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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



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Archdiocese of Southwark*

Together in Christ,
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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Adoremus, the Catholic Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool last month occupies a good part of this issue; I hope you find the reports a valuable insight into Eucharistic understanding towards other denominations. The revisit of general norms of sacramental sharing, 'One Bread One Body', is a timely reminder that our churches are not all the same and each of us has a lot to learn from each other.

We have two reports on the latest Churches Together in England Forum in Derbyshire. Tony Norfolk, who is involved in CT in Staplehurst, joined a group visiting Canterbury Cathedral, and reports a call to sit 'higher', in fact, at the front of the Nave. We also have the obituary of Monsignor Augustine Hoey OSB, a passionate ecumenist, who died last October.

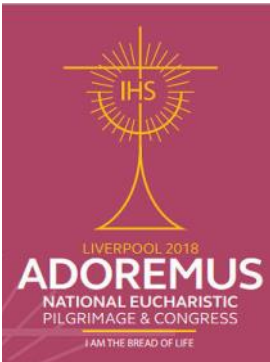
The Archdiocese of Southwark Christian Unity Commission's Forum and annual review, held at the end of September, welcomed Rev David Tatem, who spoke of his time as a URC minister and former joint secretary to the URC Roman Catholic Commission dialogues. At the Forum David told us about a story he had written which he wanted to share, and this is reproduced at the end of this issue.

A mention here that the material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 18th-25th January 2019, is prepared by Indonesian Christians. In Indonesia there is a strong emphasis upon the need for unity alongside the nation's ethnic and religious diversity. The resources also highlight issues of economic injustice and how religious pluralism can face challenges in the face of radicalisation. The theme is based around Deuteronomy 16:18-20, 'Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue...'

Michael Baldry

Adoremus National Eucharistic Congress

7-9 September 2018



Over two months before attending the Congress in Liverpool, the Southwark delegates were invited to attend a meeting to prepare us for what we were letting ourselves in for. The evening was hosted by Fr John Mulligan (Dean of Merton) who greatly inspired us by his enthusiasm for the event. I remember him asking us what we ourselves hoped to get out of the Congress and my immediate thought was “more faith”.

It was with great sadness that on the train journey up to Liverpool we received an email informing us that Fr John had passed away suddenly that very morning—seemingly caused by the strain of overwork. But had he been there, Fr John would not have been disappointed as I believe the three days more than lived up to all our hopes, though I have to say it was a very busy few days with little time for relaxation.

Every one of our speakers spoke with conviction for the Eucharist and it was so heartening to see thousands of people, laity and religious, gathered under one roof because we loved our faith. On the Friday afternoon, the Symposium day, we had to choose three sessions out of nine to attend. The middle one I opted for was **The Eucharist as a sign of the Church’s Unity: “One Bread, One Body” revisited.**

The session was led by Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, based at Farm Street Church in Mayfair, which is very active ecumenically. He introduced speakers from the Church of England, the Salvation Army and the Methodist Church. They all spoke with great love for the Eucharist—even the Salvationist who wouldn’t normally take Communion as part of his own faith. Canon John O’Toole, our National Ecumenical Officer, has sent me each of their talks to include in this publication, so there is no need for me to try and summarise them.

After the three inspiring testimonies on the Eucharist, Canon John O’Toole wound up the session by inviting us all to pray:

Lord Jesus, who prayed that we might all be one,
we pray to You for the Unity of Christians,
according to Your will, according to Your means.
May Your Spirit enable us to experience the suffering caused by division,
to see our sin, and to hope beyond all hope. Amen.

He told us that this prayer is said by the Chemin Neuf (meaning New Way) community, a Roman Catholic foundation with an ecumenical vocation. Its members worldwide experience the joy that comes from fellowship in Christ as well as the pain of disunity. As a sign of this division, they place an empty paten and chalice on the altar during evening prayer and pray in hope for the day when Christians will be able to gather around the one altar to celebrate the Eucharist together.

For me, this was very reassuring to hear. It was also most encouraging to be in a huge room with around 800 Catholics all interested in Church Unity. The tight agenda for the day meant there was only time for one question from the floor, about the pain of inter-church families not being able to receive Communion together, and I'm sure most people present would have welcomed more time, but unity was only one of a number of themes to be covered at the Congress.

Even if we didn't hear from the speakers again (though I heard they were in action at one of the parallel programme events—and well received too) it was lovely to see representatives of different churches participating in the beautifully prepared services, and clearly enjoying themselves, at what was really very much a Catholic Congress. And yes, my faith definitely was boosted by experiencing that joy which was the common denominator of those present, even though I got soaked on the Eucharistic procession at the very end!

Gwen Chiosso

A Church of England Response



My most vivid, and still current, experience of the Eucharist began with my discovery of Jesus in a living way. I had grown up in a practising family of the Church of England but, when I began to look for truth, initially it did not occur to me that this truth might have anything to do with Jesus. It took an encounter with him to put me right.

This encounter came via the Focolare Movement. One result of this was that I was encouraged to go back to my own church and discover its beauty.

It is here, in the Church of England, that I began a relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist.

I found how amazing he is. In the Eucharist God in Christ identifies himself with bread and wine so that he can identify himself with me. In other words it is God who, through bread and wine, makes me God (by participation, of course). And not just, as you might say, any kind of God, but the true God who is Jesus, perfectly divine and perfectly human.

And because this God who is Jesus not only comes to me to make *me* him, but also to the others who receive him, he makes us *all* him, all *one*: one God, one Jesus, all together.

The context of my life, however, just as the context of the Church, is that I have to live this wonderful discovery of Jesus-who-makes-us-one in a situation of division. It's very odd; indeed, it's absurd. I receive Jesus in the Eucharist, but I cannot receive him together with all my brothers and sisters of every other church. The One who makes us One is given to us in disunity. Seen from that angle the work of ecumenism is vital. We must heal the Body of Christ on earth, the Church, so that it is fit to receive the One who comes in the Eucharist.

At the same time, however, this very absurdity is a source of grace, because it underscores some of the divine realities, the gifts God hands to us.

