

Notices for 23 February

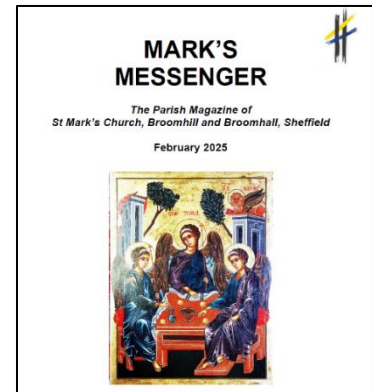
Information about upcoming events, news and how to get involved below.

Patterns of worship [here](#), Children's [here](#), church calendar [here](#) and giving [here](#).

NEWS AT ST MARK'S:

NEW EDITION OF MARK'S MESSENGER OUT NOW -

Get a copy of the latest issue now, copies at the back of church and our website with a suggested donation of £2. The issue has book reviews, news from Beth and stories from member of our community on the theme of 'some one who helped me'.



LARGE PRINT RESOURCES - If you need a larger print version of Mark's Messenger or find it difficult to see the liturgy on the screen at church, please contact Zoe or Shan and we can arrange for a copy to be printed and left at the back of church or in in your pigeonhole.

CRISIS in THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - Practical and immediate emergency support to people caught up the conflict in Eastern DR Congo

On Sunday 23 February, during the 10am service, Richard Hide will be sharing some of his lived experience of working in and building relationships with people in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the impact the current escalation of hostilities is having on projects there. After the service Richard will be available to answer questions you may have, and we will be having a collection to support one of the affected organisations there.

The Recipient will be: Indigenous rights NGO ADELIPO-Congo.

The indigenous Batwa pygmy population of Eastern Congo are marginalised and discriminated against, so are often among the most disadvantaged at a time of crisis such as this.

Adelipo has an ongoing initiative supporting orphans who have been abandoned as a result of natural disasters, conflict and rape. At the moment they are in crisis mode, not just because their coordinator Justin himself fears for his own safety, but because Batwa orphans are caught up in the chaos of the displaced people's camps. They urgently need money for the provision of food, clothing and medical care. Justin Shamutwa is their coordinator and a friend Richard has known for a number of years.

Donations can be made via St Mark's account, Account name: St Mark's PCC Sort Code: 40-41-18 Account number: 80724548 using reference NGO ADELIPO until midnight on Sunday 2 March.

The donation will then be sent via Richard to Justin and go through the accounts of the NGO.

If you would like to donate but are unable to do a bank transfer, please have a conversation with David Armstrong.

COMMUNION – Having re-introduced both bread and wine to Holy Communion, we have received feedback from those administering and receiving the bread that has led to the decision to

change the bread we are using. We have swapped to a Gluten free soft pitta. If you have allergies or intolerance that mean you are unable to eat this, we will also have some gluten free wafers available. We hope this means people will be able to continue to receive Communion safely and that it will also be a more practical arrangement that is pastorally and theologically acceptable to the wider congregation. Beth & Shan

ASSISTED DYING LEGISLATION CURRENTLY GOING THROUGH

PARLIAMENT- You will be aware of the current debate on assisted dying and the legislation going through parliament. Many of you are interested and have expressed differing views on this - some are in support of the bill whilst others are against it. Some people have already been active in writing to their MP, to show support, or to raise reservations about the bill. There is certainly not a 'correct Christian' view on it. **On Sunday 9th March at 7pm we are holding a panel discussion** with Revd Dr Mark Newitt (chaplain) and Dr Rachel Vedder (palliative care consultant) to explore this. More information below.

St Mark's Broomhill presents

THINKING FAITH

On the second Sunday of each month we tackle a different topic, with a panel discussion, and lots of time for questions and responses from guest speakers.



