



Justice and Peace

WINTER 2022 -23

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Winter Diary

'All shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.' wrote Julian of Norwich who was living in the latter half of 14th century when the Black Death was ravaging the whole of Europe.

We look forward to a winter strikes of nurses, railway and postal workers. We look back on COP 27 with disappointment that governments and corporations with power are not prepared to recognise the urgency of the climate emergency and act. We all tighten our belts and look to ways of saving energy for the good of our own pockets and more importantly of the planet. Can we share in Julian's wise words?

During Covid with its various lockdowns and restrictions on meeting, many of us got used to socialising with family and friends and attending meetings on zoom. Now we are, in a sense, free to meet up face to face. This is definitely the preferred option. But if relatives and friends live a long way away and if you can join services without travelling far or hear speakers on webinars from the comfort of your own home, this is a second best that many of us welcome.

As I was preparing this Mouthpeace, I was stuck by how much I had attended and could attend in this second best way. So I have included many details of online events and catch ups so we can keep in touch with issues without the worry of travelling in the winter. I hope these will be encouraging where ever you are living and you will maybe able to join Julian and believe that all 'shall be well.'

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The articles in MouthPeace are the views of the individual contributors or organisations concerned and do not necessarily reflect those of the Justice and Peace Commissions of the Dioceses of Lancaster and Liverpool

www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk

<https://jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/>

www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk

ADVENT 2022

NJPN This year's material produced by Anne O'Connor offers 'An Advent Journey' of daily reflections based on the scripture readings and also weekly 'Advent Reflections' of scripture, reflections, poems and prayers. <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/advent/advent-resources-2022/>

CAFOD The online Advent calendar of daily prayer and reflection offers an opportunity to pause, reflect, pray and take action. Sign up here for the calendar <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Advent-calendar> There are also prayers for use during Advent <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Advent-prayers>

PAX CHRISTI REPORT from Joan Sharples:



Pax Christi Advent Service, Saturday 3 December, 2.00pm

This year's Advent Service will be held at the Church of the Holy Apostles, 47 Cumberland Street, Pimlico, London SW1V 4LY. The music will be led by Julie McCann and singers and instrumentalists will gather to rehearse at 10am in the church. The service will be followed by our alternative Christmas market with Fairtrade and Palestinian goods, crafts and gifts, books, cards, refreshments and children's activities.

We hope that this afternoon service will allow Pax Christi Members and friends to gather together from across the country.

If you can't get to London, do join us via the parish website <https://www.holyapostlespimlico.org/> - no need to register beforehand! A flyer for the event can be found on our website.

Christmas Resources Flyer Do take a look at the Pax Christi Shop for cards, gift and books. A flyer can be downloaded for your church noticeboard from <https://www.paxchristi.org.uk/home/>

Peace Sunday, 15 January 2023

Resources will be available in early December, but it's not too early to start planning what you might do in your parish to spread the message of peace and raise money to help Pax Christi in its work. If the designated date is not possible, work with the parish to find one that is. Some Pax Christi Members will be encouraging their Bishop to ensure a Peace Sunday Mass is celebrated in their Cathedral. If you help with this, let us know. The office team is always happy to help with resources and a listening ear. Do let us know what you are doing. <https://paxchristi.org.uk/>



Annual Advent Service Tuesday 20th December at 7pm

JRS UK is delighted to invite you and your loved ones to our annual Advent Service, taking place this year on at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, 114 Mount St, London, W1K 3AH. We are excited to have refugee friends, volunteers,



supporters and staff members come together to celebrate Advent. This year's service will include carols, readings, and performances from our very own drama group. In preparation for the evening, refugee friends from the JRS drama group have already been meeting regularly to work on their story and performance. This special occasion is sure to be an evening of great celebration and reflection for the JRS UK community. If you cannot join us in person, the service will also be live streamed online from Farm Street church. We will share the link closer to the day. <https://www.irsuk.net/news/advent-service-2022/>

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN LANCASHIRE: Social Justice / Social Responsibility theme - Warm welcome

Interest in offering 'warm spaces' as a response to the cost-of-living crisis is increasing. In the past few days, more and more locations have signed up with the Warm Welcome Campaign. <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/>

The campaign was started by the Church Works Commission working with key partners to support and champion the community response to the cost-of-living crisis. Already over 3,000 organisations have registered their premises, generating an easy-to-navigate map of locations. Churches Together in Lancashire is encouraging all churches who provide any sort of public provision to register their details at the warmwelcome.uk site – it's a very simple process.

The site has a list of resources that might be useful, such as food safety guidance and working with volunteers. Some denominations (Methodist, URC) are offering small grants to locations who register. If developing some provision is new for your

church, there was an excellent webinar on Warm Spaces run by colleagues from the Methodist church earlier this month which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/UnP3ZDCezuQ> . Based on experience, this provides a lot of really good ideas and information that you need to think about when considering getting involved.

