

Witney Congregational Church

R CROSS A D S

Witney Congregational Church is a crossroads where we:

meet God in worship

meet one another in friendship

meet our community and world with the love of Jesus



WHAT'S ON GUIDE

Witney Congregational Church offer a whole range of activities through which we seek to Worship, Work and Witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in this community today.

Further information can be obtained from the Church Administrator, Minister, Church Secretary or the leaders of the particular activities who are listed at the back of this magazine.

WORSHIP

Daily Worship	9.30 am	Mon-Fri	Short time of Prayer and Reading
Saturday Praise	11.00 am	1 st Saturday of the month	
Sunday Services	10.30 am		
	6.00 pm	1 st Sunday of the month	

Communion is held twice during the month at the first Sunday evening and third Sunday morning services

PRAYER

The Church is open each morning for Prayer

STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 2.30pm Church (2nd Thursday of each month)

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday	10.30 am	Crèche, Noah's Ark & The K.I.C.K. on Sundays
Monday	10.00 am	Noah's Ark – Infant Group for babies and pre-school children
Friday	7.00 pm	Y4J – Twice a month

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Tuesday	Monthly	Deacon's Meeting
	Bi-Monthly	Church Meeting
Thursday	10.00 am	Rest & Chat (Coffee/Tea available)
Saturday	10.30 am	Coffee Morning

SUNDAY LINK

Weekly bulletin for all Christians providing stimulating thought along with news and notices concerning our Church

WITNEY ECUMENICAL YOUTH TRUST (BASE 33)

4 Welch Way (Entrance – High Street) ☎ 01993 774402
01993 864853 (Office)

St ANDREW'S BOOKSHOP

Opening Hours: Monday – Saturday ☎ 01993 709429
09.00 am – 5.00 pm

CHURCH WEBSITE

For further information, please visit our website:

www.witneycongregational.org.uk



This is the 3-monthly summer edition covering June, July & August, which means that if you are on any of the Rotas, you will need to make a note in your diary when you are on!!

During May, the Church has been extremely busy with 'Thy Kingdom Come' 24/7 Prayer, which was well presented and then followed by Christian Aid week, which also seems successful. Additionally, as Jason mentions after his contribution, the Church has a new piano, and I have just returned home to write this after the Church has had its new front automatic doors fitted and very good they look to as you will see from the picture below and when you come in to pick up this Magazine, and photographs of the various stages can be found via the following link:

http://www.witneycongregational.org.uk/photos/gallery.php?gallery_id=10&pg=1



As you read this many young people will be revising and sitting examinations, which can be a very frustrating and stressful time, so ask that

you remember them at this time; but it also means that holiday time is nearly with us again, and, even though some cannot bear the heat, the increasing good weather, which is supposed to be even better in the coming weeks, has to be encouraging for most of us. Whatever your circumstances, hopefully it will be a chance for most people to take a break of some kind.

Turning now to those who have contributed to this edition; alongside the standard pages, Canon David Winter reflects on our servant Queen; Kay Hellens gives us an update from Cumbria, including the floods & there is an article regarding the Syrian refugees living in Witney and the surrounding area, to name but a few.

Many thanks for those who have contributed for this edition, but would encourage anyone to consider submitting article(s) for the next edition by either:

E-mail:

terrypowlesland@uwclub.net

jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net

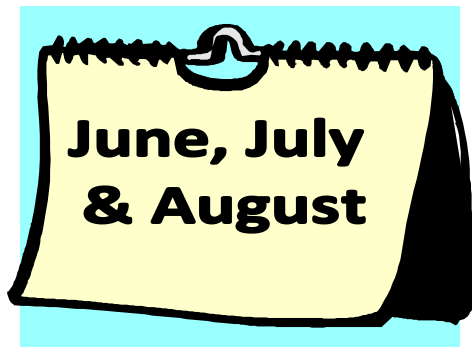
or, just plainly written on paper, which can be typed up.

