

Christ Church Ainsworth Parish Magazine



Snowdrops, also known as Candlemas Bells,
in Christ Church Ainsworth Churchyard

Serving the Community

www.ainsworthparish.org.uk

February 2026

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Parish Diary February 2026



FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Sun 1st 10.30am Holy Communion
 6.30pm BCP Evening Prayer

Weds 4th 6.30pm MidWeek Praise

SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Sun 8th 8.00am BCP Communion
 10.30am Church Parade & Family Service
 Tues 10th 10.30am Coffee & Conversation (*Ainsworth Church & Community Hall*)

Weds 11th 6.30pm MidWeek Praise

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT

Sun 15th 10.30am Holy Communion
 Weds 18th 1.30pm "Prayers & Promises" *Family friendly afternoon focusing on the season of Lent*
 7.30pm Ash Wednesday Communion Service with imposition of ashes

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Sun 22nd 8.00am BCP Communion
 10.30am Holy Communion (*followed by refreshments & drawing of the February Lucky Lotto*)
 Tues 24th 7.15pm Lent Reflection
 Weds 25th 6.30pm MidWeek Praise

MARCH

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Sun 1st 10.30am Holy Communion
 6.30pm BCP Evening Prayer



Interregnum Update

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Galatians 6:9

It's hard to believe that another 12 months have passed and we are approaching the end of our third year of interregnum; there will be new people within our worshipping community for whom our current situation is all they have known.

Whilst we all continue to hope & pray for a suitable appointment to be made to the 0.5 Incumbent's post, it's worth reflecting on the many things which have been and are being achieved at Christ Church Ainsworth during this time of vacancy.

Our Generosity & Thankfulness Group have recently begun the process of creating an 'Impact of Giving Report' – this document looks at all aspects of the life of our Church and encourages us to identify areas where there is potential, and celebrate areas of achievement.

And there are any number of great things going on within our Church Community, and so many areas of achievement!

Did you know for example, that we have in excess of 50 people who volunteer on a regular basis? Our Clergy, our Lesson Readers & Intercessors, our Lay Assistants, our Choir members, Sidespeople, Pew Polishers, Churchyard Team, ABC leaders & helpers, Social Committee – and that is only the folk who volunteer 'officially', there are many more who help out on an informal basis.

Did you know that 28 people were baptised at Christ Church Ainsworth in 2025?

Did you know that throughout 2025 we held more community & family events than we have held since pre-Covid?

All of these things are to be celebrated, and when the Impact of Giving Report is completed, you will see that there are many more things at Christ Church Ainsworth that we also need to celebrate.

Interregnum is hard, no one is denying that – hard for our worshipping community, hard for our Clergy & hard for all those who hold Office in any capacity within our Church; but when we are feeling weary with it all, and wondering whether anyone in the hierarchy really cares, let's remember the words of St Paul to the new Christians in Rome, and be assured that when the season is right, we *will* reap the rewards of all of the hard work that is being done in & through our Church in God's name. Alison Hartley – on behalf of Christ Church Ainsworth PCC

Editor's Spot ...

Welcome to the February 2026 edition of the Christ Church Ainsworth Parish Magazine, which is another bumper edition packed full of news, reports, updates & reminders – it's incredible how much is going on within our Church & wider community!

Alongside our usual reports & articles this month, you'll find an introduction from Revd Bob May, a report & final total raised for the Children's Society via our Christingle Service, an all-new column from our 'MidWeek Praise Reporter', and lots of information about our plans for Lent.

As always, make sure you check the Parish Dairy & Weekly Pew Sheet for specific details of our seasonal Services & events.

Hopefully there will be something for everyone in this month's magazine, so enjoy the read, & if you or your organisation has an event or write up that you would like us to include in a future edition, please get in touch at ainsworthparishmagazine@gmail.com

Alison

From The Registers

We commend to God's keeping:

22nd January 2026 Norman Dillon

Flower Rota

1st February Christine Dawson
15th February No Flowers During Lent

The flowers that you see in Church each week are donated by members of our congregation or wider community and are often given in memory of family or friends.

There are currently a number of spaces on the Church Flower Rota – please contact Mrs. Gwen White on 01204-595378 if you would be interesting in joining the flower rota or would like to take on an additional date.

Just A Thought

Honouring traditions should mean feeding flames, not worshipping ashes.

Bob May – Priest Planner & Trumpet Player

To help you get to know me a here's a brief intro. If you'd like to know more about my journey to faith and becoming a Priest, then you'll need to come along to the Mothers' Union meeting on 5th May.

I grew up in South London and came to Manchester to study Town Planning, which is where I met my wife, Helen. We have two married daughters, two grandsons (who live in Bury) and another grandchild on the way in July, who will be a Brightonian.

I've worked as an Urban Planner for 40 years and for the last 20 years of that I have combined it with ministry, first as a Reader and now as a Priest - hence the 'Priest Planner' identity. I combined the two in my 2023 Master's dissertation, "A critique of the theologies of housing and planning within the Church of England's "Coming Home" report".

I now run a small planning consultancy and specialize in expert witness work, assessing the impact of development on amenity, something that takes me back to London regularly for court hearings. In 2018 I became an honorary Professor at Manchester University and regularly teach postgraduates on planning and real estate courses.

For relaxation I ride a nippy 300cc Vespa, sketch and play lead trumpet with the Salford Jazz

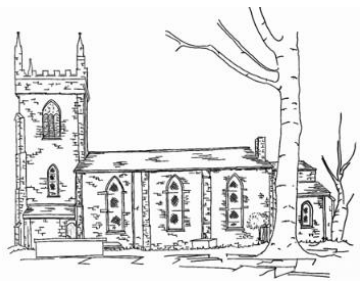
Orchestra – come and see us on Saturday 16th May at Our Lady of Grace, Prestwich. It's a mix of jazz standards and songs from the great American songbook.

In between writing sermons, I help out at a number of churches that are in vacancy, I try and keep up with

research into how we as a country can make the distribution of resources fairer for the good of all through the way in which we make planning decisions.

