

BEN

Birmingham Ecumenical News

News and events from across Birmingham & Solihull
June—September 2017

Discovering the Heart of God in the Heart of the City

#Pray24Brum

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th January 2018: 8am – 8pm

Save the Date for 24 hours of prayer 2018!

During the week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2018, Christians from across Birmingham will once again gather together to pray in and for the city. St Martin in the Bullring will be our host to welcome churches and Christian groups from different traditions to lead prayer throughout the 24 hours.

Please put the date in your diary and be part of this beautiful annual celebration of our diversity and our unity; in a witness of prayer which reaches out to embrace all those in our city and beyond.

You can sign up to lead an hour during the 24 hours via this link:

<https://goo.gl/forms/aMW5OhDyqxSFzxze2>

They Also Served

A service and exhibition to solemnly remember and reflect upon the contributions of African and Caribbean servicemen to WW1. The service is open to all, regardless of ethnic background, so together we acknowledge the multi-racial and multi-cultural character of the Great War.

5.00pm to 7.00pm Sunday 2 July

Keynote speaker: Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin

(Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, priest vicar at Westminster Abbey & Chaplain to the Queen)

Venue: The New Testament Church of God, Lozells Road, Birmingham B19 1NP

'They also served' is a Heritage Lottery Funded project of Churches Together in England

<http://theyalsoserved.co.uk/>



BEN is published by Birmingham Churches Together: Many Voices - One in Christ

Ethical Money Churches West Midlands



- Would you like to explore how you and your church can use your money and assets for the common good?
- Are you passionate about making a positive impact on your local community?
- Would you like to reflect on what the Bible says about money and Christian Discipleship?
- Did you use Dethroning Mammon as a Lent Course and would like to follow up with action?

The Ethical Money Churches (EMC) Project helps worshipping communities to explore challenging issues relating to Christian stewardship of financial resources and assets.

EMC provides opportunities for sharing and learning about the ethical use of money and assets. We provide interactive study & discipleship resources, worship material, access to advice and speakers, events, discussion groups, conferences, talks and information and support on practical ways to engage with financial issues. We help you explore faith perspectives on ethical banking, ethical investment, credit unions, social enterprises, fair trade and more.

What does the Ethical Money Churches Project offer?

- A Five Week Bible course: a new resource to look at a range of issues around faith and finance
- Workshops: providing congregations with practical information and resources into steps that can be taken to connect faith and finance
- Publicity: through EMC social media, the actions and successes of churches engaging in the project can be shared for the benefit of others
- Partnerships: support for churches to work with other local churches, organisations, charities and the surrounding community to build strong, lasting partnerships
- Support: Our EMC Officer is available to provide ongoing support to congregations throughout the process

Feedback from the EMC project

"We have run community events which were attended by people we did not know before."

"Personally, I had never considered seriously the close correlation between the Christian Faith and money issues. The course made me more aware of this."

"It has been a great opportunity to discuss topics we normally don't feel comfortable talking about"

For information contact Abi Nicholls:

Email: Abigail.nicholls@eccr.org.uk

Phone: 07484 051 866

Twitter: @ECCRWM

Web: www.eccr.org.uk/what-we-work-on/ethical-money-churches/



Churches for Tax Justice Conference

Churches For Tax Justice: An Ecumenical One-Day Conference

Keynote Speaker - Alex Cobham (Chief Executive of Tax Justice Network)

Also featuring workshops led by Revd Smitha Prasadam, John Arnold & Abigail Nicholls (Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility), Christian Aid and Oxfam

Saturday 15th July

Registration from 10:00am, concluding at 4:00pm

The Priory Rooms, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham, B4 6AF

The evasion and avoidance of tax by trans-national corporations and the super wealthy is one of the most important economic justice issues of our time. Developed and developing countries alike are losing out on much needed tax revenues, which are needed to pay for crucial public services and infrastructure. The international tax system is not fit for purpose, and is one of the key factors in the widening inequality gap between the world's wealthiest and poorest individuals. But what can the church in the UK, in all its forms, do to help fight for tax justice?

This one day event aims to help campaigners from all denominations explore how they can raise awareness and campaign for tax justice - as individuals, congregations, Churches and Christians. The keynote speaker is Alex Cobham, Chief Executive of the Tax Justice Network, and workshops will be led by Revd Smitha Prasadam, John Arnold & Abi Nicholls, and representatives of Christian Aid and Oxfam (tbc).

