Seek



January 2025

The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge www.stmarksnewnham.org

The Vicar's Letter





Dear Brothers and Sisters, May I wish you all a happy new year, and a continued merry Christmas! In the church calendar Christmas is celebrated throughout

the entirety of January. This is partly because the birth of the Messiah is too significant an occasion to restrict to 24 hours. But it is also because we celebrate not only his birth but also, to quote the well-known carol, 'all his wondrous childhood'.

It is a time when we think of the perilous flight to Egypt that the Holy Family had to make, to escape Herod's murderous envy. And of the life he would lead in the family home, after the all-clear was sounded. Of the coming-of-age rites which he passed through. Above all we remember the arrival of the Magi, the wise men, which we celebrate at Epiphany (January 6th). This ancient feast happens after Christmas because, contrary to the way we often imagine it, the mysterious figures from the East appear to have arrived a little later. They are not described in the Scriptures as coming to the stable but to a house. Perhaps some good Bethlehemite had taken pity on Mary and more fitting accommodation was eventually found? Christian tradition has latched on to this idea of the baby Jesus in a home at Epiphany. It is the custom to bless homes at this time, praying that Christ may be found there, welcomed there. That they may be places of peace, safety and hospitality.

All of which is to say that the extension of Christmas celebrations throughout January is about finding the divine in the ordinary. Christ in the family home, the everyday duties and activities. Remembering that he went through all the growing pains we do. One of the watchwords of Christmas is 'Emmanuel', which translates as 'God with us'. God shares our life with us, and touches every aspect of it with his glory. It has become the norm to speak of us living in a 'secular' age. But in truth, there is no such thing as the secular. Not from the Christian perspective at least. There is no place, or situation, where God cannot be found in or cried out to. This is why I am such a strong believer in our Anglican Parish

system, which gives me not a building but a geographical area to serve as its vicar: because while Churches are wonderful, and useful, God's presence and work is not restricted to them alone. He is at work in the homes and the pubs and the shops and the parks.

The Magi, the wise men, may have been great scholars, they may have been kings. But in Christian tradition they represent the ordinary person because they were the first people to adore him who were not from the Jewish faith. Their place in our Christmas story breaks down any ideas about exclusivity or merit. Nobody is trapped by their background, or past mistakes (the Magi took a few wrong turns!). Their journey is our journey. It is the iourney of faith. Their iourney is our iourney. We will experience the weariness of the road, the confusion of expectations overturned, the soreness of the search for meaning, truth and rest. But it is a journey from darkness to light. A journey from sinning outsider to forgiven friend. A journey from privilege and palaces to the poverty of the room in Bethlehem. A journey from false gods and priorities, from corrupt authorities and soul-crushing diversions to....to what? To wonder, awe, joy pure and simple. To a moment when we finally realise that we have come home. A moment when we feel finally able, finally free to unburden yourself, not only of our silver and our gold, but of our pretences and our anxieties. To kneel and become, to quote another hymn, 'lost in wonder, love, and praise'.

In friendship and in faith,

Jim

The Rev'd Jim Robinson

Vicar of St Andrew and St Mary, Grantchester, and St Mark's, Newnham

Crossways/ITAC: Charity of the Month



It Takes a City (ITAC) is a small charity with a big reach. It provides a number of services that support some of Cambridge's most vulnerable rough sleepers and the many with nowhere to call 'Home'.

Crossways (run in conjunction with CCHP) is its award-winning emergency winter accommodation. It is open 24/7 from November until the end of March each year, providing safety, dignity and comfort for 20 people who would otherwise be on the streets during the winter months. ITAC work in partnership with a range of agencies to secure longer term accommodation for their guests and provide ongoing support via their Survive & Thrive service.

The new <u>Haven</u> service offers a safe, welcoming overnight space for vulnerable women in the city centre two evenings a week. ITAC have plans to open the Haven one or two afternoons a week in the new year.

