

## Notices for 16 February

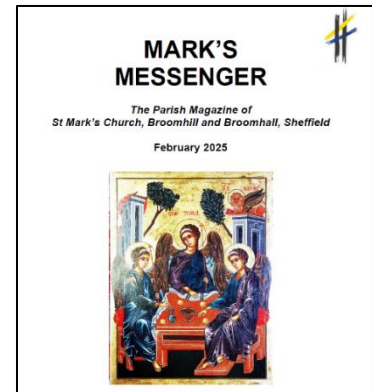
Information about upcoming events, news and how to get involved below.

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 about the mission area and stories from member of our community on the theme of 'some one who helped me'.



**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 this coming Sunday. We will be swapping 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 have expressed concerns about this, and also hold differing views on this. 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.

**Jonathan Williamson (Reader) has asked us to share this 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> reading. May I ask, if you feel similarly concerned, that you contact your representatives with any concerns you may have?

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](http://WWW.STMARKSSHEFFIELD.CO.UK)

### 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 – 13<sup>th</sup> 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

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.

**SAVE THE DATE** The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will be held in church on **April 27**. 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 begin with worship at a shortened 10 am service, 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*

### **WHAT'S ON IN THE COMMUNITY:**

**BISHOP OF SHEFFIELD ANNUAL LECTURE** – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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](#)



The poster for the Mental Health & Christianity Conference features a purple background. At the top left is the logo for Mental Health & Christianity, which includes a stylized green cross. Below the logo, the text reads 'MENTAL HEALTH & CHRISTIANITY CONFERENCE'. A QR code is positioned to the left of the text 'Book now', with a curved arrow pointing from the QR code to the text. Below the QR code is the URL 'https://MHandCConference.eventbrite.co.uk'. At the bottom left, there is a logo for the Sheffield Methodist Circuit with the text 'Organised by Sheffield Methodist Circuit'. On the right side of the poster, there is a photograph of Dr. Simon Hewitt sitting on a rock in a natural setting. Below the photo, his name and title are listed: 'Dr Simon Hewitt, Lecturer in Philosophy & Religion, Leeds University'. At the bottom right, the date and location are specified: '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](mailto:gracestead@enrichmentfortheelderly.org)



The poster for 'The Uncontrolling Love of God UK Conference' features a dark blue background with a photograph of a large, historic stone building. The text 'THE UNCONTROLLING LOVE OF GOD' is written in large, bold, white and orange letters. Below this, 'UK CONFERENCE' is written in smaller white letters. At the bottom left, the date 'Date: 4-6 June, 2025' is displayed.

**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](#)

**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](http://ourfuturehealth.org.uk/join/0518) you will be eligible for a £10 “thank you” voucher. Any questions to [support@ourfuturehealth.org.uk](mailto:support@ourfuturehealth.org.uk) Michael Miller

## THE ENVIRONMENT:

### ECO TIPS

**Now that Christmas is over, do you have an old laptop/phone/ other electrical equipment you wish to rehome or recycle?** Aspire in North Sheffield takes them all and makes good use of them. [Details here](#) If anyone has problems dropping them off, please speak to Michael Miller or Margaret Ainger.

*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 effect 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.

### **Consultation for the next Archbishop of Canterbury**

The process for the appointment of the next Archbishop of Canterbury is underway and, a key part of this, is the extensive consultation exercise that will take place in February and March. Wherever you are based, your views matter [click here](#) if you would like to have your say.