

CTC Review

19 ^{Winter}
2024

GOOD NEWS FROM CORNISH CHURCHES

SPECIAL ISSUE

*Ten years on from the signing of the
Declaration of Intent in November 2013 -
what have we achieved and what's next?*



**CHURCHES
BECOMING BETTER TOGETHER
CORNWALL**
*inspiring unity
sharing our gifts*

Cornubia : Land of the Saints

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Becoming Better Together: Ecumenical Progress in Cornwall

Just over ten years ago, on 17th November 2013, leaders of Churches Together in Cornwall gathered at a packed service in the county's largest parish church, St Petroc's in Bodmin. In the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and other national leaders, a Declaration of Intent and Letter of Companionship were signed committing us all to work more closely together.

A decade on, Christians in Cornwall gather again at St Petroc's on 27th January 2024, at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, to review our work since 2013 and re-dedicate ourselves to 'Becoming Better Together' with the signing of a new Covenant. So what have we achieved in the last ten years?

Well, Brexit, Covid, war in Ukraine and the Middle East, the cost-of-living crisis and environmental issues have affected us all as individuals, communities and churches in ways we did not anticipate. New doors have opened and church contributions to local secular initiatives, in support of poverty, loneliness, homelessness, mental health, climate change, bereavement, refugee support and much else, have been welcomed and encouraged. New Liaison Groups have been formed to develop these new relationships and discussions have begun with Cornwall Council on the development of a Faith Covenant. Hanging on in quiet desperation is the English way, as Pink Floyd once wrote; but the salt and light that Christians can bring changes the desperation to hope.

In 2013, we focussed on three specific commitments: to seek joint initiatives for mission; to work together to equip both lay and ordained ministry; and to optimise the use of church buildings for the community. After the signing, working groups were set up and three follow-up conferences in different parts of the county were arranged to gather local ideas. It became clear that top-down solutions would not work; so we have sought to develop closer relations with local groups, support their work however we may and build a new directory of church-led social action projects. Cornwall's hosting of the G7 conference in 2021 afforded many opportunities for working and praying together, sowing seeds which are now beginning to bear fruit; but the challenges facing Cornwall, one of the UK's most deprived areas, continue to multiply. So, all Christians in Cornwall are being invited to sign our new Covenant, which is not just for leaders, as we work together to address those challenges, confident that we really are becoming better together!

Roger Mills, CTC Editor



Come join us - all are welcome - from near and far to celebrate with members of Churches Together in Cornwall as we all bear witness to the signing of the "Declaration of Intent" between our Christian Churches

ECUMENICAL SERVICE OF UNITY AT ST PETROC'S CHURCH

BODMIN

SUNDAY 17TH NOVEMBER
3PM

Preacher - Dr Daleep Mukarji,
Vice President of the Methodist Conference

The signing of the "Declaration of Intent" will be completed in the presence of national church leaders including the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby



CTC Charity No 1053899



Bodmin 2013: Energetic sprinkling by Bishop Tim Thornton (CofE) and Rev Ruth Whitehead (URC)



Bodmin 2013: CTC Missioner David Smith with the signed documents

An Act of Rededication

Saturday 27 January 2024

St Petroc's Church Bodmin

Priory Road PL31 2DP

10:30am-3:30pm



**CHURCHES
BECOMING BETTER TOGETHER
CORNWALL**

*inspiring unity
sharing our gifts*

Cornubia : Land of the Saints
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*Following the tenth Anniversary of the signing of the
Declaration of Intent & Letter of Companionship 2013
by leaders of Churches Together in Cornwall*

**We invite all Christians in Cornwall
to sign a new Covenant**

as we commit to share our gifts freely
value each other's treasures

learn and grow in Christ working for God's kingdom

Guest Speaker: Revd Dr Ben Aldous

Principal Officer for Mission and Evangelism, Churches Together in England

WORSHIP – EXHIBITION – TALKS – DISCUSSION – LUNCH & TEA

No charge but bookings essential for catering purposes – free pasty lunch!

BOOK NOW at ctcinfohub.org/bbt

2013: Declaration of Intent

DECLARATION OF INTENT 17TH NOVEMBER 2013

**Ecumenical County of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly:
A Declaration of Intent by the Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed
South West Baptist Association Churches and the Salvation Army**

With the whole Christian Church, we believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We share a life of faith which is the Spirit's gift, continually received through the Word, the Sacraments and our Christian life together.

We believe that we are being called by God to realise more deeply our common life and mission, to share and respect the distinctive contributions of our traditions, and to bring about closer collaboration in all areas of witness and service.

We commit ourselves and our churches:

- a. to seek out every possible opportunity for joint initiatives at Local and County Level in mission to all the people of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- b. to work together to equip both lay and ordained ministry whenever possible, and to share that ministry wherever appropriate.
- c. to continue the work of developing strategies whereby we optimise the use of our church buildings for the benefit of communities throughout the county.

We believe that God has given our churches a particular opportunity to work together more closely.

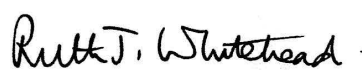
We also affirm our intention to go on praying and working, with all our fellow Christians, for the visible unity of the Church in the way Christ chooses, so that people may be led to love and serve God more and more.



