

SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

Christ Church - Hobs Moat – Olton

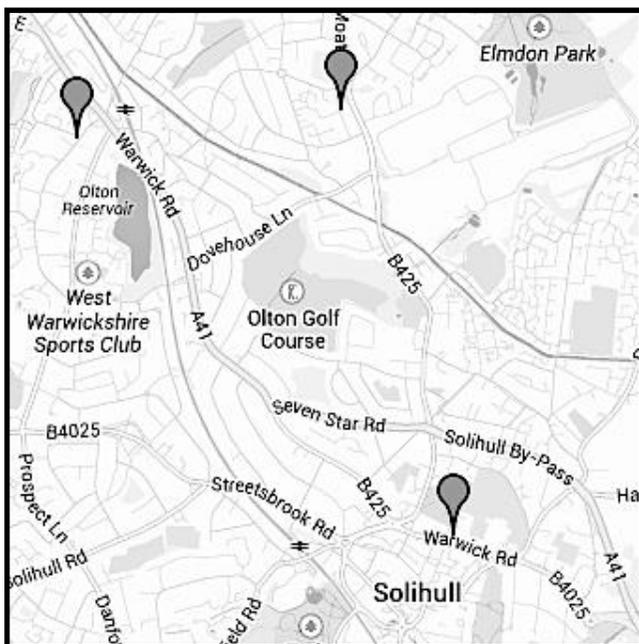
April 2018 Newsletter

Halleluia! Jesus is risen! He is risen indeed! May this declaration resound not only in these walls but touch the lives of all we meet and forever be the truth of which we speak.

Your love, once sown within a garden, tended for your own people, neglected and rejected, now spreads its sweet perfume in this place and wherever it is shown.

Halleluia! Jesus is risen! He is risen indeed!





SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

A single fellowship of Christian people, our history leads us to offer our witness in three neighbourhoods (central Solihull, Hobs Moat and Olton). Our worship on a Sunday is focused at Christ Church, but is also offered at different times in a number of care homes and in our other premises.

We share our mission with other Churches and seek partnerships with others in the community. We invite you to join us as we seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

www.solihullurc.org.uk

CHRIST IS RISEN! - Don't look back

A recent article posted on the URC Ministers' Facebook Page offered the view of "a Millennial Pastor - Leaders who do not remember the glory days", presenting a perspective on church life that is not about looking back or mourning the passing of the church most of us grew up in. There is a generation of ministers for whom the memory of full churches with lots of children is non-existent and for whom a vision for what God is about with his church of today is what inspires them.

As a united congregation, I trust that we have been seeking the Lord's direction and purpose for us in a new era, but I am also aware that we have continued to 'suffer the loss' in various ways. Easter carries God's message in Christ that death is past and all that lies ahead is his rich promise of new life. For the Apostles life was not the same. It was not a life without Jesus, for he rose from the dead and assured them of his constant presence through the Holy Spirit. For us too, as we move to a different future, Jesus is our constant presence with his promise of new and abundant life.

The story of Acts shares the struggles of the earliest churches with the practices of their Jewish ancestry and the tensions between the rule of law and God's grace. The ongoing story of the Christian Church across history is one of setting behind and putting to death those things that are not of God, in order to grasp all that God is laying before. Thankfully, the Crusades are far behind us and the darker sides of the missionary movement, coloured by Western culture as much as Christian faith is understood for what it was. Today, we face a largely indifferent

culture and hostility in many parts of the world, but we are as assured as the early church of the gifts and strength of the Holy Spirit, leading us in fresh pathways of faith.

As we celebrate Resurrection it is not a new life for our memories of the past, but a new life of trusting that Jesus will be with us through the strange territory that is the future.

