

ashwoodnews

March April 2024



Mini-Conference

We are excited to hear Jo Hargreaves over two days in April, details on page 3

Freedom in Christ

New FIC course starting in April. Read all about it including stories on pages 22-24

Volunteers

We honour our volunteers, but there's always room for more! See pages 16-21



Helping people find
and follow Jesus



Matt's message

Hello Ashwood News Readers!

Welcome to our March / April bi-monthly collection of information and news! We will look back over the last couple of months as well as look ahead to things coming up in the life of the church.

If you're new to us, we hope you can find what you're looking for. Feel free to contact us, if we can help you further. Thanks for reading!

“Volunteer Appreciation Week!”

It's been a great start to 2024! In February we loved celebrating all of our incredible volunteers during our “Volunteer Appreciation Week!”



115 different people volunteering in one (or often more) of the many teams who make Ashwood a wonderful place to be! If you are one of those 115 people then... THANK YOU!! You are amazing! We are so grateful and feel so blessed to have so many gifted, kind and generous people serving together. Go TEAM ASHWOOD!

Vision 2024: HOME

We've been very encouraged by all the feedback from people about our 2024 vision – summed up in one word “HOME”. We believe that in every human heart, there is a longing for HOME. Ever since the “fall” in the Garden of Eden, God had a longing for every person to find their way back HOME.

The Story of the Prodigal Son reminds us that the Father welcomes even the worst “sinner” HOME with open arms. And not only with open arms but with extravagant gestures of acceptance,



affirmation and forgiveness. The way we are welcomed HOME is *by Jesus and also through Jesus. Where God made it possible for every human to make His HOME in their hearts and allows us access to make our HOME in His.*

We know that this theme for 2024 will impact and apply to us in different ways. (Which we've been exploring more in our Sunday meetings and also in our current LifeGroup Material) What is God saying to you about HOME?

New Home for Ashwood

As we think about HOME in 2024, we believe that it will be a significant year of movement in our **New HOME for Ashwood** project. Lately, we've been running out of chairs! We're already aware we need to make extra room for our growing family. As we explained on Sunday 3rd March, we have re-commissioned a team to help facilitate the project – you can read more about how you could be involved in this edition. We believe strongly that the key to success will come as we pray! Our strategy for praying is also included in this edition – thank you to everyone who is on board with praying! If you've not caught up yet, please join us!

2024 Mini-Conference "HOME – Safe and Sound"!

You can now book in for our **2024 Mini-Conference "HOME – Safe and Sound"!** We're hoping everyone will

make this date a priority and join us on Sat 13th April and in our meeting on Sunday 14th April. Our friends from Ikon will come to bring a full programme on Saturday for our children (5-13) and Jo Hargreaves is our guest speaker who will help us to see God's perspective for healthy sound minds as well as God's heart for us to feel safe and rooted in His love. We'll share lunch together on Saturday! Early booking is appreciated so we can plan the 2 days carefully.



The graphic features a light blue background with the text 'HOME - Safe and Sound' in large, bold, blue letters. Below the text is a photograph of a large, ornate house with a blue roof and white walls, set on a green lawn. To the right of the house is a small portrait of a woman, Jo Hargreaves. Further right, the text reads 'Ashwood Mini-Conference 2024' in blue, followed by 'Sat 13th April', 'Registration from 9.45am', 'Start 10.15am', 'Finish by 3pm', and 'Final Session Sun Morning Meeting (14th April)'. Below this is 'With Special Guest: Jo Hargreaves' and the Ashwood Church logo, which is a green tree with the text 'ashwood church' next to it.

Easter

Finally, as we approach Easter – we can't want to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Why not invite someone to come and maybe hear the story for Easter for the first time? We're also praying for prodigals to find their way HOME – could this Easter be an opportunity for them too? Let's pray and believe for that!

Matt Bell
Senior Leader





new home for ashwood

New Home for Ashwood Update – Continuing to Pray and Next Steps

Praying Together

In 2024 there are 4 different ways we're asking everyone to join with us in prayer.

1. Monthly Gatherings

We plan to meet every month in the Ashwood Centre from 8-9pm. Here are the dates for the next 5 months: (note we switch back to TUESDAYS after March)

- THURSDAY 28th March
- Tuesday 23rd April
- Tuesday 21st May
- Tuesday 25th June
- Tuesday 23rd July

2. Fasting Thursdays

We're also encouraging people to consider fasting from food on "Thursdays" as we intentionally seek God and add extra weight to our praying. Fasting demonstrates "We're serious and we're focused."

3. Daily Reminders

Some people might like to set a daily

reminder to pray at 20:24 during 2024.

You can use either the prayer below or pray using the words from Leviticus 20:24 which says: *But I have promised you, 'You will possess their land because I will give it to you as your possession - a land flowing with milk and honey.'*

4. Pray the Declaration Prayer:

God our Father, we give you thanks and praise for all that you've done in our past and thank you for your faithfulness to us over many years.

We believe that you've called us to be a healthy growing church for all ages. We believe that you have good plans and purposes for our future.

We believe you have said "Enlarge the place of your dwelling" and it's time to Plan for Growth.

We pray that you will make it possible for us to acquire the land next door, to help with our growing church family.

Thank you in advance for providing all the provisions we need! Lord increase our faith for this project – we believe you can do it!

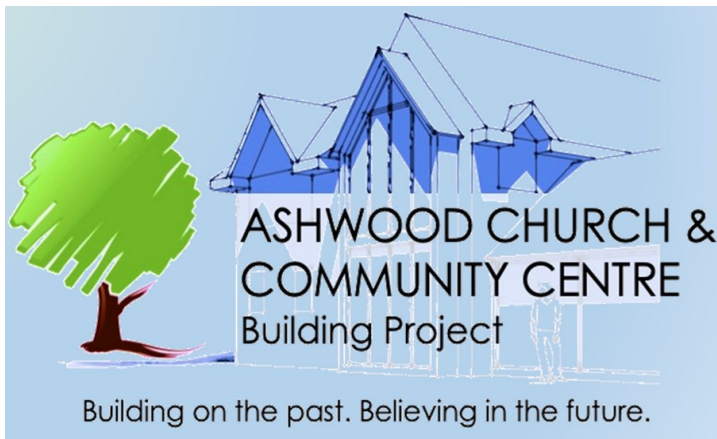
We don't want to settle for anything less than your best for us. Help us to think big! Amen

Re-Launching the NHFA Team

In our Sunday morning meeting on 3rd March, we prayed and re-commissioned the team who will help to lead the project.

Owen Wright	Meeting Chair
Elaine Torr	Trustee Link (& Project Liaison)
Claire Bell	Leadership Link
Phil Lakin	Fund Raising
Gisela Beighton	Administrator
Bob Goody	Communications / Funding Support

Plus others from time to time including Becky Holmes Finance at times during the project.



RELEVANT SKILLS / EXPERIENCE

If you believe you have some relevant experience or skills that could benefit the project you can email nhfa@ashwoodchurch.org.uk

We are unlikely to be able to utilise every offer – but we would love to hear from you if you think you might be able to help. We will compile a directory which we can draw on during the lifetime of the project.

Thanks for all of your encouragement and support!

“Unless the Lord Builds the House the builders labour in vain” Psalm 127

Matt & Claire Bell / Owen Wright / Elaine Torr

Finances

We're grateful for the group of people who also give financially either monthly or on a "one-off" basis. If you would like to give financially – please simply contact becky@ashwoodchurch.org.uk and she will help you!





Opportunities to pray TOGETHER:

We believe prayer is so important in the life of Ashwood. If you consider yourself part of our Ashwood Family – please find ways of joining with us to pray.

“Prayer Rally”

Every Sunday morning 9.50am at the Ashwood Centre before the meeting

“Pray First”

Fridays 7.00-7.30am on Zoom*

“Prayer Space”

Thursdays 9.30 -10.30am on Zoom*

“Touching Heaven”

Wednesdays 7.30pm

7th Feb, 6th March and 3rd April at the Ashwood Centre

Please join us! Everyone welcome!

“The People of God in the Presence of God.”

“Prayer for the New Home for Ashwood”

See separate section

***For Zoom meetings, find details on your weekly email.**



TRANSFORMED WORSHIP

TRANSFORMED WORSHIP NIGHTS 2024

Sunday Evenings 7pm.

Our first Transformed Worship Night of 2024 was a great one! We continued to pray again for the “prodigals” (carried forward from our Sunday morning meeting) and also prayed for healing and a fresh boldness to Praise God in every circumstance.

Make sure you have the other dates for 2024! On these evenings we gather together to worship, recognising that as we do that we can be transformed in God’s presence. We often find ourselves praying for a fresh in-filling of the Holy Spirit and praying for those who need a touch from God.

12th May / 22nd Sept / 24th Nov



Good Friday Service 29th March – 11am Kirkby Plaza (Kirkby Town Centre)

We will join again this year with other churches in the Centre of Kirkby for a short service to remember Jesus death and victory on the cross and also make a public declaration in the town together.

