



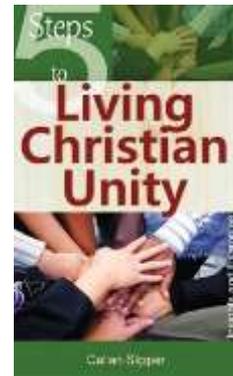
CTe-News from Churches Together in England

April 2014

'Touched with Gold' A Bible-based reflection on Christian Unity

By Callan Slipper: Ecumenical Facilitator of Churches Together in Hertfordshire.

The unity Jesus prayed for the night before he died was something immense. It was nothing less than the life of God shared among human beings. The fourth Gospel shows Jesus praying, "The glory that you given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one" (John 17:22-23). Not only is this the kind of thing that would capture the attention of a troubled and weary world, responding to some of the deepest human longings, but it has the most amazing implications. It means that in Christian unity God, effectively and really, is present and active. Here and now God works upon, through and with those who are united. Unity makes God a direct actor in human history.



The struggle to reunite the divided church is more than an add-on to the serious work of being a Christian. It is central to establishing the rule of God. For relationships of unity between people are where God is found. Worship, especially the sacraments (however they are theologized for the majority who have them), personal prayer in the heart's silence, the Bible all appear as doors onto God, doors wide open for God to come through and be with people. But they are all places or times set-aside specifically for this. Relationships of unity, on the other hand, are where God comes at any time and everywhere into the world. God is no longer separated, sometimes seemingly almost locked away. The Holy is not restricted to the sacred – either moments or places. Building genuine relationships of unity, within the churches and among the churches, is both the end that must be sought and the very thing that must be done to achieve that end. Without this everything else is diminished, because a church where God dwells through genuine unity, in the variety of its peoples and expressions and understandings and ways of doing things, is a church where everything is touched with gold, the gold of the living, effective presence of God.

This reflection is taken from 5 Steps to Living Christian Unity by Callan Slipper, p8/9. New City press 2013 www.newcitypress.com

Link to order the book from New City Press

Link to the book on the Focolare website

Link to order the book from Amazon UK

Archbishop Welby and Cardinal Nichols launch 'Listen to God: Hear the Poor'

This is the text which introduces both Archbishops speaking on video inviting Christians to spend a week praying for the poor and those who respond to human need:

Archbishop Justin Welby and Cardinal Vincent Nichols are encouraging people to join in a week of prayer for the church's work serving those in need, which they have called Listen To God: Hear the Poor.

During the week, which will run from Passion Sunday (6 April) to Palm Sunday (13 April), they will visit Anglican and Roman Catholic projects together.

Meanwhile the Archbishops are asking people to tweet what the church near them is doing, so this work can be held in prayer, using the hashtag #ListenToGod

Archbishop Justin will be retweeting a selection of the tweets each day from his personal Twitter account.

All this week daily prayer resources will be published on the websites of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Catholic Church in England and Wales, along with daily video reflections from members of both churches – including Archbishop Justin and Cardinal Nichols.- See more at:

Archbishop of Canterbury's website for introduction and videos

Download the week prayer readings and prayers

Twitter 'ListentoGod'

Cardinal Nichols on John 13 - video



URC nominates its next General Secretary

This is a press release from the United Reformed Church:

Following the resignation of the Revd Roberta Rominger in November 2013, the General Secretary Nomination Group of the United Reformed Church has been seeking her successor.

The nomination group, which is responsible for bringing a single name to the denomination's General Assembly this July, has now completed its work and is nominating the Revd John Proctor, currently vice-principal of Westminster College in Cambridge, to be the URC's next general secretary. If General Assembly accepts the nomination Mr Proctor will be inducted as general secretary on Sunday 6 July at the end of General Assembly. His term of office will therefore overlap with that of Mrs Rominger who will formally step down from the role on 31 July 2014.

Mr John Ellis, moderator of the General Assembly and convener of the nomination group said: "After an extensive process of discernment the group was unanimous in sensing that God was calling John Proctor to this immensely challenging position. We hope that the Assembly will share that sense and that the whole Church will support him in their prayers."

