

SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

Christ Church - Hobs Moat – Olton

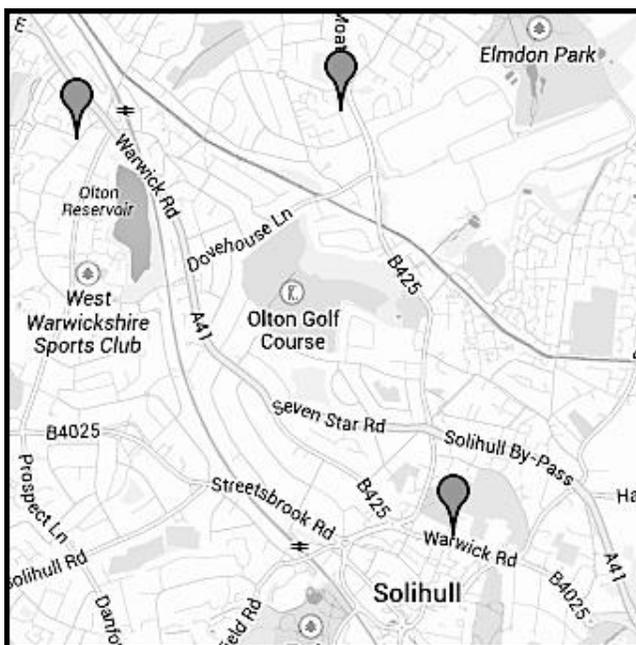
October 2018 Newsletter

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Philippians 2. 12-13

Lord, as I witness your love in Jesus, help me, by your Holy Spirit, to give witness to you in my daily life - my words and deeds and my encounters with others. For your sake I pray.





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



- **not entirely, Mark thinks**

To mention Brexit at the outset risks readers switching off straight away as the whole process seems to have been fairly tedious and what we are informed is generally short on detail. Our bewilderment regarding what is going on raises the question 'What are we to do?' as it is our future that is being shaped, but it also encourages us to retreat into our personal worlds, to keep our

heads down, keep calm and carry on with our daily tasks.

But to leave it all in the hands of others, without even a small degree of interest or engagement from ourselves does not feel right and indeed is not. Within our lives of faith we entrust our salvation to our Lord Jesus Christ and we find our assurance of this in his death and resurrection. But we also find ourselves, day by day, needing to re-engage with the reality and depth of God's love and forgiveness, which we see in Jesus, allowing these things to shape and govern our thoughts and deeds and demonstrate our salvation. We cannot 'switch off' and relinquish personal responsibility.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi:

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

So it is, we are all call to 'work out our own salvation', allowing God to work in us and through us to demonstrate his life-giving love (eternal life) to the world.

None of us can 'Keep calm and carry on' either in terms of allowing the status quo to continue, or of leaving it to others in the church to demonstrate our salvation for us. If God is at work in us, and he surely is through the love we see in Jesus and the gifts we receive in the Holy

Spirit, then we have a responsibility to offer witness to him in our daily lives. Perhaps 'Keep calm and carry on' should, for the Christian, be 'Keep praying and follow Jesus'?!

Mark

DIARY FOR OCTOBER

Monday 1st, 10am: Moment Cafe

10:30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 2nd, 11am: Worship @ St Francis Lodge

7:45pm: Music for Worship - planning @ The Manse

Wednesday 3rd, 2pm: Wednesday Club @ Hobs Moat

Thursday 4th, 10am: Tots & Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure

Sunday 7th, 10am: Holy Communion

Monday 8th, 10am: Moments Café

10:30am: Job Advice

12:30pm: Elders Meeting

Tuesday 9th, 10:30am: Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Holy Communion @ Hampton House

Thursday 11th, 10am: Tots & Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Saturday 13th, 9:30am: West Midlands Synod meeting

Sunday 14th, 10am: Worship – Alan Cotgreave

11:45am: Worship @ Star & Garter

Monday 15th, 10am: Moments Cafe

10:30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 16th, 11am: Holy Communion @ Tudor Lodge

