

Issue 2  
Sept 2020

## *Pastor Steve's Thoughts - BIGGER*

**I keep thinking, hearing and reading about these uncertain times. I am certainly living through something which I have never lived through before.**

Right now I have been here at Riverside 18 months. 9 months of those in 2019 were spent getting to know the church, the area, hearing God on direction, getting my feet under the table and building relationship with you all.

Then 2020 happened and all of that had to stop. First of all Bewdley was hit with severe flooding splitting the town and then Covid-19. In 18 months of being here nearly 50% of the time has been Bewdley in crisis. This is not what I had prepared for as I entered 2020 and as we moved here to Bewdley. This was not the start I had expected. But who did!

God has given us the word **BIGGER** and that He will do immeasurably

more than we can imagine and during this time He has. In the last 6 months the world has changed and as much as we long for what was before I keep feeling God calling us to look forwards. Instead of longing for what is gone I believe He is calling us to look forwards and onwards into what He has for us. It looks so different from what we all expected, but isn't that what God does.

Elaine Webb, one of our elders said something to me only this week. We don't want to be like Lot's wife who looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Such wisdom.

This is not what any of us expected or wanted, but God is moving. God is doing something. Instead of looking back let's keep looking forward.

**The BIGGER is here.  
The BIGGER is coming and I want to keep stepping into it, with God!**

***But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me.  
Don't stop them!  
For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those  
who are like these children."***

Luke 19:14 (NLT)



This edition has developed into a children and Christian family theme. I hope it will encourage you and build up your faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the Waters Edge is to keep you, who are not on social media or the Internet, informed of what is happening at Riverside. If you want to contribute an article I enclose a letter to explain how to do that.

The majority of you at Riverside are on the Internet and Pastor Steve has started a new theme this autumn 'In My Place'.

**Please let me know what you are doing 'In Your Place'** with news, testimonies, story, jokes etc.

**In this edition on page 10 there is an amazing story about a child and Jesus.**

On page 16 Josie, a friend, has over the years had 'Pictures' from the Lord during her quiet times of prayer. Some she has written down and each is one of encouragement.

Talking of families, I have for some time been writing about my family history and the poem below explains my problem! Can you help?

***Les the Ed***

### **My Digital Family Tree Problem.**

The computer's swallowed grandma  
Yes' honestly' it's true

I pressed 'control' and 'enter'  
And she disappeared from view.

It's devoured her completely  
The thought just makes me squirm  
Maybe she's caught a virus  
Or been eaten by a worm?

I've searched through the recycle bin  
And files of every kind  
I've even used the Internet  
But nothing did I find.

In desperation I asked Google  
My searches to refine  
The reply from them was negative  
Not a thing was found online.

So, if inside your 'In Box'  
My Grandma you should see  
Please 'Scan', 'Copy' and 'Paste' her  
In an e-mail back to me!



## My Compost Bin

Many of you know that I love gardening. I also love cooking and baking. These two activities come together in a little grey box on the kitchen window sill.

Every day I put all sorts of 'rubbish' into the box: used tea bags, Coffee grouts, banana skins, potato peelings, orange skins, apple cores, etc. and every day I take the contents of the box to feed the worms in the compost bin at the bottom of the garden. I take off the lid of the compost bin, [which disturbs all the worms round the rim] and tip the peelings etc. into the bin.

Occasionally I tip in a layer of paper shredding's from our document shredder and at times I put in a layer of grass cuttings and the dusty contents from the vacuum cleaner.

Several months later I open the door at the base of the compost bin and lift spade fulls of compost-earth-like material into a bucket. Not a sign of a banana skin, tea bag or apple core in sight!

God's worms have changed my 'rubbish' into productive, useful soil.

If we offer God our 'rubbish' - weaknesses, failures, tough circumstances, difficult relationships, lack of finance or bad health He can perform miracles and change the 'rubbish' into 'gold'.



***And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. Phil 1:6***

Jennifer Dutfield

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Jerry had heard a family rumour that his Father, Grandfather and even his Great-grandfather had all "walked on water" on their 21st birthday so on his 21st birthday, he and his good friend Brian headed out to the lake.

