DECEMBER 2026 - FEBRUARY 2027

DENHAM PARISH NEWS

Christmas Memories

St Mark's Progress

Meet Our New Administrator



Denham Parish Church

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Cover: St Mary's Church in the snow.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Christmas is a special time of year as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Like others (p.6) you may have certain traditions that bring a sense of anticipation and excitement - such as the food you eat, when a Christmas tree is put up, or the time any presents (or a 'stocking'!) can be opened. Amongst the festivities this year, please join us at St Mary's as we share the gift of Christmas – see p.32 for details of carol services, Christingle and Christmas Eve midnight Holy Communion.

If you would like to reflect more on the meaning behind this Advent season, may I commend 'Treasures in Straw' (p.31). Or maybe after reading about Tyndale's courage (p.22) you will have a new year's resolution to read more of the Bible yourself.

Fay (p.9) shares how she has experienced the faithfulness of God in both good and hard times for over 100 years and how that assurance of faith brings her peace. Our new church Administrator Jo Saripanidis (p.25) who was baptised at St Mary's as a child, shares her life story and how she's now come back full circle to work at St Mary's.

We have updates on the building work at St Mark's and St Mary's (p.12) and thank everyone who has already generously given towards our fundraising initiatives – you are making a difference! Kathy provides the recipe for playdough (p.18) used at Little Lions, a key hirer of St Mark's and who are looking forward to the extra play space!

Finally, a reminder that if you subscribe to Denham Parish News, now is the time to pay your annual subscription fee. We are pleased to continue to hold this at £1.50 per copy, or £5 per year if you pay in advance for all 4 Issues (December, March, June, September). Please pay your Distributor when they call on you. If you prefer to have your copy posted then there is an additional £5 p.a. to cover P&P. If you would like to find out more, please contact me at magazine@denhamparish.church.



Blessings,

Cathy Macqueen

magazine@denhamparish.church

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?
MESSAGE FROM CHRISTOPH LINDNER, RECTOR

Dear friends,

One of my fondest childhood memories is our family bedtime routine. It always included the reading of a story. Who read you stories as a child? And which books were your favourites? Maybe one of them was Winnie-the-Pooh?

One-hundred years ago, in 1926, the first collection of stories about Winnie-the-Pooh was published, followed by The House at Pooh Corner two years later. The stories have lost none of their charm, for children and adults alike. The characters are so well chosen and it is fun to choose the character we most resemble. Since you are asking, I think I am a curious mixture of Eeyore and Tigger.

"Good morning, Eeyore," said Pooh.
"Good morning, Pooh Bear,"
said Eeyore gloomily.
"If it is a good morning," he said.
"Which I doubt."

Which characters do you most identify with? Pooh Bear, Piglet, Eeyore, Tigger, Owl, Rabbit, Kanga, Roo – or maybe Christopher Robin?



An early illustration of Winnie-the-Pooh by E. H. Shephard

These stories started, when the author A. A. Milne told his son Christopher Robin bedtime stories and usually centred them around the soft toy that he took to bed that night. Later the parents carefully chose additional soft toys as presents for him to round out the 'family' (Rabbit, Kanga and Roo), while Rabbit and Owl were invented by the author.

"Now then, dear, let's get you tidy."
(Kanga)

By including his son in the story and letting him choose the main character for each evening's story, Milne involved Christopher Robin in the telling and

gave him ownership – no wonder they were so special to him.

Stories are powerful. They take us into different worlds and times and bring them to life. The power of the Christmas story is that it takes us to the heart of God's special plans with the people he made and loves, and we are constantly surprised that it is not a story of glamour, of power, of success: A young, unmarried woman, a confused fiancé, a birth in a stable, lowly shepherds, a tyrannical king threatening the life of the baby.

