

The
Bethel
Mag

The Church
that Meets at
Bethel



Autumn
2023

The magazine from the church
In the community
For the community

NEWS FROM YOUR CHURCH

Hi AllHappy Autumn. It's my most favourite time of year, with the richness and depth of colour to be seen everywhere around. I love the fact that the busy colours of Summer are now fading to the more calm, mature colours of Autumn. Everything is beginning to power down in readiness for the sleep of Winter.

Quite often at services, I get asked to play "the Rose", usually sung by Bette Midler, and the words are truly lovely -

*Some say love, it is a river
That drowns the tender reed
Some say love, it is a razor
That leaves your soul to bleed
Some say love, it is a hunger
An endless aching need
I say love, it is a flower
And you, its only seed*

*It's the heart, afraid of breaking
That never learns to dance
It's the dream, afraid of waking
That never takes the chance
It's the one who won't be taken
Who cannot seem to give
And the soul, afraid of dying
That never learns to live*

*When the night has been too lonely
And the road has been too long
And you think that love is only
For the lucky and the strong
Just remember in the winter
Far beneath the bitter snows
Lies the seed that with the sun's love
In the Spring becomes the rose*

It's a beautiful song about life, the circle of life and making the most of every moment, and it's also the story of God's plan for us. We get one chance at living this life before we get called home, and life after death comes to this earthly body is just like the seed buried, which in the love of the Son becomes a brand new, beautiful life. There's nothing sad about Autumn, it's completely hopeful - seeds, trees, plants that have done their job throughout Spring and Summer, begin to get

ready to rest in Autumn and Winter, for a brand new life in Spring. Jesus promised us new life, eternal life. We choose to work for Him, worship Him, live for Him while we are here on earth, before our home-calling comes and begin that brand new butterfly life for all eternity.



Autumn of course, holds the most precious season of all - Harvest time. It's a bit of a dying tradition in many churches, but I really love it. It hasn't been stolen by the business world and been commercialized as sadly, have Easter and Christmas. Harvest is left untouched, for us, God's People to cherish. It's big celebration time for Christians to take stock of all that God has provided. Look around at Creation, see the handiwork of God. Look at His provisions, His providence, His absolute goodness, and whisper a quiet word of thanks.

We are so privileged in this country NOT to be in the middle of a war zone, where food, let alone safety, is a rare commodity. Our faith in Jehovah Jireh - God our Provider - urges us to live lives of thankfulness for all we have. This then spills out into the desire to share what we have, to enable others to have what we so easily take for granted. As usual, our Harvest Gift Tree of Life will be an opportunity for us to give financially, and it will all be sent to Kenya, where drought then monsoon-style rains often destroys all the seeds and harvests. There will also be a table where we can bring dried, packeted or tinned foods which we will pass onto the Black Country Food Bank, which helps so many people who are struggling in these difficult days.

Autumn, Harvest, is God's goodness on display for anyone who will simply look. Our Harvest services are being held on Sunday 1st and 8th of October, 10.30am and 6pm. As always, you are very welcome to any or all!!

*Just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows
Lies the seed that with the sun's love, in the Spring becomes the rose*

For those who will put their hope and faith and trust in God, through Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour, the best is still yet to come. With love, Jill x



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The Bethel Mag is also available on our website

Summer Fayre

Our Summer Fayre took place on Saturday 1st July this year, and although the build up to it was as hectic as ever, the day itself was lovely and it was a pleasure to be able to welcome so many people from the local area to join us for a superb day of fellowship and fun.



This was the first full scale Summer Fayre we have held since

2016 - for a few years during the summer we held gift days and fun days, then during lockdown we had garden sales in some people's front gardens, and last year we held a scaled back summer fayre just in the outside area - where unfortunately we were deluged by an almighty amount of rain!

So this year we were back with a full scale Summer Fayre with stalls both inside nearly every room and outside at both sides of the building, and we were blessed by a lovely day and lots of visitors.

