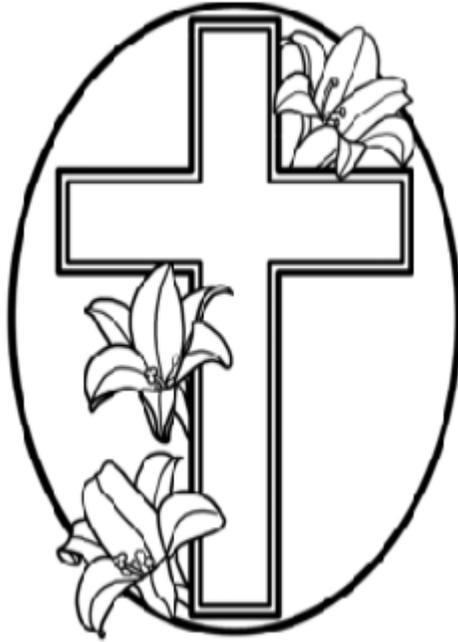


2026

MENSTON  
PARISH CHURCH  
St John the Divine



*Easter Day*  
*5 April*

£1



## MAGAZINE NEWS

Sadly, readership of the magazine continues its gentle decline - a scenario repeated across many churches. And it is sad because it is an important part of our Christian outreach to Menston. However, for the time being we are able to continue in Menston!

The Magazine is delivered free of charge to Menston residents by a wonderful team, many of whom have undertaken the task of delivering the magazine, in all weathers, for many years. Thank you to them and to all of you who have renewed your subscription to the magazine for the forthcoming year.

The new magazine advertising year begins this month. We have a new advert - for Shipley Glen Tramway. If you know of anyone who may be interested in placing an advert in the magazine please encourage them to contact the Parish Office. Advertising income for the coming year has raised £494 and we thank all our advertisers for their ongoing support of St John's.

Our 'in-house' printing and the three collating teams also help the magazine to run at a profit and contribute to St John's income. Magazine income from sales and advertising, after expenses, has raised approximately £1,500.

*Jan Alexander, Editor*

### **This month**

P6 A View from the Pews  
P7 Prayer Points  
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P13 APCM and ELECTIONS

P12 EASTER WORSHIP  
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P16 Menston MU news  
p18 Bible Bites  
P19 Notices

Copy for the **MAY** magazine is due by **Sunday 12 April**. Please email copy to both editor and Parish Office ([office@stjohnmenston.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohnmenston.org.uk)) or leave copy for typing with the office.

## The Vicarage

### Dear Friends

Easter is always a special moment in the life of the Church. After the quiet reflections of Lent and the solemn stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday, through the agony and isolation of Good Friday, we find ourselves in the joyful and life-changing moment of the resurrection, as we celebrate the fact that Jesus is Risen! Risen indeed.

For me, Easter is a reminder that all of Gods story is about love and hope. From the very beginning to the final chapter we hear of God constantly reaching out to call us his own. The good news of the resurrection is that even when things seem uncertain, painful or beyond repair, God is still there at work, bringing about new life. The stone was rolled away and what seemed like a hopeless messy end became a joyous hopeful new beginning.

At this time of year we see that promise reflected all around us, the days are growing longer, full of light, the gardens begin to bloom and the world feels like it is waking up again after the long cold darkness of winter. I have often wondered about the symbolism we would use if we were in the southern hemisphere where Easter falls in autumn. Death and decay are a given but we would have to work much harder to imagine new life around us.

It is always a privilege to share in this journey of faith. This year we have used symbols of the cross to prepare us and mark the Lenten journey. We have watched a film together and made links in our lent groups. We have spent

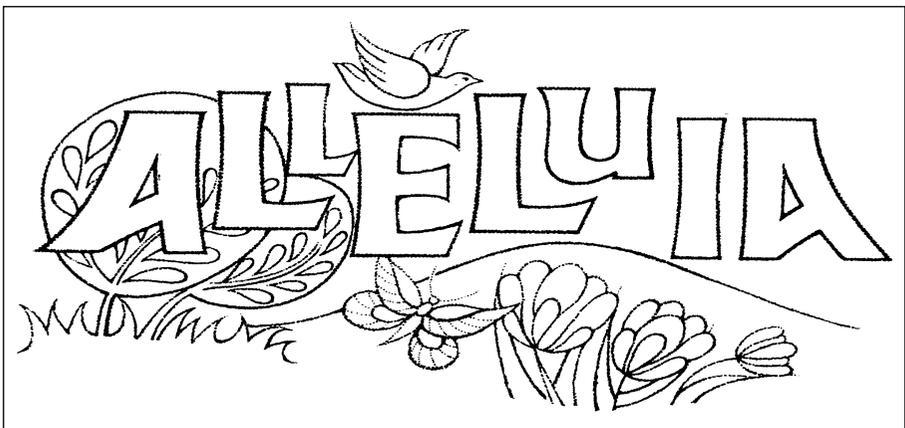
a morning exploring silence and prayer, and we have joined our local community to make music. Whether you come to St John's every week or only time to time, you are part of our community and you are warmly welcome to come, just as you are.