Ticket Price - £10, including Lunch

Register your interest by emailing: mtjncoordinator@gmail.com

or visit http://www.mtjn.org.uk/churches_for_tax_justice

The Conference is presented by:

Methodist Tax Justice Network, Central England Quaker Peace Committee, Jubilee Debt Campaign, Catholic National Justice & Peace Network and Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility.

Eadie Community House

Eadie House is looking for new members who want to live in this dynamic part of Birmingham

Are you looking for a room in shared house? Are you interested in living with a group of friendly, considerate, like-minded people age 20—30 People who want to share their journey through life, for a period of time, with others, and make a positive contribution to the wider community? Oh... and they are Christian as well...

If you are interested please contact us at:

Circuit Office, Selly Oak Methodist Church, Langleys Road, B29 6HT. Phone: 0121 472 1060.

Email: ssaunderson@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk

Chaplaincy Plus



Working in Birmingham?

Feeling isolated as a Christian?

Struggling to work out your faith in a workplace on your own?

Questioning what spiritual impact you're having on those around you?

ChaplaincyPlus is here for you

As well as providing 1:1 support. ChaplaincyPlus runs various groups, so that we can build on common ground together.

- City Legal: connecting those working in the legal sector
- City Finance: bringing together those in the financial sector.
- City Men: a space for men to connect, discuss deep stuff and encourage one another.
- The Platform: a monthly 'hot topic' discussion group over lunch.
- City Women: lunch meetings for women to connect and focus on spiritual and practical issues which impact on their working lives.
- City Lights: in partnership with Onebodybrum we create social events that connect Christians in their 20's & 30's and help them grow in their faith.

We have a dedicated flyer for churches. If you would like some within your church please contact:

Kim Yeomans at our office and he will arrange to get some out to you.

0121 236 9742/kim.yeomans@chaplaincyplus.org.uk

Birmingham Prayer Breakfast

"Getting to the Heart Birmingham in A Time of Change"

7:00am—8:45am, 26th June 2017

Hall 11, ICC Birmingham, Broad Street

Tickets £15.00



To book in or for further information contact Kim in the ChaplaincyPlus office on 0121 2369742

kim.yeomans@chaplaincyplus.org.uk to book a table of 10

or go to: birminghamprayerbreakfast2017.eventbrite.co.uk

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN OUR NETWORK

Sign up for regular emails.

We'll keep you in-the-know about what's happening in the city and we'd love to meet you face-to-face over a coffee or at an event soon

www.chaplaincyplus.org.uk/signup/

CIGB



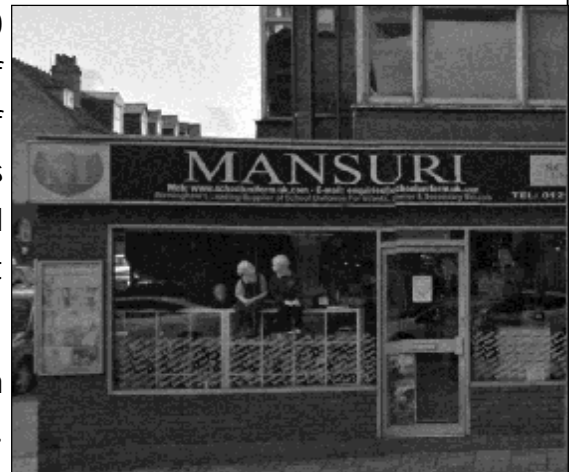
Love Your Neighbour : Cross-Cultural Engagement in Voluntary Retail Chaplaincy



Many of us get to know and love our local corner shop staff. They are may be from a different culture, but the shopping habit can give us a basis to explore more about each other. Retailing is one of the most ethnically diverse areas of employment, and a chance for us to Love Our Neighbour.

Churches and Industry Group Birmingham-Solihull has over 20 volunteer Retail Chaplains who go out regularly in the name of the Churches to befriend and support the multi-cultural staff of the shops of Birmingham and Solihull. Many of the chaplains describe this as an exciting and revealing ministry: they find themselves growing in holy relationship with people of different faiths and cultures.

