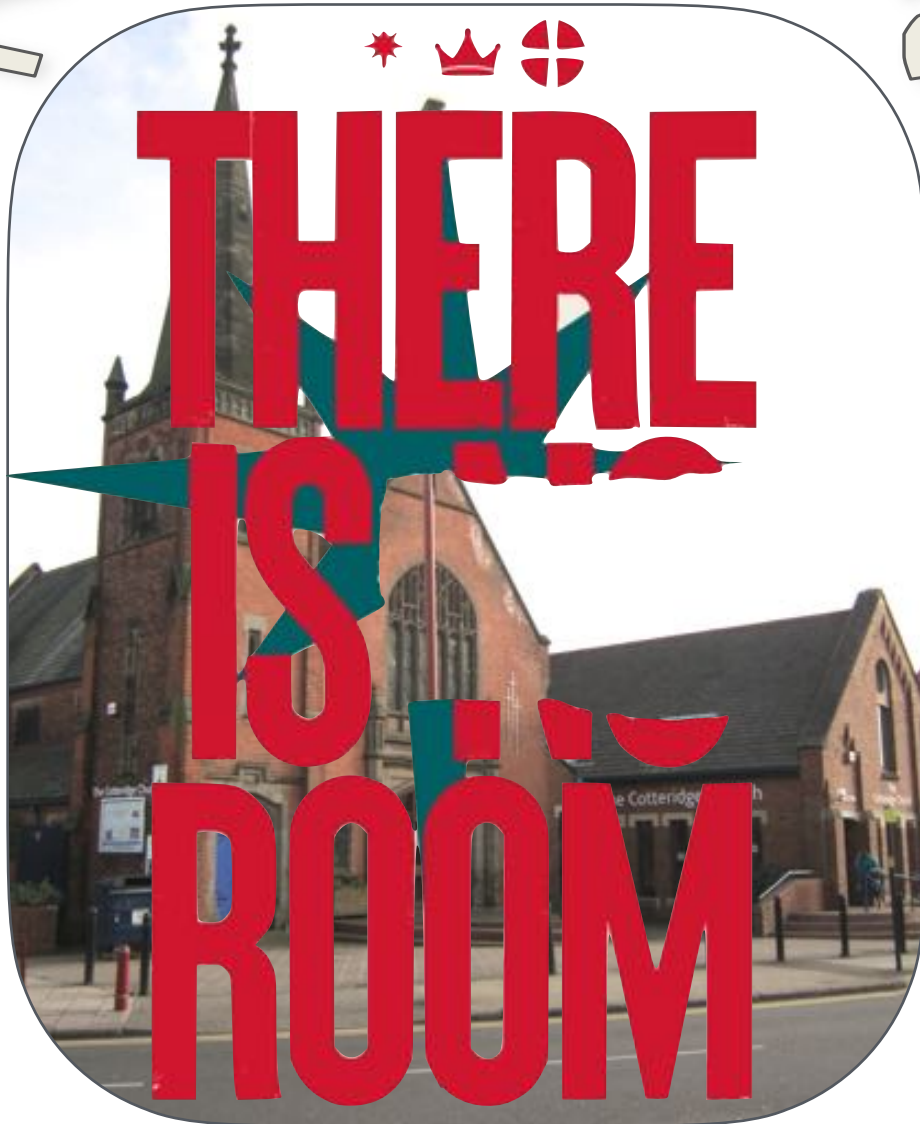


Roundabout



**The Cotteridge Church**  
**Witnessing at the Heart of the Community**

**January 2023**

## Roger's Message

Now the man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge; he was a kind, decent, mostly good man. He was generous to his family and upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that stuff about God becoming a man, which the churches proclaim at Christmas time. It just didn't make sense, and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. "I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite and that he would much rather just stay at home. And so he stayed, and they went to the midnight service.



Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier. Then he went back to his fireside chair to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another and another — sort of a thump or a thud. At first he thought someone must have been throwing snowballs against his living room window.

But when he went to the front door to investigate, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window. Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it.

Quickly he put on a coat and galoshes and then he tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them. So he hurried back to the house, fetched breadcrumbs and sprinkled them on the snow. He made a trail to the brightly lit, wide-open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the breadcrumbs and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow.

He tried catching them. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them and waving his arms. Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn. And then he realised that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me - that I am not trying to hurt them but to help them. But how?

Any move he made tended to frighten and confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed, because they feared him.

