

ST DENYS CHURCH EVINGTON, BULLETIN

Sunday 11th February 2024, Sunday next before Lent



Dear Friends, I've written and preached several times over the past few weeks about how my biggest revelation from this Christmas was an insight into what the foil on a Christingle could mean. Although it's only meant to serve a practical purpose of saving hands from hot wax, Kimberley pointed out to us that, since it is foil, it also reflects and could represent how we can reflect the love of Jesus back to others.

This theme of reflected love is ever present in scripture. Only in the past week I've found myself preaching on it. Last Sunday in the afternoon I was struck by the words "The Word became flesh and lived among us..." from John chapter 1. In the 'Message' version this is translated as "The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood". It is a reminder of how God's love is so great that he sent his Son to live in vulnerability with us. It is a language that speaks to us, not in abstract terms, but in the ways of living out our every day lives and existence with our neighbours. If we follow Jesus' example, then we will build relationships with those around us, and our lives will be a living reflection of God's love.

Equally, in preparing the reflection on the reading from Thursday morning's service; Mark 7.24-30; I couldn't escape reaching similar conclusions. In this account Jesus has travelled to a Gentile city and proceedings are interrupted by a Gentile woman who has so much faith in who Jesus is that she asks him directly for healing for her daughter. Jesus, in front of, no doubt, surprised onlookers, who expect to come first themselves, accepts the woman's protests for attention and heals the daughter. In so doing he demonstrates that God's love is available to all with faith, regardless of who they are.

For many of us, we may not consider ourselves evangelists, healers, or preachers, however we are all neighbours, surrounded by people living in our neighbourhood. As such we all have the opportunity to be reflectors of God's love ourselves. As we approach Lent, we will be thinking about this more deeply and adopting the idea of 'Loving my Neighbour' as our theme. There is a theme book of the same name, the details of which, and where to get it, are in this bulletin. We also will have weekly home groups to discuss this book as the season of Lent gets under way from this coming Wednesday (February 14th).

Lent is a time for reflection, so I do hope as many of us as possible will be able to join in with these groups and explore what it is that we can do in order to reflect God's love. I'll leave you now with some words from our Lent Book written by one of the contributors; Sanjee Perera, who writes: "It is impossible to love God without loving one's neighbour. We were created to be a mirror...a bounty of compassion and generosity beyond our understanding." With Every Blessing, **Mark**

COMING UP AT ST DENYS THIS WEEK:

Thursday 8th 10.30 Gentle Exercise Group meet in the parish centre

Thursday 8th 2pm Private Booking in the parish centre

Thursday 8th 7pm Choir rehearsal in church

Friday 9th 10am Musical Toddlers meet in the parish centre

Saturday 10th 10am Rambling Club AGM in the parish centre

Sunday 11th 10am Holy Communion in church & on Zoom ID 820 0369 6332 (password from Qyan) **4pm Holy Unplugged** in the church and parish centre

Monday 12th 8am Private Booking in the parish centre

Monday 12th 11.30am Funeral in church

Tuesday 13th 8am Private Booking in the parish centre

Tuesday 13th 7.30pm Cruse Bereavement Group meet in church & parish centre

Wednesday 14th 2.30pm Evington History & Heritage Group in the parish centre

Wednesday 14th 6pm Ash Wednesday Service in church

Thursday 15th 10.30am Gentle Exercise Group meet in the parish centre

Thursday 15th 2pm Private Booking in the parish centre

Thursday 15th 7pm Choir rehearsal in church

Morning Prayer Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9am in church.

Thursday 10am Holy Communion (BCP said) in church

Open Church 9am—12noon Free wi-fi, refreshments, chat! All welcome.

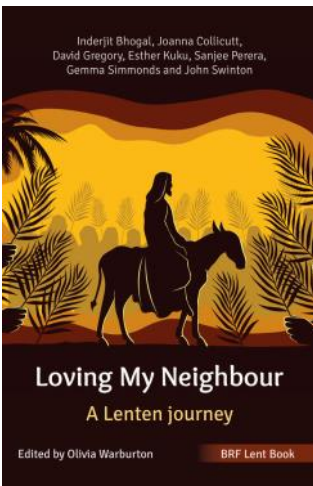
Readings for today: 2 Corinthians 4 vs 3-6; Mark 9 vs 2-9

Did you know that our friends at St. Peter's, Highfields hold FREE Saturday evening film nights in the church? They begin at 6pm and refreshments are provided: The next film is on **10th Feb** Monsters Inc (A girl, Boo, wanders into the Monsters world and it is the monsters who are scared silly!) All welcome!

