

Reflection: Walking with Jesus

This Reflection for April 2015 is provided by Anna Nugent, County Ecumenical officer for Herefordshire. Here Anna looks beyond the dark days of Jesus' trial, death and burial to the joy of Easter ...



What a happy time of year in the church calendars! Having walked with Jesus through the dark times of his trial and crucifixion, we look beyond the cross to the exciting news that Jesus is risen. The Emmaus story in Luke 24 is so relevant to us today, with enduring appeal in its humanity and its mixture of simplicity, complexity - and relevance for our ecumenical journey as we walk with Jesus today.

Like the two disciples on the road, we are often despondent. Working in rural Herefordshire with many beautiful churches and small congregations, I am very aware of Christians struggling to support their churches financially and despairing that they are getting side-tracked from what Jesus really wants them to do - bringing God's kingdom closer. I pray we remember to ask Jesus to walk alongside us because we don't have to get through the tough times on our own.

The tool Jesus used to comfort those disciples was Scripture. In Orleton, a small village in North Herefordshire with a population of less than 600, a new Christians Together group was launched this year in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It was a really joyous week with two well-attended services. The first was a celebration with the great and the good sharing in the excitement of a new group starting, including representatives from the Anglican, Methodist and Baptist churches. The second was more thought-provoking with a close look at how they planned to work within their community, under the headings of the 5 marks of mission: tell; teach; tend; transform and treasure. It was truly inspiring to see what they were already doing as Christians together and what they had planned over and above the usual joint worship they shared. Regular praying together, sharing scripture together and with children in the local school, and singing together are just a few of the many activities they told us about. It was a service full of God's love.

Jesus accepted the hospitality of strangers throughout his ministry and crucially on that road to Emmaus. He blessed and broke bread with them and at last they recognised him. We need that shock of recognition and blessing. We need the confidence to invite others to the banquet - and to share with other churches. In some places, it is crucial we work together - I would love to see the Anglican Methodist Covenant come to life in Herefordshire. I would love to see some of the folk in traditional churches recognise the strength of God's love in the independent churches (and vice versa). The thing that comforts me the most is that the closer we get to each other, the closer we get to God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I truly believe that this is happening in Herefordshire.

For an idea of what is happening ecumenically in Herefordshire this month, check the Churches Together in Herefordshire newsletter: <https://churchestogetherinherefordshire.wordpress.com/newsletter/>

Church leaders pray for the Nation ahead of the General Election

Pentecostal, Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Free Church, new church, and other invited church leaders met together to pray



with the Six Presidents of Churches Together in England in Westminster Central Hall as the country prepares for a General Election.

Open prayer from the Pentecostal tradition was followed by various hymns and prayers from the Orthodox tradition. The Archbishop of Canterbury then led the Litany for Reconciliation from Coventry Cathedral and the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster led Midday Prayer. All the Presidents in turn offered a reflection and prayers of intercession for our nation.

Hosted by the Methodist Westminster Central Hall and organised by Churches Together in England at the specific suggestion of the 6 CTE Presidents, the 2 hour prayer meeting was opened by the Pentecostal president, Bishop Eric Brown who said they were coming together as God's people from different churches to pray for the nation in advance of the General Election and to seek God's will.

Also in attendance were invited delegates of the forty-four member churches and staff of Churches Together in England, from Orthodox to Pentecostal and charismatic. The prayer meeting was led by the six Presidents of Churches Together in England (CTE):

The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby;
The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, HE Cardinal Vincent Nichols;
The Free Churches Moderator, Revd Dr Hugh Osgood (represented by Revd James Breslin);
The President for the Pentecostal Churches, Bishop Eric Brown
The President for the New Churches, the Religious Society of Friends (The Quakers) and the Lutheran and German-speaking Churches, Billy Kennedy (represented by Linda Ward);
The President for the Orthodox Churches, HE Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain.;

The presidents prayed that God would inspire the nation to discern the deep spiritual, moral and ethical challenges of our time and vote into office politicians who will build a fairer, more just nation for all citizens. Speaking ahead of the prayer for the nation, The Revd Dr David Cornick, General Secretary of Churches Together in England said: 'This is a very significant moment in the life of our nation and the symbolism of the six CTE presidents praying together for the wellbeing of our nation as we move into the General Elections cannot be overstated. On behalf of all the churches in England our presidents, who are politically non-aligned, prayed that the government formed after May 7 will be one elected by the fullest and most discerning citizen participation.'

