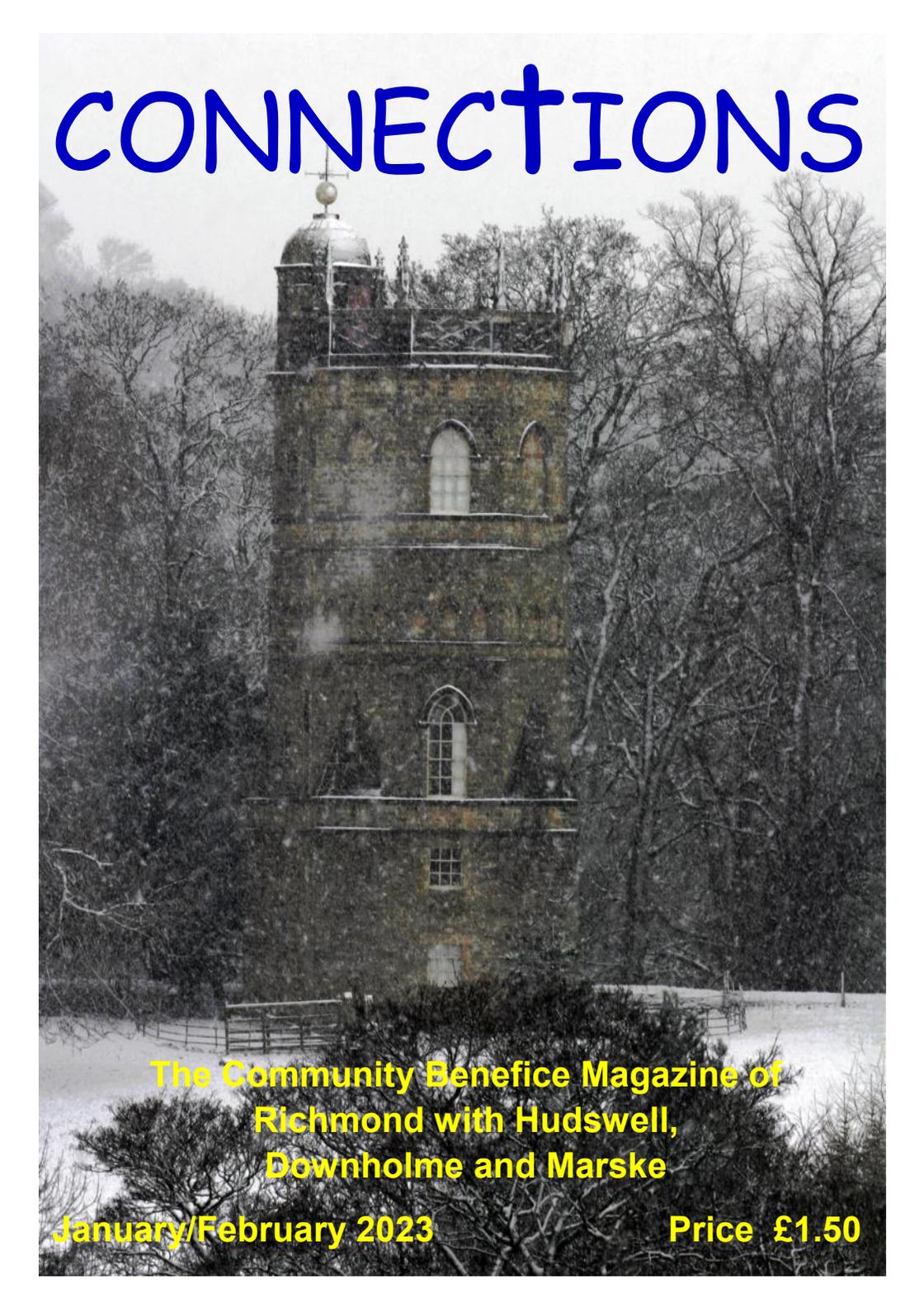


CONNECTIONS

A photograph of a stone tower with a dome and cross, surrounded by trees in a snowy landscape. The tower is the central focus, with a dome on top and a cross. The building is made of stone and has several windows. The background is filled with bare trees, and the ground is covered in snow. The overall scene is winter and somewhat desolate.

**The Community Benefice Magazine of
Richmond with Hudswell,
Downholme and Marske**

January/February 2023

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THE BENEFICE OF RICHMOND WITH HUDSWELL, DOWNHOLME AND MARSKE

www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk

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CHURCH SERVICES - St MARY THE VIRGIN, RICHMOND with Hudswell

8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion	Every Sunday
10.00 a.m.	Parish Communion Worship for All	Every Sunday apart from 1st Sunday (no communion) Every 1st Sunday
4.00 p.m.	Café Church Fun-Key Church	3rd Sunday (every 2 mths—Jan, March etc) Last Sunday each month
6.30 p.m.	Choral Evensong Free to Be	Second Sunday each month 3rd Sunday (every 2 mths—Feb, April etc)
9.15 a.m.	Holy Communion	Every Wednesday
CHURCH SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL, MARKET PLACE , RICHMOND		
10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	Every Thursday

PARISH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, DOWNHOLME

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CHURCH SERVICES AT DOWNHOLME

9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer	Every second Sunday
9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	Every fourth Sunday

THE PARISH OF ST EDMUNDS, MARSKE

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CHURCH SERVICES AT MARSKE

11.00 a.m.	Holy Communion	Every Sunday except 2nd (& 5th) Sunday
11.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer	Every 2nd (& 5th) Sunday

A happy and peaceful New Year to all! At the time of writing, a cold brightness pervades Richmond, perhaps tantalisingly suggesting a white Christmas, but I suspect by the time you read this, the romantic thoughts of snow on Christmas Day will have been dashed for another year and a damp New Year chill will be enveloping us.

This does act as a reminder that keeping warm and well fed will remain a challenge for a significant number of households this winter. A reminder of what we can do to help as a minimum regarding food and warmth is printed on page 29.

I have taken the liberty of including an abridged version of a tale I used to use in school assemblies at this time of year—the fourth wise man—which I found a moving and impactful reminder of what an active faith means in daily life, and a reminder of the conflicting thoughts which can cross anyone’s mind when physically confronted with challenging situations embodied in the plight of others. .

Finance is a challenged for this publication at present. This is set out in detail in the centre pages but we do hope that you would want to continue to buy ‘Connections’ at the higher subscription price. (£1.50 per copy—10 copies a year). **Please could you pull out the centre pages, complete the form indicating your chosen payment method if you would like to continue and return it by 7th February so that we can order the right number of copies next time.** A monthly payment scheme is available to spread the cost for those using direct payment from a bank account. Thank you in advance for helping us to get off to a good start this year. (see pages 25-28 for full details).

We bade farewell to William’s Walks in December, but welcome a new series entitled ‘Taking the Lead’ which will offer dog –friendly walks to follow. If you haven’t got a dog, you could borrow one or just do the walk anyway. Thanks to the McCormacks for this. Please share your own suggestions for future issues.

Elsewhere, Rod Hall’s lighthouse adventure reaches its conclusion. Jane Hatcher and Judith MacLeod both follow musical themes , as does part of a new occasional series called ‘I’ve often wondered...’ (Do get in touch if this sort of thought occurs to you—we’ll try to find the answer!) There are some hopefully enlightening pieces about Epiphany, items in verse from both Marske and Downholme contributed by Liz Kluz and George Alderson and Ian Short returns to photographic front cover duty with a seasonal shot of Culloden Tower (you’ve had to put up with mine for the past two months!) Add in the mix of news , dates for your diary and puzzles to pass the dark evenings, remembering always that there’s more daylight and sunshine every day for the next five months or so!! Keep smiling.

Jim Jack



Martin's New Year Message



Happy New Year!

As 2023 begins this issue of the Magazine will cover February as well as January. Our Editor, Jim Jack, lays out in his Editorial the reasons for this being a double-issue.

It may be a new calendar year but the Church's new year began in November, on Advent Sunday. As we work our way through the times and seasons of the Christian calendar we have already journeyed through the season of preparation for Christmas. The twelve days of Christmas celebrations take us to Epiphany on 6 January, when through the visit of 'wise men from the East' Jesus was 'revealed to the nations'. We will celebrate Epiphany on the nearest Sunday, January 8.

The Epiphany season continues until Candlemas on 2 February, when along with Simeon we proclaim Jesus to be the 'light to lighten the nations', and which we will celebrate on the nearest Sunday, this year falling on 29 January.

And then with the arrival of Ash Wednesday on 22 February the season of Lent will begin. Already, the new life of Easter is on the horizon!

Paul's Placement

It seems only yesterday that Paul and Jeanette arrived in our midst. From Day 1 they have blessed us with their presence, and we want them to remain with us for as long as possible. The reality, however, is that the post of Curate is for a minimum of three years and a maximum of four.

Whilst we would like Paul and Jeanette to stay until the summer of 2024, it is the case that from this Easter, Paul will be entitled to begin looking for his next post. Our hope is that he will not feel in any hurry to do so!

With a view to preparing to move on, one way for a Curate to broaden their experience is to undertake a placement in a new context during their third year. In January (7 -30) Paul will be based in Colburn, covering all aspects of ministry in a community very different from our own Benefice. During this time the Vicar, Revd Andrew Cromarty, will be away.

I am sure you join me in wishing Paul well and looking forward to his return.

"All are welcome in this place."

Scott's Placement

Meanwhile, as part of Scott's theological training at Cranmer Hall in Durham, which began in September, it made sense to maintain continuity by arranging for his first parish placement to be with us. It was agreed at the outset that this would be until Easter, after which he would move elsewhere, again to broaden his experience.

During his placement here Scott has been undertaking specific duties with clear objectives in mind. These both deepen his training experience and, given Scott's particular gifts, skills and experience, are also of great benefit to us. I am sure you will join me in appreciation of Scott's invaluable ministry whilst he is here, in wishing him well when he does move on, and in continuing to support him (as we do Gillian) as his future ministry elsewhere unfolds.

