

Conference Recorder

Four pages of news and photographs from this year's Conference area, compiled by David Butterworth.

A District that reaches out to the community

A message from Chair of the Birmingham District the Rev Ian Howarth

IT is good to be able to welcome Conference again to the NEC in Solihull, as Chair of the Birmingham District. As a District, our mission statement is that we seek to be a "Church Without Walls", reaching out to our communities in mission and service and not constrained by the institution.

Each year we encourage churches to engage in acts of mission outside the church in our "Together in Mission Week". This year some examples among many others have included having a church tent in the Town Show, handing sweets and water out at the Birmingham Pride event and having a Sunday service in a local pub that John Wesley visited in 1745!

The District is committed to supporting the development of new congregations and church plants and that is to be the priority for our new mission adviser who starts work with us in September. At present the "Jazz Church" and the "New Inclusive Church" are developing well as District projects and are growing Christian communities that attract younger adults in ways many of our traditional churches struggle to do. We are conscious that we are seeking to develop our mission in a diverse area that presents many opportunities and challenges.

Change

At the heart of the District lies the city of Birmingham which continues to change and develop at an amazing rate. New office developments seek with some success to entice firms to move their headquarters out of London; brown field sites are being used to build housing – ranging from luxury flats to affordable homes –

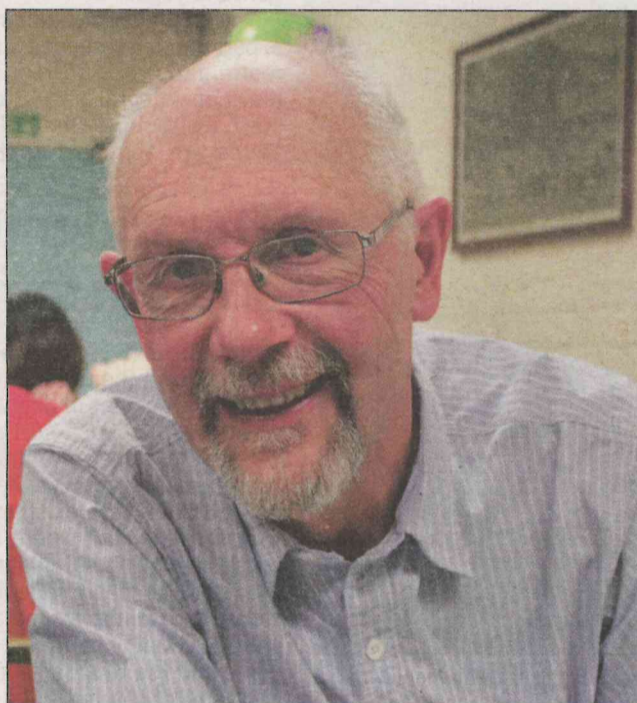
and at the heart of the city there is the development of Millenium Point around the old Curzon Street station to prepare the way for HS2, the fast rail link to London. For many in the city this presents new employment opportunities and is exciting and positive; for many in the rural areas the rail link is due to travel through, it is a despoiler of the environment and a waste of money. It shows something of the tension in the relationship between the city and the surrounding areas of the District.

Growing

Within Birmingham, despite the development, the signs of austerity are real with growing numbers of rough sleepers on the streets and in the continued struggles of Birmingham City Council to provide adequate services in the light of continuing cuts. Methodists are involved in the city's homelessness forum and in foodbanks across the District. Added to this the uncertainty of Brexit has led to pressures on the main employers of the region, such as Jaguar Landrover in Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham, whose workers are now on short time in the light of smaller orders.

The city rejoices in its diversity, but the last year has seen challenges to social cohesion. The rise in knife crime has led to tragic deaths in various areas and the witness of the Rev Andrew Brazier in walking with a cross of knives to London from Birmingham during Holy Week helped raise awareness and show the Churches' concerns.

Another challenge that the city faces is the demonstrations outside schools in predominantly Muslim areas



against inclusive relationship education. This has led to tensions between some Muslim groups and the LGBT community in the city.

