

SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

Christ Church - Hobs Moat – Olton

May 2018 Newsletter

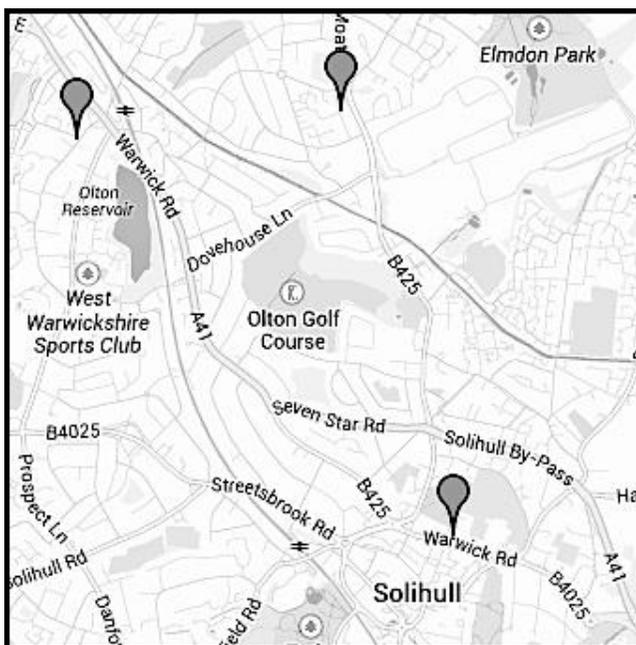
Pentecost

Unless the eye catch fire, The God will not be seen. Unless the ear catch fire, The God will not be heard. Unless the tongue catch fire, The God will not be named.

Unless the heart catch fire, The God will not be loved. Unless the mind catch fire, The God will not be known.

William Blake (1757-1827)





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

Summer is coming - we have witnessed it! Mark reflects...

It's happened all of a sudden. One minute we are in the depths of winter and the next we find ourselves digging out our summer clothes because of the heat. The grass needs a cut, the hedge is sprouting and the trees are full of buds and blossom. All this in the month of April! So many changes in nature that have seemed invisible for too long begin to bear fruit and we look forward to the real summer.

I wonder if this offers a picture of how we view our life of faith? Changes in life often seem imperceptible, with things seeming much the same for too long while, in the context of the society in which we live, we long for things to be very different, more bright, colourful and fruitful. Our calling as disciples of Jesus is about playing our part in creating that different society and culture, enabling every little aspect of our lives to contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of God in our midst.

Back in the autumn we considered various aspects of 'Life on the Front Line' - how we live as disciples with those we have to do day by day - with consideration of when we find this difficult, how our church community helps and supports us and how we sustain our calling. Through the summer months we will be exploring 'Fruitfulness on the Front Line' - how our Christian living and witness makes a difference in the society and world in which life is set.

How do our characters present a 'Godly model' for others? How can our work/creativity reflect God? How do we minister grace and love, sharing God with others? Can we help mould our culture, be a mouthpiece for truth and justice and share the Gospel in ways that others can hear and receive? Summer hasn't really come in April, but the buds are showing and the seeds of faith will bear their fruit if we commit to sharing the gifts the Holy Spirit gives us on our front lines.

I feel some prayer coming on! ... Mark

DIARY FOR MAY

Wednesday 2nd, 2pm: Hobs Moat Fellowship (used to be Monday Night Fellowship)

Thursday 3rd, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 6th, 10am: Holy Communion @ Christ Church - Mark Fisher

Monday 7th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Tuesday 8th, 10:30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Holy Communion @ Hampton House

Thursday 10th, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Saturday 12th, 10am - 2pm: Christian Aid Coffee Morning & Sale @ Methodist Church

11am: Pilgrims in the Park - reflective ramble in

Sutton Park

Sunday 13th, 10am: Worship for Christian Aid Week – Revd Barbara Calvert

Monday 14th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

10:30am: Job Advice @ Christ Church

Tuesday 15th, 12:30pm: Solihull Churches Prayer Lunch - in the Meeting Place

Wednesday 16th, 10am: Worship @ The Grove

2pm: Hob Moat Fellowship

Thursday 17th, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 20th, 10am: Worship for Pentecost @ Christ Church - Mark Fisher

11:45am: Worship @ Star & Garter

Monday 21st, 10am: Moments Cafe

10:30am: Job Advice @ Christ Church

Tuesday 22nd, 10:30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Holy Communion @ Tudor Lodge

7:30pm: Music for Worship Planning @ The Manse

Thursday 24th, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church
 2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat
Sunday 27th, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church - Ian Carnell
Monday 28th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church
Tuesday 29th, 10:30am: Messy Church @ Christ Church
Wednesday 30th, 2pm: Hobs Moat Fellowship
Thursday 31st, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church
 2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

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.

