



St Mary
Magdalene's
PARISH MAGAZINE

CROSS TALK



October 2026

Read about our
eclipse viewing on
Pages 10 and 11

Dear Friends



October brings us to Harvest, one of the most joyful moments in the Church's year. It is a time to notice again the abundance of God's goodness: the food we eat, the people who enrich our lives, the gifts we have been given and the community to which we belong. Harvest invites us not simply to count our blessings, but to ask how we might use them well.

Throughout September, our Stewardship programme has explored the theme 'Room for More'. We have reflected on making room to receive from God; room to grow in faith; room for all within the life of the Church and room to give in response to God's generosity. These themes belong together. Christian giving does not begin with the Church's need for money. It begins with all that we have first received from God.

Our churches are places in which people worship, pray, celebrate, grieve, learn and find friendship. Week by week, children and adults discover more about the love of God. People in times of need are welcomed and supported, and we seek to serve the wider community in which God has placed us. None of this happens by accident. It is made possible by the prayers, service and generosity of many people.

At our joint Harvest celebration on Sunday 11th October, we shall therefore have an opportunity to make our offerings towards the continuing ministry and mission of the Church. For some, this may mean joining the Parish Giving Scheme for the first time. For others, it may mean reviewing an existing gift. Some may be unable to increase their giving at present, and others may need to reduce it because their circumstances have changed. There is no single amount or response that is right for everyone. What matters is that each of us considers prayerfully what generosity might mean in our own circumstances.

Our offerings will be gathered as part of our Harvest thanksgiving - not as a payment for what we receive - but as a sign of our shared commitment to the life and future of the Church. Together, our gifts of money, time, prayer and service create room: room for worship and welcome; room for children and families; room to care for our neighbours and room for people we may not yet know.

As Harvest approaches, may we recognise with gratitude all that God has placed into our hands - and discover afresh the joy of offering something back.

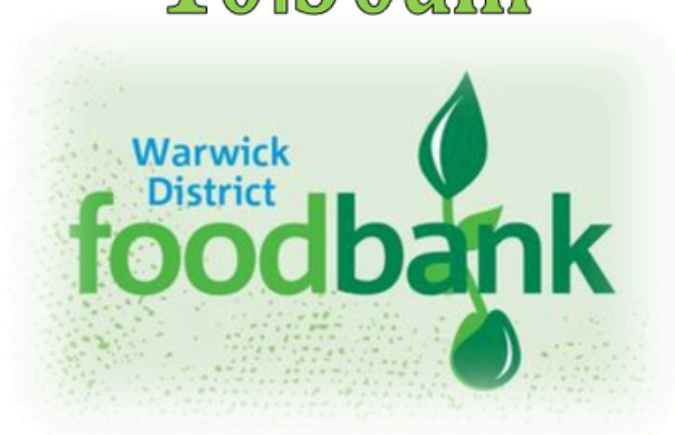
With every blessing,
William

HARVEST

Sunday 11th October 2026

JOINT SERVICE

10.30am



Tinned food collected for the Foodbank
Money for [Water Aid](#)

Followed by lunch in the Octagon

Deep Waters



Child of the large language model (LLM), AI seems to sift our every digitally expressed dream, note to self, flippant post, angry review, love letter, drawing, selfie and the catalogues of the world's most revered artists. It almost seems to be trying to bring us a virtual distillation or approximation of who we are or hope to be, or fear to become.

Here (Chinese) Open AI grapples with the prompt '**Joyous Christ style Caravaggio**' which results in this rather arresting image. There are now AI music applications which will generate 'worship songs' at your command. What does it mean that this binary 'mind'; repository of secondhand dreams can seem to worship him? Is it just AI junk - soulless and worthless?

Or is it as **Colossians 1:16** says:

For by him ALL things were created, in heaven and on Earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — ALL things were created through him and for him.

Maybe that also includes creations from the realm of binary ghosts?

Mark Bullock



Coffee Morning

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Saturday 10th October
10 - 12

St Mary Magdalene's
Vicarage Rd Lillington
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Family Fun at Crest Fest

Well done Mayor of Royal Leamington Spa (and church warden) Cllr Sarah Boad! Sarah attended Crest Fest on Saturday 15th August, which took place on the green between Eden Court and Southorn Court in Lillington.

