

The GRAPEVINE

Spring Review 2026



Looking back on January, February, March and April

The magazine for the Parish of St Nicholas with St Barnabas' Kenilworth

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www.stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk



The GRAPEVINE

Edition: **Spring Review
2026**

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This month's cover:
**The Cross at Easter -
St Nicholas' Church.**

Proof reader:
Norman Stevens

Background image:
**Spring flowers - from
Macrh 2021**

Produced with
Microsoft Publisher



Member Editor 2025
Association for Church Editors

Dear readers ...

Welcome to another edition of **The Grapevine** magazine. This Spring Review looks back over January, February, March and April.

Again we have received a good number of contributions, with lovely images and more articles from our new contributors, along with our regulars.

The Online edition is free. A small number of printed copies may be available in church for a donation to cover printing costs of **£1.50**

Thank you to those who gave me feedback on how they read the magazine, which provided a useful insight.

The online edition has interactive [links](#) which were all working at the time of the copy date, including an interactive contents page. Hitting the page number will return you to the contents page. Should you find one of the links not working, please contact me so that I can correct it in future editions.

The next edition will be created on a new software programme. As Microsoft Publisher is being retired and won't be available, therefore, the appearance may be slightly different but the content and format *should* remain the same.

If you wish to contribute, the next copy date will be early in August for the Summer edition, Please watch the Newsletter for future copy dates. New contributors are always welcome but if you are unsure about sending me something, you can always get in touch with me and let me know what you are thinking of sending.

Articles and enquiries should be sent to the editor (Tony Shakespeare) at 7 Rosemary Mews, School Lane or email:

grapevine@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Editor

Welcome

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(works on most readers)

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Sunday Services



St Nicholas' Church and Parochial Hall

8.30am Said Holy Communion at St Nicholas' Church,
Book of Common Prayer - on **first and third Sundays**.

10.00am Holy Communion at St Nicholas' Church, with singing.
Family Praise - on the **second Sunday**

These services will also be livestreamed on [YouTube](#)

StN Kids on the **first and fourth Sundays at 10.00am** in St Nicholas' Church

6:30pm Choral Evensong on the **second and fourth Sundays** *Summer time*

 **Online:** **Sundays at 10.00am** - livestreamed Services from St Nicholas' Church via our [YouTube channel](#), where you can also watch previous services.

Visit the church website at www.stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk and find the link for **Worship from Home** or [click here](#) for ways to take part in Sunday services on-line.

St Barnabas' Church

11.00am Morning Worship, with hymns on the **first, fourth and fifth Sundays**

11.00am Holy Communion on the **second Sunday**

Café Sunday 10.00am 3rd Sunday, now at **St Barnabas' Church**, Albion Street

Mid-Week Services

Tuesdays and Thursdays 7.45am Morning Prayer at St Nicholas' Church

Tuesday 11.00am 'Leavenses at St Barnabas' Church,

Wednesday 10.00am Mid-week Eucharist - on the **first Wednesday of each month** at St Nicholas' Church,

Thursday 4.30pm Evening Prayer at St Barnabas' Church

Please check the Church Newsletter or church notices for changes to regular services.

View from the Vicarage

Spring 2026

Since Easter I have been reflecting deeply on the road to Emmaus. It is a gospel account of the risen Jesus

joining two of his disciples as they walked to Emmaus, but they do not recognise him. It is not until they sit down around a table to share a meal and Jesus breaks open some bread that Jesus is revealed to them and they recognise who has been with them all along the way.



It is possible that despite many years of knowing Jesus, that we can fail to recognise Jesus too. Through the Holy Spirit, we are constantly in the presence of God – in all of our everyday activities. Walking in Abbey Fields, catching a bus, sitting at a desk, meeting friends for coffee or lunch.

The moment the two travellers recognised Jesus, all of the “head knowledge” they had from Jesus’ teaching and explaining moved to their “hearts” and they felt their hearts burn within them. That burning of the heart. When you feel like truth, or joy, is so near to you, even when you cannot find the words to express it, that’s when you are in the presence of Jesus.

We should all be encouraged by this passage to review our days every day, so that we can notice where our hearts have burned within us, where we have been in the presence of Jesus. We should also be encouraged to step alongside others in their daily life. To listen to them, as Jesus listened to the two travellers, to hear their stories, their confusions, their hopes, their joys and their sadness. And, in that listening, to help them recognise where their own hearts burn, so that they can learn to recognise when they are in the presence of Jesus.

This is what we call “walking with others”. And it is a core strand of our emerging vision and mission here at St Nicholas’ with St Barnabas’. We want to create a whole parish community that is inspired by God, and our own example, to walk with Jesus on their life journey.

