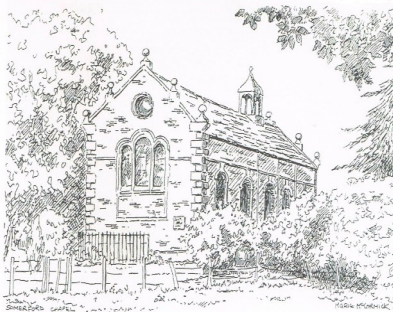
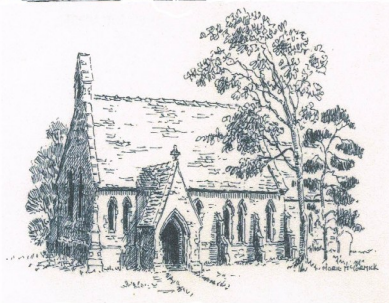


Astbury & Smallwood Parish News

November 2025

Price £1



Rector – Rev Heather Carter

Telephone 01260 702512 email revdheather@astburychurch.org.uk

Assistant Priest – Rev Steph Morris

Telephone 07703 587003 email revstephmorris@gmail.com

Reader– Andrew Bevington

Telephone 07957 961140 email a_bevington@sky.com

Reader – Andrew Bailey

Telephone 01260 640616 email aghsbailey@sky.com

***How can your church be more outward looking and share the gospel
by engaging the local community?***

After much consideration I have decided that I don't like this question. It was one which my fellow students and I had to grapple with a couple of years ago as part of an assessed piece of work on our journey to licensing in ministry, and it's one which has been back on my mind again just recently. This is in part due to a feeling that an answer to our current funding issues might also be linked in some way to our ability to address this more mission focussed challenge.

In some cases, a good answer can readily suggest itself. What used to be my home church in Birmingham now runs a very successful community cafe and meeting rooms. The modern building and location next to a small shopping hub are ideal for this purpose, but for many churches I suspect that it's not always this clear cut.

When I first thought about my own answer, I have to confess that I was more concerned with getting a good mark and passing an assignment. This somewhat less than worthy context led perhaps not surprisingly to a suggestion which as I now look back seems more rooted in pipe dream than reality

My inspiration had come from a visit to the National Trust 'poison garden' at Alnwick where many types of toxic plants are grown for display. So, I envisioned how our own churchyard might be used for a 'flora of the bible' garden where various plants from the Old and New Testaments would be cultivated. Fig trees, lilies, olives, myrrh, wheat, mustard, grape vines and many more would be on display with a corresponding plaque to address their biblical significance, and our

own aged yew tree would be given centre stage. I argued that such an attraction would naturally gain publicity in the local media and attract many visitors. I suspect there may have been a few ‘horticultural’ issues with my idea, but I did receive a good pass, perhaps the marker knew little more about gardening than I did.

What I remember most about the whole exercise was that even as I was writing it all down, I knew that it would never work: it felt like a spark of something essential was missing. It has taken me a while to realise that the spark in question was divine in nature and so I would like to take this opportunity to share a few additional thoughts on the matter.

Perhaps jumping straight into trying to solve community engagement and spreading the good news is not the best place to start for a church seeking to be more outward facing. When we look at the gospel stories, they certainly seem to point us towards a couple of more basic, underlying questions which should first be addressed.

The parable of poor Lazarus and the rich man who never notices him, prompts us to ask, ‘Who are the needy around us that we may be oblivious to?’ The busy food bank in Congleton reminds us of the many people with physical needs, but should we also consider those now living in a kind of spiritual poverty, hungry for hope and meaning?

The second question, from the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand, challenges us to remember that in amongst all our many problems we also need to be aware of what we as a church ‘have’ that we can offer to God and our local community, however small it may seem to us.

Praying and reflecting on these would, I think, start to point us in the right direction but perhaps would still not get us to the heart of the matter, which I would now like to suggest is to be found more in our own attitudes and mindset.

