



NEWS FROM ECCR

July 2017

A monthly round-up of news from the Churches and other sources in the areas of economic justice, human rights and environmental sustainability.

We invite you to forward this e-Newsletter to your friends.
They can also subscribe direct by going to the ECCR website: www.eccr.org.uk

ACTION POINT

Sainsbury's has dropped Fairtrade certification for some of its own brand teas and replaced it with a pilot of their own 'Sainsbury's Sustainability Standards Programme'. This worries ECCR and many other people. The pilot Sustainability Standards Programme will be very much in Sainsbury's control whereas the Fairtrade certification brings over 20 years' experience providing independent verification of businesses' supply chains.

We feel that the decision to brand the tea products involved in the pilot as 'Fairly Traded' is misleading to consumers.

Add to the over 94,000 who have signed the **'Sainsbury's: don't ditch Fairtrade!'** petition on change.org
<https://www.change.org/p/sainsbury-s-don-t-ditch-fairtrade> .

Keep on buying Fairtrade certified tea!

Wednesday October 11th at 6 pm
St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, London,
EC2V 6AU. (2 minutes from St Paul's
Cathedral).

A joint event between ECCR and Just
Share on the theme of:

Inter-Generational Justice

More details will appear on the Just
Share website:
<http://www.justshare.org.uk>

Before this meeting (left) ECCR
supporters are warmly invited to meet
Trustees and staff over a cup of tea to
learn and contribute about what ECCR
is doing and developing.

4.30 pm in the Vestry of
St Mary-le-Bow Church.

If you can, let us know if you're coming:
john.arnold@eccr.org.uk

NEWS FROM ECCR

If you're on Twitter, follow us on [@eccr1](#)

Inter-Generational Justice

This is becoming one of ECCR's main foci for the next period: what responsibility do older people, most of whom are benefitting from secured pensions and property, have to a younger generation who do not enjoy such benefits, let alone the more long-term risks associated with national debt and climate change? We are preparing a paper for the website, and (see above) arranging a Panel Discussion with Just Share on October 11th.

Have your say!

ECCR supporters are invited to tea before the October 11th meeting to meet Trustees and staff and talk about what ECCR is doing. Details above.

Tax Justice

ECCR was one of the sponsors, along with the Methodist Tax Justice Network and others, of a meeting in Birmingham this month. It was addressed by Alex Cobham from the Tax Justice Network (see <http://www.taxjustice.net>) and began to consider how the Churches might better organize themselves around these issues.

Corporate Members

ECCR was represented at this month's SRI presentation by Edentree Investment Management (formerly Ecclesiastical Investment Management) and one of our corporate members. We welcome such invitations and the opportunity to share with the wider ECCR network what our corporate members are doing.

http://i.emlfiles4.com/cmpdoc/1/4/2/4/3/1/files/36353_edentree-sri-seminar-presentation.pdf

Ethical Money Churches

Update from the South West

We are continuing to plan how we can extend our work into Bristol. A number of churches in the existing South West network have pledged support to the appointment of an EMC Development Officer in the area. If you would like to support the development of our work in this area and for further information, please contact Sabrina.Groschel@eccr.org.uk

Update from the West Midlands

Abi Nicholls will be leaving us for pastures anew at the end of July. Our thanks to Abi for her work in the time she has been with us and the progress she has made in developing the Ethical Money Churches project. Abi is continuing with her role with Birmingham Churches Together and we look forward to maintaining our links with her in that capacity. We will be recruiting for Abi's replacement – details will be posted soon on the ECCR website. All enquiries should be made to john.arnold@eccr.org.uk.

Mitie PLC

A group of ECCR supporters in Oxfordshire continue to monitor the activities of Mitie plc which now manages the Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre, just outside Oxford. By purchasing a small number of shares they are able to attend the AGM and other on-site meetings about the conditions in which inmates are held. They say "We believe that immigration detention is neither right nor necessary, but until such time as the law is changed, we shall campaign on the issue and monitor the conditions for these very vulnerable men held in prison like conditions without any end point to their detention. Shareholder action is one piece of the toolkit."

South Africa

On Wednesday, 16th August there will be a 5th Anniversary Demonstration organised by the Marikana Miners Solidarity Campaign in London outside the Lonmin Head Office in London followed by a Remembrance Vigil outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square. In January, ECCR, together with corporate member USPG and other members of the London Mining Network, joined the former Bishop of Pretoria, Jo Seoka, at a picket outside the London AGM of Lonmin. This campaign is to get better compensation for those bereaved and injured by the massacre at the Marikana platinum mine in 2012, and to improve conditions there now. Lonmin describes Marikana as its flagship operation, and their main German customer, BASF, is also being urged to step up.

Please contact mambushlives@gmail.com for further information and if you would like to join in support.

Newsletter:

There is no e-Newsletter in August, so the next issue will be at end of September.