This terrific community event was organised by Warwick District Council, featuring stalls run by ARC, CLEAN and Lillington Makers. Residents played games and took part in a range of fun activities including a Bachata Latin Dance workshop, outdoor games, clowning and open mic.

Sarah, whose skills are many and diverse, can be seen here making a smoothie powder by riding a bike! The event was well supported and provided a day of cheery jolliness for local families.

Sara Snatt





HIRE THE OCTAGON AT ST MARY MAG'S

- This lovely space can be used for parties, classes, meetings and more.
- Church groups, charities - £10 per hour
- Other bookings - £15 per hour or £12 per hour if 6 or more bookings are made



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JOIN US FOR
STAR CHURCH
AN 11.15 SUNDAY SERVICE
FAMILY FOCUS
INCLUSIVITY
CELEBRATION
LIVE MUSIC
CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP
HERE AT ST MARY MAG'S

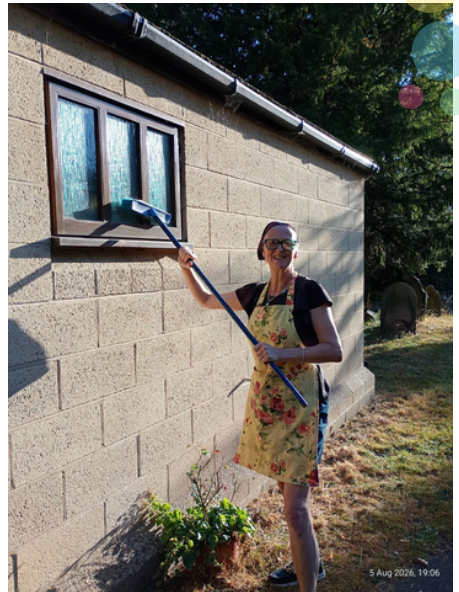
REFRESH & RENEW ECLIPSED!

The Church's Fabric group arranged a series of Renew & Refresh evenings in August. A couple of explanations might be necessary...

Who or what is the Church's Fabric Group?

We are a group who report to the PCC about the Church Fabric: that is, we are responsible for the maintenance of the church's buildings and contents. We meet every 2 months to discuss what needs doing, what's been done and more often than not, who we can get to help us with these tasks. We tackle everything from changing toilet seats to planning the replacement of the heating system.

Each August for the last few years we have been gathering every Wednesday evening to do those jobs which never seem to get done. We deep clean areas, remove leaves from rooves, clean windows and tackle as much churchyard work as we can.



Ellie Hucklesby and Sara Snatt getting stuck into some cleaning

Renew & Refresh – what's this?

This year we rebranded it, hoping for more interest and there were a few extra people. But we would love more! So, if you're interested contact Carol Innes or William, because even when August is finished, we can still find the odd job. The church is a bit like the Forth Bridge - just when you think you are finished, you start all over again.

The Eclipse

It's fair to say, despite some comments, that the eclipse wasn't booked in especially for our second week. But what an evening we had. Colanders and pillowcases were set up and there was much excitement as the round holes started to become crescents. Then we were joined by a Vicarage Road gathering, all armed with special glasses. It was a truly joyous moment, with people of all ages (and a couple of dogs) looking at the spectacle, chattering, and renewing acquaintances.

I cannot guarantee an eclipse for next year, but do still think about coming, even if it's only for a short time – children are welcome too!

Carol Innes



Beautiful eclipse
crescents seen on
the church's west door



Ringling the Changes: Meet Bell-ringer Steve Mander



You may know that the bells of St Mary Magdalene's ring out every Sunday and on Tuesday evenings as well, but did you know that they are rung by actual people? Steve Mander has been ringing at St Mary Mag's on and off for 41 years, having started as a lad and returned to it 2 years ago. When asked what he most enjoys about ringing, Steve replied, 'the people...they are so down to earth. It's easy to get involved and you feel at home, whether you've been here 40 years or 5 days.'

You don't have to be physically strong to ring and Steve says there is always someone ready to help. 'You start simply by playing rounds, then ringing up and down. Then things move on to "call changes" - it's a natural progression.'



Some of St MM's ringers, including Steve (3rd from left)

Bell ringing is a unique hobby combining mental exercise, physical coordination, and a strong sense of community. The St Mary Mag's team meets on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9pm to practise; bells are rung on Sunday mornings from 9 to 9.25am.

