



Churches Together Around Ludlow

Newsletter

Summer 2015

Contents

Thoughts from Tim Coles, CTAL Chair 2014-15	1
Ministers on the move	2
A word from Frances Biseker.....	3
Proposed Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee	3
CTAL New Initiatives Fund	7
Contemplative prayer	8
Parade of horse	9
The Filling Station	11
Ludlow Campaign for Fairness: challenging the 'dominant narrative'	12

Thoughts from Tim Coles, CTAL Chair 2014-15

The old joke asks: 'how many Christians does it take to change a light bulb?' The response: 'CHANGE????' Many people find change difficult, and I suspect that it doesn't get any easier, the older you get! Another famous saying says that besides death and having to pay tax, change is the only thing in life that you can be certain of! If that is true, then we'd better get used to the idea that change is inevitable. Of course, for most people change is fine, so long as it's not them that is having to do it, but that ostrich approach is unlikely to be very helpful either. Just recently I have had to make changes to my own diary and modus operandi as a result of medical advice. The changes have not been easy as I have enjoyed all of the things I have been doing, but the reality is that I cannot have health and strength and the full diary that I had been running. Choices have to be made, and change comes.

Two ministers are moving on from their time at Ludlow, and the truth is that change can be difficult, unless you put trust in someone to go through the process with you. In Jeremiah 29:11 the prophet who is there to prepare God's people for impending disaster says: 'For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.' In their case it would take seventy years for the disaster to end and the good to come, but it did come! That teaches me that our God is a God of movement, and a God of hope in the midst of uncertainty. Solomon wrote this proverb (Proverbs 3: 5-6, Living Bible): If you want favour with both

God and man, and a reputation for good judgment and common sense, then trust the Lord completely; don't ever trust yourself. In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you, and crown your efforts with success. Change is inevitable and often unsettling, but God is constant and faithful throughout. As a Christian I learn to submit my way to him and let his peace guide me through the turmoil. (See Colossians 3: 15.) I cannot guarantee that you will be exempt from change, but I can guarantee that if you seek God as you go through it, that he will be with you, and bring you through to the other side which you will discover is the best for your life.

As you read the newsletter, pray for those folks affected by changes, or those who are seeking to bring in new ways of working. Ask the Lord to be with them, to strengthen them for the journey, and to give them hope for the future. Pray too for all those who work tirelessly for CTAL, that they will have wisdom and courage as they bring direction (and change) which may affect us all!

Ministers on the move

The CTAL Executive Committee wishes to put on record their thanks to two ministers who will shortly be moving on from Ludlow. Ladies first: Frances Biseker will be leaving Broad Street Methodist Church at the end of July to take up a part-time position in Leominster alongside her husband John. They will work together on John's current appointment which includes Leominster Methodist Church and eight smaller chapels around Leominster and down in the Golden Valley south of Hereford. Frances has been in Ludlow for five years, and during that time worked as CTAL Chair. She has led the March of Witness at Easter, and preached in the square, supported the CTAL monthly lunches, worked with Experience Easter, the Living Nativity, developed an outreach to care homes, supported Wesley's and its gifts into the community and has been faithful in support of all of CTAL's work. We happily wish her well for the future. Frances will be replaced from 1 September by Rev Kim Stillwell and we look forward to getting to know him and his family in due course.

Also after five years in Ludlow, Colin Williams is leaving to become Archdeacon of Germany and of Northern Europe and Archdeacon of the East (with a diocesan brief for Mission). He will be working for and within the Church of England's Diocese in Europe, to support and encourage the work of the 72 Church of England chaplaincies within Germany, Scandinavia, Central Europe, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Armenia. Colin too has contributed to the March of Witness, been instrumental as the face of the church at community level, particularly organising civic services at key points through the year, along with recently ably chairing the hustings event for prospective parliamentary candidates. We recognise that he has had a big role with seventeen churches to look after within the Team Ministry as well as overseeing changes to the St Laurence's building and having School Governor and PCC duties. Colin will be leaving at the end of July and we do of course wish him well too. Some of us will be looking out for his appearance on Mastermind and offer support for greatness in that forum also. Colin's replacement appointment may take longer to put in place than Frances', but we offer our prayers to the Anglican family at this time, and will assure the new appointment of our support when they arrive.

