



**Chairman - Bishop Tim Thornton**  
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**CTC Missioner - David H Smith**  
**Treasurer - Paul Durkin**  
Charity No 1053899  
[www.churchestogetherincornwall](http://www.churchestogetherincornwall)

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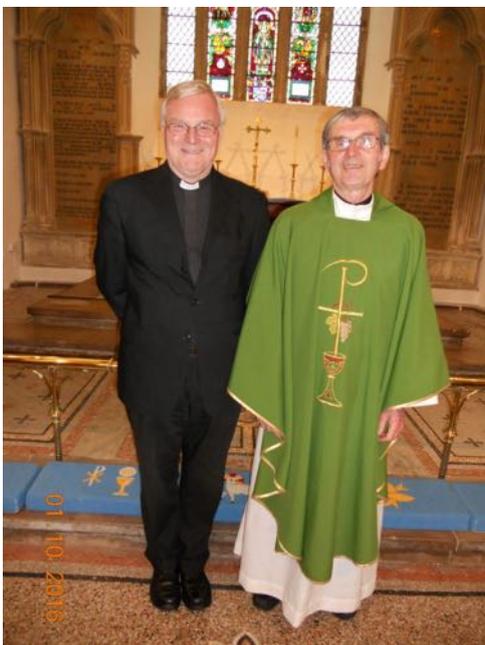
## **EVERYONE IN RURAL AREAS IS HIT HARD BY DECLINE, SAYS BISHOP OF TRURO**



THAT poverty exists in rural areas is "not at all surprising", the Bishop of Truro, the Rt Revd Tim Thornton, says in a Church of England podcast on rural poverty. Remote housing, sparse and therefore expensive public transport, and higher supply costs all contribute to poorer families, stretched relationships and, for the elderly in particular, isolation and loneliness.

It is a daily concern in Cornwall. A report by the charity End Child Poverty last month suggested that more than a quarter of children in Cornwall were living below the breadline. Bishop Tim says "It surprises me that I have to remind people that poverty in rural areas can hit more deeply, and be more affective in all sorts of ways." Farmers are among the hardest hit. The convener for Christian initiative, the Cornwall Farming Community Network, Chris Batt, said that an ageing population of farmers had resulted in less efficient farms. The next generation was reluctant to inherit the business.

*Hattie Williams full report with further comments from Bishop Tim, is featured in the Church Times.*



Revd Canon Chris Malkinson with Father Ciaran McGuinness in St Petroc's Church  
Read the article on page 3...



Christians should not be afraid of speaking "freely" about their faith at work and in public places, Theresa May has said.

The Prime Minister said people should be able to celebrate Christmas as she endorsed a report which said that Christianity should be "celebrated, not denigrated".

The report says that many employers will have "little problem" with Christians discussing their faith at work "in the same way you might talk about sport, hobbies and family life".

Mrs May's intervention came after David Isaac, chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, warned that over-anxious employers are failing to celebrate Christmas for fear of offending other staff.

The Prime Minister, who is the daughter of a vicar, said that Christians should "jealously guard" their right to speak out about their faith as she endorsed a report by the Evangelical Alliance and the Lawyers Christian Fellowship

She said: "You raise an important issue that matters to both you and me, and I think that the phrase that was used by the Lawyers Christian Fellowship was 'the jealously guarded principle' of that ability to speak freely, as you say respectfully and responsibly, about one's religion.

"I'm happy to welcome the publication of this report and its finding. "Of course we are now into the season of Advent, and we have a very strong tradition in this country of religious tolerance and freedom of speech and our Christian heritage is something we can all be proud of.

"I'm sure that we would all want to ensure that people at work do feel able to speak about their faith, and also be able to speak quite freely about Christmas."

The report warns that society is forgetting "that its many freedoms derive from centuries of applying the Bible to public life".

**Continued on page 4.....**

## Christian Aid

Each year Christian Aid provides the Go and Do action points for each of the daily reflections – linking into the important work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and advocacy of justice.

