

Parish News

St Mary's, Woodkirk

Happy Easter

April 2019



This Month:
Sticks, and Silence.

www.stmarywoodkirk.org

Who's who at Woodkirk

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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, Elizabeth Wilkinson.

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

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Dementia
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Forget Me Not Friends Memory Café
is for those in need of support, especially
those affected by dementia, their families and carers.

If you or someone you care for is suffering memory problems, have been diagnosed with dementia or are just feeling lonely and fed up please come and join us on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, In calm and beautiful surroundings you can meet others who face similar challenges, share experiences and find out about the support available.

Refreshments are served and there is no charge.

Please join us for tea, coffee and cake, a chat and a laugh. Meet both new and old friends and reminisce.



Forget me not
Friends

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

**For more information please contact Jane on 07969 640396 or visit our Facebook page
Forget Me Not Friends Café Tingley.**

Meeting Dates for 2019

March	Wednesday 6 th & Wednesday 20 th
April	Wednesday 3 rd & Wednesday 17 th
May	Wednesday 1 st & Wednesday 15 th
June	Wednesday 5 th & Wednesday 19 th
July	Wednesday 3 rd & Wednesday 17 th
August	Wednesday 7 th & Wednesday 21 st

September	Wednesday 4 th & Wednesday 18 th
October	Wednesday 2 nd & Wednesday 16 th
November	Wednesday 6 th & Wednesday 20 th
December	Wednesday 4 th & Wednesday 18 th

Welcome!

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

Parish News by Post

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

Web site & Twitter

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

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

We are on Twitter: twitter.com/stmarywoodkirk

Wheelchair Access

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

Monday, March 11th marked the 25th anniversary of Women's Ordination in the Church of England.

Vicar's Letter

In our Gospel reading this week we watch a story of loss unfold. A father loses a son, a son loses his money and self-respect, and another son loses his cool. The story of the 'prodigal' son charts the losses experienced by one family. And despite the fact this story is over 2000 years old, anyone who has any experience of family life or close human relationships will recognise the complex emotions that loss inspires.

An unreasonable demand made by the son leads to a painful admission for a parent: that a child cared for and loved now seeks to assert themselves, despite the suffering that inflicts on others. As the beloved son later sits among the pigs and wrestles with all he has lost we might be reflecting on our own choices and the consequences and losses that a series of decisions can result in. And even when lost people return, their arrival doesn't necessarily bring things back into balance; rather the lost time must be processed and dealt with before a new harmony can be established.

Loss is a present reality of a life lived whether 2000 years ago or in the present day.

But this Gospel story does not allow loss to have the last word. The father reminds the son who stayed that to remain was to receive, ultimately to be given everything the father owns. The son who returns, although sad and defeated, is no longer lost but found, and that change in status is a reason for celebration.

The emphasis at the end of this story is actually on gain: all that we receive when we stay close or come back to the father. Like the events that we witness nationally or internationally, there are very real losses and very real emotions woven into this Gospel story that shouldn't be downgraded or glossed over. But the story opens up the possibility for all of us, amid life's tapestry of loss, to gain something truly precious: the powerful love and forgiveness of our heavenly father.

As our nation wrestles with the complications of loss via Brexit, or looks out at a world ravaged by losses, or deals with the personal complications of loss, the Gospel offers another perspective: the possibility of ongoing gain, love that remains whatever our circumstances, however many losses we've racked up, love that is never lost, always found.

Best wishes

Sharon



The Double-Edged Sword

Ambition is a blessing and a curse. When it is God-directed and Spirit-managed, it can bear tremendous fruit. When it is restrained by humility, ambition can be a powerful motivator. But when it is hijacked by self and ego, it can leave a wake of destruction in its path.

I have wrestled with this issue for most of my life. If you have gifts, you know what it is to be captivated by vision. You know what it is to have dreams of what could be. You know what it is to want to do something significant with your life.

Here's where it gets sticky. Is this drive and desire and motivation about me or about God? If we're honest, we would have to admit that our hearts are entangled with God-directed motives and self-directed motives. Sorting them out is complex. A discussion of motives and ambition takes us to an inner place that's hidden from everyone. Part of what makes ambition so dangerous is that it resides in the unseen world of the soul.

God wired into every one of us a creative tension. On the one hand, we have what the ancients referred to as a "fire in the belly." I think this is our inner source of vision, our longing to make a difference, our will to achieve.

At the same time, God also has hardwired into us the need for quiet, solitude, rest, and reflection (a healthy soul). This is one reason God established the Sabbath: to teach us there is a healthy rhythm of life. We could refer to this part of us as a "spiritual recliner." It's a place of rest and peace. It's more about

being than doing.

