

Triangle



The quarterly magazine of the
Methodist Churches of
Wombourne and Springdale

Summer 2016

All change!

The Reverend Christopher Collins



As I write this, the weather seems to be all about change! A glorious summery weekend gave way to April showers – for nearly two whole days and then back to Spring sunshine today! We all say as if with one voice “make up your mind!”

It isn't just the weather that is all about change though. The fresh spring breeze brings change to the church too. Springtime is when the church meets in its general meetings (which are always open to anyone) to discuss the life of the church, to enjoy fellowship, to elect new stewards and representatives to the church council. So it is clear that change is afoot . . .

And so it is! We have said our thank-you's to some key people in the life of the church who have given years of dedicated service. On April 17th we bid a happy retirement to Denis as he set off on this new adventure of retirement . . . well at least treading the well-worn path to Worcester and Yorkshire cricket a little more often. We thanked Denis for his many years of holding Christ before us as we have pilgrimaged together.

We also need to thank stewards who have handed back their badges after years of hard work. Thanks go to Brenda Shuttleworth retiring at Wombourne and Phillippa Cooper retiring at Springdale.

It's not all about goodbyes though! At Wombourne we elected Diana Beaumont and Pat Beddall to replace Brenda and at Springdale we elected Penny to replace Phillippa. We are also welcoming June Horton and Tom Butler as additional representatives to the Church Council in Wombourne.



At Springdale we also said a very special thank-you to Brenda Turton and Ann Humpherson for the thousands of flower arrangements they have crafted over the years to enhance our worship at Springdale.

The goodbyes and welcomes don't end there! Over the summer we will say farewell, as a circuit colleague at least, to Rev'd Steve Singleton and welcome Rev'd Steve Jackson. We'll also say farewell to Rev'd John Howard as our District Chair and we will welcome Rev'd Rachel Parkinson as our new District Chair.

All of this change can seem an unsettling time as the Methodist Musical Chairs gets off and running – and we remember especially those who are moving house ►

◀ and families that follow. We remember all who are moving jobs and schools too, and everything else this time of transition brings. But amongst it all, one thing is always constant – God.

It is by God's Spirit that we trust all of these moves have been discerned and enabled and it is by God's Spirit that we will familiarise ourselves with new places, contexts, roles and responsibilities. At times like these it is important to remember God's constant love and care. I therefore encourage you, whether facing change or not, to sing with all your heart:

*THIS, this is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.*

*'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.*

Joseph Hart (1712-1767)

Springdale pastoral news

Jane Rawlings, pastoral secretary

Spring has been as glorious as ever, and the weather is feeling very summer-like – let's hope it continues.

In the last few months many of the Springdale family have found life difficult, some feeling frail and unable to live as independently as they would wish. We pray for everyone who is finding things difficult, but also remind them all that they are not alone. They have a loving family here at Springdale who will offer support and care. And remember that change is not all bad, it can offer up opportunities to try new things, meet new people and start a new chapter of our lives. Of course there is always a constant throughout our lives, our Lord Jesus, who will walk with us through our journey and carry us when we need it. May the coming months get easier and the summer sun offer welcome warmth and brightness.

Congratulations to anyone who has celebrated a birthday or anniversary recently or has one coming up in the near future. At this time of year we also remember all our young people who may be taking exams. I am sure all your hard work will pay off and I am sure everyone is hoping that you achieve everything that you are capable of.

Well that's all from me, as the year moves into summer, happy holiday to anyone who gets a chance to get away, whether it be for a day or longer. We all need to recharge the batteries and experience the splendours of God's creation whether here in the UK or further afield.

God Bless . . .

The relevance of the Cross

A walking witness for Good Friday



Photograph: Rev'd Nadene Snyman

Some of the group outside St Bernadette's Roman Catholic Church

On Good Friday, 30 Christians from churches in Wombourne walked their witness to Christ. Starting from Wombourne Methodist Church they walked towards the village centre, some of the group carrying protest banners such as "Justice for Palestine", "The Wall must Fall", "Make Peace, not War" and "Books not Bombs".

