

In Touch



A new year with God

And so the calendar year begins again, a time to take a pause, look back at the year that's gone and look forward to the coming year.

I pray that during the coming year the joy experienced by the three kings at Epiphany might overflow into all Federation churches and that through the power of the Holy Spirit each church might become a real gift for their communities .



Dates For Your Diary

18th-19th January Council Meeting, Nottingham

18th-25th January Week of Prayer for Christian unity
<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2018/>

10th February Racial Justice Sunday
<https://ctbi.org.uk/rjsunday/>

6th March Beginning of Lent <https://ctbi.org.uk/lent/>

13th-14th March Christian Resources Exhibition, Manchester

23rd March Church Support Committee, Nottingham

25th February - Fair Trade Fortnight
 10th March <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

10th-12th May Annual Assembly, Dundee

Christian Aid Appeal

Christian Aid has a long and strong link with churches in the Congregational Federation. Through Christian Aid's Community Partnerships programme in recent years we have supported appeals in the Dominican Republic (Onè Respé), Nicaragua, Ethiopia, El Salvador and Honduras.

We are pleased to announce our new Christian Aid appeal, with a focus on Syria, and in particular the challenges faced by young people to receive education and training. Christian Aid has asked churches in the Federation to help and we have pledged to raise £12,000 by 2020.

Thanks to match funding from the European Union every pound we raise will be matched by a further £9 from the EU. This means that if we can raise £12,000, this will be worth an amazing £120,000 to Christian Aid and its partners. To support our fundraising, Christian Aid will be sending project information and updates over the next couple of years. The first of these is the poster which can be downloaded from <https://www.congregational.org.uk/global-mission/christian-aid-syria>

Breathing Space

A day to be—not to do!
 Would you like us to come and set up a Breathing Space for you at your church? Contact us for the details.

Assembly

The 2019 Assembly will be held in Dundee, over the weekend of Friday 10th, Saturday 11th, and Sunday 12th May. More information will become available on our website, <https://www.congregational.org.uk/national-assembly/assembly-main>

Christian Resources Exhibition North

CRE North 2019, Event City, Manchester
 13 March 10am-8pm
 14 March 10am-4pm
<http://creonline.co.uk/cre-north-2019>
 for more information

Thy Kingdom Come

May 30th - June 9th 2019
 Thy Kingdom Come invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. This is an international and ecumenical call to prayer
<https://www.thykingdomcome.global>
 Resources are available for churches to be part of Thy Kingdom Come. Over the coming months we will be signposting our churches towards the possibilities available, including prayer rooms, 24/7 prayer and street prayer.

Children and Youth

Remember, you can still volunteer for The Working Group for Children and Youth Strategy by contacting us - support@congregational.org.uk

Congregational Federation Dairy 2019

<https://www.congregational.org.uk/events-in-2019/events-in-2019>

Fair Trade Fortnight

25th February - 10th March
 'Fairtrade Fortnight will focus on cocoa. Farmers of this iconic Fairtrade product have seen prices crash to crisis levels, particularly in West Africa where most cocoa is grown. The situation highlights in stark terms the scandal of unfair trade. Many farmers - both men and women - are underpaid and exploited. That means they can't earn enough for the basics many of us take for granted, including food, education and housing, because they don't earn a living income.' www.fairtrade.org.uk
 The Fair Trade website has a wide range of material available to help your church with a special event during Fair Trade Week, including an action guide, events pack, posters and digital campaign resources.

Practical Theology

Have you made a New Year's resolution? Have you thought about challenging yourself in the year ahead? Why not browse our prospectus and see if taking a course in Practical Theology is for you? The prospectus for 2019 is online now! www.congregational.org.uk/downloads/learning-and-development/Documents/mini-prospectus-2019-20-final.pdf
 The closing date for application is 31st May.