



July 2010

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For news of the Churches Co-ordinating Group for Evangelisation of CTE, click [here](#).

'Please may I have a word?'

150 years ago in Gateshead, Catherine Booth politely asked 'please may I have a word' in a Methodist service led by her husband Reverend William Booth. Her first address dealt with the Work of the Holy Spirit. She later published the pamphlet, 'Female Ministry: Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel' The 'spin doctors' of the day seemed to want to keep women at the spinning wheel and sink and so there was heavy debate and derogatory salvos.

Since the founding of The Salvation Army the place of women in preaching, public ministry and leadership has been a value and practice. Leadership roles are open for all and worked out with grace, through the Holy Spirit's empowering and with a servant spirit. To be 'all one in Christ Jesus' acknowledges there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. (Galatians 3:28). This would seem to have universal application for all of our relationships.

The call of God is not gender confined and the confirmation of God comes through the Spirit's anointing. The response to God's call by men and women is seen in commitment and covenant with God. We are blessed by gifted spiritual leaders who are obedient to the call of God and who consecrate themselves to the service of God for the salvation of the world. The issue is one of function and role, not status or worth, nor is it gender restricted. God calls, gives gifts and ministries as he chooses. We would not want to confine God's prerogative. William Booth, the Founder of The Salvation Army famously remarked: 'Some of my best men are women.'

Now speaking ecumenically:

In these days the number of women in spiritual leadership across denominations is growing and therefore is an ecumenical reality, responded to by openness or obstacle. With reference to the call and commission of God, mission and ministry effectiveness is the value that should not be diminished or denied by institutional concerns.

Spiritual leadership is not a role to which men or women simply aspire; it must always be a divine calling, confirmed by the Spirit. In discussion and dialogue we might prayerfully ask if the God of grace and justice would subordinate or discriminate based on a person's gender.

Graciously we come together recognising the historical and cultural context of the churches. We work together to build the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and to fulfil the Commission to make disciples of all people. The focus of John 17 is not internal but is for those who will believe because of our witness, testimony and unity. 'Please may I have a word' can be a moment to cause us to hear from God and for us to listen to Him. [Back to top](#)

New President of PCPCU

The pope has appointed Basel Bishop Kurt Koch as a top Vatican ecumenical advisor, heading the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. He replaces German Cardinal Walter Kasper, who is retiring after serving as president of the council since 1999.

The Council for Promoting Christian Unity is one of the most important of the 11 pontifical councils. The council's aim is to develop dialogue and collaboration with the other Churches and world communions. It is usually presided over by a cardinal. Koch has served on the council since 2002. He is the author of around 70 ecumenical articles and discussion papers. Among the subjects covered are Aids, the future of the Church and priests' celibacy.

Born in 1950 in Emmenbrücke in Lucerne, Koch studied Catholic theology in Lucerne and Munich and was ordained as a priest in 1982. A doctor in theology, Koch was dean of the faculty of theology at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts before being appointed bishop for Basel in 1995 by Pope Jean-Paul II. He also served as vice-president of the Swiss Bishops Conference for nine years before becoming its president from 2007-2009. He will continue as bishop of Basel until a successor is named. [Back to top](#)

Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit meets Patriarch Kirill

The role of the World Council of Churches (WCC) within the ecumenical movement and of the Russian Orthodox Church within the fellowship of WCC member churches were among the subjects discussed by WCC general secretary Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, who met in Moscow on 28 June.

"The Russian Orthodox Church can play an inspiring role in the fellowship of WCC member churches", said Tveit after what was his first meeting with the Patriarch since becoming WCC general secretary. Tveit highlighted Kirill's leadership for the development of the church's mission, especially amongst youth. "Bringing the younger generations to the faith is a common concern for all of our member churches", Tveit said. "We have learnt about some of the initiatives taken in this regard under Kirill's leadership and I think all WCC member churches could benefit from them."

