



This is a personal paper presented at a conference provided for further discussion

## Theology and praxis of Ecumenism and Evangelisation: a perspective in England, June 2015.

### Introduction

In the Catholic ecumenical journal *One in Christ*,<sup>1</sup> three major documents and affirmations of mission and evangelisation were likened to London busses. The old analogy of waiting a long time and then turning up together is apt. After decades of waiting, the three documents arrived within weeks of each other.

Considering the three significant texts, I hope to illustrate how they reflect a fresh chapter in our common ecclesial life. In particular, I'll explore a perceived shift in current theological thinking that, I believe, drives a new praxis – and relationship - for both ecumenism and evangelisation in England today.

The three significant documents are:

Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World by Pope Francis. 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013<sup>2</sup> (previous exhortation 1975).<sup>3</sup>

Challenges for the Quinquennium: Intentional Evangelism. GS 1917, agreed by the General Synod of the Church of England and signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for the two Provinces of the Church of England in October 2013<sup>4</sup> (following *Making New Disciples* in 2011).<sup>5</sup>

Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes, A New WCC Affirmation on Mission and Evangelism presented with resource materials at the World Council of Churches 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly at Busan, Korea in November 2013<sup>6</sup> (previous affirmation 1982).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One in Christ is a Catholic ecumenical journal, published by the Olivetan Benedictines of Turvey and Rostrevor. [www.oneinchrist.org.uk](http://www.oneinchrist.org.uk). Volume 48, Number 1, 2014, p39.

<sup>2</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

<sup>3</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1872415/gs%201917%20-%20intentional%20evangelism.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1783339/gs%20misc%201054%20-%20making%20new%20disciples.pdf>

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For this paper all three documents will be referred by their short common popular names: *The Joy of the Gospel*; *Intentional Evangelism* and *Together Towards Life*, and usually in this order. Most reference will be to *The Joy of the Gospel* as the theme of this conference, and then *Intentional Evangelism* as the context is England.

I am writing as the person with the brief for *Evangelisation, Mission and Media* at Churches Together in England (CTE).<sup>8</sup> I want to stress this is a personal perspective and not an agreed position paper of CTE.

## Language of evangelisation in the English Context

There are currently 43 member denominations of Churches Together in England<sup>9</sup> represented by 6 Presidents for different traditions i.e. Orthodox, Pentecostal, Catholic, Anglican, Free Churches, and 'Other'.<sup>10</sup> Each tradition can use words like 'mission', 'evangelism', 'evangelisation' in a different way, as illustrated by two helpful resources:

1. *What Mission means: a collection of comments on the definition of Mission* collated and available from Action of Churches Together in Scotland.<sup>11</sup>
2. *Foundations for Mission: a study of language, theology and praxis from the UK and Ireland perspective* from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.<sup>12</sup>

So you know where I am coming from (and what assumptions I might make in this paper), let me quote the *Five Marks of Mission*. It is quoted in *Intentional Evangelism* for the Church of England, but is often used by other denominations too. It is a framework I relate to, thinking that all 'five marks' describe 'mission', while the first two, 'evangelisation'.

The *Five Marks of Mission* are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptize, and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

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<sup>6</sup> It was released as a formal document of the WCC having previously been unanimously agreed at a Central Council meeting of WCC in September 2012. The presentation at Busan (accompanied with A Practical Guide which included Bible study, prayer and songs), followed a plenary meeting of the Council for World Mission and Evangelism, as detailed in a WCC News Release dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.mission2005.org/fileadmin/files/mission\\_statements\\_web.pdf](http://www.mission2005.org/fileadmin/files/mission_statements_web.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [www.cte.org.uk](http://www.cte.org.uk)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234690/Home/About/Member\\_Churches\\_of/Member\\_Churches\\_of.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234690/Home/About/Member_Churches_of/Member_Churches_of.aspx)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234711/Home/About/Presidents/The\\_six\\_Presidents/The\\_six\\_Presidents.asp](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234711/Home/About/Presidents/The_six_Presidents/The_six_Presidents.asp)

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<sup>11</sup> [http://www.acts-](http://www.acts-scotland.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=12&Itemid=78)

[scotland.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=12&Itemid=78](http://www.acts-scotland.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=12&Itemid=78)

<sup>12</sup> Anne Richards, Ed. *Foundations for Mission*. CTBI. 2010

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5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.<sup>13</sup>

In CTE there is a great deal of interchange between the key words and little discussion about nuance and meaning. These days, rarely does someone say, 'That is evangelism not evangelisation', or 'It makes a difference how you spell evangelisation'. Most people are informed about root and meaning but there is little concern or debate about which particular word is used.

There is even interchangeability, as illustrated by Catholic colleagues who sometimes speak of 'evangelism', as with the *SION Community for Evangelism*,<sup>14</sup> and colleagues in CTE who might normally speak of 'evangelism' respectfully using the word 'evangelisation' when Catholic colleagues are present. In general, the *Five Marks of Mission* are understood and sufficient.

Unless quoting *The Joy of the Gospel* (where evangelization is spelt with a 'z'), I shall spell with an 's' as that is how it is often used CTE (as in my role title). I was interested to hear from Professor Kirsteen Kim that there is no particular theological significance in using 's' or 'z': '... it's just spelling. Most of the world now uses US English, and actually in most cases '-ization' is also an alternative in British English as well'.<sup>15</sup>

## **'New Evangelization' and 'New Ecumenism'**

*The Joy of the Gospel* says, 'we cannot forget that evangelization is first and foremost about preaching the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him. Many of them are seeking him ... All of them have a right to receive the Gospel. Christians have a duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone'.<sup>16</sup> This evangelization is 'new' in that it is now primarily addressed to people outside the church rather than the lapsed.

Other denominations do not make this distinction about 'new' but understand the history and respect it so may make reference to the 'New Evangelization' as in *The Joy of the Gospel*. However, 'new evangelization' is not a phrase in regular use by other denominations. Further, in ecumenical circles Catholic colleagues seem quite happy to use the shorter 'evangelisation' word without further qualification. As I am on staff at CTE, 'evangelisation' is the word I'll use.

