

**Parish support – support for parishes.** *The Diocesan offices continue to provide support to parishes including: Safeguarding – training and advice and helping parishes to respond to safeguarding concerns and allegations; paying grants, stipends and pensions; managing investments; administering parish share; and producing budgets, reports and accounts; maintaining and improving our vicarages; resourcing lay ministry; discerning vocations; training ordinands and curates; managing clergy appointments; providing continuing ministerial development; providing HR support; advising about the care and development of churches (including the DAC) and helping to find grants; sharing news, information and resources with parishes; and arranging meetings and providing briefing papers for Diocesan Synod, Bishop's Council, and statutory diocesan committees.*

### Parish Structures and Governance support

*from Matt Jermyn, Parish Structures and Governance Advisor*

I often compare parish structures to flowerpots. In the same way that you would choose a pot to suit the needs of a plant, we should shape church structures for the sake of the life of the church that we want to grow. Being part of the Church of England can occasionally feel like inheriting a pot which is ornate, impractical and in places a bit cracked! There are often ways to make the structures we've inherited lighter or better fitting, however. Please pray that the life of the churches in the diocese would be supported rather than stifled by their structures, and particularly that the ones seeking support with particular issues would find the best way through.

The support available includes:

- Advice for churches on changes to governance structures such as uniting parishes or setting up joint councils
- Working with churches
- Training and support for Churchwardens
- Requests for help on a wide range of issues, from the charitable status of PCCs to food hygiene regulations

*Please pray for everyone involved in the practicalities of church life in the Diocese, that they would have the energy, time and resources they need.*



### Parish HR Support Services

*from Simone Smith, HR Manager*

In the last year since the launch of the Parish HR Support services, I have received 37 support requests from the Warwick and Leamington Deanery alone. This is excellent and shows that the Parish HR Support System is being viewed upon as a reliable source of employment law support and advice. The queries specifically relating to Warwick and Leamington Deanery are below, however this service offers support with all employment law areas covering the entire employee lifecycle including eLearning for important employment topics.

- Family leave queries such as Maternity, Paternity and Adoption
- Recruitment support including safer recruitment
- Employment status checking and support – Employee, Worker or Self-employed
- Advice with recruitment, retention and conduct in relation to volunteers
- Disability and Neurodiversity support
- Disciplinarys, Grievances, Capability issues, Restructures and Redundancies
- Handbook and Policy support
- eLearning enrolment for Sexual Harassment, Unconscious Bias and Equality & Diversity

I have been really pleased at the commitment of all the Parishes to have good HR policies and practices in place. My prayer is that the Parish HR Support Service will continue to evolve and be able to offer more support, particularly with a regular offering of training on important topics in the future.

*The HR support service is available by phone or email between 10am and 2pm, Monday to Friday.*

**Parish HR  
Support Service**



**“This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts, and grows; though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head, and then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”**

**Mark 4.26-29**

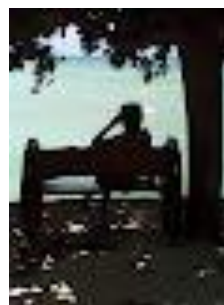
AD = Area Dean; C = Clergy; IR = Interregnum; HT = Headteacher; A = Associate; EH = Executive Head; HoS = Head of School; LC = Lay Chair

