

The Village Herald

Your Church & Community Magazine

NOVEMBER 2025

Sunday 2nd November	All Saints Sunday 10am Benefice Holy Communion at Church of the Holy Spirit, Rugeley
Sunday 9th November	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9.45am Remembrance Service
Tuesday 11th November	10.45am Act of Remembrance at Armitage Cenotaph
Wednesday 12th November	5pm Prayer and Praise
Sunday 16th November	Second Sunday before Advent 10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 23rd November	Christ the King Sunday 10.30am Morning Worship
Thursday 27th November	7pm Christmas Memorial Service
Sunday 30th November	First Sunday of Advent 10.30am Benefice Holy Communion

**church building open
daily from 9am until 4pm.**
**Thank you for your
support.**

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Our Rector writes

Pets & Heaven and Purple Poppies!

As I write this, our 14 year old, much loved black Labrador, Marley has very recently crossed the rainbow bridge and gone to doggy heaven where he can run freely without any pain or suffering. I can picture Marley chasing the squirrels and wood pigeons through endless fields of wild flowers, alongside my first dog Coco, with Bobby my son's parrot who we fostered until he was 15, flying above them. This is not to mention three budgies from when I was in my teens! For me this creates a beautiful picture of the part of heaven reserved for all wildlife - wild or domestic.

God created the earth and everything in and on it, not to mention around it! God loves his creation and we have the promise of eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven with God, if we choose to believe this. God loves every creature as well as loving us, and because of this, my interpretation is that God has a place for all His creatures when they die too.

In the Old testament the Prophet Isaiah said this:-

*Wolves and sheep will live together in peace,
and leopards will lie down with young goats.
Calves and lion cubs will feed together,
and little children will take care of them.*

*Cows and bears will eat together,
and their calves and cubs will lie down in peace.
Lions will eat straw as cattle do.*

*Even a baby will not be harmed
if it plays near a poisonous snake.*

*On Zion, God's sacred hill,
there will be nothing harmful or evil.
The land will be as full of knowledge of the Lord
as the seas are full of water.*

Good News Translation: Isaiah 11.6-9

Imagine a world like this - could this be heaven?

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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 Chris Rogers know on 07552 215087.



Losing a pet can be really traumatic for the owner(s) and their families. It's really good to have our own thoughts, our own vision and our own opinion about where our fur babies go when they leave this world. We need this as part of our grieving process as it feels like there is a hole in our lives where they were before. Do you have a vision of heaven for you or for your fur baby if you have one?

Imagine owning and training a beautiful horse and it is then commandeered by the army for a pittance and taken into war, how would we feel? Of course, I am referring to the story of War Horse, a heart-wrenching story of such a horse who was trained at home to plough a hard, rocky slope who then goes on to live through not one but two wars and eventually finds its way back home. I wonder how many animals were taken from homes and farms, alongside those bred for the army to serve alongside our men and women?

This year at St John the Baptist Church in Armitage, we will have the usual red poppies, but in addition, we will have an abundance of purple poppies too, as we remember all the animals who gave their lives alongside the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who perished. We currently have an enthusiastic team who are very busy on a Friday morning knitting purple poppies.

We seek to remember all who sacrificed their lives for our freedom today.

We will remember them.

Every Blessing,

Cath.

Rev'd Cath Leighton

Team Rector.

Remembrance Sunday Joint Service with
Handsacre Methodist Church 9.45am - 10.30am
Young people to arrive at 9.20 - 9.30am
Walk up to Cenotaph 10.40am - 10.55am
Act of Remembrance at Armitage Cenotaph 11am.

Act of Remembrance on Armistice Day at the
Armitage Cenotaph - 11th November from 10.45am

Recent Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals at St John the Baptist

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2nd October | Funeral of Thomas Ashforth of Ford Way |
| 4th October | Funeral of Susan Jayne Cartwright of Widnes, Cheshire |
| 7th October | Funeral of Kathleen Muriel Simpson of Old Road |
| 31st October | Funeral of James Albert Samuel Walker of Lower Lodge, Rugeley Road |



Handsacre Methodist Church

NOVEMBER 2025

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

The Vine Cafe

The Vine café at Handsacre Methodist Church is open from 9.30am to 4.30pm 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 9.30am till 12pm.