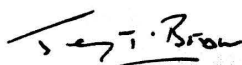
Rt. Rev'd. Tim Thornton
Anglican Bishop of Truro



Rev'd. Steve Wild
Methodist Chairman
of Cornwall District



Rev'd. Ruth Whitehead
Moderator of the South Western Synod
United Reformed Church



Rev'd Jeremy Brown
Senior Regional Minister
South West Baptist Association



Major Ian Harris
South West Divisional Leader
Salvation Army

Letter of Companionship

LETTER OF COMPANIONSHIP 17TH NOVEMBER 2013

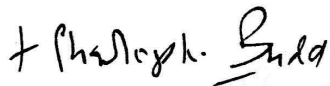
Dear Friends,

to the members and representatives of the Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed and South West Baptist Association Churches and the Salvation Army in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

We, the representatives of the other member Churches of Churches Together in Cornwall, are delighted to offer you our congratulations on the Declaration of Intent to be signed on 17th November 2013. In addition we offer you our ongoing companionship as we seek to serve Christ together in the county of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

We recognise with you the particular opportunity afforded to your churches to work more closely together, and commit ourselves to praying for God's blessing on what is begun with this Declaration of Intent.

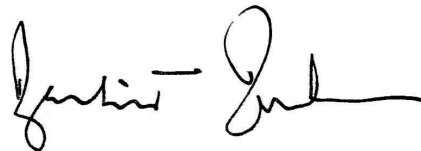
We also affirm our intention to go on praying and working, with all our fellow Christians, for the visible unity of the Church in the way Christ chooses, so that people may be led to love and serve God more and more.



Bishop Christopher Budd
Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth



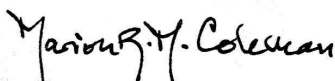
The Rev'd. Oeconómos Nikitas Lantsbery
Greek Orthodox Church
Community of Archangel Michael and St. Piran



Very Rev'd. Archpriest Benedict Ramsden
Russian Orthodox Church
Community of St Anthony & St Elias

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"We support the churches who have signed this Declaration of Intent in the move towards working together more closely."



Marion Coleman,
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Clerk to Cornwall Area Meeting

Following Up

Following the signing of the Declaration in Nov 2013, working groups were set up on five themes: CTC Executive, Mission Events Together, Working Strategically Together, Ecumenical Ventures Together, and Theological Issues Together. Exactly one year later in Nov 2014, a workshop was held in St Austell for CTC and local CT groups to discuss progress and priorities – see the report on the next page. Recognising that needs differ across the county and that travel difficulties could prevent participation in single county-wide events, in 2015 two one-day workshops were held in Truro and Bodmin – see the combined report on p.8. Then in 2016, the third anniversary of the signing was marked by a conference in Camborne = p.10.

THE NEXT STAGE

So after the wonderful ecumenical service at St Petroc's Bodmin on 17th Nov when the Declaration of Intent was signed, progress has already been considered and will be firmed up in the New Year by the CTC Executive. The draft action plan looks like this:-

Theme: 1 CTC Executive Lead: David Smith	
Ref:	Action
1a	Administration
1b	Co-ordinating reporting back from Theme Groups
1c	CTC communication
1d	CTC web site
Theme: 2 Mission Events Together Lead: to be decided	
Ref:	Action
2a	Week of Christian Unity
2b	Declaration of Intent – 1 year On – 16 November 2014
2c	Royal Cornwall Show – June 2014
2d	Royal Cornwall Show Ground – CTC building
2e	Gwennap Pit – Pentecost
Theme: 3 Working Strategically Together Lead: Bishop Tim Thornton	
Ref:	Action
3a	Joint working on policies such as environment and discipleship, rather than separate policies and initiatives
3b	Encouraging leaders to motivate and promote ecumenicalism throughout their organisations
3c	Involve ecumenical people in decision-making, such as staff recruiting, to ensure ecumenical working is seen as a priority
3d	Develop a questionnaire to establish support for ecumenical working with existing clergy
Theme: 4 Ecumenical Ventures Together Lead: Rev Steve Wild	
Ref:	Action
4a	Working together for pastoral care in rural areas
4b	Develop shared training resources
4c	Streamline training for lay preachers
4d	Develop a joint Ecumenical Youth Synod
Theme: 5 Theological Issues Together Lead: Rev Jez Brown	
Ref:	Action
5a	Communion
5b	Deployment of ordained ministers
5c	New and emerging churches

FEBRUARY 2015

"ONE YEAR ON" WORKSHOP RESPONSES

Should you wish for a copy of the responses please email CTC Missioner, David H Smith ses.dhs@hotmail.co.uk

HAS PROGRESS BEEN MADE?

This 16th November gathering in St Austell gave CTC Executive members (County Denominational Leaders and Denominational Ecumenical Officers) the opportunity to listen to what local Churches Together Groups were saying about their events and mission activities carried out over the year. Delegates expressed that they had witnessed the wonderful birth of a child in November 2013 and now they are looking for signs that the 'baby' is at least starting to crawl if not walk!

Many expressed the need for help in finding resources in order to move forward and expand.

There was recognition of a big job for Churches Together in Cornwall to tackle; there needs to be more coming together events. Representatives want County Church Leaders to both encourage bottom up suggestions as well as top down. Leaders should have confidence and engage more with their representatives at local level.

