

The Bethel Mag

The Church
that Meets
at
Bethel



Issue 73
Summer 2024

The magazine from the church
in the community,
for the community.

NEWS FROM YOUR CHURCH

Hi People

How lovely to be able to talk with you again through our Bethel Mag. It's been 10 weeks since our last one, and there's been a lot happening!



Firstly, we had our Prize Giving Service for the PathFinders, PathBreakers and IceBreakers. It's an old tradition that goes back so many, many years, when giving a book as a prize was a reward to children who regularly attended Sunday Schools. Each child gained a stamp/sticker

every week they attended, and then at the end of the year, over a certain number of stamps earned the child a reward. We have changed this at Bethel quite radically, but still kept the old thought of wanting to give each child a book - not as a reward for coming, but as an encouragement to them to keep reading and learning about Jesus. Our children are gifts into this Church - God has blessed us with each and every one of them - and we treasure them. A rather special mention needs to be made for Roxy - one of our special children, who this year received a splendid coat - "I'm Roxy - welcome to Bethel." She is now on the door welcome rota!!



Lent was rather special this year - we were led through the reading of the beautiful book, *The Garden of the Beloved* written by Robert Way. June Winnall read us through chapter by chapter, and then allowed time for quiet reflection. There's a full report later in the Mag, but suffice it to say, it was beautiful, peaceful and restorative - thank you June.

Easter itself held the Palm Sunday services, a full Passover meal and Easter Day Celebrations including breakfast and hot cross buns in the evening. Our Choral Society also did John Stainer's "Crucifixion" Cantata on Good Friday evening. Again, fuller reports later in the Mag.

Lent, Easter and Pentecost all help us to remember with thanks the works of God in our lives and in and through His Church. Our current Sunday series is based on “Live Full, Die Empty” and encourages us all to keep on being filled with His Holy Spirit so that we can pour His love out on all we meet, drawing them into the Father, because of Jesus His Son and by the power of the Holy Spirit.



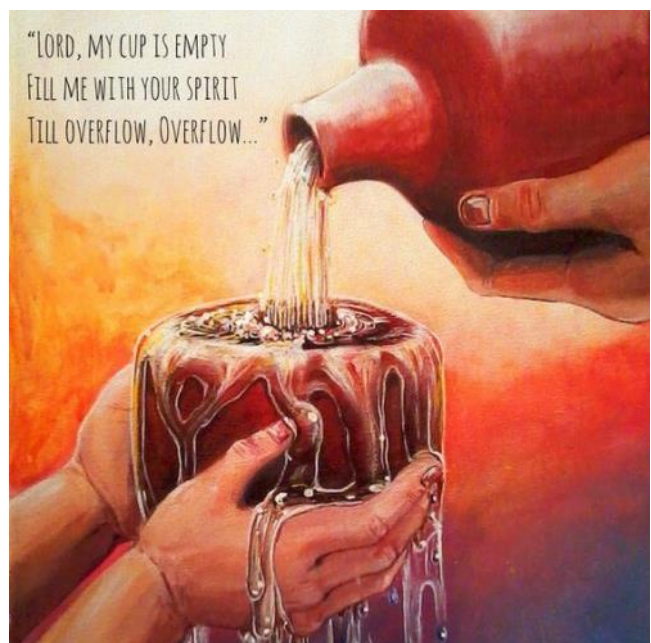
We've been looking at the tribe of Levi, and have discovered that no matter what our background or our past, being close with God promises us life now and for eternity. The Bible teaches us that the Levites became Warriors (fight the good fight of faith) Worshippers (all that I am responding to all that He is) Workers (serve as if it's all up to us, pray as if it's all up to Him) and Witnesses (Go into all the world and preach, teach and immerse people into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit)



Our faith is all about us and Him in this world - it's an amazing way to live, and a brilliant way to die.

With love

Jill x



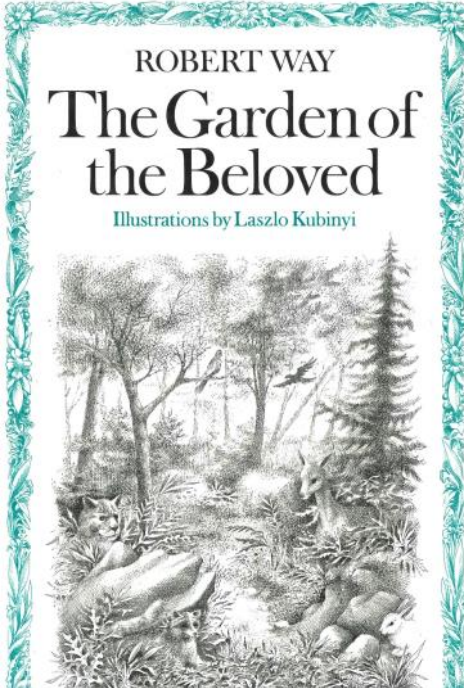
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The Bethel Mag is also available on our website

Easter at Bethel

This year, we had quite a busy Easter at Bethel, with a few new or less frequently done items added into our schedule.



