

Reflection of the Month: Rebuilding the Broken Body



From a Feature article in The Tablet, Jenny Sinclair writes:

So many people didn't see Brexit and Trump coming. Some are still unclear about what happened. Both were symptoms of our broken body. What can be done to heal these divisions and estrangements in our national community? The causes have been building for years.

Faith in the City, the Church of England report published in 1985 in which my father, David Sheppard, the Anglican bishop of Liverpool, was closely involved, focused on "communities of the left behind". It reminded us that 'Poverty is not only about shortage of money. It is about relationships; about how people are treated and how they regard themselves; about powerlessness, exclusion and loss of dignity.'

Today, we hear a lot about giving "a voice to the voiceless", rather less about the patient work of forging a common life together.

The Beatitudes teach that the "poor in spirit" are blessed. The churches do their best to honour this. But we must look closer at the relationship between the Church and "the poor". Could it be that, inadvertently, while focusing on the interests of the destitute or of refugees or migrants or other minority groups, some of us have been swept along, and overlooked the interests of the struggling working class families in our own neighbourhoods?

Who are "the poor"? Pope Francis has said they are people who live with the experience of "non-power", whether economic, social, material, relational, educational or spiritual. Someone who is living with the experience of non-power has a sense of their need for other human beings, their need for community: the very opposite of individualism. To be in a friendship with a person who is poor is to build a common good. This beautiful truth is at the heart of our faith, which is why Francis wants the Church to be outward-facing, to be not only a Church *for* the poor, but a Church *of* the poor.

But sometimes the traditions, opinions and cultures of people who are poor cut across what many in the liberal mainstream are comfortable with. Is the Church ready to embrace everyone who is poor? Not with a patronising embrace, or speaking *for*, but working *with*, on the basis of reciprocity and respect. As Rowan Williams has said, meeting another human person is to be on sacred ground.

Jean Vanier shows us that, to be fully human, we need to live, like Jesus, in relationship with those discarded by the dominant culture, no matter how difficult that may be. Vanier's experience living with profoundly rejected people has taught him that humiliation can lead to anger, and, sometimes, to violence. Those with no power may well be angry. But anger is energy: misdirected it can be divisive, but disarmed in friendship it can be mutually transformational. Indeed, Vanier talks about the "gift of

the poor.” He says often it is they who can reveal to us, with stunning clarity, the needs, the pain and the beauty of the whole community.

While those with power (that is, most of us) are estranged from people who experience non-power, all are impoverished. Shaming the poor even further into silence will eventually hurt us all.

Our task, as people of the Church, is to step outside of our echo chambers, to leave the comfort zone of like-minded friends. All of us in our country are “members one of another”. Rebuilding the broken body involves listening and humility; it is not a matter of persuasion but of encounter. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul says we should “Tell each other the truth, because we all belong to each other in the same body.” He is calling for the unity and reconciliation of the whole of creation through the agency of the Church. This challenge brings the potential for the healing of our fragmented society into convergence with the Church’s mission.

This moment of political turmoil is an opportunity. The old orthodoxies of left and right have been in decline for some time. A new settlement is being formed, and, if it is not founded on relationships between groups currently so estranged, our democracy will remain in crisis. The Church could be a blessing to our national community in this great challenge: the common good correctly understood is never partisan or sectarian. But if it cannot reform its relationship with the poor, the Church risks a sterile internal conversation, sidelining the very person of Jesus.

Jenny Sinclair is the founder/director of Together for the Common Good (T4CG)
www.togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

Original article from The Tablet, April 2017:
<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/9729/rebuilding-the-broken-body>

Jenny Sinclair expands further in *Good Neighbours and the Common Good* (podcast) at a National Justice and Peace Network conference <http://bit.ly/2t3hUbk>

Calling People of Goodwill: the Bible and the Common Good - the new bible study booklet from T4CG and Bible Society: <http://bit.ly/commongoodbible>

WPCU 2018

Advance information is on the website of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland:

That All May Be Free

**Week of Prayer for
Christian Unity 2018**

<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2018/>

Summer in the Forest (PG)

A new film in the cinema from June 23rd, about Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche, a Body in Association of CTE.