### Social media

Show your support for Christian Unity by posting unity messages and details of your events to our [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Twitter wall](#) – simply add the #wpcuwall hashtag to your Twitter post (note they take 15 minutes to appear). You can also find updates about the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Twitter by following the [#wpcu2017](#) hashtag.

Crossing



Barriers

The materials, [Crossing Barriers](#), were prepared for worldwide use by the churches in Germany based around the verses 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.

Order or download resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017 – *Crossing Barriers*. The material for 2017 was prepared for worldwide use by the churches in Germany based around the verses 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.

### Dates

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th to the 25th January – the octave of St. Peter and St. Paul. However, some areas observe it at Pentecost or some other time.

### Introduction

There are fifty million Christians in Germany who, traditionally, have mostly belonged to the Roman Catholic Church or one of the Protestant State Churches. Recent developments, particularly the reception of refugees and asylum seekers, have begun to change this balance and other Christian traditions are finding expression. Whilst that which unites the churches is stronger than that which divides, there are still areas of difference in which the churches remain self-absorbed or construct new walls.

The text from 2 Corinthians announces that God has, in Christ, reconciled the world to himself. The love of Christ compels us to be ambassadors of this reconciliation, which is enacted by dismantling the walls. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, Germany experienced how a seemingly insurmountable wall could be brought down. The fall of this wall is a symbol of hope that, with the love of God, nothing is impossible.

The resources for 2017 are available as downloads. There is also an order form to purchase the material in a published format or they can be purchased online through Church House Bookshop. We would also encourage you to subscribe to take part in the post-event survey to help improve our resources, and also for occasional email updates on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



NETWORK FOR  
PASTORAL, SPIRITUAL  
AND RELIGIOUS CARE  
IN HEALTH

## Equality and Diversity Training for Chaplaincy

**Wednesday 25th January 2017** - The Western Marble Arch Synagogue, 1 Wallenberg Place, (formerly known as Gt Cumberland Place), London, W1H 7TN.

**Tuesday 28th March 2017** – United Synagogue Sheffield, 3 Brincliffe Crescent, Sheffield, S11 9AW.

**Training Objective:** To support chaplaincy services to:

Deliver services that promote equality and diversity.  
Ensure equal access to high quality care for the population served.  
Create plans to support service development, local policy development and recruitment.

**Target Audience:** Lead chaplains, HR leads and equality leads

**Purpose of training:** NHS chaplaincy in England has evolved considerably in recent years, largely in response to changing patient needs and increasing diversity of the population. Chaplaincy teams now often include people from a range of faiths and beliefs, including non-religious care providers. The NHS England Chaplaincy 2015 guidelines acknowledged that: 'Where requests for support relate to a particular religion or belief the chaplaincy service should be able to access appropriate support for the patient or service user and, when this cannot be matched, other chaplaincy support should be offered.' Recognising the need for likeminded care, chaplaincy teams are developing their model of delivery to increase the choice available to patients, carers and staff.

When chaplaincy teams are more diverse the take up of the service increases, and so chaplaincy services will need to continue to evolve to best meet the needs of the people they serve, and to continue to provide high quality care for all.

This one-day training course will support chaplaincy services to complete a thorough equality assessment and apply this to all aspects of service development.

Both these events are free of charge.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** All food and drink will be provided. The organisers are happy to cater for specific dietary requirements. Please specify your requirements.

The organisers have requested that NO FOOD AND DRINK ARE BROUGHT INTO BOTH SYNAGOGUES as all the food and drink consumed on the premises MUST BE STRICTLY KOSHER.

**Please register via the following links:**

**London** - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/equality-and-diversity-training-for-chaplaincy-london-tickets-29784768043>

**Sheffield** - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/equality-and-diversity-training-for-chaplaincy-sheffield-tickets-29784929526>

Network for Pastoral, Spiritual and Religious Care in Health

Chair: Keith Munnings  
Chief Officer: Debbie Hodge

**ST PETROC'S CHURCH SHARING AGREEMENT  
CONTINUES TO BE A SHINING EXAMPLE  
5 YEARS ON**

It has been nearly five years since the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities in Padstow made the decision to share St Petroc's Church and the arrangement is working better than anyone could have hoped for.