"It's hard to be brave when you're only a very small animal." *(Piglet)*

And just as Christopher Robin was involved in the Pooh stories, so are we in the story of Jesus. Centuries before he was born, the prophets said that his name was going to be Emmanuel – God with us. The eternal God becomes one of us in Jesus, makes himself vulnerable and walks in our shoes! And after Jesus rises again from the dead, he gives his followers the task of continuing his story. When Jesus first announces that he won't be with them forever, his disciples panic. But Jesus assures them that he will always be with them in the person of the Holy Spirit – the storyteller is still with us today, helping us to continue the story.

"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."
(Winnie-the-Pooh)

Another reason Winnie-the-Pooh has remained popular among children and adults is the gentle wisdom of its characters. Whole books of philosophy and wisdom have been written about this (for example The Tao of Pooh by Benjamin Hoff and The Gospel According to Winnie the Pooh by James Gardiner).

"You're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."
(Christopher Robin)

The Bible calls Jesus the Wisdom of God in person (1 Corinthians 1.24) and then – breath-takingly – it calls us, the followers of Jesus, to make God's wisdom known (Ephesians 3.10). It doesn't matter whether we are anxious like Piglet, or feel we have only very little brain like Pooh – God wants to continue to tell his story through us!

Edda and I are wishing you have a very happy Christmas!

Christoph



Christmas Memories

Denham Place was the favourite of the church choir - carol singing at the home of Lord and Lady Vansitart. Ushered in to the beautiful dining room where the table was filled with lovely goodies and Lady V ladled punch from an enormous silver bowl. Choir boys had their own table with cups of hot chocolate. Before leaving we sang Silent Night to this gracious couple.



Ann Collins



On Christian Findlay's (my brother's) farm in South Africa, the whole family would set out to choose a Christmas tree from the avenue, lined with pine trees, that led up to the farm. Once we had decided on one the right size, he would cut it down. We would all help to carry it back to the farmhouse and proceed to decorate it. Finally placing a silver star on the top. Now we could begin singing Christmas carols!



Judith Newton

When I was 7 years old, we moved from Suffolk to Hayling Island. The first time we spent Christmas day on Hayling Island we went for a walk along the beach and paddled in the sea. I remember it being very cold, but invigorating. It has now become a family tradition to have a paddle whenever we spend Christmas with my parents who still live on the Island. I have never been brave enough to have a Christmas swim, who knows maybe this year!



Kath Sole

I am the youngest of 5 girls and with my parents and at least one grandmother, if not both of them and an aunt, after lunch we would dance around the Christmas tree in the hall, which had lots of real candles lit all over it, singing "we wish you a merry Christmas".

Another memory is that although the church we attended was over 2 miles away, one year the choir came and sang carols in our hall. To this day I don't know how that came about. I think I had gone to bed and peeped through the banisters!



Frankie



One cherished Christmas memory is of my daughter Danielle on her third Christmas. She was just over 2 years old and toddled into the sitting room on a December morning to find a Christmas tree, which I had put up and decorated the evening before while she was asleep, the sheer delight on her face when she saw the tree was magical.

The fairy lights were on and all the baubles sparkled. She stood stock still and looked at the tree then giggled, and wanted me to pick her up to look more closely at the baubles and touch them. It's a very happy memory of the delight children get when discovering something new.



Roz

When our two boys were very young, Jonathan who was barely two years old caught the measles. He was too young to have the jab so he was very unlucky. He shared a bedroom with big (almost three) brother Timothy. On Christmas morning Santa had visited and Jonathan was too poorly to examine his gifts so Tim had unselfishly opened his stocking for him before delving into his own. A truly kind act.



