

# The Parish Church of St James, Arnside

*part of The Kent Estuary Mission Community in The Diocese of Carlisle*

Church Hill, Arnside, Cumbria, LA5 0DW

Registered Charity Number: 1143293

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Dear friends,

*‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious  
and his mercy endureth for ever.’*

Psalm 136.1

As we journey through these autumnal weeks, this comes with prayerful greetings and with gratitude for the generous ways in which you support the ministry, mission, work and witness of St James’. It is both valued and appreciated.

In this, our annual stewardship letter, we write on behalf of the Parochial Church Council with an update about the life and work of our part of God’s church here in Arnside - not least relating to our beloved church building and our current financial outlook.

You will, no doubt, have noticed, given the presence of scaffolding around the outside of the north aisle over recent weeks, we have finally been able to undertake the repair work to the exterior of the Church Room as detailed in our Quinquennial Inspection (the five yearly comprehensive evaluation of the building by our church conservation architect). With the repointing of the stone work along the parapet, and the installation of new lead flashings, this should prevent any further water ingress and thus ensure that the north aisle remains in good order for many years to come. We hope, when it is appropriate and financially possible to do so, to then have the energy and means to redecorate the Church Room (once we’re certain we’ve stopped water getting into the walls).

In addition to this, following the partial collapse of the boundary wall near the James Fell Memorial Entrance and subsequent conversations with our neighbours, we hope that the coming weeks will see the work to rebuild the wall completed. In this we have judged it wise to take time to rebuild the whole stretch of wall, realising that since it has been standing for one hundred years it was time that it received some proper care and attention. This follows on from the work, completed during the summer months, to repair and repaint all the exterior ironwork and woodwork at St James’, again ensuring that the building remains both well cared for and in good condition.

All of the above work has been (or is going to be) carried out by trades local to our village, reminding us of the joy and responsibility it is - as part of our vocation as Christians - to serve and support the people of God in this place.

Of course, all this work to preserve and restore the church fabric, enables us to continue and enable the primary work of the church: to worship God and to share the good news of his love with all in as many ways as possible. We seek to do this in a variety of different ways as a church community, most especially through our close partnerships with the other village churches through the work of Arnside Christians Together and through our abiding connections with Arnside National Church of England Primary School.

Thank you for your support in all this, and the ordinary, helpful and persistent ways in which you - prayerfully and practically - enable these ministries to continue.

In looking ahead, we trust it important and timely to let you know of developments affecting the life (and finances) of James', which we feel important to share - as we give thanks for God's faithfulness in the past and, with confidence in his guiding, now look to the future.

Firstly, earlier in the year the Parochial Church Council reflected on the invitation by the Diocese to increase our 'ministry offer' (the amount we seek to contribute to the Diocese to help fund the cost of ministry) by 3%. Whereas in recent years, the PCC has only incrementally increased our offer due to other financial pressures, it was felt prudent and right to seek to try for 2026 to increase our contribution. In doing so we recognise that our relationship with the Diocese is of intrinsic importance in shaping what it means for us, alongside our partner churches in the Kent Estuary, to be part of God's church here in Cumbria. We want to do all that we can to ensure ministry provision in Arnside and across the Mission Community as we look to the months and years ahead.

Secondly, whilst it is good to report the various fabric related works currently in the process of being completed, seeing these through will, undoubtedly, place strain on the funds in our existing fabric fund. We know that the Quinquennial will have advised other works that will need to be completed over the coming years, to say nothing of other projects that it would be good and helpful to have sufficient funds to complete should the necessity arise.

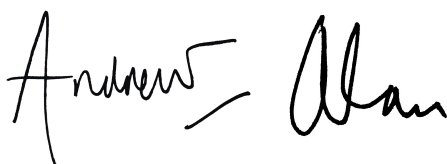
As a result of these developments, both important in helping to sustain the life and witness of St James', the reality is that - as a church - we need to (once again) try and work to increase our financial resources. Asking for this, as you'll hopefully appreciate, is never easy, but whilst financial pressures continue to be experienced widely, it is the case that state pensions and many index-linked payments have increased this year by more than 3%.

It is then with all this in mind that we write to you with an invitation for you to consider, review and hopefully be able to increase your regular giving; fully understanding that not everyone will be in a position to do this.

We do this in the weeks following our celebration of Harvest, that particular time in the year where we recognise the giftedness of all that we have and enjoy, remembering that it is from the Lord that every good and perfect gift comes. It is in response to the gifts we receive from God that all of us, albeit in many diverse ways, are called to live lives of generous giving - of our time, of our skills, of our attention and of our money.

In reading this letter we offer you our gratitude for your part, whatever that may look like, in our shared life together as a church community. Praying that we may all continue to know the Lord's blessing, encouragement and goodness as we look to the future.

Yours,



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The Reverend Andrew B Norman | Priest-in-Charge

The Parsonage, Stanley Street, Beetham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7AS

e-mail: [revdabn@gmail.com](mailto:revdabn@gmail.com) | telephone: (015395) 62355

Mr Alan Mitchell | PCC Treasurer

Pennard House, Uplands Drive, Arnside, Cumbria, LA5 0AS

e-mail: [alanjeanmitchell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alanjeanmitchell@hotmail.co.uk) | telephone: (01524) 761583