



CT-eNews

April 2021

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Reflection of the Month: Going wild

The founder of Messy Church, Lucy Moore shares our [Reflection of the Month](#) for April 2021...

We've sensed a movement within [Messy Church](#) over the last few years to do with making space to worship God through the natural world – something that comes naturally to many children and young people. It picks up people's passion for caring for the planet and for understanding more through science, as well as enjoying experiencing the awe and wonder of what God's made. We're pulling it together in various projects and resources to encourage Messy Churches both to go outside more and to steward resources even better – all under the name of Messy Church Goes Wild: a name to strike joy or fear into the heart, depending on your outlook.



There's also a movement of wilding (or rewilding) afoot in the church in this season. It's a metaphor based on the principle of land management that deliberately backs away from artificial human control systems in order to encourage biodiversity. It's a potent image to play with in church circles, especially for denominations that see themselves as a monocultural environment where innovation is strangled at birth, where structures cage in new life, artificial means are used to nurture one sort of growth but to suppress another, and where a human hand seems to have replaced the breath of the Spirit. What a far cry from the early church, with all their failings, who seem so light on structure, so responsive to the Spirit, so diverse in people groups, so quick to spread and take root and so centred on Jesus and his kingdom.

Messy Church is arguably one of the movements within the church in the West which behaves most like a wild weed, seeding itself in unlikely places (Trinidad and Tobago! Uppsala! Los Angeles!), championed by unlikely heroes (invisible, middle-aged lay women!) and ignored, patronised or despised by many in the very churches to which it brings new life and hope. The repeated regret voiced at training sessions among practitioners, who fill the building with new families every month, is, "People in my church think it's not worth doing because nobody new has come to church from it."

In the Messy network, we're very conscious that we have the luxury of relying on the structural procedures maintained by the inherited denominations (safeguarding procedures, accountability, buildings!!!) While Messy Church at its best can burst out in uninhibited creativity, taking risks and failing without destroying everything around it, crossing denominational boundaries, giving leadership responsibilities to 8 year olds and 88 year olds, it's harder for an inherited church to be as open to risk and, by definition, failure.

I wonder if the perfect relational tension is one that pivots on celebration, a core Messy value? In the real world – one in which the wild and the familiar will need to co-exist for some years to come – can we not indulge in the discipline of rejoicing in the differences God sends our way? If the energetic hospitality of the new can celebrate the protective structures of the 'established' that enable it to happen; if the safe, solid and stable 'inherited' can celebrate the experimental liberation of the new, both

working together to bring new people towards Jesus, surely this symbiotic ecology makes everyone a winner? And far more importantly, makes the Kingdom the winner.

[Explore the Messy Church website](#)

Find Messy Church on social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest: MessyChurchBRF

Read more on rewilding - [Rewilding the Church by Steve Aisthorpe](#)

Lucy Moore is the founder and team leader of Messy Church at The Bible Reading Fellowship and author of books about intergenerational worship and Messy Church, the most recent being a co-authored book [Messy Discipleship](#) (BRF March 2021)

CTE Presidents mourn the death of Prince Philip

Following the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, churches throughout England will want to pray for the Royal Family, most especially Her Majesty The Queen. We give thanks to God for the life of service offered by Prince Philip to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, his championing of causes that now seem vital to our world, his many years of marriage to Her Majesty and the selfless support he gave to her.



Presidents of Churches Together in England, named below, with the support of the Fourth Presidency Group released the following statement on 9 April:

"It is with deep sadness that we mourn the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip and offer our prayers for Her Majesty The Queen and every member of the Royal Family. May their faith in Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, be their strength in this loss."

Presidents of Churches Together in England:

Archbishop Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster

Revd Dr Hugh Osgood, The Free Churches Moderator

His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London and CTE President for the Orthodox Churches

Pastor Agu Irukwu, Redeemed Christian Church of God UK and CTE Pentecostal President

The Fourth Presidency Group comprises Lutheran, Quaker and The Church of Scotland (English Presbytery) Member Churches.

CTE President Archbishop Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury, also issued his own statement:

"I join with the rest of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth in mourning the loss of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, and give thanks to God for his extraordinary life of dedicated service. Prince Philip continually demonstrated his unfailing support and unstinting loyalty to Her Majesty The Queen for 73 years.

