

# Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle Church News



*September 2024*

## From the Editor—

How long have I been doing this? The newsletter, that is. Most of the time since Tom Arthur's stroke in 1997, aside from a break of a few years when Pat Weaver took over. The newsletter hasn't always been the same—I remember when it was a few typed and duplicated pages from John Geyer, with rather formal minutes from church groups. It changed to include more material from more sources during Tom Arthur's time, was added to the church website sometime during George's tenure, and changed to a booklet format 10 years ago. ***[Note: if you find the booklet print too small to read comfortably, please let Ted or me know, and we will provide copies with larger print.]***

The loss of church members and lockdown led to first to a Weoley Hill/Weoley Castle newsletter, then to a Cadbury Pastorate version—and now we're back to Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle. (You'll have to ask Ted Forgan for the history of the Weoley Castle newsletter.) Just one example of continuity and change in our church life—what next? Ted and I will keep the current newsletter going for the time being, at least until we know what is next for our churches.

And what **is** next for our churches? The actual make-up and procedures of the new Central & Southwest Birmingham Pastorate are still being decided. The next meeting of the Vacancy Call Group, which has the responsibility of working out the details for approval by the congregations concerned, is Tuesday 24 September. Please pray for everyone concerned and that the good will shown at our first meeting continues. And please pray that the eventual calling of a minister leads to continuation of the Lord's work with the renewal and change needed.

There are issues to resolve and questions yet to be answered: What about the Weoley Castle Manse? Where will a new Pastorate Manse be located? How will the preaching rota work? How will time, responsibilities and work be divided for all of us, not just the minister?

Change isn't always comfortable, and it can take a while to find the right balance of change and continuity. While one temptation is to chase after the next new shiny thing, another is to retreat into idealised memories of how things used to be, as though they were divinely ordained. (My late grandfather, who lived through poverty, war and very hard times, always said 'The best thing about the good old days is a poor memory'.) Sure, there were good things about life when I was a child, or when X was minister, or... but there was also plenty that very much needed to change.

In times of change like these—and when hasn't it been a time of change?—we see people who resort to violence to demand change and people who resort to violence to oppose it. We may sympathise with one cause or another; we may debate the right way to respond to violent attack; we surely sympathise with and pray for the victims of violence. But Jesus taught us that everyone is our neighbour, no matter what their ethnicity, background, religion, way of life, no matter what.

As Christians, we pray for God's guidance and for his will to be done, change or no change, even if it is personally uncomfortable or inconvenient. We pray that we can hold to what is true, but be agents for the change that God wills. As the prayer goes, *God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can\*, and the wisdom to know the difference.* \*Must, in some older versions. Or we might prefer the activist version *If I'm not home accepting what I can't change, I'm probably out changing what I can't accept.*

At this time of change for our churches, I hope we can reflect and honestly pray *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* And be ready to be the agents of his will, through his grace, in change and continuity.

*Cheryl*

## Prayer page

*We give thanks for:*

for former pastors, officers and members who contributed so much to our churches.

the people who turned out to demonstrate peacefully against racism and hatred.

the love of God that welcomes the unlovely, pardons the unworthy, knows no limit, inspires our worship; the love we share in our caring, because he first loved us.

*We pray for:*

children & teachers going back to school.

our volunteers as they take up activities on our behalf again.

people worried about keeping warm this winter.

solutions to the threat of measles and other diseases this winter.

the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, and other trouble spots in the world; for the victims of violence.

the Vacancy Call Group of the new Pastorate and for all the churches involved: Carrs Lane, Cotteridge, Weoley Castle and Weoley Hill.

the person God is preparing for our ministry.

# Pastorate News

## Weoley Hill News

September's **retiring collection** is for the Peace Pledge Union. The Peace Pledge Union is a pacifist campaigning organisation which has been promoting pacifism since 1934, in alliance with other pacifists around the world. They supply the white Remembrance poppies.

**The knitting group** are having their annual Macmillan coffee morning on 27 September at 11 AM. Everyone is invited to their lively and delicious occasion!

**The Community Choir** resumes meeting at 6.45 PM, Friday 13 September, definitely a lucky day this time. The only requirement is that you enjoy singing. (There is a small donation to cover costs.)

