

## Worship in Churches Uniting in Central Sutton

### Sunday 3 December Advent Sunday

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SCB</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Steve Tomkins (editor of Reform)</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Advent Team Service St Barnabas <i>Farewell to Revd Cécile Schnyder</i>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>United Choral Advent Service</b>

### Sunday 10 December

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	<b>Patronal Festival</b>
6.30pm		<b>Carolling at St Barnabas</b>

### 17-25 December See Christmas Worship

### Sunday 31 December

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	<b>CUCS United Morning Worship</b> <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
6.30pm		<b>No evening service</b>

### Sunday 7 January

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Phil Barnard</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship Communion Covenant Sunday <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Morning Worship
6.30pm	<b>St N</b>	<b>CUCS United Service</b>

### Sunday 14 January

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Morning Worship
6.30pm	<b>St N</b>	<b>CUCS United Service</b>

### Sunday 21 January

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	<b>CUCS United Service</b> <i>Farewell to Revd Mike Dales</i>
6.30pm		<b>Our Lady of the Rosary RC Church</b> St Barnabas Road Sutton Churches Together in Sutton and Cheam Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

### Sunday 28 January

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Morning Worship...Communion
6.30pm	<b>St N</b>	<b>CUCS United Service</b>

### ... for help or information please contact

<b>Revd Mike Dales</b> (Sutton Baptist)	07952 231723 mg.dales@blueyonder.co.uk
<b>Revd Dr David Dickinson</b> (Trinity)	Office: 020 8643 6884 Home: 020 8643 0963 todayiddickinson@gmail.com
<b>Revd Phil Brooks</b> (Team Vicar)	020 8642 2757 vicar@suttonteamministry.org



December 2017 January 2018

Dear friends,

After more than 27 years in pastoral ministry, I will finally retire at the end of January. Most of those years have been here in Sutton where I arrived just after Easter, 1996. I never planned or hoped to stay so long, but in the providence of God that is how it has worked out. And now I find myself enduring a whole string of "this is the last time I will ..." as we prepare to move back to Bristol where my journey to ministry began all those years ago.

It has been a real privilege to serve among you and the memories I take with me will encourage me for the rest of my life. It is a hard thing to explain, but perhaps it is only other ministers who can really understand what a privilege it is to serve in this way. All I can really offer to you in return is my grateful thanks for the part you have all played in making our church families such wonderful things to be part of.

And now I am preparing to embark on a very different kind of life. Retirement will give me the opportunity to pick up so many things which have been laid aside over the years, as well as finding new interests and new challenges.

But the end of January is still a little distance away! There is Christmas to come first and I will no doubt see many of you at one Christmas event or another.

My main ecumenical 'farewell' will take place on 21 January when the morning service will be held at SBC. The service will give me the chance to say goodbye properly to my many friends across our churches. The service will be followed by appropriate refreshments and nibbles and I really hope that as many of you as possible will be able to come.

In the meantime, peace and blessings be upon you and those you love.

A very happy Christmas to every one of you.

Your friend

*Mike*      Revd Mike Dales



## Will Christmas ever end? by Dave Dickinson

Christmas 2017, the anniversary year of the 1917 Russian Revolution and the 1517 Protestant Reformation, reminds me that both Communists and Reformers have at different times tried to repress the celebration of Christmas. Hogmanay is big in Scotland because seventeenth-century Calvinists did not want people to party on a religious festival and Stalin, in his attempt to crush Christianity in the Soviet Union, transferred winter festivities (so necessary at such a dark time of year) from Christmas to New Year.

Some have said that Christmas is under threat yet again. The increasing tendency in America to wish people "Happy Holidays" rather than "Merry Christmas" is cited as an instance of anti-Christmas sentiment. Yet it seems to me that Christmas gets bigger year on year. Churches and cathedrals will be brimming at midnight on Christmas Eve. About 90% of British atheists and agnostics will observe the festival without any qualms. So will about three quarters of Hindus and Buddhists living in Britain. Christmas shows little sign of decline in a society currently seeing decline in many other expressions of Christianity.

Christmas won't go away because, for most people, it is a valuable secular celebration injecting goodwill and magic into a cold, barren and dark time of year. Our missionary challenge as a contemporary church is to engage with this perception of the festival and take it further. How do we cut through the schmaltz and carve a way through the commercialism so that people see God at the heart of it all? How do we transform goodwill into Godliness? How can we help people see truth veiled in what many experience as an incredible story? One first step each of us might take is to "join the celebration" (to use the words of a bouncy carol) – in our Carol Services, on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day.

Will Christmas ever end? Of course not, it goes with us into 2018 and beyond. Christmas is not just for Christmas.

