

# ST DENYS CHURCH EVINGTON, BULLETIN

## Christmas/New Year edition 2023/2024



Dear Friends, this Advent has been a time of great joy as we have opened our doors to visits from hundreds of children. Highlights for me have included the Krishna Avanti Christingle and the many visits by year 7 from The City of Leicester College.

These visits have brought much joy but equally, at times, great uncertainty and I have been indebted to the wonderful team of people who have helped, facilitated, and led these visits. Sometimes signing up to be part of a team like this can lead us to unexpected places. This was especially true of our final visit from Oaklands special school.

We had all arrived in good time at church to receive the children. We had prepared and planned, everyone was briefed and ready. A 'stable' had been set up, we had numerous costumes, a route planned for our 'journey' to Bethlehem. All was ready. Then with just minutes to go, we received a message: 'it was too wet and rainy, the trip was cancelled.' All our effort was in vain. In many ways I was quite relieved, it had already been a busy morning, perhaps it was time for tea and a biscuit? Obviously, it was quite disappointing, but...

...But then one of our team suggested something that changed everything. 'What if we go and take all this to them instead?' Well of course by now I was thinking about my well-earned custard cream. I raised an eyebrow at this apparent madness... but the team seemed to agree and of course, she was right. After a quick phone call back, we were told that the children would love this! We gathered all our carefully set out props together in a bin bag, piled into two cars and took the Christmas story to them instead.

It was a very different presentation to the one we had planned, much better in the circumstances. The children had a great time with smiles all around and so too did we! It was an experience that I think we will all remember for some time to come.

Let us remember this Christmas that Jesus was born as the biggest disruption possible to a narrative of human failure and sin. With his birth we have all been invited in joining him in building the Kingdom of God. Being part of that sometimes involves us in saying yes to the disruptions that God puts in our way, and this can be scary at times. But if we are brave enough to trust in him then it can have some amazing and unforeseen outcomes.

This Christmas let's not be worried if our preparations are interrupted. Instead let us ask how Jesus would want us to celebrate his birth, then be open to the answers we may get and the places it may lead us to. A very happy Christmas to you all. **Mark**

## COMING UP AT ST DENYS THIS WEEK:

**Thursday 21st 9.30am Gentle Exercise Group** meet in the parish centre

**Thursday 21st 11am (10.30/40 refreshments) Walk with Wonder** in Arboretum

**Sunday 24th (Christmas Eve) 10am Holy Communion** in church & on Zoom ID 820 0369 6332 (password from Qyan)

**Sunday 24th 3pm Crafty Church** in the parish centre *leading into:*

**Sunday 24th 4pm Crib Service** in church

**Sunday 24th 11.15pm 'Midnight' Holy Communion** in church

**Monday 25th (Christmas Day) 10am Informal Holy Communion** in church

**Sunday 31st (New Year's Eve) 10am Holy Communion** in church & on Zoom ID 820 0369 6332 (password from Qyan)

**Tuesday 2nd 7.30pm Cruse Bereavement Group** meet in church and parish centre

**Wednesday 3rd 10am Evington Family History Group** meet in the parish centre

**Morning Prayer** will re-start after the Christmas break on 2nd January.

**Thursday 10am Holy Communion (BCP said)** in church on 21st December

**No Open Church** on 28th December.

*Readings for 24th December: 2 Samuel 7 vs 1-11,16; Luke 1 vs 26-38*

*Readings for Christmas Day: Isaiah 9 vs 2-7; Luke 2 vs 1-14 [15-20]*

*Readings for 1st Sunday of Christmas: Isaiah 61 vs 10-ch 62 v 3; Luke 2 vs 15-21*

**Winter Walk with Wonder** Thursday 21st December. Why not enjoy the beauty of God's creation with a 'Walk with Wonder' in winter on the Arboretum. Led by Geraldine, we will leave church at 11am and finish by 12 noon. Refreshments will be available beforehand, after the service of Holy Communion, in church.

### **Christmas Services at St. Denys Church:**

Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve) 10am Holy Communion

Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve) 3pm Crafty Church

Sunday 24th December: 4pm Crib Service

Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve) 11.15pm Holy Communion

Sunday 25th December (Christmas Day) 10am Holy Communion

Sunday 31st December (New Year's Eve) 10am Holy Communion



**Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve)** The service at 10am will mark the fourth Sunday of Advent and focus on Mary's yes to God. The knitted nativity will be returning to church at the 4pm Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

A huge thank you to all those who have worked so hard over the Christmas period supporting all the activities and services. 2

**Christmas Day Holy Communion 10am** If you are planning to be at this service, it would be lovely if you could bring along an unopened Christmas present that you have received, so that all in attendance can open presents together! Following this service, refreshments will be provided in the parish centre by the Tyler family.

**Clergy Annual Leave** Revds Mark and Anthony will be away from Boxing Day. Mark returns to duties on Tuesday 2nd January, Anthony returns on Monday 8th January. During their periods of absence, if an emergency arises, please contact either of the two churchwardens in the first instance, or Qyan if they are not available.

**St. Stephen's Church** on East Park Road will hold their Patronal Festival on Boxing Day led by Bishop Christopher, beginning at 11am. Father Irving, the parish priest, who is a great friend of us at St. Denys, warmly welcomes you all. Please go along if you possibly can.

**We are very grateful** to the Revd Canon Philip Norwood who will be leading our worship on Sunday 31st December (New Year's Eve) at 10am.

**The Eden Knit and Natter Group and The Faith and Friendship Group** are still making hats and scarves for those who need them. If you can help with knitting or crocheting hats and scarves, please speak to Anthony when he is on duty. To sponsor them for One Roof's Winter Appeal go to <https://wonderful.org/fundraisers/nDyE7>

**Forgotten—A poem by Daphne Wilshere, a member of our congregation.**

1. It was a short night's welcoming,  
Between the glass and till,  
When I was born upon this earth,  
And all was cold and still.
2. And do they now remember it -  
Leaders, advisors, children small,  
Internet, adverts, all-year shops -  
The ox and ass's stall?
3. With outcasts on the street I dwell,  
No place to lay my head -  
Forgotten by the folks who pass  
Where I stand in their stead.
4. Betrayed, rejected and despised,  
My love spills out like blood,  
And I, the maker of all things,  
Am, by the world, forgot.



**Kimberley's Christmas Flower Creation**

**Collect for 4th Sunday of Advent** Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Collect for Christmas Eve** Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Collect for Christmas Night** Eternal God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation: give to the earth the peace that we long for and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Collect for Christmas Day** Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as new worship you our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

**Collect for Christmas 1 (New Year's Eve)** God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love: gather the nations to be one family, and draw us into your holy life through the birth of the Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Pray for the sick:** Brenda Bedingfield, Pat Davies, Ann Dixon, Gwilym Edmonson-Jones, Marion Heygate, Michael Matts, Roman Orzel, Sian Rigby, Jill Sinclair, Phil Tyler **Pray for those who mourn including all those who** mark the anniversary of the death of a loved one during the Christmas and New Year period.



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St. Denys website, including the Giving Links for Church and Youth Work

[www.stdenys.org.uk](http://www.stdenys.org.uk)