There will also be a service at St Thomas's (9.30am) which anyone is free to join.

“Belonging to Ashwood” – Next Sessions

Sunday 24th March 12-12.45pm after the morning meeting.



If you'd like to find out what it means to be part of Ashwood – please join us for this short session. This is the perfect place to ask questions, and hear about our vision, values, and mission as a church. You can also find out how to join a LifeGroup or one of our serving teams. If you're new to Ashwood or been around for a while this is also perfect for you. You can just turn up or let us know you're coming claire@ashwoodchurch.org.uk

Future Dates: Sun 24th March / 12th May / 30th June

Baptism Sunday

Our NEXT Baptism Sunday is 19th May!

If you've never been baptised, please speak to someone, and find out more.

Our next Baptism awareness / preparation session will be after the meeting on SUNDAY 21st April.

We already have a number of people interested in being baptised. Could this next time be you?

Please contact your LifeGroup Leader or Youth Leader or email admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk or bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk to register your interest or if you would like to have a conversation.





lifegroups

L I F E I S B E T T E R T O G E T H E R

Ashwood LifeGroups

LifeGroups have always been important for maintaining support and care and also a place to grow spiritually. LifeGroups are a committed place in Ashwood where you can get to know a group of people, do life together and support a smaller group of people. It's also a safe place where we encourage one another to be followers of Jesus.



We continue to add new people to our groups which is always a great pleasure, and is a great way to become part of the Ashwood Family.

If you are new to Ashwood or maybe you've started connecting with us on Sundays online, and you would like us to introduce you to one of our friendly LifeGroups. Please email admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk and we'll be in touch with you!

What are LifeGroup's all about?

These are the four core values that are at the heart of all of our LifeGroups:

1. **WELCOME** – LifeGroups are inclusive and a really positive place for everyone to “do life” together.
2. **RELATIONAL** – LifeGroups are a place of high commitment where people are supported, through trusting, open and accountable positive relationships.
3. **GROWING** – We believe that the Christian life will always include spiritual development as we seek to become more like Jesus. LifeGroups are a great place to do this.
4. **JESUS CENTRED** – We want to be a community of people who know the truth of Jesus and live by His Spirit. Prayer, sharing God's word and exercising the gifts of the Spirit are all part of keeping Jesus unashamedly at the centre of all we are about.

Matt Bell



During the next 2 months, we will continue with the Belonging Course – thinking about how we “Belong in the Family of God” and how we want to invite others to come and belong too.

LifeGroups: the younger generation!

Being part of a LifeGroup is a great way to deepen your faith and do life with others. At Ashwood we aim for our LifeGroups to be: Welcoming, Relational, Jesus centred and a Place to grow! LifeGroups are such a brilliant place to share, grow and learn together, supporting one another in the highs and lows of life. We are blessed to have a wide range of ages across our church and this is reflected in our LifeGroups. Our younger generation are so important to us as a church family, we hear some of their experiences of lifegroup....

Ben's experience

Hi everyone! I'm Ben, and most people will recognise me for being one of the drummers for Ashwood! I love connecting with God through worship and playing instruments, but more recently I've found going to a LifeGroup to be a great way of being able to grow further into the Ashwood family and working on my relationship with God, as well as how he works and provides for other people in our Church.

I've more recently been part of Janet and Simon's LifeGroup after being at University. The uniqueness about LifeGroup is how we connect with people who we wouldn't usually see in

our day to day lives. LifeGroups are a mix of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds, and it makes for such an individual experience as we all try and focus on specific topics to help strengthen our relationship with God.

As someone who struggled to find time and didn't commit to LifeGroup before going to university because of other commitments and general busyness, I know it can sometimes be tricky to find time for something in a weekday evening. However, since dedicating time to LifeGroup, I've only grown to realise how beneficial it is for me and how much I enjoy spending time with other great people from our church.

LifeGroup has aided me so much in not only helping me think deeper about a specific topic, but also seeing things from other people's perspectives and connecting with different people around church.



The Gluten-free snacks provided are also a big plus!

Ben Tomlinson





Ashwood-Cultural Diversity

We are blessed as a church to have a variety of people from different walks of life, different backgrounds, different experiences, but also different cultures. We have people from Jamaica, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and various other places. Each person brings with them their own experiences and enriches us as a church.

We love that we were able at our 50 year celebration last year to incorporate some West African food and dancing - what a blessing! It's fascinating hearing other people's experiences of church. We can learn so much from other cultures. We want to be a place that's completely inclusive and represents God's beautiful multicultural church family.

The Bible truth is the same

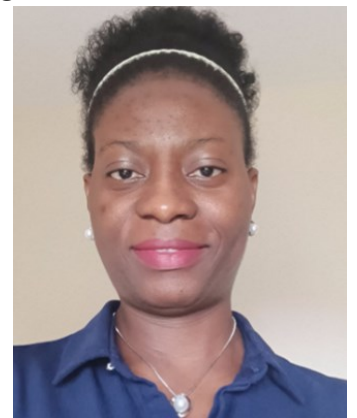
Hi Ashwood, I joined Ashwood Church for the first time in February 2023. I moved from Ghana to the UK in November 2022. I thank God every day for leading me to Ashwood Church eventually.

The one thing I miss most from back home is the dancing during church service. I've noticed it's either the cultural difference or people here are more reserved. Irrespective, the most important aspect is, God and the truth the Bible teaches is the focus of the church both back home and in Ashwood.

Fellowship with Ashwood has been a joy and a blessing so far in my faith journey. I was privileged to be part of Awaken 2023 which was a lovely

experience and I'm glad to have had my first camping event.

The highlight up to this point is the Freedom in Christ Course which has been in simple terms, a blessing and empowerment. **Ashwood helps people find and follow Jesus and does a whole lot more.** I have felt and experienced the love, warmth and belonging you find in the Ashwood family. A family that encourages prayer and helps your faith grow. Great to be part of Ashwood Church.



Linda Amoako

God brought us into the Ashwood Family

I grew up in a village called Eko Ewu with my parents and I was privileged to have been born into a Christian family even though the worshipping of idols was a common religion in the entire village.

In the early 80s a company was established opposite our family house in the village which made us the envy of most villagers because they connected electricity to our house, making us the first house to have electricity.

With an ambition of becoming a medical doctor, I finished secondary school with flying colours, but that hope never saw the light of day when my mum who is now not with us, could not fund it.

While I was thinking of the way forward in February 1998 God opened a new chapter for me by getting me enlisted in the military (Navy), a career that brought so much joy, knowledge, and experience in my country and nations such as the US and Japan.

Just when life seemed bleak, with no hope of a better tomorrow for my children after education, God opened another chapter when the idea for us to relocate to the UK was suggested by my wife (Abigail) and **to crown it all**

God brought us to the place with so much love and unity THE ASHWOOD FAMILY.



Lucky Okojie





ACE children

ACE KIDS Holidayclub

emotions. We're going to have loads of fun together! Over our three morning's we're going to play some games, fun activities, crafts, sing dance, fun challenges and the wheel of doom!..

This holiday club is totally FREE and available for children in Primary school, years 1-6 / Key Stage 1 or 2. Don't miss this opportunity to come along and have some fun with the ACE Kids team at Ashwood church.

ACE KIDS HOLIDAY CLUB

INSIDE OUT

**2ND - 4TH APRIL
10-1230PM**

**FREE
CHILDREN IN KS1 & KS2**

FAITH - FUN - FRIENDSHIP

ASHWOOD CHURCH - REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1154945.
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE REGISTERED IN
ENGLAND & WALES NUMBER 6946764

SCAN HERE

Join the ACE Kids team at our FREE Inside Out themed holiday club Tuesday 2nd – Thursday 4th April 2024 10:00am – *1:00pm

* 1:00pm if your child is staying with their packed lunch/ 12:30pm if they are not staying for lunch. *

Together we're going to explore the world of inside out and learn how God can help us with our feelings and

Bookings close on Thursday 28th March 2024. Book your place on our TicketTailor page or scan this QR code to reserve your place!



Keep an eye out on our website and main meeting updates for all our ACE Kids events and you can follow Ashwood Church on TicketTailor and subscribe to get a notification for all our events.



A C E Earthshakers

In our Sunday morning Earthshakers groups our children and young people have been looking at a new series on the Jesus' I Ams. So far we have explored and unpacked together eight of the "I am" statements of Jesus. In the



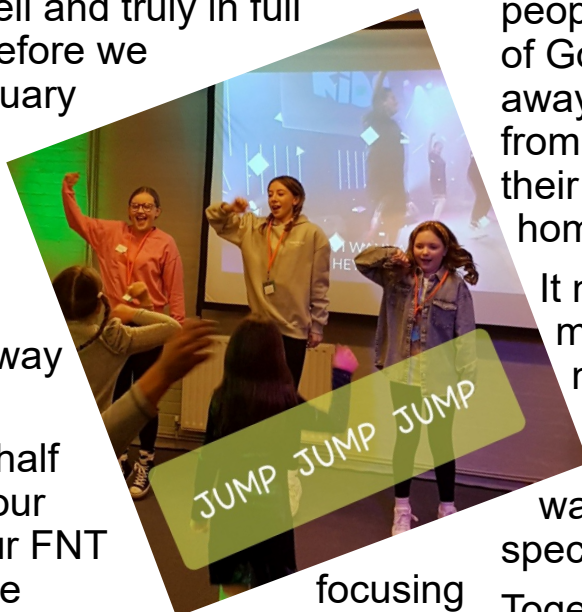
run up to Easter we will be focusing our time on some of the key events that happened over this time and the significance of Easter to our Faith. After Easter we will be following the 'Thy Kingdom Come' series in all of our groups.