As we seek to promote equality, diversity and Inclusion within society as well as the Church, these issues are not always easy, but Methodists are seeking to build relationships of trust and understanding across divides through involvement in the Faith Leaders Group, local interfaith groups, Christians at Pride and the Inclusive Church network.

The District also sponsors work with the victims of modern slavery through our Adavu project and the community sponsorship of a Syrian refugee family as a sign of our engagement with social justice.

During the past two years we have also developed a link with the Kadoma District of the Methodist Church of Zimbabwe. Last year a group from our District visited their synod and began developing the relationship. This May, seven representatives from Kadoma, including their bi-

shop, shared with us for 10 days around synod, and the growing friendship and partnership is developing a deeper understanding of what it means to be fellow Methodists living out our faith in very different contexts.

Across the District the Methodist Church faces the challenges that are common across the Connexion of smaller numbers and an ageing demographic. However, it is an exciting place to be, with many opportuni-

ties and people committed to God's mission in all its aspects.

We pray that Conference will catch something of the passion for mission and inclusion that are at the heart of our District life.

CHURCH
WITHOUT
WALLS

J. WIPPELL & Co LTD

Clerical Outfitters & Church Furnishings Since 1789

Short sleeve versions of our popular tunnel style clerical shirts and blouses are available to order online. To see our full range of styles visit www.wippell.co.uk

Exeter 88 Buller Rd, EX4 1DQ
Tel: 01392 254234
London 11 Tufton St, SW1P 3QB
Tel: 020 7222 4528
Manchester 9-21 Princess St, M2 4DN
Tel: 0161 834 7967

Email: wippell@btinternet.com



A 'fantastic venue'

A warm welcome from NEC Group chief executive officer Paul Thandi

I WOULD like to take this opportunity to welcome you on behalf of the NEC Group to this year's Methodist Conference. On Birmingham's NEC campus we have the beauty of being able to offer fantastic venues for events and live experiences at the NEC, Resorts World Arena and the Vox Conference Centre, as well as the International Convention Centre (ICC) and Arena Birmingham in Birmingham city centre.

Our region is experiencing an exciting period of development, which we are very proud to be playing a part. We are a key player in the delivery of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, hosting a total of nine sports in three of our venues – the NEC, Resorts World Arena and Arena Birmingham – and we share the vision to showcase our region to a new global audience.

During the past year our customer feedback scores have been consistently high, averaging 4.5 out of 5, because our staff really care about the experience we offer our customers. The NEC Group values its staff and to reflect this we invest in many aspects of the business, including the chaplaincy. In return our chaplaincy team gives us the opportunity to extend our hand of faith, peace and wellbeing to all staff and visitors. The chaplaincy team welcomes people of all faiths, or those expressing no faith at all, and I know that their door is always open.

Caring for our staff is high on my agenda and following a very successful Mental Health Awareness week, I was very pleased to sign a pledge to change how we all think and act about mental health. "Time to Change" is the growing social movement run by charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness to support people to open up to mental health problems. By signing the "Time to Change" employer pledge, NEC Group is committing to change the way we all think and act about mental health in the workplace.

The NEC Group has committed to support the "Time to Change" action plan of activity which will help to break the silence that surrounds mental health in the workplace. That action plan started during Mental Health Awareness week, with an amazing range of daily activities on offer to all staff, from choir sessions to walks through our local woodlands and lunchtime yoga.

The NEC Group chaplaincy is part of our human resource team and in that respect plays an integral part of our staff wellbeing. Our colleagues are the best in the business and we wouldn't have built the business to be the success it is today without great people. However, with the number of events and people on our site at any one time increasing year on year, we must make sure that our staff in particular always feel supported.

The Rev David Butterworth and his team are part of that support on offer when our team need a moment of quiet or peaceful reflection. I sincerely hope that you have an enjoyable Conference and have the opportunity to look around the NEC campus to see some of our new developments as part of your visit.



