

March 2024

## Who can we trust?

Dear Friends,

**“Don’t put your trust in human leaders.  
Don’t trust in people who can’t save you....  
Blessed are those who depend on the God of Jacob for help.  
Blessed are those who put their hope in the Lord their God....  
He remains faithful forever.”..... Psalm 146:3,5,6 (NirV)**



You’ve caught me at a bad time. I’ve just come off the phone and I’m feeling grumpy! This was my second attempt today and I was optimistic because I was talking with real people, not listening to recorded messages or a selection of options. Live-chat via the website hadn’t got me anywhere. All I want is for an action agreed five weeks ago to be done. I’ve answered security questions, not that I mind as it reduces the risk of identity theft but, when I explained the reason for my call, I was told they couldn’t help. Apparently my request wasn’t in line with company policy. “Please check the record of my last call”, I said, and there they found that an exception was agreed back in January! I won’t bore you with the rest of the story, except to say that 24 hours later I am still waiting for a call back from my new ‘friends’, Fiona and John. Do I trust them to help me? I’m beginning to doubt it. Patience and perseverance are fruit of the Holy Spirit that I need right now!

Who can we trust? With the United States presidential election and the lead-up to our UK general election, not to mention wars in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere, the whole world is in desperate need of leaders who can be trusted to act justly and act mercifully.



We rely on the Royal Mail and Post Office for our postal services and much more; surely they can be trusted? Sadly, not always, as shown by the Horizon software fiasco that affected the lives and livelihoods of 900 sub-postmasters and mistresses.

Have you received scam phone messages and emails? They can easily catch us off-guard and trick us into losing money. Let’s not even start on the world of social media!

Who can we trust? If you have time, please read the whole of Psalm 146 and not just the extract quoted above. It has made me think about who I trust and I am relieved to know that God is my Heavenly Father who I can trust without any shadow of a doubt. That doesn’t mean He does everything I ask, when and how I want it. Implicit in the fact that He is God is the fact that he knows best and He isn’t under my control.

**As Mr Beaver said when speaking of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis, “... he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”**

### Spring opportunities

Janneke reports that Know & Grow Makaton in Tring was a resounding success for the enthusiastic delegates who attended. It’s amazing how



quickly people pick up and begin to use Makaton signs. The challenge is to continue practising them at home and in our churches.

For once, all three of us shared the teaching of Know & Grow Life Matters when we delivered it in Oswestry. It was the first time of presenting this revamped workshop and we wanted to be sure that it 'worked'. Thankfully it did! We enjoyed the facilities of the new purpose-built Hope Church building and were treated to tasty homemade soup at lunchtime. *(Please note: we do not expect host churches to provide lunch; this was their idea, not ours!)*



We deliver our training onsite and not online as we find it is more effective and personal that way. We can tailor training workshops for your situation and needs, but our flagship training is **Know & Grow**:

**Know & Grow Longing to Belong**

**Know & Grow Life Matters**

**Know & Grow Makaton.**

Hear from some recent delegates:

- Thank you for a great, informative and thought-provoking day
- Raising my awareness of the struggles and misunderstandings that people with learning disabilities face was very helpful.

Email [bookings@counteveyonein.org.uk](mailto:bookings@counteveyonein.org.uk) for a place at one of the workshops listed in the **Looking Ahead** section below or to enquire about hosting one in your own church.

## Holidays and festivals 2024

Are you joining us at any of this year's events? **We could still do with a worship leader/musician for Keswick so please get in touch if you can help.**



Contact Pete, Christine and Janneke at [info@counteveyonein.org.uk](mailto:info@counteveyonein.org.uk)

Here again are the links to the festivals where CEI will be running programmes for adults with learning disabilities:

- 1 - 5 April SH Skegness <https://www.butlins.com/breaks/special-events/spring-harvest>
- 8 - 12 April SH Minehead <https://www.butlins.com/breaks/special-events/spring-harvest>
- 3 - 10 June SHH France <https://booking.springharvestholidays.com/>
- 13 - 19 July Keswick <https://keswickministries.org/convention-2024/>
- 22 - 26 August Commission, Shepton Mallet <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.

## Holidays

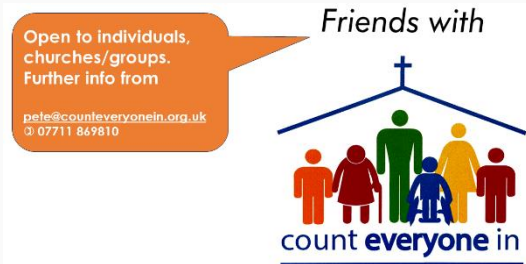
Spring Harvest Holidays is quite unlike the Easter events held at Skegness and Minehead – this is a relaxing holiday, usually with warm sunny weather. Spring Harvest has a 4–star holiday park in the Vendee region of western France, just a few miles from the pretty coastal town of St Gilles–Croix–de–Vie. In early June each year CEI runs a feature week for adults with learning disabilities, their families and care staff. There’s a discount that week for mobile home bookings that include an adult with a learning disability. Most guests return year after year, which is great, but we are keen to attract new people too.