Rev'd Chris said: "The cross is a very political symbol, the result of Jesus' stand against the empire. The banners made a link between the protest of the cross of Christ and modern day issues for which we still crucify Christ on earth today."

Importantly, the banners bore witness that the cross is for the very real issues that people face today.

As the procession reached the village centre they were joined by many families who had been taking part in children's banner-making sessions in other churches in the village. The procession culminated in an open-air service at the Maypole, which attracted its largest crowd for some years.

A well-earned rest for Denis

Tributes on the retirement of Wombourne's lay worker

Members at Wombourne have said farewell to their long-serving lay worker, Denis Beaumont. But he told them: "I'll be back!"

Denis took on the role 16 years ago when he retired from teaching. He and wife Diana have had a 40-odd year association with the church. Denis has decided to take a six-month sabbatical and hopes to spend more time with his grandchildren, supporting humanitarian and music groups – and on his beloved pastime of following cricket, mostly at Worcester.



Rev'd Chris, Denis Beaumont, Charles Clowes, Diana Beaumont and Brenda Shuttleworth at the presentation.

Former minister Rev'd Robert Ely picked up the theme in his tribute to Denis: "I knew that even if I had been

grudging over what 'counted' as Lay Work, he would have done far more than what he had agreed to. He did so much for the good of the church and the growth of the kingdom, irrespective of whether it was part of his 'job'. He was thoughtful and well-organised, well-prepared for what he did, and a deeply caring and kind man. No wonder he was so well loved by so many in Wombourne, including many not closely connected with the church. Denis was far more than a Church Worker, he was – and is – a friend: to me, and to many others. May all the dodgy umpiring decisions go his way, may he never be given run out or worst of all leg before wicket, may he not slip up going for the short singles, and may his attempts to hit a six always clear the boundary."

And another former minister, Rev'd Phil Summers, said: "I am a better minister because of working alongside Denis. His dedication, care and sheer effort are a sight to behold. Denis was always beautifully determined. Always gentle, always with others' interests at heart but always driven to get the work of the kingdom done. A kind, loving, inspired soldier of peace."

And our present minister, Rev'd Chris, commented: "Denis has been a good and faithful colleague and his many years of service in this particular role he has held before us the constant reminder of Christ's love and compassion. We thank God for how Denis' gifts have been used and we look forward to sharing what God has in store for Denis next."

And finally a word on behalf of so many members who have been supported by Denis over the years, first from Ona Saunders: “What can I say about Denis – a truly dedicated Methodist with a good sense of humour. He has put many, many hours into his visiting poorly people in hospital or their homes – even when he has not been well himself.

“What he has done behind the scenes we shall never know, but he will still be doing it even though he is supposed to be retired! You will be able to watch your favourite sport, cricket, Denis, whenever you like!”

Carole Walker, on behalf of the Prayers and Bears group thanked Denis for his support over many years. “His friendly welcome to the children and their carers was most appreciated. It was also good to have his grandchildren, Ben and Megan, joining in with us.

Wombourne Methodist Prayer group also thanked him for his commitment to the meetings, at which his pastoral experience was invaluable.

Denis was presented with gifts by Rev'd Chris during a farewell service, followed by a well-supported faith lunch. He told friends he would be returning to the church in the future.

A blessing every day

Carole Walker with a treasured gift

At Christmas I received a weekly book of blessings from America, which I refer to every day. One of the pages is reproduced here, and I would like to share some of the other thoughts with you all:

Remember that happiness is a way of travel – not a destination.

A hug is a great gift – one size fits all and it's easy to exchange.

I hope you “nose” how special you are (a picture of a rabbit nose!)



Hem your blessings with thankfulness so they don't unravel.

May the hand of a friend always be near you. May good fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.

Happy birthday, Ma'am, from the Wives

Louise Wright on a special celebration

Wombourne's Wives Group celebrated the Queen's 90th birthday in style in April. Committee members prepared a lovely "afternoon tea", decorated the schoolroom and laid the tables with cake-stands full of goodies. There were red, white and blue serviettes, floral displays, china cups and saucers and teapots. Pictures of the Queen were all around us.

About 35 members arrived in their best outfits, complete with hats or fascinators. We raised our cups of tea for the toast and sang God Save the Queen.

