Bournville, Stirchley, Cotteridge & Kings Norton

Points

The bi-monthly mini-magazine of Churches Together in Birmingham 30

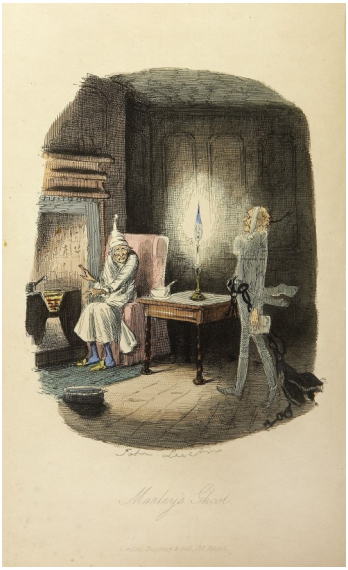
Kindness

December 2022- no 121

20p where sold

HOW TO BE KIND

Once again it is that time of the year. And, once again, I turn to THAT LITTLE BOOK for inspiration:



STAVE 1

Marley's Ghost – Scrooge the nasty

Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, coventous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas…

Two gentlemen enter Scrooge's counting-house asking for donations: 'Are there no prisons?' asked Scrooge… 'And the Union workhouses?' demanded Scrooge. 'Are they still in operation?'…

…'What shall I put you down for?' [Asked a gentleman].

'NOTHING! Scrooge replied.

STAVE 111

The Second of Three Spirits – Who is responsible?

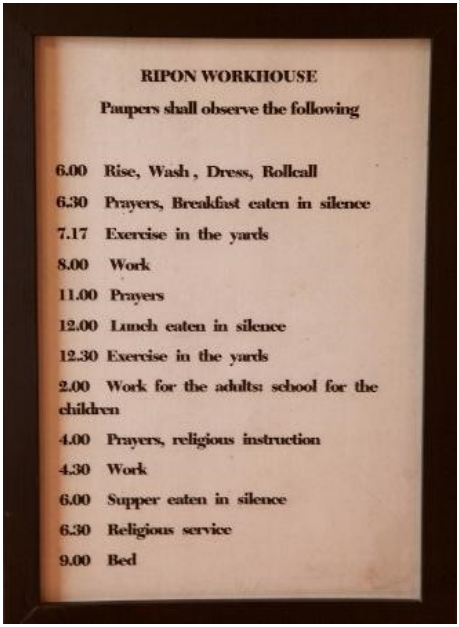
From the foldings of its robe, it [the spirit] brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment…

‘Spirit! Are they yours? Scrooge could say no more.

‘THEY ARE MAN’S,’ said the Spirit, looking down upon them. ‘And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want…’

‘Have they no refuge or resource?’ cried Scrooge.

Are there no prisons?’ said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. ‘Are there not workhouses?’


RIPON WORKHOUSE

Paupers shall observe the following

6.00 Rise, Wash, Dress, Rollcall
6.30 Prayers, Breakfast eaten in silence
7.17 Exercise in the yards
8.00 Work
11.00 Prayers
12.00 Lunch eaten in silence
12.30 Exercise in the yards
2.00 Work for the adults: school for the children
4.00 Prayers, religious instruction
4.30 Work
6.00 Supper eaten in silence
6.30 Religious service
9.00 Bed

STAVE V

The end of it – Scrooge reformed

‘A merry Christmas, Bob!‘ said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. ‘A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you, for many a year! I’ll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop [type of punch], Bob. Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!’

He [Scrooge] had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us. And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

EPILOGUE

Thankfully, not many of us could be labelled ‘Scrooge the nasty’. But kindness is our responsibility, and we could all do with being a bit

kinder. So, how do we go about that? We could await the visitation of three spirits, but I fear we may have a long wait. For some, kindness seems to come naturally. For others, it seems a struggle (me included). If I'm unsure where to begin, I like to take the simple option. Figuratively speaking: Give away your last chip – THE BIG FAT TASTY ONE – Easy as that -

Mowgli

Giving and Receiving

Love your neighbour as yourself.
JOY: Jesus first, others next, yourself last.
Sentiments imbued from early days.
Actions of love, done for others,
others who are really Jesus in disguise,
sometimes heavy in disguise.

