



SOLIHULL

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Serving Central Solihull, Olton and Hobs Moat
Communities

November 2022 Newsletter

*"And though your beginning was small, your latter days will
be very great."*

Job 8:7



Faith – Hope – Love – Since 1972

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 Laurie - 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)

Ian Carnell – Elder

Howard Cotes – Elder

Liz Amos - Treasurer

Areas of special responsibility are listed in brackets.

NOVEMBER 2022 DIARY DATES

Thursday 3rd – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 3rd - Singing for Pleasure - 2pm in the Hall

Saturday 5th - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 6th – Sunday Worship led by Linda Faber, followed by Church Meeting – 10am

Monday 7th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 7th – Job Club – 10:30am

Monday 7th – Elders Meeting – 12:15pm

Tuesday 8th – Leisurely Lunch – 12:30pm

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

Thursday 10th - Singing for Pleasure - 2pm in the Hall

Saturday 12th – Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 13th – Remembrance Sunday Worship with Communion led by Ian Carnell – 10am

Monday 14th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 14th – Shout Out for the Girls – 10am

Monday 14th – Job Club – 10:30am

Wednesday 16th – Churches Together Prayer Lunch in our Café – 12:30pm

Thursday 17th – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 17th - Singing for Pleasure - 2pm in the Hall

Saturday 19th - Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 20th – Sunday Worship led by Alan Cotgreave – 10am

Monday 21st – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 21st – Job Club – 10:30am

Thursday 24th – Tots and Tales – 10am in the Hall

Thursday 24th – Singing for Pleasure – 2pm in the Hall

Saturday 26th – Saturday Café – 9am

Sunday 27th – Advent Sunday Worship, Gift Service led by Linda Faber – 10am

Monday 28th – Moments Dementia Group – 10am

Monday 28th – Job Club – 10:30am

ROTAS

Please sign the rotas at the back of church if you can serve in any of the following roles.

If you have no previous experience in serving in any of these ways, we would be more than happy to help you.

Sunday Welcome (2 people needed each week)

6th Nov	Margaret Smith	
13th Nov		
20th Nov		
27th Nov		

Serving Coffee (2 people needed each week)

6th Nov	Nigel & Pauline	Helen Motl
13th Nov	Keith Tandy	Anne Cherry
20th Nov		
27th Nov	Marynol Agnew	Melanie Tillman

Providing flowers for the Communion Table

6th Nov	
13th Nov	
20th Nov	
27th Nov	

ANNUAL TOY SERVICE

Our annual Toy Service is on 27th November, and as usual your gifts will be donated to Solihull Women's Refuge where they look after mothers and their children.

We would like to request new or in good condition toys suitable for children between the ages of 6 months to 14 years old for both girls and boys and toiletries or similar for the mothers.

Please don't wrap your gifts. With grateful thanks.

Elaine Jones

FRESH FROM THE WORD - BIBLE READING MATERIAL FOR 2023

I am now taking orders for the 2023 Bible reading material - Fresh from the word which offers a fresh approach to Bible reading - to Bible reading READ, REFLECT and GROW.

It is written to support all readers of the Bible, from new Christians to those seeking to deepen their faith and relationship with God. It brings together 50 international writers to give you new insights every day with verses, notes, prayers and action points. The writers include theologians and biblical scholars, church leaders and activists for peace from across the world, all of whom share a passion to bring the Bible into conversation with day-to-day concerns by looking at different themes and books, opening up thoughts and insights to help you think more deeply about your faith, develop a greater understanding of who you are in Christ, whose you are and His Infinite love for you. This helps you grow in your knowledge and appreciation of the Bible and carries on the 140-year-old tradition of the International Bible Reading Association (I.B.R.A.) of encouraging people around the world.

2023 themes include: Matthew's gospel, Healing divisions, Exploring the Lord's Prayer, Social Responsibilities and Love in Action, and others.

Comments from the users of Fresh from the Word say "it reminds me each morning that God is always by my side." "It challenges me to look at things in a new light, inspires me and uplifts me...", "it has strengthened my spiritual being and helped me with my Christian walk in life."

