



St Helen's Church

Ashby-de-la-Zouch

FAITH — LOVE — COMMUNITY



Parish Magazine

September 2025

PARISH DIRECTORY

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Ashby Baptist Church	01530 413721
Ashby Congregational	01530 563301
Ashby Methodist Church	01530 412298
Holy Trinity	01530 412339
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FROM THE MINISTRY TEAM

And, just like that, it's another summer over. "Meteorological autumn" begins on 1st September, even though warm and sunny weather may continue for a while yet. The A-level and GCSE results are in, the families with school-age children and their teachers are back from their holidays, those of us not tied to term-times are taking advantage of the off-peak deals and heading off on theirs. And the Festival season has wound down to almost nothing after its August bank holiday peak.



I've just come back from another hugely enjoyable and very stimulating year at Greenbelt, where around 12,000 people gathered for the annual festival celebrating the arts and social justice from a Christian perspective. The theme for this year was "Hope in the Making" and it seemed extremely apposite, considering all that is going on both nationally and internationally. It is hard to maintain a sense of hope when we continue to see war and destruction going on in Gaza, when the war in Ukraine rumbles on, when the number of people across much of the world seeking refuge and asylum continues to escalate – not just in the UK, not just in Europe – and the challenges of climate change continue to threaten the most vulnerable in our world.

Hope, however, is not a stand-alone word. What matters is what or in whom we put our hope. And if this is not firmly rooted in God, the God whose love, faithfulness and insistence on justice we meet in Scripture, the God revealed in Jesus, ultimately our hopes wither or become corrupted. Hope is a theme that recurs through both the Old and New Testaments. It is a theme for the dark times.

In the words of the Psalmist: "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help and my God."

Greenbelt reminded me that hope is an act of the imagination. We hope for things that we do not yet see but can visualise as what could be or

should be, and how we might pray and work towards that. Hope is also something that needs to be shared, something by which we encourage one another and also energise one another. That “one another” is important. Despair comes easily when we look at the huge issues facing the world at the moment and the thought “What can I do?” is a rhetorical question with the answer “Nothing”. After 3 days of being with people engaged in various ways with an abundance of projects which make a difference to the vulnerable, needy or marginalised, that same question “What can I do?” becomes loaded with possibilities, becomes one of hope.

There are beacons of hope all round us if we are prepared to see them. They begin with one or a few people sharing a vision, sharing something that they can imagine. This is how food banks, Christians against Poverty, Hoveraid, who visited St Helen’s recently, centres like Loughborough Town of Sanctuary which support the well-being and dignity of asylum seekers and refugees, and innumerable other initiatives came into being – you don’t need me to list them for you. Even for those of us not directly involved in them, knowing about them and telling other people about them is a means of spreading hope. We can and should take the time and trouble to inform ourselves about the facts of high-profile concerns and use that knowledge to challenge the myths that are so widely promoted in some areas of the media, to the extent that they seem close to propaganda. Each time we speak out against lies, distortions of the truth or anything that stokes hatred or division or undermines human dignity, we are part of a message of hope. Every time we keep silent – well, you can finish that sentence yourself.

These are the quiet challenges, the quiet acts that shine as lights in the chaos and darkness of the world. I do not know, any more than anyone else, how the wars in Gaza, Ukraine, Yemen and elsewhere can be resolved – but there is no doubt that small, quiet, defiant acts of hope even in their hours of darkness will be making a difference there too.

I want to close with some words abridged from this year’s Greenbelt programme:

“We choose to cultivate hope, practise it, and make it a habit of character. On the strength of Jesus’ resurrection, and empowered by the promises of God, we choose to orient ourselves towards a future that is

good. We choose to build hope with our bare hands – not because we have given up on God, but because we have grasped that our hands are God’s implements. In our Act of Communion, we will share bread and wine as an act of resistance to despair. We will sing and shout our belief that Christ is Lord, which means that Caesar is not. We will turn our hands towards making the world better. We will resolve to live in the light of the freedom that we choose to believe is coming tomorrow.”

This seems to me to be a good manifesto for any Christian community. I encourage you to consider how we, in our churches, can continue to share together our vision for what God can do in and through us and to work together to bring it about.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.”