We need both a fire in the belly and a spiritual recliner to be healthy. In fact, we must have both. The problem is that these two realities create strain in our lives.

Think of it like this. Imagine that the fire in the belly (ambition) is like raw electricity. It's alive, energetic, powerful, exciting and full of potential, but it can also be dangerous and potentially fatal. Then think of a healthy soul as a transformer. A transformer serves to regulate, channel, direct, and control electricity. A transformer takes what's potentially harmful and deadly and turns it into something useful and helpful.

As Scripture says "Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but a person is tested by being praised."

In a book I read called *Purpose-Driven, by*, Rick Warren he talks about catching spiritual waves. It is God who creates waves and movements of his Spirit. We don't get to decide when the wave comes, where it comes, or how big it will be. But it's our privilege to ride a great wave and participate in what God is doing.

We cannot as Christians no longer stand on the shore looking for and praying for a wave of God's Spirit. When ambition does not have a healthy soul attached to it, we can start trying to create waves ourselves.

But God is the only one who can show us how to deal with the waves so please trust in him every day.

Gail

Prayerful Thought - The Power of Music

Can't music be powerful?

It can trigger feelings of great joy and great sadness, trigger long forgotten memories and is so varied I don't think you could ever say you didn't like music. You may not like certain types of music, but there will, somewhere, be some music that you enjoy.

Did you have a large record collection when you were growing up?

I had a school friend called Alison, and she was always buying 'singles' and we would spend many a Sunday afternoon listening to her vast record collection. The only thing was you were forever having to change the record in order to get a mix of songs. Nowadays, of course, with digital music, this is no longer an issue.

For example;

I have an eclectic taste in music and the fun thing about streaming music digitally is that I have a music collection in a mobile phone app called 'spotify' which covers all these differing tastes, and when I play them on my phone, they come up in something called 'shuffle play' which as the name suggests, mixes up the order in which they are played. This does away with the problem my friend Alison and I had, because you don't have to change your record after each song the app does it for you. This leads to interesting mixes of the many different types of songs that I enjoy listening to.

I often listen to music whilst ironing and I can be 'boogie- ing' along to 'Night Fever' by the Bee Gees, then a bit of Brothers Johnson with 'Stomp', moving onto 'Hotel California' by the Eagles and 'The Mama's and the Papa's' California Dreaming, then suddenly there'll be a beautiful piece of guitar/piano for example Le Onde by Ludovico Einaudi or Fair Albion by Patrick Hawes then suddenly it will play 'Mary did you know?' A piece Rev Sharon introduced me to a couple of years ago by one of

my dad's favourites, Kenny Rogers.

As well as listening to music I also love to sing, and I love to sing in church. One of the things I like when singing in church is how some of them are old favourites that we have sung for a long time, the tunes and words are familiar to us and we can have a good old sing with gusto, then there are the ones where we look them up and think well I don't know the words, but when Sammy or Dan start playing, you sigh with relief because you know the tune! Of course sometimes we are challenged when we see a familiar hymn but Sammi or Dan play a different tune. Recently we have enjoyed singing a hymn to a tune we don't immediately think of as a tune to sing to, for example the Dam Busters March to which we sing hymn number 67 in our green books, God is our strength and refuge.

Recently we sang number 99 in our green books, which is I cannot tell why He, whom angels worship, which is sung to the tune Londonderry Air, better known perhaps as 'Danny Boy', and I would just like to share with you a memory of mine that is stirred when I sing that song.

Firstly, I think the words are very moving, each verse has half its words related to how we cannot tell why Jesus did what he did, coming to live a human life with all its trials and tribulations, but then the second half of each verse is uplifting and talks about what we know of Jesus, of His life and about the many blessings we will receive when we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our saviour.

Now for me it doesn't just stop there with the words, as the tune also stirs up a poignant memory of my dad.

You see, my dad was a Manchester United supporter and he had a season ticket and went with my brother to Old Trafford to watch his team play. I remember once as a child asking my dad why he didn't support Leeds United, they being of course our local team and I don't remember his answer as it was a long long time ago.

However, I do remember a conversation with my dad in the last couple of years of his life (it will be his 12th anniversary of passing this year), probably coinciding with the death of the Manchester United legend George Best in November 2005. On that day my dad sent me a text and all it said was 'RIP George'.

In that conversation, my dad told me that George Best was the reason he started supporting Manchester United, he said 'I watched him play football and I'd never seen anything like it, he was just amazing'. Now my dad wasn't a 'waxing lyrical' kind of dad, so for him to talk about someone like this was very unusual, so he had obviously been very impressed.

Now you may be wondering why this memory is stirred when I sing this hymn, well it is because 'Danny Boy' was played at George Best's funeral and so when I sing this hymn, it reminds me of my lovely dad as well as the man whom he thought (and many fans of football would agree), was a truly amazing footballer.

