April 2018 View from the Vicarage

I hope and pray by the time this is published that Spring really will have arrived!

Spring and Easter are both about hope, the risen Lord that we celebrate on Easter Day is about hope for a world filled with love and kindness.

It is through kindness that we bring hope to others, and we all need kind spaces and kind people in our lives.

I came across these words from Christina Rossetti recently, written as a hymn

*‘O ye who taste that love is sweet,  
Set waymarks for all doubtful feet  
That stumble on in search of it.  
Sing notes of love: that some who hear  
Far off, inert, may lend an ear,  
Rise up and wonder and draw near.  
Lead lives of love: that others who  
Behold your life may kindle too  
With love, and cast their lot with you****.’***

By showing love to others, the ripple effect travels throughout our communities. Very often we never see the end result, and neither should we, that could lead to arrogance! We all know that kindness strengthens communities, and diminishes loneliness.

Recent research has shown that loneliness is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, increases the risk of high blood pressure and obesity, increases the likelihood of suffering from depression and can shorten our lives.

Let us thank God and pray for both kind people and the kind spaces in our communities, the shops, pubs, cafes, gardens and the schools. Also for the the churches and the various choirs and organisations locally and those that run them, and let us resolve to follow the words of Christina Rossetti and to work hard this Spring to extend the love we show to our neighbours and to strangers alike.- A worthy challenge for 2018 would be to work to abolish loneliness in our communities!

A very happy Easter and every blessing to you all