



SOLIHULL

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat
Communities

May 2021 Newsletter

"We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone."

1 Thessalonians 5:14



SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Based in the town centre, Solihull URC seeks to minister and witness to the local community, the wider town and the areas of Olton and Hobs Moat where we have formerly had a worshipping presence.

We share our mission with other Churches and are in partnership 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
www.centralsolihullchurches.org.uk

LEADERSHIP TEAM

VACANT - Minister

Gordon Justham - **Church Secretary & Elder**

Linda Faber - **Mission Enabler & Lettings Administration**

Maureen Butler - **Elder (worship & prayer, charities, social activities)**

Barrie Jones - **Elder (Property, Health & Safety)**

Elaine Jones - **Elder (Administration, Data protection, Catering)**

Jackie Justham - **Elder (charities, social activities)**

Gordon Laurie – **Elder**

Chris Harman - **Elder**

Liz Amos - **Treasurer**

Areas of special responsibility are listed in brackets.

WORSHIP DURING MAY

At the time of writing the country is not yet out of measures to restrict the spread of Covid-19. Although the rules of lockdown permit churches to open for worship the Elders have decided that it is safest for the congregation that we remain closed for the time being. We will review again at the Elders meeting in May when, hopefully the situation in the country will have eased. Our intention, if the situation permits, is to open with effect from Pentecost (23rd May). We will continue with offering an online service through Zoom throughout May.

The Worship leaders for May are:

2nd May	10:00am	Mr Ian Carnell - includes Communion
9th May	10:00am	Christian Aid Sunday (leader TBA)
16th May	10:00am	Mr Ian Carnell
23rd May	10:00am	Mr Gordon Justham (Pentecost)
30th May	10:00am	Mrs Linda Faber

THE LECTIONARY

Readings for Sundays in May from the Revised Common Lectionary are as follows. Please note that worship leaders are not obliged to follow the lectionary but you may be interested to know what the lectionary readings are for the specified Sundays. The readings in bold are the gospel readings for the day. An interesting challenge is to try and understand the link between the readings for a particular day.

2nd May - John 15.1-8; Psalm 22.25-31; Acts 8.26-40; 1 John 4.7-21;

9th May - John 20.19-31; Psalm 98; Acts 10.44-48; 1 John 5.1-6;

16th May - John 17.6-19; Psalm 1; Acts 3.12-19; 1 John 5.9-13;

23rd May – Acts 2.1-21; Psalm 104.24-34 & 35b; John 15.26-27 & 16.4b-15

30th May - John 3.1-17; Psalm 29; Isaiah 6.1-8; Romans 8.12-17

Gordon Justham

WHO ARE WE REALLY?

Whilst most of us are good at talking during normal times, are we the same during moments of crisis? It is often said that moments of crisis define who we are and what we truly believe in. For many the Covid-19 pandemic has been a crisis that is hopefully coming to an end, but for others this is not the case. Now as the UK emerges from what is hopefully our final lockdown it will be a challenge for all of us to decide what will be our new normal and given our very different personal experiences how we will behave in future.

We have all seen the way that the NHS and all key workers have risen to the challenge and the heroic efforts that they have demonstrated on a daily basis, also the acts of kindness and charity demonstrated by others during the pandemic – they have all truly shown their strength and resilience. However, we must not forget about those who have suffered through lack of access to NHS and other key services or where they have not been able to work – a difficult challenge for many.

As Christians, we recently celebrated Easter as we do every year, but this year it has brought a further air of optimism as many of us have been able to take the opportunity to physically see family and friends outdoors - even if we have had to wear warm clothes! For others it means having to come to terms with a new normal which does not include loved ones, as was poignantly illustrated when HRH the Duke of Edinburgh peacefully passed away leaving HRH the Queen to face a future without him. Thankfully there are also people who are welcoming new children and grandchildren into the world. Our future will continue to be filled with optimism and difficult challenges as it has always been, so will the future be that different?

