



CT-eNews

March 2020

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Reflection of the Month: Churches working together provide a glimmer of hope

Bishop Mike Royal, Co Chief Executive of Cinnamon Network UK and part of CTE's Charismatic and Pentecostal Leaders Forum, shares our [Reflection of the Month](#) for March 2020...



A recent newspaper article in *The Guardian*, under the heading 'Life Expectancy', highlighted the fact that over the last decade austerity has caused life expectancy to stall in the UK for the first time in a century. During the same period, a third of children were living in poverty for three years running. The socio-economic picture painted here is depressing, and it's difficult to find any glimmer of hope in what has transpired over the last decade.

But there is a glimmer of hope in the current malaise. Up and down the country, local churches who are rooted in local community have been coordinating a response to people in their communities who are falling through the cracks. The last decade has seen an unprecedented response from churches of different persuasions. Liberal churches, High orthodox churches; conservative evangelical churches and charismatic Pentecostal churches have all adopted best practice projects run by organisations specifically collaborating with local churches to make a difference. At Cinnamon Network UK we seek to encourage everyday local congregations to adopt these best practice projects.

Across the UK, [Street Pastors](#) teams have worked with local church networks to be a visible presence on the streets at night. Listening, helping and caring for the community. The great thing about the way they work is that they will only work in an area where churches are willing to work together. I had the privilege of leading the Birmingham Street Pastors team for five years. It was great to see how people from a variety of different backgrounds came together to patrol streets in the North Birmingham area.

In Shropshire, [Telford Christians Together](#), a local Churches Together initiative, recently completed a [Cinnamon Faith Action Audit](#) in their community. The Faith Action Audit measured the activity churches and other faith organisations were undertaking in the town. A survey was undertaken and a report written which now forms the basis of conversations with statutory agencies as to what faith organisations are doing and what else they might do in that community.

These opportunities to collaborate not only break down barriers between local churches, but they also show the world that we are one church.

In John 17:20-23 Jesus prayed "I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message... that they may be one as we are one. I in them and you in me so they may be brought to complete unity".

When different churches work together in the community, our unity is a witness to people; not only that the church is a loving community, but that God loves the community. Jesus goes on to say that “then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them”!

There are so many issues where churches have different theological views. It’s great when we can journey together ecumenically, putting those issues aside to reach out to the last, the least and the lost. When we do that, we bring credibility to the message of the gospel.

Our words are demonstrated by action, and our actions are an opportunity to speak words of life. **So let’s get out of our silos and extend an arm of friendship to other churches in our villages, towns and cities, as we commit to work together.** Not just once a year during the Week of Christian Unity, but 24/7, 366 days of the year 2020, and beyond!

Bishop Mike Royal is the Co Chief Executive of [Cinnamon Network UK](#), a charity supporting churches with their community engagement. He is also the former National Director & pioneer of [Transforming Lives for Good](#) (TLG), who work with children and young people at risk of exclusion from school.

Mike is a Pentecostal Bishop based in Birmingham, and represents his denomination the Apostolic Pastoral Congress on CTE’s Charismatic and Pentecostal Leaders Forum.

Funding and support available for church-based homelessness and housing projects

Do you know of a church-based social action project...

- doing work to prevent homelessness and support those with housing challenges, or
- looking to provide affordable or supported accommodation for local people?



Then [find out more about the Project Labs](#) from Cinnamon Network and the Church of England, which is open for applications until 20th April at 5pm.

Together they’re seeking to help build the capacity of churches to support local people with housing needs and build community, including **the provision of £30,000 development grants** for the two competition winners.

Local unity means hundreds of Scarborough children experience the good news

Thanks to local Christian unity, an innovative project reaching out to local schools in Scarborough has been able to continue, sharing the good news with hundreds of children.

A local church in Scarborough has, over the last four years, provided a Lift the Lid Christmas Experience for their local primary school children. Scarborough Christian Fellowship has found them to be hugely popular, so much so that it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to find enough volunteers to continue. Geoff Bowell, the church's minister, reached out to other churches in the town and a partnership developed with Faith in Scarborough Schools (FISS) - part of the Churches Together in Scarborough Committee.



Working with the schools workers from FISS, who are from different churches in the Scarborough area, made a big impact and was a huge help in the preparation and running of the Christmas Experience.

Working together proved to be really beneficial for all, especially for the 580 pupils and 52 staff from 11 local schools who visited the Christmas Experience in 2019.

The Lift the Lid Experience has also been a huge success in several other churches across the country, and has proved to be a great way to connect with local schools.



