



UNITY POST

PUBLISHED BY WEST YORKSHIRE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL – WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY: 18-25 JANUARY 2012



Looking Up
- 8 pages of
Churches
Together
news

West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council



Hot Line to Heaven
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25 YEARS TOGETHER

West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council – WYEC – exists to promote Christian Unity at all levels. We serve not only West Yorkshire but also the Dales. This year we're 25 years old!

WYEC was founded in 1987, when the region's church leaders signed a Covenant to work together. It was a big year for Christian unity ("ecumenism"). That year the phrase "Churches Together" was born at a national conference. Lots of old Councils of Churches started to become Churches Together groups, which could include Roman Catholic and independent churches.

So this year, we will think about all the ways in which the churches have come closer in the last 25 years. WYEC will publish a book about this in the autumn. (Watch this space – www.wyec.co.uk!) Also, we will be holding three big services around the region. It will be a chance to celebrate what all our local Churches Together groups have and will be achieving. We would love to have all Churches Together groups coming to one or more of the services.

Make a note of the dates and places – we look forward to seeing you there!

SPECIAL SERVICES 2012

Sunday 14th October, 3pm, The Rt Revd Vincent Nichols, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, preaches at Batley Central Methodist Church.

Sunday 21st October, 4pm, The Revd. Alison Tomlin, recent President of the Methodist Conference, preaches at Bradford Cathedral.

Sunday 28th October, 4pm, The Revd. Ernie Whalley, President-designate of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, preaches at St Anne's Catholic Cathedral, Leeds.



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All in a whirl. What's going round in Settle, page 13

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Standing up - to pray and to be counted

Christian unity is not only a right and proper thing in itself – see the prayer of Jesus in John 17, from verse 20 – it is important for mission. Together, we have the resources, material, human and spiritual, to do things we could never achieve on our own. From the church leaders’ point of view, their influence is so much greater when they stand together.

WYEC church leaders have developed a practice of speaking out on matters of common concern. The most recent example saw church leaders sign a letter of support for BBC Radio Leeds, which is faced with 20% cuts. The church leaders’ letter asked the Director General of the BBC to think again about cutting Radio Leeds in this way (see the letter at wyec.co.uk.)

“A well-resourced local radio station can help communities listen to each other, building cohesion between as well as within communities.”

WYEC church leaders have a tradition of speaking out on Ash Wednesday, the date in early Spring which some churches mark

as the start of the season of Lent. On Ash Wednesday 2011, WYEC church leaders gathered in St Anne’s Catholic Cathedral, Leeds. There was a Methodist service of confession and ‘ashing’, and a special prayer, written by WYEC Chair, the Revd. Dr. Liz Smith. The prayer was for people who were the victims of the cuts (see the full prayer at wyec.co.uk.)

God of compassion and justice, attune our listening, we pray, To hear the cries of those deprived of work, and of those bearing the burden of working long hours; To know the anger and the angst of people who feel pushed to the margins by those with wealth and power...

Some of the church leaders whose responsibilities included Leeds went to Civic Hall. They handed a copy of the full prayer to Tom Riordan, the Chief Executive of the City Council.

For 2012, there will be a church leaders’ public witness about young people’s concerns (see pages 6 and 7).



Top and right: church leaders in St Anne’s Cathedral. Left: presenting a prayer to the Chief Executive of Leeds City Council (3rd left)

The Home Team and Away

There have been some changes in the team of WYEC church leaders. The Rt. Revd. Nick Baines (pictured, right, with WYEC colleagues) has moved into the vacant seat of Bishop of Bradford. The Chair of West Yorkshire Methodist District, the Revd. Peter Whittaker,



has retired and been replaced by the Revd. Dr. Roger Walton (pictured, left, with WYEC colleagues). Both of these church leaders signed the WYEC Covenant (below) at their induction services. Within West Yorkshire African Caribbean Council of Churches, the baton has passed from Anthony Padmore to Samuel Angus. A previous Chair of WYACCC, Pastor Gloria Hanley, remains a WYEC trustee.

There are good relationships between the church leaders, and this helps churches to work together at all levels. Every year they have a 24 hour residential, on the last occasion at Holy Rood House, Thirsk. In addition to this, during the past year, a number of the church leaders spent several days away together in pilgrimage/retreat in Durham. Together they examined the work of the 8th century Venerable Bede, the church’s mission in former mining communities, and the religious implications of quantum theory!



We can all learn from the church leaders’ example. It can be good for local churches and Churches Together groups to make going away together a priority. Not only is it a chance to get to know each other better – building the trust that helps make things happen in the future – but through praying and listening you can discover what is right for your churches. Where will you go together this year?



New Canons

The Revd. Dr. Liz Smith (pictured), who is both Chair of the Leeds Methodist District and Chair of WYEC, has become an ecumenical canon of Wakefield Cathedral. Domprost Anders Alberius, Dean of the Lutheran Cathedral at Skara, Sweden, also became an ecumenical canon at this special service led by the Rt. Revd. Stephen Platten, Bishop of Wakefield. The international and ecumenical context was further enhanced by the presence of church representatives from Wakefield’s twin town of Herne, Germany.

WEST YORKSHIRE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL COVENANT

WE REJOICE in our growing partnership of trust as we share at a personal level in worship, friendship and consultation.
WE RECOGNISE that we have in common many similar responsibilities, joys, problems and hopes, and that we have much to offer and to receive from each other in the rich diversity of our traditions, which complement and challenge each other.
WE BELIEVE that in our common pilgrimage we are being led by the Holy Spirit, and that God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is calling us to a deeper unity and to a greater sharing in our mission to His world.
WE UNDERTAKE to work towards doing

everything together except that which, in conscience, must be done separately, and in particular:
TO ENCOURAGE appropriate initiatives for local co-operation.
TO CONFER together over pastoral appointments and buildings which affect the mission and ministry of the Church in West Yorkshire where we consider the circumstances call for such co-operation.
TO ACT together on public issues wherever need and opportunity arise.
WE INVITE our congregations to support us in this Covenant to which we commit ourselves, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

It's Our Silver Jubilee Year!

What's your earliest memory of churches doing things together? I've asked that question in many Churches Together groups. There have been many answers from rounders matches between different Cub packs through to Whit Walks, the Spring highlight, especially in small towns.

One of my own earliest memories, as a schoolboy, was when I went out with the local vicar's family. I thought we were just walking their dog. We then met up with the local Catholic priest and others. It turned out that the 'walk' was a 1960s CND demonstration – early ecumenical mission!

In recent years we've celebrated the centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and in 2010 the centenary of the 1910 Edinburgh Conference that helped to launch the whole ecumenical inter-church movement.

WYEC's Jubilee

In 2012, West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council (WYEC) celebrates its silver jubilee. It was founded, in its current form, in 1987, around the time of the 'Swanwick Declaration', made by national church leaders at a meeting in Derbyshire. They decided to move from a 'Council of Churches' model of working, where everyone tried to be the same, to a 'Churches Together' model, where each respects the integrity of the other. At the time it was the 25th anniversary of the influential Second Vatican Council (see page 4). This new model meant that Roman Catholic churches could be included; as Cardinal Basil Hume said at the time, moving "from a situation of co-operation to one of



commitment".

WYEC was born into this exciting period of change, as established Councils now became Churches Together groups and new Churches Together groups were set up locally and nationally (e.g. Churches Together in England).

WYEC's role is to support and promote anything that will help churches work more closely together. This could be building relationships between senior church leaders at a residential retreat, or encouraging local Churches Together groups to pray and act together.



Clive Barrett

Celebrations

We think all that is worth celebrating. We will do that partly by bringing out a special book with lots of stories – and many of the contributors – from our region. Also, in October 2012, we are holding three special services.

On Sunday 14th October, 3pm, The Rt Revd Vincent Nichols, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, will preach at Batley Central Methodist Church.

On Sunday 21st October, 4pm, The Revd. Alison Tomlin, recent President of the Methodist Conference, will preach at Bradford Cathedral.

On Sunday 28th October, 4pm, The Revd. Ernie Whalley, President-designate of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, will preach at St Anne's Catholic Cathedral, Leeds.

Put these dates in your diary now! We invite all churches and Churches Together groups across West Yorkshire and the Dales to come and join us at those services. Let's celebrate what we – and you – are doing together.

Clive Barrett

WYEC Supports You!

One of WYEC's roles is to support and encourage Churches Together groups, whether in town or country. Clive Barrett, the County Ecumenical Development Officer, is always willing to come to a Churches Together group meeting to listen or to speak, whether it's attending a small committee or preaching at a large festival.

Occasionally, WYEC holds a Consultation evening for Churches Together groups in a District. In recent months we have held two, one for Kirklees and one for North Yorkshire (or at least that part of it which is west of the A1).

The Kirklees Consultation took place in Dewsbury Minster. We heard about the importance of the Women's World Day of Prayer in Upper Colne Valley, and the excellent communications / magazine provided over the years by Arthur Preston in Lower Colne Valley; stories included the Spen Valley Faith in Schools Trust and the CARE Dewsbury Drop-In Centre for alcoholics and drug addicts; good practice included new, joint Lent courses and Bible Study in Thornhill, Whitley, and Thornhill Lees, a regular retreat held by Gomeral and Birkenshaw, and the Christian Aid quiz in Lindley. In Huddersfield Town Centre there

is enough trust between the churches for one church to be able to represent the others, for example by taking the lead in civic engagement or asylum seeker support. Add Emley and Flockton, Heckmondwike, Crossland Moor, Brighouse and Rastrick, and reports from Birstall, and Shepley and Shelley, and there is a lot of good Churches Together presence across the district.

The Consultation for North Yorkshire Churches Together groups took place in St Andrew's, Skipton. There were representatives from Wensleydale and the Northern Dales, to Bentham Churches Together in the West, Ripon Alive Churches Together in the east, and Crosshills and District Fellowship of Churches on the border with West Yorkshire. We heard about the Biblical Literacy Project in the Northern Dales, and the work of Churches Together groups in Upper Wharfedale, Skipton and Settle. There was some sharing of good practice and a real sense of solidarity.

The next Consultation will be for all Churches Together groups in and around Wakefield. It will be at Normanton Methodist Church at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2nd May 2012.

Supporting Local Ecumenical Partnerships

WYEC has held a Consultation at Windhill, Shipley, for members of Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs). A LEP happens whenever churches from different traditions do something together which requires a formal agreement. This could be a chaplaincy (e.g. Wakefield Prison, or the Universities in Leeds) or a much closer 'Covenant' relationship between churches than you'd usually find in a Churches Together group (e.g. Newsome, Huddersfield).

Most often this is when churches combine to form a Single Congregation LEP. There are over 30 Single Congregation LEPs in the WYEC region. There have also been recent LEP consultations run by West Yorkshire Methodist District and by the Yorkshire Synod of the United Reformed Church. We might give people a breather before holding another one!

Another way in which WYEC tries to support its LEPs is by occasional Review. Recent reviews have included St John's United Church, Cononley (Anglican and Methodist), and the Church in West Bretton (also Anglican and Methodist). These reviews are available on the WYEC website.

Ongoing reviews include Christ Church, Hipperholme (Methodist and United Reformed), St Matthew's, Rastrick (Anglican and Methodist), and Little Lane Church, Bradford (Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed). More will follow in 2012, including Rodley Ecumenical Centre (Anglican and Methodist).

Thanks are due to all the Denominational Ecumenical Officers of WYEC churches, many of whom have helped enormously in these LEP reviews.



Though not suited for all, the single congregation LEP model is a useful tool in the ecumenical toolbox. A number of LEPs

have formally come into being in recent months, once again through the hard work of the Denominational Ecumenical Officers. The Church in Eldwick (Anglican and Methodist) celebrates its first birthday in January 2012. Still to reach that milestone are recently formed LEPs Cornerstone (Methodist and United Reformed), Great Horton and Longcauseway (United Reformed and Methodist), Dewsbury.

If you would like to explore the possibilities for a LEP in your area, especially for a Covenant Partnership where you work very closely together but nobody needs to move from their own church building, please contact WYEC.

The most recent addition to the LEP team was already a member! The Church in Denholme was already a Baptist and United Reformed partnership, but in January 2012, Anglicans joined formally to make this a three-way partnership.



Judith Drake reports:

"It was a joyous start to the 2012 New Year for two churches in the village of Denholme, Bradford, when, after many years of collaborated activity, the churches came together to form a new Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) known as Denholme Shared Church.

"In September 2008, St. Paul's Anglican congregation took the decision to move into the building belonging to Denholme Edge Church, already a Baptist / United Reformed Church LEP. Over the last three years, the two congregations have taken time to get to know one another, enjoyed shared worship and explored each other's traditions and practices, until it was thought the time was right to formalize their new partnership. Coming together as Denholme Shared Church in one building is a new and exciting venture for Denholme, and the church intends to use every opportunity to promote the unique advantage of being the only church in the village."

Supporting other Initiatives

You don't always need a formal arrangement in order to work together. For example, Anglicans in Bentham have a new informal arrangement to worship in St Boniface Catholic church. It's the other way round in Shepley, where Catholic Mass is held in St Paul's Anglican church.

There are numerous initiatives in the region where church representatives cross denominational borders to meet and plan together. The marvellous educational programmes of Christians Learning Across Yorkshire (CLAY) is one example. See all that they coordinate at www.claycourses.org.uk.

