

Instructions to access the live stream for services:-

- Navigate to the main St Mary's Woodkirk Facebook page.
www.facebook.com/stmarywoodkirk.
- All scheduled lives will be pinned at the top of the page and you can join them by clicking on them at the time that they start.
- Alternatively a link to the live will also be published on our **A Church Near You** page
- Find the event taking place and click on "More about this event" this will automatically take you straight to the live service on Facebook.

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:-

Yorkshire Bank Morley
Sort Code 05-01-31
Account – Woodkirk PCC 31405751

Thank you - Sharon



WELCOME TO ST MARY'S WOODKIRK

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

*Engaging with God
Engaging with Each Other
Engaging with the Community*

Sunday 14th March 2021

10.30am Holy Communion – Mothering Sunday
(Service streamed via Facebook live)

Instructions to Connect given in column 4

Services for next week

Mon 9.00am	Morning Prayer streamed as above
Tues 6.00pm	Evening Prayer
Weds 10.00am	BCP Holy Communion streamed as above
7.00pm	Lent Reflective Service streamed as above
Thurs 9.00pm	Night Prayer/Compline streamed as above
Fri 9.00am	Morning Prayer streamed as above

Next Sunday's Services are as follows: -

10.30am 5th Sunday of Lent - Said Holy Community
streamed as above)

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

From our Parish Prayer Diary: For all those who have lost their jobs and businesses.

From our Church Prayer Diary : For all those who have been furloughed.

We pray for Baptism Families, Wedding Couples and Funeral Families.

Those who have asked for **prayers for healing**:

Kevin, Richard, Grace, Betty, Lionel, Frank, Nicole, Simon, Faith, Alfie, Bree, Marlene, Philip, Jillian, Brian, Margaret, Jerry, Louise, Mark, Sandra, David, Prince Philip, Dan and Richard.

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

And those whose **anniversaries** fall at this time:

Dianne Bromley, James Henry Roberts, Elizabeth Stead.

VICAR: Revd. Sharon Wilkinson 07539 466724
Email: vicar@stmarywoodkirk.org

READER: Dawn Tattersfield 07840 739239
Email: dawn@stmarywoodkirk.org

PASTORAL MINISTER: Gail Townsend 07792 975814
Email: gail@stmarywoodkirk.org

EDITOR: Dave Townsend 07745 301746
Email: dave@stmarywoodkirk.org

CHRISTENINGS can be booked by contacting:
BAPTISM CO-ORDINATOR: Barbara Tate
Email: barbara@stmarywoodkirk.org

WEDDINGS can be booked by contacting our:
WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Gail Townsend 07792 975814
Email: gail@stmarywoodkirk.org

CHURCH WEBSITE: www.stmarywoodkirk.org

FACEBOOK: regular updates about life at St Mary's can be found on our Facebook pages:
*St Mary's Church, Woodkirk,
and Friends of Woodkirk Churchyard.*

TWITTER: tweet us and follow us @stmarywoodkirk

Scripture Readings for the coming week:-

Sunday 14th March – HC –streamed live

Exodus 2:1-10

Luke 2:33-35

Monday 15th March – Morning Prayer – streamed live

Psalm 77

John 9:18-41

Tuesday 16th March – Evening Prayer – streamed live

Psalm 80

Hebrews 9:15-28

Weds 17th March – BCP HC – streamed live

Isaiah 49:8-15

John 5:17-30

Thurs 18th March – Night Prayer/Compline – streamed live

Psalm 139

Isaiah 58: 6,7

Fri 19th March – Morning Prayer - streamed live

Psalm 25

Isaiah 11:1-10

Services for Lent and Easter

Lent Reflections

There will be streamed Lent Reflective Services on Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm the next one will be on Wednesday 17th March 2021.

14th March – **Mothering Sunday**

28th March – **Palm Sunday**

Holy Week

Mon 29th March Reflective Service at 7.00pm

Tues 30th March Stations of the Cross at 7.00pm

Weds 31st March Reflective Service at 7.00pm

Thurs 1st April Maundy Thursday - Reflective Service and Watch 7.00pm

Fri 2nd April Good Friday - Solemn Service at 2.00pm

Sat 3rd April – Easter Vigil and Service of Light 8.00pm

Sun 4th April - Easter Sunday – 10.30am He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia.

PCC Meeting on 8th March

The PCC has taken the decision to open the Church from Easter Sunday. This seemed a suitable time that fits in with the Government's four stage plan and with the hope and message that Easter brings to the world and to us as Christians.

The following points were made:-

- a) We will open on Sunday's only for the first four weeks – this will reduce the risk of transmission and will allow the majority of those over the age of seventy to have had their second injections. This will be reviewed at the PCC Meeting in April.
- b) There will be social distancing in place, there will be no free movement around the church and there can be no mingling at the end of the services. Please, please when asked to leave by the person on duty do so – this is for your benefit as well as others.
- c) Face masks should be worn and of course there is no singing permitted. Neither will there be coffee or tea at the end of the Service.
- d) We will continue to stream all services.
- e) We can only have so many bubbles in church due to the size of the building.
- f) If you do not feel ready to comeback, or safe to come back or are still shielding then please take it at your own pace and join us on line. Everyone, on line and in building, make up the church.

The PCC will continually review their decisions in the light of any further Government announcements and new data emerging as well as following guidance from the Church of England.

A new risk assessment will be carried out on all aspects of worship before Easter Sunday.

Holy Communion – The PCC also agreed to continue to offer only one element of the Eucharist Feast ie the bread. The guidance is that the common cup cannot be used but that the Vicar could intinct (dip) the wafer into the wine and then distribute it directly into the mouths of those wishing to receive. I believe and the PCC agreed that this is a risk that I do not want to take.

