



MINISTER'S LETTER FROM REVD NICK STANYON

I am not sure how the word "harvest" sits with me this year.

With the extreme hot weather and the constant battle against digging foxes and squirrels, I am not sure that we will have one of any note. Last year was a complete wipe out. Apart from a glut of plums, we had no harvest at all. This year has been a constant battle, but all to no avail. And the pigeons have had all the plums too! The second failed harvest in a row, and we're feeling demoralised. My wife has talked about returning the vegetable plots to grass, but wondered as to the point even of that. Even the grass will die!



It seems that we really are stepping into the long forecast (and widely pooh-poohed) experience of climate change! As the seasons change and the weather gets more extreme, it seems our traditional gardening methods and much beloved planting may have to change. "Welcome to the club", say those who have suffered this change for so much longer and largely been ignored. But we at least are privileged to be able to still pop down to the supermarket. For them a failed harvest can mean the difference between life and death.

We may have always enjoyed our traditional harvest festivals, even if we are largely removed from the jeopardy even our farmers live with. In my teens I worked the harvest with my cousins down on the farm. Sometimes we forget that the reason we have long summer holidays is because in the past everyone was needed in the fields. Rather than sunbathing on the beach, these weeks were full of long days and back-breaking labour. A race against the clock to get the harvest in before the weather changed and destroyed the harvest. And then a collective sigh of relief and a massive ho-down of a party as we embraced the fact that for one more year we had survived!

That's the context in which the biblical harvest festivals are held. Unlike ourselves, the participants are all too well aware of the threat of crop failure and famine. And with so many factors beyond their control, they know their dependence on God, and come with truly thankful hearts

So far, my two years of failed harvest have led to disappointment, but not to desperation. Disappointment itself is hard to cope with. What must it be like for others?

My mind turns now to wondering that, if food production has become a hobby for us gardeners, does our faith follow the same path. Not so much tied up with the desperate need of survival, but with a supermarket safety net that means it matters less - a hobby rather than a life?

I am challenged by the faith of others, who do not have the same level of protection. Only God. And by one of those magnificent passages in the Bible (as my friend just described it - I'd describe it as one of the most challenging!) from Habakkuk chapter 3:

"Though the fig-tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,

though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,

though there are no sheep in the sheepfold and no cattle in the stalls,

yet I will rejoice in the Lord,

I will be joyful in God my Saviour.

The Sovereign Lord is my strength;

***he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights."* Habakkuk 3:17-19 NIVUK**

Well, that's easier said than done! But isn't it an awesome approach to life?

In the face of our struggles and disappointment, can we get any where close to saying the same?

Nick

DIARY AUGUST 2026

(NO ALL ARE WELCOME OR BIBLE STUDY IN AUGUST)

Sun 2nd Aug 10.30am Service led by the Elders

Sat 8th Aug 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 9th Aug 10.30am Service led by Mr Graham Howe

Sat 15th Aug 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 16th Aug 10.30am Service led by Rev Nick Stanyon

Sun 23rd Aug 10.30am Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Tina Brooker

Sun 30th Aug 10.30am Service led by Rev Nick Stanyon



DIARY SEPTEMBER 2026

Thurs 3rd Sept 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Sun 6th Sept **NO SERVICE AT RR.** - Circuit Welcome Service for Rev Liam Dacre - Davis, who will be Minister at Stratford Methodist Church, and Chaplain at Warwick University

Tues 8th Sept 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 10th Sept 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 11th Sept 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sat 12th Sept 9-11am Big Breakfast

Sun 13th Sept 10.30am Service - preacher to be confirmed

Tues 15th Sept 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 17th Sept 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 18th Sept 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 20th Sept 10.30am Service - preacher to be confirmed

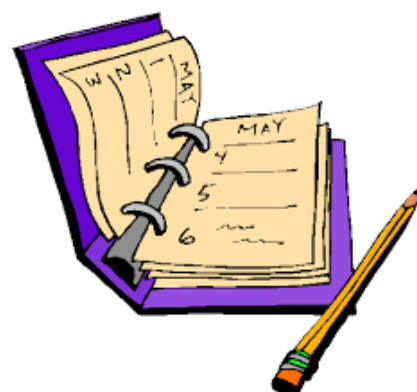
Tues 22nd Sept 10.30am Bible Study

Thurs 24th Sept 10am-12noon All Are Welcome

Fri 25th Sept 6.30pm Joint Bible Study, Lillington Free Church

Sun 27th Sept 10.30am Harvest Festival and Holy Communion Service led by Rev Tina Brooker