"He consistently put the interests of others ahead of his own and, in so doing, provided an outstanding example of Christian service. During his naval career, in which he served with distinction in the Second World War, he won the respect of his peers as an outstanding officer.

"On the occasions when I met him, I was always struck by his obvious joy at life, his enquiring mind and his ability to communicate to people from every background and walk of life. He was a master at putting people at their ease and making them feel special. The legacy he leaves is enormous..."

[Read Archbishop Justin Welby's statement in full.](#)

Among the individual responses from our Presidents, Cardinal Vincent Nichols tweeted:

"At this moment of sadness and loss I pray for the repose of the soul of Prince Philip, Her Majesty the Queen's faithful and loyal husband. I pray for the Queen and all of the Royal Family.

"How much we will miss Prince Philip's presence and character, so full of life and vigour. He has been an example of steadfast loyalty and duty cheerfully given. May he rest in peace."

The Church of England, one of CTE's 50 Member Churches, has also provided the following resources:

- [An online book of condolence](#)
- A prayer – available to share on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Photo credit: Image of HRH Duke of Edinburgh, courtesy of the Press Association.

[View this story on our website...](#)

National Day of Reflection and Prayer

The nation joined together on Tuesday 23 March for a National Day of Reflection, organised by Marie Curie, and for Christians, this was a day to both reflect and pray.

Across the country, churches were invited to be prayerful one year on from the start of the first lockdown. There was a minute's silence at 12 noon followed by a ringing of church bells and later a doorstep vigil at 8pm.



The National Day of Reflection looked to reflect on our collective loss, support those who have been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future.

General Secretary of Churches Together in England, Rev Dr Paul Goodliff said: “the churches in membership with CTE want to ‘fan the flames’ of prayer at every opportunity, and I welcome the way in which we can not only remember the past year on this National Day of Remembrance, with all of its challenges and sorrows, but also as Christians bring together remembrance and prayer. Our hope, whether in life or death, is in the mercy and kindness of God, and we join with so many to pray on the 23 March.”

[Read the National Day of Reflection messages from leaders of our national Member Churches on our website...](#)

Prayers of Hope – one year on

On Sunday 21 March, Churches Together in England marked the anniversary of the start of the first national lockdown and the ecumenical #PrayersOfHope initiative.

As the coronavirus pandemic began to sweep the globe, [candles were lit in thousands of homes across Britain on Sunday 22 March 2020](#), symbolising the light of Christ shining into the darkness.

Through the tragic events of the last year, churches across the nation have been active in serving their communities in creative and caring ways – from [providing food and shelter](#) to organising [online memorial services](#) to [hosting drive-in carol services](#). Many churches are now [temporary vaccination centres and promoting vaccine education opportunities to tackle hesitancy](#), as well as continuing to provide spiritual and emotional support to their communities.

Research on [The Church in Lockdown from Your Neighbour](#) shows that more than 70% of churches have delivered new services during the pandemic, many in areas of community outreach in which they had not been active in before.

Churches across the country have also continued to be active in prayer, with initiatives such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God’s [Prayer Shield](#) and The Church of England’s [Prayer for the Nation](#) springing up.

Christians have been invited to join together to pray each Sunday evening at 7pm, with Premier Christian Radio airing a weekly broadcast of the Prayers of Hope programme at this time. Many of our [national Member Churches](#) have contributed prayers to the broadcast during the last twelve months.



[A special anniversary #PrayersOfHope programme went out on Premier Radio](#) on Sunday 21 March this year, at 7pm. Church leaders including CTE Presidents recorded special prayers for the anniversary programme.

[Read the full story on our website...](#)

'Check before you share'

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) launched a new social media campaign to tackle false vaccine information online through a series of shareable videos and support from social media companies.

The campaign is fronted by trusted local community figures such as pastors, imams and clinicians in short, shareable videos which include simple tips on how to spot misinformation and what to do to stop its spread. The key message is check before you share, [signposting to the NHS for the best source of information](#).

The government developed the toolkit following concerns from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) of low vaccine uptake amongst ethnic minority communities, and a recent Ofcom study which showed that people from a minority ethnic background were twice as likely as white respondents to rely more on people they know, people in their local area or people on social media for information about coronavirus.

