

Issue 3
April 2024

Ecumenical Update



***Together in Christ,
Bound by Love,
Serving as One***

The ecumenical update for Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney (NWCT)

Welcome to the quarterly ecumenical update for Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney (NWCT). Here you will find general information on ecumenism so that together we can deepen our understanding of Church Unity. It also includes details of ecumenical activity across our county, as well as what is happening nationally through Churches Together in England (CTE) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). For further help or support around Church Unity please do not hesitate to contact me [County Ecumenical Officer](#).

County Ecumenical Officer Update - Dr Ian Watson



Since the last update, I've continued to meet many wonderful and inspiring Christians across Norfolk and Waveney. On a personal front (see pictures below) I finally attended my graduation ceremony with my family at the Barbican. I was presented with both a Masters in Philosophy and a PhD. The title of my thesis was: A Mazzinian Inspired Moral Form of Partiality: *MfP*-patriotism. I must confess that when crossing the stage to meet the Vic-chancellor I felt the urge to pull out a sign which said '*This is for Jesus*' but my courage failed me. I left it to others, perhaps those less discerning, to provide the added dimension for their ebullience at graduating.

Photos of Ceremony

As County Ecumenical Officer (CEO) I act on behalf of NWCT and provide the link with Churches Together in England to support ecumenism across Norfolk and Waveney.



As a way of a short detour, in many ways it was Giuseppe Mazzini's *Duties of Man* published in 1858 (the inspiration for my project) that also led me to an interest in ecumenism. Giuseppe Mazzini was an Italian political philosopher, journalist, and revolutionary. He was one of the three Italian leaders that led together the creation of the Italian Kingdom (The *Resorgimento*) in the 19th century: he was known as the *Heart* of the *Resorgimento*.

The Duties of Man is a collection of essays that outline Mazzini's ideas on the role of individuals in society and their responsibilities towards their fellow human beings. Mazzini believed that individuals have a duty to work towards the betterment of society, and that this duty is rooted in God and the fundamental principles of human nature. He argued that individuals should strive to create a society that is based on justice, equality, and freedom, and that this can only be achieved through collective action. His views on liberal nationalism and international relations are often seen as a precursor to the creation of the EU.

Mazzini had an intense faith in God. Influenced by his Jansenist upbringing his thinking is characterised by a strong religious fervour and a deep sense of spirituality. He believed in divine providence and described himself as a Christian. It should be said, however, that he was against the traditional religions and structures of the time, believing that they had corrupted the creeds. He even went as far as being appointed Triumvir of Rome during a short-lived revolution which displaced the Pope for a period of three months (those captured by Mazzini were given tours of Rome's churches and gifted boxes of cigars before their release). He emphasised the necessity of faith and a relationship with God while vehemently denouncing atheism and rationalism. His motto was *Dio e Popolo* ("God and People").

For me, the Duties of Man is still relevant today because it provides a positive Christian and ecumenical response to the challenges of modern secular society, especially regarding the challenge of alienation that arises from an exclusive focus on individual rights to the detriment of the common good. Mazzini argued that the source of our Duties is in God, and that the definition of our duties is found in His Law. The progressive discovery and application of this law is the mission of Humanity. He says:

‘When Christ came, and changed the face of the world, He spoke not of rights to the rich, who needed not to achieve them; nor to the poor, who would doubtless have abused them in imitation of the rich; He spoke not of utility nor of interest to a people whom interest and utility had corrupted: He spoke of Duty, He spoke of Love, of Sacrifice, and of Faith; and He said that they should be first among all, who had contributed most by their labour to the good of all.’ (Mazzini, 1858)

Known as the nineteenth century ‘apostle’ of duty, Mazzini believed that fixating solely on the desire for entitlements can lead to a harmful sense of self-importance, individualism and alienation. As Christians, we clearly support and champion human rights, but not exclusively so, just as important is duty and the common good. The ecumenical opportunity to deal with the harm of alienation, therefore, is to work collectively in arguing the case that we need to put duties and the common good on an equal footing with individual rights, which are the major concern of modern liberal and secular democracies. The aim of ecumenism here is to motivate collective effort more effectively for the common good. Mazzini says:

