

# Cadbury Pastorate News

Bournville, Weoley Castle &  
Weoley Hill Churches



Photo by Jayembee69

*June 2020*

## *From the Minister's study—*

Dear Friends,

While, no doubt like you, I am looking forward to life returning to “normal” (but not the “old” normal, a much better “new” normal) the time of lockdown has provided me with the opportunity to do things that I always wanted to do but never got round to. I managed to “go” (online) to the Hay Festival, the literary festival that is held each year in Hay-on-Wye and brings together writers, historians, scientists, policy makers, etc, from all over the world. I was able to watch some of the events taking place and I particularly enjoyed a conversation between two writers, Elif Shafak and Philippe Sands, who talked about how to write at this time of Covid-19 as well as a time that language has changed and become more divisive, that human rights are threatened, that nations become inward looking, etc. What is the role of storytelling at this time? And they both agree that storytelling has a major role to play, as a way of telling truths, of telling stories of individuals behind broadly generalizing headlines and overwhelming daily statistics, and of re-humanizing people and situations that are too often dehumanized. Stories help us to make sense, to raise questions, to keep us engaged when otherwise we may become disconnected or numb.

It reminds me that Jesus was a powerful and very insightful storyteller whose stories helped his listeners, and down the centuries us, to make sense of life, to be challenged and to engage with life's issues. Jesus stands in the long and continuous tradition of Jewish storytelling, storytelling being at the heart of Judaism. Jesus told stories, parables, in order for his listeners to re-imagine the world in which we live. The stories that Jesus told had the ability to open up the imagination, to imagine that the world and we can be different, better than what we consider “normal” (the status quo). And Jesus calls it “the kingdom of heaven” or “the kingdom of God” and he also says that it is already in our midst (Luke 17: 21)

What the stories (parables) that Jesus tells do for us, good fiction can also do for us today, which is opening up the imagination, helping us to analyse the present we live in and helping us to deal with the emotions that are affecting us individually and collectively at this time. No doubt there are powerful emotions of anger and anxiety in these uncertain times, and stories can move us out of the narrow chambers within which these emotions can imprison us. Fiction can be escape and release and from the stories we share we create meaning to our lives and the times we are living through. So, keep reading and keep sharing stories, to open your mind and let your imagination “fly away!”

Let me end with a story (source unknown but printed in “Stories for the Journey” by William R. White)

God decided to select a nation to be his chosen people. First, he interviewed the Greeks. “If I was to be your God and you were to be my people, what could you do for me?” The Greek people replied, “We would honour you with the finest art and the noblest systems of thought. Our great thinkers would exalt you in their writings” And God thanked the Greek people for their offer. Next God visited the Romans. “If I were to be your God and you were to be my people, what could you do for me?” “Great king of the universe” the Romans replied, “we are a nation of builders. We would erect great buildings in your name and wonderful road systems so that your people could travel to worship in these buildings” God thanked the Romans for their offer. And God interviewed one nation after another until he came to a small Middle Eastern group of people, the Jews. Once again God asked the question, “If I was to be your God and you were to be my people, what could you do for me?” And the Jewish people said, “We are not known for our power or our art or our buildings. However, we are a nation of storytellers. If you were to be our God and we were to be your people, we could tell your story throughout the whole world.” And God accepted and the rest is history....

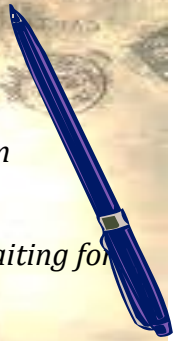
Keep well and with all best wishes,

Leonora

## *Personalia*

*Our prayers and condolences to the families and friends of Corinne Dawson, Min Elson and Revd Jim Garrow.*

*Please remember everyone among us who is ill, waiting for diagnosis or treatment, undergoing treatment or recovering.*



### **Sue Beeby has received the following from the Chatrys—**

We are safe by the grace of God. We were without power and water for three days. Somehow we are getting power, though not from the main power line, from day before yesterday night. It may take a month or more to restore the regular power supply. Many big trees have fallen and have snapped power lines and broken or bent many electric posts.

We never experienced such strong wind in our lifetime. The wind pummelled the area nonstop for more than six hours. We felt the imminent end, but God saved us.

Thanks for the prayer and the concern. Thanks to the church for the prayer.

God bless you.