OTHER NEWS

BANKING

A Daily Mail feature on inventions that have changed the world includes Temple Church, site of London's first bank. "The Knights Templar were the Western Union of the Crusades".

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4669310/Frozen-pizza-did-people-washing-machine.html>

BREXIT

In the House of Lords debate on the Queen's Speech the Archbishop of York joined senior political figures like Ken Clarke, William Hague, Nick Clegg and Peter Mandelson in calling for a cross-party commission to oversee the Government's Brexit negotiations.

<http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/archbishop-of-york-joins-growing-list-calling-for-cross-party-brex-it-commission-1-8621228>

CHURCH INVESTORS

Loretta Minghella, the Chief Executive of Christian Aid, is to be the next First Church Estates Commissioner. The Commissioner is the Chair of the Church Commissioners' Assets Committee, a statutory committee, responsible for the strategic management of the Church Commissioners' £7.9 billion investment portfolio.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/06/loretta-minghella-announced-as-next-first-church-estates-commissioner.aspx>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Christian Aid says that the G20 summit in Hamburg showed that President Trump's announced withdrawal from the Paris Agreement means that he stands alone on climate change, and he has relegated himself to the side-lines of climate change negotiations.

http://www.christianaid.org.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/May_2017/g20-leaders-must-show-trump-he-stands-alone-on-climate-change.aspx

DEBT

The Executive Director of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Just Finance Foundation has called for training to be provided to help people identify neighbours and friends in financial distress amid growing concern that rising numbers of people are at risk of falling into problem debt.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2017/06/new-call-for-training-to-help-identify-neighbours-and-friends-in-financial-distress.aspx>

ECONOMICS

Speaking at the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches meeting in Leipzig, veteran theologian Jurgen Moltmann named capitalism as one of “the gods of death”, for promising wealth and producing poverty. “The democratic idea of equality is incompatible with an economic system that produces ever greater inequality among peoples”.

<http://wrcr.ch/news/the-living-god-challenges-death-and-destruction-jurgen-moltmann-tells-global-gathering-of-reformed-churches>

“A new economy: what it could look like and how to get there” is one of the sessions at the Quakers in Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering in Warwick, July 29 – August 5, arising from the work of Quaker Peace & Social Witness on creating a Quaker vision for a new economy

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym/timetable?utf8=%E2%9C%93&search=Economics>

In a General Synod debate on “the state of the nation” the Archbishop of York said that our taxation system should make clear that while private property may be an efficient way of ensuring that our resources are stewarded and cared for, it is in no way absolute. We don't ‘own’ our money; we ‘care for’ our money as part of the whole human resource for our social flourishing.

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2017/14-july/news/uk/we-don-t-own-our-money-says-dr-sentamu>

A blog on the *EKKLESIA* website about Glenfall Tower says that society as a whole ought to ask itself about the assumptions and values which underpinned the catastrophe. These include the idolisation of profit – and, arising from this, the belief that the rich are better than others and should be further rewarded – and disdain for those on low incomes.

<http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/24075>

FAIR TRADE

The Church of Scotland has expressed concern that two major UK supermarket chains are reported to be considering changing the way they label Fairtrade produce.

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/recent/consumers_urged_to_keep_buying_fairtrade_goods

The Joint Public Issues Team (Baptist, Methodist, Church of Scotland, and United Reformed Church) is urging church members to write to Sainsbury's saying that by withdrawing from Fairtrade Sainsburys would undermine the Fairtrade mark.

<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/write-to-sainsburys/>

FOSSIL FUELS

The annual Methodist Conference last month voted for the principle of withdrawing investments from fossil fuel companies whose plans are at odds with the Paris Agreement on climate change.

<http://brightnow.org.uk/news/methodist-church-takes-step-closer-divestment/>

A report from the Transition Pathway Initiative, which includes the Church of England's investing bodies, says that many of the world's leading coal mining companies are failing to properly manage the climate change threats faced by their business and are "poorly prepared for the inevitable regulatory risks" impacting their industry.

<https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3013608/tpi-coal-mining-companies-poorly-prepared-for-climate-change-risk>

Operation Noah says that the shareholders, including the Church of England, who forced Exxon's Board of Directors. to report on the impacts of climate policies on its business, have not gone far enough. Their resolution does not require ExxonMobil to reduce its carbon emissions.

<http://brightnow.org.uk/news/exxon-climate-resolution-passed-despite-opposition-board/>

GLOBALISATION

On the eve of the G20 meeting in Hamburg, the World Council of Churches, ACT Alliance and All Africa Conference of Churches urged G20 leaders to take action to overcome hunger and sustain justice and peace in the Horn of Africa.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/call-to-action-g20-leaders-must-lead-fight-against-hunger>

Church involvement at the G20 meeting included an ecumenical service at which Dr. Agnes Abuom (Moderator of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches) called for sustainable economic growth, greater women's participation and more progressive investment in Africa.

