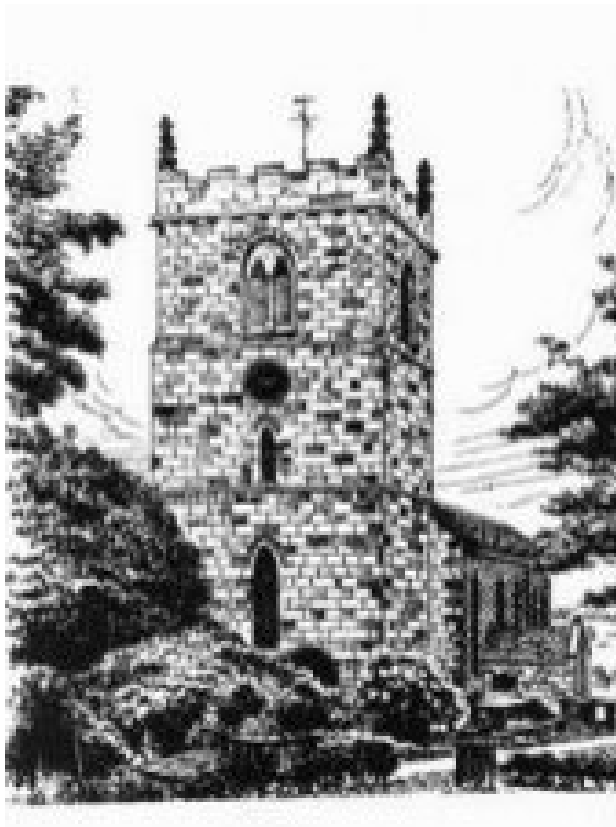


Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

June 2021



Worship Online at:
Facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk

www.stmarywoodkirk.org

Who's who at Woodkirk

Vicar of St Mary's: **Reverend Sharon Wilkinson.**
Woodkirk Vicarage, 1168 Dewsbury Road,
Dewsbury, WF12. 7JL
01924 472375/07539466724
E-mail: vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org

Reader: Dawn Tattersfield 0113 2525963

Lay Pastoral Minister Gail Townsend 0113 2528710

Churchwardens: Gary Mortimer 01924 405790
Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

Assistant Churchwardens: David Townsend, Pernoe Liburd

Deanery Synod Reps Brian Gledhill
Gary Mortimer

Verger: Gail Townsend 0113 252 8710

Organist: TBC

PCC Secretary: Dawn Tattersfield

PCC Treasurer Barbara Tate

Social Chairman: Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

Parish Centre Hire: Sally Shaw 01924 475048

Child Protection Officer: Dawn Tattersfield 0113 2525963

Health & Safety Officer: Brian Gledhill 01924 405790
Dawn Tattersfield 0113 2525963

Electoral Roll Officer: Dave Townsend 0113 2528710

**Data Protection
and Legacy Officer** Neal Pinder-Packard 0113 252 4001

Magazine Editor & David Townsend 0113 2528710

Weekly News Sheet:. Email: Dave@stmarywoodkirk.org
Magazine Articles by the 20th of the month.
Contributions for the Weekly News Sheet
by Thursday evening please.

Elected Members of the Parochial Church Council:

Gary Mortimer, Neal Pinder-Packard, Dawn Tattersfield, Laura Mortimer,
Barbara Tate, Gail Townsend, Sandra Gledhill, Pernoe Liburd, David Townsend.

If you enjoy the magazine— a donation of 60p really helps to keep it going!

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Welcome!

Enjoy reading this Parish magazine and, if you wish to know more about Church Groups, please get in touch with the Movers and Shakers - their names are on the inside front & inside back covers. Service times are on the back page. You'd be most welcome to join us. May God bless you and all whom you love.

Parish News by Post

This magazine can be delivered monthly by sending a minimum donation of £12 a year to cover magazine costs including post and packaging to: Margaret Longden, 64 Woodkirk Gardens, Dewsbury WF12 7JA. Call Margaret on 01924 473064. It's a brilliant gift for friends or family living near or far. Cheque's to Woodkirk PCC please.

Web site & Twitter

Further news and pictures of what is happening at St Mary's can be found on our web site located at: www.stmarywoodkirk.org

Copies of the magazine can be downloaded from the web site from the middle of the month of publication.

We are on Twitter: twitter.com/stmarywoodkirk

Wheelchair Access

A wheelchair is available to help people move easily between the

Let your **hopes**, not your hurts,
shape your future.

Vicar's Report for APCM May 2021

This report relates to the period January 2020 to December 2020, a period of time that has certainly challenged not just St Mary's Church but the whole Parish and beyond.

We started that Financial year with such positivity. The Parish Hall had just been refurbished thanks to a £2,500 grant from a local masonic group and £5,500 which came from our own funding. We had paid 70% of our Parish Share which we had gradually increased each year from 40% to 62% to 70% – in the current account we held just over £5,000 which we fully expected to gradually increase over the year back to its average amount of £10,500.

The Parish Hall had increased its bookings and over the previous year we had held several big missional church events for the local community.

As the year started we began hearing of the Covid 19 virus and it was first detected in the UK in late Jan 2020 and by mid February/early March it became a notifiable disease. On 23rd March the first National Lockdown began and church life as we knew it changed. St Mary's Church and the Parish Hall closed with no congregation and no vicar allowed in the building. With the closure of the Parish Hall we also lost our income from the Parish Hall which in the previous year went from running at a loss to making a profit of around £7,000.

