

**ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

When you have read it  
PASS IT ON, AND ASK YOUR FRIENDS  
TO HELP THE ALLIANCE

**3<sup>D.</sup>**

# EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM

**ORGAN OF THE WORLD'S EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE**  
(BRITISH ORGANISATION).



## **The World's Evangelical Alliance** (British Organisation)

Founded in 1846. Incorporated 1912. It exists to enable Christians of both British and Foreign Nations to realise in themselves, and to manifest to others, that living and essential union which binds true believers together in the fellowship of Christ. As a result of this union the Alliance is active in the promotion of Co-operation and Unity; the cause of Religious Liberty; the Relief of Persecuted Christians; the furtherance of United Prayer; the Maintenance of Evangelical Truth; and various enterprises of direct Evangelistic work.

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**THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE TURNS 170  
THREE GENERAL DIRECTORS RETURN**

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IS EVANGELICAL OUT OF DATE?  
WHY RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IS STILL  
IMPORTANT – 170 YEARS ON  
THE FUTURE OF EVANGELISM EXPLORED**

**REUNION NOTES.**

**WORLD MISSION NOTES**

**BOOKS WORTH READING, &c.**

# Do you care?

*Yes, but I'm not  
sure how to help ...*



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**Amaris Cole:** While this magazine is dedicated to all the work that has happened for the last 170 years, it also looks ahead to the future.

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# idea-torial



We love a party at the Alliance. I'm writing this the morning after our summer social – a chance for all the staff in our London headquarters to get together and have fun – without worrying about deadlines, targets or what's happening in Westminster. We had afternoon tea and took hilarious pictures in our photobooth. You can see a special picture of that on our Facebook page.

And we have a lot to celebrate. On 19 August the Evangelical Alliance turned 170 years old. During that time, the Alliance has achieved some amazing things. From launching Tearfund to ensuring ethnic diversity since 1846, we decided to take a look back at the Alliance's inspirational history in this edition.

While this magazine is dedicated to all the work that has happened for the last 170 years, it also looks ahead to the future. We thought now was the perfect time to find out just how much evangelicals know about evangelicalism. The results are fascinating – find those on page 14 and 15.

While we're proud of our heritage, for some, the word 'evangelical' has negative connotations. We explore on page 20, asking in our Good Question feature if we should scrap the word for good, or work harder at showing the true meaning of the label.

Great leadership has been key to the survival of the Alliance, so we're honoured to have the last three general directors feature in this edition. We spent 60 seconds with each, asking Clive Calver, Joel Edwards and Steve Clifford the same questions. It makes for great reading. Turn to page 22 for that.

As we celebrate this special anniversary, we've also got a special request for you – have a look at your letter from Steve that came with this edition, and please consider a special anniversary gift.

We'd love to hear your thoughts about this edition, and to receive any birthday wishes you may wish to send! Either drop us an email, or a Tweet to @EAUKnews using #EA170

**Amaris Cole**

**Editor**

@AmarisCole

*P.s. Did you like the special front cover? This has been reproduced from an old edition of an Alliance magazine. Only a few things have been updated. It is one of the hundreds of documents we keep in our special archive.*

**We're on Twitter!**  
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### FIVE THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL THIS ISSUE

**The Alliance is older than the lightbulb**

**97% of you think our priority must be providing a united voice for Christians**

**There are 137 lightbulbs in our England office**

**Our directors have had more than 115 speaking engagements since January**

**93% of evangelicals are committed to passing on the gospel**

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**The Evangelical Alliance's information and research officer, Kim Walker.**



**That vicar off Gogglebox, Kate Bottley.**



**Last Word with Steve Clifford.**

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**evangelical alliance** 170  
better together

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# 170th anniversary appeal

**That's right, just last week – on Friday, 19 August – the Evangelical Alliance celebrated its 170th birthday!**

That's 170 years of uniting the Church across the UK, protecting religious liberty and equipping the Church for evangelism. That's 170 years of generous support from *thousands* – probably millions – of members and supporters like you. We can't thank you enough.

**Our 170th Anniversary Appeal is simple. If just 170 of you, our wonderful members and supporters, increase your regular gifts to £18.46 a month to commemorate the year of our foundation, you could raise an extra £30,000 a year to do this core work of serving and representing the UK Church.**

So please read your covering letter from Steve for this special anniversary edition of *idea*, and please prayerfully consider whether you could be one of the 170. Thank you.

## Reaching the world on your doorstep

**The Evangelical Alliance, London City Mission and Global Connections are working together to present a day of teaching, training, encouragement, prayer, sharing resources and ideas to help churches to engage with people around them of different faiths and cultures.**

The event will be held on Wednesday, 23 November 2016 at St Jude's Church, St Mellitus College, London. The day is being designed especially for London churches, but much of what is presented will be equally relevant to other places.

The day will include plenary speakers, testimonies, case studies, workshops, teaching, interviews and an opportunity to see relevant displays and resources from mission agencies and possibly some colleges.

Contributors include the Alliance's director of mission Gavin Calver, Martin Lee from Global Connections, Graham Miller from London City Mission and Usha Reifsnider from the Alliance's South Asian Forum, among others.

Tickets are £30, and include lunch and a free copy of Dewi Hughes' book, *Evangelicals and the Religions - A theological resource for mission*, published by the Evangelical Alliance.

Bookings are open now via the Global Connections website:

**[globalconnections.org.uk/events/reaching-the-world-on-your-doorstep/161123](http://globalconnections.org.uk/events/reaching-the-world-on-your-doorstep/161123)**



## Five prayer points for *idea*: 170th anniversary edition

Praise God for His faithfulness in causing the **Alliance's work to expand and flourish over 170 years** of history. Please pray that this legacy will continue to grow, as we seek to promote Christian unity and to speak on behalf of evangelical Christians to the government and media in the UK.

Praise God for the work of **our teams in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales**, who have worked tirelessly over the years to represent a Christian perspective in local media, and in the corridors of power in their respective governments and assemblies. Their legacy of hard work and commitment is evident in the extraordinary degree of influence they have within their communities.

Looking forward, there are many exciting **forthcoming projects on the horizon for the Alliance**. Please pray for the ongoing work of our new evangelism project, the Great Commission, an online hub that will give access to stories, resources and networks to help individuals and churches evangelise more confidently and effectively.

Please pray for the work of the **threads team amongst the millennial generation**, as they take their mission of reaching "the missing generation" offline and into communities and churches around the UK. From church leader training days to seminars on relationships, politics and sport, please pray for wonderful and transformative interactions to emerge from this busy and exciting time in the life of *threads*.

Please pray for the **ongoing and critically important work of our advocacy team**. Please pray particularly for the legacy of religious liberty which the Alliance has long upheld. Please pray for the vital work the team are currently doing around the government's counter-terrorism strategy, and for the preservation of religious freedom in these turbulent times.

# Voices for good

## PUBLIC LEADERSHIP WEEKEND

**Our world needs voices for good, and Christians should lead the way in providing them.**

As part of the Evangelical Alliance's Public Leadership programme we're putting on a special weekend in October to develop voices for good to speak up in the media. We want to help Christians who are leading in a wide variety of settings have the confidence and skills to develop a profile and have an impact.

If you turn on the news who do you see speaking up, who are the voices influencing public life, and providing leadership to our society? Two things are clear, our society needs better leadership, and as Christians we need to get better at speaking up and providing that leadership.

Imagine Christians stepping up and calling our nations to account, challenging damaging trends, and providing a vision for a society which works for the good of all, a society that glorifies God.

The Alliance team will be joined by media experts to provide teaching and practical training to equip you to engage in the media and be a voice for good.

**14-16 October, Oast Houses, East Sussex. Find out more and book in at [www.thepublicleader.com/voice-for-good](http://www.thepublicleader.com/voice-for-good)**

**170**  
evangelical alliance  
better together

## A 170-year legacy

**In 1846 – 170 years ago last week – 800 evangelical Christians came together and sparked a movement that would spread around the world, changing the fabric of society for generations to come. This 170-year legacy of the Evangelical Alliance is founded on this prayer of Jesus: "I don't ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."**

Our vision and mission is to unite together and speak out for Christ; to pave the way for future generations.

If you would like to prayerfully consider leaving a legacy to the Alliance and helping shape the future of the Church in a significant way, please visit [eauk.org/legacy](http://eauk.org/legacy) for more information.



## Thanks and feedback

**Thank you to all of you who took the time to complete our communication survey. The results were very positive and it was great to hear what members think about the way we get in touch.**

Many of you told us how useful our website, [eauk.org](http://eauk.org), is. However, 15 per cent of respondents said they had never looked at our site. If you were one of them, you could be missing out on key news about the UK Church, interviews with interesting people and updates on our latest work.