Sunday 21st, 10am: Worship – Ian Carnell

Monday 22nd, 10am: Moments Café

10:30am: Job Advice

Tuesday 23rd, 10:30am: Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

Thursday 25th, 10am: Tots & Tales

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 28th: Cafe Worship & Church Meeting

Monday 29th, 10am: Moments Café

Tuesday 30th, 10:30am: Messy Church

Wednesday 31st, 2pm: Wednesday Club @ Hobs Moat

CHURCH MEETING

Please note that this is on Sunday 28th October as part of our Cafe Worship. This will be an opportunity to follow-up on matters arising from our Away Day, as we look forward to the New Year and a new phase in our church life. Please do your best to be present.

SHOUT OUT FOR GIRLS WORKSHOPS

Producing sanitary packs for girls to enable more consistent education. Finished products are personally delivered to the Kimbuta Rural Development Programme supporting a village community in Eastern Uganda.

First Monday of the month 10am - 12 noon @ The Manse
1st October, 5th November, 3rd December

THIS WAY UP Unpacking Loss

CHARITY FUNDRAISER

THE JAMHOUNDS

£12

The Oliver Bird Hall, Church Road, Solihull, B91 3RQ

★ SAT 19 NOVEMBER 7.30 - 10.30pm ★

Tickets available from Judy Fisher

GWENO'S LAVENDER BAGS

£30 was raised in September towards the gardens at the Marie Curie Hospice. Many thanks indeed!

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.

HOLY HABITS - GLADNESS & GENEROSITY

Pursuing our calling as Disciples of Jesus and how we adopt the character of Jesus and witness for him to others, we have explored a little of our 'front lines' and how our daily lives may be 'fruitful' for God. There are some 'habits' which we understand were part of the life of the earliest Christian communities. Over future months these can offer key themes for our ongoing reflection about our individual Christian lives and our Church character. During the Autumn you will discover the theme of 'gladness and generosity' featuring in some of our worship.

Acts 2. 46-47

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**COACH TRIPPERS
HOLME LACY HOUSE**

18TH October 2018

Our last visit is to Warner's Hotel at Holme Lacy House in the heart of the Herefordshire countryside.



For 400 years Holmes Lacy was home to a connected family. Indeed an early Scudamore attended William of Normandy in 1066, thus setting up his descendants for a doubtless well-earned baronetcy. Today after several generations of marriage, divorce and sympathetic home improvements, Holme Lacy stands among our most cherished country hotels. If the name Scudamore sounds familiar, you'd be right; it was Peter of that name who helped tear up national Hunt record books as one of Britain's favourite jockeys, but we can't promise any hot tips for the 3.30 at Cheltenham.

On arrival coffee will be available and there will be a two course lunch followed by a tour of the House and grounds. This trip is really recommended and if you have never been to a Warner's Hotel before it will give you an excellent insight.

With the AGM coming up in November it is time to start preparing for 2018 trips and your suggestions will be required in the usual way.

As usual the coach will leave from our new departure point THE WEST WARWICKS SPORT CLUB, GRANGE ROAD, SOLIHULL, B91 1DA at 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 at least 10 days before the event.

DAVID ARGALL (CHAIR)

SUNDAY WORSHIP IN 2019

As you know, Mark is retiring next February. This could give Janet Ince quite a huge headache in finding people to lead our services. Luckily, Linda Faber, Gordon Justham and Ian Carnell have all offered to lead our worship about once a month. This still leaves several Sundays when Janet has to find people to take a service.

We are hoping that the services on 17th March, 14th July, 29th September (Harvest) and 27th October (Cafe Style) would be led by a Cell Group, a newly formed Worship Group or - - - -? 15th December is also a possibility.

Please give prayerful thought as to whether you would be willing to help lead our Worship and let either Janet or me know.

Maureen Butler

HOBBS MOAT COFFEE MORNINGS

Dates for Tuesday Coffee Mornings at Hobbs Moat from 10.30am to 12 noon, for the rest of 2018.

- 9 October
- 23 October
- 6 November
- 20 November
- 4 December
- 18 December

All are welcome for a cuppa and chat.