There began a period of a huge learning curve, Easter was very early and I began to stream services using a mobile phone from the Vicarage. There were lots of challenges and for me and the PCC, as more and more people contracted COVID 19 and people lost loved ones, the question became where do we focus our energies when the church building is closed. How can we bring comfort and hope to those who need it and also to those who don't know they need it. How do we care not only for our congregation but our community?

It was decided that we would stream a service everyday apart from Saturday and so it began. In our notice sheet we included directions on how to join a live streamed service on our facebook page and we encouraged our older members to seek help with younger members of their families so that they would be able to

join those services.

For me this is definitely missional moving forwards as although we have some members of our congregation who do not use technology, for the future most of our older members moving forwards will be competent in using IT and therefore as and when people's health doesn't allow them to come to church, they will still be able to attend on line and will remain connected over a greater period of time.

Alongside this pastorally Gail telephoned everyone every two weeks and I delivered a Notice Sheet to those that didn't have internet access whilst emailing a Notice Sheet to all those who wanted one and everyone was aware that if they had needs then we would be available to help etc. We also became part of a local community group, Tingley, Ardsley and Thorpe Viral Kindness offering a listening ear to those who were struggling.

Once Vicars were allowed back in Church – another new learning curve began – yes I could stream with my phone but how could I link all the music, organ and pictures together and make them work for people in church and for people at home. The diocese released some advice about streaming and so I ordered £366.00 worth of video and audio capture cards, leads and cables not having a clue how to use them but by trial and error and with much thanks to my eldest boy Thomas we managed to stream live to facebook via a computer using a program called Obs. The biggest challenge was having to drag 60ft cables from the Vicarage to the Church to be able to use wi-fi from the Vicarage. We continue to have our challenges but for the majority of services it has worked well.

All of this made a huge demand on my time and IT knowledge – everything took so long initially. Another thing that was a challenge for me at least was how to make Easter and Christmas meaningful under very difficult circumstances led to a major creative rethink of how to achieve those particular services.

Throughout 2020 we were unable to hold any social events including the Family Fun Day, Church Open day, and Christmas fair/Christmas Tree Festival. These events have always drawn in the Community and for someone whose whole ministry is

based on hospitality, and engaging with people church became a very lonely place and it was never more apparent than when the last APCM was held in November.

There have been very few baptisms and no weddings at all this year due to the pandemic.

Now that was a very personal account but of course the PCC has met every month faithfully by Zoom – please see the PCC Secretary's report – as they have worked tirelessly in very difficult circumstances to ensure that all the Government's regulations, the Church of England regulations and the Leeds Diocese regulations were met. Social Distancing, masks and sanitising equipment had to be bought – an expense we couldn't really afford but approximately £1,000 was spent on kitting out the Church and the Parish Hall but as the pandemic continued throughout the whole of the year – this money not only proved a good investment in the equipment but it sat alongside the PCC's overriding concern for the wellbeing of all concerned.

Thank you to all of you for the time spent ensuring that St Mary's always has the community and mission at the forefront of all we do.

Thank you to our two church Wardens, Neal and Gary, who ably support my work and a big thank you to Neal who will be stepping down this year from being a Warden as he has now served six years in office.

In their roles of Pastoral Assistant and Reader, Gail and Dawn, have continued to come into their own this year, stepping up to learn new technology in order that they could lead worship services. Gail has particularly taken up responsibility for Pastoral Care and Dawn stepping up to lead crucial services and cover services/meetings that I could not. Both of them have multiple roles and devote a lot of time to serving St Mary's and supporting all of us so thank you to them.

A very difficult role this year has been the Treasurer's. Barbara has confidently and competently carried out this role, communicating and both myself and the PCC and advising accordingly as Finances have allowed – please see her report for further details. Thank you Barbara for all that you do. As you

know I am not aware of nor should I be aware of how much people's giving is but I do get reports from Barbara of a general nature and I would like to say thank you to everyone who has kept up their giving during this time.

Another aspect of church life that has grown is cleaning, church and parish hall have had to be cleaned extra and at a deeper level on a more frequent basis. Gillian Thorpe is our cleaner and my thanks go to her but there have also been a rota of people to clean in between services or lets – thank you to them. Elaine and Duncan Jamieson have taken on the responsibility for cleaning the church and my thanks goes to them.

All soft furnishings, kneelers and children's corner have been removed from church in order to comply with current guidelines and all COVID guidelines has been followed and both buildings have up to date risk assessments.

With regards to the Parish Hall – all groups initially stopped their activities in the Parish Hall but when the finer details emerged and guidelines changed then St Mary's Playgroup continued to operate, however, the others will not be able to recommence for the foreseeable future.

With regard to our Parish Share we only managed to pay 38% this year – we continued to strive to pay as much as we could.

It hasn't been easy to combine those worshipping at home and those who worship on-line, however, there was a concerted effort to recognise that the church is the people and we are worshipping together as God's family, one congregation. I have met some wonderful new people on line who have for the first time dared to attend a church service and find out more about Jesus which is wonderful and those who attend regularly who were once new but are now regulars contribute to the church by donating both time and money.

It was the PCC's plan to get a quote for the East Window as it is in great and urgent need for repair. We were awarded a grant of £350.00 from Church Care to go towards a report which was ordered but will not be done until the weather improves next year, however, I set myself a challenge to kick off the East Window Fund and in September, I walked for 30 days, 21,000 steps per day, over 9.5 miles per day making a grand total of 285 miles. I cannot believe how generous people were in sponsoring or making a donation and we raised a massive £4,500.00. I was excited when it got to £800.00.

