

SOLIHULL

United Reformed Church

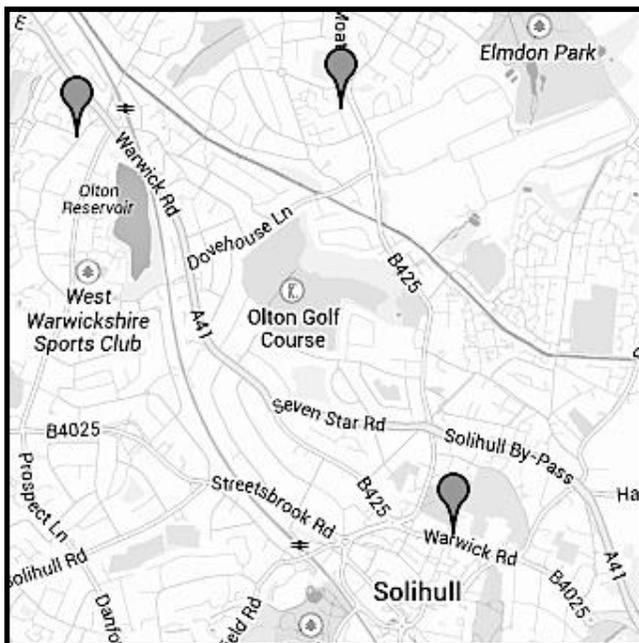
Christ Church - Hobs Moat – Olton

February 2018 Newsletter

When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6





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

Lost in wonder, love and praise! - Mark tries!

“Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place”, in the final verse of ‘Love divine’, must be one of the most lustily sung lines in the hymn book. In it we recognise how it is that God changes us to the point when our lives are fulfilled in his purpose.

It is notable then that we find change rather difficult and do not face it with similar enthusiasm! As a church, we have undergone many changes over recent years and I suspect that most of us would rather we had not had to go through it. It is quite understandable if we hoped for an easier time and particularly one where we may know what is coming our way in church life.

Sorry folks, but our transformative journey with Jesus must continue and will lead to changes for each of us as individual Christians as well as in our life together.

As I look towards retirement in twelve months’ time, I have not got a clue what it will bring. There are things that I hope I will have more time for, but I also know that setting aside responsibilities of ministry after thirty-five years is not going to be easy and that God will not have finished with me. In church life I suspect the temptation will be to ‘keep things as they are’ until a new minister is called, but that would be denying that God is constantly bringing his purpose to fruition in each one of us and this means keeping up with Jesus and allowing him to change us to his likeness.

The other temptation in the midst of change is to seek a sense of security in the familiar. But our life of faith is about following

a man who had a habit of turning the world upside-down, whether it be for religious leaders, rulers, the disabled, sick or mentally ill. Most whose lives Jesus transformed appreciated him, came to recognise who he is and were led to honour and worship. For us in the midst of changes we will find our security in knowing and worshipping Jesus - never mind anything else - and we may indeed find ourselves 'lost in wonder love and praise'.

DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

Thursday 1st, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for pleasure @ Hobs Moat

7pm: Unite - prayer meeting @ Christ Church

Sunday 4th, 10am: Holy Communion @ Christ Church

Monday 5th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

10am-2.30pm: Shout out for Girls worship @ The Manse

Tuesday 6th, 10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

11am: Worship @ St Francis Lodge

Wednesday 7th, 6.45pm: Churches Together @ Christ Church

Thursday 8th, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 11th, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church - Ian Carnell

Monday 12th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Shrove Tuesday 13th, 11am: Holy Communion @ Hampton House

Ash Wednesday 14th, 12noon: Meditation & lunch @ Christ Church

Thursday 15th, 10am: Tots & Tales @ Christ Church

2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 18th, 10am: Worship @ Christ Church

11.45am: Worship @ Star & Garter

Monday 19th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Tuesday 20th, 10am: Fellowship Prayers @ Hobs Moat

