



**APRIL-MAY
2026**

LETTER FROM REVD TINA BROOKER

Hello church family,

It only feels like yesterday when I was writing the Christmas article, time definitely goes by very quickly. We have journeyed through Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and now we have arrived at Easter time.

Easter is at the heart of our Christian faith, we awake with the proclamation that “Christ is risen!” The glorious celebration of Easter is not simply a date in the Church calendar, it is the transforming truth upon which our hope is built.

All four Gospels tell of that first Easter morning, when grief gave way to wonder. In the gospel of Matthew the women hurry from the empty tomb “afraid yet filled with joy.” In the gospel of John, Mary hears her name spoken by the risen Lord and recognises him. These tender, powerful moments remind us that resurrection is personal before it is public. The risen Christ meets ordinary people in their sorrow and calls them into new life.

For us as Methodists, shaped by the preaching and witness of John Wesley, Easter faith is never passive. Wesley’s heart was “strangely warmed” by the assurance that Christ had conquered sin and death. That assurance compelled him into a life of tireless service, proclaiming grace in fields, chapels and crowded streets. Resurrection power, he believed, must overflow in acts of mercy, justice and holy love.

Easter therefore is both celebration and commissioning. We sing our great hymns with joy, our churches are decorated with flowers, and we gather around the Communion table in thanksgiving. Yet the empty tomb also sends us out. In a world full of conflict and uncertainty, we bear witness to a hope that cannot be extinguished.

The glorious message of Easter is this: death does not have the last word. Christ is risen; love has triumphed and by God’s grace, new life is possible for all. Hallelujah and Amen!

Peace to you all

Revd Tina



DIARY APRIL 2026

Thurs 2nd April 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 3rd April 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 5th April 10.30am **Easter Service** led by Rev E Brian Mason ***Please bring a few flowers for the Easter Cross***

Tues 7th April 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 9th April 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 10th April 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sat 11th April 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 12th April 10.30am Service led by Rev Nick Stanyon

Tues 14th April 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 16th April 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 17th April 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 19th April 10.30am Service led by Rev Nick Stanyon

Tues 21st April 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 23rd April 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 24th April 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 26th April 10.30am **ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST** Service, Bridge Theatre, Warwick School (see

Tues 28th April 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 30th April 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

DIARY MAY 2026

Fri 1st May 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 3rd May 10.30am **ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST** Service at Bridge Theatre, Warwick School

Tues 5th May 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 7th May 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 8th May 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sat 9th May 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 10th May 10.30am **ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST** Service , Bridge Theatre, Warwick School

Tues 12th May 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 14th May 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 15th May 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 17th May **ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST** Service , Bridge Theatre, Warwick School

Tues 19th May 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 21st May 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 22nd May 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

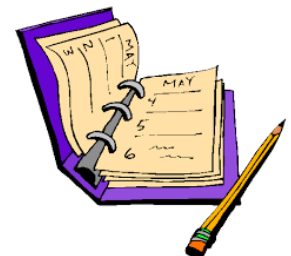
Sun 24th May 10.30am **ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST** Service , Bridge Theatre, Warwick School

Tues 26th May 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 28th May 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 29th May 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 31st May 10.30am Service led by Mrs Gail Howe



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN LEAMINGTON SPA



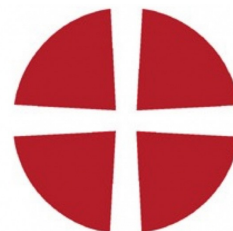
TOGETHER CELEBRATING JESUS

GOOD FRIDAY

3rd April 2026
12:00 Walk of Witness &
Open Air Service
(Gather outside Holy
Trinity Church, CV32 5RG)

EASTER MORNING

5th April 2026
06:30 Sunrise Service
(Gather on Campion Hills,
Black Lane, CV32 4TB)



ONE CHURCH TO PENTECOST 2026

A reminder that for 5 weeks, beginning on Sunday 26th April, all the 12 churches across the South Warwickshire Circuit will meet together on Sundays at 10.30am, at the Bridge Theatre, Warwick. Please speak to Margaret, Jean or Bridget if you need a lift.

