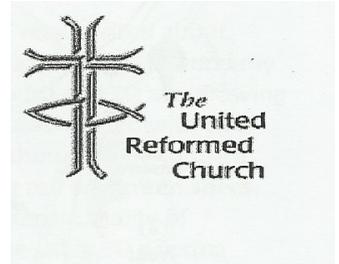


# SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

Christ Church - Hobs Moat— Olton



## July/August 2015 Newsletter

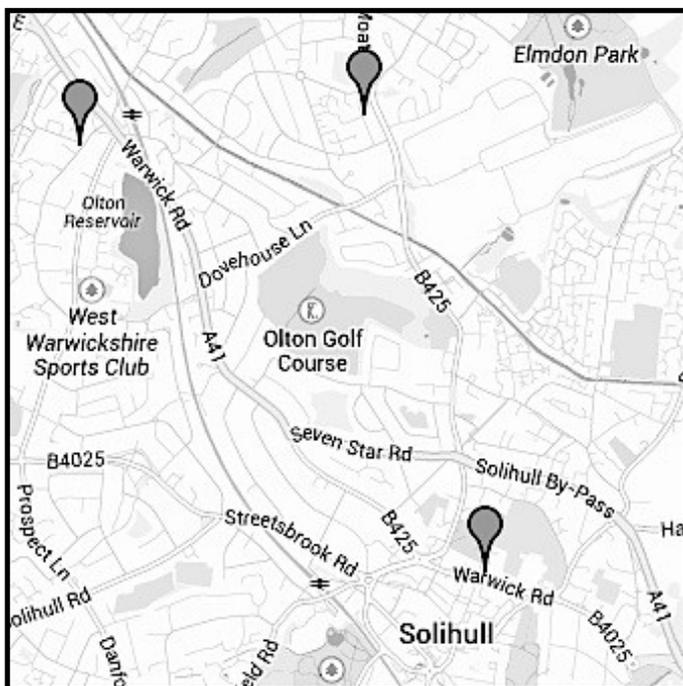
*Generous God, Sower of seeds in the new earth,  
by Your grace, our eyes glimpse new horizons,  
where the oppressed know liberation,  
where the saddened know happiness,  
and where this broken world knows unity.*

*May the utopia that is your kingdom blaze in our hearts,  
like a flame that continues to burn  
until it finally achieves its goal.*

*May we step out in hope, may our arms work for peace,  
may our lips lovingly speak a litany of passion for life.*

*Prayer by Luciano José de Lime (Brazil)*





## SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

An amalgamation of three fellowships - Hobs Moat, Olton and Christ Church - Solihull URC seeks to continue serving the three communities in a different way. Sunday worship is focused at Christ Church, but opportunities at other times and in other places are being explored and developed.

Prayer is at the heart of what we are doing, as our desire is to fulfil God's calling to us as a Christian fellowship.

We invite you to join us on the exciting and challenging journey we are on, and look forward to seeing you in the future.

## Zaidie''s Last Reflection

The old adage goes 'Time flies when you are having fun' or it could be that as we get older that days seem shorter. It has come to that time when we have to say '*farewell and so long*'. I don't know about you, but I am not very good at 'endings'. We know that things cannot go on the same forever, but it does not make endings any easier. On the other hand, what comes with an ending is a usually a new beginning, and that offer us such great opportunities and hope. That excitement comes with some trepidation as we hold in tension what we hope for and what we worry about.

The last two years have flown by and I would reflect on them as a real blessing. We have shared so much together and over such a short time. The parable which comes to mind is the mustard seed. I will always recall the Synod meeting where this parable was opened up for us to look at the different ways in which Jesus was referring to the mustard seed and the soil. Together we are seeds and we have been sown in the soil. As seeds we have had an impact on the soil and equally the soil has caused us to change. It is one of life's great mysteries as we place a small seed into soil, and with time and moisture the tiniest of green shoot will eventually appear. It is so delicate but yet has the potential to become a huge tree or a plant which spreads everywhere. Like the good news of Jesus which has lasted for centuries, we have been transformed and continue to share the fresh and good news to the world.

That is how, on reflection, I have seen our time together over the past two years. We have like seeds been planted in soil and we have grown together, journeyed together and shared together. Our relationship as seeds has changed each other, and I would say that I am a much better person for having met all of you. Equally, we have transformed the soil and continue with the help of the Holy Spirit to make Solihull a place for growth for God. May God continue to bless the work of the congregation and your ministry in the

community.

