



**St Mary the Virgin
Rickmansworth**
Serving the whole community

FROM THE VICAR'S DESK: JULY & AUGUST 2025



Greetings Everyone!

As the more observant among you will have noticed, this edition of my letter is for the next two months, as many people are away or taking a summer break. I pray that even those of you who are unable to

get away, are able to have a time of rest or of Sabbath in the coming weeks.

To begin, I offer you a prayer poem by Jan Berry...

God of Holidays

*For rest and relaxation,
Switching off phones and email,
the release from the demands of diaries
and calendars,
the blissful luxury of solitude.*

***God who rests with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you***

*For travel and exploration,
adventures to new places,
discovering beauty and strangeness,
exploring new food and ways of life.*

***God who travels with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you***

*For play and leisure,
games on beach or field,
delighting in fun and laughter,
sharing time with friends*

***God who plays with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you***

For making and creating,
forming shapes in clay, wood or stone,
splashing colour with paint or thread,

words or music echoing in our souls

***God who plays with us,
for holiday joys, we praise you. Amen***

The walls of Jericho (well, perhaps not)



The recent fall of plaster from the north wall in the sanctuary has meant we have had to temporarily close St Mary's during the day, to comply with Safety regulations.

We have set the wheels in motion for this to be made safe ASAP. "Luckily" our architect was on site in a meeting with Martyn one of our church wardens, and this has helped speed up the process. The first quote we received for making the area safe was a bit high (£2,300 plus vat), but I'm pleased to relate that we have now secured another company (through the architect), for the much more realistic fee of £600. Plus vat. The work should be completed by the first week of July, and the church can remain open again once it is safe.

Please note, that we are still recommending that no one works alone in the church while it is open to the public, and that teams of two should lock it. This is again in order to keep everyone safe after recent episodes of anti-social behaviour from a visitor.



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North Porch and lay- by planning permission

One of the long-term projects our PCC has been working on, is to improve the accessibility of the North porch by extending and partially redesigning it. This will make it easier for wheelchair users and people with mobility issues as well as families with buggies to enter the building. The proposed North Porch improvements will be linked to levelling works on the footpath and the creation of a lay-by to allow people to park safely while they unload wheelchairs and mobility aids / buggies etc. Full details of this proposal can be found on the three rivers website as we are now applying for planning permission for this project. If you would like to know more then please contact Martyn Gower or a member of the churchyard and fabric team. There will soon also be a full report of the plans in the back of church

Please can our church members support this application by reading the notes below and following their guidance ...

The PCC would welcome the support of members of the congregation for this proposal. The best way to support the proposal is by commenting on the current planning application and giving it your support.

The Application Number is 25/0883/FUL and can be viewed on Three Rivers website. When commenting I would suggest making the following points.

The description of development is 'Construction of porch extension and associated landscaping works including drop off lay-by and resurfacing pathways.'

When commenting give the application reference number & make it clear that you support the proposal.

Providing level access via the extended North porch to the church will greatly benefit many in our congregation as well as other users of and visitors to the church

The proposed drop off point with a level path to the North porch will further ease access and avoid the need for people to be dropped off outside The Feathers public house where parking restrictions are in place.

The lay-by would also be available for the use of hearses and wedding cars to drop off /pick up. Currently such vehicles park illegally outside The Feathers

The design of the North porch, retains all the existing porch apart from the current outer porch door and will offer a much more welcoming entrance to the church.

The official deadline for comments is 2nd July, but it should be possible to leave comments for a day or two after the deadline.

Baptisms and Weddings

Baptism and Wedding bookings continue to increase.

We currently have 7 weddings in the process of being booked and will have held at least 15 baptisms by November of this year, though as enquiries continue to come in that figure is set to rise. Please pray for the continuing growth of this ministry and the growing connection with our communities





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Evie making good use of the Pulpit shortly after her baptism



Celebrations board

We are planning to make more of the celebrations and events happening at St Mary's church by displaying photographs of them on the boards at the back of church.

