

# Roundabout



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

**November 2024**

## Message from Roger

Trying to find a new minister for a church is seldom an easy task.

I wonder what we would have done had we received the following application:

“It is my understanding that you have a vacancy in your pulpit, and I would like to apply for the position. I can't say that I preach too well. In fact, I tend to stutter when I speak. I do have a lot of different experiences I could share with you, since I am over 75 years old. I have only just recently had an encounter with God and, despite my initial resistance to the idea, I heard a Voice which told me personally that I was the one to do the ministry for you.

One never knows when God will appear right before your very eyes. As far as people skills go, I do tend to lose my temper every once in a while. I also tend to want things done my way, and can get violent if it's not taken care of right away. Once I even killed somebody. But since I know you are gracious people, I know you will believe me when I say that's all behind me now. I intend on showing up there in a few weeks to lead you into a brighter future. Although I was reluctant at first to work with you, I still feel called to be with you nonetheless.”

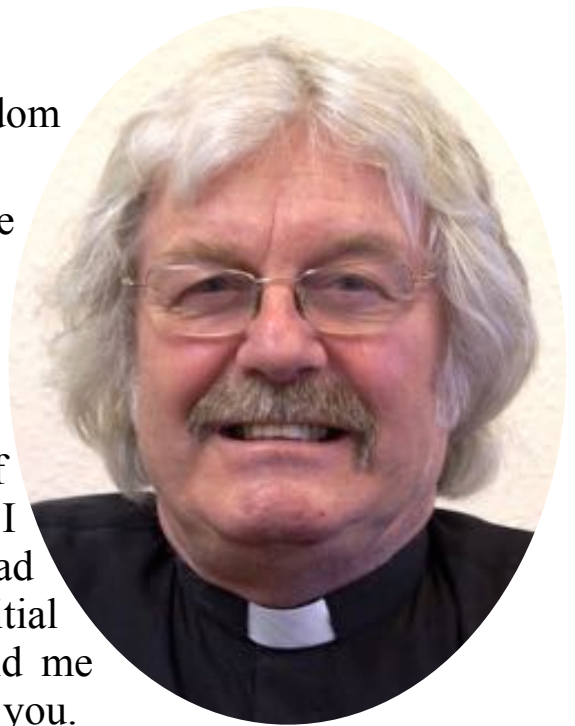
The committee member glanced up at the rest of the group. "Well, what do you think? Can this person be our leader or not?" The rest of the committee was aghast. Have an old, arrogant, temperamental, obviously neurotic, ex-murderer as their pastor? Was this committee member crazy? Who signed the letter of introduction? Who had such colossal nerve? The committee member eyed them all keenly before she answered, “It's signed, ‘Moses’!”

Church council has decided we want equal input from each of our denominations and that is what we are working towards.

The United Reformed Church is looking for someone to share the pastorate of Carrs Lane, Weoley Hill & Weoley Castle; the Anglicans are looking for someone who can give a third of their time to Cotteridge and 2/3 of their time to another parish; and the Methodists have said they will fill any gaps on the plan and oversight from a circuit minister until the end of August when the Methodist input will be formalised for the start of the Methodist Year in September.

I sincerely hope that will provide effective ministry as the Cotteridge Church moves into a new phase of its existence.

Roger



## Friends & Family.

This has been a time of farewell.

Diane Ross died at the beginning of September, Ken A a week later, and at the end of October - Ian Kaye. We send our prayers and sympathy to their families and friends.

We were all been deeply moved by the tragic accident that happened outside the church on the evening of Thursday 19th of September and echo Mike's sentiments as we send our condolences to the family, friends and loved ones of the gentleman who lost his life.

We bade farewell to our cook Shirley Payton on Friday 20th September. She retired after more than 24 years of loyal service to us. There are tributes to her later in the magazine.

