



The year we clapped for carers

When Covid-19 turned the whole world upside down, thousands of people suddenly found themselves doing incredible things to help others: doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, emergency services, armed services, public transport staff, delivery drivers, porters, shop workers, teachers, waste collectors, manufacturers, postal workers, cleaners, vets, engineers and many others – all committed to making a difference to our lives in these challenging times.

The Clap for Carers movement in the UK was initiated by Londoner - Annemarie Plas - when she saw people in other countries showing their collective gratitude each week through a timed, mass applause.

The first 'Clap for Carers' on the 26th March resonated with hundreds of thousands of people who wanted to show their appreciation for all the key workers playing their part in keeping things going. The movement gained momentum and was eventually supported by millions of people joining in on a weekly to express their gratitude and support.

In Woodthorpe, our weekly 'Clapathon' comprises clapping, cheering, church-bells ringing, pots and pans clanging, fireworks exploding and dogs barking! It has been a joyous highlight of the week to stand outside, alongside neighbours – young and old - celebrating a shared cause. Local resident and ICU nurse – Jenny – says that this weekly demonstration of gratitude, has been an immense comfort to her and her colleagues in these turbulent times.

By the time this parish newsletter is printed and distributed, it's unknown whether or not we will still be 'clapping for carers'. It is hoped however, that even when this weekly ritual has run its course, that we will continue to find new ways to support those people in our society – and in our parish – whose contribution we value so much.

Thank you carers and key workers of Woodthorpe!

A prayer for medical workers everywhere – from Christian Aid

Restoring and healing God, thank you for medical workers everywhere, embodying sacrificial love in these challenging times putting the welfare of others before their own. Be their guide, strength, wisdom and hope.

We pray for those in authority to do right by them, for proper protective equipment to be provided and for their dedication to be met with much gratitude and appreciation when they return home, exhausted.

And we pray for medical workers around the world, where resources and protective equipment are always in short supply. May these extraordinary times lead to deep and necessary changes in how our world works, to awaken us all to the reality of how connected we all are, and to work together to create the world we all want to be part of. So help us, Loving God.

Amen.

Thank you from St Mark's Church for the care and dedication given by every single NHS and essential key worker. God bless them all!

St Mark's Church, Woodthorpe

Weekly Prayers

As part of our weekly prayers we will be praying in church for those who live in:

July 2020

6th July	Longacre
13th July	Longridge Road, Tunstall Road
20th July	Maitland Road, Maitland Avenue
27th July	Maltby Road, Welbeck Gardens

Also staff and patients of Beech Avenue Clinic

August 2020

3rd August	Melbury Road, De Vere Gardens
10th August	Patterdale Road
17th August	Plains Road-1-105
24th August	Plains Road-107-227
31st August	Revesby Road

Also staff and patients of Arnold Health Centre

September 2020

7th September	Sandfield Road (evens)
8th September	Somersby Road (odds)
21st September	Somersby Road (evens), Gresham Gardens, Nordean Road
28th September	Thackerays Lane (Island to Sandfield Road)

Also the Housebound & Nursing Homes

October 2020

5th October	Thetford Close, Wymondham Close
12th October	Cambridge Gardens, Glenside, Woburn Rise
19th October	Wensley Road
26th October	The Crescent, Weston Road

Also staff and pupils of Church Drive Primary School

If there is anyone or anything in particular you would like us to pray for, please telephone and leave a message on 926 7859.

Parish Registers 2020

Baptisms

16th February	Sabrina Aloisia Potts Sophie-Mae Victoria Hutchinson
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Funerals

2nd April	Robert Wilkes
6th April	Joan Davies
6th April	Raymond Robinson-Unwin



No-one will be surprised to learn that Christian Aid Week 2020 (10-16th May) was yet another 'non-event' in what is becoming a year of cancelled annual events. The fateful Cheltenham Festival seems to have been the last UK landmark event for some time to come. There will be no Glastonbury, no Wimbledon and no Olympics. At the time of writing Liverpool remain left tantalisingly on the verge of winning the Premier League. There is no cricket, no live music or theatre and cinema films are being held back because no-one can go and see them.

