

Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle Church News



Image from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

*The URC Celebrates
Creation in Christ*

September 2026

From Ann Evans—

Dear Friends

We are now reawakening to the academic year and starting up groups again after the summer break when many have ceased. Some of us have managed to get away on holiday as well. Hopefully we are all refreshed for a new start of things ahead. As I write (Wednesday 19th August morning) there is still no news of Naomi's resit and her application for a work visa. Great news came about 6.00 PM on the same day that Naomi has passed her resit! She had to do all the parts not just the part she failed. This is excellent news. We wait for news of the next stage and continue to pray for her and the family. Exciting times ahead!

This year at General Assembly of the URC commended the observance of the new *Feast of Creation in Christ* to be observed on the first Sunday of September each year and to create and curate resources. I'm pleased to say that there is a suite of resources on the [Worship Notes](#) page – the normal *Notes* we produce and links to ecumenical resources too. We look forward to Alan's service about this on 6 September.

Grounded in an ancient, 5th Century, liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church, the Feast of Creation in Christ is a day to praise God as creator and ponder 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. In 1989 the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Dimitrios I, invited churches around the world to join in prayer for Creation – many churches responded leading to this new Feast being adopted. The movement to establish the Feast is supported by WCC (World Council of Churches), WCRC (World Communion of Reformed Churches) as well as the Lutheran World Federation, the World Methodist Council and the Anglican Communion. New readings for the Lectionary have been offered too.

We're not often used to hearing the term "Feast" in the URC in relation to church events. Yet the major celebrations of the Church's year –

Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Trinity are all “feasts”. We probably only feast now at Christmas within our families or for us as a church we share the Easter Breakfast feast but there’s no reason why we can’t have a feast on the other celebrations too. For early September crisp varieties of apples and pears have started to appear, blackberries and autumn raspberries are at their peak, and plums, damsons and figs are abundant. Cakes, crumbles, homemade ice cream and yoghurt could all be made with these ingredients. Maybe too late for this year to have a shared meal but maybe next year.

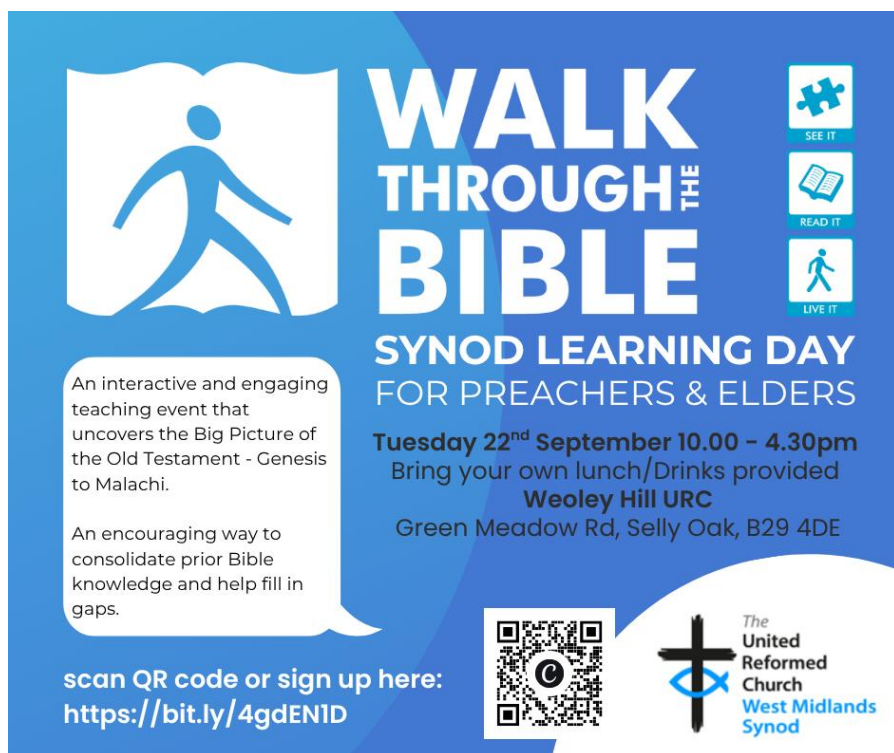
Many churches celebrate harvest during September, but we have moved ours to October to give our uniformed organisations more time to prepare items to be included and worship with us. This a service when we focus on God’s creation in some way. However, God’s creation is wider and bigger than just this so celebrating this on 6 September gives us chance to think about the whole of creation. Weather permitting there may be an opportunity to take part of our worship outside to sit or stand in silent prayer and contemplate the universe around us. If not that week maybe the following week. Some of us were able on 12 August to witness the solar eclipse which is a rare event and part of creation.

Also, we can have time to think about what humanity is doing to our planet regarding climate change and what we as individuals can do to lessen the impact of it. To quote from Creation Sunday – an introduction (for Free Church traditions). I also quoted from this in my third paragraph.