A word from Frances Biseker

Unbelievably my time at Ludlow has come to an end, and inevitably I'm reflecting on how quickly those years have gone. I won't say it's anything to do with my time here, but I do have a few more grey hairs than when I first came!

This has been a very special time for me, not least ecumenically. I treasure the friendships that I've made across all our churches and feel hugely enriched by it. I have felt so at home in all our churches and have never been made to feel a stranger or outsider. But it's not just the friendships I shall always value. Together the churches in and around Ludlow are doing a really valuable and important work in serving some of the most vulnerable in our communities, whether it's collecting for the Food Bank, toiletries for the Women's Refuge, or practically supporting those in a crisis. I sense that the wider community really values the service our churches together offer, and that the message we try and share has relevance for many people.

I am delighted that Rev Kim Stillwell and his family will be coming to Ludlow in the summer, and I know that he will find great blessing as I have done in our ecumenical friendships. So thank you for making these years special ones for me and remember, I am still only in Leominster so my ears will be flapping to hear what is going on!

Proposed Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee

At the 2014 AGM it was decided that the constitution should be redrafted. The Executive Committee has instead decided to propose Terms of Reference, and churches are asked to comment on these by 3 September. For the convenience of our readers, here is the text to be considered:

*CHURCHES TOGETHER AROUND LUDLOW (CTAL)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE – DRAFT*

PURPOSE

Introduction – We are the Executive Committee of Churches Together Around Ludlow (CTAL) and our members are representatives of the member/associate Churches who are signatories of the CTAL Covenant. The Executive Committee (usually known as the 'Exec') operates under the CTAL constitution and these Terms of Reference operate within the structure outlined within that document. CTAL member/associate churches are: The Ludlow Team Ministry (Anglican), St Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Ludlow Methodist Church, Ludlow Baptist Church, Living Waters Church, Ludlow Quaker Meeting and Ludlow Elim Christian Fellowship. The expression 'the Churches' includes all those individual churches that are component parts of the list above, e.g. St Laurence's, St Giles', St John's and the other member churches of the Ludlow team Ministry.

1. We are agreed that the 'Aims of CTAL', as recognised by the Constitution are:
 - a. "To enable the Churches, as pilgrims together, to develop growing relationships, to seek a common mind, and to make decisions together.

- b. To encourage each of the Churches to share with others the treasures of its tradition.
- c. To encourage Churches to worship, pray and reflect together on the nature and purposes of the Church.
- d. To enable the Churches to respond together to the needs of society, and to witness together to the good news of the Gospel.
- e. To enable the Churches to live, serve and evangelise together and to take further steps towards fuller unity.”

2. For it to be able to achieve its purpose and further its aims, the Executive Committee should:

- a. Strive to represent fairly all the member Churches.
- b. Show understanding and respect for the heritage, aims, priorities and activities of the various Churches and their congregations whilst,
- c. Working to achieve consensus on issues affecting more than one of the Churches, and,
- d. Maintain contact to record and disseminate all that is going on within and around the Churches in the Ludlow area.
- e. Take ownership of and be actively involved in all that is being done in the name of CTAL.
- f. Respond in a timely and effective manner to new opportunities and challenges.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The Officers elected at the AGM:

- a. Chair.
- b. Deputy Chair.
- c. Treasurer.
- d. Administrator.

4. Any co-opted Officers, e.g. Minutes Secretary (non-voting), Inter-faith Officer, Churches Together in Shropshire Representative etc.

5. Ex officio representatives of each of the following Churches:

- a. The Rector of Ludlow and a nominated clergy deputy.
- b. One of the Churchwardens/Deputy Churchwardens of each of the three Anglican churches in the town.
- c. The Priest in Charge of the Roman Catholic Church.
- d. The Minister in Charge of each of the Methodist, Baptist, Elim and Living Waters Churches.
- e. Two nominated representatives of Ludlow Quaker Meeting.

6. In addition to the above, a second representative of each of the Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Elim and Living Waters Churches (unless one of the elected officers can fill this post).

