

# An Occasional Newsletter

## The CTiW 2017 AGM

The CTiW 2017 AGM was held on Monday, 16 January at 6.30 for 7pm -9pm at Crown Court Church of Scotland. The theme of the evening was homelessness in Westminster, and featured a speaker and displays by organisations working in this field.

## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

**O**ur year at CTiW has been rich and full, with our regular events on Good Friday, when we took part in the Walk of Witness on Victoria Street, our Pentecost service which was hosted this year at St Giles in the Fields, and our Advent service at St James Piccadilly, as well as being represented at the Enthronement of Abp Silouan of the Antiochian Orthodox community; he is now heading the newly formed Archdiocese of that part of the Orthodox family in Britain and Ireland.

Our other regular events are the "Meet the Neighbours", when we visit one of our churches of an evening, (usually), and share together in a short act of worship in the hosts' tradition, learn something of the building, the life of the congregation and its mission, ending with refreshments and time to get to know one another. This year we visited the Salvation Army Regent Hall in Oxford Street – where we enjoyed the band rehearsal; The Guards Chapel – a day time event to ring the changes; Notre Dame de France in Leicester Place, and the Quaker Meeting House in St Martin's Lane. It was a wide selection, and we were made very welcome in all our places, learned a lot and got to know one another better.

Our other main theme has been the prisons ministry, dealt with elsewhere in the newsletter.

There have been several changes in the Executive; Dominic has stepped down as chair, and I now chair the meetings. Ray has left London for a time and has taken leave of absence. Jane was appointed Rector of St Margaret's Westminster, and Isobel is leaving London, and so both have resigned. We have been joined by Deborah Colvin from St James' Piccadilly and Jonathan Evens from St Martin-in-the-Fields. We have realised that our constitution has gone missing, and so we are working on a new one. Watch this space.

Our Newsletter remains one of the main ways we stay in touch, and we are very grateful to Rosa for chasing us for copy, editing and then emailing it. Please read, mark, inwardly digest, and pass on around the congregation; that way, you will know what is going on, and the "together" in our title might become more than a mere word.

*Rev'd Ruth Gouldbourne, Chairman*

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### CTiW 2017 Executive Members

**Rev'd Ruth Gouldbourne** (Chair) –  
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church  
**Raymond Crocker** (Secretary) –  
St James' Church, Piccadilly  
**David J. Mannarino** – (Treasurer)  
**Deborah Colvin** – St James' Church,  
Piccadilly  
**Rev'd Jonathan Evens** – St Martin-in-  
the-Fields, Trafalgar Square  
**Rev'd Roderick Leece** – St George's  
Church, Hanover Square  
**Rev'd Philip Majcher** – Crown Court  
Church of Scotland  
**Major Graham Mizon** – Salvation  
Army, Regent Hall  
**John Plummer** – St George's Church,  
Hanover Square  
**Rev'd Dominic Robinson SJ**, - The  
Immaculate Conception, Farm Street

Administration & Communications –  
**Rosa Postance**

**If your church is interested in  
hosting a future "Meet the Neigh-  
bours" we should be pleased to  
hear from you**

### Contact us

Website: [www.ctiw.london](http://www.ctiw.london)  
Email: [ctiw.net@gmail.com](mailto:ctiw.net@gmail.com)

## TREASURERS REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 2017

### Financial Update:

As of January 16, 2017 Churches Together in Westminster (CTiW) had a cash balance of £1,849.67. The Treasury of CTiW is in a strong position and will continue an adequate cash position throughout 2017 to support the initiatives outlined by the Executive team. As a recap, the 2016 Treasury priorities included streamlining the bank accounts and standardizing membership donations. The bank accounts priority was achieved and the new banking relationship has been established at Lloyds Bank (moved from the Cooperative Bank). All past due invoices are now paid in full. Lloyds Bank will be in a much better position to grow with CTiW via merchant processing of membership donations and potential credit card payments. The membership donation priority is described below.

Cash inflows consist of membership donations. Membership letters will be sent out at the end of January and cash inflows typically start increasing in February until April. Cash outflows consist of administrative support, printing and event sponsorships. All cash outflows are approved at the monthly Executive meetings.