[PS: Why not come to Greenbelt yourself next year? Even if just for a day – it is only just over an hour away!]

Judith Lewis

MESSY CHURCH

Our Messy Church summer picnic was a lovely occasion with lots of fun to be had for both adults and children!

Messy Church has had much the same format since its inception many years ago, so we were able to chat to people about some possible changes going forward.

We’ll also chat to people at St Helen’s all-age service and will let you know soon about our conclusions: we may try a different day and time as a

one off - and then see what we think about more permanent changes. So watch this space and we will let you know the details very soon!



ASHBY YOUTH FOR CHRIST

If you would like to sign up for regular updates either follow this link <http://eepurl.com/dvVqrj> or email helen.davis@yfc.co.uk. Alternatively you can scan the QR code. Thank you for all your prayers and support.



This summer I have had the privilege of spending time with young people at Limitless Festival. As a centre we were able to support Measham Girls Brigade in spending a week, camping at the festival. Over the week I clearly saw God working in the lives of the girls that we took, and at the end of the week three of the group had made the decision to follow Jesus. Please pray for them as they continue to grow in their faith.

Prayer prompts for the Autumn term:

Give thanks for the residential that we were able to take young people to over the summer, they were a huge success. Please pray for these young people as they settle back into schools and colleges.

Please pray the following over the coming weeks:

- For the Rock Solid year 10s, for wisdom regarding their discipleship and spiritual growth.
- For the provision of volunteers at Skaters and Rock Solid.
- For energy and wisdom for Vernon and Helen.
- For Iona, who spent last year volunteering with us, that she settles into university quickly.
- Give thanks for those who have come to a deeper relationship with God over the summer.

If you would like to get in touch with Ashby Youth for Christ please contact helen.davis@yfc.co.uk

Helen Davis

A LIGHT IN THE WORLD

The next in our series highlighting the ways we live out our faith as a church, as we hear about what it was like serving at Keppleway summer camp...



During August I had the privilege of attending Keppleway bible and activities camp, serving as a group leader for the second year running. Keppleway is one of numerous Christian holidays run by CPAS Ventures and Falcons, who combine the pillars of 'Fun, Faith and Friendship' for young people from across the country.

Accompanied by 6 young people from the Flagstaff family, 3 trainee leaders and Vernon- another leader from Ashby, we headed to the Lake District where we joined with a total of 57 young people and leaders for a week of outdoor activities. This included hill walking, ghyll scrambling, kayaking, rock climbing, archery and more. It was wonderful to witness some of the youngest attendees developing confidence and resilience through the challenging activities and to see how encouraged they were by each other's successes.



Myself and Vernon were also given the role of supporting the trainee leaders on the camp this year, including three 18/19 year olds from Ashby. It was great to see them growing in confidence as they each shared a morning 'thought for the day' in front of all the young people. These were snippets filled with honesty and wisdom, allowing the young people listening to receive encouragement and practical advice about their walk with God from their older peers.

The scriptural focus of the camp for the week was the book of Esther, which we all explored each evening through daily worship and teaching, and through team discussion times. I was blessed to be leading a team of 8 young people who were all keenly exploring faith already, so our team times were rich with discussion, questioning, shared advice and heartfelt prayer.

Each evening concluded with a slot of entertainment, including a disco, a campfire, a water fight, team games and a competitive game of twister. I have no doubt that all the young people left with lifelong memories, new friends and seeds of faith sown for the year ahead. Please do pray for all who attended, that they would begin, or continue, to explore their faith as their own in the coming weeks and months.



Emily Darlington



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SEWING, ANYONE?

On the 19th of July we had a lovely and relaxing sewing day in the Heritage centre. We hope to have another one at some point. If anyone interested in anything textiles related- stitching, hand or machine sewing, knitting, crochet, why not come along to 'We're in Stitches' group from 2-4 pm on the first Wednesday in the month. We have some experts on hand to help as well.

You will be very welcome.



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A PRAYER FOR BACK TO SCHOOL



O God, the strength of my life,
make known your will for me in this place:
help me to discover friends among strangers,
to meet opportunities and challenges eagerly,
and to do my daily tasks in your name.
Give me strength to overcome my worries,
and preserve me in your safekeeping,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.





