**Report given to CTiW Annual Meeting on 21 January 2019**

**by Executive Committee member, Rev’d Jonathan Evens as Acting Chairman for the 2019 Annual Meeting**

**Report of CTiW activities**

Our year in CTiW has focussed around our three areas of activity; education and getting to know one another; worship and social action.

We pursue our first aim largely through Meet The Neighbours and Join The Neighbours – inviting people to join in regular events at various churches. These have taken us to The Jesuit Church of the Immaculate Conception (Farm Street), Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family and St Martin-in-the-Fields. We have heard the history of Jesuits in both London and Britain, the History of the Ukrainian Church and Diaspora Life in the UK, and the wide history of St Martin’s, especially its model of mission to-day and the importance of the four C’s – Culture, Commerce, Charity and Congregational life. We also went to All Saints Margaret Street for Voices of Iraq: Stories of Trauma, Survival and Hope. If you would like to be part of either MTN or JTN in any way, please let us know. Rosa, our admin officer is great at passing news on among our churches both through our newsletter which she is responsible for editing and sending out, and through the database which she uses to share invitations and items of interest among churches. Rosa has prepared Newsletters – No. 11 (Report of last AGM), No. 12, No. 13 (Prisons Mission special), No. 14.

Our second aim regularly invites us to worship together, and we did this on Advent Sunday at St James Piccadilly, where Lindsey Meader led us in Advent reflections, and on Pentecost, this year here at Regent Hall where we were led by Major Richard Mingay. We also shared in the Cross on Victoria Street; a Good Friday Walk of Witness.

In October our Prisons Mission Prayer Vigil took place at Notre Dame de France and included a sequence of readings, dialogue, testimonies, reflections, music and prayer on the themes of prison reform, rehabilitation of prisoners, needs of victims and the Christian response. Speakers described experiences and observations of prisons and the prison system from several very different perspectives. There were performances of pieces by Handel and Fauré, both of whom wrote on themes of imprisonment, and ‘Voices from Prison’, a drama for three voices based on: ‘Koestler Voices: New Poetry from Prisons Volume One’. Prayers were led by The Prison's Mission Team at Notre Dame de France, Jonathan Evens, Richard Mingay and the Prison’s Mission volunteers.

Our third aim involves us in the prison ministry which we will hear about later in the meeting, and as well as the actual visiting of prisons which is great work, also in praying together in prisons week. The resources that are produced for that are significant. The 2018 Prisons Week booklet was used by scores of churches and circulated to churches of all Christian denominations, far beyond London. Many people told us that it was the best yet, so, if you haven’t used them before, can I recommend that you look out for them later in the year; prisons week is in October – and see how they might best serve you.

Additionally, this year, “First Impressions: Portraits from Prison”, an exhibition of paintings by men, women and children, curated by the Koestler Trust, was organised for St James’s Piccadilly, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church and St Martin-in-the-Fields. At each church, the exhibition was the focus for worship, lectures, debates and discussions on the subject of penal policy and the crisis in British prisons. Many visitors attended from churches in London and far beyond, including Prison Chaplaincy team members of different faiths, as well as other individuals and organisations. This was a major initiative led by the Prisons Mission. The venture involved a partnership with the host churches and the Koestler Trust, which for over fifty years has promoted the visual arts in prisons as an aid to education, recover and rehabilitation. The Prisons Mission raised over £10,000 from individual benefactors so that there would be no financial burden on either the churches or the Koestler Trust.

Our theme for the AGM usually reflects an aspect of mission and ministry in Westminster. This year we are exploring the model of mission (congregation, compassion, culture and commerce) advocated by HeartEdge, a new ecumenical movement for renewal. HeartEdge has been initiated by St Martin-in-the-Fields and churches in Westminster have been early adopters in the movement. We look forward to hearing from Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, Notre Dame de France, St Martin-in-the-Fields and St James Piccadilly about innovative mission activity in Westminster to do with the 4Cs of congregation, compassion, culture and commerce.

The exec has, as always, gone through various changes, and we have had to say goodbye to our former Chair Ruth Gouldbourne from Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, who has moved to become Minister of Grove Lane Baptist Church, Cheadle. We wish to record our thanks to Ruth for all that she did as Chair of CTiW, not only in the interesting and varied programme that she oversaw as Chair but also by responding to the need for a new constitution that she saw through to completion and which was adopted last year.

