

The Village Herald



**Bringing our church closer to the community
and the community closer to the church**



Our Rector writes

Returning and a Fresh Start

Sometimes life takes us down roads that aren't very easy to navigate at times. Following a challenging period in my personal life, my sabbatical has given me precious time to rest, reflect, and to heal. I have returned feeling refreshed, hopeful and ready to start again.

I am deeply grateful to Rev'd Jules, who took the helm and did a superb job leading our Benefice, and to everyone who quietly stepped in to keep our services, events and church life going.

Thank you, too, for the incredible kindness, love and support I have received from people across our parishes.

Our faith reminds us that God meets us not only when life is going well, but also in the difficult places, gently leading us towards hope and a fresh start.

Sometimes we all need to start anew or try again. As autumn takes hold, whatever this season of life looks and feels like for you, I pray you may discover that there is always hope and always the possibility of beginning or trying again.

Every Blessing to you all,

Rev'd Cath Leighton
Team Rector

Team Vicar - Rev'd Cath Leighton telephone 07903 164242 email: cmaighton@icloud.com
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Parish Church website: www.achurchnearyou.com/armitage-st-john-the-baptist
Village website: www.armitagewithhandsacre.co.uk

St John the Baptist church building is open daily from 9am until 6pm.

If you require access to the church room please let Vince Smith know on 07957 613890.

Church Diary

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday 4th October	18th Sunday after Trinity 10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 11th October	19th Sunday after Trinity 10.30am Morning Worship
Wednesday 14th October	5pm Prayer and Praise
Sunday 18th October	20th Sunday after Trinity 10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 25th October	21st Sunday after Trinity 10.30am Morning Worship

ATTENTION: We want to hear from you

Are you having a special Birthday, Anniversary, Graduation or any event or milestone you would like to share with us?

Yes, well read on.

Remember this is as much your magazine as ours so help us turn it into a truly magnificent community magazine so let's have your news, gossip, photos in fact anything that you want to share with your friends and community.

Everyone likes a gossip, - Gosh he or she's doesn't look a day over 80 or I didn't realise that they achieved a Masters in maths.

So send your news/photos to
dannybriggs905@gmail.com

Recent Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals at St John the Baptist

2nd August	Baptism of Eddie John Coles of Millcroft Way
21st August	Wedding of Bethany Kaye Frewin-Lansbury to Terence Alan Ayre of Green Lane, Rugeley
4th September	Wedding of Katie Jane Atkinson to William James Potts of Springhill Terrace, Rugeley
6th September	Baptism of Martha Belle Wall of Aborfield Road, Marchington

The tale of the Salt and Light



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



HE ONE EXPLAINED TO HIS
FRIENDS THAT THEY WERE A
BIT LIKE SALT!

IN JESUS' DAY, SALT WAS
VERY PRECIOUS. IT HELPED
PRESERVE FOOD....



....AND SALT GAVE FLAVOUR.
IT WAS VERY USEFUL INDEED



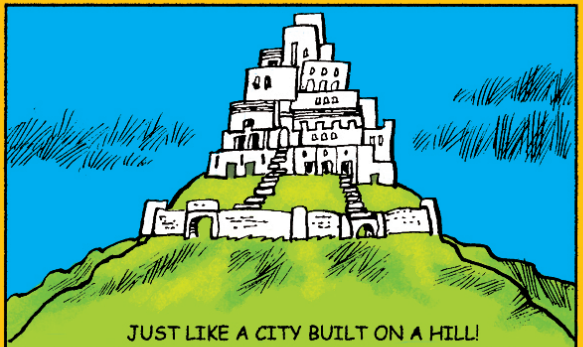
SALT HELPED MAKE LIFE
BETTER - WE TOO SHOULD HELP
MAKE LIFE BETTER IF WE
CHOOSE TO FOLLOW JESUS!

JESUS ALSO SAID HIS FOLLOWERS
SHOULD BE LIKE LIGHTS



'NOBODY LIGHTS A LAMP - THEN PUTS
IT UNDER A BOWL', SAID JESUS

THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES AS
CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE AN EXAMPLE
TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.



