

Cheadle Hulme United Reformed Church

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# CHURCH NEWS

Swann Lane Cheadle Hulme  
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[www.cheadlehulmeurc.org.uk](http://www.cheadlehulmeurc.org.uk)

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*The*  
United  
Reformed  
Church

Partnership Minister:  
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**JANUARY 2024**

**Friends,**

## *Looking ahead*

January of course is named after the Roman god Janus. He had two faces, so he could study the past and see into the future.

At the start of a new year, we dispose of old calendars and diaries. No doubt, it is only natural to look back at the former year. Perhaps we recall occasions of happy times that include special moments with dear friends. On the other hand, our old year may have had disappointments, such as loss of employment or deterioration of health.

We might also reminisce at the life of our church. We remember our building regularly filled for our services. There were many joyous occasions in which we were encouraged and supported. However, over time, things have changed. We may now have a dwindling congregation, with its regular members elderly and less active.

However, these ponderings are not meant to make us depressed! We can look back with thankfulness that God has been with us. Also, we can look to the future, praying that God will give us wisdom, strength and guidance for our journey ahead.

The Bible is full of instances where individuals and indeed the Jewish nation looked back. They had annual Feast Days, through which God showed them His grace and favour. These festivals were important because they had a dual purpose – to look back and face forward. The Passover looked back to the Israelites deliverance from slavery in Egypt. This meal was a reminder that just as God had cared for them in the past, He would be with them in the future.

Similarly, for us, the Communion Service is a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus who secured our salvation. We look back to His life, death, and resurrection so that we can live with confidence that our sins are forgiven, and one day we will live in God's eternal Home.

January can be a month when remember God's blessings and faithfulness in the past, enabling us to look to the future with confidence. As we start a new year, may it be our prayer that God will enrich us wherever we are, and that we will know He is always with us.

*Lester Amann, Editor Parish Pump*

## NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

The beginning of December brought the very sad news of the passing of Isobel Grieve who had been in the hearts of many since her move to the Care Home. A Thanksgiving Service was held at Cheadle Hulme on Thursday 4 JAN 2024 at 12.30pm. Our thoughts and prayers are with Peter and Hazel and their families at this difficult time.

We were also saddened to learn of the passing of Mary Mailer on 22 DEC following the death of her husband Sandy last June and we are thinking of Fiona, David, Kathleen, Morag and their families; stalwarts of this congregation. Her funeral will be held on Mon 15 JAN at Accrington crematorium at 1.45pm when there will be a live link.

Many thanks go to all our members who were involved with worship at a number of services in December, either leading or reading. In addition, we welcomed Margaret Dexter-Brown for a memorable Service of Light and Remembrance. On Christmas Day we joined our friends at Heald Green for a service led by our minister, Rev Kurauone Mutimwii who also led a joint service at Bramhall on Christmas Eve Sunday.

Thanks go to everyone who supported our Christmas stall this year when £111 was raised for our Church charities.

To all those who will be celebrating a birthday or special anniversary in January we hope you have a very happy time.

*The News Team*

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Sun 14 JAN** - Church Meeting

**20/21 JAN** - PREACH with a VIEW programme

**Sun 28 JAN** - United Partnership meeting for VOTING, at 12.30pm, ~Cheadle Hulme.

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### FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

We were all saddened to hear of the death of Isobel who started all our meetings with a prayer and was our dear friend. She has been sadly missed.

We have had a quiet month which nevertheless included a bagatelle tournament and a wonderful Christmas lunch prepared by Morag, Sandy and Alison with help from Mo. We had a rest for the remainder of the month and will be starting again in January with a regular time change of 1.00-2.30pm. **Carole Davies**

## ISOBEL GRIEVE - MEMORIES

~Wife, Mum, Grandma, Great Grandma and friend to many.

Isobel was born in Northumberland to William and Lena on Mid-Summer day 1928, a beautiful day so her father took her into their garden in a pram he had decorated with roses that he had picked. She had an elder brother, Roy, who teased her until she grew older, when they became the best of friends.