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

Hands on Church, crafts, activities, songs, Bible story and refreshments, for children with a parent/carer. Monthly on Tuesdays 3.30pm to 5pm.

Games Night, usually first Monday evening of the month, a great opportunity to try a wide range of board and card games and make new friends.

Please see our website: handsacremethodist.org.uk or our Facebook page for more details and updates. The Vine café has a Facebook page at The Vine Cafe & Community Space. Do like and follow for all the latest information.

Free Counselling

Are you aged 18+ and looking for an empathetic, non-judgemental ear? Our team of students and qualified counsellors are here to listen.

We can offer help with things such as anxiety, depression and bereavement.

Appointments are available on Tuesday and Friday mornings by advanced booking only.

Call or Text 07566 768228 to find out more.

**Changing
Rooms
Counselling
Service**

**Speak Now
Show Strength
Get Help**





MEETING POINT is a community group of activities open to all members of Armitage with Handsacre. Disabled transported door to door. All welcome.

01543 491704 or 07890205575

email: gifford_foote@hotmail.co.uk

TUESDAYS 10am - 11.45am - Drop in to Handsacre Methodist room - the Vine Café. Meet friends over a cuppa and join in with activities and an interesting half hour. (See the programme planned for November below)

THURSDAYS 1pm - 3pm - Join the Knit and Natter group at St John the Baptist parish church room. They raise funds for a hospice etc.

FRIDAYS at the Vine - 10am - 12pm ART GROUP. Currently NO VACANCIES

TUESDAY MORNINGS AT THE VINE

4th November: **Speaker from 'Grace Cares'** - preloved care equipment.

11th November: **Craft with Diane**

18th November: **Fish and Chips at the Vine**

25th November **Music and creativity**

2nd December: **Grab a bag for Mercy Ships.** Get a surprise gift for £2

9th December: **Singing for Joy.**

Everybody is invited to their Christmas performance at the Vine

We are grateful to the Olde Peculiar for helping us with their QUIZ EVENING and for all who contributed to our charity for the year - MERCY SHIPS.

£246.20 was raised.

Thanks also to all who supported our BRING & BUY on 7th October. Another £113 for Mercy Ships

HARVEST MEAL and gift baskets raised £153. Thanks caterers for a most enjoyable meal, especially Pauline Hodgkiss for the apple pies.



Honouring our war dead

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is a global leader in commemoration.

Founded by Royal Charter in 1917, it works on behalf of the Governments of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom to commemorate the 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

Their mission is to ensure those who died in service, or as a result of conflict, are commemorated so that they, and the human cost of war, are remembered for ever.

We have been asked to place a commemorative plaque honouring the five army personnel that are buried in St John the Baptist churchyard and commemorated by the CWGC.

We would be pleased to hear from anyone who may have family connections with any of these men so that we can honour them appropriately. Please contact the Church Warden, Chris Rogers.

They were:

- Lance Corporal B Hollins of the 6th Btn. North Staffordshire Regiment who died on November 12th 1915.
- Private Samuel Leigh of the Army Veterinary Corp who died on March 16th 1915.
- Private Arthur Plant of the Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment) who died sometime in 1921 and who is recorded as a post-war death.
- Lance Corporal Edward Francis George Matthews of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, 4th Btn. who died on July 9th 1944.
- Sapper Joseph William Bond of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, 101 Army Field Coy. who died on May 3rd 1947.

Lest we forget.



N.J. & E.T. COLES

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39 New Road, Armitage, Rugeley
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Our huge range includes animal feeds, accessories and bedding

We also have a large range of wild bird feeds including Sunflower Hearts at £30 for 20kg

Local Delivery Service Available

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm, Sat 9am-4pm

Address: 6a South Staffs Freight, Lynn Lane,
Shenstone. Lichfield, Staffs. WS14 0ED

Telephone: 01543 481521

RIDWARE HISTORY SOCIETY

Monday 3rd November:

Berenice Wilson: Anglo Saxon Women

Local resident and member of The Ridware History Society, Berry's research is on Anglo-Saxon women 1050-1150ish.

