



## Round-up of 2022



Earlier this month Dean John preached at St Nikolai, Kiel, with the following words:

*“I am so pleased to be here on this important anniversary. Seventy five years ago, in 1947, my predecessor Provost Dick Howard brought a Coventry Cross of Nails to this city, then still largely, like Coventry, in ruins. It’s now placed in this church. We were joined together then in an experience of death and destruction. We are joined together now in an experience of friendship and hope. “*

How things have moved on over the succeeding 75 years! To a network of now over 250 partners around the globe, with eight more having joined over the past year:

**Reconciliation Initiatives**, which trains dioceses and theological groups in reconciliation – see some of their topical discussion webinars [here](#);

**The Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchengemeinde Eisenach**, which has joined in large part to reconcile with its past as a town that was heavily invested in the Nazi regime;

**The Student Christian Movement** (the wonderful evening fireside presentation at their annual retreat pictured right);

**Marygate House**, familiar to many who have visited Holy Island over the years (Mary Taylor, UK & Ireland Board trustee, and Richard Parker on behalf of the Cathedral, pictured below right as the Cross made its way across the sands).



Four schools local to Coventry have joined the **ICONS (International Cross of Nails Schools)** network: **Meriden Primary School; St John Vianney Primary School; St Andrew’s Infant’s School; and Sidney Stringer Secondary School**. Others await joining next year, and the ICONS team has continued delivering their Ambassadors (Pupil) and Champions (Staff) training locally and are about to start delivering this online; and are adding to the stock of reconciliation education resources, translating some into German.



Coventry Cathedral also celebrated the new **Cathedral’s Diamond anniversary**, marking 60 years since its consecration and official opening by the Queen, in May 1962. Still at the time too close to the closing days of Covid restrictions to press ahead with lots of international attendees around the anniversary, we welcomed just a few key representatives from our international board to Coventry, and held our first **online international gathering** in its place, following a couple of occasions of online pilgrimage in 2020 and 2021. Good numbers joined in online to hear Canon Paul Oestreicher in conversation with Dean John about the war in Ukraine and our role in the wider world, and Revds Wilma Jakobsen and Mpho Tutu van Furth discussing the legacy of the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

*Last year’s interns Lara and Theresa with Sabrina Groeschel, ARSP co-ordinator, at the Cathedral’s Diamond Anniversary service.*

*Right: Delene Mark and Bert Kuipers, lead representatives of CCN South Africa and the Netherlands, receive their pectoral Crosses of Nails in recognition of their involvement on the CCN International Board.*



Early in the year, in partnership with the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship we held a short series of evening online discussions on the environmental crisis and how we meet it as reconcilers, with the close involvement of colleagues from **Green Christian**. We talked of axes of reconciliation – with God; with the past and the damage that has been irrevocably wrought; and with the haves and the have-nots; of a cycle of penitence – privilege, remorse, repentance, self-denial, reparation, renegotiation, and ultimately reconciliation; and of justice, and how very hard this is to recognize in this area. We talked also of coping and resilience: of finding a ‘language of lament’; a safe space for distress and disorientation for individuals, groups and societies; a place to find and encourage hope beyond despair.

In his Kiel sermon, Dean John continues: “.... ***In English we have a phrase, ‘to stand on the shoulders of giants’. How can we stand on the shoulders of those in Kiel and Coventry who were ready to reach out to one another and to God and set to work to rebuild a world as a place of peace and justice for all? A place for the next generations to flourish. Today, the task remains urgent. With war on our doorstep in Ukraine, the rise again of aggressive nationalist movements across the world, the newly discovered challenges of climate change bringing food poverty and existential threat across the planet, there is much to do.***”

Horror has been widespread at the desperate situation in Ukraine, particularly given the presence of our CCN partner there, **St Paul’s in Odessa**; and indeed partners in Moscow and in Belarus. You can still watch Oliver Schuegraf’s poignant prayer for the war in Ukraine from earlier this year [here](#), focusing on the peoples of all countries involved.

At Coventry itself, spring 2022 also saw the end of its year as UK City of Culture in what is now a rejuvenated city! Canon Mary Gregory arrived as our first Canon for Arts and Reconciliation, and we’ve had some world-class culture in the cathedral this year, in the Sir Jacob Epstein sculpture exhibition, and the continuation of the Broken Angel series, which has creatively re-worked the West Screen panel that was smashed in a break-in two years ago. Reinhard Pontius’ St Michael Statue, which has come to Coventry following a tour around many of Germany’s ‘St Michael’ churches, closes the year.



We look forward to several new partners joining next year, including in Germany the **Stadtkirche St Michael in Jena** and **Braunschweig Cathedral**, groups from both of which joined us on our first in-person **pilgrimage** for three years back in October (pictured left): a real joy hosting visitors back to the cathedral for 48 hours of learning, sharing stories, practice and conversation. Assisting hosting were our new interns from ARSP Germany, Lara and Marlene, who we’re really pleased to have working with us across the cathedral this year! Our next pilgrimage is due to take place from **17-20 October 2023** – do contact us if you’d like to attend.

Next year we look forward to our **International Gathering** from **24-28 May in Coventry** – held only every 4-5 years. Do try to join us! Details [here](#); registrations open next month.

And so, at the close of another year, we all wish a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to all across the CCN, and all those associated with our work in reconciliation.

**Alice Farnhill, CCN Co-Ordinator**

*Right: Dean John getting into the Christmas spirit in Kiel with Hans Tovar, City President*