Copies of Fresh from the Word can be ordered through Irene Bound and will cost £11.70. Why not try it??

Irene Bound

DINING OUT LUNCH

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

on

8TH NOVEMBER AT 12:30 pm

£4.00

ALL ARE WELCOME

MENU

FISH

CHIPS AND PEAS

.....

STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING WITH CUSTARD

.....

TEA OR COFFEE



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

By Thursday 3rd November 2022

GOD WANTS OUR CHURCH TO GROW

Following my service with the theme “God wants our church to grow”, there is a noticeboard at the back of church with 100 Bible verses, Biblical ideas and encouragements so that we can be reminded, and encouraged, that God wants our church to grow! Except there aren't 100 yet. I have started off the list, but I would love for you to contribute so that we can all encourage each other.

Someone said to me after the service that I am eternally optimistic—but I am not. I do tend to look towards the positive, but I too need reminding, and encouraging, that what we are doing is God's idea! By looking at the Bible, and reading about Church Growth, we can all remember that decline is not inevitable. We were a growing church before the pandemic, and we are delighted to have had some new people come and join us in recent months—but none of them are new to church, or the Christian faith, so there is much to do as we live in such a needy world.

The field is white, ready for harvest. We need to be filled with God's love for the whole world and bring them in as Jesus asked us to do. There is plenty of room, so be encouraged and ready to work hard in following the call of Christ on all of our lives and then we can have a church that is growing once again.

A prayer provided by LYCIG (Leading your church into growth), which we used in the above-mentioned service, helps us to keep focussed on mission:

*God of mission,
who alone brings growth to your church,
Send Your Holy Spirit to give:
Vision to our planning,*

*Wisdom to our actions,
Joy to our worship,
And power to our witness.*

*Help Solihull United Reformed Church to:
Grow in numbers
In spiritual commitment to You,
And in service to the Solihull community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen

Linda Faber

ECO CHURCH

This month sees the Global warming summit 'COPT 27' which this year will be held at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt from 6 – 18 November 2022.

What changes have you made in the last year to help reduce the climate change problem?

Today's suggestion to help the environment is to switch to environmentally friendly cleaning products. There are some great chemical products which have had years of development to make sure they are good. You may want to keep the chemicals for stubborn cleaning but why not use environmentally friendly products as much as you can? Even reducing your chemical use by half is a help. Why not give it a go?

Linda Faber

SCAH: NOVEMBER, THE MONTH OF ACTION

In previous years SCAH has organised a flag day to help raise much needed funding. During the pandemic we were, of course, unable to have a physical flag day event so in 2021 we held a virtual flag day which was far more productive and brought in much needed additional revenue, so thank you to those who kindly donated.

SCAH relies on the fantastic support and generosity shown by you, our Christian and faith community, and as ever we are very, very grateful for that support. For 2022 we have decided to move on from the flag day concept and hold a **Month of Action** in order to help raise much needed revenue.

Our Month of Action is November.

Why do we need to raise additional funding?

In 2022, year to date, our expenditure has exceeded our income and that is of course unsustainable if allowed to continue. We need to address that. Why is this happening?

As we all know the cost of living has risen significantly in 2022. We are all seeing the effects of that in our everyday lives. For SCAH it means that the cost of each starter pack we provide has risen to new heights. For the last few years SCAH has been gradually using up its reserves to provide its services and this trend has continued in 2022.

We are also helping more families with children this year as the economic crisis creates the heightened risk of homelessness for those families who are already struggling. So that means more items per pack provided, therefore extra cost.

We are also now helping the refugees who have been placed in Solihull. In the last weeks we have helped families needing assistance who have come from the Ukraine. These people have often had to leave their worldly belongings behind and need our help.

We are therefore still adhering to the SCAH principle objective of providing help for all those in need and poverty in all its forms, not just the homeless and we are sure you will all agree that it is important for us to do so.

So how can you help? During our Month of Action for November we ask you to kindly donate to SCAH.