**"If they could do it, so can I!" Jerry told Brian.**

They arrived at the lake and rented a boat then paddled out to the middle. Jerry stepped off of the side of the boat. . and nearly drowned.

Furious, he had Brian drive him back to the Family Farm and Jerry asked his grandmother why he hadn't the same "gift" as the others in the family.

Grandmother took Jerry by the hands, looked into his face and said,

"That's because your Father, Grand-father and Great-grandfather were born in the winter.

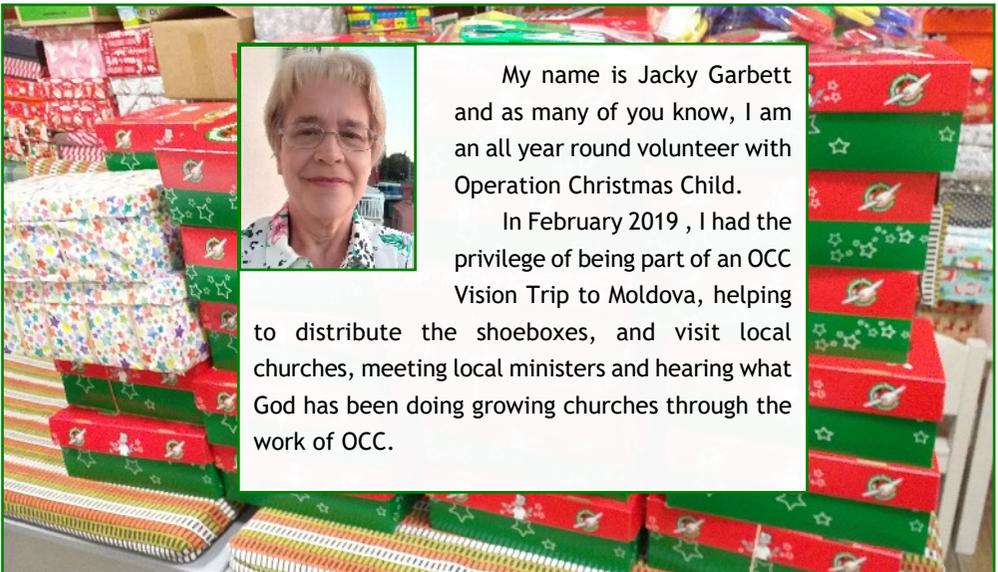
You were born in the summer."

# Operation Christmas Child

## What can we do?

We **CAN** participate in the work of Mission and work alongside churches across the world.

We **CAN** support the work of Operation Christmas Child this coming Christmas.



My name is Jacky Garbett and as many of you know, I am an all year round volunteer with Operation Christmas Child.

In February 2019, I had the privilege of being part of an OCC Vision Trip to Moldova, helping to distribute the shoeboxes, and visit local churches, meeting local ministers and hearing what God has been doing growing churches through the work of OCC.

Once again this October and November Riverside Church is going to join with **Operation Christmas Child** to send gift-filled shoeboxes to needy children in Europe and Africa.

**Can you help us** - by either donating items to fill shoeboxes (small toys, balls, games, soft toys, stationery and school supplies, hats gloves, soap, toothbrush, hair accessories, etc) **OR** filling a shoebox with items yourself **OR** donating towards the shipping costs of the boxes.



Operation Christmas Child works with local churches in over 100 countries worldwide to bring love and hope to children and their families. When each child receives a shoebox gift, they are offered a booklet called *The Greatest Gift*, which tells the story of Jesus.

The local church, supported by OCC, then offers the children the chance to enrol in a 12 week gospel course called *The Greatest Journey* where they have the opportunity to discover who Jesus is, and begin their own journey of faith. Over the past 10 years, over 10 million children have completed the *Greatest Journey* and made a commitment of faith.

For further information - have a look at the OCC / Samaritan's Purse website, or contact Jacky Garbett. There are lots of stories of the impact of a shoebox on an individual, and a community on the website, plus some amazing video clips of this life changing tool - a simple shoebox.

**Can you help? Can you share in this ministry this year?**

Details of our covid safe shoebox collections and packing parties will be sent out at a later date.

2019



Liz Walton & friends packing shoeboxes for the Ukraine 2019.



A lad in Moldova opening his shoebox.

