



The Churches' European Relations Network  
A Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland  
Charity number: 1059018

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### **Faith in Europe Briefing Meeting on 5 May**

Our next Briefing Meeting will take place on Wednesday 5 May 2021. It will start at 2.00 pm and finish by about 4.00 pm.

Because of the Covid epidemic, this meeting and all our meetings until further notice will take place in a virtual on-line format rather than at a physical location. With the technical assistance of the staff at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) we shall be running this meeting in Webinar format.

In order to be able to participate in the Webinar, you will need to register. To do so, please contact Romina Infantino at CTBI: [romina.infantino@ctbi.org.uk](mailto:romina.infantino@ctbi.org.uk). She will send you a link to the registration page.

On 5 May the Council of Europe celebrates its creation with the signing of the Treaty of London in 1949. In 1950 the Council drafted the European Convention on Human Rights, 'considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is the achievement of greater unity between its members and that one of the methods by which that aim is to be pursued is the maintenance and further realisation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms'. The Convention established the European Court of Human Rights.

The European Union celebrates Europe Day on 9 May, the anniversary of the Schuman Declaration of 1950.

The United Kingdom has left the European Union, but it is still a member of the Council of Europe.

At this Briefing Meeting our focus will be the work of the Council of Europe and the possible contribution of bodies such as Faith in Europe.

The speaker will be **Revd John Murray** who retired as Head of Social Policy at the Council of Europe; he has been the Anglican chaplain in Strasbourg and is an Associate Staff Member of the Conference of European Churches. He has lived most of his life in Alsace and holds British and French nationalities.

John Murray writes: 'The principal focus of the Council of Europe is on strengthening and protecting

Europe's foundations of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Although it doesn't have the legislative and regulatory powers of the EU, its numerous legal conventions and policy recommendations can have significant influence on the 47 Member States. When the dust of Brexit begins to settle, we should do our best to make sure that UK civil servants, diplomats and parliamentarians make full use of their opportunities for action through the European political organisation to which, perhaps to the surprise of many, the UK still belongs.'

The respondent will be **David Blackman**, who worked for 20 years at the European Parliament, and during those years and later had many points of involvement with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

There is no charge for the meeting, but donations to Faith in Europe are welcome. Please send them to our Treasurer, Keith Jenkins, 67 Cherwell Drive, Oxford OX3 0ND; [faithineurope@virginmedia.com](mailto:faithineurope@virginmedia.com)

### **Worship Service**

Before our Briefing Meeting on 5 May there will be an online Worship Service to mark Council of Europe Day and Europe Day. The service will start at 1.30 and finish at 1.50.

This service will also take place in Webinar format.

In order to be able to participate in the Worship Service, you will need to register. To do so, please contact Romina Infantino at CTBI: [romina.infantino@ctbi.org.uk](mailto:romina.infantino@ctbi.org.uk). She will send you a link to the registration page.

Please note that if you wish to attend both the Service and the Briefing Meeting you will need two separate links, one for each event.

With best wishes,

Philip Walters