

Cadbury Pastorate News

Bournville, Weoley Castle &
Weoley Hill Churches



June 2023

From the Minister's study

Dear Friends,

“Should there be a clock in the sanctuary?” was a question once asked to me. Yes, there should be. Why? So that at least I, or any preacher in the “pulpit,” know/s what time it is. In many places around the world, congregations don't care what time it is and services can go on for hours. But I think that is not the case in most churches in the UK. We usually like a service to be no longer than one hour. And actually, a service may not even last one hour anymore when sermons are shorter and fewer hymns are sung, since after Covid. But then, the fellowship after the service is also a very important part of our Sunday gathering, when we have “holy” or “less holy” conversations over a cup of coffee or tea.

Not only on Sunday morning but all through the week we keep track of time. Calendars and clocks have become our masters in our fast-paced modern society. But did you know that the idea of our lives and the events in them being controlled by a time frame of hours and minutes is relatively new? The idea came from Benedictine monks, whose passion for organizing and filling every minute of the day grew out of St. Benedict's conviction that “idleness is the enemy of the soul.” Not until the 15th century did clocks begin to rival churches in the town squares of Europe. And not until the 17th century did those clocks have minute hands.

Surely much was gained in terms of production and organization, when life became divided and subdivided into seconds, minutes and hours. But just as surely, many things were lost. We experience the effects. Our distance from the natural rhythms of life keeps increasing. For instance, hardly anything is really seasonal anymore and I do not only refer to food, for instance, but also to how we organize our daily lives. And we also live at an increasing distance from the ancient but timeless understanding that each day, each moment is a gift from a gracious God.

It was the philosopher or teacher of wisdom who was called in Hebrew Qohelet (which we know as Ecclesiastes in Greek) who understood

time very differently from the way it is understood today. He wrote after the Babylonian exile, an experience that had taught the Hebrew people that life was not always going to be easy, and that time should not be a tyrant that demanded all our allegiance.

Qohelet writes about the seasons of life, each an undeniable part of human existence. His list rings so true to experience that we often read it, as written in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, at funerals. For it begins with that which is the most fundamentally true. One day, we are born into this world and then, just as inevitably, our life in this world comes to an end.

For Qohelet, things are what they are, set in motion by God. The universe unfolds according to its own inner logic and set of seasons. Why life is set up the way it is, God only knows, but Qohelet's advice is: "The best thing to do is to be happy and enjoy yourself for as long as you live." That is theological advice at its practical best.

Since there are so many things over which we have no control, and will never have control, it is wise to be happy and to enjoy oneself as long as we live.

The other thing he recommends, his other prescription for life other than not worrying about what you cannot control and enjoying the gifts God gives you, is that always and forever we are to stand in awe before God, from whose mighty acts nothing can be added or taken away. God is the creator of time, and there is a natural rhythm to reality—a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to get and a time to let go. It is our job to know what time it is.

Some hold on desperately to that which is coming to an end, or has actually come to an end... even life itself. We hold on because letting go is so much more difficult. But, there is a time to build up and a time to break down, a time to be born and a time to die.

And so it is that churches, local congregations, also have to reckon with time, recognizing whether it is time to carry on or time to "let go." Is it time to still try to build up a congregation, with God's help, or is it the

right time to decide that it is time to “move on” and “move out” a cherished church building, while thankful for the many years of faithful ministry and service? Is it time to mourn or is it time to dance, trusting that God will always be with us and lead us to new ventures of life and faith elsewhere?

Of course there is sadness that Bournville URC has decided to close as a congregation but there is a real sense that the right decision has been made, at the right time, and we can certainly rejoice that lasting friendships have been made in our life together as a “family” of faith (see the write-up elsewhere in this newsletter!) and that we may look forward to fresh possibilities as members in other faith communities.

And so we are getting ready for the closing service on the 9th of July, which I hope many members of the Cadbury pastorate churches as well as friends of Bournville URC can attend. In this service we will share memories and we will give God thanks for the life and work of the faith community which has served as witness of God’s presence in the community of Bournville for so many years. It has provided refuge, comfort, joy and challenges for many generations of God’s people worshipping and meeting in the church building. And we will rejoice that the building will still be used for worship and activities as Rowheath Pavilion has signed a lease for its use.

