



# UNITY POST

PUBLISHED BY WEST YORKSHIRE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL - WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY: 18-25 JANUARY 2011



Hope's Back!  
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## West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council

How Big  
is our  
Society?

Pages 6-7

# LOOKING UP TOGETHER!

**Things are looking up for Christian Unity, in all senses of the phrase.**

You can look up old friends, for example. Relationship, friendship is at the heart of local unity. Getting to know better the Christians at your next door church can break down barriers and lead you to doing new things together.

You look up to people you respect, even if they are different to you. In our churches, let's look up to each other, let's grow to respect each other, and each other's Christian faith, like the parts of the body in 1 Corinthians 12. (Look it up!)

You look up information in a book or a newspaper. Read on, for news of all the things that are happening locally, regionally and beyond to promote Christian unity. There are over seven pages of stories from local Churches Together groups.

You will see that things are looking up for the churches of West and North West Yorkshire, as we appreciate all that we have in common and we work together in the name of Christ, who unites us.



*Looking up: stilts in Little Lane, Bradford (see page 10), and parachute games in Settle*

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# AN ECUMENICAL MATTER

**Welcome to Unity Post, the newspaper of the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council (WYEC). Inside, you will find lots of stories about the different ways in which the churches of different traditions are working together across West and North Yorkshire, and beyond.**

Ecumenism comes from a Greek word meaning the whole inhabited earth, and this concern for Christian mission to all people everywhere helps to drive the movement to bring our churches closer together.

WYEC exists to promote Christian Unity and brings together churches, church leaders and church projects in shared witness, mission and prayer. We try to encourage local Churches Together groups, and any activities which build up relationships between churches.

There is a big map of Yorkshire in the WYEC office, with a region marked in that stretches from Whernside in the north west – the highest and most rural point – to the contrasting area around Ferrybridge in the south east.

Altogether, the population is over two and a quarter million people. This is the WYEC region, and it covers most of three Anglican Dioceses (Bradford, Ripon & Leeds, and Wakefield), two Methodist Districts (Leeds and West Yorkshire), the Catholic Diocese of Leeds, the West Yorkshire African Caribbean Council of Churches, as well as a large part of the Yorkshire regions of Baptist, United Reformed, Salvation Army, Quaker, Lutheran and Moravian churches.

WYEC consists of senior Church Leaders and Ecumenical Officers from each of these churches. We also try to build up relationships with other churches – Orthodox, Pentecostal, independent... - to encourage Christian people to work together wherever we can. Part of this work is celebrating all that is already happening locally, ecumenically. There is indeed a lot to celebrate, as you will see in this paper. Read on!

Clive Barrett



## From the Chair of WYEC

– the Revd. Dr. Liz Smith, Chair of Leeds Methodist District

**My faith journey is rooted in Cornish Methodism – especially the singing – but the path has also taken me criss-crossing ecumenical boundaries. I was brought up in the context of ‘chapel’, and the lively and influential MAYC (Methodist Association of Youth Clubs), but I attended a very traditional Church of England Primary School – singing of psalms and canticles in assembly! - and as a teenager had close links with a youth fellowship at the parish church.**



In my late teens I responded to a call to become an accredited Local Preacher, and nearly twenty years later was accepted for ordained presbyteral ministry in the Methodist Church. In the intervening years, as well as having three children, I had found employment on two occasions working as a church based community worker for the Church of England. When I completed my ministry training I found myself working as something of an ‘ecumenical guinea pig’, as a ‘Methodist Curate’ in a Church of England parish. In addition to the Anglican-Methodist theme running through my journey, there have been encounters with other Christian traditions that have been formative: the placement in a Roman Catholic parish that deepened for me the sense of eucharistic mystery and the invisible communion in which we are held; the enthusiasm of other denominations working within local Churches Together groups; gatherings of women from across denominational boundaries, that have been signs of grace and hope. Most enriching, always, have been the opportunities to work in partnership with others in ways that address real challenges and issues within our communities.

My experience of WYEC over the past three years, since I took up my present appointment, has been an encouragement and a reminder of all that is best when we share our journeys of discipleship and faith. There are many exciting things happening across West Yorkshire and beyond, where Christians are mindful of God’s call to be peacemakers, bridge-builders and pioneers of grace. As we read about some of these ventures in Unity Post – perhaps we will be challenged afresh to do things differently - together - where we are!

Liz Smith

## STAND UP FOR JESUS... IN OUR MIDST

It could be the words of the King in the Matthew 25 parable of the sheep and the goats (‘whatever you do / don’t do to the least of these my servants, you do / don’t do to me’). It could be the Easter story of disciples walking to Emmaus with a stranger who is revealed as the risen Christ. In each case, we are reminded of the need to see Jesus in each other, especially in the vulnerable, the needy, the stranger.

In the past year, West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council has issued two public statements in support of the most vulnerable people in our society. In Lent, a season many Christians use for self-examination, senior WYEC Church Leaders came together to speak express concern at growing inequality in our society, and to encourage our churches to reach out in service to people in their own local community. (Pictured, below, with members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.)

WYEC Council also agreed to support Yorkshire’s ‘City of Sanctuary’ movement (see page 5). Churches of all traditions have been touched by heartbreaking



Gloria Hanley, then Chair of WYEC, and David Gamble, President of the Methodist Conference, with the Church Leaders’ public statement.

stories of people fleeing from terrible events in different parts of the world. We want to help these people to feel safe in Yorkshire. Many towns and cities are being declared places of ‘sanctuary’, where the frightened stranger can feel secure. Local churches are encouraged to offer hospitality and welcome to people seeking sanctuary, asylum, refuge in our midst.



## 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.

## PARTNERS AND PROPHETS

**WYEC’s work is varied, from inviting (in 2010) Deenabandhu Manchala, who works with the World Council of Churches, to speak in Leeds about the Decade to Overcome Violence, to supporting a racial justice service in Bradford Cathedral and ecumenical Mission Praise singing at Saltaire United Reformed Church.**

WYEC’s regular responsibilities and joys include the support of Churches Together groups and formal Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs). These could be institutional chaplaincies – Wakefield Prison, or the Universities in Leeds – or an especially strong covenant between local churches, e.g. Newsome, Huddersfield, where a covenant has led to Anglican and Methodist churches jointly running a superb community project. Most LEPs, however, are single congregation, which is when different churches agree to worship together in the same building at the same time. This is not the only way in which churches can show their essential unity, but it is a useful and prophetic tool in the ecumenical toolbox. We are delighted that Eldwick has just joined the single congregation LEP family.

WYEC has undertaken several reviews of LEPs in recent months. Wesley Road Chapel, Armley is a partnership of Baptist,

Methodist and United Reformed churches with an important shared ministry in a challenging inner city area; St Andrew’s Methodist and United Reformed Church, Skipton, has a very lively and active ministry at the centre of the town; West Bretton Church, Anglican and Methodist, has a unique role to play in a commuter village with few other community institutions. WYEC has also been involved in future staffing consultations with a number of churches, including Kingsway Ossett, Beeston Hill United Free Church, and Trinity Church Keighley. A number of other LEPs have been working through new Charity Commission constitutions, to ensure consistency and accountability.

### PARTNERS TOGETHER

There will be an open meeting for anyone involved with a Local Ecumenical Partnership at Christchurch, Windhill, Shipley at 10am-12noon on Wednesday 23 March.

There will also be a meeting for Churches Together groups from Kirklees in Dewsbury Minster Lower Hall, 7.30pm on Tuesday 15 February.

Each of these meetings will be an opportunity for mutual support and sharing of information, for telling your stories and tapping the expertise of others



# WYEC – SHAPE OF THE FUTURE!

**A long-anticipated report has been published by the Dioceses Commission of the Church of England. It considered the mission needs of the Church in Yorkshire, and concluded that these would be best served by the merger of the three West Yorkshire dioceses of Bradford, Ripon & Leeds, and Wakefield.**

The proposal is that there should be a single 'Diocese of Wakefield, The Church of England in West and North West Yorkshire'. The Diocesan Bishop would be based in the old West Riding capital of Wakefield, with area bishops based in Leeds, Bradford, Ripon (for the western part of North Yorkshire), and Huddersfield (for Kirklees and Calderdale). With a single diocesan office, in Leeds, there would be some cost savings, but the primary motivation was mission, with the new areas of responsibility relating more closely with the civil Metropolitan District boundaries.

Clive Barrett, WYEC's County Ecumenical Development Officer, commented that 'From an ecumenical

perspective, this report is excellent news. The proposed new diocese is not dissimilar from the Catholic Diocese of Leeds, or the combined area of the Leeds and West Yorkshire Methodist Districts. However, the real gain is that the proposed diocese bears very close relation to the area served by WYEC.

'Indeed, WYEC is almost the only Church agency operating specifically in the proposed diocesan region. This should give ecumenical relations a strong place in any new arrangement. The future is WYEC!

'Other Churches are now challenged to see how their own structures might best fit with the Anglican proposals. Might the new central secretariat have an ecumenical dimension, perhaps? There could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity here to share resources and best practice.

'My main concern now would be that the Church of England would become distracted by reorganisation. I know that when parishes merge or cluster, the real focus of local unity – the Churches Together group – can be

neglected. I trust that ecumenism would not be sidelined but would be at the heart of moves towards a new diocese.'

What do you think of the proposals? You can read them on

[www.diocom.org/yorkshire](http://www.diocom.org/yorkshire). The Dioceses Commission invites feedback from individuals, churches and organisations before 9 May 2011, after which it will produce a revised

draft. Even if the plans are accepted with only minor revisions, they would not come into effect until at least 2013.

## INS AND OUTS OF ECUMENISM

**We have welcomed some new faces into the WYEC team this year, and we have also said farewell to some longstanding servants of ecumenism. Not only a new face in the office, but also a new voice on the WYEC telephone, Alex Waring (pictured) has come to us from Leeds Church Institute. She joins Clive Barrett, the County Ecumenical Development Officer, at WYEC's Hinsley Hall base in Headingley.**

An addition to our Church Leaders group is Anthony Padmore, incoming Chair of West Yorkshire African Caribbean Council of Churches. In 2011, we look forward to welcoming Nick Baines, Bishop designate of Bradford. He was involved in the Meissen agreement between Anglican and German Lutheran churches.

Departures from WYEC Council have included David James, now retired from his post as Bishop of Bradford, along with Sarah Groves, Graham Kidman and Sean Swithenbank; replacing Sarah and Sean as Ecumenical Officers for the Moravian Church and Leeds Methodist District (North) are Michael Newman and George Bailey, whom we welcome to WYEC, along with an additional Catholic, Father James Callaghan. The full list of WYEC members can be found on the WYEC website [www.wyec.co.uk](http://www.wyec.co.uk).

Clive Barrett commented, 'We have a very strong team of committed people, working both within and between our churches. Whatever inter-church project you or your Churches Together group would like to start up, you can be sure that there would be someone to advise and support you. Just contact the WYEC office in the first instance.'



# SIGNING UP IN ELDWICK

**10/10/10 was an important day for Christians in Eldwick. After months of planning, discussing and drafting, the two congregations of Eldwick Methodist Church and St Lawrence's Church joined together, approved the Constitution and appointed four trustees for the new single congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) during Sunday's service. The Partnership is to be known as The Eldwick Church and its first minister will be The Revd Ruth Parry.**

The two congregations have been drawing closer together,

sharing occasional services and working in close co-operation on mission and outreach initiatives for many years; a study of history shows that this has been so for even longer than any of us realised! Now we have become one legal entity and from January 2011 the main worship base will be at the St Lawrence's site, with many items from the Methodist site enhancing the buildings.

In a recent address to the Methodist Conference Rowan Williams reminded us that for all we know we could still be part of the early church and as such must be prepared to change and take risks for the sake of what we believe. The two congregations

are excited about what is happening; it's a new beginning built on solid and long established foundations, which we hope and pray will equip us better to serve the community in which God has placed us.

*Pictured below: Two of the newly appointed Trustees, Phil Barraclough (left) and Richard Arnold (right), with Chris Low and Ruth Parry. The other 2 trustees are Gareth Ashton and Rob Taylor.*

## LISTENING TO EACH OTHER

**How often do you go away overnight with friends and colleagues from other churches? Many of us know how stimulating it can be to have time away with members of our own church, getting to know each other better, talking about the things that matter to us.**

It can be even more important, though, to find an opportunity to go away with people from other churches, perhaps from a Churches Together group, precisely because we don't know each other so well.

WYEC shows the way with this. Every year, a group of senior Church Leaders spends just over 24 hours away, often at The Briery, a Catholic retreat house in Ilkley. The Church Leaders were able to get to know each other better, and to hear similar and different concerns faced by those who shoulder responsibility in other churches. One of the outcomes of this retreat was the commitment of the Church Leaders to take part in a symbolic action on Ash Wednesday, 9 March 2011, in solidarity with people who are suffering as a result of Government cuts and the economic downturn.

Each church in WYEC nominates someone to be an Ecumenical Officer, and the WYEC Ecumenical Officers have also had a time away recently, at Holy Rood House in Thirsk, the Centre for Health and Pastoral Care, an excellent venue for exploring the healing of the church. The discussion was led by Bill Snelson, once the County Ecumenical Officer for WYEC, and more recently the General Secretary of Churches Together in England (CTE).

David Cornick, Bill's successor as General Secretary of CTE, also engaged with WYEC this year, and visited the WYEC office in Leeds. He and Clive Barrett, the current County Officer, were planning some joint teaching on ecumenism as part of a MA course at York St John University.



*Above Right;  
Bill Snelson with WYEC Ecumenical Officers in Thirsk*

*Right:  
David Cornick in the WYEC office.*

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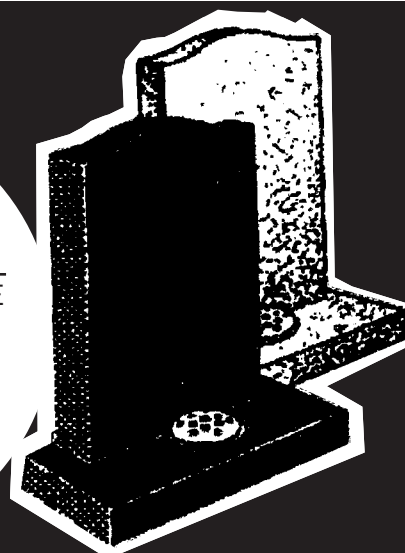
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# CHURCHES TOGETHER – FRIENDS TOGETHER

**In an inner-city area of Bradford, where the number of ministers / clergy has decreased in recent years, a small group of mainly lay people from East Bradford Churches Together meet monthly for prayer at each other's churches.**

For 2011, the 'Year of the Bible' - the meetings allow extra time for bible study each month before the time of prayer, and in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity there will be a supper and quiz. Churches represented include Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist and the Salvation Army. From being at times in the past a monthly chore, these meetings have become more a meeting together of friends, sharing lifts, news, and prayers for sick and deceased members.

This area, whilst facing reducing Christian numbers has at the same time seen a range of inter-faith links developing, recent developments including a Goodwill gathering (coordinated by interfaith and Faith Forum leaders), a BD3 Together group, house-based

Scriptural Reasoning, and a Faith Trail which starts at St Peter's Catholic church (pictured). Food plays a key part in the BD3 Together group. Members of St Clement's Anglican church, St Peter's, and the very hospitable Byron St mosque, meet three or four times a year, with people of other faiths as well, for a meal and a talk. We recently discussed 'Identity' ('Who am I?') There is a family atmosphere, with children welcome, and members of different faiths learn about each other's histories, interests and concerns.

The monthly Scriptural Reasoning group is more 'Book/ Word based (though food also frequently plays a part!) We choose a topic and prepare readings from the Bible and Koran – we have looked at prophecy, marriage, justice... We first met in St Margaret's Anglican church; now the venue is the Heaton home of a wonderful - three generations - Muslim family.

*John Joyce  
East Bradford Churches Together*



## AGEING IS SAGEING

**‘Celebrating Later Life: Older People Spirituality and Faith’ was a conference organised in Leeds by Churches Together in England, with support from WYEC.**

I facilitate a small group which seeks to bring together those from our local churches who minister to people in care homes so this meeting seemed right up my street.

‘We have forgotten the fruit an older tree can bear’ - thus we were invited to break the stereotype of ‘old and dependent’ that allows the ageism to persist. We were reminded that dependency is a feature on average only for the last two years of life and that the vast majority of people over 80 do not require residential care and do not develop dementia. Keith Albans, Group Director (Chaplaincy and Spirituality) of the Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA) Care Group, told us that celebrating longer life gave us the challenge of revisiting our ways of thinking, whether theological or economic, in the context of these great changes in the age structure of the population which have developed so rapidly in the last 100 years.

