



## CTe-News from Churches Together in England

February 2014

### Reflection from Clive Barrett With insights in to West Yorkshire



#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT (AND PRAYER)

Churches Together in Huddersfield Town Centre recently hired a 'pop-up' shop in a shopping mall. They weren't selling, but giving away food, backed by daily prayer and conversation. Like God's love, it was unconditional. Passers-by took toffees and chocolates. Next day, shoppers were offered a bowl of bananas and oranges, labelled with the names of "fruits of the spirit", and invited to pick an item with the "fruit" of their choice. What a way into conversation! "We all need some love, don't we?" "What makes you joy-full?" "Do you need a bit of patience sometimes?"

#### Food for Jesus

Food is so important in Christian life. Jesus had a ministry of feeding, physically and spiritually. He clearly liked his food. He described heaven as a banquet. The key moment before Jesus' passion, "the night before he died", he took bread... Christian responses to that action have united and divided the Church for centuries.

#### Food in Excess

The ambivalence of food is before us daily. Many of us eat too much, and a gleeful diet industry profits from the misery of obesity. We are bad stewards of food and have a culture of disposal; the British Retail Consortium says supermarkets will publish their wastage figures. Even food we buy, we throw away. Nearly half of all bakery items are discarded, 40% of apples, 35% of bagged salads... The official UK Waste and Resources Action Programme says it amounts to 15 million tonnes.

In all that, the pressures on farmers to produce the right weight, right colour, right shape, at the right time, regardless of climate instability and market speculators, lead to rural grief picked up by the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, or Christians in the [Farming Community Network](#).

#### Food Shortage

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation suggests one in eight of the world's population is malnourished, that is 870 million people. The illness, disability and premature death that leads to is vast. The principal cause is poverty, despite Millennium Development Goal No.1 being "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger."

Even in the UK, [Christians Against Poverty](#) indicates that 70% of its new clients in 2013 missed meals before CAP sorted out their debts: "We helped 4,125 new families put food on the table." Government says we are better off, yet the number of food banks is increasing, queues lengthening for food hand outs. The [Trussell Trust](#) alone identifies nearly 400 food banks in the UK, live or under development, many relying totally or partially on support from local churches of all denominations. No wonder some ask whether food banks are the new ecumenism, practical expressions of united Christian love, generosity and commitment. We are increasingly one body in the sharing of bread.

## Spiritual Food

Ebenezer Methodist Church, Halifax, passed its sell-by date and was put down, allowing an ecumenical group to start a weekly food and support drop-in. Seventy churches are now involved. As the queues grew, so did the opportunities for conversation and prayer with many people, often with chaotic lifestyles. There were spiritual as well as physical needs to be met, and a [Saturday Gathering](#) was launched, a Fresh Expression of Church that now attracts over sixty people, many of whom regard it as "their" church. Nineteen people were recently [baptized and confirmed](#). The bread of life has brought new life to a church brave enough to die.

## Asking Why?

There is ecumenical charity, and spiritual nurture, but prophetic proclamation?

Church Action on Poverty has dared to ask why "[Britain Isn't Eating](#)". Answers lie in unemployment, benefits changes and their clumsy implementation, often issues that could be addressed if there was the will. For all the generosity they exhibit, food banks are neither normal nor acceptable in a rich nation with ample resources for all. Such manifestations of extreme inequality reveal a deep injustice. The bread we break symbolises a broken, unjust world.

On Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, [West Yorkshire Church Leaders](#) will come together in united public witness on food; giving away food and celebrating Christian generosity whilst challenging cosy assumptions that food banks are an acceptable feature of life because they are not.

What can you give away, together? How can you challenge the absurdity of waste, the injustice of want? How will you become one bread, one Body?



Clive Barrett, County Ecumenical Development Officer, West Yorkshire

## Film resources - 12 Years a Slave

Damaris provide Christian resources which can be used by groups of churches.

Damaris write:



12 Years a Slave (in cinemas Friday 10th January) is a powerful and dramatic film based on the amazing true story of one man's fight for survival and freedom. In the pre-Civil War United States, Solomon Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a free black man from upstate New York, is abducted and sold into slavery. Facing cruelty (personified by a malevolent slave owner, portrayed by Michael Fassbender) as well as unexpected kindnesses, Solomon struggles not only to stay alive, but to retain his dignity. In the twelfth year of his unforgettable odyssey, Solomon's chance meeting with a Canadian abolitionist (Brad Pitt) forever alters his life. For free official community resources for this film see [www.damaris.org/12years](http://www.damaris.org/12years)

## Hope Coventry Launch Celebration

Coventry Cathedral hosted a Sunday Evening service on 2nd Feb 2014 where 300 gathered to pray for mission, from a wide variety of churches across the city.

