

## **Churches Together in Herefordshire's Annual Report – May 2025 – Nov 2025**



This report sets out the key areas of work for Churches Together in Herefordshire over the past six months. Emma Wright, the County Ecumenical Officer (the CEO) continues to be employed by CTiH for 45 hours per month.

### **Churches/Christian Together Groups**

#### **Churches Together in Weobley**

It has been great to see the fruitfulness of networking in action at CTiW. Heather Martin came to speak on behalf of Youth Hubs from Hereford Diocese at CTiW's AGM. CTiW hopes that they might be able to fund a colleague from the Youth Hub to support them in leading their holiday clubs. Leominster Youth Hub covers the two deaneries of Leominster and Kington and Weobley and employs youth pioneer workers and youth hub co-ordinators. I look forward to hearing about the outcomes from the holiday club.

CTiW are also looking to collaborate with Open the Book more. They had a Harvest service, jointly organised by the C of E and the Methodists, with donations going towards the Tearfund Afghan Appeal and there also was the opportunity to donate food to the Food Bank. The Council of Nicaea has been a very important thread this year with the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary being a key ecumenical event. Four advent bible studies are being planned throughout Advent centring on the Council of Nicaea. It's wonderful to see the profound significance of this event

many years later. Ecumenical carol singing is planned to take place in the Rose Garden again this year and I look forward to hearing more about that.



#### **Christians Together in Ewyas Harold**

CTEH continue to steward school leavers at the Primary School by giving out leavers books to Year Six. It is great to see this continuous intergenerational encouragement. They continue to organise Taize prayer at Dore Abbey. They meet to discuss ecumenical topics such as Food for Families and Hereford Food Bank where all the churches were thanked for their support and their contributions.

Most recently, they also discussed the Golden Valley Pilgrim Way which is made up of a sixty-mile circular route starting and ending in Hereford with the potential to visit many churches on route. Simon Lockett leads three pilgrimages a year through the British Pilgrimage Trust. They discussed how they could continue to support these organisations more. Around eighteen people attended the Walk of Witness and thirty people attended the service afterwards. Money was raised for Christian Aid through helping to distribute envelopes through letterboxes. It was great to hear about this foundational work that still holds a great presence in the area.

### **Christians Together in Bromyard**

CTiB held an ecumenical station of the cross and ecumenical walk of witness at Easter. They also had the charity Point of View come and discuss how to support the youth of Bromyard. Some of the youth got involved in the 'Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat' production. It's great to see this intergenerational collaboration flourish within Bromyard. They had a well attended Harvest service at the Methodist Church and St Joseph's will have an advent service which everyone can attend.

### **Churches Together in Ross-on-Wye and District**

CTRD held a Pentecost Picnic and it was a fantastic time of fellowship. Arts, crafts and a slice of birthday cake were enjoyed celebrating the birth of the Church. For Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, they want to tie in an afternoon tea service at the end of the week along with a mixture of noon and evening meetings. They laid a wreath at the Remembrance Service. CTRD will host a Christmas production of "Jack and the Beanstalk" by the Saltmine Theatre Company for a one-night production on 10 December and a Light Up A Life service after St Mary's Evensong at the end of the year. It has been wonderful to see the group continue to flourish this year.

### **Churches Together in Leominster**

Donations from Lent lunches were split between CAFOD and Christian Aid. The Moravian Church has hosted events for the Youth Hub and hosted the World Day of Prayer in March. They will continue to "pursue" rotating WPCU events at different churches.

They are already considering using the "Growing for Good" resources created by the Church Urban Fund for WPCU 2026. The group will contact the Hospice to see how they can support and collaborate with them more. It's a joy to see them investing in collaborating with the community and being a light in the Hospice.

In October, they organised another prayer and praise ecumenical event. It was hosted by the Methodists and worship was led by the Baptists. There was discussion about potentially organising an exciting Nativity trail for this year and they will approach the Council to see whether this could take place.

The Moravian Church have been hosting the Diocese's Youth Hub for drop-in sessions after school. They are taking part in the Christmas Tree festival and hoping that children from the primary school can get involved with helping to make the decorations again. It's great to see this desire for intergenerational work continuing and a strong partnership continuing to develop between the schools and the group.

### **Christians Together in Orleton**

The harvest service was well attended with a focus on donating food items to Mary's Meals. They organised a remembrance service and planned on getting the school worship group involved which is brilliant to see. If you're in a studious mood, CTiO will be running an Advent bible study. If you would like the details, please see me afterwards. If anyone fancies a refreshment with their carol singing to keep them warm, CTiO will be singing Carols at the Boot Pub again, I'm sure

you'd be very welcome if you want to come along and support.

