

Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

May 2022



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Who's who at Woodkirk

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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 church and Dewsbury Road. Just ask.

**“As full of spirit as the month of May,
and as gorgeous as the sun in
Midsummer.”**

William Shakespeare

Vicar's Letter

During an earthquake that occurred many years ago, the inhabitants of a small village were very alarmed...and at the same time surprised at the calmness and apparent joy of an old Christian lady, whom they all knew. At length one of them, addressing the elderly lady asked: "Aren't you afraid?" "No," she replied, "I rejoice to know that I have a God that can shake the world."

When your future seems uncertain, and worries abound you can gain peace and confidence. What are you most worried about today? What are you most uncertain about?

We need to remember that the Bible was written to people who lived in uncertain times. Whether it was Moses leading people out of slavery, David facing Goliath, or Peter preaching to the crowds on Pentecost, all these people lived in times of uncertainty.

Question: How did these people face uncertainty head on without wavering? How did they know the comfort and peace of God?

Answer: They learned an important truth: Life is uncertain, but God is not, and He is in control.

Years ago there was a popular television series called "Candid Camera." Unsuspecting people would be caught on camera in some of the most bizarre and humorous situations imaginable. The reactions of these people were funny enough to conjure up a smile on even the bleakest face. People need something to smile about.

During his suffering Job fondly remembered an earlier time in life in which he interacted joyously with others. "When I smiled at them, they scarcely believed it; the light of my face was precious to them" (Job

29:24). Smiles are indeed precious things.

I once read that the hotel chain Holiday Inn was looking for 500 people to fill positions for a new facility. The hotel managers interviewed more than 5000 candidates for various jobs and immediately excluded all who smiled fewer than four times during the interview. These managers understood something about the important message of hospitality and friendliness smiles convey.

It thrills me to see people smile at church. It lets me know that they are happy to have the privilege of worshipping God and enjoying fellowship with their church family. Smiles reflect the joy in our hearts and the thankfulness we feel for God's love, grace and mercy. Smiles let our guests know how glad we are to have them. Through the years I have noticed that a church made up of smiling people is usually characterized by unity, spiritual vitality, love and good works (Hebrews 10:24).

On my desk is a short saying that I ran across years ago. I have tried unsuccessfully to discover its author. "A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he cannot get along without it and none is so poor that he cannot be made rich by it. Yet a smile cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away."

The smile you share with others today will not only bring joy and encouragement into their life, it will lighten your burdens and allow God's image to be reflected in you.

Here's wishing you a smiley summer!

Sharon

Heritage Day and Edmund Yardley

As I write this we have just enjoyed another enjoyable and successful Heritage Open Day in Church, with the Church registers available for searches, local family history groups providing help and information, our colourful and interesting information boards, not to mention delicious food!

It was lovely to see some familiar faces, but also lovely to welcome new faces into our midst too. The Community Payback team were also with us this year, talking about the work they do helping us to keep the churchyard tidy.

This year, I looked for some information to display on our War Memorial. I had one or two anecdotes from Philip Stephenson to share about WWII casualties, and also looked up some additional information on one or two of our WWI casualties too.

One particular story I'd like to share with you is about the final name listed on the WWI side of our memorial, being a chap called Edmund Yardley who also happens to be buried in the churchyard.

Prior to my investigations for our heritage event, we already knew the following;
Edmund was the son of William and Janet Yardley who at the time of the 1901 census were living in Bramley.
Edmund married his wife Minnie and they lived at 32 New Scarborough, Tingley.

An article in the Morley Observer dated 23rd February 1917 recorded the following;

Signaller Edmund Yardley has been awarded the French Medaille Militaire for bravery in the field.

According to the article Edmund received the coveted distinction from the hands of Sir Douglas Haig, however, it is highly unlikely that this was the case.

The article continues, "Before joining the colours, Signaller Yardley was an insurance agent well known in the West Ardsley District."



The Medaille Militaire

Now this is when having a husband who is a First World War historian comes in handy. I asked David if he could, using the records available, find out anything more.

Well, amazingly, through a search of the Pension Record Card for Private Yardley (via the Western Front Association Website) I have discovered a regimental record from the West Yorkshire Regiment Archives which provides the following information which led to the awarding of a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) to Edmund. The details are as follows;

19970 Pte E W Yardley 1st Battn, (Tingley, Wakefield)

At Selency, on 24/25 September 1918 he rendered invaluable service as a linesman in maintaining communications between battalion headquarters and frontline companies. Throughout these operations, his untiring efforts, general cheerfulness and cool courage at all times were a splendid example to all his comrades.

During the course of his work, he was blown up by a high

explosive shell, but after a short rest he resumed his work upon the line showing total disregard to all danger.