[Download the 'Check before you share' toolkit](#)

[Watch 'Covid-19 Vaccine: The facts' A short presentation from Dr Vanessa Apea, Consultant at Barts NHS Health Trust part of CTE webinar on 18 February](#)

[View this story on our website...](#)

"The UK has a long way to go in addressing the issue of race"

The publication of the government's [Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities \(Sewell\) report](#) on 31 March 2021 has sparked great debate across the nation and is a significant moment in the cultural conversation about addressing structural reforms to tackle the social injustice of racism.



Following the turbulence of 2020, with the catalysing event of George Floyd's murder leading to global protests demanding equality and equity, the report's claim that Britain should be heralded as a beacon of best practice, and the suggestion that structural racism no longer exists on Britain's shores, has met with sharp opposition. Criticisms have come from both within the church and from the wider public space, considering the report to be undermining the lived experiences of ethnic minorities in Britain, and pointing to a lack of objectivity, academic rigour and peer review.



Leaders from across a number of our Member Churches have commented and given statements since the report was released...

CTE's Pentecostal President Pastor Agu Irukwu (of the Redeemed Christian Church of God) shared his sober reflections on the report through his online Easter Sunday sermon, alongside a message of encouragement to congregants and wider society.

Pastor Agu stated that he was "deeply saddened" by the report, which he had hoped would address and speak to structural injustices of racism in the UK. He shared his stark realisation that "the issues of racism are deeper than you and I thought, and the UK had a long way to go in addressing the issue of race". Pastor Agu then went on to encourage viewers that "we must fight this evil" of racism, explaining that fervent prayer was needed to address the deep roots of racism and the spiritual stronghold it had over the nation. His message then encouraged viewers to use every available avenue to speak up and against racism.



[Watch the 10-minute excerpt from Pastor Agu's sermon.](#)

On 6 April, the **National Church Leaders Forum** also released a statement on behalf of the black majority churches they represent. Responding to the report, the NCLF stated that "there have been widespread expressions of dissatisfaction with some of its contents, with some of our leaders expressing on behalf of their parishioners, feelings of deep hurt, especially concerning the suggestion that institutional or systemic racism in the UK no longer exists. This runs counter to their lived experiences and the success of some has been achieved in spite of, not in the absence of, institutional or systemic racism." This miscalculation is to be regretted since it hinders real engagement with elements of the report that could be impactful.

[The full NCLF statement can be found here.](#)

CTE's Principal Officer for Pentecostal and Multi-Cultural relations, Shermara Fletcher, stated "In a prime moment of opportunity following the global protests in the wake of George Floyd's death, it was disappointing to read a much-anticipated report undermining the lived experiences of those bearing the brunt of racism, as well as the work of pioneers in the racial justice field in the UK.

"Whilst work has been done to implement the integration of a multicultural society in Britain, before being awarded a beacon of global best practice there is much more work to be done in areas of employment, education, health and housing, the criminal justice system, to mention just a few."

Bishop Mike Royal, a member of CTE's newly established Racial Justice Working Group, commented: "The Sewell Report has been widely condemned in an open letter by 429 academics and multiple black church leaders alike. The denial of structural racism overlooks empirical evidence cited over many years, and ignores the lived experience of everyday people from Black & other ethnic groups. The report is divisive and lacks credibility, but at least we are talking about racial justice!"

Millennial Christians express their concerns

CTE also heard the views of key UK millennial leaders including **Seth Pinnock, Tearfund's Head of African and Caribbean Engagement**. He commented of his concern for the lack of peer review, as well as "the eyes" within the party that allowed the report to be publicised, revealing the state of our current governmental context in relation to race. He shared a sobering reflection in the words of Maya Angelou; 'when people show you who they really are, believe them', and denounced the suppression and marginalisation of those on the fringes of society who experience the effects of racism in the UK.

Emerging millennial leader **Charnelle Barclay, from the Centre of Theology and Community**, also expressed her thoughts, sharing, "In the shadow of the Black Lives Matter movement and the year that 2020 was, I was really disappointed by the release, tone and conclusions of the report. There was a real opportunity to more accurately convey the impact and reality of racism in the UK in the 21st century, and that has not only been missed but has been deemed irrelevant."



[View this story on our website...](#)

Join a webinar responding to the Sewell report: 14 April

'A Moment of Dishonour; Racism, Sewell and the Christian Response' takes place on Wednesday 14 April 2021, 7.30-9pm.