The family returned to the Isle of Man when Isobel was two, where Roy and Isobel grew up with many cousins and aunts and visited other family on trips to Burton on Trent.

Isobel was educated in Douglas, but spent lots of time with her father in the Man countryside along with their Jack Russell and ferret. She earned extra pocket money by taking poached rabbits in a basket to the local butchers!

During the war years she helped her mother in their guest house where British officers were billeted. Isobel vividly recollected VE Day when she sneaked off with her friend to row around Douglas Bay.

After gaining her school certificate, Isobel worked in a hairdresser's until she was old enough to train as a nurse. We don't think she learned many skills working with hair - years of wonky fringes on Hazel and Peter followed; when Hazel was a teenager she had a trendy feathered haircut and her mother cut all the feathers off because she erroneously thought they were mistakes by the hairdresser.

Isobel trained to be a nurse on the Island then became a midwife leaving for Birmingham. On trips home she met Angus, marrying in 1954 and became mum to Hazel and Peter.

A busy life a minister's wife supporting Angus and being involved with many groups followed. Hazel recalls her making hot-pot in a large brown pot and taking it to Church socials. on the bus! At one Church sale of

work, Hazel spent her pocket money on a trendy underskirt, which to her horror, Isobel ironed a hole in and tried to patch it by cutting up some knickers - Hazel was not amused.

Moves around the North of England ended with retirement in Cheadle Hulme in 1979, where they settled happily.

Isobel gained her son-in-law, Phil, in 1976, and daughter-in-law, Geraldine in 1989. Isobel nursed Angus throughout his long illness and then was kept busy with her four grandchildren, Richard, Andy, James and Jennifer, and her three great grandchildren, Isobel, Ellis and Rowan.

Isobel always remained close to Roy and his wife Mary, and we always enjoyed summer holidays in Devon, especially during the 1966 World Cup. Further holidays were enjoyed with her cousins from Port St Mary who would also travel across to Cheadle Hulme for family occasions.

Isobel enjoyed family time most of all. Wearing a brown furry hat which we laughed at, she would take her grandchildren on outings. On one occasion when she was visiting Hazel with young James, she got on the wrong bus and Hazel had to go to find them.

Holidays and trips in the caravan when Peter, Geraldine, James and Jen would visit us leave us with many memories. Top of the list was her thunderous snoring, which when Uncle Roy asked Richard and Andy about, they were forced to deny it happened! We visited Devon, and dropped Isobel at Roy's for a few days, Windermere, Berwick on Tweed and Derbyshire, fed for the day with a huge pot of Geraldine's chilli and a chocolate cake.

Food memories come up frequently - her ham and beef sandwiches, family barbecues in the rain, where Phil cooked, installed under a tarpaulin - 'Little Willy' sausage, crocodile chips and trifle, with specially made chocolate figures with us

all sitting round the red Formica table in the kitchen.

Isobel loved meals out, and could be found with a sherry or glass of wine and was once found with a tequila slammer – James and Jen leading her astray, again!

Her 80th birthday party was celebrated in style by taking a surprise helicopter trip over Derwent reservoir. Isobel's 90th birthday was spent at Swann Lane with a party held, again with all the family.

We have happy memories of a family get together in Little Longstone in 2016 where she was pushed to and back from the pub by James (with much laughter).

Although Isobel's last years were difficult for her, she was able to live in her own flat until she needed full time care. She lived her final years in Bankfield Care Home where she still enjoyed her glass of sherry, chocolates and biscuits, leaving us at the grand old age of 95 years.

Isobel will be missed.

**Hazel**  
**Text of Eulogy at Funeral**

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## **CHRISTIAN AID**

### **Urgent appeal for the people of Gaza**

In Gaza, our medical partner is providing mobile medical and psychological care. In southern Gaza, our partner is responding to the recently displaced, providing them with mattresses, medicines, and emergency food items. Your donations can make a huge difference. Please go to: <https://give.christianaid.org.uk> Also hope to have envelopes available on Sunday.