The meeting between the WCC general secretary and the Russian Patriarch took place in a warm and open atmosphere, Tveit said, which allowed for a frank discussion. "His Holiness has expressed a deep commitment to, and

strong interest on the WCC which I really appreciated", Tveit said. "He also shared how much the WCC has meant for him personally", he added. In that context, Kirill expressed a serious concern about some difficulties faced by ecumenical dialogue in view of what he labelled as new positions of some Protestant churches on important moral issues, including the understanding of homosexuality. "His Holiness challenged the council to articulate how it can contribute to build bridges in this situation", Tveit said.

The meeting with the patriarch was part of a 27-29 June visit to the Russian Orthodox Church. The church joined the WCC in 1961 and became its largest member. Five of its representatives currently sit on the council's 150-member Central Committee. [Back to top](#)

World Communion of Reformed Churches is formed

Two global Protestant groups met in the United States to launch a new organization representing more than 80 million Christians in Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting and other churches around the world. "In these times of division and dissension in our lives, including church life, it is highly significant that two global groups of churches ... should be willing to come together in a higher level of union," said Richard van Houten, general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council, one of the two bodies that are to merge.

The two church groupings came together on 18 June at a gathering in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to found the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Van Houten spoke in advance of the 18 to 26 June meeting, called a uniting general council. Reformed Christians trace their heritage back to the 16th-century Reformation led by Jean Calvin, John Knox and others, as well as to earlier movements that sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church. The Rev. Setri Nyomi, general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the other partner in the merger, explained that the term "communion" had been chosen for the new organization's name to point to a, "new form of working relationship". "As a communion, we recognize our common baptism and our togetherness at the Lord's table, making us better witnesses and more effective in making a difference in the world," said Nyomi, a theologian from Ghana.

Following separate meetings of WARC and REC early on 18 June, the more-than-400 delegates from the two organizations gathered for a joint service in advance of the first session of the new grouping, preceded by drumming and greetings by Native American chiefs from the local area. "We are bringing the drum back with one purpose: to signal unity to the world," said Mike Peters, a Native American minister from Grand Rapids, who has helped plan the event. "It could be the start of a spiritual awakening." Organizers say a strong Native American presence at the event is a reminder of the church's historic role in marginalising the culture of Native Americans, and the mistreatment of them.

"Hearing the voices of the world's indigenous peoples, particularly from North America, whose guests we are when we meet on their land, will challenge us and inspire us," said Judi Fisher, a WARC vice-president from Australia, who represents the group's Pacific region. News of the official founding of the new church grouping brought congratulations from the World Council of Churches, the Geneva-based organization that promotes Christian unity. "It will strengthen the contribution of the Reformed churches to unity, peace and justice," said WCC general secretary, Revd Olav Fykse Tveit. "This is a new expression of the visible unity of God's Church, and as such it represents both a gift from God and a sign of hope." Delegates in Grand Rapids are meeting under the theme, "Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace", words from The Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians (4:3) in the Bible.

WARC traces its roots back to an alliance of Reformed churches founded in 1875, and to the International Congregational Council, which held its first meeting in 1891. The REC was founded in 1946 as a grouping of Reformed churches that did not belong to WARC. From the 1960s onwards some Reformed churches became members of both bodies. The two groups noted that REC is known for its emphasis on spiritual development and fidelity to doctrinal statements, while WARC is known for its stances on racial and gender justice, the protection of the environment, and the need for a new international economic order. WARC's Nyomi said; "The way we trace our identity has always included that we are saved to make a difference in the world." In 2000, Nyomi became the first person from outside Europe to head WARC as its general secretary, and he is expected to have the same role in the new communion. "We are united; we are ready to continue playing the prophetic role that God has called us to," said Nyomi. He referred to a statement called the "Accra Confession", adopted by WARC at Accra, Ghana in 2004. The confession calls on Christians worldwide to confess their complicity in the face of mounting social and environmental ills, and the document commits its signatories, "to seek a global covenant for justice in the economy and the earth in the household of God." [Back to top](#)

Peace Among the Peoples

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, USA, will host an ecumenical peace conference July 28-31, 2010, focusing on contemporary North American responses to war. Christian peacemakers of all traditions and disciplines are invited to attend this event.