I may retire at some point, but I love the dual aspects of my work and am not very good at sitting around! In 2027 I hope to return to Sierra Leone, a country that I have worked in on short trips over many years in both ministry and planning – that could be a whole other talk for the Mothers' Union!

Revd Bob



Follow The Star

Having debated the logistics of trying to run a Forest Church session early in the Spring term, when the weather could well be unpredictable, 'Follow The Star' seemed to be a sensible, indoor alternative.



The day began with 'Wiggle Worship' for Nursery and Reception children; Wiggle even had his own little crown so that he didn't feel left out! Then each class took it in turns to learn about the meaning of Epiphany and find out about some of the traditions and celebrations that take place in other countries on Epiphany or 'Three Kings Day' as it's sometimes called. This was followed by an action packed rendition of the Epiphany story, complete with humpety bumpety camels, a bright shiny star, and lots of fun and laughter.

Each session ended with a practical activity on the theme of Epiphany; the children in years 1 and 2 made and decorated crowns; years 3 and 4 drew or wrote about the gifts which they might bring to Jesus; year 5 did a similar activity using lolly stick stars, and year 6 wrote thankyou prayers on paper stars.

The day was rounded off by a time of collective worship to which parents were invited.

MidWeek Praise Reporter

On the 21st January, I went to mid week praise, when I was at church, we learnt about baptism, which is about Christening, I think we might learn more about that next week.



I was happy to learn something new, it makes me happy. When you are baptised, which doesn't have to happen when your a baby. I was one when I was christened. Some of my friends were 6 and adults can also be baptised. When you are baptised there is an oil that has been blessed at the cathedral, there is also water held in the font, which is to wash away sin.

Debra allowed us to dip our fingers in the font water and make the sign of a cross on our forehead, I was allowed to make the sign of the cross on my mummy's head. When you are baptised you also get a candle to light your way on your faith journey.

I'm looking forward to next week!

From your young MidWeek praise reporter (Year 3)

Lent



Lent is the period of time in the Church calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and finishes at Easter; Lent lasts for 40 days.

To help us to understand what Lent means to Christians today, we need to think about what happened when Jesus was alive.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, and following his baptism, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then led Jesus into the wilderness, where He spent 40 days and nights fasting and praying.

Whilst Jesus was in the wilderness, the devil approached him and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, why don't you command these stones to become loaves of bread?"

But Jesus turned away and said in reply, "It is written: man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God."

The devil was determined not to be beaten. Taking Jesus to the holy city, he made him stand on the very highest part of the temple and said to him, "If you really are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: He will command his angels concerning you and with their hands they will support you lest you dash your foot against a stone."

But once again Jesus turned away and answered him, "It is written, you shall not put the Lord, your God to the test."

Finally, the devil took Jesus up a very high mountain and looking down, he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and he said to him, "All of these I shall give to you if you will worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Get away Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve." Then the devil knew that he could never win and so he left.

In modern times, millions of Christians give things up during Lent as a sign of sacrifice and to test their self-discipline. Christians believe that this is to represent Jesus Christ's sacrifice when he went into the desert to pray and fast for 40 days before later dying on the cross.

Lent At Christ Church Ainsworth

Lent Services – Our observation of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, with a Service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes, in Church on Weds 18th February at 7.30pm – all are welcome to attend this Service.



A short Lent Reflection Service will be held in Church at 7.15pm each Tuesday throughout Lent, starting on Tuesday 24th February – everyone is welcome to join us for these times of quiet prayer & reflection.

Prayers & Promises - Why not join us at Christ Church Ainsworth on Ash Wednesday, 18th February, 1.30 – 3.30pm, for a family friendly afternoon focusing on Lent. Learn more about this special season through a mixture of crafts, games & activities, rounded off by a short time of family friendly Ash Wednesday worship, including imposition of ashes.

Everyone welcome, refreshments available; no need to book – just turn up.

For more info contact Alison on 07952-709041.

Our 2026 Lent Challenge

In recent years there's been a drive to 'take up something positive or fulfilling' rather than giving something unwholesome or negative up. Our 2025 Lent activities included '40 Days Of Kindness', where we encouraged the children from our MidWeek Praise Service and also from Christ Church Ainsworth School to keep a Kindness Diary throughout Lent, with the aim of recording at least 1 act of kindness that they had been involved with each day.

This year our Lent Challenge is '1 Small Step'; it's easy to feel overwhelmed when we are asked to take up something new or change the way we do things, sometimes we also wonder if whatever we chose to do (or not do) really makes any difference in the grand scheme of things. But ... if everyone does 1 small thing the overall effect is cumulative, and positive outcomes tend to snowball.

Throughout the 6 weeks of Lent we're inviting you to take 1 small step each week; if you can only keep it up for 1 week that's absolutely fine, but you might find that your 1 small step is something that you want to keep up with, or maybe even encourage others to join you in.

Week 1 – Is there 1 small step that you could take to save water? Maybe turning the tap off whilst you brush your teeth, perhaps getting someone to fix that leak? Maybe it's time to instal a rain butt to reduce using tap water in your garden throughout the summer months?

Week 2 – Is there 1 extra item that you could recycle to reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfill? That could be something extra in your household recycling, or maybe you could consider donating unwanted prescription glasses, hearing aids, foreign coins, used stamps or old keys via our collecting boxes in Church? Please note that we are also now part of a candle recycling scheme; candles, tealights & tapers can all be left in the box marked 'CANDLES' which you'll find in the Church porch.

Week 3 – If you have something that you no longer use, but is still useable, could you consider donating it to a charity shop rather than binning it? Most Household Waste Recycling Centres (we used to call these 'the tip'!!) now have containers for small electrical items, which are serviced and reused or their parts reused in some way where possible.

Week 4 – Is there perhaps 1 journey this week that you could consider making on foot or by bus? If you have to go by car, could you give someone else a lift also?

Week 5 – Is there 1 easy way in which you could save energy this week? Could you make sure you only light the room that you are using? Could you commit to turning all electrical devices off for an hour each day? Could you turn your heating down slightly?