Written in the floor of the central lobby of the House of Parliament, at the heart of our government is a bible verse from Psalm 127 – ‘Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.’

These words seem ever more significant as our nation struggles with so many challenges, but they are also a reminder for us as people of faith. God is not the exclusive property of the church, to be wheeled out when we are ready and have made our own plans but rather is always to be found out there at work, ‘building’ in our communities and in the world in ways which we just fail to notice for much of the time. God invites us to join him, it is not up to the labourers to choose what sort of house to build. So, in a sense, it is not for myself, the PCC, the congregation or ministry team to ‘solve’ the question of how best to do mission in our local community.

This is the wider context we need to be aware of and in which we need to find our inspiration and ideas, and I believe that it leads us to start asking some much more beneficial opening questions.

Are we able to recognise where God is already at work in and around us, in our church and communities, are we open to where He might be leading us, and perhaps most importantly of all, are we willing to join in?

Andrew

Editor – Mr W. Ball

The Old Vicarage, Reades Lane, Congleton, CW12 3LL.
Telephone 01260 279276 Mobile 07710 234943

Our congratulations go to Denise, who was licensed as a Reader in the Diocese of Chester in a service at the Cathedral on Saturday 11th October.

Somerford Chapel had a very successful Harvest Festival service on the last Sunday in September. We had very generous donations of food produce which all went to the Food Bank at New Life Church.

The Chapel is closed now until the Carol Service on 14th December at 2.30 pm. Pop it into your diaries now The all-weather car parking will prove to be a blessing again probably.

The Macclesfield Male Voice Choir concert in August celebrating the Chapel's 350th. anniversary proved to be so popular with the audience of 85 people and raised over £1300 for Motor Neurone Disease, that we are planning to have another Concert next August!

Ken Wainwright

Astbury Ladies' Fellowship: The chairman welcomed members to the October meeting, along with Peter Aston, who would talk to us about The Old Saw Mill. We said the Fellowship Prayer, thinking of Cynthia Garside who is not well, and our treasurer Christine whose daughter Nicky is feeling much better after her eye operation. A report of the September meeting was read and then we had a very interesting talk from Peter Aston, who with his wife Linda and fifty volunteers had run the Old Saw Mill.

He called his talk The Old Saw Mill, Chapter 2. Chapter 1 had begun 16 years ago, when Town Mayor Margaret Williamson had created a 'Sustainability' Group. One of the projects had been to process the glut of apples into apple juice and cider. He told us how they had taken the Pointon family's old timber yard, refurbishing it and installing the apple processing equipment. They gradually increased production and supplied many outlets. At the same time they were also supplying boxed meals to anyone who needed them. However, after a while, financial problems arose which meant their leaving the old property. They continued boxing the meals in the Town Hall, but the apple presses went into storage.

That was the end of Chapter 1 – but last year they had the opportunity to purchase some land locally, and the idea grew that this could be cleared and the apple pressing business could begin again. That is the beginning of Chapter 2. We thanked Peter for his inspiring talk, and then Linda handed round small cups of apple juice for us to taste and enjoy.

Pamela Price had sent details of the winter luncheon (Wednesday 21st January, 12.15 for 12.30 pm at the Legs of Man). Once again, there is an extensive menu to choose from. If you would like to come – and everyone is warmly invited to join us – Pamela

would like to have names by 19th November. Please contact her (01260 591518) or Carole (07484 525829).

Members chatted over their cups of tea – thank you Anita and Margaret Pearson. The raffle was drawn. The next meeting will be on 19th November, When Jan Hardie Woolridge is doing a demonstration with a difference. She will show us how to make and paint some hellebores to be used as a Christmas gift (eg, bottle of wine, Christmas cracker). If anyone would like to do it along with her, please get in touch with me and she will bring extra materials. The Christmas lunch will be on 10th December, but more about that anon. I hope everyone is keeping well and I look forward to seeing you in November.