The film is a story about our search for love and true friendship. It is a moving portrait of life at a community where God's love for the vulnerable is lived out. And in a remarkable reversal of conventional wisdom it shows that the answers we crave can be found among some of our most marginalised people.

Like countless others Philippe, Michel, Andre and Patrick were labelled 'idiots', locked away and forgotten in violent asylums, until the 1960s, when the young philosopher Jean Vanier took a stand and secured their release - the first time in history that anyone had beaten the system. Together they created L'Arche, a commune at the edge of a beautiful forest near Paris and a quiet revolution was born. Now in his 80s, still at L'Arche and revered by some as a living saint, Jean has discovered something that most of us have forgotten - what it is to be human, to be foolish, and to be happy.



Damaris Media has produced a Companion Booklet to accompany the film, which explores the themes, issues and characters seen in it. This will be available as a free download from the film's website at www.summerintheforest.com

[Watch the trailer for the film Summer in the Forest: https://youtu.be/wLf1rx2RPrE](https://youtu.be/wLf1rx2RPrE)

Statement from the Presidents of CTE In response to the attack at Finsbury Park 19th June

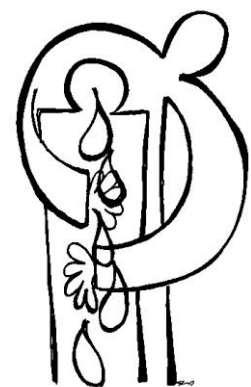
We were shocked to learn of the brutal attack on worshippers leaving the Finsbury Park mosque in the early hours of this morning. We unreservedly condemn all acts of violence which seek to undermine our society and foster hatred and intolerance.

Jesus came among us as the Prince of Peace, and in his name and for his sake, we stand in solidarity with our Muslim friends.

We remember in our prayers those who have been injured.

We pray for the leaders of our communities and nation, and for those who work in our emergency services.

We pray too for those who perpetrate such acts that God may touch their hearts and minds with his love, forgiveness and compassion.



[The Six Presidents of CTE](#)

They Also Served

Remembering the contribution of African Caribbean soldiers in WW1

For the centenary of WW1 a service and exhibition to honour the contributions of African and Caribbean Servicemen took place in the New Testament Church of God, Handsworth, Birmingham with 600 people present on Sunday 2nd July 2017.

In the presence of the Lord Mayor, Bishops, local church leaders, representatives who served in the Armed Forces and young people, Regimental Standards were presented and prayer was offered. Presentations were made in video, poetry, dance, and song, to honour the soldiers, some of whom were named. The address was given by the Rev'd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Speaker's Chaplain in Parliament and a Chaplain to the Queen, and an exhibition, book and video were provided for all guests.



<https://vimeo.com/224028656>

Here, Bishop Joe Aldred, staff member at Churches Together in England for Pentecostal and Multicultural Relations, interviews Dr Angelina Osborne, Project Director for 'They Also Served', and Revd Prebendary Rose Hudson-Wilkin about the Service.

More information: www.theyalsoserved.co.uk

'Behind closed doors' report

Behind closed doors – voices against gender-based violence, human trafficking and modern-day slavery, is a research project, commissioned by Churches Together in England, and made possible through a legacy gift of the former Leicester Free Church Women's Council.

Here is the full report published for the launch event on Wed 28th June 2017 in the House of Lords hosted by Baroness Butler-Sloss and presented by the Revd Dr Carrie Pemberton Ford, of CCARHT in Cambridge.

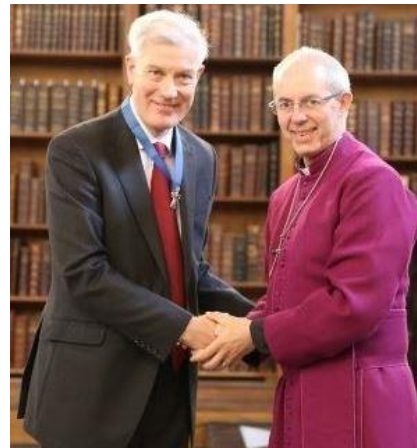
[Download 'Behind Closed Doors' PDF version](#)

[Press Release 23rd June 2017](#)



Former Methodist Vice-President awarded Lambeth Cross

A former Vice-President of the Methodist Conference (2002-2003) and Emeritus Professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Leeds, Professor Peter Howdle, has been awarded the Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby (pictured).



