

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 October

4th October: Harvest

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

11th October:

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

18th October:

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

25th October:

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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For church bookings contact

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Follow Us

Website: www.ashtonhayes.church

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Email: contact@ashtonhayes.church

Home Groups



Our home study groups have restarted. The "in person" group meets at the Vicarage on Wednesday evenings at 7.30 pm and "The Forge" online group meets on Monday evenings at 8pm via Zoom. Contact Vicar Phil or Alan Downen for more details.

View from the Vicarage

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the most remarkable developments of our age. From helping doctors diagnose disease to assisting with scientific research, education and communication, AI has the potential to bring enormous benefits to humanity. Yet AI also raises profound questions. What if it becomes more powerful than we can control? What if, in seeking to make life better, we inadvertently sow the seeds of our own destruction? Alongside the excitement about what AI might achieve is a growing concern about where it might ultimately lead.



The Bible also describes a kind of 'superintelligence' beyond human comprehension – but one that is divine, not artificial. God is our Creator, not someone manufactured by us. Through the prophet Isaiah, God declares: 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways' (Isa 55:8). God's wisdom, power and knowledge far exceed our own, but are always deployed in our best interests. For example, we celebrate his generous provision of our 'daily bread' every Harvest season. And, above all, God's ultimate goal is not humanity's destruction but our salvation – to rescue us from sin and death through faith in Jesus Christ. As John 3:16 so famously phrases it, 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.'

AI may prove to be a wonderful servant or a dangerous master. We cannot yet know exactly where it will lead. But Christians can have confidence in the One whose intelligence is beyond our imagining and whose love is beyond our deserving. Our Heavenly Father's intellect is not artificial – and neither is his love.

God bless,
Phil Weston

News

Harvest Service – Join us for our all age Harvest Thanksgiving Service on Sunday 4th October at 10.30am. Please bring donations of non-perishable food for West Cheshire Foodbank. You are also welcome to stay for a 'bring and share' lunch after the service.

A Night at the Musicals



Friday 16th October — 7.30pm.

There will be an evening of musical entertainment in church on **Friday, 16th October at 7.30pm**. Tickets are £10 each and they are 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.

You're invited to:



We look forward to welcoming you to our next Messy Church, where we hope you will enjoy making new friends, being creative, playing games and learning more about Jesus from our Bible story.

4pm — Sunday 11th October



Join us on Thursday, 15th October from 2.30pm for refreshment and a chance to meet up with friends.

Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



Come, follow me to new pastures, and I will send you out to fish for people.

after Matthew 4:19

In recent months I've had two contrasting holidays, each with their own very different landscapes, but when I visited local churches the same figure was looking back at me from their stained glass windows.

In the Yorkshire Dales, church after church seemed to turn to the image of the shepherd. Crooks, sheep, hillsides rendered in leaded panes. It's not hard to see why — walk out from almost any Dales village and within minutes you find sheep, scattered across the fellsides in a landscape shaped by centuries of pastoral farming. The windows there were commissioned by people who lived among flocks, and they reached for the picture which was closest to hand — Christ as the one who knew each of his sheep, went out after the one that strayed, and laid down his life for them.

In Devon, by contrast, it was Christ the fisherman who kept appearing. Coastal villages, working harbours, boats drawn up on shingle — and captured in the glass, nets, a calling from a shoreline, and a boat caught in a squall. Again, the imagery of the parish followed that of the place. Congregations who earned their living from the sea recognised Christ in the fisherman's world — the call by the water's edge, the storm stilled, and the miraculous catch of fish.

Those regions chose different different images, but in scripture, Jesus doesn't present himself only as a shepherd or fisherman. Every community he visited recognised him in their own working lives.

This left me wondering what image we would use to illustrate our own windows if we were to design them today. What would they say about how we picture him living amongst our community?

New Church Boiler Fundraising Appeal



We have recently received permission from our Diocese to replace our 40+ year old church boiler with a modern, more efficient, reliable model. This will cost us around £18,000 and we would welcome assistance from our community

to help cover this cost. If you would be willing to make a donation towards this project, no matter how large or small, please contact our Vicar, Phil (01829 752272), or our Treasurer, Keith Morley (07818 635121), for details.

Thank You!

The Forge

**A gathering for open minds and honest questions.
A space where big theological ideas meet science, philosophy and everyday experience.
No fixed answers required, just curiosity, and a willingness to have your thinking reimagined.**

Interested?

alan@ashtonhayes.church

Dates For Your Diary

Craft Evening

If you are quick, there is still time to book your place with Natalie for our next craft evening in church on **Saturday 10th October at 6.30pm**. The evening costs £10 but this includes all materials and light refreshments. natalie@ashtonhayes.church.

Christmas Fair



A Christmas Craft Fair for all the family is coming to St John's Church Ashton Hayes. Lots of stalls with a range of crafts, gifts and bakes, including a regifted stall, raffle and refreshments. Be sure to join us to make some early Christmas purchases. More information please contact, Margaret on 07803 242783 or Hilary on 01829 290190.

FREE ENTRY

Christmas Chaos?

Ashton Folk will be holding another of their festive concerts in church on **Tuesday, 29th December at 7.30pm**. More details later ...

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

Tel: 07842 890141

Cross Lanes Farm,
Broomheath Lane,
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