The next 3-monthly Autumn edition, covering September, October & November is due on **Sunday 4th September**

Your Editor

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Daily Prayer Time:

Mon-Fri 9.30 am

Services

10.30 am weekly & 6.00pm on first Sunday of the month and will normally be led by Rev Jason Boyd unless advised below

June

4 th		Creative Fun	10.00 – 12.00am
5 th	am	Café Church	
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion
12 th	am	Morning Worship	
19 th	am	Morning Worship	Communion
26 th	am	All-Age Worship	Rev Elaine & David Kinchin

July

2 nd		Saturday Praise	11.00am
3 rd	am	Morning Worship followed by Word Café	
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion
10 th	am	Deacon Ellie Griffin from High St Methodist Church	
17 th	am	Morning Worship	
24 th	am	Rev Judi Holloway & Dr Gillian Warson	Communion
31 st	am	tbc	
		Madley Park Residential Home	3.00pm

Aug

6 th		Saturday Praise	11.00am
7 th	am	Rev Elaine & David Kinchin	
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion
14 th	am	Rev Elaine & David Kinchin	
21 st	am	Morning Worship	Communion
27 th		Creative Fun	10.00 – 12.00am
28 th	am	Café Church	

Sep

3 rd		Saturday Praise	11.00am
4 th	am	Morning Worship	
	pm	Evening Worship	Communion

The following events are given for your particular attention:

June

4 th		SWMA Executive meeting – Cheltenham	10.30am
7 th		Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.15pm
		Deacon's meeting	7.30pm
11 th		Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am
16 th		Fellowship Group	2.30pm
24 th		Kennington Choir – Ruddigore	7.30pm

July

5 th		Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.15pm
		Deacon's meeting	7.30pm

9 th	Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am
21 st	Fellowship Group	2.30pm
26 th – 28 th	CTiW Holiday Club at High St Methodist Church	

Aug

2 nd	Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.15pm
13 th	Prayer Chain meeting	9.15am
18 th	Fellowship Group	2.30pm

Sep

6 th	Lite Bite piece of the Word	12.15pm
	Deacon's meeting	7.30pm

ROTAS

WELCOMING TEAM

June	05	Pat Smith & Claire Woodward
	12	Lesley Barter & Irene St Clair
	19	Viviane Boyd & Cecily Lau
	26	Beryl & Pip Cartwright
July	03	Jill & Robert McBride
	10	Joan Currie & Susan Wass
	17	Nanna Blackman & Theo Howells
	24	Pat Smith & Claire Woodward
Aug	31	Lesley Barter & Irene St Clair
	07	Susan Wass & Cecily Lau
	14	Beryl & Pip Cartwright
	21	Jill & Robert McBride
Sep	28	Joan Currie & Susan Wass
	04	Nanna Blackman & Theo Howells



COMMUNION

June	05 pm	Susan Wass	
		Preparation	Susan Wass
	19 am	Norline Martin & Judi Holloway	
		Lesley Barter & Viviane Boyd	
		Preparation	Beryl Cartwright
July	03 pm	Beryl Cartwright	
		Preparation	Beryl Cartwright
	24 am	Jacqui Powlesland & Susan Wass	
		Beryl Cartwright & Lesley Barter	
		Preparation	Rita Hayes
Aug	07 pm	Lesley Barter	
		Preparation	Lesley Barter
	21 am	Judi Holloway & Norline Martin	
		Viviane Boyd & Jacqui Powlesland	
		Preparation	Pat Smith
Sep	04 pm	Viviane Boyd	
		Preparation	Viviane Boyd



FLOWERS

June	05	Judi Holloway
	12	Beryl Cartwright
	19	Joan Currie
	26	Jacqui Powlesland



July	03	Sonya Boyd
	10	Val Obriain
	17	Judi Holloway
	24	Rita Hayes
	31	Beryl Cartwright
Aug	07	Joan Currie
	14	Jacqui Powlesland
	21	No Flowers required
Sep	28	Sonya Boyd
	04	Val Obriain



COFFEE

June	05	Café Church
	12	Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
	19	Jill & Robert McBride
	26	Susan Wass & Judith Bungey
	July	03
10		Clare Woodward & Susan Wass
17		Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
24		Jill & Robert McBride
Aug	31	Susan Wass & Judith Bungey
	07	Viviane Boyd & Hilary Pratley
	14	Clare Woodward & Susan Wass
	21	Sue Birdseye & Irene St Clair
	28	Café Church
Sep	04	Jill & Robert McBride