Lift the Lid's Christmas and Easter Experience are interactive and dramatised presentations for primary school pupils that offers a unique way to learn about these important Christian celebrations. The Experiences are a great way to welcome your local schools to your church building and have proved to be very popular with both staff and pupils.

More about Lift the Lid

Lift the Lid charity was developed in 2013 by Elim Ryedale Church in Malton, North Yorkshire, and they are passionate about equipping teachers with ready to use and innovative resources. Their resources inspire and engage their pupils in the teaching of Christianity and provide churches across the UK the means and opportunity to build a meaningful and long-lasting link with their local schools.

Teachers face a real and serious challenge as RE is often under-funded and under-resourced, and Lift the Lid provides an easy and effective way for churches to connect and support their local schools.

"The resources in the box are outstanding. We were very impressed with them." Teacher, Cardiff Primary School.

Visit Lift the Lid's website at www.liftthelid.org.uk to see their full range of resources, or give them a call on 01653 228060.

Becky Ibbotson, Project Director at Lift the Lid.

[View this story on our website...](#)



Archbishop Justin Welby deeply moved by Thy Kingdom Come's ecumenical dimension

Church leaders and representatives from various denominations and para church organisations gathered for the international launch of Thy Kingdom Come 2020 at Lambeth Palace, exactly four years to the day it was first launched.



At the event The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, a President of Churches Together in England, shared how he has been deeply moved by seeing Catholic and Orthodox participation in Thy Kingdom Come.

Pete Greig from 24-7 Prayer also shared his excitement at seeing 65 Christian traditions across 172 countries now involved, meaning "Thy Kingdom Come has been catalytic in Christian unity".

Uniting in prayer

The prayer movement, taking place from 21st-31st May 2020, has the support of all the main leaders of key denominations in the UK, including the Methodist Church of Great Britain, Catholic Church of England and Wales, Pentecostal Churches, Free Churches, Orthodox Churches and the Church of Scotland. It was also commended by Her Majesty the Queen and His Holiness Pope Francis, head of the global Catholic church, last year.

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Pete Greig (24-7 Prayer), Bishop Nicholas Hudson (Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster) and Teresa Carvalho (Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales) participated in the launch event at Lambeth Palace on 25th February 2020, aimed at encouraging international audiences to take part in the 11 day period of prayer from Ascension to Pentecost.



Christians from around the world, including Australia, Brazil, Papua New Guinea, Netherlands, Thailand, Mauritius, South Sudan, America and Canada tuned into watch the launch as it was [livestreamed on Facebook](#).

The power of prayer

In his main address, Archbishop Justin Welby spoke about the potential life-changing power of prayer during Thy Kingdom Come:

“What excites me is that as we come together and pray for people to be filled with the Spirit, so they come to know and love Jesus Christ, to repent of their sins and turn away from all that is wrong and to find the love of Christ filling their hearts, we are in fact praying for the changing of our world.”

Pete Greig, founder of [24-7 Prayer](#), also shared during the event, reflecting on the wider context of prayer and the various global movements happening, as well as drawing on his experience of leading global phenomenon 24-7 Prayer over the last 20 years. He said of Thy Kingdom Come:

“How wonderful this prospect of coming together from May 21-31st to pray as one – Come Holy Spirit and Let Your Kingdom Come. I would say to my fellow pastors, vicars and priests – in the busyness of all that we do, let this be the priority. Let us get behind this and let us have grace for one another in this, because I believe Jesus is calling us to pray. This has the marks of the Holy Spirit upon it.”



Prayer resources coming soon

The launch event also previewed new resources for 2020, including an exciting print/digital resource which will be distributed to almost half a million Key Stage 2 aged school children in Church of England and Methodist Schools across England and Wales.

Building on from [last year's Family Prayer Adventure Map](#), this year's digital version uses gaming and augmented reality technology to bring the 11-day themes to life. For example, each day there will be either a game, Bible story or video reflection from contributors including Archbishop Justin Welby, CBBC's Gemma Hunt, Guvna B, Jonathan Bryan (Eye Can Talk), New York Times bestselling author of The Jesus Story Book Bible, Sally Lloyd Jones, and storyteller Philip Glassborow.

The digital map comes to life through an app, which can be downloaded through any smartphone and was created in collaboration with Leeds-based charity Missional Generation.

Enduring favourite resources, such as the traditional Novena and the Prayer Journal were also previewed, which this year included the famous 'Prodigal Son' artwork from world-renowned artist Charlie Mackesy on the front cover.