Lastly, this has been a difficult year for the gardening team to maintain the churchyard. For the longest time, there was no clear guidelines and so all activity was stopped and certainly it was not possible to have the Community Payback Team – we were fortunate that they came for a little time toward the end of the growing season and we just about regained control before unfortunately guideline meant they were unable to attend. Dave Townsend and Brian Mazurke have contributed so much to the Gardening Team and without them we simply wouldn't be able to keep up with the work. Thank you again for the generosity of those who give to the Gardening Fund so that we can continue to pay for petrol, strimming wire etc and replace machinery when needed too.

Dave is also the Editor of the Magazine and I have to say thank you to him and those who contribute in any way. I have seen a lot of church magazines and I have to say the standard of the one produced here is very high. Dave has also printed off the magazines this year so that at various points in the year when the guidelines allowed they could be delivered. When the magazine has not been delivered then it has been placed on our website.

At Christmas time, Dave also built a stable containing the Nativity scene, outside of church as a way of being missional. We also placed two Christmas trees to the entrance of the church and invited the local community to hang a bauble in memory of their

loved ones. Both of these ideas proved to be very successful and received a lot of positive comments

My final point would be that ultimately material things don't matter, it is who we love, how we treat others, and our relationship with God that is important. Many people lost loved ones in the most cruel of circumstances. They were not able to be present at their deaths or their funerals and it was heart breaking to see and to take funerals in such circumstances. We as a church have maintained a closeness, our faith has been challenged but we have continued to worship albeit in a new way and we have done our very best to reach out into our community. We have also done our best to protect those who are most at risk and vulnerable amongst us.

Thank you for all your support and as someone who very much believes in God's providence we will come through this pruned but stronger at some point in the near future.

Sharon

CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT APCM 2021

This is going to be an extremely short report for this particular year. With the restriction it has not been possible to conduct much in the way of improvement to the fabric of the church. Due to investment made in prior year the Church was able to remain well maintained throughout.

The year has allowed to plan and what assess what our priorities might be going forward.

The East Window has been a cause of concern for many years and we are exploring and obtaining reports in order that we can undertake restoration over the coming year.

The Churchyard work does not stop because of the pandemic and we are extremely grateful to the help we receive from the Community Payback team. Without this help we would not keep on top of the work that is required and we thank them very much.

During this time we have also to thank those that managed to lend a hand to keep everything in order, most of which goes

without any recognition.

We are keen to have an active and progressive future and we look forward to enhancing what we can give the community.

This is the final report by Neal since he steps down as Church Warden after many years and we all thank him greatly for his efforts, especially given a young family and demanding job – many thanks.

Gary Mortimer
Neal Pinder-Packard

Deanery Synod Report for Armley Deanery 2020

The plan at the start of 2020 was to have two Armley deanery only meetings (in January and July), and two Joint Leeds Deanery Synod meetings at St George's Leeds in March and October.

In January Armley Synod met at Ven Bede, Wyther, to discuss the new diocesan strategy, how we could use it as a resource, and how it might work alongside what we are already doing in our parishes. The evening was presented by Revd Sharon Wilkinson, and her questions stimulated a helpful discussion and greater understanding of the issues.

The Joint Synod in March had a focus on lay training, with a presentation by Revd Angela Hannafin on the range of courses now available. See <https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/> A number of participants shared their experience of using the Discovery course, and synod members discussed in groups what training they had appreciated in the past, and would value for the future.

The planned Armley deanery meeting for July was cancelled because of the pandemic situation.

The subject in October (a Joint Synod on Zoom) was health and wellbeing, with an interesting perspective from Revd Dr Gillian Straine (Guild of St Raphael) on what the healing ministry is, that it is about having a full, right relationship with God, not just

physical healing, and she explained that it can involve sacramental ministry, pastoral care, and dying well. The meeting also heard from Revd Canon Ben Rhodes, head of chaplaincy, Leeds teaching hospitals, about the role of chaplains and the impact of COVID in Leeds.

We are thankful for the work of Revd Lindsey Pearson (Area Dean), David Jorysz (Armley Deanery Lay Chair), and Jo Sarker for her administrative work on our behalf.

Revd Sue McWhinney (Armley Deanery Secretary).

The impact of the covid-19 pandemic on pastoral care

This past year had been exceedingly difficult and challenging for pastoral care, so we have had to find ways of keeping our pastoral care links going.

At the beginning we were able to visit but only on doorsteps at a safe distance but then that had to stop due to new regulation, so it was decided we would result to regular contact with our congregation with phone calls every 2 weeks and weekly news sheets.

It has been disappointing that we have not been able to meet face to face, but it is such a pleasure to be able to have our phone conversations and keep in touch that way, and with our regular online services. thank goodness for technology,

Hoping for better times ahead

God bless

Gail

PCC Secretary's Annual Report 2021

PCC Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the month. Due to the Covid Pandemic a meeting was not held in April 2020 but since then, monthly meetings have been held via Zoom an online video platform up to and including March 2021. The meetings always begin with prayer.

The impact of Covid restrictions limited much that we would normally deal with in a year, however, essential business continued with Financial Matters, Health and Safety and Safeguarding being discussed every month and other matters as they arose. The PCC continued to keep their knowledge up to date and ensured all necessary legal requirements were met in both Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) delayed because of Covid restrictions, was held online, live streamed via Facebook on the 22nd November 2020.

The key aspects covered by the PCC during 2020/21 were;

Worship

Services moved to online only with Rev Sharon on a steep learning curve on how to live stream services.

