

# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

St John's: A place of worship where all are welcome

## Church Services in July

### 7th July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.30am All-Age Service (CW)  
6.30pm Evensong (BCP)

### 14th July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

### 21st July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

### 28th July:

9.00am Matins (BCP)  
10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

## Contacts

### Vicar:

Phil Weston On Sabbatical

### Reader:

Alan Downen 01829 751174  
alan@ashtonhayes.church

### Reader Emeritus:

Philip Goodall 01829 752130  
philip@ashtonhayes.church

### Pastoral Worker:

Margaret Papworth 01829 759086  
margaret@ashtonhayes.church

### Churchwardens:

Hilary Clegg 01829 290190

Diane Eldridge 01829 751282

### Church Bookings:

Linda Morley 01829 759029  
bookings@ashtonhayes.church

### Safeguarding Issues:

Margaret Papworth 01829 759086  
safeguarding@ashtonhayes.church

## Contact Us

**Website:** [www.ashtonhayes.church](http://www.ashtonhayes.church)

**Fbook:** [facebook.com/stjohnnashton](https://facebook.com/stjohnnashton)

**Email:** [contact@ashtonhayes.church](mailto:contact@ashtonhayes.church)

## Date for Your Diary

It may still seem a little early to be talking Christmas but, following the success of last year's event, this year's Christmas Fair is going to be held on



Saturday 30th November. Please contact Margaret Papworth (details above) if you would like to reserve a space and book a table.

## A View Through My Study Window

The vicar is away on Sabbatical but things here in Ashton Hayes and Mouldsworth are progressing more or less as normal. There have been a few new faces in and around the church during Phil's time away, and there are a few more to come during July and August, but a change is as good as a rest - isn't it? Well there has been quite a bit of it around Ashton in recent times. The changes we made to the interior of the church seem ancient history compared to the change that will come about with the refurbishment of the community's newly acquired pub — yes, we are all looking forward to the Golden Lion reopening.



But by the time you read this there will probably have been another significant change in all our lives - that of our elected government: as I write the polls are firmly suggesting it will be Labour in charge, but the people's vote may turn out to be completely different - who knows? (... or should that be 'who knew?') But, no matter who takes up residence in No10, it will be interesting to see how many of those pre-electoral promises are kept during the coming months and which ones will be discretely assigned to some deep, dark corner of an archive in Westminster ... and of the ones which are kept, will they all be 'fully funded' as promised? The economy, the NHS (including dentistry), the environment, education, immigration, housing, crime and policing all seem to be in the balance. However, whatever the next five years bring, I pray there will be a greater sense of compassion for all those in need and far less party politicking - is that too much to hope for?

One of the major differences between the promises of our politicians and those made by God is that we know that God's promises are true and can be relied on - they are all summarised beautifully in Psalm 23 (*pick up a Bible or take a look online at [bit.ly/NIVPsalm23](http://bit.ly/NIVPsalm23) and see for yourself*) — none of them are temporary, transient or about to be ditched. We know that he will guide us, offer us protection and rescue us when we are in trouble; he will be with us constantly; he will listen to our concerns, help us to bear our difficulties and be applied fairly, so, let's keep the faith.

With best wishes for the holiday season,

Alan Downen (*Standing in for Phil*)

## Notices

- **Vicar's Sabbatical** — Our vicar's sabbatical continues. While he is away from his post please direct any church enquiries to one of our Church Wardens (Hilary Clegg and Diane Eldridge) or our Reader (Alan Downen) – their contact details are opposite.
- **Tickets for the Summer Concert** — are now available from the Community Shop or call 01829 751174.
- **Foxhill** — If you are looking for a time to rest, relax and recuperate, we have an incredible resource almost on our own doorstep which offers peaceful surroundings, various activities and residential retreats. For more information contact: [foxhill@chester.anglican.org](mailto:foxhill@chester.anglican.org)
- **West Cheshire Food Bank** — For those who are able, the foodbank still needs our assistance. Donations of toiletries and non-perishable foods can be made at the Community Shop or at church.

## Afternoon Strawberry Cream Tea



Come and join us  
on Sunday, 7th July  
in the garden of Orchard Croft,  
Duck Lane, Ashton Hayes.  
2pm - 4pm

Tickets £10 - Available from Hilary Clegg  
All proceeds to Ashton Hayes Church

## Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



**"I know your troubles; I know that you are poor — but really you are rich!"**

Revelation 2:9

It's a wonderful thing when a child tells you their first joke. They may have learned it at school but it is clear that they have been practising it over and over again in their heads until they get home and can tell everyone else in the family and they laugh every time they tell it. Their family laugh too ... even if it is one they have heard before. The fact that they already know the story doesn't stop them listening intently and receiving it as if it were for the first time - it's all about the relationship.

When we pray, whether for ourselves, our friends or the huge issues of the nations - hunger, war, climate change, or poverty - we are not telling God something that he doesn't already know. We cannot surprise him with our concerns, but he loves our relationship, and in the conversation, and the silence, we begin to find our minds, hearts and wills becoming more aligned to his love and his plan.

It was like that for the early church in Smyrna. They lived in beautiful city, but its beauty was a backdrop for idol-worship and persecution of Christians. The idols today may take different forms - political ideas, what celebrities think, peer-group pressure - but the persecution of people of faith is more prevalent today than at any time in history.

So when we share our difficulties with God and feel impoverished, we are also sharing our pressures, failures and fears with our brothers and sisters down the centuries and across the world and in doing so we find that, in the midst of despair, he reminds us of our riches.

Ultimate power is not wielded by armies or politicians; it rests with our loving heavenly Father who never forgets us for a second. He is the Father who knows everything there is to know about us. It was true for Christians in Smyrna two thousand years ago and it is true for us now.

So let us remember that God understands what we have been through and he is listening intently - he hears our prayers, and he answers them all with a 'yes', 'no', or perhaps 'wait'!

When we tell him of our doubts and how aware we are of our own sin, he reminds us that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, and that his forgiveness is free and full, and when we tell him how powerless we feel, he reminds us of the dynamic power of his Holy Spirit.

## Music for a Summer's Evening '24

*In aid of St John's Church*

7.30pm - Friday 19th July

St John's Church

Ashton Hayes

*An evening of music to suit all tastes with the St John Singer's and Friends*

*Tickets £10 including an interval drink*

*Tickets available from Yvonne Downen (01829 751174), any of our choir members or from the Community Shop.*



## Ashton Hayes Gardening Club

### Autumn Show

Saturday 14th September  
in the Church

All details are on the club's website  
[ashtonhayesgardeningclub.co.uk](http://ashtonhayesgardeningclub.co.uk)



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## St John's Café



Join us on Thursday, 18th July, between 2.30-4.30pm for our **All-Age Café**. Everyone is welcome to join us for a free cup of tea, coffee or glass of squash and a slice of cake whilst you have a chance to have a chat with friends (or play!)

**Opening Hours**  
Monday - Saturday  
10am - 5pm

Tel: 07842 890141

Cross Lanes Farm,  
Broomheath Lane,  
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