Week 6 – Is there 1 small thing that you could do this week to help nature? Could you put a birdfeeder or nest box up, or perhaps a bird bath? Could you plant some seeds? Could you designate a small area of your garden to be a wildflower area for the summer months?

These are only a few suggestions; there may be other things that you can commit to doing. Remember, even though it only seems like a little thing; 1 small step makes a difference.

Mission Community Lent Services – As in previous years, each Church within our Mission Community will be hosting a short Lent Service, to which members of all Churches within our Mission Community are welcome. These will be held at various different times of day and will follow a variety of different formats. Watch this space for the full list of times and dates coming soon.

Bible Reading Fellowship Ministries

Lent and Easter are important seasons in the life of the Church, and an opportunity for us to slow down and consider where God is at work in our lives. BRF Ministries offers a wide variety of books and resources to enrich your spiritual journey, and also a great range of Easter cards. For more information visit brfonline.org.uk

BRF Ministries also produce a range of daily Bible Study notes & reflections which are suitable for all; these booklets are produced 3 times a year & typically cost around £5-50. If you would like to know more or would be interested in receiving a set of notes, please contact Alison on 07952-709041.

Christingle Update

Thank you to everyone who came along to the Church on Wednesday 3rd December for our annual Christingle Service. It was a lovely service filled with the sight and scents of freshly made Christingles, all individually Beautifully decorated.

Thanks to your generous donations, we have collected a total of £320.09. This is a really valuable amount of money for the charity who depend on supporters up and down the country to help with their work. Last year, the charity delivered 77 crisis support services across the UK, which helped more than 57,652 young people directly, and almost 3,547 parents and carers.

So, thank you once again from me, but I also want to pass on a message from Mark Russell, the Chief Executive of The Children's Society:

"Our children are facing many challenges, but we want to support children so they can have a better future. By being part of Christingle, you are part of a nationwide community of people whose compassion will change lives, and I want to thank you for being with us."

Children's Society Housebox Collection

The annual Children's Society Housebox collection will take place next month on Tuesday 17th March 2026. I will collect the boxes or donations placed in a named envelope, between 2pm and 5pm. If this date / time is not convenient, please let me know and I will arrange an alternative; you can contact me on 07508 106590.

Thank you to everyone who donates annually in this way to help the charity fund their projects around the country, including here in the North West.

If anyone would like to join the Children's Society Housebox Scheme to collect loose change for this worthy cause, please let me know and I will arrange a collection box for you.

Susan Campbell - Local Secretary for The Children's Society

The Big Spring Clean – Save The Date!

On Saturday 28th March, 10 – 12 noon, we'll be having a 'Big Spring Clean' in Church in preparation for our Easter Services and celebrations the following week. We'll be cleaning, wiping and dusting in all of those tricky & hard to reach areas that simply can't be done on a regular basis, plus giving everything a good tidy up and sort out.

Everyone is welcome to join us for this event, simply come along on the day and our regular Pew Polishing Team will tell us what needs to be done.

Refreshments will also be available; no need to book – just turn up!

Unwanted Gift Amnesty

Thank you to everyone who has donated items via our 'Unwanted Gift Amnesty'. This collection really helps us when we begin to plan for the stalls and games which will form part of our Church Spring Fair & other fundraising events.

Our Gift Amnesty finishes at the end of January each year, but if you have any items which you would like to donate to raise money for Church funds at other times, please leave them on the back pew in Church. Thanking you in advance!

Parish Magazine Advertising

If you own or manage a local business, have you considered advertising in our Parish Magazine? The Magazine is emailed out directly to almost 300 people every month, and also uploaded to our Facebook page, website and 'A Church Near You' page, as well as being shared to Christ Church Ainsworth School.

Our advertising year runs from March through to February; for more info / price options, email ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com

Reflecting On The Seasons – Candlemas



²² *The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification, as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ²³ as it is written in the law of the Lord: “Every first-born male is to be dedicated to the Lord.” ²⁴ They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.*

²⁵ *At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him ²⁶ and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah. ²⁷ Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the Temple to do for him what the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:*

²⁹ *“Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,
and you may let your servant go in peace.*

³⁰ *With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,*

³¹ *which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:*

³² *A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles
and bring glory to your people Israel.”*

³³ *The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. ³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, “This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against ³⁵ and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart.”*

³⁶⁻³⁷ *There was a very old prophet, a widow named Anna, daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She had been married for only seven years and was now eighty-four years old. She never left the Temple; day and night she worshiped God, fasting and praying. ³⁸ That very same hour she arrived and gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to set Jerusalem free.*

Luke 2; 22-38

Candlemas is known by various names; the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ; the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the Feast of the Holy Encounter.

Jewish purity laws required a sacrifice 40 days after a birth, and also ritual cleansing of the new mother, following the messy process of birth.

Many things in our lives are messy & don't go according to plan; many things in the world around us seem messy, and we find ourselves wondering how, or if, they fit into the wider plan. The Feast of the Purification, with its scene of Mary and Joseph going to the Temple to do what was required to handle the messiness of life is something we can all identify with.

Jewish Law also stated that the first of everything – crops, livestock & firstborn sons – was to be given to God; to keep it back, an appropriate offering had to be made instead; in this case a pair of turtle doves or pigeons. Mary and Joseph offering to God what they could, is a gentle reminder to us that saying “Thank you” can be offering enough.

Perhaps what happened next during that visit to the Temple can help us even more; as Simeon took the baby in his arms and Anna burst out with joy that the Messiah had come, everything turned around; these two faithful servants went in an instant from waiting to fulfilment.

Candlemas marks the turning point of the Christian Year, not just because it falls as the first signs of Spring are all around us; it is the point where we stop looking back on the celebrations of Jesus' coming at Christmas and start looking forward, turning our thoughts towards Lent & Easter and all that those seasons mean to us and to Christians the whole world over.

At this turning point in the year, we see all the mess and muddle in our lives and in the world around us, but it is framed with light & hope. Because God became incarnate, we know that we don't journey though the mess & muddle on our own.

