

An Occasional Newsletter

Welcome to Issue 29 (Winter 2023/Spring 2024) of our Occasional Newsletter. Please do feel free to photocopy this for distribution amongst your congregation.

CTiW 2023 ADVENT SERVICE

It now seems a long time ago when we all met at St. James's Church, Piccadilly on the evening of Sunday, 3rd December for our Annual Advent Service.

We were welcomed by Rev'd Ivan Khovacs, who led the service. The atmosphere was full of a quiet expectancy as we sang Advent carols led by the choir, and listened to Advent readings by candlelight. The weather had been very wet, and so we didn't go outside to celebrate the final part of our worship with a gathering round a bonfire, and instead we remained inside the church. Our evening ended with drinks and nibbles providing the opportunity to socialize.

Grateful thanks to Rev'd Ivan and to the Rector, Rev'd Lucy Winkett, choir and people of SJP for their hospitality and for very kindly once again hosting our CTiW Advent Service.



Issue 29
**Winter 2023/
Spring 2024**

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Contact us:

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Solemn Evensong to mark the start of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024

Everyone was invited to a service of Solemn Evensong with a choir and hymns, at the Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Assumption & St Gregory in Warwick Street at 3.30pm on Sunday, 21st January, to celebrate the start of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The service was led by the Parish Priest, Fr Mark Elliott Smith, with The Ordinary, Msgr Keith Newton, who is the head of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. The preacher was the Rev. Dr. Robin Hill, Minister at Gladsmuir Kirk, Edinburgh.



Link for photo and video of the service <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zezF5CI2bl>

The following is a message sent from the Moderator of the General Assembly Church of Scotland:-

Dear Fr Mark,

On behalf of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, may I offer greetings and I pray God's richest blessings upon you during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This ecumenical season invites us to draw closer to one another within the community of the Church and, in so doing, to draw closer to our Lord, who prayed for us that we 'may all be one...that the world may believe'. The prayer of our Lord invites us to live out our response and to embody the unity for which he prays. Within the Church of Scotland, we have sought to do so by forging a number of ecumenical declarations with sister churches, including the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. The Saint Margaret Declaration signed in 2022, in the presence of the Princess Royal, expresses the desire of the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland to continue to walk together in friendship and to express our oneness in Christ. Once more, may God richly bless you at this time.

Yours sincerely

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton

Moderator of the General Assembly Church of Scotland

THE 2024 CTiW A.G.M.

The 2024 CTiW AGM was held at 6pm on Monday, 22nd January in the Arrupe Hall, at 114 Mount Street, with some 40 persons in attendance from 15 different churches. The meeting was being held, as is customary, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and Fr Roderick Leece, Rector of St George's Church, Hanover Square, opened the meeting with a reading and prayer. Alasdair MacKenzie, from the London Prisons Mission who was acting as Chair, then gave an Introduction and Review of the year.

Following this, Alasdair reported on the activities of the London Prisons Mission. It is hoped that they will be able to again hold an exhibition of prisoners' art to take place in the Autumn.

CTiW's Treasurer, Rev'd Joan Ishibashi, from St James's Church, Piccadilly, was currently out of the country, so was unable to give a report in person. However, the current balance in CTiW's account stands at £2,739. There being no further business, the meeting closed.



Next came a break for tea/coffee and cakes, which gave the chance for people to socialize, after which there followed an illustrated Talk entitled "The Art of Believing", which was given by Fr Patrick van der Vorst who was born and raised in Bruges, Belgium. Prior to being ordained a Roman Catholic priest for the Diocese of Westminster last summer, Fr Patrick was a Director of Sotheby's Europe, and has 25 years experience in the art world. He is a specialist in 18th century French furniture. He also launched the website www.christian.art which offers daily readings based on his knowledge of the arts with the gospel, along with his personal journey to the priesthood. The daily readings seek to pair the daily reading with a work of art.

CTiW wishes to thank Fr Patrick for his extremely interesting talk, and also Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, CTiW Exec member and Parish Priest at Farm Street for the use of the hall and facilities for our AGM, as well as all who contributed to making this a most enjoyable evening.



Update from London Prisons Mission

By Alasdair Mackenzie

The London Prisons Mission co-ordinators met on 25 January 2024 at St Martin-in-the-Fields Vicarage. We were very happy to be joined by Simon Woodman from Bloomsbury Baptist Church.

We are still looking for a treasurer and website manager. Each role would not require attendance at every LPM meeting. The treasurer will need to formally sign off our accounts annually (LPM is a registered charity) and oversee our expenditure, which is extremely modest and largely consists of the subscription to our website and email account.

The website manager is a really important role as we could use our website to highlight volunteering opportunities, promote our meetings and any future art exhibitions and include updates about our work and that of those who volunteer to work in the prisons sector. If you know of anyone with relevant experience for either post, please let me know at info@londonprisonsmission.org

This year, we are hoping to stage an exhibition of prisoners' art in the run-up to Prisons Week. We are also planning an event with a guest speaker in late spring/early summer. We will let you know via this newsletter as soon as we have any news.

We are planning to visit several London prisons this year, starting with HMP Bronzefield. We also discussed [The Welcome Directory](#), which is a directory of prisons which provide a welcoming environment to ex-offenders, and we will be recommending to our churches that they sign up. Bloomsbury Baptist Church has already signed up.

We continue to explore volunteering opportunities for people who wish to support those in prison and those leaving prison and I have been in touch with the organisation Clinks ([Homepage](#) | [Clinks](#)) about this.

CTiW Executive Members 2024

Rev'd Joan Ishibashi – St James's, Piccadilly – Treasurer

Gillian Dare – All Saints Church, Margaret Street – Minutes Secretary

Rev'd Canon Dr Peter Babington - St Mary le Strand

Rev'd Matthew Catterick, St Saviours Church, St Georges Square, Pimlico

Major Geoff Chape - Salvation Army, Regent Hall

Rev'd Roderick Leece – St George's Church, Hanover Square

Deacon Ali McMillan - Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

Alasdair Mackenzie – Coordinator. London Prisons Mission.

Rev'd Dominic Robinson SJ, - The Immaculate Conception, Farm Street

Catherine Slater – WLM & Hinde Street Methodist Church

Rosa Postance – Administration & Communications (inc Website & Newsletter)

Owing to pressure of work, Martyn Watson, who was Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church's representative on the CTiW Executive, has had to stand down. We thank him for his valuable support over a number of years, and wish him well in the future.