act as advocates when a boater needs someone to unravel issues e.g. difficulties with paying licences, support with bereavement.
- **Hardship Fund:** offer coal/ fuel, food, emergency boat repairs
- **Emergencies:** take boaters to access emergency medical support e.g. doctor or hospital, housing
- **Practical:** help e.g. having someone to talk to, helping out after a (rare) boat sinking

Further information at:  
[www.waterwayschaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.waterwayschaplaincy.org.uk)



## IS COVID-19 GOD'S WORK? TWO PERSPECTIVES

**Bible scholar David Instone-Brewer believes this pandemic is not a sign of God's anger.**

In the Bible, God's plagues and other disasters were targeted, predicted and had a clear purpose. Prophets and preachers didn't claim *after* the plague or disaster happened that it was a message from God – they warned people of God's intended action *before* it happened. And they left no doubt about his purpose in it.

The most detailed plagues in the Bible are the ten aimed at Egypt when God told Pharaoh through Moses to "Let my people go" (see Exodus 7-11). He instructed Moses first to ask Pharaoh, then to warn Pharaoh what would happen if he refused, and finally to bring about the plague by waving his staff as a visible sign of his prayer to God to send it.

Not all disasters, however, are punishments from God. The Bible only highlights those few that God used as signs.

In AD 54/55 worldwide crop failures (which we only know about through sources outside the Bible), caused famines throughout the Roman world. This led to severe food shortages in Palestine a couple of years later. Because it was so obviously going to happen, Christian prophets and preachers could have declared it as God's punishment – but they didn't. Instead, Paul organised a collection from his Gentile churches throughout

the Roman world to show their concern for the Jerusalem Church (2 Corinthians 8).

Using these biblical principles, we have to conclude that Covid-19 is not a warning or a judgement from God, as it wasn't predicted and it isn't targeted at the guilty. Instead of declaring a message of God's anger, we can deliver God's message of love wrapped up in food parcels, friendship, comfort and financial support.

**On the other hand, pastor and author R.T. Kendall thinks that Covid-19 could be God's judgment.**

Christian leaders have been asked: "Where is God in the coronavirus crisis?" One theologian has said that Christianity does not give us an answer to this question, and instead instructs us to lament. Another prominent leader replied to the same question: "God is right in the middle of it", suggesting the Almighty is found in the good works of nurses, doctors and other key workers. Others have argued that God is too loving to cause anything like this, therefore it must be the work of Satan. (My concern with this view is that it imputes more power and authority to the devil than to God. I am troubled by those who have a greater fear of the devil than God.)

The Bible confronts our deepest assumptions about what we think God should be like. The God of the Bible says: "I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and

create calamity, I am the Lord who does all these things" (Isaiah 45:7).

The Bible shows us a God who is sovereign over suffering and a God who has the ability to bring judgement. This is not a message confined to the Old Testament, though. Paul writes that we are justified by Jesus' blood in order to escape the "wrath of God" (Romans 5:9).

God could have stopped Covid-19 if he chose to. If he could not have stopped it, then he is not in control, and Hebrews 1:3 teaches us that Jesus Christ "upholds the universe" by his word.

Does this mean that because God had the ability to stop coronavirus, and yet chose not to, he therefore caused it? My answer to this question is: there are some things that God does not want us to figure out.

When Moses saw the burning bush that did not burn up, he headed straight for it to figure out what was going on. But God said: "Stop. Don't come any closer. Take off your shoes. You are on holy ground" (see Exodus 3:5). The difference between what God predestines and what he permits is holy ground. If God judges us by way of a plague, it is not for us to try to figure out whether he caused it, or simply allowed it. Our responsibility is to take off our shoes and worship.

It is my view that God is trying to get our attention. I think that believers all over the world need to be open to the possibility of God's gracious judgement taking place today.

The principle of gracious judgement is this: "whom the Lord loves he disciplines" (Hebrews 12:6).

As Professor John Lennox points out in his book *Where is God in a Coronavirus World?*, it could be dangerous to claim Covid-19 is God's judgement. I agree with him. It seems to me that it is a most reasonable perspective to say that we may well be under God's judgement. If this acknowledgement results in Covid-19 getting our attention and turning us back to God, the value of such a perspective would surely be incalculable.

*Longer versions of these two articles were first published in Premier Christianity, the UK's leading Christian magazine. They are re-printed with permission. To subscribe to the magazine for £4.95/month visit [premierchristianity.com](http://premierchristianity.com)*



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## IT'S BUSY ONLINE!

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our Sunday services and small groups have moved online. We also started online "Bible Book Clubs" and ran seminars and courses on Zoom. In August last year we ran four "Marriage Sessions", currently we are running "The Bible Course" and in the spring term this year we ran Alpha - a course that explores questions of life and faith. Here is the "Alpha Class of 2021":



Our Sunday service (10.30am on Youtube and Facebook) can be watched wherever you are and streamed at a later time. Our front cover shows two of our church family children dancing along to a lively song during the service:

Here is what people are saying about the online service.