‘The theory of rights enables us to rise and overthrow obstacles, but not to find a strong and lasting accord between all the elements which compose [society]. We have therefore to find a principle of education superior to any such theory, which shall guide [all people] to better things, teach them constancy in self-sacrifice and link them with their [brothers and sisters],

this principle is Duty. We must convince [all people] that each one of them must live, not for [themselves], but for others; that the object of their life is not to be more or less happy, but to make themselves and others better. (Mazzini, 1858)

In short, our ecumenical response to the secular society should follow Mazzini in esteeming duties as well as rights. This is a view held by the great modern-day philosopher Onora O'Neill who for a time was Chair of the Human Rights Commission. And it was a view that influenced Mohandas Gandhi who when asked by Julian Huxley in 1947 to contribute to a collection of philosophical writings on human rights, declined, replying "I learnt from my illiterate but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved come from duty well done."

In today's secular society where we have the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and numerous other Charters, Treaties and Councils, in which 'human rights' politics are everywhere, the view that rights cannot exist except as a consequence of duties fulfilled should not be read as simply downgrading rights in favour of duties. Taking Mazzini's thoughts as a whole it is clear that he esteems both rights and duties, but it is the latter that for him (and us) have been neglected. Mazzini's intention in emphasising the significance of duties is to defend the individual liberty important to rights theory from selfish individualism and the egoistic impulse to satisfy desires, which he considers so harmful:

'Liberty; some have reduced it to a mean immoral individualism [where] Ego is everything and that one aim of human labour and social organisation ought to be the satisfaction of its desires; others have declared that all government, all authority, is an inevitable evil [...] that it must be restricted and fettered as much as possible [...] that a government has no mission beyond that of preventing one individual from injuring another. Reject these false doctrines [...] Your liberty will be sacred so long as it develops under the ruling influence of the Idea of Duty and of Faith in the common perfectibility.' (Mazzini, 1858)

Anyhow after that short Mazzinian detour, back to my update. It has continued to be a busy time for NWCT. Sadly, we are losing two of our long serving Denominational Officers (DEOs) for Norfolk and Waveney. First Laurette Burton, Catholic DEO, who stepped down just after Easter. And, secondly, Major Paul Robinson from the Salvation Army who departs at the end of June. Wonderfully, however, Paul is moving from Norwich to take on the challenge of being the National Ecumenical Officer for the Salvation Army. Both have been marvellous and committed servants to the ecumenical cause and the denominations who appointed them in Norfolk. They will be much missed and will remain in our prayers. I thank them for their service, and wish them health and the best for the future.

This means we have (or will have from June) 4 out of the 7 DEO posts vacant: Anglican (normally filled by the minister appointed to Gaywood near King's Lynn), Baptist, Catholic and Salvation Army. I am hopeful these will be filled over the coming months.

On a more positive front we have a national first for Norfolk and Waveney. We have appointed the very first joint DEO in the country. Rev David Ely has been formally appointed to the joint Methodist and URC post. David was already the Methodist

DEO and had been informally covering the long-standing URC vacancy for some time. His ecumenical experience and knowledge is second to none, and I am certain that he will continue to bring these to serve our Lord in answering His prayer for Church Unity that "...they may be one so that the world may believe" (Jn 17.21)

Photo: Rev David Ely
courtesy of Diss Express



New Website for NWCT

Most of you will by now have discovered our new website for NWCT, which has been created in partnership with Network Norfolk, the premier ecumenical Christian news network for our county.



The website is a tool to help acknowledge the good work and relationships that sustain Church Unity across our beautiful county. It helps us to share our experience of ecumenism so that we can offer our prayers of support to each other and to learn from others. Please check it out and the news stories I am now starting to put on it. You can also sign up to receive the regular *Enews* ecumenical updates for NWCT, or opt out, by emailing: **Network Norfolk** or **County Ecumenical Officer**

Please do get in touch to tell us about your local ecumenical initiatives, we can then offer our prayers in fellowship and love.

