

The GRAPEVINE

Summer Review 2026

Looking back on May, June and July

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

www.stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk



The GRAPEVINE

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**The Summer
Review**

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This month's cover:
***Church flowers
at St Nicholas'***

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Background image:
***Blue skies over
the Abbey Fields,
July 2026***

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Dear Reader ...

Welcome to this edition of *The Grapevine* magazine. This is the Summer review, the third in our new quarterly format, looking back over the events, celebrations and joy of May, June and July.

In the future, when you think back to the Summer of 2026, what will you remember? The heat wave that seemed to last forever with soaring temperatures? The scorched grass and dried up lake of the Abbey Fields? The blue, cloudless skies and trying to conserve water for the garden? Or perhaps the 100th anniversary carnival parade and the fair; the long awaited opening of the new swimming pool, or breaking up from school and your holiday?

In this edition, we look back on the summer of 2026 in our parish, its people as we showcase our church and community, at St Nicholas' and St Barnabas'.

As always, we have received a good number of contributions. We hope that you enjoy the lovely images and interesting articles. This is the first edition created on different publishing software from previously, so we hope that it all works well and looks familiar too.

The online edition is free, and can be read online or downloaded onto your device. A small number of printed copies may be available in our churches for a donation to cover printing costs of £1.50.

The online edition contains links and interactive elements, including a contents page to the main articles, which I hope were all working at the time of publishing and should work in most browsers and apps. Should you find any links not working, please contact me so that I can correct them in future editions.

Happy reading and good wishes,

Ed.

Welcome

Click the page title of the article below to visit the relevant page then click on the return icon at the bottom of the page to become back to here.

(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 online.

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

Back in June we held our Parish Celebration Day, where we explored our emerging vision....

**to create a whole parish community
that is inspired by God, and our own
example, to walk with Jesus on their
life journey**



People from all generations and across all our different worshipping communities gathered to celebrate the church that we are and the church that we dream of being. A great day was had with intergenerational worship and crafts that helped us to explore what the vision meant to each of us. Some of the key themes that emerged from the day included: a desire to build relationships and connect with one another in shared worship and social events; the importance of a church community that is inclusive of lots of different types of people and offers a true welcome and place where people can really belong; and creating spaces outside of Sunday services where people can ask questions about faith and deepen their relationship with God.

Over lunch there were wonderful conversations and new friendships formed and afterwards we all joined together for a massive scavenger hunt. There were some fast feet bringing the items and some even faster brains alighting on creative ways to find a picture of the King, or a receipt from a shop in Kenilworth! What we all realised was how wonderful an expression of God's Kingdom it is when we all come together to share food,



More on next page →

Continued from page 4 - View from the Vicarage

worship and time with one another, creating a supportive community that will allow us all to encounter Jesus and grow in faith.

The vision working group are currently working hard to gather all the learning and ideas that we generated from the day. Then in the autumn the PCC will publish an implementation plan. This plan will outline some key areas for our mission, which is...

Our part in making it happen...

Through God's Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus, we reach out so that everyone can experience the abundant, never-ending love of God by:

Walking with people on their journey, no matter where it starts

Enabling people to encounter Jesus through fellowship, prayer and worship

Growing our Faith together, to experience the transforming power of God in our lives

This is an exciting time, but there will be challenges ahead, so I encourage you all to pray for our emerging vision and mission. You might like to join in with our prayer for moving forward.

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Every Blessing



Rev Eira



Reverend Richard Moore

As July draws to a close the wheat fields visible from my study window are already reduced to stubble, a few bales of straw, too big for a man to move lie scattered waiting for the telehandler to scoop them up and load them on to a trailer. The warm weather has precipitated an early harvest, the yield of which will be distinctly average; “not enough rain when we needed it most!” retorted my neighbour. I think of harvest and harvest festivals in years past and this year we must be two months ahead in the cycle. The traditional hymns are out of sync too;



Come ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home!

All is safely gathered in,
Ere the winter storms begin,.....

The hymns, though, are a parable and serve a dual purpose, giving thanks for the bounty from the soil and reminding us that we are part of creation and under God's watchful stewardship. If you were in church on Sundays during July you would have heard the readings from Matthew's gospel focused on the parables of the Sower, the Tares and the Wheat, and the Harvest of the Sea. The fish/agrarian metaphors and similes not only strike a chord with Jesus' audience at the time, they are valid today as we struggle with the vagaries of weather and a changing climate. Dig a little deeper and we are reminded that our faith is assailed by factors both beyond our control and also by our individual personalities – our best intentions wither on stony ground, or are choked by worldly cares; the tares and the wheat, the shade and the light of our character grow alongside in each of us. The solution throughout is always to hold your focus on the kingdom of heaven – for that faith is the fruit of the harvest even in a changing climate.



Blackberries ripe for picking in July!

Rev'd. Richard Moore



News from St Barnabas'

Lesley O'Connor



Wednesday Craft Group

The craft group has been busy over the summer helping a charity called 'Baby Bliss'. This is a charity based in Warwick, providing clothes and toys for local families who cannot afford to buy everything their babies and toddlers need. Craft group have provided cardigans etc and many families have benefitted from their efforts.