Other examples include the churches' Social Responsibility Officers, or equivalent, in Leeds, who meet regularly together, or those with youth work responsibilities

across Yorkshire, who meet together under the heading of Faith in Young People. See an example of their work on page page number

Similarly, the West Yorkshire Faith in Further Education group is the body behind the excellent ecumenical FE chaplaincy, spreading out from Bradford College to other FE colleges across the region. See page number.

And of course, you don't have to start from a denominational position at all. Many of the best examples of Christian action come simply from Christians working alongside each other, maybe not even aware of the particular tradition of their neighbour. From Christian Aid to Church Action on Poverty, Christians from all backgrounds are making a difference.

The Revd. David Rowland

We are sorry to report the death of David Rowland, Ecumenical Officer for Yorkshire Baptist Association, who helped WYEC during a long County Officer vacancy between Stephanie Rybak and Clive Barrett. In a varied ministry, David had also been Ecumenical Officer in Coventry and had served in the Blackbird Leys LEP, Oxford. As we give thanks for David's life and ministry, we pray too for his wife, Audrey.

Assisi pilgrims for world peace

“The late Autumn morning was cloudy and cool. We stood with the crowd of locals outside the enormous basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli. This marks the site where St Francis and his small band of followers found refuge.

St. Francis also travelled to Egypt to meet Sultan Malik al-Kamil, in 1219, during the period of the unholy fifth crusade. Francis had a big vision and asked the unthinkable question, ‘Was it not possible that if people of faith talked together they might find a way of peace even across religious divisions?’ 25 years ago, Pope John Paul II asked a similar question...”



So reported John and Rita Bennett from Bolton Priory, Wharfedale. They were present at a recent Assisi gathering called by Pope Benedict to commemorate that first assembly of religious leaders. It followed a week in Rome during which common statements were prepared.

Rowan Williams pointed out that the world ignores massive loss of life among the poorest people. The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Olav Fyske Tveit, looked to the contribution of young people to peacemaking, but recognised that “a great obstacle to a just peace today is the high level of unemployment among young people”. The Bennetts noted the presence of many young people of the Focolare movement (“like Greenbelt, only much warmer!”)

Dr. Tveit indicated that the WCC would be giving priority to the need for peace-making in Jerusalem. That city, he said, “holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims, is a visible symbol of our desire to worship God. But it is also a powerful symbol of how this best can also go wrong.”

There were other Christian voices: African Christians, and the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch. There were also Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu speakers.

The Pope appealed for a radical purification of our Christian faith. He said, “In the course of history, and in the name of Christian faith, force has been used. But it is clear that this was an abuse of the faith and a contradiction of its true nature. The Cross of Christ is a sign of the God who puts ‘suffering with’ and ‘loving with’, in place of force.”

Clare Amos from the WCC noted the pilgrim spirit of humility, “and like all pilgrims we travel in the hope that we



will be transformed through our journey, and that we will eventually return to our everyday situations with renewed vision and determination to work for both truth and peace”.

John and Rita Bennett were thinking along the same lines: “The Peace gathering left us with some fascinating questions. What would we, as well as others, do differently when we got back home? In what ways can we take up peace-making, in having an ecumenical stance in our own ministries? Would some delegates meet with hostility and rejection in making such a bold commitment to peace? Is this the time and place for a new ecumenical peace movement? As the mayor of Assisi called for the town to become a venue for peace-making, how might we begin to use this incredible Christian site, for more than a location for retreats?”

Journey In Hope



Bill Snelson tells the story of 50 years of Anglican – Roman Catholic relations

The Second Vatican Council was convened by Pope John XXIII on Christmas Day 1961, and it first met in October 1962, 50 years ago this year. It was the most significant event for the Roman Catholic Church, and indeed for the whole of Christianity in the western world, since the Reformation of the 16th century. The Council renewed the self-understanding of the Church, its inner life and its relationship to other

Christian traditions, other religions and the world. It must have been a heady and exhilarating experience for those who took part.

“The greatest concern of the ecumenical Council is that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more effectively,” said Pope John in his opening address. “The Church should never depart from the sacred treasure of truth, but at the same time, she must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and the new forms of life introduced into the modern world.”

When the Council started, its eventual decrees and documents could not be foreseen; and the particular ecumenical significance of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium, 1964) and the Decree of Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio, 1965) can be discussed in a couple of years’ time. But something had happened before the Council even began, in recognising the new world and new relationships in which the Catholic Church was set: and that was, the invitation to other Christian communities to send observers to the Council. 38 observers from 17 churches and federations took up the invitation; there were difficulties getting representation

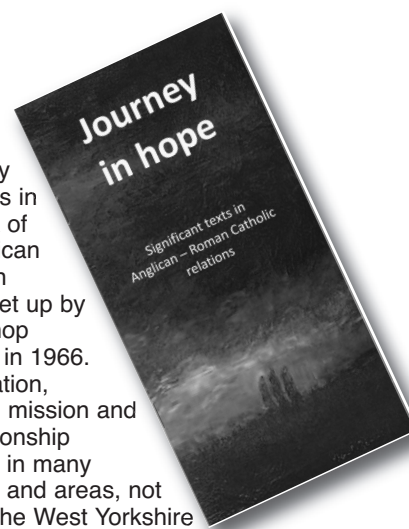
from the Orthodox Churches; of Protestant Churches only the Baptist World Alliance declined to attend.

Over the years of the Council’s meeting, friendships developed, and the informal influence of the observers (who were not permitted to speak in Council sessions) increased. West Yorkshire can take pride in the fact that the Anglican delegation was led by Leeds-born Bishop of Ripon John Moorman, a Franciscan scholar fluent in Latin and Italian. He interpreted the presence of observers at the Council as both a check on any tendency to overly “Romanise” the Church of Christ, and as a reminder to the Catholic Church that the rest of the Christian world also reflects on important issues. Moorman was later to be prominent in the “serious dialogue” between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion instigated in the Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey in 1966, a dialogue which became the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Conversations (ARCIC).

Dialogue continues: ARCIC III started its work in 2011, taking “receptive ecumenism” – reciprocal listening and learning – as its working method. The building of friendships and mutual

discovery continues in the work of the Anglican Centre in Rome, set up by Archbishop Ramsey in 1966. Consultation, common mission and companionship continue in many parishes and areas, not least in the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council.

[The Revd Bill Snelson, former WYEC Ecumenical Officer, is Development Officer in the UK for the Anglican Centre in Rome, the Chairman of which is Bishop of Wakefield Stephen Platten. The Anglican Centre has recently produced a booklet of significant texts in Anglican – Roman Catholic relations, Journey in hope. The booklet is part of the Anglican Centre’s work of building friendly and informed relations, and helps to put the new Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) III conversations into context. It is free via www.anglicancentreinrome.org, or from Bill Snelson on 01423 86266.]



Schools for Taize 2012

Taize is an Ecumenical Religious Community in Burgundy, south eastern France, known across Europe for its work with young adults. It is planning special weeks for UK school parties this coming July.

The Taizé Community welcomes about 80,000 young people each year to its international meetings. The UK School Weeks will be 1-8 and 8-15 July, 2012. School and college groups, including Year 10-13 students, are especially invited. In preparation, two young volunteers from Taizé spent three weeks in November visiting schools from Leeds to Brighton. They shared their experiences, and told how they came to doing a voluntary year working in the community. They spoke about the international youth meetings at Taizé, and the community life which everyone shares.

A week spent at Taizé appeals to a wide cross section of young people. After last year’s visit,

some A level students said, “There were great people there. It helped me to become more comfortable with myself and my beliefs.” “I had an amazing time and will definitely be going back. It can help restore your faith in humanity”. A teacher commented: “There is rarely time for reflection, a pause, some peace and quiet. Students are constantly pushed to achieve at school, bombarded with all manner of different messages from the media about how they should be living. It all leaves very little time to look within.”

Get information –including guidance for possible group leaders - about the Taizé School Weeks at: www.taize.fr/schools, or contact brpaolo@taize.fr.

Two more volunteers from Taizé will be visiting UK schools from 26 February to 17 March 2012. To request a school visit, contact UK Co-ordinator Jane Shields: jane@laloge.co.uk, or 01924 377921.

Young people from Wakefield arriving at Taize



Growing Together in Prayer

Back in 2009, the Anglican Diocese of Wakefield met with the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Hallam and Leeds for an historic Joint Assembly. The driving force for the assembly was a booklet called ‘Growing Together in Unity and Mission’ which gave practical ideas for building Anglican and Roman Catholic ecumenical links.

Each delegate at the Assembly noted how they might foster their own relationships with the other church. Four Bishops present committed themselves to organising a joint Lent course.

A group made up of people from all three dioceses began to organise a Lent course Praying the Scriptures for 2011. The course was based on the ancient way of praying the

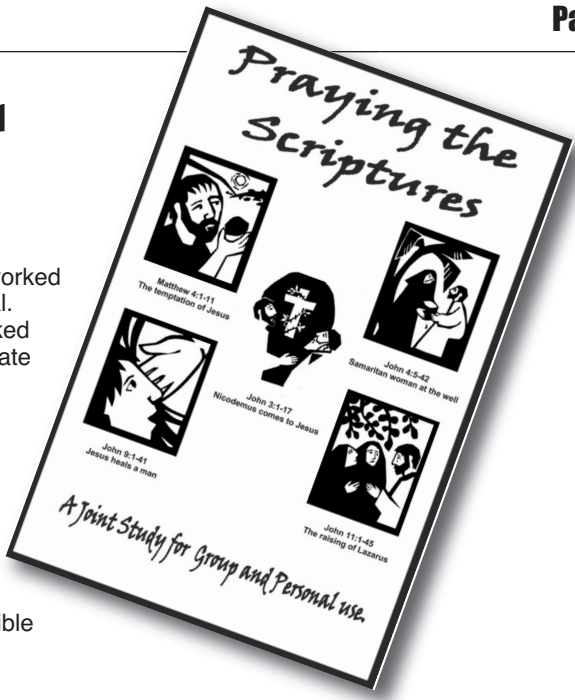
Scriptures called lectio divina; it is a meditative way of reading the Bible by which the Spirit teaches us to listen to God’s Word.

In many areas, Lent courses are fully ecumenical, so churches using this Lent material were encouraged to invite friends from other traditions. The Bible readings used were the Sunday Eucharistic Gospel readings. The course was designed for groups but it could also be used by individuals too. There was also complementary material for children and youth groups.

500 study leaflets were produced, and the planning group held four pre-Lent training evenings so group leaders could experience the study material. It was encouraging that 250 people attended one of these training

events. During Lent itself, churches and individuals worked through the course material. Also, the four bishops worked in pairs, leading four separate and well-attended evening services of lectio divina, at Barnsley, Wakefield, Huddersfield and Halifax.

Feedback showed that people enjoyed the experience, appreciated what they learnt together, and found the lectio divina approach to Bible study a real blessing.



The Great Ejection – 350 years of Dissent



In this year of anniversaries, one will be marked by a special service in Westminster Abbey in February for reconciliation and the healing of memories. The memories are long. 350 years ago, in 1662, an Act of Uniformity was passed. It was two years after the Restoration of the Monarchy (following Cromwell’s time in charge), and the Act demanded that everyone should use the new form of the Book of Common Prayer. More than that, it deprived all ministers of their livings unless they had been ordained by a bishop. The Act was

part of a package of measures designed to penalize nonconformity.

The results were immediate; nearly a thousand men gave up their posts. Most might be described as unsectarian Puritan; others were Independents and Baptists. Presbyterians were more numerous, but at this point denominational structure was not their top concern

Most of these new Dissenters found little difficulty with the concept of a national church. After all, until yesterday the parish church had been their church. The issue was that Presbyterians had their own views

as to how that church should be ordered and how, where, and in whom authority should be recognised and expressed. Independents (Congregationalists) and Baptists had more natural links with scattered congregations that had already separated; they were closer to an already existing and more radical, sectarian Dissent.

From now on, Dissent became an established fact of life - at a price. Because of the place of religion in society, religious dissenters must expect to suffer political, educational, professional, and social discrimination. Discrimination breeds persecution, pettiness, deviousness, bitterness, disruption; a nation’s DNA is infected.

Yet this is not the whole story. Deprived of civic opportunities, many of those ejected found economic opportunities in what was becoming the world’s first urban and industrial nation. They were sustained by networks of family and fellowship. A measure of accommodation was achieved slowly and unevenly, but cumulatively. The Toleration Act of 1689 was both landmark and starting point in this, as the Establishment learned to live with Dissent. The political implications of such limited toleration were immense. It helped to politicise all sections of society. It encouraged the slow appearance of

democracy, it contributed to the emergence, recognition, and even acceptance of a plural society.

A mix of inherited grievance, political opportunity, and widening social horizons gave birth to the Nonconformist Conscience - and influenced the style of the schools, institutes, and chapels which enlivened the townscapes of Victorian England. (Locally, this can be seen in Titus Salt’s village of Saltaire, pictured.)

The established order responded resiliently and imaginatively to the challenge. Over time there came mutual accommodation and mutual respect. The way was paved for ecumenism.

The union of Congregationalists and English Presbyterians in 1972, joined by Churches of Christ in 1981, promised a breakthrough in organic unity. A large number of local ecumenical projects suggested a pattern for the future. Yet in an increasingly secular society, all churches are Dissenters now.

What lessons remain for us from 1662? Many of us are ignorant of the history of our churches. It boils down to a question of stewardship, less of a particular past than on behalf of the Church catholic. Let’s understand the stories we inherit, with a missionary eye to a more reconciled future.

[Based on an article by Clyde Binfield].

