

St. Philip's News



February 2026

Ash Wednesday: Beginning Again with Dust and Hope



Ash Wednesday has a reputation problem. It sounds stern, looks serious, and involves having a smudge of ash placed on your forehead - not usually a strong selling point in the age of selfies. And yet, year after year, people come. Some regularly, some occasionally. Which suggests there's something quietly compelling going on.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent: forty days (excluding Sundays!) in which the church invites us to slow down, take stock, and make a little space for God. The ashes themselves are usually made from last year's palm crosses, burned down to fine dust. There's something beautifully honest about that. Even our most joyful moments don't last forever. Hosannas turn to ash. And still, God is not finished with us.

The words used as the ashes are imposed are stark: *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."* Not exactly a cheery greeting card. But this isn't about being morbid or gloomy. It's about truth-telling. We are fragile. We are limited. We get tired, distracted, anxious, and sometimes a bit lost. Ash Wednesday gives us permission to stop pretending otherwise.

But that's only half the sentence. The other half is hope. Dust is not the end of the story. In the opening pages of the Bible, God takes dust and breathes life into it. What looks lifeless becomes alive. What seems finished becomes a beginning. Ash Wednesday is not about wallowing in failure; it's about making room for renewal.

Lent, then, is not a spiritual endurance test or a competition in joyless self-denial. Giving things up can be helpful, but only if it helps us pay attention. The real invitation is to turn again - to reorient our lives, gently and honestly, towards love: love of God, love of neighbour, love of ourselves (which is often the hardest bit).

So, Ash Wednesday is not for the especially holy. It's for the tired, the hopeful, the curious, the doubtful, and the quietly faithful. It's for anyone who senses that life could be lived a little more deeply, a little more truthfully, a little more gently.

We come with empty hands, receive a mark of ash, and begin again. And that, oddly enough, is very good news indeed.

Reed Jonathan

Services in February



Sunday 1 February

9.30am Morning Worship
- *4th of Epiphany*

1st Reading: 1 Cor 1. 18-end
Jill Dorrington

Gospel: John 2. 1-11
Ros Loach

Intercessions: Beckie Briggs

Friday 6th February

2.00pm Communion
Priest: Gordon Cooper

Sunday 8 February

9.30am Communion
- *2nd before Lent*

1st Reading: Romans 8. 18-25
Simon Carlton

Gospel: Matt 6. 25-end
Stella Ambler

Intercessions: John Prior

Friday 13 February

2.00pm Prayer Meeting

Sunday 15 February

9.30am All Together Worship
- *Next before Lent*

1st Reading: 2 Pet 1. 16-end

Gospel: Matt 17. 1-9

Wednesday 18 February

2.00pm Ash Wednesday
Communion
in Church Hall

Friday 20 February

2.00pm No service

Sunday 22 February

9.30am Communion
- *1st of Lent*

1st Reading: Rom 5. 12-19
Ann Riley

Gospel: Matt 4. 1-11
Maureen Martin

Intercessions: John Edward

6.30pm Taizé @ St Philip's
Scholes

Friday 27 February

2.00pm Prayer Meeting

IMPORTANT!!!

St Philip's will be closed for all mid-week activities from 9th to 28th February but will remain open for Sunday services as normal. This is to allow our electrician to do some essential repairs and to install all the fire safety equipment that we need to make sure that the church is always safe for our many users.

Lord, teach us to pray.

It sounds exciting, put like that.

It sounds real. An exploration.

**A chance to do more than catalogue
and list the things I want,
to an eternal Father Christmas.**

**The chance of meeting you,
of drawing closer to the love that made me,
and keeps me, and knows me.**

And, Lord, it's only just begun.

**There is so much more of you,
the limitless expanse of knowing you.**

It could be frightening, Lord.

**It could be lonely, but you are here,
with me.**

**The chance of learning about myself,
of facing up to what I am.**

**Admitting my resentments,
bringing my anger to you,
my disappointments, my frustration.**

**And finding that when I do,
when I stop struggling and shouting,
and let go**

You are still there.

Still loving.

