

# Ploughshare Plus



News update from Christian CND

July 2020

Christians working and praying for a nuclear weapons-free world

## LIVING NEAR TRIDENT

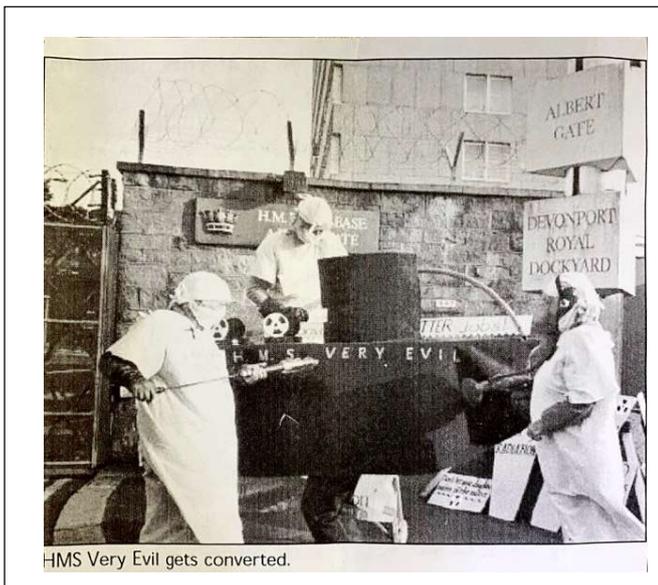
Here's the situation in Plymouth, where many of the population depend on jobs in the dockyard. At 11.30 every Monday morning, a siren sounds to remind everyone of the potential danger. Should there be a nuclear incident, people have to stay indoors, and await delivery of thyroid-protecting potassium iodide tablets.

Work has just begun on construction of facilities for servicing the next lot of Trident missile submarines. The project is heralded as relieving unemployment, but the risk continues.

Many toxic materials and dangerous substances are kept in the dockyard, which stores 13 retired nuclear powered submarines, (nine still containing reactor fuel). It is the UK's only nuclear fuelling and de-fuelling site. The land is owned by the Ministry of Defence.

In 2016, the MoD, Babcock and the City Council, held a Major Emergency Drill for everyone, and in September last year there was another, this time codenamed 'Exercise Short Sermon'.

Back in 2003, Christian CND visited Plymouth to perform street theatre against nuclear weapons (see picture). We were welcomed by Christopher Budd, Bishop of Plymouth (his greeting printed here). Bishop Christopher was a Member of the Bishop's Conference and in its Department of Justice and Peace. The Plymouth Quakers hosted us and local TV there televised our street theatre rehearsals.



HMS Very Evil gets converted.

Wearing models of the Trident fleet (renamed 'HMS Vainglorious', 'HMS Vicious', 'HMS Vile' and 'HMS Very Evil'), each in turn was summoned by a clerical figure to the operating table on which stood an actor dressed as a surgeon. Nurses 'Health and Safety' prepared them for her big saw. When opened up, their insides displayed the amounts of money that could be used for moral purposes.

Would anyone with information about any other place where people live near Trident-connected sites (Barrow, for instance), please send it in.

### MESSAGE TO CHRISTIAN CND from the Right Rev Christopher Budd, RC Bishop of Plymouth

Greetings and welcome to Plymouth. I do hope your gathering here is well supported and that you will not lose heart in your endeavour to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the nuclear version of these weapons.

The ease with which the nations can take to war has recently been graphically demonstrated by the attack on Iraq, an enterprise with serious moral questions hanging over it. The futility of war is demonstrated by the mess in Iraq and the coalition's numerous and sustained campaigns of terror and oppression.

At root, of course, is the seductive nature of power and the human propensity to vaunt such power in order to dominate and control. This the Christian tradition calls sin and it remains a powerfully negative force in the lives of individuals and communities. Your movement has consistently reminded us all of this fact over many years, and I hope you will continue to do so until there is a real change of heart in a number of us. The sign of that will be that the urge to kill and destroy each other will be finally restrained.

With all my good wishes, Bishop Christopher.

## Our Caroline RIP.

Many of you will be shocked to hear that Caroline Gilbert passed away peacefully in the Sobell Hospice on 30 June.

Her cancer had progressed very fast and she accepted courageously the fact that she had little time left, but still had CCND and Nuclear Disarmament very much in mind.

There will be much more in the next "Ploughshare", so if you have any particular memories you would like included, please send them to us.

*Patricia Pulham*

## My Journey Here

I was elected to the CCND Executive at the AGM in Coventry, 2018, and re-elected last year. I was 10 when the atom bombs were dropped on Japan. Our committee urgently needs more people who are younger or in the middle of their lives. Please give that a thought if that applies to you, or somebody you know.