There are proportionately more non-white people working in Retail than there are by proportion of the general population. Research has shown that migrants tend to be nearly twice as entrepreneurial than ordinary UK residents: 17.2% of non-UK nationals have started their own companies, compared to just 10.4 % of UK Nationals. Perhaps they are more prepared to take the risks: in Great Britain, on average, a non-UK migrant starting



Mr Mansuri started his door-to-door sales of babywear and school uniform over 30 years ago. He grew to a stall in the Bullring Market, and now has three shops across Birmingham. Our Chaplains in Kings Heath High St support this shop.

up their own business is only 44 yrs old; the average UK resident starting their own business is 52 years. Indeed 1 in 7 of British companies was founded by someone who has migrated to this country. With their relationships to all parts of the world, these businesses may become even more important in post-Brexit Britain.

There are further vacancies for Retail Chaplains in Birmingham and Solihull.

CIGB is offering another training course in the Autumn for those who may be interested in doing voluntary workplace chaplaincy – including chaplaincy to shops.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTARY WORKPLACE CHAPLAINCY

A 6 week training course for voluntary chaplaincy

Mondays 5-7pm starting 2 October 2017

Led by Churches and Industry Group Birmingham & Solihull

CIGB's Voluntary Workplace chaplains are people who want to give about half a day a week, to visit a local organisation or enterprise, befriend the workers, answer questions eg 'what has God got to do with us?' and help to discover what 'faithfulness' means in that context.

More info: www.cigb.org.uk/home/training-courses/

Places of Welcome: join this network of hospitality

Places of Welcome is a growing network of hospitality run by local community groups who want to make sure that everyone in their area has a place to go for a friendly face, a cup of tea and a conversation, creating space where people feel safe to connect, belong and contribute.



Originally developed in Birmingham, Places of Welcome responds to the challenge to make our cities, towns and neighbourhoods more welcoming. It is now a national network of around 160 small community organisations, including faith communities, who offer an unconditional welcome to local people for at least a few hours a week.

They are diverse in nature, reflecting the different communities in which they are located, the buildings they use, and the skills, interests and personalities of the people that run and belong to them, but each commits to shared values, known as the 5Ps:

- **Place:** A hospitable and accessible building, open at the same time every week.
- **People:** Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation, and staffed by volunteers, a group of people who are committed to making it happen.
- **Presence:** A place where people actively listen to one another.
- **Provision:** Free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) are on offer along with basic local information.
- **Participation:** Recognition that every person coming to a Place of Welcome will bring talents, experiences and skills that they might be willing to share locally.

To find your nearest Place of Welcome or if you are interested in joining our network go to our website www.placesofwelcome.org

or contact Sue Ball, the Birmingham & Black Country Operations Co-ordinator:
info@placesofwelcome.org

Host a 'Great Get Together' with Near Neighbours!



Jo Cox MP lived her life spreading her belief that we have more in common than divides us. In that spirit, her family and friends are inviting people across the country to mark the anniversary of her murder by organising or attending a celebration in their community.

Host a get together Friday 16 - Sunday 18 June

We are providing small grants for up to £300.00 to support a local Get Together event that you can host, that will bring people from all backgrounds together.



Near Neighbours is a charity that has been bringing people together in diverse areas across the country since 2011. That we have more in common than divides us is at the core of what we do. By hosting a Great Get Together with Near Neighbours you can join a movement of people across the country that have been celebrating our diversity for years.

Please contact Rabiya for further information on eligibility: rabiya@nearneighbours.com

Restore - Birmingham Churches Together



supporting refugees and people seeking sanctuary



REFUGEE WEEK

Refugee Week runs from 19 to 25 June with the theme 'Different Pasts, Shared Future'. Celebrations begin at the Midlands Arts Centre on 17 June with refugee artists performing from 1 - 6pm. City of Sanctuary is also marking Refugee Week and the anniversary of Jo Cox' death through a Great Get Together in Cannon Hill Park that Saturday afternoon, 17 June.