Of those of you who are regularly visiting [eauk.org](http://eauk.org), 38 per cent said it was for the news stories, while 23 per cent said that updates on the Alliance's work and features drew them to the website.

When asked to scale from one to five their experience of the website, respondents rated three for all categories: professionalism, navigation, contemporary, informative, and recommend to a friend.

If you haven't checked it out for yourself, visit [eauk.org](http://eauk.org) today.

## WHY I'M A MEMBER



When, more than 15 years ago, my daughter announced she was moving to London to work as a parliamentary intern for the Evangelical Alliance, I quickly developed an interest in the organisation and its work. I soon came to appreciate EA as an important resource, both in developing my personal faith, and understanding how to apply it in the context of the local church and the public square. In the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland, EA has consistently provided an authentic voice on issues of relevance to church and society by addressing contemporary questions whilst remaining faithful to scripture.

*Edgar Jardine, Northern Ireland*



# A multi-ethnic Alliance

At the inaugural conference of the Alliance in 1846, one of the speakers caused quite a sensation after he delivered his speech. Rev Molliston Madison Clark's speech was greeted with excited cheers and clapping. Molliston was an African-American who spoke on behalf of three million African-Americans, many of whom were slaves. We told his story in a previous edition of *idea* – you can catch up on that by visiting [eauk.org/idea/unity-through-the-decades.cfm](http://eauk.org/idea/unity-through-the-decades.cfm)

That original desire for the Alliance to serve all peoples irrespective of ethnicity has continued to be part of the Evangelical Alliance's work throughout the last 170 years.

In the mid-19th century, the Alliance started an annual Universal Week of Prayer and material was distributed around the world. It was translated into many languages, including Greek, Yoruba, Sethsoso, German and Igbo. This work continued for more than 100 years before being handed over to the European Evangelical Alliance.

The Alliance International conferences, held every seven years, attracted participants from around the world.

Many religious liberty deputations and appeal letters were sent to heads of state around the world, particularly in the 19th century.

In the 1920s the Evangelical Alliance invited Sadhu Sundar Singh, the Indian Christian missionary, to give his unique perspective at one its annual conferences in London. During his speech he said: "People who are one in Him will have that Christian love that the Evangelical Alliance represents."



Sadhu Sundar Singh  
1888-1929.

In the mid-20th century, after the Evangelical Alliance had, along with the National Association of Evangelicals in USA, founded the World Evangelical Fellowship – later World Evangelical Alliance – to work for international evangelical unity, the Evangelical Alliance in the UK was looking closer to home to ensure it was properly representative of all evangelicals.

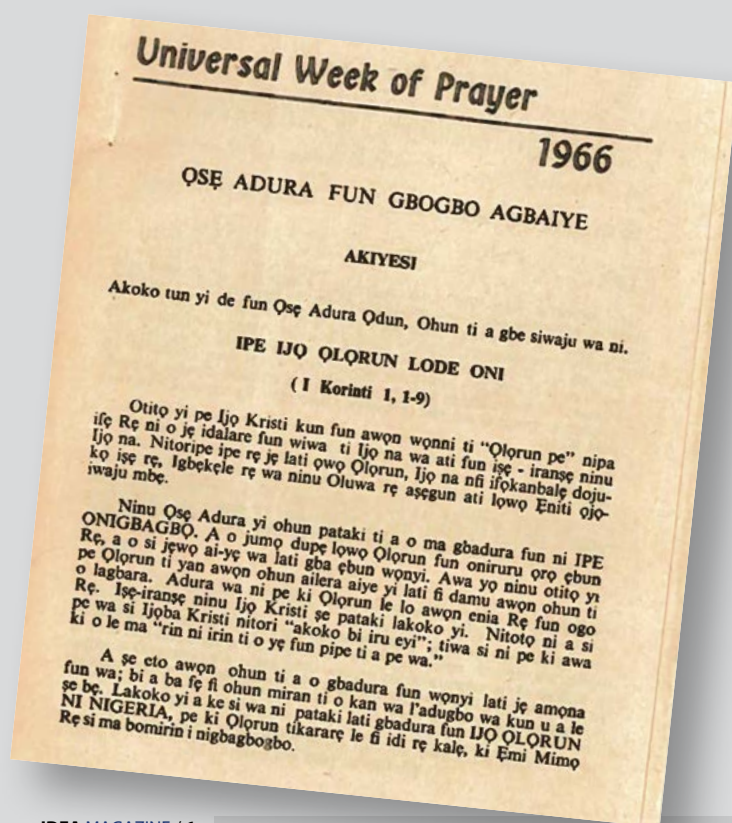
In the 1980s, when Clive Calver was general secretary, he was challenged by black church leader Patrick Mohibir to make the Alliance more ethnically diverse. Patrick went on to help the Alliance form the West Indian Evangelical Alliance (WIEA) and he became the first chair of the new organisation.

WIEA was later renamed African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance (ACEA) to better reflect the black church scene in the UK. ACEA closed in 2009.

The One People Commission (OPC) was established in 2012. This is a body within the Alliance made up of key national church leaders committed to celebrating ethnicity, while promoting unity within the UK evangelical Church. Part of the role of the OPC is to ensure the Alliance is representative of the diversity of the UK Church.

One of the members of OPC is the South Asian Forum (SAF). SAF was formed in 2010 by the Evangelical Alliance to unite and support the 75,000 South Asian Christians, originally from the eight South Asian countries, who are now living in Britain.

LEFT: Universal Week of Prayer  
1966 in the Yoruba language.







Part of Letter of Thanks sent by the Council of the Alliance to the Shah of Persia for granting religious liberty



Religious Liberty in Turkey  
Letter of Appeal from the Alliance to the Sultan  
(see pages 64-65)

LEFT: Letter to Shah of Persia 1863

RIGHT: Letter to Sultan of Turkey 1855

## Superbook Academy™

Superbook Academy is an online Sunday School curriculum that teaches Bible lessons supplementing the episodes from CBN's children animated series, Superbook®.

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[www.superbookacademy.com](http://www.superbookacademy.com)







**To celebrate our anniversary, Around the WEA is focusing on the national alliances that were formed in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland over the years.**



*Elfed Godding.*

## WALES

On 6 and 7 July 1990 the Alliance's then-general director Clive Calver, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students European secretary Lindsay Brown, Baptist minister Phil Hill and Tearfund Wales coordinator Dewi Arwel Hughes launched the Evangelical Alliance Wales.

Birthing out of Welsh church leaders' passion to see churches working together for the gospel across Wales, the Alliance appointed Arfon Jones as the first general secretary. A gifted preacher and first-language Welsh speaker, Arfon soon gathered a team around him to focus on networking, encouragement and fostering positive relationships across varying evangelical traditions.

Unity in diversity; unity for mission. Amazingly he achieved this with just a desk and a telephone in an office rented from Care for the Family in Cardiff city centre. With a £2 registration fee, it was a bargain.

Through regular prayer gatherings, thousands of miles of travel and hundreds of key friendships kindled the Lord blessed the fledgling Evangelical Alliance Wales with growth in membership, credibility as a mission-focused body and a relationship of respect with Cytûn, the newly formed Welsh expression of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. This provided an excellent foundation for substantial growth in the years to come.

*Elfed Godding, national director, Evangelical Alliance Wales*

## NORTHERN IRELAND

I heard Clive Calver speak about the Alliance at a meeting in Belfast in 1986 and made the mistake of saying to him afterwards that we needed one in Northern Ireland. He 'persuaded' me to do something about it.

Interestingly we initially thought of forming a Christian Alliance and set up meetings to consult with a wide variety of church leaders. But at a meeting on 18 March 1986 Clive Calver addressed us on the idea of forming the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland (EANI). After some false starts we held the inaugural Council meeting for EANI at Orangefield Presbyterian Church on 19 January 1987.

An executive committee of seven members was formed with a former Presbyterian

moderator Dr John Girvan as chair and Bishop Brian Herd as vice chair with me as secretary. Initially my office staff at Orangefield helped with the administration.

It is probably fair to say that in the 1980s the Alliance was very much a product of English evangelicalism. I'm delighted that we in Northern Ireland blazed a trail for seeing the Alliance become more inclusive of the nations of the UK.

In 2017 we will celebrate 30 years as EANI and thank God for our partnership with brothers and sisters throughout the UK.

*Rev Ken McBride, senior minister, Orangefield Presbyterian Church and founding secretary of EANI*

## SCOTLAND

The journey began in January 1988 when I wrote to Clive Calver concerning the possibility of the Alliance filling gaps in Scotland. We met that March and he spoke of the Alliance being a conduit, an alliance, uniting member churches and, hopefully being a voice to the nation. Scotland lacked these.

