

2024

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SEARCHING FOR A NEW VICAR

I thought that it might be helpful to keep everyone in the loop about the process, and make sure that everyone knows the same thing. If you look on our website www.stjohnmenston.org.uk there is always lots of information about us. Keep checking in to see what is new.

The Parish Brochure was completed, and the advertisement for the new vicar went live earlier in April. The closing date is mid-May, and then a small group will begin to explore the applications and make up a shortlist.

This group is led by Bishop Toby and Archdeacon Andy, but also has Derek Walmsley from Church House to represent the diocesan part of the job, and Hilary and David to represent us here in Menston.

This new chapter, like any is exciting and important. Please keep it in your prayers as our search for a new Vicar continues.

Thank you .

Andrew

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Copy for the **JUNE** magazine is due by **Sunday 12 May**. Please email copy to both editor and Parish Office (office@stjohnmenston.org.uk) or leave copy for typing with the office.

Dear Friends

This month, with the Easter holiday now just a faded memory, it may seem strange to realise we are still in Eastertide. Our readings in church continue to tell us about the different appearances of the Risen Jesus and his explaining of what has happened to His disciples. As Easter People, you and I are always coming to these stories as old, loved and so familiar that sometimes we don't see it in the way that those first disciples had experienced it. We know that they continually got it wrong with Jesus. He was forever having to tell stories to explain things or going over things again and again. As a leader and a friend, he was let down by these eleven and the others who followed him, because they heard what he said, but they didn't demonstrate it in their lives, they failed to show that they had understood Him. They fell out with each other about which of them was the most important? They often turned away the very people that Jesus was hoping would turn up. They fell asleep when he asked them to be particularly alert, and ultimately when he needed friends to support Him, they scarpered, because they got scared! One of them, the self-appointed shop-steward even told people that he didn't know Jesus, and asked what they were talking about? So, before he could trust them to be left to carry on without Him, Jesus had a number of conversations, what scholars call his farewell discourses. We read that he ate with them, he explained things, he showed them his wounds, he forgave them and then, at the end of Lukes gospel we read this:

Jesus looked at them and said 'All the things that have

been written about me in the law and the prophets, and even in the psalms, have been completed, fulfilled'. He went on to show them how to read their scriptures in a way that would make sense. 'Surely you can see now how it explains about the Messiah suffering, and rising from the dead, on the third day. And then a complete life changing process that means you are forgiven, and that this forgiveness is for the whole world, starting right here in Jerusalem! You are the first ones to hear it and see it, you are witnesses of what is next. Listen this is important. I am sending what my Father promised you, so stay here in the City until it arrives, until you are equipped with power, from on high'. Then He led them out of the City to Bethany, he raised His hands, and he blessed them, and whilst blessing them, made his exit, and was carried away into Heaven.

This month we will celebrate Ascension Day, remembering this day when he finally left His disciples to carry on without Him. But then, just ten days later, we will celebrate Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit, that creative spark that changed those disciples into apostles, that equipped them with the power that came from on high. As we relive these experiences of the disciples, as we hear the stories and sing about them in our hymns, take time to absorb it again and to allow the risen Jesus, and the power of the Spirit to transform your lives, and turn them inside out.

God bless you and yours,

Andrew

A View from The Pews by Dominic Hall

I hope you will allow me a moment of self-indulgence. Last month we had a wedding in the family. Some of you will have been in church to watch the happy occasion as Peter and Sue tied the knot, presided over by Steve. It was a lovely day.

It now means my family includes a variety of step-relatives along with brothers, nieces, nephews and cousins. It's not quite the grand scale of Queen Victoria but it's getting up there!

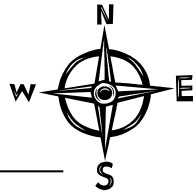
So, I wonder, what actually is a family? Clearly the biological and legal binds that keep a group of people together are readily noted. Our parents, children, siblings et al can give us joy, pain frustration and love in equal and seemingly unending measures. I wonder, though, if families are more than those ties of blood and ink.

