

Ecumenical NewsBrief

2020



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From the World Council of Churches (WCC)



Candidates nominated for WCC General Secretary

The present general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit served two five-year terms and has decided not to stand for re-election. Therefore, his position will be vacant as of 1 April 2020. After having interviewed candidates, the search



committee concluded by consensus to propose two names to the central committee: Dr Elizabeth Joy, Director/Trustee at Churches Together in England from The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church living in the United Kingdom/India, *born*: 1961.

Rev. Prof Dr Jerry Pillay, Head of the Department of Church History and Polity, University of Pretoria from the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, living in South Africa, *born*: 1965. The final decision will be taken by election at the central committee meeting which will take place from 18 -24 March 2020, in Geneva, Switzerland. Please include the election for this important post in your prayers.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18–25 January 2020

For this year's resources which are once again available on the CTBI website, please click the following link:



[Week of Prayer resources](#)

Also why not consider dedicating each day during this octave to pray for one of the churches of other denominations in your locality and get others involved in this too.



News from Churches Together in England

One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission,
empowered by the Spirit



CTE trifold leaflet

At the beginning of each year CTE also produces a tri-fold A4 leaflet, printed copies of which will be available on their website

CTE Review 2019

will be available soon on the CTE website

CTE's farewell to Jim Currin

In June 2019 CTE with friends from across the Churches in England said farewell to Jim Currin, following fourteen years of faithful service to CTE – particularly in the areas of mission, evangelism and media. This year also marks 40 years of Jim's service in the Church Army, and sees him take the opportunity to focus on ministry more locally. A huge thank you to Jim also for his support to CTMR.



CTE has two new members of staff

Welcome to Rev'd. Dr Ben Aldous



Ben is a full-time member of the team, with responsibility for Evangelism and Mission. He has been in Anglican ministry in Durban (2010–2013) and, most recently, Cape Town in S Africa (2013–2018). Ben has completed a doctorate at The University of Stellenbosch exploring an ethnographical study of Fresh Expressions in The Anglican Church of Southern Africa. He will be based in the West Country, where he grew up and worked as a youth minister (2001–2003), before missional work in Cambodia from 2004–2009. He is married to Sharon with four children.

News from CTE continued

One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission,
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Welcome also to Lucy Olofinjana



Lucy has been appointed to a half-time post as Communications and Media Officer for Churches Together in England. She comes with experience in this area working for the Evangelical Alliance (2012–2019) leading a range of mission, unity and research projects to resource churches across the UK. She also previously worked for the Salvation Army in London and attended SOAS University of London. Most recently, Lucy has been on maternity leave and loves being a mum to ten-month old Lyanu. She is passionate about building multicultural communities and sharing stories from across the rich diversity of the Church. Lucy will be based in South East London where she lives with her husband Israel, minister of Woolwich Central Baptist.

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CTE Resources and Website

A link to the many CTE resources available can be found here: <https://www.cte.org.uk/> The website is a wonderful resource and is being used extensively and updated constantly

The Receptive Ecumenism Course

can be found by copying and pasting the following into your browser: https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/306183/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive_Ecumenism/Resources/Embracing_the_Other.aspx



'A New Framework'

Please remember that '*A Guide for Understanding A New Framework for Local Unity in Mission*' is available here: https://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/516911/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/A_guide.aspx

CTE Conference: Ecumenism Today

brought together Denominational, County and National Ecumenical Officers in October 2019. It considered the joys and challenges of ecumenical work today and gave an opportunity to engage with National Ecumenical Officers. The conference explored practical tools for ecumenical working, including the mission opportunities in new housing areas.

This overnight meeting took the place of the annual meetings which some National Ecumenical Officers offer their DEOs and so it included a session in denominational groupings.

For a Methodist perspective on the conference, please visit https://cte.org.uk/Articles/561525/Home/News/Latest_news/Reflections_on_CTE.aspx



All Ecumenical Officers Conference in 2020

Following the success of the 2019 *Ecumenism Today* conference, there will be a longer conference in September 2020. This will include significant time for Denominational Ecumenical Officers to gather in denominational meetings while County Ecumenical Officers meet together with CTE staff.

