

Convention Application Form

Name _____

Role _____

Organisation / Church _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Workshop Choice (please insert your first and second choice of workshop)

1st choice 2nd Choice

Payment (please indicate your tariff)

- £50 public and private bodies
 £25 voluntary organisations/waged
 £10 unwaged
 I enclose cheque (made payable to: CRC)
 Please invoice _____

Invoice address / reference _____

Special Requirements (please indicate your requirements and give details)

- Dietary Access
 Disabled Parking
 Station Shuttle bus Other

Details _____

If you do not wish to appear on delegate List (please tick this box)

Office Use Only

Received

Allocated

Confirmed

Payment

Prophetic Interrogators

Interviews with Jim Wallis and Joy Carroll



Jim Wallis has long advocated that faith should be demonstrated in action and not a purely personal thing. He believes, for example, that faith has a role in a social economy provided we don't lose our role as prophetic interrogators. In a recent interview with CRC in advance of his appearance as keynote speaker at CRC's July convention (see Events), Jim commented: *"Political leaders have figured out that the churches are often the best delivery systems for services and even for government programmes. They have figured out that the churches have capacity, constituency, are present in so many places, and that is a good thing. And I think it can be done with integrity on all sides as long as the churches don't lose their prophetic voice - we have to keep asking the "Why" question."*

Jim also reflected on the connection between current global issues and their application to local action, the key theme for the CRC convention; *"There is a deep connection between the struggle for global poverty reduction and the poverty that is still painfully present in the wealthy nations around the margins. People are left out and left behind. There's a connection between the struggles over racism and immigration. It is always a question of connecting global struggles and local ones and I think the church should be able to do that, because what institution in the world is more global and local at the same time than we are. I can't think of one."*

CRC also spoke to Joy Carroll, previously a minister in inner-city London, and now settle in Washington DC with her husband, Jim Wallis, young family and new urban parish. Joy spoke of the opportunities that working with partner agencies can offer church action projects; *"There needs to be a level of professionalism. You do it as Christians but just as well as if you weren't. So you organise your project in a professional and well informed way. The key is to build partnership in the community so you that you're not just struggling to do something as a church without partnerships. Every situation's different but it is important to work collaboratively and professionally and not to have an agenda of trying to convert people and pull people into the church through your project."*

Joy also advocates retaining a global perspective on our day-to-day lives and actions; *"I think that we constantly need to expose ourselves to global issues that surround us. The day-to-day decisions we make, the things that we buy in stores, the value judgements we make about our consumerism directly affect and in the long run directly effect global issues so that whilst we are acting globally with a global conscience we can still be aware that we are trying to make a difference to people on the other side of the world."* Both interviews are available in full from CRC's website www.crc-online.org.uk. Don't forget to return your convention application form to CRC available in this newsletter or from the website to ensure the opportunity to hear Jim and Joy on July 2nd.

Global and Local
 Connecting People to Big Issues and Practical Action
 Friday July 2nd 2004 Northallerton
 North Yorkshire
Keynote Speakers Jim Wallis and Joy Carroll
 The latest thinking on social action in the light of world events and its application to local action.
Practical Workshops on
 Fair Trade Asylum Seekers Reconciliation
 Distinctiveness Campaigning Praying
 Public and Private bodies £50 pp. incl. lunch
 Waged and Church/Voluntary organisations £25
 Unwaged £10
 For more details
 The Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber
 t_0113 244 3413 f_0113 243 2038
 e_info@crc-online.org.uk
 w_www.crc-online.org.uk

Giving A Voice to faith

The structures of governance are undergoing change. In November, we will have the opportunity to decide whether to move towards an elected assembly. Where would faith fit into these evolving structures? The current Welsh Assembly provides a possible model with Cytun, Churches Together in Wales, aiming to keep churches well informed concerning the activities of the National Assembly, and creating awareness of church perspectives on important issues by providing a constant Christian presence and information. *"There is an opportunity post-devolution to impact very positively on UK politics and European politics and to emphasise*

Please let us know of information, sources of support and events of interest to others
To contact CRC write to the office_ 20 New Market Street Leeds, LS1 6DG,
t_ 0113-244-3413 e_info@crc-online.org.uk

'solidarity'. " Comments Revd Aled Edwards,
National Assembly Liaison Officer with Cytun.

