



JUNE 2016

Chairman - Bishop Tim Thornton
Vice Chairman - Reverend Steve Wild
CTC Missioner - David H Smith
Treasurer - Paul Durkin
 Charity No 1053899
www.churchestogetherincornwall

Churches Together Day Conference
20 June 2016 in Saltash

Baptist Church Saltash Baptist Church, Culver Road, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 4DR

Our Aim:

to gather as Churches Together in Cornwall to pray worship, celebrate, and learn about the work of God in our county and beyond with a focus toward leadership development.

Focus for 2016 include:

providing pastoral care for our congregations and the local community and engaging with a broader group of churches across Cornwall.

programme

10 AM - Morning Celebration with worship

Greeting from Bishop Tim and leaders. Mission project updates.

11 AM - Leadership Session: Waiting on God the Holy Spirit

Led by: Bishop Tim Thornton in the Chair, Rev. Danny Reed, Deputy Chair of the Cornwall Methodist District, Rev. Tim Parkman, Minister of Saltash Baptist Church.

12 Noon - Being Christians Together (meet in geographic groups)

12:30 PM Lunch Break (pasty lunch included)

1:15 PM - Afternoon Praise: We remember, we reflect, we worship

1:45 PM - Breakout Sessions

- Pastoral Care & Dementia: Led by members of the CTC Dementia Action Project Group
- Youth Ministry: Reaching our Children and Teens led by Alex Yarlett and Ray Thomas (SWYM)
- Equipping Worship Leaders: David Brittain

3 PM — Group feedback 3:15PM — Closing Worship 3:30PM — Finish

Book your place now: via this link

<https://bookwhen.com/transformationcornwall>

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is advising Christians not to talk about their faith unless they're asked to do so. As head of the 88 million-member Anglican Communion, Welby was asked at an interfaith event last month, where he draws the line between evangelism and proselytization.

"I draw the line in terms of respect for the other; in starting by listening before you speak; in terms of love that is unconditional and not conditional to one iota, to one single element on how the person responds to your own declaration of faith; and of not speaking about faith unless you are asked about faith.

In his welcome speech at the interfaith gathering, Welby spoke of the immense value that faith communities have for the wellbeing of the United Kingdom.

"I think this is something that is more and more being recognised when you look at social engagement from the faith communities, of all sorts. It represents literally billions of pounds of contribution, if the government had to pay for it every year," said Welby.

"It reaches out in a way that values the human person in a way that the machinery and institutions of bureaucracy, however well intentioned, find very difficult. It's done with people doing things because they love each other, and I think that is an extraordinarily moving fact and one that we need to celebrate."

In his speech, Welby also denounced violence against religious minorities, especially noting the apparent rise in anti-Semitism in recent years.

"We've seen a very sharp rise, over the last couple of years, in anti-Semitic expression. Absolutely intolerable," continued Welby.

Welby's comments on the difference between evangelism and proselytizing and when a Christian should share their faith comes days after the Archbishop oversaw a prayer campaign for evangelism.

Known as the "Thy Kingdom Come" campaign, the effort was coordinated by the Church of England in advance of the holy day of Pentecost.

In an interview with Premier published earlier this month, Welby stressed that congregations should do more to share their faith with those outside of the Church.

"Any church that leaves things to the 'professionals' is committing missionary suicide basically," stated Welby. "The responsibility of demonstrating in word and works the love of Jesus Christ, in a way that is deeply attractive is the responsibility of every single Christian. Always. Everywhere."

PENTECOST AT GWENNAP PIT



(above - some of our Penryn and Falmouth Churches Together colleagues)

What a wonderful afternoon it was, praising God together, sitting in the sunshine on the birthday of the church - here at Gwennap Pit. The Salvation Army Cornwall Band played brilliantly with the 'warm up' hymns introduced poetically by Tony Jasper. The service itself began at 3pm with input from various people of different denominations, including Lesley Chandler, President and Quaker Denominational Ecumenical Officer of Churches Together in Cornwall. She read the main passage of scripture - the account of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost from Acts chapter 2 - which she introduced with a brief account of her family background in the Primitive Methodists and description of Quaker worship as waiting on the Spirit like the apostles.

