

2021

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**MENSTON
PARISH CHURCH**
St John the Divine



60p

Mothering Sunday
14 March



From the Editor



Once again the March magazine is an on-line version. However, we do hope that the April edition will once again be printed and delivered to all our subscribers.

Several people have asked about paying their annual subscription to the magazine. Charmian Thomas and I have agreed that this will take place next month if we are delivering hard copies. If not, the following month I'm afraid. The cost will remain at £6 for the year which we hope you think still represents good value. Please give your money, in a sealed envelope marked with your name, to the person who delivers your magazine. Thank you for continuing to take the magazine - your support for St John's is very much valued.

May we all stay safe and well.

Jan Alexander



This month

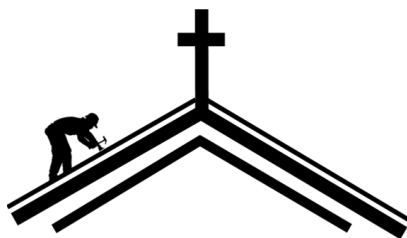
P3	Roof Appeal update	P13	150th Poetry Competition!
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Copy for the APRIL magazine is due by **Sunday 14 March**. Please email copy to both editor and Parish Office (office@stjohnmenston.org.uk) or leave copy for typing with the office.

ROOF APPEAL ~ What's happening!

Our target ~ £102,000

Income to 24/2/2021



The appeal has currently raised from:

Congregational giving	£35,723.04
Fundraising activities	£5,062.08
Menston community	£4,682.03
Gift Aid claimed	£8,082.25
TOTAL	£53,549.40 (with Gift Aid)

We are still short of our fundraising target so it is not too late to donate either by

- BACS to: Menston PCC 40-22-28 A/C 40572640
Reference (most imp) : Roof + surname
- or cheque payable to Menston PCC. Send to the Treasurer, Hillcrest, Kelcliffe Lane, Guiseley, Leeds LS20 9DE or post through the Parish Office letterbox. If you are a taxpayer please consider Gift Aid. A gift aid declaration form is available from the Treasurer if he does not already hold your details.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising events are currently cancelled due to the ongoing issues associated with Covid-19. Definite events will be notified in good time via the Parish Notes, website and magazine.

The Vicarage

Dear Friends

This Lent, in a break from tradition, we will be looking in our Sunday sermons at the great story of creation in Genesis 1. We are committed to seeing care of our world, with all the issues of climate, pollution and conservation, as an intrinsic aspect of being Christian. God made the world, and it is a gift which we must look after.

Part of the way we begin to think about looking after our world is to consider our relationship to it. Genesis 1 gives us ways of thinking this through as it discusses God's decisive dealings with his creation, the purposive character of our world, and the balance of God's sovereign and unchallenged speech with the freedom he bestows upon his creatures.

Not very 'Eastery' though, you might say, given Lent is a time of preparation for Easter.

When we read, however, in John 3:16, that God loves the world, so much that he sent Jesus, the Greek word for 'world' is 'kosmos.' We normally assume that this word means humanity, but it can also include the entire world and the way it is ordered as well as referring to those in 'the world' who weren't part of the Jewish faith at the time. In the context, the primary meaning of 'kosmos' is clearly human-centric - but that isn't the same as saying that it is exclusively so.

God created his world, affirming its goodness and taking satisfaction in it. There are parts of the Bible where God takes delight in his creation – almost stepping back watching his creation enjoy itself and marvelling at it (see Job and Psalms). The order found within our world is carefully constructed by God, and reflecting his wishes. God loves his world, his 'kosmos.'

For God, who loved his world so much that he sent Jesus, possibly the sending of Jesus for our human-only salvation is not all that is intended. Through a right orientation to God, we also find a right orientation to our neighbour (another use of 'kosmos'), and to the rest

of the 'kosmos' too. Even if John 3:16 is human-centric, (and as I say, this is perhaps only its primary orientation) its effects spill out into the rest of creation. Creation is seen in relation to God, as a gift to be tended rather than a commodity to be exploited.

