

Standing in the gaps

Towards the end of last year, Birmingham Churches Together consulted with you to gain a better understanding of the support and resources that local churches require in response to the challenges of poverty and deprivation faced across the communities of our region.

Your responses show that many local churches across our city region are standing alongside people who have fallen into gaps created by shortfalls in financial, emotional and physical support, for example nearly half of the 91 people who responded support emergency hardship projects and 60% hold events that address loneliness and isolation.

Standing in these gaps is a natural outworking of Christian faith and integral to discipleship. However, spending time in the gaps is emotionally demanding, especially when problems appear overwhelming and developing resources complex.

The consultation highlighted the difficulty of collaborating across the Christian communities of the large urban conurbations of our city region. It can result in those standing in the gaps feeling isolated and unsupported, especially at a time when the resources of many local churches are limited and fully stretched.

Following the consultation, Birmingham Churches Together and Thrive Together are responding in two ways: firstly BCTs Ecumenical Development Group is consulting with key people to identify new ways of strengthening connections and sharing resources across the city region; and secondly Thrive Together is developing a volunteering tool.

For more information contact: Revd Colin Marsh,

Ecumenical Development Officer, Birmingham Churches Together

enquiries@birminghamchurches.org.uk.

The Jericho Foundation - Trustee story



Jericho was born out of a vision that God gave to Christine Parkinson, a mission worker, based at Edward Road Baptist Church in Balsall Heath in 1993. She saw that on the doorstep of the Church was a 'Red Light' district of Birmingham - but what to do? To really help someone out of the life they were trapped in, she realised that ways had to be found to help them find another life.

Jericho's mission is to *'help individuals overcome barriers and become fulfilled skilled and employed'*. The first people in the Bible filled with the Spirit were the craftsmen building the Temple! Work gives people dignity and independence.

Being a Trustee of Jericho has been one of the most fulfilling but challenging roles I have ever undertaken. We mostly help some of the most disadvantaged 16 – 24 year olds who often have multiple problems and need love care and friendly discipline to find their way into the workplace.

In 2003 Jericho ran government funded welfare to work schemes. In the long term these were unsustainable and did not address the complicated needs of many of our clients. So we developed social enterprises where people can be mentored in a caring environment.

Jericho now runs construction, landscaping, printing and promotion, recycling, reuse, cleaning, catering and retail businesses where people can gain valuable work experience and accredited qualifications for the workplace. We employ over 50 people to run these organisations and mentor up to 60 of the apprentices and/or trainees we are helping at any time.

Our vision and passion is to equip people for the workplace. This is one of the key issues facing Birmingham, and we are becoming more aware of the challenges nationally. We have recently been awarded our largest construction project by a local Housing Association - the £1.26m refurbishment of Ravenhurst Cottages in Nechells will provide 24 self-contained 1 bedroom flats for young homeless people and will provide training, apprenticeships and work experience for the future residents and others during its construction.

We have also been chosen to partner with Carillion in insulating properties throughout Birmingham which again will help many people in the city not only in providing apprenticeship opportunities but also by relieving fuel poverty, improving the housing stock and reducing carbon emissions. Over the past 5 years we have worked with many thousands of people and helped hundreds into work or other positive outcomes. We have faced many challenges, as Government policy has changed and financial challenges have come our way but as each crisis has been faced God has provided and spoken clearly to us.

I have been a Christian since my teenage years and involved in Church life ever since. I have also been in business for over 30 years in the construction industry. I have been struck as I have more recently looked back at Church history to discover the visionary efforts of the Christian community in reshaping the economy with lasting positive effect. There are many examples but two are particularly striking and created inestimable prosperity. Cathedral building created jobs and communities, and fostered the arts. The Abbey National Building Society, now owned by Santander, was started by the Abbey Road Baptist Church in North London – providing the means for those with wealth to provide funds for housing in the local community.

We now need Christians more than ever to step up to the challenge of reshaping our society. This is why I serve as a Trustee and I am so excited about what God is doing through this Charity. We have fantastic dedicated staff who are passionate about what we are doing.

If you would like to find out more about Jericho or are interested in exploring the possibility of joining me on the Trustee board then please come and find out more at a short breakfast meeting on Friday 23rd August at 08.00am at The Courtyard Cafe at Jericho.

You can contact me by email at MartinRWarner@aol.com

Martin Warner, Trustee, The Jericho Foundation, 196-197 Edward Rd, B12 9LX (0121 440 7919 or birmingham@jericho.org.uk)

The Jericho Foundation - participant's story



My background.

I'm a 21 year old male and I came to Jericho a few days after my 20th birthday. I have a severe stammer and I also have mental health issues such as; depression, anxiety and high levels of paranoia. I got told my mental health issues were caused by my childhood upbringing. I also got told my high levels of anxiety makes my stammer 90% worst.

I studied at South Birmingham College from the age of 14 because no school would take me. At 14 I was in a pre 16 unit. This unit was for kids that couldn't get into schools because of exclusions and other reasons. Then at the age of 16 I was studying ICT at south Birmingham College and getting in a lot of trouble outside college. I was getting straight distinctions in my first year at college. But in the second year at college it went from bad to worst. I was capable of doing the work, I could have been the best in the class but I just gave up and stopped going college the majority of the time.