The Rev David Butterworth

The Rev David Butterworth

The Rev David Butterworth

Welcoming strangers into the studio

TIM Senna is a well-known radio and music personality in the West Midlands. Why is he passionate about radio and church? "Radio for me is intertwined in my faith and belief in God. Having grown up going to church, Jesus' teachings of companionship and kindness made a big impact on me and now, as an adult, every single person I meet via radio I try to treat with the kindness and love I grew up with.

"Each week I welcome a stranger into my studio, investing time in getting to know them and listening to their art or music, then self-



Conference young person representative Tim Senna with the Rev David Butterworth.

lessly do what I can to help guide them as I too feel I have been guided. In a competitive and turbulent industry my faith also keeps me persisting in achieving my dream of becoming a Radio 1 presenter through ups and downs.

"After years of working voluntarily I got a career break a

year ago and then was asked to work at Radio 1 as a result of good performance at BBC Asian Network in Birmingham.

"I feel God's hand throughout my journey giving me inner strength during harder times and guiding me towards a dream I feel is meant for me."

The widening gulf between foodbanks and customers of high street banks

HOMELESSNESS is in all our villages and towns within the wider District. In our larger cities it is evident in doorways and in villages where people couch-surf or stay with friends here and there. Many churches support local homelessness groups and it is wise to work in collaboration with existing projects.

In Birmingham, where the Rev Neil Johnson is chair of the Christian Homeless Forum, they took to heart listening to the biblical story where all the respectable citizens are invited to a kingly banquet, but they decline to come and the King is "hopping mad". He orders one of his servants to go out into the lanes and back alleys and invite those folks who are never invited to a party. By doing so, the neediest of society become honoured guests and receive a taste of God's new world.

That parable has been the inspiration for Carrs Lane LEP (Local Ecumenical Partnership) to run "Street Banquet". This regular event of food and fellowship began seven years ago in the redundant graveyard. It became a place of resurrection and then moved indoors, firstly at the Methodist Central Mission and then in the church at Carrs Lane.

A week before each "Street Banquet" invitations go out to members of the city's street community. Over the years these invitations have been distributed through outreach partner teams at St Martins in the Bull Ring and Sifa Fireside. The "Street Banquet" has a team of volunteer chefs, waiters and befrienders and theological students from the Queen's Foundation.

In our attempt to be faithful to the message of Jesus' parable, those who attend are treated as honoured guests and the number has been increasing at an alarming rate during recent months. Thirty invitations are sent out with the understanding that guests can bring companions with them, which has meant that they cater for anything up to 100 people.

By the grace of God and the culinary skill of the kitchen team, everyone who comes is welcomed and fed. Need is growing in our society. Food has certainly become a political issue. The gulf between the users of foodbanks and customers of high street banks is widening. We are called by Jesus to offer a unique way of living by welcoming those in need and sharing a taste of the new world.

Gold standard first

THE District is rightly proud of our determined churches committed to travelling the ECO pathway. Several churches have community litter-picks, improved eco lighting recycling events to name a few initiatives.

Churches like Evesham have been at the forefront of this for many years, so it is also of special interest that Quinton church has a very active Boys' and Girls' Brigades which recently devoted a whole Saturday clearing a local heritage site, collecting many bags of discarded waste and recycling it.

Further in the District, for-

mer Vice-President of the Conference and leader of the Joint Public Issues Team Rachel Lampard is to share worship during her visit to Solihull church and present their new Silver ECO award. After the service, she will lead a workshop over a bring and share lunch.

District applause also goes to Stratford-upon-Avon church, who joined the ECO-Congregation in 2004 and over 10 years gained three awards (Recorder, June 7). Now they have gained the position of the first Methodist church in the Connexion to achieve Gold ECO status (only five

churches in the whole of the UK). It's a premier award presented by A Rocha ECO Church Scheme.

The achievement includes solar panels, a ground source heat pump, organic gardens and even rainwater to flush toilets.

This mission has dovetailed beautifully with the wider mission of the church to enable more communities to utilise the premises without raising ECO concerns, but actively reducing environment impact and acting as a peer group with ECO good practice signposting to others.