I'm sure many of you will have similar emotive pieces of music and hymns that trigger memories for you, hopefully some lovely happy ones as well as those that are perhaps tinged with a little sadness, but I hope you enjoy listening to music and singing hymns in church as much as I do, they are of course a key part of our worship to God and not only make us think, like the words in hymns 67 and 99 in our green books, but can also uplift our very souls with their sweeping notes and triumphant crescendo's.

Keep singing love and prayers

Dawn

Thomas and the Cross

Young Thomas has been helping in the service for quite a while now and he leads the procession down the aisle at the end. Unfortunately he has only had a small hand-held cross to carry and wanted something a bit bigger. Luckily we had kept some of an original St. Mary's pew which - with a bit of 'TLC' - we managed to convert into a new Cross. So now Thomas is ready for action.

David



The St. Mary's Open Day.

We opened our doors on Saturday 16th March for our annual history and churchyard day.

It was a cool, wet and windy day but we forged ahead with an outdoor barbeque and churchyard tours despite the inclemency. Inside—as well as warmth, tea, coffee and cake we had displays of our heritage going back over the centuries—with help from Peter Aldred, our local historian—on hand to explain much of the recent and long ago past, from the early Viking councils—held not far away at Tingley—to the more recent road widening and grave moving of the 70's. Many thanks to Peter for his help once again.

The Morley History Society was also in attendance to discuss all matters local and we had our grave search team of Gail and Barbara to locate missing friends and relatives from long ago from the old church records and maps.

All these things combined to make it a successful and enjoyable day out for everyone—despite the weather.

I would also like to thank David Tattersfield who provided detailed information for the War Graves—14 graves in total including back stories of how they had died and the regiments and squadrons they gave their lives in serving.

David also conducted the first tour through the wind and rain which was well attended by a hardy group of seven or eight. The War graves are spread throughout the 11 acre site and so we spent a good 40 minutes out in the elements visiting each of the fallen.

I'm happy to be able to share one of the stories from the tour with you on the following pages.

David.

The War Graves Tour: Reginald Marshall.

On THE WAR MEMORIAL

Aged 22 Reginald was killed on 20/5/1944.

*Sergeant, RAF Volunteer Reserve, and part of 514 Squadron,
Son of John Henry and Annie Marshall, of Tingley.*

514 Lancaster squadron was based at Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, and, in May 1944, part of the strategic switch from bombing German cities - which involved a long and dangerous flight - to softening up strategic points in France prior to the D Day landings.

These flights were far less arduous and less dangerous to the men of the RAF, however, returning from the bombing mission on Le Mans as a wireless operator and part of the 7-man crew of a 514 Squadron Lancaster, Reginald was to lose his life. The raid on the marshalling yards and repair shops at Le Mans by 112 Lancasters and four Mosquitoes was one of five separate rail targets to be hit by a total of 900 aircraft of Bomber Command that night. The Mosquitoes were used as 'marker' planes, dropping flares on the targets which the Lancaster used for bomb aiming.

The captain (pilot) was NCO Flight Sergeant Shearing and the bomb load was made up of three types of 1000 pound bombs - totalling 10 - plus four 500 pound bombs - a total bomb-load of 12,000 pounds.

They Bombed the markers at 0030 hours from 7500 feet, however, they would have been alarmed when one of the 1000 pound bombs hung up. It was jettisoned safe in the English

Channel near the French Coast. Tragically the aircraft crashed on its return near Newmarket, cause unknown, but reports said it 'spun in' and crashed at Chippenham four miles from the airfield at Newmarket.

The Bomb Aimer, Flying officer Peake of the RCAF bailed out successfully and Rear Gunner Sgt Smart also of the RCAF was thrown clear, but sustained injuries.

All five remaining members of the crew including Reginald were killed and are buried in different churchyards up and down the UK. Reginald's grave is in the churchyard and is shown below. His name appears on the War Memorial in church.

All information supplied by David Tattersfield.



The War Graves of St. Mary's

There are three types of Grave within the churchyard:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

The gravestones are easy to spot as they are made from white Portland stone (like Reginald Marshall's pictured on the previous page). The men who died in the first or second world wars or shortly after are detailed on the CWGC database which can be accessed through their website.

Family Burials.

These don't have the white headstones because they have been chosen by the families and are therefore more difficult to find but will still be on the CWGC database.

Family Commemorations.

These are memorials to the fallen from both World wars but are not buried in the churchyard. These names are still on the CWGC database but their actual burial site or name on a memorial to the missing is elsewhere.

With thanks to David Tattersfield for the above explanations.



