

A Light in the Darkness

As I write this letter, it's tipping it down with rain, it is cold and damp and everything feels bleak and dreary. Right now, as a nation life feels quite bleak and dreary; we face unsettling times, politically, economically, with great uncertainty over Brexit, and a General Election offering little hope for the future. Our newspapers seem full of bad news; we face real struggles and tensions with shortages and cutbacks for the NHS, Education, Agriculture and Law and Order; to name but a few. There is an increasing sense of fear and accelerating concerns around our care of the environment and worldly injustices.

And yet Christmas is just around the corner – a time which should be full of hope, expectation and excitement. When I look at the story of Christmas, it is beautiful. It refreshes my soul. It is a light in the darkness of our disenchanting, confused and fear-driven world. It is a candle of hope for the future. It is the greatest story ever told. It is the miracle of God's surprising love, of a young maiden's faith, of a child from the heavenly realms and of a 'moment-in-time' that has transformed the future of humanity.

What is worrying you? What are you fearing? What are your hopes and dreams? May I suggest that you put before you the Christmas story and like the Virgin Mary, "ponder these things." Fill your thoughts with the wonder of God's great gift – Jesus Christ. During Advent we will be preparing our hearts for Christmas - getting ready to welcome again the Christ child into our hearts. Inviting



**ponder
these
things...**



Him to dwell with us; to change us and transform us, so that we might work in partnership with Him, to be a part of the solution for our broken, dreary, bleak world.

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

This is the new reality and it means everything for you and me. Let this child fill your life with hope and transform the way you live in this world. My prayers are with you and your family for a blessed and holy Christmas filled with the peace of Christ.

But as you arrive at Christmas, don't let the story stop there... for Christmas is more than just a child born. This year can I encourage you to take from the back of church, from the carousel, a small booklet called Follow The Star. Drawing inspiration from the carol 'We Three Kings', Follow The Star: 12 Days of Christmas Wonder offers daily reflections for each day between Christmas

and 5th January. Each reflection includes an introduction to the day's theme, a short Bible passage, a practical challenge to bring the theme alive and a short prayer. There are also ideas for sharing with friends and family and links to further resources.

Wherever you are on your journey, Follow The Star will help you see life afresh through the light of the Christmas star, a sign of God's hope and promises.

With love and prayers,

Revd Emma

*Revd Emma Racklyeft,
Vicar at All Saints, Denmead*



All Saints Church Services

Sunday 1st December: 1st Sunday of Advent

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am Parish Communion
- 4.00pm Christingle Service
- 6.00pm Healing Service

Sunday 8th December: 2nd Sunday of Advent

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am Gift Service for SADS
- 6.00pm Taizé – Advent theme

Saturday 14th December

- 3.30-5.30pm Messy Church

Sunday 15th December: 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am Parish Communion
- 6.00pm NO EVENING SERVICE

Sunday 22nd December: 4th Sunday of Advent

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am All Age Communion
- 6.00pm CTD Carol Service

Tuesday 24th December: Christmas Eve

- 4.00pm Crib Service
- 11.15pm Midnight Mass

Wednesday 25th December: Christmas Day

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am All Age Celebration followed by
- 10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 29th December: 1st Sunday of Christmas

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am Parish Communion
- 6.00pm NO EVENING SERVICE

Morning Prayer is said Mon-Fri at 8.30am – everyone is most welcome.



The church is open during daylight hours, for private prayer. If you wish to light a candle, there is a candle stand in the chapel.

From the Registers

Funerals

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Monday 28th October | Mrs Pauline Quainton |
| Wednesday 30th October | Mrs Eileen Matthews |
| Tuesday 5th November | Mr Alfred (Fred) Bostock |

Act of Remembrance



Thank you to everyone who joined on Remembrance Sunday as we commemorated and remembered those who have given their lives in the two World Wars, and those who have died in conflicts since, that we might have peace and freedom today.

