ashwoodnews

November December 2026



New Home for Ashwood

Find out what is happening

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Christmas Program

So much happening over Christmas, get yourself booked in**!**

Pages **11, 14, 16, 17**,

Get Together

A new offer to get together after church

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ashwood church

Helping people find and follow Jesus



Matt's message

Hello Ashwood News Readers! Welcome to our November / December edition of our Ashwood 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 – including all things Christmassy! 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!



BIG GIVE

What an incredible weekend it was! If you still see me smiling today there's every chance I'm still remembering our "BIG GIVE WEEKEND" at the start of October. We aimed high! Our goal was to include as many people across our different connections as well as create space for people to give financially and I think we did it! From the Seesaw Special on the Friday morning, to our Luncheon with local community and business leaders through to the BIG Quiz in the evening, followed by our Community Festival on Saturday morning and the 2 amazing Gospel Choir Concerts later in the day we estimate over 500 people came to hear our story and receive our invitation to contribute towards our challenging target to ultimately reach the £3.2m we need for our new home. AMAZING!

One of the BIG highlights (of course) was the Vision Offering on the Sunday morning! I think we're still blown away by the generosity of our church family, and the clear sense we were all sowing into our future, still requiring God to "multiply" and go beyond everything we can do. We know that some people gave sacrificially, and I loved hearing the stories of how people responded as Jesus spoke to them about how much they should give. Thank you to everyone, who gave and continue to give monthly too – we're grateful! At the time of writing the total over the whole weekend was over £123,000!

Also a special mention to Janine who raised £555 by running the Robin Hood Half Marathon! Well done Janine! (and congratulations on your engagement too!)





You might remember that the weekend wasn't without its challenges….. We had a significant electrical failure in the building on the Saturday morning! Once we had confirmed we could continue safely, we then switched up plans to run the rest of the weekend on limited power. I'm grateful for the team of people who stepped up to help. A special mention to "Caretaker" Dave – for his diligent work over the BIG Give weekend, but also for his ongoing faithfulness to help us to create a culture of care and welcome in our current Home. THANK YOU DAVE!

The response over the BIG Weekend was incredible – but we know that we still have a large amount of money to go. It felt significant that alongside the BIG GIVE weekend, God sent (at least) 3 people to encourage us. During our Transformed Worship night in September God sent Joshua from Betel with a "prophetic word" a confirmation that God was saying "He's got this! The building will happen."

Then during the BIG Give weekend God sent another "prophet" – Mel the choir director, who sang out during one of the songs ... "Ashwood you don't need to worry about the days ahead..." And then during Touching Heaven – our very own Molly heard God reminding us of the story of Esther. She encouraged us that God has planted every single one of us in Ashwood "For a such a time as this…" All 3 messages seemed like they were from the heart of God – to encourage us, as we continue to pray for God to provide the rest of the finance we need. So, if you consider yourself to be part of Ashwood – be encouraged today AND also don't stop PRAYING! I honestly believe that the only way we get over the line is when we ALL take responsibility for raising our prayer level and seeking God for what we believe He has promised for our future!

In the meantime, as we head into the Christmas season it's always a wonderful opportunity for us to remind ourselves the reason that God sent His only son into the world - FOR US! And secondly to take the opportunity to invite others to find the hope that only Jesus can bring….
It all starts on Friday 27th November with our Kirkby Churches Together Carol Service 6pm – come and sing with us – and let's bring a message of Hope to the people of Kirkby! Fa la la la la, la la la la! O come let us adore Him!



Matt Bell
Senior Leader Ashwood Church



welcome

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!





Chris Frith



Janet Wright

Never been welcomed so well!

About a year ago I came to Ashwood for the first time. People said hello as soon as I walked in and then when I got a few steps in I said “I’m not sure where I’m going”, at which point one of the teenagers on Welcome said “I’ll show you the way”. She chatted to me along the way before passing me on to an adult. So many people then came to talk to me – those on Welcome and those not. It was the same the week after – I was blown away – I’ve never been welcomed so well in any church. 6 months later, I decided that I needed to do my bit to welcome people and joined “the Jolly Green Team” which happens to be the team who were on welcome the day I first came. It has been great to get to know the people on the team and is also a good way to meet others in the church. Welcome is so important – it makes the difference between people coming again or not. Obviously, I have stayed, and this is a good opportunity to say a big thank you to all of you at Ashwood for making me feel so welcome.

Chris Frith

Why not come and be a part of our amazing welcome team and help provide a welcoming space for everyone coming into Ashwood? Whether you can make a cup of tea/coffee or simply greet people as they come in with a smile and warm welcome - we’d love to hear from you!

Chat to Janet Wright if you want to find out more!



small groups

Ashwood Small Groups

Ashwood Small Groups help us to:
Grow Spiritually, (Personal Relationship with Jesus)
Remain Planted, (in God's Church)
Connect with People (Fellowship) and
Become more like Jesus (Mature Followers)



They are also an important place of care and support in the church. Small Groups are a place where we can receive from other people, but importantly also a place where we can all be involved in giving.
We love the analogy that the Apostle Paul makes in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12 – where he says the church is like a body. Lots of different parts, some seen and some unseen, but all important for the body to be healthy and also to grow.
In Ashwood we aim for our Small Groups to be: Welcoming, relational, Jesus centred and a place to grow!
If you'd like to find out more about joining one of our Small Groups come along to our next "Belonging to Ashwood" session or email us at admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk

Small group nine - or “Cloud Nine” as we call ourselves!