Janet Drane

Imagine Christmas without any crackers on the table on Christmas Day - none in the shops to buy either! That was the situation during the war years (1939-45). So, Dad and I decided to make our own - I was 7 years old. We carefully collected scraps of coloured paper, any pieces of ribbon we could find, and the innards of toilet rolls! Then, come December we shut ourselves in the kitchen on a couple of Saturdays and got to work. We cut, we glued - and if we ran out of coloured paper for the outer cover we used newspaper. Then I was shoo'd out of the workroom whilst Dad filled the crackers with a gift - big excitement for Christmas Day "what would it be?" Together we then finished off the crackers tying each end with the ribbon or if that ran out, with string and then they were put away to wait for Christmas Day. Come lunchtime on December 25th, with friends, we all sat round the table



holding the crackers with arms crossed, waiting to 'pull' them. We usually found a coin as the gift (sweets were on ration cards so they weren't available) - anything from a farthing (one quarter of 1 pence in today's money) through halfpenny, penny, threepenny piece, sixpence (5p) shilling (10p) florin (20p), or half a crown (25p) - what excitement if your cracker contained the half a crown!! Our crackers had given pleasure and laughter and we'd do the same again next year - special memories of very happy times with my Dad.



Pam Montgomery

Some 35 years ago I had a wonderful Christmas with my daughter at her husband's family home in Galilee. We spent a week in Eilat before moving on Christmas Eve to Tiberius on the Sea of Galilee. Christmas Day in the hotel had many of the usual Christmas decorations and although the menu offered a number of items which were strange to us, turkey was available for the main feast if you wished. The following day we drove to Makhul Village to meet more of the extended family – Bashir had 11 siblings! It was wonderful to enjoy the company of so many and enjoy a traditional Arab meal together.



Michael Carmody



On our first Christmas living overseas in Borneo (East Malaysia) with no immediate family visiting, we decided that we should celebrate by doing things we wouldn't in the UK. So, we joined our very friendly Chinese-Malay church Christmas morning service and shared the noodle and rice dish lunch together. In the afternoon Chris and I took Jon and Tim to the Panampang open air pool for a swim and Christmas supper was at our favourite Coffee Bean Café – which was playing Boney M 'Mary's Boy Child Jesus Christ' on repeat.



Cathy Macqueen

God in the Life of Fay Williams

Great is thy faithfulness oh God my Saviour. This year on the morning of my 103rd birthday I thanked our Heavenly Father for another year of my life.


Fay's 100th birthday

I have so many reasons to be grateful for my faith which has sustained me as far back as I can remember.
I grew up in Jamaica and my maternal grandmother came to live with our family shortly before my fourth birthday, I remember her praying with me and teaching me Bible stories and hymns so I grew up with the knowledge of God. I never doubted that.
She spoke to me about her faith and how important it was to pray.



I had two older brothers and a younger sister and brother. We had a small farm and domestic help who helped care for the farm. We had no fridge and relied on an ice box and daily deliveries of blocks of ice. We had a horse drawn buggy to get around. We also had a cow, turkeys and chickens. We grew almost everything we ate, vegetables, fruit etc.

When I was around 12 years old, my mother told me that I was to be always thankful for my life as at the age of eight I nearly died from a severe attack of malaria. My mother said God answered the many prayers said for me. After leaving my Grammar school at the age of 18, I went to a business college and learnt bookkeeping, shorthand and typing. My jobs were mainly of a secretarial nature and I worked with the Shell Oil Company for over 15 years.



Fay with her family, 1963

I initially met my husband at a formal party and dance when I was 14 years old. He was seven years older than me and told my friend that "I was a cute little thing". I next met him at a New Year's Eve party when I was 20 years old. He invited me out three times before I accepted. We started dating and after 7 months he proposed to me. I accepted and we were married the following year on the 27th June 1945.

Our first daughter, Cheryl was born in 1947, Marilyn in 1951 and then Kathy in 1957. In 1959 I fell pregnant with my son David. It was a long and complicated labour. We were told that in order to save the baby's life a Caesarean operation would be necessary. My gynaecologist was reluctant to do the surgery as he insisted that at that stage I could lose my life. At my insistence the operation was performed. I developed peritonitis as he had warned and did nearly die. Keith always assured me that the many prayers of family and friends were answered by our loving Heavenly Father.