She discovered hidden talents in IT and streaming skills, sterlingly advised and supported by Tom Wilkinson, to whom we give sincere thanks. Services were live streamed throughout the periods of building closure, with much work going into service preparation including organising music, with grateful thanks to our Organist Jason. Also, service sheets were delivered to those who did not have IT access and a weekly newssheet was also distributed/emailed keeping church family upto date with developments.

Rev Sharon and the PCC have continued to work hard to provide our local and online community with a strong spiritual presence. Much creative thinking was done by Rev Sharon to ensure needs were met with online streamed Advent and Lent groups as well as a mix of streamed and live services during Advent and over Christmas. All were pleased with the positive response to the 'Prayer Bauble' Christmas Trees, and much positive feedback being received in relation to the 'Stable' , many thanks to Dave Townsend for its construction, which has proved a wonderful missional opportunity housing the nativity scene and recently an Easter garden.

Matters Arising

Whilst most PCC business related to the key elements of finance and pastoral support, ongoing work/discussion took place on fabric issues too, particularly the East Window and the flat roof of the Parish Centre with grants being applied for and reports being obtained.

Financial Matters

The lack of social events meant that finances were lower than they would have been. A number of sponsored events raised much needed sums as well as the congregation continuing to send collection/donations for the upkeep of the church. Treasurer Barbara Tate continued to monitor finances and recommend action. Whilst not covering our Parish Share we were at least able to send regular sums to the Diocese towards this.

Health and Safety

The pandemic caused much work with the production of a specific Covid Risk Assessment which developed and grew as knowledge and Government guidance changed. Rev Sharon and the PCC worked hard to ensure the most up to

date risk assessment was always adhered to, adopted and auctioned.

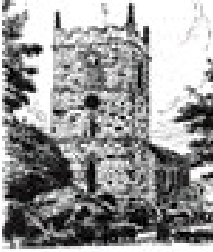
Safeguarding

The PCC continued to keep their training and knowledge up to date in this key area and ensure all necessary legal requirements continue to be met.

Whilst the world and our community are a much different place than in 2019, much progress has been made since the spring of 2020. Whilst we have not yet been able to return to our more traditional activities and sharing fellowship we continue to share the love of God wherever we can, including ministering to new members who are joining us online and we thank God for His continued blessings to the worshipping community of St Mary's Woodkirk and the community we serve.

Dawn Tattersfield PCC Secretary

Memorial Wall Hanging



Hi there, just a reminder about our Memorial Wall Hanging.

We are remembering those in our community we have lost during the pandemic lockdowns with a memorial wallhanging.

If you lost a friend or family member between 23rd March 2020 and 23rd March 2021 (due to any reason not only Covid) you can have a leaf added to our fabric memorial tree.

You can sew your own or we have a small team who would be happy to sew one for you.



All leaves must be returned by 23rd June 2021 in order that the wall hanging can be assembled for dedication and display.

This image is used for illustrative purposes only.

For further details and the template, please see our website

www.stmarywoodkirk.org or contact Dawn Tattersfield directly;

Email - dawn@stmarywoodkirk.org

Or Telephone 07840 739239)

(Once completed your leaf can be brought to church, dropped off at the Vicarage or it may be possible to arrange to collect it).

Christian Aid – Sponsored Walk

Dawn has now completed her five mile walk in aid of the Christian Aid Appeal which is focussing on Climate Change this year.



A sum of around £400.00 has been raised for the work of Christian Aid which is a magnificent effort by all concerned. Thank you so much for your support



If you would like to sponsor Dawn, or make a donation to Christian Aid you can do so via the church bank account details are given below:-

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(24hrs)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247
(24hrs free)

Mind
0300 123 3393
(Mon-Fri 9-6)

Victim Support
0808 168 9111
(24hrs)

Cruse Bereavement
0800 808 1677
(Mon-Fri 9-5)

ChildLine
0800 1111
(24hrs)

Action on Elder Abuse
0808 808 8141
(Mon-Fri 9-5)

Respect - Men's Advice Line
0808 801 0327
(Mon-Fri 9-5 or 8pm)

Samaritans
116 123
(24hrs free)

National Centre for Domestic Violence
0207 186 8270

Pastoral Care

Telephone Calls—We understand times have been difficult—please know we are here if you need anything. Gail Townsend is our Pastoral Minister and she regularly telephones those who are unable to leave their homes at this time. If you would like Gail to give you a weekly call then please do not hesitate to contact her on 0113 252 8710.

Baptisms—We are still able to arrange Baptisms but with a limited number of people attending depending on tier levels—if you wish to make an enquiry or book a Baptism please contact Barbara Tate on 0113 253 1266.

Weddings, funerals, Ashes, or the reading of banns—in the first instance please contact our Verger who co-ordinates these events. Again there are limitations on numbers depending on tier levels. Our Co-ordinator is Gail Townsend on 0113 252 8710 or email: gail@stmarywoodkirk.org.

Notice Sheets—If you would like to receive a copy of our weekly Notice Sheet via email—then please drop me an email giving me permission to add you to the list.

We are GDPR compliant-vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org.

“In God’s Plan”

What was God’s plan for building a church that would be indestructible, because at its foundation it has Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. There is a prophecy in the book of Daniel that I would like to start with that takes the form of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. In Daniel 2, we have the record of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the gigantic image, depicting the four world empires that would dominate Israel down through the centuries (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome). Daniel was called on to interpret the King’s dream. When he came to the fourth, final kingdom, Daniel spoke these startling words:

As you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. The whole statue was crushed into small pieces of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. Then the wind blew them away without a trace, like chaff on a threshing floor. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth. – Daniel 2:34-35

This Rock that crushed all world empires is none other than Jesus Christ! And it is upon this Rock, Jesus Christ, that God’s plan for an indestructible church finds its foundation. Today we build our church upon the foundation of Jesus Christ – because He is the only foundation that can withstand whatever the world throws at us. If we rely on philosophy, political systems, or tradition, we will surely fail – but if we rely on Jesus Christ, the “rock that knocked the statue down” and “became a great mountain” then we can succeed.