Another long-standing scheme is called Places of Welcome, a network of local community groups, especially churches, providing places where all people feel safe to connect, belong and contribute. <https://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/>



Interest in PoW has also increased recently, and there are now over 500 locations registered. There is no reason why you should not register with both WarmWelcome AND Places of Welcome. With the latter there is direct support available from a local Near Neighbours co-ordinator, who can help you with issues relating to safeguarding, volunteer recruitment, publicity and fund raising.

Churches Together in Lancashire is also asking anyone registered with warmwelcome.uk or with Places of Welcome to host a Lancashire Sings Christmas (LSC) event, with the offer of a simple warm meal (soup/stew/hotpot) and of course hot mince pies and maybe even warm mulled wine!! This takes place on **Thursday 15th December, 7pm, live from the studio of Radio Lancashire**. Please contact the county ecumenical officer, Rev Anton Muller (antonmuller@ctlancashire.org.uk) if interested in being a venue for LSC, or in relation to the warm welcome schemes

Mike Hart and Peter Lumsden
Churches Together in Lancashire Working Group on Social Justice

Introducing Lancaster Diocese Environmental Justice Team

Promoting Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si' and the Diocese of Lancaster's 'Charter on the Care of Creation'

From left to right: Sue Grubic, Sr Margaret Atkins, Stephen Garsed (Environmental Lead), Jane Pendleton and Fr Hugh Pollock.

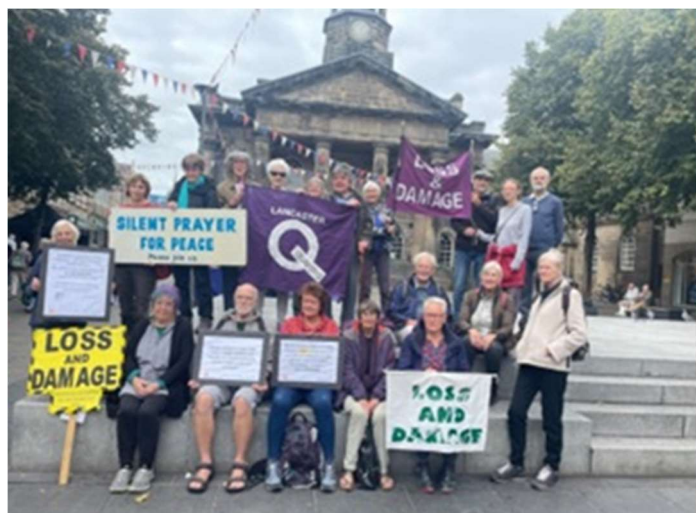


LOSS AND DAMAGE

Faith & Justice Worker, Sue Grubic, joined in solidarity with Quakers in Lancaster to attend an interfaith vigil as part of a national campaign calling for big polluters to pay compensation for the impacts of climate breakdown – this is called Loss and Damage.

Loss and damage, caused by climate chaos, is a frightening reality for people around the world and it is getting worse every year. For people across the world, extreme weather events (hurricanes, wildfires, flooding) and longer-term climate impacts (rising sea levels, desertification) is destroying homes, lives, livelihoods and biodiversity.

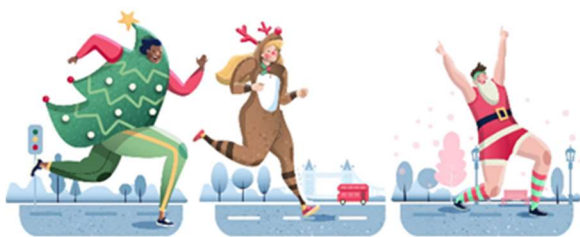
Although Loss & Damage was discussed at COP 27, there is still a very long way to go to help some of the poorest people in the world. Taken from an article by Clíodhna Mulhern.



Eco Communities Winter Fairs always have some fantastic stalls selling items to help you plan a sustainable festive season. The food, activities for all the family and workshops. With a fun festive theme through the event, we will also have lots of community groups and charities with us... This event will have a limit on tickets being indoors, this will be a ticket only event. Get your ticket on <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sustainable-cheshire-winter-fair-tickets-395354153917>



CAFOD's CHRISTMAS FUN RUN Tuesday 27th December 2022 .



Join hundreds of people around the country who will be running, walking and toddling 5km to support CAFOD's work supporting people to overcome poverty.