I use the term 'non-event' in the sense that St Mark's and other churches across Nottingham and the UK [about 12,000] have not been putting envelopes through doors then knocking days later to collect them. Neither have folks been staging 'Big Breakfasts' or other fund-raising events. Yet the window in the annual calendar that is Christian Aid Week has been and gone and this wonderful charity which operates at the sharp end of lives across the world will have lost its main source of income for the next 12 months. Imagine the phenomenon that is Children in Need being cancelled.

We are all only too aware of the plight that many charities are in. Many are desperately hanging on as their income streams have dried up whilst the needs they seek to address have only multiplied under Covid-19. A 'Christian Aid week that wasn't' will have starved this noble organisation of a massive proportion of the income it has budgeted for in the hundreds of projects currently undertaken and being planned.

May we urge you to visit the Christian Aid website to learn about the scope of their vision and their work. In the absence of an envelope through your door, and later the unwarranted and inopportune knock on your door during 'Corry' (or Eastenders – other soaps are available, but they are fast running out of recordings) may we ask you to consider giving online to Christian Aid? They will be extremely grateful, as will we, though we will never know – so be generous!

Thank you.
John and Ruth Sargent



Articles of interest

What Is Happiness?

Even a cursory 'google' of the word 'happiness' yields a wealth of happiness-related quotes, like: 'Happiness is not a place, it's a direction' or 'a great obstacle to happiness is to expect too much happiness.' In other words, there are, no shortage of opinions about what happiness is and how to 'get it'!

Last year a group of 12 people met at St Mark's church over a 7- week period to explore the theme of 'happiness' using course material called The Happiness Lab. Over the 7 sessions participants looked at Gratitude and Savouring; Kindness; Forgiveness; Nurturing Relationships; Looking After Body and Soul, and Coping Strategies. Each session began with coffee, cakes and time to catch up with each other, before watching The Happiness Lab video together - with contributions from psychologists, healthcare professionals and faith leaders. At the end of each session, participants were invited to try out various 'happiness experiments' during the week, with a view to sharing their 'findings' at the next session.

St Mark's Curate – Jack – caught up with Happiness Lab participants Dave and Pat Simpson...

So, Dave and Pat, you were two of the 'guinea pigs' on the first Happiness Lab course! What did you make of it?

We thoroughly enjoyed it! The group clicked immediately and we had a lot of fun. Everyone came willing to contribute and share from personal experience, which helped a lot. It was also really interesting to hear from the experts and get their perspective on a range of happiness-related issues.

Has the course been useful for every day life?

Certainly! Especially during this time of lockdown, we've been more aware and appreciative for the good things around us (that we maybe took for granted before) - particularly the community spirit, the beauty of nature, the

unexpected phone call, the joy of our daily dog walk, and our appreciation of the NHS and key workers.

So, are you happier people now?

Well, we have certainly tried to make things like savouring and gratitude, a habit – rather than something we do from time to time. The more you practice these things the more they shape the way you see the world.

What was the 'Happiness Lab' highlight and would you recommend the course?

The course material was great, but we also had so much fun together as a group. We listened to each other's stories and learned from each other. The group still keeps in touch via social media, and we try to encourage and support one another, which has been great.

We would absolutely recommend The Happiness Lab. It challenges your thinking but in a relaxed and friendly, non-threatening environment.

St Mark's are hoping to run the course again soon but due to social distancing, we are currently unable to set a date. Please however, keep an eye open for more information on our website: stmarksonline.co.uk. If you would like to find out more about The Happiness Lab, please contact Rev Jack at: stmarks.woodthorpe@ntlworld.com



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Articles of interest

WhatsApp? Smells like Community Spirit

For the past few weeks, we've been encouraged to view 'social distancing' as the 'new normal'. In the 'old normal' days, we were all free to work, play and roam, when and where we wanted. But with all that freedom to socialize as we pleased, few of us used it getting to know our neighbours. That's not to say that we're unfriendly, it's just that we were busy, and perhaps more importantly, unsure about how to initiate contact – we wouldn't want to be intrusive after all! Perhaps there's something in the British psyche, that fears being thought of as 'a nuisance' - and so we keep our distance. We give each other space. Until, that is, we were all given 'space' – and lots of it – then we started thinking differently about it...

