

An Occasional Newsletter

Welcome to Issue 9 (Summer 2017) of our Occasional Newsletter. Please feel free to photocopy this for distribution amongst your congregation. We hope you have a pleasant and peaceful summer.

CTIW PENTECOST SERVICE: 4th June, 2017

On Pentecost Sunday evening, we gathered at Hinde Street Methodist Church for our united worship. Any service that is preceded by a cream tea, as this one was, is off to a good start, and the opportunity to meet, talk and get to know one another and share news before we worshipped together was much appreciated.

The theme of the service was the Coming Spirit, and through singing, reading and activity, we were enabled to reflect, encounter and discover. Using art, and inviting us to encounter one another in conversation, together with times of silence, confession and intercession, we met one another across the boundaries of our denominations in our common humanity and faith in the presence of the Go-Between Spirit. As a time in which we met again with intention, the Spirit who draws us into the life of God, and into relationship with one another, this was a gathering for worship that offered something important and creative not only to the individuals who were able to be there, but also to Churches Together as a whole, with the reminder and the experience that what God does through his Spirit is draw people together in ways that change us. What better way to move into the next season of the year. We are grateful to the ministers and congregation at Hinde St for their welcome and their care of us.



Rev'd Ruth Gouldboure

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Dates for your diary

Thurs 28 Sept "Meet the Neighbours" hosted by St Saviours Anglican Church, Pimlico—time & details to be advised.

Sat 7 October: a joint Eco Church – Shrinking the Footprint conference at St James's Piccadilly

Mon 9 Oct "Join the Neighbours" for ASLAN Open Evening at All Souls Anglican Church, Langham Place, from 7-8.30pm.

Oct "Meet the Neighbours" hosted by Immaculate Conception RC Church, Farm Street, Mayfair — date & details to be advised.

8-15 Oct—Prisons Week

18-25 Jan 2018—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Mon 22 Jan— CTiW AGM, Talk & Exhibition (details to be advised)

Contact us

Website: www.ctiw.london
Email: ctiw.net@gmail.com

THE ECO CHURCH

In Westminster, the gospel call to love our neighbours becomes ever more insistent as refugees and others without settled homes are drawn to our borough. Many church communities respond with compassion and generosity to those arriving on our doorstep. And yet, the more we ask the question 'Who is my neighbour?' the more the circles of inclusion ripple outward, and the more we have to take seriously the impact of our actions on our neighbours far away. Pope Francis, in his 2015 encyclical '*Laudato si'*' underlined this by addressing his letter to all the people of the world – not just Catholics, not just Christians – and calling for all people to hear the cry of the suffering earth. *Laudato si* has been called 'a wake-up call to the whole of humanity to understand and respond to the destruction that we are causing to the environment and to other people.'

Concurrently, almost all countries signed up to the COP21 agreement to reduce their national carbon emissions in December 2015. The UK has set statutory national obligations, to cut carbon by 42% by 2020, and 80% by 2050. This is an enormous challenge. We are all effectively being asked to almost halve our energy use by 2020, and reduce it by 80% by 2050. How can churches do this and still keep warm and light, open and welcoming? And how can churches bear witness to 'our common origin, our mutual belonging, and a future to be shared with everyone'? (*Laudato si*).

Help is at hand! If you are of an Anglican persuasion, you have just come to the end of an ambitious, seven year action plan, 'Church and Earth', and much awareness and action are underway. The ongoing 'Shrinking the Footprint' campaign is

integral to this, and provides support for churches aiming to save carbon (and money!), starting with auditing how much energy is actually used. 480 Anglican churches and associated buildings in London alone can make a real difference.

And then, for all of us, there is Eco Church, a wide-ranging ecumenical project led by Christian conservation charity A Rocha UK in partnership with others. The Eco Church vision is to create a vast network of churches as local centres of creation care in the community – shining beacons of hope for a brighter environmental future. Former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, endorsed Eco Church at its launch in St Paul's Cathedral last year, welcoming the new scheme as part of a 'tectonic shift' in Christian thinking, through which environmental concerns will embed more deeply in church culture. Eco Church takes the form of an online questionnaire with lots of associated resources, and encourages churches to work towards bronze, silver and gold eco awards.

As Churches Together in Westminster, we can support each other in a borough-wide Eco-Church project. Two dates for your diary to help your community's next steps on this journey are:

- **Saturday 7th October:** a joint Eco Church – Shrinking the Footprint conference at St James's Piccadilly
- **Monday 22nd January:** The Churches Together AGM will be eco-themed and include input from a range of organisations supporting environmental action in church communities.

Deborah Colvin

CTIW EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Sadly, we are saying "goodbye" to **Major Graham Mizon**, from the Salvation Army, Regent Hall, as he and with his wife, Dawn, are shortly moving to a new appointment in Manchester. We take this opportunity to ask God's blessing on their continued ministry, and to thank Graham for his valuable support of CTIW in the past.

We are pleased to welcome their replacements, **Majors Richard and Caroline Mingay**, to our Executive. Richard and Caroline take up their new appointment on Thursday, 2nd July, and their Induction at Regent Hall is on Sunday 23rd July at 11am. Please remember them in your prayers.

PRISONS MISSION

PRISONS WEEK 2017 — 8TH TO 15TH OCTOBER

In October last year many churches throughout Britain marked Prisons Week. This was started by Roman Catholics in 1975 and has gradually spread to all Christian denominations. Since 2014 CTiW has collected and compiled material to help churches to devise interesting ways to bring this sensitive and controversial subject to the attention of diverse congregations.