Many children and young people unfortunately lose their hair due to cancer treatment; to keep warm during the colder months, they wear hats. Craft group have knitted several hats to help hospitals cope with the demand for these hats. Despite the hot weather during the last few months, the knitting needles have been out on Wednesday afternoons keeping those at Craft Group busy!

Everyone is welcome to the craft group on Wednesdays from 2pm. Not interested in craft? Don't worry you are still invited to join them for a cuppa and chat.

The history of this group goes back to the 1950's. It was originally called "Friends of St Barnabas" and was made up of a group of women who made and sold knitted items and homemade goods. They would meet in the afternoon. The money raised helped to boost the funds for St Barnabas' Church. After a while the 'Friends' met in the evenings and invited several guest speakers, they also began raising money for other causes. They made the curtains for the St Barnabas hut, the hall (now demolished) and the curtains that once hung in the church. A rota was created to clean the brasses in St Barnabas', and when the church had pews there were brass handles at the end of each pew, and they were polished with brass cleaner every week, along with the cross and candle sticks and they shone! As the years went on the 'Friends' continued to raise funds for the church, visited those parishioners who were sick and always held a raffle and had stalls at the Christmas Fair and Summer Fair, helping to raise money for charities and the parish. The group then changed their meeting time to a Wednesday afternoon. When 'The Friends of St Nicholas' and St Barnabas' came along, so as not to confuse people with two similar names, the 'Friends' were renamed as 'The Wednesday Craft Group'. For over 70 years, first as 'The Friends of St Barnabas', then as the 'Wednesday Craft group', it has served the needs of the parish, the local community and beyond. We give thanks for all that this group has done and pray that it will continue for many years to come!





News from St Barnabas'

Lesley O'Connor

'Leavenses

We have, as always, welcomed different speakers to our service on Tuesdays. Rev Eira came to celebrate St Barnabas' Day with us; we were each given a white rose with a Bible text to encourage us in our Christian journey.

St Barnabas' was known as an encourager. Thelma, Rita, Marion, Mary, Carol, Heather, Kath, and Lesley have shared their thoughts about several different subjects. Our thanks must go to Steve, who plays the piano for the service. He doesn't know in advance what hymns or songs we're going to sing but always plays so well with a smile and enthusiasm! Cakes are always available with tea and coffee; this is thanks to Chris and Mary who kindly take it in turn to bake the cakes.

The generosity of those at 'Leavenses, enabled us to send £200 to Christian Aid in May. £135.00 was sent to Parkinson's UK in July. This worthwhile charity helps research into helping find treatments and for better health care for the many people who are diagnosed with Parkinson's.

The door of St Barnabas' is open for you all to join us at 11o'clock on Tuesdays for our short service of 'Leavenses and refreshments round the table afterwards.

Warm Hub

We continue to welcome those who join us at St Barnabas' for the Warm Hub on Tuesdays after the service of 'Leavenses. During the heatwaves we have endured throughout this summer, we served lots of cool drinks, so we became a Cool Hub! Please remember that we are here all year whatever the weather so please feel free to join us; it is open to all, whatever their circumstances and it is free! St Barnabas' Church is known as a friendly, hospitable place so come along and see for yourself, bring your friends too! As well as drinks and food there are books, magazines and jigsaws to borrow, and unlike the local library, no return date!

St Barnabas' Church opened its doors in 1886 and 140 years later the doors are still open to welcome people from the local community and beyond. Please see the weekly newsletter for meetings and services happening each week in St Barnabas'.

Lesley O'Connor



St. Nicholas' Ladies Group

Gill Peppitt

MAY 5TH 7.00PM. - We were fortunate to have Gillian White who has a lot of historical knowledge to give a talk about Henry VIII and the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

She made it so entertaining and very factual - too much to transcribe at the time. The Field of the Cloth of Gold was an opulent 18 day summit in June 1520 between King Henry VIII of England and King Francis I of France.

Held in Northern France, near Calais, it featured extravagant temporary Palaces, Fountains running with Wine, Tournaments and Banquets all designed to cement lasting peace.

It was orchestrated by Henry's chief minister Cardinal Thomas Wolsey to celebrate the then recent Anglo-French Peace Treaty and strengthen ties between the two Powers. However, it resulted in a competitive display of wealth, fashion and power where both monarchs tried to out do one another. There are pictures at Hampton Court. Details gained off internet.

However, Gillian White did give lots of details and, as I said, was very entertaining.

JUNE 2ND 7.00P.M. - The Ladies held their Annual General Meeting: the committee did not change and all were proposed and seconded. Margaret Wright Leader, Pat Holder Treasurer, Gil Peppitt Secretary, Val Clark Computer Wiz, Support members Gill Boden, Janet Cherry, Heather Lowe, Judith Walmsley. Margaret read out her report for a year which included all our inspirational talks - Warwickshire Search & Rescue, The Wonderful World of Honey Bees, Shakespeare's Women, Bertie Greatheed's Grand Tour of Europe, The Real Pompeii and King Henry VIII and the Field of the Cloth of Gold. We also had a Christmas Social and Meal Out. Outing in July planned for Trentham Gardens. Pat reported on monies held, subscriptions are taken in September and cover teas, coffee, heating and payment of speakers. Any residue is given to Charity - this year it is Myton.