Carole Goodwin

Astbury Women's Institute: Our latest meeting took place at the village hall on Wednesday 1st October. Despite the disappointment of the speaker failing to arrive, it was a very pleasant, relaxed sort of evening. President Margaret welcomed members, and four visitors who she hoped would decide to join us and enjoy being part of our WI. After our rendition of *Jerusalem* came the thank-yous. Rhoda Bailey had provided a pretty plant for the President's table, which afterwards was donated to the raffle. Cath Cunliffe had created buttonholes which were given to ladies with October birthdays. One of these was Carol Steer, who would soon celebrate one of those daunting birthdays with a nought on the end. She had kindly baked three types of cake for us to enjoy at refreshment time. They were delicious.

The business of the evening included the usual correspondence with details of forthcoming events, at county and national level. Liz, our secretary, read a thank you letter from the neonatal ward at UHNS for the baby bonnets which some of our members had knitted. Catherine Pedley updated us on future Dane Valley events. The Autumn Group Meeting is on Thursday 16th October at Goostrey when members can look forward to a talk from The History Wardrobe on 'Mary Quant – Fashion Icon.' Lisa Cartlidge has volunteered to read Astbury's contribution to the Group Carol Service on Sunday 30th November at Smallwood Church.



Carol Steer with her special birthday buttonhole



President and Secretary – Margaret Pearson & Liz Edmunds

Some of our members can look forward to a seasonal evening meal at The Crown in Goostrey on Tuesday 14th October. Our groups continue to meet regularly. We stroll happily around Astbury Mere most Mondays at 11.00 am. The Knit and Natter group have (with help from the wider membership) provided harvest-themed toppers for the post boxes in the village and outside The Horseshoe. Our Striders had repeated their earlier walk around Goostrey Village, which included a stop at Bidlea Dairy and concluded with lunch at The Crown. They look forward to a different walk around the Goostrey area on Saturday 18th October.



Astbury Village post box topper

Margaret encouraged Gilly McKeane to tell members about her recent trip to London, in support of the Dignity on Dying Bill. She had been down twice previously as the bill passed through the House of Commons, and was there for the passing through the Lords to go to the Committee Stage. Gilly told us of some of the people who (like herself) might be affected by the outcome of the bill. One of her fellow

campaigners had invited her and her friend to be his guests at a choral concert in which he was performing in Westminster Abbey that same evening. She said how much they had enjoyed this very special event.

After the business of the evening, we had the opportunity for a relaxed chat with friends old and new over a cup of tea or coffee and a piece of Carol's delicious cake. The evening's competition for 'Poppies in any Medium' was won by our visitor who is now a member, Lisa Harding. She had painted a stunning poster for Remembrance. Carol Steer was second and Margaret Pearson third. The Dane Valley entry for 'The Swinging Sixties' will be entered by Carol Steer.

Our next meeting is our AGM which will be held in the village hall on Wednesday 5th November at the earlier time of **7.00 pm**. We shall begin with the Pie and Pea Supper, followed by the business of the evening, presentations and the election of our new committee and president. Our Christmas Party will take place at The Plough at Eaton on Tuesday 9th December.

New members are always welcome. For further details please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Margaret, or secretary, Liz. Phone Margaret on 07581 095418, or Liz on 07766 738004, or Kate on 07875 691170. You can also message us through our Astbury WI Facebook page.

Margaret Pearson (President)

Sartor's Quiz (Answers on page 17)

1. Which of these liturgical colours signifies joy? a. Green; b. Red; c. Violet; d. White.
2. Which of these architectural terms is the odd one out? a. Corinthian; b. Doric; c. Gothic; d. Ionic.
3. Rabbi Lionel Blue was a fellow of a college in which university? a. Durham; b. London; c. Oxford; d. Cambridge.
4. To whom, or to what, did Samuel give the name Ebenezer? a. A child; b. A servant; c. An altar; d. A stone.