Gathering together after a long break was refreshing and exciting as we had new people join us! Sadly, we had to say goodbye to four leaving, but pleased Jono, Beth, Anthony and Jenny were setting up another group!
The new group dynamics brings with it new input and perspectives, providing a place of encouragement and learning. It’s a pleasure to be a part of a diverse group, including different backgrounds and ages. A time for prayer and caring, and encouraging the prophetic, we are pressing into the Bible and listening to Jesus.
Good times! 🤩



Martin Walker



signposting

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

Children's Mental Health

Green Lane Counselling and Psychotherapy work with children and young people in a variety of settings and offer affordable rates!https://www.greenlanecounselling.co.uk/

Nott Alone Is a brilliant website that provides local mental health advice for help for young people in Nottinghamshire. For all involved in the suffering of a young person with loads of topics and resources. https://nottalone.org.uk/?a=yp

Be U Notts is a free Mental Health Service for children and young people. Their free counselling options offer a safe and comfortable space for children/young people to talk about their feelings, whether it is with a professional counsellor or other people like them. https://www.beusupport.co.uk/

Kooth is a brilliant free app for young people.It's a free, safe and anonymous place for young people to access support. They can express themselves, receive tips, join discussion boards and receive free anonymous support from trained professionals in the chat function.https://www.kooth.com/

Debt Advice

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) have some really useful stuff on their website, helping with developing a budget, making your money go further, debt advice and even help finding work. https://capuk.org/

PayPlan can also offer help and advice online or on the phone.https://www.payplan.com/

Eco Tips

Month: Novwmber

Big Impact: Insulate your house properly - Loft/Walls/Floors/Doors/Windows
Little Stuff: Reusable wrapping paper ahead of christmas, repurpose those old t-shirts into quirky new wrapping material (and ideally get it back or encourage the other people to do the same next year!)
Easy: Reduce food waste - buy wonky fruit/veg. Cook smaller portions if food is going in the bin regularly. Take a “doggy bag” from the restaurant if it is too much!

Month: December

Big Impact: If you are renovating your house, recycle the carpet, and everything else you can!
Little Stuff: Shop local for Christmas! Avoid Amazon! (Find it on Amazon, then search for other vendors)
Easy: Use a timer plug for your Christmas lights so they are not on all day/night.



Jono Wright

New Trustee

We are pleased to let you know that Jono Wright (see photo above) has recently been appointed as a Trustee and Director of Ashwood Church, and joins our existing 4 Trustees on the Board. We look forward to working with Jono on behalf of Ashwood Church and will value his input.
We are still looking to recruit additional Trustees, so please contact myself or Matt and Claire, if you feel this is something you might be interested in, and wish to discuss further.



Elaine Torr
Chair of Trustees - Ashwood Church



ACE Kids

Three mornings of building, creating, friendship and discovering God's amazing plans for us!

This October half term, ACE Kids was back at Ashwood Church with our three-morning holiday club, BUILT FOR MORE!

Inspired by the world of LEGO, we brought together children for three action-packed mornings filled with building challenges, team games, creative activities, music, laughter and, of course, plenty of bricks!

With our two teams, RED and BLUE, going head-to-head, there was plenty of friendly competition as everyone got stuck into the challenges. From putting their building skills to the test to working together, thinking creatively and tackling some seriously tricky missions, there was never a dull moment!



But BUILT FOR MORE wasn't just about what we could build with LEGO. Each morning we explored a bigger message from the Bible, discovering that God has made us for something much more.

DAY 1 — CREATED

We kicked things off by discovering that every single one of us is uniquely made by God. Looking at Genesis 1 and Psalm 139, we explored what it means to be made in God's image and reminded ourselves that we are known, loved and wonderfully made.

Our big takeaway was simple: God made me. God knows me. God loves me.

DAY 2 — CONNECTED

On day two, we discovered that we're better together! Using Paul's picture of the body in 1 Corinthians 12, we explored how everybody is different, everybody matters and everybody has something to bring. Just like LEGO bricks, we're not all the same, but when we work together we can build something amazing!

DAY 3 — BUILT TO LAST

We brought everything together on our final morning by looking at Jesus' story of the wise and foolish builders.



We discovered that what we build our lives on really matters, and that Jesus offers us a strong foundation to build upon. Our challenge was to think about how we can put His words into practice every day. Throughout the three mornings, our memory verse from Ephesians 2:10 reminded us that we are *God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good things that He has prepared for us*.

A HUGE thank you to the amazing team of leaders and helpers who gave their time, energy and enthusiasm to make the club happen. From planning and preparing to leading activities, cheering on the teams and making every child feel welcome, it really was a team effort!

And, of course, thank you to every child and family who joined us. We loved having you with us!

spark
ACE KIDS
ASHWOOD CHURCH

A NEW CHAPTER… INTRODUCING SPARK!

Alongside our holiday clubs, we're also excited to share some news about the next chapter of our ACE Kids outreach ministry. You may remember FNT — our regular children's outreach evenings. We're giving this ministry a fresh new identity and relaunching it as SPARK!

SPARK is all about creating a place where children can have fun, build friendships, discover faith and encounter Jesus. It's a fresh name and a fresh opportunity, but the heart remains the same: helping children and young people to find and follow Jesus. Our ACE Kids DNA of FAITH, FUN and FRIENDSHIP is right at the centre of everything we do. We want to create welcoming, accessible and exciting spaces where children can belong, make friends, explore life's big questions and discover just how much God loves them.

We're kicking things off with our first SPARK evening on:

FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER | 7:00–8:30PM

We're really excited about what's ahead and would love to see lots of children joining us!



To book your space on SPARK, please click here

ACE Kids is about so much more than putting on events. It's about building relationships, creating opportunities and making sure children in our church and wider community know that they're valued, loved and have a place to belong. Here's to building something amazing together — and letting SPARK shine!

Rich Reason



elevate youth

KEEPING THE MOMENTUM GOING!

