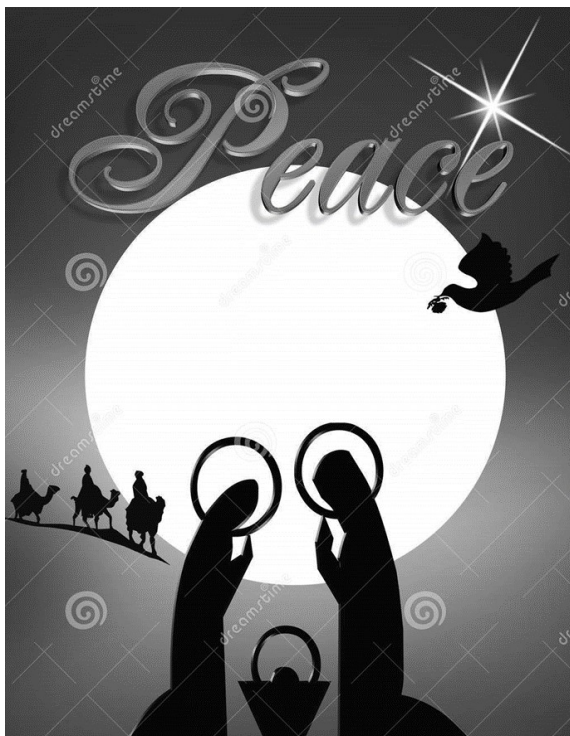


# Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

Happy Christmas

**December 2018**



***This Month:***  
*Hope, Doubt, Age and Families.*

[www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://www.stmarywoodkirk.org)

# Who's who at Woodkirk

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

**Lay Pastoral Minister** Gail Townsend 0113 2528710

**Churchwardens:** Brian Gledhill 01924 405790  
Neal Pinder-Packard 0113 252 4001

**Deputy churchwardens:** Gary Mortimer  
David Townsend

**Verger:** Gail Townsend 0113 252 8710

**Organists:** Samantha Marks/Dan Marks

**PCC Secretary:** Dawn Tattersfield

**PCC Treasurer** Barbara Tate

**Social Chairman:** Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

**Parish Centre Hire:** Sally Shaw 01924 475048

**Child Protection Officer:** Dawn Tattersfield 0113 2525963

**Health & Safety Officer** Brian Gledhill 01924 405790

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

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

**Magazine Editor & Weekly News Sheet:.** David Townsend 0113 2528710  
Email: dave2408.townsend@gmail.com  
Magazine Articles by the 20th of the month.  
Mobile: 07745 301746  
Contributions for the Weekly News Sheet  
by Thursday evening please.

**Deanery Synod reps:** Brian Gledhill & Gary Mortimer

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

Brian Gledhill, Gary Mortimer, Neal Pinder-Packard, Dawn Tattersfield,  
Dave Townsend, Barbara Tate, Liz Aveyard, Gail Townsend, Sandra Gledhill,  
Pernoe Liburd.

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

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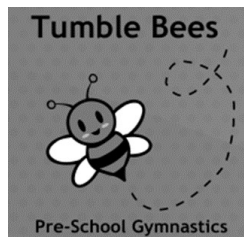
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## **Tumble Bees**

**Pre-school gymnastics for the under 5's at  
Woodkirk Valley Country Club. Classes can be  
booked through the website.**

**More info at:**

**[Tumblebees@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Tumblebees@hotmail.co.uk)**  
**[www.tumble-bees.co.uk](http://www.tumble-bees.co.uk)**



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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.

**This year's Remembrance Sunday in November will fall on the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.**

**There is a special 'gold leaf' poppy on sale to mark this special centenary.**

## Vicar's Letter

I am very definitely a stick in the mud. I don't like Christmas in September, October and November. I want to see Christmas through the eyes of my childhood when the Christmas Tree went up one week before Christmas and then you started to buy presents and put them under the tree. I remember the excitement of going to bed and not being able to sleep.

When I had my own children, the routine pretty much stayed the same. The Christmas Tree went up one week to ten days before Christmas and then when the children were small (and I wasn't as involved in church) we would have the weekend before Christmas away staying in a Travel Lodge and we would buy and wrap all our presents. We then did the Christmas food shopping on the way home. We simply unloaded the car put the presents under the tree and the food in the fridge. Sorted. Except it wasn't because of course there were still the children's presents to sort out.

The purpose of our adventure was to teach the kids that there was another side to Christmas, that it wasn't just about what they received, it was also about what they could give and that involved effort. We provided them with an allowance and they had to work out how many people they had to buy for (15 people at £2.00 a head). They then had to work out what they would buy and who would wrap it. The boys quickly learned that Lizzy was the organiser. Once they started work, part time jobs, provided their own money to buy presents.