The Eco Church gold award being presented at Stratford-upon-Avon church to chair of the church green group Dr Lim Ho, by the Rev Jennifer Potter.

Working outside church walls

THE Birmingham District comprises 150 Methodist churches, some of which are in cathedral cities like Birmingham, Coventry, Hereford and Worcester and some are in beautiful country idylls or hamlets like Welford-on-Avon, Mickleton, or Cotswold chocolate-box villages like Broadway, surrounded by rolling high "Wolds". Heraldic War-

wick is in its midst as a historic castle landmark alongside Kenilworth.

Some of the places are still famous for the once thriving automotive industry such as Coventry, Longbridge and Solihull, with brand names like Land Rover Ltd, Jaguar Cars, Alvis, Austin, Rover and Lucas to name a few. These places were blighted by re-

cession and market forces, but in many areas they have fought and come back into life like a phoenix offering IT and management services.

Some areas hold on to their royal appendages like Royal Leamington Spa and the royal town of Sutton Coldfield and are still recognised as affluent places in general.

Moseley, on the outskirts of Birmingham, was voted by "Sunday Times" readers as Britain's most desirable place to live a couple of years ago (beating Mayfair!) and is squeezed between Edgbaston and Kings Heath.

In all of these places there are a variety of stories, some churches doing well, others finding life tough, but in all

this there is the call to offer love to our neighbours.

The District enjoys the rich diversity of Methodists and especially partners from Zimbabwe, China, Fiji, Sierra Leone, the Americas and Caribbean islands and many other places along with many wonderful local people too.

Within this context the District is hailing its pro-

gramme of Mission #Church without walls. Reflecting "Our Calling" the District encouraged each church to consider what it could do with a little encouragement from the District; and the churches have had encouraging times engaging with wider communities outside church walls and the results are amazing.

Zimbabwean visitors are offered a warm welcome

AT our recent synod in Stratford-upon-Avon we welcomed a Zimbabwean group of ministers and lay members who visited the District staying with families around the wider area. It was a joy to see them welcomed to synod by Chair the Rev Ian Howarth. The growing Zimbabwean Fellowship Youth Group from Coventry Central Hall were also there to welcome them.

After visiting various Methodist heritage centres such as New Room, Bristol, they were also welcomed at Stockland Road church with the Birmingham Zimbabwean

fellowship and partners from many places around the UK. This hand of friendship and learning exchange followed a group of Birmingham District ministers and lay members who visited Zimbabwe two years ago.

We look forward to more exchanges of learning and formation opportunities. Around the same time, the Zimbabwean Fellowship held a national gathering in Selly Oak where hundreds of Zimbabweans came to gather with District staff and supporting circuits for a "Night Prayer" and celebration.



A "Night Prayer" and celebration

A REFLECTION ON 'SITTING DOWN'

MANY of our District churches are blessed by local preachers and supernumerary ministers who are freely joining in with their rich tapestry of wisdom and manifesting their calling. Minister in the Birmingham circuit and former President of the Conference the Rev Kenneth Howcroft says: "This Conference I shall be asking for permission to cease travelling as an itinerant minister and 'sit down'."

He is too busy now to think much about it. However, he is starting to realise that this is not about ceasing to be a minister, but moving on to the next stage of vocation as a minister. That is not quite the same thing as having a calling to be permanently on holiday, he says. But the trouble is that he cannot envisage very well what it will entail, or, worse, how to feel about it. Ken Howcroft thinks that "I shall be re-learning the prayer in the Covenant Service, 'let me be laid aside for you'. Or, to put it another way, it might be a sort of death and (I hope) resurrection which will be accompanied by a breaking into new life."

Wherever his new life may unfold we know he will pray for and actively seek the peace of God and recognising the well-being of others is not easy. It requires people of faith not just to have the form of godliness, but also to be empowered by it.