2.12.19

Edmund survived the war but sadly died on the 15th February 1919 'due to Broncho Pneumonia contracted whilst on active service' and is buried in the churchyard.

In addition to the information on the awarding of Edmund's DCM, his pension record card showed that his widow Minnie was living at 31 Scarborough Street with his daughter Clara aged 7 and son Arthur aged 5.

There were also another couple of records I looked up, one interesting one, where a newspaper account of one of our casualties listed that he left behind a widow and six young children, one of whom had been born whilst he was on active service, and sadly who he never got to see, and again through the Pension records, I now know the names and ages of all six children.

What is also wonderful about these heritage events is that people chat to you about things they remember from their families, and I am really pleased that one of our church members is going to share some information with me about her brother's WWII service, and in addition, after discovering a photograph online of one of our WWI casualties, hopefully, one of our local historian friends is going to provide me with some information on him too, so that's some new information gathering for next year!

Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make our heritage day such a success, it really has been a lovely day.

Dawn

Bishop Nick's Easter Message

This is the text of the sermon broadcast from Leeds Minster this morning on BBC1 television.

John 20:1-18

It was early and it was dark. And a woman stands weeping in a cemetery.

Her name is Mary of Magdala, but it could easily be Natasha of Kharkiv or Lyudmilla of Bucha or Magda of Mariupol. Standing in the ruins of a life and community, ruptured by violence and fear, is – tragically – not a rare experience in the world in which we live. 'Normality' has been torn apart and an anticipated future looks shredded in the dirt of destruction. Just watch the television and this fearful horror is everywhere in Ukraine and Syria and Yemen.

And women – it usually is women – stand weeping in the ruins of the world.

If we have the imagination to put ourselves – even slightly – into the skin of those women, we might glimpse just briefly and inadequately what it means to lose everything and fear what might lie around the corner. Violence terrorises and always seems to win in a world in which might is propagated as right and virtues such as humility, integrity and love are seen as feeble.

But, this Easter Day offers to shine a different light into this darkness. And this woman, Mary Magdalene, stands alone for now, bereft, but about to embark on a hitherto unimagined and unimaginable journey. Resurrection is the start, not the end.

One of the funniest books I have read recently is Jonas Jonasson's *Anders the Hitman and the Meaning of It All*. One character printed a shedload of Bibles, but, having fallen out with the Christians, added a line after the final verse of the final book of the New Testament: Revelation. He added: "And they all lived happily ever after", thus, of course, rendering the Bibles useless.

Because the characters involved with Jesus of Nazareth knew there was nothing romantic or fanciful about their story. Here

there was no comforting 'happily ever after' fantasy. They had put their hopes into the wandering Galilean who had helped them to see God, the world and themselves through different eyes. They had followed him, staked everything on him, and now they have watched it all bleed into the dirt of Calvary – a world ended in violence and injustice. And they might be next.

No wonder, then, that the discovery of an empty tomb didn't provoke joy or excitement. It simply added to the fear and bewilderment, the horror and the loss.

So, what changes everything? After all, the men had simply gone home to what was familiar and relatively safe. But, the woman – this woman – stays and weeps. Helpless. No agency. No hope.

What changes is a question and the sound of her name. The risen Jesus doesn't present her with an explanation; rather, he asks why she is weeping and for whom she is looking. Blinded by grief, she then hears her name spoken amid the dereliction within and around her. "Mary."

Answers to the uncertainties and horrors of life cannot be reached before the questions have been asked of us: "For whom – for what – am I looking?" If our common life is all about the accumulation of security and stuff, then who am I when it is all stripped away ... or buried in the street as the tanks withdraw and the reporters point their cameras? And who are we – collectively – when death and mortality place a large question mark over our society, our common life, our priorities, our way of living and being together? Pandemic – conflict – loss.

Easter Day should be fearful before it is joyful. Resurrection has to be met with facing the questions and hearing our name spoken quietly in the darkness.

Names matter. Mary discovers she is known. Jesus's recognition of *her* matters more than *her* grasp of him. She might struggle to use his name; but, light shines when she knows that she is loved and known, right here in the darkness.

And the women of Bucha and Mariupol? It is so important that the names of the lost and abused people of Ukraine are

remembered and spoken and not forgotten – even among the ruins of their homes. While states fuel the violence and missiles destroy cities, the quiet defiance of hope – of resurrection, even – dare to suggest that death, violence and destruction will not have the final word. Death might be everywhere; but, the quiet whisper of our name means that the journey has not finished – the destination has not yet been reached. This is the love that will not let us go – that compels us to challenge any social order that kills and demeans and diminishes any people. Racism, antisemitism, imposed poverty, industries that enslave and drugs that steal people’s souls, politics that prioritise ideology over people and sacrifice truth on the altar of power.