We also bade farewell to our minister Revd Mike Claridge, and his wife Susan, who have been with us for over seven years, and wish them a happy retirement, back in Pelsall. Again, there is more about this later on.

**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. Please feel free to come and join us.

Welcome to our Autumn meetings. Thank you. Linda Mann

### **TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP DATES - November - December 2024**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>OPENER</u>
November 12th	Music Afternoon - Favourite CDs	H.P.
26th	Don Hazzard - Elan Valley	D.H.
December 10th	Carols & Mince Pies	L.M.

Christmas Greetings to everyone. and we hope to see you in the New Year. Our first meeting in 2025 will be the A.G.M. on Tuesday January 21st 2025.

## AN UNUSUAL PENDANT

Many bargains and curios can be purchased from Linda's quirky shop in Cotteridge Church, rather like this strange medallion. If anyone once owned a similar piece of jewellery I would love to know more about it.

So far, I have discovered that it is Chinese, quite old and made of a mineral called nephrite. In Chinese medicine it is thought to help various kidney disorders.

I'd highly recommend a visit to Linda's shop - you never know what you may find.

Bob Burton



## Services for November and December

	3rd November	10th November	17th November	24th November	
10:30 am	Revd P Hoar Parade	Revd R. Collins HC/ Remembrance	Revd B. Calvert	Revd J. Tomlinson HC	
6:30 pm	No service	No service	No service	No service	
	1st December	8th December	15th December	22nd December	29th December
10:30 am	Revd B. Calvert	Revd Gordon Steele Interim Dean	TBA	Revd R. Collins Carol Service	Revd B. Calvert
6:30 pm	No service	No service	No service	No service	

Service types: HC - Holy Communion: P - Parade LA - Local Arrangement.

Please note that the wine served at Communion on the second Sunday of the month will be alcoholic [non- alcoholic wine is also available]. The Communion elements will continue to be brought to the congregation in their seats.

**Communion Services** are normally held each week at 10.00 am on Tuesdays.

### **Christmas Services:**

Carols on the Green, Bournville: Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December 6.00 p.m.

Christmas Day Service: 10.30 a.m. Revd Roger Collins.



### **The Cotteridge Church Joint Church Council Summary of Proceedings 10th September 2024**

Present: Mike C., Dorothy A., Stephen A., Neil W., Mike R., Alison S., Chris P., Pam W., and Phil A.,

Also in attendance: Revd. Canon Richard W., Revd. Cleopas S., and Revd. Steve F.

Apologies: Sandra W., Roger C., Jane S., and Mike M.,

The meeting opened with a short prayer.

Mike C., welcomed and introduced our visiting Ministers to the Trustees.

An extended discussion took place concerning the Ministerial vacancy from the beginning of November. A future meeting with the Archdeacon has been arranged for JCC members on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.

*Following the departure of the visitors, the meeting continued with normal business.*

The Agenda item regarding Policies was postponed to the October meeting due to time constraints.

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record.

Matters Arising: Action points from the previous meeting were noted as having been fully dealt with.

**Discussion matters:**

Church Cleaning: There are plans in hand to advertise and appoint a new staff member to the cleaning role in the very near future.

Issues related to the Minister's retirement:

Sandra W., has been appointed to act as Line Manager to the Administrator from 1<sup>st</sup> November.

Dorothy A., will become the DBS verifier from 1<sup>st</sup> November.

Charity Commission Contact Person: The Church Administrator is to register for this role.

Safeguarding: One raised concern has been dealt with according to procedure.

**Reports:**

Finance: The Treasurer to meet with the bookkeeper in the morning, when it is hoped the final issues with last year's accounts will be resolved.

Administrator's report: Previously circulated to members. Main item is the change to staffing arrangements from 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Plans are moving forward to the MHA using the Day Centre lounge and dining room for one day per week from the middle of October.

CSC: The report had been circulated previously. In brief the report covered staffing matters, the new arrangements for Saplings going forward, and the Year 1 actions from the Strategy relevant to the CSC.