Of particular significance for the Catholic community at the current time is *Proclaim '15*,<sup>17</sup> an initiative of the Catholic Bishops Conference for England Wales<sup>18</sup> that has a host of resources for Catholic parishes to be more missionary, focussed on a national conference to be held on July 11<sup>th</sup> 2015. I have the privilege on behalf of CTE of taking 10 ecumenical guests to join the 800 parish delegates. Hosted by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, I am particularly pleased that one of

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<sup>13</sup>(Bonds of Affection-1984 ACC-6 p49, Mission in a Broken World-1990 ACC-8 p101) - See more at:

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/fivemarks.cfm#sthash.68Hdnll6.dpuf>

<sup>14</sup> [www.sioncommunity.org.uk](http://www.sioncommunity.org.uk)

<sup>15</sup> Email correspondence

<sup>16</sup> op.cit. #15

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/proclaim15>

<sup>18</sup> [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk)

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his co-presidents of CTE<sup>19</sup> is free to attend: Billy Kennedy from *Pioneer*, one of the 'new' churches described as 'an "apostolic" movement of churches and ministries founded in the mid-80s' ... which is 'committed to the re-evangelisation of our nation and to see the Kingdom of God expressed in every sphere of society and culture'.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, *Pioneer* is a partner with the Methodist church in a number of local initiatives re-planting churches c.f. *Pioneer Connexion*.<sup>21</sup>

In CTE there are a number of 'new' churches. In addition, within denominations, there are 'new forms of church, 'new ways of being church', emerging church' and fresh expressions' of church, as detailed in the Church of England report *Mission-Shaped Church* in 2003.<sup>22</sup> *Fresh Expressions*<sup>23</sup> is an ecumenical team and movement that supports over 3000 new churches that are 'a new gathering or network that engages mainly with people who have never been to church'<sup>24</sup> e.g. in a café, club, school, new housing area, etc. Research *From Anecdote to Evidence* suggests about a quarter of people attending a Fresh Expression are existing Christians, about a third had attended church sometime in the past, while just under a half have not attended church before. In the Catholic community we hear of new ecclesial movements and communities that fits with Catholic ecclesiology of the universal Church.<sup>25</sup>

At CTE we are also used to hearing about 'New Ecumenism'. It is used to describe agendas like 'environment' or 'Inter-Faith'. A conference called *The World is My Neighbour: Bossey and a New Ecumenism*, explored aspects of this in relation to spirituality, pilgrimage, justice and peace.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps most often, groups of Churches Together use it to describe developments, restructure and (even a new name for network of 50 churches like 'Hope' Coventry) with a fresh intent for mission. In the Midlands town of Rugby the churches replaced three groups of 'Churches Together' and launched a new unity network for mission called 'Revive Rugby'. A paper describing this uses the heading 'new ecumenism'.<sup>27</sup>

I was recently asked to speak to the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council about the 'New Ecumenism', I began by suggesting a difficulty with the title as it presupposes an 'Old' Ecumenism and a choice to be made. Nevertheless, I said, many of the 2,600 groups of Churches Together in England in cities, towns and villages, are restructuring for mission and finding new life and vitality, in what I prefer to call 'a new chapter'. Churches Together groups at a county level are doing the same.

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<sup>19</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234711/Home/About/Presidents/The\\_six\\_Presidents/The\\_six\\_Presidents.asp](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234711/Home/About/Presidents/The_six_Presidents/The_six_Presidents.asp)

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<sup>20</sup> <http://pioneer.org.uk/about/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://pioneerconnexion.org.uk/>

<sup>22</sup> Mission-Shaped Church. CHP 2003. P33

<sup>23</sup> in formal partnership with the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Congregational Federation, the Methodist Church of Great Britain, The Salvation Army, and the United Reformed Church

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/about/whatis>

<sup>25</sup> From Anecdote to Evidence. Church Commissioners. 2014. P 15 and [www.churchgrowthresearch.org.uk](http://www.churchgrowthresearch.org.uk)

<sup>26</sup> <https://ctbi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/The-World-is-my-Neighbour-Bossey-and-a-New-Ecumenism-Reflections-Mary-Tanner.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.reviverugby.net/Articles/325479/Revive/News\\_and\\_Events/A\\_New\\_Ecumenism.aspx](http://www.reviverugby.net/Articles/325479/Revive/News_and_Events/A_New_Ecumenism.aspx)

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At CTE we tend to resist using the phrase 'New Ecumenism', even if we are asked to speak about it! Recent internal documents of CTE speak of 'classical ecumenism' or 'historic ecumenism'<sup>28</sup> to make the point of difference. In the *One in Christ* article which introduced this paper, I used the phrase 'New Chapter',<sup>29</sup> while in another place, an 'Ecumenical Spring'.<sup>30</sup> This development is illustrated by two eminent English ecumenists.

## **An 'Ecumenical Winter,' or an 'Ecumenical Spring'?**

Keith Clements was General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches<sup>31</sup> for eight years, and writes in his book *Ecumenical Dynamic*:

*'Today there is a wide consensus that, to put it variously, we are in an "ecumenical winter" both internationally and nationally, that the ecumenical movement has "run out of steam", that "ecumenism as we have known it has failed" and "ecumenism is quite simply dead".<sup>32</sup>*

As evidence for this view, Clements quotes an interview with national church leaders during a recent Week of Prayer for Christian Unity saying:

*'The result, to anyone hoping for a fresh injection of energy into the ecumenical movement, was not exactly encouraging'<sup>33</sup> adding, '... the visions largely consisted of incontrovertible generalisations about the unity of the Church for the sake of the kingdom of God" and "to put Jesus first and to be the Church that he has called us to be" while the overall impression was that "we have to work with [denominational] situations as they are" together with an unexpected complacent comment (as far as ecumenical history is concerned) that "previous generations saw structural unity as the expression of this faithfulness – an inward focus. Today we are apt to focus outward, on the work, sharing our resources and working together". The overall impression left by these views from the top is that, for the time being the churches have felt to have done all that could be expected of them in mutual rapprochement' ... adding 'the inference is that for most church leaders ecumenism has been left at the bottom of the in-tray while more pressing matters arrive at the desk'.<sup>34</sup>*