NB - although Radford Road Church will be closed on those Sunday mornings, all the other weekday activities will continue as normal

They were all together in one place..... they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.....

and day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. *Save us Lord.* Save us lest we perish in a storm of indifference,

apathy and blindness. Hear us, we pray, as we bring before you our Churches and our Circuit and its uncertain future. *Send us your Spirit we pray.*

Let us be like fertile soil that blossoms when the water of the living Spirit drops like dew from heaven. *Save us Lord.*



And they were all together in one place Frightened Elated Deserted *Pray*

Jumping at the slightest sound *Pray* What was going to happen next? *Pray*

Why had He gone and left them alone again? *Pray*

How could they make sense of all this? *Pray* *Pray* *Pray*

One Church to Pentecost South Warwickshire Methodist Churches: From Sunday 26th April to Sunday 24th May 2026

The Methodist churches of the South Warwickshire Circuit are coming together for a special series of worship events leading up to Pentecost.

Morning Worship

We will worship together each Sunday morning at 10.30am from 26th April 2026 to 24th May 2026 at the Bridge House Theatre in Warwick, CV346PP. Please ask if you need help getting to the theatre.

Evening Worship

Also, there will be evening worship at 5.30pm each Sunday at different churches within the circuit. These services will feature a range of worship styles and guest preachers.

Date	Location	Worship Style	Preacher/Leader
26 th April	Kenilworth	Spirit and Sacrament	Revd Helen Cameron (Ex-President of Conference)
3 rd May	Whitnash	Community Hymn Singing	Revd Sally Jones
10 th May	Stratford	Spirit and Sacrament	Revd Iain Ballard
17 th May	Wellesbourne	Taizé Style Service	Revds Sally Jones & Tina Brooker
24 th May	Warwick	Spirit and Sacrament	Revd Iain Ballard

Housegroups

During this period, we are encouraged to join in a Housegroup linked to this or a nearby church. If you are not already involved in one speak to your Minister or a steward at your local church.

Further Information

If you would like more details about these events or participation in Housegroups, please speak with your Minister or Steward at your local church. Alternatively, you may email Onechurchtopentecost@gmail.com for further information.



COFFEE ROTA

(PLEASE ARRANGE SWAP IF NECESSARY)

Would the first person on the rota please bring milk, and the second bring biscuits.

Thank you

Sun April 5th Sally and Bridget

Sun May 3rd No service at RR

Sun April 12th John and Ruth

Sun May 10th No service at RR

Sun April 19th Brenda and Alan

Sun May 17th No service at RR

Sun April 26th No service at RR

Sun May 24th No service at RR

Sun May 31st Jean and Jeni



ALL ARE WELCOME

Every Thursday morning from 10 - 12 we meet in the church vestibule to act as a "Warm Hub" for anyone who cares to come and join us. We are open to all, as the name suggests. So pop along one Thursday, and perhaps bring a friend or neighbour to enjoy a toasted teacake, with tea or coffee and maybe try the quiz, play a game, or simply sit and chat.

BIG BREAKFAST



Big Breakfast takes place on the second Saturday of every month, offering fantastic value for a delicious breakfast of your choice; profits go to our Mission Project (see below). Pop the dates in your diary, and come along to enjoy tasty food and good company.



