

NEWSLETTER No 22

Winter 2019

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 18th – 25th January, 2020



The Churches Together in Cheshire service will be held at Chester Cathedral at 3.30 pm on Sunday 19th January, when the speaker will be Lord Alton of Liverpool.

The theme for 2020 has been chosen by the Churches of Malta and Gozo and draws on the account found in the Book of Acts, chapters 27 and 28 of Paul's shipwreck on the shores of Malta, when they were met with 'unusual kindness' by the local population.

We are invited in this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity materials to see God working through people and places which offer unusual kindness.

The material for the Week can be found on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website: ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

The model ecumenical service has suggestions for involving young people in the worship and even bringing a boat into the worship area. The Cathedral service will embrace the former suggestion! The service will also include contributions from across the denominations

All are welcome!

Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy

In the recent Chaplaincy Newsletter, Sharon Meyer, the Lead Chaplain, reflects on the concerns of many in the farming community of Cheshire. It has been a challenging year, with a pleasant spring giving way to a very wet autumn, leaving fields of maize and potatoes still waiting to be harvested while saturated fields prevent the re-sowing of autumn corn.



In addition the closure of Cheshire's last market at Beeston and Tomlinsons' Dairies going into administration has impacted local farmers, emphasising again the fragile and precarious state of the industry. Events that are the highlights of the farming year, not least as opportunities for farmers to get together, such as the Nantwich Show and the Ploughing Match also fell victim to the weather. Chaplains continue to attend markets at Market Drayton and Mold and remain available for chats and support.

The Chaplaincy continues to be concerned for the impact that these challenges, and others, have on the mental health of those involved in the industry. In addressing church services at Harvest, or speaking to other groups seeks to speak openly about these matters, and to promote support for the amazing communities that comprise the Cheshire agricultural sector.

These are just some of the factors that have contributed to the increasing workload of the Chaplaincy, in response to which two additional part-time assistant chaplains have been appointed, Monica Haworth and Helen Rutter, both of whom have been connected to the Chaplaincy for a number of years. The Chaplaincy is grateful for the increased funding which has made this possible. This has included funding received from Brightlife, which has made possible the establishment of a number of lunchtime meetings, which have proved popular. These are now being extended to a wider part of the county and to some

evening meetings. For dates and more information e-mail: events@agchap.com

Thy Kingdom Come



The period between Ascension Day and Pentecost will again in 2020 mark the time when across the world Christians come together to offer up their prayers for evangelisation and renewal, shaped by the words that Jesus taught his own followers: 'Thy Kingdom Come'.

This prayer initiative, at first proposed and promoted by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, has now been adopted and endorsed by the Presidents of Churches Together in England and has steadily grown as an ecumenical movement, both within Cheshire and across the country.

Churches Together in Cheshire, working with the Chester Diocese, is eager to support the planning of local prayer initiatives across the area in that period, 21st -31st May, 2020. In recent years there have been many excellent ideas pursued in

Cheshire for prayer times, both individual and shared, prayer walks and vigils, prayer services, and these have made use of resources that have been prepared nationally as well as those specifically suited to local circumstances. Schools have in a number of instances been open to approaches made to them at this time.

Have you, or are you, someone who would like to champion and promote 'Thy Kingdom Come' in your church or in your area? Would it be helpful, encouraging, inspiring even, to hear what others have done and might be planning to do again? As a county collective, approaches for assistance can be made to the national organisers and promoters of 'Thy Kingdom Come'.

In the first instance, Churches Together in Cheshire invites you, or anyone who might wish to be actively involved in promoting 'Thy Kingdom Come' to attend one of the 'Inspire and Equip' workshops which are to be run at venues across Cheshire by the national Thy Kingdom Come Team. They are for anyone who would like to get involved from any or all denominations and traditions. Those attending will receive a free sample of resources.

Full details of these events will be circulated shortly.

Modern Slavery

 **WESEEYOU.**
THE CLEWER INITIATIVE

The Clewer Initiative, the Church of England's national initiative against Modern Slavery and human trafficking is currently highlighting the risks faced by the homeless in this regard. They write:

Homeless people are at risk of modern slavery. They are being targeted at drop-ins, winter night shelters, and on the streets.