Chaplaincy in everyday places

THE District is well known for its longstanding focus on chaplaincy, not only in the world-famous Birmingham Children's Hospital and the world-leading Queen Elizabeth Hospital (often receiving critically ill soldiers from war-torn contexts), but also for chaplains in everyday places. We offer chaplains in the shopping centre at Redditch, the Bull Ring in Birmingham, on National Express buses, within several Methodist Homes (MHA) and leading universities including Aston, Birmingham, Coventry and Warwick. Also in local hospices, mental health support centres, school and colleges.

Wherever we are able, we work collaboratively with chaplaincy groups such as the Black Country Industrial and Urban Mission, WORKCARE in Coventry, CIGB Churches Industry Group in Birmingham and Faith in Work Worcestershire to name a few.

The Queen's Foundation and other theological colleges frequently ask us to host a student discerning a chaplaincy ministry pathway.

DISTRICT IN BRIEF

Are we in 'Christ's way?'

MINISTER in the Stratford and Evesham circuit the Rev Israel Selvanayagam writes: "If Christian life proper is God-centred, Christ-minded and Spirit-led, there should be a serious and honest review of what we are and what we do. For example, is God's place in our life central or marginal, part of the main course or ice cream in a pudding? Does the Church stand for a decent and dignified social club or for transforming fellowship of love-minded disciples of Christ? Living with a relative affluence with a false notion of civilisation can be deceptive for our self-understanding.

"If the trifling charities, however mushrooming they are, go on without questioning the structures that perpetuate injustice and conflict, and without caring about the dignity and self-reliance of the individuals and families, through a new orientation in life, they fall short of mission being in Christ's way."

3Generate – inspirational

THE District actively encouraged the young people to explore 3Generate. The Birmingham circuit young people would like to say "Thank you" to the Methodist Connexion for the concept, organisation and vision of 3Generate, which is a huge task and a mammoth logistical event; to the Birmingham circuit for supporting our young people; to the 3Generate youth reps who inspired us to attend; to Ermine and Hazel for leading and organising us all; to the leaders who went on the weekend; to the local churches for their financial support; and to the army of volunteers who helped the event to run smoothly.

Happy to be sent to Coventry

AN inclusive community – no one is ever excluded from full membership or leadership roles within our community at Coventry because of age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation or ability. Outreach and discipleship leader Noah Mitchell says: "Hello! Let me show you around. I'm Noah and I have been working with students at the Spirituality and Faith Centre at Coventry University from September 2018 in addition to my role here at Central Hall. I've been working with young adults for a while now and I'm always happy to chat with you, pray for you and get you in touch with someone if you ever need a hand. Just give me a shout over email or on twitter."

Stridently supporting the living wage

THE District has longstanding relationships with the Living Wage Foundation and several Methodist ministers have been privileged to launch the annual uplift in the West Midlands. Through our strident support of Living Wage, Birmingham City Council is now seriously looking at becoming the first Living Wage city in England. It already has the Living Wage plaque on its main public notice board as you arrive at the council chambers. Our District treasurer ensures our circuits are kept up to date with increases each year.



Mapping our young people

RUDA Mvundura joined us from Zimbabwe a few months ago for almost two years (getting a VISA was arduous and shortened her time with us). This is part of a pilot as MCiB (Methodist Church in Britain) further considers the merits of such exchange programmes. Ruda's core task while she is with us in the District is to map where our young people and young adults are and help dispel the rumour that we don't have any young people.

Her life in Birmingham started with a high-profile meeting with the Lord Mayor of

Birmingham around a homeless programme which led to developing a meeting with many of our District's young people and the Lord Mayor. The young people articulated that they were very concerned about knife crime and the number of homeless people they see in the streets where they live.

It is hoped the young people will continue their social justice exploration alongside their faith development by visiting the prestigious Birmingham Council Chamber and holding interviews with cabinet members.



Last year the young people held worship around refugee issues and the damages caused by a consumer world. This has led to increased youth developed worship which is travelling around Birmingham.

Chinese Methodist church

THE Birmingham Chinese Methodist church (formerly Birmingham Chinese Christian church) was established in Northfield church from several Chinese Christian fellowships in 1994. The church focuses on supporting students, families and professionals recently arrived from the Far East such as Hong Kong SAR, Singapore, Malaysia and mainland China as well as local born Chinese community in nurturing their spiritual life.

