

## Welcome, our new Canon for Arts and Reconciliation!



We're so looking forward to Revd. Canon Kate Massey's arrival among us following her appointment as the new Canon for Arts and Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral.

Vicar of Stockingford, Nuneaton, in Coventry Diocese, since 2015, Kate was installed as an Honorary Canon at Coventry Cathedral in 2022, having been ordained in Coventry Cathedral in 2011 following a career in the NHS as a doctor specializing in mental health and psychiatry. She has extensive practical and pastoral experience in both parish and national contexts, along with a passion for the arts and reconciliation, and is also pursuing a PhD focused on reconciliation inspired by the Cathedral's work.

Kate will work closely with the Cathedral's leadership team, including Dean John Witcombe and Canon Nitano Müller, in advancing the Cathedral's mission of reconciliation, a priority for both the Cathedral and the diocese, and will take on overall leadership of the Community of the Cross of Nails. In accepting the role, Kate emphasized the timeliness of Coventry's reconciliation mission in today's polarized world and the unique ability of the arts to explore the complexities and rewards of reconciliation. She looks forward to serving both the Cathedral and the wider diocese as they seek to heal historical wounds, celebrate diversity, and promote justice and peace.

Subject to formalities, Kate will be licensed and installed at Evensong on Sunday, June 15th, 2025, and will meet the CCN International Board very soon afterwards at their meeting in Coventry in early July.

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### Opportunities to connect with others monthly on Zoom to pray the Litany of Reconciliation: all welcome!

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

\*\*\* NOTE NEW LINK \*\*\*

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88484456943?pwd=ZJNsti3fZPa4Qk3sbHrgKR3dbt4A2f.1>  
Meeting ID: 884 8445 6943 Passcode: 688379

- On the third Tuesday of the month at midday US EST, led by our North American partners :

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

### Contact us at:

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

Read this and earlier newsletters [here](#)

Access the Cathedral's recent sermons [here](#).



## A very warm welcome to our new partners!



Bishop Oliver Schuegraf and Dean John Witcombe (left) with the new Cross of Nails in its new setting following presentation to the **Evangelical-Lutheran St. Jakobi-Kreuz Church** in Chemnitz on March 5th, the city's annual Peace Day, this year the 80th anniversary of the bombing of the church in 1945. The Peace Day concluded with prayers in the marketplace.



On Sunday 23rd March were, very rarely, two Cross presentations! Welcome **Knox Presbyterian Church** and **Otago Peninsula Anglican Church**, both in Dunedin, New Zealand.

Enormous thanks to Martin and Jane Williams from the Coventry Cathedral community, who presented the Crosses. Martin writes: "The presentation of the crosses of nails turned out to be the highlight of our time in New Zealand. We were honoured to represent the Cathedral that is part of our lives, and we both feel that we gained far more from the whole experience than we were able to give.



During the service at Knox Church several individuals were invited to speak about Peace and Reconciliation. After a professor spoke about the Peace and Conflict Institute, I was surprised to find myself greeting a Māori couple with a traditional hongi (nose touching). I was then deeply moved as they explained how they visited Coventry Cathedral several years ago. The Coventry story impacted upon them to such a degree that Mr Cameron has subsequently worn a cross of nails around his neck; he and his wife have decorated their Māori meeting house with designs that incorporate the Cross of Nails in in the Bay of Hawai, and is clearly an unofficial Cross Of Nails centre! One of the 12 members of Knox congregation who put up their hands to indicate that they had visited Coventry Cathedral spoke with us after the service to say how she and her husband had stayed at Kennedy House during the 1980s and had never forgotten the experience. An Otago congregation member also had made a visit in the 1980s that had changed her life."



We very much look forward to working together across the CCN in the coming years!



## Statement from Coventry Cathedral on the situation in Israel/Gaza

The Cathedral released this statement just after our last newsletter went to press, at the end of February:

*As the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza grows increasingly fragile, we are horrified by the words of President Trump and his statement that the Palestinians of Gaza should be forced to leave what is left of their homes and land. This would amount to ethnic cleansing. We stand with the families of the hostages, and those killed on October 7th, 2023, appalled by the personal and collective trauma inflicted by Hamas. We recognize the value of every human life, including the more than 48,000 Palestinian lives lost since October 7th— nearly half of them children. We cannot be silent. Every life lost is a tragedy, every child killed is horrific, every act of violence deepens the cycle of trauma and suffering. Lasting peace cannot be built by egotistical leaders; it must come from our collective commitment to justice and peace for all.*

## North American Volunteer Internship

Are you passionate about reconciliation, peace building, and eager for a transformative international experience? Coventry Cathedral is now accepting applications for our North American Volunteer Reconciliation Internship (6-12 months) starting this September!



Sophia Burr writes: *As the current North American Reconciliation Intern, I've had an incredible experience working with the Community of the Cross of Nails—creating social media content, connecting with international partners, and participating in meaningful practices like the weekly Litany of Reconciliation. What I value most is the welcoming and supportive community that's deepened my understanding of peace and reconciliation. I highly recommend this opportunity to anyone seeking personal, professional, and spiritual growth.*

Learn more and apply [here](#) (by May 1st).

There are also volunteer internship opportunities at CCN partner the Corrymeela Community on the northern Irish west coast. Apply very soon if you are interested!

