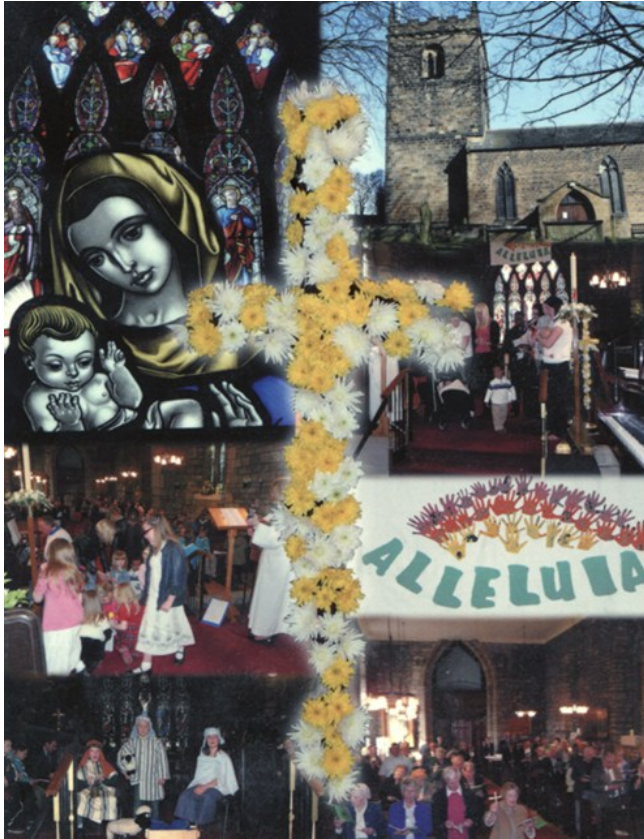


# Parish News

St Mary's Church, Woodkirk

May 2026



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

## 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 07840 739239

**Lay Pastoral Minister** Gail Townsend 07792 975814

**Churchwardens:** Neal Pinder-Packard  
Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

**Assistant Churchwardens:** David Townsend, Richard Bowes

**Deanery Synod Reps** Brian Gledhill  
Gary Mortimer

**Verger:** Gail Townsend 07792 975814

**Organist:** Currently vacant

**PCC Secretary:** Dawn Tattersfield

**PCC Treasurer** Barbara Tate 07792 211095

**Social Chairman:** Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

**Parish Centre Hire:** Cath Oakes 07796713750

**Child Protection Officer:** Dawn Tattersfield 07840739239

**Health & Safety Officer:** Brian Gledhill 01924 405790  
Dawn Tattersfield 07840739239

**Electoral Roll Officer:** Dave Townsend 0113 2528710

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

**Magazine Editor** David Townsend 0113 2528710  
Email: Dave@stmarywoodkirk.org  
Magazine Articles by the 20th of the month.

### **Elected Members of the Parochial Church Council:**

Gary Mortimer, Neal Pinder-Packard, Dawn Tattersfield, Richard Bowes, Barbara Tate, Brian Gledhill, Sandra Gledhill, Cath Oakes, Doreen Coates.

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

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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.

## **Web Site & Facebook**

For the latest news and pictures of what is happening at St Mary's go to: A Church Near You and enter 'Woodkirk' in the search box.

[www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

Find us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk](http://www.facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk)

## **Parish News by Post**

This magazine can be delivered monthly by sending a minimum donation of £18 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.

## **Did you know?**

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

## **Wheelchair Access**

A wheelchair is available to help people move easily between the Church and Dewsbury Road. Ask in the Church on arrival if you have a friend or loved one in need of assistance and we will be happy to help.

**If you wish to make a donation to the work of this church or  
if you wish to pay your weekly collection via our bank  
account then the details are given below:-**

**Virgin Money**

**Sort Code 05-01-31**

**Account Number: 31405751**

**Account Name: Woodkirk PCC**

## **Do you like Line Dancing?**

1.00 to 3.30pm Tuesdays in the Parish Hall

## **Do you like Pilates?**

7.00 to 8.00pm Wednesdays in the Parish Hall

### **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 £130.00**

## Vicar's Letter

There's a curious, almost unspoken ritual that unfolds every Sunday morning long before the first hymn is sung or the first prayer is spoken. It doesn't appear in the liturgy, no one has written a rubric for it, and yet it is followed with remarkable consistency: we choose where to sit.

Or perhaps, more truthfully, we *return* to where we sit.

If you were to watch from the back of the church, you might notice how naturally it happens. People drift in, greeting one another warmly, pausing to chat—and then, almost without thinking, they gravitate to a familiar place. The same pew, the same chair, the same corner. It's as though there were invisible nameplates fixed there: "Reserved for the Thompsons," "Margaret's spot," "That's where John always sits."

Now, of course, no such reservations exist (at least officially!). And yet, if someone *does* happen to sit in "your place," there can be a brief moment of hesitation—perhaps even mild panic. Where do I go now? Will I be able to concentrate? Will it feel...wrong?

Why do we do this?

Part of it, I think, is simply human nature. We are creatures of habit. In a world that often feels unpredictable, familiar routines offer comfort. Sitting in the same place each week becomes part of that rhythm: the same view, the same acoustics, the same proximity to the aisle (or safely away from it!). It helps us settle more quickly, to feel "at home" in a space that is, after all, meant to be a spiritual home.

There's nothing inherently wrong with that. In fact, there is something rather lovely about it. It speaks of belonging. It says, "This is *my* church. This is where I come, week by week, to pray, to sing, to be part of this community." A familiar seat can become a place of

prayerful memory—where you have wrestled with difficult questions, given thanks for joyful moments, or simply sat quietly in God’s presence.

And yet... it’s worth gently asking ourselves whether our attachment to “our spot” might sometimes limit us. Because where we sit shapes what—and whom—we notice.

If we always sit in the same place, we will often see the same people. We will greet the same neighbours, exchange the same smiles, share the same quiet nods during the peace. Over time, these small interactions build bonds of friendship and care, which is a wonderful thing.

But what about the people we *don’t* see?