Please go to www.scah.org.uk, click on the 'Fundraising and Donors' page, then click on the 'CAF Donate' button and donate a minimum of £5. You will be helping enormously. As an ecumenical Christian organisation, SCAH does not judge people, it just tries to help them.

Thanks for your generosity.

SCAH

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: Saudi Arabia

Christians living in Saudi Arabia—where the legal system is based on Islamic law—risk severe opposition, even death. Many hide their faith.

The few Saudi Christians from a Muslim background face enormous pressure, especially from their families. This is most keenly felt by women, reflecting their low status; consequences can include forced marriage, sexual abuse and house-arrest. The death penalty for leaving Islam remains in force. Expatriate Christians are wary of evangelising or gathering for fellowship as this could lead to detention or deportation.

Pray

- Ask God to continue to use the internet to strengthen believers and grow the Saudi church.
- That the Lord will reveal Himself to both Christians and non-Christians in dreams and visions.
- For wisdom and protection for all Christians as they follow Jesus.

Linda Faber

BROTHER ANDREW—FOUNDER OF OPEN DOORS

Open Doors is the organisation that provides our prayer information for praying for the persecuted church. It was announced at the end of September that Brother Andrew, founder of Open Doors has died. He passed away aged 94, at his home in the Netherlands.

Many people have been deeply impacted by Brother Andrew's life and ministry. Brother Andrew keenly believed that 'if one part suffers, every part suffers with it' and devoted his life to supporting his persecuted brothers and sisters around the world. He was a loyal friend to those who suffer – and was, in turn, inspired by their courage and faith.

Brother Andrew was an inspiring example. He said, "The Bible is full of ordinary people who went to impossible places and did wondrous things simply because they decided to obey God," and he called this "the step of Yes!" May we all be just as obedient.

Brother Andrew also said, "God wants to use us to work out His purposes. What a privilege and responsibility! So let's get on our knees and pray. And may God use our prayer to change the course of history."

Pray for Brother Andrew's family and for all who mourn him, and pray that God will continue to work through Open Doors to build on his legacy.

Linda Faber

MY FIRST 100 DAYS

Following a recommendation from Elders, Church Meeting appointed me Church Secretary on 10th July this year. This was necessary due to Gordon Justham and Jackie moving back to Otley. I would stress that I have replaced Gordon as Church Secretary and not replaced him. That would be above my pay grade, as they say.

My wife and I had returned from Scotland only the previous day and by Sunday evening it was clear that we had contracted what I will call "Tartan Covid". A sleepless night coughing vigorously was my introduction to a rather unpleasant two weeks. Of course, it seemed that the World and his Wife had heard of my appointment and the wheels of the URC started to turn such that I was receiving e-mails almost daily. I had undertaken with my fellow Elders to be as available as possible but this was not easy in the early days when it took me all my time to get a pain killer out of a blister pack!

Another issue revolved around the fact that I had designated my Gmail address as the one for Church correspondence so that messages would not get lost in the torrent of messages that comes into our BT account. Hitherto the Gmail account had only been used to book classes at the gym as their booking system could not cope with a shared address. Well, that has been a steep learning curve as well. Google does things differently and I am only getting the hang of it now. One thing that is useful is that Gmail offers predictive responses such as "Great" and "No Thanks" etc I use these a lot so apologies now to anyone who has deemed a response from me as curt.

I have received a tremendous amount of support and encouragement in my new role. There are certain obligations that automatically come with the appointment, and it has been necessary to read up on these and act swiftly to enable things to happen.

I don't think that there are any more surprises to come my way but there are still new duties to perform in the weeks and months ahead. My grateful thanks to all those who have stepped up to the plate to ensure the onward smooth running of our worship and to those who have quietly continued to make their valuable contribution.

Gordon Laurie
Church Secretary

ANNIVERSARY LUNCH – PROCEEDS



Thank you to those who attended our recent Anniversary Lunch. The proceeds of £100 will be going to the URC India Charity.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CENTRAL SOLIHULL – MEETING NOTES

The last meeting was held at St. Helen's Church on 5th October 2022.