All resources will be made available to order from early March at thykingdomcome.global/resources



Find out more

Now going into its fifth year, Thy Kingdom Come has gathered more than a million Christians, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, to pray for more people to come to faith in Christ during the period of Ascension to Pentecost – a traditionally historic time of year the church prayed for evangelisation.

[Continue reading this story on our website...](#)

Churches boost community wellbeing through partnering with Durham County Council

Revd Joanne Thorns shares how local churches are building relationships and establishing new community projects through workshops across County Durham...



Durham County Council is the large unitary local authority covering the diverse and vast geographical area of County Durham. The Council is keen to work with local faith communities, seeing them as key partners and critical friends, and recognising their unique and pivotal role in local communities and their contribution to a socially just and inclusive society.

The Council has 14 Area Action Partnerships; local boards consisting of members of the public, elected members, statutory agencies and business and voluntary organisations who come together to identify local priorities and how to tackle them, and can allocate funding to local organisations. As a member of one of the local boards, it was apparent that there was a lack of knowledge about the AAPs by local faith groups, and also a lack of knowledge about what local churches were doing.

We raised the question of how we could celebrate and support the good work that faith communities were doing, engage them more in the local board decisions and build better communication and sharing of information. Working in partnership with the Council, who provided funding, we began to trial a series of workshop events bringing people together.

We began in 2015, and events have taken a similar pattern, bringing people together to talk about their local area, to celebrate what was already being done and to look at how churches and other partners could work better together. We involved local Churches Together groups or key church leaders in the planning stages in order to get the best time and place to host the event and to ensure everyone was invited. Invites were sent to every worshipping community in the Partnership Area, asking them to send representatives willing to share stories about their activities and the needs of their local community. Local elected members were also invited, along with representatives from other key voluntary sector organisations.

The format was simple; refreshments, an introduction from a local councillor, an explanation of the AAP, input from the faith communities about what they were doing

and then round table conversations about what wellbeing might mean for their community, what might be the issues and barriers to wellbeing, and what role faith and the faith community have in supporting a sense of community wellbeing.

Over the last four years we have held workshop events in 12 areas, and they have highlighted so much good work being done. Local churches are often central to bringing people together at lunch clubs, toddler groups, children's activities, visiting the sick and the elderly, providing foodbanks, debt advice and so much more.



The workshops have helped build relationships, encouraging lively conversation about local communities and the issues facing them. We have seen new projects emerging from the discussions, including lunch clubs, film clubs, dementia-friendly activities, holiday clubs and various interest groups.

Churches have been able to access start-up funding for projects and funding for ongoing projects, as well as funds for adapting buildings. Through the partnership groups have also been able to access support, additional volunteers and better advertising, as well as sharing of information. And most importantly relationships have been improved, both among churches and between churches and other partners.

Revd Joanne Thorns is Regional Officer for North East Churches Acting Together.

[View this article on our website...](#)

Church safeguarding pledge launched to effect change

[Thirtyone:eight](#) has launched a new campaign this February with the backing of many senior Christian leaders across the UK. They are encouraging church leaders and all those working or serving in Christian faith settings to stand in solidarity with victims and survivors by pledging to be part of a movement for change in how Christian churches respond to abuse.



The [Safer Places Pledge](#) has been created as a direct response to some of the recent appalling and high profile cases of abuse in the church which continue to make the headlines in the UK.

The pledge not only speaks to the horror of the abuse that has taken place, but also the poor way people in positions of leadership and their organisations have responded when abuses have come to light. Such accounts are not unique to any one Christian denomination or tradition, and time and again victims and survivors of abuse have pleaded with leaders and those in positions of power and influence to listen to them and take action. Whilst they have limited success, the stories of further abuses, whether current or past continue to be exposed.

Justin Humphreys, CEO of thirtyone:eight, launched the pledge by calling for leaders to make a public declaration of their intent to make change happen.

Justin said "As an organisation, thirtyone:eight has been working in the area of safeguarding for more than 40 years, and although we have seen much change, it doesn't get any easier especially in the face of such appalling stories. At the same time, it gives us a renewed conviction that things must change."

"Apologies and learning lessons are important steps in the process of responding to abuse, but too often that is where we stop. We must not just take responsibility, and learn lessons, but make active, tangible, timely steps towards change and encourage others to do the same.

"As a Christian, I must fight for the church and pursue what is right and just. I believe that change begins with me choosing to be the change I want to see. I'd encourage everyone who has been moved but what they have seen, read and heard in recent months to join me in making this pledge and living it out courageously."

