

ROUNDA BOUT



THE COTTERIDGE CHURCH
Witnessing at the Heart of the Community

November 2014

From the Editors' Desk



Welcome to Roundabout, in which we are sure you will find something to your taste. In this issue we again have two instalments of 'From the Vestry' as Mary and Chris introduce themselves.

There's also an article by Rachel Hayhow on a book she's been enjoying. Rachel asks us if this is an idea other readers may like to pick up. So, over to you.

Please let us have your items for the next issue no later than 29 December. You can put them in the 'W' pigeonhole in the Pennine Way or email them to marfleetwright@tiscali.co.uk.

Steve & Caroline

From the Vestry - Revd Mary Shannahan

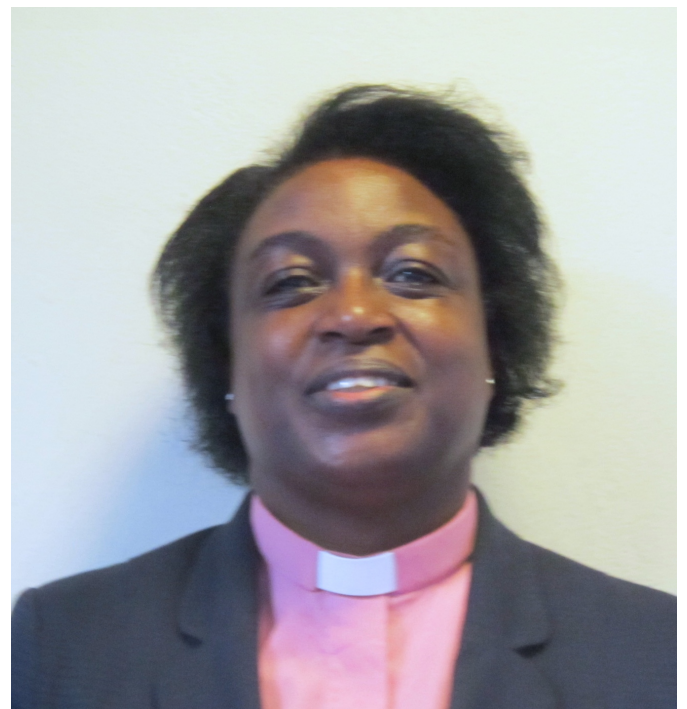
Dear Friends,

Thank you for your warm welcome to The Cotteridge United Church! It has been great to get to know you all these past two months. What I have begun to discover is a church that not only reaches out to the local community but also uses its gifts and talents to spread the Gospel of Christ. As a creative and caring congregation, the commitment to honouring the URC, Methodist and Anglican traditions is done in an incredibly thoughtful and imaginative way.

I have had the privilege of hearing some of your stories, now here is a little of mine.

I was born in Hackney, London and grew up on the Isle of Dogs and Poplar. Living just a stone's throw away from Upton Park I became a fan of West Ham football – the team all true Cockneys support!

I first went to church regularly at the age of ten and it was the Methodist Minister Douglas Woollen who nurtured my love for Jesus. He was a truly inspirational man who did not like the title reverend and insisted on being called Mr Woollen. Like Cotteridge, Poplar Methodist Mission was a beacon in the community and children and young people were the focus of its mission. I made many good friends during my formative years and met Chris, a northerner attending university in London.



We both became Church stewards and were married in 1990 leaving London shortly after. It was very difficult for us to leave our home church but knew God was calling us to a wider ministry, so saying farewell to our family and friends we travelled to another world – Birmingham! We haven't looked back since.

With two young children, I began training for the Ministry at Queens Theological College. My first appointment as a Minister was at South Yardley and Small Heath Methodist Churches. In 2011 we moved across Birmingham as I became the Minister of Longbridge and Hay Green Methodist Churches before joining the congregation here in Cotteridge in September.

As I remember my upbringing I think of the month of November and how remembering is an important part of our shared humanity. We remember aspects of our lives, past relationships, homes we lived in, schools attended and on the eleventh of November we remember the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for the sake of peace.