What about the newcomer who slips in quietly and sits near the back, unsure of where to go or what to expect? What about someone who is visiting for the first time, perhaps a little nervous, hoping for a friendly face? What about those who sit on the “other side” of the church—perfectly familiar to others, but strangers to us?

If we never change our place, we may never cross paths.

Church, at its heart, is not simply a gathering of individuals who happen to share a building. It is a community—one body, as St Paul reminds us, made up of many different parts. And communities grow stronger when there is connection across those parts, when we step beyond our usual circles and encounter one another in new ways.

Something as simple as sitting somewhere different can open up those possibilities.

Imagine arriving one Sunday and deliberately choosing a new spot. It might feel slightly uncomfortable at first—like wearing someone else’s coat—but it can also be surprisingly refreshing. You notice different things: perhaps the way the light falls through a particular

window, or how the choir sounds from another angle, or the expressions on faces you hadn't really observed before.

And then there are the people.

You might find yourself sitting next to someone you've never spoken to, despite worshipping in the same church for years. A conversation begins—tentatively at first, then more easily. Names are exchanged. Stories are shared. A new connection is formed, all because you chose a different seat.

For those who are new or visiting, this kind of openness can make all the difference. One of the most common things people say when they reflect on their first experience of a church is not about the sermon or the music, but about the welcome they received. Did anyone speak to them? Did they feel noticed? Did they feel that they belonged?

We can't all greet everyone at the door, but we can all play a part in creating that sense of welcome—sometimes simply by being willing to sit alongside someone new.

Of course, there are practical considerations. Some of us need to sit near the front to hear clearly; others prefer the back so they can slip out easily if needed. Families with young children may choose spots where there's a bit more space (and a bit less worry about the occasional wriggle or whisper). These are all entirely reasonable, and there's no suggestion that we should abandon what helps us participate fully in worship.

But within those practicalities, there is often still room for a little flexibility, a little movement, a little gentle stretching beyond our habits.

Perhaps the invitation is not to give up "your seat" entirely, but to hold it lightly.

To recognise that the church is not arranged for our personal comfort alone, but for the flourishing of the whole community.

To be willing, from time to time, to sit somewhere different—not as a disruption, but as an opportunity.

An opportunity to see the church with fresh eyes.

An opportunity to meet someone new.

An opportunity to embody, in a small but tangible way, the openness and generosity that lie at the heart of the Gospel.

There's also something quietly theological in all this. When we gather for worship, we are reminded that our true "place" is not defined by a particular pew or chair, but by our relationship with God and with one another. We come as we are, and we are welcomed. We are invited into a space that belongs to God—and therefore, in a sense, to all. In that light, every seat is both ours and not ours.

We belong, and yet we are always making room for others to belong too.

So next time you come to church, you might pause for a moment before heading instinctively to your usual spot. You might ask yourself, gently: "What would happen if I sat somewhere different today?"

You may find it changes very little. Or you may find it changes more than you expected.

Either way, it's a small act—simple, almost trivial on the surface. But sometimes, it is through such small acts that we discover new ways of being a community: more open, more connected, more attentive to one another.

And who knows? You might even discover a new "favourite seat." Just don't get too attached to it.

With every blessing

Sharon

Hello everyone

Once again we are asking for your help to support the work of Christian Aid.



**Christian Aid  
Week 2026**

**10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May**

Whilst Christian Aid help with many different emergencies for this year's Christian Aid Week Appeal they are asking us to raise funds to help support families escape the cruel grip of urban poverty.

Where hardship means hunger...urban farmers can grow hope.

In the crowded and bustling settlements of Nairobi, most parents wake every single day knowing that they must go and earn money, otherwise their children won't eat that evening.

It's a precarious and frightening daily struggle that no family should have to face.

But with tools and training from our partner, Beacon of Hope, parents are farming vegetables in a small city plot to feed their families and earn an income.

Woodkirk Walkers will be undertaking a sponsored walk of approximately 5 miles on Sunday 10th May (we're hoping the sun will shine on us!).

A sponsor form is available in church or you can speak to me after the service. If you feel able to sponsor us, any amount no matter how large or small would be brilliant. You can also donate 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.

You can also leave donations in an envelope in the plate in church after a service, or pay using your card in the machine at the back of church. (If you do donate via the card machine can you let myself or Barbara know so that we can see it is allocated to Christian Aid).

Once again, thank you so much, in advance, for your support.

With huge thanks, Dawn and the Woodkirk Walkers.

## Jacob's Ladder

I know most of us have read or heard the story of Jacob's ladder, but it can be found in Genesis 28: 10-15.



What do we know about Jacob, will we know he was sent away by his mother, and on his way

to Haron, and came to a certain place and stopped for the night, Jacob is just lying there he is dreaming, so let us gatecrash into Jacob dream.

Jacob was not exactly the most desirable character in the Bible, was he? He hoodwinked his brother Esua to steal his inheritance away, even if it meant deceiving his poor old dad, to name just one of his exploits, but he did manage to work hard most of his life and certainly knew how to pray.

I think that is what he is doing here on this night, chasing a dream of holiness, thinking God is so far from him. This is the place that will change his life. Well just think - would you expect to encounter God while fast asleep?

But what with the ladder he is seeing in his dream, starting from the ground and reaching up though the clouds, a link between Heaven and earth - with angels ascending and descending, and it's where God can even descend to earth.

In Jacob's day this was still a revolutionary concept. In his dream God is telling Jacob that he can send a message to whomever he wished, and whenever he wished, and he did communicate with his chosen people. But the thought of him making the journey down to be on our level - well that was mind

blowing for poor old Jacob.

No wonder he was afraid and decided that this was certainly was “Holy Ground”. But God was there beside him talking to him telling him that he was the God of his fathers and the land on which he was lying he would give to him and his offspring and his offspring shall be like the dust of the earth. They shall spread abroad to the west, east, north and south and all the families of the earth will be blessed in you, and know I will be with you and keep you wherever you go.

