

Cadbury Pastorate News

Bournville, Weoley Castle &
Weoley Hill Churches



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April 2023

From the Minister's study—

Dear Friends,

In his collection *Letters to a Young Poet*, the great German poet Rainer Maria Rilke responded to a young man trying to discern his vocation, whether he should continue in his training as a military officer or pursue a career as a poet. The young man had sent samples of his poetry to Rilke, asking for a critique and for advice on his future, in other words, for answers.

Rilke gave him neither. Instead, he wrote:

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms and books written in a very foreign language. Do not now seek the answers which cannot be given because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live your way into the answers."

Live the questions...live your way into the answers.

As we approach Easter we are aware again that in our Christian lives there is an important question to be lived, that is, the question of the resurrection. What is it? What can it be? Is it real? Did Jesus raise up from the grave? Or is it a myth or metaphor perhaps? Is it just a story filled with meaning for human life? What does the resurrection mean for us?

Perhaps our answer to the resurrection is more like a question, a question to be lived. For we don't know what *exactly* happened, but *something* did happen.....

Something that utterly changed and continues to change lives.

Something that gives people hope and confidence in the future and the eternal.

Something that has established a world-wide Christian community that has endured already for 2000 years.

Something that, as we take all of these things together, is truly a miracle!

But what? I don't know. Something! And we call it resurrection!

With all best wishes for Easter and the Easter season!

Leonora

PS A quote to ponder on:

To reduce [Easter] to a spectacular miracle a long time ago and a hope for an afterlife is to diminish it and domesticate it. It is not about heaven. It is about the transformation of this world. Jesus was killed because of his passion for a different kind of world. Easter is about God's "Yes" to what we see in Jesus. Easter is not about believing in a spectacular long-ago event, but about participating in what we see in Jesus. Crucifixion and the tomb didn't stop him. Easter is about saying "Yes" to the passion of Jesus. He's still here, still recruiting people for his passion for the Kingdom of God. (Marcus Borg)



TOOLS FOR SELF RELIANCE

This group has started up again in Northfield and is asking if anyone can donate tools of **any** kind that can be repaired or refurbished. These will then be sent to Africa to help those in need for their own farms or gardens, or perhaps which may help to start a business. Obviously no electric ones but those like hand sewing machines, spades, hoes, drills or old DIY tools etc. If you have any things like these rusting in a shed somewhere then look them out and let me know.

Lorraine

Prayer page

Thoughts and Prayers for Easter time,

Palm Sunday

Dear Master, we remember that many who claimed you as King on Sunday shouted *Crucify* on Friday. So confirm our faith today that our love for you will never falter or turn to hatred, but will remain constant now and for ever. We offer our worship to you, Lord, with all our love.

From *Prayers for the People*



Good Friday

He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live to righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

From *I Peter 2*

Easter Sunday

Jesus, our Lord, we praise you
that nothing could keep you dead in the grave.
You are stronger than death and the devil.
Help us to remember
that there is nothing to be afraid of,
because you are alive and by our side.

Amen

From *The Lion Prayer Collection*

Bournville URC News

We had a very good retreat at Woodbrooke College on the 14th of March when together we told the story of Bournville URC. We shared memories, gave thanks for all that we were able to do as a faithful and loving community over the years, and recognized that we can end the life of Bournville URC with dignity and grace while we will continue our journey of faith wherever it may lead us. In one of the sessions the questions were asked: What made Bournville URC unique? What are the most important contributions Bournville URC has made in your lives, in the lives of the community? If we were silent, what would the stones of the building cry out?

