

# Christ Church Ainsworth Parish Magazine



Let it Snow!

(Photo courtesy of Dennis Gillman)

**Serving the Community**

[www.ainsworthparish.org.uk](http://www.ainsworthparish.org.uk)

January 2024

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## Parish Diary January 2024

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EPIPHANY</b>
10.30am	Holy Communion
6.30pm	BCP Evening Prayer
Weds 10 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm	MidWeek Praise
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
8.00am	BCP Communion
11.00am	Covenant Service at Ainsworth Methodist
Weds 17 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm	MidWeek Praise
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
10.30am	Holy Communion
Weds 24 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm	MidWeek Praise
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>
8.00am	BCP Communion
10.30am	Holy Communion
12.15pm	Baptism
Weds 31 <sup>st</sup> 6.30pm	MidWeek Praise
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT</b>
10.30am	Holy Communion
6.30pm	BCP Evening Prayer

## Interregnum Update

*"I said to the man  
who stood at the gate of the year,  
'Give me a light that I may tread  
safely into the unknown.' And he  
replied, 'Go out into the darkness  
and put your hand into the hand of  
God. That shall be to you better than  
light and safer than a known way.'"*

The start of a new year is always a great time to look back on what has been achieved; to reflect on what has gone well, but also on those things that may not have taken the direction we had expected; to learn from the things that have happened over the course of the previous year, and to begin to plan for the year ahead.

And so it is, at Christ Church Ainsworth, as we prepare to step forwards into a New Year and the 11<sup>th</sup> month of our interregnum.

Much has been achieved over the course of the past year; our PCC and members of our worshipping community have worked not only to keep us on track, but to begin to develop new links with our wider community, to try new things, and to build on and strengthen existing links with our Mission Community.

Not everything has been straight forward, but where we've experienced challenges and frustrations, on the whole, we've been able to work through them and emerge the stronger for the experience (at least that's what we tell ourselves!).

As for future plans – that's tricky when we don't yet have a clear idea of when the vacancy will be advertised, who might apply, how long it will take for any successful applicant to take up their new position, or what plans the person who is appointed may have.

None of us can predict what 'the powers that be' will decide to do with our vacant post, or what the timescale will be. None of us can turn back the clock to 'the good old days' of one Vicar one Parish; what we can all do though, is to continue to be positive, continue to look upwards and outwards, continue to pull together as a team, and continue to do our best for God's Church here in Ainsworth and for our wider community.

Here's looking forward to a positive and proactive year ahead for our Church and wishing everyone at Christ Church Ainsworth a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

*Alison Hartley – Churchwarden (on behalf of the PCC)*

## Editor's Spot ...

Welcome to the January 2024 edition of Christ Church Ainsworth Parish Magazine, and the start of another New Year – where does the time go??

After the many and varied extra activities and events during and on the run up to Christmas, most of our groups and uniformed organisations have been enjoying a well-earned break, with many not starting back until the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January. It's always good to read the various reports and keep up to date with who's been doing what; the variety of activities on offer is a huge credit to the hard work and imagination of those who lead these groups.

Alongside our regular updates, news and reports this month, there are a couple of new articles, recommendations for reading material and a number of requests for support / donations.

Please do your best to support the many things that are going on within our Church and wider community in the coming month; if there's something you're interested in, but you're not quite sure – check out the 'Who's Who' pages towards the back of the Magazine to find out who would be best to ask.

If your group or organisation has something to report, or maybe you have an idea for an article to include in a future edition of our Magazine, please get in touch at [ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com)

Finally, just to wish all of our readers a peaceful and prosperous New Year - *Alison*

## From The Registers

FUNERALS  
November 23<sup>rd</sup>

We commend to God's keeping:  
Cedric Simmons

## Flower Rota

7<sup>th</sup> Jan      Beryl Sixsmith  
14<sup>th</sup> Jan     Jean Eddleston

A huge thank you to everyone who is part of our flower rota, and also to Kathy Armstrong Rand, for the lovely festive floral displays and greenery she has arranged in Church throughout December.

There are currently a few dates available on the church flower rota; if you would like to join the rota to mark a special date or simply to make sure our Church continues to look bright and welcoming, please contact Gwen White on 01204-595378 for further details.

## **Porch Boxes – Christmas Meal Appeal**



A huge thankyou to everyone who supported our 'Christmas Meal Appeal' so generously throughout Advent. It was great to see our 'Porch Box' being filled each week with items to help local people who are in desperate need.

Many thanks also to Jan and Christine, who deliver these items to the Porch Boxes depot, for distribution.

## **Churchyard Team - Christmas Wreaths**

Many thanks to everyone who ordered Holly wreaths from the Churchyard Team; the total amount raised was £120, which is enough to provide fuel for both of the team's mowers for half of the summer months!

## **I Just Wanted To Say ...**

By the time you read this, the decorations will be going back in the loft, the leftovers in the recycling bin, and life will be returning to normal.

What a great Christmas it has been at our lovely Church! Starting with the Candlelit Concert which was amazing – the band were fantastic, the children's choir were great, and who knew that Jenny could sing so beautifully!! Her rendition of 'Walking In The Air' was superb, and I don't think our Church has ever looked better.

The Christingle Service was enjoyed by everyone, and it was great to see so many children and their families there. The Crib Service was great fun and the Midnight Service is always an uplifting occasion.

Huge thanks must go to all who are working so hard to make all of these amazing things happen. I think we can look forward to 2024 with great optimism.

*Hilary Hartley*

## **Private Prayer**

Did you know that our Church is open for private prayer on Wednesday afternoons between 2.30 and 4pm? Please feel free to call in for a few moments of calm and tranquillity.

