

December 2023

Welcome



Dear Friends,

“... welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 (ESV)

Who will you be welcoming into your home, your church or your community this Christmas? We enjoy Christmas dinner with our close family but how about laying an extra place for someone who might otherwise spend the day alone? Will our Christmas services attract just our usual church family or will once-a-year visitors enjoy such a warm welcome that they come again next week? How welcoming is our/your community to refugees, rough sleepers and families who have hit hard times? It's not just offering a festive meal and gifts at Christmas but caring and sharing throughout the year, and especially when it is cold and miserable outside.

Hospitality is a key feature of the Christian faith that demonstrates God's love for all people. Count Everyone In aims to make everyone welcome, especially adults with learning disabilities, so that they don't miss out on Jesus. We do this to give glory to God, demonstrating His love, care, goodness and kindness. He sent His dear Son into the world as the baby we worship at Christmas, knowing that He would be put to death so that our sins can be forgiven and we can live with Him forever. He welcomes us into His family. Let's welcome Jesus into our Christmas celebrations this Christmas and welcome strangers too. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40 NIV)

In case you've missed it, we'd love to welcome you to the CEI Christmas Celebration, either in person at St Nic's Church, West Mills, Newbury RG14 5HG. It's 6pm on Sunday 3 December but, it's also available online to watch live or later at:

<https://youtube.com/live/XbqeBdRcmNU>

Happy Christmas everyone

Thank you to all the churches who have welcomed us this year to deliver Know & Grow Longing to Belong and Know & Grow Makaton workshops. It's been an incredibly full and fulfilling time for us and our prayer is that the workshops will have inspired and equipped many churches to reach out in an appropriate way to people who often miss out. Janneke, Pete and Christine, between them, have visited Birkenhead, Birmingham, Blackburn, Cambridge, Cheltenham, Chessington, Derby, Ely, Guildford, Oxford, Sudbury, Torquay and Weymouth. The calendar for 2024 is already filling up and we are really pleased to have opportunities to present Know & Grow Life Matters in addition to the other two titles. This addresses such topics as relationships, mental health, healing, bereavement and boundaries.

Thank you too to everyone who has prayed for CEI, supported financially, or served on a team during 2024. We couldn't do this without you. Please continue to pray – some specific requests are listed towards the end of this letter.

Thank you if you came to say hello at the **Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE)**, held at Solihull in November. We had numerous conversations and it will be interesting to see where they lead.

Autumn round-up What a busy couple of months it was! In addition to running five Know & Grow workshops and exhibiting at the CRE, we met with festival leaders to discuss 2024 plans, helped Stevenage Doorway celebrate their 20th birthday, talked with the European Disability Network about reaching adults with learning disabilities with the Gospel, ran Makaton Christmas carol signing sessions online (Janneke), as well as playing an active part in our own churches in Portsmouth and Newbury. We're ready for a rest but it won't happen until mid-December.

Holidays and festivals 2024

Here's a repeat from last month's newsletter to help you to help us! Please tell others what we are doing and where next year. We would love to see more guests but we are also looking for worship leaders and musicians, as well as younger team members. You'll find the dates in the Looking Ahead section further on and here are the contacts:

Word Alive <https://booking.wordaliveevent.org/> No onsite accommodation left

SH Skegness & Minehead <https://www.butlins.com/breaks/special-events/spring-harvest>

SHH France <https://booking.springharvestholidays.com/>

Keswick <https://keswickministries.org/convention-2024/> Make your own accommodation arrangements and just turn up!

Commission <https://www.commission.global/events/cf24>

Please let us know if you book for any of these events, especially if you have anyone with a learning disability in your group as it helps us with planning.

Training

What delegates say:

- You covered lots of ground, blending knowledge and experience so well
- Warm and personal, anecdotal
- Space to reflect and learn

- Pleased this material is multi-functional and can be used in different settings with different groups. Thank you
- Thank you so much for a thought provoking, engaging day. I have learned so much more than I anticipated. I feel inspired to ... encourage people with learning disabilities to get to know more about Jesus
- Brilliant! So thrilled this day has taken place!
- Loved it, you have such a gentle, clear and encouraging presentation style

We can tailor training for your particular needs, but our flagship training is the growing suite of our workshops: **Know & Grow Longing to Belong, Know & Grow Life Matters and Know & Grow Makaton.**

Email bookings@counteveryonein.org.uk for a place at a Know & Grow workshop listed in the Looking Ahead section below or to enquire about hosting one in your own church.

Resources

We have a wide range of CEI Bible reading notes, 'Prospects' worship albums on CD, DVD, MP3 and MP4, teaching resources, t-shirts, polos and hoodies and much more – all available by post or at the summer festivals. We also have New Testaments in the New International Readers Version (NIRV Accessible Edition), with large, clear print, plenty of 'white' space (actually, light grey) and line drawings.

Enquire or order at info@counteveryonein.org.uk. We add the cost of postage and packing and ask for payment by BACS transfer or cheque.

- **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.
- **CCLI** Don't forget to include 'Prospects' songs in your Church Copyright Licence (CCLI) reporting.

Looking ahead – please note that the core team meets on Thursdays

2023

Sun 3 Dec CEI Christmas Celebration, St Nic's Newbury and livestream

2024 – with more engagements being added

Sat 13 Jan – Know & Grow Makaton, Hope Community Church, Teversham, Cambridge

Sat 20 Jan – Know & Grow Makaton, The King's Centre, Chessington

Sat 3 Feb – Know & Grow Makaton, High St Baptist Church, Tring

Sat 10 Feb – Know & Grow Life Matters, Hope Church, Oswestry

Sun 18 Feb – Preaching at Thatcham United Reformed Church

Sat 2 March – Know & Grow Longing to Belong, Trinity Centre, Shrewsbury

Sat 2 Mar – Know & Grow Makaton, St Thomas' Church Hall, Cambridge

Sat 9 March – Know & Grow Life Matters, Crossways Baptist Church, Dorking

Mon 1 – Fri 5 April – Spring Harvest, Skegness

Tues 2 – Sun 6 April – Word Alive, Prestatyn

Mon 8 – Fri 12 April – Spring Harvest, Minehead

Sat 27 April – Know & Grow Life Matters, Holy Trinity, Platt, Manchester

Sun 12 May – Crossroads Group's 20th birthday celebration, Warwick

Sat 18 May – Know & Grow Makaton, The Trinity Centre, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury

Mon 3 – Mon 10 June – Spring Harvest Holidays (LPO), France

Sun 30 June – Christ Church, Waterden Rd, Guildford 10am service

Sat 13 – Fri 19 July – Keswick Convention, Keswick

Thur 22 – Mon 26 Aug – Commission Festival, Shepton Mallet

Prayer and praise

1. Thank God for opportunities to equip churches with our Know & Grow workshops, including the long-awaited Know & Grow Makaton.
2. Pray for opportunities this Christmas for people to find out about Jesus, especially for the CEI Christmas Celebration Sun 3 December.
3. Pray for more people (especially worship leaders and musicians) to work with us at festivals and in other ways.
4. Pray for Janneke, Pete and Christine that we would fill our 2024 calendars wisely.
5. Pray for families making difficult decisions about the future of their adult children.
6. Pray for our trustees, Rick, Keith, Janet, Jonathan, Maryanne, Val and Bob.

Serve God with all your heart. Do it with a mind that wants to obey Him. The Lord looks deep down inside every heart. He understands every desire and every thought. 1

[Chron 28:9 \(NirV\)](#)



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. **The office will be closed from Friday 22 December until Wednesday 3 January 2024, inclusive.**

Every blessing this Christmas,

Pete, Christine & Janneke