'I HAVE A NAME' SMC CHURCH PROJECT DATES 2018

Solihull Methodist Church, Blossomfield Road, in aid of SCAH
June 30th 7pm – “Grand Finale” – The return of ‘The Choir With No Name’ for a night that promises to raise the roof!

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK **13th - 19th May**

Further volunteers for house to house collections are always welcomed. Please have a word with Bridget Goudie if interested.

Please pray for those undertaking the collection this year. It is the largest fund-raiser.

We will welcome Rev Barbara Calvert to our morning worship on 13th May. Barbara has spent time in Haiti, a focus for this CAW, and will share with us something of her visit and the issues it raises for us.



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**.

CHURCH AWAY DAY

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.

HOBBS MOAT COFFEE MORNINGS

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

- Tuesday 8th May
- Tuesday 22nd May
- Tuesday 5th June
- Tuesday 19th June

Many thanks, **Annette Williams**

Through the generosity of donors such as yourselves, we have had the resources to employ a part-time Team Leader this year. This has enabled us to supervise a larger group of volunteer mentors, so that we are working in eight schools this year, compared with four last year, with a 30% increase in the number of mentoring sessions.

Let me give you an example of the difference which our mentoring has made in the life of one 15-year-old girl whom we will call Jane - her name and some points of detail have been changed to protect her privacy. Jane was referred to This Way Up after she had told school staff how she had seen her father repeatedly treat her mother violently since she had been a toddler, and how she herself had suffered verbal and physical abuse from her father and her brother (encouraged by her father) for a number of years.

At the beginning of the mentoring sessions Jane disclosed that she was regularly experiencing terrifying dreams in which she was 'reliving' physical attacks from her father; he was trying to kill her, and she could not move to escape. We signposted Jane to be referred to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for specialist help with Post-traumatic Stress, and while she waited to be seen, our mentors helped her over the course of eight sessions to talk through and process her experiences. By the end of this period Jane had not had any disturbing dreams for over two weeks and was feeling much more positive about herself and her future. This is just one example of the 64 students whom our mentors have been able to help during the course of the current academic year. Each of them has been and is being accompanied through a very difficult period of their life, and each of them will have enhanced life possibilities in future as a result.

Mike Gowan (Chair of Trustees)

(OUR CONCERT given by the North Solihull Singers raised £550)

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**

HOBBS 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. **Jeanne Brown**

ADAM'S FARM

17th May 2018

Our next 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)

HAMPTON COURT CASTLE AND GARDENS, HEREFORD

21st June 2018

The oldest parts of Hampton Castle including the Chapel go back to 1427 when Henry 1V gave it to Sir Richard Lenthail. It passed through the hands of various members of the aristocracy before being bought by Sir Richard Arkwright son of the inventor in the late 19th century.



The Arkwright family remained there until 1912 when it was sold on, losing most of its original furniture. Eventually it was rescued by an American millionaire in the 1990 s who refurnished the interior according to his interpretation of how an English castle should look.

In the gardens there is a maze, herbaceous borders, water features and a river walk offering views of the castle from across the ha-ha wall. The orangery café serves home-made cakes and food cooked from ingredients from the vegetable garden and local suppliers. The Conservatory designed by Joseph Paxton in 1846 - 6 years before he designed the Crystal Palace- opens directly onto the south lawn. For your further delight there is an ice cream parlour in the courtyard.

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DAVID ARGALL (CHAIR)

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

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 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.

Bereavement

Our dear friend Pam Tovey died on Friday the 14th of April at Olton Grange Residential Home aged 92 years. A private family service will be held at the crematorium on Monday the 14th of May, followed by a service of thanksgiving at this Church at 1:15pm. We send our love and condolences to daughters Katie and Juliet and their families in their sad loss.

Thank You

I wish to thank the kind friends who sponsored my daughter Ann for the London marathon. She managed to complete it in 5 hrs 55 mins, 20 mins longer than last year due to the high temperature on the day. Money raised for Children with Cancer amounted to over £2,200.

Gweno



**HOBBS MOAT SINGING FOR PLEASURE GROUP
INVITE YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS TO A
PLEASANT SATURDAY AFTERNOON
Saturday 9th JUNE at 2.30pm
at HOBBS MOAT CHURCH**

There will be another opportunity to enjoy home-spun entertainment of the highest quality provided by you yourselves! So start polishing up your party pieces. You can sing a song, play an instrument, read a poem or tell a funny story.