It's been a brilliant start to the new term at Elevate.YTH, and we've loved getting back together since September! There's already been plenty happening, with a great mix of fun, friendship, creativity, food and opportunities to explore faith together. We've kicked things off with our Prayer, Praise & Pizza evening, bringing everyone together for great food, worship and time spent praying for one another and the term ahead.



We also got creative with our Spray Painting Social, swapping our usual activities for spray cans, protective gear and a chance to put some creativity into action! And, of course, our first ever YTH Lunch gave us another opportunity to get together, share some good food and enjoy building friendships outside our regular Friday evenings. Look out for our next YTH Lunch in the new year!

Alongside these special events, our regular Elevate.YTH evenings have continued with games, challenges, conversations, Bible-based discussions and plenty of laughter! We've also been exploring some relevant topics that connect faith with everyday life. We've looked at GOD IS WITH ME, reminding ourselves that whatever we're facing, we don't have to face it alone. We've tackled PRESSURE – I CAN STAND, exploring the story of Daniel and his friends and what it means to stand firm in our faith when the pressure is on. More recently, we've been asking WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO? Looking at the different voices competing for our attention, from friends and social media to culture and God, we've been challenged to recognise whose voice should shape our identity and the way we see ourselves.

These conversations give our young people space to ask questions, explore what the Bible says and think about how following Jesus makes a difference to the choices they make every day.
But what's it all about?
At Elevate.YTH, our mission is simple: to help young people find and follow Jesus. Our vision is to see young people grow deep roots in faith, live secure in their identity in Christ, and step confidently into God's purpose for their lives.
At the heart of everything we do are four things: IDENTITY, PURPOSE, BELONGING & FRIENDSHIP. We want Elevate to be a place where young people know they belong, build genuine friendships, discover who they are in Jesus, find their God-given purpose and develop a faith that lasts!

AND WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED! 🔥

There's plenty more to come, and we'd love to see even more young people getting involved. If you've got a young person in Year 6–13 or know someone who might enjoy being part of Elevate.YTH, please encourage them to come along.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Get these dates in your diary!
13 + 27 November
11 December
8 + 22 January
12 + 26 February



Thank you to everyone who continues to pray for, encourage and support our young people and the team. Your investment in the next generation really does make a difference.

Helping young people find & follow Jesus.

Let's keep building, keep growing and keep seeing lives changed! ❤️🔥

Rich Reason
Children and Youth Team Laeade***r***



Men's Christmas Meal

Men's meal on Thursday 10th December will be a Christmas meal from 7pm at Sandys bar MTFC. There's a 2 or three course menu. Please contact Robin or Eric Cattermer for details and to order your choice. Normal menu is available on the night as well.

courses

Freedom in Christ 2026



By the time you read this, we will have completed this year's Freedom in Christ Course.

Coming out every week, especially as the evenings get dark and cold, takes commitment, but the group has done brilliantly, including an extra day to work through The Steps to Freedom.

For those unfamiliar with the course, it opens up conversations about important biblical truths. Starting with who we are in Christ, it explores what can stop us growing in faith and gives us tools to recognise ungodly beliefs we have picked up in life and replace them with God's truth.

If you had peeped into the group during the last few sessions, it would be hard to believe that some people were new to Ashwood while others had joined us from different churches. From the first session, there was a wonderful sense of openness, care and understanding. Many described it as a safe place to share, ask questions and speak honestly without fear of judgement. It has been lovely to see friendships forming and support being given each week, across different ages, experiences and backgrounds.

Testimonies from week two showed how the teaching was already changing perspectives, thinking and behaviour. One person honestly said, "I don't like this teaching, it's uncomfortable!" The following week, she returned saying God had spoken to her and she could see how much the teaching was needed and how freeing it could be. We look forward to hearing more stories in the coming weeks.

A course like this wouldn't be possible without a great team. Thank you to Martin, Emmeline, Bev, Christine, Fiona and Bec for leading, praying, making drinks and supporting and encouraging participants each week (and sometimes in between!). Extra thanks to Simon and Denny for providing lunch on the Steps Day, and to Renae, whose homemade cakes each week were enjoyed and eagerly anticipated.

We don't issue certificates because this is only the beginning – a step towards finding and walking in the freedom Christ has won for us.



A huge well done to everyone who took part. We look forward to seeing them continue to find freedom.

Janet Wright

Alpha is Starting This January!

Could You Be Part of It?

Starting Tuesday 19 January 2027

We're delighted to be starting a new Alpha course this January, and we'd love you to be involved!

Alpha is a relaxed, welcoming opportunity to explore the Christian faith, ask questions and share thoughts in a friendly, informal environment. Each week we'll enjoy a meal together, watch an Alpha video session and have time for conversation and discussion.

Whether someone is new to church, returning after many years, exploring faith for the first time or simply has questions they've always wanted to ask, everyone is welcome.

The course will run for 13 weeks, meeting every Tuesday at 7.00 pm, starting on 19 January 2027.

There will also be a full Holy Spirit day on Saturday 13 March 2026, giving us extra time together to explore some of Alpha's key themes in a relaxed setting.

Could you join our Alpha Team?

Sharing food is an important part of Alpha. Sitting around a table helps people relax, get to know one another and feel at home. We're therefore looking for volunteers to help provide a simple meal each week. You don't need to be an expert cook or commit to every week.

You could:

- Cook a main meal for one session.
- Provide a pudding or dessert.
- Help prepare or serve food.
- Help clear away and wash up.

We're also looking for table hosts and supporters to welcome guests, encourage conversation, listen and help everyone feel included. You don't need to have all the answers – just be friendly, approachable and willing to listen.

Whether you can help with food, hosting or behind the scenes, every contribution makes a difference. Even helping for just one evening would be greatly appreciated.