The recent series of information events organised by CRC and the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly is part of an initiative to encompass all faiths in determining how the region develops (see Spirit Level Issue 4 An invitation to be heard). These events prompted a great range of insights from participants which will be encompassed in a report going to the Assembly who will take a decision on how to take the next practical steps towards forming a regional structure for inter faith participation. It also clarified that we need to raise understanding of the region – how it works, and how it can make a difference.

Spirit Level will continue to report on progress or find out more from the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly at www.yhassembly.gov.uk

Useful information_

Fair Trade

Fairtrade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk includes ideas on becoming a Fairtrade church and ideas for churches
Cherry Burton Fairtrade Village
www.cherryburtonftlp.org.uk a recognised example of good practice in our region!

Social Enterprise

Find out more on government policy at other sources of information at:
www.dti.gov.uk/socialenterprise/

Funding

BT Community Connections is a nationwide award scheme, which connects community and voluntary groups to the internet. Any group or individual that can show how an award will benefit its community or voluntary group can apply for a BT Community Connections award. Every recipient will receive a package worth approximately £1,300 including an NEC multi-media computer, Microsoft software and a contribution towards the cost of one year's internet access.
Successful applicants in the past include disability groups, inner city farms, youth groups and an on-line rural shopping centre.

To find out more about the award scheme visit www.btcommunityconnections.com.

Funding Neighbourhood Learning

A guide has been produced on the increasing number of opportunities available for small voluntary and community groups. Step-by-step advice on planning, and writing funding applications, major sources and grant-making trusts, this guide is an essential companion to funding neighbourhood learning whether this is a core objective, or part of a wider project. Contact **NAICE** on **0116 204 4216**, orders@niace.org.uk or visit www.niace.org.uk/publications.

Best Kept Churchyard 2004

Your church could win a cash prize of up to £1000 by demonstrating a well-maintained churchyard. In depth involvement such as showing care for the environment, safety etc. is part of the judging criteria which aims to promote the perception of the church within the community. Closing date for entries is 30th June 2004 Visit www.ecclesiastical.co.uk for information and an application form or contact Sarah Iles on **01452 334530** or information@eigmail.com

Events_

Planted 40 years ago and still growing 8th June 1 – 2 pm Leeds Church Institute FREE Bishop Alan Sam, The Church of God of Prophecy in Leeds. Contact **0113 245 4700** general@leedschurchinstitute.org

Peace Journeys 16th June 12 noon Leeds Church Institute FREE Revd Ray Gaston A time for Christians to reflect on the situation in Iraq. Contact **0113 245 4700** general@leedschurchinstitute.org

Through the Glasgow Looking Glass 17th – 21st June 2004 International Christian College, Glasgow. The fourth UK Urban Mission Congress explores issues in urban mission from all over the UK. Information from **0141 552 4040** or visit www.jitc.org.uk

CRC Annual Convention Global and Local: Connecting People to Big Issues and Practical Action. July 2nd, Northallerton (see main feature and application form inside)

Great Yorkshire Show Harrogate, July 13th – 15th Visit the Sowing the Seed exhibition in the Churches Pavilion. Open each day (see Rural Renaissance article)

Training for the Human Resource Function Pay and Employment Rights Service

Programme of free workshops aimed at upskilling staff in voluntary and social enterprises, including:

Terms of Employment, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds 21st June

Recruitment and Selection, Centre for Learning, Bradford, 7th July

Working Parents' Rights, Town Hall, Dewsbury, 24th August

Flexible Working, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds, 21st September For full details contact **01924 439587** dsmiles@pers.org.uk