These will help our various visitors to see that St Mary's is a very much a living church and with a heart for serving its community.

We are planning another wall mounted board in the children's corner for displaying children's church artwork too, as part of the same missional project



Parish Bring and Share Meal

On Sunday the 22nd of June we held a "bring and share lunch". This was well attended congregation members old and new, and the range of food brought and shared was amazing! We all tucked in with enthusiasm, after Dawn led us in the Superman Grace

This was a lovely "easy-going" social occasion was much enjoyed by all who attended. Thank you to everyone who made this possible and to all who

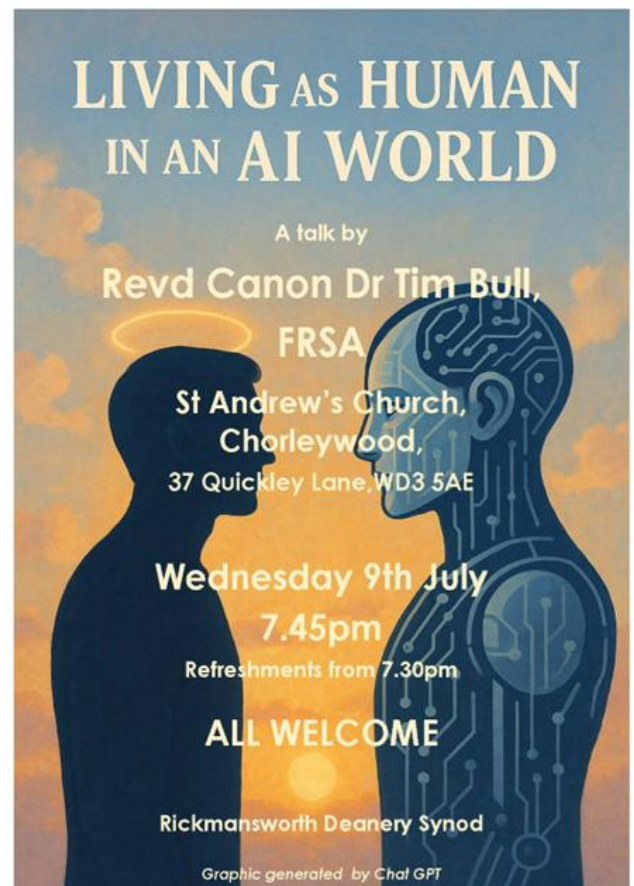
attended and brought the food to share. We look forward to holding this event again in the future



Deanery Synod open Lecture

The Deanery Synod on the 9th July opens with a lecture on AI by the Revd Canon Tim Bull.

Everyone is welcome to attend this part of the meeting – you don't need to be a deanery Synod representative to come. The lecture is at





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A message from Sean our director of Music



In July, the choir will continue to rehearse the week's hymns at 9:30am every Sunday morning. All ages and abilities are welcome to join (whether you can read music fluently or you've always thought about joining the choir!).

In addition to this, on one Sunday each month (exact dates TBC) the choir will perform an anthem during communion. In preparation for this, there will be an additional rehearsal on the Thursday afternoon before.

If you're interested in joining either our weekly rehearsals or have any questions, please talk to Sean at the end of a service or get in touch with him

directly: organist@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk

Lectio Divina (or praying with the word)

Don't be put off by the name

Lectio is simply a way of praying with the bible. If you are looking for a different way of engaging with scripture and praying, Lectio might be for you.

One of our monthly house groups focusses on this way of praying. If you would like to know more, please get in touch with Vicar Gary



Another helper for Tim and the church gardening team

We are delighted to welcome the latest member of the gardening team, Robin.

Robin spends many hours in the churchyard each week keeping an eye on things and helping to keep pests under control. When he's not doing this he can be found singing some of his own compositions from his favourite spot just outside the parish centre door

*May you know God's blessings in
fulness this day and everyday*

Gary

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