



St Mary Magdalene's

PARISH MAGAZINE

CROSS TALK



July/August 2026

Farewell From the Curate

I am writing this at the start of my last week at St Mary Magdalene's and in the Parish of Lillington. My curacy, my three years of training to be a vicar, is coming to an end. Over the last six months I have gone through a process of being "signed off": a process of getting the Bishop's stamp of approval through a series of assessments and reflections as well as making sure I experienced a wide and varied range of ministry. Therefore at the end of April, I had my final interview with Bishop Sophie, and I was officially signed off.

I have also been thinking and praying for what is next and I started to apply for jobs. Then in May it was announced following an application and interview process that I was appointed to be the next Ministry Area Leader in Merthyr Tydfil in the Church in Wales. I am going to be leading a small team of clergy to minister to the people of Merthyr Tydfil. In deciding to accept this appointment I felt an overwhelming sense of wanting to join in with the community and the work they are doing to reconcile themselves to God and to each other.

I am so excited for this next season of my ministry, but I am also sad to be leaving this community. I have been reflecting on my time here in Lillington. In fact this was not the place I was going to be doing my curacy, but I soon realised this is where I was supposed to be. It is where God wanted me and I am so grateful to have been part of this parish and community for the past three years. I am also so grateful to William and the church leadership for agreeing to take me on as their curate with little warning. It has been one of the best experiences of my life.

Over the last three years, I have journeyed with you through all of life's ups and downs. Through taking funerals, weddings and baptisms. I have visited our schools and welcomed the children to the church and it is always such a joy to expand their horizons and answer their questions. I have taken a group on retreat, explored peace and reconciliation through our faith in God and led the church while William was away on sabbatical. It has not always been easy, but I have enjoyed being here so much. Thank you for your kindness, compassion, words of encouragement, gentle feedback, support, encouragement and prayers over the last three years.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; may the Lord turn His face toward you and give you His peace now and forever. Amen.
(Numbers 6:24-26)

My last Sunday will be 28th June with a joint service at 10.30am. My Licensing Service in Merthyr Tydfil is at 4pm on Sunday 26th July at St David's Church in Merthyr.

Peace and blessings, Revd Cerys





LILLINGTON COMMUNITY FUN DAY

This annual event will take place on Saturday 18th July in the Holt Rec, Cubbington Road from 2pm – 5pm. As usual there will be a variety of attractions for children in the field as well as food and cold drinks, musical entertainment and stalls run by local groups and community organisations. St

Mary Magdalene's Church will have its own stall where visitors can meet us and find out more about our services and activities. Volunteers will be needed to man this stall and there is a sign-up rota in church.

There will be a refreshments stall inside the hall at Lillington Free Church (next to the Rec) and help from members of St Mary Mag's to run this is always greatly appreciated by the LFC team. Cakes are needed: homemade or bought as well as volunteers to help set up between 12noon and 2pm; to serve from 2pm – 5pm and clear up afterwards. There are hourly slots in which to volunteer and there is a sign-up rota in church next to the one for the church stall.

**AMANDA STEVENS
MEMBER OF FUN DAY
ORGANISING COMMITTEE**





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Lillington

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all God's creatures, great and small.**

Talent Auction Updates

Back in November, a merry group from the St MM congregation met up in the Octagon for a 'Talent Auction'. Time, treasure and talents were auctioned off to the highest bidders, with the money raised going into church funds. Promises such as a cream tea; cakes and scones; a ride in a classic car and personal tours of Coventry Cathedral and the Fusilier Museum were snapped up, amongst other items/ experiences. Carol Innes bid successfully for a felting workshop! She was joined by friends Paula and Juliet and they each made a rather splendid duck. Here are the results of the morning!



Lt Col Matthew Paterson showed Nick Button and Sarah Boad around the Fusilier Museum. He can be seen twice here as a slightly younger Matt features in the background display as well!

We look forward to hearing about more Talent Auction promises and experiences.

