



Pilgrim Post

November 2020

Churches Together in Dorset Newsletter



A greeting from the new Chair of Churches Together in Dorset, Major Katrina Greetham :

Dear Friends

It is my privilege to greet you as I begin my term as Chair of Churches Together in Dorset.

Having lived in this beautiful county now for a little over six years, first in Wimborne and now in Swanage, I am still discovering what an amazing part of the country this is. I have been ordained and commissioned as a Salvation Army officer for 32 years, and prior to Dorset, have served mainly in northern inner cities, along with a wonderful 5 years serving in Germany. I still pinch myself sometimes as I travel around Dorset, as I take in the views of both countryside and coast. God's creation is all around us, and in the variance of hills and deeps I often go in my mind to that verse from Ephesians 3:18 "And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high and how deep his love really is."

I have always been involved in ecumenical matters both in the UK and abroad, and believe passionately that we as His people can answer the prayer Jesus himself made in John 17:21 "My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as as you are I are one Father - that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us and the world will believe you sent me." We may come from different backgrounds, different denominations, different experiences, but we are together in Christ, and I believe there is more that unites us than unties us!

I look forward to getting to know more and more of you in these coming months. Thank you for what you are doing to help build the Kingdom of God.

God bless and keep you,

Katrina

News

CTD Zoom Gathering of CT Chairs



A survey was sent out some months ago to all those on CTD's contact list by the then Chair of CTD, Bishop Karen Gorham.

A number of people responded with the suggestion that Chairs of the different Churches Together and ecumenical groups across the county meet together to share stories. A physical gathering of Chairs of local CT and other ecumenical groups was organised to take place on 23rd September at the Allendale Centre, Wimborne. However, due to social distancing regulations, this was changed to a Zoom Meeting.

The meeting was very well-attended, with Chairs and other representatives of CT and ecumenical groups, a number of Church Leaders and members of the CTD Executive participating. Areas of the county represented stretched as far as Boscombe in the East, the Isle of Portland in the West and Gillingham in the North.

Covid-19 was the main concern. Services and events had been cancelled ; new levels of poverty as well as rising isolation were reported. But stories included examples of the many ways in which the churches across the county have offered hope, assistance and relief to communities affected by the pandemic, very often by working together. Many services and meetings had moved to online, but there were also phone friendship groups and support lines for those without internet operating, and churches had engaged with Council-coordinated volunteer programmes to provide shopping and medicine collection ; food banks were in full operation, with churches involvement, and more had opened – for example, two at Wyke Regis and Littlemoor, Weymouth. The churches in Swanage had linked in with the Christian charity, Besom, to provide support and needed items to families in need ; in Bournemouth, in between the two lockdowns, work had taken place to help empower rough sleepers with back to work skills and confidence. The churches in BCP had engaged with Faithworks to support Recovery course online as well as its many other projects.

It was a valuable and highly informative meeting, and it is envisioned that these gatherings will take place a couple of times a year (online or in person).

Pray October : Churches from across Bournemouth and Poole prayed every day during October for God's hope to come to the towns. The prayer points across a range of subjects and a prayer for the towns can be found [here](#)



Bournemouth Churches Alongside Rough Sleepers (BCARS) are launching a Training Centre, helping ex-rough sleepers to access training, certificates and courses, including gardening and woodworking skills.

Faithworks Recovery has seen referrals triple since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The team have adapted the service to provide safe ways to access support, including online support and socially-distanced courses and walks.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." – Philippians 4:6 (ESV)

Poole Community Exchange has just launched the exciting new project called the **Poole Pantry**. Over the last six months, they have supplied food to over 20 000 people, equalling over 120 tonnes, to support those who have insufficient income for a balanced and nutritional diet, providing them with a whole range of food at a fraction of High Street prices. They are continuing to support hostels and others across BCP with free food. Inform, recommend or refer someone who is in need of this service. Tel : [07980 002676](tel:07980002676)

Other News



Footprints, the Church-related project supporting ex-offenders across Dorset and beyond, has been recognised for its work supporting women through its Out of Court Diversionary Scheme by the Howard League for Penal Reform, which gave the project a commendation in the Women's Category of its Community Awards. Working with Dorset Police, the new scheme, based upon a Canadian

model of community chaplaincy, works alongside vulnerable women who are caught up in the criminal justice system. Find out more at www.footprintsproject.co.uk