We started with new Lent series which was organised and run by June Winnall. June facilitated a series of 10 Zoom sessions which took as its base quite an old book from the 1970's, *The Garden of the Beloved*, by Robert Way. Each session was only around 15–30 minutes long, but looked at a chapter or two from the book before taking time to reflect, pray and discuss the content. It was a really lovely time of reflection, a quiet time that was good for the soul. If you missed them, they are still available on the Bethel YouTube channel.



Lent 2024

During our time together this evening we will cover one chapter, followed by a quiet time to reflect on what the words mean to us and then to have time to discuss the messages.

I will put some of the words on screen from the chapter.

This book is based on the image of a garden, with a master gardener, called The Lover, and a young man who becomes The Disciple. God is referred to as the Beloved.

The reading is not long, so the session won't go on too long.



Chapter 8

The Disciple and the Crown of Thorns

One day after the Disciple had been working in the Garden for a long time he came to the Lover and said, "Sir, I want to experience suffering for the Beloved's sake."





On Palm Sunday, the usual celebrations were added to with a time of processing outside onto the gardens with palm leaves waving, singing songs of welcome and praise. It was lovely that nearly everyone went out onto the lawn and sang unaccompanied, songs such as Lord I lift



Your Name on High, Hosanna in the Highest, Make Way & You are the King of Glory, before returning into church to continue with the rest of the Palm Sunday service.

On the Thursday before Easter, Pastor Jill lead a Passover Meal demonstration in church. This is something that we have done occasionally before, but this was the first one for a few years. It was fascinating to go through all the items that



have such significance, what a traditional Jewish Passover means and how this is transformed by Christ.



The church was open on Good Friday between 12noon and 3pm for a time of quiet reflection and prayer. Quite a few people came in for short periods during that time to sit and contemplate and pray, and it was a wonderfully peaceful atmosphere in which to do so.

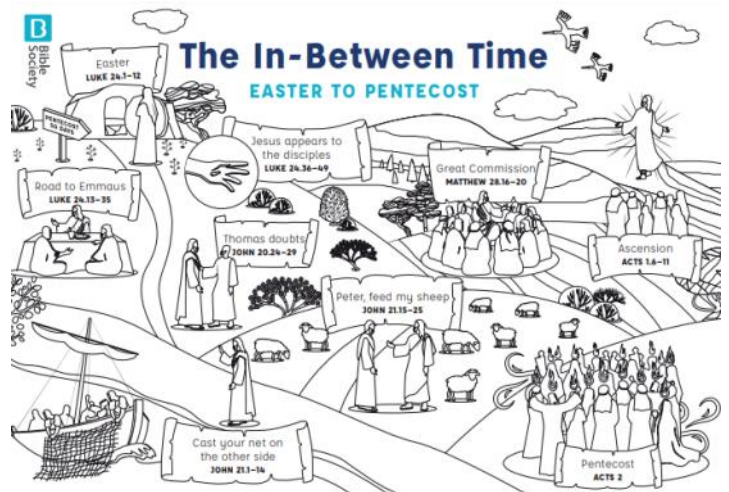
The choral society again came together to sing The Crucifixion on Good Friday evening. We welcomed our soloists Simon Eason and Jonathan Wilding, along with our organist Nick Stanbury, with Pastor Jill trying to keep the massed voices of the choir under some sort of order! It was a lovely rendition this year, everything came together on the evening to produce a wonderful sound, raising praises to our Lord, celebrating the Easter story. Again, as with most services held at Bethel, this is still available on our YouTube channel.



Easter Sunday was a joyous day, starting with an Easter breakfast of pastries and coffee/tea before the morning service, and the evening service having their own version with hot cross buns. Once again the lovely new tradition, introduced to us by Kathryn O'Grady a couple of years back, of everyone in the services on Easter Sunday being welcome to help cover a mesh cross in spring flowers from our gardens and from some flowers supplied in church was a great success, with the beautiful cross being displayed outside the main church doors for the following week.