Rich Reason

A C E KIDS Friday Night Takeaway.

2024 was well and truly in full swing and before we knew it February was quickly upon us, and it was time for our first Friday Night Takeaway of 2024!

For the first half of this year our theme for our FNT events will be on a series all about



focusing on growing as people of God and we focused our time together on what it looks like to choose to live God's way by unpacking some of the amazing story of Daniel from the Old Testament.



We learned that Daniel and his friends faced some difficult decisions about how to live as people of God away from their home.



It meant that sometimes they had to make a stand and decide that they need to live differently if they want to follow God. By Daniel and his friends choosing to live God's way, they were blessed and given special gifts.

Together we helped the children learn that whatever the situation, God is with us and as followers of God we need to make a decision to choose to live to please him. This sometimes means making difficult decisions that show others that we are different but God will be with us.

Rich Reason

Youth and Children's Teamleader



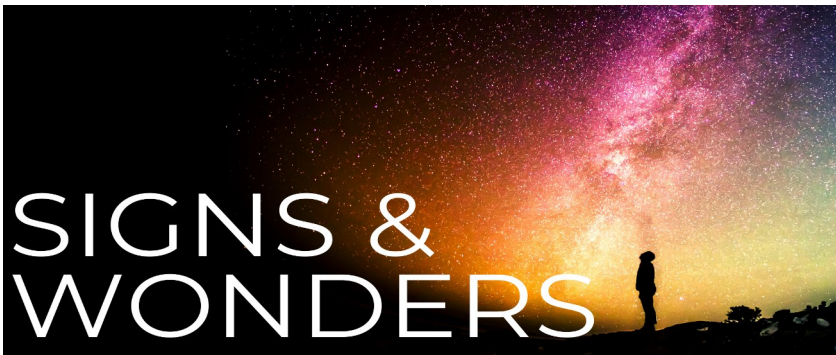
If you would like to be involved in the work involving children as part of our Sunday morning Earthshakers or A C E Kids team, please contact Rich rich@ashwoodchurch.org.uk

Signs & Wonders...

Elevate Sunday evenings

In the run up to spring at our Elevate Sunday evenings we've been focusing on a series on "Signs & Wonders". We kicked off 2024 with a session all about goals and what it looks like to

honest miracles aren't an easy thing to get our heads around and there is so much unknown surrounding them. Miracles cannot be explained away simply in human terms, we do not fully understand them, because miracles are not something performed by human beings but by God's involvement in our world.



Miracles aren't just a thing from the past! Jesus wants to and is still performing miracles today. The God that made thousands of miraculous fish sandwiches has the same power to work in new, quiet, and unexpected ways in our lives today.

invite God into our goals. Then we unpacked a 4-part series looking at a few of the different miracles that Jesus did and what we can learn from them today. Together we've looked at Feeding the 5000, Jesus walking on water, The bleeding woman and miracles today.

Miracles happen today. Maybe not on the same scale as 1000 years ago but they do happen! The sad thing is that many of them simply go unnoticed or even denied. The media calls them coincidences, realizations, or chances. And yes, let's be

Upcoming Elevate Dates

17 th March - SOCIAL YTH Vs. Leader pt.3
22-24 th March - REFRESH Weekend Away
14 th April - Elevate
21 st April - SOCIAL YTH Vs. Leader pt.4
5 th May - Elevate
12 th May CoGroups 6-7pm
19 th May - Elevate

All sessions and evenings are 6 - 7.30pm at the Ashwood centre and open for all young people in year 6 – age 18.

Elevate Youth Co-Groups

At Our Elevate.Yth CoGroups in February we continued our radical.YTH series and we were looking at the importance of living out our faith every day.

So much of life is about getting the daily rhythms right. And for the young generation to be radical for Jesus, it must be lived out on a daily basis. Radical youth looks like young people who can stand strong in their faith every day, be excited and passionate about what God is doing, and is completely unashamed of him.

Romans 1:16 MSG - *It's news I'm most proud to proclaim, this extraordinary Message of God's powerful plan to rescue everyone who trusts him, starting with Jews and then right on to*

Elevate Refresh Weekend

Please pray for our REFRESH youth weekend...

This year our annual youth weekend away is bigger than ever with more people booking in to join us. We believe that there's something for all young people who will be joining us on our Refresh weekend, and they'll have an amazing weekend together. We're excited, expectant and believing that as we meet together God is going to do some amazing things in and through all the young people.

Thank you to everyone who has



supported REFRESH with prayer and giving to it financially, we really

everyone else!

If we're going to be a radical youth, we need to make time and get in to a daily rhythm of connecting with God through pray, his word and worship.

CoGroups are back on 12th May. Our CoGroups operate like our main church lifegroup's but for young people. The aims are to create time and space where young people can grow and develop friendships, explore more about the Christian faith, get to know Jesus, have opportunities for spiritual and personal growth, explore their gifts and talents together.



appreciate the support of our Ashwood family. In the run up to our time away we would really appreciate your support by praying for a few things-

- Safe transportation to and from the venue.
- The two guest speakers from Youth for Christ.
- All the young people will have a good time and that they will have an encounter with God.
- The Elevate.YTH band as they lead everyone in our time of worship over the weekend.
- The team of leaders as they lead, support and connect with all the young people.

Rich Reason
Youth and Children's
Teamleader



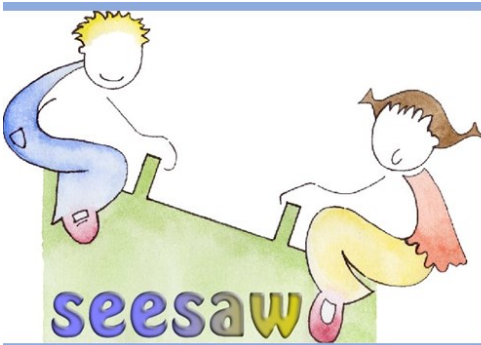


Serving is so important to us as a church, it helps us to give something back, to experience community and to use our giftings and talents for God. There are many ways to get involved in serving at Ashwood, one of the ways is through serving at our church toddler group - Seesaw.

Terrific Tuesdays at Seesaw

There is some hard work, wiping down tables, high chairs and craft tables,

picking up toys and packing everything down. But there's also conversations with lovely adults, playing with toddlers and cuddling babies, which more than make up for the hard work. My favourite part of the



Toddler Group

9.30 – 11.15 am

Tuesdays and Fridays

(term time only)

At the Ashwood Centre

FREE

morning is story time and I love to see the beautiful little faces light up as I bring their favourite stories to life. What a joy!

I would encourage anyone who's interested to come and get involved, because it's a wonderful way to spend a Tuesday or Friday morning.

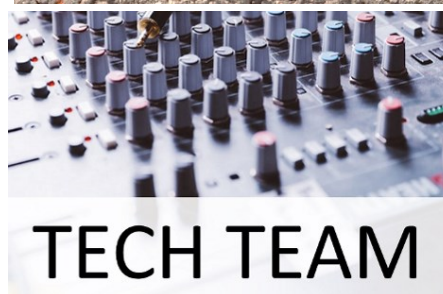
**Ann
Bramwell**



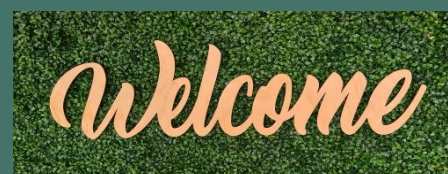
I've been a Christian since I was a child and started coming to Ashwood in 2004. Within a few weeks I started working in Seesaw. I really love children and have worked with them as a Sunday school teacher for over 60 years and in playgroups and toddler groups for over 40 years. To be honest the main reason I work in Seesaw is because I love children. To me any time spent with children is a precious gift and to cuddle babies is a delight.

I do believe though that Seesaw meets a real need in the community. It's a safe place, where everyone is treated with kindness and care. We try to make sure it's a happy, fun filled and safe environment for everyone.

If you're new to Ashwood (or even if you're not) you may be wondering "How can I get involved? How can I serve and help out?" Serving in church is an amazing way to get to know people better, to be involved in the life of the church and **to give something back!** Jesus gave us an incredible example to follow by serving those around Him. There are so many different areas you can get involved in serving. The rest of the newsletter will give you some more details on some of the logos below.