"If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see and hear and understand."

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow.

"Now I understand," he whispered. "Now I see why you had to do it."



WHEN THE SONG OF THE ANGELS IS  
STILLED,  
WHEN THE STAR IN THE SKY IS GONE,  
WHEN THE KINGS AND PRINCES ARE  
HOME, WHEN THE SHEPHERDS ARE BACK  
WITH THEIR FLOCK,  
THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS:  
TO FIND THE LOST,  
TO HEAL THE BROKEN,  
TO FEED THE HUNGRY,  
TO RELEASE THE PRISONER,  
TO REBUILD THE NATIONS,  
TO BRING PEACE AMONG OTHERS,  
TO MAKE MUSIC IN THE HEART.  
-HOWARD THURMAN





## Friends & Family

Myra Dean has died and her funeral was held on Monday 28th November. You will find a Eulogy to her later in the magazine. We are also very sad to announce the loss of baby Lily Ivy June Rackham Woodhouse. We send our prayers and best wishes to all friends and families.

We send congratulations to Geoff Hulme who has celebrated his 90th birthday recently.[Geoff was a member of the URC when it became part of the Cotteridge Church]. He sent us a message:

“Happy Xmas and a successful new year to you and your family. I am very glad to get news from the Roundabout to keep me in touch with all of my old friends at Cotteridge Church. May God's blessing be with the church as it struggles to serve the community in the 21st Century. You are all very often in my thoughts and prayers. Best Wishes Geoff Hulme”



We wish all our readers a Happy 2023 , and hope that it will bring us more peace, stability, and prosperity in our lives that 2022 has.

2022 has been a challenging year for all of us.

I would like to pay tribute to all those who have died during that time. Firstly, of course for our Queen who supported us for so many years. Also for those connected to our church: Phyllis Beckstein; Irene Spooner; Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Jean Purdy; June Milner; Stephen Wigzell; Ivor Ravenhill; Len Salkeld; Sheila Smith; Rod Simkin; Barry Jones; Pete Williams; Myra Dean, and Lily Ivy June Rackham Woodhouse. We pray for all their families and friends, and for those who have lost others too.

As editor of Roundabout, I would like to thank wholeheartedly all the many contributors to the magazine for their support and articles over the past years, also to continue that for the future. Also we are always delighted to add new contributors, and to receive suggestions for improvement of the magazine. What would you like to read here?

**Tuesday Fellowship** is a group which is open to all. We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 2.00pm in the Cotswold Room and below is a list of dates with the speakers /activities feel free to come and join us.

Thank you

Linda

### **TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP DATES Jan - Feb 2023**

24th January

AGM

14th February

Poetry with a Valentines theme

28th February

C2U will talk about their work.

## MYRA DEAN

Myra was born in Warwick in August 1943, the only child of Jessie and William Dean. Her father was stationmaster at Tile Hill, Coventry, and railways and travel were to form an important part of her life.

Not long afterwards, in 1947, her father was appointed stationmaster at Kings Norton on the old GWR line from Birmingham to Bristol and beyond, and the family moved into the Station House.

In the early 60's British Rail was looking to sell various properties, and as a result her father decided to look for a house nearby. The family moved to Westhill Road in Kings Norton in 1966 and Myra spent the rest of her life in the Kings Norton area.

She went to Cotteridge Primary School, and even at that early age, she was showing an aptitude for numbers, which she would put to good use later on. From Cotteridge she moved on to Bartley Green Grammar School for Girls where again she shone at maths.

On leaving school she joined what was then the Midland Bank. She joined as a cashier and over the years was involved in many aspects of customer service. She was clearly a valued member of staff, and amongst her papers we found a number of commendations from managers at the bank, as well as letters from customers expressing their gratitude for the help Myra provided over many years.

When the bank reorganised, Myra took advantage of the opportunity to take early retirement. She finally left the bank in June 1996, but she never really retired. The bank had been an enormous part of her life and in retirement, she maintained the link to the bank through former colleagues, through her various banks, as well as through the association for former employees.

Early retirement enabled Myra to more fully indulge in and enjoy her many interests and activities. She was an inveterate traveller, and if it involved trains, so much the better. From the time she left school, she went on two or three holidays every year without fail.

She travelled widely in Europe, North America as well as throughout the UK. She was quite an adventurous person. Her travels included helicopter flights over the Niagara Falls, two trips on the Orient Express, and a flight on Concorde.