Peace Among the Peoples is a preparatory meeting for the World Council of Churches' 2011 International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. This gathering will seek to reinvigorate conversation on war and peace by building on the recent work of the U.S. Decade to Overcome Violence Committee and peace dialogues facilitated by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA in the 1990s under the title *The Apostolic Character of the Church's Peace Witness*. In large and small group settings, participants will dream, discern and strategize next steps for creating a more unified peace witness in North America as well as encouraging our churches to become peace churches. Results of the meeting will be presented at the NCCCUSA General Assembly in November 2010 and the 2011 Peace Convocation.

The event will include presentations from leading thinkers, such as Stanley Hauerwas, Rita Nakashima Brock and Brian McLaren. Discussions on the contemporary issues of just policing, responsibility to protect, nuclear weapons, and chaplaincy will include dynamic exchanges between presenters and listeners. There will also be deliberative working sessions on current ecumenical efforts, like the Truth Commission on Conscience in War, the status of conciliar peace dialogue, and the formation of a North American Ecumenical Peace Center. Morning prayer and evening confessional worship will frame the beginning and the ending of each day. Preachers include Matthew Johnson, Mary Jo Leddy and Leonid Kishkovsky. The character of the participant body will be ecumenical and interdisciplinary. Some academics, activists, clergy, peace fellowships and peacemaking organizations are currently involved in the work of Christian Peace Witness, while many are unfamiliar with this group's work. The event schedule and detailed programme information are also posted on the conference website at: www.peace2010.net [Back to top](#)

Oikocredit presents Social Performance Report 2009

Oikocredit has released its first Social Performance report, detailing its commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of the poor through access to financial services. The report shows the progression and results of Oikocredit's many years evaluating social performance. The first printed copies were presented to representatives of Oikocredit's Project Partners and Support Associations at their Annual General Meeting in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil.

For the past 35 years, Oikocredit's primary goal has been to provide credit to organisations which may otherwise not have access to finance. This often means supporting less established, more rural organisations, which have an outstanding social focus. Many are small organisations which support women, target rural communities and are environmentally aware. "We can't assume that reaching the poor and initiating positive change are automatically achieved through access to finance," said Oikocredit managing director Tor G. Gull. "To achieve those social goals, the intent must be clearly defined and measured like financial performance is defined and measured. A combined social and financial perspective is vital for effective management in this sector." Oikocredit monitors information on partners' outreach, products and services, as well as attention given to gender, the community and the environment. These social indicators provide a comprehensive overview, which reflects Oikocredit's commitment to supporting grassroots economies. "Oikocredit's target groups, mission and goals are all weighted towards social impact," said Oikocredit director Social Performance and Financial Analysis Ben Simmes. "So it is essential for our clients, investors and staff that we measure how financial support translates into real life. We hope reporting in this detailed way contributes to industry-wide improvements in transparency, accountability and to products and services for the poor."

Oikocredit manages over €425 million in development financing to almost 800 project partners, in 70 countries. Of these partners, over 500 are microfinance institutions, reaching more than 17 million clients, of whom 85% are women and 53% live in rural areas. It is paramount all partners share Oikocredit's outlook on poverty reduction and fair financing. Oikocredit is implementing an ESG (environmental, social, governance) scorecard that analyses an organisation's operations and looks at transparency of costs, client satisfaction and evaluation of a client's ability to repay the loan. Oikocredit was also among the first signatories of the Client Protection Principles – a Smart Campaign initiative protecting microfinance clients against unfair lending practices. Visit www.oikocredit.org/socialperformance to read the full Social Performance Report 2009 and for more information on social performance and Oikocredit.

Oikocredit is a worldwide financial institution that promotes global justice by empowering disadvantaged people with credit. Since 1975 Oikocredit has offered loans, guarantees and investment capital to microfinance institutions, cooperatives, fair trade and other businesses. Today, Oikocredit operates in more than 70 countries. For more information, visit www.oikocredit.org [Back to top](#)

Pathways to Unity

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Senior Representatives Forum was given a presentation of its work during the past year. The website www.ctbi.org.uk has been well used with a significant increase in the number of unique visitors. Material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Lent Course, Remembrance Sunday, Advent and Racial Justice Sunday was downloaded from the site. Following the recent re-structuring of CTBI, Faith and Order concerns now play an increasingly pivotal rôle in its work. A Four Nations Faith and Order Reference Group has been created.