## **The Christ Church Ainsworth 50/50 Lucky Lotto!**

The December draw of the Christ Church Ainsworth 50/50 Lucky Lotto took place in Church on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December, with the lucky winner walking away with £24-00!

This fabulous fundraiser will be running each month; tickets cost £1 each and are available at the back of Church; you can enter as many times as you like!

The Christ Church Ainsworth 50/50 Lucky Lotto is drawn in Church on the last Sunday of each month, when the winner receives 50% of that month's ticket sales!!

To enter simply fill in a '50/50 Lucky Lotto' ticket, then place it in the box at the back of Church; all proceeds to Church funds.

*And Remember ... You have to be in it to win it!!*

## **Front Cover Photographs**

The wonder of modern technology means that practically everyone who has a mobile phone now also has the ability to take photographs; people are constantly taking pictures of their homes, their surroundings, their pets and even themselves!

If you have taken a photograph of Christ Church Ainsworth, or our churchyard, that may be suitable for the front cover of our Parish Magazine, please email it to [ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com)

Please note we can only use photographs with the permission of the photographer.

This month's front cover photograph was taken by Dennis Gillman.

## **Christmas At Christ Church Ainsworth**

What a fantastic variety of Christmas Services and activities were on offer at Christ Church Ainsworth throughout December 2023!

The season got off to a flying start with our wonderful, and extremely popular, Candlelit Christmas Concert held in Church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December. It was great to see our Church full, as 100 plus members of our congregation and local community were entertained with a fantastic selection of festive music played by Farnworth & Walkden Band, Jenny our Organist, and members of our MidWeek Praise Children's Christmas Choir.

As well as being a thoroughly enjoyable evening, this event raised over £600 for our Church funds.



Hot on the heels of the concert, came our 'Bring Your Own Christingle Service' – again it was fantastic to see our Church quite literally full with children and adults alike proudly displaying their lighted Christingles.



The following day saw a small team back at Church, this time doing 'Experience Christmas' with a large group of Nursery and Reception children from Christ Church Ainsworth School. The children were encouraged to think about how Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and the Wise Men might have felt and what they may have been thinking, then they thoroughly enjoyed sticking angels and stars onto display boards and covering our angel with sparkles.

The joint Carol Service at Ainsworth Methodist Church was next on the Christmas agenda – again it was wonderful to see the Church full, with people from Ainsworth Methodist Church, Christ Church

Ainsworth and Harwood Methodist Church all coming together in worship.

And finally, to Christmas Eve – BCP Communion, Parish Communion with carol requests and seasonal refreshments, Christmas at the Crib and The First Communion of Christmas!

Many thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to bring all of these things to fruition, and also to the many people from our Church and our wider community, who have come along and supported us – it's a wonderful time of year.

## **EcoChurch**



Arocha UK launched the EcoChurch initiative in 2016; at the end of 2022, 2,000 Churches had achieved an EcoChurch award. 12 months on and at the end of 2023 an incredible 3,000 Churches have achieved an award.

Of the 8 Churches within our Mission Community, Christ Church Ainsworth is one of only 2 Churches to have received the bronze award, although a number of the other Churches are working towards this.

Manchester Cathedral also recently achieved the EcoChurch bronze award – good to know that we beat them to it!!

## **EcoChurch Top Tips For January**

Recycling is high on the agenda as the Christmas period draws to a close; many charities will recycle your Christmas tree for a small donation, some will even collect your unwanted tree.

Some wrapping paper can be recycled (generally not the glittery type), also Christmas cards.

All of the extra cans, bottles and jars that which are generated at this time of year can also easily be recycled.

## **Coming Soon ... 'Green Lent'**

Throughout the 6 weeks of Lent, we'll be suggesting one small thing each week for you to try doing (or not doing) in a bid to improve your 'green credentials'. As Christians, we all have a responsibility to take caring for God's world seriously – watch this space to see how we can all help.

## Unwanted Gift Amnesty

Most of us will, at some point, receive a gift which, although well-meant, simply 'isn't our thing'; maybe you have a 'double up', or something which isn't the right size.

Perhaps these items aren't useful to you, but they could be used at one of our fundraising events as raffle prizes or sold on a stall at one of the Church fairs.

If you have any unwanted Christmas gifts, please consider donating them to Church; simply leave them in the box at the back of Church, marked 'Gift Amnesty'. Thanking you in advance!

## Raising Awareness – Bury Homeless Project

Bury Homeless Project was founded in 2018, by Bury resident, Suzanne Angle, who now leads the charity alongside Dusty Brightside, a former rough sleeper.



Bury Homeless Project is a not-for-profit, local community project assisting vulnerable clients in our local area. Bury Homeless Project assists rough sleepers back into mainstream living, supports housed clients who are experiencing financial difficulties, and provides advice on housing including pending repossessions.

Referrals to the organisation come from Social Services, Children's Safeguarding teams, Women's Refuges, Health Services, Schools and Probation Services.

As well as providing advice, support and practical help, Bury Homeless Project have 5 local drop off points, and welcome donations of warm clothing, sleeping bags and blankets which can be distributed to those who are in the greatest need.

For more information about the Bury Homeless Project visit <https://www.facebook.com/buryhomelessproject/>

**\*\*** Bury Homeless Project are currently appealing for winter clothing for adults and children – coats, jumpers, hats, scarves and gloves. If you have any unwanted winter clothing, please place it in the box at the back of Church - garments should be clean and serviceable. Thank you.

## Just A Thought ...

"A different world can't be built by indifferent people."