This webinar is a joint event hosted in partnership by the Racial Justice Advocacy Forum, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI).

Introducing the webinar, CTBI explains: 'The UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (Sewell) Report has generated a great deal of debate within society and the Church since aspects of it were launched on 31 March 2021. This webinar will be a fantastic opportunity to hear from some of the keenest minds in Church and society on this report, and for you to share your opinions on these issues.'

The expert panel will include Professor Robert Beckford, Sir Simon Woolley, Ven. Rosemarie Mallett and Eleasah Louis. [Register for the webinar](#)

Virtual meeting but concrete witness - Enabling Group March 2021

CTE held our first Enabling Group of 2021 on 11 and 12 March. It brought together individuals representing [Member Churches, Bodies in Association and intermediate ecumenism](#) (churches working together at a county level). CTE Trustee Dr Elizabeth Joy reports on the two days...



Our spring [Enabling Group \(EG\)](#) was, due to the coronavirus regulations, held virtually once again. While last October was our first online experience; this time we were 'experts'. And although we didn't meet in person I was very excited to discover in the opening informal session that one of members in my group lived nearby. An ecumenical connection for the face-to-face future!

The highlights of this EG meeting were:

I. Hearing about the active engagement of CTE's EG members, National and County Ecumenical Officers and others in [a range of COVID Vaccine webinars](#), encouraging people to be informed about the vaccine's benefits. We also heard that Pastor Agu Irukwu, CTE's Pentecostal President, had welcomed Prime Minister Boris Johnson to a vaccine pop up centre in his church Jesus House (RCCG).

II. CTE's Strategic Plan was the core focus of this EG. CTE's General Secretary Rev Dr Paul Goodliff introduced the document and stressed that it follows the commitment and combined contribution of CTE's 50 Member Churches, regarding where CTE needs to go in future. The research [That they all may be one](#), carried out by Theos from 2016-2017, and adopted by the EG in 2018, had asked CTE's Member Churches to review the strengths and weaknesses of CTE, and share dreams and visions for our future as churches working together. The new strategic aims discussed at EG in 2021 seek to bring these visions to fruition. CTE's continued commitment to this process is clearly shown through the road map laid out, with Trustees introducing the following strategic aims to the EG:

- Aim 1: To inspire Member Churches to work more closely together in mission
- Aim 2: To find new ways to support regional and local ecumenism
- Aim 3: To find new ways to extend CTE's valued role of relationship-building

- Aim 4: To create more opportunities for churches to do theology together
- Aim 5: To increase the capacity of CTE to speak into the public square
- Aim 6: To strengthen CTE's own vision of its role and make this more widely known
- Aim 7: To develop the work of racial justice for CTE and its Member Churches

EG members' feedback was reported back and issues were teased out in detail through group discussions.

In his summary of these discussions, CTE's General Secretary Rev Dr Paul Goodliff highlighted several themes, including:

- The aims are **deeply rooted in biblical principles and teachings of the Church** such as mission (including the fifth mark of mission – care of creation)
- Time and again, our rootedness in **local expressions of ecumenism** was explored, with concern that what we do nationally should find its expression locally
- Two foundational tasks were identified:
 - **Building the relationships** that will strengthen our pilgrimage together (with the image of relationships as the lubricant which allows the body of Christ to walk easily)
 - **Theology** – growth in mutual understanding as we listen to one another carefully, talk and explain.
- All of this needs communicating– to one another and to the wider world

III. A new project – the Bill Snelson Bursary Fund – has been instituted to support young people to accomplish ecumenical studies at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute, Geneva. The fund has been established in memory of CTE's former General Secretary (from 1997 to 2008) [Bill Snelson, who passed away in December 2020](#). CTE welcomes contributions for this fund towards the formation of young ecumenists for the present and the future.

IV. Appointment of Dionne Gravesande as Moderator of the [2022 CTE Forum](#) (a major event taking place every 3-4 years). In her report to EG, Dionne mentioned that the overall theme would be reconciliation, with three sub-themes – reconciliation of communities, reconciliation with God and reconciliation with the earth.

V. British Kirchentag, [Christians Against Poverty](#), [Linking Lives UK](#), [Single Friendly Church](#) and [United Society Partners in the Gospel](#) were accepted as new Bodies in Association of CTE.