ITAC could not do any of this important work without the support of the community, including our amazing volunteers and the many groups that collect donations.

To find out more about the charity's work, please visit <u>ittakesacity.org.uk</u>.

Please donate generously to this wonderful project this month.

Barry Read

Let There Be Light

A varied selection of words and music for Epiphany
St Mark's Church
3 pm Sunday 5th January

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Grantchester Church ReVaMP Project January - April 2025

We are delighted to be welcoming our friends from Grantchester at our 9.30 am services at regular intervals between now and Easter as major works take place on their site.

This is an abbreviated report from their Parish Magazine. For the full report go to https://church.grantchester.org.uk/

After several years of consultation, planning and seeking the correct permissions Grantchester Church finally has all the necessary green lights for the Church ReVaMP Project to get started. It will involve...

Restoring our beautiful church

Vestry refurbishment
Maintenance work
(and saving the best till last.)

Path regraded for step free, level access into the church.

The building work will commence at the start of January. The last service will be on 29th December after which the church will be closed until the beginning of April, opening in time for Easter.

The ReVaMP Project Details

Restoration and Maintenance

This will involve some re-plastering inside, mainly where the walls have been damaged due to damp, and repointing and repairing of flintwork and walls on the outside of the church. It will require scaffolding both inside and outside the church.

Vestry refurbishment

The vestry has a lot of purposes! The intention is make the vestry a more welcoming space where in addition to sidepersons and priests preparing for services and congregation making coffee, flower arrangers working, and brass being polished, the vicar can also hold meetings and parents can be with young children during a service.

Path regrade for step free, level access into church

What we have now... Currently, the path to the church rises from the narrow pavement by the dangerous bend in the High Street. The surface is of broken tarmacadam and gravel. The slope up to the churchyard gates is 1 in 10 at its steepest (Building regulations state that new paths should not be more than 1 in 20 gradient). Beyond the gates the path rises more gradually to the porch threshold.

There are four steps down to the floor of the main body of the church. The passage is narrow and dark and can only be accessed by wheelchair users by using a demountable ramp and the help of two able bodied people. The floor of the church is 20cm higher than the top of the High Street kerb at the start of the path. So the path rises 80cm up to the porch and then, to get to the level of the church floor, it steps down 60cm. The existing toilet is behind the hedge to the left of the churchyard gates. Its layout is designed to meet the needs of everyone including those in wheelchairs, however the approach to it is not good for the elderly and wheelchair bound.

What we will have... After the ReVaMP project, the path will be regraded from the road kerbside so that it is level with the church floor at the threshold of the church. The redundant stone steps will be re-used and laid flush on the exterior to slope gently away from the door. The reinforced gravel in front of the porch will be widened to provide a meeting space outside the church. The ancient doors will be refurbished and extended down to the threshold, all in accordance with the conservator's detailed proposal.

The area around the War Memorial and toilet will also be regraded to improve access to the toilet where there will be a near level landing area in front of the door.

St Mark's Charity of the Month 2025

A meeting was held on the 1st November 2024 in the vestry to discuss the choice of charities for the coming year.

Deep appreciation was expressed for all that Stuart Lingard had done as church treasurer over so many years to make this scheme work. It became apparent throughout the meeting, as one detail after another came up, just how far his care, knowledge and time had made it all possible.

Two of the 2025 charities will provide some particular means of remembering his contribution with gratitude: the Arthur Rank Hospice and A Rocha (which he and Rita introduced to St Mark's).

For the record: the charity of the month scheme was suggested by Stuart and Rita after they had visited a church in the Lake District, and was set up by them, Stephana Babbage and Jeffery Lewins in January 2004. Over the years it has flourished under the aegis of Margaret Herbertson and then Susan Chester.

1. Volunteers would be greatly welcome to take on a special interest in Gombe and in Christian Aid, to start lifting the load off the shoulders of the current proposers of these causes (Perrin, Andrew and Susan Chester).

- 2. It was suggested that proposers of charities should be encouraged to promote and publicise in any appropriate way, *keeping Jim informed*: e.g. in addition to the now standard arrangements for a piece in **Seek** and in the weekly email, a display in the Narthex, and brief address during a 9.30 service they should feel free to perhaps invite a speaker in for after-church coffee to talk or be available to answer questions, sell products if the charity has a marketing arm (e.g. Umoja), or provide pew slips on the 'giving Sunday.'
- **3.** There was discussion as to how gifts made for the month's charity via the electronic pay machine can be earmarked for the charity rather than general church funds.
- **4.** There were more suggestions than months available. It was agreed to carry over for consideration next year the three charities not selected this year; and also to consider whether any of them might be supported via the 2025 Lent Lunches.

Sarah Squire

St Mark's Charity of the Month 2025		
	Charity	Sponsor
January	ITAC/Crossways (Cambridge Churches Homeless Project)	Barry Read
February	The Arthur Rank Hospice Charity (ARHC)	Tina Wilson In grateful memory of Stuart Lingard
March	The Cambridge Money Advice Centre	Shev Sen
April	Gombe	Andrew Watts/Perrin Hardy
Мау	Christian Aid	Susan Chester
June	Umoja	Sue Wagner
July	Camsight	Susan Payne
August	Caring Together	Stuart Evans
September	A Rocha (an environmental charity for Creationtide) First introduced to St Mark's by Stuart and Rita Lingard	Margaret Banks
October	Gombe	Andrew Watts/Perrin Hardy
November	The Gurkha Welfare Trust	Miles Elliott
December	Embrace the Middle East	Andrew Chester

A Letter from Nigeria

Below you will find a letter received by Andrew Watts in November. Once again, it reveals just how much Stuart Lingard did for St Mark's but also for the wider church.



CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(ANGLICAN COMMUNION)

DIOCESE OF GOMBE

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20th November, 2024.

ANDREW WATTS ST. MARKS CHURCH CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Sir,

CONDOLENCES AND APPRECIATION

I am writing on behalf of the Bishop of Gombe and our entire Diocese to express our heartfelt condolences to the congregation of St. Mark's Church, and the entire Cambridge community on the passing of Stuart Lingard. May his soul rest in peace, Amen.

We also want to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude for the unwavering support St. Mark's Church has provided to the Diocese of Gombe over the years.

We just celebrated our 25th anniversary that is our silver Jubilee as a Diocese on the 17th day of November, 2024 starting with a week-long revival program at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter Bolari and we also sent you an invitation letter through Stuart not knowing that he has passed on to glory.

Your commitment to sharing God's love and spreading the Gospel has made a significant impact on countless lives. Your church's selflessness, generosity, and dedication to our diocese have been a beacon of hope and inspiration. Your supports have strengthened our faith and empowered our community.

Stuart's contributions to this partnership will never be forgotten. His tireless efforts, compassion, and dedication to serving others have left an indelible mark on our hearts. The Bishop has also proposed to name a structure after Stuart Lingard and St. Marks Church Cambridge in recognition of your support and sacrificial giving to the Diocese of Gombe.

Please accept our sincere condolences and appreciation. May God comfort St. Marks and Stuart's immediate family.

Abundant Life in Jesus Christ

We will always remember Stuart's legacy and the impact of St Mark's Church on the Diocese of

And Again our correct account number is: Bank Name: United Bank for Africa (UBA)

Account Name: Diocese of Gombe (Anglican Communion)

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With love and gratitude,

Ven. Peter Okparaji

Bishop's Admin

Anglican Diocese of Gombe

'Find my Friend'

Happy New Year everyone.

