

Churches Together in Lancashire Newsletter No 13

MAY 2015



From the Ecumenical Facilitator, The Revd Anton Müller

Welcome to this May edition of the Churches Together in Lancashire Newsletter. Since the last newsletter the 'Meeting of the Church Leaders' took place on April 16th and welcomed the new Bishop of Burnley, The Rt Revd Philip North. The next meeting of the Church Leaders will be on July 21st when the meeting will welcome the Bishop of Salford, Bishop John Arnold. Now is the time to raise questions and comments for the Church Leaders to address. Send your comments/questions to antonmuller@ctlancashire.org.uk

The meeting considered the role that Helen Boothroyd held and again noted Helen's immense contribution over her year in post. There will now follow a period of consultation in order to explore whether to create a new post that will work alongside existing ministries or whether to discern other areas that need supporting. Churches Together groups will be invited to share in this consultation alongside other mission and ministry based organisations.

The next meeting of the DEOs will be on Monday June 8th in Salford and again you are invited to contact your DEO with questions and comments to bring to that meeting.

Visit to Poulton le Fylde Churches Together Group: It was a privilege to attend the business meeting of the Poulton le Fylde Churches Together group and to discover the range of local ministry in which this group is engaged. The purpose of the visit was an invitation to explore ways of developing this ministry, to consider what to keep doing, what do start doing and where necessary what to stop doing. In every case it was important to ask the question "What can we do better or differently? Should we be 'fishing' elsewhere or exploring different ways to fish?", "Who is it for?" A summary of this time of exploration will find its way to the website in due course; in the meantime "Well done" to Poulton le Fylde Churches Together. You can find their details on the website.

News from Leyland Churches Together Group: Every Tuesday afternoon between 2-3pm, a group of volunteers from Leyland churches run a collection point for Unify Credit Union at Leyland URC. Credit Unions are financial co-operatives which offer convenient savings and low interest loans to its members. Details on the website

Development of Website and Web Directory. The CTL website is now open and can be viewed at www.ctlancashire.org.uk This builds on the excellent template set up by Debbie Peatman and includes some new features. Every effort will be made to keep the site up to date but what it needs now is your input. A diary of events (What's on and Where) is available to you to promote what the Church is doing in your part of Lancashire and also to promote the events of our partner organisations.

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The Web directory is growing slowly: Too slowly! Of the 52 Churches Together Groups listed only 9 are linked to contact details. That's 52 requests and only 9 replies! Thank you to those who have taken the time to respond. The contact form gives the name of the group, the current Chair and Secretary with email and phone number, a list of churches in the group and if possible the web addresses for those churches that have one. The bold vision for this directory is to create a visible picture of the Church across Lancashire.

This website will work in conjunction with the FACEBOOK page. If your group does not have a page then please create one and then "find and friend" Churches Together Lancashire. The CTL page will flag up your events in the first instance and point people to the website for further details. The rationale for using FACEBOOK in the first instance is that people will only go to the website when looking for something in particular. The FACEBOOK page delivers your information instantly and prompts the recipient to the website.

The purpose of the web directory is at least two-fold. 1) it demonstrates the visible unity of the Church in Lancashire 2) it enables people to locate their nearest church if they have recently moved into the area; are visiting or have recently come to or returned to faith and are seeking a church or fellowship to join. To misquote the words of St Francis "Preach the Gospel every way you can; if necessary use FACEBOOK and the Internet"!

Royal Lancashire Show 7-9 August Salesbury, Ribchester: After an absence of some years the RLS is back and we have the opportunity for a Christian presence via a Church Tent. This marquee will house an Exhibition Area and provide activities, seminars and ecumenical prayer and praise. We need stewards, welcomers and greeters, "meet-with-ers" and "sit-with-ers". The Mother's Union will be providing a "lost and found" service. In other ways so will we, as we seek to reach the community of Lancashire with the Gospel of Christ

The set up will be on Friday morning 7th August aiming to be ready by midday. The Church tent will be a proclamation of what the Church in Lancashire is doing to support the community and to live the Gospel of God. On the Sunday morning there will be an act of morning worship with +Julian, The Revd Paul Davis and leaders from across the denominations.

We are looking for 100 or so folding chairs, a podium and a PA system complete with PA operators. If you are able to help in any way with this fantastic opportunity to present the visible unity of the Church in Lancashire then please contact The Revd Chris Halliwell (Rural Officer for the Diocese of Blackburn (Chris.Halliwell@Blackburn.Anglican.Org) or The Revd Anton Müller Ecumenical Facilitator for Churches Together in Lancashire (antonmuller@ctlancashire.org.uk)

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Local Events (For further details please visit the website www.ctlancashire.org.uk)

Friday 8th May VE Celebrations Penwortham

Saturday 16th May "Run for the World" 10.00am Morcambe Prom

18th - 24th "Dying Awareness Week - A Dead Good Read"

Sunday 24th May 3.30pm "Pentecost Songs of Praise" Happy Mount Park

Friday 29th May "Loom of Life" with John Bell, English Martyrs Church, Preston

Tuesday 2nd June 7.30 "Faith in Lancaster - the Future of Interfaith"

(Lancaster Meeting House)

Saturday 6th June 7.00pm Marilyn Baker in Concert, Preston Minster

Saturday 13th June 9.30-4.30 "Wake up your Church" St Thomas Church, Lancaster

Prayer for Unity by Alison Tomlin

Help us, Holy God, to worship together as we are able, accepting each other's differences as your gift.

Help us to respect each other in every conversation, even when the other's opinion seems to us like painful prejudice.

Help us to never assume that there is only one way of being right, remembering that only One knows all the truth.

Help us to hear each other's hurt, recognizing how much all of us need your healing.

Help us to hear your voice as we work together, so that we may discover new insights about your love.

Then we may eventually, through prayer and conversation and hard work, discover your way of becoming one.

Guide us in each moment. Strengthen us in each task. Speak with and through us in every formal and informal conversation. Inspire each attempt to create a close unity.

Give us the patience we need with each other and trust in the future which only you can give.

Then indeed may we be all that you call us to be, that your desires for the world may be fulfilled in and through us, and that the world may believe.

(Alison Tomlin has been one of the chairs of the Christian-Muslim Forum, Chair of a Methodist in District and President of the Methodist Conference. This prayer may be found in *Unity in Progress: reflections on ecumenism*, Clive Barrett [Ed], 2012, Darton, Longman and Todd, London)

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