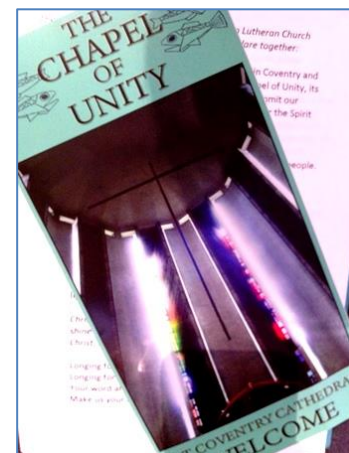


Reflection of the Month:

The Chapel of Unity - still witnessing in the tent

Among the architectural highlights of Coventry Cathedral is the Chapel of Unity, whose shape evokes a crusader's tent, approached either from the south-west corner of the Cathedral nave or through its own external door. The latter access affirms the independent nature of the Chapel, owned by a Joint Council now representing Anglican, Free and Catholic churches. Few visitors realise that, as early as 1945 a "Chapel of Unity" was established by ecumenically-minded Church leaders in Coventry and a space found for gatherings in the West Crypt of the "old" Cathedral.



Thus the Chapel that we see in the "new" Cathedral design represented a new home but not a completely new start for this initiative for Coventry's Christians. The tent-like structure is no accident as it in turn evoked the theme of a temporary dwelling: both for the group and for the idea of church unity. Surely unity, once begun, would continue to spread? But as a minister of the United Reformed Church, many of whose elder colleagues expected such a momentum to prevail when our own denomination was formed in 1972, I know that unity and union is not un-stoppable.

I wonder, what do visitors to the Chapel think, who come in and wonder at the imagination of Einar Forseth in designing the mosaic floor, or on a sunny day appreciate the projected colours of the recessed stained glass? What do they visualise when they take note of the weekly ecumenical services that are held? They may look around at the Chapel seating and imagine a stream of workers on their way to their daily employment dropping in on Wednesday mornings, shoppers perhaps filling the place on a Tuesday lunchtime. Not so. The numbers are not at all large and depend very much on the week-to-week availability of the "regulars", augmented some of the time by a small number of Cathedral visitors or by the personal following of a visiting worship-leader!

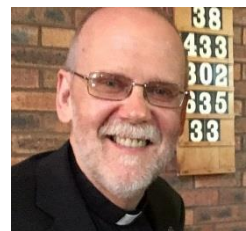
Should we take this as some barometer of low enthusiasm for things ecumenical? I don't think so. It is just that, although a special place, the Chapel is like many of our local churches today. We are seeking a new way to "do" ecumenical cooperation in the context of the Chapel while still catering for those for whom the old regular routine still serves. "The Church is its people and not the buildings" may be a cliché, but it is still true. As with many local churches, so in the case of the Chapel we remain dependent

on long-standing supporters and enthusiasts to maintain momentum while we discern what the Christians of Coventry actually need the Chapel to do. We have to acknowledge that the Chapel is not the only route by which Coventry Christians are cooperating and that to travel into the city centre to “do” ecumenism in a sometimes-cold worship space is not always appropriate, however iconic the building.

But I take heart in the life of the Chapel (as I do in the life of the smaller of my own churches), maintained by its faithful supporters who each give from their own gifts. The regular ecumenical witness to God continues. Talented people ensure it is also an almost constant showcase for displays highlighting short- or long-term issues of justice and peace, and there is much that those visitors of ours would have to have tried hard to ignore, if all they took away was thoughts of mosaics and windows.

To my mind the beating heart of the Chapel, and its strength, lies in the lay participation in its management and organisation. Also in the fact that its day-to-day running is placed in the hands of faithful Christians who are there not as appointees but because they want to be, whose role is to try to make things happen* and not to beat a denominational drum. It is not unusual – anywhere - for local ecumenical enthusiasm to ebb and flow depending on the preferences of the local church leaders. But in the Chapel of Unity there is a permanent route through which church members’ enthusiasm can be channelled and Coventry Christians of different traditions come together to worship and witness.

Revd Bill Young is a non-stipendiary minister in the United Reformed Church, in shared pastoral charge of four churches in Coventry alongside a career in Mechanical Engineering. He is a member of the Coordinating Group of the Chapel of Unity at Coventry Cathedral.