At the late age of 18 I stopped going out altogether because I was getting into too much trouble, so I stayed in and dropped out of college and became anti social. I was in my room for over 23 hours a day. I didn't go downstairs to talk to my Nan. The only time I left the house was to go to Asda and this was at 3am in the morning. I became obsessed on a computer game because I had so much idle time on my hands. I become suicidal, I started to take anti depressants and let myself starve from the fear of being judged when going downstairs.

I was still anti social but then a support worker from the Princes Trust introduced me to a company called Remploy. I went there and on the first time going there they told me about Jericho and their apprenticeships programme. A few days later I went for an interview at the Jericho Foundation, I was really nervous but they offered me a place.

Intervention

Since being at Jericho my stammer has got 50% better. I had no work experience previous to Jericho, but since being at Jericho I feel like I have learned so much and gained a lot of confidence. The people at Jericho have given me lots of support and helped me start to become the person I want to be. I was the first to complete my Level 2 NVQ Business Admin portfolio, I have been kept on at Jericho as a Level 3 Apprentice with a pay rise and got extended for another year. I have now been taken off my antidepressants since being at Jericho. I have a new girlfriend and I have now got my own flat.

After my contract ends at Jericho I'm hopefully going to go back to College to do an access course to prepare me for studying Psychology and Sociology at University, I want to be a form of social worker when I'm older. Although I wouldn't recommend Jericho to everybody, I would recommend Jericho to disadvantaged people; they have good support for people who are always in trouble and for people with disabilities.

Racial Justice Sunday, 8 September



Dreams of the 'beloved community'

August 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King Jr's monumental 'I have a dream' speech which spoke about all God's people living in freedom and peace in a world governed by truth and justice.

Dr King joined over 250,000 of his fellow Americans that day in Washington to commemorate the centenary of President Abraham Lincoln's 'Emancipation Proclamation' to free African-Americans. Lincoln, who was the USA's 16th President, is often known as the Great Emancipator for his historic act. Dr King was in Washington to argue that the freedoms promised by President Lincoln to the newly-emancipated African-Americans never really materialised, and the March on Washington was an attempt to encourage all Americans to re-commit themselves to the Emancipation Proclamation's original promise. Dr King's speech still remains an inspirational call for us to work for an equitable world.

Go to the website for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/644> to download a resource pack for 2013. It offers a service for all ages together, with a range of ideas and activities around the theme of dreams, visions and the 'Beloved Community'.

Racial Justice Sunday is 8 September 2013,
but can be marked on any Sunday during the year. Visit: <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/644>



RESTORE – supporting refugees and those seeking sanctuary



Restore's Annual Report was circulated in June. Befrienders and refugees contributed to the report covering our work of 2012. We share with you a joyful story of a refugee's reunion with his family:

"My befriender phoned me very excitedly to say that finally his wife and two children have their visas to join him in the UK. He fled Darfur three years ago and hadn't seen them since – in fact, for two years they had no contact and he didn't know whether they were alive or dead. My wife and I drove him and his friend to Heathrow to meet them. The plane landed on time at 10pm, but we were still waiting in a rapidly emptying Arrivals area at 11pm.

At last the aluminium doors open and there they were – she in a long black robe with red headscarf with the children, in their best clothes, hesitant beside her. My befriender does not move. His wife walks slowly, with great grace and dignity, to the end, and he is there facing her. It was like slow motion. They folded into a gentle embrace, almost as if they weren't quite sure if the other was solid flesh and then simply stand and hold each other. She is wiping away tears as he stoops ever so gently to clasp his son and then his daughter. It is reverent – a truly holy moment.

The evening was a time of great joy, for us as well as the family who now begin life together in a new country where they are safe at last."

City of Sanctuary – Birmingham

City of Sanctuary is a national movement of people and community groups committed to creating a culture of welcome and safety, especially for refugees seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. Local City of Sanctuary groups have been established in over 30 cities and towns across the UK. We want refugees to feel safe and welcome in our city too! The Birmingham City Council has passed a resolution agreeing to "explore the appetite to achieve City of Sanctuary status".

We need your action to confirm support for this movement of City of Sanctuary. Please consider going to www.cityofsanctuary.org/birmingham to sign a resolution of support.

We also ask individuals, churches and organisations to think how they can help make Birmingham more welcoming. This could include:

- Organising an event to learn about refugees and encouraging your church or community group to pledge support
- Hosting an event which welcomes and includes refugees
- Volunteering for a project like Restore or a Place of Welcome

To contact Restore: telephone 0121 236 0069 or email info@restore-uk.org

Churches and Industry Group Birmingham



Using Money Passionately



The Greek word 'austere' which appears in Luke's Parable of the Talents (Luke 19:21,22), means a sense of dryness. In church history, austerity has been a way of life that has been voluntarily chosen by individuals who want to pursue a sort of simple, ascetic spirituality. It has not normally been used by the church to describe a discipline that is imposed on other people against their will. One response by churches to an imposed 'age of austerity' could be to respond with an attitude of passion and generosity - and to encourage people who have a faithful passion of their own.

Churches were recently challenged to choose to work with businesses and social enterprises that put passion and community at the heart of their purpose. *Social Enterprise West Midlands* are challenging communities to buy their resources from the well of social enterprise rather than 'the dusty, dry corporations': 72% of social enterprises reinvest their income back in their local communities, because of their beliefs and commitment.

DWF - a law firm in Birmingham - told the conference on Business Social Responsibility of their own vision to transfer knowledge and power so that individuals and communities grow their own future. They say that their business heart is set on shared-value initiatives to create lasting impact by enabling community potential. With the cuts to the public sector, the private sector is being asked to rise to the challenge, and social responsibility is no longer an optional policy.