Delegates were impressed that county denominational leaders in Cornwall meet regularly together for prayer and sharing and they felt this was to be encouraged. Leaders need to model good ecumenical working together/worshipping together and to facilitate as far as possible the support of this from their ordained priests, ministers and lay people.

The Churches Together Forum Groups are contact points which can provide consultancy /mentoring review. Much mission work comes from local CT Groups. The important thing therefore for the leaders of CTC is to encourage all who are within their sphere of supervision to seek out and meet with other Christians.

Recognition that by far the majority of our greatest mission successes (Foodbanks, Open the Book, Street Pastors, Breakfast Projects, Charity Shops,

Chairman - Bishop Tim Thornton
Vice Chairman - Reverend Steve Wild
CTC Missioner - David H Smith
Treasurer - Mike Cullen
Charity No 1053899
www.churchestogetherincornwall

outside of church building. Neutral ground for mission work helps. It attracts and encourages non church goers to participate as volunteers.

Delegates want more CT Group leadership awareness that offers advice and expertise - spreading new ideas. They see CTC acting like a 'figure head' for the local groups. The example of leaders meeting and building relationships needs to filter down to the local level. However it is too much to expect only County Leaders to make this happen. It has to come from the local CT Groups.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DAY

Suggested topics for CT Groups to work on but not in any priority order were:-

FIRSTLY - ALL WE DO MUST BE SURRENDERED IN PRAYER

- Get communication right with all platforms and with Contact/secretaries of CT Groups
- **Distribution emails and Newsletters from one central point.**
- An East and West Day Conference where training, knowledge and inspiration can be shared
- **Suggested title change – from Churches Together to Christians together**
- A need to grow a healthy inclusive relationship with the Pentecostal independent churches
- **To plan events that would encourage families**
- Change (denominational) structures; make it easier for groups to work "together" and expand
- **Identify and appoint lead Officers for certain specific TC related topics/jobs**
- Help expand our Christian mission work wherever the future needs arise.
- **Look geographically where Churches Together Groups might be formed or merged.**
- Respect the covenants in place which represent lasting agreements between various churches
- **Sharing of lay and ordained ministry across denominations.**
- To promote and encourage joint events - Ideas exchange, prayer, sharing problems as well as successes.
- **A strong need for CT Leadership to conduct quarterly large united services around Cornwall**

07-01-2015 David H Smith
Churches Together in Cornwall - Ecumenical

OCTOBER 2015



(Rev Steve Wild and Sarah Yardley of CreationFest)

Time taken together at both the Bodmin and Truro CTC Day Conferences gave delegates the opportunity to debate in workshop settings their responses to various questions. What are we doing outside our normal church buildings and established structures in terms of social action projects? Examples highlighted were:- Bibles for Schools, School Chaplaincy, Walks of Witness, Open air Feast week service, Great Big Christmas Sing, Street Pastors, Memory Café, Safe Spaces, "Live" Nativity, Homeless breakfasts, Shared worship, Open the Book, the Youth Café, Food Bank outlets, Charity shops and many more.

More recently the creation of Training and Education sessions between Methodist and URC churches, developing understanding of each others' traditions, getting to the point that 'you can't tell what flavour of Christianity people are,' exchanging of pulpits – shared worship and the refugee crisis which brings people together.

The Bibles for schools project focuses on all Reception age children receiving a copy of the Bible on entering schools in St Austell and Mevagissey. The Bibles are taken home and used in schools. Money for the scheme is raised by the churches but also by individuals.

Hayle and St Austell both operate "Open the Book." The more established Hayle project has developed the delivery to include pupils in a more positive manner, such as getting the children to act the parts as opposed to the adults. What is key, though, is that pupils know that the adults are from different churches working together in the town. Newquay and Penzance also have active "Open the Book" teams.

It was noted that churches in Camborne do work together but not always under the aegis of a formal Churches Together group. This was particularly true in relation to town events such as: walk of witness on Good Friday, the town nativity play in the town square and the town passion play. A number of CT Groups have had live nativities and Passiontide events.

Hayle has a community carol service and St Austell the Christmas Big Sing. Both Hayle and Newquay have an annual "Songs of Praise."

One initiative was the Safari Supper where the starter is eaten in one church, the main in another, the sweet in a third and cheese, biscuits and coffee in a fourth. This enabled people to encounter different churches/chapels in a non-threatening way but in a way that built community.

Rural churches have their own problems as congregations decline. A real opportunity for churches to join together depending on:- relationships:

- exploring something different
- celebrating difference
- joint worship trying to 'please' everyone – by building relationships can lead to discussion. Sunday meeting.
- go with the flow and be relaxed
- relationships – laughter! Support and Prayer
- day retreat – 'dream dreams'

Pray and Prophecy

- a week of 24/7 Prayer
- supporting lots of projects
- relationships – social events – safari suppers
- Movement Festival – free family community day with Creationfest
- Filling Station – not in a 'church' building
- events – for all denominations
- Catholic Church in England is very traditional (compared to France)
- enjoy the ecumenical work
- sharing experiences together

1. Concerns and frustrations were expressed relating to what does not work quite so well.

There was deep frustration about how bureaucracy gets in the way of further meaningful unity – Upton Cross was offered as an example. We need to learn how to motivate people, to meet and encounter each other meaningfully.

The question was asked: what has happened with the Anglican-Methodist covenant of 12 years standing, and the ecumenical agreement signed two years ago in Bodmin?

