



SOLIHULL

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat
Communities

March 2022 Newsletter

"...in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth" – 2 Timothy 2:25



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)**

Ian Carnell – **Elder**

Howard Cotes – **Elder**

Gordon Laurie - **Elder**

Liz Amos - **Treasurer**

Areas of special responsibility are listed in brackets.

WORSHIP DURING MARCH

The United Reformed Church, through the Synod Moderators, have recently updated their Covid 19 guidance. **The Synod Moderators urge the continued use of face coverings in churches, including during singing, as well as maintaining good hand hygiene and appropriate physical distancing.** The Elders have considered the guidance and concur with it.

Although regulations have changed, and the current wave of infections is showing signs of easing, infection rates remain high across the United Kingdom. The Synod Moderators fully appreciate the high, and rapidly increasing, costs of heating churches, but remind us of the importance of good ventilation to prevent the build-up of virus particles in the atmosphere. Vaccination reduces the seriousness of infection. However, it is clear that the Omicron variant is still making people ill, even amongst those who are vaccinated. If you are infected the symptoms may be minor but they could have a much more serious effect on anyone to whom you inadvertently pass the disease.

The Government are now relying on everyone playing their part and taking personal responsibility for controlling the virus. We have to learn to live with it. Please continue to care for yourself and others by taking all reasonable measures to reduce the spread of the virus.

Therefore **the continued use of face coverings in churches, including during singing, as well as maintaining good hand hygiene and appropriate physical distancing** will be a major step in this process.

Thank you.

Gordon Justham

The Worship leaders for March are:

6th March	10:00am	Mr Ian Carnell (includes communion)
13th March	10:00am	Mr Gordon Justham
20th March	10:00am	Mr Alan Cotgreave with the baptism of George Mills conducted by Steve Faber
27th March	10:00am	Mrs Linda Faber

THE LECTIONARY

Readings for Sundays in March 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.

Gordon Justham

6th March Deuteronomy 26.1-11; Psalm 91.1-2, 9-16; Romans 10.8b-13; **Luke 4.1-13**

13th March Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3.17-4.1; **Luke 13.31-35**

20th March Isaiah 55.1-9; Psalm 63.1-8; 1 Corinthians 10.1-13; **Luke 13.1-9**

27th March Joshua 5.9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5.16-21; **Luke 15.1-3, 11b-32**

FOREWORD - LENT

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday which is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Shrove Tuesday gets its name from the ritual of shricing that Christians used to undergo in the past. In shricing, a person confesses their sins and receives absolution for them ready for the start of Lent. They would also be able to use up food items such as butter, eggs and milk, in preparation for giving up these items during the forthcoming period of fasting.

Lent is one of the most important times of year for Christians around the world. It is regarded as a time of solemn observance and preparation for the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are the main elements. We seek God's forgiveness, accept his love and mercy and repent or turn from our sins.

Some people pledge to give up a particular food stuff such as chocolate or wine or disengage from something such as using social media. Others may decide to offer their time to a good cause by volunteering. It is a test of self-discipline. It is to represent the sacrifice of Jesus when he went into the desert for 40 days to pray and fast and where he was tempted by Satan.

This year Lent officially begins on Wednesday 2nd March. Plans are in place for us to be able to take part in a Lent group which will be held via Zoom over a number of weeks. I personally find groups such as this invaluable and an interesting way of exploring a topic or text, listening to other people's opinions and sometimes leading me to view something differently or in an unexpected way. Although Lent is a time for us to examine our sinful nature it is also an opportunity to contemplate the fact that Jesus died for each and every one of us. Lent is a time of rediscovery and self-examination, a time for new life and

spiritual renewal. It is not all sadness and despair, it points us to the hope of the Resurrection.

So maybe as we toss our own pancakes this year or try and decide what to give up for Lent we should consider the words of Catherine Doherty, a devout Catholic and a pioneer of social justice -
“Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves..... What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment’s hesitation.”

We thank God for his steadfast love and forgiveness and look to the joy of Easter which is only just around the corner.

Julia Ensor

GEORGE’S CHRISTENING

Our second son George Stanley Thomas Mills will be christened on Sunday 20th March, as part of the Sunday service. We would love to see as many people there as possible.