7. Total membership will therefore be between 16 and 20 plus any co-opted members.

MEETINGS

8. Meetings will be held at least quarterly, normally in December, February, May and September, but may be held more frequently. Meetings of the Officers may be held between Exec meetings.

9. Quorum – not less than eight members including Officers and not less than five of the churches represented. If at a particular meeting there is urgent business that needs to be conducted in the absence of a quorum, those present may agree a proposal to be circulated by email under 14 below.

10. Paperwork – The Administrator will circulate a draft agenda at least ten days before the meeting and the final agenda and any attachments at least five days before the meeting. The Minutes Secretary will send the draft minutes to the Chair for approval at most 14 days after the meeting. The Administrator will circulate the approved minutes as soon as possible thereafter.

11. Voting – The Chair will aim to seek consensus on all issues. If a consensus is unachievable, there will be a vote by show of hands. A minimum of 75% support (of all voting members present including the Chair) is required for a motion to be passed.

12. Out of Committee Procedures – Between meetings of the Exec, where an issue lies outside the scope of the Officers' delegated powers or the Chair believes that a wider discussion is required, either the Chair can call an extraordinary meeting or, in exceptional circumstances if time is short, he/she can authorise the Administrator to circulate the details by email and call for an email vote. In the latter case a 75% majority is required of those who respond within the designated time.

13. CTAL is a group with a volunteer executive and therefore it has only limited time to 'hands on' manage activities and events, but we can provide a structure that can support church related activities. Organisers of activities conducted under the CTAL 'umbrella' should be regularly invited to Exec meetings to report on their activities and discuss future plans. Examples include:

- a. Christian Aid activities (independent committee).
- b. Traidcraft activities (independent committee).
- c. Inter-faith activities (Volunteer Officer).
- d. Food bank (managed by the Baptist Church).
- e. No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) (managed by Tenbury NILS).
- f. Lent Groups.
- g. CTAL lunches.
- h. Schools outreach activities.
- i. Wesley's (independent management committee).
- j. Ludlow Under Pressure Monitoring Group (subcommittee of CTAL).
- k. Hands Together Ludlow (moving towards autonomous status).
- l. Seasonal activities such as the Christmas lunch and the Living Nativity.

14. CTAL has an important role to play in community life. For it to maintain its reputation we must use its name properly in regard to the media and in other situations involving the 'public face' of CTAL. The natural spokesperson (in speaking to the press etc) for

CTAL Executive Committee would usually be the Chair or, in their absence, a delegated member of the officer group should deputise. Other Executive members, and those speaking for subgroups in CTAL, should be careful to qualify their position and area of contribution. They are encouraged to refer to the Chair before making any public statement which may be purported to represent the views of the CTAL Exec.

FINANCES

15. The financial year is from 1 November to 31 October. The AGM shall be held as soon as possible thereafter (bearing in mind the need for the accounts to be independently examined).

16. The Exec is responsible for proposing to the AGM the level of annual subscription.

17. The Exec is responsible for approving the Treasurer's budget proposals for the following year before the current year end (normally at the September meeting).

18. The Exec is responsible for approving the accounts before they are submitted to the Independent Examiner, presenting the independently examined accounts to the AGM and recommending an Independent Examiner to the AGM.

19. Cheque Signatories – Cheques must be signed by any two of the four Officers. Cheques for the refund of Officers' expenses must be signed by two signatories other than the recipient.

20. Delegations – Any two Officers together have delegated power to authorise general expenditure of up to £100 on any one unbudgeted event or activity. These authorisations must be declared and minuted at the next Exec. The Exec may authorise expenditure of up to £500 in or, exceptionally, out of committee. Any expenditure over £500 must be approved as part of the annual budget by the AGM or at a separate Extraordinary General Meeting. In addition to these delegations, the Treasurer may make any payments specifically included in the approved annual budget (e.g. insurance etc. costs).

21. New Initiatives – The New Initiatives Fund is restricted to the support of CTAL or member Church initiatives conceived in the current or previous financial year. Exceptionally, the Exec may extend this support to a third year. The Exec may allocate grants of up to £1,000 from the fund in or, exceptionally, out of committee, in response to a written application and business case. The Exec is responsible for reporting to the AGM on its use of the New Initiatives Fund and for canvassing for new ideas for new initiatives to support.

