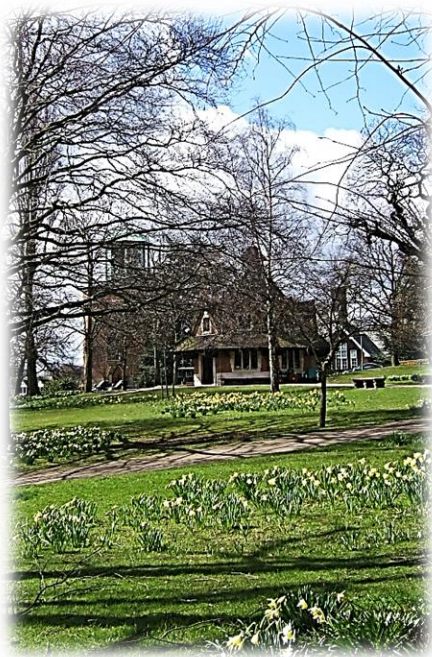


Cadbury Pastorate News

Bournville, Weoley Castle &
Weoley Hill Churches



March 2022

From the Minister's study—

Dear Friends,

At a recent church meeting at Weoley Castle Community Church (WCCC) we decided to support the initiative of one of our church members by paying for the purchase of the Easter and Christmas issues of the monthly Good News newspaper. This paper would include an insert of WCCC or community news and is distributed to all the addresses on the Weoley Castle estate. In the April issue of the paper the WCCC insert will not only include an Easter greeting but also signpost the readers to a prayer course, www.prayercourse.org, to learn (more) about prayer. After all, it is very likely that in the past two years that we have lived through the pandemic many people, of all different faiths or perhaps even none, have felt the need to say a prayer, for loved ones, for themselves, for the NHS and other frontline workers, for people and places that faced exceptional challenges here and abroad. Some of us would have found it easy to pray but others may have wondered, "how do I pray?" (This is the title of book of Pete Greig, founder of the 24/7 prayer movement).

How to pray? Already in the Bible we can read that the disciples of Jesus were not always so sure about how to pray. "*Jesus, teach us to pray...*" (cf Luke 11.1) they said. And even Paul confesses "*...we do not know how to pray as we ought...*" (Rom 8:26)

And that leads us to the question, what is prayer? But first, what is NOT prayer? A man was praying. His child was crying. A rabbi passed by and gave the man a nudge: "*Don't you hear your child crying?*" he said. "*No,*" the man replied, "*don't you see I am praying?*" "*You are not really praying,*" the rabbi said. "*If you are really praying you see and hear everything around you!*"

Prayer is a conscious relationship with God, however we understand God—whether as a supernatural being removed from the world or as the one "in whom we live and move and have our being"—and prayer is being aware of God's presence in and around us. Prayer is more than

saying prayers; it is opening up to the presence of God no matter where we are or what we are doing, to be alert to what is happening around us. Prayer can be intentional, or it can just happen, as we are suddenly aware of God's presence in some very mundane activities or in unexpected times and places. It can be in the business and noisiness of daily life, or it can be in moments of calm and in silence. *A man prayed and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until he realised that prayer is listening.* (Soren Kierkegaard).

And I very much like this idea that God sometimes listens to our casual conversations and receives them as prayers. Which reminds me that years ago a Methodist colleague with whom I shared a service made us all sit in twos and threes to talk about what was happening in our lives, in the country and the world "*with God listening in.*"

What about our intentional prayers, prayers in which we ask for something, sometimes a very long shopping list of petitions (for ourselves) and intercessions (for others)? Does prayer work or does it not? After praying every Sunday for peace in the Middle East a church member came to me questioning God's unresponsiveness. I told her that personally I do not think that God answers prayers by intervention (which would make non-interventions inexplicable) but that prayer may well have effect, after all, God moves in mysterious ways and certainly God moves in us when we pray. Prayer is not asking miracles, even though they may happen, but asking for discernment what is possible and how we can make the possible happen. Prayer changes us and opens us up to God's creative power of love and peace within us that makes a difference in the lives of our family and friends and in the wider "world. *"If we truly love people, we will desire for them far more than it is within our power to give them, and this will lead us to prayer. Intercession is a way of loving others* (Richard Foster) And so it is that we respond when someone asks us to pray for them, or if we are aware of a need, a fear or a gratitude. We express our love, concern and joy in thought, in word but

also in deed. *To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world* (Karl Barth)

“Keep it simple, keep it real, keep it up!” is the advice given in “how to pray.” And I would add, if we are struggling for words or imagination, we can always pray the Lord’s Prayer, that says it all. Or use prayers written by others which we often recognize as very meaningful (the 2022 URC prayer handbook has some wonderful prayers). Or sing your prayer (a Psalm or hymn). And remember that the best way to start praying may well be to stop praying and just be silent, in the presence of God....