## Bible Reading Fellowship

The Bible Reading Fellowship offers a fantastic range of daily Bible reading notes, which are ideal for anyone wanting an accessible, yet stimulating aid to spending time with God each day, deepening their faith, and their knowledge of the Bible.

Each booklet covers 4 months, with each daily reading followed by a short reflection on the passage. The reflections are readable, enlightening and make the Bible relevant to our daily lives. For more information visit [brfonline.org.uk](http://brfonline.org.uk)

## Easyfundraising



If you're planning to hit the online sales, book a holiday, buy train tickets, or even renew your insurance policies – please consider doing so through the Easyfundraising portal.

We currently only have 24 people who have registered to support our cause through Easyfundraising – but anyone who shops online can support us in this way; it's a really simple way of raising much needed funds for our Church.

If you haven't signed up to support us yet, it's easy and completely FREE. Almost 6,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to do your everyday online shopping, book holidays, book trains tickets, book flights, purchase car or home insurance, plus many other online transactions - at no extra cost to you! These donations really help us, so it would be great if you could take a moment to get started!

You can find our easyfundraising page here:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ainsworthpc/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=rm-rbd21-e1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ainsworthpc/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_medium=email&utm_content=rm-rbd21-e1)

## Mission Community News – Exploring Prayer

The next "Exploring Prayer" sessions will be held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January from 2 - 3pm at St. Thomas & St. John, Radcliffe, with the same session repeated later in the day from 7.30 - 8.30pm at St. Andrew's, Hillock.



The sessions we've had so far have been really interesting and helpful; whether you are 'new' to praying or an experienced 'prayer warrior', these sessions are for you! Why not join us as we journey

together through the 'whys' and 'hows' of prayer, experience different types of prayer / ways of praying, and find the styles that work best for you and your lifestyle.

No need to book – just turn up! For more info contact Alison on 07952-709041 or email [ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com](mailto:ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com)

## **Licensing Of New Area Dean**

Revd. Canon Donna Williams will be licensed as full time Area Dean of Bury and Rossendale at a Service to be held at St. Peter's Church in Bury, on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January.

Accepting the appointment, Donna said:

"It's a joy and privilege to have been called and appointed as the new Area Dean for Bury and Rossendale. I'm looking forward to becoming part of the transformation team and getting to know the other Area Deans. My heart is to see our churches flourish and grow as we seek to make the love of Jesus known in our own contexts. I look forward to serving alongside our congregations and mission communities as we seek to fulfil God's calling in our lives." (Manchester Diocese e-news).

## **Mission Community Prayer**

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church  
In the burning fire of your love,

We lift before you the churches of our mission community and the  
communities where we live and serve you.

Grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of your gospel,  
Bearing with one another in love as You build us together into one  
community.

Always abiding in You, may we be found steadfast in faith and active  
in service.

Open our eyes to see the opportunities you have prepared for us to  
work together in mission in new ways;

Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen

*Please pray for all of the Churches within our Mission Community –  
Christ Church Walshaw, Christ Church Ainsworth, St. Andrew's,  
Radcliffe, St. Thomas & St. John, Radcliffe, St. Mary, Radcliffe, All  
Saints Stand, St. Andrew's, Hillock and St. George's, Unsworth.*



***Introducing the...***



**CHRIST CHURCH  
AINSWORTH  
50/50 LUCKY LOTTO!!**

- Only £1/ticket
- To enter simply fill in your '50/50 Lucky Lotto' ticket, then place it in the box at the back of Church.
- Lucky Lotto will be drawn in Church on the last Sunday of each month; the winner will receive 50% of that month's ticket sales!!
- Tickets available at the back of Church or by contacting Alison on 07952-709041

The next Lucky Lotto draw will take place on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January, all proceeds to Church funds

***And Remember ...  
You have to be in it to win it!!***



## *Coffee and Conversation*

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January**

**10.30 – 12 noon**

**Ainsworth Church and Community Hall**

*"A cup of coffee shared with others  
is happiness shared and time well spent."*





## *Candlelight Prayer*



*An oasis of calm at the end of a busy week;  
why not join us for 10 minutes of quiet prayer and  
reflection, each Friday at 8pm on Zoom.*

*Simply click the following link to join in:*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88510585974?pwd=QUdYYjN6bDFoakxpZnBoY2ZDMUFoZz09>

*Or for more info contact Alison on 07952-709041*

*"As the shadows begin to lengthen, be guided by the  
light that shines within you."*



## **Notices, Acknowledgements & Announcements**

### **Coffee & Conversation**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January**

**10.30 – 12 noon Ainsworth Church & Community Hall**

‘A cup of coffee shared with others is happiness tasted & time well spent’

Everyone welcome

### **Ainsworth Mothers’ Union**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January**

**1pm Ainsworth Church & Community Hall**

Faith Lunch & choosing of prayer Partners for 2024 – new members always welcome.

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January**

**2.30pm Ainsworth Church & Community Hall**

Mothers’ Union Service – all welcome.

### **Candlelight Prayer**

**Each Friday @ 8pm on Zoom**

An oasis of calm at the end of a busy week. Why not join us for 10 minutes of prayer and quiet reflection each Friday evening. Simply click on the link below to take part:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88510585974?pwd=QUdYYjN6bDFoakxpZnBoY2ZDMUFoZz09>

### **Mission Community - Exploring Prayer**

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2 – 3pm, St. Thomas & St. John, Radcliffe,**

**then 7.30 – 8.30pm, St. Andrew’s, Hillock**

Experience different types of prayer / ways of praying; find out what works best for you & your lifestyle. For more info email

[ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com](mailto:ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com)

### **Save Stamps & Help A Good Cause**

Friends of The Bone Cancer Research Trust are appealing for used, new or obsolete postage stamps, foreign currency, and obsolete UK coins and notes – all of which can be used by them to help fund life-saving research into primary bone cancer. Any contributions can be placed in the container in the Church Porch.