Yes, we will rejoice. For in every time and in every place, we are to be joyful and grateful people. Sr Joan Chittister in her book entitled *There Is a Season* writes, “Joy is the Spirit of God in time” It is the way we taste eternity within the boundaries of time.

With best wishes,

Leonora

The July/August issue will be available around 15 July. Contributions are requested! Send them to the minister, Leonora Jagessar, or Cheryl Thornett at Weoley Hill.

Prayer page

We remember:

- † Young people sitting exams, their parents and their teachers.
- † People going hungry because of drought and food shortages in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Somalia.
- † People living under war and violence, particularly Ukraine and Sudan,
- † Relief workers and peacekeepers, giving thanks for their faithful service.
- † People persecuted for their faith or for standing up to repressive governments.
- † People persecuted because of who they are, on whatever grounds.
- † Campaigners for justice, giving thanks for their faithful service.
- † Our family and friends who are unwell, recovering or waiting for treatment.
- † Caregivers and NHS staff, giving thanks for their faithful service.



Pastorate News

HELP WANTED

Help is urgently required to help run the Friday Day Centre at Weoley Castle Church. Can you help to organise activities, collect subs and buy prizes, serve drinks and interact with a great bunch of elderly ladies and gentlemen for a few hours each Friday from 9.30AM to 1.30PM. It would help if you already have a DBS check,

or would be willing to apply for one, and you will be given an excellent lunch for your trouble. Please see Lorraine if interested.

Weoley Castle news

Services: 11 AM on Sundays

June 4th : led by Chris Miles

June 11th : led by Leonora – with communion

June 18th : led by Ted

June 25th: led by Andy Vail

July 2nd : led by Ted

July 9th : Joint final service at Bournville **at 10.30**

The funeral of **Eileen Budd**, a versifier and member of our congregation until she became unwell will be on Friday 9 June at 11.30 AM at Lodge Hill, led by Leonora.

Mena Jones is taking longer than expected to heal after her operation, so the Mega Movers Adult Dance Club will not re-start for another month.

If there are any more **Christian Aid** envelopes to return, please put them in the Church letter box as soon as possible

Bournville news

How can you sum up a church? Is it the building? Is it the people?

During our day of reflection in March, the descriptor that came up most frequently was 'family' But what sort of family? One that's welcoming to strangers. I can testify to that, as I was one of the strangers who received a warm welcome and found a spiritual home at Bournville URC. Over the years we've done fun things together like quizzes, shared meals and cake. We've had pancake parties and celebrated our church anniversaries.

We're a family that worships and prays together, even during covid when we couldn't meet in person we took it in turns to contact each other to find out how we could continue to pray for each other's needs.

We've tried to support and care for one another. To quote the hymn Brother, sister let me serve you -

I will weep when you are weeping
When you laugh I'll laugh with you
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.

I'm quite sure that there's been a lot of laughter and tears over the years.

We've also been a family that has sought to reach out to the community around us. Something that has become more difficult as our numbers have dwindled), Yet each year, for the last few years we have visited every home on our part of the street, to ask what they would like us to pray for. A longer term means of outreach has been Pilots -the children's group. At its height there were 25 or 26 children coming regularly to that. There are many people around who have fond memories of either being in pilots themselves or sending their children to it. Who knows what seeds were sown?

Although our church is closing down and there is sadness because of that. There is also a sense that this is not the end, that somehow the story and the friendships will go on.

Louise Tye

Weoley Hill news

New! Tuesday Fellowship

We are all aware of the size of our congregations and have been thinking about the future of our churches. Knowing our raison d'être and having a strong core to our belief and fellowship is vital to attract others.

With this in mind, we have started Tuesday Fellowship; a time of discussion, Bible study and building-up our fellowship/friendships. This is open to the pastorate churches.

Currently, we are using the *Leading Your Church into Growth* discussion material to focus on what we do as a church and to initiate ideas on how to be relevant to others.