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>PARISH SUPPORT</b> Diocesan Secretary – Jacqueline Ladds	Resourcing vocational explorations – Mark Norris DDO	Training curates – Susan Bowden-Pickstock	Ministry & Leadership – Rob Harrison	Safeguarding – standards – Sarah Price	Financial services and support – Karen Birch	<b>Parish Structures &amp; Governance</b> – Matt Jermyrn
<b>TRINITY 7</b> 3 WARWICK & LEAMINGTON DEANERY AD - Jonathan Jee LC - Claire Russell	4 St Margaret, Whitnash C – Ben Cook	5 St Margaret's CofE Primary, Whitnash EH - Sukie Owers; HoS Ruth Anstee	6 St Michael, Budbrooke C – David Brown	7 St Paul's, Warwick C – David Brown	8 Communications team - Andy Waddams	9 Heathcote Parish Church C – Rob Budd
<b>TRINITY 8</b> 10 St John the Baptist, Leamington C – Stephen Parker	11 Holy Trinity, Leamington C – Esther Peers	12 St Mary's, Warwick C – Angus Aagaard	13 St Nicholas, Warwick C – Linda Duckers	14 St Chad, Bishop's Tachbrook C - Jonathan Smith	15 Maintaining houses for parish clergy – Nigel Campbell	16 Bishop's Tachbrook CofE Primary, HT – Cathryn Kilbey
<b>TRINITY 9</b> 17 St Paul's, Leamington Spa C – Jonathan Jee	18 St Paul's CofE Primary, L/Spa H – Matthew Bown	19 St Mary Magdalene, Lillington C - William Smith	20 St James, Old Milverton C – Sue Fairhurst	21 All Saints CofE Junior, Warwick EH - Jon Queralt HT - Sandra Sutherland	22 HR including Parish Support – Simone Smith	23 St Mark's, Leamington C – Tim Broadbent
<b>TRINITY 10</b> 24 St Mary, Cubbington C – Ann Hall	25 Cubbington CofE Primary HT – Juliet Jones	26 St Mary's, Leamington C – Becky Jones	27 All Saints, Emscote C – Sharon Jones (new)	28 All Saints, Leamington Spa C – Christopher Wilson	29 Historic churches and church halls across the Diocese – Claire Strachan	30 Operations – Steve Davenport; DAC – Tim Latham
<b>TRINITY 11</b> 31 Steve Davies, Robert Langton, Roger Garratt, Anne Morris, Geoff Morris, Andrew Gorham, Alister Mort, Roy Greenland, Anne Hibbert, David Herbert, Penny Hughes, David Hodgson						

## PRAYER DIARY

### Mark 6.31

Then Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat.



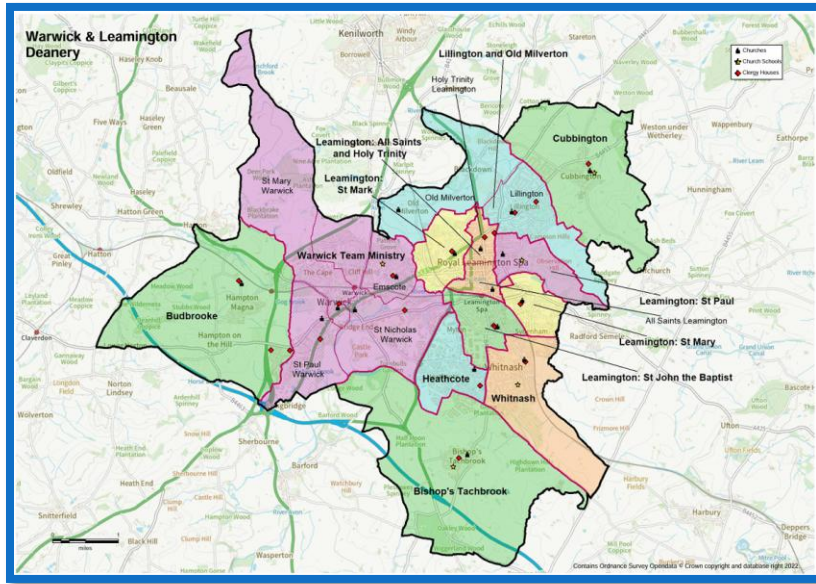
Faith and Young People (November).

Coming up – the themes for the next 3 months of 2025 are: **Healthy Communities – TFC (September); Loving One Another/Racial Justice (October); and Growing**

### BEING HEALTHY CHURCH

On a Quiet Day I pondered the possibility that as much as 70% of our time could be lavished to quietly nourish our relationship with God; leaving 30% to address relationships in church and community, or in the wider world (which is often beyond our personal influence or control). Are we in danger of prioritizing things that are beyond us, to the detriment of our spiritual core, our own 'healthy' garden?

## SPECIFIC DAYS IN AUGUST 2025



**3 - Warwick & Leamington Deanery** Area Dean, Jonathan Jee; Assistant Area Deans David Brown and Esther Peers. Lay Chair, Claire Russell

**4 – St Margaret, Whitnash** Please pray that we continue to grow in number and deeper in our faith as followers of Jesus. We thank God for our growing work with families, young people and the elderly. Please pray for our holiday club (4th-8th August) and our Bible course that starts in September. Please pray for our growing congregational plant ‘Connect at 4pm’ that meets every Sunday in our church centre. Pray for the team and that they are able to reach out to the Bulldog estate.

