

# The Messenger

## Ainsdale Village Church

### United Reformed/Baptist

Station Road, Ainsdale, PR8 3HW

### August/September 2024

From the rising of the sun to the place where it  
sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

### Psalm 113: Verse 3



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## Minister's letter

***Dear friends,***

During our recent church weekend in Grange Over Sands we spent time exploring the meaning of knowing ourselves blessed, and I'm grateful to those who shared their thoughts and experiences. It was a beautiful setting overlooking the bay, and that sense of being in awe of nature certainly helped me find some perspective. We live in a delightful world, and it's good to be reminded of how much our amazing God has given to us.

I took with me a whole stack of resources to help the sessions along, but I didn't need them, as folk made the subject all their own, and we celebrated together the lives and loves that have made us who we are, all entwined with our faith and our church.

So, what is helping you feel blessed at this time? The good weather (hopefully, if summer decides to make an appearance), the wonder of the world around us, our families, friends, joy and laughter can all help us feel better about our lives and our hopes. One of my favourite philosophical poems, "Desiderata" by Max Ehrmann, says, "with all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world."

Our time in Grange was full of laughter, friendship and fun, and I am already looking forward to the next church weekend, in June 2025. I'm also aware that there are depths and nuances to knowing ourselves blessed, and that interweaving of joy and sadness are what form the body of this rich tapestry of life. Emotion, memories, dreams and energy take us to so many deep places and it's good to share with friends we can trust. I suppose it's that complexity of human life that makes us cry at weddings.

Our loving Lord Jesus knew all about joy and sadness, and everything in between, and there was always a sense of the knowledge of his destiny – to be the embodiment of powerful love for his flock. As one of our group shared with us on that weekend, whatever happens, we are protected, we are treasured, we are safe. And so I leave the last word with the psalmist who delighted in the wonders of nature and knowledge of God:

"I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip – he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord watches over you – the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."

*Yours in the service of our Lord,*

***Hilary***

## Community Garden

The Dry Garden is now complete and looks splendid in its corner of the Community Garden. We have had many comments from garden visitors saying how much they like it, and as we had hoped, it seems to have sparked ideas amongst them to do similar projects in their own gardens to save water and cope with the changing climate.

On Thursday 11 July, the North West in Bloom judges visited the garden and were impressed to find that the Dry Garden, promised at last year's visit, was now in place.

On Saturday 13 July, as part of the Ainsdale Open Gardens Weekend, Anne Hanley and the other volunteer gardeners organised a Plant and Preserves stall, and this attracted a steady stream of visitors during the day, resulting in the magnificent sum raised for the garden of £340.

We now await the visit of the Britain in Bloom judges on Monday 29 July.

Many thanks should go to Beverly for designing the lovely Britain in Bloom poster which has been placed in the standing wooden frame in the garden. Beverly has also designed and produced a beautiful Garden Visitors Book, as well as a journal in which we can chart the Garden's progress.

Jenny



**Minister:**  
Rev. Hilary Smith  
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**Church Secretary**  
Mrs Imelda Aspinall  
Tel: 07955 874814

**Church Treasurer:**  
Mrs Wendy Parry  
Tel: 01704 578214

**Deacons:**  
Imelda Aspinall Christine Holford  
Joan Green Wendy Parry  
Lucinda Green

### **Weekly Church Activities**

**Sunday:** Morning Worship at 10.00 am  
**Tuesday:** Gardening from 9.30 am  
Coffee Morning 10.30 am – 12 noon in the Vestry  
Last Tuesday in each month, Prayer for our Local Community  
**Thursday** Knitting Group: 10.00 am at the home of Jean Harding,  
55 Leamington Road – all welcome  
**Friday** Welcome Café: 11.00 am – 1.00 pm.  
Connect Youth Group 6.00 – 7.30 pm

### **Notes from the Archives – Part 11 : 2008**

Only the Church Secretary's Report has been found (not the full annual report), but it covers a lot of ground. Jenny reported that the three main projects moved forward, sometimes slowly but going in the right direction.

