



# SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

Christ Church - Hobs Moat – Olton

## December 2017/January 2018 Newsletter

*If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us...*

*2 Corinth 5*





## **SOLIHULL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

A single fellowship of Christian people, our history leads us to offer our witness in three neighbourhoods (central Solihull, Hobs Moat and Olton). Our worship on a Sunday is focused at Christ Church, but is also offered at different times in a number of care homes and in our other premises.

We share our mission with other Churches and seek partnerships 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)

## **BABIES ARE DEMANDING – Mark recalls...**

What can you say about a baby - “Isn’t he cute!”, “He looks just like you” (Oh really!). Otherwise, perhaps not a great deal. He eats, sleeps and one or two other things, but that’s about it. Yet, he requires total commitment and exhausts you of all energy! There isn’t a great deal said about the baby of Bethlehem at the time of his birth. The focus is more on his parents and some others who in varied ways discovered about the birth. Also, there is more about what the baby will achieve as Saviour of Israel, Son of God and fruit of the Holy Spirit.

I guess that we don’t need to know that Jesus gurgled and it is more important that we have some indication of what is expected of this infant. Also, how have others responded as they discover more about God’s claims on them through Jesus. And so begins the Christian journey that takes us into the New Year. We take on board what the Prophets tell us, how Joseph and Mary accept the impact of what God is doing in the midst of their lives, the enthusiastic and then decidedly wobbly commitment of the disciples, and what a personal faith means for both the religious (the Jews) and the non-religious (Gentiles).

So Christmas is not about a festival or a season that passes, allowing life to get back to ‘normal’. It is about a demanding baby who, growing into adulthood, continues to make claims on our lives and commitments and expects that we and the world we live in will become a different place - with him.

As a church fellowship and as individuals we have spent the Autumn considering our ‘front lines’ - those places and amongst those people where Jesus makes demands of us. In the New

Year we will give consideration to ways in which our lives might bear fruit in these places and with these people. And it all begins with the baby who is God's way of saying that our lives are His front line. And he gurgles!!

Mark

### **DIARY for DECEMBER**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10am: Advent Sunday Holy Communion @ Christ Church - with contributions by the Singing for Pleasure Group

Monday 4<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Job Advice @ Christ Church

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>, 11am: Worship @ St Francis Lodge

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Make & Mend @ Christ Church

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Friday 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm: Carols & Mince Pies @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church – Gordon Justham

10.30am: Worship for Remembrance @ Star & Garter

Monday 11<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

10.30am: Job Advice @ Christ Church

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>, 10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

2:15pm: Christmas Music & Readings @ Hampton House

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>, 12:30pm: SCAH Open Lunch Meeting @ Christ Church

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2:30pm: Christmas Music & Readings @ Deerpark Court

5pm: Carol Singing @ Olton Station

Friday 15<sup>th</sup>, 8pm: Nine Lessons Christmas Acoustic @ Casey Jones'

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church

11:45am: Worship @ Star & Garter

Monday 18<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

10.30am: Job Advice @ Christ Church

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>, 11am: Music & Readings @ Tudor Lodge

12.30pm: Elders Meeting @ The Manse

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Music & Readings @ The Grove

Prayer Fellowship @ Hobs Moat

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, 2pm: Music & Readings @ Newholme Gardens

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Readings & Carols @ Christ Church

9pm: Midnight in Bethlehem

Christmas Communion @ Hobs Moat

Christmas Day, 10am: Celebration @ Christ Church

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church - The Elders

## **DIARY for JANUARY**

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>, 11am: Worship @ St Francis Lodge

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10am: Make & Mend

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Holy Communion @ Christ Church

Monday 8<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>, 10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church - Cheryl Hughes of TWUP

Monday 15<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>, 11am: Worship @ Tudor Lodge

12.30pm: Solihull Prayer Lunch @ Christ Church

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Worship @ The Grove

12.15pm: CT in Olton @ The Friary

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>, 10am: Worship & Church Meeting @ Christ Church

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>, 7pm: Quiz Night supporting TWUP @ Christ Church

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Cafe Church @ Christ Church

Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

### **A FUTURE DATE FOR THE DIARY**

While you are filling in your new calendar, don't forget to include:

#### **Saturday 17th March**

**A concert of varied music performed by the North Solihull Singers**

**In support of church charity This Way Up**

This community choir are based in Chelmsley Wood. The concert will be held in the church which we will want to fill for what will be, undoubtedly, an evening of great music and energy.