Meeting of Ecumenical Officers in the North

After the most successful 2018 meeting of Denominational Ecumenical Officers in the north, and at its request, the northern County Ecumenical Officers arranged a further overnight meeting in April 2019 at Hinsley Hall in Leeds. DEOs in the North East, Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and West Yorkshire met for networking and updating purposes. The Moderator of the United Reformed Church Mersey Synod, Rev Jacky Embrey, was able to take up the invitation to each Church Leaders group to send an observer. She sensed a very clear ecumenical vision among participants and an eagerness for better local cooperation and friendship which drives ecumenism.

News from Merseyside

CTMR Presidents' group

CTMR Presidents continue to meet quarterly to give direction to the work of CTMR. They also gather for an annual retreat. In November 2019 it was led by the new Bishop of Warrington, Rt Rev Beverly Mason. This time away was very much appreciated. CTMR Presidents rotate the chair of their meetings and of the leading of the retreat.

CTMR Management Council



The CTMR Management Council meets biannually. Last year it appointed some trustees to a smaller group of Officers who meet 4 times a year. The membership of this group is based on operational skills rather than denominational representation so as to take ahead practical matters concerning CTMR as a charity and providing support to the Ecumenical Co-ordinator. The small CTMR Officers' group is acting as an executive and is very effective. A big thank you to Linda Jones who retired in July 2019 when her CTMR trusteeship came to an end too. Linda showed exceptional commitment to ecumenism and served on the Management Council since 2003. She was also instrumental in the 2015 Review process.

CTMR Denominational Officers

Denominational Officers from Merseyside also meet quarterly for mutual support, updating and to enable working together more closely. The group are delighted to welcome Major Allister Versfeld who is the Mission Development Officer at Strawberry Field and is willing to represent The Salvation Army at the CTMR Ecumenical Officers meetings. A significant part of Allister's role is to create links and networks between Strawberry Field and the Churches across Merseyside. He will certainly bring an important and significant contribution to the DEO meetings.

CTMR Presidents invite local MPs & Civic Leaders

Local MPs will be invited to come to lunch with the Church Leaders in March this year. The Church Leaders aim at having a dialogue in a relaxed friendly atmosphere and would like to reflect on values which would help to unite society and on what can be done together for the common good.



MPs at lunch in 2019

In June 2020 CTMR Presidents will also host a Civic Reception for Mayors and Leaders of the Councils in the Merseyside Region.

CTMR Safeguarding Group

After Rev Des Bill's retirement a new convenor of the Safeguarding Group has been identified. Please watch this space for further news. Des first joined this group in 1998 and convened it after CTMR restructured in 2015. Many thanks to Des for his precious work over the years.

Join the Global Wave of Prayer

Between Ascension Day and the Day of Pentecost 2020



Between 21 - 31st May, communities and churches around the world are gathering together to pray that their friends, families and neighbours come to know Jesus Christ. Prayer events of all shapes and sizes will take place across the 10 days, including 24-7 prayer rooms, prayer days, prayer walks and half nights of prayer.

Cathedrals, churches and other venues will host Beacon Events, gathering people across towns and cities to worship and to pray for the empowering of the Holy Spirit for effective witness. Link to website and resources: <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Local ecumenical events

Ecumenical Choir raising funds for the homeless

At the beginning of December we collected for the Salvation Army. They are part of our group this year as they run a Homeless Drop-in



Centre on Stanley Road in Bootle.

Facilities include: meals, showers and an English Course for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The general public was very generous.

Many thanks goes to Colette, the ASDA Community Champion who was our contact person.

by Patsy Shaw

Carols on Church Road

The numbers of singers more than doubled this year for Carols on Church Road in Roby just before Christmas. The CofE and RC Church in Roby joined together for some wonderful singing. It was a moving opportunity to witness to being Christians together. Spontaneously ringing the bell at an elderly care home and singing a resident's favourite carol turned out to be the highlight as well as enjoying some fellowship over sharing mulled wine and mince pies.