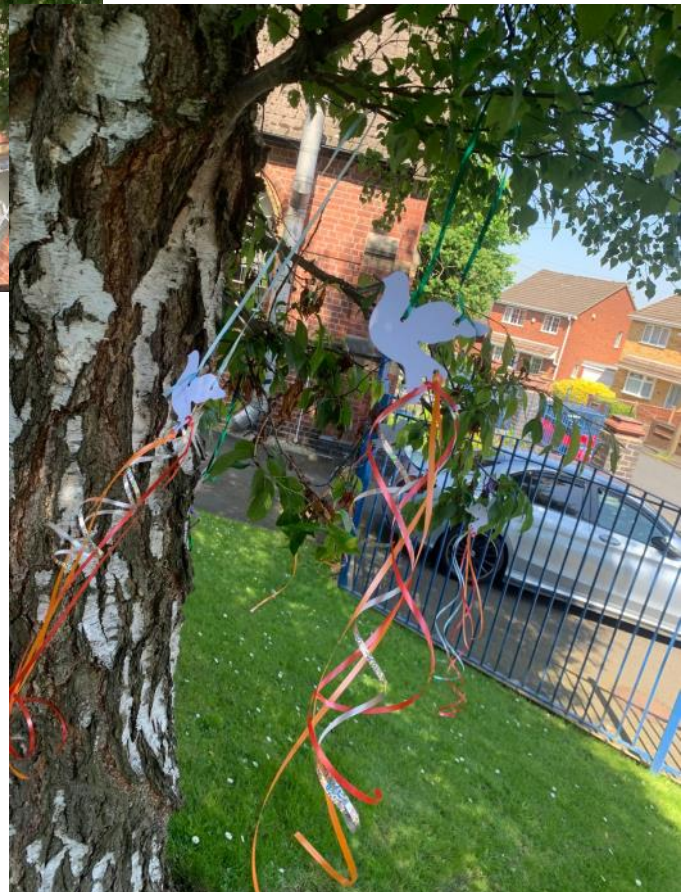
Following on from Easter, the PathBreakers and PathFinders have continued on with the theme of the 'in between' times, taking us from Easter to Pentecost and looking at how Jesus appeared to lots of people at different times in the 40 days up until his ascension, and then the coming of the Holy Spirit to the waiting disciples in the upper room.



On Pentecost Sunday, the young people looked at some of the symbols of the Holy Spirit and made a dove with flaming tail feathers to be placed in one of the trees outside church to blow in the wind.

Each of those doves has the name of a person or situation to pray for on them that each of the children have written themselves.

It was lovely to see them continuing to blow in the breeze on the days following.



PEACE PLEASE

UKRAINE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



PEACE IS THE CORNERSTONE OF ROTARY. HAGLEY ROTARY CLUB STANDS WITH UKRAINE.

Hagley Rotary Club members have been moved by the disturbing events in Ukraine.

We have a programme to send aid to Ukraine and we have been made aware that the following items are desperately needed:

- Blankets for the public and bedding for hospitals
- Medical equipment and surgical dressings
- Walking aids such as crutches, sticks, walking frames, etc.
- Elastic compression stockings and rubber gloves
- Sanitary products, incontinence pads and babies' nappies
- Weighing scales and horizontal height measures for children
- High visibility jackets, vests and armbands
- Small generators, rechargeable batteries and torches

If you can help by supplying us with any of the above items or have contacts who could help, then please let us know and we can then collect the items.

We are still praying for the awful situation in Ukraine on a daily basis, but Hagley Rotary Club are doing something practical in collecting items needed to send out there. We have already sent one load of items to them to take with their next transport out there, but if you have anything you would like to donate for future trips (see list of needed items above) please drop them into Bethel and we will get them to the Rotary club when we have a decent collection of items. Thank you very much.

Little Lambs Sponsored Walk

Little Lambs held their sponsored walk at Wollescote Park on Thursday 23rd May this year, with lots of children and parents enjoying a lovely time doing 3 laps of the park to gain their certificate of achievement. The day was overcast, but at least it wasn't the previous day when there was persistent rain all day long!

Well done to all who took part, you did a fantastic job getting around the route, and then enjoying your certificates, a play on the park equipment and a well-earned drink and snack.



There is still a sponsor form in church for anyone who would like to sponsor them as a whole, towards the provision of new and replacement of equipment for the children to enjoy and enhance their learning.