More on next page



Continued from page 4 - View from the Vicarage

One of the ways that we can realise that vision is to walk with people on their life journey, whether they have no faith at all or so much faith they are practically a Bishop! In doing so, we hope to understand each other's stories and help each other to a deeper discovery of God.

I'd love to know what you think about our emerging vision and mission and how we can shape the life of our church community to make it a lived reality. So, please come and join in the conversation at our Parish Celebration Day on 20th June at the Parochial Hall – where we will celebrate who we are and what we dream of being. More details and booking information will be shared in our weekly newsletter and on our website in the coming weeks.

Every Blessing

Eira

Rev Eira



*Walk of Witness, Good Friday -
Cross on Abbey Fields, Abbey
End/Rosemary Hill*

Reverend Richard Moore

Thanks to my wife's taste in music I suffered all day recently with an ear worm courtesy of Greatest Hits Radio - Marc Bolan's *Children of the Revolution*.

This led me to ponder on followers of Jesus after that first Easter; rather than children of the revolution, we are all Children of the Resurrection. Before that first Easter, the Children of Israel were God's chosen people; we can visualise the relationship as a traditional tent with God at the top, the apex and Israel the people at ground level at one corner and Israel the land at the other corner. Within this tent the people went about their lives under the watchful eye of God who was constant despite the human failings of his people.

When Jesus was crucified with arms outstretched he burst open the tent, he opened it to the world and what had been exclusive to the chosen people was for the first time inclusive to all humankind. By his death and resurrection all men and women who believe in Christ are welcomed into the Kingdom of God.

If only everything in the world had been made right by this, but we live in the knowledge that the Kingdom is both here and yet has not fully arrived. This paradox is brought about through our brokenness, through our inability to fully welcome the stranger, the other, into our midst. Only when divisions of race or gender or orientation or anything else that separates us has been banished will the Kingdom be complete. When that day comes all the children of God - the first children of the Resurrection and the Revolution will surely bear witness and see Thy Kingdom come both on Earth and in Heaven.



Reverend Richard Moore

Currently in Normandy

News from St Barnabas'

Lesley O'Connor



All are welcome

St Barnabas' Church was built in 1886 as a mission church to reach out to the community where it is situated. Since then, the area near the church has altered and grown, with many changes taking place. However, St Barnabas' is still there for the local community and beyond, offering a warm welcome to all.

Sunday services are at 11o'clock, apart from the 3rd Sunday when café church begins at 10o'clock.

PCC meetings are held at St Barnabas' on some Mondays.

Tuesdays are busy at St Barnabas' with the service of 'Leavenses at 11o'clock, followed by the Warm Hub. The Ladies group meet here, in the winter months at 2pm and from 3.30pm 'Brick club' is held for young children and their parents or carers.

Craft group meet on Wednesdays from 2pm.

Various other meetings are held in St Barnabas' during the year, e.g. Lent groups, music groups, discussion groups, meetings related to the running of St Barnabas'. Warwick District and Warwickshire County councils use the church for elections, and general elections have also taken place here.

St Barnabas' Church has been described as an oasis in our busy lives & the church is open every day for people who would like some quiet time or to spend time in private prayer. Those who just want to look around this unique building are always welcome, too.

Lesley O'Connor



‘Spring’ News in the Bell Tower

David Crawley

The highlight of 2026 so far has been the marriage of two of our bell ringers, Paul Reay and Emily Mort, on 21st March. Several tower members were able to attend the happy wedding at Swallows Nest Barn, Warwick, after which the bride and groom spent their honeymoon in Japan. To celebrate the occasion, we rang a quarter peal (1,250 changes taking around 45 minutes) on the afternoon of Sunday 22nd March.



The tower was also pleased to support Parish Teas on Sunday 12th April, with 21 visitors coming up to watch us ring the bells.

The bells received their two-yearly service in April and were found to be in good order, an advantage of having a maintenance contract with the bellfounders, John Taylor & Co of Loughborough. The cost of this is met by the tower through sponsored ringing and donations.

The clock also underwent its annual service in April, during which the hourly chimes were rectified and should now be heard loud and clear once more. The clock is now 150 years old and, like many of us, can occasionally feel its age by slowing down from time to time—but we do our best to maintain its accuracy!

David Crawley

St. Nicholas' Ladies Group

Gill Peppitt

St Nicholas' Ladies Group have had a very successful year so far.

In January we went for our New Year Lunch at the Race Horse in Warwick. It was a very successful and enjoyable adventure.

February saw us have a talk by **Anne Langley** about **Bertie Greatheeds 18th Century Grand Tour of Europe**, (former owner of Guys Cliff) which took quite a while, (leaving his wife at home with children) travelling through France, Switzerland, back to France then Italy. His exploits were very interesting.

