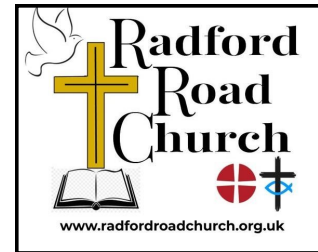


SUNDAY SERVICES

10.30 am THE SUNDAY SERVICE
Holy Communion - first Sunday of each month

(Please refer to the Diary on page 8 details of all Services as arrangements may vary).



**Radford Road
 Church
 Leamington Spa**

REGULAR WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

Monday	5.00 - 6.00pm	Rainbows (5-7 years)
	6.00 - 7.15pm	Brownies (7-10 years)
	7.00 - 8.30pm	Guides (10-15 years)
Tuesday	10.00am	All Are Welcome
	2.00pm	Friendship Circle
	7.30pm	Rangers
Wednesday	11.00am	Coffee Morning
	12.30pm	Wednesday Lunch alternating with Mid-Week Worship
		.
Thursday	2.00pm	Film Club (monthly)
Friday	6.15 - 7.45pm	Cub Scouts (8-10½ years)
	6.15 - 7.15pm	Beaver Scouts (6-8 years)
	7.30 - 9.00pm	Scouts & Explorer Scouts
Saturday	9.00 - 11.00am	The Big Breakfast (monthly on 2 nd Saturday)
	10.00am	Christians Together in Leamington
		Ramblers (monthly)

Magazine



Dec. 2019/ Jan. 2020

Radford Road Church web site: www.radfordroadchurch.org.uk

THE MINISTER'S LETTER

To the family of God at Radford Road Church, Christmas can be both an amazing, almost magical time of year, or it can be a fraught and difficult one. In this month we may be recalling happy times spent together with family, we may be reminded of significant people now missing from our lives, or we may be reflecting on what can be, and perhaps has been for us, a stressful and difficult time of year.



Superficially we can see in our Christmas cards the ideal family, mother and father doting on their first child. Clean stable, ox and ass lowing, even cherubim in attendance, such is the peace and beauty of this moment.

Like many Facebook or Instagram pictures, however, behind the smiles and the happiness there is often a different story. Life is more complicated, stressful and challenging than we imagine or often portray.

For this family doubts over the baby's true father may still have hung like a dark cloud in the air, the absence of their parents at the birth of their firstborn son, and no place to call their own, would have left mighty big questions about the future for them.

Little that I read in Luke's Gospel about the birth of Jesus seems peaceful. No soothing silent night, instead a labour in a stable, an exhausted mother and father, and then muddy, smelly, out of town visitors bursting in looking sheepish. Less shabby-chic, cuddly, wise men, and more dishevelled shepherds disturbing the worn and weary mother and child.

Yet, there, amidst the straw, not minding the chaos, was the baby called Emmanuel meaning "God with us". No longer aloof, distant from the details of our lives, the struggles and the hurts, but vulnerable, fragile, warm, his little heart beating, eyes blinking in the cool of the stable.

Just eight days later after the period of purification, Mary and Joseph report to the temple to present Jesus to the priests, and an old man called Simeon steps out of the crowd to offer a blessing upon the child that he declares, is destined to become God's salvation. Though even this moment of surprise and wonder is not without warning that Jesus is to cause the rise and the fall of many in Israel, and that a sword will pierce Mary's heart too.

This is the real Nativity beyond the gift wrapping and the tinsel, or even the beautiful wooden figures that remind us. This is the real significance of Christmas, Jesus, the reason for the season.

I hope our Nativity Exhibition, our Knitted Angels and our Carol Services lead us to this.

God bless you all this Christmas.