My prayer this Easter time is that each of us might know something of the peace, joy and renewed hope that the risen Christ Jesus brings.

May the light of Easter fill your hearts and your homes, and may the promise of New Life stay with you in the months ahead.

With love and prayers,

*Andrew*



## **A View from The Pews by Dominic Hall**

You might recall that last month I set myself, and all who wished to join me, a challenge. Namely, to read twelve of the books of the Old Testament and to reflect on the stories and messages that they bring. At the time of writing this is an ongoing project. However, I have read enough of the books to form some opinions on what is going on. Now, I am in no way a theologian. My response to these texts is as someone who likes to read and who sits in church each Sunday trying to figure out a path through the increasing minefield of existence.

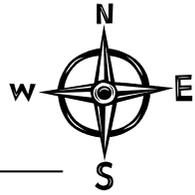
My first observation is prosaic. Where was the editor? There is an extraordinary amount of repetition in these stories. I got the impression that this was not just stylistic or that the author was receiving a payment per word! It began to feel as though this was a cultural expectation in the texts. The question is, why? I cannot answer the question adequately, but my sense is that some of these tales will have come from an oral tradition and have been copied down verbatim with no regard to how they read.

My second observation is more concerned with the people. We live in a remarkably privileged society, but we all know of people who are determined to disregard authority and cause a nuisance. This seems to be happening much more frequently in the Old Testament. I understand that these curated texts have a purpose in creating the need for Jesus; however, this is not a peaceful and calm land by any stretch. The constant hardship, oppression, violence and cruelty on show is astounding even to modern readers. Again, the question is why? It seems there is a chronicle of misbehaviour that accentuates the love of God. No matter how bad the people behave, no matter how they abandon all that has been asked of them; they will be forgiven and loved when they return to the fold.

I will continue reading the other texts I have selected but I fear there will be a continued need for a strong stomach.

A final thought on the point of all this. I started this challenge to take on the 'burden' of reading and meeting these people. It is both depressing and rewarding to see that the travails of the past are mirrored in some of the behaviours of the present. And the reward? No matter how bad things are, the forgiveness and love of God are infinite. That, for me, is the great message of hope that reaches down through the ages.

# Prayer Points



There is no time like Spring ...  
Frost-locked all the winter,  
Seeds, roots, and stones of fruits,  
What shall make their sap ascend  
That they may put forth shoots?

(adapted from *A Poem for Every Spring Day* by Allie Esiri)

Easter and the arrival of Spring offers a time of hope, renewal and reflection; a time for gratitude, forgiveness and transformation. It's a time to renew our spiritual connections; a time to pause and reflect. This period allows us the space to consider - no matter what struggles and challenges we face – that we can draw courage and faith from the power of God's victory over death.

So let's pray for ourselves, intercede for others, pray for our communities and extend compassion, hope and encouragement to all.

If ever there were a spring day so perfect,  
so uplifted by a warm intermittent breeze  
that it made you want to throw  
open all the windows in the house  
and unlatch the door to the canary's cage,  
a day when the cool brick paths  
and the garden bursting with peonies  
seemed so etched in sunlight  
that you felt like taking  
a hammer to the glass paperweight  
on the living room table,  
releasing the inhabitants  
from their snow-covered cottage  
so they could walk out,  
holding hands and squinting  
into this larger dome of blue and white,  
well, today is just that kind of day.

(Adapted from *Today* by Billy Collins)

*With thanks to Susan Druett for this month's Prayer Points*

## ECO CHURCH NEWS

### Lady Danbury in Menston?

You are invited to hear from Bridgertons' s Lady Danbury, actor Adjoa Andoh - British acting royalty- in a conversation recorded at the Greenbelt Festival last August. She speaks about her Christian faith and causing a stir! We will meet in our newly refurbished Parish Room on Thursday 23 April at 7.45pm for about an hour. Come early for the comfy seats!



