

Christian CND Annual Report 2020

Introduction

The last twelve months have seen the world face unprecedented challenges as Covid19 has changed our way of life, limiting our ability to meet in person and seeing many events Christian CND would usually attend cancelled. We have still had a busy year however, and a Christian voice of peace and disarmament is needed now more than ever as the Doomsday Clock is currently 100 seconds to midnight, the closest it has ever been.

Our membership has continued to grow this year, not only numerically but also in taking action for peace. Christian CND members have written to their MPs about the situation on the Korean Peninsula, asked local Christian leaders to sign our statement on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and attended our newly launched Zoom Prayer Meetings.

We have been greatly encouraged by the continued leadership of Pope Francis on nuclear weapons. Visiting Japan at the end of 2019 he called for progress on

nuclear disarmament. We also congratulated Bishop Stephen Cottrell on taking his new role as Archbishop of York.

We have continued to work closely with many other organisations throughout the year. Christian CND is proud to continue to work with the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which we pray will enter into force next year. At home we continue to value being part of the Network of Christian Peace Organisations and as always appreciate the work and support of National CND.

The year has not been without sadness, especially losing long-time campaigners Caroline Gilbert and Beryl Lankester. Caroline will be remembered by many at home and abroad for her energy, passion and committed to our cause. Beryl was a stalwart of Essex CND and organised Hiroshima remembrance services in the county for decades. We thank God for them both and honour their service to peace.



Working internationally has always been a key aspect of our campaign. In January we were delighted to welcome members of the Bargn Nuri Christian Community to London (photo above). Based in South Korea, the community visited as part of their 1000 Day Peace Pilgrimage for a conference in London and singing outside Westminster.

2020 should have seen the international community gather for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York, but that has been postponed until 2021. We were also unable to do our usual Embassies Walk, but we have maintained contact with key embassies and held meetings with some via Zoom to discuss current issues around nuclear weapons.

Despite a limit on the events which we have been able to organise and attend, there has still be plenty of activity over the past 12 months. We kicked off our year in Brentwood with our AGM where Bishop Rogers Morris was the speaker.

At the end of the year we gathered at St Martin-in-the-Fields for a prayer service ahead of the demonstration opposing the NATO summit that took place in London.

On of the last events before lockdown was the Ash Wednesday Witness outside the Ministry of Defence in London where Christian CND joined Pax Christi in calling for peace and disarmament.



In April a new hymn was written for our 60th anniversary. Let Us Raise Our Voice was written by Christopher Idle and Sue Gilmurray and is an uplifting rallying cry for the next season of our work.

Also this year a new report was published into the investment policies around nuclear weapons of UK financial institutions. Christian CND was pleased to work with many other faith groups on that report.

Photo left: Ash Wednesday, above: demo opposing the NATO summit.



In August we remembered the 75th anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were pleased that 220 Christian leaders from nine denominations signed our statement calling on the

UK government to use the anniversary to cancel plans for Trident replacement.

Elsewhere a service took place in Chelmsford Cathedral to remember the victims and survivors of the bombings where Bishop Roger Morris gave the address. Other Christian CND members and supporters took part in various other commemorative events across the country.



We were also pleased to be able to support events organised by other groups include Pax Christi and the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Bishop Roger Morris and Yoko Wiffen with the candle sent from Hiroshima

We have continued to take our message to Christians through the media this year. Our own social media channels continue to reach tens of thousands of people every month and our website sees more than 1000 'hits' per month.

Our own media has continued to be of a high standard and have an impact. Our journal Ploughshare and newsheet Ploughshare Plus have been published throughout the year. We have also continued to publish our monthly Prayer Diaries and update emails with the latest campaigning, news and prayer points.



Michael and Patricia Pulham have continued to write their regular column for the Catholic Universe, having the opportunity to raise issues on our agenda. Other Christian CND members have had letters printed in various publications.

Our Christian Leader statement in August received

Hiroshima and Nagasaki information at Chelmsford Cathedral

around the anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The statement was also covered in Church Times and The Tablet. Russell was also interviewed by UCB to discuss the 60th anniversary of Christian CND and our new hymn.



Bruce Kent meets a delegation from Bargn Nuri

Executive Committee and staff

Thank you to the following members of the Christian CND Executive Committee who served for the past year:

David Maxwell (Co-Chair)

Martin Tiller (Co-Chair)

Martin Birdseye

Rebecca Dillon

Geraldine Ellis

Kelvin Gascoigne

Caroline Gilbert

Mike Gilbert (Treasurer)

Michael Pulham

Patricia Pulham

Staff members:

Claire Poyner – Office Administrator

Russell Whiting – Development Manager



Caroline holds the Nobel Peace Prize won by ICAN in 2017

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2019 Exec and staff at Brentwood Cathedral

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Christians working and praying for a nuclear weapons-free world