In March we had a talk from **Frank Nield**, (former Latin Teacher at Kenilworth School), which was fascinating about the **Real Pompeii**. His knowledge about the subject was remarkable, he had taken many trips to the area. Vesuvius last erupted in 1944.

Our last talk in April was by **Mike Lister** who spoke about **Playing Cards**, This too was so interesting; basically telling us when they originated in China in the 9th Century. They looked like thin width paper: all together they looked like fans! They spread to Persia, Iran in 12th Century, Europe 13th, 14th Century and early 15th Century in the UK. Originals were hand-painted, France started card printing. In 18th Century cards started to be produced in America, similar to those we see today. The Joker did not appear in the UK until 1874.

We have had a really full Spring Session.

Our next meeting on **May 5th at 7.00pm** in St. Barnabas' will see **Gillian White** talking about Henry VIII's Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Our outing in July is to **Trentham Gardens**.

We are a thriving group (getting older) but young at heart, our speakers are wonderful

So ladies, if you would like to come to our meetings, contact Gill Peppitt

Gill Peppitt, Secretary

07896543373

St Nicholas' Mothers' Union News

St Nicholas' Mothers' Union have had a busy start to the 150th Anniversary Year. We began in January with our usual game of Beetle and a catch-up over tea and biscuits.

In February, Rev Eira chaired the A.G.M. , when we had a look back at the last year and planned the events for 2026, which is an important year for the Mothers' Union.

David Fry came in March to tell us about the Museum of Country Bygones in Marton. He gave us a fascinating glimpse of life in the past, and we had great fun trying to identify some obscure Victorian objects, all to do with the Countryside.

In April, Emma Worthington spoke to us about "Flourish", an organisation based in Leamington, which helps girls to build up their confidence and self-esteem, with talks, activities and support both in and out of school. We all played a sort of card game in which we had to find our own strengths and abilities, easier said than done!

We have also continued to hold Coffee and Chat on Friday mornings and to place flowers in the Lady Chapel.

Margaret Rogers

Sponsoring Flowers and Bells at St Nicholas' Church



Celebrate a special occasion, a birthday or wedding anniversary or in memory of a loved one by sponsoring the church flowers or the ringing of the bells.

As well as sponsoring church flowers, floral arrangements for weddings and special occasions can also be arranged by our

Flower Guild, including flowers for the church, table arrangements and the bridal flowers.

For details or to arrange sponsoring flowers or bells, contact the Parish Office, on 01926 857509 or email: office@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Or for floral arrangements by the Guild, contact the Flower Guild directly or contact the parish office





Easter Egg hunt

Heather Marshall

Children's and Families' Worker

During the Easter holidays we held our Easter egg hunt which was a lot of fun. Hidden around the church yard were ten egg clues. With each egg was an activity which told part of the Easter story. The children made sheep, collected bird seeds, swished their hands in water to remind them that Jesus washed the disciple's feet and decorated stones as a way of remembering that the stone in front of the tomb had been rolled away and that Jesus was alive. When they had completed all the tasks and found the hidden word the children received a chocolate egg reward. It was such a great way to share the Easter story in a child-friendly way.

We were very fortunate that the sun was shining. And it was lovely to see children and families enjoying being outside. It was a great way to meet our community and build relationships.

I am very grateful to all the volunteers who gave their time to help the children explore the Easter story.



[More on next page](#)



Good Friday Messy Church

Heather Marshall

Children's and Families Worker

During the morning, we created Easter story boxes. Inside the box was a donkey with clothes peg legs, a cross that was wrapped with wool, a painted stone, friendship bracelet, a candle holder decorated with stained glass tissue paper patterns and praying handprints to write their own prayers on. These crafts told the story of Easter in a creative and fun way. The children all went home with the Easter story so that they can retell it.



It was a lovely morning of crafting, getting messy, creating the Easter story. We ate hot cross buns together and had a very short service where we used Norwegian paper eggs to tell the story and a couple of chocolate eggs to help us pray.

The great thing about doing the morning in this way was that we could chat with families and get to know them a little bit. The vibe was happy, friendly, relaxed and lively: we had a lovely morning.



Easter alphabet created by children at Burton Green school as part of their collective worship.