Tues 29th Sept 10.30am Bible Study



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 Aug 2nd Brenda and Alan

Sun Sept 6th Jean and Mary

Sun Aug 9th Margaret and Jean

Sun Sept 13th Brenda and Alan

Sun Aug 16th Sally and Margaret

Sun Sept 20th Sally and Margaret

Sun Aug 23rd Julia and Bridget

Sun Sept 27th Julia and Jeni

Sun Aug 30th John and Ruth



ALL ARE WELCOME

Every Thursday morning from 10 - 12 we meet in the church vestibule for a social get-together. We are open to all, as the name suggests, so why not 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 8th August

Sat 12th September

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

Please remember in your prayers those who have been bereaved

We think especially of Ruth and John E, whose son Martin died suddenly and unexpectedly in May (see below)



Those who are ill, and especially those known to us

We ask that they may soon be restored to full health

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**

May they know of your nearness to them.



MARTIN E

A service of remembrance and thanksgiving for Martin's life was held on Friday 17th July 2026. It took place at a packed St Paul's Church, Leamington, where he was a committed member of the congregation. His two sisters, Jo and Nikki each read a poem, and shared memories of their brother.

Martin was an accomplished musician. He began learning the French horn at the age of 10, which was the start of a lifelong passion for music—he played with no fewer than 8 local orchestras, as well as being a active member of St Paul's music group accompanying Sunday worship.

Music naturally played an important part in the service, provided by the Church Music Group, and a sizeable 'Choir of Horns', which played the opening and exit music, and also a beautiful Musical Tribute to Martin. He will be much missed not only by his family, but by his many friends

REMEMBER: The Daily service BBC Radio 4extra Monday to Friday at 9.45 am and available on the BBC Sounds app (www.bbc.co.uk). Sunday Worship at 8.10am Radio 4 on Sundays.

AND

"Songs of Praise" BBC TV every Sunday (times vary)



*** Jennie M also recommends the morning service from Radio Ulster, also available from BBC sounds***



SAFEGUARDING Radford Road Church believes each person has a value and dignity as part of God's creation. We are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirm that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount. If you have any concerns, either

for yourself or for another person, please speak in confidence to one of our **Safeguarding Officers: Sue Darlison and Jean Young**, or to one of the ministers. Phone numbers on the final page

JULIAN'S BAPTISM Sun 14th June 2026

In the afternoon of Sunday 14th June, a service was held at Leamington Baptist Church for Julian C to re-affirm the baptismal vows made by his parents when he was a child, and to confirm his membership of Radford Road Church.

As well as a number of his family and friends, several of our congregation attended to support him at this momentous event. During the service, which was led by Rev Tina Brooker, Julian testified to how God spoke to him out of the blue one day while he was walking - he came to church on Christmas Day 2025, and since then has attended when he is able. He especially enjoyed the One Church to Pentecost services.



For the actual baptism, Julian was fully immersed in the water pool, supported by Rev Nick Stanyon, who also gave the Reflection and by Rev Neil Bywater (Baptist minister). The pool water was a touch on the chilly side, as unfortunately the heater had broken - so there was some frantic to-and-fro-ing with buckets of hot water shortly before the service to try to raise the temperature! After the ceremony, the trio retired to change into dry clothes while the congregation sang hymns.

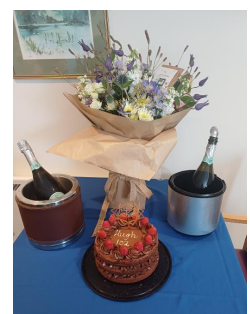


Margaret B presented Julian with a Bible and a Certificate of Membership, and the afternoon finished with tea and cake all round

HAPPY 102ND BIRTHDAY, HUGH!

A party was held on Thursday 16th July at Galanos House, Southam, to celebrate the 102nd birthday of resident Hugh S, who used to worship regularly on Sunday evenings at Radford Road Church.

A dozen of Hugh's family and friends gathered to wish him Many Happy Returns and enjoy a delicious spread provided by the home, including the superb chocolate cake pictured.



ST JOHN CHRISTOSUM



This saint, whose feast day falls on August 13th is a name you may not be very familiar with, but he is well worth getting to know a little bit about

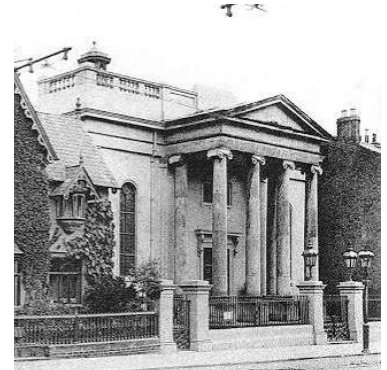
John Chrysostom was a Church Father who served as Archbishop of Constantinople, and was known for his preaching and public speaking. He is remembered not only for his preaching skills, his liturgy (*The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, is still in use in some Eastern Orthodox churches today), but also for his compassion for the poor, and his willingness to stand up to those in power who refused to keep God's Law.