P&M: The chair reported on behalf of the committee, particularly mentioning the response to the Strategy actions relevant to P&M.

W&P: The report had been circulated previously. The main items concerned the Pastoral Link meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September. The Coming Together on 9<sup>th</sup> November, and the Christmas service dates.

Denominational matters: Information was given concerning a meeting to discuss and explore what churches may do together going forward.

URC: The new pastorate continues to be discussed, things are moving forward. Apportionments have been approved and church profiles are being collated.

Dates for a number of events were noted. These will be published elsewhere.

The external Christmas Tree will be ordered in good time to be in place for the Christmas Fair.

Suggested meeting dates for 2025 were issued. It is planned to move meetings to a Wednesday going forward, due to how busy the church building is on a Tuesday.

Dates are now expected to be: 2024:-20/11

2025:- 15/01, 12/03, 14/05, 16/07, 17/09, 12/11

with the AGM hopefully on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

The meeting closed with the saying of The Grace.

JCC Chair September 2024





Well, Shirley, twenty four years have passed!

You now can have a rest at last.

You cooked us lovely food so long

You really do deserve a gong.

The cakes, the rolls, the breakfasts too,

Won't be the same, not without you.

Please, don't forget us, call one day.

You won't get lost, you know the way!

Rita Sutton



## **CLIMATE EMERGENCY** ...every little action matters.

Listening to the radio this week the United Nations again urged everyone to take climate change seriously as the ocean temperature increased far more than projected. This of course has dire consequences for low lying countries, food production and the way we live. Recent hurricanes in the States have proved the effects of a warming ocean ... so we all know that every action we can make matters.

Of course Christmas is only a few weeks away so I thought I would concentrate on actions we can take to make our Christmas more Eco friendly this year. I hope that you will take up some ideas and make that difference ... so here goes.

### **Decorations**

- \* With decorations try to avoid tinsel.
- \* Reuse your Christmas trees if possible
- \* Get creative with what you can find outdoors in the garden
- \* Turn off your Christmas lights at night or when you are out.
- \* Turn heating down a little.

### **Wrapping ideas.**

- \* Use material to wrap gifts.
- \* Re-use old newspapers
- \* Decorate parcels with foliage rather than bows.
- \* Personalise brown paper
- \* Use string rather than tape to tie up gifts.
- \* Make your own gift bags.

### **Food waste**

- \* Plan meals and try not to over buy food.
- \* Use seasonal produce.
- \* Minimise food waste by eating leftovers
- \* Freeze as much as possible that is left over...
- \* Cut down on meat and dairy when possible...

I know there are lots more ideas that you will be using; but these are just some thoughts.

The following fact must motivate us to take control of our food waste and make that difference we know matters...

“If food waste were a country it would be the Third largest emitter of greenhouse gases - surpassed only by the USA and China!”

Thank you. **Happy Eco Christmas**

Sandra Walton





## I BELIEVE IN ANGELS

I have recently read the book 'Angels' by Hope Price and listened to Mike Claridge's address on angels.

I realise that many people, including myself, have been helped or influenced by angels at some time in their lives, but angels do not always appear in the form of the fantasised picture illustrated. My most recent encounter occurred on the 'Good Friday Witness Walk' from Cotteridge to Bournville Green when I wondered whether I could make the walk under my own steam. An elderly lady appeared out of the crowd, took my arm and we walked effortlessly and pain free to Bournville Green. On arrival, before I could thank her, she vanished into the crowd - an angel in human form. All efforts to trace her have failed.

When I have shown people my picture, to my amazement, many of them from all walks of life have told me, in confidence, of their own often similar experience. When in a difficult situation they have been helped by a Divine presence.

I would love to know if you have ever had a similar uplifting experience. Perhaps the popular ABBA song 'I Believe in Angels' was similarly inspired.