Unity was the note heard at a Scottish church leaders' prayer event in late 1987. The Alliance seemed a good fit for these gaps in Scotland.

Since then the Alliance's 'voice to the nation' has increased. However, the number of areas in which a Christian voice is required has grown. The media deluge from newspapers, thousands of specialist magazines and journals, television, social media, websites and internet have saturated society with secular thinking.

When God speaks we must change, even if

our highly organised Christian constructs scream a message of continuity of an old vision.

In November 1991 a press release announced that the Evangelical Alliance Scotland would start in 1992. The Alliance's Bishopbriggs office opened for business that year.

Europe is the only continent in which societal transformation through church revival has not yet taken place. This is our challenge. To be a voice of prayer to heaven, and a voice to 1,000 social sectors and 20,000 British communities.

*Douglas Flett served on the first Executive Committee of EA Scotland and on the EA UK Council for several years in the 1990s, is part of City & Community Networks Scotland and is the Scottish representative of the International Christian Chamber of Commerce.*



*The EA Scotland's first Council*



# Who cares about the Bible?

In England and Wales only 1 out of 10 people actively engage with the Bible. But in places like China, Africa and the Middle East demand is growing fast.

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To find out how you can get involved, visit our website:  
[biblesociety.org.uk/getinvolved](http://biblesociety.org.uk/getinvolved)

**Bringing**  
*the Bible to* **Life**



# Time to look back at the last 170 years

Do you think your knowledge of the Alliance is pretty good? Or are you a new member who didn't realise quite how old we were? We hope this timeline will teach you all a little more about our amazing history – the *idea* team certainly learnt a lot!

**1843** – in June, a speculative conference to be held in London was met with an overwhelming response – 11,000 requests for tickets for a hall that could accommodate only 3,000 people.

**1846** – the Evangelical Alliance formed and had 3,000 members by end of the year.

**1847** – the first edition of the monthly magazine *Evangelical Christendom* was published. It was published for 107 years.

**1850** – The Alliance now had 5,000 members, and established the first ladies committees in London.

**January 1861** – First Universal Week of Prayer took place. This became a major international Christian event with tens of thousands of copies of prayer materials being distributed around the world and translated in many different languages.

**1879** – A personal visit of Alliance delegates to the Austrian emperor, Charles I was made to appeal for relief from persecution of Christians in Bohemia. Despite having to go from Vienna to Budapest to meet with the emperor, the visit did eventually bring a positive outcome for non-Roman Catholic Christians who had been prevented from meeting for worship or Bible studies.

**1855** – one of the Alliance's earliest religious liberty campaigns started. A letter was sent to Sultan of Turkey appealing for the removal of the death penalty for Muslim apostates. Messages were also sent to Queen Victoria, US President Franklin Pierce, Napoleon III, Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria to request support. The campaign was successful.

**1939-1945** – the Alliance was actively involved in helping refugees - Poles, Czechs, Armenians and Greeks all received help. Large prayer meetings were also organised by the Alliance; denominational leaders, and MP's were the speakers. The meetings were advertised on posters on the London Underground.

**1914-1918** – During the first World War, the Alliance organised large monthly prayer meetings - the one in London was usually attended by 2,500 people. There was a joint objective for the Alliance of praying for peace, but also to encourage spiritual unity and deliberately invited leaders from different denominations to speak at the meetings.

**1951** – The Alliance 1951 sponsored the United Evangelistic Exhibition, which ran alongside the Festival of Britain, it featured 180 Christian societies.

**1983** – Clive Calver becomes general secretary. Following his appointment the Alliance went through a period of dramatic growth in terms of membership and activities.

**1989** – Evangelical Alliance Wales established led by Arfon Jones. It was set up intentionally as a bilingual organisation.

**1954** – Harringay Crusade. The Alliance sponsored the events and were responsible for leading the organising committees. About two million people attended and there were 38,000 decisions to follow Christ. In addition, 405 churches and church halls carried live broadcasts via phone lines.

**1968** – The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund launched 1968 – now known as Tearfund.

**1987** – Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland office opens in Belfast.

**2011** – the 21st Century Evangelicals research programme launched looking at the beliefs and habits of evangelicals. A number of reports have been published including ones on evangelism, money, family and education. The research is still published in *idea* magazine today – look at page 14.

**1997** – Joel Edwards becomes general director. The appointment led to a growth in work in public affairs and advocacy.

**2009** – Steve Clifford becomes general director. Unity and mission become a major focus.

**1992** – Evangelical Alliance Scotland launched aiming to provide "a framework for evangelicals throughout the country to unite in prayer, mission and active concern for our country," said Colin Sinclair chair of the original steering committee.

**2012** – One People Commission established to promote "unity through diversity".

*Please pray for our future, that together we might continue these great works*





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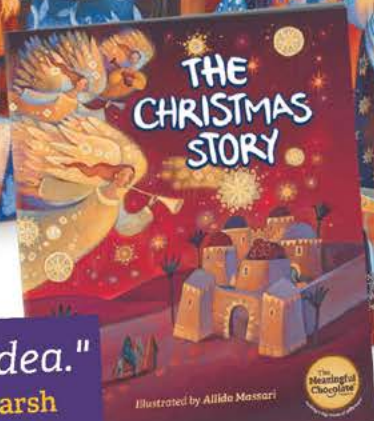
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## A great way to share the Christmas story

It might be difficult to believe but recent surveys show that knowledge of the Christmas story is fading.\*\*

Among 5-7 year olds, 36% don't know whose birthday we celebrate at Christmas and 72% don't know Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Among adults, less than 12% know the full nativity story and 51% say that the birth of Jesus is irrelevant to their Christmas. This is a tipping point.

\*\* Survey findings from ComRes 2007, 2010, 2012.

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\* There is free delivery if you order a case of 18 by 1st November 2016



## Could you be a champion?

We recommend that churches, schools and groups buy in bulk directly from us. The best way is for a champion (maybe you) to collect orders and place an order online at [www.realadvent.co.uk](http://www.realadvent.co.uk)





## Senior information and research officer

**If you contact the Evangelical Alliance with an enquiry or question about our resources, chances are you will be speaking to the Alliance information and research officer. While she's one of the shyest members of the *idea* team, she does a huge amount behind the scenes, so we thought this was the perfect time to introduce her. Readers, meet Kim Walker.**

**I usually wake up between 5am and 5:30am and the first thing I do is look at the train apps on my phone to check if my usual trains are running. If so, I jump out of bed and have a shower. I then spend far too much time doing my hair and make-up, before my husband drives me to the station.**

I live near Brighton, and so it's a long commute to King's Cross. I look at any emails

that have come in overnight while on the train, and type up some replies. The rest of the journey is for me – I read, listen to music or watch some television I've downloaded.

When I arrive at work, I like to have a wander around and find out how everyone is as I'm not in London every day. Then, it's time to clear the emails before getting on with my To Do list. It's never the same – every day is different because I'm constantly responding to what the members and staff are asking for, so although I have a plan each day, I have to be flexible.

At 9:30am we all gather for staff prayers. It's a good way of starting the day. We get a chance to pray for all the work we're involved in, as well as personal things.

I'm responsible for looking after the archives. That can be finding answers to enquiries in the archive or looking for stories that we're going to write about on the website or magazine. I also do research for the staff at the Alliance – anything from finding out about a town or an area where somebody is going to be speaking to statistics on church attendance or the history of what relationships the Alliance has had with certain organisations over the years.

I'm really pleased to also use my information management skills to manage all of the Alliance's electronic information and files.

This means when we moved to cloud storage, I was invited to organise how our files would be structured – basically where staff save their work and how. It sounds boring, but actually it's really important. If people can't find their work, it's a disaster. Whatever skills you've got you're invited to contribute here – it's one of the best things about the Alliance.

This morning I'm reading some articles from an old magazine of ours from 1903 and choosing ones to prepare for an article we're going to write.

We're very fortunate to have material in our archives going back to 1846 and it's really good to be able to tell stories from the archive because it helps explain why we're doing what we're doing today.

I have lunch as early as possible. As I have such an early start to my day, I get hungry. I have a quick sandwich in our library, and then get back to work. Lunch is really just the start of food for me – I like to have nibbles throughout the afternoon!

My afternoon might involve having a look at how my volunteer Graham is doing and thinking about what work he could help us with next. He's a retired chartered librarian, so he helps with the cataloguing and indexing of archive material, which is really helpful.

I worked in public libraries for 20 years, and when I became a Christian I quickly felt I should move into using my skills for a Christian organisation. I love working at the Alliance because it's very varied. I care very much about what the Alliance is trying to do, and everybody who works here is really amazing.

I leave the office at about 4:15pm and walk to the station. Getting home on the trains can be very challenging! I save a favourite TV show and some chocolate for the journey as a treat. I'm a bit slipper and pipe!