Approximately 800 children and adults from the local uniformed groups, the Infant and Junior schools, the Parish Council, Denmead Brass Band, a range of village groups, All Saints congregation plus





many, many more from across our community paraded from the Memorial Hall to the Village Green where a short Act of Remembrance followed.

Rev. Emma Racklyeft



**The
Children's
Society**

**No child
should feel
alone**

**All Saints, Denmead are having a
special Christingle Service on
Sunday 1st December at 4pm.**

**Come along and find out more about Christingle,
we'd love to have you with us.**

***During the service a collection for the work of
The Children's Society will be taken.***

**www.allsaintsdenmead.org.uk
www.facebook.com/allsaintsdenmead**

All Saints Denmead Christmas Services

Sunday 1st Dec	4.00 pm	Christingle
Sunday 8th Dec	9.30 am	Gift Service
Sunday 22nd Dec	6.00 pm	CTD Carol Service
Christmas Eve	4.00 pm	Crib Service
	11.15 pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	9.30 am	Christmas Celebration followed by Communion

Everyone is very welcome to all our services!



www.facebook.com/allsaintsdenmead

www.allsaintsdenmead.org.uk

#FollowTheStar

Ethical Christmas presents

How much damage to the earth will we manage to do this Christmas? Those hundreds of millions of presents we are going to buy come from somewhere – usually raw resources. Are the presents worth the strain on our already struggling planet?

Here are some alternative presents, that are eco-friendly, useful, and fairly traded.

Christian Aid (christianaid.org.uk/christmaspresents) invites supporters to send them a donation, and in return, they will send a 'lively' personalised card to your friend or relations, describing the gift you have chosen to give on their behalf.

Send a Cow (sendacow.org/gifts) also invites supporters to send a donation for a range of practical gifts, for use in helping people from Ethiopia to Zambia.

Traidcraft (traidcraftshop.co.uk) offers everything from bamboo tights to clocks to food and cosmetics.

WaterAid (shop.wateraid.org) provides sanitation equipment (such as taps to promote hand washing) to villages in Africa, Asia or Central America. The person you nominate will receive a card to let them know this has been done in their name.

World Vision (musthavegifts.org) offers you the choice of sending various specific items from mosquito nets to garden tools, all of which they say are specifically asked for and needed.

With WWF (wwf.org.uk) you can adopt a wild animal, from a dolphin to an orangutan. WWF will send your nominated person an adoption certificate and even cuddly toy.

**Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can.**
John Wesley



Did you know that it is a family in Wiltshire, the Parkers, who claim to own the world's oldest artificial Christmas tree? It was bought in 1886, and is still put up every year.

Denmead Community Centre

Denmead Film Night

Saturday 21st December 7.30pm – All Is True

rated 12A 101 mins

The year is 1613, and Shakespeare is acknowledged as the greatest writer of the age.

But disaster strikes when his renowned Globe Theatre burns to the ground. Devastated, Shakespeare returns to Stratford, where he must face a troubled past and a neglected family. Haunted by the death of his only son, Hamnet, he struggles to mend the broken relationship with his wife and daughters. In so doing, he is ruthlessly forced to examine his own failings as a husband and father.

Those with a keen interest in the life of Shakespeare, from behind the pages,

may find some wealth of knowledge in Branagh's take on the playwright. Written by Ben Elton, the script features a sharp and satirical take on the life of the Bard – which may prove to be accessible for those currently studying his great works, too.

Starring Judi Dench and Ian McKellen.

Tickets: £5.00

Citizens Advice

Need free confidential advice? Just drop into the Centre between 90.30 and 11.30 on any given Tuesday – no appointment necessary.

If you would like to receive our electronic newsletter detailing the events and activities held at the Community Centre, just visit our website www.denmeadca.com and click "join the email list".

You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.
Dale Carnegie

I have never found, in a long experience of politics, that criticism is ever inhibited by ignorance. *Harold Macmillan*

Winter Walk 4

Denmead Community Centre

Saturday 28th December 2019 – 10.30am

It was this walk that was the last one for one of our long serving members of the group, Lesley Milne. She bravely attempted some of it in December 2018 a few months before she died. With the permission of her mother, Liz, we are therefore dedicating our walk this year to Lesley.