5. Which of David's wives was the mother of Solomon? a. Abigail; b. Ahinoam; c. Bathsheba; d. Michal.
6. What was the name of David's father? a. Joash; b. Joab; c. Jesse; d. Joshua.
7. Which Christian name means 'Lover of horses'? a. Albert; b. Philip; c. Randolph; d. Stephen.
8. The NHS was in operation by 5th July in what year? a. 1948; b. 1950; c. 1952; d. 1954.
9. How many times did Nat Lofthouse, the Bolton centre-forward, appear for England? a. 13; b. 23; c. 33; d. 43.
10. Who killed Cock Robin? a. Cat; b. Dog; c. Hawk; d. Sparrow.

WORDS OF WIT & WISDOM

New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life and power and thought.

John Keble, 1792-1866

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high, untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

John Gillespie Magee, 1922-1941, American airman, member of the
Royal Canadian Air Force, *High Flight* (1943), quoted by President
Ronald Reagan after the loss of the space shuttle Challenger
with all its crew, 23rd January 1986

If speaking is silver, then listening is gold.

Turkish proverb

It's good to shut up sometimes. Marcel Marceau (mime artiste)

In every person there is a deep craving to be appreciated. That need can only be met in a home where acceptance, love and encouragement bond all family members together. Your home should be your haven, the place where you find shelter from the storms of life.

UCB *Word for Today*, Thursday 30th June 2022

Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out. John Wooden

Horse sense is that enviable faculty that protects horses from betting on humans. Sir Humphrey Dibble

Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past,
and live this day as if thy last;
improve thy talent with due care;
for the great day thyself prepare.

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

FASCINATING FACTS

The time will come when diligent research over long periods will bring to light things which now lie hidden. A single lifetime, even though entirely devoted to the sky, would not be enough for the investigation of so vast a subject. - - - And so this knowledge will be unfolded only through long successive ages. There will come a time when our descendants will be amazed that we did not know things that are so plain to them. - - - Many discoveries are reserved for ages still to come, when memory of us will have been effaced. Our universe is a sorry little affair unless it has in it something for every age to investigate, - - - 'Nature does not reveal her mysteries once and for all.' (Seneca, *Natural Questions*, Book 7, 1st century AD)

Carl Sagan, *Cosmos, The Story of Cosmic Evolution, Science and Civilisation*, p11, Introduction

The Banquet

Lord Copper, newspaper magnate and proprietor of the *Daily Beast*, is giving a banquet to celebrate reporter William Boot's accidental scoop.

Lord Copper quite often gave banquets; it would be an understatement to say that no one enjoyed them more than the host, for no one else enjoyed them at all, while Lord Copper positively exulted in every minute. For him they satisfied every requirement of a happy evening's entertainment; like everything that was to Lord Copper's taste, they were a little over life-size, unduly large and unduly long; they took place in restaurants which existed solely for such purposes, amid decorations which reminded Lord Copper of his execrable country seat at East Finchley; the provisions were copious, very bad and very expensive; the guests were assembled for no other reason than that Lord Copper had ordered it; they did not want to see each other; they had no reason to rejoice on the occasions which Lord Copper celebrated; they were there either because it was part of their job or because they were glad of a free dinner. Many were already on Lord Copper's pay roll and they thus found their working day prolonged by some three hours without recompense – with the forfeit, indeed, of the considerable expenses of dressing up, coming out at night, and missing the last train home; those who were normally the slaves of other masters were, Lord Copper felt, his for the evening. He had bought them and bound them, hand and foot, with consommé and cream of chicken, turbot and saddle, duck and pêche melba; and afterwards, when the cigars had been furtively pocketed and the brandy glasses filled with the horrible brown compound for which Lord Copper was paying two pounds a bottle, there came the golden hour when he rose to speak at whatever length he liked and on whatever subject, without fear of rivalry or interruption.