She was sometimes accompanied on her travels by friends, but she was equally comfortable travelling by herself. She was a very independent person as those who knew her will testify!

Myra lived at number 10 Westhill Road, and back in the 1940s the resident at number 97 had been none other than the Rev. W V Awdry, the author of the Thomas the Tank Engine books.

Myra corresponded with him - given their mutual interests, and met him in 1988 when he came up for a Thomas event to raise funds for the St Nicholas Church roof.

The Cotteridge Church, (previously Kings Norton Methodist Church), played an important part in her life. She was one of a large number of young people who were active in the Methodist Church. She joined the Girls' Life Brigade in 1952, and having worked her way through, she became an Officer in the Brigade.



As a teenager, she was a member of the Youth Club which involved weekly activities, camping holidays in Snowdonia, rambling and other outdoor pursuits. The members often used to go back to The Station House, and one of the group recalls the house shaking when trains passed through.

Myra was a leading member of the banner making group, and these are on display around the Cotteridge Church.

She used her musical and financial talents in support of the Women's Fellowship, as well as being a regular attender at Sunday morning worship.

Myra had a wide range of other interests and all the groups she was involved with, were represented at her funeral.

She produced beautiful handmade greeting cards which she sold to raise money for good causes, mainly St. Mary's Hospice.

She was a member of the Tartan Scottish Country Dancing Club for over 30 years, an active volunteer at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital and at the Birmingham 30 Foodbank. With reduced mobility, she continued to support the Foodbank, provided it was a job where she could sit down! Her job for many years was to keep the stock of coloured forms used at the Food Bank up to date and in order.

A tribute to Myra would be incomplete without mention of a project that took up a good deal of her time. She compiled a comprehensive and detailed family tree, fully supported by birth, marriage and death certificates, and there is an accompanying narrative with photographs. The family history covers many branches of her family, and the earliest record goes back as far as 1750.

For such a private person, Myra got involved in many activities and good causes. As a result, she touched the lives of very many people and she will be missed.

Norman Mann

## Gas Leak Friday 2nd December 2022



Whilst we were setting up for the Christmas Fayre, the road between the islands was completely closed for several hours. Both roundabouts could be circled, but each had just 2 exits - ours to Kings Norton or Northfield, the other to Bournville or Stirchley. Buses had to make strange detours. You could smell the gas outside. An engineer from Cadent came to see if there were any leaks in our supply too. - fortunately not, so we could get on with the Fayre set up. Again - fortunately - the road was opened again before the Fayre took place.

C.L.





# Cotteridge at Christmas



The Cotteridge Christmas Fayre took place on Saturday 3rd December. We had a very enjoyable time, and made about £1100. There were lots of stalls to look at , including





Then on Sunday 4th we all enjoyed a dramatic

### Christmas Service,

led by Barbara Calvert, and based on the Methodist theme of ~~THERE IS NO~~ ROOM, which included a modern dramatisation of Dickens' "Scrooge", enabling many to show their acting skills, under Rita's watchful eye.



This also included nativity scenes, with young actors volunteering from the audience/congregation.





The Shepherds



Mary & Joseph



The Three Wise Men



Many thanks to all who took part, from all who enjoyed it.  
Thanks too to Jonathan Turner, who took many of the photos.





# WARM SPACE

## COTTERIDGE



**Monday - Thursday**  
**8:30am - 5:00pm**  
**Friday**  
**8:30am - 1:30pm**



**FREE WI-FI**

**FREE ENTRY**

**HOT MEALS**  
**UNTIL 1:30**



**CAFE**

**WORK SPACES**  
**AVAILABLE**

**BOARD**  
**GAMES**

**WELCOMING**



**FAMILY FILMS**



**24 Pershore Road South**  
**Cotteridge**  
**Birmingham**  
**B30 3EJ**

**The Cotteridge Church**



**0121-433-5518**



**administrator@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk**

**#warmwelcome**

**#wearecotteridge**

**#community**

**#thecotteridgechurch**



## Saplings

Saplings, our church stay & play group, returned in the summer. We are now back in full flow with lots of babies and toddlers, along with their parents, grandparents and carers. We've received lots of positive feedback from these new families, particularly commenting on how lovely it is to have so much space, which they find very relaxing.

One parent left the following review on Facebook:

"Fantastic stay and play group, wide variety of toys for the children to play with, fun activities and great to socialise with other parents. Hot drinks, juice and a snack provided which everyone enjoys. Sessions end with a story and singing. Today was about woodland animals and my son got to make a hedgehog. He thoroughly enjoyed this activity and then we had play-dough to play with after."