If you are interested / want to know more, email admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk





Welcome and hospitality are really important to us at Ashwood, we long to see every person made to feel welcomed and cared for whether they are new to us or whether they have been coming to us for while. We hope people feel seen and valued from the moment they come through the church doors to the moment they leave and beyond! Every person helps to cultivate a welcoming atmosphere, but our welcome and hospitality team play a big role in sustaining this!

YOU ARE
SEEN
YOU ARE
LOVED
YOU ARE
VALUED

Fiona shares her experience....

Since coming to Ashwood (nearly a year ago), I was bowled over by the immense welcome we received the first time we visited. Instantly, we felt a noticeable acceptance with an air of excitement as we entered the building and were warmly greeted. I remember being impressed that there were two



designed by freepik

lovely young people at the entrance welcoming us and offering us a chocolate – a definite winner for my husband, Steve!

I personally feel passionate about encouraging others and so when asked about joining the welcoming team felt this would be a great way to get to know people and to be able to offer a friendly smile as we had received. I feel that it is such a privilege to be able to listen to others, to share a little in their life journeys, each with differing circumstances, yet recognising that we all have our own special gifts and purposes given by God, equally accepted and loved. Welcoming is great way to meet such wonderful people in the Ashwood family in a relaxed way so why not give it a go and join the team?



Fiona Hind



Serving Opportunities in Ashwood

As we highlighted in our recent Ashwood Volunteer Week there are loads of opportunities to get involved in the life of the church and all that goes on in the centre. Although there are lots of people doing an amazing job, please don't think this is a reason not to get involved. I can reassure you that there is always room for more volunteers, it spreads the load and is more fun. Here are a few areas where we do see a need for more people, and check out the rest of Ashwood News to find out about other areas you could get involved in, I'm sure there is something for everyone!

Training is given whichever team you would like to join. If you're interested in learning more about these opportunities to serve in Ashwood Church, please speak to any of the teamleaders or the core team THANK You.



Cleaning Team:

We can have over 500 people a week visiting the Ashwood Centre for the various groups and events that happen. This requires lots of cleaning, daily and weekly. Our wonderful cleaning team is very small at the moment and we'd love to strengthen it. So it will be absolutely AMAZING if you're willing and able to help. It's

usually 2 hours a month on a rota basis – obviously if we have lots of people helping we can reduce this. There are also times when we need a few extra volunteers to help on a one off basis when we are tackling a specific job. So do get in touch if you could help on that basis.

Washing and Ironing:

We also need someone who is willing to wash and iron tea towels and cloths at home

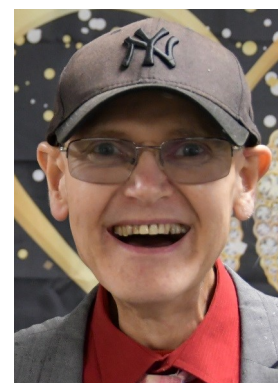


Gardening Team:

'Spring has sprung and the grass is ris... I wonder where the birdy is? The bird is on the wing... naar that's absurd, the wing is on the bird!'

I love this silly poem from my childhood. I'm reminded of it at this time of year when it's time to get active in the garden again. At the Ashwood Centre we have a gardening team who help to maintain our outdoor spaces and raised beds. We'd love to hear from you if you have an hour or two to spare to help with this.

Dave Redfern
Caretaker



Sunday Morning Welcome and Hospitality Team.

It was great to recently celebrate all our Ashwood Volunteers and it was said a few times that Ashwood couldn't do all it does without our volunteers but I wonder have you considered what you might get back. Abby Clarke, a volunteer on the Welcome and Hospitality Team said this to me during that week

"I find it a great pleasure being on Welcome team, and have selfishly found that serving has offered me a structure to having connection with people, that without it I probably wouldn't find so easily. So I am really grateful."

I think many people have found that being part of a team, and particularly the welcome team, makes it easier to get to know others and it's a great way to feel part of the Ashwood family and support all that is going on.

This seems a perfect way to say to you all, *"I'd love you to consider joining the welcome and hospitality team"*. We have a great team already but situations change and our teams are constantly changing and there is always room for more welcomers. As our Sunday mornings keep growing



there is a growing need for more people to be ready to welcome everyone who comes.

Some of our team love being on the door welcoming and pointing the way to our meeting, some welcoming families, new and regular, while others are around in the main hall offering conversation as people arrive, guiding visitors to the refreshments and helping everyone find a seat – quite a job these days. Others love serving tea and coffee and making sure each of us is ready for the meeting. There is a part of everyone.

We are particularly short of car park welcomers – you need to be able to direct car drivers to a parking spot and help the people in those cars to arrive safely in the centre! You will need a good warm, waterproof coat but we provide a high vis jacket to make sure you are visible.

If you'd like to be part of the team you need to be able



to be at the Ashwood Centre on a Sunday from 9.30am there is some setting up to do and definitely by 10am and to be able to give a warm and genuine welcome to everyone. Let me know if you want to know more.

Janet Wright



Volunteer Appreciation Week

Ashwood's Volunteer Appreciation Week in February was a week-long celebration, giving us a special opportunity to thank volunteers.

Whilst we're always thankful for the ongoing work and support of our volunteers, it was great to dedicate one week to spotlight some inspiring



people and how they contribute to the life of Ashwood Church. It was so good to hear from a number of

volunteers on why they volunteer or what they get out of volunteering – these were very inspiring quotes.

Within Ashwood we currently have 115 different people volunteering – THIS IS AMAZING!

We could not do everything we believe we are called to do without you. Let us take this opportunity, once again, to say a HUGE THANK YOU! We appreciate YOU!

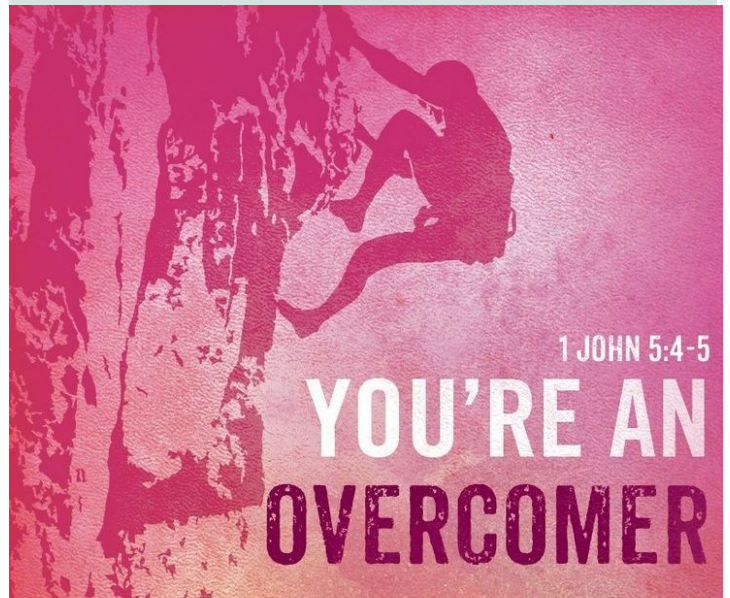
Claire Bell



Ladies Worship Night

In March we had a ladies night which was an amazing opportunity to gather as women to worship Jesus and to hear testimonies of how God has been working.

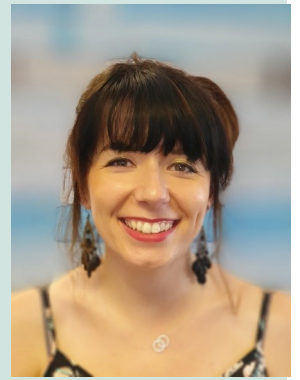
We had about 40 women gather to praise, and had a panel of 4 ladies share their stories about how they had been 'overcomers' through Jesus.



Sharing how they had overcome very painful seasons in their lives through Jesus and sharing how they had seen the goodness of God in their lives. This was so powerful. The vulnerability was inspiring!

We will be having another ladies event soon-watch this space!

Bec Goody





courses



**FREEDOM
IN CHRIST**

Freedom in Christ

As many of you know we ran the FIC course in the autumn and saw God do some amazing things.

Keys to Health, Wholeness & Fruitfulness

We are going to be running the FIC Keys to Health, Wholeness and Fruitfulness course in April on Thursday evenings **starting Thurs 18th April - Thurs 6th June 7.30 - 9.30pm with a "Steps Day" on Saturday 25th May.**

We will be exploring topics such as



emotional healing, physical and spiritual healing and how to be more fruitful in our walk with Jesus.

Most of us are impacted by health problems in some way, either ourselves or through someone we care/support and it can raise lots of difficult questions such as "Does God heal today?"

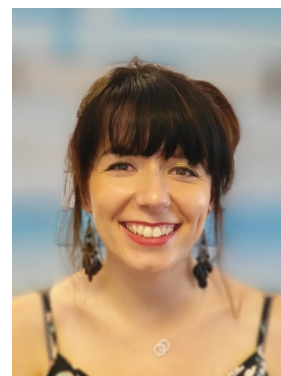


"What does healing look like?" and "Can there be a spiritual block to healing?"