[Link to Coventry Cathedral Chapel of Unity](#)

Note: This year the Chapel of Unity initiated and facilitated the planning of the special service in the Cathedral to mark “Reformation 500” which is being held at 4pm on Sunday 29th October.

[Link to Reformation 500 Service 29th October](#)



COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

REFORMATION

500

Welcome to an ecumenical service to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation

Sunday October 29th, 4 pm
Coventry Cathedral

With guest speakers Bishop William Kenney and Senior Pastor Albrecht Köstlin-Büürma
Music led and performed by the Choir of Beverley Minster

Theos report on CTE

www.cte.org.uk/theos

David Cornick, General Secretary of Churches Together in England writes:

CTE's Board took the decision last year to fund research by Theos into the current state of ecumenism in England. We hope that the report will be widely read and discussed, and that it will help our member churches to consider how they wish to work together in mission over the next five to ten years.

In presenting the report, this is the text from the Theos website:

The ecumenical movement in England has been on a significant journey over the past few decades. The number of Churches and denominations engaged in the area has grown remarkably, reflecting shifting trends in English Christianity. That, combined with major changes in the ecumenical bodies, and changing perceptions of ecumenism among Churches, has given rise to a complex and vibrant ecumenical scene.

This report provides a snapshot of contemporary ecumenism in England. It tells the story of how ecumenism has changed and describes a movement that is now sitting at a critical juncture as it looks to the future. The report focuses primarily on Churches Together in England, the main ecumenical body operating in England. It identifies the strengths of the organisation and discusses the challenges it now faces.

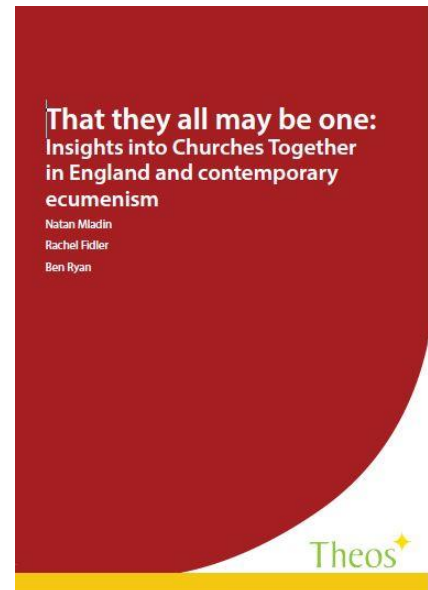
The report concludes with some suggested possibilities for the future, making some tentative recommendations for Churches Together in England as an organisation. It is our hope that this report will serve to provoke fresh debate about the purpose, focus, and direction of ecumenism as it develops over the coming years.

Natan Mladin, Rachel Fidler, and Ben Ryan, Theos 2017

[The Presidents of Churches Together in England](#) say:

"We are grateful to Theos for its work in compiling this Report. We hope that, with widespread study and discussion, it will help us grow closer to each other in our shared pathways of discipleship and in the mission we hold in common."

Archbishop Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury
Cardinal Vincent Nichols, The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster
Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, The Free Churches Moderator
The Revd Canon Billy Kennedy, The President nominated by the New Churches, the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers) and the Lutheran and German-speaking Churches



Bishop Angaelos, The President for the Orthodox Churches
Bishop Dr Eric Brown, The Pentecostal President

PDF Download of the Theos report on CTE

Link to the report on the Theos website

For a print copy of the report please send a Stamped Addressed Envelope (SAE) as follows:

1. The SAE should be an A5 envelope (23x16cm) with a 'Large' stamp and your own address already printed on it.
2. Write 'Theos Report' in the top left corner of the envelope. There is no need for a letter to request the booklet.
3. Send your SAE to Lorraine Shannon, Churches Together in England, 27 Tavistock Sq. London WC1H 9HH.
4. Lorraine will put a print copy of the Theos report in your envelope and post back to you in your pre-paid SAE.

Please note we do have 500 printed copies and we are happy to send, but time precludes doing more than popping a single booklet in an A5 envelope you have supplied, addressed, and stamped. Thank you.

