

NEWSLETTER No 18

Winter 2018

CHURCHES TOGETHER
IN CHESHIRE

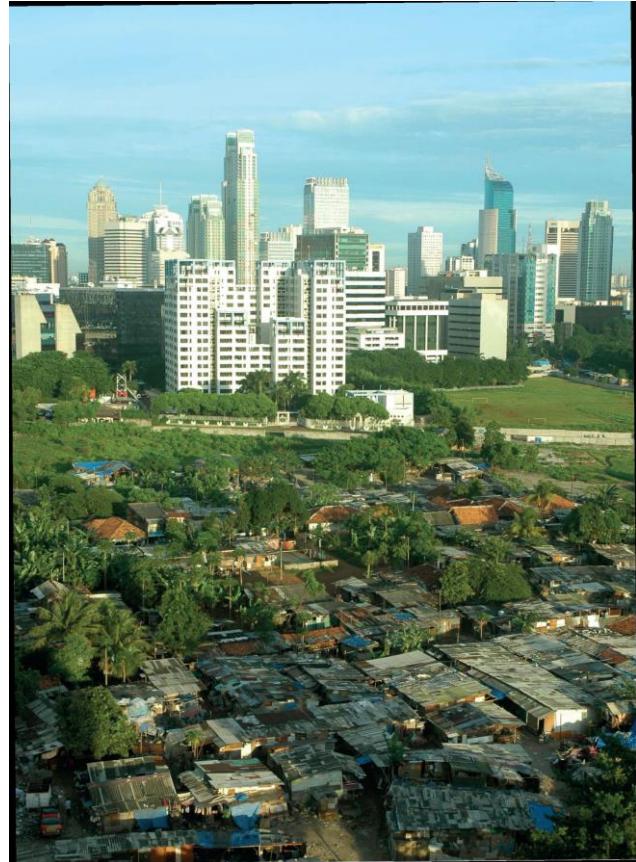


Welcome!

Welcome to this, the latest of the newsletters from Churches Together in Cheshire. As before I seek to include both news items and notices of ecumenical activities and events that are taking place within Cheshire, and also information relating more widely to the ecumenical scene across the country. . .

You will find my contact details at the end of this Newsletter, and if you wish any future edition to include reports of what has been happening in your neck of the woods, or to advertise any forthcoming event I would be pleased to hear from you

Andrew Taylor



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 January, 2019.

'Justice and only justice, you shall pursue' (Deuteronomy 16:20)

The Churches Together in Cheshire service will be held at 3.00 pm on Sunday, 20th January at The Chapel, High Street, Tarporley, and is to be hosted by Churches Together in Tarporley.

The preacher will be Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton and a Lay Canon of Chester Cathedral

Material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019 has been prepared by the Christians of Indonesia. About 10% of Indonesia's 265 million population are Christian – it is a predominately Muslim country, spread across 17,000 islands. The country's fast growing economy has faced many challenges, not least that of corruption, infecting politics and business. In particular, corruption undermines justice and the implementation of the law. As a consequence, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened. Particular religious and ethnic groups have become associated with wealth in ways which promote tensions and pit one community against others.

Indonesian Christians believe that only by heeding Jesus' prayer 'that they all may be one' can they witness to living unity in diversity. They have found the words of Deuteronomy 'justice, and only justice, you shall pursue' speak powerfully to their situation and their needs. They have, therefore, invited Christians and churches across the world to join them in their reflection of this theme.



Resources, including pamphlets, posters, study material and an ecumenical service can be found at: <https://ctbi.org.uk> › Communication › Events



Forum 2018 **'I am with you always': Together in God's mission**

'Only by working together can we alleviate the pain suffered by so many', said one of the six Presidents of Churches Together in England this week. His Grace Archbishop Angaelos, the Orthodox CTE President, was referring to Orthodox, Anglican and Salvation Army churches responding to refugees.

He was speaking alongside his co-Presidents at the Forum of Churches Together in England which took place at Swanwick in Derbyshire on the theme: 'I am with you always – together in God's mission'.

With 270 delegates present, including many under 35yrs, the six Presidents had a conversation together about the 'Presence of Christ'. Questions were posed from six young adults who were present as Forum delegates and each President reflected on the ecumenical journey which we all share in response to the prayer of Jesus for mission and unity.