Why Not Invite Someone?

As we prepare for Alpha, think about someone in your family, friendship group, workplace or community who might appreciate an invitation. Sometimes a simple "Would you like to come along with me?" is all it takes.

Even if Alpha isn't for you personally, you can still support the course by praying, inviting someone, cooking a meal or volunteering.

If you would like to attend, volunteer or offer to cook, please speak to Sallie Bates or email alpha@ashwoodchurch.org.uk.

It would be wonderful to have people from across our local churches helping to make Alpha a warm, welcoming place where people can eat, talk, ask questions and explore faith together.

Could you give one evening to help make someone feel welcome?



Sallie Bates



After Sunday Get Togethers







We're always wanting to provide new opportunities for people to connect with one another. We recognise that Sunday mornings are a great time for us to gather together as church family, but that Sunday afternoons may not always be as positive an experience, especially for those who don't live with immediate family and may be going home to an empty house. We've recently set up a WhatsApp group for anyone who is a part of our church family and would like to have the opportunity to connect with others after church on a Sunday. We already have a good number of people on this group, why not consider joining? Anyone can suggest get togethers after church e.g. "anyone fancy a walk after church this Sunday?" or "anyone want to grab a coffee after church this Sunday?" and anyone who is free and wants to go is welcome to pop along! We hope this will be a great way for people to connect and build relationships*.

Get in contact with Bec at bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk if you'd like to be added to the group.

(*your number will be visible to others in the group, and you of course can leave the group at any time)

Bec Goody

Mince pies and drinks

Margaret and Eric Cattermer invite you for their open day with mince pies and drinks on Saturday 5th December to their house. 37 Bourne Avenue, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, NG17 7FB.

Everybody is welcome to knock on their door anytime between 10am and 6pm.



Eric and Mags Cattermer





Baptism

A Big Thank You!

Matthew, thank you for welcoming me into this beautiful family - Ashwood Church. Claire, thank you for my lovely baptism photos.

Bob & Bec thank you both for your support, and Bob thank you for the kind words and prayers you did in the baptism pool.

Thank you to all the church leaders and staff. A big thank you to Dave and Anthony for your support - I love you both! A big thanks to the fantastic worship team every week.

A big thank you to all the individual brothers and sisters, guests, friends and family and all the lovely children that made my baptism day a lovely, fantastic day! A very special thank you to my daughter Kitty-Mae for following in your daddy's footsteps. Very proud of you, she comes to church on a Sunday and loves Earthshakers - thank you for being my beautiful daughter.





With love ***Paul Williamson***

Our NEXT Baptism Sunday:

If you've never been baptised,please speak to someone! We would love to talk to you about it! We already have a number of people interested in being baptised. Could this next time be you?

Please contact your Small Group 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. Our Baptism awareness session is provisionally planned for Sunday 17th January after the meeting, suitable for anyone who wants to find out more about what it means to be baptised.

christmas


Kirkby
Christmas Festival
Friday 27th November
– 6pm –
Carol Service – come and sing with us!


seesaw
Playgroup
Christmas Party
8th and 11th December 2026
9.30 – 11.15
£2.50 per child
Tuesday
Friday


THE BIG CHRISTMAS QUIZ
ASHWOOD CHURCH
SATURDAY
12 DECEMBER
7PM
TICKETS
£5 EACH
(Money raised for the New Home for Ashwood)
VENUE:
The Ashwood Centre
BOOK HERE
www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR


ASHWOOD CHURCH
CHRISTMAS CRAFT NIGHT
FRIDAY
18
DECEMBER
7.30PM
Create Festive Crafts Together
Everyone Welcome
to an evening of creativity or just come for the coffee & chat.
BOOK HERE
www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR


CHARACTER CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST
ASHWOOD CHURCH
SATURDAY
19
DECEMBER
10AM – 12NOON
FOR ALL THE FAMILY
Come and enjoy a pre Christmas breakfast with the
TOY STORY CHARACTERS
Lots of music, games and crafts and of course Bacon Cobs, Croissants and Hot Drinks.
MUST BOOK IN!
LIMITED SPACES
BOOK HERE
www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk


ASHWOOD CHURCH
CHRISTMAS
CAROL SERVICES
SUNDAY 20TH DECEMBER
AT THE ASHWOOD CENTRE
10.30 AM
CAROL SERVICE
4.00 PM
CAROLS & CANDLES SERVICE
Refreshments served 30 minutes before services
EVERYONE WELCOME
www.ashwoodchurch.org.uk

Ashwood Christmas Offering 2026 - Hope Missions

Ashwood has partnered with Hope Missions Ministries in Malawi for over 12 years. This year, we want to continue helping to resource God's Kingdom through one of Hope's church plants, Kuwala ("to shine"). Just as Ashwood has experienced growth over the last few years, so too has Kuwala. Their Sunday gatherings now regularly welcome up to 400 believers. As a result, the church's leaders and members have recognised the need to expand their facilities to accommodate more than 500 people every week.

The church has already raised 80% of the funds required and is now looking for partners to join them in completing this expansion.

Like our own Ashwood premises, the church building and its rooms will be used not only for worship gatherings but also for community meetings and local interest groups. Kuwala hosts a nursery school and, because of its size and central location, has also become the main coordination centre for Hope's community outreach programmes.

Our goal is to raise more than £2,000 to assist Hope in completing the final stages of the expansion, including flooring, windows, electrical work, and roof painting.

As usual we plan to split our offering with another chosen charity that we will partner with. Watch out for more details in December about our other partner.

Thank you for your generosity as we sow together into this shared vision of creating an expanded church home that will serve both the church family and the wider community for years to come.