The fact that Jacob would have been well versed in the Hebrew tradition both of culture and religion, and trained from birth to cherish the Jewish covenant handed down from the days of Abraham it was not until Bethel that he encountered the living God and gladly received the promise, personally conveyed to him in his dream.

The words spoken to Jacob that night:

*I am with you and will keep you wherever you go.*

Reminds me of the words spoken by Jesus after his resurrection:

*I am with you always, to the close of the age.*

We do need a ladder to reach God, as he sent his Son to walk among us, and stand where we stand, to bleed as we bleed, to rise as we could never have hoped to rise, if he had not conquered the power of death and sin and risen before us.

Amen

Gail.

## Woodkirk Walkers Walk in March...

Well... what can we say?

Dawn billed it as a 'magical mystery walk' and she wasn't far wrong. However, the mystery was not in where the walk took us, more than the length of the walk!

We try and arrange our walks with a range of between four to six miles, and Dawn, when she reconnoitred the walk the previous week had walked the return leg of just over three miles so thought, perhaps not unreasonably, that the walk would be just over double that...hmmmm it wasn't.

Seven two legged and one four legged walkers supported Gail by starting with a circuit of the reservoir, then three of us plus Teilo left the others there with promises of meeting up in Carr Gate for lunch.

We set off along the footpath from the bottom of Haigh Moor Road, walking parallel to Batley Road, through fields below the reservoir then up past farms to Woodhouse Lane. We crossed this and headed across the fields reaching the eastern edge of East Ardsley near to the motorway (M1). We then used pavements to get us to the Malt Shovel where our four friends joined us for a lunch.



*A lovely field of purple 'Bugleweed', Blackthorn Blossom and our footpath across the fields.*

We headed home using Lawns Lane then turned left onto a bridge over the M1 which brought us up into East Ardsley near The Old Hall, then we headed towards St Michael's Church, and followed footpaths taking us around the back of the new house development.



*Magnificent Magnolia looking back across the M1 Old Hall*

By this time those of us with two feet were beginning to feel a little weary - don't know how Teilo was doing but he didn't seem to mind!

Then it was crossing by Country Baskets and down Westerton Road and left on Haigh Moor Road back to the reservoir. We never know what the weather will be like, but apart from a short shower by the reservoir, whilst not basking in sunshine all the way, we did stay dry.

It was only on returning and checking pedometer that mine showed 8 miles, although Dave who had walked Teilo from his house and back again told me he had walked 9!

Rosie is leading the next one so I'm sure it will be a more reasonable distance.

With love and lots of steps



Woodkirk Walkers.

## **Ermintrude.**

*Richard Oakes continues his tales from the farm series...*

Remember Ermintrude, the cow from the Magic Roundabout?

Well, there was another one in Batley - well to be honest she was Canadian. Her full name was Elmwold Starbuck Desire.

She arrived in England, on a plane from Ontario, Canadian 1990. She arrived in with a bunch of other cows, from all over Canada, at Stansted airport, going to their new homes, all over England.

Ermintrude was then transported in a cattle lorry to Soothill. Due to quarantine restrictions, she spent several months in her own stable, in isolation before she could mix with other cows.

She had her own yard so was able to meander about watching the world go by and as she was halter broken, she could go for evening walks as long as she didn't meet any other cows.

She was definitely a pampered young lady.

After she had calved and was allowed to mix with the other cows - the 'commoners' - was she frightened? Nooooo! She was the boss.

We bought a grooming brush and a spring attaching it to a wall - basically a 3-foot-wide stiff sweeping brush. Who was the first one to suss it out? Well - Ermintrude of course!

She investigated this new device, by scratching her head on it first, then she walked underneath it, scratting her back. The ecstatic look on her face was so funny.

She showed the other bulls what to do - soon we had to clear daily from underneath this 'grooming device'.

She could count too. In the milking parlour we could milk 8 cows down each side in a herringbone form. She would let so many cows in past her, then she would purposely occupy the space for 2 cows, not budging.

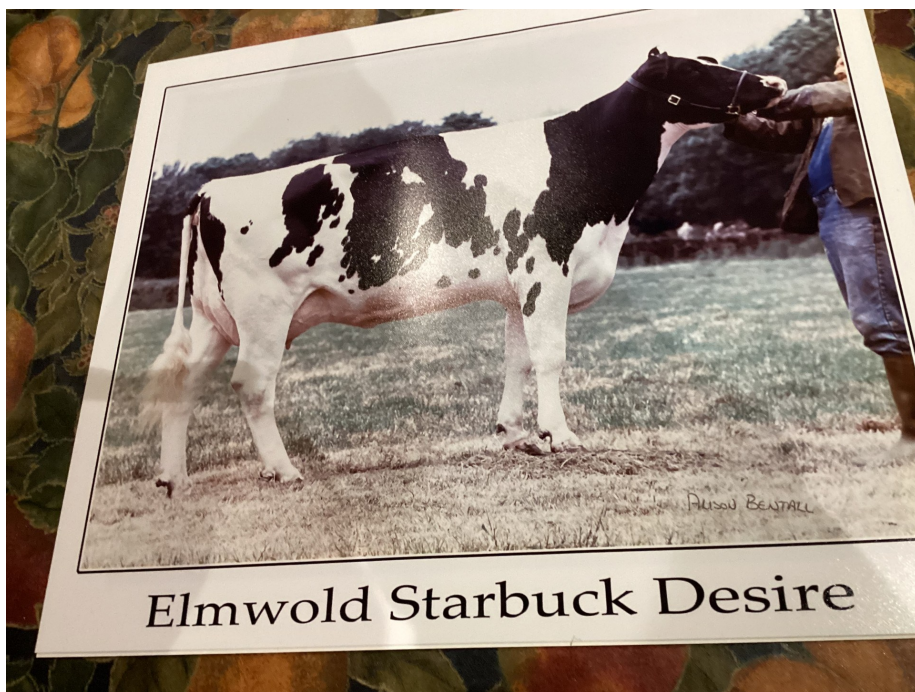
She could work the bellows which let the cattle cake (dried pellets) come down a feeding shoot into the individual troughs, thereby

getting 2 lots! She also had a penchant for Eccles cake, that Alan the cowman used to feed her.