Shelley, Jo and their team of organisers and workers did a splendid job of organising everything - not an easy task and you wouldn't believe how many hours a small band of helpers spent getting everything ready in the weeks running up to the big day, but everything was worth it as the smiling crowds arrived in anticipation of a warm welcome and a bargain.



Thank you to everyone who was involved in any way in putting the day together, working together as a team is such a rewarding experience, if a little exhausting too, but in a good way!

When the doors opened at 12 noon, the sights that greeted everyone included a massive Cuddly Toy Tombola and Toy Stall, the longest Bottle Tombola we can ever remember seeing, gifts and crafts everywhere, cakes and deserts to die for, Bethel Treasures decamped from the shop and took up residence in the butterfly conservatory, lots of games to play, raffles to have a go on, a



wonderful array of plants, the barbecue was fired up and burgers and sausages aplenty were filling hungry tummies and a good time was had by all, all helping us to raise money to be able, in these hard times, to continue to put on lovely activities which everyone can access each week.

Now looking forward to the next big event in our calendar, make a note of the date -

Saturday 25th November 2023

12 noon

for our **Christmas Fayre!!**

See you there



Feel Good Friday



A very special occasion on Friday 15th September at Feel Good Friday as we celebrated our Betty's 91st birthday!

All the ladies were keen to mark the day for her and an array of cakes, flowers, cards and good wishes were waiting for her on arrival. Everyone has a soft spot for Betty, she is such a lovely lady and always has a cheery smile on her face. She was greeted by a rousing rendition of 'Happy Birthday to you', and even had a candle to blow out on a Cherry Bakewell!

Happy birthday Betty, we hope you enjoyed your special day xx



One Way Summer Club

Little People, Big Dreams

Clare Robson - One Way Club Leader



This summer over 30 amazing children dared to Dream Big! And what a fantastic week we had.

We

looked at the lives of a few inspirational people who have made a difference to our world and the charities associated with them - these included dancer, actress and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Audrey Hepburn, naturalist and environmental advocate Sir David Attenborough, footballer and campaigner against child hunger, racism and homelessness Marcus Rashford MBE and scientist, researcher and Nobel Prize winner Marie Curie.



We had an action packed week full of energy, laughter, excitement and friendship. We found out that we can all make a difference if we dream big, work hard and make it happen.



During the week we were joined by FizzPop for some science experiments, Little Kickers for football training, a teacher from CNC Dance and Angie's animal antics with lots of interesting animals to learn about.





We were able to support 6 amazing Charities with the money raised - Marie Curie, FoodShare, National Trust, WWF, UNICEF and Bethel.

As you can see from these few photos from the week, everyone had a marvellous time!





Cancer Peer Support Group

This poem was written by Julieann Selden, whose husband, Ken, is in remission from sarcoma cancer - <https://www.instagram.com/contemplatingcancer/?hl=en>

It poignantly articulates the feelings that we can have, and the friendship and help we can gain from one another through peer support.

They Said to Go Home

They said, 'the scans look fine, your body will recover,
you don't need to be here anymore.

The cancer might come back,
but until then there's nothing we can do.'
They said to go home.



They said, 'go on and live your life.
Take a breath, take a nap, maybe even take a
vacation.

Go back to your jobs, back to your hobbies, back to
laundry, dishes,
and paying the bills.

Spend time with your family, meet a friend for lunch,
catch a movie with your loved ones.'

It sounded nice when they said to go home.

So we went home.

But the home we went back to wasn't as familiar as we thought.

The paint was the right colour and the furniture was in place,
but it wasn't the same.

Our thoughts, feelings, and interests had changed.

Our relationships, jobs, and bodies felt so much different.

They said to go home, so we tried to go home, but it didn't feel like home.

We felt lost.

It was as if we had been on a path, kidnapped somewhere in the middle, turned
around 20 times, and set off in a new direction.

We didn't know which way was up or down, left or right.

We felt stranded in the desert- abandoned, desolate, and lonely.