This meeting was held in Interfaith week, and Albert Jewell, who has made a study of the spirituality of the main religions as they relate to later life, made clear that all faith traditions have respect for the wisdom of age, in fact ‘ageing is sageing’. But there are differences in how the older person is expected to deal with their spiritual life. In Islam, there is no concept of ‘retirement’ – one is to remain engaged with the community; in Hinduism, one should ‘go to the forest’ – away from family in order to come closer to God; in Buddhism one renounces material things to gain simplicity which aids attaining Nirvana. We were reminded that Abraham set off at the age of 75, leaving all behind, to lead his people to a new life.

Rosemarie Harris of Leeds Jewish Housing Association reminded us of the importance of family, and eating together. Satwant Kaur Rait spoke of the Sikh emphasis on equality, and on spiritual growth in old age.

There were good local stories. Sister Agatha Leach, CJ, was involved in the origins of a MHA Multi-faith care facility in South Leeds which will offer care sensitive to the spiritual needs of faith communities. Linda White of St Peter's Bradford amazed

us with her account of a small inner city Bradford Anglican church in a largely Muslim area with a number of isolated elderly Christians. With a mission ‘to be a blessing in our community’, they run an ‘Anchor Project – beyond the Lunch Club’. This aims to be a ‘safe space for all’ and provides a chance for the older people to socialise with each other but also to get to know their Muslim neighbours through a variety of events and activities.

What about later life when frailty, particularly mental, supervenes? Perseverance and resilience were often mentioned as virtues. I had read that Patti Davis, daughter of Ronald Reagan (the first major figure to make public that he had Alzheimer's) had said, ‘Beneath the surface of the disease is a soul that can't have Alzheimer's, a soul that still wants to be heard’.

We heard of a ‘Friendship Club’, where people with dementia and their carers can come and be valued, supported and entertained. CSAN (Caritas Social Action Network), of the Catholic Church, has a specific project on Spirituality and Dementia. Discussion groups were urged to take ageing more seriously, in ourselves and in our faith groups.

*Anne Horsman*

**Faith in Elderly People (FiEP)** is a small ecumenical organisation established in Leeds in 1992. It raises awareness of the needs of older people, including spiritual needs, within both Christian and secular arenas – from congregations to care homes. FiEP has run care conferences, workshops, commissioned plays and produced reports and resources.

It aims to:

- Affirm the gifts of older people
- Help churches to recognise the needs of older people
- Get a new Care Home Manual out to care homes.

FiEP is willing to come to Churches Together groups throughout West Yorkshire to do training sessions; they have two core courses, one on working with older people and one specifically on dementia.

For more information contact [gaynor.hammond@northern.org.uk](mailto:gaynor.hammond@northern.org.uk), 01943 879320.

## TREASURES REVEALED IN WEST YORKSHIRE

Treasures Revealed in West Yorkshire (TRWY) has run for the last three years, managed by David Thompson and Tracy Needham of the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber (CRC). Over this time there have been similar elements in all five Districts of West Yorkshire; Bradford, Calderdale, Leeds, Kirklees and Wakefield.

Perhaps the most visible display has been five Festival weeks, one in each District, in with up to 40 places of worship being open throughout the week for visitors to view their treasures of architectural or cultural heritage. This has not been restricted to Christian churches; most major faiths (and denominations) have taken part.

A Festival week has generally been followed by one or two Faith Trails in the same District, typically involving five places of worship being open on the first Saturday of each month over the summer. Other elements of the project included training in welcoming visitors; an annual conference in each of the three years; and a website [www.treasuresrevealed.co.uk](http://www.treasuresrevealed.co.uk)

The project has been supported by The National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), also by generous donations from West Yorkshire church organisations. However HLF funding comes to an end in February, and CRC cannot continue this initiative.

We hope that other partners will continue to run elements of the project after February. For example, since 2006, Treasures Revealed in Leeds has become an annual event, managed by volunteers with diocesan funding. In Kirklees, the Faith Forum ran the Festival week and trails in 2010. It is hoped that this model will be followed in Bradford and Calderdale. A Bradford Cathedral event in January celebrated the achievements made by TRWY partners, and encouraged others to take up the project. If you are interested in continuing this legacy and wish to know about potential partners in your area, please contact David Slater at CRC on 0113 2443413 or see the TRWY website.

## Inter Faith Week



**Bradford Churches for Dialogue and Diversity marked national Inter Faith Week 2010 with a series of events.**

### Perspectives on Dialogue

On Wednesday, Anjum Anwar and Helen Reid gave the Town and Gown Lecture at the University of York St John. They spoke to an audience of just over 60 about ‘Perspectives on Christian Muslim Dialogue’. They shared the platform so that the lecture was inter faith co operation in practice, not just in theory. They weren't directly in dialogue, the dialogue was the last 20 minutes when the audience were involved in questions, debate and comment. The text of the presentation is available on [www.bccd.org.uk](http://www.bccd.org.uk).

### Youth Facing Extremism

On Thursday, Philip Lewis led a seminar looking at the challenge of Islamic and Far Right Extremism facing our young people. He spoke to a group of 12 Christian leaders, including youth leaders and chaplains. They looked together at the issues, push and pull factors, and how to find positive ways to counter extremism. As a group, they identified ways forward.

### Christian and Muslim girls' day

On Saturday a dozen Christian and Muslim girls, aged between 13 and 17 met together for the first time. The day included a chocolate fountain (voted a great hit), team games when the ‘Whatevers’ beat ‘Bubblegum’, and making a banner together. During the day, the girls talked about their early memories in life and what is important to them now. They spoke about what aspect of their faith inspires them. They also talked about the situation of Asylum Seekers and shared their concerns for people in such difficult circumstances. They agreed to meet again in January, and to bring along some friends too.

To see pictures of the event please go to [www.bccd.org.uk/index.php?PageID=youth](http://www.bccd.org.uk/index.php?PageID=youth)

### Urban Vision

Also on Saturday, Philip Lewis spoke at the Urban Vision Conference, attended by 55 people. Topics covered included ‘Understanding Islam and Muslim communities in the UK’ and ‘Towards a Proper Confidence’. People appreciated the opportunity to discuss in depth our current multi faith context and how, as Christians, we can respond constructively and in the love of God.



# SANCTUARY: A HOLY AND SAFE PLACE

**The welfare of people seeking sanctuary in the UK has long been a concern of churches of all traditions.**

At West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council, we have had meetings with a Home Office minister and senior officials, and several conversations with key officers at the UK Borders Agency at Riverside, Leeds. Most recently, we have expressed our support for the City of Sanctuary movement which is growing rapidly across Yorkshire (pictured).

The City of Sanctuary concept is attributed to Indrajit Bhogal from Sheffield. It has since been taken up by Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield and

Huddersfield (Town of Sanctuary) in our region alone.

The WYEC statement of support recognised the contribution of asylum-seekers and refugees to the Yorkshire and Humber region and called upon churches to offer a positive vision of a culture of hospitality for those in need of safety; in particular, 'to express in prayer, word and action their own support for the City of Sanctuary movement across our region; to take pride in offering a place of safety for people whose lives are threatened; and to celebrate the contribution they make to our communities, towns and cities'.

Will Sutcliffe, from City of Sanctuary Bradford, writes: 'At a National Network meeting of the City of Sanctuary movement Bradford was officially recognized as a City of Sanctuary: "a place where a broad range of local organizations, community groups and faith communities, as well as local government, are publicly committed to welcoming and including people seeking sanctuary".'

'We are thrilled that all the hard work of so many in the city to welcome and include those seeking sanctuary amongst us has been officially recognized, as well as the incredible contributions to the life of the city of sanctuary seekers themselves.

'See [www.cityofsanctuary.org/bradford](http://www.cityofsanctuary.org/bradford). Watch an inspirational short film at: [www.cityofsanctuary.org/film](http://www.cityofsanctuary.org/film).'

To be recognised as an official Town or City of Sanctuary, there needs to be support from voluntary sector, the Council, refugees themselves. There must also be a strategy to achieve greater inclusion of refugees and people seeking sanctuary. Bradford's bid was supported by



*The WYEC statement of support for the City of Sanctuary movement. Back, Liz Smith and Roger Nyantou; front, Tiffy Allen and Gloria Hanley.*



*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (left) at the launch of Leeds, City of Sanctuary*

many partner agencies including:

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON), which provides: McKenzie Friends, volunteers who help people who don't have legal representatives to make appeals and fresh asylum claims; a Hosting Project, where volunteers provide accommodation for destitute people; CHAT, a welcome with refreshments for people at the asylum appeals court who are waiting for their appeal to begin.

Bevan House providing primary medical care. Bradford Immigration and Asylum Seekers Advice Network (BIASAN) providing a weekly drop-in, with a hot meal and advice; a women's club with playworkers for children and health workers; English lessons, trips and outings.

Bradford Action for Refugees, Bradford Refugee Forum, British Red Cross... the list continues and it's still only the second letter of the alphabet!

Clearly, Bradford is proud to be a city of sanctuary.



*Liz Smith, John Packer and Michael McQuinn visit the UK Borders Agency*



## Invitation by RETAS

**For the past two years before Christmas we have had a celebration event in Otley to which we have invited asylum seekers/refugees connected with RETAS (refugee education, training and advisory service) based in Leeds.**

This event is now sponsored by Churches Together in Otley. Up to eighty people have attended each time from various countries such as Estonia, Iraq, Iran, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Cameroons. Most of them are here for political reasons and some have escaped persecution as well. They look for safety and the opportunity to make positive contribution to life here. About half of those attending the party have refugee status and can remain in England. For the others it can be a very anxious time waiting to hear from the Home Office concerning their acceptance.

In Otley we provide them with an experience outside inner city Leeds. Last year part of the programme was a walk in the park and this was enjoyable, particularly for those with children who discovered the playground.

The main course of food is provided by RETAS and last year had an African flavour. Churches Together provide the dessert. We have also offered something of the meaning of Christmas with decorations, crackers and one or two carols. This year we will have a puppet show relevant to the season. One or two of the visitors will be interviewed and share a little of their stories. We believe that it will be another positive experience for these people. It also helps towards making Leeds a city of sanctuary.

## CUPPA PLEASE

**Are you friendly and welcoming and do you enjoy chatting with people from different countries some of whom have limited English?**

Do you make a nice cup of tea? On Mondays, 1pm – 3pm at Wakefield Cathedral, a group supports a Drop In Service for asylum seekers and refugees by providing drinks and snacks, trying to create a warm and hos-

pitable environment. Along with the people using the service, the group works alongside the Council Asylum Support Team, the Red Cross, RASA, the Terence Higgins Trust, local poets, musicians, lawyers, youth workers... It's a great chance to network, meet new people and provide an extremely valuable service to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. Always fun, very interesting – come and share stories and culture! If you would like to volunteer, contact [ali.bullivent@wakefield.org.uk](mailto:ali.bullivent@wakefield.org.uk), 01924 434484.

## PAFRAS donations

**Many Leeds churches donate food and toiletries to PAFRAS (Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) which runs an enormous drop-in operation out of St Aidan's, Harehills. There is a new web-site, [www.pafRAS.org.uk](http://www.pafRAS.org.uk), where you can find out about what PAFRAS has to offer.**

PAFRAS has recently reported a study showing that three quarters of asylum seekers who are refused Legal Aid at their appeal have been wrongly denied that assistance. It is essential that people fleeing persecution get the right legal support, because the consequences of sending them back to a dangerous situation could be awful. Already, over one quarter of applicants find their appeals are successful; these people have an unnecessarily frightening time, worried that the UK Border Agency's original wrong decision might force them to return to the dangers from which they have fled. How many more lives are put at risk when people, unable to get the right legal support, are wrongly evicted to face persecution?

PAFRAS is advertising for two volunteer vacancies: a driver and a cook. If you think you might be interested, email [info@pafRAS.org.uk](mailto:info@pafRAS.org.uk) for details.

## 'I'M IN A CALAMITY. HELP ME GET OUT OF HERE.'

**The people of an area must be supported and loved by the churches and Christians of the area. The complex needs of the homeless, the poor, addicts or refugees in a town are major issues requiring a town's churches to work together. The 'Food and Support Drop-in', a project of Christians Together in Halifax, is an example of ecumenical collaboration making a big impact in Calderdale.**

In two years, the Drop-in, based at Ebenezer Methodist in Halifax, has given out over seven thousand parcels of basic food and toiletries, and warm bedding when available. In a basic 'home', heating may be unaffordable and there may be no cooking facilities. 'What cooking gear have you? Have you access to a kettle?' Selecting food suitable for a 'no cooker' is a constant problem for our volunteers.

Are we sentimental softies; are we being conned? Probably, by a few clients, in spite of our record-keeping. We do refuse some requests and exclude those who abuse the project. But by keeping a friendly atmosphere, jokes rather than judgement, most clients

feel the ethos of the project and appreciate the help we offer.

We open on Saturday mornings. With a hundred clients we need thirty volunteers to serve snacks, check needs, pack bags and to befriend. Other times we work in our store, buying stock, doing paperwork; our volunteers put in over 100 hours each week. Over 50 churches, across the full spectrum, provide the food and finance which make all this possible. Most important are all the volunteers and prayer support from churches. About half our clients accept an offer of prayer support. We've also had evangelist Barry Woodward come and tell his 'Once an Addict' story of change and hope (see [www.proclaimtrust.org](http://www.proclaimtrust.org)).

If we are to help our neighbours, we must use God's help. And we must combine all the strengths in the whole church by working together.

Other Halifax provision for people seeking sanctuary includes, Tuesdays, 10am at St Augustine's Centre, English classes for speakers of other languages, with Bible reading.



# THE CHURCH IN AN AGE OF AUSTERITY

**We are told that we now live in Austerity Britain. Cuts in public services and changes in taxation and welfare provision are being implemented to allow the UK to repay debts we have incurred in the course of addressing the biggest financial crisis since the 1930s.**

These various acts of national belt-tightening are known as austerity measures. They are our common attempt to live within more limited means than we have been used to during more prosperous times.

In spite of being in this crisis together, however, the Age of Austerity is likely to affect people unequally. It is difficult to imagine that anyone will be unaffected by the changes announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review last autumn, but there will certainly be some who suffer more greatly than others. Those who lose their jobs because of cuts, for instance, will find it much harder to make ends meet on benefits than those who keep their jobs or work shorter hours. It will be even harder for the unemployed who were also persuaded to build up debts during the credit boom that took place in few the years before 2007/08. It seems reasonable to suggest that the Age of Austerity will be an Age of Poverty for those who are most

harshly affected by the measures announced.

The Church has long had a concern for the poor and our common well-being as a society. Prior to the introduction of the welfare state, it was the Church which acted as a safety net to the poorest people. But it was also the Church which initiated many of the changes that addressed not just poverty but inequality too.

Tristram Hunt's book, *Building Jerusalem* (Phoenix, 2005), records the rise of the Victorian city during the nineteenth century. From murky beginnings, where soot, grime and squalor were the hallmarks of urban life, well-intentioned Christians, often inspired by firebrand preaching from our pulpits, were determined build a better sort of city, the sort of New Jerusalem that John envisages in the Book of Revelation. In time, the arrival of municipal socialism saw big infrastructure projects that benefited all – clean running water, sewage systems and street lighting that addressed the issues of water borne diseases and crime. In Leeds, the arrival of Walter Hook as Rector in the late 1830s saw the introduction of Church of England inspired Sunday Schools to complement the ones run by the Free Churches for some years before that. The result was not just a

spiritual revival, but also improvements in literacy on a scale never seen before. In the emerging towns of West Yorkshire, Evangelical Anglican, Richard Oastler, campaigned tirelessly for Factory Reforms that improved the lives of working children. The 1847 Ten Hour Act, meant that children under seven were no longer allowed to work, and that those under thirteen were limited to no more than ten hours a day or 58 hours a week. That still seems draconian to us now, but these early Christian initiatives were the bedrock on which further workplace reforms would develop in future years.

Some the Church's passion for addressing poverty may have been eroded during the years when welfare has been provided in good measure by the State. With our Government withdrawing support in the way it is having to, it may be time to recover a greater sense of our own role in meeting need. Poverty is a spiritual matter as well as an issue of not having enough resources to live well. We believe that we are created equally in the image of God, that we are loved equally by God, that we are valued alongside one another as equals in God's sight. It is important to us, therefore, if our neighbours are brought low by poverty in such a way

that they feel worth less than the next person. Poverty is an issue of inequality as well as of a lack of resources. Those whose lives are pulled apart during our Age of Austerity will have spiritual as well as physical needs to be met. The Church may not be able to provide jobs for the unemployed, for instance, but we have an important role in helping people pastorally to maintain self-respect and dignity at a time when it is easy to lose both.