The photograph below shows Lesley with her mother before the start of the 2017 post-Christmas walk. Lesley is positioned fifth from the right, wearing a light-coloured anorak and hat. Her mum, Liz, is just behind her left shoulder.



The route of this walk is shorter than our normal 2 hour romps during the winter and will be on lanes to the north of the village taking in Rookwood, Rushmere and Pithill, however it is highly likely that sections of our route will be flooded, so walkers are strongly advised to either wear wellingtons or at least stout boots, preferable with gaiters or over trousers. A shorter route of about an hour can be taken along a footpath, but this will be very muddy. A very short route of just under 2 Km 'around the block' is available for families with young children. Please note we will leave at the slightly later time of 10.30am from Denmead Community Centre where there is ample parking available. Post walk refreshment will be taken at the Fox & Hounds.

Walk Details

Duration: Approx. 1h 30m for full route, an hour for the short cut along Wayfarers Walk footpath and about 35 minutes for the walk 'around the block.'

Distance: 7 km – 4.4 miles (full route)

Conditions: Main route is on lanes but expect muddy surfaces and flooding across several sections. Wayfarers Walk (optional shorter route) will be VERY muddy.

Level of difficulty: Generally easy, but a steady climb from Rookwood to Rushmere and quite a steep hill from the Pithill turn-off up to Rookwood near the end of the walk.



Number of stiles: None

If you are considering 'trying' a walk with the group, wish to be included on the walks mailing list or perhaps have a query about anything relating to the Denmead Walking Group please do not hesitate to contact me at martinlewis20@hotmail.com

Denmead Afternoon Women's Institute

At our November monthly meeting we celebrated our 66th birthday and welcomed members from other institutes in our Bere Forest Group.

We were pleased to welcome Miranda to sing and play for us. Miranda is a talented young lady who sings and plays clarinet, flute and saxophone. We were taken back to our younger days with many songs from the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Most members joined in the singing with clapping and hand jiving and one member entertained us with her jiving. Songs included songs made famous by The Drifters, Susan Maughan, Shirley Bassey, Elvis Presley and John Denver.



We enjoyed tea and birthday cake in the form of the letters WI. with our oldest member, Edith Gunston blowing out the candles on the cake.

The competition for a CD was won by Janet Pearce with Carol Godson second. The Flower of the Month was won by Margaret Kennett with Joan Downing second. We have continued our monthly lunch dates with the next lunch on Tuesday 17th of this month at the White Hart at 12noon.

In January we will have a New Year Lunch at Barnards. We will be taking part in the Group Carol Service at St Georges Church in Waterlooville. On

Monday 9th. when Terry Walmsley will represent us with a reading.

This month's meeting will include our President, Janet Pearce, demonstrating Christmas Card making. Members will be able to make a card paying £1 for the materials. Janet is making a communal Christmas Card for members to sign with donations going to the Associated Country Women of the World of which the WI is a member.

The competition is for a home-made Christmas Decoration. The meeting will include the exchange of Christmas gifts (value £5) through our Secret Santa.

There will be no monthly meeting in January due to our Lunch at Barnards on Wednesday 8th. Our next monthly meeting will be on Wednesday 5th February.

Joan Downing (9226 5458)

We invite all ladies to our meetings held on the first Wednesday of the month from 2 to 4pm in the Memorial Hall, Hambledon Road. We have monthly talks and demonstrations, with a relevant competition, on a wide range of subjects so there is something to suit all tastes and interests.

You are welcome to come as a visitor to "try us out" or if a particular subject is of interest to you. We meet informally for lunch once a month and also take part in the county darts, skittles, and quiz and attend the Group Meetings when we socialise with members from the other five institutes in our Group. Members attend the twice yearly County meeting which includes a well known guest speaker.

If you are unable to attend an afternoon meeting the Evening Institute would welcome you to their meetings at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday (except December when they meet on the second Wednesday.)