We remember those families and friends whose lives were completely changed because of war. And we remember that, sadly, war is not something that happened at the beginning or middle of the century, but is still happening and is still part of our lives.

We pay honour to those soldiers and navy personnel, men and women, who seek to bring peace to our world.

As we stand in silence on the eleventh, let us pray to Christ that love will prevail in our world and that all may live and play and work without fear.

Let us in the coming days hold this World peace prayer in our hearts.

Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth;
lead me from despair to hope,
from fear to trust;
lead me from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our heart,
our world, our universe.

Yours in Christ.

Mary

From the Vestry - Chris Dowd

As it's always best to start at the beginning, I suppose I should start by telling you that I grew up in the Australian outback where my father and mother ran a cattle station and my grandmother ran a pub. Growing up there might sound exotic but everywhere seems exotic when you've never been there...

I left the outback when I went to University as do many young people. I worked in various jobs and spent several years teaching management studies as well as being an HR manager. Like many young people I was disillusioned with the

church and was incredibly hostile to any form of organised religion.

This changed when a series of events left me single (after a relationship of many years), homeless and unemployed. I found myself crying at the back of a church because I just didn't know where else to go. This led to some serious reappraisal of my life and priorities that led me back to the Church and taking "six months out to find myself" in the UK.

Nineteen years later I'm still here. A big part of my decision to stay was meeting my partner, Will, a few weeks after I got here. I also got involved in a Church community in London that saw me firstly become an elder and later to pursue ordination.

I moved to Birmingham in 2003 to start a fresh expressions Church called Journey, which was

an outreach to the LGBT community. These were wonderful and fruitful years but as the years unfolded I realised that as the Church and society changed, I needed to become part of the broader church.

As I was already working for the United Reformed Church as a University Chaplain, it felt simple and right to apply to be recognised as a Minister of Word and Sacrament within the URC. I was offered a year to finish my doctorate (a Doctor of Contextual Theology – Thd not Phd!) on the religious experiences of transgendered people and a nine month placement in a congregation.

My main passion within church is mission. If we are going to reach to those folk who (like me in my 20's) feel the church is irrelevant with nothing to offer apart from guilt and control, we need to show the world unforced rhythms of grace transforming us as we attempt to connect to the world.

When I'm not at Church you are likely to find me in the kitchen cooking, going to the movies, reading trashy novels or playing with my dogs Oscar and Bea. I go to gym with varying degrees of enthusiasm depending on how much the bathroom scales groan.....

Well you sort of know the rest... I started at Cotteridge Church and Beaumont Rd URC in September and will be with you to June. I am excited and looking forward to our time together.....

Chris Dowd

A Reflection for Remembrance

On my visit to the National Memorial Arboretum I really wanted to find one particular memorial that recalls a very sad event in WWI. It is right at the far end of the arboretum and is for the young men who were 'Shot at Dawn'.

A signpost points away from the main path and, through the trees, a space opens up to show a number of wooden posts, each with a name on.





I was surprised how many there were, how young the soldiers were and that some deaths were as late as 1918. These were boys, 16, 17 and 18, not hardened soldiers. No doubt they thought going to war would be an adventure. They had gone to fight for King and Country. They weren't prepared for the conditions – the mud, the stench, the noise and dead bodies all around them. Wouldn't you have wanted to run away? Did they have to be shot? What about prison? And what about those who had to fire the shots? The statue in front of the posts shows a man, blindfolded with hands tied. On his chest is a disc, to show where to aim. It is a very simple but moving memorial to those frightened and tragic young boys.

As an ex-soldier, I wonder what I would have done.

Len Burt

Family & Friends

We start with two 'Welcomes': Sophie Patience Hayhow and Olivia Grace Roper both born last month. Congratulations to both families.

It's 'Happy Birthday' and 'Congratulations' to regular Coffee Bar customer Derek Fisher who turned 90 years young at the beginning of October. We are informed that Derek enjoys nothing better than a custard tart (or two), a cup of tea and his crossword.