**The Christian media frequently report people seeing and meeting  
Jesus.**

It happened to me, Les, over 45 years ago and I have met and know of others who have had similar experiences.

Jeremy Sorsbie, who works for the Christian Medical Fellowship on Africa, sent this request to Hope and Kindness the week of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

***I want to encourage you to pray this week and you know that God is at work!!***

*I have been at a mission conference this last week and heard a report that some refugees from Africa were on one of these boats that crossed the Mediterranean to the island of Lesbos. The boat had twice as many people on it as it should. As it crossed the sea a young 5 year old girl fell out of the boat. Everyone cried out for the boat to stop, but the person who owned the boat refused to stop so - they looked for 10 minutes but could not see her.*

***Distraught they gave up on the girl,  
only to find her in the middle of the boat!***

***When they asked her how she got back in the boat she said,  
“A man in white came walking on the water and picked her out of the water and  
placed her back in the boat.”***

*When the boat reached Lesbos shore a mission worker was there with blankets and food and a gospel message to share. He told them about Jesus walking on the water and how they need to put their faith in Him. He was astounded when they said:*

***“We know this man walking on water, he has been walking on the sea and rescued  
one of our children”!***

*God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Let us not just keep praying but keep on praying with faith to the living God who is still sovereign Lord over nature!!*

***But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don't stop them!  
For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”***

Luke 19:14 (NLT)

# Riverkids

Over the last few months **Riverkids** have been meeting in a new way due to the lockdown restrictions we have all been part of. Riverside Church has got 'bigger' in a way we would never have anticipated. The church has grown and adapted to the current climate in ways beyond our imagining.

Initially the families kept in contact via WhatsApp which is a brilliant source of connection with resource suggestions to keep the kids connected with God and encouraging messages to each other.

In May I was starting to think of a way we could connect further with the kids and at the same time Faith approached me with the same thoughts about starting a Zoom meeting before the main service on a Sunday at 10am.

I was a bit daunted initially as I am not the best with technology however we were soon up and running with a quiz, getting the kids to guess what the bible story was going to be and looking at the miracles of Jesus in the New Testament.

Alongside this we have got them involved in stories and also making origami boats and peeling boiled eggs!!

Some of the children learned a bible verse in a socially distant way by

individually each one filming themselves and saying part of the verse. One of the children was filmed doing his part jumping into a swimming pool in his garden!

Most weeks we have around 8 children join the Riverkids Zoom and in July Rachel and James Hewlett offered to run a separate Zoom for the children ages 2-6 years known as 'The Tweenies'.

This has been brilliant as they are amazing with the children of this age group and they have been having much fun with hands on games which have been linked to the bible story and worship songs about Jesus being their Superhero!

It will be great when we can all meet together again in person and I think we will appreciate seeing each other. Until then though meeting and seeing each other by Zoom is a real blessing and the children's enthusiasm without a doubt keeps the momentum going.



*Debbie Beadle*

# Riverkids



Hi. I am Faith Beadle. I am 8 years old and I had an idea to do Riverkids zoom calls.

Riverkids used to meet on the top floor at St.George's hall every Sunday 11 till 12.

We did crafts, worship and bible stories and games. They were really fun!

During lockdown we started to do the zoom calls. On the very first zoom call I did a quiz with questions about the bible. One of the last zoom calls we made an origami paper boat and I really enjoyed that!

I am also going to get baptised in 2021 because I really feel like it is the right thing to do.

And now my mom is my teacher. We have been to loads of fun places like Eastnor castle and Habberley trail. SO FUN. We have all loved our walks we have done and spending time with my family.

On the next page are some photos of my Riverside friends.

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*But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them!"*

*For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."*

Luke 19:14 (NLT)

# Some of the Riverkids



# hope and kindness



**Was started as an orphanage in Kisumu, Kenya in about 2000.**

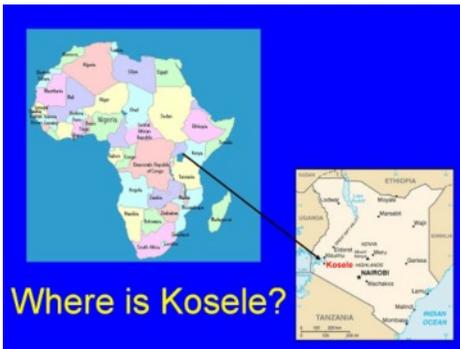
In July 2002 the Mott family, Terry and Judi and their children Tom and Ellie left their home in Redditch, England to spend a year living in a poor rural community in the west of Kenya.