We meet first Tuesday of each month, we welcome all ladies to a friendly supportive group. Times do vary. Winter 1.45 and Summer 7.00pm. Months will be on the forthcoming programme for 2026-27. We commence activities first Tuesday in September at 7.00p.mat St. Barnabas' Church.

JULY 7th 2026. - The Ladies had a wonderful trip to Trentham Gardens.

There is so much to see and do, time went very quickly; however, the heat, etc , saw many of us taking refuge In between walks, to have coffees, lunch, ice creams and tea and cakes. Unfortunately the David Austin Rose Garden



had a few blooms but the majority had died and staff were dead-heading them ready for them to renew. The wild flower borders were beautiful and the Italian Garden is in its first year. It is a very spacious Park Land really with lovely lake and trails, activities for children, and one can hire wheelchairs or scooters.

There is a wonderful garden centre and a Shopping Village which is unbelievable! A good day was had by all who went.

Gill Peppitt, Secretary

07896543373



St Nicholas' Mothers' Union Summer Report

The Summer months have been very busy and enjoyable ones for St Nicholas' Mothers' Union as we celebrated our 150th Anniversary.

In May we had an outing to Hanbury Hall in Worcestershire, which was blessed with good weather and a very knowledgeable and interesting guide who told us all the stories about the family, the paintings and even the furniture!

Our Take-over Service in June was a great success, with members leading the prayers, reading, welcoming the congregation and providing coffee and cake. Our Diocesan President, Karen Morris, gave an uplifting talk about Mothers' Union and its role today. We shared a Stall with St John's Mothers' Union at the Lion's Day, showcasing what we do and selling plants and cards. The Hook-a-Duck game proved to be very popular with the children.

We also held our very popular Strawberry Tea in June, where everyone enjoyed sandwiches, cakes, scones and of course, strawberries. We raised £ 396.30 at the event for the Anniversary Appeal.

In July Karen came to the Wednesday Communion especially to enrol two new members. At the afternoon meeting on the 15th July, Heather Marshall came along to tell us about her work, making and embroidering stoles for the clergy. She brought some samples of her beautiful needlework for us to see. She is a very talented person, and we are exceedingly lucky to have her in our Church family.

Margaret Rogers



Little Nicks – Stay and Play group

Heather Marshall

Children's and Families' Worker

New toys

We are very fortunate to have an outdoor space in the church hall. This space is under-used. Many of the families that come to Little Nicks stay and play say it is a shame not to be able to use the garden and how they have a real desire to see their children playing outdoors more. It is a great extra play space. There are great benefits to outdoor play: it encourages good health and contact with nature is so important for our mental health even in very small children.

One of the granddads who comes with his grandchild suggested we apply for a grant to buy some outdoor toys, suggesting we apply to Kenilworth United Charities. They kindly awarded us with a grant of just over £500 for outdoor play equipment.

We have bought a range of toys that can be easily stored away, that includes toy lawn mowers, toy wheelbarrows, a mud-mixing station,



stepping stones, spinning tops that you sit in and balance beams. We have recently been gifted a Wendy house which the children love.

The difference that it makes is incredible, especially for children with bags of energy who need to run. Being outside means that we can offer something different and a choice of play. We look forward to being able to offer outdoor play in the early autumn.

More on next page ➡



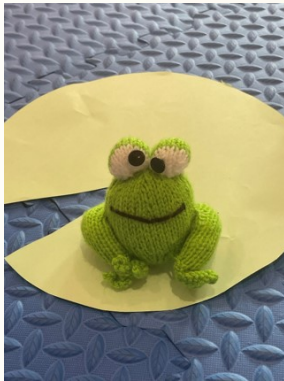
Little Nicks – Stay and Play group

Heather Marshall

Children's and Families Worker

Stay and Play Bear Hunt

Our last stay and play session we held jointly with the Methodist church. It is really great to work together for our summer celebration. Originally, we were going to hold a picnic at Castle Farm but due to the extreme heat we moved it indoors at the Methodist church, where we created a bear hunt. The children heard the story before following the trail through the swishy-



swashy grass, through the thick, oozy mud, across the deep cold river, before finding the bear in the tent cave. It was great to see the families enjoying spending time together.

I am very grateful to all the volunteers who give up their Thursday mornings to support the children and families. There is always room in the team for more volunteers, and it is always great fun. If you fancy being part of a team let me know kids@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Play Café

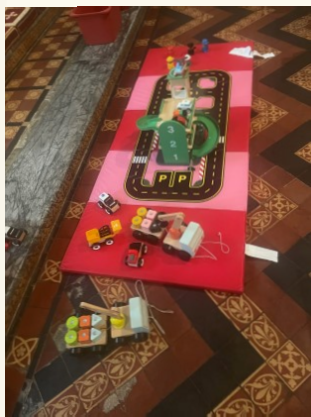
As part of our outreach, we are starting a new Play Café in St. Nicholas' church on a Tuesday morning from 8th September. We chose Tuesdays because there is nothing else on for toddlers and babies on this day. We are really looking forward to starting this new venture, showing hospitality and walking alongside people from our town.