It was a lovely evening once again. A big thank-you to all who helped and everyone who came to share this special event.



Top, one of the tables set for tea, complete with roses and surrounded by portraits of Her Majesty for her 90th birthday.

Above, some of the delicacies about to be served to members.

Left, the committee in their finery.

Doreen Pike provided the pictures

Never stop singing the faith!

Rev'd Chris on the power of hymn singing

Why I am proud to be a Methodist? Because we sing our faith!

Some days I am brought to tears as we raise our voices to sing. To sing "Christ the Lord is risen today" after the waiting and stripping bare of lent and the wrangling's of Holy Week, Good Friday and the emptiness of Holy Saturday just brings me to my knees.

To sing "bold I approach the eternal throne" with a congregation singing out of themselves raises my soul to untold places. To sing "till we cast our thrones before you/ lost in wonder love and praise" leaves me literally lost as I am caught up in wonder, love and praise. I am covered in goose-bumps when we sing "kindle a flame of sacred love/ on the mean altar of my heart!" and "for none can guess its grace/ till he become the place/ wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling".

I am challenged by the line "enemy of apathy and heavenly dove" and to "look beyond the church's door/ and see the refugee and poor". I am comforted by the lines "I trace the rainbow through the rain/ and feel the promise is not vain/ that morn shall tearless be". The list could quite literally go on and on!

It's an emotional roller-coaster just writing that! But I am glad, no, proud to be a Methodist because Methodism is synonymous with singing, literally, profoundly and loudly, our faith. The organist at Liverpool Cathedral who played for the Methodist ordination service last July commented that he could tell we were Methodists because the volume of the singing almost knocked him over.

Wherever Methodists go, it seems, we have a reputation for having a good old sing! It seems that's always been a Methodist way beginning when John Wesley adopted the Moravian practice. Charles, his brother, caught on and it is said that he wrote over 6,000 hymns and sacred poems and left a further 3,000 unfinished at his death. That's a lot of hymns!

Singing touches parts of us that nothing else will. It raises our spirits and opens up to God to receive grace upon grace. But more than that even, it is said that Methodists sing their faith. We learn and remember our theology through our hymns and songs. It is said that John edited Charles' hymns extensively to make sure they contained the right theology! But since then, successive collections have always been authorised by the Methodist Conference. That's because the collections are said to embody our understanding of God. It's theology in poetical form. In fact, hymns teach us the scriptures. If we have a thought about God, it is more than likely we can find it referenced in our hymn books quicker than the Bible!

Hymn singing is part of our DNA and so let us never stop singing as our proclamation of faith!

(By the way, the first person to guess all the hymns mentioned above will win a prize!)

Goodbye James, hello Samantha

Introducing Springdale's new senior steward

Samantha Cartwright has taken over from James Peterson as senior steward at Springdale. They got together to produce this interview, which introduces Samantha (or Sam as we guess she is widely known) in her new role . . .

James Hee hee, I've got some random questions I thought I'd ask, so just answer them off the top of your head! So what's your name?

Samantha Samantha Elizabeth Cartwright.

JP What's your favourite colour?

SC Hmm, that's a tricky one . . . I'd say blue.

JP These are the easy ones to start with. Can you tell us an interesting fact about you that people might not know.

SC I grew up in Wolverhampton, and I've lived in Penn all my life, except when I was at the University of Warwick, which is actually in Coventry. I lived there for a year, then went to Italy for a year, and then moved back to Leamington Spa, and did my final year living at home and commuting. I suppose a lot of people won't know I'm a fluent Italian speaker.

JP And that's what you do for a job, isn't it?

SC Yes. I'm an interpreter. Well, I'm learning to be an interpreter – it's a life-long skill that you acquire over time.

JP So, to Springdale. Is this the only church that you've been to regularly?

SC Yes. This is the church where I grew up. My grandparents came here



Samantha Cartwright

when they relocated about 50 years ago. My parents came here and so did I. I did attend a Methodist Church in Bologna in Italy while I was living there. It was quite traditional.

JP What made you stick with the Methodist Church then?