Sorry I haven't been in touch for a while. Mind you, I am not as elusive as our new friend, Annette Zero who is proving very difficult to reach! I hear that lots of you are trying very hard with such things as recycling. We have been trying to get rid of some of the 'stuff' we have been hoarding but



never using. A friend suggested that we try 'Freecycle'. We put photos of some of things on the website and

people that could use them contacted us and arranged a time to collect the items. It was quite an experience and I met some interesting people. One man came to collect a fold-up bed. He said it was for his mother-in-law who was coming for Christmas. I told him that it was not very comfortable, but his reply was, "Oh that doesn't matter!" Of course, he must be going to give up his own bed for her, do you think?



But, back to recycling. You have been telling me about your efforts to do things such as saving used aluminium foil until you have enough to make it into a ball the size of a tennis ball before putting it in the recycling bin so that it can be easily separated by the machine at the

recycling centre. Did you know that you can recycle your real Christmas tree with JUSTHELPING (just-helping.org.uk · register) who

will collect your tree and arrange for it to be shredded and composted. The donations will be given to the Arthur Rank Hospice. Alternatively, I understand trees can be taken to a zoo (lions love them apparently!) or used to keep sand dunes in place (not recommended to dump your tree on Holkham beach through).



It seems that second hand clothes have become popular with the youngsters. I was using the 'find my friend' app (a tracking

device) on the phone to see where my granddaughter was and I found that she was on Regent Street. When she eventually got to our house, I asked her what she was doing on Regent Street. Evidently, she had been scouring the charity shops for clothes. She held up a pair of jeans triumphantly. My husband said, "But they have holes in the knees!" "That's the fashion, Granddad. Anyway, I can sell them on Vinted later." I didn't dare ask what Vinted was.

And so we all try to reach Annette Zero in our own way. Personally, we tend to 'wear out' our clothes in the old-fashioned way. In fact, my husband put on a pair of tracksuit bottoms the other day. I said, "You can't go out in those. The knees are worn through!" I expect you can guess the reply, "But that's the fashion nowadays!"

Best wishes for 2025 and keep up your efforts.

Rosemary Ley





Happy Birthday, Alan

Congratulations and very best wishes to Alan Jones who celebrates his 90th birthday on the 8th January.

From the Registers

Funeral 13th December Stella Innes

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The Hymns of Timothy Dudley-Smith

Last year I asked Tim Verney to choose some prayers for the October edition of Seek. Amongst them was the final verse from one of Timothy Dudley-Smith's hymns, Lord of the Years, which Tim has included in his article below. At the time limited space meant that I was not able to print it but this led on to a discussion of the prolific hymn writer and Tim kindly agreed to write an article about him.

This replaces our usual prayer page and surely the two verses which Tim quotes in full give us two wonderful prayers with which to begin the New Year.

Jane Plows

Lord as this day begins
Lift up our hearts in praise;
take from us all our sins
guard us in all our ways:
our every step direct and guide
that Christ in all be glorified.

These are words by the Right Revd Timothy Dudley-Smith, one of our leading hymn writers, who died last summer aged 97. He was exceptionally prolific, penning some 450 compositions over more than 60 years. Our own hymn book at St Mark's, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, contains no fewer than 40 contributions from him.

So it seems at first a little puzzling that Bishop Dudley-Smith himself insisted he was unmusical. His great gift lay in what another hymn writer termed his "music of words, their patterns, rhythms, pairs and contrasts, worked over painstakingly until the precisely satisfying sequence and balance were found and settled on".

One phrase of his that struck me as I leafed through the hymn book was, "He who hung the stars in space, holds the spinning world in place". As for the music, this was left for others to compose or, very often, was linked to a well-known existing tune.

His work is noted for combining poetic skill and theological depth. From his earliest years he loved poetry, thanks to the influence of his schoolmaster father. But it was much later that he turned to religious verse, while on holiday in Cornwall. This was for his own use, but friends suggested that some might make good hymns. Family Cornish holidays spent on the beach near the Lizard Peninsula were a fruitful time for inspiration, while a card at Christmas, featuring a new composition each year, was eagerly anticipated.

