



From the Ecumenical Facilitator Revd Anton Müller

October saw the return of students to Lancashire Colleges. It has been good to learn more about the work of the **chaplains** in our colleges and universities which are both ecumenical and inter faith. The chaplains across the different colleges are a dedicated team who work well together promoting and being the Gospel right where they are.

It is a huge step for many students leaving home for the first time, not only leaving behind families, but life-long friends; and for some parting from relationships. It was good to visit the colleges during Fresher's Week and to see how the chaplains across the denominations and faiths pull together and present a visible unity to reach out in friendship and support to the students that they serve. Returning students work alongside the chaplains to provide a welcoming atmosphere - serving soup and bread, hosting 'cream teas' - for the young people who come with a mixture of hopes and vulnerability.

It was good to meet with the Revd Alex Logan, who is the chaplain at the University of Cumbria based in Lancaster at St Martin's Chapel, but also managing the team of chaplains across the different University Campuses.



The **Chaplaincy model** is an excellent way to view the mission of the Church where the Church is the Chaplaincy and the serving congregation themselves are the chaplains reaching out to meet the needs of their local community. The Chaplaincy is also a model for ecumenical partnership where the work of mission is seen as a shared endeavour not bound by denominational divisions, economic or numerical concerns, but coming together to reach out with one voice to bring wholeness and healing to the community.



It has been my own privilege to work as a Chaplain in colleges, hospitals and hospices in various parts of the country. In every case those chaplaincies nurtured the needs of the individual faith community whilst working as one for the visible unity of the Gospel of Christ in which we all share. Anything less than this is not mission. It is from such a united position that we as the whole Church are able to share our work with other faith communities in bringing about change and transformation in our communities.

Please pray for those who work as Chaplains in different institutions. Pray also for the vision of your church as a chaplaincy, a church without walls; a church where you, the congregation, serve as chaplains to the community.

A Gathering of Churches Together Chairs and Reps

21 Representatives from 11 different Churches Together Groups met at St John's Minster in Preston on 20 October. It was a great encouragement to hear of the different ways in which Churches Together are serving their communities. It is planned to hold similar meetings in Blackpool, Burnley and Blackburn.

The next **BIG** gathering will be on **20 January** for the **Churches Together in Lancashire Forum** - This will be held at St Cuthbert's Church, Preston; 7-9pm. Churches Together Groups from all over the county are invited to attend and to bring displays of their activities and outreach to a "marketstall of mission". The **AGM** will be at 8pm. Worship will be led by Churches Together in Fulwood and Broughton.

Revd Tim Presswood , Baptist, +Julian Blackburn, CoE, Revd Paul Davis, Methodist, Revd Richard Church, URC , +Michael Lancaster, RC, + Geoff Lancaster, CoE

The Church Leaders of Churches Together in



Lancashire met on 30 October at St James, Shireshead. The constitution of Churches Together in Lancashire was reviewed and approved as part of the charity registration process. The Church Leaders discussed membership matters and additional trustees to ensure that each element of our work together is represented. Discussion also included continuing concerns about fracking and other issues of social justice. The Church Leaders sent greetings and best wishes on behalf of Churches Together in Lancashire to Bishop Terence Brain, retiring as Bishop of Salford. Please hold +Terence in your prayers with gratitude for his years of faithful ministry.



With November came the **visit of the Archbishop of York**. The Light in the Darkness event brought 2,000 people to the Tower and there was heartfelt sympathy for the group from Hesketh Bank unable to get into the Ballroom. The Archbishop led the gathering into a renewal of our faith, but it was an opportunity for a renewal of the heart of the church and a renewal of our calling and service together as servants to our communities.



So much of our faith is about remembering who we are under God; a people called to unite in mission and service, to be the visible unity of the Gospel. The weekend of **Remembrance** has been a powerful opportunity to stand together for all that is good and to be reminded of all that is evil.



With Advent and Christmas approaching we have the opportunity again to show that visible unity. To mark the centenary of the 1914 Christmas Truce, churches with Preston North End FC invite you and your congregation to join us for a **Silent Night Carols** event at The Deepdale

Stadium on Monday 8 December from 7pm for about one hour. It will be a fantastic opportunity to celebrate Christmas together with regular supporters and members of the local community in unique surroundings. www.greaterlove.org.uk

And then 10 days later, on **18 December, Lancashire Sings Christmas** takes place across our county. Check out the Facebook page "Sing Christmas" and choose a carol.