To begin with, as you can imagine, it was immensely painful not to be able to

receive the Eucharist, except on special occasions, together with my Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. The first thing I found was that not being able to receive the Eucharist was a taste of the cross – that very suffering of Jesus’ sacrifice made effective in the here and now, as it were *re-presented*, in the Eucharist. He comes to me in the pain. So my exclusion was a chance to share in the pain that generates unity, a contribution to the healing of the Church, Christ’s Body.

But then I began to discover other things. I found, for instance, that when I was unable to receive Jesus in the Eucharist at a Roman Catholic celebration, through my relationship with the others who had been to Communion, I was in fact nourished by God. It was all an effect of our love for one another expressed perhaps by a smile of reassurance, a word of solidarity, a listening to one another in conversation, an act of kindness freely given. It was clear to me that what I found I was receiving through the others, namely God who is love, came because *they* were the living Body of Christ. All that mattered was that I and they both remained in the Gospel life, so that this current of love could be in us, passing from them to me.

Later on, though, I found something more. In the Church of England’s Book of Common Prayer we are assured that if in time of sickness, when the sacrament is brought to someone who cannot receive Holy Communion physically, nonetheless, if that person’s disposition is one of repentance, faith and thankfulness, (and I quote) ‘he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul’s health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth’. It is spiritual communion. This I have experienced many times when, because of church discipline, I cannot otherwise receive the sacrament. It does not feel the same as when I can actually receive the Lord’s Body and Blood in my mouth; but it is the same Jesus who comes to me.

Rev Callan Slipper

National Ecumenical Officer, Church of England

A Salvation Army Response

From my earliest years I remember my minister parents preaching and living out what in their belief was a sacramental lifestyle. Indeed, it was the Holiness preaching based on the Wesleyan revival and Holiness movement that was contributory to the birth of what is now The Salvation Army in 1865, and now globally working in 130 countries. Growing up in that atmosphere, observing some wonderfully sacrificial people in a variety of my parents churches, at 16, I gave my whole life and soul to Jesus Christ.



Up until I was 16 The Salvation Army and its mission statement of “Heart to God and hand to man,” had been my existence, and as a result its sacramental stance for me has had a totally different interpretation. At the time I became a Christian I came into contact with the beautiful service of Communion when the SA celebrated its 100th year in the beautiful Abbey in Bath. The Abbot had invited my church to receive communion and my father to preach, an honour in deed.

When William Booth (SA’s Founder) for pragmatic reasons laid aside Communion in 1883, it was never seen as a once and for all decision, indeed, as late as the late 1990’s the SA’s Spiritual life Commission once more addressed the re-

curing issue of communion and it's to their conclusions I wish to refer.

Firstly, it concluded that if sacramental meant specifically the use of certain prescribed observances, then the Salvation Army was indeed non-sacramental. However it goes on to say, "that if St. Augustine's definition of communion as 'a visible sign of an invisible grace', allowed the wider embracing of symbols as 'signs of something sacred' then in that broader sense, the Army is most definitely a Sacramental Movement. (and indeed) it doesn't deny the value of symbolism in religion.

As an officer in my 35th year of ministry, at no stage have I ever refused an invitation from a brother or sister church when invited to share in communion (in fact I relish it)! The SA encourages its members to participate, to be as Christ directed. The sense of unity expressed in the High Priestly prayer in John 17:21 that we would be one as Christ and His father are one, is never more palpable as in these special moments of Christ's "Invisible Grace." However, as One Bread, One Body has underlined, (and Callum and Father Dominic stated was a real sense of pain and imperfect Communion) this very act of being one, the Body of Christ, has still some way to go!

Secondly the commission concluded that Sacrament as they understand it, should be properly reserved exclusively to denote Christ alone as the true mystery of God, (Col.2:2), and the language of holiness and sanctification, rather than sacrament, should be used to express the grace of Christ lived out in our lives as believers. Here, I must stress the focus is upon *living a holy life* and not purely on a ritual, however beautiful, meaningful and really moving.

The Spiritual Life Commission states that "the language of sacrament, as with the language of incarnation, is reserved for Christ alone, and is one of the many ways in which his uniqueness is affirmed. Salvationists with an ecumenical heart and John 17:21 as their motivation, want to stress that the SA is not anti-sacramental, going further to suggest that the holy life lived out in the world, is for them the outliving of authentic sacramental life, and for them is not just what some have defined as a use of sacramental observances.

A Salvationist theologian and poet and an erstwhile world leader, General Albert Orsborn, underlined this teaching in a beautiful song:

"My life must be Christ's broken bread,
my love His outpoured wine,
A cup o'erfilled, a table spread
beneath His name and sign,
That other souls, refreshed and fed,
may share His life through mine".

For Salvationists sacramental rites "are seen in a very different light...not as a prescribed occasion, or as the sole source of God's grace."

The most prolific of Salvation Army Holiness writers and teachers, Samuel Logan Brengle, defined this teaching as '**Christ in you**' - teaching that the Lord's Supper should "**always point.. the Church beyond the celebration, to the living out of what the body broken and blood spilled made possible**": (the recovery of holiness of life and the restoration of fellowship with God and man.)

Thank you for listening and may God bless His Church.

Major David Evans

Territorial Ecumenical Officer, The Salvation Army

A Methodist Response



His presence makes the feast;
and now our spirits feel
the glory not to be expressed,
the joy unspeakable.

*Charles Wesley (1707-88),
Hymns on the Lord's Supper*

Seven years ago, I was offered and accepted the role of the Methodist Church's Connexional Ecumenical Officer, although seven days ago I took up a new appointment. Long before that, it had been my privilege to serve for ten years on the British Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue. Those years included our rejoicing together at how much we have in common and how far we have travelled together since Vatican II. Those years also included the publication of *Ut Unum Sint* and *One Bread, One Body*; as you can imagine, we discussed both documents at some length.

Re-reading *One Bread, One Body* for this afternoon, I was reminded how we sometimes misunderstand one another. I offer just two examples:

First, I don't think Methodism sees itself as 'rooted in the Reformation'; the doctrinal standards of the British Methodist Church state that it 'claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church which is the Body of Christ. It rejoices in the inheritance of the apostolic faith and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic creeds and of the Protestant Reformation.' That's rather different from being 'rooted in the Reformation'.