<http://www.urchurch.org.uk/media-news/147-news-slider-articles/1384-united-reformed-church-nominates-its-next-general-secretary.html>



American Memorial Chapel Travel Grant

- To foster understanding and the exchange of ideas between clergy of all denominations

The American Memorial Chapel Travel Grant gives a member of the clergy, from any denomination, the exciting opportunity to undertake a tour of the USA for approximately four weeks with the aim of fostering understanding and the exchange of ideas. The panel is particularly looking for proposals that will have an impact for those involved and their communities and that will forge on-going and productive relationships between both individuals and organisations.

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/398499/Home/Article/News/News_items/American_Memorial_Chapel.aspx

For more information on how to apply contact amctg@rcc.ac.uk or visit www.rcc.ac.uk.

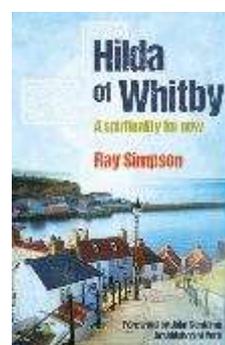
The deadline for this year's applications is 30 September 2014.

Hilda of Whitby: a Spirituality for Now

Ray Simpson writes about his new book which sheds light on early inter church relations and 'unity in diversity' today:

Help share my joy – the publication of the first non-fiction book on Hilda, arguably the greatest first millennium woman in the English-speaking world and an icon for our times.

Penny Warren, Members' Guardian of the international Community of Aidan and Hilda writes of it: 'There have been times and places where the wise woman or wise man was central to the community. These people were not pandered celebrities, but those open to the depths of God, and a way of love. Hilda was such a woman. 'Hilda of Whitby' reveals Hilda's secret as well as her history and perhaps may challenge us to seek new styles of leadership for today'.



The Archbishop of York writes a foreword. He thinks that factions in today's divided church could learn from Hilda and he baptises new Christians on the spot where Hilda was baptised.

I unfold the story of Hilda's work at Hartlepool and Whitby and draw key lessons for Christians today. Nine chapters explore nine facets of Hilda's life and how her spirituality can transform us.

Order from your local Christian bookshop (UK) or online at www.brffonline.org.uk £7.99

Inter Faith Learning Opportunities

The **Woolf Institute** is a leader in the academic study of relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims. Established in Cambridge in 1998, the Institute is recognized around the world for the excellence of its **research, teaching, policy** and **public education** programmes.

The Inter Faith Officer is currently participating in the 15 week online course "Bridging the Great Divide: the Jewish-Muslim Encounter" and recommends it.

The Institute also offers shorter online courses and information about these can be accessed [here](#).

Catholic and Black Churches in Historic Birmingham Meeting

On Thursday 6th March 2014 forty Birmingham Church Leaders from Catholic and Black-led Churches met to consider the challenges of Christian ministry in an urban context and what cross-church engagement and partnership may be possible.

Speakers, Fr Patrick Mileham - Birmingham University and Rev'd Dr Carol Tomlin - Oxford University, offered Catholic and Black Christian theological perspectives on inner city life; while the Rev'd James Herbert - Senior Pastor Life and Light Fellowship and Fr Jeremy Howard - priest at St Catherine's Bristol St, offered narratives of some urban challenges and corresponding responses from Catholic and Black church contexts.



Notes from the meeting are available [here](#).

AIF conference: Living Bread and True Vine



Doral Hayes from the Association of Interchurch Families sends this information about the annual AIF conference:

August Bank Holiday Sat 23rd to Mon 25th August 2014 @ Swanwick, Derbyshire

This year's annual conference of the Association of Interchurch Families is intending to focus on our different approaches to the celebration of the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper. During this weekend we hope to explore our beliefs with the aim of deepening our own understanding as well as learning from our partners. Experience shows us that there is a wide variation of understanding of the Lord's Supper both within and between denominations and we hope that it will be both helpful to ecumenical understanding if we are able to explore this in the context of the love we share in our marriages.

We shall have input from speakers of different church traditions, the opportunity to reflect on our title "Living Bread and True Vine" through bible study and group discussion, and workshops.

All information is on the CTE web page that includes a video of Doral introducing AIF:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/397273/Home/Article/News/News_items/AIF_conference_Living.aspx

Wisdom From Within the Monastery

June 27th – 29th 2014

8th Annual Seminar with Monos at Abbey Grange & Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey



This year's conference will focus on listening to the wisdom from within the monastic tradition both historically and contemporarily. Our speakers will help us connect the spiritual wisdom of the past with present day Christian living. The conference is for anyone who has an interest in engaging

with Christian monasticism as a spiritual discipline or anyone who has an interest in understanding the current explosion of all things monastic within the Church. All are very welcome.