Book review_

Faithfulness in the City_

Every year urban theologians and practitioners gather at St Deiniol's Library to discuss their work in Britain's inner cities and outer housing estates and the underlying theology. This group has now produced a fascinating book containing 21 separate contributions, mostly about 'People and Communities' but also offering 'Reflections and Discernments'. The book is a treasure house of stories and reflections about the least prosperous parts of today's Britain. Here a just a few examples:

- how 'Three Foolish Women' sought to restore hope in Conisborough and Denaby in South Yorkshire following mining closures;
- an astonishing multi-faith walk along the Barking Road in Newham, a Borough in which the 61 'mainstream' Christian congregations are outnumbered by 72 Pentecostalist congregations and 46 congregations from other world faiths;
- how Brazilian notions of liberation theology have been imported into downtown Plymouth, with a parish split up into 'Basic Ecclesial Communities';
- the relevance of Isaiah 58 to the challenges of disadvantaged areas of Bradford.

There is much to ponder in this book and I strongly recommend it.

DAVID PRICE

David convenes CRC's task group on Social Inclusion

.Edited by John Vincent

Published by Monad Press, St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, Flintshire CH5 3DF

(ISBN 0 907450 334)

Gospel Imperative or Government Vision?

Is social action part of a vision for an inclusive and growing economy or a demonstration of faith?

It is estimated that church social action contributes up to £75million to the economy of Yorkshire and the Humber, but what are the benefits of being part of the social economy? The Government has identified that social enterprises tackle a wide range of social and environmental issues and contribute to the public good. The social economy encompasses a wide range of faith-based initiatives such as those featured in CRC's reports on social action, Angels and Advocates and Sowing the Seed.

"A fundamental approach to enterprise unleashes the potential among our communities," explains Graham Brownlee, CRC's Chief Executive. "For Christians our view of a God-given world tells us that authentic enterprise changes the environment creatively so that opportunity and involvement is open to all."

The Government aims to create an enabling environment for social enterprises, make social enterprises better businesses and establish their value more widely. To many on the ground that could pave the way for improved funding arrangements and support, but for others, greater uncertainty and challenge. And the strategy and systems for delivery is still under development under the leadership of the DTI's Social Enterprise Unit.

However, church commentators warn of the need to retain focus on the motivation for action.

"We are not just social service providers, we are prophetic interrogators for why so many people are hungry or homeless. We have to keep asking the Why question and not just keep pulling bodies out of the river, but send people upstream to see who or what is throwing them in." comments Jim Wallis (see the Jim Wallis interview inside)

Liz Carnelley, Policy Officer at CRC also reminds us that *"funding should follow need, rather than the other way around."* Liz is the author of CRC's latest Keynote report *Enterprising Faith: Faith and the Social Economy* to be launched at the CRC convention on July 2nd. This report introduces the concepts and issues relating to the social economy and discusses opportunities and challenges for faith-based projects.

Inside

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Key issues from July 2nd's programme reviewed
- **Jim Wallis and Joy Carroll in focus**
2 transatlantic interviews in advance of the convention
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- **Giving Voice to Faith**
Updates on a Regional Faith Forum and election issues

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CRC'S CONVENTION**



Supporting Fair Trade and Local Produce

Huge financial power is embodied in the global food chain but this power is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. Both producers and consumers are becoming increasingly powerless in the food chain, and decisions over what, how and where food is produced are being made by a few large global companies. Whether it is production inputs where, for example, just five companies dominate worldwide seed production, or the other end of the chain where it is confidently predicted that in a few years only six global supermarkets will dominate the food retail market, the story is one of concentrated economic power. The weak link is the food producer – increasingly squeezed at both ends.

Whilst the impact of low and unfair returns on producers in the developing world can be quite literally a matter of life or death, the issue is taking on real significance here at home where our producers are increasingly disadvantaged. Between 1995 and 2001 here in the UK the retail price of food increased by 21%. In the same period the price received by the producer increased by just 2%.