They said to go home.
But home was out of reach.
The home we knew didn't exist anymore.
We wandered around before trying to build a new home.
But the new home crumbled and cracked, forcing us to repair, rebuild, or start completely over.

They said to go home.
But they didn't understand.
After seeing thousands of patients in this position,
they still didn't understand.
It looked so simple from their perspective.
Go home, go back to your life, pretend that cancer never came.
But we couldn't go home.

Our souls were altered on the deepest level.
Our hearts were shattered, our minds were chaos, and our bodies hurt.
They couldn't see it.

Then we saw others.
'Do you know where you are going?' we asked.
'No, I feel rather lost,' they would say. 'But you are welcome to join,
and we can pave a new path together.'
In that moment, though we were all still lost, we felt a glimpse of home.
Our hearts connected and friendships formed on the simplest notion
of being aimless wanderers together.

"Your thoughts and feelings make sense given all that you've been through. Others may not understand, but I can see, because I've walked a similar path."

"You belong here."
Our hearts began to relax. We took a deep
breath of fresh air.

The Cancer Peer Support Group meets at Bethel usually on the last Tuesday of each month, starting at 5.30pm until around 7pm or just after. Anyone who has any experience of cancer, themselves or through friends or relatives, is very welcome to join us.



Bethel Memories

By Val Woodhouse

Well, here we are, another Autumn upon us, this year haven't we been blessed with a gorgeous Indian Summer? The extra sunshine has given us bonus vitamin boost as we face the shortening days of Autumn but we also have a spiritual boost as we celebrate the bounty of God's creation at Harvest Festival. Bringing in the harvest was something many local people including families from Bethel would be involved in. It is remarked upon in the early Bethel magazines that Sunday School attendance dropped markedly during the Summer as families ventured into the nearby counties of Hereford, Worcestershire and Shropshire to go hop picking, making some extra money as well as enjoying the healthy country air. Whilst Bethel Chapel is firmly within the industrial Black Country it is also on the edge of the Worcestershire countryside so, Bethelites of the 19th century were uniquely placed to be aware of the significance of a good or poor harvest to a people with very little money to spend on food.

Harvest thanksgiving has always been celebrated here at Bethel Chapel. Some of the earliest financial accounts of Bethel are from 1890 and the incomes and expenditures for October of that year include the income from the offerings at the harvest services, profits from the public Harvest Tea combined with the profits from the sale of the Harvest produce as just over £4. Bizarrely, the sale of two oven doors on 20th October bumped the month's income to nearly £6! According to trusty Google £1 in 1890 equals £142 now, so chapel had an October income of £852, not bad for a backstreet chapel whose congregation was made up of working people such as cog and nail makers, rag and bone man, miner, brick maker and dairyman.

During World War One the Harvest service was still an annual highlight, so much so, that a photograph of the 1915 harvest display was sent to Bethel lads fighting abroad as a reminder of home and proof they were not forgotten. Until more modern time there would be three services a day, the minutes of the committee meeting for October 1936 record



that Mr W Fasey was invited to lead the morning service whilst Mr E Mottram would be presiding over the afternoon service. In their quarterly report in the November magazine Christian Endeavour thanked people for supporting their inaugural Harvest thanksgiving service, whether that was incorporated in the Sunday Service, or a separate weeknight service is not clear. Harvest celebrations were concluded with an always popular public harvest tea which would include an auction of produce. The sale

often produced some competitive bidding and was always accompanied by lots of laughter. In 1936 the auctioneer of choice was Mr G Perks. He was nominated for the task by Mr H Kirton who I think may have been relative of Alf Kirton, the husband of our lovely Lynda.

Music in worship is a very important especially in the Protestant religions, in Colossians 3:16 Paul tells us:

'Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.'

