



Review of the year

one in Christ Jesus • engaged in God's mission • empowered by the Spirit

Based on CTE's 2018 report to the Charity Commission. Full text: www.cte.org.uk/annualreports

Forum: 'I am with you always' – together in God's mission

Two aspects of the work of Churches Together in England dominated the year 2018. The first was the planning for, then running, [the Forum](#) 17-19 September at The Hayes, Swanwick, under the leadership of Ruth Gee, Forum Moderator, and Hilary Topp, Deputy Moderator (centre and left in photo). The Forum brought



together well over 250 delegates from all CTE's [Member Churches](#), [Intermediate Bodies](#) and [Bodies in Association](#) – key to the vibrant Marketplace which ran throughout Forum.

This was another remarkable Forum, and one marked by the excellent and relaxed quality of the relationships between the delegates. Our theme was *'I am with you always' – together in God's mission* and highlights were the public conversations between all six of CTE's [Presidents](#). Six young adults were also invited to share their platforms to ask them questions.

Delegates were then able, in small groups, to formulate further questions which were presented to a panel of all the Presidents.

Forum is a delegate conference and it is up to our Member Churches and Intermediate Bodies to decide who attends but we did our best to encourage them to send [young adults](#) and certainly this Forum had a larger number of delegates under 35 than in the past. These young adults led worship and facilitated small groups, as well as being asked to pose questions to the Presidents. They were fully integrated into the dynamic of Forum and the feedback from them was very positive – as, indeed, it was from all delegates.

As well as [workshops](#) and a [Bible Study](#) session, this year's Forum had a [Musician in Residence](#), Teresa Brown, who ran a workshop and also composed [new music](#) for Forum. Delegates were also invited to weave a thread into the Forum tapestry under the guidance of Rachel Parkinson.

One new development this year was to employ professional video and IT staff and this resulted in immediate videos of the main sessions of Forum being made available [on CTE's website](#). For the first time we also had a Forum photographer, Chris Dobson, and all photos were posted in a [Flickr album](#) which was viewed 1,115 times.



Staff changes

The second major aspect of CTE's work in 2018 was the retirement at the end of September after ten years of distinguished service of CTE's General Secretary, David Cornick, and the recruitment of his successor. Tributes were paid to David at Forum and a farewell service at Lambeth Palace was attended by many leading figures in the ecumenical world, past and present.



Our new General Secretary is [Paul Goodliff](#), a Baptist minister who has served churches in Streatham, Stevenage and Abingdon. He was the Baptist Union Central Area's General Superintendent (1999–2004) and its Head of Ministry (2004–2014).

Towards the close of 2018 [Jim Currin](#), CTE's Officer for Evangelisation, Mission and Media, announced his early retirement in June 2019. So another recruitment process was begun, leading to the [appointment](#) in 2019 of Ben Aldous and Lucy Olofinjana.

Relationships

Relationships are vital at every level of ecumenism. In particular, we continue to be profoundly grateful for the level of ecumenical understanding and mutual support amongst our six Presidents. 2018 saw greater continuity in the six-fold praesidium after significant changes in 2017, with only Revd Canon Billy Kennedy concluding his term of office. The process to appoint his successor began in 2018.

The Enabling Group

Our [Enabling Group](#) (our Members' Meeting) continues to reflect England's Christian diversity. Its members recognise each other as disciples of Jesus Christ, but are diverse in their styles of Christian worship, theology and spirituality. This reflects the relational heart of ecumenism, and is why relationships remained at the heart of our work in 2018, with an increasing sense that this is 'so that the world may believe': deepening collaborative mission and evangelism between Member Churches is at the forefront of our concerns.

In the March Enabling Group meeting, the [Methodist Church](#) gave a presentation about itself and led night prayer. The meeting also considered mission strategies and received a [reflection on ecumenism](#) by David Cornick as his farewell to the Enabling Group. Richard Bradbury (r), one of CTE's [Trustees](#), led a discussion about New Churches and ecumenism – an area identified for further work in the future.



New strapline

In November, the Enabling Group considered a [vision statement](#) by the incoming General Secretary, Paul Goodliff, which led to a new strapline: **One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission, empowered by the Spirit.** At this meeting we explored ways in which the churches might speak more productively with one voice into the wider 'public square' and said farewell to Ruth Bottoms, a Baptist who has served us for many years first as Vice-Chair and then Chair of Trustees (and so Deputy Convenor and Convenor of the Enabling Group). We welcomed Rowena Lovrance, of the Religious Society of Friends, as new Chair of Trustees and Enabling Group Convenor.