REVIEW

23. These Terms of Reference should be reviewed on a five yearly basis alongside the Constitution. The next review of the latter is due in 2018.

Mike Beazley
CTAL Administrator

CTAL New Initiatives Fund

The thinking behind CTAL's New Initiatives Fund goes back to 2006, when it was proposed that we should seek to raise a modest ring-fenced amount that could be made available at short notice to pump-prime innovative ecumenical action. Such activity would be in response to new needs or opportunities for witness, awareness-raising or social action.

The concept implied that the specific purposes would not be too closely defined in advance, as the whole idea was to have modest resources available for swift response to unexpected opportunities. On the other hand, it was proposed that any grants should be partial rather than full, in response to proposals coming from members within the CTAL network, and subject to the support of a majority of the full membership of the CTAL Executive.

Initial small donations came from the Catholic, Elim and Methodist churches to establish the fund, which then became the vehicle to absorb funding for an event called the Life Exhibition (aimed at local schools) and a regular weekend Saints Alive programme (aimed at local youngsters). These two initiatives attracted substantial funding from Living Waters, the Baptists, St Giles and Elim, with additional major grants from the Bishop of Hereford and the Richards Castle Educational Charity. The largest amount came when Wesley's Café volunteers donated a substantial sum to the New Initiatives Fund from their operating surplus. Money was also allocated to buy public address equipment and a banner for outdoor events, and towards costs of the Methodists' summer holiday club.

In 2008 new income came with small donations from the Catholics, Quakers and Methodists, plus a further major gifts from Wesley's in both years. Support continued for the Saints Alive programme until it was discontinued at the end of the year. Money was spent on printing and distributing information leaflets about the churches in and around Ludlow, and for Back-to-Church Sunday. A large collection of Christian books was purchased for Ludlow Library. Funding was passed to the Baptists to assist their sports support visit to Guyana. Smaller sums were spent on publicity and food hygiene training to re-launch the Ludlow Outreach programme of suppers and lectures, and to meet costs in mounting the Hope for the Palestinians? exhibition during the Ludlow Festival.

The Wesley's' café volunteers continued to make an annual donation of 10% of their project's net income. The ecumenical Ludlow Options team was helped with the cost of specialised training in youth relationships counselling, and the Methodists received a grant for an embroidery exhibition during the Ludlow Festival on the theme of creation and the environment. The Acts 2 team was helped with costs of a new schools-related programme called Easter Experience, and a grant was made to the Methodists to support the Marches Agricultural Chaplaincy project.

By mid-2013 the Fund had received special donations from the Anglican and Methodist churches for support of practical initiatives in response to needs identified in CTAL's 2012 *Ludlow Under Pressure* report. Financial support was given to the St Laurence's Young at Art exhibition, and for sponsorship of church members who participated in the Rotary Club's Ludlow Cares fund-raising sleep-out – which in turn encouraged the Rotarians to make a major donation to the local Fuel Poverty Fund managed by the Baptist Church.

Further funding was provided in support of Acts 2 initiatives and the Christmas Living Nativity witness, and to promote Messy Church and HOPE14 events. The Fund met the costs of a meeting to explore the idea of establishing a Street Pastors scheme in Ludlow, and provided pump-priming support for the new Hands Together Ludlow project.

Laurence Taylor, CTAL Treasurer

Contemplative prayer

*The contemplative life has to do with the desire to seek stillness
amid the rush of life;
To find silence amid noise;
To listen amid the clamour to speak;
To deepen the internal amid the purely external;
To search for God amid the busy-ness.
Contemplative prayer is the expression of that desire.*

What is contemplative prayer?

Contemplative prayer has been described as waiting upon God; listening for God; opening ourselves to God; responding to the invitation to meet God in silent awareness. Perhaps the best description is prayer of the heart.

All prayer is a response to God's initiative. We may think the initiative is ours, but it is God who makes the first move; an invitation to which we respond.

