

Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle Church News



October 2026

From Alan Cotgreave—

As I sit to write this I am reminded by a friend that today is the “equilux”, the day in which half the day is in daylight and the other half in darkness. I hadn’t realised until today that that is not quite the same as the equinox which is the exact astronomical moment when the centre of the sun crosses the equator and whilst the two are closely related they may not exactly coincide. (Or so my reading tells me before someone who is an expert tells me differently!)

The day in which we have as much daylight as nighttime may, then signal the response “It’s all downhill ‘til Christmas now then.” as the hours of darkness increase and the daylight decreases.

As I thought about this it occurred to me that here in Selly Oak there is another way to think about this. It seems to me that our area is coming back to life after the quiet and calm of the summer. A new bunch of students have arrived and others are returning bringing a new sense of vigour to our streets. It is certainly the case that the supermarket where I do the weekly shop was busier today than it has been recently and whilst that may be an irritant it is absolutely the case that many businesses in our area would not survive without the custom that students bring. I might have to do without my budget weekly shop if the students didn’t return!

The new beginning that this time of year represents is a welcome thought for all of us. It was a real treat a couple of weeks ago to celebrate the Feast of Creation in Christ by spending some time in reflection and prayer outside at Weoley Hill and to fully appreciate all that we have around us.

It has been a glorious summer and many of us have enjoyed the warmth and relaxation that has afforded us but we must all be mindful of the consequences these effects of climate change are having. Farmers are reporting poorer crops as harvests suffer from lack of water and of course we must continue to pray for those whose lives have been turned upside down by the wildfires not only on the continent but much closer to home too.

It feels appropriate then that we celebrate this feast of Creation in Christ. Andy Braunston the URC minister who coordinates the digital services explains “Grounded in an ancient, 5th Century, liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church, this is a day to praise God as creator, pondering the great mystery that everything was created in and through Christ. In response we are inspired to care for the created world in these times of ecological crises.”

For us then this festival begins on the first Sunday in September and culminates in our harvest worship, which for us at Weoley Hill is October 11th when we welcome representatives of our uniformed organisations into our worship – further signs of new life and new hope.

I’m going to try and ignore the Christmas paraphernalia that is already appearing in the shops for the moment and see this time post equinox as a new opportunity to give thanks and be grateful. The waiting for Christmas can wait!

*All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord
For all his love!*

Shalom,
Alan

Prayer page

We give thanks for

- † The glorious creation we are part of
- † Kindness shown by strangers
- † Our visiting preachers and the messages they bring us
- † The generosity we see within our Pastorate, in other churches and in the world at large
- † Church workers of all kinds, especially the people who take on the unseen, unrewarded jobs that keep our churches going
- † The fellowship and care for each other we share; the Spirit that gives it life

We pray for

- † The situations in Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, Ukraine and Sudan—and that somehow peace with justice will prevail
- † People trapped in violence not of their making
- † People afflicted by flood, fire, storm, drought, failing crops, lost employment
- † People who are ill, waiting for treatment, undergoing treatment or recovering
- † People who face the prospect of cold homes and expensive food this winter
- † Christians facing persecution for their faith in countries where our faith is unwelcome or illegal
- † Our pastorate as we prepare for a minister, physically, organisationally, and spiritually
- † Revd Sakala and her family as they wait on slow bureaucratic processes to be completed so they can finally join us

Pastorate News

The situation regarding Revd Sakala's visa is still much the same. A piece of good news is that a number of people within the Pastorate have offered enough money to cover the cost of flying from the Seychelles to Mauritius and back for the required, repeated biometrics.

Weoley Castle News

**Sunday morning services: 11 AM at Weoley Castle
Community Church**

Oct 4th Informal HARVEST Family service led by Sam, Susie & Jonah

Oct 11th Led by Barbara Calvert—including Communion

Oct 18th Informal Bible Study, with cuppa & biscuits—led by Ted

Oct 25th Led by Phil Seadon

Nov 1st Informal Family service led by Sam, Susie & Jonah

Nov 8th Remembrance Sunday service—led by Alison Geary—including Communion

Other Activities

In October we will be celebrating **Harvest**: please bring harvest offerings of non-perishable food for the Food Pantry to the service on October 4th. Also envelopes will be available for donations to “**Commitment for Life**”—the URC fund to help others to have a better harvest. This is particularly important when governments have been reducing international aid. Please return envelopes to the Church letter box by the end of the month.

We welcome Christine, Bertheli, Isaac & Andrew: the **“Growing Younger” team**, who are using the Church Lounge as their office and meeting place; they have made it their own by painting some walls and adding furniture. They will be improving activities for young people in the WM Synod area, and we look forward to seeing them involved in some activities here in the near future.



Last year's harvest at Weoley Castle

A Family Fun Day will take place in half term: Tuesday October 27th from 10 AM till 2 PM: craft activities and free light lunch for children and parents.

Weoley Hill News

The retiring collection for October is in aid of the Air Ambulance. Please let Lorraine have your suggestions for 2027 retiring collections.

Harvest in two parts

As we did last year, we will celebrate Harvest worship with the uniformed groups on Sunday 11 October, but our Harvest dinner will be a shared occasion with Birmingham Korean Church on Sunday 18 October, when they celebrate their anniversary as a church. They are planning to prepare most of the meal, but we are welcome to bring our contributions, especially puddings.