John was born in Antioch and raised in a Christian home. Although he originally wanted to become a monk, he was eventually ordained into the pastoral ministry. His preaching was excellent, and he became well-known. The word **Christosum** means 'Golden-Mouthed' and people from all over the Greek-speaking world would come to hear him preach. When the Bishop of Constantinople died, John was taken by force from the smaller town of Antioch to the capital city and made bishop.

St. John was not afraid to speak boldly about how we as Christians should behave and how that example should actually impact how people around us live. He spoke out against injustice and himself was a bold defender of those who were mistreated, even when it was not popular among those in power.

PHOTOS PLEASE!!!

CELEBRATING RADFORD ROAD CHURCH



As we move toward the closure of Radford Road and look to the future, it would be good to share photographic memories of the past by displaying photos of Radford Road/Trinity and Spencer Street churches and their activities.

Over the summer, can you have a look for any photos you might have - preferably with dates, and let me have them by September 30th

Margaret B

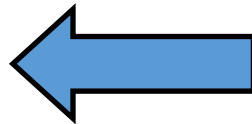


BRAVO TO THE SCOUTS!

We are very grateful to the Scouts, who have worked extremely hard to clear the pathways around the back and side of the church hall. These areas are not often used, and had become badly choked with weeds



BEFORE



AFTER



Jane G has sent in this wonderful poem. She says "I read this poem, and apart from really liking it, it sums up the Radford Road/Trinity ethos - the things which brought me to it in the first place and which make me stay

THE TABLE IS LONGER THAN WE THINK

The table is longer than we think

Longer than polished wood

or borrowed chairs,

longer than the bread broken

and passed from hand to hand

It stretches through kitchens

and community halls,

through cups of tea shared

on difficult afternoons,

through conversations

that begin with weather

and end with tears.

Come.

There is room.

Not because we've earned a place,

not because we've got life sorted

but because grace keeps

pulling out another chair.

Around the table

stories are shared like bread.

Joy passed around.

Sorrow divided.

Hope replenished.

The lonely discover

they're not quite as alone

as they feared

The stranger learns their name

matters here

The weary find

they can put down their burdens

for a little while.

And Christ is among us,

not only in sanctuaries,

not only in prayers and hymns,

but in laughter spilling across tables

in soup served generously,

in hands reaching for one another.

This is how the kingdom grows

Like yeast in dough.

Like roots beneath a forest floor.

Like a fire passed from one candle to another.

Quietly.

Steadily.

One welcome.

One conversation.

One open door at a time.

And the table keeps growing

because God's love

has never learned

how to make itself small.



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E Hamilton 2026

THE AYLESFORD WELL

Have you ever wondered about the pale blue abstract sculpture outside All Saints Church? It marks the site of the old Aylesford Well House

Until around 1800, Leamington was a tiny village known as Leamington Priors. In the late 1700's, the village began building baths around its saline springs, for the increasing number of visitors who travelled here to "take the waters" in the hope of improving their health

The first well house was built on the instruction of the 4th Earl of Aylesford, the lord of the manor, following a visit to the town in 1803. For those wishing to take advantage of the facilities inside the building there was a scale of charges depending on how long you were visiting. In 1813 the 5th Earl pulled down the 1803 well house to replace it with a larger one. When the well house was first built there were very few buildings in the town and it stood more or less alone.



However, with the rapid growth of the early 19th century, by the mid-1830s it was at heart of a bustling town. This changed in 1890 when the houses on the east side of Victoria Terrace and on the north of Church Walk were demolished to allow for the extension of the Parish Church of All Saints. From then on the well house stood as a focal point in front of the enlarged parish church. This remained the situation until late 1960 when the Well House was earmarked for demolition. There were some people who were not going to let the well go without a fight. One of these was councillor Fryer who made a last ditch

attempt to save it at the council meeting held on Wednesday 9th November 1960, before the demolition was due to begin on Friday 11th.

He asked if the ratepayers had a prescriptive right to use the well due to their long standing right?