From its earliest days Bethel has always placed emphasis on music in worship. In 1897 the chapel ordered a Best French Harmonium from Mr Stanton at Tipton for £24, the order stipulated that it must be sent on approval and would be paid for upon the satisfaction of the management committee. I don't know how long this instrument remained at Bethel but, I had the privilege of speaking to two men who had both been Sunday School boys during the mid-1930's and each of them told me that children would be encouraged to pump the bellows for the organ during worship! Not surprisingly, by the mid 1930's it was decided that a better organ was needed. Ever conscious of being wise stewards of God's money and mindful of the still outstanding debt on the chapel, members of Bethel had been searching across the country for a decent second hand one. The minutes of October 1936 discuss meeting the expenses of a deputation going to London to see yet another organ which turned out be one more disappointment. So, on 5th November 1936 an extraordinary Committee meeting was called where it was agreed the sensible way forward was to place an order with John Tanner & Sons of Raunds, Northamptonshire for a bespoke reed instrument. The Organ Fund Committee which had flagged somewhat on the fundraising front due to lack of progress in acquiring an instrument were rejuvenated and promptly set about raising the balance by selling scented cards, arranging Sausage and Mash suppers and dances amongst other things, raising enough to pay for the organ in full upon completion. The beautiful instrument still delights us to this day as we worship in the shadow of those who went before.



Our Remembrance services will be held on 12th November. We once again will gather to give thanks for all those who have fought to keep our country safe. We also remember those who did everything they could on the home front in support of those on active service. I cannot let this go by without asking that we also give a special thought for the young lads of Bethel who left all that was dear to them to defend their country against evil. Some came back as men forever changed by the horror they had witnessed. Some never returned home and some forever lie in foreign soil. As Europe is once again facing potentially perilous times, we will take inspiration from their courage and *'we will remember them'*. Amen.

Little Acorns - Summer Sessions

Di Woodward, Little Acorns Toddler Group Leader

We have had a lovely time during the holidays with the extra three sessions put on in addition to our term time sessions.



We have enjoyed a visit to Wollescote park enjoying and exploring the sensory garden and two sessions held in Little Lambs.



We decided to offer these sessions as we felt it was a long time to be away from the group for babies and toddlers, and also for parents. For

some Little Acorns is a lifeline to chat to other parents and grandparents, to share concerns, experiences and to engage in adult conversation over a cuppa.



Being able to use nursery has been wonderful with families getting to see the nursery environment and to experience first hand the setting indoors and outdoors and for the children transitioning to nursery in the next few months it has enabled them to spend a morning in nursery familiarising themselves with their new surroundings.



Little Acorns is now back after the Summer break in its usual place and time in the main church, meeting on Thursday mornings during term time, between 9.30 - 11.15am, and all parents/carers and their children under 5 are very welcome to come along at any time, no booking required just come along and enjoy a lovely morning meeting with others and having a chat whilst the little ones play safely.

Pathfinders

Summer 2023

Over the summer holiday weeks this year, Pathfinders have had a theme of



'water', in all sorts of Bible stories. We started off with some seaside themed sand-art, then went on to Jesus walking on the water where we made

paper boats and a clothes peg Jesus, the wise and foolish builders where we built our houses on rocks and slippery cushions for sand, Jesus turning water into wine - we then had a break and watched the women's world cup final and had a fantastic time! Then back on course with fishers of men, and to round the summer off before going back to



school we had a gloriously sunny morning to have our 'wet and wild' session -



starting with a bunch of games, such as catch the duck in the paddling pool, squirt down the cups, fill a bucket relay using squirters. We then had a break to have an ice cream, and finished off with everyone getting completely soaked in a free-for-all.

We had a wonderful time!





Bethel Chapel

Remembrance Sunday Service



**Sunday 12th
November 2023**

6.00pm

Everyone welcome

We will remember them

If you are in need of a carpenter/handyman, Roy Hamblett has recommended the following gentleman, who used to work at Woodcraft in Lye:

DPS Home Maintenance

Carpentry, Painting & Decorating, Plumbing, Electrical, Plastering,
Tiling and General Repairs

All work guaranteed, no job too small

Small family business, offering 20% senior citizen discount

Free quotations

Call Dave on 07758 415702

Day Trip to Llandudno

From our trip organiser extraordinaire, Lynda:

The Friday before the August bank holiday I had the good fortune of being with our friends and acquaintances having a good time on a day trip together. A pleasure to be with one another. Thank you everybody for making my day.



