

Weoley Hill Church News



March 2018

From John Davies

God in the Everyday.

I've never been comfortable with a Christian world view that divides life into the 'sacred' and the 'secular', feeling much more comfortable with a holistic understanding; God is one, Father, Son and Spirit, and we too are one with the Trinity, who are also in us, through our faith in Jesus. He himself promised his disciples this before his crucifixion, and a major element in a developing faith is a growing awareness of it as a reality in our everyday lives.

So, if God is truly within us, and we are living in his kingdom, nothing we do can be outside of it— yes, I know we both can and do fall into sin of one sort or another (Lead me not into temptation, I can find the way there easily enough by myself) but that doesn't negate the basic principle. We are in Christ, and that affects everything we are involved with.

One bad result of the false sacred/secular division is an idea that 'sacred' church or 'Christian' activity is more important than our day to day work. I'm convinced that is a mistake; unless we are professional church workers most of our lives are spent earning a living, where we are called to be Christ's witnesses.

I struggled with this for a long time. God's provision for me, initially, was to in one way or another, with the armed forces. It wasn't always easy to see how that fitted in with God's purposes, particularly when very vocal articles in the Christian press repeatedly told me I shouldn't really be there. How many articles have you seen, in Reform or elsewhere, that take a positive line on the military? Precious few, I'll be bound. (And yes, by conviction I'm also a pacifist, but that's another story.)

Things changed when I moved to work at a Vehicle Registration (Motor Tax) Office and then the Office of the Traffic Commissioner, in the days before they were centralised. You've probably never heard of the latter office, unless you're involved in commercial transport; let's just say

that it has a very important role in road safety. Dealing directly with the public gave my work a Christian dimension which had previously been far harder to see. It also meant that a great many different parts of my life suddenly came together in a unity of purpose they had not previously had. And, believe me, I loved it. For the very first time I really could see my daily work as a divine calling— a vocation.

Part of my work involved dealing with offenders of one sort or another, which gave some interesting insights into human nature, but hopefully made the roads safer. And it also made life a little fairer for the decent hauliers, who have a hard enough time to make a living without unbalanced competition from cowboy operators who buck the system. And there was the pleasure of helping people get it right; of being a paraclete or comforter in a very real, nuts and bolts sense. It's far easier, and better, to do it that way, than wait until they get it wrong and then bawl them out.

Karl Barth talked about our being God's hands and feet, and this is the practical outworking of our oneness with him. Whatever we do, day by day, he is actually doing through us; this is our witness and our calling. And it is how the kingdom grows and expands, a bit at a time. Jesus likened it to yeast in a batch of dough, the leaven which permeates through the whole bowl and causes it to raise, ready to be of benefit to mankind. Sometimes we have to be salt, stinging in the raw places of life, as I had to be in revoking licences or arranging prosecutions for offenders but that's essential to be healthy.

It's easier to be aware of this in some professions, such as the medical world, than others. But it can be in simple things too; the way we speak to the doctor's receptionist or the shop assistant shows that God values and loves them for example. We have his love in our hearts; we've experienced his forgiveness. As the old Orange phone advert said, we need to pass it on.

John Davies

Personalia

Please remember all who are recovering from surgery and injury:

Christine Grubb has a broken shoulder

John Davies is at home recovering from a hip replacement.

Kath Upton is in remission.

Hilary Littlejohns has moved to Norwich. She was presented with a garden centre voucher for her new home on her last Sunday with us. We wish her well.



Thanks

Kathleen, Richard, Sarah and families would like to thank everyone at Weoley Hill Church for their phone calls and concerns over the last few months of 2017 when Brian was in hospital.

It was very comforting to know that prayers were with us during this time and to see so many congregation members joining with Hospital Chaplains ,ex colleagues, friends, neighbours and family at the service.

Many thanks to everyone for their contribution to the service.

Neighbourhood News

News and events from other local churches:

Early notice: Open Gardens in the area on Sunday 8 July—visit some after the picnic! Includes gardens in Middle Park and Greenmeadow Roads; details nearer the time.

Weoley Castle: The Rep is mounting a play called Elephant at Weoley Castle on 17 March at 7 PM. Details will be shared when available.



Collections in the New Year

I have to sound a note of caution this early in the New Year. In both January and February our Free Will Offering collections were well below the budget figure.

	Collected	Budget	Deficit
January 2018	£2,538.00	£2,942.92	£404.92
February 2018	£2,894.00	£3,092.92	£198.92

This means that only two months into the year we are just over £600 BELOW our target budget.

The Loose Cash collections are only £5 below the budget figure of £230.76 for January and February.