In some contrast, David Cornick, the current General Secretary of Churches Together in England, provided a paper when he spoke to the Cambridge Ecumenical Council in April 2015 saying:

*CTE has changed, It is not a council, it's a meeting place. It is not a bureaucratic conundrum, it's a living conversation. It is not yesterday's tired structures and turgid agendas, it's a celebration of witness and service...*

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<sup>28</sup> Changing landscape of Ecumenism, a paper by Revd Dr David Cornick, General Secretary of Churches Together in England, as presented to the Cambridge Ecumenical Council 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Paper to the CTE Enabling Group, September 2012

<sup>31</sup> [www.ceceurope.org](http://www.ceceurope.org)

<sup>32</sup> Keith Clements, *Ecumenical Dynamic*, WCC 2013 p13

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Op.cit. p14

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*...I think the ecumenical tide is beginning to turn, an ecumenical Spring rather than an ecumenical winter is in the offing. But it's not what we expected. Across the country new mission focused unity movements are springing up – let me give you one example. In Southampton the evangelical Southampton Christian Network, Churches Together and the mainly black Southampton Pastors Network have come together to form 'Love Southampton'. They have been working with the local authority to try and serve the community in the wake of government austerity. The churches worked out that between them they provide 17 fulltime youth workers and 37 parent and toddler groups across the city, and they are now the major providers of youth and under 5 services across the city. The council was spending £1.2 million paying agencies to find families for adoption. The churches have taken on that work and since March 2013 have found 70 people willing to be foster carers. And so it goes on – food banks, free breakfast for 60 every Saturday, teams going into schools to lead assemblies, Street Pastors, pregnancy counselling and so on. It is an extraordinary development which we are watching closely with our friends and colleagues in the Evangelical Alliance.*

David Cornick continues:

*For those white haired ecumenists like me its 'Life and Work' rather than 'Faith and Order'. But listen to a URC minister in Southampton – 'I think unity, though not uniformity, among Christians is crucial. When we see God at work with people others scorn or ignore, and join in, that's good news. I want Love Southampton to become one of the many ways in which we can embody good news in this city' and her Evangelical Pastor colleague – 'There is a desire to seek the good of the city rather than an individual church. While we have theological and church differences, they are recognised, respected and celebrated. We are one church here.'*

*'Do we need a new vision of unity, I wonder, which begins with the broken Christ, and accepts our brokenness and division?*

*One swallow doesn't make an ecumenical summer, but this breaking down of barriers in community service across the country is surely significant. So too is the slow but steady development of relations across ethnic barriers as black and white churches grow in trust and understanding of each other. So too is the very traditional ecumenical 'next step' in Cumbria as the Anglican diocese, the URC Synod and the Methodist District develop 'an ecumenical county'. Being an ecumenical instrument or a County body, is about holding that balance between the new and the historic, discerning the times of the times.<sup>35</sup>*

## **The root of ecumenism and evangelization in the Vine**

At the risk of stating the obvious, the root for the relationship between evangelization and ecumenism is in a Biblical text: John 17: 20/21, often described as the 'High Priestly Prayer' of Jesus. It is not the only text<sup>36</sup> but it is perhaps the most quoted: 'My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father,

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/148182/Home/Photo\\_Stock/Extra\\_photos/One\\_Light\\_One.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/148182/Home/Photo_Stock/Extra_photos/One_Light_One.aspx)

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just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me' (NIV).

There is much debate about the interpretation of this text for our times and whether the 'one' in the prayer means what we often mean by 'one' today. In addition, there is the question as to whether the phrase 'that the world may believe you have sent me' is equivalent to evangelisation in our context. Aware of this I want to take a generalist view - often quoted by both evangelists and ecumenists as the inspiration for their life's work - on face value. What interests me more is that 'evangelisation' and 'ecumenism' has often had an uncomfortable relationship, even though they are inspired by the same text! As Colin Marsh wrote in *Mission-shaped Unity: Missio Dei and a New Way of Being Churches Together*: 'When I told a friend was writing about mission and ecumenism, "What!" he exclaimed, "mission and ecumenism in the same sentence; they are contradictions!"'<sup>37</sup>

The High Priestly prayer of Jesus in John 17 and his prayer that we may be 'one' is, I believe, to be read in the light of the vine and the branches which preceded it. We are one because we are in Christ, and out of him all life flows. As churches, we are all different however, growing in different directions as separate branches. As such, there is an inherent paradox in our unity – we are at the same time one in Christ, yet separate churches going in different directions.

'Classical' and 'historic' ecumenism has tended to look at the difference between churches e.g. since the Lund Principle of 1952 asked re conversation and other Churches, 'whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?'<sup>38</sup> 50 years ago *Unitatis Redintegratio*<sup>39</sup> explored, 'the restoration of unity among all Christians'.<sup>40</sup> However, if there is fresh energy in ecumenism it is not so much about visible unity but what the churches can do together in the world. For both ecumenism and evangelisation, the focus is now less 'church' and more 'local community'. This is one key element of the 'new chapter' and a sign of the times.

