

ROUNDA BOUT



THE COTTERIDGE CHURCH
Witnessing at the Heart of the Community

JANUARY 2015

From the Editors' Desk



Welcome to Roundabout and a very Happy New Year! As is customary at this time of year we've been in reflective mood and have realised that we have now completed four years as Editors. We've been looking back at earlier issues and what a journey we've had. That journey could not have proceeded without the articles and news which we have received. So a huge 'Thank you' to all our contributors and a plea to those of you who have not yet contributed. Let us have your news and your views. You Pennine Way readers are some of the first to see Roundabout as it come hot from the press. Roundabout is for ALL who use the Cotteridge Church and we want it to reflect the experiences of all its readers. The time has never been more right to write.

Please let us have your items for the March issue no later than 25 February. You can put them in the 'W' pigeonhole in the Pennine Way or email them to marfleetwright@tiscali.co.uk.

Steve & Caroline

From the Vestry



As we celebrate Epiphany I think about how I really enjoy art galleries and how my parents enlightened me to the world of art and culture. In the National Gallery there is a painting by the Dutch painter Gossaert, *The Adoration of the Kings*.

The picture is a wonderful reminder and memento of how familiar biblical stories have always been dressed for their own day. I do recall that, in the National Gallery, there are other interpretations of Epiphany, one by Bruegel and another by Botticelli. Gossaert has three Kings. Casper kneels in front of Mary

with his gift of gold. Melchior offers myrrh and Balthazar, the black King, frankincense. Different elements of the Christmas story are included in the painting: Joseph looks on along with the donkey, ox, the shepherds and the sheep. In the sky the angels sing the Gloria and in the very centre there is a star. Just like the star on our tree outside The Cotteridge Church, we continue to carry the light of Christ through numerous activities including the food bank, Junior and Senior Church, Day Care and all activities here, I pray that in 2015 we continue to work our purpose out in the name of Christ.



Joycelyn

Family & Friends

It's a 'Welcome' to Lottie Mai Overall, born on 27 December, and congratulations to her parents Jo and Rob and her Grandma Helen Gale.

Barbara and Geoff Hulme have asked us to share the following: 'We would like to thank all who have supported us with their concern and prayers. It has been a very difficult year. We wish all a very happy and spiritually uplifting new year. God bless you all'.

Jean Dewey would like to thank all who have sent her best wishes for Christmas and for all their lovely Christmas cards.

We are sad to report the death of Goff Nicholls from Beaumont Road URC. Our thoughts and prayers are with Esme and family and church members.

The 3C's café, volunteers and customers were saddened to hear of the death at the end of December of Rosemarie Allison. Rosemarie had been a volunteer on the Monday and Wednesday 12-2 team for over 12 months and was much loved by all who knew her.

Florence Semar Poorman - 1933-2014: 'She was so kindly'*

Affectionately known as Florice and Flo, she was born on the 27 July 1933 in St Ann, Jamaica, the second to youngest child of six.

Florice was brought up in a household that was deeply religious, with a strong work ethic. Strict but fair with an abundance of love, love of farming, cooking, and dressmaking. All these qualities were instilled from a young age and would be drawn on in later life.

Florice spent her early years with her paternal grandparents. After leaving school she decided to pursue her ambition to be a seamstress, which she was able to do in Spanish Town. In 1956 Florice came to England and settled in the Midlands where she met and later married Clifton Poorman.

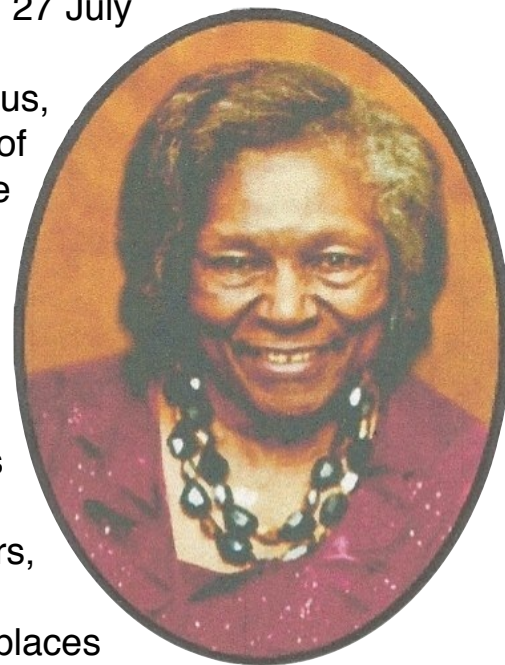
She was able to take up posts in a variety of business sectors, such as manufacturing, catering, and the medical profession.

Florice had a great love of travel, journeying to several places around the world including a fabulous trip to Las Vegas. She also continued to enjoy her sewing and baking.