Secondly, whilst some Methodists misunderstand what is usually referred to as 'transubstantiation', I've come across Christians of many traditions who don't appreciate Methodist teaching on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. I chose the Charles Wesley verse [at the beginning of this article] for this very reason: we believe that 'his presence makes the feast'.

Thankfully as long ago as 1971 and under the heading 'The real presence', the first report of our international dialogue stated:

Both Methodists and Roman Catholics affirm as the primary fact the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the Mass, or the Lord's Supper.

Something else that struck me again as I re-read *One Bread, One Body* was the difference in our understandings of the Eucharist as the sacrament of unity. Although the *Decree on Ecumenism* says that 'the unity of the Church is both signified and brought about' by the Eucharist, I think it's fair to say that Methodists place a stronger emphasis on it being a means of unity among Christians of different churches as well as within each church.

The implications of that difference are a challenge for many of us. In one of my appointments, however, I had pastoral responsibility for an inter-church family; I am, therefore, acutely aware of the pain as well as the very occasional 'joy' that inter-church families experience at celebrations of the Eucharist. I wait with interest to see what happens to the German Bishops' proposed guidelines on this particular form of eucharistic sharing.

Rev Neil Stubbens

Outgoing Connexional Ecumenical Officer, Methodist Church

Diocesan Ecumenical Pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral 11th October 2017

Four of our congregation (from Staplehurst, near Maidstone) joined this Diocesan Pilgrimage. We met at the Christchurch Gate and were then taken on a guided tour of the Cathedral. This was followed by a period of prayer, in one of the side chapels, for Christian Unity, both seeking forgiveness for the continuing separation and praying for help in bringing us closer together. We then had a time for exploration before returning to the Cathedral for Evensong. This turned out to be a very big occasion. It was a Choral Evensong with both the men's and the girls' choirs participating and it was a celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Kentish Gazette, the Canterbury area's local weekly newspaper. So there were various dignitaries there too.

We did have something of a biblical experience when, because of the nature of the event and the number of people attending we had sat near the back only to be called forward to the very front where seats had been reserved for us! The Dean, the Very Rev Dr Robert Willis welcomed everyone, making special mention of our little group, and led the service. In his homily he spoke of the importance of the freedom of the Press, of the importance of a local as well as a national Press, but also of the importance of the integrity of the Press and accurate reporting. All in all it was a very enjoyable and uplifting experience.

Two more unusual items I noted:

The cloisters here are on the north side of the Cathedral, contrary to normal practice in this country where they are usually on the warmer south side. This was because when they were rebuilding the Cathedral in 11th century under Archbishop Lanfranc it was found that the land to the south was an old Roman graveyard and the Archbishop did not want his cloisters over a pagan burial ground and so put them on the north side. The guide advised that they were very cold and seemingly in winter there used to be a fire in the middle of the cloisters where the monks were allowed to stand for 10 minutes every hour to warm themselves. This might have worked because my experience of standing in front of an open fire is that, unlike central heating, you get warmed right through to the bone and when you go out into the cold you don't feel it, at least for a time, hopefully 50 minutes!!



The other item was an Antony Gormley 'sculpture' of a figure hanging in the Crypt over the location of Archbishop Thomas Becket's original tomb. It is entitled 'Transport' and was made in 2010 using 1000+ handmade nails taken from the 19th century lead roof tiles of the South East Transept and, being slightly magnetic, moves with the earth's magnetic field.

Tony Norfolk

Monsignor Thomas Kenneth Augustine Paschal Hoey OSB

It is challenging to write an obituary of a reasonable length for a man and priest of an average length of life – ‘the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years...’ (Psalm 90:10 King James Version), more so for someone like Mgr Augustine Hoey who reached fivescore years plus one.



Born in Leeds on 22 December 1915, Mgr Hoey died on the morning of 26 September 2017 while sitting peacefully in his chair at St Peter’s Residence, Vauxhall, having enjoyed a good breakfast. He was an elderly priest who had lost the will to die, if ever he had such a will! Perhaps no one was more surprised than Augustine Hoey himself that, at the age of 78, he was ordained as a Catholic priest at Westminster Cathedral by Cardinal Basil Hume OSB. One description of his beatific smile

in the sacristy afterwards was that he was indeed ‘Surprised by Joy’. He had already led a rich and full life of ministry as an Anglican priest and a member of the Community of the Resurrection. His early years in ministry, with the CR, were typified by the word ‘mission’, the great outreach of Anglo-Catholicism into working class parishes and communities both in the north of England and the East End of London. Like his great exemplar, Cardinal John Henry Newman, he came into Full Communion with the Catholic Church convinced that ‘there was nowhere else to go.’

From 1935-38 Kenneth Hoey studied Modern History at Oxford. It was during these years that he first visited Walsingham. He studied at Cuddesdon from 1939-40, and then was ordained to the diaconate followed by ordination to the priesthood in 1941 for ministry in the Church of England. In April 1945 he entered the novitiate of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, but withdrew to continue ministry in east London. However, the attraction of the CR drew him back and he returned to Mirfield and he made his final profession in July 1950. He took the religious name Augustine. His ministry of prayer, preaching and spiritual direction took him to a variety of places to live and minister among the poor and disadvantaged, including South Africa in the 1950s where he challenged the apartheid regime. Fr Augustine led the missions to parishes in poor areas. For many, the missions were life-changing as Fr Augustine used his gifts to bring people to repentance and to confession. Without using notes, he preached with conviction, often with a tableau involving parishioners and the mission team to depict the theme and endorse his message. He loved acting and he loved drama, and he was good at both. The mission team was made up of priests, religious and lay people and perhaps a brother from the Community of the Resurrection – these did all the parish visiting, going to people’s homes and to local pubs and other places of gathering where Fr Augustine would speak fearlessly to the people, exhorting them to come to the evening mission service.