Mark

DIARY FOR APRIL

Sunday 1st, 8.30am - 9.30am: Easter Breakfast in the Meeting Place

10am: Easter Day Holy Communion @ Christ Church

Sunday 8th, 10am: Worship - Gordon Justham

Monday 9th, 10am: Moments Cafe

10:30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 10th, 10:30am: Messy Church

Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Holy Communion @ Hampton House

Thursday 12th, 10am: Tots and Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 15th, 10am: Worship & Annual Church Meeting

Monday 16th, 10am: Moments Cafe

10.30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 17th, 11am: Holy Communion @ Tudor Lodge

Wednesday 18th, 10am: Worship @ The Grove

12.15pm: Churches Together in Olton @ The Friary

Thursday 19th, 10am: Tots & Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Friday 20th, 10am: Fellowship Prayers @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 22nd, 10am: Worship - Revd Ken Howcroft (Solihull Methodist)

Monday 23rd, 10am: Moments Cafe

10.30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 24th, 10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Worship @ St Francis Lodge

Thursday 26th, 10am: Tots & Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Saturday 28th, 10am: Christian Aid Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 29th, 10am: Cafe Worship in the John Palmer Hall

11.45am: Worship @ Star & Garter

6pm: Christian Aid Presentation - Prosperity Raymond, Country Manager for Haiti @ Christ Church

Monday 30th, 10am: Moments Cafe

10.30am: Job Advice

JOB ADVICE

Every Monday morning from 10.30am @ Christ Church (Story Room). If you know anyone in need of support or advice with CVs etc. let them know about this or speak to Trixie Harman.

EASTER BREAKFAST

On Easter Sunday between 8.30- 9.15am, a varied buffet breakfast will be served in the Meeting Place. All are welcome to share in this prior to our Easter morning service.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

This will be taking place on Sunday 15th April in conjunction with our morning worship. We have much to give God thanks for, as we look back over a busy and fruitful year, but what is more exciting is the view ahead, as the faithfulness of God promises much.

One of our annual decisions relates to the charities we will support through the coming twelve months (one local, one global). If you have suggestions to propose, it would be helpful if information could be made available in the weeks beforehand, to assist our decision.

We are hoping to have another Away-Day on **Saturday 29th September** for which plans are being made. Please put the date in your diaries. We will be celebrating Harvest Festival on Sunday 30th September.

The AGM will give opportunity for us to share any hopes we may have for an Away-Day.

SUPPORTING CHRISTIAN AID

Our major efforts towards relief for global disasters and situations where folk struggle for the basics of life come in Christian Aid Week in May, but we have some opportunities this month to prepare ourselves.

On **Saturday 28th April (10am - 12noon)** we have our Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat.

On **Sunday 29th April (6pm)** we are privileged to be hosting Prosperity Raymond, Christian Aid's Country Manager for Haiti, who will be able to tell us the story of that country following both earthquake (2010) and hurricane (2013). This is a rare opportunity for us to hear things first-hand, rather than through video or newsletter. Please put the date in your diaries.

HOB'S MOAT COFFEE MORNINGS

Dates for Diary section re Tuesday Coffee Morning at Hobs Moat.

- Tuesday 10th April
- Tuesday 24th April
- Tuesday 8th May
- Tuesday 22nd May
- Tuesday 5th June
- Tuesday 19th June

Many thanks, **Annette Williams**

FLOWERS FOR CHURCH - AND IN MY SACRED SPACE AT HOME

In the past I have sometimes wondered to myself why we spend money on buying flowers each week for church, when surely it would be better to give this money to a charity. 'What would Jesus think', I wonder? Perhaps we should do without this weekly indulgence in church?

Make no mistake I absolutely love flowers. I spent 30 years of my life teaching people to paint in a botanically accurate way. My students and I peered through microscopes at the centres and details of flowers. We even marvelled over leaves – yes leaves – they are amazing in their own right especially under magnification. Photosynthesis; light energy for the plant, is taken in through leaves. Plants need light for life! We too need light from the sun to see – but also the light of God for our souls. Plants and flowers have their significance for our spiritual needs.