Florice was at her happiest with her extended family: children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. To all who called her a friend, she was true and loyal. Known to be a keen listener, she gave wise counsel.

She will be missed, but we are better for having her in our lives.

(* At the funeral, several people were heard describing Florice in this way)



So what happens now? The future ministry at Cotteridge

Last July, after the departure of Rev Jacky Embrey, a small group known as the 'Staffing Consultative Committee' was appointed by the Joint Church Council to consider the next steps.

At that stage we thought the job was (relatively!) simple. It was to fill the URC vacancy of the Cotteridge Church with a new URC minister. We had to update the 'profile' of the church, send it to the URC hierarchy, upload it to the appropriate website and wait for the offers of a new minister to roll in.

Except it wasn't that simple. It turned out to be far more challenging and more exciting than we could have imagined. We did start by looking at the previous 'Profile' document and realised that this document did not really represent the current thinking, or enthusiasms or directions of the current Cotteridge Church. At a significant meeting after Sunday service in September and with the help of Rev Neil Riches, church members clarified thoughts on the current and future priorities of our Church.

Then as we started rewriting and began looking at other church profiles out on the internet, we were asked to attend a meeting of the three denominations which make up the Cotteridge Church: the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. Through discussions with this group, it became obvious that we were being challenged and were challenging ourselves to look further into the model of the future ministry at Cotteridge.

A new crossroads

What has become clear to the whole of the Joint Church Council, with whom we have shared ideas and prayers, is that we are again at some kind of crossroads and that now may be the time to change the pattern of ministry we have had for the last 25 years or so. In the same way that we had to take a huge leap of faith when we knocked 2 churches down and joined 3 separate churches into one, we are suggesting that we look for a different kind of ministry and a different kind of person to help the Cotteridge Church to move forward towards the next 25 years.

We are suggesting that we look to appointing a URC or Methodist trained community related worker who will begin to help us in knitting together the community initiatives that have sprung up at Cotteridge with the worshipping faith-based community centred around Sunday acts of worship. This person would have a church trained background, (hopefully) would be entirely based at Cotteridge (although might be part-time) and would have a focus on the older adult focused ministry that we have been discussing at Cotteridge for some time now.

This person would be appointed on a fixed term contract of about 5 years. It does not mean that we would never have a URC minister again. It might be that the next time there is a vacancy in the team, we look to appoint a URC minister and a Methodist based community worker. What does seem certain is that unless we recognise the need for change in the leadership of the church and the nature of the church community, we are not preparing the Cotteridge Church for the future.

We are expecting to hold a Church meeting in the next couple of months to update everyone further and to answer any further questions that you may have. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to talk to any member of the Staffing Consultative Committee about your ideas or concerns.

Lin Brown, Helen Gale, Primrose Garrow, Doreen Hancox, Sandra Walton

Christmas Decorations at Cotteridge Church

Much has been said about the incredible Christmas Tree outside church, and not all of it polite - comments ranged from 'Just how many men does it take to put up a Christmas Tree' to 'What a fiasco- they can't even get all the lights to work'. However, on the positive side, many people have said 'Wow - that's amazing - thank you so much'.

There has also been talk about who provided the tree, so, better late than never, here is the official explanation.

Birmingham City Council declared that there was no money in the budget for trees, lights and decorations in Cotteridge for Christmas and New Year.

Lifford Business Associates (LBA) - formerly Cotteridge Traders - decided this was simply not good enough and so they asked local shopkeepers and the Church to contribute a relatively small amount of money to, at least, provide a tree.

Enough money was raised for a tree and lights. Next time they hope to have enough for street lamp decorations as well.

LBA also provided the smaller outside tree for us to use as a Memory Tree and they even supplied the baubles and labels for people to remember those no longer with us.

Inside church we have a team to whose members we all owe a huge 'Thank you':

Bob Hotchkiss and his brother who somehow managed to tether the huge tree to a pillar in the Malvern Room. Colin our caretaker who went up and down the ladder an awful lot of times to fix the beautiful lights and decorations on the higher part of the tree, and was then joined by Shirley our cook who helped with the lower level decorations; Lin Brown for the beautiful garlands around the pillars in the Malvern room and Chris and Babs from the Garden Gang who decorated the smaller trees in and around the Pennine Way.

We also had a special team known to those of us in and around the Pennine Way as 'Irene's little helpers' (Len, Chris, John and Bob). They are four of the coffee bar customers who were always on hand to fetch and carry whatever was needed even if it did mean going up and down the stairs a hundred times (or so it seemed) to carry all the trees and decorations up to the ground floor. So my thanks to all who helped

Next year, some of us may not be here, or even if we are, we would still appreciate any offers of help to decorate church, please don't be shy to offer.

Irene - Church Administrator



Church Day Centre.