David Marlow (Treasurer)

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Nancy was kept very busy by the 14 members who turned up on 14 February as she poured, patted and placed a mountain of freshly cooked pancakes in front of everyone. A couple braved a cheesy choice but most stuck to the traditional lemon-and-sugar ensemble until all plates, and pancakes, were cleared. A quiz sheet, based on Fruit and Vegetables, helped to pass the time whilst waiting and caused a few groans (the puns were atrocious, the pancakes were delicious!) Thanks to all those who helped clear up at the end and especially to Nancy for doing the cooking.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 14 March, 2.15 PM for 2.30 PM start, when John Davies will conclude his illustrated talk “Strolling in Slovenia”. Cake will be served!

Lorraine DaCosta



“THE PROJECT”

This month’s retiring collection is for “The Project”, near Colmers Farm schools. We formerly knew them as the “South Birmingham Young Homeless”. It still deals with those youngsters who have been in care for most of their life and on reaching 18 are then moved into hostels or given accommodation but no homewares. Increasingly they found they were also dealing with single mothers and small families who were having housing and financial difficulties and lately they have added benefit advice and form filling to their remit so as to cover recent legislation, They felt a new name was needed to cover all the services they now offer to those of all ages. This is a very small charity which works very hard to those in the Longbridge/Rubery areas and beyond.

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Coming up...



Lent Lunches: at Selly Oak Methodist,
Friday 9 March, 12-1.15 PM, at St
Mary's, Saturday 17, 12-2 PM:

Mothering Sunday 11 March, Ian Cartnell preaching

Palm Sunday 25 March, All-age worship, Alan
Cotgreave preaching

Maundy Thursday here 29 March, 7.30 PM, the
Revd David Tennant & the Revd Mark Bennet (St
David's)

Good Friday 30 March, 7.30 PM, Ann Evans
preaching

Early Easter worship 1 April, 7 AM, followed by
breakfast (please tell Alan or Cheryl)

Easter Communion 1 April, 10.30 AM, led by the
Revd Brian Brown

FISH & CHIP SUPPER AND QUIZ

We managed to raise a purr-fect £164.00 for **Fairtrade** on Saturday 24 February with the *Cats and Dogs* themed quiz, from the 33 people who followed the trails and hunted for the fabulous (!) prizes. The winners, by only 1 point, were Iris Bird, Doreen Bradley, Deb Moriarty, Nancy Nicholls, Liz Roberts and Sheila Skeels.

Thanks go to Daniel DaCosta for the scoring, to those who kindly donated raffle prizes, to those who helped serve drinks and later cleared up in the kitchen, to those who helped clear the hall afterwards, and especially to Nancy who supervised the extra catering and setting out.

We are hoping to try something new to raise funds later in the year for the Youth and Family worker—perhaps a Beetle drive, Bingo, Indoor games—to give the quiz a rest for 12 months so as to reinvigorate interest, and perhaps a pizza party or KFC chicken (should they get supplies!) for those who don't like fish. Perhaps you have an idea you would like to try yourself or a suggestion to give to the Church Action Group? (Dare we say even a “Meet the new Minister evening?") All ideas are welcome and whatever is decided we hope it will certainly be a fun evening.

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From the Church Secretary

Vacancy news:

The Elders of Bournville, Weoley Castle and Weoley Hill met with the WM Synod Moderator Steve Faber and Interim Moderator Ian Ring on Thursday 15 February. Among other matters discussed, the Moderator requested that the combined profiles be sent to him by 28 February for the first Pastoral Committee meeting of the year. This is the first step in the process of (eventually) calling a minister. The profiles were sent in on 26 February after several days of intensive work.

Technically, the Pastorate does not have enough members among the three of us to warrant a full-time minister, but other considerations are taken into account, including special circumstances like ours. Looking ahead several years, we *may* eventually be part of a team ministry

Please remember that all parts of this process are meant to be strictly confidential until we issue a call, and that all three churches in the Pastorate must separately vote in favour to call a candidate.

And coming up:

We and all other churches must begin to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, which comes into effect in May. We will have to obtain various permissions for holding records as electronic data or as paper in a filing cabinet. When you receive a letter asking for permissions, please complete and return it as soon as possible.

Cheryl Thornett
Church Secretary



WEOLEY HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH PRAYER DIARY

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Col 2:6-7

	Church members	Topical prayers
WK 1: 4th- 10th March	Lorraine DaCosta Gary Davenport Ken Davenport John Davies	For the restoration of broken relationships: Within families. Is there a family you can pray for in particular? Within communities in our city and our country. Between tribes or ethnic or religious groups. For those groups and agencies that have projects to restore relationships Eg Corrymeela, Tearfund, The Bible Society. For our future minister. For progress and guidance in our plans for a Youth and Family Worker.
WK 2: 11th -17th March	Séana Davies Corinne Dawson Roland & Arrah Ebot-Arrey, Reyan & Malcolm Rob & Anila Edge, Oliver & Yona	
WK 3: 18th - 24th March	David & Geraldine Evans Emlyn & Ann Evans Samantha Evans, Chelsea, Mikey, Kayden & Chase	
WK 4: 25th -31st Mar	Marius & Jennifer Felderhof Margaret Field Josie Fisher John Fletcher	

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