"People ask, why has it happened to you so many times? It's because they target you when you're drunk. And it's wet and cold and you're hungry, and someone's offering you work and a drink at 3 o'clock in the morning you jump on it. The penny don't drop, because all you're thinking is you ain't got a drink in your bag, but soon the cycle starts again." — *Charlie*

According to the Homelessness Monitor, rough sleeping in England has grown by 165% since 2010.

In the last two years, the Modern Slavery Helpline has had reports of 353 potential victims who were homeless before, during, or after being exploited.

There are many causes for homelessness, ranging from family break-ups, to unemployment, personal crises, and mental health. Homeless people living on the street, and those in temporary accommodation, are vulnerable to being exploited by perpetrators of slavery who can offer incentives that sound attractive. Many of these perpetrators are part of national or global gangs, operating in different parts of the country, which means they can move slaves from town to town to

avoid detection and isolate the slaves further from potential networks of help.

Victims of modern slavery may also become homeless after escaping from their traffickers because they are unable or don't know how to access support.

At the moment, although there is lots of anecdotal evidence, there is very little data to connect homelessness and modern slavery. We need this to change.

We know that over the winter many churches across the UK host or support Night Shelters, potentially coming into contact with thousands of homeless people. We need you to start a conversation with your guests, to enable them to find help and support, and to help us to understand the problem.

Have they been targeted by traffickers?
Have they picked up casual work which turned out to be abusive or exploitative?
Ask open questions which encourage your guests to tell their story.

Let's talk to the homeless people in our communities, so we can say We See You to victims of modern slavery.

If you want to know more about Modern Slavery the Diocesan Director for Social Responsibility at church House (tel: 01928 718834) can put you in touch with someone who can make a presentation to your church or group

Kitchen Table Project

The Kitchen Table Project is a growing movement of mums, dads and carers who

want to inspire a faith that lasts in their children. We want to encourage and support each other, sharing stories and ideas of small, simple, everyday things we can do that will help build faith in our children.

A great starting point is the *Inspire* session, a 90 minute small group discussion that helps parents get together to start talking about how important it is to introduce our children to God, how we feel about it and what the challenges are. It's an opportunity to look at simple ways to bring God into conversation, whether during the walk to school, the dinner table or bedtime.

The session comes with a step by step leader's guide and a short 10 minute video to help start the conversation, and everything is free to download from kitchentable.org.uk. There's also a pack of discussion cards that can be used anytime, to help parents think about ways to bring faith into the home in a way that suits their own individual family.



Inspire a faith that lasts

Parents and church workers can [sign up](#) to receive a monthly email with stories, encouragement and ideas, as well as reviews of resources that are helpful as we all travel on this journey together.

The book *Raising Faith*, written by Andy Frost, Director of Share Jesus International, and Katharine Hill, UK Director for Care for the Family, is a great supporting resource, designed with bite-sized chapters that parents can read on-the-go in a busy household. It's full of practical

tips and stories to encourage parents and carers as they become more intentional about sharing faith at home.

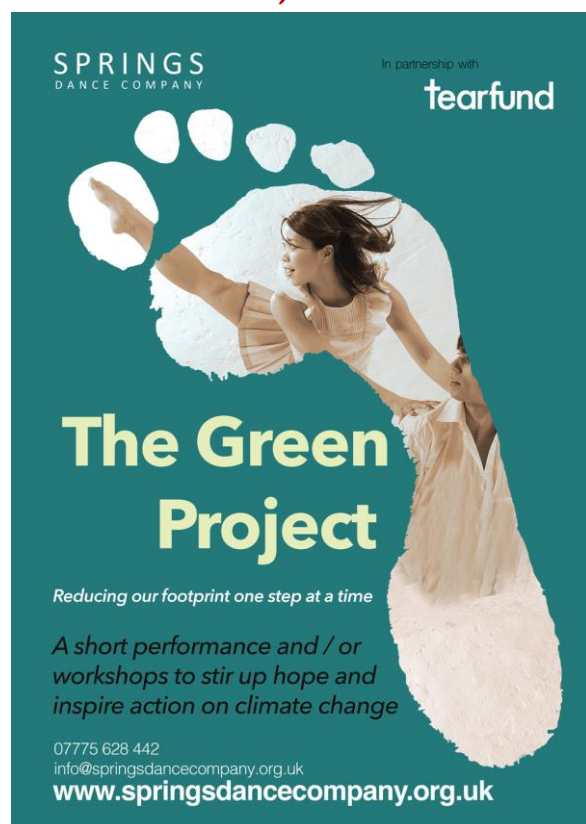
If you're a church leader and want to help equip the parents in your church to nurture faith at home, then have a look at the [church toolkit](#) with sermon outlines and ideas that you can use to help everyone in your congregation work together to see the children you know grow up to love Jesus.