My friend, Nadia, with whom I studied at university has had a complicated relationship with her biological family. She has referred to those of us who shared a house in the 1990s and have stayed in touch as her 'friend family'. We talk often of the church family as the Anglican communion debates some of the thorny issues of the day. The UK takes a prominent role at the UN – often called the 'family of nations' and in a couple of months the athletes of the world will gather in Paris to renew the meeting of the Olympic family.

It seems the word is about more than the people to whom we are related. Family appears to be about the support, care, love and shared interests we have. This makes me think that when politicians talk of 'family values' they are missing key elements of family life. When I was ill last year, Peter and Sue took me in and cared for me without qualm or quibble. That is family. When an Olympic athlete stumbles in a race, the competitor that stops and picks her up is her family. When we offer shelter for those washed up on our land escaping strife, we are showing they are family.

True 'family values' it seems to me, are based on how we treat those in need of our help. It is how we give what is needed – be it time, resources, a room, a shoulder to cry on. It is recognising that we may be the one in need one day. Do unto others as they do unto you is the very core of family. As members of the human family, this should be at the forefront of our minds every day.

Prayer Points



THE TRINITY

In May we experience an abundance of new life and regeneration.

We give thanks to God the Creator of the World and all that is in it.

We give thanks to God the Son, who demonstrated through his life, death and resurrection how to live with love and integrity.

We give thanks to God's Holy Spirit that inspires, enables and encourages us.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 15 v 13.*

A Prayer for Peace in our strife ridden world.

Almighty and everlasting God,

let justice and peace embrace our lands.

Let love and security replace violence and pain.

Let hands raised in anger and hands ready to strike become hands reaching to offer peace.

We dream of a time when fear becomes faith.

When love and respect walk side by side.

When all people see the world as if through your eyes and recognise each other as God's own children.

We pray for a time when weapons of destruction and the desire for power become dreams of justice, equality and freedom and that these dreams become reality.

May our eyes be the eyes that see the poverty in our world.

May ours be the ears that hear the cries of your people.

May ours be the hands that work for transformation to bring about your kingdom on this earth.

adapted from St Augustine of Hippo.

With thanks to Sallie Finch for this month's Prayer Points

ECO GROUP

How about organising a BIG LUNCH?

The weekend of 1st/2nd June is set up to be the opportunity to meet up with neighbours by having a street party for the Big Lunch. Bring and share works really well for food and drink as well as chairs, plates, cutlery and glasses - no waste! There is lots of information on the [website:https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-lunch](https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-lunch) If you find a couple of people in your street who are up for it, it works out- do give it a try!

SAY NO to the MOW

Mowing your lawn less and letting parts grow long saves you time and helps give nature a home. If you want to make an even bigger impact on wildlife, wait to mow your lawn or a section of it until August to support even more animals. Contribute to citizen science and get to know what (and who!) lives in your church's green - sign up to take part in Churches Count on Nature (8-16 June 2024) at caringforgodsacre.org.uk/churches-count-on-nature-faqs/.

MAY ECO Tips: In the utility room

- 1 When using a washing machine ensure there is a full load and turn down the temperature. Heating the water to higher temperatures uses more energy.
- 2 Electric tumble dryers use energy. If it's a nice day dry your clothes outside. In the winter most drying is done by the wind, so check the forecast for wind days and nights as you can hang washing overnight (as there is no dew in the winter).

- 3 Irons use a lot of electricity to get hot – only iron clothes that really need it.
- 4 Cut up old clothes or sheets that you were going to throw out, to use as cloths for cleaning jobs rather than buying new cleaning cloths.

Future date

Saturday 20 July Eco church summer workshop from 10-12.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Menston Neighbourhood Plan

Having held a useful meeting about Green Spaces, the Parish Council wants to hear from people about their thoughts on travel and transport issues in the period up to 2040 as we prepare our policies for the Neighbourhood Plan. This topic received the most comments in the recent survey so come and hear more and contribute your ideas. The meeting will be on Wednesday 22nd May at 7.30 in Kirklands.