A = Some people were **angry** with Jesus

B = **Born** in Bethlehem

C = **Cloaks** were thrown on the ground

D = Jesus rode on a **Donkey**

E = **Eager** to see Jesus

F = Some people in the crowd **fainted**

G = **Good** news

H = **Hosanna** shouted the crowds

I = **I** love Jesus

J = **Jesus**

K = **King**

L = Because he **loves** us

M = **Meal** together

N = **No** I will not betray you

O = **Open** the door

P = **Passover**

Q = **Quietly** Jesus prayed

R = **Risen**

S = **Stone**

T = **Tomb**

U = **Upper room**

V = **Victory** over sin

W = **Wine**

X = **is a cross**

Y = **You** can be friends with God

Z = **Zion**

Heather Marshall

St Barnabas' Easter Flowers

Rita Colville



The Flower Guild

Judith Walmesley

At last we are getting some warm, sunny weather. The hedgerows are laden with clouds of frothy blossom and leaves have unfurled with a splash of bright green. Spring has definitely arrived!

The Flower Guild continues to thrive, although we are always needing new members to enable continuity. We have had quite a busy start to the year. At the end of January we held our first Demonstration and Workshop of the year which, as usual, was well attended. Barbara Sheppard demonstrated a symmetrical arrangement using a variety of foliage, pussy willow and three types of flowers with different shapes. Afterwards several ladies took part in the workshop, with beautiful results.



Early in the year the Flower Guild was approached by

Kenilworth Chamber of Commerce who were planning an event to showcase what was going on in Kenilworth. They wondered if Barbara, on behalf of the Flower Guild, would demonstrate and lead a workshop. Barbara and some members of the Flower Guild did the preparation and in February the event took place and it was a great success. Some of the ladies who took part now join in the regular workshops we hold in St Nicholas' church. Events like this are a great source of outreach.

The second Demonstration and Workshop happened in March. Barbara once again demonstrated, and this time it was an arrangement in a basket using spring flowers. We gave the arrangement to our Treasurer, Alan Searle, and



Continued from page 15 - The Flower Guild



his wife Sue who were soon going to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Once again we had an increased attendance and many ladies joined in the workshop.



On Holy Saturday we began decorating the church for the Easter Festival. Rev Eira came to say prayers and to thank us all. This year the colour scheme was pastel-coloured flowers with foliage and pussy willow, adorned with decorative Easter eggs. As usual, everyone worked hard to create impressive arrangements. We received many compliments, which is very gratifying. Thank you also for donating towards the cost of the Easter flowers. It is very much appreciated.



More Easter Flowers on
page 23





At our latest workshop in May, the numbers of attendees increased even more than usual. Barbara demonstrated making arrangements without the use of Oasis foam. This is something we should all try to do, if possible, to reduce pollution from microplastics. Three arrangements were demonstrated, the first used a pin holder in a shallow container, the second had chicken wire inside a deep vase and the third was a bulbous



vase filled with water with pebbles in the base. Several ladies rose to the challenge of not using oasis and produced stunning arrangements. It is amazing how just three flowers and foliage in a shallow container with a pin holder can make a dramatic impact!

This is a roundup of the Flower Guild's recent activities. We continue to arrange a pedestal in front of the pulpit each week. Thank you for continuing to sponsor arrangements and for supporting us in many different ways.

Our next Demonstration and Workshop is on **Saturday 11th July at 10:30 in St Nicholas' church.**

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Judith

The Power of Flowers

Thelma Mitchell

The beauty of the Cathedral-standard flower arrangements we enjoy at St. Nicholas' and St. Barnabas' never fail to take my breath away. In April the flower arrangers excelled themselves! The Easter floral displays, large, middling and small, were breathtaking and joyous.

As if standards weren't sufficiently high, they then created an arrangement at the pulpit for Neville and my 60th wedding anniversary! I could not stop looking at their beauty which was heart-gladdening and brought back many memories over the years, which have gone in a trice.

It has been a tough few months recently, to crown a rubbish couple of years, as someone said. Losing our son, then our grandson and serious illness pushed us to the brink. Then, to add insult to injury, our car was stolen. Off our drive. (If I am ever vain enough to write an autobiography, that saga will have a chapter all to itself!) Suffice to say, our nine-year old Skoda automatic was used in an armed robbery, with false number plates, and the driver left his passport in the car. And by the way, key safes are not safe! Our house key was cut out of the box to open our front door and take the car key.

Throughout these momentous times, the love, support, help and prayers of so many folks at church, and in the local community, have given us the strength to continue, to praise God and rejoice in His creation, 'giving thanks in all things', especially the joy the ministry of church flowers brings. Every visit, every prayer, every card, every email, every hug, every kind word, every quiet touch of the arm, have upheld us. And so many heartfelt and grateful thanks to the Flower Guild for their amazing ministry.