The [Safer Places Pledge](#) contains six statements to:

- Speak up
- Put survivors first
- Conceal nothing
- Take responsibility
- Make change happen
- Hold each other accountable

The pledge invites people to voluntarily sign-up, and gives the opportunity for them to publicly show they've pledged their support. **Individuals and organisations can sign up to the pledge at thirtyoneeight.org/pledge**

[Thirtyone:eight](#) (formerly the Churches' Child Protection & Advisory Service) is one of CTE's [Bodies in Association](#) (organisations which work ecumenically).

Together for the Common Good wins strategic award to develop lay leadership

Together for the Common Good (T4CG) has won a strategic award to deliver a 12 month programme of lay leadership development within Catholic dioceses and other communities.



The award, from the Charles Plater Trust, was presented to T4CG by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, one of CTE's Presidents. The £50,000 grant will be shared with five diocesan

and charity partners; the Caritas organisations of Nottingham, Brentwood and Shrewsbury dioceses, plus Nugent Liverpool and the Parish of St Mary Moorfields in the City of London.

Each partner will deploy T4CG's "Here: Now: Us People" Common Good workshop as part of their lay formation and parish development plans. T4CG will recruit a Project Leader to coordinate the programme over 2020-2021, and it is envisaged that 400 people will participate.

Cardinal Nichols said:

"Together for the Common Good is exploring some of the most important themes in our society today: how do we build a more resilient sense of shared endeavour? What will bring about a common effort across our society? These challenges are so important as we face deep-seated changes in our way of life, in new relations with Europe, and with the created world. I am delighted that this work will be strengthened by this award from the Plater Trust."

Underpinned by Catholic Social Teaching, the programme inspires and equips lay people to fulfil their vocational responsibility by putting Common Good principles into practice and by working with others of different opinions and backgrounds. Through building local relationships, participants will tackle the breakdown in social trust within their communities.

The Charles Plater Trust funds projects relating to Catholic Social Teaching and in Catholic contexts. However, the Here: Now: Us People resource is designed for mixed cohorts of Christians from different traditions working together. It is ideal for Churches Together groups.

T4CG is seeking funding to roll out the programme more widely and discussions with strategic Anglican, Free Church and other ecumenical partners are underway.

Jenny Sinclair, Founder Director of T4CG said:

"We're excited to be working with five fantastic partners. The Here: Now: Us programme makes explicit the connection between faith and action. It acts as a catalyst to inspire lay people to play their part, from the grassroots to the boardroom. In this era of social fragmentation, developing Common Good lay leadership is a gift the Church can bring to help strengthen our communities and contribute to national renewal."

The resource fills a gap in lay formation and parish development, strengthening engagement within local communities and cultivating more diverse and collaborative forms of lay leadership. The resource also provides effective and accessible Catholic Social Teaching formation for staff and volunteers in Catholic agencies. It helps people to articulate why they do what they do, helping to guard against mission drift.

T4CG is [now recruiting for the Plater Trust funded Project Leader role](#), a part-time position commencing in April. The application deadline is 23 March 2020.

Project partners share their vision

Partners anticipate that the programme will strengthen lay leadership, deepen the sense of shared mission and increase social action volunteering:

Paul Bodenham, Programme Leader for Social Action, Diocese of Nottingham said:

“The programme will help foster and harness the faith, commitment and know-how of the people of the diocese through lay formation, peer-support and co-operation. We anticipate it will help us ensure forthcoming parish reorganisation results in confident, generous, missionary communities.”

Read more from the partners [on our website...](#)

For more information

- about the Common Good Partnership project please contact: info@togetherforthecommongood.co.uk
- about the Project Leader role, [visit this web page](#) (closing date 23rd March, 5pm)
- about the *Here: Now: Us People* Common Good workshop, please visit togetherforthecommongood.co.uk/training/here-now-us-people
- about The Charles Plater Trust, visit: plater.org.uk

About Together for the Common Good

Together for the Common Good (T4CG) is a small charity helping people across the churches play their part to strengthen the bonds of social trust, and is [one of CTE's Bodies in Association](#) (organisations working ecumenically). Visit Together for the Common Good (T4CG)'s website at www.togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

[View this story on our website...](#)

Photo details: Taken by Marcin Mazur of Philomena Cullen and Cardinal Vincent Nichols (Chair of Trustees, the Charles Plater Trust) presenting the award to Jenny Sinclair, Alison Gelder and Catherine Brady of Together for the Common Good.