Pictured: A seven man Lancaster crew similar to Reginald's.

GEORGE & JEMIMA. BEING SHEEPISH

George pops up with Jemima lagging behind.

George. I see ya still struggling with this higher wall Jemima?

Jemima. I'm coming George, give me a mo, there you go, here I am.

George. OK Jemima, how's it going?

Jemima. Fine, fine, you OK?

George. I'm Ok now thanks, but I was a bit stressed out earlier today.

Jemima. Why, what happened?

George. Aw, my Dad dragged me off to that B & Q place in Huddersfield, and I hated every minute of it.

Jemima. Why?

George. I'll tell you why. For a start, I thought B & Q stood for Be Quick, but it doesn't, it stands for Blooming Quackers.

Jemima. Come on then George, do tell.

George. OH! Do tell, are you going posh all of a sudden?

Jemima. Ok then, tell me all about it.

George. Well, for a start, have you seen the size of that place? It's massive, so B & Q can't stand for Be Quick, cause it takes forever to get round it, especially with my Dad.

Jemima. What did your Dad want anyway?

George. He's making a new gate for our back garden to keep the wrong-un's out.

Jemima. So did ya Dad get everything he needed?

George. Oh aye, after about two hours.

Jemima. Why two hours?

George. Well, for a start, he wanted some wood, but he didn't know where it was, so he say's to one of them orange apron wearing twits " Excuse me young man, where would wood be?"

Jemima. Wood wood?

George. Yeh, the wood wood.

Jemima. Not Edward wood wood?

George. Who's Edward Wood Wood

Jemima. Oh, he's someone off the telly, he was the squeezerlizer.

George. Who?

Jemima. Never mind, carry on.

George. Anyway, after a while we found the wood wood, but it was too long for what my Dad wanted it for.

Jemima. So what did your Dad do?

George. He had to go see the saw man.

Jemima. And did he saw the see man.

George. Yes he seed the saw man and the see man sawed the wood wood.

Jemima. Ok, and then what?

George. Well, my Dad put all the wood wood on the trolley, but then he wanted some butt hinges.

Jemima. Why would he need hinges for his butt?

George. I don't know do I?

Jemima. Then what?

George. Then he needed some screws, so we went looking for the screw man.

Jemima. The screw man?

George. Yeh, the screw man.

Jemima. Did he look anything like the tin man?

George. He might have done, but I think he was in another department.

Jemima. Did you find the screws then?

George. Did we find the screws? Have you seen how many screws there is in B & Q? - there's thousands of em!

Jemima. So did you get them then?

George. Eventually.

Jemima. Why eventually?

George. I'll tell you why Jemima. My dad wanted Phillip's screws, so I spent the next half an hour looking for Phillip.

Jemima. And did you find him then?

George. No, I had to ask Malcolm instead and he told us where Phillip's screws were.

Jemima. Is that it then?

George. No, is it heck. We needed some paint, and there lies

another problem.

Jemima. Go on George, I can't wait.

George. Well my Dad wanted Mongolia, but we could only find Magnolia, but my Dad said it would have to do.

Jemima. So that must have been everything now then George?

George. Oh no, it's not that easy Jemima. We now had to pay for it all.

Jemima. So what's hard about that?

George. All the people at the checkouts. I now know what B & Q stands for.

Jemima. What?

George. BIG QUEUES.

Jemima. So did you finally manage to pay?

George. Yeh, we went to that self serve checkout, it was hilarious.

Jemima. Why?

George. My Dad put the wood wood on the thingy and this woman say's 'wrong item in the bagging area'. I thought Oh no, we've got the wrong wood wood, we'll have to swap it now, and if we've got the wrong screws as well, I'll never find Phillip to give him em back.

Jemima. So what did you do then?

George. My Dad sorted it and we finally got out of the place.

Jemima. So has your Dad got the gate made and put up?

George. Yes at last.

Jemima. So then George, what are you doing tomorrow?

George. Spending a day in Screwfix. Ha ha, only joking.

Jemima. So what's the gate for then George?

George. Well my Dad says it's to keep good things in and bad things out.

Jemima. So what's the bad things then?

George. I don't know, it might be them pesky sheep in the back field, they're always getting out.

Jemima. Ha hah, it sounds a bit like that story in Church last Sunday.

George. What story?

Jemima. Ya know, the one about Jesus being a gate.

George. Jesus is a gate?

Jemima. Well not as such, you see Jesus thinks of himself as a gate, which people have to pass through to get to the father.

George. What, like I have to go through our gate to get to my Dad?

Jemima. Yeh, something like that George, but Jesus speaks of sheep and teaches that anyone who does not enter into the sheep fold through this gate (Jesus himself) is a thief and a bandit. No one comes to the father except through him. Jesus is himself the gate that the shepherd goes through to the sheep, therefore the only authentic shepherds are those admitted to go to the sheep, and for the sheep to come in and go out.