10.30am: Neighbourhood Coffee Morning @ Hobs Moat

10.30am: Messy Church @ Christ Church

Wednesday 21st, 10am: Worship @ The Grove

Tapestry @ Christ Church

12noon: Lent Discussion & Lunch

Thursday 22nd, 2pm: Singing for Pleasure @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 25th, 10am: Cafe Church @ Christ Church

Monday 26th, 10am: Moments Cafe @ Christ Church

Tuesday 27th, 11am: Holy Communion @ Tudor Lodge

Wednesday 28th, 10am: Tapestry @ Christ Church

12noon: Lent Discussion & Lunch

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 to discuss attending our next 2-day Induction Training on 1st & 2nd February 2018



**SATURDAY 17th MARCH
7.30pm in CHRIST
CHURCH. Supporting
THIS WAY UP. Tickets £7
available**

are a community choir based in the North of Solihull. The group was set up over 11 years ago by Solihull musician Kris Chase-Byrne. They perform in 3 major concerts of their own a year and appear all over Solihull at other events. NSS firmly believe in all that the word 'community' means and raise thousands of pounds every year for local charities and are really happy to be supporting This Way Up in 2018. From musical theatre, to pop, and folk to more contemporary choral music, they pride

themselves on a varied programme that is set to have something for everyone.

JOB ADVICE

Every Monday morning from 10.30am @ Christ Church (Story Room). If you know anyone in need of support or advice with CVs etc. let them know about this or speak to Trixie Harman.

LENT 2018

Ash Wednesday is on 14th February when there will be an introduction and meditation followed by a simple lunch in the Meeting Place @ Christ Church.

During the weeks of Lent we will be exploring how, **through the experience of desolation in various aspects of our lives, Christ offers his life-giving presence.** The themes will be the focus for our Sunday and Maundy Thursday worship, right through to Easter Day. Material to aid further discussion and personal reflection will be available each week. Opportunity for discussion may be offered in Cell Groups, but will also be made on Wednesday lunch-times over a simple soup lunch in the Meeting Place.

Throughout, all are encouraged to contribute to the making of our Tapestry - on Sundays following worship, on Wednesdays from 10am to lunchtime and at other pre-arranged times for groups (Cell Groups, Moments etc.)

The Temptations of Jesus

Sunday 18th February - 'I am hungry!' - physical and spiritual hunger

Sunday 25th February - 'Fall-back Saviour' - all will be well?

Sunday 4th March - 'Kingdoms and Powers' - a dysfunctional world?

Mothers' Day

Sunday 11th March - 'Motherhood moments'

The Way of the Cross

Sunday 18th March - 'Indifferent friends and denial'

Palm Sunday 25th March - 'Empty Praise' - dangerous populism

Maundy Thursday 29th March - 'Hospitality, betrayal and death'

Good Friday 30th March - 'Abandonment and death' Easter Day

- 'Empty tomb - He is not there!'

INVITATION, INVITATION, INVITATION

I have spent the last term encouraging you to invite more of your friends, neighbours, relatives and vague acquaintances to the many activities that we have been undertaking as a Christian community. To encourage each other I asked you to colour in a rectangle on a lighthouse for each person you invited to something whether or not they came. If you haven't coloured any boxes showing people you have invited please do that. (The picture is at the back of church). At the time of writing about 100 boxes have been coloured in, which works out at about two invitations per person who attends church on a Sunday morning. And yet we have had more than 10 special occasion services or activities in that time plus our usual goings on. This is very concerning. I wonder if:

1. You haven't bothered/ got around to colouring in the boxes on the picture – please do that - it will encourage others to keep inviting too.

2. You are not comfortable with inviting so haven't done any inviting.
3. The activities we are organising are not the sorts of things you or your acquaintances want to come to so you haven't been inviting them.

I have concerns about all three of these explanations whichever, or combination, is true. For all three there is a problem with communication of one sort or another and secondly, for all three, there is a problem with being an active part of the Body of Christ because the Body of Christ is a family of people who invite – we are to be always inviting people into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Bringing people to church or church things is a small part of that journey to Christ. As people get to know Christians they have more examples of how the relationship with Christ works and more people to whom they can address their questions.