They had no way of knowing what would come of it. Hope and Kindness was born out of Terry and Judi's desire to work with orphans and widows in Africa and a unique opportunity that they were given to pursue this dream.

Terry and Judi visited Riverside in early 2019 and Hope and Kindness is also supported by other Elim churches.

Terry and Judi were the first guests that Steve interviewed on-line from Kisumu near Kosele, Kenya on the 1st Partnership podcast earlier this year.

It is now 18 years since Terry and Judi went to Kisumu and their story will continue in further issues.



## **Terry & Judi's news of the Covid 19 situation in Kenya.**

Schools and churches were closed down immediately when the 1st covid case was reported on 13th March. Initially Nairobi and Mombasa were locked down for 3 months from April to June.

Most people are half-hearted in wearing face masks and social distancing is rarely practised. Only 3% of the population are above 60 years old and most of the population live in sparsely populated communities.

Hope and Kindness's Kenyan pastor, Dorine, has been encouraging their church to meet outside in small groups wearing face masks.

Annie went on a holiday to Kenya and when she saw the deprivation and the awful poverty of orphans she decided to do something about it immediately.

**But that's a story for another issue.**

## *Annie Austin's Story continued.* hope and kindness

However on returning to England she was determined to help.

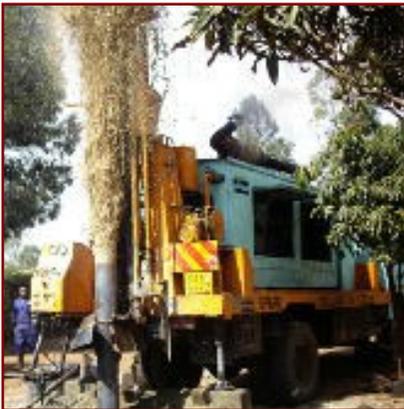
In just two years she raised £2000 and asked her pastor at Riverside if he knew of any charity working with orphans in Kenya. Annie was connected to Hope and Kindness.

Terry & Judi at that time needed to buy a field on which to build a school.

The £2000 exactly matched the price of the field they were hoping to buy!



## **Annie came to their rescue again in 2009.**



Initial muddy water erupting from the borehole when the drilling reached the water.

By that time with so many children attending school Terry & Judi were finding it impossible to obtain enough safe drinking water and **if it could not be resolved the school would have to close.**

Annie's fund raising, with the help of a friend raised the £13,000 to drill them their own borehole.

The water supply has remained secure ever since and the water is excellent. Terry & Judi told Annie later that;

***'Without it we would not be able to work as we do.'***



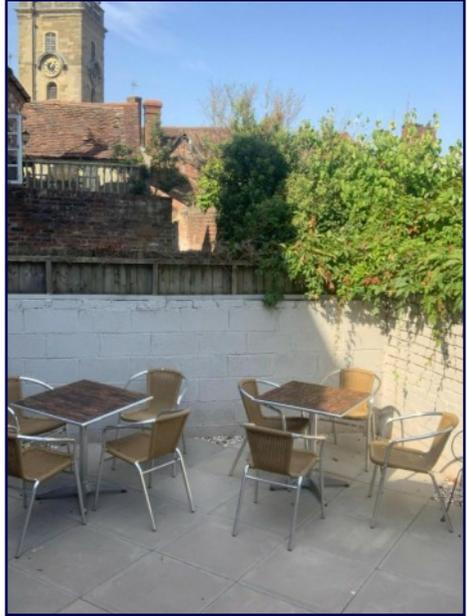
We are really pleased to be able to show you some pictures of where we are with the coffee shop and starting this new ministry here in Bewdley. It has been a longer journey to get this far than we would have hoped but, as the photos show, we are getting close to opening.

When we are in a time of such uncertainty due to coronavirus it is really exciting and a great opportunity to be opening up a new business. We aim to bring hope, support, encouragement and love to our community whilst selling great coffee and cakes.