Janet Cliff - 1942-2014

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to thank everyone for their kind wishes, thoughts and prayers following Janet's death on 20 April. It was inevitable that it was going to happen and we were comforted by the fact that she died on Easter Sunday and went to Heaven on the same day as our Lord. Her funeral was on 1 May with the interment of her ashes on 24 September at Lodge Hill.

Janet's father died on a troop ship when she was 2 years old and is buried in a



cemetery in Bombay. Her mother moved in with her grandparents which was where she grew up. She attended Kings Norton Methodist Church as a child, was a member of the Girls' Brigade and subsequently an officer. She was an active member of the church in many ways until her death. She enjoyed being a member of the choir and greeting people as they arrived for the service on a Sunday morning.

Janet was a devoted wife and mother, a professional housewife who looked after her family with care and enthusiasm. She enjoyed cooking, especially cakes and biscuits that were popular with all who visited the house. Janet had many friends for various

reasons – the church, neighbours, colleagues from Camp Hill Girls School where she worked for over 20 years. These and other relationships contributed to the number of people who attended her memorial service at the church. We recall how full the church was and also the enthusiasm with which the hymn “Will your anchor hold” was sung. The retiring collection at this service coupled with donations made directly to the funeral directors amounted to almost £1300, which was donated to the church and St. Mary's Hospice.

She is sadly missed but we are strengthened by remembering her life and we thank the Lord for allowing us to share our lives with Janet.

John Cliff

Flowers At the Cotteridge Church.

With Christmas nearly upon us (yes it is and sorry to remind you of its proximity) I thought I'd remind you of the floral decorations and arrangements we've had throughout the year. Easter is the first decorative event of the year and I hope the pillars and cross arrangement did not disappoint this year. A summer wedding is a rare occurrence at Cotteridge and we were thrilled to be able to decorate the church for Lucy and Dave in July. The church looked fabulous, a riot of blue and white for a stunning bride and her handsome bridegroom. During the summer we've enjoyed some beautiful arrangements and a very small but dedicated team



of people give their time and their creative skills to arrange the pedestal and chapel flowers each week, funded entirely by donations mostly for birthdays and anniversaries, but some just donations. Look out for something different for Remembrance Sunday and then later in December the Christmas pillars and pedestal. If you would like to donate to the Flower Fund or think you would like to join the team of arrangers, even if it is for just one week's arrangement, please see The Flower Rota for 2015 on the notice board, please add your name if you can contribute in any way to keeping the Cotteridge Church decorated. A huge Thank You to all the arrangers for helping me keep the church decorated and to all those who have donated to the Flower Fund this year.

Lin Brown

Our Roller-Coaster Spiritual Year

No matter how much we plan our lives, God may have different plans for us. The first part of our year we planned, the second part we did not! A year ago we spent the last 2 weeks of our 6-week China holiday working for Crossroads in Hong Kong. As you may recollect from our previous articles on that trip, Crossroads sends containers of used, but high quality, equipment to charities in developing countries and links charities' needs with potential corporate suppliers. Unfortunately, only one bid in four is approved. We had some good news a few weeks ago when we learnt that the bid we helped to put together and facilitate from Kirongo Methodist Hospital in Kenya, had been successful.

2014 started off well. Our annual Faiths for Fun event for children was the most successful of the 7 years we have been organising it with over 80 children and 60 adults of different faiths attending. Similarly our 3rd Faiths, Health & Wellbeing event at the University of Birmingham was well attended with a high level of participation.

As in recent years our spiritual journey this year included participation at the Methodists for World Mission conference at Swanwick, focusing on mission in South Asia, followed by the Us (Anglican) mission conference at High Leigh, at which we explored the transformative Gospel. It was a great privilege for us to participate in the International Association for Religious Freedom global conference at the University of Birmingham. It was heartening to see people from so many different countries working together for world peace and justice.