If there is anything we, the church leadership, can do to help you be better at inviting people to things then please alert us to the need. Let me encourage you to take a step of courage and invite someone to something. Be encouraged that **we have had successes** through this initiative even in these 3 months. People have come to coffee mornings who have never been here before – a first step in getting to know the church and its people. Someone came to the Job club through invitations given out to the school children. New people keep coming along to Messy Church each time. We have had a few visitors to Sunday services. **We need this.** We need this because this is what a Christian community is. A place where we invite people

into a relationship with Christ and His church. A hospitable and welcoming people.

Let us pray together:

Heavenly Father, Your heart is open to all people and You constantly seek ways to show Your love and draw people to Yourself. Help us to be bold and active in reflecting Your heart; help us share what we have found to be true in You. Give us Your strength and courage to invite our friends, neighbours and relatives to come along and meet others who know You too so that their words and actions may be added to mine and make a difference on someone's journey towards You. Amen.

When I look back over the years at all the people who have said that I have played a part in bringing them to faith, or helped them make a critical faith step, they have never said it was because I have said or done anything major or fancy. It has always been little things. Inviting, including, listening, talking about my faith. The little things make such a difference. May I encourage you to keep being intentional about the little things. Most of the difference we will make will be 'out there' on our Frontlines. But our goal is to make disciples. I know that I can't possibly meet all the needs, or answer all the questions, of those I know, so I need the help of others. I need my friends to get to know other Christians too so they can have the best chance at seeing Christ for themselves. I want to get to know your friends and I would like you to get to know mine. Invitation is a part of that.

Linda Faber

A SACRED SPACE

For those who can't get to church to worship each week there can be a void – especially for people who attended church as children and adults and then for one reason or another cannot get there. Maybe they are housebound or have some incapacitating ailment – or maybe they are in a care home. Whatever the reason, they may well feel something is missing – and something important – worship! One idea, which I gleaned from a friend living in France, is to create a sacred space at home. My Roman Catholic friend included candles in her sacred space - but I know my fire-fighter son would warn that, 'Many a house fire is started by candles in the home'. Be warned! Candles, if used, have to be carefully monitored and tended.

What could we safely include in our own sacred space in the home? The obvious first choice is, of course, a copy of the Bible – in a big enough print to be easy to read. A comfy chair is also desirable – placed near enough to the holy book, which could be placed on a small table within easy reach. Leaving the Bible open, at a favourite page, encourages us into the sacred space of course – for prayer and meditative reflection.

Some of us may like to have fragrant flowers or a living plant in our sacred space – to remind us of God's beautiful world and his generosity to us. If there is someone we'd particularly like to pray for, a photograph may be helpful. Your choices, of what you'd like in a sacred space at home, may well differ from mine. Items in the sacred space may change from time to time - but the space should not be cluttered as that could well be

distracting. The sacred space needs to be calm and peaceful, so you can sit, relax and talk to Our Lord in prayer. Then God will enfold you in his warm blanket of love and give you his peace. God bless you all, **Carol**

A SLIGHTLY PARAPHRASED 1 CORINTHIANS 13

If I bake a Christmas cake & dozens of mince pies, but have not love, I am just another harassed housewife.

If I decorate my house with outdoor fairy lights & a twinkling Christmas tree, but have not love, I am just wasting electricity for no reason.

If I write a hundred Christmas cards & stick a newsletter in each one, but have not love, I only gain writer's cramp.

Love stops baking to phone a friend in need.

Love stops decorating to hug a child.

Love stops shopping to visit a lonely neighbour.

Love does not envy the colour co-ordinated Christmas decorations in another's house, nor the neatly wrapped presents under a neighbour's tree.

Love does not write vain Christmas letters boasting of this year's achievements.

Love does not just send cards to those who can return the favour.

Love does not only buy presents for those who can return the favour.

Love does not work out how much a friend will spend on your gifts & then seek to spend not a penny more.

Love knows the joy of giving without counting the cost.