Sat 11th April

Sat 9th May (Profits to go to Christian Aid)

9-11am



Our Mission Project this year is MAF. Mission Aviation Fellowship is the world's largest humanitarian air operator. For over 75 years they have been flying light aircraft over jungles, mountains, swamps and deserts. This has enabled more than 1,500 aid, development and mission organisations to bring medical care, emergency relief and long term development. Their pilots and personnel deliver relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food, medicine, anything that can only be safely and speedily delivered by air. Faithful supporters give and pray to make all of this possible



FAMILY NEWS

We are sad to report the death of Frank G, beloved husband of Jane, whose funeral took place on 10th March



Please remember in your prayers those who have been bereaved

Comfort the families and friends who grieve

Those who are ill, and especially those known to us

We ask that they may soon be restored to full health

We give thanks for the gradual recovery of Pat's son Malcolm

Those who have worries and anxieties

Give them peace and comfort in the knowledge that you are close to them. Please especially remember in your prayers **Ann, Anne, Geoff, Gill & Eric, Hazel Kath, Vi; all those involved with the Night Shelter**



We are very grateful to **Rodney Moore**, who has made a generous donation to the flower fund in memory of his mother **Mavis**, who died in January, to provide flowers for the colourful display outside church



PROPERTY REPORT



As you may have noticed, there is a leak into the church near to the organ. I am still awaiting a date for this work to be done.

Bridget Halpin

NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T!

During a recent Service, Rev Nick intrigued the congregation with this picture, illustrating how sometimes we look, but do not see!

Does this just look like a pile of stones to you? If you hold the picture nearer or further away from your eyes, and perhaps squint a little, you may suddenly find you can see a quotation from Jesus (Luke ch9 v40)

If you need a clue, the answer is on the last page! (below Feedback)



VERY IMPORTANT—IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS LETTER FROM REVD NICK STANYON ABOUT THE CLOSURE OF RADFORD ROAD CHURCH, PLEASE READ



**Radford Road Methodist/URC Church, Radford Road, Leamington Spa.
CV31 1NF**

16 February 2026

Dear Church members and friends,

I am writing to inform you of a **special church meeting on Saturday, 21 March 2026 at 10 am.**

This will be concerning the future of our Church.

As you will know, maintaining a church building of the age and size that we have at Radford Road, as well as running the day-to-day life and witness of the church, takes a lot of time, energy, money and commitment. With fewer active people, many who find themselves with decreasing energy, we have to consider the future viability of the church.

Prompted by huge potential repair costs to the roof amongst other things, the elders felt it was time we took stock. So did the Methodist Circuit, who must approve large expenditure on the building. On January 20th we met with Revd Iain Ballard (Circuit Superintendent), Matthew McDade (District Property Consultant), Chris Benson (Circuit Steward), Revd Steve Faber (URC Moderator) and both our ministers. We came to realise that any such expenditure must be thought through carefully and justified. We would need to come up with a clear mission plan and be able to aim consistently for growth in the coming years.

At our elders meeting on Feb 5th, the elders determined that it was not the cost of a building project that was the crunch issue for us but whether, as a congregation, we had the time, energy and commitment to turn things around. The option of finding and spending all the money to bring the building into good repair, then drawing up a plan for mission and growth, with consistent outreach and evangelism in our community over the next five years, was seen to be beyond us. The elders agreed unanimously that this option was not viable.

This left us with three other options to consider. One was that we stay in our current building short term and then close on, say, covenant Sunday next January. (This option will still involve a small emergency repair to the roof, which must be done). Another option was to plan to keep going until our 150th anniversary in September 2027, have a good celebration, and then close. The fourth option was to keep going till the anniversary and find another space for us to rent to meet on Sundays. This might be with another church, or in other local rooms.

After deep and prayerful discussion of each option, which was also sad and tearful at times, the elders ruled out hiring another venue. When they thought of all the energy and commitment this would involve each week, they could not see who would be able to do this. Furthermore, while it was thought that staying open until the anniversary would be nice, this idea was then dismissed as untenable, especially as this would involve the necessity of a costly buildings survey.

So, the elders came to the clear and unanimous decision to propose the following to church meeting:

Radford Road Church will close in January 2027 (date to confirmed). The congregation will either disperse to different churches or move en bloc to another church.