## Advent Lecture and Epiphany Talk!

How lucky we are to have two speakers who are experts in their field to help us to explore different aspects of the Reformation and to reflect on the Nativity Narratives. Why not have a light supper with friends in the Oasis before the talks begin, especially if you are coming straight from work. Tickets available in each church or on the Trinity website, or pay on the door!

### Picturing the Reformation

A Trinity Advent Lecture by the Rt. Revd. Dr Christopher Herbert, Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics, University of Surrey

Tuesday 12 December 7.30 pm  
at Trinity Church, Cheam Road, Sutton

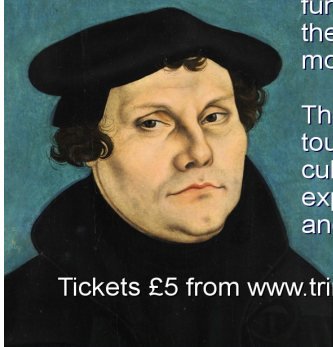
Light suppers on sale from 6pm

The Reformation was one of the major turning points in world history... but what were its origins? Was Martin Luther the only driving personality behind it? Was it simply the result of an abstruse theological argument which got out of hand? What, if anything, did it have to do with

fund-raising? And, perhaps the key question: was there more than one Reformation?

This richly illustrated lecture, touching on the art and culture of the period, will explore all these questions and suggest a few answers.

Tickets £5 from [www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk)



### The Gospel Stories of Jesus's Birth

A talk by the Very Revd Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans

Tuesday 30 January 7.30 pm

Light suppers on sale from 6pm

Why is it that only Matthew and Luke supply any information about Jesus' birth, while Mark and John pass over it in silence?

Why are Matthew's and Luke's stories so different?

Where have these stories come from?

How important is the virginal conception of Jesus?

Are we dealing with history, myth, or something in between?

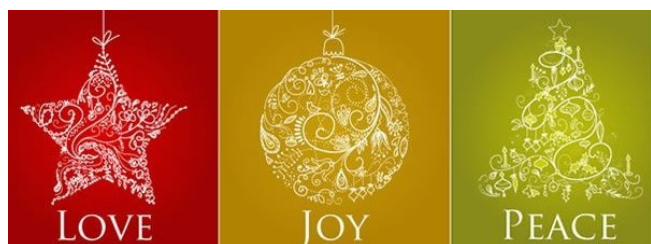
Tickets £5 from [www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk)



**From the Editor** I would be delighted to receive comments and suggestions on the future of *Unite!*. Contact me by email: [olwenmedwards@gmail.com](mailto:olwenmedwards@gmail.com) or by phone: **8643 2525**. Copy date for the February issue is 17 January. *Unite!* is also available online via each church's website.



# News from the Churches



## CUCS Christmas Worship

### Sutton Baptist Church

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17 December</b>
10.30am	Christmas Family Service <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Service of Lessons and Carols</b> united with Trinity at SBC
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24 December Christmas Eve</b>
11.30pm	<b>Midnight Mass</b> united at St Nicholas
<b>Monday</b>	<b>25 December Christmas Day</b>
10.30am	Family Christmas Worship united at Trinity

### St Nicholas Parish Church

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17 December</b>
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	Morning Worship
6.30pm	<b>Sutton Team Carol Service</b> united at Christ Church
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24 December Christmas Eve</b>
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	Morning Worship
4.00pm	Christingle Service
11.30pm	<b>Midnight Holy Communion</b> united with SBC at St Nicholas
<b>Monday</b>	<b>25 December Christmas Day</b>
10.30am	Family Communion

### Trinity URC/Methodist Church

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17 December</b>
10.30am	Junior Church Nativity Service
6.30pm	<b>Service of Lessons and Carols</b> united with SBC at SBC
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24 December Christmas Eve</b>
10.30am	Morning Worship
3.30pm	Crib Service for young children
11.15pm	<b>Candlelight Service</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>25 December Christmas Day</b>
10.30am	Family Christmas Worship united with SBC at Trinity

## Sunday 3 December Edwardian Afternoon

Join us for a visit to **Little Holland House**, Beeches Avenue at **2.30pm**. It is 3 minutes' walk from Carshalton Beeches station and on the 154 bus route. The house and the furniture were designed and built by Frank Dickinson in the "Arts and Crafts" style. Then a short 15 minute walk to John and Deborah Wroe's home for afternoon tea and Edwardian games, perhaps followed by the Advent Service at Trinity at 6.30!

Contact John and Deborah Wroe for details:  
020 8642 9064 john.p.wroe@btinternet.com

## Carol Singers wanted!



<b>When?</b>	Friday 15 December 7.00-8.00pm
<b>Where?</b>	Outside Sutton Station
<b>Why?</b>	To support <b>Action for Children</b>
<b>Who?</b>	Both adults and children from all our churches to sing or collect!