SC Family tradition, I suppose. When we were down in Newquay at Easter I went to an Anglican church. I love music and they had a band with a drummer, which was really good – but it didn't seem to differ much from Springdale. When I was at School we went to St Benedicts, and of course when I was at the Grammar School we went to St Peters.

JP So when someone says "Spring-

dale” to you, what’s the thing that immediately springs to mind? Have you got a favourite memory?

SC It must have been some sort of show or entertainment. I was about eight or nine, the church was the other way round back then and I was on stage. I was dressed up as Ariel from *The Little Mermaid* – sitting on a bean-bag and mum had got the whole costume going on for me. That and generally performing with the Junior Church for Anniversaries.

JP What are your hopes for Springdale?

SC I hope we continue to grow, especially with younger people. Maybe find some way to bridge the gap between A-level age and university, and then after. I realise not many people can come while they’re away at university or doing further education, but after that, what can we do to get them back? That’s the only thing in our congregation that’s really missing – people my kind of age, really.

JP Yes – there is a bit of a gap, isn’t there. People who have been at church, then stop coming when they’re at Uni and don’t come again until they’ve maybe had kids.

SC That’s the time when they’re coming back.

JP They come to Tots or Hotpot and they want their kids to experience the sort of thing they had. But it’s difficult because no-one quite knows what to

do – you’re not youth, you haven’t got kids to take to Tots or Hotpot, you’re not old enough for some of the other groups. But what can we do?

SC Junior Church is really important, but if you have a strong family unit too, that helps. It is easy to get out of the habit of going to church though. We might do more to encourage this.

JP What scares you most about being Senior Steward?

SC The organisation really – I don’t want to forget something vitally important, or not turn up to something.

JP Is there something you could change that would make your life as Senior Steward much easier?

SC If communication was easier, and everyone replied to your emails or calls first time, that would be amazing.

JP Last question – what are you most looking forward to in the next three months, in and out of church?

SC In church, it’s the Family Fun day on July 10th. In fact, we should probably get that mentioned again in the notices and from the pulpit. Last year was great, and we have got so much to build on. And in personal terms I’m really looking forward to going on holiday with my family – Mum, Dad, Fiona and of course Mark.

JP Great! Thanks so much for your time – and enjoy your year as Senior Steward. I’m sure it’ll be a fabulous experience.

Challenge of a musical ministry

Samantha Cartwright at the Garth Hewitt concert

At first hearing, the title immediately engaged me: “Strange Weapons”. I’d never heard of Garth Hewitt (apologies to his avid fans who sat a row behind me on the night, allowing themselves the occasional woop of joy) but, because this evening of entertainment was endorsed by Lesley and Chris and since I am a lover of live, acoustic music, I bought a couple of tickets. The evening approached and, having done no research of any kind, I turned up to Springdale with little expectation of what the evening would bring.

Once introduced, Garth entered church and stood in front of us on the dais. He began to play the harmonica and guitar which feature heavily throughout his songs. An instant warmth emanated from the performance and as the evening progressed, I developed an acute awareness of the depth of his work.



Garth Hewitt

The flyer advertising the evening read: “songs of struggle and hope, regrets and homecomings”. Indeed (without wishing to offend!), from the perspective of a 20-something-year-old, with regards to my personal experience, I felt Garth assumed a grandfather-like role, adopting anecdote, drawing on his extensive travelling around the world to provoke thought and conversation. How is God’s love being shown in the darkest of places, how are we as Christians challenged to live as Christ amongst the chaos (plus many more existential conundrums which I am presently too ignorant to discuss seriously)?

Ultimately, this was a subjective perspective and, after years of didacticism and being instructed to always be objective, the older I get, the more I appreciate subjectivity and introspection. A PowerPoint of photographs guided us vicariously through some of Garth’s travels where individual stories were championed within the broader contexts of poverty, disaster and conflict. Music has always engaged me in a spiritual way and I certainly felt God’s presence as Garth sang. His accounts highlighted the importance of Springdale’s recent Kyros pledge and he also discussed his work as founder of the Amos Trust. I would recommend a “Google of Garth” to find out more about his music and his ministry. “Little Boy Down” brought a tear to my eye.