This was illustrated in a recent consultation of County Ecumenical Officers (CEOs)<sup>41</sup> when asked about new initiatives in Churches Together groups. They spoke about the new unity movements for mission linked through *We Gather*<sup>42</sup>, the growing network of food banks coordinated by the *Trussell Trust*<sup>43</sup> the night time initiatives like teams of *Street Pastors*<sup>44</sup> and *Street Angels*,<sup>45</sup> as well as a wide

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<sup>37</sup> Colin Marsh and Jim Currin, *Mission-shaped Unity: New way of Being Churches Together*, Grovebooks, 2013 p25

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/240503/Home/Resources/Local\\_Ecumenism/Sharing\\_a\\_common/Sharing\\_a\\_common.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/240503/Home/Resources/Local_Ecumenism/Sharing_a_common/Sharing_a_common.aspx)

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/247722/Home/Resources/Theology/Unitatis\\_Redintegratio/Unitatis\\_Redintegratio.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/247722/Home/Resources/Theology/Unitatis_Redintegratio/Unitatis_Redintegratio.aspx)

<sup>40</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19641121\\_unitatis-redintegratio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html)

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234721/Home/About/EcumenicalOfficers/County\\_or\\_Intermediate/County\\_or\\_Intermediate.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234721/Home/About/EcumenicalOfficers/County_or_Intermediate/County_or_Intermediate.aspx)

<sup>42</sup> [www.wegather.co.uk](http://www.wegather.co.uk)

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.trusselltrust.org/>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.streetpastors.co.uk/>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.sa-cni.org.uk/>

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variety of joint initiatives with prayer networks, justice and peace groups, Inter-Faith discussions, climate change action, conferences on welfare reform etc.

In terms of inter-church relations, a significant development and energy has come with conferences exploring 'Receptive Ecumenism'. In a recent consultation of CEOs, Callan Slipper<sup>46</sup> was speaking about 'Receptive Ecumenism' in a session I was also speaking about evangelisation. We both made the point that new ways in ecumenism and evangelisation start, not so much with ourselves, but the 'other'. Further, the 'other' is less often seen as 'different' and more as 'gift'. We shall explore a theological shift which I believe accounts for that welcome development, but first let's consider fresh impetus for evangelisation.

## **Exhortation, Intention and Affirmation of Evangelisation**

The three texts all arrived on our desks – or as a download in the Inbox - at the end of 2013, most significantly without any real cross referencing about the timescale. Although the Anglican Bishop of Sheffield, Steven Croft, had been an Anglican Fraternal Delegate at the Synod of Bishops for the New Evangelization,<sup>47</sup> and Bishop Steven was behind much of the Church of England document *Intentional Evangelism*,<sup>48</sup> I am not aware of formal dialogues, comparison of notes, joint meetings or linked writing groups to compare texts and agree timetables. This makes the arrival of these three texts all the more extraordinary.

The apparent lack of collaboration says that evangelisation is naturally top of the agenda for many churches. The *Joy of the Gospel* puts this most strongly, saying evangelisation is the first task of the Church. Pope Paul VI said evangelization was the 'vocation proper' and 'deepest identity',<sup>49</sup> while Pope Francis quotes Pope John Paul II, 'because this is the first task of the Church'.<sup>50</sup> Led by the Pontiffs, the point is very clear: the task of evangelisation should be the top priority of the church.

In the opening words of his first exhortation, Pope Francis, writing for the 'Bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and the lay faithful', 'on the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world'<sup>51</sup> begins: 'The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark on a

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<sup>46</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/237389/Home/News/Reflection\\_of\\_the/2014\\_Reflections/Touched\\_with\\_Gold/Touched\\_with\\_Gold.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/237389/Home/News/Reflection_of_the/2014_Reflections/Touched_with_Gold/Touched_with_Gold.aspx)

<sup>47</sup> In the preserved archive <http://bishopofsheffield.blogspot.co.uk/> Bishop Steven has two relevant articles: one on his attendance at the Synod of Catholic Bishops, the other his discussion paper, *The Seven Disciplines of Evangelisation* used in *Intentional Evangelism*.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html) paragraph 14.

<sup>50</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html) paragraph 15.

<sup>51</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

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new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the church's journey in years to come'.<sup>52</sup>

*Intentional Evangelism* begins: 'To proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ is also to proclaim the vision of Jesus Christ for God's world, for humankind and for the whole of creation'<sup>53</sup> and concludes: 'it is vital to hold together the call to grow the Church through making disciples with the call to serve the common good of the whole society and the re-imagining of ministry which will make both possible'.<sup>54</sup>

*Together Towards Life* is introduced with the words: 'We are the servants of the Triune God, who has given us the mission of proclaiming the good news to all humanity and creation, especially the oppressed and the suffering people who are longing for fullness of life. Mission – as a common witness to Christ – is an invitation to the "feast in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15). The mission of the church is to prepare the banquet and to invite all people to the feast of life'.<sup>55</sup>

I think it is significant that each is emphasizing the needs of the 'other' person and wider world rather than the Christians need to impart truth.

This is a shift in emphasis from 'old style' evangelism and perhaps the reason why RT Kendall (a well-known preacher and author and for 25 years the minister of Westminster Chapel) feels the need to write an open letter to the UK church about not watering down the gospel, saying: 'the gospel is always under siege, particularly at a theological level. The enemy will always seek to rob the gospel of its stigma and its power. I applaud those who affirm Paul's teaching of the blood of Christ propitiating the justice of God. Our calling is not to make the gospel palatable, but to tell it as it is, and this includes the unpalatable truth about God's wrath and judgment to come'.<sup>56</sup>

RT Kendall is defending a view of the Gospel not expressed in the titles *Together Towards Life* or *The Joy of the Gospel*. Indeed his is a view that is at odds with many English Christians who, I suspect, warm more to words of Pope Francis in the opening line of his exhortation about 'joy' ... 'encounter with Jesus' ... and being 'set free'. Certainly that is the theme of *Stepping Into Evangelism*<sup>57</sup> where Mark Russell writes, 'It's not called "Good News" for nothing!'<sup>58</sup> and *Sharing Jesus*<sup>59</sup> where Roy Crowne writes 'We need to co-operate with God's Holy Spirit, listening well to God and to the people we are with, so we can speak appropriately at the right time'.

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<sup>52</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid p5

<sup>54</sup> Ibid p6

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/mission-and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes>

<sup>56</sup> RT Kendall, Christianity magazine, June 2015 p2.