Of all the gospel writers, Luke is the one whose portrayal of Jesus is starkest when it comes to poverty and inequality. Luke 6:20-26 offers a unique contrast between those who are poor and those who are well-off. Jesus tells the poverty-stricken, the hungry and the sorrowful that they will be blessed with laughter, food and the Kingdom of God; by contrast, the rich, the well-fed and those who laugh now are promised sorrow, hunger and trouble. Poverty and inequality appear to walk hand in hand, leaving those who are well-off with a clear responsibility to those who are poor. The point is made as early as Luke 1 when Mary sings with both joy and challenge:

'The Lord has used his powerful arm to scatter those who are proud. He drags strong rulers from their



Bradford statue of Richard Oastler

thrones and puts humble people in places of power.

God gives the hungry good things to eat, and sends the rich away with nothing.'

In the Kingdom of God, the world is turned on its head by disciples who believe that poverty and inequality are neither necessary nor inevitable. If we are in this Age of Austerity together, then let the Church be at the forefront of those who are prepared to act with care and conviction.

Philip Bee

## The Government View

*Baroness Saida Warsi from Dewsbury addressed Anglican bishops in September on Government policy towards faith. Here is an extract from her speech.*

**The proportion of people in the world who adhere to the four biggest religions has actually increased in the past century. And right here in Britain, despite what many say, religion is certainly not going away.**

Not only did up to eighty per cent of British people say that they had some kind of religious belief in the last census but there is evidence to show that religious attendance actually seems to be rising. Tearfund tells us that number of people attending church each year increased between 2007 and 2008, from around one in five adults to around one in four. Cathedral worship has increased since the turn of the century. And the Baptist Union has been recording rising attendances - especially among the young. The fact is that our world is more religious than ever. Faith is here to stay. It is part of the fabric of human experience. And in Britain faith is very much alive and kicking.

We have to come to a deeper understanding about the contribution of these faith communities to our society. In other words, why they do the good things they do. Unless we understand what drives people of faith to contribute to society, we cannot hope to help them on their way.

Now there will always be people who look at faith-based charities and think they are something sinister. They fail to see the vital link between these peoples' faiths and their contribution to society. They fail to see that these people feel inspired to help others because of their faith.

And very often, faith communities offer us innovations which the whole of society can learn from: the Fairtrade movement was launched in an Anglican theological college in the North East. Churches were integral to the emergence of the anti-homelessness and the anti-slavery movements. The story of overseas development cannot be written without the names Christian Aid, CAFOD Islamic Relief, Jewish Care, and Muslim Aid.

Of course in England it's hard not to notice the presence in every community of a parish church served by clergy. It's absurd to stereotype these parishes as 'holy huddles'. They are hubs around which people of all faiths and none can meet, greet and build relationships in what can be a

fragmented society. As you know better than any of us, they are also the bases where post offices, libraries and job clubs have been co-located. They are the place where self-help groups for those facing addictions can meet affordably.

So the real question is not: 'how should big government be controlling faith-based organisations' ... but 'how can government help people of faith do even more to build the Big Society?'

Once we are clear about the reason why faith-based charities do all the good things they do, we can put in place the right policies to support them responsibly. Faith gives rise to huge numbers of personal kindnesses and other civic contributions; faith shapes beliefs, behaviour and a sense of purpose; what government should be doing is helping people of faith express themselves in this way.

My conviction is that in a stronger and bigger society the scope for people of faith to take their places as equals at the public table should become easier not just on so called 'stake-holding' bodies but as the vanguard of an increasingly decentralised civic society.

[O]ur aim with the Big Society is to build a culture where we don't just look to government to solve all our big problems. Where people are empowered and feel encouraged to take control of their local communities and neighbourhoods. And where we foster a new culture of social responsibility - not by legislation but by example and collaboration.

One big part of it is about giving you - charities, churches, faith groups, community groups - the chance to do even more good. That means giving you the chance to take control over local community buildings or run services where the community thinks that you could do that well.

Under our plans, you will have more power, more responsibility, and more choice over how to get involved in your communities and over how to apply your skills. I don't just want to say to you that you have a lot to contribute to building the Big Society. I want to tell you that for me you are at the heart of society already and key to its future, and that this government will be on your side.

(For a critique of the Big Society as debated by the Church of England General Synod, see [www.thinkinganglicans.org.uk/archives/004691.htm](http://www.thinkinganglicans.org.uk/archives/004691.htm) and go to GS 1804.)

**A Big Chance?** Steve Chalke, King's Church Halifax, 23 February. See page 18.

## JOHN SENTAMU REFLECTS

**A man asked me recently: 'What do you think of the Big Society?' So I told him: 'The Big Society? The church has been doing it for over 2000 years!'**

There is nothing new in a set of Government policies that looks to encourage individuals and voluntary groups to be enabled, to be engaged within our community, to care for one another.

The Church of England knows all about volunteering. More people do unpaid work for church groups than any other organization. Churchgoers contribute 23.2 million hours voluntary service each month in their local communities.

The Church of England alone provides activities outside church worship in the local community for over half a million children and young people aged under 16 years, and 38,000 young people aged 16 to 25 years. Over 136,000 volunteers run activity groups for young people which are sponsored by the Church of England.

The Church employs more youth workers than any other organization and is involved on a daily basis trying to make the lives of young people better. What I am trying to say is that the Church understands the importance of volunteering and being active in our communities. As one of my predecessors, Archbishop William Temple said, 'The Church is the only organisation that exists for the wellbeing and fraternity of its non-

members'.

But what we must not forget that the state has responsibilities too.

There is a reason we pay our taxes. We should expect the state to run and fund strong public services, with our money.

The promotion of social justice should be a primary moral imperative for any government, and for every publicly funded institution. For when the government puts the promotion of social justice at its heart, we can stand together as one nation, as one people in solidarity with each other, recognizing the dignity of all, and affording all fair and equal opportunities for access and services. Freedom, fraternity and informed choice must characterise our social fabric.

For hard working families – especially those living in the poorest communities – I think we should stand up and call on the state to play its part by investing in Britain's recovery.

What many who may face redundancies will not understand is why the banks who caused the credit crunch and the downturn, and had to be bailed out, are giving themselves huge bonuses. When will the Government have the guts to tackle the huge bank bonus culture? This is a gravy train that is running out of control. Urgent action is needed.

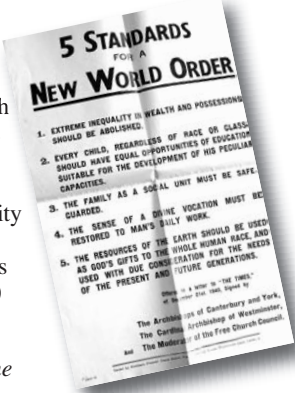
## CHURCH LEADERS – TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

**West Yorkshire's senior Church Leaders have a tradition of making a stand together on matters of common concern at the start of Lent each year. On Ash Wednesday 2011, 9 March, concerns will be around people who are suffering as a result of cuts, job losses, and the economic downturn.**

Church Leaders will symbolically acknowledge personal and collective failure and take responsibility for vulnerable people who are most affected by developments in society.

This year's concern follows naturally from last Lent's stand, which took the form of a twin-pronged public statement. First, research has shown that inequality, the gulf between rich and poor, has widened and that everyone in society suffers when that happens; that is a problem for government to tackle. Second, we all have a responsibility toward each other, and the churches can lead the way in promoting volunteering and creating a spirit of community responsibility; that is something for all of us to do. Read the WYEC Church Leaders 2010 statement by going to 'Public Statements' at [www.wyec.co.uk](http://www.wyec.co.uk).

*A Leeds Quaker wartime poster shows a 1940 statement made by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the Moderator of the Free Church Council. WYEC Church Leaders' concern for equality has strong ecumenical foundations.*







City and country have distinct needs which should be taken seriously by both government and the Big Society. The Inn Churches project in Bradford supplements statutory provision for the homeless. Tim Fox reports on the conclusions of a rural conference, where housing was also an issue.

# ROOM AT THE INN

Photos Courtesy of Nathan Ramtohul

‘Is not this what I require of you as a fast? ... Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, taking the homeless poor into your house, clothing the naked when you meet them and never evading a duty to your kinfolk?’

The Inn Churches Winter Shelter Project responds to that challenge from Isaiah (58:6-7): to provide emergency accommodation for the homeless for seven nights per week at a different church each night. Volunteers from each church involved, and other churches, host up to eight men and/or women overnight, providing a hot dinner and a hot breakfast. The churches lie within a two mile radius of the City Centre, and each church is expected to host only one night per week. This complements Bradford City Council’s provision for nights when the temperature drops to zero. The churches are open regardless of the temperature. This ecumenical initiative is supported

by an amazing fifty three churches across Bradford and beyond. A successful one-month project last February served 56 different individuals, supplying a total of 257 beds over the course of 28 days. This year’s project will last for the three coldest months of this winter; the expectation this winter is that the need could be even greater.

Of course there are many large agencies providing accommodation and other services to homeless people. Nevertheless there is a severe shortage of ‘low threshold’ direct access accommodation and the majority of hostel beds are full most of the time. Church run winter shelters are regarded as more friendly and flexible than hostels, and less bureaucratic. They directly serve the needs of homeless and vulnerable people.

How effective or desirable is it for churches to get involved in an increasingly professionalised area of community action? Is it right

just to offer temporary space on a church hall floor to someone who has a right to decent and secure accommodation? This year statutory and other voluntary agencies in Bradford will provide up to eighteen beds when the temperature is below zero. Yet in cold weather, extra provision is always needed; lives are saved each winter by church shelters.

And there are some people and groups whose needs are not well served by hostels and for whom homelessness services may not all be available. These include:

- people who can manage reasonably well but who have lost their home, perhaps due to a relationship breakdown;
- people who reject hostels and services and who may become long term entrenched rough sleepers; and
- people with no entitlement to benefits e.g. EU nationals, destitute asylum seekers or undocumented migrants



The Inn Churches Project involves an amazing 53 churches and organisations, from Catholics to Abundant Life, and more than 260 volunteers. Nine hosting churches share out provision over the three months.

‘This project has captured the heart of many across the city. It is powerful evidence of what can happen when the Church comes together to work as one, in service to the poor,’ said Canon Sam Randall, who initiated the project.

Shawna Splawn, Community Worker for Bradford Diocese, added, ‘I believe we’ve tapped into a spiritual dynamic that is going to make a big difference to our

homeless friends on the street this winter. Our volunteers will be providing a place of welcome, a place of warmth, and a place of hope. Our prayer is that no one this winter will be left in the cold.’

The volunteers’ lives are changed too. One comment described how ‘Seeing our guests on a daily basis, hearing their stories ... made me change my perception of homelessness. ... We cannot fully portray the difference the project made to the lives of the precious homeless people we touched and to the impact of those lives on our amazing team of volunteers.’

# FAITH AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

An ecumenical conference at Swanwick marked the 20th anniversary of the 1990 report ‘Faith in the Countryside’.

Alan Smith, the Bishop of St Albans considered the ‘State of the Countryside’. Anne Richards spoke about the spread of the gospel through the occasional offices in a small rural village, and addressed the churches’ role in developing good communication between villages.

Happiness and economic ‘success’ was a theme in Michael Winter’s address. He spoke of the tussle between economists who want to put a value on everything and those who want to find a way of measuring happiness or well-being. Human well-being is not just an economic thing. The land and all that is on it have an intrinsic dignity and value.

Mark Shucksmith is a Board Member of the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC). He referred to the power struggles involved in planning affordable housing: ‘Churches can and do play a vital role, challenging people in rural communities to act in accordance with their values, showing leadership and preaching neighbourliness in action through social justice and compassion’.

Answering prepared questions were Professor Winter, Sue Shaw (chair of ACRE, the national body of Rural Community Councils), and Archbishop Rowan Williams, who spoke about concern for the profile of rural life and the rural church. The media, he said, often gave a distorted picture of rural life, perpetuating commonly held myths of what the rural experience really is. More encouragingly he said that the Church is ‘not going to go away’. As in inner city areas, it has a ‘basic fidelity’ and is committed to staying with the rural community – believing in the God who is not going to go away. And therefore the Church is there for celebration, for the affirmation of meaning.

The rural Church he said, is equipped to do some things well and is doing them – in and for the community.

The Big Society arose in a fringe meeting held for Christian Rural Concern (CruC) and Christian Rural and Environmental Studies (CRES) with talks given by John Whitehead, Caroline Hewlett, Timothy Fox and Philip Wagstaff (all tutors or students of CRES) under the heading, ‘Resourcing Small Communities in the Big Society’.

The conference mentioned the churches’ role to be inclusive of those who are marginalised, of church members’ voluntary work in various directions for the

benefit of the community, often in partnership with others. There was also mention of ‘care farming’ as a way of getting people back into farming.

At the end, five ‘headlines’ were presented that embodied the most important recommendations from the seminars:

1. That affordable housing should be available and set up after a local survey of needs and a community-led plan, formulated to an agreed national standard.
2. That the Government should remove barriers preventing churches from accessing funds for community benefits.
3. That the Churches strengthen their (already considerable) contribution to sustainable communities and use this as a basis for engaging Government and local communities in the ‘Big Society’ agenda.
4. That the Government should safeguard UK’s forests and the ecological, cultural, economic, recreational and spiritual benefits that are already in place.
5. That the Churches should organise the training and preparation of its ordained ministers to encourage collaborative ways of mission and ministry.

Overall my impression was that the rural Church has a lot to give to the local community, the wider Church and the nation, but that its voice has not always been heard.

Timothy Fox, Bentham

Clive Barrett adds:

Churches Together in England has a variety of Bodies in Association, organisations which bring Christians together in a common cause. One such group is Housing Justice, a Christian voice on issues of housing and homelessness. Housing Justice Deputy Director, Alastair Murray, claimed recently that the shortage of affordable rural housing had reached crisis point in many parts of the country ‘especially for families in housing need in areas with high property prices and large numbers of second homes’. Churches can be uniquely placed in the community where they have surplus assets. Providing housing is a very practical solution to creating social benefit and preventing rural hardship. A Faith in Affordable Housing (FIAH) initiative would promote the use church land and property for affordable housing and community purposes.

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## MESSINESS AND MEXICO

**Christ Church, Halton, is a Methodist – United Reformed ecumenical partnership in East Leeds. The church has pioneered two initiatives in recent months.**

Its ‘Messy Church’ afternoons have been such a success that numbers have had to be restricted! Around fifty children and parents turn up on one Saturday each month to enjoy crafts, singing, a puppet show which tells a Bible story, and some refreshments for the children. They have made Advent calendars, bracelets, lanterns and blow-paint pictures. It is a wonderful witness in the area and the parents enjoy it as much as the children and all the church helpers. They are looking forward to more fun and games in 2011.

In the approach to Christmas, the people of Christ Church decided to follow the Mexican tradition of Posada. A beautiful wooden statue of Mary and Joseph (pictured) started their journey on Advent Sunday, and moved from house to house on their way to Christ Church on Christmas Day. People passed them on to the next person enjoying some fellowship, a cup of coffee or just a chat. It was a lovely way of journeying through Advent together and Mary and Joseph arrived at church on Christmas Morning.

## THE BIG SUPPER

**Extending an invitation to Churches Together in Pontefract, the Society of Friends at their Meeting House in Pontefract held an evening entitled ‘THE BIG SUPPER’, which coincided with harvest festivals. The idea being that surplus goods from gardens and allotments could be tasted and exchanged, and people be encouraged to buy locally produced goods.**

Home-made soup, breads, savoury dishes, scones and jam were provided, and surplus goods included pumpkins, marrows, tomatoes, cabbages, apples and some home-made puddings and cakes. It was a very pleasant evening of sharing goods, recipes and gardening advice, made all the more delightful by the number of small children who tasted and played.

Goods left over were donated to All Saints Church, Pontefract, to help feed a number of ex-offenders trying to start a new life. Suggestions were sought for a way of continuing this experiment of sharing local produce and knowledge, and the idea of a market stall was mooted.

Alan Franks

# Cross Out – No Mistake!

**In January 2009, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) proposed that the focal point of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity should be the creation of a simple wooden cross by fixing together two pieces of wood, like those used by Ezekiel to describe the union of divided nations.**

Many Huddersfield churches created wooden crosses of different sizes, some lashed together with cord as suggested by CTBI. The Cross created by Lower Colne Valley Churches Together was of less adventurous construction, and also differed from others in the district in that it had ‘legs’ and was meant to travel. This, too, followed a CTBI suggestion that the Cross should become an Ecumenical Cross for local Churches Together groups, to be circulated around member churches to represent the essential unity they shared.