Our Newsletter number 6 (still available on the website) contains reports of the different ways churches in central London marked Prisons Week in 2016. There were forms of worship which included prayers, intercessions, readings, reflections and sermons about penal policy and the criminal justice system. There were also lectures, discussions and debates about what churches and individual Christians can and should do to address some of the very serious issues which cause widespread distress and anxiety.

The CTiW Prisons Mission has become more established over the last three years. As a result, volunteers from “engaged” churches, who regularly work to support the multi-faith Chaplaincy Teams in two of London’s huge male prisons and HMP Bronzefield, Europe’s largest prison for women, are able to contribute to our “new and improved” Prisons Week booklet for 2017. It will thus be more authentic and useful.

The new Prisons Week booklet will be published and available on our website in August. This will allow plenty of time for member churches to plan special services and after worship activities. It will contain both new and favourite prayers, readings and reflections, with a foreword by Bishop Richard Moth, the Roman Catholic Bishop for Prisons. Some of the material focusses on prisoners who have been convicted of criminal offences, but are often also vulnerable, isolated and have themselves been victims of violence, abuse or neglect. The booklet also encourages concern for prisoner’s families, prison staff, chaplains, visitors and particularly the

victims of crime. In compiling the booklet, we have been guided by this extract from a prayer by Revd Neil Campbell, Chaplain of HMP Dumfries: “...We pray for the prisoner knowing that human divisions are false, that this is not the innocent praying for the guilty, or the right praying for the wrong, but people praying for people, the hurt remembering the hurt...”

We have devised a new quiz about the penal system, as last year, this was found to be a very useful introduction to church discussion groups. Several churches reprinted the quiz, as well as artworks by prisoners, donated by The Koestler Trust, in their Orders of Service, or church magazines. The very brief anonymised case studies can be used to demonstrate that inmates convicted of criminal offences are also human beings. We have included a list of the many faith based and secular charities and voluntary organisations which provide services, education, recreation, research and other prison related activities. All these are sources of advice, information and support for churches planning for Prisons Week. In addition, some of our Prisons Mission volunteers are ready and willing to attend member churches for services, or assist in preparations for the week. The purpose of the booklet is to provide such a wide variety of material that either lay or ordained people, of every Christian denomination and tradition will find something attractive, relevant and suitable for use within their church.

There are at present 94,800 men, women and children in British prisons, more than any other nation in western Europe. During Prisons Week we must aim to ensure that, for the sake of them, their families, victims and the future of our society, they are not “out of sight and out of mind”.

John Plummer
Coordinator. Prisons Mission
Churches Together in Westminster
 62 Perth Road
 London N4 3HB
 Tel: 020 7272 1639

SANCTUARY ON THE SQUARE

A new name in the life of Notre Dame de France community! We hope it will be one that will become very familiar to you as the weeks and months go by. 'Sanctuary on the Square' is the name chosen for a new ministry here at Notre Dame de France which started on Wednesday afternoon, the 3rd of May and will continue on every Wednesday of each week after that from 1.30pm- 4.30pm. It will be staffed by trained volunteers from Notre Dame de France. The first group of volunteers have been planning this ministry for some months now. 'Sanctuary on the Square' is for women only – a place where women can meet and feel at home in a friendly and confidential environment away from the stresses and strains of their everyday life. It will be a simple ministry, offering women the opportunity to relax with a cup of tea or coffee, to listen to some music, read a magazine or chat with someone if they wish. Gradually we hope that we can offer more opportunities for our guests to relax – such things as massage and beauty care. Referral advice may also be offered when requested. From the beginning there will be a children's play corner available for mothers with youngsters. Perhaps this is the opportunity you have

been looking for to get more involved in the life of Notre Dame de France? We would welcome more volunteers who could give their time and talents to this new initiative. If that is not possible perhaps you could do-

donate children's toys, books and games for the children's corner. Or you could simply spread the word about 'Sanctuary on the Square' so that it becomes known by those who need just such a moment of rest. Every little bit of support helps! Our hope is that 'Sanctuary on the Square' will slowly become well-established and so complement other ministries which have been established at Notre Dame de France - another expression of our faith in Jesus who rose from the dead on Easter Sunday in order to restore life, life to the full!



Fr Kevin Mowbray S.M.

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"Join the Neighbours"

Members of CTiW churches were kindly invited by All Souls Church to a delightful Musical Evening at St Pauls Church, Robert Adam Street on Thursday, 1 June. The concert was hosted by West One, a monthly gathering for those aged 40 plus, who "aim to encourage Christian growth, support and fellowship in a friendly atmosphere with a variety of spiritual, social and leisure activities." The group were very welcoming, and it was an excellent evening with performances by Ben De Souza (accordion), Hamin Kim (cello) and Maria Karchant (piano). The presenter was the All Souls Orchestra Music Director, Noel Tredinnick, who is a well-known conductor and composer, and who will be familiar to those who watch tv's "Songs of Praise" or attend the very popular "Prom Praise" at the Royal Albert Hall. Although not as many came from CTiW as we would have hoped, we would like to thank everyone for the warm and friendly reception we were given.

New members are most welcome at West One. Email: info@allsouls.org for further details of future events or see the All Souls website.

Future Events (See Dates for Your Diary on page 1)

- **"Meet the Neighbours"** - If your church is interested in hosting a future event, we should be pleased to hear from you.
- **"Join the Neighbours"** - If you are holding a special event, festival etc to which you would care to invite people from other churches, please do let us know and we will pass on the invitation. Likewise, if you would like to invite other churches along to visit one of your church groups to see what they are doing.