Liverpool Fun Run Time: 10am registration, 11am start

Venue:

Wavertree Athletics Stadium, Wellington Road, Liverpool, L15 4LE

Contact: liverpool@cafod.org.uk or 07779 804242

Bollington Fun Run Time: 10am registration, 11am start

Venue: Middlewood Way, Viaduct next to St Gregory's Church, Bollington, Macclesfield, SK10 5JW

Contact: shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk

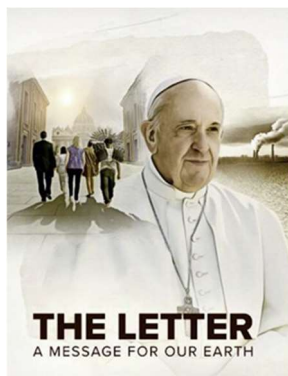


Virtual Fun Run Time: Anytime! Venue: Anywhere! Contact: events@cafod.org.uk Details of all

<https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Sponsored-challenge-events/Run-for-CAFOD/Christmas->

A COMMUNITY SCREENING OF THE LETTER THURSDAY 12TH JANUARY 2023

7pm – 9pm United Reformed Church, Antrobus St. Congleton CW12 1HE GB



This film by Laudato Si' Movement features Pope Francis as the protagonist and among five leaders representing the voices of Indigenous people, the youth, the poor and the wildlife of our planet.

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/the-letter-film-how-spiritual-values-call-us-to-take-action-on-the-planetary-crisis-2?source=email&>

There will be a short introductions and light refreshments served at 7pm.

After the showing of the film there will be time for you to reflect and share your thoughts and what actions we should be taking, as well as a

Q&A. Karen Sutton: 07714447417 klsutton55@outlook.com



CAFOD NEWS



Marian Thompson writes: On the week I was putting Mouthpeace together CAFOD held two informative webinars and I was able to join both. Here are some my impressions but I would encourage you to try and view them in full as they give a good impression of how wide reaching CAFOD's work actually is.

LOOKING BACK ON CHALLENGES AND JOYS OF 2022

Webinar Host: Eileen Hayes, Volunteer Co-ordinator Specialist at CAFOD

With a short film we were reminded of the past year from CAFOD's perspective. Some joys: in January 1 billion doses of global covid vaccine were shared. Later in May a Mass in Rome marked the first stage (the local phase) of the synodality process in the Church.

And the challenges: in February Russia invaded Ukraine which led to a rise in global food prices. For many this led to a food crisis with people depending on the distribution of emergency food and water which is not a sustainable option. Disasters and

emergencies followed around the world – in June a devastating earthquake in Afghanistan, in July many countries (even the UK) experienced record high temperatures, in August violence broke out in Sri Lanka and Pakistan experienced disastrous floods. In areas of Africa there were droughts as the rainy season failed again.

When Rhea Tariq, CAFOD Director of International Programmes was asked if she thought the number of emergencies was increasing she replied very positively 'Yes'. She explained that some people were caught up in one disaster after another, for instance heatwaves led to cyclones and devastating floods. Working with partners, CAFOD tried to help people to prepare for possible emergencies such as by building cyclone shelters or devising early warning systems for floods. This could be as simple as providing bikes and megaphones for people to provide a warning in areas with no other communication systems. As the disaster unfolds a very rapid response is important. Often stakeholders flee as quickly as they can but the church remains and offers immediate help on the ground. Later a different kind of help is needed in rebuilding physically but also emotionally.

Jenny Hayward-Jones, CAFOD Fundraising Volunteer Programme Coordinator, gave a presentation about the synodality project and its importance in giving a voice to the marginalised and to women.

Perlagia Kapuya, CAFOD Food Systems Specialist in Africa, had attended COP 27 but had technical difficulties in joining the webinar, just phoning in briefly towards the end to tell about her work with food systems. Perlagia has made a video and you can see her on the following CAFOD webinar.

Christine Allen, CAFOD Director, talked about COP27 from a CAFOD point of view. She explained it was important hear the voices of the people directly affected now by climate change and the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund was a significant step forward for them. This was not something that had come out of the blue but was something people had been working on and pressing for over many years. There is a strong sense that the money for the fund should come from the polluters- fossil fuel companies and rich governments like ours. Like many of us, Christine was disappointed that there was no improvement on Glasgow in ratcheting up the 1.5° global warming target.

Finally Christine outlined CAFOD's priorities for 2023.

- i. Building on their work on food systems. This is the lense through which CAFOD is looking at their climate work as food security is a real day to day experience for people.
- ii. Lobbying and influencing the UK government about International Development (ID) spending and priorities. In these challenging times at home it is important that there is still a strong commitment and support for ID. Should this already reduced budget be used for the government's work with refugees and asylum seekers?

The webinar concluded with a video in which friends and partners of CAFOD offered their hopes for 2023

You can see recording of the whole webinar <https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Review2022?bmid=b0a2a977d0be&source>

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COP 27 CLIMATE TALKS?