Churches in Formby

pray for all their local churches on a rota basis.

Why not include a prayer for the local Churches in your services too?

Please tell us

We are aware that there will have been countless other local ecumenical events before Christmas and throughout the year and would love to hear from you.

Pentecost Celebrations 2020 in Liverpool

Praying for Peace

Sunday 31st May, 1-3pm



Plans are well underway for our Pentecost two-cathedral celebrations in 2020 including the bi-annual procession along Hope Street. Pentecost Sunday will be on 31st May and our theme this year will particularly focus on praying for peace.

This is a significant act of Christian witness in our city region and we encourage you to make it a priority in your calendar.

Right: Sharing and meaningful conversations at Pentecost 2019
Photo: Andrew Edwards



Below: Images of past Pentecost Celebrations



For more details as we get closer to Pentecost 2020 please visit: www.ctmr.org.uk or call 0151 709 0125 or email: office@ctmr.org.uk

Working together more and more?



From Andrew Edwards LEP Co-ordinator for CTMR

Around our region there are over twenty worshipping congregations, bringing together different traditions.

These LEPs (Local Ecumenical Partnerships) open up opportunities for sharing resources and mission initiatives – they also throw up their own questions and challenges.

Part of my role is to offer advice, or point in the direction of others who can.

If you're at an earlier stage I'm here to help too. Maybe you're working with Christians of other traditions on a particular project, or you're more and more finding that you are planning or praying or dreaming together, then you may be wondering how to take the next steps. At what point do you need to put something on paper? What would be appropriate for you? What will strengthen your partnership at this stage? Who do you need to talk to? Are there others doing something like this?

Among other resources, there is a new Flexible Framework for Local Unity which helps with questions like this. Please get in touch.

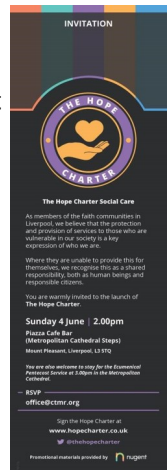
andrew@ajedwards.me.uk

0151 203 9117

CTMR Social Justice Group

As Churches Together we express our shared commitment to challenging and combatting injustice. Current initiatives include the "Hope Charter" calling for a fairer and better resourced approach to providing care for the elderly and vulnerable in our region, and supporting refugees with a particular emphasis on forced detention.

Along with Churches Together in Cheshire we also encourage our communities to stand against modern day slavery both in their consumer choices and by being vigilant as we go about our daily lives.



Support for Asylum Seekers (SAS)



Destitution Project - 2019

SAS has collaborated with Faiths4Change on a number of wellbeing projects.

- The weekly visits of people seeking asylum to the three allotments in Childwall are greatly appreciated. Being out in the fresh air is a welcome distraction from their other worldly problems.
- SAS has funded Workshops providing instructions on building rustic garden furniture which is being used in the new Peace Garden.
- At St Michael in the City the overgrown and derelict garden area around the church has been cleared and a new Community garden is in use by visitors and will be developed further. The community market offers fresh fruit and vegetables and healthy options at affordable prices and will be developed in 2020. Freshly cooked healthy meals are offered free to visitors twice a week.
- SAS has followed its humanitarian mission in financially supporting other partners working to fight destitution.
- Asylum Link Merseyside's work provides emergency accommodation, emergency support grants, weekly food parcels, free fruit project, ESOL outings for students, food for Refugee Week celebrations and Christmas celebrations.
- SAS contributes to Refugee Women Connect [formerly MRANG] by providing emergency support grants to clients, many with young babies, who for various reasons beyond their control are destitute i.e. no access to public funds or homeless or both.
- SAS are receiving more and more requests from different sources e.g. Community Centres and food banks regarding people seeking asylum who present themselves in dire need. We can see such referrals increasing in 2020.

