

March 2023

A time to cry and a time to laugh.

A time to grieve and a time to dance.

Ecclesiastes 3: 4 (NLT)



Dear Friends,

"Everything happens for a reason."

"Be strong."

"God never gives us more than we can handle."

Platitudes like these are easy to say but are they helpful? Troubles come in all shapes and sizes. In recent months several friends have experienced bereavement; others have had milestone events such as a first birthday alone, a wedding anniversary without their husband or wife, or they've become a grandparent/uncle/aunt – with no special person to share the joy; other friends have marked the 1st, 2nd, 3rd 10th anniversary of losing a loved one. Were they alone in remembering the one they'd loved and lost? Did I remember too and did I pick up the phone, put a card through their door or send a message to let them know they are not alone? Time may take the edge off the initial grief and a new normal is established but we need each other, to weep together and to remember the happy times. Grief is complicated, especially when relationships have been difficult, but we can still sit with our friends in their grief. May our words be few and our prayers, care and practical help be our language of love and comfort.

I recall a funeral for a founding member of our church's learning disability group in St Albans. We had a group member in the car with us and got into conversation about funerals. The church service in this instance was to be followed by burial in the churchyard but this lady had only been to a cremation. We did our best to explain the differences and, when we reached the church, we showed her the prepared grave. "What are you doing that for?" called a woman who was supporting other friends of the deceased man. We explained that we were helping our friend to understand what to expect, but our words were greeted with a shrug of the shoulders, as if to say, "Why are you bothering?"

The funeral turned out to be a joyous affair with enthusiastic singing and the sharing of happy memories when photo albums and other significant mementos were passed around the church. When it was time for the burial we were glad to have prepared our passenger for that moment at the

graveside. How good it is to look forward to our heavenly home where there will be no more pain or suffering, sadness or dying.

Book now!

Do you have any plans for the summer? Have you thought about joining us at one of the festivals listed in the 2023 Festival Dates section below? If they're not for you, you could pass on the information so that people with learning disabilities have the opportunity to come along.

Each event is different so please ask us if you'd like to find out more.



If you're looking for a holiday abroad, less of a conference but a real holiday with relaxation, leisure and fun as well as worship and teaching, please take a look at the CEI week at Spring Harvest Holidays in France (other non-CEI weeks are available too!). We have our own programme but each evening we join in all-age worship led by Luke Bacon, a vicar from Kent who has become a great friend of CEI, and speaker Gareth/Gaz Hillier from Care for the Family. There's the coffee shop and bar, freshly baked baguettes and croissants, ice creams, a heated outdoor pool, canoeing on the River Vie and much more – roll on June!



Training

Thanks for praying for the **Know and Grow workshops** that have taken us many miles already this year. We've just booked our first one for the autumn and would love to help with your church's training needs. **Know and Grow workshops** are for anyone, from those who 'only' make the tea to the church leaders, whatever their involvement with adults with learning disabilities. In **Know & Grow 1** we look at topics such as:

- what it means to be human
- how churches can be accessible and welcoming for adults with learning disabilities
- how to set up a small group and plan a meeting etc.
- making church services accessible to all

In **Know and Grow 2** we move on to address some sensitive but important topics in relation to learning disability, including:

- relationships
- healing

- death, dying and bereavement
- boundaries



Know and Grow Makaton, still a pilot at present, is to be launched very soon (watch this space!). It's fun and informative, equipping people to communicate and worship using simple key word signing.

Email info@counteveryonein.org.uk to book a place at one of the workshops in our diary below, or enquire about hosting one in your own church.

2023 festival dates – where CEI will run accessible parallel programmes

- **Word Alive** 1 – 6 April at Prestatyn, North Wales. Day passes only now available with 50% reduction for concessions and carers free. See <https://wordaliveevent.org/online-booking/offsite>
- **Spring Harvest** 10 – 14 April at Minehead, Somerset. Day tickets only now available. Follow the links from <https://www.springharvest.org/>
- **Spring Harvest Holidays, France** 5 – 12 June. Details and booking at [Spring Harvest Holidays | Count Everyone In](#)
- **Keswick Convention (week 1 only)** 15 – 21 July at The Pencil Factory, Keswick, Cumbria. Book your own accommodation and just turn up. <https://keswickministries.org/about-keswick-convention/2023-convention/>
- **Connect** (Commission – New Frontiers) 24 – 28 August at Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet. Details and how to book at <https://www.commission.global/festivalhome>
- **Awaken** (formerly The ONE Event) 25 – 28 August at Lincolnshire Showground, Lincoln. Details and how to book at <https://awakenevent.uk/>



Resources available by post

Here's a selection from our list of resources which you can order by contacting the office and making payment by BACS transfer or cheque (details will be supplied). Postage and packing costs will be added to prices shown.