It is a very active community and organises several wonderful events each year. Recently delicious Chinese food was offered at the Birmingham circuit staff meeting.

Knife angel

Coventry city being the centre for peace and reconciliation received the amazing Knife Angel made entirely out of knives and 4m high. It stood for several weeks very poignantly outside the steps of Coventry Cathedral.

People visited from miles around leaving prayer and floral tributes. It enabled people to express their grief around knife crime and pledge to help bring peace.

This spurred the Rev Andrew Brazier and his church members to support the creation of a local "Cross of Knives" which was designed to travel in a trailer as well as be an icon in churches and community centres.

At Easter the working party walked the cross to Westminster, London, from Erdington, calling at Daventry and Milton Keynes on the way (Recorder, April 26).

Willersey – chocolate box pretty

RENOWNED Cotswold furniture maker Gordon Russell had a hand in designing the unique oak pews and other furniture in the Willersey church. However, the attractive building was cold and the kitchen outdated, so in January 2011 it underwent an environmentally-friendly refurbishment to install new insulation, secondary glazing and a new kitchen. The congregation was granted £10,000 from Corby International,

through the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust, to add to funds raised from other grant-making bodies. The total came to £45,000. The church is now kept at a constant temperature to help preserve all the prized furniture and fittings.

The unique oak pews and all the other church furniture were created at the Gordon Russell factory in Broadway. Martin Blakeman's father, Jack, finally designed and co-ordinated all the fur-

niture, some on an order and some, particularly the pulpit and Communion table, were made by members of the church who worked for Sir Gordon. The wood was bought through the factory and then the items were made charitably outside of usual working hours.

Many people from Willersey worked at the Russell's site in Broadway. Now the church and beautiful garden are available for more community initiatives.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

EVERYTHING we do has some element of EDI within its planning, but we recognise that we can always do more. "Imagine'19" was held in the spring attracting 400 visitors to Carrs Lane church centre. This was the second major conference on fresh ways of being church. This gathering was centred on hundreds of diverse Christians engaging in thoughtful conversations around leadership, mission, inclusive evangelism, church growth and innovation, with several cutting-edge practitioners around

renewal in the UK.

Speakers included John Bell of Wild Goose Worship Group, Bishop Mike Royal of Cinnamon Network, Rachel Lampard of JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team), Chair of Birmingham District the Rev Ian Howarth and Chair of Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District the Rev Rachel Parkinson. Workshops were offered on various subjects including raising awareness around EDI.

THE Rev Farai Mapamula is now leading our District's EDI

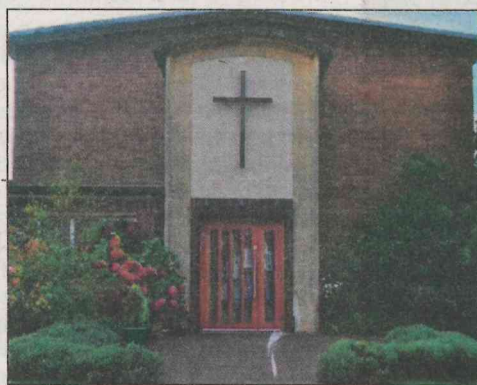
platform. Farai informed synod that she will look to develop wider engagement with circuits to raise the profile of EDI and the Methodist Church Toolkit. Ms Mapamula spoke passionately about recognising that there is much to be done. The groundwork in the EDI workshops at "Re-imagine'19", which Ms Mapamula facilitated, showed that circuits were keen for wider inclusion in awareness and information offerings for further dissemination and, not least, for EDI sessions locally in circuits.

Children-centred ministry

MANY of our churches have children-centred ministry with crèche facilities, children's corners, messy church, farm days, mums' groups, dads' morning with children and uniformed organisations. Some might

say we wouldn't be Methodist without them. Interestingly, there is always a new door opening.