I spent a couple of years producing my book 'Embroideries from an English garden'. I tried to balance the idea of drawing botanically accurate flower designs through the seasons with the need for simplification - so people could actually embroider flowers that look natural and beautiful. So you see I do really love flowers. Frequently I say that 'I only need to look at the centre of a flower under a microscope, or even with the naked eye, to believe in God'. Who else but God could produce these marvels and He has given us flowers for joy, through His own grace and love for us.

So I should have known myself better when I initially thought that, in my sacred worship space at home, I wouldn't indulge myself by having fresh flowers. For a week or two it had some silk flowers – very pretty and they never need watering. But

they didn't feel right. I didn't feel right. My sacred space needed real flowers as well as the Bible for me to be happy. And I do still give money to charity I hasten to add.

Flowers are a way for me to thank God for the wonders of His creation. As I read my Bible I can often smell the flowers beside me – and they remind me of church of course. For nearly 70 years I have worshipped in churches decorated with flowers. Every morning the first place I go to is my sacred space – and the smell of the flowers and sight of the open Bible on its stand greet me. 'Good morning Lord!' I say cheerfully, as I greet my heavenly Father. Whether it is the sight of the lovely flowers or the lure of reading my Bible again that draws me into my sacred space at home several times a day, I know not. I pray there frequently too, drawing in the perfume as I speak to the Lord. And the sight of the colourful flowers reminds me just how lucky I am to live in God's wonderful world!

Smiles and blessings to you all, **Carol**

In my sacred space.



If you create your own sacred space at home – and I can assure you it will bring joy, comfort and enlightenment – try to obtain

a bookstand of some type for your Bible. It adds to the enjoyment and peace – you can relax with the Bible propped at an appropriate angle, which makes it so easy and inviting to read in your sacred space. Cooks often use bookstands for recipe books, so cook shops can be a good source – or the internet of course!

STAMFORD AND BURGHLEY HOUSE

19th April 2018

Our tripping season kicks off with a visit to Stamford and the Burghley experience at one of England's greatest Elizabethan Houses.



The House, with its 18 State Rooms, as well as the Gardens of Surprise are open from 11am until 5pm. The Orangery Restaurant, overlooking the beautiful Rose Garden with views of the South Lawns, and the Garden Café, situated on the edge of the Parkland, are able to provide tea, coffee and homemade cakes after a long coach journey, delicious lunches in a picturesque setting, or a traditional afternoon tea as a perfect end to the day.

The coach will leave from our new departure point THE WEST WARWICK SPORTS CLUB, GRANGE ROAD, SOLIHULL, B91 1DA at our usual time of 8.30am.

As agreed at the AGM the revised charge will be £20 a person excluding any entry fees but including a tip for the driver.

May I respectfully remind you of the cancellation guide and that you should ring Val on 706 9687 to book.

We look forward to your continued support and take the opportunity to wish you all a great Coach Trip New Year.

David Argall (Chair)

ADAM'S FARM

17th May 2018

Our second trip will be to Adam's Farm in the Cotswolds. Joe Henson first opened his farm gates in 1971 and now has 50 flocks of different animals including rare breeds. His son Adam now runs the farm with his business partner Duncan Andrews.



There are seasonal demonstrations and between February and April is lambing time when you can see lambs in the petting shed along with other young animals. There is also a Farm Safari ride, Visitor Centre and of course Adam's kitchen which serves homemade food.

The coach will leave from our new departure point THE WEST WARWICKS SPORT CLUB, GRANGE ROAD, SOLIHULL, B91 1DA at our usual time of 8.30am. As agreed at the AGM the revised charge will be £20 a person excluding any entry fees but including a tip for the driver. May I respectfully remind you of the cancellation guide and that you should ring Val on 706 9687 to book 10 days before the event.

DAVID ARGALL (CHAIR)

UNION
THEATRE



Blithe Spirit

by Noël Coward

THURSDAY 26th, FRIDAY 27th & SATURDAY 28th April 2018 at 7.30pm
Solihull URC, Warwick Road, Solihull, B91 3DG
Free parking at Solihull School

ADULTS £13 | CONCESSIONS £12

*concessions are senior citizens & students in full time education

BOOK ONLINE: UNIONTHEATRESOLIHULL.CO.UK

BOX OFFICE: 0121 705 6762 or 07949508478

This amateur production of "Blithe Spirit" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.