We have now seen three wedding couples whose weddings will go ahead in May and June and to say they are excited is an understatement.

Barbara has been inundated with Baptism requests and these have all been booked in.

Funerals have continued to happen within the guidelines set out.

Certainly up until (at least) 21st June we will continue to follow all the government guidelines on numbers, social distancing and face masks.

So there is some positivity on the horizon and we are moving forward albeit slowly.

As much as I know that you have all missed worshipping in the church building, this year has taken its toll on all of us, and from a personal point of view, the church building has been a lonely place, because it is you the people that make it church, that give it life.

National Day of Reflection – 23rd March

This is a national day to remember those who have died during the pandemic, and to show support for everyone who has been bereaved. It was an idea spearheaded by the charity Marie Curie but has been quickly supported by other organisations including the Church of England.

At St Mary's we would like to be part of that and so watch this space as we will be revealing how we can help and encourage our community to remember their loved ones who have died during the pandemic and one year of lockdown.

If you are struggling or need anything then please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Gail.

Love and prayers to you all.
Sharon

Lent Reflection on 10th March looked at the theme – Walking in the Light.

Opening Prayer

Your life was a journey
from the moment you were born.
From birth to death
From Bethlehem's stable
to Calvary's cross.
How often we fail to understand,
that the conclusion of your journey
was inevitable,
that you understood this
from the very beginning,
and yet still walked the path
that was yours to take.
By comparison
the many choices we make
in our life seem trivial,
the twists and turns we choose
are often taken on impulse,
with no clear comprehension of the outcome.
Thank you, Jesus.
Thank you that you loved humankind enough

to make that journey,
even as you felt the pain of rejection,

the pain of the lashes,
the pain of the nails,
the pain of the cross.

Amen.

Readings: Numbers 21:4-9, John 3:14-21, Ephesians 2:1-10

I suspect that there are not many 'Watch for snakes' signs in this country but in other countries such as the United States they can be seen fairly frequently. It is a warning that there are dangerous things out there that can bite you, hurt you, maybe even kill you. So we are told to avoid the snakes and if you see one get away. That makes sense. It's good advice. It is, I suspect, how most of us try to live our daily lives. And it's not just about the snakes that crawl on the ground. We live that way with regard to the snakes of life. We avoid those things we

fear, the things that hurt us, that bite us and cause pain – not just physically but also emotionally and spiritually. So we avoid dealing with our addictions and attachments. We ignore broken relationships. We put off doing the hard work of life. We turn away from our difficulties. We repress painful memories. We don't acknowledge our fear, resentments, or anger. We refuse to think or talk about our own death. We deny the things we have done and left undone. After all isn't that what the sign says? If you see a snake get away.

What if there was a different sign? What if the sign said, "If you see a snake look him straight in the eyes. Stare him down. See who blinks first." It sounds kind of crazy but at some level that's exactly what God told the Israelites to do.

Their impatience in the wilderness, their fear of dying, living with an uncertain future and an unknown destination, the emptiness, thirst and hunger, the difficulty of life – all manifested themselves as snakes in the wilderness; snakes that would bite, wound, and kill them. They would have to face the reality of their snakes. It seems like a smart Israelite would turn and run. But when the Israelites tried that they died. We are not saved from our snakes by running away. God offers a different option. Instead of turning away, the salvation God offered the Israelites was that they were to stare at the very thing they feared. God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts. God's logic often seems foolishness.

Somehow authentic life involves facing and looking at the reality of death – not only our own physical death but also the many ways we die each day. The daily deaths happen in various ways – in our disappointments, failures, and shattered dreams; in our regrets and sorrows; our loneliness; our anger, fear, and resentment; the losses

and broken relationships we experience; the separation and isolation caused by sin.

God's remedy reveals that the wilderness serpent is both the agent of death and the agent of healing. The cross of death is now the cross of life. God says, "Look at it. Look at the very thing you fear, the thing that bites, terrorizes, and kills you." Those are the places in which Jesus Christ stands victorious. God does not remove the dangers and difficulties of life. Instead, God offers a remedy and a way forward. "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." In the person of Jesus, God became flesh to stand with us in the snaky places, to heal us, to make us alive, and lift us to the heavenly places. In Christ:

- The place of fear becomes the place of courage.
- The place of sin becomes the place of forgiveness.
- The place of wounding becomes the place of healing.
- The place of death becomes the place of life.
- The place of falling down becomes the place of rising up.

The very things that destroy life in the human world are, in God's world, the instruments of healing and salvation. In God's world the cure for snakes is a snake, the cure for human life is God's incarnate life, and the cure for death is death.

Those who are willing to look into the snaky places of their life will see the Son of Man being lifted up; the healing and transformation of this world and life. Christ says to each one of us, "Look on me, believe on me, and live. Turn your gaze and you will be saved by the God who sent me. I have not come to condemn the world but to love the world into salvation."

This holy season of Lent asks us to discover and name the snakes of our life. And then decide. Will we turn and run or will we turn and gaze? Lifting our eyes to meet the gaze of love, the gaze of Christ?

Closing Prayer

Your light is the only light we need
as we travel through life's mystery

Your word the only voice we hear
that still small voice that leads us
to the place where we should be

Your presence is the only company we need
as we walk this narrow road
Your fellowship the warmth we crave to help us on our
way

Grant us the eyes of faith

that can see beyond
the troubles of this day,
knowing that by your grace
we can be overcomers,

and all that we perceive
as our current weaknesses
might become strengths
that will uphold us
in better days to come.

Amen