



Service Sheet

11th December 2022, 10.30am, St Mary's
The Third 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).

WELCOME

HYMN

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice, rejoice!

*Emmanuel shall come to thee,
O Israel.*

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, thou key of David, come
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the Law,
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Advent 3 – John the Baptist

Jesus said, 'No one more
important than John the Baptist
has ever been born; yet the least in
the kingdom of heaven is greater
than he.'

Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!

*The third candle is lit and this
response is used:*

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.

John the Baptist, by his preaching
and by water poured,
brought to those who heard
his teaching
news of hope restored:
'Keep your vision strong and steady,
and be ready for the Lord.'

(Children will leave for Sunday Club now)

email: office@denhamparish.church

phone: 01895 832771

SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen Lord have mercy.

CONFESSION

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

COLLECT

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIRST READING: James 5. 7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING: Matt 11. 2-11

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out

to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he..

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON

THE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. **Amen.**

PRAYERS

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

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

HYMN

The Lord will come and not be slow, his footsteps cannot err; before him righteousness shall go, his royal harbinger.

Truth from the earth, like to a flow'r, shall bud and blossom free; and justice, from her heav'nly bow'r, bless all humanity.

The nations all whom thou hast made shall come, and all shall frame to bow them low before thee, Lord, and glorify thy name.

For great thou art, and wonders great by thy strong hand are done: thou in thy everlasting seat remainest God alone.

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.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and
praise.**

Father, you made the world and
love your creation. You gave your
Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free
from sin and death. And so we
gladly thank you, with saints and
angels praising you, and *saying:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of
power and might, heaven and
earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving
Father, through Jesus Christ, our
Lord; and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit, that broken
bread and wine outpoured may be
for us the body and blood of your
dear Son.

On the night before he died he had
supper with his friends and, taking
bread, he praised you. He broke the
bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is

given for you; do this in
remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took
the cup of wine. Again he praised
you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my
blood of the new covenant, which is
shed for you and for many for the
forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often
as you drink it, in remembrance of
me.

So, Father, we remember all that
Jesus did, in him we plead with
confidence his sacrifice made once
for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of
life and cup of salvation, we
proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory. Jesus Christ
is Lord:

**Lord, by your cross and
resurrection you have set us
free. You are the Saviour of the
world.**

Lord of all life, help us to work
together for that day when your
kingdom comes and justice and
mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms and
bring us with all the saints to feast
at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ,
and in Christ, in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are
yours, O loving Father, for ever and
ever.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

We break this bread to share
in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many,
we are one body,
because we all share
in one bread.**

GIVING OF COMMUNION

*Please follow the directions of our
sidesteam. There is no one-way system
anymore. Please return to your seat
through the middle aisle.*

*We now take communion in both
bread and wine again. Please feel
under no compulsion to receive the
wine, though.*

*If you'd like to receive a blessing, please
keep your hands at your sides as you
come forward.*

*If you'd like to receive Holy
Communion seated in the pew, please
let a member of our sidesteam know.*

HYMN during Holy Communion

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be ev'ry breast from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
prepare we in our hearts a home,
where such a mighty guest may come.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;

without thy grace we waste away,
like flow'rs that wither and decay. To
heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee
whose advent doth thy people free,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Ghost, for evermore.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

**Almighty God, we thank you for
feeding us with the body and
blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our
souls and bodies to be a living
sacrifice. Send us out in the
power of your Spirit to live and
work to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

HYMN

We wait with great expectancy
to see your Kingdom come.
We trust your word to be fulfilled
and pray your will be done.
So in our world of ache and loss
we're calling out, as one:

*Come Lord Jesus,
we hunger and we yearn
for your return. Come Lord Jesus,
oh we pray for your return.*

You came to us so long ago
and you will come again.
We long for heaven on the earth,
an end to grief and pain.
Lord, may our lives anticipate
and usher in your reign.

*Come Lord Jesus,
we long to know you here,*

come and draw near.
Come Lord Jesus,
oh we long to know you here.

So lead us in your patience, Lord,
and help us match your pace,
to walk the straight and narrow road
in rhythms of your grace,
and may this Advent way of life
all hurriedness replace.

Come Lord Jesus,
and teach us how to wait,
you are not late.
Come Lord Jesus,
help us worship as we wait.

THE BLESSING

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Songs and Hymns reproduced under CCLI licence 61873



PRAY: Who would you like to share the good news of Jesus with this Christmas? Pray for them daily.

TAKE several copies of Denham Parish News and give them away (they include the full Christmas programme).