REST & CHAT

June	09	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
	16	Pat Smith
	23	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair
	30	Robert & Jill McBride
July	07	Beryl Cartwright
	14	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
	21	Pat Smith
	28	No Rest & Chat
Aug	04	Robert & Jill McBride
	11	Beryl Cartwright
	18	Joan Currie & Iris Lindsay
	25	Pat Smith
Sep	01	Jean Stanley, Marina Bowerman & Irene St Clair
	08	Robert & Jill McBride



Every effort has been made to meet individual circumstances. However, please change with someone else if the dates are not convenient for you

June 01 Marjorie Lee
 07 Matthew Brusch
 10 Finn Obriain
 14 Norline Martin
 16 Hayley St Clair
 19 Jonathan Brusch
 23 Peter Gamston
 June Woodley
 25 Gerald Hayes
 Julianne Schunselaar
 26 Viviane Boyd
 Val Obriain
 28 Maureen Miles
 30 Jacqui Powlesland



July 04 Wout Schunselaar
 05 Bob Blackman
 06 Tom Hopwood
 09 Sarah Hopwood
 14 Lynne Thomas
 25 Harry Hathaway
 26 Jennie Garrett
 30 Irene St Clair
 Jason Boyd

Aug 02 Janet Hayes
 06 Declan Hathaway
 13 Melissa Gundem

**WITNEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION – SATURDAY 1st OCTOBER 2016 10 am – 4 pm**

In aid of the newly-installed front doors and the Special Effect charity – see www.specialeffect.org.uk



Cream teas will be on sale throughout the day in the lounge area of the church

An entrance fee of £1 per person will be charged

For further information, please contact Jacqui Powlesland at jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net or telephone 01993 776 281

Pastor's Paper

It was disappointing when she said it wasn't true. Suzanne told an allegory originally penned by Jean Giono. In 1913 a young man meets a shepherd, Elzeard Bouffier planting acorns in a desolate valley. He returns to visit the area after the war. Severely traumatised by the horrors of all he had experienced, he finds a forest. The shepherd has become a bee keeper because he fears what the sheep will do to his saplings. The shepherd-turned-beekeeper has built dams higher up in the mountains and created irrigation for this forest. The oaks bring life to an arid land and hope to thousands who have been devastated by the great European conflict. Such is its beauty and power to bring happiness that the government turns it into a national park.

We have two sapling oak trees in pots in our garden. The acorns were collected by Jeremy in Scotland and France. It was August 2011. Jeremy and Viviane planted all the acorns and two survived. Every year we have watched them grow and mature. It is mind blowing to realise that – providing they do not become diseased – these two trees will outlive us by centuries! And yet such small, fragile beginnings...

On the 21 May, around 30 church members gathered in the Elsie Auty Lounge for cream tea and a natter. Suzanne led us in a structured and creative conversation about our church fellowship. (*The questions we asked one another follow this letter together with our responses*). If you were unable to attend, please have a look at the questionnaire and have a go at responding to it. Then submit it in to a deacon or me so that your voice can be added to the overall discussion.

As Suzanne explained to us, the LEAF process takes two years. She will be returning to meet with the diaconate –

likely in June. Then we will map the way forward for our explorations for the next year. Central to this whole process is the life of prayer. Please pray for our fellowship as we seek the mind of Christ in being the kind of people he needs us to be in our community. This is a time of preparing the ground so that our hearts are the fertile soil in which the kingdom of God may grow. It may seem nebulous, perhaps fragile and uncertain, but in faith we wait.

This talk of prayer brings me to “Thy Kingdom Come”. The call to pray came from the Archbishops, Justin Welby and John Sentamu. Our Church Meeting responded with a resounding ‘Yes!’ and then we reached out to other churches in the community.

We launched “Thy Kingdom Come” during our morning worship on the 17 April. Then we met over three Thursdays to pray with members of other churches and to plan the week of activities from the 8-15 May. These planning/prayer meetings were very special. A palpable bond could be felt as every person shared their passion for prayer and the desire for renewal in the life of Jesus Christ.

Prayer is the breath and heartbeat of our relationship to God through Jesus Christ. And yet it is often the very thing that bamboozles us. When the subject of prayer comes up often people will say, “I’m not very good at prayer. I really struggle with what to pray for and how to pray.” We know that prayer is essential and life giving but we find it a challenge. I take comfort from the fact that the disciples needed to learn how to pray and asked Jesus to teach them.