Sam Walker





Ashwood Church Financial Giving

We are so thankful to everyone who gives financially. We can't do anything without you! With your help, we can play our part in seeing God's Kingdom built and lives transformed for Jesus. **The easiest and most cost effective way** to give to Ashwood Church is directly into the church bank account.

You can make a one off bank transfer or set up a regular standing order using our bank details:

Account Name:	Ashwood Church
Account Number:	00216525
Sort Code:	60-01-73

Donate - via Steward

This account can be used for donations for the general work of the church and the New Home for Ashwood project (if making a donation towards the New Home for Ashwood project, please use 'NHFA' as the reference so your gift can be correctly allocated). Alternatively, you can:

Donate - NHFA

- Donate by cash during the offering on a Sunday morning
- Make a debit / credit card donation via our online Stewardship - page (visit https://www.stewardship.org.uk/ partners/20024077 or scan the QR code)
- Make a debit / credit card donation via our online Donate page (visit https://ashwoodchurch.churchsuite.com/donate or scan the relevant QR code)
- By debit / credit card on a Sunday morning (please see Becky if you would like to donate this way)

Donate – General Fund

Please note that due to local branch closures and increased banking costs, we can no longer accept cheque donations

Month	Total Giving	General Offering	Development Fund (New Home for Ashwood)	Building Fund
Sep 2026	**£21,965.00**	£11,550.00	£9,563.00	£851.00
Oct 2026	**£103,241.00**	£10,759.00	£91,506.00	£975.00

'A huge thank you to everyone who supported the New Home for Ashwood project by getting involved with the Big Give Weekend. The total amount raised (including the estimated Gift Aid reclaim and pledges) now stands at £123,657.99!

Finance Focus: People!

Ashwood is a lively, informal, growing Church with people from a wide variety of backgrounds. We seek to love, serve and follow Jesus Christ. We aim to be a Church that is friendly and accessible for the whole family. Whatever your background, race, colour or history, we want you to know that you are welcome!
At Ashwood we value people and want to invest in them. We are incredibly fortunate to have a brilliant group of volunteers, committed Leaders, a wonderful Core Leadership team and a great Staff Team.

Over the last 12 months your financial giving has enabled us to:

- Pay all of our part time staff team to help facilitate the work of the church in all areas including: Community, Pastoral Care, Children and Young People, Worship, Finance, Administration, Care of the Ashwood Centre and Leadership
- Invest in and facilitate training, coaching, mentoring & supervision sessions for some of our Staff Team, Leaders and Team Leaders
- Access training sessions & resources for our Children's Team
- Access & run Safeguarding training
- Facilitate team meetings for our Worship, Kids, Youth and Staff teams
- Support Leaders to attend Ground Level Events including National Forums and the Annual Leadership Conference
- Contribute towards training days and retreats for our Senior Leaders

Your giving has also allowed us to provide financial support beyond ourselves to:

- Links International (for Links Charity, Sam Walker and responses to the floods in Malawi and Nepal)
- Ground Level (including Awaken)
- Freedom in Christ
- Hope Missions
- Abby Clark
- The British Red Cross (in response to the Hurricane Melissa Appeal)
- The Middle East Emergency Appeal
- The International Nepal Fellowship (in response to the Nepal floods)



Thank you so much for the money you give which has enabled all these things to happen.
Everything we do is connected to our mission to help people find and follow Jesus.



Becky Holmes
Financial Administrator



pray first

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
Fridays 7.00-7.30am on Zoom*

"Prayer Space"

Thursdays 9.30 -10.30am on Zoom*

"Touching Heaven"

Please join us! Everyone welcome! The people of God in the Presence of God.
Wednesdays: 2nd Dec, 6th Jan

"Prayer for the New Home for Ashwood"

See separate section

Transformed Worship Sunday Evenings 7pm

Let's gather together to worship and to press in to all that God has for us! Join us for a night of praise, worship and seeking God. 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.

22nd November



Belonging to Ashwood

Next session: Sunday 22nd November 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 Small Group 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** **bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk**

Further date: 31st January 2027

ashwood church

Come and join us and be encouraged, stirred and grow your faith.

There are many opportunities at Ashwood throughout the month to join others in prayer – Pray First, Prayer Space, New Home for Ashwood Prayer, Touching Heaven, our Small Groups and Transformed Worship, to name just a few. Prayer is such an important part of our walk with God and is key to seeing Him move in our church, communities and nation. Yet, if we're honest, do we give prayer priority in our daily lives, welcoming God into all we do and expecting Him to lead us?

Gathering to pray can play a key role in helping us grow and develop our prayer lives. If you don't already join in, I want to encourage you to give one (or more) of these opportunities a go. Together, we find strength and confidence, encourage one another, learn and are inspired. As we share and pray, our faith is stirred and we grow bolder.

Many of us don't feel confident praying, yet prayer is something we can all do. It's simply our conversation with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, beginning with acknowledging His presence with us. We can easily limit prayer to bringing our needs before the Lord, but there is so much more: listening to God, groaning with the Spirit, laughter, tears, shouts, worship and much more.

In our gatherings, we begin by welcoming the Holy Spirit to move and encourage us. We give thanks, helping us put aside unhelpful thoughts and focus on the Lord. Worship is also central, whether through songs, scripture or pictures, turning our hearts, spirits, souls and bodies towards God.

We then bring different people and situations to the Lord. Often, we find ourselves speaking scripture over them or receiving prophetic pictures that release faith and inspire further prayer. This builds our faith and encourages us to keep praying long after the meeting ends.

We've prayed for prodigals, our local and national government, schools, pupils and staff, our communities and their physical, spiritual and emotional health, as well as situations around the world. We also pray for Ashwood activities, including baptisms, holiday clubs, Small Groups and New Home for Ashwood, and for those coming to Cafe22, Seesaw and Foodbank. At Prayer Space, we regularly pray for our Core Team, Staff Team and volunteers, as well as the persecuted Church around the world. The time goes quickly, but these topics often stay with us throughout the day.