Sara Snatt



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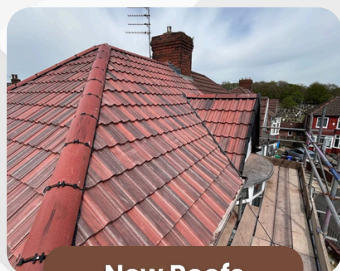
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- Church groups, charities - £10 per hour
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10-12

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AND KIDS' CRAFTS



A Trip to Holland

This was a very special trip for me, travelling with two of my oldest friends Wilma and Lorna. We've known each other since school in Edinburgh (over 70 years!) and the extraordinary thing is... nothing has changed. We still laugh at exactly the same things. Our fourth companion was Vincent, my rather large poodle (37kg... more pony than dog!) who was travelling abroad for the first time. In The Hague we wandered out and found, quite by chance, a small bar with live jazz. We walked in with Vincent. No hesitation. No rules. Just music, wine, and a quietly perfect moment.

A tram ride took us to Scheveningen - once a simple fishing village, later a fashionable seaside resort. Even now, beneath modern developments, one senses its earlier life. In the afternoon, we explored the city, its political and historical heart on a walking tour, and then the Mauritshuis Art Gallery. There, among young Japanese and Chinese girls taking selfies, I stood in front of Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring. After a day of movement, responsibility, and fatigue, it felt special. Thankfully the crowds thinned; the light was soft, and for a moment I looked into her eyes.

In Haarlem our stay at the Holiday Inn turned out to be a happy surprise: a good breakfast and, most importantly, Vincent was allowed to sit with us at the table (always a strong start to the day!) We set off for the Grote Markt and stepped into the magnificent St. Bavo's Cathedral - another breathtaking Gothic treasure. To think that both Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and George Frideric Handel once played its extraordinary organ! The pulpit, with elements dating back to the 15th century, is one of the oldest I've encountered. Vincent wandered contentedly beside us, entirely at ease. I lit a candle for David - it would have been his 87th birthday today - and another for my Mum. A quiet, reflective moment in a very beautiful place.



Walking around Haarlem is like stepping into a 17th century Dutch painting: the architecture, the tiny streets, and those wonderful pots of flowers outside every house. No gardens, yet somehow they create such charm and colour. I'm quite in awe and slightly envious that mine never look quite like that!

We navigated around Amsterdam to Muiderslot. This stunning medieval castle dates back to the 13th century; is surrounded by a moat and beautifully preserved. It looks exactly as a fairytale castle should.

Sadly, Vincent was not allowed in, which led to my first proper walk along a Dutch dyke. All was going beautifully until Vincent decided, quite deliberately, to roll in cow poo. What followed was half an hour of emergency cleaning with wipes, towels, and kitchen roll. I can report that while we didn't achieve perfection, we did reach a level that made re-entering the car just about tolerable! Despite a slightly "hairy" drive around Amsterdam and the ongoing challenge of remembering to stay on the right, we are still speaking to each other, remarkably! Lorna remains the calmest of navigators, quietly guiding us through every twist and turn.

In Utrecht. Lorna and I joined a walking tour, and what a contrast to our experience in The Hague! Our guide, Geoffrey, was superb, full of dates, stories, and wonderfully entertaining anecdotes.

The highlight? His tale of Louis Bonaparte, who briefly ruled Holland under his brother Napoleon Bonaparte. Determined to address the Dutch people in their own language, he proudly announced... not that he was their new king, but their new rabbit! 🐰 Apparently, the Dutch words are dangerously similar. Our final night was spent in the charming coastal town of Maassluis, where, joy of joys, dogs were even allowed in the dining room. But once again, Wilma kindly stayed with Vincent while Lorna and I enjoyed breakfast. A small kindness that made everything so much easier.

A few reflections on our journey...

- There is something very special about travelling with friends you've known since childhood. We slipped into an easy rhythm, full of laughter, tolerance, and shared memories.
- Travelling with a dog requires serious planning. Dog-friendly hotels must be booked well in advance and even then, most only allow dogs in the room, not public spaces.
- Vincent travelled beautifully, but it's not without effort: food, treats, medication, leads, wipes, cuddly toys, balls... an entire bag devoted just to him!
- But above all what a joy this trip has been. Not a single cross word between us. Just companionship, flexibility, and a shared sense of adventure. A real privilege.