We are often so busy, so wordy and, if we are honest, so self-centred in our praying that God can't get a word in edgeways. When we realise this we start to incorporate silence into our prayers, until it undergirds our whole prayer life – which is life itself. Life and prayer were inseparable to Jesus. They can be so for us.

So we come to contemplative, wordless prayer: prayer of the heart. Why? Because God is God. We need no other reason. We do not embark on contemplative prayer to experience God; to have holy feelings; to advance in prayer; or to lead a better life. Some or all of these things may happen. But when we come to God in silence and stillness we lay aside all else. We are available, open and receptive, for God to do as he wills. We just are with God in silence and stillness, because God is.

Preparing to pray contemplatively

When we pray we bring our whole selves to God – body, mind and spirit. First we need to find a place and a time that suits us. The place should be quiet and comfortable free from distractions. Ideally we should choose a time when we are reasonably alert and able to relax. It is worth experimenting to find a posture that is comfortable for being still.

Contemplative living

Our concentrated times of silent prayer can and should spill over into the rest of the day. However busy we are there are always spaces; waiting for the kettle to boil, waiting for

a bus, walking to the shops. We can use these times to remember that we are always in the presence of God, and simply be in that presence.

In other words we are learning to see God in every thing, every event, every person. This very process will stir us to take action in the face of need, injustice or oppression – just as Christ was stirred to action. Contemplative prayer helps us to engage with the world, not to escape it.

Contemplative Prayer Group

Belonging to a group of people who meet regularly to pray in silent contemplation can be a great help and encouragement. We do not feel isolated. In Ludlow there is a contemplative prayer group that meets weekly, on Wednesday mornings at 11am, for 30mins silent prayer. We are an ecumenical group and welcome all.

If you are interested in coming along to the Ludlow group or finding out more about contemplative prayer please contact Pat Helm 01584 318169 or Helen Blyth 01584 875041

There is nothing in all the universe so much like God as silence.
Meister Eckhart, 14th-century German theologian and mystic

A prayer for stillness

*God of stillness and creative action
Help us find space for quietness today,
That we may live creatively,
Discover the inner meaning of silence
And learn the wisdom that heals the world.
Send peace and joy to each quiet place,
To all who are waiting and listening.
May your still small voice be heard
Through Christ in the love of the Spirit.
Amen*

The Retreat Association

Much of the content of this article is adapted from julianmeetings.org.

Pat Helm and Helen Blyth

Parade of horse

On Sunday 26 July Ludlow Town Council and the Ludlow Hunt are organizing a 'Parade of horse' through Ludlow. This event will commemorate the role of the horse in the First World War and give remembrance of this animal's relationship to man and the suffering that war brought to so many. In the first two weeks of the war some 140,000 horses were requisitioned for war service and locally a government depot was set up at Craven

Arms to requisition, assess and assign horses to military need. The removal of horses from Ludlow and South Shropshire was a notable feature of that time.



discovershropshire.org.uk/html/resource/resource:20070323114913 – Courtesy of Shropshire Regimental Museum

Last year we came upon a picture showing the South Shropshire Yeomanry leaving Ludlow to go to war in August 1914. Our modest venture tries to commemorate this event when the horses of today will follow their predecessors on the same route from the town centre. The parade will be led by a mounted Officer of the Royal Mercian and Lancashire Yeomanry (the successor body to the Shropshire Yeomanry) and will consist of mounted members of the hunt – they will forsake the huntsman's jacket for a tweed one. They are not commemorating hunting, but the horse – a decision made by the Hunt themselves.

The horse was the backbone of the British Army – used for cavalry work, moving artillery, transport and communication duties. Even with the coming of the motor vehicle they were in massive use and at their peak in 1917 there were 368,000 horses and 82,000 mules deployed on the Western Front. In the course of the war, it is estimated, some 3 million were killed.

And this sad fact is the premise behind one of two poems we will use in the short ceremony to be held at Castle Gardens. The work by Steven Cooke is called *War horse* and, like others of this type, celebrates the bond between horse and rider, its loyalty and bravery, but also the betrayal of the animal by man in this situation.

