



SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat
Communities

March 2024 Newsletter

*"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man
his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have
compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly
pardon."*

Isaiah 55:7



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

Ian Carnell – Elder (Chair of the Elders, Worship & Prayer)

Gordon Laurie - Church Secretary & Elder

Liz Amos - Treasurer

Linda Faber - Mission Enabler & Lettings Administration

Howard Cotes – Elder

Bev Hands – Elder (Children's work)

Barrie Jones - Elder (Property, Health & Safety)

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

Areas of special responsibility are listed in brackets.

MARCH 2024 DIARY DATES

Friday 1st – World Day of Prayer - 10am to 2:30pm

Saturday 2nd - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 3rd – Sunday Worship and Communion led by Ian Carnell – 10am

Monday 4th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 4th – Job Club – 10:30am

Wednesday 6th – English Conversation Café - 10am

Thursday 7th – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 7th - Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

Saturday 9th - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 10th – Mothering Sunday Worship led by Linda Faber – 10am

Monday 11th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 11th – Job Club – 10:30am

Tuesday 12th – Dining Out Lunch – 12:30pm

Thursday 14th - Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

Saturday 16th - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 17th – 10th Anniversary of Solihull URC Special Sunday Worship led by Rev Mark Fisher – 10am

Monday 18th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 18th – Job Club – 10:30am

Wednesday 20th – English Conversation Café - 10am

Thursday 21st - Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 21st - Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Meeting Room

Saturday 23rd - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 24th – Palm Sunday Worship led by Linda Faber – 10am

Monday 25th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 25th – Job Club – 10:30am

Thursday 28th – Maundy Thursday Supper and Communion led by Ian Carnell – 7pm

Sunday 31st – Easter Sunday Worship and Communion led by Rev Steve Faber – 10am

ROTAS

Please sign the rotas at the back of church if you can serve in any of the following roles. Thank you to those who have volunteered:

Sunday Welcome (2 people needed each week)

Serving Coffee (2 people needed each week)

Providing flowers for the Communion Table

Please consider if you can learn how to serve in any of these ways for the first time. If you have no previous experience in serving in any of these ways, we would be more than happy to help you.



SYNOD REP

We still do not have a Synod Representative. The purpose of the role is to keep us in touch with what is happening in the wider church, help us to access resources and personnel that we could make use of, and to attend the Synod meetings only a couple of times a year.

Could you take on this role to keep us in touch with the wider church? Please speak to Gordon Laurie if you are interested in finding out more.

Linda Faber

SATURDAY CAFÉ URGENT REQUEST

We have had an excellent response for volunteers over the last seven years, and I would like to thank them for their support. However unfortunately we are in need of more help, especially if anyone is on holiday or is unable to cover. We usually work in pairs and training will be given.

We have found it very rewarding, enabling us to have conversations and build relationships with those who use the café. The café is open every Saturday during term time from 9.00am -11.30. If you are able to come and join us and help to keep the café open please contact me and I will talk to you about the details. Many thanks.

Elaine Jones

SERVICES IN MARCH

Sunday 17th March: Solihull URC 10th anniversary celebrations. You should have received an invitation to attend, please make sure you RSVP if you would like to attend the lunch.

Thursday 28th March 7pm: Maundy Thursday supper and communion in the café. Please sign the sheet in church if you would like to attend so we have numbers for catering.

SOLIHULL JOB ADVICE GROUP

Solihull Job Advice Group meets every Monday morning at Solihull United Reformed Church from 10.30am until 12.30pm. We are an informal, friendly group and offer help on all aspects of job seeking. Do join us for a free coffee, a chat and help with your job application.

Trixie Harman

THIS NEWSLETTER

The decision has been made for the monthly newsletter to only be produced every two months. The next edition will be April/May. Please make sure you plan far enough ahead and get your information in on time for events.

(Starting April they will be grouped as follows: Dec/Jan; Feb/March; April/May; June/July; Aug/Sept; Oct/Nov; Dec/Jan)

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING?

If yes, why not come along and join our friendly SINGING FOR PLEASURE group.

We sing a mixture of popular, folk, classical and sacred songs. We meet in the church cafe on Thursday afternoons at 2pm. Usually we sing for about an hour and then we have refreshments and a chat. Most of all we have fun while making music.



It only costs £2.50 which includes the music. Why not try it. No audition needed. Free taster session. Please see me for more details.

NB Singing for Pleasure will not be meeting Thursday 28 March and Thursday 3 April.