The Institute for Social Enterprise in Birmingham runs www.shopforchange.info which allows people in Birmingham to source goods from local social enterprises. www.buyse.co.uk is a similar national database to allow people to get in touch with social enterprises from across the UK. As well as using them themselves, churches could have a role in promoting and publicising local social enterprises.

Social enterprises create new wealth in more self-reliant and sustainable ways and enshrine certain core values in the market place. Social enterprise is one of the UK's fastest growing sectors, with an estimated 62,000 examples currently operating across the country - more than 20% of them are based in the West Midlands itself. More than 200 schools in the UK now run their own social enterprises and have the topic on the curriculum.

The 'Market Place' is a great opportunity for changing behaviour and sharing values; for linking rich and poor; for breaking down barriers between strangers. It is no surprise that the Market Place was where Jesus, and St Paul, found their ministry to be most fruitful.

The Churches and Industry Group Birmingham and Solihull can assist local church communities to support their faithful local economies. Peter Sellick, CIGB Development Director, 0121 426 0425 or Peter.sellick@cigb.org.uk

Back to Church Sunday

This year Back to Church Sunday is on Sunday 29th September.

For information and resource materials, go to www.backtochurch.co.uk

BackToChurchSunday   

Taking over the City: Midnight Oil Summit



3000 Young people to converge on Birmingham for major 3 day conference about faith

Seth Pinnock, cited as a young leader to watch by the creators of the Black Power List, will be hosting one of the UK fastest growing faith based non-denominational BME youth gatherings when he stages the 7th annual Midnight Oil Summit conference at Britain's second capital city, Birmingham from 18-20 July.

Up to 3000 young people, across racial, cultural and denominational divides are expected to converge on Birmingham for the three day event will take place in three famous landmarks in the city: Birmingham Conservatoire, the world famous Symphony Hall and Centenary Square. MOS delegates will be able to take participate and enjoy a wide range of activities which will include the first ever live recording of a gospel album at the world famous Symphony Hall. A range of artists including Seth's group, ANT will perform songs he's written over the years.

Seth, aged 23 and deemed the youngest person to ever book the Symphony Hall for an event stated: "Midnight Oil Summit aims to show young people that Christianity is exciting and relevant and has something to say about all areas of their lives." He continued, "I believe that young people will turn out in their droves to attend MOS because they know they won't leave the same as when they arrived. They'll be stretched, encouraged and equipped to meet the challenges of life and to make a difference and also get the opportunity to meet fellow believers from different Christian traditions and countries. I'm also looking forward to recording the debut MOS gospel album. It's going to be great."

Other activities taking place during the three day MOS conference include:

- ◇ MO Street Party in Centenary Square featuring dance performances, choir performances and a picnic
- ◇ Futurebuilders: a Reception for up-and coming as well as established young leaders
- ◇ Gender specific conferences dealing with a range of issues including sex, relationships,
- ◇ Launch of the Alpha Orchestra, comprised of musicians across the cultural and denominational divides

Participants scheduled to take part in Midnight Oil Summit 2013 include MOBO award winner Jahaziel, National Day of Prayer Convener Pastor Jonathan Oloyede, CCM artist Philippa Hanna, leading praise and worship artist Noel Robinson, Andy Hawthorne, founder of the Message Trust and many many more.

Seth shared, "We have brought together some of the UK's leading Christian speakers, teachers and artists to inspire, empower and motivate the young people and adults that will be attending MOS to be the best they can be, live the best lives they can and be agents of positive change and social transformation in their communities."

Seth was inspired to start Midnight Oil Summit when he was a 16 year old college student. He wanted to put on an event where young people could enhance and develop their Christian faith. He held his first ever MOS in 2007 when he was aged 17 and still a student at college. Seth stacked shelves in Asda and carried out a range of fundraising activities to raise money to finance his first ever MOS conference, which was held at Bethel Convention Centre, in West Bromwich and attracted 500 people. It now attracts thousands.

For more details phone 0161 946 2300.



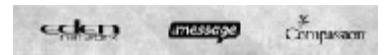
Taking Over the City

Thursday 18th July – Saturday 20th July 7th Anniversary

Be part of this historic gathering. 'To unite, to worship and to empower'.
This vision, given to a teenager has become a movement, a mission and a miracle.

Thursday 18th July	6pm – 9pm Recital Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire & 'Futurerbuilders Leaders Reception'
Friday 19th July	12pm – 12.30pm Centenary Square: Opening Ceremony, followed by Mo Street Party until 3pm. 6pm – midnight – Symphony Hall – Midnight Cry
Saturday 20th July	8am – 11am Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire – Prayer Plus 11am – 1pm – Recital Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire – A.Men Conference 11am – 1pm – Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire – Woven conference & The Bakery 1pm – 3pm Centenary Square – Mo Street Party 3pm – 5pm – Woven Conference 6pm – 10pm – Symphony Hall – Live in Worship.

Visit the website <http://godsbride.org.uk/gatherings/midnight-oil-summit/welcome3.html> for full details and ticket pricing



Recycling with the Boys Brigade!



We have the Means in Our Hands !