Sometimes, Lord

I don't know what to say to you.

But I still come, in quiet.

**For the comfort of friends
sitting in silence.**

**And it's then, Lord,
that I learn most from you.**

**When my mind slows down,
and my heart stops racing.**

**When I let go and wait in the quiet,
realizing that all the things**

I was going to ask for

You know already.

**Then, Lord, without words
in the stillness**

You are there ...

Lord, teach us to pray.

Eddie Askew



ST PHILIP'S, SCHOLLES SUNDAY

22 FEBRUARY @ 6:30pm

If you've never been to Taizé worship service before, why not consider coming along. It involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, periods of silence and liturgical readings.

In the Kitchen



- ⇒ Don't put warm or hot food into the fridge or freezer as this will make the fridge work extra hard to try and keep it cold; always allow food to cool down first.
- ⇒ Use a bowl to wash up rather than a running tap and save £25 a year in energy bills.
- ⇒ When making a cup of tea, only boil the amount of water that you need. You waste electricity (and money) heating water you won't use.
- ⇒ Eat less meat, particularly red meat; producing 1kg of beef produces the equivalent CO² to you driving a 300mile round trip while leaving all your lights on at home.

Prayer Chain

We are launching a new Prayer Chain in May 2026! If you like praying and have a WhatsApp account, we would love you to join us!

To find out more, or to sign up, please contact Clare de Normanville:
stphilips.webeditor@gmail.com



Please note the Café will only be open on **Friday 6th February** from 9:00am to 12:00pm and then closed for the rest of the month. This is to allow for essential electrical work to be undertaken at church.

Our usual Saturday café will **NOT** be taking place on Saturday 28th February.

Please accept our apologies for this closure and we look forward to seeing you all again in March.

Fearfully & Wonderfully Made



HOME

GROUP



Friendship & Fellowship



Prayer



Laughter



A traditional hymn or two



WHERE: John & Sally Edward's home
73 Nook Road, Scholes LS15 4AX



WHEN: First Wednesday of the Month
7:30pm - 9:00pm

Everyone is welcome!

Especially if you are not a regular at a home group – no need to book, just turn up.

CARING FOR EACH OTHER...

If you haven't seen someone for a while, please either try and find out how they are or let us know and we will try and make contact. Please also ask the person if they would like to go on the prayer list (using their full name or just first name). A note to us giving a contact number or address of the person concerned often helps.

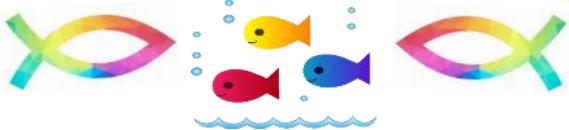




Confirmation

We will be having a confirmation service in the Benefice on **17th May**, to be held at St Peter's. Confirmation is an opportunity to say a personal “yes” to the faith into which you were baptised, and to explore what it means to follow Christ today - questions, doubts and all. In a service led by the Bishop, we pray for the strengthening of the Holy Spirit, not because anyone has it all sorted, but because we all need encouragement for the journey. If you're curious, feeling a nudge, or simply want to take the next step, this may be for you - do have a word with Revd Jonathan to find out more.

Little Fishes



Parent & Toddler Group

For ages 0 – 4

Tuesday 3rd February
10.30am – 12.00pm

Please Note:
The group will be closed until
Tuesday 3rd March

come serve with us

We need more volunteers in every area of church life, so if you would be interested to help with:

- Music Group
- Reading / Intercessions
- PA Desk
- Refreshments
- Welcome team
- Prayer Ministry

or would just like to find out more, please contact Revd Jonathan or Ann Riley.

All volunteers would be required to undertake necessary training / legal checks (DBS).

Need prayer?



Got something on your heart and need a listening ear? Our Prayer Ministry Team are here every Sunday after the morning service, just come over to the Prayer Area on the right side of the church. It's private, confidential, and you'll be with people who care.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for entries into the March issue of this Newsletter is **Monday 23rd February 2026.**

Please send any items to admin@elmetetrinity.org

If you need anything advertising between editions of the Newsletter, please contact Diane who will send out information via email and Facebook.