We don't consider ourselves expert prayers; we simply bring these situations to the Lord, inviting Him to move and bring wisdom, revelation, healing and comfort. And our prayers don't stop when the meetings finish – they continue throughout the day.

Why not join us when you can? You don't have to stay for the whole time or pray out loud, but I can assure you that joining in will encourage you.

"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."
Colossians 4:2

Janet Wright





local and global prayer



24/7 The Gathering

Christine and I had the privilege of joining the livestream of 24/7 Prayer: The International Gathering from Belfast. People from 70 nations joined, in person and online, sharing in a wonderful celebration of this global prayer movement. We heard amazing stories of lives, communities and nations being transformed through prayer, alongside inspiring worship, teaching, prophecy and encouragement to keep praying and believing.

Jesus is building His Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it! We are united with our Christian family around the world, including the persecuted and suffering Church. Through prayer, giving and practical action, we can carry one another's burdens and love one another as Jesus loves us.

You can watch the sessions and seminars here: gathering.24-7prayer.com

Share the Good News

We pray that Ashwood Church and churches across Kirkby-in-Ashfield will make the most of every opportunity this Advent and Christmas to share the good news of Jesus and be good news to those around us. Come, Holy Spirit – Come, Lord Jesus!

We are reminded of Jeremiah 29's call to pray for the peace and prosperity of the towns and communities where God has placed us, with the promise that when we seek Him wholeheartedly, we will find Him. King Jesus wants to meet us in our everyday lives, bringing His peace and prosperity through His Kingdom, even in difficult seasons.

As 2026 draws to a close, we give thanks for how we have become more planted, rooted and fruitful, and look ahead with faith, believing that the best is yet to come. We pray for peace and prosperity for one another, today and throughout 2027.

Open Doors / Arise Africa

We pray that the Arise Africa petition, with over one million signatures, will gain momentum and receive a positive response from the UK Parliament, the United Nations and other governments. May it change hearts, attitudes and policies, bringing lasting peace and prosperity to communities and nations across sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty, persecution and suffering are so severe. Let the violence stop and the healing begin! We believe that nothing is impossible for our God.



You can watch Sam's video on YouTube and you can read the latest Links newsletter here: https://www.links.charity/blog
We give thanks for the growing Church Connect partnerships in Malawi and pray for fruitfulness in these growing relationships.
We also pray for the planned Ashwood team visit to Malawi next year, partnering with Hope Mission.
In October some of the Links team had the privilege of travelling to Southern Asia to minister alongside pastors and partners from across the continent.
We give praise and thanks for Links Asia and all the Church leaders and partners from many nations, who were able to meet together in unity and friendship to worship, pray and learn together at two conferences.
We pray God's blessings and protection on the growing Links partnerships in Asia, knowing there's strength and fruitfulness in our unity together. IN IT TOGETHER.
Let this be an encouragement to us in our prayers for LINKS.charity and the Links partners around the world. It's exciting to see where God's Kingdom IS coming and our Father's good pleasing and perfect will IS being done through all of our prayers and obedience, through local Church partnerships around the world. In the midst of severe challenges, persecution and suffering Jesus is both present and powerfully at work, in the business of making all things new in the power of His LOVE.

Hope and Ashwood - Spring 2027

Our partnership with Hope Missions Ministries through Links International continues to connect us to Annie and Fracnis through; prayer, resourcing and going to visit and work alongside them in Malawi.
Ashwood has another opportunity to support and visit Hope Missions with training and projects in Spring 2027.
We always aim to serve the needs of Hope Mission. They have highlighted a few areas; which includes leadership empowerment, community healthcare and vocational training programmes, like tailoring and bricklaying.
If you are interested to know more about the trip and maybe be a team member or support someone to go next year please talk to Janet Wright or Mandy Walker.
Links International will support organising our schedule, flights, transport and accommodation along with Hope Missions.

Key Info:

- Dates: Easter 2027 (between 26th March and 10th April)
- Duration: 8-10 days
- Location: Lilongwe and Nkhotakota (Lakeside community)
- Volunteer total cost per member: £2,000+
- Confirm Place: before the end of Dec. 2026 and pay for the flight (£1,000+) before the end of Jan. 2027.



Dave Redfern

Sam Walker







New Home for Ashwood
Thank You, God!
But Let's Keep Praying!

What an incredible few weeks we've had on our New Home for Ashwood journey!
Following our amazing Big Give Weekend and Vision Offering, we're delighted to share that the total has now grown to over £123,000, including Gift Aid!
That's more than £123,000 given and pledged towards our New Home, and we are so incredibly grateful.
Thank you to everyone who has given, prayed, served, encouraged and played a part. The generosity of our church family and wider community has been extraordinary.
What a reminder of what can happen when we each bring what we have and place it into God's hands.
But as we celebrate, we also recognise that there is still a significant journey ahead of us.

Our Grant Applications
Please Pray!

One of the biggest areas of focus for the New Home team at the moment is securing funding from charitable trusts, foundations and other organisations.
A number of grant applications have already been submitted, and we are continuing to explore further opportunities.
Some of these applications are for substantial amounts of money and could make an enormous difference to the next stages of the project.
We've also been having some encouraging conversations and making new connections with people and organisations who could potentially help us move forward.



This is where we really need the whole church to pray!

Over the coming weeks and months, decisions will be made about some of the applications we've submitted. We know that funding decisions are often highly competitive, but we also know that nothing is impossible for God.

So can we encourage you to make our grant applications a particular focus of your prayers?