Diversity is key

A commitment to diversity flows over into every other aspect of our work. We sustain a deliberately diverse range of networks, meetings, conferences, consultations and encounters – from Digi-Comms Officers to those who work in new housing, from encounters between Pentecostal pastors and Orthodox clergy to gatherings of [County Ecumenical Officers](#), from meetings of Bodies in Association who reach into almost every facet of charitable life to briefing sessions for international visitors (in 2018 for a group from South Korea).

Website and social media

We invest a good deal of staff time, energy and creativity in our [website](#), our online shop window. All staff contribute to the content and in 2018 we had an additional part-time member of staff who assisted with this, eg with the Forum web area and general web maintenance. In 2018 resources were updated in two substantial areas: new pages serving the [English Anglican-Roman Catholic committee](#) and all the resources, videos, reports, and photo library from the Forum. Our website is reviewed continually and there are now 883 live topic sections under the four main headings of About, News, Resources and Contact. In particular, approximately 150 items of news (eg events, jobs and reports) were added to keep the news section up to date and informative.

In 2018, with over four million page requests on the website www.cte.org.uk, our visitor numbers for page requests averaged 11,794 a day, with an average stay on site of 2 minutes 40 seconds. This is considerably up on 2017 when we had 9970 page requests per day.

Our [Twitter](#) feed @churchesengland has 1,429 regular followers who receive an average of 37 news items a day from across the Churches and networks of CTE.

CTe-News and other services

Churches Together in England also provides a dedicated ecumenical news service to 1307 subscribers each month. In 2018 this included August as there was so much news. [CTe-News](#) is an open access news service averaging twelve news items a month, leading with a *Reflection of the Month*. We also provide a news bulletin, [EvangelismUK](#), for about two hundred specialist evangelists and missionaries.

In 2018, for a number of reasons, CTE closed down the Black and Multi-cultural Churches Directory. This had been an important online service provided by CTE for many years.

Witnessing in the public square: Windrush

CTE Presidents, the outgoing and incoming General Secretaries and other CTE staff attended [a service in Westminster Abbey](#) to mark the 70th anniversary of the docking of the SS Windrush, beginning the fruitful (if at times fraught) arrival of many from the Caribbean seeking work at the invitation of Great Britain.

The contribution of that generation of migrants, and all those who followed, has been immense in the life of the churches in England, transforming the English church scene for good and for the blessing of the wider nation.



Photo: Dean & Chapter of Westminster

Award for service to faiths

The [Windrush service](#) was hugely successful and was attended by over 2,000 people including the Queen's representative and the Prime Minister. CTE staff member [Joe Aldred](#) led in the planning and execution of the service, and this was but one event that led to his being honoured late in the year with a life-time's award for his service to faiths at the Windrush Legacy Gala sponsored by Society of Black Lawyers, Blacksox, Operation Black Vote, and A Few Good Men. Churches Together in England is justifiably proud of the way one its staff has been so singularly honoured. Joe is a man of many talents, amongst which was advising the BBC's *Call the Midwife* about Pentecostal church life in the 1960s.



Other public events

Churches Together in England co-sponsored a service in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the canonisation of St Oscar Romero, the martyred Archbishop of San Salvador. CTE was represented by the General Secretary and staff member Jenny Bond read a lesson.

The General Secretary also represented CTE at another service recognising the suffering church in the Middle East, which was attended and addressed by HRH The Prince of Wales. The retiring General Secretary spoke during the first six months of 2018 to a number of county ecumenical gatherings.

Pentecostal and Black Churches and multi-cultural relations

An important [area of CTE's work](#) is support for Pentecostal and Black Churches and the development of their integral role in ecumenical relationships. In 2018 work was undertaken on an anthology, [Pentecostals and Charismatics in Britain](#), which will feature twelve writers from across the Pentecostal and Charismatic streams, reflecting ethnic and gender diversity, covering historical and current developments. It will add significantly to the literary genre available on this area of British Christianity. With a foreword by the Archbishop of Canterbury, SCM is due to publish the book in April 2019.

A [national theological conference](#) in the West Midlands marked the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation from Pentecostal and Charismatic perspectives. The event attracted about 100 attendees from across the country. A report on the conference was forwarded to a much wider constituency of CTE Member Churches and beyond. (Photo at foot of page.)

