



Welcoming,  
Caring,  
Sharing

## August/September 2013

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[www.worcesterurc.org.uk](http://www.worcesterurc.org.uk)

# The Sunday Plan



Sunday 4th August  
11 am Worship

Conducted by Rev John Johansenberg  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 11th August  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Rev Richard Alford  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 18th August  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 25th August  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Mrs Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 1st September  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Rev Georgina Everington  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 8th September  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Mrs Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 15th September  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Robert Apps  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 22nd September  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Rev Phillip Rees  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 29th September  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Mrs Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 6th October  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 13th October  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Rev David Ryan  
Coffee after the service

## From the Manse

Dear friends



There is a story of a woman who wanted a husband. She prayed, ‘Lord, send me someone loving.’ The next day she met a loving man, but he was as thick as two short planks. So she got back on her knees and said, ‘Lord, thank you, but that’s not good enough. Please send me someone both loving and intelligent.’ The next day she met a man who seemed perfect. All was going well, until she discovered he was engaged. She got back on her knees. ‘Lord, that’s not good enough either. Send me someone loving, intelligent and faithful.’ Two days later, a Labrador arrived.

Our group of churches is going through the process of trying to find another minister to work alongside the Elders and I. It can be difficult, especially as it is for a half-time post. And, as someone I trained with would say, people willing to take on such a post are as rare as rocking-horse droppings.

Yet the vacancy committee has conducted an interview, and the churches will have to soon put their minds to making a decision. You will know by now that someone will preach-with-a-view on 22nd September. To preach-with-a-view doesn't mean preaching in the garden, where the view is good. It simply means preaching with no promise, seeing how it goes. If everyone is sufficiently happy, it may be possible to fill the position before too many more months go by.

This is where I tell you how serious a decision it is. Yet, I know how difficult that decision can be. I have been asked if I think I could work with the candidate, but how can I tell? I have only met the person for an hour or so. I know so very little about them. So you, and I, have to trust our instincts and pray that the Holy Spirit prompts us right.

Just like the woman in the story above, there is a lot of praying to do, and a lot of pros and cons to be weighed. We need to do this seriously, considerately and thoughtfully, listening to each other. And we need to make sure we do not allow the fear and worry of not finding someone else (because of the rocking-horse-dropping feeling) to make us jump at just anybody who comes along, thereby shortcutting the talking and thinking that is necessary.

Of course, no one is perfect. You found that out with me. We all have foibles and faults. That is why we need Jesus. If someone comes who seems to be perfect, then remember the old adage that if it is 'too good to be true' it probably is. Jesus reserved his harshest criticism for Pharisees and leaders who thought they had everything worked out and that they could, by their own strength, somehow do everything needed to be just right for God.

That of course is not possible. The gospel is of God who came to a world of sin and lifted us out of the mire we could never get out of by our own strength. If I would give any guidance it is to ask

ourselves, about any candidate, 'Is this person trying to be perfect themselves, or do they know they have to rely on God's grace and mercy?' If it's the first, then either they will work themselves to an early grave (which might get the work done, but will be a bad example), or will make everyone else feel guilty. Or both. There is no condemnation in Jesus. He has taken the guilt and shame away for those who trust him.

I'm sure I can rely on all church members to join in ensuring the right decision is made.

Every blessing

Duncan

## Diary Dates



Wednesday, September 4th

Elders Meeting at 7 pm

Thursday, September 5th

Albany Fellowship at 2:30 pm

Sunday, September 22nd  
with

Rev Dr Phillip Rees 'Preaching  
a View'

Wednesday, September 25th

Church Meeting at 7.30pm

Tuesday, October 1st

Joint Church Meeting at  
Worcester URC re: Phillip Rees

Sunday, October 6th

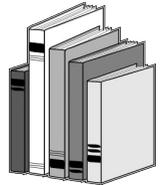
Harvest Festival, followed by  
Harvest lunch



May I thank all who gave of their time, talent and money to support the 2013 Christian Aid Appeal. A Special mention goes to Chris Harris who provided the Christian Aid Lunch which bolstered the appeal. The total forwarded from WURC Area was £541.59 , and when £51.41 is added by Donations which were Gift Aided, gives a total of £593.01, a commendable effort and thanks to all contributors.....

