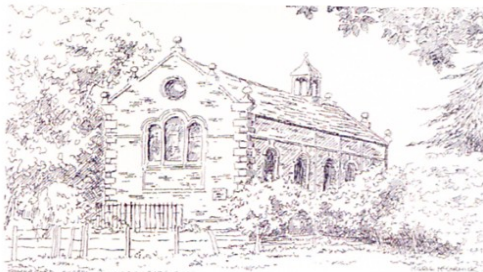
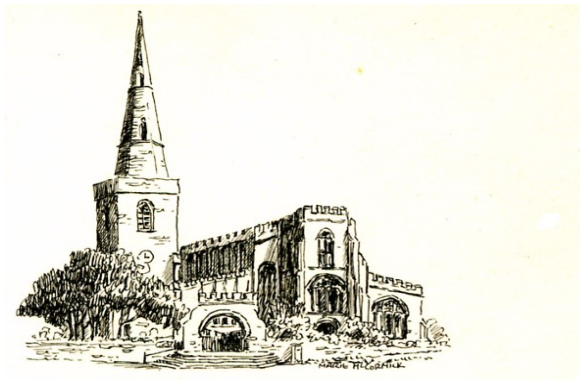


Astbury & Smallwood Parish News January 2012 Price 50p



FROM THE RECTOR,

Rev Jonathan D. M. Sharples,
Astbury Rectory, CW12 4RQ. *Telephone 01260 272625*

My dear friends,

Henry Ford was once asked: ‘How can I become a success?’ Ford replied: ‘If you start something, finish it.’ Apparently it took Henry many a long hour in his garage at home (‘Happy days’, his wife no doubt reflected) to develop his first car. Yet even before completing it he was acutely aware that he could build it much better. The desire to give up on the first car, he said, was strong but he carried on regardless. He later reflected that he learned even more about how to improve the second car by finishing every detail of the first one.

I know something of his nature. I was once engaged on a similar feat of engineering ingenuity and probably spent equally long hours locked away in my garage, measuring, designing, testing, creating, constructing, persevering, perfecting, adjusting, refining, and finally completing. And I can tell you I agree with Henry Ford – for I learned even more about how to make my next shelf by finishing the first.

It is one thing to be a perfectionist, but it is altogether better to be a ‘completionist’ – someone who actually gets the job done.

What God began with the birth of the Saviour, He finished when His Son was crucified. Christmas hailed the beginning of God’s great salvation plan. But Jesus’s birth in and of itself achieves no more than a phone call to the fire brigade – it is a start, but needs carrying through until the job is done.

God is described in the Bible as the author and perfecter of our faith - having started something, he will finish it.

Jonathan

Editor, Mr W. Ball
The Old Vicarage, Reades Lane, Congleton, CW12 3LL

As this issue of the *Parish News* is being published on 25th December, we wish Happy Christmas to all our readers.

Please remember that if you would like the Church to benefit from extra cash, you should consider gift aiding your offering. For further details please contact me.

Susan Blakeman 01260 280067/ 273249

Richard and Jean Moore would like to thank everybody who helped at the Christmas Lunch on Sunday 27th November and all those who have helped in past years to make the event enjoyable for all those attending at the start of the Christmas season.

After careful thought and consideration Richard and Jean have decided that after 32 years the 2011 party was the last one they will organize.

We would like again to say a big Thank You to all who have helped and supported us over the years to make this event so successful.

Richard and Jean

On behalf of Astbury's Senior Parishioners (though I am not quite there yet!) I would like to thank Richard and Jean and the team for all their hard work over so many years, and to wish them a happy 'retirement'. Here now is the perfect opportunity for some of the newer and younger members of the congregation to step into the breach and take on this Party for the Seniors: please contact me if you are interested.

Bill

Rectory Tea happens every first Friday of the month – but there won't be one on 6th January: we'll be back in February. It's a chance to meet, eat and treat yourself to a lovely High Tea. Open to all, you're always welcome. Tea. At Three. At the Rectory. Makes Betty's Tea Rooms look like a Truckers Caff.