(Please note, this proposal is agreed by all the elders but will be formally proposed on their behalf by Margaret Bull, seconded by Jean Young and Andrew Davidson. Neither minister voted in the meeting, pledging to support the elders in whatever decisions they made.)

Obviously, there is great sadness in bringing this proposal. It will be a great loss to many, and the elders share the heartbreak that many will feel. They are also concerned for other organisations and groups who use our building. However, the elders are convinced this is not only a realistic but also a right proposal, which they believe is the Lord's will. We urge you to think and pray carefully, so that Church Meeting can agree. Maybe in preparing you will think 3-5 years ahead and consider how much energy and commitment you and others will be able to realistically give?

If church meeting accepts this proposal, there will be much to do in formally closing the LEP, terminating the sharing agreement on the building, and sorting out all the practicalities of the closure.

This may well involve further proposals being brought to this or a later church meeting to fulfil the formal requirements of both denominations. Most important will be the pastoral care we give to each other as we seek to find new ways to follow Jesus, and new fellowships in which to worship. Both Rev Tina and I wish to make ourselves as available as we can to talk to individuals and offer pastoral support at this time. However, for personal reasons, I will not be available to several weeks from 9th March and I will not be able to be at the Church Meeting.

On behalf of Rev Tina and myself, I offer you Christian Love. Our prayers are with you all.

God bless you.



Rev Nick Stanyon.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 21ST MARCH 2026

Following on from the letter from Rev Nick, a special congregational meeting was held on Saturday 21st March to discuss and vote on the proposal that **“Radford Road Church are seeking permission to begin the process to close by January 2027 and empowers the elders to take on this work. The congregation will either disperse to different churches of choice or move en bloc to another church.”**

Time was given for those present to express their feelings, and for the reasons behind the proposal and the various options going forward to be laid out. When the vote was taken the result was 13 in favour of the proposal and 5 against, with no abstentions. Please note that the Constitution states that only church members who are present at the meeting are eligible to vote.

This decision has been taken with much sadness and after a lot of prayer.

Radford Road Church will therefore close its doors in January 2027



SPRING

For a fleeting moment

Nature holds its breath

Sunlight filters through the wintry trees

Snowdrops glisten in the grass

Green shoots promise more delights

And Springtime whispers softly on the breeze

Julie S



PRINCE WILLIAM AFFIRMS HIS FAITH

The Prince of Wales has revealed his commitment to the Church of England and his 'quiet faith' in a move aimed at clarifying his role as future king and head of the Church.

William's devotion to the Christian faith has long been questioned as he is not a regular churchgoer nor as devout as his father, King Charles or the late Queen Elizabeth.

Now, a few days before he attended the Archbishop of Canterbury's enthronement, William for the first time confirmed his wish to forge 'a strong and meaningful bond with the Church and its leadership'.

A source close to the prince told The Sunday Times: 'This week is an opportunity to be very clear in people's minds, when he walks into Canterbury Cathedral, of where he stands.'

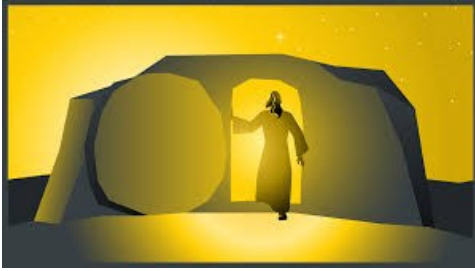
'For him, it is a drawing of a line in the sand of where he's at, and it's really important that the question over his commitment to the Church is cleared up.'

'His feeling is, 'I might not be at church every day, but I believe in it, I want to support it, and this is an important aspect of my role and the next role, and I will take it seriously, in my own way.'

On Wednesday 25th March 2026 The Prince and Princess of Wales attended the installation of Dame Sarah Mullally, on behalf of the King.

It is protocol for the heir to attend, rather than the monarch.