The parade will start at the Ludlow Cattle Market on Overton Road and make its way via Ludford Bridge and up Broad Street, along High Street, arriving at the Events Square/Castle Gardens (at 2.30) where the ceremony will take place with the Mayor Cllr Paul Draper and the Rector of Ludlow, Ven. Colin Williams. The parade will leave the Events Square at 3.00 and return to Overton Road.

The organisers are grateful to McCartney's for their kind assistance in this event.

The Filling Station

In March 2014 three filling stations opened in South Shropshire – just when many rural ones were closing down! However, these particular ones will not fill motorists' petrol tanks, since they are designed for a spiritual top-up!

Filling Stations are part of a growing national network of over sixty monthly meetings (with some abroad) designed to encourage local Christians. They are not a new church and do not meet on a Sunday. These three Filling Stations meet in a village hall (Leebotwood, 1st Wednesday), a school (Stokesay in Craven Arms, 3rd Thursday) and a community centre (Newcastle-on-Clun, 2nd Friday). A fourth has started in Knockin, Oswestry; another is expected near Tenbury Wells. Decisions about organisation and venues (preferably a comfortable, well-equipped and easily accessible building) came about as a result of God's leading through prayer. When Filling Stations founder Rev. Richard Fothergill came up from Bath for a planning meeting in Clun in November 2013, he arrived having just obtained the Bishop of Ludlow's personal blessing!

Not only does FS invite Christians of all denominations to its gatherings, but it welcomes the seeker – or simply the curious – to what is intended to be a spiritual feast conducted in a relaxed café-style atmosphere. It begins, of course, with a welcoming beverage and home-made cake. After a time of worship in music (hymns and songs), someone shares what God has been doing in their life, before our invited guest speaks on some relevant Christian subject. FS have their own list of recommended speakers, who often travel long distances to meetings, but we are now also inviting local speakers, including the Bishop of Ludlow. Prayer is available afterwards for any personal needs (we have seen some healings), finishing with another cuppa for those still thirsty for more!

More than just encouraging isolated, and sometimes 'churchless', Christians, FS brings local churches together for fellowship as one Body in Christ, working to combine their resources, talents and giftings, i.e. as leaders, musicians, caterers, bakers, administrators, writers, sound technicians, and those with artistic flair. Each can help to build up Christians in their faith and feed back blessing into their churches. FS offers opportunities to distribute Bibles and Christian literature and is mildly evangelistic (scores have come to faith through FSs).

FS is probably one of the best things now happening spiritually, certainly in rural areas. There are new faces every month (some from quite a distance); some disappear, but return later, while others would not miss one meeting! But what can Filling Station do for a town like Ludlow? While most are based in villages, some are actually in towns like Cirencester, Basingstoke and Henley-on-Thames and will still perform the important task of bringing believers together for encouragement and for reaching out to the community. Perhaps our Bridgnorth friends will shortly tell us when their FS, Shropshire's fifth, has settled in.

Anyone wanting to know more can log on to thefillingstation.org.uk, where meeting details of each group are given. Although I live outside Ludlow, I would be interested to hear from anyone who feels they might like to explore the possibility of starting one in or around Ludlow (town support is most welcome in villages). FS staff are always willing to

come and give every assistance they can to help them in that journey, plus provide starter packs, posters, invitations, etc. for meetings; but, from our own experience, we know that the greater the prayer and preparation, the more fruitful will be the result.

Clifford R. Webb, 01547 540445, clifford.edith@btinternet.com

Ludlow Campaign for Fairness: challenging the 'dominant narrative'

Since the crash of 2008, the principal political story in the UK has been the need for austerity. The last coalition government made it its main theme, the Labour opposition adopted a milder but similar version, and David Cameron has now promised to press ahead with heavy cuts while not raising taxes. George Osborne proclaimed that paying off the deficit is essential and that "we are all in this together"; but while top-rate tax payers got a tax bonus, the cuts so far have impacted overwhelmingly on the poorer members of society and on public services – with more to come. At the same time inequality in the UK continues to grow, with all its serious social consequences; London is now the millionaire capital of Europe. But there is another version of events which tells quite a different story – that the 2008 crash was not caused by Labour, and that it did *not* make austerity and Cameron's cuts inevitable. The deficit is now actually smaller than it was in the days of Labour's Clement Attlee who created the NHS and of Tory Harold Macmillan who told us we'd "never had it so good"; and the current Tory programme is driven by ideological choices to shrink the state, not by practical necessity. (See the comments by Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen at newstatesman.com/politics/2015/06/amartya-sen-economic-consequences-austerity).