As Christians, we are well aware of the poverty that exists in many areas of Birmingham. In 2013, we still have 35% of our children living in poverty. The poor family, wherever on this globe it originates from, now lives in Birmingham, dysfunctional because of debt, despair of employment or increasing income to pay basic needs, at risk of offending to accrue some wealth and constantly struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

Children of these families, more than any, need the security and self-esteem that the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association is able to bring to an otherwise chaotic life. All the support we freely give to referred individuals and families in need is directly funded by the recycling of clothes and furniture in our shops and recycling centre.

Church members need to know the value of their unwanted clothes, shoes and handbags (£600 per 100 full black bin liners) - congregations really need to get the message out that we can work together to create jobs for our young people and support our families in need. We can provide a child with a comfortable bed to sleep in as well as invite him to activities.

We need more church members to remember that donated furniture, crockery, cutlery, toys and books for the children and clothes for the family can be supplied at very little cost if the donations remain high. Referrals are taken from housing managers, probation officers, integrated family support teams and other agencies working with those in danger of becoming homeless.

The value of clothes and shoes thrown away each year in Birmingham is worth a staggering £11 million pounds each year - how much more supporting our brothers and sisters in need could we achieve as a network of churches - if we all recycled our belongings to support these families in need?

The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association are supporting children of offenders; female offenders; unemployed young people through providing training and work experience and most importantly, opening new groups to provide children and young people with a positive activity programme that develops their personal experience of being a young Christian.

Please ask us to come and talk to your church about Christian Recycling

To come and tell our story about Christian Recycling at Your Church, contact: - Ann Reaney 0121 333 5873

To enquire about opening a recycling group in your church with funding!! Peter Newton/Sean Clancy on 0121 333 5868

Just Caring



Just Caring Midlands

– a new Christian charity providing support to vulnerable young adults.

Just Caring Midlands is a newly established Christian charity based in Birmingham whose main aim is to provide support and care to vulnerable and disadvantaged adults.

They operate in the Birmingham area, initially starting out in the south of the city. They are seeking to offer help to people between the ages of 18-25, but will assess each individual case that is referred to us. As a new charity they primarily offer a befriending and mentoring service; offering 'help' in whatever form that may be needed.

If you would like to know more or would like them to share something about themselves with your congregation or colleagues, they would be more than happy to come and speak and give a presentation. Please get in contact with them if this is of interest to you. Additionally, you may know of adults in your church or connected with your organisation that are vulnerable and would benefit from some additional support, such as that provided by Just Caring Midlands. If this is the case please do get in contact them.

You can also visit their website, which you can find at www.justcaring.org.uk

Please do not hesitate to contact them should you wish to have more information or if you know of anyone who would particularly benefit from Just Caring Midlands' care and support provision. Their e-mail address is admin@justcaring.org.uk

Christian Aid



India Floods Appeal: At least 20,000 people are missing and over 600 people have died after flash floods and landslides swept through northern India. Rains believed to be the worst in 80 years are affecting up to 1 million people, and the death toll is likely to rise above 5,000 according to government sources. Christian Aid partners are already responding but your help is needed. Envelopes for churches are available.

Harvest Resources: As you and your church give thanks for God's goodness this harvest, please share the inspiring story of the work of Christian Aid's partner, the Pro-Indigenous Commission of São Paulo, who have stepped in to help forest communities fight outside threats from logging and mining companies. christianaid.org.uk/harvest

Will Aid: November is a good month to make that Will you've been putting off for some time, as participating Will Aid solicitors will do it for a donation instead of their usual charge. These donations benefit a number of charities working in the UK and overseas, one of which is Christian Aid. Make your appointment soon though...they get booked up quickly! willaid.org.uk

For further information contact 0121 200 2283 or see christianaid.org.uk/westmidlands
Christian Aid, Room 403B, The Big Peg, 120 Vyse Street, Birmingham B18 6NE

Fair Trade



More than just a sermon...

Traidcraft will be holding its second sermon at Carrs Lane Church
Wednesday 23rd October refreshments from 6pm, service 6.30pm – 7.45pm.

Dr Paula Gooder, recently appointed as The Bible Society's Theologian in Residence, will be talking about justice as an important biblical theme and how the bible instructs and inspires us to live out our faith by striving to make the world a more just place. This will also be an opportunity to learn more about Traidcraft and to meet like-minded supporters and campaigners. More information will be at www.traidcraft.co.uk/sermon nearer the time.

If you would like to attend, please email Jemma Bowman: jemmab@traidcraft.co.uk or call 0191 497 6458



in Birmingham City Centre, Carrs Lane Fair Trade Shop are open 5 days a week all year round

Shop here regularly and make a difference
to the lives of the poorest of the poor in developing countries

You will find a large selection of Traidcraft foods and household essentials, a choice of everyday greeting cards and beautifully handcrafted cards a good range of unique gifts all handcrafted, functional or decorative, or both.

Autumn/Winter Catalogue – see it here or at www.traidcraft.co.uk from 30 July and all will be available to buy here.

You will find us on the main foyer of Carrs Lane Church Centre at the corner of Carrs Lane with Moor St. Queensway
(opposite M&S Foodhall entrance)

Open 10.30am -2.30pm Tuesday through to Saturday,
Contact us on 0121 643 6151 email fair-trade@carrslane.co.uk www.carrslane.co.uk/shop

Queen's Foundation: successful postgraduate course



We are pleased to announce that our popular PG Certificate in Interfaith Engagement is running again from September 2013. This postgraduate certificate will develop your understanding and skills of Inter Faith Engagement. It provides a flexible accessible and affordable way of critically exploring the implications for Christian ministry in our multi-faith world.

