

Weoley Hill Church News



July & August 2017

Letter from the minister

Dear Friends

I haven't ridden a bicycle for many years because I have lost my confidence completely and can't remove my right hand from the handlebars to indicate. I've seen what many drivers (and pedestrians) do to cyclists. As a driver and pedestrian I've seen some of the idiotic things that some cyclists do to other road users. Some of those on bikes try to keep moving at all costs, weaving their way through stationary traffic, through red lights at junctions and pedestrian crossings.

(With apologies to any physicists amongst us.) Cyclists do have the laws of physics on their side. All moving objects possess momentum and kinetic energy, which can only be restored by the input of fresh energy. So, a cyclist who slows down will have to pedal hard to get back to their previous speed.

Churches possess a kind of spiritual momentum: it can't be measured in any scientific way, but we know when things are going well and that we're "getting somewhere". This shouldn't surprise us because each community of Christians is supposed to be a community in movement, disciples seeking to grow in discipleship and follow Jesus. This pilgrim theme runs through the Bible from Abraham to Jesus and beyond.

But there is a real danger that a church can lose its sense of motion, especially during the summer which used to be the holiday period – that now begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December! Nonetheless families with children are looking forward (!?) to the end of the school year, while other people make their escape before prices reach their peak. Many of our regular activities will soon go "on hold."

There is nothing wrong with this. Jesus and the disciples needed to take time out to rest, eat and drink. They also needed time to be spiritually refreshed by spending time in prayer. But, as every walker knows, if you pause for too long your muscles seize up and it becomes hard to get moving again. Equally, everyone who's had a holiday has

experienced that "I really don't want to go back to work" feeling when they return home. Lethargy can very easily become the order of the day!

So, when summer comes to its end, we will have to overcome our inertia. We'll only have a few weeks before we hit Harvest, and only a few more weeks after that Advent beckons and we'll be thinking of Christmas - what a thought! They're not here yet, so I would like to ask you to use some of that 'down' time to think and pray about some of the things that we' need to consider from the autumn on.

Mission and outreach to our neighbourhood. Lots of young people come through our doors each week, we aren't making the most of the contacts we have with the people who live around us. We have a responsibility to share our Christian message with them - but how can we do this? People are not going to beat a path to our doors, so we need to discover ways of interacting with them, inviting them to 'special' services and activities.

Our own involvement in church life. The Apostle Paul says that every Christian has a gift which they should use to serve Christ in and / or outside the church. How can we best use the gifts and skills God has given us to spread the good news of Jesus?

Please do enjoy the summer. I hope that we will all have time to relax, reflect and think. And then, when autumn comes, let's move ahead with renewed vigour and find a new momentum which will be quite unstoppable!

Every blessing

David



Personalia

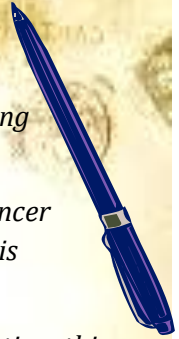
Please remember all who are ill or injured or are receiving or waiting for treatment.

Linda Bradley broke her elbow. Kath Upton is having cancer treatment and seems to be doing well. Gordon Thornett is awaiting a knee replacement.

Edna Bayliss may have moved into Bryony House by the time this appears.

We still need volunteers to bring two women from Bryony House, one with a walker, to church.

Congratulations to Esther Cotgreave for making a very good start in competitive synchronised swimming, and to Levi Cotgreave for taking part in a performance of Carmina Burana at the university.



Minister's Annual Leave

The Minister's annual leave is from 1-15 July. Please get in touch with your Elder or the Church Secretary with any concerns or urgent matters.

Thanks

Jim Brackley was so overwhelmed to receive a card from the church members on the occasion of his 90th birthday and thanked you all. I think we should also thank Doreen Longman who has taken on this valuable service on behalf of us all.

Rosemary Hay

Seconded: Thanks, Doreen!

Cheryl

Neighbourhood News

News and events from other local churches:

WEOLEY CASTLE FESTIVAL

This annual event is on **Saturday 8 July** from 12 noon - 4 PM. As well as the usual stalls, refreshments and ice cream there will be children's rides and inflatables plus lots of arena events throughout the day. It is held on the central island at Weoley Castle Square so do come along and support this free community event.



