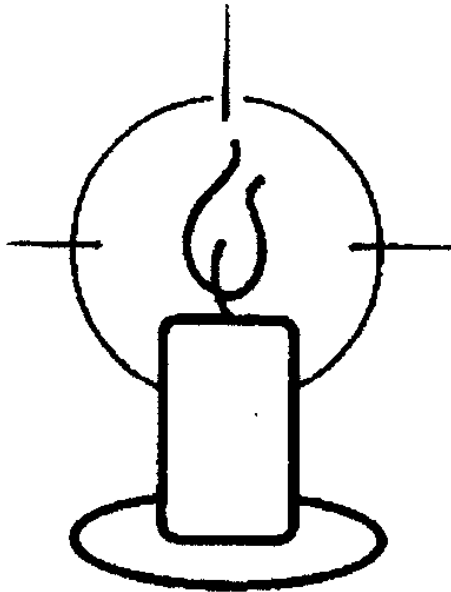


2025

MENSTON
PARISH CHURCH
St John the Divine



LENT

*Lent begins
5 March*

£1



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Andrew Lindsay BSc(Hons)

Phone 01943 872716

Email info@thefootpeople.co.uk

Website www.thefootpeople.co.uk

*If you would like to subscribe to the Magazine regularly please contact
the Parish Office (872433) to arrange delivery.*

SOME GOOD THINGS ABOUT LENT

The days get longer. The English word for this season is the only one that has no religious significance at all. 'Lent' is simply an abbreviation of the Old English word 'lencten', which means 'lengthen'. On these islands, where weather is always a major topic of conversation, it's not surprising that what people noted about the days of Lent was that they got longer - no more of those ghastly dark tea-times.

It only lasts 40 days. Fasts, by their very nature, can't last forever, but Lent has a very manageable forty days. New Year Resolutions simply stretch off into some impossibly distant horizon, but our Lenten attempts at discipline (chocolate, cigarettes, daily prayers have an end date to them.

It's a journey towards Easter. Lent goes somewhere, and that somewhere is the empty tomb of Easter morning. It's daffodils in the churchyard and new life all around us.

Parish Pump News Service



This month

P6	A View from the Pews	P14	PCC news
P7	Prayer Points	P17	Menston MU news
P8	Visits to Poland	p18	Bible Bites
P11	Ash Wednesday	P19	Notices

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

The Vicarage

Friends

The 8th of this month will mark 6 months since I was licensed as Vicar of St John's. It feels more like 6 minutes!

I can't tell you how right it feels to be here. It has felt like that since I first read the parish brochure, at interview, and ever since. I feel well blessed and well placed. Thank you to all of you for welcoming me and for all you've done here to make it such a fab community to join and to bring my family to.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

This month your PCC will be gathering for an extended meeting, an 'away day'. We will be taking a breath and raising our eyes from the week to week business of church life, taking a bigger view and looking further ahead.

We will be wondering about the calling of this church in this parish, where God might be leading and how we can meet him there. Do please pray for us, that we would be attentive to God, the needs of the congregation and the needs of the parish and those yet to join us. Because of course the church is one of the only groups that exists not for its own benefit but also for the sake of others.

Jesus is for everyone. For you, for me, and for them.

We are all beloved children, whom God longs to be in relationship with.

Our calling is not to serve ourselves, but to serve God and neighbour. But its easier to seek our own comfort and harder to know what others might respond to, and once you are on the inside, well its nice just to rest and enjoy the benefits.

But whilst St John's is our home, and that home should be safe and comforting, we are called to open our home, share it and sincerely welcome others in. Indeed, more than that, go out into the streets and beckon them in. Just as in Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet, when the servants were called to go into the streets and extend the invite to anyone who wanted to come.

What a challenge! Anyone who has ever had any family or friends stay with them for a while, knows that usually by day 3 you are ready for them to go! But our future, their future and the future of the church, and indeed the world, depends on us being able to share well with others.

To share our faith, share our hope, to share our time and our space, and our resources.

Maybe that is something we can focus our Lenten prayers on, to share more of ourselves with others, in our own personal lives and as a church.

This might involve being more honest with God and ourselves about our fears and self-centeredness.

It might involve trusting and valuing others more than is comfortable.

It might involve being less independent, asking for help, or relying on others more than self.

It might involve giving up something we value, as a way of reducing our dependence on the material, in preference for God and others, e.g. giving time or money away to good cause.

Jo

A View from The Pews by Dominic Hall

“I hope by the time you read this that the ground under foot is a little softer, the air on your face is a little warmer and the nascent shoots and buds are breaking through the earth and popping through the branches on the trees.”