Annette

UPDATE FROM LONGBRIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE

I have now been here more than a year, which is difficult to realise as the time has flown by. The village is nearly full, with just a few apartments still empty until people move in when they have sold their houses. The long hot summer has been very trying for many older people, but at least one could walk in the air-conditioned corridors and sit in the public rooms.

It has also been trying for the gardeners, who had hoped to have beautiful displays in the flowerbeds. They tried hard with giant sunflowers, but in the end the sun won the battle. The greenhouse was filled with tomato plants, and all surplus produce – tomatoes, broad and kidney beans, cucumbers and marrows - have been on sale for donations to the Garden Club in an 'honesty box'. I had hydrangeas, geraniums and busy lizzies on my balcony which have done well, but the pelargoniums burnt to a crisp as the buds emerged.

One day I went as a volunteer with some dementia friends to Hagley Village, another ExtraCare village on the Hagley Road. There were about 30 of us sitting round in a large circle, being entertained by Vamos, a leading full mask theatre company who bring their funny and fearless brand of wordless theatre. There were two men and two women, interacting with everyone before giving little masked playlets. One was of an old-style hospital matron and staff who eventually delivered an equally ugly baby. Another was a couple in the back row of a cinema, who were joined by a GI (American WW2 soldier) who of course tried to get off with the girl. Really funny entertainment which many in the audience would recognise.

Another form of entertainment has been provided by Frost & Foster, two young musicians from King Edward's School who as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award had to visit elderly people once a fortnight and entertain them. Both played the piano, one the cello and one could sing. Each time the boys came the audience was larger, and

although they have now finished the Award they are continuing to come because they so enjoy it. Several local Primary schools send their choirs to sing for us also.

Now it is time to prepare for the Flower Festival and Harvest. The theme is 'Thankfulness', and we have been asked to decorate tiles according to what we feel thankful for. The blessings of safe and comfortable living and good companionship come to mind.

Marian Batten

FRESH FROM THE WORD: THE BIBLE FOR A CHANGE

It is time to order the 2019 edition of this helpful IBRA book which will inspire your reading of the Bible in a changing world. It is led by theologians, scholars, creative writers, church leaders and activists from around the world, and offers notes, prayers and suggestions for further thought for every day of the year. It will be approx. £10.

If you would like a copy, please contact Marian Batten (07855 516687) or Irene Bound (0121 449 6367).

THANK YOU

A very belated report and thank you to everyone who supported our 'Boules' afternoon! The only problem was the weather! No Boules but plenty of tea, cakes and company!! We raised £347 for The Colin Choyce Charity. This was made up of the Saturday afternoon tea and Sunday sale of cakes, including donations from folk who could not join us. It was lovely to see friends from Solihull Methodist Church and neighbours from Barston who joined us. Thank you all again.

Chris and Trixie

Sam and Stuart Mills wish to thank all those who came to celebrate their son Harry's baptism. Your presence was very welcome, and Harry was so relaxed that he slept through his big moment!

WE DIDN'T MAKE IT AND, TO BE HONEST, I AM DISCOURAGED

I hope you remember this time last year my asking you to make a special effort to begin inviting people to things that we do at church whether it be a coffee morning, a seasonal service or special activity. I know it is difficult and I pointed out that research shows that only 5% of people find inviting others to something easy – that's not many – which means that most of us are outside our comfort zone. I set up a picture of a lighthouse for you to colour in each time you had extended an invitation – whether or not the person came along. This was so we could encourage each other with how we were doing. I set a target of 200 invitations between us. We have held over 30 special events or special services plus our normal Sunday services and regular groups, there are about 88 of us who come to church regularly; I was only asking for 200 so it should have been easy but we didn't make our target.

I am discouraged because Christian people are a people of invitation – our purpose is to invite people to come and meet Jesus.

I have been a little encouraged though to hear a couple of stories of success (success we were defining as making an invitation - whether or not the person accepted the invitation) Some people made the extra effort not only to invite (which they found difficult), but those invitations were accepted, much to the surprise and delight of those who took the leap. Well done. Take heart and invite some more.