At Perry Hall church (pictured) they hold a weekly Sensory Baby Session with community support and in Hereford St John's there is a unique gathering in the whole of the county of Herefordshire with Twins Club Hereford, where they share ideas and understand the unique experiences of raising multiple birth children. It is an amazing source of support and an opportunity to make new friends. They have playtime, snacks, craft and music, but most of all – fun! And they even organise a social evening each month for mums to escape! All new mums, dads and expectant parents of twins, triplets or more are very welcome. The group meets every Friday in school term time from 10 am - 12 noon.



DISTRICT IN BRIEF

SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE District is committed to working with the broad-based community non-partisan social justice group CitizensUK – not forgetting that this social action group was helped to start almost 30 years ago with funding from the Methodist Church. This route ensures a real grounding with diverse communities not least via extensive "listening campaigns". It has enabled the District to represent those who have been marginalised through cut-backs and the widespread austerity.

GIRLS' BRIGADE FIRST

THE Quinton Girls' Brigade is the first and only brigade in the UK with male leaders. At a special youth-focused all age service the two young men were presented with formal certificates recognising their unique status.

SUPPORTING PRIDE

IN various corners of the District, Methodists support PRIDE events. In Coventry Central Hall and wider city centre, the PRIDE fellowship has been welcomed and is a significant part of the ministry. In Birmingham city centre the precinct areas were full of joy and vivid colour for PRIDE. And Stratford-upon-Avon also hosts a very popular PRIDE event. It is especially heart-warming that the District's initiative, New Inclusive Church (NIC), has appointed a new part-time pioneer who will be starting in September. NIC draws people of all ages from far and wide and this investment of a pioneer is good news in many ways, not least because they are really passionate about social justice issues as the lead.

ATTENDING IFTARS

THE District enjoys very cordial interfaith relationships. These are afforded not least through our very active social justice programme. Therefore, it was natural that District staff with friends and members would attend several Iftars; a community meal when the traditional Muslim day-long fasting time of Ramadan is broken with prayer each evening. The Rev David Butterworth was invited to speak about refugees at the Newman University Iftar with almost 200 guests present. The work the District has maintained supporting refugees has developed a groundswell of interest and wider engagement. District staff and chaplains joined the Iftar at the University of Birmingham which met in its new "Green Heart" with 600 guests from all traditions. It is thought this may have been the biggest and most diverse Iftar in the UK.

INTERFAITH

ALMOST daily there is some form of interfaith conversation taking place within the wider District. Much of this is with social justice and community activists recognising the world as it is and determined to change it into the world as it should be. Several District members attended the Birmingham City Holocaust event at the civic banqueting hall. A District representative was invited to offer a keynote address as he had worked with Rabbi Margaret Jaccobi to encourage Birmingham to open its doors to refugees. Mr Butterworth invited Rami, the little boy of the community sponsorship family, to light the candle of peace with representatives from various faith and community contexts and other Syrian refugees.

WELCOMING REFUGEES

THE District is proud to have two of the top most welcoming cities in the UK – Coventry and Birmingham. However we are also very pleased that our churches in Leamington Spa, Warwick, Evesham, Redditch, Quinton, Malvern and Sutton also support refugee programmes. Coventry is acclaimed as the "most welcoming" city after resettling more refugees though the UK Government's resettlement scheme than anywhere else in the country since the scheme launched in 2014. We are supporting the community sponsorship charity, Sponsor Refugees, which helps community sponsorship groups settle refugees through the VPRS scheme and is calling on the Government to extend the scheme beyond 2020.

MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

IN a super-diversity District there is also human trafficking and modern-day slavery. The District supports advocacy and awareness project ADAVU which helped almost 100 survivors in three years. While every company must now have a safeguarding policy around modern-day slavery there are still 13,000 victims at any one time in the UK and some specialists in this field estimate the real figure is more like 136,000 victims. In the West Midlands alone, 359 crimes of modern slavery were recorded. One survivor told Adavu project manager Lisa: "I may not have scars on my body, but you see the scars on my heart." Surprisingly, both UK born and foreign citizens are victims and the UN has said "this is the greatest human rights issue of our times".