"Challenging and thought provoking" Fiona, Anglican Priest and Inter Faith Advisor; "

A great course that introduced me to new ways of thinking and practices for engagement" - Jessica, Inter Faith Community Worker

"Invaluable for my work with young Muslims and Christians" - Anna, Youth Worker

"A brilliant course that helped me build deeper relationships in my Multifaith community" - Andrew, University Chaplain

The course is made up of two modules over two terms, the first is Theology in Dialogue and the second is Christian Practice in Multi Faith Contexts. Each module lasts a term and is run in two sets of two-day teaching blocks. In one year you would take two 30-credit modules that mix theological enquiry with practical engagement.

Dates for 2013-14 are: 10-11th October, 5-6th December, 16-17th January and 13-14th March

The programme is taught in partnership with the Faithful Neighbours Centre in Birmingham and is validated by Newman University College.

For informal conversation call Ray Gaston: 0121 452 2623 or email r.gaston@queens.ac.uk

For application details contact Jenny Maher: 0121 452 2628 or email j.maher@queens.ac.uk

A Generous Orthodoxy:

Inter Faith Community Worker Jessica Foster on her experience as a participant on the course:

Why did you do the course?

Working in an inter-faith context I had questions that I think many Christians have about salvation, about church, about mission and about dialogue. I didn't so much want to know about different faiths but more what were Christian theologians and inter-faith practitioners saying and thinking in relation to our multi-faith context.

What were the best things about it?

There were lots of good things about it. It was a small group and participation was really encouraged. The tutors presented and held different theologies and perspectives and we were introduced to a broad range of practical approaches. In the end, the best thing about it for me was the opportunity to study and read, following my own interests but guided by the tutors. So the bit I most enjoyed, and this is proper nerdy, was getting to think about Rowan Williams' understanding of the Church's role in interfaith relations.



What is the main thing you have learnt from it?

I am not sure that there was one main thing. But I found it helpful to think about the theological stream in which we are swimming. I heard ideas that really helped me articulate my own half-formed ideas and I was presented with ways of doing interfaith engagement that challenged and inspired me. It was great to hear voices of theologians and practitioners from a really broad spectrum and realise that orthodoxy can be very generous.

Who would you recommend it for?

This is a course aimed specifically at Christians and I think is best for people in some kind of active ministry or in relationship with people from different faiths. I found the teaching days did not disrupt my working life too much and I wasn't overloaded by the academic study required. If you are the sort of person who is both challenged and inspired by ministering in a multi-faith context you will get a lot out of this course.

July Events



Fresh Expressions Vision Day

Sutton Coldfield United Reformed Church, 1 Brassington Avenue
Sutton Coldfield B73 6AA

9.45 for 10am - 4pm, **Saturday 13th July**

'Imagine church for those that don't do church'

Speakers:

Linda Rayner, Stuart Scott, John Titlow, Rachel Matthews.

For more information or to book contact Rachel Vernon:
0121 783 1177 or admin@urcwestmidlands.org.uk

Solo Plus Theatre Company are performing

The Medieval Mystery Plays

Blue Orange Theatre 118, Great Hampton Street, Birmingham B18 6AP

7pm, Saturday 13th July

(part of Birmingham Fest. Proceeds to the NSPCC)

Tickets £5: £4 concessions. Box office 0121 212 2643.

The play preaches the gospel.

It begins with the Fall of Lucifer from Heaven,
and follows the birth, life, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of
Jesus and ends with the Final Judgment.

An innovative performance suitable for family audiences.

For further information please contact Linda Mae:

0121 770 8893 or lindamae@talktalk.net

Understanding & Interpreting Ruach Blessing Cards

9.30am-4.30pm, Saturday 13th July

St Martin's Church, The Bull Ring, Birmingham, B5 4BB

Cost: £60 (includes full set of cards worth £29.99)

Lunch: Tea & Coffee will be provided, but please bring lunch,
or the Church has a Tea lounge for sandwiches.

Want to reach people who are spiritually searching
with God's love for them?

The Ruach Blessings cards, is a Bible based, Jesus focused ministry,
supported by Church Leaders from different denominations. It's
mission is to meet and engage with people on their spiritual journey
and to provide opportunities for them to hear God's heart for them,
to encounter God and the Holy Spirit.

www.ruachcards.co.uk

Partnership between St Martin's Church
& Sanctuary in Birmingham East West Trust

0121 744 3057 or 0781 3038756; www.eastandwest.co.uk/

Apostolic Leadership and the Future of the Church

with Alan and Debbie Hirsch

A Masterclass provided by Springdale College

10am – 3pm, Saturday 13th July

BMS International Mission Centre,

24 Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6QX.

Tickets cost £20 including lunch as well as tea and coffee.

Spaces are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

Book your tickets online at:

<http://sdcolmasterclass2013.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Garden Retreat Day

9am – 5pm Monday 15th July

Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre,

1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ

Would you like to spend time in silence and reflection in the peaceful
environment of the garden? Do you want to experience a safe space
to re-connect with aspects of your own life using the garden as a
metaphor? The Garden Retreat Days offer a place of rest and
refreshment from busy lives. Some themed input will be offered, and
opportunities for reflective and creative responses to the themes
which will include: spiritual growth, change, abundance, awe, wonder
and challenge.