NewWine
Local churches changing nations

Our weekend of Christian meditation at Stanton House and the days we spent at New Wine were both spiritually refreshing in



different ways. The first, as the title implies, was a quiet weekend spent meditating on a variety of inspiring Christian phrases. There were over 11,000 Christians present at the New Wine festival, a sort of Christian 'Glastonbury'. Of these, 2,000 were under 25 years of age. There were between 6,000 and 7,000 people present at the evening services, and equally divided between men and women. We came away feeling truly uplifted.

But nothing could have prepared us for the bombshell in store for us. We had heard from Peter's younger sister, Margaret, in June that she had been diagnosed with colon cancer and was starting chemotherapy. Peter's youngest sister died of cancer 6 years ago. The bombshell was compounded at the beginning of September, when Jean was admitted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital as an emergency with severe abdominal pains and underwent surgery the following day. She also was diagnosed with cancer and is starting 6 cycles of chemotherapy at the City Hospital, each 3 weeks apart, with possible further surgery after 3 cycles. As we said at the beginning none of us know what is around the next corner for us. However, it is in our vulnerability that we become more aware of God's presence, and our interdependence on the people around us. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank to everyone for their kindness, good wishes and prayers. We are very positive about the future, whatever that may be and continue to do the things we have previously done, within our capability. We ask you to keep us in your prayers.

Blessings

Peter & Jean Rookes

Junior Church Promotions Sunday 2014

We've welcomed two new families to Junior Church in the past year and now have 42 children on the register. We promoted 3 children in September, James Adams, Jamaine Babb Watson and Isla Cliff. They have now started school and so moved from Beginners to Primary.

We currently have 7 children in the Crèche/Beginners group, who enjoy playing with toys and looking at books, as well as bible story time and craft each week.

Following the promotions, the Primary group had 19 children on the register. Over the past year they have followed the Scripture Union Splash programme, as well as other sessions on specific topics. One of these led to them delivering a whole service on Mothering Sunday about Cotteridge Church and what Cotteridge means to them. They even decided who was going to be the treasurer and organist in the future! In the summer term, they produced a very colourful folder about Cotteridge church and their own interests, to send to our Action Aid sponsor child, "Godknows Madyambudzi", in Zimbabwe.

There are now 16 young people in the Seniors group. They've continued to combine sessions from the Scripture Union Grid programme with visits from various speakers. They also researched and delivered a service about Action Aid

and our sponsor child. One particular theme this year was that of the Exodus and the consideration of refugees. This culminated in "World Food Night", for which they planned and cooked all the food, prepared quizzes and organised entertainment. This was a really enjoyable evening which raised £593 for Refugee Action. The young people are keen that we help them to relate the bible to everyday life and this is an example of just that.

Other highlights this year were our Junior Church Christmas Service, a New Year party for the younger ones and a film evening for the Seniors. We ended our summer session with a family BBQ in the church garden.

In the coming year, we'll be looking for more new things to do, including a possible trip to a working monastery and we're once again hoping to take part in the St Basil's sleepout. We now have rather a large Primary Group. Thanks to 4 new volunteers, we were able to split this group from 26th October, into an Infants age group and a Juniors group. We will now be able to deliver more age related sessions, which should make a real difference.

I'm most grateful to the leaders and helpers in Junior Church, who all work very hard to deliver an exciting and varied programme to the children. Many thanks to Pam Waddell, Clare Naughton, Liz Larkin, Tim Clayton, Chris Allen, Sonia Howard, Alex Clayton, Josh Vail, Rita Sutton, Ruth Roadley-Battin, Chloe Sprackling, Christine Turner, Alison Sprackling, Jane Jones, Chris Pascal and Angela Bugden.

Sue Clayton

Cotteridge Church Older Adults Service

The service offers places for anyone over 55 to join our day centre service where we have daily entertainment and activities.

We have had some lovely trips over the summer to local beauty spots and the Safari Park and are planning Christmas shopping trips to garden and shopping centres.

We are also running a 'Silver Surfers' group to help over-55s with their computer skills.