Why not sign up and come and explore this with us. It's a great opportunity to go deeper with God but also to make deeper connections with those within Ashwood.

If you are interested please let Bec Goody know - 07968101051 - thank you.

Bec Goody
Pastoral Care Team Leader





We know that we have a God that is in the business of answering prayers, a God of breakthrough, a God of freedom! It's so encouraging hearing other people's stories of what God has done in their lives, it fuels our faith and builds our level of expectation!

Esther's experience

Taking part in the Freedom in Christ (FIC) course has been one of the best times I've experienced my belongingness in my Christian faith.



It's been a source of a reminder of my power and identity as a child of God. The course has helped me resolve some personal and spiritual conflicts as I've chosen to believe in the truth of God's word.

I've grown in faith, which simply, is

finding out what is already true in Christ and making a choice to believe it. I used to believe in just my feelings, instincts and what I see, but the course reminded me of what God actually says in the bible and that's simply the TRUTH to be believed.

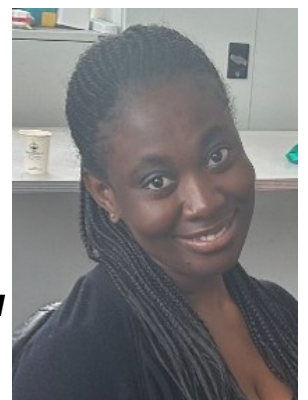
Also, the course's package included pocket cards highlighting some bible verses of God's message, for the untrue to be renounced, and to believe what God says in His word. These cards have been very helpful to me as they're handy, I can read, meditate and pray anytime and anywhere I carry to.

I feel an ongoing transformation. Barriers to growth and entrenched patterns of thought are being broken due to a renewed mindset and constant prayers.

The shared experiences of fellow participants during the course were also an amazing part of it.

So inspiring!

Esther Owusu



Cheryl's experience

When I heard Freedom in Christ (FIC) was running, I felt like God was saying to me that I needed to sign up as well as do The Marriage Course. So I listened to God and did what he said.

Within the first few weeks of starting both courses, I thought to myself 'Have I taken too much on, is this the right time with all the other things I have going on and involved in?' Despite my doubts, I heard God say to me "You've got this! Let's do it!".



I remember turning up at session four and God was on my case, and everything changed from then on.

There were certain strongholds that I knew I needed to face that I'd been

putting off for a long time. One of my strongholds was social media, what it was doing to me mentally and emotionally,



and I was spending too much time looking at it. I knew it was holding me back and I needed to do something.



It was January 1st 2024 and I'd completed both courses and I decided that it was time to delete ALL social media apps from my phone!

I can't begin to tell you how free I feel and the difference this has made in my life since then. I'm in a spiritually much healthier place now. It's been a very hard journey (one that I'm still on) but I'm not letting go of it now, I'm hungry for more of God and the amazing journey I'm on.

A verse that has helped me on my journey is Galatians 5:1 MSG. "*Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.*"

Cheryl Reason





Men's Thursday Breakfast

Men's Breakfast every Thursday morning from 9.30am at The Regent Wetherspoons in Kirkby. All men welcome to join! Contact Robin Isterling, Dave Logsdail, Eric Cattermer or Mike Tomlinson for more information.

Men's Food Night

Watch out on weekly emails for future dates in March / April.

Astonished Men's Conference

Alive Church Lincoln Friday 19th April Evening / Saturday 20th April Full Day (starting from 10am)



For those that don't know what a Christian Men's Conference is: In a nutshell, it is a gathering of men in the presence of God over 2 days. There will be worship, guest speakers, prayer and some excellent seminars. You will encounter the presence of the Holy Spirit in powerful ways. There really is something special about a room full of men in the presence of God.

The seminars will cover a number of relevant topics, often around what it means to be a man of God in the modern world. Trust me when I say,

each one is beneficial in some way.

Prices: Friday night is £8, Saturday all day is £12. For the whole event, it is £20 (there are concessions for OAP's/ under 16's). After the Friday night session, there will be food (a curry) and a quiz (a supplement of £7 for this!) Fabulous!

For more information and to book yourself in go to: <https://www.alivechurch.org.uk/>

Please contact me on 0749 6889904 to let me know you've booked in and we can agree how we share transport. I will stay overnight in Lincoln which you can also do, but many people will travel across for either Friday, Saturday or both.

I'd love to take a large group this year! Please sign up guys as, in my experience, these events can be life changing!

Vic Croll





Ashwood Church Financial Giving

The easiest way to financially support the work of Ashwood Church is to make a direct bank transfer / set up a standing order:

Account Name: Ashwood Church

Account Number: 00216525

Sort Code: 60-01-73

If you decide to give via bank transfer / standing order, please let Becky Holmes know (becky@ashwoodchurch.org.uk) so that we can say thank you and allocate your gift to the appropriate fund.

Alternatively, you can:

- Make a debit / credit card donation via our online Stewardship page. Go to <https://www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20024077> or scan the QR code



- By debit / credit card / Google Pay / Apple Pay on a Sunday morning (please see Becky if you

would like to donate this way)

- By cash or cheque (made payable to 'Ashwood Church') during the offering on a Sunday morning

Becky Holmes
Financial Administrator



	Total Giving	General Offerings	Development Fund	Building Fund
December 2023	£10,508	£9,548	£561	£399
January 2024	£14,274	£12,114	£1,584	£576

Christmas offering 2023: **£4,571.00** including the estimated Gift Aid reclaim.

Finance Focus: Mission and Community

In Ashwood Church we look to find ways to be a blessing and make a difference in our world. We want to be fully rooted in God but also fully rooted in our community. We want to see more people coming to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Your financial gifts, whether small or large, make a difference and enable us to bring the Gospel message to our friends, families, neighbours and community. Over the last 12 months, your financial support has helped us to:

- Run our weekly community café, 'Café 22' and extend the opening hours!



- Provide much needed food and supplies through 'Storehouse', the Kirkby Foodbank



- Support the Linking Lives UK initiative 'Two's Company' – a telephone befriending service



- Organise an ACE Kids Event at Morven Park.



- Run our first ever 'Ashwood's Got Talent' night (in December 2023) Take part in the Kirkby Christmas Festival
- Bring some Christmas joy to the local community by Carol Singing at Morrisons
- Host the 'Breakfast with Woody' Christmas breakfast
- Provide financial support to other organisations beyond ourselves: including Ground Level, Links International and Youth for Christ. In addition to our regular support of these organisations we have also made one off donations to help the vulnerable in the UK and overseas



- Respond to national and global appeals. In the last 12 months we were able to support the emergency appeals for the floods in Libya and the earthquake in Morocco

- Run our annual Alpha Course (which started a few weeks ago)



Thank you so much for the money you have given which has enabled us to do this and much more.

Everything we do is connected to our mission to help people find and follow Jesus!



Pastoral Care



Pastoral care is really important to us as a church, we're always exploring how we can care for people more effectively, how we can help to cultivate support networks and signpost people to those that may be able to support further.

Lola and Michael are part of one of our pastoral teams - the pastoral gathering, they explain why pastoral care is important to them.

What is pastoral care?

Participating in pastoral care has deepened our commitment to caring for others in line with

Christian values. Pastoral care involves love, empathy, support, and community building, extending beyond assistance to personal connection and affirmation.

Love, exemplified by Christ, forms the basis of pastoral care, essential for believers to reciprocate.

Attributes include active listening, presence, and guiding without judgment, especially in everyday situations.

However, pastoral care presents challenges like vulnerability and



confronting truths. Yet, these challenges foster growth and deeper connections.

Embracing love in pastoral care enriches lives and communities, as seen in the early

church (Acts 4:44-46), emphasizing loving others without expecting reciprocity.

It's a profound way to connect and discover compassion within ourselves, urging everyone to extend care not out of obligation but for mutual enrichment.

Lola and Michael Olajide



We love because Jesus loved us first - who could you show care to this week?

The Gathering Place

The Gathering Place

In January we launched our new group called 'The Gathering Place' which takes place on the 1st and 3rd Friday in the month, 2-4pm at the Ashwood Centre. As a church we're always looking for ways to 'do life together', to go deeper with one another and to provide more opportunities for people to mix. We are growing each week in size on a Sunday which is really exciting, but with that, we don't want to ever lose a sense of togetherness or belonging.

FRIDAYS 	FRIENDSHIP 	FAITH 	FUN 
A place to connect, have conversations, receive support, relax and have fun!!			

We know that LifeGroups provide a primary place for people to mix and go deeper with one another, but felt we wanted to provide something else too.

You may be thinking: "Is The Gathering Place for me?" There is no set agenda or criteria, a variety of people go, different ages, different backgrounds. We're just playing games, doing crafts, drinking tea and doing life together.

Liz shares her experience

I started coming to Ashwood Church just over a year ago and have been made to feel so welcome from that very first Sunday.



I had recently retired after nearly 40 years as a primary school teacher, a job that I had enjoyed.

I was looking at how my life had changed since retirement and what direction my life would go in now.

I was building up a new sense of belonging as I began to meet new people and take up new opportunities.