The sermon was given by the Revd. Paul Smith, from Plymouth Methodist Central Hall, who spoke powerfully of the results of infilling by the Holy Spirit in ordinary people, such as were the first disciples, St Augustine, Luther,

Calvin, John Wesley, and many more who have made a great impact for Christ in the power of the Spirit. He also gave a memorable account of a baptism at the Central Hall, requested by some teenagers to be by full immersion (for which he had to research and acquire a portable baptistery), which was attended by a gallery full of young people, because those being baptised had invited all their Sixth Form to the service, many of whom had since come forward themselves to learn more. After the baptism he led the baptised students across to the rooms where they would dry and change and as they dripped across the floor they left a trail of wet footprints. He drew a parallel between this and infilling by the Spirit, which should lead to a clear trail visible to all. Are we being "drips for Christ"? There was a clear message for us all in this.

The singing was strong and emotional - the words eat into the heart - Be still, for the presence of the Lord is moving in this place - And can it be - my chains fell off, my heart was free - the Holy Spirit was with us as was Charles Wesley. Another wonderful praise occasion for Christians to come listen and share together.



REFERENDUM JUNE 23rd 2016

"We are not for names, nor men, nor titles of Government, nor are we for this party or against the other...but we are for justice and mercy and truth and peace and true freedom, that these may be exalted in our nation, and that goodness, righteousness, meekness, tolerance, peace and unity with God, and with one another, that these things may abound."

These are the words of Edward Burrough, an early Friend, spoken in 1659 when our country was facing an uncertain future. Oliver Cromwell had died the previous year and the monarchy would be restored the following year. People had questioned the absolute authority of parliament, monarchy, army and the church. **All**, in some measure, had been found wanting. Many turned to emigration because of religious and political persecution.

The names of Adenauer, Bech, Beyen, Churchill, De Gasperi, Hallstein, Mansholt, Monnet, Schuman, Spaak and Spinelli seldom trip off the tongue easily these days but these were the visionary Europeans facing an uncertain future at the end of WW2. Their vision, after the horrors of two world wars, was for a peaceful, united and prosperous Europe. Peace and unity became the glue of the European Union and it is worth noting that although there have been many wars globally since 1945, no member country has waged war on another member country. These visionaries were onto something...

Fast-forwarding to today, through its European Union membership the UK participates in the world's largest single market with 27 other member States accounting for 16% of global imports and exports - more than either the US or China.

Euro-sceptics say the UK could be more prosperous in international trade if it left the EU. What alternatives are available? Should relations with this huge organisation be redesigned?

Each member country contributes 1% of their Gross National Income (GNI). In 2014 the British government made a net contribution of £9.8bn out of a total UK government annual expenditure of £700bn. This represents about *0.5%* of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The EU is by far the UK's largest trading partner. Exports and imports make up 60% of the UK economy - higher than most EU countries but lower than Germany's 84%. This demonstrates that EU membership is not a barrier to strong international trade links.

Whether Britain stays or leaves we face changes and costs of all kinds when we vote on June 23rd.

For spiritual guidance in the run-up to this vote I have looked at the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and found Quaker testimonies weaving in and out of what he was saying to the people. (Matthew 5 - 7) SPICES - Simplicity, Peace (and Justice), Integrity, Community, Equality and Stewardship. As spices season our food, these testimonies should 'season' our voting in June.

There is however, a need to challenge the dangerous narrative dominating international affairs. European governments think security is achieved by dominating others. They think it is about state power and the ability to contain threats with military force. So we have throughout Europe a growing tide of militarism with the sub text of 'fear'. This we need to monitor, to speak truth to power, if we are, as follower's of Christ's teachings, the peacemakers.

For some light, if slightly satirical relief from these weighty issues, take a look at the Patrick Stewart sketch on YouTube which is a take on the Monty Python classic and asks *"What has the European Convention on Human Rights ever done for us....?"* Theresa May has said that Britain should leave the Convention. WARNING: contains strong language (the final two words).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptfmAY6M6aA>

* In contrast the UK government aspires to spend 2% of its GDP, on the military, in line with NATO targets.

Lesley Chandler

Ecumenical Ministry or “post-denominational age”

This is the final part of a sabbatical study entitled - “The Local Church Working Right?” written by Revd David Muskett. If you would like to read the full study please click on the title on the home page of <http://www.churchestogetherincornwall.org.uk> on the front page and under the heading **FEATURES**.