Churches and the General Election

As the 2015 General Election approaches various churches and networks of Churches Together have produced papers, guidelines and resources to help Christians in England engage with the politics of the nation. This is a (web) page in progress and more links will be added as available. The list is in general alphabetical order:

[A letter to Catholics in England and Wales from their Bishops](#)
[Baptist, Methodist, URC: Joint Public Issues Team](#)
[Bishop Angaelos speaking at House of Lords re Identity](#)
[Christian Aid Election Manifesto - CA is an agency of CTE](#)
[Church of England Pastoral Letter of the Bishops](#)
[Churches Together in Britain and Ireland](#)
[CTBI Guide to Planning Hustings PDF](#)
[Evangelical Alliance: Will you show up?](#)
[Religious Society of Friends \(Quaker\): Quaker Vote](#)
[The Catholic Church in England and Wales re Education](#)
[2020 Vision of the Good Society PDF report](#)

Related NOTES:

[Lobbying and Hustings: a paper from Helen Boorthroyd, CT Cumbira](#)
[Quaker resources re the Lobbying Act](#)
[Quaker concern at the Lobbying Act](#)

Web page link for updates:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/431693/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Churches_Agencies_and.aspx



Walk A Cross the Island

Churches in the Isle of Man are inaugurating a new Intermediate Body this week, Churches Alive In Mann (CAIM).

The word 'caim' originates from an old Gaelic word meaning: 'protecting', 'encircling', 'sanctuary', 'loop' or 'circle' and has been passed down from the ancient Celtic Church. [Caim prayers](#) are simple prayers of faith, acknowledging God knows and understands. Caim prayers are encircling prayers – the circle symbolises the encircling love and presence of God surrounding you, protecting you, caring for you (Psalm 125 v 2).

The inauguration begins with *Walk A Cross the Island* during Holy Week (30 March to 5 April), a unique journey of the cross around the Isle of Man. Everyone, from all denominations has been invited to join the pilgrimage at any stage of its journey throughout the week.

David Cornick, General Secretary of Churches Together in England has sent the following message to Bishop Robert Paterson, Chair of CAIM:

We were delighted to hear of the inauguration of Churches Alive In Mann and the walk of witness around the Island, culminating with worship in the cathedral on Easter Sunday afternoon. On behalf of all at Churches Together in England, we send greetings to the churches of CAIM as they witness to the passion and resurrection of our Lord, and join our prayers with theirs for the work of the churches and for the people of the island. May the joy of the risen Christ be yours. David Cornick

Christian Solidarity Worldwide Pursue Justice conference 25.04.15



Jill Coombe from CSW writes about 'Pursue Justice' for people who suffer for their faith:

Attacks on Christians and other religious minorities around the world are increasing daily. To find out how to play your part in supporting those suffering for their faith, join us at Christian Solidarity Worldwide's Pursue Justice Conference in London on Saturday 25 April, 11am-4pm. Tickets are free! You'll hear from those who have seen or suffered persecution, get updates from our advocacy team, and pray and take practical action to pursue justice. Find out more and register your free place here:

www.csw.org.uk/pursuejustice

Note: CSW has a Council of Reference that includes church leaders of many traditions and denominations: <http://www.csw.org.uk/ourteam.htm>

Made in God's Image

A twenty-four hour conference of the Society for Ecumenical Studies

Explorations in Christian Anthropology – How a common understanding of humanity can draw Christians and churches closer together

This conference looks from a range of denominational perspectives at key issues of 'being human' in order to engage from a different angle in a fruitful area of ecumenical discussion.

