

Roundabout



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

March 2026

Minister's Message

Dear Friends,

"Lent opens with an invitation to notice the stories that shape our choices. Temptation is rarely dramatic. It is often the quiet pull towards shortcuts: the need to prove ourselves, the urge to stay in control, the desire to numb what hurts, the instinct to protect our image. The spiritual work of this week is not perfection or performance, but truth. What do we reach for when we feel vulnerable, and what might it look like to choose trust instead?" #temptation #wilderness"

By Gary Hopkins - 2026



I have chosen to begin my letter with a quote from one of our Methodist song writers and Liturgists. I felt quite challenged by Gary's words. In these days of business, we are sometimes drawn to, and more and more inclined to cutting corners and making the most of our time, while forgetting that we are called to live in the truth of God's word, and not to our own desires to control and manage. Let love be real!

Yet, this is a time of Lent, we are invited to pause - to stop - to listen and to introspect. A time that reminds us to re-examine our intentions and our hearts, so we can mend our ways before Christ comes again - we are but dust, and to dust we shall all return! Remember, friends, sin must be acknowledged, cleansing must be requested, the heart must be renewed, and joy can be restored. And in the midst of all this- and more, God is with us in our desert and lonely times.

So siblings in Christ, be of good cheer even in this time. Because all is not lost, after Holy Saturday and its darkness, Easter Day will come!

By the way, we have managed to find a Methodist Minister to serve Selly Oak Methodist Church and the Cotteridge Church, who will be joining us on the 1st of September 2026 to replace me as I have been moved in the Circuit. All this is subject to Conference approval at the of June 2026.

Have a blessed lent.

The Rev'd Farai Mapamula

Friends & Family.

May Kaye - wife of Keith celebrated her 100th birthday on 23rd of January. She and Keith are long standing members of our church, but are no longer able to come. We sent her a card signed by many and she also had one from the King & Queen. The home arranged for a piper; she really enjoyed his music and requested Amazing Grace. Carl took this photo when he took our card.



Congratulations to Eira on her 95th birthday, which she celebrated on 18th February.

It was good to see Don & Sue back in the Church again, following Don's injury.

Thanks to Lorraine Buffery, who has served on the Coffee bar, for her poem.

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

Thank you. Linda Mann

TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP DATES -March & April 2026

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>OPENER</u>
March 10th	Music afternoon (Bring CDs)	L.W
24th	Farai	F.M.
April 14th	Favourite Poetry	S.B.
28th	Barbara Calvert's cycle trip.	B.C.

Thank you all for your support over the year.

Services for March and April

	1st March 2nd of Lent	8th March 3rd of Lent	15th March Mothering Sunday	22nd March Passion Sunday	29th March Palm Sunday
10:30 am	Revd Barbara Calvert. All Age Morning Worship/ Parade	Revd Tariro Mukoja HC	Revd Farai Mapamula	Revd Roger Collins HC	Revd. I Selvanayagam
	5th April Easter Sunday	12th April 2nd of Easter	19th April 3rd of Easter	26th April 4th of Easter	
10:30 am	Revd Tariro Mukoja HC	Revd Roger Collins	Revd Farai Mapamula	Revd Farai Mapamula	

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

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

Revd Dr Israel Sevanayagam is the Minister of the Broadway Methodist Church.

Methodist Minister

At the invitation of the Methodist Circuit, the Ministers and a number of JCC members, recently met with a minister who had expressed their interest in becoming the Methodist Minister here and at Selly Oak Methodist Church.

The meeting involved a tour of our building, conversation about our community work and activities, and an opportunity to learn something of one another through a general question session over lunch.

Two of our JCC members attended Selly Oak Methodist Church during the afternoon, to join the group with responsibility for determining whether the minister was to be invited to fill the vacancy.

I am delighted to announce that Revd. Tokunbo Asogbon has accepted the invitation to move to Birmingham. He and his young family will move to Birmingham from their current home in Cumbria during July, to begin his ministry here from September.

I have assured Tokunbo he and his family will receive a very warm welcome.

Dorothy Audley

Revd Farai Mapamula will be staying in Birmingham as one of the Superintendent Ministers but will be working with other churches.



Church Garden.

Our Church garden is waking up with the arrival of 2 more volunteers (Mike & Jane Ravenhill) Thanks to both of you.

We are desperate to get out & start tidying, clearing, sorting...with the long-term aim of opening the back garden to serve Afternoon Teas and / or delicious meals.



The Greenhouse is waiting for annual seeds to be planted.