To consider our world - that we have damaged through sin and greed and continue to damage – in its right relation to God and consider our own positions within it, therefore, seems like a good Lenten discipline. In Jesus we have a renewing of ourselves, but consequently a renewing of our world which we see now in part, and we anticipate seeing in full when Jesus returns.

Steve

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Why Church?

Over the coming months, St John's PCC will be spending time in each meeting thinking about what St John's might look like post-pandemic. It is really very rare for a church to experience a natural break in which it can step back and take stock of where it has come from and where it feels called to go in future. Over the new few months, the PCC will be looking at the key questions of ***Why?, What? When? Who? And Where? - beginning with Why.***

Why? – What is the purpose of church? What is *not* our purpose?

By stepping back and asking ourselves again - why we are church, what is our purpose? - I hope that

the other questions will be a little more focussed. This will give us chance to assess what we do, and what we might want to do in future, against the purpose of St John's being here in Menston. It may also suggest that some of the things we have done, don't really fit our purpose, and therefore allow us to concentrate our efforts and resources for the future.

You may also want to think about these questions, and let us know what you think. *Steve*



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, MENSTON.

— Steve Peckley

A View from The Pews by Dominic Hall

Last month I wrote about charity. It seems only right to continue down this path so this month I want to look at 'hope'. I am writing this on St Valentine's Day which must count as a day of hope for many.

Traditionally someone would send a secret message to the object of their affection. The hope would be that the person receiving the message would understand and work out where it came from and a beautiful romance would blossom. As I say, hope! Nowadays, the day is earmarked for couples to reaffirm their love for each other. Hope also expresses itself in ways more prosaic than love.

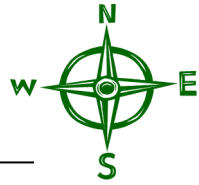
This year, of course, we have the great hope that the Covid vaccination programme will help us reach a point where we can begin to get back to normal. Many are hoping that they can go on holiday, visit family members or go to the theatre or cinema before the summer.

Hope is that extraordinary entity that keeps us going. Think of Willy Loman in Miller's 'Death Of A Salesman' a man whose existence was the embodiment of the big deal just around the corner. Then there is the football fan (like me) who lives in the hope that their team will win the title, cup or sometimes just the match! From classical literature we have Pandora and her box containing all the ills of the world. Once opened and all those ills had been released into the world, hope was what was left.

So what actually is hope? I think it is that feeling we all have, like Loman, that our journey should be forward facing and that we should strive to learn, understand and seek to be better than before. Trials are placed before us and sometimes they seem to be insurmountable. However, with hope we can at least try to overcome them. For most of us the problems are relatively small. There are people living difficult and precarious lives who have a need to keep hope alive just so it is worth getting up every morning. Hope is for them an essential part of their lives. Whether there seems to be no end in sight to problems, whether there is an existential threat through political violence or even if a life-threatening illness takes hold, hope is, in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, '...being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness.'

My hope is that you all stay safe and well during the continued pandemic.

Prayer Points



'March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb' we are told. It certainly comes in with the darkness and cold left over from February, but after the vernal or spring equinox on 21 March we can feel the light is returning, and hopefully the warmth, and please Lord, an overwhelming healing.

In stillness we pray:

You Creator God, have seen our harsh times,

You have witnessed the universe appear to withdraw its support,

Leaving us thrown back on our own resources.

Whether we feel your presence or your absence there is no pretence

When we cry to you 'How long O Lord? How long?'

Amid Lent we can take a moment perhaps to allow our spiritual selves to be rebalanced. To look again and see God in all created things. To the outside view Lent is about giving up and self-discipline, but perhaps what we need this Lent is a chance for some spiritual spring cleaning and to invite God to 'put a new and right spirit within'.

O Lord, who hears our silent cry, be with each person this day who is wandering their own lonely desert track. Encircle with your love those who know there are no short cuts, who cannot go round but must go through.

Thank you that we do not get to the garden until we have faced the featureless barren desert.

Take our smudged and grimy selves, emerging from the wilderness, and stroke your blessings into each of us, for we know you never turn away a broken spirit.