## News from ICONS Schools

This month the ICONS team delivered our training sessions for teachers - our 'Champions' course and also gathered our ICON schools for a network meeting. These meetings are online and available for any staff from schools who are exploring, applying or established in our network. We share news, ideas and support. Emma creates and shares a new resource to help schools explore one of the 3 CCN themes. This month it was Learning to Live with Difference and Celebrate Diversity through reflecting on the (un)reliable narrator. The resource looks at understanding how to manage multiple and often competing narrative accounts in conflict situations. Look out for it on our website.

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

### Is a lasting and just peace possible in Israel and Palestine?



Thank you to Daniel Munayer, in place director of CCN partner Musalaha, a reconciliation ministry in Israel and Palestine, and the only Palestinian ever to have addressed the UN Security Council, for coming to Coventry this week to explore this question with us, both as a Cathedral reconciliation team and with the wider community in conversation with the Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry Cathedral, and Jamie Eyre, CEO of Embrace the Middle East. Discussion focussed on how vital it is that reconciliation is based around meeting the needs and healing the injustices of the oppressed, not the oppressor - with that in place, yes, there can still be hope.

Read Daniel's recent blog post: <https://embraceme.org/blog/israel-palestine-conflict-reconciliation-is-not-neutrality>



#### Being Missional Today

10 June 2025 | Coventry Cathedral

Explore questions that matter 🤔

- ✓ How do we respond when the world and the church are in flux?
- ✓ What does it mean to be in a season of transition to an unknown future?
- ✓ How can we be peacemakers in our local contexts?



**Being Missional Today at Coventry on 10th June 2025:** a festival of missional thinking exploring the impact of disruptions in church and world, the liminality of this current season, and the role of reconciliation practices, with 22 different speakers, mostly published authors, with Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani and Revd Dr Al Barrett headlining. Open to all; further details [here](#).

Following the **Corrymeela Community's** recent 60th anniversary celebration at the Cathedral, partners may be interested in their Great Britain Cell Group which organised the event, which meets on Zoom, normally on the third Monday evening of each month. It's open to all those who support or wish to find out more about Corrymeela, and meets next on 14th April at 7.30pm to hear Jean Horstman introducing Nurturing Hope, a project arising from the understanding of conflict gained by Corrymeela and our partners in Northern Ireland, Korea and other conflicts. Email [mstearshandscomb@gmail.com](mailto:mstearshandscomb@gmail.com) for further details.

A very few places are still available for the **weekend retreat at Marygate House, Holy Island** from 16th-18th May 2025, organised by our CCN UK & Ireland partners, with Revd Canon Dr Sarah Hills, Vicar of Holy Island, leading the retreat, and with discussion sessions led by CCN partners Open Table, the SCM and CCN UK/Irl Chair Mark Simmons. Spend time with a small group of others in or connected to the UK & Ireland membership, with specifically a focus of discussions being the Litany, its language and its relevance for today, particularly with regard to gender, in the peaceful and stunning surroundings of Holy Island, staying with one of our most recent UK partners. Please contact Cerys Smith at [csmith.mediations@gmail.com](mailto:csmith.mediations@gmail.com) to sign up or for more information. A small assistance fund is available.

## What does the CCN have to say about non-violence?

One of our partners expressed deep concerns about the current emphasis on militarization and violence within NATO and across Europe, raising critical questions about how the CCN can effectively respond. They asked how to actively foster peace, prevent violence, and respond wisely when violence does occur—questioning specifically what wisdom and compassion, without passivity, look like in such complex and challenging circumstances.

It's easy to own a call to peace – and even to non-violence – outside the context of war, and many of us have spoken of our commitment to non-violence from that context for many years. We want to treat everyone, without exception, as a brother or sister, another human child of God – and to care for others, and seek to be in relationships with others, in that way. Our foundational text inscribed in the Cathedral ruins, “Father Forgive”, famously omits the word ‘them’, because we are all ‘us’.

Our commitment to heal the wounds of history, learn to live with difference and celebrate diversity, and build a culture of justice and peace mandates us to seek reconciled relationship with all people.

However, in recent years we have found ourselves speaking more often about the call for justice as an essential part of our work, introducing the word to our third CCN priority. This came before the wars in Ukraine, and then Gaza – but these have heightened our awareness that reconciliation without justice can never be true reconciliation.

On my visit last year to Ukraine, I was told that what our partners need is not just prayers – they need help to defend themselves against an aggressor. And that means, practically, weapons. How can non-violence work in the context of Ukraine, or Gaza? There are examples of successful non-violent resistance to aggression, but none that I know that have successfully resisted invasion.

As part of our revisiting of this theme, we have looked again at how we use Provost Howard's words Christmas morning, six weeks after the bombing: *What we want to tell the world is this: that with Christ born again in our hearts today, we are trying, hard as it may be, to banish all thoughts of revenge; we are bracing ourselves to finish the tremendous job of saving the world from tyranny and cruelty; we are going to try to make a simpler – a more Christ-child like sort of world in the days beyond this strife.*

This is not a message of non-violence but rather doing whatever is necessary to rid the world of injustice, whilst holding open the hope for future reconciliation. In the short term those who are oppressed and attacked need justice and security. In the long term, peace and reconciliation – but we have to recognise that this will take time. Wisdom and compassion in the meantime are about refusing to give up on the idea of our enemies as human, hoping for a future peace grounded in justice – which respects all and longs for genuinely reconciled relationships.

Readers may want to look again at the conversation I had with [Canon Paul Oestreicher](#) on this subject in recent years.

**The Very Reverend John Witcombe**