



Sheffield Group News

September 2017

“...we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
Ephesians 2, v 10

The Bulletin Wrote Itself...

Sometimes we have to think hard about what goes in our bulletin; encouragement? Challenge? Comfort? Wisdom?

This edition writes itself because, as you see, SO much is happening. Most of the events in this edition are Sheffield-wide and some further afield, but all because folk from Sheffield URCs are involved or concerned. A few are one-off specials happening because of the activity of specific congregations but, even here, it is hard to know what to include and what to leave out! New regular groups, bible studies and prayer and news of new people and members (of which there are many) don’t get a look in! Most past activities are, well...history. It’s all happening NOW!

A recent national survey showed the number of “religious” people in the UK falling below 50% for the first time. The media have leapt on this, the unspoken sub-text being that the Church are “past it”! I am reminded of Mark Twain’s comment when he read his own obituary, published in error in the local newspaper: “Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated!” So, it’s over to you...

Praise Him with Music...

We are pleased to announce our third **New Song** session, where we come together to learn "new" (as yet unlearned) songs and hymns in a fun atmosphere. This will be at Gleadless URC on **Sunday, September 17th at 6.00pm** and all are welcome. Light refreshments are included and if you have your eye on a particular hymn or song you would like to learn, please let us know!

Everyone is very welcome to celebrate the Harvest Season on **Saturday 30th September at 6pm** when we will be treated to a special concert by **Friends in Harmony** Choir. The concert is at Central URC and tickets are £4, available from the Norfolk Room or Peter Johnson of Gleadless URC.

The next Team **Prayer and Praise** gathering will be on **Sunday, October 15th at 6.00pm** at Central URC. This is an informal time to come together in thanksgiving to God for all He has done and to hold our work before Him in prayer.

Reformed and Reforming...

Two events at Central United Reformed Church will mark the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, to which all are welcome:

2pm, Saturday 21st October - Professor Clyde Binfield, OBE, FSA talks about the *Historical Perspective*

6pm, Wednesday 25th October - Rev Kevin Watson, URC Moderator talks about *Reformation Today*

8th October is also **Dedication Sunday**, reminding us of when we became the URC in 1972. As we focus on this day it reminds us that we continue to dedicate ourselves to the unity, growth and reformation of the Church.

Talking of **Reform**, our own Team are to feature in the URC’s national magazine soon - watch out for an article about our new ministry pattern and pray that others in the URC can learn from us and be encouraged to join the reformation!

Discovery Doors...

A Project celebrating the big ideas that came out of the Reformation and made a different world will be taking place in central Sheffield in the **week beginning 30th October 2017**.

Discovery Doors recalls that momentous moment on 31st October 1517 when Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the door of All Saints Church, Wittenburg. His ideas led to debates about power, individual thought, freedom and education.

People from many traditions are coming together to decorate prominent doors around Sheffield to create a commemorative trail around Cathedrals, schools, libraries, museums, bookshops theatres and churches. Each door will bear thought-provoking questions such as: Where have you seen goodness today? What gives you hope? When are you most free? What makes you unique? What would you reform in the world today? What divides us? What unites us?

More details can be obtained from Congregational Minister Suzanne Nockels at suzannenockels@gmail.com or by registering your interest at the *Discovery Doors Sheffield* Facebook page.

India News and More?!

Our next **Mission and Care** meeting will be on the **10th October at Shiregreen URC**. The two big agenda items will be presentations by Jake Houlton about his World Challenge trip to India and news of a new Sheffield URC-wide arts and crafts project led by our own Gwen Smithies - she of the quilt-fame! Please come along and support Jake and Gwen!

Quilt Success!

Talking of quilts... following the success of the WW1 project the Meersbrook Park group continued to sew quilts. The Group meets on Tuesdays and entered two quilts in the Harrogate Quilt Festival competition and received a Commendation!

Now they invite you to share in their triumph! As part of Meersbrook Park's Harvest celebration they are holding a **Quilt Exhibition** which will show both new and old quilts the group has produced.

This will be on **Saturday September 23rd** at Meersbrook Park URC, from 10.30am to 2.30pm. Light refreshments will be available and admission will be £1 which includes the cost of refreshments. As part of this celebration the Lord Mayor will attend. The Celebration will include the presentation of two quilts to the children and staff of Bluebell Wood.

Further information from Margaret Bell (0114 2746644) or Pete Clark (0114 2587979).

Thinking of Retirement?

Neither are we... but the Charlton and Linley homes comprise 10 lovely and well-maintained bungalows on Abbeydale Road South, opposite Millhouses Park. They are managed by Trustees from Sheffield URC churches. Members of Sheffield URCS, aged 60 or over can be added to the waiting list for a home which are single or double occupancy.

If you would like to find out more or have a look round a bungalow, please call Ann Hammond on 0114 2745852 or email Elaine Ferguson at elaineferg32@yahoo.co.uk.

The Trustees meet three times per year. They would welcome a couple of new faces so please get in touch if you would be interested in joining them - they are not retiring yet!

Mental Health Aware?

An excellent **Awareness Day** about mental health issues in faith communities will take place on **Saturday 16th September**. It is at All Saints Ecclesall Parish Church Ringinglow Road, S11 7PP from 9.30am to 4 pm. See your Church Secretary for details.

Call for Peace...

South Yorkshire leaders of all faith traditions joined in issuing a statement (extract below) in the wake of the terrorist attack in Manchester - sadly other events have already intervened since, so the need to pray for peace is as urgent as ever.

"Manchester people have led the way in a dignified and humane response to the tragedy of the Manchester attack by showing the best of humanity at times of crisis. We, the Faith Leaders of South Yorkshire call upon all communities, that the best way to defeat those that wish to divide our communities is to respond in the way Manchester people did...the greatest honour we can give to the victims and their families is by following the Mancunian way".

Calling Worship Leaders!

Following our recent gathering of worship leaders, we will meet again to help each other prepare for **Advent** at Central URC on **Monday October, 16th**. There will be a light tea for those who want it at 6pm then we begin at 7pm.

The evening is open to all worship leaders, preachers and members of worship groups and is an ideal opportunity for us to help each other in preparing for Advent worship. It will include an overview of the Lectionary Advent Themes, more detailed Bible Study on one week's themes, ideas for leading prayers, hymns, visual aids and a brief taster of using technology to enhance our communication. More details will follow later... Please let us know if you want to receive them.

Healing Play...

There are still places available on the **Healing Play Day (24th September at Cliff College, Derbyshire)**. The day is a varied mix of media, hands on experiences and practical and inspirational ideas easily adapted to ministry or work setting - in a relaxed and supportive environment. Find out more about the day from Jenny Lambourne via her website imeandspaceforchildren.co.uk or on 07748841087.

Final Things...

Events happening in two of our local churches...

At Dore and Totley: Sunday October 8th, 2.30 to 5.30 - a children's event, led by John and Maria O'Brien then a Coffee morning (Saturday October 14th, 10-12) and Breakfast (9am Sunday November 5th), both in aid of Sheffield Carers Centre. There will be an All Souls service on Tuesday October 31st at 7pm and Dronfield Genquip Band concert (Sunday December 3rd at 3pm)

At Gleadless: a Musical Evening on Saturday 7th October at 7pm. Simon sings Flanders and Swann among other things!
