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APCM

Sunday 28 April

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THANK YOUs

The new magazine advertising year begins this month. Many of our advertisers are continuing and we thank them for their ongoing support for St John's. If you know of anyone who may be interested in placing an advert in the magazine please ask them to contact the Parish Office.

Advertising income for the coming year has raised £758. This is an extremely valuable contribution to magazine income and, together with our 'in-house' collating teams and magazine sales, helps the magazine to run at a profit, and contribute income to church funds.

Also, if you use the services of any of our advertisers please let them

know where you saw their advert. It helps to make them feel their support for St John's is worthwhile.

Magazine sales are slowly falling year by year. Can you help? Persuade a neighbour or friend to take the magazine? Free delivery within Menston. Contact the Parish Office if you can help.

Jan Alexander, Editor

Many thanks to everyone who was involved in the '**Music in the Air**' concert on 2 March which raised £600.17. This is great and there were lots of lovely comments about the young people particularly and the great music from everyone.

Marilyn Banister



This month

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Copy for the MAY magazine is due by **Sunday 14 April**. Please email copy to both editor and Parish Office (office@stjohnmenston.org.uk) or leave copy for typing with the office.

Dear Friends

Many of you will know that whilst I have been waiting for my surgery. I have had quite a few months where I've been reflecting on what all this means, about what I can and cannot do, and how best to do it. I am sure that many of you will have experienced similar times in your life when it feels like important things are on hold, other people are making your decisions, and your head is so stuffed with either massive amounts of pain, or massive amounts of pain medication (I am still to decide which is worst!) But when we are in places like that in our lives, what do we believe about ourselves and more importantly what do we think God thinks about us?

Somehow or other I managed back last October to go on my first ever retreat. The diocese encourages its clergy to do this, ideally once a year. I am ashamed to say that I just kept putting it off and making excuses. My clergy review came around each year, and either the Bishop, the Archdeacon or the Area Dean would ask 'and have you taken your retreat this year?' Being off work, not really doing anything much, was like a super-imposed retreat, but I did find a way to get to a quite wonderful place in the North East called Alnmouth Friary. I am not certain how I managed to get me and my constant companion (the stick!) all the way there, but I am so glad I did!

Two things stood out for me through my discussions with the friars (a wonderful group of five Franciscan Friars). First of all 'why are you thinking about all the things that you can't do? What about the things that you can do?'. That was a good question... What could I do? And more significantly 'don't sit around trying to make sense of things beyond you, get out of the way so that God can do His thing'. Clergy overall are not good at getting out of the way! We convince ourselves that we, more than anyone else are indispensable. Oh yes, its not what we tell others, obviously, but deep down inside... it doesn't apply to us. Well, there is nothing like 7 months of sick leave (I preferred 'unfit for duty!') to physically get you out of the way. And what was it that I could do?

I decided that I could use social media, and that during Advent, I could go on a spiritual journey around various themes and share it with a few others. I found a great book by Lisa Bodenheim of the Iona Community, called *Disturbing Complacency*, and I set off, via WhatsApp with a small band of other travellers and we explored our faithful complacency. It was one of the biggest learning experiences that I have enjoyed, and our little group grew as people added their friends. So when Lent came around and I was still not at work, we set off again. We have explored some dark and challenging things of our faith, and some wacky things, we have shared more together and it has been good. We have another two weeks of reflecting together as we get nearer to our remembrance of Easter, but what a joy it has been.

There is a sense of an interregnum being the ultimate in getting out of the way, and allowing God to 'do their thing'. I want to just share a few thoughts with you. Getting out of the way is important, but it is a positive action not a negative one. We must expect God to do His thing. That means preparing us for whatever that looks like, working hard at being ready, but recognising it is Gods busy-ness not ours. How are you spending this time, whilst we wait for a new incumbent? I think that we should be in preparation, open and listening, doing less but hoping for more. This is not a vacuum to be filled with our own private agendas, but rather a waiting place, a reflecting pool, an oasis to think about what we can do differently, but essentially attune ourselves to God doing His thing with us. So my prayer is that for, you our interregnum is a spiritual blessing where you might have the courage to explore what God doing His thing in your life might look like?

My plan is to return to work after Easter, different, but excited about the next leg of the pilgrimage. I hope and pray that your plans are truly blessed by our loving God, and that you and yours might have a truly blessed and exciting Easter.

Andrew

Check out Andrew's plug for the Men's Group on page 14!

A View from The Pews by Dominic Hall

Recently I have encountered quite a lot of swearing. Now, you might think that this is an inevitable consequence of working in prison. However, working with foreign national prisoners means my learners are less likely to swear in English at me – though I'd imagine I am now capable of causing great offence in Albania, Poland or possibly Vietnam!

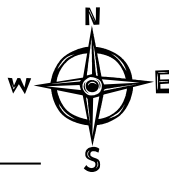
The swearing I have encountered has largely come courtesy of two interesting cultural moments. The film 'Wicked Little Letters' is centred on the Littlehampton letter writing scandal of the 1920s in which the prim, proper and overtly Christian Edith Swan is the recipient of some incredibly vulgar letters. I won't spoil the film by adding more of the story, but the language is deeply offensive and designed to be so. Whilst the letters used in the film are vile, they have the merit of being the text of the actual letters of the scandal – adding an authenticity to the film.