If you have further questions please do get in touch with Gareth at Gareth.hillier@cff.org.uk

Find out more at www.kitchentable.org.uk and sign up for our monthly email.

Follow us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/ktpcampaign

The Green Project



Springs Dance Company's *The Green Project* offers a short dance theatre presentation that will stir up hope and inspire action on climate

change. Celebrating all the world provides The Green Project shines a light on how we share the world's limited resources with our neighbours both near and far.

The presentation can be accompanied by an introductory talk, tailor-made discussions and workshops, that will encourage people to reflect, speak out and take action to address the damage done to God's creation.

Ideal for church services, festivals, advocacy events and schools.

Contact Springs for further details on 07876 752 910, visit our [website](#) or email: touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk

Cinnamon Network



Community Transformation Project: We want to help your church change lives

Cinnamon Network has recently been awarded a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to help local churches support their communities.

In Autumn 2020 we'll be launching an interactive online toolkit and app to help churches develop social action strategies that meet the most pressing needs in their local areas.

In addition, Cinnamon Advisors will be providing personalised support to help a number of churches develop their social action vision and action plan.

If your church wants to do more social action, then we'd love to hear from you.

At Cinnamon, our goal is to make it as easy as possible for local churches to set up sustainable social action projects, find funding and get the right support and training to make a positive impact in their local area.

Whether you're an established church reviewing its community engagement, or a new church plant stepping out into social action for the first time, then we can help.

We can provide:

- one-to-one and group support with Cinnamon Advisors
- peer support and shared learning opportunities with other churches
- an opportunity to help us develop our interactive toolkit and have first access to this new resource
- access to our Cinnamon Leadership Training programme
- access to a bespoke training programmes both online and in person to support various aspects of church, community and civic engagement

We're looking to work with churches in urban, rural and coastal communities.

If your church is interested in receiving support, then please get in touch with the Jonny Gios, the Cinnamon Advisor in your region at Jonnygios@cinnamonnetwork.co.uk

Chester Passion Play

Musical Director finds Jesus

Matt Baker, who is directing next year's Passion Play, was recently walking through the streets of Chester, wondering who he could ask to play the part of Jesus, when a familiar face, Nick Sherratt, who previously played Jesus came walking towards him. Was it coincidence or divine intervention? Either way, Jesus was found in the Nick of time. The Passion Play takes place on Good Friday 10 April 2020 at 10.30am in Chester City Centre. In January we will be looking for people of all ages and abilities to audition for all other parts.

Chester Mystery Plays, Churches Together in Chester, Link Up and Theatre in the Quarter are working together to produce the Chester City Passion on Good Friday 2020

Find out more

www.fb.me/ChesterCityPassion



Through the Roof

Through the Roof exists to support and equip churches to become places of welcome for disabled people so they can belong and contribute to church life. However, many find it difficult to know where to start. Disability Inclusion in our Churches...is more than ramps and accessible toilets... it's about belonging, feeling valued and being able to contribute.

Through the Roof offers a one-day event to equip churches and disabled people to serve Christ together. You will benefit from:

- New ideas and resources
- Inspiring real-life stories
- Inclusive experience

Suitable for anyone with roles and responsibilities in church life, and those with a desire to see churches more welcoming and inclusive for disabled people.

14th March - Ivy Church, 97 Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 2GP
BSL interpreters, access requirements and refreshments provided.

More info can be found on the website: <https://www.throughtheroof.org/forchurches/events/>

Tickets £10 each or £15 for 2 and can be booked through: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/throughtheroof>

Christmas....

...is coming!

I take this opportunity once again 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 issue will be in March. If you have any items you would like to be included, not least anything you might wish to publicise of your Easter plans, please send them to me by 28th February, 2020

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