We can generously offer that same resurrection hope that surprised and bewildered Mary in the garden on the first Easter Day ... when we enable bereft people to hear the whisper of their name, knowing they are known and loved and held – by God and by us.

Indeed, Christian faith is no fantasy. But, it proclaims quietly that we need not be driven by fear, but can be drawn by hope. In our search for light and love, for a future through and beyond the now. And in our commitment to those who fear their name has been forgotten.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!
Alleluia!

Bishop Nick



God is better than Sat Nav!

Recently I was driving along a road, my Satnav was on as I had been somewhere new, and I left it on as I headed for home even though I knew where I was going.

It suddenly announced “In three hundred and ten yards go over the roundabout taking the second exit” and I thought how on earth (or I suppose in the satellite’s case how not on earth) does the satellite know to precisely three hundred and ten yards, where I am?

According to a BBC Future Article (Sep 2013) *All modern sat-nav systems rely on the Global Positioning System (GPS) known as Navstar. This is powered by a system of 24 satellites orbiting the Earth at an altitude of approximately 11,500 miles (24,000km).*

I cannot even imagine how far that is, I remember driving all over France a few years ago during a three week holiday, thinking I had driven a long way and it was about 2,000 miles!

But here is Satnav in my car knowing I’m 310 yards from a roundabout???

I’m sure there are boffins out there who could explain how Satnav and global positioning works, however, that is not the focus of my article, no, it made me think light heartedly about the differences between Satnav and God! Well after all, as Christians we believe that God is with us wherever we are, that he is always there. If you commute or travel any decent distances, then your Satnav is probably with you wherever you are.

Then you have the instance of when you have programmed your Satnav with your destination and it tells you a route, however, on occasion you are familiar with part of the journey so ignore the instructions until you come to the part that you don’t know. But all the time you are ignoring your Satnav it is doggedly telling you to turn around, take a left or right etc whilst you completely ignore it.

Well God may not be speaking out loud to you, but He is trying to guide you in the way you need to go, and although you might be ignoring Him, he keeps on gently directing you.

Of course in order for your Satnav to work you need to input your destination, you have to interact, you can also choose to avoid motorways etc, the more detail you put in the more accurate your route.

Well, with God, you don’t have to put in your final destination, He knows

where you're going, but the more 'detail' you have in your relationship with God, then the more you get out of it!

When you use your Satnav to get somewhere and all of a sudden it announces "You have reached your destination" and you really haven't, is a little like our journey as disciples for God, you may not think of yourself as a disciple, but when you share your love of God with others, God may quietly whisper, "you have reached a way point "it is part of God's plan for you to become His disciple.

Now I'm sure a lot of you remember those heady days before we had Satnav when you looked at your trusty map book and plotted a route say, for your holiday destination. (I still do enjoy looking at map books when planning British holidays – I remember my dad had a trusty AA map very old and he had drawn, in felt tip, the location of the M1 and other 'new' motorways!).

In my work in Human Resources/Personnel I had, on a regular basis, to go and visit employees who were off work, and when working for the local City Council that took me across areas of Leeds I had heard of but never been to. I had a trusty A to Z and interrogated it to find the streets I needed to visit. On one particular day I found the house, paid my visit and then set off back (as I thought) to the office. Unfortunately in some areas of Leeds one street looks much like another, and having set off I made a few turns and hilariously ended up right back where I had started. When I realised, I just sat for a few moments laughing at myself, before 'girding my loins' and eventually, without any more mishaps, returning unscathed to the office!

If we don't spend time with God, we can feel that we have lost our direction, perhaps feel like we're going around in circles, that's why it is important to read God's word, to spend time with our fellow Christians and to spend time in prayer.

God is our very own A to Z, or as the Bible puts it "I am the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega" (what's that other than an A to Z?). I leave you with this final quote which has been circulated on social media

The fact that there is a highway to hell and only a stairway to heaven says a lot about anticipated traffic numbers!

Wishing you many happy days with God as your Satnav.
Love Dawn

Preparation and Trust:

Among folks who look to the Bible for daily guidance there is a centuries-long, lively debate that can be boiled down to this: Is our impact in life shaped by our efforts, or God's?

It's an important question, because of the extremes—on the one side, well-intentioned hard workers who write things like "The world is run by tired men" to maddeningly passive 'trusters' who intone "Let go and let God."

So what's the answer?

"The horse is prepared for the day of battle; but the victory belongs to the Lord" —Proverbs 21:31

There's a lot of rich history around horses going into battle. If you are taking a horse to a fight, you have to decide what kind of horse - how to armour the horse (protect the horse, protect the rider, or both); whether to mount the horse or attach a chariot; how to feed, train and groom the horse ... you get the idea.