Jeremy Davies  
Christian aid Co-Ordinator.

## Book Group



A number of us enjoyed the third meeting of the book group.

We had a final discussion on Woodbine Willie as another member of the group had read he book. Mariannes notes on both the Author of the book and on the life of Woodbine Willie are includede on Page 12 of the Newsletter.

We then discussed 'Books that have made you think' which included The Diary of Ann Frank, The Last Veteran and Florence Nightingale.

The next meeting will be announced in Church notices, please come and join us.

# Preaching with a View

Sunday, 22 September

Rev'd Dr Phillip Rees is 'preaching with a view' at the Worcester URC on Sunday, 22 September.

Phillip is our candidate for the position of a part-time (50%) minister. Some of you have already met him and this is your opportunity to hear him preach. He will also be preaching at Holly Mount, Malvern on 29 September if you are unable to be with us on the 22nd.

Please try to be at the Service on 22 September and put the date in your diary.

# Joint Church Meeting

Tuesday, 1 October

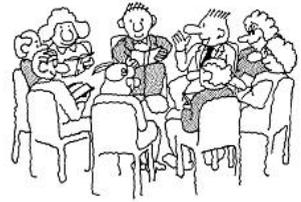
There will be a Joint Church Meeting at Worcester, together with the Malvern Churches, on Tuesday, 1 October at 7.30pm. We are hosting the meeting to discuss together our views and make a decision with a view to the possible appointment of Phillip. The meeting is open to everyone but it will only be Church members who will be allowed to vote. This is an important meeting and it is hoped that as many as possible will be able to attend. There will be a cup of tea available and the meeting should not take too long.

# Items for the October Newsletter

If you have any items for inclusion in the September Newsletter please give them to Tim Dunn, 27a Cornmeadow Green, Claines, Worcester. WR3 7PN. Tel 01905 457909, Email [newsletter@worcesterurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@worcesterurc.org.uk) by Sunday 22nd September at the latest please.

# Albany Fellowship

June found us enjoying Strawberries and Cream which followed a very entertaining hour from Bryan Nevil-Lee. Bryan took us all back down memory lane with a collection of songs and poems.



At our July meeting we had decided on a visit to Hartlebury Museum. We arrived at 2pm to have a look around the Museum. A few comments that I over heard were to the fascination of the Travellers Caravans. These were in various states of refurbishment and on to completion. How ever a family of four, never mind larger families, slept in these I will never know. The one thing I will say though is how cosy they looked and what a wonderful contraption it was. I have a real thing about old fires and to find the tiny range fires in these Caravans was amazing! All the intricate artwork and carvings that had been carries out on the glass cabinets and the caravans themselves was astounding. The Museum had many collections of various items including Doll's Houses and furniture, Children's Toys from the Nursery, displays and information on Salt production of the area, Miniature Trains and much more. It was a very enjoyable hour.

At 3pm we collected in the Café for our Afternoon Tea. My memory has gone blank but I think there were 17 or 18 of us altogether, as you can imagine there was a lot of chatter amongst us all and the Café must be applauded for there efforts in supplying us all with our afternoon teas.

At about 4pm we all dispersed and let the museum return to normal. We had all thoroughly enjoyed our afternoon outing.

We would like to thank all who have entertained us so far this

year, it has been a very full programme.

We have no meeting in August and will regroup again on the 5th September at 2.30pm in Church.

Jean and Teresa send our very best wishes and our love to you all and hope you all have a wonderful Summer break.

See you all in September.

Jean and Teresa

## Sponsored Cycle Ride



On September 14th a sponsored cycle ride takes place, nationally, around Churches. Tim and I used to take part in this many years ago. It is run by the Historic Churches Preservation Trust. The idea is that Churches are open to sign the sponsor forms of those cyclist taking part and offer light refreshment. The ride takes place between 10am and 6pm.

