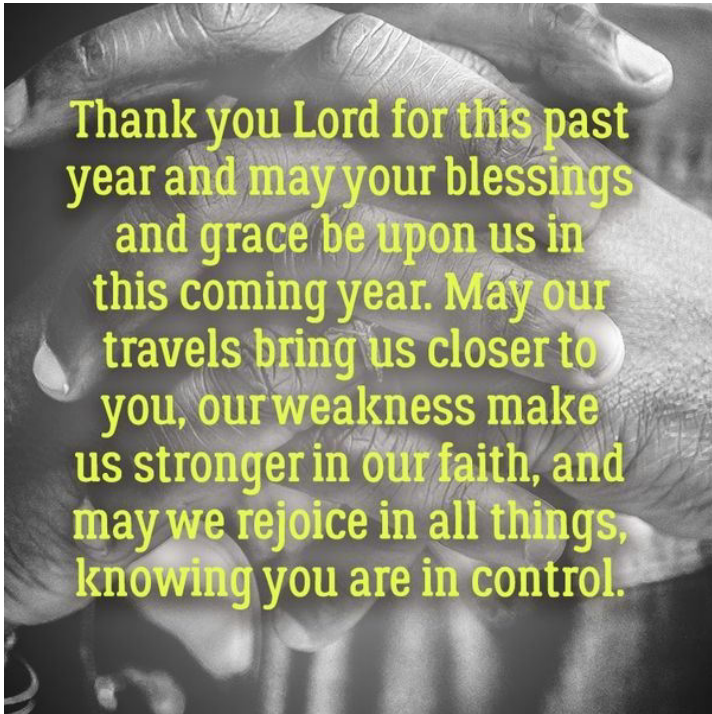


# Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

Happy New Year

**January/February 2022**



**Worship Online at:  
[Facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk](https://www.facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk)**

**[www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://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 07740760556

Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

**Assistant Churchwardens:** David Townsend, Pernoe Liburd

**Deanery Synod Reps** Brian Gledhill

Gary Mortimer

**Verger:** Gail Townsend 0113 252 8710

**Organist:** Mr Stephen Parker

**PCC Secretary:** Dawn Tattersfield

**PCC Treasurer** Barbara Tate 07792 211095

**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** Neal Pinder-Packard 0113 252 4001

**and Legacy Officer**

**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!

## **In this Month's Magazine:**

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**Do not be afraid to face  
life. This New Year has a  
lot of promises for us.  
Trust God and everything  
will be fine.**

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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](http://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](https://twitter.com/stmarywoodkirk)

## **Wheelchair Access**

A wheelchair is available to help people move easily between the church and Dewsbury Road. Just ask.

**Feed yourself with God's  
word. That way you will not  
feel the hunger. Stay full  
with God's love!**



## Vicar's Letter

Happy New Year to everyone – a time to start afresh – a time for those dreaded New Year's Resolutions.

The problem with most resolutions is that they jump to the end of the story rather than trying to shape the narrative. It's not that you shouldn't have lofty goals. But goals are outcomes; resolutions are actions. Think of it as though you were looking back after having achieved your goal. What would you have needed to do to get to that point? A good resolution is one that focuses on and embraces those things.

If your New Year's resolution is to lose 10 pounds, pay off your credit card debt, write a book, or build a business, then what you are telling yourself is that the only joy is in achieving the end goal. You are setting yourself up to despise the process and discipline that stands between you and that goal.

What if instead of focusing on the goal, you focused on embracing the activities that bring you closer to the goal? So, instead of saying "I'm going to lose 10 pounds," how about, "I'm going to work out three times a week for 30 minutes, no matter what else I've got going on." Or instead of, "I'm going to write a book in 2022," you agree to "write 500 words each day--even if it's 500 words of gibberish."

Do you notice the difference in the way those two resolutions were re-written? Here are the three basic rules to writing solid and achievable New Year's resolutions.

First, the focus of a resolution is on the process, not the goal. By committing to the process you are not only improving your chances of reaching your goal, but you are also creating a behaviour that will pay off regardless of the specific goal achieved. Achievement, like happiness, is the by-product of a process, not just the attainment of a goal.

Second, the success metric of a resolution is tied to the discipline of performance as opposed to that of achievement. Take, for example, the process of writing 500 words each day. By setting a daily word count you are creating a habit. Results come from the process and discipline of doing, rather than that of planning and waiting.

Third, far too many people fool themselves into believing that what's standing between them and their goal is just the decision to pursue it, when what's really standing in the way is the process that they don't want to deal with. It goes like this: "I can lose 20 pounds, I just haven't decided to do it yet--but I will, and then you'll see!" or "Yeah, I'll write that book someday. It's a brilliant book and I just don't have the time to do it." That is the essentially flawed foundation of most New Year's resolutions. In our imaginations, we are all writing acceptance speeches for our induction into the innovators' hall of fame. The difference is that those who actually get the award haven't shirked the discipline needed to get them there.

Resolutions aren't destinations; they are the habits and the behaviours that give us license to reach our destinations. When we look back, it's the discipline of those habits that has paved the long and winding road to where we are today.

And so spiritually how can we this year deepen our relationship with God—can we set aside time on a regular basis to pray, to listen to worship songs, to read the bible etc. It is only by going through this process do we grow as Christians—as understanding deepens, faith grows and the outcome of a deepened faith is a willingness to serve—faith in action.

I have come across this website

[www.revrhona.wixsite.com/website](http://www.revrhona.wixsite.com/website) which is both interactive and multisensory on Prayer. It is worth exploring—why not use your set aside time to take a look and let me know what you think.

