

## Remembering Kitty

Kathleen Eunice Hallmark, known to everyone as Kitty, was born 95 years ago; she attended Ashover School, later teaching there and meeting her future husband, Ralph, also a teacher. Kitty also taught at Handley School, in the building which is now St Mark's Church.

Sadly Ralph died many years ago leaving Kitty and son Robin, who supported and cared for one another for the rest of Kitty's life. Kitty was a familiar face in the village carrying her many shopping bags on her way to Matlock, Derby or Chesterfield and was well known to the bus drivers of the area.

Kitty was a faithful worshipper at All Saints Church, Ashover and was a member of the robed choir for 56 years until it was disbanded. Kitty often referred to the final 6 choir members as 'The Remnant'. Kitty was also a member of the Ashover Handbell Ringers for many years.

In December 2018 Kitty moved to Longmeadow Residential Home at Matlock, where she died on 15th February 2021. She will be missed by many in the village, in the church and the locality.

## Rector Vacancy Update

*Our churches stand at the centre of their communities and are open to all for services, weddings, baptisms and funerals. In spite of a wonderful ministry team, our rector is sorely missed - here is the latest information from the head of our Amber Churches Succession Planning Group on the difficulties of finding a new rector.*

Despite considerable notice that Ralph and Susan Lawrence would be leaving at the end of last September, the Diocese of Derby would not allow us to look for a replacement until a small group representing the Amber Churches Benefice had met with the Archdeacon in October. During the preceding months we had consultation meetings within each parish church family and began work on the Benefice Profile - the 'sales brochure' for interested applicants. However, without knowing what the Diocese would permit it was difficult to move forward. Following several meetings with the Archdeacon, we now know that the Diocese will only appoint a part-time Rector for the Benefice and that any appointment is unlikely before the end of 2021 at the earliest. This decision and the final version of the Profile is still subject to final approval by The Bishop of Derby. It is hoped to obtain this shortly. The timing of a person taking up the position may also be partly driven by the availability of the Rectory in Ashover which has been let out for a minimum of 6 months.

That there will not be a like-for-like replacement is a huge disappointment. A number of arguments have been put to the Archdeacon to try and reach an alternative answer, but the Diocese is committed to saving costs over the next 5 years. Part of their solution is to substantially reduce the number of paid ministers, to reorganise the way they are expected to work, to share resources and collaborate more with neighbouring parishes and ensure that the laity play a greater role in running churches. We know of several other parishes within the Diocese who are in the same position. This is replicated nationally within the Church of England and there has been considerable unfavourable coverage in the national media about decisions being made to cut numbers of parish ministers, often it would seem, while increasing central staffing and costs.

It is hoped that the recruitment process can continue over the next few months and that a successful appointment will be made so that a new Rector will come to live and work in our communities and lead our church families. In the meantime, we are extremely fortunate that our Ministry team of Alan, Jenn, Celia and David, supported by many others have been able to continue providing online services each week. Thank you to them all.



## amber news

For the amber churches of  
**Ashover, Brackenfield, Handley and Wessington**  
*working and playing together, with God, for people*

April 2021

## Church Services

There will be no services in any of our churches in April but on-line Sunday services recorded by our ministry team and church wardens will be available to view from the YouTube channel *All Saints Ashover For Amber Churches*. There is a link to this from the home page of the amber churches website: [www.amberchurches.org](http://www.amberchurches.org)

**Services in churches will start again  
from the beginning of May.**



## Hope on the Horizon!

### Bassett Rooms Open from 21st June

It is the plan (subject to what the government allows at that time) to reopen the Bassett Rooms on the 21st June 2021. It will be great to be able to get together face to face once again. It is hoped that there will not be any restrictions nor a need for a COVID risk assessment

The PCC is planning to have garden furniture in place by June, so this will be a welcome addition to the Bassett Rooms facilities.

Already there are bookings for the Lunch Club on 21st June and the Coffee Shop on 6th July, and further bookings are now being taken. You can book securely; should opening subsequently have to be delayed, you can reschedule or cancel without penalty.

If you would like to book the Bassett Rooms for after 21st June, please contact the Bassett Rooms Booking Manager, Helen Boffy on [bassettroom@gmail.com](mailto:bassettroom@gmail.com) or phone 07515 280707 to discuss your requirements.

### Baptisms

Family celebrations of baptisms have been missing over the last year, maybe now plans can be made.

### Weddings

Wedding bells will hopefully ring out again from July. Many weddings postponed over the last year will be celebrated in our churches over the coming months and we wish all the couples every joy.



If you would like to announce any activity starting up again in our area, drop an email to the address below and it will be included in next month's Amber News.

## Contact Information

Church Wardens

All Saints Church Ashover: Nev Stanley 01246 826980

Holy Trinity Brackenfield: Nigel Rogers 01773 836137

St Mark's Church Handley: Fran Roberts 01246 865389

Christ Church Wessington: Rita Buckley 01773 835 633

[www.amberchurches.org](http://www.amberchurches.org)

[info@amberchurches.org](mailto:info@amberchurches.org)

## A Time to Hope

Even though we may be starting on a roadmap out of the current situation, if there was one word that every single one of us still needs at this present time it is **HOPE**.

