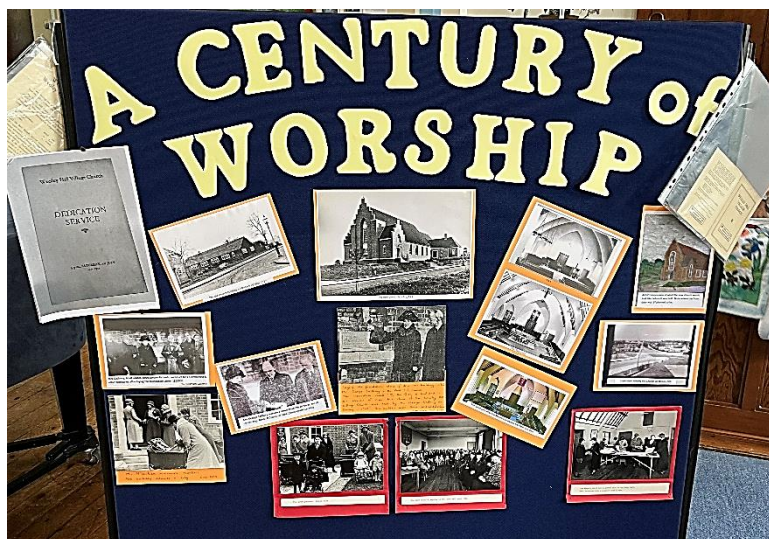


Cadbury Pastorate News

Bournville, Weoley Castle &
Weoley Hill Churches



September 2022

From the Minister's study—

Dear Friends,

As I met up with a friend recently, with her elderly Russian Terrier dog and my Border Terrier puppy meeting each other for the first time, she reminded me of the response of Billy Graham when asked “Do dogs go to heaven?” He had answered, “God will prepare everything for our perfect happiness in heaven, and if it takes my dog being there, I believe he’ll be there.” And while I said to my friend that I usually do not speculate about heaven, we did remember that Desmond Tutu had said, “I would refuse to go to a homophobic heaven. No, I would say, ‘Sorry, I would much rather go to the other place.’” So, we do not know whether Billy Graham and Desmon Tutu have met each other in heaven...nor whether Billy Graham has met up with his dog!

Whatever we think of heaven, or we do not think about it, and whether we have hope to be reunited with our beloved pets, or have no such expectation, we do see from the beginning of the Bible (Genesis) how important animals are to God. He blesses them, makes a covenant with them, rejoices and calls them good. And, from the beginning of creation, there has also been a special relationship between humankind and animals. One of the first tasks given to Adam (and Eve?) is to name the animals. Naming is an act of relationship that reflects God’s intent for humans to share a close bond with the other creatures.

And so, we have given our puppy a name, Valdo. He is named after Pierre Valdo who started the Waldenses movement in the 12th century. Valdo was a rich merchant from Lyons, who, deeply touched after reading the gospel, sold all his possessions in order to lead a simple life of poverty, as a preacher. He firmly believed in the authority of Scripture and had a translation of Biblical texts made into the vernacular. He had many followers, called Waldenses. Valdo did not manage to get permission from the pope for lay people to preach. The Waldenses were excommunicated, they scattered to various parts of Europe, they joined the Geneva Reformation and while persecuted for

many centuries, communities survived in Italy (the so-called Waldensian Valleys) and beyond. And while the Waldensian church membership today is small they are well respected in Italian society for their strong and active sense of social responsibility and involvement.

While our Valdo is not aware of his illustrious namesake, he certainly recognizes his name, even if he pretends not to hear, and his name means a lot to us as it identifies him as our beloved pet. And as all animals are God's creatures and pets our beloved companions, I want to share a couple of prayers as well as a quote to reflect upon. I do so in the context of the Season of Creation, from 1 September to 4 October each year, when churches are encouraged to have a focus on creation, with all the joys and responsibilities that being part of God's creation brings to us.

*God, our Creator, help us to love all creatures as kin,
all animals as partners on Earth, all birds as messengers of praise,
all minute beings as expressions of your mysterious design
and all frogs as voices of hope. Amen.*

Even as we celebrate our animal friends, our world suffers and groans. May our minds be reminded of peace by the animals of this world.

*May the work of peace be ever on our minds,
For even where there is hatred, cubs and kittens still play.
Even where there is injury, the eagles still soar.
Even where there is despair, the morning is greeted with song.
Even where there is darkness, burrows, dens and nests bring safe
sleep.
Even where there is sadness, the whales and dolphins leap up to the
sky.
May we seek not so much to dominate as to live in peace with all God's
creatures. Amen (Blessings of Animals Service compiled by Ana
Gobledale)*

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand of it.
Love every leaf, every ray of God's light.