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## **THANK YOU**

To all at Swann Lane - thank you very much for the sweets you so kindly gave me for Christmas. I hope you had an enjoyable time. Best wishes for 2024.

**Love Ann Hardie**

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## **URC AT CROSSROADS**

A culture of listening and collective discernment

### **Shortage of ministers**

To say there is a shortage of ministers in the URC is to state the obvious. Indeed, this was a recurring complaint and source of sadness in many of the interviews we conducted. It also came through clearly in the survey we ran. The minister-to-church ratio varies from synod to synod, but in one of the synods we studied, the ratio was approximately 20 ministers to 100 churches. As one interviewee put it, “ministers are now becoming more like little bishops of a small diocese.” In a similar, only half-humorous vein, a local church leader referred to this as the “bubble gum model of ministry”, where ministers are stretched thinner and thinner across congregations. Many interviewees and respondents to the questionnaire reported that the absence of a full-time minister has a negative effect on the congregational life and ministry of local congregations, limiting particularly their ability to meet the needs of their local communities through outreach activities. “Without a fulltime minister and therefore relying on a list of lay preachers it is hard to establish any sense of continuity and future progress,” said a survey respondent, voicing a representative sentiment in the research.

Indeed, qualitative data from our research revealed that congregations which experience a level of flourishing have either a full-time minister or a minister who, while not strictly speaking full-time, is sufficiently embedded within and present to the congregation in order to, among other things, meet their pastoral needs and mobilise for local mission.

Dependence on ministers can be seen in the responses to the online survey we conducted. 36% of respondents (effectively 145 out of 402 churches) identified “limited ministerial support” as a barrier to thriving as a congregation. In the same question, 18 out of 402 churches selected “all of the above”. “Synod cannot expect growth if it continues to say ‘NO’ to our requests for help personnel/hours”, said a respondent to the survey.

However, we also came across congregations who, although they had not had ministers for several years, were self-reliant and resourceful. This was largely down to having “very capable elders and local leaders,” as the minister who eventually came to one of the churches in

question said during our interview. “A small group of committed people can make a huge impact and can continue congregational ministry with little stipendiary support,” they noted. In a similar vein, another interviewee remarked how “a group of committed people can really be an excellent witness to the community; they can keep things going, maintaining their building extremely well and nurturing the sense of fellowship.”

Indeed, several interviewees were keen to stress that having a minister or a greater share of a minister’s time should not be seen as a panacea. When asked whether there are “any church burdens that, if freed of, would liberate you to flourish?”, a respondent to the ‘Jubilee Questions’ survey identified “the idea of leadership being predominantly for ordained clergy...” as a barrier which, among other things, can sometimes prevent not only members to receive Communion (because they lack ‘Ministers of Word and Sacrament’) but also to develop as mature, local leaders who can take ownership of the life, discipleship, and mission of local congregations. This points to what several interviewees described as a crisis of discipleship and leadership development throughout the denomination. More on this further below.

*Nathan Mladin  
to be continued...*

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## **SOUP, SWEET & MEET**

Wed 17 JAN

12 noon

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### **MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP**

At the March 2023 meeting of the Greater Manchester South & Cheshire Missional Partnership we shared the idea of creating a prayer calendar, so all our congregations are praying for one of our pastorates each month, praying for their mission and ministry and for the Partnership as a whole.

Each Church has prepared a prayer for the Partnership to use in worship. How your congregation uses this resource is up to you. The prayers are not designed to be for a specific event, they are about the general life and mission of the Church and can be used

appropriately, though it was agreed to use them in the order published. Here's the first...

## PRAYER FOR ALTRINCHAM URC

Lord God, we join together in prayer in this church and across our Missional Partnership, united by our faith and trust in you.

We ask for your blessing on our shared commitment to make a positive difference in the world, using our gifts and talents for the benefit of all. Help us to follow in your footsteps and make our way purposeful so that we can be beacons of hope in our communities and bring to fulfilment all that you ask us to do. Let your light shine.

Lord God, we thank you for all those who help others through their work, volunteering or good neighbourliness. Bless our neighbours and strengthen those who bring healing and comfort to those in need. We pray that you will give us the strength and vision to step into situations where we can serve. Let your light shine.