Best wishes Bob Burton





## Farewell to Revd Mike & Susan Claridge



In his last message to us in the September edition of Roundabout, Mike told us that he is retiring to Pelsall, but will be joining the Methodist ministry team there.

The Pennine Way community bade farewell on Tuesday 22nd, and the Church members bade farewell at the Sunday service on 27th October, and we had the traditional farewell cake, and gift presentations to Sue Spencer as our preacher on many occasions, as well as to Mike and Susan. We give them our best wishes, and hope that they have a long and enjoyable “retirement”.





They send their thanks to us, both for our best wishes, and gifts, and also for our support during the last seven and a half years.

“Thank you to everyone for the send ‘offs’ as we prepare to leave Cotteridge for retirement. It was good to see so many people in The Pennine Way on Tuesday, and at the service in church (Sunday 27th October), with food and chat afterwards.

Thank you to Celia for the wonderful cake, and to everyone for the many cards received. Thank you for the generous donation which we intend using to buy a garden bench.

Thanks to Sue Spencer for preaching on The Parable of the Sower and reminding us that seeds we sow now can, when nurtured by God, bring a harvest long into the future.



Thoughts and prayers for the future ministry of all at The Cotteridge Church. Mike and Susan Claridge.”



After the service, we all enjoyed a “sociable sandwich” lunch together.

Many thanks to Dorothy and her helpers for providing it.





# **The Cotteridge Church Christmas Fair**

**Saturday 30th November  
2024**

**10:00am—1:00pm**

**Santa's Grotto**

**Festive baps**

**Mulled fruit punch**

**Tombola**

**Table-Top-Sale**

**Cake sale**

**Christmas goods for sale**

**Fair Trade**

**Plant Stall**

**The Memory Tree**

**And much more.....**



## Celebrating Flowers

I wonder if you have been “upcycling” any item recently. I had a conversation with Jane Stephens a few months ago when she showed me a photo of a plant stand she had seen on a church visit. She wondered if just supplying plants or flowers which could be put in vases would encourage more folk to help the flower team.

Well I priced the stands and of course they were so expensive. Then to my joy I noticed my neighbours had placed a rusty plant stand outside their house ready for waste collection. I couldn't ask them quickly enough if I could have it!

I then bought some special metal paint and set to work with my wire brush and cloths and, of course, you have now seen the finished stand in church. There are times when I'm away that organising the flowers is a challenge...so here is a solution.



Last week I purchased some cyclamen plants donated by Diana Seward. Naturally, I rang her to say what was happening and she was pleased. The plants will stay on the stand and be replaced regularly with seasonal additions - eg poinsettias during Advent/Christmas and then bulbs in the Spring.

So keep your eyes open! There may be other items out there we can recycle...and of course if you are willing to display plants please sign up to the flower list - maybe now for 2025?

A big thank you to Chris Pascal for her help and support with our Harvest display. It's a real joy, every year, to get out the knitted vegetables made by our Craft group at least 2 years ago. They always add that extra something to our display. Thank you too for all the donations of food for the Food bank. I think we had a wonderful response this year. Thank you everyone for your support and donations for Flowers and now Plants. It really does enhance our worship.

Sandra Walton

## We Will Remember Them

This Poem was written by Leo Marks for Violette Szabo and given on 24 March 1944. She was a French agent of Special Operations Executive who was eventually captured, tortured and killed by the Nazis. It was made famous by its inclusion in the 1958 movie about Szabo, "Carve Her Name with Pride", where the poem was said to be the creation of Violette's husband Etienne.



The Life that I have  
Is all that I have  
And the life that I have  
Is yours

The love that I have  
Of the life that I have  
Is yours, and yours, and yours.

A sleep I shall have  
A rest I shall have  
Yet death will be but a pause,

For the peace of my years  
In the long green grass  
Will be yours, and yours, and yours.



