



Weoley Hill Church News

January 2017



From the Church Secretary

This was supposed to be a farewell newsletter from Ian Ring, our Interim moderator. Unfortunately, Ian was taken ill after Christmas (or became more unwell than he had been previously) and was sent to hospital in Worcester for tests following a visit to his GP. We don't know any more than this, except that he had to be driven there by someone else but didn't need an ambulance. Please pray for his recovery.

This is, of course, always a difficult time of year for anyone who is unwell or frail, especially people with heart or lung problems. And especially people who are homeless or in inadequate housing. Others really struggle with debt, diet, drinking or with rifts with family and friends in the weeks following the holidays. Or have to choose between food and heat.

January is the coldest month, even when we avoid snow, ice or floods, and there are weeks to go before we notice much difference in the length of day. It's hard to keep up resolutions about healthy eating, exercise and thrift—I gave up making resolutions some time ago, since failing to keep them through the winter only adds guilt to the misery.

Too many media articles focus on the trivial or offer inaccurate, badly-reported, even harmful advice. Too often the cult of positive thinking (or the Christianised version of it) is presented as the easy solution to everything, or at least everything that can't be cured by 'detox' or an expensive diet and gym plan.

But: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4.13 Not easily, not through a yearly resolution, not without taking a hard, realistic, prayerful look at the task ahead.

Not by assuming that a minister or a Youth and Family worker will take care of everything,

As Weoley Hill and as part of the *Cadbury Pastorate*, we will need to pray, to adapt, to listen, to be willing to give up what we have 'always done' to further our work and witness. We have to accept that nothing human is perfect, but to hope for the best. It isn't enough to hire a part time Youth and Family worker unless we also show our young people and any who come through the doors that we love them, value them and are willing to make sacrifices on their behalf.

When people are faced with serious illness or disasters in their lives, they don't magically turn into wonderful, brave people with beautiful heads (cancer joke), who can suddenly run marathons or start billion-pound businesses with no help or support from anyone else. They need us to accept the reality of the illness or disaster, they need our prayers and they need our practical support, especially when it becomes clear there will be no fairy-tale happy ending.

For ourselves, counting our blessings is most important when it's hardest to see any blessings, but for someone else we need to **be** a blessing, not tell them to start counting.

The dreadful problems in the world—war, injustice, disease, poverty, ignorance, climate change—can't simply be cured, or the saints would have done it already. But careful statistics show that there is less extreme poverty, relative and absolute, in the world than there was a century ago. Not so many children die of malnutrition or preventable disease. More children, and more girls, go to school for at least a few years. Thank God for all the

people of good will who look hard at the problems and work towards solutions.

Not so much through the grand resolutions as through faith, hope and love carried out in good works, year by slow year, day by day.

Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
may we know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
day by day.

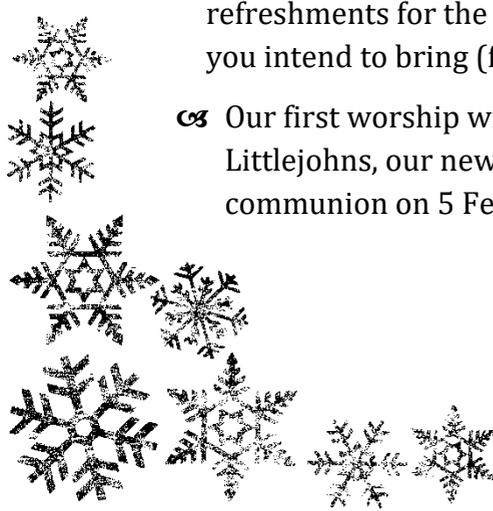
from the prayer of Richard of Chichester

Cheryl

Apologies if this is a bit disjointed; it was written in haste.



Updates

- ☞ There is a work party at the Manse on Tuesday 3 January, beginning at 9.30 AM.
 - ☞ The concert planned for 21 January in memory of Jessica Mayhew, and raising funds for the Youth & Family Worker Fund, has been cancelled.
 - ☞ Please indicate whether you plan to attend the induction service on Saturday 28 January. There is a sign-up sheet.
 - ☞ Please tell Nancy if you can help provide refreshments for the induction and what you intend to bring (finger food only).
 - ☞ Our first worship with the Revd David Littlejohns, our new minister, is communion on 5 February.
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Personalia

Peter Clason died on the morning of 7 December and was remembered in a service here on 20 December. Please remember Ina, Andrew and Joanna in your prayers.