This followed a special service last November which saw Stacey Kelly appointed for 'Hope Coventry' - a partnership of churches and individual Christians in Coventry engaging afresh in mission and action, under the banner of Hope 2014. [www.hopetogether.org.uk](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk)



A promotional video of Hope 2014 was shown, which features various national church leaders speaking about a year of mission. We heard about 34 churches in Rugby with Hope 2014 banners which gives a sense of corporate purpose.

Coventry is hosting city wide events, and is looking for 5 regional missional churches, from which 'Hope Champions' can forge partnerships with local churches and agencies for outreach and community service.

Hope 2014 centres around the Christian calendar and the natural opportunities afforded to the churches to say something about the Christian Gospel - underneath the unifying Hope 2014 banner.

Hope 2014 provide training opportunities through the 'Mission Academy' training, where young people are equipped across the churches to do outreach in Coventry this will be facilitated by Coventry Youth for Christ.

**www.coventrychurches.org.uk** is a website set up to serve the churches and local community - local churches can be found and activities advertised.

Full report:

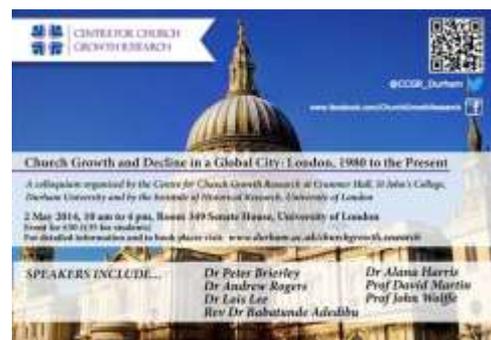
[http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391766/Home/News/News\\_items/Hope\\_Coventry\\_Launch.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391766/Home/News/News_items/Hope_Coventry_Launch.aspx)

## A Colloquium - Church Growth and Decline in a Global City

David Goodhew from Cranmer Hall, St John's College, University of Durham writes:

This is an academic colloquium on church growth and decline in London, 1980 to the present – details are in the flier below. It includes internationally recognised academics such as Prof David Martin of the LSE, alongside some excellent new researchers. It is at the University of London's Institute for Historical Research on 2 May 2014. It will be of great interest and practical use both to the many church ministers and members who live in Greater London, but also more widely, as the trends visible in London are happening elsewhere. The research is both academically very solid and offers rich insight into growth and decline within London's churches.

Information and booking is at: [www.durham.ac.uk/churchgrowth.research](http://www.durham.ac.uk/churchgrowth.research)



## I-Spy Easter resource from Churches Together in Sudbury and District

This is a letter from Lynda Sebbage, Vice Chair – Churches Together in Sudbury & District, about a project and resource developed locally which other Churches Together groups may be interested in using at Easter.



Dear Friend, Over the last two years, Churches Together in Sudbury & District, has run a really

exciting and effective outreach event at Easter entitled "I-Spy Easter". It turned heads and drew in the crowds, and as a result, we were able to speak to so many parents and children about Jesus! This was mainly because members of the team wandered the streets dressed in biblical costume and the children 'spied them out'; once identified the characters signed the child's collection card until all the signatures had been collected. With a fully completed card, the children could then pick up an Easter 'prize' as a reward (chocolate egg, Easter comic or small Christian gift).

At the same time, with the blessing and benefit of a large redundant church in our marketplace, we were able to offer the children many activities including drumming, arts and crafts, dancing, face painting, plane flying, fish prayers and an Easter Garden. During the day, all the participating Easter characters came together into the Church to perform a drama which recounted the whole Easter story; the characters also carried their own story cards to give away, so that children who could not wait around for the drama could take the gospel away with them.

Hearing of our venture a town nearby took up our idea but not having a central church they varied the event to suit their own situation and worked out of a supermarket precinct; instead of the activities they sang Easter 'carols' and encouraged shoppers to join in! They were delighted with the response they received.

In all, it was agreed that "this was one of the best things we have done in Sudbury"!

Full report: [http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391285/Home/News/News\\_items/I\\_Spy\\_Easter.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391285/Home/News/News_items/I_Spy_Easter.aspx)

## Part time Admin for FCG

The Free Churches Group are looking to recruit a Part-time Administrator as they seek to develop their work on behalf of the Free Churches of England and Wales. This role will offer administrative support to the Staff of the Free Churches Group based at the central office in London, helping to ensure the effective delivery of services across various activities, and to the efficient running of the office.