At my age of 39, Keith and I offered to entertain two Canadian children who were visiting family in Jamaica. Their aunt became ill and had to be hospitalised. We took Bobby (10), Janet (7) and our children Kathy (5) and David (3) to Cable Hut Beach which was deserted, so we had it all to ourselves. It was a lovely afternoon and the sea was very calm. Bobby ignored my advice and swam too far out and got into difficulty. I managed to swim out and reach him, but he grabbed me tightly and started pulling me down. I felt sure we were going to drown as we were out of our depth. I remember saying. "Oh God". Immediately, despite the sea being calm before, a huge wave lifted us up, deposited us on the beach and slowly rolled back. I knew it was a miracle. Keith was reading on the beach so hadn't realised the situation. We both said special prayers of thanks that night.

We moved to the U.K. (Enfield) in 1969 with Marilyn, Kathy and David. Cheryl then 24 years old decided to go to Vancouver. That year I was diagnosed with cancer and had to undergo a major operation. The surgeon told Keith that I could live another 5 to 10 years. Three years later I had another operation to determine whether the cancer had returned, thankfully it hadn't.

In 1981, at the age of 65, Keith died very suddenly from deep vein thrombosis. For a long time, I found it hard to find any comfort. I prayed every night for over a year asking God to let me die as I felt I would never be happy again. He answered my prayers in a different way. After several years, I became a Bereavement Visitor and a member of the Pastoral Team at St Andrews Parish Church in Enfield.

At the age of 88, I had another operation to remove a non-cancerous lump in my throat which extended to my voice box. I was warned that I could lose my voice and half of my thyroid gland and had to sign a form agreeing to this. My voice got deeper and I am now managing with half a thyroid gland.



Fay with some of her family, 2026

My faith has been tested many times; I remember when Keith passed away suddenly and then my daughter Kathy after three years suffering from acute myeloid leukaemia, I asked "Why dear God, why?" About 18 months after Kathy's death, my son had a major stroke which has left him partially paralysed. These were all very sad and testing times.

I live alone, happily and peacefully, in my apartment in Denham Garden Village. I moved here in 2008 to be nearer to Kathy, and David, Angela and their children. I have seven grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren so there are lots of family to keep in touch with! My iPad is a great way to communicate with them.

It also enables me to join services and Lectio365 online and join Bible study groups and prayer evenings on Zoom. I live alone but am blessed by kind friends who often visit me. I also join some of the many events in the Village. I leave my future and everything else in God's hands through prayer. The Lord is my constant companion and I feel at peace. Great is His faithfulness.

Two buildings, one community, a future worth investing in

Update on the New St Mark's Hall by Mike Stewart

Now here's the problem.

The foundations are dug the concrete is poured and the time has come for the crane to lift on the pre stressed concrete beams that form the floor of the new hall when, on the day before they are to be delivered, the fabricator rings up to say that due to a clerical error they have made the beams too small and it will take three weeks to make new ones and bring them to site!

It is not entirely unreasonable that the builder should respond in simple, but readily understood language, that that was not ideal and could the supplier think of a better option that gets the beams on site in 48 hours. Fortunately, the supplier understood the message and redirected some beams they had made for another client to our site in Denham Green.

However, the beams were too long so the builder had to cut through 60 concrete beams reinforced with steel to get them to the right length. That required something a bit more substantial than even the sharpest hand saw! But come Saturday morning all the beams were ready, the crane had returned and 80 tons of beams and blocks were laid precisely in place and all before the heavens opened. This is exactly what happened!



So the construction programme remains on track – but I am ashamed to admit we never asked about what happened to the customer whose beams we were given. To be fair not our problem! Coping with such problems is an integral part of the construction world.

The good news is that all the below ground work is finished, without any nasty shocks or unbudgeted costs, so the contingency we included in the contract price remains secure and as the build process moves towards more certain and predictable costs we can begin to release some to improve elements of the final fit out.

In the next two or three weeks we will be confirming the final details of the air conditioning for both halls and will be getting quotes for solar panels and battery storage systems to enable us

to deliver on a key objective of creating, as far as possible, a carbon neutral hall that will be well placed to withstand the challenges of climate change with longer, hotter summers and probably wetter and stormier winters.