(reflection based on Psalm 51 read at the start of Lent)

Revision of the Electoral Roll 2021

The Annual Church Parochial Meeting (APCM)
will be held on ***Sunday 18 April.***

The revision of the Roll is a legal requirement and will take place in March ready for the APCM.

In case you are not on the Roll and would like to be, you need to be over 16 and have attended services at St John's regularly over 6 months. When you are on the Electoral Roll, you can vote at the meeting to elect our PCC members and Deanery representatives; you can also raise matters of parochial or general Church interest, and you can stand for election yourself. So being on the Roll, enables us to take a full part in the decision-making processes of the Church of England.

The existing Roll will be placed on view at the back of church on **7 / 14 / 21 March**, and application forms will also be available then. If you would like a form and cannot get to church, please contact me and I will get one to you.

Completed forms should be posted into the Vestry / Office in an envelope marked with my name by **Sunday 21 March** at the latest. If you have moved during the last year, could you please check that I have your new address.

The revised Roll will be on view on **Sundays 28 March / 4 & 11 April**. No new names can be added to the Roll during this time.

Please get in touch if you have any queries.

*Elizabeth Leopold
Electoral Roll Officer*

ealeo200@hotmail.com

CLIMATE ACTION MENSTON (CAM)

- ◆ Concerned about the climate?
- ◆ Worried about wildlife?
- ◆ Interested in energy?
- ◆ Anxious about air pollution?
- ◆ Troubled by traffic?
- ◆ Want to make a difference?

Whether you want to save the planet, improve habitats; adopt a low carbon lifestyle, you will be welcome at Climate Action Menston.

We are a dynamic group that wants to grow! For a chance to hear what we have been doing ,what we want to do and how you can get involved please contact info@climateactionmenston.org.uk

GREEN TIPS for this month

We believe God loves this world and he's given us the privilege of looking after it. So let's get involved in what is going on around us – in our local communities and in the wider issues that affect our world.



This month - Looking at **WASTE**

- ◆ **Reduce waste:** What do you throw away most? Aim to reduce this as much as possible. Keep a log of what you throw away and aim to reduce it by a third, through reducing packaging and recycling.
- ◆ **Re-use waste:** Make sure you always re-use your carrier bags. Better still, don't accept them in the first place. Always carry a spare bag. Put one or two re-usable bags in your main bag so you always have something with you to use if you go shopping.
- ◆ **Recycle waste:** Buy your milk from the milkman and return your glass bottles.

Remember - small actions on our part DO make changes.

*Outreach Group - suggestions taken from A Rocha's website
<https://arocha.org.uk/our-activities/living-lightly-take-action/>*

THIS MONTH from Andrew

Is there no balm in Gilead?

During lockdown I have found myself looking more and more at the writings of the old testament prophets. These Hebrew prophets seemed to both value and criticise their traditions. Perhaps this ‘honest love’ they showed for their heritage was the real sign of their prophetic integrity.

The prophet Jeremiah lived in a time of deep grief and loss. Jerusalem had fallen to the Babylonians and the people had been exiled. He exposed the false prophets of his day who denied such necessary suffering and pretended that things were *not really that bad*. He famously poured out his heart and soul in Jeremiah 8:22, when he asked ‘Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?’.

The cry for healing and a balm for Gilead feels like a prescient theme for today. During Black History month, on the back of the Black Lives Matter protests, we have been looking at Bradford University, at the African American Spirituals and the Civil Rights Movement. One of the most powerful of these songs picks up Jeremiah’s cry: ‘There is a Balm in Gilead.’

*There is a balm in Gilead, to make the spirit whole.
There is a balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul.*

The inspiration is obviously Jeremiah. The prophet has come to a wilderness place in his life. Spiritually depressed and tortured he cries out, ‘Is there no balm in Gilead? ...’ His question is rhetorical, it is not directed at any particular person, I am not even certain it is directed at God but is rather a question raised through the circumstances of his life. He is searching his soul, stripped back to bare minimum he is saying ‘surely in the name of all that is good, there must be a balm in Gilead, it can’t be that there isn’t?’. He is brought face to face with the very ground and core of his own faith. During this last year as news of the pandemic and the devastation it has caused has washed over us in waves, many people have found themselves overwhelmed with grief and tortured by loneliness.