At Selly Oak Methodist Community Sponsorship for Refugees

a new practical way for communities to help refugees

This free event will be a chance to be inspired, ask questions, network and connect with others who are keen to support refugees through community sponsorship. It will be hosted by Rev David Butterworth and Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacobi and will involve speakers from the UK groups involved in sponsorship.

Date & Time Wednesday 19 July 2017

Arrival: 16:30 **Panel Discussion:** 17:00 -19:30

Location Selly Oak Methodist Church

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Our outing to the **National Memorial Arboretum**, Alrewas, Burton on Trent, on Wednesday 14 June was blessed with lovely sunshine which added to the enjoyment as we admired the beautiful grounds and sculptures.

There is just too much to see in one visit but we tried to do as much as possible by catching the 'land train'. This took us a slow journey around the site pointing out several of the memorials. Large areas are designated for the Royal and Merchant Navy, the Royal Air Force and all the regiments, past and present, of the Army but intermingled with these are smaller gardens devoted to the Police, Fire service, the Post office, the RNLI, the Ambulance service and others plus hundreds of other monuments each dedicated to those who have been killed or injured in the service of this country.

There are memorials to those who came from overseas to help. From Canada, India, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere and a large Polish memorial with amazing central sculpture and a memorial to the French resistance, the Ghurkhas and the Africa Rifles.

As well as beautifully engraved and decorated memorials, there are some wonderful sculptures. The hundreds of stainless steel 'feathers' of the RAF eagle shone in the sun, whereas the statue of the bomb disposal officer was coal black, and how marvellously balanced was the statue of Pegasus above the parachutist pulling in his pack? The most moving groups were the two sets on the high central mound. They are for all those fallen since the end of World War II and are surrounded by a high wall engraved with the names. Sadly, names are still being added. A gap has been left in the wall so that a beam of light shines through at 11.00 AM on the 11th of November. A path of those who received the Victoria Cross leads to this mound from which the entire site can be viewed.

There are many individual touches. The copse of 328 oak trees, one for each merchant ship sunk in WW11; the horse chestnut trees planted along 'The Beat', the area for the Police, to remember the wood used in early police truncheons; the 'Shot at Dawn' area planted at the eastern end of the site so as to get the first rays of the dawn light; the Twin Towers memorial consisting of two blocks of polished grey granite containing pieces of the rubble from ground zero; the 'Basra Wall' constructed *in* Basra by those who served there, then removed and reassembled here exactly as it had been. The Garden of the Innocents, a place to remember the slain children of Dunblane, Beslan, Norway and others, has a central tree, dedicated to Anne Frank, which has the blossom removed before it is in full flower to remind us that she and the other children were never allowed to 'blossom'.

We were there for 4 hours (including eating!) and did not see half of the site which has plans for further expansion. It is beautifully designed and well worth a visit. Car parking is £3 per day but is free to go in. The 'train' is £5 pp and for £6 you can hire an electric scooter. Wheelchairs are free to borrow (advance booking needed). If you have a relative that you want to commemorate in some way you can do this by having a tree, tile or bench marked for them. Contact their website or 01283 245100 for more information. Postcode DE13 7AR

Our next meeting is our **annual Garden Party on Wednesday 12 July at 54 Middle Park Road**. Bring a plate of something to share with friends but just come along anyway for tea and a chat in Nancy's lovely garden anytime from 2.30 PM. There's always plenty!

Lorraine DaCosta



Cadbury's and Fairtrade

You may have heard about Cadbury's ceasing to sell their chocolate as 'Fairtrade'. This is what the Fairtrade organisation has to say about it:

From next month, you'll no longer see the FAIRTRADE Mark on the front of Cadbury Dairy Milk bars, hot chocolate and Buttons.

This is because Cadbury's parent company, Mondelez International, have decided to roll out their own sustainable sourcing programme called Cocoa Life across all Cadbury products. This is so they can safeguard their supply chain by taking complete responsibility for the sustainability of the cocoa they buy.

The difference between Cocoa Life and the FAIRTRADE Mark

The Cocoa Life programme isn't an independent farmer-owned system like the one behind the FAIRTRADE Mark. Instead, Mondelez work directly with cocoa farming communities to develop action plans that tackle challenges such as climate change, improving cocoa quality and making cocoa farming a more attractive profession for young people.

