

NEWSLETTER No 3

Spring 2015

CHURCHES TOGETHER
IN CHESHIRE



Welcome!

Welcome to this, the third of the newsletters which I am circulating from Churches Together in Cheshire. As before I seek to include both news items and notices of ecumenical activities and events that are taking place within Cheshire, and also information relating more widely to the ecumenical scene across the country.

In this newsletter we are looking ahead to significant events of the next three months. The glorious good news of Easter will be widely celebrated, and many churches and Churches Together Groups will, again, be making public witness of the Easter story. In May there will be the General Election, in which all of faith have been urged to engage, and also Christian Aid Week, another time when the churches' profile is raised with the public. Please see the items in this newsletter relating to these matters.

You will find my contact details at the end of this Newsletter, and if you wish any future edition to include reports of what has been happening in your neck of the woods, or to advertise any forthcoming event I would be pleased to hear from you

Andrew Taylor

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

I am aware that in many parts of the county churches came together to mark and to celebrate this time, using the material

prepared by the churches of Brazil and brought together under the title of "The Well is Deep". I trust it was a time of blessing for all involved, and has served as a powerful witness of our common faith and commitment to each other and the communities we serve.

Churches Together in Cheshire is most grateful to St. Mary's Parish Church, Nantwich and the Nantwich Christian Council who hosted the service on 25th January and to the preacher on that occasion, Rt. Revd. Mark Davies, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Shrewsbury.

In 2016 the service returns to Chester Cathedral when, on 24th January, the preacher will be the Revd. Lord Leslie Griffiths. Further details of this service, and of the material being made available for the Week of Prayer next year will be circulated later in the year.

Salt of the Earth

The Salt of the Earth network has the following events planned for 2015:

Salt Sunday on 17th May , 2015

From Brine to Beef

Activities and events for the whole family

10am – 5pm

Reaseheath Agricultural College, Nantwich
Speaker: Bishop Keith Sinclair

The Cheshire County Show, 23rd & 24th June.

Find us in the Church Tent.

Network Meeting, 2nd July, 2015

Speaker: John Weaver

Science & Faith: myths, conflicts and the reasonableness of belief

Venue to be confirmed

Network Meeting 17th November, 2015

Paul Treloar

From particle accelerator to accelerated economic impact

Daresbury Innovation Centre WA4 4FS

Further details will be circulated nearer the time, or for more information contact

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Churches and the General Election



As the 2015 General Election approaches various churches and networks of Churches Together have produced papers, guidelines and resources to help Christians in England engage with the politics of the nation. This is a (web) page in progress and more links will be added as available. The list is in general alphabetical order:

[A letter to Catholics in England and Wales from their Bishops](#)

[Baptist, Methodist, URC: Joint Public Issues Team](#)

[Bishop Angaelos speaking at House of Lords re Identity](#)

[Christian Aid Election Manifesto - CA is an agency of CTE](#)

[Church of England Pastoral Letter of the Bishops](#)

[Churches Together in Britain and Ireland](#)

[CTBI Guide to Planning Hustings PDF](#)

[Evangelical Alliance: Will you show up?](#)

[Religious Society of Friends \(Quaker\):](#)

[Quaker Vote](#)

[The Catholic Church in England and Wales re Education](#)

[2020 Vision of the Good Society PDF report](#)

Related NOTES:

[Lobbying and Hustings: a paper from Helen Boorthroyd, CT Cumbria](#)

[Quaker resources re the Lobbying Act](#)

[Quaker concern at the Lobbying Act](#)

Web page link for updates:

On the official website from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, you can find information about how to hold a local Hustings event - a forum for members of the public to hear from candidates and political parties. You can register details of your own event and search for events happening near you. You can also download CTBI's election discussion document '2020 Vision of the Good Society' and other resources from member churches and agencies.

Link to CTBI site:

<http://ctbielections.org.uk/>



Christian Aid



Becky Hurst, the Regional Co-ordinator for Cheshire has supplied the following article in preparation for Christian Aid Week, 10th – 16th May, and would be pleased to talk to churches and church groups about the current work of Christian Aid. Becky has herself recently returned from a visit to projects in Ethiopia. She can be contacted on: 01925 582 829 or by e-mail at BHurst@christian-aid.org.

Afraid, alone, in pain

Loko's choice in life is simple: 'If I can't collect firewood, my children will die.' Four times a week, in a remote corner of Ethiopia, Loko makes a back-breaking eight-hour trip to gather wood. It's a task she dreads, but she steels herself to do it because if she doesn't her children will starve.



She prays to God as she walks. 'I ask him to change my life and lead us out of this,' she says.

Just £5 could give Loko a loan to start her own business buying and selling tea and coffee, freeing her from her desperate task and allowing her to spend more time caring for her family.

Be the answer to Loko's prayer this Christian Aid Week.

This Christian Aid Week, you can help transform the lives of women like Loko.

From 10-16 May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people like Loko.

Every year, 100,000 volunteers demonstrate God's love for the poor by taking part in house-to-house collections for Christian Aid. This fantastic witness is a chance to take the mission of the church into your community.

Last year I visited Ethiopia with our current interns and we were fortunate enough to meet with Loko and also many women who have already benefitted from Hundee's work. I would be delighted to come and share these stories with your church.

Photo credit:

Christian Aid/M Gonzalez-Noda

Developments in Chaplaincy

Churches Together in Cheshire, working with the Denominational Ecumenical Officers has been turning its attention to Chaplaincy. As reflected in the last newsletter, Churches Together in Cheshire has a well-established interest in this through the working of the Agricultural Chaplaincy. Chaplaincy has increasingly become one of the expressions of church which is essentially ecumenical and increasingly inter-faith.

In the first instance we have tried to bring together a schedule of known chaplaincies across the county. For some this is relatively easy, and those working in settings such as the Armed Forces, Hospitals, Prisons, Education, and Industry tend to have that publicly recorded. We are aware, though that there are many other chaplaincies being undertaken, with varying degrees of formal recognition. It would be good to hear from any and all those who are fulfilling a chaplain's role. Once a fairly comprehensive picture has emerged we can give thought to how this important outworking of church can be supported and resourced.

This is not only a local issue. Theos, a noted religious think tank is currently launching a new report: 'A Very Modern Ministry: Chaplaincy in the UK', seeing chaplaincy as a fascinating case study on the future of how faith and belief groups will operate in the public square. Also The Alliance of Town and City Chaplaincies (ATTC) is holding a national conference in Luton on Thursday 16th April 2015.

[Click here for a flyer with full details about the day](#)

Human Trafficking



This recently established organisation, a project of Christian Concern, Crewe, headed up by Susan Taylor, ran an excellent Day Conference in November to highlight to local statutory services the current alarming dimensions of human trafficking. Susan hopes that later in the year she can make training available to local bodies. In the meantime a group from Churches Together in Frodsham has been working in relation to this issue and has prepared a brief guide for churches. A full update will appear in the next newsletter For further information please contact: Susan Taylor: susan@spotlightonslavery.com.uk; Stephen Pickett: frodshamforuminfo@gmail.com;

Easter

I take this early opportunity to extend Easter greetings to churches, Churches Together groups and other Christian networks. May we all be again overwhelmed by the Good News of the Easter story and share it widely with a world hungry for such news!

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