Rooted in a life of personal and communal prayer, Fr Augustine encouraged and helped others to pray. In 1973 he set up the Emmaus house of prayer in Hulme, Manchester, in a flat in a deprived area rife with crime. He connected with local people, accepting them and they accepted him. In 1977 the Emmaus house moved to a particularly poor area of Sunderland, where Fr Augustine offered confession, spiritual direction, quiet days and retreats. Above all, as with the flat in Hulme, the focus was on silent prayer.

Fr Augustine was drawn to the Catholic Church, and he and Cardinal Basil Hume OSB exchanged many letters and had several meetings. For Fr Augustine, committed ecumenist for whom disunity was a scandal, his journey towards the Catholic Church became decisive over the question of authority, and how and by whom decisions affecting the Church's teaching and practice are made. Writing to Cardinal Hume in November 1993, Fr Augustine felt he had become 'un-churched...and so I turn to Rome, not reluctantly, because in the past I have taken the Catholic Church as the source of my teaching and for my models both of the priestly and the monastic life.' In the early 90s many clergy and lay members of the Church of England felt similarly. Fr Augustine, now well into his 70s, became a 'godfather' figure, supporting others whose journey of faith brought them to Rome. In April 1994 aged 78, Fr Augustine was received into the Catholic Church by Cardinal Hume. He wondered if he could continue to be part of the Community of the Resurrection, but this proved not possible. Later that year he went to live at Charterhouse, an Anglican foundation on the site of the Carthusian monastery in central London, where he was very happy. Ordained to the diaconate (for a second time!) he then proceeded to ordination as a Catholic priest in February 1995, and he celebrated his first Mass at Cockfosters, the Benedictine parish in north London that had been supportive of Fr Augustine as he contemplated becoming a Catholic. Dom Placid Meylink OSB had become his spiritual guide and supporter.

In 1998 Fr Augustine went to live in the Cathedral Clergy House and served as a Cathedral Chaplain while maintaining a monastic rhythm of prayer. His presence at Westminster Cathedral, as one of the Chaplains, was at once gentle and lively. He was energetic, and patient, very committed to giving time to the confessional, to spiritual direction and to the celebration of Mass. He continued to attend to his social life and his many friends from the many worlds in which he moved. His impact on the lives of countless numbers of people is known to God alone. Perhaps above all it was the conviction of his preaching and his apparently simple way of speaking about prayer which made the development of a spiritual life something which even the most ordinary person felt achievable under his guidance. His two seminal books, 'Leaves from the Tree of Heaven' (1998) and 'Adventure into Silence' (2000) have become invaluable aids to those fortunate to have encountered the way in which he lived out his teaching and preaching. He gave wise advice concerning prayer and praying: 'We do not learn to cook by reading cookery books,' he wrote, 'we learn by doing it (praying), ultimately in the contemplation of the divine love of God in the silence of our hearts.'

Yet in this long life of contemplation there was also an anxiety to be on the move.

In 2001 when he felt his presence might become burdensome at Westminster Cathedral Clergy House he asked Cardinal Cormac for permission to move to the residence run by the Little Sisters of the Poor in Vauxhall, recognising that he needed to be cared for, enabling him to continue to care for others. His deep desire to return to live at Walsingham, first visited in 1937, was fulfilled in 2014. On 12 December 2015 Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, with Fr Augustine concelebrating, at Walsingham to mark Fr Augustine's 100th birthday, the occasion that the Cardinal told him of his appointment by Pope Francis as a Chaplain to his Holiness with the title Monsignor. Mgr Augustine wanted to spend his final years on a solitary ecumenical pilgrimage, praying for the unity of Christians and interceding for his many 'spiritual children'. This was a time of deep satisfaction to him. But his increasing need for care meant returning to St Peter's Residence and the Little Sisters. In September 2016 he wrote to Cardinal Vincent letting him know of his desire to move there once again. His familiar figure, dressed in the robes of a Benedictine Oblate surmounted by his ubiquitous Roman hat will be missed on the streets of London, in buses trains and taxis. He will be missed at his beloved Westminster Cathedral and in Clergy House where he experienced the spiritual fellowship which had first brought him into a Religious community.

Mgr Augustine enjoyed good food and wine, including champagne, 'something you never regret having drunk,' throughout his long life. He enjoyed the opera, ballet and theatre, and he enjoyed the company of people in their variety. He was able to help people to feel understood and accepted as he listened to them and they increasingly opened up to him. People saw in him a man of unaffected humility, in touch with God and with his own, and others', humanity. 'Trembling on the Edge of Eternity', a biographical memoir published by St Michael's Abbey Press, second edition February 2016, tells the story of Mgr Augustine Hoey's extraordinary life.

Nearly twenty years ago, Fr Augustine shared his thoughts about death – his own death – in writing: 'If I have prepared, here below, by a life of union with Jesus and with all my brothers and sisters, to live a final community life in Heaven, I shall be able, like St Francis, to welcome death as a sister who opens the door of our Father's house...Dying is my last and greatest priestly function when in union with the victim of Calvary. It is my last offering of myself, however unworthy it may well be, and I want to make it for the greater glory of God and for the benefit of the whole Church. It is my last Mass.'

When ordained as an Anglican priest, Fr Augustine made a promise to Our Lady that he would mention her in every homily he would preach. Mary, through the Rosary and visits to her shrine at Walsingham and elsewhere, became very much part of Mgr Augustine's life of prayer and discipleship. As Mgr Augustine did several times daily we ask Mary to pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. We do so now for Augustine, that he may rest in peace.

Mgr Martin Hayes VG, Diocese of Westminster
8 October 2017

Churches Together in Central Bromley

Churches Together in Central Bromley (CTCB) has a membership of eighteen churches who support groups in Bromley based at some of the member churches, such as the Latch Project, the Bromley Foodbank, Bromley Shelter, Just B and so on. This year CTCB has partnered with both the Royal British Legion and Bromley Council to commemorate the WW1 100th Anniversary at a special Remembrance Sunday this year.