The town's Roman Catholic congregation had used St Petroc's Church for many summers when they outgrew their own church. However, it was following a survey on the Roman Catholic Church which highlighted that one side of the building was falling out and would need extensive work, that a conversation about sharing a church took place between St Petroc's Revd Canon Chris Malkinson and Father Keith Mitchell from the Catholic church.

St Petroc's is the only church this side of Gloucester that has this arrangement. Initially there were a number of legalities for both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches to work through, in particular with the Aumbry, a recessed cabinet Anglicans used for storing sacred vessels and the Tabernacle, a fixed box the Roman Catholic Church had.

Although there are different teachings on the Blessed Sacrament, it was agreed both congregations would pray together before the Blessed Sacrament while respecting the different doctrines.

St Petroc's Anglican minister Revd Canon Chris Malkinson said: "The arrangement is absolutely perfect. There really haven't been any problems. You would think that there would be the occasional blip but we just haven't had any. I would definitely recommend it to any parishes in a similar situation."

He added: "I believe it has helped to give the Roman Catholic congregation a focus. They weren't able to keep their church open all day but we can at St Petroc's and they really appreciate being able to pray at any time of the day."

Father Ciaran McGuinness, from the Roman Catholic Church agrees. "I am absolutely delighted with the sharing arrangements at St Petroc's, Padstow. It is a wonderful privilege to be able to worship in such a beautiful and ancient church, knowing our ancestors in the faith have worshiped for centuries.

It has brought us all closer together. We Catholics really appreciate the spirit of unity and fellowship in Padstow."

Revd Canon Chris Malkinson is also pleased with the arrangement both practically as well as spiritually. The Roman Catholic Church pay a sum each year which helps with the maintenance of the church and buildings, and having two congregations using the church means they have double the efforts for fundraising and community events.

Five years on the arrangement is continuing to work well and Revd Chris says there have been surprisingly few problems. "In fact, throughout five years of the twice yearly council meetings, the only disagreement that has come about was about a notice board!"

Tony Carter writes:-

Churches Together in the Launceston Area produces and delivers a Christmas card for the Launceston and Tregadillett churches. The cards are delivered to all homes in Launceston and Tregadillett by volunteers from Launceston Central Methodist Church, Launceston Community Church, Launceston Gateway to New Life Church, St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Church, Launceston Salvation Army, St Mary's, St Thomas' and St Stephen's Launceston Parish Churches, and the Church of Christ the Cornerstone. Tregadillett (Methodist and Anglican LEP).

Churches Together in the Launceston Area also provide a lunch on Christmas Day in the hall at Launceston Central Methodist Church for any who would like company and will be doing so on Christmas Day this year (25<sup>th</sup> December 2016)

CT Launceston are holding a united service at Launceston Central Methodist Church at 10.30 am on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017, with light refreshments afterwards and are planning to have their usual stand at Launceston Agricultural Show on the third or last Thursday in July 2017 or first or second Thursdays in August 2017, where we also serve light refreshments.

Also linked to Churches Together in the Launceston Area are Advent and Lent Bible study courses at Tregadillett Anglican and Methodist LEP, the churches or other places of worship of members of Churches Together in the Launceston Area and the homes of church members.

**CAN YOU AFFORD TO MISS THIS INCREDIBLE EVENT?**

**FALMOUTH LIVE NATIVITY**

**Sunday 11th December  
Starts 1.30pm at Events  
Square and finishes on  
The Moor, Falmouth**

Rediscover the true meaning of Christmas. Follow Mary, Joseph and their donkeys through town from Events Square. Help Mary and Joseph find somewhere to stay. Listen to the angels sing while shepherds watch their flock of sheep, listen to King Herod and follow the star and the 3 kings to the stable in the marquee on The Moor. Afterwards look at the animals in the marquee and enjoy free refreshments and children's activities in Falmouth Methodist Church.