The CTBI Networks are the ecumenical space where the churches co-operate and reflect together within the specific areas of Public Issues, Mission, Inter-Religious, International Students and Racial Justice. The Church and Public Issues Network (formerly Church and Society) was involved in the preparation of the *Faith in Politics* briefing document for the UK General Election and the setting up of a hustings registration system on the website. The Mission Network helped with the run up to and the follow up after the Edinburgh 2010 Conference and the publishing of the *Foundations for Mission* research. The CTBI ecumenical visit to China, February-March 2010, focussed on the roles of women in the Chinese churches and the impact of migration on Chinese Christianity. The Inter-Religious Network hosted a CTBI event at which the then Secretary for Communities and Local Government, the Rt. Hon. John Denham MP spoke about his priorities for interfaith engagement. The Racial Justice Network organised a day conference exploring the challenge posed by political parties of the far right. Jon Cruddas MP and Arlington Trotman were the principal speakers. [Back to top](#)

Dr Williams' challenge at Methodist Conference

Addressing the annual Methodist Conference, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, said he wanted to see the Church of England and Methodist communities growing much closer together. In a 40-minute address to the Conference in Portsmouth's Guildhall, the Archbishop contrasted the roles of the apostles Peter and Paul in the Church, and what the contemporary Church could learn from them.

In a further 40-minute session, the Archbishop took a wide range of questions. Dr Williams was asked what risks the Church of England was taking in relation to the Covenant with the Methodist Church. "The answer is not a lot," Dr Williams replied. "We are being invited, in the short to middle term, to work out flexibility on models of 'dual nationality'; that is, how two communities with two different histories can develop some genuine overlapping life."

Dr Williams also answered a question as to whether a Covenant relationship between Anglicans and Methodists was exclusive. "A covenant ought to be a friendship written down," he said. "It doesn't mean there are no other friendships. If it becomes us against them; a little friendship against the world, well, God help us really. Any act of reconciliation has to be mutual; Anglican clergy at every level accepting the ministry of those they are being reconciled with."

The Methodist Church and the Church of England are in a covenant relationship. On 1 November 2003, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the General Secretary of the General Synod, together with the President, Vice President and Secretary of the Methodist Conference signed the Covenant at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen. The Covenant puts the two Churches on a path of ever-deepening relationships, mutual trust and co-operation on the road to a richer unity. [Back to top](#)

Hope for the Women's Co-ordinating Group

A year ago the Women's Co-ordinating Group (WCG) reached a crisis point. Structural changes within representative denominations, coupled with the dwindling numbers of people able to attend meetings and a reduction in the resources that were available through CTE, led to the WCG asking serious questions about its future.

The WCG had existed for many years with the aim of encouraging women's organisations and groups to work together on projects of common concern, to offer support, to give a forum for talking about women's experiences and to share expertise and resources. Whereas in the past this had been undertaken in practical ways, it had become clear that this way of working was no longer feasible. A steering group was formed to look at possible ways forward, including the painful reality that the group might need to be disbanded. This work resulted in WCG deciding to embark on a new way of living.

Recognising the changing nature of women's lives and the influence of communication technology it was decided that the WCG should act as a conduit for information about women's work, issues and events through the active use of the WCG web pages on the CTE website. Rather than attending several meetings per year or residential events, the principal role of representatives would now be to collect and disseminate information and promote the website. The vision planning and business life of the WCG would occur but at an annual meeting, which may also provide a platform for raising pertinent topics. Previously established links with other organisations could continue because

precious human and financial resources had been conserved to be channelled into areas that required particular commitment.

On 10th March 2010, suitably close to International Women's Day, the WCG met for its first AGM, at which the new website was launched. This launch included a guided tour round the site, the central feature being a new discussion forum. Why not visit us at [Women's Issues](#) on the CTE website and let us know what you think? [Back to top](#)

The Mission of Peace - Thinking Global, Acting Local

The recent Edinburgh 2010 gathering, celebrating the centenary of the 1910 World Missionary Conference, brought several hundred prominent world church figures to the UK. A number of those visitors indicated their willingness to speak in other parts of the country. As a result, West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council (WYEC), with other local partners, looked through the Edinburgh attendance list and approached one of the delegates whose CV resonated with local mission concerns. Clive Barrett from WYEC went to the Closing Ceremony and returned to Leeds with Deenabandhu Manchala, an Indian Lutheran who works for the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva.