Throughout my teens I was wondering where such a destructive bomb would lead. My Anglican boarding school had a CCF, with military training alongside a Christian upbringing, and I felt something was wrong. When I told my father I would register as a conscientious objector to military service, he told me the current Archbishop was not against our atom bomb, but I felt that Jesus would have been. I joined the Quakers, but later felt at home with 'Quanglicans' like Paul Oestreicher.

Fast forward to 1978 when, in midlife with young children, the UN debated disarmament approvingly. Then in 1979 Mountbatten, our chief of Staff in World War 2, said publicly that nuclear war could never be fought. As a teacher I realised that deterrence, that cannot be used, deters nobody, so I joined CND. Three months later Mountbatten was assassinated. I leafleted his funeral with his views about nuclear weapons. The Church and the Bomb was published shortly afterwards, giving a strong theological case against nuclear war. I still find strength in peering through the metal fence protecting Mountbatten's statue near Horse Guards Parade, and think how apt is the depiction of him looking through binoculars into the distance. Foreseeing the end of nuclear weapons?

In the nineties I briefly taught "Conflict resolution in the classroom and the wide world" at London University, and then was Secretary of the Conflict Research Society and was on the committee of the Gandhi Foundation.

My big plan for this year was a public meeting at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, where the UN in 1946 first met, wanting to see atom bombs banned. We have permission to defer it to next July. One of the last things that our member, Caroline Gilbert, did, before her passing on, was to ask the new Archbishop of York to speak at that meeting .

*David Maxwell*

## Adapting to the 'new normal' with Covid-19

Like all organisations Christian CND has been thinking about what we need to do to adapt our practices in light of the on-going situation with Covid-19. We have already held Prayer Meetings and Executive Committee meetings online and now attention is turning to our AGM in October.

We still hope to be able to gather in Newcastle, but we're putting a number of contingencies in place including the possibility of allowing members to vote at the AGM either by post or online.

It's hoped that remote voting would enable more members to take part in the elections and encourage a wider range of people to stand for the Executive Committee. The proposal will be discussed at the Exec meeting in July, but if you have any thoughts on remote voting, please do get in touch and feed in to that discussion.

## New report highlights investments in nuclear weapons

Christian CND has been working with other UK-based faith groups to publish a new report into the financing of nuclear weapons. Every year billions of pounds is pumped into companies involved in producing nuclear weapons by banks and pension funds.

With the UK currently undertaking the replacement of the four Trident submarines at a cost of £205 billion, it is vital that pressure is applied to banks and pension funds to take money away from the companies building these weapons. The international community is turning its back on nuclear weapons through the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which may have implications for financial institutions in the UK.

The report gives financial institutions a score for their policies and how willing they have been to engage with the research that fed into the report. While there are some positives, including The People's Pension and NEST, the government's default pension scheme with 4.5million members, committing to consult to get the views of their members, there is still much work to be done.

We've set up a template letter so you can contact your bank or pension provider and ask them to move away from funding nuclear weapons. To find out more and to read the report visit the Christian CND website – [www.christiancnd.org.uk](http://www.christiancnd.org.uk)

# From the Exec

“Goals are discovered, not made”. So writes Richard Foster in *Celebration of Discipline*, a wonderful book first published in 1989 which helps modern Christians rediscover some of the spiritual disciplines which we may be in danger of overlooking. The quotation comes from the chapter on *The Discipline of Solitude*. The most profoundly influential changes in our lives are rarely designed and planned in advance — rather, we discover them when we allow ourselves the space, silence and solitude to listen to God and ourselves.

This was my experience of getting involved in the peace movement. It was not the result of a strategic thought-process, but a strong conviction which really came to the front of my mind during a peaceful holiday in North Wales. A few weeks later, in the solitude of the cathedral ruins at Coventry, I filled in the Christian CND membership form!

Of course, those of us who help to run Christian CND, just like any organisation, have goals and strategies to reach them. We would like our membership to be fifty times as big. We would like our existing members to feel fully engaged and enabled by what we do. We would like disarmament to be a mainstream issue for UK Christians of all denominations. And, of course, we would like to see an end to nuclear weapons. None of these things are quixotic, unattainable goals. Our Father in heaven does know how to give good things — big good things — to those who ask him!

However, as a Christian organisation, we do differ from secular ones. Our motivation as an organisation springs from our walk with God. Our goals as an organisation should be set according to the measure of faith that he has given us (Romans 12.3). As Foster repeatedly notes, “The Spiritual Disciplines are things that we do”. Silence and solitude are not inert, they are productive. Have you ever been to the source of a great river like the Thames? It starts in solitude and obscurity, but flowing from this unpromising source it can water a mighty city’s millions.