Key Note Speaker: Rev Robin Gibbons: Oxford – Poverty and simplicity within the monastic tradition

Rev Gary Hall: Queens Foundation Birmingham – Thomas Merton for the laity

Br. Thomas O.S.O.C. Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey – On becoming aware of God

Anthony Grimley: Monos – The Life of St Antony as a model for new/lay monasticism

Reverend Mother Mary Luke: Community of the Holy Cross - Humility in the Rule of St Benedict and in St Bernard's 'On the Steps of Humility'

For more details contact: Ant Grimley, Monos, Oaks Road, Whitwick, Coalville, LE67 5UP

Phone: 01509 600137

E-mail: ant@monos.org.uk Web: www.monos.org.uk

Rugby World Cup - a golden opportunity

The third largest international event of its kind will be here in the UK in the autumn of 2015, writes Dave Chawner, the co-ordinator of an organisation created to help churches engage with the tournament.



In 2003 England snatched the glory – remember Jonny Wilkinson's match winning kick? In 2007 against all odds England reached the final. In 2011 Wales just lost out in a nail biting semi-final. All this drama and passion will be on our doorstep as England host Rugby World Cup 2015.

48 games in 13 venues from Newcastle to Exeter and Cardiff to Brighton spread over just six weeks. 20 international squads using 50 training venues. Local festivals of rugby in every major town & city. Half a million fans from 100 different countries. Wall to wall media coverage.

Here is another golden opportunity for the church to engage with a national event and with its local community as it did around the Olympics. And Engage 2015 is here to help, providing a menu of ideas and resources many of which can be built into existing activities.

Backed by the denominations and many of the organisations involved with More Than Gold, we are working closely with the tournament delivery body, England Rugby 2015, to provide hosting for participants' families, chaplaincy to the squads, games pastors and volunteers.

At the local level there will be opportunity to develop partnerships to screen matches, host community festivals, experiment with touch rugby, stage quizzes and speaker events, minister to locally based squads & their supporters, and much more.

Irrespective of limitations on resources there will be ways in which your church can link into your community during RWC 2015. Don't risk missing out on these God given possibilities to serve and to share. Start thinking and planning now. Register your interest by contacting david.chawner@engage2015.co.uk, and look out for the website www.engage2015.co.uk due on line after Easter 2014.

Dave Chawner speak to Churches Together on video about Engage 2015:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/397230/Home/Article/News/News_items/Rugby_World_Cup.aspx

Church Treasurer Foundation Training from ACAT



Dan Russell from the Association of Church Treasurers and Accountants says: 'I'm writing to let you know that we have launched our Spring programme of Church Treasurer Foundation training. This Foundation Course is an introduction to all the issues a Treasurer might meet and includes the following topics:

- * Legal overview – Role of the Trustee (to include any recent changes)
- * Accounting records and IT
- * Preparing the Annual Accounts
- * The Annual Report
- * Preparing annual budgets
- * Independent examination
- * Taxation issues including Gift Aid and VAT
- * Employment issues

The course is suitable for new and established Church Treasurers. Both members and non-members of ACAT are cordially invited to this event. The cost is a modest £30 as a means of covering some of the outgoings. Places can be booked online by visiting the Training page of the ACAT website http://acat.uk.com/foundation_courses.html .'

Manna Conference in Leeds

Trevor Jackson writes about a conference in Leeds which is open to all: 'Manna is literally spiritual food for the journey of faith we are all on. It exists to encourage and build up, through expository teaching of the bible, all who serve and minister in a wide range of churches and is not exclusively for 'leadership'. Historically we have welcomed speakers on the cutting edge of ministry within the Body of Christ and this year is no exception with the visit of Pastor Jim Graham from Gold Hill Baptist Church (Bucks) together with Pastor Bob & Jeanne Claycamp from Calvary Chapel Exeter who will be speaking over these dates. The Evening Meetings are totally FREE with quite moderate fees relating to the daytime sessions. Advance 'registration' is always helpful for catering though we'd be delighted to see anyone who just 'turned up' for one of the days!!

