

### **Church Leaders' delegation to the Party Conferences**

Leaders from the Baptist Union, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church will join with leaders from the Salvation Army in a delegation to the Conferences of the three main political parties in September and October. The group will attend conference sessions and meet with a number of MPs. With a General Election less than a year away, it is an exciting time for politics.

A key element of the visits is the breakfast meetings with the Christian groupings within each party which members of local churches are welcome to attend:

#### *Liberal Democrat - Tuesday 22 September*

7.45-9.00 am at Richmond Hill St Andrew's United Reformed Church, 8 St Stephen's Road, Bournemouth BH2 6JJ

Colin Breed MP will speak about the economic crisis.

#### *Labour - Tuesday 29 September*

8.00-9.00 am at St Paul's Church, West Street, Brighton BN1 2RG

The event will be themed around the economy and the speaker will be Treasury Minister Stephen Timms MP.

#### *Conservative - Tuesday 6 October*

7.45-9.00 am at Rusko Suite, St James' Buildings, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EJ.

The event will be a time of reflection and prayer, led by Salvation Army Commissioner Elizabeth Matear (Moderator of the Free Churches Group - Churches Together in England) and David Burrowes MP.

### **'Hope in God's Future'**

The major report exploring theology and climate change will very shortly be available as an attractive, full-colour booklet, incorporating a study guide. £5.00 for single copies; £45.00 for packs of 10. Order from Methodist Publishing (<http://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk>; 01733 235962).

### **UN International Day of Prayer for Peace - Sunday 20 September**

As publicised in the previous Newsletter, resources from the Joint Public Issues Team are now available for churches to use on Sunday 20 September to mark the UN International Day of Prayer for Peace (21 September).

<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/peacemakingsunday/>

### **Climate Change Day of Prayer - Sunday 4 October**

Join with Christians of all denominations to observe Sunday 4 October as a Day of Prayer to reflect on the seriousness and urgency of our global situation. 4 October is St Francis' Day and also marks the culmination of 'Creation Time'. The Day of Prayer is an initiative of the

Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Resources include prayers and readings, magazine inserts and information and ideas to help your planning. <http://www.operationnoah.org/resources/groups/day-prayer>

### **'Voting With our Feet' - the challenge of the politics of the far right and the churches**

**Monday 5 October**, 11.00 - 4.00 at Westminster Cathedral Hall, London SW1P 1QJ. Conference arranged by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland to reflect on the churches' response to the politics of the far right. Main speakers: John Cruddas MP and Revd Arlington Trotman (Moderator, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe). Cost £10 including lunch. Further details at <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/407> or email [victoria.akinyode@ctbi.org.uk](mailto:victoria.akinyode@ctbi.org.uk) to register.

### **The Climate Crisis - The Christian Response**

2009 Operation Noah Lecture by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams. **Tuesday 13 October**, 6.45 for 7.00 - 9.00 pm at Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge. The lecture takes place just seven weeks before the vital UN climate summit in Copenhagen and will set the scriptural and theological agenda. To reserve a place, email [campaigns@operationnoah.org](mailto:campaigns@operationnoah.org), ring 020 7324 4761 or write to Operation Noah, The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT. Further information at <http://www.operationnoah.org>.

### **Loss of Innocence - Gaza children's art exhibition**

**25 September - 6 October** at The Well, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. The exhibition is sponsored by UNESCO and supported by Friends of Sabeel UK. Rod Cox collated the artwork during his visit to Gaza this spring after participating in the convoy.

### **'Hold Fast to Hope' - Prisons Week 2009: 15 - 21 November**

Prisons Week was established to pray for and raise awareness of all affected by the reality of prisons: victims, prisoners, families, prison staff, the wider community and the justice system. Go to the website (<http://www.prisonsworld.org>) to download the prayer leaflet or order in larger quantities, for further resources for study and worship, and ideas for activities to highlight the issues.

### **A World in Waiting ... Advent hope in an economic crisis**

Following the global financial crisis, hope is in short supply and needs to be rebuilt. And that is what Advent is all about - a season to take seriously the plight of 'those who dwell in darkness' but also to awaken a longing and commitment to a better and different kind of world. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland is producing web-based resources including reflections, liturgical ideas, prayers and pointers to action. Available shortly to download at <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/advent>.

### **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) ; phone - 020 7916 8632; address - 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT*