

TOGETHER

Winter 2025

December to February
Distributed free within the Benefice



THE BENEFICE OF
DEBENHAM & HELMINGHAM

Reflection by Rev'd Susan Taylor

As our year moves once more into the season of Advent, I marvel yet again at the idea of God in this world as a human being. God who made the whole universe, who filled our world with such wonder and beauty - that God - chose to be here with us in the same form that we inhabit. It seems such a mad idea. Babies are just so vulnerable, yet God became one. Not only tiny and dependent on care from those around him; but God became a baby in an occupied land, not as part of the occupying side—but among those oppressed by the Romans. Add to that God chose to be born not in power and splendour but in vulnerability and in poverty.

And although our Christmas carols might give us the impression that the world stopped its busy life and in hushed wonder focused on the tiny, unimportant village of Bethlehem—it did not. God became flesh not with a shout of triumph and news spread across the world, but with a messy birth and the cry of a baby; with a visit from a few smelly shepherds.

The story of Jesus' birth tells us that God loves us so much. God loves us enough to become vulnerable; enough to enter into our humanity amongst those who are considered unimportant in the power structures of our world. And through that story we learn that God chooses to whisper his words of love, of comfort and joy to us. In doing so, those words are heard only by those who want to hear. For God loves us so much that God gives us the choice to turn our eyes to the starlit beauty of the world and see God's hand at work; to turn our hearts to the poor and vulnerable and see God's love at work; to turn our heads to hear again the well-known story of Christmas and in that story we have the choice to find the truth of God's desire that we all live life in God's love; in God's peace and joy.

Life did not stop in awe and wonder on that day in Bethlehem, but strangely, these days Christmas Day, when we celebrate this wonder and this love, is about the only day when a lot of the world does stop. Perhaps that will give us just a moment when we can listen, and hear, the God that whispers to us of a love beyond our imagining.

Advent Group

There will be an advent group meeting in Dove Cottage on Wednesday evenings at 7pm starting on 26th November then 3 December, 10 December and 17 December, Entitled **Mapping Advent**, we will explore Advent's many rich themes with readings, poems, music, art and discussion in the group. Everyone is very welcome to all or any of the evening. For more information see <https://shop.dioceseofnorwich.org/collections/publications/products/mapping-advent> or use the QR code on your electronic gadget.

- 26th November Watching and waiting
- 3rd December Preparing a place
- 10th December The need for change
- 17th December Saying yes



Debenham and Helmingham Benefice Church Services December 2025

Sunday 7th December	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	family@church
Monday 8th December	4.30pm	Debenham	Christingle Service
Sunday 14th December	8.00am	Kenton	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Winston	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Framsden	Holy Communion
		Aspall	Carol Service
Monday 15th December	3.00pm	Pettaugh	Carol Service
	6.00pm	Helmingham	Carol Service
	7.30pm	Debenham	Carols with Salvation Army Band
Saturday 20th December	5.00pm	Framsden	Carol Service
Sunday 21st December	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Framsden	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Pettaugh	Holy Communion
Christmas Eve	5.00pm	Kenton	Carol Service
	5.00pm	Debenham	Crib Service
	6.30pm	Winston	Carol Service
Christmas Day	11.30pm	Debenham	Holy Communion
	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 28th December	10.30am	Kenton	Family Service
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Winston	Holy Communion
		Pettaugh	Morning Prayer

FRAMSDEN

Framsden Woodland Group

No Halloween event this year but we invite you to a Winter Solstice Celebration in

the woodland on Sunday 21st December at 3.30pm. A chance to connect with nature, recharge, reflect and look forward to the daylight increasing. Email: framsdenwoodlandgroup@gmail.com

HELMINGHAM

Harvest Festival combined with Holy Communion was conducted by Rev Susan Taylor. Members of the congregation brought donations of tinned food for distribution at the Parish Pantry or Eye Food bank.

Christmas Carol Service will be on Sunday 14th December at 6pm.