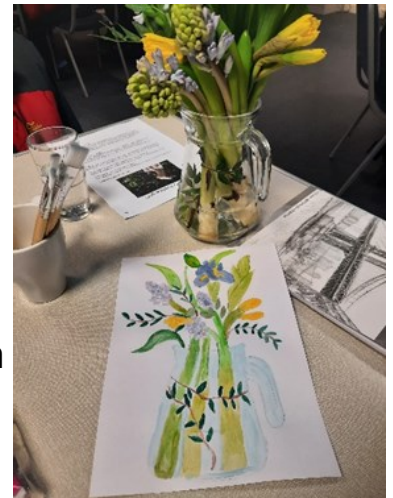
I got involved with The Gathering Place as I saw this as a new opportunity for

me to meet people and connect further with life at Ashwood Church.

The Gathering Place is a place of Friendship, Fun and Faith. I look forward to being involved on a Friday and find it a relaxed, supportive and caring place to be. I would definitely recommend coming along. It is a place to connect with people and offers the ideal opportunity to talk and have conversations as we join together in a range of activities. At the end of each afternoon we gather together for a time of reflection and prayer.

Why not come along and try it?

Elizabeth Herriot



If you care,
we care.

Carer support group

We recognise that within church we have a lot of people involved in caring for relatives and we've been thinking about how we can support those within church that are involved in caring for loved ones. We're aware that this takes a toll and can be draining and that

chatting with others who are in a similar position can be really helpful/encouraging. We have set up a WhatsApp group for those involved in caring for loved ones, so we can pray/support each other and have social get togethers (about every 2 months). Caring looks different for each of us, some live and care full time for someone, for some it's regularly checking in and supporting a loved one, but we all share that emotional burden of caring for someone.

Andy shares his experience

I joined this group because I'm looking after elderly parents, albeit from 70 miles away as my wife and I have moved around a lot with work. It's a once every-so-often relaxed meet up.

For me this group is a chance to learn as well as speak. Some are experiencing different issues with their loved one/s, but others have been further along similar paths which I can see myself having to tread in the future.

I'm not a massive crowd person but felt that I could do with the support above



lack of comfort and besides, it's also not a crowd, I'd say 20 people or so.

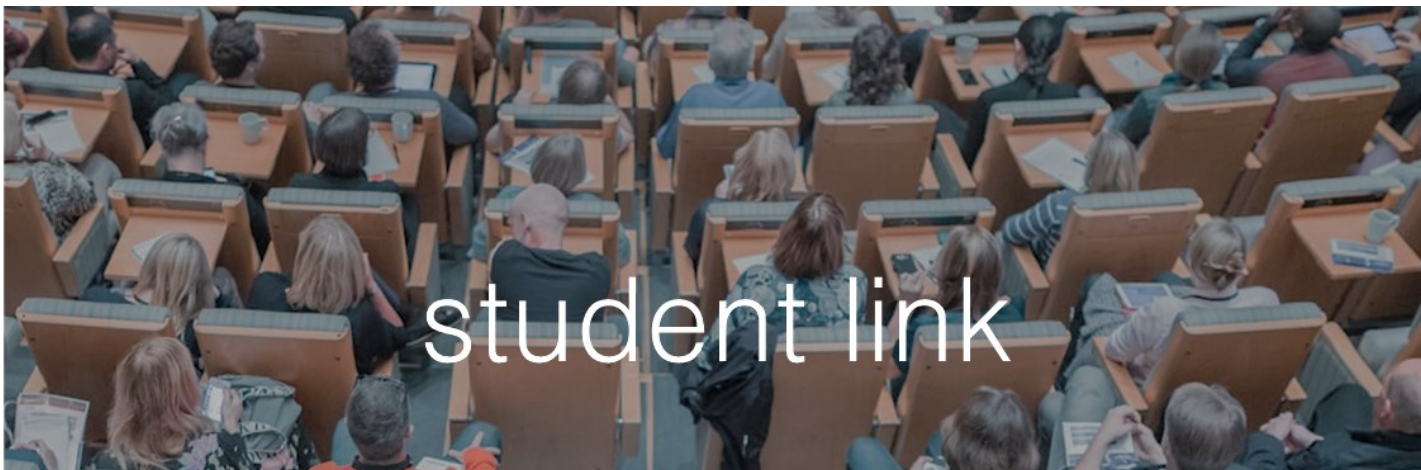
Caring for elderly, often confused or even ungrateful parents can be a real drain on resources, for me that

doesn't always mean only petrol, time and money – it's the exhaustion that can take place when the care services and authorities just don't get it (or are too busy to want to get it!).

I'd recommend this group to anyone who just wants a sympathetic ear or who wants to try and put together a new plan of action with the various services by listening to how others have done it.

Andy Wood





student link

ASHWOOD STUDENT LINK PERSON UPDATE

When people in Ashwood head off to university we encourage them to find a local church where they can receive support and encouragement and also worship Jesus regularly, but we also want them to know that we continue to think of them and pray for them.

If students are already connected to one of our LifeGroups before they go, that group will often continue to support them throughout their university career.

We also have a Student Link person – who will contact our students from time to time, to check in with them and check they are doing ok.

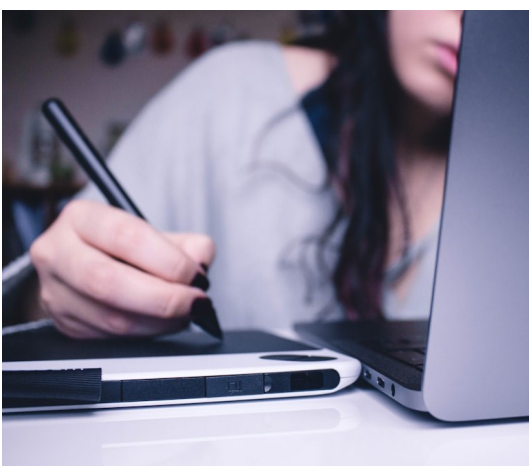


For a while, Janine Manning was our Student link person – and we're very grateful to her for taking this role for the last season!

THANK YOU JANINE!

For the next season, Jill Hay has kindly agreed to take on this role.

Let's pray for all of our Students and let them know we love it when they are with us. Let's also pray for Jill as she actively and intentionally stays connected with our students on our behalf!



A body with many parts!

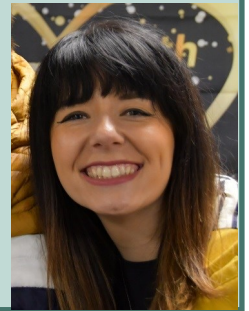




At Ashwood, we strive to create a culture of care and to support people pastorally to the best of our abilities. Some issues however are so complex and deep that they may require additional support.

If you're unsure of where to go, here are a few ideas. This may be for you or someone you're supporting, but we hope you find it useful. Don't hesitate to get in touch with me for more information.

Bec Goody
Pastoral Care Team Leader



Need a reliable Trader?



If we or someone we love is vulnerable, it can be especially important to find a trader (e.g. electrician/plumber etc) that will be reliable and not take advantage! Age UK have a list of approved businesses/traders in your local area. Why not have a look: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/age-uk-business-directory/>?

Caring for someone with dementia?

Supporting loved ones with dementia can be incredibly difficult, there are a variety of places that offer support including:

Carers UK is another great organisation that is the voice of carers and fights to obtain better support for carers. They have lots of useful stuff on their website about what your rights are, what you are entitled to benefits wise, helplines you can contact and looking after your own wellbeing, which is so important when you're looking after someone! Why not have a look: carersuk.org.





Alzheimer's society - have lots of helpful information and have a dementia support line you can ring-(03331503456) if you are a carer, or are affected by dementia yourself or worried about a diagnosis, trained staff are ready to give you the support you need. They are available Mon to Weds: 9am – 8pm, Thurs and Fri: 9am – 5pm, Sat and Sun: 10am – 4pm

Admiral Nurses - are specialist nurses developed by dementia UK who help people living with dementia stay independent for longer – and support the people caring for them so that they will have the strength to cope with the bad days, and the energy to enjoy the good days. Admiral Nurses work in local community services, GP practices and NHS hospitals, care homes, and hospices. To find out how they can support you ring their free helpline- 08008886678



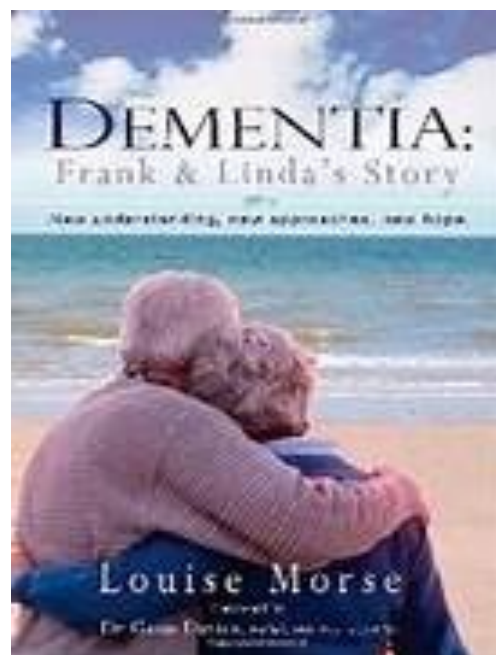
Pilgrims's friend society have some brilliant resources about understanding dementia and supporting loved ones.

