

Cadbury Pastorate News

Weoley Castle &
Weoley Hill Churches



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*Christmas Blessings
& a Happy New Year*

December 2023

Letter pages

From Ann Evans:

Dear All

The future for our church life in one way is uncertain. There are many unknowns. We do not know how our churches will be grouped with others, we have no idea when we can start to advertise our vacancy and we have no idea when we will have an interim moderator to help us with the process of calling a minister. Along with that we do not know whether we can let the Weoley Hill manse or whether it will be sold, depending on where a minister will be based.

I have written about the uncertainty of church life in one way, however in another way our church life continues. The season of Advent and Christmas is here again, when we look forward to celebrating the birth of Christ. Christ came to earth as a baby, born of a young woman who was nothing special but had the most special task of all time in giving birth to our Saviour in a simple stable, which must have been very difficult. It was a troubled part of the world then and still is today.

Jesus's birth was predicted. The prophets of old were predicting the future. Here are a few examples: Isaiah 7:14—Isaiah prophesies that a pure young woman will give birth to God's son. Matthew 1:18-23—Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled. Isaiah 9:6—Isaiah prophesies that Jesus Christ will come as a baby; Jesus is described by several names. Micah 5:2—Micah prophesies that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem.

I am no prophet but I have hope for our future working together as the two Weoley churches, that we can continue together to be beacons of hope and light for the neighbourhoods we are in.

So let us work together and keep the Christmas hope alive in us all as we look to the future and whatever it might bring.

A joyous Christmas and a healthy and bright 2024 to you all

God bless

Ann

A prayer for the Holy Land from Archbishop Hosam Naoum, the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem.

*We pray without ceasing
for justice, reconciliation, peace,
and an end to hatred and war.*

*We also pray for God to change the hearts
of all leaders and decision-makers in our
countries and around the world.*

*For we are in dire need of hearts that love,
show mercy, and are willing to live in unity
with others, hearts that respect human dignity
and choose life rather than death.*

God of peace and justice, hear our prayers.

Amen.



As suggested by Christine Miles:

On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

By John Milton

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heav'n's eternal King,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,
Wherewith he wont at Heav'n's high council-table,
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside, and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal
clay.

Ring out ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears
(If ye have power to touch our senses so)
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the bass of Heav'n's deep organ blow;

And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to th'angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,

Time will run back and fetch the age of gold,
And speckl'd Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering Day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,

Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,

With radiant feet the tissu'd clouds down steering;
And Heav'n, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

(You may recognise some of this from a Christmas hymn.)



Prayer page

We seek the mighty God
in the most unlikely places
as a child in a stable,
and in an empty tomb.
May God hear these prayers,
which come from the unlikely corners of our lives.

We pray for:

lasting peace with justice for the people of Gaza, of
Palestine and of Israel; for the people of Ukraine, and for all
people who live in war-torn or violent parts of the world.

justice and for strength for Christians who are persecuted
for their faith and for prisoners of conscience.

Your healing and comfort for people who are suffering in
body, mind or soul, and for the people who care for and
tend them.

true Christian love to be shown to people who lack food,
shelter, medical help, and basic human needs.

a better world in all ways for those who come after us.

Give us ears to hear, O God,
and eyes to watch,
that we may know your presence in our midst
during this holy season of joy
as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Daily Devotions from Palestine

During the summer a group of URC young adults visited Palestine, and a few months ago, before the attack of 7 October and the reprisals, some of their reflections on the visit were compiled and scheduled as Daily Devotions for 19 to 25 November. If you aren't a Daily Devotion subscriber, you may find it useful to look up these reflections on the situation in Palestine. Go to <https://devotions.urc.org.uk/devotions/2023/11/> and click through the pages to 12-18 November

Concert in aid of Amnesty International & Freedom from Torture

3PM Sunday 10th December, Bournville Friends Meeting House
£8 on the door (under 16s free)
An eclectic mix of music, dance and poetry.
Café and stalls open from 2PM.

Quiz night in aid of Amnesty International & Freedom from Torture

7.30PM Friday 26th January, St Mary's church hall, Vivian Rd, Harborne. £8—includes samosas but bring own drink.
—See Sue.