Between February and April 2016 I was privileged to have the opportunity for sabbatical leave from my post as Methodist Minister in the East Solent and Downs Methodist Circuit. In that post I live in Haslemere and have pastoral charge of Methodist churches in Haslemere, Liphook, and Lindford. I am also chaplain to St Francis Community Church, Headley Down, an independent, non-denominational congregation with strong ties to local Methodist and Anglican congregations.

During one visit I met another visitor to that area who had come from China. I had just asked around to see how many different denominations were represented at our gathering. The Chinese visitor described her country as in a “post-denominational age” – there are no denominations.

It is a phrase I have used here with for some time a different meaning. I believe we are in a post-denominational age in this country when people look for a congregation to join. If they have moved they may first try the place with the same denominational label that they used to attend but that is the extent of denominational loyalty. More important factors in the choice of a place of worship are style of worship and teaching or theology and an affinity with the people they find there. Joining a congregation is not so much about whether that congregation is friendly but more whether the ‘joiner’ feels they can make friends.

Hearing from ministers and leaders of local congregations of different denominations and from Ecumenical Officers in the past three months I am also aware that we are becoming increasingly post-denominational in terms of mission. In many places the significant mission projects and activities are undertaken by Christians from a variety of denominational traditions and those with no denominational affiliation. As at least one place described it, the theological differences disappear in the face of combined activity in the service of the Kingdom in the local community.

The Declarations of Intent in Cumbria and Cornwall seem to look for the illusive middle way between the “organic union” of the 1960s-70s and some kind of friendly separateness. There is an attempt in most places to put an end to rivalry. Where ecumenical working is described as ‘best practise’ the attempt is to go beyond co-operation. It seems from my enquiries that what the Church in many local areas is looking for is a way to be seen as the Church (singular and united) in all the ways it relates to the community whilst retaining separate and varied worship. That works for as long as ministry can be sustained by a variety of denominations. When this is no longer the case the default is that everyone reverts to whatever is left unless they travel.

Many of the differences over theology have disappeared for those engaged together in the mission of God’s Kingdom. Truly to be the Church in a place the differences over ministry also need to disappear when seen from inside as well as from outside the church. Effectively that means interchangeable ministries.

Clearly for some people with some theologies of ordination there are some difficulties with this but there are places in Cumbria and Cornwall where it is not only the case but it seems you have to opt out if you don’t like it rather than opt in if you want it. That not only enables greater coverage for services but means that the Church can be more local rather than having ministers travel great distances in order to cover services of their particular denomination.



It raises some questions for me. As an Anglican priest in Full Connexion with the British Methodist Conference I am some kind of hybrid. (Is that an Anglodist or a Methlican?) My authorisation and permissions to officiate are complicated and seemingly dependent on the opinions of different bishops.

If Interchangeable Ministry can be done in Cumbria and Cornwall, why can it not be done everywhere?

It seems to me that we have a mutual recognition of ministries. There are very few who would claim that a minister of any denomination or independent congregation is not a Christian Minister. Differences are over the way that ministry is discerned, recognised, authorised and commissioned. In many respects the sticking point is Episcopal ordination. There is a helpful symbolism in the idea of the laying on of hands going back to the apostles to give an authority to the recognition of a ministry by the whole church. In practical terms the greater benefit to the local church receiving a minister is that his/her ministry has been recognised and authorised by the church more widely than the local congregation – that is nationally and/or globally.

And personally: If a Methodist Minister, for instance, can have blanket permission to officiate in Anglican churches across a whole county (with only a few exceptions) why can’t a Methodist Minister (with an Anglican ordination) be given a geographically qualified Permission to Officiate in another part of the country at the invitation of the relevant Incumbent(s)?

If two areas of the country can make this amount of progress it should be an urgent part of conversations at a national level for Churches Together as well as in bi-lateral conversations, especially the Anglican-Methodist Covenant to agree some level of Interchangeable Ministry. It has been done in the name of Mission and the formation of Mission Communities in Cumbria.

It seems to me that Cumbria is not the only part of the country that would be well-served by a greater unity for the sake of the Church’s Mission. In the past the Church has often changed out of necessity or pragmatism. It should not have to become a pragmatic necessity for the continuation of God’s Mission in England for this to be addressed.

David Muskett
April 2016