Lord God, we share with you our love and concern for all those who are struggling – those who are ill, in pain, troubled or bereaved; those who are facing poverty, war, prejudice and oppression. Fill our hearts with love and compassion so that we can be the people you want us to be.

Living God, let your light shine through all our lives. **Amen.**

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## WINDOWS

On a cold winter day a wife texted her husband "Windows frozen."

Her husband texted back:

"Pour some lukewarm water over it."

The wife texted back five minutes later:

"Computer completely not working now."

**Parish Pump**

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Godlessness. 9, Egotism. 10, After. 11, Eat. 13, Sort. 16, Plan. 17, Escape. 18, Odds. 20, Idem. 21, No fear. 22, Idle. 23, Abet. 25, Ail. 28, Eaves. 29, Achieve. 30, Grasshopper.

DOWN: 2, Odour. 3, Lair. 4, Same. 5, Neat. 6, Settled. 7, Gershonites. 8, Grandmother. 12, Apples. 14, TES. 15, Octopi. 19, Deliver. 20, Ira. 24, Breve. 25, As is. 26, Lash. 27, Whip.

## CALLING OUR MINISTER

Churches and Partnerships talk to their Synod about declaring a vacancy, then write a 'Profile' describing their situation. Profiles are published in the Eastern Synod website (who host this for the whole URC).

Synod Moderators meet monthly and discuss vacancies, ministers moving and students graduating, and may introduce or advise some. Applicants can consult their Moderator, and students their Principle OR, view the website and contact the declaring church /partnership.

Elders/Steering groups with a vacancy can consider the minister/student profile and then perhaps arrange a meeting (~interview). If both parties are agreed, a 'Preaching with a View' is arranged. Easy for one church, a nightmare for a partnership of 8, where video conferencing is needed.

When congregation(s) have met /seen /heard the minister/ordinand, a church meeting (or united church meetings) is/are arranged to discuss and divine if they are going to 'call' this person and a vote is organised. If 75% vote to call this applicant, the candidate makes a final decision to accept the call.

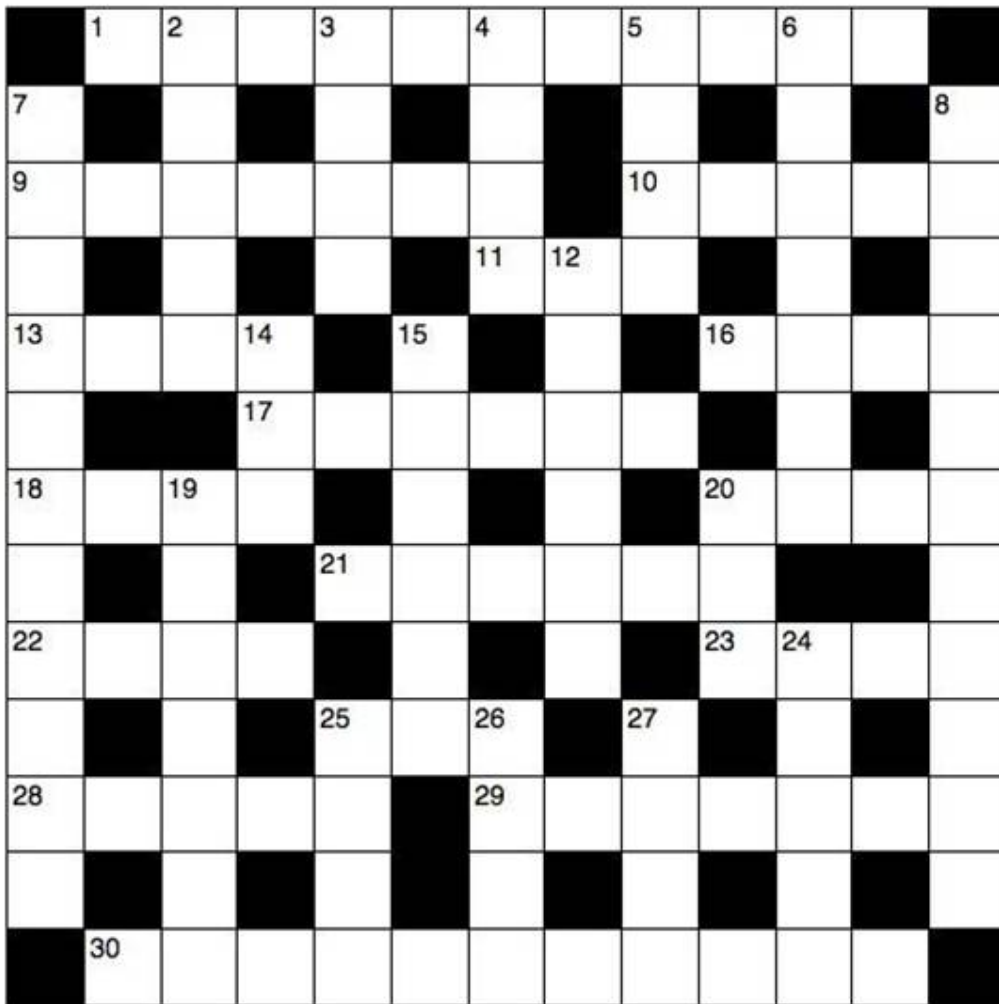
If the vote is say 80%, the minister / student may still feel that 1 in 5 don't want them and decline the call, but all being well, it leads to induction and /or ordination and a new minister joining the worship team. Yes, we are committed to 'team ministry' for the future.