Ribblehead, Railways and Religion



“Railways & Religion in the Western Dales” is a new faith trail focussing on the places of worship associated with northern railways, including the famous Settle-Carlisle line. In particular, the chapels on this trail chart the story of the missions to the navvies in the 19th century.

Often in appalling weather, with poor living conditions and exposed to constant and life-threatening dangers, these men toiled on the tracks, with their wives and children often sharing their shanties. This harsh life and the efforts of the Methodist missions to bring sobriety and so a little financial stability, education and spiritual support to the navvies were brought vividly to life by nearly 50 local school children who participated at two launch events for the “Railways & Religion” Faith Trail.

It is an ecumenical project, with Anglican, Methodist and Quaker partners. At one Methodist Chapel, children from the local had written letters home from the perspective of the navvies and sang about life on the railway. Their letters made a moving presentation; the children clearly understood the fears and motivations of the navvies building the (now famous) Ribbleshead Viaduct, imagined and tenderly expressed to wives many miles away in Ireland.

For hard copies of the trail see ctfc.org.uk. For more information, contact Gina Dowding, 07501 469374.

Close the Gap, Collect the Taxes

Representatives from a range of Christian denominations and charities handed over a letter to the Chancellor asking the Government to tackle tax avoidance in order to “Close The Gap” between rich and poor in the UK.

They pointed out that the Institute for Fiscal Studies has shown that the gap between rich and poor in the UK is at its highest for at least the last fifty years. From experience, the churches know that this level of inequality tears at the fabric of society. More and more individuals and communities feel that they have no stake in wider society.

In that climate, the signatories to the letter said they were increasingly concerned about the impact of tax avoidance and tax evasion. In an age of austerity and spending cuts, they said, “tax avoidance is morally unacceptable and tax evasion has to be seriously addressed.”

Tax evasion and avoidance is estimated by the Treasury to cost the UK at least £35 billion annually. This is nearly 9% of UK tax revenue. The efficient collection of these taxes would reduce the need to cut so much welfare expenditure, cuts which hurt the poorest people in society.

Signatories to the letter included: Leo Osborn (President of the Methodist Conference), Richard Mortimer (Deputy General Secretary of the United Reformed Church), Jonathan Edwards (General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain), Sr Maureen Tinkler (Director, Vincentians in Partnership), and David Walker (Bishop of Dudley).

A WANTED GENERATION

Prayer for Young People, Ash Wednesday 2012

For many churches, Ash Wednesday (22 February in 2012) is the first day of Lent, the start of the preparation for Good Friday and Easter. It is a time of penitence, of saying sorry for wrongs done and commitment to a holy and just future.

In recent years, WYEC church leaders have come together in public witness on Ash Wednesday, with statements or prayers for such concerns as the plight of

asylum seekers, or people in debt, or victims of the cuts. For 2012, the church leaders want to focus on young people, the pressures they are under, the good work done with and for them, and the great contribution that young people make to society.

In the run up to Ash Wednesday, various surveys and soundings take place, as we listen to the views of young people, and invite them to contribute to our prayer. Rolf

Mason, the Chaplain to Bradford College is helping with this. The Church Leaders' united prayer for young people will take place at Bradford College at 2.15pm on 22 February. If you would like to be there, please contact alex.waring@wyec.co.uk

On these pages we read of some of the pressures facing young people and the work of the churches and Christian-inspired agencies in support of young people.



How happy are our children?

families **Sarah, now 14, was eight when her stepfather started sexually abusing her. When her mother didn't believe her, she ran away from home. She was placed in a children's home, but because she was bullied she ran from there too. She ended up on the streets, taking drugs and soliciting.**

Thankfully, The Children's Society found Sarah and helped her get off the streets and into a new home. Now she's safe and beginning to rebuild her life.

Many are not so fortunate. The unhappiness that drives children to put themselves at such risk beggars belief. And yet a staggering 100,000 children in the UK run away from home each year.

At The Children's Society, we want to know more about what makes young people so unhappy because this unhappiness can drive children to ever more risky and desperate behaviour. If we want to help girls like Sarah, knowing what makes them happy can be crucial.

In order to find this out we have embarked on a pioneering research programme into 'children's subjective well-being' that actually asks children what

makes them happy.

Family matters

And there is good news. We know that most children are happy most of the time. At any one time only about 10 per cent of children are unhappy - though this is not static, with the same children feeling happy or unhappy at different times.

We also know that family relationships are at the heart of their sense of well-being. At the end of the day what makes a childhood good is not the amount of stuff a child has, but the amount of love he or she experiences.

So it is unsurprising that changes in home life harm children's well-being, and harm it more than adults sometimes realise. Family conflict and recent changes in family structure have a big impact on the well-being of children and are reasons why children decide to run away. Children from families where conflict is high and support low are up to 10 times more likely to run away than those from warm, stable families. Up to 50% of children living in foster families or in care have run away.

Economic factors

While relationships may be the most

important factors, changes in family income and employment also have an impact on how happy our children feel.

In families where household income has dropped, 15% children are likely to feel unhappy, compared to only 7% in families where it has risen. At a time when the economy is likely to be getting more difficult and more people are at risk of losing their jobs, there is a real chance that more children will become desperate and unhappy and more likely to run away.

Building a safety net for young runaways

While we have a duty to improve the well-being of all children, for some, like Sarah, circumstances have already forced them to run away and we need a different approach.

So The Children's Society has launched a nationwide campaign, Make Runaways Safe, calling on the Government to develop an action plan for young runaways and we would like your help.

Please sign our petition and urge your congregations to do the same. You can find out more by visiting www.makerunawayssafe.org.uk.

YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Sharx, the Christian Youth Group from Pellon attended the West Yorkshire Police Community Trust awards presentation at Tong.



Better Butties

Boothtown Boys' Brigade Bacon Brunch crossed the generations. It was one example of 12 ecumenical Halifax Boys Brigade companies fundraising for Overgate Hospice. See www.halifaxbb.co.uk

Prayers for Calderdale

On one Saturday morning each month, people from various churches come to Halifax Minster for Prayers for Calderdale. Every borough in the area is prayed for, and the need of individuals, families and communities. Councillors and Council workers, people in education and the health and emergency services, the farming community, employers and workers in industry, people seeking employment – especially young people – all these people and more are prayed for in this time of prayer. Prayer requests can be sent to prayersforcalderdale@gmail.com.

In a further development, the organisers invite all Christians in the district to prayer and fasting on Ash Wednesday, 22nd February 2012, "as a sign of our unity in God and in prayer for our borough."

Take young people seriously

Andy Lloyd, a former social worker, is head of the Children, Young People and Families Department at Leeds Trinity University College, an institution with a Catholic foundation. An elder at Lister Hill Baptist Church, Andy is Chair of Horsforth Churches Together. He believes there are different ways to look at "justice" for young people.

"First," he writes, "it is a tragedy that thousands of children suffer abuse at the hands of adults. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse deeply scar the lives of those children and often impact into their adult lives, affecting the ability to form solid relationships and causing issues around self-esteem. That abuse of children has happened within some of our churches is devastatingly sad

"Second, children seem to be expected to become adults so much quicker that they need to be. We ask them to take responsibility for their lives sooner with few support structures but a lot of criticism and anger when things go wrong. Someone coined the word "adultification" – meaning making children become adults too quickly. Although it is not in the dictionary, it is a useful word to describe the challenge many children face when growing up. It is sad that some people seem to regard childhood as like a trip to the dentist – something which is necessary but best got over with quickly!

"Third, our adolescents: of course there are some young people whose behaviour is both illegal and reprehensible. They behave in

ways which takes our breath away and we cannot understand what is going on. These situations are complex and need a lot of skilled intervention to prevent these children becoming persistent offenders.

"However, the vast majority of young people are not like that. They are teenagers who simply want to make their way in this complex world. They might dress in ways which adults do not appreciate, or speak a language we may not fully understand, and their music is indescribable!" (Didn't our parents say the same about us?! – Editor.) "Their hair may be very long – or very short! We may well find them frightening – particularly in groups.

"But ... if we can get to know them, they turn into perfectly pleasant young people, just bewildered with the life stage they are in. Many young people simply want adults who will take them – and their needs – seriously.

"It is worth remembering that this is the reason that Barnardo, Stephenson (founder of the Children's Homes – now Action for Children), General Booth of the Salvation Army and other Victorian philanthropists began their work. Motivated by the Christian Gospel, they developed their work which continues today.

"Our children, whether troubled or troubling, need that same commitment to their future that these pioneers showed. A commitment born out of the Christian principles of hope, love and forgiveness which can 'seek and save the lost.'"

CELEBRATING FAITH IN YOUNG PEOPLE

A new poster, being distributed to churches in Yorkshire and the Humber, celebrates the breadth and diversity of work with young people by churches in the region.

It is published by the Faith in Young People Group, a partnership of different Church youth work advisers and officers. Churches involved in this work include Roman Catholics, Anglicans, URC, Methodists and the Salvation Army, as well as some independent churches and Christian organisations. The aim is to encourage and inspire people in local churches to see what can be achieved, both by and with young people. One of the group said "it has been exciting and encouraging to see such a wide range of activity and community involvement taking

place amongst young people."

"Thousands of young people are regularly involved with our churches through worship, workshops, outreach, special events and activities, and a broad range of youth work. This poster profiles just some of them, to encourage every church to celebrate the lives of young people in their own community."

The Range of projects covered by the poster vary from inner city initiatives in Leeds and Bradford, to projects in rural areas like the Dales.

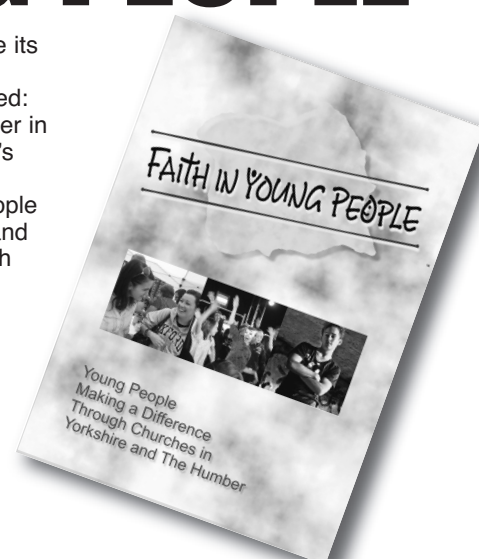
If your church would like to work with young people, you will find the contact details for your denominational youth officer on the poster.

The Faith in Young People Group ask churches to display the poster in a

prominent position, in order to maximise its impact.

Yorkshire Church Leaders have agreed:

- to seek opportunities to work together in the interests of reaching out with Christ's love to young people;
- to encourage and enable young people to openly voice their hopes and fears, and actively listen to young people with fresh ears;
- to find further ways of crossing the divides of age, culture, and understanding, to enable true multi-generational belonging and action;
- to respond to the challenge of a fresh and renewed vision in the church and in the wider community, renewed by young people



KIDZ, Hope and Change

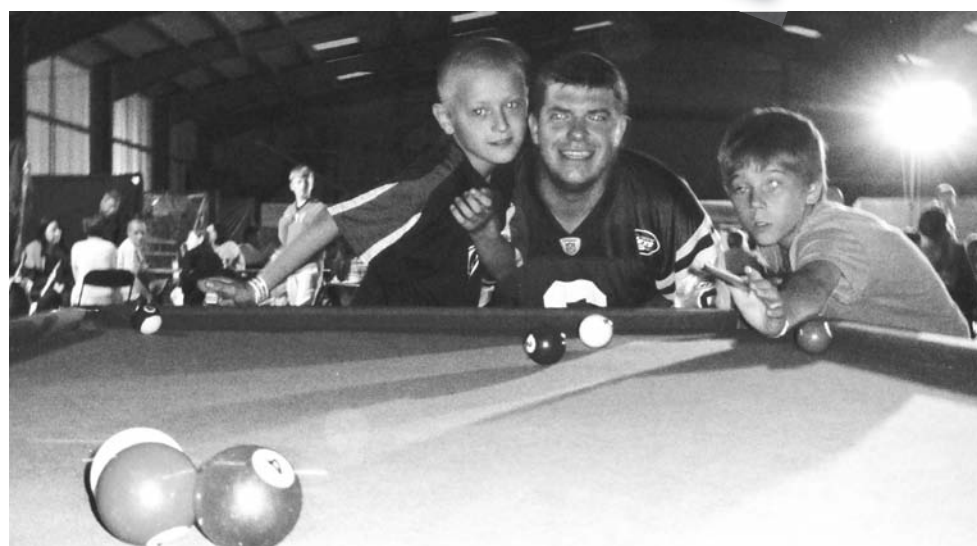


"You are a vital part of the school and what you teach is so important. You make such a difference to the children." So says a headteacher in one of the 34 inner city primary schools in which Kidz Klub is active.

Kidz Klub Leeds continues to grow and reach more inner city children and families than ever. Activities aimed at children unreached by the Church living in areas of high deprivation are run in the North, South, East and West Leeds, our Home Visiting Programme alone reaching over 1,400 children each week during term time. Through all activities we reach over 2,000 children each week.

Kidz Klub is in the process of launching two new exciting initiatives. Our new "Happy Teas" engage children in serving older members of local congregations who pray for the children, introducing inner city children to service and mission, while giving a space for faithful people of prayer to meet the very children their prayers do so much to affect. The first Happy Tea in Beeston was a great success and a joy for all involved; we will be looking to rotate the work around Leeds.