The week of prayer was shaped by that prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. Our church became a prayer room with stations created by various churches: Cogges C of E, Davenport Road and High Street Methodists, Oasis, Elim, Baptist and Congregational Churches prepared the

stations. There was a constant stream of prayer and all but one night was covered. There were offices of prayer at St. Mary's on the Green and daily opportunities for prayer at St. Mary's Cogges. So many people fed back that this week was a blessing, drawing Christians together in unity. I personally experienced signs of God's grace in the opening up of relationships that I had given up on. What a healing experience.

As your minister I feel a deep sense of privilege to be able to share ministry with you. These past few weeks I have experienced a heightened awareness of being part of a special community. I would invite you to join with me in praying for God's guidance and for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in us. I sense that God is on the move.
Shalom

JASON
2

Announcement of a baby... grand piano



Special thanks to Gillian Warson who has donated a baby grand piano to our church for worship. It is beautiful both to hear and see. Thank you!

A LEAF CONVERSATION

If you were not able to be part of the day, here are the questions that we had to ask one another. Why not take some time to answer them yourself and hand them into one of the deacons or to Jason

1. Tell a story about when you've seen Witney Congregational Church at its best over the past five years. (Something big and something small)
2. Name three strengths of Witney Congregational Church.
3. What is the most profound thing you've learnt from someone else in this Church community?
4. What you think other people learn from you in this Church community?
5. What aspect of discipleship/faith would you like to learn more about in the future? (Something big and something small)
6. What one small thing could Witney Congregational Church learn together that would make a big difference?
7. If you planted a seed of learning today (say from question 5 or 6) what type of plant would you hope it would grow into?

In Groups

1. From Question 5 and 6 what do you think the learning priorities are for Witney Congregational Church?
2. How might you make space for learning and growing to happen? Where can time/people be released?

3. Who else might need to be involved in this LEAF conversation? (other church groups, ages, community partners etc.)



Meeting with Witney

1-Offer greetings...

2-Devotions (5 minutes)

Tell the story of Cornelius and Peter

Cornelius learned

Peter learned

Peter (verse 34) 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism' I now realise....something profoundly true about the nature of God.

Impact of that realisation...

Explain LEAF briefly

Pray!

3-Paired Conversation (40 mins)

4-Feedback (15 minutes)

5-Group Work. (40 minutes)

6-Feedback...exploring parties....how do we test this?

7-Pray!!!!

LEAF CONVERSATIONS AT WITNEY

21ST May 2016

The congregation identified the following strengths:

Fellowship and Friendship (X4)

Noah's Ark

Café Church

24/7 Prayer

World Café

Love

Prayer

Guidance

Worship

Welcome (X3) particularly outsiders

Patience and Strength

Unity

Help in times of grief

Help in crisis times

A building open to the public e.g. baby room (X2)

Building in the town centre (X2)

The congregational way

Practical Christianity

Shared sense of responsibility for one another

Kindness

Jason

Churches Together

Embracing the new

Size

Support

Good teaching

What mutual learning is already happening?

Seeing others overcome difficulties (X2)

"I can be myself" (X2)

People who encourage other's gifts and talents

Acceptance of other faiths (X2)

A strong belief in the power of prayer (X2)

How to laugh

Visiting people who are not part of the church.

What it means to be fully committed.

Practical kindnesses

Disability isn't a barrier (X2)

Dying people grieve
Forgiveness
Taking risks/new ways of doing things
OK to cry.

Individuals said they'd like to learn more about..

Discerning spiritual gifts and living in the Spirit
How to understand obscure biblical texts (X2)
How to nurture the faith of teenagers
The discipline of prayer (X2)
Understanding the Bible (X2 in particular O.T.)
Opportunities for open prayer and Bible studies (X2)
Discussion about issues affecting us in our lives
Biblical theology
Pastoral/Discipleship groups
Learning styles
Spirituality
Baptism of the Holy Spirit
End of life issues/Discipleship for those at the end of life
Keeping our teenagers/children interested in faith.

The small things which people feel the Church could learn together that would make a big difference are:

Communication with one another (X2)
How to be companions
Use of technology e.g. Wifi.
I find the screen difficult and prefer hymnbooks
More all-age learning
How to attract families
Listening carefully to one another.
Connecting/investing in young people
Praying together
Making Church Meeting more inclusive .
Making Church Meeting more a seeking of the mind of Christ
Sharing the gospel message
Being physically closer in worship.