Webinar Host: Liam Finn Campaigns Manager – CAFOD in conversation with Diego Martinez Schuett CAFOD Policy Analyst on Food Systems and Neil Thorns Head of Advocacy Communication & Education, CAFOD. Neil was also an official Vatican delegate at this COP27 as the Vatican now has a seat at the table having signed the Paris agreement in October of this year. There were 6 delegates from the Vatican and it was the second smallest delegation – the smallest was San Marino.

Diego : Food and agriculture is a newcomer to COP discussions yet 1/3 of greenhouse gases comes from agriculture. Discussions have been going on since 2017 and a report of these discussions was presented. It was agreed by the parties to work further on agriculture and food security over the next 4 years so it is now at last very much on the agenda.

He also described the layout of COP with its pavilions making it more like a fair. The size was difficult for smaller groups, those from the global south for example, to navigate which raised questions about justice, equality and fairness.

Neil: Agreeing to a Loss and Damage Fund is an historic agreement, 30 years in the making. But important issues have now to be worked out- who will govern it? who will pay? A transitional committee had been established to work on this for the next COP. Climate finance was not really looked at and Neil explained why.

Another important topic that came up for discussion was Food Systems and Agriculture. The Egyptian Presidency was particularly interested in this and pressed for it to come to this COP.

Perlagia Kapuya, CAFOD - Food Systems Specialist in Africa, had made a video describing her work. As well as involving food systems, she works on agriculture and land use, loss and damage, resilience, climate finance and gender justice. She emphasised that these could not be split into topics as all were interlinked and had to be considered together.

The webinar concluded with answering the questions in the chat.

You can view the recording <https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/COP27webinar2?bmid=b0a2a977d0be&source>



A PROPHETIC ROLE FOR THE CHURCHES

On 22 November Bright Now with Operation Noah launched their latest report: 'Church Investment in Climate Solutions: Financing a Liveable Future.' Read it here <https://brightnow.org.uk/resource/church-investment-climate-solutions-financing-liveable-future/>

The United Nations and International Energy Agency have highlighted the urgent need for investment in clean energy, stating that private and public investment in renewable energy must triple to \$4 trillion a year by 2030 if we are to reach net zero by 2050 and have any chance of limiting global heating to 1.5°C. If the world were to redirect the \$570 billion of annual planned oil and gas investments towards renewables, this could fully finance wind and solar energy expansion in line with the 1.5°C target of the Paris Agreement.

In order to ensure a fair and fast transition to clean energy and ensure a liveable future, especially for people living in poverty, investment in climate solutions needs to scale up rapidly – and Churches have a key, prophetic part to play calling on governments to implement policy that addresses the climate crisis at the speed and scale required.

Many UK Churches have now made commitments to divest from fossil fuel companies. As well as divesting from fossil fuel producers, it is vital for Churches to increase investment in climate solutions such as renewable energy and energy efficiency, which reduce the demand for fossil fuels.

Following on from the disappointing COP 27 the webinar that launched this report launch offered some hope.



Following on from the disappointing COP 27 the webinar that launched this report offered some hope. The speakers included

Lorna Gold (Director of Movement Building at FaithInvest and Chair of Laudato Si' Movement)

John O'Shaughnessy (Chief Financial Officer of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary and Co-Founder of the Catholic Impact Initiative Collaborative)

Mike Sturgess (Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, Diocese of Truro)

James Buchanan (Bright Now Campaign Director at Operation Noah) and Julia Corcoran (Bright Now Campaign Manager at Operation Noah), who together co-authored our report and will present the key findings.

If you missed the webinar you can catch up here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROh4FFvpc-E>

Read the blog <https://brightnow.org.uk/resource/church-investment-climate-solutions-financing-liveable-future/>

Lorna Gold is well known in J & P circles and was one of the main speakers at our Swanwick conference in 2021 on the theme 'Life on earth- a moment of truth'. Since then we have had COP26 in Glasgow and recently COP 27 in Sharm El-Sheikh. Lorna who has attended COPs in the past gave her verdict on the latest in Egypt.... 'a failure'. She conceded that the agreement to form a loss and damage fund was positive BUT the fund on its own is useless while the world continues on its present path to disastrous collapse. The economic model has not shifted and governments are still not committed to putting into action the rapid transition required. To Lorna it is unthinkable to people of faith at this stage in the climate crisis that our faith institutions are still investing in climate disaster. There are various mechanisms mostly voluntary to support transition to a low carbon future but the way the investment world is structured makes it almost impossible to know how investments are being made and the impact they are having. That is why so many faith institutions have adopted primarily a negative screening approach -the divestment in fossil fuels approach as a means of tackling the climate disaster. At least when you divest you are applying the ethical principle of 'Do no harm'. That is obviously a start.