So, we keep busy,
Sometimes frantically busy.
Helping, listening, showing compassion,
putting our efforts into doing, doing for others,
proof of our love and commitment to God.

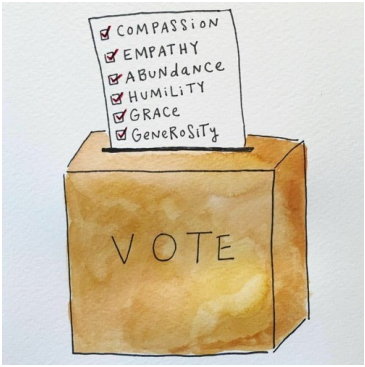
Yet we need to be receivers too, not just givers.
Jesus, whom we call Master, lord, Teacher, Healer,
God himself in human form, yet also a receiver.
You accepted:
meals from Martha, from Simon the leper,
from Zacchaeus, Levi, Peter's mother-in-law.
care from three Mary's, Joanna, wife of Herod's steward,
unnamed women from Galilee
the list could continue.

Understanding God, we confess
that so often we rush to be givers,
perhaps feeding our own satisfaction in feeling needed,
yet by our busyness,
denying the less confident
their opportunities to give too.
Help us to be humble enough to be receivers as well as givers,
to accept graciously, and with true thankfulness,
the gift which others offer to you through our receiving.

Ros Murphy

‘Vote for kindness – the party of action’

‘Kindness’ often has rather a weak ring to it. Anyone who is described as ‘a really kind person’ is seen as being soft and rather unworldly. It’s not very dramatic or revolutionary. Being kind is not going to change the world. No prospective Councillor, MP or Prime Minister ever listed ‘kind’ on their election propaganda as one of the qualities that would get them elected.



We talk about being ‘kind’ to children, or to insects, or to pets, or (sometimes) to yourself.

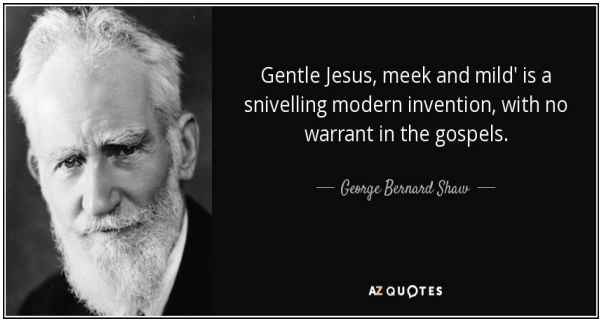
The point is that being ‘kind’ is not enough on its own. You can be kind to the victims of child trafficking, but you should also be angry with the traffickers. You can be kind to those who have experienced abuse, while attacking the abusers. You can be kind to those who attend the Food Bank, while running major campaigns to abolish poverty and despising those in power who condemn benefit holders to a lifetime of debt.

We need to redefine some actions currently seen as ‘kind’. Kindness is NOT patting on the head – that’s being patronising. Kindness is NOT being uncritical – that’s being naïve. Kindness is NOT about keeping quiet – that’s allowing injustice to flourish. Kindness is NOT about always saying ‘what has to be said’ – that’s being cruel. Kindness is NOT ‘each to their own’ – that’s unchallenging.

Kindness to the planet is not about ‘growth, growth, growth’ – that’s selfishness. Kindness is not unlimited growth. If you begin to see the planet as part of your family, then, like your children, you might expect some growth, but not to 9 foot. The point about encouraging healthy

growth is knowing when to stop. Kindness to the planet and our fellow humans is accepting that as a race we are better off with green growth or possibly even degrowth.