Email: County Ecumenical Officer

The website link is: nwct.org.uk

Together in Christ, Bound by Love, Serving as One

Dates Agreed for 2024-25 - NWCT Leadership Group

The following dates have been agreed for the Leaders of Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney. If you want to raise any ecumenical-related matter with them for prayer, discussion or consideration, then please let me know before each meeting.

| | | |
|------|--|---|
| 2024 | 23 May, White House, Poringland | Church Leaders Meeting & Prayer |
| | 24 November, Anglican Cathedral, Norwich | Church Leaders Meeting and Prayer. Followed by a service of commitment for a new ecumenical mission statement at 3.30pm. Sermon to be given by the General Secretary of Churches Together in England. A reception to meet Church leaders will be held straight after the service. |
| 2025 | 13-17 January | Church Leaders Pilgrimage to Rome |
| | 23 November, Catholic Cathedral, Norwich | Church Leaders Meeting and Prayer. Followed by an ecumenical service at 3.30pm. A reception to meet Church leaders will be held straight after the service. |

Draft (v.3) Ecumenical Mission Statement for NWCT

NWCT has drafted a new ecumenical mission statement. The existing church leaders' ecumenical covenant dates back to 1991 and, as all the original signatories are no longer serving in Norfolk and Waveney, it is felt timely to update it.



Ecumenical Mission Statement

Together in Christ, Bound by Love, Serving as One

Inspired by the prayer of Christ for Unity, we, as Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney, strive to embody the spirit of ecumenism.

Together in Christ

With open hearts and minds, we share a commitment to foster a harmonious and loving Christian Community that transcends denominational boundaries.

Bound by Love

By respecting and valuing each other's traditions and beliefs, we seek to foster a spirit of collaboration in spreading the message of God's love to all.

Serving as One

In this spirit of togetherness, we are living out the Gospel's call to serve, uplift and support all who live, work and visit Norfolk and Waveney. As fellow pilgrims we support one another as we journey together in faith and prayer.

Ecumenism is not about structures. It is about fostering and nurturing relationships to build trust and mutual understanding.

The senior church leaders of NWCT will publicly commit to the new ecumenical mission statement on **Christ the King**, 24th November 2024 at 3.30pm, in the Anglican Cathedral, Norwich. The sermon for the service will be given by the

General Secretary of Churches Together in England, Bishop Mike Royal. This will be followed by a drink's reception for sharing and fellowship.

It would be great to see as many Christians as possible sharing in this ecumenical celebration of unity, and not just those who belong to the traditions that comprise NWCT, or are only located in Norwich, but from all churches across Norfolk and Waveney.

A copy of the latest draft is available here:

Together in Christ, Bound by Love, Serving as One

New Name for Transforming Norwich

On 20 March 2024, I attended the Transforming Norwich meeting in St Cuthbert's Church in Norwich. These are wonderful meetings of church and organisational leaders sharing friendship, ideas, and prayer in an informal atmosphere of true fellowship. They have now changed the name of the group to **Connect Norwich**.

Photo: courtesy of Connect Norwich

Rev Tim Yau, from **Connect Norwich** says that the purpose of the group is to: "bring together local Christian church, ministry and organisational leaders and their teams, who are committed to developing relationships that reflect the love of God, across the Greater Norwich area, for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We also aim to provoke mission and provide a point of communication across churches in greater Norwich."



As County Ecumenical Officer, I think this is an excellent move and very much reflects their core purpose, which is about fellowship and making connections for the sake of the gospel of our Lord Jesus. The group includes church leaders from the more traditional churches alongside the several free and charismatic churches we are lucky to have in Norwich. It is always a delight to engage with such diversity, which is based upon mutual respect and trust. As I said at the meeting, in my ecumenical experience, **Connect Norwich** is a beautiful initiative that represents the very best sort of ecumenical relationship.

The Leaders of Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney (NWCT)

An important aspect of receptive ecumenism is that we learn more about each other's traditions so that we can better appreciate and share our different gifts. After all, ecumenism, at least as understood by most people, is about unity not uniformity. In this issue of the update there are two opinion pieces from NWCT senior church leaders. The first is from Rev Julian Pursehouse, Chair of the East Anglia Methodist District and convenor of NWCT. Julian is about to move on from his role and here he reflects on his time in NWCT. The second is from Rev David Mayne, Regional Minister Team Leader for the Eastern Baptist Association. David is the new Baptist senior church leader on NWCT, here he introduces himself and outlines his hopes for ecumenism across the area.