If you don't have a greenhouse or a lack of wide windowsill place, please bring your trays & use the space - it would be so good to see it being used.

We can help tend!

We are hoping to purchase a Wormery so kitchen waste can be recycled.

Once we experience warmer, sunny weather please take your refreshments outside & see the area for yourself. How many of you even know where & what our Garden is?



Thanks, Chris P.

Knit and Natter

Come and join us! Recently we have been knitting fingerless gloves, some of which have been given to those in need at the foodbank, and others have been sold for church funds in the coffee bar. Soon we shall be thinking of Easter.

The Natter is also very important!

Joe takes any spare yarn we have, and crochets blankets with it. This is his latest one.



Diane works in our kitchen, and Patricia, a member of our group, taught her how to crochet.



Boys' Brigade



All the leaders and boys would like to congratulate Tommy on being awarded the Presidents award. He was presented with his badge and certificate at the February parade service by our company president Mike Meadows.



Our annual charity general knowledge quiz has been arranged for Friday 10th April beginning at 7-45p.m., where teams of up to 6 people can take part. The cost is £2 per person and all money raised will be shared between The Church and Birmingham Hospice. Please, if possible, support this event as it is for such good causes.

Bob Hotchkiss

THE CHALLENGES FACING YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

A listening event with
Al Carns MP

Rescheduled date

Friday, 20 March · 7:00pm – 8:15pm

Rowheath Pavilion Church,
Heath Road, Bournville, B30 1HH

Hosted by Churches Together in B30 with
Al Carns MP – All Welcome

What Happened at Easter?

He's crucified at Calvary.
It's said the Son of God is He.
Jesus Christ is now arisen
Trust in Him and go to Heaven.
He will answer any prayer.
Just remember Jesus is there.
Remember at this time of year
His crucifixion did occur.
Experience that He's alive
With the Holy Spirit survive.
He died for mankind's salvation
Believers of any nation.

Lorraine Buffery

Easter Flowers



Many of you will already know that I am more than a little obsessed with flowers - a trait encouraged by my parents, and developed from my late husband, Richard.

There are many flowers which are associated with Easter. Because Easter falls at different times each year, flowers associated with Easter also flower at different times, so that they coincide with Easter.

Firstly the Easter Lily, associated with purity & resurrection.

Then we include:

Daffodils - also known as the Lent Lilies, representing the arrival of new life. Lily Green, near Redditch was known for its wild daffodils.

Hyacinths, symbolising sincerity.

Tulips, representing love, belief and forgiveness, [seen here from Keukenhof]

Hellebores - the earliest flowering. These are called the Lent Rose [& also the Christmas Rose], and it represents rebirth.



C.L.



URC minister

It is good to know that we may soon be welcoming a new URC minister to our church. You will be aware that two meetings have already taken place at the end of February. There will be two opportunities to hear the candidate preach;

1st March 10:30: Worship at Carrs Lane Church.

A meeting will follow the service, for members to have a discussion and then vote on whether to 'call' the candidate to serve the pastorate.

1st March 15:00: Worship at Weoley Castle Church.

This service will also be followed by a meeting and an opportunity to vote.

This is our opportunity to ask questions and share in the process of calling of a minister to the pastorate.

NB: The services and meetings are open to everyone. However, voting is restricted to church members who have heard the candidate preach at one of the services on 1st March. To vote you must be present at the meeting.

Weather

I think we shall all long remember the dismal wet days of January and February this year. Blue sky and sunshine seemed a distant memory! As a child I remember the ground being covered with inches of snow, making snowmen on the lawn, and putting out strings of peanuts for the blue tits. Now it is much warmer. Flowers are not sure when to bloom, and the days of ice coating the inside of the windows are long gone. I remember visiting the Museum and Art Gallery in the city centre, quite frequently. We always stopped to look at the 1881 "February Fill Dyke" painting by Benjamin Williams Leader which really depicts what we have seen this year. His painting is of the Worcestershire countryside. The title is taken from an old country rhyme;



February fill the dyke,
Be it black or be it white;
But if it be white,
It's the better to like.

I do hope that by the time this is published, the hope promised by these lovely photos taken by John Cooper, will be realised

Celia Lester



Climate Change - Every Action Matters

Climate Change Emergency.

What WE do matters!

2026 has begun... a new start for us all, time to think about what we can do to help reduce our carbon footprint. Even though it feels like the same message... I know we can all think of ways we can do more over the next few months.

It was a pleasure to welcome students from Birmingham City University to the church last week. They were there to see what goes on in our building as a part of their project on Sacred Spaces, and how we are addressing Eco-issues within our church.