This book "Dementia" Frank and Linda's story' by Louise Morse is

absolutely brilliant!

It combines personal stories with insights from different caregiver professionals, with medical insights, and a window into the caregiving sector, intertwined with spiritual support. *personally I've found this book really helpful and truly recommend it!! Why not check out their website:

<https://www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources>



You can find all this information and lots more about signposting on our website now: ashwoodchurch.org.uk (under wellbeing / about us)



Beauty in Brokenness

As part of the crafters Lent project there will be a tree in reception for people to add eggs or drawings with our theme "Beauty in Brokenness". As we look at Easter we will reflect on what it means to us. Out of brokenness came new life. The symbol of the egg breaking open and releasing new life. Beauty is everywhere . Creativity can tell our story of brokenness and redemption.



Japanese art, Kintsugi and Anime are often born out of struggle, loss, hurt, loneliness and/or isolation.

These art forms take a broken pot put it back together with gold, creating something beautiful from something broken! From our brokenness comes beauty so you can find beauty everywhere. Just take time to stop reflect and see the beauty in this moment.

We'd love you to add an egg to our tree, expressing what new life means to you and together we can celebrate what God is doing and showing us.

Mandy Walker



Lent Blanket

Ashwood crafters are busy making knitted or crocheted squares as part of this year's Lent project. They are being sewn together into a blanket which will be given to someone who needs it.

The squares are in a variety of styles and colours to represent the great diversity of Ashwood Church and God's creation. Each maker is choosing the colour and style that best represents them, or their current mood. Some are made by confident crafters, others are a "first time" product.

You don't have to be a regular part of Ashwood Crafters to take part, just make a 6inch square and give it to me so that I can add it to the blanket.

Whilst I've been working on my squares and starting to sew the blanket together I've been reading a book called Knit one Purl a Prayer that discusses how knitting (or any other way of being creative) can help us in our prayer life.. I'm trying to learn a Psalm as I knit. Why don't you start to exercise your creative muscles— whichever way you want to do that.

Christine Redfern





World Fair Trade Day on 11th May

Every second Saturday of May, WFTO celebrates World Fair Trade Day to shine a spotlight on the transformative power of the Fair Trade business model and its positive impact on people's lives and communities. Every year, the theme of the campaign changes to focus on a specific topic that is dear to the community. For 2024, the theme of

the campaign is #BusinessRevolution! <https://wfto.com/campaigns/world-fair-trade-day-may/>

I wonder how we can join in the celebrations this year by choosing Fair Trade?



Happy Birthday Fairtrade Mark...

This year we're celebrating 30 years of the Fairtrade Mark here in the UK. This means 30 years of the international certification that guarantees producers are paid a fair price for their products and a premium is invested into their communities. All this has brought positive change to people's lives and communities, enabling them to work their way out of poverty with dignity and flourishing. Creating sustainability by putting people and planet before profit!

This means we'll be celebrating a very special Fairtrade Fortnight in September. To create momentum towards this September the Fairtrade Foundation has created 30 ways to celebrate 30years. You can find out all the details on their website:

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/media-centre/blog/30-ways-to-celebrate-30-years-of-fairtrade/>

Please feel free to get in touch with us or come and have a chat if you're interested in knowing more. Thanks for reading.



Dave and Christine Redfern





Bob is on the move. (not from Ashwood, so don't worry)

As many of you will know, for the last four years I have been working for Youth for Christ, originally as their Missions & Evangelism Director, and then due to a raft of redundancies this time last year, I moved to be Head of Income Development. I have been incredibly privileged to have spent most of my life now seeking to share Jesus across Britain, and I have only been able to do it because I know I have so many faithful people cheering me on, praying for me, and supporting the ministry.

So, firstly, I want to say a massive thank you to Ashwood Church, who have been supporting me as one of your mission partners, both prayerfully and financially, as well as so many of you here at Ashwood who do this on a personal level too.

The News

At the end of February, I finished my role at Youth for Christ, and have now taken up a new position as Chief Executive Officer for RMS (Rural Mission Solutions).

Who is RMS?

Rural Mission Solutions is a Christian charity that specialises in serving rural churches throughout Britain. RMS isn't



just a charity; it's a beacon of hope, tirelessly dedicated to nurturing village churches across Britain. Our mission is clear: to empower these churches to embrace their communities, radiate God's love, and share the transformative message of hope found in Jesus Christ. With decades of experience, we possess the expertise to craft culturally relevant strategies that resonate deeply and effect change.

Our 'dream' is to see visible, vibrant, credible, and caring Christian communities in every village. This might well be the local village church, or an informal group of Christians



drawn from the local churches. They will be people engaged with and in their local village, and with a heart to serve the wider community, rather than self-interest. Their mission will be to show God's love for all and to share the life-changing good news of Jesus Christ.

We are a small staff team, consisting of me as the new CEO, an Operations Manager, a Mission Adviser, and a CofE Network Adviser, although we have a huge amount of potential heading into the future under new leadership, with 3 new appointments across the next 9 months (funding dependent).

What do RMS do?

We offer a process that is interactive, designed to suit each local situation and led by an experienced facilitator. Most importantly, we start by carefully and prayerfully listening to understand your current situation, looking at your strengths and weaknesses and then we explore what resources your church might already have. It is important that as many church members participate and actively support the process, which then involves generating ideas and determines the most appropriate course of action. This is followed by implementing that plan into action and then evaluating its success. Once this has been completed, the final step is to repeat the cycle again without losing momentum.

We are aware of how most village churches are under-resourced, and as our heart is to encourage small village churches, so our consultations and individually tailored mission solutions for rural churches are free!

How could your support help?

RMS was established 35 years ago and

has a mass of potential as we head into the future, and as we know, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, so we will do our best to serve the 20 million people within rural communities, and to seek to help them to find and follow Jesus for themselves. Not only do we have potential to impact rural areas across Britain, with one of our team based locally, this means a strategic priority for us will be the rural areas surrounding Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire.

The charity is funded entirely by donations from individuals and churches, and I would love it if you would prayerfully consider whether you might be able to support me, and RMS into the future. It may be you want to join our growing prayer list, or you might even feel prompted to give a gift, either one-off or regular, of which you can do both by visiting www.ruralmissions.org.uk or just grab me in church for more information.

Blessings,



Bob Goody



awaken

We are excited about AWAKEN 2024!

We are so thrilled to see this event building and gathering momentum and we know that it is significant for the church in our nation at this time. Once again we will be on the Lincolnshire showground over the August Bank Holiday weekend expecting and experiencing a great move of the Holy Spirit as we gather together. Awaken is a time of Celebration and our strapline FAITH, FAMILY, FUN really does sum it up.

The event includes everything you love about a summer gathering, with dynamic worship, inspirational teaching, encounters with the Holy Spirit and opportunities to go deeper in faith. There are great kids and youth programmes, activities for the whole family and space to be together in Church Community.

We're excited to step into all that God has for us and are looking forward to seeing you there!



To book **Awaken 2024**, (23.-26. August) follow this link:
<https://groundlevel.yeahtickets.com/awaken-2024/tickets>

Faith - Awaken is about going deeper

We want Awaken to spur you on in your Christian walk, empowering you to live out a God filled life in your own context. Awaken is a space to encounter God together.

Fun - Awaken is about enjoying the gift of life

Life is meant to be enjoyed, Awaken is a space to have fun and express yourself with other like minded people.

Family - Awaken is about being together

At the very heart of Awaken is a desire to be together, united as one church family in pursuit of God.



23rd Aug
26th 2024

Lincolnshire
Showground



Reaching others.
Discovering for ourselves.

We're blessed to have a number of authors within our church family, Allan has written a number of books, encouraging others that there can be GOOD NEWS amidst our struggles. Whatever we face, we have the GOOD NEWS that we have a personal saviour who loves us and who will fight for us no matter what. We can have hope.

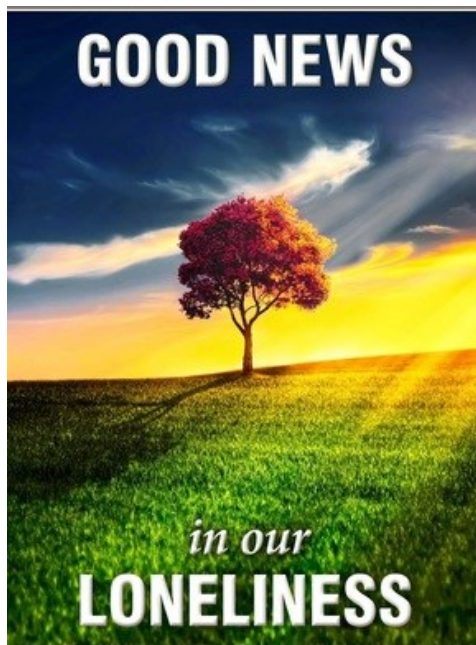
Allan's path to writing

My mother became a Christian in her mid-70's. Dad was uninterested.