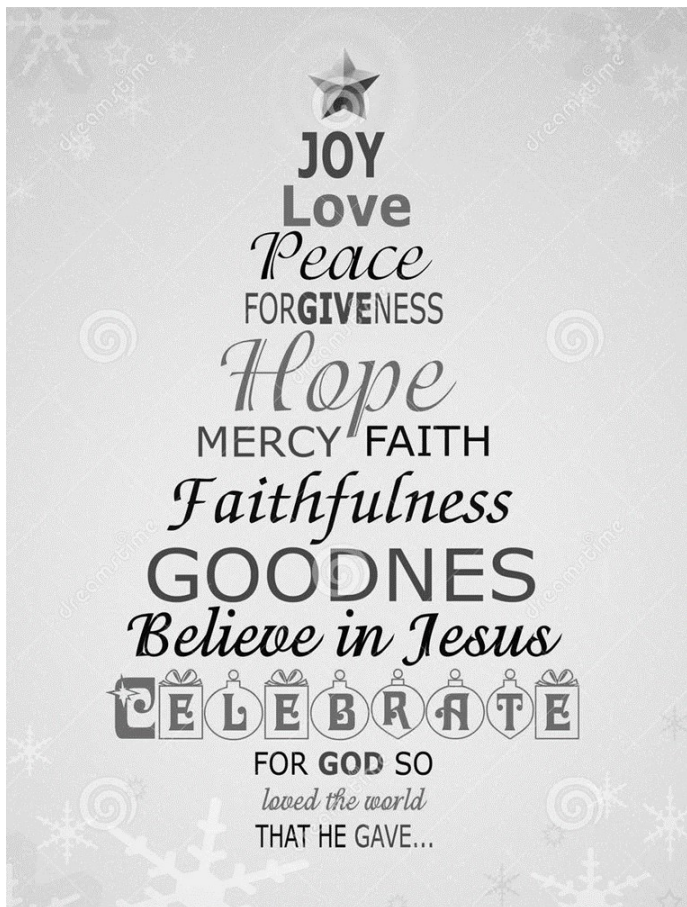
But there was still another lesson for them to learn, that Christmas was much more than the giving and receiving of gifts. We purposely didn't buy expensive presents (and still don't). It is a time to get together with family and loved ones. It is a time to gather at church and to remember the real meaning of Christmas – to a child it is Jesus' birthday – to an adult it is God made man. God himself came among us and lived among us – not as a King, not as a wealthy ruler but as a vulnerable helpless child born to a teenage mother. The Christmas story is full of unlikely characters and those on the edges find themselves at the centre of the action. The unimportant get

starring roles. The forgotten are the first to know. It's a story of the unexpected. It flips the world on its head. It changes everything.

There are many opportunities this Christmas to come to St Mary's and hear the Christmas Story, and to remember the gift that God has given us, His Son, Jesus Christ, the baby that grows into the man on the cross, the man that is fully human and fully divine, Christ the King, the Son of God who came as part of God's plan to redeem the human race. Come and be redeemed, come and be welcomed, come and be loved or just simply come and be still.

Sharon

Vicar



# Carols by Candlelight

*A traditional service of nine lessons and carols*



**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December**  
**4pm**  
**St Mary's Church, Woodkirk**  
Dewsbury Rd, WF127JL

*A warm welcome to all!*

For more info visit: [www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://www.stmarywoodkirk.org)



## **Children and Families at St Mary's**

It's great to see the continuing growth in the number of children and young people at St Mary's. Children and young people are an integral part of our church today and are not merely the church of tomorrow. It is important to make sure we are a church to open its arms to all ages, make them a part of our church community and allow them the opportunity to learn and develop as young disciples.

We are excited to announce that from January we are going to launch 'Stepping Stones' a Sunday school style group for children of primary school aged children (children aged 5-11). Meeting on the fourth Sunday of the month in the vestry, the children will be lead through activities based on the readings for that Sunday so that the whole church family share the same scripture together. We will then return to church during the peace so we can share communion together. The first Stepping Stones will be on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30am in the vestry.

The Messy Church Activity mornings will continue to take place once a term so keep an eye out for these being advertised. Messy church is a great opportunity for us to engage and build relationships outside a usual church setting – and is a great introduction to church. It allows families to come together, to eat together and celebrate God in a different way.

The mums and tots group which meets on Wednesday mornings from 9.30 to 11, will be re-launched in January and will be renamed

### **St Mary's ABC group.**

ABC stands for Adults, Babies and Children and will make the group more inclusive to everyone. This continues to be very popular group and provides a safe and fun place for children to play and is good way to get to know new people. Parents, Grandparents and carers are all welcome to join us.

Please continue to pray our continued work with children and families within the parish as we continue to build and develop new relationships. If anyone has any questions then please feel free to email me at:

[lizzy@stmarywoodkirk.org](mailto:lizzy@stmarywoodkirk.org).

Lizzy

# Prayerful Thought an 'Adventus'

Hello there

By the time you read this we will have started our advent season towards Christmas, you will have opened some of the little doors on your advent calendar (or perhaps burnt a few days down on your advent candle) your Advent (ure) will have begun.

It is so easy to get swept along in our Christmas preparations and almost forget about Advent, these four Sunday's prior to Christmas, but really we should make sure that Advent is in all our planning because Advent comes from the Latin word Adventus meaning 'arrival', a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the coming of baby Jesus in the manger in Bethlehem all those centuries ago.