I am writing this (and perhaps you are reading it) during the Coronavirus ‘lockdown’. Many of the activities Christian CND was planning for our anniversary year of 2020 have been cancelled or deferred. The goals we set ourselves may not be met, at least not yet. Many of us, who used to crave some quiet solitude, are tiring of it already! Foster writes, “One reason we can hardly bear to remain silent is that it makes us feel so helpless... If we are silent, who will take control? God will take control, but we will



never let him take control until we trust him. Silence is intimately related to trust.”

So let us trust in God, during and after the ‘lockdown’. Perhaps we will develop some immunity to feeling we must always fill the silence and work in our own strength. Perhaps we will lift our eyes to the hills, from whence cometh our strength.

MJ Tiller, Rugby, 30/3/20

**It's clearly too soon to tell which of these events will take place physically. Some may be cancelled, others may take place online. Always check before heading out!**

**If you are organising any event, especially online events, do let us know.**

**6 August:** Hiroshima Day. Annual Hiroshima Day event in Tavistock Square **London**. 12noon. Info: 020 7607 2302 [info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org) <https://www.londoncnd.org/>  
**Milton Keynes:** Reflection on Hiroshima Day, 8.15am at MK Rose, Campbell Park MK9 4AJ. And at 7.30pm, Lantern Floating Ceremony, Peace Pagoda, Willen Lake, MK15 0BA. 01908 663652. [mkpeacepagoda@gmail.com](mailto:mkpeacepagoda@gmail.com)

**9 August:** Nagasaki Day. Anniversary of the execution of Franz Jägerstätter.  
**London:** Nagasaki Day Peace Walk from Westminster Cathedral will unfortunately be cancelled this year. Info: 020 7228 9620. [londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com](mailto:londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com)

**3 October:** Christian CND Annual General Meeting and Conference. Heaton Baptist Church, Heaton Rd, **Newcastle upon Tyne** NE6 5HN.

One of the guest speakers will be Nick Megoran, lecturer in political geography at the University of Newcastle, specialising in geopolitics, religion and the war on terror. Nick is also Co-convenor of the Martin Luther King Peace Committee <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/martin-lutherking/>  
More details later but please put the date in your diary! All welcome.

## From the office

As some of you who have received emails from us, and main CND, will know, the office has been closed for some time now (how time flies when you're not having fun!). Work has been done from home, where possible.

As the CND office does not have a letter box, we put a hold on post, but now one member of CND staff goes in each day, post deliveries will start once more. CND have offered to open our post and put all important incoming, including cheques, in a place where I (Claire) can pick them up without going any further than the front door. In order to get this Ploughshare Plus out, I have had to arrange with CND for me to be the only one in the office (I can walk there rather than use public transport). It's part of the very-sensible safety protocol set up by CND.

So if you have sent in a cheque for an order, sorry but there will be a delay in getting the order to you. You can phone the office and leave a message on the call minder (I will check messages from home), and emails can be answered fairly promptly.

We would ordinarily have produced a Ploughshare in May. But seeing as we didn't go to the NPT (postponed), we cancelled our Embassies Walk, and lots of other events we'd planned on going to have also been cancelled, we have realised there would not be a lot to put into a full Ploughshare, so we decided to produce a shorter Ploughshare Plus to give you a news update. If you're online, make sure you sign up to get our monthly news updates. Scroll to the bottom of the home page of our website to find a link to sign up.

We hope all members are staying safe.

*Claire Poyner*

## CCND goods (to be ordered later in the year!?)

**Robin Christmas Cards:** £2.50 for six.  
**'Submarine' Christmas Cards:** £2.50 for six.  
**Picasso Greetings Cards:** £2.50 for six.  
**CCND stickers:** 10 stickers for 50p, 50 stickers for £2

**Legacy leaflet:** Free

**Churches' pack:** Free

**T-Shirts:** £12 each.

**Cotton bags:** £4 each. **Mini bags:** £1.50.

**Pack of 24 A4 sheets of Interfaith quotations on peace:** £1 a pack

**Other CCND items available:** Church Statements Poster (free), badges (30p), enamel brooches (£1.50), hand-held fans (£2), pens (£1) and a history of CCND (£2.50).

**Shop online at:** <https://christiancnd.org.uk/shop/>  
**Or send orders with cheque made out to Christian CND to:**

Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament  
162 Holloway Road, London N7 8DQ

Please include £2 for p&p. for single small items and £4 for larger items (such as t-shirts). Phone the office if you have any queries (Monday and Tuesday mornings) 020 7700 4200, or email [christians@cnduk.org](mailto:christians@cnduk.org)

In these unusual circumstances, please contact the office if you want some items urgently. We *might* be able to get them to you. Otherwise, it will be a wait of several weeks, Covid permitting. Goods will usually be sent by Royal Mail second class post.

**Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament**

Mordechai Vanunu House, 162 Holloway Rd, London N7 8DQ Tel: 020 7700 4200  
[christians@cnduk.org](mailto:christians@cnduk.org) <https://christiancnd.org.uk/>