St Helen's Church & Community Heritage Centre

Every
Friday

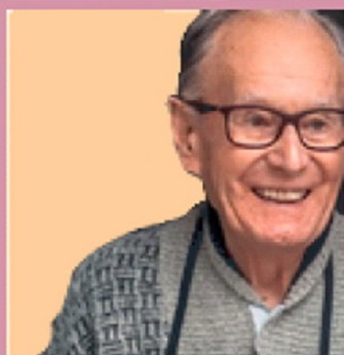
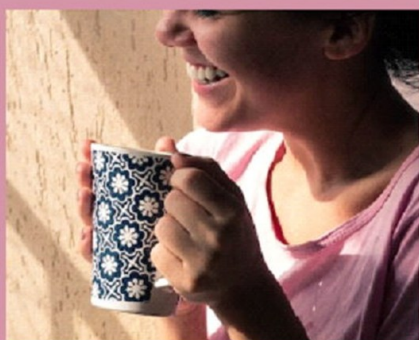
HEART WARMING SPACE

2 pm
to
4 pm



Tea
Cake
Chat

No
Charge



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LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN OF SANCTUARY

It is with great sadness that I write that my dear friend Shirley has recently died after a short illness. She was my trusty assistant at our weekly English conversation classes at Loughborough Town of Sanctuary - and the asylum seekers and refugees loved her, as did I.

Shirley was feisty and funny. In her nineties, she ensured that our group learnt some vocabulary that might not be immediately useful, since she lost either her 'hearing aids' or her 'glasses' - or both - every week. It did come in useful however, for teaching prepositions: 'is it *in* your bag? - *behind* your purse? *between* the pages of your diary? *under* the table?' And it also led in nicely to the prepositions game: 'put on the green hat' etc. ! (See photo.)



Shirley didn't believe in dumbing down her spoken English, often using colloquialisms that left the group somewhat puzzled: ('oh dear, I'm all over the place today!') but they just smiled and looked to me for an explanation - or reached for 'Google Translate' with varying success!

She was immensely kind to *Sameer, when he became the first of our asylum seeker friends to be given 'Leave to Remain' (and thus immediately became homeless). He called her 'mum' and Shirley later rejoiced with him when his young wife was able to join him from a refugee camp in Syria. When they visited Shirley for the last time during her brief illness, her daughter Jo told me: 'Sameer is being so solicitous towards his second Mum. It is moving to see.'

*Basim (who had previously escaped torture in Chad) was also repeatedly the recipient of Shirley's kindness and later visited her to help out

during her short illness. His message to me, when we heard that she had died, says it all:

'I am so sad for our mum Shirley... may God give her paradise. We miss her and never forget her. She was a very kind and good woman.'

Other members of our group - *Sahdia, and her daughter *Fahreen (from Afghanistan) loved her too. They brought young *Asim with them to the English sessions during the school holidays. Shirley immediately took him under her wing and had him smiling - and he later said he wished she could come to his house and talk to him every day!

It was Sahdia and Fahreen who told me emphatically one day that 'all English people are very kind!'

That assurance - especially in the current climate of hostility towards immigrants, may be some distance from the truth - but for me, that is honestly the reality of the relationship between LToS volunteers like Shirley and the asylum seeker community we seek to support.

So when you read or hear the less-than-kind words about refugees, spoken by a minority of our English compatriots - don't despair. Kindness really *does breed kindness!*

So, in memory of my dearly missed friend Shirley - Keep the faith!

Pat Stafford

**Names have been changed for privacy reasons.*



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

GARDENING TIPS FOR SEPTEMBER

As Summer starts to fade, September is the ideal time to prepare your garden for the cooler months ahead. Don't forget to keep watering and dead-heading, cut out faded perennial stems to keep borders tidy, as well as get the compost going with all the waste generated. There is still lots to do in the fruit and vegetable garden but not so much in the coloured flower areas.