**Celebrate Restore's work
and hear how Restore has helped refugees and
people seeking sanctuary at**

Restore's Annual Celebration 2017

on Monday 19th June 2017

7pm - 9pm

at Carrs Lane Church Centre, B4 7SX

**NB There is no car-parking at the church so please park in nearby car parks or side streets
or use public transport.**

**Enjoy refreshments and meeting together with other
volunteers, supporters, refugees and asylum seekers.**

For further information about Restore's work and Refugee Week
please contact – info@restore-uk.org or 0121 236 0069

National Interfaith Week: 12-19 November 2017

This year's National Interfaith Week will take place from Sunday 12th to Sunday 19th November. It follows last year's bumper year when over 500 people participated in 21 activities around the city and its environs. Join in by arranging an activity. They can be large or small, and in any location as long as they involve people of more than one faith, or no faith. They can focus on the spiritual, artistic, music, drama, remembrance, health and wellbeing, conversation, food, sport, recreation or educational.

The IFN (Interfaith Network) have produced a toolkit, which can be accessed at:-

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/inter-faith-week-toolkit>

The Birmingham Council of Faiths will once again be coordinating the programme, if you have any ideas please contact Dr Peter Rookes, Secretary & 3rd Sector Liaison Officer, Birmingham Council of Faiths, pjrookes@gmail.com, 0121 477 2282 or 077 033 360 88.

Small Footsteps

A week long interactive set of indoor and outdoor workshops for young people (11-14 years old) exploring the different themes of environment and the shared values of all faiths.

Monday 31st July - Saturday 5th August

8:30 am - 3:45 pm (Monday—Friday) Half-day (Saturday)

We are pleased to say that booking is now open for students at

<http://peacehub.org.uk/footsteps/events/small-footsteps-2017/>

Each day will feature fun and engaging workshops exploring a different aspect of the environment.

Topics covered include: Water, Food, Waste, Recycling, Energy, Nature & the cycle of life, Trees, Climate change, & lots more fun!

Meet each morning throughout the week at Birmingham Central Mosque (180 Belgrave Middleway, B12 0XS): transport for all participants will be provided from here to Fircroft College, where the activities will take place. Transport is also provided back to Central Mosque each afternoon for pick-up at 3:45. This is because Central Mosque is easy to access from all parts of the city.

If you would like your child(ren) to take part, please download a student application form

and return to smallfootstepsbcf@gmail.com

St. Chad's Urban Farm

St. Chad's cathedral parish are setting up an Urban Farm project exploring themes of sustainable agriculture, community gardening and healthy eating. The garden which will be based at St. Chad's primary schools will hopefully become a focus for engagement with the local community. And if other churches would like to get involved this is a great opportunity for Ecumenical partnership.

Find our more at: <https://stchadsurbanfarm.wordpress.com/>

Wheelchair friendly space for churches



St. Nicolas' Church in Kings Norton has been at the very heart of its community for over 900 years and this ancient building has been, and continues to be, a very visible and active symbol of Christian faith and worship.

Worship in a 900 year old building can be very inspiring but can also create many difficulties with regard to physical access for those with a range of disabilities, stone steps, uneven floors, pews and restricted viewing are just a few of the challenges that can occur. But this has in no way deterred the team at St. Nicolas' from finding creative ways to make those with disability challenges and their carers feel welcome, involved and valued.

The most recent initiative looked at how to designate space within the church that gave those with wheelchairs and powered buggies space to park that provided easy access, sufficient room and "sight-lines" to the celebration.

Working with Revd Steve Jones - Bishops Advisor on Disabilities and Dean Jefferies – Mats Nationwide, Sylvia Fox St. Nicolas' Church Manager looked at ways to define the space required in a way that was flexible, low maintenance and very cost efficient. That solution was two non-slip, bespoke printed floor mats that created almost 3 sq metres of very visible parking space that would easily accommodate up to 3 adult size wheelchairs or buggies. The mats come with a 5 year guarantee which means that over the life of the mats the cost equates to 91p per week. For that investment the users are made to feel even more valued and involved in the worship of the church community.

If you are interested in finding out more about this initiative contact: Revd. Stephen Jones, Bishop's Advisor on Disabilities:

Office: 01214601173, Mobile: 07866 748932, Email: revdstevejones@gmail.com

Narthex: new support and advice warehouse



New 4,000 SQ foot support and advice warehouse for one of West Midland's biggest foodbanks

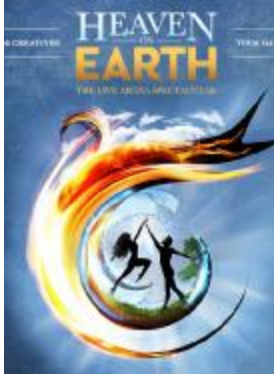
Birmingham charity, Narthex Sparkhill is extending its foodbank project to a new 4,000 sq. ft. warehouse; a second round of funding from the Big Lottery of £445,000 over 5 years funds the foodbank project. Since 2011, Sparkhill Foodbank has been operating from premises on Bard Street in Sparkhill.