Those special moments in time I have committed to the memory bank, including some very special worship sessions we have shared. However, one unique memory has to be ... thanks for the experience of Pantomime. My theological reflections on Cinderella will never be the same again! So on behalf of Trevor and Mom (Lin) I would like to say ... Thank you so much for everything. Those few words of 'thank you' seem so small but they mean so much.

So as I move on to a new place in my ministry, my peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you (John 14:27) and hope that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7) My prayer as we say farewell:

*Our great God, in Christ you make all things new.  
Clothe us with power from on high, that with generous lives and  
hearts on fire,  
we will work with you to grow our church and transform the world.  
Glory be... and Amen.*

Zaidie Orr



The Parable of the  
Mustard Seed  
by Chris Coates

## **DIARY OF EVENTS**

### **JULY 2015**

- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> 2pm Singing for Pleasure @ HM  
7.30pm Cell Group Leaders meet
- Saturday 4th 11am-4pm Great Tea Party at local Hospice
- Sunday 5th 1.30pm Churches Together in Olton Picnic @ The Friary  
(Wednesday 8th - Eversfield School in CC)
- Thursday 9th 2pm Singing for Pleasure @ HM
- Saturday 11th 2pm Moderator's Farewell Event @ Sut.Coldfield URC
- Monday 13th 12.30pm Generations Lunch Hour @ CC
- Tuesday 14th 10.30am Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ HM
- Thursday 16th Coach trip to Glos.& Warks.Railway. 8.30am @ Olton  
2pm Singing for Pleasure @ HM  
(last meeting until September)
- Saturday 18th 2 - 4pm Garden Party @ The Kembery's
- Sunday 19th 11.30am Church Meeting follows worship
- Monday 20th 7.30pm Elders Meeting @ HM
- Friday 24th 7pm 'Nourish' first week
- Monday 27th 10.30am Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ HM  
10.30am Exploring Messy Church @ CC

### **AUGUST 2015**

- Saturday 1st 2pm @ Central URC Sheffield - Ordination of Zaidie Orr  
Coach leaves Olton at 10.30am
- Monday 10th 12.30pm Generations Lunch Hour @ CC
- Tuesday 11th 10.30am Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @HM
- Monday 17th 7.30pm Elders' @ The Manse
- Thursday 20th Coach Trip to the Potteries. 8,30am @ Olton
- Tuesday 25th 10.30am - Messy Church @ CC  
Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ HM

## **WORSHIP & PRAYER DURING JULY**

Wednesday 1st 10am @ Olton - Word & Prayer

**Sunday 5th** 10am @ Christ Church - Holy Communion

**Sunday 12th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship - Margaret Marshall

Monday 13th 11.30am @ Christ Church - Word & Prayer

Tuesday 14th 2pm @ Hobs Moat - Word & Prayer

Thursday 16th 10am @ Olton - Fellowship Prayers

**Sunday 19th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship\*- Mark Fisher

Friday 24th 10am @ Christ Church - Praying with the Papers

**Sunday 26th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship - Tim C Aho

## **WORSHIP & PRAYER DURING AUGUST**

**Sunday 2nd** 10am @ Christ Church - Holy Communion - Ann Evans

**Sunday 9th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship - Mark Fisher

Monday 10th 11am @ Christ Church - Word & Prayer

Tuesday 11th 2pm @ Hobs Moat - Word & Prayer

**Sunday 16th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship (inc. Fellowship Prayers) - Gordon Justham

**Sunday 23rd** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship - Mark Fisher

Monday 24th 10am @ Olton - Praying with the Papers

**Sunday 30th** 10am @ Christ Church - Worship - Cell Groups

### **\*A Sunday Celebration of Music on 19th July**

Please come to our special Sunday Celebration of Music Service led by Mark and the Hobs Moat Singing For Pleasure Group on 19th July. If you would like to take part or know more, please see me on Sundays or come on Thursdays at 2pm at Hobs Moat.