Lord Jesus, light of the world, take away our darkness, forgive our sins and make us people of light, faithful to your word. Help us to walk in your light and live our lives to your praise and glory, that we may bring light to the waiting world – Amen

Christ Church Ainsworth Book Of Remembrance



If you have lost a family member or loved one and would like their name to be recorded in our Book of Remembrance, please speak to a member of our Clergy or one of the Churchwardens, or email ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com . This option is available for those who have been a part of our local or worshipping community, or those whose funeral has been held in Church.

Please note there is a charge of £5-00 per entry for this service.

The Christ Church Ainsworth 50/50 Lucky Lotto!

The January Lucky Lotto draw took place in Church on Sunday 28th January, with the lucky winner walking away with £18-50!

This fabulous fundraiser runs 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.

To make it even easier, you can now enter the Lucky Lotto via direct payment, either monthly or annually. For more details, please email ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com

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

Online Giving

We understand that many people no longer carry cash, however thanks to the wonders of modern technology, we can accept online donations to support the work of our church.

Online giving is done via a website called 'Give A Little'; you can access our page by clicking on the following link:

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/4e852de9-3667-426f-ae72-1747784eda0c>

Or by scanning the following QR code with your mobile phone:



Once you've done that, choose the amount you wish to donate – the suggested options are £5, £10, £20 or £50, but there is also an option to click and choose your own amount. Next, simply follow the on screen instructions - fill in your personal details, (if you are a tax payer you can choose to add Gift Aid to increase your donation), then enter your card details. When you're finished, you'll get a 'Thank You' message on screen and you can request a receipt via email for your own records – simple!

Gift Aid

Gift Aid is a UK government scheme that allows charities to reclaim the tax already paid on donations from UK taxpayers.

Did you know your donation could be worth 25% more at no extra cost?

If you're a UK taxpayer, completing a Gift Aid form allows the Church to reclaim the basic rate of tax on your donation. For every £1 you give, the Church receives £1.25.

Gift Aid significantly boosts the funds available to many charities and organisations, including our Church; in the 2024/25 tax year, Christ Church Ainsworth claimed an additional £6,786.20 through Gift Aid - more than the total annual cost of gas, electricity, and water used by the Church and equating to 15% of the total annual expenditure!

Thank you to everyone who currently supports our Church by Gift Aiding. If you are a UK taxpayer and don't already Gift Aid donations, please complete a Gift Aid form and return it to Church or post it through the door of the Vicarage. You can find out more about Gift Aid and download an application form by clicking the link below:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=gift+aid+declaration+form+pdf&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-gb&client=safari>

Easyfundraising

#HelpFromHome - Raise FREE funds
for us every time you shop online
[Find out more](#)



A big thank you to our amazing supporters who raise free funds for us on #easyfundraising. If you're not signed up yet, why not join today! You can raise free donations for Ainsworth Parish Church - Bolton every time you shop online. All the big names like John Lewis & Partners, Expedia, Argos, Just Eat and many more are ready to make a free donation at no extra cost to you.

We currently have 29 people who have registered to support our cause through Easyfundraising, although there must be many others who shop / order goods online. Anyone who shops online can support us in this way; it's a really simple way of raising much needed funds for our Church.

Our current Easyfundraising total is £939-57; with more supporters, could you help us to get this total to £1,000 by the end of 2026?

<https://join.easyfundraising.org.uk/ainsworthpc/ivcmuo/c2s/ZdU7Z020/CE955/facebook/>

Church Electoral Roll Review 2026

In accordance with Church of England regulations, the Church Electoral Roll must be reviewed prior to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

ALL members of the Parochial Church Council, Sidesmen, and anyone wishing to speak at the APCM or hold any office in Church, must be on the Church Electoral Roll.

The last date for accepting names will be 29th March 2026. After this date, no names can be entered or removed from the Roll until after the APCM on 26th April 2026.

If you are currently on the Roll, you DO NOT need to complete a form; if you're not sure whether you are, or should be on the Church Electoral Roll, the admission criteria are listed below; if you're still not sure, please check with Jill Ainsworth, our Electoral Roll Officer.

Electoral Roll

The criteria for admission to the Electoral Roll is:

1. Individuals have been baptised.
2. Individuals are a member of the Church of England or of any church in Communion with the Church of England.
3. Individuals are age sixteen or over.
4. Individuals are resident in the parish, or not being in the parish, have attended public worship in the parish during the last six months before the date of application for enrolment, and
5. Have signed a form of application for enrolment.

Forms are available in church and should be returned by Sunday 29th March 2026.

Christ Church Ainsworth - Grave Cleaning & Maintenance

If you choose to have a memorial stone on your loved one's grave, you are welcome to tend the grave and place flowers yourself, but if you are unable to do so, our Churchyard Team offer a number of options:

- Regular cleaning of headstone £30-00 / year
- Regular cleaning of headstone, flowers placed monthly & wreath placed at Christmas £210-00 / year

For more information about grave maintenance please contact Janet Hayes on 07895-033736.

News From The Diocese – Vocations Day Sat 7th Feb 2026, 10-2.30pm, St. Brides, Old Trafford. M16 9NW

The Manchester Diocese Vocations Day provides an opportunity for those attending to explore various areas of lay and ordained ministries and to have conversations with people called to these roles. The aims of the event include:

- To enable attendees to explore their personal calling, gifts and skills.
- To remind and encourage those present that God has a plan for everyone.
- To showcase a wide variety of lay and ordained ministries.

Refreshments will be provided throughout the day but please bring your own lunch.

For more info or to book your place visit [Vocations Day Tickets, Sat, Feb 7, 2026 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Mission Community News – Candle Recycling

As part of our Mission Community multi-church recycling initiative, we are now working in partnership with recycledwax.co.uk to recycle Church & domestic candles & other wax products.

If you have candles at home that you'd like to recycle, simply place them in the box in the Church porch. We're happy to accept almost any type of candle or wax product, including:

- Glassware candles
- Wax melts
- Tealights (metal or plastic cups included)
- Coloured or fragranced pillars

Every box we receive helps keep wax out of landfill and gives it a chance at a second life.