Using mostly the Domesday Book as her main source she is able to piece together the life stories, vignettes as it were, of the English women who managed to ride out the vicissitudes of the Norman Conquest with their landholdings still intact.

Staffordshire exemplars include Godgifu of Madeley who held a quite substantial group of holdings around Moddershall; Aki's sister, who may have been a hermit or a nun at Stone; and last but not least to Lady Godiva who may have spent time in Kings Bromley.

Monday 1st December:

Dr. Ann Featherstone: Fools and Horses: the Victorian Circus

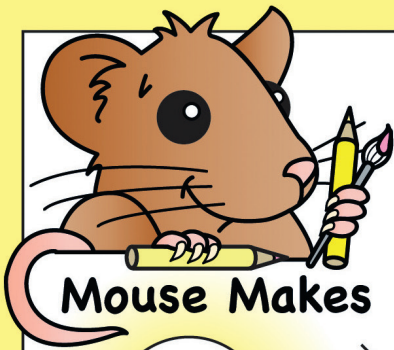
Meet in Hill Ridware Village Hall WS15 3QT.

7.30pm for 7.45pm start. Tea/coffee available.

Non-members are welcome £3 per visit

For information on how to join please contact Membership Secretary: Helen Sharp 01543 490873 or Chair: Roy Fallows 01543 491826

More information can be found at
www.ridwarehistorysociety.com

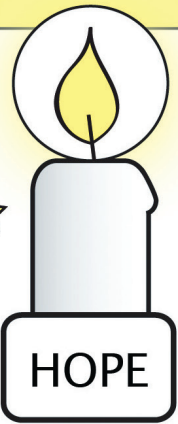


LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

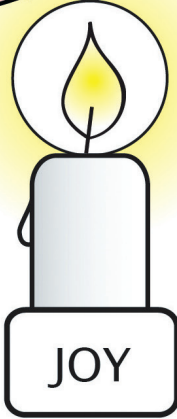
Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November.

ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour.

We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



Read:
LUKE 2:10-11
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



Read:
Romans 5:1-2
Through who do we have peace with God?

L G L O R Y E M P R O M I S E
S O K J Y A A R R I V A L W F
A D V E N T G O O D N E W S O
V P L S V L I R P S V P C A R
I E I U I O F C H R I S T H T
O A G S U V T M E S S A G E O
U C H O P E O P C A N D L E L
R E T U R N J O Y T W D B E D

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



Farmers' Harvest Festival Service

On Harvest Festival Sunday evening, over 200 people; local farmers, local residents and well-wishers, gathered at Higher Coley Farm in Little Hayward to celebrate a rather special harvest festival.

For the past 17 years, Rev Geoffrey Staton, a regular visitor at St John the Baptist leading our Sunday services, has officiated at this unusual Service of Thanksgiving in the large open barn generously loaned by the Bagot family for this special occasion.



This year was even more special as it was the last time that Geoffrey would be officiating. Age catches up with us all.

A moving sermon, hearty singing and quiet prayer and contemplation characterised a service appreciated by all who attended.

This included a number of our congregation members who turned out to support Geoffrey's swansong.

The collection was donated to St Katherines Hospice and raised £5000.

1st November – All Saints' Day, the feast day of all the redeemed

All Saints, or All Hallows, is the feast of all the redeemed, known and unknown, who are now in heaven. When the English Reformation took place, the number of saints in the calendar was drastically reduced, with the result that All Saints' Day stood out with a prominence that it had never had before.

This feast day first began in the East, perhaps as early as the 5th century, as commemorating 'the martyrs of the whole world'. A Northern English 9th century calendar named All Hallows as a principal feast, and such it has remained. Down the centuries devotional writers have seen in it the fulfilment of Pentecost and indeed of Christ's redemptive sacrifice and resurrection.