One visible difference for the near future is that we will be wearing face coverings for the protection of others. Historically masks have been used as a disguise, for celebrations or even to depict emotions. As Christians we mustn't let masks hide or disguise who we are, how we act or what we believe in. What will we all do when hopefully we can remove our face coverings and fully reveal ourselves to everyone once again? Has living through the Covid crisis changed what we will do as Christians in the future either individually or as a church? We are reminded of an old saying which is that "if you carry on doing what you did in the past then you can expect

to get the same outcome in the future”, do we really want the same outcome as before and if not, what are we going to do differently?

During 2020, as family we experienced the loss of loved ones, and the joy of a new life in the world. Our first granddaughter was born over a year ago and we have only seen her in person for brief periods during the last 14 months and understandably we have yet to form that strong physical grandparent bond with her. Last weekend we spent a lovely day with her and so hopefully she will soon begin see that we are not just pictures on a Zoom call. As she sees more of us, we do wonder what she will see in us. We hope she doesn't see people who have been adversely changed by a crisis but people who are hopeful for a better future for all and demonstrate those true Christian values that we all believe in. We hope she will also see that we endeavour to demonstrate these values to everyone as we emerge from the crisis.

Personally, we do not know what the new normal will be or how we will behave and respond to future events as we know that we don't have all the answers. But as Christians we believe that we know those values that have carried us this far and these will be the ones that we carry with us in future. We hope that we can all in our own small way make a difference as this country and the world try to recover from the damage done in recent times.

In trying to share our thoughts we have taken our inspiration from the Romero Prayer and Romans 5: 3-5.

Extract from Romero Prayer

“We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and do it well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.”

And Romans 5: 3-5

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of

the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Ailsa & Alec Betts

THANK YOU

Many thanks to you all for the beautiful orchid, the lovely card and the kind, thoughtful message it brought to me for my special birthday --- all delivered to my home by Trixie. Also, thanks to all those of you who sent individual cards because you were already "in the know".



The celebrations were spread over a number of days, but on my actual birthday Ian arranged for us to have a tasty take away Indian meal. However, I also enjoyed another main meal, a light lunch and a cream tea with either, the one and only member of my family who lives reasonably close, or with friends.

I count myself most fortunate to have such really good friends, and I am truly grateful that I chose to worship God in the company of such wonderful people --- I certainly have much to thank God for!

Rita Routley

MOMENTS

Our last “Moments” meeting was on 16th March 2020. During this very difficult time, especially for people with dementia, we have kept in regular communication with them and their carers.

We continued to send their birthday cards and each volunteer was allocated two carers to be in touch with by telephone for an update as to how they were managing, it has been very much appreciated. Unfortunately, two of our group have died and three have gone into a care home.

In November after much anguish, I’m not the best with technology; I managed to set up zoom meetings for the carers and volunteers. At Christmas we turned on our Christmas lights, had crackers, hats, jokes, games, sherry and mince pies, it’s amazing what you can do on zoom, it was enjoyed by all. Each volunteer took a hyacinth plant and card as a Christmas gift from “Moments”.

Since then we have had zoom meetings every three weeks playing all sorts of different games (trying to be inventive) telling jokes and of course the obligatory quizzes. These have been most successful bringing a bit of light relief to the carers.

A regular question is: when we will be able to meet again at Church? Unfortunately, I feel that this will be difficult at the moment due to the close proximity of sitting with them.

In closing I would like to thank everyone for their continued support.

Elaine Jones



The climate emergency is one of the greatest injustices we face. Together we can stop this climate crisis.

“This climate crisis hurts us all but people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day. From drought to flooding, climate change robs people of control over their lives. Extreme weather means people are struggling to survive without a reliable source of water. Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live. A reliable source of water will help families withstand long drought or relentless rainstorms.”

Additionally, Christian Aid is highlighting the threat of climate change on tea producers in Kenya. Please remember these communities in your prayers.

“Every envelope. Every gift. Every challenge can change lives.”

