

Joint Christian Public Issues Conference - 21 February 2015

THINK, LOVE, PRAY

Love your neighbour: Think, Pray, Vote - the third JPIT Conference - for a day of reflection, discussion and Bible study focussed on how Christians and churches can help create a more just society in the build-up to the 2015 General Election.

We are excited to announce that the keynote address will be delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. Following this will be a series of workshops on a wide range of issues, from engaging with the media and building relationships with your MP to climate change and grounding politics in faith.

Love you neighbour: Think, Pray, Vote will take place at Coventry Central Hall on Saturday 21 February with opening worship starting at 10.30. The conference is free, but there will be an opportunity to make a suggested donation of £10 on the day to help cover some of the costs.

We expect there to be a lot of interest so please book early to avoid disappointment.

For more information and to register your place please go to www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/loveyourneighbour

*News from the Methodist Church is compiled by
Rev Andy Fyall.*

News from 
The Methodist Church

October 2014

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Ken Howcroft and Ms Gill Dascombe, asked Methodists to ensure that they spend some special time in prayer for persecuted minorities during worship on 31 August.

They wrote this special prayer which we can continue to use:

God of love, guide us as we pray:

God of all nations and peoples, hear our prayers for the people of Syria and Iraq, and for all whose lives are torn apart by hatred and violence, whose heartbreak is more than we can imagine:
God of compassion, guide us as we pray.

For leaders and politicians and those who seek to negotiate for peace, whose responsibility is more than we could bear:
God of wisdom, guide us as we pray.

For aid workers, medical staff, those who care for refugees, orphaned children and older people, whose daily workload is more than we could tolerate:
God of goodness, guide us as we pray.

For those who feel compelled to accomplish their justice through warfare or terrorism, whose motivation is more than we can comprehend:
God of justice, guide us as we pray.

For ourselves, who look on, devastated and helpless, praying to our God whose peace is beyond our understanding:
God of peace, guide us as we pray.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit:
Amen.

Archbishop invites young Christians to spend year praying at Lambeth Palace

Archbishop Justin Welby is opening up Lambeth Palace to adults aged 20-35 to spend a year living, praying and studying together as a radical new Christian community

In a unique experiment the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is to open up Lambeth Palace in London to Christians aged 20-35 – inviting them to spend a year living, studying and praying at a historic centre of the Anglican Communion.

Launching in September 2015, the Community of St Anselm will gather a group of adventurous young adults from all walks of life, hungry for a challenging and formative experience of life in a praying community.

The Community will initially consist of 16 people living at Lambeth Palace full-time, and up to 40 people, who live and work in London, joining part-time. The year-long programme will include prayer, study, practical service and community life.

Members of the Community will live in a way the ancient monastics would recognise: drawing closer to God through a daily rhythm of silence, study and prayer. But, through those disciplines, they will also be immersed in the modern challenges of the global 21st century church.

Lambeth Palace is in the process of recruiting a Prior to pioneer this new venture and direct its worship and work. The Prior will work under the auspices of the Archbishop, who will be Abbot of the Community.

To find out more, visit: www.stanselm.org.uk

Methodists lose nearly 100,000 members in ten years. What can be done?

It is to the credit of the Church that its general secretary, Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, is making no attempt to do this. In his report to the Conference, he says: "However the Statistics for Mission report is understood and interpreted it does not make for easy or comfortable reading. If ever we needed any encouragement to continue to focus on those things that make for an ever better Church which is a discipleship movement shaped for mission today, then these statistics provide that."

These figures will be a body blow to Methodists. However, we will pick ourselves up from the canvas after a count of eight or nine, go back to their corner and after a wet sponge and a good talking-to, come out fighting. But how?

Here, though, are some ideas that might be worth thinking about by Mark Woods, a Baptist minister.

- 1. Be realistic.*
 - 2. Be brave.*
 - 3. Be honest.*
 - 4. Be ruthless... You have 4,800 chapels, and that's too many. Close some, sell the buildings and use the money.*
 - 5...But not too ruthless. Many of these are the only functioning place of worship in the town or village. They might be liabilities at the moment, but they could be assets. Develop a strategy to support and revive them.*
 - 6. Don't lose your nerve.*
 - 7. Don't beat yourselves up too much. Your churches are lovely (mostly) and your ministers are capable.*
 - 8. Be deeply, painfully self-critical. The hardest thing we can ever do is critique who and what we are, because it means standing outside the frame of reference which we've always taken for granted. But the Methodist Church has the opportunity to ask itself really hard questions about how it expresses the Gospel and embodies the Kingdom in the 21st century.*
- FOR THE FULL ARTICLE VISIT: <http://www.christiantoday.com/>