If you have a pond, then it is best to spread a net over it in order to reduce the amount of Autumn debris (mainly dead leaves) entering the water. You may want to cover your pond with a Heron Net. Clean out the greenhouse, plant nursery and cold-frames ahead of Autumn sowing and growing. Continue watering on hot days (ideally with a watering can). Start to reduce the frequency of house plant watering. You can reduce your indoor watering even more if you have Succulents.

Many perennials look tired and have brown leaves. When the frost strikes, some of them will just collapse into a brown mess. However, some remain in good shape. Sedum looks good as it fades, but plants such as Hostas can look awful, but don't remove dead foliage until they fully die. The risk of frost is getting closer and it may be worthwhile storing outside-tender plants in a frost-free place such as a conservatory or sunny porch. If placing them in an unheated greenhouse, then cover them with fleece as well as raising the plant pots off the ground so air can circulate and reduce the chance of grey mould forming.

The vegetable garden is still active. You can plant onion and garlic sets to over-winter and pot up plants of Basil, Coriander, Dill and Parsley to grow them on the kitchen/porch window sill for a supply of herbs during winter. Keep picking Courgettes, Beans, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Sweetcorn and Peppers whilst young, fresh and tender. Dig up remaining main crop potatoes before slug damage spoils them. They do need to be stored somewhere dry and, most importantly, dark. Hessian sacks are ideal for storing them. Potatoes can go green very quickly when exposed to light, even if left in a greenhouse or conservatory for 24 hours after harvesting. However, they have to

be dry before putting them into sacks otherwise they can rot. Tidy up your strawberry plants and clear away any used straw as this will harbour pests and diseases over Winter. Pick Apples and Plums to test when they are ready, gently lift them in the palm of your hand and give them a gentle pull – they should come away easily.

We hope that rain will continue to fall, preferably during the night and so leaving the shortening days free to garden. It's a good idea to start planting Spring-flowering bulbs for next year. Bulbs make a lovely Spring display when planted in containers or in borders, especially Snowdrops, Daffodils, Crocus and Hyacinths.

We have had a good look around our garden and we are removing some plants which depend on heavy watering. We are not generally replacing them as this year (and probably future years) our weather may stay very dry throughout the Summer months. We are also developing our planting into, "Islands", so that we can directly water the roots and not just the leaves, therefore saving water and time.

Enjoy your September gardening whether you have only pots, a small garden or a larger garden.

Alan and Alison Cross



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Telephone: **01530 813101** email: editor@ashbytimes.com
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OUR WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

	am	pm	Wednesday
1st Sunday 7th September		3.30pm All age service 6pm Evensong	1st Wednesday– 3rd Holy Communion 10.30am In Church
2nd Sunday 14th September	10.30am Holy Communion		2nd Wednesday-10th Holy Communion 10.30am Prior Park Community centre
3rd Sunday 21st September	10.30 am Morning Worship		3rd Wednesday– 17th Morning prayer 10.30am In church
4th Sunday 28th September	10.30 am Holy Communion		4th Wednesday– 24th Holy Communion 10.30am St Helen's In church

Regular activities:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Monday mornings | - Little Fishes 9.30 - 11.30am during term time |
| Mondays | - Pilgrim group |
| 1 st Wednesday | - We're in stitches – 2 till 4pm |
| Thursdays | - Choir practice – 6.30 till 8.30pm |
| Fridays | - Heart- warming Space 2-4pm |
| Saturdays | - Parish Prayers – 9.30am in the Hastings chapel |
| 1st Saturday | - Pause for Paws– 10.15-12.15 at the tower door. |

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th— Soiree: Music For Two Pianos— 6-8pm

Join us again for choral evensong with St Helen's Choir, followed by refreshments and then a recital -'Music For Two Pianos'- by Jeremy Kimber and our very own Rev'd Sue Field. Entry is free with a retiring collection.

Saturday 13th— Ride and Stride-

Church will be open as usual to support cyclists and walkers taking part in this annual fundraiser for Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust.

Hello Heritage Event— 10am-3.30pm

The Heritage Centre will be open with archaeology and information from our 2012 archaeological dig, as well as 'dig boxes' for budding young archaeologists to excavate.

Sunday 14th— Service on the Dodgems— 10.30am

Please do join in with this annual service, hosted by Ashby Methodist Church, as part of Ashby Statutes Fair as we witness to the wider town. Please consider bringing your own camping chair as seats in Dodgem cars will be limited.