EASTER TRADITIONS

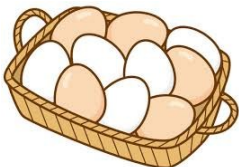


Easter is the greatest festival of the Christian calendar, commemorating the central events of the Christian faith, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. Its position in the spring (decided at Whitby Abbey in the year 325, as the first weekend following the first full moon after the spring equinox) was a chance of fate: the events concerned were linked to the Jewish Passover, which falls at this season.

It was a happy coincidence, allowing the celebration of the Resurrection, with its opening of Jesus's tomb, to take place when nature is opening up and restoring life to the world. Likewise, the establishment in the sixth century of the preceding seven-and-a-half weeks as the main Christian period of abstinence and soul-searching also suited the time of year when food was in shortest supply after the winter.

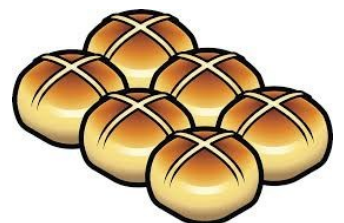


Known in England as Lent (itself an old name for spring, when the days lengthen – 'lenten' in Old English), meat, cheese and eggs were all banned from people's diet for its duration. As a result, part of the rejoicing of Easter Day, and of the two days of holiday that customarily followed it in the Middle Ages, was the ability to feast freely on these foodstuffs again, once the morning church service was over. Or rather, to do so as far as income allowed. Meat was out of the price range of most people, and cheese too much a staple to carry much excitement.



Eggs, however, were both valued and affordable, and relatively abundant at that season. It accordingly became a custom to exchange them among friends and relatives, until the 19th century, when chocolate alternatives began to be manufactured for the more prosperous members of society. By the 20th century, rising prosperity had made them affordable by everybody, and the definitive modern secular symbol of Easter was in place.

Hot cross buns were another. It developed from the medieval custom on Good Friday of closing up a consecrated host, the bread of the Catholic mass that symbolised the body of Christ, in a miniature tomb in most churches. This was then watched by parishioners representing Roman soldiers until it was opened on Easter Day and the host displayed as a symbol of the Resurrection.





Elizabeth "Betty" Greene was born in 1920 in Seattle, a child of strongly Christian parents. She developed an early love of aviation, and was fascinated by the exploits of Charles Lindbergh, Admiral Byrd and Amelia Earhart. As a teenager she took flying lessons, and later served as a pilot with the Womens Airforce Service Pilots, flying several different kinds of planes and doing experimental work on high-altitude flights. When a trusted older friend suggested she should use her flying skills for Christian missionary work, Betty "leaped for joy at the thrilling

thought of combining flying with her love of God"

Betty helped found Mission Aviation Fellowship, and on February 23, 1946, she embarked on the first MAF flight, taking off in a red 1933 Waco biplane from Los Angeles, California, with a remote jungle location in Mexico as the final destination. Later that year she became the first woman to cross the Andes mountains.



Betty served as an MAF pilot for 16 years, flying in 12 countries and touching down in some 20 more. In 1962 she began working at MAF headquarters, and later served as an MAF advocate until her death in 1997.

"I expect to pass through
this world but once.
Any good thing, therefore,
that I can do or any
kindness I can show to any
fellow human being let me
do it now.
Let me not defer nor
neglect it, for I shall not
pass this way again."

-Stephen Grellet





ECO CHURCH—HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN FOOD WRAPS!

Beeswax wraps are a planet-friendly alternative to cling film. Beeswax food wraps are simple to make, last a long time and you can customise them to your liking so they look great too!

YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton fabric
- Pinking shears or scissors
- Baking tray
- Baking parchment
- Cosmetic grade beeswax pellets (available from health food stores or online)
- Pastry or paint brush
- A pen
- Washing line and pegs



Step 1

Preheat the oven to 90°C and cut the fabric to the size food wrap you'd like to make

Using pinking shears will minimise fraying but scissors will do the job too!