<sup>57</sup> Stepping Into Evangelism. [www.churcharmy.org.uk](http://www.churcharmy.org.uk)

<sup>58</sup> Op.cit. P8

<sup>59</sup> Sharing Jesus. SJI/Hope 2014.

[http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Articles/386797/Sharing\\_Jesus.aspx#.VV5CuaNwbZ4](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Articles/386797/Sharing_Jesus.aspx#.VV5CuaNwbZ4)

## Evangelii Gaudium quoted

In today's English ecumenical climate we are well used to Christian leaders and documents of one tradition using the resources and quoting from rich traditions of another. This is quite natural and often goes unnoticed.

*Intentional Evangelism* from the Church of England quotes the Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops, 'The Christian faith is not simply teachings, wise sayings, a code of morality or a tradition. The Christian faith is a true encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ'<sup>60</sup> while the Archbishop of Canterbury quoted Pope Francis in his very first Lambeth lecture, from the 'wonderful Encyclical': 'And of course Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* said "why is it that so many people go to evangelise looking as though they've just come from a funeral?"'<sup>61</sup>

We are also used to national church leaders being in services or sharing a stage together. The CTE Presidents prayed for the 2015 General Election at Methodist Central Hall; the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster too part in the reburial of King Richard III in an Anglican Cathedral. Carey Lodge, writing in *Christian Today*, says Archbishop Welby and Cardinal Nichols had a 'standing ovation' as they quoted Pope Francis and 'declared unity' from the stage of the Royal Albert Hall at the HTB Leadership Conference hosted by Nicky Gumbel'.<sup>62</sup> Note, the stage was re evangelisation as the conference was about leadership and the Alpha course – through which the Archbishop of Canterbury himself became a follower of Jesus.

In a very different context the formal English dialogue between the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church,<sup>63</sup> discussed evangelisation and *The Joy of the Gospel*. The Anglican co-chair, Bishop Tim Thornton, says they have commissioned Paula Gooder to write a popular guide to *Evangelii Gaudium* under the imprint of the Anglican publishing house, CHP.

*The Joy of the Gospel* may be a Catholic document but it is not confined to the Catholic Church.

## Ecumenism and Evangelisation – coming together again

We have already noted that the root text most often quoted for both ecumenism and evangelisation is the prayer of Jesus in John 17 which has two dynamics, the first 'that they may be one', the second, 'that they may believe'. This was the inspiration for the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 which is sometimes cited as the start of the modern ecumenical movement. However reflecting on the developments that followed, in 1953 Lesslie Newbigin, missionary and ecumenist, felt moved to write:

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<sup>60</sup> Op Cit p4

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5515/archbishop-of-canterburys-lecture-on-evangelism>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/standing.ovation.as.justin.welby.and.cardinal.vincent.nichols.declare.unity/53362.htm>

<sup>63</sup> [www.cte.org.uk/arc](http://www.cte.org.uk/arc)

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*'The ecumenical movement has been a by-product of the missionary movement, arising out of the missionary experience of the Churches outside of the old Christendom, and enormously reinforced by the experience of the Churches within Christendom which have found themselves here also in a missionary situation face to face with new paganisms. It is important to bear this fact in mind, for the ecumenical movement will become fatally corrupted if it does not remain true to the missionary origins. The very name ought to be a safeguard, where it is remembered that in the New Testament oikumene never means the worldwide Church but always the whole inhabited earth to which the Church is sent. There is a real danger at the present time of a false sort of ecumenism, an attempt to find consolation amid the wreckage of the old Christendom in the vision of the new and wider Christendom, yet without the acceptance of the hard demands of missionary obedience. The attractions of this broad and comfortable blind alley must be resisted. There can be no true ecumenical movement except that which is missionary through and through, for there can be no true doctrine of the Church which is to be held, so to say, in the tension of urgent obedience between the Saviour and the world He came to save'.<sup>64</sup>*

In 1990, the British Council of Churches deliberately became 'national ecumenical instruments' of which CTE is the instrument for 'England', following the statement of church leaders called the *Swanwick Declaration* that says about unity and mission:

*We now declare together our readiness to commit ourselves to each other under God. Our earnest desire is to become more fully, in his own time, the one Church of Christ, united in faith, communion, pastoral care and mission. Such unity is the gift of God .... In the unity we seek we recognise that there will not be uniformity but legitimate diversity. It is our conviction that, as a matter of policy at all levels and in all places, our churches must now move from co-operation to clear commitment to each other, in search of the unity for which Christ prayed and in common evangelism and service of the world.*

'Legitimate diversity' is an interesting phrase. In 1990 there were 16 member churches: now in 2015 there are 43, many of whom would not see 'full visible unity' as their ecumenical goal.

In the past 10 years at CTE I have heard a wide variety of diverse ecumenical agendas and different goals on the ecumenical journey. Here is a list of 'Five Voices' to aid further discussion. Different goals are:

1. Working Together
2. Mutual Accountability
3. Full Visible Unity
4. 'Whole inhabited earth'
5. Coming kingdom of God<sup>65</sup>

My own view is that number 5 is what Jesus preached and it encompassed 1-4. The coming kingdom transforms local communities and is the aim of many new 'unity movements for mission, as with the

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<sup>64</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *Mission Theologian*, A Reader compiled by Paul Weston SPCK 2006, p120,121, quoting from *The Household of God*: Newbigin 1953.