James

MINISTER (URC)	Revd. James Church jamesichurch@hotmail.com	733265
MINISTER (Methodist)	Revd. Sam McBratney s.mcbratney@methodist.org.uk	07706 586860
ADMINISTRATOR	Margaret B	716625
CHURCH TREASURER	Tina	835656
ORGANIST	Margaret H	313027
MID-WEEK WORSHIP	Jane	02476 696700
WEDNESDAY LUNCH	Veronica	429465
FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE	Margaret H Ruth	313027 771834
PROPERTY	Bridget Andrew	426419 259233
RAINBOWS	Bridget	426419
BROWNIES	Bridget	426419
GUIDES	Emma	07980 767049
RANGERS	Sarah	07889 214050
BEAVER SCOUTS	Matthew	07804 364327
CUB SCOUTS	Matthew	07804 364327
SCOUTS	Malcolm	07799 432318
EXPLORER SCOUTS	Mark	07980 817696
ACTING GROUP SCOUT LEADER	Mark	07980 817696
MAGAZINE EDITOR AND WEBMASTER	Marjorie carrier_mj@yahoo.co.uk	427451

ROTAS

	Welcomer	Coffee	Flowers to give	Arranger
Dec 1	Sue	Margaret & Bridget		Jean
Dec 8	Rosemary	John & Ruth		Kath
Dec 15	Ann	Veronica & Jherell	Valerie	Tony
Dec 22	Veronica	Sally & Julia		Margaret
Dec 29	Julia	Brenda & Alan		Margaret
Jan 5	Joan	Margaret & Jean	Please see 'Flowers in Church' paragraph on page 3	
Jan 12	Jherell	Bridget & Veronica		
Jan 19	Rosemary	John & Ruth		
Jan 26	Sue	Julia & Sally		
Feb 2	Veronica	Brenda & Alan		
Feb 9	Ann	Jean & Margaret		

Would the first person on the Coffee Rota please bring 2 pints of milk and the second bring biscuits. Thank you!

We thank all those who have promised flowers for the church and also thank the arrangers for using their time and talents in this way.

and finally...

Believe you can and you're halfway there. -

Theodore Roosevelt

Thank you for reading this copy of Radford Road Church Magazine. To cut down on paper and production costs many people now receive the Magazine by email but, if you do still have a hard copy, please pass it on to a friend or re-cycle it when you have finished with it.

Please email Marjorie at carrier_mj@yahoo.co.uk before Sunday Jan. 20th if you have any items suitable for publication in the February Magazine.

FAMILY NEWS



Please remember in your prayers

those who have suffered bereavement.

Comfort the families and friends who grieve.

those who are ill and especially those in our prayer book

We ask that they will 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 think especially of Ann, Sally's Mum, Mavis and John F.

Please pray for all those you know who have special health problems, worries or concerns. As autumn and winter approach, may they keep warm and safe and may they know others are thinking of, and praying for, them.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY MORNING

We are holding a Children's Activity morning on Thursday January 2nd 2020 from 9.30am to 12noon. The theme is 'The Wise Men'. We are still in the planning stage but if you are able to help please let Margaret B, Bridget or Jean know.

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

Fifty years ago a group of young wives from this church went on several flower arranging courses. Afterwards they offered to arrange the church flowers. Now, for several reasons, those ladies have come to the decision, that they can no longer continue to arrange the flowers in church on a regular basis. However they will get together as a group to put flowers in church on special occasions. In place of the flower arrangements, living pot plants will be placed on the rostrum.

In the past several members of the congregation have kindly donated money for the purchase of the flowers and now, instead, the gift of a colourful houseplant would be appreciated. Perhaps you are able to plant bulbs so that there will be a lovely display of spring blooms in church during March and April. If anyone wishes to place a flowering plant or vase of flowers in memory of a loved one these can be placed on the Remembrance Table.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the arrangers who, over the years, have given their time and talents and to all the congregation who have given donations so generously.

Hazel Hobbs

THE SON OF GOD

Last Christmas we received a remarkable Christmas card in which the text, written by prolific novelist, Jeffery Archer, told the story of Jesus Christ from birth to crucifixion in just 346 words. The card is on sale again this year. The card depicts Jesus as the manager of a football team called 'The Disciples' – 'not one of the players is a star, in fact the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition'. In what might be seen as a parable for our times, Archer takes a sideswipe at shallow 21st century notions of fame and poses the question how, without recourse to focus groups, advertising gurus, spin doctors or social media, and with 'no box sets recording any of his miracles', Jesus is 'still the best-known celebrity on earth' more than 2,000 years after his death.