In the show ring she was a star, knowing how to look good and won at many shows. At the Yorkshire she was third senior cow but got the best udder in show award.

She was udderly fantastic!

Richard



*The Award winning Ermintrude*

## **I am the vine...**

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I  
in you,  
you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.  
John 15:5*

You may remember in the last magazine, I talked about how spring blossom, for me, epitomised the psalm reference to flourishing as a flower of the field but then the wind goes over it and it is gone?

Well this month I was inspired by a bunch of grapes! Pardon?, I hear you cry...

It just so happens that I have recently started munching on grapes and have been buying the mixed red and green grape packs from the supermarket, but I have discovered after three or four days, the fleshy stem the grapes were attached to has become very dry and wizened. This is what made me think of the famous Jesus 'I am' sayings, and in particular this one.

Now I'm no expert in food logistics so I have no idea when the grapes were picked, chilled and transported, although I am sure they were not transported attached to the vine tree!  
*An amazing aside, I have just checked the origin of my grapes and have discovered that although they are both in one tub for me to enjoy both white and red together, they are actually from two different continents...the red grapes have come from South Africa and the white grapes from India.*

The thing is that the bit of grapevine my grapes are attached to keeps the grapes nourished for a little while but eventually, because they are no longer attached to the vine tree, they

cannot sustain this and dry up and wither and become brittle.

This of course illustrates so clearly, what Jesus means for us if we are separated from Him. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit unless it is joined with the vine, only those who are joined to Jesus and receive their strength from Him produce fruit. The statement emphasizes the sustaining power of Jesus and the need for us to stay 'connected'.

When we are busy, it is so easy to let our prayer life be one of the first things we stop doing, we are tired, stressed etc., but by doing that we are cutting off our supply of 'living water', of the nourishment that comes from being part of the tree that has such strong roots.

Sometimes amongst my bunch of grapes, I discover one or two tiny grapes that haven't properly formed, they were probably starting to grow when the grapes were picked and whilst the fully formed grapes survived the storage and long journey, the new fruits were not strong enough to grow on the journey.

My grapes are very far away from their vines in South Africa and India and unable to continue to be nourished and grow. We must ensure that we do not leave our vine, Jesus. If we stay true to him, we are part of the vine, part of the tree with strong roots and instead of being pruned, gathered up and thrown in the fire, we will produce fruit, fruit that will last.

Love and grapes

Dawn x

## **George Jemima & Tommy. God Almighty.**

**All pop up.**

**Jemima.** Eyup you two, how's it going?

**Tommy.** It's going very well thank you, whatever's supposed to be going.

**George.** (Confused) What, where, when, who, where we going?

**Jemima.** What on earth's wrong with you two, shall we go out and come in and start over again?

**George & Tommy.** OK then. (They pop down behind the wall leaving Jemima behind)

**Jemima.** (looking behind her) What have you done that for?

**Tommy.** (From behind the wall) You told us to go out and come in again.

**Jemima.** (Really mad) Well, come in then.

**George.** I should give it a minute if I were you Tommy, she's fuming.

**Jemima.** Come on now, please stop messing about, I promise I'll be nice.

**George & Tommy pop up again.**

**Jemima.** Right then, are we all settled now?

**George & Tommy.** Yes Jemima, crack on.

**Jemima.** Are you both getting settled back into school after the Easter holidays?

**Tommy.** Yes, thank you Jemima.

**Jemima.** And you George?

**George.** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jemima.** So, what have you been learning about this week then?

**George.** T'egypt!

**Tommy.** T'egypt!? T'egypt!? What's T'egypt!?

**Jemima.** I think he means Egypt Tommy.

**George.** I'm from Yorkshire, it's T'egypt.

**Jemima.** Alright then George, what have you learned about Egypt?

**George.** Oh, it's fascinating. There's this Geezer who's got a big

pyramid and this thing that stinks.

**Tommy.** I think he means The Great Pyramid at Giza and The Sphinx.

**Jemima.** Just humour him, Tommy.

**Tommy.** Owt else George?

**George.** Owt else did ya say Tommy? we'll get tha talking Yorkshire yet.

**Jemima.** Come on George, anything else about T'egypt.

**Tommy.** You said T'egypt Jemima.

**Jemima.** I know, he's got me at it now. Come on George.

**George.** Well. When we'd finished learning about T'egypt, we went on to learn about the Geeks!

**Tommy.** Who are the Geeks George?

**George.** Some lot from Geekland.

**Jemima.** What on earth are you talking about George, where's Geekland?

**George.** I don't know, it sounds like something to do with engine oil.

**Tommy.** I think he means Greece Jemima.

**George.** Yeh, them's em.

**Jemima.** So, what have you been learning about the Geeks, I mean Greeks?

**George.** Well, the Geeks are much like t'egyptians.

**Tommy.** In what way George?

**George.** They don't have a God.

**Jemima.** I think you'll find they do George.

**George.** Yeh, but not one God, they have loads of 'em.

**Tommy.** Yes George, I remember a bit about T'egyptian Gods.

**George.** He's got it Jemima, he said T'egyptians.

**Jemima.** Shush George, carry on tommy.

**Tommy.** There's a God of the sun, he's called Ra.

**George.** I bet he's warm.

**Tommy.** Then there's Osiris the God of the Underworld and Horus the sky God.

**George.** So why all of them Gods? It's same with the Geeks.

**Jemima.** The Geek, I mean Greek Gods are called The Titans.

**George.** Oh yeh, I've seen that film. Clash of the Titans, good film.

**Tommy.** Yeh, me too, great film.

**George.** So, who are these Geek Gods then, do you know any Jemima?

**Jemima.** I may know a few.

**Tommy.** Pray tell Jemima.

**George.** Pray tell, blimey Tommy, have you been for elsiecution lessons?

**Jemima.** Well really boys, there's hundreds and really too many to mention, but the main ones were called The Olympian Gods, who lived on the top of Mount Olympus. You may have heard of some of them.