When I get home, between half past six and seven, I usually have an amazing meal made for me as my daughter's a great cook. I eat, and then we tend to watch television together as a family. If I haven't been working in the office, I look forward to going to an exercise class in the evening. I arrive early to have a drink and chat beforehand. The teacher's wife is Taiwanese, and she brings in lots of different teas from Taiwan to try. I love standing around chatting and drinking the tea.

I try not to do too much before bed to make it easier to go to sleep. I read somewhere that the optimum time for getting to sleep is 10:34pm – so I aim for that!



# Sometimes buying Fairtrade isn't enough...

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Guatemala.  
Photo: Richard Else



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# Evangelical about evangelicalism?

## THE RESULTS ARE IN

**As we celebrate the 170th anniversary of the Alliance, we were keen to find out what evangelicals know about the history of evangelicalism in our country, how evangelicals are perceived publicly, as well as the history of the Alliance. So we recently surveyed almost 1,500 evangelicals and here are some of the key findings.**

**First, 80 per cent of participants said that they are comfortable with being described as an evangelical. The minority that didn't had some interesting views. One comment was: "Non-Christians think very negatively about 'evangelicals' or have no idea what it means." Another said: "I wouldn't. Non-Christians would associate me with the American right." While a small proportion confirmed that there are some negative connotations with the term, this finding illustrates that for the majority there is a strong and positive affinity with being identified as an evangelical. It also confirms that we all have a responsibility here in the UK to challenge negative public perceptions and promote positive ones.**

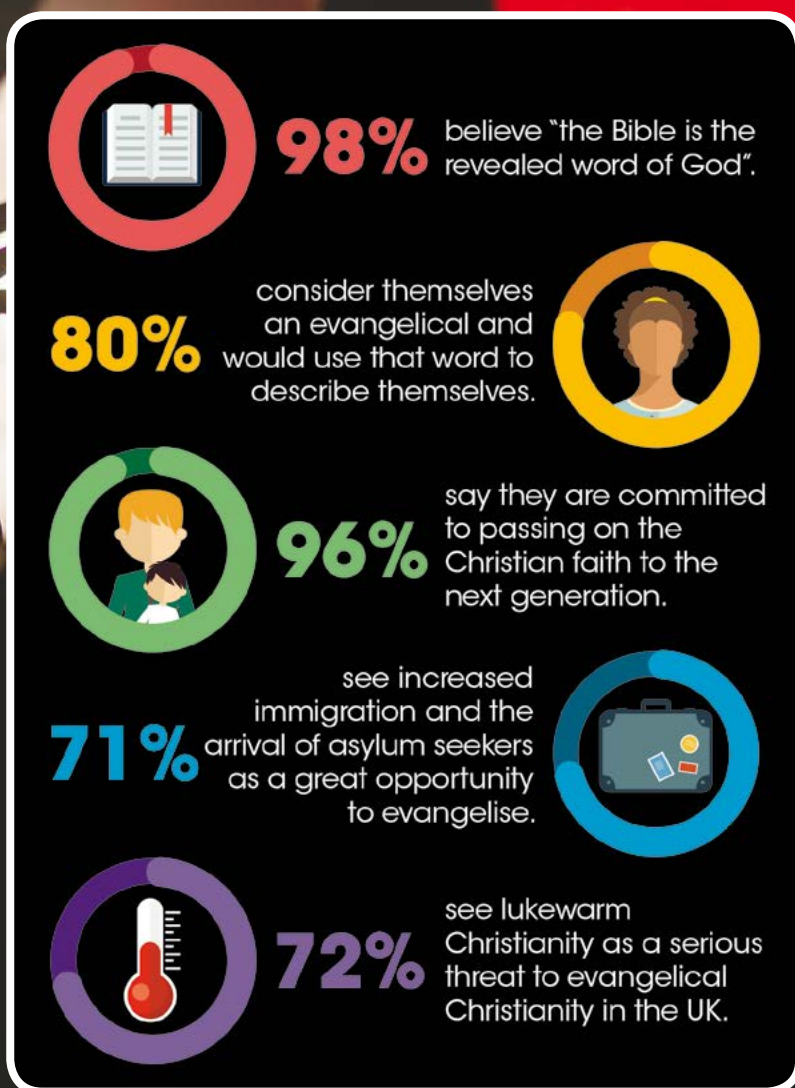
One of the most encouraging statistics from the survey was that 96 per cent of those surveyed agreed that every Christian should tell people about Jesus. Similarly, 98 per cent agree that we should strive to share the

love of Christ with others. As the Evangelical Alliance, we're passionate about seeing the UK Church united in mission, so we're really encouraged to see that evangelicals strongly believe in both word and deed mission – sharing the love of Jesus in what we say as well as how we act.

Later this year, we look forward to launching the Great Commission website hub, which will inspire and equip each church and individual Christian to be talking about Jesus with those around them. With 87 per cent saying that they are actively committed to spreading the gospel among friends, colleagues, neighbours and the local community, we will also be sharing lots of stories of how Christians and churches up and down the country are talking about Jesus.

Another very encouraging statistic is that 93 per cent said that they are actively committed to passing on the gospel to





the next generation. Our last survey on generational relationships highlighted the need for the older generations to share and tell their stories to the young. We should take heart from this consistent message in our surveys. It highlights a passion to leave a legacy for God's kingdom behind of those that are coming after us – who in turn will have the privilege of sharing the gospel in the future. As the founder of Methodism and one of the greatest evangelicals, John Wesley, once said: "You have one business on earth – to save souls." The survey shows that, in terms of evangelism, the future looks good.

We also questioned our survey participants on their views on the future of evangelicalism in the UK. An interesting statistic is that 62 per cent agreed that British evangelicalism will increasingly depend on the contribution of black and ethnic minority Christians. In the changing face of our landscape in the UK, where

society is becoming very diverse, it is clear that our participants place great importance on these groups for mission, with 71 per cent saying they see increased immigration and the arrival of asylum seekers as a great opportunity to evangelise. Addressing some of these issues is the One People Commission – a body of the Evangelical Alliance made up of key national church leaders, committed to celebrating ethnicity, while promoting unity within the UK evangelical Church. You can find out more information on this at [eauk.org/onepeople](http://eauk.org/onepeople).

Alongside concerns expressed about freedoms in the UK, almost all participants, 99 per cent, agree that religious liberty and persecution of Christians overseas is an important issue that must be addressed. Indeed, when asked what should be the priorities going forward for the Alliance today, religious liberty was at the top. One of the first international issues that

the Alliance ever campaigned on was that of religious liberty and it continues today. We have partnered with Open Doors, Release International and Christian Solidarity worldwide to form the Religious Liberty Commission. Again, you can find out more about this work on our website. Domestically, our public policy work is very much focused on protecting freedom of religion from secularism and government over-reactions to security concerns.

The results of this survey are encouraging in many ways. The fact that most participants recognise that we need to actively evangelise and bring the gospel to others is significant. For us at the Alliance, we also acknowledge an important statistic; that 97 per cent said that the Alliance's priority should be being a united voice for Christians who share the most important evangelical doctrines and practices. As we work towards unity for the Church in the UK, this will indeed spur us towards that goal.



# The **E** word: should we scrap the term 'eva

**Some people are evangelical about recycling; some about the political party of which they are a member. Some are evangelical about cycling, while others describe themselves as evangelists for the 5:2 diet. In all of these contexts, being *evangelical* about something describes being passionate about it; using every opportunity you can to speak of this thing that you're enthusiastic about. People who are evangelical about something are convinced that that thing is something that everyone else should be evangelical about too.**

So why is it that when evangelical Christianity is spoken about in wider society – or in the pages of *the Guardian* – the term takes on negative connotations? Before looking at the external factors, it's important that we as the evangelical Church recognise why we might have brought this on ourselves; so often we critique culture and stand in judgment over others without making clear the alternative narrative by which we aim to live our lives.

But on top of this, there are other reasons. To the religiously illiterate, including unfortunately many people in the Church, evangelicalism is reduced to the right-wing Republican arm of American politics, or simply a sect of Christianity that is 'anti' things rather than for the radical transformation of the whole of society through Jesus's saving work on the cross and the anticipation of his kingdom coming on earth.

In 2014, we conducted a survey among people in their 20s and 30s who are part of our *threads* collective. We were disappointed, but not surprised, to find that 32 per cent of people consider themselves to be evangelical Christians, but would never use the word 'evangelical' when describing themselves – another 37 per cent of these self-defined evangelical millennials said they might occasionally use the 'evangelical' label.

One respondent commented: "The word frightens off non-Christians. People who don't know what evangelical means often assume it's something to do with TV evangelists who ask for money." Another simply said: "The term makes me cringe a bit. I think it's quite cheesy."