Tutor(s): Steve Lock and Frances Henley Lock

£50 day school – includes a 2 course lunch

Bookings and further information: www.woodbrooke.org.uk



Disabled Christians Fellowship

You are invited to the meetings
of a vibrant group
of the Disabled Christians Fellowship, Hay Mills/Yardley

All ages and abilities are welcome

10.30am Saturday 20th July

Hay Mills Congregational Church, Waterloo Road B25 8LD

We would love you to join us.

For further information please ring 0121 440 3564 or go to
www.throughtheroof.org

Summer Serenade: a choral concert to celebrate summer

Sunday 21st July at 7.00 pm

Sutton Coldfield United Reformed Church

1 Brassington Avenue, Sutton Coldfield B73 6AA

featuring The Circle Singers of Royal Leamington Spa

Musical Director: Beresford King-Smith with Accompanist Lynne Adams
and Rosemary Robinson, piano. Proceeds in aid of the Church Project

Tickets: £6.00 from 0121 355 5018 (the King-Smiths).

0121 308 4749 (Meriel Shotton), or Church Reception

July and August Events

Garden Praise led by 'Vision' Worship Group

Sutton Churches Together present the 6th Garden Praise
(by kind permission of Middleton Hall Trust)

Sunday 21 July 3:00 – 4:15 pm

in the Glade Garden of Middleton Hall

(near Tamworth on the A4091 between The Belfry and Drayton Manor)

Grounds open to Garden Praise visitors from 1:30pm

Entrance £3.00 car / £5.00 minibus

includes access to grounds and gardens (entrance charge collected
by Middleton Hall Trust Restoration Fund)

A separate freewill offering will be taken
towards the costs of Garden Praise.

Bring your own folding chairs or picnic rug
and umbrella if it looks like rain!

More information from – Wesley Groves: 0121 378 1555

email: gardenpraise@gmail.com



Birmingham Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference

One Lord One Faith One Baptism

Monday 12th – Friday 16th August

Paragon Hotel, 145 Alcester Street, Birmingham B12 0PJ

Speakers: Marie Beirne – Franciscan Friars of Renewal

– Steve Murray – Fr. Bill Keogh

Visit: www.bccrc.org.uk



Church of God of Prophecy National Diamond Jubilee Convention 'God's Favour'

Friday 16th - Sunday 18th August

Bethel Convention Centre, Kelvin Way, West Brom' B70 7JW

To register for the conference go to: www.cogop.org.uk

Gospel Wave 27 July

27th JULY 2013 Gospel Wave 12-7:30pm

Handsworth Park, Birmingham B20 2BY - Holly Rd entrance

**Entertainment includes: GOSPEL ARTISTS FROM AFRICAN-
CARIBBEAN, ASIAN and EUROPEAN BACKGROUNDS.**

FAIR GROUND RIDES, BOUNCY CASTLES, FOOD ON SALE.

5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT for CHILDREN & YOUNG TEENAGERS

CHARITY STALLS & LOCAL ARTS & CRAFTS.

PUPPETS, FAMILY FUN

GOSPEL FESTIVAL

FOR ALL &

FREE ADMISSION

Our aim is to:

to serve to enhance the family unit.

To bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community
and presenting arts, drama, singing and dancing and the Word of God.

To offer people who want to seek God the opportunity to meet, talk and
share God's Word with people

and to have a **Fantastic day out !!**

The day is **presented by** Perry Beeches Baptist Church and multi-cultural Churches
across Handsworth District. **Supported by** various local and national charities.

All aspects of the **Community** get involved, both to enjoy a fun day together and
also to provide valuable information on the services and support they offer.

We had a great success last year, **Gospel Wave 2013** promises another action
packed day of family fun and full entertainment. **Come and join us....**

For further information please contact: CLAIRE MUTTER 07834 800433 or JULIE MASON 07816 607483

September and October Events

The Faith, Hope and Love Tour

Tony Campolo and Kerry Dixon
Free entry (a collection will be taken).

7.30pm Friday 6th September

Birmingham Christian Centre,
The Parade, Birmingham B1 3QQ



Organised by Tony Campolo and
Signpost International.
www.signpost-international.org

For more details, contact: Kerry Dixon:
tel: 01382 660072; mob: 07711410017;
email: enquiries@signpost-international.org



LVE Haiti - The Vision

As part of the LVE Haiti project there will be a
Feedback service at

6.30pm on Sunday 15th September

Edward Road Baptist Church, Balsall Heath.

This feedback service is an opportunity to hear a report from a recent visit to Haiti by an ecumenical team led by Cassius and Vanessa Francis. The LVE Haiti project was birthed after the devastating earthquake in Haiti on 12th January 2010.

Contact Cassius or Vanessa Francis:
cassiusafrancis@gmail.com

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Bull Street Quaker Meeting in Birmingham City Centre will be open on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September from 1.00 - 5.00pm

Once again Bull Street Quaker Meeting is taking part in Heritage Open Day. The current Quaker Meeting House was built in 1933 on a city centre site occupied by Quakers since 1703. Some of the old gravestones have been retained. Visitors will have a tour of the meeting house and lobby. There will also be exhibitions illustrating Quaker history and introducing modern Quakers. Includes an exhibition from the Quaker Service Memorial Trust illustrating the work of Quakers during WW 1 and 2.

A guided Quaker Trail walk on Sunday starting at 2.00pm from the meeting house.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided. Seating in the garden if the weather allows.

