



St Mary
Magdalene's
PARISH MAGAZINE

CROSS TALK



April 2026

Photo of Holy Island by
pilgrim Rachel Duff

HE IS RISEN

From the Vicar...



Dear friends

One of the most moving moments in the Easter story comes when the risen Jesus appears to his disciples and meets Thomas, who struggles to believe. Rather than rebuking him, Jesus simply shows him his hands and his side. The marks of the crucifixion are still there. The resurrection has not erased the wounds; instead, those wounds have become part of the story of new life.

It reminds me of the Japanese art of Kintsugi. When a treasured bowl breaks, the potter carefully restores it using lacquer mixed with powdered gold. Rather than hiding the cracks, the repair highlights them. The bowl becomes more beautiful because of its history. Its fractures are not disguised but transformed into something precious.

In a similar way, the risen Jesus still bears the marks of the cross. The wounds are not signs of defeat but of love, sacrifice and redemption. They tell the story of suffering that has been transformed by resurrection.

Perhaps that speaks to many of us. None of us reaches Easter without some scars. Life leaves its marks: disappointments, losses, worries, and moments when things have felt broken. Yet the message of Easter is not that God removes every crack in our lives, as if they had never existed. Rather, God works within them, bringing healing, hope and new beginnings.

The resurrection tells us that brokenness is never the end of the story. In the hands of God, even the deepest wounds can become places where grace shines most brightly.

Easter is God's great declaration that love is stronger than death and that new life is always possible. Our lives, like the mended bowl, may carry the marks of struggle, but in God's hands those marks can become signs of beauty, resilience and hope.

And that is the promise of Easter: that the risen Christ meets us where we are and gently begins the work of making all things new.

With every Easter Blessing,

William



HE IS RISEN



St Mary Magdalene's Church Lillington

Easter Vigil at 6am,
(followed by breakfast in the Octagon)

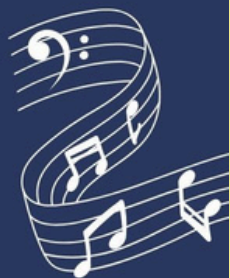
Joint Easter Celebration
at 10.30am

All Welcome

Sunday 5th April



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7.30pm

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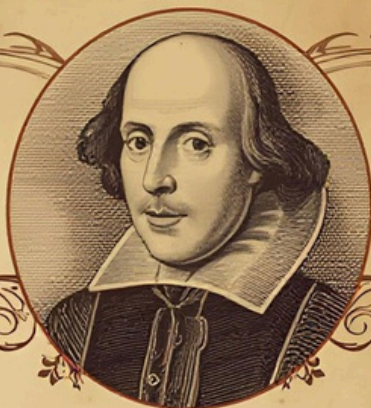
A Lovely Leamington Walk

On the 7th March, 10 of us set off on our walk around Newbold Comyn. Ted and I had walked it a couple of weeks before and found it to be very very muddy. We decided that it would not be safe to take the group so settled on a different route. The first part of the walk into the woods and to the bird hide went well and we stopped for our coffee break for a little while. Carrying on, we took various different paths and ended up a bit lost. We asked a gentleman if we were on the right track; he confirmed we were and soon we knew where we were. We got back to the New Inn in Leam Terrace before it rained and had a really good meal. The food and staff were excellent. It was the first time we have taken a group there and I am sure it will not be the last.

Sandra & Ted Dear



Robin &



Carol's

Annual Quiz

Thursday 23rd April 2026

6.45pm

at St MaryMagdalene's Church, Lillington

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SOCIAL EVENTS

All Welcome

Come and join us for...

Saturday 11th April 10am Coffee Morning - Raising money
for Belveder (Ukraine support)

Thursday 23rd April 6.45pm Quiz with cake and puddings

Saturday 9th May 10am Coffee Morning

Saturday 23rd May 7.30pm Love Lillington Fundraising
Concert (with cheese and wine)



Contact Us:

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Over the Mountains and the Sea...

Our lovely vicar William often speaks of ‘thin spaces’ - places where we feel closer to God; often a place of natural beauty. I was lucky enough to visit New Zealand recently and was bowled over by its incredible landscape: huge craggy mountains, vast rolling hills and ragged, stormy seas. Being a musical type, I found myself continually singing God’s praises in my head, especially,

‘Over the mountains and the sea Your river runs with love for me,
And I will open up my heart and let the Healer set me free’
(Composer: Martin Smith)

It’s a lovely song and one which we sometimes sing at our Star Church services. The words helped me connect with God in these thin spaces, reminding me that He is in all things. Obvious really, but sometimes you have to be somewhere else to fully appreciate it.

Join us if you can for inspiring, informal and musical worship at our ‘Star Church’ All Age Service on Sundays at 11.15.

Sara Snatt



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A Week of Stillness on Holy Island

I arrived on Holy Island feeling rather apprehensive. I had never been on a retreat before and wasn't quite sure what to expect. Added to that was the question of whether it would really work taking Vincent, my five-year-old standard poodle. As anyone with a large dog knows, they bring joy but also responsibility. Thankfully, from the outset, I realised this was going to be a week of reassurance, kindness and gentle encouragement.