I always smile to myself with some of the advertisements I see on television or hear on radio for things like new kitchens, new sofa's and new boilers etc because these things really don't need in anyway to be done at this time of year really do they?

I mean yes, it's lovely having these things new, and if you have been thinking about it and are expecting family and friends to visit then they can be really lovely, but if we think about it, we could have changed our sofa's boilers or kitchens in the previous 11 months of the year really.

I also remember my dear dad causing my mum additional stress at Christmas when with only a couple of weeks to go, he decided he must repaint the kitchen!

Amongst former work colleagues, church family and actual family, three ladies have given birth to their first children (all boys!) since the beginning of October, and three ladies are preparing for the birth of babies in the next 4-6 weeks (two are first babies, the other is a second one). Now never having had a baby myself I can' speak from first-hand experience, but I bet all six ladies did or are preparing as much as possible for their new arrivals, and are preparing for their lives to change completely.

Well Advent is the same, it enables us to be giddy and excited about the coming of a baby, the nice thing is we only have to hear, read and

sing about it, not get involved in the messy and sometimes painful side of things! Unlike a lot of our other preparations for Christmas, it also doesn't cost us anything, which as a Yorkshire person should please us all!

Whilst I know we can't just stop our day to day lives and all our preparations, it might be nice if you can just take a little bit of time during Advent to shift your focus a little from all the commercialism, the encouragement to buy tons of food and strive for that perfect Christmas dinner, to think about that young family all those centuries ago.

Their Christmas wasn't perfect, far from it. A poor young mum heavily pregnant having to travel on the back of a donkey on dusty uneven roads, a frightened father to be, a simple carpenter, not well paid, trying to care for his wife and child, a bustling busy town with no spare room, so a stable with the animals was all they could find. And yet, into all this mayhem, the saviour of the world was born.

Jesus was born for all of us, whether we are ordering a new sofa or making do with the one we've had for years or one our family gave us, whether we have tables groaning with food or will be making do with something simple, whether we live in a two up two down, nice little bungalow, big sprawling mansion or a shop doorway.

Try and take a few moments every day or every week during advent to have your own (or family) adventus, time of expectant waiting and preparation for the coming again of the Christ child born in a manger. Read the Christmas story in Luke Chapter 2 verses 1-20 or there are many children's versions you can share as a family.

Remember for the best life **Advent – U – R – E...**

Prepare for the coming of Jesus in the Manger for love that is...

**Unconditional**  
**Real and**  
**Eternal**

With love and blessings  
Dawn



**ADULTS 50P  
CHILDREN  
GO FREE!**

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For more information visit: [www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://www.stmarywoodkirk.org)

# WHAT is GOD?

This was written by an 8-year-old named Danny Dutton, who lives in Chula Vista, California. He wrote it for his homework assignment to, 'explain God'

I wonder if any of us could have done as well?

## EXPLANATION OF GOD

One of God's main Jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grown-ups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times besides bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything, and is everywhere, which keeps him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your mum and dads head asking for something they" said you couldn't have.

Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren't any who come to our church.

Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach people who didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified him. But he was good and kind, like his father, and he told his father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them, and God said OK and God did not let Jesus stay in the grave but raised him from the dead.

Hi Dad, (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his hard work on earth, so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So, he did, and now he helps his dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are

important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary - only more important.

You can pray any time you want, and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

You should always go to church on Sundays because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God!

Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun, like going to the beach. This is wrong, and besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway.

If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim, and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids.

But. .. you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and he can take me back anytime he pleases.

And ... that's why I believe in God!

*With thanks to Barbara for this story*



## **My name is Gail and I am old.**

*They will still bear fruit in old age” (Psalm 92:14).*

I know, I know. Some of you think I'm bragging. And maybe I am. But even though it has a few drawbacks and as some have said, “Growing old is not for sissies,” there is much to be said for the golden/silver years in trying to serve the Lord. I have lived through many decades on this planet, have seen things few around me have experienced (and have the scars to bear witness), the lessons learned are solid and sure, and my reasoning powers have not abandoned me.

Psalm 92:12-15: *“The righteous one will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They will still yield fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and very green, to declare that the Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”*

Those four verses are keepers, such memorable lines. I love this little text but in no way have I mastered the content.

Fruitful. Bearing fruit in old age. God's senior saints often have energy, will (hopefully) have the skills, and always have the experience which can bless so many who are coming behind them. But they must not allow themselves to be put on the shelf. They have so much to offer.

Look around to see who we can bless.

Want to see how this works? Check out Barzillai in Second Samuel, chapters 15-19. When King David was fleeing Jerusalem with his little entourage—his son Absalom was leading an insurrection and storming the city—as they crossed the Jordan River, the royal party was hosted by several old friends, including Barzillai (see 17:27-29).

Later, when Absalom is dead and the rebellion over, David is returning home. At the Jordan, he invites Barzillai to, as we say, “Come on and go home with me.” David wanted to repay his hospitality.