Isabella Moore



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LOVE LILLINGTON 10th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT 23rd MAY

The plan was for a musical celebration of 10 years of our Community Initiative “Love Lillington”. We celebrated with an evening of choral classics and it was a triumph! 87 tickets were sold (with only 4 remaining-the maximum seating capacity was 91).

The highlight of the evening with the joy of the church being full of people from our community and beyond seated on comfortable chairs, was something to behold and give thanks for. The Espresso vocal quartet introduced some wonderful variety into the programme and our 30 strong St Mary Magdalene’s singers, under the expert direction of our Musical Director Rachael Jefferies, almost lifted the roof with beautiful choral pieces, expertly supported by guest organist Adrian Moore. Congratulations to Reuben Whitehead for his solo. Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to help with many tasks to keep the event running smoothly. For me this occasion was always about the celebration and any profits made were secondary, but I am pleased to report that we raised £845.00.

Christine Butler, Love Lillington Action Administrator



Choir Mistress Rachael Jefferies
with members of the choir

LOVE LILLINGTON 10TH ANNIVERSARY PRAYER

Heavenly Father, whose special care is always for those in need, we pray for your blessing on the work of Love Lillington. In our 10th Anniversary year we thank you for your loving help and support in all we have been able to achieve in assisting those in our community whose need is greatest.

We pray that in the years to come you will continue to inspire us through our prayers to give generously of both our money and time and to use our practical skills to support the vulnerable in Lillington, declaring in so doing your great love for each one of us.

We ask this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to love our neighbours as ourselves.

Amen

Caroline Carr





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SEPTEMBER 7-00PM

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At St Mary Magdalene's Church Vicarage Road, Lillington

cheese and wine interval

17

‘Just Practising’



I was talking to friends recently and they asked me what memories I had of the days I used to drive cars from or to Italy. I had several. This one may amuse you...

Back in 1975, I worked at Automotive Products in Leamington. My boss asked me to fly to Milan and bring back a prototype Lancia Gamma, as Lancia had asked if we could produce an automatic gearbox for them. I duly flew to Milan and reported to the Milan office. As the car was not yet ready, I had to kill some time in Milan – such a shame. After several days the car was ready to collect from Turin. It was a Wednesday afternoon and I was due to take my family to Wales on Saturday for the Easter break.

I began my journey and drove 1,200 km in 12 hours – this was prior to the Channel Tunnel and most motorways! This first stop was just north of Paris; the next morning I drove to Calais and made the crossing to arrive back home by late evening. I delivered the Gamma (a very nice 2.5 litre, 4-cylinder Boxer) to work on the Friday and made it home for lunch.

The next day as we got into the car to set off for Wales, my wife asked, “Are you feeling okay to drive?” I replied, “Yes thank you. I have been practising!”

Larry Dunham



The rather splendid Lancia Gamma

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Saturday 8th August

10 - 12

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Save the Date...

Saturday 5th September 2026

Church Day In

We look forward to having a whole church day together to receive teaching, socialise and spend time with one another across the 3 services.

**We would love for you to come. There will be a limit to places, but we want as many people as possible to attend therefore please contact Hester (event coordinating) to reserve your place:
cfprojectworker@gmail.com**

There will be a small charge required to cover catering, but this will be kept as minimal as possible and more information will be provided ASAP; support for those who cannot fund themselves is available.



Eye in the Sky

Many years ago, we took our sons and some of their friends to Bovington Tank Museum in Dorset. It was amazing and yet fearful in equal measure to see these huge vehicles with the potential to cause so much damage. The boys, of course, loved it all and being able to climb aboard and pretend to be soldiers was so exciting.

I, on the other hand stood back and tried to imagine what it must be like to have similar enemy tanks rolling in to your town, not knowing what carnage it was going to bring: huge powerful machines of war. It made me shudder to think of it, and yet this was a reality for so many people around the world at any given time.

Now, fast forward some 40 plus years. It was a beautiful spring morning as I and the rest of the group went about our exercise class in Victoria Park. The sky was so blue, the trees bursting with new life, people around the park taking in the fresh air and dogs chasing after their sticks or toys as we did our stretching, reaching and all the other activities. All was well and God was in His Heaven.