Despite dire weather warnings, the journey up was full of laughter, companionship and a sense of adventure. From our first meeting at Cambridge House, William gently reminded us that letting go of our usual business would take time. He was right. Peace does not arrive instantly; it grows slowly when space is given to it.

The island itself quickly worked its quiet magic. Even in driving wind and rain, walking along the beach with Vincent, watching him race through sand and surf, felt deeply restorative. When plans changed, as they often did, flexibility became part of the learning. An impromptu communion service in our shared house, with wide views across the island, remains one of the most moving moments of the week.



Each day brought rhythm and reflection: morning walks; evening prayers; shared meals and thoughtful discussion of Matthew's account of the Magi. We talked about journeys, uncertainty, power, fear, and faith as an orientation point rather than a guarantee. Slowly, I learned to sit quietly, to listen, and to resist the urge to fill every moment. Walking together mattered. Long walks across fields, beaches, and even across the seabed itself at low tide became a shared experience. Conversations flowed naturally, friendships deepened, and the island's stark winter beauty encouraged honesty and openness.

As the retreat drew to a close, there was a gentle sense of completion. On the final day we walked once more across the island, taking in the ruins, the wide skies and the sea that had framed our week of prayer and companionship. We shared a last meal together and gathered for our final evening of reflection, aware that something precious had been shared.

The following morning, we all departed in different directions, some returning home, others continuing onward journeys, carrying with us the stillness, insights and friendships formed during the week. I travelled north to visit friends, grateful for the space Holy Island had given me. I have travelled widely in my life, but this stay on Holy Island stands out as something truly special.

Isabella Moore



**St Mary Magdalene,
Lillington Parish Magazine**

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An Evening of Solidarity

I was invited to join Pat Poulson and Margaret Moore at the Royal Spa Centre on February 6th for an evening celebrating Solidarity with Ukraine. There were people from all over Warwickshire, of all faiths and none, organisations such as the Freemasons and Lions Club, Council members (including both Cllr Boads!) and people from the Ukrainian and Polish communities.

My expectation was a bit of a party atmosphere and there were several notable speakers including representatives of the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Matt Western MP, Jerzy Boczkowski, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Embassy of the Republic of Poland and Eduard Fesko, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Ukraine. For me, it was Eduard Fesko who spoke most eloquently and explained how Russia's real aim is Europe wide domination, not just to own a part of Ukraine. The number of casualties (including deaths, missing and injured) in Ukraine is approximately 600,000 and in Russia over 1.2 million. Combined Russian and Ukrainian casualties could reach 2 million total casualties by the spring of 2026. No major power has suffered anywhere near these numbers of casualties or fatalities in any war since World War II. It made me realise how close we are to war here in the UK.

Belveder has delivered 61 ambulances to Ukraine.



We were shown a film of a soldier in Ukraine fighting in the waste land of the front line with his brothers in arms, and then relaxing in a moment of respite joking about funerals and death. No background music, no soaring violins, or sonorous drums, no Hollywood heroes – just people's husbands and sons. And then they told us this soldier had been killed.

Another film followed, this time of soldiers racing to rescue an injured comrade, but they knew he was dead before they found him and yet they still risked their lives to return his body.

The Rt Hon Tony Cleary, who has delivered many of the 61 ambulances to Ukraine, provided much information on the ongoing cost of providing ambulances, kitting them out for service and the need for medical supplies. He quoted that the West Midlands Ambulance Service, which covers Warwickshire, has 800 ambulances yet Ukraine has just the 61 many of which have been destroyed. He told us about a hospital train that cares for and undertakes operations that delivers injured soldiers from the front line to hospitals, at the end of the line there are 21 ambulances standing by – every day. And its not just the gunfire and bomb dropping drones to contend with, the temperature is freezing well below minus and many homes have no power.



So far Belveder has sent over 200 tonnes of critical medical supplies to support those in need.

What can you do?

- On April 11th there will be a coffee morning raising funds for Belveder, the overarching Leamington charity that sends humanitarian need to Ukraine. Dawid Kozłowski has spoken in our church and is a Trustee of the Belveder Charity.
- Knit hats and scarves to keep people warm (details from me or Pat Poulson)
- Donate medicines, there is a box in church for donations of over-the-counter medicines (not prescription medicines)
- Pray

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today. We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons. We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them. We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions. Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen

Carol Innes
Tel 07758 857740

i Source: Centre for Strategic and International Studies
(<https://www.csis.org/>) 2026



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Ukraine



Saturday 11th April 10am - 12pm

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From The Church Records - February		
Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals
Kassia McCurdy Meacock	Joshua Hough and Megan McDonald	Mary Rebecca West Christopher Rhodes