Some kind of celebration/academic conference.

Some questions

- 1- What are you really pleased to see down here? What resonates?
- 2- What are you surprised to see down here?
- 3- What are you surprised to not see down here?

GROUP WORK

Learning priorities

- Engaging with non-members who we have contact with
- Gathering naturally together- Developing ways of being out in the community in prayer
- Listening to one another
- A mission project for young people
- Discipleship learning during the week.

How do we release?

Meet up for coffee/lunch in small groups or one-to-one
Planting in Costa
Offering pray for people in public spaces
Stop some activities
Have Church Meeting on a Sunday
Opt in prayer/learning times during the activities we're already doing.

Who else do we need to include in LEAF discussions

Young people
Adherents

Some questions

- 1-Can you see a link between the priorities identified by the group and the LEAF conversations?
- 2-Is there anything else from the LEAF conversations that should be a learning priority (I'd suggest you shouldn't have more than 4 areas)?
- 3-How will you test/keep a look out to see whether these are what God is calling you towards?

The following article, written by Rev Canon David Winter, has been extracted from Parish Pump, considers the Queen's life, and is entitled:

The Way I See It: Our SERVANT QUEEN

The whole country will this month be celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday. She has splendidly fulfilled the promise made on the day when her father, King George VI, died and she came to the throne at the age of 27. On that day she dedicated 'the rest of my life, whether it be long or short' to the service of the nation and the Commonwealth. She has certainly proved that she meant what she said. Hers is already the longest reign of any British monarch.

Those years have seen huge changes in the world: the end of apartheid in South Africa, the transition of scores of countries to independence within the Commonwealth, the advent of space exploration and men on the moon, the arrival of the computer and the internet, social media, Twitter and so on. Through it all she has remained a calm, reassuring figure, head of state to 12 different prime ministers and leader of a resilient and growing Commonwealth of Nations.

The Queen has quietly moved with the times. Her rather tortured 'royal' accent of the forties and fifties has broadened into a quietly spoken Received English. Uneasy about it at first, she has made herself an effective performer on television. And through it all she has openly acknowledged that her own Christian faith is the bedrock of all that she is and has done. In recent years she has been more willing to talk about that faith, notably in her Christmas messages.

To mark her 90th birthday, the Bible Society has published an attractive illustrated book *The Servant Queen*, setting out largely in her own words the essential heart of that faith. The Queen herself has written a Foreword. The aim of the publishers is that the book should be widely distributed, so that people up and down her kingdom can share her evident enjoyment of a committed Christian faith. It's subtitle is 'And the King she serves'. As advertisers say, 'every home should have one'.

The Servant Queen is available from the Bible Society in packs of ten for £10, or singly. Go to: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/landing/servantqueen/>



- Have you ever noticed the difference in the Christian life between work and fruit? A machine can do work; only life can bear fruit. - *Andrew Murray*
- Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things. - *A Gordon*



PRAYER LETTER

No 175

Contacts Conversations and Listening

Recently at home we have been inundated with cold callers on the telephone trying to engage in conversation to sign up to buy something. We now ignore these calls or put the telephone down immediately without identifying who we are. With modern phones the caller can be identified if known to you or if you are expecting a call.

When talking on the telephone it is usually a two way conversation, listening and talking. Sometimes the listening part can be quite difficult if you are multitasking at the same time or if your mind wanders and you do not hear what the person is saying.

‘Prayer is like a telephone’ for us to talk to God but it is never meant to be a way one conversation. We can speak to God when we pray but when God speaks to us are we listening? The ‘Listening Concept’ of God calling us is very difficult. How do we know if God is speaking to us, prompting us to do something or show us where to go?

In the First Book of Samuel Chapter 3 God repeatedly calls Samuel who thinks it is Eli calling him. Eli having been woken up 3 times realises that it is God calling Samuel and tells Samuel to lie down and if he hears his name being called again say ‘Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.’