CRC's report on rural crisis in the region, *Sowing the Seed*, identified the case of the Lincolnshire farmer who was refused 9p per cauliflower only to see the same produce on sale at £1.25. It also estimates that at least one third of the region's farms would not survive without some off-farm income.

One village in Yorkshire has given support to the concept of Fair Trade and supports local produce as one means of exercising their consumer power. Cherry Burton achieved Fairtrade Village status in July 2003. The original idea came from the Young People's Church Group. It is supported by 27 businesses in the village including the village shop, pub and restaurant, and sponsored by the Yorkshire Regional Food Group as a model of good practice for the region. A website and directory enable better access to products – both

Fairtrade and locally produced. Cherry Burton will join a number of projects featured in CRC's rural report, *Sowing the Seed* at the Great Yorkshire Show July 13th – 16th (see Events).

The Fairtrade Foundation exists to ensure that producers in the developing world receive a fair return for their products. They will lead a practical workshop at CRC's convention July 2nd (see Events) drawing on local experiences to see how fair trade is about more than food production, but also about land use and politics within a global economic system. The workshop will show how a local community and church can get practically involved with these big issues.



Cherry Burton, a model for good practice in fair trade.

Distinctiveness



The question of what makes your work Christian is not just a matter for abstract reflection. Joy Madeiros looks at some of the concrete implications – which are particularly important now that the law has changed.

The issue for many Christian organisations today is how to be distinctive in an increasingly diverse world. The challenge is to maintain and promote a Christian identity whilst actively seeking to be relevant, accessible and inclusive.

At a basic level, the challenge of ensuring that a Christian organisation has a Christian identity starts with knowing its purpose. This might simply be a case of (re)acquainting yourself with the charitable objects and, perhaps, the statement of faith. But being confident about putting that purpose into action and ensuring that the purpose reflects and projects a distinctively Christian identity is another matter altogether. For example, how does a Christian organisation's purpose of expressing God's love by providing a drop-in centre have a distinctly Christian identity? The distinction is not in the work itself, because this work can be delivered by Christians and non-Christians alike.

You may be saying that the Christian identity is in the Christian activities of prayer and worship and the impact that these activities have on the work? And of course it's true that the distinctive identity has its origins in the spiritual life of the project. But while worship and prayer may be part of the project's weekly and daily life, it may be difficult to argue in all circumstances, for example in the case of funding, that these aspects alone make it distinctively Christian. The drop-in centre is being funded to provide a place of welcome/care/information; it is not being funded to be a church.

The answer to the question posed above – what is the distinctively Christian identity of Christian organisations in the 21st Century? – is to do with the Christian motivation of those who are drawn to fulfil the Christian purpose of the project. The Christian identity flows from the shared desire to build the Kingdom of God by providing the hospitality, care and welcome as an expression of God's love. The distinctively Christian identity is in the ethos – the shared belief, the shared commitment, the shared motivation for the achievement of the Christian purpose.

If the Christian identity of an organisation is largely held in the expression of its ethos, it is crucial that this identity is authentic and has integrity. If that Christian identity is to be held up as the distinguishing feature, the thing which makes this project different from another, the identity cannot simply reside in the shared beliefs and motivation, however sincere they are: it must shape the values of the project and direct the way the project is run.

Joy Madeiros is Faithworks' Employment Advisor and will be running a practical workshop on Distinctiveness in a Diverse World at CRC's July 2nd convention (see Events).

Joy Madeiros of Faithworks will discuss Distinctiveness in a Diverse World at the CRC convention

News Round Up_

Rural Renaissance On Show

The Bishop of Ely, Anthony Russell, has been elected president of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. He is an ex Director of the Arthur Rank Centre and the Church of England's spokesman on farming and countryside matters. *"I hope I can raise awareness of the human issues in farming during my presidency,"* he said. *"Much is written about the triple bottom line – economic, environmental and social. However, social issues always seem to receive much less attention. As the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms are implemented, there will inevitably be personal pain, especially in the tenanted sector."* Dr Russell succeeds HRH the Duke of Gloucester and will hold the post of president for one year, commencing on Oct 1 2004.