I may have been a bit previous when I opened with this last month! Every day this week I have had to scrape the ice off the car before heading to work. I am still wrapped up like Nanook of the north and the ground is still unforgiving if you fall on it. Perfect timing then for my boiler to conk out!

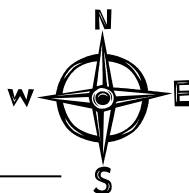
It is a well-worn maxim that how we respond in adversity defines us. If that is indeed true, then my defining features may well be unprintable! In truth, the suffering of others and, more importantly, their resilience and defiance puts my ‘problems into perspective and continues to astound me and give me hope for the future.

We pray almost weekly for the ‘ordinary’ people of Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere. The hardship they face is almost unimaginable. Yet in the face of terror, deprivation, conflict and cruelty there are still points of beauty and hope. In Syria, for example, a young artists’ collective, known as ‘Blue Team’ are shedding light on the reality of life under Assad and in the weeks after his fall from power. In Afghanistan, where more than a million girls have been denied access to schooling by the Taliban, there are reports of underground classrooms and book clubs designed to give girls and young women a chance at education. Even in Ukraine, where normal life has been interrupted by unsought conflict, art is providing moments of colour and escape from grim reality.

It seems amazing that people will turn to art, music and literature at a time when their energies might be spent on other matters. Yet I think it is a powerful reminder of the usefulness of the arts in our lives. We cannot always stand up to the strong and powerful aggressor. We don’t have to. Art gives us a way to circumvent them, often to satirise or ridicule them – even better if they are unaware of the slight. With paintbrushes, pens and instruments, the resistance to intolerance, violence and bigotry is being fought on a tangential plane.

Is the pen mightier than the sword? Well, it won’t kill anyone but it, along with its artistic companions, will create acts of beauty that will last long after the conflict. And that is the truest act of resistance.

Prayer Points



There are some very significant dates in March!

March 1 - St David's Day - patron saint of Wales. Pray that, like David, we make our relationship with God central to our lives.

March 4 - Shrove Tuesday - Lord help us to prepare ourselves for the season of Lent.

March 5 - Ash Wednesday - Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May the ashes we wear remind us that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life through Christ.

March 7 - World Day of Prayer - pray today that the Lord will reveal to you how you can make a difference in the lives of those around you and the world.

March 8 - International Women's Day - pray today for women throughout the world who are building up their own communities. Give thanks for the Mother's Union which is working against gender-based violence.

March 17 - St Patrick's Day - the patron saint of Ireland. Give thanks that Patrick brought Christianity to Ireland and the shamrock as the symbol of the Holy Trinity.

March 20 - The First Day of Spring - Give thanks for the signs of Spring in our fields and gardens - for the newborn lambs; for the spring flowers and the first signs of green in our trees and hedgerows.

March 30 - Mothering Sunday

We pray for Mother Church throughout the world; that she may nurture and encourage us in the ways of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As a mother hen gathers her chicks to protect them, we give thanks that our Lord protects, supports and feeds us with his unconditional love. Give thanks for our own mothers; for all the love and care they gave us. We give thanks for the example of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who humbly accepted her mission in life.

With thanks to Jane Pratt for this month's Prayer Points

MEMORIES of a TRIP to POLAND

We have all been reminded lately of the Nazi atrocities which occurred in Poland during World War Two. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp and a series of commemorative events have been held.

I shall never forget my own visit to Auschwitz although it was years ago, in 1980. I was staying in southern Poland on a walking holiday, but we had three sightseeing excursions, a day in Krakow, a tour of amazing salt mines and then a river trip on wooden rafts and finally the visit to Auschwitz. I remember it was a cloudy day and the whole place had an air of gloom and great sadness. We saw huge rooms full of the possessions which were taken from the prisoners as they were marched towards the gas chambers. There were thousands of spectacle frames, piles of small battered suitcases, of old shoes and of false teeth. The horror of the Holocaust was clear to see.

We had a Polish lady as our guide for these visits and I remember that she was determined to show us as many churches as possible. Even at the end of the day when we were all tired she stopped the coach each time we passed even a tiny church. Her sense of pride in the appointment of a Polish pope was obvious. There were photos of John Paul II in the windows of tiny cottages we passed along the roads.

My abiding memory to this day is one of sadness that the people lived in a poor country and that history had treated them so badly. Despite this their strong religious faith and pride in Poland were obvious. I only hope that now, in the 21st century they can continue to have a better life.

