

CHURCH MEETING

There is to be a meeting on **Sunday 25th January** following morning worship which will seek to address some of the matters included in this Bulletin.

COMMITMENTS

The process that we have been through to express our commitments to a variety of aspects of our mission has raised a number of issues amongst members. The following is some response.

It is recognised that the process has not been perfect.

There was a natural desire to note the opinions of active adherents as well as members. This is not straightforward as we cannot differentiate active/non-active adherents. Also, we have historically allowed numbers of non-active members, who have not participated in the discussions leading to our commitments.

In addition, many commitment returns were made anonymously, making any member/adherent differentiation impossible.

There has been some concern at the speed of the process. The careful programme to explore fully where we felt God was calling us in terms of mission prior to making decisions about premises was rendered unworkable by an overwhelming desire to make the commitment to premises quickly.

Recognising the complexities outlined in paragraph 2, every effort was made to ensure all members and active adherents could express their commitments. Distribution on 14th December was carefully recorded and others were posted or hand-delivered.

There was some ambiguity around the discussion meeting on Monday 5th (morning). A sheet of analysis of the declared commitments was distributed to aid discussion around mission. This made public the preferences expressed relating to premises and discussion followed based on this. The declared commitments indicated the mind of Church Members and are the substance of our decision. The discussion on Monday 5th has not been instrumental in this.

TRANSITION

We are preparing a way for us to celebrate the contributions that are being brought together in Solihull United Reformed Church from each of the constituent fellowship - Olton, Hobs Moat and Christ Church.

On Sunday 22nd February we will celebrate Hobs Moat.

On Sunday 1st March we will celebrate Christ Church.

On Sunday 8th March we will celebrate Olton.

From these celebrations we will draw things formally together at the Annual Church Meeting on Sunday 22nd March.

Then on Palm Sunday, 29th March, the Moderator Revd Roy Lowes will lead our worship and help us to walk with Christ - not only in his kingship, but through his trial and sufferings, dying to self in order that resurrection life might be ours.

LOOKING FORWARD

What follows is an indication of some things that may be important for the future.

Public Profile

- Attention is already being given to signs, publicity and website presence.

Transport

- We will explore establishing a coordinated scheme so that folk do not have to make their own arrangements, or have an alternative to their usual lifts to church events.

Property Management

- This is one of the bigger uncertainties indicated on the commitment returns. We will be seeking to find ways to make this much less of a burden on church members practically and financially, as well as monitoring the feasibility of this.

In Hobs Moat

- Another Christian church has expressed an interest in using the premises for regular Sunday worship.
- We hope to establish a week-day Cell Group that could offer a focus for prayer and worship in the community
- In time we will hope to expand activities that support the isolated and lonely from the local community.

In Olton

- There is interest from community groups in enabling continued use of the premises. This includes Kineton Green Primary School as well as tenant organisations. A further meeting to explore possibilities is planned.
- We have had conversations with the Cubs/Beavers regarding continued joint activities/worship. We will explore possibilities further.
- There are clear links with the other local churches which can lead to continued witness to the local community in partnership. This may include work with younger generations and with care home residents as part of an expanded Generations Project. Churches Together in Olton is the forum for pursuing this.

In Central Solihull

- We will be working to improve accessibility between church and halls.
- The possible establishment of a Meeting Place will be explored in order to serve final decisions in the near future.
- We will seek to ensure that all car parking spaces will be available to members on Sundays, giving priority to those who need to park close to the church premises.

Themes

- These are already being developed for Cell Groups and have been used within the Generations Project in care homes. Further development within church life and through activities that will involve the community is to be made over the coming months.

PRAYER

This remains the key to all that we might look forward to. We have hastened the measured process through which we were exploring what God is calling us to and while the needs of the lonely and isolated remain needs in society that claim our attention, we wish to be certain we hear God aright.