To be held at The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, B15 2QH
Speakers: Dr Susan Durber, Dr Samuel Kimbriel, Fr Christopher Knight
05-06 June 2015 (Lunchtime to Lunchtime)

For further information, contact: Aleksandar Miljkovic, SfES Secretary
Email: alecsandar3@gmail.com



Churches welcome call for benefit sanctions review

A coalition of major UK Churches, with a combined membership of more than 800,000 people, has welcomed the call for a full independent review of the benefit sanctions system. The recommendation comes in a report from the Work and Pensions Select Committee that has been released.

Earlier this month the Churches called for such a review in their report [Time to Rethink Benefit Sanctions](#) which cited new evidence about the negative impact of the current regime. They revealed that, in 2013/14, nearly seven million weeks of sanctions were handed out to people, with around 100,000 children affected. The data, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, also shows that people who receive the sickness and disability benefit Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) because of a long-term mental health problem are being sanctioned at a rate of more than 100 per day. The most common reason for being sanctioned is being late or not turning up for an appointment.

"The Select Committee Report describes a system that is broken and needs urgent review," said Paul Morrison Public Issues Policy Adviser for the Methodist Church. "Churches are often at the forefront of helping people who have been sanctioned and who are in desperate need of food, support and advice. It is unacceptable that vulnerable people can be left with no means of support as punishment for often very minor mistakes. "The people we have met have spoken of the shame, demoralisation and loss of self-worth caused by this system. As Christians we believe that everyone is loved, valued and made in the image of God, and we have a responsibility to challenge any structure or system that undermines that dignity. We hope that whoever forms the next government will treat this issue with the urgency and seriousness it deserves."

"So far, more than 1,400 people have [written to their MPs](#) about sanctions as a result of the campaign," added Niall Cooper, Director of Church Action on Poverty, "It's great that people in churches understand how important this issue is. We know that sanctions have a disproportionate impact on those who are most vulnerable: young people, care leavers, homeless people, single parents, the mentally ill and those with long-term illness. The new government must act to ensure that the benefits system provides a safety net for everyone, rather than making people destitute."

[Time to Rethink Benefit Sanctions](#) was published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Church Action on Poverty, the Church in Wales, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church.
Link: http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/434163/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Churches_welcome_call.aspx

The Salvation Army's 'Amazing spiritual ride' re Fresh Expressions

Andrew Vertigan shares his thoughts on the first year since The Salvation Army joined the Fresh Expressions partnership.

In post for almost nine months as The Salvation Army Fresh Expressions Mission Enabler - and with the denomination as a partner of Fresh Expressions heading into its second year - I can honestly say it has been the most amazing spiritual ride.

Little did I realise the challenge and blessing in seeking to communicate, convince and connect the United Kingdom Salvation Army with all that Fresh Expressions seeks to do. It has been both exhilarating and demanding.

To be honest, I think the biggest personal blessing has been the joining together with kindred men and women from across different Christian traditions; all of whom share the same heart and passion to reach the unchurched with the good news of the gospel in culturally relevant ways. I've found it surprising to discover how much we have in common! Through it all there has been - and continues to be - a true sense of God's grace and unity of the Spirit.

As a movement, The Salvation Army has sought to actively put things in place, not only to embrace Fresh Expressions but also to let it speak prophetically into the wider church movement. I guess to use the language employed by many involved in developing and encouraging fresh expressions of church, we have



been discovering what the 'mixed economy' means in our setting. This has been so helpful in our understanding of how we create the right space, environment for that as well as provide the necessary components to identify, train and equip pioneer officers.

[Read the whole reflection on the Fresh Expressions website](#)

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Premier 'Society Sunday' June 14th 2015

Society Sunday is a new Christian event designed by Premier to develop and deepen relations between faith groups and those in authority. Society Sunday will be an annual event, scheduled to take place on the Sunday nearest the Queen's Official Birthday. The 2015 event will take place on June 14th and has received the backing of Faith Minister and Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles MP.