At Swanwick Lorna had been a keen supporter of faith communities divesting from fossil fuels and encouraged us to write to our Bishops about this. Now she is suggesting that divestment is selling the faith short because faith with its rich traditions and deep understanding of the nature of money can do so much more to support the emergence of a new economy. In fact Lorna suggests it is our moral duty to do so. If the webinar had been held ten years ago, she suggests, it would be difficult to point to solutions and their investability. But this is no longer the case. There are clear choices - good choices that point to what is sustainable, regenerative, circular and will shape the decade to come. It is essential that faith institutions with their control of trillions of dollars of assets worldwide should intensify their efforts to deliberately support the emergence of a low carbon, just transition. These investments can take many forms as the report suggests. FaithInvest* the organisation Lorna works for gives help with this. They work closely with individual asset owners relooking at how their investment policies help to deliver the big vision of a just and sustainable world – or as we call it in the Christian world -the kingdom of God. Now is the time to put the kingdom back in the centre of our investment decisions in bold and prophetic way. It is eminently doable but we must be mindful that our investments are not just for today or tomorrow but for eternity.

*Find out more <https://www.faithinvest>

Two of the other speakers John O’Shaughnessy and Mike Sturgess described their positive experiences when their institutions made this commitment.

December 10th Human Rights Day 2022



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights consists of a preamble and 30 articles that set out a broad range of fundamental human rights and freedoms to which all of us, everywhere around the world, are entitled. It guarantees our rights without distinction of nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, language, or any other status. The 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated on 10 December 2022.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/get-involved/campaign/human-rights-day>

Read the declaration

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/human-rights/universal-declaration/translations/english>

Church Action on Poverty Sunday, 19 February 2023

Give, Act and Pray as part of the movement to unlock UK poverty

When people come together to reclaim their dignity, agency and power, we can make huge changes - in ourselves - in our communities and in the world. Building a powerful movement to unlock poverty has never been more important. The cost of living crisis threatens to sweep millions into poverty, threatening their dignity and agency. No one should have to face the choice between heating and eating.



To prevent more people being swept deeper into poverty, it’s vital that those of us affected have a say. Now more than ever, churches and communities need to stand together and uphold each other’s dignity, agency and power.

On Church Action on Poverty Sunday, we are invited to join with other churches across the UK in giving, action and prayer and to celebrate the transformational possibilities of people coming together to reclaim their dignity, agency and power.

Use our free worship resources to reflect and pray for change, and raise funds to enable more people to speak truth to power.


We’re looking for at least 150 churches across the UK to hold a special service or take a collection on Church Action on Poverty Sunday. Register here to be one of these. <https://churchpoverty.e-activist.com/page/115061/subscribe/1>

TRUTH AND INTEGRITY

Paul Southgate, NJPN Chair writes: **Introduction to NJPN statement on ‘Truth and Integrity’.**

Thomas Aquinas said that “the proper objects of the heart are truth and justice.” There is no justice without truth. Truth and integrity are of crucial importance to democracy, the rule of law and in relation to climate change. Tackling these issues is going to require truthfulness and much closer co-operation. Ultimately what is needed is a spiritual response based around Truth. NJPN has been particularly exercised over the last few months and years about truth and integrity in public life, or the lack of it. We are not the only ones. In March 2022 the Quakers launched a new group called the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group (QTIG) and they reached out to NJPN with an invitation to join their discussions. NJPN was delighted to accept and we invited QTIG to speak at our

Networking Day held on Saturday 12th November. After discussions, the meeting and the NJPN Executive endorsed the attached statement which we commend to our Network members.



NJPN DATES 2023

NJPN Open Networking Day
February 25th 2023

'The Cost of Living Crisis - living versus existing'

10.45am for 11am–3.30pm on Zoom
Book via eventbrite
www.eventbrite.com/e/njpn-networking-day-tickets-466276314457
or via link on NJPN website
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn-meetings/

ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE

21–23 July 2023
The Hayes Conference Centre,
Swanwick, Derbyshire

**"Sustainability?
Survival or Shutdown"**

Dates of other Networking Days

AGM & OPEN NETWORKING DAY: 13th May 2023
London area—venue tbc (10.30am–4pm)

OPEN NETWORKING DAY: 23rd September 2023
West Midlands area - venue tbc (10.30am–4pm)

OPEN NETWORKING DAY: 18th November 2023
10.45am for 11am–3.30pm on Zoom

Meeting statement

Members of the National Justice and Peace Network and the newly formed Quaker Truth & Integrity Group met today at Romero House in London to discuss the subject of "Towards a Better Kind of Politics".

We have come away greatly encouraged by our meeting, at which we have been able to share deeply our concern about the state of truth and integrity in public life. We have discovered that we have much in common with regard to human values and human dignity. We from the NJPN warmly welcome and endorse the Declaration published recently by QTIG.

We are aware of the strength of unity and undertake to co-operate closely on an issue we regard as an existential one, which we are approaching from a common spiritual place. We are particularly aware of the importance of these issues to younger people, among whom there is a mounting sense of deep anxiety.