The Wednesday Communion service in the Village Hall will not be celebrated on 4th January, but will resume on 11th January at the new regular time of 11.00 am.

Starting in January we have a new course which we hope will become a regular feature in the life of the parish.

The Marriage Course is a six session course set in a fantastic atmosphere which many people say feels like a date night. Candlelit meals are served at romantic tables for two while listening to practical talks that are informative and fun. Couples are given topics to discuss and interesting ways to discuss them. Music is played so you can't hear couples on other tables and they can't hear you! There is no group work, so nothing is shared with anyone else!

The course will be held on Thursday evenings beginning on 5th January. Each evening starts at 7.00 pm and finishes at 9.45 pm. The whole course costs £30 per couple which includes all meals. The venue is the new Coffee Shop at Glebe Farm.

The greatest achievements in life take practice, training and dedication. It's the same with marriage. A strong, loving and lifelong relationship doesn't happen by chance. For many couples life is busy and hectic and time to talk meaningfully with our partner is time we find hard to find. Thousands of people have already done this marriage course and found it one of the best things they have ever done for their relationship. Some have likened it to a marriage MOT and a definite enhancement to any relationship.

For more details about this or subsequent Marriage Courses, contact Jon or Ella at the Rectory.

Astbury and Smallwood Parish News: The subscription for the new year continues at £5 and saves you £1 over the year compared to the cover price of 50p per copy. Take out a subscription and save! The subscription should be paid to Mr Ball or Mrs Blakeman as soon as possible. You will receive a receipt attached to your next edition of *Parish News* after you have paid.

Publication is on the last Sunday of each month. The actual dates for 2012 are shown on page 9. To guarantee inclusion of your article,

please ensure that it reaches Mr Ball no later than the copy date (also shown on page 9). Contributions may be handwritten or typed, posted to the address above, faxed to 298913 or emailed to williamball@supanet.com or williamball@btinternet.com. (Note the extra 'b' in the second email address.) If any reader would prefer to receive a **large-print version** of the magazine (at no extra cost), please let me know. If you wish to receive your magazine by post, the total subscription is £16.50. Please make cheques payable to *Astbury & Smallwood Parish News* **not** *Astbury PCC*.

Prayer Group: We continue to hold meetings on the second and fourth Thursday evenings of each month. The next is on Thursday 12th January at 8.00 pm at Rachel and John Hulse's, 2 Chaffinch Close, Congleton, CW12 3FE. Please check the weekly *Newsletter*, in case the venue has changed. Do continue to let us know of particular concerns that need prayer. You can put your prayer requests into the box in the Lady Chapel or send them via email at prayer@astburychurch.org.uk. We can assure you that anything said in prayer group remains confidential and will not be talked about elsewhere. For more information please talk to John and Rachel Hulse - 01260 289084, rachel1304@talktalk.net or to Sally Drage - 01260 270217, sally@drage.me.uk

Somerford Chapel: The Service of Nine Lessons & Carols led by Ella took place on Sunday 11th December. Though it was cold and wet and muddy outside, we were warm enough inside, and fortified afterwards by mince pies and mulled wine.

As always, there has been a full complement of services and events in church and village in recent weeks, from the Senior Parishioners' Party at the end of November and moving on through Advent Carols, the Servants' Supper, the Ladies' Fellowship Christmas supper, School Nativity, Somerford Carols, Congleton High School Carols, the Christingle, the Live Nativity, Candlelit Carols and the Crib Service to the Christmas Day celebrations of the birth of our Lord.

These occasions do not just happen: they involve a great deal of planning, rehearsal and organization, and we thank everyone who was involved in every single event, each of which went a long way in lifting some of the present gloom - as do the floral decorations in the church, executed as ever with quiet efficiency by Mrs Cook and her team.