In the Little London/Woodhouse area Kidz Klub will be launching a new "Dance and Arts" group as part of our creative arts projects. The group, run in partnership with



local churches, will give a safe space for local children to express themselves creatively and provide an outlet for their feelings and emotions.

But we are in need of volunteers in all we do, and in all areas of Leeds. Our amazing volunteers are ordinary people with a heart

for children, and a wonderful picture of God's family with people of all ages (12 to 82) and backgrounds who believe that God wants to make a difference in these children's lives. We need people who can bring hope and change to inner city Leeds.



CULTURE FUSION



Culture Fusion is the amazing new operation of the YMCA in Bradford. A dramatic mill conversion and extension, designed by and for young people, it was opened with a prayer from David Ison, Dean of Bradford Cathedral.

There are dance and gym spaces, performance space, workbenches and workshop spaces for training, Connexions for careers advice, and displays and community cohesion education provided by The Peace Museum. For more – and there is much more! – see www.culturefusion.org.uk and www.peacemuseum.org.uk.



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Castleford**

Pontefract Road
Castleford
West Yorkshire
WF10 4JB

HEADTEACHER
Required for September 2012

Tel: 01977

Group 2
NOR 210
ISR L11-17

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Christ"**

- Do you want to join a school with an outstanding Catholic ethos?
- Have you the drive and focus to lead the whole school to 'outstanding'?
- Can you develop our pupils to their full potential?

The dedicated governing body of St Joseph's are looking to appoint a practising Catholic who shares their passion and strong commitment to Catholic education. They believe that our hard working pupils and staff and supportive parents deserve an inspirational leader who will be committed to building upon the schools' considerable existing strengths.

This is a good school. There is a welcoming environment and pupils obviously enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance.

Ofsted December 2011

Further details and the full application pack are available from: Mrs P Slater, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Pontefract Road, Castleford, WF10 4JB
Email: trish@st-josephs-castleford.wakefield.sch.uk

Closing Date: Monday 30th January – 12noon
Interviews: 10th February 2011

St Joseph's is an outstanding school guided by its mission statement 'Learning to love, loving to learn through Christ'. It is a welcoming place where children are loved and respected and where the enjoyment of learning is almost tangible.

Section 48 December 2011

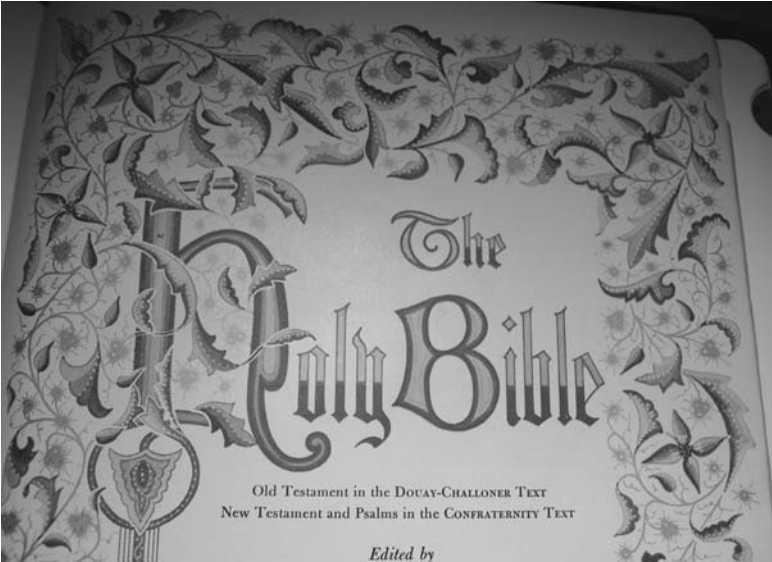


A visit to the school is encouraged

St Joseph's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced CRB check is required for the successful candidate.



Bradford Bibles



For a long time, East Bradford Churches Together has met monthly for prayer. Last year they always met an hour earlier, mark the Year of the Bible. John Joyce describes what they did:

“Each month we have focussed on one section of the Bible - such as the Prophets, the Wisdom Books, the Acts of the Apostles - and the host church led the initial selection of passages and reflections on what they mean to us.

“In the Sacred Scriptures we have found solid ground for unity; and often the 'biblical' part of the evening naturally flowed into the subsequent hour of prayer. This was particularly true when we looked at the Psalms. Our singing and prayer that month was rooted in psalms of thanksgiving, petition and praise.

“We are largely a gathering of the laity, and have no scripture scholars in our group, but all have their favourite readings. We invariably ran out of time once discussion started. We have used different translations, individuals bringing their own treasured versions from home, as well as using copies stored at (not all!) of the churches. This has helped our appreciation of the text - and getting to know each other too more deeply in the process.”

Horbury Lunch



Churches Together in Horbury meets for its annual dinner.

Costume Prayer



The service was held in St Urban's RC Church, Headingley, Leeds. 'Chilean Ladies' in their costumes and a colourful focus for a very good service and enjoyed by all with many favourable comments. Audrey Fletcher - Branch Secretary

Daughters of the King

Eighty women from different Calderdale churches met at All Saints, Halifax to explore the inspirational life of the biblical figure, Esther. They heard Esther's story and shared their own stories about how God had helped them through difficult times. To finish, each woman took a pebble, symbolic of the load they were carrying, and laid it down at the cross. A couple of weeks later, the Daughters of the King core team took great pleasure in taking the burdensome stones and throwing them in Baitings Reservoir, so they are well and truly gone.

LET'S LOVE CALDERDALE!



For the “Love Halifax” festival in September, many churches set up stalls around the Piece Hall offering a variety of free goodies and services. Buns, cakes, tea, coffee, popcorn, hot dogs, face painting, foot massage, nail painting, chill out, healing, balloons, crafts and painting and a giant sandpit with sandcastles were all on offer (page 20).

Three hours of stage entertainment included the legendary Jimmy Cricket, with bands and dancers. Over 2000 people came through the Piece Hall.

Linda Maslen, one of the organizers, said the festival “showed the people of Halifax just a little bit of God's amazing love and generosity.”

The sun shone throughout, though dark clouds hovered and as the clear up finished the most glorious rainbow appeared. As Linda said, “it just reinforced to us that God had indeed been with us.”

For 2012, the festival will be extended to Love Calderdale, on 26th May. It will be the Big Birthday Party to celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the Church. The organizers hope to have even more Christian groups and churches involved. But, says Linda, the message stays the same: “we are giving to the people of Calderdale because of what God has given us and not asking for anything in return.”

To get involved, contact Linda Maslen on 07595949153 or linda_maslen@hotmail.com

HONLEY'S NEW LOOK

The Methodist – United Reformed Church Local Ecumenical Partnership in Honley has just refurbished their building. The bright, versatile space combines elements new and old. The joiner/craftsman involved, and his wife, were invited to the Thanksgiving service.

Preaching in the newly refurbished building at the church's Anniversary service, the Revd. Kevin Watson, URC Moderator, quoted an old but still relevant verse:

10 little churchmen went to church when fine,
but it started raining, then there were nine
9 little churchmen stayed up very late
one overslept, and then there were eight...
(...and so on down to one...
...and then back up again!...)
... 8 eager churchmen, searching round for souls,
praying, working, witnessing, drew others in by shoals.
Shoals and shoals at every service, cramming



every pew –
O God, supply this grace and zeal in my own church too!

Life in Rodley: Cubs, Costumes, Canals and Catholics!

The Church in Rodley - an Anglican / Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership - is numerically small, but has an active weekly programme, including a Prayer Meeting, Ladies Group, Cub Scout Pack and Rodley Young Ones (playgroup), in addition to outside bookings like yoga, pilates, the Yorkshire Costume Society, and councillors' surgeries. The church's outreach includes supporting the Operation Christmas Child appeal, and filling numerous shoe boxes.

Christmas is a busy time, including Christingle – very popular in the village – and Carols by the Canal, an evening when a brass band plays on the canal towpath.

The exciting ecumenical news for the Church in Rodley is that the local Roman Catholic congregation has started using the church building for their services. The Anglican / Methodist members gave them a welcome party to show that they were pleased to have them there.

Giving and Receiving



“Well we've been to London to the Inspire / Evangelical Alliance awards!” writes Jennie Phillips from the Halifax Food and Support Drop-In. Jennie, Kate Fawcett and Roy Sykes went to the Jubilee Rooms in the Houses of Parliament to receive a Highly Commended award in the Inspiring Church category. It meant they were in the final three of 100 nominations nationally. The Drop-In, based at Ebenezer Church, is a mission outreach of many Halifax churches. It has recently given out its 12,000th food parcel.

Although Ebenezer is closing for Sunday worship, the Methodist Circuit is keeping the building open for God's work as New Ebenezer. The Food and Support Drop-In will carry on working there for the people of Calderdale. As Jennie said,

“We are so grateful to Ebenezer for their contribution to the project – they have opened their doors to us and have let us use their wonderful building. It has united many

churches together. We take comfort that it will continue to be used for God's work.”



RESOURCES EXHIBITION

Forty different Christian organisations came together for a 2nd Calderdale Christian Resource Exhibition. Held at The King's Centre, it was run by Churches Together in Halifax, HOPE Calderdale and Halifax Street Angels. It celebrated and showcased the amazing work carried out by the whole Christian community.

Four hundred people visited exhibition, including councillors and the Mayor of Calderdale, Nader Fakri.

Exhibitors included social projects: Food and Support Drop-In, Salvation Army, Alpha House, Teen Challenge and Project Colt (where people with addictions come to faith and start on a life without drugs and alcohol), Christians Against Poverty (who help people in debt or struggling with finances), Crisis Pregnancy Centre, Street Angels, Prison Fellowship, MUM, Turning Point Counselling Centre, St Augustine's Centre, Noah's Ark Cafe and Heatherwood. There were national and international projects: Leprosy Mission, Impact Kampala, CNI Network and Open Doors; and those that work with young people, such as: X:Site, Youth for Christ Calderdale, Boy's Brigade and Hand to Mouth puppet ministry. There were new initiatives: Love Halifax, Youth and Church Link Worker and Inn Church; and also innovative resources: Aglow International, Christian Motorcyclists Association, FGBMFI, Gideon's, More Than Gold, Pretext Ministry, Slack Top Centre, Prayers for Calderdale and The Viral Bible Project.

In the evening, guest speaker Debra Green from Redeeming our Communities spoke about the power of partnership working and the need for the church to be at the heart of this to help create community transformation. Organisers said “The day told the story of how partnering with one another and with God can make a massive difference in the lives of individuals and also for the wider community.”



Connecting Crossgates

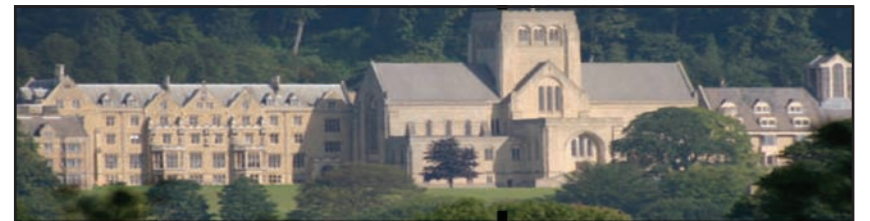


Churches in Crossgates are excited about their new project.

Funded by Leeds Christian Community Trust, “Connecting Crossgates” will consider how the churches and community might better work together to bless the area. Motivated by faith in a God who cares, it aims to see what already works, and what the gaps are. The overall remit is to promote health and well-being in all areas of life - spiritual, physical emotional and economic. The project aims to connect people, churches, voluntary groups, business, the community, and their ideas. Often busy people don't have time to stop and see how they might work better if they connected with others

Karen Gray, the Coordinator, says, “There are so many needs and so much the church can do to help connect what is going on in the community. I will spend six months listening to the community and seeking to hear what God might be leading us into together.”

One option could be developing a community café... a safe place for people to be heard, loved and prayed for; a neutral place where people could get support and advice (on relationships, parenting, debt...) Karen describes it as a “loving context - just what this diverse community needs in these difficult times.”



Ampleforth Abbey Trust

Situated in over 2,000 acres of outstanding natural beauty, the works of Ampleforth Abbey are diverse. It is home to a community of 80 monks, more than 815 students on two separate school sites and 500 staff.

Retreat Team

Hospitality Administration Manager

Salary: £27,000 per annum

The Hospitality & Pastoral Services' Team welcome over 10,000 residential guests per annum, who take part in residential and day retreats run by the Benedictine Monks of Ampleforth. The Hospitality Administration Manager will be fully supportive of the Benedictine Community's aims and responsible for the efficient administration of guest bookings; providing a warm welcome to all guests; management of guesthouses comprising accommodation for up to 100 guests; staff, budget and health and safety management and oversight of housekeeping. Proficient in administration, guest relations and in establishing strong interdepartmental working relationships, the ideal candidate will be educated in hospitality management and have a proven track record of retreat or hospitality management.

Skills required:

- Experienced Hospitality Administration Manager
- Excellent people management skills
- Excellent administrative skills
- Budget Management
- Promoting a positive attitude and fostering open communication
- Organised, friendly, calm, flexible, self reliant
- Educated in hospitality management
- Minimum education requirement: 3 A levels

Closing date for applications: 31 January 2012.