I wish you all a peaceful and blessed year—Sharon

# **CAPTION COMPETITION Winner!**



**Thank you to all who wrote in and gave an answer to the question, “What are the Alpacas thinking or saying?”**

**The winner as picked by Dave & Gail is:-**

**I don't now about you AI, but I wish these two would wind their necks in.”**

**Trevor Sykes—a prize will be coming your way!**

The Christmas story is a defiant rejection of the notion that darkness always wins and invites us to look for the light that is there when the gloom all-powerful, **writes Bishop Nick in a Christmas reflection for the Yorkshire Post.**

“Nearly three thousand years ago a Middle Eastern poet wrote words that must have sounded like nonsense to his audience: ‘The people who walked through darkness have seen a great light.’ It goes on to say: ‘those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.’

“It sounds alright in a candle-lit church during a carol service, but does it mean anything when you get out of the building and back into the realities of life?

“Well, Isaiah was addressing people who were fearful about the future.

“They belonged to a small territory which was always being squeezed by neighbouring powers or the competing great empires. They were unsure to which side of the latest threat they should pledge their allegiance. And, of course, this meant political, economic and military allegiance.

“The question these people faced every day was how to ensure their security and freedom in an uncertain world in which the future was often shaped not by themselves, but by others. Calculation was always a bit of a gamble.

“Isaiah wants to warn his people to remember who they are, what they are about and where they have come from.

“And, running through their story was an apparently ridiculous notion that however dark their circumstances became, the light of God’s presence couldn’t be snuffed out.

“Not just God’s presence when everything was going well for them, but when the darkness descended and the future seemed to be shutting down. ‘The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.’

“I think this is pertinent to where we find ourselves in Yorkshire this Christmas.

“If 2020 was a challenging and dark year for so many people, 2021 promised much before delivering little certainty.

Promises of a return to 'normal' gradually got forgotten as the world came to terms with continuing uncertainty and viral predominance as the only norms. "We continued to learn that human beings cannot control everything and are not invincible kings of the world. Infections, illness, bereavement, death, isolation can't be organised according to convenience.

"But, the interesting thing here – to which we become inured by familiarity – is that this is precisely the sort of world Isaiah wrote in and into which a baby was born in Bethlehem.

"The story of Christmas is not essentially about making us feel comfortable, but, rather, about God opting into the radical discomfort of a world such as this. The real world we know and enjoy and endure.

"Darkness is part of that reality and can't be avoided. Indeed, light has no reference if there is no darkness against which it becomes meaningful.

"Which, in itself, sounds all a bit miserable. But, the Christmas story is one to surprise us in every generation. For it invites us to look for the light that is there when the going is tough and the gloom seems all-powerful.

"One of the radical challenges the grown-up Jesus would bring to his people was simply this: don't just look for the presence of God when all is well, your problems are solved, your mum is healed or you think all is going to be OK in the world; look for the presence – the light – of God even while the darkness persists.

"In terms of Jesus's first friends, this sounded like: 'Can you spot the presence of God in your world even while you remain under Roman military occupation, your freedoms are curtailed, illness is all around and the chances of your children surviving infancy are pretty low?'

"This is why I think Christmas should be a great celebration. It is a defiant rejection of the notion that darkness always wins. It dares to see through the immediate and re-frame 'reality' in the light of the light that, as John's Gospel puts it, cannot be extinguished.

"This isn't fanciful romanticism or, even worse, some form of easy escapism – religion as an opiate to keep people calm; rather, it takes the world seriously, looks tragedy in the eye, and still insists that this is where God is to be found.

Continued on page 31

## Good King Wenceslas

Do you know? It's amazing where you can go on a story inspired just by a Christmas Carol!

It just so happened that as I was driving to church on Boxing Day, I heard Good King Wenceslas on the radio, and it was only as I came into church that I connected the words of the carol with an act occurring on Boxing Day, otherwise known as the Feast of St Stephen, which celebrates the long tradition of charitable giving on the Second Day of Christmas.

The carol tells the tale of the King seeing a poor man out in the snowy cold weather and setting off with his page to take the man food, drink and logs for a fire, telling about the difficulties of the journey but ending with the moral that if you are a blessing to others then you yourself will be blessed.

Whilst this is quite a positive moral tale, it stems from a rather grisly tale (well it is based in medieval times when quite a lot of grisly things seem to have happened!).

The man we sing about was actually a Duke of Bohemia and lived from c907 to c935 and was assassinated on the orders of his brother (Boleslaus the cruel).

Wenceslas was regarded as a martyr and saint almost straight after his death but he wasn't promoted to King until Roman Emperor Otto I gave him this title posthumously a few years after his death.

People in Bohemia and England in particular began to venerate St Wenceslas.

One 12th-century preacher said:

*"His deeds I think you know better than I could tell you; for, as is read in his Passion, no one doubts that, rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by*

every difficulty.”

His remains are in St Vitus’ Cathedral in Prague and his Saint’s Day is a public holiday in the Czech Republic. So there’s something to think about next time you sing Good King Wenceslas.

In addition to this about the King himself, I also found out that the words to the carol were written in 1853 by John Mason Neale but the melody is much older, a 13th-century tune called ‘Tempus adest floridum’ in praise of the spring. A translation of Tempus adest floridum goes something like this;

Spring has now unwrapped the flowers, The day is fast reviving Life in all her growing powers Towards the light is striving Gone the iron touch of cold Winter time and frost time Seedlings working through the mould Now make up for lost time	Herb and plant that, winter long Slumbered at their leisure Now bestirring, green and strong Find in growth their pleasure All the world with beauty fills Gold the green enhancing Flowers make glee among the hills Set the meadow dancing.
Through each wonder of fair days God himself expresses Beauty follows all His ways As the world He blesses: So, as He renews the earth, Artist without rival In His grace of glad new birth We must seek revival	Earth puts on her dress of glee Flowers and grasses hide her We go forth in charity Brothers all beside her For, as man this glory sees In th’awakening season Reason learns the heart’s decrees Hearts are led by reason

May we all be a blessing to others like Wenceslas (but not suffer his grisly medieval fate).