Sidesmen & Sideswomen wanted: We are always pleased to welcome newcomers to our ranks, so if you could be available for about half an hour before and half an hour after a Service (8, 10 or 6.30) every now and then, please have a word with the Wardens. The duties are not onerous: welcoming worshippers, dealing with sheets and hymn-books, helping during the service if required, collecting and counting the Offertory, tidying up afterwards. If you want to give it a try, tell Bill or John. Thank you.

Ladies' Fellowship: It was a fine clear night for the Fellowship's Supper. Last year the temperature was -8° C and the Supper was postponed! Members arrived carrying plates of food and the hall was soon set up for Communion Supper. The Rector led Communion and we stood in a crescent to receive the host. Get well prayers were said for Edith Sampson and Ian Pennington. After the service the Rector was thanked and members moved quietly to their seats. Some notices were given out: there are still some tickets (£6.50 each) for the pantomime, Ali Baba, at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 18th January. Contact Mrs Goodwin on 01260 274190.

Regarding a banner for the Ladies' Fellowship, members were asked to scrutinise two hassocks, both worked in cross-stitch, one an example of 'five stitches to the inch', the other 'ten stitches to the inch'. The general consensus was that ten stitches would look better for a banner (although I am assured this will take longer to do!) Mrs Morgan had drawn a suggested central logo showing the steeple, church and porch. There was also the question of size – members were to think on these things. Mrs Cook asked for help in decorating the church for Christmas. Then we moved to choose our supper and to sit at the tables, the Rector and Ella joining us. Crackers were pulled, although not many hats worn – too many big hairstyles! Thanks must go to all who helped to make it

a very enjoyable evening. The next meeting will be on 15th February when Mrs Joan Archer will update us on ‘Christ the Rock’ school in Uganda, or we may see you on 18th January for the panto. Until then, we hope you all have a healthy and very happy Christmas.

Carole Goodwin

Astbury Women’s Institute: After a very enjoyable Christmas Party held at Congleton Golf Club on Wednesday 30th November, Astbury WI held their final meeting of the year on 7th December in the Village Hall. The members enjoyed an, at times touching, at times funny, but always thoroughly entertaining talk by Geraldine Jervis about her life-long hobby of embroidery, which has led her to produce some exquisite cross-stitch pictures.

The meeting opened, as usual, with the singing of *Jerusalem*, but this was a far from usual meeting, for it was the very first meeting for new President, Mrs Catherine Pedley and new Secretary Mrs Yvonne Walker. Mrs Pedley began the meeting by introducing the new Committee to the members. Sadly, Mrs Jane Butler, who had agreed to take on the role of Treasurer, (so ably undertaken, for some years, by Mrs Margaret Hocknell,) has been forced for health reasons to resign. Mrs Pedley acknowledged the hard work of the previous officers and appealed to the members to give the new Committee as much help as they can to take the WI forward and continue to build on the successes of the group.

Mrs Kath Wainwright was thanked for the flowers on the President’s table and it was announced that Mrs Sue Clarke would provide the flowers for the January meeting. There were no December birthday girls present at the meeting and Mrs Pedley asked that members should ensure their birthdays were correct on our list in January, when subscriptions of £31. 50 would be due. During the general business of the meeting members were reminded that; The Dane Valley Group’s Carol Service will take place at Marton Church on Sunday 11th December, when Mrs Susan Clarke will represent Astbury and read one of the lessons. Bowling members must hand in their forms before 2nd March 2012. A Leap Day Literary Lunch is to take place at The Freemasons’ Hall, Christleton, when the speaker will be Victoria

Howard, members requiring tickets should order them at the January meeting. Tickets for this event will be £22.00.

Mrs Sue Clarke has organized an outing to the Susan Boyle Musical at the MEN Arena in the spring. She and other members had attended the WI Carol Service in Chester earlier on the day of our meeting; the singing, she said, was wonderful!