And so began the planned movement of the Cross

around our six churches; it was hosted by each church for a period of about three months, doing the full round of the churches in roughly eighteen months.

The Ecumenical Cross did more than just represent church unity, it helped to achieve it. As members of the former host church accompanied the cross to its next host, they witnessed the worship of Christians of another tradition, crossing boundaries, building relationships.

During 2010, the first full circuit of the Ecumenical Cross was completed. It has recently moved from the Quaker Meeting House (pictured) to the Baptist Church where it was originally created. It will move next to St Mark’s Anglican Church in time for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 2011.

Arthur Preston



[Our thanks are extended to Arthur Preston, who stands down as Secretary of Lower Colne Valley Churches Together in 2011: Ed.]

## Scarecrows

**“Men breaking in through the roof and dead bodies around the building” was a suggested message to entice the local media reporters to visit Aldersgate Methodist Church, Low Moor, Bradford on the weekend of 10th and 11th July. However, it was decided to contact them with the less sensational invitation to a “Biblical Scarecrow Festival”. This was Aldersgate’s first attempt at such an event and resulted in scarecrows not only being made by church members but by children from local schools and neighbouring youth organisations.**



Visitors bought a programme which gave Bible references and background information on the 28 characters, and then they were invited to match up each scarecrow with the appropriate number on the quiz sheet. Bibles were available and several people admitted it was the first time they had opened one for many years.

Mary Twentyman, the main organiser of the festival, said “People really enjoyed making the scarecrows and there was great sense of Christian fellowship. The two local Anglican churches in South Bradford Parish have already approached us to offer their premises and make the festival a community-wide event next year.”

Note: As part of the Year of the Bible celebrations Aldersgate Methodist Church, Holy Trinity Wibsey and St Andrews Oakenshaw cum Woodlands will be holding another Scarecrow Festival over the Pentecost Weekend 11th and 12th June 2011 – watch the press for further details.

## ILKLEY MORE

**Churches Together in Ilkley (CTi) consists of nine churches throughout Ilkley and Ben Rhydding. Our aim is to encourage member churches to work together in ways that are appropriate to the task and to share resources where possible.**

‘Can we do this together?’ sums up one of our key aims. During a year we organise or participate in: Unity Week, Easter cards delivered to every home, Good Friday Walk of Witness, Easter morning Sunrise Service at the Cow and Calf Rocks, open air Pentecost Service, Civic Service at Sacred Heart Church, open air Songs of Praise, Back to Church Sunday, Remembrance Day Parade, Carols at the switching on of Ilkley Christmas lights, Christmas cards delivered to every home, Advent Service, open air Carol Concert. We also support a revival centre in Matugga, Uganda.

This year we have also put up a display with banners (pictured) in Ilkley Library Foyer .

The CTi Millennium Project is a continuing focus on young people with learning disabilities. In 2001 , from money we had raised, we were able to purchase a home for three young people. This is managed by a housing association. CTi’s



activities today for young people with learning disabilities include: a contact group, a dance group, at least four summer outings and both a weekly café at the Baptist Church and an allotment project at St John’s Ben Rhydding which continue through the summer. These activities are supported by volunteers and fundraising in the district.

## HUDDERSFIELD LIGHTS

**Churches Together in Huddersfield Town Centre were invited to take part in Kirklees Council’s Festival of Light weekend.**

The Street outside the Parish Church was closed and Victorian fairground rides placed along it, so it was agreed to base all our activities here. The Churches got involved by organising a reflective walk round the Christmas story in the church, entitled ‘Follow the Star’. This was well attended on Saturday and much appreciated by many for whom it was a new experience. We also

offered an opportunity to a ‘Get in the nativity picture’ which allowed people of all ages to put on nativity costumes and be photographed. Mary and Joseph were also out on the street looking for a room and giving out Christmas booklets for all ages whilst encouraging people to come in and join the fun or simply have a cuppa and get warm, as it was cold snowy weather. We closed on Sunday afternoon with a Christingle family service based upon the theme of ‘Jesus, Light of the World.’

## POST-ECUMENISM...?

**I suppose we could call this the post-ecumenical period: not that Ecumenism has died, but that the movements towards organic unity in the churches are... where do you find a metaphor?... becalmed?**

Well, yes if you say we are not making forward progress- but we are not in peaceful waters, because the sea of secularism in which we sail is full of secular submarines, picking our ships off with well-aimed torpedoes. The bridge and the engine-room are not always in harmony on the ships, which makes manoeuvre difficult. The ships are not always signalling to each other, or speaking the same language on their radios, and so collisions are always likely. If only we could form up in some sort of convoy, each doing what they do best!

Surprisingly, the Pope’s latest initiative in inviting disaffected Anglicans over to Rome may be a sign of a way forward, if you take it only as a principle. In fact it is nothing new, as various Eastern churches follow a separate path in many things, except for an allegiance to Rome. As ever, it comes down to questions of authority, but the ability to continue to honour traditions and structures- culture even- has its attractions for many. The ships are following an Admiral, but each is sailing in its own way. The creaking you hear may be this metaphor rather than any ship, but I am beginning to think that Churches Together is holding together in Wakefield on such a principle. We may not have an agreed Admiral but at least some sort of consensus. ‘All for one and one for all’ may be our mission statement, or ‘Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno’ as some traditionalist bloggers would have it, nothing being authenticam unless rendered into Latin. We are not really the Three Musketeers, but it is also,

Wikipedia tells me, the unofficial motto of Switzerland and they certainly know the problems of unity.

So we don’t so much do Christian Unity, as do Christianity (to quote Alistair Campbell on George W Bush) in Unity, if you get my distinction. To take an example: for years, we have had a Walk and United Service in Wakefield on Good Friday: it is probably the largest purely Christian event in the city. Churches Together felt we should continue the story, which usually ended solemnly on Good Friday on the steps of Wakefield Cathedral at the Crucifixion. So in 2010 we added two more events: a silent Vigil outside the Cathedral on Holy Saturday, a sort of Guerilla Christianity- at a stretch- when various ‘shoppers’ suddenly gather together in a prominent silence, and then a Pentecost event (pictured opposite, page 9) reversing the Good Friday order: starting in the Cathedral and going outside, three stages, in three different styles of worship.

There are dangers in starting something off in your own style and expecting everyone else to come on board when the course is already set, but it can work: nor can you expect everyone to support everything: but the beginning is mutual support rather than antagonism, the warm hand rather than the cold shoulder. The secret is the constant striking of a balance, the constant trimming of the sails. The rocks are there, but we try to keep moving.

Nick Shields,  
Churches Together in Wakefield



# REWINDING

## 1. In Gomersal and Birkenshaw

Churches Together in Gomersal and Birkenshaw (CTGB) had a rewarding 2010, serving our communities and worshipping together. We have been blessed and received so much in our ministry and outreach in supporting the REWIND 2010 programme. Our various REWIND efforts were very well supported by CTGB members, local Christians and by the schools, their children and teachers. It has been a most rewarding, inspiring time for everyone involved.

REWIND is a Scripture Union programme enabling people of faith to deliver the Christian message of Easter and Christmas to local schools. In ninety minutes of fast moving quizzes, games and crafts and video clips the Christian story is told by rewinding to the first Christmas or Easter, then fast forwarding to the way we celebrate them today. We answer the question, 'Why is this season important to Christians'?

Our REWIND sessions have been held in the Church of England, Methodist, Moravian and United Reformed churches - a splendid ecumenical effort and achievement. To date, nine sessions have been held, for around 80 children, each session being run at four different

venues, three times a year. As well as Christmas and Easter, there is a 'Moving On' session for children moving from primary to secondary school, helping them to think about the challenges that are ahead of them and the choices that they will have to make.

Teachers are encouraged to come to relax through the sessions and their feedback has been very positive; they particularly appreciate the Christian message delivered by Christians.

We will continue this most exciting, rewarding and exhilarating ministry during 2011.

*Rev. Ralph Davidson,  
Churches Together in Gomersal and  
Birkenshaw*

## 2. In Keighley

Every year Year 6 pupils from primary schools in the Keighley area are invited to take part in REWIND to Christmas. The Christmas story is retold through DVD clips, drama sketches and quizzes; and the children explore what Christmas means to them and why it is so important to millions of Christians all over the world. Working in small groups, led by Christians from local churches, the children



have the opportunity to read the Christmas story for themselves, create a stained glass tea light holder and reflect on the real meaning of Christmas.

REWIND to Christmas in Keighley is run by Christian Links in Keighley Schools (CLiKS), with the support of local churches. Over 660 pupils from 20 primary schools attended this year, and we know their teachers are looking forward to an hour off where they can relax, eat mince pies and watch their pupils enjoying

themselves!

Comments from last year included: 'We always enjoy the lovely CLiKS events. The staff are so welcoming and the overall event is relevant, informative and fun'; 'All leaders very enthusiastic and held the children's attention'; 'The teaching of the Christian understanding of Christmas was brought in a sensitive way - thought provoking but not "taught".'

*Alison Way*

# HORBURY YOUTH

**H**orbury Churches Together has had a paid youth worker since 2004, working mainly with 11-16 year olds. In 2009 a Big Lottery grant enabled us to employ a Senior Youth Worker, a part time Administrator and to open a state of the art office in the local Methodist Church.

We have 12 regular volunteers of all ages from our Churches. We are now about to take a volunteer young person on placement for two terms to give that person work experience. We shall be doing these three times a year.

55% of our Youth Management Committee are enthusiastic young people under 25, never short of ideas. We work together within the 'Here by Rights National' framework

As part of the Lottery Grant agreement and to continue our Young Christians part of the project, we need to raise over

£20,000 per annum. Church congregations and Youth Volunteers have undertaken a sponsored bike ride at Wakefield Westgate railway station, sponsorship from 15 runners per year in the Great North Run, individual giving and varying amounts from fundraising in the Churches.

The objectives include the provision of fitness and sporting opportunities for enjoyment, the setting up of lunch time groups in the local High School to assist students with behavioural and interactive skills, teenage lifestyle groups and 'Experience' events which have so far included a visit to the Holocaust Museum at Newark, ice skating and themed residential activity weekends.

Our groups consist of a Christian House Group for 16-19 year olds, four lunch time drop in clubs at the High School for 11-16s, a Youth Club for 8-16 years, an after school friendship group for 13-16s, a football training group for year 7 in conjunction with the High School and a girls' dance group. In addition we mentor 15 young people individually. We have had success with Reading Support groups, increasing reading ages by up to 2 years through intensive 10 week programmes.

The Head Teacher at the High School has commended us for the work we put in with a number of students who, she says, would not have achieved the maturity and GCSE results they gained in 2010 without our support. In the next few

years and we hope to expand our work beyond the 250 young people per annum who currently benefit from the project

The Revd John M Parton, Chairman of Horbury Churches Together, said it is a

great privilege to be the Chair of such a dedicated organisation which has so much support from the congregations of the churches in and around Horbury.



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# RECLAIMING THE STREET

## THE BIG LUNCH @ LITTLE LANE

**We had a street party, a Big Lunch.**

'We' are Little Lane Church, a Baptist / Methodist / United Reformed ecumenical partnership in inner Bradford. The idea behind the Big Lunch, is that when people come together and have fun we become more positive. We can build new friendships that can be enjoyed throughout the year. It starts a journey to rebuild our communities which the Eden Project in Cornwall calls 'heart warming'. Little Lane Church, Bradford Youth Players and Community Development workers organised the day. Local businesses supported the event by giving food, plates, carpet and other accessories. Local residents and church members prepared and served food. Manningham Healthy Living Project gave out fresh fruit and 'Playspace' entertained the children. We had parachute games, music from the church worship band and Bradford Youth Players singing pieces from musicals.

Around two hundred people attended; we met our neighbours and celebrated living in Girlington. It was also a chance for the diversity of faith and culture to come together in an environment of acceptance.

The street party went so well we are already thinking about next year. (Thanks go to CNET, Bradford West Area Toller/City Ward Coordinator, and local Police for their support.)

*Lynn Britten*



## ANGELS FOR HEADINGLEY TEST

**Street Angels have taken to the streets of Headingley to watch over revellers enjoying the area's night-time economy. These local church volunteers patrol the streets at weekends to offer help to people using the area's bars, pubs and clubs, which are particularly popular with students.**

The project has got off to a flying start thanks to a grant of almost £1,500 from the West Yorkshire Police Community Trust. Supported by officers from the North West Inner Neighbourhood Policing Team, the Angels lookout for people in distress through drink, or who have become separated from friends, or who need help to get home. Their work will help to reduce anti-social behaviour and stop people becoming victims of crime, while freeing up police resources to deal with more serious incidents.

The Angels, including student volunteers from the universities, receive training in basic first aid, drugs awareness, conflict management and health and safety so they can offer practical assistance to those in need and calm situations before they escalate. They wear distinctive high-visibility jackets and carry radios linking them to police, licensees and local door staff.

The team operates from South Parade Baptist Church, part of which is a 'safe haven' where people can go while their friends are found or a taxi called.

The scheme has been organised by the local Churches Together group covering Headingley and surrounding areas and follows successful Street Angels projects in Halifax and other parts of the region. Paul Blakey, who founded the original Street Angels scheme in Halifax, spoke at the Headingley launch.

Chief Superintendent Ian Whitehouse, Divisional Commander for North West Leeds Division, said: 'The work of Street Angels has made a really valuable contribution to keeping people safe in other parts of West Yorkshire and we are confident it will bring the same benefits here. It will not only help keep potentially vulnerable people safe on a night out but will also assist the work of my officers to cut crime and anti-social behaviour for the benefit of all people living in and visiting the Headingley area.'

## CELEBRATING PENTECOST IN LISTER PARK

**If you were in Lister Park, Bradford, one Sunday afternoon in May, you would have noticed a good crowd of people having a great time around the bandstand. Why?**

Christians of all traditions believe that the Holy Spirit of God is available to all of us to give confidence, power, encouragement and peace. On the first Pentecost, Jesus' friends rushed outside to tell everyone about Jesus. There's a long tradition of celebrating Pentecost outside.

Older Bradford residents fondly remember Whit Walks. Updating this tradition for our century, people from the local churches got together on Pentecost Sunday, forming a colourful procession to the bandstand in Lister Park to join talented local groups celebrating with music and dancing. The Salvation Army Band gave us a rousing start, followed by John Froud (with children), the choir of the Church of God of Prophecy, Irish dancers and musicians, Filipino musicians, the Free Spirit singers, Worship with Ben, Ruth and Ruth, Asian Christian musicians and the Bradford Family Church Worship Band. There were children's activities, with puppets mysteriously appearing to encourage people to join in, and a well-received short talk about the meaning of Pentecost.

The weather was brilliant, the shade proving more popular than the sun. It was a fantastic day! Thanks to everyone who provided sound equipment, staging, flags and all kinds of skill and enthusiasm. Above all, thanks be to God who gives us strength to celebrate all that is good in our lives and in our amazing world.

*Heather Grinter,*

*Girlington, Heaton and Manningham Council of Churches*





# STREETS SETTLE UP

One of the most active local groups is Churches Together in Settle and District. We organise an area-wide distribution of Christmas and Easter leaflets, held Community Carols either around the Market-Place or at local supermarkets (lighter and warmer for folk to join in!)

We performed our Good Friday Passion Play 'on the move' as it travelled between four venues during the action from the Last Supper to Golgotha. Involving over twenty actors in costume, plus crowds acting crowd scenes, this is becoming a popular annual event.

There was good support for Pentecost Praise in Millennium Gardens, followed by a barbecue, and also August Songs of Praise, with the theme of local employment: 'A Celebration of our Community Life Together'.

Our 'Prayer Walk' leaflet is used by visitors throughout the summer. This is a free guide to places of historic and social interest in Settle with places to pause and ponder on the route of the walk. A monthly Big Settle Breakfast, with cooked breakfast and after-breakfast speaker, is popular at the Quaker Meeting house.

We held a walk for Environment Sunday, and organised Hustings for the General Election, a talk by Release International (who support persecuted Christians in many countries), and a Barn Dance.



# HYMNBURGERS ON THE GREEN!

On the Move has happened in Keighley for five years during Spring Half Term. The idea is to serve free burgers and hot dogs outdoors in the context of Christian worship, with an opportunity for people to stay and chat. Last year 3,400 burgers and hot dogs were served over three days in June. The sun shone brilliantly...

We used Church Green, next to Keighley Shared Church. The atmosphere was relaxed, and people were receptive to talking about the Gospel: twenty-one response cards filled in, and as a result, several people attended church the following Sunday.

While the Shared Church was open over those three days, 78 people visited. The feedback from church leaders in Central Keighley Churches Together has been very positive; they have agreed to do it again next year.