The second batch of swear words appear in David Mitchell's book, 'Unruly' which looks at the English monarchy from the Anglo-Saxon period to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The swearing in this book is present, I imagine, to show frustration, anger and a common touch. To my mind it is unnecessary, unwelcome and detracts from an otherwise enjoyable book. I am no prude. I hope it will not shock you to learn that there are times when I resort to the occasional swearword. In fact, those times might be more frequent than I hope and 'occasional' might be understating the amount somewhat! Swearing, in context and at the right moment can have the power to shock – it is, after all, its *raison d'être*. (That's your actual French).

In the film the power of the words is dramatic and designed to be so. It shows that we are generally upset by the use of coarse and vulgar language. In the book, however, the swearwords are designed to show an irreverence that is not in keeping with the tenor of the content. Words have power. We can encourage, empower, excite, delight and amuse with just what we say or write. Indeed, Mitchell himself quotes Shakespeare's Richard II at the end of his book with a speech about kingship that encapsulated the human condition. When used creatively and imaginatively, language binds us and paints pictures as vividly as the great artists. When used destructively or coarsely, language can disappoint, alienate and worse.

In short, how we say something can be as powerful as what we say.

Prayer Points



SPRING: a time of promise, lighter nights, green leaves, fresh blossom, warmth in the sun's rays... Our steps are lighter; we're looking forward. But there are still *those* days – those days of petty frustrations and niggling doubts. Lost spectacles, minor aches and pains, roadworks, being kept on hold, self-checkout tills...

We understand that the world is neither binary nor perfect, but this is Spring: the world is alive! You are alive!

So drop your shoulders and put down your worries, and consider how lucky you are.

*What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head:
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hand themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.*

(from The Garden by Andrew Marvell)

Or consider the love of God – described as 'unutterable and perfect' in this section of *The Divine Comedy* by Dante:

*The love of God, unutterable and perfect,
flows into a pure soul the way that light
rushes into a transparent object.
The more love that it finds, the more it gives
itself; so that, as we grow clear and open,
the more complete the joy of loving is.
And the more souls who resonate together,
the greater the intensity of their love,
for, mirror-like, each soul reflects the others.*

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

St John's Parish Church, Menston

Family Eco Quiz

A family fun Eco Quiz with food!

Food: jacket potatoes + toppings followed by cake
Drinks: tea, coffee, squash

**Saturday 27 April
4 - 6 pm in the Parish Room**



**FAMILY
TICKET - £10**

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TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM
THE ECO TEAM AT CHURCH
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Revision of the Electoral Roll 2024

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will be held on *Sunday 28 April*.

This year's APCM will be held on Sunday 28 April and the Electoral Roll must be updated – or, revised, before then. This is the final 'revision' before a new Roll is drawn up next year, so I am fairly sure nearly everyone is now on the Roll.

However, if you have joined our church family recently, do consider going onto the Roll. It means you can vote at the meeting to elect PCC members and Deanery representatives; you can also raise matters of parochial or general Church interest, and you can stand for election. You can also become a sidesperson. To be on the Roll, you must be baptised and 16 years old, either live in the parish, or have worshipped here regularly for at least 6 months.

The Roll will be on view at the back of church on 24 & 31 March and 7 April and during that time application forms will be available in the back of the folder. Completed forms should be returned to me, or left in the office in an envelope marked with my name, by **7 April** at the latest. After that date, no names can be added until after the APCM.

If you have moved during the last 12 months, could you please check that I have your new address.

Any queries, please get in touch: ealeo200@hotmail.com

Elizabeth Leopold

Worship this month

7 Apr The Second Sunday of EASTER
Readings: Acts 4: 32-35; John 20: 19-end
Reader: Julie West

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

14 Apr The Third Sunday of EASTER
Readings: Acts 3: 12-19; Luke 24: 36b-48
Reader: Heather Greig

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

21 Apr The Fourth Sunday of EASTER
Readings: Acts 4: 5-12; John 10: 11-18
Reader: David Machin

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

28 Apr The Fifth Sunday of EASTER
Readings: Acts 8: 26-end; John 15: 1-8
Reader: Dorothy Slater

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

5 May The Sixth Sunday of EASTER
Readings: Acts 10: 44-end; John 15: 9-17
Reader: Jan Alexander

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

MID-WEEK SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

9.30am Thursdays: 4 / 11 / 18 / 25 April; 2 May

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING

Sunday 28 April ~ 11am

To be held within the Parish Eucharist service.

AGENDA

- Election of 2 Churchwardens
- Election of 4 Deanery Synod members
Automatically members of PCC
- Election of PCC members:
4 to serve for 3 years
1 to serve for 2 years
1 to serve for 1 years
- Treasurer's Report

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

Please notify Andrew by Tuesday 23 April, by email or in writing, of any questions you may wish to raise at the meeting.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts will be available on **Sunday 21 April**. Please take one per household and bring with you to the meeting.