Thelma Mitchell

Getting to know ... Jane Brown

Liz Smith



Although born a cockney, Jane's family moved out of London when she was 6 months old and she grew up in the home counties and the Midlands. After marrying Andy, they lived for a while on a RAF base in Germany, before moving to a small village west of Glasgow in Scotland. She'd trained and worked as an infant teacher before her marriage and so after the children were born, she became involved in teaching at the local Episcopalian Sunday school. Jane and Andy moved with their 3 boys to Kenilworth in 1995. At first she started a little Kumon centre for Maths which ran for some years before she began working as a teaching assistant with teenagers with special needs at Aylesford School in Warwick.

She started serving at communion services as a teenager as she was drawn to it for some unfathomable reason. She would serve at the early 8.00 am service. The church was a mile or so away in the next village and she remembers that she used to like getting up extra early to walk through the water meadows by the river to get there, liking the feeling of being in the midst of the natural world at that very quiet time of day.

Her family had fairly strong links with the local church in Buckinghamshire; her father was treasurer for the PCC and ran a very small, very amateur church choir and there were lots of vicars in her family! They were brought up with Sunday school or church every Sunday, taught the Lord's Prayer and her family was part of the local church community. She thinks that when young people move away from the family environment for work and study it is such a testing time for their faith. Will they continue to listen to that still small voice or will it be drowned out by noisier distractions? For her, God's presence has been a constant, and marrying Andy, who has his own strong personal faith, has only helped them both grow in faith.



Jane's not sure that she's been on a faith journey, it's felt more like a roundabout! She quotes John Donne: 'On a huge hill ... Truth stands, and he that will/Reach her, about must, and about must go'. She feels that human lives go round in circles and we learn and re-learn lessons from different perspectives but with a more mature understanding. She adds 'We continue to challenge ourselves and to grow and that is better than stasis or becoming self-satisfied. The film Groundhog Day makes the same point'.

Jane also believes that listening is important, although she feels she has a long way to go. "I don't think that you can ever be too good a listener!. Recognizing that the chance encounter with a stranger, even if it lasts for only a few seconds, can be the most important thing you do that day. Our priorities for life can be very topsy-turvy and what we think of as important may not actually be that relevant to the Kingdom of God".

Jane has prayed a lot about what God is calling her do. The answer came back, 'You must write'. She was standing by the ironing board at the time and turned hot and cold all over! She objected of course, but He kept coming back at her so eventually she felt she must write or she would explode. So, she began and it's got better over time. There's a major medieval text written during the Wars of the Roses called Le Morte D'Arthur which she wants to retell for the 21st century. Ostensibly it's about King Arthur, but she feels that it's really about division and reconciliation, retribution and forgiveness. "It's a story for our times and rather more nuanced than the swords and sorcery stuff dreamt up by Hollywood".

For Jane, faith is the ground on which she walks: "Honestly what is the point without it?" She works, she prays and tries to be open to people and be with them in the moment. Jesus challenges her to go where she doesn't want to go and do what she doesn't want to do. Jane does find this uncomfortable at times, but she feels it has also enriched her immeasurably.

Liz Smith





Brick Club @ St. Barney's

- JOURNEY INTO SPACE

Thelma Mitchell



Brick Club continues to thrive each Tuesday after school in term time at St. Barnabas church. Some of the children caught chicken pox, which was doing the rounds and, sadly, had to miss a number of weeks last term. We missed them, their sense of fun, ingenuity, talents and interest. They are all a great group of children and we learn so much from them too.

We pray that this term they are all fully recovered and back among us. Some of the highlights recently have included making plant pots and planting them up for Easter. And, on the occasion of the recent **Artemis II** crewed moon mission, we journeyed into space! Thinking about God's creation and making rockets from small, interlocking plastic bricks was definitely very popular!

The atmosphere is always informal, the toast hot, the fruit fresh and we have the best Bible stories to create models for! We know that not everyone can come every week - you are most welcome to come whenever you are able. We look forward to seeing you again soon. That hot toast won't eat itself!

We feel very God-blessed. It is wonderful to see the club going off in often unplanned but exciting directions and thriving. Let's pray for a continuing-to-flourish Brick Club in 2026!

St. Nicholas and St. Barnabas; we have LIFT OFF!

Thelma Mitchell

Church Teas



We served **Snowdrop Teas** in February and those brave enough to endure the cold and rain certainly enjoyed the Teas in St Nicholas' Church.

We have served in April and May and welcomed many new and regular customers into the church. The Belltower was also open to visit.

On **21st June** we will be serving Teas and light lunches from 1.00 until 5.00pm in the St Nicholas' Parochial Hall, High Street, in conjunction with **NGS Kenilworth Open Gardens**. We will be serving the usual delicious cakes and drinks with income for church funds.

We will then serve Church Teas on the second Sundays of the month from 2.00 until 4.30pm in St Nicholas' church until October.

