



Pathways to Unity

churches
together
IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND®

Overview of 2009 / 2010

CTBI's purpose is to "serve the Churches of Britain and Ireland on our shared journey towards full visible unity in Christ". All the work that is undertaken is focused on this central aim. What follows is a brief summary of the work that has been undertaken over the past year.

The website

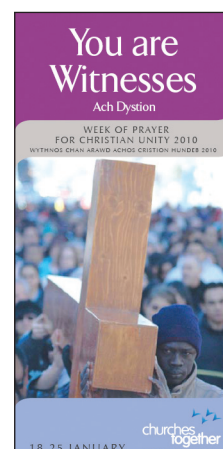
The website is central to the way in which CTBI works. The past year has seen a significant increase in the number of "unique visitors" (108,249 in 2009, compared with 78,729 in 2008) and downloads of the various resources, including:

• Lent	73,207
• Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	60,164
• Remembrance Sunday	34,864
• Advent	22,711
• Racial Justice Sunday	19,125

Worship and study resources

The worship and study resources have proved to be a very popular aspect of CTBI's work and all of these are available as downloads from the website:

- **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** - continues to be one of the core worship resources and has seen increased downloads of more than 30% overall. The four nations writers group has proved an effective and creative group. CTBI also participates in the international meeting that prepares the originating material.
- **Lent** (in partnership with BBC Radio 4 and local radio) - this partnership has continued in 2010 with "People on the edge of his pain". Preparations are underway for 2011 which will focus on the use of the Bible. The partnership with the BBC will continue and for 2011 we are pleased that the Bible Society is also working with us.
- **Creation Month** - currently in partnership with the Churches Environmental Issues Network.
- **Racial Justice Sunday** - in 2009 and 2010 in partnership with the Catholic Agency for Racial Justice.

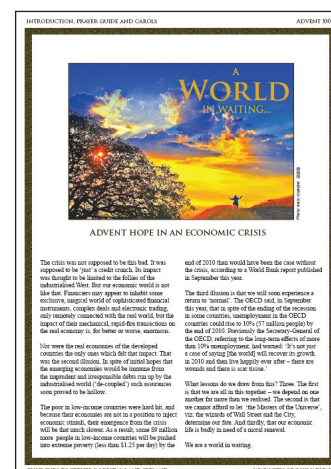


- **Remembrance Sunday** - this material prepared by the Joint Liturgical Group proves to be another valuable resource available through the CTBI website. It is hoped that some additional material will supplement it for 2010. In addition JLG is about to publish “Out of the Depths” which explores how the Churches respond to occasions of public grief.

- **Advent: “A World in Waiting”** - explored aspects of the economic recession. CTBI has never before provided Advent resources, none the less this proved to be a very popular resource attracting the attention of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation and was subject of an article in “the Times” newspaper.

- **Holocaust Memorial Day** - in partnership with the Council of Christians and Jews and made available on both organisations’ websites.

- **“Above Us and Between Us”** - published in response to the open letter to the Churches, “A Common Word” by 138 Muslim scholars, this is a working resource for local churches and groups who are interested in exploring aspects of Christian-Muslim relations. It may be followed up with similar material.



Currently explorations are underway to develop study resources on John Henry Newman and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Faith and Order

Following the recent re-structuring of CTBI , Faith and Order concerns now play an increasingly pivotal role. The Trustees approved the creation of a Four Nations Faith and Order Reference Group which will be key in taking forward this work. The Reference Group will:

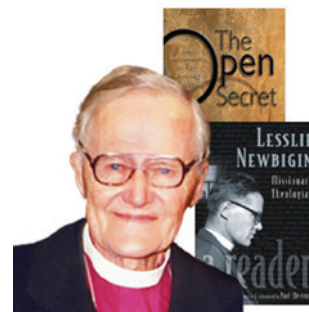
- be a forum of discussion on key theological issues relating to ecumenism.
- monitor Faith and Order developments in the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity.
- monitor the agendas of the CTBI Networks and Forums (including Mission Theology Advisory Group), identifying areas that might have a Faith and Order implication.
- closely monitor bi-lateral dialogues within the churches of the four nations.
- arrange a four nations Faith and Order Consultation/Conference when appropriate.
- keep up to date with the Faith and Order priorities of the CTBI member churches.
- keep in close touch with the National Ecumenical Instruments and any Faith and Order work they might be undertaking.