A **Quiz Night** is being planned on similar lines to previous years on Saturday 31st January or February 7th, the final dates had not been decided by the deadline date. As before teams of 6 and interval refreshments included in ticket price. Look out for details.

Helmingham Primary School & Nursery

A busy term has seen the children celebrating Harvest at St. Mary's Church, Framsdén. The increase of children now attending Helmingham Primary School was very evident as we filled more pews up! Super reading of our 'International' themed Harvest as we visited countries to see how they celebrated the harvest from Argentina through to Ghana. Our new song this year was Conkers, very apt as we made our way through



conkers galore down the church path. Children ended up with an encore of Conkers at the end of the afternoon. A lovely hamper of store cupboard food was collected and donated to FIND (Families in Need).

Our Topic this term being Paddington / London with KS2 Class travelling by coach to the Tower of London where they got first hand experience of the history of our capital city—compared to our rural location in Helmingham. Photos of our children with Paddington in different

places have been a great source of conversation last term.

Our Reception/Nursery class is growing as we welcome 2 year olds for morning sessions 8.30-11.30. Regardless of the weather it is outside that is most popular using the Mud Kitchen, building with blocks/planks, painting, transporting water etc. Each week we have a story based activity including The Hungry Caterpillar, Where the Wild Things Are & Owl Babies. Itchy Bear—saw the children counting/printing with apples and finishing the afternoon making apple crumbles to take home and share with their families.

KS1 have been putting their best foot forward as they have learnt to Line Dance by co-

Debenham and Helmingham Benefice Church Services January 2026

Sunday 4th January	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	family@church
Sunday 11th January	8.00am	Kenton	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Winston	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Framsden	Holy Communion
		Helmingham	Morning Prayer
Sunday 18th January	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Framsden	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Pettaugh	Holy Communion
		Kenton	Morning Prayer
Sunday 25th January	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Winston	Holy Communion
		Pettaugh	Morning Prayer

ordinating their steps and claps and mastering the grape vine! Alongside this they have learnt how to play the recorder.



Helmingham School & Nursery have hosted one of the first Parent/Carer “Coffee, Tea Catch ups” as part of the PINS (Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) Project. An environment for parents/carers to hear about the project but also talk about the positives and even better ifs ... about support around Neurodiversity. The next meeting will be 11th December (this time hosted at Henley School) 14.00 with the title Managing Big Feelings and Behaviours at home – a chance to look at Emotional Regulation, Strategies and supportive parenting approaches.

Christmas is now fast approaching and our whole school are attending the panto at The Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds.... Oh no you're not Oh yes

we are !!

On Wednesday after school on 10th December we are performing our version of the

Nativity with lots of singing and laughter. Straight afterwards we roll into our Christmas Fayre with stalls, games and refreshments. A brilliant time of staff and families mixing together.

At the end of half term we said Goodbye to staff members of our school. Mr. Hopkinson (our Forest School Lead) and Ms Carroll (TA Hedgehogs/Foxes). We will miss them but wish them well for the future.

Do come and visit us if you are looking for a Nursery place for your child (2 – 5 years) or ready to start/continue Primary School. We are a friendly, small and dynamic school looking to share our enthusiasm that ‘every child counts’.

Check out our website, facebook page (you can look over our school from the drone film taken) or ring our Office Manager on 01473 890267 or 01473 355452 or email office.helmingham@consortiumtrust.org.uk.

PETTAUGH

Well, October is nearly over and we seemed to have escaped without any serious storms. The beautiful autumnal colours have come early but a lot of the leaves were blown down too soon. The Suffolk blue skies and vibrant sunrises and sunsets have been a real treat.

The Annual Ride and Stride for Suffolk Historic Churches took place on 14th September and many took to their cycles, to ride to each of our seven Benefice Churches and beyond. Well done to all those who took part, and thank you to Ruth Crane for organising it again. We had at least eight visitors in St Catherine. The day had started beautifully but by the end the heavens poured and the last few riders were well and truly soaked!