The very first command in scripture includes caring for the world and its creatures. In Genesis 1:28 God blesses humanity, encourages us to be fruitful, and to ‘Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’ In the context of God creating and declaring all creation ‘very good’ (v.31) and calling Adam to ‘work’ and ‘take care of’ the garden (2:15), this ‘rule’ should not be seen as self-serving domination but in line with the Old Testament vision of ‘shepherd Kings’. We are to serve and preserve

creation, reflecting God's desire for his world to flourish and thrive. The Genesis command continues with God's call on Noah to include creatures of every kind in the ark (Gen 7:2-3), with injunctions to treat animals with respect (Ex 20:10, 23:12; Prov 12:10), with the Psalms recording creation's praise of its Creator (19, 104, 148), and with Jesus teaching and modelling an ethic of listening to and caring for the earth and our human neighbours (Matt 6:25-34, 10:29-31; Mark 4:35-41). Creation Sunday provides an opportunity to reflect, repent for the ways we have failed by mistreating and abusing God's good work, attune our vision to suffering around us, and to encourage Christians to see care for our common home as integral to our identity as disciples of Jesus, the Lord of creation.

God Bless
Ann



The poster features a blue background with white and yellow text. On the left, a white silhouette of a person walking is set against a yellow background. To the right of this, the title 'WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title, 'SYNOD LEARNING DAY FOR PREACHERS & ELDERS' is written in smaller white capital letters. Further down, the date and time 'Tuesday 22nd September 10.00 – 4.30pm' are listed, followed by the location 'Weoley Hill URC' and 'Green Meadow Rd, Selly Oak, B29 4DE'. On the right side, there are three small icons: a puzzle piece labeled 'SEE IT', an open book labeled 'READ IT', and a person walking labeled 'LIVE IT'. At the bottom left, a speech bubble contains text about the event being interactive and engaging, and another speech bubble mentions consolidating prior Bible knowledge. Below these, a QR code is provided for signing up, along with the URL 'https://bit.ly/4gdENID'. At the bottom right, the logo for 'The United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod' is displayed, featuring a stylized cross and a blue eye-like shape.

**WALK
THROUGH
THE
BIBLE**

**SYNOD LEARNING DAY
FOR PREACHERS & ELDERS**

Tuesday 22nd September 10.00 – 4.30pm
Bring your own lunch/Drinks provided
Weoley Hill URC
Green Meadow Rd, Selly Oak, B29 4DE

An interactive and engaging teaching event that uncovers the Big Picture of the Old Testament - Genesis to Malachi.

An encouraging way to consolidate prior Bible knowledge and help fill in gaps.

scan QR code or sign up here:
<https://bit.ly/4gdENID>

The United Reformed Church
West Midlands Synod

Prayer page

Creator God, we offer thanks and praise for the world we live in, for mountains and plains, hills and valleys, forests and deserts; for oceans, lakes and rivers. We confess we have not been good stewards of our world, not only neglecting it but too often destroying it for short-term gain. We ask for the wisdom to do better and the skills to repair as much damage as is possible.

We pray for the people who have lost everything in the glacier collapse and flooding in Nepal and those threatened in other glacial areas. We pray for the people directly suffering from the drought in the UK and in Europe, especially for farmers and victims of fires and people who will struggle to pay increasing food costs. We pray for the people now flooded by heavy rainfall on drought-hardened earth.

We pray for your spirit of wisdom and love to reduce the many conflicts and tensions on every level, international, national, and local.

We pray for students, teaching staff and parents at the start of the academic year, and for young people beginning work and adult life.

We pray that the barriers to Revd Sakala and her family joining us will soon be overcome, and that we will be ready to join her in the work you have called her to.

We pray for those among us who are unwell, recovering from illness or injury, those who can no longer care for themselves. And for those who are mourning, grieving, and the carers.

Pastorate News

Further delays—

We have just learned that Revd Sakala's visa has been further delayed by multiple bureaucratic hurdles. She has to resubmit biometric data, which means flying from the Seychelles to Mauritius (the nearest centre for this), the URC has to obtain a fresh Certificate of Sponsorship, and the URC is waiting for the very substantial Immigrant Health Surcharge previously paid to be refunded so they can pay it again.

Weoley Hill News

The retiring collection for September is in aid of Debt Justice

National Emergency Briefing film

7 PM Friday 4 September, St Francis Church B30 2AA

This is an opportunity to watch the film in which Chris Packham shares some of the predictions aired at the National Emergency Briefing which took place in Nov 2025. It will be followed by questions, discussion and refreshments.

It will also be shown at Cotteridge Quaker Meeting, 23A Watford Rd, B30 1JB on Saturday 19 September at 4 PM and 7.45 PM.

Save Water – and maybe a lot of money!

The best way to save water may be to go on a meter. It makes one think before running a tap! Most water bills are significantly lower when on a meter if there are fewer people in the home than the number of bedrooms.

Keep a bucket in the sink to catch water whenever you run a tap. This can be used for watering the garden, washing the floor, flushing the loo or....

