

# Intouch

News of ministries within  
the Affinity Family

NEWSLETTER  
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## Director's Desk

### Contents

- 1 Director's Desk

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- 2 Church Society:  
Contending in the  
Church of England

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- 3 The Evangelical  
Presbyterian Church  
of England and Wales

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- 5 Go Teach

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- 6 News and Reports

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Affinity is a growing network of 1200 Bible-centred churches and Christian agencies throughout Britain and Ireland.

**affinity**  
gospel churches in partnership

### Greetings in our Saviours' name!

As I write this introduction our country is facing its greatest crisis for more than a generation. Already we know of people in the Affinity family who have passed away due to COVID-19, and perhaps you have relatives or friends affected in some way.

By the time you get to read this it is certain more people will have died, and I do not know whether by then the number of deaths will still be increasing or, in God's mercy, starting to decline.

We mourn with those who mourn but we do this in sure and certain hope of the resurrection as we give thanks for the lives of believers who are now with Christ.

But for us who remain, with all the uncertainties and fears about the future, we need to remember that 'God's solid foundation stands firm' (2 Timothy 2:19).

It is easy to become paralysed

and forget that God is still on the throne and people still need to hear the gospel. We need to remind ourselves that God has not been surprised or limited by what has happened recently. There have been opportunities to serve in new ways and, God willing, when things return to 'normal' we will preach and live the gospel with greater urgency and resolve.

I hope you will enjoy reading this latest edition of In Touch and see what God is doing in building his kingdom through the work of some of our partners. Particularly pray for them during this time when, no doubt, their activities will have been disrupted.

Graham  
Nicholls



# Church Society: Contending in the Church of England

**Church Society is delighted to be an Affinity Associate. The Society has been going for around 180 years. Our purpose is to equip God's people to live God's word as we contend to reform and renew the Church of England in biblical faith. Two other evangelical organisations, Reform and The Fellowship of Word & Spirit, both decided recently to merge with us, to strengthen our work at this critical time.**

Our ministry consists of publishing, politics, patronage, partnerships and prayer. We have a quarterly magazine, *Crossway*, and theology journal, *Churchman*. The latter has been going since 1879 (JC Ryle contributed to the first issue), but we have recently decided, after much thought and prayer, to rename it *The Global Anglican*. This is an attempt to show our commitment to the cause of orthodox Anglicanism worldwide, and I will be launching this rebrand (God willing) at a conference with hundreds of bishops from the GAFCON network

in Rwanda this June. We also have many online resources at churchsociety.org (blog, videos, podcast, talks) and publish a number of books.

The Church of England has a major report out this year called *Living in Love and Faith*, dealing with issues of marriage and sexuality. We are praying that this will winsomely restate biblical truth and the Church's official teaching on the subject, which is largely still orthodox – on paper at least, and in many parishes still. But elections to our General Synod in September may change the balance of power and have an impact on what happens afterwards.

Church Society has a role in the appointment of ministers in around 130 parishes.

We try to make the most of every opportunity this patronage gives us for the sake of the gospel. We also organise a number of conferences every year, including four regional events this year looking at episcopacy and how evangelicals relate to bishops, and a Junior Anglican Evangelical Conference (JAEC) which aims to help those in the earlier stages of Anglican ministry to stand firm.

Dr Ros Clarke is our Associate Director (and course leader of our Priscilla Programme, a training course for women run in conjunction with Union School of Theology). We also have two part-time Regional Directors helping build up our national network – Mark Wallace (South) and George Crowder (North) – as well as two administrative staff workers in the office (David and Sophie) and many volunteers who serve on our boards and committees. We share our prayer requests every day on Facebook, Twitter and PrayerMate.

**Lee Gatiss**  
**Director of Church Society**

Church Society staff team at their 2019 national conference



# The Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales

**The Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW) is a young denomination, only a few decades old. Though still small in size it forms, along with the International Presbyterian Church, almost the whole of the evangelical Presbyterian presence in England, the nation that was the source of its confessional document, the Westminster Confession of Faith. But knowing EPCEW is more than knowing its history, location and confessional documents.**

EPCEW is an evangelical church. This means we are committed to faithfully, boldly and warmly holding forth the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This commitment displays itself particularly in three characteristics that have held true in our short history:

First, we are firmly committed to the Word of God. Our ministers and elders all subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Our confession is unflinching and



## Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales

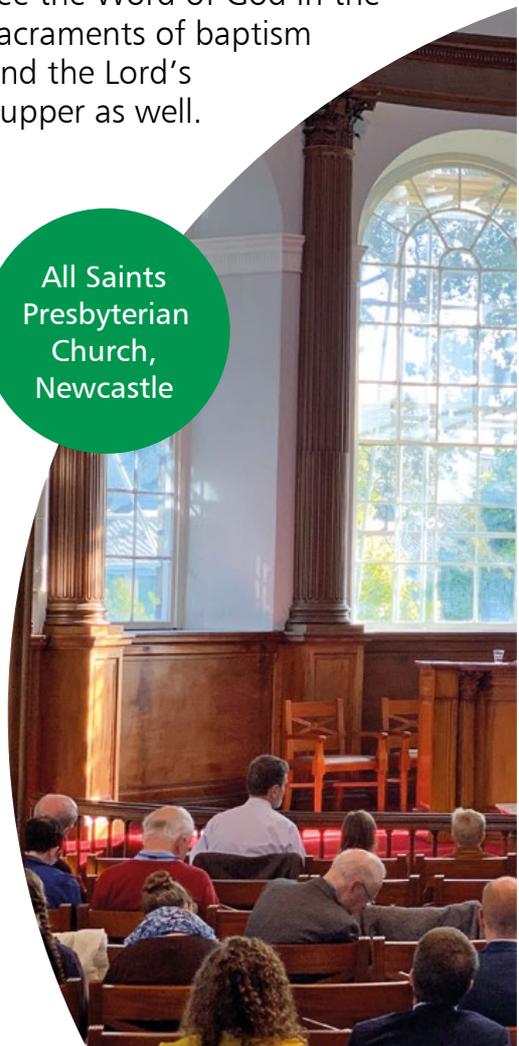
clear in its commitment to the Holy Scriptures. From the first chapter, the confession states that 'The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.' It holds us firmly to a commitment to the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

This means that the preaching in our congregations will proclaim God's Word boldly as God's authoritative Word for our lives. The Word is not only for studying and increasing theological acumen; it exhorts, reproves, corrects and trains us in righteousness. It calls us to belief and repentance. It gives us imperatives about what we must believe and how we must live. Indeed, it

is Christ's chosen means to speak to his church and the world today!

This also means that our worship is regulated by God's Word. If you visit an EPCEW church you will hear the Word of God read, the Word of God sung, the Word of God prayed and the Word of God preached. You will see the Word of God in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper as well.

All Saints  
Presbyterian  
Church,  
Newcastle



We seek to worship God as he has directed us to do so in his Word. This means that our aim in worship is reverence, majesty, joy, sobriety and order, and most of all to give the Triune God the glory due to his name, in the way that best pleases and honours him.

Second, the EPCEW is committed to evangelism. We labour to be outward facing, warm, outreaching and evangelising congregations. God has given his Church, in his Word, his power to save the lost from sin and death. One of the attributes of meetings where our elders and ministers gather together is that we encourage and exhort one

another to evangelism; we seek to learn from one another's efforts how we might more effectively reach a lost and dying world. Our congregations, in our ministry, would always labour to hold Romans 10:14-15 before our eyes: 'How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"'

Third, the EPCEW is firmly committed to church planting. We are a small denomination of just over 20 congregations, but that number has nearly doubled in the last decade.

We currently have church plants in Hexham, Salford, Sunderland, Oxford and one in Berlin. We are also at various stages in exploring or beginning church plants in Lincoln, Gloucester and Zürich. We are always looking for more opportunities to plant new churches.

It is evident in that list that we have even planted outside England and Wales a couple times when the opportunity has presented itself. This commitment means that every new plant from the outset is looking forward to the day when they will be able to send out new congregations themselves. We like to say that church planting is in our DNA. The EPCEW has this commitment because we believe that this is the Scriptural model; it is the command of Christ to his Church in the Great Commission of Matthew 28; it is the model set forth by Christ in Acts 1:8. And it is the pattern followed by the apostles in Acts and the Epistles.

The EPCEW is a Bible-centred, evangelistic and church-planting denomination. We seek to reach the lost, but also to build up the church. To this end, we are pleased to be on connection not just with fellow Reformed and Presbyterian churches in the UK and Europe, but also to share in fellowship with other evangelical denominations through organisations like Affinity.

