



WARWICK ANNOUNCES NEW PEACE FESTIVAL FOR 2026



A Community Call to Hope, Action and Connection

Friday 8th and Saturday 9th May 2026

St Mary's Warwick, Old Square, Warwick CV34 4RA

Warwick will host a brand new community festival this spring, as St Mary's Warwick launches the WARWICK FESTIVAL OF PEACEBUILDING on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th May. The two day event invites residents, visitors, schools and local organisations to come together in a shared celebration of peace, diversity and collective action.

Designed as a positive antidote to the overwhelming sense of despair that many feel in the face of global challenges – from the climate crisis to conflict and injustice – the Warwick Festival of Peacebuilding aims to spotlight the power of local communities to inspire change.

Organisers are delighted that the much-loved Leamington Peace Festival is also going ahead this year, and support it wholeheartedly. “You can never have too much peace,” they said.



Vicar of St Mary's, Reverend Canon Angus Aagaard (*left, top*), said:

“It is imperative, at a time of global tension and uncertainty, that we look to find ways of living together in peace. This festival aims to shed a light on the many local and national groups seeking constructive ways to build healthy and peaceful communities and to give a voice to young people who are justifiably anxious about what lies ahead.”

YOUTH VOICES LEAD THE CONVERSATION

The Festival opens on Friday evening with a panel discussion centred on young people's perspectives. Local students and youth representatives from across the region will be invited to share their questions with the panellists, which will consist of experts on a diverse range of important issues including climate, social equality, disabled rights, sustainable housing and ethnic equality.

Joining the panel will be Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe (*left, bottom*), Human Rights Advocate on Injustice, Resilience and Freedom. Nazanin was detained at an Iranian airport while returning to London with her 22 month old daughter after visiting family in Tehran. She was falsely accused of trying to overthrow the Iranian government, a charge she denied, and sentenced to five years in prison. Since her release, Nazanin has faced lasting physical and mental health challenges while rebuilding her life, reconnecting with her family, and strengthening her relationship with her daughter.

Chairing the panel will be Tom Shakespeare, Professor of Disability Research at LSHTM (*left, middle*), who said:

“At a time when it's more important than ever for people to have control of their lives and choices, young people are prey to so many more pressures now, from smartphones to social media.”





kindness together humanity vision
oneness CONNECT equality inspire
UNITE community CARE BEFRIEND blessings
PEACE healing
LOVE NOW
responsibility COMPASSION forgive
freedom GRACE intention GENEROSITY
unconditional family HOPE purpose SOUL

A DAY OF ACTION, CREATIVITY AND CONNECTION

On Saturday, the Festival moves outdoors to the College Garden behind St Mary's Church, transforming the space into a vibrant hub of activity. Local groups working for justice, sustainability and community wellbeing – both in Warwick and around the world – will showcase their projects and invite visitors to get involved.

The day will feature:

- * Community stalls and interactive displays
- * Performances and live music
- * Peace talks and informal conversations
- * Creative activities for all ages
- * Opportunities to take small, practical steps toward a more peaceful future

The overall aim of the Festival is to explore what it means to be peace builders in our homes, our communities, and our world. Whether you come to listen, to learn, or simply to be among kindred spirits, you'll leave reminded that you're not alone – and that together, we can shape a more compassionate future.

A website has been set up, at which people can join a news mailing list, along with a Facebook group for discussion.

Entry to the panel discussion is free, but booking is advised: warwickpeacebuilders.eventbrite.com

Canon Angus Aagaard is available for interview. Logos and images available on request.

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT FESTIVAL CO-ORDINATOR ADAM WOOD
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