Key Responsibilities.

- IT Administration and Maintenance of Databases, web site and corporate social media
- Administrative support to Executive officers including General Secretary
- Financial Administration and Book-keeping
- Office Management

Full details of salary, benefits and conditions:

[http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391282/Home/News/News\\_items/Part\\_time\\_Admin.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/391282/Home/News/News_items/Part_time_Admin.aspx)

## 'Doing Ecumenism in Rome' AIF Lecture 22.02.14

PRESS RELEASE



Association of Interchurch Families Seventh John Coventry Memorial Lecture  
Saturday 22 February 2014 2.30pm Heythrop College, Kensington Square, W8  
5HN - Monsignor Mark Langham "Doing Ecumenism in Rome: Reflections on 5 years in the Council for Christian Unity "

Fr Langham is a priest of the Westminster diocese, Monsignor Langham was Administrator of

Westminster Cathedral till 2008 when he was appointed to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) where he served for 5 years as Secretary to the Vatican's dialogues with the Anglican and Methodist communions. His lecture, entitled "Doing Ecumenism in Rome": Reflections on 5 years in the Council for Christian Unity, will draw on his experience in this role.

The lecture will be chaired by Canon Dr Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the Director for Unity Faith and Order at the Anglican Communion Office who worked alongside Monsignor Langham when they were both co-secretaries to ARCIC III.

ALL WELCOME – ENTRY FREE – REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

**Download a PDF Press Release**

For more information please contact: Association of Interchurch Families T: 020 33842947 E: [info@interchurchfamilies.org.uk](mailto:info@interchurchfamilies.org.uk) [www.interchurchfamilies.org.uk](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org.uk)

## **Street Angels Commissioned at Celebration Service of Tamworth Covenanting Churches**



19th January saw members of Tamworth's Covenanting Churches (TCC) crowd into St Editha's Church, Tamworth to celebrate the many social action projects engaged on in the town and to commission Tamworth Street Angels. They were joined by representatives from national and local government, Chris Pincher MP and his Worship John Garner, the Mayor of Tamworth and representatives of church denominations – Rev Adrian Argile (Baptist Church Regional Minister), Revd Ian Howarth (Methodist Church, Chair of the Birmingham District) and the Rt Revd Jonathan Gledhill (Bishop of Lichfield). Led by the Acting Vicar of Tamworth, Rev Vic Van Den Bergh, the service provided an opportunity for the many Christians in the town to celebrate the social action and pastoral engagement that is done together and to hear from some of them and the work that they do.

The Rt Rev Jonathan Gledhill who prayed for and commissioned the Street Angels followed the address and as he did he also challenged the Christians of Tamworth to pray for and offer support for this valuable work.

[http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/390144/Home/News/News\\_items/Tamworth\\_Street\\_Angels.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/390144/Home/News/News_items/Tamworth_Street_Angels.aspx)

Paul Blakey, Street Angels video for Churches Together: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyMo4irKSTY>

## **Palm Crosses for Palm Sunday 13.04.14**

Press Release from the Zulem Trust  
PALM CROSSES FROM NONGOMA, ZULULAND  
FOR PALM SUNDAY 13th April 2014



Do you use Palm Crosses in your Church or Community? We invite you to try ours, made by members of the Church in Nongoma, Zululand, South Africa. They are

bookmark size. We invite a donation of £10 per 50 palm crosses and they are supplied in multiples of 50. We also provide packets of ash, free of charge, although we would ask for a thank-you donation towards the orphan-feeding fund. For an order form, please email us at [palmcross.zulem@btinternet.com](mailto:palmcross.zulem@btinternet.com) or go on to our website [www.zulemtrust.btck.co.uk](http://www.zulemtrust.btck.co.uk).

## **WCC 10th Assembly contributions and highlights**

Chief contributions and highlights of the WCC 10th Assembly are available in the newest issue of *The Ecumenical Review*, a quarterly journal of the WCC.

The 10th Assembly was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013, under the theme, "God of life, lead us to justice and peace." Plenary sessions explored the theme under rubrics of unity, mission, justice and peace.

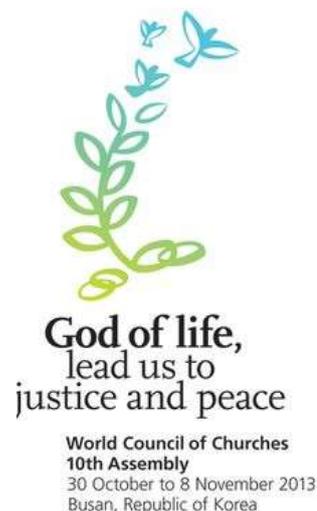
The fourteen pieces in ER include the full reports of the WCC general secretary and moderator, the official "Message" of the assembly, a list of its public statements with links to full texts on the Internet, the assembly's unity statement and several of the notable presentations from the assembly's plenary sessions and final worship.