This complex system has evolved to maintain confidentiality so that an existing congregation shouldn't hear that their minister wants to go.

Our Steering group, as 'Elders' of the Partnership, have been down this time consuming route several times and now present a candidate to you on 20/21st Jan, at Cornerstone /Altrincham /Bramhall. see Calendar

The Partnership, of soon to be 8 churches, is struggling courageously with only 1 minister, Kura, and though he is managing very well indeed in a new culture, he (and we) deserve a full team. We encourage you to see /witness our candidate, and please try hard to be able to vote later (members eligible) to make it representative.

**Bernie Stevens**



## CROSSWORD CLUES

### ACROSS

- 1 Paul said the wrath of God 'is being revealed from heaven' against this (Romans 1:18) (11)  
 9 Go smite (anag.) (7) 10 'But — I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee' (Matthew 26:32) (5)  
 11 'Take and —; this is my body' (Matthew 26:26) (3) 13 Type (2 Thessalonians 2:10) (4)  
 16 'Woe to those who — iniquity' (Micah 2:1) (4)  
 17 'How shall we — if we ignore such a great salvation?' (Hebrews 2:3) (6)  
 18 Opposite of evens (4)  
 20 Previously cited (Latin) (4)  
 21 'There is surely — — of God in this place, and

they will kill me because of my wife' (Genesis 20:11) (2,4)

22 The Thessalonians were warned to keep away from every brother who was this (2 Thessalonians 3:6) (4)

23 Beat (anag.) (4)

25 To trouble or afflict (Job 16:3) (3)

28 Part of a roof (1 Kings 7:9) (5)

29 Attain (Job 5:12) (7)

30 Insect noted for its gymnastic ability (Psalm 78:46) (11)

### DOWN

2 Smell (John 11:39) (5)

3 Lion's home (Jeremiah 25:38) (4)

4 'Jesus Christ is the — yesterday and today and for ever' (Hebrews 13:8) (4)

5 Tidy (4)

6 Made their home (Genesis 47:27) (7)

7 Their task was to carry the curtains of the tabernacle (Numbers 4:25–26) (11)

8 Timothy's was called Lois (2 Timothy 1:5) (11)

12 The Lover likened the fragrance of the Beloved's breath to these (Song of Songs 7:8) (6)

14 Times Educational Supplement (1,1,1)

15 Eight-tentacled sea creatures (6)

19 'And lead us not into temptation, but — us from the evil one' (Matthew 6:13) (7)

20 D.L. Moody's legendary song leader, — D. Sankey (3)

24 Rarely used musical note (5)

25 'Your will be done on earth — it — in heaven' (Matthew 6:10) (2,2)

26 and 27 'The Lord Almighty will — them with a — , as when he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb' (Isaiah 10:26) (4,4)

27 See 26 Down

## SERVICES

Elders' wish to keep everyone safe, so please stay home if you are unwell.