Interviews will be held on 13 February 2012

Previous applicants need not re-apply

Contact for further information/application form:

The Human Resources Office, Ampleforth College, YORK, YO62 4EY

Tel: 01439 766415 Fax: 01439 788770

email: humanresources@ampleforth.org.uk

Job descriptions, specifications and application forms available on our

website at: www.college.ampleforth.org.uk/employment/

Ampleforth College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and a Criminal background check will be carried out on all successful applicants.

CONNECTIN

Connecting Leeds

The November 2011 'Connect' event lived up to its name - over 200 people came from all over Leeds to talk, eat, dream, think, pray and learn together about social action within Leeds. This was the second such event run by Leeds Churches Together in Mission, Leeds Christian Community Trust, Network Leeds, and Unity in Poverty Action. The aim was to bring together Christians engaged in social action across the city, to 'connect' with one another.

An interactive presentation, the 'Scandal of Inequality', showed gross inequalities within the city. It suggested that inequality is bad news for everyone in the city. Does the Christian good news imagine another possible world where inequality is abolished? The challenge was - 'What if we sought to reduce inequality within our city today?'

People heard each other's stories and learn about organisations that already make a difference in Leeds. There will be a follow up 'open space' event on 16th February. If you'd like to go, contact jonathan@leedschurchestogether.org.uk.

For more on the 'Scandal of Inequality in Leeds', see www.scandalofleeds.info

[This includes 'The Vision', a marvellous meditation: 'I saw Leeds, the holy city, coming down out of heaven... And the Spirit showed me the tree of life growing on East End Park...']



InterACT

The Three Churches Project in and around the Meanwood area of Leeds has grown to be the InterACT Church and Community Partnership. It "facilitates fun and creative activities that bring people together."

Working alongside others to see lives transformed, it aims "to discover God's

purpose for the area, as we seek to demonstrate His love in words and actions."

There are youth, drama and craft clubs at Stainbeck URC.

Leeds Youth Cells Network helped run a Demonstrate Day, with groups combining sports activities with litter picking and gardening for elderly people.



A Hope 11 mission included a holiday club, community cafe, gardening projects and a "Party in the Park" event. Ginnels were cleared; gardens were weeded; hundreds of people were fed free burgers and sausages; children danced, played, heard stories, made kites and banged

drums; some ladies learned how to use a mobile phone and email. A determined man twisted balloons on stilts for 3 hours (see Page 1), whilst others painted face after face after face.....

Find out more at www.interact.uk.net



Missioner in Horsforth

Duncan Stow, known to many from the Leeds Youth Cell Network, has become a "Missioner" in Horsforth. Supported by Leeds Christian Community Trust, he will aim to deepen the relationship between the churches and the local High School, support cross-church mission initiatives such as "Hope" events, and map/celebrate Christian witness in Horsforth.

For news of Churches Together groups and all ecumenical events, visit the new-look WYEC website:
www.wyec.co.uk

ING THE CITY

Hope for the Nations

“Let there be light in the midst of the darkness” These were the opening words of the first song which heralded the start of the 5th year of Hope for the Nations, in Briggate, Leeds. The light really shone throughout the day, both literally and metaphorically. This year it was good to welcome Christians originally from the Philippines, Mauritius and India for the first time. Making a return visit were groups from the African nations including Ghana, Cameroon, Caribbean, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe. Also represented were Arab speaking nations and Chinese speaking countries, as well as Iran, Poland, Israel and South Korea (picture page 20).

Market stalls were set up at 7.30 in the morning. Many people came to the stalls during the day to talk. One stall was for RETAS (Refugee Education Training and Support), who told people about Leeds, City of Sanctuary. One international congregation, His Majesty’s House, gave away free clothing under the banner “Freely, freely you have received, freely give”. The face painting team was kept busy, and amazed shoppers wanted to know why 800 drinks were given out without charge.

The music was a varied as the cultures and age groups. Great harmonies of praise, Korean children dancing, the rhythms of African nations, and Bollywood-style worship songs, all reflected a passion for Jesus. There was also a rendering of ‘Happy Birthday’ for Amos, the young grandson of Paul Lancaster, the principal organiser.

Add an African fashion parade, and the “rippling” of the giant banner of nations, drawing in the crowds.

God was duly thanked for such a great day. As the momentum continues to build, the next Hope for the Nations festival will be on 7 July 2012, from 12 noon.



ALL AROUND THE WORLD




The Universities Chaplaincy in Leeds is a partnership of eight different churches. In collaboration with other ecumenical partners they have just celebrated 25 years of the International Students’ Club at the Emmanuel Centre, University of Leeds.

This event was attended by around 120 people, enjoying a stimulating quiz, a delicious hot Indian meal, inspirational African music, an historical drama about the Club and a thought provoking short talk. And, of course, there was a birthday cake!

The international work at the Chaplaincy includes up to 100 participants each week in the International Students Club and up to 40 people at other regular groups and initiatives: Chinese student groups, Cooking & Friendship, Bible discussions, the International Staff and Friends Coffee Hour and Culture Café.

Chaplain Seija Frears, a Lutheran deaconess, helps to co-ordinate these events in collaboration with ecumenical partners across the city.



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Loving Light in Meltham

For the last two years, Meltham Churches Together has held a children’s “Bright Party” as an alternative to Halloween. For 2011, they used their Crossroads Charity Shop windows to show the theme of “Light”, to counteract the gruesome and frightening displays in other shops in the village.

“We dressed the windows with white fairy lights and balloons which said ‘Meltham Churches Together – We love Light’”, said Jean Burhouse, Churches Together Secretary. The balloons were given to children in the days leading up to Halloween, and also distributed at a united service at the end of October. The Vicar explained that Christians look to Jesus, the Light of the World and celebrate brightness and light not darkness.



Seaside Rock

Ilkley is a long way from the seaside, so enthusiastic volunteers from six churches brought the seaside to Ilkley! Three Anglican churches, one Baptist, one Methodist/URC and one Catholic were involved in “Seaside Rock” a holiday club which attracting over 60 children for a week in August. The club has been run by Churches Together in Ilkley for over 20 years. Children who attended the club are now becoming young helpers and role models for the next generation.

Ruth Jones explains, “We often use Scripture Union material which suits all denominations, and are all united in our passion to bring Jesus to the children who don’t attend our churches - about half of the attendance.”

As a follow up, 30 children has a wild time at the Churches Together Light Party on Halloween night. Fuelled by hot dogs, crisps and cake, they enjoyed limbo dancing, apple bobbing, pin the tail on the donkey, a balloon drop and disco, as well as making some beautiful candle holders and



stained glass windows. They heard about how Saul’s life was changed by the flash of light on the road to Damascus and how Christian friends helped him understand who Jesus really was.

“It was great to see Christian children from different churches having fun together,” said Ruth.

AMPLEFORTH ABBEY			
Pastoral Retreats 2012			
January			
Mon 9–Fri 13	Local "Soup and Prayer" Walks		
Mon 16–Thu 19	The Art of Prayer		
Fri 20–Sun 22	Literature And Spirituality		
Fri 27–Sun 29	In Vino Veritas		
February			
Mon 6–Thu 9	Sacred Reading–Food For The Soul		
Mon 13–Fri 17	Benedict and Morrisons Plc		
Fri 17–Sun 19	Tai Chi Movement and Christian Meditation		
Mon 20–Thu 23	Be Faithful To The Gospel – A Lenten Retreat		
March			
Mon 12–Thu 15	Getting in Touch with God		
Fri 23	Tai Chi and Christian Meditation Day		
Fri 30–Sun 1 April	John at Easter		
April			
Thu 5–Mon 9	Easter Triduum Retreat		
Wed 11–Sun 15	Beach Prayer Walks		
Mon 23–Thu 26	The Paschal Banquet		
May			
Fri 4–Sun 6	Creativity Through the Eye of the Heart		
Mon 14–Thu 17	Loving Myself and Others and God		
Fri 18–Sun 20	Christian Meditation		
Mon 21–Mon 28	Retreat for Religious Sisters		
Mon 28–Thu 31	The Use Of The Enneagram		
June			
Fri 15–Sun 17	Fr. Stephen's Renewal Retreat		
Fri 22–Sun 24	New Great Themes of Scripture 2		
July			
Mon 2–Thu 5	Tai Chi Movement and Christian Meditation		
Fri 13 – Sun 15	Art and Spirituality		
Mon 16–Thu 19	Beach Prayer Walks		
Fri 20–Sun 22	The Tender Compassion of our God		
Mon 23–Fri 27	Local Moors' Walks		
August			
Fri 3–Sun 5	Homeward Bound		
Thu 23–Wed 29	Pilgrimage Of Grace		
September			
Mon 3–Fri 7	Beach Prayer Walks		
Fri 7–Sun 9	In Vino Veritas		
Fri 14–Sun 16	Through His Wounds		
Mon 17–Thu 20	Getting in Touch with God		
Fri 21–Sun 23	The Attentive Life		
Fri 21–Sun 23	The Gospel Of Luke		
Mon 24–Thu 27	Spirituality For Men		
October			
Fri 12	Tai Chi Movement and Christian Meditation		
Mon 22–Mon 29	Pilgrimage to Iona		
Mon 29–Fri 2 Nov	Saints & Sinners		
November			
Fri 2–Sun 4	Benedictine Peace		
Mon 5–Thu 8	Benedict For Beginners		
Mon 12–Wed 14	A Retreat with Fr. Dominic		
Fri 16–Sun 18	Local Moors' Walks		
Mon 19–Sun 21	A Retreat led by Fr. Edward Corbould		
December			
Fri 7–Sun 9	Lord, Do Not Delay – An Advent Retreat		

Round the Clock Prayer



Christians across Ilkley and Wharfedale have just undertaken 24/7 continuous prayer for the area, and not just for a week but for three months! From mid-September, when the season of prayer began after the monthly Churches Together service at Ilkley Baptist Church, to mid-December there was a weekly rota of 168 hour slots. Individuals and groups volunteered to cover one or more slots, pledging to use that time each week to pray for Ilkley and its surrounding area. There was an eighty-strong team of pray-ers. You could send in a prayer request by cards, which were distributed round the area, or by submitting an online request through the excellent Churches Together in Ilkley website, churches-together-ilkley.net

Most slots were filled by individuals praying wherever they usually are at that time – in their homes, schools or work-places – all fitting locations for prayer which is focused on blessing

the community. Some night slots were filled by former Wharfedale resident, Wendy Somers, and her church friends in San Diego, California. They moved to America in August, but that wasn’t going to stop them being involved in praying for God’s blessing on Ilkley and Wharfedale. They took advantage of the time difference to fill some of the hardest slots. It seems that church family has no borders.

The Revd. Lee Townend, vicar of All Saints, said, “We aim to pray God’s richest blessing on every person in the town and valley during this time. We want to pray for healing and wholeness.”

The initiative started with people from five churches discussing the local heritage of prayer. Then the number of churches represented tripled – uniting people in prayer from many denominations and styles of worship. Ted Price of Hope City Church, Wharfedale, said “It has been so encouraging to work in such unity and purpose with Christians from other churches.”

Jesus said to them “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest awhile.” Mark 6:31

On behalf of the Ampleforth Community, I invite you to share some time with us at the Abbey, to experience the prayer of our Monastic Community and the beauty of our location.

Our pastoral team lead a varied and interesting retreat programme. We hope you will find something here to encourage you to step aside from everyday worries and spend some time on retreat.

Abbot Cuthbert Madden, OSB

Our retreat houses are available for private, parish, school, college and university retreats. Further details of all our retreats are available from our pastoral team at:

Pastoral Office, Ampleforth Abbey
York YO62 4EN
Tel 01439 766889
email: pastoral@ampleforth.org.uk
Booking Enquiries available on-line
www.hpo.ampleforth.org.uk

YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD IDEA DOWN

Helen Smith writes about the Calderdale Inn Churches Project

Over several years, the Food & Support Drop In, Halifax Central Church, Salvation Army and Street Angels, have seen more and more people needing a place to stay. A lack of emergency shelters has meant Calderdale people sleeping rough in plummeting winter temperatures. Last year a client who attended the Food & Support Drop In, and who was also homeless, died of pneumonia. As followers of Jesus we cannot ignore the plight of homeless people in our area.

We knew of a Bradford project, 'Inn Churches'. In February 2010 over 21 churches in Bradford set about piloting a scheme of emergency accommodation and hot food for the up to 8 homeless people, seven nights per week. It happened at a different church each night, near the city centre, for one month, with church volunteers from across Bradford. It was a fantastic witness of a

faith that reaches out to the lost and overcomes injustice. Building on that success, Bradford Inn Churches in 2010-2011 provided emergency accommodation for up to 12 guests for 3 full winter months.

In February 2011 some Halifax based church leaders and volunteers from the Food & Support Drop visited one of the churches involved in the Bradford project in action to meet the hosts and guests and see how it all worked. We decided we needed to set this up in Halifax, too.

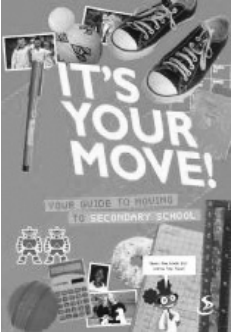
There was overwhelming interest from local churches and others, and so we announced plans to pilot a small Inn Churches scheme in Halifax this winter, on Friday and Saturday nights from 20 January to 11 February 2012. People signed up to be volunteers and churches offered the use of their buildings. The Pilot Scheme is also supported by Calderdale Council Housing Officers. We are praying that the Pilot Scheme will be a great success and will help many people.