The PCC approved the Play Café and have given some money to help with the set-up costs of new toys, cups with lids, toasters, small coffee tables, and play mats. I also applied for and received a Mustard Seed Grant from Coventry Diocese for the rest of the start up costs. On the 2nd



Little Nicks – Stay and Play group - continued from page 12

of July we were able to invite our current stay and play group to experience what it would be like on a Tuesday, it was a great morning, and we had a lot of fun exploring the church and playing with the new toys. We are really looking forward to starting properly in September. This is a great opportunity for us to live out our new vision.



Heather Marshall



New burses and veils - to remember Vedra



The start of the 8.30 Eucharist on Sunday, 26 July was rather different from the normal. The Rev Richard Moore came in with his servers and stood in the usual place to say the Lord's Prayer and the Collect for Purity. The Rev Norman Stevens detached himself from the small group on the front bench and went to the altar as if he was going to take over! But in fact, the altar had on it four sets of burses and veils. The veils were folded up but normally they are used to cover the chalice and the paten before the start of the service, and after the communion. The burse is placed on top of the veil and holds the corporal which is the cloth that is put on the altar under the chalice to catch

any crumbs.

So, what was this all about? When Norman's wife Vedra died at Easter 2025 he asked the vicar whether there was anything that the church needed that can be bought to remind us of her. She identified the burses and veils that the church already had, and had had for some years, as being rather worn and dilapidated. She did some research and found that Messrs Watts, renowned church furnishers, was in the process of launching a new series of these items, and that they would serve very well as a memorial. She told me that there was a choice of two, and one of them was called the Bodley set. Unbeknown to her at the time, these would be perfect. Firstly, Vedra was conversant with Messrs Watt's, having spent some time in the shop talking to seamstresses there. Secondly the church where her husband was working as the verger (S. Paul's, Knightsbridge) was the first parish church in London built specifically by the high church Tractarian Movement, and had been extended and embellished in 1892 by George Frederick Bodley. Bodley was a believer in strong colours especially olive green and brick red. This is echoed beautifully in the burses and veils.



New burses and veils - to remember Vedra - continued



Furthermore, the church had in store an altar frontal designed and commissioned by Bodley, and by then a good hundred years old. It is a valuable piece of period embroidery: the leader of S. Paul's sewing Guild contacted the Victoria and Albert Museum, just along the road, with a view to Vedra's restoring it. The museum sent its fabrics conservator,

and she asked for an example of Vedra's embroidery work and was shown Norman's ordination stole, whereupon she gave Vedra permission to repair some particularly bad spots, ready for the church's 150th anniversary. So, yes, the Bodley set was ideal for her memorial!

On the morning, then, of the 26th of July, Norman led a short rite of blessing that same ordination stole, assisted by his American niece and her husband, in England for a week's visit, and by the Rev Rachel, the Rev Richard and Andy & David the servers. So, now, when we enter the church for the 8.30 BCP Communion, on the altar will be burse and veil appropriate to the colour of the season – white, red, purple or green. It will serve to remind us of the many times that Vedra had been a worshipper with us.

Revd Norman Stevens



Chelsea in Bloom



On the 21st May the Flower Guild and members of Kenilworth Flower Club enjoy a fabulous trip to London, visiting Chelsea in Bloom, London's only free Flower Show. Every year when the Royal Chelsea Flower Show is on many of the shops and businesses in Chelsea and KnightsBridge decorate their premises with

amazing floral displays. This year's theme was Out of this World. The trip was organised by a new member to The Guild, Jenny Adams, assisted by Sue King, who arranged free all-day parking for us and little treats and games on the journey going and coming home. It was a lot of walking, easier for some than others, but really worth it. The decorations, as you can see from the photographs, were amazing, costing thousands of pounds. Participating displays cover Fashion and Beauty, Lifestyle and Leisure, Food and Drink. They issue a map so you know where to go and what will interest you. My friend and I thoroughly enjoyed the day as did everyone we spoke to., I have been to the Chelsea Flower Show 26 times over the years and had never heard of Chelsea In Bloom until Jenny mentioned it and this was the 20th year, you can check it out on the



website, [Chelsea in Bloom.co.uk](http://ChelseaInBloom.co.uk) and if you love flowers, London, and a good day out, Jenny is repeating the trip by popular demand next year. She is also organising a trip to the NAFAS National Show in July 2027 being held in Lincoln. My name is already on the list, if you are interested, please contact me.