Step 2

Place your fabric on a baking tray lined with baking parchment. If the fabric you've chosen is one-sided, remember to place the patterned side facedown.

Step 3

Sprinkle beeswax pellets evenly across the fabric -you want the wax to cover the fabric when melted but without any excess. If in doubt, try a little and then if there are any gaps after step 4 (below) you can add more and repeat.

Step 4

Put the sheet in the oven for 5-10 minutes

IMPORTANT – Keep watching the fabric all the time it is in the oven as it is a fire risk!

Step 5

Spread the beeswax

When the pellets have melted completely, use oven gloves to remove the tray from the oven and spread the beeswax evenly over the whole fabric with a paint brush or pastry brush

You'll have to be quick to spread the wax before it cools, but don't worry, you can always repeat step 4 if it sets before you've finished.



Step 6

Time to dry!

Remove the fabric from the baking sheet using tongs, hang it up to dry over newspaper to catch any drips. Your home-made food wrap is ready to use once the beeswax has set and isn't tacky.

Caring for your beeswax food wraps

Your food wraps can last up to a year or more if treated nicely and looked after. It's recommended that you give them a refresh every 3 months or so by popping back in the oven on a baking parchment covered tray, but it depends on how often you use them.

To clean, simply splash a little washing up liquid and gently wash with cold water. Avoid contact with heat such as hot water, microwaves or ovens – you don't want to melt the beeswax! Not suitable for use with raw meats.

FAITHS TRAIL SATURDAY 18TH APRIL 2026

This year there will be a Walking Trail around Leamington.

9.15 Registration and visit Polish Centre , Radford Road



11-11.45 Talk on Paganism at the 'Labyrinth'
and visit to All Saints Church



12 noon Visit to Ahmaddiyya Mosque and Community Centre, Adelaide Road



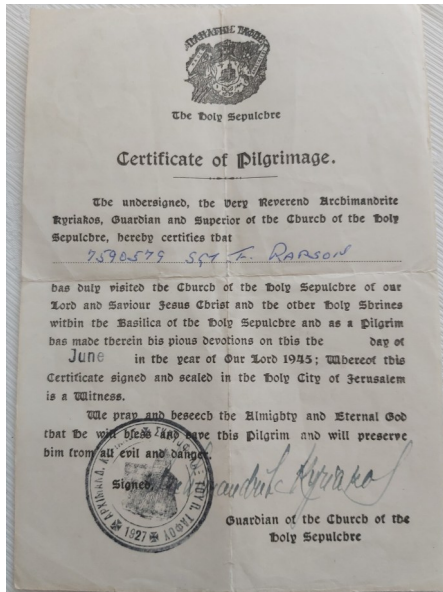
1pm Refreshments

Date for the diary: Wellbeing Conference Saturday October 10th 2026



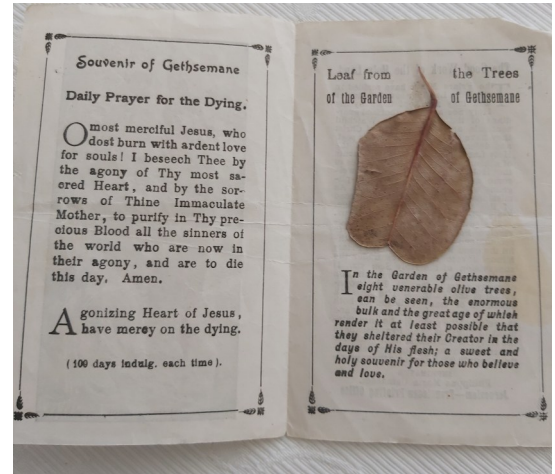
Sally has written a very interesting account about her father's visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during his wartime service.