Throughout the Bible there are numbers of occasions where God speaks to chosen people whilst they were praying or in a dream or through a vision. Read Acts Chapter 10 Cornelius’ encounter with an angel whilst he was praying and Peter’s conversation with God when he was in a trance (asleep). This episode shows how God speaks to people and how he wants them to do’ out of the ordinary things.’ In Acts Chapter 9 The Lord explains to Ananias in a vision, the conversion of Saul and sends Ananias to the house where Saul is staying, to lay hands on him so he may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

We may or may not have experienced such visions or conversations. We should always be listening as God speaks in many different ways. We may have experienced God speaking to us through people, Church Services, music, the natural world and many other ways. Listening is a skill which is learnt, through training and concentration. Quite often you hear so much at one time you are easily distracted. So many noises, thoughts and things occupy your mind that to listen carefully is difficult. Finding a quiet place for personal prayer helps the mind to concentrate.

The LEAF Programme, Learning, Engaging and Acting in Faith requires a lot of listening to each other and to God. The opportunity we had at the Afternoon Tea in engaging in a ‘listening activity’ which Suzanne Knockles led, was a learning and sharing experience with each other. As we move forward with The Leaf Project may we, like’ The Early Church’ in Acts, pray together for God’s vision for our Church Fellowship in Witney.

As you pray use the words ‘Be still and know that I am God’ so that you will be able to hear His voice and not only hear but act upon it.

Every Blessing
Beryl

Please note that for up-to-date prayer requests contact Beryl Cartwright (703717)

The following article has been written and submitted by Kay Hellens, and is entitled:

LAKE DISTRICT LIFE

I think it can safely be said that living in the Lake District has not been dull over the last few months and I have been very thankful that I live at the top of the hill and the river is at the bottom!

The relentless rain finally stopped a couple of weeks ago (I am writing this in the middle of April) - however, that does not mean that we have not had any rain since! The winter has not been particularly cold but it has been long, dark, dreary and wet! I got to know where all the 'floods' were likely to be on the roads that I use regularly and learned to go the long way round when travelling locally so that I avoided the roads that were closed (and there were several of them). I watched in disbelief the pictures on the TV of places that I know well where what were normally gentle small rivers flowing through the towns turned into raging torrents, bursting their banks and travelling across the roads to flood the houses on the far side. I usually have a day out at Grasmere (Wordsworth country) while the daffodils are at their best but this year such a trip was not possible because the road subsided during the December floods and is not likely to be open again until the end of May! Local fields were under water and even now, although the water has finally drained away what is left behind is mud rather than grass!

When the lambing season began the weather was far from ideal and some farmers had to resort to putting plastic coats on the lambs to protect them from the rain. They are fine if it is cold but they do not like the rain! My dogs are not keen to go out of the back door, let alone go for a walk, because they do not like getting their tummies wet (they are miniature longhaired dachshunds) and one of them usually spends most of his time sitting in the garden watching anything

that moves. It will be better once the temperature gets more springlike and (hopefully) the sun comes out.

I am still happily settled at Storth Village Church (a mixture of Methodists and Anglicans) where I am a worship leader. I was the senior steward for a while but decided that I could not give that the time it needed once my brother was up here closer to me and not at all well. He spent time in hospital and is now in residential care in Morecambe.

I often walk the dogs along the promenade at Morecambe where it is always 'bracing'. It puts a bit of colour in my cheeks and they enjoy the pleasure of being able to spend some time running backwards and forwards and chasing anything that moves. Vikki leaves the running about to the younger ones but is happy to trot along beside me ignoring everyone else.

My handicrafts, making lace, beading, crochet and such like keep me busy as does my computer although I am not involved in any social media (email apart). I make most of my own greetings cards and various things using photographs I have taken throughout the year, culminating in a calendar that I do at Christmas. The agricultural show season is not that far off so my thoughts are turning to what I can sensibly finish that will be good enough to enter in the various craft classes. Travelling round the shows as I do with my lace pillow in tow, the entries in the craft sections also do the rounds and it is interesting to watch what wins at each show. Just because an item wins at one show does not mean that it will do so at another - like all competitions what is admired by one judge will be ignored by another! I do not necessarily enter things I have made but this year I have one or two items that I think are good enough to make an appearance.