Thank you,

Stuart & Sam Mills

MARCH 2022 DIARY DATES

- Thursday 3rd** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall
- Thursday 3rd** - Singing for Pleasure - 1:30pm in the Hall
- Friday 4th** - World Day of Prayer activities – 10am to 2:30pm with prayers led from the front at 12pm
- Saturday 5th** - Saturday Café – 9am
- Sunday 6th** - Sunday Worship with communion led by Ian Carnell. First Sunday in Lent. Retiring offertory for UNICEF – 10am
- Monday 7th** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am
- Monday 7th** – Job Club – 10:30am
- Tuesday 8th** – Lent Study Group on Zoom “Talking Jesus” – 10am
- Tuesday 8th** – Dining Out Lunch – 12:30pm
- Thursday 10th** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall
- Thursday 10th** - Singing for Pleasure - 1:30pm in the Hall
- Saturday 12th** - Saturday Café – 9am
- Sunday 13th** – Sunday Worship led by Gordon Justham - 10am
- Monday 14th** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am
- Monday 14th** – Job Club – 10:30am
- Tuesday 15th** – Lent Study Group on Zoom “Talking Jesus” – 10am
- Thursday 17th** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall
- Thursday 17th** - Singing for Pleasure - 1:30pm in the Hall
- Saturday 19th** - Saturday Café – 9am
- Sunday 20th** – Sunday Worship led by Alan Cotgreave with the baptism of George Mills conducted by Steve Faber – 10am
- Monday 21st** – Moments Dementia Group – 10am
- Monday 21st** – Job Club – 10:30am
- Monday 21st** – Elders Meeting – 12:15pm
- Tuesday 22nd** – Lent Study Group on Zoom “Talking Jesus” – 10am
- Thursday 24th** – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall
- Thursday 24th** - Singing for Pleasure - 1:30pm in the Hall
- Saturday 26th** - Saturday Café – 9am
- Sunday 27th** – Sunday Worship led by Linda Faber. Mothering Sunday - 10am

Monday 28th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 28th – Job Club – 10:30am

Tuesday 29th – Lent Study Group on Zoom “Talking Jesus” – 10am

Thursday 31st – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 31st - Singing for Pleasure - 1:30pm in the Hall

PHOTOCOPIER

We have had an all-singing and all-dancing photocopier under contract for a number of years and the contract is about to come to an end. The Elders have decided that we should move into the future with a less expensive option as our church budget has been running at a large deficit for some years.

We are going to buy two printers which between them will be able to do pretty much everything that we are able to do at the moment. They are not photocopiers though, and it will be quicker to print from a computer than to scan and print from paper, so, for some things, we will have to operate differently. And other things will be slower than at present. Whilst this is not the same, and perhaps not quite so convenient, we will be saving hundreds of pounds per year from next year.

We will have the new ability to scan paper documents into a computer that we cannot do at the moment, and have sometimes needed. Please be patient as we get the new equipment installed and become familiar with it. If you need to copy something, please allow extra time than at present.

Linda Faber

DINING OUT LUNCH

Come and enjoy a leisurely lunch and a chat in our café style restaurant

on

8th MARCH AT 12.30 pm

£3.50

ALL ARE WELCOME

MENU

TUNA FISH PASTA

.....

TRIFLE

.....

TEA OR COFFEE



Please book by contacting Linda at 0121 709 5505 or email solihullurc@gmail.com

By Thursday 3rd March



AN APPEAL

Dear Supporters of EducAid Africa,

The epidemic has meant that school year dates have become rather distorted and we understand that there will be new pupils needing to be sponsored for a secondary school in April 2022. If you are willing and able to sponsor a pupil, know someone else who would be happy to do so or be willing to co-sponsor a pupil (halving the contributions please could you let me know. Pupils apply to our representatives in Mombasa and they choose according to ability and need.

The current cost of sponsoring a school pupil is £38 a month or £450 a year or £1800 for the 4-year period.

Apparently, things are beginning to get back to normal in Kenya and their need is as urgent as ever to receive secondary education and change their lives so much for the better.

Thank you all for your support and encouragement – it is certainly much valued.

Every blessing to you and your families,

Ian D. Carnell MBE
Chairman of the Trustees
EducAid Africa
info@educaid-africa.org

TOTS AND TALES

Tots and Tales our toddler group meets every Thursday morning and is a small group of grandparents, parents, carers and small children. We began again in late spring having stopped over the lock-down period, along with everything else. It takes time to build up a new group but we are delighted to be growing.

To that end we have needed to purchase some more mats so we can accommodate everyone on the floor in a suitable manner. If you would like to make a donation to the church to help support activities like Tots and Tales and to buy new equipment, please speak to me.

SOLIHULL LINK

Solihull Link has been going for a month now, being run by Solihull Integrated Addiction Service from our café. We have begun the work needed to be able to put in a washing machine for them by taking out the urinals in the men's loos up the stairs. (Thanks to Barrie and a volunteer called Dick.) Next the Electrician needs to put in some sockets to plug in the appliances.

