

two day sports and community Festival during the Games. The torch relay is coming to town giving another opportunity to focus on More Than Gold's mission of "Outreach, Hospitality and Service".

It's not too late to arrange something in your area; this is a once in a lifetime opportunity!

David Brinn david.brinn@stcatharines.co.uk

Voluntary Contributions

Somerset Churches Together gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Christians and Churches Together Groups throughout the county who make voluntary contributions to our work. These help to meet the costs of communication and co-ordination, mailings and publicity etc. undertaken by the County Ecumenical Officer.

The guideline for voluntary contributions is £5 per worshipping congregation in membership of each Christians and Churches Together Group per year.

Please send voluntary contributions to the Honorary Treasurer of Somerset Churches Together Mr Nick May, Diocesan Board of Finance, the Old Deanery, Wells, BA5 2UG.

Dates to Note

2nd February 2012, SCT AGM (3.00-3.45) and Forum (4.00-6.00)

At Locking Castle Church, Jasmine Way, BS24 7JW – see enclosed flyer

29th September 2012, SCT Autumn Forum (all day)

In Taunton – a chance to engage with your issues of ecumenical concern.



NEWSLETTER

ADVENT 2011

www.sctog.org.uk

This newsletter comes to you as the church begins the season of Advent. Advent, as we all know, is about waiting for the arrival of something or someone very important, but this is modern life, which tells us, 'stay busy while you wait', so even in our churches we find it hard to resist the urge for busyness and no doubt you are all looking forward to Advent programmes of one kind or another.

Terry Hershey writes, 'this reminds me of the young couple (a long time ago) who were looking for lodging. Their plans called for a semi comfortable inn. What awaited them? An empty stable, with not much to offer but straw and starlight, and the songs of angels.

I wonder what would happen, he goes on, if we made this announcement at church. There are many activities this Advent. Because of this, we recommend that you choose just one.'

Then comes his final challenge; 'what are you doing this Advent? I'm sitting this one out – really. After all, Advent is about waiting, as in sitting still.' May God grant us all a happy and holy Advent which allows us enough space and stillness to prepare for the one who comes to make his home in our hearts and lives.

+Peter Taunton

Olympic Frome

Advent greetings to you all! May this season of Christian promise and expectation bring spiritual joy to everyone in your churches.

It is now 5 months since I took on the role of County Ecumenical Officer and it has been a delight to get to know some of you during that time but there are still many more whom I have yet to meet. I see my role as chiefly that of enabler and encourager so if you think I can be of any help at all in your local situation, please do get in touch.

Hopefully most of you will have seen the monthly Updates of forthcoming events and useful information which I have been putting out since September. The Updates go by email to the Secretaries of most Churches Together groups and LEPS, and by post to those who are not online. If there are any events or information which you would like to publicise around the county, please be sure to give me the information at least a month in advance and I will happily include it.

To some extent the Updates have replaced the quarterly Newsletters which Robin Dixon used to produce, so this mini-Newsletter is a trial to test the waters. Please feel free to photocopy it and distribute it widely among church people in your area. Email Updates are quicker and cheaper to produce but it is important to communicate in the ways which you find most useful. It would therefore be very helpful indeed if you could let me know whether you would value a regular Newsletter like this and, if so, how frequently. Thank you so much!

Gabrielle Grace
County Ecumenical Officer

3 Champford Mews
Wellington Tel: 078111 08218
TA21 8JW Email: sctogether@phonecoop.coop

In October 2010 I attended a national meeting about how the Church could respond to the Olympics; I came back fired up and determined that we would do something in Frome. More Than Gold is the national organisation backed by all the major Churches to help us engage with the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

I began talking about it and Frome Area Christians Together agreed to register as a group rather than as individual churches, which was a first nationally and meant that we already had a structure in place for publicity and planning. Over the next year, an organisation formed called More Than Gold Frome which, while led by the Churches, is a collaborative project between Christians and a range of sports and community groups in the area.

This project has been a breath of fresh air and seems to capture the imagination of everyone who gets involved. It hasn't been hard since we went public in September to get groups outside the Churches on board and we are now at the point where they are approaching us to be part of it.

So what have we planned? Firstly a load of fundraising, as we want everything to be free of charge next summer. Things planned vary from a charity calendar featuring local people with a 1948 Olympic torch to quiz nights, skittles evenings and a St Patrick's night celebration. We have a church service planned for the start of the Olympic Truce period which will not only highlight the issue of peace but also celebrate the role which sport plays in our communities.

During the Games, we will be opening a Big Screen Coffee Shop in St Catharine's Hall from 8am to 10pm daily showing action live from London and serving free Fairtrade drinks and food at cost price. We are holding a