



# **SOLIHULL**

## **UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat  
Communities

### **November 2020 Newsletter**

*Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him  
day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne  
will dwell among them.*

***Revelation 7:15***



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

The Worship leaders for November are:

1 November: Mrs Margaret Marshall: Remember your Creator

8 November: Mr Ian Carnell (Remembrance Sunday and Communion):  
Remember the example of those who have served  
before us

15 November: Mr Gordon Justham: Remember there is a cost to  
commitment

22 November: Mr Ian Carnell: Remember the world church (Church  
Meeting after worship)

29 November: Mrs Linda Faber: Remember the poor (1st Sunday of  
Advent and Toy Service)

## THE LECTIONARY

Readings for Sundays in November 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 in any event. The readings in bold are  
the gospel readings for the day. **Gordon Justham**

**1 November** Matthew 23.1-12; Micah 3.5-12; Psalm 43; 1  
Thessalonians 2.9-13;

**8 November** Matthew 25.1-13; Amos 5.18-24; Psalm 70; 1  
Thessalonians 4.13-18;

**15 November** Matthew 25.14-30; Zephaniah 1.7 &12-18; Psalm 90.1-  
8,(9-11),12;

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11;

**22 November** Matthew 25.31-46; Ezekiel 34.11-16,20-24; Psalm 95.1-  
7a; Ephesians 1.15-23;

**29 November** Mark 13.24-37; Isaiah 64.1-9; Psalm 80.1-7,17-19;  
1 Corinthians 1.3-9;

## REMEMBRANCE

My theme for November covers two very different aspects of “Remembrance”.

The dictionary definition of Remembrance is “Remembering or being remembered, memory, recollection.” Remembrance Day, or Armistice Day, on the 11th of November, has been observed by Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War to remember those of the armed forces who died in the line of duty. It is also called “Poppy Day”. Poppies, one of the only plants to grow on the barren battlefields after World War 1, came to represent the immeasurable sacrifice made by the brave soldiers and quickly became a lasting memorial to those who died in that war and later conflicts.

Remembrance Day has been observed every year since 1919 with a two-minute silence at 11am. This year the British Legion are asking the nation to “pause – mute your phone, close your laptop, switch off the telly and head to your doorsteps to take part in the two-minute silence paying your respects to our Armed Forces community past and present.”

Remembrance Sunday is held in the UK on the second Sunday in November. It commemorates the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian service men and women in the two world wars and later conflicts. This year the annual Remembrance Sunday march past the cenotaph will not take place, instead a Government-led service at the Cenotaph will go ahead as a closed ceremony. Local Remembrance events are permitted with a limited gathering and must comply with local restrictions in place at the time. My second aspect of Remembrance is remembering things that have happened in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Who cannot remember the services and celebrations marking the 75th Anniversaries of the end of the Second World War in Europe and in Japan but also etched into our minds are the horrific scenes shown of the battlefields?

Who cannot remember Captain Tom as he walked 100 times up and down his garden to raise money for the NHS. His effort encouraged others of all ages to undertake challenges to also raise money for charities. We stood outside our houses and clapped for the NHS and all the other key workers who have kept going for the benefit of us all.

I remember the hours each week talking on the phone; the WhatsApp conversations; and members of the Creative Stitch Group, of which I am a member, pasting photos of their amazing work. I remember the first hugs from my grandchildren, Madison and Hollie; the bird song which accompanied the part of Steve and Linda's service held in their garden. I remember people moving out of the way when out walking and the thanks and smiles for doing so. There were many more families out walking or cycling together. I have had time to look around at the world around me and I am amazed at what I've seen.

BUT I know that millions of people in the UK and all around the world who will have had very many different memories. Going onto Reuters News Website, I saw photo after photo along with headlines of the terrible things happening all over the world. It is truly heart breaking. Whilst giving thanks to God for the good things that have happened, we MUST remember in our prayers those friends and strangers all over the world who have suffered tremendously in so many different ways so far in 2020.

Every good wish to you all – keep well, keep safe, keep remembering!  
**Maureen Butler**

## **THANK YOU**

It was so good that we could finally return to church a few weeks ago after such a long time away, and I have valued this opportunity. But I'm sure we are all aware that this was not possible without a great deal of planning and hard work understanding the rules and putting them into practice to enable this to happen as safely as possible.

So a big thank you to all those involved in this ongoing task, it is very much appreciated.

**Sylvia Lidsey**

## **OUR RETURN TO CHURCH**

Since we have returned to worshipping in person at church about 50 people have attended worship at one time or other out of the 80 or so that we have on the pastoral care list. We seem to have settled into a pattern where there are usually about 30-35 at worship on any given Sunday. There is a little room to easily seat a few more under the covid-19 rules we have to adhere to, and then after that we would need to start putting out some chairs at the back, which is also easy but not needed yet. I know those who have been attending have really enjoyed worshipping together and we remain mindful of those who are unable to join us for all sorts of reasons. The form of worship is different but we continue to evolve new ideas, and new things to do, to try to compensate for not being allowed to sing together.