**Joshua Rieger, Minister,  
Hexham Presbyterian  
Church**



# Go Teach

**Go Teach Publications Ltd is a UK-based registered charity, which produces Bible teaching material for use with children and young people aged 3 to 14 years.**

We began publishing dated Sunday School resources under the name 'Feed My Lambs' in 1946, making us the longest-established creator of such materials in the UK. Originally, we were part of the work of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC), and lessons were largely written by church ministers.

Go Teach was formed from that earlier work and became an independent charity and limited company in 1976. No longer associated with the FIEC, our work is now managed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Grace Baptist Ministry to the Young and the Evangelical Movement of Wales.

You might have heard of Go Teach when you were a child. You might think that nothing much has changed since then, but would you take a second look?

Based in Macclesfield, near Manchester, we occupy purpose-built office and warehouse space in the historic Paradise Mill. We have four full-time members of staff, and a small army of freelance artists, writers,



editors and proof-readers who contribute a great deal.

Our aim is to glorify God by producing materials which teach the major events and themes of the Bible in a thorough yet engaging way. Our main product is a four-year syllabus for four age groups. Over the four years, we publish twelve teachers' guides, accompanied by bright visual aids and engaging activity sheets for children and young teens.

In addition to this, we also offer helpful resources, such as Holiday Clubs (look out for our new Jonah club), colouring books, posters, craft books and more. It is quite an endeavour for a small company to continue, and we greatly value the prayers of God's people, and of course we would invite you to consider whether we could help you in teaching God's Word to the young.

While we seek to continue in the present, we have an eye

on the future and we hope to

be able to strengthen so that we can make what is good even better and more useful to the churches. We have plenty of ideas and hopes for more resources to help with weeknight meetings, and more web-based and video content. But we can't get there without God's help. Please, above all, pray for us, and get in touch with us to ask for a free sample pack, or with any queries you might have. You can call us on **01625 422279** or visit **[www.goteach.org.uk](http://www.goteach.org.uk)**

**Jonathan Hunt**  
**Editorial Administrator**



# News and Reports

## Norman Wells

It is with deep sadness that we report the death of leading family campaigner Norman Wells, after contracting COVID-19. He was a long-standing friend of Affinity and member of our Social Issues Team. The Christian Institute have published an online tribute from which we quote:

Norman had been Director of the Family Education Trust since 2004. Over the years he authored several significant publications. These included 'Waking Up to the Morning-After Pill', which highlights how promoting the morning-after pill to underage girls undermines parents, and 'Too Much, Too Soon', exposing the anti-family agenda of sex education in schools. Bioethicist John Ling said Norman was 'quiet, but always insightful, thorough and reliable in whatever he said or wrote. He was easy to admire and love. It was our privilege to know Norman. We honour the man, but we bless his Saviour.' Roger Hitchings added: 'We have lost a true Christian gentleman, the epitome of gentleness, faithfulness and passion for Christ's honour. May we serve as faithfully and be equally ready when our call home comes.'



## New member

We are pleased to welcome Access Insurance as a new associate member of Affinity. As a Christian-owned and operated business with a commitment to an evangelical position, they work closely with over 2,000 churches in the UK, seeking to provide advice, consultancy services and insurance policies specific to each church's needs. Find more about them and the services they offer at [www.accessinsurance.co.uk](http://www.accessinsurance.co.uk)



## Theological Study Conference 2021

Despite the current lockdown we are still hopeful that our planned Theological Study Conference will be able to go ahead on 17-19 March 2021. The theme is 'The Undiscovered Country' – Biblical Eschatology. There will be five papers, followed by a closing sermon:

**Paper 1** – 'All Things New', Michael Allen, Professor of Systematic Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando.

**Paper 2** – 'With Me in Paradise', Hamish Sneddon, Assistant Minister at St. Andrews Free Church of Scotland.

**Paper 3** – 'The Hopes and Fears of all the Years', Rupert Bentley-Taylor, UK-wide preacher and teacher with the Bible Teaching Trust.

**Paper 4** – 'All Israel will be saved', Gareth Burke, Minister at Stranmillis Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

**Paper 5** – 'The Business of Heaven', Paul Mallard, Pastor of Widcombe Baptist Church, Bath.

**Closing Sermon** – Andrew Davies, retired pastor living in South Wales.

Email us now to register your interest and we will send you a booking form later this year.

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