Instead of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and the Fairtrade Premium, Mondelez pays farmers the market price for their cocoa and then a loyalty payment on top to boost their incomes.

They also invest in projects that address the challenges identified by community action plans, which farmers create and deliver with Mondelez.

Fairtrade's involvement with Cocoa Life

Here at the Fairtrade Foundation we've been working with Mondelez for many months to make sure Fairtrade farmers have been properly consulted on the Cocoa Life programme, and that they will receive at least the same value as they have under Fairtrade certification. As part of its development we have been able to make sure farmers' views have been heard and they have told us they fully support it.

Five times as much Cadbury chocolate will be sourced on sustainable terms through Cocoa Life than was Fairtrade certified. Mondelez have committed to continue buying the same volumes of Fairtrade certified sugar as they do now.

The Fairtrade Foundation exists to represent and protect farmers' interests, and we see it as our responsibility to ensure that this continues to be the case. That's why we've worked with Mondelez on developing Cocoa Life and will continue to help them monitor it to ensure it truly benefits cocoa farmers and will publish an annual report on how we think that's going. Our work with Mondelez on their Cocoa Life programme is indicated by the Fairtrade Foundation's name appearing on the back of packs.

On the other hand – you could invest in some delicious Fairtrade chocolate from my Traidcraft stall on Sunday 9 July!

Christine

July Retiring collections: Sightsavers eye surgery charity

Sightsavers is an international organisation that changes lives for the long term. We work in more than 30 countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and support people with visual impairments to live independently.

We do what we do because 80 per cent of blindness in the world is avoidable, and we think that's astoundingly unfair.

We do it because people with disabilities deserve the same opportunities as everyone else.

For more in depth information about our work and current projects, visit the policy and research pages of our website:

<https://www.sightsavers.org/>

Scout Camp

Here it is as promised, now that I have sufficiently recovered from camp to sit down and tell you all about it. So for a change of scenery, I took 36 of the group to Rhydd Covert in Bewdley, because what else is there to do over a soggy bank holiday weekend in May? For those that don't know it, Rhydd Covert shares an entrance with West Midlands Safari Park—and just ask the leaders about the noises that could be made by the Lions and Rhinos—nature at its best. By lunchtime on the Saturday all 10 of the tents were up and ready for their occupants for the next 2 days. The site was quiet and I am not sure it was ready for the invasion that was to ensue. Then it happened: first they came in their ones and then their twos and before long the site was awash with excited Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and teddies. At Sunshine's (Sharon Towns) request Skip (Rob McManus) started the first fire of the weekend whilst the young people built dens and explored the site. Eventually tea was served and then we set off in our groups to see if we could detect some bats using the equipment from the site. Bats were heard, much to the joy of the young people. I have to say it was quite exciting even for us adults and I am still amazed that the Beavers stayed quiet enough to not scare them away.

One late night and very little sleep later, Sunday arrived with the activities that Roo had planned for the day—climbing, colouring, woggle making, pioneering and games ensued. We even had time for invading the shop to spend the pocket money sent by parents. During the pioneering in the afternoon we had a lovely visit from David and Hilary, with David running a Scouts Own and presenting Chief Scout Bronze awards to Zach and Lucie—well done to both of them. The evening came and despite the rain, Skip got the fire going again and songs about Alice the Camel, Skip and Ieuan 'arguing' about whose friend Cecil the Caterpillar was filled the site, all washed down with hot chocolate and s'mores. Roo had the pleasure of investing 5 Cubs (Gamin Lee, Rory Davis, David Lee, Su Hyeon Hong (Rose), Acenture

Sihota) and 1 Scout (Natasha Stewart-Boyles,) welcoming them to the family of Weoley Hill.

The day dawned on Sunday to rain, rain and more rain, giving Skip lots of work to do on our return to get tents clean and dry. However, this did not stop the young people and off they all went orienteering around the site. The record of number of points found goes to Rose, Kate, Gamin, Eungho and Yoonhoo, who found 7 points to everyone else's 6. Sadly the rain meant that we had to pack up a bit early but the disappointment associated with this was off set by another trip to the shop and pizzas bought in especially for lunch.

