

The Messenger

Ainsdale Village Church

United Reformed/Baptist

Station Road, Ainsdale, PR8 3HW

August/September 2025

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light

Matthew Ch. 11, verses 28-30



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Dear friends

We are half way through 2025, and as usual when we pass the midsummer date, I wonder where on earth the time has gone, and reflect on the many changes that life has brought.

After a long, cold winter it's good to feel the warmth (even though we could do with some rain) - the sun is shining, the days are long and the garden has suddenly become a riot of colour, after months where I wondered if the flowers would ever bloom again. It's amazing how quickly this new growth has emerged, and a reminder that life is finding a way, even when we can't see it happening.

I sometimes find myself measuring time in terms of what I was doing this time last year, or five or ten years ago, and reflect on the ups and downs, joys and losses. Friends have come and gone, children have been born, pets have enriched our lives, experiences have brought understanding – and through everything, I hope that as a person of faith, I've done my best to not take anything for granted, and to offer it all to God, with thanksgiving that whatever happens, and whether I can see it or not, all is safe in His hands.

Jesus spoke on several occasions about the need to keep watch, sometimes using parables to illustrate that we should always be aware that things are going on that we're not aware of; the parable of the bridesmaids, the faithful servant, the fig tree.

If we can see beyond that which is right in front of us, a whole new world of opportunity opens up, and although these parables contain an element of danger – “these are the beginnings of birth pangs...no one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert!” they also contain hope – hope for new birth, for change, for the wonderful fulfilment of God's plan for creation.

We cannot see into the future, and maybe that's just as well. Those words of Jesus speak of living for the moment, in the best way we can; they speak of acceptance, vigilance and peace at this time, and above all, they tell us to be aware that things are going on that we are not privy to, and all we can do is trust. In the meantime, we are enriched to do God's work of care for each other, care for creation, care for ourselves and our faith.

Let the flowers be a sign that God is always at work, bringing into our lives the gifts of time, colour and hope.

Have a blessed summer,

Yours in the service of our Lord,

Hilary

Ladies Group

In June we did a short walk around Ainsdale, looking at some historical details.

The evening was forecast to be very wet, but in fact we managed the walk with umbrellas held aloft! We ended up in the vestry for our refreshments, sadly not a picnic in the garden. Then in July, Claire tested our wits with a very interesting and varied quiz. Christine Rimmer was the winner of this – obviously she has been hiding her light under a bushel!

Our next treat will be a Chinese meal at the New China City on Monday 11 August. There will be a notice for this on the vestry notice board, so please add your name.

In September, our calendar tells us that I will be hosting either a film night or a beetle drive, so I have decided to do a beetle drive!

Quite a few people have told me they have never been to one of these – so I'm sure it will be a fun evening.

Jenny

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Deacons:

Imelda Aspinall Christine Holford

Joan Green Wendy Parry

Lucinda Green Ann Swift

Weekly Church Activities

Sunday: Morning Worship at 10.00 am

Tuesday: Gardening from 9.30 am

Coffee Morning 10.30 am – 12 noon in the Vestry

Last Tuesday in each month, Prayer for our Local Community

Thursday Knitting Group: 10.00 am at the home of Jean Harding,
55 Leamington Road – All welcome

Friday Welcome Café: 11.00 am – 1.00 pm.
Connect Youth Group 6.00 – 7.30 pm

Community Garden

The garden has been looking beautiful over the last few weeks, with lots of flowering shrubs coming into their own. Of course, the lawns have been looking a bit sad due to lack of rain, but even these now are beginning to green up. The dry garden is stunning at the moment, and is proving its worth as a drought-proof area. Many of our visitors comment on it, so hopefully they will use the idea in their own gardens. Heartfelt thanks are due to the gardeners who come to water on a regular basis.

On Saturday 12 July, as part of **Ainsdale Open Gardens** weekend, the Community Garden held another pant sale, and a sum of over £300 was raised for garden funds. A wonderful effort by the gardeners, led by **Anne Hanley**, who had provided many of the plants grown on from her allotment.

On **Monday 28 July**, the **Britain in Bloom** judges will be visiting the garden to assess its progress over the last year, and, of course, we very much hope we will achieve the category of Outstanding again. We won't know this until October when the Britain in Bloom awards are presented.