When we come to the New Testament, we find an interesting encounter with Jesus and His disciples that I think will make all of this much clearer:

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other

prophets.” Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.” –
Matthew 16:13-19

God promised that every member of his church will be a transformed individual. He or she is to be a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus explained this to His disciples as He was with them at Caesarea Philippi. Our Lord knew that His days in the flesh were numbered, and He knew that some would not understand Him. Was there anyone who recognised Him and who would carry on His work after He ascended into heaven? That was the crucial problem – it involved the very survival of the Christian faith.

Jesus stood at the center of Syrian, Greek, and Roman worship. There, of all places Jesus asked two questions: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" and "Who do you say I am?" Peter clearly stated the deepest conviction of his soul, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." What a statement!

Messiah means "the anointed one" and refers to the work Jesus came to do as messianic deliverer. "Son of the living God" has reference to the deity of Jesus – He is God incarnate. Simon Peter said two glorious things about Jesus:

- 1) As to His work, he said Jesus is the anointed Messiah;
- 2) As to His person, Peter said that Jesus is God come in the flesh.

Even so today, that church is indestructible where members have confessed their belief in Jesus Christ as the Messiah who is God. This is the essential work of the church.

The single most important prerequisite for being a member of the New Testament church is the new birth. The indestructible church has a regenerated church membership through faith in Jesus Christ. And when we say we are committed to Christ and His church our commitment is made to the One we know to be God in the flesh – the One who can save our souls.

Rembrandt could take a piece of canvas, dab his paints on it, and create a beautiful painting – we call that art. Shakespeare could write a sonnet or play on a sheet of paper – we call that genius. A skilled workman can take a piece of metal, shape it, twist it, mold it, and it becomes a thing of usefulness and beauty – we call that craftsmanship. But only God in heaven can take a sinner and make him a saint. We call that salvation.

The church is indestructible because it is made up of people who have been transformed by the power of Almighty God.

After Peter made his great confession regarding his faith in Jesus, our Lord said: "Upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it." This is a beautiful promise that Jesus gave to His church. The thrust of the statement is that the church is indestructible because of its dynamic relationship to Jesus Christ. There can be three ways we see this truth in this passage.

1. The church is built *on* Christ.

Jesus said, "you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."

The hymn writer was correct when he wrote, "The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." I think we are placed in the church as living stones so that we can do spiritual services that are acceptable unto God (1 Pet. 2:5).

2. The church is built *by* Christ.

Our Lord said, "upon this rock I will build my church." Not only is the church built on Christ, but the church is built by Christ.

Over 2,000 years ago, Jesus walked the shores of Galilee, the towns and the cities of Israel, calling forth fisherman like Peter, James, John and Andrew. Dramatically, one day He turned to His disciples and said:

You did not choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit. – John 15:16a

3. The church is successful only through Jesus' power. After Jesus told His disciples He would build a church, He made this great promise: "All the powers of hell will not conquer it."

As the church carries out its evangelistic ministry by sharing the gospel, we batter down the gates of hell and death. As the church preaches the gospel, we snatch the lost from a burning hell that they would receive if they rejected Christ as Saviour. The Lord here is commanding us to be an attacking army sent from heaven. The theme song of the church is not, "Hold the Fort," but rather "Onward Christian Soldiers."

Where do we find ourselves today – are we in retreat against the enemy, or are we invading his territory? The indestructible church is always on the attack. In striking metaphors the New Testament describes the main task of the church. Jesus compared the Christian to light, salt, water, bread, and fire. Now what can light, salt, water, bread, and fire all have in common? Penetration is the one common denominator. Light penetrates darkness and it disappears. Salt penetrates meat, and it is preserved. Water penetrates the ground and a harvest springs forth. Bread penetrates the body and gives strength. And fire is dependent on penetration for its very survival.

The church of Jesus Christ is God's penetrating force in our society. We are to bring the world to the foot of the cross

that men and women might know Christ as Lord and Saviour. But there is something we have to always remember – It takes faith to make a church great. Faith is the confidence, the assurance, the belief in God and His power. We can become what God wants us to be. We can do what God would have us to do.

Jesus told them. “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.” – **Matthew 17:20**

Now I know that our faith is demonstrated by deeds, but Jesus did not tell us here to prove our faith by moving the mountain ourselves. Jesus didn't tell us to pick up a shovel – He said "believe it and it will happen." True faith in God has nothing to do with our abilities, our talents, or our financial condition – true faith in God is believing that God has the ability to come through for us. Great things are possible if we dream great dreams for God.

Why are we committed to Christ and His Church? Because Christ's Church is the only indestructible institution in this world. Because it is through Christ and His church that we experience salvation. Because it is through Christ and His church that we are empowered by God. Why are we committed to Christ and His Church? Because we are the people of God.

Gail

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2020

We started the year full of optimism, we were in a better financial position than we had been for several years. We had plans to pay a larger percentage of our Parish Share. The Parish Centre was fully let and bringing in a good income. Then came Covid. All our plans went out of the window, closed down, we had very little income, but still a certain amount of expenditure.

We ended the year in the same position - lockdown coming in January - so no plans for 2021.