Menston Parish Council

Menston Heritage Group

Thursday 2 May at 7.30pm in Kirklands is the date for the next meeting of the Heritage Group. We are working on the trail - wording and places as well as how to organise all the information we are gathering. If you are interested and want to know more, contact Marilyn on 874220 or come along that evening.

THY KINGDOM COME: 9 - 19 May

This year more than a million Christians worldwide will be joining in long-distance prayer between Ascension Day and Pentecost. What started in 2016 with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York inviting the CofE to pray, has grown into an annual international and ecumenical call to 11 days of specific prayer that more people will come to know Jesus. The movement is now in nearly 90% of countries worldwide and spread among 85 different denominations and traditions.

Thy Kingdom Come encourages: 'Every person, household, and church to pray that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.' They invite each Christian to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of five people whom they know, who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

Whether we have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, we are invited to take part this year. Archbishop Justin Welby says: 'In praying *'Thy Kingdom Come'* we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities.'

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK:13-20 May

Sometimes supporting others can be difficult. Some people are easy to help. They know what the problem is and what help they need. Others are very demanding and always need help. They go from person to person asking for support and do not always follow advice. Then there are those who would never ask for help. They battle on and get exhausted and struggle on their own.

Probably the best helper is the person who can listen and not judge and guide the burdened to find their own answers. Often the person who is best at helping others is the one who has experienced life's ups and downs themselves. We can support others by:

- Listening and keeping confidences.
- Looking out for someone to make sure they are ok.
- Respecting their choices even if we do not agree.
- And, best of all, praying to know what to say and when to be quiet.

Parish Pump News Service

PRAYER FOR OUR CHURCHWARDENS

O Lord, we beseech Thee to bless all who give themselves to the service of their fellow worshipers. Endue them with wisdom, patience and courage that they may worthily minister in Thy Name. Amen. (Prayer from the C of E)

Churchwardens have a vital and historical role in the life of the church. They are elected by the parish not just the members of the church. Anyone in the parish can vote for them, not just people on the church's Electoral Roll.

Wardens used to have a significant role in the wider life of the parish with responsibilities for charity, poor relief and even bridges and roads.

Their church duties today include:

- Maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service.
- Being entrusted with the property of the church.
- Having a duty to cooperate with the vicar.
- Encouraging parishioners in practice of 'true religion'.

Quite a job! These are their legal duties, but the prayer above reminds us to pray for them to seek God's will, not theirs or ours, but God's, and to strengthen the weak and encourage the fallen. And of course, as anyone who has served as a churchwarden knows, many other jobs as well, especially during an interregnum!

They may feel most of the time that they are weak and have fallen, but they are equipped with our support and prayers to look after other people who need strength or support - which is probably most of us at times!

Parish Pump News Service

Worship this month

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

12 May The Seventh Sunday of EASTER

Readings: Acts 1: 15-17, 21-end; John 17: 6-19

Reader: Peter Wilbraham

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

7-8pm The Den

19 May PENTECOST

Readings: Acts 2: 1-21; John 15: 26-27, 16: 4b-15

Reader: Jane Pratt

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

26 May TRINITY SUNDAY

Readings: Romans 8: 12-17; John 3: 1-17

Reader: Jenny Steele

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

2 June The First Sunday after TRINITY

Readings: 2 Corinthians 4: 5-12; Mark 2: 23-3: 6

Reader: David Mercer

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

MID-WEEK SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

9.30am *Thursdays: Ascension Day 9 May / 16 May /
23 May / 30 May / 6 June*

News about the churchyard

You may remember that several months ago an application was made to the authorities for permission to close the historic section of our churchyard. All the grave plots were filled several years ago, and there is no more space for it to function as a cemetery. No burials have taken place in this area for many years.

His Majesty the King has now granted permission and formally closed that part of the churchyard, meaning that the responsibility for its upkeep now switches to the local authority. The PCC and the churchwardens are working closely with Bradford Council to ensure that this happens in a safe and timely fashion.