Evelyn Waugh, *Scoop*, pp215-216

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Astbury & Smallwood Parish News

Publication & Copy Dates 2025/6

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Last Date for material 19th December

The February issue will be published on 25th January

Last Date for material 16th January

The March issue will be published on 1st March

Last Date for material 20th February

The April issue will be published on 29th March

Last Date for material 20th March

The May issue will be published on 26th April

Last Date for material 17th April

The June issue will be published on 31st May

Last Date for material 22nd May

The July issue will be published on 28th June

Last Date for material 19th June

The August issue will be published on 26th July

Last Date for material 17th July

The September issue will be published on 30th August

Last Date for material 21st August

The October issue will be published on 27th September

Last Date for material 18th September

The November issue will be published on 25th October

Last Date for material 16th October

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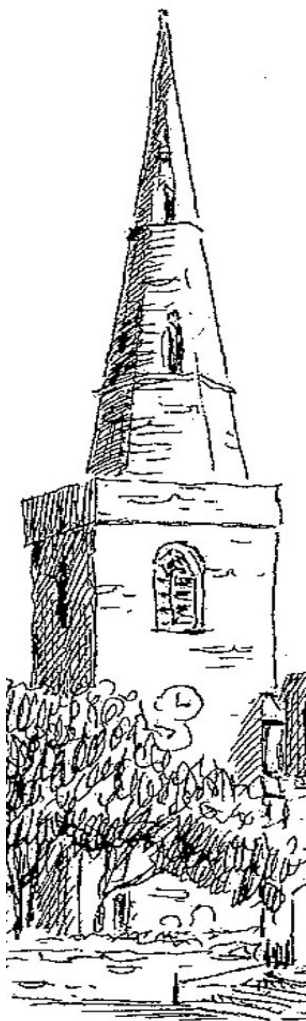
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ASSISTANT PRIEST		Rev Steph Morris	07703 587003
READERS		Andrew Bevington	07957 961140
		Andrew Bailey	01260 640616
		Denise Morrey-Carter	01260 702512
CHURCHWARDEN		Dr Sally Drage	01260 270217
CHURCHWARDEN ELECT		Mr Trevor Massey	01260 271254
SERVICES	8.00 am	1st & 3rd Sundays	Holy Communion BCP
	8.00 am	2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays	Morning Prayer BCP
	11.00 am	1st & 3rd Sundays	Morning Praise CW
	11.00 am	2nd & 4th Sundays	Holy Communion CW
	11.00 am	5th Sunday	Benefice Service
	6.30 pm	1st & 3rd Sundays	Compline
	6.30 pm	2nd & 4th Sundays	Evensong BCP
Wednesday	11.30 am	every Wednesday	Holy Communion CW
	2.45 pm	every Wednesday	Community Worship

Funerals and Services of Holy Baptism & Holy Matrimony by arrangement with the Wardens

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Hon. Secretary	Mrs M. Chapman	
Hon. Asst. Secretary	Mr A. Bailey	01260 640616
Hon. Treasurer	Mr T. Buiskool	
DEANERY SYNOD	Mrs C. Goodwin, Mr A. Bailey, Mr A. Bevington	
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CO-OPTED PCC MEMBERS	Miss P. Blythe, Prof Denise Morrey-Carter	

SIDSEPEOPLE	see ASTBURY ROTAS	
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Head Teacher	Miss P. Blythe	01260 272528
Chairman of Governors	Mrs K. Moore	01260 290135

WEBSITES www.astburychurch.org.uk

CHURCH KEYS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Astbury Church choir meets to practise every Friday evening
between 7.00 and 8.00 pm.

Astbury Church bellringers meet to practise every Wednesday evening
between 7.30 and 9.30 pm.