Ian Robertson from Premier Media writes:

Society Sunday is a great annual opportunity for local churches to engage with their surrounding communities and celebrate the work of faith in society. It is a platform to pray for the Queen and local and national government and it will encourage churches to work together in unity for a common purpose. This project is the initiative of Premier Christian Radio and has the backing of both Government and the Church and it is hoped that thousands of churches will sign up to be part of this.

[Link to Society Sunday June 14th 2015](#)

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland visit CTE

On Friday, the 20th of March 2015, ten visitors from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland met David Cornick and Jim Currin at the CTE office. There were the seven senior vicars from the parishes in Vantaa and one from Helsinki, plus the administrative director and the director of the common parish work of the Vantaa Parish Union.



Vantaa lies next to Helsinki. There are 211 000 inhabitants, of which many are immigrants (mainly 1st and 2nd generation). The average level of education is lower than in other cities in the capital area, houses and flats are cheaper, and there are many industrial employments. Also the Helsinki Airport lies in Vantaa. Around 60 % of the people in Vantaa are members of the Evangelical Lutheran parishes. There is one parish for the Swedish-speaking minority, and six Finnish parishes. Their work is tax financed: the church collects tax from its members. In Vantaa the tax rate is 1 % of earned income. Each parish has several priests and other employees.

When David Cornick and Jim Currin introduced the work of CTE, the guests were especially impressed by the strong focus on the common mission, evangelization and social work of churches. Things that are done by paid church workers and maybe some volunteers in the majority church of Finland, are mainly done by volunteers in England. And it is possible to do all this in spite of theological and liturgical differences between the member churches of CTE. Sometimes different opinions and practices take a lot of energy even in a single parish, so it is good to keep the focus outside, on how we are called to serve our community and our world as Christians.

David Cornick closed up the meeting by saying that if you are in Christ, you are in Christ with your brothers and sisters. After this meeting we all have a couple of new brothers and sisters to pray for, and we will go on doing that.

(Laura Maria Latikka)

UK faith leaders call for new initiatives to bring an end to nuclear weapons

Faith leaders across the UK have signed a statement calling on nuclear weapons states to join with other states to implement new approaches to eliminate nuclear arsenals.

Ahead of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference meeting from 27 April to 22 May 2015, senior representatives from eight faiths in the UK, including Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist, have given their backing to a statement calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The faith leaders argue that nuclear arsenals "violate the principle of dignity for every human being that is common to each of our faith traditions". The statement urges nuclear weapons states to "develop a robust plan of action that will lead us to a nuclear weapon free world" and stresses that "it is necessary to move beyond the division of our world into recognised nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states".

The statement has been supported by the Revd Dr Chris Ellis, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Rt Revd John Chalmers, Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Revd Kenneth G. Howcroft and Gill Dascombe, President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference; John Ellis, Moderator of the United Reformed Church and Paul Parker, Recording Clerk for Quakers in Britain.

Other signatories include the Most Revd Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool; Maulana Shahid Raza OBE, British Muslim Forum; Bharti Taylor, The Hindu Forum of Europe; Lord (Indarjit) Singh of Wimbledon, Network of Sikh Organisations and Ven B. Seelawimala, London Buddhist Vihara.

The Revd Kenneth G. Howcroft, President of the Methodist Conference, said: "The joint statement demonstrates to the UK government the strong desire on the part of faith communities for concerted action on nuclear weapons. His Holiness, Pope Francis, has recently spoken of the need to declare such weapons as illegitimate under international law. As faith communities, we urge the UK government to use its considerable influence to build support for new initiatives on disarmament."