“...it has been a joy to serve alongside many able and gracious colleagues from other church traditions.”

Rev Julian Pursehouse

Chair of East Anglia Methodist District and Convenor of NWCT

Looking back – Looking forward!

Over the last decade it has been a joy and a privilege to be associated with Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney as a senior leader in the Methodist Church and in recent years to be the convenor of the Church Leaders Group. I am now the longest serving Church Leader in the county and it has been a joy to serve alongside many able and gracious colleagues from other church traditions.

Each year the senior leader's group has met twice yearly for lunch, prayer, counsel, and mutual encouragement, as well as other special occasions like the consecration of Bishops! This time has been precious, as we have sought to support one another, particularly during the challenges of a world-wide pandemic, when public worship was stopped, and our lives were reduced to a much smaller footprint. We shared our common pastoral concern for our clergy, laity, and churches!

When I reflect upon this period of time, I am often reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul, at the beginning of the Epistle to the Philippians, where with great

“I am thoroughly glad that I have served here in this beautiful county and met so many inspiring people who through the gift of faith are seeking to make a difference!”

affection he holds the congregation in his heart, he gives thanks for their partnership in the Gospel and joyfully prays for their continuing witness and service to the Gospel. ***‘I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.’***

As I prepare to leave the county in the summer and move to pastures new, I am thoroughly glad that I have served here in this beautiful county and met so many inspiring people who through the gift of faith are seeking to make a difference!

I am confident that my successor, Rev Helen Hollands, will bring much warmth and energy to ecumenical relations in the county and I wish her well.

Rev Dr Julian M. Pursehouse



**Rev David Mayne
appointed new
Regional Minister
Team Leader**



Rev David Mayne

Regional Minister Team Leader for the Eastern Baptist Association and member of NWCT

Dear Friends

I’m pleased to have the opportunity to greet you all in this way. I’ve been so encouraged by the work of Churches Together in Norfolk and Waveney over these past few months, and I am hopeful for all that lies ahead as we seek to serve God together.

In November 2023 I took up my post as the Regional Minister Team Leader for the Eastern Baptist Association. Together with my colleagues, we serve 170ish churches across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridgeshire. Prior to this I served in local church ministry in Croydon and Southend.

Throughout my ministry I have also supported national Baptist life in a variety of ways, including through the work of the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), a joint endeavour of the Methodist Church, United Reformed Church, Baptist Union, and

“It is a constant joy to see the impact churches have in working together to speak out

on the environment and on poverty, pooling our ideas and resources to better become a society which welcomes the stranger and priorities the marginalised.”

Church of Scotland. JPIT seeks to help churches work together for peace and justice through listening, learning, praying, and taking action on public policy issues.

It is a constant joy to see the impact churches have in working together to speak out on the environment and on poverty, pooling our ideas and resources to better become a society which welcomes the stranger and priorities the marginalised. This work, alongside our historic commitments to build friendships with one another and live well together in our local contexts, can bring energy and life to our ecumenism.

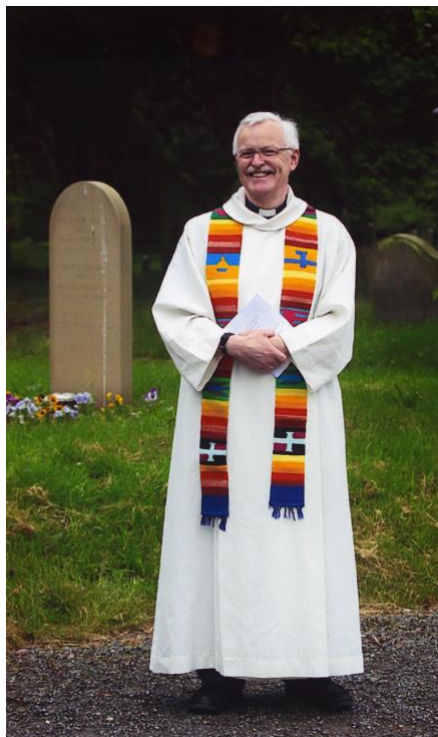
Engaging with social and political issues also provides our churches with opportunities to build links with others in our communities. Many of our Foodbanks have volunteers from beyond the churches that host them, and there are plenty of people in every village, town and city who want us to do more to tackle climate change. We will be far more effective at bringing Kingdom change about if we can develop relationships with the people of peace around us. Far from being irrelevant or hunkered down, our churches can be hubs of connection and change, bringing new life and the justice of the Kingdom of God more into view, and into the daily experiences of our communities.