Short URL link to the report for twitter, websites etc. www.cte.org.uk/theos

Ecumenical Romero Service at Westminster Abbey

David Cornick, General Secretary of Churches Together in England writes:

The West Front of Westminster Abbey is occupied by statues of ten twentieth century martyrs. Among them is Oscar Romero. Romero, the Archbishop of San Salvador, was gunned down whilst saying mass in the chapel of the Divine Providence Cancer Hospital on 24th June 1980. El Salvador was then a country divided into a small landowning elite and the mass of landless poor. The whole system was kept in place by a mixture of repression, electoral fraud, torture and violence. Romero found God in the plight of the poor and week by week confronted the repression and preached reconciliation, peace and social justice, living out the commands he found in Scripture. On the day before he was killed, he said in his homily at Sunday Mass – ‘...[A]gainst any order a man may give to kill, God’s law must prevail: Thou shalt not kill. No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God...’



On Saturday last a considerable congregation from many denominations gathered in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the centenary of his birth. A wreath was laid under the statue by Julian Filochowski, Chair of the Romero Trust, in the presence of HE the Ambassador of El Salvador.

Sir James Macmillan's anthem, based on the those words of Romero's homily and Psalm 31, commissioned by the Abbey for this occasion, seemed to reflect the paradoxical dynamic of martyrdom the as the percussive roar of violence and anger was countered by the melodious beauty of Romero's words and the text of psalm - 'I trust in you O Lord; I say You are my God.'

Lord Williams of Oystermouth reminded us in his sermon that the true beauty of the church was glimpsed in the brutal horror of Romero's assassination, first because this is the ultimate cost of standing with God's poor ones, but also because the church speaks the beauty of Christ's Truth in the midst of falsehood, lies and violence and makes that truth manifest every time the eucharist is celebrated. The beautiful modern reliquary containing a portion of the alb Romero was wearing as he was martyred reminded us all of that day and that witness.

As the service ended we raised our Romero crosses and prayed that we too might discern the signs of the times, stand up for the oppressed and be a voice for the voiceless, working for the good of all God's creation.

CTE have been pleased to work with the Romero Trust in raising awareness of this centenary.

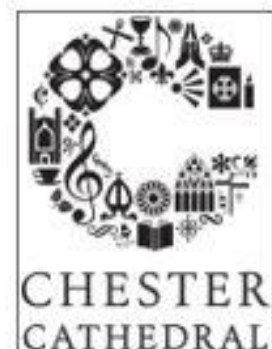
[More information about the Service](#)

[Westminster Abbey Romero Service booklet PDF](#)

Cheshire Churches' Response to Modern Slavery

On September 17th people from across Cheshire joined together at Chester Cathedral to learn of and pray for those caught up in the tragedy of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The service had been arranged by the Cathedral, Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network, and Churches Together in Cheshire.

The Mayors of Cheshire East and Cheshire West, local councillors, the High Sheriff of Cheshire and the Bishop of Chester were present. Caroline Virgo represented the Church of England's national Clewer Initiative. Contributions to the service came from the preacher, Major Kathryn Taylor of the Salvation Army, and readers Stephen Pickett of Frodsham



Churches Together, Sandra Murphy, Head of Adult Safeguarding for Cheshire East Council and Susan Taylor, the founder of the Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network. Music was provided by the Cathedral choir and organist and the music group of Hoole Baptist Church, Chester. Reports were given on: the work of the Anti-Slavery Network by Amy Morris, the Co-ordinator; on the Purple Teardrop Campaign of Soroptimists International by Anne MacDonald; on the Frodsham Churches local initiative by Stephen Pickett and on the Modern Slavery Act's requirements on Ethical Supply Chains by Quintin Lake of the 50eight Consultancy. The congregation had the opportunity to talk further with all the speakers after the service.

On behalf of Churches Together in Cheshire Bishop Peter Forster signed the following statement, a response to the strategy agreed amongst the relevant statutory bodies across the county:

The Church leaders of Cheshire welcome this strategy to fight this evil in our midst and commend those within the churches of Cheshire:

- To use all appropriate opportunities to promote amongst their congregations and denominations awareness of the signs of modern slavery;
- To understand the ways in which concerns can be reported to the relevant statutory bodies;
- To ensure that safeguarding guidelines, procedures and training take account of concerns in respect of modern slavery
- To explore the development of 'Hubs of Concern' around Cheshire to promote awareness within their local communities;
- To explore how the facilities and people of the churches might be offered and used to support those in the process of recovery.
- To be mindful of the possibilities of modern slavery at play within the services and goods they buy and to use their decisions and purchasing power to combat this.