Exploring Unconscious Bias - Thursday 5th March 7.15 for 7.30pm @ Christ Church Walshaw. BL8 3SF

Join us for an evening with Diane Gray-Stephenson (Diocesan Racial Justice Lead), as we unpack unconscious bias, the impact it can have & how we might be more inclusive. Everyone welcome, no need to book – just turn up.

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.*



SILLETTS

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Did you know it costs around £1,300 per week to run & maintain our Church?

That's around £186 per day!!

You can make a donation directly into our Church bank account: Christ Church Ainsworth PCC, Sort Code: 08-92-99
Account number: 65510959

Or by scanning our QR code



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Radcliffe & Whitefield Mission Community Prayer Diary



February 2026

1 st	We pray for all who visit St. Thomas & St. John, Radcliffe; that all would feel welcome & supported.
2 nd	We pray for mission & ministry at All Saints Stand.
3 rd	We pray for the Radcliffe Team, their volunteers & helpers, and give thanks for all that they do.
4 th	On World Cancer Day, we pray for all who have been affected by cancer; we pray for all who work with & care for those who have cancer & we pray for those working to develop new treatments.
5 th	We give thanks for & pray for all Incumbents, OLMs, NSMs & SSMs & those who have Permission To Officiate throughout our Mission Community.
6 th	We pray for mission & ministry at St. George's, Unsworth.
7 th	We pray for Alaina Anderson, as she takes on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer for Christ Church Walshaw.
8 th	On Racial Justice Sunday, we pray that we might walk in humility and solidarity with all around us, on the journey towards equality and justice for all.
9 th	We pray for those who will join together for Morning Prayer at St. George's, Unsworth today; praying that those present will be nurtured & uplifted by the Holy Spirit as they begin their week.
10 th	We pray for mission & ministry at Emmanuel Community Church, Radcliffe.
11 th	We pray for those who will be part of the Bible study group at St. Andrew's, Hillock today, that they may grow in understanding & in faith.
12 th	We pray for mission & ministry at Christ Church Ainsworth.
13 th	We give thanks for & pray for our Church Officers, Lay Leaders & Volunteers.
14 th	We pray for those who will be part of the Valentine's Activity Afternoon at Christ Church Walshaw today; that this would be a time of fun, faith & fellowship.
15 th	We pray for all who will be leading or attending JAM Sunday School at St. George's, Unsworth today, that the seeds of faith may be sown & nurtured in young hearts.
16 th	We pray for members of Christ Church Ainsworth PCC who will be meeting with Archdeacon Rachel this evening to discuss the ongoing interregnum.
17 th	We pray for all who will be leading Lent Services, Reflections or Bible Study Groups in the coming weeks; that they may be guided by & inspired by the Holy Spirit.
18 th	We pray for those who will be part of the Prayers & Promises family event at Christ Church Ainsworth this afternoon; that the seeds of faith might be sown & nurtured in those who attend.
19 th	We pray for mission & ministry at St. Andrew's, Hillock.
20 th	We pray for discernment & guidance for the team at St. Andrew's, Radcliffe, in their ongoing efforts to address various maintenance issues at the Church.
21 st	We pray for mission & ministry at Christ Church Walshaw.
22 nd	We pray for mission & ministry at St. Andrew's, Radcliffe.
23 rd	We give thanks for 200 years of faith and worship at All Saints and ask for God's blessing for the celebratory events taking place throughout the year, and on those involved in organising them. We pray that the year may be a time for building closer relationships with our local community.
24 th	We pray for those who will join together for Jesus Prayer on Zoom this evening; praying also that others might feel called to be part of this time of prayer.
25 th	We pray for mission & ministry at St. Thomas & St. John, Radcliffe.
26 th	We pray for & give thanks for the work of the Food Pantry Team at St. Andrew's, Hillock; praying also for all of the individuals & families who access this service.
27 th	We pray for mission & ministry at St. Mary, Radcliffe.
28 th	We pray for God's guidance for the team at St. Andrew's, Radcliffe, as they seek to discern new ways in which God is calling them to serve their community.

"What wings are to a bird, & sails are to a ship; so prayer is to the soul."



**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
- You can also enter by BACS payment or standing order, for details email ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com
- All proceeds to Church funds

The next Lucky Lotto draw will take place on Sunday 22nd February.

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



Coffee and Conversation

Tuesday 10th February

10.30 – 12 noon

Ainsworth Church and Community Hall

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





CHRIST CHURCH AINSWORTH



!!QUIZ SHEET QUIZ LEAGUE!!

- Each month we'll be producing a fun quiz sheet; sheets are only £1 each. You can pick up a sheet next time you're in Church.
- Make sure you place your completed quiz sheet in the box at the back of Church no later than the last Sunday of the month.
- There will be a prize each month for the winner, but also a league table so that you can accumulate points throughout the year, with a prize for the overall Quiz Sheet Quiz League winner.
- You can also enter by BACS payment or standing order & we'll email a quiz sheet out to you each month; for further details email ainsworthparishinfo@gmail.com
- All proceeds to Church funds.

????????????????????



PRAYERS & PROMISES

A family friendly afternoon
focusing on the season of Lent

- Craft
- Activities
- Followed by a short time of family friendly Ash Wednesday worship with imposition of ashes.

Wednesday 18th February

1.30 - 3.30pm

Refreshments available,
everyone welcome.

For more info contact 07952-709041



RECYCLE FOR CHARITY

Did you know, many of your unwanted items could be recycled?

Do you have any of these items stuck in a drawer or cupboard?

Please bring along your glasses, hearing aids, foreign currency, stamps, keys, ink & toner cartridges (branded only) & bra's & place them into the boxes provided in church.

All items will be collected at the monthly Mission Community Task Group meetings where they will be sorted and sent to where they are needed most.

Thank you



RADCLIFFE & WHITEFIELD MISSION COMMUNITY



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."*



HEALTHY BODY ... HEALTHY MIND

Exercise Isn't Just For The Gym!

Doing something active is a form of exercise.



Being active with others is good for social and mental health.

There are many local opportunities to get active through volunteer work;
Ainsworth Churchyard

is one opportunity.

