

Hillsborough Inquest

Joint statement from the Presidents of Churches Together in the Merseyside Region

Today we have reached another significant milestone in a journey of grief and a quest for justice that has dominated the life of our city for too long. We stand together as church leaders and commit ourselves afresh to support those who hurt, help those who grieve and show God's love and compassion for all.

We have now had confirmed what many recognised to be true from the outset of this tragedy. Yet there remain unanswered questions and unresolved accountabilities. No judicial action can bring back the lives of those who were lost or undo the sorrow of those who continue to mourn them. And we cannot escape the reality that this verdict comes too late for some who did not live to see the consummation of their tireless quest.

At the heart of the Christian faith is a narrative of justice, and justice must be allowed to take its course. But our Christian message is also one of forgiveness, grace and mercy. It is only now that some of the wounds can begin to heal and that some of the hurts can begin to be released – truth and justice are crucial to that process, but grace and mercy must also play their part in the journey forward.

Now is the time for us to show our true dignity; we must not now become consumed by bitterness, recrimination and hate, as we allow justice to take its course. We continue to pray for the families of the 96 and everyone whose lives are affected and scarred by this tragedy.

The Rt Revd Paul Bayes Bishop of Liverpool
The Most Revd Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP Archbishop of Liverpool
The Rt Revd Tom Williams Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool
The Revd Phil Jump Regional Minister North Western Baptist Association
The Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson Chair of the Liverpool District
The Revd Jacky Embrey Moderator, URC Mersey Synod
Major Drew McCombe Divisional Leader, Salvation Army
Dr. Nic Harding – Director of Together for the Harvest