On Good Friday 3 April from 10-11am we will be planting vegetable seeds. Do come along and join in.

### Music in the Air

Many thanks to everyone who supported this event - performers and audience plus stage management and catering. Great repertoire of music and such talent. The event raised £315.20 for church funds, so a great outcome all round.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Menston Heritage Group

We next meet on Monday 11 May at 7.30pm in Kirklands if you are interested in coming along to find out more about what we do and how you might get involved.

### Climate Action Menston

Our Science Week activity at the school focused on reduce, reuse and recycle. The children sorted rubbish, heard about the challenges of different sorts of plastic and how to recycle as well as how to reuse more stuff! , it was great to be a part of this event.

Some of us are now taking part in the 'Let's Talk Climate' training provided by Larger Us which we hope will be really helpful in how to spread awareness in the best possible way.

## EASTER LILIES

Thank you to all who have donated so generously to the Easter Lilies this year. They are always a joy to arrange and we shall be doing so on **Saturday 4 April starting at 9.30am.**

If you would like to be involved bring some scissors or secateurs, you will be very welcome. Help and support on offer. Thank you.

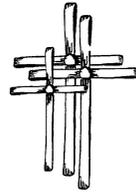


*Jan Alexander*

## THANKS

A huge thank you to Brenda Robinson for making our palm crosses once again. Despite being house-bound, and amidst extremely

difficult family circumstances, she was delighted to continue the job she began some 40 years ago.



## SPRING IS HERE!

If you sleep with your bedroom window open, you will know all about the dawn chorus around now. The birds are busy establishing their territorial rights, and the 'early birds' have probably already selected a nest site and started building.



The blackbird builds a solid cup of twigs, plant stems and leaves, lined with a thick skin of mud covered with finer grasses and leaves. The long-tailed tit forms a soft hollow ball of mosses, hair and wool, with a tiny hole as entrance. The wrens do it differently, with the male wren sometimes building several nests before his finicky mate will accept one. He gets his revenge, though, because he sometimes installs a second wife in one of the rejected sites.

*Parish Pump News Service*

## WHY the PCC?

The church – both locally and nationally – might be likened to a swan. On the surface everything seems to run smoothly. Underneath, however, there is a network of people who work tirelessly to keep the show on the road and make decisions about the future direction we should take.

At the APCM (Sunday 26 April 11am) we will have a chance to elect new members to the PCC. I would like to show what the PCC does and, hopefully, inspire and encourage those of you who are thinking of putting your names forward to take the plunge.

Perhaps the most important responsibility for the PCC is deciding what we do with the money that comes into St John's. We need to contribute a share to the diocese and make sure the fabric of the church is cared for, but we also need to think about our mission. We look at what we deliver in terms of worship and how that is likely to play out. We set in place plans for special occasions such as Easter and Christmas. All of this is done via lively but friendly discussion and prayerful thought.

Joining the PCC – particularly one with established and experienced members - can be a daunting prospect. However, I'd like to think we are welcoming and encouraging. If you do join us, you will meet some lovely people. What is also true is that you will have a better understanding of the way a church runs on a daily basis, and I think a better understanding of the rapid paddling that goes on under the surface.

Being on the PCC is also a very good way to build confidence. A lot of us can wander blithely through life and not feel that we have a contribution to make. Listening to and taking part in the discussions at PCC and having a say in decisions that affect the life of St John's in Menston can be empowering and give a fresh new purpose in life.

Ultimately, it is a rewarding and important part of church life. I do hope that some of you to consider putting your names forward in the coming weeks.

*Dominic Hall*

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# ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING

## Sunday 26 April ~ 11am

To be held in church and to be followed by a short said Service of Holy Communion.

### AGENDA

- Election of 2 Churchwardens
- Election of 3 Deanery Synod members to serve for 3 years. *Automatically members of PCC*
- Election of PCC members:
  - 3 to serve for 3 years*
  - 2 to serve for two years*
- Treasurer's Report

Please think and pray about nominations and whether you are prepared to stand for any of the vacancies.

