Bournville, Stirchley, Cotteridge & Kings Norton

Points

The bi-monthly mini-magazine of Churches Together in Birmingham 30

Fair Trading

June 2023- no 124

20p where sold

At a recent AGM for Churches Together in B30 local Councillor Mary Locke gave the following speech.

The role for churches in Bournville, Cotteridge and Stirchley

Good evening, firstly I want to say thank you to Chris and everyone present for inviting me here this evening.

The role that our churches play in Bournville, Cotteridge and Stirchley, is I believe as vital now as it has always been, and this is thanks, in no small part, to everyone who is here this evening.

Over recent years we have faced some of the biggest challenges that our country has witnessed in modern times, firstly with the pandemic, and now with a cost-of-living crisis that shows no signs of easing.

The pandemic changed the way that our society operated – keeping us in our homes, making us wary of any contact with other people, and isolating the vulnerable.

The response to the pandemic in our community was superb, with initiatives such as the B30 Food Bank being a lifesaving resource. I remember that during the pandemic a leaflet was produced and posted around my ward of Stirchley, offering help for residents in picking up shopping and prescriptions.

Whilst people were unable to come together in person they forged digital links where they could, with street WhatsApp groups flourishing, allowing people to get in touch with their housebound neighbours, which was vital for those who lived on their own.

And whilst the pandemic was awfully isolating for many people, I feel that it has renewed our belief in the power of community, with neighbours speaking to neighbours as never before. And with a greater number of people now working from home, there is a new emphasis on community.

As we have moved out of the pandemic, we have been faced with a cost-of-living crisis, with spiralling fuel bills, and the cost of household goods leaping up. This has caused huge concern and difficulty for people across our neighbourhood, as people struggle to make ends meet, put food on the table for their families, and keep their homes warm.

Throughout the challenges that we have faced, the churches in B30 have been at the heart of our community's response. From organising food bank collections and providing ways that people could come together to worship online, to providing warm welcome spaces and access to advice, our church communities have pulled together to help the people that they serve.

As we continue to face a difficult economic situation, I know that the churches in B30 will continue to provide vital support for our communities.

Our churches have a wider role to play too, and as we've heard already this evening, you are all working together on responding to the other challenges that we face as a society, such as tackling the climate emergency and supporting people fleeing war and oppression.

As well as playing your part in these serious issues, I know that you are all keen for our churches to be at the heart of our community celebrations, whether they are nationwide celebrations such as the Coronation, local events such as CoCo Mad or the Bournville Festival, and of course Easter and Christmas.

Through Churches Together in B30, we have the chance to build our churches' status within our area, helping to bring people from all walks of life together and to build strong and resilient communities. We have a wide and diverse population in B30, and whether in difficult times or times of great celebration, our churches have a vital role to play.

Looking to the future, I know that we will continue to work together for the benefit of our communities. As a local councillor I have great ambitions for the area, and have recently helped to set up a local jobs fair to link up residents with the opportunities that are opening up in the area.

I am also keen to support people who do not have computer or smart phone access, and I'm working with senior councillors and officers to get more information out to the public in our libraries, community centres, mosques and of course churches.

We have a thriving community here in Stirchley, Bournville and Cotteridge, and I am proud to represent the area that I live in and love. I know that we face significant challenges, but with a strong group of churches, the B30 Foodbank and an array of community groups and charities, I know that we will build a stronger and healthier

neighbourhood.

Thank you again for inviting me, and I would be glad to answer any questions that you have.

Mary Locke Birmingham Councillor in B30

ZAYTOUN OF PALESTINE

Zaytoun is a non-profit company established to support marginalised farming communities in Palestine through the production of olive oil and other olive products. The welfare of local farming communities and development of the agricultural infrastructure in Palestine is of the utmost importance to Zaytoun and as such they operate as a Fair Trading company and have recently achieved Fair Trade certification for a selection of their range.

Palestine is the home of the olive tree, with some of the oldest olive groves in the world dating back 2000 years. The country's Mediterranean climate, rich fertile soil and Zaytoun's use of traditional organic farming methods ensure that these olive products are always of outstanding quality.

Canaan Fair Trade. Canaan works with over 2,000 artisan family farms spanned across 52 different villages to sustainably source olive oil, almonds, freekeh and maftoul amongst other products. Based in Jenin, northern Palestine, Our olive oil soaps are made by The Nablus Soap Company which was founded in 1971 by the Tbeleh family who have been making soap for over 400 years.

Nakheel Palestine is a regional leader in growing, packing, and exporting the finest quality Palestinian Medjoul dates from Jericho since 2011.

The Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) is the largest fair trade producers union in Palestine, with over 1400 small-scale Palestinian farmers joined in fair trade collectives and cooperatives across the country. Their cooperatives supply us, via Canaan Fair Trade, and we support their Trees for Life tree planting scheme.s our zesty za'atar, works with Palestinian producers living in Israel, who face discrimination and unequal access to resources.