Prayer Group

What is prayer?

And why do we do it?

Prayer is our way of communicating with God and, incidentally, with each other.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Friday afternoon of every month to discuss and then pray for people and events within our local community and in the wider world.

If you want to know more, please speak to Ros Loach or email admin@elmetetrinity.org.

You would be very welcome to come along at any time, as and when you can, for a cup of tea and chat to find out what it is all about.

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

**Our next meeting will be on
2nd February at 7.30pm.
Alan Stanley is talking about
"the Prison Service".**

**On 2nd March our speaker is
George Gale talking about
"Whitby Muster Rolls"**

Mothers' Union is a global Christian movement working with people of all faiths and none to develop communities, strengthen families and advocate for change. Our members are active in 83 countries and work tirelessly to serve their communities to build a future where everyone thrives.

Ending violence, ending poverty, ending injustice. We are a truly worldwide Christian movement. And a local one!

We usually meet on the first Monday of each month at 7.30pm at St Philip's church.

If you want to know more, please contact:

Sally Wray ~ 07484 152 886

Elizabeth Lawson ~ 07518 642 942

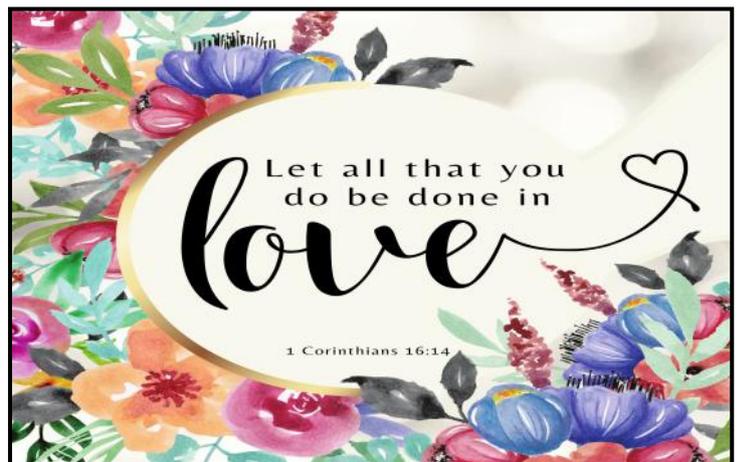
Foodbank

FOOD FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

The Food Bank is short of the following items and any donations are much appreciated:

- ⇒ **Tinned Meats**
- ⇒ **Tinned Fruit**
- ⇒ **Tinned Potatoes**
- ⇒ **Packet Mash**
- ⇒ **Pot Noodles/Super Noodles**
- ⇒ **Toilet Rolls**
- ⇒ **Shower Gel / Toiletries**

If you can pop an extra item into your shopping basket, it really does help. Thank you!





Ash Wednesday Service

18 February 2026

2pm

In the Church Hall



Lent Reflection - Saturdays in Lent

For Lent this year, we will be meeting together to reflect the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter.

We will meet together **every Saturday during Lent at 12 noon** (starting on 21st February, then every Saturday until 28th March) for just half an hour with time for prayer, silence, quiet music and reflections on the weekly theme of Christian discipleship - worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

Just come and receive.

"Draw Near is all about teaching us how we can cultivate the habits and practices that will draw us nearer to God.

And we will find that, in doing so, God will draw nearer to us, too."

Archbishop Sarah Mullally & Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



Reflections and prayers to help you find and follow God in everyday life

Everyday Faith is the daily devotional app from the Church of England designed to inspire, equip and encourage you in your faith every day of the week, not just on Sundays.

Everyday Faith is about where and how we encounter God as we go about our lives. Where is God in our daily lives? How do we find God in the fullness of everyday life?

Whether you wish to develop your faith or support others in theirs, Everyday Faith is designed to support you in your life discipleship, or vocational journey.

The app will provide you with carefully curated daily reflections, including selected Bible readings, a simple prayer to prepare you for the day ahead, and thoughts based on that week's theme.