Love the animals, love the plants, love everything.
If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.
Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day.
And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love. (Fyodor Dostoyevsky)

With all best wishes, *Leonora*



The theme for this year's Season of Creation is:

LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF CREATION



The burning bush is the Symbol for the Season of Creation 2022. Today, the prevalence of unnatural fires is a sign of the devastating effects that climate change has on the most vulnerable of our planet. Creation cries out as forests crackle, animals flee, and people are forced to migrate due to the fires of injustice.

On the contrary, the fire that called to Moses as he tended the flock on Mt. Horeb did not consume or destroy the bush. This flame of the Spirit revealed God's presence. This holy fire affirmed that God heard the cries of all who suffered and promised to be with us as we followed in faith to our deliverance from injustice.

In this Season of Creation, this symbol of God's Spirit calls us to listen to the voice of creation.



Friends Of KSN Gift Day Sunday 18 September

Synod Executive asks all churches to hold a Gift Day/special collection for the Friends of KSN Appeal as part of our support for the Diocese of Durgapur and the URC Jubilee, and for each church to send the money to the synod before the October Synod Meeting. There is a website <https://friendsofksn.org.uk> and the Moderator also suggests visiting the website at amzn.in/60Dmxy0 to buy items from the KSN Wish List, noting that 1 rupee was about 1 penny, as a separate way of helping.

Prayer page

We give thanks:

- ❖ For the return to more regular worship and activities.
- ❖ For the people who continue to turn out to make this possible.
- ❖ For young people moving up a step—starting school, moving on to secondary education, to training courses or university.
- ❖ For their teachers and the families who support them.
- ❖ For medical staff who have given so much extra time and effort over the past years.
- ❖ For the individuals and campaigners who shout on behalf of the voiceless and unheard.

We pray for:

- ❖ The people for whom lockdown has never really ended, and the people who are even more isolated now.
- ❖ For young people making new beginnings in education, training or work, and for their teachers and families.
- ❖ For people with health needs still unmet because of the pandemic, and for the medical staff struggling to catch up.
- ❖ For individuals and families facing difficulties of general inflation and higher prices of necessities, especially fuel, and for the people trying to find solutions
- ❖ For people in war-torn parts of the world, including Tigray and Ukraine.
- ❖ People suffering from climate change: severe heat, drought, rain and floods, winter cold.



Rights Removal Bill

A number of bills that have been and are in the process of being passed in our parliament limit human rights and freedoms.

The UK government is scrapping our Human Rights Act with the Rights Removal Bill, which is likely to get its 2nd reading in September. It gives more power to those in power, making it harder for ordinary people to challenge decisions. It will also make it harder to hold other countries to account when rights are more restricted in our own. (Amnesty has a petition against the bill at [amnesty.org.uk/actions/save-our-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/save-our-rights).)

The Policing Act and Nationality and Borders Act, which replaces the 1951 Refugee Convention, and the proposed Public Order Bill are other new bills curbing human rights. You may want to find out more and/or contact you MP about them.



Faith and frontiers: Christian responses to the migration crisis webinar

10 AM – 4 PM Saturday
17 September. This conference will explore the challenges to policy and practice that arise when people cross borders to seek sanctuary. What should be the Christian response to those who seek asylum and refuge in our country? What insights can be derived from the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer?

PROJECT BONHOEFFER

FAITH AND FRONTIERS

Christian Responses to the Migration Crisis

This conference will explore the challenges to policy and practice that arise when people cross borders to seek sanctuary. Specifically, it addresses the question of what the Christian response to those who seek care and shelter in our country should be, and asks what insights can be derived from the life and work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Saturday 17th September 2022
10:00-16:00
FREE ONLINE EVENT

Speakers include Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Bishop of Dover, Dr Ulrich Schmiedel of the University of Edinburgh, an authority on religion and migration, and Rev Dr Keith Clements, a noted Bonhoeffer scholar. We will also be joined by groups who are currently working on the ground to meet the needs of asylum seekers and refugees in Calais, Kent, and the North of England.

projectbonhoeffer.org.uk/events
contact@projectbonhoeffer.org.uk

Pastorate News

A letter from the National Finance Officers of the URC

To: All members and adherents of United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Dear Friends,

Is anyone back to normal?

After two years of pandemic and lockdown, and Covid still with us (thankfully, for most, in a much weaker form), we can now worship together in person and find fellowship again. But for most of us it is not simply a return to how it used to be; some people have not returned to church, some have died or become too frail, some churches have closed and others considering it.