Bethel Memories

Val Woodhouse

Fairs, festivals, carnivals and picnics are often words associated with Summer at Bethel. In 1928 Lye held its first carnival and Bethel was actively involved in this major community event designed to raise money for the local hospitals. A write up of this inaugural event states the whole procession was over a mile long: the floats were lined up in Providence Street and despite being packed close together they took up the whole length of the street, two abreast for most of it. These floats, or tableaux, are described in processional order, the lead being a horse drawn lorry entered by the Co-op, listed as a '*comprehensive*' depiction of ploughing at harvest time and the production of bread. The second tableaux was Bethel's entry created by Mr S Dickens, it was described as '*of an entirely different type, a clever representation of a Sultan's harem, seven veiled ladies being seated round the feet of the very proud Sultan.*' Segments of this carnival can be viewed online (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU_X3k4Q4ZE), although the Bethel effort does not appear, however, I think one can buy a DVD of the whole procession. Throughout the 1930's the magazines commend Bethelites efforts for the local carnival; during the decade Sunday School laid over 100 feet of pennies as part of a mile of pennies and despite not winning in 1928 with the 'Sultan' tableaux, a Bethel float did go on to win first prize a few years later. The need for people to raise funds for local hospitals remained pressing until the NHS was formed and the minutes of the June 1937 committee meeting record that Bethel was still granting free use of the church hall for the Lye Carnival Committee to meet.



A Carnival Float from the early 1930's

Outdoor events are obviously a thing to treasure in the British climate and during the 1930's the Bethel Sports and Social Club nurtured many a sporting ambition but the vision for this club took eighteen months to achieve fruition. It took faithful members many months of labour to clear and level the ground at the side of chapel in order that games could be safely played. The magazine of August 1932 records that so outstanding was the difference they had made to the local landscape that they had received a letter of thanks from the local council for the improvement made.

Because Bethel is independent, having no parent body to help with finances, fundraising is the ongoing norm and we are blessed to be supported by many local businesses in our efforts. In 1936 it seems Bethel were no less fortunate, the June

Committee minutes indicate they were recipients of regular donations of potatoes to be used for fundraising sausage and mash suppers.

A prominent fixture in the Summer fundraising calendar is the Summer Fayre, formerly known as the Garden Party.



This year we will again be returning to the garden as we host an outdoor

Summer Fête a little earlier than recent years this time on Saturday 8th June, consuming strawberries, finding a gem on the Bethel Treasures stall and hopefully going home clutching our prizes of a lovely bottle of vinegar, peach shampoo or maybe even bubble gum flavoured pop courtesy of the bottle



tombola. I have to say that such has been my good fortune on that stall I have not needed to purchase a bottle of vinegar since 1989! There was a bit of a flap on in 1991 when just before our Strawberry themed Fayre our normal supplier informed us he was unable to let us have the quantity of strawberries we needed for the event due to weather conditions that Summer; in fact the dearth of this much loved Summer fruit went on to become national news. But, hurrah! we found a farm with strawberries to spare and the day went ahead, the strawberries complimented by sausages cooked by a heroic team who had smoke blowing in their eyes all afternoon due to the prevailing wind. Further enjoyment could be had for those of us of a more nervous disposition by watching all of the foolhardy members of Bethel who thought it would be fun to take over from the 'maiden' and take turns being dunked in the cold, cold water! Quite a different use for the baptistry tank!



In these days of Summer with so much happening at Bethel it is such a joy to have so many people entering God's house and a privilege for Bethel to be able offer hospitality to friends and strangers alike, which is an important part of Christian ministry. Throughout his life Jesus received hospitality as a guest of both strangers and friends. Therefore, in welcoming guests we serve Christ (Matthew 25:40) joyfully sharing with others the hospitality which the Kingdom of Heaven extends towards us.



We're about seeing young people's lives changed by Jesus.



Update from Catherine Green.

For the last 20 years I have been working for a Christian youth work charity called Youth for Christ based at their Head Office in Halesowen. I wanted to take a moment to say thank you.

Many of you at Bethel personally support me in my work and it isn't just me who wants to say thank you for your kind and generous support, but the entire organisation. Your support not only supports me but the whole team benefit too.

I became a Christian when I was 13 because a friend, invited me to come and join the youth group at Bethel - Icebreakers. I got to hear that God loved and wanted a relationship with me and I wouldn't be where I am in my faith if it wasn't for that initial invitation. The investment in time made through my youth worker and others made sure that young people like me, got to hear about Jesus and make a decision to follow Him for themselves.

A desire to see other young people reached led me to work for Youth for Christ. Youth for Christ seek to "take the Good News relevantly to every young person in Britain". That is a big aim but after more than 75 years of service Youth for Christ is still going and we currently have around 60 local ministries serving young people in their communities through the support of local churches.

I serve the Youth for Christ team at a national level helping to support these ministries. For many young people "Youth for Christ" is their initial engagement with the local church. It is through going into schools, running youth clubs, running detached youth work in parks and other locations and much more that young people, are hearing about Jesus.