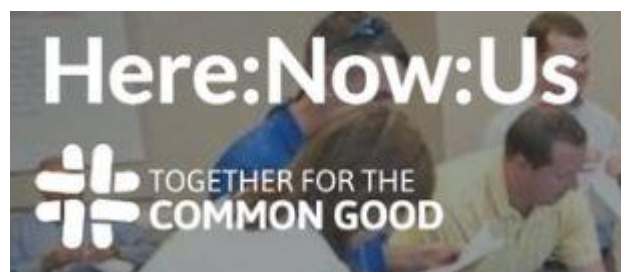
Prayers were offered for all those who find themselves victims of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, for those who are engaged in the trade today, and for all who are working to support victims and eradicate the evil.

Plans are being made for a further event at the Cathedral in the New Year.

Common Good 'Thinking Days'

Jenny Sinclair writes:

You may be interested to hear that Together for the Common Good will be piloting our new one-day "Common Good Thinking" training packages in October - and we're looking for participants. You are warmly invited. We are trialling a day for church leaders, and a day for lay people, each in two locations - Liverpool and Sussex.



If you would like to come, please click on the dates below for full details and book your

place. Registration is essential. The training is free and lunch and all materials are included. As with all our events, we are working hard to ensure a good ecumenical mix.

This is a pilot stage. If you can think of particular individuals near to those locations who you think would be well-suited, please do forward this message to them, cc'ing Bryony Wells our training coordinator, (bryony@togetherforthecommongood.co.uk). We'd prefer it if this wasn't put on public circulation lists. Thank you!

For more information, dates and contact visit the [CTE website News page link here](#)
www.togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

New President for the Bible Society

Helen Crawford writes:

I'm very happy to introduce you to our new President, His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the UK. Bishop Angaelos began his ministry in the UK in 1995 as a parish priest and became General Bishop of the Coptic Church in the UK in 1999. He works extensively with many different communities to build bridges, promote dialogue, and foster unity between churches, faiths and communities.



Bishop Angaelos replaces Dr Richard Chartres, former Bishop of London, who is retiring after six years as our President. Bishop Richard has been an enthusiastic and generous supporter of our mission, both in the UK and globally, not least in China where he has travelled with Bible Society.

Our Chief Executive, Paul Williams, said: 'We are profoundly grateful to Richard Chartres for his outstanding service over the past six years.' He said: 'Bishop Angaelos, and the Coptic Orthodox Church which he represents in the UK, models a deep, prayerful spirituality that is characterised by its attentiveness to Scripture...

'With his passion for the work of the church here, particularly amongst young people and the marginalised, and his connection with an ancient Christian community that has suffered throughout its history for its loyalty to Jesus Christ, Bishop Angaelos is perfectly placed to share and promote the vision of Bible Society as it moves into the new work God has for the organisation both at home and abroad.'

Helen Crawford is Digital Content Manager for Bible Society, a [Body in Association of Churches Together in England](#).

His Grace Bishop Angaelos is [one of the six Presidents of Churches Together in England](#).

Petra Children's Ministry Course

Toni Hasler writes:

We at Petra Institute for Children's Ministry UK, a [Body in Association of Churches Together in England](#), are presenting our inaugural children's ministry course in the UK in November. We have presented children's ministry courses in 73 countries around the world, and are now offering a course which is suitable in the UK for all groups, organisations or individuals who work with children.



The 5 day course, called "Walking to Wholeness – Helping Hurting Children to Heal" is for adults who know or work with children who have experienced hurt in a way that caused an impact on their life— perhaps a child suffering loss or humiliation or rejection or threat. The dates are Monday 13th November to Friday 17th November, and as this is the inaugural course for up to 20 participants we are offering a vastly reduced cost of only £35 per person, including all practical, interactive tuition and materials, plus a two course meal each of those 5 days.

The course is to be presented by Rev. Dirk Coetsee and his wife, Taleta. Dirk is a highly experienced children's ministry trainer and is Managing Director of Petra Institute for Children's Ministry in South Africa.

[PDF download leaflet for more information](#)

[Link to course information and contact email.](#)

Toni Hasler is Development Manager, Petra Institute for Children's Ministry UK.