So the sun (metaphorically speaking) goes down on another camp. The tents are being cleaned and dried slowly, the lost property is being reclaimed just as slowly and Skip and Roo's focus shifts to Rea Away 2018. Watch this space for the report on that next summer.

If anyone would like to find more about what the group has been doing and watch the video of camp made by Ieuan please feel free to attend the AGM and Bar- B- Q on 9 July at 1915.

Anna Ostojitsch

August Retiring Collections: Freedom from Torture

Every survivor of torture in the UK has a different story, which means their needs are different, too. That's why we tailor the support we offer to suit each person who comes to us.

We provide counselling, group therapy and ongoing support. We run groups like gardening, music, creative writing and cookery. We provide expert medical assessments to support survivors' asylum claims.

And we use our expertise and evidence to protect and promote survivors' rights and hold torturers to account.

<https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/>

Lunch Club & Friendship Groups

We have decided to combine this year's Christmas lunch for these two groups. The meal will be on 6 December at 12.45 for 13.00 and will be a traditional Christmas lunch. The cost will be £5.00 and everyone is welcome. Names of those wishing to come will be collected nearer the time.

On December 13th we are planning an afternoon tea for Friendship Group. This will be at 14.30 and will cost £3.00. We hope to serve seasonal food including mince pies. All welcome.

Other dates for your diary

September 24: There will be a joint Harvest lunch with the Korean Church after morning service. There will be a list to sign up for contributions in September

October 22: Lunch is planned after the joint service with Weoley Castle. Soup and rolls will be provided but contributions of cakes or puddings would be appreciated. List to sign a few weeks before the event.

November 18: We are undecided on whether to hold an Autumn Fair. This has been poorly supported for the last two years. We feel this is an opportunity to invite our neighbours into the buildings which is so important. Has anyone any ideas on how this could be changed to attract more people? Or any other comments?

Nancy Nicholls



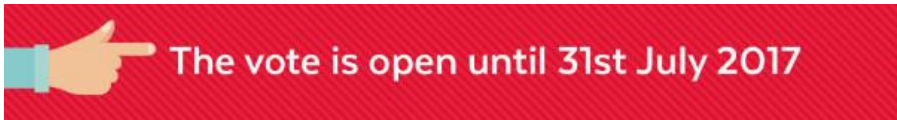
Masonic Charitable Foundation grant—please vote

The Masonic Charitable Foundation is celebrating the 300th Anniversary of the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England, and as part of the celebrations is pledging £3million to 300 charities across the UK. It is, however, up to the public to decide which charities get the largest grants (up to £25,000) through an online vote.

Margaret Basterfield requests our votes for 'NICE – Centre for Movement Disorders', which was of great help for her son Chris. As it happens, the Birmingham Crisis Centre, which we support as a congregation, is also a candidate for a grant—and you can only vote once, although they are listed for different counties, alas. I'm sure that between us, we can provide votes for both these excellent and essential organisations, so please vote for one or the other.

How you can help: **Go to www.mcf.org.uk/vote**

NICE is in the **Worcestershire** section and **Birmingham Crisis Centre** is in the **Warwickshire** section.



WEOLEY HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH PRAYER DIARY

I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart: I will tell of your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.
Ps 9:1-2

	Church members		Church members
WK 1: July 2-8	Ursula Aitken Edna Bayliss Sue Beeby	WK 6: Aug 6-12	Alan, Lydia, Jacob, Esther, Levi & Joel Cotgreave Roger Cotgreave
WK 2: July 9-15	Mary Bevin Iris Bird Jim Brackley	WK 7: Aug 13-19	Mohamad Chamanbaz Juliet & Yvonne Chideya
WK 3: July 16-22	Linda Bradley Tom and Doreen Bradley	WK 8: Aug 20-26	Jinsub, Youngsun, Edward & Grace Chung Ina Clason
WK 4: July 23-29	Joy Brain Jane Byford	WK 9: Aug 27-Sept 3	Joyce, David, Susan & Catherine Cope
WK 5: July 30-Aug 5	Bill Campbell Kay Campbell Grace & Joy Carter		

NOTE: As always, please feel free to send any feedback on the Prayer Diary and specific prayer requests at 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.