Part of this task requires repairs and remedial work to some of the older graves and monuments. Anyone walking by will see that some of the angles of the head stones are precarious and in need of attention. We believe that most of these graves are of an age where it would be difficult to find surviving relatives, to

inform them of the repairs that will take place. However, we are certain that they would approve of this work. Thanks to the work that Jan has done over the years, we are able to see which graves tie in with which family names etc, especially the more weathered ones.

The local authority will complete this repair work and then take over responsibility for keeping the grass mowed and the pathways safe. This probably means that it gets a 'good cut' around three times a year. Our willing team of volunteers will hopefully try to do maintenance in between times, and our much-appreciated garden will not be affected.

All this work was carried out with great care and with consultation, and we hope that this way, we can preserve this historical corner of the village for years to come.

If you have any questions or concerns, please Hilary or Andrew.

ALL IN THE MONTH of MAY

200 years ago on 7 May 1824 the first performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony took place in Vienna. It is regarded as Beethoven's greatest work and is one of the most-performed symphonies in the world.

90 years ago on 28 May 1934 the first Glyndebourne opera festival was held, in East Sussex.

75 years ago, on 12 May 1949 the Soviet Union lifted its blockade of Berlin. The blockade had led to the Berlin Airlift, in which British and American planes had delivered millions of tons of food, coal and medical supplies to the isolated people of West Berlin.

70 years ago, on 6 May 1954 Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes (3 minutes, 59.4 seconds), in Oxford.

Also 70 years ago on 20 May 1954 Bill Haley & His Comets released the song *Rock Around the Clock*. It brought rock and roll into the mainstream and is regarded as one of the most important records in music history.

30 years ago on 6 May 1994 the Channel Tunnel linking England and France was officially opened.

Also 30 years ago, on 10 May 1994 Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as South Africa's first black president, after more than 300 years of white rule.

25 years ago on 1 May 1999 the body of mountaineer George Mallory missing since 1924 was found on Mount Everest.

The work of nurses is celebrated around the world on 12 May. That day was chosen to be International Nurses Day because it is the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth.

ECO GROUP

Climate Action Menston

Interested in travel and transport issues in Menston? There is a Climate Action Menston meeting on Tuesday 30 April at 7.30pm in Kirklands to talk trains, buses, the Greenway and all things travel. Do come along.

On Wednesday 15 May at 7.30pm in Kirklands, CAM will be holding a Eco quiz at its AGM so do come and test your eco knowledge as well as hearing about what CAM has been doing. Also an opportunity to contribute your ideas for how we tackle the climate emergency in Menston in 2024, 2025, 2026 etc! If you wish to join and so have a chance to vote for committee members, please go to the [CAM website](#) for details of membership.

Whatever happened in the Boat Race?

Traditions are an important part of any culture and one tiny part of our national identity is the throwing in of the victorious coxes at the end of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Races. They were particularly dramatic races this year, but neither the cox of the women's race nor the men's was thrown in. Why? Because levels of E. coli were far too dangerous and several crew members had suffered from sickness before the race. In 16 tests around Hammersmith Bridge there were an average of almost 3,000 E. coli units in each 100ml of water. Ten times higher than the level graded as 'poor'!

This is symbolic. Symbolic of a deeply damaged relationship between humans and nature; humans and God's creation.

Christianity is not alone in the religions of the world in attaching profound importance to water: Moses striking the rock for water to supply the Israelites in the desert; the baptismal water of Jordan; the water used by Christ to wash his disciples' feet; the water that flowed from His side alongside His blood, which we now mix with communion wine.

Water is about cleansing, purification, spiritual healing, life and rebirth. When we send rockets to the moon or distant planets of Jupiter, the search for water is often at the heart of the mission. It is fundamental to our existence.

So what has happened to make our rivers and beaches so dangerous? I remember when the water boards were being privatised in 1989, I decided not to buy any shares. Apart from some ethical scruples I thought, ‘Our water and sewage infrastructure is largely Victorian. It has done brilliantly but is now a liability. It will cost a fortune to replace. How will shareholders ever make a profit?’ How incredibly naïve of me!