Barzillai's answer is classic. “I don't have long to live, so why should I go up to your city and be a burden on you? I'm 80 years old. I can't distinguish any longer between good and bad. I can't taste the food I eat. I'm so deaf I can't even hear the singing of my people.” He thought a minute and then said, “However, here is Chimham. Let him go with you. Do for him whatever you think is fitting.” (19:31.)

Whether Chimham was his son, his grandson, or the son of a friend or servant, we have no idea. But do not miss what happened there: The old man gave the youth to the king! He endowed the youngster in a life-changing way.

Barzillai changed forever the destiny of that young man and all who would come after him. That is bearing fruit in old age.

Lead a youngster to Christ, send a young person a bible, buy someone's groceries and don't let them know where it came from. Youthful. They're full of sap.

The life of a tree is in its sap, those nutritious fluids running up the veins of the trunk and throughout the limbs right out to the very ends of the leaves.

Some of the youngest people I know are the oldest ones in church. They are full of life, happy in the Lord, overflowing with love and laughter, fun to be around. They are still learning and growing and serving. They are the most positive, upward-looking people in the congregation, the ones readiest to "tear down this old building and construct something for the future!" They appreciate their history, but love their Lord and God's people far more. They are not so attached to the old hymns (which they love) that they cannot enjoy learning a new song.

Someone told me about their grandmother who went to live them. Each morning as the family awakened, they could hear Grandma singing through the walls and knew she was all right. But one morning, no sound came from her room. They began to worry after a bit and one of the kids was about to go and check on her, when all of a sudden, her lovely voice was heard singing, Grandma was just fine.

Young people love to sing and laugh, to learn and read and have fun, to get together with friends and to hug. The saddest thing you'll ever see is people who grow elderly long before their time. Let's not let it happen to us.  
Beautiful.

Now, when we have arrived at this stage in life, senior disciple, where we see these things and know these truths, tell them! Do not keep this wisdom to yourself.

Tell our story, old-timer. The rest need to hear it.

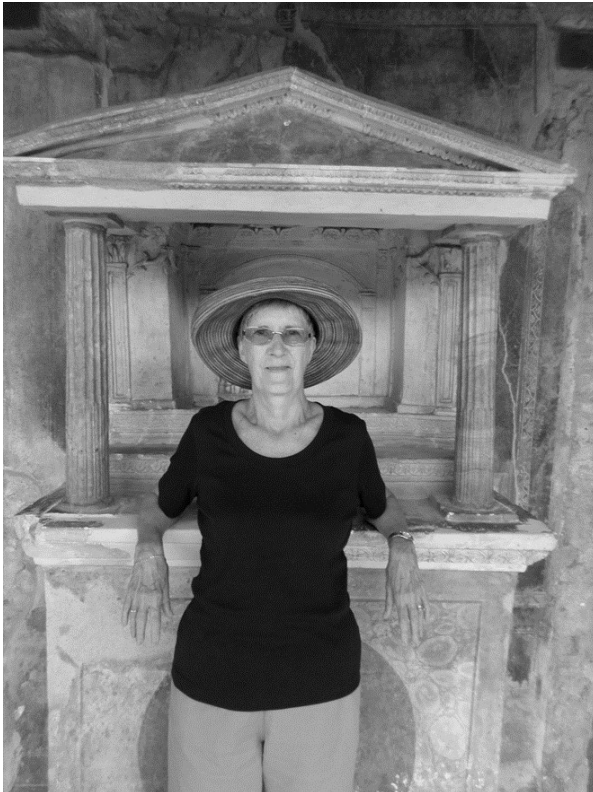
I know, I know. You're saying, "But they don't want to hear it. They don't have time."



It's true that they are rushed and don't have long attention spans. So, here are some suggestions:

1. Write short articles there, telling experiences you had and lessons you learned the hard way.
2. Remember to tell the good and the bad, the bright and the dark. Each has contributions to make to the effectiveness of the other. By giving the downside, you make the upside authentic. By telling the upside, the great things, you give hope to those going through the valleys.
3. An alternative is to write a book. Type it or handwrite it, your choice. And—repeating myself here—do not burden yourself with the need to do it perfectly or you'll go to heaven with not a line written. Get on with it. Tell everyone what you learned. Tell what you know of the Lord Jesus Christ and His way. Tell everyone what you got right and what you wish you could do over. Have fun. Laugh. After all, you're full of sap.

Gail x



St Mary's Church, Woodkirk  
Dewsbury Rd, WF127JL

# Christingle Service

Christmas Eve  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December

3pm (Aimed at under 7's)\*

5pm (Aimed at over 7's)\*

**\*All welcome to  
either service**

*Help us bring light and hope  
to children living in poverty  
in this country.*



The  
Children's  
Society

For more info visit: [www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://www.stmarywoodkirk.org)

## **Christian Aid Thank You.**

Big thanks to everyone who contributed to raising £82 at the Harvest Festival for the project below. Sally.

### **Christian Aid: Helping people with disabilities help themselves.**

Almost half of Ghana's young people are unemployed and those who are disabled face further challenges in supporting themselves and their families.