We are so grateful and appreciative to so many people from Riverside who have helped in painting, fixing, cleaning and sorting, to name just a few of the jobs that have been done. A massive thank you to everyone who has done something in helping us get this ministry started.

*Liz Robinson, Claire Beadle and Gerry Mills*

Hanging sign outside the front and rear courtyard



## Clementine's Interior with the counter and tables



There are two further floors  
for dining and relaxing.



We are living in uncertain times at the moment and I am sure with all the conflicting information coming from different sources, that it can be a real problem for us to know what is right and whom we can trust.

I expect Noah felt like that when building the ark, he couldn't even go fishing because he only had two worms!! (joke). He ended up being the greatest financial advisor in the Bible because he was floating his stock because everyone else was in liquidation!! (joke)

Mike and I have found that after many years of trusting the Lord we can definitely rely on Him. We all have our testing times, like the last 6 months, but when we come into the fullness of God and let the Holy Spirit bathe us in *His Love, Joy, Peace, Kindness etc.*, the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5: 22 we can relax in Him.

We have been really blessed by being able to lead our Wednesday Church on different days and in different gardens.

People have been most kind by opening

their gardens up to us where we have felt a real presence of the Lord by meeting together in fellowship, spoken worship, learnt more from the Word of God and partaking together in Communion.

The gifts of the Spirit have also been in evidence when we have been blessed with personal and corporate words of knowledge from the Lord.

I really encourage you, especially in times such as these when we are searching for answers, that there is nowhere better to put your trust than in the One who gave us life in the beginning - Our Father God. Then, when we had sinned, He gave us the chance to be born again by sending us His Son to be the ultimate sacrifice. When Jesus ascended to heaven, He left us a great gift - The Holy Spirit, our wise guide and giver of gifts.

Let us immerse ourselves in Him today, ask the Lord to fill us anew in the glorious Holy Spirit so that we can be a blessing to everyone around us. God bless you all.

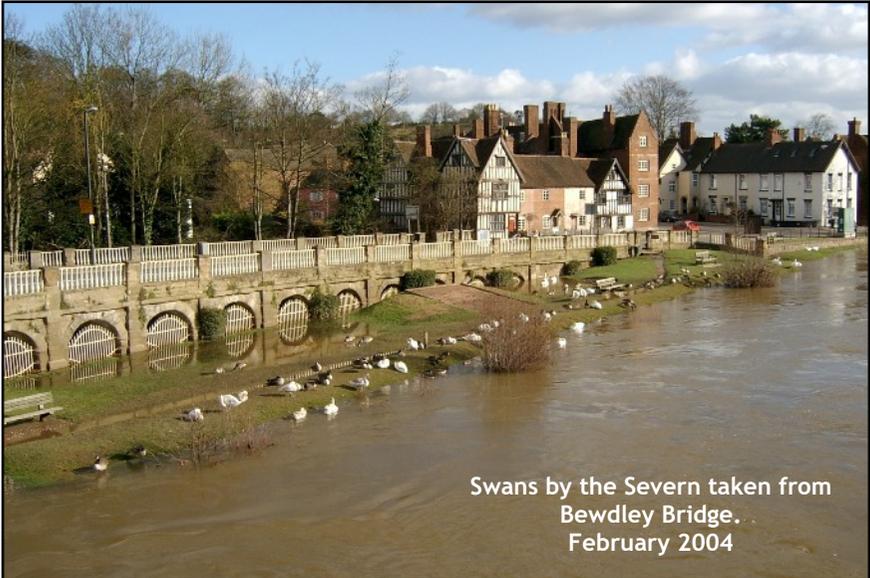
## Josie's Picture

### Trust the Lord

The path ahead is totally blocked by Jesus looking at me and smiling in an encouraging way. He is so large that I am unable to see anything to the side of Him or beyond Him. He is asking me to trust Him completely. I do not need to see further than Him to the road ahead, He's already gone there and sorted it for me.

*If I was able to see the way ahead, beyond Him, of what good would my faith be? I wouldn't need it at all.*

**“Trust in the Lord with all your heart;  
lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths”  
(Proverbs 3:5)**



Swans by the Severn taken from  
Bewdley Bridge.  
February 2004

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