If I am not demonstrating with my lace pillow I will be entering the dog show with one or other of the dogs. Vikki, the oldest, is now 10 and usually does well

locally. She also has a number of rosettes from Crufts, although we did not go this year - Hound day was on the Sunday and I could not get a train that would get me to the NEC in time to show. Although I would have done it a few years ago, I did not fancy the 5am start necessary to do the journey there and back by car in one day and staying overnight makes it very expensive. The young bitch I have (posh name Minard Moonlight Shadow - Moon for short) will be 2 on the 1st May and is delightful. I am hoping to have a litter from her this year - her breeder assures me that she will 'blossom' if she has a litter and that it will calm her down (she is very lively at the moment and is convinced that she is the most important being on the planet - she has a lot to learn!). She is very intelligent and I have never come across a dog that is so good at making it very clear what she wants - and is devious when she wants to get her own way!

Today the weather has taken a turn for the better and the sun has been shining all day. It has been great to be able to have the doors and windows open and get some air into the house. Leo has just got off the settee where he was lying in the sun to find himself somewhere where the sun is not so hot. It is a case of make the most of it while it lasts - we are promised wintery showers and much colder temperatures over the weekend! Things can be very unpredictable up here so it is always a case of taking advantage of good weather while we can!

I am fortunate in that I am keeping very well and finding that there are often not enough hours in the day! My vet found it very amusing when he saw me yesterday. I had taken my friend's dog to have his teeth cleaned on Monday and then collected him and taken him home (my friend is unfortunately far from well and did not want to do the driving) and yesterday I took another friend, who is not well, and her cat who needed a vaccination. He said he thought I should have a special chair in the

waiting room! Fortunately, my animals are all fighting fit!

The Cornerstone is always a welcome distraction when it arrives and I read it with interest. Although there have obviously been some changes since I left, I still recognise many of the names and the activities that go on. It is some time since I was in Witney and now that my brother is not living in Cornwall (I used to break the journey with friends in Freeland) I don't have that excuse any longer, but change is a fact of life and nothing stays the same forever.

Kirkby Lonsdale is a very active market town and on the list of places for coaches to stop, particularly on Thursdays when it is market day. There is always plenty to do be it during the week or at weekends. Throughout the tourist season there are always visitors around some of whom assume that Main Street is pedestrianised and that can make life frustrating for locals who are just trying to get through the town to either go home or further afield. Strangers wander through the town down the centre of the road blissfully unaware that there is a car behind them! The pace of life is slower up here than in Oxfordshire but it suits me these days not to be always watching the clock!

This comes with my by wishes to all who remember me (and in response to Terry's request for more contributions!).

Economy

The wife of a banker asked him why he seemed a bit down. He replied: "I'm a walking economy! My hairline is in recession, my stomach is a victim of inflation, and both of these together are putting me into a deep depression."

Update on Refugee Support in West Oxfordshire

This is a Witney Community Group working with all concerned Witney people including the Churches, co-ordinated by Luci Ashbourne.

Firstly, 4 Syrian families are due to arrive in Witney on 29th June. The homes have been sorted and the council have the keys. Kim (from housing) is just putting together a more personalised 'adopt a room' list as the homes are furnished to varying degrees. Once this is complete it will be shared with the local groups who can take ownership of a room (or two). In the meantime Heather McCulloch from West Oxfordshire District council is trying to locate a unit to store the items. Once a group has gathered all of the items on the list they can be delivered to the unit and stored there but until then they will need to be kept by the groups. This list will be going out next week.

Besom are going to help with many of the larger items but WRAG will be informed of any they can't source so that it can manage trying to source them with the local groups and wider network. This will happen after WRAG have sent out the details of 'adopt a room'. It is being done in short phases so it can be effectively managed.

The welcome packs will be two separate packs for each family. One containing foodstuff (spices etc) and one containing personal hygiene toiletries. Groups can put cards and other things in to make them really welcoming. Heather is creating a list and will be in touch with groups who have offered regarding this. She is incredibly grateful. WRAG could do two of each and Quakers have offered to do two of each, together with other Churches and Community Groups.

Lastly, Heather is trying to identify individuals who may want to support the families personally too. This would be helping welcome them, identifying needs, helping with appointments, and organisation and just generally being a friendly face. Luci is not sure if anyone would be keen to take on a role like this. Luci has offered to support as much as she can but is at work all day. She will meet with them and invite them along to days out with the children when she can. Witney Quakers have also offered to help and can be available in the day time. Juila Morgen from Besom (who is supporting the families already here) will be contacting Luci to give a better idea of what this role looks like.