The pieces convey something of the spirit and tone of the gathering, along with analysis of the current work and prospects of the WCC and the larger ecumenical movement.

Said ER editor Theodore A. Gill, "The content of this issue is by no means exhaustive but is intended to provide insights into assembly-goers' attitudes toward the churches' progress toward unity, toward a common understanding of the church, toward openness to common mission and evangelism, toward an understanding of those many elements that make for peace with justice. *Ecumenical Review*, as ever, provides a space where diverse voices may be raised, and heard."

Other committee reports, plenary presentations, homilies and videos from the assembly are available online. A full report and analysis of the assembly will be published on 1 April.

**[WCC web page](#) / [List of the authors and articles](#) / [Subscribing to The Ecumenical Review](#) / [WCC 10th Assembly website](#)**



## **'Major impact' of fresh expressions of church: new research**



Fresh expressions of church are having a major impact on growth in the Church of England – according to research released today (Thursday, January 16, 2014).

The detailed study, involving all fresh expressions of church in 10 dioceses, was carried out by the Church Army's Research Unit for the Church Commissioners. Canon Dr George Lings, the Unit's Director, said, 'Nothing else in the Church of England has this level of missional impact and the effect of adding further ecclesial communities.'



**[Video of George Lings speaking of the main headlines, from the Church Army Research Unit](#)**

Between January 2012 and October 2013, researchers spoke to the leaders of 518 fresh expressions in the dioceses of Liverpool, Canterbury, Leicester, Derby, Chelmsford, Norwich, Ripon & Leeds, Blackburn, Bristol and Portsmouth. These dioceses were chosen to reflect variety in context, geographical spread and different stances towards fresh expressions.

The findings come as part of an 18-month research programme investigating factors related to church growth within the CofE. They showed that, by 2012, four to five times as many fresh expressions were being started per year compared to 2004 - when the Mission-shaped Church report was launched.

The growth has been noticeably marked in the past three years. Some 44% of the fresh expressions in the research were launched between 2010 and 2012. Across the 10 dioceses surveyed, this adds the equivalent of a whole new diocese in terms of numbers. Evidence suggests that for every one person involved in the setting up of a fresh expression of church, there are now two and half more people. A typical fresh expression begins with 3-12 people and grows to 250% of that initial team size.

[www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/anglicanresearch](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/anglicanresearch)

[http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/390133/Home/News/News\\_items/Major\\_impact\\_of.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/390133/Home/News/News_items/Major_impact_of.aspx)

## Challenge to be blood 'Donor Churches'

Churches across the UK are being challenged to become "Donor Churches" and raise the profile of blood and organ donation in their community. The fab Church Challenge launched this week by the fleshandblood campaign is the first of its kind and seeks to encourage churches to see blood and organ donation as part of its giving.



In just one year, 30,000 churches have received information about the fleshandblood campaign and across the UK denominations, organisations and festivals have taken part in raising the profile of donation, mobilising the church to increase the number of donors. This new challenge aims to equip local churches as long term advocates of donation providing practical tools to help churches donate together, talk about donation and raise awareness in their communities.

In response to the introduction of the Church Challenge Lynda Hamlyn, Chief Executive of NHS Blood and Transplant who was awarded a CBE in the New Year's Honours for her services to healthcare said, "On behalf of NHS Blood and Transplant I'd like to thank churches for their support, for making donation important in their community and for the hope this will bring to all those who depend on our life saving work."

Groundbreaking research carried out by the fleshandblood campaign suggests that 70% of Christians already consider blood and/or organ donation to be part of their core "Christian giving" or are open to the idea. Almost one in ten Christians have given blood in the last year compared to 4% of the eligible population over the last two years.

The research results can be found at <http://fleshandblood.org/resource/2013-research-results/>  
[www.fleshandblood.org](http://www.fleshandblood.org)

## Prayers for Streets lead to Food bank and Three Baptisms



After the National Day of Prayer and Worship at Wembley, last September I was inspired to pray for my street. Last May, the Churches Together, (five churches), formed a Food Bank which is actually based opposite my home. My Street is now on the map ([www.neighbourhoodprayer.net](http://www.neighbourhoodprayer.net)) in more ways than one! I was praying with a neighbour or our street generally, but we believe this was an answer to prayer, as a food bank was one of the things on my heart to see happening in Walton. I think this came out of praying for people to be blessed in our town and for the church to be more visible in our street. Our church had already been giving out food parcels at Christmas. We heard that a lady from the local Roman Catholic Church was looking to set up a Food Bank and so it came to be born!