The churchyard has looked really well this year and we must thank the Taylor family in particular Daniel, who has mowed throughout the hot summer as a volunteer towards his Duke of Edinburgh award. The meadow although wilder this year has been an absolute treat to walk through and the bees, butterflies and insects must have enjoyed all the extra wild flowers.

The Harvest Service was held on 26th September and the church was beautifully decorated. Food donations were collected at the service and taken to St Mary's Debenham to be added to the collection being made there. All the donations were then taken to the Waveney Food Bank for distribution to those needing help in these difficult times.

On the 14th October the ashes of Harold Forsdike, whose family came from Pettaugh, were placed in the family grave in the churchyard. Also the Ashes of Angela Underhill, a former resident of the Rectory, are to be interred with those of her husband Cdr John Underhill OBE in the remembrance garden on 15th November.

Some of our residents in the village have been unwell of late, and we wish them all a comfortable and speedy recovery. Many cases of Covid are still lurking and some nasty viruses and chest infections so please take care.

The year 2025 will be remembered for continued struggles in divided countries. We can



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only hope and pray that peace will be found in 2026. More locally, the success of Ipswich Town F.C. in reaching the Premier League came to an end but they managed to win the Derby against Norwich after 16 years. Hopefully they will have a good season.

Dates for St Catherine's Church diary:-

Sunday 9th November - Service of Remembrance at 9.30am.

Sunday 14th December - Carol Service 3.00pm

Christmas Day - Holy Communion at St Mary's Debenham at 9.30am.

All are most welcome to these events.

WINSTON

The Annual Ride and Stride for Suffolk Historic Churches Trust took place on Saturday 13th September. Unfortunately we had none take part for Winston but we had nine visitors to the church.

The Pet Service on Sunday 21st September was great fun. We had 14 dogs, Bonny the Pony and Atlas the Tortoise. Thank you to all the owners who brought their pets to the service and stayed for refreshments in the schoolroom after the service.

We wish Julie, Carl and family every happiness in their new home in Barham following their move from Debenham Road, Winston Green.

Also, a belated warm welcome to the family in Rogers Farm Cottage, now called Manor Farm. We hope they will be happy in our village.

The Evening Prayer service should resume in April after the winter break.

The Carol Service takes place on Christmas Eve, 6.30pm in the church. Any readers or musicians willing to take part please contact Veda on 01728 861363. The Carol Service collection goes to E.A.C.H.

Please note, no service on Christmas Day.

The Annual Winston Quiz usually takes place in the Spring. More details in the next magazine.

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2026. *Sandra*

DEBENHAM

Soup Lunch

There is a New Soup Lunch starting in Dove Cottage (12-2pm) on **November 8th, 13 December, 10 January and 14 February** - everyone from across the Benefice is welcome for a lovely soup, roll and pudding at just £8. Proceeds to Debenham Church.

Christmas Market

Saturday 6th December, 1-4pm at St Mary Magdalene church and Dove Cottage. Free entry. FREE visit to Father Christmas (1.30-3.30pm, up to age 11)

Refreshments * Gifts * Grand Draw * Craft Stalls * Bottle Tombola * Chocolate

Debenham and Helmingham Benefice Church Services

February 2026

Sunday 1st February	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	family@church
Sunday 8th February	8.00am	Kenton	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Winston	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Helmingham	Holy Communion
	Framsden	Morning Prayer	
Sunday 15th February	8.00am	Aspall	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
		Framsden	Morning Prayer
	11.00am	Pettaugh	Holy Communion
	Kenton	Morning Prayer	
Sunday 22nd February	9.30am	Debenham	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Winston	Holy Communion
		Pettaugh	Morning Prayer

Tombola * Jigsaw Puzzles * Bric-a-Brac * Games * Books * Raffles * Cakes

Parish Pantry

Every Wednesday morning, 10am to 11am in the church. Collect a bag of groceries for £3.50.