*Please notify Revd Jo or the Parish Office by Tuesday 16 April either by email or in writing, of any questions you wish to raise at the meeting.*



# Worship this month

## **5 Apr EASTER DAY**

**Readings: Acts 10: 34-43; Matthew 28: 1-10**

**Reader: Julie West**

6.10am Sunrise and Fire Pit

10.00am Everyone Together Easter Celebration

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## **12 Apr The Second Sunday of EASTER**

**Readings: Acts 2: 22-32; John 20: 19-end**

**Reader: Hilary Feathers**

9.30am Zest with Communion

11.00am Parish Eucharist

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## **19 Apr The Third Sunday of EASTER**

**Readings: Acts 2: 36-41; Luke 24: 13-35**

**Reader: Dorothy Slater**

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

3.00pm IGNITE / FIREWORKS in the Parish Room

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## **26 Apr The Fourth Sunday of EASTER**

**Readings: Acts 2: 42-end; John 10: 1-10**

**Reader: Jan Alexander**

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

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## **3 May The Fifth Sunday of EASTER**

**Readings: Acts 7: 55-end; John 14: 1-14**

**Reader: Peter Wilbraham**

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

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## **MID-WEEK SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*9.30am Thursdays: 9 / 16 / 23 / 30 April; 7 May*

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# EASTER

ST JOHN'S, MENSTON

**DRAW NEAR TO WONDER ABOUT THE HOPE OF EASTER @ ST JOHN'S:**

**Palm Sunday - 29th March: 9.30am, 11.00am - Holy Communion**

During our regular services we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem & his journey to the cross

**Wednesday 1st April: 7pm - Stations of the Cross**

A reflective contemplation of Jesus' movement from hero to crucified

**Maundy Thursday - 2nd April: 7pm - Last Supper and Gethsemane**

Recounting Jesus' last night with his friends, includes Communion

**Good Friday - 3rd April: 2pm - An Hour at the Cross**

A quiet time of contemplating the pain and the love of Jesus on the Cross

**Saturday 4th April: 2pm - 4pm - Zest @ Kirklands Easter Special**

A lively and creative time exploring the wonder of Easter through crafts, storytelling and donkey rides! At Kirklands Community Centre

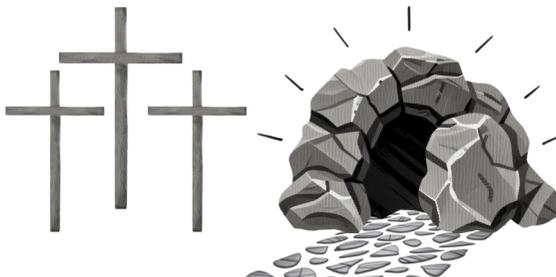
**Easter Sunday - 5th April**

**6.10am – Sunrise and Fire Pit**

Watch the Sun rise on Easter Day, followed by a simple breakfast

**10am – Everyone Together Easter Celebration**

Easter Communion Service for all the family!



## **PCC November 2025**

The PCC met to discuss a number of important areas in the life of St John's, beginning with prayer and reflection. We were grateful for strong attendance and for everyone's thoughtful contributions.

### **Finances & Giving**

Members reflected on the Generosity and Gratitude season, which was well received across the congregation. We've already seen positive signs, including several new Parish Giving Scheme donors and increased giving from some existing supporters. Although full figures are still coming in, the PCC felt encouraged.

The Diocese of Leeds is moving to a three-year cycle for Parish Share requests, helping both parishes and the Diocese plan more confidently. St John's contribution request will be lower over the coming years due to reduced attendance, though we remain committed to contributing generously towards the wider mission of the church and the need for clergy across the diocese.

### **Improving Accessibility**

A major part of our meeting focused on making our church building easier and safer for everyone to access. The sloping path to Main Street was highlighted as particularly difficult, especially in the dark or

bad weather. The PCC discussed long-term improvements - such as lighting, a continuous handrail, and reshaping parts of the path—as well as temporary measures like clip-on lighting for evening events. We are also exploring options to update the hearing loop system and to improve chancel access.

### **Parish Room & Facilities**

The Parish Room to be redecorated in January 2026. Conversations about improving the toilet facilities there will continue in the coming weeks.

### **Supporting Ministry & Mission**

The PCC received a positive finance update and approved a small number of spending requests, including Christmas lighting and modest improvements to path lighting for safety. The Parish Administrator's pay will also increase in line with the real living wage from January.

### **Safeguarding**

A recent wellbeing concern involving a church member was followed up promptly and sensitively. There are no ongoing safeguarding issues to report. We are grateful to everyone who helps maintain a safe and caring environment for all.

### **Looking Ahead**

Advent groups, the Christmas Quiz, and seasonal events were all approved and are now well underway in planning.