ECO CHURCH

On 30 March, Easter Saturday do come along to the Parish Room between 10-12 when there will be a chance to help with planting seeds, making the Easter Garden and join a scavenger hunt Everyone welcome.



Saturday 27 April from 4-6pm come and pit your wits in the Eco quiz (see page 8). We will meet in the Parish Room and there will be a veggie meal of baked potatoes and toppings followed by cake. Tickets are £10 per family and £4 for individuals. All welcome.

Eco tips for April are:

- Fit more active travel into your day and daily routine.
- Re-evaluate your journeys: explore walking or cycling options, or modify your route to include some form of active travel, ie disembark a stop early and complete the remaining part of your journey on foot, indulge in a leisurely stroll, or opt for a bike ride along a cyclist-friendly route.
- Consider connecting with your local Ramblers or cycling group for shared experiences.
- Use the extra steps or the changed travel arrangements as a prompt to pray for God's creation, nature's preservation and the reduction in fossil fuel usage.

If you would like to join our local eco church group, Jen, Sally, Matthew, Catherine, Jeanne-Claire and Marilyn, do get in touch.

MENSTON HERITAGE GROUP

We next meet on Thursday 2 May in Kirklands at 7.30pm. We are still collecting stories from local people and are working on the trail. Do join us! *Marilyn 874220.*

CLIMATE ACTION MENSTON

The Travel and Transport working group will meet on Tuesday 30 April, 7.30pm in Kirklands to talk all things travel and how we might work with Otley 2030 and Climate Action Ilkley on travel issues. Do come along.

Date for your diary: Our Annual General Meeting will be on Wednesday 15 May at 7.30 pm. *Marilyn*



This month:

2 April 2.15pm ‘Show and Tell’ in the Parish Room
(Please note change to programme)

Members are invited to bring a personal item from the past which they hold dear and to share their memories with the group.

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Leeds MU Diocesan News

The Diocese is 10 years old this year – and Special Celebrations to mark this will be held on April 19, 20 and 21. Our new Diocesan Chaplain is Bishop Smitha Prasadam. She is the new Bishop of Huddersfield and will be a great asset to the Mothers’ Union.

Our Diocesan finances are fairly healthy – due to some generous grants received this year. We need more members to pay their subscriptions by Direct Debit, however, which is cheaper to process and less time consuming. Also, many branch treasurers are finding banking cash and cheques increasingly difficult due to bank closures in all areas.

The End of Triennial Service will be held at 11am on Saturday 23 November in Bradford Cathedral, and it is hoped that as many Bradford members as possible will be there.

Jennie Kimber’s 3-year term of office as Bradford Area President will end in December this year. The process to nominate a successor has already started, and members are asked to pray for a suitable candidate to come forward, willing to take on this important role.

A Happy Easter to all our members.

Marjorie Boddy & Ann Dixon

Did you know?

St Johns, in addition to the small groups that meet in people's homes, has two other more informal groups that meet?

The Men's Group usually meets on the first Wednesday of the month, around 8.00pm at the Malt Shovel, generally for a pint and a pizza. But also for us to chat to each other about life, the universe, and everything. Several of the dads from Zest come along and some of the older men also show up. It's the perfect setting to encourage each other and share ways of living our faith in 2024. Rumour has it that there is a women's group who do something occasionally quite similar.

If you want to know more, Ask Roger, James or Andrew about the Men's Group, and Sally or Catherine about the Women's Group.

CLERGY QUIZ ~ with thanks to Heather Greig

The answers to the following clues are all the surnames of former vicars of Menston. Can you identify the vicars? Some are easy but others may be more challenging!

1. LGI has them
2. Was he saucy?
3. Job in an office
4. Child of heir to the throne
- 5.. Served with chips
6. G & S opera
7. Scotch. mist found on a farm
8. Describes parents attending a graduation ceremony and a mode of address by Yorkshire folk
9. Lower end of village south of Selby

Answers: 1. Ward 2. Hammond 3. Clarke 4. Wilson 5. Place 6. Yeoman 7. Harland 8. Proudlove 9. Heckingbottom.

FROM THE REGISTERS

HOLY MATRIMONY *We extend our warmest congratulations to:*
13 April Peter Wilbraham and Sue Lee

FUNERAL SERVICES *We commend into the hands of Almighty God:*
13 March Marie Storr R.I.P.
18 April Vernon Nelson R.I.P.

ALTAR FLOWERS

21 April Elizabeth Leopold

2024/5 FLOWER ROTA

The new rota for altar flowers is now in the church porch. Please sign up for your preferred date(s).

THANK YOU to all who contributed so generously to the Easter lilies this year. We were able to arrange them on almost every service in the church and they made a wonderful sight after the sombreness of Lent.

Light Up St John's – Floodlight Sponsorship

16 April Remembering my beloved husband with love today and always.
24/28 April Remembering my beloved husband with love today and every day.

This is 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.

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