Love Dawn x

## Should we Die To Ourselves

For years, there has been a silent message that most of us have been taught to accept. It is based on an idea that is portrayed as Biblical. The message is that to be a good Christian in any situation, no matter how hard, you must die to yourself.

This message has been passed down in various forms, such as:

You should always be nice.

You should only think of others.

It's wrong to think about yourself.

In fact, you might have even heard these messages summarized in one powerful statement: You must die to yourself.

The subtle power of this message is strong, especially for women, because it is often portrayed as what Jesus wants. After all, didn't Jesus say: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me"? ([Luke 9:23](#))

This phrase has been used out of context to encourage millions of women to:

destroy their health

stay in abusive marriages

let co-workers take advantage of them

bury their God-given talents

sit by while friends walk all over them

Do you really think that is what Jesus meant?

When verses are ripped out of context and used as a weapon, it's toxic. You may not even know that you have somehow internalised this toxic interpretation of Jesus's words. You just know that you are exhausted, hurting, empty, and overwhelmed.

I've been there. As a Christian woman, I believed it was my job to say "yes" to every single person around me. I wanted to serve and help others, and I thought that my job was to "die to myself" in order to meet the needs of everyone else. This worked for a while, until I completely burnt out. I ended up feeling empty and alone. I was angry at others and angry at God. I had worked so hard to help others, why was I feeling this way?

I loved Jesus, and I genuinely cared for other people. I just did not have a clue how to honour the as yourself part of the "love others"



I loved Jesus, and I genuinely cared for other people. I just did not have a clue how to honour the as yourself part of the “love others” commandment.

I didn’t know how to let Jesus love ME.

I didn’t know that loving others is a two-way street.

I didn’t know that contrary to what I had been taught, saying “yes” to Jesus meant saying “yes” to caring for my own heart and learning to meet my own needs.

But don’t take my word for it.

Jesus said to deny yourself to follow him. What did He mean by this. Let us listen to what Jesus said about what it means to die to yourself. Later in his life, when talking to his disciples, Jesus used a metaphor to describe the process of dying to yourself:

“Listen carefully, unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you will have it forever, real, and eternal.” [John 12:24-25](#).

A grain of wheat must be buried deep in the ground in order to become what it is really meant to become. That burial is like a death. That grain stops being a grain when it gets buried. Something old is gone. But what happens to that grain? It sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. That grain becomes even more powerful. It shines even more brightly.

I think the meaning of dying to yourself is a process of letting go of what was, in order to become who you are meant to be.

This idea is backed up in other passages, as we learn what it means to follow Jesus. Here is what John says:

But whoever did want him,  
who believed he was who he claimed  
and would do what he said,  
He made to be their true selves,  
their child-of-God selves.

[John 1:11-12](#)

John is saying that when we [follow Jesus](#), believe in him, and do what he asks, we must become even more of our true selves, the

beautiful soul that God made. We know from Jesus's words that the process can feel like death, like we are losing all that we have known. Indeed, letting go of old ways can be painful. Change is no small thing. But here is the promise: We are dying to old ways in order to become the fierce, light-bearing person that God made.

When we follow Jesus, we become our true selves, a child-of-God.

I do not think this process is not a rigid form of self-denial. It is not a "grin and bear it" way of being in the world. In fact, it's quite the opposite. If you are taking that approach, If we are being honest: there are parts of us that is still hanging on to old ways. It is not actually dying to yourself.

Instead, consider this.

What if dying to yourself means dying to:

[toxic patterns](#) of relating to other people  
people pleasing as a way to get love  
shame and self-hatred

trying to perfect ourselves in order to earn approval

playing small so others will not be threatened by us

believing that we don't matter and that our life does not have value

What if dying to ourselves means dying to the lie that God does not want more for you?

What if dying to ourselves means saying "yes" to doing the work of becoming our true self?

What if dying to ourselves means saying "yes" to following Jesus as he seeks to heal us and our relationships from the inside out?

This is the what I believe it means to say "yes" to the life God has for us. It is what I believe it means to grow in emotional and spiritual health. It means "dying to" toxic patterns of relating to God, ourselves, and others. And, it means saying "yes" to following [the Good Shepherd](#) as he leads you to becoming more of our God-created self.

Invite God to Draw Near.

Prayerfully invite God to [draw near](#). Listen to what God has to say to us? Is it possible he is nudging us toward saying "yes" to what we need and want? Do not rush into making big change at this point. Simply notice any assumptions we have been making about God.

We need to grow in self + God-awareness. It is to begin to notice messages that we might be listening to that aren't actually what God wants or what is best for you. This is the first step in making what a "Yes List." It's starting to think about what we want to say yes to in order to honour the person God made. It may feel uncomfortable at first. That is OK. But we must find ways of relating to other people and start saying "Yes" to the life God has for us.

Gail x



Want to Start Yoga?

Start by bending down to pick up your dog poo "known as the downward dog position" then put in a bin!

A balanced diet is a piece of cake in each hand!

If we shouldn't eat at night why is there a light in the fridge!

Age is an issue of mind over matter—if you don't mind—it doesn't matter!