**5 - St Margaret's CofE Primary School, Whitnash** Thank God for the fantastic staff and pupils of our school. Also, thank God for the 'open door' stance towards clergy from St Margaret's Church, who regularly lead collective worship and are also foundation governors.

**6 – St Michael, Budbrooke** We are thankful for recent baptisms, a continued commitment among us to pray weekly for revival, and God’s sustaining when most of our team have had wider ministry commitments. Please pray for our growing partnership with St Paul’s Warwick (*see below*), for God’s blessing on our shared Alpha Course(s), schools and community work. Pray too, that our re-ordering plans progress and we can create a real legacy for coming generations through the transformation of our church building. C - Martin Davies (also Diocesan Rural Officer), Curate, Luke Thomas, Mary Lodge (PTO), R, with PTO – Bob Dubock, Ray Filby

**8 – St Paul’s, Warwick** – We are thankful for our new team, for signs of new life and growth and new people connecting with the church. Please pray for God’s continued grace upon the partnership we have built with St Michael’s, Budbrooke and for shared mission and ministry plans this coming academic year as we join together as a Network. Amy Vogel, Plant Leader; Children’s worker – Caroline Mara

**9 – Heathcote Parish Church** – We thank God for the refurbishment work in our community sports hall over the Summer and for the volunteers and funding that has been provided. We pray for the opportunity this facility will offer to be a blessing to more people in our local community.

**10 – St John the Baptist, Leamington Spa C – Daniel Vickerstaff**

**11 – Holy Trinity, Leamington Spa** - Holy Trinity thanks God for its wonderful all-age church family, worshipping, praying, speaking out together, and asks for patience and focus as the fulfilment of our Vision Project awaits key decisions and the generous giving that will fund it.

**12 – St Mary's, Warwick** R with PTO – Doreen Mills

**13 – St Nicholas, Warwick.** C Anita Morgan (also Dean, Self-Supporting Ministry), John Alderman (PTO), +David Evans R – Fiona Trewick, Carole Ellis.

**14 – St Chad, Bishop's Tachbrook -**

## 16 – Bishop's Tachbook CofE Primary

**17 – St Paul's, Leamington (also designated as Mission Hub)** One highlight we are praising God for this year is a well-attended youth Alpha course which we ran in January - several young people began or deepened their faith journey as a result. Another is the Venture weekend we were able to take 35 children in year 4 at our church school on, exploring evidence for the resurrection. Please pray that God continues to grow faith and bear fruit in young people at children both at St Paul's and across our mission hub too! C – Eleanor Jeans, Andy Ruffhead, Curate - Dâmares Gomez-Morris, Graeme Pringle, Steve Kelly (Associates) R Jan Pringle. Eleanor Jeans writes, *“for the Mission Hub – it would be great to pray for our mission hub as we continue to meet together and seek God's guidance. Also, HOPE church - our new worshipping community at St Paul's Leamington CofE Primary School - that God would equip us and help us to know what this will look like in the future. Could we also pray for the Myriad Learning Community, which next meets in October? For the 8 teams and their lay leaders who are part of this from across the diocese. Pray for the team as we lead and for each team of leaders of each new worshipping community.”*

### 18 – St Paul's CofE Primary, Leamington

**19 – St Mary Magdalene, Lillington** We give thanks for a season of planning for change that will end with the start of works to make the church more accessible and adaptable. Building works begin in September and we give thanks for all the prayer and vision that has brought us to this point. C (associate) – Rosemary Pantling; C – Cerys Smith R – Roderick Clark

**20 - St James, Old Milverton** - prayer for the smooth progress of our building plans as we look towards planning permission.

**21 – All Saints CofE Junior, Emscote – Warwick**

**23 – St Mark's, Leamington** - We thank God for our welcoming, diverse congregation and the creative ways faith is shared across generations. Please pray for wisdom and resources as we develop our outreach with youth and elderly people. R – Marie Calvert, Amanda Di Giovanni.

**24 – St Mary's, Cubbington R - Jo King (also Warden of Readers)**

25 – Cubbington CofE Primary

**26 – St Mary's, Leamington Priors** - St Mary's thanks God for growth in faith amongst our youth and for their inspiring testimonies, for a new Children's Family and Youth Leader joining us in September and for CAP Hope Cafe guests wanting to be baptised after doing Alpha. Please pray for our roofing project which is taking place between July - December, for it all to go smoothly. For the Lord's provision with finance. For Alpha in the Autumn and the development of our work with CAP (Christians Against Poverty).