[26 UK faith leaders sign statement to end nuclear weapons](#)
[Read the full statement here.](#)

NATIONAL CHURCH AND SOCIAL ACTION SURVEY RESULTS 2014

The results of the third biennial [National Church and Social Action Survey for the UK](#) show that church members of all denominations across the UK have not only continued to serve the needs in their communities but have increased their efforts. They continue to play a crucial role in building and maintaining 'social capital', social inclusion and social cohesion. They engender a sense of community through initiatives such as parents and toddlers. They care for those in distress e.g. the bereaved. They help those in crisis e.g. distributing food. They help educate and develop values e.g. school assemblies.

For the most part, they are unsung heroes who finance their own efforts, increasingly taking on more initiatives and getting a great deal of encouragement from their communities and the results of their efforts.

"As Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society, I welcome this, the 3rd National Church and Social Action Survey report. It shows how, up and down the UK, church members from all denominations play a vital role in serving the needs in their communities. It is remarkable to see such continued, increasing effort, with over a million volunteers, along with church staff, regularly engaging in social action of all kinds. Also remarkable is the fact they are, for the most part, financing their own efforts and opening up their buildings and facilities free of charge. This movement of church-based social activism is one of the most positive developments in modern Britain, and its impact is steadily growing."
Rt. Hon. Stephen Timms MP

The responses indicate that 1.1 -1.4 million volunteers participated in church-based social action in the UK in 2014, touching millions of people through various initiatives. UK churches have increased the average number of volunteer hours on social action to 114.8m per annum. This is an increase of 16.8% compared with two years earlier and 59.4% compared with four years ago. Churches have also increased paid staff to help co-ordinate their initiatives: UK churches have increased the average number of staff hours on social action by 18.8% in two years. This is equivalent to roughly six hours of staff time to 10 hours of volunteer effort.

In addition to high levels of volunteering, church members also generously finance the vast majority of initiatives, with UK churches increasing their spending on social action to approximately £393m in 2014. This is an increase of 14.9% in two years and 36.5% in four years. 72% of churches are financing social actions totally themselves, while for those that have received any grants, these do not cover total costs. Unsurprisingly, the larger the church, the more the hours and money is spent on social action initiatives. If we were to fully cost volunteer time (some of which is quite specialist) and paid staff time at an average wage of £517 per week[1] or £13 per hour, this would amount to a staggering £2.388bn. If we then include the use of facilities and direct financial contributions, we estimate that the total cost to churches of social initiatives is above £3.5bn per annum.

Link to webpage for more information and further details:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/433348/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/National_Church_and.aspx

A faith action audit in a Devon Town

Kit Harbottle, Methodist Ecumenical officer for Plymouth and Exeter District, writes:

Tavistock Area Christians Together followed the example of larger towns in doing a faith action audit. A booklet summarising the results is being used to strengthen the already good relationship between local churches and public bodies. Tavistock is a fairly prosperous market town of about 12,000 on the western edge of Dartmoor, 15 miles from Plymouth. TACT links 8 denominational and independent churches in the town, and, through the Deanery and Circuit, a number of Anglican and Methodist village churches.



Faith in Action
in the Tavistock area



The audit, run by a volunteer with relevant experience, collected information by an online survey filled in by a church leader or administrator. After some telephone chasing and coaching, the response rate was high, though some figures were admitted guesstimates. A separate survey went to leaders of 7 joint projects (eg Street Pastors), asking about their volunteers, funding etc. These got more robust results as information was already being collected. The analysis was circulated to contributors and presented to church leaders, who then developed it for publication.

The questions were bespoke, inspired by city audits, but aiming to work for rural churches, and to reflect local public sector priorities. For example, the use of church buildings by outside groups was measured because they are key assets for village life. Tourism is important to the local economy so the heritage role of historic churches and the volunteer time to keep them open was covered. While the total input to work with children and young people proved impressive, churches also acted as a focus for bringing all ages together, eg through hosting arts events.