A huge thank you to the Scouts who continued to pay their rent even though they were not meeting. Also to those of you who contribute to church funds by Planned Giving envelopes. I kept finding a pile of envelopes behind my front door and I'm grateful to those of you who sometimes turned up at my back door with their envelopes. Thanks also to those of you who continued to make your contributions by standing order, that really helped us to keep going.

Streaming services most days also picked up followers from out of our Parish and they too made generous donations direct into our bank account.

Diocese decided to keep Parish Share for 2021 the same as 2020 (£39,875). We will endeavour to increase our contribution.

Although our current account balance looked healthy at the end of December at £16558, included in that figure is £12228 either restricted or designated funds. These restricted funds are for either The Churchyard Fund, the Forget me Not Cafe and the East Window Refurbishment fund. We are saving money each month to pay for a new flat roof on the Parish Centre Toilet block and these are designated funds.

Our Bank in Morley closed down and I'm grateful to Gary for taking the banking to Dewsbury for me before I had my vaccinations.

My thanks also to Richard Atkinson, who again has audited our accounts without charge. I'm grateful to all the PCC and Rev Sharon for their support during a very difficult year. We pray that things will improve in 2021.

Barbara Tate

Prayerful Thought - Prayer: I've got it all wrong...

Hi there

As you may have read through previous prayerful thought articles in the past, I have a varied relationship with prayer.

Sometimes I get in a groove and do quite well, at other times I'm so busy getting tasks done, I don't always find time to sit still and pray, and I know some of my church family and friends are much better at 'prayer' than I am.

Well something recently made me realise I've got it all wrong about prayer. I've approached it in the main, like a kind of duty, and that's where I've been going wrong.

Rev Sharon and I have been reading a book by Philip Yancey called 'The Jesus I never knew' which has proved an enjoyable read, and has led to some interesting discussion between us.

It is in our latest chapter discussing what type of person Jesus was, not only talked about how we have applied our own interpretations of what Jesus might have looked like, but the particular bit I want to focus on was from the author about how he might have felt about Jesus, if he'd been there at the time.

If you think about it, Jesus was an odd combination of extravagant claims coming from an ordinary looking Jewish man, He claimed to be the Son of God, yet He ate and drank like other men and even got tired and lonely.

In some ways Jesus seemed to feel 'at home' here and sometimes very 'not at home'.

The author uses the story of Jesus calming the storm to illustrate what he means. You can find the story in the Gospels of Matthew (8 23-27), Mark (4 35-41), and Luke (8 22- 25).

A storm blew up on Lake Galilee nearly capsizing the boat in which Jesus was sleeping – He stood up and shouted into the storm ‘Be still!’

This display of power helps to convince the Disciples that Jesus is unlike any other man, and yet it also hints that He is vulnerable, after all Jesus had fallen asleep from sheer fatigue. Jesus also, despite being the Son of God; son of the creator of rain clouds, was rained on! The maker of stars got hot and sweaty under the Palestinian sun! Jesus subjected himself to natural laws. He lived and died by the rules of earth.

So yes, Jesus felt ‘at home’ here but when he felt ‘not at home’ he went aside and prayed. Think about the garden of Gethsemane just before He was arrested. Think about occasions after He had performed miracles, what did He do? He spent time alone in prayer.

Yancey describes it when Jesus went to pray, that He did so “...as if to breathe pure air from a life support system that would give Him the strength to continue living on a polluted planet”.

It is this quote that made me realise I’d got it wrong about prayer. I need to stop looking at prayer as a ‘duty’ and look at it as life support!

If I consider prayer like this, then it changes my whole outlook. There is something else that has helped me as well.

I’d followed the Church of England online Lent reflections and a couple of weeks after they ended, I received notification that the next set of online reflections, which would run from the 19th to the 30th April were to look at prayer and were headed;

Prayer: Where to start and how to keep going

It also included the following quote from the new Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell;

There is no right way of praying. There are just the ways that are right for you. But there is also the great heritage of praying that we can learn from and explore.

The 'blurb' about this series of reflections says that it will "...consider ten basic questions about prayer and offer simple helps for making prayer a part of everyday life which will include:

- What prayer is;
- When and where to pray;
- Whether words are always needed;
- What to do when prayer seems impossible;

Praying alone and with others.

The first reflection talked about our wanting to pray as the beginning of a relationship with God that can grow and grow. And that it can start anywhere.

The reflections reassure us not to worry if we find it difficult to pray. I was heartened that they explained that prayer doesn't depend on us nearly as much as we think; prayer is not dependent on our effort, or our eloquence (or lack of it!).

It is all about the gift of God, and God praying in us, but it also has to be an act of human will. God calls out to every human heart and longs to make a home there. But God waits for us to respond. When we do, it is God's delight to come to us and sing his song within us. Our voice – however faint and unsure of the tune – is joined to the song of the Spirit.

We are God's beloved. God is constantly coming into our presence to say that he loves us. Most of the time, we probably won't be aware of this. But that doesn't mean God isn't there. We aren't usually aware of the air we breathe. But we keep on breathing.

The reflection says that prayer is the most natural thing in the world. It has been said that prayer is as natural as a flower opening its petals to the sun. But it can also be the hardest. There will be dark and difficult times when prayer feels impossible.

Prayer requires discipline as well as desire, because it is relationship, it is about letting go and allowing someone else to be at the centre of our lives. This is never easy for someone like me who likes to be 'in control'.

Another useful quote is that from a book by Elizabeth Obbard which says;

“You learn to pray by praying.”

Then, the reflection goes on to say that “There is no right way, or place or posture for praying. Just the way that is right for you, and that using set prayers is one of the best ways to get started.