Ensure your friends know about it. Tickets will be available during January.

# THIS WAY UP

Unpacking Loss

## ARE RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS

To join our team of **Pastoral Mentors** working with **young people** in **local schools** who are struggling to cope with

bereavement or family breakdown –

If you are a good listener, have a regular morning every week and would like to be trained to support these young people –

**Contact Sarah on 0121 439 9181 or [sarah@twup.org.uk](mailto:sarah@twup.org.uk) to discuss attending our next 2-day Induction Training on 1st & 2nd February 2018**

### IBRA BIBLE READING NOTES 2018

Marian Batten is happy to continue to order the daily Bible readings for those who wish to receive them. Perhaps you would like to try them for the first time? There is a Bible reading a brief commentary for each day, with accompanying prayers and thoughts for the day. They cost about £10. Please sign the list in church or see Irene Bound.



## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

There will be a big card to sign instead of sending individual cards to church friends. Donations in lieu will go to Christian Aid.

In lieu of Christmas Cards and the money going to charity:-  
Barrie and Elaine would like to wish all our friends a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

**“Friends in Solihull URC send warm Christmas greetings to all readers of our Newsletter. May the baby of Bethlehem be the Saviour in whom you find blessing”**

## CAROLS AND MINCE PIES

FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER at HOBBS MOAT  
CHURCH at 6.30pm

Singing For Pleasure will be leading this evening of Christmas carols and festive music followed by tea, coffee and mince pies.



The singing group would welcome more singers. No audition needed. Thursdays at 2pm. See Janet for more details 0121 706 0204 or any member of the group. We are singing at Deerhurst and Hampton House in December as well as taking part in the Communion Service on 3rd December at church.

Janet Ince

## **HOBBS MOAT COFFEE MORNINGS**

### **Christmas Coffee Morning**

Thank you to all who helped and those who supported this event. A grand sum of £294.35 was raised on the day. We wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Caroline, Janet and Annette

### **Dates for Diary re Tuesday Coffee Morning at Hobs Moat**

- Tuesday, 12 December 2017
- Tuesday, 2 January 2018
- Tuesday 16 January 2018
- Tuesday 30 January 2018

### **The gardening team at the hospice will be having their annual Christmas sale**

Door and Table Decorations and Gifts. Tuesday 5th of December from 9:00 am. Sale will take place at the main foyer of the hospice.

Gweno

### **Carol Singing**

If you enjoy singing carols, join Churches Together in Olton as they serenade commuters and passers-by outside Olton Station on Thursday 14th December from 5pm till 6pm (ish). It is a lovely atmosphere and all are warmly welcome.

Maureen Butler

**Housebound or in care:** Alf Andrews, Jean Mather, Joan Shaw, Beryl Pullin, Vera Atherley, Thelma and Phil Phillips, Kath Bishop, Sheila Schwartz, Pam Tovey, Norma Clement.

**Health Issues or increased frailty:** Margaret Agnew, Irene Kettle, Andrea and Phil Holt, Rosalind Smart, Peggy Crosby, Celia Stephens, Jean and Albert Holmes, Rosalind, Thea, the Jenkins Family, Margaret Toogood, Sheila Durant, Enid Chapman and her sister, and Ian and Jean Alder. Shirley Peck and her family are struggling with her dementia and all need our prayers. We pray for all of these friends and their carers and pray for God's blessing on each of them.

### **SHOE BOXES**

I have just waved off 23 shoe boxes filled by SURC members and would like to say a big THANK YOU to you all. I appreciate what an effort it is.