### **Winter Clothing Appeal**

Bury Homeless Project are currently appealing for donations of warm clothing, sleeping bags and blankets which can be distributed to those in our local area who are in the greatest need. Please place any suitable items in the box at the back of Church; all items should be clean and serviceable.

## Around The Organisations ...

### 16<sup>th</sup> Radcliffe Brownies

We've had a fun-filled festive few weeks as the Brownies have been busy making decorations for the Ainsworth Christmas Tree Festival.

With a vision that encapsulated the essence of Girlguiding, right from Rainbows through to Guides (and not forgetting the Brownies in between!) the girls did a fantastic job of making the baubles for the tree, which ranged from paper plate rainbows, to paper doll Girl Guides. The tree was also very special as it commemorated leaders who are sadly no longer with us.

We had a lot of fun putting it up and the girls also benefitted from a sneak peek at all the great Christmas trees that were at the festival, with a chocolate-themed inspired tree the firm favourite amongst the Brownies, and wonderings of who would be the lucky person to eat all the chocolate once the tree came down!

To keep the festive spirit going we have also decorated chocolate houses with sweets and icing sugar. Almost big enough to house a small family, we hope they survived the journey home and didn't get eaten in one sitting!



To finish the term, we had a Christmas party with plenty of games, music and food.

We've also enrolled seven new Brownies this half term so welcome to Jess, Hollie Rose, Amarah, Pippa, Abi, Lexie and Esmi. We also say goodbye and good luck to Libby and Lola who will be moving on to Guides.

Special thanks to all the Brownies who either donated or helped out at the tombola for the Christmas Fair, and those who completed a fun window activity for Christingle donations.

We hope all our Brownies have had a very Merry Christmas and are looking forward to welcoming them back in January!

16th Radcliffe Brownie Leaders

## 12<sup>th</sup> Radcliffe Guides & Brownies

It has been a busy run up to Christmas, starting in November when we celebrated the 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays of our 2 young leaders – with chocolate cake and balloons!

During November we completed a skills builder badge: by designing and playing a “top trumps” game; using a range of recycled materials to build a dream tower; and looking at the properties of a variety of balls and deciding which of several activities each one was most suitable for – though some choices didn’t work too well! Then we made Christmas cards and sewed a Christmas decoration. And, to finish off the term, we had a visit to Paint-a-Pot.



All this meant that we were able to present Innovate skills builder badges to Amelia B, Amelia S, Eloise, Erin, Grace M, Grace S,

Hannah, Hattie, Izzy, Lucy, Lily May, Poppy L, Poppy Ly, and Sofia. Amelia B, Eloise and Hattie gained their Express Yourself theme badge and also their Guide Bronze Award - the first ones for our unit. Well done to all the girls!

12<sup>th</sup> Radcliffe Guiding Leaders

## Transformation - Now!



What a delightful Christmas Lunch we had at the Rose and Crown. The welcome was excellent, the service, exceptional, the food, scrumptious and the fellowship outstanding. It was three hours well spent and enjoyed.

### **Below are some updates from Mary Sumner House:**

*"We are delighted to launch our new Gifts of MU where you can buy a gift of membership, friendship or supporter for a friend or family member, who would like to support Mothers' Union. See Jean Eddleston or me for details.*

*Thank you to everyone who has donated to our Big Give Christmas appeal. We are raising money for our savings and skills development programs in Tanzania. We are hugely grateful to everyone who has generously donated so far. I can forward details of these programs if anyone wishes.*

*Members around the world took part in our No More 1 in 3 campaign as part of the 16 Days of Activism. It has been fantastic hearing how members have held services, vigils and marches across the globe to raise awareness and call for an end to domestic abuse.*

*Finally, huge congratulations to our CEO, Bev Jullien, who was installed as a Honorary Lay Canon at St Albans Cathedral on MU's Global Day of Action. What an achievement! "*

In our branch, we observed the 16 Days of Activism by praying for the worldwide work that is done by Mothers' Union and others and remembering our responsibilities to this ongoing campaign to end gender based violence.

There will be no meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January. Our first meeting for 2024 will be on **16<sup>th</sup> January at 1pm when we will have our Faith Lunch.** Please bring a small amount for us to share on the buffet table.

During or after this, we will choose our secret Prayer Partners for the next 12 months. If you would like a Prayer Partner, and are unable to attend on the 16<sup>th</sup>, please contact, Andrew, Jean or me.

On Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January (back to our normal time of 2.30pm) we will have the first of our 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday Service in the Church Hall.

Finally, I wish everyone a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

Jennifer White

## **From the Archives – January 1999**

January 1999 saw the first increase in the price of the Parish Magazine in a number of years – each copy would now be charged at 25p – incredible value for money! The front cover of the Parish Magazine remained unchanged for 1999, the inside cover given over to a wonderful Epiphany sketch, complete with Wise Men mounted on camels. After the busy Christmas period, the Parish Diary for January 1999 was much quieter, with regular Sunday Services including 8am Holy Communion, Parish Communion and Evensong, plus 9.30am Holy Communion on a Wednesday and a ‘Surgery’ in the Vicarage between 7-8pm on a Thursday.

‘News From The Parish’, was taken up largely by thanks for goods donated and help offered at the Christmas Fair, which had raised a total of £2,042. Other news included the provision of a Memorial Book to be permanently displayed in Church; this had been kindly gifted by Jane Lee. A further note advised that Parishioners should speak to Father Alan or Venitia with regards to inclusion of a name in the Memorial Book; the suggested donation for each entry was £5.