As Baptist churches, we always start at the grassroots. Change starts with individuals working together and local churches partnering with one another. It is my hope that in the years ahead we can continue to play our part in those partnerships, working with sisters and brothers from other denominations to create places of sanctuary and joy for everyone. It's not always easy work, I know, but I have been privileged to see it happen in so many places, and I hear such excellent stories from so many of our churches. I'm very much looking forward to visiting groups and projects in the years ahead, and to hearing more from across Norfolk and Waveney.

Rev David Mayne

Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)

Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting and worshipping with the LEP in Loddon. This is a long-standing partnership between the Anglican and Methodist traditions. The mixed congregation (although many see themselves as simply one congregation) were very welcoming and I enjoyed their service and fellowship immensely. Here the Rector for Chet Valley, Rev David Owen, reflects on his time with the LEP. He highlights some of the advantages of an LEP but also some of the challenges. David is soon to retire, and we wish him a long and healthy retirement. I'm sure the local community will miss him greatly.



Rev David Owen

Rector, Chet Valley, and Rural Dean of Loddon Deanery

The Church in Loddon has been a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) since the 1970s when the ministers and congregations of the Methodist and Anglican churches decided it made missional and pastoral sense to do things together. A formal agreement took place, and unusually for an LEP, it was decided to retain both the grade 1 listed parish church of Holy Trinity in the centre of the village and also the (listed) Methodist Chapel of St John's.

The advantage of having two buildings is obvious. The more modern and flexible facilities at St John's are useful for different styles of worship and for church groups and are also widely used by local community organisations. In contrast, the architectural beauty and size of Holy Trinity provides a defined focus for the church in this locality and a space for larger gatherings for worship, including weddings and funerals.

The problem we have is that two buildings mean two lots of costs – maintenance, insurance, day-to-day running costs and more.

The Church in Loddon is part of the Lowestoft and East Suffolk Methodist circuit and part of the Anglican Chet Valley Benefice. The latter consists of seven villages with four active churches that work together, a Rector who lives in Loddon and a small team of self-supporting ordained and lay ministers. There is no longer a resident Methodist minister. As a parish church, it is committed to serving the geographical community in which it is placed, whereas as a Methodist church its first responsibility is to its members regardless of where they live. In practical terms this doesn't greatly affect the way it works, but on official levels it can be an administrative headache.

The two denominations both require sets of accounts to be submitted annually, but they operate to different financial years. The concepts of having a Church Electoral Roll (Anglican), a Membership Roll (Methodist) and an LEP Members list are also an annual problem. (Some people wish to designate themselves as both Anglicans and Methodists, thus resulting in spurious (double counting) statistics to the separate denominations!) There is an understanding that safeguarding requirements will be in line with the rest of the Chet Valley Benefice so that people are not required to undertake two courses at every level, which would create impossible hurdles.

Would I recommend creating a formal Local Ecumenical Partnership? The honest answer is probably not if you have very different membership structures and are separately making good use of your buildings and facilities. But at the same time, I would definitely say that working together and sharing in joint services and activities benefits everyone, given that we are all seeking to spread the gospel of the Kingdom of God rather than simply support a denomination. It is the formal agreement that raises the issues and creates the burden of administration. Having said that, all the churches in the Chet Valley Benefice appreciate and make use of the facilities of St John's. It is a vital tool of local mission and ministry. The question remains as to whether running two buildings can be affordable in the years ahead.

Rev David Owen



Churches Together in Kings Lynn

One of the more thriving local Churches Together Groups in Norfolk and Waveney is in King's Lynn. As I go around the area, I pick up a positive buzz about their ecumenical track record and scope of successful initiatives. In this edition of the ecumenical update, Peter Coates, secretary of Churches Together in King's Lynn, gives a personal and interesting view on the mercy of ecumenism.