Why not pop in and see if we can be of service to you.



I've been enjoying this.... Surprised by Grace: parables and prayers, by Susan Durber It can be difficult to read - or listen to - parables. We are too familiar with them, and think we know what they mean, and what we ought to think about them.

So I have found dipping into this collection of parables really refreshing and eye-opening.



Susan Durber says that Jesus belonged to the Jewish tradition of story-telling that didn't think stories had only one correct meaning, but could be explored again and again and keep giving us new insights.

She then gives a very approachable reading of each parable which has often turned my idea of it on its head and shown me the story, and God's world, in a new light. They truly do surprise by grace.

Each parable is accompanied by a prayer and an evocative picture. I keep wanting to give it to people, but you can order it yourself

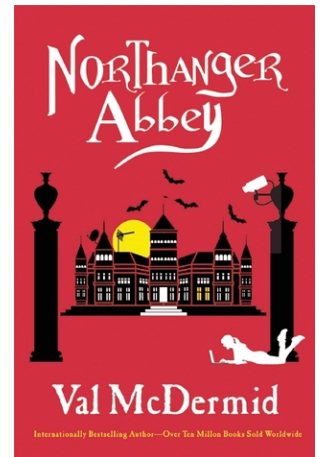
from URC publications – or maybe Roger could get it in for us?

Rachel Hayhow

Book Club

Our next meeting is at 56 Foxes Meadow on 4 November at 8pm. We'll be discussing Northanger Abbey – no, not that one. This is a modern rewrite by crime author Val McDermid.

Christine Adams



Boys' Brigade



Our Enrolment service took place on Friday 3 October when our new Company Chaplain Rev Joycelyn Lewis-Gregory presented the boys and staff with their new enrolment cards. Mike Meadows, Company President awarded the 'Best Boy' trophies to Anchors-Taylor Mason (Anchors), Blake Dodd (Juniors) and Company section - Euan Clayton and Seniors Chris Butt and James Hobson. The 'Ron Clarke Memorial Shield' was presented to Josh Vail.

The Battalion Junior Section Quiz heats also took place during October. Our team Blake, Finlay, Denis and Alex scored 105 points and we now await to see if we have qualified for the finals in November. Thanks to Chris Adams who acted as our quiz master.



Our annual BB week is 2-9 November when the boys and staff raise funds for the company. Every year we have to pay a capitation fee to BB headquarters [£702 this year]. Any donation would be appreciated by all the boys and staff.

Bob Hotchkiss

Magic Breakfast Club fundraising update

magic breakfast
fuel for learning

Every Easter Junior Church fills canisters with mini Easter eggs which the congregation is asked to exchange for a small donation to charity. Last Easter the Seniors group chose a new charity called, Magic Breakfast (www.magicbreakfast.com). We chose this

charity because, at the time, we were focusing on the topic of exam stress as we could relate to this topic ourselves. This charity provides free, nutritious breakfast food, for example bagels, porridge, orange juice and cereals, to over 8,500 children in 242 UK primary schools. The charity targets schools where over 35% of the children are living in poverty and eligible for Free School Meals. They feel that in each one of those schools, many children arrive at school too hungry to learn. Providing a good breakfast helps these children to reach their full potential and achieve their daily goals.

A student receiving a Magic Breakfast said:

‘We had a breakfast club during our SATs and it helped me get higher levels’ – Rashye, Islington.

So far, the Church has raised a staggering £200 for our chosen charity with more donations coming in still. This number could be even higher if those who still have canisters at home fill them with money and return them. This would help the charity to support more children by providing them with their breakfast.

Bethany Jones, Kathryn Clayton, Arama and Clarissa
Lemon

Leprosy Mission Stamp Appeal



Last year the Leprosy Mission made more than £120,000 from donated Christmas stamps. Considering that fewer cards are sent than previously this is a significant amount. The money goes into the charity's funds to help people like Manja, Mohammad and Shimna.