We will decorate for Harvest on Saturday 10-October ca. 2 PM.

Quiz Night

Our autumn quiz night is on Saturday 17 October, 6 for 6.30 PM. The £10 cost includes fish & chips plus extras and a donation of at least £2 to the B30 Food Bank. You can form a team (up to 6) in advance or just come along and join a table. As always there will be a raffle—see Lorraine if you have a prize to offer. Soft drinks, including tea and coffee are provided; bring your own if you prefer. If you haven't come before, it's great fun and lots of laughter. Names to Lorraine in advance, please, and pay in advance if you can.

Notices and beginning worship

A number of people have mentioned that the notices seem to take up a lot of time at the beginning of worship, so at the September church meeting we agreed that only 'headline' items will be read out and details and other items will be displayed on the overhead screen before worship, with a few printed copies available for those who need them. To make a clearer difference between the business of notices and our worship, the Bible will be opened after the notices, with the silence.



🎵 **Free concert in aid of Birmingham Hospice** 🎵

Saturday 24 October at 2.30 pm at Weoley Hill Church

You are invited to an informal afternoon concert to be given by Weoley Hill Community Choir on 24 October. The concert will feature some instrumental items as well as choral pieces performed by the choir—and as always an opportunity for some audience participation! There will be no admission charge, but a collection will be taken in aid of the wonderful work of the Birmingham Hospice (formerly Selly Oak and Erdington Hospices). After the concert light refreshments will be served, offering an opportunity for socialising between the choir and audience.

This will be the third concert we have given in aid of the Hospice, and we hope you will come along to enjoy some music making in support of this most worthwhile local cause.

Gordon Thornett



November 'Songs of Praise'

Alan will lead a 'Songs of Praise' service on Sunday 22 November, also Christ the King Sunday. Please let Alan know any favourite hymns you would like included and, perhaps, why it's a favourite. Could you share this in the service? Or write a couple of sentences for Alan to read out about it? We'll be publicising the service in the neighbourhood, hoping to reach out to people who don't regularly go to church.

Weoley Hill Calendar for October 2026

Friday	2	11 AM-1 PM: Knitting group Macmillan coffee morning
Sunday	4	10.30 AM: Worship & communion led by Revd David Tennant
Saturday	10	2 PM TBC: Decorate the church for Harvest
Sunday	11	10.30 AM: Harvest worship led by Ann
Wednesday	14	7.00 PM Elders' meeting
Saturday	17	6 for 6.30 PM: Quiz night with fish & chips
Sunday	18	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd Samuel Cyuma . Meal with Korean Church after worship
Monday	19	3 PM: F&B meeting (Budget) 2.30 PM: Community Choir concert in aid of Birmingham Hospices.
Sunday	25	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd Ian Ring .

Fridays, 6.45- 8 PM in term time: **Community Choir**. All welcome, see Alan or Gordon

A Walk through the Bible

This journey through and around the Old Testament was brought to us by the organisation Walk through the Bible in the person of presenter David Brown. These are normally a series of shorter Saturday sessions, and usually for a fee, but in this case Synod paid and it was an all-day affair. There were a few Weoley Hill people and others from across Birmingham.

The 'walk' looked at the map or architecture of the old Testament with a variety of mnemonics to remember the names and order of the books and with charts, timelines and maps to put things into context. The presentation was very good, considering the large amount of material covered. A session walking through the New Testament may be arranged at some time.

Cheryl Thornett

Eco Corner

From A Rocha UK's Easy Eco Tips 2026 Calendar

October

Greening your home this Autumn. Tackle climate change and reduce your heating bills by finding and reducing the draughts in your home. Find the gaps that let cold air in and warm air out (keyholes, letterboxes and gaps around windows, doors, loft hatches and floorboards for example). Do what you can to fix these gaps—there are lots of tutorials on how to do this online. It's also a good time to prepare for winter by putting radiator reflector foil or baking foil behind the radiator. This will reflect heat back into your room.

Thick underlay under your carpets particularly rooms downstairs over the foundation's air space.

Another hint I saw on television the other day was about window blinds. If you have a radiator under a window which has a Venetian-type blind turn the blind in such a way that doesn't let the heat escape to the window but reflects into the room.

Another way of keeping warm is not put on the heating until it is really cold and put on jumpers instead, using wraps and hot water bottles.

Ann

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

I hope I've found some good tree jokes *-but I'm stumped...*

1. How do trees get on the internet?
2. What did the tree do when the local bank closed?
3. How can you recognise a Dogwood tree?
4. What is a tree's least favourite month?
5. What did the tree wear to the party by the pool?
6. What kind of tree fits in your hand?
7. Why did the tree like to play chess?
8. Why do lots of trees go to sleep in Winter?
9. How do you fall out of a tree without getting hurt?
10. What gets many rings but never answers the phone?
11. What did the beaver say to the tree?
12. How does an evergreen tree get ready for a date?



1. They log on. 2. It started its own branch. 3. By its bark.
4. Sep-timber. 5. Swimming trunks. 6. A palm tree. 7.
Because it was a Chess-nut. 8. For rest. 9. Just be leafy! 10 A
tree trunk. 11. It's been great gnawing you. 12. It spruces up.

Weoley Castle & Weoley Hill Churches

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.

We have formed a new Pastorate with Cotteridge & Carrs Lane churches and have called a minister who will join us later this year.

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