When mum died years later, my 93-year old father was left alone at home.

Although I wanted to share my faith with him, I knew he wouldn't listen.

Instead, I wrote a booklet especially for him - "Good News in our Later Years" - which he could read at his own pace and in his own space. His spiritual journey began, culminating in an amazing conversion 3 years later - months before he died. Dad's experience convinced me that there was a wide-spread need to present the



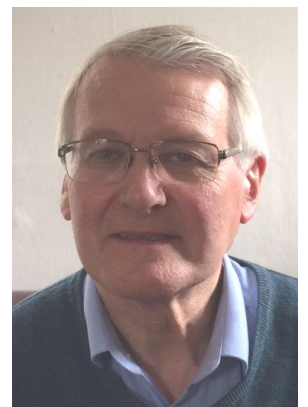
gospel to specific age-groups or circumstances - prophetic evangelism. Other booklets followed:

"Young People and Parents", "The Retired and Lonely", "Strangers on the Street", "Those facing Cancer or walking with Dementia". The ministry grew. At present between 4,000 and 5,000 publications are used by churches and evangelists every year.

The "Loneliness" booklet addresses the universal deep-seated need to be accepted, valued, understood and loved. A healthy church goes some way to counteract loneliness, by offering sincere love and genuine friendships.

But it needs God to square the circle. Through a living, personal and fulfilling relationship with Jesus, we discover a wonderful Father who breaks the curse of our deep-seated loneliness by completely knowing us, valuing us and unconditionally loving us.

Allan Horsfield



local and global prayer

Praying4:Local+Global

We keep on keeping on Praying for those people and families who are really struggling to live with the increased cost of living crisis both locally and globally. This is driving more and more people below the poverty line! We believe Our God is a generous God who loves Justice and Fairness.

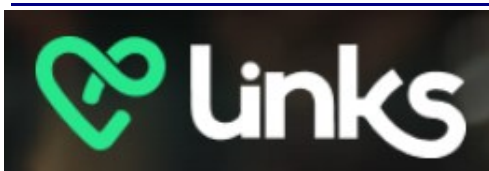
'God our Father, we welcome your government and rule in our lives. Your Kingdom come... We give Thanks and Praise where we see Jesus bringing good news and transformation... 'making all things new!'

Local

We give thanks and celebrate **Neighbourhood Prayer Networks** and all those who faithfully pray for their neighbours and prayer-walk their neighbourhood.

As we welcome the longer days and hopefully warmer weather of Spring, let's be encouraged to get out and enjoy walking and praying for our neighbours and communities to find and follow Jesus and to be transformed by God's LOVE!

Global



Sam Walker in Kenya...

We pray

for Sam as he transitions into his new home and work in Kenya. We pray for God's wisdom and understanding as Sam helps to establish the new LINKS Africa Hub in Kenya. These are exciting and challenging opportunities for creating more links. We're IN IT TOGETHER! You can read more by visiting: <https://www.links.charity/blog/links-in-kenya>

Or see Sam's latest update on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujlKbTHLA7g>

The logo for Tearfund, with the word "tearfund" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Tearfund LENT appeal STORY...'If

I didn't get this net, I would have to go hungry.' said Kamona, whose family is suffering the effects of changing climate and rising costs in Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, where Kamona and her family live, 35 million people don't have enough food to survive. Floods and

tropical cyclones have increased with the changing climate... Through faithful supporters, Tearfund is helping local churches in Bangladesh, and around the world, to be at the heart of life-saving transformation in their communities.

Kamona struggled to feed her family, until her local church gave her training, tools and support through a Tearfund partner church. *'I am very poor... I was given a net, a weight (for the net), and a large pot from the church, with which I started fishing. With their help I catch fish and sell them in the market. This is how I support my family. I thank Jesus Christ for giving me this fishing net through my local church.'* Small changes can make a BIG difference.

<https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/lent-appeal>

We pray for charities like LINKS and TEARFUND who are following Jesus where the need is greatest... literally saving lives, families and communities through partner churches around the world.



All things are possible...

Over the last few months I have found myself deeply moved to pray for Open Doors and the many churches around the world who are suffering persecution. Open Doors supports Christians in more than 70 countries who are risking their lives to follow Jesus. They do this by supplying Bibles, providing emergency relief and helping persecuted believers stand strong for the long-term. In the UK and Ireland, Open Doors helps the church to pray, give and speak out for those who share our faith but not our freedom.

Each year they produce a World Watch List, of where Christians face the most extreme persecution and they presented this years list to a group of MP's on 17th January. 'Profound', 'powerful', 'unforgettable' are some of the terms used, by some of the 101 MPs, to convey the impact of what they heard about our persecuted family worldwide. I continue to pray for our

MPs to make their voice and our voice heard in parliament to implement the recommendations from Open Doors.

You can read more on their website about the World Watch List and the Parliamentary Launch. You can also see how you can get involved, in prayer and other actions as well as reading more stories like one about Sara from Iraq (See. Change. for persecuted women and girls. When I read Sara's story from Iraq, there are two things that really grabbed my attention. One is the remarkable complexity of the persecution of Christian women around the world. The other is that nothing is impossible for God. No persecution is too complex for Jesus to overcome.

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/sara-iraq-see-change/>

Dave and Christine Redfern





Regular Meetings:

- **Sunday Morning:** Ashwood meets in the Ashwood Centre starting at 10.00am for refreshments, meeting starts at 10.30am
- **Touching Heaven Gathering:** 7.30 – 9.00pm usually 1st Wednesday in the month: 3rd April, 1st May and 5th June
- **LifeGroups** meet fortnightly on Sunday or Monday evenings. If you would like to be a part of a LifeGroup please speak to one of our LifeGroup coordinators: Molly Bell or Bec Goody
- **Ashwood Youth** meets on Sundays, details see page 14
- **Prayer Opportunities** see pages 6 and 40/41 for more details

Ashwood in the Community

- **Ashwood Men** Weekly Breakfast at Wetherspoon's on Thursdays 9.30
- **Café 22:** Mondays except Bank Holidays 9.30am – 1pm
- **Foodbank:** Tuesdays 2.00pm - 3.00pm
- **Seesaw (toddlers):** Tuesdays & Fridays term time 9.30am – 11.15am
- **Detached / Bike Project:** Thursday evenings in the Coxmoor estate

For Your Diaries:

22nd - 24th March	Elevate Youth Refresh Weekend	pg 15
29th March	Good Friday Service	pg 7
2nd - 4th April	ACE Kids Holiday Club	pg12
13th - 14th April	“HOME” Mini-Conference	pg 3
18th April	Start of Course: Keys to Health, Wholeness and Fruitfulness	pg 5
19th - 20th April	Astonished - Men's Conference	pg 25
23rd - 26th Aug	2024 Awaken	pg 38
Dates for	NHFA prayer	pg 4
Dates for	Transformed Worship	pg 6
Dates for	Belonging to Ashwood	pg 7



sunday messages

The best way to get hold of our Sunday messages is the 'Talks' section of our church website (or Facebook).
Here's a reminder of what has been preached over the last few weeks

Sunday 28th Janaury	Vision 2024 - Home Matt Bell
Sunday 4th February	Baptism Sunday Gill Isterling
Sunday 11th February	Vision 2024 - Home, Part 1 Matt Bell
Sunday 18th February	Vision 2024 - Home, Part 2 Bob Goody
Sunday 25th Febuary	Vision 2024 - Home, Part 3 Helen Tomlinson
Sunday 3rd March	Vision 2024 - Home, Part 4 Paul Bell
Sunday 10th March	Vision 2024 - Home, Part 5 Gill Isterling

My Father will love them, and we will come and make our **HOME** with each of them"
John 14:23

Then Christ will make his **HOME** in your hearts as you trust in him
Ephesians 3:17

Enlarge your house, build an addition, spread out your **HOME**, spare no expense
Isaiah 54:2



Further information

For further information about any church activities, please speak to one of our welcome team or one of the people taking part in the meeting. Alternatively, feel free to make use of the following contact information:

Senior Leaders	Matt & Claire Bell 01623 237749 matt@ashwoodchurch.org / claire@ashwoodchurch.org
Administrator	Gisela Beighton admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Children and Youth Work	Richard Reason 07852 915270 rich@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Community Outreach Leader	Gill Isterling gill@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Pastoral Care Team Leader	Bec Goody bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Finance	Becky Holmes becky@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
LifeGroups	Bec Goody bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Church email	info@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Church website	www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Facebook	ashwood church page

www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk

In case you miss any of the information from Ashwood News or the weekly notices, then visit www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk.

We have a Church Weekly email with lots of information to help keep you up to date with what's going on and how to get involved. To be included in the mailing list to receive this information please email admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk.

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