The various groups and organisations had all been busy on the run up to Christmas; Church Women’s Fellowship members had enjoyed a trip to The Octagon Theatre; the Guiding and Scouting sections had all enjoyed Christmas parties and activities; Ainsworth Scouting Sections had once again won the District Group Swimming Trophy, with Beavers and Ventures winning their sections and Cubs and Scouts coming second in theirs. The Day School were pleased to announce that the Playground Appeal had finally raised the full amount needed for the required work – a massive £11,600 had been raised!

In January 1999, the ‘Face To Face’ interview was with Margaret Turner, ‘our organist who brings her talents to every Church Service’. In January 1999 there were no Weddings recorded from the previous

month, but 2 Baptisms and 1 Funeral. The number of Communicants for the previous month was listed as 286, with the Collections listed as £1353.

## Praying Through The Seasons – New Beginnings



*“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”*

*James 1; v 12*

The New Year can often bring a mixed bag of emotions; recent or ongoing events in our own lives or in the lives of those around us, may have created unrest and anxiety. While some may have just experienced the best year ever and look forward to an even greater one looming ahead, others may have just trudged through one deep struggle after another. A new year may bring desperate hope for things to be better, with an ache for still-fresh wounds to slowly begin their process of healing.

The Bible often encourages us to let go of what isn't helpful and press on ahead to the future; it also reminds us that those who are faithful despite setbacks will be rewarded.

As Christians, whatever kind of year we have had, we can take courage in knowing that we are not alone. Not ever. Our God is a “with us” God, who has the power to carry us into a fresh, new start.

*Heavenly Father,  
When the old year dies,  
And the new comes bounding in,  
Help us to draw strength from knowing  
That in the next twelve months  
The snows will go,  
The buds will burst,  
The heat will rise,  
The leaves will fall,  
And that all of these things will happen  
According to Your will and in Your time;  
Help us to remember that there is order in Your universe,  
And that we are a part of it. Amen*

## **You Might Like To Read ...**

*"The Bible In Ten", written by David Kitchen, published by BRF.*

This wonderful book is a must for everyone. It gives a short, sharp snapshot of every book in the Bible; each one taking no more than 10 minutes to read. Each chapter concentrates on explaining what happens and acts as a springboard for getting to know the whole story better.

The book is written in everyday language and gives the reader a real sense of how relevant the Bible still is to our lives and our communities today.

Reading 'The Bible In Ten' isn't the same as reading the whole Bible, but it is a starting point for understanding it better. The book doesn't aim to answer every question you will ever have about the Bible, but by the end of it you should have a much clearer idea of what the Bible contains, and also a sense of how beautiful and astonishing the Bible actually is.

*"I wish 'The Bible In Ten' had been written sooner – it is fun, fresh and full of insight. Easy to read, but with so much packed in. Whatever your Biblical starting point, there's something of value for you."*

## **Space To Share A Prayer – New Year**

Eternal God,

You gave us the greatest gift: the gift of life.

In the coming year, help us to use it wisely.

May we grow in generosity, kindness and forgiveness, hope, faith and love. Amen.

## **Top 20 Christmas Movies**

Everyone loves to watch a movie at Christmas, but which is your all time favourite? According to movies.com, these are the top 20 Christmas movies of all time ...

20) The Santa Clause (1954)

19) Gremlins (1984)

18) National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989)

17) Scrooged (1988)

16) Die Hard (1988)

15) Miracle On 34<sup>th</sup> Street (1947)

- 14) White Christmas (1954)
- 13) The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993)
- 12) Trading Places (1983)
- 11) Home Alone (1990)
- 10) Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer (1964)
- 9) The Year Without A Santa Claus (1974)
- 8) The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992)
- 7) Bad Santa (2003)
- 6) Love Actually (2003)
- 5) How The Grinch Stole Christmas (1966)
- 4) Elf (2003)
- 3) A Charlie Brown Christmas (1965)
- 2) A Christmas Story (1983)
- 1) It's A Wonderful Life (1946)

## **For All The Saints – January; St. Timothy**

Name: Timothy of Ephesus

Feast Day: 26<sup>th</sup> January

Born: Lystra

Died: 97 AD, Ephesus; martyred by stoning

Place of burial: Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Purification, Termoli, Italy

Attributes: Pastoral staff

Patron Saint of: Those suffering from stomach and intestinal disorders.

Born at Lystra, Lycaenia, Timothy was the son of a Greek father and Eunice, a converted Jewess. He joined St. Paul when Paul preached at Lystra, and became Paul's close friend and confidant. Timothy accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey; Timothy worked with Paul and Silas and helped found churches, notably in Corinth, Thessalonica, and Philippi, but when Paul was forced to flee Berea because of the enmity of the Jews there, Timothy remained. After a time he was sent back to Thessalonica to report on the condition of the Christians there and to encourage them under persecution, a report that led to Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians when he joined Timothy at Corinth.

It's thought likely that Timothy was with Paul when the Apostle was imprisoned at Caesarea and then Rome, and was himself also imprisoned but then freed. According to tradition, Timothy then went to Ephesus, where he became its first Christian Bishop, before being martyred by being stoned to death in 97AD, when he opposed the pagan festival of Katagogian, held in honour of Diana.