Now we have significant European turmoil and its likely effect on fuel and food prices for us in the UK.

Thank God that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13 v.8). Whatever else changes, He is our rock, our cornerstone.

Financially, things were extremely tough for churches in 2021. Plate offerings had collapsed; some regular givers had to reduce or entirely stop giving to support God's work; and those churches which hire out their premises had seen income from that source disappear. Even those churches where the majority of the giving was by standing order or bank transfer (if you have not considered regularising your giving in this way, please do – it helps your treasurer significantly) may have seen a 20%+ drop in income.

If this had been replicated in giving to the M&M Fund in 2021, we might have been faced with a serious financial crisis last year.

But no, through the generosity of individuals, churches and Synods, we can report that income only fell by 4.4%. With a similar reduction in

expenditure the M&M Fund result was a deficit of only £80,000 (less than one-half of one percent of income), a deficit that can be comfortably covered by reserves.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2021 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

With churches and individuals under financial pressure, 2022 is not going to be an easy year either. The M&M Fund budgeted income (based on Synods' projections) will not be sufficient to cover expected costs and we are reconciled to dipping into our reserves more seriously as a result.

However, if we "ordinary Christians" are to fulfil the call of Jesus to be His witnesses in the world around us we need ministers and other workers "on the ground" and we need shared resources which are often best created centrally. That all comes from the M&M Fund.

Again, thank you all!

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

Ian Hardie (Treasurer)

Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)

A note from Ted Forgan: Another figure, not in the letter was the average cost of M&M per Church Member: £501 per year. Note that this is an average: some will be moved to donate much more to maintain the Church and its mission; some will be able to afford much less.

Weoley Hill

*Word has been received that **Séana Davies** died on Monday 15 August. We don't yet know what the funeral arrangements may be.*

Heritage Open Day

Once again, this year on September 10th, Weoley Hill church will be open to visitors as part of our centenary celebrations. Included will be:

- Our photographic display of 100 years of Weoley Hill church
- Textile art exhibits from the Westhill Trust
- Demonstrations for children of how the organ is played. – To fit in with this year's Heritage Day theme, Astounding Inventions
- 2.15PM Bournville Clarinet Choir recital (30 mins)

Refreshments

If you are able to make a cake or by helping on the day for an hour or 2, either to welcome visitors in the sanctuary or by serving refreshments, please let Sue know. Thanks to those who have already volunteered.

Anniversary



We had a wonderful time on Sunday 3 July. All the comments that have been made have been very positive.

Thanks to all who put an uplifting service together and took part. Leonora, Alan, Gordon and the enhanced choir, Ann, Cheryl, John & Norma and Juliet. Special thanks are due to Gordon who composed and arranged an anthem especially for the event. Thank you to Sue for arranging all the photo displays which were interesting and artistic. Thanks to Ann for the admin and sending out the invitations. (Apologies for thanking myself but elders did thank me as well!)

No event at Weoley Hill would be right without food so thank you to the catering team, Nancy, who decorated the cakes, Lorraine, who organised things, Ina, who ordered and collected vital parts of the meal, Linda, who got on with things in the background as did Cheryl and Gill. But not forgetting the members of the congregation for their contributions of food because in true Weoley Hill fashion there was plenty left over, and we still managed to feed about 75 people! Thank you also for those people who came on Saturday to set up tables and make the place clean and tidy and those who cleared away after the event. It was a good team effort.



We have had several good wishes from those who could not come, particularly Pat & David Weaver, Hilary Littlejohns, Tom & Marieke Arthur and George & Nnenna Kalu to name a few.

I am hoping to put together a booklet or folder of such good wishes and memories along with photos taken on the day. If you have any particular memories of your connection with Weoley Hill please let Ann have them, either using the card provided on the day, letter or email. The photos taken on the day have been posted on Facebook and hopefully will go onto our website.

I sent a short article to *Reform* about our anniversary. It was edited quite a bit and is not quite accurate but at least it got a mention for all readers to see in the digest section.

Thank you to everyone who came and who helped to make the day a success.

Ann Evans

100th ANNIVERSARY BANNER

We are still missing a few signatures from the banner by the main entrance. We hope to complete this, with the backing material added, by the end of this month. If you have not received a yellow circle of material on which to write your name, in whatever format you like, which can then be embroidered and later attached please contact Lorraine or Nancy. We don't want to miss anyone!
Lorraine



Our Support for Christians in Need

We supported Barnabas Aid through one of our retiring collections this year. The following relates a little of Barnabas's recent support given to Christians and their communities, often delivered by local Christian groups and churches.