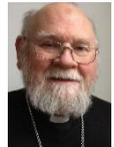
The new Bishop of Burnley will be the Reverend Philip North



Philip North is currently Team Rector of the Parish of Old St Pancras, a large inner city parish of 4 churches in the Camden area of North London. The appointment was made by the Bishop of Blackburn following consultation with a representative group from the Diocese.

"I am very excited about sharing in the ministry of the church and the life of the community in this region. It is really good to be returning to the north of the country where I began my ministry, and especially to be coming to Lancashire with its diverse communities, stunning countryside and terrific football!"

"My predecessor, Bishop John, started some pioneering work with other faiths and the Cathedral has also been instrumental in enabling Lancashire's diverse faith communities to understand each other better.



"This kind of important inter-faith work is something I am very familiar with where I am currently based in London. I am a governor of a church school with a 68% Muslim population and I have sought to encourage close links between people of all faiths to strengthen the already vibrant local community.

"One of my great passions is work with young people, and here there is so much to build on, not least with the Diocese's fantastic network of church schools.

"In my current ministry in London I am all too aware of the impact of poverty, low pay and social inequality in undermining the dignity of human life, and the church in this region is addressing this with some bold and imaginative projects."



Welcoming Philip to the Diocese as the future Bishop of Burnley, Diocesan Bishop Rt Revd Julian Henderson said: "Bishop Geoff and I are delighted to welcome Philip as a new member of the episcopal team here in the Diocese.

"He comes to us with a wealth of experience and a passion for spreading the gospel. His track record suggests we have a new Bishop who will make a significant contribution to the life of the Church of England in Lancashire and we look forward to his consecration in York on February 2."



**From the Social Justice and Inter Faith Development
Officer Helen Boothroyd**

This edition I bring you a variety of exciting news: of all our pending Inter Faith Week events in Lancashire, of the Social Justice Pledge recently signed by our Church Leaders, and of the role of local churches in preventing the closure of Clitheroe Jobcentre.

Inter Faith Week: 16-22 November

Inter Faith Week is upon us. There is a huge range of exciting events across Lancashire, detailed in the attached leaflet (pdf).

Something is taking place every day of the week. Whether you have been to inter faith events before or have not yet had that experience, I urge all readers to go to at least one such event during the week. Hopefully many people will want to go to several. There is plenty of variety of activity and location to choose from.



May I particularly draw your attention to **A Celebration of Faith in Lancashire on Thursday 20 November at 7pm in County Hall in Preston**; Lancashire Forum of Faiths' celebration for people of faith from all across the county. The event will be addressed by Councillor Jennifer Mein, Leader of Lancashire County Council, and we will hear many inspiring stories of inter work around Lancashire.

Religion, Security and Global Uncertainties: 26 November



Immediately following Inter Faith Week, this event, arranged by Blackburn Cathedral exChange project and the Open University, examines hugely important current issues.

6.00-8.30pm; Blackburn Cathedral Crypt. Copies of the [Religion, Security and Global Uncertainties](#) report and executive summary will be available at the event. All are welcome, but in order to manage numbers and refreshments a formal note of invitation is required to attend. In order to book please contact Anjum Anwar by email or phone: anjum.anwar@blackburncathedral.co.uk; or 01254 503081; 07903 731106.

Other Dates for your Diary

North Korea revisited: 23 November, 6.30pm, Torrisholme Methodist Church, Morecambe - See attached pdf poster.

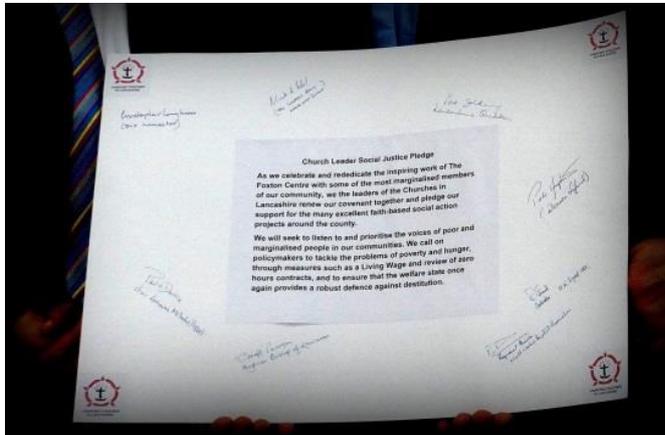
Becoming a dementia friendly church: 3 & 10 December; 14 & 21 January, 1-5pm, St Cuthbert's Church Centre, Preston - See attached information and booking form.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2015: www.ctbi.org.uk/682 (free resources)

Inspire 2015: Loving your neighbour: 7 March, 9.30am-4pm, Runcorn College, Leyland - See attached pdf poster.