Janet Ince

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### July 7<sup>th</sup>

2 Samuel 5: 1-5, 9-10 and Psalm 48 Ezekiel 2: 1-5 and Psalm 123  
2 Corinthians 12: 2-10 Mark 6: 1-13

### July 12<sup>th</sup>

2 Samuel 6: 1-5, 12b-19 and Psalm 24 Amos 7: 7-15 and Psalm 85: 8-13  
Ephesians 1: 3-14 Mark 6: 14-29

### July 19<sup>th</sup>

2 Samuel 7: 1-14a and Psalm 89: 20-37 Jeremiah 23: 1-6 and Psalm 23  
Ephesians 2: 11-22 Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

### July 26<sup>th</sup>

2 Samuel 11: 1-15 and Psalm 14 2 Kings 4: 42-44 and Psalm 145: 10-18  
Ephesians 3: 14-21 John 6: 1-21

### August 2<sup>nd</sup>

2 Samuel 11: 26 – 12: 13a and Psalm 51: 1-12 Exodus 16: 2-4, 9-15 and  
Psalm 78: 23-29 Ephesians 4: 1-16 John 6: 24-35

### August 9<sup>th</sup>

2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33 and Psalm 130 1 Kings 19: 4-8 and  
Psalm 34: 1-8 Ephesians 4: 25-52 John 6: 35, 41-51

### August 16<sup>th</sup>

1 Kings 2: 10-12, 3: 3-14 and Psalm 111 Proverbs 9: 1-6 and  
Psalm 34: 9-14 Ephesians 5: 15-20 John 6: 51-58

### August 23<sup>rd</sup>

1 Kings 8: 1, 6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43 and Psalm 84 Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18  
and Psalm 34: 15-22 Ephesians 6: 10-20 John 6: 56-69

### August 30<sup>th</sup>

Song of Solomon 2: 8-13 and Psalm 45: 1-2, 6-9 Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9  
and Psalm 15 James 1: 17-27 Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## CHURCHES TOGETHER IN OLTON

Churches Together in Olton are having a picnic on Sunday  
5th July at 1.30pm on the Friary Lawn. All are very welcome  
to bring their picnic and enjoy the friendship of members  
of CTO.



## THE GIDEONS

Two Gideon Friends took part in our Sunday service recently. In a Bible-based address they explained how the little New Testament and Psalms, with its list of helpful contacts in the front, are valued by many in hospitals, prisons, hotels and schools around the world. They did not ask for money, but prayer for their work.

Among the display of Bibles afterwards were little tubular collecting boxes, which can be filled with loose cash of any kind, and a number of people took them away. The tube will hold enough 2p pieces to buy a child's New Testament, and 50p pieces will amount to £20.

Although they can be collected individually if you wish, we thought the best plan is to return them to Church in a few weeks' time, for which arrangements will be made.

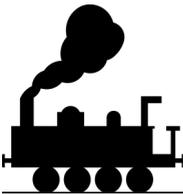
Marian Batten

## COACH TRIPPERS UNITED

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE WARWICKSHIRE STEAM RAILWAY

**THURSDAY, 16<sup>th</sup> JULY**

We look forward to a ride on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway, leaving Toddington and calling at Winchcombe, Gotherington, Cheltenham Racecourse and Laverton. The train runs half-hourly, and light refreshments are available at Winchcombe station and more substantial ones at Toddington station.



The inclusive cost of the coach and the train will be £25. If you would like to come, please contact **Val Cross (706 9687)** by Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July.

**MIDDLEPORT POTTERY, STOKE-ON-TRENT**  
**THURSDAY, 20<sup>th</sup> AUGUST**

At Middleport Pottery we shall see the production of Burleigh pottery.

They say:

‘The factory tour is a unique experience which follows the whole Burleigh production process. It features a little of the wonderful history of Burleigh and even includes our original steam engine. However, I do need to make you aware that the factory tour is quite physically demanding, as there are several flights of steep wooden stairs, lots of uneven surfaces and no seating available due to the nature of this special Victorian building. It is important to be aware of this, and we ask that you please make sure everyone in your party is also aware before committing to the tour, If you are uncertain if it would be suitable there are other options available - we can give you a slightly different tour of more accessible parts of the site, or you are welcome to just arrange for catering and have a self-guided tour of the visitor areas (not the factory), please just ask. We can also give you a seated talk about the regeneration project as an alternative.

‘The factory tour lasts around 75 minutes. We generally begin tours at 11am, with a maximum of 10 people per tour.’

If you would like to come, please contact **Val Cross (706 9687)** by Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> August, and let us know whether you would like to do the full tour or a limited tour.