By Neil Cunningham

Liverpool Cologne Church Partnership

A seven member delegation visited Koln in June 2019. There were interesting opportunities to link up with the University Chaplaincies and the Catholic Youth Service (who are hoping to link with their equivalents here Animate).

Hope University recently linked with the Catholic University based in Koln and the Catholic Chaplain Marie-Therese Lacey was one of the delegation.

Image courtesy: Diocese of Liverpool



There were opportunities to link with several

fresh expressions. Plans are underway for a return visit in June 2020.

The Liverpool Team were also able to attend a Conference on Local Ecumenical Partnerships and attended worship with their guests on Sunday. Ultan Russell, Chair of the Koln Partnership Group said: *"We have had links with Koln for over fifty years and it is one of the strongest ecumenical twinning relationships and vital for reconciliation and mutual understanding."*

By Ultan Russell

Archdiocesan Synod 2020

Ecumenical Involvement

About 20 Ecumenical Observers were invited as observers to the RC Archdiocesan Synod 2020 meetings. There were Anglican, Baptist, Coptic Orthodox, Methodist and Quaker observers. A big thank you to ecumenical partners for sending representatives to Synod 2020 meetings. Their contributions were greatly valued and ecumenical partners were



very keen to be part of it. This includes 4 members from the CTMR 18+ group. Subsequently the Synod Co-ordinator was invited to address the Lancashire Ecumenical Church Leaders group. By Ultan Russell

Some of the group pictured here represented CTMR 18+ at the Synod meetings. Image: Andrew Edwards

Liverpool Seafarers Centre received international recognition

In the Christmas Season Crosby headquartered ecumenical charity Liverpool Seafarers Centre (LSC) was appealing for Christmas gifts to distribute to seafarers passing through the port..

LSC CEO John Wilson said "This is a special time for the seafarers centre and we are grateful to all our staff and volunteers for extending a big warm Merseyside welcome to the many seafarers who pass through the port at this time delivering 95 per cent of all goods coming into the UK including many Christmas gifts on our high streets."

Liverpool Seafarers Centre was recently crowned the world's best seafarer centre at an awards ceremony held as part of London International Shipping Week in the autumn.

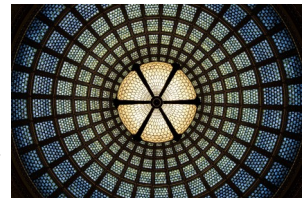
To find out more about Liverpool Seafarers Centre please visit their website:

www.liverpoolseafarerscentre.org



Pictured: One of the many seafarers receiving a gift. Courtesy of LSC

Towards a common vision and Christian Law



Susan Durber and Paul Goodliff are coming together in February at Westminster Abbey to reflect on

The Church: Towards a Common Vision and *Principles of Christian Law*.

This day conference on Saturday 8 February 2020, open to all, is hosted by the Society for Ecumenical Studies. Please see CTE website for further information <https://www.cte.org.uk/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=561217>

Dialogue between Faith Communities

Since 2018 the leaders of faith communities across Merseyside have met together twice a year with Christian leaders from the Catholic, Anglican and Free

Churches. The meetings, which take place at the house of the Bishop of Liverpool, are intended to promote interreligious dialogue and relationship, but also serve as a place where all faith communities can identify areas of common interest, and other agencies can come to consult with faith groups. Visitors to the Faith Leaders' Group have been diverse, from the Royal Navy to the Crown Prosecution Service, and from Everton Football Club to local schools.

The Faith Leaders' Group is coordinated by the Rector of Liverpool, the Revd Canon Dr Crispin Pailing (rector@livpc.co.uk) along with an Inter-faith Development Officer, Liz Atherton (liz@faiths4change.org.uk).

They would like to encourage Christian congregations to engage locally with places of worship for other faith communities. If you would like help to explore this, or introductions to other faith groups, then please get in *touch*.