Hairdressers name "Crops and Bobbers"  
Seen in a magazine—Alice

# Mary, did you know?



One of my favourite Carols is Mary, did you know, through the ages this carol has been widely debated, and still this day many seem unable to stop debating whether “Mary, Did You Know?” is theologically accurate or even a good song.

The text of “Mary, Did You Know?” was written in 1984 by singer and songwriter Mark Lowry. Musician Buddy Greene wrote the music to the song in 1991 while he and Lowry were touring with the Gaither Vocal Band. Below are the full lyrics:-

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Would save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your baby boy  
Has come to make you new;  
This Child that you delivered Will soon deliver you?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Would calm a storm with His hand?  
Did you know that your baby boy  
Has walked where angels trod,  
And when you kiss your little baby  
You've kissed the face of God?  
Mary, did you know?*

*The blind will see, the deaf will hear,  
The dead will live again,  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak  
The praises of the Lamb!*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Is Lord all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy  
Will one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy  
Was Heaven's perfect Lamb,  
And the sleeping Child you're holding  
Is the great, the Great I AM?  
Oh, Mary, Mary, did you know?*

God had a plan and this young girl, a virgin, had been chosen to be the mother of his son Jesus. I think God chose Mary because her faith was so strong, and we can believe that because when the Angel Gabriel came to her, she did not hesitate to say "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. 'Mary, Did You Know?' Yes, I think Mary knew, what [are](#) your thoughts.

Gail

## Help available at the Numbers below...

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**National Domestic Abuse Helpline**  
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**Mind**  
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**Victim Support**  
**0808 168 9111**  
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**Cruse Bereavement**  
**0800 808 1677**  
(Mon-Fri 9-5)

**ChildLine**  
**0800 1111**  
(24hrs)

**Action on Elder Abuse**  
**0808 808 8141**  
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**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](mailto: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](mailto:vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org)

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

**BURN'S**  
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## **St Mary's Playgroup Woodkirk**

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- Thursday 9.30 - 11.25

All sessions are £9.50 each , paid termly.

For more information please email -  
[stmarysplaygroup12@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stmarysplaygroup12@hotmail.co.uk)

Or check out our Facebook page -  
St Mary's Playgroup Woodkirk

Charity number 1083568





**Christingle Services  
and  
Candle Collection**

**The  
Children's  
Society**

Hello there

I just wanted to write and say how wonderful it was to see so many people, young and old, at our Christingle Services on Christmas Eve.

A wonderful team of folks got together on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December and got stuck in making 280 Christingles, a total of 1120 cocktail sticks that had to be loaded with jellies, raisins and marshmallows (as well as a few we scoffed as well!).

Many thanks to all those who came and helped out, it certainly was a case of many hands make light work. A special thank you to new team members Brownie member Alayna, Islah, Elana and Anna who enjoyed it so much they cancelled a trip to the cinema! Thank you so much.

Then of course we came to the two services, both services were well attended with families getting involved in the building of the nativity scene with the children bringing up the figures and we sang carols and learned about the Children's Society and it's excellent work. Some people had remembered their candle collection boxes too. A big thank you to the Rainbows and Brownies who sent some of their boxes to the service.

Whilst I haven't got all the collection boxes back yet, so far the collecting candles and the collections at the two services have raised an amazing £269, and so a huge thank you to you all for your generosity.

Dawn Tattersfield



An American photographer on vacation was inside Westminster Abbey taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read '£10,000 per call'.

The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for.

The priest replied that it was a direct line to heaven and that for £10,000 you could talk to God.

The American thanked the priest and went along his way.

Next stop was in Salisbury

There, at the cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same sign under it.

He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in London and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was.

She told him that it was a direct line to heaven and that for £10,000 he could talk to God.

'O.K., thank you,' said the American.

He then travelled to Canterbury, Lincoln, Stoke, Durham and Liverpool. In every Cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same '£10,000 per call' sign under it.

The American, upon arriving in the N of England decided to travel to Yorkshire and check out to if the Tykes had the same phone.

He arrived in York, and again, as he entered York Minster, there was the same golden telephone, but this time the sign under it read '50 pence per call.'

The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign.

'Reverend, I've travelled all over England and I've seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to heaven, but in the rest of England, the price was £10,000 per call. Why is it only 50 pence here?'

The Vicar smiled and answered, 'You're in Yorkshire now, son .... it's a local call.'

Trevor Sykes

## **School Christmas Services/Concerts**

I just had to write and say how wonderful it was to see two of our three Primary Schools coming into Church this Christmas. Sadly, Westerton Primary Academy were unable to bring their Christmas Concert to us, but we were treated by two evening concerts by Blackgates Primary Academy and the whole of Hill Top Primary Academy came for their end of term Christmas Concert on the last day of school.

Years 2, 3 and 4 presented their concert on 13<sup>th</sup> December and were supported by lots of parents with years 5 and 6 presenting theirs on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

The children were wonderful, singing with gusto and their reading was lovely and clear, they had all worked very hard preparing and it was lovely to see them. I was present on the Monday evening and was really pleased when the children sang the Christmas Alphabet, a song I'd not heard in ages.

A collection for the work of the Children's Society was taken on each night and a total of £140.46 was raised, so a huge thank you to all the Staff, Children and Parents.

On Friday morning, it was a cold but beautifully sunny morning for the children of Hill Top for their walk from school to church. They were treated to a wave from Santa who was waving from a rooftop on Hey Beck Lane as they went past.

Sadly the situation with the Pandemic meant that the only adults in attendance were the staff and the parents who had walked along with the children.

Those of us who were lucky enough to be in church heard some lovely singing and the pupils of Year 5 led the readings, telling the traditional Nativity story interspersed with a selection of carols and Christmas songs.