Heather Greig

Heather's article and the recent programmes commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau brought back memories of my own visit in 2009 as a member of Leeds Philharmonic Chorus. We were on a short tour of Poland, based in Krakow, to perform the Polish Premier of Karl Jenkin's '*The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace.*' He is hugely popular in Poland

and we'd hoped to persuade him to conduct the concert. Sadly, we were unable to afford his fees! However, the concert was very well-received.

Krakow has many attractions one of them being the 12 noon daily trumpet call from a high tower in the vast main square. Played four times in quick succession at each cardinal compass point, it ends abruptly after 5 notes, said to be when the trumpeter was shot through the throat by invading Mongol hoards in 1241! We visited the Salt Mines too and were allowed to sing in one of the vast and extremely chilly chambers. It had a wonderful acoustic.

Our final visit (voluntary) was to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The entrance into Auschwitz is beneath the infamous sign 'Arbeit macht frei' - loosely translated as work sets you free. Each day, prisoners would pass under the sign to and from their long and harsh labour details and read the cynical expression, knowing that their only true way to freedom was not work but death. We joined hundreds of visitors queuing to visit barrack rooms full of possessions. It was a silent experience. It was a struggle to assimilate what we were seeing. Like Fiona Bruce, who presented the BBC programme from Auschwitz, we visited one of the gas chambers ... and like her, I emerged with no words to describe my feelings of horror.

We then drove the 2 miles to Birkenau and walked through the arched entrance via railway tracks to the platform where the fate of over 1.3 million Jews was decided. We know the 'lucky' ones were sent to the barracks, others straight to the gas chambers and thence the crematoria. We ended this grim visit at the site of some of the extermination blocks blown up by the Nazis just before the camp was liberated. We were privileged to be allowed to sing the final piece of music from *The Armed Man*. We failed ... a second attempt was just about in tune. The words are: *God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be anymore pain.*

A powerful hope for our future.

Jan Alexander



LENT COURSE

with Menston Churches

MENSTON METHODIST
CORNERSTONE CAFE

TUESDAYS
2.30 - 3.45PM

11TH MARCH

18TH MARCH

25TH MARCH

1ST APRIL

8TH APRIL

ST JOHN THE DIVINE
PARISH ROOM

TUESDAYS
7:00PM - 8:30PM

11TH MARCH

18TH MARCH

1ST APRIL

8TH APRIL

15TH APRIL:
STATIONS OF THE
CROSS

WE WELCOME EVERYONE TO JOIN US AS WE
EXPLORE DEEPER ASPECTS OF FAITH AS WE
LOOK TOWARDS THE EASTER STORY



WEDNESDAY
5 MARCH

ASH WEDNESDAY

with Menston Churches

BURLEY LANE

ST JOHN THE DIVINE

9.30am

MAIN STREET

MENSTON METHODIST

7.00pm

JOIN CHURCHES IN MENSTON TO
MARK THE START OF LENT

Worship this month

2 Mar The Sunday next before LENT
Readings: Exodus 34: 29-35; Luke 9: 28-36
Reader: Jenny Steele

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

9 Mar The First Sunday of LENT
Readings: Romans 10: 8b-13; Luke 4: 1-13
Reader: David Mercer

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

16 Mar The Second Sunday of LENT
Readings: Philippians 3: 17-4:1; Luke 13: 31-35
Reader: Ros Wilkinson

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

23 Mar The Third Sunday of LENT
Readings: 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13; Luke 13: 1-9
Reader: Colin Alexander

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

30 Mar The Fourth Sunday of LENT Mothering Sunday
Readings: Colossians 3: 12-17; John 19: 25-27
Reader: Pat Machin

9.30am Zest
11.00am Parish Eucharist

6 April The Fifth Sunday of LENT

Readings: Philippians 3: 4b-14; John 12: 1-8

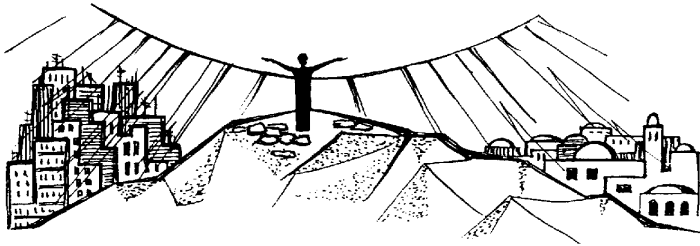
Reader: Adele Maddy

9.30am Zest

11.00am Parish Eucharist

MID-WEEK SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

9.30am *Thursdays: 6 / 13 / 20 / 27 March / 3 April*



CORE

Core is our group for children aged 7 to 11 years old. We meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon.