Congratulations to Sharon

Someone else who has been training for ministry – this time as a Pastoral Assistant – is Sharon Digan. Somehow, she has managed to fit the year-long Diocesan training course into her busy schedule (which includes a bustling family life and demanding job as a carer at The Terrace Care Home). She now joins Jennifer Patrick as a Pastoral Assistant within our Pastoral Care Team. I am sure you will join me in congratulating Sharon and in supporting her in her new ministry.

And if you would like to consider following Sharon's and Scott's examples by training for a form of authorised ministry then I would be delighted to discuss the possibilities and options with you. Details of all the Diocesan courses available can be found on the Digital Learning Platform: Diocese of Leeds Learning (anglican.org)
How and where is God calling you?

Agape Meal

Returning to the Epiphany season, the commemoration on 25 th January of the Conversion of St Paul, the 'Apostle to the Nations' is preceded by the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Christians of all denominations join together to pray for the Unity and the Mission of the worldwide Church.

A Richmond tradition is for our churches to gather for an Agape Meal, a simple meal in which we enjoy fellowship as well as 'companionship' (ie breaking bread together). This year, it will take place on Wednesday 25 January, at 7p.m. at the Roman Catholic Church Hall on Newbiggin. All are welcome.

Honorary Canonry: an honour for us all

My 'installation' as an Honorary Canon of Ripon Cathedral will take place during the service of Choral Evensong there on Sunday 29 January at 3.30 p.m.



This is very much an honour for our Benefice, enabling us to have a voice in the affairs of the Cathedral and representing not only our Benefice but also our Deanery.

I would like to thank you for the privilege of being in ministry with you and therefore to celebrate this joint honour with you. If you would like to attend the Installation then please speak to Colin or myself. Details of the arrangements can be found elsewhere.

With every blessing for 2023 and all the times and seasons ahead.

Martin



BENEFICE SERVICES IN JANUARY & FEBRUARY

Please note that there will be no morning service at Marske on 1 January 2023. All other services noted on page 3 will take place. In addition, on Ash Wednesday 22 February, Ashing will take place during the 9.15 a.m. communion at St Mary's. There is an additional service of Holy Communion with ashing on the same day at 7.00 p.m., also at St Mary's.

What is 'ashing'?

Customs associated with Shrove Tuesday are well-known and common, without many understanding the religious significance of the day. The following day, Ash Wednesday, is the day which marks the start of Lent, the period of time when Christians prepare for Easter, with many seeing it as a time of self-denial and a time to –re-examine priorities in living and then making changes to be more in step with Christ's teaching and example. The Ashing service offers a time where the ashes from last year's palm crosses are used to make a sign of the cross on the forehead of worshippers as a sign of penitence or a form of witness.

Wedding

On Saturday 26th November

Dani Kane and Jamie Wilcock

were joined together in Holy Matrimony.

Help them to keep lit the torch of love that they now share in their hearts so that by their loving example they may pass on the light of love forever. Amen

A TIME OF MY LIFE (part 2)

This month, we conclude **ROD HALL's** story from Christmas 1964. In the last edition, we heard of his excitement on receiving his first posting to duties as a Supernumerary Lighthouse Keeper on the South Stack light, a rock lighthouse just off the coast of Anglesey, connected to the island by a rather rickety bridge. The senior duty 'keepers, Mick and Bryn had given him a surprisingly warm welcome and persuaded him that, as 'nothing ever happens here' on the light, he could 'mind the shop' for a couple of days whilst they took some unofficial shore leave to visit acquaintances on the mainland over Christmas.

So the eighteen year old Rod accepted the challenge of overall responsibility for keeping the light in, a light which served the busy shipping lanes used by vessels loading and unloading cargoes at the docks on the River Mersey. It was a rather wild Christmas Eve that year, but, with light working well and the range pumping out welcome heat, Rod settled down to play his guitar and enjoy a cosy Christmas. What could possibly go wrong—because, in the words of Mick and Bryn, 'nothing ever happens here'?

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

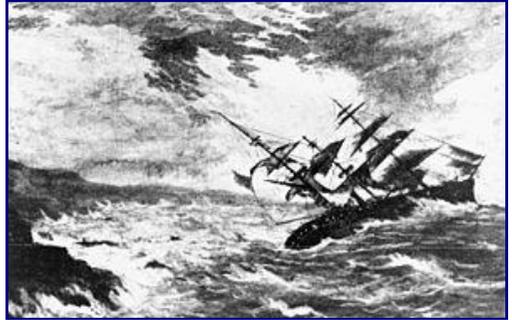
The lens on a lighthouse weighs many tons but it rotates effortlessly on a circular trough filled with mercury. Beneath it, a mechanism (rather like a grandfather clock) is powered by a substantial weight on a long cable. As the weight descends down the centre of the lighthouse tower, the lens rotates and the beams of light move around creating the familiar flash. Beautifully engineered, amazingly simple and foolproof—well, almost.

The weight had been wound up fully at the end of the previous watch so all I had to do was release the brake and the lens began to slide around silently and gracefully as the weight descended. I found the logbook and entered '24 December 1964; wind NW force 7; visibility good.' and signed it—I recall—with a sense of satisfaction and a flourish. My first job on my first light completed and recorded. Reading the embossed cover on the logbook with the



motto 'Trinitas in Unitate', I had a vision of my somewhat grumpy Latin teacher from school days past bending down and saying in my ear "Go on, Hall. Translate it!" And then , the best part. pulled a lever and ten thousand candles burst out into the Christmas Eve night. Such power!

The fire was still bright when I returned to the living room in the accommodation block beside the lighthouse. Despite the rising wind, it was cosy within. I thought of John Jack Jones, a 19th century lighthouse keeper on South Stack. A famous storm of 1859 claimed many ships including the 'Royal Charter' which was returning from Australia with many passengers who were bringing back gold won by prospecting. It sank nearby with the loss of 450 lives and only 39 survivors. Jones was returning to his duties on the Stack when he was hit by a boulder dislodged by the same storms. He managed to crawl to the lighthouse, but his cries for help went unheard and he was found dead outside near the door the following morning.



It takes four hours for the weight on the lens to descend before having to be re-wound back to the top. So, at the appointed time, being the Principal (i.e.only) keeper, I left the warmth of the living room, out to the lighthouse itself and up the spiral stairs to the lantern. It felt bitterly cold and I wound the cable up vigorously with an energy only reserved for the young—and foolish.

Now, above the noise of the wind, I heard a bell ring as I continued winding the weight to the top before fleeing to the warmth of the kitchen below. I remembered Mick saying the word 'bell' - but thought no more about it.



Location of South Stack and indication of shipping routes in and out of the Rivers Mersey and Dee

I was roused from my Christmas Eve reverie in front of the range by the most unlikely and chilling sound imaginable. The big Bake-lite phone (the sort you see in black and white police films) rang out. Its urgent and commanding tone demanded an answer. With trepidation, I picked the handset up and, with a small trembly voice, I answered . 'Hello. South Stack. S.A.K. Hall speaking.'

A very Welsh sounding voice replied: "Who's that? Where's Bryn and Mick?" - obviously

confused by the sound of my voice.

“Er, not here at the moment , sir.”

There was a pause, almost as if he was thinking , ‘Those two up to their tricks again no doubt and left this boy in charge of the light.’ “This is the Holyhead Coastguard, son. You’ve got a stood light.”



A still photograph capturing a point on the sweep of the beam when it picks out the cliff face. Unfortunately, in Rod’s case, the light was not sweeping but static and pointing at the cliff—and on a wild night!

“A what?” Replaying my training at Harwich in my mind didn’t explain this phrase.

“Look out of the window, son.” I did ... and froze. A bright beam of light was shining on the cliff face, but it was stationary. It was , indeed a grammatically incorrect but technically correct ‘Stood Light.’

This occurs when the lens ceases to rotate and the beams of light, (unique to South Stack), no longer sweep around but remain still.

For Trinity House, a stood light was a cardinal offence, especially if caused by negligence rather than breakdown. I had visions of ships on this busy shipping lane crashing onto rocks, seamen swimming for their lives to shore on my watch and an eventual expulsion from Trinity House.

His voice broke in with calmness. “Now, listen to me, son. This is what you do. Go up to the lantern and check the drum. Most likely it’s got jammed up with the shackle on the wire. Don’t put your hand in, whatever you do. Just push the lens round with your shoulder until it frees itself. I’ll ring you back,” .. and he was gone.

Another race up the stairs. The lantern was still ablaze with light, like a huge spider with golden legs, the beams shining statically out into the Irish Sea, as well as the steep cliff face. I put my shoulder to the lens and began to walk around the lantern. As I did, the lens, floating on its bath of mercury, began to revolve slowly.

After what seemed ages, but in fact was just a few revolutions, there was a creak and a slight clunk from the machinery and the cable was free to descend on its own and revolve the lens once more. The light was flashing as it should,

I ran downstairs, a wiser keeper. The phone rang again. “That’s it, son. You’ve done it. I can see your light from here.” He paused. “ Now look, son. I reckon we got away with it, see? So, whatever happens, just say nothing, right?” Another pause.

And son.”

“Sir?”

“Happy Christmas” Then a chuckle and a click and he was gone. A kindly man. I realised now that the distant bell which Mick had mentioned (the one I thought I’d heard ring) was a warning that the mechanism was fully wound. I’d overwound the mechanism,

causing the jam. If the kindly coastguard had reported the incident, Bryn, Mick and S.A.K. Hall would have ended their careers immediately.

As it was, I went on to serve on nine lights, mostly Cornish tower rocks, including Wolf Rock at Christmas 1967 as recounted in an earlier edition of this magazine.