Janet Ince

DINING OUT LUNCH

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

Tuesday 12th March at 12.30 pm

£4.00

ALL ARE WELCOME

MENU

Lasagne

Seasonal vegetables



.....
Bread and Butter Pudding

.....

Tea or Coffee



Please book by contacting Elaine 0121 744 6067 or email
vej46@yahoo.co.uk

By Thursday 7th March 2024

THE LEPROSY MISSION – COFFEE MORNING

Please join me for a coffee morning to raise funds for this worthy cause on:

Friday 12th April

From 10.30 – 12.30

At 19 Raddington Drive, Olton, B92 7DU

Homemade cakes and raffle prizes gratefully received.

Anne Cherry

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The next World Day of Prayer is on Friday 1st March. Come and pray in the church at any time of the morning, or early afternoon, (10am-2.30pm) using prayer stations to guide individual prayer. Additionally, there will be included 20 minutes of prayers led from the front, at 12 noon, for those who would like some community guided prayers.

The World Day of Prayer theme this year is provided by the women of Palestine focusing on “I beg you, bear with one another with love” from Ephesians ch 4 v1-7.

Do you know people who have got out of the habit of going to church who used to? This might be perfect for them. They don't have to engage with formal church but it is an opportunity to come into a building again and reawaken their faith and engage with God in a way that is bigger than their internal conversation with God.

Linda Faber

SHINE YOUTH - AFTERNOON TEA

Shine Youth are holding an afternoon tea on Sunday 21st April.



The event is from 2 - 5pm and every £5 for coffee / tea and cake (and any other optional donations) will be match-funded.

Shine Youth is a Christian charity in Solihull with whom volunteers from many of the local churches provide listening and mentoring support to 11 - 18 year olds experiencing mental health and wellbeing difficulties like anxiety and bereavement. They are fundraising to continue and to expand this work as it is in high demand in schools and at their Youth Wellbeing Cafe in Shirley. Delicious homemade cakes will be enjoyed in the beautiful Wren Hall on the Warwick Road not far from Knowle. Plenty of free parking is available.

Many thanks,

Cheryl Hawkins
Shine Youth CEO

CONTACT BOUNDARIES

Dear Church,

I love you all dearly and I don't like to turn you away when you want something from me. As a consequence there has built a practice over the years that people phone, text and email at all times. I like to help. However, I chose to work a limited number of hours on purpose. I have a large family, most of whom have special needs, and life is very full at home all the time, and quite often stressful because of the special needs. I need a better distinction between home and work life. It is a difficult boundary to draw. We in the church are also family and I like to help.

I work 25 hours per week only, Monday to Thursday 8.30am-2.45pm. At the time of writing it is the end of the school half term holiday and I am not working this week. Yet, I have had between 5 and 7 phone calls or texts every day (plus emails), some of which have been stressful, and I have worked up to 6 hours each day on church business. I know this practice is self-inflicted—I like to help—but I am in a position where this has built up to such an extent that I need to speak up and for work to be at work, and not during family/home time. Like all of you who give volunteer hours to the church, so do I, and I don't begrudge doing church things in 'my own time', but there needs to be a boundary of me choosing to give volunteer hours when I have the capacity to do so rather than having to drop everything and respond to a call from someone.

I would like to ask you to please be more mindful of my stated availability as I endeavour to get a better balance between church and family/home time.

Linda Faber

COACH TRIPPERS UNITED

At last I am able to give you the list of our coach trips this year:

Thursday 18th April - The late Peter Scotts Wetland Centre at Slimbridge



Thursday 16th May - Powis Castle and Gardens. N.T.

Thursday 13th June - Rutland Water Cruise with coffee and biscuits and Melton Mowbray

Thursday 18th July - The late Queen's Savill Garden at Windsor

Thursday 15th August - Trentham Gardens

Thursday 19th September - Belvoir Castle

Thursday 17th October - Batsford Arboretum and Moreton-in-Marsh

As usual the trips will leave West Warwick Sports Club at 8.30 and the cost (£25) will include coach, driver tip and car parking with all entrance fees extra. Booking for the first trip starts on March 1st by email please. davidargall185@btinternet.com

David Argall

FIRE

Following the fire in the church office we are still unable to operate as normal or as we would wish. This will continue for some time going forward. Please be patient and we will do our best to keep everyone informed of what is going on. To aid this we need extra attention, and help, to make sure everyone is aware of notices —especially as we are unable to print information to give to those who do not receive email.

As well as putting things right—we are still waiting for the insurance company to inform us that they will cover the losses—we have also had a Fire Audit by the Fire Brigade (who are interested in the preservation of life) and an independent Fire Risk Assessment (which will help identify risks and weaknesses in our buildings). Both of these assessments require us to make changes to our building and practices. Some of these are mandatory minimum standards but we also aim to reach the standard of best practice.