However, if we use our own words, not to worry that they won't be good enough. Even if we find we have no words, we should offer God our thoughts, even our distractions and anxieties. Give him the time we have set aside.”

When I think about prayer in this way, it feels much more like something I can set time aside with God to do. Time to be. Thinking of prayer as Yancey puts it “...as if to breathe pure air from a life support system” as well as “...a relationship with God that can grow and grow” feels a better way to approach it. Now I have to make sure that I set that time aside every day.

How about you? Are you ready to breathe some fresh air too?
With God's Love and Peace
Dawn xx

How do I join an on-line Service?

If you are not so familiar with the on-line world but you would like to join one of the services, here's some good news! It's easy!

Go to: [facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk](https://www.facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk)

Then select 'Videos' from the side bar.

To join a 'Live' service look for the right time on the Diary page. You can also view previous services from the same location.



Alberts June Quiz

1. Which Brewery uses the symbol of Yorkshire Rose as it's company logo?
2. What colour duffle coat does Paddington bear wear?
3. In American law what six letter word is used in a serious crime?
4. True or False the longest fence in the world is in Australia?
5. In which Yorkshire city is there an area of historical interest known as Little Germany?
6. Which chain of shops appeared on the British High Street in 1909 and closed 100 years later in 2009?
7. What are the surnames of the two disagreeable old men in the Muppet Show?
8. Which of these London stores opened first Harrods, Fortum & Mason or Selfridges?
9. Where is the plaque which reads "We come in peace for all mankind"?
10. Who won the BBC's Sports Personality of the year in 2019?
11. Which outlaw has been played by Russel Crowe, Kevin Costner and Sean Connery?
12. What type of beans are used in most commercially canned baked beans?
13. A huge fire engulfed which Parisian landmark in April 2019?
14. On ITV's The Chase, the chaser called Jenny Ryan is known by what nickname?
15. Which fruit would you generally find in a Black Forest Gateau?
16. Who wrote the 2011 book "Gangsta Granny"?
17. Which two English cities are connected by the M69 motorway?
18. In the Disney film "Frozen" what is the name of the Snowman?
19. Gorgonzola cheese originated in which country?
20. Cape Horn can be found in which continent?
21. In which country would you find the largest malt whisky distillery of the world?
22. In mythology what is a "Kraken"?
23. CLEARLY KEG is an anagram of which famous star of silver screen?
(female).

(Answers on page 37)

Church Mouse Tales

'Are you asleep?' I asked my friend Hubert, the Black Canon, quite loudly - just in case he was.

He opened his eyes slowly and looked at me impassively.

'No, I was meditating'. He looked a like someone who would rather not have been disturbed.

'Oh good', I went on, 'because I wanted to ask if you had any hobbies?'

'Hobbies?' he looked a little perplexed.

'Yes - you know - things like stamp collecting or bird watching?'

'No, nothing like that', he replied with a sigh.

'Well I was thinking of taking up a hobby', I continued.

'What have you decided to do?' he asked although I detected a little disinterest in the whole subject.

'I'm going to start collecting grass clippings', I declared quite proudly.

'Aren't they all very much the same?' he asked. '...and anyway what purpose do they serve?'

'Oh no - they are most certainly not the same - they are all different lengths and textures - very interesting indeed.'

'but what are they for?' he persisted.

'That's the point of a hobby', I explained, 'they don't have any purpose - I just like them.'

'Well I'm pleased for you Misha - I hope you enjoy your new hobby and it keeps you occupied.'

'Oh I'm sure it will - I cant wait to get started.'

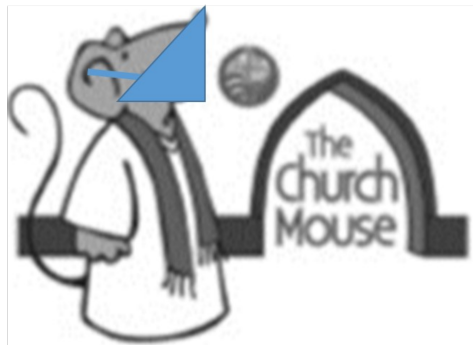
'That's good - and in the meantime I have decided to have a hobby of my own.'

'That's great Hubert, what have you decided on?'

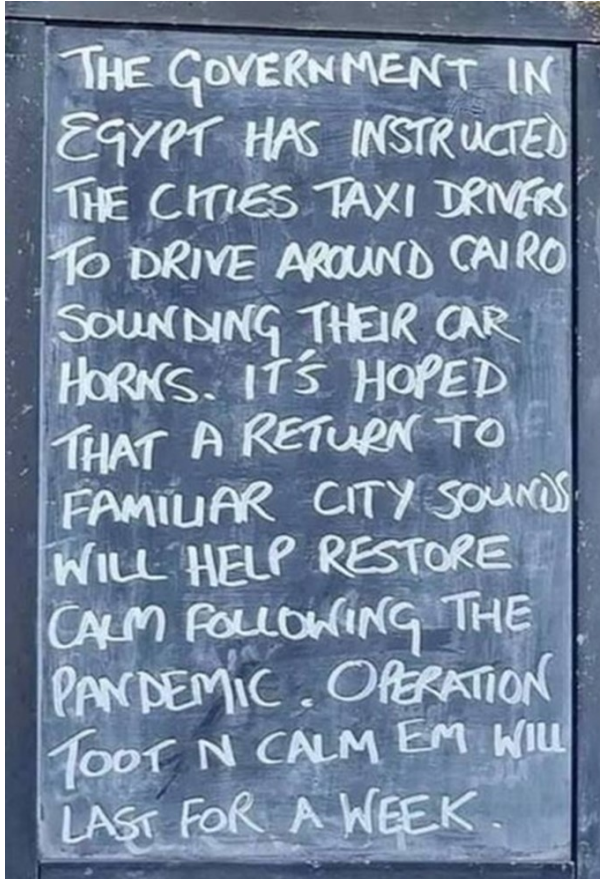
'Meditation.' And with that he closed his eyes once more.