However you can just enjoy yourself listening. All followed by tea and cakes. There will be a retiring collection for a chosen charity.

GET EXCITED – ABOUT THE BIBLE!

And in particular the Gospel of St Mark!

‘But we’ve heard the stories from St Mark before Carol; -many many times some of them! Some of them are repeated in the other 3 gospels too.’

Yes you are right of course. If I were to count how many times I’ve heard some of the stories in the Bible – such as the Good Shepherd, the Good Samaritan; the healing of the leper etc – well I’ve lost count. I’ve probably heard the ‘Good Shepherd’ most years since I was knee high to a grasshopper and I’m nearly 70 now. I still love the story – but if I am absolutely honest it doesn’t excite me anymore because I’ve heard it all before.

Would you go out and buy yesterday’s newspaper or one from last week when you already know that news? No be honest – you wouldn’t. I’ve been learning a new tuning on my guitar – tuning some of the strings to unfamiliar notes. I’ve been experimenting with the sounds of totally unfamiliar chords – I’ve discovered something new – a new

sound that excites me – and I can't wait to tell others – let them hear it! I've made up chords and I have absolutely no idea what I am playing – but I am so excited about it that I tell all sorts of people – like 'a newly converted Christian wanting to tell everyone about Jesus'!

And that's the crux of the matter. For some of us; including me until recently, our faith can grow stale – we are not like 'newly converted Christians', - 'cos we've heard it all before'! We've lost the excitement of the Good News of the gospels. That was true of me – until I started reading my Bible in my sacred space at home, on a daily basis, for my own instruction and pleasure. At the moment I am reading St Mark from start to finish – without wandering into other parts of the Bible. And guess what? That excitement rises in me again and it is so uplifting. This morning I read the tale of the healing of the leper again – and Jesus told him to tell nobody but go to the synagogue and show the priests to be declared 'clean'. And did he obey Jesus? No! Because he was so excited and amazed that he couldn't wait to go and tell others what Jesus had done.

When we are excited we surely tell the Biblical stories very effectively - and that way we pass on our faith. That is why we need to be excited about our faith. But there is another reason too as God sends his holy spirit into our excited voices – 'Go out and tell', says God and helps us to do it, through his holy spirit.

Do try reading St Mark's gospel right through. It is the earliest gospel to be written – about 70 years after the death of Jesus apparently. And it doesn't start with the nativity. But I won't tell you anymore. Capture the fresh excitement for yourself! And 'go out and tell'!
Smiles and blessings, **Carol**

NEW SPONSORED CHILD

MARIAMA KEBBEH was born in 2009 in one of the poorest areas of The Gambia. She is the only child of Muslim parents, speaks Fulla and we are her only sponsors. Her home has wattle and daub walls and a corrugated iron roof and consists of 2 rooms within a family compound. Her father is a farmer and her mother looks after the family and helps on the farm.

Mariama goes to a local primary school. Whilst this is free most parents struggle to cover the extra costs of exam fees, school materials and uniforms. Consequently only 52% of children are currently registered in a school. There is a free health centre in Mariama's community where minor injuries can be treated but more serious cases are referred to a hospital over 52 miles away. All medicine must be paid for.

Access to safe, clean water has always been a challenge for families and women and children bear the brunt of this. ActionAid is working on supplying secure water sources.

You can read more about work being done to improve the future of children like Mariama on the notice board. If you would like to write to Mariama, eg, a post card, the address is ACTIONAID THE GAMBIA, PMB 450, SERRE KUNDA, THE GAMBIA, AFRICA Ref. no. GM0110467B
Supporter Ref. no. 3905221

Thank you all for your support. **Anne Cherry**

ON HOLIDAY WITH GOD – AND HIS EARTHLY ANGELS!

Oh how I missed it – my Bible - and my sacred space at home! And to think that for 69 years I have gone on holiday without my Bible – and yes I freely admit it – I haven't missed it. What a confession!

This is not to say that I forgot to say my prayers and I certainly went to church in our holiday places if possible. Some of my favourite old churches are in our holiday places – most notably St Mary Magdalene Church, Mortehoe. For me it is a special joy and a pilgrimage to go there. But I would never have thought to pack a Bible in my suitcase. This Spring John and I had received an exciting invitation to go and visit our dear old friends who have now moved from France to Wales. To make things easy for us they offered to pick us up from Gabowen station and take us over the border from England to Wales and their rural cottage. Unfortunately John was not able to remember these friends due to his Alzheimer's and dementia. So getting him packed up and ready was not easy. But once we got there John soon relaxed and enjoyed the company; the genuine loving and compassionate welcome.