ASTBURY ROTAS for CLEANING & BRASS – *currently suspended*

ASTBURY ROTAS

		8.00 am	11.00 am	6.30 pm
October	26th	Bill Ball	Sally Shaw	Peter Snape
November	2nd	Bill Ball	Carole Goodwin	Peter Snape
	9th	Jean Nadin	Brenda Cook	Peter Snape
	16th	Bill Ball	Andrew Bailey	Peter Snape
	23rd	Jean Nadin	Brenda Cook	Peter Snape
	30th	Bill Ball	NO SERVICE	Peter Snape
December	7th	Bill Ball	TBA	Peter Snape

Answers to Sartor's Quiz this month (page 9)

1 – d; 2 – c; 3 – a; 4 – d; 5 – c; 6 – c; 7 – b; 8 – a; 9 – c; 10 – d.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Matrimony

September 27th Oliver Ian Francis Williams & Jessica Elizabeth Wilshaw

Burial of the Dead

September 29th	Lawson Stuart Beech	84
October 1st	Derek Johnson	76 ashes
October 3rd	George Joseph Ball	86

JOINT PARISHES CALENDAR FOR THE COMING WEEKS

OCTOBER

Sun 26th TRINITY XIX

8.00 am	Astbury	November <i>Parish News</i> published
9.30 am	Smallwood	Morning Prayer (BCP)
11.00 am	Astbury	Worship for all
6.30 pm	Astbury	Holy Communion
		Evensong (BCP)

Wed	29th	11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
		2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service

NOVEMBER

Sun 2nd TRINITY XX

8.00 am	Astbury	Holy Communion (BCP) – Rev Ian
9.30 am	Smallwood	Holy Communion (CW) [Enticott
11.00 am	Astbury	All Saints’ Service
6.30 pm	Astbury	All Souls’ service
11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service
7.30 pm	Astbury	Women’s Institute

Sun 9th REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – TRINITY XXI

8.00 am	Astbury	Morning Prayer (BCP)
10.50 am	Astbury	Remembrance Service
3.00 pm	Smallwood	Remembrance Service
6.30 pm	Astbury	Holy Communion (BCP)
11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service

Sun 16th TRINITY XXII

		8.00 am	Astbury	Holy Communion (BCP) – Rev Ian
		9.30 am	Smallwood	Holy Communion (CW) [Enticott
		11.00 am	Astbury	Morning Praise (CW)
		1.00 pm	Astbury	Holy Baptism
		6.30 pm	Astbury	Compline
Mon	17th	7.30 pm	Astbury	PCC Meeting
Wed	19th	11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
		1.30 pm	Astbury	Ladies' Fellowship
		2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service
Fri	21st	6.00 pm		Copy date for <i>Parish News</i>
Sat	22nd	10.00 am	Astbury VH	Baptism Preparation

Joint Parishes Calendar, continued

NOVEMBER

Sun 23rd THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

		8.00 am	Astbury	Morning Prayer (BCP)
		9.30 am	Smallwood	All Age Service
		11.00 am	Astbury	Holy Communion (CW)
		1.00 pm	Astbury	Holy Baptisms
		6.30 pm	Astbury	Evensong
Wed	26th	11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
		2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service

Sun 30th ADVENT SUNDAY

				December <i>Parish News</i> published
		8.00 am	Astbury	Morning Prayer (BCP)
		10.30 am	TBA	Benefice Service
		6.30 pm	Astbury	Advent Carol Service

DECEMBER

Wed	3rd	11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
		2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service
		7.30 pm	Astbury	Women's Institute

Sun 7th ADVENT II

		8.00 am	Astbury	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30 am	Smallwood	Holy Communion (CW)
		11.00 am	Astbury	Morning Praise (CW)
		4.00 pm	Biddulph OH	Christmas at the Old Hall
		6.30 pm	Astbury	Compline
Wed	10th	11.30 am	Astbury VH	Holy Communion (CW)
		2.45 pm	Astbury	Community Service

ASTBURY & SMALLWOOD PARISH NEWS

is also available in large-print format.

Please let Mr Ball know if you require such a copy.

Editor – Mr W. Ball

Telephone 01260 279276 email wbbtov@gmail.com

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Somerford by Marie McCormick

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