For some, it is to meet again with friends or family, or to hug grandchildren, for children to see their friends, for others to return to the sport they love or to travel, or just to go to the hairdressers.

Thankfully, there are now signs of hope; the vaccine is yielding results, celandines and daffodils are bringing



brightness and joy to our gardens and birds are singing. Maybe, then, this is the time to start to recover from the very real sickness that we have all suffered, though sadly for some it is too late.

So, how do we recover from this rollercoaster of emotions we have felt, from the fear, from the profound sadness of loss? We need to reflect on the positives, as well as the negatives, what we have learned through this experience. We need to recuperate and begin to look forward with hope to the things that will restore us and our community.

In a pamphlet about hope, Roger Carswell has written: "There are moments in history that are so striking that the world stops and seems to stand still, such an event was the twin towers or the untimely death of Princess Diana." (For us, 2020 will be remembered as the year the world was shaken by an invisible virus.) "At the funeral of Winston Churchill after the final prayer a bugler high in the dome of St Paul's sounded *Taps*, the universal signal that says the day is over, but then another bugler, on the other side of the great dome, sounded *Reveille* signalling "It's time to get up, it's time to get up in the morning". We are now at that same moment of hope mingling with sadness.

To find reasons for hope, turn your gaze to the selfless kindness and ingenuity of thousands of our fellow human beings in hospitals, in science labs and on the streets; human kindness cannot be "locked down"!

When the time comes for us to be together again as a family, church, community and nation we need to set a special time to give thanks, to Remember and Reflect in order to help us to Recover and Restore. "I will restore the years the locust has eaten, says the Lord." Joel 2v25.

Just as surely as we have the expectation of daffodils in Springtime bursting with colour in the face of uncertainty, despair and death, Easter comes with real HOPE.

Easter, the time of resurrection, Jesus rose from the dead and can be with us in the present, and walk through each step of our future into eternity.

"You will restore my soul again; from the depths of the earth, you will bring me up." *Psalms 71 v20*.

*Marjorie Telford*

## Spring Foraging is Here Again

The ransomes - wild garlic leaves - that are carpeting shady, damp areas can be used in sandwiches, omelettes and as a pesto ingredient instead of basil.

For those plagued with the "weed" ground elder: try picking the leaves, washing them and add to a pan with a knob of butter, cover and cook gently for 10 minutes to get a delicious green vegetable, or to make soup.

Wild sandwiches can be made with the young leaves of dandelion, hawthorn, lady's smock and sorrel.

## A Hope Chest of Ideas

What would you put in a lockdown Hope Chest? They used to be lined with cedar to protect against insects and used to store up beautiful things for the future.

Now my lockdown Hope Chest would contain a cup of coffee in a café, a walk up on Kinder Scout and a day playing with the grandchildren. Why not start one and let each family member add something to do in the future?

We are not there yet, and still have rules to obey but ...

**H.O.P.E. - Hold On, Pain Ends**

## Gardening with Love

Easter is a time to remember loved ones no longer with us - lilies are sometimes put in churches in their name. This year you could make a miniature Easter or Spring garden from moss, twigs, stones and flowers as a remembrance and place it in your garden or on a doorstep. The time taken to put it together would allow a short period of reflection and thanks for those lives.

## Palm Crosses

Traditionally, small palm leaf crosses are handed out in churches on Palm Sunday - this year on Sunday 28th March - but as there will be no service in church, a box of palm crosses will be left in Ashover Church porch for people to help themselves to during the week before. Rev Jenn Willis, who will be leading the on-line Palm Sunday service, will include a section in the service to bless these crosses. Many people keep the crosses at home pinned to a noticeboard or in a pot until the start of Lent the following year when crosses may be burned to provide the ash for Ash Wednesday services.

## St Mark's goes back to School

This year, the congregation of St. Mark's Church in Handley are giving each child at Stretton Handley Primary School a gift bag, each with a Palm Cross, a Palm leaf to colour and a brief story of Palm Sunday to help them to understand a bit more about Jesus and the week leading up to Easter. There is a crayon and maybe a treat too!! The Children will then be coming together in school for an Easter service on Thursday 1st April.



## And These Three Remain ...

Not having taken part in any on-line services during the past year I have found other ways to worship God and to study His word. As Lent approached I decided to do a study on the word **Love**.

On Day 21 I read Romans 5:5 'And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out His **Love** into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.' It is amazing how God **Loves** us and during my study I've become more aware of no matter how people behave, God always **Loves** us.

In Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own **Love** for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." It is humbling to read but it does give us enormous hope that, as we trust in God and **Love** Him, he never ceases to **Love** us.

As I write this I am up to Day 25 and the readings are from 1 Corinthians chapter 13. Verse 13 says it all. 'And these three remain, faith, hope and **Love**, But the greatest of these is **Love**.'

Our **Hope** in God and His **Love** during this Pandemic are most precious gifts and if we stick close to Him, He will see us through this difficult time. *Eileen Bratt, Wessington*