<http://blog.oikoumene.org/posts/songs-and-more-for-global-justice>

Pope Francis has said that the international community must not remain resigned to the plight of those suffering hunger and malnutrition, which is often caused by the indifference of many and the selfishness of a few.

<http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com/pope-hunger-caused-indifference-many-selfishness-13671>

LATIN AMERICA

Pope Francis has said that the current social and economic crisis facing Latin American countries has allowed for the “growth of poverty, unemployment, social inequality” and a situation in which the planet, “our common home, is exploited and abused.”

<http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com/poverty-inequality-latin-america-unthinkable-levels-pope-says-13649>

MODERN SLAVERY

Churches Together in England has launched a new report, “Behind Closed Doors”, which calls on Black Pentecostal Churches to do more to tackle the ‘hidden’ scourge of women blighted by human trafficking and modern slavery.

http://www.cte.org.uk/Articles/500687/Home/News/Latest_news_articles/Press_Release_Behind.aspx

MUSLIMS

A report by the Citizens Commission on Islam, Participation and Public Life, part-funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, says that more needs to be done, not just to provide more equitable access to opportunities for British Muslims but to allow the British economy to harness the full potential of this significant section of the population.

https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/newcitizens/pages/1261/attachments/original/1499106471/Missing_Muslims_Report_-_Electronic_copy.pdf

NORTH OF ENGLAND

In the Queen’s Speech debate on business, economic affairs, energy, transport, environment and agriculture, the Bishop of Durham argued for the importance of investment in the North-East of England and including all groups in discussions around Brexit, the Northern Powerhouse and the Industrial Strategy.

<https://churchinparliament.org/2017/06/26/queens-speech-2017-bishop-of-durham-outlines-opportunities-and-risks-facing-north-east/>

PENSIONS

The list of finalists and winners in the Pension Scheme of the Year awards included the Church of England Pensions Board in the finalists for the Best DB Scheme Innovation category.

<https://www.professionalpensions.com/professional-pensions/news/3012939/pension-scheme-of-the-year-awards-2017-the-winners>

POVERTY

Church Action on Poverty arranged for three groups of residents from Leeds, Teesside and London to share their stories at an event hosted by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty in the Houses of Parliament
<https://blog.church-poverty.org.uk/2017/07/14/our-day-in-parliament-the-truth-about-poverty-and-how-to-tackle-it/#more-3962>

The Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, has called on the Government to put child poverty at the top of its agenda. He was speaking following the publication of the Social Mobility Commission report showing a failure to narrow the gap between the rich and poor.
<https://www.christiantoday.com/article/children.suffer.and.britain.faces.perilous.future.as.poverty.deepens.across.the.nation/110276.htm>

In a joint venture between the Church Urban Fund, York Diocese and Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland, holiday schemes served 5,000 meals in Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland last year and this summer organisers expect to provide even more.
<https://www.facebook.com/notes/church-of-england/food-friendship-and-fun-holiday-schemes-supported-by-church-urban-fund/10155059694023143/>

RURAL LIFE

In the debate on the Queen's Speech, the Bishop of St Albans focused on the impact of Brexit on agriculture and fishing, and on the environment, calling for legislation on clean air.
<https://churchinparliament.org/2017/06/26/queens-speech-2017-bishop-of-st-albans-discusses-farming-fishing-and-environment/>

The Bishop of St Albans, as President of the Rural Coalition, has joined others in saying that Brexit and other new government policies must provide opportunities to build affordable housing, infrastructure and economic development to the right level for rural areas to prosper and be sustainable
<https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/rural-campaigners-lobby-for-boost-in-affordable-homes-51342>

The Rural Coalition has also published a report saying that more than nine million people live and work in rural England, yet their concerns are in danger of being squeezed out if Brexit discussions focus only on agriculture and the environment. It argues that the effects of austerity and corporate cost-cutting have already decimated vital rural services, "risking rural communities becoming enclaves only for the wealthy".
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jul/15/countryside-crisis-rural-britain-north-yorkshire>

TAX

Christians on the Left, a supporter of the Financial Transaction Tax – the so-called "Robin Hood Tax" - has welcomed the release of a milestone report in the campaign which they say would benefit the whole of the UK.

<http://www.christiansontheleft.org.uk/news>

UNITED STATES

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) has urged US Senators not to pass the Financial Choice Act which they say would severely weaken corporate accountability structures and critical financial regulation meant to safeguard the public and the economy.

<http://www.iccr.org/citing-increased-financial-risks-investors-urge-senators-reject-financial-choice-act>

WELFARE

The Church of Scotland has reacted with dismay to the UK Government's decision to close job centres in Scotland, including six in Glasgow, saying that the decision ignores the needs of jobseekers, especially those who lack computer skills or do not have access to getting online.