Towards the end of the service, Hill Top introduced me to a new song, and it was even lovelier as one pupil sang the opening lines as a solo, with a lovely clear voice.

The tune and the words were lovely, and although I can't share the music with you, I can share the words;

*Follow that star, from wherever you are  
Follow that star, from wherever you are*

*It burns like an ember  
It's the heart of December  
So follow that star*

*Follow that light, let it lead through the night,  
Follow that light, let it lead through the night,  
It shines like a beacon  
To the faith that you're keeping  
So follow that light*

Thank you so much to the children, staff and parents of Blackgates and Hill Top Primary Academies for bringing your lovely performances to church, and here's hoping Westerton pupils will be able to share with us as well next year.

Thank you

Dawn

## HOPE AND LOVE

The body of the church is hope and love and committed to doing what Jesus did while in His body with the intent of establishing **Hope and Love**. Granted, Jesus did a lot of things while in His body and most churches are doing something similar to what He did. But I like to think a church full of Hope and Love goes beyond basic discipleship and focuses on the actions of Jesus.

Hope and Love in our church can maybe help someone who is lost, we want to provide a practical way for them to find somewhere where they feel comfortable where they feel Gods presence, sound rounded with Hope and Love.

The Bible uses a number to measure something, on average, twice in every chapter and Jesus is no different. He measures the length of time He will be dead when He talks about being in the belly of the earth for three days. He also measures love when He explains that a man with 100 sheep left the 99 to search for one.

But in Luke 17:17–19, ten lepers come to Jesus for healing and only one returns to thank Him. Jesus knew how many lepers came to Him, so maybe we should question how many lepers are in our communities. In other words, how many homeless people, lonely people, kids in foster care, and elderly in convalescent homes are these in our area we have not reached already.

Jesus did not simply sit in the synagogue and wait for people to come to Him. He went to them. At St. Mary's we have managed to go out into our community and visit those in Care homes, Schools and those in their homes that need our help and friendship, Jesus asks us to follow his lead to go out into the community to share his word, love and Hope. Remember whenever Jesus walked out into the country side and met up with a demon-possessed person, before He could say a word the demon called to Him by name and begged for mercy. The demon knew who He was on a spiritual level.

n Mark 10:49–51, blind Bart cried out to Jesus for help. Jesus asked a very simple question. He said, "What can I do for you?" Once we get out into our community maybe we can try and **identify some of the problems** and **walk** with the hurting in our community, and the key question we need to ask is how you can help, and remember to

respond to the answer to our offer to help with love.

Being a church with community outreach, we make the choice to act in practical ways that we can address the real needs of our community.

God bless

GAIL

### **Bishop Nick (continued from page 11)**

“I once got into big trouble for suggesting in a book that the carol ‘O come, all ye faithful might usefully be rephrased to say ‘O come, all ye faithless.’

“I wasn’t actually proposing we sing different words to it, but musing that all the people in the Nativity story are odd. They don’t fit the bill when it comes to contemporary expectations of kingship.

“Wouldn’t God go for the people who are likely candidates for sainthood? Instead, he draws in shepherds (while at their work – not in church), foreign (pagan) stargazers, hotel owners, probably ordinary family members, and whoever else was around at the time.

“These weren’t people who had found all the answers, but they knew the daily struggle to survive in a complex and contingent world. And it was to them that the light appeared, interrupting the routine of the everyday and illuminating the hint of a possibility that the darkness doesn’t have the last word after all.

“Go to a carol service this Christmas and this is the story to be discovered, the experience – light in the darkness – to be had. It might seem to be hidden behind a screen of tinsel and candle wax; but it draws us into the light that guides us through uncertainty and fear.”

Bishop Nick (first issued in the Yorkshire Post)

## **Sulky Teenager!**

Have you any family traits? My dad was a bit of a sulker, and I realised I must have inherited some of his sulkiness at the end of November!

I was to have travelled to Devon to spend the weekend with my sister but sadly the snow and strong winds brought by ‘Storm Arwen’ put paid to that, and so I sulked.

As I couldn’t go to Devon I didn’t want to go anywhere, I was a ‘sulky teenager’!

Well this got me thinking that there must have been examples of people ,who ‘sulked’ in the bible, and sure enough I came up with a few instances, where although the bible doesn’t mention the word ‘sulking’ we can imagine the characters in the passages would have sulked. Here are the ones I came up with (I’m sure you’ll be able to think of others too).

### ***Jonah***

The book of Jonah is in the Old Testament and is only 4 chapters long, but if you have time, have a read through them, we hear about Jonah trying to avoid doing what God asked him to do which resulted in his famous journey into the belly of a big fish. Jonah seeks God’s forgiveness and survives, then goes to do what God asks.

However, I think it is in the last chapter we really see Jonah ‘sulking’ because he isn’t happy with what God has done. Jonah wanted God to confine his love and mercy just to the Israelites but God shows Jonah that His care and concern, His purpose to save extends to the whole world if they will repent.



### ***Ten of the disciples***

My next example of sulking is found in Matthew's Gospel (20 v20-28) and is on the occasion when the mother of James and John (the son's of Zebedee) asks Jesus if her two sons may sit one at his right hand and one at his left. I can imagine the other 10 disciples sulking about this request (the Bible says they were 'indignant'). Why should those two disciples get that 'honour' above any of the others? Jesus of course, uses the request as an example to further stress that this is not what his message is about. He explains again and again that the Kingdom of God is for the humble, there will be no lording it over anyone else.