South Leeds on the Move

At the end of summer term, over 500 Year 6 primary school leavers in South Leeds received a copy of a special booklet from Scripture Union. 13 schools gave permission for Churches Together groups in both Leeds 11 and Leeds 10 to give "It's Your Move" books to each pupil moving on to High School. The churches paid £600 for them.

"It's Your Move" is a 64-page publication designed to help the young people with this big step in their lives. Questions and answers, a survival-guide, dilemmas, opportunities, poems and stories, and experiences from others who have made this move are all included in this guide to moving on to Year 7 in new, strange but exciting surroundings. Over a million copies of "It's Your Move" have been sold since 2000.

Each school, including but not only Church of England and Roman Catholic, was sponsored by one or more local churches. In some cases, books were presented by church people in the school before the pupils moved on. One satisfied Year 6 teacher told the churches: "It was received very favourably by the children, their families and staff and the gesture was gratefully appreciated." Another said: "It is absolutely brilliant... the best example of its kind, with a good range of articles, information and spaces for the children's own jottings. The quality is superb. If our 42 current Year 6 pupils could receive a copy this year they will be tremendously grateful. Thank you for this very kind offer!"



Settle spinning the Gospel

Churches Together in Settle and District holds no fewer than three Children's Holiday Clubs – "The Gift" at Christmas, "Travelling to Easter", and a three day summer Club called "Big Top", with clowns (see picture on page 20) and circus skills backing up stories of Bible characters.

Last year, they modified their well-received Good Friday Passion Play, "Journey to the Cross," to include a moving Crucifixion scene. John Bavington, incoming CT Chair, was the crucified Jesus (see pictures on page 19).

There were five community meetings on the practicalities of "Facing up to End-of-life Issues." A Solicitor, Hospice Director, NHS speaker, Funeral Director and Cruse Counsellor were the speakers. CTiSaD has also printed a simple "Directory of local assistance", showing support available for people in financial need. These have been placed in churches and in schools, surgeries and shops.



ALL CHANGE!

Churches Together in Gomersal, Birkenshaw and East Bierley held their first Pulpit Swop in the 2011 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It was so successful that they are repeating the initiative in 2012. Nine churches, including Anglican, Methodist, Moravian and Reformed sent clergy and lay preachers to churches of other traditions.

Ralph Davidson, for Churches Together, said, "We found that the individual churches gave the visiting preacher a very warm welcome and their WORD in all cases was very well received. These contacts help in opening the doors of all our churches to each other. We can now place a name to a face and we share ministries / worship together."

These ministries include: Joint Prayer and Praise Service –Pentecost Witness – Rewind – Prayer Walks – and Advent worship. There's also a detailed schedule of all future events so each can support the other.

As Ralph says, "We can certainly recommend a Pulpit Swop. It is a most exciting, interesting and rewarding day and it does 'open doors.'"

Speaking with one voice

“Churches Together can present a united voice in a world which likes to divide and rule,” says Nick Shields, the Secretary of Churches together in Wakefield.

Nick tells this story: “A few months ago our local Council introduced “fines” for funerals overrunning the 30 minute ‘slot’- as they call them at the Crematorium. 30 minutes is not long, especially as they also stopped everyone except blue badge holders using the nearest car-park. Elderly mourners had to walk up a 100 yard slope to the chapel.

“Churches Together got together and, with others, made representations. As a result, the time ‘slots’ have been increased- at least temporarily- and a signed ‘drop-off’ area set up nearer the chapel. Ministers have also reclaimed the robing room! An ongoing dialogue has been established with the council, with regular meetings where problems and improvements can be discussed.”

Nick wonders whether Churches Together should intervene over hospital parking as well, or when local Councils marginalize Christianity by refusing to say “Christmas”... It is all about “Speaking with One Voice”.

A Christmas Pageant: Inn, Donkey, Twins... Twins?

Crosshills and District Fellowship of Churches (CDFC) comprises 9 local churches and holds several joint events through the year. There was a Harvest ceilidh and a One World Week service – this year’s speaker was Clive Barrett from WYEC. The Lent Course for 2012 will look at different denominations.

In December, for the last four years, an outdoor nativity has taken place. Up to 300 people watch and follow the leading group, walking through Sutton-in-Craven village, with the Christmas story being told and acted out. Glennis Attwood reports, “We call at the doors of the three local pubs, ‘looking for a room’. The pageant is led by a donkey and the actors, dressed in costume. We have always had a baby, and for 2011 there were twins, so an understudy was available!” The pageant continued to Sutton Park where the nativity scene was re-enacted, and some carols sung. The event ended with mulled wine and mince pies in the Baptist Church. It is hoped to repeat the pageant in 2012.

King James’s Day

Churches Together in Ilkley (CTI) celebrated the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible by organising an unbroken 24 hour reading of passages selected from a wide cross-section of its contents.

This was the churches' contribution to the Ilkley Summer Festival. It took place at Christchurch, a Methodist-United Reformed Church partnership. Over ninety readers took part, drawn from all the members of Churches Together. Not only could you turn up to listen but the event was also streamed “live” on to the CTI website – an exciting development in itself.

They carried out a survey, asking people to state their favourite text or passage from the Bible. The Psalms emerged as the favourite book, and the overall favourite passage, which included a majority of quoted texts, was the eighth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

AND NATIONALLY...

The Presidents of Churches Together in England have signed a personal Covenant. Rowan Williams (Archbishop of Canterbury), Vincent Nichols (Archbishop of Westminster), Michael Heaney (Moderator of the Free Churches Group) and the Lutheran bishop, Jana Jeruma-Grinberga, committed themselves “to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith, expressed in common discipleship, worship, witness and service.”

Community Dialogue Manuals

If you want to know how to build relationships with neighbours from other traditions, you need to look at the new set of ten (free!) Community Dialogue Manuals produced by the Dialogue Society. They have been inspired by an open Islamic movement, committed to dialogue.

Supported by the Department of Communities and Local Government, the manuals are intended “to inspire enthusiasm for dialogue and to provide the tangible ideas, know-how and resources to make effective dialogue projects achievable. They provide a helping hand to any group or individual interested in bringing their community together and increasing interaction between people of different cultures and faiths.”

Titles include: Building Partnerships, Noah’s Pudding, Celebrating Festivals, Community Fairs, Community Engagement Dinners, Community Centres Branching Out, Speed Dialogue, Open Mosque Day, Fast-Breaking Dinners, and Media Engagement.

The series aims to help people to bring their local communities together through tried and tested approaches, and should be of interest to community groups, religious groups, private individuals, local authorities and companies alike. Download manuals at www.dialoguesociety.org/publications or get free hard copies from manual@dialoguesociety.org.



Bradford Dialogue First

Over a hundred leaders of diverse faith groups attended an interfaith consultation and reception in Bradford City Hall. It was hosted by the Mayor, Nayeeda Ikram – the country’s first Muslim woman mayor – and the Bishop of Bradford. The Bishop said that when Christians and Muslims meet, for example, the first issue is that each would like to convert the other. The second is to realise, in practice, that that is not very likely to happen. The third is then to work out how everyone can live together with integrity.

David Ison, Dean of Bradford, divided people into small, mixed groups to ask: “What can your faith group contribute to Bradford? How can you work together? And can / how can the Council help you with this?”

Many signed up to continue this valuable dialogue throughout the city in 2012.

Beyond the Comfort Zone

“Christian Engagement with Islam” was the theme of a Leeds conference organised by Churches Together in England and the Christian Muslim Forum. It enabled Christians who feel less than comfortable with Islam to ask questions and see what is being done together for the common good by Christians and Muslims in this country. Participants came from all over England and Scotland. Christians of various traditions were together for the day, and were joined by some Muslim friends in the afternoon.

Bishop Tom Butler, former Co-chair of the Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom, gave a keynote address highlighting the development in the churches longstanding commitment to inter religious dialogue.

A range of other speakers included Dr Helen Reid, Programme Director at Bradford Churches for Dialogue and Diversity, Dr Philip Lewis, and Anjum Anwar, Dialogue Development Officer at Blackburn Cathedral,

Among the workshops was one on women as “less visible leaders”.

A video about the conference is on www.christianmuslimforum.org.



Putting Religion on the Map

Academics at the University of Leeds have researched the religious communities of Leeds for 35 years. Their ground-breaking work has been the subject of a recent exhibition of photographs and posters at the University.

The Community Religions Project (CRP) was founded in 1976 by Michael Pye, Ursula King and Bill Weaver, from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies (TRS). At the time, Michael Pye said that:

“The City of Leeds contains people from south and east of the Hindu Kush. The hymns of Martin Luther are sung in German, the Catholic mass is celebrated by Poles, and Greek Orthodox perform their exits and entrances in the Church of the Three Hierarchs directly beside the main West Indian and Sikh communities of Chapeltown. Moreover, Yorkshiremen are interesting too, and so is the Church of England in its mysterious forms.”

The CRP has published pioneering work on minority ethnic religions, especially South Asian heritage Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities settled in Leeds and Bradford. It established the CRP’s reputation in such work across the UK and Western Europe.

Dr Seán McLoughlin, who co-organised the

exhibition with CRP colleague, Dr Mel Prideaux, said that “The exhibition marks the history and significance of the CRP, and reflects the life of multi-faith Leeds. It reminds people in the city of our expertise on religions, local communities and issues at the heart of public life, and it underlines that community engagement is very much part of the University’s strategy.”

The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Reverend Alan Taylor, opened a networking event organised around the exhibition – “Religion in Leeds Then and Now”. Professor Kim Knott, CRP Director since the 1990s, gave a retrospective before guests browsed photographs from 1976 paired with contemporary images. TRS staff and students interacted with civic and community leaders, as well as public sector professionals and longstanding project partners.

The photographs included several of St Aidan’s church, Roundhay Road, from 1976 and 2011, as well as Roscoe Methodist church, Chapeltown Road. Other images showed the change in use of church buildings, and their relationship to the landscape and community of Leeds.

The photographs and related academic publications are being digitised and will be available via an open access website in early 2012.

Court Up in Chaplaincy

Bradford Court Chaplaincy Service (BCCS) has been extended. Having shown its value at the Magistrates’ and Coroner’s Courts, it is now also serving the Combined Courts Centre, beginning with the Crown Courts.

Mary Carroll, who Chair of Trustees for BCCS, said, “The Crown Court is a more formal and formidable setting than the Magistrates’ Court, in that much more serious offences are dealt with. Serious crime can have a devastating and lasting impact on the primary victims and also on the families and friends of those accused, or convicted, of such offences. Our Chaplains and

volunteers need to be both well prepared and confident to undertake this highly confidential and complex work and, have undergone additional training.”

One chaplaincy volunteer commented that “It was a huge privilege to be there, at a time of great emotional need and stress”.

Anyone at all who attends the Crown Court can access this totally free and confidential support, including staff who deal with difficult and distressing cases. The team has a desk near Court 7 and can be contacted via reception or at 01274 722422.

Pioneer in the city

James Barnett writes:

“In a nutshell, this is me. I’m Clare’s husband and I’m dad to Molly (7), Simeon (4) and Reuben (3). We have lived in Leeds for over 6 years, for most of which I was team vicar of St George’s. A year ago I was appointed as Pioneer Minister to New Communities in Leeds, a post jointly funded by the Church of England and the Methodist Church.

“The big idea? To respond to the challenges of 10,000 people living in gated communities across Leeds city centre. I spend a lot of time meeting new people and talking about life, God, community and relationships. I’m involved in community based initiatives in the city centre, including the

waterfront festival. Also I lead a new church named Riverside Church, which gathers on Sunday afternoon and is made up of what we call missional communities.

“What holds all this together is a commitment to 3 simple values: Faith, Hope and Love. In every part of my life and job is the desire to live out these values. My dreams are that over time a healthy, vibrant and missional church will have been birthed. And that the many communities I have the pleasure of being involved in will be stronger with deeper relationships at their heart. And most of all, that many people will have been introduced to the person of Jesus and His family the Church.”

Sanctuary Sunday 2012

Leeds Churches Together in Mission (LCTiM) in conjunction with Leeds City of Sanctuary have designated 29th April as a Sanctuary Sunday. They encourage churches across Leeds to hold a service or event exploring Sanctuary issues, stories and responses. “Let’s create a more welcoming city for those seeking refuge among us.”

LCTiM can help to put together a service or event. It can provide refugee speakers and a Resource Pack of worship materials and contact details for Christian projects working with asylum-seekers and refugees.

City of Sanctuary is a movement dedicated to creating a culture of hospitality for people seeking

sanctuary in the UK. Individuals and groups can pledge to support the movement. See www.cityofsanctuary.org/leeds or [/bradford](http://bradford.org), or [/huddersfield](http://huddersfield.org), or [/wakefield](http://wakefield.org). A growing network of churches belong to City of Sanctuary. LCTiM can also put you in touch with other sympathetic faith groups

For more details – and to spread the word about your Sanctuary Sunday plans - contact Jon or Sue at info@leedschurchestogether.org.uk or 07930364733.

“Don’t ill-treat any foreigners who live in your land. Instead, treat them well as you treat your citizens and love them as you love yourself.” Leviticus 19: 33-34.

May they all be one

Members of the Focolare community in Leeds were involved in preparing and supporting the international ecumenical meeting of church leaders and friends that was held in the Focolare Centre for Unity. Representatives from the Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Lutheran, Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox churches took part, including Bishop Walter Jagucki, Bishop Emeritus of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, who lives in Leeds.