Volumes have been written on how to train and prepare a horse for battle and the answers given depend on the era, the relevant geography and the current weaponry technology.

All of that to say, it's not an easy thing to prepare a horse for battle. There's a lot of thinking, working, analysing and trial and error to consider. Lots of hard work. And then the battle comes. Hopefully the horse is well prepared and hopefully the warrior has considered all of the contingencies and made all the right decisions.

But, at that point, it's out of the warrior's hands—victory belongs to the Lord. Any warrior reading this proverb would have been bit uncomfortable—after all, they were highly trained, experienced in battle, dependent on their own knowledge and resources. None of that is discounted.

The implication—live a considered, strenuous, self-disciplined life, giving it your best energy, preparation, thought, fitness level, strategy. The battle will be tough. But realize that in the end the result is God's, not ours.

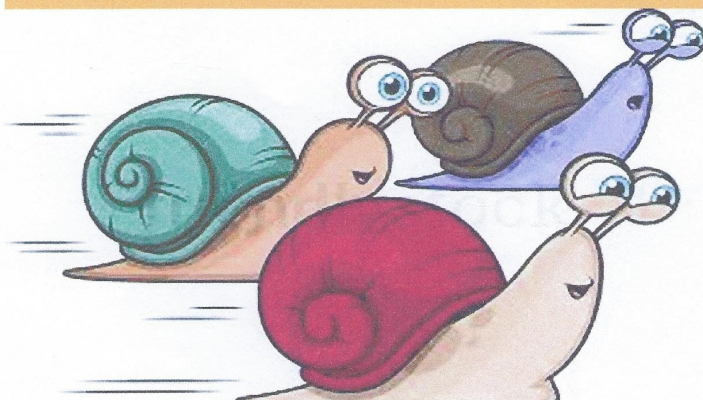
Are we better at being prepared or trusting? Chances are we excel at one or the other.

Thank God for the one in which we excel, and ask him where he wants to strengthen us in the others. This should be a great conversation between us and him!

Scriptures: John 19:28, Proverbs 21:31

Gail

SNAIL RACE NIGHT



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(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—At the moment we are continuing to arrange Baptisms and we will follow the relevant guidelines set out by the government. We will keep in touch with you if you have already booked if anything changes. If you wish to make an enquiry or book a Baptism please contact Barbara Tate on 07792 211095.

Weddings, funerals, Ashes, or the reading of banns—in the first instance please contact our Verger who co-ordinates these events. Our Co-ordinator is Gail Townsend on 0113 252 8710 or email: gail@stmarywoodkirk.org. We will follow government guidelines throughout this winter and if we need to inform you of changes then we will contact you when and if the government makes changes.

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. My email address is vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org

Please note we are GDPR compliant and take great care of your private information.

Prayerful Thought: The Cross

I wonder, if like me you have one of these?
It is a holding cross.

This one is made of olive wood and sits
comfortably in your hand as an aid to prayer.
It's light, smooth and quite lovely really.



Here is another cross, a palm one.
I gave out palm crosses at the Wednesday
service after Palm Sunday, and I noticed that
one or two of them were marked, like this
one.

I thought to myself, 'Oh, I can't give out that one, it doesn't look
nice.

This led me onto further thought.

The cross is **THE** symbol for Christians, recognisable
worldwide, a symbol of love, hope and sanctuary, and yet it was
an instrument of torture and most painful death.

These thoughts about the palm cross reminded me of a number
of instances. Firstly, when I was a teenager in the late 70's early
80's, I went with my church youth group to see Jesus Christ
Superstar. I don't remember the full play, or the details of the
scene, but I have a recollection of the harrowing depiction of the
crucifixion and the music that accompanied it.

Also, I have attended diocesan training events and we have
done an exercise where the leader will share with us many

different images of Christ in art ranging from the 'Jesus friend of little children' found in children's bibles, through images of Robert Powell who played the part of Jesus in Franco Zeffirelli's 1977 British-Italian epic film and television drama serial, and various 'strange' (to me) more modern, '*avant garde*' depictions in modern art. The leader asks us to choose the image that means something to us and then talk about it.

Then there is the 2004 Mel Gibson film 'The Passion of the Christ' which I have never seen, but which I am told, portrays vividly the brutal scourging of Jesus.

And finally, I cannot forget, the first Good Friday service that Rev Sharon led, when the service commenced in silence, a silence that was eventually broken by the harrowing sounds of nails being hammered into wood. Kneeling at the altar I remember involuntarily shuddering as I listened, and even though I have heard it on subsequent Good Friday's it is still as harrowing.

It was all these things that were brought to mind when I alone, decided not to hand out a 'marked' palm cross in church.

The thing is, that Easter reminds us that the death Jesus died for us was horrific, it was tortuous, it was agony, and it went on for many hours.

