

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH DISCUSSIONS

One-Plus-One - Same-Sex Marriage
What is the Spirit Saying to the Churches?
- the future of the church

REVD STEVE FABER - new Moderator
Is to be inducted in Sutton Coldfield on Saturday 5th
September

PROPERTY BITS AND PIECES

Olton

The Synod's Quinquennial Survey is to be done on 19th May. When the report is published we will have a much clearer idea regarding remedial and maintenance work that is required.

Items of work in hand include:

- demolition of a chimney stack
- decoration of the Sunny Room inc. floor repair
- attention to tiles on the tower

Hobs Moat

The drainage work at the end of the car park is complete.

Clearance of land at the rear to ease damp in the back room has been undertaken.

A repair to the exterior hall doors means that only half will now open - enough for most occasions.

Christ Church

Plans are in hand to install safety film on low windows.

The sound system is receiving an overhaul.

The Manse

Work is in progress to enable the Fishers to move in at the end of July.

First stages towards a Meeting Place

Church Meeting are asked to give the Elders authority to progress these two pieces of work that would be better undertaken during the Summer months.

- **The installation of a moveable partition wall** between the Mayflower and Livingstone Rooms - this to enable groups to move from the John Palmer Hall. Estimated cost is £5k
- **The levelling of the stage** in the John Palmer Hall in preparation for the wider development of the hall as a Meeting Place. An estimate for this (August 2014) is for £10k +vat.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MISSION

Generations in Olton

Wednesday 20th May there is a meeting of CT in Olton with a view to establishing aspects of the Generations Project in Olton.

Regular pastoral links with Care Home residents and staff, along with willingness to offer occasional activities are sought.

Dementia Café ☕

The Generations Project has from the outset been challenged by dementia, with the need to relate to those who suffer, enable a continued Christian discipleship and support those who care for sufferers.

A key element of a Meeting Place would be the provision of a Dementia Café where sufferers and carers can meet for mutual support and appropriate activity.

On Monday 11th May the Generations Lunch Hour showing a video about dementia was open to anyone and was advertised in other local churches. We were challenged by an elderly couple where the husband cared for his wife and were clearly desperate for support.

It is suggested that we seek to establish a Dementia Café before the development of a Meeting Place. This will involve building a relationship with Alzheimers UK, networking places where those in need may be reached, spreading publicity and managing and enabling an afternoon of welcome, conversation, refreshment, information and activity.

Please 'sign up' if you are interested in exploring this further (with no obligation to participate yet).

A Welcome Meal 🍴

The Coptic Orthodox Church (old St Ninian's) is planning the provision of a cooked evening meal for needy individuals and families on a Friday evening. Plans to do this in our Mayflower Room are in their infancy, but may proceed quickly. Assistance from other churches is welcomed. Participation will build relationships with a church who do not, as yet, relate to Churches Together.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

A group of volunteers are ensuring that there is provision for children and young people every Sunday during worship.

Imaginative ideas are invited for ways in which we may engage with young people on other occasions

DBS CLEARANCES

Trixie Harman has volunteered to be our verifier for these. Church Meeting are asked to agree.

PASTORAL CARE

It seems clear that a variety of means need to be employed to enable us to exercise the sort of supportive care we wish to. All are based on relationships.

Beginning with Cell Group members we are seeking to 'map' existing relationships and will then look at others. We will also need to create ways of supporting those who are outside relationships that can offer pastoral care.

MEETING PLACE DEVELOPMENT

An initial 'brain-storming' discussion evening was helpful in enabling people to begin engaging with some of the detail of this project. There are three main elements that will need to be progressed by different groups:

- **The space** - the division between relaxation, activity, children, catering, with appropriate furnishing, lighting and decor.
- **The catering** - what will we offer as food and refreshments, what facilities are needed (kitchen and servery), who will do this and how will it be managed?
- **The activity** - creating relationships with particular groups for whom activities might be offered (a dementia café is an example of this).

There is an inter-relationship between all of these three elements and, in time there will be a need for overall management of our aims in mission and the facility, along with publicity.

This might be part of the consideration of how we replace a Warden with a role that is more than a lettings manager/caretaker.

Please look out for invitations to planning meetings in which you may participate.

PRAYER

All that is outlined in this 'Headlines' is dependent on your prayer as we seek to fulfil our Lord's purposes for us as a church, rather than our own bright ideas.

We continue with:

Fellowship Prayers - with a focus on individuals

Praying with the Papers - looking to the world

Word & Prayer - focussing on each of the three communities we seek to serve.

THEMES

Cell Groups are looking in various ways at the theme of 'Journey'. Discussions may focus on our spiritual journey but there is also encouragement for anyone, while making a journey, to be attentive to where they witness God - in people, in creation, in activity or to make comparisons between their physical journey and a spiritual one - what is the destination, who helps you get there, what are the obstacles and challenges etc.?

SOCIAL EVENTS

There is a need to create a new coordinating group - seeking to enable others to organise events that do not clash and encouraging events when there are gaps.

An opportunity to begin in on Thursday 21st May 7.00pm @ Olton Any interested are welcome.

On Friday 12th June - Popular & Folk Music with Colin McIlwaine and Carol Andrews @ Hobs Moat

Sunday 28th June - Garden Lunch @ Harmans'

United Coach Trippers continue a full programme.

Saturday 18th July Garden Party @ Kembery's

ZAIDIE ORR's ORDINATION & INDUCTION

This will be at Central URC, Sheffield on Saturday 1st August.

We need to know who would like to go to support Zaidie (sign list) and, if it is necessary, someone who would book and arrange a coach.

FRANC KELLY RETIREMENT

After 39 years serving Christ Church as Warden Franc retires in August. We will be organising an appropriate 'thank you', probably at the beginning of September.

The Elders are considering how the various roles that Franc fulfils may be fulfilled in the future.