Please remember all who are ill or undergoing medical treatment: Robert Cope, Colin Graham, Ian Ring & Kathleen Upton.

Gill Hitchin's great niece Alice's surgery was successful.



Commitment for Life

I am pleased to say the Commitment for Life contribution this year was £3,703.50, and that it was slightly up on last year (£3,668.25).

David Marlow



Toy Service



John and Lyn Ankcorn want to thank everyone on behalf of the Birmingham Crisis Centre for the toys donated, as well as the other support we have given.

Neighbourhood News

News and events from other local churches:

St Marys: For 8 weeks from 11 January we are planning to read Jonathan Sacks' *Not in God's Name* (about £7.50 on the Waterstone's website). We will run a group at Bridgwater Court at 10.30 AM and an evening group - probably at the Knights'. Cheryl and Ann will pass on expressions of interest from our congregation.

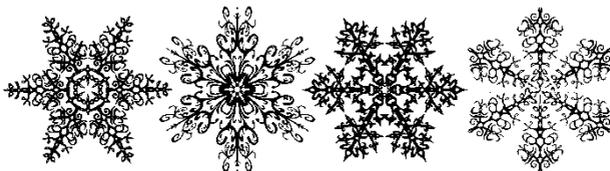
St Chad's Cathedral: 21-22 January, 24 hours of open prayer and worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Times in the Calendar.

Lunch Club

The Lunch Club meets on Wednesday 4 January. Arrive any time from 12.30 PM on to begin eating at 1 PM. Please let Nancy Nicholls know if you plan to attend.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Meet for tea, cake and chat on Wednesday 11 January from 2.30 PM.



The scouting term report

By Ciaran Turnbull (a scout)

The Beavers

The Beavers went on a trip to the Northfield fire station. The Beavers went into the breakroom and they watched a video about Fancies the Firefly. They had a look inside the fire car and fire engine. They heard the fire stations alarm. And 4 Beavers earned their Chief Scout Bronze awards which were presented to them by the Red Watch Leading Firefighter. For the first time our Beavers attended the annual District Christmas Party where they saw Santa. The Beavers also had a party of their own, they played party games.

The Cubs

The Cubs had two section nights led by the Scout Leader, these involved making telescopes (the telescopes were made of cardboard rolls) and fire lighting. These activities were run by Roo and Skip. Skip and Roo organised a game of hockey (this was entertaining). They also went on a trip to the German Market. They caught the bus there and back again, they had a brilliant time and they enjoyed themselves.

The Scouts

The Scouts went ice-skating. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves even though some of our bums were hurt

after some of us kept falling on our bums; even Roo had a go and she had to get a scout to help into the middle, two new Scouts were invested while we were ice-skating (on the ice rink). and lots of badges were given out to other Scouts. Two Scouts have earned their Chief Scout Golds. The Scouts have also finished their DIY badge—this involved wiring up a light switch, making and painting a box. As well as the Cubs, the Scouts made telescopes and did fire lighting.



Beavers at Northfield Fire Station

WEOLEY HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

PRAYER DIARY

*The Lord says: "They will call on my name and I will answer them." Zech 13:9
Glory to God in the highest & on earth to those with whom he is pleased Luke 2.14*

JAN 2017	CHURCH FAMILY	WE PRAY FOR OURSELVES & THE WIDER COMMUNITY
WK 1: 1-7 Jan	Ursula Aitken Edna Bayliss Sue Beeby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● peace in war torn regions ● refugees from various parts of the world that have been forced to flee their homes
WK 2: 8-14 Jan	Mary Bevin Iris Bird Jim Brackley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● peace between different communities in our country ● Brexit negotiations & implications from national to local and individual level
WK 3: 15-21 Jan	Linda Bradley Tom & Doreen Bradley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● peace within families at what can be a difficult time of year ● the needs of individuals, families, groups within our local area ● that we may show Christ's love & compassion to all who walk through our doors ● members & leadership of the congregations & groups that use our buildings ● stronger links with our local community
WK 4: 22-28 Jan	Joy & Colin Brain Jane & Paul Byford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● peaceful relationships between governments ● peace and reconciliation across the world; a healing of negative divisions
WK 5: 29 Jan- 4 Feb	Bill Campbell Kay Campbell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● that we may know & be able to share God's peace ● a closer walk with God for each of us in 2017

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, now to Sue Beeby.