



**Welcoming,
Caring,
Sharing**

December 2013/January 2014

MINISTER

**Rev Duncan Tuck
71 Lower Howsell Road
Malvern Link
WR14 1DN**

Tel 01684 562404

CHURCH SECRETARY

**Mrs Pat Berryman
12 Dineley Road
Peopleton
Pershore
WR10 2EJ**

CHURCH ADDRESS:

**Albany Terrace
Worcester
WR1 3DU**

www.worcesterurc.org.uk

The Sunday Plan



Sunday 1st December
11 am Worship

Conducted by Rev. Duncan Tuck
Coffee after the service

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

Conducted by Rev Richard Alford
Coffee after the service

Sunday 15th December
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Margaret Mandrell
Coffee after the service

Sunday 22nd December
11 am Carol Service

Conducted by the Singing Group
Coffee after the service

Tuesday 24th December
11:30 pm Christmas Eve Communion

Conducted by Rev. Duncan Tuck

Wednesday 25th December
10 am Christmas Day Family Service

Conducted by Paul Denham

Sunday 29th December
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Rev. Duncan Tuck
Coffee after the service

Sunday 5th January
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Teresa & Tim Dunn
Coffee after the service

Sunday 12th January
11 am Worship & Holy Communion
Individual glasses

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck
Coffee after the service

Sunday 19th January
11 am Morning Worship

Pulpit Exchange -Week of Prayer
for Christian Unity
Coffee after the service

Sunday 26th January
11 am Worship & Holy Communion
Common Cup

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck
Coffee after the service

Sunday 2nd February
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Helen Yare
Coffee after the service

From the Manse

Making God Laugh

Dear friends



With Christmas crackers and parties in mind, I have a question for you: When is a door not a door? Answer: When Jesus is being humorous.

If you're wondering what on earth I'm talking about, then think of something Jesus said about camels and needles (try Mark 10.25). Isn't that funny? The problem is we have heard that so often, we miss the humour. But I'm convinced that Jesus, here, is actually cracking a joke!

Jesus had a sense of humour. And as we approach the season when most people say they get very stressed - Christmas - we should remember that. Think about it for a second. If, as theologians say, Jesus was not only perfectly God, but also perfectly human, then it stands to reason he had a sense of

humour - just like us.

There have been many attempts to explain that camel remark away. Some theologians have surmised that there was a door in the wall of Jerusalem called the Needle Gate. That, they say, was what Jesus was referring to seriously. But I find that hard to swallow. I prefer to think that Jesus wasn't deadly serious all the time.

How can Jesus be both God - who gave us our humour - and human, without seeing the funny and absurd side of life? God must have laughed at ducks with their big feet and strange bills, laughed at pompous clerics, laughed at David dancing, laughed at the disciples' faces when Jesus strolled by walking on water.

It's good to laugh. And one thing Christmas should do is make us happy. Therapists tell us that laughter is an essential safety valve against many physical and psychological problems. To laugh is part of our make-up. So, if we are made in God's image...

However, there's laughing and there's laughing. I'm convinced that God would love to laugh with us. But how often do we share happiness with him? When was the last time you said, 'Lord, you'll like this one - a funny thing happened to me on the way to church...'
More often than not, we only talk to him when we're serious and in trouble. Come on, give God a break.

If you really feel that there's no way you can share something humorous with God, here are a few ways to make God laugh:

1. Show him your plans.
2. Promise yourself you'll get up at five every morning and pray for two hours.
3. Tell him your problem is too big (or too little) for him to cope with.
4. Tell him he doesn't understand what you're going through.

5. Tell him you're not worth it (this might make him cry instead).
6. Tell him you don't need changing.
7. Tell him that your neighbour's problems are nothing to do with you.

I've done enough to give God a belly laugh over the years. The trick I'm learning is to stop puffing myself up and to laugh along with God. Then God can set about putting me right.

Normally he'll start with his greatest joke: Have you heard the one about a God who loved his people so much to come as a small baby, in a manger, and grew up to be a humble carpenter?

Christmas is a time of joy. Let's join God in his joyful laughter this season.

Every blessing
Duncan

Diary Dates

Sunday, December 1st	Church Meeting after the Service
Sunday, December 1st	Advent Service, St Stephens 7:30 pm
Wednesday, December 11th	Elders Meeting 7pm
Tuesday, January 14th	Elders Meeting 7pm
Sunday, January 19th	Evening service for week of prayer for Christian Unity 6.30 pm at Worcester Cathedral
Wednesday, February 5th	Elders Meeting 7pm
Sunday, February 16th	Church Meeting after the Service

Monday Evenings : Singing Group : Contact Margaret Morris

Friday Evenings : Table Tennis : Contact Tim Dunn

Monthly Book Group : Contact Tim & Teresa Dunn

Monthly Albany Fellowship : Contact Jean McCluskie/Teresa Dunn

Christmas Cards

Want to send Christmas greetings to friends at church but worried about all those trees being chopped down to make cards? Singing group have the answer!



This year there will be a special tree in church on which you can hang a single 'greetings bauble' on which you can write your message. You will be able to buy a bauble (made from recycled cards) during Advent for a donation to our church's Christmas collection for Unicef, supporting the Philippines appeal, or alternatively make your own to hang (but please consider making a donation anyway). I will pin an example to the notice board in the hall. Please feel free to send your usual cards if you prefer.

Penny Peak



A Shawl Ministry

A Shawl Ministry - a simple and effective way to show people you care for them, and to remind them of the love and support that surrounds them, even when they are alone. Shawls can be knitted, crocheted or woven, and given to anyone who has been going through or is facing a hard time, through illness, bereavement, or other difficult circumstances. They can also be given at times of change (e.g. to someone leaving for a new job,) and of joy—a wedding, birth of a baby, graduation, etc.

CWF convention's theme for this coming year is 'Unconditional Love'.

We thought it would be a nice idea if those who can, could make a shawl to bring to conference. They then could be blessed and given to people to show God's love.

This comes from the Christian Women's Fellowship newsletter. For the keen knitters among us we also have patterns for prem babies hats and jackets which are donated at the hospital in Worcester and used by the tiny babies.

Helen Yare

reActive

Tim and I attended a Vocano Choir Charity Concert at the Baptist Church on October 12th. It was in aid of reActive Foundation Charity.

We felt that it would be a good idea to highlight the Charity in the Newsletter. Below are some brief introductions to the Charity and if you require any further information you can access their web site which is: www.reActive.org.uk.

The reActive Foundation offers specialist neurological physiotherapy, occupational therapy and rehabilitation for a wide range of neurological conditions such as Stroke, Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and other Neuro-degenerative Conditions. The Team of physiotherapists and occupational therapists brings a combined knowledge of well over 40 years experience specialising in the assessment and treatment of neurological conditions.

Some of Our Objectives

- To provide ongoing, affordable exercise and therapy for individuals living with a long-term neurological disability;
- To promote quality of life and independence through exercise and goal-orientated therapy, increased social integration, vocational preparation, sporting/leisure/past-time promotion, and 'life ambition' fulfilment;
- To prevent secondary complications which may otherwise result in hospital or other healthcare setting admission, or re-homing to an increased dependency setting, such as a care home;

What we offer: Clinic-based Sessions, Home Visits, Hydrotherapy, FES Assessment, Acupuncture, Physiotherapy-Supported Gym Sessions, Exercises Classes.

We treat: Stroke, Acquired Brain Injury, Spinal Cord Injury, Multiple Sclerosis, MND, Parkinson's Disease, Cerebral Palsy, Polyneuropathies, Ataxias & Balance;
at ANY STAGE of the condition!

Teresa Dunn

Childrens Pages

The Christingle consists of:

an orange representing the world;
a red ribbon around it representing the blood of Jesus;
dolly mixtures or dried fruits skewered on cocktail sticks pushed into the orange, representing the fruits of the earth and the four seasons (the representation of the four seasons was a later addition, not of Moravian origin.); and
a lit candle pushed into the centre of the orange, representing Jesus Christ as the light of the world."

Here's how to make your own Christingle:

You will need:

Orange
Candle
Red ribbon
Pins
Cocktail sticks
Sweet and/or dried fruit



Instructions:

If the orange does not sit flat, cut a small slice off the bottom (with adult supervision, please!) Use an apple corer to make a hole in the middle of the orange and push in the candle.

Wrap a length of red ribbon around the centre of the orange and pin into place.

Thread sweets and dried fruit onto 4 cocktail sticks and push these into the orange.

Albany Fellowship

What a surprise we had at Albany Fellowship! There were about twenty or more of us. We had not met in October as both Jean and I were unable to be there.



What a wonderful afternoon we had. Rita Michelmann entertained us with her memoirs of being in the Land Army. She was sent to work on a large Estate where she had to work each day. Her evenings and weekends were her own. The family she was with embraced her and would treat her or take her out from time to time. It was very interesting. A huge Thank you Rita for a wonderful afternoon. We finished off as usual with tea and cake and biscuit.

In December there will not be a meeting at Church, instead we are to gather at 'The Wagon Wheel' at Grimley for our Christmas Meal. You will be contacted nearer the time date as to who is collecting who and what time we need to be there.

Thank you to all who have helped in any way over the past year, without your help we could not continue. All it leaves us to do is to wish you all a Very Merry and Peaceful Christmas and New Year.
God Bless you all
Jean and Teresa

Advent Service - St. Stephens

Sunday 1st December : 7:30 pm

This is a shared service between the North Worcester Group of Churches. It will be led by Rev Fiona Haworth, chaplain at Worcester University, who is involved with the Iona Community.

If you have never been before do try to come it is a good opportunity to share worship and meet with fellow Christians in the area.

Eileen Barnett

I know that we have only known Eileen for a few brief years, almost ten I believe. In that time we have become very, very fond of her as have most of us, I suspect. We all have our memories of her, especially of her unending smile, her concern for those around her and not wanting to put anyone out.

A visit would make her day and even if you were feeling a bit down in the dumps by the time you came away you had been given a tonic. We loved the stories of her time on the farm and of her need to go and help her brother as his wife deteriorated. "I can't do much but I can sit and peel a few veg and make a cake" she would say.

For some reason Tim became known as Fred and that's what he was called ever after. Dotty, our dog, would be walked down the canal to pay her a visit, oh she did make a fuss of her. Even when, in the past year or so she spent most of her time in bed, she wanted to see Dotty, and hopefully us as well.

We found that when she was in hospital she would never complain except saying "There's no salt in the food!" The Staff were always very fond of her and she would have them laughing very soon after being taken in. At home she came to have a team of Carers looking after her, they all thought the world of her. One of them was so fond of Eileen that she would call on her if she was passing in between her own visits to her clients.

Eileen paced her self this last twelve months or so. If there was something she wanted to go to, such as Harvest, Albany Fellowship, Easter or the Bradbury Centre, then she would stay in bed for the few days prior to the meeting then make sure she was up and ready to go on the day. If she could not go she would be very upset but accepted that it was not able to happen.

These are a few of our memories of a very dear lady we wanted to

share with you. We know you all have memories and she meant a lot to us all in lots of different ways.

We are away in Yorkshire at the time of her Funeral and whilst we shall be thinking of Eileen and her Family we shall be with you all in Spirit on the day.

A light has gone out in our Church, but that light is shining more brightly in Glory and will do for evermore.

God Bless Eileen, Sleep Tight.
Teresa and Tim

Individual Glasses

In church, you hear people voice opinions about the use of individual glasses or common cup during communion. I was brought up using individual glasses, so for me they became expected and 'traditional' and so correct. As I matured and looked beyond the bounds of my own church walls, I met other sincere and committed Christians who did things differently and were equally sure that their way was the correct way. I recently did a little research on the origins of individual glasses.

I had a little look on line in case I had got it wrong on when individual glasses came into use. They were invented in the late 1880s in America, apparently as a response to worries in the cities at a time when cholera was rife, but not much used. There is a 1906 article arguing that they are theologically acceptable (again American) this would suggest that there may have been some use of them in the UK right at the beginning of the twentieth century but would be consistent with what I had been told about them being brought into general use for hygiene reasons at the time of the Great Flu in the winter of 1918-19. Prior to that a common cup was always used and certainly in the Presbyterian tradition and that of the Churches of Christ (correct me if I am wrong on that bit Tom) was passed hand to hand around communicant members of

the congregation. It is a measure brought in for practical health reasons. The actual difference in tradition appears to lie in whether you receive in your seat, as a member of a shared meal or walk up to the front to a central point.

In modern times, commercial single use 'glasses' already filled have become available. They look a bit like the individual pots of long life milk you get with tea or coffee sometimes – but contain communion wine or grape juice. In some churches, you go up to the front, pick your pot, tear off the lid, consume it and return to your seat. Again a response to health issues like Aids and to the size of some modern American churches – saves on the washing up.

However we 'remember the death of our Lord until he comes', it is not the mechanics of the act that matter but the mystery of the faith that enables Christ to be with us that we partake in.

Helen Yare



Book Group

Our Book Group was low in numbers in November but we still had an interesting meeting for those that attended.

We talked about books we had recently read, which this month included *The Moonstone*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Rebecca Shaw Novels*.

We then discussed our Fictional Heroes, or just favourite Characters from books we had read if we had no particular hero. It was an enjoyable hour, please feel free to come and join us, even if you are no great reader.

We probably won't meet in December, so listen out for an announcement of a January date.

Beadle Duties

Every Sunday we have a selection of willing volunteers who graciously perform duties to keep the service running smoothly. As Elders are allowed to have holidays, it is sometimes difficult finding sufficient Elders to ensure these duties are covered properly. That means we can occasionally over-burden some of the faithful.

With that in mind, we would like to ask all non-serving Elders if they will consider coming on a rota for Beadle duties and helping ease some of the work. None of it is onerous, and it does not mean doing it every week; but a few people spinning too many plates can cause problems.

If you feel you will be able to help, please speak to one of the Elders, or the Secretary, and you will be welcomed with open arms.

My thanks to you in anticipation.

Duncan

Items for the February Newsletter

If you have any items for inclusion in the February Newsletter please give them to Tim Dunn. 27a Cornmeadow Green, Claines, Worcester. WR3 7PN. Tel 01905 457909, Email newsletter@worcesterurc.org.uk by Sunday 19th January at the latest please.

Worcester URC Duty Rotas

	1-Dec	8-Dec	15-Dec	22-Dec	29-Dec
Preacher	Rev Duncan Tuck	Rev Richard Alford	Margaret Mandrell	Singing Group	Rev Duncan Tuck
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Carol Hardyman Betty Forrer	Bryan Neville-Lee Nicky Neville-Lee	Brian McCluskie Jean McCluskie	Jeremy Davies Liz Davies	Sarah Lodge Margaret Dodds
Reading	Nicky Neville-Lee	Michael Clarke	Paul Denham	Rob Peachey	Margaret Morris
Prepare Table		Teresa Dunn Jean McCluskie		Doreen Cheesbrough Tom Cheesbrough	
Serve Communion		Paul Denham Sarah Lodge Brian McCluskie Nicky Neville-Lee		Bryan Neville-Lee Helen Moore	
Beadle	Rob Peachey	Helen Yare	David James	Nicky Neville-Lee	Liz Davies

	5-Jan	12-Jan	19-Jan	26-Jan
Preacher	Teresa & Tim Dunn	Rev Duncan Tuck	Pulpit Exchange	Rev Duncan Tuck
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Roger Morris Margaret Morris	Penny Peak Ann Cook	Doreen Cheesbrough Tom Cheesbrough	Tim Dunn Teresa Dunn
Reading	Rosemary Clarke	Jeremy Davies	Liz Davies	Margaret Dodds
Prepare Table		Nicky Neville-Lee Bryan Neville-Lee		Teresa Dunn Jean McCluskie
Serve Communion		Rob Peachey Margaret Morris Roger Morris David James		Nicky Neville-Lee Bryan Neville-Lee
Beadle	Paul Denham	Rob Peachey	Helen Yare	David James

	2-Feb	9-Feb	16-Feb	23-Feb
Preacher	Helen Yare			
Books/Foyer & Offertory	Paul Denham Rob Peachey	Pat Berryman Len Berryman	Michael Clarke Rosemary Clarke	Brian McCluskie Jean McCluskie
Reading	Carol Hardyman	Tim Dunn	Sarah Lodge	Teresa Dunn
Prepare Table		Doreen Cheesbrough Tom Cheesbrough		Len Berryman Pat Berryman
Serve Communion		Tom Cheesbrough Michael Clarke Jeremy Davies Liz Davies		Paul Denham Brian McCluskie
Beadle	Nicky Neville-Lee	Pat Berryman	Liz Davies	Rob Peachey

PLEASE ARRANGE YOUR OWN DUTY SWAPS AS REQUIRED