Love is patient when faced with a queue at the post office and smiles at those sharing the experience.

Love does not get angry & shout at the kids to stay out of the way, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Computer games break, chocolates soon vanish, Christmas trees drop their leaves, but the gift of LOVE endures forever.

Love is not just for Christmas, it lasts the whole year through.

Christ is not just for Christmas, He wants to stay with you forever.

COACH TRIPPERS 2018

The Committee and I are now in a position to publish the dates and venues for 2018 trips which are as follows:-



APRIL 19th: STAMFORD AND BURGHLEY HOUSE

MAY 17th: ADAMS FARM

JUNE 21st: HAMPTON COURT HOUSE AND GARDEN
HEREFORDSHIRE

JULY 19th: BARNSDALE/RUTLAND WATER WITH BOAT TRIP

AUGUST 16th: THE WIMPOLE ESTATE (National Trust)

SEPTEMBER 20th: BRISTOL

OCTOBER 18th: STOKESY CASTLE AND LUDLOW

The above dates are all Thursdays, leaving our new departure point THE WEST WARWICKSHIRE SPORTS CLUB, GRANGE ROAD, SOLIHULL, B91 1DA at our usual time of 8.30am.

As agreed at the AGM the revised charge will be £20 per person excluding any entry fees but including a tip for the driver.

There are two venues that although voted for we consider not to be possible, Highgrove only take small parties at 2 hour intervals and Hampton Court which after much discussion was agreed to be too far across London.

May I respectfully remind you of the cancellation guide and that you should ring Val on 7069687 to book.

We look forward to your continued support and take the opportunity to wish you all a great Coach Trip New Year.

DAVID ARGALL (CHAIR)

SHOUT OUT FOR THE GIRLS

At the end of October, about 30 people met at the manse to take part in a workshop to make sanitary products for girls in a village in Uganda. The project is part of ongoing work of friends of mine, who live in Cheshire and 3 of them Gill, Moria and Cilla came and spent the day with us, showing us how to make the sanitary towels and the little case to put them in.



Many of you were kind enough to donate cotton material, towels and waterproof material and the manse dining room was a hive of industry with cutting, pinning and sewing going

on. We made sure that we kept our energies up with frequent cups of tea and coffee, cake, lunch and more cake.

This is a project I would like us to continue, as teenage girls in Uganda often miss several days a month from school, when they have their period, as they don't have sanitary products and can't afford them. I am going to have another workshop at the manse on Monday 5th February from 10am until 2.30pm and would encourage you to come and join us for the whole time or any part of it. Again tea, coffee and lunch will be provided (and cake of course). You don't have to be an amazing sewer, although if you are, that's great. There is plenty of cutting out and assembling to do, so if you could bring a pair of scissors then that would be helpful. Last time we had 3 sewing machines on the go, so if you do have a sewing machine that you would be willing to bring, please let me know.

If you are able to come, please let me know, especially if you are able to stay for lunch. Also feel free to invite others. The more the merrier!! **Judy Fisher**



Greetings to all EducAid Africa supporters. I do hope that you all have had a very pleasant Christmas. This period marks the

Kenyan schools' long holiday of approximately 2 months and so these letters were written in October before they broke up.

The term three is coming to an end and soon we will depart for home for the December holiday which will take approximately two months and this is the longest holiday that we are going to have. God has been by my side since the year began until now as the school closes. All thanks I give to Him for the gift of life He has given to me.

The term has run smoothly as it was the shortest term. It has also been a busy term. I used a timetable so that it can guide me as it makes me manage my time well because time and tide wait for no man. My parents thank you for your sponsorship. We always pray for you in everything you do. May the almighty God bless you abundantly. We really love you!

Days at these schools are very long involving a very early start and lots to do during each day. The students have to organise any spare time that they have for their studying, often setting themselves smart objectives.

Life here in school is not as easy as people think it is. As for me, it has been difficult since I never have got a good plan for my studies. But I have now got a solution to my problem. We have completed our end of term and the results ain't that bad. I am always praying to the Almighty to give you a long life on earth so that you can see me prosper in my exams.