Actually the wetter stormier winters are a real design challenge. When the original St Mark's Hall was built in the 1960's the building regulations required only a small soak away to take the rain water from the roofs. For this new building we had to install a massive underground tank capable of taking all the surplus water from a once in a 50 year storm which will then release that storm water into the natural watercourse as it is able to accept it.

There is one important feature of the new hall that has a lead time of twelve weeks to design and manufacture. That is the big glass windows that look out over Denham Green Lane. As soon as the block and brick work in that section of the building is complete the glazing company will come and take the precise measurements for all the windows and the external and internal doors and build them to order. Call me a coward but I am really glad no one has asked me to take or check those measurements.



The builders are planning to make the building watertight before Christmas so that in the new year they will be able to make quick progress with the internal mechanical and electrical systems, decorations and the final fit out and finishes. Once we get to that watertight stage we can start to plan for the opening ceremony with increasing confidence and excitement. See the next edition of DPN for the date.

You will have seen from our fundraising brochure that we still need an extra £100,000 to bring the final fit out and finishes up to the standard we passionately want to achieve. We are making good progress towards this target but still have some way to go. Thank you to everybody who has made a donation and enabled us to claim the 25% gift aid.

We are looking forward to the new enlarged St Marks's Hall as a key part of our community for years to come.

If you would like to financially support this project, please contact PCC Treasurer Mike Stewart: **treasurer@denhamparish.church**
For the latest on the building work, visit **www.denhamparish.church/stmarks**

MEET LENNY THE LION!



Calling all creatives under 18

Lenny the Lion has been living in St Mary's Church since 1564, that's 462 years. Help him tell his story!

Write a short story about Lenny's adventures. Colour in a picture of Lenny or make your own drawing.

The best stories and images will be printed as a booklet, with all proceeds going to our appeal.

Why not raise some money yourself? You could use your time and gifts to wash a car, help with gardening... and give the money to our appeal.

Find out more:
www.denhamparish.church/lenny

Update on St Mary's Renovations

By Clive Ashcroft

How often have I looked up at the nave and chancel roofs to be saddened at the missing and broken crosses. No more! St Mary's now has two new crowning glories made from the same stone as the original crosses and to the same pattern, thanks to remnants and a very old photograph.

I have to say, as I watched our friends from Corinthian Stonemasons raise and remount the crosses, I was actually very much moved, it was as if all the other work we are doing to ensure our wonderful church lasts for another 900 years, was being crowned with a finishing touch, a flourish, a completeness.

The father and son team from Corinthian each carved a cross with love skill and precision and we thank them both so much.

Please take time to look up - hopefully on a sunny day - and see the sunlight play on the pristine stone and say a quiet prayer of thanks that we have been able to carry out this much needed work.





FAMILY REGISTER OF DENHAM PARISH CHURCH

BAPTISMS

23.08.26 Axel Melis
05.09.26 Charlotte Caldecourt
06.09.26 Paloma Stone
20.09.26 Clementine Lewis-Bisht

THANKSGIVING FOR A CHILD

30.08.26 Teddy Lawless



Axel Melis



Charlotte Caldecourt



Paloma Stone



Teddy Lawless

FUNERALS

27.07.26 Iris Harvey (92)
07.08.26 Jean Margaret Tapping (87)
24.08.26 Chantal Jackson (89)
01.09.26 Cliff Thomas (91)
18.09.26 Jill Mary Glanfield (77)

SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

25.07.26 Jean Ollerenshaw (96)



Iris Harvey



Jean Tapping



Chantal Jackson



Cliff Thomas



Jill Glanfield



Jean Ollerenshaw

Craft Corner

PLAYDOUGH

AS USED AT LITTLE LIONS!

by Kathy Paine

YOU WILL NEED:

- Plain flour: 2 cups
- Salt: 1/2 cup
- Cream of tartar: 2 tablespoons
- Vegetable oil or baby oil: 2 tablespoons
- Boiling water: 1 to 1.5 cups (add gradually)
- Food colouring: A few drops
- Mixing bowl and spatula
- Measuring cup and spoons



Playdough is best played with and not eaten!