The growing need in south east Birmingham has seen the charity setup 4 satellite centres, a clothes bank, a cooking and budgeting course and a debt advice service. The new resource warehouse based in Tyseley will mean that all of these services can be brought under one roof instead of 3 venues, providing better quality support for families in crisis.

CEO Nigel Brookhouse said: "We are also crowd funding for a commercial kitchen to provide a simple meal for clients coming to us for food parcels and support. Some of our clients having not eaten for days and walked for several miles to get a food parcel. It would make a big difference to them to be able to get a hot meal, especially during the winter months. We are looking to raise the funds in the next 6 weeks, and we hope it will be matched by the council in order to provide this much needed support for people, but we cannot do it without the generosity of the local community." In 2016, we distributed over 70 tonnes of food to hungry people, including feeding over a 1000 children living in poverty.

The Bishop of Aston Rt. Revd Anne Hollinghurst officially opened the Support and Advice centre on 25 May.

Performances



Heaven on Earth Musical

Russell Watson, Kerry Ellis and Hugh Maynard will star in a new musical called Heaven on Earth, which will take this powerful Christian message to arenas across the UK beginning in Birmingham in December. Heaven on Earth is a spectacular musical that will take audiences back to the beginning of creation, re-telling the well-known story of Adam and Eve, their fall from Paradise and the power of redemption. The Garden of Eden will be re-created in amazing fashion using a host of groundbreaking special effects, such as fire, water and animatronics — all in an exploration of the universal search for the meaning of life. Audiences will witness the creation of the universe and the formation of man from the dust — just two of many marvels that will stay with audiences long after the show is over.

This is a wonderful opportunity to impact the whole of the West Midlands with the Gospel and bring hope to many thousands of people. Perhaps your church would like to use this for local evangelism by inviting family and friends to the show so that as many people as possible might experience 'heaven on earth.'

For this purpose we are offering discounted tickets to all churches with groups of 20 or more. To take advantage of this offer, please contact Info@eiproductions.co.uk.

You can find more details directly about tickets and further venues on the website:

www.heavenonearththemusical.co.uk/tour-dates

LEGACY: The Story of Martin Luther

Consumed with guilt, wrestling with the darkness, Martin Luther carries his faith with painful fascination. Through intense study of the bible and prayer Martin becomes convinced that salvation comes through faith alone and can never be bought.



On the 500th anniversary year of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses being sent out, Saltmine is delighted to announce a new 20-minute dramatic presentation celebrating the life and work of a true Faith Pioneer. This powerful portrayal can easily fit into a church service or into a celebration event already scheduled.

Available October – early November 2017

Suggested minimum donation: £550 + travel donation

To enquire about booking a date please contact Joanna Bell, Tour Co-Ordinator on 01384 454 807

or email: creative@saltmine.org

Saltmine Theatre Company is a professional company with a Christian ethos. Saltmine creates faith-motivated art and tours to churches, theatres and schools throughout the UK and abroad, performing to over 100,000 people each year.

For more information please visit www.saltminetrust.org.uk

The Songs of Praise Network

The Songs of Praise Network will help the Songs of Praise Production Team stay in touch with and listen to as many of the UK's Christians as possible. We will use The Songs of Praise Network to tell you about the content of each of our programmes and to enable you to easily contact the production team with your ideas, suggestions and newsworthy events which you feel could be potentially interesting to the programme's audience. We will send out a weekly emailed newsletter to all those signed up to The Songs of Praise Network to let you know what's on the programme, what we're on the lookout for and to remind you to send us your ideas for stories, up and coming events and contributors. Contact us for information about the network at: thesongsofpraisenetwork@avantimedia.tv

Retreats

Practice and Presence: Experiencing flow, clarity and spaciousness

Monday 26 June to Thursday 29 June

Woodbrooke Centre, 1046 Bristol Road Birmingham, B29 6LJ, United Kingdom

Ensuite Fee: £343.00, Standard Fee: £315.00

We will come together to explore and experience spiritual practices and ways of being present from a variety of different faith traditions; particularly those that encourage and allow us to connect more deeply with 'that of God within'. We hope to include practices as diverse as 5rhythms dance to Taize singing and a Grand Silence to Vision Divina using Buddhist, Hindu and Eastern Orthodox images and icons. We will be offered the opportunity to challenge ourselves, and to try something new in the safe space that is Woodbrooke. There will be opportunities for personal space, group sharing and the freedom to go where each one of us is led.