The evangelical revivals of the 18th century saw a shaking of the "dead orthodoxy" of Protestant churches that had become stale. According to *The Evangelical Revival & The Oxford Movement* by Rev T.C. Hammond, these evangelicals – spiritual reformists – were labelled disparagingly as "enthusiasts". Their passion was markedly different from the "measured calm" of those concerned by the "dispassionate disputants" who were disturbed by the extravagance the evangelicals displayed.





# Evangelical'?

Rev Hammond writes, "[Evangelicalism] brought to a word-weary people a new motive power. It received the truly practical which had been largely discarded as speculative. It spoke again of sin, redemption, regeneration, justification and sanctification. But it spoke of these things as realities in personal experience... Revelation, despite the disadvantage that it did not happen to be written on the sky, gripped the imaginations of men. God spoke to souls. Redemption clothed itself in the garments of the actual suffering of the Son of God on behalf of actual sinners, the actual sinners listening to the message. Regeneration became a positive work of the Holy Ghost experienced in the daily lives of multitudes. Justification was the actual acceptance for Christ's sake of an individual, concrete sinner in this or that village."

In more recent history, many of us have heard of David Bebbington's four-point description of the qualities that define evangelicalism; that is, biblicism – a particular regard for the Bible, crucientism – a focus on the atoning work of Christ on the cross, conversionism – the belief that human beings need to be converted, and activism – the belief that the gospel needs to be expressed in effort.

In an increasingly religiously illiterate world, we might ask the question whether we should ditch the word 'evangelical', which we have proudly held in our organisation's title for the past 170 years. In 2016, is the term totally meaningless? Especially when you consider the depressing statistic we found in our *Talking Jesus* research with the Church of England and HOPE, which revealed that 40 per cent of people in the UK don't think Jesus was a real person who actually lived. If such a significant percentage of people think Jesus was a fictional character, how can we begin to convey to them the complicated theology of evangelicalism?

But to ditch the word 'evangelical' would strip out the heart of why we exist as an organisation. Instead, we must reclaim it. One of my big dreams as director of communications at the Alliance is that one day the term 'evangelical Christian' might automatically conjure up an image of 'good news people'. Not for our own glory, but for the glory of the God we're so enthusiastic about.

Evangelicals must be committed to a living, active faith that has implications for every person and every society; our passion must be for the *euangelion* – the good news we have, the message that says 'there is more than this'. The truth evangelicals live with is of life, and life in all its fullness. It's why we're so passionate about it – we believe the best thing we can do for our friends, our families, our neighbours and our world, is to introduce them to Jesus. We are the enthusiasts.



# Three general directors. 33 years of leadership. 60 seconds each. Ready... Go!

As this is a very special edition of *idea* magazine, we're getting three big names in this feature for the price of one. To celebrate 170 years of the Evangelical Alliance, **Amaris Cole** spent 60 seconds with the three most recent leaders to explore their important contribution to the charity.



Clive Calver.

## Clive Calver

General director: 1983 – 1997

### What did you do before joining the Alliance?

I was programme director for Billy Graham's Mission England, drawing the churches to collaborate in re-evangelising our nations.

### What was the biggest lesson you learnt during your time as general director?

Things took longer than I thought they would to achieve, but the greater the investment of patience, the more likely the promise that God would work us through to successful conclusions. What we achieve together is likely to be more valuable than what we would do in our own more privatised world. It's harder to do but worth more in the end.

### What achievement are you most proud of during your time at the Alliance?

The emergence of cross-cultural partnerships, the opening up of greater opportunities for ministry for women, and the recognition

that what was achieved in the public arena was more the heartbeat of the Alliance than what was done in our own evangelical ghetto.

### Many people don't use the word "evangelical" to describe themselves anymore. Why do you call yourself an evangelical?

The problem with the word "evangelical" lies in its reinterpretation — often across the Atlantic — in the past 100 years. When looked at historically, it simply denotes people who have found Jesus in an intimately personal relationship and want to move his Church to reach his world with his love and grace. That is what I still want to be part of and, until someone gives me a better word to adopt, I'll stick with Augustine, Wycliffe, Whitfield and the rest. For to neglect our history without having something to put in its place is cavalier at worst and superficial at best.

### Our recent survey shows only 59 per cent of evangelicals think evangelicalism has a bright future in the UK. What do you think?

That rather depends on the evangelicals. We have always had a propensity for self-destructiveness, and that must be avoided if we are truly to make a contribution to our world, for that is what evangelicals have always been about. We need to look more to the welfare of others than the purification of ourselves.

### Why do we still need an Evangelical Alliance?

Because we can achieve more together than we can ever do apart, and because we will always need a table on which to put together the jigsaw of the various things God is doing in His world within the UK.

### What's your prayer for the Alliance's next 170 years?

That God's grace will always conquer personal ambition. In other words, that people will always look to the benefit and blessings of their brothers and sisters, rather than to their own. If we do that, then I pray there will always be an EA to help us fulfil one area of that dream tomorrow.

### QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

#### As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to go into politics and change the world. Later, I found I needed to be changed first.

#### What age did you become a church leader?

24.

#### What's on your bucket list?

I want to see new generations go further with God than mine has achieved. I'm never readily satisfied with the status quo.





Joel Edwards.

## Joel Edwards

General director: 1997 – 2009

### What did you do before joining the Alliance?

Before the Alliance I combined working as a probation officer with responsibilities as a local pastor. I also served as general secretary of the African & Caribbean Evangelical Alliance, which meant I also served as part of the Alliance's leadership team.

### What was the biggest lesson you learnt during your time as general director?

It's very hard to identify any one, but the greatest guiding principle emerged after some 10 years in the Alliance was that unity had to be missional and not an end in itself. It's what I regarded as "unity with intent."

### What achievement are you most proud of during your time at the Alliance?

I was very proud to have been a part of a movement of evangelicals that worked to make faith in Christ a viable proposition in the public square and help renew confidence in the gospel in society.

### Many people don't use the word 'evangelical' to describe themselves anymore. Why do you call yourself an evangelical?

I call myself evangelical for a number of reasons. It has a great pedigree: its good news. I still believe that the idea of being good news people is worth fighting for, because of its commitment to

marry social engagement and spiritual renewal in society with commitment to the gospel. The fact that 'evangelical' has become a term of derision should make us think twice about the label, but rather than abandoning the label my conviction is that we should call Christians to inhabit the spiritual and societal meaning of evangelical faith.

My concern is that in the long-run our willingness to drop the label will mean stepping aside from the distinctive values it represents.

I wrote "*An Agenda for Change*" as a manifesto for our work

### Our recent survey shows only 59 per cent of evangelicals think evangelicalism has a bright future in the UK. What do you think?

I agree! Evangelicals have found ways of remaining true to our biblical commitment while leading in social engagement. This has been a hard fought for 30-year journey, which is bearing fruit here in the UK.

Evangelicalism is also learning to be more discursive with the culture it is keen to serve.

### Why do we still need an Evangelical Alliance?

The Alliance remains an important kite-mark and forum for diversity. It sustains as well as reviews its own identity in relation to its mission in the world. The absence of such a forum would lead to fragmentation of an essential Christian presence in Britain and across the world.

### What's your prayer for the Alliance's next 170 years?

For growing courage and an ability to make calculated risks rather than playing it safe. That it will become stronger in its witness for Christ. That the Alliance will increase in its ability to balance its internal unity with its external mission to the world.

### QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

#### As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A journalist at one stage, followed by social worker/probation officer, but I always had a sneaky feeling it might be something in relation to church leadership.

#### What age did you become a church leader?

About 25.

#### What's on your bucket list?

To finish my current doctoral programme with Durham and remain useful to Church and society.



Steve Clifford.

## Steve Clifford

General director: 2009 – present

### What did you do before joining the Alliance?

Since the 1980s I've been involved in church leadership within the Pioneer network of churches; planting and overseeing churches, supporting leaders and training leaders. Alongside this, I've brought leadership to a number of national and international initiatives: March for Jesus in the 1990s, more recently Soul in the City London and the national Hope 08 initiative – which I continue to chair.

### What was the biggest lesson you have learnt during your time as general director?

The amazing diversity of the evangelical community. We are enriched as we celebrate the different contributions made by the various expressions of evangelicalism. It has been a privilege to visit so many different churches and develop friendships with so many leaders from right across the spectrum of the Christian community.

### What achievement are you most proud of during your time at the Alliance?

For me, the relationships I have developed with leaders from the migrant church have been a particular blessing and encouragement and indeed we as an Alliance have significantly changed because of their influence.

### Many people don't use the word 'evangelical' to describe themselves anymore. Why do you call yourself an evangelical?