Back in the plantations of the deep south of the United States, the slaves caught this mood, this spiritual dilemma but they also did an amazing thing, and they straightened out the question mark in Jeremiah's sentence, turning it into an exclamation mark: 'There is a balm in Gilead!' It is a statement of creative triumph.

I wonder if you are familiar with the song? If you have listened, (there is a wonderful recording of Mahalia Jackson singing it on YouTube) it is a most wonderful melody, almost haunting, it hovers around a basic scale without straying very far, apart from one sharp lift of a musical eyebrow – that serves as a suggestion of an escape, before the tune swings back again to work out its destiny. The message behind it however is powerful ...I think it is about basic human optimism. A hope that grows through pessimism and doubt, that transcends hurt, pain and disappointment and by doing that, creates its own strength, and offers us all a glimpse of an escape, and therein lies the hope. It is well worth having another listen to the song, reading Jeremiah Chapter 8 again, and fixing our eyes on Jeremiah's God, the God of the plantation slaves, the God of each of us, as we look to emerge from the captivity of Covid.

God bless.

Andrew

HOLY WEEK SERVICES ~ 29 March-4 April

- ***Stations of the Cross*** - available online throughout Holy Week www.stjohnmenston.co.uk
- ***Good Friday Zest event*** - available online throughout Holy Week
- ***Maundy Thursday*** - 9.30am Online YouTube communion
- ***Maundy Thursday*** - 5pm 'Zoomy-Zest-Eat-Along' Last Supper. Zest eat together and talk about Easter
- ***Easter Sunday*** - Zest online and 11am Service in church with optional Holy Communion.

Worship this month

7 Mar The Third Sunday of LENT

Readings: Genesis 1: 9-13; John 15: 1-11

11.00am Service of the Word followed by optional Eucharist

14 Mar The Fourth Sunday of LENT ~ Mothering Sunday

Readings: Genesis 1: 14-19; John 1: 1-9

11.00am Service of the Word followed by optional Eucharist

21 Mar The Fifth Sunday of LENT

Readings: Genesis 1: 20-23; Luke 12: 22-34

11.00am Service of the Word followed by optional Eucharist

28 Mar PALM SUNDAY

Readings: Genesis 1: 24-31; Mark 1: 9-13

11.00am Service of the Word followed by optional Eucharist

4 Apr EASTER DAY

Readings: Acts 10: 34-43; John 20: 1-8

11.00am Service of the Word followed by optional Eucharist

Due to the national lockdown, the Sunday Zest service will be on-line and Wednesday morning Holy Communion services are postponed until further notice.

The church building will be open for private prayer on Wednesdays 10am-4pm, and Sundays 12.30pm-4pm.

During the 11am service, any overflow will be directed to the Parish Room where the speaker system will be used to enable people there to take part.

Social distancing and hygiene measures should be maintained, including the wearing of a mask unless exempt. A register is kept of those who attend for contact purposes.

CELEBRATING St JOHN'S!

This year is a very important year for us all at St Johns Church. We are celebrating the **150th Anniversary** of the opening of the church building. There was a small worshipping community who had been meeting in a cottage up Derry Hill, but on the 28 April 1871 our beautiful church was consecrated for worship.



We are planning all sorts of events to celebrate this year, and after last year it is good to have reasons to celebrate and look forward. But for now, I am officially challenging everyone to our first event.

We are having a **Poetry Competition** to mark this big birthday. The theme must be something about St Johns and the Anniversary, but your imagination is the limit. We want everyone to feel able to enter, so there are three categories.

Under 10 years,
10 - 16 years,
Adults.

The winning poems will be published in our celebration souvenir brochure, and there will be prizes...!

So, get your pen and paper, and see what you can do. Good writing! Entries to: associate@stjohnmenston.org.uk

Closing Date Sunday 21 March

Andrew



Recipe Book

We are hoping to produce a recipe book as part of the celebrations for St Johns 150th anniversary. We would like contributions of your favourite recipes to be included.

Please contact **Sue Lee 875393**.