Member churches all support the work of the Bromley Town chaplain who works with the local businesses and shopkeepers and the Council itself. The chaplain is also able to then meet their employees, customers and thus contact anyone else in the vicinity she meets in Bromley casually. The chaplain can then invite them to informal meetings taking place in the local churches or in coffee shops as well as holding Bible studies and talks.

The chaplain's link with the Council promotes co-operation between it and CTCB enabling permission for certain events to take place such as setting up a Christmas Nativity scene and display and the Easter Walk of Witness with a public worship service held in its centre. This gives an opportunity for church leaders from all its member churches to give a public talk on the meaning of Easter. Many shoppers stop to listen and join in with the hymns. At Christmas, church members knit woolly sheep for a 'Lost Sheep' competition which are given a name and put into as many shops as are willing to put them on display for children to discover and note where they are in order to gain a prize for finding them.

Many churches of course have their own ongoing projects but are able to use CTCB to inform and communicate all that they do. It is this kind of communication which has encouraged not only individual church projects but also Bromley borough council to work with churches across the whole borough in a 'Transform Bromley' initiative. Bromley Council works closely with Bexley Council which also has a 'Transform Bexley' initiative. The aim is to link all the Churches Together groups in all areas of the borough to promote communication, collaboration and co-operation across the whole borough community.

All the work of CTCB is underpinned by the Ministers' Breakfast in which all the church leaders meet together to plan, discuss and pray for the work of CTCB ensuring co-ordination and properly 'thought through' projects supported by prayer.

Jill Bulman

‘I am with you always’ – Together in Christ’s Mission **CTE Forum, September 2018**

I had the privilege to be one of the two representatives of the CUC at the recent Churches Together in England Forum in Swanwick from 17th—19th September. The Forum was described in the preface to its programme as “the broadest ecumenical gathering of Christians in England. It brings together representatives from our 47 Member Churches, as well as the Intermediate (County) Bodies which promote regional and local ecumenism and 51 Bodies in Association – all charities and organisations which work ecumenically in mission, theology and community action of all kinds.”

It was said to be an opportunity to be encouraged by the diversity and depth of Christian witness in England, and to be enriched by forging new relationships and connections and it is a chance to celebrate and to deepen our relationship with Jesus and with each other, through Bible study and discussion, workshops and listening to speakers from all parts of the Christian Church. I certainly found it to live up to these claims.

The preface also spoke of the Forum as not a meeting where participants deliberate, but it is a way of “taking the ecumenical temperature”, of hearing from each other where we are on the journey to be one in Christ. My experience was that it was all that and more, for the questions and challenges raised in an atmosphere of journeying together.

The transforming power of Christ was the subtext throughout the time spent together, not just in the input from the stage, but in all the interactions throughout the three days where there was a tangible presence of Christ in and through all. With around 300 present, including a number of under 35s, there was a buzz and positivity, a desire to use each moment to share, listen, learn, be open and discover the richness of the other.

The first evening saw David Cornick (outgoing CTE General Secretary) give an excellent thoughtful reflection on the work of the CTE in the last three years which showed how far we had travelled despite ‘the winter of ecumenism’. He shared personal reflections on his work in ecumenism: ‘... although we know that Our Lord longs for His Church to be one, my experience of learning more about Jesus has happened within the tensions and pain of the Church as it is, full of imperfection, division and tragedy. There’s grace for you. Christ is with us where we are, as we are.’

He continued: ‘For me, that’s where ecumenism starts – in the wonderful generosity of God in Christ, with the fact that although I might have real doubts about the cultures or structures of partner Churches, the reality that I cannot deny is that Jesus is there and the fruits of His presence are obvious.’

The evening continued with three of the six presidents of CTE, Archbishop Angaelos, Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Justin Welby reflecting on Christ’s presence followed by them answering searching questions put by some of the young people. This format was repeated the following day with the other three presidents, Pastor Agu Irukwu, Revd Canon Billy Kennedy and Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, giving their contributions and responses to the young people. The questions posed gave opportunity to deepen the realities facing all Christians today within the

challenges of modern living and the pain of ongoing separation amongst Christians.

There was a visible unity and friendship amongst the six presidents, a reflection of their relationship and mutual respect as they led us on our ecumenical journey together. I would recommend viewing, when possible, the video recording on the CTE webpage.

The CTE press release sums up the input from the presidents at different moments of the forum. The Pentecostal President, Pastor Agu Irukwu, said that our witness to Christ continues despite what we are going through. ‘Whether on the mountains or in the valleys, we tell



the story of His presence with us just the same.’ Archbishop Justin Welby, the President for the Church of England, added, ‘people will see the presence of Christ in us when we stop holding on to things and we start letting God put a cross in our hands.’

Referring to Jesus, one of the young adults asked the Presidents, ‘What tables would you overturn?’ Cardinal Nichols for the Roman Catholic Church said, ‘We are being given a consistent lead by Pope Francis on clericalism and the assumptions on a position of superiority and privilege that are sometimes present. He wants that table clearly and vigorously turned over.’

Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, the Free Churches President, agreed, suggesting we needed new ways of measuring success, ‘We need to come away from the competitiveness we’ve had between the Churches. Why not measure what impact we are having on society?’

All the Presidents spoke of the need for divine encounter. Revd Canon Billy Kennedy, representing the New Churches, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Lutheran and German speaking Churches, said that in a ‘very fragmented world the Church needs to rediscover its confidence,’ and whilst language and culture change, ‘the need in human hearts hasn’t changed.’

Cardinal Nichols used the image of a rose window as a picture of the Church, ‘which always has Jesus at the centre’ he added, referring to the Churches working together in England.

There was an excellent Multi-voice Bible Study: Luke 24, 13-35. A conversation between William Kay a minister from British Assemblies of God, Patricia McDonald SHCJ, a Catholic religious sister and Janet Scott, a Quaker. All speakers seemed to dovetail into the other, giving food for thought on the passage on the road to Emmaus, with different perspectives but each one enriching.