“Strange Weapons” is the name given to Garth’s tour. The juxtaposition of these words, imposed upon the painted, tattered heart symbol of Hewitt’s flyer encapsulates that which I gleaned from the evening: the difficulty and complexity of our human situation against the backdrop of the ultimate force that is God/Love, and the ever-increasing call for everyone to utilise the metaphorical weaponry of Christianity for humanity’s sake.

Thank you to the organisers and to Garth for challenging my expectations.

Fish, fun and fellowship on the cut

Eric Walker charts a voyage along the Staffs and Worcester canal

Ship's Log – Tuesday, May 10th, 2016: *Our pastoral group embarks on a voyage from Castlecroft to Autherley Junction aboard the Ernest Thomas II*

Weather: *Rain forecast all day*

Crew: *Captains Bill, Roy and Terry*

Quartermaster: *Pauline Hotchkiss*

Quizmaster: *David Hotchkiss*

Twelve passengers embarked at 1015hrs and set sail at 1030hrs.

The first port of call was Dimmingsdale, where the ship completed a five-point turn. Then it was full steam ahead for Autherley Junction.

The tranquility of the ship's movement and the verdant scenery was in stark contrast to the animated conversation and joviality of the passengers. In the comfort of the saloon, morning and afternoon refreshments were served by our experienced galley staff.

An emergency stop was made at Newbridge, where there was dash to collect fish and chips from the local chip shop. Just two passengers made up the landing party. The meals were devoured in almost complete silence.

No sleeping was allowed, and to ensure that this was the order of the day quizzes were offered to the passengers at various times. Disappointingly, for a Methodist group, there was an element of cheating reported, although the guilty persons were not required to walk the plank (none being found on board).



Voyage into the unknown: intrepid travellers



Approaching a lock at Compton

Passengers disembarked at 1600hrs having enjoyed an informative, interesting and fun trip. Many thanks to the crew and particularly to Pauline and David. The bara brith and lemon sponge were delicious.

There was wonderful fellowship and it was quite right and proper that we thanked God for the day and blessed each other with the Grace.

Sadly, there was one criticism of the day – the Band of the Royal Marines failed to play as we set sail.

Wombourne pastoral news

Pauline Hotchkiss, pastoral secretary



Here we are again. Spring has been very wet and I understand the forecast for the summer is to be long and hot. We look forward to that and being able to spend time outdoors.



**Frances and Bridie cut their
(and the Queen's) cake**

On our visits to The Maltings since Easter we have celebrated Pentecost and we had a special meeting on April 21st to celebrate the 90th birthday of our Queen. Two of our members will be celebrating their 90th birthdays in June and July. We wish them a very happy birthday. Our friends appreciate the visit and we feel it is an important part of our Pastoral care in the community. We have a new member of the group. She moved into the Maltings after Easter and has been attending our monthly meetings ever since. Another group from church visit Himley Mill Care Home each month. They witness to two units at the home and I am sure the residents and the staff enjoy this time of fellowship.

If anyone is interested in joining in with either of these monthly events, please ask Carole Walker about the Maltings and ask Rev'd Chris about Himley Mill. I am sure there will be a warm welcome for new people to join them.

GOOD NEWS

Three more babies this season. Lily-Mae's great grandmother is Barbara Tromans; Louie Jullien, who lives in France, is the great grand-daughter of Cynthia Hatton and Harry



Lily-Mae



Louie Jullien



Harry James

James has Ona Saunders for a great grandmother. How fortunate these babies are. Just recently I learned we will soon have another great grand-mother. Betty Crossfield's grand-daughter is to give birth in August. Watch out for the photograph. Our congratulations go out to the families of all our new babies.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE (AND THE NOT SO YOUNG)

Congratulations to Lee Cresswell who was married to Kaileigh Lawrence in May. Lee is the youngest son of Gail and Martin Cresswell. It is always a joy to hear about our young people and where they are at in their lives.

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

June Horton will be 80 on June 8th and will be celebrating with a party the following Saturday. We offer you our congratulations, June, and our prayers that you have a wonderful birthday.