The day after Boxing Day, Mick and Bryn returned. By their appearance, both seemed to have experienced an enjoyable Christmas. “Everything go alright, Super?”

“Oh, yes,” I replied, breezily. “As you said, nothing ever happens here!”



Rod Hall



TRINITY HOUSE

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THE WRECK OF THE ‘ROYAL CHARTER’

The ‘Royal Charter’ was mainly a passenger ship running between Liverpool and Australia and able to carry up to 600 passengers in relative luxury in the fast time of under 60 days. It was a 4 year old steam clipper which was wrecked running onto rocks off the north –east coast of Anglesey on 26 October 1859. At least 450 lives and about 200 vessels were lost in a storm which is known as the ‘Royal Charter Storm’ to this day.

In winds which rose to hurricane force, the vessel had been unable to pick up the Mersey pilot and, giving up hope of further progress in rapidly rising seas, dropped anchor off the coast. However, the port anchor chain snapped and the ship was battered against the rocks, close to shore. Many lost were dashed against the rocks and those drowned were reputedly weighed down by the gold they were bringing home from Australia. It is said that many locals became rich from gold which they found washed ashore after the disaster.

A positive benefit was that it set in train the development of the Meteorological Service, bringing in the familiar gale warning service to prevent similar tragedies. **JEJ**

WHY THE NEW YEAR RESOLUTION?

On page 7 of this month's edition, we read of how Ash Wednesday is a time when Christians reflect on their lives and resolve to make changes to be more Christ-like. However, in general terms, it is 1 January—New Year's Day—when many will customarily consider using the new year as a fresh start to some aspect of their lives.

A RESOLVE For Every Morning of the New Year

I will this day try to live a simple & sincere and serene life & repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity and self-seeking & cultivating cheerfulness & magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence & exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and a child-like trust in God

From a Calendar by Bishop John H. Vincent
Copyright 1993 by Chaucer Press

New Year resolutions- where people resolve to change a personal behaviour which they do not like or set a personal goal- are mainly a Western custom, although the practice is also seen in the East.

Where did it all start?

The custom can be traced back at least to 4000 years ago in ancient Babylon when the people sought to appease their gods for their human straying from desired ways. However, this particular custom was not linked to the date on which we start our calendar year but the day marked the start of their new farming year. Crops were planted in what we now know as mid-March. This was followed by a twelve day religious festival where resolutions were made to ensure a good harvest and loyalty was pledged to their king.

Moving on to Roman times, people made promises to the god Janus, often to do with repaying debts or returning borrowed objects. This carried through to the medieval times when knights reaffirmed their vows of chivalry (known as the 'peacock vow.'). This provides a possible link to the custom commonly being carried out in the month of Janus—the Roman God who is represented by two faces, one looking backwards and one looking forwards.

New Year Customs

Other customs have evolved associated with the New Year and 'bringing the New Year in.' The Scots, for example, start their New Year by 'first footing.' In Spain, on each of the twelve strokes of the clock at midnight a grape is eaten to bring good luck for the coming months.



An old custom in Denmark is that people stand on chairs, ready to jump off at midnight and leap into the New Year. The Swiss might drop a dollop of cream on the floor to bring a prosperous new year. In Greece, an onion may be hung on the door as a symbol of re-birth. Doughnuts filled with jam or liquor (Pfannkuchen) are eaten in Germany.



Pfannkuchen

In the Christian church, the watchnight service on New Year's Eve is used for preparing for the year ahead and resolving or committing to what worshippers will do for the better in the year ahead. The Methodist Church uses this service as a service to renew their covenant (a service created by John Wesley). The Judaic New Year marks the start of a period to reflect on one's wrongdoings over the year and to offer as well as seek forgiveness.

In earlier times, there is evidence of people's promises being based on Bible verses. Nowadays, resolutions seem to be focussed more on such things as losing weight, giving up smoking, taking more exercise.

A Warning!

A report in 2014 showed that 33% of Britons didn't keep track of their progress, 35% said their resolutions had been unrealistic and 23% forgot about them completely. How do you do with your resolutions? What helps you to succeed?

In 2022, YouGov reported that 16% of Britons planned to make New Year resolutions—up from 11% in 2021. From 2021, 31 % claim to have kept all of their resolutions, 41% said some, with 38% of men and 26% of women claiming that they kept all of their resolutions.

The most common resolutions reported at the start of 2022 were to do with improving exercise (49%), personal fitness (49%), improving diet and/or losing weight (40%), spending less time on social media (16%), taking up a new hobby (15%) with 8% saying they would volunteer or do more charity work and 5% saying they would raise money for a charity.

Whatever you choose to do, may it make 2023 a better year for you and all whose lives you touch.

Happy New Year!

JEJ



POETRY FROM DOWNHOLME

GEORGE ALDERSON's verse this month carries the theme of the previous article about personal behaviour a little further. Pause for thought for the year to come.

TAKE ADVICE FROM AUGUSTINE

They say that you always 'should speak as you find,'
They don't make it easy! You need to be kind,
Now some folk are touchy when I disagree
With things that are clearly obnoxious (to me!)

The volume goes up and the shutters come down,
There's often a hint of a forthcoming frown!
What once was a cordial chat or debate
Has suddenly altered—expressions of hate

Surround every feature, from pursed lips to eyes!
The message conveyed is one hard to disguise.
How best to move on from this crisis at hand?
You don't want to hurt them, yet neither seem bland!

Remember Augustine's advice to the nuns?
Its worthy of note by all daughters and sons.
'We must love the sinner, repudiate sin!'
This sensible notion is where to begin.

I'll try to remember all sayings I cite
And not always feel that I'm (obviously) right!
There isn't much point winning every last jot
If all that's achieved is that tempers turn hot!

It's always much better to love than to lose
Remember that some have a very short fuse.
Perhaps you are planting a seed that may grow,
You may see the outcome, you may never know!

At least you'll have chances to get back on track
And manage to bypass a verbal attack!
Your friendships grow stronger with flexible thought,
Remember Augustine's wise words that he taught.

George Alderson

THE NEW LADIES GROUP

Following last month's announcement of the formation of a new group for ladies to parallel the men's group, an inaugural meeting was held on 25 November in the Morro Lounge (former HSBC bank building) in Richmond—an evening enjoyed by all who attended. The first meeting of the New Year is due to be held on the last Friday of January (27 January) and an open invitation is extended to all who wish to attend. Contact the Sunderlands for further details.



THE PIPES ARE CALLING...

...though sadly not in a good way for Danny boy—or even Peter Trewby and Graham Barber who, once again, have been spending inordinate amounts of time to ensure a warm building at St Mary's. Once again, a boiler packed in in early December and there was also a significant leak in the heating (warming?) system which required repairs. Worshippers and visitors to St Mary's can marvel at the fine appearance of the building and its architecture, but the reality is that the central heating is old and is going to require regular repairs as joints and other bits give in to the test of time. Whilst a grant has been obtained to cover part of the cost of the work (another fine piece of work by Peter), with the excellent fund-raising work of the Friends helping to ensure that this financial burden does not fall on the main parish funds.



...the good news is - I've found a way of heating the church on unwanted chip-fat!...

EPIPHANY—LOOKING BACK

January marks the time when the church year moves into the season of the Epiphany and, for many, it is a reminder that this heralded the visit of the three Wise Men to the babe in the manger. In this article, we look at what is known of this visit.

TWELFTH NIGHT—A MEETING OF KINGS?

On 6th January we celebrate Epiphany – the visit of the Wise Men to the baby Jesus. But **who were these Wise Men?** No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them ‘Magi’. That was the name of an ancient priestly caste from Persia. It wasn’t until the third century that they were called kings by a church father, Tertullian.

And **were there just three?** Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three – to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing – and even embalming. Certainly the birth of Jesus



set the way in which the world defined what each of these symbolised. Since the 8th century, the Magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior

Magi from the East – it isn’t a lot to go on. This religious caste among the Persians were devoted to astrology, divination and the interpretation of dreams. Their involvement led to an extension in the meaning of the word ‘Magi’, and by the first century, the Magi in Matthew’s gospel could have been astrologers from outside of Persia. Some scholars believe they might have come from what was then Arabia Felix, or as we would say today, southern Arabia.

It is true that, in the first century, astrology was practised there, and it was the region where the Queen of Sheba had lived. She of course had visited Solomon and so would have heard the prophecies about how one day a Messiah would be born to the Israelites and become their king.

The Arabian Connection

Matthew’s gospel (chapter 2) is clear that the Magi asked Herod: ‘Where is the One who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have



come to worship Him.' So it is possible that in southern Arabia ,the Queen of Sheba's story of how a Messiah would one day be sent to the Israelites had survived. Certainly, there are a number of other early legends that connect southern Arabia with Solomon's Israel.

To many people this makes sense: that the ancient stories of a Messiah, linked to later astrological study, prompted these alert and god-fearing men to the realisation that something stupendous was happening in Israel. They realised that after all these centuries, the King of the Jews, the Messiah, was about to be born.

One more interesting thing that gives weight to the theory that the Magi came from southern Arabia is this: if you study any map of Palestine as it was during biblical times, you will find that the old Arabian caravan routes all entered Palestine 'from the East'.

A Developing Story for Changing Times

The story of the coming of the Magi grew in the telling. As stated earlier, it wasn't until some hundreds of years after Jesus' birth that they had acquired names. By medieval times they were considered to be kings. Whoever they were, we do know from Matthew that they brought three gifts to Jesus.

What about their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? While we cannot know for sure what was in the minds of first century Magi, one Victorian scholar has offered a possible explanation as to the significance of their gifts. He was the Rev John Henry Hopkins, an American Episcopalian minister, who in 1857 wrote his much-loved Christmas carol, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

Gold, said John Henry Hopkins, was a gift that would have been given to a king.



Frankincense had traditionally been brought by priests as they worshipped God in the Temple. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial.