And yet, many of us find comfort in the familiar shape and smooth contours of our holding crosses. I should have handed out the marked palm cross, it is how the palm leaf grew and was dried and cut, and when you think about it, is an excellent metaphor for us; we are not perfect, but the perfect



one died on that cross to set us free from our sins and bring us to new life through his death and resurrection.

As a Christian I will always see the cross as a symbol of God's love for me and a symbol of hope.

I still have 'Visiting the statue of Christ overlooking Rio de Janeiro' on my bucket list of places I want to travel to. And I will still, no doubt, involuntarily shudder when I hear the sounds of the hammer and nails played at the start of our reflective Good Friday Service.

But the next time I hand out palm crosses, I will not prevent a marked cross from being taken by someone, as it is a reminder that the cross is not perfect, we as Christians are not perfect, only Jesus, who took our sins upon himself that day at Golgotha is perfect.

With love
Dawn



Did you used to drink from your saucer??
Here's a nice poem that came up on my Facebook feed recently

Drinking from My Saucer

by John Paul Moore

I've never made a fortune and it's probably too late now.
But I don't worry about that much, I'm happy anyhow.
And as I go along life's way, I'm reaping better than I sowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I don't have a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough.
But I've got loved ones around me, and that makes me rich
enough.
I thank God for his blessings, and the mercies He's bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I remember times when things went wrong, my faith wore
somewhat thin.
But all at once the dark clouds broke, and the sun peeped
through again.
So God, help me not to gripe about the tough rows that I've
hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.

If God gives me strength and courage, when the way grows
steep and rough.
I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.
And may I never be too busy, to help others bear their loads.
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has
overflowed.

Courtesy of Facebook

Dawn

St. Stephen (died about 34)

One of the first seven deacons of the Christian Church, Saint Stephen is also the first Christian to be martyred for the Faith (hence the title, often applied to him, of *protomartyr*—that is, "first martyr"). The story of Saint Stephen's ordination as a deacon is found in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, which also recounts the plot against Stephen and the beginning of the trial that resulted in his martyrdom; the seventh chapter of Acts recounts Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin and his martyrdom.

Not much is known about Saint Stephen's origin. He is first mentioned in Acts 6:5, when the apostles appoint seven deacons in order to minister to the physical needs of the faithful. Because Stephen is a Greek name (Stephanos), and because the appointment of the deacons occurred in response to complaints by Greek-speaking Jewish Christians, it is generally assumed that Stephen was himself a Hellenist Jew (that is, a Greek-speaking Jew). However, a tradition arising in the fifth century claims that Stephen's original name was Kelil, an Aramaic word that means "crown," and he was called Stephen because Stephanos is the Greek equivalent of his Aramaic name.

In any case, Stephen's ministry was conducted among Greek-speaking Jews, some of whom were not open to the Gospel of Christ. Stephen is described in Acts 6:5 as "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost" and in Acts 6:8 as "full of grace and fortitude," and his talents for preaching were so great that those Hellenist Jews who disputed his teaching "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke" (Acts 6:10).

Unable to combat Stephen's preaching, his opponents found men who were willing to lie about what Saint Stephen taught, to claim that "they had heard him speak words of blasphemy against Moses

and against God" (Acts 6:11). In a scene reminiscent of Christ's own appearance before the Sanhedrin (*cf.* Mark 14:56-58), Stephen's opponents produced witnesses who claimed that "we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place [the temple], and shall change the traditions which Moses delivered unto us" (Acts 6:14).

Acts 6:15 notes that the members of the Sanhedrin, "looking on him, saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel." It's an interesting remark when we consider that these are the men sitting in judgment on Stephen. When the high priest gives Stephen the chance to defend himself, he is filled with the Holy Spirit and provides (Acts 7:2-50) a remarkable exposition of salvation history, from the time of Abraham through Moses and Solomon and the prophets, ending, in Acts 7:51-53, with a rebuke of those Jews who refused to believe in Christ:

You stiff-necked in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do you also. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who foretold of the coming of the Just One; of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels and have not kept it.

The members of the Sanhedrin "were cut to the heart, and they gnashed with their teeth at him" (Acts 7:54), but Stephen, in another parallel with Christ when He was before the Sanhedrin (*cf.* Mark 14:62), boldly proclaims, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). Stephen's testimony confirmed in the minds of the Sanhedrin the charge of blasphemy, "And they crying out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and with one accord ran violently upon him" (Acts 7:56). They dragged him outside of the walls of Jerusalem (near, tradition says, the Damascus Gate), and stoned him.