In those early days of the pandemic it dawned on us en masse, that enforced social distancing (the epitome of 'giving each other space') could put the most vulnerable in our society at risk. And so we very quickly mobilized ourselves to form community groups designed to keep a neighbourly eye on our neighbours during these challenging times. The rapid surge in community groups was initiated by Becky Wass from Cornwall, after she designed and distributed a card to her over-70s neighbours forced to self-isolate. Becky's offer to collect urgent supplies, pick up shopping or just chat on the phone, captured the nation's imagination, and very soon community groups were forming up and down the country.

Woodthorpe has also seen a rise in community groups these past months. The Clap for Carers movement facilitated conversation on the streets as we gathered together (at a distance!) to celebrate a collective cause. But technology has also played an important part in bringing us together and creating a new sense of community. Residents from Patterdale Road were invited to join a WhatsApp group back in the early days of the pandemic. Over the course of almost 3 months, neighbours who rarely (if ever) spoke to one another became friends: running errands for one another, sharing

helpful information, jokes, music and photos, swapping plants, and donating to a weekly Foodbank box. By the time VE Day came around on the 8th May, community spirit was soaring and residents were eager to congregate in the street putting faces to names and house numbers! We chatted, raised our glasses, ate cake, and basked in glorious, early summer sunshine!

But as lockdown lifts and the 'old normal' becomes the new 'new normal' again, I wonder if we will feel that old inhibition creeping back in? Will we self-impose a polite distance between ourselves and our neighbours, or will we use our new found freedom to keep those friendships-forged-in-lockdown alive?

An international crisis brought us together, but what will keep us together when the clapping has stopped and it's business as usual? We know it's not a lack of care that creates the distance we experience in everyday life, it is, amongst other things, simply the pace and demands of modern life. But could we, I wonder, take some of what we've learned – and even relished – during lockdown and use it to enrich community life going forward - even when there's an abundance of toilet rolls on the shelves and the flour flows freely...?

Finally, in conversation with people on my street and around the parish, ideas about keeping community-spirit alive are already forming and many people are planning post-lockdown street parties, but perhaps we could also aim to keep our WhatsApp groups going? Fundraise together for a street-supported charity? Continue donating to the weekly Foodbank box? Plan socials and get-togethers? Initiate bake-offs? And dig out the bunting for annual street parties? Could the silver lining, of a terrible year be that it was social distancing that brought us together?

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Book review - 'L is for Lifestyle...'

Christian living that doesn't cost the earth by Ruth Valerio

Greta Thunberg and the Fridays For Future school strikes, David Attenborough's documentaries, extreme weather like Hurricane Dorian... climate change is undoubtedly a trending topic. Meanwhile, social issues such as Europe's recent refugee crisis and Britain's recent political turmoil seem relentless. All of this can sometimes leave us feeling overwhelmed, unsure how we can start to tackle these mammoth global problems.

In *L is for Lifestyle*, Dr Ruth Valerio, an environmentalist, theologian and currently the Director of Global Advocacy and Influencing for Tearfund, uses the 26 letters of the alphabet to take us on a journey from 'A is for Activist' to 'Z is for Zeitgeist', exploring current environmental and social issues and how we can respond.

Valerio makes it clear that protecting our planet and everything that inhabits it isn't just for green-fingered nature-enthusiasts, rather it is a matter that should concern all of us. As highlighted numerous times throughout the book, it is the poor who are affected most by the developed world's consumerist lifestyle. Despite the richest 10% of people producing over half the planet's fossil fuel emissions, the consequences are most devastating for the poor: increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather patterns like hurricanes, wildfires and droughts threatens the world's food supply, drives people from their homes and separates families, increasing poverty, hunger and the risk of conflict.