Mary Cudjoe, 30, lives in a suburb of the Ellembele district in the western region of Ghana, with her ten-year-old son and three-year-old daughter. Life has been very hard, as her condition means she is unable to farm or fish to earn a living, and she has been reliant on her parents to support her and her children.

Thanks to your support of this project, Mary has been learning how to make soap. She has now started producing liquid soap and hair products on a small scale to sell at local markets.

Mary said: 'I have now acquired the skills to set up my own business which will enable me to support my family financially 'Business is gradually picking up and I have so far made some profit from the business. My dream is to have the biggest soap selling shop in the Ellembele district and also have agents in nearby districts who sell my products.

'I have high hopes that my business will grow and make me self-reliant so I can cater well for my parents and children. Mary is growing more independent and now wants to help her neighbours. She says: 'I would want to extend a helping hand to other people with disabilities by training them in soap making in order to improve their living conditions. I would like to thank the supporters for their goodwill towards the project and I urge them to continue to pray for us.'



## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13 (A Christmas Version)

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtimes, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata, but do not focus on those I love the most, I have missed the point.

...In other words,

Love stops the cooking to hug a child

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse.

Love is king, though harried and tired

Love doesn't envy another's home that has co-ordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust.

But the gift of love will endure.

Sharon.

## Prayers and Psalms

Morning prayer is said in church every weekday at 9am, apart from a Wednesday, and as part of our prayers we usually include prayers for those highlighted in the Diocesan Prayer Diary which includes any particular historical figure for example St Columba, Hilda, Abbess of Whitby etc, then a benefice within the Diocese, its clergy and then within the Anglican Cycle of prayer for somewhere in the world.

I receive email notifications from the Diocese and on a Monday, it popped up that the benefice being prayed for was Woodkirk St Mary's!

It was funny how I felt that I had to be in church that morning, to know that all the churches across our diocese would be praying for us, it made it feel somehow more special.

As well as prayers in these services we also read a psalm and on that day, the psalm for the day was Psalm 62. The version we read from the morning prayer book is slightly different to the various bible versions I looked up at home, but I hope you will be able to take a moment to look up Psalm 62 in the Old Testament.

In another reference book this was listed as 'A psalm of patient trust' a psalm of David, where the psalmist commits his cause to God. It refers to God as 'my rock and my salvation' and urges us to put our 'trust in Him...for God is our refuge'.

It goes on to say 'Put no trust in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them and then finishes by saying; '...steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord. For you repay to all according to their work.'

Prayer is one of the simplest things we can do but we forget that others are praying too. Probably the only time you pray when you are not alone is in church on a Sunday (or other day) morning and you

can forget that others all over the world will also be adding their prayers too.

On that November day it was a bit cool and yet my heart was warmed because I knew that people across the diocese were praying for our church and our community.

Many of the psalms are referred to as Psalms of David, and not all the psalms are nice heart-warming ones. However, look at psalm 62, read it through, a 'Song of trust in God alone'.

Put your trust in God... 'For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken'

I was reminded of this contemporary song;

My hope is built on nothing less, Than Jesus' blood and righteousness

I dare not trust the sweetest frame But wholly trust is Jesus' name  
Christ alone, Cornerstone, Weak made strong in the Saviour's love  
Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all

Take time to pray, if you have access to the internet, you can find the Diocesan prayer diary under the 'Resources' tab on the home page and then scroll right to the bottom of a list of resources and you will find 'Prayer Diary', it will give you a monthly list and will help guide your prayers, and just think, as you pray for the benefices across the diocese they will be able to feel the warmth of our prayers just as I felt the warmth of theirs when they all prayed for us back in November.

With love and prayers

Dawn

**St Mary's Church, Woodkirk**  
**Dewsbury Rd WF12 7JL**

# *Community Christmas Tree Festival 2018*

**Come and visit our Christmas Trees  
decorated by the local community!**

## **Festival Opening Times**

**Friday 7th December**

Tree Viewing, 4pm-8pm

**Saturday 8th December**

Tree Viewing, 10am-6pm

**Sunday 9th December**

Family Nativity, 10.30am

Tree Viewing, 12noon-4pm

Family Carol Service, 4pm

**Festive refreshments  
and a warm  
welcome to all!**



**Don't miss our Christmas Fair  
Saturday 8th December, 10am-2pm  
in the Church Hall!**



For more information visit: [www.stmarywoodkirk.org](http://www.stmarywoodkirk.org)

## Doubt Busters

One of the things I love about the Bible is how honest it is. The pages of Scripture don't gloss over the flaws and sins and weaknesses of people. Even the great heroes of the faith are not airbrushed or photo-shopped to make them look superhuman. I also love that Scripture lets us see the real struggles that people have in seeking to follow God.

One such person in the Bible is a guy named Asaph. You can feel the anguish in his soul when he wrestles with the following questions.

Has the Lord rejected me forever?

Will he never again be kind to me?

Is his unfailing love gone forever?

Have his promises permanently failed?

Has God forgotten to be gracious?

Has he slammed the door on his compassion?