VI. The EG accepted the application for CTE Church membership from the [Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East](#). A majority of Member Churches now need to agree to membership over the next three months.

VII. Re-imagining intermediate ecumenism – a discussion of the challenges facing churches working together at a county level. The team presented two particular challenges – that of involving New and Independent Churches, and also the challenge of seeing diversity represented at a county level.

This EG meeting will stand out for its work paving the path for the future of CTE through engagement with its Strategic plan and for the rich and diverse cultures and traditions who participated, deepening relationships and enhancing mission and witness amidst the COVID pandemic. [Read Dr Joy's full report on our website...](#)

Will you design our new Forum logo?

£200 prize

We need a logo for the [2022 Forum](#) and we need it fast. Can you help?

The Churches Together in England Forum is the broadest representative ecumenical gathering of Christians in England. It takes place every three to four years and brings together over three hundred representatives of [CTE's Member Churches](#), [Intermediate Bodies](#), [Co-ordinating Groups](#) and [Bodies in Association](#).



The inspiration for your logo should be the theme for the 2022 Forum - Reconciling Hope - a broken Church for a broken World.

We need a high-resolution logo in three shapes/sizes:

- Rectangular, for web pages, like the one at the top of [this page](#). (1200 pixels wide by 900 pixels high)
- Wide landscape (1200 pixels wide by 200 pixels high), like the one at the very bottom of [that page](#) to go on the bottom of web pages, the top of the programme and at the bottom of PowerPoint slides.
- Thin portrait (1200 pixels wide by 3200 pixels high), to sit at the side of a PowerPoint slide, [a bit like this](#).

Copyright

It is the entrant's responsibility to make sure that any images used are copyright free. By entering the competition you are giving CTE the copyright of the design, which we will retain going forward.

How to enter

Please e-mail your entries by 9.00 am on Monday 10 May 2021 to [Jenny Bond](#)

- Use Forum 2022: logo competition as your email subject line
- Attach your design in the three sizes
- Your file types should be .jpg or .png
- Please include your name
- Don't forget to include your mobile phone number

Good luck!

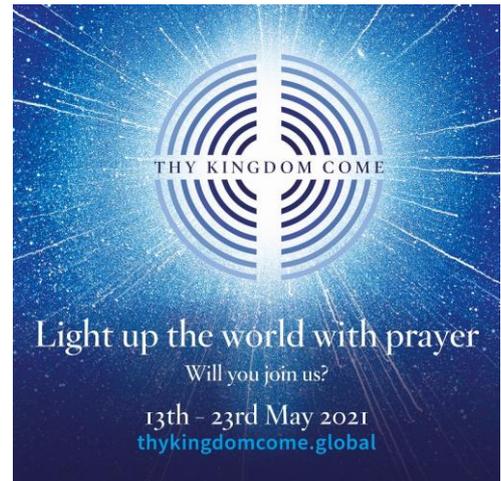
[View this story on our website...](#)

Thy Kingdom Come 2021 update

This year Thy Kingdom Come, the global ecumenical prayer takes place from 13-23 May.

The Cheeky Pandas

New resources for 2021 will include an [11-part children's video series called Cheeky Pandas](#) - packed with Bible stories, prayers, animation, worship songs and interviews with special guests including CTE Pentecostal President Pastor Agu Irukwu and his wife Shola (Jesus House), adventurer Bear Grylls, CBeebies presenter Gemma Hunt and Revd Nicky Gumbel (HTB and Alpha), to name a few.



The video series can be used as part of church at home, gathered church (online and offline) and in school assemblies. Episodes are accompanied **by activity packs**. And the series will be the main content in the Family Prayer Adventure Map and App.

For young people

This year The Kingdom Come have teamed up with the Archbishop of York's Youth Trust to produce 11 video reflections from influential Christians for the daily themes of Thy Kingdom Come.

Voices include Guvna B, Pippa Baker (Catholic Charismatic Renewal), Jamie Jones-Buchanan (former professional Rugby player) and Elle Limebear (worship leader).

Each video reflection includes an accompanying discussion plan which is suitable for use in colleges, youth groups or at home with friends.

Keep an eye [on this page](#) for the videos and plans which over the next few weeks.