Here in the UK we often feel distanced from hurricanes, extreme poverty and other catastrophic events but as

discussed in 'G is for Globalisation', our daily choices often make us more interwoven with the rest of the world than we'd sometimes like to think. This book prompts the entirety of the Church to realise that 'caring for God's earth should become an integral part of church life, rather than an optional extra', not least to improve the quality of life for the world's poorest people. A key idea throughout the book is that social and environmental action shouldn't feel like just another responsibility, or even a burden, rather a blessing and gift from God.

With each chapter focusing on one issue, for instance 'Money' or 'Plastic', then concluding with ideas for action, this book gives practical guidance for starting to make small changes in our lives. Suggestions include setting aside a few evenings a year dedicated to writing to your MP or other organisations regarding important social and environmental issues and intentionally taking time to engage with nature - God's creation - and fall in love with it.

I've already started to notice ways this book has affected my thinking - from choosing the most ethical student bank account over ones seemingly offering more attractive incentives, to thinking about simplicity over consumerism when buying in readiness for university. I strongly urge you to read this book and similarly start to discover small changes you can implement in your life to work towards a better world and living a more fruitful life focused on building God's kingdom here on earth.

Reviewed by Elisha Roberts

Children, Youth and Families at St Marks

We have been very busy within Children's and Youth Ministry in this lockdown period with various Zoom calls and videos making sure we're all still connected. We wanted to make sure we didn't lose out on time together that we would normally have on a Sunday, so these times of connection have become vital for us.

We have four Zoom calls each week for our Infant, Junior, Younger Youth and Edge groups which have had great attendance and been immensely fun. We play games, read stories and share what we've been up to during the week. We've even had a good boogie in the Infant and Junior calls, which was a big workout! A big thanks to Naomi for all the creative and fun ideas we have had during these calls.

The videos we've been putting together for Sunday teaching have been a new and interesting way of exploring faith together. We wanted to give our families and young people opportunities to engage with discipleship in a way that was more reflective for them and a chance to deepen their relationship with Jesus. In our Youth videos we have

been encouraging them and suggesting ways to start crafting a daily routine of prayer and scripture reading, including journaling, working through Bible plans and prayer techniques.

We've been having a lot of fun coming up with new ways to connect with one another but it is not the same as our usual Sunday sessions. And we are especially missing all the schools work that we had been doing, so looking forward to getting back into all of that very soon.

Check out our YouTube Channel – St Mark's Church Woodthorpe.

Articles of interest

Eco Church: Hope for our environment in Woodthorpe

How things have changed since I last wrote to you earlier this year outlining our plans for working towards a Silver Eco Church award at St Marks. Eco Church is a scheme run by a conservation charity, A Rocha, which encourages churches to become more environmentally friendly by offering bronze, silver and gold awards for their environmental commitments. In September last year we undertook an audit of the church's activities. St Mark's was thrilled to be awarded a 'Bronze' Eco Church Award.

In what seems like a lifetime ago, over 25 people gathered on Saturday 15th February at St Marks to discuss ideas for how we can work towards the Silver Award. The energy, enthusiasm and ideas were contagious and incredibly encouraging as people are clearly passionate about seeing the issues progressed. We focused on three particular areas; how to improve the land that we're responsible for, how we can adopt more sustainable lifestyles and how can we engage more effectively with our community (both local and global). Great ideas emerged around developing transport plans to encourage more people to walk or cycle to church, recycling schemes, having some gardening events to re-wild our green space and also planning for celebrating Earth Hour in March (rescheduled for March 2021!).

Plans are still underway. I'll be exploring over the coming weeks with my small team how we can start to progress some

of our ideas. But these times have also provided opportunity for reflection on how we balance the environment, with our social and economic needs. The last 6 weeks have seen a fantastic sense of local community, of less cars on the roads and more people walking and cycling. Many have commented how they can hear the birds more clearly, and nationally and globally we have seen air quality improving, less water pollution and carbon emissions reducing. Profound questions need to be asked as we imagine our future 'new normal' as to how we balance our social, economic and environmental needs.