Being ‘kind’ to a bully is just encouraging obnoxious behaviour. The fossil fuel industry and its advocates are currently acting as bullies – threatening that if we do not allow them to “get every cubic inch of gas out of the North Sea”, then we will all suffer power cuts and ever-increasing energy prices. The fact that renewables are currently 9 times cheaper to produce energy than fossil fuels is being shouted down by the 600 plus fossil fuel lobbyists who attended COP27.



Being kind to your children, grandchildren, neighbours, your community may involve sitting down on a motorway and disrupting traffic. Being kind to our future is not always being the ‘nice guy’ to everyone. It is about making choices. Being kind to our world is not always about avoiding conflict with our colleagues.

I was never a great fan of ‘Gentle Jesus, meek and mild’. I was much happier when he was overturning the tables of the money changers. And no-one ever said He wasn’t kind.

Helen Gale

KINDNESS

A dictionary definition: the quality of being friendly, generous and considerate.

I would like to add love and compassion to these qualities.

Mr Mowgli and I like to watch The Repair Shop on BBC1. It is one of our favourite TV programmes – a wonderful example of kindness in action.

Members of the public take in the battered family treasures they would like repaired. There is usually a personal story why the heir-loom means so much to them. The expert restorers listen with great compassion and nothing seems to be too much trouble no matter how tricky the repair proves to be.

It is clear how moved they are by the wonderful reaction of the return-ing owners when they collect their newly restored, treasured item.

We had a friend who went to the Bank every Birthday to withdraw a handful of £20 notes. He would then walk down the street and give away the money to astonished passers-by who probably thought he was mad! However, he enjoyed doing this and said it gave him much more pleasure than any birthday gifts he might receive.

Obviously, we are not all in a position to be so generous financially, but we can find a way to bring an act of kindness into our daily lives. No gesture is too small whether it be a smile, a thank you or seeing how best we can be of help our neighbours.

'For centuries, people have recognised the power of kindness. Not only

does being kind help others around you, but it positively impacts your life as well!'

Quote taken from inspirekindness.com

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you - Ephesians 4:32

Mrs Mowgli

Get me out of Here - Please

Have you been watching I'm a celebrity get me out of here? This year Matt Hancock the politician has been included. For those of you who need a memory jolt, he was the Health Secretary when during Lockdown told us to stay at home and keep our distance. He lost his ministerial position because he didn't follow his own advice. Many people lost loved ones during Lockdown so it was an emotionally painful experience when he admitted breaking his rules which even the Queen kept.

When he arrived in the jungle the other contestants harassed him and he had to endure trial after trial. Slowly most of his rivals grudgingly accepted him although they were unable to forgive him for what he did. Many viewers felt that he had been given enough punishment and were starting to feel uneasy while watching the programme.

Human nature is a strange phenomenon. At times, we struggle to express our emotions. Then we can be sucked in by the emotion of the moment, make poor decisions and live to regret our actions. Our conscience goes missing temporarily.

We cannot change the past. It is behind us. We can only change the present and influence the future. Many of us think we lack the power to change anything. But one small act by many people can have a dramatic effect. One snowflake will melt and die. But lots of snowflakes will cause traffic jams, stop trains and create chaos. Make your decision positive, based on kindness for the future of yourself and the world.

The desire of a man is his kindness: and a poor man is better than a liar. Proverbs 19:22.

John Slevin

Continue

Into a world which needed you
My wish for you
Is that you continue

Continue

To be who and how you are
To astonish a mean world
With your acts of kindness

Continue

To allow humour to lighten the burden
of your tender heart

Continue

In a society dark with cruelty
To let the people hear the grandeur
Of God in the peals of your laughter

Continue

To let your eloquence
Elevate the people to heights
They had only imagined

Continue

To remind the people that
Each is as good as the other
And that no one is beneath
Nor above you

Continue

To remember your own young years
And look with favour upon the lost
And the least and the lonely

Continue

To put the mantel of your protection
Around the bodies of
The young and defenseless

Continue

To take the hand of the despised
And diseased and walk proudly with
them
In the high street
Some might see you and
Be encouraged to do likewise