#### **United Church:**

On the proposed union with the Cornerstone Baptist Church, a very positive joint meeting took place, involving Ainsdale Elders and Cornerstone members, with Howard Sharp, URC Moderator, and Phil Jump, Baptist Church Co-ordinator. It was agreed to start the formal uniting process early in 2009. In the meantime, we got to know each other better with a fellowship meal, followed by a quiz and games.

#### **New Church Entrance:**

The Quinquennial Survey was received in February. It listed tasks to be completed, some of which would be included in the proposed new entrance. In August, the Elders met with the Synod Pastoral Committee to discuss the new entrance, which had developed into a significant building project. It was agreed that we should first complete electrical, asbestos and fire surveys. These were completed by the end of September, including removal of asbestos from the boiler cellar by a specialist company at a cost of over £2000.

Peter Brook commenced building work in October, and in time for Christmas we had the new access ramp and splendid new oak doors. In addition to funds from our own resources, the Synod made a financial contribution, and Jenny wrote to various trust funds, some of whom also contributed.

**Note:** The original side wall of the small hall was where the handrail on the ramp now is, with a double door entrance in the wall with a high step access. That wall was demolished with the new wall built in its present position to create space for the new doors, facing the road, with the sloping roof above. Peter styled the brickwork at the top of the wall to match the main sanctuary wall.



## Ainsdale Open Gardens weekend – Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 July

This event was organised by Ainsdale Civic Society, and as usual the Community Garden was there for people to visit on their rounds of all the gardens. The weather was fairly kind with no downpours, although we could have done with a little more sunshine.

As stated in the Community Garden item, the Plant Stall raised £340 for garden funds, and the refreshments, kindly provided by the local Co-op, raised £193 for church funds.

So a good result all round.



Debbie Hall from Co-op Funeral care was a stalwart helper and sold raffle tickets for most of the day.

Many thanks go to all the other helpers who acted as waiters and kitchen maids – we were still serving scones and cakes until at least 4.00 pm.



Ainsdale Village Church  
Station Rd

## Pets Service

Sunday 4th August

Ainsdale Community Garden

2 pm

followed by refreshments.

All pets welcome....

large and small

An opportunity to celebrate  
and give thanks  
for our animal companions!



# LAZY SUNDAY AFTERNOON TEA



## AINSDALE VILLAGE CHURCH

SUNDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2024

2.00- 4.00 P.M.

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM WENDY PARRY  
TEL: 01704 578214 (Mobile: 07760314305)

ADULTS £10.00  
(WITH A WELCOME DRINK)  
CHILDREN £7.00

VEGETARIAN AND GLUTEN FREE  
OPTIONS AVAILABLE  
(PLEASE REQUEST WHEN  
PURCHASING YOUR TICKET)





## WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S PLANNED!

Following the cancellation of the church fundraiser '**Donna's Bazaar**' due to bad weather, rain, thunder and lightening it was re-scheduled for a couple of weeks later. Just as well it wasn't called a summer bazaar because once again it rained!! So, it was held in the church and the vestry and was a great success. Organised by the volunteers and regulars at the Friday Warm Welcome café we raised £237.50p. Our regulars, not only local but from Churchtown, Crosby and Waterloo were all really pleased and are talking about doing another one!

The raffle had some impressive prizes, and made a big difference to our fundraising, also gaining support from local businesses. Our thanks go to:

Mick and team from DOLCE VITA who donated a £60 voucher and a bottle of wine.

Collette from AINSDALE VILLAGE BUILDERS for a beautiful hanging basket.

Emma and team from Studio 57 who donated a £20 gift voucher.

Later that same evening we had a '**GHOSTLIGHT PERFORMERS SCRATCH NIGHT.**'

Arranged by their chairman, Jen, she started off by explaining what this was and went on to recite a couple of her new poems, one she had written on the train the previous day.

The contributors were connected to SDC at The Little Theatre, and it was (not sure what we were expecting!) a successful evening, enjoyed by performers and audience alike.

The entrance money, 'pay what you can, suggested £5,' went to Ghostlight Performers, the proceeds from the bar to Connect Youth Group.

### **NOW TO WHAT IS PLANNED:**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September will be the church's '**LAZY SUNDAY AFTERNOON.**'

From 2-4pm IN THE CHURCH Tickets are £10, available from Wendy. A welcome drink on arrival, there will be Prosecco and various soft drinks, afternoon tea along with entertainment from Paul and 'the lads.' A RAFFLE with a variety of prizes, any donations for the raffle, unwanted gifts, items for a food hamper, for a 'sweets and treats' hamper etc would be much appreciated.