On Easter Sunday during the evening service we welcomed Maureen Boswell into full membership. Maureen has been worshipping at Wombourne for many years and takes a very active role in church. Our thanks and prayers are offered to Maureen for all that she does and, I have no doubt, will continue to do.

PRAYERS

The Prayer Circle meets every two months to update our prayer cards. We always name our older loved ones who are no longer able to care for themselves and are in residential care. We pray especially for each one of them

New names are added to our prayer list and the names of those who are well and no longer in need of the Prayer Circle are removed. We were blessed with good news at our May meeting. Several of those for whom we are praying are showing signs of improvement. It is also a time of shared fellowship of the members of the group. We ask God to sustain those who pray daily for those in need.

We continue to pray for Pete, Sue and the family, Cathy Anderson, Robyn, the grand-daughter of Eric and Carole Walker, Pam Rogers, Jane Venables and Mark Corbett. Jesus I pray that Your Holy Spirit will watch over them.

All those who are in need of our love and prayers for healing will be blessed.

Many thanks are due to Denis, our Lay Pastoral Worker. I have no doubt that you all are aware now that Denis retired at the end of April. A special thank-you from the members of the Prayer Circle and all the Pastoral Group visitors. You will be missed.

If I have failed to mention anyone with a need or with good news then I apologise. Jesus knows our every need and will watch over us.

An urgent appeal from BOB HUGHES

I received this from a friend of mine. He really could do with some help. He writes:



This is Lexi. She's an eight-week-old German Shepherd. I bought Lexi as a surprise for my wife, but it turns out she is allergic to dogs so we are now looking to find her a new home. She is 39 years old, a beautiful and caring woman who drives and is a great cook and housekeeper.

People who make a difference

With thanks to Bob Hughes

You don't have to actually answer these questions. Just ponder, read straight through to the end, and you'll get the point.

1 Name the five wealthiest people in the world.

2 Name the last five Wimbledon winners.

3 Name the last five winners of the Miss World contest.

4 Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.

5 Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.

How did you do?

The point is, few of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers.

They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies, awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten.

Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

1 List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.

2 Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.

3 Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.

4 Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.

5 Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Easier? The lesson:

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards.

They simply are the ones who care the most.

All smiles

● **Two television ariels met, fell in love and eventually decided to get married. Apparently the service was only average but the reception was terrific.**

● A Sunday school teacher asked her children: "And why is it important to be quiet in church?" One little girl replied helpfully: "Because people are sleeping."

● A young minister took his car for an oil change. After looking under the bonnet the mechanic turned to him and said: "If I were you, Your Reverence, I'd keep the oil and change the car."

● **Overheard after a communion rail blessing: "Gran, the man with the dress on said his prayers on my head."**

Wombourne vestry news

Charles Clowes, senior steward



Well here I am again, senior steward for the fourth time. It is an honour to be part of the team that makes worship and the running of the church go smoothly. We will miss Brenda who is stepping down as steward but welcome Diana Beaumont and Pat Beddall into the Leadership Team. Thank you to all those many people who support us in this task.

We will miss Denis Beaumont our lay worker as he retires and takes a well-earned rest and a six-month break from worshipping at Wombourne. We held a special service for him on April 17th followed by a bring-and-share lunch. In Rev Chris's address he spoke for us all when he based his sermon on the text: "Well done my good and faithful servant". Don't stay away too long, Denis!

From Ash Wednesday, and throughout Lent, our Easter season was meticulously planned by Rev Chris with great attention to detail. On Maundy Thursday we shared a wonderful lamb stew and Communion representing the The Passover and Last Supper. On Good Friday a short time of worship and a walk of witness visiting all the churches in the village were followed by an ecumenical time



Amanda and the Three J's tuck in to breakfast

of worship at the maypole on Windmill Bank. Saturday evening was a quiet time of bible readings and prayer. On Easter Day after an 8am Holy Communion people were treated to a cooked breakfast*, a family service at 10.30am and at the evening service we welcomed our friend Mo Boswell into the Methodist Church.



Charles and Sandra at work in the kitchen

We have just heard that we have received a significant grant from "Ibstock Cory" towards the disabled access programme. Hopefully this will soon get off the ground and we will be able to carry on our work of spreading the Good News to the people of Wombourne.