Freedom Sunday 15th October 2017

Elizabeth Joy writes:

15th October is the date suggested to use these resources to raise awareness as well as pray for those who are trafficked and participate in combating

Human Trafficking. This date is the closest Sunday to Anti-Trafficking Day on Wednesday 18th October. If that date doesn't work, then any Sunday can be observed to spreading the word about modern slavery and human trafficking encouraging participation in Churches Combating Modern Slavery - Human Trafficking.

Human trafficking is the world's fastest growing global crime, involving over 30 million men, women and children around the world today. This is more than at any other time in human history. Freedom Sunday is a day for global faith communities to stand together in prayer and take action to put an end to this horrendous crime.



This year, Freedom Sunday takes place on Sunday 15th October 2017.

[Link to Freedom Sunday website for more information](#)

[Download PDF of Freedom Sunday resources](#)

Elizabeth Joy is the Honorary Coordinator for the [CCMS-HT work with CTE](#)

Rural and Urban Issues compared

Christians in urban and rural areas have discovered similarities and links across the different contexts in which they work. Following informal discussions about cross-overs and the implications for ministry, Churches Together in England convened and hosted a meeting for members of the Churches Rural Group and the Urban Forum.



Chaired by Rev Dr David Cornick (General Secretary of CTE), the meeting provided an opportunity to listen to one another's experience, share information and identify overlaps, common ground and potential areas for collaboration in future work. A number of common issues that have wider implications emerged from the case studies, stories and experiences shared.

[Download a summary report PDF of the issues compared](#)

Modem Leadership Conference 2017

Thursday 7 December - Friday 8 December
Sarum College, Salisbury



What is the Church for? Mobilising and organizing beyond Sunday morning

Modem's annual conference returns to Sarum College, set in the serene surroundings of Salisbury's Cathedral Close. The conference brings together experts from the fields of leadership, management and ministry for stimulating conversations between church and business communities.

This conference aims to help all to understand more about what is the church for, to help churches to mobilise and organize beyond Sunday morning.

Keynote Speakers

Professor Mike Higton on 'The Church as Witness' and Dr. Graham Adams on 'The Church and the Solidarity of the Shaken'. Both keynote speakers plan to be with us throughout the conference, so that the whole community can develop its thinking and development and make good use of the wisdom and ideas of the speakers, as well as of each other.

Programme

The aim is to uncover different perspectives, to make new connections and to open up conversation which will continue beyond the life of the conference. It is anticipated that the title of the conference will trigger a far-ranging set of responses and we are looking to seeing what emerges as we explore the terrain together.

Bookings

To reserve your place(s), please email [Alison Ogden at Sarum College](mailto:Alison.Ogden@SarumCollege.org) or telephone +44 (0) 1722 424826.

[A flier with full details including Speakers' biographies can be downloaded here.](http://www.modemuk.org/)

Modem UK is a Body in Association of CTE.

Swanwick Declaration plaque re-positioned

Jim Currin writes:

The Hayes, otherwise known to many as the Swanwick Conference Centre, is the place where 30 years ago national church leaders presented the English churches with the Swanwick Declaration.

You can read about the major event and read the text on the [CTE website here](http://www.cte.org.uk/news). The 1987 event marked the transition from a Council of Churches model to a Churches Together model and is a major foundation milestone in the formation of Churches Together in England.

After recent extensive building work at The Hayes, the Swanwick Declaration plaque which has been repositioned and placed in a new location and raised presentation as in the photograph. Visitors to The Hayes will find the plaque, all nice and clean, beside the path on the way to the Chapel.



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2018

The WPCU is coordinated in these isles by our colleagues at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

All information is at: www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer



That All May Be Free

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2018

Resources available to order or download

www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

Photo © Tonya Fitzpatrick, World Footprints (<http://WorldFootprints.com>). All Rights Reserved.



And finally ...

Christmas is coming up and resources from two Bodies in Association of Churches Together in England:

Bible Society: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/christmas/>

Bible Reading Fellowship with an [Advent Calendar link here](#)
And a new network celebrating 25th Anniversary

Sports Chaplaincy UK is a new Body in Association of CTE: [website link](#)

.....

This mailing is from Churches Together in England and is sent once a month
Subscribe and see the archive: www.cte.org.uk/news
To unsubscribe or to submit items for consideration, email: website@cte.org.uk
A Word version is available to cut and paste articles for further distribution: www.cte.org.uk/news