In the election the anti-austerity view was put forward by the SNP and the Greens, but largely went unheard. Ludlow Campaign for Fairness (LCF) was started last year by a group of people in the town who feel that it's time things changed and that the dominant austerity narrative should be challenged. LCF is not focussed on events in Ludlow. Our home town is also beginning to feel the effects of the cuts and we want to question them too – we have recently challenged Shropshire Council over its systematic privatisation of services in the county. But we want especially to raise awareness of the national issues at stake, to bring a wider picture into the public domain, and to encourage discussion and debate. We are not party-political and have no party affiliation; we are not tied to any one church, though many of us are church-goers; but we do not believe that the unfettered market and a low and lax tax regime are the best answer to Britain's problems, or that making 'the state' smaller will necessarily bring greater national prosperity and equality. We are also concerned about issues of democracy, accountability and transparency when more and more social provision is being privatised, and the government claims a mandate for this despite the fact that more than 6 out of every 10 voters voted against the Conservatives.

In order to spread information and open debate we have sponsored a series of public lectures in Ludlow by specialist and expert speakers. Professor Peter Pietroni spoke about damage being done to the NHS. Sue Carter of the Scott Bader Commonwealth described the fascinating alternative business model of Erich Scott Bader and his son Godric, chemicals entrepreneurs who outdid John Lewis by giving the whole Scott Bader company to its employees – the firm is now a very successful and very socially equal multinational maker of polymers. David Marquand, historian and former politician, has

talked about the way in which Britain is becoming marketised, 'Mammon's kingdom'. On 19 June another historian, the former Reith Lecturer Geoffrey Hosking, asked the question 'Is there a crisis of trust?' in society: his conclusion emphasised that in the long run free markets and democracy are incompatible.

Further down the line Richard Murphy, a high-profile taxation specialist, will be analysing the national and international tax and tax evasion system – the British Treasury has just rejected EU proposals for curbing tax evasion. If you want further information, please look at our Facebook page, or visit our website (out there with basic information but still being developed) at ludlowfairness.wordpress.com/about/.

Sandy Robertson, Chair, Ludlow Campaign for Fairness

Member churches

Ludlow Baptist Church	Mr Simon Lambourne 01584 874076	LudlowBaptistChurch.co.uk
St Laurence's, St John's, St Giles', Church of England	Venerable Colin Williams 01584 872001	stlaurences.org.uk
Living Waters Church	Mr Andy Summers 01584 879297	lwludlow.org.uk
Ludlow Methodist Church	Rev. Frances Biseker 01568 612406	ludlowmethodistchurch.org
Ludlow Quaker Meeting	Cynthia Prior and Colin Sheward (CTAL representatives) 0870 7656 980	ludlowquakers.co.uk
St Peter's Roman Catholic Church	Canon Christopher Walsh 01584 872906	stpetersludlow.org

Associated church

Elim Christian Fellowship	Rev. Tim Coles 07734 106275	ludlowelim.co.uk
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Editor's note: The newsletter welcomes expression of a range of views. Those expressed in articles are those of the contributors. They do not necessarily represent the position of CTAL.

For a large-print newsletter please use the version on the CTAL website, or for a printed copy contact any of the churches.

Contributions for the next newsletter should be sent to the editor, Wendy Bartlett, at wendy.bartlett@smquakers.org.uk (please note changed email address). The last date for items for the next issue is 14 October 2015.

Sustainability: Please print out only as much of the newsletter as you need. On the Print menu state which page you want. Your printer details will say if you can use the back of already-used paper. And using the Fast Normal or Fast printing settings on the printer Properties menu will save ink.

To make it easier to read the newsletter on screen, you can change the font size: if you are using Word, click on View, then Zoom, then type the size you need (eg 125%) into the box.