- Pray for favour with the people reading and assessing our applications, that they would understand the vision and the difference this new centre could make.
- Pray for positive decisions and for significant financial provision through grants and other funding opportunities.
- Pray for open doors, including unexpected opportunities, new relationships and people who want to support what we're building.
- Pray for wisdom for everyone involved in preparing applications, meeting funders and making important decisions.
- Pray for God's timing, that the right provision would come at the right moment.

At our recent prayer meeting, we were reminded of the Israelites standing before the Red Sea. What seemed impossible to them was not impossible for God.

And perhaps that's a helpful picture for us right now.

We have a big vision. We have a significant financial challenge. But we also have a God who has been faithful throughout this journey. Let's not allow the size of the challenge to become bigger in our thinking than the greatness of our God.

More Than a Building

One of the most encouraging things about our Big Give Weekend wasn't just the money raised. It was seeing new relationships formed, people from our community reconnecting with Ashwood, and local leaders hearing more about our vision.

And that's what this is all about.

We're not simply trying to put up a building. We're creating a home that will enable us to serve our community, welcome more people, support families, invest in children and young people, and help more people find and follow Jesus.

The building is important, but what God is doing in us and through us along the way is just as significant.

Let's Keep Going Together!

The Big Give Weekend was an incredible milestone, but it wasn't the finishing line. There will be more opportunities to give, more conversations to have, more applications to submit and more steps of faith to take.

And through it all, we want to remain a church family that prays, listens, trusts and responds to God's leading.

Prayer for our New Home for Ashwood:

29th November 26
21st January 27

12.15-12.45pm in person
8-8.30pm online

So please keep praying.

Pray for those grant applications. Pray for the people making decisions. Pray for our team. Pray for our town. And pray that God would continue to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.
And don't forget to keep praying at 20:24 each day for our New Home for Ashwood. We've already seen so much to be thankful for.

Over £123,000 raised through the Big Give Weekend and Vision Offering.

New relationships. New opportunities. Growing faith. Extraordinary generosity. And we're believing there's so much more to come.
Thank you, Ashwood. Let's keep going, together!



Bob Goody
On behalf of the New Home for Ashwood Team

NHFA Giving

For donations, please scan one of the QR codes

Via Stewardship pg

Via Chrurch Suite

Obedience, Sacrifice and Peace

"But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams."
1 Samuel 15:22
This was my experience when asking Jesus what I should be giving to the building offering. He asked me to give a fund I was creating for replacement teeth! So, I had a discussion over this, as I pointed out that I do need teeth Lord! Ever the forthright father, he still asked that I should give that and not to be concerned about the consequences. So I did and I was completely at peace about it. Often obedience involves sacrifice. Seems to me that listening to the prompting of the Spirit is more important than relying on our preconceived ideas of self reliance being the answer to our predicament. After all, "*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him*."

Psalms 24:1 . So if he prompts, then he will not let us down as he is our provider and protector.



Martin Walker

A little encouragement from Rural Missions

I wanted to share a few encouragements with my Ashwood family about what's been happening at Rural Missions. It's been a busy season of conferences, conversations and welcoming new colleagues, and it's good to remember the churches and people at the heart of it all.

One of the privileges of my role is seeing what happens when churches have time and support to think about their communities, listen to God and plan their next steps. Many have faithful people who love Jesus and care deeply about their neighbours, but are stretched and unsure how to move forward. Walking alongside them is a real privilege. Recently, three congregations at Boughton Monchelsea each came away from their consultation with three practical plans. Sompting Community Church also gave lovely feedback following a visit from Lois, our Senior Mission Enabler, describing it as "very supportive, uplifting, encouraging and really thought provoking". She helped them explore areas of church life and find a clearer way forward. They particularly valued the ongoing support and accountability, which we'll continue providing as they look for a new minister.

That captures what I hope Rural Missions can be: coming alongside churches, helping them recognise what God has placed in their hands and encouraging them to take the next step.

Our staff team is growing in response to the need we're seeing, with new regional colleagues and opportunities developing in Scotland and Wales. This means we can be closer to churches, respond to more requests and provide ongoing support. It's an exciting time, although there's plenty for me to get my head around as we welcome people and help them settle into their roles!

Alongside this growth, our financial support needs to grow too. A legacy has helped us develop the ministry, but we now need regular income to sustain the larger team and future work. You can give regularly or make a single gift at www.ruralmissions.org.uk/donate.

Our new church partnership campaign also invites churches to help keep consultations, networks, training and resources freely available. Please pray for new supporters, lasting partnerships, successful funding applications and wisdom in our decisions.

Being part of Ashwood matters to me. You are the church family I worship with, serve alongside and come home to after travelling. Thank you to everyone who asks how things are going, takes an interest and prays. It means a lot.

For more stories and encouragement, visit www.ruralmissions.org.uk/goodnews.

Please keep praying for me, the team and the churches we serve: that their plans will create opportunities for people to encounter Jesus, discover His love and begin following Him.



Bob Goody
Chief Executive
Rural Missions



community

Welcome and Hospitality

What do ‘Diamond Art’, paper decorations, tea, coffee, cake and laughter have in common?

The answer is Cafe22! This is just a taste of what’s been happening over the last couple of months. Add in the Big Give Weekend Community Festival and you have one busy team! Not just the servers and kitchen staff, but also the bakers, those who help set up and those who stay to tidy up, simply because they can.

We’ve welcomed new guests, seen some stay and watched old regulars return after the holiday season. But whether numbers are low or high, one thing is guaranteed: the atmosphere is always great because Jesus is there with us, in the conversations, welcome and hospitality.

If you use Lectio 365 (a prayer app I would thoroughly recommend), you’ll know that Welcome and Hospitality are two characteristics of living out our faith. We see these on a Sunday morning, but they’re also a big part of Cafe22.