Search "Everyday Faith" in the App Store or Google Play to download this free app.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Is there something you'd like us to pray about? You can send your prayer requests by using this QR Code and completing the form.

All prayer requests are confidential.



GIVING

SUPPORT THE WORK OF ST PHILIP'S

St Philip's is a charity which receives no funding from the government and is entirely dependent on donations to keep its doors open, continue its work in the community and maintain its buildings and surroundings.

If you would like to support us, you can donate in the plate or use the contactless device at the entrance to church. If you would like to give regularly, you can set up a Standing Order or use a Giving Envelope.

More info from Tim South, the Treasurer or Revd Jonathan.



Standing Order

Giving Envelope



Contactless



Collection Plate



giftaid it

If you pay UK Income Tax, we encourage you to Gift Aid all your giving to church. Gift Aid in the UK is a scheme enabling registered charities to reclaim the tax from the Government on a donation made by a UK taxpayer, increasing the donation by 25p for every £1 you give, without costing you any extra.



PALM SUNDAY

PRaise & PROSECCO

SUNDAY 29 MARCH @ 6PM

ST PETER'S THORNER

WORSHIP OLD AND NEW

**AS WE JOURNEY INTO HOLY WEEK –
WITH MUSIC, A REFLECTION, PRAYER,
AND A GLASS OF PROSECCO TO CELEBRATE**

TIME FOR GOD
TIME FOR GOD

Lent

Lent Quiet Morning - Leeds

Date: Saturday 7th March 2026

Time: 9:00am - 12:00pm

Venue: Leeds Minster

Speaker: Revd Janet Williams, Vice Principal of St Hild College

Theme: Time for God

This quiet morning will include some reflections on finding every day a 'holy day', on being held by God in season and out of season, and on the transfiguration of time. You are encouraged to bring whatever helps you reflect – such as a journal, knitting, or doodle pad.

**If you are interested in attending,
please let Diane Brennan know and she will book you a place.**

St Philip's Church Weekend Away

18th-20th September 2026
at Wydale Hall



Join us for a refreshing and faith-filled weekend at beautiful Wydale Hall, set in the peaceful North Yorkshire countryside. It's a chance to pause, pray, and enjoy good company, good food, and plenty of laughter together. There'll be time for worship, reflection, walks, and rest – something for everyone!

Come and be part of it – a weekend to reconnect with God, with one another, and with yourself.

Cost: £224 per person

Children under 2 years: **Free**

Children aged 2-11: **40% of adult price**

Children aged 12-16: **60% of adult price**

All accommodation is En-Suite and Full Board will be provided

**For more information and a Booking Form
please see Alan Stanley or Revd Jonathan
A £25 Deposit per person will be required**

Wydale

www.wydale.org





Open Doors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

FIVE THINGS

TO KNOW

ABOUT CHINA'S

CRACKDOWN

ON CHURCHES



Representative image

There's a renewed crackdown on churches in China, with the high-profile Zion Church among those targeted. What exactly is happening and how can you pray?

1 WHAT HAPPENED AT ZION CHURCH?

Zion Church is one of the most influential underground house church networks in China. Founded in 2007 in Beijing by Pastor Jin Mingri, it's grown to over 40 cities with an estimated membership of 10,000.

In 2018, the Chinese government officially banned the church and confiscated its property after they refused to install CCTV cameras. The church turned to a 'hybrid model', with large online services alongside smaller, in-person house churches.

In October, 38 people were arrested in a series of coordinated raids.

At the time of writing, 22 are believed to remain in detention.

2 WHAT'S TRIGGERED THE CRACKDOWN?

It appears to be linked to the 'Online Code of Conduct for Religious Professionals', implemented in September 2025, which restricts religious content online unless it's disseminated through state-approved channels.

The charge of 'illegally using internet information' – which has been formally levelled at Pastor Jin Mingri and four others – suggests that the church's online ministry may have triggered the arrests.

3 HOW ARE OTHER CHRISTIANS IN CHINA RESPONDING?

They're experiencing a mixture of fear, sorrow and solidarity. Prominent house churches have publicly expressed support for Zion Church. Others are encouraging Chinese believers to hold onto hope, and calling for unity and prayer.