*"I'd like to tell you how much I enjoyed last Sunday's service. I listened to it whilst out cycling with my family and found listening to the hymns in the countryside really uplifting."* **Megan**

*"I spend most of my week on Zoom, so find it difficult to get online for church services but your Sunday services were so welcoming, natural and refreshing - I felt like I was with you in your home."* **Debbie**

*"Every Sunday, when I join in, I feel a renewed sense of anticipation as the minutes (ie. 'countdown') are ticking away...and you never disappoint us. Much appreciated."* **John**

*"Your services really lifted me when I needed it most. They're always so positive and uplifting. Interesting to watch with lots of varied talks and topics."* **Faith**

If you've never tuned in - give it a go!  
[tinyurl.com/youtube-denham](https://tinyurl.com/youtube-denham)  
[www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church](https://www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church)

**Please take part in our survey to help shape the future of our services:**

Online at [www.denhamparish.church/survey/](http://www.denhamparish.church/survey/) or contact our church office for a paper copy.



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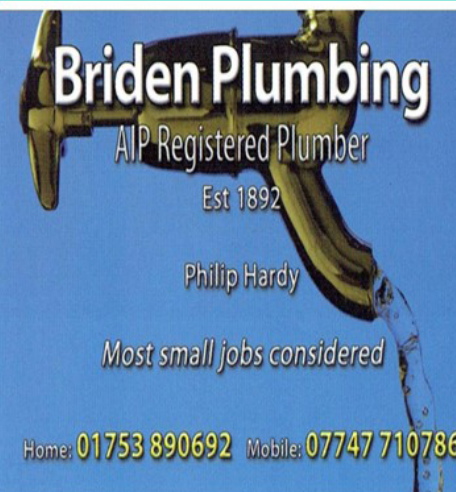
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## THE GIFT OF SABBATH

BY REV IAN JENNINGS

I was brought up in a church community that was very keen on Sunday observance. It had nothing to do with 'rest' but had a lot to do with 'rules'. I was dressed in my Sunday best for church which I remember was a little blue suit with short trousers along with very shiny shoes. The shoes had to remain shiny throughout the day because playing outside was not allowed on Sunday. One Sunday, my friends and I were climbing on the church wall after the service whilst the adults were busy chatting inside. I snagged my trousers on the church wall and a little L shaped tear appeared. I was very worried about this and tried to conceal it. On the way home my mum spotted it and the truth came out. She was as annoyed about my failure to keep the Sunday rule of 'no play' as she was about the tear in my trousers! There was no tv or radio; no games or outdoor playing; no getting together with friends. There were three visits to church: 10am, 3pm and 6.30pm. Auntie Doris came to supper every Sunday evening after church. Reading and singing were allowed. We often gathered round the piano to sing a few hymns. My friends knew never to call for me on a Sunday. I once broke up a fight between two of my close friends on the way home from church. They were two boys I really liked and I was dismayed to see them angrily throwing punches at each other so

I ran ahead of my parents, stood between my friends and with outstretched hands ordered them to stop! To my surprise they did. That was the day I discovered that breaking up fights on a Sunday is allowed! On the whole Sundays were pretty boring for a lively boy.

All of this really has nothing to do with the Sabbath, which is a rest day created by God so that we could have time to rest, be refreshed and reinvigorated. It is a beautiful gift from God, not a legalistic burden. God's plan for his people is that they should live in 'Shalom' - the experience of all round wellbeing. This involves the presence of peace and the absence of stress. In a busy and demanding world, it is still a priority that we find that place of rest, a welcome break, a time to pause. God, who knows us and our deepest needs has made provision for us to switch off from clamouring demands and to find a refreshing place of peace and stillness.

The fact that God built that into a weekly pattern for us tells us something of our continuing need to establish a Sabbath as a regular place of refreshing in our lives. The Sabbath as God's gift to us reminds



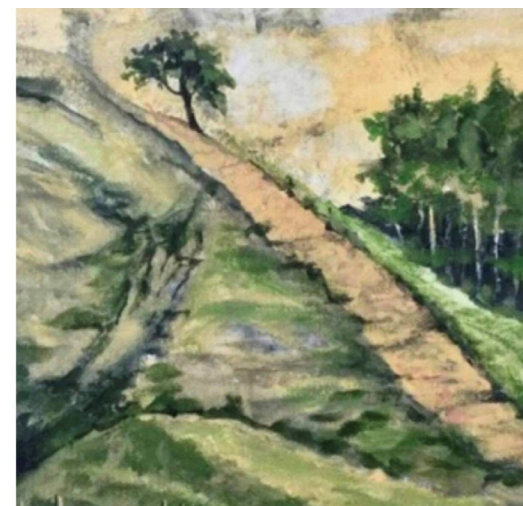
us that God is loving and creative and sees our basic need to rest and recharge. I do hope that the experience of lockdown may have left us with a positive legacy of taking time for ourselves - shifting the focus from doing to being. We can live our lives dominated by 'to do' lists, whilst we are caught up in a maelstrom of bustling activity. We are often wired to feel guilty if we are not busy. That can lead to a break-down if we are not careful and it certainly filches the joy from life. We need some 'selfcare' - to take it easy, to calm down, to stop and establish a sabbath as part of our routine.

When I was Rector of Aston I had Monday as my day off (my sabbath) - it certainly couldn't be Sunday. I looked at 'memories' on Facebook today and there was a picture of me that my daughter had taken at Easter a few years ago. I was sitting upright in the chair fast asleep and the caption under the photo was, "This is another thing I love about Easter - my Dad works so hard he falls asleep mid-sentence."

Mondays became our sabbath and especially when Barbara began to work part time and took Monday off, too. We used to walk in the Derbyshire Peak District every Monday. It was an intentional time to engage with the beauty of God's creation, to spend some valuable time together, and to 'cast all our care upon God in

the knowledge that he cares for us.' (1 Peter 5:7)

Since Barbs and I were engaged in work that could be mentally and emotionally taxing we needed something completely different on our day off. A 10 mile walk is physically testing but we always found it spiritually renewing. Then home to a warm bath, a good meal and glass of wine completed the day. A day of sabbath rest may take different forms for different people but it should enable us to refocus and change the emphasis from 'doing' to 'being.' We need that as part of our weekly routine so that we don't experience burnout. It was God's idea in the first place that we should have a weekly day off that is a million miles away from the demands of daily routine. Jesus often said to his disciples "Come away and rest a while." What day of the week is your sabbath and how do you spend it?





## Hymns for different occupations:

Dentist	Crown Him with many crowns
Weatherman	There shall be showers of blessings
Contractor	The church's one foundation
Tailor	Holy, Holy, Holy
Golfer	There is a Green hill far away
Politician	Standing on the promises
Optometrist	Open my eyes that I may see
Gossip	Pass it on
Electrician	Send the Light
Shopper	Sweet bye and bye
Dry Cleaner	O for a faith that will not shrink
Census Taker	All people that on earth do dwell
Taxation Officer	We give thee but thine own
Traffic Engineer	Where cross the crowded ways of life
Obstetrician	Come, labour on

And for those who speed ...	
55 mph	God will take care of you
75 mph	Nearer my God to Thee
85 mph	This world is NOT my home
95 mph	Lord, I'm coming home
100 mph	Precious memories

*A glad heart makes a happy face'*  
(Proverbs 15:13)

While the average child laughs 150 times a day, say researchers at the University of Michigan, the average adult laughs only 15 times

From A Barrel of Fun, J. John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books



Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that.

Don't be impressed with yourself.

Don't compare yourself with others.

**Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.**

## WHY? OH! WHY?

This is an unbelievable testing time for all.  
The most uncertain daily challenge that I recall,  
Over many years.

Friends are taken ill ...some without recovery.  
The rest, like me, making the discovery  
Of unprecedented fears,

Not only for the safety of those we love.  
The unknown millions over and above...  
All the nations.

How to live with the growing confusion?  
Where to go for a possible solution?  
Explanations?

Questions to which no answers are clear.  
Experts do their best, as they frequently appear  
On our TV.

Governments take daily decisions, giving instructions  
Urging everyone to follow their repeated directions.  
Some do.

Scientists are working, as never before, to produce  
A vaccine which will take on the virus and reduce  
The flu.

Lockdown has meant that most of us are confined  
To stay at home and thus we've become more inclined  
Towards TV

This may prove to be an unexpected bonus.  
A learning curve, nothing to do with the virus.  
Maybe...

For us to understand more about the natural world.  
David Attenborough's knowledge and wisdom unfurled.  
At last!

Wouldn't it be a wondrous outcome...Nature's production...  
If we were to end the wasteful mass destruction  
Of the past.

It will take time; more hardship to come...that's for sure.  
Equally, we know ...whatever happens we shall endure.  
And survive.

Joyce Hobson January, 2021

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## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT DENHAM PARISH CHURCH

BY EDDA LINDNER



These past fifteen months have brought so much change for all generations. Young people's education and sometimes their home situation has changed unrecognisably.

Olivia (12) writes: *“This past year has taught me that life is not always what it seems, so take the time to see how beautiful it really is.”*

When Christians of any age meet, discovering the beauty of the life God is giving us, must be one of the key purposes for gathering, whether that is onsite or online...

### Where are you?

What? In front of the computer, again?! Well twice a month Destiny meet online and since the end of January we've been on the Wellbeing Journey for Youth. We meet 45 minutes on Sundays at 5pm and each time we think about one area of our

wellbeing (mindset, physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, financial and vocational).

The material is presented in video form and the session is hosted by at least three of the smiley faces of this photo.

Sophie (13) writes:

*“The Youth Wellbeing Journey has really helped me in understanding how we can develop a relationship with God and things we can do to welcome Jesus into our lives and how our mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing can benefit from this. The course made learning about this really easy, simple to understand and enjoyable.”*

We love connecting with the young people in our community and can't wait to meet again soon in person.

Throughout the spring term we continued to connect with families via SundayClub@home bags, the Easter trail and Easter egg quiz. The Sunday Club What's App group is amazing - precious snapshots and comments are being shared. Parents were given the opportunity to sign up to a midweek “parent pub supper@home bag” a small gesture to celebrate with them the end of weeks of home schooling... and to tell them all what a wonderful job they are doing at being parents.





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