## **PCC January 2026**

The PCC reviewed church life, finances, and plans for the year ahead, beginning with prayer and reflection.

### **Finances & Giving**

Thanks to the generosity of our church family, in 2025 after meeting our running costs, maintaining our reserve, and funding local mission work, we were able to offer a Parish Share contribution of around 80% of the Diocesan request. This is less than we have been able to offer in the past and we hope to offer what they need in the future.

### **Mission and Ministry**

We continue to see real energy in areas such as community engagement, work with children and families, and financial sustainability. Other important areas - like accessibility, inclusivity, and discipleship - will be given more focus in the coming year.

A fuller discussion on Prayers of Love and Faith and wider inclusivity is planned for the March PCC meeting.

We also look forward to:

- A Quiet Day on Saturday 7 March, exploring silence and prayer.
- A return to a 4pm Nativity for Christmas 2026.

### **Parish Room Refresh**

Work continues on refreshing the Parish Room. New paint colours and curtain fabric have been chosen, and repairs are being arranged. New chairs have been approved and the older ones will be removed. Once complete, the room will offer a more welcoming and practical space for groups, mission and hospitality.

### **Upcoming Events**

Funding and approval were given for:

- *Kintsugi Hope partnership* (supported by a donor).
- *Lent Conversations* and a film afternoon.
- *February half-term* family activities, including a Pancake Party, Stay & Play, and Collage Club.
- *Holy Week and Easter* will follow the usual pattern, with St John's hosting Maundy Thursday Communion.

### **Other News**

- *Our new Co-operative Bank account* is open and running.
- *Access issues around the chancel step* are being reviewed
- We are engaging an architect to support our over-due Quinquennial inspection.

The meeting closed in prayer, grateful for all that God is doing in and through our church community.



**This month:**

7 April 2.15pm 'Extraordinary women' Mrs Sue Nicholas

At our last meeting in March, we were pleased to welcome Jo, our Vicar. who led us through a Lenten Meditation in the comfortable surroundings of our refurbished Parish Room. We read the story of the Prodigal Son, followed by a reflection and discussion regarding our views on the different aspects of Justice and Mercy. Our grateful thanks go to Jo for finding the time to lead our MU meeting within her busy schedule,

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**2026 -The 150th Anniversary of the Mothers' Union**

During this coming year a lot of exciting events and celebrations are taking place all over the country. However, we are aware that many branches, including our own, are concerned that with ageing membership they are unable to do too much or travel too far to take part.

We are reminded that we are a movement that is rooted in prayer and that we are never too old to pray. When we pray, God listens to us, then remarkable things happen. Mary Summer was too nervous to speak at the first meeting in her parish and asked her husband to speak for her. After she found her confidence she did speak out, and now we have members in 84 countries, including a new branch which has just opened in Dubai. Long may we continue with our support of families around the world.

*Marjorie Boddy & Ann Dixon*

## All in the month of APRIL

### What's orange, sticky and worth preserving?

This month sees **National Marmalade Week (18 – 25 April)**. Dalemain Mansion and Gardens in Cumbria hold the World Marmalade Awards and Festival. It celebrates, preserves and promotes artisanal marmalades, with thousands of entries. (Even Paddington Bear will be in attendance!)



Ever wonder where marmalade comes from? One tradition traces it to a storm-damaged Spanish ship which took refuge in Dundee Harbour in 1700. It was full of Seville oranges that the captain was desperate to sell before they went mouldy. A local down-on-luck merchant, one James Keiller, bought the lot. He didn't know what to do with the oranges either, but fortunately he had a resourceful wife. She set about turning a shipload of Seville oranges into a preserve, and so the first marmalade factory was born.

Marmalade has been at the heart of British breakfasts for centuries. Winston Churchill fought the Second World War on it (washed down with a flute of Pol Roger each morning) and of course, Paddington Bear's sandwiches were all marmalade!

### National Parks Fortnight 4 - 18 April

This month would be a good time to visit at least one of our 15 National Parks, and to appreciate once again the role they play in conserving our environment and encouraging people to enjoy outdoor activities.

**Oldest:** The Peak District designated the first UK National Park in 1951.

**Largest:** Cairngorms National Park in Scotland, covering 1,748 square miles.

**Most visited:** Lake District National Park, with about 18 million visitors a year.

**Locally we have the Yorkshire Dales, North Yorks Moors and Northumberland.**

**Altogether, the** National Parks make up roughly 10% of the total landmass in the UK..

More details at: <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/>

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Luke 22:24, John 13:3-17

Jesus and his disciples were celebrating the Passover with the special meal. The disciples were bickering again.