Eternal God, so high above me; so deep beneath me; so vast around me. Long before time and stretching into eternity, connecting me with all there has been and all that ever will be. Let me pause—just a moment—to bask in your presence and drink in the wonder of you. Intimate yet unknowable; within me, yet uncontainable; awesome yet everyday wonderful God. (Karen Campbell in URC Prayer Handbook 2022)

With all best wishes,
Leonora

Lent ecumenical study



Tuesdays at 10.00 AM: St Mary's **Hall** with Revd David Parker

Wednesdays at 7.30 PM: SOMC with Farai Mapamula

Thursdays at 2.30pm: Weoley Hill with Leonora Jagessar

The study will be adapted from the Churches Together in Britain & Ireland study *Following Christ in the footsteps of the saints*.

Please sign up as soon as possible. All welcome.

Prayer page

A LENT PRAYER (submitted by Glynis Bate)

Father, this year I thought that instead of giving up something I'd write a list for Lent. In these actions may I be better prepared to journey to Easter and to share Jesus's death and resurrection. In these gestures may my love of you and my love of others become united.

This Lent open my heart to recognise that I'm best placed to serve you when I'm serving others.

This Lent give me the grace to(Make your own list)

Be forgiving when I get annoyed with others behaviour.

On my fridge it says take a deep breath and be patient,

help me to pray each time I see it.

(Put on your fridge something meaningful to you.)

Pray once a week for that someone I'm struggling to like

Admit to sin I have committed and ask for healing

Eat frugally once a week and give to the food bank.

Say thank you for things I take for granted.

Visit someone living alone with a happy heart and not a sense of duty.

Listen carefully and don't interrupt when with others.

Reduce waste particularly water.

Tell someone about your unconditional love.

Heavenly Father, I hope these steps will help me become closer to you and build your kingdom here on earth.

Pastorate News

Pastorate Safeguarding training session

The session, on 12 February, was led by Donna Gordon, Safeguarding Officer for West (and East) Midlands synods and attended by several elders from the Pastorate, some group leaders and two people from Wylde Green URC. Slides from the session will be available at some time. The session combined foundation and intermediate levels and gave us all a lot to think about. The topics were organised under People, Premises, Programmes, Policies, and Process.

People: Types of abuse and neglect vary from physical or sexual abuse through neglect, discrimination, spiritual abuse, to modern slavery and exploitation. In the same way, signs of abuse vary from bruises and injuries to changes in behaviour such as self-neglect and self-harm, withdrawal, acting out anger or violence, or bullying others; other physical signs include flinching, lashing out, and sexually inappropriate language or behaviour in children or unexplained money or 'gifts'. Children often reveal abuse through play. In adults, sudden unexplained poverty or mentions of 'losing' money or missing appointments unless taken by someone else may also be signs of abuse.

(An at-risk adult is legally defined as someone with care and support needs, but of course others may be at risk as well. Part of our love for one another must be awareness of vulnerability of any kind.)

If you suspect abuse, recognise, respond, report and refer.

Churches and other religious groups have a particular responsibility because of the traditional authority of clergy and teachers and respect for them, which creates an imbalance of power and can lead to control, coercion and bullying. Our open doors can present a hazard. So safeguarding should be a regular part of our Elders' agendas, and we must keep track of what training is due and review and update our policies annually.

Premises: This includes Health & Safety—our physical premises, fire safety, food hygiene, First Aid kits and records all being maintained—access issues, with records of who has access to buildings; who has keys; who enters or leaves during activities (such as who is authorised to collect a child, child/adult ratios, noticing if a child or vulnerable adult wanders, not leaving vulnerable people alone)—much of which we already do. It is our responsibility to ensure that groups using our premises have suitable safeguarding policies and insurance.

Regular **transport** on behalf of the church, such as a minibus, needs licensed, insured drivers and a second responsible person in the vehicle, with records kept and an emergency plan. For informal lifts to church, we should just keep records.

Policies: We are recommended to have a buddy system for one-to-one meetings in church or in visits, which could be someone else waiting nearby, or a phone call or text afterwards.

These days, even volunteer roles such as creche supervisors and junior church teachers should have application forms, job descriptions, DBS and reference checks, interviews, inductions and probation periods. Although this seems burdensome for a small church, it deters unsuitable people and helps to prevent accidents and unfortunate situations. Consent forms should be used for activities involving transport and for photos of children—and we should avoid having children's faces in photos.

This is just a summary of a very detailed session.

All of this, increasingly required by law, is not easy for small churches like ours, but once the routines for things like records are established, they will become less burdensome. And even more to the point, they are practical ways of caring for one another, particularly those who are vulnerable.

The PowerPoint slides for the session can be shared.

Cheryl Thornett

Weoley Castle News

There will be two “in-person” services in March: at 11 AM on Sunday 13th led by Leonora with Communion (followed by our AGM), and on the 27th (Mothering Sunday) led by Joe Bevan. We intend to return to weekly services from Palm Sunday 10th April onwards.