Deenabandhu's background was in coordinating and reflecting theologically on the WCC's 'Decade to Overcome Violence', which comes to an end next year. He is also working on issues related to churches as 'Just and Inclusive Communities'. In a fascinating meeting in Leeds, Deenabandhu worked with a group of local Christians, exploring issues of faith and violence in the city. Inspired by a local Peace Trail, the group took time out to look at the city market from a perspective of peace and violence. From bookmakers and pawn shops, toy guns for sale, busy '£1' stalls, to a homeless people's workshop selling restored furniture, with multiple faiths, languages and cultures represented, the market was a microcosm of the issues being faced.

In a world of structural violence, where is power? What part do the churches play in this? What is the relationship between love and power? How did Jesus deal with power, both his own and that of others? What about our own power? As was said at the meeting, 'Without a sense of vulnerability, you will never see Christ in the other person'. That insight applies to all peacemaking, whether in churches, our local cities or the wider world. [Back to top](#)

British Muslims speak out on impact of July 7 bombings

Our first thoughts and prayers are for those remembering loved ones and friends lost or injured in the 7 July 2005 London bombings. This was the worst act of domestic terrorism Britain has ever experienced. The shock of finding that the perpetrators were young apparently well integrated British Muslims has caused many to question the role of Muslims in the UK.

The July 7 bombings affected British Muslims in an unprecedented way as questions about their loyalty, Britishness and the nature of their belonging in our society created endless discussion, academic research, government interventions and media speculation. Today we add substance and authenticity to the debate. For the first time, 25 British Muslims explain in their own words what they were doing that day, how they were affected immediately by the bombings, and what lessons they draw now that five years have passed. The contributors, evenly balanced between men and women, include British born Muslims, immigrants and converts to Islam.

Edited by Murtaza Shibli, former Public Affairs and Media Officer of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the book, *7/7: Muslim Perspectives* will be launched on 7 July at the House of Lords, (Room 4A from 17.00 -19.30) at an event supported by the Universal Peace Federation and European Muslim Research Centre, University of Exeter. The editor of the book, Murtaza Shibli, said "The voice and views of the ordinary British Muslims have been lost amongst the endless debates and analysis. This book offers a chance to find out what normal people experienced and how this watershed event has had an impact on their lives both as British citizens and as Muslims."

Canon Guy Wilkinson, National Inter Religious Affairs Adviser & Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury, said of the book "Those responsible, we need to be reminded, were respecters neither of humanity nor of religion. If this book enables more people to be respecters of both, then it will have contributed to the wellbeing of British society."

Robert Lambert and Jonathan Githens-Mazer of the European Muslim Research Centre, University of Exeter, argue that a failure to hold a public inquiry into 7/7 has led to many misunderstandings about its causes. This in turn has allowed religiously observant and politically active Muslims to be demonised as 'radical' or 'extremist' by ill-informed commentators and politicians. For them "This is an excellent book that challenges Islamophobic accounts of Muslims that have grown alarmingly since 7/7". In a joint statement, Robin Marsh and Margaret Ali of the Universal Peace Federation said, "The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) is supporting the book launch of '7/7 Muslim Perspectives' because facilitating dialogue and understanding between communities is central to UPF's vision. It is good to hear firsthand accounts from Muslim men and women. Through the humanity and compassion in their

testimonies a wider common ground can be perceived by concerned non-Muslim Britons. This is particularly necessary at this time of tension over immigration and the rise of the BNP".

Mohammed Amin, one of the authors who has lived in the UK since infancy, said "Many Muslims are still in denial about the relevance of the bombers' religious beliefs. However, if these bombers had believed that they would go to hell, they would not have carried out suicide bombings." Fatima Khan vice chair of the Muslim Safety Forum and a contributor to the book said: "The events of 7/7 left their mark on millions. For me, one amongst the millions, they marked a shift in how I perceived the world and how it looked back at me. "

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Evangelicals explore Interfaith Encounter

Fifty leading figures in the evangelical movement met on 8 July at St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace in a ground-breaking private consultation to explore the issues raised in building relationships with people of other faiths.

