**Update 28/03/21 – PALM SUNDAY**

**Our Church Building is COVID-secure, so you can either attend worship physically or worship with us on Facebook**

**(*Worship in Church is allowed during Lockdown*)**

**Holy Week and Easter:**

***Monday (29th)***

7.30pm: Virtual Stations of the Cross (livestreamed on Facebook)

***Tuesday (30th)***

7.30pm: Holy Week reflective service (livestreamed on Facebook)

***Wednesday (31st)***

6.30pm: Mid-Week Praise (recording posted on Facebook)

7.30pm: our Lent study course continues into Holy Week (on Zoom)

***Maundy Thursday (1stApril)***

7.30pm: Communion & stripping of the Sanctuary (in church)

7.30pm: Service of the Word (recording posted on Facebook)

***Good Friday (2nd)***

10.30am: The Way of the Cross (in church)

12 noon: Seven Sayings (livestreamed on Facebook)

***Easter Sunday (4th)***

10.30am Easter Communion (in church)

12 noon Easter Celebration (livestreamed on Facebook)

**To join us on Facebook, follow this link:**

[https://www.facebook.com/ChristChurchAinsworth](about:blank)

**Bible Readings** for Sunday 28th March: Palm Gospel Mark 11:1-11; Passion Gospel Mark 15: 1-39

If you missed any of our livestreamed services, some of them can be found on our website [https://www.ainsworthparish.org.uk/online-worship.html](about:blank) or our YouTube Channel

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1kRCPBIymPoDSyhH9CZYrw](about:blank) The Prayer Book Society lists some churches livestreaming BCP services: [https://www.pbs.org.uk/churches-and-services/-1](about:blank)

**Planning to attend our church building for worship? The following COVID-19 Secure restrictions apply (updated 10/1/21):**

* **Unless you are legally exempt, you must wear a facemask**
* Our seating capacity is normally limited to 28 downstairs but can be increased slightly when members of the same household/bubble attend together. There is also limited capacity (15) upstairs.
* Services are basic and short.
* Everyone must gel their hands as they enter the building.
* There is a collection plate on the font, but this will not be passed around.
* Worshippers are expected to remain 2m socially distant from each other, unless from the same household / bubble. This means sitting down promptly (where the paper is on the pew) and no gathering in the aisle or immediately outside the main door for a chat.

**(NB School bubbles do not apply in church.)**

* **When worshippers enter, they must sit in the next available pew, filling from the front and from the wall, taking care not to touch any part of the pew as you move along. There must be no heading for that favourite pew!**
* **Everyone (except the presiding priest) will remain seated throughout each service. Unfortunately, this means any children attending must also remain seated throughout the service.**
* There is no singing.
* A PowerPoint version of the order of service is projected in church.
* A Test & Trace QR Code is displayed at the entrance for those worshippers who have downloaded the NHS T&T app. Others are asked to complete a registration form each week. The forms will be destroyed after three weeks. A GDPR compliant privacy notice is posted inside church.
* We leave from the rear pew first.
* The toilet is for emergencies only, and anyone using it is expected to spray disinfectant on all surfaces they have touched.

Some will feel that it is currently better not to attend in person. Indeed, the Church of England advises that certain groups of people may be at increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19, including people who are aged 70 or older, regardless of medical conditions. Whether you attend worship in church with others, or prefer to join with us on Facebook, is entirely your decision. Our responsibility is to ensure you have the choice.

Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) should not join us in church due to the risk that they pose to others; they should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household.

***New or Amended Notices:***

**Clock Change**: A reminder that the clocks go forward at **1am today** (Sunday 28th)

**Palm Sunday (today):** Palm Crosses will be available in church. Otherwise, try making and decorating your own; bind two lolly sticks together or cut one out from paper. You could even decorate your cross before displaying it in a window. Why not take a photo and post it on our Facebook Page!

**Treasurer & Building Officer:** Geoff is about to move on to pastures new, so we are without a parish Treasurer. Going forward, this situation is unsustainable and, if we do not find a volunteer soon, we will begin to experience operational difficulties. You do not need to be an accountant to be our Treasurer; an aptitude for finance is all you need. If you think you can help, contact Revd Dave for a chat.

Also, less urgent but still important, we need a Building Officer. This is about arranging (not necessarily undertaking personally) the repair and maintenance of our church building. This could be undertaken as a ‘job share’. Again, if you feel you can help, contact Revd Dave for a chat.