As always, if you would like the detailed cash debt and credit activity, please email at [david.mannarino@53.com](mailto:david.mannarino@53.com) and I will send them to you directly.

### Membership/Subscription Update and Timetable:

It has been several years since a pricing increase was proposed and approved. The 2017 annual membership donation is increasing from £25 to £30 (£5 increase). This increase will be used primarily for event sponsorship and web page subscription.

*David Mannarino, Treasurer*

## PRISONS MISSION REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017

### Crisis in prisons

The crisis in British prisons has been festering for many years. Most of the ancient Victorian prisons are grossly overcrowded, with reduced numbers of staff causing more inmates to be locked in shared cells for up to 23 hours each day, with little access to education, work, recreation, or "purposeful activities". The murder at HMP Pentonville in October, the riot in Bedford, Moorlands and Lewes in November and Birmingham and Swaleside in December, attracted media attention. The 106 suicides in prisons throughout the year were little reported. The Prison Governors Association made an unprecedented call for an "independent public inquiry into the rising incidence of violence, self-harm and suicides".

population, than any other Western European country. Many of these people are further damaged by imprisonment and less able to become independent, law abiding and useful citizens when released. Against this tragic background, the efforts of a few CTiW member churches to undertake work in prisons and with prisoners can seem trivial and almost worthless. Our experience convinces us that this very modest ministry is not only worthy but essential. The people are held in prisons in our name. They are out of sight, but must not be out of mind.

### Prisons Mission Objectives

Participants from the "engaged" member churches have two aims:

In December 2016 there were 96,365 men, women and children in British prisons. More, per head of

- Support and assist the multi-faith Prison Chaplaincy Teams in their task of providing opportunities for

## PRISONS MISSION REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017 continued...

worship, religious education and pastoral care for inmates and their families, as well as Prison Officers. The inmates are often distressed, angry, anxious, worried and isolated.

- Inform congregations and members of their churches about their learning and experience of prison and the criminal justice system, so that knowledge about the facts are communicated and more people become concerned about our prisons.

### Church "Engagement"

Our Prisons Mission involves more than the recruitment of a few suitable and well intentioned volunteers to become participants. Each church agrees to support at least two members of their congregation who undertake the outreach work with a Prison Chaplaincy Team. The churches receive and consider regular reports from participants about the activities and issues and explain such news and developments at church services and newsletters. The churches also agree to focus on marking Prisons Week each Autumn.

### Participant Activities

The activities undertaken by participants depend on their skills, aptitudes and available time, as well as the needs and priorities of the chaplains, who often work under considerable pressure. Activities include attending and supporting services in the chapel, Bible studies classes, one to one mentoring prisoners before and after discharge to aid resettlement, assisting children and families in the visiting rooms, administration in the chaplaincy office, accompanying chaplains on their rounds and generally learning and becoming useful.

### Support for Participants

Becoming a participant for this Prisons Mission is not like volunteering to visit patients in a hospital. Prisons are an unfamiliar, foreign and even hostile environment, which is usually hidden behind high walls.

Participants are given training by chaplains and closely supported by the Coordinator. There are also bi-monthly Review Meetings at which all participants exchange information, discuss problems and support each other. A common difficulty is coping with the

ments in the penal and criminal justice system and changes needed to improve the effectiveness of our work.

### Prisons Week

This year we collected and compiled an improved booklet of resource material to help and encourage more member churches to devise interesting services and other activities to bring the issues and needs of prisons and prisoners to the attention of congregations. In addition to prayers and intercessions drawn from different denominations, the booklet also contained a quiz about prisons as an aid to church discussions and a list of helpful and relevant organisations. The material focused not only on prisoners and their families, but those who work in the system and victims of crime. The authenticity of the booklet has improved as more participants become able to apply their experience of work in prisons to the material. The booklet was widely used and we believe that more London churches than ever before marked Prisons Week effectively. Brief reports of several of these events are included in the November 2016 edition of the CTiW Newsletter.