Kailash and family

*The Chatry family worshipped at Weoley Hill while they were in the UK.*

# In memoriam



# Min Elson

We record with sorrow that Min Elson died peacefully at home on 22 May from advanced lung cancer. After Min & Terry came to Birmingham from Daventry, they were looking for a Church and came across WCCC, while looking for and failing to find a different one! They soon felt at home, really got involved and became members in 2011. We discovered that this strong-minded, talkative Glaswegian, whose voice often boomed around the corridors of the Church, greatly enjoyed providing meals. She got involved with the Senior Citizens' Day Centres & Lunch Clubs, and was Mistress of the Chafing Dish at Big Brekkies (for Christian Aid) and Barbecues and helped with the children's Summer Activity Week. Many will remember her signature vegetable soup, or simnel cake, or the calorific bites she made from Rice Krispies and melted Mars bars. Terry died in 2014, but Min was prepared to be elected an Elder in 2015, and accepted the post of Church Secretary later that year. She was new to this kind of role, but took on the duties with care as she learned on the job. She took on many other roles, such as flower-arranging, inventive Harvest Festival displays and helped with the "adopt a soft toy" stall at the Weoley Festival. She certainly didn't look as old as 70, when we celebrated that birthday last Autumn, so her illness this year came as a most unwelcome surprise to sons James and Chris, and to everyone else who interacted with her. She will leave a big hole in their lives and the activity of the Church. Nevertheless, we give thanks for her life, now taken up into eternal life, and continue to uphold particularly James & Chris in our prayers.

Ted Forgan

## Tribute to Jim Garrow

It is with great sadness that Bournville URC report the death of a member of our church family, the Reverend Jim Garrow.

Where do you start to write about a wonderful man who has been a model example of a Christian life and an inspiration to many, many people over his long life? Jim played an important part in our church community and we at Beaumont Road will miss him dearly. We all have many memories of Jim. He had a great sense of humour, a strong work ethic and was full of ideas. He gave us great encouragement and his faith and commitment were exemplary.

As many of you know Jim preached for over 60 years and received a certificate to mark the occasion. His last service was in February this year. He often talked about giving up preaching but I knew that he would carry on until the end of his life as he was unable to stop; it was too important to him and also to us. I think Jim knew that.

Jim was Minister at Bournville URC in the 1970's and also ministered at Nottingham, Stoke, Birmingham, Derby and Leicester. Jim returned to Birmingham in 2011 to live near Shirley, his daughter, David and Katie and returned to worship at Bournville. That is when I got to know Jim and we became good friends.

Jim's arrival was a breath of fresh air and it wasn't long before he became a fully committed and valuable elder. He was full of ideas, many of which we tried out. He initiated a Thursday afternoon group which lasted a few years but never attracted as many people as Jim would have liked. He never gave up with coming forward with new ideas. Giving us articles to read, sending us on training courses and talking about different styles of worship.

He never stopped working. My last email from Jim was as recent as 19 April just as he started to become unwell. We had been discussing plans for Christian Aid week, a charity that was very dear

to his heart alongside Commitment for Life which he supported with great enthusiasm.

I'd like to share with you some of my personal memories of Jim while I'm sure many of you could recount similar stories.

Jim has always encouraged me to take an active part in worship. This is difficult as Jim is one of the best preachers that I've listened to; his sermons were legendary. I have a copy of one that I go back to time and time again. It is titled forgiveness and when I discussed this sermon with Jim he said that of all his sermons this was the one that people asked for a copy of the most as forgiveness is the most difficult thing for people to do. Jim always forgave me when I forgot something he asked of me and although I try I'll never be able to live up to his example.

With his help I have been able to preside at worship. He commented on errors I made during my first communion service and I haven't made the same mistake since, thanks Jim. It was Jim that gave me the encouragement to take my first Songs of Praise service at Beaumont road, a service that he was unable to attend because he was unwell. However, I gave him a copy of the service and he went through it with his comments. I felt as though I was back at school which made me smile. I really appreciated his thoughts and comments and that encouraged me to do more Songs of Praise services.

It was because of Jim's ideas about different styles of Bible readings in church that I bought a dramatic Bible. I often use it and it always reminds me of Jim and it does make the scenes come alive, which I like.

Jim had a marked effect on many of us, his generosity encouraged us to be more generous and this is something that has changed my views on generosity. Jim once told me that true generosity had to hurt a bit and this is one piece of his advice that I try to follow.

