

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

St John's – Focused on Christ, united in faith, serving our community
and a place of worship where all are welcome

Church Services in September

6th September:

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

13th September:

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

20th September:

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

27th September:

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

A short service of **Morning Prayer** is held in church **every Wednesday morning at 9.00am**

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

Contacts

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Website: www.ashtonhayes.church

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Home Groups

Our home study groups will be restarting in September. The Wednesday "in person" group will meet in the Vicarage on 2nd September at 7.30pm. The Monday group, which normally meets online using Zoom, will hold its first meeting of the new term in church on 28th September at 7.30pm. This session will include a "Bring and Share" Agape supper. Contact Vicar Phil or Alan Downen for more details.

View from the Vicarage

This summer's blockbuster, *The Odyssey*, has brought the world of Greek mythology to our cinema screens. It retells Homer's famous story of Odysseus (played by Matt Damon) and his long journey home after the siege of Troy - a story in which gods and goddesses such as Athena, Poseidon and Zeus stand behind the events that unfold.

Yet the gods of Greek mythology are very different from the living God we meet in Scripture. The Greek gods are powerful, but they are also remarkably human. They can be jealous, angry, deceitful and unpredictable. They quarrel with one another, compete for power and often behave in immoral ways. The Greek deities are also confined within the cosmos, living on Mount Olympus.

But the Bible presents us with a very different depiction of the divine. Not a collection of competing gods, but one God, the Creator of heaven and earth. A God who is not a part of the universe, but the One who brought it all into being. A God who is not constrained by the forces of nature, fate or anything else. And unlike the immoral gods of Greek mythology, the God of the Bible is holy, righteous, faithful and trustworthy. He is a Heavenly Father full of justice, mercy, compassion and love. Above all, the Christian faith introduces us to a gracious God who has reached out to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, we encounter a God who seeks the lost, forgives sinners, welcomes the outsider and offers new life.

The mythological gods of Ancient Greece continue to inspire great stories and enthralling films. But the Christian God is not merely a character in a fictional story - he is the Author of our story, the rightful Lord of all our lives, and a patient Father who waits for us to turn to him.

God bless,
Phil Weston



News



Our thanks to — the Kelsborrow choir for their wonderful performance of 'Songs from Stage and Screen'. It was an evening that was enjoyed by all.

Christmas Craft Fair

The St John's Christmas Craft Fair will take place in church on 21st November 2026 between 11am and 3pm. There will be more information available in our next edition.

West Cheshire Foodbank — with the rising cost of living there are still many families who are struggling to put food on the table. Please remember that donations for the Foodbank can be dropped off at the church or the Community Shop.

You're invited to:



We look forward to welcoming you to our first Messy Church of the new school year and we hope you will enjoy making new friends, being creative and finding out about Jesus in a new way at St John's.

4pm — Sunday 13th September



Join us on Thursday, 17th September from 2.30pm for refreshment and a chance to meet up with friends.

Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
Colossians 3:13

When we first join a church, a family, a new community or any kind of close-knit group, there is often a honeymoon period where everything feels warm, accepting, open and easy. But sooner or later, that initial Impression begins to fade and we start to notice disagreements, hurt feelings, and people who have let us, and others, down. At that point many of us are tempted to quietly give up on the idea of "community" altogether, or perhaps stay involved but hold back, never quite willing to fully participate again.

Christians tend to carry two pictures of community in their minds: the first is the garden of Eden, where everything was in harmony, and the other, the promised New Jerusalem, where every tear will be wiped away. Both are beautiful, but both lie outside our ordinary history — one before it begins and the other after it ends. Neither tells us how to live together in the here and now.

For help with that, I suggest we might look instead to the Last Supper. There were people sat around that table would shortly betray Jesus, spend part of the evening arguing about which of them was the greatest and then deny and abandon him. But Jesus didn't walk away: everyone was still welcome and he kept breaking the bread, passing the cup and sharing of himself.

That is perhaps the best model for our life together: not as a perfect community free from all disagreement, but one where there is a willingness to stay at the table when things get difficult — trusting, not in our own efforts to get along, but in God's presence among us, even in the midst of our disappointments and failures.

Dates For Your Diary

Craft Evening

Natalie is organising another of her, now famous, craft evenings. This one will be in church on **Saturday 10th October at 6.30pm**. Tickets will cost £10 but this includes all materials and light refreshments. To book your place or for more information, contact Natalie on natalie@ashtonhayes.church. It should be a really 'gourd' evening!



Learn to make your own Beautiful pumpkin



Fish & Chip Supper

We are holding a Fish and chip supper on Friday, 2nd October at 7pm in the Village Hall. Tickets will cost £20 per person but, to guarantee a meal, they **must be booked before Monday, 28th September**. Tickets will be available in church and from the Community Shop. For more information contact Richard Groves on richard@ashtonhayes.church.

Harvest Service

Our annual Harvest Service will be held on **Sunday, 4th October at 10.30am**. Please bring along your donations of non-perishable food which will be sent to the West Cheshire Foodbank. The service will be followed by a 'bring and share' lunch.

A Night at the Musicals

There will be an evening of musical entertainment in church on Friday, 16th October at 7.30pm. Tickets will be £10 each and they will be available from the church and the Community Shop or contact Rachel on 07824 545438. You are invited to bring along your own drink and nibbles to this event.



Opening Hours
Monday - Saturday
10am - 5pm
Late night Thursday
until 8pm.

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