All proceeds to church funds.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November will be the **Ghostlight Performer's Launch night** for their next year's season - a concert and a licenced bar along with festive snacks, to which the NODA rep has been invited and will be in attendance.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December is the **Ghostlight Performer's Christmas Murder Mystery Evening.**

Both these events will be ticketed with a licenced bar.

The Murder Mystery is the Ghostlight fundraiser for the church and already receiving lots of interest!

Thank you for your support for any or all the above.

Love and God bless

**Joan**

**Dear friends,**

I am writing this having just returned from a trip to Disneyland Paris. I took Olivia as a post-GCSE treat. We had a wonderful time, it was everything you would expect, full of fun and Disney-magic, and walking, lots of walking! We flew in and out via Charles De Gaulle airport which was plastered in posters and information for the upcoming Olympics and Paralympics.

It has been 100 years since Paris last hosted the Olympic games. A lot has changed over the century, for example the Paris 1924 Games took place over just under three months, between 4 May and 27 July with 17 sports and 126 medal events. In contrast Paris 2024 lasts just over a fortnight (from 26 July to 11 August) with nearly double the number of sports: 32 in total - and 329 medal events.

But one thing that hasn't changed is that every Olympics has given rise to heroes and legends; to men and women who have pushed the boundaries and have gone above and beyond to achieve something incredible. I am looking forward to seeing what this year's Games has in store but I would like to take the opportunity for us to look back at a powerful story that came out of the 1924 games; The story of Eric Liddell. His story was famously retold in the Oscar winning film *Chariots of Fire* (full disclosure: I haven't actually seen the film).

I knew of Eric but didn't really know much more than he was good at running, had a catchy theme song and was regarded a hero of faith. It was through my work that I was able to discover more about him. I was sent a sample copy of an evangelical booklet called *Running the race of your life: The story of Eric Liddell* by J. John and I would like to share some of it with you.

Liddell, born in 1902 in China to Scottish missionaries, made an early commitment to follow Christ. He took his faith seriously, believing that, because Jesus had died for him, his life should be spent serving God and other people. He was an outstanding all-round sportsman and, after playing rugby for Scotland, focused on athletics.

He was selected for the British team for the 1924 Paris Olympics with the expectation that he would run – and win – the 100m. Liddell, believing he had to respond to God's goodness to him, refused to take part in the 100m heats held on a Sunday. He came under enormous pressure but, refusing to compromise his faith, instead trained for the 200m and 400m.

After taking bronze at the 200m, Liddell prepared for the 400m, a distance over which he was not expected to do well. Yet he won, breaking the world record in the process.

After the Olympics, Liddell felt called to return to China to teach in a Christian college. Soon, as war made China increasingly perilous, Liddell's children and wife – pregnant with their third child – left. Liddell, committed to serving the Chinese people, stayed.

In 1943, Liddell was imprisoned in a brutal prison camp, where he became a leader – helping, encouraging, teaching Bible classes, and praying for both his inmates and captors. Malnourished, his health failed. In 1945, just months before liberation, he died aged just 43. Though widely mourned at the time of his death, he was soon forgotten – until 1981 when his story was made into the Oscar-winning film *Chariots of Fire*.

Liddell framed his entire life within his knowledge and love of God. He believed that his ultimate, unbreakable priority was to serve Jesus, wherever he was – whether on the track, in his career, or even in a prison camp. Every arena presented an opportunity to declare Christ's lordship. And he was ready to pay the price for following his Lord: in Paris, and again in China.

Eric Liddell's life was dominated by one guide, the Bible; one figure, Jesus; and one goal, responding with all he was to the One who'd saved him. As we enjoy the Olympics, may we point those around us to Liddell's remarkable story and seek to emulate it ourselves, wherever God leads us.

Love and God Bless

**Lucinda**

## Ladies Group

At our June meeting, we watched a DVD of *The Way*, a story about people walking the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela, which was a very enjoyable and thought-provoking film. It was a chilly evening, so we were glad of a hot drink and some supper afterwards!