I am looking forward to my studies and I will not give up in life because no one was born on a silver plate and luck comes after a struggle. I'll be determined and focus on my objectives and put in smart objectives which will make me become a responsible person in the future.

The schools attended are Christian schools and their faith and knowledge shines out. This student obviously has been studying the Book of Proverbs!

Actually the term has been going swiftly with the aid of my Lord. How grateful I am for the efforts you have made to support me in my education for the whole of this year. May the Almighty bless you for your special kindness (Proverbs 11:17). You have sincerely sacrificed yourself, like Jesus did for me, to be in school and gain the knowledge that I didn't have before. I am wishing that you please remember me in your prayers. (Read Proverbs 11: 20,25 and 12:14).

Text books are certainly in short supply at the schools and, if they possess revision books, they are at a distinct advantage – but most can't afford them. We are using some of our funds to buy them such books and this is certainly helping them. If you ever wish to donate towards revision books, please don't hesitate to let me know.

The revision books you offered really helped me and are still helping me – more effort and working spent on my academics. I thank God he has given me the strength and the power to acquire education and be the person I want to be in the future. I pray for God to guide me and protect me as I pursue my studies. I know that God is on my side and I will perform better. **Here are some of the students receiving the Revision Books we have donated.**



Life at home is certainly different to the life at school. Some go back to great poverty and their Christmas, unlike ours, will have been marked by a lack of food. They can't just sit and relax at home as there are chores and jobs to be done.

The weather here is rain. I often go to the beach but the water is too much now so it is difficult to collect shells as my hobby. I use the shells to make necklaces, bangles and for decoration. I also like visiting elderly people. I normally help them to do their household chores whilst they tell me stories about the past. Christmas is around the corner and I wish you all the best in it. May the Lord shower you with a lot of blessings in whatever you do. I always go to church every Sunday in school and at home. I usually help in house chores and community work. Let us be ready for the birth of Jesus Christ in our hearts on Christmas Day

Some of our students have been fortunate enough to gain admission to universities and, through your generosity, we have been able to pay their fees. Even then, through no fault of theirs, everything doesn't always go smoothly.

I am so happy that I joined the University of Kabianga and I am really enjoying undertaking my degree course in Human Resource Management. Within the first few days I have been

able to socialise with people from different places and I have made several friends. I have not adapted well to the cool and wet climate experienced in Kencho but all in all I am doing well. However I fell sick the first day I stepped into the place. I had some complications with my stomach which led me to be admitted to one of the hospitals in Kencho town for three days and the bill amounted to 25,660 Ksh. (Nearly £190). I am happy that now I am OK and everything is fine.

Another university student, nearing the end of her course, shows her gratitude to the sponsor who made it possible for her and who has completely changed her life.

I thank you for the continued support that you are offering to me in my studies. I am now in my fourth year – it being the final year of my course – and I just want to pass my sincere gratitude to you as this far that I have come to is all because of the support you are giving me. My life is a complete change now and I believe I now can do more in life and be of help to the people around me.

As we approach the dawn of a new year may I wish you every happiness and thank you for the great happiness that you have brought the students whose lives have been changed so dramatically. I conclude with a song I taught the pupils of my school when I was their headteacher.

*See the child standing there, as he sees the world go by.
He is standing all-alone and he'll always wonder why,
When nations spend their millions on power and on might,
That he never had the chance, to learn to read and write.
See the child standing there, with hunger in his eyes.
He is standing all alone, as a nation slowly dies.*

*He knows that he is hungry and he doesn't understand,
There are just too many people in this dry and barren land.*

Chorus

*So take this child by the hand,
And lead him back to love.
Leave the fear and the misery behind.
Take this child by the hand,
And lead him back to love.
And show him that people can be kind.*

Dear Supporters

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the founding of EducAid Africa by the late Patrick Langmead. What he started has greatly enhanced the lives of so many needy pupils in Kenya. To mark this milestone we are organising a garden party on the afternoon of 24 June at Barston (just outside Solihull) to which you are all invited. Please can you put the date in your diaries. More details will follow.