Every Wednesday, volunteers come together to help tidy the churchyard – clearing leaves, mowing grass, tidying the graves. There are jobs for any age or capacity.



Tea, cake and a chat split the session into two halves. All are welcome.

EVERY WEDNESDAY

COME RAIN OR SHINE!

9:30 – 11.45 A.M.



Radcliffe & Whitefield Mission Community

Are working with 'The Recycled Wax Company' to keep candles out of landfill.

We can take:

- 🕯 Church candles
- 🕯 Tea lights
- 🕯 Tapers
- 🕯 Domestic / scented candles (including those in glass jars)
- 🕯 Wax melts

Simply bring your unwanted candles & melts to Church & we'll do the rest.



Radcliffe & Whitefield Mission Community

Exploring Unconscious Bias



Join us for an evening with Diane Gray-Stephenson (Racial Justice Lead) as we unpack unconscious bias, the impact it can have & how we might be more inclusive.

Thursday 5th March, 7.15 for 7.30pm

Christ Church Walshaw, BL8 3SF

Everyone welcome; for more info contact
Alison on 07952-709041

Notices, Acknowledgements & Announcements

Coffee & Conversation

Tuesday 10th February

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 3rd February – Ainsworth Branch AGM

2.30pm Ainsworth Church & Community Hall

Everyone welcome

Cuppa, Cakes & Company

****Thursday 12th February 2 – 3.30pm****

(Please note the change of date)

Ainsworth Methodist Church Hall

Participate in board games, dominoes, table tennis & jigsaws or just come for a chat. Cost is £2.00 payable on the day.

Prayers & Promises

Wednesday 18th February 1.30-3.30pm

Christ Church Ainsworth

Why not join us for a family friendly afternoon focusing on Lent; learning, games, activities & a time of family friendly Ash Wednesday worship.

Everyone welcome – no need to book, just turn up.

Lent Reflections

Start on Tuesday 24th Feb, then each Tuesday throughout Lent

7.15pm, Christ Church Ainsworth

A short reflective Service which is open to all.

!!Save The Date – The Big Spring Clean!!

Saturday 28th March 10 – 12noon, Christ Church Ainsworth

Why not come along & join us as we dust, sweep, polish & tidy all those hard to reach parts of our lovely Church building, in readiness for our Easter celebrations – everyone welcome, refreshments available.

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=QUdYYjN6bDFoakxpZnBoY2>

[ZDMUFoZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88510585974?pwd=QUdYYjN6bDFoakxpZnBoY2)

Around The Organisations ...



Towards the end of last year, we received the Manchester Diocese MU news that informed us that in 2025, the number of lives that had been impacted by MU projects in Manchester are in excess of 2562. This number was from the end of September, so will obviously have increased by the year end. How effective is that?

Now, 2026 is a new and exciting year. We will be celebrating, over the whole year, the 150th Anniversary of the founding of Mothers' Union by Mary Sumner in 1876.

Mothers' Union has two challenges for us in 2026:

The New Members Challenge and

The 150 Anniversary Fundraising Challenge

The heart of the 150th 'New Members Challenge' is each of us doing what we can to help Mothers' Union grow and flourish into the future. Every new member counts because every person brings fresh energy, ideas, and faith. So let us step forward with faith, courage, and prayer. Invite a friend, neighbour, colleague, or fellow church member. Share your story and the hope that has sustained Mothers' Union for 150 years and will carry us into the future.

The '150 Anniversary Fundraising Challenge' is an investment in the future of Mothers' Union. Every gift, large or small, helps to carry forward our legacy and ensure that the next 150 years shine even brighter. Perhaps you have some ideas as to how we, as individual members or as a branch could organise our own project.

On the same newsletter, I found the following advertisement for a book of prayer which will appeal to many of us.

“Lighting the Way” is a beautiful new collection of 150 heartfelt prayers, gathered from Mothers' Union members across the globe, alongside bishops and distinguished voices from the UK and overseas. Shaped around 15 key themes, it reflects the vital work and projects of Mothers' Union today, offering comfort, inspiration, and encouragement in these changing times. With contributions from high-profile personalities, including beloved TV presenter Alison Hammond, this unique prayer book speaks to the heart of faith, family, and community.

A must-have companion for prayer and reflection "Lighting the Way" is available to order now.

Your shopping makes a difference. 100% of the profits supports our work ending violence, ending poverty, ending injustice.

You can order your own, price £5.99, by contacting Frances in the shop or I will get a copy for you.

The old year has ended, and we start our New Year with our AGM on Tuesday, February 3rd at 2.30pm in the small, top room of the Church Hall. Mothers' Union is a member-led organisation, so we need your input in planning how we run our branch and projects and what contributions we make into the wider Mothers' Union.

Please do your best to be there.

We will discuss the next few month's activities at a branch meeting immediately following the AGM.

Jennifer White

From the Archives – February 2001

The sketch on the inside cover of the February 2001 magazine depicted a teacher leading singing in a school assembly whilst a piano was being played in the background; there is no suggestion as to the choice of subject & no school service shown in the Parish Diary, so perhaps this was simply the Artist's choice of image.

Alongside the usual Services, the Parish Diary for this month included details of a Parish Quiet Day to be held at Whalley Abbey, and the first of a series of Lent Devotional Services to be held in Church.

The Parish News included an update from the Christingle Service, which had raised a total of £257-21 for the Children's Society; a further £54-73 had been raised via donations from those holding Houseboxes.

News from the various groups and organisations was a little thin following the Christmas break, but Rainbows had been having a go at paper weaving, whilst both Brownie units were planning their Pack Holidays, to be held later in the year.

In February 2001, there were 3 Baptisms and 8 funerals recorded from the previous month, but no weddings. Communicants for the previous month were listed as 475; but there was no report of collections.

Space To Share A Prayer - Candlemas

God of light, shine on your world;
Bring your light and restoring presence to the dark places in this world
and in our lives.

Bring hope to hearts that are downtrodden and feel defeated,
Bring your care and compassion to those who are in pain.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord – Amen

Everything You Need To Know About - February ...