Tuesday 30th—Heritage Talk— 7.30pm

The heritage series continues as Gay Evans delivers a talk entitled 'Albert Isaiah Coffin: Doctor or Quack? Healer or Harming? You decide.' Tickets £4 on the door, including light refreshments.

A VISIT TO HM CHAPEL ROYAL

It was early one beautiful sunny morning in June when a group of us from across the Flagstaff family met at Sue's house. We were joining Sue for a Service of Choral Mattins at HM Chapel Royal in St James's Palace in London. As part of her role a King's Chaplain Sue was preaching during the service.

Just like any good day out, there was a stop for breakfast on the way. A short tube ride, a lovely walk through Green Park and we were soon making our way through security at St James's Palace.



The staff at HM Chapel Royal made us instantly feel welcome and we were treated to refreshments in The Colour Court. Up until the mid-19th century the Changing of the Guard Ceremony took place in The Colour Court. Despite the grandeur of the surroundings, and the many formalities to come, Sue surprised many of us as to how calm she was.

Personally, much of my worship on a regular Sunday morning is usually done through music. This was the perfect service for me to have the opportunity to worship in a different way in very special surroundings, but with the comfort of our local vicar and with the music that was sang so beautifully by the choir.

Sue's sermon focused on the readings from Deuteronomy 11 vv1-15 and Acts 27 vv 1-12. Sue spoke about how the news was very much dominated by the Iran and Israel conflict, how in the world we live in now communication about events such as these is much quicker due to modern technology. This ease of communication can be advantageous, but it also comes with its drawbacks such as individualism and pressures to conform to certain ideals. This is a very different world to when the bible readings were written, and Sue reminded us through her sermon that it important that 'we are to love the Lord our God and to keep his commandments'. On that day

when we were at HM Chapel Royal, yes it was a special day, but we had to remember it was still simply down to putting God first in our lives and worshipping him.

Following the service, we were all able to enjoy a meal at a nearby restaurant before making our way back home.

Thank you to Sue for allowing us to join you for the day, and to all the other lovely ladies from across our Flagstaff family that I had the opportunity to spend the day with.



Michelle Fretwell

A NEW VISION FOR ST HELENS

Some years ago, the PCC agreed the vision statement that is on our publicity and noticeboards – Loving God, Loving Others, Loving the World - but, at the beginning of this year, we decided to revisit the statement and to see whether we were ready for a change. At an away day in January, members of the PCC and the Ministry Team started with a blank sheet of paper and worked in groups to put together some ideas. We grouped those ideas and the three words that emerged from the discussions were 'Faith, Love, Community'.

Andy Smith very kindly worked on a longer statement which reads:-
St. Helen's is a community that is deeply rooted in God and faithful to Christ. We are called to welcome everybody with open arms, offering a safe and nurturing environment where each person can explore the Christian faith at their own pace. Our mission is to grow together in God's love and to share that love and the gospel of hope through our words, our actions, and by

building strong, connected relationships within Ashby and the surrounding villages.

This has now been agreed by members of the PCC and the Ministry Team and we will start using that in our publications. We will also preach on the three aspects of this statement in forthcoming services and I will introduce this in my sermon on 14 September at 10.30am.

We hope that this renewed vision statement will help us to shape our ministry and evaluate what we do under God as we go forwards seeking to serve Him in all that we do.

INTRODUCING PRAYER MINISTRY

When I first arrived in Flagstaff, it was suggested that we introduce prayer ministry. We now have a Pastoral Team and I also have two other clergy (Richard and John) working with me which makes this possible.

We hope to offer this on the fourth Sunday of the month as people return from receiving communion and it will take the form of a simple set prayer for healing and wholeness. This will usually be with a member of the Pastoral Team and a member of the clergy who would also be able to offer anointing if people would like that.

The Ministry of Healing was and is an important part of what the church has to offer and it comes from a place of recognising that we all need healing to become more whole. This is not just physical but also emotional, psychological, spiritual and includes the healing of relationships.

I will be introducing this in my sermon on 28 September at our 10.30am service of Holy Communion but please talk to me if you would like to find out more about this in the meantime.