**Tommy.** Which ones Jemima?

**Jemima.** Well, the main ones were the children of Cronos and Rhea. There was Zeus, Poseidon, Hera and Demeter and Hades. Then later there was Apollo, Artemis and Hermes.

**George.** I don't like Hermes.

**Tommy.** Why's that George.

**George.** They always lose your parcels.

**Jemima.** With all these Gods the Greeks also built lots of shrines and temples to their Gods, some of them remain standing today, the main ones are The Parthenon in Athens and the Acropolis.

**Tommy.** But why do they have all these Gods, we know there is only one God, isn't there?

**George.** I hope so. I've done enough building and pointing round here without erecting Aprocoliptus and Parmesans.

**Jemima.** Right then boys, don't you think this brings us nicely to the gospel reading in church, when Paul addressed the people of Athens. He told them he was fascinated with all the shrines and monuments he came across whilst walking around. He said it was plain to see that you Athenians take your religion seriously. Paul found one shrine with an inscription. TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. He said to them "so you are ignorant to the very thing you

worship” Paul said he was here to introduce them to this God so they could worship intelligently and know who you are dealing with.

**Tommy.** Yeh Paul, you tell ‘em.

**George.** Yeh, rock on Tommy.

**Jemima.** Shush you two, I’m in the zone.

**George & Tommy.** Soreeee!

**Jemima.** Paul went on to say “The God who made the world and everything in it, the God of the sky and land doesn’t live in custom built shrines or asks the human race to run errands for him”

**Tommy.** We’d be alright running errands for God, I wonder what he’d want.

**George.** Well, what do you get somebody that’s got everything? Apart from loaves and fishes I suppose.

**Jemima.** Do you mind if I carry on?

**Tommy.** Please proceed.

**George.** He’s being posh again Jemima.

**Jemima.** So, as I was saying. Paul told the Athenians that God could take care of himself. He makes the creatures; the creatures don’t make him. Starting from scratch he made the entire human race. He’s not remote, he’s near.

**George.** Where, where, where?

**Jemima.** We don’t have to grope around in the dark to seek after God, he doesn’t play hide and seek with us.

**Tommy.** Could you imagine playing hide and seek with God?

**George.** Yeh, a fat chance we’d have of finding him.

**Jemima.** That’s just it George, that’s what Paul was trying to tell The Geeks.

**Tommy.** Greeks.

**Jemima.** Sorry. The Greeks. We’re the God created; we live and move in him. He told the Greeks it wouldn’t make sense for us to hire a sculptor to chisel a god out of stone. Paul said “God overlooks it as long as you don’t know any better.

**George.** Ya making my brain hurt now Jemima.

**Tommy.** Yeh, it’ll have to come out.

**Jemima.** I think what it means George, is that if we just carry on worshipping the unknown we will go on until the unknown becomes known in truth. I mean God set a day when the entire human race would be judged and everything set right, and he's already appointed the judge, confirming him before everyone by raising him from the dead.

**George.** So, what about all these T'egypt and Geek gods then, what happened to them?

**Tommy.** They just have old ruined shrines laying around the world to remind us of the unknown.

**George.** Good I'm glad there's no more Hermes.

**Tommy.** Yes, they're now called Evri.

**George.** Oh noooooooooo!

**Jemima.** Say goodbye boys.

**Tommy & George.** Goodbye boys.

## **News of the World?**

Thanks to Malcolm and Hazel for sharing this with us...

"The only thing I take seriously in newspapers nowadays is Fish and Chips, and even that I take with a pinch of salt!"

Author Unknown

Dawn x

## THE WOODKIRK WALKERS... APRIL.

Apparently, you can 'Tip Toe Through the Tulips' but what should you do when walking through other flowers? Should you bounce through Bluebells? Or bound perhaps? Or maybe even bop through them? I'm pleased to report the Woodkirk crew did not indulge in any such antics on 25 April; rather, we simply lived up to our name and walked through the bluebells. Sticking to designated paths of course; not trampling over such beautiful flowers.

In pleasant sunshine we set off downhill from Middleton District Centre car park to Newhall Road then turned left onto a path through the open fields adjacent to Middleton Park. We were now quite literally wandering across a rubbish heap, although you wouldn't know it from the trees and grass there today. Originally a slag heap of Middleton Broom Colliery, when that closed in 1968 the area became a rubbish pit and for many years household waste was brought in by Leeds City Council bin lorries. In the 1990s it was landscaped over and has since become home to a variety of flora and fauna. On a clear day there are excellent views across Leeds city centre and beyond.



Turning into Middleton Woods itself we were treated to our first patches of bluebells as we followed the track down to the Heritage Middleton Railway Halt. From here we took the tarmac path, with thick bluebell carpets on both sides, up to the Visitor Centre Cafe for a comfort break.

What goes up must come down so it was onto another tarmac path, known as the Waggonways. Originally built in 1755 it was part of a route transporting coal from the mine to Leeds centre that allowed wagons carrying 45 tonnes to freewheel down the track, controlled only by a single brake that the driver could lean on. Once again there were carpets of bluebells on either side of the path.



From here we turned up onto the open grassland area known as The Clearings. This too has its place in history. In June 1933 a plane taking part in an air pageant run by Sir Alan Cobham's Flying Circus tragically killed two boys, aged 12 & 8, after it hit a down draft and ended up skimming the watching crowd.

We continued through more woodland to Nicks View and then down the grassy slopes across an area that until 2014 was a municipal golf

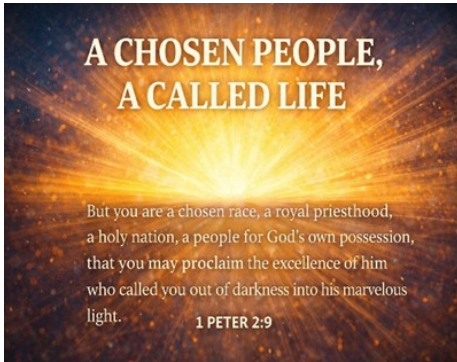


course. Nature friendly management of the old fairways has created grass paths alongside taller meadow grasses which are becoming richer in wildflowers, butterflies and insects every year, whilst the sand bunkers have rewilded with self-sown trees.