With the generous donation secured by our Fund Raiser, we will soon be taking delivery of a greenhouse, to be sited in our Church garden!!!! This is very exciting, and will mean, with the help of volunteers, member of the Day Centre will be able to take a more active part in growing plants from seed etc.



If you are at all interested in being part of this new project, please see Michelle, Day Centre co-ordinator, or Chris Pascal.

The members and staff celebrated Yuletide with a number of parties, lunches and outings.

The annual trip to The Rose & Crown, Lickey Hills, was enjoyed by all, with presents, good food & entertainment.

We do have vacancies most week-days, and if anyone would like to join the Centre, please contact Michelle, or Irene in the Church office. Why not just call in and see if you would like to become part of the group.

Chris Pascal

The B30 Food Bank: New Year Resolutions for 2015



New Year resolutions only really make sense when you feel you have some control over your life, when you are feeling optimistic or when you think that life could change. For a lot of our foodbank clients, life in 2015 doesn't look like that. According to Polly Toynbee, if the current government wins the next election, "an unthinkable £12bn is to be cut from benefits, all from working age families, most in work, making foodbanks a fixture" (Guardian, 9 Dec 2014).

So what have we learnt from our first whole year of operations during 2014 and what would be our New Year

Resolutions for 2015?

1. Never underestimate the resources of your local churches. The largest donations during 2014 came from the B30 Churches. Our new warehouse is as a result of the generosity of a local church. All the foodbanks in Birmingham are the result of local church actions.
2. Never turn down any volunteers. Volunteers are the life blood of the project. Everyone has different skills. Volunteers have issues in their own lives, but they are amazingly loyal and without them the project would fold. From bishops to bankers and from social workers to shop workers, we have such a range of talent. A client arriving at the foodbank speaking only Spanish was greeted in Spanish and then handed to a 'meet & greeter' who continued the conversation in Spanish!
3. Never prejudge a client. The stories of deprivation and survival are incredible. You never know what is going on in a client's life.
4. Never underestimate how many people might walk through the Cotteridge Church doors when the foodbank is open. On the Friday before Christmas, 47 people turned up at the foodbank and we fed 123 people in two hours - one per minute!
6. Never undervalue all the ways in which local churches and charities offer support to people in need. So, through a person coming into the Cotteridge Church for the foodbank, we might encourage them to come back to 'Parents and Toddlers', to the 3Cs coffee bar, to the Employment Club at the Pavilions, the Seniors group at Kings Norton or any one of the numerous church-based activities.

7. Never forget the basis of what we do. “This is not an optional activity, but a fundamental part of our witness and service”. (Archbishop Justin Welby, December 2014)

Helen Gale

Birmingham Faiths Covenant



Birmingham is an outstanding city in so many ways. The photo was taken following the signing of the first covenant in the UK between a local authority and faith groups. The covenant was drafted by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Faith & Society, chaired by Stephen Timms MP, and pledges a joint commitment between faith communities and Birmingham City Council to build trust and work together to face the challenges ahead.

The decade ahead will see our country facing new demands on public health, social care, education, employment and community inclusion, which means that we need to unlock the potential of every part of our society to work in partnership towards solutions. It is increasingly recognised that faith-based organisations play an important role as providers and advocates, particularly on behalf of the most vulnerable members of our society. We were privileged to represent the Birmingham Council of Faiths at the launch

Peter & Jean Rookes

The Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Salisbury.



I had a wonderful Boxing Day outing to Salisbury Cathedral, accompanied by son John and his wife. This was my first visit and although I knew about its famous spire and had seen replicas of the famous paintings by Constable and Turner, I have to confess that I was unprepared for its overall splendour both inside and out - the stonework and carving is amazing, especially when you consider the masons had no mechanical tools, cranes, proper scaffolding or laser measuring devices etc.

The whole cathedral sits on only a four foot deep foundation, on a gravel bed, which sits on bedrock. The water table is just 2 feet below the floor of the nave, and thus all the commemorative stone tablets are just that - there is no body buried beneath them - except that of Ted Heath (modern

technology coming to the assistance!).

It numbers amongst its features the world's oldest working clock mechanism and a wooden Madonna & Child (both date from the 14 Century) and the 1980 Prisoners of Conscience window dedicated to those who have suffered because of their faith. In the nave, beneath



the spire is a large font, installed in 2008 for the 750th anniversary of its consecration. Water pours steadily and constantly from each corner, so that the surface is a smooth reflective mirror. Gazing into this mirror gives a view of the roof, and much of the upper walls also, so it is easy to appreciate the perfect symmetry of the vaulting, and the meticulous detail of the decoration.

The Cloisters (which are the largest in Britain) are magnificent and unusual in that they have never been part of a monastic building. The adjacent Chapter House proudly displays a real copy of the Magna Carta - very

neatly written in small handwriting, signed in 1215, and one of possibly up to 30 copies which were distributed throughout the country to remind the people that they had freedoms and rights.