JUST LIKE A CITY BUILT ON A HILL!

Autumn Apple Crumble of Good Intentions

As the leaves begin to fall, the evenings draw in and we suddenly realise that summer has really gone, it's time for a pudding that is warm, comforting and guaranteed to make everyone forget about the weather. This is the sort of pudding that says, *"Never mind the calories, it's nearly Christmas!"*

Ingredients

Six large cooking apples- preferably not the ones that have been sitting in the fruit bowl looking increasingly suspicious.

Two tablespoons sugar - or more, depending on how tart the apples are and how sweet your tooth is.

One teaspoon cinnamon - because cinnamon makes everything taste more autumnal and makes the kitchen smell as though you know exactly what you're doing.

A good handful of raisins - optional, and best omitted if anyone in the family starts complaining.

A splash of water - not too much; we're making pudding, not soup.

For the crumble

225g plain flour - measured carefully, unless you're the sort of cook who regards weighing scales as a suggestion.

110g butter - preferably softened, although shouting *"SOFTEN"* at it doesn't seem to help.

110g caster sugar - plus an extra spoonful for the cook.

75g oats - for the illusion that this is practically a health food.

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Peel core and chop the apples. Try not to eat half of them as you go along. If you do, simply pretend you were *"checking"* the quality.
2. Put the apples into a suitable ovenproof dish. Sprinkle over the sugar and cinnamon and add the raisins if you're feeling particularly generous. Add a small splash of water.
3. Now comes the crumble. Rub the butter into the flour with your fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs. If you find yourself wondering whether it's supposed to look like this, yes, it is.
4. Stir in the sugar and oats. Don't overthink it. The beauty of crumble is that it is one of the puddings where looking slightly untidy is actually part of the recipe.
5. Sprinkle the crumble mixture generously over the apples. Don't press it down. We're making crumble, not laying a patio.
6. Put it into the oven and bake for 35-40 minutes, until the top is golden and the apples are bubbling underneath.
7. Serve warm with custard, cream or ice-cream. Personally, I recommend custard.
Enjoy.

The Autumn Blessing

May your apples be plentiful, your crumble be crisp, your custard be warm, and may nobody ask how many calories are in it.

May God bless our homes, our families and our church community as the autumn evenings draw in.

And when the wind blows the leaves all over the garden, may we remember that God made them beautiful - and He never said we had to rake them up immediately!

Amen.

Tessa Riley



Handsacre Methodist Church

OCTOBER 2026

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

This season we invite anyone who is looking to find out more about God, faith and the Bible to join us for a series called On The Way.

On The Way helps people explore Christian faith as something lived and practised, not just believed.

Each of the 12 sessions invites people to:

- reflect on experience and everyday life
- engage with the Bible, art, music and prayer
- explore core ideas of Christian faith in an open way
- share insights, questions and stories with others.

The next two sessions take place on 11th and 25th October.

Upcoming services:

4th October - Harvest Festival
with Deacon Jan Sutton

11th October - Deacon Annabel Terry.

On The Way. We meet at 9.30am as usual for a time of singing, Bible reading and prayer. We pause at 10am for refreshments and then start our On The Way session. We aim to finish by 11.15am. All are most welcome to join us for all or part of the morning.

18th October - Karen Brown

25th October - An On The Way session,
led by members of the church
(see 11th October for more
information)

The Vine Café

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, toasties and omelettes. 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, Mondays from 9.30am till 12pm.

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

Craft & Chat, Thursdays from 1pm. Enjoy an afternoon in the Vine with good company, refreshments and crafts. Learn to knit or crochet, or improve your existing skills

Games Night, monthly on Monday evenings, a great opportunity to try a wide range of board and card games and make new friends. The next one is on 5th October from 7.30pm.

Saturday breakfast - 17th October 9.30am to 12pm.

Special Event: Light Party and meal
Saturday 31st October from 6pm - 9.30 pm. Please sign up at the Vine café.

Please see our website: handsacremethodist.org.uk 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.



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

01543 491704 or 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.