9 MARCH 7PM END OF LIFE ISSUES

There will be a summary of the Assisted Dying Bill followed by hearing about the lived experience of working with end of life care with:

Rachel Vedder is a consultant in Palliative Medicine working in Barnsley and has worked in palliative care for 20 years

Mark Newitt is an experienced healthcare chaplain who holds a number of different roles, including working in palliative care settings



Broomfield Road, Sheffield, S10 2SE

WWW.STMARKSSHEFFIELD.CO.UK



Separately and in addition to this event...Jonathan Williamson has asked us if he can share his personal view with you.

Many of us will be following the progress of the Assisted Dying legislation that is currently proceeding through various stages in the House of Commons. It is quite difficult to see what exactly is going on as the mainstream media (BBC, ITV, C4) have been limited in the attention which they have given to the level of scrutiny since the Second Reading. I do not presume to speak for St Mark's Church on this matter, nor would I on any matter, but I have extreme reservations about the way that this bill is progressing. I wrote to my MP (Sheffield Hallam) asking that she vote against the bill on 2nd reading. My reasons are mainly rooted in the belief that life is a sacred gift from God, and that we should not take the decision to end our lives prematurely, let alone assist in the premature death of another. But there are other concerns too – the lack of consideration of palliative care in our society being a major concern. My MP voted for the bill, with a hope that the scrutiny process would iron out any concerns that people may have. Sadly, as I have seen, the scrutiny process has been anything but rigorous, with the committee, and the witnesses selected to give evidence, heavily weighted towards being for Assisted Dying.

I shall be writing to my MP again accordingly, as the scrutiny process has not been good enough, asking that she change her mind on 3rd reading. May I ask, if you feel similarly concerned, that you contact your representatives with any concerns you may have?

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: Public Consultation

The process for the appointment of the next Archbishop of Canterbury is underway and, a key part of this, is the extensive consultation exercise taking place in February and March.

Wherever you are based, your views matter.

You can find more information about the questions being asked and how you can participate [here](#)

This consultation closes on 31 March, so please ensure your response is submitted by that date. Your feedback will play a vital role in shaping the decision-making process on who should be nominated as the next Archbishop of Canterbury.

CAR PARKING: If you wish to use a visitors' space as a one-off, to attend the hospital, please contact Briony or Tim, so we know you are not a "rogue" parker. Thank you for your co-operation.

HELP OUT AT ST MARK'S:

NAMASTE - There is an ongoing collection at St Mark's of good quality warm clothes and coats, as well as toiletries, shower gel and period products for refugees. Please bring items to the building to be passed on. Thank you for your generosity. Dilys, St Mark's International Donations Committee chair

FLOWERS- Contact Mary-Jane Ryder if you could help arrange the flowers occasionally, training provided. With thanks to Mabel Padfield, John Hall & Jennifer Hurrell for donating flowers, and Rachel Pilkington, Briony Tayler & Jennifer Hurrell for arranging them during February.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT ST MARK'S:

5 MARCH is Ash Wednesday and we will be holding a service at 7pm at St Mark's this year. This day marks the beginning of Lent and include the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of Ash Wednesday, to be marked with the sign of the cross on your forehead and to receive Holy Communion.

LENT COURSE 2025: THE PARABLES

Lent Groups this year will be looking at some of the parables we find in the gospels. To do this the group will be using storytelling and drawing on Paula Gooder's book *The Parables*. Lent Groups from St Mark's and St Mary's will be meeting once a week on 5 consecutive weeks between 6th Mar – 13th April. They will be meeting online or in person, on various days/times. You can sign up for a group either by emailing the office or adding your name to the sign-up sheets at the back of church.

Group A with Sandra Newton: Monday evenings at 7.30pm on zoom -**FULL**

Group B with Lynn Pocock and Emily Baughan: Monday evenings at 8.15pm in Hangingwater

Group C with Jane Brooke: Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm in Netheredge

Group D with Hannah Jones and Michael Bayley: Wednesday at 3pm in the church lounge

Group E with Tim Crome and Tricia Morgan : Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm near Ecclesall Road

Group F with Bekah and Jack Hampson: Wednesday evenings at 8pm on zoom

Group G with Boyd Morgan, Joy and Stephen Straits: Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm in Grenoside

Group H with Shelley Johnstone: Thursday evenings at 7.30pm in Walkley at St Mary's Church

Group I Student and Young Adults Group, with Seth Roberts and Bethany Leake meeting as part of their usual group.