Paul Hedges (Winchester University), a self-confessed pluralist, stimulated a vigorous and far-ranging debate by mapping the broad spectrum of possible Christian orientations towards other faiths. Daniel Strange, Dr Nicholas Wood (Regents Park College) and David Muir responded by setting out the scriptural basis on which relationships could be built. Daniel Strange (Lecturer at Oakhill College) commented: "It is great that those out of the evangelical tradition would want to get evangelicals talking to one another on these issues. Dr Andrew Smith (Director of Youth Encounter for Scripture Union) said "This was a timely and useful event that enabled evangelicals to consider seriously Biblical approaches to interfaith encounters. By including both theoretical and practical ideas the day encouraged participants to consider how theology and practice inform each other. I'm sure that initiatives such as this will equip evangelicals to take seriously their engagement with people from different faith traditions." David Muir (Faiths in Britain) said "I thought the consultation was excellent. Congratulations on organising an extremely valuable event. I would welcome a similar event with representatives from the major religions."

Workshop sessions explored scripture, inter-religious conflict (Dr Jane Clements) and drew on experiences of agencies such as the Archbishop's Christian Muslim Forum and the Cambridge Interfaith Programme (Sarah Snyder). The consultation also heard powerful contribution from Dr Andrew Smith (Scripture Union) about his work bringing young Christians and Muslims together and from Nick and Kerry Coke (Salvation Army) about living out the gospel amongst the Muslim community of Stepney. Julian Bond (Christian Muslim Forum) comments: "For those struggling to decide whether they are Exclusivists, Inclusivists, Pluralists or Particularists one of the speakers, Dr Nicholas Wood, offered this Biblical verse full of generosity to other religious expressions – 'Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.' (Malachi 1.10,11)"

St Ethelburga's Director Simon Keyes said "I think we succeeded in creating a safe space for evangelicals to talk frankly about the issues that arise in relation to other faiths. It was a very good natured and illuminating day which mapped out the ground on which evangelicals can relate to non-Christians. We're certainly going to encourage further exploration of this fascinating territory which is crucial to the future of multi-religious Britain."

For further information contact: Christophe Kiworr, 07553 501285 Christoph@sthelburgas.org

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Developing European Church Relations

When the Lutheran Church in Great Britain (which I have the privilege of serving as Bishop) moved in to occupy an empty room in the basement of the CTE offices at Tavistock Square, we discussed ways in which we could co-operate; and the obvious way seemed to be to use some of my experience in working in and with European churches to develop some CTE work in European Church Relations. And so, since the spring of this year, I have been working (in a very part-time way) on developing contacts and exploring what is already done in this field, whether by individual churches, by ecumenical bodies or by specific networks and organizations that bring together churches in England with their Christian counterparts in mainland Europe.

This has already proved very interesting and stimulating. Now we are hoping to enter into the next phase, and explore ways in which CTE might be able to support churches in their contacts with Europe, particularly for those who are not able for reasons of capacity to maintain a specific person or department with responsibility for overseas contacts. In this present economic climate, some larger churches are also paring down staffing levels, and those who work in ecumenical or cross-border contexts are seen, inevitably, as less essential.

Among possible plans for the future are:

- An electronic newsletter, perhaps as part of CTE, informing people of events and developments, and also reminding us of the long history of church contacts between England and European countries (far pre-dating the European Union, of course)
- Theological exploration
- Enabling networking, both within CTE churches and with European institutions
- Meetings to discuss areas of common interest
- Seminars on European church issues – e.g. Charta Oecumenica: does it have any relevance for our situation? Or perhaps a comparison between the European and English Reformations, and their consequences for our present day situation

What we actually end up doing will depend on feedback from people already involved in European work, as well as those who would like to explore this field. How can CTE help you? What would you like us to do?

And finally – a request: if you or your church have an interest in this new work, or if you would like to offer information about past or present European ventures; or if you would just like to know more about this new work, please do get in touch. My contact details are below.