Sponsorship is given for each Church visited and half the money raised goes to the Church of your choice, usually your own Church, the other half goes to the Historic Churches Trust. By the way, you can Walk instead of cycle if you wish!

This is a fun day and a wonderful way to visit other Churches in your county. Tim and I are planning to take part again this year and would encourage anyone who would like to join us to do so. You do not have to come WITH us, you can organise your own route. If you would like any more information on this event or a sponsor form please speak to Teresa or Tim.

If you would like to sponsor us please contact us to fill in the sponsor form. We will be using one form for both of us, and we would aim to visit about 30-35 churches.

Thanks, Teresa and Tim

# Studdert Kennedy and Bob Holman

by Marianne Wade



This biography of Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy nicknamed Woodbine Willie in the Great War, was published in March. Its author Bob Holman is of particular interest to me as he trained and worked as a child care officer, but was then drawn into the academic life and became a professor of administration at Bath University. He also joined the Labour Party. To his surprise he became increasingly uneasy about his successful life. He felt guilty about teaching social workers to do what he was not doing himself and that he had reduced his Christianity to a sham ie. Jesus chose to be raised by a local couple and sought the company of ordinary working class people rather than the rich elites. With his wife he left the 'ivory tower' and for the next 30 years lived and worked in deprived areas, the kind of places with similarities to the poor areas where Studdert Kennedy served. Bob is described by the Daily Telegraph as 'the good man of Glasgow'. He writes and contributes regularly to the Guardian.

Studdert Kennedy was born in 1883. His father was Irish and a Vicar, father of 14 children, 4 of his 7 boys were ordained. He was brought up in a very poor district. After graduation he was determined to be a priest, at this time the Church of England was in decline with the clergy seeking friends in the middle classes. Studdert Kennedy was not interested in Politics but felt at ease with the poor. He married Emily and with her agreement accepted the post at St. Pauls Worcester in June 1914 because it offered the smallest income and the poorest people. Evensong became an experience rather than a service. People queued to see him afterwards. There were constant Visitors to the Vicarage. He visited the poor and sick whether they attended church or not. Children loved him.

Initially he supported the war and applied to enlist as a chaplain.

He was able to hold the attention of 2000 working class men at a time. In December 1915 he was sent to France. He had little training and is known for his distribution of New Testaments and cigarettes and hence the nick name Woodbine Willie. In July 1916 he was transferred to the Somme and was always present when the men went over the top. He sought out the wounded and the dying for which he was awarded the military cross.

The Church of England chose him to work with the National Mission of Repentance which had been set up. There was enormous concern about greed, selfishness, conflict between the classes, drunkenness and sexual immorality. Studdert Kennedy worked at a tremendous rate in spite of suffering badly from asthma. He used bawdy language, cracked jokes, sat on the edge of the platform with his legs dangling. He grabbed attention with fast words. No notes of his sermons survive. He wanted to steer clear of political parties and believed the Church should show the way. Not only was he a great teacher but he wrote many books. Just as a matter of interest 172 chaplains were killed during the war.

He returned to the UK in March 1919. Although he was known as the Poor Persons Parson the outcome of the War was to increase poverty. The CofE remained essentially middle class and there were difficulties in communicating between the 2 classes, Kennedy believed the teaching of Jesus contained the values and practices which should underpin society. He became a speaker on demand and in 1921 was employed by the Industrial Christian Fellowship, leaving St. Pauls but still living in Worcester. He died in 1929 at the age of 45.

# Childrens Pages

## Campfire Craft for kids

Our Campfire Craft provides a campfire which is perfectly safe for children of all ages - and, even better, you can bring it indoors if the weather lets you down! When you have made it. why not gather around and sing some campfire songs!

You will need:

4 Cardboard tubes (we used the inner tube from kitchen towels)

Brown paint

Crepe paper in red, yellow and orange

Glue (optional)

Instructions:

Paint your cardboard tubes brown and leave to dry. Arrange them into a rough pile. If you want to keep your campfire to use again in the future, you can glue them into position.

Rip up pieces of the crepe paper and scrunch into flame shapes. Push the flames into the pile of tubes.



# The lies we tell ourselves

Ending comfortable myths about poverty.



At the beginning of March the Baptist Union, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland published a report on the myths widely circulated about the poor in our society today. It makes interesting reading. The report begins by quoting John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

“So wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, ‘They are poor, only because they are idle’.” Yet today many churchgoers and members of the general public alike have come to believe that the key factors driving poverty in the UK are the personal failings of the poor – especially ‘idleness’.

The myths exposed in this report, reinforced by politicians and the media, are convenient because they allow the poor to be blamed for their poverty, and the rest of society to avoid taking any of the responsibility.

Churches have a special interest in speaking truthfully about poverty. Both the biblical warnings of the prophets and the example of Jesus teach us to pay special attention to the voices of the most vulnerable and underprivileged. The systematic misrepresentation of the poorest in society is a matter of injustice which all Christians have a responsibility to challenge.

The six myths the report examines are:

## Myth 1

‘They’ are lazy and don’t want to work

The most commonly cited cause of child poverty by churchgoers and the general public alike is that “their parents don’t want to work”. Yet the majority of children in poverty are from working households. In work

poverty is now more common than out of work poverty. It is readily accepted that across the country there are families in which three generations have never worked. Examples of such families have not been found, and the evidence suggests it is unlikely we ever will. How did we come to believe these things?

### Myth 2

'They' are addicted to drink and drugs

Churchgoers and the wider public cite addiction as the second most common cause of child poverty.

While addiction is devastating for the families and communities touched by it, fewer than 4% of benefit claimants report any form of addiction. How did we come to believe this is such a big factor in the lives of the 13 million people who live in poverty in the UK today

### Myth 3

'They' are not really poor – they just don't manage their money properly

Nearly 60% of the UK population agrees that the poor could cope if only they handled their money properly. The experience of living on a low income is one of constant struggle to manage limited resources, with small events having serious consequences. Statistics show that the poorest spend their money carefully, limiting themselves to the essentials. How did we come to believe that poverty was caused by profligacy?

### Myth 4

'They' are on the fiddle

Over 80% of the UK population believe that "large numbers falsely claim benefits". Benefit fraud has decreased to historically low levels - the kind of levels that the tax system can only dream of. Less than 0.9% of the welfare budget is lost to fraud. The fact is that if everyone claimed and was paid correctly, the welfare system would cost around £18 billion more. So how did we come to see welfare claimants as fraudulent scroungers?

## Myth 5

'They' have an easy life

Over half the British public believes benefits are too high and churchgoers tend to agree. Government ministers speak of families opting for benefits as a lifestyle choice. Yet we know that benefits do not meet minimum income standards. They have halved in value relative to average incomes over the last 30 years. We know the ill and the unemployed are the people least satisfied and happy with life.

Why have we come to believe that large numbers of families would choose this a lifestyle?

## Myth 6

'They' caused the deficit'

The proportion of our tax bills spent on welfare has remained stable for the last 20 years. It is ridiculous to argue, as some have, that increasing welfare spending is responsible for the current deficit. Public debt is a problem but why is it being laid at the feet of the poorest?

## Conclusion

As a coalition of major British Churches, we want to create a new story; one grounded in truth, compassion and hope. Part of our calling as Christians is to seek after truth, and that means facing up to our own blindness as well as calling others to account.

Collectively we have come to believe things about poverty in the UK which are not grounded in fact. We need to develop an understanding of the depth and breadth of UK poverty that is compatible with the evidence available. Just as importantly we need to match the language of public debate with the reality of people's lives. It is a task we must approach with humility; one which puts the lived experience of poverty at its heart, and one which is committed to truthfulness – no matter how uncomfortable we find those truths to be. Please join with us in this challenge.

For more information visit:

[www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty)



Invite you to a

# Be Still Day



## Deepening our relationship with God through Silent Prayer

Led by Magdalen Houlihan\*

10am – 3.30pm  
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2013  
Droitwich Methodist Church,  
Worcester Road, WR9 8AN

**ALL WELCOME**

This event is free, but donations of £5 invited to cover expenses. Please bring a packed lunch.

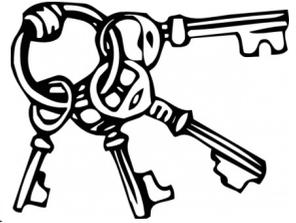
\*Magdalen has worked as a lay leader in Silent Prayer ministry with Fr Ben O'Rourke OSA of Clare Priory for the last 7 years and has led many "Be Still" days

**TO BOOK YOUR PLACE** Please contact Max Jourdier on  
[mandcjourdier@gmail.com](mailto:mandcjourdier@gmail.com) or 01886 812259

# Prayer Partners 2013

## KEYS IMAGE

We pray for those who are in prison. Those who are denied their basic human rights, those who are living with their conscience, those who are imprisoned by life itself, in Gaza, in Jerusalem and other places of conflict. We are committed to life.



Action: Hold your house or car keys in your hand. Work your way through the bunch and reflect on each key and what this represents to you. Does your house key represent a safe space? Does your car key represent your freedom and independence? Does your office key represent your right to work and earn money? Thank God for each key and what it personally means to you. Pray for those whose freedom has been taken away.

## RICE IMAGE

We pray for those who are experiencing the effects of changes in climate. Those whose crops yield less because of salination, those whose homes are destroyed by floods and cyclones and those whose livelihoods are lost.



Action: Hold a handful of rice in your palm. Look at each wonderful nourishing grain. We may take such a thing for granted but crops such as these are vital to billions across the globe for food and livelihood. As you run the grains through your fingers, pray for those facing poverty and hunger due to a failed crop caused by climate change and farmers across the world whose livings have been destroyed.

## Worcester URC Duty Rotas

	4-Aug	11-Aug	18-Aug	25-Aug	
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Barbara James David James	Paul Denham Rob Peachey	Pat Berryman Len Berryman	Michael Clarke Rosemary Clarke	
Reading	Paul Denham	Rob Peachey	Margaret Morris	Rosemary Clarke	
Prepare Table		Nicky Neville-Lee Bryan Neville-Lee	Teresa Dunn Jean McCluskie		
Serve Communion		Helen Moore Rob Peachey Margaret Morris Roger Morris	David James Teresa Dunn		
Beadle	Liz Davies	Pat Berryman	Rob Peachey	Helen Yare	

	1-Sep	8-Sep	15-Sep	22-Sep	29-Sep
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Brian McCluskie Jean McCluskie	Carol Hardyman Betty Forrer	Bryan Neville-Lee Nicky Neville-Lee	June Barber Margaret Dodds	Jeremy Davies Liz Davies
Reading	Jeremy Davies	Liz Davies	Margaret Dodds	Carol Hardyman	Tim Dunn
Prepare Table		Doreen Cheesbrough Tom Cheesbrough		Len Berryman Pat Berryman	
Serve Communion		Nicky Neville-Lee Bryan Neville-Lee Tom Cheesbrough Michael Clarke		Jeremy Davies Liz Davies	
Beadle	Paul Denham	Paul Denham	Liz Davies	Nicky Neville-Lee	Pat Berryman

	6-Oct	13-Oct	20-Oct	27-Oct	
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Roger Morris Margaret Morris	Carol Hardyman Sarah Lodge	Doreen Cheesbrough Tom Cheesbrough	Tim Dunn Teresa Dunn	
Reading	Sarah Lodge	Teresa Dunn	Roger Morris	Brian McCluskie	
Prepare Table		Sarah Lodge Rob Peachey		Teresa Dunn Jean McCluskie	
Serve Communion		Paul Denham Brian McCluskie Sarah Lodge Helen Moore		Rob Peachey David James	
Beadle	Rob Peachey	Helen Yare	David James	David James	

Please arrange your own duty swaps as required