If that is true, then you could say that the Wise Men, in choosing their gifts for this infant, honoured Jesus with gold because He was King of the Jews, with frankincense because He was to be worshipped as divine, with myrrh, because He would also become a sacrifice and die for His people.

The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had! They travelled for months over difficult terrain, they never saw any evidence of Jesus' kingship, His divinity or His sacrificial death. They worshipped Him through faith in God's promises about Him. Isaiah foresaw this response to Jesus: 'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.' The Magi's eyes of faith saw clearly and far into the future.

Compare that with the High Priest and religious leaders whom the Wise Men saw in Jerusalem when they first arrived. These head priests knew all about the prophecies of their own coming Messiah, but NOT ONE Jewish religious leader travelled to look for Him in Bethlehem. And it is only six miles down the road!

Compiled by JEJ from 'The Parish Pump Ltd'

THE FOURTH WISE MAN

It seems appropriate at this time of year to include an abridged version of the story of Artaban, a fourth wise man who missed giving his gifts at the manger. Henry Van Dyke published 'The Story of the Other Wise Man' in 1895. Later, he said "I do not know where this little story came from--out of the air, perhaps. One thing is certain, it is not written in any other book, nor is it to be found among the ancient lore of the East. And yet I have never felt as if it were my own. It was a gift, and it seemed to me as if I knew the Giver."

Artaban lived in Persia. A very wealthy and wise man, he was one of the Magi and a man of great faith. With his learned friends, he had studied the scriptures to ascertain the time when the promised saviour should be born—he in his home in Persia, others in Babylon. They knew of the coming of a sign, but not its time or place. The agreement was that when the sign appeared, Artaban was given ten days to journey to Babylon to meet up with his friends, after which they would

journey together in a camel train to find the promised king and give gifts as a tribute. To prepare for the time, Artaban had already sold much of what he owned to buy three jewels to present to the new-born king—a sapphire, a ruby and a pearl.

And then came the night when, watching the night sky, Artaban saw the sign for which he had been waiting. His fastest horse was saddled and, clutching his precious gifts and food and drink for the ten day journey to Babylon, he said a prayer and set off across the known desert paths, heading for the city and the meeting point for the quest of the Magi.

Things went well—until, at dusk on the tenth day and with Babylon in sight, his horse became unsettled. Perceiving a dark shape lying by the side of the road in the starlight, he dismounted. There, ill with a fever and with signs of a fever-driven death, he found a sick man. A dilemma confronted Artaban. Should he pursue his long prepared search or, as a physician and a man of compassion, stay to tend this sick and needy fellow human being. He prayed, and through that prayer, knew he couldn't go on without helping a fellow human being in need. He stayed for several hours, bringing the man back to consciousness. Leaving his last remaining food and drink, healing herbs and instructions, he headed off at great speed, but with diminishing hopes that he could reach his rendez-vous in time.



He pulled up at dawn at the meeting place. As he feared, his friends were nowhere to be seen—only a piece of parchment, telling him that their camel train could wait no longer, that they had set off and that he should follow them across the desert if he should find the message.

In despair and with no resources for his journey, he knew his only hope was sell one of his jewels and secure camels and provisions for his solo journey across the desert to catch his friends—or at least to see the new born King.

It was several days later when his pursuit took him to Bethlehem, but he found the streets of the town deserted. Where was everyone? The rumour was that Herod was sending soldiers to collect taxes so many of the inhabitants had taken their flocks and possessions out of the town, beyond their reach.

The sound of a lullaby drifted into his senses and, pushing the door of a nearby dwelling, he found a young woman with a child. Yes, three wise men had arrived about three days beforehand, found a man called Joseph, his wife and a young



child and, the story was, given them some quite expensive gifts. Hearing the rumours of soldiers, they had all fled. It was said that the young family were heading for Egypt.

Suddenly, there was a commotion outside. Shouts and screams of soldiers seeking out and killing any babies they found. Artaban went to the door just as a group of Herod's soldiers appeared in the street. As Artaban stood calmly in the doorway, the captain approached. Looking him in the eyes, Artaban stretched out his fist and unclenched it to reveal a large ruby. "This is for a prudent captain who will go on his way and leave this house alone." he said, in measured tones.

The captain stared for a moment, then grasped the gem and shouted, ' Nothing here, men. Let's move on.' As they departed, Artaban slumped against the door post and prayed for forgiveness. 'I have spent for men what was meant for God. I am no longer worthy to see the face of the King.'

But the woman heard him and, weeping for joy, said quietly, "But sir, you have saved my little one. May God bless you, keep you and give you peace."

Although Artaban had now only his precious pearl as a gift, he became even more determined that he should find the King and so he set course for Egypt, On his journey, he saw pyramids. He sought counsel with a Hebrew rabbi who told him to seek this king not amongst the rich but the poor.

As he searched, he crossed land ravaged by famine. He made a home in plague-stricken cities, using his skills as a physician. He searched crowded slave markets, he visited prisons and as the years passed by he found no king but continued his healing and his caring along the way



It was now over thirty years since he had begun his quest. He was more stooped now. His hair was white and, with his knowledge as a physician, he was sensing that his life was coming to an end and so he returned to Jerusalem in a final desperate hope that he would find the King.

When he arrived, he found crowds of people, many clearly not from the city, moving like a tidal wave towards a place called Golgotha. 'Why the crush?', he asked.

'There's an execution due. Two thieves who probably deserve it but also a man called Jesus. He's a Nazarene who claims he is the son of God! The priests say he must die, even though he's done many wonderful works among the people. But Pilate's let them have their way.'

Artaban's tired heart sank. Half a lifetime of searching and it had come to this. The King for whom he was searching had been cast out and perhaps was already dying. Surely this must be the same one for whom the star had appeared thirty three years ago? Artaban's ageing fingers curled round his one remaining gift, the precious pearl which he had carried for so long. Perhaps he could use this as a ransom to save this Jesus from his enemies.



His attention was suddenly grasped by the cries of a young woman being dragged through the streets by a small group of soldiers. As they drew level, she suddenly broke free and threw herself at his feet. "I see from your dress that you are a Magi, sir. Please have pity. I am to be sold as a slave for my father has died in debt.!"

Yet again, Artaban recognised conflict in his heart—the same conflict as he had on the road to Babylon and in the cottage in Bethlehem. Two of his gifts for the King had been drawn from his hand to serve strangers in desperate need then. Now he was so close to his long-sought King. But he knew what he must do. His aged hand stretched out, the precious pearl in its grasp and he laid it in the girl's hand. 'Daughter, take this for the ransom.' The last of his treasures had gone.

Almost at the same time as he uttered these words, the sky drew uncommonly dark and a shuddering earthquake began, rocking the houses and causing the soldiers and others to flee in terror. Artaban sank against a wall for protection. His last tribute had gone. His long search was over. He had failed.

Suddenly, a heavy roof tile, dislodged by the tremor, struck him and he collapsed, breathless, pale. He wept. 'I have failed in my vow to honour the King,' he whispered tremulously. 'When did I see you hungry and fed you? When did I see you thirsty and I assuaged your thirst? When did I see you imprisoned or sick and came to help you? In these thirty years I have searched and never found you, never seen your face, never served you, my much sought King.'

And then a gentle voice came. "Verily I say to you, in as much as you have done these things for the least of my brothers and sisters, you have done this to me." And a calmness and happiness came over Artaban's dying face. This other Wise Man had found his King.

Abridged and adapted from 'The Other Wise Man' Henry Van Dyke by JEJ

TAKING THE LEAD

CAROLE & JOHN McCORMACK start the New Year with a series of walks with a difference. They have been seeking out walks which are dog-friendly and will be sharing their findings with us over the months to come. Whilst there is clearly nothing to stop people embarking on these journeys without a trusty hound in tow, these routes are really helpful to those dog owners who have been faced with the same uncertainties as Carole and John when exploring new territory with the family pet.

TAKE THE (DOG) LEAD ... dog-friendly walks around Richmond

When we arrived in Richmond, I would have welcomed suggestions for practical walks for my dogs, with answers to questions that only dog owners can fully appreciate (Can I walk my dog off-lead? Are there poo bins? Is there clean drinking water? Is it safe, and can I relax a bit?), so I shall be sharing a few of my discoveries with you, with all the canine comfort details included.

General doggy rules that underpin what I write are:

- dogs need to be under control always – and even if there is **not** livestock, must be reliably obedient;
- if there are sheep grazing, then dogs must be on leads at all times; and
- quite honestly, if there are cattle, I don't risk walking my dogs there. Cows will not figure in these walks!

ASKE ESTATE

Distance: About 3 miles or, with extension, about 6 miles.

Start: At the old racecourse off Whashton road, where there is ample free parking.

Terrain: Varied – but only gentle slopes, nothing too demanding. It can get very muddy so decent footwear is essential.

Opportunities for dogs to be **off-lead**. Poo bins are noted!

Refreshments and toilets: Mocha Café, Aske.

-o0o0o-

From the car park (poo bin outside the racecourse gates), cross the road and walk downhill towards Richmond until you reach Gower Road on the left, signposted to



Richmond Golf Course. (Poo bin on corner). Take this turn and walk up to the golf course **(NOTE; The golf course welcomes sensible dog walkers, but take care as golfers tee off to the right.)**

Follow the road downhill and across the car park, from where a footpath is marked by a white post. Skirt the course, walking in line with the trees on the right so as to avoid another tee. Check carefully to the right that all is clear, then cross the course to a gate exiting onto farmland and then onto the Aske estate. This footpath has the camino sign, added in 2021, and now British pilgrims can start their own pilgrimage on their doorstep. (A walk for another day, perhaps?? Ed)

The Camino Inglés or the English Way to Santiago, is officially linked with a number of pilgrimage trails (<https://www.yorkshiretimes.co.uk/article/Brit-Pilgrims-Head-For-Spains-Camino>).