TearFund has produced a wonderful short report called 'The World Rebooted' (https://www.tearfund.org/~media/files/action_resources/the_world_rebooted/2020-tearfund-the-world-rebooted-en.pdf?la=en) in which they observe three changes to our values, that I would say we've certainly witnessed more than ever in Woodthorpe:

1. From 'I alone' to 'we together'
2. From valuing productivity above all else to valuing life
3. From small tweaks to a new way of being

Do stay in touch – we'll be exploring these questions through our Eco-Church group at St Marks over the coming months. To get involved or find out more please email Richard Bull at rich.bull72@gmail.com



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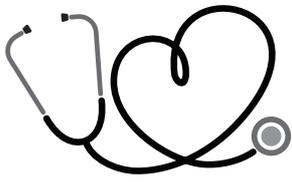
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Doctor's Orders!

Hello my name is Vanessa. I live and worship here in the Parish of St Mark's and work as a local GP.

Since the last Doctor's Orders all of us have faced some major challenges to our lives and changes to the status quo.

A realisation of the fragility of the human race has been a wake-up call to what is truly important and adds value to our lives. For some this has been a time for innovation and creativity, for others a time to "batten down the hatches". Fortunately despite the uncertainty

one thing has remained relentlessly constant to keep the Nation healthy – our NHS and the plethora of Key Workers from the essential services sector. The Thursday clap in recognition of this has been very humbling and appreciated by all of us who are Key Workers... Thank you Woodthorpe.

In this article I will discuss the most famous Nurse in the world, changes regarding GP/Hospital consultations and some current useful resources for anyone suffering from mental health issues.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale who had her first calling from God to Serve at age 17 years. Florence Nightingale was a pioneer in her time and put modern Nursing as a career firmly on the map. She transformed healthcare by advocating **HAND WASHING WITH SOAP AND WATER** to reduce the risk of developing and transmitting infections, as well as scrupulous hospital and home hygiene. Her dedication to delivering compassionate personalised care awarded her the name "Lady of the Lamp" by the soldiers she cared for in the Crimean War (1853-1856) as she carried out her nightly ward rounds holding a lantern whilst they slept .

How fitting that Florence Nightingale's legacy is still so relevant and has been modelled in our truly dedicated highly skilled Nurses and Care Workers in all the healthcare settings of today.

Handwashing with soap and water followed by proper drying of the hands remains crucial in the fight to reduce the spread of the coronavirus here in 2020.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS During the coronavirus pandemic GP practices, Community services and Hospitals have remained open for business but needed to alter how they deliver healthcare to the population.

All healthcare staff and health professionals have been on a very steep technology learning curve so that we can now consult and treat you in very safe and effective ways using the latest IT systems. Telephone triage, telephone consultations, video consultations, electronic prescribing have become the new norm. We are still seeing patients, according to need, in surgeries face to face with the use of PPE and where appropriate always following social distancing rules. Of concern has been the fall in patients contacting us with potential signs and symptoms of cancer and serious illnesses, and so on behalf of the CCG/PCN's/Government Agencies remember "WE ARE HERE". We can address concerns and either re-assure you and your loved ones or refer urgently onto the appropriate hospital based pathways.

MENTAL HEALTH There has been a definite rise in mental health problems as a consequence of the numerous challenges Covid has brought to us all. Many people do not want to admit to struggling with their mental health and often see it as a failure. Time to reframe our thinking. I feel it is better to address and voice mental health using an ABC approach.... Acceptance, Bravery and Courage.

Currently there are many highly trained people in organisations specifically there to address the various ways that mental health issues manifest themselves. It is good to talk and share the burden.