[Link to Tavistock Area Christians Together website](#)

[Link to the faith audit PDF booklet](#)

Home Secretary re churches and human trafficking

Bishop Dr Joe Aldred, stff member at CTE, and an organiser of a meeting reports:

Theresa May has called on churches to support the government in its bid to clamp down on those in involved in human trafficking. The Home Secretary has met with church leaders from different

denominations to address concerns and call on them to take action on the issue.

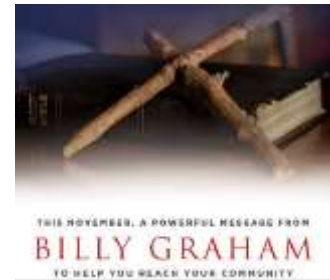
Despite the slave trade being 'ended' 200 years ago in the UK, an estimated 20,000 victims are thought to be living in the UK. While many are brought in from abroad, police are picking up more and more cases of British nationals being forced into unpaid labour. The meeting with church leaders was brought about after concerns that more needs to be put into the Modern Slavery Bill to meet the needs of victims.

Speaking to those gathered, the Home Secretary said: "We've already seen action by churches on this. Working together we can deal with this issue.

Thanks to Marcus Jones: [Read the whole report from Premier](#)

My Hope / Billy Graham Resources tour

Following the release of a [video called *The Cross*](#), the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) have plans for a tour in England for local church leaders to gather over a lunch and hear about resources and mission possibilities together.



The video message from Billy Graham was released for the first time in the UK on Nov. 7, 2014, in celebration of his 96th birthday. It also marks the 60 year anniversary of Harringay Arena in London, which saw Billy Graham share the message of the gospel to a total of 1,750,000 people who attended these evangelistic meetings during its twelve-week period.

Following up this initiative, Martin Shotbolt writes:

We are planning more Leader's Meetings in different geographic areas through the year. Our desire is to pull in as many leaders as we can, and would obviously like to include the Churches Together groupings for inclusion. Our plans so far have seen meetings in Milton Keynes, Blackpool, Manchester, Leeds, Hull, Nottingham and Newcastle already and we have set the following dates for the rest of 2015 - to which more can be added:

Chelmsford 28/4; Cambridge 30/4; Ipswich 5/5; Basingstoke 16/5; IOW 15/5; Portsmouth 19/5; Southampton 20/5; Brighton 21/5; York 20/10; Middlesborough 21/10 and Chester 22/10. These are booked and planned. Provisional dates are 3 in Scotland week 15/9; 4 in London week 22/9; Stoke 30/9, Coventry 1/10; Lincoln 2/10; Truro 6/10, Plymouth 7/10; Exeter 8/10; Oxford 13/10; Croydon 14/10; Canterbury 15/10; St Albans 16/10 - so we are setting these up at the moment.

Please be in touch for booking details for the meetings listed and/or to discuss hosting an extra meeting if it can be scheduled.

Martin Shotbolt, National Church Relationship Coordinator, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
TEL: 020 8559 0342 Email: martin.shotbolt@bgea.org.uk
Photo credit: Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

[Link to the video *The Cross*](#). Information on this initiative: www.myhopewithbillygraham.org.uk .

'When Left Behind' An appeal is launched



[Video of the appeal on YouTube](#)

**This is a press release from CopticMedia.com on behalf of His Grace Bishop Angaelos
6 March 2015**

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales wrote personal letters of condolence to His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark, and His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom following the brutal murder of 21 Coptic Christians in Libya and subsequently made a generous contribution towards the #WhenLeftBehind appeal, which will support the families in Egypt of those murdered in Libya. The Prince of Wales has continuously expressed his concern regarding the current challenges facing Christians in some Middle-Eastern nations and visited the Coptic Orthodox Church Centre in Stevenage in December 2013.