LENT LUNCHES AND BEYOND: A simple lunch will be offered on Sunday 9 March and 6 April. All are welcome to stay. If anyone would like to co-ordinate one of these, please contact Briony.

23 MARCH – We will have our usual 8am, 10am and 7pm services. If you are planning on attending St Mark's church on this date – do plan ahead and check the route of **Sheffield Half Marathon** which starts and ends in Sheffield city Centre. Your journey to or from church could well be affected by road closures which will start from 08.30 that morning.

27 APRIL - Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will be held in church immediately after the shortened morning service. At the meeting, we review the past, assess where we are now and look ahead at where we are heading over the next year or so. We'll hear something of Beth's vision for St Mark's, receive the Annual report in which we share various aspects of the ministry of St Mark's over the last year, thank those who are standing down from lay and ordained service, elect new people into various roles, our treasurer presents the budget and there is an opportunity to ask questions or express concerns before we look forward to how we can work together to support the mission and ministry of St Mark's as we reach out to the world. Please do save the date so you can attend and be part of this important meeting. If you want to vote or stand for election, you do need to be registered on our electoral roll. Do ask us for more details about being on PCC and the Electoral Roll. *Beth & Shan*

27 APRIL BRING AND SHARE LUNCH - After our APCM we plan to have a bring and share lunch to which all are welcome.

WHAT'S ON IN THE COMMUNITY:

BISHOP OF SHEFFIELD ANNUAL LECTURE – 3rd and 4th March.

Happy are those': Wisdom from the Psalms on happiness, wellbeing and caring for mental health with Rev Dr Isabelle Hamley, Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. Isabelle Hamley has been a parish priest, a university chaplain, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury and now serves as Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. She is passionate about Scripture and the way it speaks into the life of the world and of the church. She has written extensively on issues of justice, violence, trauma and mental health; her books include *God of Justice and Mercy: A Theological Commentary on the Book of Judges*; *Embracing Justice*; *Struggling with God* (with Chris Cook and John Swinton); and *Embracing Humanity*. [More info and booking here.](#)

CHANGEMAKERS CONFERENCE - The Sheffield CA committee warmly invite you attend an online screening of the annual Changemakers conference on Saturday March 8th - 10.00am until 13.45pm (approx) at St Gabriel's Church, Dobbin Hill. Full details are on the poster on the international committee notice board and you can also use the link below to see the programme for the conference and to register for this regional event- [Click here.](#)

ST JOHN'S – OUR MISSION PARTNER - Scissors Paper Stone is hosting a series of events at St John's Church in 2025, exploring the lives of those who shaped the Ranmoor community. These events include guided tours, talks, exhibitions, and workshops, offering a fascinating insight into local history. Please support them by attending events or spreading the word. More details can be found [HERE](#)

MENTAL HEALTH & CHRISTIANITY CONFERENCE – 22 March, Wesley Hall Crookes.

Aimed at ordained or lay, who are working or volunteering with people in churches and Christian organisations. However, it is open to anyone who is interested. The Conference aims to deliver a high standard of information based upon both science and experience while respecting and incorporating the Christian faith. **The Keynote Speaker is theologian Dr Simon Hewitt—Lecturer in Philosophy and Religion at Leeds University, he also** draws on his own experience of bipolar disorder. Lunch and refreshments will be provided throughout the day. Suggested donation of £12.00 but pay as you can also available. [Tickets and more information here](#)

Mental Health & Christianity

MENTAL HEALTH & CHRISTIANITY CONFERENCE

Book now

<https://MHandCConference.eventbrite.co.uk>

Organised by Sheffield Methodist Circuit

Dr Simon Hewitt
Lecturer in Philosophy & Religion, Leeds University

Saturday 22nd March, 2025
Wesley Hall Methodist Church, Crookes, Sheffield

DEMENTIA STARS TRAINING - Are you caring for a loved one with Dementia, involved with pastoral care or on the welcome teams at church? If so, you could benefit from attending this training which helps people to understand behaviours and reactions and discover what you might do to help and support a person with dementia better.