## **Time For A Smile**

A new sister was welcomed to a silent monastery and told she must not speak until directed. After five years she was told she could say two words, so she said, "Hard bed." A better bed was provided. Five years later she was told she could say another two words, so she said, "Cold food." Steps were taken to provide better food. On her 15th anniversary at the monastery, she was told she could say another two words, so she said, "Must leave." She was told it was probably the best thing as she'd done nothing but complain since she arrived.

A few days after the school holidays ended, a young curate received a call from his six-year old son's teacher. She said she was ringing because his son had been misbehaving. "Hang on a minute," said the curate, "We had him all summer and we never called you once when he misbehaved!"

## **Strap Lines**

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.

Beware of New Year's resolutions; they can go in one year and out the other.

Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

I am responsible only for what I say and not what you understand.

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.

## Poems From The Parish (And Beyond ...)

### The Battle Of The Seasons

Each year the seasons come and go,  
Each has a part to play,  
But one year, Old Man Winter  
Simply wouldn't go away.

"We don't want Spring round here", he said,  
"We don't want warmth and sun,  
I've much more winter weather yet –  
I've only just begun!"

So, Old Man Winter called the winds,  
He called the ice and snow,  
The months went by and Old Man Winter  
Simply wouldn't go.

The ground lay frozen hard for weeks,  
The water hard as stone,  
And all the time a thin wind blew  
That chilled you to the bone.

But then, a hint of brightness –  
Could the sun be peeping through?  
"Oh no", said Old Man Winter,  
"I have much more work to do."

And Old Man Winter called the clouds  
Of hail and sleet and rain,  
The ground became a mud bath,  
Water bubbled down the drain,

The rivers burst their banks,  
Swelled up by months of rain and snow,  
With water all around –  
Still Old Man Winter wouldn't go.

Instead, he called a mighty storm  
That lashed the leafless trees,  
Then icy winds brought sleet and snow  
And yet another freeze.

The weeks dragged by, the land lay flat,  
The seas were wild and rough,  
And Springtime thought, "This can't go on,  
Enough is quite enough.

The country should be green by now,  
Awash with life and sun,  
With baby birds and little lambs  
All having Spring time fun."

But Old Man Winter wasn't ready  
Yet to go away,  
And so began a battle that  
Rolled on from day to day.

An icy wind blew up and brought  
More hail and sleet and snow,  
But Springtime kept on trying  
To create a sunny glow.

And in between the storm clouds  
Came a brighter patch of sky,  
But Winter screeched, "I'll not be beat  
However hard you try!"

Now great, black clouds again were seen,  
And thunder shook the air,  
Great forks of lightening split the sky,  
The wind howled everywhere.

But Springtime kept on trying,  
Smiling brightly through the storm,  
And gradually, at last,  
The land began to feel the warm.

Until, despite the wind and rain,  
The sunshine brightly shone,  
And with a final thunderous crash,  
The winter time was gone.

## **The Parish Puzzler**

### **New Quiz**

The answers to the following questions all begin with the word 'new'.

1. A Cornish seaside town and holiday resort
2. Post found on the stairs
3. Small amphibious creature
4. Daily publication to keep people informed.
5. Very young baby
6. A law of gravity
7. Someone who has recently moved to the area
8. Country with Wellington as its capital city
9. A couple who have just been married
10. Town in West Suffolk, famous for horse racing

(Answers on page 29)

## **Church Anagrams**

Unscramble the letters to find parts of a Church:

1. R L A A T
2. T F N O
3. W P E
4. R T U Y S N A C A
5. P P T I U L
6. R C T E L N U
7. R S T Y E V
8. E A V N
9. I E A L S
10. R W E O T

(Answers on page 29)

## Sidesmen, Lay Assistant & Prayers Rota

<b>Date</b>	<b>Sidesmen</b>	<b>Lay Assistant</b>	<b>Prayers</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> Jan 1 <sup>st</sup> Sun of Epiphany	Mags Gillman Dennis Gillman	Lorraine Holden	David Holden
14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun of Epiphany	N/A	N/A	N/A
21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun of Epiphany	Susan Campbell Barbara Leigh	Beryl Sixsmith	Andrew Lowe
28 <sup>th</sup> Jan 4 <sup>th</sup> Sun of Epiphany	Jean Ellis Christine Shaw	Carole Butler	Jenny Johnson

## Reader's Rota

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reader</b>	<b>Readings</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> Jan 1 <sup>st</sup> Sun of Epiphany	David Holden	Genesis 1.1-5 Acts 19.1-7 Mark 1.4-11
14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun of Epiphany	N/A	N/A Covenant Service at Ainsworth Methodist Church
21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun of Epiphany	Beryl Sixsmith	Genesis 14.17-20 Revelation 19.6-10 John 2.1-11
28 <sup>th</sup> Jan 4 <sup>th</sup> Sun of Epiphany	Jenny Johnson	Deuteronomy 18.15-20 Revelation 12.1-5a Mark 1.21-28
4 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun before Lent	Peter Holden	Proverbs 8.1,22-31 Colossians 1.15-20 John 1.1-14

## Who's Who

Vicar	Vacancy <a href="mailto:vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk">vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk</a>	01204 398567
OLM	Revd Debra Johnstone	01204 399630
Churchwarden	Alison Hartley Chris Haworth	07952 709041 07855 638450
Church Treasurer	David Holden	<a href="mailto:davelholden@aol.co.uk">davelholden@aol.co.uk</a>
Secretary of the PCC	Vacancy	
Organist	Jenny Johnson	07734976978
Gift Aid & Freewill Offering Secretary	Carole Butler	07379 196608
Safeguarding Officer	Peter Holden	01204 596938
Church Hall Booking		<a href="mailto:bookings@ainsworthchurchhall.co.uk">bookings@ainsworthchurchhall.co.uk</a>
Magazine Editor	Alison Hartley	<a href="mailto:ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com">ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com</a>
Magazine Adverts		
Primary School Head	D Gerrard BA(Hons)PGCE	01204 527484

## Services

Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
 10.30am Family Service, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Family & Parade Service  
 6.30pm Evening Prayer (BCP) 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday

Weds 6.15pm Mid-Week Praise

Home Communion is available for anyone unable to attend Church due to illness or frailty.

