

Churches Together in Worcestershire

News, views and ideas...bringing together the ecumenical community in the county

March 2010



May our Lord Jesus Christ
Go before us to guide us;
Stand behind us to give us
strength;
And watch over us to protect us as we
travel

Amen



Viewpoint

100 NOT OUT?

In 2010 the modern ecumenical movement will have been running for 100 years and there are various plans to celebrate this important centenary around the country. There are plans too for a County event towards the end of the year. In that century there have been ebbs and flows, but Christian Unity has never been off the agenda.

Why is this?

Because, in 1910, the divisions between Christians of different denominations were a scandal, an insult to God and a very bad witness to the world. At that time many British Churches committed to each other, to sharing in God's mission, rather than competing with each other, as had happened so often both at home and abroad. Since then huge strides have been made to heal the differences, moving churches from cooperation to commitment, seeking communion with one another in mission to the world.

Also, there has been a new understanding of what 'Unity' means. It is a Gospel imperative, a gift from the Father and the prayer of Christ for his people. This ecumenical movement towards the goal of Unity is not an 'add-on', an 'optional extra' or a 'hobby for anoraks'. It is vital for the future well-being of the planet; humans being the most dangerous of its inhabitants. Unity is not just a gift for the church. It is for the world, broken, divided and at war with itself. The church, having received this gift, must set an example by pursuing it in partnership with churches and non-church agencies alike, waving the flag at every opportunity. As the Roman Catholic scholar, Cardinal Jan Willebrands said "Unity is vital only if it is a vital unity." If St Paul is to be believed 'Unity' is what Christ died for. 'Christ... has broken down the dividing wall of hostility...that he might create in himself one new human in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing hostility to an end.' Eph.2:13ff. Unity is at the heart of God. It is the doctrine of the 'Trinity' and the will of the Father, the work of the Son in the power of the Spirit.

I heard a story recently about an inquisitive child who asked her Mother one of those big awkward questions. It went something like this:

Small child, "Mummy, what does God do all day?"

Mother, thinking fast, "He mends things, dear"

By definition, it's what we do too. That mending, for the great purpose of unity has been central to our Churches' life for 100 years. This year too is an opportunity to renew our commitment to each, for the future and for the greater mission of God in and for the world.

With all good wishes in Christ,

David Ryan,
Anglican Diocesan Ecumenical Officer for Worcestershire.

Lyttleton Well Christian Bookshop Malvern

With the closure of the old SPCK bookshop in Worcester, a number of other local Christian bookshops have widened their range of books and goods. The Lyttleton Well Christian Bookshop in Church Street Malvern have asked us to remind you that their bookshop now stocks a variety of altar breads, communion wafers, candles (Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion) and has a wide selection of prayer books, hymn books and bibles.

They can obtain church stationery from Church House and books and church supplies from SPCK and other publishers. The small shop stocks a wide variety of other Christian books, children's and youth books and resources, CDs etc. You are welcome to drop in and browse, or order by phone or email.

CHURCH STREET GREAT MALVERN WR14 2AY
Telephone: 01684 573702 email:bookshop@lyttletonwell.co.uk
Bookshop Manager: Cathy Jefferies. www.lyttletonwell.co.uk

The Lyttleton Well's current newsletter containing book reviews etc. and a Calendar of Ecumenical events in Malvern, can also be viewed on their website.

[note from Editor: also to be recommended is the Lyttleton Well Coffee shop on the same premises, where you can find scrumptious home made cakes and tasty light lunches!!!]



**Welcome to the new Roman Catholic Archbishop for the
Archdiocese of Birmingham**

CTiW welcome the **Right Reverend Bernard Longley**, who was previously titular Bishop of Zarna and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Westminster, and who has recently been installed as the new Archbishop of Birmingham. Bishop Longley was named the ninth Archbishop of Birmingham on 1 October 2009. He succeeds the Archbishop of Westminster, the Most Reverend Vincent Nichols (2000-2009). In 1996 Bishop Bernard became National Ecumenical Officer at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. In 1999 he was appointed Moderator of the Steering Committee of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and also Assistant General Secretary of Catholic Bishops' Conference with responsibilities for Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. Bishop Longley authored the Catholic Commentary on the Agreed Joint Statement by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission - 'Growing towards Unity and Mission' (2007).

[www.catholicchurch.org.uk/ccb/catholic_church/the_church_in_england_and_wales/bishops/longley_bernard]

Bishop Longley was installed as Archbishop of Birmingham at the Metropolitan Cathedral and Basilica of Saint Chad on 8 December 2009.



"Religion - wounding or healing?": A day conference organised by Churches Together for Healing

Carrs Lane URC Birmingham October 9th 2010 10.30 - 3.45 pm

Key Speakers:- Dr Stephen Pattison and Revd Chris MacKenna

Cost of day £15

More information at:

<http://www.churches-together.net/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=186858>

Including the Excluded - what churches can do!

Disabled people are the most excluded people group in the world, but UK churches can take advantage of free resources to enable everyone to be included.

Sadly, statistics show that disabled people are the most likely to be in poverty, not to receive an education or have paid work and to be victims of abuse. Consequently, they are also the most likely not to have heard the gospel. Christian disability charity Through the Roof is seeking to change that, and has so far given away 100 copies of their publications to churches free, all to make sure that the inclusion of disabled people is not forgotten in the recession.

Fifty churches have taken up the offer so far and Through the Roof has had many happy responses from churches glad to receive these resources. One said 'your resources look excellent, finances are tight at the moment, and the free material makes all the difference'. The materials are helping churches take steps to include everyone, and the charity will follow up soon to find out the difference they are making.

"Everyone's struggling with money at the moment, but at Through the Roof we want to be counter-cultural and give something away for nothing." said Jacky Oliver, CEO. "A little effort can make a big difference to the lives of disabled people and these resources will help churches make practical changes to enable disabled people to be fully involved in the life of our faith communities."

Through the Roof's publications include

'All Welcome' -- good practice advice to welcome people with different needs; 'Intentional' -- strategies to include disabled children;

'Come In!' -- physical adaptations for buildings;

'Be a Roofbreaker' -- Equipping churches and communities to become welcome and safe places for all;

'Hearts in Motion' -- a bible study exploring disability and

'Removing Barriers' -- a self-assessment checklist to help you identify ways to fully include disabled people.

Contact Through the Roof on info@throughtheroof.org or 01372 749955

with your address and church or organisation details to choose two out of the six free publications.

CTiW Church Leaders:

Anglican: Rt Rev John Inge, Bishop of Worcester

Baptist: Rev. Keith Judson (Chair)

Methodist: Rev. Bill Anderson

Quakers: Desmond Gamlen

Roman Catholic: awaiting appointment

Salvation Army: Captain Jenny Forman

United Reformed Church: Rev. Roy Lownes

www.churchestogetherinworcestershire.blogspot.com

Denominational Ecumenical Officers:

Anglican: Rev. David Ryan

Baptist: Rev. Gordon Bran

Methodist: Rev. Jane Wilson

Roman Catholic: Kevin Down

United Reformed Church: Rev. Jim Brown

Treasurer: Mrs Jo Dowling

Administrator/Newsletter Editor:

Annette Leech