<sup>65</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/236181/Home/Resources/Relationships/Discussion\\_papers\\_audios/5\\_Marks\\_of/5\\_Marks\\_of.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/236181/Home/Resources/Relationships/Discussion_papers_audios/5_Marks_of/5_Marks_of.aspx)

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Gather network guide *A Vision for Transformation* by Roger Sutton<sup>66</sup>, and *Hope*, about which Roy Crowne says: 'We're seeing more churches reach out to their communities than ever before, demonstrating the good news through their words and actions. Churches are partnering together to be able to do more, showing the cross-cultural unity, and seeing their communities changed as a result'.<sup>67</sup>

The 'coming kingdom of God' is also key to evangelisation and mission as expressed in *Together Towards Life*, 'The church is a gift of God to the world for its transformation towards the kingdom of God. Its mission is to bring new life and announce the loving presence of God in our world.'<sup>68</sup> *Intentional Evangelism* says: 'Jesus proclaimed the coming kingdom of God in his actions and his words. Through the image of the kingdom, Jesus articulated and focused a vision for the creation and for the whole of human society. He called both men and women to follow him as disciples, to be with him and to be sent out.'<sup>69</sup> Pope Francis put it this way: 'The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (cf. Lk 4:43); it is about God who reigns in our world' ... Jesus mission is to inaugurate the kingdom of his father; he commands his disciples to proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 10:7)'.<sup>70</sup>

Put simply, emphasizing a theology of the kingdom, rather than the church, brings both ecumenism and evangelisation back together. It is a reflection of a theological shift I wish to explore next.

## New thinking in theology

My premise is that in the Western Church we have generally inherited a Pauline view of ecumenism and evangelisation, and now we are rediscovering a Jesus view. Further, this shift is making a massive difference to the way mission and ministry is currently being exercised in the English context – illustrated I believe by many of the examples of praxis already quoted above.

This shift is, I believe, closely related but even more fundamental to another: the *Missio Dei*.<sup>71</sup> Put very simply, the 'mission of the church' (mission ecclesiae) is associated to Paul and the development of the church, and the 'mission of God' (Missio Dei) aligned with Jesus and his incarnation/mission. If we move the focus of our theology from one person to the other, we also move our model of mission. I realise this is an area of much debate so will carefully track the theological shift from 'Paul' to 'Jesus' by quoting relevant key missiological texts over recent decades to the present.

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.gather.global/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/A-Vision-for-Transformation-Roger-Sutton.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> The Heartbeat for Mission, Hope 2013 p5

[http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Shop/Products/494380/Hope08\\_shop\\_products/HOPE\\_The\\_Heartbeat.aspx#.VV5D7aNwbZ4](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Shop/Products/494380/Hope08_shop_products/HOPE_The_Heartbeat.aspx#.VV5D7aNwbZ4)

<sup>68</sup> op.cit. #10

<sup>69</sup> op.cit. p 2

<sup>70</sup> op.cit #180

<sup>71</sup> Marsh and Currin

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A general observation is that our theological words re evangelisation have generally been Pauline – words like conversion, adoption, justification, regeneration, redemption, sanctification, salvation, election etc. Significantly, today, these words do not surface much in *The Joy of the Gospel*, *Intentional Evangelism* or *Together Towards Life*.

When the eminent missiologist Roland Allen wrote his influential book in 1912 challenging mission practice, he assumed the comparison not with Jesus but with Paul in *Missionary Methods: St Pauls or Ours?*<sup>72</sup>

When CH Dodd wrote *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development* in 1936 he captivated many with the concept of Paul's preaching and proclamation as *kerygma*, to which Michael Green refers in *Evangelism Now and Then* with a summary at to what the kerygma might have been: 'The age of fulfilment has dawned, as the scripture foretold. God has sent his Messiah, Jesus. He died in shame upon a cross. God raised him again from the tomb. He is now Lord, at God's right hand. The proof of this is the Holy Spirit whose affects you see. This Jesus will come again at the end of history. Repent, believe and be baptized'.<sup>73</sup>

In the ground breaking work of Catholic scholars Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, (exploring mission in the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation), we read: 'The importance of Paul for the biblical foundations for mission can hardly be exaggerated' adding, 'alone among New Testament writers, Paul gives the most systematic presentation of a universal Christian vision. The force of Paul's word and personality and the energy of his missionary commitment continue to make the Pauline letters a powerful challenge to the church's self-understanding'.<sup>74</sup> Contrast these comments with those earlier in the book about Jesus, 'Almost all of Jesus' universal mission commissions found in the Gospels are presented in *post*-Easter contexts', adding 'Thus the Gospels do not offer strong evidence that during his lifetime Jesus of Nazareth engaged in an explicitly universal mission, nor did he so commission his disciples'.<sup>75</sup>

More recently, in 2004, Bishop Stephen Sykes wrote, '... some of the assumptions traditionally made by British evangelicals are changing under the impact of theological enquiry and argument. For example, the idea that there is one standard type of conversion experience – usually modelled on that of St Paul – is no longer presupposed; there can be a variety of journeys into faith. Nor is it assumed that conviction of sin must figure prominently in the preparation for conversion. Moreover, multiple conversions over a period of time are quite common, as in rededication and recommitment'.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> [http://www.amazon.com/Missionary-Methods-St-Pauls-Ours/dp/0802810012#reader\\_0802810012](http://www.amazon.com/Missionary-Methods-St-Pauls-Ours/dp/0802810012#reader_0802810012)

<sup>73</sup> Michael Green, *Evangelism Now and Then*, IVP1979 p65

<sup>74</sup> Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, SCM. 1983 p161

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid* p142

<sup>76</sup> Gavin Wakefield, *Sharing Faith*. BRF 2004, in the Foreword by Bishop Sykes p11

## Rediscovering a Jesus model of evangelisation

Coming to the present, NT Wright, tells us that one reason for writing *The Challenge of Jesus* is that 'I have been particularly concerned to put into the minds, hearts and hands of the next generation of thinking Christians the Jesus-shaped model of, and motivation for, a mission that will transform our world in the power of Jesus' gospel'.<sup>77</sup> This was followed by *How God became King*, in which Wright says, 'The question, then is not only Can we learn to read the gospels better, more in tune with what their original writers intended? It is also: Can we discover, by doing this, a new vision for God's mission in the world, in and through Jesus, and then – now! – in and through his followers? And, in doing so, can we grow closer together in mission and life, in faith and hope, and even in love? Might a fresh reading of the gospels, in other words, clear the way for renewed efforts in mission and unity?'<sup>78</sup>

The answer, I believe is a profound 'Yes!' The theological ground has shifted and the effects are being observed. Perhaps it is 'chicken and egg theology' - and of course correlation is no proof of cause - but certainly there is a new chapter and cohesion between a new missional theology, national exhortations and what is happening on the ground.