Dates for your diary = June 21st, July 12th, August 9th, September 13th (Heritage weekend) and October 11th Harvest.

Thank you for your support, especially those who serve and make the delicious cakes.

Janet Cherry



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[Facebook.com/StNicholasStBarnabasKenilworth](https://www.facebook.com/StNicholasStBarnabasKenilworth)



Easter Flowers at St Nicholas'



Continued from page 23 - Easter Flowers at St Nicholas'



CONFIRMATIONS

Revd Eira



As the sun rose over Coventry Cathedral, a group of worshippers from St Nicholas' with St Barnabas' gathered with many others from across our diocese for the Easter Sunday Dawn Service. We were there to celebrate with two girls from our congregation, Elinor and Elizabeth as they were confirmed by Bishop Sophie. As Elinor and Elizabeth made a special commitment as part of their faith journey in this beautiful dawn service, we were blessed to be able to pray for them as they chose to declare their faith.

Elinor and Elizabeth have been part of the parish since they were small children, worshipping with us several times a month including at Café Sunday. They took this big decision after taking part in our Live Life course – where we discussed theological ideas like “what is worship?” and “how is Jesus like us?”. We explored how who we are, and where in the world we live, might shape how we imagine Jesus, and how growing disciples is less about a performance and telling people what to do and more about watering seeds and watching them grow into beautiful flowers.

Elinor and Elizabeth are inspirational in the way that they talk about their faith and their love of God. Please pray for them as they continue to grow as Jesus' beloved disciples.



Eira

DIY Building Project

Malcolm Trewick

This is the building project which the DIY team carried out in March. It didn't get Architect's approval, nor need a Faculty from the Diocese. Nevertheless, it was a brilliantly carried out job by Churchwarden Frank and DIY'er Michael, photographed by Malcolm.

If anyone feels up to doing a bit more, come along and join us next month.



*'Celebrating Pauline's
90th birthday today at
'Leavenses'*

Thelma Mitchell

Friday mornings coffee and chat

Each Friday, from 10.30 to 11.30am. Please do come along and catch up with friends while enjoying a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits in St Nicholas' Church.



Religious Education – changes ahead?

Cllr Richard Dickson - Kenilworth St John's

In many ways RE is an odd subject.

It's compulsory to study RE in all Primary Schools and, in England at least, up to but not necessarily including GCSE at Secondary Schools. But parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons and RE is not currently part of the National Curriculum. RE has seen a 40% drop in GCSE entries between 2009 and 2019, largely due to its exclusion from the English Baccalaureate.

RE can cover a wide range of faiths and worldviews. It can include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Humanism, Judaism and many more. Pupils learn how different groups understand life, meaning, spiritually, culture and morality. Without endorsing any one religion or worldview, RE sets out to help pupils navigate the diversity of beliefs they meet in modern Britain. RE is also known as Religious Studies, but is different from Religious Instruction and Divinity.

RE helps pupils understand global issues, develop respect and empathy, think ethically and avoid prejudice and extremism. So it helps build and sustain community cohesion. It can help put issues taught in other arts and science subjects, and in citizenship and PHSE, in context. It can help young people – whether they have a faith, worldview or not - to become religiously literate in the 21st century, so they can form positive relationships with people of other faiths and worldviews and none. In the diverse and multiple-cultured places where we live, this makes RE vital to help create resilient communities.

Most subjects taught in our schools follow a national curriculum. But with RE each Local Authority creates its own agreed syllabus, with private schools and faith schools following their own. Local authorities do this through a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education involving representatives from the local principal faiths and worldviews, teachers and nominated elected Councillors. I am a member of the Warwickshire SACRE, in part because of my previous work with Westhill Trust and not because – oh, still the guilt – 50 years ago I failed Divinity O level!



Continued from page 27- Religious Education - changes ahead

Many RE teachers in Primary and Secondary schools have no formal post A level qualification in the subject. Imagine this being common in Maths, English or a Science subject! Some RE lessons are led by representatives from external organisations whose remit, in their governing document at least, is to promote only one religion and to recruit followers to it. Some people may see this as contrary to the balanced and inclusive approach taken by schools.

Now, after consultation, the UK's central government is looking at changes supported by, amongst others, the National Association of Teachers of RE, the Religious Education Council and the National Association of SACREs. Previous attempts in the past 20 years have sadly not borne fruit, because they've not had political approval or endorsement from some faith bodies, e.g. the Anglican National Society for Education.