Our themes this term ranged from Dinosaurs, to Autumn and Outer space. We also had our usual Cake themed week, from which we donated £35 to the Macmillan Coffee Morning appeal.

We meet on Fridays in term time from 9.30 to 11.30. We now operate a booking system on Eventbrite. If you know anyone who would like to come, please let them know. If you would like to help on a rota either on Friday mornings, or with the set up on Thursday evenings at 6pm, please get in touch with Sue at

[sue.clayton@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk](mailto:sue.clayton@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk)

## Services in January and February

	1st January	8th January	15th January	22nd January	29th January
10:30 am	Mr John Cooper Parade	Revd M. Claridge All Age Service HC	Revd M. Claridge Morning Worship	Revd R. Collins Covenant Service HC	Revd M. Claridge Morning Worship
	5th February	12th February	19th February	26th February	
10:30 am	Revd Barbara Calvert Parade	Revd M. Claridge HC	Ms Judith Bell Morning Worship	Revd R. Collins HC	

Tuesdays: 10.00 am: There will be a short service of Holy Communion at the Church.

Wednesdays at 7.30 pm: There will be online worship on Zoom.

Contact Revd Mike Claridge <[mike.claridge@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk](mailto:mike.claridge@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk)> or via the church web site to give details of online services, and zoom interactions etc.



The Cotteridge Church  
**Joint Church Council**  
**Summary of Proceedings 18th October 2022**

## Introduction

The Meeting was held in Hybrid Mode.

## Key Decisions

1. The meeting decided to decline the National Churches Trust grant and initiate the required roof repairs independently.
2. The JCC agreed a pay rise for the Kitchen Staff.
3. The JCC approved the purchasing of a new Freezer and Electric Oven for the Kitchen.
4. The Meeting approved the purchase of a new boiler for the Day Care Centre.
5. The meeting agreed that the Photocopier should be replaced with a used, cheaper device.

## Summary Proceedings

1. Peter Childs attended the meeting in his role as the Chair of the Property and Management (P&M) to discuss the required property repairs to the church identified by Quinquennial inspection. Peter explained that David Pycock had applied for a National Churches Trust grant of £10,000 to help with the repairs to the roof, but this grant came with a lot of conditions which the meeting thought excessive. Peter recommended we decline the grant and initiate the roof repairs independently.
2. The treasury team reported on the Church's Finances and that they still include the Foodbank funds which would soon be reported independently as the Foodbank was in the process of becoming a separate charity. It was noted that the Day Centre Staff had received a pay rise, but the kitchen staff had not.
3. The meeting reviewed the report from the Community Services Committee and noted the fact that Catering Services were still running in deficit but were encouraged to see that a project was in progress to improve the current offering and hopefully attract new customers. It was also reported that some of the kitchen appliances needed replacing, most notably one of the gas ovens needs replacing with an electric version and a more efficient freezer needs to be obtained. Jonathan Turner has been to the Church to take photographs to be used to publicise Saplings and the Day Care Centre and hopefully to increase footfall at both.
4. The meeting then reviewed the Property and Management Report and learnt that the Day Care Centre boiler had been out of action for several months and needs replacing with a more energy efficient version.
5. The meeting discussed the Administrator's Report and the problems with the Photocopier and whether it should be replaced with a used device at a reduced rate.
6. The next meeting of the Joint Church Council will be on 8th December 2022 at 19:30 and will be a Hybrid meeting.

This Summary is authorised by: Neil Walters (Chair of the Cotteridge Church Joint Church Council)



## Boys' Brigade



Our B.B. Week /Sponsored sleepover held in November was a staggering success with £1,500 raised for our capitation fee to HQ, and our funds. Phil Adams' bake sale made £150. Many thanks to the parents, church members and friends of the company for their generous donations.



At the Church Christmas Fayre, the B.B. again ran the tombola stall and raised £115. Again, our thanks go for the donation of prizes and for the many people who just had a go. Three of the lads had their



own bottle stall. The session ended with our Christmas party and we start back on 6th January.

New members will be most welcome.