By Revd Canon Dr Crispin Pailing



BBC Radio Merseyside

'News from the Pews' is broadcast around 7:30am every Sunday morning. It is the 'what's on' feature for the Daybreak programme on BBC Radio Merseyside.

Get in touch with presenter Helen Jones to publicise

your ecumenical events giving plenty of notice. By email:

helen.jones@bbc.co.uk or by post - Helen Jones, Daybreak, BBC Radio Merseyside, P.O. Box 95.8, Liverpool, L69 1ZJ.



Churches Together Merseyside 18 +



A journey in faith and friendship

15 months ago a group of young Christian adults began to meet in Liverpool to get to know each other and to celebrate what they have in common through their Christian Faith.

A lively, interesting and very happy journey has taken place over these past months as the group has grown together in mutual understanding and a shared vision, with the Gospel at the centre of everything they do.

The group is made up of members from the Salvation Army, Methodist, Anglican, Pentecostal and Catholic Churches: - young men and women from different walks of life, all over the age of eighteen.

On reflection, it is easy to see how the Holy Spirit has been at work, as the young people have been so open to sharing their gifts and talents, in a spirit of collaboration.

Whilst acknowledging the difference in denominational traditions, a deep respect and appreciation of and for each other has developed and these young people are on a mission to continue to spread the good news.

Since the initial meeting in November 2018, they have worked together to establish a common vision through shared leadership. Members have taken turns in chairing meetings and offer individual perspectives to enlighten each other.

For example, in April, P J and Chloe (Anglican and Methodist) led the group in determining its' purpose, and set out their hopes and dreams for the way forward.

In May, Peter led the group through the Catholic Synod 2020 questions, which sparked a lively exchange of views and ideas. Following this, two members, Sam and Chloe, were pleased to participate in the Synod meetings, representing the Anglican and Methodist Churches. They were delighted to observe how their input was received and welcomed by Synod 2020 members. Also two other members Bek and Lauren from the Salvation Army are looking forward to attend further Synod meetings.



Pentecost Celebrations on Sunday 9th June became a particular highlight for the group. They actively took part in the event. Group members were honoured to

have been asked to proclaim some of the readings during the service and the bonds within the group were strengthened that day.

As the year moved on, relationships have deepened and lots of insights, and food, and laughter have been shared along the way.

A need for prayer emerged also, and when it was Liam Mc's turn to chair he gave a brief talk on Ignatian Spirituality followed by guided prayer in the two main Ignatian forms - the examen and the imaginative contemplation of the Gospel. This was well received by all and deepened the groups' sense of spirituality.



Picture: A social evening in July turned into a moment of sharing.

More recently, the group decided to dedicate some time to visiting the various denominations,

in order to appreciate their work and traditions more fully.

In October, the Catholic Chaplaincy of John Moores and Liverpool University warmly welcomed the group at St.Philip Neri Church, led by Liam Mahan and Fr.Neil Ritchie.

November brought us to Childwall Valley Salvation Army, where Bek and friends offered to share their home for the evening, and explained how they live in community to facilitate their Christian outreach.



Picture: A very informative evening at the Salvation Army

The journey continues...a seed has been sown, and with God's grace the group will flourish and produce rich fruit. The young people are keen to welcome others to share in and become part of the journey. Youth workers are also welcome. We are grateful to Taras who has supported us along the way.

If you know anyone aged between 18 to 30, who may be interested, please encourage them to contact Veronica. ctmr.admin@gmail.com

Face book page at <https://www.facebook.com/ctmr18plus/>

Meetings take place on the second Monday of each month. All are welcome. We hope to see you soon!

