

# *An Occasional Newsletter*

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## **PRISONS WEEK 2019: 13-20th OCTOBER**

In recent years our Prisons Mission has made good progress in promoting Prisons Week. This will be marked from 13th to 20th October, which includes two Sundays.

A revised and improved edition of the booklet of resource material for Prisons Week will be published in mid-September. This will include new prayers and reflections from inside prisons as well as from people involved with the prisons and criminal justice system. The Foreword is written by Commissioner Anthony Cotterill - Territorial Commander for the Salvation Army, United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland. The booklet will feature a new quiz, as many churches have found this to be a useful tool for discussion groups. Artwork has been donated by Koestler Arts, and this is often reprinted within Orders of Service in the week. There are several brief essays on current issues and useful information on the prevailing "crisis" in British prisons, as well as a directory of relevant organisations for church people to contact.

The purpose of the booklet is to encourage both ordained and lay people of churches far beyond London to devise interesting and effective services and related events about prisons, prisoners, their families, prison staff and victims of crime. We hope the resources in the booklet will help you to mark Prisons Week in your own way and bring these sensitive issues to the attention of your congregation.

### **PLEASE PLAN NOW FOR PRISONS WEEK AT YOUR CHURCH**

"...I was in prison and you came to visit me..." (Matt 25.36)

Every parish community across our nation is affected by prison experiences, quite literally.

There will be at least one member of our churches who has had a friend or family member incarcerated. Most likely someone in the community themselves will have been imprisoned or been at risk of prison.

How do we connect with these often hidden experiences, cutting through stigma and misunderstanding?

The Prisons Mission of CTiW produces resources for Prisons Week and is encouraging parishes to consider raising the profile of prisons and those affected by them this October.

*by Rev Matthew Harbage. St Mark's Regents Park and Prisons Mission Volunteer*

The new Prisons Week resource booklet will be distributed in mid-September. To order digital or hard copies please contact:

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Coordinator. Prisons Mission  
Churches Together in Westminster

Tel: 020 7272 1639  
Email: [johnplummer.audax@gmail.com](mailto:johnplummer.audax@gmail.com)

## CTIW PENTECOST SERVICE

This year's Pentecost Service was held at St Martin-in-the-Fields and led by Revd Sally Hitchiner. The service followed a Thy Kingdom Come Beacon Event on Trafalgar Square to which the Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Revd Dr Sam Wells, and St Martin's Voices had contributed. Some of those celebrating Pentecost in the Square then joined the CTiW supported Service, together with members of St Martin's congregation and CTiW members.



The service was a celebration of Pentecost using music drawn from the Choral and Gospel traditions and featuring the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields and the Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir. Topped and tailed by congregational hymns, the service alternated between contemplative choral pieces and soulful emotive gospel songs. Interspersed throughout were evocative meditations drawing the congregation into the disciples' experiences and emotions prior to, during and after Pentecost. These mirrored our emotions and enabled us to own the Pentecost experience. By the end of the service, the congregation were on their feet, with dancing in the aisles, as the Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir provided a rousing and uplifting finale.

The Chair of CTiW, Revd Jonathan Evens, led intercessions for the ecumenical work of CTiW, while other members of the St Martin's congregation prayed for wider society and the world.

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## CTIW REVIEW

CTiW is currently reviewing its programme of activities to assess their appropriateness going forward and whether changes or new developments are required. We need to consult member churches in CTiW both on their views on the value of CTiW, and what kind of events and initiatives they would like to see in order to understand what people want, what motivates them and what prevents them from participating.

The following questionnaire is being sent to all member churches asking them to complete the questions with groups from their congregations. The questionnaire explores the impact of popular CTiW events such as "Meet the Neighbours" while also exploring scope for working alongside other existing or developing networks and the extent to which our focus should be on face-to-face meetings or side-by-side working. Questionnaire returns are invited from all churches in Westminster, so if you have yet to see a copy please request one from Rosa Postance [ctiw.net@gmail.com](mailto:ctiw.net@gmail.com) or see our website <http://ctiw.london/>



## CTiW consultation 2019

**Church:**

**Date completed:**

**1. Why do you think ecumenical activity is valuable? To what extent do you think there is alignment between your reasons for supporting ecumenical activity and the programme CTiW delivers? Are there any other activities that CTiW could deliver that would be a better fit with your reasons for supporting ecumenical activity?**

**2. CTiW's current programme is: Advent Service; AGM (with presentations); Walk of Witness; Pentecost Service; Meet the Neighbours events; Join the Neighbours events; Prison Mission; Prayer Vigils (occasional); Special Services (occasional – for specific occasions); Website; Newsletters; Event mailings. What aspects of this programme are working well? Which aspects need to be reviewed?**

**3. In what ways should CTiW work with other ecumenical networks/initiatives i.e. Ecumenical Breakfast, Westminster CITIZENS, HeartEdge etc.? In what ways should we aim to have different activities from groups such as these?**

**4. In practice CTiW is not able to involve the full range of churches in Westminster with its activities, which of the following do you think are the main reasons:**

- **Doctrinal reasons or reasons of tradition;**
- **General busyness of church programmes;**
- **CTiW publicity/information not shared by churches;**
- **Lack of interest in CTiW events;**
- **Insufficient priority given to ecumenicism;**
- **Inward focus of congregations;**
- **Other – please specify.**

**Please prioritise the above in terms of issues for CTiW to address and suggest possible solutions.**

**When completed, please return to CTiW at [ctiw.net@gmail.com](mailto:ctiw.net@gmail.com)**

**Thank you.**