This week, a lady came in looking for the Wellbeing Centre next door. We showed her where it was and invited her back for coffee. She returned for coffee and lunch, and each time I peeped through the kitchen hatch, she was deep in conversation. She didn’t know anyone when she arrived, but certainly wasn’t lonely while she was with us!

Many people arrive alone and are welcomed into a group if they want company. Often, they stay much longer than planned because of the welcome they receive.

I tend to think of hospitality as welcoming people into your home, and that is definitely a gift. But I’m learning you can show hospitality wherever you are. I find it hard to welcome people into my home because I need somewhere to recharge my social batteries after being around lots of people. But at Cafe22, it comes easily!

Hospitality is about welcoming people into your space and life, even for a short time; showing you care and offering a safe space to be. It’s who you are, not where you are, that matters. Jesus showed this throughout His life. He had no fixed home, yet welcomed people into His life every day.

My prayer is that Cafe22 and its wonderful team will continue to reflect Jesus through their hospitality, welcome and everything else they do.



Christine Redfern



environment

We wish you a Fairtrade Christmas...

Fairtrade Foundation: Fair to people, fair on the planet, fair pay...

Yes! We celebrate the Fairtrade and Justice movement and all the good that has been and continues to be achieved through doing life FAIR. Let's stop and think: How can I do it FAIR? By making changes to the things I buy... By thinking ahead and planning how I can make this Christmas a Fairtrade Christmas, that benefits the people, planet and pay of producers as well as those who receive our gifts.

We've chosen to buy from these 3 websites below because they focus solely on fairtrade through direct relationships with farmers and producer cooperatives.

https://trueoriginfoods.co.uk/ - A great range of fairly and ethically traded goods focusing on direct relational trade.

https://www.wearefairtrade.com/ - set up by a team from Traidcraft to continue their vision and mission.

https://chooseliberation.com/ - Nuts about fairtrade and good from the ground up!

Fairtrade logo/ World Fairtrade Organisation logo/ Rainforest Alliance/ Soil Association... The list goes on but what they all have in common is a movement for change in the way we trade. The best practice moves towards a more circular economy where everyone within the circle or life cycle of the product benefits, putting people and planet before business profits! I acknowledge that any system or regulation can be flawed and isn't perfect. I found a really helpful logo comparison research here: https://www.wearefairtrade.com/blogs/news/ethical-logos-compared

Our choices do make a difference... by choosing to buy products that are fairly traded, sustainable and ECO friendly we can know we're making a positive difference to the lives and communities of farmers, producers and our precious planet. We read in the Bible: *ALL that God created was very good and we are commanded to care for all of HIs creation in the ways we LOVE God and LOVE one another.*

Thanks for reading.

Dave Redfern





what's on

Regular Meetings:

- **Sunday Morning:** Ashwood meets in the AshwoodCentre starting at 10.00am for refreshments, meeting starts at 10.30am
- **Touching Heaven Gathering:** 7.30 – 9.00pm usually 1st Wednesday in the month: 7th October , 4th November. Details see page 20
- **Small Groups** meet fortnightly, details see page 5
- **Ashwood Youth** meets on Friday nights, details on page 11
- **Prayer Opportunities** see pages 6 ,15, 16, 17
- **New Home for Ashwood Prayer** dates: page 6
- **Belonging to Ashwood** Meetings see page 14
- **Transformed Worship Nights**,dates and details seepage15

Ashwood in the Community

- Ashwood Men: Weekly Breakfast on Thursdays 9.30 am and monthly meal out at the Stags (page 11)
- Café 22: Mondays except Bank Holidays 9.30 am – 1 pm (page 28)
- Foodbank: Tuesdays 2.00pm - 3.00 pm
- Seesaw (toddlers): Tuesdays & Fridays term time 9.30am – 11.15 am
- The Gathering Place: First and third Friday of the month 2-4 pm

For Your Diaries:

22 Nov	Sunday	Belonging to Ashwood	pg 20
27 Nov	Friday	Kirkby Christmas Festival	pg 3
4 Dec	Friday	ACE Kids Spark	pg 9
5 Dec	Saturday	Mince Pies and Drinks	pg 14
8 & 11 Dec	Tuesday & Friday	Seesaw Christmas Party	pg 16
10 Dec	Thursday	Men's Christmas Meal	pg 11
12 Dec	Saturday	Christmas Quiz	pg 16
18 Dec	Friday	Christmas Craft Night	pg 16
19 Dec	Saturday	Christmas Breakfast	pg 16
20 Dec	Sunday	Carol Services	pg 16
Spring 27	8-10 days	Ashwood in Malawi	pg 23



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 remind of what has been preached over the last few weeks

Sunday 20th September	Healthy Living, Healthy Giving 1 Matt Bell
Sunday 27th September	Healthy Living, Healthy Giving 2 Matt Bell
Sunday 4th October	Healthy Living, Healthy Giving 3 Matt Bell
Sunday 11th October	Baptism Sunday Bob Goody
Sunday 18th October	Fruitful in Every Season - Joseph Bob Goody
Sunday 25th October	Fruitful in Every Season - Ruth Helen Tomlinson
Sunday 1st November	Fruitul in Every Season - Hannah Jules Bingham
Sunday 8th November	Fruitful in Every Season - Daniel Zoe Bell
Sunday 15th November	Fruitfulness in Every Season Ness Wilson

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 matt@ashwoodchurch.org / claire@ashwoodchurch.org
Administrator	Gisela Beighton admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Children and Youth Work	Richard Reason 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
Small Groups	Bec Goody bec@ashwoodchurch.org.uk
Church email	admin@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 come along to our next "Belonging to Ashwood" Session (pg 17) or for more information, email **admin@ashwoodchurch.org.uk.**

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