The Camino Waymark

This footpath, where there is no livestock and dogs can be off lead, runs between two agricultural fields. then turns right, skirting Aske estate woodland.

Go through the little gate on the left, down a hill to a small stream (good pitstop for pooches) then uphill and through another gate onto Aske parkland. There are quite frequently sheep grazing here so, if there are, back go the leads!

The footpath then goes along the tarmacked entrance drive directly in front of Aske Hall and there are attractive views of the Hall to the left and a large lake to the right.



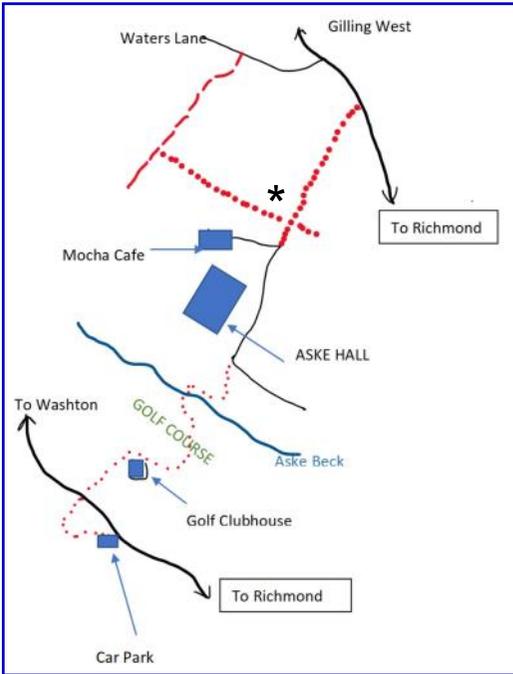
Aske Hall in Winter

A cattle grid means that one has to use a field gate on the right to continue down the drive until you come to a turning on the left. A clear sign shows where Mocha has fairly recently opened a dog-friendly café in the Hall outbuildings and tea, coffee etc can be bought here. There are loos too.

Shorter version of walk: Retrace the route until one reaches the golf course

clubhouse again. But here turn right below it, to follow another footpath through the very well-kept and attractive golf course. Leave through a gate beside Pippin Barn, follow the short drive, and then cross Whashton road and get onto the Race-course through a gap in the wall opposite. Follow the path to the left which, some 200 yards later, takes you back to the park.

Longer version of walk: At the point where the drive in front of Aske Hall leads left to Mocha, the camino-signed footpath goes over a stile and across a small enclosed field. Two horses graze here consistently, and occasionally there are sheep. Cross this field to a field-gate.



Sketch Map of Walk (not to scale)

Here there is a choice of footpath (*): either straight on for about half a mile goes directly to Gilling West; **or** turn left, following the ridge initially and ending up – after approximately a mile and a half – in the same village. This route is pretty obvious: follow high ground until one sees a gate into agricultural fields to the right. Cross these fields and then turn right along a farm track. Turn right again where this track meets Waters Lane and follow this to the village. This part of the walk is peaceful and usually stock-free and there are panoramic views of countryside.

Return Journey: Two options are possible for the return journey. Either retrace the route along the same path-

way, for perspectives are different when following rising land, and this is certainly worth considering, or, at the end of Water Lane, cross the Gilling road and turn right along the paved pathway out of the village. Follow this for about 200 yards until you see the footpath sign on the opposite side. Cross over and follow the path to point (*) above. Then return as per the shorter version above.

Carole and John McCormack

YOUR MAGAZINE 2023

THE POSITIVES

Your feedback over the past two and a half years about this magazine has been very supportive and positive for which we, the editorial team, are very grateful. As suggestions for change have been made, we have tried to incorporate them, but the A5 booklet format, full colour printing and good quality publication have all been welcomed.

The PCC is also warmed by this feedback and the fact that each issue is read by people beyond the congregations of our benefice seems to confirm the approach of offering a range of content which includes the Christian message and its relevance to our community but also goes more widely to be of broad community interest.

In this way, by attracting a wider readership, the benefice churches are making a monthly contact with a wider part of the Richmond, Hudswell, Downholme and Marske areas.

IMPACT OF RISING COSTS

However, the rising costs of fuel, energy and paper has meant that costs have gone up rapidly this year, but there is still a strong desire to maintain the magazine in its current form because of its popularity and outreach.

To save on some costs, we are returning to publishing 10 issues per year instead of 12. This is the first two month issue; the other 2 month issue will be July/August and the December issue will be December/January and take us in to 2024.

To ensure that the magazine covers its costs in 2023, we are making efforts to increase the number of advertisers marginally; but we will also need to increase the price. **The single issue price for 2023 will be £1.80 but the subscription rate will be £15.00 for the year, i.e. £1.50 per copy, saving 30p per copy.** For people who can arrange a standing order either through on-line banking or visiting their bank to set up a standing order, paying £1.50 per month for 10 months starting 1 March is a manageable alternative for our administrator.

For contributors, I am moving the deadlines forward by 10 days to leave open access to the most competitive print costs which take longer to deliver.

We do hope you will stay with us as a loyal benefice readership and help our churches' link' with the wider community through reading our magazine. Indeed, there is evidence of this happening already with subscribers passing their magazines to other family members, friends and neighbours.

Jim Jack

SUBSCRIBING FOR 2023- WHAT'S TO DO?

1. You will see that this set of 4 pages can be pulled out without losing content from your magazine. **Please then detach pages 27&28 and complete the relevant section**—page 27 if paying through your bank directly into the PCC account, page 28 if paying by cash or cheque.
2. It is **important that this sheet or the information on it, is sent to Colin Hicks , our Parish Administrator, when making the payment.** Details of how to do this are on the form. This will ensure that you are on the delivery list (or will have your copy kept at the back of church) for the March issue onwards. (Making this January/February issue cover 2 months give us the breathing space to get this organised).
3. The option of 10 monthly payments is open to anyone opting to pay directly from their bank to the Church bank. **Please ensure that the name of the person to whom the magazine is to be delivered** is entered in the 'Reference' section of your bank transfer instructions. Sorry that we can't offer the option of card payments at this time.
4. Please could you complete this by **7th February** so that the correct number of magazines for the March issue can be ordered.
5. If you have any queries, please contact the Parish Administrator using the details on pp27/28 or to stmarys.maged@gmail.com

YOUR MAGAZINE—WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

This magazine was put forward for a national award for 2021, judged in mid 2022. Whilst we did not win in any category, we got some pleasing and useful feedback, the latter being used to make some changes in how the magazine is presented. There is still more to consider (e.g. consistency of font type and size, consider increasing the size of photos, wider margins, two columns). I need to develop my limited IT skills to take some of this on further! However, it was deemed 'a good magazine with great content...some good quality photos... creative and imaginative headlines...good seasonal, colourful cover photos...' and crucially 'Clarity of the Christian message—very clear, well done.' Upwards and onwards.

JEJ

MAGAZINE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENT 2023 £15.00

Due 1st February 2022

HOW ARE YOU PAYING?

If you are paying by Direct Bank Payment (BACS)/ Standing Order

Please arrange to make your payment to

Account Name: Richmond with Hudswell PCC

Bank Sort Code: 40-38-19

Account No: 93005798

Reference: MAG and recipient's full name

(very important to add this to ensure that the magazine payment is properly recorded)

Amount: £15.00 single payment or

10 monthly payments of £1.50 starting in March 2023 and running through to December 2023 payable 1st of each month

Please also email all of the details in the box below to the Parish Administrator, admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk confirming the payment arrangements you have made. Queries to email address or mobile: 07498 299061; Thank you

Recipient's Name (include Christian and surnames)	
Your Name (if paying for someone else)	
Delivery Address for magazine (including Postcode)	
Tel. Contact No.	Of person making the payment
Email address of person making the payment	
Payment details; (delete that which does not apply)	SINGLE PAYMENT £15.00 10 x £1.50 MONTHLY

Paying by cheque or cash? Please see reverse side of form./next page

PTO

If you are choosing to pay by cash or cheque: Due 1st February 2022

Please follow the steps set out below.

Please note: sorry, but it will not be possible to offer a monthly payment option with cash or cheque payments because of the difficulties of maintaining up-to-date accurate records.

Step 1: Please complete the details below

Recipient's Christian and Surnames	
Your Name: (if paying for someone else's subs)	
Recipient's Delivery Address (including Postcode)	
Tel Contact No. of person making the payment	
Email address of person making the payment	

Step 2) Please put this form with your subscription amount of £15.00 (cash or cheque) . Important – some people forgot to put the form with their payment in 2022 making it impossible to record some subscriptions as paid.

Step 3). Please post to:

Colin Hicks, Parish Administrator, The Rectory Office, Church Wynd, RICHMOND, North Yorkshire DL10 7AQ. **Cheques payable to 'Richmond with Hudswell PCC.'**

OR you can hand your envelope to a churchwarden for passing on to Colin
OR post through the letterbox at the Rectory.

(Parish Administrator contact details: mobile: 07498 299061; **email:** admin@richmondhudswellparish.org)

NOTE: Unfortunately, it is not possible to use card payments currently as there is no means of adding your address details.

New subscribers should contact the Parish Administrator direct to place their order.

SUPPORTING CARE FOR OTHERS IN RICHMOND—A REMINDER

You will recall that, last month, the magazine was alerting people to this joint venture, located at and led by our friends at the Methodist Church in Richmond

Help is still needed is to make sure the word gets out that the space is available to anyone—including yourself as a reader of this magazine. People are also needed to make a warming cup of tea or coffee and to chat to anyone visiting who would welcome the contact.

If you would like to be put in touch with the relevant people, **please contact Paul Sunderland or Martin Fletcher. (see page 2 for details).** Other organisations have been working to fill the gaps which the Methodist rooms cannot. CAN YOU HELP? It doesn't have to be every day or even every week—just enough people to ensure that the space is 'staffed' with welcoming faces and voices.