Scoping my 40 year library of books on evangelisation it is significant that the 'Jesus-model' has only been specifically written about in the past 6 years e.g. Jerram Barrs in *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*<sup>79</sup> and by Robin Gamble in *Jesus the Evangelist*.<sup>80</sup> However, it seems to have gone unnoticed that this development is a remarkable echo of the phrase by Pope Paul VI in the previous exhortation on evangelisation in 1975, 'Jesus himself, the Good News of God, was the very first evangelizer .... As an evangelizer, Christ first of all proclaims a kingdom, the Kingdom of God; and this is so important that, by comparison, everything else becomes "the rest"'.<sup>81</sup>

The shift is seismic, and observed by Frost and Hirsch:

*'In effect, Jesus is our primary model of mission, and the Gospels are our primary texts. This might sound somewhat prosaic, but it is actually a massive paradigm shift from the way the church has generally viewed Christology in the Christendom mode. Jesus has generally been read through dogmatic ontological frames (as in the Creeds) or through the structures of Paulinism (as in the Reformation), but we have obscured the primary historical portrait of Jesus as found in the Gospels'. They go on to say, 'let it be said we affirm the Pauline view ... actually the problem is not Paul at all, the problem lies in Pauline-ism. Like always, the -ism is the problem. It is worth reminding ourselves that Paul himself was very keen to ensure we focus on Jesus and not on him (1Cor1:11-17)'.<sup>82</sup>*

Putting it in my own words now, I think we have inherited a Pauline view of evangelisation (and ecumenism) which is now being reconsidered in the light of the 'Jesus-model'.

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<sup>77</sup> NT Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*. SPCK 2000. Preface.

<sup>78</sup> Tom Wright, *How God became King*. SPCK 2012 Preface.

<sup>79</sup> Jerram Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*, Crossway 2009

<sup>80</sup> Robin Gamble, *Jesus the Evangelist*, David Cook Publishing 2009

<sup>81</sup> *Evangelization in the Modern World: Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Nuntiandi of His Holiness Pope Paul VI: 1975 #7*

<sup>82</sup> Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come*, Hendrickson 2005 p112/3

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Paul clearly had a conversion experience and formulated to 'gospel' message to reflect that. It also shaped his model of evangelism which was often preaching and planting new churches. Too often today Christians have assumed that evangelism has to be done in the same way (Frost and Hirsch re the '-ism'). The study of 'missions' has been about the church' and the message of the gospel has become a formula. Christians say 'I can't do evangelism' often because they think they are not set apart to do the work or confident to preach e.g. on a street corner. Much of *The Joy of the Gospel* is in stark contrast to these views – which is perhaps one reason why it is so welcome and often quoted.

My own book *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way*<sup>83</sup> explores how it is that every Christian can do evangelism. Evangelisation can be done in a myriad of ways, respecting differing personality types, and, as Pope Francis would have it, with joy. For me that joy comes about most when you see the other person begin a journey or an adventure of faith. An accompanying study *The 360 Gospel of Jesus – Every Angle for Every Person*<sup>84</sup> considers the gospel in the Gospels by looking at the given text and words of Jesus to those he encountered. There is no formula or 'kerygma' as such with Jesus as illustrated in this exciting quote:

*An essentially biblical emphasis – all too often ignored by the church – is that Christ is Lord and Saviour of the whole of a person, or he is no saviour at all. Because Jesus insisted on seeing the person whole, one could never be sure which aspect of a person's need he would tackle first. Here comes the paralysed man, helpless and obviously sick in body. His friends have bought him hoping for a simple cure, and Jesus talks about the forgiveness of sins. Here on the other hand comes a clear case of spiritual need, an enquirer asking how to gain eternal life, and Jesus gives him an economic answer, telling him how to give away his goods to the poor. Because ultimately Jesus cannot rest content until all of a person's needs are fully met, it does not matter much to him where he starts on the work of salvation.*<sup>85</sup>

The shift from considering 'Paul' to 'Jesus', may be significant, but it is nothing more than a rediscovery. Indeed, we should take the text seriously, 'I appeal to you, brother, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. ...one of you says, "I follow Paul", another "I follow Apollos"; another "I follow Cephas"; still another "I follow Christ". Is Christ divided?'<sup>86</sup> There is no competition between 'Paul' and 'Jesus' but there is a current rediscovery of the latter which is opening doors.

Having said that, the rediscover of the Jesus way is significant in a wide variety of ways, not least as NT Wright reminds us, Jesus preaching in the Gospels is all about the kingdom.

Mary Tanner, once the European President of the World Council of Churches, reflects on the 'paradigm shift' in ecumenism re the pilgrimage for justice and peace, saying: 'The pilgrimage for justice and peace is orientated to the values of the Kingdom, the justice and peace of which the

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<sup>83</sup> Jim Currin, *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way*. BRF. 2011

<sup>84</sup> Jim Currin, *The 360 Gospel of Jesus*. Grovebooks 2011

<sup>85</sup> Written by John V Taylor, from *Mission as Dialogue* as quoted in *Pray Every Day* by Ronald Jasper. Collins '76 p 51 (with 'man' changed to 'person' in the last sentence.)

<sup>86</sup> 1Corinthians 1:10-13a

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prophets spoke and which Jesus proclaimed and which was inaugurated through his life, death and resurrection and sending to the Spirit, the kingdom which is at the end of all things brought to fulfilment in Christ. The emphasis on a pilgrimage to justice and peace, identified by some as a new paradigm, is not so much a new ecumenism but rather a reinvigorated ecumenism, a refreshed ecumenism'.<sup>87</sup> Interestingly, 'Justice and Peace' is a major theme of the World Council of Churches and also the 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission quoted in *Intentional Evangelism*.