We are intending to organise (for the first time in 2 years) a “Good Friday Happening” for children to share with the Easter story in craft and drama.

Church Meeting agreed that we would give funds to Bill Hopkins’ mission to distribute the ‘Good News’ Newspaper all around the Weoley Castle estate this Easter (and again at Christmas). Donations of money or time for this would be welcomed.

Moira Hill had been in hospital after a fall, but is back home again and recovering, but won’t be able to return to helping at the Day Centres for a little while.

Mary Sparkes feels she has got back some of her energy, while the doctors continue to investigate and treat what was wrong with her. She thanks all those who asked after her.

Margaret Wozencroft has been in and out of hospital, but they have sorted out some of her medication and the latest news is that she is feeling rather better and home again, but is getting help with her mobility.

Bruce continues at Gracewell care home. He recently remarked that he wonders whether the removal of all Covid legal restrictions by the Government is a plan to reduce the cost of caring for older people – by getting rid of them!

Chris Hopkins has just taken on another fostering: a little girl called Tuliza, born on St Valentine's day

Ted Forgan

Weoley Hill

Wednesdays 10 am: Art Club

Thursdays 2.30 pm, starting 10 March: Lent Study Group

Fridays 6.45 pm: Community Choir.

Weoley Hill Calendar for March 2022		
Wednesday	2	Ash Wednesday--Church soup lunch 1 pm
Friday	4	10.30 AM: World Day of Prayer
Saturday	5	10.30 AM: Gardening group—all welcome.
Sunday	6	10.30 AM: Communion Service led by the minister. Tea/coffee after worship. Discussion group. Annual Reports due
Wednesday	9	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Thursday	10	2.30 PM: Lent study group here
Sunday	13	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans.
Wednesday	16	10 AM-12: Art Club. £1
Thursday	17	2.30 PM: Lent study group here
Sunday	20	10.30 AM: Worship led by the minister. Annual Reports distributed
Wednesday	23	10 AM-12: Art Club. £1
Thursday	24	2.30 PM: Lent study group here
Sunday	27	10.30 AM: Mothering Sunday worship led by Blair Kessler.
Wednesday	30	10 AM-12: Art Club. £1
Thursday	31	2.30 PM: Lent study group here

Although the government is ending most Covid-19 restrictions and precautions, it is up to us as a congregation to decide what precautions we continue to take. *Please let your Elder or the Church Secretary know whether you think we should continue to wear masks in worship, especially while singing.*

There will be **tea and coffee after worship** again, and an opportunity for **group discussion**—details later. Please see Linda Bradley if you can join the coffee rota.

The **AGM** is after worship on Sunday 3 April. Ann Evans is proposed as Church Secretary and Juliet Chideya to return as a serving elder.

Please remember the family of Betty Johnston, who died on 2 February and was remembered with a funeral service in church on 18 February. Betty, a resident of Bryony House, had been unable to worship with us for a few years due to advanced age and infirmity.

Cheryl Thornett

Any Old Photos?

We would like to make displays of photos of past and recent events for the church's centenary celebrations this year (particularly the anniversary service in July and the Heritage Day in September). If you have any photos you could lend of events at the church or related to church activities or organisations taken elsewhere, they would be appreciated. Examples might include weddings, church anniversaries, uniformed organisations, youth activities, sales, work parties.

Please write your name on the back of the photos along with a date and explanation of the event and hand them to Sue by Easter.

If you would like to be involved with mounting the displays, that would be great!

Sue Beeby

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

Not the NHS!

Doctor, doctor: I've swallowed some money!

Take this and we'll see if there's any change in the morning.

Doctor, doctor: will this cream clear up my spots?

I'm sorry: I can't make any rash promises.

Doctor, doctor: I can't get to sleep at night!

Try lying near the edge of the mattress: you'll soon drop off

Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a goat!

How long has this been going on?

Since I was a kid.

Doctor, doctor: I keep thinking I'm a moth

You need a psychiatrist – not a doctor!

I know, but I was just passing and saw your light was on.

Doctor, doctor: I feel like a house window.

Can you tell me where the pane is?

Doctor, doctor: feel like a pair of curtains.

Pull yourself together, man!



The Cadbury Pastorate

Open for Worship

(In line with Government guidelines.)

Bournville URC, Beaumont Rd: Worship at 3 PM on 1st Sundays and 10.30 AM on other Sundays.

Weoley Castle Community Church, Quarry Rd: Worship Sundays at 11 AM.

Weoley Hill URC, Greenmeadow Rd: Worship at 10.30 AM.

Sunday worship can be still found on the Weoley Hill website as in print form, and through email on request.

Check with the organisers for news of groups which normally meet in Weoley Hill and Weoley Castle.

Please check the churches' websites for further news and any changes, as well as details of precautions to be observed.

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Secretary: Cheryl Thornett 475 6338

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Secretary: Maureen Peart 605 3540