- a. There needs to be structural changes, especially in the intermediate levels below Bishop Tim/Rev Steve and above the grassroots activities of lay people locally. Tim/Steve model seems not to be replicated lower down between clergy of different traditions. The need to get commitment from all levels of churches locally.
- b. Sharing ministries, oversight, worship in churches. The way that some find it difficult to negotiate the traditions of others, putting people outside of their comfort zone – people didn't want to feel embarrassed by not knowing what to do.

- c Getting Pentecostal or Free churches to join local CT groups, especially if they already participate in local CT arranged mission activities - they will often engage in supporting social projects but not in worship, giving the sense that 'they are the real church' but others weren't. There were theological issues outstanding which compounded this situation.
- d Getting younger people involved. Discussion ensued about what this means - do we want them just to replace 'us' - or are we happy for them to do their own thing?
- e How do we take on board the 'critical' educational approach students have been taught?
- f Simply not wanting to go to others' churches. This wasn't just an issue with inter-denominational events. This was also true of Circuit services in some Methodist areas or Anglican Clusters where identity was felt to be lost or where such services were rarely well attended.

Some solutions had been tried, such as going to see the traditional service of another denomination and this had some limited success. On the whole, though, neutral venues appeared to work best.

2. What folk would like to explore and see develop further?

- Prayer should be higher on the agenda and we should find ways of spending more time in prayer together – to learn the languages of prayers from different traditions.
- Opportunities for theological reflection – learning how we do theology differently and enriching our own knowledge and understanding.
- The development of a chaplaincy to those working in Tourism. This would be cross denominational reaching out to people often on zero hours contracts, long and irregular hours and low wages.

3. What needs to change?

- a) Getting Pentecostal groups involved
- b) Appealing to young people
- c) Use of social media

Structural changes allowing ministry vacancies in rural areas to be filled by ecumenical clergy.

Getting websites running well and keeping them up to date. If we want to do more together we may have to face up to the reality of having to do less on our own.



More work with schools – easier if there is a church school in an area, but where there is none, need to make more impact - excellent work is already happening in Prayer spaces for Schools and Open the Book.

What do we need to move things forward?

We are one church – we have diversity within that church
Sunday 15 November (2 yrs since Declaration) service of unity?
Bodmin, St Austell – where next – rolling service – move around the District.

4. Each group was invited to share one issue. This resulted in the following points:-

The importance of making 'church' accessible

- Through our buildings: advertise that we are DDA friendly
- Through our language: cannot take our vocabulary with us; it is not known or understood
- Through our age groups: young as well as old
- Through our disabilities: those with any difficulties through to those with none
- Through all social levels: not just affluent but those who are struggling

If we could address accessibility issues we would have taken the church outside itself, because Church here does not just mean buildings but our institutions, structures and groups.

Unfortunately, our current structures get in the way of all this.

Four other suggestions were made:

There was a need to do something for children and young people across the member churches. Helping them develop friendships that could last into the future and help shape the future church.

Have a more interactive and intuitive website, especially for local CTs linked to the Cornwall CT website. Such websites need to be fit for purpose.

Investing in non-traditional ways of being church so everybody is on a level playing field when coming together.

There needs to be better communication as to what is going on and why. Often people in the pews don't get to hear about what is happening until it is too late or it has happened. Identifying who the gatekeepers are is essential. There needs to be a flow of information up and down the structure in an efficient way.

The creation of a common, joint, CT prayer for all members of CT groups in Cornwall to use everyday and pass on to other church members to help raise awareness and to launch our future work in prayer.

Would value more opportunities to discuss CT work outside own CT groups, maybe on an area basis rather than whole County.

Could CTC have a shop window of what advice and facilities are on offer for local CT groups?

Would love a course on pastoral visiting to those with dementia!

By far the majority attending the conferences stated they enjoy meeting with others, the fellowship together and the content. They heard from each church leader in turn, along with Martin Follett on gaining Charitable Status, Peter Moody on the importance of affiliation and insurance for activities and events, Christine Todd and Bren Stuart-white on Dementia Awareness and future 2016 plans.

We also had the youngest CT Group Chairperson from Callington with us, Morag Stolton and members of the Chemin Neuf Community.

Many thanks to Transformation Cornwall staff, Debbie Croucher, Lois Wild and Rosey Sanders in helping with the overall planning and organising of the event.

Also to Rev Steve Wild, who even with his very busy schedule found time to be with us as Churches Together in Cornwall as the work that CTC undertakes in Cornwall is very close to his heart.



Churches Together Conference

26 November 2016 in Camborne

Address: Elim Church Camborne, Kerrier Way, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 8FH **Telephone:** 01209 714 781

Our Aim:

to gather as Churches Together in Cornwall to pray, worship, celebrate, and learn about the work of God in our county and beyond with a focus toward leadership development.