As evangelicals, we carry a rich heritage, those that have gone before us and have profoundly influenced, not only the shape of the Church, but society as a whole. I'm an evangelical because I have a passion for scripture, I'm convinced about the significance of the saving work of Jesus on the cross. I want to see people come to Christ and I want to see society changed for good. So that's what an evangelical is and I'm one of them. I also love the fact that increasingly within society, the word evangelical is being used to describe those who are passionate, committed, believe in what they're saying and want to influence others to believe in it as well. That's using the word evangelical as an adjective rather than a noun – and so I'm evangelical because I am passionate about my faith.

### Our recent survey shows only 59 per cent of evangelicals think evangelicalism has a bright future in the UK. What do you think?

I wouldn't be in the role that I'm in if I was not absolutely convinced that we as evangelicals have a vital contribution to make, not only in the UK, but across the world in seeing God's mission for the world expressed; His purposes done, the kingdom of God extended. I think all the research of recent years has pointed to the fact that nominalism in the UK is dead. It is no longer socially advantageous to occupy a pew or a seat on a Sunday morning. Increasingly, we are seeing churches populated with people who gather together on a regular basis out of the deep conviction of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives and the desire to see others come to know him.

### Why do we still need an Evangelical Alliance?

Because we exist to serve the Church across the United Kingdom, a Church that we're convinced is far more effective when united in our mission. The great John 17 prayer of Jesus calls to a unity which carries a missional imperative "That they might be one that the world might believe". This means our goal is simple; to see a Church more united in mission and more confident and effective in voice. So, we're about unity, we're about advocacy and we're about mission. Put those together and it sees the Church working to see spiritual, social and physical transformation across our country.

### What's your prayer for the Evangelical Alliance's next 170 years?

That as we pray, unite and give ourselves in mission together, we will see that transformation. That churches all over the country will be full of passionate followers of Jesus and the spiritual climate of our nation will be profoundly changed.

### QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

#### As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A professional footballer playing with Bradford City in the very top division and saving a penalty in the FA Cup final enabling us to win the cup.

#### At what age did you become a church leader?

I was carrying leadership responsibilities in the church from the age of 22, but was employed full time when I was 31.

#### What's on your bucket list?

I have to confess, I'm ashamed to admit, it's a source of some embarrassment, but 'I don't have a bucket list'.



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# A JOURNEY TOWARDS UNITY IMPACT REPORT 2015-16

WORKING FOR A UNITED CHURCH; CONFIDENT IN VOICE, INSPIRED FOR MISSION.

Thank you so much for your support – you were with us through some exciting times in 2015-16. Thanks to you, here are some of the Alliance's highlights as we journeyed towards unity last year.

## 560

### ALLIANCE APPEARANCES IN THE MEDIA

Thanks to your support, the Alliance appeared in the media a total of 560 times in 2015-16, notably including appearances in *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail*, and on the front page of *The Telegraph*, and on the BBC, Sky News and Fox News. We are committed to being a voice of hope, representing the UK's evangelical Christian constituency to the media, government and society as a whole.



# 170

### YEARS SINCE THE ALLIANCE WAS FOUNDED

Our formation in 1846 – 170 years this year – had the unity of Christians as its main aim. Our founders were inspired by Jesus' prayer in John 17 that Christians might be one. And our vision and mission remain the same to this day.

*"I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them as you have loved me."*

John 17:23

## 5,000

### PEOPLE RECEIVE *BUILDING TOMORROW'S CHURCH TODAY* RESEARCH

Last year, our One People Commission – a body made up of key national church leaders committed to celebrating ethnicity while promoting unity – carried out a key piece of research into millennials in the Church, thanks to your support. The findings of the research, entitled *Building Tomorrow's Church Today*, were presented at a launch event on board the HMS President on the Thames, and gathered 160 people, one of the most diverse audiences the Alliance has hosted. Following the launch, the research has been posted, downloaded, viewed or ordered approximately 5,000 times.



## 1,735

### ATTENDEES AT NATIONS' GENERAL ELECTION HUSTINGS

In Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Alliance hosted 1,735 people at 15 hustings at local churches, enabling Christians to engage in the elections and put questions to MPs that matter deeply to the Church in those nations. Some of these

hustings also resulted in considerable local media coverage, spreading the word further afield of the Church's engagement in politics and giving voice to the Christian community.



## 480

### LEADERS INTERVIEWED FOR GREAT COMMISSION WEBSITE

With your generous support, we are launching an exciting new programme called the Great Commission this autumn. We are collating, creating and commending a wide range of evangelism initiatives, resources and training tools on one website – enabling churches and individuals to be talking about Jesus. Around 480 denomination, organisation and church leaders have been interviewed and surveyed to help shape this programme and identify the greatest needs in the Church to equip Christians for mission.



## 100

### PUBLIC LEADERS TRAINED AND EQUIPPED AT PILOT EVENTS

We are passionate about seeing more evangelical Christians serve and lead in local communities and in national life. With your support, we held a pilot Public Leadership training weekend in July 2015, with 30 young public leaders participating, and the first two Public Leadership networking breakfasts brought together 70 leaders who are influential in law, finance and business. We have also been developing a suite of resources for distribution in 2016-17.



## 350,000

### HITS ON *THREADS* WEBSITE

We can't thank you enough for all that your support is enabling *threads* – our online and offline collective of Christians in their 20s and 30s – to do. *threads* once again won Multi-Author Blog of the Year at the Premier Digital Awards in 2015, which celebrates excellence in Christian new media. We've been delighted to see online engagement grow exponentially, with a total of 350,000 hits on *threadsUK.com* last year, and more than 4,000 Twitter followers. With your help, *threads* has also begun to train church leaders to be more effective in reaching the millennial generation, with 80 leaders trained at two pilot training days.



# 6,580

## SURVEYS COMPLETED FOR 21ST CENTURY EVANGELICALS RESEARCH

We continue to equip churches and organisations with unique research into the evangelical community in the UK, through our regular *21st Century Evangelicals* research reports. In 2015-16, 6,580 surveys were completed for four reports into the beliefs, habits and practices of evangelical Christians, including surveys on British values, health and wellbeing, ethical consumerism, and intergenerational church.



# 4,200

## TAKE PART IN "100 DAYS OF PRAYER"

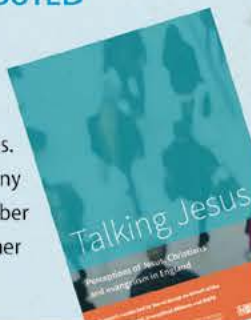
With 2016 being a year of centenaries – the Battle of the Somme and the Easter Rising – the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland partnered with 24/7 Prayer and festival Summer Madness to unite for "100 days of prayer for 100 years of history". Thanks to your support for the Alliance, we encouraged churches to host a prayer room, and we published a specially-curated magazine that was received well across the nation, with 4,200 people receiving the magazine or downloading the app in February and March alone.



# 32,000

## TALKING JESUS REPORTS DISTRIBUTED

With your support, in September 2015 the Alliance published the *Talking Jesus* research report, in partnership with HOPE and the Church of England, to explore the UK population's understanding of Jesus. 32,000 copies of this report were distributed, and many more downloaded online. The Alliance hosted a number of significant forums and workshops, bringing together church leaders to look at the findings.



# 54,000

## VISITS PER MONTH TO EAUK.ORG

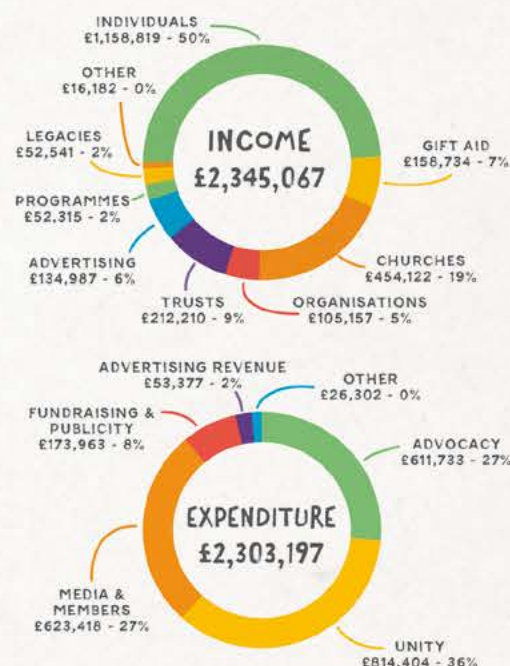
We are thrilled to hear that our online presence continues to grow, with 54,000 visits per month last year to the Alliance's website, and 29,700 people across the UK following us on Facebook and Twitter. Thank you for your support and partnership.

## POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Thanks to your ongoing support for our advocacy work in parliament on behalf of the UK Church, the Alliance's public policy team was – and continues to be – deeply involved in speaking out against the government's Counter-Extremism Strategy, particularly around out-of-schools education which could see church groups inspected. This has involved months of engaging and collaborating with Christian and non-Christian MPs and other organisations to coordinate responses and challenge proposals. It has also led to considerable media coverage, including on the front cover of the *Daily Telegraph* in December 2015. In January's debate on the proposal, it was confirmed that 10,000 responses to the strategy were received, and we were informed that a majority of these were from Christians.



## 90% OF EXPENDITURE RELATED TO CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES



# 120+

## UNITY MOVEMENTS SUPPORTED AND EQUIPPED

We thank God for all that your support is making possible for GATHER, the Alliance's network of more than 120 unity movements – local gatherings of churches and Christian organisations in towns and cities across the UK. In 2015-16 we piloted and launched culture-specific groups, working together for transformation in the spheres of business, education, media, health and the arts.





# Freedom: don't chill o

Dr Dave Landrum, director of advocacy



**Evangelicals – surprise, surprise – really like evangelism. This makes freedom really important, and for 170 years the Evangelical Alliance has understood this. Our archives contain wonderful examples of international campaigns for religious liberty that involved letters and petitions to the president of the United States, the King of Sardinia, the Emperor of Austria, the Shah of Persia, the Sultan of Turkey, the King of Prussia and the Emperor of France! This campaigning covered issues such as repealing the death sentence for apostasy in Muslim-majority countries and protecting protestant minorities in Catholic-majority countries. Alongside longstanding campaigns against slavery, we also ran appeals on behalf of Jews in Germany in the 1930s.**

The political structures may have changed over the years, but the issue of liberty remains as important as ever. Today, alongside campaigning for the persecuted

Church around the world through our Religious Liberty Commission, we continue to advocate for gospel freedoms both internationally and domestically.

A few years ago, in response to news stories and high profile court cases against Christians, the Alliance conducted a series of parliamentary hearings with Christians in parliament to establish what was happening to our freedoms in the UK. The subsequent report *Clearing the Ground* found that, despite some reports, Christians in the UK were not being persecuted. However, it did conclude that we are experiencing marginalisation, and that this was creating a 'chill factor' in which Christians felt increasingly pressured to toe the line and be quiet about their faith in public. Apparently, although our good works are still valued, our good words are not.

Added to this, we now have various forms of censorship creeping into public life through things like 'hate crime' legislation to address

'non-violent extremism' – whatever that means. On the surface these can be seen as political responses to legitimate security concerns that threaten our freedoms. However, they also suggest other agendas to muzzle those voices and opinions that dissent from the prevailing secular, liberal worldview. This means that rather ironically, our long-held, hard-won freedoms are being threatened in the name of freedom. There's no denying that we live in a society that is less tolerant of other beliefs, and is easy to take offence. However, as Salman Rushdie once stated: "What is freedom of expression? Without the freedom to offend, it ceases to exist." It would be great if Christians could once again courageously take a stand for freedom by reminding our society that no one has the right not to be offended. But will we?

At one end of the Church spectrum, the response to this threatening secularism has been anger – a righteous rage about the



# out, speak up!



direction of our 'Christian country'. At the other end of the spectrum, the response has been acquiescence – a cowardly compromising to maintain status, comfort and of course funding. Clearly, neither of these responses cut the mustard for the work of the Great Commission.

So, what should we do? For evangelicals – people committed to the authority of scripture and the proclamation of the gospel – the chill factor is a real challenge. Undeniably, we are called to practically demonstrate the love of God to a lost world, and thank God Christians take this seriously. But we can't just quietly do social action. It's the gospel that makes us distinctive. It's our USP. Our *raison d'être*. As Tim Keller has noted: "If we confuse evangelism and social justice we lose what is the single most unique service that Christians can offer the world. Others, alongside believers, can feed the hungry. But Christians have the gospel of Jesus by which men and women can

be born into a certain hope of eternal life. No one else can make such an invitation." (*Generous Justice*).

Critically, our response to the current 'chilling' will determine the future of our freedoms to: proclaim the gospel; to live out the gospel; and to transmit our values to the next generation. There's a lot at stake, and at the Alliance, we want the Church to be equipped to know more clearly about the freedoms we have to share our faith, and to be encouraged to do this more confidently. In partnership with the Lawyers Christian Fellowship we have produced *Speak Up* as a brief guide to our gospel freedoms. Covering what the law says in relation to sharing the gospel in work, in public, via advertising and more. It shows that our religious freedom in the UK is considerable indeed.

Importantly, the resource encourages Christians to resist the temptation to respond in the manner of just another rights-claiming victim group, solely focused

***The political structures may have changed over the years, but the issue of liberty remains as important as ever."***

on our own narrow agenda. This is because the gospel has wider consequences for society. It has shaped our modern ideas about freedom of religion and belief which in turn have become foundational for many of our other freedoms, human rights and civil liberties. Historically, the gospel of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ is synonymous with freedom. Indeed, true freedom can only be found in Jesus. But there's more. His gospel not only sets men and women free, it also has what John Stott called "an antiseptic effect on society". It cleanses, heals and strengthens our national life. This is because the freedom to proclaim and live out the gospel – and the freedom for all to accept it or to reject it – demands and sustains even more freedoms. And when this happens everyone benefits.

So, we really shouldn't listen to the 'chilling' words of a few secular "thought police". Instead, we should remind everyone that evangelism is not a problem for our society. It's actually a sign of its health and freedom. It should be celebrated. For a salutary reminder of this truth, we need look no further than Russia, where President Putin – again, in the name of tackling terrorism – is creating laws to suppress the freedoms of evangelicals to gather and proclaim the gospel.

In the West, our society is in denial about the biblical source of the many freedoms that are presently being abused. The recent secularised commemorations of the Magna Carta provide a good example of this wilful denial. Our response to this needs to be strong and clear affirmation of where our freedoms come from. And we need to remember that, as followers of Christ, the truth is that if we don't exercise our freedoms, like a muscle they will eventually weaken. If we don't use them, we'll lose them. So don't be chilled out. Speak up.

You can find *Speak Up* and *Clearing the ground* on our website – [eauk.org](http://eauk.org)

# Why I'm an evangelical

**Evangelical – noun: *a member of the evangelical tradition in the Christian Church.*** The trouble is, some people think the E word is a term used by old, conservative Christians who are very anti an awful lot of things. Is that true? We spoke to some evangelicals to see why they believe what they believe. Old fashioned? We don't think so.



Attempting to squeeze my faith into a particular shape always feels like a bit of a challenge! God's a bit of a genius at surprising us, and it seems that as soon as I think I've got a grip on understanding something more about Him, the horizon opens up and I realise that there's so much more of Him to discover. So perhaps for me, being an evangelical is less about defining the essence of my faith, but more about defining the way in which I grow in my journey of understanding God.

From a really young age, there have been three things that are dear to me; three things that continue to provide signposts for the journey. Firstly, I couldn't live without my friend and saviour Jesus – my life finds meaning in him. Secondly, the comfort and reassurance of the Bible as the stabilising force for my faith is so important – I love the way it has stood the test of time, daily providing fresh insight into life's ups and downs. Thirdly, expressing my faith in the context of a church family keeps me grounded – it's in community that I grow to accept and deal with the frailties of my own humanity.

Tim Rowland,  
Welsh Assembly Member



My initial response was: I don't know why! I've been part of evangelical churches my whole life and I made a personal commitment to Jesus aged 10. I've grown in my faith through various experiences since then, but never questioned what it means to be an evangelical. It's just always made sense. I actually didn't really know what the word meant. So I investigated: apparently an evangelical believes in the authority of the Bible, salvation through Jesus and the importance of sharing the gospel. My faith certainly ticks those boxes. Phew!

So I am an evangelical because I believe the Bible is inspired by God and that He speaks to me as I read His word, to help me live for Him. I know I am saved from my sins through accepting the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and look forward to eternal life with him through the resurrection. He is with me every day. And I want to be telling other people this, which is easier said than done. It's been good to take a step back from something I've always taken for granted and check that I really do believe it. And reassuring that having examined evangelicalism more closely, it still makes sense.

Dr Katherine Cole,  
doctor in Cambridgeshire



I'm very proud to own the label evangelical, although it's not one that's necessarily understood by many outside Christian circles, or indeed within the further education sector in which I have been called to work. To me, it is a sense of deep conviction about the saving grace of Jesus. It is good news – the greatest news, and it needs to be proclaimed. That conviction compels me to live a faith that is holistic – what Christ did for me 2,000 years ago has an impact on what I do today in my work life and my personal life. Those I work with are very aware of my Christian faith and I think that demonstrates what an evangelical Christian is – someone who can't be a secret Christian.