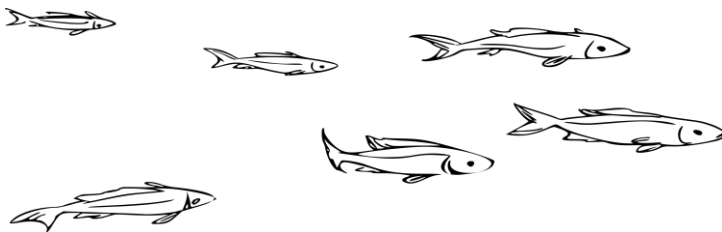
Arrangements for Baptisms, Marriages, Banns of Marriage, and Funerals  
 Contact 01204-398567.

Answers to New Quiz: 1) Newquay, 2) Newel Post, 3) Newt, 4) Newspaper, 5) Newborn, 6) Newton's, 7) Newcomer, 8) New Zealand, 9) Newly Weds, 10) Newmarket

Answers to Church Anagrams: 1) Altar, 2) Font, 3) Pew, 4) Sanctuary, 5) Pulpit, 6) Lectern, 7) Vestry, 8) Nave, 9) Aisle, 10) Tower

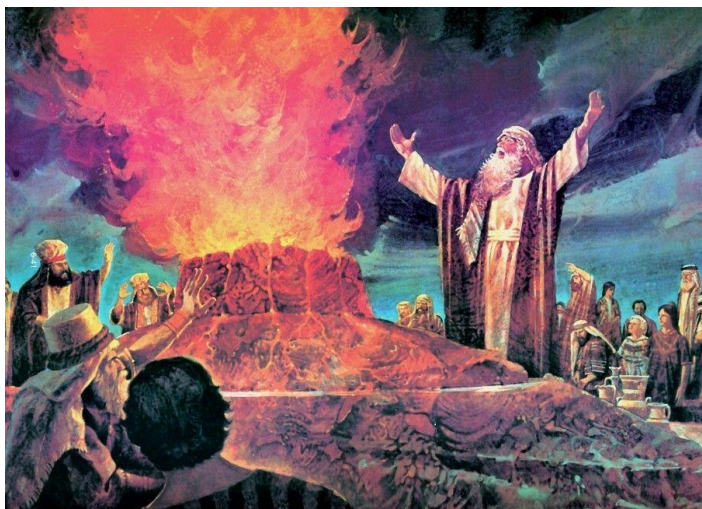
## Who's Who For Church Organisations

Mothers Union	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month at 7.30pm Branch Contact Jean Eddleston	0161 761 2147
Altar Flowers	Kathy Armstrong Rand	07748 020743
ABC First Steps Toddler Group	Fridays 10.00am - 11.30am Church Hall Jennifer White	07964 587694
Group Leader	Bill White group.ainsworth@praws.gmnscouts.org.uk	01204 595378
Beaver Scouts	Friday at 6.30pm in the Church Hall Leader	
Cub Scouts	Friday at 6.30pm in the Church Hall	
Scouts' 14 <sup>th</sup> Radcliffe	Fridays at 7.45pm in the Church Hall Leader Stacey White scouts.ainsworth@praws.gmnscouts.org.uk	07742 610281
Explorers	Friday 7.30 – 9.30pm; in the Church Hall Leader John Turner	01204 381590
Brownies 12 <sup>th</sup> Radcliffe	Thursday at 7.00pm to 8.15pm in the Church Hall Brown Owl Polly Ryder	07437 519045
Brownies 16 <sup>th</sup> Radcliffe	Thursday at 6.15pm to 7.30pm in the Church Hall Sarah McAnulty	07955373623
Guides 12 <sup>th</sup> Radcliffe	Thursday at 7.00pm in the Church Hall Captain Polly Ryder	07437 519045



# Little Fishes

Elijah



## People In The Bible

The Bible is a collection of stories that help us to learn about God and God's dealings with people, right from the beginning of the world. The different parts of the Bible are called 'Books'; each Book was written for a special purpose - some books tell us the story of God's chosen people, the children of Israel, some books are filled with wisdom and advice, some books tell us about things which may be in the future; many of the Books of the Bible include stories about ordinary people who played an extraordinary part in history.

### Elijah

When Elijah's story began, King Ahab was the ruler of the land of Israel. King Ahab said and did lots of things that he shouldn't have done; he allowed the people of his Kingdom to say and do things that they shouldn't have done. One of the things that King Ahab



did was to worship Baal, who they believed was a 'weather god'; King Ahab and his people did this even though the Bible absolutely told them that they

should only worship the one true God! All in all, under King Ahab's rule the land of Israel had become a place that made God unhappy.

And so, God chose Elijah to go to Israel and take a message to King Ahab. Someone who is chosen by God to take a message from God to ordinary people is called a 'prophet'; there were many prophets in Bible times, and Elijah was one of them. Elijah went to Ahab and told him, "God has told me that there will be no rain or even dew in the next three years until I tell it to rain again."

Imagine what would happen if it didn't rain for three whole years! The rivers and streams and reservoirs would all dry up; water would have to be strictly rationed; you might only be allowed 1 glass of water a day; you might only be able to flush the loo or have a bath once a week!!