Focus for 2017 going forward includes:

providing pastoral care for our congregations & the local community, engaging with a broader group of churches across Cornwall & planning for "Thy Kingdom Come"

programme

10am - Morning Celebration with worship offered by hosts

Greeting from Bishop Tim and leaders. *Mission project updates.*

11am - Leadership Session: Waiting on God the Holy Spirit

Led by: Bishop Tim Thornton in the Chair,
Rev. Steve Wild, Chairman of Cornwall Methodist District
Pastor Richard Curnow, Wadebridge Christian Centre
Rev Matt Noble, Truro Baptist Church

12 Noon - Being Christians Together – Faith stories in a secular society – led by Sarah Yardley

12:30pm - Lunch Break (free pasty lunch included)

1:15pm - Afternoon Praise: God's Care For Us

1:45pm - Breakout Sessions

Dementia Awareness within our churches : Led by the CTC Dementia Action Project Group

Youth Ministry: Reaching our Children and Teens led by Ray and Becky Thomas (SWYM)

Sharing the Faith: Led by Worship Director David Brittain of Camborne Elim Church

3pm — Group feedback

3:15pm — Closing Worship

3:30pm — Finish

To book your place and order your free pasty,
Please copy and paste this link

<https://bookwhen.com/transformationcornwall/e/ev-s8ck-20161126100000>

Royal Cornwall Show

CTC's regular outreach at the Royal Cornwall Show was well established before 2013 and has continued throughout the decade, interrupted only by the Show cancellations during the Covid pandemic. Offering roving Chaplains throughout the showground and refreshments, prayers and other activities in a prime location on Stand 1 by the main entrance, plus a well-attended pre-Show service followed by a pasty reception. In 2021 the tent was rebranded as 'Sanctuary' to offer a place of calm particularly appreciated by those still anxious about crowded spaces following lockdown. Sadly costs have rocketed in the past few years and changes in the style of marquee are planned for 2024 – however both CTC and the Royal Cornwall Show are determined to maintain our presence at Cornwall's biggest annual event. Join us this year 6-8 June!



Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)

2015

CHRISTIANS TOGETHER IN LINKINHORNE

We are a fellowship that includes active members of the Anglican, Methodist and Quaker denominations who have journeyed spiritually to joint worship and union in Christ in Upton Cross, Rilla Mill and Linkinhorne.

Historically the parish is called Linkinhorne and is centrally placed between Launceston, Liskeard and Callington and our churches and chapel link us to clusters, circuits and parishes centred on these towns.

Its history, however, has probably encouraged a sense of independence and self reliance going back to the early Celtic Christians, of whom St Mellor the patronal saint of the parish church was one. Like many of the Celtic saints whose names are lovingly preserved in the Cornish landscape, little is really known of him except that he must have been a worthy Christian.

This serves to remind us that it is the Lord's name that we bear and work towards promoting rather than any one denomination. The explosion of the population in the area during the mining days attracted and created many Christians of many different labels. Places of worship were built at virtually every crossroads, some were no more than tents, literally. If the song is right, "the creed and the colour and the name..." don't matter because the Lord was present with those struggling to alleviate the evils and ignorance that blighted many lives.

It is quite likely that it is because of this diverse history that worshippers at the remaining chapels and the two churches came together over the later years of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries.

Strong friendships were forged and joint ecumenical events such as harvest suppers and services and fellowship group were enjoyed. These were not however sufficient to stem the decline in numbers attending services or to upkeep buildings that had been too big even before completion as in the case of the Rilla Mill Methodist Chapel.

God pulled a few heads out of the sand, so to speak and once freed from worry about the building, the small Methodist fellowship returned to its historic small group or class type meeting and did so in the village hall.

With the other hand He disposed of the said building to two Baptist Christians who entered into and enriched the worship of the three remaining congregations.

The affirmation was clear that there was a future, a journey to be embarked on although without a destination revealed. What was also sure was that there were a few intrepid pilgrims ready to set out on it from all corners of the parish.

Local Ecumenical Partnerships have existed in Cornwall for several decades, and the areas covered have continued largely unchanged since 2013, though with many changes of personnel and changes in scope, largely dictated by the availability of ministers – the URC has suffered the largest reduction in leaders in the county. Our annual report gives details of the current situation each year. Of particular note are the re-animation of Riverside (Looe) and the continuing success of Linkinhorne (the area between Liskeard-Callington-Launceston) – their report from 2015 hints at why this works so well. In recent years responsibility for the oversight of LEPs has shifted from Churches Together to the denominations involved, but we are still called upon to advise on the most appropriate model for those embarking on new collaborative ventures – there are a number of less formal alternatives to LEPs which may well be preferable.

Support was readily forthcoming from Anglican and Methodist clergy and from both organisations and this was appreciated and will be gratefully used. The two offer handrails to guide and hold us up and on course along the path we seek to climb. Now we feel that they have got us safely here and can be relied on in the future.

In recognition of the intention of the main Churches to make their own journey together on converging paths we signed our own copies of the document signed at Bodmin two years ago. This makes our intentions and that of our parent Churches clear. We are also echoing the national call to use the title Christians Together rather than Churches Together to say that we really will welcome all and any who seek to wear that badge.

We are far from ashamed of the institutions ourselves but recognise that we may travel further and faster with some if we park the baggage that they might associate with establishment and history. We belong to a family that recognises that we have made mistakes and that we don't always see eye to eye, similar words have been used by Pope Francis and we are in agreement that we can show love and respect and sit around the table together.