**The Tuesday Fellowship** will resume on Tuesday 17 September and will look at the series *Service: ministry with hearts and hands*. Please talk to Sue Beeby if you would like to join this study.

*See Lorraine DaCosta if you are interested in the Art Group.*

## Reform magazine

There have been some changes to our denominational magazine. It now must be self-funding and not subsidised by the URC.

Reform is a fresh and challenging magazine exploring theology, ethics, personal spirituality and Christian perspectives on social and current affairs.

The magazine is for thinking people who enjoy reading about Christian ideas from a range of viewpoints. It features writing

from journalists, academics, politicians, campaigners, scientists and religious leaders.

As well as high-profile interviews, in-depth features and book, music and film reviews, Reform carries letters and a regular light-hearted column.

The magazine is published 10 times a year by the United Reformed Church but has readers from all Christian denominations, as well as readers from other faiths and from no faith tradition.

The current edition contains an article about the Church Life Review which is a group(s) looking at the future life of the denomination. An interesting read. There is more background information on the URC website. Church Life Review—United Reformed Church

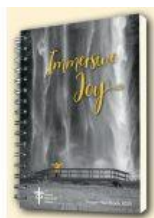
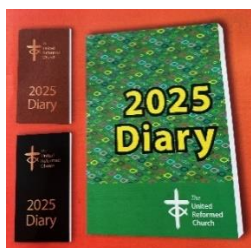
We have been sent several complimentary copies which are available at the back of the church for you to take home and read. Consider subscribing at a cost of £29.50 for 10 copies throughout the year.

Let Ann know if you are interested.

Ann Evans

Editor's note—there are some very thought-provoking articles in the September edition. I recommend it. C.

## Prayer Handbooks and diaries for 2025



I am taking orders for the prayer handbook for 2025 at £6.49. Also orders for the 2025 diary, either brown or black standard size at £9.00 each or an A5 desk version at £11.

If I have your orders by the end of the month I will be able to pick them up at the Synod meeting on 19 October in Sutton Coldfield.

Please let me know if you wish to have either a prayer handbook or diary.

Thank you

Ann

Weoley Hill Calendar for September 2024		
Sunday	1	10.30 AM: Worship & communion led by Revd Ian Ring.
Sunday	8	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann.
Sunday	15	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd David Tennant. 12 noon: Church meeting
Tuesday	17	10.30 AM: Tuesday Fellowship
Wednesday	18	7.30 PM: Elders' meeting, <i>change of date</i>
Sunday	22	10.30 AM: Worship led by Annette Sampson.
Tuesday	24	7.30 PM: Pastorate planning meeting
Friday	27	11 AM: Knitting group annual Macmillan coffee morning
Sunday	29	11 AM: Pastorate Worship at Weoley Castle.

## Weoley Castle News

### Services: 11 AM on Sundays

Sept 1<sup>st</sup>: led by Ted

Sept 8<sup>th</sup>: Bible study, led by Carol

Sept 15<sup>th</sup>: led by Frank Challenor; including Communion

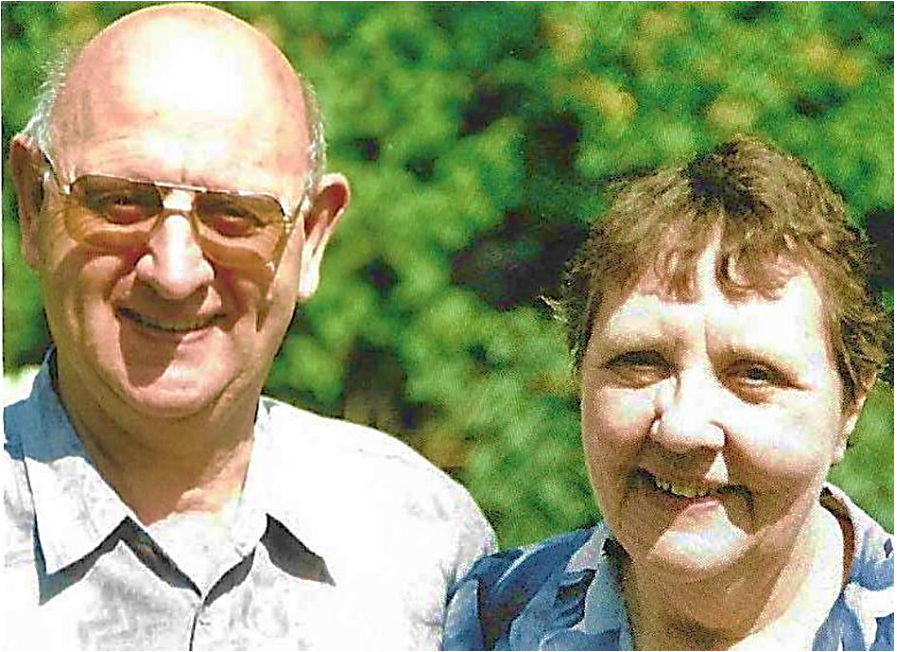
Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>: led by Barbara Calvert