Professor Howdle received the award for "his outstanding contribution to Anglican-Methodist relations" following his dedication to the cause over the past 15 years.

Following the signing of an Anglican-Methodist Covenant between the Church of England and the Methodist Church, in 2003 Peter was appointed co-chair of the Joint Implementation Commission (JIC), which sought to develop Anglican-Methodist relations. Through his continued efforts Anglican-Methodist relations have shown significant improvement over the years and he is now developing proposals for the interchangeability of ministry between the two Traditions through the Joint Faith and Order Ministry and Oversight Group.

On receiving the award, Professor Howdle said: "I'm delighted to receive this award and feel very honoured. I feel that it reflects the importance of the work of the JIC and is a great encouragement to local ecumenism.

[Read more ...](#)

New National Ecumenical Officer for The Church of England

The Revd Dr Callan Slipper has been appointed as the new National Ecumenical Officer for the Church of England, following the retirement of the Revd Dr Roger Paul earlier this year. Working as part of the staff team at the Council for Christian Unity, he will have a pivotal role in developing the Church of England's relationships with other churches in this country. In particular, he will focus on deepening partnership in mission and evangelism across the full range of Christian communities, including the growing number of Pentecostal and independent churches.



The Bishop of Peterborough, the Rt Revd Donald Allister, who chairs the Council for Christian Unity, commented: 'We are very pleased that Callan is willing to take on this major responsibility. There are many opportunities in the present context for churches to grow more fully into the unity for which Christ prayed, as they enter more deeply into partnership in the gospel. Callan's breadth of ecumenical experience locally as well

as internationally will be a great asset for us, as well as the depth of his theological thinking in this area.'

Dr Slipper said: 'At a personal level I feel rather daunted by what I shall have to do. But with God everything is possible. The unity Christ died for is God's dream for us all. At its heart lies the unity of Christians, so this is key to our mission and to every aspect of our spiritual health. Seeing the dreadful things happening in the world, unity seems clearly the true challenge of our times.'

Dr Slipper is an Anglican priest and a member of a community within the Focolare, which was founded by Chiara Lubich in 1943 in Trent, Northern Italy, with a focus on Jesus' prayer on the eve of his death: 'May they all be one' (Jn 17:21). It has spread across the world to Christians of about 350 churches and is in dialogue with members of other faiths, all dimensions of contemporary culture and in particular with people of no specifically religious belief.

Recently Dr Slipper has combined theological work for the Focolare International Research Centre with the role of Ecumenical Facilitator for Churches Together in Hertfordshire. He has worked for many years in the field of Christian unity and is a member of a number of national and international ecumenical bodies, including the Anglican Oriental Orthodox Regional Forum, the Methodist Anglican Panel for Unity and Mission and the Focolare International Ecumenical Ethical Commission.

Christian Aid re Paris Agreement

Christian Aid has welcomed the Government's recommitment to the Paris climate accord in the Queen's Speech.



Tom Viita, Christian Aid's Head of Advocacy, said: "The Queen's Speech has set the agenda for this Parliament to make big strides forward on climate change; all parties must now work together to turn the Paris Agreement into reality. In a hung Parliament, it's important that the Government takes advantage of areas that have robust cross-party support. "The Paris Agreement provides a ready-made template for international cooperation outside the EU, and is a vital plank of the UK's place in the wider world. With all the turmoil of Brexit negotiations, the Government must not be distracted from this vital area of global cooperation with far reaching consequences to people around the world.

"To retain our credibility on the global stage we cannot fudge our stance on climate change: we are either on the side of Donald Trump or the rest of the world, which has scorned the Trump Administration's reckless decision to walk away from its international commitments. "The Queen's Speech indicates this Government means business. In a few days' time the Prime Minister needs to prove to the G20 leaders that she wants the UK to sit at the top table of climate leaders. Other heads of state – including those in the Commonwealth – will be watching closely for signs that the UK is serious about its ambitions on climate.

