

April 2017



Engagement: Living out Christ's love and hope

Being advocates for human flourishing, through initiatives which combat injustice, environmental destruction, exclusion and isolation.

Bishop Rachel invited speakers to inspire and challenge MPs and guests at an event in the House of Lords to mark International Women's Day. The event was hosted in partnership with Christian Aid, Nelson Trust and Restored, to promote gender equality.

Muzoon Almellehan, an 18-year-old Syrian refugee spoke for the Malala Fund about the importance of prioritising girls' education. She said: "While I was in the refugee camp in Jordan, I went from tent to tent to tell parents that [their daughters] needed teachers, not husbands." She called on the UK government to increase support for education, especially for female refugees.



Niki Gould (left) from the Nelson Trust, a Gloucestershire-based organisation that supports disadvantaged women with complex, multiple needs said: "As a consequence of women going into prison, over 17,000 children are separated from their mothers each year. Over 80% of these women have committed a non-violent offence. It costs £45,000 to keep a woman in prison, we are paid £550 to support women in the community."

Christian Aid's Chief Executive Loretta Minghella said: "Christian Aid was delighted to partner with Bishop Rachel and with Restored, as together we seek to mobilise the faith community to challenge and change the discriminatory beliefs that lie at the root of gender inequality. Our voices have the power to transform people's experience of gender – especially for women and girls living in poverty – and to ensure they are shaped not by oppression, but by justice, dignity and hope."

Mandy Marshall, Co-Director of Restored said, "30% of women worldwide experience violence from their partner. Faith based organisations have great reach and influence at both national and local level in millions of communities across the globe. With the right support, we believe they have the potential to challenge the injustice of gender inequality and hasten the end of violence against women.

She ended with a challenge to each of us: "How is what I am doing affecting relationships? Am I giving all of who I am to empower and build others up or am I using the power that I have to diminish and dominate?"

At this time of Lent and Easter, we can all think of ways that we can promote the flourishing of others—what change will you make today?

Engagement: Investing in people and programmes, which excite young people to explore and grow in faith

Do you know young people who are passionate about fellow young people exploring and growing in the Christian faith? The Youth Priority Group, part of the Diocese of Gloucester's LIFE vision, are looking for two young people (aged 16-19) to be a vital part of this group. Young people will need to have a reference from a youth worker or someone in a position of authority in their church. Please contact Andy or Sharon Macaulay for more info andy@therock.uk.com, 01242 700700 as soon as possible.

Abundance: living life to the full in a rural community

Saturday 10 June, 10am to 4.15pm, Hartpury College

What does 'life to the full' look like in our rural communities? How can rural churches engage imaginatively in our rural communities and express our faith in ways that are life-giving?

The answer to these questions often needs a specific approach in the rural context. A different way of thinking about mission is necessary for it to be suitable for our villages and wider rural environment. For this reason, we have created an event that draws together a variety of organisations and practitioners that understand the rural context and can offer inspiration and insight that are appropriate for the life of small village congregations. Our hope is that by focussing on the rural environment, we will be offering tools and resources that are a better fit and therefore more easily put into practice.

The event is open to all, including members of the other Christian denominations who share our neighbourhoods. The event has been planned ecumenically, with particularly significant input from Churches Together and the Methodist Church. Come along and be inspired. Booking details: 1452 835544 nkent@glosdioc.org.uk

Events and training

Monday 10 April to Friday 14 April and Sunday 16 and 17 April

Seven Towers Holy Week Pilgrimage

The way of the cross, as from the eyes of Jesus. Visit each of the churches in the Seven Towers Benefice to experience the Easter story as told by artist Jonathon Brown. For more details visit www.seventowers.org.uk or contact the Revd Philippa Donald, talk2philippa@hotmail.com or 07810 228397.

Easter Sunday 16 April, 10.15am

Festal Eucharist at Gloucester Cathedral

All are welcome. Easter Egg Hunt for the children.

Thursday 27 April, 9.30am to 1pm

Talking of Glory in a Darwinian World

Dr Christopher Southgate proposes a way of understanding divine glory that gives due weight to the pathos of the world while emphasising both God's sovereignty and God's redemptive love. £5 refreshments provided.

Saturday 29 April to Monday 1 May, 10.30am to 5.30pm

Flower celebration

St Bartholomew's, Churchdown

Light refreshments, plant sale, music, Christian art display. Donations welcome.

Thursday 4 May

WEMTC Open evening

Local training for contextually-rooted ministry.

Contact jcusworth@wemtc.org.uk 01452 874969.

Have your say: Visit Facebook /**Diocese.of.Gloucester**, email Katherine at kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk, follow us on Twitter @**glosdioc**, view videos on YouTube **Diocese of Gloucester** or visit our website Gloucester.anglican.org