Course Leader Information: Lynne Sedgmore has facilitated retreats for over 25 years and has explored extensively the spiritual practices of different faith traditions. Gill Pennington is Woodbrooke's Spirituality Tutor. Her ministry is walking alongside people as they explore the promptings of God's spirit in their lives.

Visit <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/> to book or contact gill.pennington@woodbrooke.org.uk, Tel: 0121 415 6783

Individually-Guided Silent Retreat

at Nicholaston House, Gower Peninsular, Swansea, S. Wales

Monday 4th to Sunday 10th September

with daily individual guidance to suit your need and temperament

Guides; Rob Hingley and Pat Callaghan, £399 ticket

For further information contact Rev Rob Hingley rob.hingley@btinternet.com (0121) 777 2171

Manresa Link Basic Training Course for Prayer Guides.

In response to growing demand, the Manresa Link training course for Prayer Guides (in the field of Ignatian based Individually Guided Retreats in Daily Life) is moving from every two years to annually. The next one will commence in the autumn of 2017. The course consists of 8 Saturday mornings, two residential weekends (where trainees alternate between making a guided retreat and using their learned skills to guide someone through a weekend retreat) and then a final Saturday morning.

If you are interested in pursuing this ministry, please email manresalink@hotmail.com to express interest, and someone will get back to you.

A pre-requisite for attendance on the course is that you must have attended an Ignatian Individually Guided Retreat, either residential or in Daily Life. If need be, such a retreat in Daily Life can be arranged for you.

Commemorating the Protestant Reformation

St Chad's Pilgrimage, Saturday 23 September

An 18-mile pilgrimage walk is being organised to take place on 23 September from St Chad's Cathedral Birmingham, to Lichfield Cathedral to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, whose official anniversary is 31 October 2017.

Pilgrims will be sent on their way at 9.00am by Dean of St Chad's Cathedral Gerry Breen, and welcomed at Lichfield Cathedral around 5.00pm by Dean of Lichfield Cathedral Adrian Dorber. Senior church leaders from across the West Midlands will be taking part in the pilgrimage (for some if not all of the distance), including the Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, Anglican Bishops of Lichfield and Birmingham along with Methodist, United Reformed and Baptist Regional leaders.

Contact details for Birmingham Churches Together

Please pray for the staff of Birmingham Churches Together and its projects, Restore and Training as we are moving office at the end of July from St George's Community Hub to Balsall Heath. New contact details will be available on our website as soon as a date for moving is finalised. Email addresses will remain the same.



BEN (Birmingham Ecumenical News)
is a publication of Birmingham Churches Together (BCT)



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.

Deadline for the next edition of BEN: 5.00pm Tuesday 19 September

Enews deadlines: 9.00am on Mondays 26 June, 17 July, 14 August, 4 September

Postal Address: Birmingham Churches Together, St. George's Community Hub
Great Hampton Row, Newtown, Birmingham. B19 3JG
Telephone: 0121 236 3966 (please leave a message on the answerphone and we will get back to you)
Editor: Revd Colin Marsh, Ecumenical Development Officer (email: office@birminghamchurches.org.uk)
Social media: www.facebook.com/birminghamchurchestogether
Twitter: @BirmCTogether

Presidents of BCT: Bishop David Urquhart (Anglican Bishop of Birmingham)
Archbishop Bernard Longley (Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham)
Revd. Ian Howarth (Free Churches Moderator and Chair of Birmingham Methodist District)

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

Details for Vacancies can be found on the Birmingham Churches Together' website.
They are regularly updated.

Are you missing out?

If you appreciate BEN - you will enjoy our monthly enews.

It is packed full of information, news and events that do not appear in BEN

Subscribe on the newsletter page of our website: www.birminghamchurches.org.uk