So for most of us what are we going to do differently? We are again in a good season for making invitations. By the time you read this, harvest will be behind us which was one opportunity to invite people to come to church but ahead we have Remembrance Sunday, Advent and Carol services. There will be other events as well as the regular activities such as the café being open on Saturday mornings, Messy Church and our parent and toddler group.

Hand in hand with inviting we have talked a lot about our Frontlines - making the most of opportunities with those we meet on a daily basis. Ask God to show you who, amongst these contacts, might be ready for an invitation to something more or something deeper.

We need this. Invitation is not only the key to the Kingdom but it is the key to the future of church.

Linda Faber

HARVEST BOXES

Harvest Festival is on 30th September. Please will you bring your Christian Aid Boxes to the service on this day if possible, if you are unable to be there, kindly give them to Myles Ensor by the end of October, Many Thanks.

Bridget Goudie

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**

SILENCE; SERVICE; SCRIPTURE AND SACRAMENT

Every Sunday morning I listen to Sunday Worship on Radio 4. It starts at 8.10 should you wish to start this habit too – or you can catch up at other times on BBC iPlayer. Either way it is well worth listening to and comes from different churches and denominations, which add to the interest.

On the first Sunday in September this programme came from St Martin in the Fields in London. The theme was the ancient Christian disciplines of 'Silence; Service; Scripture and Sacrament'. These disciplines are worth meditating upon methinks.

Silence. In our busy modern world silence can be a rare thing and we need to make space and time each day for it. This is the silence of meditation in which we give God the opportunity to speak to our hearts and minds. We pray of course – but do we leave enough silent spaces to enable us to discern God's will in our prayer time? Do we clear our minds enough to let him speak to us?

Thoughts fill our minds almost constantly and this can also mean that we may miss the glories of the world that God has created for us. I have been particularly aware of this since creating my outdoor sacred space and deliberately immersing myself, for just a few minutes each day, in observing and giving thanks for the glories of creation immediately around me in the garden. We have all been given treasure beyond measure in the natural world – and yet do we always fully appreciate it? Look at the ever changing skies, the plants, the creatures and the rich colours of autumn and relish them in silence. Then thanks God for them.

Service. Serving others is an essential part of being a true Christian: putting others before self. 'Christ has no body now on earth but ours' – we sing a song about this sometimes. As a full time carer I find it quite hard, however much I may love him, to always put another's needs

first. I cannot plan anything because each day is different and every day is unpredictable. Some days I am tired – and then it gets even harder to put another person’s needs first. Friends and family have needs too – and, as Christians, their needs call to us and pull at our heart strings. Then we look at the wider world. What can we do for the homeless for example? Helping others in whatever way, large or small, is part of our Christian calling – ‘Love one another’ – the greatest commandment of all.



Scripture. Daily reading of the Bible is also an essential part of our Christianity. God speaks to us through the scriptures. Again leaving space for silent contemplation when we have read a passage in the Bible is so important. Read the words slowly – don’t rush through them. What do they mean and why has God led you to read this passage today? Most importantly how does this passage relate to you and your daily life? Some passages in the Bible can be challenging – ask for God’s guidance and a deeper understanding of the meanings of the words you have read. And then apply this knowledge to daily life – and the all-important aforementioned ‘service’ to others.

Sacrament. ‘Do this, as often as you take it, in remembrance of me’. Yes the final ‘S’ is for the sacraments – the sacred bread and wine of communion. I freely admit that for many years of my life I

underestimated the importance of taking communion. Now I know just how important it is to take communion as often as possible - though even once a month is sometimes a challenge! In days gone past many Christians took communion every day – particularly Roman Catholics for whom the Mass is still very important and is taken frequently. We too should endeavour to take communion as often as possible, to strengthen our relationship with Jesus Christ and to have His spirit living inside of us in active service. Taking communion - and the resultant close relationship with Jesus - gives us the strength and wisdom to carry on, no matter how challenging our lives may be. God bless you all, **Carol**