Bob Hotchkiss



## Structure and Routine

As many of you may know I retired recently, I only told one person at church what I was planning to do, but as Olive Penderghast noted in the film Easy A “my terminological inexactitude accelerated with velocity” and soon everyone at Church was congratulating me. So let me put the record straight. Yes, I have retired, but first I took voluntary redundancy. The company I worked for was, and is, a large US based IT services company and they had noticed that there was no IT work happening in the UK. Basically the UK is a digital desert, - just another sign of decline of the UK as a world player. Anyway, with no IT project work the company decided it didn't need IT Project Managers; so decided to run a work force reduction programme, and I was in a pool with two other, younger Project Managers. I decided to put in for voluntary redundancy to ensure that the other two retained their employment, as I could take early retirement without affecting how much pension I would receive. I think the thing that annoyed most of the UK employees was the company, DXC, had just gone into a sponsorship deal with

Manchester United for a lot of money: their logo can now be seen on the club shirts.

Anyway, I had been in full time, continuous employment since I was nineteen and am finding it difficult now, as employment gave my life structure and a constant routine to follow. I am determined not to end up watching daytime television so intend to build a new weekly routine, which so far includes delivering the weekly Worship Cards to Church members in West Heath each Tuesday, helping set-up Saplings each Thursday and helping the wonderful Steph run the Coffee Bar on Friday. I also intend to read more and finally learn to play the Banjo properly. Anyway, I am sure my interests will expand over the next few months:- I may even take up painting again. At the moment I can't understand how retired people can survive without getting bored!

Neil

### Sermon On The Mount updated.

My late brother, Geoff, was a great person. He was charming, kind, had a wicked sense of humour and nothing got him down, not even when he was diagnosed with MS. He didn't feel sorry for himself and didn't ask "Why me?"

But this story starts years ago when he was a pupil at Cotteridge School.

He came home one day and told my parents he had been accused in front of the whole class of stealing a watch. My mother knew there had to be a mistake. Honesty was a major thing in our family (I got into big trouble once for lying to my Granny). Next day my mother was up at the school, explaining to the teacher that whatever else Geoff might do he just would not take anything that belonged to someone else. The teacher would not relent and for weeks Geoff was under a cloud, added to which some of his classmates were very spiteful. Then one day Geoff came home and explained that everything was now OK. The boy who had stolen the watch had been found. When my mother asked if the teacher had apologised Geoff shook his head and said it didn't matter. Next day my mother was up at the school. She asked why Geoff had not received an apology. He had been accused in front of the whole class and before my mother left he had got his apology in front of the whole class. When I went to Cotteridge School I didn't like that teacher. I thought she was horrible because of what she had done to my brother.

Fast forward to the 1990s. Geoff's MS had become so bad that he had to retire early. He was a chartered surveyor and valuer with Birmingham City Council and he loved his job but it was getting more and more difficult for him to get around. He reluctantly accepted the fact. However, he was asked if he would do voluntary work on the phone. He had years of expertise and a network of contacts. He really enjoyed helping people with housing and repair problems and advising them about tribunals. He felt that he was still useful. One day he said to me, "You'll never guess who I've helped." When he said the name, I couldn't believe it. How could he be helpful to that horrible teacher.

He just laughed and said, "Haven't you heard of turning the other cheek?"

Rita Sutton



# Climate Change Emergency

What we do matters!

## **HAPPY ECO YEAR 2023**

I hope you had a good Christmas Celebration and are looking forward to this New year and all we can do together to make that difference.

I was so aware over Christmas of all the packaging that was used both in our food and gifts:-lots to recycle but so much that was a waste of resources. Then when we opened our crackers on Christmas Day I was so pleased to see at the base of every cracker joke an ECO TIP. Amazing!

When we read them out it made a good discussion time around the table ...some of them were:

Shop plastic-free. Carry folded re-useable bags.

Recycle responsibly - separate items carefully

Change your cooking habits:- plan in advance.

Eat seasonal food whenever possible.

Change your lightbulbs to LED.

Well done to that cracker manufacturer!

So lots to think about as we go into January.

- \* If you have a real Christmas tree take it to Cotteridge park for recycling.
- \*With energy costs so high - time to think about how these can be reduced? Turning off lights, turning down thermostats. Walking when possible instead of using the car.
- \***Try to make an Eco -resolution. Here are some ideas.**
- \*Be wiser when shopping:- only buy what you need
- \*Reduce your consumption of single-use plastics.
- \*Reduce your food waste. Freeze left overs, make soup.
- \*Try swapping to an eco-product.
- \*Have a meat free Monday:- go vegetarian one day a week
- \*Think about your travel habits, walk when possible or use public transport.
- \*Look out for articles and programmes that are talking about the effects of climate change and reducing our carbon footprint.
- \* Take time to be outside:- look around at the green surrounding us.
- \*shop zero waste at refill stores when possible.