I loved to cook for Jim who always appreciated my efforts. He couldn't resist my chocolate and beetroot cake when he and Primrose came to lunch one day and he had second helpings as, after all, it was healthy as it contained vegetables. I particularly liked doing teas at church watching him eat with such pleasure. I recall one occasion when Shirley wasn't there and he had double helpings and took a parcel home for the next day with a wicked gleam in his eye and encouraging smiles from me we felt as though we were both being a bit naughty. He wasn't so keen on my no sugar chocolate cakes even though he appreciated my efforts. He loved sweet things.

Jim played a major role in our church community not only through his preaching and his writing of the church magazine but also through his nurturing and encouragement. Jim wasn't afraid to push us and ask difficult questions to help us grow in faith and ministry. He was also concerned about worldwide issues. He supported Amnesty International and arranged a special service each year to support the letter writing campaign. He supported the Fairtrade programme, Christian Aid and Climate change campaigns. Jim read a daily newspaper and would cut out snippets that he thought would interest any of us. I received my last one from him this March about an issue that was of concern to me. Jim was a very thoughtful man.

Thanks be to God for a wonderful man who has changed my life for the better and, undoubtedly, many more people can say the same not only in our church but in many more churches and elsewhere during his long career. It has been a real privilege to have known such a knowledgeable , wise, warm, caring person.

Jim was a servant of God and a good friend.

We will miss him so much.

Glynis Bate



## 50 Years of the Weoley Castle Community Church Building

We had been planning to celebrate on 7 June the vision of those who made possible the opening our present building 50 years ago. Only two people in our present congregation remember the old building: myself and Margaret Wetherall, who wrote a history of the Church up to 1986—50 years after it was first established in Weoley Castle. I am not going to attempt the same for the most recent 50 years, but I thought it a good idea to record some recollections from the time our “new” building was put up.

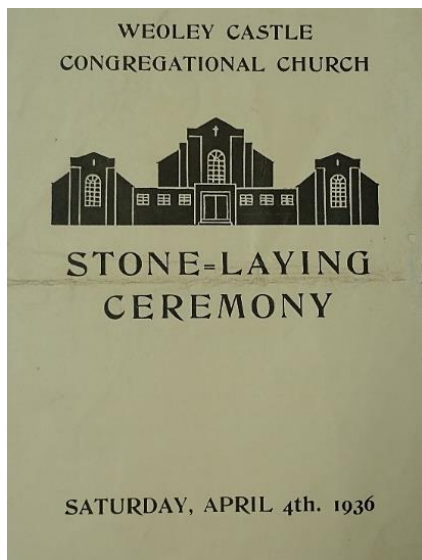
In the second half of the 60’s, Meg & I were living in Harborne; I was a PhD student and she was a newly-qualified geography teacher. We had tried some local Churches and found them wanting, so looked for the nearest Congregational Church, as that was our background. One day, I cycled across to the Square, and saw on the noticeboard outside that services were at 11 AM and 6.30 PM. The following Sunday, we cycled across for 6.30, and found the building dark and deserted – no one had changed the board after evening services had been discontinued! Perhaps surprisingly, we tried again the following Sunday morning. The church was at that time being led by two inspirational Westhill staff members: Revs. Philip Cliff and John Rutherford, who had taken the task upon themselves to help the Church recover after a period of calling a minister who immediately fell ill, remained in post but couldn’t serve. The old building faced the Square, where the Heron foods supermarket now is, and had lots of windows, which were just at the right height for someone on a Saturday night to walk by and smash a few. (You may have noticed that our present building does not!) Philip & John put forward the idea of selling the Square frontage, and putting up a new building facing Quarry Road, on Church land occupied by a scout hut. The price received for the land was sufficient to pay for a new building and also leave a surplus in the bank. During the building work, John lived next door in the Manse with Olive his wife (she is in her mid-90’s, living in a care home in Penrith) and he greatly enjoyed

being “Clerk of works”. He remarked that the workers responded to him, cutting down on profanities, because they were building a church! The architect was Anthony Cliff, son of Philip. Maybe this sounds like nepotism, but it meant that the congregation were much involved in the details of the design. Coventry Cathedral had been rebuilt not long before, so we wanted some modern art at the front of the sanctuary: in tribute to the tapestry in Coventry. The textile sculpture by Irene Waller can be viewed as a cross and a crown, holding together both a female and a male figure and the wider community. The building was one of Anthony Cliff’s first commissions. During his later career as an architect (he is now retired) he had great affection for his “baby” and inspected the building or gave advice from time to time.