The saints do not belong to any religious tradition, and their lives and witness to Christ can be appreciated by all Christians. Richard Baxter, writing in the 17th century, wrote the following:

*He wants not friends that hath thy love,
And made converse and walk with thee,
And with thy saints here and above,
With whom for ever I must be...*

*As for my friends, they are not lost;
The several vessels of thy fleet,
Though parted now, by tempests tost,
Shall safely in thy haven meet....*

*The heavenly hosts, world without end,
Shall be my company above;
And thou, my best and surest Friend,
Who shall divide me from thy love?**

1,255 ancient English churches were dedicated to All Saints - a number only surpassed by those dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

**(Maurice Frost (ed.), Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient and Modern (London: Clowes, 1962), no. 274, verses 1,3,6.*

CHURCH MICE



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, Church Lane, Armitage

Wednesdays 10.30 – 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

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Village Herald

Your new church & community magazine

Would you like to increase the awareness of your company/organisation and at the same time enhance your your social good profile? Yes, well the Village Herald may well be the vehicle for you.

The magazine is delivered every month to all the households in our two villages Armitage and Handsacre direct to the letterbox of almost 3000 homes and a readership of some 10000. It is in full colour and whilst in its infancy and its content will continue to grow the Herald as had an extremely positive acceptance by the community. The content and size and distribution will continue to grow and develop over the coming months and with your involvement we will reach our goals that little bit quicker.

We appreciate that we all want a big bang for our hard earned pound and we truly believe that's what we can offer you.



St. John the Baptist Church, Armitage with Handsacre

What benefits will a sponsor receive?

Firstly, **8 1/4 page adverts** (normal cost £30 plus vat, total £36) **Total Value to sponsor £288.** The sponsor will also receive up to **two 1/2 pages** in any 12 month period to publicise their company.

You will also be **listed on our front page** as an official sponsor with your company name and logo for one year.

Now what is the cost we hear?

Well less than the value you will receive all the above for **only £250 plus vat.** Yes that is correct £250 plus vat. To make the decision even more of a non brainer you can make 10 direct debit payments of **£30 a month for 10 months.**

So do you want to be one of our founder members just say yes to a member of our volunteers and we will get the ball rolling.

For further information contact

Barry Liddle
liddedarlo@gmail.com

The Village Herald is run and operated by
St. John the Baptist Church, Armitage with Handsacre.

Light and Truth

Much as I'd prefer not to think about Christmas presents and cards until the week before Christmas, the reality is that as soon as Bonfire Night and Remembrance Sunday are over, I must procrastinate no longer! Poor Advent. It's lost in the mists of time, its season of spiritual preparation for Christmas overtaken by ever exotic Advent Calendars, their numbered windows promising expensive 'treats' to help us to get through the stress of Christmas preparations. I've even seen a cheese-a-day Advent calendar. Seriously, who thought of that one?

Instead of moaning about the commercialism of Christmas, here at Lichfield Cathedral we do all we can to keep the Sundays of Advent special, beginning with the hauntingly beautiful Advent Carol Service. But then we go 'full bling' with the Christmas Light Show and the Christmas Tree Festival. They're ever popular, a seasonal 'must' in many people's diaries. And at the heart of both, is a search for the light in the midst of the darkness. Physical light in the long nights of winter. And spiritual light in a world which feels chaotic and dark.

One of my favourite worship songs is 'Christ be our Light' by the Roman Catholic songwriter Bernadette Farrell. It's beautiful. If you don't know it and have access to the internet, do search for it. You'll soon be singing along to its gentle tune and meaningful lyrics.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

This is why, I think, so many people turn to the Church at Christmas, on the shortest days of the year. Our ancestors prayed that the sun would return. We search for the Son - the one who is the Light of the World. Even those who don't yet know him for themselves. But light and truth are in short supply *at the moment* - and in the Church we know both.

Many the hearts that yearn to belong.

*Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.*

So many people are lonely at Christmas. So many are searching for somewhere to belong. As Christians we belong to one big family, made brothers and sisters through our baptism. Who might we 'serve' this Christmas by simply inviting them to 'come and see'? Invite them to a carol service, or a social event at church, or bring them to their cathedral to see the Christmas Trees or Christmas Light Show. You might make someone's Christmas, and it might be for them the first step to joining the church and finding faith. The worst that can happen is that they say no, so what's to lose?

A blessed Advent from us all at Lichfield Cathedral.
Your Cathedral.

*The Rt Rev'd Jan McFarlane
Dean of Lichfield*

The Advent season begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day - in 2025, that is November 30th.

Lichfield Cathedral's programme of worship and events for Advent and Christmas can be found on the cathedral website: www.lichfield-cathedral.org