The former MP, has donated the story to Cancer Research UK and it is printed inside one of their charity Christmas cards.

He says, "I wanted to write a piece that would not only appeal to my generation, but I hoped would inspire a younger generation, obsessed with football and celebrity. It took me several drafts before I'd completed the final version".

As for what drove him to write it in the first place, Archer recalled a 'piece of prose that had been written in the 17th century which he saw when he attended a carol concert at St. Michael's Church in Belgravia, London, the previous year. He said: "It inspired me to want to write a modern version. I was delighted when Cancer Research UK chose the text for one of their Christmas cards, not least because my wife was successfully treated for bladder cancer some years ago, while I have fully recovered from prostate cancer."

"Cancer affects the lives of so many, as Mary and I are so aware, and is particularly poignant at this time of year, which is all about spending valuable time with your family."

Jeffery Archer has written 35 books, including works of non-fiction such as the three volumes of prison diaries following his 2001 conviction for perjury and perverting the course of justice, and they have sold 275million copies.

He has shown an enthusiasm for biblical themes before, titling one of his novels 'Kane and Abel' in an echo of the sons of Adam and Eve, from the book of Genesis. A more recent novel, 'Heads You Win', was first published at the end of 2018.

Jeffery Archer donates all profits from the Christmas card to Cancer Research UK. He was invited by Cancer Research UK to read "The Son Of God" for the first time at their carol concert at St. Mary's Marylebone in London on December 19th 2018.



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN LEAMINGTON (CTL)

CHURCHES TOGETHER RAMBLERS

Saturday 14th Dec. 2019 10.15am for 10.30am (**note later time**)

PARKS OF LEAMINGTON

Local walk from Windmill Inn, entirely on tarmac paths.

Leader: Nigel Briggs

Christmas Lunch at the Windmill Inn at 1.00pm for 1.15pm for those who have booked by 29th November.

Saturday January 18th 2020 9.45am for 10.00am.

Details for both walks will be on the vestibule notice board.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

United Service on Sunday January 19th 2020 at 6.30pm

Venue: :Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa.

Preacher: Revd. Liz Jackson who works with refugees.

FACTS ABOUT REINDEER

Reindeer lived in England at the end of the ice age 10,000 years ago. Climate change and hunting led to their demise here.

The only place where reindeer roam wild in Britain is in the Cairngorms where they were re-introduced in the 1950s.

In 2008 a small herd was imported from Scandinavia and set free on the Trevarno Estate near Helston, Cornwall, to make Christmas feel more authentic for tourists. In May this year a male calf was born to parents, Prancer and Rudolph, and named Blue after the bluebells for which the estate is renowned.

They eat fungus in winter, and leaves and grasses at other times.

Laplanders use reindeer for milk, clothing, and sometimes keep them as pets.

According to one researcher, the myth of flying reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh was started by hallucinating northern Europeans who had been eating magic mushrooms!

Eddie Newall

Taken, with permission, from The Parish Window

NATIVITY EXHIBITION 2019

Dec. 3rd – 7th inclusive 2pm - 4pm and Dec. 8th 10am - noon & 2pm - 4pm



Again we are hosting the Nativity Exhibition at Radford Road Church and it is bigger and better than ever before! There are exhibits from all around the world and each exhibit depicts the wonderful story of the birth of our Lord.

Amongst the display of over 120 exhibits are traditional nativity sets showing the Holy Family in the stable; miniature ones that have been made to fit into dolls' houses; silver

teaspoons with nativity figures at the end of the handles and sets made from olive wood carved in Bethlehem. There are sets from South America which feature llamas in the stable and a set from Zambia where the traditional sheep have been replaced by hippopotami. There is a set showing North American Indians with a tepee instead of a stable and a colourful Mexican set made from tin plate. There is no charge to view the exhibition but visitors may like to make a donation. The proceeds will be shared between our Mission Project and the Church funds.