Best wishes and thanks to you all, **Ian Carnell**

Letter from Solihull URC's Sponsored Pupil 2

We, as a church, have been a keen supporter of EducAid Africa in the past. EducAid Africa supports some Christian schools in the Mombasa area and sponsors needy individual pupils for their secondary education – something that has a definite and positive effect on their future lives.

Currently Solihull United Reformed Church sponsors a boy at St George's High School in Kaloleni. He has sent us another letter. (Bear in mind that English is his third language)

To Solihull United Reformed Church

Dear Sponsors,

How are you? How are you doing there? I hope that you are fine and well. I am fine here in school and proceeding with my studies well. May I take this opportunity to thank God for His glory and favour for keeping us and protecting us until this moment. So far we are doing well and no problem have we experienced this term. May I also thank you for the books you bought us. Actually they help me very much such that I have improved my grades from C plus to B minus and I promise you that I will improve better than that, God willing. I don't have much to tell you but these few words. Thank you very much and may God bless you and your family.

Yours faithfully, Salim Munga

In his end of term report he got a C- for English, a B+ for Swahili, a C+ for mathematics, a C for biology, C- for Physics, B- for chemistry, A- for History and Government and B- for Business Studies. An overall mean grade of B-. May I thank you again for the difference that you are making in this boy's life.

Ian Carnell, Chairman of EducAid Africa Trustees

Dear Supporters of EducAid Africa

We were delighted to hear that our friend Felix married a lovely lady called Sally at the beginning of this month. Here are some pictures of the happy event:



“When you are given a precious gift by someone as special as you, then you develop a certain feeling of responsibility for this gift; to give it the maximum care you can give it and to use it as

efficiently as you can. You are giving me a gift that I have this kind of a responsibility for. I work hard to produce results that are worthy the cost you pay for my education. I believe the best way to say thank you is to produce good results.”

This was written by a young man who lived in a small village in Kenya and whose life has been transformed by children from a primary school in Solihull. Felix’s father died in 1996 but Felix still managed to get to Primary School. At the end of his primary school career he had done so well that he had passed the examinations to attend one of Kenya’s top national schools in Nairobi. This was a great honour not only for him and his family but for his village. No one had ever gone to a national school from the village before. The whole community set about raising money for Felix but, after several weeks, it came to very little, as they were all so poor.

Joy turned to despair when the school place was about to be withdrawn. Fortunately, children at Greswold Primary School, on hearing of his plight, raised the money needed and he was able to take up the place after all. On the subsequent visit to Kenya I was privileged to meet Felix. He had journeyed down overnight from Nairobi on the bus – a journey of over eight and a half hours – just to meet me and to express his thanks to the school. His tired face was filled with joy and he expressed the feeling that he had now another friend.

Several years later he gained a place at the University in Nairobi – a truly remarkable achievement. His life had been transformed through the pennies raised by the children back in

England. This young man has gone from scraping a living with his widowed mother to being a member of one of the finest universities in Africa. On arriving he wrote:

“At last I am here! So long have I been longing for this chance. All in all challenges are not to be feared but to be faced solidly with courage and you know that the courageous can hardly help but win. Every door is a door of opportunities – a chance to unleash the best of my abilities for excellency and a brighter tomorrow”

He later became a very successful agricultural engineer and, in his spare time, he has helped in areas suffering from famine. He is also a member of the Kenyan Support Team of EducAid Africa.