Baptist scholar secures funding for Covid-19 research

Prof. Paul Weller, together with Dr Sanjee Perera, has secured special funding by the British Academy to conduct research on the organisational, financial and human impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Christian Faith-based Organisation Service Sector in Great Britain. The main research instrument of the project (which began in August and runs until April 2021) is an online survey of Christian FBO's, which will take place from October 2020 to January next year. Findings will be shared at a Knowledge Exchange Conference in March, to which FBO's other than Christian will be invited to share from their perspective.

The Methodist Council have requested that their advisory body (the Joint Advisory Committee on Ethics and Investment) recommends disengagement and disinvestment by the Central Finances Board from all oil and gas companies not currently aligned with the Paris Agreement target of a global temperature rise of well below 2 degrees.

Tackling Racial Injustice

Churches Together in England has responded to the [Presidents' call for real change](#) to work towards racial justice. Trustees have set up a racial justice working group ; CTE's [Enabling Group](#) will spend a key session reflecting on the issue and promoting change ; and [County Ecumenical Officers](#) (CEO's) and those with a brief for racial justice within Intermediate Bodies have committed themselves to learning more about racial injustice and putting in place strategies to combat it. County Ecumenical Officers joined an online meeting in early October, organised by CTE, on Racial Injustice. The second part to this takes place in December.



Events (online)



The Newbold Diversity Centre invites you to the last lecture of 2020, at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10th November : ***Does poverty have a colour? How the Church can restore dignity, equality and justice for all.*** Speaker: Amanda Mukwashi, Chief Executive, Christian Aid. Register for the Zoom webinar [here](#)

Saltmine Theatre Company is promoting the online screening of its musical, 'Hark - A Nativity Story' - a missional resource for the church, which can be shown in either in a church building or watched at home. Read more [here](#)

Opportunities

Routes to Roots in Poole are hoping to provide hot food for the needy from mid-October, but need more volunteers. If you can help, please contact Andy Mason andy.mason@routestoroots.org. R2R are also still in need of funds to complete the refurbishment of the new Hill Street premises. Find out how you can help [here](#) www.routestoroots.org

Remembrance Sunday Due to Covid restrictions, Dorchester Town Council are unable to coordinate their normal Remembrance Parade and Service, and are inviting residents to commemorate from home. They will be publishing more information on their [Facebook page](#). You are also invited to 'remember on your doorstep' this year and to pay your respects at 11am on Remembrance Sunday to mark the two-minute silence.

Poole Food Bank (Jimmy's) has now moved into the church hall of St James's church in Church Street, Poole and it has secured storage facilities nearby. Tins of meat or donations of money are their greatest needs at present.



Agencies and groups across the BCP conurbation are starting to consider how to bring **Hope at Christmas**. **Prama Telephone** is the idea for friendship groups of 4-5 people to link up over the phone ; another idea is for a *virtual tea party*, on or around Christmas Day. For more information, email keith.gubbins@pramalife.org

If anyone in the BCP is doing a virtual or real-life gathering for those in their community over Christmas, please email Alistair on hello@faithworkswessex.org.uk so that it can be passed on to the Community leads at the Council and this Good News can be shared in this difficult season.



Pramacare are looking to appoint someone with a Christian background as their Business Development Director. www.pramacare.org.uk Email hr@pramacare.co.uk



The **Premier Digital Conference** takes place online on 14th November, offering guidance and tools to help navigate the new normal, 'hybrid' approach to church life. For the first time, you have the option to pay what you want for a ticket. Secure your place [here!](#)

Dorset Council has launched a consultation, asking people to let us know what they think about the recently published draft [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy](#) and action plan, which seeks to ensure that services and estate become carbon neutral by 2040, and across the whole Dorset Council area by 2050. Responses must be submitted before Wednesday, 9th December, 2020. Read more [here](#)

Churches Together in England is seeking a **Principal Officer for Pentecostal, Charismatic and Multi-cultural Relationships** (lay or ordained). Read more [here](#)

Community and Voluntary Sector Fund Dorset's cultural and community voluntary organisations have until 29th November to submit their application for revenue support – grants for up to three years. Find out more [here](#).