Barbara Sheppard



Photos of the church flowers taken by Dave Hurr



The Mothers' Union Berry Best Strawberry Cream Tea 2026

Thelma Mitchell



Did you know that strawberries are a superfood? The term 'Superfood' is not a scientific term as such, nor part of a scientific category. Rather, a Superfood is a non-scientific, informal marketing term for whole foods packed with high levels of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and anthocyanins which can reverse some loss of balance and memory. They tend to offer a high number of beneficial compounds relative to the calorie count.

According to Doctor Google, strawberries are packed with Vitamin C, antioxidants and fibre and one of the best foods we can eat. There are more vitamins in a bowl of strawberries than in an orange!

With this in mind – or maybe not, we needed no encouragement! – we tucked into generous dishes of the sweet and juicy berries and cream at the Mothers' Union annual Strawberry Cream tea in the parochial church hall. Alongside were feather-light scones, an abundance of dainty, crustless sandwiches and a delicious variety of homemade cakes. Again, the conversations flowed over the refreshments and members of the MU weaved round the tables constantly, to refresh teapots and top up the cake stands. It was definitely an elegant, swelligant party!



And it was for a great cause, and a wonderful celebration of the year of the 150th anniversary of its founding by Mary Sumner in the small parish church of Old Alresford in Hampshire. She believed that women, regardless of status or class could come together in faith to support one another and strengthen family life within the church. The Mothers' Union has grown to 4 million members in 84 countries. At its heart is the firm belief that faith and compassion can transform lives.

Thank you to the members of the Mothers' Union for so much hard work and dedication. It was such a pleasure and privilege to be with you and enjoy another lovely afternoon and delicious food together.

Thelma Mitchell



Getting to know ... Laura Bradby and Sam Flower

Soon to be Mr & Mrs Flower!



Liz Smith

Laura grew up near Richmond in North Yorkshire in a small rural Parish where she and her parents were the youngest in the congregation. She has always been a Christian but became rather disillusioned as a teenager, taking confirmation classes twice due to her uncertainty.

Sam grew up in Northwich, Cheshire and his family also attended a C of E church and he went to the local church school. He says he was not the most enthusiastic about his faith and eventually 'fell out of it'.

They met as students at Oxford University where they both studied Maths, in the same year and at the same college. During this time, Laura joined the CU and began to attend St Aldgate's large, charismatic church which helped her to reconnect with her faith. Eventually, Sam started to go along with her too.

However, they began to feel they 'needed more than Coldplay songs' from their church and so went to St Colomba's URC where they found a congregation with a wider age range, not just students, and was more accepting and inclusive, helping to guide their faith. They soon became involved in the community helping serve teas and coffees and reading in the services. As the church had a pastoral vacancy and were without a minister at the time, they even led or did the talks in the services.

Laura and Sam moved to Kenilworth about 3 years ago when Laura began studying for a PhD at Warwick University and until recently Laura was co-president for the local newly formed Student Christian Movement society at Warwick University with one of their workshops leading her to give a talk in church. Sam works from home as a Management Consultant in Engineering, for 'people who build things'.

They decided to come to St Nic's as they live a stone's throw away on High Street and soon found it to be a friendly, safe space. Sam was asked about becoming an altar server in their first month of attending St Nic's. Sam quickly agreed as he felt he wanted to be involved and his Mum had been

More on next page ➡



Continued from page 19 - Getting to know

an altar server too. Laura was also asked but took a bit longer to agree as she 'can tend to overthink things'.

Sam has been on the PCC for the last year, involved in the Church Vision group and he is also on the Eco church committee, giving a talk at the outdoor Eco service in May. They are both members of the Deanery Synod.

Laura feels her faith calls her to pastoral work and it also shapes her world view, especially in current world situation: 'don't put faith in the secular'. Sam agrees, seeing secular generosity as man's empty praise. Sam is a member of the corporate social responsibility team at work which undertakes charitable giving, including Foodbanks.

They have not always been confident of being Christian in a rather secular world and haven't always told people about their faith but are now integrating their identity as a Christian more with their studies and work.

Prayer is important for them both, especially when things get tough. However, it can be difficult to find time to be still for reflection in daily life for a sustainable, well-rounded spiritual life and, as heard in a recent talk, 'Do the job in front of you'.



Laura and Sam knew each other for a while before getting together during Covid and they feel that their relationship has only deepened since their engagement in February last year. As Laura has only one more year left on her PhD, it was important to them that they marry in Kenilworth to include the St Nic's community before their next steps. They are now planning their wedding together and their faith is being reflected in the ceremony. They have chosen Sam's favourite hymn 'Be thou my vision' which tells us that God matters more than work, while Laura's choice is 'All are Welcome'. It was sung at Rev Eira's licensing service not

long after they arrived. And of course the perennial 'Love Divine' with the Wedding at Cana reading. More unusual, the second reading is about the early church community in Acts 2 vv 43 - 47.

Sam and Laura's wedding is at St Nic's at 12 noon on 29th August and like the hymn, 'All are Welcome' to come and share their 'happy day' and have bubbly and biscuits with them afterwards.

We wish them all the very best in their married life together!



Liz Smith

The Abbey Fields in July



THE GRAPEVINE

Fancy being an editor?