Rev. Sue Field

THE LORDS PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer, possibly the most well-known prayer, has stood the test of time, as it's still popular 2000 years after Jesus first gave it to the twelve disciples. They had asked him 'Teach us to pray,' and Jesus replied 'When you pray, say:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, '

Rather than reciting it all the way through, we pause here to try to dig into its relevance to us today. Just this first part. We know that Jesus often referred to God Almighty as 'Father,' and he felt very comfortable with that. But no-one else had dared be so familiar with God, who is given many names in the Jewish bible. None of them is Father. Psalms is the great book of prayers and reveals the closeness of God, but the writers are unable to get over the last hurdle and call God 'Father.' Why not? Because you'd have to be a daughter or son of God to call him Father.

This is a great conundrum – why is Jesus suggesting we call God our Father? It's more than him inventing a new name for God. In a way, you are no longer saying a prayer but stepping into the very presence of God. I can understand that Jesus felt this was quite normal, but it must have been a shock to the disciples. Jesus encourages us to go a step too far and come right up close to God Almighty, and call him 'Father.'

To go immediately into saying 'Our Father' is very direct. In the Psalms you often have a word or two of introduction, as in Psalm 143:

Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy;

In your faithfulness and righteousness, come to my relief.

With Jesus there is none of this pretending there's a barrier, or using apologetic language. Straight away, he's asking you to recognize you're a child of God, and to call him Father without further ado.

Of course, there's more to it than that. NB: Others will tell you about God, describe God, and make statements about God. But their opinions are almost irrelevant because Jesus clearly wants us to pray directly to our Father, and not to be thinking about miscellaneous comments about God (like

mine here). Anyway, let's move on to the next phrase.

'Our Father in heaven...'

We're so familiar with the whole prayer we may miss the reason why 'heaven' suddenly pops up here. I mean, we would normally soon get into our list of requests, asking God to help us with our dire situation, our problems, our friends who are suffering, and so on. The puzzle with the word heaven is this - what does it mean? None of our dearly departed has returned to give us news of how heaven looks. Possibly because it's so different there simply aren't the words to describe it. You have to be there.

What was Jesus trying to say in mentioning that heaven is the place where the Father exists? My gut feeling is that heaven is not a place. Instead, is it the presence of God? Do we have a practical example? Yes, the phrase 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand' occurs three times in Matthew's gospel. Can it be that if Jesus is in the room you are automatically in the kingdom of heaven? This possibility is too amazing to believe, unless you take some time to think about it.

Whatever your view of heaven, you have to agree that it's a challenge to your brain to understand it. Jesus continually throws awkward ideas like this at his listeners. It's his style. He's not allowing us to get too comfortable. And don't worry if you're feeling overwhelmed. Join the club.

Why is it so difficult? Because the Father is spirit, and we are not. Also, God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. What chance do we have at solving these puzzles? My advice is, go with the flow. Follow Jesus, because we have to assume he knows the path he's leading us on. Chill out here, and have a break, because the next part of the Lord's Prayer is very hard.

We say 'hallowed be your name' or holy is your name. Another good word - holy. The mere mention of it leaves me floundering. I confess I'm not holy and never have been, but I'm glad God is holy because this may enable him to be who he is, and to do what he does. Note that we don't really know God's name. He probably doesn't refer to himself as 'God,' or 'I am who I am.' By the way the name Yahweh is how Jews refer to God, but they can neither say it nor write it down, as it's too holy.

In a way, our not knowing what the holiness of God is, or his name, is a clue to solving the conundrum. For if calling God our Father seems too chummy, then 'holy is your name' is a warning that we should respect God and not take any liberties. Or 'don't push your luck!' We are to follow God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Whenever we try to take the lead, we end up in the ditch, and have to eat a lot of humble pie. A bit embarrassing really.

To conclude, the aim of a reflection is to mull something over, and in this case the start of the Lord's Prayer. What I find absolutely stunning is how Jesus is able to say who I am, and who God is, in two very short phrases. How does he do that? He must be God. There's no other explanation!