"The Government needs to get back on track with its carbon reduction plans after too many delays. The UK cannot hope to be a champion for international climate action

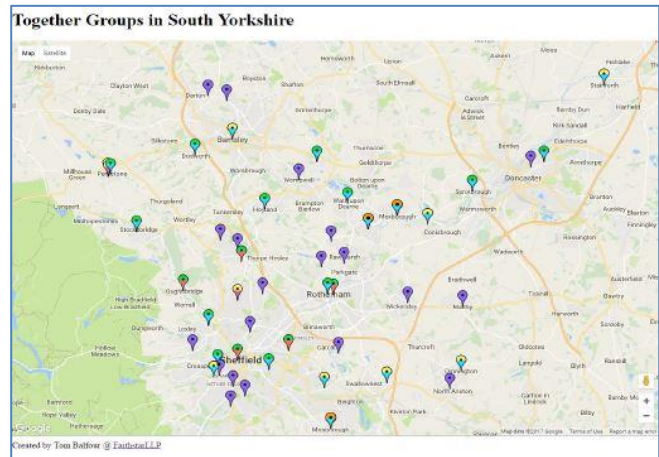
unless it is delivering on its plans at home. An ambitious Clean Growth Plan to transform the economy must be a top priority for the new Government.”

For more information email: [Joe Ware](mailto:Joe.Ware@cte.org.uk)

Christian Aid is an [agency](#) of Churches Together in England

Churches Together in South Yorkshire research into local church mission

Churches Together in South Yorkshire (CTSY) has had as a key aim since 2009 of growing the number of joint missional groups operating in the local communities across the county. This was known informally as encouraging Churches Together (CT) groups to ‘move beyond the pulpit swap’.



The way that we’ve encouraged this has been through example and with some direct meetings with groups. For a short time we had small mission grants for local groups to venture into new types of activity – these ranged from a family fun day to a foodbank. Since 2011 our twice-yearly Forums have not touched on formal ecumenism at all but been about different aspects of holistic or integral mission on topics such as ‘Speaking out in the public square’ with a Bishop in the House of Lords and a sandwich board evangelist; Roy Crowne from HOPE Together ; and ‘What should the churches be saying and doing to encourage good community relations across South Yorkshire?’ when speakers from local councils and Muslim groups challenged us on our role.

In 2016 we decided to assess how successful our approach had been. CTSY and FaithStar (a local faith sector support organisation who do admin and other work for CTSY) contacted all the local groups that were in our database in 2016, with a structured simple questionnaire to find out what they were doing. This was irrespective of whether they were, or identified as, CT groups. We also tried to uncover additional groups not already on our database, or renew contact with groups where there was no live contact. They were asked which churches were in the group and whether it was lay people as well as ordained leaders who attended, how often they met (how **lively** they were), and what activities they organised together (how **outward-facing** they were). The data received by March 2017 was compared with the 2011 baseline. The Report was published in May 2017. We know that some groups in existence haven’t responded, and that others probably exist that we did not track down, so we do not claim it as a complete record of activity.

Read more re the impact of the strategy, changes in participating churches, and download of the full report PDF:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/291963/Home/Resources/Mission/CTSY_2017_research/CTSY_2017_research.aspx

Day Conference on the Balfour Declaration



THE
BRITISH TRUST
FOR TANTUR

2017 is the centenary of the [Balfour Declaration](#) which had a determinative effect on the shape of the Middle East. Our colleagues in the ecumenical [British Trust for Tantur](#) have arranged this day conference on its legacy and we are pleased to bring it to your attention

Homeland? Exploring the heritage of the Balfour Declaration, Saturday 21st October at the [Notre Dame Centre, 1 Suffolk Street, London SW1 4HG](#) (Just off Trafalgar Square)

Charge for the day £20 (cheques made payable to The British Trust for Tantur and forwarded to The Right Revd John Went, The Rectory, Latimer, Chesham, Bucks HP5 1UA) Reduced charge of £10 for Tantur Alumni and theological and other students.

[A booking form can be downloaded here](#)

Mission and Ministry in Covenant Report



On 27 June 2017, the Church of England reports:

The Church of England and the Methodist Church in Britain are to consider proposals that would bring them into a new relationship of full communion, after a period of some 200 years of formal separation.

The proposals are presented in [Mission and Ministry in Covenant](#), a joint report from the two churches' faith and order bodies. It sets out how the Methodist Church could come to have bishops in the historic episcopate, and how ministers from one church could become eligible to serve in the other.

