



St Leonard's Church
cnr Strickland & Mitchell Sts
Denmark

Anglican Parish of Denmark-Walpole

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St. George's Church
11 Vista St
Walpole

We endeavour to be an expression of God's love in the community

Saturday, 9 December 2023

Dear Parishioners,

Once again, this letter comes to you with my prayers and good wishes for Christmas and a new year beyond.

Christmas Services this year are as follows:

Walpole:

Sunday, December 24th
10 am Extended Communion – Harold Luxton
Monday, December 25th
10 am Morning Prayer with Carols – Harold Luxton

Denmark:

Sunday, December 24th
9.30 am Holy Communion – Revd Sally
5.00 pm Nativity – Children's Service
7.00 pm Lessons and Carols
Monday, December 25th
9.30 am Christmas Eucharist – Revd Sally

I hope that we might see you at one or more of those services. However, I am aware that Christmas is one of those opportunities that families try to get together, so if you are travelling, please stay safe.

Ever since Covid disrupted our church services, Bishop Ian has been seeking ways for communicants to partake of the common cup in a safe way. Generally, the practice has been for those who wish to drink from the common cup may do so, but intinction by communicants (the communicant dipping the bread into the chalice) has been banned. In October, Bishop Ian released a paper he had written on the reception of the wine at Holy Communion, and this was discussed at our Clergy Conference in November.

One of the ways Bishop Ian suggested was that the priest intinct the bread in the wine and offer it to the communicant. I experienced this in several places while I was away in the UK, as he did when he was there earlier this year.

I am aware that not everyone approves of this way of having communion, however, with a number of people in the parish not comfortable partaking of the common cup, and in consultation with both centres in our parish, I have had authority from Bishop Ian for the following:

Walpole will continue to offer the common cup and communicants can choose to drink from it or not.

In Denmark we will offer bread and wine with the priest intincting. We started this practise on Advent Sunday and will review it in the new year, but so far, most people in the Denmark congregation were very happy with this way. People can, of course, choose not to have the bread intincted by signalling to the priest beforehand.

Lent and Parish Annual Meeting of Parishioners.

Ash Wednesday and the first Sunday in Lent fall on February 14 and 18, respectively, therefore, I can see no reason that this year the Annual Meeting of Parishioners cannot be held on Sunday, February 25. (In previous years, the date of the AMP has coincided with the first Sunday in Lent, the beginning of Lenten studies, along with the extra services on Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday – hence last year it was changed).

With the diocese's '6-year rule', there will be four vacancies this year, including that of a Warden. Please think about whether you would like to serve the parish in this important sphere. The Parish Council has worked very well together over the last few years, and I pray this may continue. It is about working together to serve the parish and ultimately to serve God in this place. If you would like to know more, please don't hesitate to talk to me about this.

While at Clergy Conference, various colleagues shared experiences they had had over the year at conferences and various courses etc. One that really spoke to me was Revd Jamie Murray's experience in how to enable "Local Houses of Prayer". From that he shared what I believe is a very useful tool for when we find ourselves in a difficult situation or relationship.

Based on a reading from Colossians 1: 9-12 is a focus for your prayers around the word "BLESS" as you pray for that person or situation.

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| B | Body | pray for health and healing |
| L | Labour | pray for the/their work |
| E | Emotions | pray for joy, peace, hope, love |
| S | Social | pray for relationships – marriage, family, friends |
| S | Spiritual | pray for a deepening of faith, grace and salvation |

I pray that you find this helpful, as I am beginning to see a change in me, as I pray it.

While still on the subject of prayer, I have attached an updated version of the parish Prayer Diary for 2024. I hope that you find this helpful as well. There will be printed copies of this at the back of each of the churches.

The annual Christmas Bowl Appeal through the World Council of Churches – *Act for Peace* organisation is open for donations. There are Christmas Bowl envelopes at the back of each church, or you can add to our parish donation online at: mycb.link/70082. Christmas bowl goes towards providing safety for people forced from their homes by conflict or natural disaster, with this year focussing on the needs of refugees in Myanmar.

I like to enter Advent and Lent with a theme in my mind, which informs my sermons and especially for the climax which is Christmas and Easter. This Advent I have felt God's call for us to be People of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, and so bearers of God's hope, peace, joy and love to others as we approach Christmas and the birth again in our hearts of Emmanuel – God with us.

Revd Sue Lodge-Calvert finished her reflection on the readings for Advent 2 with the following:

This is the season of the beginning of the good news. Hope is rising again. Peace is our calling. Joy is waiting for us. Love beckons. Let our hearts and minds be turned toward the things of God. Let us help prepare the way for the coming of God in our time and place.

I wish you all a very happy, holy and safe Christmas, may you know God's blessing.

Peace and all good wishes, with my prayers.

Sally

Revd Sally Buckley tssf
Parish Priest