Parish Café

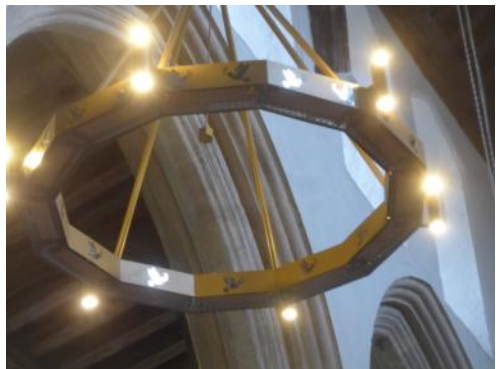
Every Wednesday, 10am to 11.30am in Dove Cottage. Hot drinks, cake and chat, for a donation only.

Family@church

A family friendly service for the young and not so young. On the first Sunday of each month, 9.30am breakfast, 10am service.

New Heating System!

The new infrared heating system in St Mary Magdalene church is now operational! Richard Blackwell and Peter Holme had visited Aynho church in Northamptonshire in May 2024 and were impressed by their



system. However, following leaks in the ancient heating pipes under the floor in March this year, we were forced to abandon the old heating system (new boilers were installed about seven years ago) and raise money quickly for a completely different heating system using infrared heaters. Debenham's heaters are supplied by Herschel Infrared Ltd (see www.herschel-infrared.co.uk/heritage) and each Halo heater provides up to 7.6kW of heating and lighting (45kW total). There are also three 2kW heaters in the chancel (for organist, clergy etc) and three more 2kW heaters in each side aisle, for use when congregations are large (18kW total). The Halo heaters can be controlled by WiFi using a phone app or an iPad (to be supplied). More powerful heaters could not be installed because of the limitations of the electric supply, and upgrading would have been extremely expensive.

You will notice that the colour of the heaters matches the stone pillars, and they look quite traditional. Also they were customised with the Benefice's dove logo. You can see more photos (in colour) in November's Debenham Parish Magazine.

How well does it work? The new system is being switched on 20 minutes before services, whereas the oil fired system had to be run for 16 hours beforehand and was still not very effective. There have been many favourable comments on the new system. Running on electricity, there is a considerable reduction in the church's carbon footprint because fossil fuel (oil) is no longer used. Is it cheaper to operate? Time will tell, but we hope so because heating is more instant and more localised, concentrated on the congregation rather than the building structure.

The whole process took seven months from applying for a faculty (permission to proceed) to final installation. The total cost was £76,000 (plus VAT, which will be reclaimed) including scaffolding and electrical work. We are grateful for all who have contributed, including Debenham Parish Council (£15k), Mid Suffolk District Council (£30k), Suffolk Historic Churches Trust (£6k), Alfred Williams Trust (£2,500) and £24,000 from local contributions.

What's next? Solar panels on the south aisle roof—but first the roof needs repairs, and that is going to cost a lot of money. Start saving now!

The Corner Café

Open every Thursday from 4-6pm (ages 11-17). Venue: Dove Cottage, Debenham
Serving a range of different drinks including coffees, iced coffees, bubble tea.
Different flavours of muffins, doughnuts and other snacks available at affordable prices. A cosy chill place to hang out with your mates or even to just relax alone.
Wifi available. Now with air hockey table!

Debenham United Reformed Church

Tuesdays Drop in coffee morning anytime between 10:00 -11:30.

Sunday Services at 10.45am.

Cakes and Choruses on the last Sunday of the month at 3pm.

Friends and Neighbours 2pm-4pm monthly on Thursdays.

For services see www.urcstowmarketandvillages.com

Our Fund Raising Day in October raised a total of £1,100 and donations to date of £9,000! A really big thank you to all who helped and supported our annual event.

Waveney Foodbank

A collection box for Waveney Foodbank is in the church porch. Debenham Co-op also has a box for collections (Stowmarket Foodbank), as does the Forge Community Church.