From Jane Hart:

So for the first time ever, I decided to do one of Lynda's Llandudno coach trips.



I took big Sis along for the ride.

From the minute we got on the coach I knew it was going to be a fantastic day.

It was good to spend time with my sister, but also so very good to spend time with my Bethel family, some of whom I very rarely see.

It's difficult to describe the atmosphere on the coach, it was full of fun and laughter, and so much of a family vibe.

I must give a shout out to the 4 Children who were on the coach. Not a sound did we hear, they were so well behaved, a credit to their parents.

Even managed to see Santa too.

I love my Bethel Family and feel so Blessed to be a part of it.

Llandudno 2024 here I come.

Thank you to Lynda for organising the trip.

Thank you to all who came.... for just being you.



From Kathryn O'Grady:

Making memories - our Church family coach trip to Llandudno! An early start saw a coach load of fellow church members climb aboard the fun bus, with smiles on their



faces, eagerly awaiting the journey ahead. Our slightly longer than expected drive to Llandudno was filled with sausage sandwiches, regular sweetie sharing (with thanks to Jo!) and witty banter from our coach driver.

As we arrived in the chocolate box picturesque town of Llandudno, filled with grand Victorian architecture, we all departed from the coach to embark on our own exploration and adventures. The O'Grady's headed straight to the beach and we were greeted by the salty tang of the sea breeze and the breathtaking view of the

coastline and pier. Despite the occasional showery downpour, Tomas, Erin and Bethany ran straight to paddle in the sea and chasing each other with seaweed. A fabulous sandcastle was created and there was excited anticipation of the tide coming in and

filling the seaweed decorated moat.

Following the traditional beach picnic consisting of sandy sandwiches, drying off from their dip and pockets full of carefully selected pebbles, we wandered onto the pier to experience the delights of the amusement arcade. "Tipping Point" had nothing on the O'Grady delight of watching the drop of the two pence slot machine.



As with all trips to the seaside, ice-cream was a pre-requisite, so we set off along the high street in search of the perfect holiday treat. Lemon curd, triple-chocolate, raspberry panna cotta, and cherry amaretto flavoured cones certainly fit the bill at the old-fashioned ice-cream parlour.

A stop off at the Harry Potter shop and some souvenir fudge on the way back to the coach finished the day perfectly with a chocolate frog waiting in the bag for the journey home. A re-route home through Wrexham and Whitchurch to avoid the misery of Bank Holiday motorway traffic took us back

through more of God's natural beauty.

The ride home was quieter, filled with the contentment that comes from a day spent in the fresh sea air with loved ones and in God's wonderful creation (but no less sweetie sharing!) Tomas has discovered a new love of Lemon Sherberts and I have rekindled an old love of Blackcurrant Liquorice! The raffle was a real highlight with the anticipation of a winning ticket burning in your pocket.



For me, this trip was more than just a day out; it was a day of family, faith and fellowship. It reminded me of the beauty of nature, the strength of our community, and the love of our Creator.

As I look after my little tribe while Dave is working away and we prepare for our imminent house move, it reinforced the importance of cherishing moments with family and friends whilst also finding solace in the beauty of our faith and the world around us. It was a beautiful reminder of the warmth and unity of our church community. In the words of Wallace & Gromit "What a Grand Day Out!"



Our next coach trip out is to Gloucester Christmas Market on Saturday 9th December. There is a waiting list for seats as it sold out almost immediately! Let us know if you would like to go and we can put you on the waiting list if anyone drops out.