You may wear masks (perhaps for singing). Also, understand our plans may change with little notice. We may sometimes have a speaker and sometimes a simple in-house led service. Video conferencing continues and Leaders or readers may Zoom in or speak in church.

Duties are performed by a small team on a rota. Please check the board for changes.

Date	7 JAN	14 JAN		21 JAN	28 JAN
Service	Morning Worship	Songs of Praise	MP Evening Zoom Service	United Service at Bramhall	Morning Communion
Time	10.30 am	10.30 am	***6.30 pm***	10.00 am	10.30 am
Leader	Sandy Smith	Bernie Stevens	Rev Kurauone Mutimwii	Preach with a View	In House
Elder Duty	P Oliver	D Phillips			A Stevens/ P Oliver
Door	M Smith	M Hardie			H Elsdon
Reader					D Green
Flowers	Fellowship	D Green			H Elsdon
Coffee	B & A Stevens	D Green			M Hardie
Notes		<b>CHURCH MEETING</b>	Meeting ID: 717 0575 5463 Passcode (case sensitive) 2Hs7w3	<b>CHEADLE HULME CLOSED</b>	<b>United Meeting at Cheadle Hulme 12.30pm</b>

## CHURCH REGISTERS - FUNERAL

**ISOBEL MARION GRIEVE** who died on 3 December aged 95 years, at Stockport Crematorium and Cheadle Hulme URC on Thursday 4 January 2024

## LECTIONARY for JANUARY

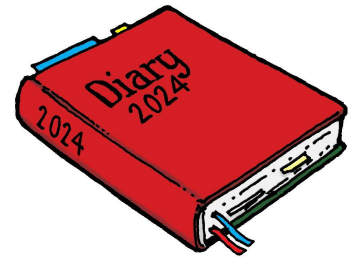
7 JAN: Genesis 1.1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19.1-7; Mark 1.4-11  
 14 JAN: 1 Samuel 3.1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139.1-6,13-18; 1 Corinthians 6.12-20; John 1.43-51  
 21 JAN: Jonah 3.1-5,10; Psalm 62.5-12; 1 Corinthians 7.29-31; Mark 1.14-20  
 28 JAN: Deuteronomy 18.15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8.1-13; Mark 1.21-28

**Members, friends & neighbours**

**FILM MATINEE**

Sat 27 JANUARY

# CALENDAR



...to the best of the editor's knowledge, unless you know better...

## JANUARY

Mon 01		
Tues 02		
Wed 03		1 pm~2.30 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE
Thu 04	12.30pm	Thanksgiving service for Isobel Grieve 7.30 pm MP Steering Group meeting on Zoom 2pm Choir Rehearsal
Fri 05		
Mon 08		
Tues 09		
Wed 10	10.30am	Elders' meeting 7.30 pm Worship Group ~ Church
Thu 11		
Fri 12		2 pm Choir Rehearsal
Mon 15		
Tues 16		
Wed 17	12pm	SOUP, SWEET and FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE
Thu 18		
Fri 19		2 pm Choir Rehearsal
<b>Sat 20</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Meet candidate &amp; family at Cornerstone URC for coffee</b> <b>2.30 pm Preach with a View at Altrincham URC</b>
<b>Sun 21</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Preach with a View at Bramhall URC</b>
Mon 22		
Tues 23		
Wed 24		1 pm~2.30 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE
Thu 25		
Fri 26	10.00 am	Management meeting ~ Church 2pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 27		2.30 pm Film Matinee
Sun 28	12.30 pm	Partnership Churches meeting at CH for <b>VOTING</b>
Mon 29		
Tues 30		
Wed 31		1 pm~2.30 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE



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