Richmond Methodist Church Dundas Street Entrance

Monday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Wednesday: 1.00pm – 4.00pm

Friday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

(Weekly from Monday 7th November)



How we can support Richmond's Food Bank

For readers who add to their weekly shop by buying items for the Foodbank based at the Influence Church, this is an updated list of the most useful donations

Tins : meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, soup, beans, pasta, tinned meals (e.g. chilli, stew), pies, rice pudding, spaghetti

Packets: pasta, pasta sauce, noodles, cereal, porridge, rice, biscuits, spaghetti; flapjack

Jars: pasta sauce, sandwich fillings, jam, spreads, tea, coffee

Also: UHT milk, squash, washing up liquid, deodorant, bars of soap, tampons, sanitary pads, nappies (0-3 mths); laundry detergent or powder,, toilet rolls (4 packs) ; shower gel; shampoo

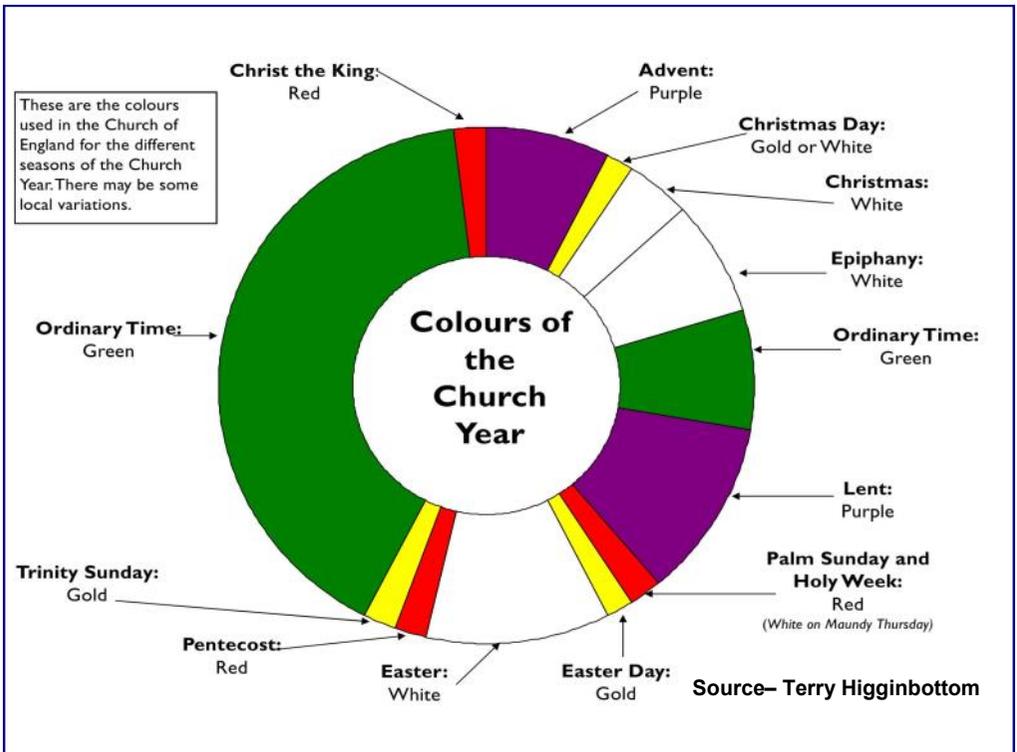
More information :storehouse@influencechurch.co.uk

'I'VE OFTEN WONDERED...'

A new, occasional series where we try to shed light on things which we feel we should know but suddenly realise we don't—an experience which parents of young children will have had on a regular basis! If there's something you've 'often wondered' please get in touch and we'll try to find the answer. I'll start the ball rolling with three of my 'wonderings.'

'I've often wondered what is the significance of all of the different colours of altar cloths and vestments? Do they mean something or does someone just fancy a change of colour?'

The helpful colour wheel printed below is a handy summary of meaning. Hope it helps!!



'I've often wondered about the background and significance of the name 'Jesus' as we are told that Mary was instructed by the angel to use this name.'

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. The angel Gabriel in Luke (1:26-33) told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because He will save His people from their sins.

The name Jesus is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. There is also the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became 'Ἰησοῦς' (*Iēsoûs*), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

For early Christians, the *name* of Jesus held a special significance. In Jewish tradition, names expressed aspects of personality. Jesus' name permeated His ministry, and it does so today: we are baptised in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), we are justified through the name of Jesus (1 Cor 6:11); and God the Father has given Jesus a name above all others (Phil 2:9). All Christian prayer is through 'Jesus Christ our Lord', and it is 'at the name of Jesus' that one day every knee shall bow.

**'I've often wondered why churches use pipe organs to lead
or accompany music in church.'**

Colin Hicks gave a really interesting talk about the development of church organs which was printed in the October edition of the magazine. Jane Hatcher's article in this current edition also gives further insights into how music developed at St Mary's.

In earlier times, when music became part of services, local musicians created what was often known as the West Gallery band which was usually a mix of stringed, wind and percussion instruments of whatever mix a local community could provide.

The term "west gallery" derives from the wooden galleries which in the 18th century were constructed at the west end of typical churches, and from which gallery the choir and/or musicians would lead the music. Churches were built in a standard layout, with the nave running from east-west away from the altar, so that the west gallery or choir, would face the altar, the same way as, but above, the church-goers. Victorians disapproved of the Georgian galleries, and most were removed during restorations in the 19th century

As the organ developed as an instrument, it had the capacity to mimic a range of different sounds through its different voices and as a single instrument it could span more octaves than any other single instrument. So it came to replace the local band and often filled a gap if instrumental skills were not available locally. It was also said that the vicar would find it easier to influence one organist than a community band! Organs also fitted a more 'polite' and restrained form of formal worship in Victorian times

Scientific experiments have shown that the very large bass pipes emit something called *infrasound* which is lower than 20 Hz and therefore indistinguishable to the human ear but can still be felt or experienced. Such infrasound has been shown to instil feelings of sorrow, anxiety, spirituality or even coldness as it is experienced—so it may not just be the dicky central heating causing this feeling at St Mary's!

FIRST 'AT HOME' COFFEE MORNING OF 2023



[This Photo](#) by Un-



Come in from the cold to a warm welcome.

Anne and Martin Clarke invite you to a

WINTER WARMER

COFFEE MORNING

You will find us at **1 Lawrence Crescent**
at top of either Gilling Road or Cross Lanes,
turn right along Olliver Rd,

10.00am to 12.00 noon

Saturday 21st January 2023

Toasted tea cakes, biscuits, cakes, tea and coffee and good company

QUIZ NIGHT—SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY

The Friends of St Mary's are organising a big quiz night at the Town Hall on Saturday 18 February starting at 7.00 p.m. Popular local quizmaster Dave Tucker is hosting the evening with a table team quiz, interval games and a pie and pea supper (vegetarians catered for too). There will be a bar throughout the evening. Tickets, costing £10 per person will be on sale from the second Sunday in January from Andy Lovell, John Challis or any committee member. Prizes will be won!! Why not get a group together and come along for what promises to be a great evening's entertainment.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING— Sunday 26 February

In order to get into a cycle of meetings which ties in with the Friends budgetary year, we will be holding this meeting on 26 February after the morning service. We will be seeking nominations for the committee and officer posts (postponed from the last meeting held in November) to serve for a year until the February 2024 meeting.

PATHWAYS IN PRAYER

JOHN PRITCHARD's helpful series to support personal prayer continues this month with thoughts on a further way of relating to God in prayer—a straightforward process which requires a little time and practice.

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy reading)

When writing about Intimacy, that fourth way of relating to God in prayer, I referred to Lectio Divina and muttered 'More later' at the end. Well, this is 'more'.

If you've sometimes found yourself reading the Bible without getting much out of it, this is a well-used way of letting parts of scripture feed you at a deeper, more personal level. It's about transformation rather than mere information.

It operates in three or four steps (all helpfully beginning with the letter 'r'!)

Read. Take a short section of a gospel or a letter of St. Paul. For example use last Sunday's gospel reading (on the News sheet) or start Mark's gospel or the letter to the Philippians. Read that short section through once to remind yourself of what it's about. Then read it again, more slowly, and notice when a word or phrase pops its head up and catches your attention. That's all the reading you need do.

Reflect. Take that word or phrase and turn it over in your mind repeatedly. It's a bit like chewing a sweet and sucking the goodness out of it. Repeat the phrase, question it, turn it upside down. What is it saying? How does it apply to you, right now? Does it have some sharp edges? What might it mean to take it seriously? This might take a few minutes. Don't give up too soon. Keep asking questions of that phrase.

Respond. Take your thinking and any insights you've gained from that reflection and now pray about them. Bring those ideas to God and ask for help to take those insights into your life. Or resolve with God to act in accordance with what you've thought or realised. Let prayer arise naturally from what you've found so far. Just talk to God.

Rest. This is a fourth optional stage of lectio divina. It simply means being still in the aftermath of the lectio, and resting in the embrace of God, for however long or short a time, is helpful.

Simple? Yes - and deeply refreshing.

John Pritchard



NOTES FROM OUR PAST

Last year, we learned more about the history of the organ at St Mary's and the drive to maintain the high quality of music at the church. As **JANE HATCHER** explains, the interest in and commitment to good music can be traced back at least two hundred years and tells us of the people who led this commitment.

MUSIC AT ST MARY'S IN TIMES PAST

Richard Morris, the archaeologist and scholar of many topics ecclesiastical, has suggested in his book *Evensong* (2021) that many larger churches may, in pre-Reformation days, have had a small pipe-organ. This theory has been prompted by the recent discovery in Suffolk of pieces of wood now known to have been the soundboards of such.