West Bank Salt Company

Linda Mann

A Mermaid's Kiss

Money in the form of coins first arrived in about the 7th century BC, in what is now Western Turkey. Coins were made of electrum, a naturally occurring mix of gold and silver. In Rome, coins were minted near the temple of the goddess Juno Moneta, hence the words 'mint' and 'money'.
This story is how my friends and I trade without using money, and was inspired by a friend of mine, let's call him Fred. Fred and I like making things, particularly model powerboats, which we sail on Bournville Model Boat Pond.
Back to Fred: It was late afternoon, a little boy (about 10) and his grandma came to the pond to sail his boat. Things did not go well:

Fred asked: 'Won't it go?'.
Little boy: 'No, it just goes in circles'.
Fred: 'Want me to fix it?'.

Fred took the boat home and after a lot of work and some new parts returned the little boy's boat, all fixed.

'What do I owe you', asked Grandma.
"Nothing - My pleasure', said Fred.

Anyway, Grandma insisted on buying him a pint. The moral of this little tale is:
Fred's real reward was the sheer joy of fixing the little boy's boat.

This is not an isolated case. The exchange of money is a rare at the Model Boat Club. Boats, parts, and help are usually swapped or given away, and there is plenty of advice for newcomers, like me.

This spirit of support and friendship doesn't just apply to material things. Sometimes we have little accidents! A moments lack of concentration and a boat, that has taken months to make, crashes into the concrete side of the pond, or worse – another boat. Grown men cry! Friends gather round and look on in dismay. But the mood soon changes to optimism. 'It's ok, we can help you fix it – a spot of glue here, a lick of paint there. It could have been a lot worse -
It was only 'A Mermaid's Kiss'. Mowgli,

Tearfund

It all began in 1970, when a typhoon killed over half a million people in Bangladesh. World development charity Tearfund started to deliver relief to the Bangladeshi people, and in 1974, Richard Adams, with the backing of Tearfund, filled a returning aeroplane with jute handicrafts, to sell in the UK to help the people with trade, as well as aid. This was the start of Tearcraft & it made a real difference to the lives of artisans, but Richard felt constrained by what the organisation could achieve & a group of 6 friends started Traidcraft.

Tearfund wanted to bring traidcraft more under its evangelical criteria whereas RICHARD ADAMS wanted to pursue a more radical agenda informed by his interpretation of his Christian faith and apply the principles of love and justice to international trade.

It was this principle that Jane and I liked so launched Traidcraft when The Cotteridge Church was in the wilderness in 1988

Traidcraft co-founded the Fairtrade Foundation in 1992. The Fairtrade Foundation is a non-profit organisation which licenses use of the FAIRTRADE Mark on products in the UK in accordance with

internationally agreed Fairtrade standards.

Mark is the symbol of the international Fairtrade system – and the most globally recognized ethical label. When you buy products with any of the FAIRTRADE Marks, you support farmers

and workers as they improve their lives in their communities.

Traidcraft plc announced that it might have to cease trading by the end of 2018. A much slimmed down version emerged , a company which bought in fair trade products from other companies. However not convinced that this was the right approach because in January 2023 Traidcraft went under. This was not surprising, after an Autumn with no Christmas catalogue and products going out of stock not being replaced.
In a sense when Traidcraft went under the basis for continued existence lay in the model Traidcraft had established.
So **Meru herbs** we got from JTS in Scotland, apricots, mango, pineapple and Just Five bars from Equal Exchange Sunderland and we also used Ethical Super store. Now some of Traidcraft's products are available from wearefairtrade.com having been released by administrators, and new companies have come on board like

WHO GIVES A CRAP
Did you know most toilet paper is made by cutting down trees? Our products are made from 100% recycled paper or bamboo, while also saving a whole load of water and energy along the way. We also donate 50% of our profits to charity partners, helping provide access to clean water and sanitation services in developing Countries.

Divine Chocolate is a more difficult company with which to deal Divine Chocolate is a global social enterprise driven by a mission. Our mission is to help end exploitation in the cocoa industry, creating a world where farmers thrive and prosper. Our business model reflects the belief that producers should earn a share of the profits they help to create. That's why Kuapa Kokoo Farmers' Union, a co-operative of over 100,000 cocoa farmers in Ghana, who grow the finest quality cocoa for our everyday and seasonal collections, co-own Divine Chocolate. Their stake in Divine Chocolate is a first in the Fairtrade world

Traidcraft is a name guaranteed by a foundation who want to continue what they started. Transform Trade is the Charity wing set up before traidcraft failed They have won the trust of the Traidcraft foundation and it will be interesting to watch and see how this develops bearing in

mind the following three principles

Trade Justice We are painfully aware that 40 years of fair trade has not done enough to counter the incredible power imbalances in international trade. We are passionate about economic justice and believe that transparency is key in achieving this.

