

### **URGENT: Climate Change Bill – TAKE ACTION NOW!**

The Climate Change Bill is currently being debated in Parliament. We welcome the principles of the Bill, but it is a long way from being perfect.

Please write to your MP to ask him or her to make sure that the Climate Change Bill is robust, meaningful and an effective tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We have produced a special briefing about the Bill that you can see at [www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/jpitenvironment.htm](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/jpitenvironment.htm)

### **Buy Less: Live More**

During Lent 2008 the Methodist Church is to provide a web based resource to encourage people to change their patterns of behavior by becoming less 'consumerist' and more generous and fulfilled: [www.buylesslivemore.org.uk](http://www.buylesslivemore.org.uk) will go online early in 2008.

There will be two different challenges on each day of Lent, around the two themes of 'Buy Less' and 'Live More'. The challenges will be available on the website, by e-mail subscription, and also through a Facebook group. People will be able to share their experiences online. To tie in with and promote 'Buy Less Live More' a special Lent 'credit card' will be produced. The idea is that people can put the cards in their wallets, perhaps covering up their real credit cards, as a reminder to 'think before you spend'. The cards will be available in packs of ten from mph in the New Year. They will be free, with a small charge for postage. To order call 01733 325002 or visit [www.mph.org.uk](http://www.mph.org.uk)

### **Transatlantic Slave Trade: An Apology**

Last month the Baptist Union Council of Great Britain unanimously agreed a statement apologising for the transatlantic slave trade following lengthy discussion and prayer.

It includes a call for reparative action: "We commit ourselves, in a true spirit of repentance, to take what we have learned from God in the Council and to share it widely in our Baptist community and beyond, looking for gospel ways by which we can turn the words and feelings we have expressed today into concrete actions and contribute to the prophetic work of God's coming Kingdom."

Read the full statement at [http://www.baptist.org.uk/news\\_media/latest\\_news/slave-trade.html](http://www.baptist.org.uk/news_media/latest_news/slave-trade.html)

### **11 Million Takeover Day**

On Friday 23 November pupils from St Mary's Bryanston Square Primary School took over Methodist Church House for the day as part of the 11 Million Takeover Day initiative run by the Children's Commissioner. You can see further information on the initiative at [www.11million.org.uk](http://www.11million.org.uk). The Joint Public Issues Team's new Methodist bosses decided on two topics – pollution and gun and knife crime – and produced a podcast, a webpage and wrote a letter to a government minister. Both of these pages and some pictures from the day can be seen at: [www.methodist.org.uk/takeover/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/takeover/) and the podcasts can be listened to at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openogod.webradio>

### **Opening Doors, Opening Hearts – Poverty and Homelessness Action Week**

23 January – 3 February 2008 is Poverty and Homelessness Action Week.

Housing Justice, Church Action on Poverty and other organisations have joined forces to run a national action week focussing on issues to do with poverty and homelessness. It is expected that over 100 'poverty hearings' will take place around the country.

Resources for churches, information on how to get involved, and details of the poverty hearings are available at [www.church-poverty.org.uk/event-items/poverty-and-homelessness-action-week-2008](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/event-items/poverty-and-homelessness-action-week-2008) and [www.housingjustice.org.uk/homelessness-sunday/phaw2008/phaw.htm](http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/homelessness-sunday/phaw2008/phaw.htm)

### **Centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

2008 will see 100 years of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. To mark this historic occasion, a special service of celebration and commitment will take place in Westminster Abbey on Friday 18 January at 5.00pm, and everyone is invited. If you would like to attend, please complete an online form before 3 January at <http://www.churches-together.net/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=98816> or call 020 7529 8131.

### **Churches' Refugee Network Annual Conference**

Save the date for the 2008 CRN Conference: Saturday 17 May at Carr's Lane URC, Birmingham. More information on bookings to follow in a later Joint Public Issues Team Newsletter, or contact us (see below).

### **Stoles from Mozambique**

Handmade, Fairtrade, colourful stoles from Mozambique available for £35 + p&p from Revd Kate Gray, World Church Advocate, URC North Western Synod ([minister@breadbreakers.co.uk](mailto:minister@breadbreakers.co.uk)). You can see some people modelling them from URC General Assembly 2007 at [www.worldchurch.blogspot.com](http://www.worldchurch.blogspot.com)

### **Fund4Darfur / Holocaust Memorial Day**

Fund4Darfur helps survivors of the Darfur crisis – both in the region and those in the UK facing destitution and the threat of return. 27 January is Holocaust Memorial Day, and the Fund4Darfur is using this day to raise awareness of the work it does and would welcome financial support. If you would like to donate money or find out more about promoting the Fund4Darfur, call 0870 0427 4444 or visit [www.fund4darfur.org](http://www.fund4darfur.org)

### **Care of Creation: Exploring the Christian approach to ecology and our interconnectedness with the whole of God's creation**

Wednesday 30 January, 10.30 am-3.30 pm at Katherine House, 26 Singleton Road, Salford, M7 4WL. Led by Mike Monaghan. For further details, email [khousefcj@hotmail.com](mailto:khousefcj@hotmail.com) or ring 0161 708 9744. Suggested donation £15. Tea/coffee included but please bring your own lunch.

### **Can religions ever be channels for peace - or - do we need religious disarmament?**

Christian Interfaith Practitioners' Association Annual Conference; Tuesday 20 - Thursday 22 May at Luther King House, Manchester. Cost: £130 (full board); £70 (day visitor); £10 REDUCTION IF BOOKED BEFORE 31 DECEMBER 2007. For further details contact David Jonathan - [jgrassroots@btconnect.com](mailto:jgrassroots@btconnect.com) - 01582 416946.

### **Just Church Programme now available**

How just is your church? Just Church is a new programme designed for churches and groups, to help you embed a concern for poverty and social justice in the life of your community.

The Just Church website has a number of resources for download and material to give you ideas. You can also purchase paper copies of individual modules or the whole programme for £15. For details see [www.justchurch.info](http://www.justchurch.info), or write to Just Church, Church Action on Poverty, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ.

### **Still Human, Still Here and Living Ghosts**

Still Human, Still Here, the campaign that supports destitute refused asylum seekers, is asking people to watch and share a short 11 minute film produced by Amnesty International UK. You can watch the film (flash version) here: [www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10398](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10398) or you can order a DVD copy from [Jan.Shaw@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:Jan.Shaw@amnesty.org.uk).

Living Ghosts is a related project run by Church Action on Poverty. They are currently protesting against measures proposed by the Government to restrict access to healthcare services to refused asylum seekers. For more details see [www.church-poverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts) and [www.medact.org](http://www.medact.org)

### **Contact**

If you would like to receive the Joint Public Issues Team Newsletter, or would like to publicise an event or project, please contact Wendy Cooper, e-mail - [wendy.cooper@urc.org.uk](mailto:wendy.cooper@urc.org.uk) Telephone - 020 7916 8632 Address - 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT