

Church & Parish



News and Events in Armitage with Handsacre

No.271 APRIL 2024

Church & Events Diary

Sunday 7th April	Second Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion
Wednesday 10th April	5pm Prayer & Praise
Sunday 14th April	Third Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 21st April	Fourth Sunday of Easter 10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 28th April	Fifth Sunday of Easter 10.30am Morning Worship

**Church building open daily
from 9am until 6pm.**

**Thank you for your
support.**



Our Rector writes

After 24 hours of travelling by road and by plane, a group of six tired priests (including one bishop) arrived at Bishop Diseko's house in Klerksdorp, in the Diocese of Matlosane, South Africa. We were welcomed with open arms as part of the family, and treated to freshly baked cakes, a choice of tea and fresh juice.

After we'd gone through the programme of events, ministry, and worship for during our stay we were all shown to our living quarters. I was to stay at the bishop's house and had the Bishop's daughter's room which she'd given up especially for me!

We started the day early sharing Morning Prayer together followed by a real spread for breakfast which would continue throughout the week!

Meeting Rev Rob, a local priest from Potchefstroom was our first trip. We were to hear much about not only the history of the church building where he served, but about the history of the people of South Africa in the area too. A plaque on the wall commemorates different British Regiments who



served in the area. Some blue carpet is also fixed to the wall either side of the sanctuary behind the altar, apparently gifted from Westminster Abbey!

We heard of the many lives lost in the Boer War and the tactics of Lord Kitchener who was responsible for the setting up of an English-run concentration camp for Boer women and children to stop them feeding and supporting their husbands and young men during the war, as the British were losing. We visited the site and were dismayed to find it fenced off and overgrown, even though there was a memorial on the grounds.

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Village website: www.armitagewithhandsacre.co.uk

The Church Room

St John the Baptist church building is open daily but if you require access to the church room please let Trevor Harvey know on 01543 491154

Joining the Bishop on a retreat to Pilanesburg was also a huge treat for us all. As part of this retreat we visited the game park and were taken round by an experienced ranger. Meeting up just before 6am, we set off and were greeted with the most awesome sunrise I've ever seen, along with a deep peace that blanketed the whole area when we stopped to observe our surroundings and listen. Seeing the wildlife out of enclosures was just magical.



All refreshed we returned to Klerksdorp to prepare for leading services at local churches where we were to meet many people from the local townships. What an amazing experience to lead worship with such a rich, vibrant, and vocal culture where the worship comes from deep within. Much joy, singing, dancing and excitement was shared with the local people through worship during the evening. After the service there were plenty of handshakes, hugs, and photos too!



Thursday was a day to meet many other clergy from across the bishop's diocese to learn from them and to hear how their challenges compared to ours. The Diocese of Matlosane is vast, with some priests who had multiple churches to look after, having to travel up to 100km between their churches! It was such a blessing to learn how priests found ways to ensure all their congregations felt loved and cared for by their priest despite the distances travelled. Taking time to pray and give home communion to local people after the Sunday service was one of these ways. The congregations have had to get used to not seeing their priest every week, which has taken some time, but the commitment of the priests to give them the time together when they are there was so important. I wonder how this could work in our Parish, in our Benefice?

Joining the Ecumenical Mother's Union for their Day of Prayer was a real time of celebration, lament, vibrant worship and singing together in harmonies that just blended perfectly. The Mother's Union is very active in this area of South Africa. They assist many families in need across the townships where they live themselves.

Throughout our trip, we were all totally bowled over by the love, effort and sacrifices the bishop's family and the churches we visited made, to ensure we felt at home and at ease. Flying home seemed to come far too soon!

Now its time to reflect on this short week and bring some of my experiences into my ministry here too.

Thanks for reading and God bless you all!

*Rev'd Cath Leighton
Team Rector!*



Handsacre Methodist Church

APRIL 2024

We meet for worship each Sunday morning from 9.30am to 10.30pm.

Once a month we have a special service called Hands on Church from 4pm to 6pm. We provide crafts and activities for all ages, a short time of Bible storytelling and prayer, and finally we all share a hot meal together. There is no charge for this.

The Vine Cafe

The Vine café at Handsacre Methodist Church is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. We serve a wide range of coffees, teas, and hot chocolate, as well as homemade cakes, other sweet treats and toasties. There is no set charge, but donations can be made. Afternoon teas are bookable on request.

You are welcome to stay as long as you like—we have books, magazines, colouring, board games and jigsaws for you to enjoy.

We also have:

Chapel Lambs, a family play group, on Mondays from 9am till 12pm.

The Hangout, a group for children in years six, seven and eight, with food, chat, games and craft, Mondays 3.30pm to 5pm.

Games Night, monthly on Monday evenings, a great opportunity to try a wide range of board and card games and make new friends.

Wednesday afternoon activities,

1pm to 3pm. A different activity each week including quizzes, games, music and crafts.

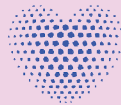
Please see our website:

handsacremethodist.org.uk

or our Facebook page for more details and updates.



MEETING POINT Handsacre Methodist Room, The Vine
Drop in between 10am and 11.45am
All are welcome..



NHS
CHARITIES
TOGETHER



PROGRAMME FOR TUESDAY MORNINGS - EVERYBODY WELCOME...

2nd April: **Pauline Sharratt** - flower arranging demonstration

9th April: **Craft with Diane** - unique picture frames

16th April: **Anthony's music quiz**

23rd April: **St George's Day programme**
with songs featuring Phil Saul with his guitar

30th April: **Chat**



Barbara Valladolid

Presented the work she produces with diamond art. Pictures, earrings brooches. All sorts of pretty and delicate sparkling jewellery, beautifully crafted.

Contact Barb if you would like a stall at your event .

Valladolidhealth@yahoo.co.uk
07968 585225

Lilian Thacker

We sadly announce the death of Lilian Thacker aged 94. Lilian was one of the founding members of Meeting Point and well known in the village where she was a member of the WI and a loyal supporter of village community life.

There will be a thanksgiving service for the life of Lilian at Handsacre Methodist Church on Friday 5th April at 1.15pm.

PROPOSED TRIP on the Penkridge Canal with fish and chip lunch MAY 21st - £25 including canal trip and fish and chip lunch.

We have places left for anyone who might like to join. Tel: 01543 491704

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

for residents to get to hospital or doctor's appointments 01543 547507
info@communitytransport.armitagewithhandsacre.org

CHURCH MICE



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, Church Lane, Armitage

Wednesdays 10.30am – 11.30am
Church Room open from 10am

A free activity for 0-4yr olds (with their carers) during school term time.

Refreshments, stories, songs, play & crafts with a Christian theme.

Donations of £1 per family welcomed

Speak up and be voted

So often diocesan synods are perceived as boring, dry and bureaucratic. This should not be the case! Rather they should exist to serve the mission of the wider Church, to make strategic decisions, and to encourage the growth of mission and ministry in our diocese. So, are you passionate about these things and want to play a more active role in embedding our vision and strategy in the life of all our churches and communities? Then please read on...

What is Diocesan Synod?

Diocesan Synod is our primary elected, representative body and brings people together across the Church of England in Staffordshire, north Shropshire and the Black Country. It holds the diocesan vision, drives mission, sets strategy, elects and appoints a range of positions on boards and committees and shapes priorities.

It may respond to questions put to it by the General Synod and is an advisory and deliberative body. It considers the important topics facing our diverse and unique diocese and the wider Church. It is a statutory institution which serves not only our diocese but influences and helps to direct the national church on matters of church, public and government policy. It also includes some mandatory governance items such as approval of the budget and the annual accounts. The membership consists of three houses: the House of Bishops; the House of Clergy; and the House of Laity.

The current three-year term is due to end on 31 July. The next synod members will be elected in the summer of 2024 and serve a term of three years. Meetings are held in March, June and November.

The agenda for 2024-2027

Themes for the next three years will include embedding our diocesan vision and strategy, taking forward the Growing Faith initiative in relation to schools and families; a continuing focus on growth in numbers and depth of discipleship, including new Christians, and new worshipping communities; actively engaging with our local communities,

determination to continue to focus on safeguarding, diversity, racial justice and the environment.

What skills and qualities do representatives need?

- **Vision:** Do you have a vision for a flourishing Church and a passion to work with others to share your Christian faith and deepen the discipleship of those around you?
- **Commitment:** Are you ready to seek God's will through prayer and reflection, with a heart for growth, mission and engagement across boundaries?
- **Openness:** Are you open to trying new approaches while learning from others, embracing change and the bigger picture and to sharing inspiring feedback with your deanery, PCC and wider church family?
- **Enthusiasm:** Members of Synod are encouraged to speak and challenge confidently, enabling change whilst leading and encouraging others.
- **Good communication skills:** Do you have a listening ear? Are you receptive and open-minded and have the ability to share your passion?

Do you have - or could you develop - some of these qualities to serve the Diocese of Lichfield? If so, can I encourage everyone reading this who is on the electoral roll of your church, is over 16 years of age and an actual communicant to prayerfully consider whether this is something God is calling you to do?

I would be happy to talk to anyone considering this and answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Julie Jones is the Diocesan Secretary/Chief Executive Officer for the Diocese of Lichfield and can be contacted at julie.jones@lichfield.anglican.org or on 01543 306291.

More can be read at lichfield.anglican.org/diocesan-synods/



Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council

Notice of Annual Parish Meeting

All members of the public are welcome to attend

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday the 25th of April at 7pm at the Armitage with Handsacre Village Hall, WS15 4UZ

Agenda

1. Welcome from Chair of the Meeting
2. Apologies
3. Matters arising
4. Financial Statement
5. Any other business

This meeting is an opportunity for all residents of the parish to express their opinions or concerns regarding issues relevant to the parish. Please note that this is not a Parish Council Meeting, but it is Chaired by the Chairman of the Parish Council in accordance with legal requirements. Councillors attend this meeting as members of the public.

Samantha LaPlanche
Parish Clerk

Armitage with Handsacre Bowls Club

April is fast approaching which can't come quick enough for bowlers. Green opens on Saturday 6th April and we expect most members to be ready with bowls polished. Visitors will be most welcome, either to view proceedings or to have a go.

Our friendly games with Kings Bromley, Lichfield Museum, Tamworth and Whittington have been arranged and Hagley and Rugeley Pro are in hand.

The Club are holding a quiz at the Old Peculiar on Thursday 8th March. We hope to raise funds for the Club and have some fun. Have a look at our site on Facebook, Armitage with Handsacre Bowls Club, where events happening throughout the season will be displayed. Come along and have a go.

Visitors and new members are always welcome. For more information call Jean McGill 07896760220 or Mo Hipkin 07894325352

Wild Daffodils

At this time of year, the yellow trumpets of daffodils brighten up even the dullest spring day. Most of what we see are planted garden varieties, but a real treat is to find wild daffodils (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*).

Once widespread, the wild daffodil is now much rarer, having mysteriously declined during the 19th century. It now has a disjointed distribution - for instance it is found mainly in south Devon, pockets of the Black Mountains in Wales, stretches of the Gloucestershire-Herefordshire border country, the Sussex Weald, Farndale in Yorkshire, and the Lake District. Elsewhere, even in suitable habitat, it only occurs in small patches, many miles apart. For example, in churchyards.

The wild daffodil's status as a popular flower was particularly celebrated in the area around Newent, Dymock and Ledbury on the Gloucestershire-Herefordshire border which acquired the nickname of 'The Golden Triangle.' In the 1930s the Great Western Railway ran 'Daffodil Specials', from London for weekend tourists to walk amongst the 'golden tides' and to buy fresh bunches at garden gates. Many farmers and orchard-owners used to have them as a cash-crop, harvested on a 'Pick Your Own' basis. At the end of April, the meadows went back to their function of growing hay or fruit.

A 1930's guide to a village in the Golden Triangle wrote: *They are picked by the local women and children and were sold to an agent, who sends them to South Wales, where they find a ready sale for Mothering Sunday and also for Palm Sunday, for many places the old (Welsb) custom of 'flowering the graves' on that day still persists. The daffodils are also sent to northern industrial towns.*

Information from Flora Britannica by Richard Mabey

How to spot a wild daffodil

The wild daffodil is smaller than horticultural varieties, with paler petals and a deeper yellow trumpet-like tube. The leaves are grey/green, flattened and around 15mm wide. It is relatively short (30-35cm) and forms clumps which carpet the ground. A top tip is that unless there are several hundreds of them looking particularly small and washed out, they probably aren't wild!

Please help us to map the churchyards containing wild daffodils by taking a photo on the iNaturalist app and posting it on our Beautiful Burial Grounds project within iNaturalist.

All the best,

Harriet

*Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor,
harriet@cfga.org.uk,*

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22