NJPN hopes to look at the issue of truth and integrity at its annual conference on the theme of sustainability in July next year and to invite ecumenical parties such as QTIG to join them. QTIG will in turn remain in close touch with NJPN as it explores the scope for ecumenical and interfaith cooperation.

London, 12 November 2022

A BETTER KIND OF POLITICS Report of talks at NJPN meeting 12 November 2022

The network heard from two speakers from the Quaker Truth & Integrity Group (QTIG) www.quakertruth.org. Peter Hussey commenced his remarks by referring to Pope Francis' call for a better kind of politics - "one truly at the service of the common good". But is this a description that we would recognise of our current politics - do equality, fairness and the wellbeing of our neighbours feature in the interactions we see in our parliament, on our television screens, or in our news or social media? Or, instead, do we hear people who have stopped engaging and say: "There's no point - they're all the same". Democracy can only really exist when political leaders are honest and practise integrity. 'Spin' can be just a variation of emphasis but it becomes unacceptable when it is a lie. After 13 years in government, accusations of dishonesty and failings of integrity are bound to be directed primarily at the party in power but reminding ourselves of claims about the existence of "weapons of mass destruction" suggests that power, not political opinion, is the main enemy of truth. In light of these problems, the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group wants to work along with other groups to highlight injustice or failures in standards. Parliament itself has set out seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership) see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life> and government needs to be measured against these principles. Whilst it is true that some may enter politics to line their own nests, many more, possibly the majority, want to improve the lives of the communities they represent. They are people who try to operate with honesty and integrity. QTIG are committed to finding such people and supporting them as much as possible by giving them positive reinforcement. QTIG seeks the "Kinder Ground" to offer to politicians, writers and administrators, away from the chill winds of recrimination and accusations - wanting to encourage those who stand for truth and integrity rather than, primarily, looking for fault.

Citing the example of the Brexit Bus with its promise of an additional £350m a week to spend on the NHS, Peter said that Boris Johnson might have to carry some of the blame for many of the lies and misconceptions around the Brexit referendum, but he

was only effective thanks to an army of other opinion formers. And this is part of the established pattern of misleading statements from our political leaders, whether it be “There is no alternative” to austerity, or the existence of “weapons of mass destruction”. We see similar problems now in the discussion of climate change, or budgeting for capital projects. Our politicians and the media of the day provide a revolving door for a tiny group of people who manage information and opinion. Many work in parliament, but many others work in lobbying firms, think tanks and the media. The internet offers great benefits (fact checking etc) but also allows for lies, conspiracy theories and group thinking. A politics “truly at the service of the common good” is a precious thing that will take patience and kindness, as well as truth and integrity. It may require moving away from tribalism and the politics of conflict. It may require a movement of people acting in faith and with love, it may need us to move away from difference and towards unity.

Jan Arriens built on this introduction by explaining what the Quaker Truth and Integrity Group are practically doing to promote a better kind of politics. They in particular want to shine a light on the good and bring back truth and integrity to centre stage. In this endeavour, they have developed a Declaration <https://quakertruth.org/declaration/> that they hope people will send to their own MP. They urge people to write to their MPs, other elected representatives, and others in public life, commending them whenever they act with integrity. QTIG wants to promote a more participative democracy and constitutional reform that will allow for MPs to be more responsive to the needs of their constituents rather than other vested interests. They also want to promote higher standards of truth telling in the media. To these ends, they have also introduced an Award for an individual who makes a marked impact with their standard of honesty and integrity. Do people have possible nominees to suggest (see <https://quakertruth.org/truth-award/>)?

The Quaker Truth and Integrity Group want in particular to work with other faith groups, and beyond, to promote better standards in public life – both promoting greater awareness of, and building up more respect for, the Nolan Principles. In the discussion that followed, there were exchanges on the adversarial parliamentary system (even the architecture of the House of Commons that does not encourage bi-partisanship); the first-past-the-post electoral system; the whipping system - all of which contribute in different ways to the polarised positions taken by our politicians. Several examples were given of other groups that might be interested in supporting QTIG’s Declaration, learning about the Award, making combined statements and developing common programmes of work – for example the Catholic Union of Great Britain, Christians in Politics, More in Common, Hope not Hate, Together for the Common Good etc. CAFOD (and other such groups) also have ‘Parliamentary Correspondents’ etc. who could be alerted to the Nolan Principles and the work of QTIG in the course of their campaign efforts.