Continue

To plant a public kiss of concern
On the cheek of the sick
And the aged and infirm
And count that as a
Natural action to be expected

Continue

To let gratitude be the pillow
Upon which you kneel to
Say your nightly prayer
And let faith be the bridge
You build to overcome evil
And welcome good

Continue

To ignore no vision
Which comes to enlarge your range
And increase your spirit

Continue

To dare to love deeply
And risk everything
For the good thing

Continue

To float
Happily in the sea of infinite substance
Which set aside riches for you
Before you had a name

Continue

And by doing so
You and your work
Will be able to continue
Eternally

Maya Angelou

Foodbank

Last month the B30 Foodbank received 1543kg of goods and gave out 2225kg, feeding 239 clients on 119 vouchers.

Urgently Needed

Baked beans, rice, pasta sauce, tinned fish, tinned fruit in juice (not prunes or grapefruit), sweet biscuits (not multipacks), tinned spaghetti, jam or honey, liquid or bars of soap, nappies (sizes 4, 5 and 6), laundry powder or liquid, tinned tomatoes, strong carrier bags.

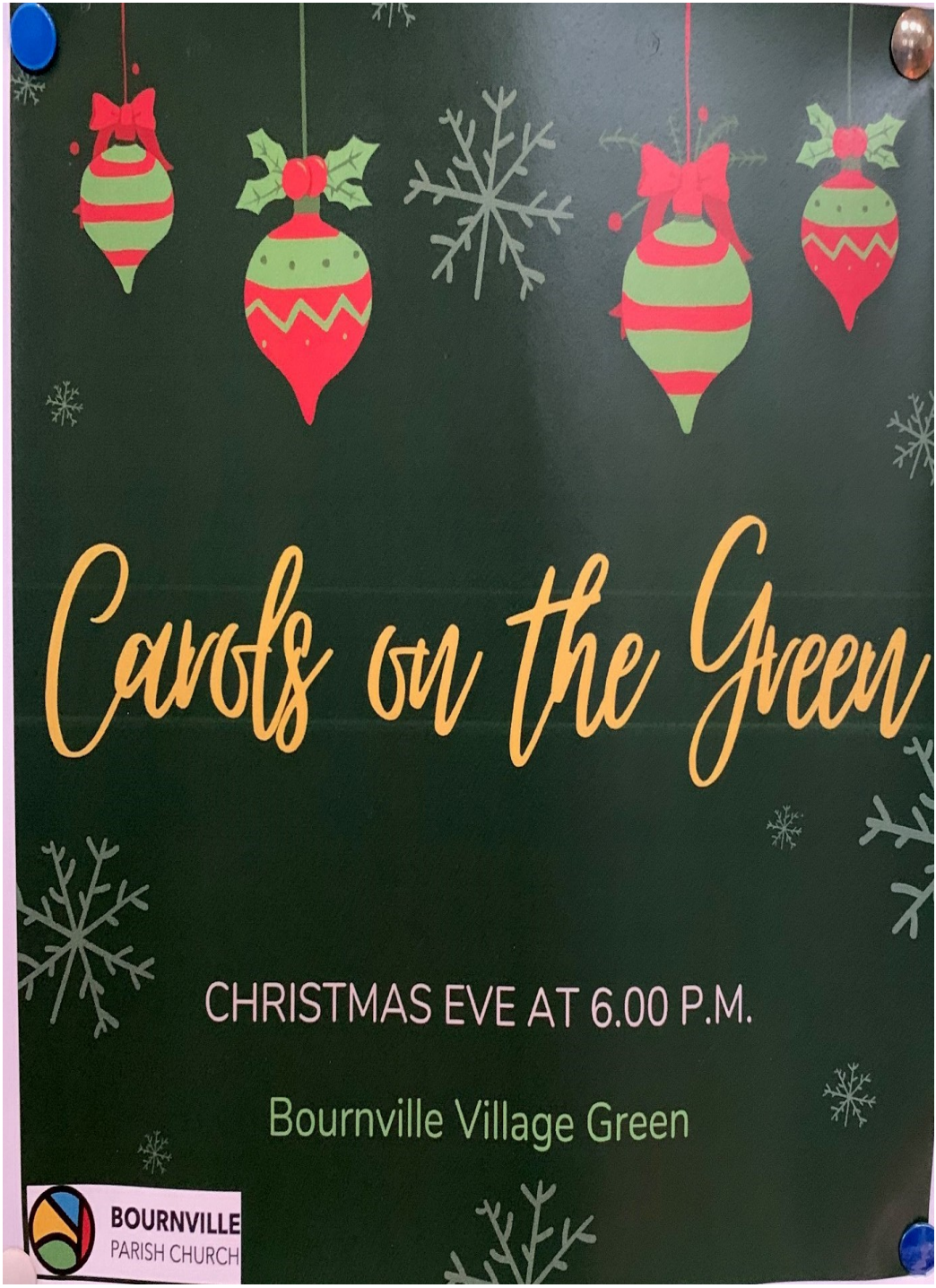
Items lower in stock:

