

Service Sheet

4th December 2022, 10.30am, St Mary's
The Second Sunday of Advent

Welcome to St Mary's Church! We are so glad you are here – whether you are in the church building or watching online. If you are here for the first time or visiting, please say hello (in the chat feature online, or to the service leader or a member of the welcome team in church). You can find out more about our church on our website (www.denhamparish.church) or Facebook page (facebook.com/denhamparish.church).

Christoph Lindner, Rector

WELCOME

HYMN

Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes
The Saviour promised long;
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To bless the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With Thy belovèd name

ADVENT 2– THE PROPHETS

Jesus said, 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets: I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.'

Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!

(The second candle is lit.)

Jesus is the light of the world.
A light no darkness can ever put out.

HYMN

Advent candles tell their story
as we watch and pray,
longing for the Day of Glory,
'Come, Lord, soon,' we say.
Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness,
changed for gladness on that Day.

Prophet voices loudly crying,
making pathways clear;
glimpsing glory, self-denying,
calling all to hear.

Through their message -
challenged, shaken -
hearts awaken: God is near!

CONFESSION

God of mercy, we acknowledge that we are all sinners. We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said and done, and are mindful of all that we have failed to do. For the sake of Jesus, who died for us, forgive us for all that is past, and help us to live each day in the light of Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

COLLECT

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and Saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God.

Amen

SONG

I am a city on a hill.
I am a light in the darkness
Jesus living in me can change the world
(x2)

Let my light shine let my light shine
Let my light shine
(x2)

If God is for me who can stand against me
Let my light shine, let my light shine
Let my light shine
(x2)

We are a city on a hill
We are a light in the darkness
Jesus living in us can change the world
(x2)

Let your light shine let your light shine
Let your light shine
(x2)

If God is for us who can stand against us
Let your light shine, let your light shine
Let your light shine
(x2)

(Children leave for Sunday Club)

FIRST READING: Romans 15. 4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has

become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, 'Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name'; and again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people'; and again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him'; and again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Matt 3. 1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."' Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to

Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

OFFERTORY HYMN

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. Amen.

PRAYERS

We pray for our five mission partners: Bible Reading Fellowship, Church Army, SHOC/Trinity, Tearfund and Wycliffe Bible Translators. We thank you for their sharing of good news in action and word and pray that you would sustain and inspire them. May they see rich fruit in their work for you.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen

HYMN

The kingdom of God is justice and joy;
For Jesus restores what sin would destroy.
God's power and glory in Jesus we know;
And here and hereafter the kingdom shall grow.

The kingdom of God is mercy and grace;
The captives are freed,
the sinners find place,
The outcast are welcomed
God's banquet to share;
And hope is awakened in place of despair.

The kingdom of God
is challenge and choice:
Believe the good news,
repent and rejoice!

God's love for us sinners
brought Christ to his cross:
Our crisis of judgement
for gain or for loss.

God's kingdom is come,
the gift and the goal;
In Jesus begun, in heaven made whole.
The heirs of the kingdom
shall answer his call;
And all things cry "Glory!" to God all in all.

BLESSING

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GIVE AND SHARE at Christmas

We need help to pack and distribute Christmas boxes. Volunteers are required from 8th to 16th December at St Mark's Hall. If you can spare even a couple of hours please e-mail Dexter on dexterbrown125@gmail.com

AVAILABLE NOW for Advent and Christmas: *Christmas Cards from St Mary's*, featuring our Christmas stained glass window (£1 each)

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year's Christmas Appeal will be split evenly between two of our mission partners: **SHOC/TRINITY** working with homeless people in our area and **TEARFUND**, which works with local partners across the world where the need is greatest.

A LIFE OF GRACE

Mark Greene has written a moving tribute to Her Majesty the Queen. An ideal gift! Usual price £7+P&P. Buy it today for £4.

Weekly Diary

TODAY 3.30PM Carols at Cafe Church. St Mary's

Tues 6th 7.30pm - PCC Meeting. Vestry

Weds 7th - Little Lions toddler group.
St Mark's. Contact eddalindner18@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS AT ST MARY'S POSTERS

We have A4 and A3 posters with our Christmas programme. Can you ask a shop, pub, surgery, community space etc. in Denham to display it? Let's make sure people know! Pick up posters after the service at the back of church.

Are you on social media? Please post our flyer there.

Download the PDF at
www.denhamparish.church/christmas

NEW MAGAZINE OUT!

The Christmas issue of Denham Parish News is out! Please pick up extra copies to give to family, friends and neighbours. It's a great way to invite people for our Christmas events and services - the whole programme is included.

ALPHA starts in Denham in January.

It has helped many people around the world to find faith in Jesus. Who can you invite? Can you make a list and then pray for them daily?

www.denhamparish.church/alpha



Let's pray together ...

- For creation care and all our efforts to look after our planet - individually, as a nation and international community. For concrete steps after COP-27.
- For conflicts and wars in our world: For people of peace to find ways of making peace.
- For those who are unwell.
- For those who have lost loved ones, especially the families of Nigel Hone and June Pegg.