There is also a local way of helping Syrian refugees still in Syria. Information about collections of food for Syria have been circulated. Dried and tinned foods are warmly welcomed and there are collection points in Witney. 5 Larch Lane, Madley Park, OX28 1AG is one of those collection points. Eleven pallets to help fill a container will be going by lorry from Witney and shipped to Syria at the end of May. The Charity 'One Nation' will be distributing the food in Syria, at Atmeh at the One Nation camp for many orphans and widows.

Other collections of food, clothing and money are also going on in many churches, clubs and in the shops in the town. There is a great deal of very good will which is a joy to see.



The following article, written by Richard Bewes, has been extracted from Parish Pump, and looks back on the extraordinary Wimbledon of 1879, and is entitled:

When the Vicar won Wimbledon

“Lawn Tennis,” wrote J.B. Priestley, “is a name with the mildest associations. It suggests a companion pastime to croquet, a late-Victorian thing, bright with petticoats and delicately clouded with curates.”

So it seemed with the development of Wimbledon’s All England Lawn Tennis Club from its beginnings in 1869 as a Croquet Club, at which “Gentlemen are requested not to play in their shirt sleeves when ladies are present.” However, with the addition of tennis courts to the grounds, the new game gained ascendancy, and the first Wimbledon Tennis Championships took place in 1877.

It was at the third tournament of 1879 that the Rev J.T. Hartley, vicar of Burneston in Yorkshire, won the All-Comers Gentlemen’s Singles out of an entry of 45 competitors at Wimbledon, and repeated the feat the following year.

On the middle Sunday of the tournament, he was obliged to dash back to Yorkshire to deliver his church sermon before returning once again to complete his triumph at the All-England Club.

Never again was a clergyman to win Wimbledon. (Though in their dreams I am sure many clergy have appeared in the final a number of times!)

Today a Bosnian, Novak Djokovic, as world’s Number One, leads a dazzling array of players who - almost universally -

see Wimbledon as ‘the big W’ - that can seemingly make a man or woman immortal.

The following article, author unknown, has been extracted from Parish Pump, and is entitled:

The story behind the Hymn: Lord, for the years

*Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.*

*Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.*

**Lord, for our hopes, the dreams of all our living,
Christ and his kingdom one united aim;
Rulers and peoples bound in high thanksgiving,
Lord of our hopes, our trust is in your Name. ...*

By Timothy Dudley Smith

This well-loved hymn was written in 1967 by the Rev Timothy Dudley Smith, who later became Bishop of Thetford. He later confessed: “I wrote it on a train when I was very pressed for time. I’m thankful if

something I write gets picked up, but I suspect anyone who does something in a rush later regrets that they didn't find time to apply the sandpaper a bit more!"

Dudley Smith had been asked to write a hymn for the centenary service of the Children's Special Service Mission, now Scripture Union, in St Paul's Cathedral. His commission was to write words that could be fitted to Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia*, as it was to be accompanied by an orchestra with this tune in their repertoire. And so – 'Lord for the years' was written.

Dudley Smith need not have worried about lack of time – his lyrics were a 'hit' in the cathedral on the day, and went on to become so well-loved that George Carey chose the hymn to be sung at his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells, and then again later, in 1991, at his consecration as Archbishop in Canterbury Cathedral.

The hymn continued to be widely sung and loved, until in 2002 Timothy Dudley Smith was asked to write an extra verse for it so that it could even be sung around the time of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Many of the words in the hymn are true for the Queen herself, as she celebrates her 90th birthday this month. She does indeed thank God 'for the years your love has kept and guided, urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way'...

And so indeed the 'extra' verse added for the Queen has also held true:

*Lord for our hopes, the dreams of all our living,
Christ and his kingdom one united aim,
Rulers and peoples bound in high thanksgiving,
Lord of our hopes, our trust is in your Name.*

The Kennington & District United Church Choirs present:

a Concert Version, in Costume of

Ruddigore

or The Witch's Curse

by Gilbert & Sullivan

on Friday, June 24th 2016

at 7.30 p.m.

Congregational Church, Witney

**Collection for Christian Aid
Entrance is FREE!**

**An Evening of Music, Sparkle and Fun for
the whole family!**

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