6th October: Harvest Baskets and Festival meal

Auction of baskets and produce for the world hungry.

Lunch: Ham salad and apple pie £6 for two courses and a cuppa.

13th October : 1st Armitage Scouts (Andrew and Tammy) Scout/cub activities

20th October: Jill's Quiz

27th October: Music All Sorts

Please start to bring in bags and gifts for charity 'Grab a bag' in aid of Alzheimer's Research

3rd November: Lunch Outing to Wolseley Garden Centre

Please book with Celia

THURSDAYS 1pm - 3pm:

Join the **Knit and Natter** group at Armitage Parish church room.

They raise funds for a hospice etc.

This group is currently knitting remembrance poppies for St Thomas' Priory Nursing Home Chapel. Would you like to join in? Contact Sandra on 07868040681.

FRIDAYS 10am - 12pm

Art Group meets at The Vine. Contact Celia : 01543 491704.

If you have difficulty with finding transport to medical appointments phone 01543 547507 for help from Community Transport .

Please leave a message for Diane stating your name, the date and place of your appointment and your address. She will get back to you.



Our early parish church

Much of St. John the Baptist church was rebuilt in the 1840s, but evidence from earlier descriptions and drawings allows us to glimpse the medieval church that once stood at Armitage.

The origins of the church probably lie in the mid-12th century, during a period when new parish churches were being established across the diocese. The manor of Handsacre was then held by Hubert de Handsacre, whose family were connected with the foundation of Ranton Abbey in 1150. It is possible that the church at Armitage was founded under his patronage.

Tradition also links the site with a hermit's cell overlooking the River Trent, reflected in the name "Armitage", derived from "L'ermitage".

The earliest church was Romanesque in style. Stebbing Shaw, writing in the 1790s, described massive round pillars, zig-zag carving, and a richly decorated south doorway typical of Norman workmanship. These features

suggest that Armitage was intended from the beginning to serve as an important parish church rather than simply a chapel attached to Handsacre manor.

Over the centuries the church was altered several times. The chancel acquired Gothic windows during the medieval period, while the tower was rebuilt in 1632. By the 1840s much of the building had become unsafe and was rebuilt under the architect Henry Ward, who attempted to preserve its Norman character. At the same time a new south aisle was added to accommodate the growing congregation.

Although much of what we see today is Victorian, the church still preserves the character of its medieval origins and reflects nearly nine centuries of worship and parish life in Armitage.

Richard Ewing
www.armitageops.com

Ridware History Society

Monday 5th October 2026.

AGM and Talk: How to Do Family History
Speaker: Vanessa Morgan

Vanessa Morgan's introductory talk, How to do Family History, will follow the (short) AGM. Vanessa, a writer and genealogist currently researching local Victorian crime and murders, will introduce key family history records and sources, share a few lighter historical anecdotes, and offer guidance to anyone with questions or difficulties in their own family history research.

Monday 2nd November 2026

Beasts of the Battle(field): The
Staffordshire Hoard by Dr. Charlotte Bull

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

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Little Lambs

TODDLER GROUP

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rugeleycofechurches@gmail.com



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Church of the Good Shepherd, Hislop Road
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22 November 11am - 3pm

Seniors Annual Festive Tea Party

10 December 1.30 – 3.30pm

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07716 190051

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The Rev'd Jules Smith who was recently priested (June 20th) officiating at St John The Baptist Church, Armitage.

Jules is presently based at St Michaels Church, Brereton.

The congregation of St Johns look forward to welcoming Rev'd Jules back in the very near future.

We thank the following businesses and individuals for their support in joining our Angel initiative.

Business Angels

N.J & E.T Coles Butchers & Bakery,
AK Feeds Shenstone,
Armitage with Handsacre Village Hall,
Meeting Point

Community Angels

Ann Hyden, Ann Samways, Claire LeVoi,
Barry Liddle. Danny Briggs, Tessa Riley,
Ron Riley, Gifford Foote, Sing For Joy
(Lynne Tandy), Gill Hanson-Giddins,
Vivienne Leyland



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