Social Justice We are actively, noisily passionate about equality across all areas, including: gender, religion, opportunity, regardless of background, heritage, experience or inheritance.

Environmental Justice We are increasingly concerned and worried about the killer effects climate change is having on our partners. We will bring people's attention to the crisis which will be created if we overstep the UN's ambition to pursue a limit to global warming of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Rev Roger Collins

"But the scales aren't fair to start off with!"

In the introduction to his book, "Edible Economics", Ha-Joon Chang, states that economics is not a science. It depends on moral and ethical decisions.

It follows that trade is not based on some value-free, give and take operation where the scales are equally balanced - your pears for my apples. Fair trading is not a mathematical equation based on some divine manual kept under lock and key at the United Nations.

As we have all learnt personally in the last year, (as if we didn't already know), international trade in general, and fair trading in particular, is based on power, scarcity and ownership. If one of the most powerful nations in the world controls the flow of oil and we apparently need oil to make the world go round, then the price of oil goes up. If, however, we cease to be so dependent on oil for our day-to-day energy needs, oil becomes superfluous to need, demand reduces and the price of oil comes down.

I admit it's not that simple, but Just Stop Oil does have a moral and economic argument as well as an ecological one.

Fair Trading in Context

Basically, we don't start from a fair or level playing field. Who decides what is fair? We know that a person dying of thirst would be willing to pay a great deal to someone holding a glass of water if they had the monetary resources. The same person in a different environment would think nothing of pouring that glass of water down the sink in a western environment where the water flowed through the tap and they watched the rain bucket down outside.

So, trade comes down to what we value. Not just for today but for tomorrow and our future. Fair trading demands that we care for the other partner. We need to take a view not just of each individual trading transaction, but of the wider context in which it takes place. Fair trading is not about 'getting a good deal' or exploiting a position of advantage. It is about 'levelling up' (if that term hadn't been quite so debased recently). In an ideal fair trading situation, no-one at the top should benefit from a trade negotiation until those at the bottom have been raised up. My grandson (age 6) was so upset by his continual prowess at Monopoly that he insisted on giving his best property set to me so that the game would be 'fairer'.

Fair Trade and Food

George Monbiot, in his new controversial book, 'Regenesis', states that "Today just over 70% of the world's farmland is controlled by just 1% of its 'farmers' ". What that means is that fair trading is just not an option for many of the world's poorest. Those who 'own' the food are usually not those who have worked for it or created it; they are those who control the money markets.

The scourge of deforestation is a result of a grab for land which is a result of the world wanting to increase its intake of beef. We are apparently willing to trade our future increased carbon emissions

"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

and our planetary health for more steak. If we refuse to buy it, then there is no market to sell it into.

There is also the context of money around trade. It seems obvious, but most trade is not goods for goods. Money is the intermediary and that money is owned by corporations and shareholders. So the complications of fair trading in a world market situation far outweigh the simplicity of the idea of a fair transaction.

We all have a role in this world of trade in thinking about our own trading relationships. Those of us of a certain age might trade our current non paid employment (retirement!) with those who are time poor in return for future care.

As someone who grows food and who is interested in it, I take part in quite a few ‘trading’ relationships.

My neighbours get rhubarb – and the seemingly inevitable overproduction of courgettes. I get neighbourliness. I get the apples from their tree which hangs into my garden. They get the apple chutney I make. They also get the things I grow that you can’t buy – sorrel (great sorrel and lentil soup for the freezer), yellow raspberries (beautifully sweet, but too soft for commercial production), striped beetroot (only for high class restaurants apparently).

I ‘trade’ with myself and my family. I’ve invested in a large freezer. The overproduction of rhubarb = rhubarb fool and rhubarb crumble. Excess courgettes and tomatoes = ratatouille. Summer bounty = winter investment.

I can do it because at this stage of my life I have the time, the interest, the motivation. My 'trade' with my friends and my children is giving my time for their health. Less fast or processed food. More interesting and international cuisine. In this case, 'trade' is a real part of a caring relationship. And they do say that your children choose your care home!