The men who picked them up had some moving stories to tell of when they distribute them and urge us to watch the short video on their website. They said they always return inspired to redouble their efforts. We take so much for granted. Well done!

Anne Cherry

## **THE 'FORGET ME NOT' CHRISTMAS**

'Forget it not!' - The shopping list!  
The presents large and small:  
The food and drink, we buy in bulk -  
But do we need it all?

'Forget us not!' – The charities;  
Those letters through the post  
To tell us of unfortunates,  
Who need our help the most.

'Forget me not.' - The family  
And folk confined to home.  
Remember too, the elderly  
- And those who live alone.

'Forget them not.' - The animals;  
The puppies small and sweet:  
The little ones who, as they grow,  
- Are thrown out on the street.

'Forget them not.' - The ones we've loved,  
- Who now we see no more.  
Lord, keep them safe until we meet  
Again, at Heaven's door.

'Forget us not!' - The bells ring out,  
- From churches far and wide.  
May those who enter, here within,  
Find peace and love inside.

'Forget me not,' the Christ child says,  
'For Christmas came through me.  
And I have better gifts, by far,  
Than those beneath the tree!'

Carol Andrews

### **A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY**

On 15th December there is an exciting 'Churches Together in Olton' event which I think a number of you would enjoy. See advert! I have heard Gareth Davies Jones play guitar and sing at Casey Joe's bar in Olton three years ago and I can thoroughly recommend his gigs.

I find his songs and guitar playing really inspirational, uplifting and enjoyable. He brings a number of string instruments to his country wide gigs and is a very talented professional musician from the North of England.

The Nine Lessons Christmas theme is traditional but his playing and approach is thoroughly modern yet melodic. The event will be held in an upstairs room at Casey Joe's and there is a lift for those who find stairs difficult. I do hope some of our church family will come and enjoy – see details on the advert.

Reserving your tickets in advance is strongly recommended, as this event will be advertised widely in and around Olton.

Carol Andrews

# **NINE LESSONS CHRISTMAS ACOUSTIC**

**SONGS & STORIES OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS**

With singer-songwriter

## **Gareth Davies-Jones**

"A new lease of life for the oldest and most traditional of songs -  
a fresh yet traditional sound" - Bright Young Folk

"Very beautiful music,...I can thoroughly recommend this"

- Bob Harris, BBC Radio 2

**Friday 15th December 8.00 pm**

**Casey Joe's Bar (Upstairs Room)**

**1293 Warwick Road, Birmingham, B27 6PU**

**Tickets £7.50**

Reserve tickets: 0121 707 5722 or

[admin@oltonbaptist.org](mailto:admin@oltonbaptist.org)



## **CHURCH SECRETARY**

We still need to find a new Church Secretary. Please find below some of the principal tasks associated with being Church Secretary:

- Principal point of contact for Synod and Church House primarily for mailings
- Dealing with the Annual Return to Synod: not onerous
- Dealing with correspondence on behalf of the Church
- Assisting the Chairman of Elders' Meetings and Church Meetings in preparation of agendas
- Preparing the minutes of Elders' Meetings and Church Meetings (a task that could be delegated to a Minutes Secretary)
- Keeping records of Church Membership, Marriages, Baptisms etc. for inclusion in the Annual Report (delegated to an administrator)

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the role. Please give prayerful consideration to whether you can respond to the call to be Church Secretary. Thanks.

Gordon Justham

## KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

### **Minister**

Revd. Mark Fisher: 07950 399615 - 0121 291 4726 - [mjf.urc@me.com](mailto:mjf.urc@me.com)

### **Church Secretary**

Mr. Gordon Justham: 07540 289855 - 01564 776229 -  
[gordonjustham@talktalk.net](mailto:gordonjustham@talktalk.net)

### **Website**

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

**Hall Lettings** in Hobs Moat, Olton or Christ Church - details are on the website.

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

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

### **Moments - a dementia cafe**

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Christ Church

Details from Mark Fisher - contacts above

## **FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER**

Material for the February edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

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

by Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January please.