Much of the Pentecostal and Charismatic constituency belong to Britain's Black Churches rooted in the Windrush Generation experience – those from the Caribbean and Commonwealth who migrated to the UK between 1948-1973. Joe Aldred led an ecumenical planning team which delivered a national service of thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey to mark the 70th Anniversary of the arrival of the ship Empire Windrush, reported above.

Representatives of CTE Member Churches identifying as Pentecostal or Charismatic met twice this year as the Pentecostal Leaders Forum, chaired by the CTE Pentecostal President. The Forum received reports from its two sub-groups on the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade, and on government legislations of particular interest to Pentecostals and Charismatics. The Forum also developed a 'protocol' for greater ecumenical involvement.

Joe Aldred responded to requests for advice, consultation and input from a wide variety of organisations and individuals including:

- The Jamaican High Commission for which Joe organised two ecumenical prayer breakfasts.
- Government departments including the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government on church and community matters especially youth, a Race Disparity Audit and Windrush.
- [Housing Justice](#) in their work with churches helping homeless people.
- As external examiner for two universities where PhD research related to Pentecostal and Black Church studies.
- Provided support for research students and practitioners on Pentecostal and Black church ecclesiology, black and Pentecostal theology, WW1 black involvement, and inter-cultural ecumenism.



- Other organisations including [Churches Together in Britain and Ireland](#), [Action of Churches Together in Scotland](#), the Interfaith Network, National Church Leaders Forum (a Black Christian Voice), Movement for Justice and Reconciliation, thirtyone:eight and Feed The People.
- Provided written articles for journals and magazines, broadcasts for the BBC such as the Daily Service and Pause for Thought; interviews for United Christian Broadcasters radio and Premier Christian Radio.
- Preached in a range of churches nationally, including in Northampton to mark the 100th anniversary of WW1 British officer and first black professional footballer Walter Tull.

National Ecumenical Officers

The fine working relationship and nexus of friendships which binds the [National Ecumenical Officers](#) (NEOs) together is a vital component of the English ecumenical engine. 2018 saw three new NEOs come into post and therefore, for the first time, we were able to offer them a day-long induction event, delivered by the then General Secretary David Cornick, and [Jenny Bond](#), the Officer for Training, Resourcing and Events, who works most closely with the NEOs. We continued to service the regular meetings of all NEOs in 2018.



Supporting County Ecumenical Officers

An indispensable part of our ongoing responsibility for local ecumenism is to support the work of [Intermediate Bodies](#) and their officers (County Ecumenical Officers – CEOs – and equivalents). Jenny Bond, our officer for Training, Resources and Events, is at the sharp end of this, keeping information flowing, dealing with queries and arranging the annual Consultation, working as usual with a group of CEOs. In 2018 she worked with officers from the East Midlands delivering a Consultation showcasing and reflecting on the work of Intermediate Bodies in the context of reflecting

on spirituality and dialogue. In the autumn of 2018 work began with the West Midlands CEOs to plan the 2019 Consultation which will be more sharply focused on mission.



We have continued to provide support during CEO vacancies, helped with recruitment and professional appointment procedures and with the induction of new Officers, offering them a personalised induction session at CTE's London offices. The [training](#) course for new Ecumenical Officers and facilitators continues to be refined and improved in collaboration with our National Ecumenical Officer colleagues and is always well attended and well received.

A new venture

CTE encourages CEOs to meet together in regions for mutual support and encouragement. Jenny Bond, our officer for Training, Resourcing and Events, is part of the group meeting in the North West which during 2018 expanded to include other CEOs in the north who are without near neighbours. One result was an overnight meeting in May for all Denominational and County Ecumenical Officers in the north. Key inputs were delivered by Richard Bradbury who spoke about new Churches and by Jenny Bond, with a presentation on [A New Framework for Local Unity in Mission](#), a key document which is changing the way Ecumenical Officers work. This meeting was such a success that another will be held in 2019 which CTE will service.

Reviewing Intermediate Bodies

Intermediate Bodies constantly review their structures and while we normally do not have the capacity to participate in these [reviews](#), we nevertheless act as consultants. In 2018, Jenny Bond, our officer for Training, Resourcing and Events, attended two meetings of [Swindon Churches Together](#) as part of its attempt to refocus its work and has also been approached by [Churches Together in Leicestershire](#) for advice about their forthcoming review.