Thy Kingdom Come, South West Awake

It was suggested in the follow-up meetings that CTC should organise more large-scale worship events and that all initiatives should be founded on prayer. Both were encompassed in the decision to engage with the international ecumenical prayer movement 'Thy Kingdom Come' which began in 2016 and now unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions - so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ. Cornwall joined the movement in 2017 and an ecumenical committee including CTC organised a major 'Beacon' event in Truro Cathedral on Sun 28 May, offering three services in different styles with prayer stations available throughout. A week later on Pentecost Sunday a second Beacon event was held at Gwennap Pit. Both were very well supported and the following year the pattern was repeated at Truro Methodist Church and Gwennap, and in 2019 at St Martin's Church Liskeard and Gwennap, this time both on Pentecost Sunday as East and West Cornwall services respectively. Covid prevented meeting in 2020 and 2021, and in 2022 the Queen's Platinum Jubilee occurring at Pentecost made it impractical to organise separate TKC events. In 2023 we were once again able to meet ecumenically at Gwennap Pit.



In 2021 CTC provided a series of daily video reflections for Thy Kingdom Come on our YouTube channel, which were well received and have continued annually as a way of bringing the event to a wider audience who are not able to get to organised services.

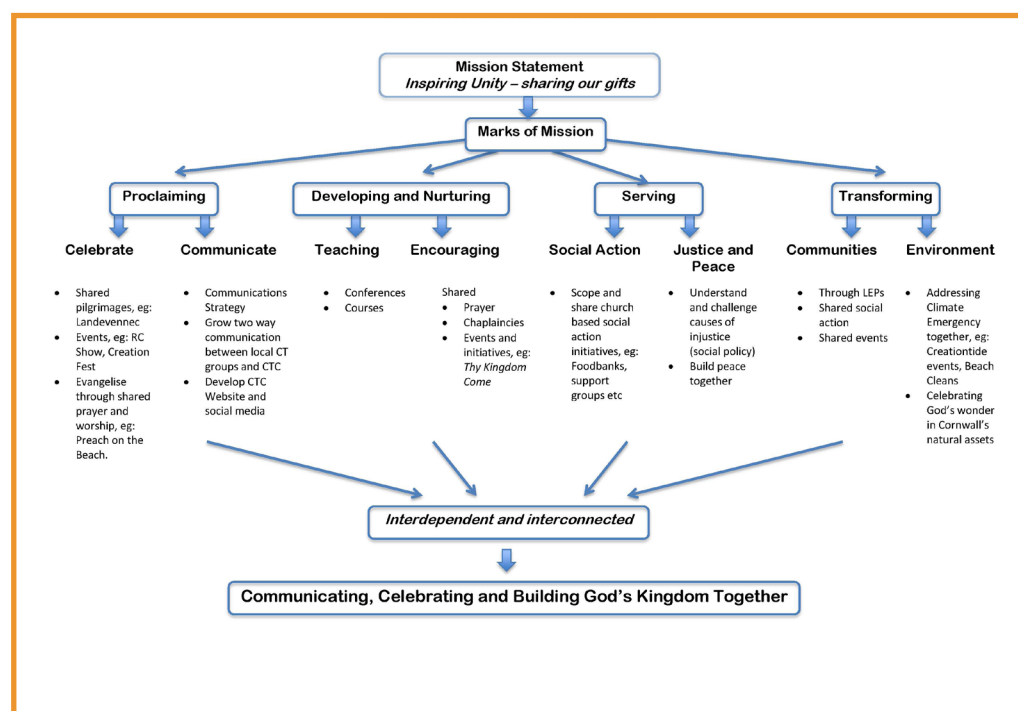
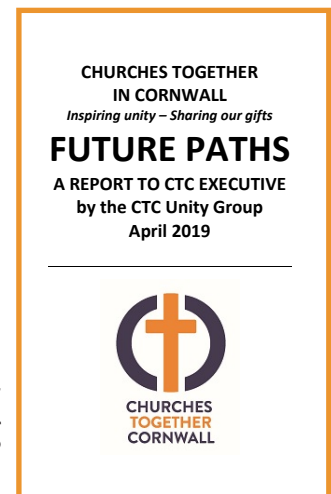


Also in 2021, a new initiative alongside Thy Kingdom Come, South West Awake, organised a prayer event along the South West Coast Path, encouraging churches and individuals to sign up to pray at one-mile intervals along the entire 630 miles of the Path from Minehead to Bournemouth. This too was well supported, and repeated in 2022 and 2023. For those not close to the coast path, the opportunity to pray on a 'high point' of your choosing was also provided.