# X-SITING TIMES!

Leeds X-site has been a partnership between local churches and Scripture Union, for anyone aged 7-11. It is being relaunched in Spring 2011.

A group of leaders has been secreted away, planning and scheming ... and praying a lot. They have come up with a new plan for children's events in the city centre, for every child who goes to any church in Leeds and is in the Key Stage 2 primary school age range. The new venture is going to be Bigger, Brighter, Better than ever before – oh, and it will

be new!

If you want to come along, start organising for someone to bring a group. There will be a place for leaders and parents too.

We are looking for more leaders to be involved and to help make this a special event for children of the city of Leeds, for God. If you want to know more, or want to offer your skills or register a group from your church, please contact: Anne Carter, anne.carter@riponleeds-diocese.org; or Hannah O'Shea, 0113 294444, www.mosaic-

church.org.uk; or Jan Fennell, jan.fennell.mbc@btconnect.com.

Below: Fun, adventure, friendship: some of the seventy children at last year's X-site holiday in the Lake District



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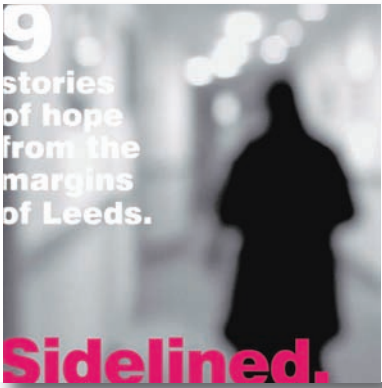
# LEEDS TOGETHER IN MISSION

For more information on all these stories contact Jon Dorsett at  
LCTiM: 07930 364733;  
info@leedschurchestogether.org.uk.

SIDELINED

Leeds Churches Together in Mission (LCTiM), together with nine social action initiatives working with some of the city’s most vulnerable and marginalised people, have produced an excellent new DVD, Sidelined. Projects featured include Abigail Housing, Integrate, Joanna, Leeds and Moortown Furniture Store, Manuel Bravo Project, Meeting Point, New Hope, Spacious Places and the West Yorkshire Community Chaplaincy Project. Between them, they work with homeless people, asylum seekers, refugees, prostitutes, offenders and drug users.

The DVD is good for small groups, mission groups and church services. For your copy contact LCTiM.



LEEDS COMMUNITY ORGANISING

Community Organising gives people power to fight for changes they want to see. It enables change from below, ‘participatory democracy’. Problems, solutions and tactics are identified by the people who are affected. There is training on how to bring about the changes that are wanted. It builds broad-based organizations with long term popular power.

LCTiM, and other church networks, is pioneering the launch of Community Organising in Leeds in 2011, bringing about an alliance of groups and individuals who support grassroots-based change.

Community Organising has worked in other areas. London Citizens has pushed for a living wage and affordable housing. Together Creating Communities in North Wales has set up a nightshelter for homeless people and won local victories on sound pollution and specialist nursing. We believe Leeds has equally exciting potential!

Interested? Contact LCTiM.



CONNECT

LCTiM, LCCT, Network:Leeds and Unity in Poverty Action came together to ‘CONNECT’ (pictured). It was a chance for 180 people from over 40 Christian congregations around the city to gather together to meet, greet, play, pray, dream, scheme, inspire and be inspired! With stalls, food, the premiere of the ‘Sidelined’ DVD, and some Speed Networking (a fast paced series of 2 minute conversations enabling people to meet others and discover any shared interests), there were many chances to ‘Connect’. Watch out for a similar event in 2011!

LENT PRAYER

The Leeds Lent Prayer Diary 2011 is LCTiM’s annual Lenten prayer resource, featuring social action, youth, arts, justice and

community projects from around the city. Copies are available free of charge to distribute amongst congregations, organisations and groups.

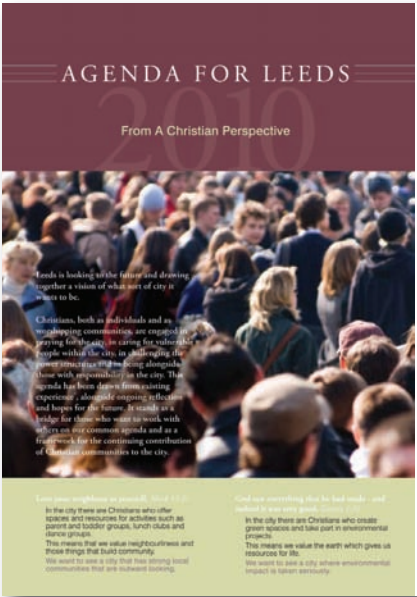
To order your copies, please contact Dave Paterson of Unity in Poverty Action, davepaterson84@hotmail.co.uk, 07903 123 283.

A CHRISTIAN AGENDA

The Leeds Initiative (a Council-led partnership of private, community and public bodies) is working on a ‘Vision for Leeds’ up to 2030, how to make Leeds become a better place for us all. As a churches’ submission to this process, for LCTiM, Kathryn Fitzsimons has produced an Agenda for Leeds from a Christian perspective. It builds on the 2007 survey Faithful Capital, on church-based community action. There are nine headings; here is a taster of just one:

“Love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31). In the city there are Christians who offer spaces and resources for activities such as parent and toddler groups, lunch clubs and dance groups. This means that we value neighbourliness and those things that build community. We want to see a city that has strong local communities that are outward looking.

We hope this document will help Christians to reflect on our own activities and mission. To find out more, contact LCTiM.



LEEDS CHARITY ADVENT CALENDAR



For advent last year LCTiM produced a £1 novelty scratch-card advent calendar to raise funds for, and awareness of, six local projects: City of Sanctuary; Joanna; Moor Allerton Elderly Care; Simon on the Streets; St Luke’s Cares; and TIDAL.

A cartoon depicted the city’s well known buildings and famous people. Each day had a message that encouraged people to reflect and engage with the city, their communities, and themselves in interesting, unusual and fun ways. Some examples included: ‘Build community where you are: make mince pies for your neighbours’; ‘Help Green our city: plant a fruit tree’.

There will be a 2011 Advent calendar too. Businesses can bulk buy as a gift to staff or clients; churches can use it to raise funds. To get an alert when the next calendar is available, contact LCTiM.

PEACE TRAILS AND EXHIBITIONS

Churches Together in Moor Allerton and Shadwell will walk the Leeds Peace Trail this Spring and welcome others to join them. This city centre Trail tells fascinating stories of peace-making - each connected with people, groups and places in the city, past and the present.

Together for Peace, Leeds City Council and The Peace Museum have picked a range of sites of historic interest, each with a story that raises awareness of timeless issues such as war and peace, immigration, equality, nuclear effects, human rights, and campaigning.

To join the Moor Allerton and Shadwell CT group, contact john.witt@ntlworld.com, 0113 269 3489. Download Peace Trail leaflets at www.t4p.org.uk, or www.peacemuseum.org.uk (there’s also for a Bradford Peace Trail).

For an illustrated talk about the Peace Trail or the peace history of Leeds, or would like to mount exhibitions about the peace history of Leeds and/or Yorkshire (new!), contact Clive Barrett, 0113 2618053, clivebarrett@wyec.co.uk.

## AMPLEFORTH ABBEY

Pastoral Retreats 2011

<b>January</b>		<b>August</b>	
Fri 28 – Sun 30	The Art of Prayer	Thu 25 – Wed 31	A Pilgrimage of Grace
Mon 31 – Thu 3 Feb	True Blessedness: A Retreat on the Beatitudes	<b>September</b>	
<b>February</b>		Fri 2 – Sun 4	A Scarlet Thread Part 2
Mon 7 – Thu 10	Lectio Divina	Mon 5 – Fri 9	Beach Prayer Walks
Fri 25 – Sun 27	Tai Chi and Christian Meditation	Fri 9 – Sun 11	A Pilgrim People
Fri 25 – Sun 27	Art and Spirituality	Thu 15 – Thu 22	Pilgrimage to Iona
<b>March</b>		Fri 16 – Sun 18	Tai Chi and Christian Meditation 2
Mon 7 – Thu 10	Season of Grace	Mon 19 – Fri 23	Ora et Labora
Mon 21 – Thu 24	Getting in Touch with God	Mon 26 – Thu 29	Praying and Living the Liturgy
<b>April</b>		<b>October</b>	
Fri 15 – Sun 17	The Eucharist in the Bible	Mon 3 – Thu 6	Masculine Spirituality
Thu 21 – Mon 25	Easter Triduum	Fri 14	Tai Chi and Christian Meditation Day
Wed 27 – Sun 1 May	Beach Prayer Walks	<b>November</b>	
Fri 29 – Sun 1 May	Creativity Through the Eye of the Heart	Fri 4 – Sun 6	Benedictine Peace
<b>May</b>		Mon 7 – Fri 11	Retreat for Priests
Mon 9 – Fri 13	In the Footsteps of Northern Saints	Fri 11 – Sun 13	In Vino Veritas
Fri 13 – Sun 15	Christian Meditation	Mon 14 – Thu 17	Benedict for Beginners
Mon 16 – Thu 19	Not Just for Sundays	Fri 18 – Sun 20	Literature and Spirituality
Mon 23 – Thu 26 May	Lord, Teach Us to Pray	Mon 21 – Wed 23	A Retreat with Fr. Edward
Mon 23 – Fri 27	A Seaside Saint	Wed 30 – Fri 2 Dec	The Christ of St. John's Gospel
<b>June</b>		<b>December</b>	
Mon 6 – Thu 9	Enneagram 1	Fri 2 – Sun 4	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Fri 17 – Sun 19	Great Themes of Scripture 1		
Fri 17 – Sun 19	Renewal Retreat		
Fri 24 – Sun 26	In Vino Veritas		
<b>July</b>			
Fri 1 – Sun 3	8 Thoughts and 12 Steps		
Mon 11 – Thu 14	Loving Myself and Others and God		
Mon 11 – Mon 18	Retreat for Religious Sisters		
Fri 15 – Sun 17	One Day at a Time		
Mon 18 – Thu 21	Enneagram 2		
Fri 22	Tai Chi and Christian Meditation Day		
Mon 25 – Fri 29	Beach Prayer Walks		

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:

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# CARDS OF LEEDS 15



There are several collaborative enterprises run by Churches Together in Leeds 15. The biggest involves members of local churches undertaking house to house delivery of 11,500 Christmas cards to homes throughout the area. Cards are also distributed via the Nativity Tableaux erected each year by church people in the Cross Gates Shopping Centre. The Centre management are supportive, and local choirs lead carol singing.

Every two years, Churches Together in Leeds 15 holds a front cover design competition, open to seven churches and schools. Current winners included an adult from St Theresa’s and two children who are pupils are Manston St James Primary School.

The cost is divided between the seven churches, who also benefit from a generous printer whose charges have actually come down!



# DIVINE READING

**There is really only one place to go for Lent 2011, and that is to the stunning joint Lent Course prepared by the Anglican Diocese of Wakefield with the Catholic Dioceses of Leeds and Hallam.**

It follows a ground-breaking shared Assembly (pictured, right) between them in 2009, when the various bishops pledged to continue meeting and praying together and for their churches to draw up a Lent Course together. To supplement the course

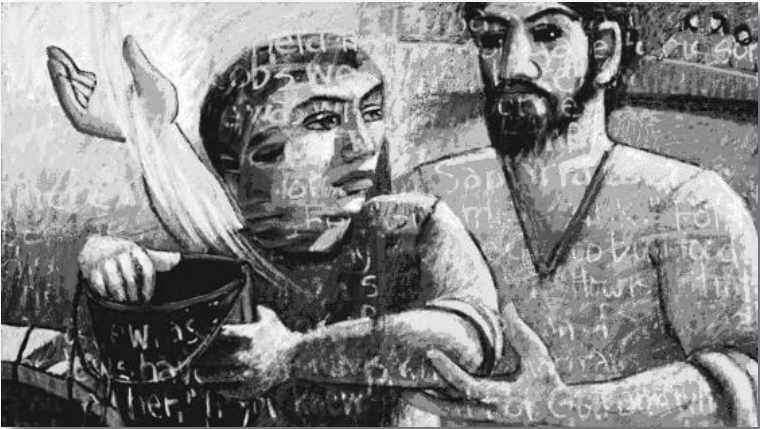
which has been produced, the Bishops will lead further ecumenical reflections in March and April. The Bishop of Pontefract and Mgr Kieran Heskin will be in St Patrick Huddersfield on 15 March; the Bishops of Hallam and Pontefract in Barnsley on 16 March ; and on April 7, the Bishops of Leeds and Pontefract will be in Halifax, and Hallam and Wakefield will be in Wakefield.

The course itself is a package

appropriate for all churches, not only in the Wakefield Diocese area. It would be especially good if ecumenical groups could engage with it, wherever you are based.

Called ‘Praying the Scriptures’, the course is rooted in scripture, highly appropriate for the ‘Year of the Bible’. There is an introductory ice-breaker, in recognition of the fact that not everyone will know each other, especially in a new Churches Together setting. There is suggested music and artwork, and opportunities to listen, be silent, discuss, and pray.

The emphasis is on a particular way of reading holy texts, called Lectio Divina (literally ‘divine reading’). It is an ancient way of reading through, meditating upon, praying with and contemplating the Scriptures. While especially important in the monastic tradition, it is also used by Christians today from all walks of life as a means of pondering the living Word of God. If you want to know more in advance, there are some training evenings: 7.30pm on 31 January in Treacy Hall Wakefield; 3 February St Patrick’s Huddersfield; 7 February at Holy



Jesus and the woman at the well; for Lenten reflection

Rood Barnsley; and 8 February at Halifax Minster.

Sometimes also called ‘prayerful reading,’ Lectio Divina opens our hearts and minds to what God is saying through passages of the Bible. To put it another way, Lectio Divina allows us to ruminate with the texts, to chew them over and over in our mind and heart. By doing so, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we will be able to hear and respond to God’s Word more deeply, allowing it to penetrate our lives and nourish our discipleship. ‘Seek God in reading; find God in meditating; knock though prayer and God will open the door of

grace in contemplation.’

Everything you need can be accessed by clicking on ‘Events’ on the Wakefield Diocese website, [www.wakefield.anglican.org](http://www.wakefield.anglican.org).

As the Bishops of both Churches say in their introduction:

‘We are excited about waiting to hear what God has to say to us this Lent. We are delighted that we can meet together to pray the Scriptures. Many churches will bring other friends from other traditions too.

‘So, let us attend patiently to God’s word. Let us attend lovingly to one another. Let us wait with expectation and longing for God’s word to us!’

## Pray As You Go Mobile Phones

**Churches and Churches Together groups are slowly realising that a website is essential for 21st century communication. We recommend [www.wyec.co.uk](http://www.wyec.co.uk), which contains links to many of the Churches Together websites in our region.**

We discovered recently that we are getting thousands of ‘hits’ on our website, many from around the world. The mission potential of the humblest website goes way beyond your local community.

Some Christian organisations are also on Facebook; I was looking recently at the Ripon Cathedral page, for example, which has over five hundred fans worldwide!

The latest must-have piece of software, though, is the App – a feature specially designed for i-phones, Android mobile phones and other gadgetry. What apps are out there, I wonder? Putting ‘Prayer’ into the search engine produced over one hundred possibilities to download. ‘Bible’ produced almost 350 apps to choose from! One I have used is Cadre Bible, which lets you download any of different versions including - for free - the King James Bible, appropriate for the 400th anniversary, though not New International or New Revised Standard, for ridiculous copyright reasons. You also get access to a range of study tools.

One app that I do appreciate on my Android phone is a Pocket Common Worship site, which is based on daily Anglican offices of readings and prayers. You can see yesterday’s, today’s and tomorrow’s services of Morning and Evening Prayer – both contemporary and Book of Common Prayer versions – as well as Night Prayer.

I would also recommend a Catholic app called simply ‘Mass Readings’. It is much more than that, however. It not only shows you the daily Bible readings, but also lets you download a podcast so you can hear them being read. There is also a meditation on the readings and a whole range of Catholic prayers, daily office readings, Rosary, and Stations of the Cross (traditional or scriptural).

With Kindle and other e-books taking off as well, there are ancient spiritual classics, like St Augustine’s ‘Confessions’ available to upload for free.

This is immensely useful while travelling. No longer do you need bulging pockets, weighed down by Bible and prayer books. It is great to have access to a spiritual and scriptural library, one’s daily prayers and full biblical texts, all on your mobile phone, fitting neatly in your pocket. One question, though, for techno-geeks: when does praying become playing (with your electronic toy)?

CB

## ALL THINGS IN COMMON

The theme for the 2011 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is ‘All Things in Common’, an allusion to the experience of the apostles in Acts 2. Material for the week has been prepared by an ecumenical group in Jerusalem. These resources can be found at [www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer).