PCC Notes

We are getting quite accustomed to holding PCC meetings by Zoom. It's inevitably not as sociable as meeting in person but we still have lively and thorough discussions. Our meeting on 15 February brought out lively and wide-ranging views.

The meeting opened with prayers.

Colin Alexander as Treasurer reported on our finances generally and the funding appeal for replacing the roof. Income and expenditure were largely as expected during January. He noted that there could be a deficit at the end of the year both because of the extraordinary times and the need to replace the roof as soon as possible. There were a good range of views whether fund raising this year should be allocated in part towards the running expenses of the church. It was decided that for this year, all fund raising should be allocated to the roof fund.

We turned attention to Mission Giving, which was unanimously accepted to be an intrinsic part of Christian life. The current policy of giving 5% of our unrestricted income to reflect God's generosity and the relative wealth of our circumstances was endorsed. The PCC recognised that a number of more detailed principles, intended

to emphasise the central role of giving in our Christian life, should be discussed with the Outreach Group, who have had a central role in guiding our mission giving for many years.

The church in Menston was consecrated in 1871 and therefore 2021 is our 150 anniversary. Ideas for celebration were discussed. It is intended that the weekend of 18 / 19 September will be a major highlight, centred around Bishop Nick's visit and a flower festival. Revd Andrew, Catherine Meakin and Sue Lee have been asked to co-ordinate events during the year.

The Vicar explained to the PCC that the pandemic and what we have learned from our responses to it have provided a very important and rare opportunity to consider how to design our church post-covid. He initiated a discussion, to be continued at future PCC meetings, starting with a fundamental question: why do we have a church in Menston? Initial thoughts were put forward as an immediate response. Members of the PCC were asked to pray and to ponder on the question so that it can be explored more fully.

Peter Wilbraham

Dear Members

Membership

There was a positive response from most members when approached about paying their subscription this year, which has seen a substantial increase. We are pleased to report, therefore, that our membership still stand at a healthy number 19, having lost only 7 members. We had 26 members at the start of 2020, but sadly, Barbara Nelson and Joyce Edgley passed away during the year and we have now lost 5 other members who decided to lapse for various reasons. Our future as a viable branch looks a little more certain now, thank you.

Our Overseas Link - Nova Scotia, Canada

News at Christmas from our link branch in Nova Scotia contained news of the same situation there as for everyone here because of the pandemic. Nova Scotia has about 1 million people but only 7 Covid cases at the time of writing, and for several weeks they had no cases. They can go to the shops but restaurants are take-away only, church services are on line and they can only have 5 visitors. Even though members had not met together since last winter, they managed to make 'shoe boxes' for Mission

to Seafarers, which gave them a sense of achievement in these difficult times.

Leeds Diocese Update

During the pandemic, the Presidents of Leeds Diocese and Bradford Area have been working hard with their respective officers to keep members informed about how things are going and trying to plan ahead for when restrictions are lifted and meetings and activities can start again.

Many things are put on line for members to share in, zoom meetings are held and branches who are equipped to do this are invited to join in also. News is sent out monthly to all branches by email or post, as they wish us to feel involved and optimistic during this period.

In some areas, members have managed to keep up with their efforts to provide donations to various projects including knitted gifts for Leeds Children's Hospital, and Christmas cards, chocolates and craft supplies for New Hall Prison for women.

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With love and prayers, until we can meet again.

Marjorie Boddy & Ann Dixon

Biblical Numbers Quiz

The answers to Questions 1-7 are all numbers. Add these together and subtract 100 from the total. Take the cube root of your answer to give you the answer Question 8, and thereby solve the puzzle.

1. Books of the Old Testament
2. Sundays in Lent
3. Longest Psalm
4. Beatitudes in Sermon on the Mount
5. Days between Easter Day and Ascension Day
6. Loaves and fishes total used to feed the five thousand
7. Good years predicted by Joseph to Pharaoh
8. *Book number in the New Testament (Answer on p19)*

With thanks to Heather Greig

All in the month of MARCH

75 years ago, 25 March 1946, London's Heathrow Airport was opened, as London Airport. It was renamed Heathrow in 1966.