We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month at 37, Bryony Rd at 10.30 AM but the next meeting on **6th June will be at 2.30 PM** to discuss our worship. – You are welcome to come. It's not an exclusive club! We all have a part in the church's future.

June's retiring collection is for Debt Justice (formerly Jubilee Debt). The July retiring collection is for the Church Mission Society.



Coronation Lunch

What a lovely lunch we had on Sunday 6 March to celebrate the King's Coronation. As usual there was a great team effort to prepare the J.K. hall with flags, a display, a memorabilia table with reminders from the last coronation and, of course, a delicious and abundant arrangement of food.

Very many thanks to all those who donated sweet and savoury platters and also items for the 'free' raffle where, for once, we weren't asking for money but all those who came were given a ticket for the draw. Thirty-eight people attended, had a go at the Royal Wordsearch puzzle, and joined in the loyal toast to the King, and also a birthday toast to our guest of honour Michael Walpole, who was celebrating his 95th birthday!

Thanks to Ann and Bob who provided wine for the toasts; to Mahtab and her husband and son, Ali and Muhammet, who with Sue, Cheryl and myself helped with setting out the hall on Saturday afternoon; to John for bringing in some papers directly involved with Westminster Abbey in 1953 and others who brought in precious memorabilia; to Sue, again, and Linda for sterling work in the kitchen and to all those who helped clear everything away by 1.30 PM. Although not as grand as some we can at least say we did something to remember this special day.

Lorraine

(It really was a 'smashing' day so if anyone has a few spare wine goblets... plain, small, not special ones... we would appreciate them to replace a few that dropped from their box!)

And we celebrated a birthday, too!



Calendar for June 2023

Sunday	4	10.30 AM: Communion Service led by the minister.
Monday	5	2.30 PM: F&B meeting
Tuesday	6	2.30 PM: Tuesday Fellowship
Wednesday	7	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Sunday	11	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans.
Sunday	18	10.30 AM: Worship led by the Revd Ian Thornley. 12 NOON: Church meeting after worship.
Tuesday	20	10.30 PM: Tuesday Fellowship
Sunday	25	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan.
Thursday	29	10.30 AM: Manse Morning discussion
JULY		
Sunday	2	10.30 AM: Communion Service led by the minister.
Tuesday	4	10.30 PM: Tuesday Fellowship
Sunday	9	10.30 AM: Final worship at Bournville, led by Leonora and the Revd Steve Faber, Synod Moderator
Wednesday	12	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting?
Sunday	16	10.30 AM: Worship led by the minister
Tuesday	18	10.30 PM: Tuesday Fellowship
Wednesday	19	ca 3PM? TBC: Afternoon tea (bring & share) at the church, outdoors if weather permits. Friends and neighbours welcome.

July afternoon tea

We are making plans for an afternoon tea at the church on Wednesday 19 July, probably 3-5 PM, outdoors if the weather permits. Plans are at an early stage, but please mark this in your diary. Because not so many of us are up to baking large quantities these days, we are considering making a small charge and buying in, but of course the more home-baked items the better! Please see Lorraine or Cheryl with any suggestions.

The Pastorate at large is invited, of course, and perhaps this would be a good occasion for inviting friends, family or neighbours.

New! 1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship

Wednesdays 10-noon: Art Club

Fridays at 6.45: Community Choir

It's exam time!

What wild animal does well on exams without studying?

The cheetah.

What sort of exams do witches do?

Spelling tests

If I got 50p for every maths exam that I've failed, I'd have £2.40 now.

Teacher: "I hope I didn't see you looking at Tim's exam paper."

Pupil: "I hope you didn't see me either!"

I failed my calculus exam because I was seated between two identical twins:

I couldn't differentiate between them.

Teacher: "What nation do you distrust the most?"

Student: "Exami-nation"

Student: "I don't think I deserved zero on this exam."

Teacher: "I agree, but that's the lowest mark I could give you!"

My calculator stopped working half-way through my exam. I can't count on it anymore.

How do you do well in an exam on insect control?

Do a lot of swatting!

Student to teacher: "You forgot to put the mark for my answer inside a circle, like you usually do."

Teacher: "No: I forgot to put the circle around the mark!"

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.

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