HOSTING GUESTS TO OUR PREMISES

Each week we welcome around 40 different community groups into our premises either in Hobs Moat or Christ Church. It is a privilege, enabled by simply having the premises, and it is an opportunity to have a share in groups that support people through health, artistic, social and charitable activities. What we would like to do is to express our support in a more personal way. This has been modelled by Marcia and Judy as they have managed our lettings over recent years. We are now seeking volunteers who would be willing to ‘pop in’ to group meetings from time to time, to express interest and to be a personal link with the church and ensure that we serve groups in the best way possible. Hosts would also be the initial point of contact (by phone) if groups wish to raise matters with the church, although for practical matters this would be passed on for the appropriate person to respond. If you feel able to have responsibility for one session of a week (morning, afternoon, or evening), willing to occasionally visit or make contact with the groups who meet at that particular time, please sign up on the sheet at the back of church.



A letter from our sponsored student, Salim Munga who attends St George's RC High School. He was 5th in his class.

Dear Sponsors,

I hope that you are all fine and well. I am also fine here at school. May I just thank God for protecting us from the beginning of the term until its end. It has been a good term for me and for everyone in the school.

In the academic field I am proceeding very well and working very hard with my studies – although there are difficulties with some of the subjects. However I am looking for solutions so that I can achieve my goals. My overall grade has dropped slightly but this does not make me lose hope. I have taken it as a challenge and now I am working extra hard for the national exam.

May I thank you for your support from the beginning of this course until this moment. I am praying for you and your families. Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

Yours faithfully,

Salim Munga



FROM OUR POSTBAG AUGUST 2018

Welcome to our latest edition of “From Our Postbag” – extracts from some of the letters from our sponsored students. Some letters give us some information about their background and family.

My home is in Mombasa and I come from a single parent family; my mother, my 5 year old brother and I. I would wish for you to pray for me and my family. Since my parents divorced in 2014 they have not come together again but I believe that one day I will record victory for my family.

One of the challenges of life in a boarding school is how to allocate your free time. Some of our students give us an insight into the ways they revise. Getting together with other students often helps.

I read hard and smart. I want to produce better results next term. The teachers work hand in hand with us so that we may pass with flying colours. I save and spare the little time of morning, lunch and night preps to follow up my timetable which is very helpful to me.

Here at school I have developed a friendship with some of the other girls. We help each other in many ways. They are the best friends I have ever had in life. They are loving and caring friends. They show obedience to everyone and respect everyone regardless of their ages. They're very focused on what they need to do.

Now we have made a timetable which we follow strictly. To those subjects which are still a challenge to us, we discuss it and if we still

find it hard we approach a teacher for assistance. I will soon become the student school nurse in our school and that is preparing me for my future career of becoming a doctor.

This opportunity of a lifetime – to benefit from a Secondary education is one we take for granted in the UK but, without your help, these students would never get to attend the next phase in their education. They are truly grateful for your help in enhancing their life prospects.

You are my pride and you will remain the pride of my life as you are part and parcel of my life. Thank you for your financial contribution in my academic life. I thank you for how far you have brought me academically. You have played an important role in my success in achieving my goals and ambitions. You have been a positive change agent in my life. I thank you once again for transforming my life in this academic journey.

I take this opportunity to really thank you for continuing to offer your hand in sponsoring me. May God bless you so much because it is through you that my dreams and goals of life are still alive.

My family and I are just fine enjoying every breath that God is gifting us day by day. I wish to take this golden opportunity to say thank you for what you are doing in my education life.

Without your financial support it would be impossible to continue with my studies. May the Lord increase everything that you have emptied. I am very grateful and thankful for your support. May God shower you with lots of blessings.

Thank you again for your very generous support, encouragement and positive attitude. It is very much appreciated.

Ian Carnell, Chairman of the Trustees.



*‘Consider the lilies, how they grow:
they neither toil nor spin,
yet I tell you, even Solomon, in
all his glory, was not arrayed
like one of these.’* *Luke 12:27*

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 or Christ Church - details are on the website.

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

www.generationssolihull.org.uk generationssolihull@icloud.com

Moments - a dementia cafe

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Christ Church

Details from Mark Fisher - contacts above

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Material for the November edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 21st October please.