Once again, the current coronavirus pandemic restricts the opening of churches and door to door collections are not taking place across Solihull. To enable Christian Aid to maintain its vital work across the globe, they have suggested giving can be made by using their e-envelope scheme. I have now set up an **e-envelope** for Solihull URC. Unfortunately, through our postcode, CA have us listed as Christ Church (which I could not change) and not SURC but if you click on the link below it will take you straight to the giving page for our church.

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/solihull-uk-reformed-church?channel=copy>

For those who are unable or prefer not to access the internet, there will be an opportunity to give to CAW later in the year when the church reopens using the traditional giving envelopes.

Just for fun I have included a quiz on the next page to tax your brains and to encourage your donation to CAW. (Answers will be printed in June's newsletter)

For further CAW virtual events, articles and information visit

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Myles Ensor

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 300,000 STEP CHALLENGE

As we cannot hold fund raising events face to face during the restrictions, I have decided to undertake this challenge suggested by Christian Aid as a way of raising much needed money. I plan to take a minimum of 300,000 steps during the month of May either walking alone or with others socially distanced. If you feel able to make a donation to support me, please follow the link below.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Julia-Ensor-300Kstepchallenge>

If you do not have access to the internet, I will happily take donations when we are back at church hopefully at the end of May/early June.

Julia Ensor



(All answers are songs titles)

1. Beyond the spectrum (9,4,3,7)
2. A number of coloured containers (3,5,7)
3. How I want things done (2,3)
4. Astonishing princess (7,5)
5. Metal digit (10)
6. Battle station (8)
7. Aging burger king owned land (3,8,3,1,4)
8. Thistle (6,2,8)
9. Dancing girl (8,7)
10. Result of joining a rambling club (5,5,4,5)
11. Japanese residence (5,2,3,6,3)
12. Mad dog (3,4,5)
13. Dwarf celebration (5,8)
14. Mope about Clyde (4,5)
15. Released song (9,6)
16. Today will be tomorrow (9)
17. Delivered without charge (4,4)
18. Push composer round and round (4,4,9)
19. The Glasgow Fair (6,7)
20. Splatter cash (3,7)
21. Like the passing of the years (2,4,4,2)
22. No noise (3,5,2,7)
23. Dawn chorus (3,6,4)
24. Miss O'Hara strips (7,7)
25. Key lime, for example (8,3)
26. Promise a reunion (4,4,5)
27. Where CA has a room (5,10)
28. Hush-hush, darling (6,4)
29. Cowardly U.S. girl (3,6,4,2,5)
30. Methuselah Trent (3,3,5)



Dear Members of Solihull URC,

Thank you for your continued support of EducAid Africa – it is making and will make such a difference to the lives of these young people in Kenya. With the sponsor’s permission, I reproduce part of the letter sent to her. The sponsor is one of our congregation and the pupil’s name is Elnorrah.

“I am fine and I thank God for being faithful to me. He has taken me through the whole 2020 disaster year of Corona and I am here today in very good health – praise is to the Lord. Allow me to express my gratitude to you for the good work you are doing to me. I really appreciate it. As the days go on, I continue enjoying your support. How I pray is that God will help me so that I can post a good grade because I think that is the only way to express my appreciation.

Our school has changed since we got our new administration. They build for us many taps and now there is water flowing everywhere. Myself I believe in God. He is good and cannot leave His people to suffer. In my life I have come to discover that only God can lead us, can correct us and even sharpen us. I put all my trust in Him because He has a purpose for me. Many times, when maybe I found myself with a problem, I open my Bible and I get happiness again.”

Here is a girl whose life has changed dramatically due to our sponsorship and her Christian faith. Thank you all for your support and prayers for these young people.

Every blessing,

Ian D. Carnell MBE
Chairman of the Trustees, EducAid Africa

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

VACANT

Church Secretary

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

Website

www.solihullurc.org.uk

Hall Lettings: 07925 573259

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

www.generationsssolihull.org.uk generationsssolihull@icloud.com

Moments (currently not meeting)

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Central Solihull

JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER

Material for the June 2021 edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 23rd May please.