Here are contact details for some of those organisations waiting to listen and help;

Action on Elder Abuse - 0808 808 8141 (Mon - Fri 9-5pm)

Anxiety UK - 03444 775 774 (Mon - Fri 9.30-5.30pm)

Beat Eating Disorders - 0808 801 0677
(Mon - Fri 12-8pm and weekends 4-8pm)

Child Line - 0800 1111(24hrs)

Cruse Bereavement - 0800 808 1677 (Mon - Fri 9-5pm)

MIND (Mental Health Charity) - 0300 123 3393
(Mon - Fri 9-6pm)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247 (24hrs)

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000
(Mon - Fri 8am-10pm and weekends 9-6pm)

Parents Helpline (for concerns about a child or young person)
- 0808 802 5544 (Mon - Fri 9.30-4pm)

Respect - Men's Advice Line - 0808 801 0327
(Mon - Fri 9-5 or 8pm)

Samaritans - 116 123 (24hrs)

The Silver Line (helpline for older people) - 0800 470 8090 (24hrs)

Victim Support - 0808 168 9111(24hrs)

On Line Platforms

Age UK – www.ageuk.org.uk

BBC Action Line - www.bbc.co.uk/actionline
(resources for mental health and addiction)

Let's Talk WellBeing - www.letstalkwellbeing.co.uk
(on line self-referral form)

NHS website is a great source of information and help at either
- www.nhs.uk, or NHS Apps library

Young Minds (for children and young adults)
- www.youngminds.org.uk

These resources and phone lines may not be appropriate or suitable for some people and so I would recommend contacting the GP surgery and scheduling a call back. A healthcare professional will spend time listening to fears, anxieties and worries and most likely ask questions to assess the severity of symptoms associated with the mental health problem. We will always ask about thoughts of suicide and self-harm. We can make recommendations on types of therapies or drug treatments. There are a lot of antidepressant medications that can be prescribed and if one is needed it will be chosen specifically for you in accordance with the presenting symptoms. Most people fear that if they start on antidepressant medication they will become addicted to it but this is not the case. Pharmacists being highly skilled healthcare professionals are happy to talk about any medications prescribed including potential side effects, uses and monitoring regimes.

Do not struggle alone there are many people wanting to help. "We are All in it Together."

A good night's sleep, exercise, a well-balanced healthy diet and a virtual hug is just what the Doctor ordered to help maintain positive mental health.

A FINAL NOTE Having recently worked on a project with fellow healthcare professionals from around the world on a strategy for SMART hospitals fit for the future I would say that some of the pioneering innovations and creativity will ensure resilience of the health and social care sector and be fully pandemic ready.

Wishing you all very good health and keep safe.

Vx

Articles of interest

The Church has left the building

Government measures to control the spread of Covid-19 have helped us to remember that whilst St Mark's benefits from two multi-use buildings, church is about people not bricks and mortar.

Back in March, with lock-down on the horizon, we printed and delivered postcards to every household in the parish. Our offer still stands: if you are feeling isolated and would value speaking to someone from St Mark's, please call 0115 926 7859 or e-mail stmarks.woodthorpe@ntlworld.com and we will try to support you in the best way we can.

We have set up a YouTube Channel - St Mark's Church Woodthorpe. Each Sunday morning there are 3 new videos: a short service, a family video and something for youth. Why not take a look? It has been lovely to welcome new people.

The Church of England also offers a free 24-hour service, Daily Hope, which offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line 0800 804 8044. This has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

Lectio 365 is a daily devotional app that helps you pray the Bible every day: <https://www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional>

Don't forget our own website stmarksonline.co.uk and Facebook/[StMarksWoodthorpe](https://www.facebook.com/StMarksWoodthorpe)

Calendar

At the time of going to press, we are unable to open our doors on Sundays or during the week. We will continue to follow government and Church of England protocols around Covid-19. Updates will be posted on Facebook and our website.

Can we pray for you?

If you would like us to pray for you during Parish Prayers, please complete this slip and return to the church office or e-mail your details to stmarks.woodthorpe@ntlworld.com

Name: _____

Address (optional): _____

Please pray for _____

Contacts

Vicar: Rev. Matt Roberts
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For baptism and wedding enquires, please contact the Church Office in the first instance.

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