Pentecostal President, Pastor Agu Irukwu, said that our witness to Christ continues despite what we are going through. 'Whether on the mountains or in the valleys, we tell the story of his presence with us just the same'. Archbishop Justin Welby, the President for the Church of England, added, 'people will see the presence of Christ in us when we stop holding on to things and we start letting God put a cross in our hands'.

Referring to Jesus, one of the young adults asked the Presidents, 'What tables would you overturn?' Cardinal Nichols for the Roman Catholic Church said, 'we are being given a consistent lead by Pope Francis on

clericalism and the assumptions on a position of superiority and privilege that are sometimes present. He wants that table clearly and vigorously turned over'.

Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, the Free Churches President, agreed, suggesting we needed new ways of measuring success, 'We need to come away from the competitiveness we've had between the Churches. Why not measure what impact we are having on society?'



All the Presidents spoke of the need for divine encounter. Revd Canon Billy Kennedy, representing the New Churches, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Lutheran and German-speaking Churches, said that in a 'very fragmented world .. the Church needs to rediscover its confidence,' and whilst language and culture change, 'the need in human hearts hasn't changed.'

Cardinal Nichols used the image of a rose window as a picture of the Church, 'which always has Jesus at the centre' he added, referring to the Churches working together in England.

The Forum marked the change of CTE General Secretary from the Revd Dr David

Cornick, who retires, to the Revd Dr Paul Goodliff, recently appointed.

Full reports, including pictures and session recordings can be found on the CTE website: www.cte.org.uk/Forum2018/afterwards

Regional Co-ordinator



Christian Aid have appointed a new Regional Co-ordinator for Cheshire and Staffordshire, Jude Limb, who can be contacted at:

Christian Aid
Bold Street Methodist Church
Palmyra Square North
Warrington, WA1 1JQ
Office: 01925 573 769

Becky Hurst, the previous Co-ordinator, is not entirely lost to Cheshire as she has moved to be a community development worker for four churches in Crewe.

Movement for Justice and Reconciliation

The Movement for Justice and Reconciliation is a charity whose aims are to examine and highlight the evidence of injustice suffered by people in communities of deprivation where there is a background of colonial or industrial enslavement, and where there is a need for action to effect reconciliation.

MJR is planning to sail a replica slave ship on a public awareness voyage around Britain in June and July 2019. The ship will visit some of the ports that were involved in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, highlighting not only the history but the on-going legacy of this period in British history.

The aim in each port is to provide an opportunity for visitors to view the on-board exhibition about enslavement and its legacy down the generations. The hope is that the voyage will act as a catalyst for locally resourced projects and events at the time of the ship's visit and afterwards.



It is planned to start the voyage in mid-June in Falmouth, where the ship we are hiring is. It will then visit seven other ports in total: Plymouth, Ilfracombe, Liverpool, Manchester, Whitehaven, Lancaster and Bristol. If you live near any of these places and would like to be involved MJR would be happy to give you more details and put you in touch with the local co-ordinator.

Further details of all events can be found on the MJR website: www.mjr-uk.com.

Thy Kingdom Come



This national – now global- call to prayer will again be held during the period between Ascension Day and Pentecost, which in 2019 will fall between 30th May and 9th June.

Plans are already being made in relation to events across the county and Diocese. For information about previous years and resources for local church initiatives please visit:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy



The Chaplaincy has received National Lottery funding from Brightlife to run a series of lunches at a number of locations for those in the farming community, particularly those experiencing social

isolation. These have now been organised for:

3rd Wednesday in the month at The Crown, Lower Peover. 12 for 12.30 pm

1st Thursday in the month at Rose Farm Tarporley. 12.30 for 1.00 pm

3rd Monday in the month at Lynda's Tea Room, Saughall. 12 for 12.30

Alternate Thursdays at Brown Knowl Methodist Church and Malpas High Street Church. 12 for 12.30

Every Monday morning hay and straw market, brunch at Goostrey Home and Leisure

An additional venue at St. Georges Church Hall, Waverton is also planned

For dates and further details please see the website: www.agchap.com

Saturday, 23rd March, 2019.