George. Aw Jemima, I don't get it.

Jemima. Let me put it another way George. Say the gate your Dad's just put up is Jesus, and everything that's good can pass through the gate. But thieves and robbers and vagabonds, such as The Pharisees don't come through the gate because they are bad.

George. I'm right glad about that, I don't want my garden full of them Phara wotsits.

Jemima. Pharisees.

George. Yeh, them an all.

Jemima. So you see George. Jesus is the good shepherd and looks after his sheep. We are his sheep George. We are good and put our faith in Jesus and Jesus has promised to give those who trust in him, life to the full. But that doesn't mean that our lives will be easy, comfortable or problem free. But it does mean that we will know real blessings such as peace, joy & hope and one day we will pass through Jesus the gate into God's kingdom.

George. Halleluiah - AMEN (George pops down behind the wall)

Jemima. (looking behind) Where ya going George

George. (from behind the wall) I'm off to shut that gate.

Both Bye bye everybody.

Bonus Quiz: CRYPTIC TREES

(example:- used to make cricket bats = WILLOW)

1. Sounds like the seashore?
2. Syrup for pancakes?
3. Left when the fire goes out?
4. Used to record your genealogy?
5. Not a junior?
6. Someone crazy about bricks & mortar?
7. Seems to be a favourite paint colour?
8. Yearn, or long for?
9. Eye colour for nutters?
10. Could be a cove or a type of window?
11. Bundle of twigs for flogging?
12. Eraser?
13. Not me I hear?
14. Found on Lebanon's flag?
15. Neat & Tidy?
16. Part of hand
17. Up this tree you could have a problem?
18. Hardy's partner?
19. Animals coat.
20. Could be two?

1.MAPLE 2.ASH 3.FAMILY 4.ELDER 5.WALNUT 6.MAGNOLIA
7.PINE 8.HAZEL 9.BAY 10.BIRCH 11.RUBBER 12.YEW 13.CEDAR
14.SPRUCE 15.PALM 16.GUM 17.LAUREL 18.FIR 19.PEA 20.PEAR

Ambitious times

Seen in a magazine (with apologies to Sharon):

A Lancastrian roused by a Yorkshireman's scorn, protested that he was born a Lancastrian and hoped to die a Lancastrian.

'What?' asked the Yorkshireman, 'hast tha no ambition?'

Alice

STEPPING STONES



10.30am
Fourth Sunday of
the Month
in the vestry

For ages 3-12
(Under 5's must be
accompanied)

**Come join our new Sunday
Children's Group!**

*Enjoy a wide range of fun and creative bible-based
activities, before joining the congregation for the
communion*

Next Get Together will be on 28th April

For more information contact Lizzy Wilkinson at Lizzy@stmarywoodkirk.org

Shall I Take an Axe to it or Shall I Let it Grow

There has always been a romantic strand in me, in which I imagine myself in a different world. One of these dreams have been about living in the country. Leaving the hurly-burly of this life and living in a very sleepy village, I could see it all in my mind's eye. There would be a old church and churchyard, the churchyard would be kept tidy by a flock of sheep. There would be a gateway into the churchyard and next to that would be a fine old yew tree. Of course, it is all an illusion.

In 2005 we planted a yew tree in St. Marys churchyard. The yew tree can be a symbol of continuity, walk through many country churchyards you will see yew trees – in some cases they may have been there for a thousand years. It is amazing though – imagine the changes that those trees would have seen, had they had human eyes! Every tree we plant whether in church yards, fields or gardens, is a sign that we care for our environment, for the stunning creation given to us by God,

I want to share with you a poem. It not exactly about a yew trees, but instead, this time about a seed. Compare it, if you like, to the seed of faith:

The seed I took from a low branch of a rain forest tree,
wore a red fruit like an apple that might have poisoned me;
But I set and watered it, waited day by day.

Nothing seemed to come of it, I threw the soil away
Now in the garden where it fell, quite against my plan,
Springs up a thing as stray, as fierce, as tall as a grown man.
Should I take an axe to it? Should I let it grow?

It will shade my window-sill and choke the flowers below.

It will beat its wild arms in winds against my wall.

It may smash my roof down if storm should make it fall.

Damn the unexpected! I don't know.

Shall I take an axe to it or shall I let it grow?

Like nurturing seeds, or planting yews, faith calls out of us the natural spring of God's love, but then also the discernment to walk with his spirit. Faith involves risks just like that seed. But after that it's not exactly a matter of axes, more a case of careful pruning. How can we celebrate the continuity of the gift of faith and the challenge of the gospel? How can we do it so that others too are kindled with the burning flame of God's love?