Pastorate News

Weoley Castle News

Services: 11 AM on Sundays

Dec 3rd: Castle Elim Church are coming to WCCC for a service in their style, mainly led by Rachel Jewson—with parts led by a WCCC member. Includes **Communion**.

Dec 10th: Service for the **2nd Sunday of Advent, led by Chris Miles.**
Please bring toys and gifts for the Salvation Army to distribute.

Dec 17th: Service led by Ted with *musical contributions from Northfield Baptist church band* and including *Communion*.

Dec 24th: led by Joe Bevan; *no Christmas Day service at WCCC*

Dec 31st: Joint service at Weoley Hill at 10.30 (main hall floor at WCCC being re-surfaced)

Jan 7th: *at WCCC at 11 AM.* Led by **Chris Miles.**

Jan 14th: led by **Frank Challenor**, including **Communion**.

Jan 21st: led by **Ted**

Jan 28th: led by **Paul Tucker**

News

In an initiative led by Bill Hopkins, we are “casting our bread upon the waters”. Bill is distributing about 4000 copies of a Christmas “Good News” tabloid newspaper to houses around Weoley Castle. We have personalised the outer wrapper of the Good News, so the top half of the front page looks as shown. The back page has the headline “Good things going on in Weoley Castle” and publicises the ‘Love Weoley’

community group and 'Warm Spaces', gives details of all the various activities at WCCC and also supplies contacts for other Churches in the area. The strapline at the bottom says: "This Christmas Good News is sponsored by Weoley Castle Community Church, to spread the Good News of Jesus and the good things going on in Weoley Castle". If you'd like to see an image of the whole wrapper, contact Bill: bill_hopkins@btopenworld.com

**GOOD NEWS
FOR WEOLEY CASTLE**

Christmas 2023

Here is a new Christmas song to listen to as you contemplate the meaning of Jesus' birth: <https://bendavidtrigg.com/songs/a-child-is-born>

Unto us a child is born

We are having the wooden floor in the main hall of the Church sanded and re-sealed immediately after Christmas, so there will be no activities in the building during this period. We expect to re-start some activities on Friday 5 January. The last Day centre and Warm Space before Christmas will be on Friday 22 December, and then both will be closed for two weeks.

Weoley Hill News

Decorating the church on Saturday 9 December from around 2 PM.

Please remember to bring unwrapped toys (separate gift wrap and ribbon welcome) for children at Birmingham Crisis Centre to the ***Toy Service on 10 December.***

Advent Lunch

Please join us for lunch on Wednesday 13 December at 12 NOON! Just let Lorraine or Cheryl know, so we cater for the right number. The planned menu includes mulled wine, a choice of soup, a cold main course of salad, rolls and sliced meat or cheese, and Christmas pudding and/or mince pies, all for a mere £5 per person. Weoley Castle members are welcome to join us; just let Ted or Chris know so they can pass the numbers on.



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Candlelight Carols

This year's carol service is Saturday 16 December at 5 PM, when we will be joined by members of the Community Choir. Mince pies and mulled wine after the carols. Everyone is welcome!

The December retiring collection is for Water Aíd.

Calendar for December 2023& January 2024

Sunday	3	10.30 AM: Advent 1 Communion led by the Revd David Tennant.
Tuesday	5	10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship
Saturday	9	2 PM: Decorate church
Sunday	10	10.30 AM: Advent 2 Worship led by Annette Sampson. Toy service.
Wednesday	13	12 noon: Advent Lunch, £5 per head. Please notify Lorraine or Cheryl of numbers. 7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Saturday	16	5 PM Carol service
Sunday	17	10.30 AM: Advent 3 Worship led by Ann Evans.
Tuesday	19	10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship
Sunday	24	10.30 AM: Advent 4 Family 'crib' worship led by Alan Cotgreave.
Monday	25	11 AM: Family Christmas worship led by Alan Cotgreave.
Sunday	31	10.30 AM: Pastorate worship

January 2024

Tuesday	2	10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship?
Sunday	7	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd Brian Brown.
Wednesday	10	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Sunday	14	10.30 AM: Worship led by Blair Kessler.
Tuesday	16	10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship
Sunday	21	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann.
Sunday	28	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan.
Monday	29	2.30 PM F&B meeting

Please check individually for the dates that regular activities close for the holiday and resume again.