Lancashire Church Leaders sign social justice pledge

On 14 October the Lancashire Church Leaders renewed their covenant with each other by signing a pledge of support for social action and social justice:



"We, the leaders of the Churches in Lancashire, renew our covenant together and pledge our support for the many excellent faith-based social action projects around the county.

"We will seek to listen to and prioritise the voices of poor and marginalised people in our communities.

"We call on policymakers to tackle the problems of poverty and hunger, through measures such as a Living Wage and review of zero-hours contracts, and to ensure that the welfare state once again provides a robust defence against destitution."

Church Leaders signing the pledge were Rev Richard Church, Moderator of the North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church; Rev Paul Davis, Chair of the Lancashire District of the Methodist Church; Pat Golding, representative of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers); Bishop Geoff Pearson, the Anglican Suffragan Bishop of Lancaster and Rev Tim Presswood, Transitional Regional Minister of the North Western Baptist



Association. Major Mark Billard, Divisional Director for Evangelism of the North Western Division of the Salvation Army; Fr Peter Hopkinson, Ecumenical Officer for the RC Diocese of Salford and Fr Chris Loughran, Ecumenical Officer for the RC Diocese of Lancaster signed on behalf of their Church Leaders.



The event, attended by guests from [Together Lancashire](#) and [Preston Christian Action Network](#), took place at [The Foxton Centre](#) in Preston, a Christian-based social action project which has been doing cutting-edge work with some of the most marginalised members of the local community for 45 years. The Foxton Centre has recently received the BIBAs Lancashire 2014 award for most inspiring business of the year. CEO Tim Keightley said: "We are delighted to have been given this recognition of the fantastic and inspiring work of our staff, volunteers and trustees and of the inspiring lives our service users lead in overcoming huge obstacles to their successful living."

Local Churches Help Save Clitheroe Jobcentre

Nigel Rix, Chair of Clitheroe Christians in Partnership, writes:



"In October Clitheroe Christians in Partnership invited Christians in the 8 Clitheroe churches to sign a postcard to the Regional Manager of Job Centre Plus requesting that plans for the closure of the Clitheroe Jobcentre be reconsidered because of the costs and extra time involved for clients in travelling to Blackburn. I delivered almost 600 signed postcards to Blackburn and discussed the campaign on Radio Lancashire."

The DWP has now announced that it has abandoned plans to shut Clitheroe Jobcentre.

Many congratulations to Clitheroe Christians in Partnership for its key role in this successful campaign. We can all make a difference and effect change for social justice. What can your Churches Together group do locally to tackle the injustices facing your local community and our neighbours across the county, the country and the world?

Volunteering for Prison Fellowship

Do you have a heart for prison ministry? [Prison Fellowship](#) is a volunteer-driven organisation with a mission to show Christ's love to prisoners by coming alongside them to change. Peter Osbourne of Prison Fellowship Kendal urges more Christians to consider volunteering: "*By joining us you would obey Jesus when he said we should show care for prisoners (Matthew 25). Our 6-week course in victim awareness and restorative justice has amazing impact on them. No wonder; our work is carried along in a tide of prayer by the group, individuals and churches. Please join us in Christ's work.*"



Prison Fellowship seeks through prayer and practical care to help, support and develop a Christian ministry to prisoners and their families across the country. Sycamore Tree is a Restorative Justice course, based on Luke 19:1-10 and Prison Fellowship needs volunteers to help deliver this course. Sycamore Tree tutor Ruthie Woodhouse says: "*One of our past learners said 'The course has helped me realise the damage I've caused ... Sycamore Tree has given me hope.' Will you join us in this life changing work and bring hope for change to so many broken lives?'*" Full training and support are provided. For further information and to volunteer please contact Stephen Hawkins: 07890 636837; stephenhawkins@prisonfellowship.org.uk

Christian Aid Christmas appeal

Donations will be doubled by the UK Government. Download fundraising and worship resources, and donate, at: www.christianaid.org.uk/getinvolved/christmas

WW1 Writing competition: [The Book of Plans, Hopes and Dreams](#) - follow link