We passed alongside the lake, which is now a popular spot for amateur anglers, having at one time been a paddling pool and boating facility. Resisting the urge for a second helping of bacon butties at the Visitor Centre we continued through the woods, picking up a path running parallel to the Manor Farm Estate, across the grassland back to Newhall Road for the final short uphill trek to the cars.

It might only have been a couple of months since our last walk through Middleton Park, but not once during these 5.5 miles did we duplicate our previous route. Such is the variety of what is sometimes called the 'green lungs' of South Leeds, with over 300 acres of ancient woodland, parkland, plus fascinating stories and remains of a rich history on our doorstep.

Rosie



*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”*

— **1 Peter 2:9**

This verse reminds me of who we are truly in Christ. Peter uses rich, Old Testament language to describe the identity of God’s people—not as ordinary, but as chosen, royal, and set apart. These are not titles we earn; they are given by God’s grace through Christ.

We must all try to notice the purpose behind this identity: “that you may proclaim the excellence of Him.” We are not saved merely for our own benefit, but to reflect and declare God’s greatness. Our lives are meant to point others to the One who brought us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

This transformation is both positional and practical. We have been transferred from darkness to light, and now we are called to live in that light. Our identity should shape our conduct, our speech, and our priorities.

Let us just remember who we are in Christ today. When we are tempted to define ourselves by past failures or worldly standards, return to this truth. Live in a way that reflects our calling—set apart, grateful, and ready to point others to God’s grace.

**Prayer:**

Thank God for choosing us and calling us into His light.

Ask Him to help us live in a way that reflects our identity in Christ.

Pray for boldness to proclaim His goodness to others.

Amen

Gail

## Who's not a clever boy then?

If you managed to visit our Heritage event in the middle of April you may have seen instances with old black and white photographs where we had used Artificial Intelligence (AI) to great effect in colourizing the images which looked amazing.

However, I did explain that with AI you need to exercise caution. In one of the images of the interior of church AI had added more decoration than was actually there.

I had another illustration of this a few days later...

David and I had a pootle out to the Yorkshire Dales, we headed towards Masham then through the Dales stopping for a picnic at the Leeds Pals Memorial at Breary Banks, (it's on the site of their first world war training camp). We then headed across the moors to Leighton and Lofthouse down Trapping Hill (I don't know this I'm looking it up on Google Maps lol!)

It was as we were descending Trapping Hill, a long road down, that I spotted a bird that I didn't recognise.

I had spotted all kinds of birds, common and less so, including a few curlews, but this one was swooping in a way I hadn't seen before so I took a proper look at it and made a note that it was a reasonably sized bird with a black back and black wings, but it's front was white. I didn't have any internet so couldn't look it up whilst I was there, but as we got towards Pateley Bridge I got a phone signal and so input details to Google of a swooping bird with black wings and a white front and pressed search...

Now here is my issue with AI...

It doesn't know what you actually know, and so it came back with an answer of 'Magpie', of course Google wasn't aware that I knew exactly what a Magpie looked like and knew it definitely wasn't one!

I scrolled a bit further down the list and then saw that the bird I had seen was in fact a Lapwing, also known as a Peewit.

So I started thinking about knowledge and wisdom and I thought I bet I'll find something about that in Proverbs, and here we are;

*Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding,  
for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold.*

*Proverbs 3:13*

This proverb tells us that if we seek wisdom and understanding we will be happy and that our rewards are better than status or success. However, this is wisdom being not just intelligence or knowledge; but the ability to live rightly, attentively, and faithfully before God and others.

To "find" wisdom takes effort and intention it is not accidental. It is sought through prayer, listening, experience, and openness to correction. Understanding grows when we reflect on life through God's perspective rather than reacting from impulse or self-interest.

If we seek wisdom we are "blessed" with an inner steadiness and joy that does not depend on circumstances.

In the instance that I was thinking about, yes I got a quick answer from AI through my Google search but I didn't gain any

wisdom, but as with our modern assumptions, I had ‘Googled’ it and found a quick answer that ended up being wrong.

I’m not saying AI doesn’t have it’s uses, we have proved how useful it can be,

So by all means use Google and other search engines to get the starting point for information gathering, and don’t be afraid to question what it tells you, but if you want to gain happiness, take a bit more time, do a bit of research and receive blessings through acquiring ‘wisdom’.

Love and magpies!

Dawn

## **LIVING IN A BARREN LAND**

The culture war is over, and we came out on the losing side—but only for a while. I just finished reading once more through the Book of Revelation, and we are ultimately on the winning team. Reading Revelation brought me back to William Williams’ great hymn, “Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer,” through which we pray for God’s guidance as “pilgrim(s) through this barren land.” These words have relevance for our times, because we are indeed pilgrims in a strange place.

Though reading this last book of the Holy Bible to me there are 5 harsh realities of living life in this barren land.

Here are the five harsh realities for living life in this barren land that came to my mind.

First, in this barren land we have something to say that no one else will say and that will not be said without us. That is what we are called to do, especially in times such as these. We are called to be disciples of truth. Some people who most need to hear truth will

not readily receive our message. Nonetheless, staying silent is not an option for us: “If the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand” (Eze. 33:6).

Second, in this barren land we should expect to be maligned, judged and falsely accused more than ever before. Fear not, however, because it will be a blessing! A generation ago, there were people who believed we lived life on a pedestal of respect. In this new post-Christian world, a massive societal worldview shift has stripped away just about all the respect that once came with being the Lord’s Disciple. Now there is a rejection of any notion of a God who reveals Himself as personal or of that God’s representatives. As His disciples, we are now marginalised, considered at best to be past our sell-by date.

A blessing? Indeed, for the Lord we serve directed His strangest blessing specifically to us: “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matt. 5:11-12). Lot’s of Prophets are criticised in a barren land. As his disciples we may sometimes expect it!