Just some ideas to consider but I really hope you can try one or more and make those Eco Resolutions a Reality this January.

## **Remember we can all make a difference !**

“The earth is resilient. We can save our planet if we commit to it.” Yvon Chouinard  
Sandra Walton

## News from our Peruvian Friends:

Dear Everyone

This WAS going to be a Christmas letter. But things in Peru are, as you know, not exactly normal right now so it actually has a lot of up-to-date news as well...

As many of you will know, Peru has suddenly become an item of world news. On 7 Dec, the day Congress was going to discuss the President's impeachment for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time since he took office in July 2021, I was sitting on a bus on the way to the Cathedral to set up and generally get things ready for the evening Carol Service when one of the people due to read sent a message - "Are we still having the Carol Service?" A somewhat confusing question since I was totally unaware of anything that would mean NO. I was enlightened a few minutes later by a call from Juan Carlos who put me in the picture... There followed a few bizarre hours which included

- Chaos as people tried to get home (in the totally understandable fear that troops on the streets could well lead to some very nasty things)
- The vote by Congress (who had refused to accept the President's decision to close Congress, on the (defendable) grounds that this was an unconstitutional move) to impeach him
- The arrest of the previous President by his own police escort, thus avoiding him reaching the Mexican Embassy and asylum; this news was greeted (in Lima) by the equivalent of cheers on car horns (all those people in traffic jams...) (He is currently in preventive detention in a prison which formerly held just one prisoner – ex-President Fujimori; so it is still a prison exclusively for ex-Presidents but now has 2 residents)
- The swearing-in of the new President Dina Boluarte (previously vice-President)

So by 4pm on 7 Dec things seemed fairly calm. And indeed life DID continue. We had the postponed Carol Service on 11<sup>th</sup> Dec, and schools etc worked normally on Monday and Tuesday. However, trouble was brewing. Discontent was not only against the previous President. 83% of people want new GENERAL elections, involving both President and Congress, but it was clear that most Congress members are not thinking of moving on until they have to (July 2026). So, in some areas of Peru (mostly those already known for disturbances and for violent uprisings), the unrest began, leading to the declaration of a state of emergency for 30 days with a curfew in most of the country (though not Lima). In Lima there is still mostly calm, but parts of Peru, especially in the South (eg Arequipa) are cut off, with damage to government buildings, power lines and other things. "Collateral damage" from the blocking of main roads and closure of provincial airports means that the Christmas Box boxes, prepared and ready to go to the Arequipa and Cusco areas, are now stuck in the Cathedral until ???, and Idú from Jesús el Nazareno who went to spend her birthday with her mother is now stuck there, again until ???





Please continue to pray,

- That the violence will cease
- That those stranded in different parts of Peru be able to continue their journey
- That Congress, who REJECTED a motion to bring elections forward to Dec 2023 (instead of April 2026), would listen to the people whom it has been elected to represent, and reconsider this decision
- That the “professional” troublemakers who form a significant part of those causing the unrest would be prevented from continuing
- That the interim government would listen to good advice
- For the economic effects of the unrest. It has been calculated that Peru loses over US\$ 25 million DAILY, money badly needed for basic things like health and education

We give thanks also that we have a God who is involved in the world in which we live.

God bless you and keep you secure in Him, now and always,

*Juan Carlos & Penny*

## Bob's Treasures



The Birmingham Temperance Society was formed in 1830 against the heavy and destructive drinking that was widespread in the 19th century. Initially in Britain social drinks such as beer and cider were consumed as a 'thirst quencher' but soon a vow of total abstinence was introduced. The picture on the left picture shows some Church of England Temperance Society badges which some people may still own.

In contrast, the other picture

shows some beer barrel keys which shows that, despite the movement, heavy drinking still occurred in many areas!

After all the seasonal festivities, should we all give up alcohol and have a “Dry January”?

One never knows what may turn up when metal detecting!

BOB BURTON



## Languages of the Bible

The Bible has been translated into many languages from the original biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. As of October 2017 the full Bible has been translated into **670 languages**, the New Testament alone into **1521 languages** and Bible portions or stories into **1121** other languages!