Social services, church leaders and many others in our community are given vouchers to give to people in need. People are given up to three vouchers for an emergency situation, such as a delay in benefits following the loss of a job. Some of the stories are heart breaking! We give people food for three days every Friday. Schools, churches and other organisations, donate the food.

I then put it to our pastor and his wife that we could take on a few streets each to pray for in our home-groups, which we have been doing now for several months and in one particular road, we have had three people come to faith in Jesus and been baptised. The three people, a Grandmother and two Mum's started attending the "Mother and Toddler" group that my church, Coastlands runs. Not long afterwards, they became Christian and we believe it is because their street was one of the streets that we are praying for.

Our Pastor meets regularly with ministers from other local churches and told them about the neighbourhood prayer initiative and this has since snowballed across other churches in our town. We are now covering over 30 streets in our town in prayer. Doors are really beginning to open here in Walton-on-Naze in Essex. This has all happened in twelve months, we are so grateful to God for His faithfulness. Prayer really DOES make a difference. Molly, Essex

This story appeared in the 22nd November 2013 newsletter of [www.neighbourhoodprayer.net](http://www.neighbourhoodprayer.net)

## Anglican-Lutheran Society 'Minority Churches Conference'



The Anglican-Lutheran Society is putting on a conference 'Fear not little flock' reflecting on the opportunities and challenges presented by living as a minority church. The event will take place at Lake Balaton, Hungary between 12 and 16 September 2014. Although the focus will naturally be on the experience of Anglican and Lutheran communities representatives from other traditions will also be present as both speakers and participants.

It is intended that conference would be useful to anyone who ministers or worships in a minority church. The organisers hope that Christians in majority churches who seek to work creatively with minority partners would also benefit from attending.

Details of the conference can be found at

<http://www.anglican-lutheran-society.org/conference%20Hungary%202014.htm>

## EDUCATION SUNDAY 2014 16 February

**RESOURCES: Going above and beyond ...**

**Matthew 5.21-37**

**[/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=119970](#) <DOWNLOAD**

MORE RESOURCES AVAILABLE SOON:

Sermon/homily notes

Prayers

Hymn and song suggestions

Primary school collective worship resource

Secondary school collective worship resource

Ideas for all-age worship

Resources for Higher Education



### **About Education Sunday:**

Education Sunday is a national day of prayer and celebration for everyone involved in the world of education. For more than 100 years there has been an annual recognition of Education Sunday in England and Wales (traditionally on the ninth Sunday before Easter). The resources are designed to help you prepare for your own celebration on or around Education Sunday, or on any other day during the year, such as the start or end of the academic year. You can use these resources in your church, in local schools, colleges and universities and in other places of learning. [www.educationsunday.org.uk](http://www.educationsunday.org.uk)

## Invitation to John Bradley's retirement

**Thursday 20 March**

**at Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes**



Join us in Milton Keynes on Thursday 20 March for afternoon tea to celebrate John Bradley's service to ecumenism in England. John joined the CTE staff team in September 2001 as Field Officer for the South after many years as County Ecumenical Officer for Devon. As he retires we want to take this opportunity to wish him well and celebrate his long and dedicated service to ecumenism.

As Field Officer, John has supported the County Ecumenical Officers and Intermediate Bodies in the south of England and been the fount of all wisdom for everything to do with LEPs. He has served as Secretary for the Churches' Group for Local Unity and editor of Pilgrim Post, which became CTe-News. John has been a member of various groups and networks including the Churches' Rural Group, Friends of the Bossey Institute, and latterly Churches for All.

We will be hosting afternoon tea to thank John for his work, friendship and support at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone, 300 Saxon Gate West, Milton Keynes, MK9 2ES on Thursday 20 March 2014 from 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm.

If you are planning to travel on public transport, the nearest train station is Milton Keynes Central with a short bus journey (approximately 10 minutes) on either bus no. 5, 7, X31 or 300 followed by a 5 minute walk. Taxis are also available from the station. If you are planning to drive, there are 40 free parking spaces at the rear of the Church but availability is subject to any other events taking place. Failing that, there are plenty of fee-paying parking spaces available close by. A map is available **here** to help you plan your journey. Let us know if you can join us by clicking **here** and if you can't come but would like to send John a message, click **here**.