And these were some of the responses:

- Importance and central role of Holy Communion
- Uniqueness as a family – relational and belonging
- Prayer walk around the road (community belonging)
- Church located in middle of a street – both unique and a challenge (some could not find it!)
- Church with open arms: open and honest with each other
- Sharing of skills and attention to details
- Current community may be dispersed but work in the building will continue with a new lease
- Pilot stories to be told – very much a part of the life of the church
- Place of fun and laughter
- Language of sermons – positive and encouraging: not putting down of people
- Meals and eating together central to the life of the community: kitchen was an important part in the life of the church
- Lockdown memories and how the church community responded
- A supporting ministry – supporting members and friends
- Our story continues – not ended yet: image of flowers (forget me not – poached egg)

At our closing service on the 9th of July we will celebrate all that made Bournville URC the faithful and beloved community that we were privileged to be part of.

Weoley Hill News

We regret to announce the death of John Ankcorn, a former member, on Sunday 5 March. His funeral service will be held at 12 noon on Friday 14 April at Weoley Hill, followed by a reception in the John Kydd Hall . Among his many other achievements, John was a founding trustee of the Birmingham Crisis Centre, and some of us remember him playing the violin in church services.

Morfudd Knight, a former member of Weoley Hill and wife of Donald Knight, died on Saturday 4 March. Morfudd taught English as a foreign language and as a second language. Her funeral was at St Mary's on 24 March.

Our prayers and condolences to the families and friends of John and Morfudd.

Coronation weekend lunch

On Sunday 7 May we will mark the coronation of King Charles III with a special thanksgiving service at 10.30am followed by a buffet lunch. Do come along with friends and family and help to make this time a memorable one (some of us can remember the last one!) All churches in the pastorate are invited, along with our Korean and Arabic congregations. If you would like to you can dress up in any combination of red, white and blue, bring any memorabilia from the last or present coronation for a small display, and any **finger food** donations (you can bring these from 9.30am in the morning). Nothing requiring cutlery please. Sign-up sheets will be available throughout April, or you can give a financial donation if you prefer. There will be a short paper quiz to keep us occupied and we would be grateful for donations for a FREE raffle if you have anything suitable. Please see Lorraine or Cheryl for more information.

PS We understand that one of our members has a 'big' birthday around the same time.

The Mamie Martin Fund.

This fund supports the education of girls in Malawi. It was established in 1993 by the daughter of Mamie Martin, who was a missionary in Malawi in the 1920s.

It currently supports 148 girls across 7 schools. Part of the fund supports scholarships in memory of Jack and Phyllis Thompson, former members of Weoley Hill, who lived here in the 1980s and worked extensively in Malawi.



Holy Week Worship

Weoley Hill

Sunday 2 at 10.30 AM: **Palm Sunday** Communion.

Thursday 6 at 7.30 PM: **Maundy Thursday at St Davids**

Friday 7 at 7.30 PM: **Good Friday** worship led by the minister.

Sunday 9 at 7.00 AM: **Early Easter** worship led by the minister.

Easter Breakfast, notice needed.

10.30 AM: **Easter Communion** led by Stuart Scott.

Weoley Castle News

Services: usually 11 am on Sundays

April 2nd: led by Chris Miles

April 6th: **8 pm Maundy Thursday communion** - led by Chris Miles

April 9th: **Easter morning at 10 am** - led by Leonora – with communion

April 16th: led by Ted

April 23rd: led by Joe Bevan

April 30th: **Joint Pastorate Service** at Weoley Castle - led by Leonora

Good Friday “Easter Happening” for families and children

On Friday April 7th from 10 am to 12.30 pm, there will be Easter crafts, ending with an Easter Celebration.

The new “**Mega Movers**” adult dance group for health and wellbeing on Tuesdays at 6.30 has been increasing in popularity. Mena Jones leads it with enthusiasm, and she will also be contributing to the Easter Happening.

The **Friday “Warm Spaces”** initiative, with free hot drinks and a light lunch at 1.15 will continue indefinitely, even as the days get warmer. It supplies a welcome social space, and continues to be accompanied by Debbie’s clothes exchange and Incredible Surplus food pantry, which usually have about 30 customers. We have received funding for this from ASDA and also from “Stewardship” – a Christian Philanthropy organisation (<https://www.stewardship.org.uk>). Two weeks ago, Jim Parry from the engineering company Volkerfitzpatrick who have been rebuilding University Station in Selly Oak and had heard about us, came with donations, including household necessities. Pictures were taken by Mary S.



