



Weoley Hill Church News

May 2017

From the Manse

Dear Friends,

If you want to discover someone's tastes, have a look in their shopping trolley in the supermarket. Another way is to look at their bookshelves when you visit them. These will give some idea of their mind and body. Understanding where others come from in terms of faith is more of a challenge, however. Learning about another person's favourite Bible passages and hymns can help.

So, what are your favourite passages? As it is only fair to answer my own question, three of mine are the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus during the evening of the first Easter at Luke 24:13-35; Paul telling his readers about God's promise that nothing can separate us from his love in Jesus and the opening of John's Gospel.

The Emmaus road story is fascinating. The two disciples do not recognise Jesus as he comes alongside them and engages them in discussion. The failure to recognise Jesus, in spite of all he was teaching them, continues until he breaks bread with them at their meal. The mystery, suspense and surprise of this story, are what makes it special for me. As we travel through this Eastertide and any time, whenever and wherever we are, we should be open for the possibility that the stranger in our midst could well be God, or Jesus, or the Holy Spirit in disguise; testing what we know and understand about our Saviour and Lord, and the significance of his death and resurrection to and in our lives.

Asking people about their favourite hymn offers the prospect of variety and interest. What are your favourite hymns? I'm always interested keen to know. Most of us have more than one favourite, so I invite you to compile a list of your top ten. What

would make it into your list? You could even have the luxury of having a seasonal list to avoid a conflict between Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. As this magazine comes out shortly after Easter, let's concentrate mainly on Easter hymns.

Some near the top of my lists would be: Thine be the glory; When I Survey the Wondrous Cross; In Christ Alone by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty; Christ's is the world in which we move by John Bell and Graeme Maule. The clearly Easter hymns can also be sung at any time of year because Easter is so central to the Christian faith that it defies being confined to just one time of year. Jesus' death and resurrection are the essence of what we believe. They are what the Christian faith is all about and why it is crucial that each one of us own the story for ourselves. So, my challenge to us all this Eastertide until Pentecost and beyond is to study the Bible to find your favourite passage and understand why it is so.

Also, search a hymn book, and go online, if you can, so you can list your top ten hymns and why each one has earned its place in your heart. There may well be a Songs of Praise service not too far in the future when you will be asked to provide a hymn with your story, or I tell the story of that hymn or a reading with your thoughts about your faith in Christ Jesus.

Happy Eastertide!

David

Personalia

Welcome to Michael Kisa Agaba Nganwa, 3.3 kg, born on Monday 24 April.

Welcome to Oliver Keith DaCosta born Wednesday 3 May, 9lbs. First child to Daniel and Lizzie, first great-grandchild to Lorraine and Fred. Mother and baby doing well.

Ann Evans is due to have surgery on 12 May.

Please remember all who are undergoing or waiting for treatment, including Joyce Cope, Kath and David Upton, Joy Brain, Primrose Garrow from Lunch Club and others. Edna Bayliss has broken her femur and is in the QE.



Iris & Ron Webb would like to express their sincere appreciation for all the love and concern shown to them by the Weoley Hill Church Family on the death of their son Graham. Your support has meant a great deal at such a sad & difficult time.

God bless you for your kindness.

Ron & Iris

Neighbourhood News

News and events from other local churches:

Carrs Lane, Wednesday 10 May at 6.30 PM: Ann Pettifor will speak on "A Moral Economy".

Christian Aid Big Breakfasts: Selly Oak Methodist on 14 May from 8.45 AM on; **Wooley Castle** on 18 May from 10 AM. Details elsewhere.

Craft Fair at St Martins in the Bullring Saturday 20 May, 10 AM - 4:30 PM. Proceeds to support St Martins work helping the vulnerable and homeless in Birmingham

25 May-4 June: **Thy Kingdom Come**—communities and churches around the world gather together to pray that their friends, families and neighbours come to know Jesus Christ. **Daily events at St Philips Cathedral**



God Loves the NHS

An **NHS Prayer Walk** is being organised to take place during the 10 days of Thy Kingdom Come.

It will be passing through Birmingham from Walsall to Solihull on Friday 26 May. There will be opportunity to greet and join the Pilgrims during the evening in Solihull. Further information will be available in May's Birmingham Churches Together enews.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Fourteen of us gathered to hear and see Gordon's *Music—a universal language*. We were informed there are 7000 languages, but we stuck to English. To piano accompaniment, we all sang *A beautiful, wonderful world*—one of Gordon's pieces.