Holy Unplugged with our Youth Worker Sarah on Sunday 11th February at 4pm. A calm and relaxing time of contemporary acoustic worship.



Lent This year we are taking a theme of 'Loving my Neighbour' and discussing where this will lead us to. Home groups are restarting for this season with Gail's group from Thursday 15th February at 2.30pm. Viv's group will begin to meet from Tuesday 20th February at 10.30am. There is also the opportunity to set up an evening group meeting on Zoom, do get in touch with me (**Mark**) if this interests you. Each week the groups will explore and discuss a chapter of our Lent book, the details of which are on the next page of this bulletin.



Our Lent book is titled 'Loving My Neighbour, A Lenten Journey' It has seven chapters that lead us up to, and then into Easter, each contributed by a different author. We will be discussing a chapter each week, so it is important that as many of us as possible get access to a copy. I have already ordered several copies, and these are available to purchase at the reduced price of £8.64. If you talk to Mark, he can order further copies in this way. If you prefer to get your own, then there are copies available from Christian Resources at St. Martin's House in the city (at a slightly higher price) or, you could order your own copy to be delivered to your home from the online Christian book seller: eden.co.uk

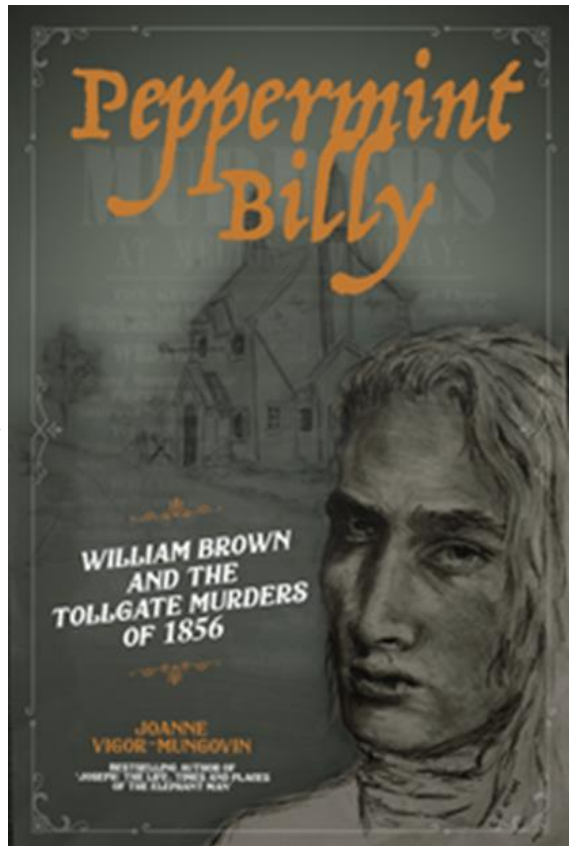
Holy Week Devotion, Singers Still Needed! Save the date! On Tuesday 26th March, during Holy Week, St. Denys will host a performance of a beautiful choral work entitled 'Passiontide.' Rehearsals continue this Thursday 8th Feb. Attending as many of the remaining rehearsals is necessary. Thank you, **Qyan**



Left: A beautiful flower creation by Kimberley

Right hand side: The Evington History and Heritage Group will meet on Wednesday 14th February, 2.30pm in the St Denys Parish Centre.

Joanne Vigor-Mungovin returns after her previous talk about the Elephant Man, to introduce us to William Brown and the Tollgate Murders. Members free, Visitors £3. Refreshments and parking in church carpark available. All welcome!



Bishop Saju's Message for Racial Justice Sunday



Bishop Saju has shared a message for **Racial Justice Sunday**, which takes place this Sunday, 11th February. We would love you to incorporate it into your services or share with your worshipping communities, if you are able. [You can watch it here](#). You can find more liturgical resources to mark Racial Justice Sunday on the national church's website.

Collect for the Sunday next before Lent Holy God, you know the disorder of our sinful lives: set straight our crooked hearts, and bend our wills to love your goodness and your glory in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pray for the sick: Brenda Bedingfield, Pat Davies, Ann Dixon, Marion Heygate, Michael Matts, Sian Rigby, Jessica Saul, Andrew (Andy) White **Pray for those who mourn including the family and friends of** Thomas Drake, Gwilym Edmonson-Jones



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

www.stdenys.org.uk