Help is needed each day during the week to serve refreshments and to chat to our visitors. Please sign the chart in the vestibule if you are able to offer a couple of hours to help in this way.

A simple lunch will be provided on Sunday December 9th just for those who are able to help with the dismantling of the exhibition in the early afternoon.

Please let Margaret B know in advance if you can help and would like lunch.

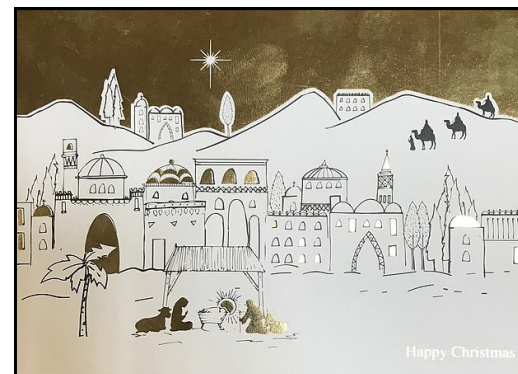
NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER

James has suggested a fantastic idea for a new Church Stall at next year's Craft Fair - but it needs action **NOW!**

Full details of this exciting project will be revealed much nearer the time of the 2020 Craft Fair (Oct. 3rd 2020) but, in the meantime, we are appealing for lots of second hand fiction books which you have enjoyed but they must be in really good condition.

Please let Marjorie have any books you are able to donate as soon as possible and then we will organise a working party to get this brilliant idea off the ground.

So, when you are next having a sort out, please remember that fiction books are needed by Radford Road Church, and pass them on, so that this idea can be brought to fruition.



The card, with a gold and white nativity scene on its cover and including the text below, is again exclusively available in Cancer Research UK's 600 shops nationwide and on line at <https://shop.cancerresearchuk.org/product/son-god-christmas-cards-jeffrey-archer-pack-10>

Price:
£2.99 for a pack of 10 cards

The text on the card reads:

'He was born in a barn, his father a carpenter, and his mother a decent woman, but they were of no significance, and certainly couldn't afford to give the boy a private education. And yet, as a teenager, he was arguing the toss with his elders and betters in the council chambers.

He never got a proper job, just roamed around the countryside, unshaven, and living off bread and water and the occasional fish, while offering his opinions to those who cared to listen.

He became the manager of a football team known as The Disciples, not one of them a star, in fact the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition.

The authorities eventually arrested him as a rabble-rouser, but couldn't decide what to charge him with, other than the fact he claimed he was the Son of God.'

They strung him up with a couple of criminals, and when he finally gave up the ghost, rather assumed that would be the last they'd hear of him.

The Disciples were relegated at the end of the season, in fact the captain claimed on more than one occasion that he'd never been a member of His team. When He died at the age of thirty-three, there were no obituaries in the local press reporting his achievements, no glossy supplements highlighting his colourful career, no radio programmes to discuss his legacy, and no box sets recording any of his miracles.

But then, He'd never relied on focus groups to advise him on current trends, or advertising gurus to spend millions promoting his brand, or spin doctors to sharpen his image, and he didn't require social media to keep his followers up to date, so you could be forgiven for assuming he'd be forgotten in a few days. So how can one explain that over two thousand years later, Jesus Christ is still the best-known celebrity on earth?

Could it just be that He was the Son of God?'

ANTICIPATION

1. It's November, quick get ready
Not much time left, it's quite near.
All the thinking, all the planning
Not much time left, soon be here.
2. Stir Up Sunday has just gone by
Soon be Advent, on its way.
All the stirring, all the tasting
Puddings finished, stored away.
3. It's December, days rush by now
Not much time left, it may snow.
All the writing, all the posting
Cards are done now, off they go.
4. Gifts are sorted, quick get wrapping
"Who is this for?", write a tag.
All the shopping, feet are aching
Queues are longer, "Need a bag?"
5. Christmas Eve, anticipation
or glad tidings in the morn.
Listen, hear the midnight bells chime
Peace be with us, Christ is born.