We enjoyed seeing Finty trying to pull off his granddad's glasses—much better than trying to play the guitar!

Gordon has sung with the CBSO chorus for over 30 years—he has composed for the CBSO and also has links with Norway (Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim), Portugal (with a poem by an African lady, the words of which gave us all a laugh, which Gordon set to music).

Examples of Gordon's pieces we heard included *Noel, See amid the winter snow; Rise up shepherd and follow, Star of the East, Stjerna Var (Where is your star)*, all written or arranged by Gordon. We also heard *Those were the days, You'll never walk alone*, and another Norwegian carol, *Kling na klokka (Let sound now the church bells)*.

There are problems with getting published, so Gordon is now self-publishing via USA Swirly Music, whose composers retain their own copyright.

Gordon's *Gloria*, was first performed with a 'too noisy' brass band. A Milwaukee man was interested, so in due course the USA premiere happened with 6 brass players, organ and tympani. The middle section of this piece links with Lent.

A USA Poet, Brian Holmes, wrote *Bright was the star*; another poet, Julie Myers, wrote *Beyond grief*; Linda Marcus (who is Jewish) wrote *Christimastime in the eyes of a child*—you have guessed it, Gordon set each of these to music.

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may was sung by the Michigan University Ladies' Glee Club.

In the UK, Simon Halsey and colleagues in the CBSO Chorus are most supportive. Gordon's *Gloria* has been performed in the UK—we also heard *Guiding star* sung by the CBSO Chorus last Christmas.

The final item was *Rise up shepherd and follow*, sung by a Liverpool choir and introduced by Alan Titchmarsh.

There were questions from the floor—we had a super afternoon. Thank you.

Next month, 10 May: Christian Aid Bring & Buy and cream tea at 2.30 PM. Bring your cakes, plants, books, bric-a-brac, your money and your friends. See you there.

Deb Moriarty

Please note:

**The Church secretary is away from 6-13
May and from 20 May to 1 June.**

Cheryl Thornett

CHRISTIAN AID BRING AND BUY

This event will take place on **Wednesday 10 May** when, once again, we are asking for your support to help to raise funds for this worthy cause. It is organised by Friendship Group and will meet at the same time, 2.30 PM start, and will have the usual stalls to browse around before enjoying a summer cream tea.

As it is a “bring and buy” sale we would invite you to bring—or send—items for the stalls, (eg books, bric-a-brac, plants, cakes, toiletries, jewellery etc) then, hopefully, find something you can later buy, which will contribute to the final total. Collection can be arranged if necessary and all donations are very welcome.

If you have nothing to donate, come along anyway for a delicious ‘cream tea’, a la Devon or Cornwall whichever way you load your scone, and you will get a friendly welcome even if you don’t pick up a bargain!

Lorraine DaCosta

Christian Aid Big Breakfasts

Sunday 14 May from 8.45 AM onwards at **Selly Oak Methodist**. *Please tell Emlyn if planning to go.*

Thursday 18 May, 10-12 NOON at **Weoley Castle**.

May Collection

The retiring collections for May are in aid of The Acorns Children’s Hospice.

The wall

I recently spent 10 days in the Holy Land and one aspect that made an impact on me is the dividing wall of concrete. I used my thoughts on this as part of a worship I led and I had some positive feedback. I mention several of the places we visited.

The wall that divides. The wall between the state of Israel and the occupied territories of Palestine. This wall is ugly, huge, and real and takes a very strange route that even divides families who cannot have access each other on both sides. This is so difficult for them when there is a family celebration. This wall also prevents Palestinians from getting access to decent health care in Jerusalem. Some people do have access through the wall but their papers are rigorously checked.

Walls which can keep people within an area and keeping them safe as in old times with castles.

Walls can be broken down or just fall down but yet are reconstructed and restored to be a barrier again. Jerusalem over the centuries. Also the ruins at Masada, Capernaum, Megiddo and Caesarea Philippi in the Golan Heights.

Walls can be foundations on which other walls are built. Strong foundations can lead to strong wall. This can be seen in the alleged ruins of Peter's mother in law's house in Capernaum and are incorporated into a modern church shaped like a boat.

There can be invisible walls within families and society; these sometimes need to be identified to be removed if that is appropriate.

