

CCN Newsletter

November 2024

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

Welcome to the CCN, our new partners this autumn! (top, left to right) the **Eric Liddell Peace Garden** at Morningside United Church in Edinburgh, which received their Cross in August; **The Fellowship of Reconciliation** and **Friends of the Holy Land**, which each received theirs over the weekend of CCN Sunday in September, and (below) communities from the four **Hauptkirchen** of **St Petri**, **St Michaelis**, **St Jacobi** and **St Nikolai** in Hamburg, which all received theirs from Canon Mary Gregory earlier this month. Welcome to each and every new partner!



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

- On the first Friday of the month at 11am UK time, now led by our UK & Ireland partners :

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/6527541231?pwd=uAgknkerTxUiC4pvYyi3jiEWbDtNLO.1&omn=82688331914>
Meeting ID: 652 754 1231 Passcode: 2Cor518

- On the third Tuesday of the month at midday US EST, led by our North American partners (note new access code) :

<https://zoom.us/j/91751768631?pwd=9gQO2FYvie0HiWMqgeB6enWeFt68Vs.1>
Meeting ID: 917 5176 8631 Passcode: 896595

Contact us at:

alice.farnhill@coventry.anglican.org | <https://www.facebook.com/CCNCoventry/>
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/reconciliation/community-of-the-cross-of-nails>



Introducing Bishop Sophie Jelley

Congratulations to the Right Reverend Sophie Jelley, who will be joining us as Bishop of Coventry in early 2025!

Bishop Sophie is currently Suffragan Bishop of Doncaster in the Diocese of Sheffield, and she visited us at the Cathedral, along with other locations in Coventry Diocese, on the day her new post was announced earlier this month. Read more about her [here](#).

Season of reconciliation at Coventry

Access each of our Sunday sermons during this special focus month [here](#).

The resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury

the past fortnight has been one of enormous sadness for very many of us in the UK and throughout the world as we digested the record of the terrible abuse outlined in the Makin report and the woefully inadequate response to it. This report led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. We pray for healing, justice and peace for all the victims of this abuse, and for Archbishop Justin. Read the statements from Acting Bishop Ruth [here](#), and from Coventry Cathedral below:

We recognise the immense hurt and harm described in the report on the activities of John Smyth. This has no place in the church of Christ.

We pray for all those whose sufferings have been described in the Makin report. We take responsibility for lifting them before God and committing ourselves to playing our part in making the church a safe place for all to know and experience God's love.

We also recognise that Archbishop Justin has chosen to take personal and institutional responsibility for the terrible shortcomings outlined in the report. Our prayer is that this humble act of leadership will help those who suffered to know themselves seen and heard, and will open further the space for the actions that need to be taken by the whole church to create a truly safe culture for all.

In Coventry Cathedral, we have welcomed Archbishop Justin's ministry both with us as Canon for Reconciliation and in subsequent years. He is part of our family. As a member of our family, we also hold him and his own family in our hearts and in our prayers.

May God bring healing to all who have been hurt and lead us to build a culture of justice and peace for all.

The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry

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A group of young people from around Europe visited CCN partners as part of the **Berlin Youth Gathering** last month. The Martin-Niemöller-Haus in Berlin-Dahlem, Martin-Luther-Memorial-Church, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Memorial-Church, Chapel of Reconciliation on the former death strip at the Berlin Wall, and the Garrison Church in Potsdam all hosted the group over the course of the weekend, which was eye-opening and inspiring to all. From Sophia, one of the attendees: "I really enjoyed this gathering. It wasn't just about exploring Germany's complex past; it was about connecting with each other and figuring out how we, as young people, can learn from the past and construct paths to move forward toward reconciliation". Enormous thanks to the organisers on the German Board, Felicitas and Maite, and all those who supported the venture!

Standing by the Swedish windows at the entrance to the Cathedral's Sir John Laing Centre conference suite, visitors from Recklinghausen and Frankfurt in Germany, and from Breda, Deventer and Utrecht in the Netherlands, all with us for our **October pilgrimage** recently - thank you all for your time and energies!

Our pilgrimages next year take place on 27-30th May and 13-16th November. We encourage all new joining partners to attend one, where possible. Spaces remain for November - contact Alice if you are interested!



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A hearty welcome to this year's **volunteer interns at Coventry Cathedral**, this year from Germany and the USA: Alwine, Constanze and Sophia! While all internships get involved with broad aspects of our Cathedral life, Alwine, from Dresden, is working particularly with our schools team; Constanze, from Würzburg, with our CCN and events teams; and Sophia, from Atlanta, Georgia, USA, is focussing on CCN social media and strengthening our partnerships in North America. We are so pleased to have them living here at the Cathedral and working among us this year! Find out more about our internships [here](#).