February 1st 1901 - The royal yacht *Alberta* brought the body of Queen Victoria into Portsmouth harbour en route to her funeral in London the following day.

February 2nd 1665 - British forces captured New Amsterdam, the centre of the Dutch colony in North America.

February 3rd 1730 - The London *Daily Advertiser* newspaper published the first stock exchange quotations.

February 4th 1926 - Malcolm Campbell sets a new world land speed record of 174 mph (278 kmph) in Wales.

February 5th 1958 - Parking meters first appear on the streets of London's exclusive Mayfair district.

February 6th 1783 - Death of 'Capability Brown' one of the greatest English landscape gardeners.

February 7th 1301 - The son of King Edward I of England becomes the first English Prince of Wales.

February 8th 1587 – Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded on the orders of her cousin England's Queen Elizabeth I.

February 9th 1964 - 73 million Americans tuned in to the *Ed Sullivan Show* to watch four lads from Liverpool appear for the first time – they were The Beatles.

February 10th 1354 - Students at Oxford University fought a street battle with local townspeople resulting in several deaths and many people injured.

February 11th 1975 – The *Iron Lady*, Margaret Thatcher, became the first woman leader of the British Conservative Party.

February 12th 1554 – Lady Jane Grey, 'the nine days queen' was beheaded at the Tower of London, aged only 16 years.

13th February 1688 – Protestant, William of Orange, and his wife Mary (daughter of James II) came to the throne of England after the Catholic King James II fled to France.

14th February 1933 – Students at Oxford University declared that they would not fight for “King and Country”.

15th February 1971 - Pennies, bobs and half-crowns all disappeared as Britain went decimal.

16th February 1659 - A cheque was used for the first time in Britain, it was written by a Mr Nicholas Vanacker.

17th February 1461 – Lancastrian forces defeated the Yorkists at the 2nd Battle of St. Albans.

18th February 1478 - George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, died in the Tower of London, said to have been drowned in a butt of his favourite malmsey wine.

19th February 1897 - The Women’s Institute was founded in Ontario, Canada, by Mrs Adelaide Hoodless.

20th February 1938 - Anthony Eden resigned as British Foreign Secretary.

21st February 1804 - British engineer Richard Trevithick demonstrated the first steam engine to run on rails.

22nd February 1797 - Over 1,000 French troops attempted to invade Britain, landing on the Welsh coast. The brave ladies of Fishguard saved the day!

23rd February 1863 - Lake Victoria, in Africa, was declared to be the source of the River Nile by British explorers John Speke and J A Grant.

24th February 1917 - President Woodrow Wilson informed the US nation of the contents of an intercepted message from the German Foreign Minister offering Mexico an alliance against the US.

25th February 1570 – England’s Queen Elizabeth I was excommunicated by Pope Pius V.

26th February 1797 - The Bank of England issued the first ever one pound note, in part a result of the panic in London caused by the French Invasion of Fishguard!

27th February 1782 - The British Parliament voted to abandon the American War of Independence.

28th February 1900 - The four-month siege of the British garrison at Ladysmith in Natal, South Africa, ended as a relief force broke through the Boers at Spion Kop.

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Caramel Whirlies

You will need:

- 1 pack of ready rolled puff pastry
- 50g butter, melted
- 50g light brown or demerara sugar

Here's what to do:

- 1 – Unroll the sheet of puff pastry, leaving it on the greaseproof paper.
- 2 - Spread the melted butter over the upper side of the pastry
- 3 – Sprinkle the sugar evenly over the melted butter.
- 4 – Roll the sheet of pastry from the long side, to form a tight 'sausage'.
- 5 – Cut into pinwheels about ½" wide, then arrange them flat side down on a floured baking sheet.
- 6 – Bake at 200c for approx 15 mins, or until golden & crisp.

(Note: You can also replace the butter & sugar with a spoonful of pickle & 50g of grated cheese to create savoury whirlies)



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Poems From The Parish (And Beyond ...)

Jesus Bids Us Shine

Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light,
like a little candle burning in the night;
in this world of darkness we must shine –
you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine, first of all for him;
well he sees and knows it, if our light is dim;
he looks down from heaven, sees us shine –
you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine, then; for all around
many kinds of darkness in this world abound:
sin and want and sorrow: we must shine –
you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Susan Warner

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The Parish Puzzler

Purple Quiz

As we move forward into Lent, the liturgical colour is purple ..

1. Which country has purple in their flag?
2. Which 2 colours do you need to mix to make purple paint?
3. Which gemstone is known for its purple appearance?
4. True or false – purple is classed as a ‘royal colour’?
5. Which children’s show character is purple?
6. The 'Land of the Purple' where the colour was believed to be first produced is an island of which country?
7. Which month of the year has a purple birthstone?
8. True or false – cyan is a shade of purple?
9. In the game of pool which numbers are the two purple balls?
10. True or False, the colour purple was made from a tropical sea snail called the Murex?

LENT ...

All of the answers to the following clues include, but don't necessarily start with the letters ...L E N T ...

1. Without noise
2. A type of pulse
3. Skill or ability
4. Something that doesn't attract
5. To give in
6. Rough or aggressive
7. A type of corn based flour
8. A condition which is extremely severe or harmful
9. Saint who is celebrated in February
10. Brilliant!