The 'image' of the man in armour is purely to signify that we are all in the same battle of contending for or defending the faith entrusted to us. it's not some exclusive kind of approach we have in mind. Our dedicated Manna Webpage with Programme Information can be viewed at: www.cotw.org.uk/manna

Easter resource from ACTS

'Action of Churches Together in Scotland' have produced a resource for Easter. This year's Easter Resource was prepared by a team from The Salvation Army, Jack in USA, Christine and David from Australia and Jacqueline and Alan Dixon from Scotland.

The theme is based on making choices and I am sure this interesting resource will be useful to you, either read individually, or to prepare study sessions through Holy Week.



If you would like a paper copy please contact Shona Paterson either on 01259 222362 or shonapaterson@acts-scotland.org Download the resource from the ACTS website

Pentecost: 'The Biggest Birthday Party Ever' launch events

This is a Press Release from the Methodist network Share Jesus International, that co-ordinated the 'Pentecost Festival' hosted by a number of Churches Together groups in previous years:

Christians across the UK are preparing to celebrate Pentecost, the Birthday of the Church, with The Biggest Birthday Party Ever. And launch events are planned in four key locations - Sheffield, Birmingham, London and Merseyside - across the weekend 29th May to 1st June.



Details of the launch events are now published online at www.sharejesusinternational.com/launch from where local churches can also discover how to host their own Pentecost parties throughout the week of 29th May to 8th June – Pentecost Sunday .

“Pentecost has long been the forgotten Christian festival but it’s time we re-discovered the celebration of Pentecost – the birthday of the church - and over the next few years, we want to see it celebrated across this nation!” says Andy Frost, Director of Share Jesus International, the organization behind Pentecost Festival and The Biggest Birthday Party Ever.

For more information about the event, entry or venues and to register/buy tickets go to www.sharejesusinternational.com/launch or call: 020 8944 5678

Church Related Community Work Roadshow

This is an advert for the roadshow on Saturday 17th May at Castle Hill URC, Northampton from 1030 - 3.30.

The roadshow is open for all 'concerned for communities and their development and want to make the church a place of relevance and compassion'.

Samara Andrews is the programme administrator:
crcw.admin@urc.org.uk



[Download a flyer for the Roadshow for more details](#)

Christian ministry and the Media

CODEC is holding its fifth MediaLit training course from 23rd to 27th June 2014 exploring Christian ministry and the media.

Previous MediaLit courses, held annually since 2010



(see 'Related Links'), have been greatly valued by the participants – ministerial students/ordinands, media professionals, diocesan and district communications officers.

MediaLit is open to anyone interested in engaging with the media - mass media, broadcast media, social media, community media. Come along and add your voice to the conversation.

You can find out more on <https://www.dur.ac.uk/codec/about/events/medialit/>

Noah - film resources for discussion



Nick Pollard from 'Damaris' writes about Christian resources which groups of churches may want to use in relation to the forthcoming film 'Noah':

Dear friends,

It was so good to work in partnership with you last year around the Channel 5 broadcast of THE BIBLE series. We achieved so much together as people across the nation talked about the Bible. Now we have another opportunity - and perhaps together we can do something even greater!

Noah (in UK cinemas from April 4th) is an epic film inspired by the Bible story of Noah - for details see www.damaris.org/noah.

From the visionary filmmaker Darren Aronofsky, and starring Russell Crowe, Emma Watson, Jennifer Connolly, Ray Winstone and Anthony Hopkins, Noah will once more give us many wonderful opportunities to encourage a conversation about the Bible.

Thank you to John Bradley

Revd John Bradley has been a member of the staff at Churches Together in England for 12 years and recently retired.

Colleagues and friends met at John's home church of Christ the Cornerstone in Milton Keynes for a 'Thank you Tea'. The General Secretary of CTE, Rev Dr David Cornick gave an appreciation, as did Mrs Val Potter who is a CTE Director and colleague for many years. Teresa Brown of Devine Music, played a violin solo reflection and John was presented with a cake specially made for the occasion to say 'Thank you'.



[Click here for Celia Blackden's pictures of the tea](#)

[Click here for pictures shown during the tea of John's ministry](#)

All of the above articles and more can be found on www.cte.org.uk

To submit articles for consideration in CTe-News email jim.currin@cte.org.uk