The stoning of Stephen is notable not simply because he is the first Christian martyr, but because of the presence of a man named Saul,

who "was consenting to his death" (Acts 7:59), and at whose feet "the witnesses laid down their garments" (Acts 7:57). This is, of course, Saul of Tarsus, who, sometime later, while traveling on the road to Damascus, encountered the Risen Christ, and became the great apostle to the Gentiles, Saint Paul. Paul himself, while recounting his conversion in Acts 22, testifies that he confessed to Christ that "when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I stood by and consented, and kept the garments of them that killed him" (Acts 22:20).

Because Stephen is mentioned first among the seven men ordained as deacons in Acts 6:5-6, and is the only one singled out for his attributes ("a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost"), he is often regarded as the first deacon as well as the first martyr.

Representations of Stephen in Christian art vary somewhat between East and West; in Eastern iconography, he is usually shown in the robes of a deacon (though these would not have developed until later), and often swinging a censer (the container in which incense is burned), as deacons do during the Eastern Divine Liturgy. He is sometimes depicted holding a small church. In Western art, Stephen is often depicted holding the stones that were the instrument of his martyrdom, as well as a palm (a symbol of martyrdom); both Western and Eastern art sometimes depict him wearing the martyr's crown.

Saint Stephen's feast day is December 26 in the Western Church (the "feast of Stephen" mentioned in the popular Christmas carol "Good King Wenceslas," and the Second Day of Christmas) and December 27 in the Eastern Church. I hope you enjoyed my reflection on St. Stephen.

God bless Gail



Malcolm Haigh – The Batley Historian.

As many of you know Malcolm hasn't been so well recently and it was great to see him at the recent St. Mary's Open Day. He doesn't venture out so much these days and perhaps this is a good time to remember some of the things he has managed to achieve.

He has spent a large part of his life writing and campaigning on behalf of Batley and it was as far back as 1978 that Malcolm published his first book "The History of Batley 1800-1974". Malcolm has dedicated most of his life to supporting Batley and working to ensure that his local knowledge of history is both known by the wider population through his books and through his involvement with local history groups and local education. Malcolm has always been an avid campaigner to ensure that Batley's heritage is maintained, publishing four books in total along with four guide booklets for Batley Cemetery containing historical data and information about some of the more prominent characters buried there.

Whilst it is well known that Malcolm worked as a journalist, chief reporter and sub-editor, including twenty-eight years with the Yorkshire Evening Post, some of his other roles are perhaps less well known: Secretary of the Batley and Birstall Civic Society; Chairman of the Batley Conservation Group; Chairman of Batley Environment Forum; First Chairman of Batley Community Alliance and finally Co-ordinator of Batley Cemetery Support Group.

Perhaps also less well known is that Malcolm's own younger brother, Walter, died three weeks after birth due to a spinal problem and was buried in an un-marked grave in Batley Cemetery. Malcolm discovered that many hundreds of young children were also buried in Batley Cemetery without any headstone bearing their names. These were children who may have been still-born or died very early in their little lives, but their parents were unable to pay for headstones and "proper" burials. The children were brought mostly directly from the local hospital and laid in already open graves or in unmarked graves around the perimeter walls. In his capacity as co-ordinator, then in 2001,

Malcolm - with the help of the scouts - was able to raise enough funds from firms, organisations and individuals to have a memorial stone placed in the cemetery for all the children - thus giving a focus for grieving families and those who wanted to pay their respects.

In 2013 Malcolm was recognised at national level and was presented with a British Empire Medal (BEM) by Dr Ingrid Roscoe, the Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire on the 23rd September 2013. There were hundreds of nominations for the BEM, but only nine individuals from West Yorkshire were chosen. Malcolm went along to the historic Bowcliffe Hall, north-east of Leeds not far from Bramham Park to receive his award.

Malcolm spoke of his amazement in receiving an award of such prestige: "I never imagined I would receive an award like this. I am so thrilled." he said. Malcolm has worked tirelessly on many different fronts, but he says it has all been done to promote the town of Batley. His hope is that the good townsfolk are as proud of Batley as he is.

Malcolm also worked hard for St. Mary's church as a Church Warden and Magazine Editor as well as campaigning for the churchyard to be recognised as a nature haven for wildlife. We hope that Malcolm continues to keep active and is being well looked after.

David



Once again we are asking for your help as part of our wider area support for Christian Aid.

Whilst Christian Aid help with many different emergencies for this year's Christian Aid

Appeal they are focussing on the plight of drought which numerous countries around the world face.



I will be undertaking a Sponsored Walk during Christian Aid Week (14th -20th May) following a route supplied by the Morley District Christian Aid Committee and starting from St Mary's.

Your sponsorship could help a community build a water dam to help families survive the drought. Every donation can help change lives.

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

Virgin Money

Sort Code 05-01-31 Account Number: 31405751

Account Name: Woodkirk PCC

Please put Walk in the reference.