The welcome changes include:

1. Embedding RE in the National Curriculum to help ensure a more consistent and broad approach to the subject;
2. Christianity to be studied in depth across the RE curriculum, reflecting its influence on British history, culture, ethics, and national identity;
3. More focus on non-Christian faiths so that at each Key Stage at least one extra world religion is studied; and
4. Fostering understanding of how belief in the transcendent informs moral decision-making, personal identity and social responsibility.

It's unclear if the right to withdraw will remain, but it'll take years for these changes to be embedded. It'll be many years too before young adults become more faith and worldview literate than they are at present. Please pray for students studying RE and Worldviews, teachers and inspectors of the subject, school leaders and SACRE members.

Remember too that the teaching of RE is different from the need for a compulsory daily act of worship in our schools. That's another minefield altogether!

Cllr Richard Dickson - Kenilworth St John's

What's happened to the Abbey Museum?

Some of you may have noticed that the Abbey Museum, the 'Barn,' has not been able to open as usual this year. It is normally open from Easter until late September on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The problem is all down to the electricity supply, and here begins a long story. With the new swimming pool being built a new and upgraded power supply has been provided via a substation. A new cable was laid along the route of the old cable, beside the path. It was expected that if there were any delays, the old cable could still be used. However, when they were excavating it was discovered that the old cable was dangerous and could not be reconnected. Although the original plan was to come through the left hand side of the door where there is a stone missing, this route was decided as not practical so a new entry had to be explored. The archaeologists then found abbey foundations in the way which mean that another plan had to be devised, this time, to use the existing point of entry but enlarge it to accommodate the new cable.



With legal issues and revised planning and approval procedures to be met, this has led to a long delay with currently no timeline as to when the electricity will be connected to allow the Kenilworth History and Archaeology Society, who run the museum voluntarily, to re-open the museum for visitors.

In the meantime, along with Town Cllr Alan Chalmers, KHAS is providing small free guided tours of the abbey ruins using the Kenilworth Revealed App on iPads, on Sunday afternoons from 2.30pm. These are likely to continue throughout the summer.

The museum doors will be open for book sales, donations, a chat and to book on the tours but hopefully the museum will be fully open and ready for visitors very soon, when you will be made most welcome.



**Kenilworth History &
Archaeology Society**

Wednesday Study Group

Heather Alford



For our studies through Lent we used a book written by Paula Gooder which invited us to think about the lives of 9 different women who might well have been in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and what effect the events of that day and the following week may have had on their lives. Some of the women were imaginary and it was interesting to try to put ourselves into their shoes; gauging what our reactions might have been as the week progressed. We also looked at how the week would have felt for some of the women that we do know were there and having to witness such distressing things at first hand; Salome, Mary Magdalene, Mary, Jesus' Mother.

We found the whole series of studies very different from our normal discussions; it was stimulating and very thought-provoking to envision ourselves in a situation that is so well-known to us; but also completely unknown. We were able to share those thoughts with each other.

On the last of our Lent studies we spent time in meditation and reflection of the journey that we had been on, and prepared ourselves to continue that journey into Holy Week.

For the summer term we are studying the book of Ruth. If you would like to join us, you would be most welcome. Please contact me Heather Alford.

Heather Alford on 01926 858308



Why not celebrate a special occasion, a birthday, wedding anniversary, etc. or in memory of a loved one by **sponsoring the flowers at St Barnabas' Church.**

Sponsor forms are on the notice board at St Barnabas' Church, or ring Rita on 07450069399, or speak to her in church.

Carbon Confidence in an Hour

Victoria Lee

On 27th April, Kit and I went to St John's, Kenilworth, to attend a Churches Together event to learn a bit more about carbon release and climate change. Colin Angus, Net Zero Carbon Project Officer, is running this course throughout the diocese and I thoroughly recommend it.

As you probably know, the Church of England has set itself a target of reaching Carbon Net Zero in all its buildings by 2030. (Carbon Net Zero means "balancing the amount of greenhouse gases produced with the amount removed from the atmosphere, achieving a net total of zero emissions". In practical terms, it means avoiding using fossil fuel in any and every context.) It is an ambitious goal, and it shows how seriously the CofE (along with many other organisations) is taking the climate situation.

I often feel a bit hopeless when it comes to climate change: how can I make a difference, especially if other people and, indeed, other countries aren't bothering to do anything? I can feel quite defeated.

And, yes, the current situation does look bad: the world is getting hotter, humans aren't making enough changes quickly enough, and the poorest people will likely suffer the most as a result. However, there is some positive news as well. Churches – including St Nicholas' and St Barnabas – are actively reducing their carbon footprint. This might be by switching to renewable energy suppliers, improving heating systems, switching off unnecessary lights, increasing insulation, recycling, and so on. All these actions have an impact. The impact isn't just to do with numbers: it is also a signal to governments and leaders to act as well.