Future Paths

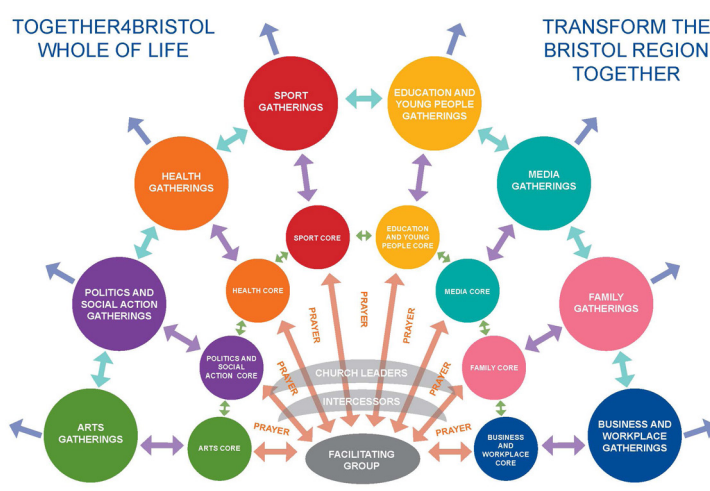
In 2017, the then CTC Missioner, David Smith, announced his intention to stand down from the post after serving since 2010. Two recruitment exercises followed but failed to attract a successor. Thought was then given to the possibility of sharing the post in a ‘team leadership’ model and a ‘Unity Group’ was set up in Oct 2018 to investigate, comprising two CTC Executive members (David and broadcaster Donna Birrell) and two external advisors, Kathy Pope (SACREd Space bookshop, St Austell) and Roger Mills (Falmouth & Penryn Churches Together). The group presented its report ‘Future Paths’ to the CTC AGM in April 2019. The Executive invited the external members to join them as co-opted members and progress the ideas with a view to implementing a new structure within three years, with Roger Mills acting as CTC Missioner while the transition took place, allowing David to retire. The report (which can be read at www.ctcinfohub.org/wp-content/uploads/Future-Paths.pdf) identified eight ‘marks of mission’ which could be used as a basis for restructuring. After further refinement, these were adopted as in the chart below, with existing CTC activities assigned to the appropriate area of mission. The report’s proposal of a ‘strapline’ *Inspiring Unity – Sharing our Gifts* for use on CTC publicity was also adopted.

To progress the new structure, a member of the existing CTC Executive was appointed to lead each missional area, meeting together regularly as a Steering Group, formed in September 2019.




Team Leadership

As the Steering Group began to work together, it soon became apparent that, although the missional areas did fairly accurately reflect CTC's objectives, most activities overlapped several areas, and thus could not easily be 'assigned' to a single leader. The initial idea of dividing the Missioner post into eight bite-sized jobs would not be practicable. Moreover, the time Executive members could devote to the task was very limited. A wider circle of people knowledgeable in specific areas of activity was needed. Further research of work in other counties drew our attention to a model developed in Bristol over the past decade, involving specialist groups comprising representatives of local gatherings, both secular and faith-based, in different 'spheres of life'. These operate independently but feed into the central Churches Together network. In an urban area, those organisations are physically relatively close together, facilitating discussion and co-operation; in a dispersed rural area like Cornwall, would such a system work?



The answer came sooner than we thought. In January 2020, we received an invitation to attend a meeting of representatives of organisations involved in bereavement, organised by a local children's charity, Penhaligan's Friends, in their rather small offices. Over 80 people attended, representing 80 different organisations, most of whom had not previously met. This was way more than could be seated, so good networking was assured as people had to stand and circulate! The idea was to establish if a new network to enable these organisations to interact better would be helpful – it was immediately obvious that it would, and a further meeting was planned in March 2020. But by then we were in lockdown... so the meeting took place online, and it was clear that the need for a communications network had just greatly increased. The 'Cornwall Bereavement Network' rapidly coalesced, created a steering group and invited a church representative to be on it, held regular meetings with invited guests, and developed a 'signposting' website



(www.cornwallbereavementnetwork.org/) for those seeking support in time of loss. This all bore a striking resemblance to the Bristol system of ‘gatherings’ and ‘core groups’ and, by operating online, connected organisations across the county from Bude to Penzance. And importantly, the idea had come not from Churches Together but from the community, who had invited participation from faith groups.

The model was soon taken up by others and the Cornwall Churches Environment Network, Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network, Faith and Mental Health Network, and Chaplaincy Support Network came into operation in 2020-21. Other ‘lison groups’ are in process of development including a Sports Ministry Network, and others under consideration include Racial Justice, Pilgrimage and Youth & Family Work. Latest in the ‘family’ is the Cornwall Network for Supporting Persecuted Christians, formed in Nov 23. All have different roots, different objectives and different ways of working, but all are connecting those with common interests who are geographically scattered. Some are successful, some are struggling, and over time it will become clearer what works and what doesn’t. There is certainly no ‘one size fits all’ and we are very much on a journey of discovery. But we are building new church/community links and shown that the ‘Bristol model’ does indeed work in a rural context.

So the growth of Liaison Groups working alongside the Steering Group was increasing CTC’s capacity but also increasing the need for co-ordination. It was also increasing the flow of information across the Missioner’s desk which led to the development of the infoHub (p16) and the role began to divide naturally into two - a Co-ordinator and an Editor. The three-year transition to ‘team management’ envisaged in 2019 was due to end at the AGM in 2022, so job descriptions for these two roles were firmed up and advertised, with initially little response. But through a series of ‘God-incidences’ it became possible for Kathy Pope to take on the Co-ordinator role from September 2022, and Roger Mills continues (for now!) in the Editor’s role. This happy development has greatly facilitated continuity as we develop our ‘team management’ approach. We are very much still learning, but it’s looking good!

infoHub



The decade saw a phenomenal increase in the amount of information about coming events around the county landing on the Missioner's desk, generally by email. Originally forwarded 'as is' to those on the CTC mailing list, this soon became tiresome for the recipients and some form of regular digest became necessary. The market in commercial mailing list software was growing rapidly, dominated by Mailchimp, and its advantages became clear in 2018 with the introduction of GDPR and its associated record-keeping requirements, conveniently covered by Mailchimp and its like. Following experience with weekly Mailchimp newsletters in Falmouth/Penryn and Penzance, the decision was taken to combine those publications and extend coverage to the whole county; and thus the *CTC Weekly News* was born in June 2019, in six editions corresponding to the former District Council areas. Brief extracts in the Weekly News linked to the full story on the CTC website. The existing website, built around the software originally developed by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, proved inadequate to the task and a new Wordpress site ctcinfohub.org was developed to handle the increased load. By the fourth birthday of the *Weekly News* in June 2023 we had published