After the business members enjoyed Mrs Geraldine Jervis's inspiring talk and were able to purchase some of her beautiful embroidered pictures. The proceeds from the sale of her work are all donated to The Douglas MacMillan Hospice, for whom she has raised a wonderful £11,000 to date. Geraldine was thanked on behalf of members by Mrs Margaret Pearson. Mrs Margaret McCleavy won the competition for an embroidered picture with a stunning commemorative picture. The meeting closed in the usual way with *God Save The Queen*.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th January at 7.30 in the Village Hall. The Speaker will be Nick from Arighi Bianchi in Macclesfield, when the competition will be for a decorative wooden box. Anyone wishing to join us, as a member or a visitor, will be most welcome.

Margaret Pearson

The *Word for Today* booklets are available at the back of the church. The *Word for Today* is a daily devotional, designed to help and encourage you in your daily walk with God. Each day you will get a quotation from Scripture and then a couple of paragraphs either discussing or exploring the verse. The booklets are a useful accompaniment and encouragement to reading the Bible: you will be amazed at the impact it has on your life.

Prayer for Today is a sister publication with thought provoking articles on a current theme. There is also a pull-out prayer diary for the three months which can be a useful starting point for daily devotions.

Please help yourself to either or both – they are free – and if you find them useful, why not sign up to have them delivered direct, the forms for this are in the back of the booklets.

Rachel Hulse
UCB Representative for Astbury

Parish News Publication & Copy Dates 2012-2013

The February issue will be published on 29th January
Last Date for material 20th January
The March issue will be published on 26th February
Last Date for material 17th February
The April issue will be published on 25th March
Last Date for material 16th March
The May issue will be published on 29th April
Last Date for material 20th April
The June issue will be published on 27th May
Last Date for material 18th May
The July issue will be published on 24th June
Last Date for material 16th March
The August issue will be published on 29th July
Last Date for material 20th July
The September issue will be published on 26th August
Last Date for material 17th August
The October issue will be published on 30th September
Last Date for material 21st September
The November issue will be published on 28th October
Last Date for material 19th October
The December issue will be published on 25th November
Last Date for material 16th November
The January **2013** issue will be published on 30th December
Last Date for material 21st December



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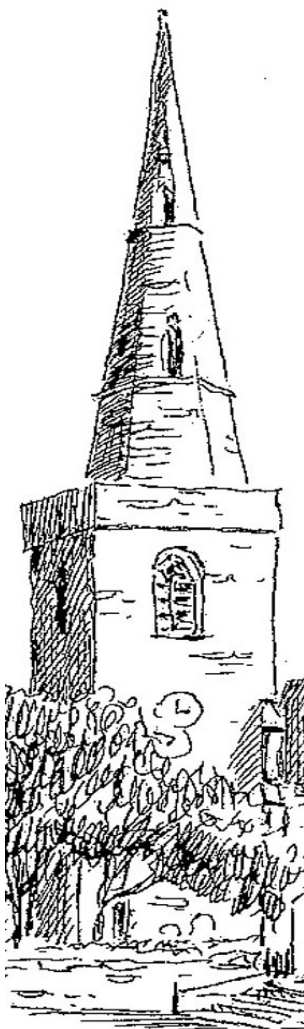
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PATRON – Sir Richard Baker Wilbraham Bt, DL, Rode Hall

VICAR		Rev Jonathan Sharples. Astbury Rectory.	01260 272625
ASSOCIATE PRIEST		Rev Ella Sharples. Astbury Rectory.	01260 272625
CHURCHWARDENS		Mr L. Ford, Overton Green Farm.	01477 500466
		Mr M Gilsean, Oak House, Walhill Lane.	01477 500351
TREASURER		Mrs L. Blythe, Wharams Barn, Congleton Rd.	01477 500545
SECRETARY		Mrs D. Poole, Holford Farm.	01477 500729
SERVICES	9.30 am	1st Sunday 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays	Family Communion Holy Communion
VILLAGE HALL		Mrs A. Bracegirdle.	01477 500342

CHURCH KEYS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

St MARY'S CHURCH, ASTBURY

PATRON – Sir Richard Baker Wilbraham, Bt, DL, Rode Hall

RECTOR	Rev Jonathan Sharples. Astbury Rectory.	01260 272625
ASSOCIATE PRIEST	Rev Ella Sharples. Astbury Rectory.	01260 272625