Written by Julie S who attends our "All Are Welcome" group

MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

As you may be aware the Methodist Conference 2019 discussed Marriage and Relationship and produced a report entitled 'God's love unites us'. Each circuit is asked to discuss what is proposed around marriage and relationship and to air thoughts and questions it may have. **THERE IS NO DECISION MAKING**, it is simply an opportunity to gather together thoughts which can be taken back to Synod and then Conference will be voting on proposals in 2020.

At Radford Road we will be spending time discussing this at the Congregational Meeting on 15th February 2020.

The Circuit has arranged several road shows at different venues which any one is welcome to attend. You only need to attend one.

These are on:

Sat. 7th Dec. 2.30pm – 4pm at Northgate Methodist Church

Sat. 11th Jan. 2020 10.30am – 12noon at Kenilworth Methodist Church

Sat. 18th Jan. 2020 10.30am – 12noon at Stratford on Avon Methodist Church

It is important that as many people as possible get the chance to hear what is proposed and to air their concerns and thoughts.

RECIPE FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Take twelve whole months.
Clean them thoroughly of all bitterness, hate, and jealousy.
Make them just as fresh and clean as possible.
Now cut each month into twenty-eight, thirty, or thirty-one different parts, but don't make up the whole batch at once.
Prepare it one day at a time out of these ingredients.
Mix well into each day one part of faith, one part of patience, one part of courage, and one part of work.
Add to each day one part of hope, faithfulness, generosity, and kindness.
Blend with one part prayer, one part meditation, and one good deed.
Season the whole with a dash of good spirits, a sprinkle of fun, a pinch of play, and a cupful of good humour.
Pour all of this into a vessel of love.
Cook thoroughly over radiant joy, garnish with a smile, and serve with quietness, unselfishness, and cheerfulness.
You're bound to have a happy new year!

Author Unknown

Taken, with permission, from 'The Parish Window'

MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTY REPORT



Work completed

Boiler repaired in the Church centre.
New notice board fitted at the front of the Church.

Work to do

Baby changing mat to be fitted in the disabled toilet room in the vestibule.
New hot water supply to be installed to the small sink in the Church Centre kitchen.
Boards to be fitted behind the chairs in the lounge to prevent damage to the plaster.
Check water leak in the boiler room.

Bridget

PRAYING TOGETHER IN DECEMBER

The monthly Prayer Diary encourages the Church family to focus prayers on specific people or organisations on a daily basis

1st	Rehoboth Children's Centre	16th	The Uniformed Organisations
2nd	Valerie	17th	The Friendship Circle
3rd	Nativity Exhibition	18th	John F
4th	Wednesday Lunch & Mid-Week Worship	19th	Gill
5th	Christians Tog. In Leamington	20th	The Street Pastors
6th	House Group	21st	Gladys (Sally's Mum)
7th	Joyce	22nd	The Elders of the Church
8th	Christingle & Christening	23rd	The Film Club
9th	Night Shelter volunteers	24th	Nick
10th	Ken	25th	People who are alone at Christmas
11th	Clare	26th	Clarice
12th	Kingsley & Anne	27th	Ann
13th	All Are Welcome	28th	Ralph
14th	Big Breakfast	29th	Peggy
15th	Our Ministers & their families	30th	Margaret H's Mum
		31st	Children's Activities Morning

You are invited to take a pebble from the basket on the Table of Remembrance, sit or stand quietly and concentrate on your particular concern. Then hold or stroke your pebble – feel your hurt, worry, loneliness, pain, guilt, unhappiness or anxiety flowing into your stone. Feel it warm in your hand. If you are praying for someone else, feel your love and compassion flowing into your pebble.

When you are ready, leave your pebble at the cross of Jesus. Leave it with your concerns, so that Jesus can deal with them. Then go – knowing that Jesus loves and cares about you.