It was one of these two friends, Ursula, who first inspired me to make my sacred space at home. So I was excited to tell her about it – and my articles, advising others how to do the same thing and have a sacred space in their own homes – with the all-important Bible as a focal point and centrepiece. 'You can do the same thing here', she said – take your Bible to a place in the cottage or garden and read it. I gazed out at an inviting seat in the garden with a little arbour around it and in my mind's eye I could see myself sitting there with my Bible – content with the Lord! There was only one problem – yes of course - I had forgotten to bring it!

Anyhow I could borrow Ursula's Bible so that was OK. 'The Bible is such a comfort isn't it?' said Ursula. I gave her one of my home made bookmarks – a green ribbon one with white ribbon roses and I know

she'll treasure it. Smiling with joy, she popped it between the pages of her Bible. She told me she is not able to get to church in Wales as the nearest RC church is 10 miles away. Many local chapels and churches have apparently closed. How sad this is – and it makes it even more important that we Christians should spread The Word.

Ursula tapped her heart and said, 'But Jesus is here in my heart'. And she has her sacred space at home of course – and her Bible! Every evening our friends invited me to say Grace before the meal – yes it is an important ritual I had been forgetting at home. It is indeed so important to say Grace and how easy it is to forget to say thank you to the Lord. I thank God for friends like these who show the way – and lead us on with Christian love!

Smiles to you and God bless you all, **Carol**

UPDATE FROM LONGBRIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE

More people are moving into the Village all the time and bringing with them new ideas; there are about 30 different groups, from Yoga and Seated Bowls to Craft work and Ballroom Dancing. Enthusiastic Gardeners have formed a Greenhouse group which is going to bring colour to the grounds when the original landscaping contract comes to an end later in the year; they are busy pricking out seedlings at the moment. The Christian Fellowship group which started with six participants has now grown to more than 50 on a Sunday evening, with a simple form of worship which all can enjoy. Local clergy from all denominations drop in from time to time.

A Singing for Pleasure group has formed (which I have joined) and at the Christmas Fair we sang carols from the balcony above the atrium. In March we gave our first concert in collaboration with an existing small choir. The entrance fee was £2 towards the purchase of a piano

and raised over £300. With our weekly donations of £1 it soon mounts up, and now a piano has arrived. There is already a grand piano in the restaurant, but we meet in the 'village hall' where the acoustics are better. We now have 8 contraltos and 4 tenors, so we are starting to sing in harmony thanks to an inspiring pianist and choir leader. There is not much work to do in the library now that it is all in order. There are usually one or two people doing a jigsaw puzzle there as well as others on the computers. As that work has dried up I have become a 'Befriender' and help in the room where dementia sufferers are entertained in different ways in the daytime.

Christmas and New Year festivities were enjoyed, and now we are looking forward to Spring and being able to get out more. It was good to discover that after walking down to the shops (M&S, Sainsburys, Boots, etc) there is a lift which cuts out the uphill part of the walk back!

Marian Batten

A FEW SAYINGS...

- A cold church is like cold butter. It never spreads very well.
- The church that does not evangelise will fossilise.
- Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Walk beside me and be my friend. (*Albert Camus*)
- If you want to get to heaven, then you have to travel via King's Cross.
- Everything in God's store is on the bottom shelfyou have to get on your knees to get it. (*Robert Collier*)
- A small boy in Sunday School was asked what a lie was. He said, "A lie is an abomination in the eyes of God." Then added, "And our very present help in times of trouble."
- God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

WHERE WE ARE

I have heard a few comments from people who seem to have newly noticed that our geographical location affects the type of ministry we offer.

We are a town centre church. We have to ask what type of services and ministries do we need to offer that meet a need that a local neighbourhood church does not—why should someone come into town rather than go to groups, and worship, at the church just around their corner or at the end of their road?

For nearly two thousand residences we are geographically the nearest church, so we are also a neighbourhood church. Those residences are very diverse in type from small flats to large, gated, detached, homes. This is an added challenge. How are we offering meaningful contact to those who live nearby?

There are 8 other churches within a one mile radius. How are we distinct? What does God want to do through us that He isn't doing elsewhere?

These types of questions are some that we have to find the answers to. Please consider them further and not just move on to the next article! Talk to the church leaders and make your views and opinions heard.

Linda Faber

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.generationsssolihull.org.uk generationsssolihull@icloud.com

Moments - a dementia cafe

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Christ Church

Details from Mark Fisher - contacts above

JUNE NEWSLETTER

Material for the June edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 20th May please.