40 years ago, 29 March 1981, the first London Marathon was held.

25 years ago, on 13 March 1996, the Dunblane Massacre took place in Scotland. A gunman killed 16 children and a teacher at a primary school and wounded several others before taking his own life.

10 years ago, on 15 March 2011, the Syrian Civil War began. It still continues today.

**JULIAN OF NORWICH:
'within listening distance of
the silence we call God'
A Study Day with Joyce Simpson**

Parcevall Hall, Monday 10 May, 10.00am-8.30pm

'What seek ye?', or 'What do you want?' are the first words Jesus utters in St John's Gospel. Julian's reply is direct and firm: *'God of your goodness give me yourself'*.

How does Julian, an anchorite in 14th century Norwich, challenge and support pilgrims in the 21st century? Just as from the window of her cell Julian gave comfort and counsel to the burdened and perplexed, so many have found that to spend time in the company of her book, *The Revelations of Divine Love*, is to find strength for the journey through life.

Joyce Simpson, retired Head of Humanities at Leeds Trinity University, for many years taught medieval literature to undergraduates, and has a particular interest in Julian of Norwich, who lived through 'an age of adversity', characterised by epidemic, war, civic conflict, and harsh struggles for social justice. The day is a quest to discover for ourselves the truth of her insight that 'Love was his meaning'. Along the way we will ponder 'Julian and Desire', 'Julian and Fear', 'Julian and Trust', and consider the encounter between Julian and that flamboyant pilgrim, Margery Kempe.

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Arrival at 10.00am for Holy Communion at 10.15am. The price includes coffee, lunch, afternoon tea and evening meal. There is an option to stay overnight on Monday 10 May. Price £48.

To book contact Parcevall Hall, Appletreewick, Skipton, BD23 6DG Tel: 01756 720213 email: admin@parcevallhall.org.uk
website: parcevallhall.org.uk/get-in-touch

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 14 verses 15-24

Jesus was at a dinner when one guest said how good it would be to be at God's feast for His people at the end of time.

So Jesus told a story -

A man once gave a great feast.

I love feasts!

He sent his servant to invite his guests.

Then he knows how much food to cook.

When everything was ready, he sent his servant to tell his guests.

Time to get dressed up!

But they all made excuses.

One said, 'I've bought some land and I need to see it. Sorry!'

How rude! Nobody buys land without seeing it!

The next said, 'I've bought some oxen and I need to try them out. Sorry!'

And you don't buy oxen without trying them first!

And another said, 'I got married so I'm not coming.'

The master was very angry.

They insulted him with their rude excuses!

He told his servant to go to every street in the town and fetch everyone who was poor or disabled.

How generous!