During the rebuilding, we were “The Church in a Suitcase” (two cases actually) and met on Sundays in the hall in Princethorpe School - carrying in and taking away the hymnbooks, Communion ware, etc. We thought of ourselves as the Israelites in the desert, with no permanent place of worship. I remember wondering how the “Promised Land” would turn out: was it important for a Church to have a building, as we know well that the Church is not a building? However, since we were getting a building, we had to decide on its name. At the time, the Congregational & Presbyterian Churches were in the process of uniting, but the name of the new denomination was not known. We therefore decided to describe the building’s purpose, which of course had been the major consideration in the design. It has served us well since then: the only major repair has been the replacement of the flat roof in 1996, and we have upgraded the toilet and kitchen areas to modern requirements. Looking back, I think there would be only two things I would have designed differently: if the hall ceiling had been higher, it would have allowed a wider range of activities, and if the vestibule had been a little larger, it would have made an extra meeting area. However, these are minor things: in general, I feel that Anthony Cliff got the design spot on.

Soon after the building was finished, John and Philip bowed out, as Ernest Cruchley was called to be the minister. Ernest had agreed to preach at our anniversary service this month, and could have given us a wonderful account of all that was made possible with a purpose-built building and the minister living next door. The first half of that story will no doubt be told when we are able to hold a thanksgiving service for his life. Meanwhile, of course, the building is eerily quiet, and we are presently “A Church in an email” (or phone call, WhatsApp, Facebook or Zoom).

Ted Forgan





# Bournville URC Foodbank Collection



Every Saturday Glynis Bate puts out the “Bournville URC Foodbank Collection” notice and collection bin in front of her house and the response from the community has been truly amazing. The first week 41 kilos of food supplies were collected, the week after 82 kilos, then going up to 111 kilos, and so it continues. The B30 foodbank is the recipient of the collection and they are very grateful to Bournville URC for their generous donation, while the church thanks all who are contributing.

Leonora



# **Birmingham Crisis Centre**

*A message from Lyn Ankcorn*

I would love to thank the very kind person who left food for the Crisis Centre in my porch on the day of Corinne Dawson's funeral. Your church have been so kind and generous.

During Lockdown, the staff at the Centre have been amazing, and at all time have gone that extra mile for the residents in very difficult circumstances; as you know all the children are off school; and at a combined meeting of staff and residents have decided not to take up the offer of return to school yet; for the children who could take up the offer. I am happy to report that the centre is well supplied for food at the moment. To help with 46 resident children an extra play area has been refurbished and there are very strict rules concerning allocated time in each play area so that the families are distancing—a lot of hand washing—the staff supplied with PPE and the residents have been making their own face masks. One of the Trustees is a surgeon and she has advised on how to use PPE correctly. A lesson we all need to learn. The worrying down side is that there was not room for 47 mothers and their children – the staff are always working with other organisations to provide help and safety. The call helpline has been exceptionally busy.

Kind regards

Lyn

## Green times

We have managed to have a walk every day of 2 km or more. We have discovered many green spaces around this side of Birmingham that we didn't realise were there or so interesting.

Ley Hill Park is lovely with its wetland walk and open spaces but it is on a hill as the name implies! The park had a house in the past which was owned by a member of the Kunzle (cakes) family and later a Palethorpe (sausages). The house has long gone.

There is the Bourn Brook way from Harborne Lane to junction 3 of the M5 via Woodgate Valley. We have done all that now at different times.

I mentioned this last time I wrote an article that despite the lockdown spring was not been on lockdown. We are now in the 9th week as I write and the trees are in full leaf and the different flowers are now out and in some places there is a profusion of wild garlic.

What I am noticing while on the walks is the birdsong; it is clear and bright but I have no idea which birds are singing. The Woodgate Valley claims that there are more than 80 species of bird, including marsh harrier, long-eared owl and kingfisher; and 250 species of plants including common bluebells, foxgloves and honeysuckle, have been recorded. (From their website)

What is also wonderful there is that on the whole the only noise is that of the birds. Am I just more aware or has the number of birds been appreciating the lack of intrusion in general.

With fewer cars on the roads, less public transport and hardly any planes flying the pollution of our planet is reduced. If you are up on high the views are clearer as there is no pollution haze hanging over the area. Are the birds singing more sweetly because the air is cleaner?