Inspired by the Focolare’s “spirituality of unity”, the theme of the event was “The Word of God and its transforming power”. Archbishop Rowan Williams welcomed the bishops to Lambeth Palace, and the ecumenical group joined Archbishop Vincent Nichols for vespers and attended Mass in Westminster Cathedral.

One day was an open day when a further 25 Church Leaders from England and Scotland came

and heard a key input from Maria Voce, who took over as Focolare’s president from the founder Chiara Lubich after her death in 2008.

Maria Voce is well versed in ecumenical matters having opened the Focolare community in Istanbul in the late 1970s, building strong bonds with the Orthodox Church and developing Focolare’s interfaith relations.

Quoting Chiara Lubich, she said: “If by some absurd hypothesis all the Gospels on earth were destroyed, we would like to live in such a way that people could to some extent rewrite the Gospel by seeing our behaviour.”

Church leaders present affirmed Focolare’s contribution to ecumenism in Britain, influencing and enriching the life of the Church. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor said that the Focolare Movement was among the “green shoots” of ecumenism and that its spirit of communion indicated a way forward.

Interfaith Events

29 January
Holocaust Memorial Day – “Speak Up, Speak Out”. With Rachel Reeves MP. 1.30pm, Leeds Town Hall.

20 February
“The Pastor and the Imam”. Wakefield Interfaith Group show a (free) film from Africa. 6pm at Treacy Hall, Wakefield Cathedral.

22 February
“Back to the Future: Beyond John Hick’s Philosophy of Religious Pluralism”, by Gavin D’Costa, Professor of Catholic Theology, University of Bristol. 6.15pm. Jointly organised by Concord and the University of Leeds Department of Theology and Religious Studies.

22 March
West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy service: Ron Williams talks about prison chaplaincy for people of different faiths. 7.30pm, Multifaith Centre, Allerton High School, Leeds.

sport together. They run weekly football leagues for 17-22 year olds of all abilities in Leeds, providing churches with a new side to their sports based ministry. There has been football coaching in East End Park and Seacroft. Find out more from the qualified coach, Rod Christopher, 07519440938 and rodchristopher@hotmail.co.uk

Onside, Outside

Onside Sports is a charity under the umbrella of Leeds Christian Community Trust. It aims to provide hope through sport by trying to bridge gaps between communities, encouraging people of varied ethnicities and religions to engage in

Jubilee 2012



Halifax Minster is leading the West Yorkshire commemoration of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. There will be a special service on 12 February, and a public launch – to which community groups and businesses are invited – at 7pm on 22 March. The Big Lunch (developed by the Eden Project) is one way in which churches could get involved together on the official birthday weekend. The Big Lunch has previously been used by churches as a community festival, here at Little Lane Bradford in 2011.



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Louise Armitage asks, “Are You Healthy In Spirit?”



I was converted to ecumenism as a teenage member of an Ecumenical Lent Group, when someone pointed out that as it was Jesus's dearest wish that we should be one as He and His Father are One, it should be our dearest wish too. Coming from my Baptist perspective, this opened up undreamed-of horizons. From then on I was convinced! Some years later, an Anglican Vicar told me that I was to be a bridge between the denominations and I took it as a prophetic word.

I was invited to join the Bradford Diocesan Spirituality Group as an ecumenical member about fourteen years ago and we've worked together ever since. This is a group which resources and supports spiritual directors and plans events and consultations to rekindle awareness and inspire work in the field of spirituality. We have also produced a course on Christian Meditation and written helpful leaflets about spiritual direction and spirituality.

'How did you come to compile the Spiritual Health Check?'

We are regularly urged to monitor our physical health and well-being, not only in doctors' surgeries and clinics but also by fitness centres, slimming clubs and holiday companies. Advertisers connect bodily health with spiritual wholeness. Slogans for walking gear, for example, urge customers to 'Catch the Spirit', 'Set the Spirit Free', or 'Be Inspired'.

All of this made me wonder how we as Christians might check up on our own spiritual health, and it became clear that all we have and all we are is an expression of this. All our relationships, interests,

pastimes, commitments, hopes and dreams are woven into our Life in Christ. Even the ways in which we choose to spend our time or our money are all spiritual issues. Spirituality is not only about private devotion, public worship and Christian service, but is as wide as life itself.

Last year I suggested that the Spirituality Group should compile a Spiritual Health Check for churches and parishes to use. I was asked to write a questionnaire. We hoped that priests and ministers might run off copies, invite their own congregations to fill in the questionnaire and give themselves a 'Spiritual Health Check', and then note down the things that surprised or even shocked them, and what, if anything, they might do about it. This could then be discussed one-to-one, or might be shared in small groups with other trusted friends in the congregation who would resource one another. Alternatively members of devotional groups or House Groups within the church might meet to answer the questions individually then share and discuss their responses, and perhaps update them annually.

Katharine Cheney and I compiled a further short questionnaire especially for leadership groups within the church, such as PCCs and diaconates, enabling them to identify where the real spiritual energy and vitality in their church communities can be found. These leaflets may be found on the Bradford Diocesan website.

How can we sit quietly and hear what God is saying?

When you are next out walking by the sea shore, or beside a river or stream, choose a pebble that really appeals to you

or catches your attention. You may already have one that you chose long ago.

When you have time, take it with you into a comfortable and quiet place, without interruptions, away from the 'phone. Sit and hold it in the open palm of your hand.

Listen intently for a few moments to distant sounds; to the sounds in the building around you, then to the sound of your own breathing and heartbeat.

Quieten yourself and listen to the silence that undergirds it all.

If you have distracting thoughts, acknowledge them and reassure them that you will deal with them later!

Relax. Feel warm relaxation flowing from the crown of your head, down through your face, down your scalp, down your neck and into your shoulders, down your arms and right to the tips of your fingers, down through your body, your back, your abdomen and hips, on down your legs, and flowing on through your toes.

Notice how the chair supports you; the feeling of your clothes on your skin; how your hair feels on your head.

Be aware of any points of tension and relax them.

Be alert to God's Spirit moving in and around you.

As you breathe in, breathe in light, breathe out darkness;

Breathe in hope, breathe out despair;

Breathe in wholeness, breathe out all that damages and disturbs you,

Breathe in joy, breathe out sadness.

Breathe in love, breathe out hatred.

Breathe in peace, breathe out fear.

Examine the stone. Get to know it. Feel the weight and the shape of it, the temperature, the texture, the flaws and markings.

Does it remind you of anything or anyone?

Think of its long history, its origins in the earth's crust, and the upheavals that caused it to be broken off, whirled about, pounded by the current, reshaped, and finally hurled on to a beach (or lying on the bed of a stream or river), unnoticed for ages until suddenly it is chosen, lifted, brought back like a treasure and now is held and is beginning to be known.

Think of your own history, of the family you were born into and of the milestones in your own life – successes and failures, growth and brokenness, health and illness, joy and pain.

It might help to note down some of the things you have remembered.

You have been shaped and marked by your family history and by all your life-experiences.

God has brought you through all that to this present moment, and here and now you are chosen, lifted, brought back, held and known.

God knows your fears and anxieties and your deepest need and today, here, God comes to bless you in ways that are exactly right for you – according to the Maker's instructions.

Lord, open our hearts, our minds, our memories, our inner being, to the healing, renewing, refreshing, releasing, transforming power of Your love.

Notice how your stone feels now. Look at it carefully again.

Notice how you feel now.

What is God saying to you?

What do you want to say to God?

'But the Lord is still in the city...'

In the shadow of Manningham Mills in Bradford, symbol of the city's prosperous industrial past, lies a hidden treasure. Hidden away amidst the noise and the rush of urban life is St Cuthbert's Catholic church, a quiet haven which is rich in spiritual heritage and artistic treasures. Embedded in its walls are a collection of beautiful stonework Stations of the Cross, sculpted and gifted to the church by the world renowned Eric Gill.

In November, 22 Christians from Leeds and Bradford gathered at St Cuthbert's for an urban quiet day. (Thanks to Father Eamon.) Instead of retreating into the countryside to find God in the midst of his creation, they came to look for him in the heart of the city.

The Stations were the main focus of their reflections: a strange spiritual exercise for the start of Advent. Yet as the day progressed the fullness of the salvation story was played

out, with the Incarnation of Christ reaching fulfilment in his Passion and Death, and the joy of Resurrection and Ascension offering up the Advent hope of new heavens and new earth.

Those taking part reflected on the Gospel accounts of Jesus' journey to Golgotha and beyond. They used their imaginations to look beyond the Bible stories into the experiences of those who were there as witnesses. There was a chance to focus on their own life and journey with God, and to pray for others.

As well as the Stations, other artworks caught the imagination: the lovely Leonard Walker stained glass windows; the figure of Mary depicted as a Bradford mill girl; a statue of Joseph carrying the baby Jesus. One participant commented on how he had never seen Joseph as a step-father, yet in a sense he was just that. He found himself

thinking about friends he had who shared that same status, and the difficulties they face.

Another said that as she looked at Mary, she noticed the design of the window beyond, which reminded her of bobbin ends. She found herself reflecting on the value of work and productive employment: a call to prayer during times of economic challenge and rising worklessness.

Each person who attended is engaged in one way or another in urban life and work. Some work in community or youth projects. Others were 'ordinary' Christians who belong to urban churches. In the midst of their busy lives, this quiet day was an opportunity to remain in the city and yet come apart to find peace and renewal. It brought affirmation that they are part of his story: God remains with them just where they are. As Zechariah assures us, the Lord is still in the city.

Ruth Smith

Prayer for Crossgates

Around 20 people from across the churches, gathered together in a home to intercede for Crossgates. Running 6 hours from 4pm, the evening was structured around a short simple prayer and a song on every hour, followed by opportunities for corporate, group and individual prayer.

Prayer stations helped people to pray in a variety of forms in an informal manner. Moving from room to room, prayer took the form of "post-it" notes on doors to pray for opportunities. Maps showing different streets were used to bless the area. In the kitchen, a poster led people to ask God for wisdom about a possible community café. One room had a powerpoint loop of images. Individual prayers were written down on a prayer tree. There were inspirational pictures on the walls.

Jonathan Gray, whose home was used, said "It was encouraging to see so many people from different churches praying together... there was a real sense of unity and purpose."

**The West Yorkshire Spirituality Network
has a new website.**

Find out more at www.wysn.co.uk.

Denby Dale Prayer Ltd.

When times are hard, it is especially good to pray for local businesses. Churches Together in and around Denby Dale has a weekly prayer rota of over 100 businesses and shops. The aim is for a person to visit a group of shops/businesses they are familiar with to say that the churches are praying for them, and to give them with a prayer card. The cards ask whether the businesses would like prayers said for them on a regular basis. A greetings card is taken in on the week that prayers are being said. There has been a good response from businesses, and this new venture has been welcomed into the community.

In another development, the craft/activities of Messy Church at Denby Dale Methodist Church are followed by a simple meal, "like spaghetti Bolognese". It sounds as if things just get messier!

Churches Together in and around Denby Dale keep traditional events – Unity Week, Lent Course, Holy Week, Good Friday Walk of Witness, Christian Aid, All Souls Service, Remembrance, and Carols (in 2011, with a folk singer, fiddlers and "irregular" carol singers). They also ran an August Holiday Club which attracted 46 children.

Beyond the Streets of Halifax

Street Angels go from strength to strength not only in the SWYEC region but across the country and the world! The Christian Nightlife Initiatives (CNI) Network, inspired by Paul Blakey, founder of Halifax Street Angels, now supports 100 night-time projects.

In the WYEC region CNI supports: Bradford Street Angels, EDGE youth work in Todmorden, Halifax Street Angels, Headingley Street Angels, Huddersfield Street Angels, Keighley NightLight, the Leeds Pioneer Minister for Night-time economy, Skipton Street Angels and Wetherby Street Angels. Some news from across this region:

Skipton

Skipton Street Angels started in April 2009. A team of 33 Angels invest over 2,500 volunteer hours each year into the Skipton community. They have helped people collapsed on the pavement, one having epileptic fits, some with concussion and a few with cut feet, despite disposing of over 4,000 abandoned bottles and glasses. Inspector Craig Linton of North Yorkshire Police says of Skipton Street Angels: "Their enthusiasm, commitment and strong community spirit has in my opinion helped to make Skipton a safer place to visit and socialise."

Huddersfield

Huddersfield Street Angels have helped reduce violent crime by 40% since launching and have been were shortlisted in the Huddersfield Examiner Friend of the Year award. They have a good number of volunteers but more are always welcome.

Leeds

Beth Tash is Pioneer Minister for Night-Time Economy, Leeds. She writes: "I started work in Leeds city-centre at the beginning of September with the brief of finding ways to connect Christianity and nightlife culture. I have been mostly: praying, thinking, dreaming, wondering about what God might want to do here; meeting the city council, a group of landlords called 'pubwatch' and the police who are all keen on the restart of street angels; going out and about prayer walking 2 nights a week, asking God to show us what he sees, what he wants, chatting to people along the way; hanging out in clubs and bars, meeting workers and clubbers there, learning about their lives, the issues, the hopes, their thoughts on my job, faith, God, life, the world and the universe!"



Beth Tash

Headingley

Headingley Street Angels have been accepted as part of student nightlife, offering support and guidance to all who pass, and are greeted with great support and enthusiasm to all they meet. The team are celebrating their first birthday with a night out in Headingley!

Halifax

Halifax Street Angels have a great team of volunteers who commit week in and week out to make the difference on the town's streets. With nearly 6000 volunteer hours invested in our town last year, the group has seen Halifax go from a binge to better culture.