[livenativity@outlook.com](mailto:livenativity@outlook.com) [Facebook.com/falmouthlivenativity](https://www.facebook.com/falmouthlivenativity)  
[www.falmouthchurchesttogether.org.uk](http://www.falmouthchurchesttogether.org.uk)

Please note our children will need to be accompanied by an adult. Due to the nature of the event, we ask that you leave on time.





It says: "Although these liberties have been hard-won, however, they can also be easily lost. If not attended to, they will wither away.

"Like a muscle, without exercise they will atrophy. The Bible tells us that we grow as we give, and the truth about our gospel freedoms is that 'if we don't use them we'll lose them'. "The lost need the gospel, so we need to be intentional about sharing it.

"We hope that this resource will inform followers of Christ about the freedoms we have to do this, and encourage confident and fruitful evangelism in every area of public life. Freedom, in every sense of the word, depends on it. So let's speak up."

The report says that employees should look for the "opportunities" to "spread the gospel" as long as they do so in a "respectful" manner and do not "brow-beat" colleagues.

It says: "Religious beliefs have protection that other beliefs do not. If you are expressing an opinion that is informed by your Christian beliefs, you have greater legal protection than if it is simply expressed as your opinion on a topic.

"This is, therefore, a good reason not to be shy about stating how your faith informs your opinions."

It adds: "[Christians should] foster a culture of conversation about faith. The more such discussions are commonplace, the less it will be felt to be 'wrong'. Ongoing natural discussions are better than forced, isolated occasions."

The document also suggests that Twitter, Facebook and other forms of social media present a "wonderful opportunity for getting the good news of Jesus Christ out to a vast audience at little cost".

It comes after Theresa May, a practising member of the Church of England, said that Christianity "lies behind what I do".

Article credit – Telegraph Photo Credit: Jon Collinson

## TO ALL OUR READERS – DO HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PRAYERFUL HAPPY & PEACEFUL NEW YEAR

More than two thousand years ago a little baby was born in a manger; an event that changed the world. This boy-child, [Jesus](#), is the promised Messiah who stepped down from [Heaven](#) to be born as a babe, live a sinless life and willingly give His life as the Perfect Lamb of God to pay a [sin](#) debt that He did not owe.

As foretold in the Scriptures, He did this for you; He did this for me; He did this for the whole world. When we believe this simple truth, Jesus' payment for sin is accounted to us and we are promised eternal [life](#). Since that first [Christmas](#) morn much has been said about Christmas.

### Christmas Quotes

*"He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute." ~ Augustine*

*"To the American People: Christmas is not a time or a season but a state of mind. To cherish peace and good will, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think on these things, there will be born in us a Saviour and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world." ~Calvin Coolidge*

*"How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, His precepts!" ~ Benjamin Franklin*

*"Christmas can be celebrated in the school room with pine trees, tinsel and reindeers, but there must be no mention of the man whose birthday is being celebrated. One wonders how a teacher would answer if a student asked why it was called Christmas." ~ Ronald Reagan*

*"Christmas is based on an exchange of gifts, the gift of God to man – His unspeakable gift of His Son, and the gift of man to God – when we present our bodies a living sacrifice." ~ Vance Havner*

*"There is no connection between the worship of idols and the use of Christmas trees. We should not be anxious about baseless arguments against Christmas decorations. Rather, we should be focused on the Christ of Christmas and giving all diligence to remembering the real reason for the season." ~ John MacArthur*

*"The Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this truth of the Incarnation." ~J.I. Packer*

*"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful." ~ Norman Vincent Peale*

*"You can never truly enjoy Christmas until you can look up into the Father's face and tell him you have received his Christmas gift." ~ John R. Rice*

*"The greatest and most momentous fact which the history of the world records is the fact of Christ's birth." ~ Charles H. Spurgeon*

*"Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king." Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled! ~Charles Wesley*