In smaller group discussions, some of these issues were brought further forward since everyone seemed to agree with the initial question – they were all very worried about the standards of honesty and integrity in public life. Participants discussed issues such as: the importance of challenging untruths; the need to get the facts out and explain underlying problems (eg to counter misinformation about migrants and refugees); an awareness that the promotion of justice (more than charity) requires advocacy and ‘good’ politics; the importance of education (in schools, and indeed in seminaries) about the values we require of public service; is it enough for the MP to be sincere or how do we ensure that they have accurate information for policy making; the need to discuss issues rather than labels and reality; the value of faith groups using their voting power to assert good values; the importance of the (Catholic) hierarchy thinking more strategically and ‘outside of the box’ in promoting greater truth and integrity in our politics; the need to recognise that integrity in public life requires change (and formation) not only in our elected representatives but also in the electorate; the value of hope and looking for it in ourselves and others; the need to promote that human values and human dignity should be at the heart of any faith initiative, thus avoiding misguided claims of “being too political”; the need to work on an ecumenical basis to promote some of these principles more effectively.

There was general agreement to a statement to be proposed to the Network executive proposing continued cooperation between the NJPN and QTIG.

THE BALFOUR PROJECT

Aim: Peace, justice and human rights in Palestine/Israel.

In November 1917 the government of Britain issued the Balfour Declaration which promised a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine whilst also promising to protect the rights of the existing indigenous Arab population. However, in 1915 Britain had already promised the Arabs who supported them against the Ottomans, that after the war they would be granted independence in their lands, including Palestine.

Subsequent British governments upheld the promise to create a Jewish homeland but deliberately reneged on the promise to protect the rights of the Arab inhabitants. Thus, a homeland for the Jewish people has been achieved but the League’s ‘Sacred

Trust of Civilisation' to facilitate Palestinian independence is still to be fulfilled. Over a hundred years ago, the stage was set for a struggle to control the land that has intensified from that day to this.

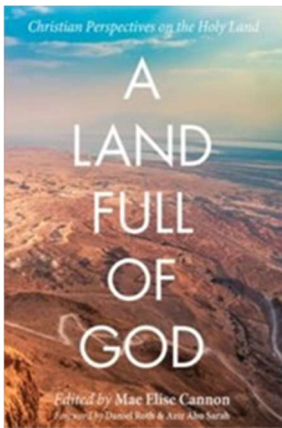
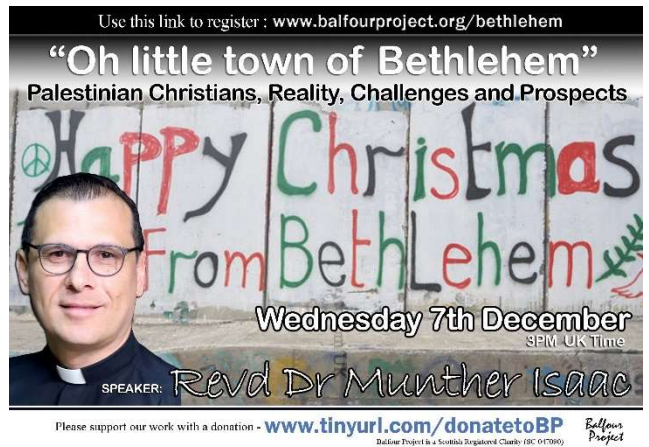
Our Mission Statement:

Acknowledging Britain's historic and continuing responsibilities, we work through education and advocacy to advance equal rights for all in Palestine/Israel, regardless of race or creed. We raise public awareness of the issue in Britain. We seek to persuade our Parliament and Government to demand that the rule of law and fundamental human rights, including the right to self-determination and the implementation of international law, are upheld in Palestine/Israel. Our Government recognised the State of Israel in 1950. We urge it to recognise the State of Palestine now, as a step towards equality and an end to the occupation which began in 1967.

Wednesday 7th December at 3pm UK Event - "O Little Town of Bethlehem" - Palestinian Christians, Reality, Challenges and Prospects

- The world turns to Bethlehem during Christmas, but they have a fairytale image of the little town. However, this is a real community with real challenges. This webinar gives an insight into the reality and challenges of Palestinians and Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land.

Link to to join <https://balfourproject.org/bethlehem/>



A collection of essays edited by Rev. Dr Mae Elise Cannon offering Christian perspectives on the Holy Land, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how we as Christians can work for peace and justice in the region.

A four-part webinar series organised by Embrace the Middle East/Churches for Middle East Peace. Tim Livesey CEO Embrace led the second session. Each webinar considers a theme from the book and can be viewed again here

<https://embraceme.org/land-full-of-god-course-material>

They are about 90 mins each so maybe listened to one each week of Advent. You may even be inspired to buy the book which includes articles by Desmond Tutu, Jim Wallis, Pope Francis, Martin Luther king.