## Saying Farewell



**Cécile Schnyder's** last service in Sutton will be at St Barnabas Church on Advent Sunday, 3 December at 10.30am and will be followed by a bring and share lunch. Everyone in CUCS wishes Cécile a happy and fulfilling ministry as priest-in-charge of Dulwich St Clement with St

Peter and Chaplain to James' Allen School for Girls.

There are some weeks to go before we say goodbye to Mike Dales after nearly 22 years as minister of Sutton Baptist Church but as there is not a January edition of *Unite!* there can be no more reminders! We hope that the church will be packed for his last CUCS United Service at 10.30am on 21 January.

## Don't forget the Christmas Tree Festival!

The Sutton New Town Christmas Tree Festival will open at St Barnabas Church with a gala celebration on Friday 8 December 6.00-8.00pm with mulled wine, mince pies and Christmas cheer. This is the big switch on and then the festival will run until 6 January 2018.

Festival opening times:

Weekdays	11.00am to 1.00pm
Saturdays	9.00am to 3.00pm
Sundays	9.00am to 1.00pm

## Devotions

### Christmas on the Edge

Christmas sets the centre on the edge;  
The edge of town, the outhouse of the inn,  
The fringe of empire, far from privilege  
And power, on the edge and outer spin  
Of turning worlds, a margin of small stars  
That edge a galaxy itself light years  
From some unguessed at cosmic origin.  
Christmas sets the centre at the edge.

And from this day our world is re-aligned  
A tiny seed unfolding in the womb  
Becomes the source from which we all unfold  
And flower into being. We are healed,  
The end begins, the tomb becomes a womb,  
For now in him all things are re-aligned.

Malcolm Guite



### Looking ahead!

#### What are human beings that God is mindful of them? (Psalm 8: 4)

Because Lent is traditionally a season of self-examination, 2018's Lent programme for CUCS takes the form of three talks on alternate weeks on being human. Among the questions Dave Dickinson will explore: What sets us apart from the animal kingdom? What is our essential nature? Can we be Godlike? What does it take to be fully human?

**Tuesday 20 February 7.30pm Trinity**  
**Tuesday 6 March 7.30pm Sutton Baptist Church**  
**Tuesday 20 March 7.30pm St Nicholas**

There will also be a daytime discussion group meeting three times in the Oasis Terrace Room at Trinity led by Sylvia Robinson.

**Tuesday 27 February 2.30pm**  
**Tuesday 13 March 2.30pm**  
**Tuesday 27 March 2.30pm**

On **Ash Wednesday, 14 February** the Frugal Supper will be held at SBC followed by the Service of Ashing at St Nicholas'.

So you will have the opportunity to be involved in something every week during Lent with events spread around our three churches.

## Regular Events

CUCS is Sutton Baptist Church, St Nicholas and Trinity URC/Methodist who are Churches Uniting in Central Sutton, and who regularly meet together for prayer, worship and shared activities.

All members of CUCS are warmly welcomed at these activities

**Christian Meditation Groups** are not meeting at the moment.

**Saturday Prayer Meeting (1st and 3rd Saturdays)**  
10.00am - 11.00am at Sutton Baptist Church.

**St Nicholas' Mothers' Union** All are welcome  
Contact: Emma Cann 020 8641 6530

**Women in Touch (WIT)** meets fortnightly on a Monday at 10.30am at different venues, to enjoy a variety of activities including coffee, films and outings. It is open to women of any age. For further details of the programme contact: Carole Adams 07711879645 or see: [www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk)

**Trinity Toddler Group** meets on Tuesdays in term time in Trinity Hall, 9.00-11.00am.  
Contact: Sheila Booth 8715 0514

**Bunker**, the youth club for CUCS, meets in Trinity Hall on Sunday evenings in term time from 6.30-8.00pm for young people at senior school. A chance to get to know other young people in CUCS and have fun together.  
Contact Jane Oliver: 01883 346261.

**Badminton Club** meets 7.45-10.00pm every Monday in Trinity Hall.

**Sutton Churches Tennis Club** can be found between 99 and 101 Gander Green Lane, Sutton. All ages and abilities are welcome. See our website at [www.clubtennis.co.uk](http://www.clubtennis.co.uk)

**Coffee and Craft** meets in the Oasis at Trinity, 10.00-11.30am usually on the third Friday of the month. Meet with others and work on your knitting, sewing, paper craft or other project. Beginners welcomed!  
Contact: Deborah Wroe: 8642 9064,

**Oasis** at Trinity Church is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm for refreshments, light lunches and a chance to chat.