The next online session for those starting with the bronze level is on Wednesday 26 February from 1.30 - 3.30 pm and you can reserve a place [here](#)

This is an excellent short (generally online) training course run by AgeUK Sheffield and Enrichment for the Elderly. It consists of 3x2 hour sessions which are **free to attend** and on completing each level the participants receive successively bronze, silver and gold star badges and certificates.

There is no examination. Grace Stead who presents the course is an excellent communicator and has considerable experience herself of caring for somebody with dementia so this is not a highly academic course! Alison Wragg and Claire Webber from St John's have just received their gold stars and are united in saying how good the training was, full of practical advice and helping the course participants to see the world through the eyes of somebody with dementia.

For more information you can contact Claire (parish administrator 0114 2301199) or Grace Stead gracestead@enrichmentfortheelderly.org



THE UNCONTROLLING LOVE OF GOD - Join us at Highgate House Conference Centre, Northamptonshire, to discuss ideas that will change the way you think about the divine. Based around a series of set piece dialogues, this conference will open up avenues of theological thought that challenge the mainstream consensus that 'God' is all powerful and fundamentally 'in control'. Drawing on work from scholars and

practitioners from various parts of the Christian tradition, we will question these certainties and explore other ways of understanding the nature of God. [More here](#)

TO ALL THOSE WITH TEENAGERS: The National Youth Orchestra will be performing at the City Hall on Wednesday 16th April and tickets are free for teens! "The musicians will bring Stravinsky's Petrushka to life, with shifting rhythms and harmonies dancing between each instrument, creating an intoxicating world of sound. A palpable connection between the Orchestra and the soloist is central to Jennifer Higdon's Percussion Concerto with Jordan Ashman, BBC Young Musician of the Year 2022, as soloist. Tickets £22 | **Tickets free for teens**"

OUR FUTURE HEALTH - Like Pauline and myself, you may have already registered for this large scale NHS research to gather data for detecting and preventing diseases earlier, such as dementia, cancer, diabetes and heart disease. It involves completing an online questionnaire, giving a blood sample and having blood pressure checked. As data is gradually assessed you will have the option of learning your future risks and analysis of your DNA. Almost two million have signed up but millions more, any age over 18, are sought. If you join using the link: ourfuturehealth.org.uk/join/0518 you will be eligible for a £10 "thank you" voucher. Any questions to support@ourfuturehealth.org.uk *Michael Miller*

THE ENVIRONMENT:

"Several members of the congregation have become concerned about the closure of local recycling points around the city since August which is due to stalemate in a dispute between Veolia and the two unions Unite and GMB who represent their workers. Environment Group has investigated the issue. Disappointingly there is no evidence of progress at the moment so we raised our concerns. You can read the Council's response here. We have asked our local councillors to keep pressing for a solution."

Our question to the Waste and Street Scene Committee, Sheffield City Council:

I write from St Mark's Church, a Gold awarded Eco- Church (8,000 churches who work for the climate, nature and our communities). We are dismayed at the closure of most local recycling centres and the almost complete absence of information available to

residents about what is happening - nothing on the Veolia or Council websites - it all looks like business as usual. This has lasted many months. Congregation members are asking me about this all the time - anxious that this plastic should be recycled and not burned (despite the reclaimed heat). Folk have garages piled high with the stuff. This week I took mine to the Longley Ave West Recycling Centre - their recycling bins were overflowing and I was advised to put mine in Household Waste. Sheffield has declared a climate emergency and we need to take action about plastic. I understand from my local councillor, who had a protracted job getting the information himself, that there is an industrial dispute paralysing things. **Is there more you could do to press for a resolution? Such as using contractual levers? Please do all you can to restore our services - and please tell us what is happening?**