John Calvin 1509-1564

Other aspects of the Faith and Order:

- The Director of Programmes was invited to participate in the International Faith and Order Plenary, held in Crete in October 2009 and many of the issues that emerged there will play a significant role in CTBI's ongoing Faith and Order agenda. This was followed up with a "debrief" meeting for those who attended this meeting from the UK and Ireland.
- CTBI completed the celebrations marking the centenary of the Anglo-German Ecumenical Exchanges (1909-10).
- A Colloquium marking the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, held in partnership with Churches Together in England.
- A conference marking the centenary of the birth of Lesslie Newbigin, undertaken in partnership with the Gospel and Culture Network. (A publication is also planned.)



Lesslie Newbigin 1909 - 1998

The Networks

The CTBI Networks are the ecumenical space where the churches co-operate and reflect together within the specific areas of Public Issues, Mission, Inter-Religious, International Students and Racial Justice.

Church and Public Issues (formerly Church and Society)

- The preparation of the "Faith in Politics" briefing document for the UK General Election and the setting up of a hustings registration system on the website.
- The writing of the worship materials for Creation Time in partnership with the Churches' Environmental Issues Network.
- The Advent course "A World in Waiting" which focused on issues relating to the economic recession. Meanwhile the resources that accompanied the 2009 CTBI Conference on the recession is still available on the website.
- A conference on constitutional issues including devolution is being planned for the autumn in consultation with the partners in the Four Nations.



Mission

- The run up to the Edinburgh 2010 Conference and the publishing of the "Foundations for Mission" research.
- Follow up to Edinburgh 2010 including production for further mission resources.
- Exploring a new way forward for ecumenical discussions and co-operation around mutual concerns for Israel-Palestine.
- A response to the WCC Faith and Order report "The Nature and Mission of the Church".
- Mission Theology Advisory Group has now completed two substantial pieces of work – "The Unreconciled" and "The Dispossessed" both currently being prepared for publication.

China

- CTBI ecumenical visit to China, February-March 2010, focussed on the roles of women in the Chinese churches and the impact of migration on Chinese Christianity.
- China Roundtable meetings on the Chinese House Churches and on the pastoral and practical needs of Chinese students in Britain and Ireland, with potential follow-up meetings with chaplains and Chinese churches in Britain and Ireland.
- The China Study Journal published two issues, including a special edition on the Chinese House Churches.
- Ongoing work of the British and Irish Amity Teaching Group in the ecumenical recruiting, sending and supporting of teachers of English in China.
- Exploring new forms of cooperation with the Amity Foundation in its 25th year.
- Shipped the contents of the “Salisbury Library” to China to be used for theological training in ecumenism.



Inter-Religious

- The hosting of a CTBI event at which the then Secretary for Communities and Local Government, the Rt. Hon. John Denham MP spoke about his priorities for interfaith engagement.
- Co-operation and co-ordination on issues relating to the membership of multi-faith forums by smaller religious groupings and new religious movements.
- Matters concerning the Religion and Belief Consultative Group.
- A renewed focus on bi-lateral relationships, especially renewed support for the re-establishment of the Christian-Hindu Forum.
- Dialogue between Christian black clergy and Jewish rabbis in partnership with the Council of Christians and Jews.
- Consideration of “Finding God in Friend and Stranger”, the newly published teaching document on inter-religious relations by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales.



International Students

- This Network has received the support of the CTBI Trustees to work in a more flexible way. Explorations towards this are currently underway.
- Continuing support of the remaining WCC Scholarships and the Hardship Fund.

Racial Justice

- A day conference exploring the challenge posed by political parties of the far right. Jon Cruddas MP and Arlington Trotman were the principal speakers.
- Ongoing work on Racial Justice Sunday worship resources.
- The concluding stages of the PEERS Project.
- Development of a partnership with the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe on, 'Migration 2010' and beyond.
- Support for the Churches' Refugee Network and in particular the Churches' endorsement of the Sanctuary Pledge.