STEP 1

Combine dry ingredients: Stir the flour, salt, and cream of tartar together in a large bowl.



STEP 2

Add liquids: Pour in 1 cup boiling water, vegetable oil, and food colouring.



STEP 3

Stir continuously with a wooden spoon until a sticky dough forms. If it looks too dry, add the remaining water a little at a time.

STEP 4

Cool and knead: Let the mixture rest for 5 to 10 minutes until it is cool enough to handle. Tip the dough onto a floured surface and knead it vigorously with your hands until it becomes smooth and no longer sticky.

STEP 5

Have fun: You can add glitter, sequins, essential oils or spices for an extra sensory experience.



Music at St Mary's

St Mary's Festival

13th September 2026



Seth Schultheis didn't disappoint, captivating us all with a world class piano recital including works by Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms as well as contemporary composers Dai Fujikura and Elizabeth Ogoneka. If you'd like to hear Seth again, he is playing at Wigmore Hall, London on Wednesday 9 December at 1pm.

Come and Sing – St Mary's choir

By Jill Sands



A warm welcome awaits you, no technical knowledge is needed, just a love of singing (robes and music are provided). We practise with Stephen, our Choir Master, before and after Sunday services and once a month on a Thursday evening. When required we also sing for weddings, funerals and Thanksgiving services. Singing for the latter is particularly humbling. Earlier this year we sang at the funeral for a much-loved member of the choir, leading the procession into church and then sitting beside the coffin.

Ann Collins has joyfully sung with St Mary's Church choir since 1949 (so she's seen 7 Rectors!) In recognition of such long and faithful service to church music, Ann was recently awarded a gold medal and certificate from the Royal School of Church Music to which the choir is affiliated. Thank you, Ann!

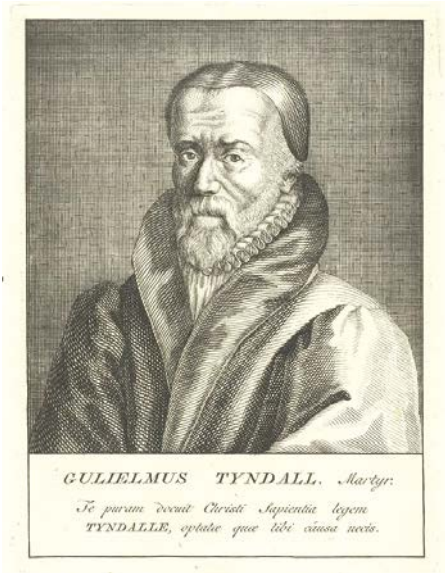
To find out more about St Mary's church choir, please contact the Church Office.

THE BIBLE IN ENGLISH
BY CHRISTOPH LINDNER

"And it chaunced in thoose dayes: yt ther went oute a comaundment from Auguste the Emperour that all the woorlde shuld be taxed. And this taxynge was ye fyrst and executed when Syrenius was leftenaut in Syria. And every man went vnto his awne citie to be taxed. And Ioseph also ascended from Galile oute of a cite called Nazareth into Iurie: vnto ye cite of David which is called Bethleem because he was of the housse and linage of David to be taxed with Mary his spoused wyfe which was with chylde. And it fortuned whyll they were there her tyme was come that she shuld be delyvered. And she brought forth her fyrst begotten sonne and wrapped him in swadlynge cloothes and layed him in a manger because ther was no roume for them within in the ynne."

When I pasted these lines into my word processor it went wild, underlining plenty of words. And yet, we understand the story reasonably well. It is, of course, Jesus' birth as told in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2.

One of the things I love about Christmas is the retelling of the Christmas story in a candle-lit church.



The old story is familiar as a favourite winter coat and yet it is no less powerful than it was when shepherds heard it from a choir of angels.