Housebound or in care: Alf Andrews, Jean Mather, Joan Shaw, Beryl Pullin, Thelma and Phil Phillips, Kath Bishop, Sheila Schwartz, Norma Clement, Pam Tovey.

In hospital: Eric Bignell

Health Issues or increased frailty: Margaret Agnew, Irene Kettle, Andrea and Phil Holt, Rosalind Smart, Peggy Crosby, Celia Stephens, Albert Holmes, Thea, the Jenkins Family, Margaret Toogood, Sheila Durant, and Ian and Jean Alder. Shirley Peck and her family are struggling with her dementia and all need our prayers. We pray for all of these friends and their carers and pray for God's blessing on each of them.

Thank You

"Many thanks to those who supported the Leprosy Mission. We raised £457.85, which was a wonderful amount. The money changes lives and gives hope to those affected by leprosy.

Once again, many thanks for your loyal support.

If anyone else would like to support the Leprosy Mission please see me. **Sue Plant**

SPONSORED CHILD

We are 5 people short of our target. If we can find 5 more people willing to pay £12 a year we can commit ourselves to a new child. Please see me if you feel you can help. **Anne Cherry**

ANNUAL CHRISTIAN AID EVENTS

Christian Aid coffee morning at Solihull Methodist Church is held on Saturday May 12th. I would be grateful for volunteers to help with the bookstall. There will be a box in the church for paperback books.

The following week is the house to house collection. Please consider if you can help, delivering or collecting envelopes, counting or taking monies to the bank.

Will the regulars please be in touch with me. Thank You so much, **Bridget**.

CHRISTIAN AID COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 28th April 10:30am - 12noon @ Hobs Moat

Come and enjoy coffee, tea and cake. We will also have a cake stall and raffle. If you have any other fund raising items for this occasion please see Janet Ince or Caroline Clarke. All donations gratefully received.

FLOWERS

Everyone enjoys the flowers which are on the communion table every week but someone has to provide them. There is a calendar on the noticeboard at the back of the church inviting folk to select a date when they can provide the flowers. If you are not happy with arranging flowers that does not matter as someone else will do that for you but you might like to make a donation instead.

We would encourage anyone visiting someone to take some flowers from church, they are always appreciated and there is paper and gift cards to go with the flowers, if you are unsure of where to find anything please have a word with a member of

the flower committee. Now that the church is always locked it is a shame to leave them in situ where no-one will see them.

Judith Kembery

HOBS MOAT MONDAY NIGHT CLUB

We have now decided to meet fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm. Our numbers were going down due to folk not wanting to drive or turn out on the darker nights. We are in the process of sorting out a programme and we have lists of dates to hand out. We would like to see any of you who are interested, you will be made very welcome .We enjoy days out and the occasional meal out also tea or coffee and cakes at our meetings.Come and see us on the 4th of April.

Jeanne Brown

THANK YOU

Sam and Stuart Mills wish to thank the congregation for the kind gifts, cards and messages following the early birth of their son, Harry William Alan. Harry is doing very well and Mum and Dad (and grandparents) are very proud.



BIBLE BOOKMARKS

My fascination with Bible bookmarks began back in my teens when, every year in Christian Unity Week, the nuns at my convent school would give us a bookmark for our Bibles or school hymn books. The bookmark had a printed prayer for Christian unity, which was read out in our daily school assemblies.

I loved these bookmarks. I can see them now in my mind's eye as they satisfied, just a little, my envy [oh dear the sin of envy!] of my Roman Catholic friends' colourful bookmarks in their hymn books. They were paper ones with pictures of saints and more prayers or else information about the saints. Some of the bookmarks were shaped like a cross. I still have my catholic hymn book from those days – but alas not the bookmarks which is frustrating.

