

Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle Church News



July/August 2025

From the Editor—

To everything there is a season....

Summer season, exam season, silly season, holiday season, hay fever season, fire season, festival season, drought season, barbecue season, traffic jam season....

Life is full of ups and downs, we say; nearly everything, however good, has a negative side. Summer brings longer days and the hope of sunshine and warm weather but also brings grass and weed pollen and the risk of sunburn and heatstroke. Young people may look forward to the end of exams and the beginning of their holiday, but there is still the stress of waiting for results and the possibility of disappointment and failure as well as success. A wonderful family gathering may entail difficult travel or spread illness.

There is much in the world worthy of rejoicing—more children go to school than ever before, many once-deadly diseases can be prevented, cured or at least managed, we can talk to family and friends around the world in a way unimaginable in the days of the expensive, crackly long-distance phone call at Christmas. (I nominate clean water from a domestic tap as a top benefit of civilisation—praise and thanks to the organisations working to provide it where it is still needed and shame on companies that value bonuses and share prices over clean water.)

There is much in the world to weep over, on global and personal levels. Christians and others protest government cutbacks to food and health provision for the poorest parts of the world—and protest hunger and poor health in this country. We worry about climate change and the possibility another pandemic, of conflict in Ukraine and the Middle East escalating into global warfare....

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, Romans 12:1 tells us; not easy especially when we are called on to do both at once. How do you rejoice with and praise the A* student without making the D or F student feel even worse? Or support the one who didn't get their

required grades without neglecting the one who did? Do you keep quiet about your successful treatment because others are facing yet more treatments or have no more available, or keep quiet about your unsuccessful treatment because you don't want to discourage others or diminish their rejoicing?

Beyond the personal level, this also applies to a number of current issues, including the assisted dying legislation, expressing support for Gazans without antisemitism, and many difficult social issues.

And what about anger? Is anger ever justified or are there things that should make us angry? This is difficult for those of us told as children not only to suppress all anger, but that we must not even experience it.

Empathy is the word we are looking for, the empathy revealed above all in Jesus, who wept with Martha at her brother's tomb. The empathy that felt with the outcast, the poor, the sick, the foreigner, the sinner. And yes, anger on behalf of worshippers ripped off in the very temple by money changers and sellers of sacrificial animals, an offense against the people as well as against God.

Not, of course, anger because someone jumped the queue or left their donkey in 'his' spot or didn't move out of his way fast enough, but anger at injustice to others and disrespect towards the House of God. Give us the grace to know the difference in our own lives.

What really powers empathy and makes it effective is love. Love of God, love of neighbour as ourselves; treating them the way we would like to be treated, not doing to others what we wouldn't like done to us. This won't answer the question of how to rejoice with one and weep with another at the same time, but it will open us to the grace to express empathy for one person or group in ways that isn't hurtful to someone else.

Cheryl

Prayer page

Teach us, Lord, by your example and through your Spirit to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep, and to be usefully angered for others, in true empathy and love for all our neighbours in this world and so share your great love with them.

We pray for

A just and lasting end to the killing in Gaza and peace for Christian, Jew and Muslim.

A just and lasting end to the war in Ukraine.

A resolution to tensions with Iran.

Wisdom for legislators considering assisted dying.

Greater compassion in society at large for people 'not like us', whether old, young, ill, disabled, the stranger in our gates, the widow, the orphan, non-believers and followers of other faiths.

Young people and their families facing big changes in their lives as they move on to new stages of school or get exam results or begin the challenges of adult life.

We thank you for

The loving example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peacemakers, the givers of justice, the diggers of wells, the planters of trees, the clinic workers, the food bankers, the protectors, the campaigners for the world and for other people.

The people who tend and care with love and empathy, whatever the setting.

A beautiful world with enough for all, if by Your grace, we are willing to share fairly and to protect its resources.

Pastorate News

Pastorate Service

We held our first pastorate service on the afternoon of 8 June, Pentecost Sunday at Weoley Castle Community Church. It was led by Revd Melanie Smith, our interim moderator. It consisted of 2 Bible readings read dramatically by one or two of the churches and each church provided prayers. It was also intergenerational, so the young people present were involved in some of the activities such as blowing up special balloons which were let go to fly wherever they wished representing the Holy Spirit.

Towards the end of the service Melanie presented the pastorate with a 4-piece jigsaw with the name of each church on each piece. The named piece was then given to each church so they can bring the pieces together whenever we worship together.



It was wonderful act of worship with all churches involved and I hope it is a sign of things to come that we can work together under a minister in due time.

We hope to hold such services twice a year.

At the moment there is no news of a minister for the Pastorate.

Ann Evans

Weoley Castle News

Services: 11 AM on Sundays

July 6th: Bible Study—led by Carol

July 13th: led by Frank Challenor – including communion

July 20th: led by Ted

July 27th: led by Joe Bevan

Due to many people being away during August, we shall have small café-style Bible Studies following the lectionary for the first four Sundays:

August 3rd: Bible Study—led by Ted

August 10th: Bible Study—led by Sam

August 17th: Bible Study—led by Jonah

August 24th: Bible Study—led by Carol

August 31st : Joint service with WH- at WCCC—led by Brian Brown

Sunday afternoons at 4 PM. These continue every Sunday in July until July 20th (detailed programme in last month's Newsletter) then pause during the Summer and restart in September.

News of the Fellowship

Keith Twamley is now happily receiving care at home.

Christine Hopkins has been knocked sideways by a virus that has left her exhausted and unfortunately we have had to cancel a few Day Centre/Lunch Club sessions. She says she is on the mend and will be back in harness soon.

We hear that one of our regular visiting preachers, the retired prison chaplain **Phil Turley**, has developed some health issues that need sorting out, so may not be able to come again for a while.