Children are welcome although there are no specific activities arranged. www.centralenglandquakers.org.uk

QUAKER QUEST

"Discover a spiritual path that leads to peace
and social justice"

10.00am – 4.00pm Saturday 28th September

Bull Street Quaker Meeting, 40 Bull Street Birmingham B4 6AF
Find out more at www.quakerquest.org or tel. 07811 255789

The Second Annual Sam Sharpe Lecture

Dr Neville Callam, General Secretary of Baptist World Alliance

Deconstructing the Notion of Race

Wednesday 2nd October – 6:30pm

BMS World Mission, International Mission Centre,
Birmingham

To book your place, contact: 0121 472 4986
or lesley@baptist-heartofengland.org

The lecture is free however, due to limited capacity,
please reserve your seat in advance

www.samsharpeproject.org enquiries@samsharpeproject.org

Get Out More! Helping your church to be globally missional

Tuesday 8th October from 7.30 – 9.00

in the Meeting Room

Rowheath Pavilion, Heath Road, Bournville B30 1HH.

Tea and coffee provided, drinks available from the bar.

How can Birmingham churches promote global mission?

How can they think missionally?

How can they support their overseas mission workers more effectively?

What do mission workers feel their unmet needs are?

How effectiveness is our partnership with them?

Oscar and Syzygy are happy to invite church leaders and mission supporters to an evening presentation which will consider these issues and help your church excel in its support for missions.

SYZYG Y MISSIONS SUPPORT NETWORK

Providing Practical Support for Christian Missions

For more information contact

info@syzygy.org.uk or info@oscar.org.uk

<http://www.syzygy.org.uk/>

Parenting Teenagers Course



5 week course starting
7.30pm on Tuesday, 3 September at
Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church
Cost £20 per person
Includes workbook, drinks and delicious dessert



This exciting new course from foundations is for parent/s or carer/s of children aged 11-18

Session topics: Keeping the end in mind; Meeting our children's needs; Setting boundaries;
Developing emotional health; and Helping them make good choices

For information call 07787 861054 or email office@foundations-westmidlands.org.uk
See our website for more details, promotional video & on-line booking: www.foundations-westmidlands.org.uk

Marriage Preparation Course



Couples preparing for 'The Big Day' can make the best start to their life together by devoting time to prepare for their marriage.

Our next event is Care for the Family's 'Marriage by Design' course
Saturday, October 5th 2013 - a brilliant one day marriage preparation course.

This course gives engaged couples the opportunity to develop skills & address issues which will enhance their relationship and lay the foundations for a fulfilling life together. We are now also working on our 2014 Season of courses.

If we can help you in any way please contact: Rob & Pam Whittington 0121 378 1422
rob-pam@foundations-westmidlands.org.uk or write to Foundations Office c/o SCBC, Trinity Hill Sutton Coldfield B72 1TA
www.foundations-westmidlands.org.uk

Saltmine Theatre



Three Witnesses is a new play from Saltmine Theatre Company –

a contemporary retelling of the Gospel of Luke. This production shows writer Luke seeking to piece together the true story of Jesus and his quest to save the lost.

Created in partnership with UCCF, *Three Witnesses* toured to 25 universities in Spring 2013 as an outreach event, watched by about 4000 students. Some became Christians after seeing this production. Hundreds took away copies of the Gospel and Uncover Bible studies to find out more.

Saltmine now offers this play to churches as an ideal mission event.

The best model is for groups of churches to work together to book this show, sharing costs and promotional work.

Touring dates: 4th – 19th October 2013. Available dates from 14th – 19th October 2013

Cost: £990 + travel costs (total cost for Worcester- £1115)

For more information, contact Joanna Bell on creative@saltmine.org or 01384 454807.

Women's Ecumenical Network

Advent Praying Hour: 10.30 - 11.30 am Friday 29th November

The Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham, (Refreshments from 10.00am).

Speaker: Marjorie Evans, a Methodist Local Preacher. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Spiritual Courses and Guides

Birmingham Forum for Spiritual Directors and Companions

September 2013 to December 2014

Aims of the course: To encourage giftedness and offer practical training in the skills of spiritual direction.

This involves: Broadening your understanding of the Christian tradition of prayer

Laying a solid foundation for the practice of spiritual direction.

Who is it for? The course is open to Christians of any denomination (ordained and lay).

Those seeking a place should be people who find others turn naturally to them.

Be mature, knowledgeable and stable in their Christian faith. Already have, or be prepared to have, a spiritual guide.

When and where? The course runs from September 2013 till December 2014, and consists of 18 Tuesday meetings, in four terms, from 10 am till 3.30 pm. The venue is St Luke's Church Centre, Great Colmore Street, Lee Bank, Birmingham B16 2AT.

Cost?: £450 for the 18 sessions. (£150 for the first term, £100 per term thereafter).

Details are available from: Revd John Austen : john@jausten.freeserve.co.uk Tel: 0121 554 8882

Individually-Guided Retreats in the Ignatian tradition

These residential Retreats are conducted in silence with an experienced guide to work alongside you as you pray with scripture and other aids, according to your individual need and temperament.

Nicholaston House, Gower Peninsular, South Wales
beside the sea

16th – 22nd September

Guides: Rob Hingley and Frances Henley-Lock. £355

Monastery of Our Lady and St Bernard, Brownshill, near Stroud
in Cotswold Countryside

27th October – 1st November

Guides: Pauline Green, Rob Hingley, and team. £270

For further information contact Rev Rob Hingley, St Bernard's Vicarage 147 Hamstead Road Great Barr, Birmingham B43 5BB
Tel: 0121 357 4534 email: rob.hingley@btinternet.com

Reflection Days at Wellsprings, 236 Alcester Road South, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 6DR.