"We're crying out not only for peace, but for revival."

4 ARE FURTHER ARRESTS EXPECTED?

Probably. "Since 2018, under Xi Jinping's agenda of the Sinicisation of Religion – an effort to make religion more 'Chinese' – the space for religious freedom in China, particularly for Christians, has continued to shrink," explains Juliana*, a local partner.

"What we're witnessing is not an isolated incident – it's a calculated move. This tactic has been used by the authorities to control the growth of the church, specifically those unable to 'obey their management' ('illegal' or 'unregistered' churches).

"Zion Church was deliberately targeted to send a chilling

message to others, to intimidate the broader Christian community."

5 HOW ELSE HAVE BELIEVERS BEEN AFFECTED?

Several pastors' homes have been sealed, personal assets confiscated and bank accounts frozen. Legal assistance has been obstructed. Their families, lawyers and fellow believers remain under immense emotional and spiritual strain.

"We're facing a very real spiritual battle," shares the pastoral team from Zion Church. "What's being suppressed is not just one congregation or one group of people – it's the church in China as a whole, standing at a historic crossroads. We're crying out not only for peace, but for revival. Not only for release, but for the coming of God's Kingdom."

PLEASE PRAY

- For the release of those held, and for the crackdown to end
- For wisdom, strength and provision for those affected
- That faith and hope will reign in believers' hearts, and for revival in China.



**THE BIG
PLASTIC
COUNT
9-15 MARCH**

**JOIN THE UK'S BIGGEST
PEOPLE-POWERED
INVESTIGATION INTO
PLASTIC WASTE.**

The Big Plastic Count is back for 2026 and you can sign up to take part NOW!

In previous years, The Big Plastic Count has revealed that most of our plastic isn't actually recycled... The majority is burned in the UK, and the rest is sent overseas or to landfill. Burning plastic waste is a big problem – it fuels the climate crisis, pollutes the air, and harms the health of our communities – *especially* those hit hardest by inequality.

So what better way to make this year *count* than by joining the UK's biggest people-powered investigation into plastic waste?

From 9–15 March, thousands of schools, households and communities around the UK will count the plastic packaging they throw away. We'll then use this evidence to keep pushing the government to take urgent action to tackle the plastics crisis.

Since our last campaign, the UK has elected a new government – one that says it's serious about tackling plastic waste. This is our chance to put their promise to the test.