"The reform of the CAP will be of fundamental significance to most farms in this region," comments Howard Petch, convenor of CRC's Rural Renaissance Task Group and CRC's vice chair. *"There will be some winners and many losers in respect of current income levels with serious implications for many farming families. Every business will need to assess the impact of reform and reappraise personal and business objectives in pursuit of a long term future."*

The Rural Church Support Network has already responded with an information event to brief local clergy on the issues and practical steps that can be taken to support those hardest hit *"Many farmers in our diocese will lose out financially and their farms may no longer be viable. There is great uncertainty and great anxiety as we enter a new and unknown world, especially in livestock farming,"* comments Revd Canon Leslie Morley, Rural Adviser, Diocese of Ripon and Leeds.

The Church has previously shown its capacity to respond to rural crisis, not least during the foot and mouth crisis. Organisations such as Farm Crisis Network and the Rural Church Support Network featured in CRC's Sowing the Seed report (see publications form) will be at the Great Yorkshire Show July 13th – 15th in Harrogate.

"We wanted to create a marketplace that celebrates the report and enables the projects featured to express life and faith in rural communities to a wider audience," explains Revd David Eyles, Chair of Yorkshire Churches on Show. Visit the exhibition in the Churches Pavilion adjacent to the Show Ring.

CRC Launch Educational Achievement Handbook



Leeds. *"Our shared responsibility is to ensure that all children achieve their potential whatever their religious, cultural and ethnic background."*

The RAISE project was established to look at how schools, local communities and faith communities can make a positive difference with particular reference to Muslim pupils of Pakistani and Kashmiri heritage. The project is a partnership between CRC, Yorkshire Forward and the Uniting Britain Trust and is an example of the CRC's role as a lead partner in matters of faith and cohesion across Yorkshire and the Humber as well as the commitment of partners in the region. Co-ordinated by the Insted consultancy, the handbook identifies good practice in this region and beyond. **The handbook is published by Trentham Books, the principal publisher in the UK concerned with issues of equality in education (see www.trentham-books.co.uk for more information on the handbook)**

Church Tourism Celebrated

Over 80 delegates attended the North Yorkshire Church Tourism Initiative's second annual conference, held in Harrogate on 27 March 2004. Entitled Firm Foundations Future Focus, the event featured speakers from English Heritage, Harrogate Museums and Arts, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Yorkshire Tourist Board who considered how we can better promote churches as a key element of our heritage, the importance of churches as cultural resources, how we can interpret churches to attract and engage more diverse audiences and how churches fit into the region's tourism product. The conference also provided a timely opportunity to celebrate the success of the project's second year.

With over 240 churches actively involved in the project, and links to nine of the county's major ecclesiastical sites, it is now one of the largest initiatives of its kind in the country. In addition the Project has now allocated over £30,000 to 70 church-based interpretation projects which will enhance the understanding and enjoyment of visitors to the county's churches. **Find out more by visiting www.yorkshirechurches.com or contact Zoe Kemp tel. 01977 611962 email zkemp@ytb.org.uk.**

CRC's Year of Delivery

CRC will publish a review of its second full year of operation in July. The review will focus on how it has delivered on its key aims: to represent churches to regional bodies; to advocate faith and to work with partners in regeneration. Key projects such as the Intercultural Leadership School (pictured) will be featured. A summary will be available to all usual recipients of Spirit Level and delegates at CRC's July convention (see events) with the **full report available to download from the website www.crc-online.org.uk.**

"Over the past year the CRC has connected with an increasing range of issues that matter deeply to Christians and we have acted on these in exciting partnerships across the region," comments Graham Brownlee, CRC's Chief Executive. *"Our growing links with local groups, sub-regional partnership and national agencies provide a springboard for the future."*



Good Practice from the Black Majority Churches



Social action from Black Majority Churches across the region will feature in a new directory with full listings of the region's 28 churches. Published jointly with the West Yorkshire African Caribbean Council of Churches (WYACCC), the directory will be launched at CRC's July convention (see main feature).