If you would like to join our merry band of ringers or would like to ask a question about it, please contact the church office on 01926 470449. Give it a go – you will discover a new hobby and contribute something really valuable to your local community.

Sara Snatt



ADVERTISE WITH US

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To find out more contact Sara at
crosstalk@lillingtonparishchurch.org

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Leamington Library of Things

**Did you know there is a place you
can go...**

...to borrow items you only need occasionally, such as DIY tools, garden equipment, kitchen gadgets, camping or party supplies? It is called the Library of Things and is on Bedford Street in town. The 'borrow not buy' way of doing things means you can save money and storage space, whilst also helping to reduce consumption and waste. Benefits include:

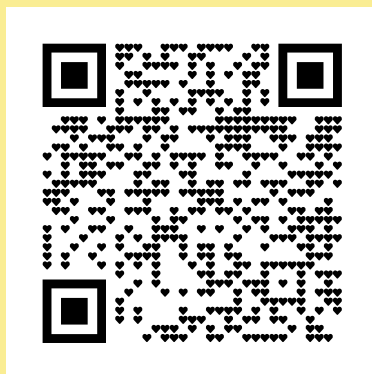
- Cost savings - borrowing is much cheaper than buying an expensive item for a single use (e.g. carpet cleaner or PA system).
- It frees up valuable home storage space, leaving your cupboards, garages and sheds free for other things you use more frequently.
- Sustainability - by sharing items, we reduce manufacturing demand and prevent items from being thrown away while they are still usable.
- Try before you buy - it gives you an opportunity to test out a tool or gadget for a project before deciding to invest in your own.
- Community building

**Go to <https://leamingtonlibraryofthings.co.uk>
or scan to find out more...**

The Library is open:

- **Monday: 10am – 12pm**
- **Wednesday: 11am – 1pm**
- **Saturday: 2-4pm**

Sara Snatt





ST MARY MAGDALENE'S CHRISTMAS FAIR

HOT DRINKS, CAKES, MULLED
WINE, CRAFTS, TOMBOLA,
PRELOVED STALL, TOY STALL
AND SO MUCH MORE!

Saturday
5th December
10 - 1

VICARAGE ROAD
LILLINGTON CV32 7RH

Singing in the Rain

Oh the smell, the sound, the feel of the freshly falling glorious rain. After many weeks of the hot, dry weather I did start to think we would never hear raindrops on our windows again.

As a keen amateur gardener, this year proved to be THE most challenging year I can ever recall. The warm sun of the early spring was most welcome and with a little nurturing and a sprinkle of water there was optimism in the air, watching the seeds begin to turn into fresh young plants. Yes, there was going to be an abundance of colour during the summer months. Such is the nature of being a gardening enthusiast - we are always looking forward to the good things yet to come in the next season.

However, as we all know, the total lack of rain started to become more of a problem. Young plants were starting to shrivel and die off, then as the weeks went on, the established shrubs couldn't cope. Everything was starting to close down for self-preservation: hardly any flowers; fruit was sparse or non-existent; leaves were curling and crispy as they fell to the ground below. This was no longer a nurturing exercise but a fight for survival for all that had been in the garden for many years.

Water is the most essential element for the whole of creation - without it we cannot exist. So, 2026 has been a shot across the bows. Both personally and globally, we must take stock and prepare, if this is indeed the way our climate is going. If we are to manage these feast or famine situations then it is up to us to use our water resources with care during the months of plenty. It will be next spring before we can fully assess what has survived, but hope springs eternal and like life itself, we must not give up in the face of adversity, for nothing stays the same forever and there will always be new beginnings.

Jan Talbot



Marvellous Music

On Thursday 17th September, members of St Mary Mag's congregation attended All Saint's for an evening of music. The programme featured a chamber performance by the Coull Quartet playing music by Haydn, Dvořák, and Beethoven, alongside a special guest appearance by the Rugby based Ukrainian Shchedryk Choir. The event raised funds for Belveder CIC to deliver ambulances filled with medical supplies and aid to Ukraine.

Sara Snatt



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LOVE LILLINGTON 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION YEAR



It is always good to look forward but also to take stock and look back a little. We have enjoyed a good 10th Anniversary year so far and give thanks for all that our Lord has strengthened us with – enabling our church Community Initiative – Love Lillington – to continue to help poor, vulnerable and needy people who live in our parish.