We are again approaching the time when we ask if there are any people who would be happy to sponsor a pupil for four years at a Secondary School in the Mombasa area of Kenya. As you are aware, able pupils from Primary Schools are offered places in Secondary School but there is a fee to pay which so many of the families are not able to afford. This is where we have the opportunity to change these young people’s lives for ever, as we did for Felix. Stephen and Jonah are already interviewing needy candidates for admission to Secondary School for the new school year which begins in January 2018. The demand for school places is high but currently we are only able to offer places to four pupils. If you, or you and a group of friends, are interested in sponsoring a pupil it currently costs £1800 for the four years which can be paid as a lump – or paid annually at £450 - or monthly at £38. Costs have unfortunately risen due to a rise in school fees and a change in the exchange

rates because of Brexit. If you are able to sponsor, either as an individual, a group or as a church or school, please let me know by e-mail at info@educaid-africa.org

Thank you, **Ian Carnell, Chairman of the Trustees**

'I HAVE A NAME' SMC CHURCH PROJECT DATES 2018
Solihull Methodist Church, Blossomfield Road, in aid of SCAH

- February 10th 7pm – Ten pin bowling night including a delicious supper!
- March 3rd 7pm – “Welcome Spring” – concert featuring The AD concert band
- April 11th 1pm - Soupa Talks – A member of SCAH speaking about their aims and objectives
- April 22nd 10:30am – Homelessness themed morning service with Rev Mark Fisher from Christchurch
- April 28th 7pm – Quiz Night with Fish and Chip Supper
- June 30th 7pm – “Grand Finale” – The return of ‘The Choir With No Name’ for a night that promises to raise the roof!

JOB CLUB AT CHRIST CHURCH

Have you ever been to Job Club held in the Story Room at church every Monday morning? As you know God has given me an important job of being my husband John's carer; so I am definitely not looking for more work! However, when a young relative of mine finished at University, he became a Job Seeker.

So knowing Job Club exists at church, I enquired if he may like to come to Christ Church and try it out. Sometimes it takes a lot of courage to come through the door of a place where you know nobody, so I was determined to find an opportunity to accompany him. And thus, one Monday morning, I found out what an amazing service Job Club is for unemployed people. Our church member Trixie Harman helps at Job Club each week and she has very able helpers in her friends Tim and Molly, both of whom give their expertise and advice, to help un-employed people. The Job Club atmosphere is relaxed and welcoming – as you'd expect in our church. Of course there is a welcoming cuppa for all who come through the door!

Advice is given on how to write a CV and the important points that should go into this document, to attract the eyes and interest of prospective employers. Writing a CV of all your qualifications and previous experience is a way of selling



yourself and is essential to finding a new job. But it is a skill to create – so relevant advice is really useful. One important aspect of Job Club is the self-confidence it gives to Job Seekers. Everybody has skills to offer of one sort or another but it takes confidence to tell others about these skills. In a relaxed environment the Job Seekers sometimes have mock interviews – to give them experience of talking about their particular skills and abilities in an interview situation.

So if you know of anybody who is looking for a new job, tell them about Job Club! Well done Trixie and team – you are changing people’s lives for the better and doing a very worthwhile job. And how can we, the church family, help? By prayer! Please pray each week for the success of Job Club at church - and for the Job Seekers. It is one way we can all help the Job Club team and support the Job Seekers. Smiles and blessings to all, **Carol**

LETTER FROM JENNY AT TOY SERVICE

“Last year your church kindly donated toys from your toy service to us. The toys were distributed in various ways. Some went to the children in our group at their Christmas party, but the majority of the toys donated went to families in the local community. In total 24 families (65 children) received toy parcels. Some of the gifts were donated to needy families in the Kingstanding area of Birmingham. The remaining gifts were given to a lady who every year organises a meal on Christmas day at a church centre for needy families. The children there then received a gift off Santa. I just want to share what one

recipient wrote in a card for me. She said “Christmas morning will be something special this year, as my children will really believe that their ‘Santa Stop Here sign’ really worked. I felt quite choked to be honest.”

As you can see they are involved in quite a few projects and what she started some time ago has really grown. I think it would be good for folk to see what happens to the goods we collected and they donated. It might be an idea to add that this year the Cubs and Beavers at Olton asked for a Toy service which Mark conducted on the 4th December. I contacted Jenny as she had written and asked if we could help again this year so she came and collected everything that was given – they are always so grateful and work so hard to make Christmas special for many who would normally struggle to find presents for their families. Thank you. **Irene Bound**

SPONSORED CHILD

We are about to change our sponsored child for a new one and need to decide what we are going to do. In order to reach the minimum amount required by the charity (anything less is not viable for them) we need 19 people to pay £12 a year. At the moment we have 10 contributors as some people have moved away or are not able to continue for whatever reason.