Digital Support from Dorset Council Dorset Council can offer support to help people get online, find friends locally through the Meetup website or to find a local digital champion to help. Read more [here](#)



Donations to Change for Good, which works to end homelessness in BCP, have now moved to **contactless giving**. Watch this [video](#) for more information and find out more about the local Homelessness Partnership [here](#) And from 27th October, donations of up to £75 to [Faithworks BCARS](#) (Bournemouth Churches Alongside Rough Sleepers) and the [Recovery](#) course will be match funded by Localgiving. Also, signs displaying 'Hope' have been made by ex-rough sleepers and can be seen lighting up churches across the town. Why not order a postcard of these signs, to remind you that you can always find light shining in the darkness? Email hello@faithworkswessex.org.uk

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have invited every church to join them in [prayer](#) at 6pm daily, in a message encouraging 'calm, courageous and compassionate' responses to the difficulties of the second national lockdown in England.

The Evangelical Alliance UK is calling for a [National Day of Prayer](#) on Friday 13 November 2020.

'As One.'

Covid-19 has inspired a wave of community spirit, and many believe it is important to harness and build upon the amazing spirit of friendliness, service, love and supportive neighbourliness.

'As One' is a local/national post-Covid partnership initiative. Based on a highly successful Christian initiative in Birmingham, networks of churches at the city or county-wide level will be invited to approach their local authority with a partnership proposal which draws in other partners, including businesses, schools, community centres, GP surgeries, etc.

When gatherings are safe and welcome, churches in different areas will be encouraged to put on simultaneous outdoor Memorial Services for their local community, to help bring peace to the shared experiences of grief, anxiety, trauma, isolation and loss in the community. The same churches can then put on a 'Back Together' celebration in the form of a tea party, inviting nearby streets, in order for relationships to grow, belonging to blossom and isolation to recede. Church members living on those streets can help to build positive community, pray for their street and engage with the many, bringing something of the love of God to their community.

'As One' aims to provide a comprehensive service to take the burden off church leaders, including help with approaching the local authority, providing banners, branded letterhead for invitations, table signs, window stickers, clear written guides and mentoring support, suggestions for the Memorial Service and Back Together celebration format, while energising national media and social media profiles. More details will follow at a later date, but you can watch a 2 minute initial video from Churches Together in England's Co-President Hugh Osgood [here](#) Other links : www.as-one.uk www.permissiontosmile.org <https://www.local.gov.uk/permission-smile-campaign-boost-friendliness>.



Dorset Equality Group Dorset is far from equal, having extremes both of wealth and of poverty. Parts of Dorset have neighbourhoods among the

of excess
10%

most deprived in England, average house prices over 10 times average earnings, over 25% of children living in poverty and no easily accessible public transport (Figures from the 'Hidden Dorset' report, Dorset Community Foundation, 2018).



Save the date:

Public event with renowned equality presenter Danny Dorling on the evening of Friday, 1st October, 2021.

Details will be at

www.dorsetequalitygroup.org.uk when confirmed.

Dorset Equality Group was founded in 2016. It engages with policy and decision makers - local and national - to press for a fairer deal for both people and planet. Enabling the natural world to regenerate and responsible finance to flourish are at the core of Dorset Equality Group's demands. Members of the Dorset Equality Group are *available to share their vision with your congregations at times of worship or in other contexts of your choice*. Please contact the group's correspondent, Rob Pearce, by email at dorsetequalitygroup@gmail.com Tel : [01202 886651/07771 903538](tel:01202886651).

Dorset Youth Council Voice your opinion and help make a difference! This is your chance to talk to decision-makers about issues such as the environment, public transport and local provision for young people. Read more [here](#).