- Accessible undated Bible reading notes:
 - Who is Jesus? £2.50
 - Easter £2.50
 - Jesus returns to heaven and what happened next £2.50

- The Holy Spirit £2.50
 - Christmas is Coming £4.50
 - Prayer £4.50
 - Psalms £4.50
- 'Prospects' worship albums on CD (£5), DVD (£8), MP3 (£8) and MP4 (£10)
 - Jesus the start of it all
 - No god is greater
 - Say the Word (CD and MP3 only)
- Holy Communion service booklet £2
- Two teaching series available: The life of **Joseph** (7 sessions – £8) and **'Ruth'** (4 sessions – £4).
- T-shirts (£10.50), polos (£16) and full-zip hoodies (£25) available in Sapphire Blue, Burgundy Red and Charcoal Grey, all with the CEI embroidered logo and in sizes from Small to XXL (some also come in XXXL).

The **New International Readers Version (NirV) – Accessible Edition** has large, clear print, plenty of 'white' space (actually light grey) and simple line drawings. At present only the New Testament is in print and is available

at: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/search/NirV%20accessible%20edition%20softback/>



Friends with CEI

The CEI family continues to grow and is a source of mutual support and encouragement. Churches/groups, individuals, couples and families can sign up free of charge although a commitment to annual or monthly donations is appreciated. Ask for an application form at info@counteveryonein.org.uk.

Ways to help CEI

- Don't forget that any of the 'Prospects' songs used by your church or group should be included in your Church Copyright Licence (CCLI) reporting.
- A few weeks ago we bought some beautiful greetings cards from CEI friend Tua Phelps-Jones at: <https://www.flamingopaperie.co.uk/web/tuaphelps-jones>
- **Give as You Live** is one way to donate to CEI at no extra cost to you – see link for your online shopping at the foot of this letter. **Please note that Amazon Smile is no longer operating and support for chosen charities from Amazon has ended.**

Looking ahead (RJ = Rosey, JK = Janneke, CW = Christine, PW = Pete)

Thurs 2 March – Core team meeting, Newbury
Sat 4 March – Trustees' meeting, Newbury
Fri 10 March – Additional Needs Alliance core team day, Birmingham (CW,PW))
Sat 11 March – Know & Grow Makaton (pilot), Chessington (JK)
Thurs 16 March – Core team meeting, Newbury
Tues 21 March – Training for Chichester diocese (CW,PW))
Thurs 30 March – Core team meeting, Newbury
Fri 31 March – Travel day for Word Alive, Prestatyn
Sat 1 – Thurs 6 April – Word Alive, Prestatyn (RJ,CW,PW))
Mon 10 – Fri 14 April – Spring Harvest, Minehead (JK leading team; CW,PW exhibition)
Sat 22 April – Know & Grow Makaton (pilot), Guildford (JK)
Sun 23 April – 25th anniversary celebration No Limits, Southwick, Trowbridge (CW,PW)
Thurs 27 April – Core team meeting, Newbury

Prayer and praise

1. Thank God for Know & Grow Makaton held in Weymouth in February and pray that the enthusiasm generated will lead to effective mission and ministry.
2. Give thanks for the Know & Grow 1 workshop in Birmingham and pray for churches to communicate God's love to adults with learning disabilities.
3. Pray for our trustees, Rick, Keith, Janet, Jonathan, Maryanne and Val, as they and the core team meet on 4 March: pray too for a new treasurer.
4. Pray that Know & Grow Makaton will be signed off by the Makaton Charity.
5. Pray for more workers to join Rosey, Janneke, Pete and Christine as CEI core team.
6. Pray that adults with learning disabilities will be supported in coming to faith in Jesus, becoming His disciples and helping others to follow Him too.
7. Pray for the planning for the festivals – team members, teaching, seminars, accommodation etc. – and for the guests who will attend to meet with God.

Welcome to anyone reading this newsletter for the first time this month. We hope you find items of interest and are prompted to pray for CEI. See also <https://www.counteveryonein.org.uk/> and we'd love to hear from you at info@counteveryonein.org.uk

Thank you for all your prayers, messages and financial gifts. They mean more to us than we can tell you.

And finally

Here is what we can be sure of when we come to God in prayer. If we ask anything in keeping with what he wants, he hears us. 1 John 5:14 NIV



If you are thinking of supporting financially, thank you.

Donate to Count Everyone In at www.give.net/20280624 or directly into Metro Bank (business) account (Gift Aid form available on request) - Sort code: 23 05 80 - Account no: 33248601

GDPR We hold your contact details for the purpose of sending you this newsletter at your own request. We also hold details of people who serve on CEI teams or attend training days. If you have any questions about this, or you wish to be removed from mailing lists etc, please let us know.

Social media – See www.counteveryonein.org.uk and you can also keep up with us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram. Please follow, like and share so that more people find out what is happening.

***Please note that the best times to contact the main office is Tuesday to Friday 9:30 – 5:30pm**

Every
blessing,

Pete & Christine, Janneke and Rosey

Pete: 07711 869810 pete@counteveryonein.org.uk

Christine: 07751 431277 christine@counteveryonein.org.uk

Janneke: janneke@counteveryonein.org.uk

Rosey: rosey@counteveryonein.org.uk