We recently hosted our first board games extravaganza. The children invited members of our church family to join them for a fun filled afternoon and those who attended were not disappointed!

We had a wealth of games to choose from including chess, mahjong, rubik chase, bananagrams, dobbble, and uno

flip. The children did a great job of explaining the rules of each game and I'm pleased to report there were no bad losers and hardly any cheating.

We were served refreshments and sweet treats made by Zoe, our very own 'bake off' champion in the making.

It was a great success and we will be organising another board games afternoon soon.

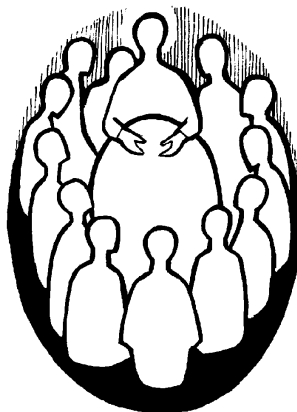
Sallie Smith

PCC Notes - Sallie Smith

The meeting began with a bible reading and reflection followed by prayer.

During the meeting we discussed the following points.

- **Christmas Services**
The Carol service and the Nativity were a big success and were both very well attended. We discussed the possibility of increasing seating capacity next year for the Carol Service, by moving the mulled wine to the Lady Chapel. There was discussion around the possibility of making the Carol Service more accessible to people who attend church less regularly, by adding some narration/explanation.
- The **Longest Night** service was a great reflective service and much appreciated by all who attended.
- **Bless the station** was a fantastic addition to the Christmas programme and was very well received by the villagers who benefitted.



- The **Christmas Day** service worked well and combined aspects of both Zest and the traditional 11am service. It was agreed by PCC that this style of service should also be used on Easter Day.

Plans For Lent and Easter

The possibility of an evening service on Ash Wednesday was discussed. This would allow people who are working during the day to attend.

Jo suggested using the C of E text *Wild Bright Hope* as a study guide for some Lent groups.

The PCC adopted the Zest@Kirlands event, that will take place on the 19 April.

Finance

In line with what was agreed at the November PCC meeting the treasurer confirmed that for the end of year 2024, 85% of the share request (£62,651.80) will be paid. Of the unrestricted giving 5% will be used for mission giving (£4,408.98). Reserves of £17,000 will be maintained.

Through using Green Journey as a tendering agency, the treasurer has managed to secure a new electricity contract. There will be an increase in cost of £591 a year. There will also be a likely rise in water rates from next month.

Safeguarding

Jo spoke about safer recruitment of volunteers and the process she is currently undertaking to implement new procedures. Initially Catherine and Jo will concentrate on making sure that the youth

and children's team have all the relevant safeguarding checks and measures in place. The PCC thanked Catherine for all the work she does in this area.

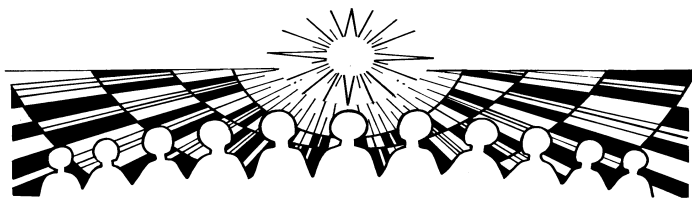
Upcoming events

Jen Shepherd is going to run a half term version of the weekly Stay and Play which currently runs on a Friday morning during term time. The PCC agreed that this would be wonderful outreach for the community and thanked Jen for her commitment and enthusiasm for this project.

The PCC away day will be held at St Mary's Parish Centre, Burley in Wharfedale on the 15 March.

This years **APCM** will take place on the 11 May 2025.

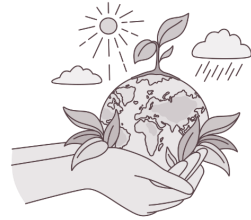
The meeting was ended by saying the Grace.



ECO CHURCH NEWS

Eco quiz for all ages

We have had to postpone the Eco Quiz so it will not happen on 8 March. A new date will be publicised soon.



Eco tips for March- going shopping

- ◆ Make a list before you go food shopping to help avoid over impulse buying and buying food you will end up throwing away.
- ◆ Reduce your impact on the environment by buying second hand when you can. Ebay and charity shops are good sources of reused items.
- ◆ When you need to buy a large item research it carefully. Think about how long it could last, how much it costs to run, what it is made of, where it is made, can it be recycled at the end of its life. Better quality items often last longer and so cost you less over time.
- ◆ Tempted to buy in impulse when you are shopping? Get in the habit of coming back the next day or week when you have thought through if you really *need to buy it*.