A special anniversary visit by UK CCN partner the Flightpath of Friendship Reconciliation in early September - pictured with Canon Nitano, Canon for Worship and Welcome at Coventry.



News from ICONS – International Cross of Nails Schools

“On Saturday 14 September Claverdon Church Centre, near Coventry, was full for a morning meeting to raise awareness and funds for ICON School Mar Ephraim in Bethlehem. We first heard Amal, Head Teacher of the school, speak, via pre-recorded interview, so positively and courageously about her school of which she is rightly proud. Her prayer is for the safety of the children, their families and her staff – as well as for more resources if possible for the school. This was followed by a very powerful and moving talk from Revd Su McClellan, from charity Embrace the Middle East, who had visited Bethlehem in June. She was able to explain how life is now for the people in the West Bank, particularly Bethlehem – and also in Israel and Gaza. All who were there were inspired and touched by the two talks and gave very generously - an amazing £3,850 was raised for the Mar Ephraim School.”

Gill Evans

For more information, take a look at the ICONS-specific newsletter [here](#) or email: 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>



Thought for the Month November 2024

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Speaking the truth to one another in times of electoral turmoil

For the Community of the Cross of Nails the last line of the Litany of Reconciliation is one of our central texts: **“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you”** (Ephesians 4:32). Yet it helps to recall some of the verses just before: these verses are almost like a little bit of schooling in democracy:

“So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.”

So what does it take for kind and tender-hearted interaction to succeed? Talking truth to each other! Direct contact, constant conversation is fundamentally important for the functioning of our democratic societies.

Democracy needs direct disagreement, debate and ultimately the will to convince others with arguments. It needs competition and the struggle for truth. And it is crucial that these discussions take place face to face - in parliaments and council meetings, at club meetings, in church councils and even at the dinner table of families, not under the anonymity and distance of online communication. Evil talk is quickly typed into a cell phone. It is also becoming increasingly clear that the algorithms of social media lead to forums and bubbles of like-minded people. Yet it is so important for our society that we do not lose contact with people who disagree with us.

Admittedly, this is time-consuming and exhausting. However, this is the only way we can find out together what is really good, that builds up and is necessary to give grace - as the letter to the Ephesians describes. In the struggle for the truth and the right path, yes, we will hurt others and perhaps even do them a real injustice. Sometimes those affected hear: “For the sake of peace and quiet, forgive and forget”. But a simple “forgive and forget” does not serve reconciliation and our democratic coexistence. Here too, the author of Ephesians has a surprisingly realistic suggestion. Anger cannot simply be suppressed or locked away, and those who have suffered are allowed to be angry - at least for a while. “Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger”. There is a time for anger and pain. But painful memories can destroy a person. Only those who are able to face anger and address it can overcome it. Only those who are willing to acknowledge and listen to the anger of others can achieve change.

All this biblical advice for a reconciliatory democracy is demanding, but it is incredibly important for a kind and tender-hearted coexistence between us humans.

Reverend Dr Oliver Schuegraf, Bishop of Schaumburg-Lippe and Chair of the German Board of the CCN

Lazarus is Dead: following the US elections

Lazarus,
Jesus' friend
was ill.
Lazarus,
Jesus' friend
died.

But Jesus lingered
 Jesus waited
 Four days.
And there was a stench
 From the death
 of Lazarus,
And Jesus wept.

They rolled
 away
 the stone
 from the tomb
as he commanded.

"Lazarus, Come out"
He cried.

And out he came
Bound
From head to
 toe.

And Jesus said to them
Unbind him
Let him go.
And they did.

Jesus' friend
Truth
Was ill.

Jesus' friend
Truth
Died.

And there was a stench
From the death
 of Truth.

Jesus' friend
Mercy
Was ill.

Jesus' friend
Mercy
Died.

And there was a stench
From the death
 of Mercy.

Jesus' friend
Grace
Was ill.

Jesus' friend
Grace
Died.

And there was a stench
From the death
 of grace.

Jesus' friend
Love
Was ill.

Jesus' friend
Love
Died.

And there was a stench
From the death
 of Love.

And Jesus wept
 At the death of
 Truth,
 At the death of
 Mercy,
 At the death of
 Grace,
 At the death of
 Love.

Still weeping, Jesus cried out
Roll away the stone!

And Jesus said
 Truth come out!
And Jesus said
 Mercy come out!
And Jesus said
 Grace come out!
And Jesus said
 Love come out!

And they did.
Bound
from head
to toe

And Jesus said to us
Unbind them
Let them go.

Robert T.J. Childers
November 11, 2024