We are very relived that the fire was not large and most especially that no one was injured or killed. We would like to be sure that, should a fire ever occur again, that we have done everything possible to ensure a similar good outcome. As an interim measure before a fire alarm system is fitted, there are 4 turn-by-hand fire bells installed (Foyer/Nattery; church; Youth Room; John Palmer Hall Foyer). Please be familiar with where these are, as well as where all of the fire extinguishers are, and of course all of the fire exits from the building. Every room has a notice detailing fire procedures. Please take the time to look at these periodically.

Dealing with the fire and the following inspections has been extremely stressful and we thank you all for your support, help and prayers so far.

Linda Faber

NOMINATIONS FOR LOCAL CHURCH CHARITY

Birmingham Outreach Angels

Started by three women, who wanted to do something to help the increasing number of homeless people in the centre of Birmingham. They decided that more outreach was needed and headed into the city centre on Tuesday nights, using their own money to buy food and distribute it, to those who need it. They now see 100 or more people each week, with many volunteers and now offer hot meals and a friendly face and help where applicable. They go to the same three places each week, which are busy areas for rough sleepers. It is run entirely on donations.

Shine Youth

I would like us to support the local charity Shine Youth. It is a community charity run by Christians who offer support to young people in the areas of mental health/wellbeing, bereavement and counselling. My two youngest children attend one of their weekly groups and in the last year one has had support in the school setting where Shine Youth ran a course for a group the teachers identified as being in difficulty. Being autistic, overwhelming anxiety is a constant challenge for my children and this group is helping them develop coping strategies for use in their school, public and private lives.

St Basil's

Did you know we house over 600+ young people every single night across our 40+ supported accommodation schemes in Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Solihull, Redditch, Kidderminster, Walsall, Sandwell and Leamington Spa? St Basils works with young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, to enable them to find and keep a home, grow their confidence, develop their skills, increase opportunities and prevent homelessness.

NOMINATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL CHURCH CHARITY

Smile Train

Smile Train is a nonprofit organization and charity providing corrective surgery for children with cleft lips and palates. Headquarters in New York City was founded in 1999, and provides free corrective cleft surgery in 87 countries, training local doctors and providing hospital funding for the procedures.

Smile Train was created in 1998 by Brian Mullaney and Charles Wang. They felt the most efficient way to provide cleft surgery was to train and support local doctors rather than to fly in Western doctors to the poor, developing countries. Local doctors would also be able to provide all round care rather than the limited engagements of the mission-based model.

The Leprosy Mission

I would like to propose The Leprosy Mission as our overseas charity for 2024/25. Those who heard Guy Wilcock speak at our Service last October will be aware of the marvellous work done by the Mission and the medical advances that are being made. There are also structural issues with their hospitals where funding is required to make premises functional again.

Today, stigma still surrounds this debilitating disease and countless individuals are left isolated and shunned. One of the main reasons for proposing the Mission is that a seemingly small contribution on our part can make a huge difference today. For example, a gift of £36 can provide a tonne of bricks to help restore Muzaffarpur Hospital Outpatient Department.

I commend this Charity to you.



FUNDRAISING APPEAL

I'm abseiling down Millennium Point to raise money for NICE!

For those who aren't aware, NICE (National Institute of Conductive Education) are a charity based in Moseley providing a range of flexible services, such as physical therapy, to adults and children with movement disorders. Harry, our eldest, has attended services at NICE since 2020, and has really benefited from their support and guidance.

NICE are organising the event on Saturday 13th April, and I'm abseiling to help support the charity with their work. If you would like to make a donation towards their work, please let me know either in-person, or email me at samjensor@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Sam Mills

NEWS OF AN OLTON FRIEND

Sheila Durant is now in a care home near her daughter Sue's workplace. It is her birthday on 11th March so if you would like to send her a greeting this is her address-

Fernlea Care Home, 20 Torkington Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport, SK7 4RQ

She is settling down nicely there.

Gweno

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

VACANT

Church Secretary

Mr. Gordon Laurie – 07500 902593 – gordonjlaurie@gmail.com

Church Phone Number

0121 709 5505

Website

www.solihullurc.org.uk

Hall Lettings: 0121 709 5505

Safeguarding: Melanie Tillman - 07511 084840

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

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

Zoom Details

Meeting ID: 865 7763 7936

Passcode: 986653

APRIL/MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Material for the April/May 2024 edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 24th March please.