**Linda Faber**

## **JOINING SUNDAY WORSHIP FROM HOME**

We are still considering the most appropriate way of recording Sunday worship to allow others to see or hear what is going on in church when they cannot attend. No one has requested the facility after my asking for feedback last month but we understand from other churches, who do such things, that they have picked up new people from such a project, and so we are continuing to look at what we might be able to manage to do. **Linda Faber**

## **WHAT IS OUR FRUITFULNESS AT THE CURRENT TIME?**

I included an article last month about fruitfulness during this covid-19 era and challenged you to think about a set of questions. Another month has gone by so it would be a good time to take a look at them again. Did you write notes last month? Get them out and take a look back.

- **What has happened since I last looked at these questions? - generally.**

What can be celebrated? What has been difficult? What has been a surprise? What is the Spirit saying in all this?

- **What Big Hairy Audacious Goals are we currently working on?**
- **When we last looked forward, what did we imagine that fruitfulness would be like in the coming months? Look at specific projects or areas of work.**

What has happened? What have we done since then? What else has happened? Have things turned out the way we prayerfully hoped? What is the Spirit teaching us?

- **What should we do next in the light of our experiences?**

Carry on? Change direction? Curtail something? Learn from the negatives as well as the positives.

- **What are the specific next steps?**

- **What will fruitfulness look like in 2-3 months' time?**

What could happen? As we look forward, what are the possibilities? What are we anxious about? What are we hopeful about? Where might the Spirit be leading us?

I would love to hear your thoughts if you have anything to share from your personal experiences or to contribute to our church plans and ideas. [linda@faberfamily.org.uk](mailto:linda@faberfamily.org.uk) or [solihullurc@gmail.com](mailto:solihullurc@gmail.com) or church phone 07925 573259 or letter, or arrange an appropriate meeting with me.

**Linda Faber**

## **CONGREGATION NEWS**

Many congratulations to Linda and Steve on becoming grandparents to Jessica, Beth and John's daughter and to Christine, Linda's mum, on becoming a great grandmother. We wish them well.

We send belated good wishes to Bridget who celebrated a special birthday on 3rd October.

Gerry Candy has a very special birthday on Friday, the 6th of November. We all send our love and best wishes to her and hope that she will have a good day.

## **CHURCH AT CHRISTMAS**

This year things will be very different for all of us at Christmas. We would however like to make the church welcoming for all of us and especially for any visitors who may be able to join us.

If you would like to help to decorate the church, could you let me know and we can arrange a time for us to meet. Thank you.

**Trixie Harman 01675 442 859**

## **MUSIC IN OUR CHURCH SERVICES**

We are all missing singing hymns in our services. So if you play an instrument or would like to sing solo or in a small group in our service, socially distanced of course, please contact me. Looking forward to hearing from you.

**Janet Ince**



## CHURCH MEETING

At our recent Church Meeting the redevelopment of the buildings was raised.

A feasibility study had been prepared by architect Colin Wilcox (who had handled the redevelopment of Lillington URC). Our biggest issue is the number of different levels in our current building (at least 13) which do not make it user friendly from an accessibility point of view. In addition to the number of levels the topography of the land is awkward in that it slopes downward from Union Road and downward towards the Warwick Road.

The architect's basic recommendation was that the best way forward is to demolish and rebuild. The Elders support this view. However, there are options as to how this should be achieved given our current needs and the available budget. At the Church Meeting it was proposed and accepted that we create a "Buildings Group" to review the work that has been undertaken to date and to take the matter forward. Some of the work that has been undertaken to date is on display at the rear of the church.

We are holding a further Church Meeting after worship on 22 November at which one of the agenda items will be to confirm the "Buildings Group". If you feel you have any skills that would be appropriate to a "buildings project" and you would like to be a part of this small group then please contact the Church Secretary - Gordon Justham – on 01564776229 or via email at [gordonjustham@talktalk.net](mailto:gordonjustham@talktalk.net).

**Gordon Justham**

## **INTERNATIONAL BIBLE READING ASSOCIATION**

Marian Batten always ordered "Fresh from the Word" Bible reading material for us from the IBRA. Sadly Marian is no longer with us but if you would like to continue using this next year or begin to use it, I can order it for you.

Next year's copy should cost £9. I have information regarding the list of Bible readings and themes for next year if you would like to see them. Please order as soon as possible.

**Irene Bound**

### **HOLY HUMOUR**

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!"

His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?"

The son replied, "I do know!"

"Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?"

"That's easy, Daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"

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There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country.

"Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

"Only the Ten Commandments." answered the lady.

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Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world.

There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, its morning."

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A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter.

Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a parking ticket from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.

**Ian Carnell**

### **HARVEST GIFTS**

Our Harvest Service was held on Sunday 27 September. Gifts from this service went to support the food bank which is operated from the Renewal Church on Lode Lane.

On the day there were many generous donations of non-perishable food items, toiletries and money. The monetary gifts alone amounted to £100.