Sunday Worship in April		
5th April Easter Day	6am 10.30am	Holy Communion - Vigil and Vows followed by Breakfast Joint Celebration Service (in church & online)
12th April 2nd of Easter	9.30am 11.15am	Holy Communion (in church & online) Worship for All (in church)
19th April 3rd of Easter	9.30am 11.15am	Holy Communion (in church & online) Worship for All (in church) with Sunday Club and Community Lunch (in church)
26th April 4th of Easter	9.30am 11.15am	Holy Communion (in church & online) Worship for All (in church)

Weekday Services in April - Holy Communion in church & online at 10am on Wednesday 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 April

HOLY WEEK

Wednesday 1st April

Holy Communion at 10.00am

Night Prayer at 7.00pm

Maundy Thursday 2nd April Passover Meal at 6.00pm

Good Friday 3rd April

Family Service at 10.00am

Liturgy of the Cross at 2.00pm

Stations of the Cross at 7.00pm

Services are streamed Live and are available afterwards on our website:
<https://www.lillingtonparishchurch.org>.

For Funeral, Baptism and Wedding enquiries, please contact Revd. William Smith on 01926 316475 or email vicar@lillingtonparishchurch.org.

For general enquiries please contact the church office by telephone on 01926 470449 or email office@lillingtonparishchurch.org. Outside of office hours, please leave a message on the answer phone and we will return your call.



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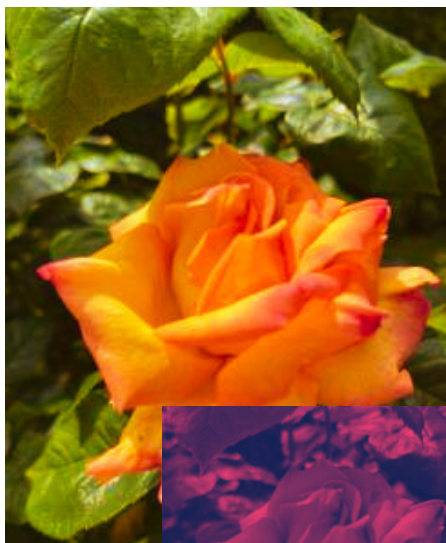
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My footsteps took me to a cross
 A cross on barren land
 My footsteps led me onward
 With none to take my hand
 Alone; bereft of comfort
 Alone; no crowd nearby
 Alone; I walked to Calvary
 The place where Jesus died
 I closed my eyes; imagining
 That I was there that day
 I closed my eyelids suddenly
 To keep the tears at bay
 But even though it was a dream
 It was so very real
 I took each step towards His cross
 And there – before – did kneel
 My Saviour's voice was clearer
 These were the words He spoke
 "Father forgive..." and when I heard
 My heart it surely broke...
 For when the Lord was dying
 On a cross that caused His pain
 His heart was for all others
 Filled with mercy to proclaim...
 That they could be forgiven
 For the sin within their lives
 They had killed the Lord of heaven
 Surely they would be despised?
 Yet, the purpose of Christ's dying
 Was to save a fallen world
 A centurion standing near Him
 Knew salvation's hope 'unfurled'
 My footsteps took me from that cross
 Where on another day
 My Saviour rose to life again
 He lives, He lives to stay...
 He guides me as I follow Him
 My footsteps firm and strong
 My joy complete, He lives, He lives
 My Lord... my King...my joyful song!



Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. Luke 23:34 (NIV)

The Death of Jesus

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, Lema sabachthani?" (which means

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

When the centurion

and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!" ...

Matthew 27:45-46, 54 (NIV)

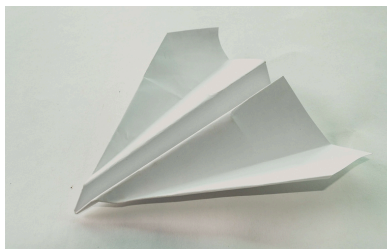
He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.

Come and see the place where he lay.

Then go quickly and tell his disciples:

'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.'

Now I have told you." Matthew 28:7 (NIV)



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Church Services

Sunday

9.30am Holy Communion Service

(1 hour service with robed choir)

11.15am All Age Service

(40 minute service with children at its heart)

Wednesday

10.00am Holy Communion Service

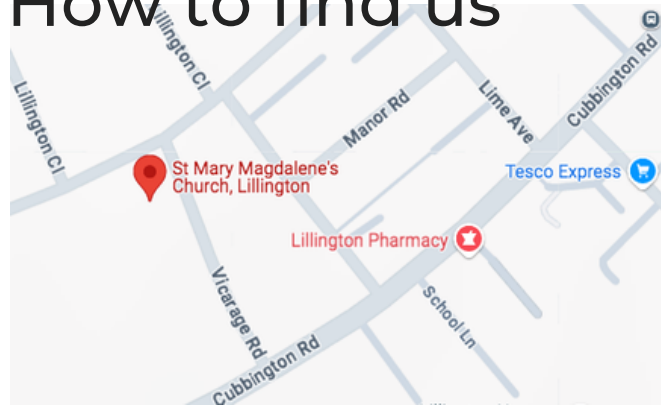
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How to find us



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