If the CEI week doesn’t suit you, why not look at the website <https://springharvestholidays.com/> and find one that would suit you better. Hire a mobile home or a tent, or take your own tent or caravan, there’s something to suit everyone.

Their website says: “Our vision is for our guests to enjoy superb holidays in an excellent environment. We want our guests to be refreshed and renewed: spiritually, mentally and physically. We welcome guests from different backgrounds, nations, ages and abilities.”

### Meeting Friends!

Pete and Christine were pleased to be invited to Farnham Baptist Church for a Sunday morning service at the end of February. Members of the Friday Group led parts of the service and served refreshments. We were interviewed by Gordon Watson, who is one of the leaders, and then he prayed for CEI. The preaching was based on 1 Corinthians 14 and never has Count Everyone In been name–checked so many times in one sermon! It was a lovely opportunity to meet up with friends old and new. The group, and indeed the church, have recently formally become Friends with CEI.



### More Friends!

In February we were thrilled to welcome Halifax Elim Church as Friends with Count Everyone In. With more and more pins on our map in the office, indicating the location of our Friends, it is encouraging to see how God is growing the work across the country. We long for the day when every adult with a learning disability, regardless of where they live in England or Wales, has less than 5 miles to travel to a church that is intentionally accessible and welcoming so that no one misses out on Jesus!

### Old Friends?

We’ve had a couple of instances recently where groups that were associated with Prospects in past years have somehow come across Count Everyone In and are now forging a link with us. Do you have connections with any churches or groups that were once part of Prospects and might like to be put in touch with CEI?

If you, your group and/or church, or any other one want to know more, please email [pete@counteveryonein.org.uk](mailto:pete@counteveryonein.org.uk) and ask for an application form – just specify personal or group/church – and Pete will whizz one over to you.

Yes, the forms do mention money – not a set subscription fee because money is never the criteria for friendship, but as a charity we rely on donations.

## Resources

We don't run an online shop but we can post items out to you. There is a wide range of CEI Bible reading notes, 'Prospects' worship albums, teaching resources, t-shirts, polos and hoodies and much more – all available by post or in-person at some workshops, festivals and events. 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](mailto: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

**2024** – correct as at 28 February

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

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

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

Thurs 14 March – CEI strategy meeting – core team & 2 trustees

Sun 17 March – Morning service at Bridge Church, Newbury

Tues 19 March – Churches for All Zoom meeting

Fri 22 March – Additional Needs Alliance core team get-together, Leicester

Sat 23 March – Know & Grow Longing to Belong, St John's Church, Muxton, Telford

**Mon 1 – Fri 5 April – Spring Harvest, Skegness**

**Mon 8 – Fri 12 April – Spring Harvest, Minehead + exhibition**

Weds 17 April – CEEC Evangelism Day, London

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

Sun 12 May – Crossroads Group's 20<sup>th</sup> 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**

Tue 25 – Wed 26 – Churches for All residential, High Leigh Conference Centre

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

Sat 6 July – CEI trustees' meeting

**Sat 13 – Fri 19 July – Keswick Convention, Keswick + exhibition**

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

Sat 7 Sept – Know & Grow Longing to Belong, St Austell, Cornwall

Sun 8 Sept – Morning Service, Helston

Tues 8 – Weds – 9 Oct Christian Resources Exhibition, Milton Keynes

Sat 26 Oct – Oswestry Deanery Mission Day

Sun 1 Dec – Christmas Celebration online & onsite, St Nic’s Church, Newbury

### Prayer and praise

1. Thank God for opportunities to train, equip and encourage teams around the country, especially our recent visits to Tring and Oswestry
2. Thank God for CEI Friends groups/churches and others that welcome adults with learning disabilities, especially those we’ve visited recently at Farnham Baptist Church
3. Pray for Janneke, Pete and Christine for health, safe travel, energy and inspiration
4. Pray for festival planning and for worship leaders for the Keswick Convention
5. Pray for our trustees, Rick, Keith, Janet, Jonathan, Maryanne, Val and Bob for wisdom and discernment

**At all times, pray by the power of the Spirit. Pray all kinds of prayers. Be watchful, so that you can pray. Always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me (*us*). Pray that whenever I speak, the right words will be given to me. Then I can be bold as I tell the mystery of the good news.** Ephesians 6:18–19 (NirV)



**If you are thinking of supporting financially, thank you.**

Donate to Count Everyone In at [www.give.net/20280624](http://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](http://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 are Tuesday to Friday 9:30 – 5:30pm.**

**Every blessing,**

*Pete, Christine & Janneke*