There is also a Book of Prayer. Any situation entered in the book will be prayed for at Friday Bible Study and included in the monthly Prayer Diary.

FILM CLUB

Do come along on Thursday Jan. 23rd at 2.00pm when you can see

"Pay it Forward"

Coming from a difficult home a young boy takes his teacher's challenge and tries to make the world a better place. Instead of paying back good deeds he attempts to pay them forward by helping other people. This has massive repercussions and transforms the lives of others who are forced to deal with their painful pasts.

Tea and cakes will be served: £2.00 per person.



THE NEXT BIG BREAKFASTS will be on Dec 14th and Jan. 11th at 9.00am.



Come along and bring your friends and smell the sizzling bacon as you come through the door.
The November Big Breakfast raised £61.00

GLOVES, HATS AND SCARVES



Thank you to all those who have knitted scarves, gloves and hats for clients of the Night Shelter. The table in church was piled high with beautifully knitted garments. These gifts will be given to the Night Shelter in December and will be much appreciated during the cold and frosty nights of the winter months. The time and effort people have given in producing these garments show their willingness, thoughtfulness and generosity towards others whose lives are difficult.

Matthew 25:35

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

DECEMBER DIARY 2019

Sun	1	10.30am	Sunday Service with Holy Communion led by the Revd. Sam McBratney
Mon	2	10.00am	Setting up the Nativity Exhibition, Help needed please
Tues	3	2.00am	Nativity Exhibition & EVERY AFTERNOON THIS WEEK
		2.00pm	Friendship Circle: No Meeting
Wed	4	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12.30pm	Wednesday Lunch: Short Advent Worship led by the Revd. James Church and an opportunity to view the Nativity Exhibition.
Fri	6	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sat	7	10.00am	Nativity Exhibition (also from 2pm - 4pm)
Sun	8	10.30am	The Christingle Service led by the Revd. James Church. The service will also include a christening service. After the service there will be a jacket potato lunch for those who are able to help with the dismantling of the Nativity Exhibition.
Tues	10	10.00am	All Are Welcome
		2.00pm	Friendship Circle: Members' Afternoon
Wed	11	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12:30pm	Mid-Week Worship - Revd. Sam McBratney
Fri	13	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sat	14	9.00am	Big Breakfast
Sun	15	10.30am	The Carol Service
Tues	17	10.00am	All Are Welcome
		2.00pm	Friendship Circle: Christmas Carols, their authors & composers
Wed	18	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12.30pm	Wednesday Lunch followed by Christmas Songs of Praise with Connie Francis.
Fri	20	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sun	22	10.30am	The Sunday Service led by the Revd. James Church
Wed	25	10.00am	CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE led by the Revd. James Church
Sun	29	10.30am	The Sunday Service led by Mr Tim Pearson



JANUARY DIARY 2020

Sun	5	10.30am	Covenant Service with Holy Communion led by the Revd. James Church
Tues	7	10.00am	All Are Welcome
Wed	8	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12.30pm	Lunch & Mid-Week Worship
Fri	10	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sat	11	9.00am	Big Breakfast
Sun	12	10.30am	The Sunday Service led by Mr Alan Cooper
Tues	14	10.00am	All Are Welcome
Wed	15	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12:30pm	Wed. Lunch. Revd. James Church will lead New Year worship.
Fri	17	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sun	19	10.30am	The Sunday Service led by the Revd. Sam McBratney
Tues	21	10.00am	All Are Welcome
Wed	22	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12.30pm	Mid-Week Worship -
Fri	24	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace
Sun	26		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (See page 13)
		10.30am	The Sunday Service led by the Revd. James Church
Tues	28	10.00am	All Are Welcome
Wed	29	11.00am	Coffee Morning
		12.30pm	Wednesday Lunch. Songs of Praise (recorded on Feb 10 th 2019).
Thurs	30	2.00pm	Film Club "Bugsy Malone"
Fri	31	7.30pm	House Group at 135, Leam Terrace

Please note: The Friendship Circle will not meet during January.