As the Methodist Church in Britain reports:

The report sets out proposals which, if accepted, will enable a new depth of communion between the two Churches and would make presbyters from each Church eligible to serve in the other. Together these developments will enhance the Churches' common mission to the glory of God.

The proposals would also see the Methodist Church recognise the office of a President-Bishop as expressing the Conference's ministry of oversight in a personal form. The report builds on the theological convergence established by 'An Anglican-Methodist Covenant', signed in 2003, and the subsequent work of the Covenant's Joint Implementation Commission. In 2014 the General Synod of the Church of England and the Methodist Conference mandated the faith and order bodies to bring forward proposals that would enable the interchangeability of ministries in the two churches.

The report sets out a way by which the Methodist Church would become one of the churches with which the Church of England is officially in communion, alongside other members of the Anglican Communion and Lutheran churches in the Porvoo Communion.

The report has been released for discussion in the Methodist Church and the Church of England, as well as with ecumenical partners: [Mission and Ministry in Covenant](#)

Comments from church leaders on CTE website:

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/500973/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Mission_and_Ministry.aspx

Methodist web-site: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/news-and-events/news-releases/mission-and-ministry-in-covenant>

C of E website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/06/publication-of-mission-and-ministry-in-covenant.aspx>

Thy Kingdom Come Shropshire

Rev Chris Densham. Ecumenical Mission Enabler for Telford & Shropshire writes:

In December last year the Bishop of Shrewsbury Mark Rylands called together a small Ecumenical team to consider how we might best utilize the Thy Kingdom Come prayer initiative in Shropshire. A desire emerged to see the county saturated in prayer during this period through a variety of events crisscrossing the county. In particular we tried to make use of our hills as natural vantage points from which we could proclaim God's saving love and grace across our communities. For those who couldn't manage a hill there were other opportunities to engage with Thy Kingdom Come Shropshire. So "Look to the Hills" was born.



On a glorious May evening we celebrated Ascension Day by climbing The Wrekin, just outside Telford. About 40-50 of us gathered to pray, stimulated by clear views over the whole of the county and beyond. The next day we were on Lilleshall Hill with its views into North Shropshire and over Telford again.

On Saturday we returned to The Wrekin for a family picnic and prayer with Bishop Mark Rylands. We had Messy Church at the summit, goody bags for children and gained permission for a Land Rover to drive very close to the top for those unable to make the climb.



In complete contrast was Bank Holiday Monday on Caer Caradoc with Bishop Alistair Magowan. Thick mist prevailed, but about 50 folk gathered, some to pray in the Catholic Church in Church Stretton and the rest to climb and pray.

Other hill tops included the Hill Fort just outside Oswestry, Clee Hill in south east Shropshire and Nescliffe and Lyth Hill, both close to Shrewsbury which included another prayer picnic for families.

[Read more ...](#)



County Ecumenical Officer for Essex & East London

Churches Together in Essex and East London is seeking to appoint a new County Ecumenical Officer to work with churches and church leaders across the area.



We are looking for someone who is:

- inspired by the vision of Christians of different traditions working together.
- a great networker and solution finder.
- interested in engaging with the mission and growth of God's Kingdom across Essex and East London.

We are offering a salary of £11,500 for 16 hours per week to someone who can support and facilitate ecumenical understanding, commitment and partnerships amongst churches in Essex and East London; enable good communication between churches and ecumenical groups and serve as Executive Officer and Secretary to Churches Together in Essex and East London.

Closing date for applications: 14th July
Interviews will take place on 21st July in Chelmsford

For an application form and supporting information, please contact:

Revd. Paul Whittle, Moderator
Synod Office, The United Reformed Church
Whittlesford
Cambridge
CB22 4ND

Email: moderator@urceastern.org.uk or Telephone: 01223 830770

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure

Long Term Volunteer Opportunity at Corrymeela



1st September 2017 until 27th August 2018
This is a great opportunity for programmatic exposure, shadowing professionals in their field of work and running out programme content as well as supporting our hospitality through housekeeping, kitchen and reception duties.