"To many the notion of 'Black Majority Churches' is still a fairly new phenomenon. Who are they? What do they do? This is true within the wider church community and in the secular and civic arenas," comments Pastor Tony Parry of WYACCC. *"In several ways BMC's have made a significant contribution in terms of enhancing the fabric of the African and African Caribbean communities generally and*

the wider church as a whole. This directory hopes to identify where the BMC's are currently located across the region, and profile a number of the churches to learn more about what they do in terms of community projects etc, and gain some insight into their particular journey and experience."

Enterprising Faith

The latest Keynote report 'Enterprising Faith: Faith and the Social Economy' report will be published by CRC in July. It aims to inform and provoke thought and discussion and provide a context for churches to review their role in providing a variety of services aimed at promoting the 'common good'. It should also provide the impetus for creating a voice for those on the ground at a time when their activities in local communities are the focus of developing regional and governmental policy. Liz Carnelly CRC's Policy Officer wrote the report to, *"concisely explain what is meant by the social economy, to think about the role of faith organisations, and to raise issues and suggestions for the future. It is aimed at project managers, church leaders, and those active in faith communities who wish to know more about what is becoming an increasingly important area for national policy as well as local delivery."* **Enterprising Faith will be available at its launch at CRC's July convention (see events) or by using the publications form in this issue.**

Briefing Papers Provide Practical Support

As the local and European elections approach, immigration and political extremism have featured strongly in the region's news. Meanwhile, CRC has produced briefing notes on the BNP and Destitute Asylum Seekers outlining the practical issues and possible action as part of our role in supporting churches of this region which was well received across the region.

"It is an excellent initiative, and one on which I hope local churches will take a firm lead. Congratulations on such useful thinking" comments Barry Sheerman, MP for Huddersfield and Chairman of the Select Committee on Education and Skills.

The BNP have 101 representatives standing in the region at the local elections alone. The briefing paper provides some information to equip churches to respond urgently to a local BNP candidacy. The CRC Commission has expressed concern at the damage that the BNP can do to race relations, while recognising that it is important not to demonise people who vote for the BNP who may do so out of desperation.

The briefing paper recommends that local churches join together ecumenically to:

- encourage people to vote; in some areas, a process whereby individuals have systematically encouraged their friends to vote has been very effective;
- challenge myths and rumours;
- provide information to local press;
- organise symbolic events e.g. prayers or vigils for racial harmony.

Responding to Asylum Seekers will also be the focus of a practical workshop led by Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network at CRC's July convention (see Events) **Both briefing papers are available from the publications section of CRC's website www.crc-online.org.uk, or contact CRC tel. 0113 244 3413 email info@crc-online.org.uk.**

CRC Publications order form_

I would like to order:

copies of the **Sowing the Seed** at £3.50 plus £1.00 p+p (Yorkshire & Humber church) £5.00 plus £1.00 p+p (Standard price).

copies of **Angels & Advocates** at £3.50 plus £1.00 p+p (Yorkshire & Humber church) £5.00 plus £1.00 p+p (Standard price).

copies of the **Angels & Advocates Summary** at £1.00 for 10 copies plus £2.00 p+p.

copies of the **Angels & Advocates Bible Study Packs** at £1.00 plus 75p p+p

copies of **Sticking Together_ Community cohesion: a response to the debate** £4 plus 50p p+p

copies of **Enterprising Faith_ Faith and the social economy** £4 plus 50p p+p (available July 2004)

Your Name

Address

Post Code

Tel No

Email

Please post or fax to:

Churches Regional Commission
for Yorkshire and The Humber
20 New Market Street,