Calling all would-be ditors, or those retired editors that would like 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 a year. The software I m now using is Affinity Publisher Plus, 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 links as needed, sending it for proof reading before sending it to be published via the parish website.

Although this sounds like a lot of work, much is copying and pasting articles that we receive by email, usually in Word or doc format and arranging images on the page but there is plenty of room for some creative ideas and a lot of scope to add your own personal touches.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in, or would like to know more about what is involved, then please email me at: grapevine@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

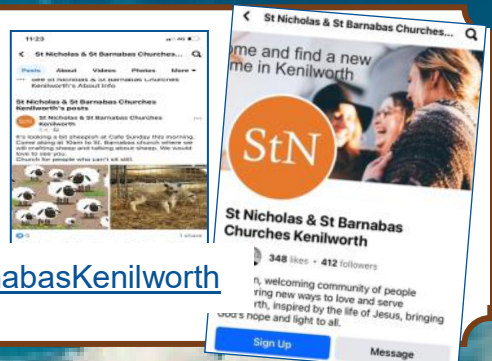
Ed.

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The Flower Guild

Judith Walmesley

I had hoped by now that we would have had some steady rain but unfortunately another heatwave looms. The lawns are so dry and the colour of straw. Many of the plants and shrubs are showing signs of stress so we will have to continue watering sparingly, just to keep them alive.

The period between Easter and Harvest is a quiet time for the Flower Guild. We have continued arranging weekly flowers in church, with many being sponsored. Recently, an arrangement on the font, sponsored by the Kelly family, celebrated their son Thomas's graduation. (Photo on page 25)

In May, Jenny Adams, one of our members, organised a coach trip to "Chelsea in Bloom". This event raised £350 for the Flower Guild! We are very grateful to Jenny for all the time and effort she put in to making the trip such a success. Another one may be arranged for next year! I hope you all enjoy reading Barbara Sheppard's account of the day's event and how superbly it was organised.

In June, we heard the incredibly sad news that Maggie Rogers had passed away peacefully at Myton Hospice after a long battle with cancer. Maggie had been a most creative and loyal member of the Flower Guild for many years. Despite failing health she resolutely arranged a most beautiful and inspiring altar pedestal last Christmas. Maggie will be greatly missed.

Our most recent demonstration and workshop was held in July when Barbara demonstrated a 'Summer all round design' using a variety of Summer blooms and foliage. Once again this was well attended and we all enjoyed a morning of fun with flowers and refreshments. Some ladies took part in the workshop





(above) and produced beautiful arrangements. Barbara's daughter-in-law Jennifer brought samples of very fine and exquisite embroidery to display. Many thanks to all those who helped get the church ready for the event, particularly Paul for arranging tables and chairs, and Margaret, Sally and Elaine for helping with refreshments. The next demonstration and workshop is on Saturday, September 19th at 10.30 in church. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

The next Festival for the Flower Guild is the **Harvest Festival on the 11th October**. Due to a wedding on Saturday 10th we are decorating the church on Friday 9th October. The planning meeting will follow the AGM at St Barnabas' Church at 10am on **Monday 21st September**. Looking forward to seeing you there.

With best wishes

Judith 🌷





Thomas Kelly with the flower arrangement on the font to celebrate his graduation

Congratulations. Thomas



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



St Barnabas' Craft Group - Baby Basics

Heather Alford

Since the Christmas Tree Festival raised funds for Baby Basics in Warwick in 2024, the ladies of **The St Barnabas' Craft group** have given a lot of time and energy to knitting all sorts of garments and toys. Doreen Cross and I took 21 cardigan and hat sets, 3 jumpers, 5 cardigans, 16 knitted toys of various shapes and sizes with some toiletries over to Warwick Baptist Church to the ladies who run Baby Basics.

On the morning we arrived, the ladies who run the charity had just had a request for two Baby Basic kits to be prepared for twin girls who were due very soon. Some of the clothes and a blanket that we had brought were immediately put into the baskets being prepared! It was lovely to be able to see the wonderful work that is being done to support mothers who do not have anyone who can give them the encouragement and support they need.

The charity is based at the Warwick Baptist Church where they have storage, not just for clothing but all the things like nappies, toiletries, baby baths and Moses baskets that are needed when a baby arrives.

This shows a Moses basket full of clothes for a baby up to the age of 12 months. They try to give each mother 6 of each size of clothing so that she has enough to be able to wash and have them ready to wear again. There will be vests, babygrows, cardigans, hats, jackets along with toys, toiletries and nappies. This basket was made up for one of the twin girls who was due.



Doreen and I were made to feel so welcome and we had a cup of coffee with the ladies as they worked. They were thrilled with the thought that St Barnabas' Craft Group had been beaver away for them all those months and they had no idea!



If you would like to join the St Barnabas' Craft Group they meet on Wednesday afternoons at 2.00pm in St Barnabas' Church. Newcomers are always welcome and you don't even have to knit! You are welcome to come for a chat and a cup of tea, as well as cake, if you're lucky.