Christian Aid This year, Christian Aid has suffered, as it has been unable to fundraise in the usual manner. Help them in their work abroad as they undertake development, emergency responses and advocacy, as well as tackle Covid-19 in areas where life is precarious at the best of times. Find out more [here](#)



Churches Together in England

#PrayersOfHope To mark six months since the beginning of the Presidents of Churches Together in England's national call to prayer for all those affected by the coronavirus pandemic, an invitation to Christians across the country to join together in prayer at 7pm each Sunday night, CTE General Secretary, Rev Dr Paul Goodliff, has written a special prayer. You can download and print a poster, to encourage the prayers to keep going, [here](#)



On Friday, 23rd October, CTE launched the [Toolkit](#) for [A Flexible Framework for Local Unity in Mission \(AFF\)](#) which it hopes will be of great use at local level, helping anyone with a vision for working with other churches on a new or existing venture, be it holiday club, mission event, messy church, homeless shelter or community café. The toolkit covers Working, Partnership and Constitutional Agreements and aims to help churches to collaborate with confidence and flexibility – guiding them step by step to develop the right agreement for their venture. Resources include practical information and a PowerPoint to explain the basics to others.

CTE would love to hear stories of how churches are working together locally and their experiences of creating Working and Partnership Agreements, so that CTE can use them to improve the toolkit. Please send your stories and examples of agreements created for local situations to FlexibleFrameworkStories@cte.org.uk



The Church of England's Council for Christian Unity has reissued a very slightly updated edition of 'Telling the Story' – of the origin and development of LEPs - to enable us to understand better these enduring structures. It offers three reflections and three challenges at the end of the booklet. Are they still valid? Read more [here](#) (The edition should be read in the context of ' A Flexible Framework for Local Unity in Mission.')



Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Resources are available for the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021** [here](#)

The Synergy Network (SN) – a growing coalition of churches and agencies working to end Serious Youth Violence - is launching a new [website](#) on 1st December 2020.

The World Council of Churches is inviting young people from around the world to participate in an essay competition on the theme of *'The Future of Interreligious Dialogue.'* Read more [here](#)

Resources

The latest government advice on how to help others during lockdown can be found [here](#)

Information on volunteering to support the community in the **BCP** area during Covid19 [here](#) and the **Dorset County Council** area [here](#)



While we are unable to meet in our church buildings, **Together at Home** is providing free resources for churches to share with their families to help them explore the Bible and learn about God together whilst at home. Each week, they are producing two packs that churches can share, full of family activities, including Bible study, prayers and printable puzzles, which help connect people to God and to one another, with one pack based on the readings which follow the Lectionary Calendar. You can find out which bible stories will be covered in their *Looking Ahead* page. Read more [here](#).

The **LecDeck** is a Youth Lectionary resource. Each (Sunday) card contains a Bible passage selected from the principal service, along with thought-provoking questions, quotes, a prayer focus and an action, and also offers a 'ready to go' session for youth groups. It is also suitable for churches where there may be minimal young people, as it can be given to the young person to look at and consider in their pew (following Covid-19 restrictions). Order a Year B pack of cards and find the links to download the app [here](#)



November 2-9th was **Befriending Week**. **Linking Lives UK** equips churches to reach and support those particularly at risk from isolation. Visit linkinglives.uk to find out more.



Faith in Later Life seeks to inspire and equip Christians to reach, serve and empower older people in every community, through the local Church. Resources include Coronavirus Support, asking the questions : What does fellowship look like with isolation? What if you don't use the internet? How do we share faith? How does this time impact those living with dementia? Read more [here](#)

Dorset Community Action Covid-19 Advice Page [here](#) Covid-19 Dedicated Support Helpline [01202 847608](tel:01202 847608) weekdays 11am-4pm.

The Baptist, Methodist, URC and Church of Scotland, Together with Church Action on Poverty, have launched a new campaign, **Reset the Debt**, arguing for a fresh start for families swept into debt by Covid-19. Find updates and calls to action on this and other campaigns [here](#)

Sarum College : Have a range of online [courses](#)

CTE's monthly mailing of the latest news can be found [here](#)

UK Modern Slavery helpline : 08000 121 700 unseen.uk.org/helpline-appeal

[The Ecumenical Review](#), published by the World Council of Churches.

'Racialised History – Until the Lion Writes' by Joe Aldred, written for Black History Month. Read it [here](#)

'We Need To Talk About Race: Understanding the Black Experience in White Majority Churches' by Ben Lindsay (also available on Kindle)

'Thinking Outside the Box: on Race, Faith and Life' by Joe Aldred (also available on Kindle)

'But where are you really from?' by Amanda Mukwashi (SPCK).

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