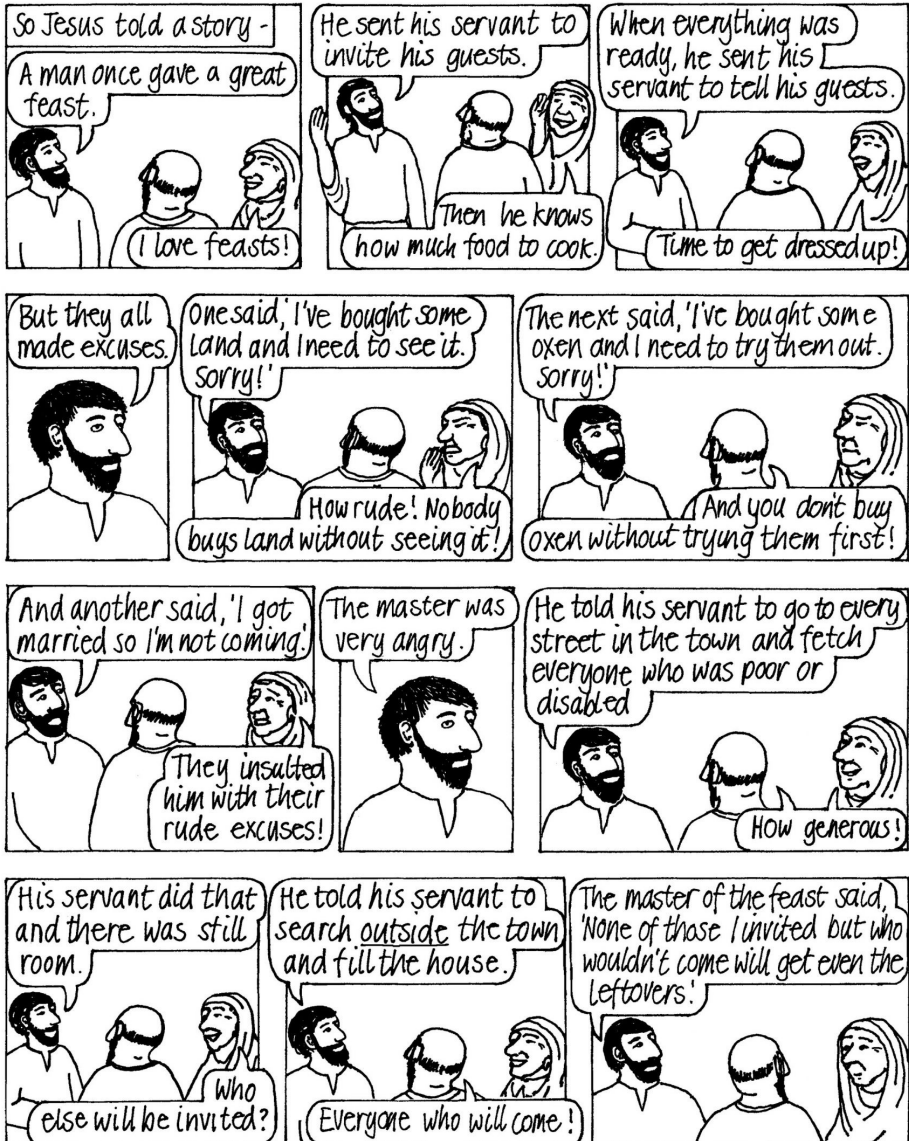
His servant did that and there was still room.

He told his servant to search outside the town and fill the house.

Who else will be invited?

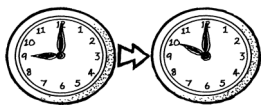
Everyone who will come!

The master of the feast said, 'None of those I invited but who wouldn't come will get even the leftovers!'



NOTICE BOARD

SUMMERTIME Remember the clocks go *forward* on Sunday 28 March.



POP a POUND for the Roof Appeal For those who have been saving pound coins for the roof appeal - please bring your jam

jars to church on **Easter Sunday 4 April** and hand them to the duty church warden.

If that isn't possible then they could be delivered to York House, 5, Church View (directly opposite the church). Many thanks for your contribution.

Jane Pratt

*Biblical Numbers quiz answer p16:
Book 5 - Acts of the Apostles.*

EASTER LILIES

Easter Day is **Sunday 4 April**. This may seem some way ahead but it is helpful if we can order and collect the lilies in good time from a wholesale Leeds flower market. They can take at least a week to open from the tight bud stage in which they are despatched from Holland.

If you wish to contribute to the lilies which decorate St John's at Eastertide you can put your donation through the **Parish**

Office letter box or pass it to a church warden on Sunday mornings. Please put the money in a sealed envelope clearly marked **'for Easter Lilies'**.



2021 FLOWER ROTA

The new rota for altar flowers will be in place shortly in the porch. Please sign up for your preferred date(s).

Jan Alexander

Light Up St John's – Floodlight Sponsorship

Mar 2 - Remembering my Dad with love on his anniversary

Now that the dark winter nights are with us 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.

Contact office@stjohnmenston.org.uk to make arrangements.

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Excellent references available.



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FAIR PRICE



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- ✓ Replace sealant
- ✓ Put up light fixtures
- ✓ Replace light bulbs
- ✓ Tiling
- ✓ Decorating
- ✓ Insulation
- ✓ plumbing

- ✓ Sort leaky taps
- ✓ Clear blocked drains
- ✓ Outdoor power-washing
- ✓ Repair cracks and holes
- ✓ Clear out garage
- ✓ Joinery
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