Tinned or packet soup, squash, UHT whole and semi skimmed milk dog food, instant hot chocolate (not cocoa powder), long life fruit juice, instant coffee (not decaf), porridge, ready made custard (tins or cartons), tinned rice pudding, tin/packet vegetarian eats, tinned meat, sugar (50g), toilet rolls, size 3 nappies, gender neutral shower gel and shampoo, washing up liquid.

Please do not donate:

Decaffeinated drinks or fruits infusions, Bottled water, Large bottles of lemonade or coke, Any foods containing alcohol, Cooking ingredients, Fresh produce including vegetables, eggs and bread.
Non-dairy items or gluten free items, Coffee beans, Large boxes of teabags (120's or larger), Very large boxes of cereal or porridge, Loose tea, Cocoa powder, Tampons, Make up, hair accessories, perfume or after-shave.

HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS


Carols on the Green
CHRISTMAS EVE AT 6.00 P.M.
Bournville Village Green
BOURNVILLE
PARISH CHURCH

Saturday 3rd December 2022

Christmas Fayre

10:00 till 14:00

Come and join us at The Cotteridge Church for some Festive Fun.

Traidcraft
Books
Crafts
Games
Toys
Tombola
Festive refreshments
Cakes/mince pies
non-alcoholic mulled punch
Father Christmas
Childrens games/activities
Toddler play area
Lucky Dip
Plants
Jams/chutneys
Cards
Memory Tree (help keep our external tree lit for the Christmas season in memory of loved ones)

To donate towards the outdoor tree lights and to have a named star placed on our indoor tree in memory of a loved one please visit:

Click on the different links below to find out what's happening in your church

(Crl + click on link)

https://www.facebook.com/rowheath.pavilion/

https://ssjandh.org

https://bournvilleparishchurch.org.uk/

https://www.facebook.com/BournvilleParishChurchStFrancisOfAssisi/

www.ascensionstirchley.com
https://www.facebook.com/AscensionStirchley/

https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Organization/Bournville-Quaker-Meeting/

https://www.facebook.com/Cotteridge-Quaker
https://cotteridgequakers.org.uk/

https://www.thecotteridgechurch.org.uk/
https://www.facebook.com/TheCotteridgeChurch/

https://www.birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk/church-page/st-andrews-b30

https://www.weoleyhillchurch.org.uk/links.php

https://www.birminghamvineyard.com/

https://www.facebook.com/vineyardbham/

https://b30.foodbank.org.uk/

https://www.birminghamchurches.org.uk/news/

https://ctb30.org.uk/

BOURNVILLE
PARISH CHURCH

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM BRASS BAND

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

SEASONAL MUSIC, CAKES, RAFFLE & MERRIMENT!