Medieval churches were designed to provide acoustics for singing, not the reading and preaching that came with Protestantism. Churches such as our St Mary's, where we know there were several chantry priests, would have had enough male voices to provide something of a choir. A small organ could have been placed nearby in the chancel to accompany the singers on major feast days.

All this is of course speculation as far as St Mary's is concerned, for any organs which existed were ousted in more Puritan times. The first Richmond organ of which we have documentary evidence was installed in 1809 after a public subscription organised by the then Rector, Revd Christopher Goodwill.

I was interested recently to come across a contemporary description of it. It was clearly considered a high quality instrument of its time, having a good tone, and consisted of "three towers and two flats, with a swell of the most pleasing effect." It was placed on a gallery at the West end of the church, the interior of which, of course, before the major rebuilding of St Mary's in the mid-19th century, looked very different from what we know today.

My source describes the interior as then being "encumbered and disfigured by prodigious galleries [sic] and by pews of all sizes and shapes, lined with green baize. The chancel contained a few stalls of good carved oak, said to have been brought from Easby Abby at the time of its dissolution."

The description comes from a very distinguished figure in the history of English cathedral music, William Edward Dickson (1823-1910), a Canon of Ely Cathedral. He had childhood



memories of Richmond church services, as he had been born in the town. He was the son of a surgeon, who had sadly died three months before William's birth. His mother, Elizabeth, had now been widowed a second time, for she had earlier been married to one of the Robinson family of The Friary.

She lived with her son, and an older daughter Sarah, and some children from her first marriage, in one of those houses on the south side of Maison Dieu which have wonderful views of the town from its rear windows.



James Tate the Elder

Young Dickson attended Richmond Grammar School. It must be assumed, from his later career, that he was a bright boy, and thus would have earned a free place at the School. But it is also apparent that his parents were friendly with the Tate family, the elder James Tate being headmaster for Dickson's first year at the School.

After Tate moved to St Paul's in London in 1833, his son, the younger James Tate, became head. William Dickson obviously felt a deep affection for this younger Tate and, after his mother moved to Devon, he boarded at Swale House with the younger Tate and his family. He also records that the younger Tate helped the boy arrange the long and tedious holiday journeys to and from Devon.

The Grammar School was in Dickson's time still a small building located at the back of the Churchyard, and he wrote a vivid description of how the schoolroom was laid out and the teaching methods employed there. And he also gives lengthy accounts of the boarders' leisure-time activities out in the countryside around Richmond.

William Dickson's family was a musical one. His late father had been a talented amateur musician, playing the violoncello, and singing, in local groups in the town, and indeed composing music. His mother, he says, who had been educated in York, had been taught music by no less than the distinguished organists of York Minster, Matthew Camidge, and his son Dr John Camidge. So it is hardly surprising that young Dickson showed an early talent for music. He too learnt the 'cello, and was taught by a serjeant in the band of the North York Militia. Young Dickson would thus have taken a keen interest in the type of music he heard in St Mary's. The Grammar School boarders attended two services there each Sunday, but went in informal groups, rather than an



Matthew Camidge (1758—1844)

organised party, and occupied two pews, one on each side of the nave. As a small boy in 1828, William had not only heard the organ then in the church, but further records that he also been introduced close-up to what he describes as this “castellated” instrument by his mother, when his older sister had tried to play it.

I was surprised to note that he describes the organist as being a lady, a Miss Howson, “a clever and brilliant performer in the style of her day. Her taste was florid; scale-passages abounded in the interludes which she introduced, according to usage, between the verses of the metrical psalms. Double shakes, and all other forms of nimble and dexterous ornamentation were there in profusion.”

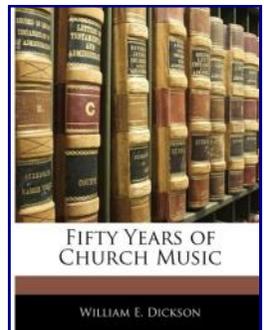
So who was this talented Miss Howson? I decided to investigate whether I could discover who she was. I think she was Frances, the youngest daughter of a Richmond saddler called Francis Howson, and his wife Esther. At the end of the 18th century, Francis had travelled north to Richmond from London, where he had been the foreman to a saddler and cap-maker at Hyde Park Corner. So perhaps the whole family were used to a rather metropolitan standard of accomplishment.

Dickson adds the comment that when Miss Howson resigned as St Mary’s organist in order to be married, her successor was, sadly, much less of a success! As Fanny Howson, she married Adam Mickle, a Bedale draper in 1837, which fits perfectly with Dickson’s reminiscences.

Of the music Dickson heard in St Mary’s, he says “Our highest flights in ‘Church Music’ at Richmond reached no loftier elevation than Pope’s *Ode*, ‘*Vital spark of heavenly flame*’, to the music of Hargreaves, and Jackson’s *Te Deum in F*. Once in each year, when the North York Militia were quartered in the town for their annual training, and came to the church with their band, we were treated to Luther’s Hymn, with solo trumpet obligato between each couplet of the verses.”

William Edward Dickson entered the Church, and served as curate in a couple of rural parishes before moving to Ely in 1858. He was appointed to the Cathedral in the last days of Dean George Peacock, one of James Tate’s distinguished “Invincibles”. Dickson served at Ely Cathedral as Precentor and Sacrist before being appointed Honorary Canon. Also at Ely, he began trying to improve the standard of music in the Church of England, both at parish and cathedral level.

Towards the end of his long life, he published books looking back on what he had known, such as *Fifty Years of Church Music* in 1894, and *In My Ninth Decade* in 1903.



Jane Hatcher

NEWS FROM St EDMUND'S, MARSKE

As winter begins to bite, it's hard to imagine those glorious, lazy days of high summer when the languid air is filled with the sound of bees and things with teeth. On the other hand as we sip long, cool drinks in the summer time, it's difficult to think of how miserable winter can be, especially for our farmers and folk who work out of doors in atrocious conditions.



In the summer of 2021 a wedding took place at St. Edmund's Church in Marske which was attended by many of the Dales farming fraternity. During the wedding ceremony one of the guests, Stephen Longstaff, surprised the other guests by reading the following poem which he had prepared for the occasion. It is a heartfelt tribute to our farmers who are unsung heroes and who rarely receive our thanks for what they provide for us. According to one of the congregation it "brought the house down" as many of the folk in church could identify with it. I hope it will be appreciated now by our readers who may see something of their own lives in the words which Stephen shared on this special and memorable occasion.



Liz Kluz

SO GOD MADE A FARMER

And on the eighth day God looked down on his planned paradise
and said "I need a caretaker."

So God made a farmer

He needed someone to get up twelve hours before going to bed
who would feed the cows and sheep, shovel muck, pick up the
dead animals and then the living. Someone willing to fight their way
through blasting hail storms in wet, dripping overalls on a quad bike
not even paid for yet.

So God made a farmer

God needed someone prepared to stay up all night with a newborn heifer calf that won't suck and watch it die, then dry his eyes and say "maybe next year".

So God made a farmer

God said "I need someone who can hang and fasten gates, stop water troughs flooding out buildings and weave together fence netting and keep the farm up with the only material available to him... baler twine".

So God made a farmer

God needed someone strong enough to wrestle a Sumo warrior Texel tup, to scream at hogs jumping through a gap in the wall which has been fixed twenty times. He must be able to tame cantankerous machinery, which has simply stopped working overnight; then come home hungry to wait for dinner until his wife has fed the pet lambs before telling her that it will be worth it in the end...and mean it.

So God made a farmer

He said he wanted someone willing to ride the tractor at double speed to get the hay rowed up ahead of the gathering rain clouds and then not mind when the baler turns up two hours late just as the heavens open.

So God made a farmer

The Lord said it had to be somebody who can bale a family together with the soft bonds of sharing who would laugh, love, sigh then look at his wife and they would say "we wouldn't have it any other way".

God Bless the farmer



BEHIND THE HYMNS

JUDITH MacLEOD, a stalwart member of our church choir, continues her series which looks in more depth at the thinking behind hymns which we may sing on a regular basis without fully grasping what the words are about.

Coming after the annual busy period for our church choir at Christmas, her thoughts turn this month to the season of Epiphany and a hymn which is bound to be sung at one of the January services.

As you may be reading the magazine at the beginning of January, a hymn for Epiphany seems most appropriate. I have chosen 'Brightest and best are the sons of the morning,' [no 84 in Common Praise]. It tells the story of the three wise men coming to visit the infant Jesus in Bethlehem.

It was the first hymn of the well-known hymn-writer of the Church of England, Reginald Heber [1783-1826]. 'Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty' and 'From Greenland's icy mountain' are two other well-known hymns of his. He was from an aristocratic family, well educated and went to the University of Oxford where he won the University prize for Latin three years running. Before his life was cut short by a stroke in India when he was Bishop of Calcutta, he spent sixteen years as a parish priest in Shropshire where he wrote most of his 57 hymns.



Reginald Heber
(1783-1836)

This hymn has been set to many different tunes. The commonest is Epiphany Hymn by Joseph Francis Thrupp [1827-67]. The narrative of the hymn is told from the viewpoint of the wise men. Matthew records how some wise men travelled from the east to pay homage to the new-born king. "We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" [Matt.2:2]. The striking phrase 'sons of the morning' in the first line has its origin in Isaiah 14:12.

1. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

The hymn was for a long time excluded from many hymnals on the grounds that it involved the worship of a star, but this interpretation is now thought to be too literal an interpretation of Heber's words and not his intention. The first verse also has echoes of Job 38:7: 'When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy'.

2. Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Verse 2 offers a touching portrayal of the manger scene with the infant lying surrounded by angels and the 'beasts of the stall'. The closing line achieves a lovely balanced pace with the powerful evocation of Jesus as 'Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all'.