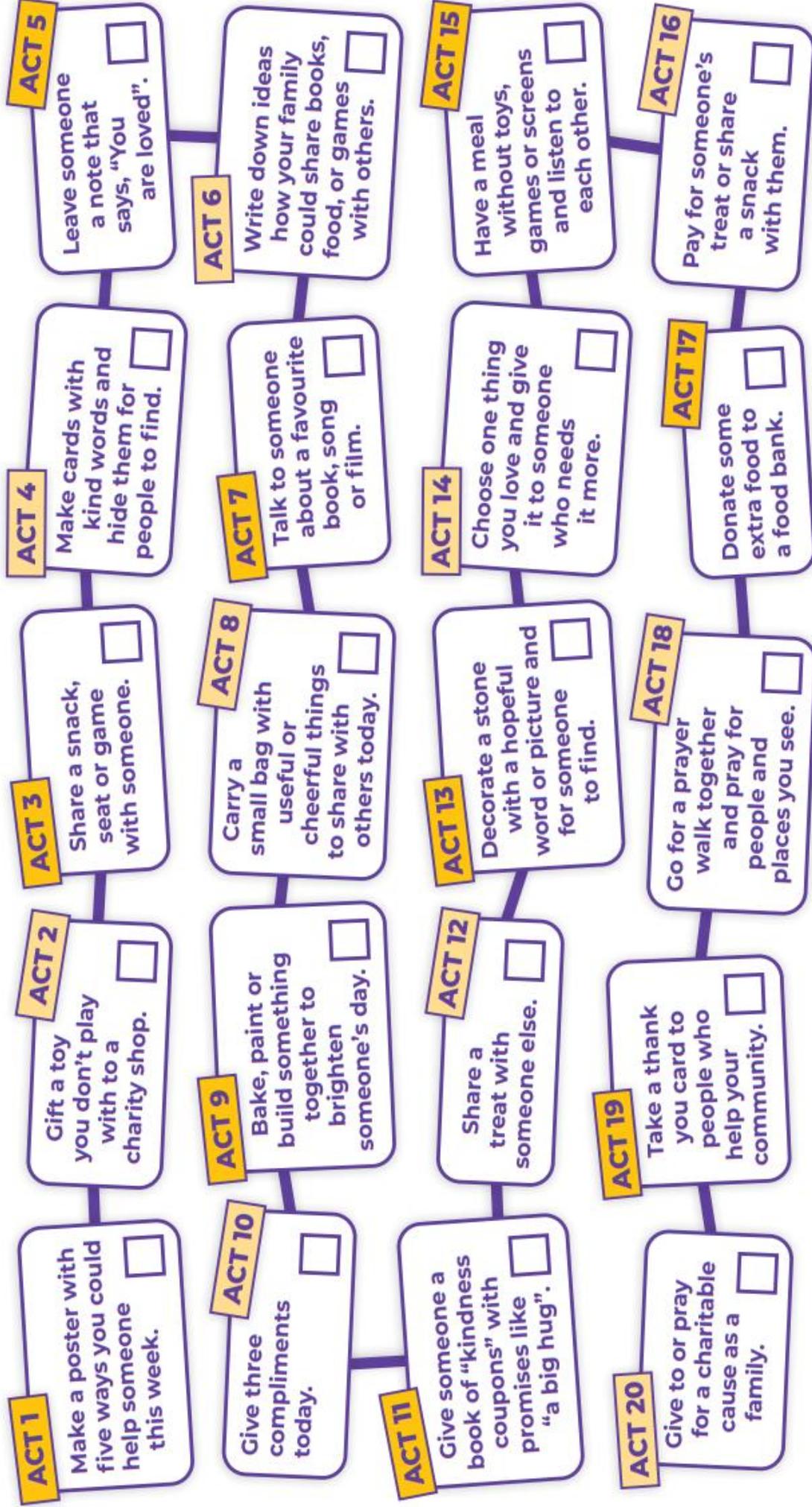
**Make 2026 the year you take action.
Sign up to take part in The Big Plastic Count and you'll be part
of a movement calling for a fair future that's free from
the impacts of the plastics crisis.**

We're not just counting plastic. We're counting on the government to act. Together, our voices are strong. Let's use them to make sure they listen.