Peter inherited his faith from his mother who converted when she attended a boarding school run by nuns in Ryde on the Isle of Wight. He went to Prior Park College in Bath, qualified in medicine from Liverpool in 1973 and was a haematologist at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn from 1988-2015. He left the church in his 20s and returned in the late 1990s. He was secretary of a Churches Together Justice and Peace group in King's Lynn for 10 years up to 2010 when he became secretary of Churches Together in King's Lynn. He has published a book of poetry called 'Generation Care'.

Peter Coates

Secretary Churches Together in Kings Lynn

What is the point of Churches Together? Perhaps one answer might be to work for mercy. Consider the human condition from the point of view of a person who would like the world to be peaceful. A world where everyone could have the opportunity to reach their full creative potential. As we can see from the news and history this does not seem to be happening and there may be many reasons why. Factors which damage our relationships include sin, inequality, neurodiversity, mental illness, sub-conscious

motivation, primitive animal motivations, ignorance and the complexities of reality, which are beyond our understanding.

In his book *Incognito*, the neuroscientist David Eagleman describes our brain function to be analogous to an iceberg. There is a small part of brain function above the water working consciously, but much of the brain works sub-consciously. Studies on motivation show that humans are largely unaware of their own motivations. Add to this the problems posed by our more primitive animal emotions which drive us to aggression, anger, desires, addiction and self-preservation and we are starting to see the reality of the problems. Inequality in society is a huge problem which epidemiologists have correlated with all our social ills. It produces a dysfunctional society with suffering for rich and poor alike.

Neurodiversity and mental illness are complexities which additionally make people struggle to understand themselves and other people. Then there is ignorance. We are all obviously ignorant of the future effects that our actions will produce but Karl Popper tells us that 'Our knowledge can only be finite, while our ignorance must necessarily be infinite'.

Jesus, of course, counters much of these problems with his teaching. He urges us to give up primitive animal motivations and change to working together for the good of all, on projects which God the Father has instituted. As a result, we can all see the amazing work which people do in every sphere of life.

However, with all these human problems in our relationships and our attempts to be successful at contributing good to society, it seems hardly surprising that we sometime end up, even with the best intentions, in failure or conflict. Perhaps through our failures we change and learn. However, Jesus does not allow us to avoid failure by doing nothing. The man who had no wedding garment, that is who has not worked in any of the Father's projects, was thrown out into the darkness (Matthew 22: 1-10).

When we are faced with failure, the concept of mercy comes into focus. Jesus obviously expects us to be merciful ourselves because he says: 'Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them,' (Matthew 5:7). But what does it mean to be merciful?

The church teaches that there are 7 corporal works (relating to supporting the body) and 7 spiritual works of mercy. The seven-corporal works of mercy are: 1. To feed the hungry, 2. To give water to the thirsty, 3. To clothe the naked, 4. To shelter the homeless, 5. To visit the sick, 6. To visit the imprisoned, or ransom the captive, 7. To bury the dead.

The seven spiritual works of mercy can be understood in the light of the teachings of Jesus and are: 1. To help people to gain knowledge of what is right, 2. To counsel people who, in their own lives, have issues which make them doubtful about what is right, 3. To admonish the sinners, 4. To bear patiently those who wrong us, 5. To forgive offences, 6. To comfort the afflicted, 7. To pray for the living and the

dead. In addition, Pope Francis has suggested that the care of creation should be an additional work of mercy.

Churches Together gives churchgoers the opportunity to volunteer to contribute toward these works of mercy in the society. The King's Lynn Food bank was set up as a Churches Together project after Pastor Kevan Crane, then leader of the Baptist Church, invited the Trussell Trust to visit King's Lynn and speak at a public meeting. The first leader of the Christian's Against Poverty Debt Centre was Kevan's daughter Emily. Churches Together have also supported Christian Aid and CAFOD and individual churches have their own ways of helping the poor of the world. WaterAid is a charity which provides clean water to the poor.

