**RE CTE Forum 2012.**

**A letter from Janet Scott, Forum Moderator**

Dear friends

I look forward to welcoming you to the 2012 Forum of Churches Together in England. We expect over two hundred participants from a wide variety of churches to gather at The Hayes Swanwick from 23 to 25 October.

The Forum is an opportunity for churches to worship together, to study and consult together and to give a sense of a broad direction for CTE and the ecumenical movement in England over the next few years. The Enabling Group, CTE’s governing body appointed largely by the churches, has decided to relieve the Forum of any responsibility for governance of CTE so that we can concentrate better on our primary functions. There will still however be an opportunity to find out about and comment on the work of CTE and its Bodies in Association at the exhibition which will be open throughout the Forum and staffed on the Wednesday afternoon. You will also receive a written report of the work of CTE. On the opening evening Peter Whittaker, who has been the Convenor of the Enabling Group and Chair of Trustees for the past several years will reflect on the ecumenical journey so far. On Thursday morning we shall reflect together on the way forward.

The planning group has seen the Forum as embedded in worship and grounded in scripture. There will be times which will be specifically called worship, but our understanding is that our worship and our work cannot be separated, and therefore all our sessions, whether study, discussion or business should be seen as part of our offering to God.

The theme of the Forum is ‘What does Love require of us?’ Our thinking will be based on Paul’s first letter to the church at Corinth, chapters 12 and 13. This has been chosen because it shows how the Holy Spirit can give unity in diversity, how the Spirit gives us all gifts which build up the church, and how the greatest gift is love. Our study of these chapters will be led by Judith Lieu, a Methodist who is Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. We shall look at some of the issues arising from the chapters in small groups, called Home groups, and in preparation you are asked to read the chapters and to consider, if possible with other members of your church, locally or in wider groupings, the questions:

* How has the Holy Spirit led me and /or my church? How do we recognise the leadings of the Holy Spirit?
* What gifts has the Holy Spirit given my church? What gifts can we recognise in other churches?

We look forward also to the presence of our Presidents who will form a panel to consider similar questions. They will be joined by Mary Tanner, European president of the World Council of Churches, who will also preach the sermon at the closing worship, and Doye Agama, Bishop of the Apostolic Pastoral Association and deputy Moderator of the |Forum who has been elected as the next Moderator.

Under our theme we shall also look at some of the issues which have the potential to be church-dividing. You will receive information about these discussions separately and will be asked to make your choice by a specific date. If you reply in time you will be allocated to your first choice. The rooms and plans will be arranged according to the size of group expected. We hope that the focus on our theme of love will enable us to find ways forward which will emphasise our unity as members of one Body who belong together whatever our differences.

Finally we ask you to pray for the Forum and for all those who are part of it. May it help the churches towards knowing and following the will of God.

Janet Scott

Moderator