

Churches Together in England Press statement

21 March 2022

For immediate release

CTE Forum 2022 The Hayes, Swanwick

The Churches Together in England Forum, the broadest ecumenical gathering in the country, ended on 16/3/22 with a renewed commitment that the church is ready to serve a 'broken world'.

More than 300 delegates from CTE's 52 national Member Churches, Bodies in Association and partner organisations met to discuss the theme 'Reconciling Hope: A broken church for a broken world' viewed through the lenses of racial justice and the climate emergency.

CTE President, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, spoke on reconciliation in a post-Covid world. He urged the church to embrace its diversity and, "where we disagree, we must learn to disagree well...look outwards and respond to the crises that surround us, with the love of God that is within us, and with the unity that can be reached between us."

Tearfund Global Advocacy and Influencing Director, Canon Dr Ruth Valerio, addressed the question of reconciliation with the earth. She said facing the climate emergency is an integral part of the Christian faith: "We need to get hold of God's love for the world. In Genesis 1:31 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.'"

Professor Anthony Reddie and Rev Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson spoke on reconciling communities. Professor Reddie demanded that the church confront its collusion with the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade. Dr Henry-Robinson challenged individuals to think where they found themselves - as oppressors or following Jesus's way of justice, hope and peace.

Orthodox theologian Dr Ralph Lee reminded delegates that, "as we seek to understand one another better, deep listening helps us overcome the difference in our language and traditions."

During the gathering the Forum attendees made two statements on Ukraine. The first, [calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities](#) and for churches everywhere to campaign for an end to the war in Ukraine. The second, [appealing to the UK government to support the churches offering welcome and sanctuary to Ukrainian refugees](#).

As Forum drew to a close the new General Secretary of Churches Together in England, Bishop Mike Royal, was commissioned into his role. He addressed Forum with his vision for the Church across England:

"We've got to build a bigger table to gather around and listen to the voices which are often not heard. We need to raise a new generation of ecumenists. And to be ready to respond practically and relevantly to the needs in the world that God has called us as church to serve."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Churches Together in England (CTE) is the national ecumenical instrument supporting and encouraging churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity. CTE brings together [52 national Member Churches](#). With churches drawn from the Anglican, Catholic, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Orthodox and Lutheran traditions, as well as Free Churches, Quakers and others. CTE unites one of the broadest range of churches in the whole of Europe. [Read more about CTE](#).

[CTE Forum](#) takes place every three years. It was postponed from 2021 due the Coronavirus pandemic.

[More information on the speakers at CTE Forum 2022](#).

The following photos from CTE Forum 2022 are available.

A - Forum general view

B - Archbishop Justin Welby

C - Canon Dr Ruth Valerio

D - Commission of Bishop Mike Royal (pictured L to R Dionne Gravesande, Forum Moderator; Anton Muller, Deputy Forum Moderator; (hidden) CTE President Hugh Osgood; CTE General Secretary, Mike Royal; Hilary Treavis, representing national Member Churches; Cathy Limebear, representing Bodies in Association)

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Media information

Bishop Mike Royal

General Secretary of Churches Together in England

mike.royal@cte.org.uk

07967 368350