There was a morning with an option of worship: • Celtic reflective morning prayer with the harp • Morning prayer in song with Noel Robinson • Orthodox Matins • Quaker meeting for worship based on silence • Roman Catholic Mass. The daily prayers within the hall were supported by Teresa Brown, resident musician, together with Noel Robinson, harpist Rowena Bass, jazz pianist John Bowman, singer Diana Stanbridge and drummer Chris Beckett. The diversity of the musicians both in style and church backgrounds was impressive. Teresa Brown composed, for the final worship, a combination of Rimsky-Korsakov’s setting of the Lord’s Prayer and

her own worship style music composition for Thine is the Kingdom....

The interactive style of small groups and workshops was welcomed and gave each one an opportunity to reflect on the paradox of our diversity yet oneness in Christ.

Paul Goodliff, incoming CTE General Secretary, when asked what should be the priorities for CTE as we travel forward, spoke of four priorities. Firstly, continuing the good work thus far; secondly, by renewing the focus of CTE upon mission; thirdly, rediscovering the way of discipleship for English Christians. And a fourth priority to find ways of speaking into the public square.

For me I came away enriched by the people I met and their depth of faith. So I am more aware and challenged by our differences and the hurdles to overcome before 'They may all be one', but with an ever greater certainty that Christ unites us more in our openness to embrace the other in our desire to live more and pray more. I experienced the need to grow in depth, understanding and appreciation that the gift of each person is a reflection of Christ, to believe in our common journey and desire that He is with us always – His transforming power.

Ann Gavin

A Personal Reflection on the CTE Forum

I write this in Nottingham station, a few last Forum delegates catching their trains outside. It has been 3 intense days of fellowship, prayer and learning. It was my first CTE Forum, and I did not know what to expect.

"I thought it would be a lot of the usual suspects of ecumenism," said a Church of Scotland delegate to me just this morning. "I guess I would probably count as one, but I was surprised to see so much new blood." As one of a number of under 35s prayed over towards the end of the Forum, I could sympathise: it was not just about the growing number of younger people involved, but also the newness of the people involved regardless of age. There was diversity in every respect you could think of, as much as Archbishop Anghelos of the Coptic Church called for the Church to be blind to what makes us different.

Not long before the final arrangements for the Forum were being made, I made the conscious decision of pushing out of my comfort zone. As an introvert who is more than comfortable in the traditions of the Catholic Church, it led me to embracing extemporary prayer and charismatic worship, but also to say yes to the invitations of the organisers to participate in a session with three of the CTE presidents, as well as lead a small group. This has shaped my experience of the Forum more than anything, if only because of the sudden rise in the number of people interested in talking to me about my question, which was something that will probably resonate with many.

My question was shaped by my experience of being questioned as a real

Christian for being Catholic, which includes in the not so distant past a pastor praying for my conversion; I know that it will resonate with people beyond the RC church, as many denominations seem to have strict ideas of what a “real Christian” is (a tendency that offers plentiful material to the satirical news website The Babylon Bee). It’s easy for church leaders not committed to ecumenism to sign up to do social projects with other churches even when prejudice exists that such churches are not “valid”; I have been involved with many of them. In such environments, there is a sense that theology is left at the door: it could be secular charities, you couldn’t tell. This poses the risk of us forgetting why we do it, which is the good works that flow from the living faith that St John wrote about in his epistle.



Alessia (centre) poses her question

My question then was what practical advice the presidents (who represented the less institutionalised traditions within the CTE) had for making sure ecumenism did not turn into just another project centred on social justice. While their answers had depth, my question was rather providentially answered by the announcement of Paul Goodliff as the incoming General Secretary of the CTE. He is one of the founders of the Order for Baptist Ministry, a dispersed order which prays a daily office, and Paul himself appeared, from his workshop on prayer (which I have attended), to be rather fond of the Catholic ways of praying. What better example of how to live ecumenically than learning to pray from one another instead of creating the most sanitised version of prayer that will not make anybody uncomfortable (or even work alongside each other with no prayer at all).

Another striking aspect of the Forum for me was the genuine willingness to embrace one another, from the Presidents at the top all down to the people not involved in organisational governance at the bottom. In a world of division and arguments that we must win, and seeing people as someone to win over to our side of the argument, it was heartening to see that we are still capable to share without preaching, and learn without fear of being changed by the other. There was no agenda, just different journeys with the Lord that all happened to be parallel for 3 days in the beautiful setting of rural Derbyshire.

Alessia Cesana

Photos by Chris Dobson, © Churches Together in England

Christian Unity Commission Forum

22 September 2018

The speaker at this year's Forum was **Rev David Tatem** who gave us an engaging talk about his life and its ecumenical journey. Born and raised a Methodist in a part of Plymouth with many Methodist churches and just one Anglican, he had no significant contact with Christians from other denominations till he moved to Bristol to study. He met his first Roman Catholics as well as Anglicans, Baptists and others in Bristol and was stimulated by these contacts.

He was invited to join a small ecumenical discussion group which included people from various denominations including a Catholic Priest and a Quaker. This was one of 50 groups round the world which met as a project of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. For several weeks they discussed the question, "What gives you hope?" David learned a great deal from these meetings; it was at this time that he went beyond being "an ecumenical tourist" and was "prepared to be changed".

He became a candidate for Ministry in the United Reformed Church/URC and chose to do his studies at the Cambridge Theological Federation, an ecumenical partnership which also included two Anglican colleges and one Methodist. There were "one or two" Catholic students there but no institution. He regretted that their studies did not include training in practical ecumenism as well as church history and the basic curriculum. The expectation was that with those studies an ecumenical understanding would rub off "and mostly it did". But he felt the lack of practical training when he had his first post: a URC church in St Albans opposite a Catholic one.

He had "reasonably good" relations with the neighbouring priest but an awkward situation arose when a woman, who turned out to be a Catholic, began coming to his church and receiving communion there. He didn't know what to do about it and in time she stopped coming. He now urges people preparing for ministry to include training in ecumenism.

For his second post he was an Ecumenical Chaplain in the Hatfield Root Group alongside Catholics, Quakers and others. He learned by experience there but again wished he had had some formal training. Some time later he was in a Local Ecumenical Partnership/LEP with the Moravian church in Bedford. That denomination began with Jan Huss before the Lutheran Reformation. They are very ecumenically minded and have a tradition of innovating – for example, they were the first to have Christingle services.