Unusually, and only because it is a pioneering area, in 2018 she and the then General

Secretary, David Cornick, devoted significant time to review [Churches Together in Cumbria](#) and its relationship to the Growing Together process which is working towards being an ecumenical county. They attended several meetings, wrote a report (available [on our website](#)), and [presented](#) it to Cumbria Church Leaders and to a meeting bringing together Churches Together groups in Cumbria.

Bodies in Association

2018 also saw our [Bodies in Association](#) meetings continue (a work which we share with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland,) under its Convenor, Doral Hayes of the Association of Interchurch Families.

Staff and Trustees

CTE would be unable to work as well as it does without the good relationships within the Board of [Trustees](#), within its staff, and between the two bodies. [CTE staff](#) meet once a month in London for staff meetings, have a weekly Skype conversation and meet for a 24 hour residential meeting each January.



In 2018 staff were delighted to welcome Richard Bradbury, one of CTE's Trustees, to their meeting and to explore with him relationships with New Churches. Our staff team has been remarkably stable for the last ten years and yet transitioning from one General Secretary, David Cornick, to another, Paul Goodliff, has been effective. It was fortuitous that Forum was able to mark and celebrate this shift of leadership and we were also glad to make a more [formal farewell](#) to David at Lambeth Palace in the week following the Forum.

Ecumenism is sustained and developed by this complex web of relationships and networks, and we are grateful to all who have worked with us in 2018.

Action for Mission

Our work here falls into two discrete categories. We have acknowledged expertise in [Pentecostal and Multicultural Relations](#) (PMR). Our staff member in this area, Joe Aldred, is key to many initiatives within the wider black community, reported above. Elizabeth Joy worked alongside him as a volunteer until she was elected a Trustee at the end of 2018.

An 18-month project researching the involvement of African and Caribbean servicemen in WW1, something scarcely mentioned in historical narratives, resulted in a [website](#), copies of a [DVD](#) and booklet and a mobile [exhibition](#). We continue to manage these resources, distributing them on request, including the exhibition, in schools, churches and community centres.

Mission and Evangelism

Our second main missional focus is through the work of [Jim Currin](#), our Officer for Evangelisation, Mission and Media. In 2018 we were again partners in the national prayer initiative [Thy Kingdom Come](#), encouraging and resourcing it to become more ecumenical, especially between Ascension and Pentecost. Again, all our Presidents eagerly endorsed this initiative and Jim was part of the core ecumenical planning team resourced from Lambeth Palace, which hosted a launch event for 200 ecumenical 'champions' from around the nation for planning local events with groups of churches.

To help resource Christians of different traditions praying together, CTE commissioned a video project called 'Pray Together'. This included people from a wide variety of CTE Member Churches, including each of the six Presidents. We hope to publish it in 2019.

We were also partners with the [Gather Network](#) of 'new unity movements for mission' and in 2018, became a partner in *The Collective* which networks network leaders around the country. To assist in our learning, Jim Currin attended an international conference for *Movement Day* in Washington DC to hear of new unity movements in other parts of the world.

Practically, but just as importantly, we continue to provide space and servicing for the Churches Group for Evangelisation, which brings together the evangelism officers of the churches from Roman Catholic to Pentecostal in conversations

three times each year. In 2018 Jim Currin was part of the Reference Group for the [Christian Enquiry Agency](#), met the new Communications Director and advised on www.christianity.org.uk's revised website. The Group for Evangelisation also started scoping denominational resources for discipleship and began plans to co-ordinate some of this work.

Christianity



We also hosted and serviced the Churches Group for [New Housing Areas](#) and its work coordinating across the churches, strategic planning and learning eg planting new churches on estates to build community where there is none. One particular project was to gather pioneer ministers and managers together, considering the second stage of church and community development when the initial pioneer minister moves on to another appointment.

During 2018 we continued to research what CTE's Member Churches understand by mission in their different traditions. The findings were collated and reported back to [the Enabling Group](#). We also continued to advise a number of local Churches Together groups about working together and undertaking mission activities together. Nationally, through Jim Currin's work with the [Churches Rural Group](#), CTE was a planning partner with 'Germinate' which brought 150 people together to consider rural ministry and mission in England.