CAB



Lesley Rose, Advice Services Manager for Citizens Advice Winchester District, gives advice on reducing the cost of your energy bills during the winter months.

Q *I live with my two children and partner in a small semi-detached house. During the winter our heating and electricity bills shoot up. Do you have any tips on how I can keep the cost of my energy down during this period?*

A There are a few things you can do to save some money during the winter months. Check when your energy contract is due to expire. If you're at the end of your contract use Energy Compare by Citizens Advice (energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk) to see if you could save money by switching supplier or tariff.

If you're on a prepayment meter you could save money by replacing your meter with one that lets you pay after using energy rather than in advance. Most suppliers won't charge you for removing a prepayment meter, though many will run a credit check or ask you for a deposit.

You may also be eligible for certain grants and benefits, these could include Warm Home discount or help with energy debt. Contact your local Citizens Advice if you need help with the application.

Here's a few practical tips to help keep costs down:

1. Using a timer for your heating, lowering your thermostat and using radiator valve controls could save you over £100 per year
2. Changing light bulbs to an energy-efficient one could save £50 over the lifetime of the bulb
3. Turn appliances off standby mode to save around £30 a year
4. Seal cracks in floors, skirting boards and add draught excluders to letterboxes, doors and windows.

Some energy suppliers also offer grants to allow improvements to your home, like insulation or a new boiler. What help you can get depends on your circumstances and what would help your home. You don't need to be a customer of one of these suppliers to apply but you'll need to check your eligibility. Visit www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk for more details.



Denmead and Waterlooville Rowans Support Group

presents

CHRISTMAS Tea @ ~~Three~~ TWO



£7.50 pp
(by Ticket only)



2pm the Pavilion, Denmead

King George V Playing Field

Sunday 15th December 2019

Tea with Delicious Cakes Prizes

Music by *"Pianoman Justie"*

For further information contact 0794 7611 699
Patricia.bailey333@gmail.com

a community support event held in aid of

Rowans
Hospice

Purbrook Heath Road, Purbrook,
Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 5RU
t: 023 9225 0001
w: www.rowanshospice.co.uk
Registered Charity no. 299731

After Christmas please
save the date to join us at
our RACE NIGHT on
February 1st.
Tickets on sale later.

We have begun a collection HATS, HANDBAGS
and ACCESSORIES for our sale next spring.
Please contact me if you have any you would like
to donate. patricia.bailey333@gmail.com or
07947611699 Thank you

Denmead Village Association

Dr Bob France, who has spent many years as a volunteer for the National Trust, and his alter ego (a butler in the late 1800s and early 1900s) entertained us by explaining some of the Christmas traditions we now know, and how they developed. The talk started with the 1870s, when many of the things we know today are already in houses.

Celebrations in winter started with the Romans, who held parties and exchanged gifts; Christians followed but did not celebrate Christmas. Eventually it was decided that Christ's birth would be celebrated at the time of the shortest day. The Tudors celebrated grandly; Puritans closed everything on Christmas Day, and even churches were closed. Christmas returned with the Georgians, but there was no Father Christmas and no presents. Only the aristocracy had Christmas, and the celebrations lasted from 1st December to the end of Twelfth Night. Turkeys were brought from Norfolk and they walked to London over about six weeks. The ordinary people would eat rabbit or chicken. At this time people were moving from the country and became an urban society, so many traditions were lost. The poor relied on money in the boxes in the churches which was doled out at Christmas. Servants were allowed to go home on boxing day.

The Victorians "reinvented" Christmas; until then Father Christmas was dressed in green. In the 1800s an American, Clement C Moores, wrote a poem which included St Nicholas dressed in red, riding on a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer. Queen Charlotte introduced Christmas trees, and in 1848 the London Illustrated News printed a picture of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and their children with a Christmas tree, and from that time it became popular with everyone. Holly, ivy and mistletoe were introduced and are full of superstitions. Many of the traditions we know today have developed from then. Long may they continue!

The vote of thanks was proposed by Edna Goodman.