In July we had a meal out at The Spitfire in Ainsdale, much enjoyed by all, and looking forward to August, Pat Cooper has promised us a quiz evening in the vestry (or even the garden if summer eventually arrives). I don't think Pat will give us an easy ride, so we'll need to put on our thinking caps. No doubt, also, we will need some sustenance to help boost our brain cells. In the Ladies Group calendar, we have a Lancashire evening planned for September, and this will probably involve more eating! What a surprise. Perhaps Lancashire Hotpot and Eccles cakes with Lancashire cheese.

## Jenny

### God Be In My Head

I came across this recently, and remembered that we used to say and sing it often when I was at school, a very long time ago, but some things remain with you throughout life.

God be in my head, and in my understanding;  
 God be in my eyes, and in my looking;  
 God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;  
 God be in my heart, and in my thinking;  
 God be at my end, and at my departing.

## Jenny



## Harvest Festival – Sunday 15 September at 10.00 am

The Harvest Festival service will be led by Janice Atfield. As always, we will be donating the harvest gifts to Southport Soup Kitchen, so please bring along tinned and packet goods to be arrayed at the front of the church.

Also, some fresh produce will be required to make a lovely display, along with perhaps some flowers and foliage. On the Saturday morning prior to the service (14<sup>th</sup> September) helpers will be required to decorate the church, from 10.30 onwards, so please come to help if you can. No doubt coffee etc will be available.



# Sunday Rotas

	Door	Communion	Reader	Flowers	Tea/Coffee
<b>4th Aug</b>	Jean Harding	Jeremy Lister Ann Swift	Jenny Boulton	Vacancy	Donna Barnacle
<b>11th Aug</b>	Service at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am				
<b>18th Aug</b>	Jean Harding		Wendy Parry	Stella Tominson	Jenny Boulton
<b>25th Aug</b>	Jean Harding		Jeremy Lister	Vacancy	Joan Green
<b>1st Sept</b>	Jenny Boulton	Imelda Aspinall Jenny Bolton	Imelda Aspinall	Gay Dowie	Norma Naisbett
<b>8th Sept</b>	Service at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am				
<b>15th Sept</b>	Jenny Boulton		Beverly Bush	Imelda Aspinall	Jeanne Taylor
<b>22nd Sept</b>	Jenny Boulton		Janice Hill	Beverly Bush	Ann Swift
<b>29th Sept</b>	Team Service at Churchtown Village Church at 10.45 am				



## Calendar for August

- Sun 4<sup>th</sup>** Holy Communion at 10.00 am – Hilary Smith
- Sun 4<sup>th</sup>** Pets' Service at 2.00 pm. Led by Hilary Smith  
– see poster in magazine
- Sun 11<sup>th</sup>** Morning Worship at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am
- Mon 12<sup>th</sup>** Ladies Group Quiz Evening – see item in magazine
- Sun 18<sup>th</sup>** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – service of favourite hymns (DIY)  
– Mike Smith playing the organ
- Sun 25<sup>th</sup>** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – Janice Atfield,  
with the Methodist congregation
- Sun 25<sup>th</sup>** Songs of Praise Service in the Community Garden  
– led by Janice Hill
- Tue 27<sup>th</sup>** Prayer in the church from 11.30 am



## Calendar for September

- Sun 1<sup>st</sup>** Holy Communion at 10.00 am – Hilary Smith
- Sat 7<sup>th</sup>** Intermediate Safeguarding Training 10.00 am – 1.00 pm.
- Sun 8<sup>th</sup>** Morning Worship at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am
- Sun 8<sup>th</sup>** Lazy Sunday Afternoon Tea – please see details in the magazine
- Mon 9<sup>th</sup>** Ladies Group Lancashire Evening – see item in magazine
- Tue 10<sup>th</sup>** Deacons' Meeting in the vestry at 7.30 pm
- Sun 15<sup>th</sup>** Harvest Festival Service at 10.00 am – Janice Atfield
- Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – Janice Hill,  
and the Methodist congregation
- Tue 24<sup>th</sup>** Prayer in the church from 11.30 am
- Sun 29<sup>th</sup>** Team Service at Churchtown Village Church at 10.45 am.