The Town Clerk, Mr Sothert, said that up to 1935 the public had acquired a right as "from time immemorial"



However, in 1935 the corporation decided the water should no longer be drawn from the spring under the well house, but piped from under the Royal Pump Room. At this point the right was broken and so this could not be used as an argument to save the well house.

In 1963 the site was marked by a grey granite stone, which looked remarkably like a tombstone, bearing an engraving of the well house and a history of the spring. In more recent years this too was removed, to be replaced by the modern sculpture seen today representing the healing waters flowing from the earth. It is called the 'Spring' sculpture created by Oliver Barratt in 2006



POEM FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

The golden days of August burn and stay,
With lazy skies that stretch across the bay.
The cicadas sing beneath the fading sun,
As summer's vibrant race is almost run.

But when September brings its gentle chill,
And shadows lengthen on the quiet hill,
The amber harvest and the falling leaf,
Make autumn's early magic true and brief.



ECO FEST

Date: 5th September 2026

Location: Royal Pump Rooms The Parade,
Leamington Spa, CV32 4AA

Time: 10:00 - 17:00

Cost: Free

Celebrate everything eco at the Pump Room Gardens.

Learn about how to decrease your carbon footprint, increase your healthy eating and step outside more to explore beautiful local green spaces. Vegan, veggie and local organic meat is available, along with craft activities, live music on the bandstand, a performance by a theatre company and more!



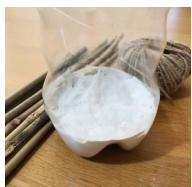
ECO CHURCH: MAKE A BEE HOUSE

Get buzzy. Build nesting places for the bees that don't buzz (and don't sting either). You can make this for tiny solitary bees to lay their eggs in. And ladybirds might use it as a place to sleep out the winter.

You will need

Plastic drinks bottle • Plasticine or blu-tak • Scissors • Short bamboo canes all the same size • String

1. Cut the top off the plastic bottle so that remainder of the bottle is about a centimetre shorter than your bamboo canes.



2. Push the plasticine or blu-tak into the bottom of the bottle. Poke a hole in the side of the bottle just above the bottom for the string.

3. Stick the canes (open ends out) hard into the plasticine and keep putting them in until the bottle is full.



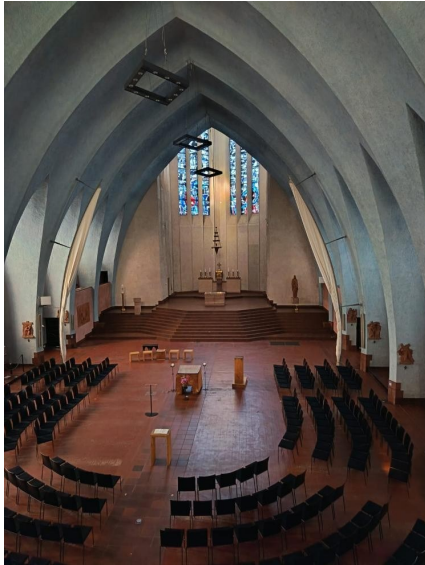
4. Use string to hang the bottle up in a sunny spot on a tree, shed or wall. Make sure it tilts downwards slightly to keep rain out.



SINGING IN FRANKFURT

Jean writes:

In June I travelled to Frankfurt in Germany with a group from the Royal Leamington Spa Bach Choir, to give a joint concert with the German-American Community Choir (GACC). This group was originally founded in 1973 by the US military stationed in Frankfurt, with the aim of strengthening and deepening international friendship through a shared love of music. The choir continued to flourish after the



withdrawal of American forces in 1995, and currently has about 180 active members, including German and American, but also several other nationalities.

The weekend of the concert was in the middle of a heatwave, with temperatures reaching a record 42 deg centigrade! Nevertheless, approximately 80 singers from both choirs assembled at the church of Sankt Bonifatius at 9.30am sharp ready for a full day of rehearsing. The interior of the church was cooler than outside,



but unfortunately we were positioned up on the balcony, grouped around the organ, where the heat was several degrees higher than below. The GACC thoughtfully provided bottled water and fruit drinks for everyone, and laid on a splendid spread of salads for lunch in the blessedly cool basement of the church.

The concert on Sunday 28th June went very well, and afterwards we had a communal meal at a traditional restaurant which offered its own refreshing “Apfelwein”, similar to a very dry cider.

Altogether, it was a hot and sticky but very enjoyable trip, and three weeks later we welcomed members of our host choir on their return visit to Leamington, presenting the same programme (Durufle Requiem and Bernstein’s Chichester Psalms) to an English audience



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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

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 20th September 2026 if you have any items suitable for publication in the next issue of the newsletter