Manja – Married at 14, Manja had five children. She later contracted leprosy and her husband asked her to leave the family home. Her right leg had to be amputated and then her left leg became infected. Manja suffered nerve damage in both hands and muscle damage in her face which was so bad she was unable to close her eyes for more than ten years. Finally, she was treated in a Leprosy Mission hospital where surgery has prevented any further loss to her sight.

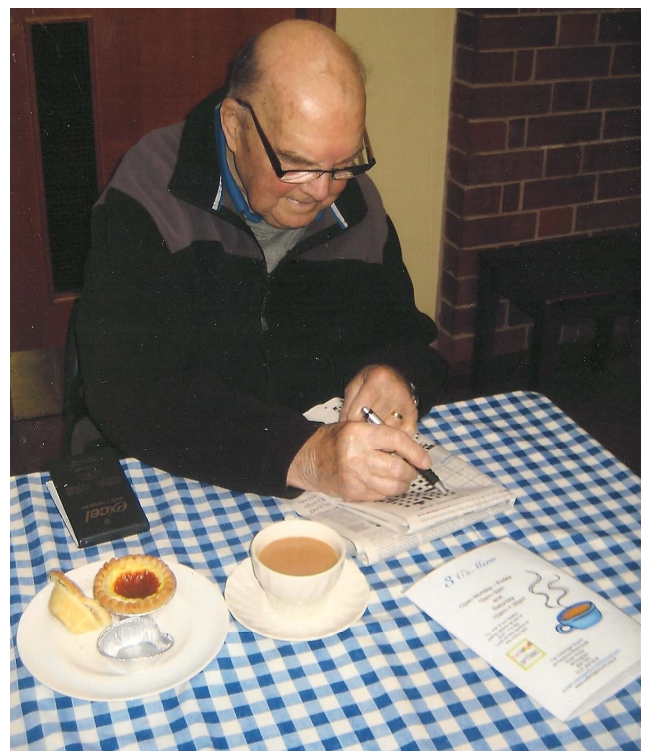
Mohammad – leprosy has caused 16 year old Mohammad's fingers to 'claw', and his feet to drag meaning he is no longer able to play his beloved cricket. He, too, has muscle damage leaving his eyes unable to close and his sight in danger. Surgery can help.

Shimna – just 9 years old when she was diagnosed with leprosy, Shimna's illness was no surprise to her family as her father and siblings had previously been diagnosed and treated. Shimna had a long stay in hospital, where she was nursed back to health. Back in school, she was shunned by her friends, who didn't want to sit with her. Even her teacher told her to sit at the back.