The Most Revd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury also offered his condolences to Bishop Angaelos during his personal visit to the Coptic Orthodox Church Centre on 19 February 2015, and endorsed the appeal with a video message. [The full appeal video can be seen HERE.](#)

Bishop Angaelos launched the 'When Left Behind' appeal at a memorial service in London on 18 February 2015, where he spoke of the immense courage, strength and dignity shown by those who lost their lives in Libya, saying: "As we mourn with the families of those who died we also rejoice in the faithful conviction, strength, dignity and bravery of these men; these fathers, brothers, uncles and sons who will never be forgotten." Bishop Angaelos invites all to contribute to the 'When Left Behind' appeal, saying: "These young men were bread winners for their families and their loss will not only rob them of the joy of their presence but will leave a significant financial void in an already impoverished community. I am thankful to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, His Grace The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Right Honourable David Cameron and so many more who have already expressed their support and solidarity with the families who are left behind and with the Coptic faithful around the world."

DONATE via <http://www.JustGiving.com/WhenLeftBehind> or TEXT 'COPT21 £(amount)' to 70070. More information via @WhenLeftBehind and www.CopticMediaUK.com and www.CopticCentre.com

Marks for Ecumenical Engagement: What do we need in the mixing bowl?

This is personal paper for discussion re mission and ecumenism. It is not a policy document of Churches Together in England, and is written by Sheelagh Aston (Revd) Priest in Charge, Oxclose LEP Church & Ecumenical Adviser Durham Diocese.



Sheelagh writes in the Introduction:

This paper summarises the research findings collected from a survey taken September 2013-May 2014 with the North East Churches Acting Together (NECAT). Church Leaders, National & County Ecumenical Advisers and 5 Single Congregational Local Ecumenical Partnerships located in the Sponsoring Bodies region & Yorkshire. The aim was to identify what 'ingredients' contribute to enabling Christians from different traditions to be partners in ministry and mission. It contained 7 questions covering:

- The factors which contribute to collaboration in ministry and mission.
- The role of mission within ecumenical partnerships.
- The relationship between the local situation, denominational & ecumenical structures.
- The use and effectiveness of formal agreements in ecumenical partnerships

From the survey responses a list of 'marks' with accompanying characteristics were produced akin to the model developed by Robert Warren in his Healthy Churches Handbook. The hope is that these ecumenical marks might help churches wishing to work together by providing a matrix against which they can identify the gifts and strengths they can bring to the venture and where they may need more time to grow. Alternatively, it may also help to assess an existing project.

Link to the paper and contact email:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/257049/Home/Resources/Mission/Books_and_Papers/Marks_for_Ecumenical/Marks_for_Ecumenical.aspx

Evangelisation and Ecumenism: A New Chapter

This is a personal paper provided for further reflection and discussion. It is not a policy document of Churches Together in England but is written by Captain Jim Currin, CA., Evangelisation, Mission and Media, at Churches Together in England. The paper is available from a search on www.cte.org.uk



One in Christ

Evangelization and Ecumenism: a new chapter, begins with a note about three major significant documents (World Council of Churches Affirmation/ Pope Francis 'Joy of the Gospel'/Church of England 'Intentional Evangelism') and then reflects on new aspects of evangelisation and ecumenism that Jim believes to be significant developments across England at the present time.

[Download PDF Evangelisation and Ecumenism: A New Chapter](#)

The article first appeared in *One in Christ*, a journal produce by Turvey Abbey, in June 2014. [Link to One in Christ website.](#) For a further exploration of this topic, see [Missio Dei: New Ways of Being Churches Together by Grove books.](#)

Changeover in South London

Easter Sunday marks the retirement of John Richardson, long-standing Ecumenical Officer for Churches Together in South London. John has had a long and varied ecumenical experience, including a stint as acting General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

John is succeeded by Claire Crowley. Together they have written to the churches and ecumenical groups in South London:
http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/434836/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Changeover_in_South.aspx



New CTSL contact: Claire Crowley, CTSL, c/o Springs Dance Company, 65 John Kennedy Court, Newington Green Road, London N1 4RT. Claire@ctslondon.org.uk.

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This mailing is from Churches Together in England and is sent once a month

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