2021 Resources

Other new resources include [this year's Novena and the Prayer Journal](#), written by the Archbishop of York with the express intention of inspiring readers to re-encounter the love and joy found in Jesus Christ.

The award-winning [Thy Kingdom Come app](#), available in nine languages, will for the first time, include audio content from 24/7 Prayer's Lectio 365, with audio reflections from Pete Greig, Archbishop Justin and 24/7 Prayer GB UK Director, Carla Harding.

[Explore the Thy Kingdom Come 2021 website for more details on this year's plans.](#)

[Order resources for your church, including printed copies of the Prayer Journal and Prayer Adventure Map.](#)

[View this story on our website...](#)

Arise Sheffield 2021: Christians in Sheffield on a mission to prayer-walk every street in the city

Arise Sheffield Team Member, Beth Craggs shares this inspiring story...

Across Sheffield this March, over 1,000 Christians have been stepping out on their daily walks with renewed vigour, as part of a new city-wide initiative called [Arise Sheffield](#). Arise invited followers of Jesus from across the city to prayer-walk their local area in preparation for a season of sharing faith, which included sending an Easter card to over 240,000 homes in the city, and the distribution of over 5,000 Real Easter Eggs.



With people from nearly 150 churches taking part, Arise coordinated the city-wide prayer-walking through [a dedicated prayer-walking app](#), which allows users to create routes in their local area to pray for on their daily walks. Completed routes turn golden, lighting up the city step by step. In total, over 2000km of Sheffield's streets were prayer-walked before the end of March - the equivalent of walking the length of the UK twice.

Growing from a collaboration between the Christian charity [Together for Sheffield](#) and local church leaders, Sheffield Christians of many denominations embraced the Arise vision. The Anglican and Catholic Bishops, as well as Baptist, Methodist, Church Army, and non-denominational church leaders have been instrumental in supporting Arise and many of them have commented about how Arise has been reinvigorating their congregations during a time when people have been feeling helpless and isolated.

Zoom meet-ups for the participants have been filled with stories about how the movement is already making a difference. One participant said, "I've lived on the same street for years, but since Arise, I feel more deeply connected to my neighbours than before." Another said, "I think the combination of the visuals, tech, and having a focus for our daily walk really captured my children's attention and my son (who doesn't normally pray out loud much) prayed loads." A third said, "Hopefully this will not be the end to Christians working together in this way - one of the best things to come out of Arise for me, is to know that we are not alone."

Thanks to the faith-filled response of Christians across Sheffield, organisers are exploring ways for Arise to become an ongoing movement of missional unity for the city.

[Watch the Celebrating Arise Sheffield 2021 video](#)

The Arise organisers are hosting a Zoom meeting for other areas interested in exploring a similar initiative for their cities: [contact them by email](#) to find out more.

[View this story on our website...](#)

Relay to COP26 from the Young Christian Climate Network

Beth Naylor-Smith and Hannah Bristow from the Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) share their organisation's ambitious plans for a countrywide relay to raise the profile of climate and creation care theology...

This year is an important year for climate negotiations. In June, world leaders are meeting in Cornwall for the G7 Summit. In November, heads of state and international organisations will be attending COP26 in Glasgow. It's a decade-defining opportunity to make a stand for climate justice, to hold our leaders accountable and to protect people, not bank balances. It's a decade-defining opportunity to think about what we, the Church, could do together - how we could #RiseToTheMoment.



[The Young Christian Climate Network \(YCCN\)](#) are an action-focused community of Christians in the UK aged 18-30, choosing to follow Jesus in the pursuit of climate justice. We are organising a 750-mile Relay to COP26, walking from Cornwall to Glasgow to raise awareness of COP26 and spark conversations around climate and creation care theology within local churches and communities across the UK. Along the way, church leaders will hold services and events at key cities and join us in praying for climate justice. The symbol of the Relay is a boat, a representation of our hope that we would #RiseToTheMoment and set sail towards a just future.

We would love for all who feel able to sign up and walk with us as we make a stand for climate justice. We also encourage churches to sign up together, both to walk with us and get involved in planning and hosting events and providing accommodation for the walkers in their local area.

This Relay is open to all, regardless of denomination or creed, age, ethnicity or gender identity. This Relay is ecumenical: it is an opportunity for all Christians to raise our collective voice in support of ambitious change so that the love of Jesus might be shown in our local communities, nationwide and to our global neighbours.