If you feel you would like to take part in this scheme please have a word with me and if we have enough people we can continue with our new child. May I take the opportunity to say a big thank you to all who have supported Ganesh in the past.

Anne Cherry 707 4285 or annecherry@talktalk.net

Housebound or in care: Alf Andrews, Jean Mather, Joan Shaw, Beryl Pullin, Thelma and Phil Phillips, Kath Bishop, Sheila Schwartz, Norma Clement. Pam Tovey was discharged from Solihull Hospital on Friday 19th and is now at Olton Grange Residential Home, 84 Warwick Road, Olton.

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, 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.

Thank You

Sheila Durant wishes to thank kind friends who sent her Christmas cards, new home cards and sympathy cards. She is now settling into her new flat at No 30, 4 Grange Road, Solihull B91 1BL.

Thank you to all my church family, for your good wishes, cards and flowers on the occasion of my 90th birthday. God Bless you all, Anne Lamb.

Congratulations

To our dear friend Ian Carnell who was recently awarded the MBE in the New Years Honours List for services to young people in Solihull. We all know how involved he is with whatever he

takes on board, and wish him well in the future. Well done Ian, you deserved it.

Bereavement

Jim Durant died on the 3rd of January aged 91 years. He had been ill for some time. The funeral service will take place on Monday the 29th of January at the Robin Hood crematorium at 12:30 pm. Sheila and Jim met at Selly Oak hospital where they both worked in the 1950's and had been married for 62 years. We hold Sheila, David, Susan and family in our thoughts and prayers.

Pitter-Patter

Barrie and Jeanne are very pleased to announce the safe arrival of their new granddaughter Mila on the 18th January in Amsterdam to their son Craig and his wife Ivannia. Mother and baby are doing well and Nanny can't wait for a cuddle. They wish to thank everyone for all the calls and enquiries over the last few weeks.



SOLIHULL 26 FEB — 09 MARCH 2018

In partnership with local churches, bands and youth workers from the Message Trust will be visiting several secondary schools in Solihull from 26 Feb 2018. This 'Higher Tour' will

culminate in a concert on Friday 9 March where young people can hear more about a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. Church Youth Leaders in Solihull invite YOU to join their United prayer group to pray for the Higher Tour at 7.30—9.30pm on:

- Thursday 1st Feb @ Christchurch URC*, Warwick Rd, B91 3DG
- Monday 26th Feb @ Knowle Parish Church, High St, Knowle, B93 0LN
- Friday 9th March - Christchurch URC*, Warwick Rd, B91 3DG.

**in the Meeting Place at the rear of the church (off Union Road)*

For more info contact Tina Brooker on 0121 705 7367

Prayer is powerful and effective (James 5:16)

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The service this year will be held at St. Helen's Church, St Helen's Road, Solihull on Friday the 2nd of March commencing at 10.30am. We would be very grateful to see as many people as possible from our church, both male and female, all are welcome. If anyone would like a lift please have a word with me and that will be arranged. There is plenty of parking at St. Helen's. This year we will be thinking about the people who live in Suriname which is a country in South America. The service will flow easily and there will not be a speaker, we will just use the booklet produced by the people of Suriname which is entitled ALL GOD'S CREATION IS VERY GOOD! Hope to see you there. **Judith Kembery**

KEY CONTACTS & INFORMATION

Minister

Revd. Mark Fisher: 07950 399615 - 0121 291 4726 - mjf.urc@me.com

Church Secretary

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

Website

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 generationssoalihull@icloud.com

Moments - a dementia cafe

Mondays 10am—12 noon@ Christ Church

Details from Mark Fisher - contacts above

MARCH NEWSLETTER

Material for the March edition

Is due to Stuart Mills: 07931 614393

stuartkmills@gmail.com

by Sunday 18th February please.