Wednesdays **Art Club**

Thursdays 10-11.30 AM: **Coffee & Chat**

Fridays 6.45-8 PM: **Community Choir**—last rehearsal 16

December, before the carol service, resuming again probably
Friday 12 January.

New Year Quiz

The first quiz of the year will be on Saturday 17 February and will be for Fairtrade, which is one of the events we are obliged to do in order to keep our status as a Fairtrade church. As usual we will start at 6.30 PM but try to arrive about 6.15 PM to get settled. Fish and chips are ordered for 7.30 PM and we hope to leave by 9.00 PM. Teams of six at £8.00 per person please, but you can come and join up with a group to make up a team. Donations for raffle prizes are always welcome. Prizes are surprising—and indescribable!

Lorraine

Commitment for Life

Many thanks to all those who have sent their donations to this Christian Aid based charity which we have supported for over 23 years. The total raised so far, and which David has already sent off, is **£2164** plus **Gift Aid from HMRC** of **£526** so total is **£2690.25**

This is £500 less than last year but very good considering the current financial climate and the loss of some good friends. If you have not yet sent in your envelope, and would like to do so, then please hand it in when convenient as donations can be received all year. Our area of focus is Palestine, which was chosen *last November*, but is now in the forefront of everyone's mind, so continue to pray about this area.

Lorraine

West Midlands Synod 13 and 14 October Vision4Mission

The residential Synod ran from Friday 5.30 PM to Saturday 4 PM. Throughout the whole meeting we were very aware of world events and in particular the news from Israel and Gaza. It began with a presentation on the Synod Review which is ongoing.

On Saturday there were two sessions where there were parallel workshops. I attended one on Racial Justice and one on Family Outreach.

In the afternoon there were sessions on the Synod Review which included one discussing the way in which the Synod Office can support the churches.

There are particular challenges at the moment to recruit Synod staff to replace several members of staff who are retiring or leaving for other jobs. The meeting recognised their service and thanked them.

There was a Synod business meeting conducted by Zoom on Thursday 19th which considered resolutions from the Synod Review including options about Synod staffing. There was an amendment passed which called for support to churches for their websites.

John Fletcher 22/11/2023

The next issue will be available around 1 February. Contributions are requested! Send them to Ted Forgan at Weoley Castle or Cheryl Thornett at Weoley Hill.



WHAT DO YOU CALL...

You may remember a joke from a couple of months ago: "What do you call a man with a seagull sitting on top of his head?" – to which the answer was "Cliff". Well, here are some more in the same vein:

1. What do you call a woman who is good at catching butterflies?
2. What do you call a man wearing a raincoat?
3. What do you call a man wearing two raincoats?
4. What do you call a woman who drives a truck?
5. What do you call a woman who throws her invoices in the fire?
6. What do you call a man lifting a car with his head?
7. What do you call a man carrying a car number plate?
8. What do you call a woman who glows like an electric fire?
9. What do you call a woman with slates on her head?
10. What do you call a man with cat scratches on his head?
11. What do you call a woman sitting on a slice of bread?
12. What do you call two men by the window?
13. What do you call a woman with a frog sitting on top of her?
14. What do you call a woman who owns a tortoise?
15. What do you call a woman with a sunlamp?
16. What do you call a man with an elephant sitting on him?

1. Annette
2. Mack
3. Max
4. Laurie
5. Bernadette
6. Jack
7. Reg
8. Anita
9. Ruth
10. Claude
11. Marge.
- 12 Kurt 'n' Rod
13. Lily
14. Shelley.
15. Tanya
16. An ambulance



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The Cadbury Pastorate

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 in complete form.

Bournville URC has closed.

THE PASTORATE IS CURRENTLY IN VACANCY

WEOLEY HILL CHURCH Office: 244 6711

Secretary: Ann Evans 628 4558

B29 4DE

weoleyhillchurch.org.uk

WEOLEY CASTLE COMMUNITY CHURCH: 475 3841

weoleycastlecommunitychurchurc.org.uk

weoleycastlecommunitychurch50@gmail.com

B29 5LE