Suddenly, one of the group members pointed out a drone that was hovering overhead. I was keeping one eye on that as we went about our session, wondering why it was there. The time went on and our class instructions, for me at least, were fading into the background. The drone just 'sat' there. It felt like it was watching our group, and became more disturbing and almost intimidating the longer it was there.

My imagination started to take over. What if it released a missile or detonated the tennis courts using the laser weapons that drones can use? The impact would send everything in the surrounding area up into the air; everyone who was still able to would be running for their life. I could actually feel panic rising within me. Of course it won't do that...but what if? Sadly, this is no irrational feeling for so many people in the world today. Modern warfare makes this a reality for thousands of people in many different countries - ordinary people going about their everyday life, caught in the devastation caused by these almost silent, remote controlled objects of hostility.

Jan Talbot





From The Church Records – May

Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals & Memorial
		Bryan Long

Sunday Worship in July

5th July – 5th after
Trinity

9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online)
11.15am All Age Communion (in church)
6.00pm Choral Evensong (in church/outside)

12th July – 6th after
Trinity

9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online)
11.15am Pet Service (in church)

19th July – 7th after
Trinity

9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online)
11.15am Worship for All with Community Lunch (in church)

26th July – Mary
Magdalene

9.30am Patronal Holy Communion (in church & online)
11.15am Worship for All (in church)

Weekday Services in - Holy Communion in church & online at 10am on Wednesday 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 July; 5, 12, 19 and 26 August

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.

Sunday Worship in August	
2nd Aug – 9th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am All Age Communion (in church) 6.00pm Evening Service (in church)
9th Aug – 10th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)
16th Aug – 11th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)
23rd Aug – 12th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)
30th Aug – 13th after Trinity GREENBELT WEEKEND	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)

Join us for a Bring and Share Community Lunch in the Vicarage Garden

Sunday 16th August at 12.30





CONTACT US!

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vicar@lillingtonparishchurch.org

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CROSSTALK:

crosstalk@lillingtonparishchurch.org



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church community

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

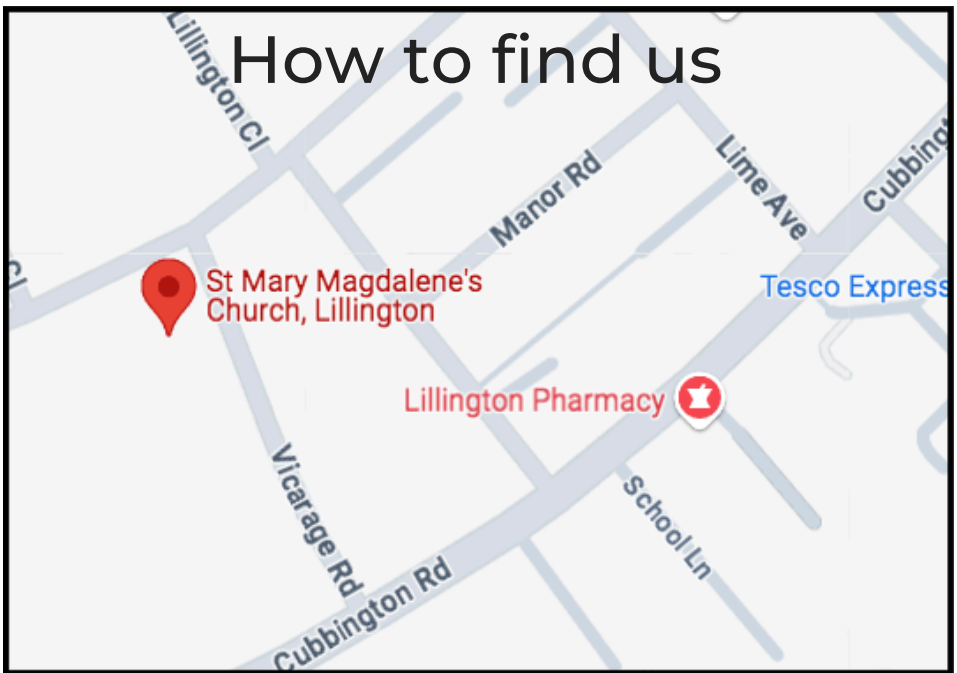
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How to find us



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