Coronavirus has been a drastic way of cleaning up the atmosphere but we must try to find ways of keeping it clean once we are let out! Let's think about how we spend our holidays and whether we fly to get to the destination. Try to travel differently and safely by not creating such pollution. Maybe even stay in this country and not flying anywhere. There are so many beautiful places to visit in our land so let's find them and explore them.

It is God's planet for us to manage let us try to see it from God's viewpoint and manage it as well as we can. Lots of little things can help.

Ann Evans



Cow parsley on Rea Valley cycle way



Victoria Common



Hawthorn along Woodgate Valley



Grove Park



## **Newsletter news:**

Following the illnesses and deaths of Min Elson and Jim Garrow, the three church newsletters are being combined into one. My apologies: at the moment it looks more like a Weoley Hill newsletter, just with added bits from Bournville and Weoley Castle. Of course none of us know how long this will be necessary, but if you have ideas or suggestions for making it truly a Pastorate newsletter, please let me know.

([cherylthornett@hotmail.com](mailto:cherylthornett@hotmail.com)).

In particular, what about prayer notes for Bournville and Weoley Castle to go on a page next to the WH prayer diary? Separate news pages for each church? When we go back to separate newsletters, should there be a Pastorate newsletter once a quarter, or once or twice a year? Or just a supplement page to go with our own newsletters, regularly or occasionally?

Cheryl Thornett

## **CHRISTIAN AID 2020**

Many thanks to all who supported Christian Aid this year. I sent off £1000 in donations, but there will be many more donations made on-line as well, so a big thank you. If anyone needs the quiz answers, I can e-mail them (or get them to you by post).

Thanks also to Lorraine for the excellent banner placed outside church.

Emlyn Evans

# WEOLEY HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

## PRAYER DIARY

*Lord, your constant love reaches the heavens; your faithfulness extends to the skies. Your righteousness is towering like the mountains; your justice is like the depths of the sea.*

*Ps 36: 5,6*

	<b>Church members &amp; local streets</b>	<b>Other topics</b>
<b>WK 1: 7- 13<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Margaret Shiner Vida Southall & Carys <i>Witherford Way &amp; Close</i>	For those we know who are not able to get out because of medical problems.
<b>WK 2: 14<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Kumar & Gini Tambyraja Gordon & Cheryl Thornett <i>Greenmeadow Rd Hemyock Rd</i>	For wise decisions to be made so that we can safely move forward from lockdown. For the many whose jobs are at risk.
<b>WK 3: 21<sup>st</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup> June</b>	David & Kathleen Upton Barbara & Philip Viney <i>Swarthmore Rd Presthope Rd</i>	The north-east coast of India & Bangladesh ravaged by cyclone Amphan, in addition to Covid 19 restrictions. Remember the Chatry family in Kolkata within the affected area.
<b>WK 4: 28<sup>th</sup> June- 4<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Rachel Wakeman Michael Walpole Kath Wood <i>St Denis Rd Hollybrow Long Leasow</i>	Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country. The government may be trying to slow the process of radicalisation but Islamists are putting increased pressure on more liberal & minority groups, including Christians.

*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*

Names in the prayer lists are on our church register but please add other members of the families mentioned to your prayers.

## Calendar for June 2020

Our normal calendars have been suspended because of Covid-19. Please use online worship, or the worship presentation and sheets prepared by the Minister and others. The presentation and sheets are available on the Weoley Hill website and via email. The sheets can be posted if requested. We will worship together in this way.

The next issue will be available around 1 July. Contributions are requested! Send them to the minister, Leonora Jagessar, or Cheryl Thornett at Weoley Hill.

***Special thanks to Alan Cotgreave, who has been creating audio-visual presentations for Sunday worship, and to everyone who is helping to distribute worship sheets and newsletters.***

## EasyFundRaising

**We've been paid £34.24 by #easyfundraising! Thanks to everyone who's raised. If you're not supporting Weoley Hill United Reformed Church, please sign up now. It takes 2 minutes & 4,100 shops will donate to us for free every time you shop with them!**

**Visit:**

**<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/weoleyhillurc/payments/62/>**

David Marlow

# The Cadbury Pastorate

## **Covid-19 cancellations:**

All worship has been suspended in our churches for the time being, but Sunday worship can be found on the Weoley Hill website as an audio/visual presentation or in print form.

Recorded worship is also available via the URC Daily Devotions or YouTube.

All groups which normally meet in the churches have ceased meeting.

Please check the websites for further news and any changes.

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