Richard Vann

BITS AND PIECES FROM 1872

I was watching a television programme recently in which they showed the plight of farmers during the very wet spring of 2024. It was mentioned that the previous year when the amount of rain had been just as bad was 1872, so I decided to investigate and see whether it had affected Ashby and surrounding farms.

Local and national newspapers do talk about the huge amounts of rain and floods that occurred elsewhere, but I could find no mention of flooding or farmers' problems in and around Ashby that year. Harvest Festival services at St Helen's went ahead as normal without any mention of problems or shortages. However, my attention was drawn to several other (unrelated) things that happened in Ashby in 1872.

The first was the death of John Davys at the age of 81. Mr Davys was appointed church warden at St Helen's in 1847 and served for many years. He held several other public posts over the years: Poor Law Guardian, Manager of the Blue and Green Coat School and was trustee of several charities. His occupation was wine merchant and his name can still be seen above the entrance to a passage in Market Street next to the former HSBC

bank. By 1861 he was living in Hill House in Trinity Close and farming 220 acres. Although a resident of Ashby for many years, he was born in Barrow Upon Trent (not to be confused with Barrow on Soar) and his name is remembered in the local primary school there: Sale and Davys C of E Primary School. He helped to rebuild the school in 1843.

Quite a different event in 1872 was the Ashby annual Sunday School Treat. No fewer than 470 children took part as well as teachers and friends, drawn not only from St Helen's Sunday School but also the boys and girls of the school in North Street and the Blue and Green Coat School. It took place on 14th August in Willesley Park by permission of the Countess of Loudoun. Everyone gathered outside the school in North Street and set off in procession led by the school banner and a band. This was followed by Revs. Denton and Vavasour, the teachers, friends and the children, the infants being taken in a wagon decorated with evergreens. They reached Willesley Hall (now demolished of course) at 2pm where the band set up in the carriage circle and the children formed a ring and sang hymn 385 *Praise the God of All Creation*. The children were then allowed to play. Footballs and cricket were provided, the band played dance music and there were races with "toys and coppers" being given as prizes. Even the boat on the lake was made available for those who wanted to go fishing.

At 3.30 a bugle sounded and the children went in for tea. Play resumed afterwards until 7 pm when the procession formed up again. After singing another hymn and the National Anthem, they marched back into town with banners and flags flying. They were greeted in Market Street by a display of fireworks. They then returned to the school where they were each given a bun as they left for home. Quite an occasion obviously! No wonder it had been eagerly anticipated for weeks beforehand.

Finally, the following complaint about the pavements of the town, which appeared in the Burton Chronicle on 26th December 1872 is worth quoting in full:

"A stranger visiting the town, as he approaches by the Midland Railway, is struck with the compact, the cleanly, and respectable appearance of this small inland town. His expectations are raised by the sight of the Bath

Grounds and the Royal Hotel. He is surprised, however, when reaching the clump of trees at the beginning of Bath Street, (the Loudoun Memorial was not built until 1879) and looking over the wall, to see that heap of earth made a receptacle for all kinds of broken crockery and filth. Turning the corner of Bath Street, he is pleased with our wide and handsome street, but on walking up one side and down the other, is amazed at the discreditable state of the foot pavement.

Notwithstanding the gentle slope of the greater part of the street, in rainy weather you might collect sufficient water to float a man-of-war (a type of warship). Foot passengers are far better on the boulder and gravel pavement of the horse road. The flags are broken in a thousand places. The rain collects and stands in your way like miniature lakes. Splash, splash, splash is your experience as you walk along, if you do not most carefully select a place for the sole of your feet. There is a rumour that at the last meeting of the Local Board of Health this body did turn their attention to “the public health, versus the Town Pavement”. The bootmakers, the doctors, and the Burial Board are the only persons likely to have a vested interest in the present state of things. Surely the ratepayers would support the Board if they undertook the re-pavement of the street from top to bottom.”

Thank goodness things have improved today!

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A photograph of the lower legs and feet of several people dancing on a wooden floor. The text 'The Ranter's Barn Dance Band' is overlaid in a large, stylized, blue font with a white outline.

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First Saturday of the month



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door)

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will be
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5th July,
2nd August,
6th September,
4th October,
1st November,
6th December.*

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