Third, in this barren land we must be able to see beyond the evening news. Why? Because tomorrow’s news will be different, and any disciple of the Lord’s stuck in today soon will become boring, downcast and ultimately irrelevant as today’s news. Remember ours is the news of hope beyond today. Paul said, “If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the

resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:19-22).

Fourth, in this barren land let us take extra care of our personal soul health. What are we doing to take care of our soul? Recently I became fascinated with the emphasis on soul care in the Book of Psalms. This is especially true of David’s psalms. David develops an intimate relationship with his own soul.

It is clear that for him soul care is a high priority. He says of the Lord his Shepherd, “He restores my soul” (Ps. 23:3). Later, he effectively becomes a carer to his own soul, writing first of his soul’s desire, “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?” He next initiates a conversational relationship with his soul,

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God...” (Ps. 42). Without good soul health, our discipleship will become anaemic, and we eventually will crash and burn.

Fifth, be aware that in this barren land a disciple’s integrity is on the line 24/7/. “Jesus said, ‘A disciple is not without honour except in his hometown and in his own household’” (Matt. 13:57). We will be under observation in every way where we live. May we, as was Paul, be able to say, “Our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake” (1 Thess. 1:5).

Using *ethos*, the Greek word from which we get our English word *ethics*, Paul told the Thessalonians that the people could see that their walk and talk were in sync with one another. Elsewhere he wrote about declaring the whole counsel of God in public and from house to house (see Acts 20). Consistency was Paul’s watchword. May it also be ours. Integrity is always important for all who share God’s Word but ever more so in this barren land.

Gail

## May Recipes

### Potato and Courgette Tart

#### Ingredients

320g pack Jus-Rol light puff pastry

1 egg, beaten

40g vegetarian hard cheese, grated

60g quark fat-free soft cheese or 50% less fat crème fraîche; 100g

baby spinach, blanched and chopped

1 tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp to serve; 1 tsp chopped rosemary

150g new potatoes, very thinly sliced; 50g courgette, thinly sliced

salad leaves, to serve (optional)

#### Method

Preheat the oven to gas 6, 200°C, fan 180°C. Line a baking tray with nonstick baking paper. Unroll the pastry and halve widthways to make 2 rectangles about 18 x 23cm (freeze 1 for another recipe).

Transfer the pastry to the tray and score a 1cm border around the edge, then prick within the border with a fork. Lightly brush the border with a little beaten egg, then chill while you make the filling.

Mix the remaining egg with 30g cheese, the quark or crème fraîche and spinach and season well. Spoon onto the pastry, keeping within the border. In a large bowl, mix the oil with most of the rosemary and the remaining cheese. Toss through the potato and courgette to evenly coat. Layer the potato and courgette over the spinach, then sprinkle with the remaining rosemary. Bake for 40-45 mins until crisp and the potatoes are tender. Drizzle with oil, then cut into slices.

Serve with salad leaves, if you like.



### Leek and Cheddar Fritters

#### Ingredients

2 tbsp vegetable oil; 10g butter; 1 large leek,

finely chopped; 2 eggs; 1 tsp Dijon mustard;

50ml semi-skimmed milk; 100g self-raising flour; ½ tsp baking

powder; 50g mature Cheddar cheese, grated; 1 tbsp chopped

tarragon.



#### For the salad dressing

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar; 2 tbsp organic extra-virgin olive oil

80g bag watercress, spinach and rocket salad

## **Method**

Heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil and the butter in a large, nonstick frying pan over a medium-high heat.

Add the leeks and fry for 6-7 mins until soft and just starting to brown. Set aside to cool.

Put the eggs, mustard, milk, flour and baking powder in a bowl and whisk together until you have a smooth batter.

Stir in the cooled leeks, Cheddar and tarragon. Add a little extra milk if your batter is too thick to coat the leeks and cheese fully.

Wipe the frying pan clean and heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil over a medium-high heat.

Using a tablespoon, add 2 or 3 dollops of batter to the pan, depending on how many fit, and gently push down with the back of the spoon to shape the fritters.

Cook for 4-5 mins on each side until golden and crisp.

Remove the fritters from the pan and keep warm. Repeat until all the batter has been used.

Mix together the balsamic vinegar and olive oil toss with the salad. Serve with the hot fritters.

## **Chocolate Cherry 'Frumpets'**

### **Ingredients**

200g cherries; 1 tbsp caster sugar; For the frumpets; 1 tsp cocoa powder; 75ml milk; 2 eggs; 2 tbsp caster sugar; 4 crumpets; ½ tbsp butter; 50g 0% fat Greek-style yogurt; 10g 75% dark chocolate

### **Method**

Pit the cherries then put half in a small saucepan.

Sprinkle with 1 tbsp caster sugar, add a splash of water and cook over a low-medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 4-5 mins until saucy and slightly softened.

Meanwhile, in a shallow baking dish or bowl, whisk the cocoa powder with the milk, eggs and caster sugar.



Soak the crumpets in the liquid for 1 min each side.

Melt the butter in a nonstick frying pan over a medium heat, then fry the crumpets for 2-3 mins each side until golden.

Serve with yogurt, cooked cherries and the remaining fresh cherries. Grate over some dark chocolate to serve.



## **Apple and Cinnamon Flapjacks**

### **Ingredients**

150g baking spread; 80g light brown

soft sugar; 2 tsp ground cinnamon

250g soft apricots, finely chopped

250g porridge oats; 50g 4 seed mix, plus 1 tbsp; 4 Braeburn

apples, cored and coarsely grated; 2 tbsp icing sugar

1 orange, zested and juiced.

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to gas 4, 180°C, fan 160°C. Line a square 20cm baking tray with baking paper.

Melt the baking spread, sugar and cinnamon in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Cook for 3-4 mins, stirring frequently, until the butter has melted.

Stir in the apricots, oats and 50g seeds until well mixed. Stir in the apples.

Spoon into the prepared tray and smooth the top with the back of a spoon.

Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 30-35 mins until lightly golden. Cool for 10 mins in the tray, then use a knife to cut into 12 equal-sized pieces. Cool fully.

Mix the icing sugar with 1-1½ tsp orange juice and a pinch of the zest. Drizzle over the flapjacks and sprinkle with the remaining 1 tbsp seeds.

Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days or freeze for up to

## Albert's April Quiz

- 1) Which duo sang "Bridge over troubled waters"?
- 2) When does a nocturnal creature hunt for food?
- 3) What nationality is the novelist Maeve Binchy?
- 4) WHO SAID: Doctor Livingstone I presume?
- 5) In the Bible who was swallowed by a whale?
- 6) Which of the USA/Canadian Great Lakes has the shortest name?
- 7) Which is the U.S.A's smallest state?
- 8) In which London building is the Duke of Wellington's tomb?
- 9) Which flying car was driven by Dick Van Dyke in a film?
- 10) Which female name is the capital of Tuscany's Italian region?
- 11) Which word is both part of a shoe and a flat fish?
- 12) Who wrote the song "Mr Tambourine Man"?
- 13) The series "M\*A\*S\*H" was set in which decade?
- 14) Who founded "PLAYBOY" magazine?
- 15) In which mountain range is "Mount Everest"?
- 16) Which group had hits with "Good Vibrations" and "I Get Around"?
- 17) In which London building are the Promenade Concerts held yearly?
- 18) How many sides has a heptagon?
- 19) Which notorious doctor was Britain's worst serial killer?
- 20) Who played the title role in the film "Beetle Juice"?

Answers on Page 42

## Pastoral Care

**Telephone Calls**—We understand times are 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 07792 975814.

**Baptisms**—If you wish to make an enquiry or book a Baptism please contact Barbara Tate on 07792 211095 in the first instance. Barbara will then arrange to visit you and book your Baptism into our Diary.

**Funerals & Ashes** - in the first instance please contact our Verger who co-ordinates these events.

Our Co-ordinator is Gail Townsend on 07792 975814 or email: [gail@stmarywoodkirk.org](mailto:gail@stmarywoodkirk.org).

### **Weddings and Banns**

In the first instance please contact our Vicar or Church Warden Gary Mortimer on 07740 760556 who co-ordinates these events.

**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.

*St, Mary's, Woodkirk*



*Come along and join us for a*

*“Knit & Natter”*

*(or just a natter!)*

*Wednesday 1.00pm-3.00pm*

*St. Mary's Parish Centre*

**Contact: Dawn Tattersfield 07840739239**

## How do I join an on-line Service?

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

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

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

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



### Quiz Answers:

- 1) Simon & Garfunkel, 2) At night, 3) Irish, 4) Henry Morton Stanley,
- 5) Jonah, 6) Erie, 7) Rhode Island, 8) St. Pauls Cathedral, 9) Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, 10) Florence, 11) Sole, 12) Bob Dylan, 13) 1950,
- 14) Hugh Hafner, 15) Himalayas, 16) The Beach Boys, 17) Royal Albert Hall, 18) Seven, 19) Harold Shipman, 20) Michael Keaton

**With thanks to Sally and Albert**

# FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

## BAPTISMS—

(none this month)



## DEATHS



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

**Alan David West**

## WEDDINGS:

(none this month)

## Wedding Blessing:

(none this month)





## Lydgate Lodge is a welcoming and beautiful home offering residential and dementia care for older people.

It's a place where kindness defines care - where every action is guided by a genuine desire to support your well-being, offering not just assistance, but thoughtful compassion to help you live better every day.

Please get in touch to find out more about life at Lydgate Lodge and how we can help you to live your best life.



Purpose Built Home



All Inclusive



Nutritious Food



Person-Centred Care



Daily Activities



Couples Welcome

To find out more about Lydgate Lodge and to speak to our friendly team, contact us on:

01924 355 020

A Soothill Lane, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 6EZ  
 E [lydgate.lodge@hc-one.co.uk](mailto:lydgate.lodge@hc-one.co.uk) W [hc-one.co.uk](http://hc-one.co.uk)



Part of the HC-One Family

## Shirl's Curls

Local fully qualified Ladies Mobile Hairdresser with over 30 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.

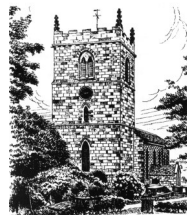
Nominal Cost is £75 for  
3 hours.

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

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An independent family business,  
the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of the Marshall  
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'.

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### CONSULTANTS

**CHRISTINE BENNETT**  
**RACHEL STONES**

RESIDENCE  
3 HOLLY COURT  
TINGLEY

## **What's on**

(please contact the leaders for further information)

**ABC Group** Adults, Babies and Children  
Wednesday 9:30-11:00am (Term time)  
Thursday 9.30-11.00am (Term time)  
Contact: Charlotte 07972 217528

**Line Dancing 1.00-3.30pm Tuesday**  
Contact Helena 07719946917

**Knit and Natter—come and enjoy help with crafts or just chat**  
**Wednesday 1.00-3.00pm.**  
Dawn Tattersfield 07840739239

**Pilates** **Wednesday 7.00– 8.00pm**  
Contact Erin Blake

**Young at Heart** 1st & 3rd Thursdays 2:00pm  
Sally Shaw 07963610708

**Rainbows** Thursday 5.30 - 6.30pm  
Ruth Osenton-Brown 07805186479

**Brownies** Thursday 6.30 - 7.45pm  
Hannah Tombling 01924 501892

**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

Wednesdays 10am Holy Communion in Church & On-line.

### Special Services and Events:

#### May

Saturday 9th: Beetle Drive with Supper 6pm

Sunday 10th: Christian Aid Walk 1pm

Thursday 14th: Ascension Day Service 7pm-8pm

Thursday 21st: Lydgate Lodge Service 11am.

Saturday 23rd: Dementia Awareness Open Day 2pm-4pm

#### June

Saturday 13th: Family Fun Day 10am-2pm

Please see Page 42 for details of how to join a streamed service