- 209 weekly issues
- 1650 news stories
- 1710 events
- 183 vacancy notices
- c.2000 links to other organisations' newsletters

distributed to 250+ subscribers, many of whom forward the newsletter to others. Alongside the website and newsletter the infoHub provides social media channels on Facebook, X and YouTube with 800+ followers. In 2023 we added the facility to manage sites for local CT groups as part of the infohub, at no extra charge for those paying the annual CTC affiliation fee, currently just £20 p.a., and in 2024 software developments will allow newsletter subscribers to tailor its contents to suit their interests.

We are looking for more people to help run the infoHub - if you are interested, please contact ctcinfohub@gmail.com. Even if you can only spare a few hours a month that would be very helpful in securing the future of the service - thank you!

SAM: Social Action Mapping for Cornish Churches

The SAM project stemmed from a social action audit carried out in 2015 in West Penwith by the Cinnamon Network. It recommended the creation of a county-wide directory of church-led social action projects, and the progressing of this idea was one of the first priorities for the Steering Group in 2019. A project was devised in conjunction with Falmouth University to use student volunteers to gather data from around the county, and a CTC stand at the University's Volunteering Fair in February 2020 attracted several students interested in participating. Sadly lockdown hit us just a few weeks later and the project never got underway; we still hope, however, to recreate it at a future date.

However, data gathering via the internet was still possible, and while some activities had to shut down during the pandemic, others continued and redoubled their efforts. So we were able to post information on those, initially on the infoHub, but from 2021 on the new platform Cornwall Link cornwall-link.co.uk/, in partnership with Age UK who were keen to build a database of projects that would be of interest to social prescribers etc. For us this enabled us to get our information to people outside the church sector and the partnership proved really valuable. Sadly in 2023 Age UK decided to withdraw from Cornwall Link, and the future of the platform was in doubt; but Made Open, the company who own the software, have committed to maintaining it while new funders are found, so we are hopeful that we will be able to continue using the platform to disseminate details of church-led social action projects across the county.

*In this special retrospective issue of CTC Review, we have only been able to give a quick snapshot of just a few of the highlights of the past decade. To learn more, we invite you to browse through our **200-page online book*** of extracts from the CTC Review and its predecessor CTC Newsletter, covering many other events and activities - including responses to Covid and the war in Ukraine, the G7 in Cornwall, participation in Creation Fest and the Christian Resources Exhibition, support for persecuted Christians and victims of modern slavery, work in dementia care and the encouragement of pilgrimage, to name just a few. We know there is much more to do - but let's take this moment to give thanks for what has been achieved, and go forward in hope!*

** www.ctcinfohub.org/churches-together-in-cornwall-2013-23/*

A New Covenant

*join with Christians across Cornwall in renewed commitment
to Becoming Better Together*

sign at ctcinfohub.org/bbt

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CORNWALL CHURCH LEADERS AND MEMBERS' COVENANT

27TH JANUARY 2024

*As Leaders and Members of Christian Churches, Groups and
Communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly:*

We give thanks to God for the way in which Christians from
different traditions have grown together - through worshipping
and serving, fellowship and learning, sharing both gifts and
differences in love.

We give thanks for the role of Churches Together in Cornwall,
and all of the Churches and Christians Together groups, as we
grow positive relationships where unity can increase.

We lament that there are still issues which divide us and we
repent that we damage the Body of Christ, weakening our witness
to communities in Cornwall.

We rejoice in the diversity of our traditions
that enrich us all, as we journey together.

We celebrate the heritage of Cornwall which we share in our
holy places, our welcome to one and all, and renewed tradition of
pilgrimage.

We commit to share our gifts freely, and value each other's
treasures, as we learn and grow in Christ. Together we will
proclaim the Good News through evangelisation and mission
as we seek to deepen local relationships.

We commit to working for God's kingdom through better
understanding and closer co-operation.

Together we will serve the people of Cornwall through positive
social action and work for climate justice, caring equally for our
common home and those who experience disadvantage.

We re-dedicate ourselves and our churches
to working towards the fullness of unity
for which Christ prayed, through the power of the Holy Spirit and
to the praise and glory of God.

A Prayer for Unity

by David Adam

A Prayer for Unity

Lord Jesus Christ,
you prayed that we might be one
even as you are one with the Father.
Help us to live at one with you
and so in unity with each other.
Lord, strengthen our common bonds
and help us to appreciate the richness in our diversity:
that we may be one in love and in you.
We ask this in the power of your love,
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

David Adam

Affirming His presence - A prayer for every day of the year

Kevin Mayhew 2011 - ISBN 978-184867-373-1

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**CHURCHES
TOGETHER
CORNWALL**
inspiring unity

sharing our gifts

SEND US YOUR GOOD NEWS!

ctcinfohub@gmail.com

CELEBRATE GOD'S WORK IN CORNWALL

***follow us on Facebook: @ChurchesTogetherinCornwall
and Twitter: @CtcMissioner***

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