Saturday 28th September 10am – 4pm - *The Other Side of Chaos* led by Margaret Silf

We are living through times of alarming and accelerating change and dislocation. What patterns of both science and spirituality and in our own experience might help us navigate this turbulence?

Can apparent breakdown become breakthrough in our personal lives and the life of our world?

This day of reflection is based on Margaret's book of the same title

Saturday 19th October 10am - 4pm - *Open with the Heart* led by Nigel Groom

Nigel will lead us in a quiet day of reflection, using image, word, music and silence. The only requirement is to come and rest awhile, be open, to listen with the heart, and to let yourself be nourished. Nigel Groom, formerly a Jungian Therapist and Counsellor, now "retired", offers spiritual accompaniment as an anam cara (soul friend) to any who seek.

For more details or to book contact tel: 0121 444 7463 or email: wellsprings.kingsheath@gmail.com

Birmingham Healing Rooms

Are you sick, in pain, troubled or anxious? Receive prayer in Jesus' name

No appointment needed

No charge - everyone is welcome

0121 622 2435

1st Wednesday in month 7.30pm to 9.00pm

2nd Monday in month 2.00pm to 3.30pm

At St Luke's Church, Great Colmore Street, Lee Bank, Birmingham B15 2AT

We are Christians from the local churches.

We believe that God loves & can heal you.

www.birminghamhealingrooms.org.uk



Remembering World War I

"2014-2018 is going to be a significant time for these islands as we remember and reflect on the First World War."

This is the opening sentence from a paper by Jim Curran, Churches Together in England (CTE). It aims to encourage local groups of churches and to start thinking, praying and preparing as together we will be remembering World War 1.

Go to the CTE website: www.churches-together.net to read the text in full and for additional information.

To find the article, go to www.churches-together.net and enter a search for 'world war'

The long url is:

http://cte.churchinsight.com/Articles/358630/Churches_Together_in/Features_Reviews/Features/Remembering_World_War.aspx

Christians and Christianity in the Middle East

The British Trust for Tantur: 'Christians and Christianity in the Middle East' Day Conference
at the Notre Dame University London Centre, 1 Suffolk Street London SW1Y 4HG

Saturday 21st September 10am - 4pm

To be led by Anthony O'Mahoney of Heythrop College and a range of informed speakers.

Organised in partnership with Churches Together in England and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Please contact Ms Sheena Bishops, Bishops Office, No. 2 College Green, Gloucester GL1 2LR

or email: sbishop@glosdioc.org.uk for a booking form

Volunteer this summer

Are you aged 18 - 25? Want experience working with Children?



HOPE IN OUR CITY is a five week summer programme of amazing Christian witness in which a group of Christians will take over a local community Centre in Acocks Green to provide open access play opportunities for children aged 6-11 years based on popular Bible stories. We are looking to find up to 10 volunteers who can commit to at least 2 weeks.

Bus/Rail fare will be paid and lunch will be provided. Uniform and CRB check provided

For more information contact Michael on: 07951 674 624. email hope4ackcosgreen@live.co.uk. Funded by St Peter's Salltley Trust

Music Ministry opportunity

St John and St Peter's Church. Ladywood

We are looking for an accomplished musician, who can ideally play the organ and piano - or keyboard, and who enjoys working in a variety of worship styles of music – Sung Eucharist; Taize; Hillsong, Gospel etc. The person will have experience of leading a choir or worship group and has enthusiasm for teaching and leading worship.

We want someone who will work with us to build up the choir and worship group, and who engages well with and can inspire children in worship. We work with our church school, and are about to commence a new community music project with "Black Voices." We hope the right person will bring in their own style as we journey together in music and liturgy that embraces our faith, tradition and cultural diversity.

Salary: Based on the R.S.C.M. scale. Additional payments for weddings, funerals and other offices and special services.

Contact: Reverend Ian Harper: Vicar and Area Dean. email: harper-i1@sky.com Tel: 0121 2105310/ 07961537487

Faithful Photographers Wanted

Building on the success of the Faithful Friends photography exhibition,
Near Neighbours and the Faithful Neighbourhoods Centre,
are looking for photos that help
to build up a picture of all the incredible things that
are happening in this city.

We are looking for images that relate to either
'Faith', 'Friendship' or 'Community'.

Winning entries will be displayed alongside our current exhibition
in Birmingham Cathedral during interfaith week (November 16th onwards.)

There will be an awards event on Saturday November 16th .

To find out more or to submit photos please contact jess@nearneighbours.com
Photographs will be displayed on a flickr site over the coming months.

Birmingham Ecumenical E-news

Do you receive our monthly newsletter?

It includes lots of news and information that is not included in the printed edition of BEN.

Add your email address to the 700 already receiving our monthly newsletter.

Go to the newsletter page on our website www.birminghamchurches.org.uk
or email enquiries@birminghamchurches.org.uk with 'subscribe to enews' as the subject heading



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The contents of BEN do not necessarily reflect the considered views of the BCT Trustees or its member churches.

BCT reserves the right to edit/format news articles/events/information for inclusion in BEN.

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**Deadlines for enews: 9.00am on the following Mondays: 22nd July; 19th August;
23rd September & 14th October**

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Major Samuel Edgar (Free Churches Moderator).

Birmingham Churches Together: at the heart of Christian partnership in Birmingham and Solihull (Charity No. 243931)