Friday December 9th 7:00 – 9:00 pm

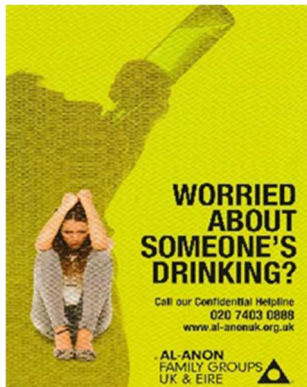
at St Mary's Creative Space Saint Mary's Hill Chester CH1 2DW

TAMER SAHOURI, Palestinian Oud Master and Composer, Academic Director of the Edward Said National Conservatoire of Music and FARIS ISHAQ, Palestinian Nay Master, Global Jazz Flutist and Composer. Oud, Nay and Percussion in an extraordinary dialogue of ancient Arabic instruments in rich harmonic exploration

Chester Friends of Palestine Book <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/tamer-sahouri-faris-ishaq-tickets-460685842757>



AL- ANON



Marian Thompson writes: I am sure we know of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and the excellent work they do. But I am ashamed to say that I did not know about Al-Anon until a member of a local group came to talk to our Churches Together quarterly meeting last week. He was aware that many people did not know about Al-Anon and asked us to publicise their work. The drinking of every alcoholic affects about 20 other people: a partner, family, friends, work colleagues. Where as AA is fairly well known and very helpful to the alcoholics themselves, others affected tend to be overlooked and forgotten. Al- Anon is an organisation specifically for them offering help and support through a website, helpline and meetings. All meetings are free and open to anyone affected by someone's drinking where people can share experiences and offer each other support often exchanging phone numbers. Al-Anon is non affiliated, non religious. There are about 700 groups in the country and I heard there has been one in Marple for sometime. Members' identity is protected. Al-Anon teaches that alcoholism is a disease, a complex, progressive disorder that causes physical, mental, spiritual and financial problems leading

to anxiety, anger and denial for alcoholics and their family and friends. Al-Anon doesn't give advice but encourages people to focus on themselves – self care and self esteem are important as people closely connected with alcoholics are often damaged themselves by the experience. They follow a 12 step programme similar to AA which can lead to self knowledge, help with recovery and acceptance of the situation. Al-Anon is funded by donations. Our speaker explained how he became involved when having to cope with an alcoholic partner. He asked if we could help get the organisation better known particularly to those who were needing help. More information on <https://al-anon.org/>



The Medaille Trust team writes:

As this is our last edition for the year we look back at some of the important achievements of our charity over the year. We report on the Criminal Justice Conference in Slovenia, the launch of the Entrepreneurship Academy in Albania and our participation in the new Coalition to Stop Slavery. This edition also celebrates the achievements of our wonderful staff and we bring you pictures of the staff awards for 2022. Our warmest congratulations to the winners. As we approach Christmas 2022 we bring you reflections from a modern slavery survivor, of Christmas in Albania and how she is looking forward to Christmas at our safe house this year. Our front cover design is an introduction to our Christmas campaign this year, 12 Stories of Christmas.



Read here <https://www.medaille-trust.org.uk/uploads/publications/Medaille-Trust-Magazine-Winter-22.pdf>

DIARY

DECEMBER

- 3 Pax Christi Advent Service 2 pm Pimlico London or online see page 2
- 7 Balfour project 'O little town of Bethlehem' 3 pm Webinar see page 9-10
- 9 Chester Friends of Palestine Concert 7 pm Page 10
- 10 Sustainable Chester Winter Fair 10 – 4 Chester International School Handbridge Booking essential see Page 3
- 10 Human Rights Day see page 7
- 15 Lancashire Sings Carols with radio Lancaster see poster on page 3
- 20 JRS Advent Service 7 pm in London but also on-line see page 2
- 27 CAFOD FUN RUN'S at Bollington and Liverpool Registration 10 am for 11am start see page 3

JANUARY

- 12 Film: 'The Letter' screened at URC, Antrobus St. Congleton 7pm – 9pm see page 3
- 13 CAFOD QUIZ* in Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port starting at 7.30pm. As usual there will be a raffle with good prizes and entry is still only £3 - contact Tony Walsh 0151 355 6419
- 15 Peace Sunday see Pax Christi report page 2
- 18 -25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 'Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice.'

<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2023/>

FEBRUARY

- 10 CAFOD QUIZ* in Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port see January 13th
- 19 Church Action on Poverty Sunday see page 7
- 21 – March 6 Fairtrade Fortnight <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/Current-campaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight/>
- 25 NJPN Open Networking Day on zoom 10.45 – 3.30 pm see page 8

MARCH

- 3 World Day of Prayer prepared by women of Taiwan 'I have heard about your faith '
<https://www.wwdp.org.uk/2023-theme-and-country-taiwan/>
- 10 CAFOD QUIZ in Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port see January 13th
*Tony is pleased to report the three Autumn Cafod quizzes have been successful raising over £600 for Cafod's work in the developing world.

Thank you to the following helpful websites:

National Justice and Peace Network <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/>

NW NJPN Bulletin produced by Anne O'Connor <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/category/njpn-northwest/>

ICN Independent Catholic News <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/>