What is a “senior citizen” ? – continued

During a visit to my doctor, I asked him “How do you determine whether or not an older person should transfer to an old age home?”

“Well,” he said, “we fill up a bath, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person and ask them to empty the bath.”

“Oh I understand,” I said. “Normally, a person would use the bucket, because it’s much bigger than the teacup or the spoon.”

“No.” he said. “Normally a person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?”

“Wayside Pulpit” ?

At a recent Elders’ meeting, we were discussing whether at Weoley Castle we had the right balance between “serving” and “preaching” – in the activities that happen during the week - not what happens in worship on Sunday mornings. We thought about putting up inside the building some posters that could spark thoughts or conversations about the things that make us a Church as well as a community resource.

Wayside pulpits have been outside churches with this aim, sometimes with rather bland statements, such as the one that said “DON’T WORRY, IT MAY NOT HAPPEN”. This was situated on the noticeboard right next to:

“Next Sunday’s service will be led by Revd. J Bloggs”!

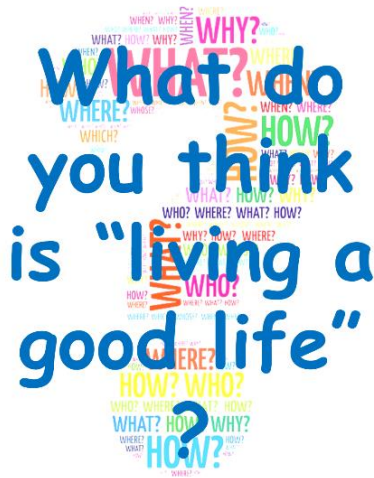
On the subject of statements, there is a story told about the Nobel-prize-winning British theoretical physicist Paul Dirac. He was giving a lecture, and at the end he asked if there were any questions. A nervous young student put up his hand and said: “Professor Dirac, I didn’t understand how you got to that equation on the right of the blackboard.” Dirac replied, with a complete absence of emotional intelligence: “That was a statement, not a question; are there any questions?”

Questions: from the time of Socrates, and for children from when they begin to talk, questions and answers are the way to gain



**MAYBE A CHRISTIAN
HAS AN ANSWER**

understanding. Rabbis and teachers know this well, and the best kind



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of question is one that doesn't call for a simple yes or no answer.

People who count them up say that in the Gospels, Jesus is recorded as asking about 300 questions, and being asked about 180 questions.

Leonora pointed out to us that Jesus gave a direct answer to only about 2 or 3 of the questions he was asked; often he responded by trying to get the questioner to consider and supply their own answer. A good example is "Who is my neighbour?" - to which the response was the parable of the Good Samaritan.

With that in mind, we felt that any posters we put up should have open-ended questions rather than statements, though that means not putting up statements however true, such as "God is Love". I have had a try at making some of our own. I would welcome comments on these ideas or suggestions for others. The strapline at the bottom is also an invitation to consider what *you* would say in answer to that question!

Ted Forgan (ted.forgan@gmail.com)

Legacy of Slavery

At the recent Synod meeting in March those present shared in saying the following confession and apology that was put to General Assembly last July about its role in slavery. It is a statement of our church of which we are all part.

Proposed Confession and Apology by the United Reformed Church

2.1 We, the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, mindful of our own history and that of our antecedent bodies, wish to confess and apologise for our role in transatlantic slavery, and the scars which continue to blight our society, our Church, and the lives of black people in our midst and around the globe today. This action is firmly rooted in the gospel call to repentance, and gives life to the commitment in our Basis of Union to be ‘formed in obedience to the call to repent of what has been amiss in the past and to be reconciled.’