This last point is an illustration of how sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between mission and ecumenism in the new chapter.

## **A new praxis for ecumenism and evangelisation**

In the past 2 years CTE has been through a process of review to reflect the new ecumenical landscape, with very practical implications for posts, personnel, and ways of working. The agreed strategy from 2014 is threefold:

1. Relationships
2. Action/Mission
3. Theology<sup>88</sup>

We have already noted that similar changes are taking place at county and local level. The account from Southampton, mentioned by David Cornick, is interesting as it is an illustration of a 100+ other 'new unity movements for mission', supported by the Evangelical Alliance 'Gather'<sup>89</sup> network and team with whom we work closely.

The new relationship between ecumenism and evangelisation is further illustrated by Colin Marsh who writes about *Missio Dei* as a leading concept in Christian missiology', going on to say, 'Since God is one, united in the Trinity, *Missio Dei* challenges churches to be reconciled with each other in order to participate together in mission'.<sup>90</sup>

*Hope* is a significant movement that has been encouraging and resourcing churches to do that since *Hope '08*, under the slogan 'do more together in words and actions'. The latest initiative was 'Silent Night' community carol services that remembered the 1914 Christmas Truce, held in hundreds of sports venues across the UK. Church leaders have asked *Hope 2014* to continue for another 5 years. This will commence considering research re evangelisation in England which will be available later in the year.

An evaluation of *Hope* says: '90% of local practitioners said that *Hope 2014* helped them reach their neighbourhood. And more significantly, four in ten respondents to the survey said that someone had

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<sup>87</sup> <https://ctbi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/The-World-is-my-Neighbour-Bossey-and-a-New-Ecumenism-Reflections-Mary-Tanner.pdf>

<sup>88</sup> [http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234700/Home/About/2014\\_strategy/2014\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234700/Home/About/2014_strategy/2014_strategy.aspx)

<sup>89</sup> [www.wegather.co.uk](http://www.wegather.co.uk)

<sup>90</sup> Op.Cit.p4

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come to faith after *Hope 2014* activities'.<sup>91</sup> Further, the evaluation stated: 'The *Hope 2014* network is broader and more diverse than in 2008, including black and ethnic minority churches ... alongside an even greater range of mission agencies ... 67.5% of survey respondents who represented churches reported that they had collaborated with other churches through *Hope 2014*. Of these 85% were working with churches of different denominations'.<sup>92</sup>

The energy for 'how we do "church"' is very strong within denominations - but less so ecumenically. *Church Times* correspondence about the Church of England taking forward *Making New Disciples* and *Intentional Evangelism* with the follow up report *Reform and Renewal*<sup>93</sup> has been energised by discussion of structure and finance. Ecumenically, at present, we are much more concerned about relationships and action, as illustrated in the article quoted earlier when the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury were on the Royal Albert Hall stage together:

*Nichols said he and Welby have "an implicit trust in each other", which has not always been the case with Anglican and Catholic leaders. "It is not something that is heavy, that we work at because it's an uphill struggle, but it's much more like a breeze coming from behind us that catches our sails and helps us to go forward," he said. They both spoke with great respect about Pope Francis, and of his commitment to unity. Francis emanates a "profound sense of global authority, a profound sense of global wisdom... a deep commitment to human relations and above all relations both with the core and those on the edge," Welby said. When we've met we've talked principally about prayer, the Lord Jesus Christ and the poor. I've come away from each meeting with a renewed determination and inspiration...[to be] drawn back to the face of Christ."*<sup>94</sup>

Such relationships are not just about prayer and fellowship, but often hard work and sacrificial giving, as illustrated by the millions of volunteer hours and £3 Billion worth of support provided by faith communities, reported by the Archbishop of Canterbury speaking about networks of churches in 57 towns covered by research of the Christian Faith Action Audit in May 2015.<sup>95</sup>

One key element of a Jesus model of mission is not only the reintegration of ecumenism and evangelisation, but also the reintegration of word and deed. Andy Hawthorne runs the *Message Trust* through which thousands of young people have become followers of Jesus, and says, 'Over the centuries, Christians have asked what our priorities should be – unashamed gospel proclamation or serving the most vulnerable and marginalised. It's exciting to be part of the generation that's discovering the answer is both'.<sup>96</sup>

Social action prompts a great deal of enquiry about the message of the Christian Gospel – not only picked up by pastoral missionary parishes – but illustrated by the 353,600 first time visitors to

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<sup>91</sup> A Year of Mission. An Evaluation of Hope 2014. Theos 2015. P7

<sup>92</sup> Op.Cit. p 9

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2015/17-april/news/uk/church-growth-bishop-broadbent-rounds-on-the-critics-of-reform-and-renewal>

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5557/archbishop-on-faith-as-a-force-for-social-good>

<sup>96</sup> The Heartbeat of Mission.p6

Personal Paper for the conference Making All Things New? Evangelii Gaudium and Ecumenical Mission,  
St John's Cambridge 2015 by Capt. Jim Currin CA:

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[www.christianity.org.uk](http://www.christianity.org.uk) in 2014, run by the *Christian Enquiry Agency*<sup>97</sup> on behalf of the member churches of Churches Together in England.

This is a new chapter in our story and the exhortation to share the joy of the gospel has arrived on time.

## Conclusion

In 1942 the then Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, said the ecumenical movement was 'the great new fact of our era'. This paper has tried to evidence another 'great new fact' - that of a theological shift from a Pauline to a Jesus model of ecumenism/evangelisation and word/deed, which is bearing fresh fruit on the vine.

Jim Currin, Capt, CA. MA.

Evangelisation, Mission and Media, Churches Together in England.

*This is a personal paper and does not necessarily represent the views of either Churches Together in England or the member churches of Churches Together in England. It was presented as a conference paper for discussion and is on the website [www.cte.org.uk](http://www.cte.org.uk) for further reflection and comment.*

*Jim.currin@cte.org.uk*

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<sup>97</sup> <http://christianity.org.uk/index.php/cea.php>