Andreea Gherman (Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church - Treasurer) and Majors Richard & Caroline Mingay (Salvation Army, Regent Hall) have all completed a full first year on the Exec and we have benefited hugely from their input. We have been very glad to welcome and co-opt Rev’d Canon Anthony Ball (Westminster Abbey), Rev’d Matthew Catterick (St Saviours Pimlico), Gillian Dare (All Saints Church, Margaret Street), Rev’d Joan Ishibashi (St James’s, Piccadilly) and Rob Thompson (Hinde Street Methodist Church) during the year. They have joined the other members of the Exec: John Plummer (St George’s Church, Hanover Square), Rev’d Dominic Robinson (The Immaculate Conception, Farm Street), Rev’d Roderick Leece (St George’s Hanover Square) and myself.

We have been ably supported, as in recent years, by Rosa Postance who, as Secretary, undertakes administration and communications including our website and Newsletter. Our thanks to everyone who has served on the Exec this year for the tremendous contribution made. In a moment we will ask the approval of the meeting for those who have been co-opted in the course of this year and will note that Andreea Gherman and John Plummer are standing down from the Exec.

Andreea’s work schedule, family and church commitments have become such that she cannot continue to volunteer the time necessary to do my job as treasurer and member of the Executive with the thoroughness she would like and she is therefore resigning effective June 1st, 2019. We are all very sorry to hear this news because of the significant contribution Andreea has made to CTiW through her helpful and constructive contributions to Exec meetings and especially for the way in which she was able to take on the Treasurer role without a handover and sort through the hiatus in order to get us back on track with up-to-date information and effective systems. We are all very grateful for this very significant piece of work as well as being appreciative both of the time that Andreea has had to commit to undertaking it and the patient and constructive way in which she have gone about it.

John Plummer brings huge energy and enthusiasm to all his commitments and undertakings combined with a very precise knowledge of the issues and tasks he addresses. All these have been abundantly evident in the time that he has spent as a CTiW Executive member. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the work he did to draft a new constitution for CTiW. We are much in John’s debt for all his input to the Executive and, in particular, for our constitution. So, as with Andreea, while we understand the reasons for his decision to stand down, it is with real regret that we lose his input at this stage. We are glad, however, that he will continue to be a force for mission, and for change in the Prison Service, through his continued leadership of CTiW’s Prison’s Mission.

To lessen the burden of monthly meetings on busy people, it was decided that the Executive will meet approximately five times a year for “themed” meetings, and that when necessary smaller “task groups” will be set up to work on specific projects as has been the case with the organisation of the prayer vigil and the AGM.

As part of the MTN at St Martin-in-the-Fields members from one denomination spoke of things they particularly appreciated about a different denomination. I spoke about the development of my faith as a child in a Baptist Church and the more recent inspiration provided by Baptist ministers through their involvement with HeartEdge. Sr Catherine Jones of Notre Dame de France had been impressed by the way in which Major Richard Mingay of the Salvation Army had led prayer for support, healing, hope and forgiveness at the Prayer Vigil. Rev’d Richard Carter, Associate Vicar at St Martin’s, spoke about his admiration for the Jesuits when working in New Guinea and a new appreciation the importance of the Sacrament during a year spent at a Roman Catholic Seminary in Melbourne. These personal stories and appreciations of other denominations demonstrate the value of the links, understanding, friendships and fellowship built up through the work of CTiW, which is based on, but which transcends, the educative element of our work through events such as MTN and JTN. It is real experience and encounter of each other in our similarities and differences that can lead to real appreciation for and understanding of each other. This is why worshipping and praying together, whether in Advent or at Pentecost as well as in Vigils and at MTNS or JTNs is at the heart of all we do. Our work together – getting to know and understand one another better; sharing in prayer and worship and taking on challenging social issues still matters. The Kingdom has not yet come in its fullness; we are still called to seek it, and to explore it. Thank you for being here tonight to take part in this expression, and thank you, too, to all of those who do various things during the year to keep those glimpses of the Kingdom of God coming.