Sept 29<sup>th</sup>: led by Phil Seadon. At WCCC; joined by Weoley Hill on this 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month.

Based on the response to our August Bible study meetings, we have decided to aim to have “Sword Practice” about once a month instead of our usual service.

- Thanks to **Madge Finch** for all the help she has given to the Day Centres and for coffee duty on Sunday mornings until very recently. She has had a couple of falls, and has moved just after her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday to live in the Lawns Care Home, Alvechurch.
- Bill & Chris Hopkins have welcomed Esme, their latest foster child. We think of Hephzibah, beginning her first teaching job in the UK. Chris Miles is continuing treatment and was able to attend Church recently. Keith Twamley continues to recover after the operation on his back. In July, Sam & Katie Poursain welcomed Orin, their third child: another boy!
- Debbie Flynn will be restarting the clothes and uniform exchange on Friday mornings on Sept 6<sup>th</sup>, along with others continuing Warm Welcome, and Incredible Surplus food pantry. There are vacancies in the Monday & Friday Day Centres: contact Chris Hopkins on 0121 426 1227 for more information.





- Kathleen Cruchley died in July, and in August, Peter C. came from Geneva to lead her funeral service. Despite the fact that Ernest & Kathleen left Weoley Castle on Ernest's "retirement" in the mid 1990's, our sanctuary was packed for the service, which pays tribute to the love and affection in which both were held.
- Chris Basterfield has just become a godparent to the baby daughter of old friend Stacey.

## Eco Tips

*Please share your tips!*

- Blister packs can be recycled at the Northfield Super Drug.

A lot of us are already trying to avoid single-use plastics and get as much use out of things as possible before recycling or disposing of them, have turned our thermostats down, and more. And perhaps we drive less, walk more and take public transport when practical.

There's always something more we can do as individuals. But let's not forget to ask the supermarkets to reduce packaging, to buy locally as much as possible, and to promote affordable food that is not highly processed. If enough people ask, they will listen. And we can write to our MPs and local councillors as well. Individual action *is valuable*, but only goes so far. World-wide action by big business and governments is needed as well.

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

# Back to School!

1. What did the buffalo say when dropping off his kid on the first day of school?
2. Why didn't the dinosaur want to go back to school?
3. Why didn't the elephant want to use the computer at school?
4. Why did the jelly bean want to go to school?
5. What is a witch's favourite subject at school?
6. What is a snake's favourite subject?
7. Why did the kid eat her homework?
8. Why did the dog get detention?
9. Why did the bored student throw her watch out of the school window?
10. Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?
11. What's the difference between a teacher and a steam train?
12. What do you do if a teacher rolls their eyes at you?

1. Bye, Son!
2. She was a nervous rex.
3. He was afraid of the mouse.
4. To become a Smartei!
5. Spelling!
6. Hisssssstory.
7. Because his teacher said it was a piece of cake.
8. It forgot to eat its homework.
9. She wanted to see time fly.
10. Eventually, he woke up.
11. One says: "Spit out that chewing gum!"; the other says: "Chew, Chew!"
12. Pick them up and roll them back!

# 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.*

**THE PASTORATE IS CURRENTLY IN VACANCY**

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