200 South Sudanese families living in a refugee camp in northern Uganda, after fleeing conflict and violence, were given seeds, tools and training to become self-sufficient in growing vegetable crops.

Barnabas funded security measures around a church in a strongly Islamic part of Kyrgyzstan after attacks on the building, the pastor as well as children.

Since 2017, 1475 Pakistani brick kiln worker families have been freed from debt and bonded labour. Unpaid loans by workers are passed onto the next generation with interest so the families, including young children, are trapped into servitude making bricks. Once freed from debt, there is the possibility of the children going to school.

Church volunteers in Burkina Faso search in the bush for communities that have fled attacks on their families and villages and have remained hidden for months. They are taken to safety and provided with food aid from Barnabas. One grandmother now is trying to earn some money by collecting old plastic bags to sell. Another, after the distribution of Bibles in the local language, said that she sleeps with it under her pillow as she had never received such a present before.

Similar rescue missions continue in the forests of Myanmar as minority Christian groups are targeted to be eliminated. In Chin State, for example, 22 churches and 350 homes were destroyed by the military last autumn. Barnabas helped 5,204 such families in the year to March 2022.

(Information from Barnabas Aid magazine July/August 2022.)



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

Weoley Hill Calendar for September 2022

Saturday	3	10.30 AM: Gardening group
Sunday	4	10.30 AM: Communion Service led by the minister.
Saturday	10	10-4 Heritage open day
Sunday	11	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan Cotgreave.
Wednesday	14	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting
Sunday	18	10.30 AM: Worship led by the minister.
		12 NOON: Church meeting
		<i>The Gift day for the Indian hospital (Khristiya Seva Niketan Hospital).</i>
Saturday	24	2.30 PM: Walking group. Meet at church.
Sunday	25	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans.

Wednesdays 10 AM-12: Art Club. £1

Fridays 6.45 PM: Community Choir

*Septembers retiring collections are for **Smile Train**.*



Bournville

Preaching schedule:

4 Sept Leonora (3 PM)

11 Sept Elders

18 Sept Stuart

25 Sept Nick Stanyon

The Bournville **Elders meeting** is on 6 of September at 10.30AM.

And **Ruth Eaton** is still recovering from her hip operation and we continue to pray for her full recovery and her return in our midst in church.

Weoley Castle

After various short, long or no breaks, things are starting up again in September:

Day Centres and Lunch Clubs: Monday 5th

Parent & Toddler: Wednesday 7th

Incredible Surplus: Friday 9th

Knit & Natter has continued all through on Tuesday evenings

Our **Services** will revert to weekly at 11 AM from Sunday 11th:

11th: led by Leonora, with Communion

18th: led by Chris Miles

25th: led by Peter Cruchley—last chance before he relocates to Geneva

We hear that the *free Tuesday lunches organised at St Gabriel's* have been very popular; a Guardian reporter came to see them the other week.

There will be a meeting at 2 PM on the 8th at the Encounter Church on the Square to see how various Churches and other organisations can together provide a “Warm Space” somewhere in Weoley Castle every day during the Winter, to help people suffering from high fuel prices.

The school uniform and other clothes provision, run by Debbie at Incredible Surplus on Friday mornings has become very popular and has received many donations to their stock. All the uniforms have a paper label pinned to them: that has the age written on, not the price, which is free!



Limericks

An indolent vicar of Bray
His roses allowed to decay.
His wife more alert
Bought a powerful squirt
And said to her spouse 'Let us spray.'

A tutor who tooted a flute
Tried to teach two young tooters to toot.
Said the two to the tutor,
"Is it harder to toot, or...
To tutor two tooters to toot?"

There was a young lady of Riga
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside,
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

There once was a man from Nantucket
Who kept all his cash in a bucket.
His daughter, named Nan
Ran away with a man
And as for the bucket, Nantucket.

A mouse in her room woke Miss Dowd.
She was frightened: its squeaking was loud.
She made up a plan,
The vermin to ban:
And sat up in bed and meowed.

God's plan made a hopeful beginning.
But man spoiled his chances by sinning.
We trust that the story
Will end in God's glory,
But now is the other side winning?

The Cadbury Pastorate

Bournville URC, Beaumont Rd: Worship at 3 PM on 1st
Sundays and 10.30 AM on other Sundays.

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

WEOLEY HILL CHURCH Office: 244 6711

Secretary: Ann Evans 628 4558

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