Jana Jeruma-Grinberga, Secretary for European Church Relations, Churches Together in England, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH 020 7529 8147 Jana.jeruma@cte.org.uk [Back to top](#)

Living with Dying: Bishop David Sheppard

Grace Sheppard spoke about her new book *Living with Dying* at St Margaret's Church, Angmering, West Sussex, and at The Church Centre, Horsham. In the foreword, Archbishop Desmond Tutu writes, 'Grace Sheppard's intimate journey helps us to live with dying creatively and positively.' Cathy Lewis-Jones is the Director of St Johns Hospice in the Wirral where David spent his last days. She writes 'for fellow travellers on the same journey this book will give comfort, courage and direction: for others it will provide insight into the journey.' All donations and proceeds from the [book](#) will be given to the Hospice. The picture on the front cover is from the sculpture in Chester Cathedral depicting when Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well and she gave Him water to drink.

David Sheppard first came to international attention as a batsman, captaining the MCC. Later, as Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, he became an ecumenical pioneer with Archbishop Derek Worlock and Revd Dr John Newton who, as Free Churches Moderator, was one of the first Presidents of Churches Together in England. They were known as the 'Liverpool Three' and famously declared that they were 'Better Together.' [Back to top](#)

CAFOD moves to new green building

On 10th May 2010, CAFOD moved premises after 28 years in Stockwell to a purpose-built new building next to St George's Cathedral in Southwark. Having previously been spread across three separate sites, it was important to be able to accommodate all staff under one roof, both to improve efficiency as an organisation and to continue to respond to the needs of our partners overseas as effectively as possible.

The new building, in keeping with [CAFOD's LiveSimply](#) initiative, has been designed in the most cost effective and environmentally friendly way. The building has achieved an 'excellent' rating by the Building Research Establishment Environment Assessment (BREEAM), the highest possible rating. Only 148 buildings reached this out of 1200 assessed last year. The Assessment covers a range of environmental indicators such as energy, transport, pollutions, materials and water use.

So how does the building reflect CAFOD's 'LiveSimply' values in its day to day operations? When walking into dark rooms, lights connected to movement sensors activate and switch off when the space is empty again. The building is heated and cooled using ground source heat pumps and a solar thermal system that is designed to provide 100% of the heating demand, 100% of the cooling demand and 50% of the hot water supply. The roof-mounted solar panels, which convert the sun's energy into electricity, generate around 3500 kWh per year saving the equivalent of two tonnes of CO2. A natural green sedum roof increases the biodiversity of the area by encouraging plants and insects to make it their home and rainwater collected from the roof is used for toilet flushing. Aerated taps and low water use fittings mean less water is used and of course staff implement strict recycling rules to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. Amazingly, over 20% of the energy required to run the building is produced using these renewable methods.

Aside from the building's green credentials it is designed purposefully to maximise opportunities for staff to interact and work more effectively together. The move has also enabled the agency to strengthen its links into the local church community. For example, CAFOD worked together with the Archdiocese of Southwark to agree that CAFOD leased part of the Cathedral car park for the new office site, thereby mobilising the Archdiocese with projects such as the refurbishment of the Cathedral Centre - the Amigo Hall.

CAFOD's new home was fittingly named Romero House by the Board, in an ongoing tribute to the memory of Archbishop Oscar Romero. There will be an official opening of the building by Archbishop Vincent Nichols on 15th July. [Back to top](#)

The Church, Homelessness and Housing Need

Housing Justice's Annual Conference, this year held at Carrs Lane in Birmingham on 15th July, brought together over 140 people from churches and agencies involved in practical action on homelessness and housing.

In the day's opening reflection and prayer the Archbishop of Birmingham, the Most Reverend Bernard Longley, spoke simply and directly of the Church's duty to respond meaningfully to those in need. Rebecca Pritchard, CLG Rough Sleeping Specialist Adviser on Homelessness, gave a presentation on the current homelessness strategy, highlighting some of the challenges still to be faced if we are to end rough sleeping. Graham Stubbs gave a response from the Birmingham Christian Homelessness Forum and from his work heading up the St Martin's in the Bullring advice desk, identifying the obstacles many people still face in getting the accommodation and other help they desperately need.