**Sadly, without a Parish Treasurer we cannot pay our bills so, before long, we would cease to function.** **Please do not assume that the clergy will cover building maintenance and finance until such time as these vacancies are filled – we do not have the time!**

**Church Electoral Roll:** in preparation for our annual meeting on 4th May, it is necessary to give notice that the Electoral Roll will be closed to additions from 19th April until 5th May. If you were on the Electoral Roll last year, you will still be on it but, if you would like to be certain or join the roll, email [vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk](about:blank) . NB You need to be on the roll to vote or stand for election.

To join the Electoral Roll, you must be baptised and aged 16 or over then either a) live within our parish or, b) if non-resident, have habitually worshipped with us during the last 6 months.

**Annual Report:** also, in preparation for the annual meeting, groups and organisations are invited to send a short report of their activities / experiences during 2020 to

[vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk](about:blank) for inclusion in the annual report.

**Scouts:** [https://www.facebook.com/cooperscraftz](about:blank) are selling key rings and compass pieces to support the Scouts trip to Austria in 2022.

***Previous Notices:***

**Steppingstones for Growth:** A small group has been meeting over the past few months to discuss Church growth and think about how we might better help others as they seek to grow spiritually. We are utilising some brilliant videos produced by Manchester Diocese. Want to know more? Email Revd Dave for a Zoom link ([vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk](about:blank) ). Our next meeting (via Zoom) is on 16th April.

**Giving:** Although public worship at Christ Church is restricted, there are still significant bills to pay. Not least of these is the Parish Share. This is the common fund to which all parishes contribute, and from which most clergy receive their stipends, including our vicar. Because the income of this and other churches has declined since the COVID-19 crisis began, payments from parishes into the common fund have reduced significantly. Yet, despite this situation, all clergy continue to minister, and all are committed to doing so. None have been furloughed.

The good news is, regular giving at Christ Church via standing orders and planned giving envelopes has, to a large extent, been sustained. **A big thank you to everyone for this fantastic effort.** Unfortunately, other sources of income have reduced significantly but, despite this and unlike many parishes, we still managed to pay our Parish Share in full during 2020 by drawing upon our fast-depleting reserves.

Ministry is not cost-free. Therefore, if you normally make your offering via the envelope scheme or by placing cash on the collection plate, please consider setting up a standing order or making a bank transfer (contact Geoff Whittle on 01204 385452 or [geoffreywhittle@btinternet.com](about:blank)). Otherwise, if you can do so safely, please drop your offering through the Vicarage letter box. (NB setting up a standing order or making a bank transfer **does not** involve giving us your bank details.) And, if you can afford to make a special donation, please consider doing so!

*‘The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.’ (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)*

**Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs)** We are looking for volunteers to become ALMs. ALMs are lay people active in church life, who have been identified by their parish as having a particular gifting, vocation or calling to lay leadership. They work collaboratively alongside the Vicar and the wider ministry team, with a distinct focus on growing, nurturing, and serving the wider parish community. Areas of ministry include: Children & Families; Community Outreach & Social Action; Digital Church & Online Media; Ecology & Creation; Mission & Evangelism; Parish Admin, Finance & Governance; Pastoral Outreach & Listening; Prayer & Spirituality; Worship & Liturgy; Youth Work. Further details can be found by clicking on this link: [Diocese of Manchester | Authorised Lay Ministry (anglican.org)](about:blank) Interested? Simply contact the Vicar to start the ball rolling, with a view to applying for the 2022 course.

**Porch Boxes:** During lockdown it is not possible to receive donations for Porch Boxes in Church. However, if you shop at any of the following, they have somewhere to receive donations: ASDA (Radcliffe; Pilsworth & Bury); MORRISONS (Whitefield & Ramsbottom); TESCO (Bury & Ramsbottom) **OR we can still support Porch Boxes through a donation: A cheque made payable to “The Porch” sent to Michael Perrin, 14 Kenmore Avenue Bury BL8 2DY or Bank transfer to Account number 81643089  sort code 09-0155  account name The Porch or Online** [**https://porchboxes.wordpress.com/**](about:blank)

**Please hold in your prayers:**

**The sick**: all who are ill, especially for: Barbara Aspin, Alan Clifford, Betty Lawrence, Nora Tudge, Deborah Sandercock-Pickles, Margaret Turner, Stella Burkey and Louise Singleton.

**The bereaved:** All who have lost loved ones, especially the family and friends of Bridget Hartley. May they find healing, peace, strength, and courage to face the future.

***“The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16)***

**Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.   
Amen.**