

# CCN Newsletter

## February 2024

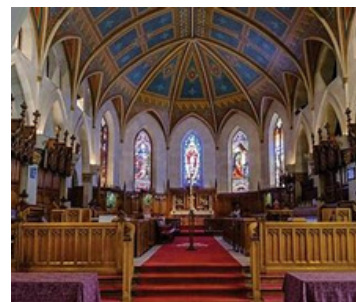
Healing the Wounds of History  
Learning to live with Difference and Celebrate Diversity  
Building a Culture of Justice and Peace

### New CCN partners in early 2024!

The first this spring is St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport, Louisiana. Founded in 1839, the Cathedral moved to its present campus 120 years later and was named the Cathedral of the Diocese of Western Louisiana in 1990. "Through connection with the Community of the Cross of Nails, we feel there's the opportunity to help focus mission on feeding and clothing the poor; working on racial reconciliation; and human trafficking (domestic and sexual), working with community and neighbourhood groups". St Mark's receive their Cross of Nails from Dean John on March 10th.



And on 28th April, at St Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, the Diocese of Huron joins us. With a variety of ministries and ministry settings across around 160 parishes in southwest Ontario, the diocese's current foci are on becoming "a learning church, a just church, a diverse church and a new church".



"As a diocese within which one of the residential schools for indigenous children existed, we are keenly aware of the need to heal the wounds of history, particularly those in which we are complicit. Creating – and celebrating – a just church is one of our core priorities and, in all we do, we seek to live in the peace that God offers."

**A very warm welcome to both new partners as they prepare to join us.**

### CCN Spring pilgrimage in Coventry

There are still spaces on our next CCN pilgrimage, from 21-24 May 2024. Aimed at those in the process of joining the CCN, but open likewise to those more familiar with Coventry, we warmly invite you to come to spend some extended time in the space where the story begins, following the rhythms of our cathedral day, and learning about our reconciliation ministry and about each other's reconciliation journeys. The pilgrimage starts at 6pm Tuesday with dinner together, and concludes after lunch on the Friday. We'd love to have you with us! £175 per person, including all midday and evening meals (accommodation not included). Do contact Alice with any questions or to book.

Our October pilgrimage dates in 2024 are 15th-18th October.

### Join other partners once a month on Zoom to pray the Litany of Reconciliation – all welcome!

- On the first Friday of the month at midday CET, led by our German partners :  
<https://zoom.us/j/881976123?pwd=MVFnQ1Rxb0Y2Y0dZmV01oQT09>  
Meeting ID: 881 976 123 Password: 637997
- On the third Tuesday of the month at midday US EST, led by our North American partners :  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82501462596?pwd=Q1ZmNjNGZmhueklORld1RTVPT1liUT09>  
Meeting ID: 825 0146 2596 Passcode: 746888

#### Contact us at:

[alice.farnhill@coventry.anglican.org](mailto:alice.farnhill@coventry.anglican.org)  
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/reconciliation/community-of-the-cross-of-nails>  
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### News from ICONS (International Cross of Nails Schools)

Before the holidays ICONS schools have been looking at light festivals and considering a message that one of our schools shared with us at their presentation service "Little things can make a difference".

We have been reflecting on what a tiny, fragile and unassuming thing a candle flame can be and yet what a difference it can make in the darkness. Children have been encouraged to consider that the little things they do can make a big difference to the community around them.

St Bart's School (in the photo on the right) sing this song.:

With my own two hands

<https://youtu.be/mRjDBd6tBBY?si=f0HOclxzwsTtsELi>

So, whether you are 4 years old or 104 years old don't be discouraged by the enormity of the difficulties around you, smile at someone, hold a door open, notice and be kind.



For more information, take a look at the  
ICONS-specific newsletter [here](#) or email:  
[Jessica.Weale@Coventry.Anglican.org](mailto:Jessica.Weale@Coventry.Anglican.org)

**Keep up with us through our social media and our website:**

[ICONS Facebook](#)  
[ICONS Instagram](#)  
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/reconciliation/icon-schools>

### News from Together for Hope

Together for Hope, the CCN's 'little sister' network, is a community of groups from across the spectrum of beliefs, following the same three guiding principles and the model set by the CCN.

An organisation preparing to join the CCN this spring but which works extensively across faiths is holding a free discussion event on Saturday 2nd March. Birmingham Newman University hosts the event, 'Meeting at the Crossroads: How do faiths work together to impact the world?' Opening at 10.30am with Dr Raymond Perrier & Dr AV Mahomed of the [Denis Hurley Centre](#) located in both Durban, South Africa and the UK, the day continues into workshops, and on into an afternoon discussion panel with contributors including Rev Rogers Govender, Dean of Manchester Cathedral; Patricia Whitney, Inter-religious commission for the RC Archdiocese of Birmingham; and Professor Jackie Dunne, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham Newman University. The day concludes at 4pm and is FREE for all to attend - refreshments available in the Atrium Cafe. [Register here](#).