JoJo, a regular at Warm Welcome, recently fell and broke a bone in her arm. She keeps smiling despite being in a lot of pain.

Please remember all these people and their families in your prayers.

Gail Dean is an important person at WCCC; she keeps the building clean and tidy. Her daughter Claire's wedding was on Saturday June 28th. See the picture of Gail and Claire posing in their glad rags.

We much appreciate how **Yvonne & Oleg's Elite Dance academy** helps young people develop skills and self-confidence. One of their students is pictured in the advertisement for their classes at WCCC, which are on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.



Elite Academy Of Dance And Gymnastics

Build confidence,
Become part of a
team, Learn new
skills

07787062248

Weoley Castle
Community Church
URC, 115 Quarry Rd,
Birmingham B29 5LE



Facebook page : Elite Academy Of Dance and Gymnastics
<https://www.eliteacademyofdanceandgymnastics.com>

Weoley Hill News

Linda Bradley

Linda died as a result of cancer on Saturday 21 June, leaving her daughters Nicola and Helen and their families. Please remember them in your prayers. The funeral will be at Waseley Hill Crematorium at 11.00 AM, with refreshments afterwards at the church at 12.15/12.30 PM.

July retiring collection for St Basil's Homeless Centre

St Basils is one of the largest organisations working with young people who are homeless or at risk in the country and is the largest regional organisation of its kind. Their programme includes prevention, accommodation, employability, and a youth voice.

“We want young people to feel cared about, to have trusted support, somewhere safe, suitable and affordable to live that enables them to learn and work.”

August retiring collection for Tear Fund.

Tearfund is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. We tackle poverty through sustainable development, responding to disasters, and challenging injustice. We believe an end to extreme poverty is possible.

Thousands of people needlessly suffer and die every day because of poverty. But that's not God's plan for the world. And God is calling you—all of us—to reach out to people in greatest need. We partner with local churches and organisations who have a crucial role to play in the places worst affected by poverty.

Garden party 23 July, 3-5 PM

Our summer garden party is at Nancy's as usual—please invite a friend or neighbour to join us. Contributions of garden tea food are very welcome, but of course not all of us can still cook or shop for a crowd. Come anyway! If you can contribute a bit extra, contribute towards the cost or help with the preparations, see Nancy.

Invitation to our church family:

Cheryl and Gordon will celebrate 50 years of marriage on 26 August with an informal buffet lunch in the John Kydd Hall between NOON and 3 PM. We hope you will join us.

Weoley Hill Calendar for July & August 2025

Sunday	6	10.30 AM: Worship & communion led by Revd David Tennant.
Sunday	13	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd Elaine Hutchinson.
Wednesday	16	11.00 AM Linda Bradley's funeral, Waseley Crematorium. 12.15/12.30 PM Refreshments at the church 7.30 PM: Elders (change of date)
Sunday	20	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan Cotgreave.
Wednesday	23	3-5 Garden party--bring a friend or neighbour
Saturday	26	12 noon <i>Golden anniversary, Cheryl & Gordon. Informal buffet. Church family welcome--numbers needed, please.</i>
Sunday	27	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans.
Monday	28	3 PM: F&B
August		
Sunday	3	10.30 AM: Worship & communion led by Ann.
Sunday	10	10.30 AM: Worship led by Revd Elaine Hutchinson.
Sunday	17	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan Cotgreave.
Sunday	24	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann Evans.
Sunday	31	11 AM: Joint worship at Weoley Castle.

Summer schedules:

The Tuesday Fellowship will meet on an ad hoc basis over July & August. Please see Ann for meeting times and places.

The Community Choir will meet until 18 July and then will resume in September.



Synod Residential Gathering 'Growing the Church'

24 hours of learning, worship, encouragement and fellowship

An Invitation to all
(not just Synod Representatives!)

**Friday 17 and Saturday 18 October 2025 Ask your
Church Secretary for more details.**

(Please book via the Synod Office on 0121 783 1177)

The October Synod meeting

The Synod residential meeting Fri 17- Sat 18 Oct 25 will be at Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel by the NEC (B40 1PP). It is open to all church members, and it is possible to attend without staying the night. The theme is 'Growing the Church' with learning, worship, encouragement and fellowship. The cost for 24 hours is £195 for a single room or £30 for the day visit. It is hoped that churches will contribute £100 per person attending overnight. Cost will not be a barrier. Booking is required by 31 August. Ann has a copy of the booking form or it can be obtained by email so it can be completed online.

Please contact Ann if you are interested in attending either overnight or just for the day on Saturday.

There will not be a business meeting during the 24 hours as that will be held by Zoom later in the week.

John as synod Representative and I as Church Secretary will attend.

Please try to attend if you can as it is chance to find out more about our wider church and meet people from other churches in the Synod.

Ann Evans

SOME ANCIENT ROMAN JOKES

(Recognising that July and August are named after Roman Caesars)

Who refereed sporting events in Ancient Rome?

The Roman Umpire.

Why didn't Romans use maps?

All roads led to Rome.

Why were most Roman roads straight?

They were designed by their rulers.

What's the problem with Roman Lego?

You can't build it in a day.

I heard people are trying to ban Roman numerals.

Not on my watch!

Why did the Romans find algebra easy?

Because X was always 10.

What was the Romans' greatest achievement?

Learning Latin.

Four Norse gods, one Roman God, and two celestial bodies walk into a bar.

The bartender says: "Oh no: this is going to be a week joke!"



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

Weoley Castle & Weoley Hill Churches

Weoley Castle Community Church, Quarry Rd:

Worship Sundays at 11 AM.

Sunday afternoons at 4 PM: *Informal, family-friendly services with food*

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 are forming a new Pastorate with Cotteridge & Carrs Lane churches and hope to call a minister to the Pastorate soon

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