

Fruitless – don't raise the stakes

Government proposals to double the stakes and prize limits for fruit machines are nearly at the end of its Parliamentary procedure: the House of Lords will debate and vote on the proposals on Tuesday 21 April.

Making it easier to gamble more during a time of recession is wrong. The new prize limit for fruit machines found in pubs will be more than weekly benefit levels, and children will be able to play on gaming machines and win prizes worth £50.

There is also a risk that this proposal could lead to an increase in problem gambling. The Government had committed to protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

Fruitless is a campaign of the Methodist Church, Baptist Union of Great Britain, United Reformed Church and six other churches and Christian organisations aimed at raising awareness and opposition to these proposals.

For more information visit www.fruitless.org.uk

Join the hundreds of other people who have signed a petition to the Prime Minister.

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/fruitless/>

European Elections and Countering Political Extremism – 4 June 2009

European Parliament and English County Council elections take place on Thursday 4 June. The Joint Public Issues Team have prepared a briefing with information about the elections, available at

www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/jpitpolitics.htm

A new toolkit has been prepared for local church leaders on countering far-right and racist political movements. For this guide, and for other information about political extremism visit the ecumenical resource website www.methodist.org.uk/extremism

G20 London Summit

Leaders of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the United Reformed Church and the Methodist Church have welcomed the communiqué from the G20 Summit. They expressed hope that this might represent the start of a process of reordering global economic relationships based on more just and sustainable principles. Read more about the position of the three churches at

www.urc.org.uk/news/2009/april/moral_values_critical_for_building_an_equitable_and_sustainable_global_economy

The three denominations were signatories to a submission by UK Churches' ahead of the London Summit on a sustainable and equitable reordering of global economic relationships.

[www.urc.org.uk/what_we_do/church_and_society/docs/Churches%20Position%20Paper%20on%20G20%20Summit%20\(final\).pdf](http://www.urc.org.uk/what_we_do/church_and_society/docs/Churches%20Position%20Paper%20on%20G20%20Summit%20(final).pdf)

Get Fair Constituency Lobby – Make your voice heard

The Get Fair campaign is coordinating a Constituency-based Lobby of MPs on 26-27 June, to ensure ending poverty in the UK is on the agenda of all major political parties.

Government statistics have revealed that 12.8 million people are living in poverty in the UK today – that's 1 in 5. It's time to **GET FAIR**.

For the lobby to be successful, **GET FAIR** needs to find people in as many parliamentary constituencies as possible who are willing to act as a local organiser. Could you help? It would involve bringing together people from a range of local organisations to plan the lobby jointly. **GET FAIR** have held a series of briefing events to provide activists with information – from detail on the campaign and the purpose of the lobby, to how to organise a delegation and put across an effective case to your MP.

Three more regional events are being planned. If you want to attend register by calling 0161 236 9321 or emailing info@getfair.org.uk. You can also find out more and sign up for monthly updates at www.getfair.org.uk.

Perth, Wednesday 22 April, 6.30-8.30pm
Cardiff, Friday 24 April, 7-9pm
London, Wednesday 29 April, 2-6pm

British and Irish Association for Practical Theology Annual Conference

BIAPT Annual Conference 14th – 16th July 2009, Ushaw College, Durham
'Public Theology: Dialogue in the Public Square'

Keynote Speakers: Elaine Graham, Stephen Lowe, Frances Ward, Wahida Shaffi, Peter Robinson and Bob Langley. For further information call 020 8265 9432 or visit www.biapt.org.uk

Issues in Human Embryology: Exploring Christian Understandings

Churches Together in Cumbria Social Responsibility Forum

Tuesday 28 April, 6.30-9.30 pm at Southey Street Methodist Church, Keswick CA12 4HH
Wednesday 29 April, 6.30-9.30 pm at St Thomas' Church, Kendal LA9 4QG

The events will begin with an accessible explanation of the underlying science concerning IVF choices and the use of human embryos in medical research. After different Christian ethical viewpoints have been presented, there will be opportunity to submit written questions to put to the panel in plenary.

Speakers: Dr Murdo Macdonald, Policy Officer, Church of Scotland Society, Religion and Technology Project
Professor David Jones, Professor of Bioethics, St Mary's College, Twickenham (Roman Catholic)
Revd Ruth Gee, Chair, 'Created in God's Image' Working Group (Baptist/Methodist/URC).
Chaired by the Very Revd Mark Boyling, Dean of Carlisle.

For further information, contact Helen Boothroyd (01768 550045; hbctic@tiscali.co.uk).

Strangers into Citizens - Day of Action and Celebration Monday 4 May in London

10.00 Free Church Service at Methodist Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH
11.30 Gather in Tothill Street to walk to Trafalgar Square
12.00 Strangers into Citizens Rally

Join the call for:

- a pathway to citizenship for migrants who have put down roots in the UK;
- a recognition that migrants remain vital to the UK economy and society, even in the downturn;
- an end to limbo for people fleeing persecution who have waited on a decision for many years.

See www.strangersintocitizens.org.uk for further details.

Contact

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