David was also part of the LEP in Milton Keynes based in Church of Christ the Cornerstone, representing Methodists and Baptists as well as the URC. In time Catholics joined the other denominations there and people in the town thought of them all as one team. He was treated like the Dean of a cathedral and often gave homilies at Catholic Masses just as Catholic priests preached for other denominations; the clergy on the team were interchangeable. Inevitably there was some con-

fusion and distress over the Catholic restriction of communion and he learned in time the occasions when non-Catholics could receive the sacrament as a matter of “pastoral necessity”.

Before his retirement a year ago David had spent eight years as the URC’s Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

He now has time to reflect on his long experience in the ecumenical field. LEPs offer a unique experience; they are not hierarchical but differ significantly at local and higher levels in ways which create quite a few difficulties. Where LEPs have existed for years and call themselves “United Churches”, there are tensions when representatives at national level are told they are *not* “united”. They are *partnerships* which means by definition discreet entities. Methodism, for example, has its own global structure and Methodists need to acknowledge that “and all its ecclesiologicalies”.

Tensions arise at local level too. David gave the example of a new LEP in the 1980s comprising many denominations: Catholic, Anglican, URC, Methodist and others. It was not working well and it turned out that the problem arose from different ideas of what was “local”. For Anglicans and the Free Churches the LEP was their local church, but the Catholics felt a strong connection with other Catholic churches. David sees this as a cultural matter and cultural differences can be very subtle. They relate to what makes you feel comfortable; things ranging from food and clothing to questions of theology which give a sense of group identity.

For some years David shared the leadership of a URC-RC Committee dialogue group with six URC members and six Catholics. Regarding the various differences between them, a decision was taken “to respect the theological position of the Other to allow them to be united”. For that end they were willing to be “mutually inconvenienced”. Many of the differences are historical and there are literally thousands of Protestant denominations. The dialogue group included one excellent church historian who helped them explore the range of misconceptions and stereotypes.

They also considered the confusions of language: not only where one word – e.g. “local” – has different meanings but the reverse of that, which David finds most interesting, where different words have the same meaning. The group compared their liturgies line by line: Why this word? Why that? What was said in the room stayed there so everyone could be completely open and honest.

Their consideration of Communion would have helped David when he started out in St Albans. Along with the exceptions for “pastoral necessity” he saw the different understanding of “communion” for Catholics and others. For Catholics, receiving the body of Christ in the sacrament was the Big Thing; it didn’t matter *where* it was received. For the others, receiving the bread and wine together with other members of one’s own community was the Big Thing. David told a story he found very moving of a minister in an LEP arranging for a dying woman to receive communion with a small group from her church, so she was receiving in community.

A deep appreciation of the Catholic sense came to David through a visit to India and

reading Dominique Lapierre's *City of Joy*, a novel based on the real life of a priest in Calcutta. A scene describes a massive flood overtaking the city, a mixture of sewage and water rushing past and a priest holding up a table covered with a white cloth and the shining monstrance containing the large host on top of it. David was impressed with a sense of great power emanating from it; the Real Presence.

Decision-making is another fundamental aspect of church life which differs and is often a source of misunderstanding. The URC has adopted a new method for its Assemblies which bears some similarities to the Quaker way. Following a presentation plus a question and answer session, people are asked for responses expressed through holding up blue cards (cool) or orange ones (warm). The moderator invites individuals to speak and takes further responses until in time a Common Mind emerges, with all in agreement.

URC members of the dialogue group probably all began with a rather naïve idea of how decisions are taken in the Catholic church – assuming they all come down through the Pope in Rome and then local Bishops. They were astounded to learn the actual degree of consultation and reference-making which goes on.

URC people in the pews generally know little or nothing about the international ecumenical dialogues of the World Communion of Reformed Churches/WCRC. The Roman Catholic – Lutheran dialogue which resulted in a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification/JDDJ in 1999 was adopted by Methodists in 2006 and, with the exception of two member churches, by the WCRC in 2017. With few exceptions, Christian bodies worldwide are signed up to this text affirming that salvation comes through faith in Christ by the grace of God. But David says most URC congregations are unaware of this. The work of chipping away stereotypes and prejudices is ongoing.

Toward the end of his talk David gave examples of what is now called Receptive Ecumenism and recommended a new online course from Churches Together in England called “Embracing the Other”. In this country, interest in the aspect of learning from other denominations and a mutual sharing of spiritual gifts is driven from the Catholic side but there is no Catholic input to this course:

https://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/306183/Home/Resources/Theology/Receptive_Ecumenism/Resources/Embracing_the_Other.aspx. It is designed for use by individuals as well as groups, one version with additional text in red to guide group leaders.



A personal example of Receptive Ecumenism which David has adopted is the Jesuit practice of Examen; he listens to the podcast every morning and showed us a slide of a statue inspired by it: black and white figures facing each other.

From his lifetime's experience, David knows that Christians can move beyond defensiveness about their particular traditions to openness toward and interest in the others. It takes time, it is not easy but it is God's will, "that the world may believe".

Alison Williams

Boats and Barnacles—A Story

Once upon a time there was a group of fishermen and some friends who had met a really inspiring man, a master mariner in fact, who had introduced them to some amazing facts about sailing and fishing which had completely blown them away. He had changed their lives, turned them upside down and inside out and had inspired them so much that after he went away they built a new kind of boat to carry them. It had beautiful but very simple sails to catch the wind and banks of oars so the crew could row in partnership with the wind; it always worked best when the wind and the oars were in partnership. It was sleek and fast and it could turn on a sixpence. It could cross oceans and sail up rivers and they travelled in it far and wide.