We are also starting to gather suggestions for 2016 trips, so could you let a committee member have these as soon as possible, and please put your name on so that we can consult you about it.

Please note that in all cases bookings for future events can only be taken after the previous outing, to prevent mix-ups.



## DOES EVIL EXIST?

ONE DAY a professor of a university decided to defy his students. He asked them, "Did God create everything that exists?" A student bravely answered, "Yes, he did". "Everything?" asked the professor. "Yes, everything" the student replied. "In that case, God created evil. Correct? Because evil exists." To that the student had no answer, and remained silent. The professor was delighted at the opportunity to prove once more that faith was only a myth.

Another student then raised his hand and asked, "May I ask you a question, Professor?" "Of course" was the answer. "Does cold exist?" "Of course it does. Did you never feel cold?" The student said, "Actually, sir, cold does not exist. According to studies in physics, cold is the total and complete absence of heat. An object can only be studied if it has and transmits energy, and it is the heat of an object that transmits energy. Without heat the objects are inert, incapable of reaction. But cold does not exist. We created the term 'cold' to explain the lack of heat." The student went on, "And in answer to your question, sir, God did not create evil. Evil is the absence of love, humanity and faith. Love and faith are like heat and light. They exist - their absence leads to evil."

Now it was the professor's turn to be silent.  
The name of that student was Albert Einstein.

*from Bournville Church Newsletter*

## Cream Teas at Barnes Close

We are expanding our popular Sunday afternoon Cream Teas at Barnes Close this year. Come along and enjoy the peace and tranquility as you tuck into homemade scones and tea or coffee



Sundays 19th & 26th July and 13th September 2015  
3pm to 5pm

Irene Bound

GARDEN PARTY  
SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JULY  
FROM 2.30 TO 5.00



at 64 Widney Manor Road

No admission charge  
but we will ask for donations to the Church  
charity

Cream teas + Competitions  
Bring and Buy + Plants + BookStall

Parking at 64 for those who have difficulty in walking far.

Or at 68, there will be room for a few cars there.

Athletic drivers can drop their passengers off then park at  
the Sixth Form College

Come to the

***GREAT TEA PARTY***

**At your local Hospice in Marsh Lane**

On Saturday, 4th July

From 11am until 4pm

Just drop in for tea and cakes

Come and see the gardens too.

See you there,

Gweno

## OLTON

### **PRAYERS for, and NEWS of OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

I'm sure the news of the arrival of **Jill Hughes'** grandson, **Ethan John William Allman**, has already circulated amongst you, so our congratulations, love and best wishes go to his happy parents, **Jenny** and **Adrian**, to his excited sister, **Esther**, and to his delighted grandmother, **Jill** and great grandparents **Eileen** and **Howard**.

A couple of things have changed recently for **Pat Mountford** - she has moved house and had surgery for a knee replacement --- hopefully both went well.

**Phyllis Macer-Wright** has been in hospital with a chest infection but I'm sure she will be fully recovered in plenty of time for her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday which will be on August 30<sup>th</sup>. We send our love and best wishes to **Phyllis** for that special occasion.

Sadly, it is not all good news as we have recently learned of the death of **Win Marshall** who was the widow of one of our former ministers, **Revd. Ernest Marshall**.

Rita.

### **Win Marshall – a tribute**

I first met Win Marshall in the spring of 1963 when the family came to live next door to me. Ernest had been chosen as our new Minister in the Olton church, and he came with his wife and three sons, John, Peter and Tim.

Win was a wise and wonderful person, always so kind and helpful to everyone. In the 20 years they served us at Olton it was a very thriving Church, and Win supported Ernest in every way she could.

Ernest died 20 years ago, and Win eventually went to live in Lincoln, where she died peacefully two weeks ago. She was 94 years old. We think of John, Peter and Tim and their families, and also her sister,

and send them our sincere condolences.

Win held a very special place in our hearts, and will always be remembered with love and deep affection.

Gweno Nichols

## **CHRIST CHURCH**

Let us send warm prayers and comfort to our friends and relatives: Barbara and Keith, Shirley, Brenda, the Jenkins Family, Doris, John, Syd and Michelle, Michael.

We also pray for those that are unnamed but in our hearts and thoughts.

Bridget.