Violette Szabo was a posthumous recipient of the George Cross [presented to her orphaned daughter by the King]. During her second mission into occupied France, she was captured by the German army, interrogated, tortured and deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany where she was executed.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violette\\_Szabo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violette_Szabo)

*St. James's Palace, S.W.1. 17 December 1946*

The KING has been graciously pleased to award the GEORGE CROSS to:

"Violette, Madame SZABO (deceased), Women's Transport Service (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry). Madame Szabo volunteered to undertake a particularly dangerous mission in France. She was parachuted into France in April 1944, and undertook the task with enthusiasm. In her execution of the delicate researches entailed she showed great presence of mind and astuteness. She was twice arrested by the German security authorities but each time managed to get away. Eventually, however, with other members of her group, she was surrounded by the Gestapo in a house in the south-west of France. Resistance appeared hopeless but Madame Szabo, seizing a Sten-gun and as much ammunition as she could carry, barricaded herself in part of the house and, exchanging shot for shot with the enemy, killed or wounded several of them. By constant movement, she avoided being cornered and fought until she dropped exhausted. She was arrested and had to undergo solitary confinement. She was then continuously and atrociously tortured but never by word or deed gave away any of her acquaintances or told the enemy anything of any value. She was ultimately executed. Madame Szabo gave a magnificent example of courage and steadfastness."

C.L.





# \* Hush the Noise Join the Love Song this Christmas



Christmas is loud, isn't it?  
So much expectation. So many voices.  
You're invited here as we Hush the Noise to  
join the love song this Christmas

**Join the Celebration!**

**All Age/Parade Service  
10.30am Advent Sunday  
1st December 2024**

**Music, singing, prayers, readings, reflections  
AND for this special service only...a  
drama...  
'Wash Night'**

[methodist.org.uk/HushTheNoise](http://methodist.org.uk/HushTheNoise)



The **Methodist** Church 



## Boys' Brigade

Our annual enrolment service was held in October with the boys and leaders receiving their new membership cards from our chaplain Revd Mike Claridge.



At this service we also awarded our “boy awards” from the previous session. Our company president Mike Meadows presented the trophies to Mikey [Juniors], Orla [Company] and the Seniors went to Fin for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

At the end of October we say farewell to our company chaplain for the last 8 years Mike Claridge and wish him well in his retirement.

Bob Hotchkiss



## Report from Worship and Pastoral Committee

**Coming Together for Coffee and Cake** (on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November) is an opportunity for members of the congregation to meet socially after the departure of Mike Claridge as we start to look to the future with new ministerial input.

**Pastoral Links Meeting** was held in September with a particular focus on what we can offer to our members who, for a number of reasons, cannot worship with us in person regularly on a Sunday morning. Suggestions included:

- Circulating a list of other churches which offer online services;
- Broadcasting a service from Cotteridge;
- Home communion
- Links to MHA Live at Home Scheme
- Regular mailings of Prayer Cards, Roundabout, phone calls from Pastoral Links and friends.

**Evening Services** have had between 1 and 6 people attending, but as nights draw in it has been decided to suspend them, restarting in April.

**Future Services** are being looked at for next year including a “Songs of Praise” style service and a Celebration of Light.

Jane Stephens

## Cotteridge to Eastbourne

Pennine Way Trips started 20 years ago and to celebrate this landmark a five day holiday to Eastbourne was arranged. Here are some thoughts from people who took part.

**Elaine** - Weather? Whether? That was the question when packing. Whether to take warm, waterproof clothes or just ordinary ones and something to dress up in for the evenings. Well, as it happened, ordinary ones were fine because the weather was glorious. We sat on the pier, eating ice cream. It was perfect weather for a perfect holiday.

**Patti** - Eastbourne looked beautiful when we arrived; the sun was shining. The



hotel was so comfortable and the staff couldn't do enough for us. The ride on the sightseeing bus was very interesting but oh so windy! Directly opposite our hotel was the pier and we popped on it every day, especially to visit the Victorian Tea Rooms

for a cream tea - and there was cream, lashings of it.