Nowadays I read my Bible daily – often several times a day, in my Sacred Space at home. So once again I felt the need for Bible bookmarks. Quite often there are several readings which I am studying and I want to refer to them easily.

Thanks to gazing at the two long ribbon bookmarks draped between the pages of the Bible, on the magnificent eagle lectern at St Margaret's Church Olton, I've also become fascinated with liturgical colours. So I decided to make some ribbon bookmarks for my home Bible, in colours to suit the Christian festivals and seasons.

I've always loved ribbons – many people recognise me easily from behind due to my hair ribbons which control the curly locks! So off I went to Acock's Green to buy ribbons – what a change from buying food! I decided to decorate the ends of my ribbon bookmarks with ribbon roses and ribbon embroidery.

But you could just as easily use the ribbons without adornment. How colourful and interesting the Bible looks, with its hanging ribbons – try it! I think you'll find Bible bookmarks really useful. Your Bible may already have one integral bookmark but you can always add more. They make the Bible readings and stories so easy to find – and buying ribbon for bookmarks is not expensive you'll be pleased to know - so you can indulge yourself! Enjoy! Happy Bible reading and God bless you all, **Carol**

'I HAVE A NAME' SMC CHURCH PROJECT DATES 2018
Solihull Methodist Church, Blossomfield Road, in aid of SCAH

- April 11th 1pm - Soupa Talks – A member of SCAH speaking about their aims and objectives
- April 22nd 10:30am – Homelessness themed morning service with Rev Mark Fisher from Christchurch
- April 28th 7pm – Quiz Night with Fish and Chip Supper
- June 30th 7pm – “Grand Finale” – The return of ‘The Choir With No Name’ for a night that promises to raise the roof!

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.
Prayer is the burden of a sigh
The falling of a star,
The upward glancing of the eye
When none but God is near.
Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips cry;
Prayer the sublime stains that reach
The majesty on high.
Prayer is the contrite sinners' voice
Returning from his ways
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And cry "Behold He Prays".
Prayer is the Christian's vital breath
The Christians' native air.
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters Heaven with prayer.
The saints in prayer appear as one
In word and deed and mind,
While with the Father and the Son
Sweet fellowship they find.
O thou by whom we come to God
The life, the truth, the way,
The path of prayer, thyself has trod
Lord, teach us how to pray.

J. Montgomery 1771 - 1854

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

In last month's newsletter I invited you to join us at the service to be held at St Helen's church on March 2nd, sadly the service had to be cancelled owing to the snow and we did not want anyone to sustain an injury on the ice. I rang the headquarters to be asked to reconvene on a date to suit ourselves. We had a meeting of the local committee at my house and it was decided to hold the service on April 23rd at 10.30am at St. Helens. Sadly this coincides with Moments and the Job Club but Monday is the only day that the church is available and the pianist also is free.

We have tweaked the service a bit and whilst there will be no speaker a short video will be shown which was made by schoolchildren in Solihull on recycling. The theme of the service is ALL GOD'S CREATION IS VERY GOOD and was produced in Suriname and the video is appropriate. The committee have also been asked to vote on a name change for the future and we have asked for the WOMEN'S to be dropped. When the service was first introduced in the 1930s it was known as the World Day of Prayer so it looks as though in the future that is what it will be called.

I do hope that you will be able to join us at St. Helens on April 23rd, there is plenty of parking available and if anyone wants a lift please speak to me. Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the service. **Judith Kembery**

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

Revd. Mark Fisher: 07950 399615 - 0121 291 4726 - mjf.urc@me.com

Church Secretary

Mr. Gordon Justham: 07540 289855 - 01564 776229 -
gordonjustham@talktalk.net

Website

www.solihullurc.org.uk

Hall Lettings in Hobs Moat, Olton or Christ Church - details are on the website.

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

www.generationssoalihull.org.uk generationssoalihull@icloud.com

Moments - a dementia cafe

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Christ Church

Details from Mark Fisher - contacts above

MAY NEWSLETTER

Material for the May edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 22nd April please.