Early notice: Quiz night (with fish & chips) on Saturday 17 October

Please note that the email address for S Beeby in Who's in the Pews is no longer correct. Please ask for up-to-date contact information.

Weoley Hill Calendar for September 2026		
Sunday	6	10.30 AM: Worship & communion led by Alan
Wednesday	9	7.00 PM Elders 'meeting
Sunday	13	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ann.
Sunday	20	10.30 AM: Worship led by Alan.
Sunday	27	10.30 AM: Worship led by Ian Carnell.
Church meeting		

The **Tuesday Group** will resume on a date to be announced.

The **Community Choir** will resume on Friday 11 September at 6.45 PM.
See Alan or Gordon.

Weoley Castle News

Sunday morning services: 11 AM at Weoley Castle Community Church

September 6th Led by Sam

September 13th Led by Brian Brown—including Communion

September 20th Informal Bible Study, with cuppa & biscuits—led by Jonah

September 27th Led by Ian Thornley

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

Other Activities

The **Day Centres** restart after a week's break on Monday September 7th & Friday 11th; the **Parent & Toddler Group** restarts after the Summer holidays on Wednesday September 9th.

The beginner's "**English Conversation Class**" for people whose first language is not English on Tuesdays from 1.30 - 3 PM will restart on September 15th.

On Sunday September 20th, there is a **Weoley Castle Heritage** celebration at St Gabriel's from 1.3 - 4 PM. Activities for all ages.

Members and volunteers at the Day Centres were very sorry to lose **Betty Leslie**—an irrepressible and lively soul—who died peacefully in hospital on August 17th. Her funeral will be at Lodge Hill on Friday 11th September at 3.15 PM. Donations in her memory to Cancer research, please.

Recent Events

On Tuesday 11th August, two coaches and a car left the Church at 8.30 am for the **day trip to Barry Island** in S. Wales. We were blessed with full sun, tempered by a gentle sea breeze, perfect sand for sandcastles and sea for paddling, and it all resulted in a lovely Community day. See a picture of the resort, taken just before boarding the coaches for home.



The following Tuesday, there was a **Family Fun Day** at Church. On a backdrop made by Mary Sparkes, we recreated a seaside scene – as in the picture.



Eco corner

This month as we enter the Season of Creation, I have looked at the A Rocha Eco church website and found this prayer.

A prayer of longing to open to the Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver
Confession Prayers

God of little buds now wearing green sleeves,
God of lilac limbs all full with signs of flowering,
God of fields plowed and black with turned-over earth,
God of screeching baby bird mouths widely awaiting food,
God of openness, of life, and of resurrection,
Come into this season and bless me.

Look around the tight, dead spaces of my heart
That still refuse to give you an entrance.

Bring your gentle but firm love.

Begin to lift the layers of resistance

That hang on tightly deep inside of me.
Open, one by one, those places in my life
Where I refuse to be overcome by surprise.
Open, one by one, those places in my heart
Where I fight the entrance of real growth.
Open, one by one, those aspects of my spirit
Where my security struggles with the truth.
Keep me open to the different and the strange;
Help me to accept the unusual and also the ordinary;
Never allow me to tread on others' dreams
By shutting them out, closing them up,
By turning them off or pushing them away.
God of the Resurrection, God of the living,
Untomb and uncover all that needs to live in me.
Take me to people, events and situations
And stretch me into much greater openness.
Open me. Open me. Open me.
For it is only then that I will grow and change.
For it is only then that I will be transformed.
For it is only then that I will know how it is
To be in the moment of rising from the dead.

Source: Joyce Rupp, 'May I Have This Dance?: An Invitation to Faithful Prayer Throughout the Year.' Apologies for spelling but I have copied exactly as it was given.

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.

One-liners heard at the Edinburgh Fringe

"I remember thinking, as I taped a piranha to my boomerang, this could come back to bite me." - Olaf Falafel

"My paper manufacturing business has folded seven times so I'm pretty sure it can't happen again." - Olaf Falafel

"I dated a magician—I was seeing him, now I don't." - Jenny Gorelick

"I hate AI because it keeps trying to steal the jobs I love, like creative writing and being confidently wrong." - Adele Cliff

"The Trump administration is like the movie Oppenheimer—it's full of weird white guys and halfway through you wish it would end early." - Chris Grace

"I'm having an awful time at the moment. The back of my car fell off and you'll never guess what you can't buy at a car boot sale." - Anna Thomas

"99% of the poor are work-shy thugs. That's a conservative estimate." - Ed Mulvey

"It's hard to get Ozempic, there are a lot of hoops to go through and I didn't fit through any of them." - Adam Greene

"You can learn a lot about camping online but you learn so much more in the field." - Roger Swift

"I'll never forget the look on my dad's face, when I told him I had a photographic memory." - Kevin O'Brien

"I spent all day writing a joke about margarine and I can't believe it's not better." - Alex Kitson

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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