BOURNVILLE PARISH CHOIR
BOURNVILLE VOCAL EASE LADIES CHOIR
BOURNVILLE BELL CHOIR &
THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM BRASS BAND

BOURNVILLE PARISH CHURCH
7PM FRIDAY 2ND DECEMBER
TICKETS £8 ADULT £5 CHILDREN

RSCDS Birmingham

Join our

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON CLASS

from 7 September 2022 for fun, friendly Scottish dancing.

Every week from 2.00-3.30pm

Bournville Quaker Meeting House, 65 Linden Road, Birmingham B30 1JT

A rota of teachers will take the class.

Please contact Fiona Thomson on 07791 863522 or fthomson69@gmail.com for more details.

WORLD KINDNESS DAY

World Kindness day was launched in 1998 by the World Kindness Movement, an organisation, formed in 1997 at a Tokyo conference, of like minded kindness organisations. Over 28 nations are involved in this Non Political Non Religious mission. Their aim is to create a kinder world by inspiring individuals and nations towards greater kindness. In the UK World Kindness day is organised by Kindness UK a not for profit organisation. Kind day UK was launched on the 13th November 2010 and has been growing in popularity every year since with many individuals, schools, charities, institutions and businesses taking part. Anyone wishing to take part in World Kindness day or Kindness day UK can pledge a good deed and also find a range of resources including ideas for random acts of kindness both large and small at the Kindness UK website. www.kindnessuk.com

BEGINNERS IMPROVERS SHARE CHAT SOCIALISE

ART CLASSES

Your first class is free!

Art Classes

These classes are designed to create a sense of fun, community and acceptance...and we make a bit of art too!

Mon 10am - 12 noon Harborne *
Tues 10am - 12 noon Bournville
Wed 12.30pm - 2.30 pm Bournville
Wed 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm West Heath*

Art Appreciation Lectures Bournville

Regular lectures on a broad range of topics that help you to understand art in fun and inventive ways.

Tues 12.30 am - 2.00 pm
Wed 10.30 am - 12 noon
Thurs 7.00 pm - 8.30pm EVENINGS

The classes are for people who love to make art, socialise & have fun. You can begin with as little as a biro & the back of a cereal packet; we don't mind!

Nita is a qualified teacher, artist & art history researcher dedicated to bringing you quality teaching & learning at all levels. Suitable for 18 +

ZOOM also available - request the link

FREE tea and coffee available here *

Costs vary between £8-£10 per class

Contact Nita at : nitanewman@live.co.uk for availability, full information and itinerary for all classes in all destinations.

07779 414598 Text preferred

CHURCH CONTACTS

For further details of worship and/or activities at any of the churches please contact the people below:

- St. Andrew's Methodist Church
  Revd. Farai Mapamula - 427 1747
- Bournville United Reformed Church
  Revd Leonora Jagessar - 472 0730
- Society of Friends, Bournville
  Claire Bowman - 07753 635438
  Room Hire, 471 2155
  annegiles57@gmail.com
- St. Francis Church, Bournville
  Rev Canon Richard Wharton - 472 7215
- Rowheath Pavilion Church
  Inter regnum
  Office - 458 1711.
- Society of Friends, Cotteridge
  Chris Martin - 475 2088
- The Cotteridge Church
  Revd. Mike Claridge - 433 5176
  Revd. Roger Collins - 459 4009
  or Church Office - 433 5518
- Ascension Stirchley
  Revd. Catherine Grylls - 443 1371
- Catholic Church of Ss Joseph and Helen
- Catholic Church of St Paul's
  Father David Barry - 458 1236

"Points" is published by Churches Together in Birmingham 30 for the exchange of ideas and news. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the churches as a group or individually.

Contact **"Points":** c/o Mr John Slevin (Editor) 54 Bunbury Road, Northfield Birmingham, B31 2DW. E-mail: johnslevin@blueyonder.co.uk Or ring the Editor, Mr John Slevin on 0121 476 1942.

Editorial Committee: *Roger Bunce* *Linda Mann* *Gill Broadhead* *Margaret Scorey*

Next Issue's Focus will be

Migration

Deadline for articles: 22 January