Here is the response: All Recycling Bring sites are currently closed due to the industrial action being carried out by Unite members which has reduced the availability of Veolia's workforce. The decision to close the bring sites was taken to ensure the continuation of essential black, blue and brown bin collection services. Discussions are taking place with Veolia to reopen some sites at the earliest opportunity, however any decision to reintroduce the sites can only be taken if there is full confidence that essential services, including black, blue and brown bin collections are not negatively impacted. We are offering as much support as possible to minimise impact on the public during the strike action, and we are encouraging Unite and the GMB to engage in discussions to resolve this inter-union dispute. Information and updates relating to the closure of the bring sites is provided on our service alerts page. Environment Group have also raised these concerns with Veolia directly and with our 2 local councillors.

NB Updates can be found at www.sheffield.veolia.co.uk , not on the Sheffield council website

ECO TIPS

Turn it off - Energy conservation is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint. Leaving your electricals on standby uses unnecessary energy – turn them off at the wall when you've finished using them, and you could see your bill going down.
(Source Good energy)

Eco tips from congregation members are welcome - please send them to the church office.

A SUMMARY OF GENERAL SYNOD:

The Church of England's General Synod convened from February 10 to 14, 2025, in London, focusing on safeguarding reforms and the clergy conduct measure.

Safeguarding

In response to past failures in handling abuse allegations, the Synod deliberated on enhancing the independence of its safeguarding processes. Two models were proposed:

Model 3: This approach involves establishing an external scrutiny body, likely on a statutory basis, to oversee safeguarding functions. Most responsibilities currently managed by the National Safeguarding Team (NST), excluding policy development, would be transferred to an external employer. Diocesan and cathedral safeguarding officers would remain under their existing

structures, with further work to determine the legal and practical requirements necessary to implement

Model 4: This model advocates for a more comprehensive transfer, moving all safeguarding officers, including those in dioceses and cathedrals, to the same external body as the NST. This would centralize safeguarding under an independent entity, aiming for uniformity and reduced conflicts of interest.

The Synod endorsed what is being referred to as Model 3.5, emphasizing immediate progress by setting up an independent scrutiny body and conducting further analysis on the feasibility of Model 4. This decision was met with mixed reactions. Bishop Philip North, who put forward the amendment, in affect making this hybrid model 3.5, stated that it allows for immediate advancements while not hindering the pace of more fundamental changes. Conversely, many survivors and advocates expressed anger and disappointment, viewing the move as insufficient for restoring trust and addressing the church's safeguarding shortcomings. Bishop Joanne Grenfell (lead bishop for Safeguarding) expressed her disappointment that complete independence had not been agreed ([more here](#)) but this decision does not rule out option 4, once further work has been done.

Clergy Conduct Measure

The Synod granted final approval to a new Clergy Conduct Measure, aiming to establish clearer expectations and accountability for clergy behaviour. This measure seeks to provide a more transparent framework for addressing misconduct, ensuring that clergy are held to consistent standards across the Church. The specifics of the measure include defined procedures for reporting and investigating allegations, as well as outlined consequences for confirmed misconduct. This development is part of the Church's broader effort to enhance integrity and trust within its leadership.

Living in Love and Faith (LLF)

The LLF initiative, which explores questions of identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage, was due to be a significant topic at this Synod. The House of Bishops had been expected to present detailed proposals, but instead notified Synod of delays to this. Some of this will now be discussed at the July Synod and some aspects have been pushed to 2026.

Other Matters

The Synod also discussed and committed to work to increase the numbers of vocations from coming from working class backgrounds. They voted to increase the representation of young adults on Synod. And as I write this on Thursday afternoon they are discussing restructuring the central organisation of the church.

Leadership and Governance Challenges

The Synod occurred amidst significant leadership transitions and internal tensions. Following the resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby over a safeguarding scandal, Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, serving as the interim head, faced calls for his resignation due to his handling of abuse allegations. A notable portion (20%) of Synod members attempted to prevent Archbishop Cottrell from addressing the assembly.