2.2 As a Conciliar Church, we have listened to one another as we received the report of Mission Committee on the ongoing Legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. We have heard the pain of sisters and brothers who have been hurt, and are still being hurt, by these legacies, including the continuing scourge of racism. We have heard God in Christ speaking to us at what we believe to be a Kairos moment. In a spirit of humility and vulnerability, we are urged on by a movement of God’s Spirit, calling us for a journey of words and actions towards a future built on equity, justice and love.

The Confession and Apology:

The General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, gathered in Swanwick in 2022:

- *humbly acknowledges our share in and benefit from our nation's participation, and that of some of our own antecedent bodies, in transatlantic slavery.*
- *recognises our failure to honour the efforts of our abolitionist forebears by permitting the legacies of transatlantic slavery to continue shaping our world*
- *offers our apology to God and to our sisters and brothers in Africa, the Caribbean, and their descendants, for all that has created and still perpetuates such deep hurt, which originated from the horror of slavery.*
- *repents of the hurt we have caused, our reluctance to face up to the sins of the past and our silence in the face of racism and injustice today.*
- *admits that these sins are part of our continuing failure to see and hear God in all our neighbours, whoever they may be.*
- *commits, in a true spirit of repentance:*
- *to find constructive ways by which we can move from saying 'I'm sorry' into concrete actions of 'repairing justice' and so contribute to the prophetic work of God's coming kingdom*
- *to continue working to promote racial justice as part of our Christian commitment to justice for all*
- *to encourage the whole United Reformed Church to be engaged in this journey.*

What can we as a pastorate do to 'repair justice'?

West Midlands Synod March 2023

The Synod met on 18th March at Sutton Coldfield URC.

Worship was led by a team from the lay preachers of the Synod.

The items in the morning included a talk by Jan Scott about the work of the Higher Education Chaplaincy at Aston University which has just celebrated its 50th Anniversary.

There was also a talk by Simeon Michel the leader of the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) which works on behalf of the URC, Baptists and Methodists on social issues, educating the churches and addressing political leaders.

Ann had reported separately on the Legacy of Slavery.

There was a lot of information on ways in which Synod can support churches and this will include a review of Synod operations on which all churches will be consulted.

I have been accepted as one of the delegates to General Assembly.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss anything in more detail.

John Fletcher

March 2023

B30 Food Bank

Urgent needs:

UHT semi-skimmed milk, UHT whole milk, long-life fruit juice (not needing refrigeration), tinned vegetables (carrots, peas, sweetcorn), tinned meat (ham, corned beef, pork sandwich, pulled pork, chicken), cereal (not greater than 500g), liquid/bar soap, gender neutral shower gel, toothpaste (not mouthwash)

Weoley Hill Calendar for April 2023

Saturday	1	10-4: Church away day at the Greenhouse, Barnes Close. Bring a packed lunch.
Sunday	2	10.30 AM: Palm Sunday Communion Service led by the minister. NOON: Annual Church Meeting
Thursday	6	7.30 PM: Maundy Thursday worship at St Davids
Friday	7	7.30 PM: Good Friday worship led by the minister.
Sunday	9	7.00 AM: Early Easter worship led by the minister. Easter Breakfast, notice needed. 10.30 AM: Easter Communion led by Stuart Scott.
Monday	10	Easter Monday
Wednesday	12	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Friday	14	12 NOON Funeral of John Ankcorn
Saturday	15	9.30-12 Work party
Sunday	16	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans,
Sunday	23	10.30 AM: Worship led by Bill Wilson from CAP.
Thursday	27	10.30 AM: Manse Morning discussion
Sunday	30	11 AM: Pastorate worship at Weoley Castle led by the minister.
May		
Saturday	6	Coronation
Sunday	7	10.30 AM: Communion Service led by the minister and induction of Elders TBC. Lunch after worship

Wednesdays 10 AM: **Art Club**

Fridays 6.45 PM: **Community Choir**

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

The Cadbury Pastorate

*Bournville URC cannot use their building at present.
Please contact the minister or church secretary for
times and places for worship.*

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 in outline or complete.*

PASTORATE MINISTER: the Revd Leonora Jagessar

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