Solihull Link will take some months to become established and known but we are delighted that already in the first few weeks of operation they have been successful in being able to prevent someone from getting evicted from their home and becoming homeless. They and have also secured further benefits for this person, to which they were entitled, but didn't know so hopefully that person is on a more secure footing for the future.

Linda Faber

HARVEST FESTIVAL DONATIONS

I found Linda's information on the food bank and list of suggested harvest festival donations really helpful. It brought to mind of being on receiving end of the harvest festival gifts.

I helped manage a local authority, old people's residential home. My daughter's school donated some of their harvest festival collection to the home. There were some wealthy parents.

I have to say there were some pretty exotic things that arrived in the donation, it was obvious the parent had raided the kitchen that morning for something/anything to give, it was usually the type of thing you get in a Christmas hamper that you just don't know what to do with.

I had some sympathy, all parents will recognise that panicky, sinking feeling when just as you are about to leave the house for school, the child informs you they have to take in an ounce of plutonium for the lesson that morning! Perhaps a little exaggeration there, but it certainly feels like they have asked the impossible.

Furthermore, I had a big dilemma, a lot of the donated food was out of date! I was really torn. After about the third year of me being at the home I plucked up courage to tell my daughter's form teacher of this, we were both embarrassed. However, it never happened again.

So, as I say, I found the list suggestions helpful. I remember being very deflated when part of my donation, that had come via the school was scoffed at by a colleague. I ask you, what's wrong with Carrot and Orange Soup? It was all I had. And yes, you can laugh.

Marian Clarke

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CENTRAL SOLIHULL – MEETING REPORT

Our last meeting was held via zoom on 9th February.

Covid has continued to affect many events that were planned. One of the events that regrettably had to be cancelled was the service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity due to take place on 23rd January, 2022. Encouragingly, most churches reported that they are now beginning to get back to a more regular timetable of services and inter-church activities.

World Day of Prayer – Friday 4th March, 2022 at Solihull URC

This replaces what was previously held under the umbrella of the Women's World Day of Prayer. This year it is being run by Linda Faber – see flier. Everyone is very welcome.

Solihull Town Centre Chaplaincy

Did you know that Solihull has a Town Centre Retail Chaplaincy team who visit shops in Solihull?

There is an opportunity to sign up for a training course beginning Thursday 3rd March 2022. If you would like to know more about this role and what it involves to join the current team, please contact Beryl Moppett.

Lent

Most churches are organising their own inter-church events. However, one of the members of Solihull Methodist Church is hoping to organise a series of prayer walks throughout Lent which are intended to take place at varying times and on different days to allow more people to be able to participate. As final details are too late for this newsletter, once more information becomes available, it will be advertised via the Sunday morning service sheets.

Walk of Witness

This will take place on Good Friday, 15th April, 2022 starting at 11.00am. People are asked to gather outside St. Augustine's Church. As usual, it will end with refreshments at the Oliver Bird Hall.

Refugees

There are currently around 180 refugees being accommodated in the Ramada Hotel in Solihull. Most are single males but there are also some families with children. The Council are trying to arrange some much-needed activities and the first event took place at Shirley Methodist Church last week.

St. Alphege are hoping to organise a weekly or fortnightly games session in the Oliver Bird Hall most likely on a Friday and will be looking for volunteers to help with refreshments and facilitate simple games such as snakes and ladders, giant jenga or jigsaws. Further details to follow.

The Generations' Project

Contact within care homes has been extremely limited throughout the pandemic. However, Solihull Methodist church recently held a service at Fountains Care Home, the new home on the site of Shirley Aquatics. They are also investigating the possibility of a befriending scheme working in association with a charity called Linking Lives UK and have a representative from this organisation coming to talk to their congregation in April. More information to follow.

Prayer lunches

The proposed dates for prayer lunches held at Solihull URC are as follows.

Weds 4th May

Weds 6th July

(There will be no meeting in March because the World Day of Prayer is taking place and no meeting in April because of Easter events.)

These lunches start at 12.30 pm and there is an open invitation to anyone who would like to attend. Drinks are provided but you can bring your own lunch if you would like to.

Julia Ensor

ECO CHURCH

Did you know that there are such things as solar powered rubbish bins? Brueton Park in central Solihull has several. The idea is that the bin is able to squash down the rubbish in it in much the same way that a dustbin lorry crushes its load. This way the bin has a larger capacity and so doesn't need emptying as often. This means that the trucks that go round emptying them aren't needed so often and so there is an environmental saving when there is less fuel being consumed. But they are even cleverer than that. They can signal how full they are to the office so that no lorry is sent out at all if it is not full yet. And this technology can also help the collectors to plan the most economical route between full bins to reduce driving around unnecessarily. How great is that? Perhaps we can learn a lesson for our bins at home too. Squash our rubbish so we need to use fewer single-use black bin bags and make sure they are full before putting them out to the wheelie bin. Better still, put our rubbish in bags or containers that have been used for something else first.



