

# St Michael and All Angels Mill Hill



*Ash Wednesday*



**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February  
2026**

**7:30 pm**





## The Processional Hymn (NEH 67)

*Please stand*

Forty Days and Forty Nights  
Thou wast fasting in the wild,  
Forty days and forty nights  
Tempted and yet undefiled.

2 Sunbeams scorching all the day,  
Chilly dewdrops nightly shed,  
Prowling beast about thy way,  
Stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.

3 Let us thine endurance share,  
And awhile from joys abstain,  
With thee watching unto prayer,  
Strong with thee to suffer pain.

4 And if Satan, vexing sore,  
Flesh or spirit should assail,  
Thou, his vanquisher before,  
Grant we may not faint nor fail.

5 So shall we have peace divine,  
Holier gladness over shall be,  
Round us too shall angels shine,  
Such as ministered to thee.

6 Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,  
Ever constant by thy side,  
That with thee we may appear  
At the eternal Eastertide.

## The Greeting

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All: And also with you.**

*The priest introduces the service*

## Prayer of Preparation

**All: Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of Penitence

In a moment of quietness, let us prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries by calling to mind the ways in which we have failed God and our neighbour, and then let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
 we have sinned against you  
 and against our neighbour  
 in thought and word and deed,  
 through negligence, through weakness,  
 through our own deliberate fault.  
 We are truly sorry  
 and repent of all our sins.  
 For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
 who died for us,  
 forgive us all that is past  
 and grant that we may serve you  
 in newness of life  
 to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
 have mercy upon us,  
 pardon and deliver us from all our sins,  
 confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,  
 and keep us in life eternal;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## Kyrie

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.  
 Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.  
 Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

## Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,  
you hate nothing that you have made  
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:  
create and make in us new and contrite hearts  
that we, worthily lamenting our sins  
and acknowledging our wretchedness,  
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,  
perfect remission and forgiveness;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All: Amen.**

## First Reading

*Please be seated*

### **Isaiah 58: 1-7**

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice  
like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins. <sup>2</sup>Yet day after day they  
seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were  
a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake  
the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous  
judgments, they delight to draw near to God. <sup>3</sup>  
“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble  
ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve  
your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your  
workers. <sup>4</sup>Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie  
in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?

<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds  
of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let  
the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

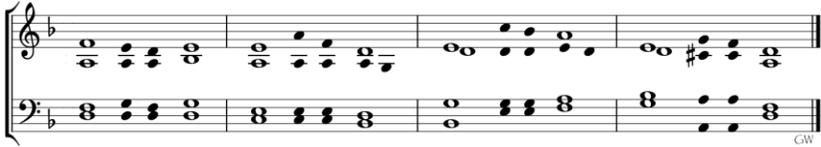
<sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them, and not  
to hide yourself from your own kin?

This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**



## Psalm 51 v 1 - 8



### **R** Have mercy on me, O God, and cleanse me from my sin.

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; •  
according to the abundance of your compassion  
blot <sup>1</sup> out · my offences.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness •  
and cleanse me <sup>1</sup> from my <sup>1</sup> sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my faults •  
and my sin is <sup>1</sup> ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned •  
and done what is evil <sup>1</sup> in your <sup>1</sup> sight. **R**
- 5 So that you are justified in your sentence •  
and righteous <sup>1</sup> in your <sup>1</sup> judgement.
- 6 I have been wicked even from my birth, •  
a sinner when my <sup>1</sup> mother con|ceived me.
- 7 Behold, you desire truth deep within me •  
and shall make me understand wisdom  
in the <sup>1</sup> depths of · my <sup>1</sup> heart.
- 8 Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; •  
wash me and I shall be <sup>1</sup> whiter than <sup>1</sup> snow. **R**

## Second Reading

### 2 Corinthians 5: 20b – 6: 10

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

<sup>2</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**6** As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you. 'See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see – we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## The Gradual Hymn (NEH 63)

*Please stand*

- All ye who seek a comfort sure  
In trouble and distress,  
Whatever sorrow vex the mind,  
Or guilt the soul oppress.
- 2 Jesus, who gave himself for you  
Upon the cross to die,  
Opens to you his sacred heart;  
O to that heart draw nigh.
- 3 Ye hear how kindly he invites;  
Ye hear his words so blest -  
'All ye that labour come to me,  
And I will give you rest.'
- 4 O Jesus, joy of saints on high,  
Thou hope of sinners here,  
Attracted by those loving words  
To thee I lift my prayer.
- 5 Wash thou my wounds in that dear blood  
Which forth from thee doth flow;  
New grace, new hope inspire, a new  
And better heart bestow.

## The Gospel



Prai — se to you O Christ, King of e - ter - nal glo - ry. CW

The Lord be with you

**All: And also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew

**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **Matthew 6: 1 – 6, 16 - 21**

Jesus said “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.<sup>6</sup>But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.

<sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**All:** This is the Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **The Sermon**

*Please be seated*

## The Creed

*Please stand*

**All: We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is  
worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

## The Liturgy of Penitence

*Please be seated, or kneel if you prefer*

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father,

**All: have mercy on us.**

God the Son,

**All: have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit,

**All: have mercy on us.**

Trinity of love,

**All: have mercy on us.**

**All: Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind,  
and strength.

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.

We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us.

We have not been true to the mind of Christ.

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

We confess to you, Lord ...

all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience  
of our lives.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation  
of other people.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Our anger at our own frustration

and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts  
and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship  
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Accept our repentance, Lord ...  
for the wrongs we have done,  
for our blindness to human need and suffering,  
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

**All: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

For all false judgements,  
for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbours  
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those  
who differ from us.

**All: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

For our waste and pollution of your creation  
and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

**All: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

**All: Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.**

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

**All: that we may show your glory in the world.**

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

**All: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

*A period of Silence is now kept.*

**All: We have not loved you with our whole heart.**

**We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**In your mercy**

**forgive what we have been,**

**help us to amend what we are,**

**and direct what we shall be;**

**that we may do justly,**

**love mercy,**

**and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

## The Imposition of Ashes

Dear friends in Christ,  
I invite you to receive these ashes  
as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this  
season of Lent.

God our Father,  
you create us from the dust of the earth:  
grant that these ashes may be for us  
a sign of our penitence  
and a symbol of our mortality;  
for it is by your grace alone  
that we receive eternal life  
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**All: Amen.**

*The president and people receive the imposition of ashes.*

*At the imposition the minister says to each person:*

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.  
Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

Let us pray.  
God our Father,  
the strength of all who put their trust in you,  
mercifully accept our prayers;  
and because, in our weakness,  
we can do nothing good without you,  
grant us the help of your grace,  
that in keeping your commandments  
we may please you, both in will and deed;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## The Peace

*Please stand*

Since we are justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us access to his grace.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you

**All: And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace

*All may exchange a sign of peace*



### **The Offertory Hymn (NEH 70)**

Lord Jesus, think on me,  
And purge away my sin;  
From harmful passions set me free,  
And make me pure within.

2 Lord Jesus, think on me,  
With care and woe opprest;  
Let me thy loving servant be,  
And taste thy promised rest.

3 Lord Jesus, think on me  
Amid the battle's strife  
In all my pain and misery  
Be thou my health and life

4 Lord Jesus, think on me,  
Nor let me go astray;  
Through darkness and perplexity  
Point thou the heavenly way.

5 Lord Jesus, think on me,  
When flows the tempest high:  
When on doth rush the enemy  
O Saviour, be thou nigh.

6 Lord Jesus, think on me,  
That, when the flood is passed,  
I may the eternal brightness see,  
And share thy joy at last.

## The Preparation of the Altar

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:  
through your goodness we have this bread to offer you, which  
earth has given and human hands have made.  
It will become for us the bread of life

**All: Blessed be God forever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:  
through your goodness we have this wine to offer you, fruit of the  
vine and work of human hands.  
It will become for us the cup of salvation.

**All: Blessed be God forever.**

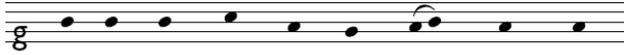
## The Eucharistic Prayer



The Lord be with you **R.** and al-so with you.



Lift up your hearts. **R. We lift them to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



**R. It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good  
to give you thanks and praise,  
almighty God and everlasting Father,  
through Jesus Christ your Son.  
For in these forty days  
you lead us into the desert of repentance  
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in  
grace  
and learn to be your people once again.  
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service  
you bring us back to your generous heart.  
Through study of your holy word  
you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our  
hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love.  
As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast  
with joyful hearts and minds  
we bless you for your mercy  
and join with saints and angels  
for ever praising you and singing:

## Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,  
hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Bles - sed is he who comes in the name  
of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Please be seated, or kneel if you prefer*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit, and according to your  
holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in  
remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is ri - sen. Christ will come a - gain. Murray

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you. Send the Holy Spirit on your people and gather into one in your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we, in the company of St Michael and all the angels and saints, may praise and glorify you for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,

in the unity of the Ho-ly Spi-rit,

all honour and glory be yours, al-migh-ty Fa-ther,

for ev-er and ev-er. **A - men.**

# The Lord's Prayer

As our saviour taught us so we pray:

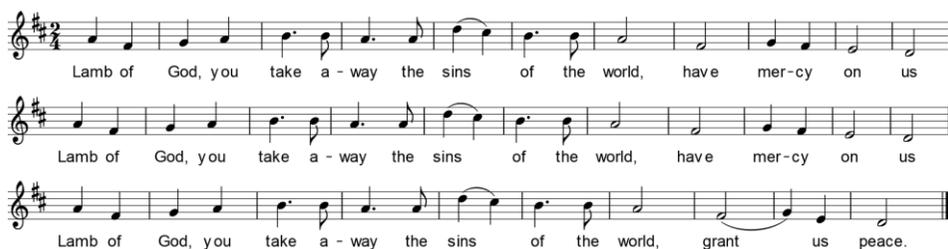


Our Fa-ther who art in hea-ven, hal-lowed be thy name; thy king-dom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our dai-ly bread.  
And for-give us our tres-pas-ses, as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us.  
And lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion; but de-li-ver us from e-vil.  
For thine is the king-dom, the power and the glo-ry, for e-ver and e-ver. A-men...

## The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ  
**All:** Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.

## Agnus Dei



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us  
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us  
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, grant us peace.

## The Invitation to Communion

Jesus is the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**All: Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

## The Communion

Communicant members of all Christian Churches are warmly welcome to receive Holy Communion. Any member of the congregation may receive a blessing. Those wishing to receive a blessing should please bring this order of service with them.

### The Communion Hymn (NEH 416)

- O God of Bethel, by whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led:
- 2 Our vows, our prayers, we now present  
Before thy throne of grace:  
God of our fathers, be the God  
Of their succeeding race.
- 3 Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wandering footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.
- 4 O spread thy covering wings around,  
Till all our wanderings cease,  
And at our Father's loved abode  
Our souls arrive in peace.

## The Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God,  
you have given your only Son to be for us  
both a sacrifice for sin  
and also an example of godly life:  
give us grace  
that we may always most thankfully receive  
these his inestimable gifts,  
and also daily endeavour  
to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**All: Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your son Jesus Christ,  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

## Notices

### The Blessing

*Please stand*

The Lord be with you  
**All: And also with you**

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All: Amen**

## The Recessional Hymn (NEH 468)

Through the night of doubt and sorrow  
Onward goes the pilgrim band,  
Singing songs of expectation,  
Marching to the promised land.

2 Clear before us through the darkness  
Gleams and burns the guiding light;  
Brother clasps the hand of brother,  
Stepping fearless through the night.

3 One the light of God's own presence,  
O'er His ransomed people shed,  
Chasing far the gloom and terror,  
Brightening all the path we tread;

4 One the object of our journey,  
One the faith which never tires,  
One the earnest looking forward,  
One the hope our God inspires:

5 One the strain that lips of thousands  
Lift as from the heart of one;  
One the conflict, one the peril,  
One the march in God begun;

6 One the gladness of rejoicing  
On the far eternal shore,  
Where the One Almighty Father  
Reigns in love for evermore.

### The Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Thought for Ash Wednesday

Famously, Ash Wednesday is the day more people go to church than any other, including Easter. Countless more people will receive ashes this day than will receive the Eucharist. We are strangely attracted to the mark of the ashes, a stark emblem of the mortal flesh that we bear, and of the death that is the inevitable destiny of each of us.

Like the fire that generates them, ashes are primordial.

They literally represent the judgment of Genesis 3:19: “For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” We will one day become the ashes we wear—a humbling thought. And to be marked with ashes this day can indeed be a profound spiritual experience.

Despite the beauty of this sacramental observance, the Scriptures of the day ironically point us in another direction: “Rend your heart, not your garments,” counsels Joel, “and return to the Lord your God.” Jesus is even clearer: Do not perform religious rituals in public or parade your religiosity so that people will notice: “When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden.” These exhortations could well make a case against pridefully wearing ashes in public. They are certainly an indictment of fetishizing religious ritual. The Scriptures of this day nudge us toward internal renewal, not outward show.

For despite its name, the point of this day is not ashes. The point of this day is mercy—seeking the mercy of our God, who is rich in kindness, abounding in steadfast love. The Psalmist, evoking the mortification of David, opens his heart to the God of mercy, begging forgiveness, the renewal of a faithful spirit, and the restoration of hope and joy. The Lenten drama takes place not in public places or in religious ritual (Ps 51:18–19), but in the hidden corners of the human heart, those parts seen only by God and most in need of God’s forgiving love. Freed by that love, we can even face death itself without fear, knowing that beyond the ashes there looms the fulfillment of life in the promise of resurrection.

*Paul Crowley*

# Volunteers Needed for Our Community Banquet!

Are you looking to be more involved in your community?  
We'd love to have you join us!

We're looking for volunteers for a variety of roles to help make our monthly Community Banquet a warm, welcoming, and successful event.

Roles include:

- Event setup and decoration
- Welcoming guests
- Serving food
- Kitchen support
- Clearing and packing down
- General assistance throughout the event



No experience needed – just enthusiasm and a willingness to help. A DBS check will be required.

**If you'd like to get involved, please email  
[manisha@nw7hub.org.uk](mailto:manisha@nw7hub.org.uk)**