Taxpayers generously wiped out all existing debts so the new companies could start with a clean sheet. Since then, shareholders have taken £57 billion in dividends while at the same time running up debts of £60 billion. Last year, when the Environment Agency reported half a million discharges of raw sewage into our rivers, averaging 3 billion litres a day, the companies blamed the rain. We have all witnessed increased rainfall and flooding as a consequence of climate change, but this has been widely known for 25 years and predicted by scientists for far longer. There has been ample time to prepare.

The issue is deeper than politics. It is about the mismatch between the care we should show for nature and God’s creation and the fundamental trajectory of capitalism. The prime objective of capital is to make profit. Massive profits have indeed been made, whether of water or oil – but at great expense!

Timothy was profoundly accurate when he wrote: ‘The love of money is the root of all evil.’ Somehow, if we want to live in harmony with nature and build a future for humanity, we will need to take the greed out of capitalism. That is going to take a great deal of prayer!

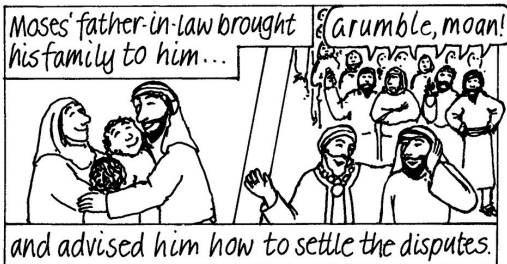
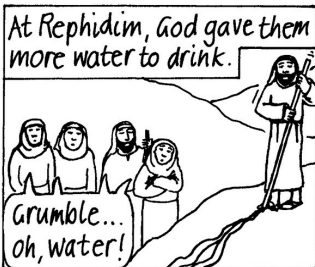
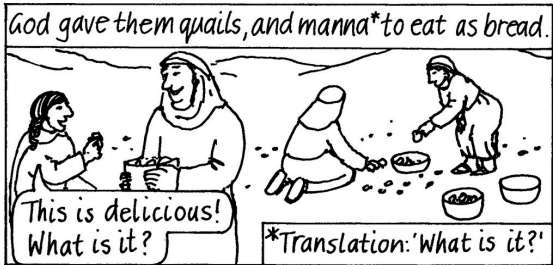
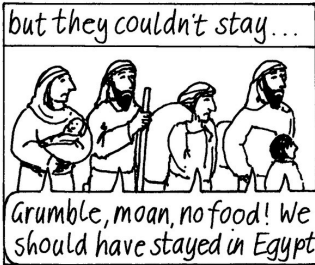
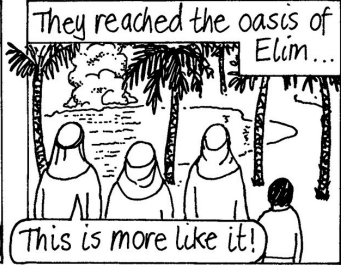
Edward Gildea writes magazine articles for his local church, St Mary’s, Saffron Walden in north west Essex, each month.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Exodus chapters 15:22 to 19:2

God had rescued the Hebrews from Egypt, and was leading them to their new land. But after 3 days...



FROM THE REGISTERS

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

FUNERAL SERVICES *We commend into the hands of Almighty God:*
9 April Aline Price R.I.P.

ALTAR FLOWERS

5 May Judith Knaggs
12 May In memory of Iris Nerurkar
19 May Janet Kitching

NEW ROTA

The new rota for altar flowers is now in the church porch.
Thank you to all who have signed up - a few dates remain.

EASTER LILIES

Thank you to all those who have donated so very generously towards the cost of the Easter lilies and to Judith and Sue who helped me to arrange them on Holy Saturday. It was a pleasure to do so and to help St John's celebrate the Resurrection on Easter Day.

Jan Alexander

Light Up St John's – Floodlight Sponsorship

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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