Gail



The Yew Tree in the Churchyard

From Wrath to Mercy.

Gail explores the road to humility.

Are there any limits to human wickedness? Imagine someone who practices witchcraft and séances, fortune-telling. Picture them engaged in murder, violence, hurting youngsters. Give them nationwide authority and influence, so that they not only practice these things, but train others to do the same. Now, if there is room left in your imagination, envision this person finding a way to win God's affection.

What moves God's heart? Buried deep in the Chronicles of Israel is the story of a despicable ruler who captured the Father's grace and mercy by humbling himself before God. His name is Manasseh; you can read about him in 2 Chronicles 33. In the space of one chapter, scripture reveals the transformation of a man from vessel of wrath to vessel of mercy. He won God's attention because of his humble heart. It's not that Manasseh simply experienced God's mercy; he provoked it.

The Father loves humility. It turns his head. Jesus tried again and again to share this secret pathway to God's heart: "The one who humbles himself will be exalted." He used this phrase no fewer than four times. Jesus himself modelled humility as he lived in the low places of Israel. He portrayed children as exemplars of humble trust in the Father's care. He derided self-sufficiency.

Humility is an expression of truth and integrity. People intuitively hunger for humility in their spiritual and political leaders. Perhaps this hunger for authentic humility is growing stronger: let us look at this simple phrase, "How can we humble ourselves?". All over the world people enter search phrases like "how to be humble like Jesus?" and "how do we

humble ourselves before God?" There is beauty in the humble way.

Humility is the sail that captures the mercy of God. His ear is tuned to hear the weakest words of a humbled heart.

In King Manasseh's story we find hope for everyone who has wondered if they could possibly grab God's attention. Here are four sure lessons from Manasseh (2 Chronicles 33) for those whose hearts are inclined:

1. Even in the midst of gross iniquity, God is still speaking: (v10) Even after a long list of rebellious acts against God, the text reveals that God still reached out to Manasseh. If you've been told that God hides from your sin, you've been misled. Our sin is one of the very reasons God continues to reach out to us. He loves us and refuses to give up on us. But it's not just that his love reaches down; a humble heart reaches up.
2. God knows how to humble us: (v11) There's a massive difference between being humbled by the Almighty and humbling yourself before him. God may arrange circumstances that bring us low in the eyes of others, but only we can lower ourselves before God. He can extend severe mercy, in C.S. Lewis' phrase, but we remain in control of our own thoughts and hearts.
3. Our hearts can move God's heart: (v13) This is an astounding revelation! God is not impressed by human power, wealth or wisdom, but he is impressed by the human heart. When we choose contrition, the Father tells all heaven to be quiet. Our prayers never have more power than when we take our proper place before him.
4. Our humble example can influence the generations to come: (v25) Manasseh had a grandson named Josiah, who (as

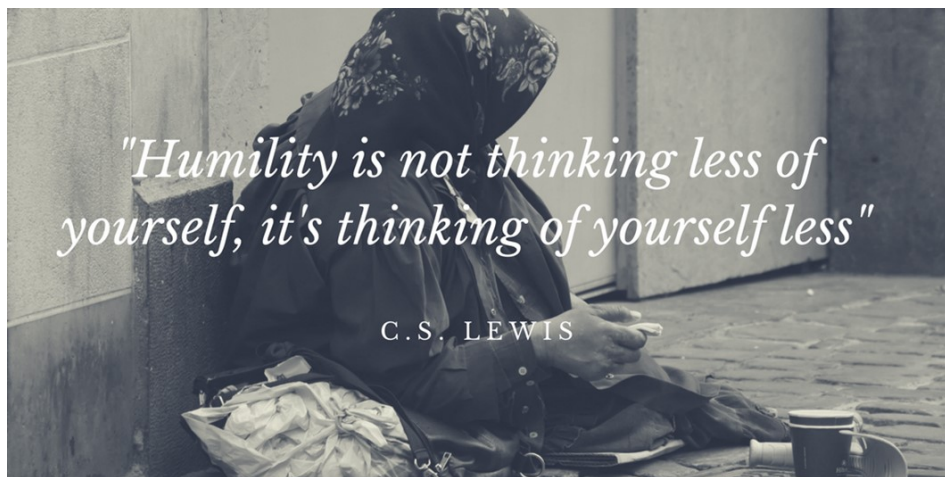
a child) sparked a nationwide revival. I like to imagine that Josiah heard first-hand from his grandfather the horrors of rebellion and the grace of humility. Our life-lessons can become the seed that springs up thirty, sixty, and a hundred-fold in the lives of those who follow.