We currently have 4 places left for our 1st September 2017 – 27th August 2018 team. If you are interested in applying, please contact our Volunteering Office volunteering@corrymeela.org for more information or call us on 028 2076 2626.

Closing date for applications: 1st August, 2017.

Further volunteering opportunities can be found on our website: <http://www.corrymeela.org/volunteer>

Corrymeela is a Body in Association of CTE

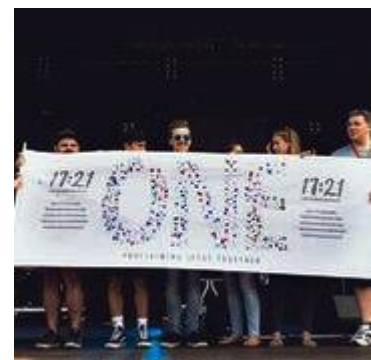
17:21, 120,000 Christians @ 30 events



Well over 120,000 Christians at over 30 events are now expected to be involved in 17:21 initiative to showcase unity between Christians across the UK. Following the launch at Spring Harvest, the 17:21 scroll continues its journey across the UK with visits to Big Church Day Out, South and North.

Pete Greig, the event's host, invited the vast crowds to show their identification with the great John chapter 17 prayer of Jesus, by raising their thumbs and joining with UK events, festivals and conferences in a symbolic act of adding thumb prints to a scroll that says, "We are ONE". The programme concluded with a great moment of prayer as the crowds were encouraged to celebrate and cheer on all the events and festivals that are happening in 2017.

17:21 is bringing together many of the Christian festivals and conferences that are happening this year. Having already travelled over 3,000 miles the length and breadth of England and Wales, with Northern Ireland and Scotland yet to be visited, it is likely to travel almost 10,000 miles before the end of November.



17:21 is based on the Bible verse John 17:21 'May they all be ONE that the world might believe'. With such a variety and range of well-known Christian festivals and conferences taking part in this significant show of unity, this offers a stunning visual representation of the Bible verse in action.

Further details and a full list of participating events are available from the website: <https://1721.org.uk>

The initiative was developed by Lyndon Bowring (Executive Chairman of CARE), Nola Leach (CEO of CARE), Steve Clifford (General Director of The Evangelical Alliance) and David Coffey (former President of The Baptist World Alliance).

Summary of the CRG meeting 21.06.17



Please pass on this summary to colleagues interested in the ongoing work of the Churches Rural Group, and in particular, a summary of the meeting held on 21st June 2017 at the Arthur Rank Centre which covered:

- > Everybody Welcome: Rural Mission Sunday 16th July
- > New Housing Areas in Rural areas
- > Brexit and Implications in rural area
- > Movement Day, transforming local communities
- > Thy Kingdom Come, collating rural stories
- > Going Together, International Rural Conference:

[Download PDF summary report of the meeting](#)

Update from Taizé Birmingham weekend

Brother Paolo writes with an update on the ecumenical weekend in Birmingham, called Hidden Treasure:

The page www.taize.fr/birmingham now contains a short account of the Hidden Treasure Birmingham weekend with links to photos, a transcript of Dr. Rowan Williams' talk, as well as the reflections written by several of you after you got home.



The recordings made by the BBC during the meeting are available: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08vxj40>

Brother Paolo

And finally ...

Ecumenical Youth Forum

A one-day conference in Leeds for young people aged 16-23 to launch the Ecumenical Youth Forum: young people working through Christ for peace and justice. Workshops, seminars and keynote speakers on social justice, faith and politics, with opportunities to explore issues such as Brexit, a Christian response to the refugee crisis, and making real change in your community.



Joint Public Issues Team link: <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/regionaljpit/eyf/>

[Booking link](#)

ECCR member Oikocredit launches a UK blog

Established in 1975 as a co-operative, Oikocredit (a Body in Association with CTE) invests in more than 800 social enterprises and cooperatives across Africa, Asia, Latin America and Central and eastern Europe. We prioritise inclusive finance, agriculture, renewable energy and infrastructure sectors to reach the most disadvantaged communities in the world.

To read the blog please follow the link: <https://www.oikocredit.org.uk/blog>

**Please note there will be two extra mailings
of CTe-News: Education Sunday and August.**

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This mailing is from Churches Together in England and is sent once a month

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