The main messages I took from the course were that even small changes are worth making – they all add up to decrease our carbon emission, and that helps humans and the planet. Worldwide, there is a lot that must be done, but as individuals and, together, as a church community, doing something is far, far better than doing nothing. So, we must keep going and take positive steps.

Victoria Lee

Heat Loss in our Churches

Victoria Lee

One day, last winter, Sam borrowed a thermal imaging camera from the town council and surveyed both St Nicholas' and St Barnabas' churches to see where most heat left the buildings.

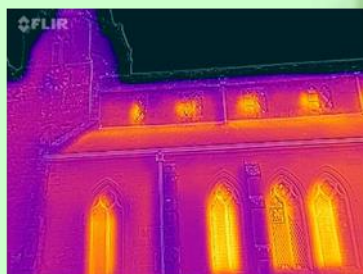
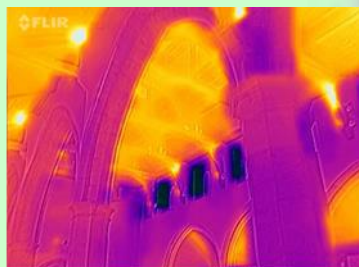
The results may not entirely surprise you, but visual evidence is useful and, also, indicates where changes, if they are feasible, could be made to reduce heat loss. In St Nicholas', heat is lost through the open main doors, but having the inner doors closed makes a significant difference. This shows the importance of those inner doors in heat retention.

Heat is also lost through the windows, including the north, south and upper windows. Our stained-glass windows are precious. However, the upper windows are undecorated and rarely opened, so it might be possible to insulate or double glaze them.

Lastly, less heat is lost through the roof and walls than might be expected. The photographs show the roof to be an excellent insulator.

In St Barnabas', heat is lost through the main door when open – that's not surprising. The windows are double glazed and the photographs show that these are working well to reduce heat loss. Heat is lost, however, through the metal walls. So, in St Barnabas', it would be worth investigating if the walls could be insulated.

Sam created a power point document, so if you would like further information, please ask the Eco Team.



St Nicholas' showing heat loss through the roof, internal, and South side, external.



St Barnabas' showing heat loss through the doors and metal walls

**The Parish Church of St Nicholas,
Abbey Fields, Kenilworth, CV8 1BP
And St Barnabas' District Church,
Albion Street, Kenilworth, CV8 2FY**
Registered Charity Number 1126227

Postal and Parish office address:
St Nicholas' and St Barnabas'
Church,
The Parochial Hall, 28, High Street,
Kenilworth, CV8 1LZ



Who's Who?

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Prayer and Fellowship

For detail of our various groups, contact the office who will be able to pass your details onto the group leader.

Parish Office

The Parish Office is located in the Parochial Hall, High Street.

The Office is open and you can contact Debby, the Parish administrator, during the usual office hours **11am – 2pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday**. Otherwise, if you have an urgent enquiry which needs responding to in a time-sensitive manner, please contact the churchwardens or Revd Richard Moore.

Email or telephone:

01926 857509 | office@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Our postal address is: **St Nicholas' and St Barnabas' Church, The Parochial Hall, 28 High Street, Kenilworth, CV8 1LZ.**

To post anything by hand, there is a post box outside the Parochial Hall



St Nicholas with St Barnabas Kenilworth
*A Parish in the Church of England Diocese of Coventry
and Registered Charity 1126227*

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www.stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Before you go ...

The next Grapevine will be the **Summer Review**, looking back at people, events and celebrations over May, June and July.

Again, for those running church or local community groups, clubs, societies or meetings, this could be an opportunity to submit your 2026-27 programme of planned activities, events or talks so that readers can see what is coming up during the year.

It was great to see so many contributions again for this edition of The Grapevine. I hope that people will equally enjoy contributing to our next edition, and that our readers will find something entertaining in the Summer edition.

Do watch the Parish Newsletter for the next copy date and when to expect the next edition.

Fancy being an editor?

THE GRAPEVINE

Calling all would be editors, or those retired editors that would like to have another go ...

I am looking for a sub-editor to help with The Grapevine. Nothing too demanding, especially as we now only produce four issues per year. The software I am planning to use for future editions will be **Affinity Publisher**, which is part of the Canva Suite.

It will involve collaborating with me to plan the pages, adding the articles and images, inserting and checking any links needed, sending off for proof reading and making corrections before sending it to be published.

Although it sounds a lot of work, much is copying and pasting in articles received and arranging the images but there is plenty of room for some creative ideas and a lot of scope to add your own touch.

If it sounds like something you would be interested in, please email me at grapevine@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Ed.