Looking through our church hymn book, ones that immediately ring a bell are *Fill your hearts with joy and gladness*, *As water to the thirsty*, *Name of all majesty* and *Safe in the shadow*. And then, of

course, there are two of his most famous hymns, *Tell out my soul*, written in 1962, which John Betjeman called "one of the few modern hymns that will truly last", and *Lord for the Years*, another firm favourite often sung at national occasions, which was written for the centenary of the Scripture Union five years later while travelling on a train to London.

Bishop Dudley-Smith was born on Boxing Day 1926 and went from Tonbridge School to Pembroke College, Cambridge. He trained for the ministry here at Ridley Hall in the parish, later moving to work at the Cambridge University Mission in Bermondsey, south-east London. He became Archdeacon of Norwich, then Bishop of Thetford and spent his retirement in Salisbury, latterly returning to Cambridge to be near his family and attending St Andrew the Great church next to the Grand Arcade in the city centre.

Besides his huge collection of hymns, he wrote many short books on the Christian faith and a major two-part biography of John Stott, the hugely influential evangelical leader, a lifelong friend and Cambridge contemporary.

Typical of his modest manner and speech, he termed hymn writing, a "functional art", the very title he gave his final book, a study of hymn writing published when he was 90.

I find it easy to overlook the skill of a hymn writer, the gift that enables someone to encapsulate a thought in verse or to compose a tune, without which worship would be very different. Today a new generation of hymn writers and composers are carrying the baton, hopefully inspired by Bishop Dudley-Smith, who concludes Lord for the Years:

"Lord for ourselves; in living power remake usself on the cross and Christ upon the throne, past put behind us, for the future take us: Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone."

Tim Verney

Foodbank Dates

Please bring donations for the foodbank to church on Sunday 5th January.

Alternatively, on Thursday 8th January leave them at 19 Kings Road (Eleanor Scott) 9.00 am - 3.00 pm, and 1 Millington Road (Rosey Gardiner) 8.00 am - 6.00 pm.

(There is also a Tuesday morning collection point from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm at the Gough Way island with the postbox. In addition, there is a collection point at the Co-op).

St Mark's Church Mission Statement

To be the people of God in this place and to work to make God more real for our community.

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Regular Groups

Monday Bible Study

10:30am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

Tuesday and Thursday Home Groups

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, <u>aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk</u> or Mike Thompson, <u>michaelangelot99@gmail.com</u>

Prayer Meeting

11.00 am every Friday at 10 Stukeley Close – contact: Anne Howie, 01223 356140

Choir

The choir normally sings on the first three Sundays of the month at our 9:30 am service. Rehearsals are 6:00 pm - 7:15 pm on the first and third Fridays of the month and from 9:00 am on Sundays.

Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in January

Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

Sunday Services

5th January at **9.30 am** Communion (Joint Service with

Grantchester)

12th January at **9.30 am** Morning Worship with Junior Church

19th January at **9.30 am** Communion with Junior Church

(Joint Service with Grantchester)

26th January at **9.30 am** Communion with Junior Church

Regular Weekday Services

Monday - Friday at 9.00 am Morning Prayer

Tuesdays

Weekly Communion (BCP) at **11.00 am** followed by refreshments

Keen vegetable gardeners

Two allotments are available from January in our beautiful community allotment at the end of Fulbrooke Road.

Contact Joyce at joycecade@gmail.com

The February Issue of SEEK

All contributions are welcome. Please send them by Wednesday 15th January to Jane Plows at <u>janemp@virginmedia.com</u> (350120) or contact any member of the committee.

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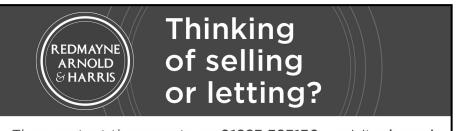
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