Meet up Mondays

10am-2pm in Dove Cottage. Lots of activities including jigsaw puzzle exchange, refreshments, games, crafts and books. Dogs welcome.

Debenham Library

Our Advent Window will return in December. Look out for it in the dark evenings!

Greetings Cards and Christmas Cards are for sale in the library at £2.50 each, in aid of Debenham Library. Stock up while they last! Cash only.

Books, DVDs, WiFi, Computers, Printing/photocopying/scanning, A4 Laminating, CDs, audiobooks, downloadable music/audiobooks/eBooks, free reservations, drinks for sale. The room is available for hire outside opening hours.

Tuesday 0930 am – 1300 pm Wednesday 1500 – 1930 pm

Saturday 0900 am – 1300 pm Sunday 1200 – 1600 pm

Tel: 01728 861940 Email: debenham.library@suffolklibraries.co.uk

www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/libraries/debenham-library

Facebook: @DebenhamLibraryandFriends

Suffolk Libraries: Mobile Library Routes (every 4 weeks)

Aspall Church, Thursdays 1145-1210

Framsden Village Hall, Thursdays 1400-1415

Pettaugh, Old Bull, Fridays 1535-1555

See www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/visit/mobile-libraries for more information.

Debenham Shed

We have various items of furniture and other goods for sale which have been donated.

To see the full list, go to www.debenhamshed.org.uk and click on “For Sale” at the top, or on the menu if you’re using a smartphone. Here are a few of them:

- Small chest of drawers, Georgian Style
- Large display cabinet with glass front
- Spear and Jackson garden sprayer 5 litre, pump action 5LPAPS
- Enamelling kiln Horst Uhlig - Type U5 900W
- Corded planer, Hitachi 82mm. Model P20SA
- Hedge Trimmers
- Drop leaf table - dark wood
- Mirrors
- Bosch drill and stand

- Record player
- Metal garden furniture

The prices are very reasonable—you can make us an offer.

What is Debenham Shed? A place to make things by yourself, with guidance or with others. It could be in metal, cloth, wood or plastic. We have lots of tools and sourcing materials. You may want to repair or make new—the limit is your imagination. It is also for social connecting and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and of course a lot of laughter. Debenham shed is open to all.

Debenham Shed is at 2 Fields Farm, Low Road (IP14 6BJ). We are open on Monday mornings 9am-12pm, Fridays 10am-5pm and normally the second Saturday morning of each month. Membership by the year, half-year or PAYG. Chairman: Rob Davies 07952 556152 Treasurer: Tony Hutt 07906 614328. Visit our website at www.debenhamshed.org.uk (sign up to newsletters on the Contact page) Email info@debenhamshed.org.uk. Like our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/DebenhamShed. Registered Charity 1212367.

Debenham Green Team

On the first Saturday of each month, outside The Lion from 9am-11am, we collect Tetrapak cartons, plastic flower pots and contact lens packaging, as well as the items below. We have containers for dental products and corks at the back of the church. Also old candles for recycling. River sampling takes place monthly.

Join the mailing list at debenhamgreenteam@gmail.com or look at the website <https://www.debenhamgreenteam.co.uk>. See the events coming up at www.facebook.com/DebenhamGreenTeam.

Debenham History Society

See <https://thedenhamarchive.net> for the current series of programmes, as well as an extensive archive of information, photographs, publications, etc and to join their mailing list. Publications now archived include Debenham Parish Magazine, a Debenham Village Guide of 2002 and this magazine.

Editor's notes

The Copy deadline for the next *Together* magazine (March to May) is **25 January**, and is normally published about two or three weeks later. Quarterly, A5 format. 700 copies are printed and collated on Rizograph stencil copier, distributed free by members of Winston church. Send copy to the editor by email, email attachment (Word or MS Publisher formats preferably); Adobe PDF format may be suitable. Photographs do not reproduce well but graphics are usually OK. If you can't do any of these send the copy in the post.