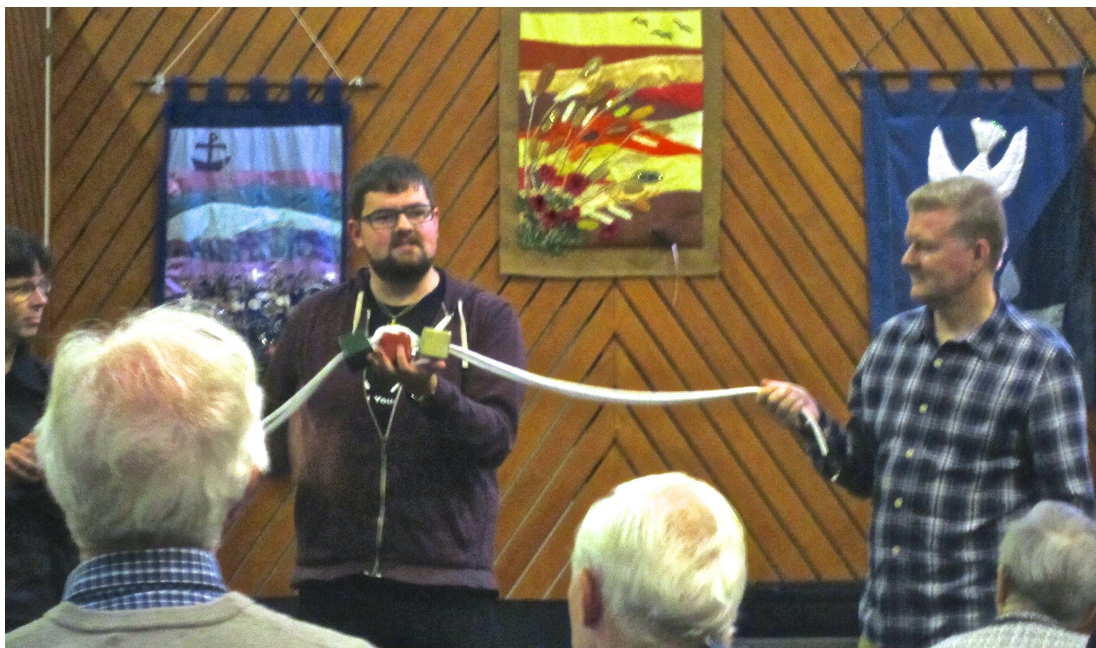


Please put your stamps in the box by the pigeon holes at the end of the Pennine Way – thank you.

Photo Gallery



Cotteridge Has Talent!



The Cotteridge Church

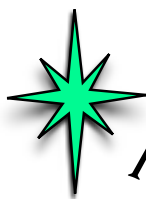
CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 6th December
2014

from 10.00 a.m. ~ 1.00 p.m.

Welcome!

Enjoy!



Music



Stalls



Gifts

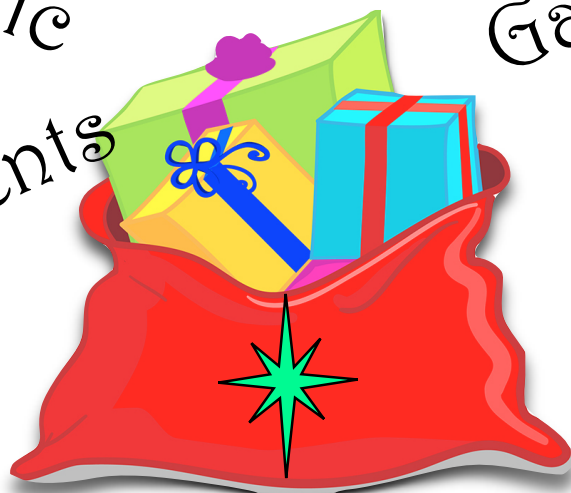


Santa



Games

Refreshments



Faiths For Our City
in partnership with
Birmingham Council of Faiths

Faith, Health & Wellbeing Seminar

Fri 28th November 10.00-4.30 (registration 9.30)

The University of Birmingham
Orchard Learning & Resource Centre
Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, B29 6QW

'What is new in Health Care?' Dr Peter Rookes, 3rd Sector Liaison Officer,
Birmingham Council of Faiths, Lay Adviser Birmingham CrossCity CCG
'Spirituality & Disability' Christopher Barber, Full-time care giver, RCN West
Midlands Board member, Lay Cistercian.

'Advocacy & Dignity Champions' Margaret Harries, Lead Nurse-Older Adults
'Researching the Sandwell "Chaplains for Wellbeing" service' Dr Peter Kevern,
Associate Professor in Values in Care, Staffordshire University

'The role of Faith in Mental Health' Daniel Singleton, Director, Faith Action
'Palliative & End of Life Care' Gabriella-Nivas Ravy, Senior Operations Officer
Birmingham CrossCity CCG

'Religion & the NHS Equality Delivery System' Michelle Dunne, Interim
Manager for Equality and Diversity, Birmingham CrossCity CCG

Tea and coffee can be purchased at the refreshment bar, but please

bring your own packed lunch.

The Orchard Learning and Resource Centre is accessible by the 61, 63 and 98
buses from the City Centre and approximately 15 minutes' walk from Selly Oak
Station. Free parking is available around the site.

There is no charge for the event.

Contact Peter and Jean Rookes to book a place at pjrookes@gmail.com, phone
477 2282.



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