Or you can leave donations in the plate in church after a service.

Thank you so much, in advance, for your support.

Dawn x

A Side-person's tale.

After reading Gail's Easter article in the April magazine (*about nurturing newcomers – editor*), I thought I would put pen to paper. Quite a few years ago when on side duty, a quiet, hesitant couple came to St. Mary's. They asked where they should sit. I told them anywhere or if they wanted they could sit on the naughty pew with me. This they did. Afterwards they said they had enjoyed the service and I'm glad to say they were back the following week. They are still here today.

If you haven't already guessed the couple are Gail and Dave – no longer that quiet, hesitant couple but as beloved (also very useful) members of St. Mary's. Long they remain.

With Love

Alice (by the way Gail still blames me).

P.S. We are not just open for Easter and Christmas but all are welcome anytime.

Knitting, nattering and Nostell!

Hi there

I just wanted to share with you, what we have been up to in our knit and natter group on a Wednesday afternoon.

St Mary's Knit and Natter Group have been meeting weekly since the end of October last year. We have a lovely group of both church and non church ladies, some come to knit, some come to crochet and some come to natter and enjoy fellowship (and cake)!

Well a few months ago, something cropped up on my Facebook feed which I decided to share with the group;

The National Trust House, Nostell Priory (on the south side of Wakefield) were asking for donations of knitted or crocheted 8" (20cm) squares of any design, in red, white and blue. They wanted them to make into blankets which they want to use over the Jubilee weekend in June, after which they would be donated to a worthy cause.

I shared this with the ladies and was delighted when they agreed that they would like to knit or crochet squares.

I can now tell you that I dropped off 41 squares at Nostell Priory last week, and they were very gratefully received. Here is a picture of our squares.

We were also delighted to be able to make a donation of £250 towards the East Window Fund which were proceeds from our weekly funds.

If you are a knitter (or a natterer), enjoy crochet or just want a chat, you are most welcome to join us on Wednesday afternoons 1.00pm to 3.00pm, it would be lovely to see you. Also, if you don't knit or crochet but would like to learn, we have ladies who can teach you. I must admit, since joining the group last year I have managed to complete a number of long term 'works in progress' as well as starting, and indeed finishing others!

Please contact myself (Dawn) on 07840 739239 or Elaine 07894 402332 for further information, or just come along on a Wednesday from 1.00pm. (see also next page).

With love from chief natterer

Dawn



St, Mary's, Woodkirk



Come along and join us for a

“Knit & Natter”

(or just a natter!)

Wednesday 1.00pm-3.00pm

Commencing October 20th

St. Mary's Parish Centre

Contact Elaine on 07894 402332

ALBERT'S QUIZ

Easter Questions

1. Easter Island forms part of which Country?
2. What day is the commemoration of the Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus?
3. What is the Sunday before Easter called?
4. What is the name of the 40th day after Easter?
5. Who was first to speak to Jesus after he rose from the dead?

Royalty Questions

6. Where did King George VI die?
7. In which year and where did Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh marry?
8. When is the Queen's actual birthday?
9. After Queen Elizabeth II and Queen Victoria, who was the third longest reigning British monarch?
10. Where did Prince Philip break the news to the Queen of her father's death?

Parliamentary Questions

11. How many constituencies are represented in the House of Commons?
12. What is the official report of all parliamentary debates called?
13. Nicknamed the Beast of Bolsover, who lost his seat after 49 years in the 2019 General Election?
14. Which senior officer in the House of Lords is responsible for access to and order within Parliament?
15. Which is Boris Johnson's constituency?

British Cities

16. How many British Cities are there in Devon?
17. What is Britain's smallest city by population?
18. Which is the most northerly city in Britain?
19. How many cities are there in Northern Ireland and can you name them?
20. Which two Welsh counties don't have a city?

History Questions

21. Who was King of England from 1199 until his death in 1216?
22. Which city was the capital of the Anglo Saxon Kingdom of Wessex?
23. Which 1704 battle was the Duke of Marlborough's most famous victory?
24. Who was the first Archbishop of Canterbury?
25. Who was King of Britain from 1760 until 1820?