CHURCHWARDEN EMERITUS	Mr G. Taylor	
CHURCHWARDENS	Mr W. Ball, The Old Vicarage, Reades Lane.	01260 279276
	Mr J. Hulse, 2 Chaffinch Close.	01260 289084

SERVICES	8.00 am	every Sunday	Holy Communion	BCP
	9.00 am	1st Sunday	Morning Prayer	BCP
	10.00 am	every Sunday	Family Communion	CW
	10.00 am	every Sunday	Junior Church	
	6.30 pm	1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sundays	Evensong	BCP
	6.30 pm	2nd Sunday	Sung Eucharist	BCP

Services of Holy Baptism & Holy Matrimony by arrangement with the Rector

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Hon. Vice Chairman	Major G. Allen	01260 270360
Hon. Secretary	Mr W. Ball	
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs S. Blakeman, 3 Astbury Marsh.	01260 280067

DEANERY SYNOD

ELECTED PCC MEMBERS
Mrs S. Blakeman, Mrs M. Cheetham, Mrs B. Cook, Mr G. Dale,
Dr S. Drage, Mrs C. Goodwin, Mr F. Griffiths, Dr J. Moore,
Mr I. Pennington, Mr P. Powell, Mr H. Prince, Mrs E. Riches,
Mr G. Taylor., Dr C. Tickner

CO-OPTED PCC MEMBER
Mrs J. Wagstaffe

SIDSEMEM	see ASTBURY ROTAS, next page	
BELL RINGERS TOWER CAPTAIN	Mrs C. Worrall	
CHILDREN'S SOCIETY	Mrs S. Blakeman	
ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER	Mr A. Carwardine, 44 Birch Road.	01260 279201
FLOWERS	Mrs B. Cook.	01260 290194
JUNIOR CHURCH	Mrs M. Cheetham, Mrs E. Stanmore	
TRAILBLAZERS	Mr A. Carwardine, Dr J. Moore	
PARISH NEWS EDITOR	Mr W. Ball	
PARISH NEWS FINANCE	Mrs S. Blakeman	
ORGANIST	Dr S. Drage	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE	Mrs J. Eardley	
VILLAGE HALL BOOKING	01260 295104 or 07735 256976 or 01260 272625	

ASTBURY ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, School Lane, CW12 4RG.		
Head Teacher	Mrs J. Wagstaffe.	01260 272528
Chairman of Governors	Mrs D. Graham	01782 379034

WEBSITES
www.astburychurch.org.uk
www.achurchnearyou.com/astbury-st-mary

CHURCH KEYS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE RECTOR AND CHURCHWARDENS

Astbury Church choir meets to practise every Friday evening
between 7.30 and 8.30 pm.

ASTBURY ROTAS

		8.00am	10.00am	6.30pm
December	25th	W. Ball	J. Hulse	NO
			E. Riches	SERVICE
January	1st	J. Nadin	F. Griffiths	N. Alcock
	8th	W. Ball	B. Cook	F. Davenport
			R. Wright	P. Powell
			G. Dale	T. Gresty
	15th	C. Goodwin	J. Hulse	S. Blakeman
			E. Riches	C. Bloor
	22nd	W. Ball	F. Griffiths	P. Powell
			B. Cook	E. Cartledge
	29th	A. Carwardine	R. Wright	N. Alcock
			G. Dale	F. Davenport
February	5th	J. Nadin	J. Hulse	S. Blakeman
			E. Riches	C. Bloor

At the 10.00 am Communion service, Mr Griffiths administers the chalice
on the 1st Sunday, Mrs Blakeman on the 3rd and Mrs Cook on the 4th.