King Ahab listened to Elijah, but he wasn't too worried; after all, he thought, he could just pray to Baal if he wanted it to rain ...

After Elijah told King Ahab what would happen, the Lord told Elijah to go and hide; God guided him to a place where he could live safely whilst the drought lasted. God made sure Elijah had what he needed. He stayed by a stream where there was water for him to drink and a raven, brought him bread and meat for breakfast and supper every day.



After some time had passed with no sign of any rain, the stream that Elijah was drinking from dried up and there was no more water to drink. So, God told him to go to a place called Zarephath, there he would find a woman who would give him food and water to drink.

Elijah trusted God and did exactly what he said. When Elijah came to the entrance of the town, he saw a woman there gathering wood. He said to her, "Please could you spare me a little water and a small piece of bread?"

She replied, "I don't have any bread to eat, just a small amount of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. This is all that I have left to feed myself and my son; I don't know what will happen once we have used those last few things up, because then we will have no food left."



Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid! Go home and use the flour and oil to make a loaf of bread for you and your son, but first make a small loaf of bread for me and bring it to me. God has told me that if you do this, your jar of flour will never go empty, and the jug of oil will not go dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land once more."

So, the woman went home and did as Elijah had told her, and every day after that, there was food for Elijah, the woman and her son.

One day, the woman's son became poorly and died. She went to Elijah for help, so Elijah hurried to her house and said, "Give me

your son." He took the boy in his arms and carried him to the room upstairs, then he cried out to the Lord, "O Lord my God, please let this boy live again!"

Elijah spread his hands over the boy and cried out to God three times. The Lord heard his cry, and the boy began to breathe.



Elijah picked up the boy and took him back downstairs to his mother and said, "God has answered my prayer, your son is alive!"

As the woman hugged and kissed her son she thanked Elijah, and said, "I know that the Lord is with you and whatever you say is true."

Almost three years went by, and not a single drop of rain had fallen on the land of Israel; the rivers and streams had run dry, the crops were wilting and the animals and people were thirsty. You might think that by then King Ahab would have realised that he needed to change his ways, but he and his people carried on behaving as badly as ever.



King Ahab grew angry and blamed Elijah for bringing God's message to him; to try to make sure that God wouldn't send him any more bad news, King Ahab tried to get rid of all the other prophets, but what he didn't know was that one of his own servants, a man called Obadiah, was helping the prophets to escape!

God spoke to Elijah and told him, "Go to King Ahab and I will send rain." So, Elijah went to find King Ahab. King Ahab was very angry when he saw Elijah waiting to speak to him, he called him a troublemaker.



But Elijah said, "I am not the troublemaker - you have disobeyed God over and over again. You stopped following his commandments and started worshipping Baal. God has sent me to tell you to summon all the people of Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel."

When all the people were gathered on Mount Carmel, Elijah stood before them and said, "It is time for you all to make up your

minds; if the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." The people just stood there and said nothing.

Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only prophet of the Lord left but Baal has over four hundred. Here is the challenge; take some meat and place it on a pile of wood, but do not set fire to the wood. I will do the same. Then you call out to Baal, and I will call out to the Lord. The god who listens and starts the fire is the real God."



The people agreed to the challenge, so, Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "You can go first, but remember you must call on Baal; you must not start the fire yourself."

So, they put their meat on the wood, then they began calling on Baal to start the fire. They shouted and danced around the wood yelling to Baal to start the fire. They shouted and shouted all morning - but there was no answer and the meat stayed sitting there on the pile of wood.

After a while, Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Maybe you're not shouting loudly enough. Perhaps your god is busy or sleeping and he can't hear you; maybe you should shout louder."

Some of the people ran around screaming to Baal, others were bowing and crying to Baal, others were lying on the floor and pleading - but nothing happened.



Elijah let them carry on like that through the whole of the day, then finally he called the people over to his pile of wood. He took some stones and put them around his wood, then he dug a trench around the outside of the stones, then Elijah did something very strange; he told the people to bring as much water as they could and pour it over the wood and the meat, so much water that it would fill the trench he had dug around the stones.



The people laughed, thinking that Elijah was making a big mistake; surely Elijah's God would never be able to start a fire now!

Once everything was completely soaked, Elijah stepped forward and simply prayed: "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, show us today that you are the real God of Israel and that all I have done is obeyed you. Answer me Lord, so that these people can believe in you once again."

Just as Elijah finished his prayer and everyone stood silently watching, the pile of soggy wet wood burst into flames. Everything was burnt down to nothing, and all the water was gone.



The people were amazed and began to fall on their knees and cry out, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is the real God!"

Elijah told King Ahab that now the people no longer worshipped Baal, God would let it rain. Then Elijah went back to Mount Carmel and prayed to God that the drought would be over, and that rain

would come. While he was praying, he asked his servant to look towards the sea for a rain cloud. The servant came back and said, "There is nothing in the sky Elijah."



Elijah kept on praying; he asked his servant seven times to keep looking, and the seventh time the servant came back and said, "There is a very small cloud, as small as a man's fist, coming this way."

As the people watched, the little cloud grew bigger and bigger, and the sky got darker and darker. The wind began to blow and very soon drops of rain began to fall - at last the drought was over.



### **So, What Can We Learn From Elijah's Story?**

Elijah was an ordinary person; he was sometimes frightened and sometimes made mistakes. But Elijah's faith in God was so strong that he obeyed God without question, even when the things he was asked to do seemed impossible. With God on his side, Elijah was able to do incredible things and proved to the people of Israel that there really was only one true God. God has a job for each one of us, if we trust in him, he will show us what that job is.

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