### ***The brother of the Prodigal Son***

In Luke 15 v11-31 we read about the man with two sons otherwise known as the Prodigal Son. If you have a spare five minutes, look it up. In summary, the youngest of two brothers goes to his father and asks for his inheritance now, which the father agrees to. Then off the young man goes living it up and having a great time, all whilst his older brother continues to work with their father. Of course he young man runs out of money and ends up working feeding pigs and is so hungry he contemplates eating the pig's food. But then he decides to go home and seek forgiveness and ask to be set on as a hired hand. But when his father sees him approaching he is delighted and puts on a feast and clothes his son in robes. It is perhaps not surprising that the elder son is unhappy about this as he has continued to work hard all the time his wayward little brother was living it up.

### ***The Devil sulked!***

Matthew's Gospel again (4 v 1-11) tells us the story of when Jesus had been in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights and the devil comes to tempt him. He tells Jesus to make stones become bread, throw himself off a high tower, and promises Jesus he will give him

everything he can see if Jesus will only bow down and worship him. Jesus responds quoting scripture, and at the end it states “Then the devil left him...” yeah, I bet he did, and I bet he was sulking as well!

### ***The workers in the vineyard***

My final example of sulking in a bible story is back in Matthew’s gospel (20 v1 – 14) and is the story of the man who hires workers for his vineyard. Now you may think this is fine and no reason to sulk, but the problem is, he carries on hiring workers throughout the day, but when it comes to the end of that day and he is paying all his workers, he pays them all the same amount whether they have worked all day or whether they were only hired for perhaps the last hour or two of the day. Naturally the workers who were hired at the start of the day sulk, why should those who have only worked an hour or two get the same as them who have worked all day? But the owner of the vineyard reminds them that they agreed to work all day for a specified sum. That may be so, but perhaps we can sympathise with their sulk!

Looking back I can see that three of my five sulking examples come from the Gospel of Matthew, I wondered if there was a reason for this?

Looking Matthew up in my Bible Handbook, it tells me that the gospel is attributed to the onetime tax collector turned Apostle Matthew and says that he was a Jewish Christian writing for a church mainly composed of Jewish Christians and that Matthew was writing it as a kind of ‘bridge’ connecting Jesus with what has gone before, it was important that Matthew showed the new faith as being rooted in Judaism.

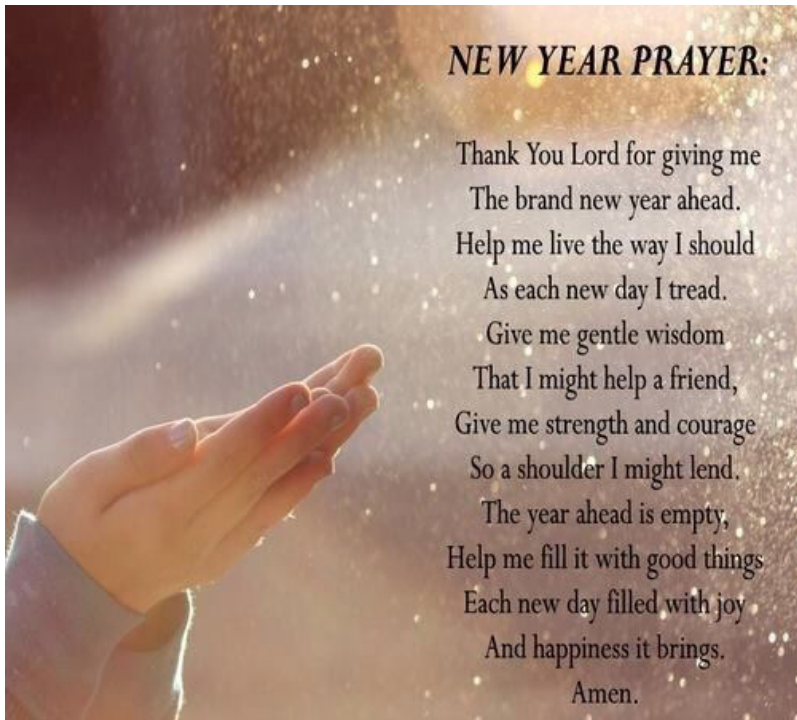
Perhaps it's mere coincidence that Matthews Gospel was the treasury of sulking stories, but as Matthew links Jesus with the fulfilling of the Old Testament prophecy as well as forcibly denouncing the hypocritical outlook of the Pharisees, we probably shouldn't be that surprised, as I'm sure there were a fair few sulky Pharisees about too!

Thinking about it, I was sulking because I couldn't do something I wanted to do, but as it happened, it meant I could do something else, so although I was disappointed at not being able to see my sister, I was alright later in the day.

It's made me smile finding examples of other 'sulky' individuals, you'll have to tell me if you can think of any other examples.

With love and no sulks!

Dawn x



### ***NEW YEAR PRAYER:***

Thank You Lord for giving me  
The brand new year ahead.  
Help me live the way I should  
As each new day I tread.  
Give me gentle wisdom  
That I might help a friend,  
Give me strength and courage  
So a shoulder I might lend.  
The year ahead is empty,  
Help me fill it with good things  
Each new day filled with joy  
And happiness it brings.  
Amen.

# 'EVERY PERSON MATTERS ABSOLUTELY', BISHOP NICK WRITES AFTER TRAGIC CHANNEL DEATHS



“Every person matters, as we are made in the image of God”, Bishop Nick has written powerfully about the tragic deaths in the Channel of those trying to reach the UK.

Please find below his script for Thought For The Day on BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, broadcast on Thursday, November 25.

Bishop Nick said: “I was on a train back from London to Leeds last night when I caught up with the news that some people had drowned in the Channel while trying to reach England from France. By the time I got home the number had risen to over twenty and a song of lament was going around inside my head.