Heather Alford



Change is coming in our local communities.

Cllr Richard Dickson - Kenilworth St John's

Firstly, the government announced in July that, from April 2028, Warwick District Council and the County Council will no longer exist. They'll be replaced by a new South Warwickshire Unitary Authority incorporating also Stratford District Council, for which there'll be Shadow Authority elections in May 2027 along with town and parish council elections.

This new unitary authority will have responsibility for all the existing services of all three councils. This has huge consequences for service users and staff. Local Government Reorganisation needs to be seen as a long journey of change not a close-by destination.

The new draft South Warwickshire Local Plan is now out for 'consultation' until early September. This was agreed as 'sound' by majority decisions at SDC and WDC. However, many of us remain very concerned about the economic, environmental and cultural impact and viability of 100s more properties in Kenilworth, especially with inadequate certainty of educational, care, health, highways and leisure infrastructure for our communities. The Plan is due to be submitted to the Planning Inspector by 31/12/26 for adoption by March 2028. Meanwhile, without a 5 year housing land supply, our town and surrounding area is exposed to speculative planning applications from landowners which the Planning Inspector is very likely to grant. This includes the Ken.1 site on Rouncil Lane where it's planned 766 properties will be built on land previously designated as green belt.

On other matters, in July the County Council held an online Cost of Living summit for which some of us had been pushing since March. More than 100 public sector and voluntary and community sector delegates from across the county shared ideas about what more can be done to support residents and



Continued from page 27- Change is coming to our local communities

communities struggling with high food bills, and rising energy and housing costs. The key next steps have to be a series of practical and better coordinated measures in urban, suburban and rural areas. The County Council has also recently unanimously agreed to increase action to support young people Not in Education, Employment and Training.

County Council news has also, sadly, been dominated by two recent Code of Conduct hearings. An independent legal opinion had reported that the Council Leader had twice breached the Councillors' Code of Conduct. On a majority basis, the Hearing Panel of three councillors rejected these opinions in both cases. In a subsequent debate about climate change the Council Leader said that floods in the county are an 'act of God' and that there's nothing we can do about the impact of climate change. Meanwhile there's no news from the administration on the County Council's consultations proposed several months ago on plans to restrict the types of books made available in our libraries and on the defunding of the county's equalities service.

If you are a person of faith, please do continue to pray for all these issues and for the residents and staff affected by the changes being made. This is hugely appreciated.

Cllr Richard Dickson - Kenilworth St John's

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.



Wednesday Study Group

Heather Alford



This term we have been studying the book of Ruth. I think one of my favourite accounts in the Bible of the selflessness of one person for the needs of another. After disaster has come to her mother-in-law, Naomi's, family when she loses first her husband and then both her sons, Ruth displays such compassion in her actions. Naomi has no option than returning to her home country in the hope that she can find relatives who will help her. Ruth insists that she be allowed to accompany Naomi back to her native Bethlehem. Naomi's deep and uncomplicated trust in God their creator and protector has helped Ruth to find faith in him too. She is determined to stay with Naomi and give her the support she needs. Ruth's story and the trials that she goes through can so often be the sort of difficulties that we all face today.

We had interesting discussions which compared the plight of refugees today as they seek to find safety in other countries; leaving everything they have known behind as they travel abroad. Through their faith Ruth and Naomi were able to settle in Bethlehem as Naomi's relative, Boaz, looked after their needs. His kindness and generosity gave them the assurance that their future was secure. It was through her faith in God that Naomi made that decision to return to her people. It was a faith that did not waver and both she and Ruth were sheltered by that faith.

Next term our study will be very different! We will be using a study guide written by a group of Christians in Birmingham and is titled, "Our Common Home: Caring for God's Creation". We meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 2.30pm – 4.00pm in St Nicholas Church. If you would like to join us you would be very welcome. Please contact me, Heather Alford on 07788870308 for more details.

Heather Alford



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.



Cherishing the Churchyard at St Nicholas'

ECO - CHURCH
Small Steps for a Big Impact

Victoria Lee

Cherishing Churchyards is a country-wide initiative that takes place in early June and is supported by A Rocha and Caring for God's Acre. It is our second year of taking part with specifically arranged



activities, though, of course, we all cherish and work in St Nicholas' Churchyard all year round!

First, the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts came along on a Monday evening to help both in- and outside the church as part of their Big Help Out campaign. In the churchyard, the children, accompanied by young adult helpers, parents and leaders accomplished a wide range of really helpful tasks: weeding, sweeping

paths and clearing away some slippery moss, edging and mowing the lawn in the herb garden, and trimming back the hedge near the High Street.

The Beavers also created bug hotels from found twigs and leaves. The high energy levels and willingness of all involved meant a lot was achieved and there were some very noticeable improvements.