A warm tribute was paid to Beryl Moppett who sadly passed away on 11th August 2022. Beryl had been the Chairperson and a driving force of this committee on several occasions and right up to her death she had led the Solihull Town Centre Chaplaincy Team. She was also heavily involved with Job Club here at SURC.

Prayer lunches will continue to be held here at SURC in the café from 12.30-1.30 pm on the following dates:

- Wednesday 16th November
- Wednesday 18th January

(Please feel free to bring your own lunch and hot drinks will be provided. All are very welcome.)

Crib Blessing Service – Sunday 27th November at 3pm

Father Dominic from St. Augustine's Catholic Church will lead this service which will be held in Mell Square.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – 18th–25th January 2023

The week will start with the prayer lunch at SURC on Wednesday 18th January, as above. A combined service will be held at Solihull Methodist Church on Sunday 22nd January at 4pm. Please try and support this very important service.

World Day of Prayer – Friday 3rd March 2023 – details to follow

Store House – Jubilee Church

Jubilee Church currently meet for worship at Langley Primary School on a Sunday morning. They are asking for donations of board games, good quality clothing and toiletries which they will pass on to those in need.

If you have any suitable items to donate, please contact me or pass on to Linda Faber.

For information on further events, links and resources go to <http://www.centralsolihullchurches.org.uk/>

Julia Ensor

HAPPY BIRTHDAY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH!

The URC website has published a list of activities and celebrations that various URC churches undertook, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Reformed Church. These include special services, delicious spreads, the lighting of candles, interviews with Christian media outlets, and the sharing of photos of the Uniting Assembly. Members from all across the UK took part, as well as members from Fiji.

You can read more about these on the URC website at <https://urc.org.uk/happy-birthday-united-reformed-church/>

Stuart Mills

ADVENT BOOKLET

As has been my practice over the last few years, I am again writing a booklet for us all to use through the days of Advent. I expect to have it available from about halfway through November so look out for your copy. Advent begins on Sunday 27th November this year.

I plan for this booklet to be such that it could also be used by those who have some interest in the Christian faith but who aren't yet committed, so if you know someone who might like a copy from you, please let me know so I can print enough. The theme of the booklet this year is 'Preparing for after Christmas'.

Linda Faber

ADVENT HIGH TEA—OUTREACH EVENT

As I hope you know, we are always looking for ways to invite people into our church so that they can see how welcome they are and to get know them better. To this end we are going to hold a 'high tea' in the café on the afternoon of Saturday 26th November. The aim of the event is to spend pleasant time together and then we will give out an Advent Booklet and invitations to Christmas services.

We would like you to think of who you could invite who doesn't come to church regularly. We have 8 tables for 4 people each and we would like to have no spare spaces on the day. If you are a couple, do you have two friends from outside the church family who you would like to have tea with? If you are on your own, is there someone else in the church you can split a table with and invite one friend each or could you bring 3 friends?

There are invitations for you to invite your friend/s with and then tickets which will cost £5 each if they are able to come along. Invitations and tickets from Linda Faber.

INVITATIONS TO CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Once again it is time to be inviting people to our Advent and Christmas services. We will be producing invitations that you can give out to all your friends and neighbours.

We will also be producing invitations that we would like to put through the doors of houses and flats around the church. Would you be willing to deliver some of those invitations? There will be bundles of between 20 and 80-ish cards to deliver to specific streets. The first service included will be the Advent Gift Service on December 27th so the cards will need to be delivered in the week or two before that (the second half of November). You can always do more than one street on different days—they don't all have to go out at once. Please let me know if you can make yourself available for this task. Thanks.

Linda Faber

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

VACANT

Church Secretary

Mr. Gordon Laurie

Church Phone Number

0121 709 5505

Website

www.solihullurc.org.uk

Hall Lettings: 0121 709 5505

Generations Project - enabling the Church in care homes

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

DECEMBER 2022/JANUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

Material for the December 2022/January 2023 edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 20th November please.