<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/reconciliation/together-for-hope>

<https://www.facebook.com/CovTforH/>





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### Holocaust Memorial Day as an ARSP intern

Doing a volunteer internship this year with Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP) has not only given me the opportunity to be part of the Events and the CCN Team at Coventry Cathedral, but also means some involvement with the Jewish community here in the UK. ARSP as an organization was formed in 1958 by protestant Christians, the call of their work being first and foremost taking responsibility for the Nazi regime’s terror and the Holocaust, and seeking to help its victims recover after the war. What started as groups of young volunteers who got sent to cities like Coventry to help with post-war rebuilding, today is an organization with many partners all over Europe, Israel and the US, part of whom are Jewish or have a Jewish background. Here in the UK for example, one of ARSP’s longest standing partners is the Association for Jewish Refugees (AJR). Two of my fellow volunteer interns are spending their year with them and we, as this year’s intern group, also get invited to some of their events, such as the Holocaust-Memorial-Day-Service that we all attended on the 22nd of January at the Belsize Square Synagogue in London. The content of the event was obviously dominated by the recent escalations in Israel and Palestine, and this was challenging listening at times. At the same time, for me commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day (27th of January) is absolutely crucial, and ARSP being so connected into reconciliation work of this kind was one of the main reasons I chose it for my voluntary service. Even though, based at Coventry Cathedral, I am not hugely involved with that side of ARSP’s partnerships, I view its connection to the Jewish faith as very important and taking part in occasions like the Holocaust-Memorial-Day service definitely broadens my perspective on what it means to be Jewish in today’s world.

**Lea Rischmüller,**  
volunteer intern  
at Coventry  
Cathedral



*This year’s ARSP  
UK-based volunteer  
interns, based in  
projects in London,  
Exeter and Coventry*

### Many congratulations to Kasta Dip on his appointment as Chaplain for the Anglican Church in Poland!

Kasta was our lead representative in the CCN for Asia for several years recently when he worked for the India Peace Centre in Nagpur. We wish him and his family the very best for their move and his new role in this pivotal part of Europe right now.





## Thought for the Month February 2024

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### The Netherlands in a right-wing democracy

**2024 is set to be a record year for national elections, with 50 taking place, from India and South Africa to the USA and the UK. Just late last year, the Netherlands had its own electoral shock.**

The Netherlands is still recovering from the parliamentary elections on November 22, 2023. The familiar landscape of parties left and right, with a balanced wide midfield, changed completely that day: that midfield almost completely disappeared and the right in particular got the wind in its sails: Geert Wilders' party, the PVV, became the largest with 37 seats (out of a total of 150 seats). No one expected this; the left, transformed into an occasional coalition, also won some seats (25), but not nearly as massively.

It seems inevitable - still, building coalitions takes time - that Wilders will prepare for the role of prime minister. Coalition partners appear to be present and willing. A relatively newly formed successful populist party, the BBB, which is concerned about the fate of farmers and European regulations, is eager to do so. This is an attractive party for people who like simple solutions. Then there is a brand new party, New Social Contract, born out of nowhere out of concern about the vacillating policies of the now-vanishing government. This party seems to be completely filled by the former middle parties. The VVD, which has been at the helm of Dutch democracy for many years, Mark Rutte's party, but now with a new party leader, also wants to govern again. Their new leader does not hesitate to annul her party's previous choices. All four of them really want to be together!



How does the Netherlands suddenly find itself in such a situation? What explains the attractiveness of populist programs? The Netherlands is a prosperous country, with a well-fed and satisfied population, and we are 'Europe pur sang'. The trains run on time and there are good, critical newspapers here. The reason for this, as in the whole of Europe, is the question of how attractive or unattractive we are to others. Populists believe that we are being inundated, although the figures show something quite different. The disappearing government has deliberately allowed the asylum shelter to slip away, and there are dramatic images of rows of dark-skinned people, dilapidated tents and angry neighbors.

For the four parties that are now investigating whether they could do something beautiful for our country together, there are some hot topics. The inviolability of the position of the constitution; separation of powers; do Muslims remain Dutch even if they do something wrong? The PVV does not have much to do with Europe, does not feel connected to Ukraine and finds Putin an inspiring figure. And they think all worries about the climate are nonsense.

And what does this mean for our own Coventry Network? Shortly after the elections, our last semi-annual meeting took place. If 1 in 4 Dutch people voted for the PVV, what about our people? These are difficult questions.

There is a lot of work to do beside praying our Litany.

**Bert Kuipers, Lead of the CCN Netherlands Board**

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