You may have noticed that within the Youth for Christ logo is a heart. That heart symbolises God's heart for young people and that's what fuels our mission. It is with that in mind that we have recently restructured our teams around our core values C-H-R-I-S-T.

Each team name demonstrates one of our core values. We are committed to sharing Jesus with young people and empowering the local church. We seek to do so by being Courageous, Helpful, Relational, Innovative, Spiritual and Together, whilst being united in Christ.



COURAGEOUS TEAM: focus on evangelism, advocacy and research. They are the people who tell us what's coming our way and how we need to position ourselves.



HELPFUL TEAM: they work hard keeping everything going. They work in finance, income, marketing and HR.



RELATIONAL TEAM: this is my team and we love people. We're spread out all over the country, visiting our Youth for Christ centres, churches, speaking at events, working in our inner city deprived communities and pioneering new ministries. We are the front face of much of what we do.



INNOVATION TEAM: creative people who write, design, film, edit and record lots of resources. They have big ideas and make them happen. yfc.co.uk/brandnewresources



SPIRITUAL TEAM: the National Director and Prayer Co-ordinator keep us focussed on why we do what we do and who we are doing it for. At the very heart of our strategy is prayer and dependence on Jesus.



TOGETHER TEAM: provide our training, educational development and mission hub gatherings.

Last year Youth for Christ came into contact with over 1 million young people, that's worth celebrating but we want to reach many more. On 20th March, Youth for Christ made a national statement of intent as we launched our new strategy.

It's a strategy that seeks to support and help the local church connect with and reach unchurched young people. This is a strategy that has been well planned and one we believe could bring about real and lasting change. If you want to hear more visit our website yfc.co.uk where we have posted a video from our National Director, Neil O'Boyle or you can read more here yfc.co.uk/time-for-change. We are confident about our new strategy and ask that you continue to pray for us as we move into what could be our most exciting chapter yet.

I continue to need your support and do ask that you consider if this is an area where you can help me further. I have a support page on our website yfc.co.uk/catherinegreen where you can find out more.

Perhaps if you receive my newsletters for interest or prayer support you may feel able to support me financially through a regular or one off gift and if you already give thank you, many of you have been with me for a number of years and I genuinely appreciate the longevity of your commitment.

A Bible verse that Youth for Christ have used in some of our updates this season is Romans 10:14-17 "How will they know if no-one tells them". We want to see young people in this nation reached with the Good News of Jesus. They need it and they are worth it.

Thank you for your support.

Catherine.

Crafting for Fun

We have been very blessed recently with being gifted with a lot of crafting items from a number of different people. There are a few crafters at Bethel who have an interest in this area and we wanted to be able to share these with people who could make good use of them, so on Saturday 4th May, we held our first Crafting for Fun sale and demonstration.



It was a new venture for us, so we weren't sure if anyone would come at all, but we had tried to publicise it to crafting people in the area and it turned out to be a lovely day, with a steady flow of people coming through the doors to look for bargains amongst the sale items, to have a go or to see how various crafts are done - Jackie was kept busy showing people how to knit and crochet, and Angie and Sam were demonstrating how to do various

paper crafts. All was enjoyed in a relaxed atmosphere over an enjoyable cuppa and a biscuit!

We thought that there might be around half a dozen tables needed to set out, but it turned out that we had over 20 tables full of items such as stamps, die cutting items, magazines,



CD-ROMs, card stock, paper crafts, needlecraft threads, wools, needles and hooks, etc. We sold an awful lot of our stock but because we had so much to start off with, we still have quite a lot



left after the sale, so we are looking to put on another sale, possibly in a different venue, later in the year. Keep your eyes open for news of the next sale, there are still lots of lovely bargains still to be had!



Bethel Chapel, Hill Street, Wollescote, DY9 8TL
Saturday 13th July 2024
from 12 noon



Absolute knock-down prices, everything must go
Bric-a-brac, household items, adults and childrens clothes,
kitchen items, books, toys, games, etc.
Come along and grab a bargain, or a few!
Entrance is free

Bethel Chapel & Little Lambs Pre-School Centre

Hill Street, Wollescote, Stourbridge, DY9 8TL

Summer Fête



Saturday 8th June 2024

from 12 noon



**Come and Join us on the
Lawn for a Lovely Afternoon**

- Grand Draw
- Games
- Crusty Cobs
- Plant Stall
- Homemade Cakes
- Bottle Tombola
- Strawberries & Cream
- Gift & Sweet Tombola