CLEANING ROTAS

December	30th	ANYONE AVAILABLE PLEASE
January	6th	J. Moore & Junior Church
	13th	W. Prince, S. Stuffins
	20th	M. Pennington, C. Brooks, K. Wainwright
	27th	B. Sutton, D. Cotton
February	3rd	C. Garside, M. Follett
	10th	R. Birchall, J. Barlow
	17th	J. Nadin, T. Morgan
	24th	J. Moore & Junior Church

BRASS ROTAS

January	10th.	M. Booth, C. Goodwin, J. Nadin
	31st	C. Banks, T. Meakin

FROM THE REGISTERS

Service Attendances

		8.00	9.00	10.00	6.30
November	23rd	-	-	7	-
	27th	14	-	140 ad + 35 ch	41
	30th	-	-	7	-
December	4th	16	4	48 + 19	30
	7th	-	-	6	-
	11th	13	-	250 + 160	29
	14th	-	-	8	-
	18th	6	-	48 + 21	150 + 20

Holy Matrimony

December 3rd Robin Wheeldon & Deborah Stokes

Burial of the Dead

November 22nd Harry Potts 91
 December 2nd Constance Elizabeth Mary Griffiths Hicks 72

JOINT PARISHES CALENDAR FOR THE COMING WEEKS

DECEMBER

Sun 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

		8.00am Astbury	January <i>Parish News</i> published today
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
Wed	28th	10.00am Astbury VH	Family Communion
Thu	29th	1.00pm Astbury	Holy Communion
			Holy Matrimony

Joint Parishes Calendar - continued

JANUARY, 2012

Sun	1st	THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY	
		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.00am Astbury	Morning Prayer
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion
		6.30pm Astbury	Evensong
Wed	4th	7.30pm Astbury VH	Women's Institute
		7.30pm Astbury	A Passage & a Pint in the Egerton
Thu	5th	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
Sat	7th	9.30am Congleton Library	Coffee Morning
Sun	8th	EPIPHANY I	
		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion & Holy Baptisms
		6.30pm Astbury	Sung Eucharist
Mon	9th	7.30pm Astbury	PCC Standing Committee
Wed	11th	11.00am Astbury VH	Holy Communion
Thu	12th	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
		8.00pm Astbury	Prayer Group at 2 Chaffinch Close
Sun	15th	EPIPHANY II	
		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.30am Smallwood	Family Service
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion
		12. noon Astbury	Holy Baptisms
		6.30pm Astbury	Evensong
Mon	16th	7.30pm Astbury	Village Hall Committee
Wed	18th	11.00am Astbury VH	Holy Communion
		7.30pm Astbury VH	Ladies' Fellowship
Thu	19th	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
Fri	20th		February <i>Parish News</i> Copy date

Joint Parishes Calendar – continued

JANUARY

Sun 22nd EPIPHANY III

		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion
		6.30pm Astbury	Evensong
Wed	25th	11.00am Astbury VH	Holy Communion
Thu	26th	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
		7.30pm Holy Trinity, Mossley	Deanery Synod
		8.00pm Astbury	Prayer Group at 1 Gosling Way

Sun 29th EPIPHANY IV

			February <i>Parish News</i> published today
		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion
		6.30pm Astbury	Evensong
Mon	30th	7.30pm Astbury	PCC Meeting

FEBRUARY

Wed	1st	11.00am Astbury VH	Holy Communion
		7.30pm Astbury VH	Women's Institute
		7.30pm Astbury	A Passage & a Pint in the Egerton
Thu	2nd	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
Fri	3rd	3.00pm Astbury	Tea at the Rectory

Sun 5th SEPTUAGESIMA

		8.00am Astbury	Holy Communion
		9.00am Astbury	Morning Prayer
		9.30am Smallwood	Holy Communion
		10.00am Astbury	Family Communion
		6.00pm Astbury VH	Trailblazers
		6.30pm Astbury	Evensong
Thu	9th	7.00pm Astbury	Marriage Course
		8.00pm Astbury	Prayer Group

Astbury & Smallwood Parish News
is also available in large-print format.

Please let Mr Ball know if you require such a copy.

ASTBURY & SMALLWOOD PARISH NEWS

Edited by Mr W. Ball

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and All Saints' Chapel of Ease, Somerford by Marie McCormick

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