## BIBLE FRESH

**Who said, ‘Not to know the King James Bible is to be in some small way barbarian’? The perhaps surprising answer is the renowned atheist, Professor Richard Dawkins.**

The translation of the Bible ‘authorised’ by James 1 is 400 years old this year. This is a cause for commemoration and celebration, outside as well as inside our churches. The phrasing and language of the King James Version (KJV) have become an established part of English culture. As Dawkins admits, ‘You need the Bible to understand literary

allusions’. (‘Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings...’ – hardly!)

Its phrases have permeated everywhere. The KJV is a building block of the heritage of the people of this land and beyond. (‘There is no new thing under the sun.’) For Christians and non-Christians alike, it’s part of what it is to be British, a root of national cohesion. Winston Churchill saw its global significance: ‘The scholars who produced this masterpiece are mostly unknown and unremembered. But they forged an enduring link, literary and religious, between the English-speaking people of the world.’ We neglect it at our peril. It should be available to everyone and taught in every school.

Of course scholarship has improved since 1611, and there are less quaint, more learned

and more accessible translations available today. But the KJV is one of the most powerful tools in the Church’s toolbox. (‘Where your treasure is...’) We all need to know it better, both for our own spiritual as well as cultural benefit, and also to be able to communicate it and promote it in wider society. (‘Do unto others...’)

There are two obvious ports of call. The first is the website [kjv400.co.uk](http://kjv400.co.uk). This gives all the information you could want about the 1611 Bible. The second is [www.biblefresh.com](http://www.biblefresh.com), a broad alliance of groups giving each church some ways to get to know the KJV better and to promote it. They want churches to read, train, help translate and share experience of the Bible.

## Other Lent Courses

### York Course

The theme of the 2011 Lent Course from York Courses is ‘Rich Inheritance: Jesus’s Legacy of Love’.

It is written by Bishop Stephen Cottrell with Inderjit Bhogal providing the thoughtful closing reflections. Archbishop Vincent Nichols, Paula Gooder and Jim Wallis also feature on the course CD.

Each of the five sessions offers a good selection of stimulating questions aimed at engaging every group member. It is also suitable for the ‘Year of the Bible’.

### ‘The Unreconciled’

The 2011 Lent Course from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland is called ‘The Unreconciled’. It tackles such issues as:

- How do we bring about reconciliation?
- Who is responsible for bringing about world peace?
- Who should feed the hungry?
- What happens when attempts at reconciliation fail?
- How do we cope with failure?

Each session asks how scripture can help us to understand the plight of these ‘unreconciled’ people. The journey through Lent will consider what God has done for us through the crucifixion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; there will also be resources for Holy Week. See [www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk).



# YORKSHIRE AND THE WORLD

Kirsteen Kim (pictured) reports:

**The 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference may be the most important date in the history of the ecumenical movement. That gathering of about 1200 Protestant missionaries led directly to unprecedented cooperation in world evangelisation, strategic alliances in church life, and attention to divisive issues of faith and order. Edinburgh 1910 may be seen as the start of the modern ecumenical movement. It was the origin of the World Council of Churches and led to many other initiatives for unity.**

As a lecturer in theology at Leeds Trinity University College with a special interest in mission and world Christianity, I was delighted to serve the centenary project of Edinburgh 1910 as half time Research Coordinator. Edinburgh 2010 was intended to renew the churches’ vision for mission and to celebrate the way in which the church has now become truly global. Back in 1910 nearly 70 percent of the world’s Christians lived in Europe; in 2010 more than 70 percent live outside it. Africa and Latin America will soon have the largest Christian populations. Edinburgh 2010 also celebrated the remarkable level of ecumenical cooperation that has been achieved. In 1910, delegates were all Protestants; Edinburgh 2010 represented all major strands of Christianity: Catholic, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and both historic Protestant denominations and newer Evangelical movements and independent churches.

One reason Edinburgh 1910 made a lasting impact was the research of its preparatory commissions, showing the state of mission activities at the time. To stimulate new thinking for mission now, a multi-national research project was set up in 2008 to work on key issues in mission today: the foundations for mission, mission among other faiths, mission and power, mission spirituality, and of course mission and unity. [See Kirsteen’s study report: Balia & Kim, ‘Witnessing to Christ Today’, 2010] I

continue to edit the fifteen Edinburgh 2010 volumes being published with Regnum Books International.

Thanks to digital technology, I can work as research coordinator from West Yorkshire. Leeds Trinity let me have a base and I only occasionally travelled to Edinburgh. The 1910 conference organisers and commission convenors depended on surface mail to communicate with missionaries around the world. Travel was by sea and rail. In 2010, email, the website (www.edinburgh2010.org), Skype and conference calls, Facebook and Twitter provided a variety of means to engage with mission thinkers globally from my base in Yorkshire. Air travel meant international study groups could meet face-to-face before the conference. I took part in some of these and in other related conferences in Tokyo, Cape Town, Wuppertal, Hamburg and Geneva, as well as many places in the UK. Other events were held in Aarhus, Accra, Bangalore, Belfast, Boston, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Henderson (New Zealand), Hyderabad, Iloilo (Philippines), Liverpool, Minsk, Matanzas (Cuba), Melbourne, Nairobi, Oslo, Oxford, Rome, Santiago, Seoul, Seramban (Malaysia), Toronto, Utrecht, and many other cities.

In the imperial context of 1910, most churches, in every continent, with the exception of the Oriental Orthodox, were mostly led by European white missionaries. One of the conference organisers was far-sighted enough to realise that this would not always be the case and he invited a few ‘native’ leaders. Seventeen Asians attended, and their presence was much remarked upon. They had an impact out of all proportion to their numbers because they were men of stature, who made some of the most remembered speeches, challenging the racial stereotypes of the day.

In 2010 the delegates were from all over the globe, and no distinction was made over whether their church was ‘older’ or ‘younger’, or who received the gospel first, and from whom. The

descendents of the delegates of Edinburgh 1910 have learnt, as Peter did in the house of Cornelius that ‘God shows no partiality’ (Acts 10:34) but blesses others in the same way. Local European churches may be relatively small and powerless among many others worldwide. Although Edinburgh 2010, with fewer than 300 delegates, was less than a quarter of the size of the 1910 event, it was significant because it was planned by representatives of all the world’s churches and demonstrated their good will to work together.

The gender balance of the 2010 conference was much better than in 1910, and I felt no resistance to my contribution as a woman leader. I coordinated the conference study process, in which delegates invited experts helped focus the work of study groups on different themes. The result was a short Common Call to mission (see www.edinburgh2010.org), which is commended to the churches for reflection and implementation. Given the theological and cultural diversity of the study process and conference, it was remarkable how much we were able to say together. The Common Call affirms the growing understanding that mission is first and foremost God’s loving intervention in the world by Word and Spirit, in which the church is privileged to participate (missio Dei). Since mission is of the very nature of God, the church – and each local congregation – is also missionary by nature. The Common Call makes clear that Christian mission is holistic, concerning the whole human being – not just the soul – and human society and creation.

‘Recalling Christ, the host at the banquet, and committed to that unity for which he lived and prayed, we are called to ongoing co-operation, to deal with controversial issues and to work towards a common vision. We are challenged to welcome one another in our diversity, affirm our membership through baptism in the One Body of Christ, and recognise our need for mutuality, partnership, collaboration



and networking in mission, so that the world might believe.’ (Edinburgh 2010 Common Call, part 9).

### LAUSANNE 3

*Clive Barrett adds:*

Kirsteen also attended the third Congress of the Lausanne Movement, which met in Cape Town. Delegates from two hundred countries discussed evangelism, under the theme, ‘God in Christ reconciling the world to himself’ (2 Corinthians 5.19).

The Lausanne Movement seeks to be a global network of ‘reflective practitioners’ who share one vision for the work of world evangelisation. The movement began in 1974 when Billy Graham and John Stott convened an International Congress on World Evangelisation in Lausanne, Switzerland with the goal of framing ‘a biblical declaration on evangelism’ and stating ‘what the relationship is between evangelism and social responsibility’. The Lausanne Covenant adopted by the first congress has been a rallying cry for many Christians, and for some it has come to define what is meant by ‘evangelical’. For the first time, a delegation attended from the World Council of Churches. The General Secretary, the Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit spoke of Christians’ ‘common vision of the holistic mission of God.’ He added, ‘Let us keep the road open, and the dialogue going, so that we learn from one another how we can participate in God’s mission together with respect to others as one Body of Christ.’

### AROUND THE CHURCHES

#### Dialogue

Wakefield Cathedral was packed for a visit by Cardinal Cormac Murphy O’Connor. Stephen Platten, Bishop of Wakefield, held a public dialogue with the Cardinal on Anglican – Roman Catholic relations. They have a close relationship from being involved in international conversations between the churches. The Pope’s 2010 visit brought many British Christians together, not least at a special Westminster Abbey service. (Read about it at www.wyec.co.uk). More recently, Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches has visited the Vatican, where, he said, Benedict XVI ‘emphasized in a very kind and also a very strong way the importance of the World Council of Churches’ work’, not least on issues of faith and order.

#### Future Hope

Many churches were inspired by the HOPE 08 campaign, which brought people together and affected communities. 88% of churches thought it improved their attitudes to each other. Hope Together is the process leading to a big new focus on 2014. Complementing HOPE are Bible Fresh (page 13) and More Than Gold, linked to the Olympics. See www.hopetogether.org.uk.

#### Salvation Army

The UK and Ireland Territory of the Salvation Army has approved a new Ecumenical Statement: ‘The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical expression of the Body of Christ and an integral part of the worldwide Christian Church with its own distinctive governance and practice. Comprising a community of believers we commit ourselves therefore: 

- to make known our common life in Christ through shared witness, worship and service
- to participate with our ecumenical partners, locally and nationally, in areas of social action and engagement in the public concern
- to deepen relationships through fellowship and shared pilgrimage
- to seek to do collectively all that would further the Kingdom of God.’

# Bridging The Gap

**Over three hundred Christians, Catholic and non-Catholic, joined in an ecumenical act of worship at Bolton Priory, Wharfedale, for the Priory’s Marian Festival.**

We celebrated the place of Mary in our different traditions in this Priory dedicated to St Mary and St Cuthbert, where the monastic tradition goes back to 1154. It was the first time since 1539, when Augustinian Canons were forced to abandon their Priory in the English Reformation, that Roman Catholics have worshipped here in large numbers. The celebration was held both in the nave and the ruined chancel, by permission of the Duke of Devonshire, who was present at the celebration.

Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist partners planned and worked together for over one year to put the festival together. Christians from Catholic and Reformed traditions joined in a feast of ecumenical liturgy, accompanied by Otley Brass Band. The next time the Feast for St Mary falls on a Sunday, will be 2022, so we thought this was a proper occasion to put an ecumenical spring into our steps. In the UK,

Christians from the main churches need to be seen to harvest the fruits of ecumenical dialogue, such as the ARCIC (Anglican - Roman Catholic) Commission and the Covenant agreement between the Church of England and the Methodist Church. This was an occasion to do so, enabling us to listen to each other, to celebrate our different traditions and grow

closer together. Christians still need to grow in unity together.

The large crowd gathered in the nave of the Priory church to hear the Rev. Prof. Geoffrey Wainwright, a leading Methodist theologian and writer on ecumenical spirituality, speak on pictures of Mary in the gospels and Christian tradition. We introduced him to the Chairman of the West Yorkshire Methodist District, the Rev Peter Whittaker, who was present with us. We processed through the remains of the cloisters to the ruined chancel and listened to Fr David Kelly, a contemporary Augustinian and theologian from Milltown Theological Institute in Dublin, who gave a contemporary Catholic interpretation of Henry VIII’s Dissolution of the monasteries. Kate Rhodes, a former educational lecturer, described how the English Reformation of Henry VIII, affected Bolton Priory and all the people of Yorkshire.

Roses were collected from the congregation, symbolising the new beginnings for the kingdom of God, the new Eden, begun in the Son of Mary. They were received and blessed by Bishop John Flack, the son-in-law of the Rev Maurice Slaughter, who was priest and leader of the Priory congregation in the 1970’s. Maurice worked to re-roof, glaze and floor the West Tower, after it had stood as a bare shell for over four hundred years.

After the singing of Salve Regina, Fr Christopher Armstrong led the prayers and the



former Archbishop of York, David Hope, gave the final blessing. Greetings for the occasion had been received from Bishop David James and Bishop Arthur Roach, as well as Cardinal Walter Kasper, the recently retired President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity at the Vatican. The Rev. Bill Snelson, Development Officer UK for the Anglican Centre in Rome was also on hand to share information about the work of the Anglican Centre in Rome, where colleagues have close contact with their counterparts in the Vatican.

Cardinal Kasper, working within the Anglican-Roman Catholic International

Picture credit: Margaret Cody

Commission, points out that our Catholic and Protestant perspectives on the place of Mary in the scheme of God’s salvation, are complementary, not opposed to each other. In living with diversity, from Anglican, Methodist and Catholic perspectives, in this Marian festival, we have been able to express how the figure and witness of Mary enriches an incarnational faith in Christ, which we all share. Mary has been portrayed within the pattern of grace and hope, which lies at the heart of the Christian gospel of Jesus Christ.

John Bennet



# STILL BURNING

The family of Elim Pentecostal churches has recently joined Churches Together in England. There are a number of Elim churches in the WYEC region. Andrew Lancaster tells us the story of one of them, Bridge Street Pentecostal Church, Leeds.

**Bridge Street Pentecostal Church in the heart of Leeds is a lively and cosmopolitan congregation drawn from more than fifty nations.**

It began in the early years of the 20th century just off York Road in Leeds at a time when just as today there was great social need. In fact older members recall the area being known as Hell Fire Corner because of its problems of drunkenness and violence. The early Bridge Street Church, known as Mount Tabor, had been formed by a group of people who wanted to experience the power and presence of God as the New Testament Christians had done. So they had a desire to preach the Gospel and see ‘The Fire of the Holy Spirit’ changing people’s lives.

In 1927 they invited the well known Pentecostal evangelist George Jeffreys, founder of the Elim Pentecostal Churches to hold meetings in the city aimed at explaining clearly the message of God’s love and forgiveness. The congregation met for prayer on the Sunday night before the meetings began asking God to save and to heal. Because God answered them, they were never able to meet in

that room again. Over the next two weeks, more than two thousand people made a profession of faith in Jesus and there were some remarkable healings.

In order to cope with this growth, the current Bridge Street building was erected during 1929 at a time of great financial uncertainty. Members bought bricks, or sacrificed to buy chairs and the church was opened in 1931.

Today Bridge Street church partners with many other fellowships across the City. As one of the founding churches of Leeds Kidz Klub, it still hosts the City Centre event every Saturday. It also provides office space for Kidz Klub workers in an adjacent building.

Many of the volunteers for the Leeds work of Teen Challenge are members of the church which has also been a long term supporter of Leeds Faith in schools. More recently, Bridge Street has been one of the four organising churches that helped stage two City Wide Alpha launch events aimed at encouraging as many churches as possible in the city to run an Alpha course or a similar event.

The church still has a vibrant children’s work including a large Sunday School a mums and tots group used by 120 families each week and two after schools clubs in the Leeds nine area.

The church also runs more than thirty small groups which enable members to care for and support each other. Our vision is that no one stands alone, no one struggles alone and no

one serves alone. We want to serve together.

Central to our identity is the fact that the Gospel message has not changed. The power of God still changes lives. The Gospel is still God’s good news to a lost and hurting world. And the passionate Fire of Holy Spirit is still able to empower Christians to serve their God.

Today Bridge Street Church is very different in make up from the church of the 1930s. But we also have to say that today’s society is very different too. None the less we have the enormous privilege of reaching out to today’s world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And we must also acknowledge that without the grace of God we could not do anything of lasting value.

Because our present site is due to be redeveloped we intend to move to a new site just about half a mile away which will give us increased meeting space and an opportunity to help the local community in even greater ways.

This is all part of our overall vision to ‘Go with the gospel, Grow in our relationships and Glorify God with our lives’. We want to see the name of Jesus held in High Honour in our city.

Psalms 115 begins, ‘Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but unto your name be the Glory because of your love and Faithfulness.’

This is the testimony of Bridge Street Pentecostal Church, and it will also be the key to our future.



International Service at Bridge Street Church



Prayer Meeting before George Jeffrey's Campaign

Our prayer is that the fire will still burn in our hearts, and that the church of Jesus will continue to impact our great City.