INVITE: A personal invitation to come to a Carol or Christmas service together is by far the best way.

SPREAD the word: post our Christmas events on social media, take a poster at the back of church and ask a local pub, restaurant, surgery, community space to display it.

www.denhamparish.church/christmas

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.

More information on the notice board at the back of church. There is a glass jar at the back of church for donations to the Christmas Appeal

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

Mon 12th Dec. 8pm The Well. St Mark's

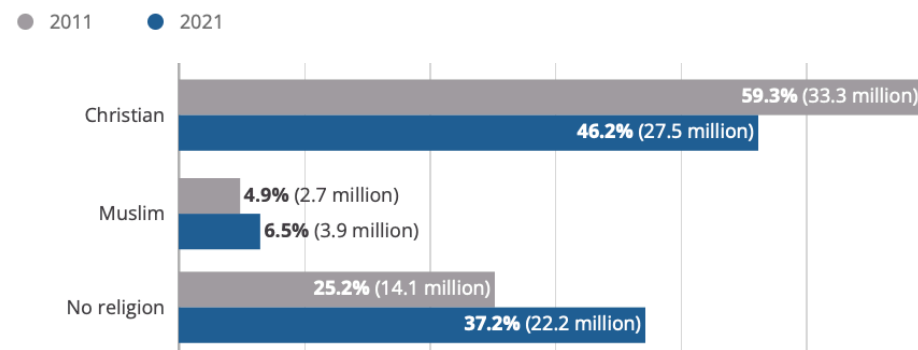
Sun 18th 10.30pm. Carols for all ages.
St Mary's

Sun 18th 6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols
St Mary's

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, Val Dewhurst and June Pegg.

Religious composition, 2011 and 2021, England and Wales (Extract)



The Evangelical Alliance, along with others, was part of a piece of research called Talking Jesus.

Despite our increasingly secular culture, 27.5 million people ticked the Christian box. We also discovered that 45% of the population were willing to tick the box to say they believe in the resurrection. Also, 54% believe that Jesus was a real human being. Note how closely this ties in with the latest census figures for those who identify as Christians. The majority of those who ticked the Christian box in the census may not attend church regularly, but there is likely an openness to Jesus and the history defining moment of the resurrection.

It is also interesting to note the rise of the 'nones' in the census. The census tells us that the Christian population has dropped by 13.1%, which is a lot. But most aren't off to follow a new religion. The biggest rise, up 12%, was in those who ticked 'no religion'. The census only found 32,000 agnostics, 14,000 atheists and 10,000 humanists. Most Christian denominations are bigger than these groups, despite the generous media coverage they receive.

So the census figures may show that nominalism is dying. But that group, representing almost half the population, likely believe in Jesus and the resurrection. Even the 22.2 million who ticked 'no religion' haven't opted for another religion. Some aren't convinced by the sanitised version of Christianity they have been offered, but they also aren't convinced by anything else.

"I think this is a watershed moment for us as a Church though it's been coming for many years. How we respond should affect the life of every local church, every diocese, and every part of the life of the Church of England. My prescription is in essence very, very simple. It is that, following Andrew, we place telling other people about Jesus at the heart of our common life and at the head of our priorities." *Bishop Steven Croft*

"Ironically, I think the secular imagination has far more challenges in store. For once it has finished piggybacking on the inherited deposit of faith, it will have to work out what it believes and why. Without a meaningful moral story to underpin it, might will be right and power supreme." *Rev'd Giles Fraser*



A Warm Space at St Mark's Church Hall?

At our PCC meeting on Tuesday 6 December we discussed the possibility of creating a warm space at St Mark's. Here is the concept:

Target group:

- older people
- those who live on their own
- parents and children after school

Format:

- Weekly on Wednesdays from 12pm to 5pm during cold season
- A welcoming, warm space (lighting, comfortable seating in small room)
- Simple soup and bread roll meal available
- Book swap shelf with donated books
- Option of running "Parent Talk" sessions before school pickup
- Leaflet drop to houses in walking distance of St Mark's
- Time-limited project: Commit to at least four to six weeks and then review response
- Start around middle/end of January

This proposal is very much dependent on forming a team that will be able to sustain a warm space once a week during the winter months.

Is this something you would like to support? Could you commit to helping once a month for at least 2 hours?

Please email or call Victoria:

office@denhamparish.church | 01895 832771

FROM REFUGEE TO REVEREND

Azita's Story



Mon 16 Jan 2023, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Denham
UB9 5BH
FREE ENTRY

Find out more and sign up:

www.denhamparish.church/azita