These are more than theological considerations; they are postures of the heart.

What is whispered in the Old Testament is shouted in the New: humility is the doorway to God's Kingdom. Jesus embodied the life of humility before the Father. He demonstrated the humble path leads to glory, a glory unimagined by the wisdom of men.

Humility spared Manasseh's life. The humility of Jesus opened the floodgates of heaven for others. We are his humble vessels. The world waits for us to pour ourselves out.

Gail



A Fortuitous Circumstance

Hi there

Do you sometimes find yourself going to something you have in your diary and then when you get there you've got the date wrong and it's not what you thought you were going to?

I managed that a week or two ago when I went one Wednesday morning all prepared to do an assembly with the lovely pupils at Hill Top Primary Academy only to find that I should have been there on the Monday morning! Thankfully Mrs Hymans was very understanding, she also explained that on that particular Wednesday it was the turn of the nursery children to do an assembly to the rest of the school, and that I could stay and watch if I wanted to, and so I did.

Now, just let me ask you, do you remember the original Walt Disney film of Mary Poppins with Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke? It's one of my favourite movies, dodgy cockney accents and all, and I still watch it occasionally(usually when David is out!). The reason I mention it is that if you remember towards the latter part of the film, Bert the chimney sweep is sweeping the chimney of the house where the Banks' children live and the children end up inadvertently getting pulled up the chimney and Bert and Mary Poppins of course follow them up It then shows you a view of a most magical rooftop horizon and Bert says, 'What we have here is a fortuishus circumstance' which of course gives them another opportunity for an unforgettable adventure.

Well, whilst watching the nursery children at their assembly wasn't as much of an adventure as shooting up chimneys and

having a riotous time dancing with a lot of chimney sweeps, it certainly was a wonderful privilege and something I that I thoroughly enjoyed and will remember for a long time.

I experienced a fortuitous circumstance. I had gone to present an assembly and ended up watching one, oh and it was much better than mine too!

So the next time you take a wrong turn and end up on a different road, or turn up somewhere and it's not to what you thought it was, just think about the opportunity it has offered or given you.

In taking that wrong exit on the motorway, did it enable you to enjoy a more scenic route to your destination? In turning up to a coffee morning or lunch at church or the community centre, did you meet new people?

We may not end up singing and dancing on a rooftop with a lot of chimney sweeps, but we may have the opportunity for our own 'fortuitous circumstance'.

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious to you.
Love and chimney sweeps.

Dawn x

Albert's 'Schoolboy Memories' Quiz

Part One – William Shakespeare Plays.

1. Which Play features the Twins Viola and Sebastien?
2. The Cole Porter Musical 'Kiss me Kate' was based on which play?
3. In which play were Oberon and Tatiana the king and queen of the fairies?
4. Which play features a money-lender named Shylock?
5. What are the family names of the lovers Romeo and Juliet?
6. Which battle is the centre-piece of the play Henry V?
7. Goneril, Regan and Cordelia were the daughters of which king?
8. In Julius Caesar which character had a lean and hungry look?
9. Which play is referred to as the Scottish Play?
10. Which play contains the soliloquy beginning To Be or Not to Be?

Part Two – British Authors – Charles Dickens.

11. Which novel includes characters named Mr. Micawber and Uriah Heap?
12. Fagin, the Artful Dodger and Bill Sykes appear in which story?
13. Ebenezer Scrooge and the ghost of Jacob Marley star in what?
14. In what story did Mr. Pecksniff and Sarah Gamp emerge?
15. Sydney Carton died and Madame Defarge knitted in which novel?
16. Little Nell sobbed her way through which story?
17. In which novel did Philip Pirrip (Pip) and Abel Magwitch meet?
18. Headmaster Mr. Squeers and his pupil Smike were in which story?
19. Augustus Snodgrass & Sam Weller feature in which novel?
20. Which two novels with titles starting with 'B' did Dickens write?

Church Mouse Tales

Misha the church mouse is contemplating...

I've heard that a sabbatical is a good thing to do. I'm thinking of a sabbatical myself - you know a few weeks out in the Church yard might do me good. Bit of sunshine and fresh air - what's not to like?

My friend Hubert, the Black Canon said I should be careful, there are unseen dangers out there - cats, owls, foxes - even kestrels. There's much less cover to hide under too these days.

Anyway Hubert said a sabbatical isn't a holiday—it's a time for prayer and reflection and for working things out with a bit of peace and quiet. Afterwards, Easter will be a much more rewarding experience.

Suddenly a sabbatical is starting to loose its appeal — I'll stick to the great indoors I think. Working things out isn't my strong suit - besides now Easter Eggs have been mentioned....

