



- CfR Programme
- CfR Personal Retreats
- CfR Romania
- CfR Footprints (*in former Yugoslavia*)
- CfR East Africa

**Newslink  
Easter  
2019**

### **From The Community Coordinator:**

I wonder if you spotted the news that Israel had guaranteed safe passage through their territory for animals being evacuated from Gaza Zoo to Jordan. What is the world coming to? Animals being treated more humanely than human beings. Surely the world is upside down. True God charged the human race with caring for the whole of creation – animals included. But that also includes other humans and Jesus told us to ‘love one another’. As we celebrate Easter with its wonderful story of the death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord and our Saviour we should be more determined than ever to follow him and be obedient to him. *Ian Ring*



### **News from CfR – Ian Ring**

One of the great joys of working for CfR is welcoming guests to Barnes Close for personal retreats, CfR retreats and Reflection Days. It is a real privilege to share with guests on such occasions and those who come regularly have become friends. Sometimes we discuss the church or issues in society on other occasions we open the Scriptures and try to discern what God is to us today as well as the historical context of the particular passage of Scripture before us. In the increasingly frenetic and fast paced world in which we live there are too few opportunities to stop for such reflection and too few places to do it. Of course, the internet is full of resources and interest groups to help us and it is very easy to find online help to agree with our point of view. The advantage of meeting together to do theological reflection is that we often come across people who have different views to us and whilst that sometimes provides a challenge it also helps us to consider our own views and maybe modify them under the guidance of God. This is where CfR has provided such a valuable service at Barnes Close over the last thirty years. We are the Community for Reconciliation and each of those words is important in what we do.

Firstly, as a ‘Community’ we are a group of people, in this case bound not by geographical location but by sense of purpose. It is not something we do on our own, individually, rather we do it in partnership with others. The ‘for’ reminds us that is something we are working towards, something we have not yet achieved. The announcement ‘this train is for Bristol Temple Meads’ tells us not where the train is but where it is going. It is exactly the same with our title, the ‘for’ tells us not where we are but where we are going. Finally, ‘Reconciliation’ tells us the goal, our aim, our purpose. It is in no way restricted or qualified, it is total and complete and therefore implies that we are working towards reconciliation with those with whom we fundamentally disagree.

How we do this in the Community for Reconciliation is something that we are constantly trying to discern. Part of that process is to model it in our life, decision making processes and our projects. Furthermore, we have to do our best to ensure that we only support external work and projects that accord with our aims.

### **CfR Programme at Barnes Close**

**Reflection Days 10am to 4pm Cost: £15 per day**

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July



**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April Easter at Barnes Close**

Follow the Easter story with friends old and new in the beautiful surroundings of Barnes Close and with churches in Rubery.

Cost £250 (*waged*) £200 (*unwaged*)

## International Projects Update

### CfR East Africa

It is now 25 years since the Rwandan Genocide and our thoughts and prayers are with our friends all over Rwanda and further afield. While much reconciliation work has been done, there is still more to do. One of CfR's aims is to stick with those who are hurting long after the spotlight has left them. So those who are still living with HIV/AIDS, the consequences of rape, bereavement and extreme poverty as a result of that genocide we support through PHARP (Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Programme) Rwanda.

You may have heard Sir Mark Rylance on the Radio 4 Appeal talking about Peace Direct. Part of their work is to map grassroots peace projects - it is good to know that ICRP (Initiatives Communautaires pour la Reduction de la Pauvrete au Burundi) is one of those projects, and that our support is being put to good use in Burundi.

Many of us were enthralled by the television series *Blue Planet 2* and have recently watched *Blue Planet Live*. Through these programmes, Sir David Attenborough has brought the issue of the disposal of plastics to many who were not previously informed or interested. He has a global voice on conservation and sustainability from a natural history and a political standpoint and is striving to make the work a better place for all of us.

In 1986, I was able to go snorkelling in the Indian Ocean, off the coast of Kenya, near Malindi. It was a wonderful experience - one that could not now be done safely, due to its proximity to Somalia and its extreme Islamic influence. Tourism in this area is now almost non-existent and with it the income it brought. As we know, extreme poverty often leads to conflict and, in this difficult area, PHARP Kenya are working with local people to promote peace and conflict resolution.

In a recent Traidcraft catalogue, I read an article, *Healthy Soil*, about the importance of good quality soil in agriculture. While this article focuses on South East Asia, we know that the same applies to East Africa. I have previously mentioned the Massai farmers who are now unable to feed their families from their land. Again their extreme poverty has resulted in conflict and PHARP Field Workers are living and working alongside these communities.

So how can we add our support to those living in extreme poverty and areas of conflict? We can take care to live as sustainably as possible. We can buy food and other goods from Traidcraft or other Fair-Trade suppliers. And we can financially support the projects working in vulnerable areas.

CfR would like to continue its funding for projects in East Africa as follows:

- PHARP Rwanda £1,000
- PHARP Kenya £1,000
- Maji Mazuri, Nairobi £1,000
- ICRP Burundi £1,000

In recent years, much of this funding has come from our reserves. We are no longer in a position to continue this 'top up' and so are asking specifically for donations for these projects. You may think of hosting an event to highlight this work, and if you would like one of us to come and speak to a group, please get in touch. You may wish to give a small amount each month. If so, please get in touch with Ian. However you wish to give, we would be grateful, and so would those communities in East Africa who will benefit as a result.

*Jan Scott*

### News from Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary

Every Wednesday there is a Drop-In Centre at the Church in Broad Street, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Among other things, they aim to provide a safe, welcoming place where asylum seekers and refugees can relax by socialising, playing games and informally mixing with people from their own and other cultures.

#### Contacting the Community for Reconciliation:

🌐: [www.cfrbarnesclose.co.uk](http://www.cfrbarnesclose.co.uk)

✉: [cfrpeace@gmail.com](mailto:cfrpeace@gmail.com)

☎: **01562 710231 (answerphone available)**

✉ **CfR, Barnes Close, Chadwich, Bromsgrove, Worcs B61 0RA**

**Barnes Close Office hours: Monday - Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm**