I'm most important because I've known him the longest

But I've given up the most to follow him!  
I'm the oldest!



There was a reason why no-one wanted to be the least important - the roads were mud and everyone's feet got very dirty.

It was the job of the least important servant to wash everyone's feet...



The disciples didn't have a servant, and none of them wanted to do the feet washing...



Jesus took off his outer robe and tied a towel around his waist.



He filled a large bowl with water and started washing the disciples' feet.

Peter couldn't believe what he was seeing!



Are you really going to wash my feet?

You will understand later why I am doing this.



I can't ever let you serve me like this!

If you don't let me, you will no longer be my disciple



Then wash all of me!

If you've had a bath, then you only need your feet washing!



Once Jesus had washed all their feet, he put his robe back on and sat down.



Do you understand why I, your teacher, did this? I am setting you the example of how you are to serve each other. Do it, and God will bless you.

# NOTICES

## **ELECTORAL ROLL**

A reminder that completed forms should be handed to me, or handed in to the Office preferably in an envelope marked with my name by **Sunday 5 April** at the latest.  
*Elizabeth Leopold*

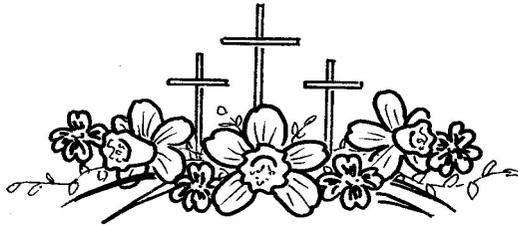
**PARISH OFFICE** - open on Wednesday 1 April. It will then be closed until Thursday 16 April. The administrator will be available remotely from Tuesday 14 April.

**HOMELESS HAMPERS** - a reminder that we are no longer a drop-off point for donations.

Donations should now be taken to **Menston Library** where they are collected weekly, and distributed.

*Please discourage anyone from bringing donations and leaving them in church.*

Thank you for your help with this. *Revd Andrew*



## **Light Up St John's – Floodlight Sponsorship**

22 April Special memories of my beloved husband

A very special way to mark an anniversary or simply to give thanks. The cost is £5 per evening which helps to cover the costs of floodlighting the church from dusk until 10.30pm.

Contact the Parish Office to make arrangements: 872433  
or [office@stjohnmenston.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohnmenston.org.uk)



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

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advertisers. Your  
continued support  
for St John's via  
the Parish Magazine is  
much appreciated and  
valued.*

## Question of the month:

At work we are required to teach 'British Values'. One of these is that we follow the rule of law – somewhat ironic in a prison!

It set me thinking about how we might influence the law; so, the question of the month for April is a bit of a classic:

**If you were Prime Minister for a day,  
what one law would you introduce?**



# Care starts at *home*

Friendly support and activities for older adults in Menston

*Join us at our activities*



## Home Instead Memory Café

Join us every first Wednesday of  
the month 10am - 12pm at  
Cornerstone Café, Menston



## Home Instead Chair Based Exercise Class

Join us every Tuesday from  
2pm - 3pm at St Mary's Parish  
Centre, Burley in Wharfedale



## Our Home Care Services

- |               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Companionship | Live in Care            |
| Personal Care | Home Help               |
| Dementia Care | Minimum one hour visits |

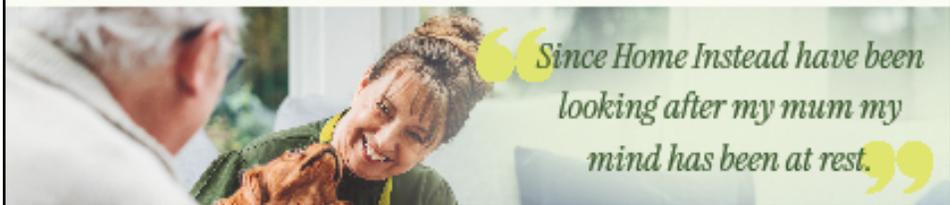
## Get in touch



01943 662188



office@ilkley.  
homeinstead.co.uk



*“Since Home Instead have been  
looking after my mum my  
mind has been at rest.”*

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- Dog walking

Please call to discuss your personal needs.

**Contact Sarah: 01943 874018 or 07919 566352**

**Excellent references available.**

*St John's Church is not responsible for the quality of work or services advertised in this magazine*