The message from these plenary speakers and from Housing Justice Chair Bishop James Langstaff, who led the day, was clear: the Church has an important role to play in society's response to the needs of people who are homeless or in housing need. Not just in providing practical care and help, but in speaking out when the system clearly fails so many people in need.

One particular highlight was the thrilling performance from The Choir with no Name who are now seeking to extend their inspirational work to other parts of the country. The conference ended on a high note with Marie Benton and the choir leading us all in singing Primal Scream's 'I'm moving on up!' See the Housing Justice [website](#). [Back to top](#)

Presidents encourage the churches

Two of CTE's Presidents, Archbishop Rowan Williams and Commissioner Elizabeth Matear, visited the Princess Alice Hospice. The visit was planned to give encouragement to staff and patients and to inform the presidents of end-of-life care and ethical issues relating to government strategy. They met with the wide team of professionals and volunteers who work in the hospice and in the community care it offers. The overriding ambience was one of joy and enthusiasm for life, with the individual very much at the centre of the care offered. The day care provided patients with a sense of worth, dignity and belonging. Care for in-patients offered help for body, mind and spirit, respecting individuality and embracing family and friends during difficult days.

Chief Executive Nicholas Ratsey said: "When the request came from Churches Together for us to facilitate a visit from the Archbishop and Commissioner the hospice team felt honoured that our achievements as a leading voice in the end-of-life care arena had been recognised."

At the end of their visit Commissioner Matear and Archbishop Rowan Williams were asked what they had gained from the visit and if there were any challenges they wished to share with local churches around the country.

Archbishop Rowan had been impressed by the respect that is given to vulnerable individuals leading to giving them space to make their own decisions about life, also the communication of the hospice's mission with the wider community, enabling them to participate through volunteering and the network of charity shops. Here he saw ways in which Christians might easily engage with the valuable ministry of care that the hospice movement offers.

Commissioner Betty was similarly impressed by the value given to individuals, not always seen in wider society. The fact that this individual care is also offered outside the hospice in the community, with much effort spent in getting alongside people in their homes and other situations, was another model she felt the hospice offered to Christians, and she saw in this important elements of ministry that churches might emulate.

In reflecting on the hospice building Commissioner Betty said: "The purpose-built facility incorporates a courtyard called 'The Eye of the Storm', which is a beautiful metaphor for hospice care. The care of people at vulnerable times in their lives and at the end of their lives is an important ministry. We value every person and want to ensure that they are shown dignity and worth. The hospice environment and ethos informs our thinking and models such love and care."

Some photos of the visit are on the website [here](#).

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Website updates

Visitors to the CTE website will notice some structural changes. These have been made in order to make certain areas of the site more easily accessible. In the main tabs you will now find:

Working Together – with links to the work of the churches co-ordinating groups. These are the main places where the churches meet to do business together around certain issues.

Common Cause – offers links to Bodies in Association and other groups where ecumenical work takes place naturally.

For those who have got used to discovering things through 'themes', these can still be found from the front page and in both these other areas. We hope that these are helpful changes for our readers. [Back to top](#)

Enabling Church

Disability, wholeness and Christian theology, a day conference for all interested on 7th October 2010 at Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

A major conference is to examine the church's attitudes to disability and its failure to include disabled children and adults. 'Enabling Church', hosted by Premier Christian Media, will cover issues ranging from spirituality and disability, the mission of the Church and disability, healing and wholeness, hidden disabilities, and engaging with children with disabilities.

A recent survey by Premier Christian Radio highlighted the need for such an event. A survey of Christians, undertaken by ComRes, revealed that almost half of those questioned believe that their church needs to make improvements to be more accessible to people with disability. Two-thirds of churches said they would be grateful for ideas on how best to include people with a disability in church activities. Though much has been to improve access to church premises, disabled people still frequently feel alienated from church activities. 'Enabling Church' aims to dig deeper into the issues and to explore the way Christians understand disability and wholeness.

Tickets are £25 pp (accompanying supporters of delegates Free) Register now at:

www.premier.org.uk/enablingchurch or call 08456 525252

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