Winterley Brass Band is putting on a concert in aid of the Agricultural Chaplaincy at 7.30 at St. Peter's Church, School Lane, Elworth. CW11 3HU

Tickets: £10, including coffee, tea, cake and raffle

Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility

ECCR has beeen looking to appoint a new Executive Director. This is an exciting time to join our organisation. We have recently adopted a new strategy for increased impact and received funding towards

refining and implementing it. We are seeking someone who will lead us in this new phase of growth.

ECCR helps Christians engage in ethical investment and in advocacy with companies and governments. Our vision is to see more and more Christians using their voices and the finances over which they have stewardship to promote human rights, economic justice & environmental sustainability.

For more information about the work of ECCR please contact Peter Spiers, Society of Friends at Chester

Chester City of Sanctuary

The City of Sanctuary group in Chester is part of a UK wide, grassroots movement. It's vision is: "that the UK will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution." (City of Sanctuary UK 2017)

The group now has its own website which can be accessed at:
chester.cityofsanctuary.org

Church Action on Poverty

[Can you help unlock UK poverty by organising a collection or soup lunch on 3 March 2019?](#)

Liam Purcell, Communications Manager, Church Action on Poverty writes:

Church Action on Poverty Sunday this year is on 3 March, marked as Transfiguration

Sunday in many churches. So we invite you to look at things in a different light, just as the disciples did.

- Listen to stories of how Church Action on Poverty's work transforms lives and communities.
- Commit your church to listen more deeply to people who have been swept to the edges of society by poverty.
- Explore new perspectives on familiar Bible stories.
- Hold a collection or soup lunch – raise funds to make voices heard, tell stories and call for action.
- Use our worship materials to reflect and pray for change.

Please register now to be part of Church Action on Poverty Sunday. You'll get a free pack of worship materials and fundraising ideas. We'll be in touch later in the year with videos, sermon notes and other resources.

Spring would love to hear from anyone interested in hosting a performance of **Bread of Life** for Lent and Easter 2019.



Further information can be found on the Springs Dance Company [website](#) by emailing touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or calling 07876 752 910

Bread of Life

Spring Dance Company is delighted to be returning with its much sought after and highly praised production **Bread of Life**, for churches, cathedrals, festivals and schools. A reflection on the last supper, **Bread of Life** celebrates the meal of bread and wine with Jesus, the ever present King. This Lent and Easter rediscover the living, breathing **Bread of Life**, through this stirring depiction of how God is building a community of love with Jesus himself at the centre.

Student Sunday Resources Available



The Universal Day of Prayer for Students is on the 17th of February 2019. This annual event has been celebrated since 1898, making it one of the oldest ecumenical days of prayer.

The Student Christian Movement, one of our [Bodies in Association](#), has produced a number of resources to [download](#) encouraging churches to mark the occasion.

SCM hopes churches across the nation will spend this day praying for students alongside other churches throughout the world.

For more information see SCM's [website](#):
www.movement.org.uk/resources/student-sunday.

Unity at the Cross



A developing act of witness to unity has been established, coming from Jonathan Philips, Priest-in-charge at St Peter's at the Cross, Chester, working with Andrew Taylor, Ecumenical Development Officer for Churches Together in Cheshire. The principle is simple: City Centre Church Leaders will gather for a short moment, to pray 'at the cross', both geographically and spiritually.

The hope for this meeting is that it will serve four purposes:

- Increasing unity in the Body of Christ through a simple but powerful act of Church leaders praying together, uniting at the Cross.
- Increasing relational unity across the Church leadership of the City of Chester.

- To be a powerful time of blessing over the city centre and beyond.
- To be a public witness to the world of Jesus' prayer in John 17 and that many will see how we love each other and come to know Him.

Dates have been set for three such Church Leader gatherings in 2019, and in addition it is intended to gather congregations from all the Chester City Centre Churches for a time of shared worship, again gathered 'at the Cross'.

Christmas....

...is coming!

I take this opportunity to proffer all appropriate seasonal greetings to churches, Churches Together groups and other Christian networks. May you know joy and peace this Christmas and may the coming year be a time of fruitful endeavour for the Kingdom

Next Edition

The next issue of the Newsletter will be in March. If you have any items you would like to be included, please send them in by 28th February, 2019.

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