A New Framework for Local Mission in Unity

Mission and unity are integral parts of being the Church, and a key document here is [A New Framework for Local Mission in Unity](#) which was published in 2017. It provides a resource for wider and more collaborative ecumenical mission activity and facilitates a much looser, nimbler enabling of ecumenical mission objectives. It continues to require work to promulgate it and to promote understanding of it. National Ecumenical Officer colleagues are key to this work but Jenny Bond, our officer for Training, Resourcing and Events, who is primarily responsible for enquiries about local ecumenism, wrote [A guide to understanding 'A](#)

[New Framework](#)' which was published early in 2018. She also created a PowerPoint presentation explaining key aspects of the document which she delivered to the May 2018 conference for all Ecumenical Officers in the north and which will be made more widely available in due course. [A New Framework](#) is now an integral part of the [training course](#) for new Ecumenical Officers.

A significant piece of work was begun in 2018 with the Milton Keynes Mission Partnership and those Member Churches involved with it. CTE hosted a meeting between MKMP, the National Ecumenical Officers and legal officers of those Member Churches, exploring what new legal structures would be appropriate and acceptable. This is an ongoing piece of work which we hope will be concluded during 2019 and which will release energy and enable mission in Milton Keynes in the future.

Theology

Theological reflection and bible study informs all that we do in CTE. In particular, the Enabling Group devotes one session at each meeting to this, alternating between theological reflection and bible study. It goes without saying, too, that all our meetings begin and end with prayer and worship is a key component of the life of CTE.



For many years CTE has supported the work of [Receptive Ecumenism](#) and in 2018 a key resource on this was completed by Callan Slipper, National Ecumenical Officer for the Church of England, David Tatem, former National Ecumenical Officer for the United Reformed Church, and David Cornick, then CTE General Secretary. [Embracing the Other](#) is a resource for local groups which is available as a download from our website. It can be delivered as a stand-alone session, either as a day or half-day, or as a five session course.

As we have done in past years, we provided Pentecostal ecumenical representation to the General Synod of the Church of England and we supported the working of an Anglican and Pentecostal Theological Steering Group which considered a wide range of mutual interests and is planning a Theological Conference on Pneumatology and Baptism in April 2019.

Governance issues and general remarks

The [Theos report](#), delivered in July 2017, continues to set the broad parameters of the work of the staff and Trustees of Churches Together in England.

During the course of the year David Lavender, Company Secretary, on behalf of the Trustees, revised the [Rules](#) for the Company, and after consultation with the Churches, these were accepted at the Enabling Group in November 2018. This confirmed the appointment of six Presidents, ensured that language was consistent throughout and clarified the manner of the appointment of Chair of Trustees and the Convenor of the Enabling Group, together with their respective Deputies.

Trustees, through their Finance Committee, continue to exercise careful financial control as they enter a planned period of deficit financing. That is sustainable in the short term, but clearly not in the long term, and they will engage with Member Churches about that during 2019.

New Members

Key Performance Indicators for an umbrella body must include the number and influence of those who wish to join it or remain in its embrace. It is a pleasure to report that we are dealing with applications from Churches which wish to join, and that during 2018 we welcomed the Order of St Leonard and the Serbian Orthodox Church as [members](#), while anticipating the successful conclusion of the application process of the Wesleyan Reform Union early in 2019. We also welcomed as [Bodies in Association](#) Together for the Common Good, the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (now called thirtyone:eight), the Christian Police Association and the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers.

Partnership

We continue to work in partnership with the Inter-Faith Network of the United Kingdom, the British Trust for Tanur, the Gather network, the Evangelical Alliance, Hope Together and the National Church Leaders' Forum (amongst others) as well as the other National Instruments and [Churches Together in Britain and Ireland](#). In particular, Jenny Bond is a member of the writers' group for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, convened by CTBI. Joe Aldred remains an Honorary Research Fellow at Roehampton University and Paul Goodliff an Associate Research Fellow at Spurgeon's College and a member of the World Council of Churches Pentecostal Joint Consultative Group in its third round of meetings.

Plans for the future

CTE is committed to developing working arrangements with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and with the National Instruments in Scotland, Wales and Ireland, and with the [Free Churches Group](#) which generously makes its [Education Officer](#)'s expertise available to us.

We will continue to seek all avenues to use our expertise in mission, education, theology and multicultural issues to the benefit of our members.

In particular, in 2019, to replace [Jim Currin](#) (below) who is taking early retirement, we have [appointed](#) a full-time Evangelism and Mission Co-ordinator and a part-time Communications and Media Officer. Following on these appointments, we plan to hold a conference on Evangelism, Mission and Discipleship in 2020.



Download the full report with the accounts
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