If you are interested in joining the eco group, do get in touch. Our next meeting is on ***Thursday 6 March***.

Marilyn, Catherine, Sally , Matthew and Jen.

This month:

4 March 2.15pm Shrovetide Social – including a Quiz and Raffle

25 March Lady Day
Diocesan Services are no longer held, but some branches hold their own services and invite others to attend.

30 March Mothering Sunday
Daffodil posies provided by MU

At our AGM on 4 February we had a good attendance of 13 members which was a welcome number.

For the coming year we now have a membership of 17, which means our group will be able to function for some time yet. However, two members have sadly had to lapse due to health and access concerns.

In the time remaining after our official meeting, members joined together in a reflective activity entitled 'Green Spaces', which was an exercise in appreciating the many benefits and pleasures of different types of gardens (e.g. Wild, Hope, Tranquil). Beautiful coloured photographs of a selection of gardens were passed around and readings and poems connected to them were read aloud by elected members for the enjoyment of all.

Our thanks go to Kathy Roberts for supplying the material for this unusual activity, although she herself was not able to be present at the meeting.

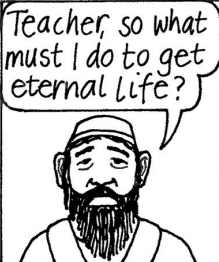
Marjorie Boddy & Ann Dixon

Bible Bite

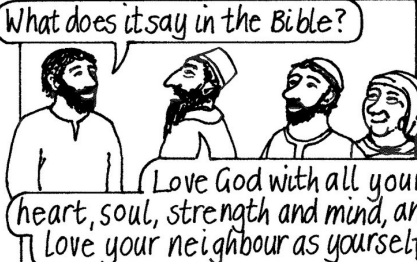
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 10:25-37

An expert in the Law of Moses wanted
to test Jesus' knowledge of the laws in
the Bible, so he asked Jesus a question.




Teacher, so what must I do to get eternal life?

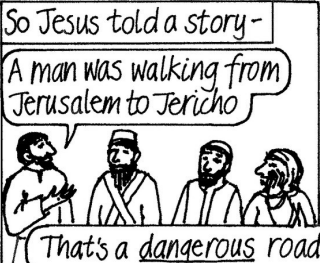


What does it say in the Bible?

Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and Love your neighbour as yourself.

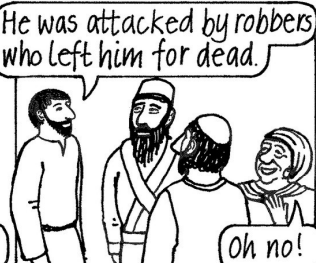


You've got it right.
But who counts as a 'neighbour'?



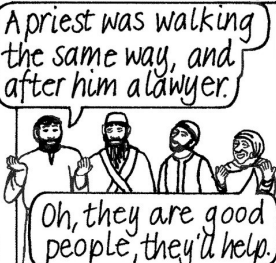
So Jesus told a story -
A man was walking from Jerusalem to Jericho

That's a dangerous road!



He was attacked by robbers who left him for dead.

Oh no!



A priest was walking the same way, and after him a lawyer.

Oh, they are good people, they'll help.



They saw the hurt man but they walked past

I bet it's an ordinary person who helps!



Then a man from Samaria came that way...

Oh no! We hate them and they hate us Jews! That hurt man is done for!



He felt sorry for the hurt man, and cleaned and bandaged his cuts.

What? No!



He put him on his donkey, took him to an inn, and paid for him to stay.



So who was a real neighbour to the hurt man?

The... the Sss... the one who helped him.



So go and do the same.

FROM THE REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM

16 March

*We welcome into the Lord's family:
Isaac Pennells*



ALTAR FLOWERS

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday 5 March. In accordance with Church of England tradition there will be no flowers in church from then until Easter Day.

If you would like to ***sponsor*** the flowers for a week in the coming year, perhaps to remember a loved one or an anniversary, please add your name to the list in the porch. If you are unable to arrange them yourselves speak to Jan Alexander - a member of the church flower team will be happy to either do them for you or help you to do them yourself. Vases are quite acceptable containers.

The new flower rota is now in the church porch.

Light Up St John's – Floodlight Sponsorship

27 March

In memory of Patricia Holdsworth.
Keep seeing the 'smiling sun'.



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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**Miscellaneous observations
with Lent in mind:**

Adversity does not make us frail; it only shows us
how frail we are. *Anon*

God only asks you to do your best. *Robert H Benson*



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