Our Coffee Morning in March was a joyful and well attended occasion with a table sale, balloons and a fantastic celebratory cake to share with everyone.

In May our 10th Anniversary Concert in church was an amazing event. A full house audience, all seated in comfortable chairs facing the organ pipes, was a special sight to see and our thanks go to former musical director Rachael Jefferies for putting the programme together and training the choir in weekly rehearsals; also to organist Adrian Moore and all the choir members, supported by vocal quartet Espressivo. Special thanks also to William for his support throughout, and for all he and project leader Nick Button did to drive through the completion of the first stage of the reordering in time for this celebration.

Moving into the Autumn season of this special year, we look forward to church services dedicated to Love Lillington on Sunday 18th October. We hope to share these services with you all in joyful praise and thanks for all that God is doing in Lillington.

Christine Butler
Love Lillington Action Administrator

We are looking forward to two special services dedicated to Love Lillington on Sunday 18th October at 9.30 and 11.15. Join us in joyful praise, giving thanks for all that God is doing in Lillington.



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From The Church Records – August

Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals & Memorial

Sunday Worship in October

4th Oct - 18th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am All Age Communion (in church) 6.00pm Evening Service (in church)
11th Oct - Harvest	10.30am Joint Harvest Holy Communion (in church & online) followed by Lunch
18th Oct - 20th after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)
25th Oct - last after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion (in church & online) 11.15am Worship for All (in church)

Weekday Services in October - Holy Communion in church & online at 10am on Wednesday 7, 14, 21 and 28 (Morning Prayer)

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.



CONTACT US!

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vicar@lillingtonparishchurch.org

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Isabella Moore 07801 108720
Isabella@lillingtonparishchurch.org

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joegoodlad70@gmail.com

LOVE LILLINGTON

Christine Butler 07963229756
lovelillingtonaction@lillingtonparishchurch.org

CROSSTALK:
crosstalk@lillingtonparishchurch.org



Come and explore faith, find
friendship and join a loving
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

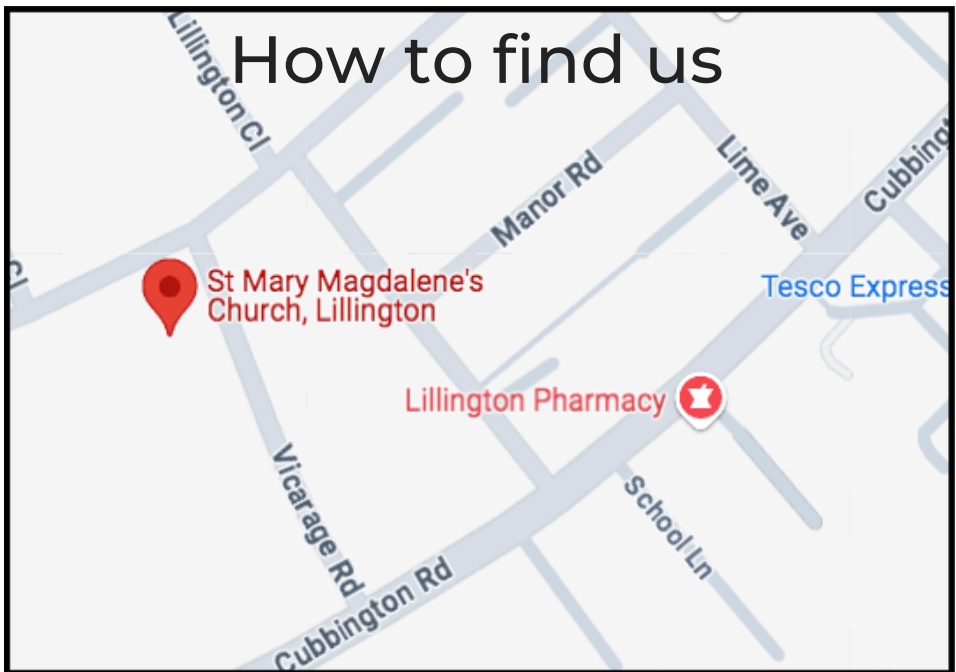
OR you can now join us via our website:

www.lillingtonparishchurch.org/streaming

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How to find us



St Mary Magdalene's, Vicarage Rd
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