Come, join, and #RiseToTheMoment.

[Find more information about the YCCN Relay and sign up to support](#)

[View this story on our website...](#)

Coming Home and CT Keswick

Churches Together in Keswick was featured in [the Archbishop of Canterbury's Housing Commission recent report entitled "Coming Home" or "Tackling the Housing Crisis."](#)

CTE's Principal Officer for Evangelism and Mission, Rev Dr Ben Aldous, spoke to Bill Bewley, chair of [Keswick Community Housing Trust](#) and a member of [Quaker Housing Trust](#) about the way CT groups have amazing opportunities to bless their communities in concrete ways...



When the Commission came to Cumbria for their visit Bill was a little surprised when he heard there was a committee looking into the spiritual basis for

affordable housing. For Bill the theology of providing adequate housing is very simple. Jesus embodied it when he said we should love our neighbour as ourselves. Bill believes it is a basic human right that we should all have a proper place to live. It is a basic given of social justice that we should all work very hard to help people to live and work in the community and have access to good quality affordable housing.

Bill happily encourages everyone to read the report, not just for their story but for the many gems within its pages. His hope is that this taster will encourage others to use it as much as they can to help communities all over the country to deliver affordable housing at a time when it is desperately needed.

[Read the full story on our website...](#)

Webinar 22 April: Edging into Hybrid Church

Is your church leadership wondering how to balance in-person worship and online church?

Churches Together in England, [Hope Together](#) and the [Evangelical Alliance](#) are co-hosting an online webinar to help churches plan and prepare for so-called hybrid church.

The main aim of the event is to encourage and practically equip Church leaders. We will look at the opportunities provided by digital Church and share some lessons learned from a Church in the United States who has been doing this for more than ten years.



Join online on Thursday 22 April from 2 to 3.30pm. It's free.

This webinar will cater for those churches who haven't yet dipped a toe in the digital waters and those who are quite far down the road.

[Book your place now](#)

[Download the event flyer](#)

[View this story on our website...](#)

Jobs

Lead Pastor - North-East Chinese Methodist Church

Fixed Term Contract – 3 years initially (40 hours per week)
Darlington and Newcastle Methodist
Districts
£26,600 - £32,250 per annum


The Methodist Church

(Normal terms and conditions apply for Methodist Minister)

The North-East Chinese Methodist Church exists to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ across the North-East of England. It currently consists of three churches - Durham, Middlesbrough and Newcastle. These churches are multi-lingual and worship in Cantonese, Mandarin and English. The congregations consist of worshippers of all ages.

We have an exciting opportunity for a Lead Pastor to work across these congregations. The successful candidate may be a lay or ordained pastor from within or outside of the Methodist tradition and able to demonstrate the ability of pastoring in Cantonese/Mandarin.

Closing date for applications: Monday 10 May 2021
Interviews (2-stage process): Wednesday 2 June and Thursday 24 June

[*Find further information about the role and person specification here...*](#)

And finally...

BRF's Virtual women's day 23 April 2021

The theme of the Bible Reading Fellowship's Annual Women's Conference, Wells in the Wilderness, is inspired by the promises in Isaiah 43:18-19. Join popular, thought-provoking speakers to explore the different ways in which God provides refreshment in the wilderness.

[*Find out more...*](#)



CTE MA Mission Prize 2021 – last chance to apply

Have you recently finished an MA in the area of mission, evangelism or church planting from an UK theological institution? Why not apply for this award, which closes on 30 April?

[Terms and conditions and how to apply](#)

18 to 30? Engage ecumenically with the world church

The deadline for applications for young adults (18 to 30 years old) to apply to be stewards at The World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly in Germany in August and September 2022 has been extended to 30 June.



[Find full details of how to apply](#)

Faith Pictures from the Church Army

This free resource is designed to help Christians of all traditions talk about their own story of faith with confidence, and is ready to run online or in person.

[Find out more...](#)

Want to keep receiving the CTE monthly newsletter?

This is just an early warning... Over the next couple of months we are changing how we produce and send this CTE monthly newsletter. As part of that process, to keep to GDPR regulations, we will need you to re-subscribe to this publication. We don't want to lose you as a reader so please look out for an email explaining what you need to do. Thank you!

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