(Answers on Pg 44)

Sidesmen, Lay Assistant & Prayers Rota

Date	Sidesmen	Lay Assistant	Prayers
1 st February 10.30am	Mags Gillman	Beryl Sixsmith	Andrew Lowe
8 th February Church Parade	Barbara Clarkson Guiding Section	N/A	Guiding Sections
15 th February 10.30am	Susan Campbell Barbara Leigh	Chris Haworth	Jenny Johnson
22 nd February 10.30am	Jean Ellis Christine Shaw	David Holden	David Holden

Reader's Rota

Date	Reader	Readings
1 st February 4 th Sun of Epiphany (White) <i>DJ</i>	Beryl Sixsmith	1 Kings 17.8-16 1 Corinthians 1.18-31 John 2.1-11
8 th February 2 nd Sun before Lent (Green) <i>BM</i>	Guiding Sections	Church Parade
15 th February Sunday next before Lent (Green)	Jenny Johnson	Exodus 24.12-18 2 Peter 1.16-21 Matthew 17.1-9
22 nd February 1 st Sun In Lent (Purple) <i>BM</i>	David Holden	Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7 Romans 5.12-19 Matthew 4.1-11

Who's Who

Vicar	Vacancy vicar@ainsworthparish.org.uk	01204 398567
OLM	Revd Debra Johnstone	01204 399630
Associate Priest	Revd Bob May	
ALM	Alison Hartley	07952 709041
Churchwarden	Alison Hartley	07952 709041
	Chris Haworth	07855 638450
Church Treasurer	David Holden	davelholden@aol.co.uk
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		bookings@ainsworthchurchhall.co.uk
Magazine Editor	Alison Hartley	ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com
Magazine Adverts	Alison Hartley	ainsworthmagazine@gmail.com
Primary School Head	Mrs L McGreavy BA(Hons)	01204 527484

Services

Sunday 8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) 2 nd & 4 th Sunday
10.30am	Family Service, 2 nd Sunday Family & Parade Service
6.30pm	Evening Prayer (BCP) 1 st Sunday
Weds 6.30pm	Mid-Week Praise

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

Answers to Purple Quiz: 1) Dominica; 2) Red & bluet; 3) Amethyst; 4) True;
5) Barney the Dinosaur; 6) Greece; 7) February; 8) False; 9) 4 & 12; 10)
True.

Answers to Lent ... Quiz: 1) Silent; 2) Lentil; 3) Talent; 4) Repellent; 5)
Relent; 6) Violent; 7) Polenta, 8) Virulent; 9) Valentine; 10) Excellent.

Who's Who For Church Organisations

Mothers Union	1 st & 3 rd 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	group.ainsworth@praws.gmnscouts.org.uk	01204 595378
Beaver Scouts	Friday at 6.30pm in the Church Hall	
Cub Scouts	Friday at 6.30pm in the Church Hall	
Scouts' 14 th 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 Stacey White scouts.ainsworth@praws.gmnscouts.org.uk	07742 610281
Brownies 16 th Radcliffe	Sarah McAnulty	07955 373623
Guides 12 th Radcliffe	Captain Polly Ryder	07437 519045

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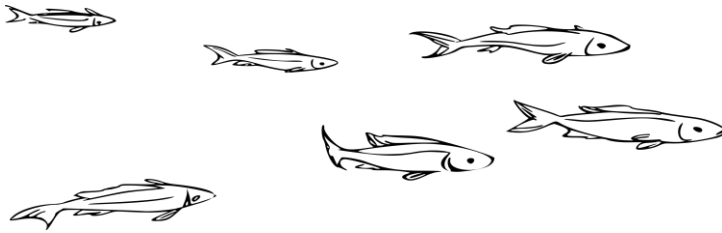


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Little Fishes

Candlemas



Candlemas

Last month's Little Fishes was all about Epiphany and the story of the three Kings; in the Church of England Epiphany is celebrated on the 6th of January, but did you know that the season of Epiphany carries right on up to the 2nd of February?

So What happens after Epiphany?

At the time when Jesus was born there were many customs and traditions which people had to follow; certain things they could do and other things which they couldn't do.

One of the really important traditions at that time was that women were not allowed to go to Church or take part in any religious festivals straight after having a baby - if they had a baby boy they had to wait 40 days, if it was a baby girl they had to wait 60 days! Then at the end of this time, the woman had to go to the Temple or Synagogue to be purified and to present her baby to God and give Him thanks. After the ceremony the woman was allowed to take part in religious services again.

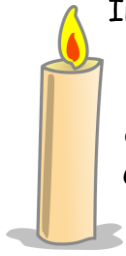
With a little bit of maths, we can work out that the 2nd of February is exactly 40 days after the 25th of December - the day that Jesus was born, so this is the day that Mary went to the Temple in Jerusalem to be purified after Jesus' birth, and also to present the baby Jesus to God.

When Mary and Joseph went to the Temple in Jerusalem, they met 2 very important people, Anna and Simeon. Anna and Simeon were prophets, which means they were messengers of God; Simeon held the baby Jesus in his arms and called him 'a light to the world'.

In some Churches the 2nd of February is known as "The Presentation of Christ In the Temple", in others it is known as "The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary", but it is also known as Candlemas.

So What Is Candlemas?

As time went on, many people began to observe this religious festival with lighted candles. In olden times, candles were very important - not only because people needed them for light, but they also thought that candles would give them protection from bad things.



In churches, the 2nd of February was the day when all of the candles which were to be used in church throughout the coming year were brought into church and blessed; over time it became known as the Festival of Candles, or Candlemas.

Candles are extra specially important to Christians because, as Simeon predicted, Jesus is 'the light of the world'; without Jesus in our lives the world can seem like a dark, lonely place where people can feel as if there is no one to help them or look out for them; with Jesus in our lives there is always someone that we can turn to for help and comfort.

Did You Know ...

Snowdrops are also known as Candlemas Bells because they flower early in the year. According to legend, Eve was walking in the Garden of Eden and crying in despair over the cold and death that had entered the world. An angel heard her and helped these little flowers to bloom, even though it was cold and desolate, and pointed them out to Eve as a sign of hope. Many Christians see these flowers as a symbol of Jesus Christ being hope for the world.



What Am I?

I get shorter the more I'm used, but I'm not a pencil.

I'm made of wax, but I'm not a crayon.

I can help you to see in the dark, but I'm not a torch.

I'm often found on a birthday cake, but I'm not icing.

What am I?



Persona Care and Support in partnership with HMR Circle Bury are looking for volunteer drivers

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If you enjoy driving, meeting new people and would like to help your local community - then make a difference by supporting people to access a range of social activities or attend appointments who would find this difficult to do by themselves.

A contribution of 45p per mile is payable on the day, to reimburse for the cost of petrol and support the costs of insuring and maintaining your vehicle.



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Persona
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