By Veronica McDonnell & Elisabeth Hachmoeller

Ecumenical Walk of Witness

Liverpool City Centre

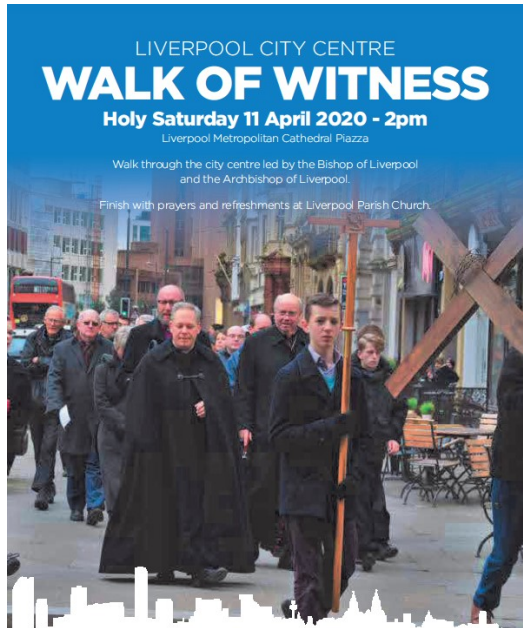
2pm on Holy Saturday
11 April 2020

Come and join the Archbishop of Liverpool, the Bishop of Liverpool, and other CTMR Presidents as they walk together on Saturday 11 April through the main shopping streets of Liverpool.

Christians from all denominations are invited to be part of this witness to our Easter faith as we walk together, read the Bible, and pray with the people of the City.

This has become one of our primary opportunities to show the unity of Christians in our region.

The walk begins at 2pm outside the Metropolitan Cathedral, and ends at 3pm with a short act of worship followed by refreshments at Liverpool Parish Church.



Mission in the Economy Retail Chaplains Needed



Mission in the Economy are recruiting volunteer retail chaplains to help facilitate a project with city centre employees - My Liverpool: 52 stories - gathering people's stories about Liverpool using craft, photography, prose and poetry. If you are interested please contact Claire Henderson Davis claire@mite.org.uk or phone her on 07734420137.

Liverpool HeartEdge Day

The HeartEdge Ecumenical Conference which will be hosted at Liverpool Parish Church takes place on 1 April 2020. HeartEdge is a movement which springs from St Martin in the Fields in London. The movement describes itself thus: "We are churches growing commercial and cultural activity, compassionate response to need and congregational life. HeartEdge is about sharing, connecting, finding support and developing, at the heart and on the edge. People, organisations and churches join, identify gaps in their resource and find new ways of being." The day conference in Liverpool is free to attend and will allow churches to come together and explore different models of development and growth, and to find support and guidance in exploiting the opportunities in our different areas. The HeartEdge movement is ecumenical, and the conference is being organized by church leaders from different Christian denominations. Tickets are available from Eventbrite <https://www.heartedge.org/>



Bodies in Association with CTE:

Bible Society



The God who Speaks: The Year of the Word is the latest campaign of the Bible Society, in partnership with the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Please visit godwhospeaks.uk for more information.

Focolare

Mariapolis 2020, 24 –28 July

This year, the Focolare hold their annual Mariapolis in Ampleforth, Yorkshire. To find out more about this ecumenical event, please visit <https://www.focolare.org/gb/>



From CTE

The Principal Officer for Evangelism and Mission The Revd Dr Benjamin Aldous is pointing us to two initiatives from HOPE.

The first initiative is where, on the 20th day of each month at 20:20, Christians are asked to pray for 20 minutes, either as individuals, in a group, or as a church or a group of churches that we will see a significant fruitful harvest this year. Please see the website for more information: https://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/327007/Prayer_2020.aspx

The second initiative is Hope Prayer Spaces, where HOPE are encouraging groups and churches to create 'Prayer Spaces' which invite people to come in and pray and perhaps have an initial experience/ encounter with God. HOPE have produced a booklet for it. More information is available on the website following this link: https://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/328363/HOPE_Spaces.aspx

CTMR Website www.ctmr.org.uk

Please notify us of any events open to all denominations in Merseyside planned by two or more Churches. There are many ecumenical initiatives/actions supported by different Churches all over Merseyside: services, food banks, walks of witness, passion plays, fraternals, ... We would love to hear how Churches are working together in this region.

Electronic versions available

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