It was interesting to be able to highlight what we have done over the past few years and how we have all raised our awareness of making that difference. The Solar panels on our roof generate electricity; the LED lights reduce our electricity use; Double glazing, as seen in the Cotswold room, supports insulation. Re-cycling of paper, plastics and tins through First Mile has been a great success especially with our current problems with Birmingham and the bin strike! Our kitchen is serving seasonal foods and is actively controlling any waste through batch cooking and freezing. Our garden has produced fruit - apples and pears and tomatoes, and gives us all a quiet place to sit and think and enjoy nature and greenery.

These are just a few, but show that we are, at The Cotteridge Church, very serious about our responsibility towards reducing our use of electricity and gas and making that difference. The students were very impressed and were amazed at how the building is used daily by the community, and the welcoming atmosphere that's created by - particularly - the volunteers in our building. We appreciate everyone who helps us create this - you enable us to make that difference every day. Thank you for making their visit so positive.

As I write this Lent begins on Wednesday 18th February until 2nd April ... and I received this very interesting email from A Rocha this week that I would like to share with you.



They are looking at the weeks in Lent, and organising a CarbonFast ...” to help us examine any excesses in our lives and how we can live more gently with God on his earth”.

It has a different focus each week. If you want to log onto their site [<https://arocha.org.uk>], more information is available ... practical suggestions and prayers to lead us through the Lent season.

Week 1. Nature

Week 4. Food

Week 2. Shopping

Week 5. Transport

Week 3. Money

Week 6. Energy

Week 7. Social Media.

If we focus on these areas as we journey through Lent I know it will help us to be mindful of our lives and how we use the resources we have available .

As we all know that whatever you manage to do in the weeks ahead does make that difference. Thank you for all your support for Eco-matters and we look forward to making that difference in 2026.

Sandra Walton

STAMPS FOR BIRMINGHAM CITY MISSION

Thank you everybody who has been saving their used postage stamps and putting them in the red box or giving them to me. Please don't stop, if you are lucky enough to get letters or greeting cards with stamps on these days!

<https://birminghamcitymission.org.uk>



This is just one way of raising funds for Birmingham



City Mission, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. It started in 1966 “with a few volunteers going into the old Bull Ring next to St Martin's Church. On a Saturday evening...the gospel was preached and homeless people were fed. There were no staff, buildings, vehicles or money, but in those early weeks the vision to ‘proclaim the gospel and to help those in need’ was born.”



Now they have an office, Care Centre, and shop in Birmingham, and last year their staff and volunteers have preached and given out literature on the streets, taken lessons and assemblies and after-school clubs in schools, organised special events and a summer camp for young people, visited elderly people, found accommodation and support for homeless people, delivered Christmas gifts for the Toylink project, and provided all sorts of items such as food, toiletries or furniture for people in need. Their Annual Review gives the statistics!



They are planning some special events for their



"Diamond Year":

Saturday 6th June: 60 Bridges Walk.

Saturday 4th July: BCM Open Day.

Saturday 19th September: BCM Banquet.

Saturday 17th October: 60th Annual Celebration at St Martin's Church.

(Quotation from January 2026 BCM Update.)

Jean Morgan



Main Headquarters
in Langdon Street



View from the Care Centre
in Washington Street

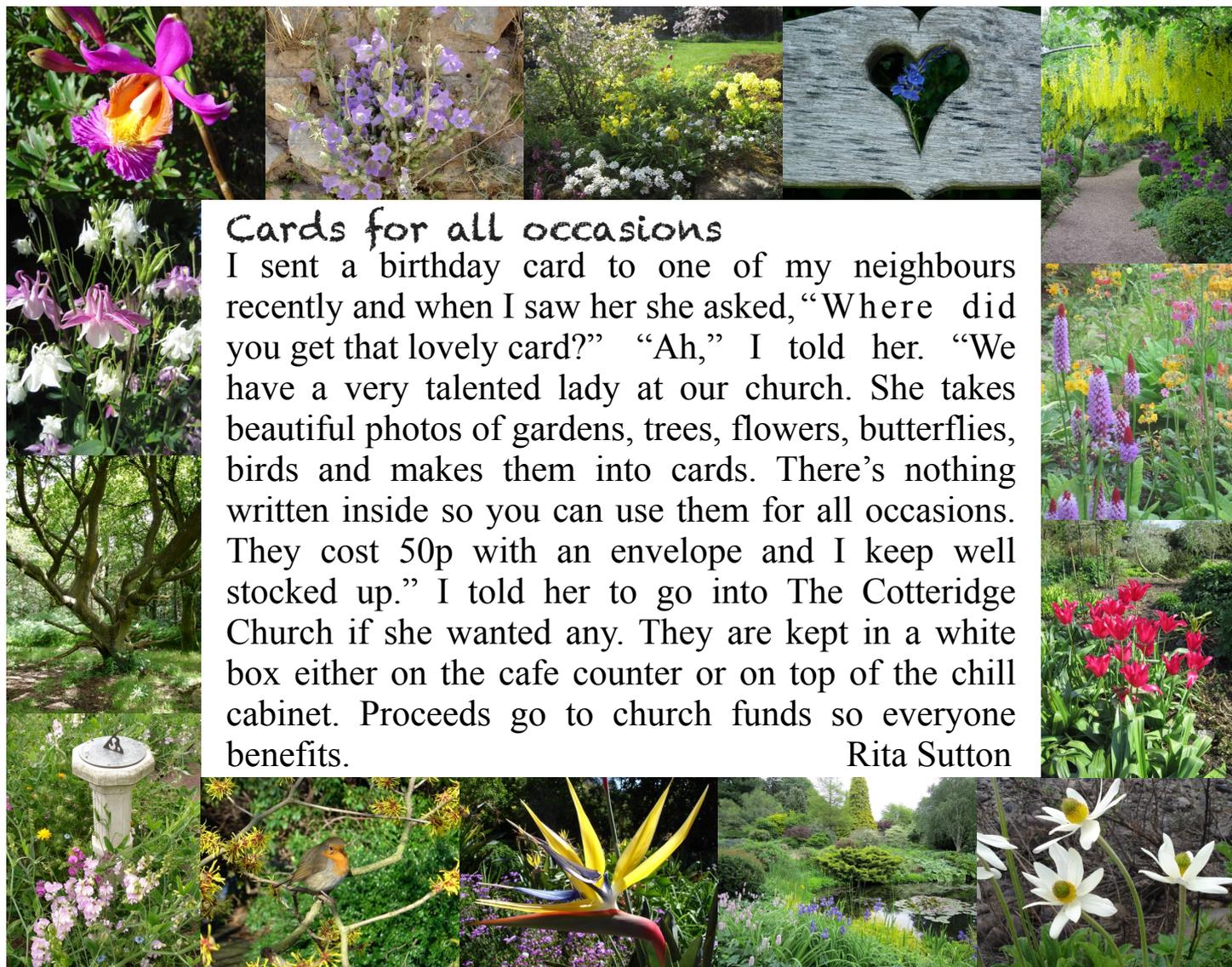
Home Communion

One of the most precious memories of time with my mother, Madge, is celebrating home communion with her a few days before she died. When Michael Blood gave her the wine she looked up at him and said, "That was a drop of good." I tutted but Michael told me to leave my mother alone.

I was reminded of that time when I went with Revd Tariro and Maggie Simkin to celebrate home communion with Jenny Fryer. Jen had not been able to get to church for some time. It was a lovely, gentle service and Tariro gave a short address too. Afterwards we enjoyed tea and laughter, reminiscing about the old days at St. Agnes. Jen and I grew up there and we were Sunday School teachers together.

When I rang Jen a few days later she said how much she had enjoyed the service and meeting Tariro. We hope to celebrate together again in the future.

If you know someone who would like communion at home do ask. It really brings meaning to "where two or three are gathered together" Rita Sutton



Cards for all occasions

I sent a birthday card to one of my neighbours recently and when I saw her she asked, "Where did you get that lovely card?" "Ah," I told her. "We have a very talented lady at our church. She takes beautiful photos of gardens, trees, flowers, butterflies, birds and makes them into cards. There's nothing written inside so you can use them for all occasions. They cost 50p with an envelope and I keep well stocked up." I told her to go into The Cotteridge Church if she wanted any. They are kept in a white box either on the cafe counter or on top of the chill cabinet. Proceeds go to church funds so everyone benefits.

Rita Sutton



Photograph by John Cooper

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Large print issue is available to download from our web site.

Your Editor from January 2017 is Celia Lester

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roundabout@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk

The Cotteridge Church, Pershore Road South, Birmingham B30 3EJ

Tel: 0121 433 5518 Fax: 0121 459 6909

Email: administrator@thecotteridgechurch.org.uk

Website: www.thecotteridgechurch.org.uk

X [Twitter]: @CotteridgeChur facebook.com/TheCotteridgeChurch

Instagram [the_cotteridge_church](https://www.instagram.com/the_cotteridge_church)

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