As time passed, the original crew died and the boat was passed on to others who had originally come on board as passengers but stayed to become crew and they in their turn passed it on to others who passed it on to others and so on down the years, but the boat continued to sail because it was well designed and it never sank. Gradually new crews began to make changes, improvements they called them, essential alterations and some of them were I guess. They stretched the hull and put in more seats - some of these were more comfortable than others - and nice cabins appeared too, for some, but there were just wooden benches for others. They re-designed the rigging, with main sails, headsails, jibs and spinnakers and ropes and tackle everywhere. Gradually it became more and more complicated to sail and they argued over who should give the orders and who should steer it and which direction it should go in and even what colour it should be painted and what you had to wear to crew it or even come on board. Some of them wanted to have a carved figurehead and some didn't and even the ones who did argued whether it should be a man or a woman and who would carve it, how big it should be and which way it should be facing and lots of other really important details.... and there was much disagreement.

I know it is jumping ahead a bit but one day someone invented the outboard motor and some of the crew said, 'Great, about time too! now we can stop rowing,' and others said, 'The what?' and others said, 'Over my dead body' and others said, 'The master mariner never said we should use one of them,' and again there was much disagreement. But all the while the wind kept blowing, sometimes soft and gentle and sometimes like a hurricane and the wind said to herself, 'Let's see what they make of this,' and spun them around in circles, and some got seasick and threw up over the side while others said, 'Wheeee!'

And all the while too, below the water line, barnacles were growing on the hull so the boat became heavier in the water and went more and more slowly. Every now and again somebody would notice the barnacles and wonder if they were part of the boat or not and even if they were damaging the boat, but then they would shrug and forget about it and go about their business. Eventually somebody got so fed up with the barnacles that they made a really big fuss about it, and there was so much disagreement that some people got off that boat and built another boat which was barnacle

free, for a while at least, but that boat got barnacles too, and so did the next boat and all the other boats that other people built when they got off the boats they thought hadn't been built properly or weren't going in the right direction. Some were supposed to have been painted with anti-fouling paint so that barnacles couldn't grow, but they did, and all the while, on all the boats, there were those who would say: "What beautiful barnacles we have been given, they are a gift that must be treasured!" So they formed groups called things like the 'barnacle appreciation and conservation society' and even the 'centre for the enhancement and advancement of barnacles.'

There were some who came to believe in their barnacles as being the only way to truly experience a boat, or even that really the barnacles were the boat, and often that those whose boats had different barnacles to theirs were not true boats and would eventually sink and the people on them be lost. At the same time others formed 'the league for the abolition of barnacles' and wrote treatises on 'the falseness of the barnacles on other boats and why we don't have them' and it got really complicated and then everyone started to write manuals. There were manuals for the crewing of the boat, with lots of organisational instructions and diagrams and dos and don'ts, and often it seemed like it was mostly don'ts; and manuals for the appreciation and advancement of barnacles, with rules, procedures and guidelines and of course, penalties for not doing it properly; and then there were the manuals for the removal of barnacles, including how to tell the difference between barnacles and the hull and especially the rudder and how to insult or even punish the people who liked barnacles ...and there was much disagreement.

And all the while the wind blew and it was really cooking up a storm and some of the boats were so engaged with the barnacle problem they barely noticed and some of them even thought that if they could convert the boat into a submarine they could escape beneath the storm and not be bothered by it. Some had started to think about converting theirs into a spaceship in order to escape completely above the storm and some had long ago turned theirs into houseboats, taken down the sails, sawn up the oars for firewood and even turned the outboard motor into a generator to power the television and the fridge and were happily moored up a quiet backwater growing tomatoes on the roof.

And all the while the wind blew but there were people on the different boats who waved to one another as they shot past each other, sometimes going in opposite directions, and when someone invented ship to ship radio they started to talk to one another and then they made visits to each other's boats and occasionally got together when they were in the same port or stuck on the same mudbank. They discovered that despite their differences they had an awful lot in common and that actually they had more in communion, sorry, in common with people on the other boats than they had with many of the people on their own boat! They often discovered that once upon a time their ancestors had crewed on the same boat but had had a really silly falling out, (well some of them had been pushed it's true) and that they shared the same thoughts about barnacles and they thought, 'We've got such a lot in common and so much to learn from one another,' and because they were so wary of barnaclisation they formed 'the society for the avoidance of barnacles' and the wiser ones said, 'Hold on, have we just made some more barnacles?' So they

were very careful, but they still went ahead and they felt the wind blowing harder and harder and the storm raging around them and their determination grew and they began to discuss if they shouldn't really now all be on one superboat to ride the storm and carry lots of passengers or whether they should maybe create a fleet of their boats, an armada even, that could travel close together and produce the same result as the superboat but perhaps with greater flexibility, better able to carry different types of passengers (including some that other boats didn't feel comfortable with), and they all wondered what the intention of the master mariner had been when he'd inspired those first fishermen.

And there was still much disagreement but not as much as before, because partly thanks to the ship to ship radio and the visits to each other's boats and the wind, of course, they didn't so much argue, like they used to, as listen to one another and ask each other and themselves questions and gradually they began to understand the barnacle problem better and to learn afresh some of the subtler skills of sailing and to learn patience because, let's be honest, the boats weren't little ones any more. Many of them had become great big ocean liners and you can't turn an ocean liner, and especially a fleet of them, on a sixpence. It takes quite a long time. But the wind is patient and she never stops blowing.

David Tatem

Following on from the successful visits of recent years to help us discover more about our fellow Christians, here is news of the next one.

The visit will be to the **Greek Orthodox Church in Welling** on **Wednesday 7th November**. The plan is to arrive from 2.30pm when refreshments will be available in the nearby church hall belonging to St Michael's Anglican Church.



Around 3pm Rev Gerald Theodore Hopkin will take us to their small church, beautifully decorated with icons. He and his wife will speak to us about the Greek Orthodox faith, concentrating on what we, as Catholics, have in common with them, allowing time for questions. Around 4pm Rev Gerald will lead a service of Evening Vespers for the feast of St Michael and the Archangels, which they celebrate at a different time to us.

The address of the church is: Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, DA16 3AP. There is a car park belonging to St Michael's Church where you can park if coming by car. If you travel by train, there is a good service to Welling station from London or Kent. The church is a bit of a distance from the station, so if you let us know which train you are arriving on, lifts can be arranged.

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EDITOR

Rev Michael Baldry

togetherinchrist@hotmail.co.uk

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