“Some years ago the Canadian songwriter Bruce Cockburn was in Afghanistan. He happened to be at Kandahar Airport as the coffins of fallen soldiers were taken on board an airplane for repatriation – that is, the return of the bodies to those who loved them back home. He wrote: “Each one lost is everyone’s loss, you see; each one lost is a vital part of you and me.” It is a hauntingly simple and beautiful elegy in the face of human mortality. It’s full of empathy for those whose

world would now have changed for ever and whose grief would be unbearable.

"But, the point he makes is that if we don't have our basic humanity in common, what is then left? This reflects the famous John Donne assertion that "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less..."

"It seems that both Cockburn and Donne were able to penetrate through the dominant politics and positioning of their day and find the truth at the heart of it all – that whenever people die, a hole is left into which pour the tears of the bereaved. The difference between the fallen westerners in Afghanistan and the drowned easterners at Calais is that we label the latter, question their choices, and forget their identity.

"The French President, Emmanuel Macron, put it well when, recognising human solidarity, he offered first his sympathy to the families of those who drowned. This isn't just a time for politics; rather, it is a time for digging deeper emotionally and being touched by tragedy. I don't know the names or circumstances of those who have died, but their death changes the world.

"This goes to the heart of Christian faith when faced with tragedy and loss. The Judeo-Christian tradition begins with people being "made in the image of God" and, therefore, being of infinite value – a value that goes beyond their economic or utilitarian function. Every person matters absolutely – not just those we deem acceptable.

"Naive sentiment? Maybe. But, it also happens to go to the heart of what Christian faith refuses to negotiate.

"Each one lost in the Channel had a name, a history and people who loved them. God knows their name even if I don't."

Bishop Nick

## **Church Mouse Tales.**

The other day, I asked my friend Hubert, the Black Canon - innocently, you understand - what he might do on his day off?

‘Day off?’ he cried, with pained expression, ‘I’m a man of God you know, I live a quiet and humble life with meagre food for my belly - a simple existence of prayer and study.’

‘Even more reason to have a day off’, I observed.

‘A day off is still a day’, he mused, ‘there is sunrise and sunset and things to do in between. A person can’t just miss the day out completely – it simply can’t be done.’

‘Well no, the point is, you can have a day when you can choose to do something – or do nothing. It’s up to you..’ I folded my arms in satisfaction.

‘Hmmm’, he looked perplexed, ‘I’m not sure I follow.’

It was clear my simple explanation had not had the desired effect. I tried a different approach.

‘It’s a day,’ I explained, ‘when you can set the prayer list and pick the hymns too.’

His eyes widened.

‘Keep your voice down!’ he whispered. ‘Don’t let the Abbott hear of this...this...Anarchy!’

‘Oh – did I mention?’ I asked lightly, ‘the Abbott is here..’

‘What!’

‘Hello Brother Hubert’, said the Abbott with a smile.

‘Er – hello Abbott – I was just saying, I am about to start the prayer rota – after I’ve cleaned....’ The Abbott held up his hand.

‘It’s fine Brother Hubert’, he smiled, ‘it’s my day off – let’s not talk shop...what about a nice cup of tea?’

Hubert smiled at the Abbott then looked at me with accusing eyes.

I smiled back innocently....

Misha x

## Albert's New Year 2022 Quiz

1. Which ocean covers about a third of the earth's surface?
2. The patella is better known as which body part?
3. Which American city is known as "The Windy City"?
4. Which actor sings the theme tune to TV's "New Tricks"?
5. In which conflict is George Orwell's "Hoage to Catatonia" set?
6. Jacob Marley was the partner of which literary character?
7. Which comedy duo presented TV game show "Shooting Stars"?
8. Through which English City did Lady Godiva ride naked?
9. Of which European country is "Sofia" the capital city?
10. Who was the first man to walk on the moon?
11. Who wrote the "Harry Potter" novels?
12. A set of scales represents which sign of the zodiac?
13. In the nursery rhyme "Hey Diddle Diddle" what jumped over the moon?
14. Which Irish comedian hosts "Mock the Week"?
15. Of which type of fruit is "Granny Smith" a variety?
16. Which cartoon character works for the "Slate & Gravel" company?
17. In 1933, Percy Shaw invented what road safety device?
18. Which London thoroughfare is traditionally associate with newspapers?
19. At their nearest points how far apart are Russia & America? Is it a) 4 kms b) 40kms c) 400kms?
20. According to singer Katie Melua how many bicycles are in Beijing? Is it a) 8 million b) 9 million c) 10 million?

Answers on Page 41

## **Dates for Your Diary**

Sunday 2nd January—Holy Communion

Weds 5th January—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Sunday 9th January—Holy Communion

Monday 10th January—PCC Meeting (On line 7.30pm)

Weds 12th January—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Thursday 13th January—Young at Heart 2.00pm

Sunday 16th January—Holy Communion

Weds 19th January—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Sunday 23rd January—Holy Communion

Weds 26th January—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Thursday 27th January—Young at Heart 2.00pm

Saturday 29th January—Burns Night Quiz 6.00pm (2 courses £6.00)

Sunday 30th January—Holy Communion

Wednesday 2nd February—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Sunday 6th February—Holy Communion

Wednesday 9th February—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Thursday 10th February—Young at Heart 2.00pm

Sunday 13th February—Holy Communion

Monday 14th February—PCC Meeting

Wednesday 16th February—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Sunday 20th February—Holy Communion

Wednesday 23rd February—Holy Communion

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

Thursday 24th February—Young at Heart 2.00pm

Sunday 27th February—Holy Communion

Wednesday 2nd March—Holy Communion (Ash Wednesday—10.00

Knit & Natter 1.00pm

and 7.00)