The highlight (literally!) of the visit was the 90 minute Tower Tour, when a guide took a small party right up into the spire. Sadly, once they took a good look at me they were afraid I would never get down again, so it was the young who had that experience.



When they built the tower and spire, reinforcement braces were made beneath it, but its 6000 tons of stone has caused part of the nave to sink a little. The original mediaeval wooden scaffolding is still within the spire. It does not link at all to the sides, but its 6 tons hangs from the very top - designed to hold the spire to the building securely, which it has done ever since. Needless to say the views from up there are amazing - even though the weather was far from clement.



There was a delightful Christmouse trail, inviting children to follow the path of the little Christmas Mouse as he seeks the baby Jesus. Little mice were hidden by interesting and relevant artefacts, and a leaflet gave lots of clues to their positions. When all the mice had been found, children could claim a prize from the Cathedral shop.

For me the Cathedral remains first and foremost a place of worship. Its atmosphere is warm and friendly and it is a living testament to the endurance of Christianity.

If you are ever in that area do visit. The car park is free, and there is a reasonably priced and good restaurant. If you want to partake of wooden and stone spiral stairways with and without a handrail to the heights, you will have to book a £10 ticket. You are assured of a wonderful day.

Celia Lester

BVSC Ageing Better Initiative

As some of you know, we are both actively involved with BVSC (Birmingham Voluntary Services Council – Peter as a Non-Executive Director) and we thought that we should bring the Ageing Better Initiative to your attention. This is a Big Lottery Fund (BIG) investment, funding community-led approaches that enable older people who are most at risk of social isolation and loneliness to lead more fulfilling lives across 15 local authority areas in England. In Birmingham, BVSC (Birmingham Voluntary Services Council) is leading a cross sector partnership which has been successful in securing an investment of £6,000,000 from the Big Lottery Fund to help reduce social isolation of older people.



So far in Birmingham we have submitted our vision and strategy for Ageing Better in Birmingham, which has been created through the Ageing Better partnership to meet the following outcomes:

- Older people are less isolated.
- Older people are actively involved in communities with their views and participation valued more highly.
- Older people are more engaged in the design and delivery of services.
- Services that help reduce isolation are better planned, co-ordinated and delivered.
- Better evidence is available to influence the services that help reduce isolation for older people in the future.

Our BVSC model is based on recognising the talent, skills and hidden abilities of older people, and working to make communities strong, more resilient and better able to tackle the underlying problems that cause isolation. The BVSC team is working with 10 older people who are currently experiencing isolation to hear their voices and stories to inform the development of our vision. Once our strategy has been approved by the Big Lottery Fund, we will be seeking partners who are enthusiastic about sharing our vision.

Peter & Jean Rookes

Boys' Brigade

Thanks to everybody who made a donation to our recent BB week. We raised more than £600, which includes money donated on our BB 'Gift Aid' page. Congratulations to Tom



Bunn and Euan Clayton who both collected the most. After the success of the last two years we are again collecting unwanted clothes during January. Clean items should be put in black bags and brought to church on Friday 6 February between 6.00pm and 7.15pm when they will be loaded on to a van. Or you can bring your bags on Sunday 1 February and we will store them till Friday. The clothes will be sold in the Boys' Brigade shops or sent overseas.

Tom Bunn and Jayden Rawlinson-Cook have now qualified for the President's Badge and they will be presented by our own BB president Mike Meadows on Sunday 1st February at the parade service.

At the Christmas Fair the BB raised £121 on the tombola stall for church funds. Many thanks to everybody who donated prizes or supported us on the day.

The session closed with our Christmas party and BB starts again on Friday 9 January when new members would be most welcome.



Bob Hotchkiss

Leprosy Mission Stamp Appeal

In 2013, the Leprosy Mission made more than £120,000 from donated Christmas stamps. Considering that fewer cards are sent than previously this is a significant amount. If you have any Christmas stamps you've saved, you can put them in the box by the pigeon holes at the end of the Pennine Way – thank you.



FAITHS FOR FUN EVENT 2015

7th glorious year

For all youngsters aged 7½ to 12 years of different faiths to have fun and learn together about other faiths

Sun 1st March 2015, 1.30 - 5.30 p.m

Hamstead Hall Academy (previously known as Community Learning Centre), Handsworth

Event organised by Birmingham Scout Association
in conjunction with Birmingham Council of Faiths

Certificate awarded to verify 3 parts of World Faiths Badge

Refreshments

Games in Spacious Sports Hall

Cost £2 per participant.

Further details and registration forms from Dr Peter & Mrs Jean Rookes Tel 477 2282, or e-mail pjrookes@gmail.com



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