The Purple Flag award, which shows a safe and vibrant night-time economy, is a testimony to the work carried out by Street Angels and partner organisations and contributed to a 57% reduction in violent crime since we launched in November 2005.



Halifax Street Angels with comedian Jimmy Cricket



Skipton Street Angels

One City Projects - The Story Goes On!

The "Faith in the City" report caused a stir when it came out in 1985. The local ecumenical response was the setting up of the Leeds Churches Community Involvement Project leading to the founding of "Faith in Leeds", which ran until 2001. Part of this was "One City Projects", created by David Rhodes, to explore the local impact of issues of social justice. It ran talks, visits, prayer, bible study and discussion together with "Retreats on the Streets" and "Walks of Awareness." Many city churches took part. The story and theology behind One City Projects is covered in David's book "Faith in Dark Places". Nigel Greenwood took over from David as Director in 1999.

One City Projects continued beyond Faith in Leeds as an independent organisation authorised by Leeds Churches Together in Mission. It was a member of ecumenical networks across the city. It produced seasonal theological reflection for Advent, Lent and Pentecost. It became a resource for churches,

with customised programmes to respond to local needs, always with a vital role in promoting social justice.

One City Projects joined Leeds Christian Community Trust and offered programmes on various topics including urban theology, and city and/or community walks. It reached people through preaching, leading worship, and involvement in city-wide activities like 'Jesus in the City', 'Celebrate Faith', 'Go Local' and 'Did You Know?' With help from the Church Urban Fund, the "Retreat on the Streets" has recently been offered in Birmingham and Manchester.

Working closely with Leeds Church Institute, One City Projects produced resources for churches: "Empty Spaces" for Holy Week, "Reflections on Urban Life" in response to the Faithful Cities report, and "Life in Recession". Although Nigel retired as Director at the end of 2011, the future of One City Projects is assured with future programmes being delivered through Leeds Church Institute.

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YOUR PEACE OF MIND IS OUR PRIORITY

More Than Gold!

The November 2011 'Connect' event lived up to its name - over 200 people came from all over Leeds to talk, eat, dream, think, pray and learn together about social action within Leeds. This was the second such event run by Leeds Churches Together in Mission, Leeds Christian Community Trust, Network Leeds, and Unity in Poverty Action. The aim was to bring together Christians engaged in social action across the city, to 'connect' with one another.

An interactive presentation, the 'Scandal of Inequality', showed gross inequalities within the city. It suggested that inequality is bad news for everyone in the city. Does the Christian good news imagine another possible world where inequality is abolished? The challenge was - 'What if we sought to reduce inequality within our city today?'

People heard each other's stories and learn about organisations that already make a difference in Leeds. There will be a follow up 'open space' event on 16th February. If you'd like to go, contact jonathan@leedschurchestogether.org.uk.

For more on the 'Scandal of Inequality in Leeds', see www.scandalofleeds.info [This includes 'The Vision', a marvellous meditation: 'I saw Leeds, the holy city, coming down out of heaven... And the Spirit showed me the tree of life growing on East End Park...']



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The 2012 meditations for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity come out of the experience of the Churches in Poland. The days are themed: Serving, Waiting, Suffering, Struggling, Peacemaking, Loving, Feeding, and Uniting. The serving and waiting concern our approach to God. Then comes confession and the struggle is our hunger and thirst for a right relationship with God and each other. The final themes are our response to the Word in prayer and commitment.

The strapline for the Week is "We will all be changed", changed by our serving, waiting and so on.

These themes are seen in the main service for the week which is based around 1 Corinthians 15. 51-58, "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This year, for the first time, Christian Aid has been involved in the preparation of materials for the week.



Resources for the Week can be downloaded from www.ctbi.org.uk.

Local Practice

What do you do for the Week of Prayer? Some Churches Together groups, like Wakefield, have a united service. Some, like Gomersal, Birkenshaw and East Bierley have a pulpit swop. Others, like Crossgates, hold daily prayer in different churches (even a café, in one instance). It's the big annual celebration of our essential unity. How do you mark it in your area?

A reflection from the Week of Prayer

*Peace is not the absence of guns
but the presence of restraint.
Peace is not the absence of bombs
but the presence of compassion.
Peace is not the absence of vengeance
but the presence of mercy.
Peace is not the absence of retribution
but the presence of reconciliation.
Peace is not the absence of division
but the presence of grace.
Peace is not the absence of greed*

*but the presence of justice.
Peace is not the absence of difference
but the presence of unity.
Loving and merciful God,
speak peace to our hearts and minds
that we may make peace in the world:
breaching divisions to bring reconciliation,
bringing justice to bear where prejudice
prevails,
bearing your grace in and through our lives.*

Holy Rood House, Thirsk

Spring seminars at the Centre for the Study of Theology and Health include:
23 February. "Growing faith: the church as a liberating learning community". Liz Smith and Anne Phillips
2-3 March. "Spiritual legacies for our times: Carl Rogers, Julian of Norwich and Etty Hillesum". Brian Thorne.
10 March. Northern launch of "Responding Well". Carolyn Buckeridge and David Gamble.
24 May. "Women and Ecology". Mary Grey
Details, costs and opportunity for overnight accommodation: www.holyroodhouse.org.uk or 01845 522580.

For news of Churches Together groups and all ecumenical events, visit the new-look WYEC website: www.wyec.co.uk.

Running a Church Project with Trustees

Trustees – you can't work with them - or without them!

Whether you call them your Board, Steering Group, or simply team of loyal supporters - however small your project you have to have trustees. But what is it they are meant to do?

Neil Casey, director of Wild Goose consulting, facilitates a Livability training day, 9.45am-3.45pm, 31 January, St George's Centre, Leeds. (£20 in advance, includes lunch). To book, contact Ruth Smith, 0113 350 8070, rsmith@livability.org.uk.

The day covers the legalities which affect smaller charitable groups, the difference between good governance and good management, and the qualities you need to find in trustees.

TREASURES REVEALED Continues

There will be a week of events in Leeds to celebrate the city's spiritual heritage, 28 April – 7 May 2012. Places of worship are invited to register. A brochure will be available at the start of April. Details from Jamie Guest, 0113 2522 797, james.guest2@ntlworld.com

Time to Get Online!

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland provide a free website hosting service for Churches Together groups. If you don't already have a website, it's surely time you got one, and this is a very easy way to give your Churches Together group a public profile. To find out more, go to www.ctbi.org.uk

30 Years Service

2012 is the thirtieth year since Sylvia Wright left her nursing career in Leeds to help look after the poor, sick and disabled in Southern India.

At the age of 74, she still runs a 220-bed hospital in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. 80,000 outpatients are treated each year. Other projects include day centres for disabled children, a residential school for deaf children and a nursing college training student nurses.

The Sylvia Wright Trust plans to mark this milestone with a Service of Celebration & Thanksgiving in St. Anne's Cathedral, Leeds, on Sunday 22 April at 2.30 pm. For details see www.sylviawright.org.

Mission Shaped Ministry

This ecumenical course is a one year supported journey to equip people in the thinking and practice of Fresh Expressions of Church. In Knaresborough, from 21 January. Details from either Bev Hollings, 01924 826130, beverlyhollings@virgin.net, or Karin Shaw, 01423 500087, karinmshaw@googlemail.com, or see www.missionshapedministry.org/yorkshire 12.

Life Together

There will be an Anglican-Lutheran international conference exploring "Christian Ministry in Tomorrow's World" at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, 3-7 September 2012. It will explore different traditions of ministry in an ecumenical context, and will be especially relevant for students preparing

for ministry, and those (lay or ordained) in the early years of accredited ministry. More information is on www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.

Lent 2012

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German theologian, who was an important part of the growing ecumenical movement between the world wars of the 20th century. He was executed for his opposition to Hitler, but his writings are still influential. When he was in his prison cell in 1944, he wrote a poem, "Stations on the Way to Freedom", in which he highlighted discipline, action, suffering and death.

"Pathways on the Way to Freedom," the 2012 Lent Course from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, is based on Bonhoeffer's ideas.

For details and resources, see www.ctbi.org.uk.

Churches Together in Wakefield

The Annual United Service takes place at 6pm on 22 January at English Martyrs Church, Dewsbury Road, Lupset. The preacher will be the Dean of Wakefield, the Very Revd. Jonathan Greener.

Action Week

Poverty and Homelessness Action Week is 28 January – 5 February. For resources and ideas see actionweek.org.uk

Peace Lecture

The 2012 Huddersfield Quaker Peace Lecture will be held at 7.30pm on 10 May. Diana Francis, a former President of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, will speak on "Nonviolence in International Affairs: Nonsensical Dream or Urgent Necessity?"

Diana brings experience of peace work and conflict transformation in post-communist Europe, the Middle East, Africa and South and East Asia. Her most recent book is "From Pacification to Peacebuilding: A Call to Global Transformation".

Scargill Movement

For stimulating residential short courses, try Scargill House in Wharfedale. See www.scargillmovement.org. Includes:

2-4 March. "Washed up and Ready to Go? The strange story of Jonah, sulkiest of prophets." Led by Adrian and Bridget Plass.

6-8 March. "Growing the Rural Church - a conference." Led by the Scargill Movement, with guest speakers including James Bell (Bishop of Knaresborough), Peter Aires (Churches Conservation Trust), Leslie Morley (Rural Officer for the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds) and Elizabeth Clark (Rural Officer for the York and Hull, and Leeds Methodist Districts).

Encourage a Woman in Leadership

Yorkshire Baptist Association is running a "7 Deadly Sins (!) of Women in Leadership" course of over 2012 to encourage women to take on leadership roles in their churches and beyond. Seven sessions, held at Huddersfield Methodist Mission, will be led by Kate Coleman, the incoming Chair of the Evangelical Alliance Council.

Details: Millicent.brown@on-course.co, 01484 225716.

Denholme and the Lions!

An exhibition at Denholme to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible involved the whole community. Individuals and local groups produced their own interpretation of one of 100 selected Bible passages. It was a huge success with 85 individuals and ten different groups from the village taking part. 200 visitors saw old editions of the Authorised Version, huge Family Bibles, tiny versions made for a soldier's pocket and a copy of the Geneva Bible loaned from the parish of Holme Wood and Tong. The Exhibition linked past with present, bringing hope for the future.

The picture shows a display of Daniel and the Lions, made at Denholme Primary School.



Passion in Settle



Scenes from the Settle Good Friday Passion Play (see page 13)



Banner for all

The colourful banner of Churches Together in Mirfield and District really does represent all the churches. Each church helped make the banner by contributing its own cross to the design.

God Wills Fairtrade Coffee!



Little Lane Church in Bradford is a Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church partnership. It was recently the site for the launch of a special Fairtrade Coffee from Costa Rica.

Apparently, in Costa Rica, if you say "See you tomorrow", the likely response would be "If God Wills It" – IGWI. IGWI Coffee has just started being imported regularly into the UK.

The Revd David Downing, who runs IGWI, has seen the benefits that Fairtrade can make to humble coffee farmers, their families and their communities in Costa Rica:

"The coffee is fantastic – and that's not just me saying that, the people at the event said it. But also, behind the flavour is the way IGWI is trying to make sure all profits from the coffee go back to the workers in Costa Rica."

The Little Lane event was the first time this coffee has been sold by IGWI. It's a good way to buy a great coffee with a strong social conscience, going beyond that of many other Fairtrade coffees available. See www.igwicoffee.org.uk, and Facebook at IGWI.

The people at Little Lane were very encouraging, and David said 'It feels quite special to launch a new coffee in Bradford!'

REWIND to Christmas Art Competition

REWIND to Christmas (an event for Year 6 pupils run by Christian Links in Keighley Schools) was in desperate need of some new banners to decorate the venue this year, so Alison Way, CLiKS Schools Worker, launched an Art Competition for local primary schools.

Year 6 children were given the brief of designing 8 new banners for the event, which had to include the words 'REWIND to Christmas' and pictures showing different Christmas celebrations and traditions. CLiKS received 155 entries from 6 primary schools and chose 2 overall winners and 7 runners up who had their designs transformed into banners by Oddball Designs. Congratulations to Hafsa Khan and Sophie Rook from Eastburn, JunayD Imran from Eastwood, Samia and Zahra Hauser from St Andrew's, and Connor Murgatroyd and Lucie

Eardley from St Joseph's who were all runners up. Congratulations also go to Harris David Payne from Laycock, who won the competition for his clear and colourful Christmas design. CLiKS intended to have one overall winner, but were so impressed Bilal Ali's design, from Eastwood Primary, that they decided to award him to first prize too. Alison Way said, "We were overwhelmed by the number and quality of designs we received, and had a hard time picking the winners! We have been really pleased by how well the banners look, and the children were excited to see their designs on display at REWIND to Christmas! We liked Bilal's colourful text design so much that we will be using his banner on the publicity for the event next year". Each child will be awarded a prize, and the two winning schools will receive £100 of RE resources each.





REDDY OR NOT?!

Hot Line in Settle!

It is official! GOD LOVES YOU! – This is the sign Churches Together in Settle and District have put up in their newly acquired redundant phone box. They use it to display free literature, church service information and posters of up-coming events. As the out-going Chair, Revd Mgr Tony Boylan says, the box “helps us to direct our prayers without the necessity of a BT line.”
Also in Settle, a clown illustrates God’s love at a children’s party (see page 13).



Above: Love Halifax festival at the Piece Hall (see page 8). Below: Hope for the Nations, Leeds (see page 11).



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