Walls can be decorated like the paintings on the wall at the convent on the old road to Bethany, also murals and frescoes. The icon on the wall and the wall stories and the 'Banksies'

Walls and barriers are needed for safety but they may also need to be removed in certain circumstances.

We visited the Wailing Wall, a wall of great significance for the Jews who lost access to it for many years. There is division there as well as males go to one section and females to another. The barrier between is not too high so by standing on a chair mothers can see their sons' Bar Mitzvahs.

There are places with no walls such as the Tent of all Nations being in zone c of the occupied territory which the Israelis claim is their land.

Walls of all types that are barriers probably need to be broken down and it is better to talk first in the hope that this leads to peace. This is what one of the nuns at the convent said and they have the wall of part of their boundary.

The history of the land in this region we know as the Holy Land has had a turbulent history over hundreds if not thousands of years. Will it ever have peace? Different nations have ruled it but frequently other nations also want the land so conflict ensues.

So let us pray for peace in the land where Jesus was born and grew up to lead his followers and then died and rose to save us all.



The Wall as part of the boundary of a convent nursery.



The Wall as another boundary wall of the convent—it crosses the old road from Jerusalem to Bethany.

An icon on the Wall in Bethlehem. This was painted by the same people who have provided new icons in Lichfield Cathedral



Ann Evans

Update from the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts

So once again it comes to my attention that I have been somewhat remiss in updating you all with the comings and goings of the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. This is because we have all been so busy that it is hard to stop long enough to let you all know.

I start this piece with the wonderful news that our Cub pack now have such numbers that we have had to start a waiting list for all those wishing to join from outside other the group, the Cubs have 20 young people and priority for places must go to our Beavers. Talking of Beavers they too have very good numbers with there being 20 Beavers and 10 waiting to join when they reach the right age. I am sure it is now safe to say the future of Scouting at Weoley Hill is safe for a long time to come again. With this in mind, if you know of a child that is of Cub age that wishes to join please contact Anna or Gary Davenport in the first instance so that we can ensure that we have a space for them.

As I am sure many of you have seen in the Weoley Hill news, the Group alongside the Guides made the front page due to the number of high awards our young people have achieved and since this was released Kyuwon Choi (Scouts) and Courtney Spittle (Beavers) have joined them and earned the Chief Scout Silver and Chief Scout Bronze awards respectively. Well done both of them.

Over the last term the Beavers have visited Morrisons to learn about where our food comes from and learnt a bit about Space for their Space badge. The Beavers like the rest of the Sections

are looking forward to camp at the end of May. Watch this space for a report about that, I promise not to leave it too long.

The Cubs visited RAF Cosford during the Easter break and earned the Air Activities Stage 1. They enjoyed it so much that they have inspired the other sections to think about organizing a similar trip. Well done the Cubs, youth shaped Scouting in action there. In addition they have worked on their skills challenge badge and learning new and useful skills such as peeling potatoes and making cups of tea for their parents at home—let's hope they carry it one once they have the badge.

The Scouts are responsible for their own programme as Skip and Roo find that it makes for happier Scouts when they do. They have worked hard on some motorcycle models which are coming together nicely now and shouldn't take much longer to finish. Also they have worked on their Navigator staged badges with a view to putting those skills into practice for their two-yearly expedition later in the Summer.

So it seems we have been busy Beavers, Cubs and Scouts with lots more coming up in the next term.

Anna Ostojitsch



WEOLEY HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

PRAYER DIARY

Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Colossians 3:1

	Church members	
WK 1: 7-13 May	Chris Mayhew Rob McManus & Anna Ostojitsch, Ieuan, Ciaran Margaret Miles	As we remember those affected by terrible crimes, pray for those who might perpetrate such acts that their hearts might be changed.
WK 2: 14-20 May	Deborah Moriaty Brian & Audrey Nganwa, Jonathan, Elizabeth & Michael Nancy Nicholls	For the work of Christian Aid; that through the meeting of physical needs, people might learn of Christ's love.
WK 3: 21-27 May	Pam Norton Jill Palmer Anita Pickerden	For those passing through a dark spiritual tunnel; that our prayers might bring a ray of hope.
WK 4: 28 May- 3 June	Marilyn Raw Diane Rogers Tony Sames	For our politicians that they may put our country's interests first as they seek (re)election.

NOTE: As always, please feel free to send any feedback on the 'Prayer Diary' and specific prayer requests that you would like to include in future lists to Sue Beeby.