Hebrew is one of a group of languages known as the Semitic languages which were spoken throughout that part of the world, then called Mesopotamia, located today mainly in Iraq. Their alphabet consisted of 22 letters, all consonants. (Imagine having an alphabet with no vowels! [How would you tell the difference between pAst, pEst, and pOst?]) Much later they did add vowels.)

During the thousand years of its composition, almost the entire **Old Testament** was written in Hebrew. But a few chapters in the prophecies of Ezra and Daniel and one verse in Jeremiah were written in a language called Aramaic. This language became very popular in the ancient world and actually displaced many other languages. Aramaic even became the common language spoken in Israel in Jesus' time, and it was likely the language He spoke day by day. Some Aramaic words were even used by the Gospel writers in the New Testament.

The **New Testament**, however, was written in **Greek**. This seems strange, since you might think it would be either Hebrew or Aramaic. However, Greek was the language of scholarship during the years of the composition of the New Testament from 50 to 100 AD. The fact is that many Jews could not even read Hebrew anymore, and this disturbed the Jewish leaders a lot! So, around 300 BC a translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek was undertaken, and it was completed around 200 BC. Gradually this Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was widely accepted and was even used in many synagogues. It also became a wonderful missionary tool for the early Christians, for now the Greeks could read God's Word in their own tongue.

The earliest copies of parts of the Hebrew Old Testament were discovered in 1947. as the famous Dead Sea Scrolls and actually date back to the first century BC. Even though they are at least 900 years older than any parts of the Bible we had before this, they are copies, not the originals. The originals have all been lost or destroyed. But we do not doubt that we have the original text. Copying by scribes was done with great care in those days and as the text was regarded as sacred, copyists were extremely painstaking. Today some 5000 hand-copied documents exist of all or part of the Bible, and they agree in 98% of the text! No other ancient writing has this amount of underlying support with such amazing agreement as to the text.

How good are your linguistic skills?

*English:* Our Father who Art in Heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name

*Galilean Aramaic:*

ܐܒܘܢ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ  
ܢܬܚܕܝܫ ܫܡܚܐ

Aboon Dbashmayo Nethcadash shmokh

*Greek:*

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου  
[Pater hēmōn ho en tois ouranois, hagiasthētō to onoma sou]

*Hebrew:*

אבינו אשר בשמים, יתקדש שמך

Vnv shr vshmm, ytkdsh shmch

C.L.



## St Wulfstan [ca 1008 - 1095]

19th January is the feast day of St Wulfstan, in the Anglican Church. He was one of the very few high ranking English churchmen to keep his office after the Norman Conquest. When he died in 1095, he had been the only English-born bishop left in England.

He was born in Long Itchington, a few years before his family lost their land there to King Canute. After studying at the monasteries in Evesham and Peterborough, he became a clerk at Worcester Cathedral, and was ordained as a priest there in 1038, after which he joined a benedictine monastery in Worcester. He was consecrated Bishop of Worcester by Ealdred, his predecessor in 1062. At his consecration, the Bible passage randomly chosen was "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile". There are numerous tales of how this was seen to be true of him.

Wulfstan had been closely associated with Harold Godwinson, but he nonetheless managed to retain his position after the Norman Conquest when many English abbots and bishops were deposed. Later legend said that when he was ordered to surrender his episcopal staff, he stuck it into the tomb of King Edward, declaring that as Edward had appointed him, only Edward could take it from him. No one could pull the staff out of the tomb except Wulfstan himself - his own sword-in-the-stone miracle. So he kept his position.

He was a social reformer, and struggled to breach the gap between the old regime and the Normans. He was a strong opponent of the slave trade, and, with Lanfranc succeeded in banishing it from Bristol.

He founded the Great Malvern Priory, and undertook much of the tasks involved in rebuilding Worcester & Hereford cathedrals, and Tewksbury Abbey, and many other local churches.

At Easter in 1158 King Henry II and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine visited Worcester Cathedral and placed their crowns on his shrine there, vowing not to wear them again. Their son King John is now buried there.

Wulfstan was canonised by Pope Innocent III on 14th May 1203. One of the miracles associated with him was the curing of King Harold's daughter.

A detailed biography about him was written by his Chaplain, Coleman soon after his death. The English original has been lost, but the Latin translation made by William of Malmesbury in ca 1120s is still extant.

He was named Wulfstan because his father was Æthelstan [noble stone] and his mother was **Wulf**gifu [wolf gift].



Celia Lester [with help from the Internet!]



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