**Chris** - the holiday was brilliant. Eastbourne is flat so it is easy to walk to the gardens and the shops. The bus took us to Beachy Head and the scenery was wonderful. I really enjoyed every minute of my holiday.

**Ladies from the Quadrangle**- our hotel was clean and comfortable, the staff outstanding - and the food, delicious and lots of it. In the evening the entertainment had us dancing, singing and laughing a lot. It was a great holiday that was over far too quickly.

**Marion** - WOW - a wonderful holiday, hotel lovely, food lovely, company lovely. I can't wait for next year's adventure!

**Rita** - I think that means it was a success. Phew!





## A Great Birmingham Achievement - The Elan Valley Water Supply, 1892-1904

In 1875, the Council took over Birmingham water supply from the private companies which had failed to supply adequate clean water, especially to the poorer areas, which suffered high death rates [1 in 5 children died before the age of one!]

As population and industry grew, the Council realised that large new secure supplies of clean water for the future were needed.

It chose the Elan and Claerwen Valleys in Central Wales to supply this water. Three dams were built [plus one more later] and the water was brought 73.5 miles to a new reservoir at Frankley.



From there, from 1904, supplies went out across the city.

It gave the city large scale supplies of clean water, well into the future - including now. [though Birmingham no longer owns it - Boo!!]

Every time you wash, bath, make tea, flush the toilet etc. you use Elan Valley water.



If you would like to know:

- why the Council took such an active rôle.

- why its engineers chose two valleys 73.5 miles away,

- how the dams were built using the equipment available at the time,
- how the water was brought, without pumping, 73.5 miles through hills and across rivers,

- how costs were carefully controlled, [cf HS2!!]

- and the effects of the dams on the local Welsh population,

Then - come to the Tuesday Fellowship talk [FREE!] at the Church on Tuesday 26th November at 2.00 p.m.

Don Hazzard



## The Greeks had a word for it

Now that I can no longer run around any more, and my life is much more sedentary, it gives me more time to ponder, and I am getting quite interested in etymology. Studying where words come from lets us know the meanings of so many more of them easily. For example “Auto” [αὐτό] in Greek means “self”. So AUTOMobiles mean self moving vehicles - do not need a horse to pull them! AUTOMatic mean self working: so for a car - you do not need a gear box - and so on. OMNIbus is Latin for all, so - now contracted to Bus; this takes all the people [well a goodly number] and OMNIvores eat everything!

I got to thinking about our words for places of worship.

One of the earliest versions of the Bible to be widely circulated was written in classical Greek.

Why do we have words like Church/Chapel/Cathedral and so on? How did they originate? The internet came to my rescue.

**Church.** This is a building meant for Christian worship.

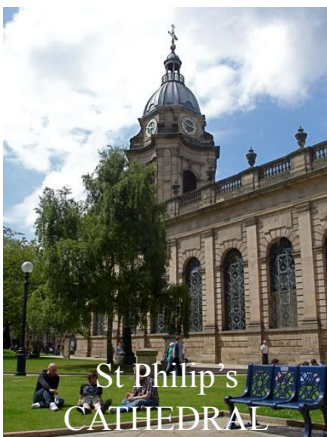
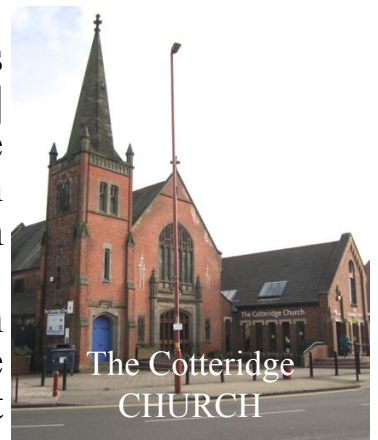
In Scotland they call it Kirk; the Dutch have Kerk; the Germans Kirche. All derive from the Greek “κυριακός” [kyriakos] meaning belonging to the Lord - from “κύριος” [kyrios] - the master. It has changed somewhat over the centuries, but I am sure you can see the similarity still. All, effectively, mean “dedicated to the Lord”.