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/recent/kirk_criticises_decision_to_close_job_centres_in_scotland

A blog on the EKKLESIA website says that for people who most need help and support, particularly sick or disabled people, the welfare state has been 'reformed' so badly it is now completely failing them. The safety net has been shredded and people are falling through into the type of living conditions we'd expect to see in a developing country.

<http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/24119>

VACANCIES

ECCR Ethical Money Churches Project – West Midlands

ECCR will shortly be advertising for a new part-time Development Officer. Details will appear on the website: www.eccr.org.uk or contact john.arnold@eccr.org.uk.

Student Christian Movement

SCM currently has two vacancies for their staff team in Birmingham: a Fundraising Officer (28 hours per week) with a salary from £22k, and an SCM Connect Project Worker (28 hour per week with the possibility of becoming full time), with a salary starting at £20k. The closing date for applications is 5pm on Wednesday 2nd August. Further information, including details of how to apply, can be found at www.movement.org.uk/jobs

RESOURCES

“Amity Insight: The Future of Work” has been produced by Edentree Investment Managers, part of the Allchurches Trust and a corporate member of ECCR. It says that the UK labour market, while outwardly successful and buoyant, masks some significant structural challenges.

<https://www.edentreeim.com/docs/default-source/LiteratureLibrary/amity-insights/amity-insight-the-future-of-work.pdf>

“Reclaiming the Common Good: How Christians can re-build our broken world”

edited by Virginia Moffatt.

£14.99 Darton, Longman and Todd

What kind of world do we want to live in? One that works for a few, or one that works for the common good? And what part can Christians play in building a future of hope, peace, equality and justice?

<http://dltbooks.com/titles/2205-9780232533156-reclaiming-the-common-good>

“Feast or Famine: How the Gospel challenges austerity”

edited by Simon Barrow, Co-Director of Ekklesia

£5.99 Darton, Longman and Todd, to be published in November 2017

A five-week Lent course for groups and individuals looking at the practical issues of austerity versus plenty in modern Britain.

<http://dltbooks.com/titles/2195-9780232532616-feast-or-famine>

EVENTS

Greenbelt Festival

August 25 – 28

Boughton House, Kettering.

This year's theme is "The Common Good", and will include the launch of THE EXCHANGE: Enterprise for the Common Good

<http://www.greenbelt.org.uk/enterprise-for-the-common-good-introducing-the-exchange/>

Ethical business practice in a post-truth world

6 pm Wednesday 13th September 2017 at [St James's Church](#), Piccadilly

A Just Share event

Last year the Oxford Dictionaries named 'post-truth' as the Word of the Year. When facts are no longer considered important, where do international businesses stand? How does one establish business practices when feeling and emotion are the markers for what is considered 'real'? How can businesses navigate this new political reality and keep operating in an ethical way?

<http://www.justshare.org.uk/events/4567220764>

Taking the High Road: The Business Case for a Just Workplace

The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility's Annual Event

Thursday, September 28th, 2017

3:30 - 8:30 pm

The Riverside Church, New York City.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/taking-the-high-road/event-summary-d26098e3ece24a848a383d5d16ad2a0b.aspx>

Good Money Week

October 8th – 14th

<http://www.goodmoneyweek.com/>

ECCR Supporters Event

Wednesday October 11th at 4.30pm

Join us for an update on ECCR's activities over a cup of tea

St Mary-le-Bow Church, Cheapside, London

Inter-Generational Justice

Wednesday October 11th at 6pm

St Mary-le-Bow Church, Cheapside, London

A joint ECCR / Just Share Panel

What have faith & money got to do with Climate Change?

Thursday October 12th: 9.15 to 3.30pm

A Good Money Week Conference organised by the Church of Scotland, Christian Aid Scotland, Eco-Congregation Scotland and Oikocredit.

How can our financial investments have an impact on Climate Change?

Speakers include ECCR's Executive Director.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-have-faith-and-money-got-to-do-with-climate-change-tickets-35685901492>

Business as a force for good

The Salt Annual Event: Monday 16th October: 6.30-9.00pm

CCLA , London EC4V 4ET

SALT is Christian Aid's new network uniting faith & business to transform communities.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/business-as-a-force-for-good-tickets-34423934916>

Ethical employment practices at home and abroad

A Just Share panel event

Tuesday 24th October, 6pm at All Hallows-by-the-Tower

Employment is the foundation of any business and the cornerstone of ethical business practice. How can companies ensure that the employees throughout their supply chain are being treated fairly?

<http://www.justshare.org.uk/events/4567220764>

AND FINALLY....

Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, has suggested that his company could fill the gap in people's lives left by the decline of churches, as well as other organisations. "A lot of people now need to find a sense of purpose and support somewhere else," he said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/29/mark-zuckerberg-church-facebook-social-network>

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