*Psalm 77:4-9*

*If we are honest, we would have to admit that even as christens we have our Asaph moments. But thank goodness, the passage doesn't end in verse nine. As we walk with Asaph we can discover a couple of practices that are helpful to our soul when we find ourselves in seasons of doubt.*

### **Remember God's track record**

This is about gaining perspective. This is about stepping back from our immediate circumstance and getting a look at the big picture.

I recall all you have done, O Lord; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago. They are constantly in my thoughts. I cannot stop thinking about them. Psalm 77:11-12

Notice four words in these two verses...recall...remember... thoughts...thinking.

Memory is a friend to faith. I can witness to this personally. God has an amazing track record in my life. And, his faithfulness in the past gives me confidence to deal with the doubts that come in the present. While having time at home nursing a cold, I was thinking about this very point. Looking out the window I watch as a plane s flying overhead, and it got me thinking. Here is a plane flying almost 600 mph at 31,000 feet. There are about 200 of people on board hurtling through the air. It is flying through the clouds. The people on board will not be panicked or even nervous. WHY?? Because they have faith in the airline's track record. They have faith that someone had built the plane well. They have faith that someone had inspected the plane and that someone had put fuel in the plane. They have faith



that there were pilots in the cockpit (although they may not see them) and they have faith in the instruments they were using to fly the plane.

And, likewise, when I step back and reflect on God's track record, my doubts diminish.

Asaph says "these wonderful deeds are constantly in my thoughts. I cannot stop thinking about them." These events are true. God's track record is historically verifiable. So, if God can deliver 2 million people from Egypt and he can part the Red Sea and he can make the walls fall down at Jericho and he can let Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego come out of the fiery furnace unharmed and he can keep Daniel from being eaten by the lions and Jesus could rise from the dead... then he certainly can take care of me.

If you are going through a time of doubt, spend some time reflecting on God's track record.

### **Choose to trust God's character and power**

*Psalm 77:13-14*

*Our God is a God of miracles and wonder and power. That truth is seen spectacularly in creation.*

Think for a moment about the neighbourhood we live in called planet earth. Our sun is 93 million miles away and it is just an average size star in Milky Way Galaxy. And it is perfectly positioned at just the right distance to sustain life on this planet.

The sun is 333,000 times the size of the earth and it is so powerful that it takes its light and heat only 8 minutes to travel from surface of the sun to touch your skin. Every sunrise is a reminder of God's faithfulness. With amazing precision and majesty, the keeps showing up every day.

It hangs up in the sky as a testimony for God's bigness and power and creativity. Psalm 19:1-4 says the heavens tell of the glory of God. The skies display his marvellous craftsmanship.

When we meditate on God's majesty and when we consider his creation, it helps us overcome our doubts. There is freedom in coming to terms with our smallness. Even though our world may seem out of control, the universe isn't out of control. The great big God of the universe can be trusted. He is not powerless or negligent. If we are the crowning achievement of all his creation, don't you think he is going to take care of us?

May we rest in that reality today.

Gail x

# Hopeless or Hopeful?

Hello there

Do you feel hopeless or hopeful?

You might think today, that across our world hope is in short supply, there are so many global issues and hopelessness in our communities, and sadly, most of us will battle with hopelessness at some point in our lives.

But as Christians, we should always remember that no problem is big enough that our God cannot handle it.

A few weeks ago I was in a state of feeling hopeless, something had happened, not a tragedy, but something that made me very upset and I did feel hopeless. I had lost sight of the fact that although I felt alone and hopeless, God was there for me.

It was during opening worship at a meeting I attended, when I was able to refocus and my hope was restored. The chaplain read from St Paul's letters to the Ephesians chapter 1 verses 15 – 19a in which Paul, writing from prison, gives thanks for the faith of the people at Ephesus (in modern day Turkey) and asks that God may give the Ephesians a '...spirit of wisdom and revelation as they come to know Him [God]' and that they '...may know what is the hope to which [God] has called you'.

The chaplain then went on to say that in our prayers we wait and hope and expect God to help. Hope dares us to believe that things will turn out right in the end, we then sang a slightly different version of Amazing Grace, the words of which were;

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see

T'was grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

My chains are gone, I've been set free  
My God, my Saviour has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy rains  
Unending love, amazing grace

As Christians, we are called to be people of hope, and Advent is the perfect time to be hopeful for the coming of Jesus. God has given us a new life in a living hope and wants us to share it with others. Life will not stop throwing things at us because we are a flawed people, but when we allow God to build that hope in us that encourages us to share that hope with others. We are the chinks of light in our community, we build our confidence and it gives us hope for our families and friends and across our wider community.

If you are feeling hopeless or have lost hope at the moment, then my thoughts and prayers are with you, that you may come to know the love of God in your life and that your hope in the future may be restored.

In researching this article I discovered that the version of Amazing Grace referred to above was written by an American musical artist called Chris Tomlin and was the soundtrack to the 2006 film Amazing Grace about the campaign against the slave trade in the British Empire, led by William Wilberforce starring Ioan Gruffudd, and you may like to have a search online for 'Amazing Grace – Chris Tomlin' to hear this different but quite beautiful version.

My prayer for you is that you discover, or remember God's love for you, and that you may be filled with hope this advent and Christmas time.