Gordon and I delivered these items to Renewal Church who were very grateful for everything. They asked us to pass on their thanks for all of the gifts which will be used to help the hungry and less fortunate in Solihull. Thank you all for your generosity.

**Jackie Justham**

### **GIFT SERVICE**

Our gift service is on the 29th November. We are asking for unwrapped gifts of good toys for children and gifts suitable for mothers. These gifts are going to the Solihull Women's Refuge where they were very much appreciated last year.

**Elaine Jones**

## **SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS – 20 DECEMBER, 10AM**

As we are still likely to be under COVID-19 rules in December, it will be improbable that we will be able to enjoy a typical service! Therefore, we would like to organise a very different format whereby we invite the congregation – whether present in church or at home – to participate in some form.

We are asking for you to send us one or more of the following:

- Prayers for Christmas
- Your favourite carol and why it is so special to you.
- Short memories of services held over the Christmas period in other years
- Your favourite Christmas poem and why
- A seasonal poem written by you
- Your favourite Christmas painting or drawing
- A seasonal painting or drawing done by you
- Any other material that is relevant to the story of the Birth of Jesus

If we were overwhelmed with such material, we are suggesting the production of a booklet containing your contributions – even if they were not used during the service.

Let us show that Solihull URC is well and truly alive and active - celebrating Christmas 2020.

Contributions can be given to Janet or me at church or sent to me by post at 232 Warwick Road, Solihull B92 7AE or by e-mail to Janet Ince at [artist4you@btinternet.com](mailto:artist4you@btinternet.com)

Please would you send any material by 29 November at the latest. I look forward to your contributions!

**Maureen Butler**

## **SOLIHULL CHURCHES TOGETHER**

Unfortunately all the events planned for this year to celebrate 800 years of Christianity in Solihull were cancelled and it is very difficult to plan for the future due to ever-changing restrictions.

There are a couple of things that we hope will take place:

- The Crib will be placed in Mell Square in December but there will be no Service of Blessing this year.
- The service for Christian Unity is planned for Sunday evening 24th January. Venue, time and booking details to follow.

**Elaine Jones**

## **ADVENT BOOKLET**

Each year, recently, I have produced a booklet of readings and thoughts to look at each day through advent. There has been a different theme each year and some years I have connected the daily readings to the Sunday service Bible readings and themes. I am going to do that this year. We are going to be looking at some of the amazing people (good and bad) that Jesus had in his family genealogy. Each one of them played their part to help bring forth, and fulfil, the promises of God to those who believe. On Sundays we are going to be looking at a slightly different angle; focussing on what some of those people received from God. Please look out for the booklets which I plan to be available from mid-November ready to begin on Advent Sunday (29<sup>th</sup> November)

**Linda Faber**

## **SOCIALISING AT CHURCH**

We have missed being able to see each other through the long months of lockdown, but now that the church has re-opened for worship we must continue to exercise considerable restraint in how we socialise after worship.

It is a requirement that after worship we move outside as quickly as is safely possible.

Once outside, we must still keep 2 metres apart even whilst enjoying conversation. Please avoid standing for a chat where others will need to walk past you within 2 metres.

We must not meet in groups larger than 6 indoors or outdoors, and we should not move from group to group – the Government are asking us to “limit how many different people you see socially over a short period of time.” Not only will you be liable for a fine (fixed penalty notice) if you breach the “Rule of Six”, you will be giving a very bad witness to anyone who walks past the church and sees a large group of people standing outside talking.

Please leave the church premises quickly after worship, and keep in touch with your friends through the week by telephone or online. We’ve all been disturbed by the predictions of cases doubling every week or so – let us be scrupulously careful not to be responsible for adding to the numbers, or to put ourselves at unnecessary risk.

Remember that the great majority of members at Solihull are at greater risk of developing serious illness should they catch Coronavirus, because of age and health condition. By keeping our distance – physically rather than emotionally – we will be loving our neighbour as we love ourselves.

**Steve Faber**

## NEWS

I write to inform you of the death yesterday morning (Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October) of Revd Graham Spicer. Graham was diagnosed with primary liver cancer three years ago. We pray for him, his wife Rita & friends.

As well as serving the joint pastorate of Solihull & Knowle from 1984 through to 1998 Graham also served at Hardware Street, West Bromwich 1976-84; St Peter's, Bishopton 1998 - 2003; Stratford-upon-Avon 1998 - 16. He will be sadly missed.

Gordon

## KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

### **Minister**

VACANT

### **Church Secretary**

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

### **Website**

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

**Hall Lettings:** 07925 573259

**Generations Project** - enabling the Church in care homes

[www.generationssolihull.org.uk](http://www.generationssolihull.org.uk) [generationssolihull@icloud.com](mailto:generationssolihull@icloud.com)

### **Moments (currently not meeting)**

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Central Solihull

### **DECEMBER/JANUARY NEWSLETTER**

Material for the December/January edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

[stuartkmills@gmail.com](mailto:stuartkmills@gmail.com)

by Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November please.