

ST DENYS CHURCH EVINGTON, BULLETIN

Sunday 15th February 2026, Sunday next before Lent



*Readings for today, 10am: 2 Peter 1 vs 16-end; Matthew 17 vs 1-9,
4pm: 2 Kings 2 vs 1-12; Matthew 17 vs 9-23 (or 1-23)*

Dear Friends, last week, I explored Richard Dawkins' views as to why creation was a Godless event. Today I review some counter-arguments, taking as my guiding light Revd Dr Rodney Holder, an eminent mathematician, astrophysicist and ordained Anglican minister.

Dawkins takes a reductionist view of creation, arguing that the universe and its varied lifeforms are only atoms, molecules and electrical impulses. For Holder, this theory cannot explain moral values, the ordered structure of the universe or why there is something rather than nothing.

These are some of the arguments which Holder advances to support a God-centered view of creation:

1. The structured nature of the universe, the universality of scientific laws and the development of morality require explanation. He sees these as the product of intelligent design by a creator.

Dawkins dismisses this, regarding the special attributes of the universe as being just a fact; adopting the view that "it is what it is" without explanation.

2. Most scientists believe that the probability of the conditions for intelligent life existing by chance are extraordinarily remote.

Dawkins counters this with a multiverse argument; that if enough universes exist there is a high probability of one or more having the right conditions by chance.

Holder's view is that a purposeful creator is a more satisfying argument than one based on chance and that only purposeful design can explain the physical laws and reality of creation. ***Continued overleaf.....***

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3. The “Big Bang” theory - the idea that the universe was created by the expansion of an almost infinitely hot, dense and small speck of matter and energy - is much in vogue.

For Dawkins this offers a complete explanation of creation, without the need for intelligent design. By contrast, Holder argues that the theory is consistent with the Christian view that the universe had a beginning and was created from nothing by God.

4. Morality also divides the two. Dawkins sees it as the result of human reasoning and cultural evolution, rejecting absolute morality in favour of morals founded on the shifting sands of cultural change.

Holder’s view is that moral truths are real and derived from God; that Dawkins only explains behaviour not morality. He sees morals as the gift of a kindly God, not the passing whim of any given community.

Constraints of space mean that I have only skimmed over this complex topic but I hope that my words may help to stimulate your own thoughts.

Keith Vaughan (*Guest Writer*)

COMING UP:

Thursday 12th 10.30am Gentle Exercise Group meet in the parish centre

Thursday 12th 12pm Private Booking in the parish centre

Friday 13th 12pm Private Booking in the parish centre

Sunday 15th 10am Holy Communion in church and on Zoom, ID 820 0369 6332 (password from Qyan) followed by refreshments in the parish centre.

Sunday 15th 4pm Evensong in church

Monday 16th 2pm Monday Meet meet in the parish centre

Thursday 19th 10.30am Gentle Exercise Group meet in the parish centre

Thursday 19th 10am –12 noon Open Church

Thursday 19th 10am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion (said)



We are sorry that last Sunday's service was not livestreamed via Zoom. This was due to a last minute decision to hold it in the parish centre because of heating issues in church. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

We welcome back Revd Phil White to preside and preach at our service of Holy Communion this Sunday 15th February at 10am. Refreshments will be served in the parish centre after the service. All welcome.



 **Evensong** takes place this Sunday 15th February at 4pm, led by Revd (Fr) Canon Dr Stephen Foster. All are welcome to this quiet, reflective, prayerful service, with hymns, to end the day.

The funeral service for the late Brenda Johnson will take place at Great Glen Crematorium on Tuesday 17th February at 3pm and will be led by Revd Liz Wilson and Kimberley Tyler. Please note the change of time from that originally published. All who knew Brenda are welcome to attend.

CANCELLATION Please note that the Lily House Bereavement Group session planned for this coming Tuesday 17th February is cancelled.

Ash Wednesday Holy Communion (with ashing) will take place in church this Wednesday 18th February at 6pm, marking the beginning of Lent. All are welcome to attend and make this service the start of your personal Lenten journey for this year. The President and Preacher will be Revd Rob Hinsley.



Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion (said) will be held on Thursday 19th February at 10am in church. The President and Preacher will be Revd Liz Wilson, Area Dean. Refreshments will be served at the back of the church after the service. All are very welcome.

The family of the late Barrie Coleman have asked me to inform everyone that the ceremony to inter Barrie's ashes, taking place on Sat 21st February, will be for the Coleman family only. They would like to thank you in advance, for your respect and understanding of their wishes. **Qyan**

Silent Prayer: Experience and Reflection at Leicester Cathedral Heritage and Learning Centre on 16th February and 16th March, 7pm—8.15pm. Leicester Cathedral are offering Silent Prayer events on the third Monday of each month in 2026. An opportunity to pray in silence with others, and, if desired, to reflect on and learn from our experience. Open to anyone who desires to pray in silence. Each event is led by Revd Canon Dr Nigel Rooms, Associate Priest at St. Margaret's, Leicester, in partnership with Leicester Cathedral Discipleship. To find out more, email nigel@praxisworks.uk.

Last verse of a poem by George Herbert, a useful Shrovetide (pre Lenten) Prayer, as we try to discern the practices that will help us keep Lent very fruitfully:

*Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast
By starving sin, and taking such repast
As may our faults control:
That ev'ry man may revel at his door,
Not in his parlour; banqueting the poor,
And among those his soul.*



Thought: Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy one is here, come bow before his throne with reverence and fear. In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground, be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy one is here.

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

Pray for the sick: Joan Ackland, Nigel Dearman, Ann Dixon, Revd Richard Howells, Ron Maund, Gail Russell, Isobel Thorpe, Richard Williams. **Pray for those who mourn including the family and friends of** Brenda Johnson, Susan Kirkham-Middleton, Morag Maund, John Pickering, Revd Brian Thompson



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

Youth Work: www.stdens.org.uk