3. Say, shall we yield him in costly devotion,
Odours of Edom, offerings divine,
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Verse 3 refers to the gifts associated with the wisemen – 'gold from the mine', frankincense in the 'Odours of Edom' [Edom was a mountainous land stretching down south to the Red Sea.] and 'Myrrh from the forest'. The words are phrased into a question – what is a fitting gift for a child who is both Maker and Redeemer? All the gifts mentioned belong to God in the first place [Rom.11:36].

4. Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favour secure:
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

The answer comes in verse 4 where we are told that what we can offer is 'the heart's adoration' and prayer - 'Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor'. Material gifts have value as tokens of our praise, worship and support, but love is the one gift that is only ours to give.

The hymn is then completed by repeating verse 1, reminding us of the Epiphany which marks the start of our new calendar year.

Judith MacLeod



"Never mind, let's just be happy that Baz came to church in the first place."

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200 CLUB— November and December Draws

The winners of the November & December monthly draws were

November: No. 152 John Tait

December: No. 151 Isobel Scrafton

Congratulations to both winners. The results of the end of year draw will be announced via the website and pew sheet.

Subscriptions for 2023 will be due shortly. New participants welcome.



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THIRST!! (The Men's Group)

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Next meetings: 5 January and 2 February



Contacts: Rev Paul Sunderland or Leonard Scrafton. Just turn up and be welcome!

SMALL GROUPS FOR CHRISTIAN NURTURE

It's well known that meeting in small groups for discussion and prayer is one of the best ways of growing in our faith. It's where we learn, ask questions, express doubts, search the scriptures and find ourselves accepted and cared for in genuine fellowship. **JOHN PRITCHARD** offers a very helpful summary of what's on offer currently. As church life picks up do consider if any of these groups appeal. We all need to grow!

At St Mary's before the pandemic we had two home groups that did this excellently. After that traumatic watershed the scene has changed and there are a number of small groups happening for anyone to consider.

The Discussion Group.

What this group does is written on the tin. It meets monthly in the evening and moves gently from one subject to another. Very democratic, very open-ended.

Contact: Anna Boyce: boycead11@gmail.com

The Book Group.

This daytime group meets in church monthly to discuss a Christian book. Discussion roams widely! **Contact: Isobel Short: ishort1998@aol.com**

Home Group.

This group is just getting going, hoping to meet fortnightly on a Tuesday afternoon at Martin and Anne Clarke's house for Bible study and discussion. **Contact them on poshbothy2@gmail.com**

Poetry and Puds.

Members of this group bring three poems they enjoy and a pudding! The aim isn't directly Christian nurture but often drifts in that direction. Meets on the first Tuesday evening of the month at John and Wendy Pritchard's home. **Contact: johnlpritchard@btinternet.com**

Exploring Faith.

This excellent ecumenical group meets on occasional Saturday mornings at the Rokeby Inn on the A66 for coffee, pastries and a good speaker on an important theme of Christian concern or ministry. Deans, professors, prison and hospital chaplains, even defunct bishops, have been amongst the speakers but the style is always accessible. Dates via pewsheets and web site. Highly recommended and the brain child of Keith Miller, who needs to know who's coming for catering. **Contact: kshmilller32@gmail.com**

INFORMATION POINT- ALL ARE WELCOME

There are a number of groups working in the church. All are welcome if you fancy contacting the group and being part of what they do.

Keith Robson reminds us that the Happy Bodgers are operating once more for help with odd jobs. Keith's contact number is (07866) 325843

AFTER THE CARDS AND VISITORS

Bereavement is a very difficult time for the spouse/partner left behind.

Starting again on your own is even more difficult.

Carrie and friends would like to help you with the next step.

Our informal meetings are on the first Wednesday of every month at the Fleece, starting at 1.30 p.m.

Please phone **Carrie Stephenson 850103** if you would welcome any more information. The approach is very informal and relaxed

TELEPHONE SUPPORT IS ALSO AVAILABLE.

Do please get in touch.

PASTORAL CARE— A CONTINUING SERVICE

The St Mary's Church community wishes to do all we can to support, listen and love all in our parish whether members of our church or not.

The Pastoral Team at St Mary's has a **Prayer Circle** at St Mary's. If you have something which you would appreciate prayer for, whether for yourself or for someone you care about, we would be privileged to pray about it. No prayer request is ever too small or trivial. Whatever you wish to share, in confidence, we will support you in prayer.

To ask for prayer you can either telephone, email or text Rev Martin on 821241, fletcher_martin@yahoo.co.uk or 07762 440094; or Paul Sunderland (07989 178196) paul.sunderland@leeds.anglican.org—or speak to any member of the Pastoral Team and they will place your prayer in the circle. Please be assured your requests are confidential.

- ◆ *To be a praying member of the circle or a member of the Pastoral Team, please speak to Rev Martin or Paul. They would love to hear from you.*



Sudoku - Easy

3		9		8			2	
	2	6		7	4		9	
7			6				8	
			7	2		5		
	8			3			4	
		7		1	5			
	3				7			1
	7		1	4		8	6	
	1			5		4		9

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Sudoku - Medium

		6					9	
1	5		9	8				
4			6	5				8
6	4	3				9		
		7				8	3	1
5				3	2			9
				4	9		5	6
	2					3		

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St Mary's Groups

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

We need YOUR help and ideas.

You are automatically a Friend!

Could you please consider giving some time to keep things going ?

Interested? Please contact the Secretary, Jim Jack at stmarys.maged@gmail.com (07754 283161)

NEXT EVENTS (see p. 32)
Coffee Morning 21st January @
 1 Lawrence Road
Quiz Night 18 February



YARNS



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Word Search

The Coming of the Magi

'Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.' So Matthew tells of the coming of the Magi, or Wise Men, to the baby Jesus. Today we remember it on Epiphany, on 6th January. Did they come from Arabia Felix – nowadays southern Arabia? How many came? No one knows, but by the 6th century they were named Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Why gold, frankincense and myrrh? Gold stands for kingship: Jesus was King of the Jews. Frankincense stands for divinity; Jesus was to be worshipped. Myrrh stands for death and burial; Jesus would become a sacrifice and die for His people. The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. Isaiah fore-saw this response to Jesus: 'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.' The Magi wanted to worship Jesus; Herod wanted to kill Him.

- King
- Jews
- Star
- East
- Worship
- Magi
- Wise
- Men
- Baby
- Jesus
- Epiphany
- Arabia
- Felix
- Gaspar
- Melchior
- Balthasar
- Gold
- Frankincense
- Myrrh
- Kingship
- Divinity
- Death
- Isaiah
- Nations
- Herod
- Jerusalem
- Scribes



- Priests
- Bethlehem
- Prophecy

Puzzle Solutions

Sudoku — Easy

3	4	9	5	8	1	6	2	7
8	2	6	3	7	4	1	9	5
7	5	1	6	9	2	3	8	4
4	9	3	7	2	8	5	1	6
1	8	5	9	3	6	7	4	2
2	6	7	4	1	5	9	3	8
9	3	4	8	6	7	2	5	1
5	7	2	1	4	9	8	6	3
6	1	8	2	5	3	4	7	9

Sudoku—Medium

3	8	6	2	7	1	5	9	4
1	5	2	9	8	4	7	6	3
4	7	9	6	5	3	1	2	8
6	4	3	1	2	8	9	7	5
8	1	5	3	9	7	6	4	2
2	9	7	4	6	5	8	3	1
5	6	8	7	3	2	4	1	9
7	3	1	8	4	9	2	5	6
9	2	4	5	1	6	3	8	7

Wordsearch

I	G	A	M	J	G	I	P	I	H	S	R	O	W
Y	E	E	E	C	A	R	M	S	F	R	R	X	I
I	N	W	L	I	O	S	E	E	U	K	R	R	S
R	S	A	C	P	E	B	L	N	R	S	M	Y	E
A	E	A	H	B	N	I	A	A	P	P	E	E	M
I	I	E	I	P	X	T	S	I	P	R	H	J	H
D	C	R	O	A	I	A	U	B	I	I	E	A	E
Y	C	A	R	O	H	P	R	A	H	E	L	E	R
S	S	P	N	T	K	L	E	R	S	S	H	A	O
I	A	S	L	I	O	O	J	A	G	T	T	S	D
F	R	A	N	K	I	N	C	E	N	S	E	T	B
E	B	G	Y	T	I	N	I	V	I	D	B	A	R
I	D	E	A	T	H	H	T	L	K	W	B	M	B
G	O	L	D	A	P	S	M	H	U	Y	L	E	N

Deadline for March edition : Monday 6th February .
To contribute letters, articles, etc
contact stmarys.maged@gmail.com

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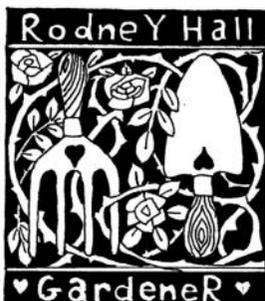
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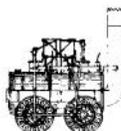
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Executive Headteacher: Mrs C. Barnett

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At our school, we begin caring for your children as soon as your family walks through the door. With specialist provision for two-year-olds and a teacher-led Nursery, we cater for ages 2-11. We believe that each step of your child's education is as important as the one before and everyone is encouraged and supported to **believe** in themselves and each other by working hard, having pride in their work and **achieving** their **dreams**. With this in mind, all members of the school community enjoy engaging in a wide range of opportunities both within school and beyond, which help them to grow academically, spiritually and emotionally.

We would love to invite prospective families to come along and see our fantastic school. To make an appointment please contact the school office on 01748 822104, or email admin@trinityr.dalesmat.org.

Wrap-Around Club

We are delighted that we also offer additional childcare, outside of the usual school day, run by school staff who know the children:

Breakfast Club (07:50 - 08:50): £4 per session (£3 sibling discount)

After-School Club (15:20 - 17:30): £8 per session (£7 sibling discount)

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