Little Lambs - Kids & Bids

Jen Anslow, Little Lambs Manager

I am sure that many of you are aware that over the past few years there has been a wealth of social experiments and research regarding the benefits of relationships built between young children and older generations (notice I have refrained from using the term elderly!!!). In fact, research shows that connecting youths with seniors can help to boost confidence, increase communication, and improve memory. Children also benefit from intergenerational relationships. Some may not have grandparents of their own and spending time with the elderly amongst the community offers many advantages. Seniors can share their wisdom and help children to develop many of their academic skills. Furthermore, seniors are often very patient and make great listeners. They can give a child their full attention, which any parent or teacher knows isn't always easy to do!

With this in mind, back in 2019 we at Little Lambs decided to take advantage of the fact that many 'Bids' are part of the Bethel family, either attending services or Cornerstone on Wednesdays. We felt that both the 'Bids' and the children would benefit from building up relationships.....and so 'Kids and Bids' was born!

The original group of all ladies (not planned that way – it was just the ladies seemed keener to join) came into Little Lambs sessions on Monday mornings between 10 and 11am. Large tables and chairs were provided for them so that the children could join them in a variety of craft activities, chatting and building



Our Kids & Bids wall of photos and memories, displayed in the Little Lambs entrance area

up relationships as they worked. It proved to be a real hit, the ladies (known as Nannies to the children) became regulars. Staff supported the sessions and noticed that the same children were linking up with the same Nannies each week, such wonderful relationships were formed that some Nannies even met up with the children and their parents outside of Little Lambs!

Unfortunately, like many nursery activities, Covid put a stop to our sessions in March 2020. Obviously as both young children and the older generations were vulnerable groups, we did not feel confident to start the group again until Autumn 2022 and by this time sadly we had lost some of our beloved Nannies.

Our new group began, with new faces and new relationships began to forge. The children and Nannies alike look forward to the sessions to meet up, spend quality time together and explore a variety of crafts, including collage, dough, threading, and jigsaws. Long may 'Kids and Bids' continue!

Bethel Chapel

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The church in the community, for the community



Sundays

Morning Worship 10.30am
incl. Pathfinders (under 12's)
& Icebreakers (over 12's)

Evening Worship 6.00pm

Little Lambs

Pre-School Centre



High quality 55 place private pre-school education within a happy, secure and stimulating early years environment for children aged 2½ to 5 years.

Further details and Prospectus available on our website

One Way Club

For 5 - 10 year olds

Monthly on a Saturday, 10.00am - 1.00pm
Check website for dates - £2.00 per session



Games, Crafts & Activities

Cornerstone

Luncheon Club for Senior Citizens
Wednesday 12.30pm

Free local minibus transport provided if needed

4 course meal
£5.00



Cancer Peer Support Group

Monthly on last Tuesday of each month
5.30 - 7.30pm



Knit & Natter

From the experienced to the novice,
everyone welcome

Monday 9.30 - 11.30am



Breathe In, Breathe Out

Support group for people living with breathing difficulties of all kinds, e.g. COPD, Asthma, etc

Monday 1.00 - 3.00pm

B.I.B.O.

Little Acorns

Parents/Carers & Toddlers

Play and activities for toddlers and their carers

Thursday 9.30 - 11.15am

£3.00 per session
(incl. refreshments)



Feel Good Friday



Social get together for anyone who wants to have a cuppa, a chat and play cards, dominoes, etc.

Friday 2.00 - 4.00pm

Friday Night Icebreakers

For 11 - 18 year olds, get together at the end of the week, play music, games, cook, etc

Friday 7.00 - 9.00pm

Bethel is also available for
Weddings, Christenings and Funerals
For further information please see our website or contact the church office.

Harvest at Bethel



Sunday 1st October

10.30am

Harvest Family Celebration

4.00pm

Harvest Afternoon Tea

6.00pm

Evening Harvest Celebration

BETHEL  **TREASURES** *Heaven Scent* 

190-191 High Street, Quarry Bank, DY5 2AB

please call in any day they are open, you will be made most welcome

Tuesdays 10am - 2pm - Wednesdays & Fridays 11am - 3pm - Saturdays 10am - 1pm

Donations for the shop, incl. small items of furniture, welcome at Bethel during office hours