

The current Presidents of **Churches together in England** have signed a Personal Covenant . An extract reads:

'Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all'.
(Ephesians 4:3-6)

We **believe** in the Triune God; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because we confess 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church' our paramount ecumenical task is to show forth this unity, which is always a gift of God. Jesus Christ revealed to us on the cross his love and the mystery of reconciliation; as his followers, we intend to do our utmost to overcome the problems and obstacles that still divide the churches.

We **rejoice** that the Churches in England are steadily growing closer in mutual trust and respect. As Presidents of Churches Together in England we have in common many joys and hopes, and we have much to offer and receive from one another in the rich diversity of our traditions.

We **believe** that in our common pilgrimage we are being led by the Holy Spirit, and that God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is calling us to deeper unity and to a greater sharing of our mission in his world.

We therefore **commit** ourselves

- ◆ To persevere in seeking common understanding of God's message of salvation in the Gospel;
- ◆ in the power of the Holy Spirit, to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith, expressed in common discipleship, worship, witness and service.

Signed by -

- The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury
- The Most Revd Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster
- The Revd Michael Heaney, Moderator of the Free Churches Group
- The Rt Revd Jana Jeruma-Grinberga of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain.

(For more details go to www.cte.org.uk.)

Mrs Liz Overthrow (Secretary to WCT)
19 Bratton Avenue
Devizes SN10 5BA
E: liz.overthrow@btinternet.com



**December
2011
Newsletter**

Making a Difference Together - Living Examples 12 November

Greatly appreciated!!

Over 35 people attended the WCT Forum at Market Lavington Community Hall on a sunny Saturday in November. Participants came from Churches Together groups around Wiltshire, representing all the major denominations.

We were joined by Father Aidan Bellinger from Downside Abbey who introduced the theme of Spirituality and later reflected upon the three presentations.

We heard about:

Healing on the Street of Melksham,

Songs of Praise on the Wharf in Devizes and

Breakthrough, a project for helping the homeless in Trowbridge.

Feedback from the day was extremely positive and included comments like "inspiring....good to hear personal stories not just reports....encouraging ... good to share good practice ...we had a sense of being listened to."

**'The Word was made flesh,
he lived among us and we saw his glory.'**

(John 1:14)

An Invitation to

A Quiet Day at Ivy House, Warminster
Tuesday 20 March 2012 from 10.00 to 3.30

Come and explore the spirituality of Christian unity in this peaceful setting and enjoy a time of refreshment and renewal.

Retreat Leader: Canon Geoffrey Barton

Coffee, Lunch and Tea
Just £10.00 per head – subsidised by
Wiltshire Churches Together (contact Liz to book)

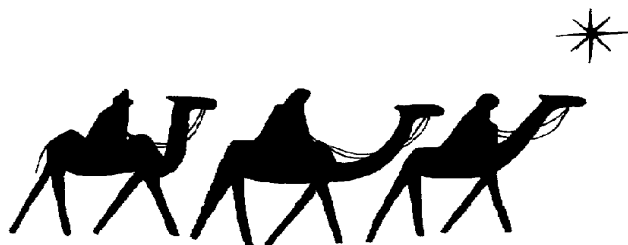
+++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++

WCT – The Future

The feedback from the two Forums this year has been passed on to the Church Leaders, who met on 8 December to consider how best the spirit of ecumenism in church groups could be fostered and supported. Bishop Nicholas (the new Bishop of Salisbury) is keen to build personal relationships with the other Leaders through prayer and reflection, and in so doing look at how churches could work together more effectively at local level in today's world.

There is a widespread view that the top-down approach to ecumenism (even the word itself) is no longer meaningful to Christian communities. WCT in its current structure does not meet local needs, so we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide our Leaders and us to a way ahead which meets those needs.

Tony Thorpe (Chairman of Wiltshire Churches Together)



Trowbridge Day of Prayer: 11th February 2012

Valentine-themed goodies will be given out in town, to help people understand that God loves Trowbridge and so do we. Evening service is from 7 - 9 pm @ Holy Trinity, with Rev Lyndon Bowring as guest speaker.

Contact Marjory on thewades@blueyonder.co.uk

News from Alabaré

Damascus House in Salisbury has been replaced with a brand new purpose built hostel, providing high quality accommodation and a range of training facilities in a more environmentally friendly building.

The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam, the new Bishop of Salisbury, gave Alabaré Place his blessing last month in a service of commissioning. Residents, workers and supporters joined in the service held under the soaring glass atrium, the heart of the hostel.

Bishop Nicholas declared: "What an amazing place, it makes you grow! Why does a home matter so much? It gives us somewhere to flop, it gives us privacy and security. It gives us a sense of identity, of who we are. Without a home you can lose your sense of identity...To have a home in our society is a right."

With 30 en-suite rooms with communal living spaces and kitchens, the state of the art hostel can accommodate 33 people in total. It is hoped that Alabaré Place and the staff who run it will be able to support around 50 people a year who might otherwise be without a home, sleeping on the streets or "sofa surfing" – relying on friends.

For more information visit www.alabare.co.uk.