It is therefore hard to imagine that, 500 years ago, Christmas was very different for the common folk. Church services were held in Latin and that included the readings from the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible. Most of the worshippers would have been passive bystanders, not understanding a thing.

The Bible passage at the beginning of this article comes from William Tyndale's English Bible, printed in 1526

– 500 years ago. From an early age, he had a strong sense of mission to translate the Bible into the language of the people. As a boy he was inspired by the story of how Aethelstan (the grandson of Alfred the Great) caused part of the Bible to be translated into English. The young Tyndale was very gifted – he went to study in Oxford at the age of 12 and later spoke at least five languages. John Foxe in his "Book of Martyrs" remarks that he was "singularly addicted to the study of the Scriptures" – there are far worse addictions!

At the time there was a great revival of the study of the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible, so Tyndale set himself the task to base his translation on those original texts, rather than the Latin Vulgate translation, as previous English Bibles had done. But King and Church did not authorise his project – many felt it was too dangerous to put the Word of God into the hands of unlearned common people. In a dispute with a clergyman, Tyndale famously said, "If God spares my life, I will cause a boy who drives a plough to know more of the Scriptures than you do."

In pursuit of his dream, Tyndale travelled to the Continent in 1524, never to return to England. His New Testament was eventually printed in the German city of Worms. The recent invention of the printing press made the production of Bibles so much quicker and brought their cost down. Soon copies of it were smuggled into England. While around 3,000 were printed, only three copies survive today. Why? Because King and Church expended great energy to seize and burn copies of it, even sending agents to the Continent. One of those agents was Augustus Packington. What the Bishop of London, who charged him to apprehend Bibles, didn't know, was that Packington was a friend of Tyndale's. So they came up with a plan: Tyndale gave him the remaining copies of his first edition, Packington delivered them to the Bishop and received a reward, which he promptly paid to Tyndale, who used it to finance the printing of a second, improved edition of his New Testament.

Eventually, though, Tyndale was betrayed and executed in Holland. His impact, however, was colossal. Experts estimate that 70-80% of the later King James Version of 1611 is based on Tyndale's translation.

So when you hear the greatest story of all times read again this Christmas, thank God for the gift of Scripture and for the people who gave their life so we can read the Word of God in our heart language.

What's Happening

AT DENHAM PARISH CHURCH?

During St Mark's renovations, the location for activities have changed.
Please check our website for further details

Little Lions TODDLER GROUP

Wednesday mornings in term time
Higher Denham Community Hall UB9 5EA
Contact: Kathy Paine
kathypaine16@gmail.com

CAFÉ CHURCH

Time to chat | Food for thought
Coffee and cake, hymns and prayers
Denham Garden Village Hall UB9 5GB
31st January, 28th February
No Cafe Church in December or March
Contact: Christoph Lindner
rector@denhamparish.church

DESTINY

For young people aged 10 and older
Second Sunday of the month
Meet at the Rectory, 10.30am

Contact: Tim or Charlotte
destiny@denhamparish.church

Baptisms, weddings and funerals

www.denhamparish.church
/baptisms-marriages



Bellringing

Contact:
andrew@simpson.trumail.com

Small Groups

Grow in faith and friendship
www.denhamparish.church/lifegroups

Sunday Services

www.tinyurl.com/youtube-denham

At St Mary's:
9am and 10.30am

WELCOME TO OUR NEW ADMINISTRATOR
JO SARIPANIDIS



Hi everyone

Just as a brief introduction, here are some of the threads making up my life so far:

I am half British (on my mum's side) and half Greek (on my dad's), but I was born in Wimbledon, which most definitely makes me a Womble!

My church background is similarly 'double'. St Mary's is very special to me, as I was baptised here. Shortly afterwards we moved to Greece, to my father's hometown of Thessaloniki (so I am also a Thessalonian!), where I was chrismated into the Orthodox church.

We continued to travel back and forth throughout the years, and I have memories of a lovely lady teaching us songs in the vestry at St Mary's when we were very little and taking us for walks in the graveyard, of vestry teas, of Thursday communion, and of magical candlelit services on Christmas Eve.

Possibly because of my own mixed background, ecumenical dialogue has always been close to my heart. Education-wise, too, I found myself pulled in two directions initially, between the Sciences and Humanities. I started studying Maths at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki but left this to come and study English & Theology at the University of Leeds. I returned to Thessaloniki and taught English for almost a decade before returning to the UK to complete a Bachelor of Divinity at Aberdeen university and an MTh in Biblical Studies at Edinburgh university. I then moved back to Old Aberdeen and worked for the university for another ten years, first as part of the welfare team at Hillhead student village, and later as administrator for the Philosophy department.

I'm really excited to be starting this new chapter in Denham! In many ways it feels like coming home, both physically and spiritually, and I'm truly looking forward to getting to know you all and being part of the church's life once more!

Jo

PARISH DIRECTORY



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office@denhamparish.church

Office times
Monday and Tuesday: 10am to 2pm
Thursday: 1pm to 3pm

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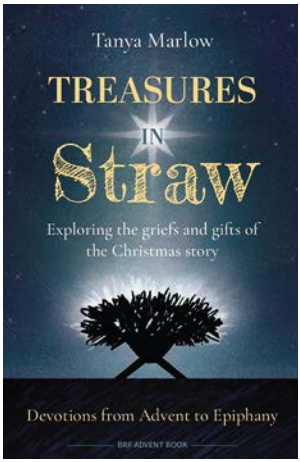


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“TREASURES IN STRAW”:
OUR ADVENT BOOK THIS YEAR

“How do you feel about Christmas? Generally I love it. For me, Christmas means comforting traditions, little treats and inspirations throughout Advent, and the delight of watching my son opening his presents – spiritual, emotional and physical nourishment. For my friend Helen, it is quite different. Issues with grief, mental illness and chronic physical illness have made it harder to enjoy the day itself. Being single and childless (not by choice) at a festival focused on childbirth emphasises the losses Helen feels every day.”



This is how Tanya Marlow introduces her Advent Book, with daily reflections covering 1 December through to 6 January. She aims to recover Christmas for those who find it hard, exploring the story of Christmas in the Bible and telling lots of stories from her own life. She believes that the Christmas story speaks precisely to those for whom the festival is filled with anxiety. And she is asking tough and relevant questions: What are God’s promises for those without hope? How does God restore people shamed by society? Can we sing songs of joy after disaster? How can lament help us heal?

We are inviting you to read this book through Advent and Christmas, to deepen your understanding of faith and God and the timeless Christmas story and to discover Christmas afresh – right where you are, not airbrushing out the difficulties you are dealing with.

Buy a copy from St Mary’s Church (Sundays and Office Hours) for £7.50 (while supplies last) or from a bookshop of your choice.

On Sundays through Advent and the twelve days of Christmas we will also reflect on themes of the book.

“For some, Christmas is a magical time. For others, it can be painful, and the tinselled tellings of Jesus’ birth feel saccharine and empty. Yet, in that first Christmas, all of life is there – disgrace and honour, uncertainty and hope, temptation and tyranny, sorrow and celebration.”



SHARE THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS IN DENHAM THIS YEAR!

Sun 29th Nov	3.30 pm	Carols at Café Church. *Denham Garden Village*
Fri 4th Dec	6.00 pm	Carols on the Green. *Denham Village Green*
Sat 12th	2.00 pm	Carols and Readings. *Denham Garden Village*
Sun 20th	4.00 pm	Carols for All Ages by Candlelight. *St Mary's**
	6.30 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols by Candlelight. *St Mary's**
Thur 24th	4.00 pm	Christingle Service. *St Mary's**
	11.00 pm	Midnight Holy Communion. *St Mary's**
Fri 25th	9.00 am	Christmas Day Holy Communion. *St Mary's*
	10.30 am	Christmas Day Family Service. *St Mary's**

** These services will also be streamed on www.youtube.com/DenhamParishChurch*

On entering the house, the wise men saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
Matthew 2:11

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