*(*Charles modestly neglects to say that he and Sandra cooked the breakfast, and very good it was too! – Ed)*

Lots of fairly traded goods on offer

Shop rises from ashes with expanded range



As reported in the previous edition of Triangle, Wolverhampton Fair Trade is once again open for business at the Methodist Centre in Darlington Street, following the fire that devastated the building. Additional space in what was the Guild Room has enabled an expansion of the range of goods on offer, and volunteer Lesley Cook is pictured above with some of them. Organiser Brenda Shuttleworth is keen to point out, though, that there isn't usually much time for lounging about with cups of coffee! Having said that, the shop will soon be serving fair trade coffees, teas and snacks to visitors looking for unusual gifts. Opening hours are:

Tuesdays	10am – 4pm
Wednesdays	10am – 5.45pm
Thursdays	10am – 4pm
Fridays	10am – 4pm
Saturdays	9am – 1pm

Don't wish too hard . . .

A small boy wanted a baby brother, so his father suggested he pray every night for one. The boy began to pray earnestly, night after night. When nothing happened, he gave up. After a few months his dad said they were going to visit Mum in hospital and he was going to get a big surprise. When they got to the room, the little boy saw his mother holding two babies. "Well," said his dad, "what do you think about having twin brothers?" The lad thought for a moment and replied: "It's a good job I stopped praying when I did."

More tea, Vicar . . . please

Cynthia Hatton on a surprise treat

In April, Betty Crossfield, Val Edwards, Margaret Higgs and I were invited to have afternoon tea with Rev'd Chris at The Vineyard. It was a big surprise, but turned out to be a very enjoyable one.

Chris was an excellent host and spread before us was a beautifully-laid table with two stands of delicious sandwiches, cakes, scones, jam and cream – in fact everything that we would have been better without!



Chris told us it was a thank-you for long-term services and we were deeply touched. We assured him that it had always been a pleasure to serve the church that we love. Hope we'll be around long enough for a repeat performance!

Rhyming reminder of our calendar

Jackie Neilson

An anonymous *aide memoire* taught in Sunday School in the 1920s. I found it in a church magazine when visiting a church in Shropshire.

The Christian Year

*Advent begins our sacred year,
Proclaiming that the Lord is near.*

*On Christmas Day, Oh glorious morn,
Jesus the Son of God was born.*

*Epiphany, with guiding star,
Showed Christ to gentiles from afar.*

*Ash Wednesday our Lent begins,
Forty days mourning for our sins.*

Good Friday, blessed day, is when

Christ died to save the souls of men.

*Then Easter comes, when Jesus rose,
The reign of sin and death to close.*

*And his Ascension to the skies
Inspires each humble heart to rise.*

*Whitsuntide, with tongues of flame,
The Holy Ghost with comfort came.*

*To three in one and one in three
The seasons of the Trinity.*

Scars that will never go away

Jean Spragg shared this from Russell Henderson

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

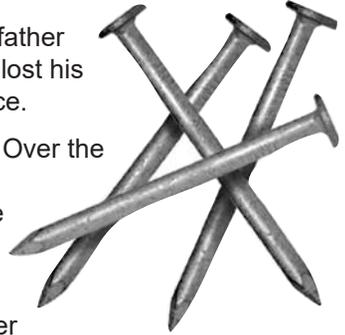
The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said: "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there."

The little boy then understood how powerful his words were. He looked up at his father and said: "I hope you can forgive me, Father, for the holes I put in you."

"Of course I can," said the father.

It's not always anger, it is your actions in general. There are no "fresh starts" in life. There is no new beginning. Forgiveness comes easy for many people but the scars of the past never go away.

Watch what you do today, because sometimes the price isn't worth the reward.



I know where I'm going (?)

With thanks to Barbara Tromans

The evangelist Billy Graham tells of a time early in his career when he arrived in a small town to preach a sermon. Wanting to post a letter, he asked a young boy where the post office was. When the boy told him, Billy Graham thanked him and said: "If you'll come to the Baptist Church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven." The boy looked surprised and finally stammered: "But you don't even know your way to the post office."