## 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://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.**

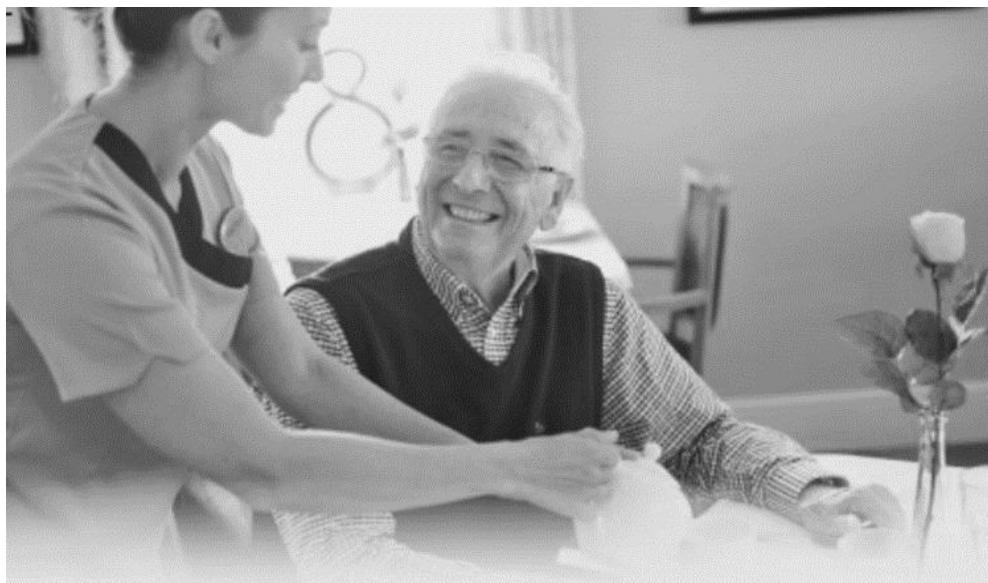


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## QUIZ ANSWERS for Albert's New Year 2022 Quiz

1. Pacific; 2. Kneecap; 3. Chicago; 4. Dennis Waterman;  
5. Spanish Civil War; 6. Ebenezer Scrooge; 7. Vic Reeves & Bob Mortimer; 8. Coventry; 9. Bulgaria; 10. Neil Armstrong;  
11. J K Rowling; 12. Libra; 13. The Cow; 14. Dara O'Brian;  
15. Apple; 16. Fred Flintstone; 17. Cat's Eyes; 18. Fleet Street;  
19. 4 kms; 20. 9 million.

**A very big thank you to Albert!**



## **Lydgate Lodge** *a great place to live*

*"Lydgate Lodge  
is a lovely environment  
for residents and relatives  
alike providing excellent care  
and facilities."*

Son of Resident at  
Lydgate Lodge

[carehome.co.uk review]

Lydgate Lodge makes a real difference to the lives of our residents, offering 24 hour residential and dementia care in luxurious surroundings and with an inclusive fee package.

Lydgate Lodge's caring and highly trained staff cherish our residents, assisting them to remain independent and ensuring they enjoy an active lifestyle.

*A home is more than just bricks and mortar - it is a place you feel safe, well cared for and relaxed.*

Passing by? Pop in for a cuppa ...

### **Lydgate Lodge Care Home**

Soothill Lane, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 6EZ

lydgate.lodge@idealcarehomes.co.uk

01924 355 020

**ideal** carehomes

idealcarehomes.co.uk

## FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

### BAPTISMS—

There were no baptism during the month of December and so we will pray for those families who have baptisms booked in February.



### DEATHS



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

Marlene Berry

Belinda Stanhope

Audrey Bourne

### WEDDINGS

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



**Tumble Bees**



Pro-School Gymnastics

**The Hive @  
Woodkirk Valley Country Club**

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**[www.tumble-bees.co.uk](http://www.tumble-bees.co.uk)    07866 618455**

**Did you know?**

**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**

## Shirl's Curls

Local fully qualified Ladies Mobile Hairdresser with over 20 years' experience.

Shirley brings the professional salon experience to you in the comfort of your home, without the stress of travelling or parking.

Specialising in cutting/styling, foils, colouring and perming.



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

**To Contact Shirley Tel : 07805 804 015**

## Parish Centre Rentals

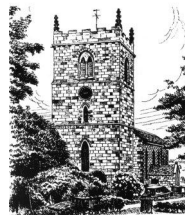
We have space for Groups who may be interested in using the Parish Centre at various times of the week.

Nominal Cost is £60 for 3 hours. Regular long term bookings negotiable.

Contact: Sally Shaw

01924 475048 for more information.

**Loving.**  
**Living.**  
**Learning.**



 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Leeds

# BENNETT OF MORLEY

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS

*o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o*

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family who were established in  
1891. The family pride themselves  
on their caring and understanding  
of the bereaved and offer a complete  
funeral service including a pre-paid  
funeral 'plan'.**

*o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o o*

### CONSULTANTS

**CHRISTINE BENNETT  
RACHEL STONES**

RESIDENCE  
3 HOLLY COURT  
TINGLEY

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

**Knit and Natter—come and enjoy help with crafts or just chat**

**Wednesday 1.00-3.00pm**

**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

## 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	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

### Special Services in Jan & Feb:

Sunday 2nd January 10.30am Epiphany

Sunday 9th January 10.30am Baptism of Christ

Sunday 30th January 10.30am Presentation of  
Christ in the Temple—Candlemas

Wednesday 2nd March 10.00am/7.00pm Ash  
Wednesday

Please see Page 41 for details of how to join a  
streamed service