And mostly, we have to question the whole idea of trade as being vital for 'growth', ... but that's another article. Helen Gale

Friday 7 July @ 7.30 pm

In SS Joseph & Helens Church Hall, Station Road

Come along and join a team

Or bring your own team of six players

£3 per person

Raffle & Refreshments (or bring your own)

All proceeds for the B30 Foodbank

further details contact Tess Singleton on 0121 458 1657

Foodbank

Last month we received in 1872k and gave out 2339k
feeding 280 clients on 128 vouchers

Urgently needed
Rice (500g), pasta sauce, tinned spaghetti, tinned meat (ham, corned beef, pork sandwich, pulled pork, chicken), jam/honey, chocolate bars, tinned/carton ready-made custard, small jars of instant coffee (not decaffeinated), liquid/bar soap, gender neutral shower gel and shampoo

Low in stock
Baked beans, UHT semi-skimmed milk, long-life fruit juice (not needing refrigeration), cereal (not greater then 500g), UHT whole milk, tinned rice pudding, tinned tomatoes, tinned vegetables (carrots, pease, sweetcorn), tinned fish (tuna, mackerel, sardines, salmon), squash, porridge (not greater than 500g), dog food, cat food, tinned/packet vegetarian meals, sugar (500g), sanitary pads, toilet rolls, washing up liquid, nappies size 6

Well stocked
Pasta shapes, dry spaghetti, tinned potatoes, tinned/packet/soup, instant hot chocolate (not cocoa powder), tinned fruit in juice (not prunes, rhubarb or grapefruit), sweet biscuits (not multi-packs), noodles, instant potato, nappies sizes 1-3, baby food and baby care items, gender neutral roll-on deodorants, razors, baby wipes, laundry powder/liquid (not family sized), toothpaste, toothbrushes (single or duo pack)

Not needed at all

Tea bags (40's or 80's), crisps, decaffeinated drinks or fruit infusions, bottled water, large bottles of lemonade or coke, any food or toiletries containing alcohol, cooking ingredient or sauces, instant potato, tinned macaroni cheese, fresh products (including vegetables, fruit, meat, eggs and bread), non-dairy items, gluten-free items, coffee beans, loose tea, large boxes of teabags (120's or more), very large bags or boxes of porridge and cereal, cocoa powder, medicines, mouth wash, tampons, make up hair accessories, perfume or aftershave, Christmas or Easter items

HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

You are invited ...

Places of Welcome

Pavilion has a session every Friday morning in the Rowheath Terrace Room.

Bournville Parish Church, St Francis meets every Thursday morning 10.30 am – 12 noon in Church.

Warm Spaces - where people can gather for free in a warm, safe, welcoming place and enjoy a hot drink and some company.

Cotteridge Church
Mon-Thurs 8.30 am – 5.00 pm
Friday 9.30 am – 1.30 pm

Music Box -
An Evening of Live and Local Music

Saturday, June 10 · 7 - 9pm

An uplifting evening celebrating our amazing live and local music!

CALYPSO MOON - *upbeat all-female jazz band* -
check out their Facebook page

AMIT DATTANI - *inspiring country blues finger style guitarist* -
check out their website

ANNE-MARIE ALLEN - *uplifting singer songwriter* -
check out their website

Tickets £5 each. All the money raised will go to the church, to support their vital work in the community

Church of the Ascension, Stirchley Pineapple Grove Stirchley B30 2TJ

Click on the different links below to find out what's happening in your church

(Crl + click on link)

https://www.facebook.com/rowheath.pavilion/

https://ssjandh.org

https://bournvilleparishchurch.org.uk/

https://www.facebook.com/BournvilleParishChurchStFrancisOfAssisi/

www.ascensionstirchley.com
https://www.facebook.com/AscensionStirchley/

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https://www.facebook.com/Cotteridge-Quaker
https://cotteridgequakers.org.uk/

https://www.thecotteridgechurch.org.uk/
https://www.facebook.com/TheCotteridgeChurch/

https://www.birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk/church-page/st-andrews-b30

https://www.weoleyhillchurch.org.uk/links.php

https://www.birminghamvineyard.com/

https://www.facebook.com/vineyardbham/

https://b30.foodbank.org.uk/

https://www.birminghamchurches.org.uk/news/

https://ctb30.org.uk/

CHURCH CONTACTS

For further details of worship and/or activities at any of the churches please contact the people below:

- St. Andrew's Methodist Church
  Revd. Farai Mapamula - 427 1747
- Bournville United Reformed Church
  Revd Leonora Jagessar - 472 0730
- Society of Friends, Bournville
  Claire Bowman - 07753 635438
  Room Hire, 471 2155
  annegiles57@gmail.com
- St. Francis Church, Bournville
  Rev Canon Richard Wharton - 472 7215
- Rowheath Pavilion Church
  Inter regnum
  Office - 458 1711.
- Society of Friends, Cotteridge
  Chris Martin - 475 2088
- The Cotteridge Church
  Revd. Mike Claridge - 433 5176
  Revd. Roger Collins - 459 4009
  or Church Office - 433 5518
- Ascension Stirchley
  Revd. Catherine Grylls - 443 1371
- Catholic Church of Ss Joseph and Helen
- Catholic Church of St Paul's
  Father David Barry - 458 1236

"Points" is published by Churches Together in Birmingham 30 for the exchange of ideas and news. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the churches as a group or individually.

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Next Issue's Focus will be

The Role Model

Deadline for articles: 22 July