So - why do the French have an “Église” and the Welsh “Eglwys”? Again we have to blame the Greeks! In Greek the prefix “ek” means out and καλέω [kaleo] means to call - but not just any call. It is the special call made to Moses through a burning bush. If you look at the text in an ancient Greek bible, its word now translated as church is εκκλησία [ekklesia]!

**Chapel.** This is used in large Anglican churches and cathedrals, as a small space set aside for a more private worship. Also, while a church is the whole building, which may have a number of different spaces, a chapel usually refers to just the place of worship. There is a considerable number of stately homes around the country, which have their own private chapel. Often it refers to a place of worship for those not of Anglican or Catholic denomination.

**Cathedral.** Here we have to blame the Romans. A Cathedral is the most important church of a diocese, and its leader is a Bishop. Cathedra is Latin for “chair”. The seat referred to is the seat of the bishop, who is the leader of a group of churches related to the cathedral. The bishop's seat is both a metaphor for the cathedral as the bishop's “seat of power” and his actual chair, the “cathedra,” inside the cathedral.

Henry VIII built cathedrals in six English towns, and then designated them as cities. This erroneously gave us the idea that if a town had a cathedral, it was automatically designated as a city. For a time St David's [the smallest city in the U.K.] lost its city designation, before it was restored in 1998. City status is now designated by the monarch, on the advice of ministers.



Celia Lester

## Stamps for Birmingham City Mission

A few people have asked me if we are still collecting used postage stamps.

The answer is a definite YES!

The charity we currently support this way is the Birmingham City Mission. It was “established in 1966 and exists to share God’s love across Britain’s second city. We proclaim the Christian message in the city centre and the community, and we run projects which bring practical help and hope to both young and old, the homeless and people struggling to make ends meet. We are a Christian charity, but offer our services without test or condition.”



The projects include the Care Centre, a drop-in for the homeless in Birmingham city centre; the Resource Centre which distributes food, clothing, furniture etc. to people struggling to make ends meet; Elderlink, a visiting service for isolated older people in east Birmingham; the Youth Team, which provides “interactive



and thought-provoking experiences” for young people; the Children’s Team, which “works in primary schools sharing Bible stories in assemblies, lessons and clubs”; the BCM shop in Kingstanding which is both a charity shop and Christian bookshop; Christmas Toylink; and a training programme which “combines hands-on experience and study in evangelism and social work.”

They produce a monthly newsletter [by post or on line] and hold an annual Celebration meeting at the Priory Rooms, Bull Street [previously the Friends’ Meeting House] with reports on their projects and lively inspiring singing!

There are several ways to support BCM, but for a start, please save stamps from your post. Taking care not to damage them cut them off the used envelope, leaving a small margin of paper around them, and put them in the box by the pigeonholes in the Pennine Way at Church. No waste paper please! Don’t forget to bring your stamps, if you still receive Christmas cards by post, especially from overseas.

Jean Morgan

[sections in quotes “ ” are from BCM’s own literature]

There is so much sad and bad news circulating now, and I am sure we all find it very depressing - from the wars in Ukraine, & the Middle East to the damage we are doing to our wonderful planet. Everyone needs to laugh and smile, so I thought it might be a good idea if we could share something amusing, or uplifting with everyone in each issue. I am inviting you to contribute to this, please.



A trivial one to begin: I was driving through Brierley Hill recently & I spotted a pub. It was called “**The Dog and Lamp-post**”!

C.L.





Roundabout is the bi-monthly newsletter of The Cotteridge Church.  
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Your Editor from January 2017 is Celia Lester

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