Editor: Tony Hutt, Email: tony@tonyhutt.co.uk Tel (01728) 860173. 19 Priory Lane, Debenham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 6QD.

Advertising payments to Kate Branch, The Red House, Winston, Stowmarket IP14 6LG Tel (01728) 861004 Email: cmcbranch@btinternet.com (payable to Winston

PCC). 1/8 page for £20 p.a. (4 issues); ¼ page for £40 p.a.; ½ page for £80 p.a. Send advertising enquiries and advertising copy to Tony Hutt.

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Email wattsdebenham@aol.com

Winston School Room

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details.

The Corner Cafe

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www.debenham.onesuffolk.net

Framsden PC

www.framsden.onesuffolk.net

Framsden village

www.framsden.org.uk

Winston website and PC

www.winston.onesuffolk.net/parish-council

Pettaugh website and PC

www.pettaugh.suffolk.cloud

Framsden Baptist Church

www.framsdenbaptistchurch.org

Forge Church (Debenham)

www.forgechurch.com

Debenham United Reformed Church

www.urcstowmarketandvillages.com



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Brufords of Debenham	14	The Debenham Lion	18
Chimney Sweep, Andrew Baynes	18	Traditional Oak Carpentry	17
Coast & Valley Tree & Garden Care	13	Westminster Blinds	7
Farthing Funeral Service (Pecks)	16		
Framsden Greyhound	14	<i>Together</i> magazine carries advertise-	
Green Car Taxis	18	ments as a service to advertisers who	
Hair by Lauren Fox	15	wish to promote their services or prod-	
Henry Abbott hardware, housewares	18	ucts to readers. This does not imply that	
Home Help, Natasha Barnes	15	the publishers of the <i>Together</i> magazine	
Limes Garage	18	endorse or provide any guarantee as to	
LJ Home and Garden Maintenance	15	the quality of the services or products	
Mark Jardine, Plumber	19	advertised. It is the responsibility of the	
Miranda Millar, Curtains/Furnishings	16	customer to make the necessary enquir-	
Park Farm Meadow, dog walking	13	ies of any advertiser. For advertising	
		rates see page 12.	

WHO'S WHO IN THE BENEFICE

Rector Revd. Susan Taylor 07990 959593 revsusantaylor@icloud.com
(Please note, my usual day off is a Friday and every third Saturday of the month.)

Chaplain Debenham High School and Associate Priest

Rev Keith Rengert 07990 959593 revdkeith@gmail.com

Ministry Team

Mrs Veda Berriman 01728 861363 veda.berriman@btinternet.com

Mr Mark Trevitt 01473 890568 mail@wheelertrevitt.co.uk

Note: Ministry Team phone number: **07990 959593**.

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/debenham

Facebook: @debenhamandhelmingham Instagram: debenham_helmingham_benefice

Churchwardens

Debenham, St Mary Magdalene

Mrs Sheila Blackwell 01728 861815 sheila.blackwell@icloud.com

Mrs Betty Connors 01728 860513 bettyconnors@outlook.com

Helmingham, St Mary

Mr Mark Trevitt 01473 890568 mail@wheelertrevitt.co.uk

Melvyn Blower 07368 296509 melvynblower@gmail.com

Aspall, St Mary of Grace

Mr Andrew Ward 01728 860343

Framsden, St Mary

Mrs Christine Schofield 01728 684076 ctschofield@outlook.com

Kenton, All Saints

Mr Vic Woodgate 01728 861118 vicwoodgate@winterbrook.co.uk

Pettaugh, St Catherine

Mrs Sheila Janson 01473 890883 s.janson@btinternet.com

Winston, St Andrew

Mr Brian Branch 01728 861004 cmcbranch@btinternet.com

Winston Schoolroom

To hire, contact Kate Branch on 861004, The Red House, Winston IP14 6LG or email cmcbranch@btinternet.com.

Dove Cottage

Contact: Ray Watts, 70 High Street, Debenham IP14 6QP Tel 01728 860255