Misha



QUIZ ANSWERS: 1. Twelfth Night 2. The Taming of the Shrew 3. Midsummer 4. The Merchant of Venice 5. Montague & Capulet 6. Agincourt 7. King Lear 8. Cassius 9. Macbeth 10. Hamlet 11. David Copperfield 12. Oliver Twist 13. A Christmas Carol 14. Martin Chuzzlewit 15. A Tale of Two Cities 16. The Old Curiosity Shop 17. Great Expectations 18. Nicholas Nickleby 19. Pickwick Papers 20. Barnaby Rudge & Bleak House.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (also commonly known as Daffodils)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

The poem was inspired by an event on 15 April 1802, in which Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy came across a "long belt" of daffodils. Written in 1804 by Wordsworth's own account it was first published in 1807. In a poll conducted in 1995 by BBC Radio 4 to determine the nation's favourite poems, *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* came fifth.

Diary for the coming weeks

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

April

6th Sat	9:30am	Church & Churchyard clean up
7th Sun	10.30am	Holy Communion
	12pm	APCM
8th Mon	7:30pm	PCC Meeting in Church
9th Tue	6:30pm	Confirmation Class
	7:30pm	Lent Group
10th Wed	10:00am	Holy Communion (Iona)
	10:45am	Lent Group
14th Sun	10:30am	All Age Palm Sunday Service
	12:30pm	Baptism
15th Mon	7:30pm	Reflective Service
16th Tue	7:30pm	Stations of the Cross
17th Wed	10:00am	Holy Communion (Healing)
	1:00pm	Forget me Not Café (to 3pm)
	7:30pm	Reflective Service
18th Thur	11:00am	Lydgate Lodge Holy Communion
	7:30pm	Maundy Thursday Reflective Service
19th Fri	2:00pm	Good Friday Reflective Service
20th Sat	8:00pm	Easter Vigil Holy Communion
21st Sun	10:30am	Easter Sunday Holy Communion
24th Wed	10:00am	Morning Praise with Gail
28th Sun	10.30am	Holy Communion

May

1st Wed	10:00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	1:00pm	Forget me Not Café (to 3pm)
4th Sat	9:30am	Church & Churchyard clean up
5th Sun	10.30am	Holy Communion

Guess Who?

You don't have to quiz yourself to work out this youngster is never blue—he's sky blue!



Did you guess? Last month's little lad was our quiz maestro Albert Shaw.

More Funny Signs from Down Under....

Optimism?



Desperation..



FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

We welcome into our church family:-

Willow Sheldon
Erin Grace Saville
Reginald Tommy Ledgard



DEATHS



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

Anne Pamela Hebden
Jack Anderson

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

St Mary's ABC Group

ABC (Adults, Babies and Children) is a warm and friendly group for you and your little ones!

Wednesdays 9.15 until 11am (Term time)
St Mary's Parish Centre
Dewsbury Road, WF12 7JL

£2

per session
/per family

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Parish Centre Rentals

**We have space for Groups
who may be interested in
using the Parish Centre on a
Monday or Wednesday**

evening.

Nominal Cost is £50 for

3 hours.

Contact: Sally Shaw

**01924 475048 for more
information.**

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Contact: The Editor (see page 2)

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What's on

Playgroup	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am to 11.25am Becky Schofield 07811 146958
Community Fit	Group Exercise Classes Mondays 6:45pm to 8:15pm Rachel Tunstall 07711 416178
ABC Group	Adults, Babies and Children Wednesday 9:15-11:00am (Term time) Sally Shaw 01924 475048
Stepping Stones	Sunday Children's Group (3-12 years old) 4th Sunday of the Month 10:30am in Church
Rainbows	Thursday 5.30 - 6.30pm Ruth Osenton-Brown 01924 607393
Brownies	Thursday 6.30 - 7.45pm Hannah Tombling 01924 501892
Keep Fit Class	Thursday 8:00pm Margaret Hampshire 01924 476721
Young at Heart	1 st & 3 rd Thursdays 2:00pm Brenda Dixon 0113 253 4078
Beavers	Friday 5:00pm to 6:15 pm Joanne Rutledge 07950 580877
Cubs	Friday 6:30pm to 7:45 pm Marianne Ingham 07778 542302
Scouts	Friday 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm Trevor Holdsworth 0113 253 0927
Explorer Scouts	Friday 7:45 pm to 9:30 pm Chris Ingham 07816 517838

Services

1st Sunday of the month:

10:30am Holy Communion

2nd Sunday of the month:

10:30am All Age Worship with Holy Communion
A Service for all the family.

3rd Sunday of the month

10:30am Holy Communion

4th Sunday of the month:

10:30am Holy Communion

5th Sunday of the month (4 times per year)

10:30am All Age Worship with Holy Communion

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