With love and blessings

Dawn

## Albert's Christmas Quiz

1. Who wrote the Fairy Tale that inspired the Disney Film 'Frozen'?
2. What is the four week period before Christmas called?
3. Which of Santa's Reindeers names start with a 'P'?
4. Which bird is given as a present on the first day of Christmas.
5. What was the old name given for the Christmas period?
6. What is the star sign for people born on Christmas Day?
7. In which film do Cameron Diaz and Kate Winslet swap homes for Christmas?
8. Who wrote the children's story 'The Snowman'?
9. In which ocean is the Australian territory Christmas Island?
10. What is the name of the children's story referred to in question 1?
11. Sherry is added to the cake base of which dessert, often eaten at Christmas?
12. If you had Gluhwein what would you be drinking?
13. In 1994 Maria Carey had a Christmas hit with which song?
14. In the mid-1990's which group had 3 consecutive Christmas Number 1's?
15. Kirsty McColl and the Pogues had a Christmas hit with which song?
16. Which Reindeer has a red nose?
17. A Christmas 'Bucks fizz' cocktail is a mixture of champagne and what else?
18. Who played Scrooge in the film 'The Muppet Christmas Carol'?
19. Boxing Day is also known as what? (apart from Sally's birthday).
20. Each year Norway sends a Christmas Tree to where in London?
21. Which George duetted on the hit 'Last Christmas'?
22. Which song is usually sung on New Years Eve?
23. What was Brenda Lee doing around the Christmas tree in 1958?
24. Did Dean Martin and Charlie Chaplin both die on Christmas Day?
25. Which Christmas song was written and performed Jona Lewie?

Answers on P34



**We would like to warmly invited you to join us for our  
Advent and Christmas events!**

#### **Advent**

<i>Sunday 2nd December</i>	Holy Communion	10.30am
<i>Friday 7th December</i>	Christmas Tree festival in church	4pm-8pm
<i>Saturday 8th December</i>	Christmas Tree Festival in Church	10am-6pm
	Christmas Fair in the Parish Centre	10am-2pm
<i>Sunday 9th December</i>	Family Nativity Service	10.30am
	Christmas Tree Festival in Church	12noon-4pm
	Family Carol Service	4pm
<i>Sunday 16th December</i>	Holy Communion	10.30am
	Carols by Candlelight	4pm
<i>Sunday 23rd December</i>	Holy Communion	10.30am

#### **Christmas Eve**

<i>Monday 24th December</i>	Christingle Service(targeted at under 7's*)	3pm
	Christingle Service (target at over 7's*)	5pm
	* Everyone is welcome to either service	
	Midnight Mass	11.30pm

#### **Christmas Day**

<i>Tuesday 25th December</i>	Christmas Day Family Holy Communion	10.30am
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## Diary for the coming weeks

(Morning Prayer will take place at 9.00am Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri.)

### December

1st Sat	9:30am	Church & Churchyard clean up
	11:00am	Country Baskets Carol Singing
<b>2nd Sun</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
3rd Mon	7.30pm	Warden's Meeting
4th Tue	6:00pm	Black Gates Sch Carol Service 3-4 Yr
<b>5th Wed</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
	1:00pm	Forget me Not Café (to 3pm) Elvis
6th Thur	6:00pm	Black Gates Sch Carol Service 5-6 Yr
7th Fri	4-8pm	Christmas Tree Festival
8th Sat	10am	Christmas Tree Festival & Fair (see P33)
<b>9th Sun</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>All Age Nativity &amp; Holy Communion</b>
	12-4pm	Christmas Tree Festival (see P33)
	4:00pm	Family Carol Service
10th Mon	7:30pm	PCC Meeting
12th Wed	10.00am	Holy Communion (Iona)
	1:00pm	Blackgates Sch Carol Service
<b>16th Sun</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	4:00pm	Carols by Candlelight
18th Tue	12:30pm	MU Lunch
	6:00pm	Lydgate Lodge Carol Singing
16th Wed	10:00am	Holy Communion (Healing)
	1:00pm	Forget me Not Café (to 3pm)
20th Thur	11.00am	Lydgate Lodge Holy Communion
	7:00pm	Westerton Christmas Concert
21st Fri	9:00am	Hilltop School Christmas Service
<b>23rd Sun</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>24th Mon</b>	<b>3:00pm</b>	<b>Christingle (Under 7's)</b>
	5:00pm	<b>Christingle (Over 7's)</b>
	<b>11:30pm</b>	<b>Midnight Mass</b>
<b>25th Tue</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Christmas Day Holy Communion</b>
<b>26th Wed</b>		<b>NO 10am SERVICE TODAY</b>
<b>30th Sun</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	12:30pm	Baptism

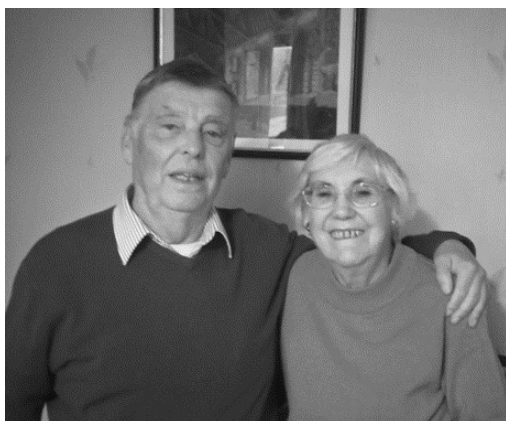
**QUIZ ANSWERS:** 1. Hans Christian Anderson. 2. Advent. 3. Prancer  
 4. Partridge. 5. Yule. 6. Capricorn. 7. The Holiday. 8. Raymond  
 Briggs. 9. Indian. 10. The Snow Queen. 11. Trifle. 12. Mulled Wine.  
 13. All I want for Christmas is you. 14. Spice Girls. 15. Fairytale of  
 New York. 16. Rudolph. 17. Orange Juice. 18. Michael Caine.  
 19. St. Stephens Day. 20. Trafalgar Square. 21. Michael.  
 22. Auld Lang Syne. 23. Rocking. 24. Yes both. 25. Stop the  
 Calvary.

## Guess Who?

So you think you can point out who this tough guy is?....Fat chance.



Did you guess? Last month's Choirboy was Philip Stephenson, pictured below with wife Nancy. He was a choirboy here at St. Mary's for many years.



## Church Mouse Tales

'I love Christmas!' I declared loudly.

'Well er—so do I' said my friend Hubert, the Black Canon.

'All those trimmings, turkey, Christmas pud, presents... it's great.'

'It's not just about those things you know,; reminded Hubert more seriously.

'Well no, there's the Christingles, Carols by Candlelight, Christmas Tree Festival, Christmas Fair.....'

'Yes, they are great things too, but...'

'I know, I know then there's family and friends—it's a great time to meet up and catch up see the ones who mean the most....'

'Yes that too, but....'

'Then there's Midnight Mass and the Christmas Day Service..'

'Those are great too but.....'

'Then there's the small matter of a child being born' I said.

Hubert nodded. 'Go on', he said.

'Many children have been born on that day both before and after that one day, but none of them were both born and by doing so represent the birth of a new way of life that we almost take for granted. A way to break free from chains but yet still take responsibility, a way to love and be loved without persecution and a way to change lives for the better with a common cause.' I paused for a moment.

'I knew you had been listening', said Hubert with a smile.

'And its about Mince Pies—don't forget Mince Pies. I like the ones with brandy.....'

Hubert rolled his eyes.

Misha x.





# FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

## BAPTISMS

We welcome into our church family:-



## DEATHS



We give thanks for the lives of:-

All those who have died within our Parish

Stacey England

Lynne Ward

Pamela Bedford

**WEDDINGS** Please pray for all couples who married at St Mary's, especially:



May...

God bless you richly with His mercy and grace today and always.

Amen



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**We have space for Groups  
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**Nominal Cost is £50 for**

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**Contact: Sally Shaw**

**01924 475048 for more  
information.**

**Andrew Roper**

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**Contact: The Editor (see page 2)**

**Annual Fee for Advertising:**

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TINGLEY

## What's on

<b>Playgroup</b>	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am to 11.25am Becky Schofield 07811 146958
<b>Toddler Group</b>	Wednesday 9:15-11:00am Sally Shaw 01924 475048
<b>Rainbows</b>	Thursday 5.30 - 6.30pm Ruth Osenton-Brown 01924 607393
<b>Brownies</b>	Thursday 6.30 - 7.45pm Hannah Tombling 01924 501892
<b>Keep Fit Class</b>	Thursday 8:00pm Margaret Hampshire 01924 476721
<b>Young at Heart</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursdays 2:00pm Brenda Dixon 0113 253 4078
<b>Beavers</b>	Friday 5:00pm to 6:15 pm Joanne Rutledge 07950 580877
<b>Cubs</b>	Friday 6:30pm to 7:45 pm Marianne Ingham 07778 542302
<b>Scouts</b>	Friday 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm Trevor Holdsworth 0113 253 0927
<b>Explorer Scouts</b>	Friday 7:45 pm to 9:30 pm Chris Ingham 07816 517838

## **Services**

### **1st Sunday of the month:**

10:30am Holy Communion

### **2nd Sunday of the month:**

10:30am All Age Worship for adults and children

12:00pm Holy Communion

### **3rd Sunday of the month**

10:30am Holy Communion

### **4th Sunday of the month:**

10:30am Holy Communion

### **5th Sunday of the month**

10:30am All Age Holy Communion for adults and children

### **Wednesdays:**

10:00am Holy Communion

### **3rd Thursday:**

11:00am Holy Communion at Lydgate Lodge

### **Morning Prayer 9.00am—Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday**

To arrange for **Baptisms** please contact: Barbara Tate on:

0113 253 1266

### **Baptisms held at 12.30pm on 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays**

To book weddings, funerals, or the reading of banns please contact our Coordinator, Gail Townsend (0113 2528710) email: [gail@stmarywoodkirk.org](mailto:gail@stmarywoodkirk.org)