HOLY SEPULCHRE AND GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE



During the Second World War my father served in Jerusalem. Whilst there he visited the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Shown is a picture of the Certificate of Pilgrimage he received. He also had a leaf from a tree in the Garden of Gethsemane.

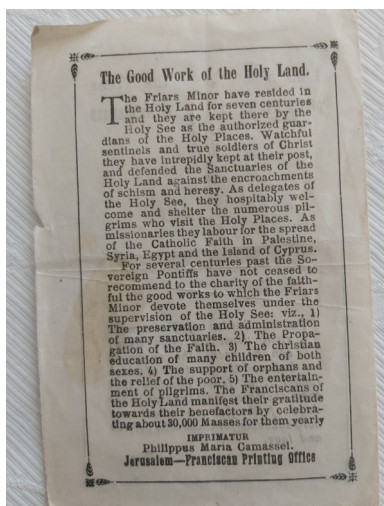
In 1979 my mother wrote to the Friars Minor of the Holy See, who are the authorised guardians of the Holy Places. She explained that my father had visited the site and enclosed a donation asking if they were able to send her a leaf, the reply and leaf are shown in the pictures. On a separate small card Friar, Rev. Jose Montalverne de Lancastre wrote:-



"I first analysed the carbon 14 of a piece of trunk from the olive tree cut down in 1942 to enlarge the road to Jericho. It gave me about 2100 years of age, later confirmed by Israeli scientists"

The site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is identified as the place of both the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus of Nazareth. The church has long been a major pilgrimage centre for Christians worldwide. According to the New Testament, Jesus was crucified at Golgotha, "the place of the skull" (Matt. 27:33-35; Mark 15:22-25; John 19:17-24). This has been identified as an area of abandoned stone quarries just outside the city wall.

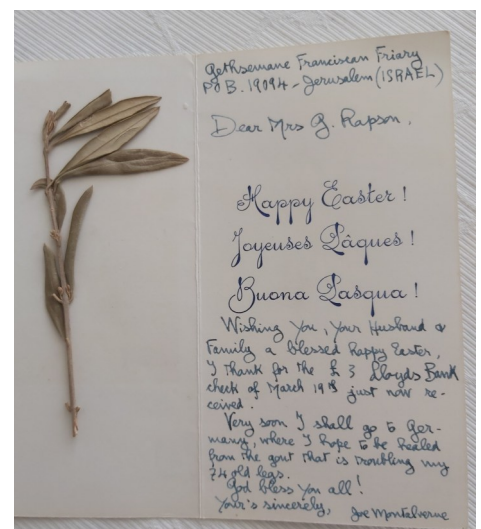
About ten years after the crucifixion, a third wall was built that enclosed the area of the execution and burial within the city, which accounts for the Holy Sepulchre's location inside the Old City of Jerusalem today.



For eight hundred years, the Franciscan friars of the Order of

Friars Minor have been the guardians of the Holy Sepulchre, on behalf of the Catholic Church, and share the ownership of the Basilica with the Greek Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is not immediately next to the Garden of Gethsemane, although both are in Jerusalem. The Holy Sepulchre is inside the Old City walls, while Gethsemane is located across the Kidron Valley on the Mount of Olives, roughly a 20-30 minute walk apart.



CHURCH CONTACTS

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BEAVERS/CUBS	Matthew
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(if you need to get in touch with anyone on the list without a phone number, please use the church email to request details)



Please feel free to comment on this or any other edition - we welcome your opinions. Just contact Jean or Sally by phone, text or email

Optical illusion, page 5 - the words say "THE STONES WILL CRY OUT"

Thank you for reading this electronic copy of Radford Road Church Newsletter.

A limited number of newsletters are being printed and most people are receiving electronic copies. This is a much greener, cheaper and less time-consuming way of producing the magazine.

At present 66 copies of this Magazine are being sent out.

Please email Jean or Sally by Sun 24th May 2026 if you have any items suitable for publication in the next issue of the newsletter