### Outcomes

The multi-faith Prison Chaplaincy Teams value the work of our carefully increasing number of competent and committed Participants with vulnerable inmates. The congregations of a greater number of London churches have become better informed and more concerned about the crisis in our prisons.

### Future Plans

We aim to maintain, expand and improve the value and effectiveness of our work at HMPs Wandsworth, Wormwood Scrubs and Bronzefield and commence work at Pentonville and Brixton prisons.

We aim to "engage" with three more member churches and recruit and support additional participants to undertake the work in prisons and to report back to churches.

We aim to improve the quality of our Prisons Week resource material and encourage more member churches to use this to focus the attention of congregations on the crisis in our prisons and the possible solutions.

frustration of seemingly endless bureaucratic delays. The meetings also consider political develop-

*John Plummer, Coordinator. Prisons Mission*

**C**olin Glover from The Connection at St Martin in the Fields was the main speaker on the theme of Homelessness and Encounter, and left us with useful insights and helpful observations about the current situation in advance of his retirement - looking forward to fresh challenges that will face his successor, and reflecting on the changes he has witnessed in the decades since he founded the organisation.

Under the general headings of Practice, People, Politics and Place he had noticed a political shift which no longer holds politicians responsible and accountable about the issue of homelessness as once they were, and given the provision of various services for homeless people there is now much more of a pressure for them to 'sign up' for a 'service'. And yet not all users of these services are prepared to engage with such a 'tidy' and 'tick-box' approach.

Homeless people continue to move to London as in the past especially from Scotland and the north, but increasingly also from overseas, as economic migrants or refugees, but are seldom prepared or ade-

## “HOMELESSNESS & ENCOUNTER”

quately resourced for life in an expensive metropolis, without friends, job, or family home in the UK. In addition there are language issues that now present many more obstacles.

The places from which services are offered to homeless people which were once rather run-down backstreets near St Martin in the Fields, Hinde Street Methodist Church, Westminster Cathedral for example, now find themselves at the centre of a much more glitzy and cleaned-up Westminster that the Council wishes to promote as a World-City with many luxury apartments but no affordable housing. How much longer will it be appropriate to locate services in such increasingly smartened up areas?

Finally in looking at practice and thinking about the future, Colin argued that while the work of a few churches with initiatives such as winter night shelters is very welcome, there must be more collaboration across organisations and local government concerned with different aspects of contemporary urban poverty.

*Rev'd Roderick Leece*

**H**omelessness in Westminster, especially amongst young people, was chosen as the theme of the evening. During the AGM, representatives from six organisations working with the homeless each gave a 2 minute résumé of their activities. Later over refreshments attendees had the opportunity to browse displays by a number of leading organisations helping the homeless in Westminster, and to speak with their representatives. These included West London Mission and Westminster Churches Night Shelter (Methodist),

Cardinal Hume Centre (RC), The Passage and “Home for Good” (resettlement support) Scheme (RC), Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church (Baptist), Borderline (supporting homeless Scots in London), The Connection at St Martins-in-the-Fields (Anglican), and Housing Justice/Soup Run Forum.

The CTiW Executive wish to express grateful thanks to Crown Court Church of Scotland who kindly hosted the AGM, to the speakers and exhibitors, and to everyone who contributed to the evening by coming along and giving us their support.

## WHAT IS HeartEdge?

HeartEdge is:

- A network of churches initiated by St Martin-in-the-Fields
- For those working at the heart of culture, community and commerce
- With those at the margins and on the edge
- Building association, learning, development and resource

HeartEdge supports churches in blending their mission around four key areas:

- Congregation – Inclusive approaches to liturgy, worship and day-to-day communal life
- Community – models of outreach serving local

need and addressing social justice

- Culture – art, music and ideas to re-imagine the Christian narrative for the present moment
- Commerce – Commercial activities that generate finance, creatively extending and enhancing mission and ministry through social enterprise

HeartEdge supports its members in finding their stories, sharing resources and connecting effectively with others developing their church and community. HeartEdge will be launched at St Stephen Walbrook on Wednesday 8 February. To book a place go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/at-the-heart-on-the-edge-the-heartedge-conference-2017-tickets-29792821130>