Linda Faber

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION IS A GLOBAL REALITY

At least 340 million Christians around the world experience systematic discrimination, unfair treatment and persecution. That means 1 in 8 Christians are affected by 'extreme', 'very high' or 'high' levels of persecution in 74 countries.

Open Doors assembles a list of the top 50 where there is the most extreme persecution and asks us to pray for them.

This month: Yemen

Christians in Yemen usually keep their faith secret; if they are discovered they could face the death penalty. Leaving Islam is forbidden, and all Yemenis are considered Muslims by the state. Islamic militant groups threaten Christians from a Muslim background with death, and tribes may kill or banish anybody converting to Christianity.

The civil war and pandemic are impacting all citizens, but Christians are particularly vulnerable as relief aid is mostly distributed through local Islamic leaders and mosques. They often discriminate against anyone not considered a devout Muslim.

Pray

- That secret believers will have wisdom and discernment as they support one another.
- For those taking great risks to provide seekers and new believers with discipleship support.
- That peace will return to Yemen.

Linda Faber



World Day of Prayer 2022

4th March

International material prepared by England, Wales & Northern Ireland

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CENTRAL SOLIHULL

ask you to please

join people around the world in prayer

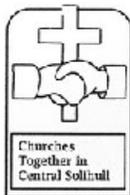
on Friday 4th March

at Solihull United Reformed Church.

Drop in between 10am—2.30pm

Parking off Union Road B91 3DH

**Informal individual prayer informed by
material presented in multiple prayer
stations.**



A very short service of led prayers
will be held at 12 noon to draw
together the themes of the day.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

World Day of Prayer activities this year, in Central Solihull, are going to be a bit different. In the past there has been a service which has been put together by a different country each time and organised and led locally. There was no one willing to organise the service this year and so we are going to offer prayer activities instead to make it more a 'day of prayer'.

Our church will be open for all Christians in the town to drop in at any time from 10am-2.30pm to offer prayers for our world. There will be 8 prayer stations with ideas of different things to pray for, so you should allow at least 30-50minutes for your visit. If you happen to be here around mid-day there will be some prayers led from the front, as well, if you wish to join in with those. Please come along and pray for our world as so many other Christians will be doing so on the same day.

Linda Faber

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES

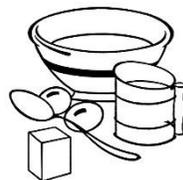
It is never too early to start collecting things together for the Christmas shoebox gifts. In each month Link To Hope suggest something that we can get so that we spread the cost of our gifts. This month of March they suggest that we collect or buy craft gifts. Suggestions are: Hand made headbands, pencil and glasses cases, lavender bags, craft kits, puppets and sewing kits.



Anne Cherry

FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH

Yogurt Jelly Pie - Serves 6-8 - A great easy three ingredients dessert



175g (6oz) digestive biscuits (11-12 biscuits)
135g packet of strawberry jelly cubes or jelly of choice
340 (12oz) low fat yogurt

Preheat the oven to 220C/fan 200C gas 7. Line the bottom and sides of a 20cm diameter cake tin, I used a loose bottomed tin, with baking paper. Make sure it fits properly. Place the biscuits into a polythene bag and crush them into crumbs with a rolling pin. Take out a small handful of the crumbs and set aside (this is to decorate the pie). Pour the rest into a big mixing bowl.

In a separate bowl, prepare the jelly according to the instructions on the packet-but don't add the cold water, just the boiling water, so you'll be adding half the liquid it tells you to. Add 3-4 tsp of the concentrated jelly mixture to the biscuits to help bind them together. Tip the biscuits into the prepared tin and use a spoon to flatten them down and get rid of any gaps. Bake the biscuit base for 10 mins, set aside to cool.

Add the yoghurt to the jelly and whisk until lump free. Chill the mixture in the fridge for 1-2 hours to thicken a little. Once it's reached the consistency of thick custard pour it of the biscuit base. Place the pie in the fridge overnight to set. When you're ready to serve, sprinkle the remaining biscuit crumbs over the top of the pie, and carefully remove from the tin. Serve on its own or with a handful of fruit to match your jelly flavour.

Elaine Jones

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

VACANT

Church Secretary

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

Church Phone Number

0121 709 5505

Website

www.solihullurc.org.uk

Hall Lettings: 07925 573259

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

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

Moments

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Central Solihull

APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER

Material for the April 2022 edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 20th March please.