I suspect his choice of hobby included an ulterior motive, but I can't be sure...

Misha x



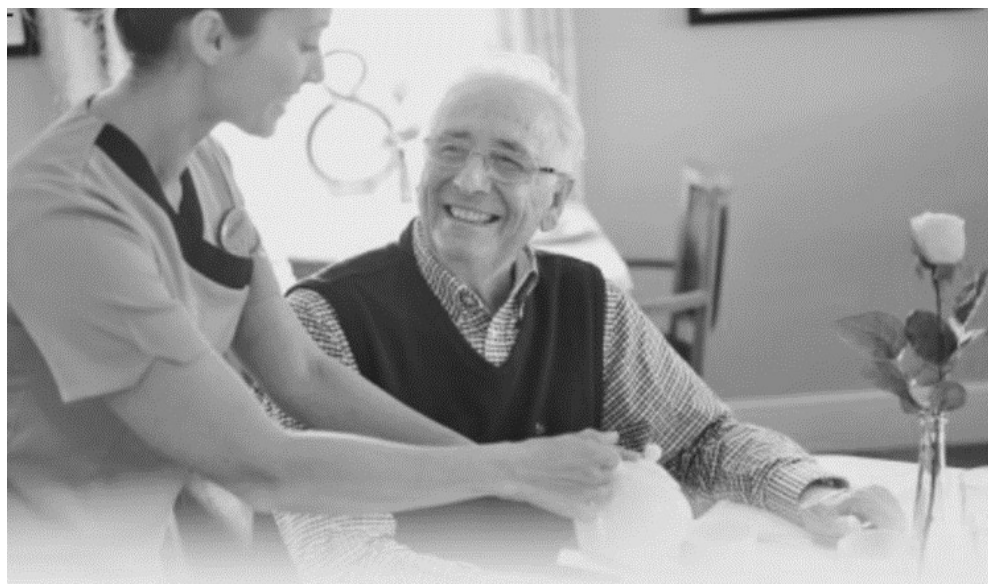
Keep Calm and....



Trevor

QUIZ ANSWERS

(1) Samuel Smith, (2) Blue, (3) Felony, (4) True (Dingo Fence 3,488 miles) , (5) Bradford, (6) Woolworths, (7) Statler & Waldorf, (8) Fortum & Mason, (9) On the Moon (10) Ben Stokes, (11) Robin Hood, (12) Haricot (also accept navy beans), (13) Notre Dam Cathedral, (14) The Vixen, (15) Cherry, (16) David Williams, (17) Coventry & Leicester, (18) Olaf, (19) Italy, (20) South America (Chile). (21) Japan (Suntory Whiskey) (22) A Giant Sea Monster (23) Grace Kelly.



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FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS—We welcome into our Church family:-
Woodrow Jack McLeish



DEATHS



We give thanks for the lives of all those who have died within our Parish:

Betty Sedgewick
Betty Webster

WEDDINGS

Neil Parker and Laura Atkinson.
Daniel Thompson and
Stefanie Burns.



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Contact: The Editor (see page 2)

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Parish Centre Rentals

We have space for Groups who may be interested in using the Parish Centre at various times of the week.

**Nominal Cost is £60 for
3 hours.**

**Contact: Sally Shaw
01924 475048 for more
information.**

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What's on (please check with the leader due to current tiers)

Playgroup Monday, Tuesday & Thursday

9:30am to 11.25am

Becky Schofield 07811 146958

ABC Group Adults, Babies and Children

Wednesday 9:15-11:00am (Term time)

Cheryl 07948271688

Stepping Stones Sunday Children's Group (3-12 years old)

4th Sunday of the Month

10:30am in Church

Rainbows Thursday 5.30 - 6.30pm

Ruth Osenton-Brown 01924 607393

Brownies Thursday 6.30 - 7.45pm

Hannah Tombling 01924 501892

Keep Fit Class Thursday 8:00pm (Over 60's)

Margaret Hampshire 01924 476721

Young at Heart 1st & 3rd Thursdays 2:00pm

Brenda Dixon 0113 253 4078

Beavers Friday 5:00pm to 6:15 pm

Joanne Rutledge 07950 580877

Cubs Friday 6:30pm to 7:45 pm

Marianne Ingham 07778 542302

Scouts Friday 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Trevor Holdsworth 0113 253 0927

Explorer Scouts Friday 7:45 pm to 9:30 pm

Chris Ingham 07816 517838

Diary and Services this Month

Sunday Services.

Each Sunday there will be a Holy Communion Service at 10.30am in Church as well as Online.

Weekday Services

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Mondays 9am | Morning Prayer |
| Tuesdays 6pm | Evening Prayer |
| Wednesdays 10am | Holy Communion in Church & On-line. |
| Thursdays 9pm | Night Prayer |
| Fridays 9am | Morning Prayer |

Special Services:

Sunday 13th June: 10:30am Holy Communion
followed by 1:30pm Baptism.
(Monday 14th June: 8pm PCC meeting)
Sunday 20th June: 10:30am Holy Communion
followed by 1:30pm Baptism

Note: Wednesday Services will be in Church as well as streamed via St Mary's Facebook Page.

Please see Page 34 for details of how to join a streamed service