The second event was a nature count, where five of us walked the churchyard for an hour counting birds, insects, bees, butterflies, wildflowers and grasses – as many types and numbers that we could identify. There is no doubt that phone apps help with



More on next page



identification, though I still like reference books. The results of the nature count were mixed: the numbers were slightly lower, but we had some interesting finds, for example, a chimney sweeper moth. The weather on the day affects the count (and it was dull and just about to rain), so no short-term conclusions can be drawn. Our results are submitted to Churches Count on Nature, which then join a country-wide survey and so will be useful over a longer period of time. It is a useful record of what is happening in churchyards and church land nationally and over the years.



Our third event was a joint work party with Friends of Abbey Fields (FOAF). The hardworking and committed group has been great in helping us, especially in maintaining the walls surrounding the churchyard. English Heritage and the Council have given advice on how to preserve these – which is essentially a painstaking process of carefully cutting back ivy, green alkanet and other deep-rooted plants by hand. Pulling the plants out is not allowed, nor is spraying with weedkiller, both for obvious reasons. In addition, moss needs removing – this is

done with soft wooden implements and gentle brushing so as not to cause any damage. It is a labour of love! Removing all the plant material isn't necessarily very 'eco'; this is an instance where heritage trumps eco concerns. The walls are part of the history of the place and quite special. As we remove plants, especially ivy and moss, encouraging it in other places in the churchyard and Abbey Fields (and our gardens) becomes more important, so as to sustain the wildlife that relies on them. It is all about creating a balance.



Continued from page 31- Cherishing the churchyard at St Nicholas'

ECO - CHURCH
Small Steps for a Big Impact

As a side note, the Friends of Abbey Fields is a wonderful local organisation. Do become a member, if you can. They help to keep the Abbey Fields in good condition and also hold excellent nature events, like bat walks.

The weather was a little trying for the Cherishing Churchyards week. The FOAF work party was rained off initially but took place a week after. Like most English people, I enjoy complaining about the weather, but we so needed the rain by June, I didn't mind at all. The churchyard suddenly returned to vibrant green – and it was a beautiful sight. I hope you find time to walk around St Nicholas' churchyard – and perhaps visit the herb garden near the High Street. Every season brings different interests to the fore and there is always something to see.

The Lapidarium

On one of the walls facing out to Abbey Fields there is a lapidarium. A word I didn't know prior to moving to Kenilworth, this is a collection of historical stones monuments and archaeological fragments. As part of the wall-clearing in the Cherishing Churchyards event, the FOAF joint work party spent time tidying it up a bit. It was designed by Dr Richard Morris of Warwick University and reconstructed in 1984. In the wall, there is an array of interesting stones from the old Abbey, dating from the 12th Century, which were discovered in archaeological digs that took place in 1922 and 1960.



Victoria Lee



**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

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vicar@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Assistant Parish Priest **Revd. Richard Moore** 07539 431186
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Pastoral Assistant c/o parish office 857509
Pastoral Care Coordinator pastoralcstn@gmail.com

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Currently vacant

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Gift Aid Officer Jane Kempton janekempton@hotmail.com

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Bellringers Cathy Weir kenilworthringers@gmail.com
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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*

e-mail: office@stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk
www.stnicholaskenilworth.org.uk

Before you go ...

The next edition of *The Grapevine* will be the Autumn Review, a look back at our parish and its people over August, September and October.

For those running church groups, this may be a good time to mention any events that are taking place over Lent and Christmas.

It was great to see so many of our regular and newer contributors for this edition. If you would like to contribute to the next one, the copy date will be early in November but do watch the Parish Newsletter nearer the time. Regular contributors will also receive my usual email reminder.

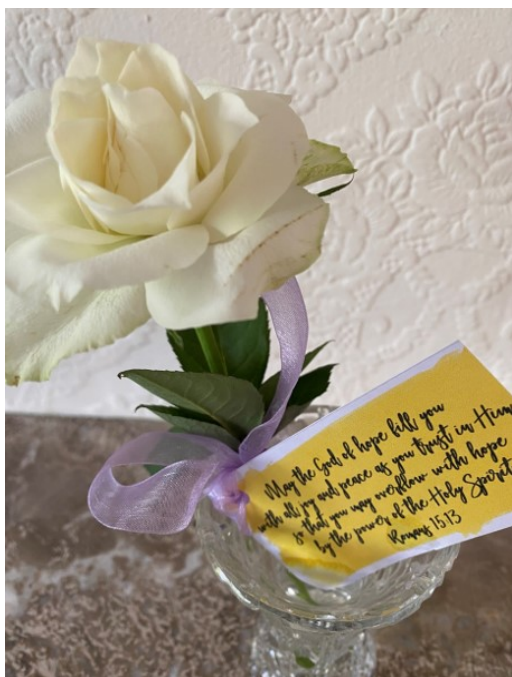
The usual word count for a single page is around 375 words, in Arial size 10. But I can reformat if you use another font and size. You can also include images, preferably not high resolution and make sure you have permission if they show faces or children, You can submit two pages if you wish but please let me know well in advance of it is likely to be more so that I can arrange the pages to run consecutively.

Send your copy to Tony Shakespeare at grapevine@stnichlaskenilworth.org.uk or through the parish office.

Ed.

... and finally:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace if you trust in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)



Sent in by Lesley O'Connor