## **HOBBS MOAT**

The following friends are in need of our thoughts and prayers at this time. We ask for God's blessing on each of them and those who are carers: Alf Andrews, Peggy and Harold Crosby, Jean and Brian Mather, Maureen Bellamy, Joan Shaw, Vera Thomas, Nita Renshaw, Irene Lambert and Partner Keith, and Thelma Phillips. Please keep these and all of the folk on our prayer lists in your prayers each day.

Jeanne

**Congratulations** to Craig Brown & Ivannia Romerez who are to be married on 27th June in Ivannia's home country of Costa Rica.

We send our love to Jeanne & Barrie as they make the exotic and exciting journey to celebrate the happy occasion.

Thank you for all of your messages and good wishes as we travel to our Son's wedding this week. See you when we get back. God bless.

Jeanne

Solihull Methodist Church

# Open Gardens



**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July**

*Gardens open from 2.00pm to 5.00pm*

- 7 gardens spruced up for you
- Widely varying designs
- Refreshments available in some gardens
- Children's treasure hunt

*Garden Passes and Guides on the day from  
Solihull Methodist Church car park*

*(Blossomfield Road – next to Solihull Railway station)*

**Adults £5, Children free**

**Fill your car with 4 or more and get one free**

**More information 0121 705 4126**

A Sunday school teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem.

A small child replied “They couldn’t get a baby-sitter”.

UNION  
THEATRE

# AS YOU LIKE IT

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

JOIN US UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE FOR A SUMMER SHOW  
OF THE BARD'S BEST LOVED COMEDY MUSICAL.

THU 16 - SAT 18 JULY 2015 AT 7.30PM  
SOLIHULL URC, WARWICK ROAD, SOLIHULL, B91 3DG  
ADULTS £10 | CONCESSIONS £9

CONCESSIONS ARE SENIOR CITIZENS, STUDENTS AND UNDER 16S - GROUP BOOKING DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

BUY ONLINE: [uniontheatresolihull.co.uk](http://uniontheatresolihull.co.uk)  
PHONE: 0121 784 4067 - EMAIL: [uniontheatresolihull@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:uniontheatresolihull@yahoo.co.uk)

Thursday 16th - Saturday, 18th July at 7.30p

Solihull URC, Warwick Road, Solihull. B91 3DG

Tickets: Adults £10, Concessions £9

Buy on line: [uniontheatresolihull.co.uk](http://uniontheatresolihull.co.uk)

Phone: 0121 784 4067

Available from Jackie & Gordon Justham or Lucy Williams

## **ZIMBABWE - Extract from Stories for Change 111**

Harare, Zimbabwe - Activist Itai Dzamara was getting his haircut at the local barbershop when five armed men seized him, shoved him into an unmarked truck and sped off. He hasn't been seen since.

Dzamara, 35, is a journalist and opposition supporter who spearheads a pro-democracy movement called 'Occupy Africa Unity Square' that is demanding long-standing President Robert Mugabe to resign.

The barber - who declined to give his name fearing reprisals - told Al Jazeera that Dzamara's captors accused him of cattle theft, handcuffed him, and drove off at high speed. His abductors were earlier spotted cruising around the neighbourhood in two vehicles, he said. A week after his kidnapping, Sheffa Dzamara, the journalist's wife, said she prays he returns to his family safely. Their two children are distraught by the disappearance of their father, she said.

"They miss their father and ask for him every day" she told Al Jazeera, unable to hide her emotions. "It is so difficult to explain why he can't be with them. The kids love him dearly." Sheffa said she's approached the authorities repeatedly, but no one has been able to help her. "I am tired, I cry myself to sleep every day ... I pray every day for his safe return," she said with a trembling voice.

The Africa Unity Square landmark is next to Zimbabwe's Parliament, High Court, Supreme Court, and Constitutional Court. It is also a stone's throw away from Mugabe's office and has been the theatre of Itai Dzamara-led sit-ins demanding the resignation of the 91-year-old president and new elections. He has had fierce run-ins with anti-riot police, and has been frequently detained without charge and beaten.

Dzamara's older brother, Patson, recently spoke at a news conference in Harare, saying the family "still hold on to hope even though the worst is indeed a possibility. We keep on praying".

"As a family, we do not know where he is," Dzamara's brother told the media gathering packed with reporters and foreign diplomats.

"We can only make assumptions. The past week has certainly been one of the most tumultuous and tormenting for us as a family. We admit that we are dealing with [a tragic] and complex situation."

The leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party, Morgan Tsvangirai, issued a statement last week saying he holds President Mugabe and his security agencies responsible for Dzamara's abduction, "Tsvangirai says he knows [Dzamara's whereabouts], ask him to assist ZRP [Zimbabwe Republic Police]" Information Minister Jonathan Moyo said on Twitter.

"I've said I do not have any information whatsoever about that matter, and that's my honest and final truth," Moyo said. Describing the abduction as 'barbaric', Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa told Parliament last week he could not confirm that Dzamara was arrested or is in government custody.

Two days before Dzamara's abduction he delivered a speech at an opposition rally in Harare, offering solidarity with the MDC for mass protests against the deteriorating political and economic situation in Zimbabwe. "We are in no doubt as to the perpetrators of this abduction," Tsvangirai told the news conference. "We hold Mugabe and his regime responsible for this morbid and senseless act."

"The president - who is also the AU [African Union] and SADC [Southern African Development Community] chair - cannot preside over a country where innocent citizens get abducted and disappear."

The United States and European Union called on authorities to immediately investigate the disappearance. "If he is being held in state custody, it is vital that his fundamental human rights and freedoms - as guaranteed by Zimbabwe's constitution - be honoured," the US Embassy said in a statement.

The EU said Zimbabwe's government should "take all necessary measures to ascertain Mr Dzamara's whereabouts, safeguard his

well-being, and accord him the full protection of the law".

The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights successfully filed a habeas corpus application at the High Court ordering senior security officials "to do all things necessary to determine his whereabouts".

High Court Justice David Mangota also directed a team of police detectives to work closely with Dzamara's legal team to search for him. "The Zimbabwe Republic Police is appealing for information on the whereabouts of Itai Peace Kadiki Dzamara, aged 35 years," said a police statement issued with contact details.

Many Zimbabweans have disappeared since the country gained independence from Britain in 1980. Dewa Mavhinga, a senior researcher with Human Rights Watch, said there were no exact figures on how many people had been forcefully abducted, "but what is certain is that thousands have disappeared".

"NGOs extensively documented cases of thousands of enforced disappearances of civilians in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces between 1983 and 1987, during the period that later became known as the Gukuruhundi massacres," Mavhinga told Al Jazeera.

"None of those implicated was ever brought to justice. Instead, President Mugabe issued a blanket amnesty pardoning them. Outside of state involvement, people do not simply vanish from the streets of Zimbabwe without the police establishing what happened," Mavhinga said.

McDonald Lewanika of the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition - a conglomeration of more than 350 civil society groups - said Dzamara's abduction was "a sad reminder of a politics that we thought we were leaving behind as a country.

"It is a sad and scary indicator of the future that we are headed towards as a country, where people are abducted, kidnapped, beaten and killed on issues of fundamental interest to the polity", Lewanika said. "The state is clearly complicit in this matter and needs to do everything it can, using all its structures to ensure that Dzamara is

brought back home safe and sound - otherwise the people's confidence in the state's ability to protect them will wane, and that is not a good thing."

*Permission to publish given here only: Al Jazeera. Author: Gift Phiri.*

**Commitment for Life Prayer**

We pray for the safe return of Itai Dzamara to his family. We pray for all those who are falsely imprisoned or denied their basic human rights. We are committed to life.

The Graceful Blessing -  
sung to Frère Jacques.

May God bless you;  
    May God bless you  
And our friends;  
    And our friends.  
May the love  
        of Jesus;  
    May the love  
        of Jesus  
Live in you;  
        Live in you.



## KEY CONTACTS

### Minister

Mark Fisher                      mjf.urc@me.com                      07950 399615

### Church Contacts

Olton

Duty Elder    07961 216867

Hobs Moat

Duty Elder    07549 610765

Christ Church

Gordon Justham      gordonjustham@talktalk.net      01564 776229

### Worship Rotas

Enid Chapman    0121 706 1851

Janet Ince                      artist4you@btinternet.com      0121 706 0204

Gordon Justham      gordonjustham@talktalk.net      01564 776229

### Website

[www.solihullurc.org.uk](http://www.solihullurc.org.uk)

## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Material for the September edition is due to

Marian Batten 0121 689 8213

[mborchard@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:mborchard@blueyonder.co.uk)

by **Sunday, 23rd August**, please