Jenny



Ainsdale Open Gardens Weekend – 12 and 13 July 2025

This annual event is organised by **Ainsdale Civic Society** and is always very popular, with people travelling from outside the area to visit the gardens. As always, the Community Garden participated in the event on the Saturday. The community gardeners held a plant sale and raised over £300 for garden funds, which was a magnificent effort. We also served refreshments throughout the day in aid of church funds. Although we had a steady stream of customers earlier on in the day, by lunchtime the village had become very quiet. We had some tables indoors where it was much cooler, and in the end we raised £93 for the church.

On Tuesday morning, 15 July, the gardeners hosted a **“Thank You”** coffee morning, alongside the usual church coffee morning, to show the gratitude of the community to those people who had opened their gardens to the public over the weekend. In the usual contrary way of English weather, it poured with rain, so we were forced into the vestry for coffee and cake. However, it was a very convivial occasion, and people from Ainsdale who had opened their gardens were able to meet some of their fellow gardeners, swap experiences and get to know each other.



Notes from the Archives – Part 17: 1910 to 1914

We continue with extracts from the monthly church meetings, starting in **1911**.

1911: In reply to an appeal for financial help from the Canning Road Church, it was agreed that “in view of our own present difficulties with a deficit on the year’s working, we could not render any assistance”.

The ladies were thanked for organising an American Tea, which raised £6 for church funds.

“It was agreed that the Sunday School should be kept closed a little longer on account of so many children in the village suffering from measles”.

In **1912** the National Health Insurance Act came into force, with payment having to be made for John Green, the Chapel Keeper, and for the Pastor.

The Deacons refused a request to hold a Picture Show in the Milton Hall for three evenings, and a later request to sell salvaged goods was also refused.

In 1913 the July Church Meeting was adjourned as only five people turned up! The Choir sent a letter to the Deacons complaining of poor seating, and that the organ was in such a poor condition, it should be replaced. They wondered if it was worth the effort of rehearsing! However, a little later an anonymous donor paid for the organ to be repaired.

Continuing the events of **1913**, it was agreed that the Sunday evening Children’s Service should be allowed to continue but “due to lack of discipline and the effect of the lighting in the Milton Hall has upon the lighting in the church when both services are going on at the same time, the discontinuance of the Children’s Service will be considered at the next Church Meeting”.

At the next Church Meeting, the Children’s Service was indeed discontinued!



On a happier note, through various activities, the **Ladies Sewing Group** raised £89, which wiped out the financial deficit and enabled the Church to enter 1914 free of debt. It was agreed to adopt the envelope system of giving on a six month trial.

In **1913** the Rev. Deauville resigned due to ill health and sadly died shortly afterwards. The Church was then without a minister until 1916, when Rev James Drummond commenced his pastorate.

1914 was of course a very significant year in the life of the country, and the minutes of the September meeting include a typed letter from the Lancashire Congregational Union which in part reads:

“We all sincerely hope that the present lamentable War may soon be brought to a conclusion and the work of the Churches carried on with renewed vigour. We ask that those Churches not having a settled minister at present should postpone seeking to fill the vacancy for the time being. The Executive regrets that it will not be able, for the present, to renew the Grant previously made to maintain a Minister”.

Having covered the early years of the church in some detail, the next article will be a general review of the 1920s and 1930s.

Alan

The Letter – Joan Green: The Goodness of God

Dear Friends,

*I love You Lord
For your mercy never fails me
All my days I've been held in your hands
From the moment that I wake up
Until I lay my head
I will sing of the goodness of God'*

The first verse of the worship song, the title above. This is one of the two worship songs that have helped, indeed got me through some of the 'darkest' times in my life. I thought about the goodness of God many years ago on one of our annual summer holidays at Taizé. In one of our group meetings a young man remarked that he believed "the good in you is the God in you."

That phrase has stayed with me ever since, my family could attest to how many times I have quoted it! Whilst being good does not make you a follower of Christ, it's a good place to start from. With the right opportunity to engage with someone, seeds of faith can be sown and with the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, a journey of faith may begin. That is one of the greatest privileges of being alongside young people, all people really, to be able to share your faith and experience of the goodness of God.

I started this a while ago, before Jenny reminded of the deadline for the Messenger! Then at the weekend I attended Café Jam at Crosby this is one of the worship songs that we sang. A great evening, also to commemorate Rita who plays keyboard and set up the band, leaving her Synod Clerk role.

She also came to Taizé the first couple of years we did, in fact she organised a weekend here bringing young people from Crosby to join with our young people for a 'Taizé weekend.' Girls slept in the vestry, boys in the church, not that anyone got much sleep if I remember!

The minister at Crosby, who I met a few weeks ago at the Living Faith Day was not able to go to Taizé, (his son came), but he arranged Taizé style worship once a month at Crosby URC.

This style of worship could not be more different from contemporary worship or traditional worship. All may enable you to feel the closeness of God and the presence of His Holy Spirit. Being at Taizé transformed my life, as it did Lucinda's, a subject we touched on at the recent Team Church weekend, with a wonderful couple from Formby whom we had not met before. They did the epilogue on the Saturday evening and used material from Taizé.

Diane, from Formby, who along with her late husband Phil led many of our Sunday morning services was at all these events and had also visited Taizé. She said it would be wonderful to experience that style of worship again. I said I would ask Lucinda, who has quite a lot of music from there.

So hopefully, one Sunday afternoon or evening,

A TEAM TAIZE WORSHIP

But until then I will leave you with the chorus:

'All my life You have been faithful

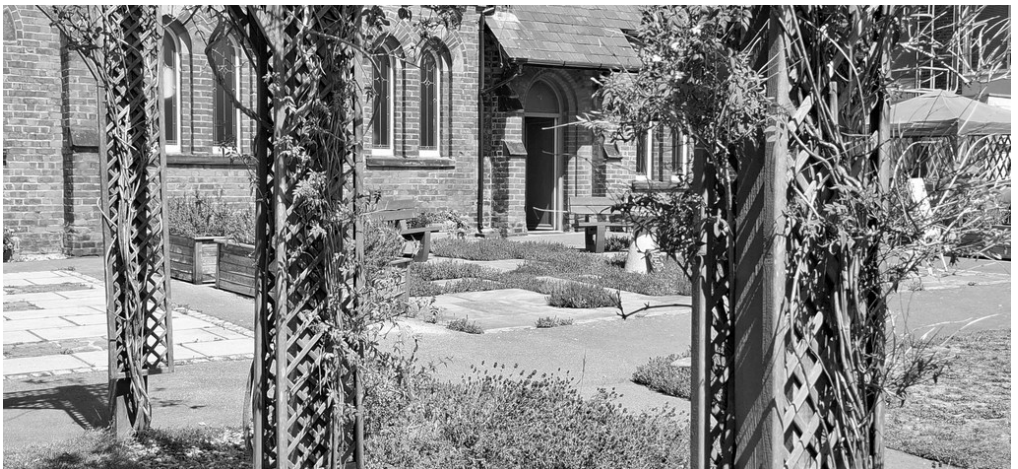
All my life You have been so so good

With every breath that I am able

I will sing of the goodness of God.'

With love and blessings.

Joan



Sunday Rotas

	Door	Communion	Reader	Flowers	Tea/Coffee
3 August	Jean Harding	Jenny Boulton Imelda Aspinall	Jeremy Lister	Wendy Parry	Jenny Boulton
10 August	Service at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am				
17 August	Jean Harding		Jenny Boulton	Jean Harding	Lynn Connolly
24 August	Jean Harding		Wendy Parry	Suzette Gorman	Joan Green
31 August	Team Service at Birkdale URC at 10.45 am				
7 Sept	Ann Swift	Ann Swift Beverly Bush	Janice Hill	Jenny and Alan	Lynn and Joan
14 Sept	Service at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am				
21 Sept	Ann Swift		Imelda Aspinall	Daphne Arch	Ann Swift
28 Sept	Ann Swift		Jeremy Lister	Vacancy	Jenny Boulton

Calendar for August

- Sun 3rd** Holy Communion at 10.00 am – Hilary Smith followed by a Church Meeting
- Mon 4th** Bible Study with Hilary Smith at 13 Hatfield Road – 10.30 am
- Sun 10th** Morning Worship at Ainsdale Methodist Church at 10.45 am
- Mon 11th** Ladies Group Chinese Meal at the New China City – see item in magazine
- Sun 17th** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – Janice Hill
- Sun 24th** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – DIY. Mike Smith will be playing the organ, and Ainsdale Methodist congregation will be with us
- Tue 26th** Prayer in the church from 11.00 am
- Sun 31st** Team Service at Birkdale URC at 10.45 am



Calendar for September

- Sun 7th** Holy Communion at 10.00 am – Janice Hill
- Mon 8th** Ladies Group Beetle Drive in the vestry –
see item in magazine
- Sun 14th** Morning Worship at Ainsdale Methodist Church
at 10.45 am
- Sun 21st** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – Keith Trencher
with Janet on the organ?
- Sun 28th** Morning Worship at 10.00 am – DIY
Ainsdale Methodist congregation will be with us
- Tues 30th** Prayer in the Church from 11.00 am