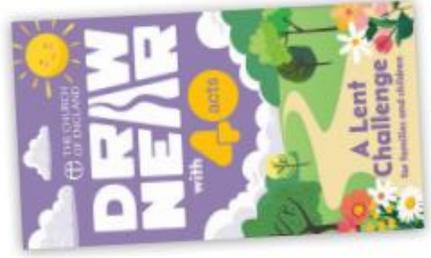
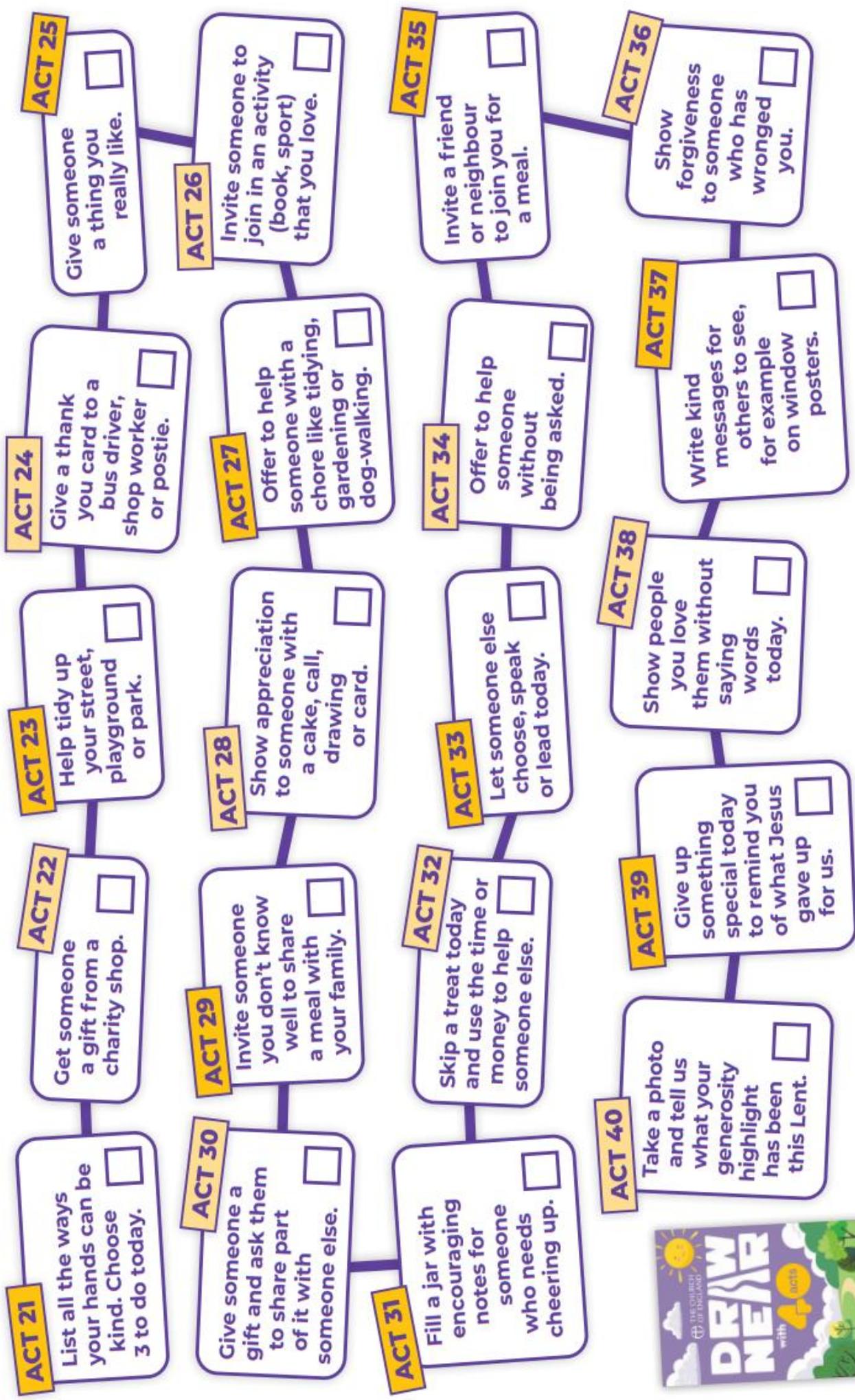
To sign up, please go to their website: <https://thebigplasticcount.com/>

Thank you,

Helen Astin on behalf of The Big Plastic Count Team



Explore the life-giving habit of generosity with daily Bible readings, reflections and prayers the Draw Near with 40acts booklet. Find out more via cofe.io/DrawNear



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How to Contact Us



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Licensed Lay Minister

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Reader Emerita

Ros Loach

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Churchwarden

Ann Riley

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Treasurer

Tim South

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✉ tim@thesouths.uk

Interim Rector's PA

Diane Brennan

✉ admin@elmetetrinity.org

Safeguarding Officer

Beckie Briggs

☎ 07794 155158

✉ safeguarding@the-briggs.co.uk

If you would like to speak to someone about any aspect of St Philip's Church safeguarding policy, or you have any concerns, please speak to Beckie in the first instance. You can also contact Revd Jonathan Brennan.

**Loving.
Living.
Learning.**

We aim to:

- Love** God, the world and one another.
- Live** in the world as it is, but, drawn by a vision of something better, we want to help individuals and communities flourish.
- Learn** when we get things wrong, by listening and then growing together.

www.leeds.anglican.org

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds