



Welcoming,  
Caring,  
Sharing

## February/March 2013

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

# The Sunday Plan



Sunday 3rd February  
11 am Worship

Conducted by Rob Ellis  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 10th February  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Ann Tempest  
URC Lay Preacher  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 17th February  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 24th February  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Paul Denham  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 3rd March  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 10th March  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Margaret Mendrell  
Lay Reader at St. Stephens  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 17th March  
11 am Morning Worship

Conducted by Rev Robert Apps  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 24th March  
Palm Sunday  
11 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Rev Duncan Tuck  
Coffee after the service

Friday March 29th

Good Friday Procession of Witness  
Details to be announced

Sunday March 31st

8 am Easter Sunday Reflection

Preacher to be announced

10 am Easter Sunday Worship and  
Holy Communion

Preacher to be announced

## From the Manse



Dear friends

The other day I managed to catch an episode of a new TV series of the Father Brown stories by GK Chesterton. Chesterton is an interesting writer. Faith to him was active and vibrant. At one time he said, 'What makes Christianity such an adventure is its wild extremes: sorrow of cross and joy of empty tomb.' Another time he wrote, 'If Christianity should happen to be true – that is to say, if it's from the real God of the universe – then defending it may mean talking about anything and everything. Things can be irrelevant to the proposition that Christianity is false; but nothing can be irrelevant to the proposition that Christianity is true. All things not only may have something to do with the Christian God, but must have something to do with him if he lives and reigns.'

In other words, nothing is outside of God's interest and concern. If we truly believe in the Christian God, then he is involved in everything. And that's an interesting thought as we leave

Christmas behind and look towards Spring.

Today is frosty, with a possible threat of snow. Should we talk to God about the frost and snow? Of course. Perhaps the adventure that Chesterton talks about there is recognising that our God is involved in the delicacy and uniqueness of every snowflake, and is equally concerned that we learn to care for those around us when those snowflakes, and the frost, get too hard for some to take.

The flowing of a river, and the pouring of rain, are all part of this extraordinarily diverse and complicated, utterly wonderful world we inhabit - a world that our bible says was brought about by a God who loves the world. And yet we have seen how destructive that water can be, when the rivers burst their banks. We can wonder at rushing streams, and glory in the beauty of sparkling water that God creates. And we can also try to understand how God wants to move in our hearts so that our compassion and help goes out to those for whom there has been too much water. Or even care for those who have no water, and are dying of thirst.

If the Christian God is real - and I wholeheartedly hold that he is - then that understanding touches everything we do. But, I want to use a GK Chesterton phrase again. In that TV episode, Father Brown got angry at a vicar who was using God as an excuse to justify murder. Father Brown raged, 'God is not there as your scapegoat!' That's very true. Not just for murder, but for much of what we do. If we understand God correctly, then we must take seriously that biblical insight: 'God is love.' And that love is active, a love that draws us in to participate. God is not there to support our prejudices, hatreds, selfishness or greed.

So don't tell your neighbour, 'I can't help you in your need, because I've got to go to a prayer meeting.' The bible says that it is no good saying to someone who is homeless, 'Go in peace, and be warm,' when we could be in a position to provide clothing and warmth. I

may be flying a kite here, but it seems to me more and more that if a church is not seen to be actively showing God's compassion, then it becomes irrelevant and dies. As we enter spring - the time of new life - may we show that life all the more in the way we operate

## Diary Dates



Thursday 7th February  
Albany Fellowship 12 noon

Tuesday 26th February  
Worcester Elders Meeting at 6.30 pm

Friday 1st March  
Womens World Day of Prayer

Sunday 3rd March  
Church Meeting after the morning Service

Thursday 7th March  
Albany Fellowship 2.30 pm

Saturday 16th March  
Quiz Night at Albany Terrace, 7pm

Tuesday 19th March  
Worcester Elders Meeting at 6.30 pm

Sunday March 31st  
Easter Breakfast at Albany Terrace, 8:45 am

## Junior Church

Currently Jean McCluskie, Helen Moore and Margaret Morris take turns to provide activities for the younger members of the congregation. They would very much like some more people to join the team. It is a very rewarding thing to do.



We currently operate a flexible rota and it would be very helpful if two or three more people could join this so that everyone could cover a Sunday morning on a monthly or even bi-monthly basis.

The activities are very much up to the person taking the session but there is a lot of material in the cupboard and we would be more than happy to all get together to do the planning.

Please give this some thought and talk to Jean, Helen or Margaret to find out more and offer your help.

Thank you!

## Christianity Explored

I have had an enquiry regarding the possibility of running a course for people who have no knowledge of Christianity and wish to know more. But one enquiry does not constitute a course. So I would like you to let me know of anyone who might be interested.

I would suggest that each non-Christian be accompanied by a Christian to the course, to stop it being so scary. You could bring a friend, neighbour, relative - anyone who might be saying to you, 'What is this Christianity business all about?' If I get enough of a positive response, I will try to hold it during the Spring. Please let me know by February 17th so that I can plan wisely.



Duncan

# From your China correspondent



Another letter from China

Two months on and the weather has got colder. The classrooms and staffroom (and the flat) have no heating so you pile on the layers and teach in your coat. Plug in electric hot water bottles are popular amongst the students to keep their hands and laps warm under the desk. Teachers have to stand up and get cold hands. I managed to get a sore throat and was taken by a colleague to buy a chicken to make chicken soup. First go to the market and choose your live chicken and bargain on the price. They then cut its throat and put it into hot water and then into a drum which removes the feathers. It is gutted and cut into pieces head and all and put in a bag to take home. It does make good soup and the meat is definitely fresh.

One of the teachers has been taking me swimming with her to baths built on a hot water spring. It involves a hair raising cycle ride across town – there seem to be no traffic rules, or if they exist they are totally ignored. On the way back we often stop off at one of the tiny local eating places for me to try yet another local specialty. We spotted toads for sale in the supermarket – in the food section.

I did actually make it to church once. All in Chinese of course but you would have known all the hymn tunes – traditional nineteenth century European and the choir up the front in smocks and big pussycat bows. The words and readings were projected onto screens so I could work out from the characters which readings were being used and tell the difference between the Lord's prayer

and the creed. The student who took me there usually plays the music but is having this year off as he has final exams to work for and they really make them work here.

Christmas Day coincided with the 110th anniversary of the school. On Christmas Eve I was invited to the local University and on Christmas Day, after a normal day of teaching, the students put on a spectacular show out of doors. We sat in the dark in our coats to watch. I had helped to rehearse a short version of Snow White in English which was one of the 'acts'. There was also some traditional dancing from various parts of China performed by students from those regions.

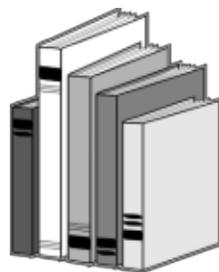
I have been on a few outings with colleagues – to a mangrove forest which we explored in a traditional fishing boat, to a family wedding, to some historical sites, up a mountain – the hard way, to various temples and the odd banquet. Everyone here has been so friendly and hospitable that I will miss the friends that I have made here. However I am also looking forward to seeing my UK friends as well. I may even be back by the time you are reading this.

Helen

## **Book Club?**

A few of us have discussed getting together once a month over cups of tea and coffee to discuss the books we have been reading. What books we have enjoyed and recommend, or what we wouldn't.

Maybe we could even read the same book and discuss it.



If you would be interested in this please contact Tim and Teresa and we'll try to move the idea forward.

# Malvern Science and Faith Weekend

A weekend of talks, discussion and activities for people of all faiths and none on topics of scientific interest

## Sustainability

The challenge to care for the earth is found in all of the major religious faiths. For 2013, Malvern Science and Faith Weekend explores the theme of sustainability from a multi-faith perspective as well as offering science workshops for children by Leaders in Science for Sustainability Education.



Satish Kumar



Rianne ten Veen



Rosalind Selby

1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH  
2013

Art and Science activities for Children

Science for Sustainability Workshops

Meet the RSPB

Project **earth** Seminar

Sunday Morning Service

Hands-on Demonstrations

Film and discussion evening: *The Economics of Happiness*

Holly Mount  
Church



St Matthias  
Church

With thanks to:

**earth**

Keele  
University

RSPB



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

# A Brush with the Past

Benjamin Williams Leader R.A (1831-1923)



Looking out of the front window of my parents' cottage in Whittington, I cannot help but admire the handsome, but unassuming white building opposite, a Victorian villa that, at the time of my residence in Whittington, was occupied by a local company and turned into offices.

The building in question was residence to local Victorian artist Benjamin Williams Leader who lived there from 1862 to 1889. Whittington and the surrounding countryside became an inspiration for many sketches.

Leader was educated at the Royal Grammar School in Worcester, and studied at the Worcester School of Design. In 1854 at the age of 23 he attended the Royal Academy

The countryside of Worcester proved to be a real provider of subject matter for Leader who fell in love with its picturesque beauty

For the next ten years Leader painted Worcestershire, Wales, and the Severn Valley, producing beautiful pastoral landscapes that appealed to his Victorian audience

According to the 'Art Journal' of 1901, Leader's most popular work was 'In Autumn There shall be Light'

In 1914 he was made an Honorary Freemason of the City of Worcester in recognition of his services (as a director of Royal Worcester, and a native of the city).

Leader's paintings are exhibited in the Victoria and Albert

Museum, the Tate Gallery in London, In Worcester (the largest collection), Manchester, and Birmingham and in private collections.

Leader died in Surrey in 1923, at the age of 91, a local Worcester boy whose work had become world renowned. Next time you look out of your window and see an unassuming building turned into offices, dig a bit deeper into its history and you might be surprised at what you find.



Evening After Rain Worcestershire

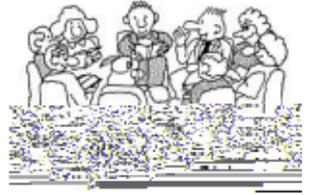
Ruth Coote

## **Items for the April Newsletter**

If you have any items for inclusion in the April 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 24th March at the latest please.

# Albany Fellowship

We look forward to seeing you all on 7th February 2013 when we will have a soup and a roll lunch. Please note we will meet earlier because of this at 12 NOON and finish about 2.00pm



See you all soon  
Love  
Jean and Teresa

## Church Christmas Party

A huge thank you to all who attended this event. We were small in number but we all had a very good time.

The hall was decorated with paper chains and snowflakes, games were played, Bryan Neville-Lee entertained us with singing, Duncan challenged us with a quiz and lots of tea was drunk. We rounded off with a few Carol's before departing home again.

Many Thanks again.  
Teresa and Tim

# Pause for Thought

from the Worship Group



This months thought is from  
[www.freshwinds.org.uk](http://www.freshwinds.org.uk)

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## About us

Since 1992 Freshwinds has been offering care and support, without charge, to adults and children living with life threatening and life-limiting illness as well as individuals from socially excluded backgrounds. We deliver a range of services including the provision of integrated complementary therapy, advocacy, employment advice, debt counselling and community based initiatives on HIV, substance misuse and crime. [You can find out more about our programmes here.](#)

At our heart Freshwinds is a sanctuary of peace and calm. Our home is open to all and offers a safe and caring environment. As such, Freshwinds is essentially a spirit – a passion that binds everyone to work together to ease suffering and encourage healing.

In the last year we have seen over 8,500 people access our services increase and a further 60,000 (est) receiving one off and community level advice. Approximately 50% of the people we work with are from ethnic minority backgrounds and our current telephone contact rate is 8,500 per month.

We currently have over 270 volunteers.

## Mission Statement

“To provide a person centred, fully integrated model of care and support, to individuals with life threatening and life limiting illnesses and those experiencing social exclusion, within a caring, safe and secure environment, exploring their circumstances and emotions to find a true resolution to their situation.”

## Our guiding principle

“Recognising that with empowerment comes responsibility. Being mindful to Act with integrity; supporting all human beings and honouring all needs equally.”

## Values statement

“Providing holistic support, embracing diversity and promoting empowerment and dignity through professional integrity.”

# WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

(Interdenominational)



Friday 1<sup>st</sup>. March 2013

‘I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me’

A service prepared by Christian Women of France

## **City Service:**

St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Pump Street      10.30 a.m.

Speaker – Rev. Anne Smith

## **West Side Service:**

St. John's in Bedwardine      1.45 p.m.

## **Other Services:**

St. Mary's, Kempsey      1.45 p.m.

St. Stephen's Church, Barbourne      1.45 p.m.

Fernhill Heath Baptist      7.30 p.m.

St. Clement's Church, Henwick Roa      7.30 p.m.

St. James, Callow End      7.30 p.m.

# Prayer Partners 2013

Welcome to Prayer Partner 2013. This year we have one prayer that is split into 10 separate verses. Under each verse is a suggested action that is designed to help you focus your prayers and time of reflection. They are just suggestions and we encourage you to use the ideas in whatever way best helps you in your personal or public prayer time.



## SHOPPING LIST

We pray for the hungry of this world, those who are caught up in the cycle of poverty that denies some people food. Grant that we will take a lead in giving generously. We are committed to life.

Action: As you write your shopping list or do your shopping this week, take a moment to thank God for the sheer choice and availability of food we have at our fingertips. Think about each ingredient you write down, or look at the shelves piled high with every kind of flavour, packet, herb, spice, meat, juice and fruit you could need. Thank God for all the abundant riches He has provided us with and ask Him to give us the strength, will and wisdom to share that wealth with all of our brothers and sisters across the world.

## A GLASS OF WATER

We pray for those who are thirsty because they are denied access to clean water and those who are thirsty for living water, for the right to live. We are committed to life.

Action: Fill up a glass of water from your tap. As you do so give thanks that you have such a precious life-giving commodity at your fingertips. Sit with your glass of water. Smell it, taste it, dip your fingers in it. Really look at it in detail. Clean, still, fresh and revitalising. You couldn't live without it. Pray for those without access to this basic human right.



# JOHNS

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- Carpentry Repairs
- Plastering
- Plumbing Repairs

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