### **Churches Together in Kington**

All churches continue to contribute to the Food bank and Herefordshire Council are collaborating with St Mary's on starting a food share scheme in the parish rooms. They also supported the civic remembrance service. The churches rotate who is creating the crib at Kington's Tourist Information Centre and it's the Catholic Church's turn this year. It's amazing to see this form of creative outreach to the community! Kington Benefice Pilgrim Paths walks continue to take place every month from May to September. Over 150 people joined them over the summer to walk short circular routes from their churches – and finish with fellowship and tea!

### **Churches Together in Hereford**

At their recent forum meeting CTH have planned events for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, World Day of Prayer and Good Friday walk of witness. In addition to promoting City Praise & the Cathedral initiatives, they have arranged for carol singing in the centre of Hereford at 12.30pm on Saturday 20th December. CTH are also supporting Street Pastors on the 13 December and Hereford Baptist Church's carol service at Maylord Orchard on the 22 December. It's great seeing this continuous outreach grow to support the community and it's encouraging to see other churches continuing to network together.

### **Groups with whom CTiH works**

### **Church Leaders Together Hereford**

Church Leaders Together Hereford continue to meet on the first Tuesday of every month for a time of fellowship and prayer. They want to organise praying around the city walls for revival. This is incredibly important and will be a very profound time of fellowship to pray for people to know Jesus. If you would like to know more about how you get involved, please contact myself and I can pass on the details.

### **Churches Working Together in Ledbury**

The main event that CWTiL are organising is a Light Up A Life service led by Bev Ramsden from St Michael's Hospice, 2:30pm on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December at Ledbury Methodist Church. Everyone is welcome to attend and it will be great to continue to see an outpouring of fellowship in Ledbury this winter.

### **Meeting with Anglicans and Methodists**

The CEO had a meeting with Archdeacon Derek, Rev Lois and Rev Phil. There was discussion that Youth Hubs will start in Bromyard and in Ledbury. The Youth Hubs are also got involved with the 'Joseph' production in Bromyard. There are lay people who are currently part of the clergy response team and are advertising for emergency cover. If you would like to know more, please contact me.

### **Vennture**



### **Lean on Me: Helping Herefordshire Come Home Safe**

When people go out at night, things don't always go to plan. Vennture's Lean on Me teams are there to help; giving first aid, offering support, and reducing emergency service callouts. Last year, they responded to 276 incidents, supported more than 1,200 people, and prevented 80 callouts.

A new cohort of young, local volunteers is currently completing seven weeks of accredited training before joining the teams on the streets, where they will serve under the guidance of experienced leaders.

For one young volunteer, their impact was clear from the start: "We supported a girl who was scared and badly bruised. After time and care, she told us what was happening. Our safeguarding report led to police action. I knew I'd made a difference in her life."

Help Vennture to keep bringing Christian compassion to their streets. Please pray for their teams, and please fundraise to support their work. If you would like their contact details, please speak to me afterwards.

### **LEAF**



LEAF have re-constituted their youth work and are collaborating with Close House in Hereford helping provide youth workers for them. It's really encouraging to see this networking across the county develop and flourish.

### **Hereford Homeless Forum**

The CEO enjoys hearing updates from the Homeless Forum and hearing about churches collaborating with local charities and services that support the homeless. CTiH, Hereford Baptist Church, Vennture and SPSJ have signed the Herefordshire Homeless Charter, a pledge to all work together along with other charities countywide to support those struggling with homelessness.

### **Churches Together in England**



## **All EO's Representatives Conference**

The All Ecumenical Officers Representatives Conference theme was "journeying together through ecumenism." There were many discussions on the topic of journeying together including discussion from the living with diversity working group and the racial justice working group. The discussion was thought provoking, moving and humbling. The takeaway that was received from a talk on ecumenical organisation reiterated the importance of acting in power with others, not over others. It was also noted that there is an iron rule that is important to remember: never do for others what they can do for themselves. If you do that you take away their power and their agency.

## **CTiH**

CTiH's Standing Committee still meets 4 times a year. This gives me an opportunity to report back to the team of denominational representatives on a quarterly basis.

Rev Duncan MacLean has stepped down as Chair of CTiH. We thank him for the support that he has given over almost two years that he has been in the role.

Steve Grisman is currently the Chair of CTiH until Christmas and then Rev Phil Warrey will take over as Chair in January.