(answers on page 37)

Dates for Your Diary

May

Sun 1st **10:30am Holy Communion**

1:30pm Holy Baptism

Wed 4th 10am Holy Communion

Sat 7th 6-9pm Social Event - Snail Race

Sun 8th **10:30am Holy Communion**

1:30pm Holy Baptism

Mon 9th 7:30pm PCC Meeting

Wed 11th 10am Holy Communion

Sat 14th Christian Aid sponsored walk

Sun 15th **10:30am Holy Communion**

12pm APCM with Lunch

Wed 18th 10am Holy Communion

Thur 19th 11am Lydgate Lodge Holy communion

Fri 20th 10am-12pm Coffee Morning for Christian Aid

Sun 22nd **10:30am Holy Communion**

Wed 25th 10am Holy Communion

Sun 29th **10:30am Holy Communion**

1:30pm Holy Baptism

June

Wed 1st 10am Holy Communion

Sun 5th **10:30am Holy Communion**

12:30pm Queen's Jubilee Afternoon Tea with live music

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
Then select 'Videos' from the side bar.**

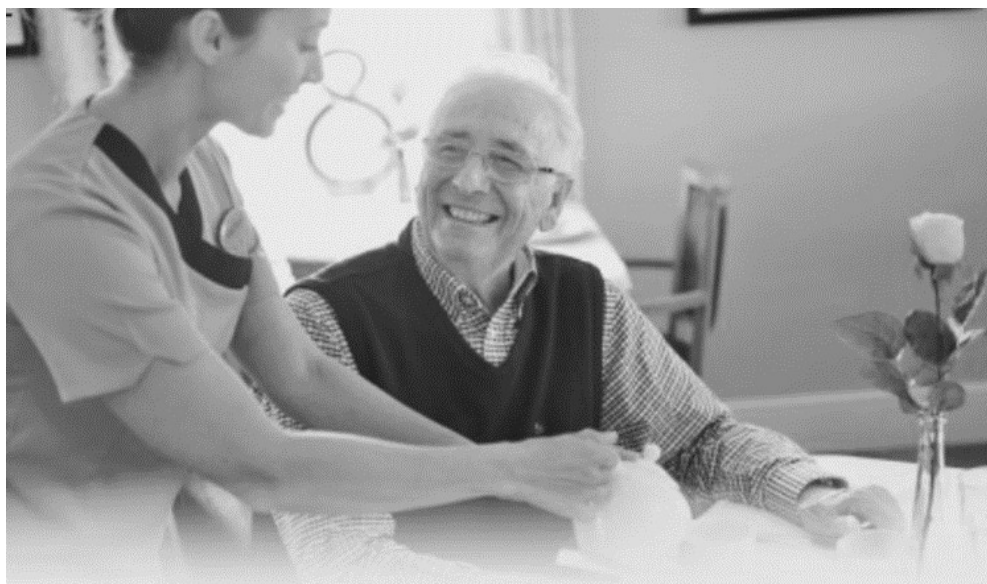
To join a 'Live' service look for the right time on the Diary page. You can also view previous services from the same location.



QUIZ ANSWERS

(Easter Answers) (1) Chile, (2) Good Friday, (3) Palm Sunday, (4) Ascension Day, (5) Mary Magdalene, (Royal Answers) (6) Sandringham, (7) 1947 Westminster Abbey, (8) April, (9) George III, (10) Mount Kenya, Foothills, (Parliamentary Answers) (11) 650, (12) Hansard. (13) Dennis Skinner, (14) The Speaker of the House of Commons, (15) Uxbridge and South Ruislip, (British Cities) (16) Exeter and Plymouth, (17) Saint David's, (18) Inverness, (19) Five (Armagh, Belfast, Derry, Lisburn, and Newry) (20) Powys and Mid Glamorgan, (History Answers) (21) King John, (22) Winchester, (23) Battle of Blenheim, (24) St. Augustine, (25) George III.

Albert



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Lydgate Lodge

carehome.co.uk review

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FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS—We welcome into our Church family:-
Cohen Michael Ashton
Penny Irwin
Fraser Blake Ireland



DEATHS

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



Marie Kerfoot
Patricia Makepeace
Roger Crook
Margaret Aldred
Velma Roberts

WEDDINGS

We pray for all who are preparing for marriage in the coming months



Tumble Bees

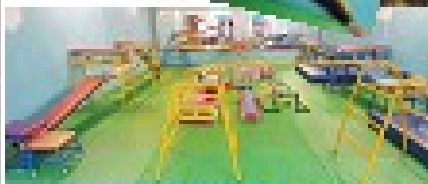


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We place our Parish Magazine on our website each month therefore YOUR Advert reaches many more people.

To advertise in St Mary's Parish Magazine

Contact: The Editor (see page 2)

Annual Fee for Advertising:

Quarter Page £35.00

Half Page £70.00

Full Page £110.00

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Get in touch to discuss your needs and to book an appointment.

To Contact Shirley Tel : 07805 804 015

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. Regular long term bookings negotiable.

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

Lauren Adamson 07885626603

ABC Group Adults, Babies and Children

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

Nikki Esberger 07932026419

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

Young at Heart 2nd & 4th 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

Knit & Natter Group: Wednesday 1-3pm

Elaine 07894 402332

Services

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

See Page 36 for more details

Please see inside for details of how to join a streamed service