Vacancy – Together for the Common Good: Project leader



Are you an experienced project manager with excellent communication skills, who gets on with people, who is organised and self-motivated?

Together for the Common Good are recruiting for the right person to take on a unique Project Leader role, to lead the implementation of their 2020-2021 Common Good Partnership project. Working with five Partner organisations in five locations, this role will coordinate and oversee the roll out of workshops, ensure the embedding of a delivery capability in the Partners and assist in the evaluation of the project.

This is a part time position, 22 hours per week. 12-month contract. £17,000 (£28,500 FTE).

[Download the recruitment pack on their website.](#)

Closing date: 23rd March 2020, 5pm.
Interviews in central London: 31st March 2020.

[View this vacancy on our website...](#)

Vacancy – Birmingham Churches Together Enabling Officer



Birmingham Churches Together is seeking to recruit an Enabling Officer to work with churches and Christian organisations to promote and develop Christian unity and mission.

The successful candidate will be a skilled networker and facilitator able to work with senior church leaders but equally happy collaborating with small local groups. The post also requires day to day management of the charity and management and oversight of BCT's communication to its networks across Birmingham and Solihull.

- **Salary: £40,833 pro rata (£24,500 for 21 hour week)**
- **Closing date** for applications is 5pm on Friday 27th March 2020
- **Interviews** will take place on Monday 20th April 2020

For further information about the role please contact Robert Mountford at bcce.clasp.emo@gmail.com

For a full Job Description and application form please contact: debbiesaunders@cofebirmingham.com

There is therefore a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a committed Christian.

You can also view this information [on the Birmingham Churches Together website.](#)

[View this vacancy on our website...](#)

And finally...

New CTE leaflet available

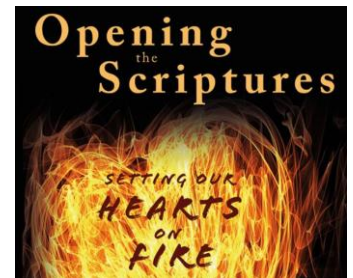
The 2020 CTE tri-fold leaflet is a useful resource, including a list of our Member Churches, staff details, highlights from 2019 and planned projects for 2020. [It is now available as a pdf on our website.](#) Printed copies are now available and can be requested by [emailing Lorraine](#) and confirming the number you would like and the postal address for delivery.



Lent course from CTBI

This year's Lent course from CTBI is entitled *Opening the scriptures: setting our hearts on fire*. A number of churches in Britain and Ireland are keeping 2020 as 'the Year of the Word' so this course, with its focus on scripture, will be an ideal resource for Lent 2020.

Visit the CTBI website at www.ctbi.org.uk/lent



National survey for churches

Churches, chapels and meeting houses in the UK are being asked to take part in a new online survey to establish their value to local communities. Data from the survey will be used in a new research study by the National Churches Trust into the social and economic benefits that churches provide to local communities and to the UK generally. Click [here](#) to take the survey, open until Friday 13th March.



Rural mission training with the Arthur Rank Centre

Applications are now open for the 2020 [Germinate Leadership](#) programme. The 18-month course is for lay and ordained leaders in rural churches who have already displayed some creative and entrepreneurial flair in rural mission.



Arthur Rank
Centre

CONFIDENT RURAL CHRISTIANS

The next [Rural Ministry Course](#) will take place from 8th-10th June 2020. This course is designed for lay and ordained church leaders entering a rural appointment for the first time or and those already in rural ministry who feel the need for a 'refresher'. This is a three-day residential programme.

Church, slavery and abolition

Richard Reddie, Director of Justice and Inclusion for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), provides a historical overview of the Church's involvement with the slave trade. Find out more at ctbi.org.uk/church-slavery-and-abolition/



Find more below...

National Sports Sunday 2020: 17th May 2020

Since 2018, National Sports Sunday has been growing as an opportunity to mobilise Christians to see how they can best serve the community of sport. Put the date in your diary now and visit the website to find out more: www.nationalsportssunday.org.uk



World Christianity conference, June 2020

The Andrew Walls Centre Annual Conference takes place at Liverpool Hope University from 28th-30th June 2020, with speakers drawn from across the world.

The conference will focus its attention on the revival, renewal and revitalisation movements of World Christianity since the dawn of 20th century, including the astonishing growth of African Christianity and renewals in Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. [Find out more...](#)



Year of prayer for climate justice

In 2020 Christian Aid is unleashing a year of non-stop prayer for climate justice. You and your church can join together with people around the world to bow our heads and lift our voices to build a better world. [Find out more...](#)



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