The most amazing mission project in the whole of Leeds is thoroughly ecumenical. Kidz Klub works with churches of all traditions to reach non-church children in some of the most challenging and deprived inner city areas. There are assemblies and clubs in 33 schools, and community parties and cafes. Kidz Klub engages with two thousand children each week, many of whom receive regular home visits.

**‘Why do you bother doing this?’ These were the words one parent recently asked two of our team members as they faithfully carried out their weekly home visit in the freezing cold and rain.**

Isn’t it wonderful when people are caused to ask ‘why’? On a recent visit to Leeds, Bill Wilson (founder of Metro Ministries in New York – the inspiration behind the UK’s Kidz Klub model) said, ‘people don’t care what you know until they know that you care’.

Home visiting is at the heartbeat of Kidz Klub, it’s where we show the children and their families that we mean what we say. We bother because God is bothered! Yes it costs, but who ever saw something change without first being committed? On those cold and wet nights when it would be so easy to stay indoors, we bother because we know that the children are worth it. They need and deserve the consistency of people who are committed to them. After all, as Church we are family. At Kidz Klub we believe that these children are part of our family and as such we treat them that way. Visiting is where we earn the right to speak into the children’s lives; it’s where we build the relationships that Kidz Klub is all about. This year our super team carried out 31,052 home visits! Now that is something to be proud of because that’s where we are seeing God making a difference, through the open doors and trust that is built as each week families know that we will be there.

There was so much to thank God for throughout 2010 – our 10th year. From seeing many more children attending our Kidz Klub’s (and also getting to know God more and more!) to new Kidz Klub’s starting with the Middleton Kidz Klub’s launch in March, and activities in West Leeds beginning in the Winter of 2010/11. We are truly thankful to God and to the army of people who have supported the work. As we look ahead to 2011 we are excited to see all that will develop with the new Kidz Klub in West Leeds, and with our Community Work through which we are focusing on further supporting and discipling the children who attend our Klubs. We also continue to seek new partnerships with congregations across Leeds so that we can start new Kidz Klub’s for children in areas that we are not currently covering.

A story which really touched our hearts came from our new Kidz Klub in Middleton this year. June, one of our volunteers at the Klub also works in a Middleton School. One day at School a little boy who attends Kidz Klub was sent to her to cool down because he had been behaving badly. He doesn't have the easiest life and his behaviour can be challenging. June explained that she would give him some time to cool down, and then would come back and talk with him. However, when she came back she found that the little boy was on his hands and knees praying. Amazed she left him for a little longer, and when she returned he explained

# BOTHERED!

that he had been asking God to help him. This child knows that God is real and an ever present help because of people who have taken the time to show him that.

Our prayer is that there will be many more children like him, as Mums and Dads, Brothers, Sisters and Grandparents from the Church in Leeds step forwards to commit their time to the children of our city. Yes it costs. But yes it is worth it. Our latest volunteer recruit is 81 years young, ‘I reckon there’s another 20 years in me’ he recently said, and so he wants to commit to serving some of the most vulnerable children in our city. What an attitude! He knows that change comes with commitment, as does our wonderful team. Please do join with us in 2011 in whatever ways you can because through your commitment change really can take place in many children’s lives.

If you are interested in finding out more about opportunities for you or your congregation to get involved with Kidz Klub, or would like to visit one of our Kidz Klub's in action please do get

in touch with us. Our contact details are: Kidz Klub Leeds c/o Bridge Street Church, Bridge Street, Leeds, LS2 7QZ 0113 2456533 [www.kidzklubleeds.org.uk](http://www.kidzklubleeds.org.uk); [info@kidzklubleeds.org.uk](mailto:info@kidzklubleeds.org.uk)  
Sarah Turner and the Kidz Klub team



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Local charities benefit from Airport's foreign coin collection. Pictured: Nick Baker, Chaplain; Margaret Sentamu from the charity Acts 435; Abigail Houlden, LBIA Business Support Unit.

# MINSTER MINISTRY

The question I'm often asked is, 'Why are you a Minster?' It's a good question – why were we fortunate enough to become Halifax Minster, and what difference does it make to our life and mission?

In the Middle Ages, before parish churches evolved, Minster churches were widespread. Ancient Minsters were missionary bases, served by teams of priests and monks, ministering both in the church itself and in the region's hamlets and settlements. Halifax Parish Church, which in medieval times had covered 124 sq miles, was 'minster' of what is now Calderdale and beyond. It's daughter churches later became parish churches in their own right.

The vision for a modern Minster is to carry on the historical tradition by being a place of prayer and worship, hospitality and learning, and a base for mission and pastoral care.

What does that vision mean for Halifax Minster? The worshipping community identified three key themes which related to our vision statement, 'Seeking God: Sharing Faith: Serving Halifax'.

The first theme is Culture. The church has been a cultural hub for 900 years; it is writ large in the glass, stone and wood which give it such beauty. For centuries the church would have been the only roofed public space in Halifax, used by everyone for everything. It remains today one of the biggest public spaces in which the people of Calderdale can gather. With this resource we welcome many people from private, public and third sectors, for services and events. In recent weeks the Minster has housed: a presentation of the Queens Award to Elland Silver Band during a Help the Heroes concert; Halifax Choral Society; Halifax Symphony Orchestra; the national Youth Choir of Great Britain. We joined Eureka and Square Chapel as a new venue for the Halifax Festival, with a calligraphy and heraldry exhibition, and a week of performances from Square Peg Production theatre company. We encourage ever more diverse creativity and inspiration, allowing people to make this holy space part of their own personal landscape.

Our second theme is Civic Engagement, always an important part of the life of this church. As well as welcoming people into the

Minster for services and events, we also serve on Boards, committees, and Governing Bodies. We serve the town and its communities in hosting: a professional advisers event for Calderdale Community Foundation; Crossley Heath Grammar School Prizegiving; Health and Social Care Awards for the Council; the Mayor's Civic Service; a Service for Snow Heroes after last year's winter; the Laying up of Colours for the Duke of Wellington Regiment and Armed Forces Day service; the Launch of the Calderdale Methodist Circuit; a monthly Public Sector service; the Oakleaf Service, for road traffic victims – the list goes on. The 2011 programme already looks busy, and in 2012, we shall launch the West Yorkshire celebrations of the Queens Diamond Jubilee Year.

Our final theme, which reveals the daily life of the church, its clergy and congregation, is Education, the key to the Minster making the most of its resources to serve Halifax and the Borough. We are working on an Education Package to help schools deliver the National Curriculum. With a freelance education officer, and close work with local schools, Calderdale's Museums and Libraries Service and neighbours such as Square Chapel and Eureka, we hope to use the Minster in history, geography, art, RE and other subjects. Learning is lifelong, and in 2011 we host some lectures in a growing relationship between the Diocese of Wakefield and the Catholic Dioceses of Leeds and Hallam, and we mark Education Sunday, this year celebrating HE and FE, with Calderdale College students in the Minster sharing their skills in head massage and beauty therapy!

This activity is undergirded by a dedicated team of clergy and laity: keeping Daily Offices, a daily Eucharist, in a Minster open nearly 365 days a year. People come to the Minster as a volunteer, for paid employment, to visit the oldest building in Halifax, to light a candle for a loved one, and just to be still and pray. Halifax Minster is not unique in its ministry, which is shared by many large churches in Yorkshire's largest towns and cities. Such places have an important mission to witness, minister and reach out to people who might not set foot in their local church.

Hilary Barber

# GOD IN THE AIR

'I'm not drunk you know', said a woman tottering towards me – though it is not unknown for people to be drunk at the airport. She was confused as to where to go and I took her through to the security zone prior to departures. She was a lollipop lady, a little unsteady having been recently knocked down in an accident. She was flying off to stay with relatives to help recuperate, I offered to pray.

Like all chaplaincies, airport chaplaincy is unpredictable because people and life are unpredictable. One moment you can be having an in depth conversation around bereavement, the next something like 'Can you explain the creation story to me' through to 'Where's the toilet?' as I wonder around the terminal in my 'hi-vis' LBIA chaplaincy jacket. I offer three hours a week, with support of the Circuit and the Oastler Centre who made the initial contact with the airport.

Leeds Bradford International Airport (LBIA): 'Creating an outstanding regional airport, connecting Yorkshire with the world.' This is the aim of the company which bought the airport in 2007. They have recognised the value and relevance of faith communities and I have been made very welcome at the airport by cleaners, Fire and Rescue, the Police, Human Resources, Board of Directors, the Chief Executive and many more.

Over 2000 staff work at the airport across 30 businesses - likely to double in a few years as passenger numbers grow to 5 million, with more Yorkshire people flying from Leeds Bradford rather than Manchester and elsewhere – raising one of many environmental questions (increased flights equals increased emissions but decreased car journeys equals decreased emissions). It is important to understand how to bear costs of such things in a sustainable way which continues to challenge the aviation industry just as it does wider society.

Currently you can fly direct to over 70 different destinations across the UK, Europe and Africa and even Pakistan. There are charter flights to places as different as Lapland and Barbados, with a great diversity of people working in and passing through the airport, with various spiritual and emotional needs.

For example, over 700 pilgrims travelling to Jeddah needed space to change and pray. Working with the airport we established suitable temporary locations helping not only the pilgrims and their families (who had come to see them off in for a once in a lifetime trip) but also ensured there was space for the other airport users.

As a full time Presbyterian in the Otley and Aireborough Methodist Circuit, I already have pastoral oversight of two churches. So why take on an additional role? I believe the Church needs to be involved in chaplaincy mission work, meeting people where they are.

I meet many people at the airport aged 25-50 – a group absent from many churches. Also, the pace of change at the airport is so different from in our churches. The move from public to private ownership and the ongoing global financial context have meant the airport needs to cut costs. There are redundancy and pain for some employees and growth and delight for others. A chaplain engages with people in the midst of these life changing issues. As John Wesley said: 'go not to where you are needed but where you are needed most'

The next steps are to build our partnership with the airport and to encourage more Christian denominations and other faith groups to be part of the chaplaincy - we are in the process of appointing a Muslim chaplain. If you are interested in getting involved in a voluntary capacity (lay or ordained) please contact me, nick.baker@lbia.co.uk, outlining what you feel you might offer. Training will be provided.

The role of a lollipop lady is to be a very visible sign. Her words remind me of Peter's Pentecost words of Acts 2.15: 'They are not drunk as you suppose'. The Spirit continues to challenge us. The good news is not for the church but rather for the church to share with others and in doing so discover new truths welling up from the gospel. All of which makes for an exciting and dynamic context in which the Spirit moves and grows – a place where Christ's love can be made known.

Nick Baker

# CHRISTIANITY.ORG.UK

The Christian Enquiry Agency has re-launched its website. It deals with issues of faith, prayer, and the questions people ask. Look at – and recommend to others – [www.christianity.org.uk](http://www.christianity.org.uk).

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# Peace People

**In 1660 the Religious Society of Friends wrote to Charles II saying, ‘We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world’.**

This is often known as the Quaker Peace Testimony. Today, it is an expression of how we believe we should live in the world – in our daily lives, our work, our communities and at national and international level. As ‘Advices and Queries’, the Quaker guide to faith and practice, challenges us: ‘Search out those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in yourself which lie at the root of destructive conflict. In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?’

This is why Quakers did relief work in Europe after the world wars. This kind of work continues to today; a QPST (see below) trustee, Hilary Browne, served as an Ecumenical Accompanier in Israel/Palestine, where she discovered a sign outside the Friends Meeting House in Ramallah in the West Bank saying, ‘There is no way to peace. Peace is

the way.’

QPST stands for the Quaker Peace Studies Trust. Its roots can be traced to 1967 when George Murphy, a Quaker, stood by war memorial in Cambridge; a message came to him, ‘You shall do it, and I shall help’. It was a driving force for him. Some Quakers were hesitant, some thought it emotional, others thought it moving. He said ‘I knew that that Power would never allow a failure’ In 1969 he suggested to Quakers the idea of ‘an academic department in a British University studying Peace’. The record says ‘Great interest has been expressed in this proposal.’

Murphy formed a small group including Robert McKinlay, a member of Bradford Quaker Meeting and later Pro Vice- Chancellor of Bradford University, which had received its charter in 1966. The Vice-Chancellor, Ted Edwards, was an enthusiastic supporter of the proposal for a peace studies department, saying, ‘This (Department of Peace Studies) will be a central activity in this new Technological University. It will provide a background of values which will be important to all students.’

In 1972, The Religious Society of

Friends launched an appeal for £75,000, which was raised within four months. The Appeal Office was the kitchen of Bradford Meeting House; older Friends still remember ‘stuffing thousands of appeal leaflets into envelopes around the kitchen table’. Adam Curle, a Quaker, was appointed the first Professor of Peace Studies. The Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University is now the largest Peace Studies Department in the world with a renowned international reputation. It has many overseas students who after completing their courses work globally in related fields.

The Quaker Peace Studies Trust was formed to administer the fund. Although the University itself has taken over the core costs of the Department, the Trust gives bursaries to students, supports new projects and funds day schools and conferences. A student liaison officer is funded to help overseas students to settle in Yorkshire, get to know the University and Bradford’s way of life. S/he organises field trips in difficult areas of the world so that students learn at first hand about work that needs to be done.

QPST has sponsored ‘Peace Jam’.



This annual weekend brings Nobel Peace Prize Laureates to Bradford to inspire high-school young people from across Yorkshire and beyond to learn to sort out problems of conflict and injustice. The young people then work throughout the year with mentors from the student body. The Trust gives bursaries to students from poor areas.

The Trust sponsors Programme for a Peaceful City - action research into how Peace Studies and community groups in Bradford and beyond can

learn to work together. It facilitates the creation of ‘safe spaces’ where difficult issues can be discussed by a variety of groups.

QPST also supports a new research project looking at sustainability (or lack of it) and global security.

Recently the University Library catalogued papers from the early days of the Trust. Properly preserved, they are accessible on request. The picture above shows some Trustees, University and Library staff with some of the archives displayed.

## SERVING TIME

**Her Majesty’s high security establishments are designed for keeping people in. Tall forbidding walls are topped with razor wire; there is a plethora of electronic and other gates to get through. One has to pass an x-ray search of one’s goods more thorough than at an airport. Notices tell you it a criminal offence to bring articles like mobile phones into prison.**

After that, go through a couple of electronic doors and collect a formidable bunch of keys. There are innumerable gates to open and lock behind you before the day is done. And don’t be in too much of a hurry, as there are dog patrols and the canines look hungry!

That’s even before you get into the main prison, a grim-looking Victorian building built to house men whom society requires to be kept out of the way. Some of these guys have made national headlines with their crimes yet when it comes down to it they are human beings like everyone else; so they need the touch of humanity that we as a chaplaincy are there to provide.

## A day in the life of a Wakefield Prison Chaplain

First off is ‘stats’ – statutory duties required by law – which include visiting men who, for one reason or another, are isolated in the segregation unit. It always feels like working in the bowels of the earth. I see each man briefly then chat to staff members as I fill in the inevitable paperwork. Then on to the medical unit which is more relaxed. This is the prison hospital for men who are ill in one form or another. They all have to be seen and I usually sit and talk to anyone who wants a few minutes of my company.

After that, if there is time, it’s off to the wings or workshops for general pastoral visitation, remembering always to make sure the prison officers know I’m there. ‘It’s for your own safety, sir,’ they tell me and they are right. Although the chance of getting caught up in an incident is slight, it does happen and diligence is required at all times in this sort of environment.

Unless there is any one specific to see, I usually wander around the wings talking to anyone and everyone, believers and unbelievers. This particular time I sit down at a table where a

board game is in progress. A couple of minutes later one of the prisoners comes to me with a chair and says very politely, ‘This is your chair, sir, and’ (pointing to the one I am sitting on) ‘that is mine!’ I join in the general amusement, re-seat myself and continue to build relationships round the table.

Some afternoons I run a discussion group which is open to everyone. We usually discuss philosophical matters related to science and the meaning of life. About twenty men attend with every shade of belief or lack of it. The one rule is that everyone must discuss in a polite and orderly fashion. It’s amazing how well that works and also how brain-stretching some of the discussion is. But then, some of these guys have a lifetime to read up on their subject matter. At the end we never seem to have agreed on much but it’s noteworthy as to the relationships that are built using civilised discussion.

Sometimes in an evening visitors come in to take a chapel service and the chaplain has to be on hand for that. Of course, this is in addition to the services we take on Sundays and the various groups we run during the week. Like any work with people, chaplaincy is infinitely varied and often intensely interesting. But then, as Christians that should not surprise us as we believe all people are made in the image of God. When I go out of the gates on the way home I feel I have had a very full day!

## AGITATE, INSULATE

**As part of a national Big Climate Connection campaign to alert the government to the urgency of climate issues, Fabian Hamilton, MP for Leeds North East, was lobbied by 17 constituents at Harehills Lane Baptist Church. Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics and Methodists represented a range of groups including local residents, Oxfam, TIDAL, Schumacher North, Arocha, the Chapeltown Development Group and the local Carbon Reduction Action Group.**

The MP set the tone happily by arriving on his bike, and engaged in debate with some of the more seasoned campaigners. (One of them, Mary Keynes celebrated her 80th birthday a year ago by cycling to London with a team to join the 2009 The Big Wave Climate March; another, Bill Phelps, had arranged for Fabian Hamilton to lead the rickshaw-led campaign cycle across London en route to Edinburgh for the G8 Summit in 2005.)

Each year the importance of taking Climate Change seriously increases. This lobby argued for better insulation and affordable heating for the poorest homes in the UK, and for less carbon pollution by power stations. Fabian Hamilton agreed to work for good international climate change strategies.

Ali Phelps

[The Ripon and Leeds Diocese has published an excellent practical resource document, ‘Caring for God’s Earth’. See [www.riponleeds.anglican.org/environment1.1](http://www.riponleeds.anglican.org/environment1.1).]

### EURO AND ECO

A consultation on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology in Europe organized by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC), meeting in Hungary, adopted a ‘Budapest Call for Climate Justice’.

Eighty representatives of churches and church-related agencies working on poverty reduction and development met to discuss the links between the creation and accumulation of wealth on the one hand and ecological damage and poverty on the other. The methods of wealth creation and the pursuit of unlimited wealth in rich industrialized countries of Europe often impoverish communities and harm creation as a whole.

The consultation noted that: ‘In industrialized countries economic growth should no longer be seen as an aim in itself.’ They called for ‘the redistribution of wealth and sharing of technology between rich countries and poor countries affected by climate change’ as ‘crucial elements of climate justice’. They invited the WCC to put climate justice, poverty eradication, and the relationship between them, on the agenda of its 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea, in 2013.

## Lighthouse

**The Lighthouse Group (TLG), founded in Bradford in 1987, supports 12-16 year olds from deprived communities who have been – or are at risk of being - excluded from school. A recent Church Leader day gave leaders of fourteen churches across nine denominations to hear about the work of TLG.**

Each day in the UK, 2500 young people are excluded from school; each year 44,000 young people leave school unable to read or write, and over 50% of excluded children fail to get any A-C grades at GCSE. Exclusion can be rooted in family breakdown, bereavement, being in care, bullying, gang culture, domestic violence and drug or alcohol abuse. TLG in partnership with the church seeks to hear the cry of these young people.

TLG’s vision is to equip the church to engage with young people at a crisis point in their education - either by setting up Education Centres or through an Early Intervention Programme. TLG’s Education Centres help excluded young people continue their education outside of school earning credits toward qualifications and learning life skills. 96% of young people at TLG Centres show a positive outcome beyond the 12 week

programme, returning to mainstream school, engaging in college, employment, training and volunteering.

TLG’s new Early Intervention Programme was launched at the church leader day. It is based on a local church training church members to be behavioural coaches or mentors who then go into schools to work with young people nearing crisis point.

Tim Morfin of TLG said that ‘TLG’s 20 years of experience of working with disadvantaged young people, combined with our passion for working with the local church, makes the Early Intervention Programme a really exciting opportunity. We want to support more young people who are at risk of exclusion from school.’

Through Education Centres and Early Intervention centres the local church can give these young people an education worth having alongside providing a place they can go for support and care. They give churches a chance to open the door to young people and their families in the local community, a door that can seem so impenetrable at times.

The next TLG day for local church leaders will be 25 January in Bradford. Details from [david.horsfall@tlg.org.uk](mailto:david.horsfall@tlg.org.uk), 01274 900 385, [www.tlg.org.uk](http://www.tlg.org.uk).



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SOME 2011 EVENTS

• **January 19:** ‘Receptive Ecumenism after the Papal Visit’. Leeds Trinity University College Chaplaincy Open Lecture, with Paul Murray from Durham University. Follows 6.40pm Evening Prayer in Chapel. 0113 2837100, ext. 393: d.richmond@leedstrinity.ac.uk  
 • **January 22:** ‘Building Faith / Equipping Leaders – Undefended Leadership’, St George’s, Leeds, 10am-4pm, led by Simon Walker. £15 with lunch.  
 • **January 23:** Ecumenical Choral Vespers, Leeds Cathedral, 3pm.  
 • **January 29-February 6:** Poverty and Homelessness Action Week.  
 • **February 1:** ‘Managing Volunteers’, St Catherine’s, Doncaster Road, Wakefield; 9.45am-3.30pm. £20 with lunch. 0113 3508070; rsmith@livability.org.uk  
 • **February 15:** WYEC OPEN CONSULTATION FOR CHURCHES TOGETHER GROUPS IN KIRKLEES. Dewsbury Minster, 7.30pm.  
 • **February 23:** ‘The Big Response – The Church, the Kingdom of God and the Big Society’; King’s Church, Park Road, Halifax. With Steve Chalke of Oasis and Faithworks. 10.30am-4.15pm. £5. 07725 501465, paul@streetangels.org.uk.  
 • **March 9:** Ash Wednesday. WYEC Church Leaders’ Public Act of Witness.

• **March 23:** WYEC Consultation for Local Ecumenical Partnerships, Christchurch, Windhill, Shipley; 10am.  
 • **March 25-27:** ‘Celebrate Rastrick Together’. Stunning community festival put on by Rastrick churches, Rastrick High School.  
 • **April 24:** Easter Day. Celebrate with a Real Easter Egg, the only one to tell the Easter Story. Get bulk orders in advance. www.realeasteregg.co.uk.  
 • **May 14:** ‘Risk and the Criminal Justice System’, Oxford Place, Leeds. 9.30am-4.30pm. 0113 2564072; philomena.ohare@btinternet.com  
 • **May 22:** ‘Building Faith / Equipping Leaders – Grasping and Living the Whole Bible’; St George’s Leeds, 9.30am-1pm, led by Mark Powley. £10 with coffee.  
 • **June 5:** Hold a Big Lunch street party. www.thebiglunch.com.

PASTORAL MUSICIANS

The West Yorkshire Network of Pastoral Musicians is organising an ecumenical afternoon in Leeds for those interested in the music and spirituality of the Iona Community.  
 On Saturday March 19th 2011, Philip Jakob, member of the Iona Community and Director of Music for the cathedral and diocese of Hallam, will lead a workshop on the theme “Washing the Feet of the World”. Philip, an organist and published composer of liturgical music, is in wide demand as liturgical animator at conferences and often works with John Bell and the Wild Goose Resource Group. In addition to the Iona Community, he is a Council member of the Yorkshire and Humber Faiths Forum, and Forum Chair of Churches Together in South Yorkshire.  
 Iona is a tiny and beautiful Hebridean island, cradle of Christianity in Scotland. The Iona Community was founded in Glasgow and Iona in 1938 by George MacLeod, minister, visionary and prophetic witness for peace, in the context of the poverty and despair of the Depression. From a dockland parish in Govan, Glasgow, he took unemployed skilled craftsmen and

young trainee clergy to Iona to rebuild both the monastic quarters of the mediaeval abbey and the common life by working and living together, sharing skills and effort as well as joys and achievement. A commitment to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation is an integral part of the Rule of the Iona Community, and a key aspect of their lives both as individuals and as a community.  
 The workshop on March 19th will run from 2 to 5pm, at Leeds University Catholic Chaplaincy, St Mark’s Avenue, Leeds LS2 9BN. The cost will be £5 waged / £3 unwaged. For further details, email wychurchmusic@yahoo.co.uk , or phone Joe Burns on 0113 2674176, or visit www.westyorkshirechurchmusic.org.uk

SCARGILL

The Scargill Movement has got Scargill House, in the beautiful setting of Upper Wharfedale, back in action again as a leading Christian centre of retreat, study and prayer.  
 If you would like to join an organised programme, here is a taste of what is happening:  
 January 28-30, Worship Leaders’ and Musicians’ Retreat; February 4-6, Youth Leaders’ Retreat; March 11-13, Being with Jesus in the Wilderness; March 21-25, Leaders Learning to Listen; May 9-13, Enjoying and Caring for God’s Creation; May 20-22, Monasticism and Fresh Expressions.  
 If you would like more details, or would like to spend time at Scargill on your own, or as a family or church, contact 01756 761236, info@scargillmovement.org; www.scargillmovement.org.

HAVING A FEAST

A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.  
 It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples. It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context.’ (See www.freshexpressions.org.uk)  
 A fresh expression is a church plant or a new congregation, a proper church It’s for those who have never been to church or who do not want to go back to what they experienced before. In Yorkshire, Fresh expressions include the Wesley Playhouse in Birstall, Gracespace in Saltaire, Sorted in Bradford, Emmanuel Café Church in Leeds, and Divine Divas (!) in Tadcaster.  
 Fresh Expressions Area Strategy Teams (FEASTs) help develop and sustain fresh expressions of Church across a region, supporting and training pioneers, and promoting prayer. FEASTs could give the church landscape a ‘mixed economy’.  
 A typical FEAST includes permission givers (a senior leader or two), champions (those committed to developing fresh expressions of church) and pioneers / practitioners who already work on specific fresh expressions.  
 Ideally those on FEASTs should be: Passionate about fresh expressions / senior enough to be listened to / well connected / articulate / supportive of practitioners and pioneers / ecumenically-minded and Kingdom orientated.  
 That’s quite a challenge, but we’re having a go in West Yorkshire, starting on 17 January. For details, and the next meeting date, contact Nick Blundell, nickcblund@aol.com.


CONFIDENCE

Yorkshire Baptist Association has identified a weakness many of us have when talking about our faith – a lack of confidence. Whatever your tradition you will want to see the confidence building strategy at www.yba.org.uk.

CALLED TO CARE

CARE Dewsbury opened its doors in July 2007 to provide Care And Respect for Everyone. Those calling into CARE include the homeless, people with addictions, those who are lonely and people seeking help with their lives who don’t know how to obtain it.  
 Some just come initially for a hot meal or to find someone who has time to listen to them and talk to them. We have had up to 46 people in a two hour session (we open Mondays and Thursdays from 10 am to 12 noon) but normally we expect to see 20 to 30 people. We have built up excellent relationships with many other organisations, both statutory and voluntary and by working together we have been able to help many people. At present we have 3 people in rehab with Teen Challenge and Betel. CARE is supported and staffed by people from the Churches in Dewsbury and we have also received help from Kirklees Council, West Yorkshire Police, the Mayor’s Charity Appeal (2009) and local schools who provide tinned and packaged food at harvest time. We believe God called us, as His people, to show His love in practical ways to all those who seek our help.  
 We have a dedicated team of volunteers and a huge band of supporters, but above all we have a wonderful Father God who cares for everyone, whatever their problems and we ask for your prayers that we may continue to serve Him in CARE Dewsbury for many years to come.  
 Liz Exley  
 Churches Together in Dewsbury

SITS VAC


 The Diocese of Ripon and Leeds has developed three imaginative Pioneer ministries in Leeds City Centre. Rob Hinton has already been appointed Chaplain to the business communities. In association with Leeds Methodist District, James Barnett (left) has been appointed to minister to the new city centre residential communities.  
 • The remaining post is currently being advertised. It is to minister to the night time communities in the city centre. It is open to lay and ordained people of any denomination. For further information contact Peter Burrows, 0113 269 0594, peterb@riponleeds-diocese.org.uk.  
 • The Bradford city centre based Peace Museum has two part-time vacancies, one administrative, the other for a person with education expertise. See www.peacemuseum.org.uk.  
 • Volunteer representatives from faith communities are required to work on ‘Resilience’, i.e. major incident scenarios. Contact West Yorkshire Police, wyrf@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk



# Ripon Pastors

An ecumenical Ripon Street Pastors group has been set up by Simon Hoare, with Claire Green and Gloria Sturdy from Holy Trinity and New Life Church. Simon, a former ecumenical officer for Bradford Diocese, is part of the retired clergy team at Ripon Cathedral; he is also Christian Aid coordinator for Ripon Churches Together group, known as 'Ripon Alive'.

The Pastors' work is supported by prayer together before they venture onto the streets on alternate Friday evenings. 'I have learnt so much from praying with people who have completely different ways of praying to me,' reflects Simon.

A team of three Pastors walks around the city centre talking to people and providing a reassuring presence into the small hours of the morning. 'Having the Pastors on the streets definitely has a calming effect' says Simon. 'They are unity in action.'



# Declaring

Do you live in a village or a suburb where the only church building(s) belong to a single denomination?

How can members of that church reach out to Christians of other traditions? This was the dilemma faced by the Anglican parish of Upper Wharfedale. The solution was the signing of a Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome. This means that the churches in the parish will offer hospitality and more to residents and visitors from other churches. It is a commitment both to be inclusive and to be sensitive to the needs and practices of Christians from different backgrounds.



Vivien Firth and Peter Yorkstone sign the Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome in Kettlewell Parish Church



Congratulations to the Anglican, Baptist and Methodist churches in Golcar, who have signed a local Covenant to work even more closely together.

Above: Signing the Golcar Covenant

# FIVE YEAR SUCCESSES

## Halifax Street Angels

Giving up your weekend nights to help drunken revellers is not everyone's cup of tea. But for the last 5 years the dedicated team of around 30 volunteers at Halifax Street Angels have been doing just that.

Braving all weathers and overly-merry town centre visitors, up to a dozen volunteers are out every weekend to make the streets safer. Based at the Fairtrade Cafe at Crossley Street, they have helped countless people, from young people unable to get home after nights out clubbing to older people who ask to be accompanied as they walk to the bus station after a trip to the theatre.

What started in Halifax has now spread across Britain. Paul Blakey, who founded the project with other members of Churches Together, said: 'People hear about it and want to see for themselves how it works. It's a simple idea that has taken off.'

The team have been presented with numerous awards, including the Tilley Award by Government Office for helping to reduce crime in Halifax town centre. Street Angels are part of West Yorkshire Police award-winning Operation Northdale, which has reduced sexual offences linked to town and city centre nightlife. Calderdale Police's divisional commander Chief Superintendent Alan Ford said: 'We welcome the fantastic work that the Street Angels do. For details, see [www.streetangels.org.uk](http://www.streetangels.org.uk).

## Todmorden Youth Caravan

George Lambert writes:

The Churches Together in Todmorden Youth Caravan Project has proved so successful in the past 5 years that we've had to buy a bigger, more modern caravan. (The old caravan is being used to start a similar project in Southampton!)

On average, 17 young people from 13-16 visit the caravan on Friday evening. It links with a Parish Church Youth Cafe starting at 9pm. Young people have a safe environment to talk, play games and find a listening ear when needed.

The caravan is staffed by volunteers plus a paid youth worker and relies on fundraising and donations. We are grateful for the support of Todmorden Town Council,



Todmorden Rotary Club, West Yorkshire Metro and Calderdale Community Foundation. The Town Mayor (pictured) has made the Youth caravan her nominated charity

The Caravan also provides a Christian presence at Todmorden Boundary Walk, Carnival and the Agricultural Show.

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In order to experience life at Alexandra Court please feel free to contact my daughter Marilouise, to arrange a viewing or alternatively have a look at our website for more information. We look forward to welcoming you soon.

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**For many young people, historic divisions between Christians do not make sense. Working with young people is something that churches can most fruitfully do together. Examples from across our region include:**



*Horbury youth on target (inside, page 9)*



*The Little Lane party (inside, page 10).*



*The amazing Kidz Klub in Leeds (inside page 15) recently received a visit from John Sentamu, Archbishop of York.*



*Churches Together in Bentham has recently taken over local collecting for Christian Aid week. Pictured are Matthew, Joshua and Jacob Tomlinson, of St Margaret's, Bentham. Stephen Dawson, Chair of Churches Together, said that they raised over £2000, despite the recession: 'Christian Aid Week is a great opportunity to contact every household with news of the world's poor'. For 2011, they will be holding a Christian Aid week barbecue.*

# STREET CHAPLAINS

The Leeds Churches Street Chaplains is an ecumenical Christian response by the churches across Leeds to the needs of people using the city centre. The project seeks to demonstrate a Christian presence by engaging with people on the streets and in the night-time venues in order to care, listen, converse and offer practical help.

- A Street Chaplain is a member of the church who has a vision for mission beyond the usual boundaries of the church.
- The purpose of a Street Chaplain is to care, to listen, to support and help people in as positive a way as possible.
- It is a Street Chaplain's aim to get to know people in the community and to build relationships with them in order to identify needs and work towards helping them.
- A Street Chaplain must gain the credibility of the community so that the community knows that the church has come to them.

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**Leeds Churches  
STREET CHAPLAINS**


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