The King's Lynn night shelter is now in its 7th season. It was started as a Churches Together project and now is in St John's House, next to the station in Lynn. It has 15 staff and 60 volunteers who work with the 8 guests who are housed in their own individual rooms. The staff work with all the local professional bodies to help homeless people get back into functional life again.

The chaplaincies at the hospital and at the hospice also have volunteers who visit patients and relatives to give support. We all have a great need for the joy of good relations between humans. When a person is ill it is wonderful to be valued enough that someone has taken the trouble to visit. Religiously minded people also feel a sense of inclusion and acceptance through prayer. The chaplaincy at Norwich prison recruits' volunteers to visit prisoners and some people in prison greatly value this. Christians also can attend the funerals of ex-prisoners, homeless people or people whose funerals are otherwise poorly attended.

Undertaking the spiritual works of mercy would be part of the function of each person's individual church. There are very interesting and lovely people in all the churches and more visiting between churches would be something that I would love to see. Certainly, the Methodists and Anglican churches work closely together in Lynn and the newly re-built Beacon church on the North Lynn estate is a lovely community hub.

If we succeed in our work, we give the glory to God and thus deny our own dangerous self-importance. One of my favourite quotes from the Bible is: 'Whoever acts without mercy will be judged without mercy, but mercy can afford to laugh at judgement' (James 2:13). I love the mercy of God as displayed by Churches Together.

Peter Coates

News from Churches Together (CTE) in England



Ecumenical Fund for Young People

Churches Together in England (CTE) is still looking to fund young people in ecumenical experience and study. **The Bill Snelson Young Ecumenists Fund.** This was launched in October 2023 by CTE and the Snelson family. Grants of up to £6000 from the Fund allow young adults (18 to 35) to experience ecumenism abroad. That experience can be study, pilgrimage, volunteering or any activity that promotes church unity.



[Download here a brief guide to The Bill Snelson Young Ecumenists Fund and how to apply.](#)

DailyHope Phone-line



New funding means that this **Faith in Later Life** project can reopen immediately after closing at the end of January 2024. **DailyHOPE** was initially launched in April 2020 as a response by the Church of England, Faith in Later Life and Connections at Holy Trinity Church in Claygate to support older people who would not be able to access online worship during lockdown.

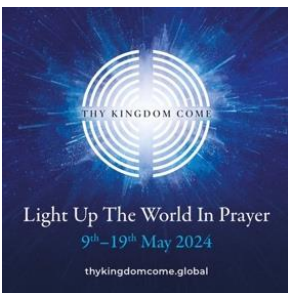
In 2023, Faith in Later Life took over the development and ownership of the line, but its aim remained the same; to ensure that the spiritual life of older people could continue to flourish. Data from the same year showed that DailyHOPE received almost 100,000 calls. After closing at the end of January 2024, it has been joyfully

announced that the service can re-start with immediate effect as additional funding has been secured.

As DailyHOPE is relaunched and refreshed, Christians are being encouraged to share the free telephone number – 0800 804 8044 – in their church and wider communities.

The plan for DailyHOPE is to further develop the range of content and content providers in order to appeal to a wider audience of Christians, as well as older people exploring faith for the first time.

Reminder for Forthcoming Events



9-19th May 2024 – Thy Kingdom Come Prayer Event

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. Since it began in May 2016, TKC has grown into a movement which unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions. The ultimate purpose is to use prayer so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ. TKC provide a range of resources for churches from prayer stations and '24-7' prayer, to service templates and prayer journals for congregations. They also provide resources to help families and young people pray together including, for example, Family Prayer Adventure Map and the Kingdom Kit. You can find these resources on their website: **[TKC \(click here\)](https://thykingdomcome.global)**

Jesus said to them,
“Peace be with you. As
the Father has sent Me,
so also I am sending
you.” When He had said
this, He breathed on
them and said, “Receive
the Holy Spirit....” (John
20:21-22)



Key links

Churches Together in England
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
Conference of European Churches
World Council of Churches
Society of Ecumenical Studies
Unity News Across East of England
Hope Together

<https://cte.org.uk/>
<https://ctbi.org.uk/>
<https://ceceurope.org/>
<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/>
<https://ecumenicalstudies.org/a-tent-of-learning/>
[Link to East of England News](#)
<https://www.hopetogether.org.uk>

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