Barry Poultney (lay licensed funeral officiant)

**27 – All Saints, Emscote – Warwick** C David Pettifor (PTO) R - Andrew Giles

**28 – All Saints, Leamington Spa** Give thanks for the Living Labyrinth and pray for those who use it; pray for increased capacity to develop mission and ministry, and to raise funds for pressing repairs

**C = Clergy R = Reader H = Headteacher**



## PRAYER JOTTINGS – AUGUST 2025

- There are excellent, short Grove booklets on themes relevant to 'Quiet lives' including Spirituality and Pastoral Care. One (P172) from 2022, by retired GP and spiritual director, Rhona Knight, focuses on "Unforced Rhythms of Grace: Rest, Recovery and Flourishing in Ministry". She says, 'It is helpful to take time to reflect how well-watered the different aspects of our lives are and consider prayerfully where changes might be needed.' One way to do this is what she calls the '**Water Wheel**' – plotting on a scale from 0-10 where 0 is poorly watered and 10 well-watered in relation to segments including: **Family & Friends, Fun & Recreation, Vocation/employment, Health, Partner/Close Friendships, Relationship with God, Community, and Sabbath (rest day)**. Where we deem ourselves thirty, she encourages us to consider how these areas might be 'watered' – How might God be inviting you to do this?

Pastoral - Grove Books / The Revd Dr Rhona Knight - Grove Books

- John Mark Comer "Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become like him, Do as he did" (2024, SPCK), also has a companion guide 'The Practicing the Way Course' (2024, Form) which over eight sessions enables an individual, couple or small group to review their relationship with Jesus, including handling pain and suffering, receiving healing and crafting a Rule of Life. Might this be an option for you and your home group this Autumn? Nicky Gumbel, Alpha pioneer, says of the book **"I love John Mark Comer's vision for life – to be with Jesus, become more like him, and aspire to do what Jesus would do. This book can only help us all in our own walk with Jesus."**
- From Thomas Keating's "Intimacy with God: an introduction to centering prayer" (Crossroad, 2020) St John of the Cross wrote, "*The Father spoke one word from all eternity and he spoke it in silence, and it is in silence that we hear it.*" This suggests that silence is God's first language and that all other languages are poor translations. *The discipline of Centering Prayer and the other traditional practices are ways of refining our receptive apparatus so that we can perceive the word of God communicating itself with ever greater simplicity to our spirit and to our inmost being. The practice of Centering Prayer, therefore, is not contemplation in the strict sense of the term but a preparation for it.*" (p. 15) He says that "*Centering Prayer is a method of prayer that comes out of the Christian tradition, principally The Cloud of Unknowing, and the writings of St John of the Cross. It brings us into the presence of God and thus fosters the contemplative attitudes of listening and receptivity*" \*(p. x)

**The Lord is my Pace setter – I shall not rush.  
He makes me stop for quiet intervals;  
He provides me with images of stillness  
which restore my serenity.**

*Tokio Megashie, a Modern Version of Psalm 23*

## Encouragement to Receive

Clive Hicks writes *"I visited the National Gallery to escape the heat on 11<sup>th</sup> July. This almost photo-realistic image of Joseph, the father of Jesus, dreaming, caught my attention. Riveting as an image of a step 'beyond pondering in contemplative prayer' ... drifting into sleep, and being receptive to God's messenger. "after he had pondered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to ...." (Luke 1.20a)*



*Could this be a prompt for some of us to enter sleep in a more quietened, reflective state rather than heads busy with news, media, mobile screens etc?"*

Frank Laubach, quoted in *Devotional Classics – Renovare* by Richard Foster and James Smith (Harper Collins, 1993) "*The day had been rich but strenuous, so I climbed "Signal Hill" at the back of my house talking and listening to God all the way up, all the way back, all the lovely half hour on the top. And God talked back! I let my tongue go loose and from it there flowed poetry far more beautiful than any I ever composed. It flowed without pausing and without ever a failing syllable for a half hour. I listened astonished and full of joy and gratitude [some might ask] "Why did God waste his poetry on you alone, when you could not carry it home?" ... I only know He did and I am happy in the memory.*"

- Each month **we focus on a different Deanery; this month it is Warwick and Leamington.** In September we will be praying for Coventry East Deanery, in October, Coventry North and then the Kenilworth Deanery in November. I look forward to receiving updates from area deans and clergy, and anyone else with specific prayer requests.

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