I don't think we necessarily need to be hung up on labels, though. Throughout my life, I have attended Church of England – my grandfather was an Anglican priest in the south-east of Nigeria – Baptist, Ichthus and Newfrontiers churches. Despite the number of denominations, every church I've attended has been an evangelical church, reflected in the passionate Christianity of the leaders and the congregations.

Stella Mbubaegbu CBE,  
principal and chief executive,  
Highbury College Portsmouth





***For me, evangelicalism makes living and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ central to Christianity in a way that resonates most deeply with what Jude calls ‘the faith once delivered to the saints’ – the faith of those apostles who were closest to Jesus.***



I'm an evangelical because I believe evangelicalism to be the most authentic expression of the gospel. For me, evangelicalism makes living and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ central to Christianity in a way that resonates most deeply with what Jude calls “the faith once delivered to the saints” – the faith of those apostles who were closest to Jesus. I'm an evangelical because evangelicals properly look to scripture as God's Word - the definitive guide to that apostolic message, both in the New Testament that records Jesus' life and mission, and in the Old Testament that he himself revered.

I'm an evangelical because evangelicalism prioritises theologically what I've known experientially since the age of 15 – that on the cross Jesus stood in my place, bore my sin, and gave me a new start with God. I'm an evangelical because like me evangelicals are restless to share this amazing grace with others, and because they know that the power of the Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead compels them – as it compels me – to invite others to fall in love with Jesus, and to see God's world transformed now, and in the age to come, by His love, justice and truth.

Rev Dr David Hilborn BA MA PhD,  
principal of St John's School of Mission,  
Nottingham



I grew up in a large evangelical, charismatic church in south-east London, so I suppose in many ways I'm an evangelical because it's that context that shaped my faith. I was surrounded by people who were passionately vibrant about their faith, who studied the Bible and were focussed on mission, the gospel and the kingdom of God. All these experiences formed my understanding of what it meant to be evangelical, this was faith and truth that impacted your whole life, not just a Sunday morning.

These days, I worry sometimes that the word evangelical is used synonymously with the word 'traditional': a byword for being old fashioned, judgmental or fearful of modern life. To me, being an evangelical is the total opposite. It's to actively and positively engage with the world around us, to have a faith that interacts, that makes sense, that applies itself with relevance. Our mandate is to show that God's great provision for us in Jesus Christ is as essential now as it ever was, and ever will be. I hope to live this out in my own life with grace, kindness, the vibrant passion I saw growing up, and lots of prayer!

Abigail Sheldrake,  
primary school teacher in Essex



To share what the word 'evangelical' means to me, I begin by breaking down the word itself. The noun, 'evangel' means 'good news'; referring to the good news of the redemption of the world through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the word 'evangelical' in the Christian context, describes and means to me, a 'born again' Christian, having accepted the responsibility to faithfully herald and promote with passion this evangel; committed to the great command: "love God and love people"; and the great commission: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel," and to "go and make disciples of all the nations."

I connect with the word evangelical because it describes my Christian belief as one who holds to the authority of God in and through scripture, the trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ; the message of the cross; the power and work of the Holy Spirit; and salvation by grace through faith alone. I also connect with the word evangelical because it connects me to the fellowship of Christians across the denominations, who share the same belief, mission, and purpose, working together to transform our communities with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Rev Samson Awak-Essien  
Police community support officer  
and Elim pastor

# Did you know? The history of organisations the Alliance supported

**Over the years, the Evangelical Alliance has been part of some great projects, including Keep Sunday Special. The Alliance has also been privileged to help establish some really important organisations, some of which have been enabled by the Alliance, while others have developed from the work that the Alliance has done. Here we take a look at some of the organisations the Alliance has helped shape and grow.**

## TEARFUND

In 1960, coverage of a global refugee crisis sparked a generous outpouring of compassion by Christians across the UK, with many people sending in donations to the Evangelical Alliance. In response, a fund was established to distribute the gifts to evangelical agencies caring for refugees around the world. As money continued to come in through the 1960s, George Hoffman, a former curate, was employed to help develop the work of the fund. On 29 May 1968, George Hoffman and others met



*Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund News Bulletin Vol.1 No.1*

for the first time as The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund: Tearfund.

In the years since 1968, Tearfund has continued to work with some of the most vulnerable and needy communities around the world, always compelled in its work by the conviction to reach the very poorest with God's love. Today, it is one of the UK's top 10 emergency relief agencies, highly regarded in its field with a reputation built on developing the best ways to meet needs and years of experience in some of the toughest environments.

## HOME FOR GOOD

A desperate shortage of foster carers and adoptive parents in 2011 inspired a group of Christian leaders who were also foster carers or had adopted children to challenge the UK Church to begin to meet the need of so many children across the nations.

Working hard throughout 2012 to develop a strategy, the Home for Good campaign was officially launched in 2013 as a joint initiative between the Evangelical Alliance, Care for the Family and the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service.

In September 2014, Home for Good became a charity in its own right, working to further inspire, encourage and equip the UK Church to provide homes for children in need.

At the time, Alliance general director Steve Clifford said: "This feels like a landmark moment for us as an organisation. The potential for Home for Good is huge. In the same way that Tearfund was incubated and birthed out of the Alliance nearly 50 years ago, we pray that it will go from strength to strength – not for its own sake – but for the sake of those children desperately in need of homes for good."

Today, Home for Good is working harder than ever – and we at the Alliance know this first hand, they work out of our offices! – with their *pathway to adoption* plan, employing regional managers to expand the work around the nations, promoting Adoption Sunday, developing a network of champions and establishing a Professionals Forum.



*Home for Good inspire, encourage and equip the Church to adopt and foster children.*

## WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

The World Evangelical Alliance is the oldest organisation to have come out of the Evangelical Alliance in the UK. Until 1951, the Evangelical Alliance had been primarily a British venture, but with some offices in a few other countries around the world.

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WEA secretary general Bishop Efraim Tendero.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the newly formed National Association of Evangelicals in the USA suggested a more formal international Alliance be established. The International Convention of Evangelicals met in Holland in 1951 with 91 representatives from 21 countries – John Stott and A Jack Dain attending on behalf of the Alliance in the UK. They agreed to form the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF), which was to be led by co-international secretaries, one of first of which was Roy Cattell, the then-general secretary of the UK Evangelical Alliance. The WEF offices were based out of the Alliance offices in London.

Only Spain joined from continental Europe, with other European national alliances choosing to form the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA). The division initially caused some breakdown in relationship, but some

national alliances came in to WEF in 1968, and the EEA and WEF increasingly worked in collaboration over the ensuing years.

In 2000 the WEF changed its name to the World Evangelical Alliance. Today the WEA is based in New York and works to support member alliances around the world, including through the Refugees Taskforce, the Women's Commission, the Leadership Institute and the Religious Liberty Commission.

### GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

The Evangelical Missionary Alliance was founded in 1958 when the Evangelical Alliance's Overseas Committee merged with Fellowship of Interdenominational Missionary Societies (FIMS), establishing itself as an independent mission network. In its early days the EMA and the Alliance shared some staff, with Gilbert Kirby as part-time general secretary of the EMA as well as the Alliance.



*Global Connections is a network of mission agencies, organisations and churches.*

The EMA was always described as an organisation in "close relationship" with the Alliance and today Global Connections and the Alliance continue to work closely together. They are an independent network of more than 300 member agencies, churches and other organisations, working together to establish best practice in mission work. They produce guidelines to support churches and mission organisations, including the *Code of best practice in short-term mission* and the *Code for best practice*

*for church to church partnerships, and facilitate a range of forums including the business and mission forum, the communications officer forum, and the governance hub.*

### THE BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADES

Although not directly a product of Alliance work, the Billy Graham crusades in the post-war era were heavily supported and developed by the Alliance. Billy Graham visited the UK in 1946 conducting a number of popular evangelistic youth events, inspiring some discussion amongst UK evangelicals about a possible crusade targeting adults. Following some very delicate discussions in both the UK and USA the Alliance facilitated an organising committee for the 1954 Haringay Crusade.

Attendance across the events at Haringay arena was estimated at two million, including 120,000 people at Wembley stadium on the last day of the crusade. Demand was so high that the Alliance had to organise an overflow rally for 55,000 at White City. Billy Graham's technique of using an appeal for a response at the end of the message then linking responders with a counsellor was new to the UK but following Haringey it became standard practice at evangelistic events.

"It was widely recognised that that the Graham crusades of 1954 in London together with a highly influential Scottish crusade in Kelvin Hall, Glasgow in the following year had made a major contribution to a change in evangelical outlook. The sponsorship of Haringey by the Alliance could have substantially narrowed Graham's support but in the event evangelical Christianity was given a significant boost."

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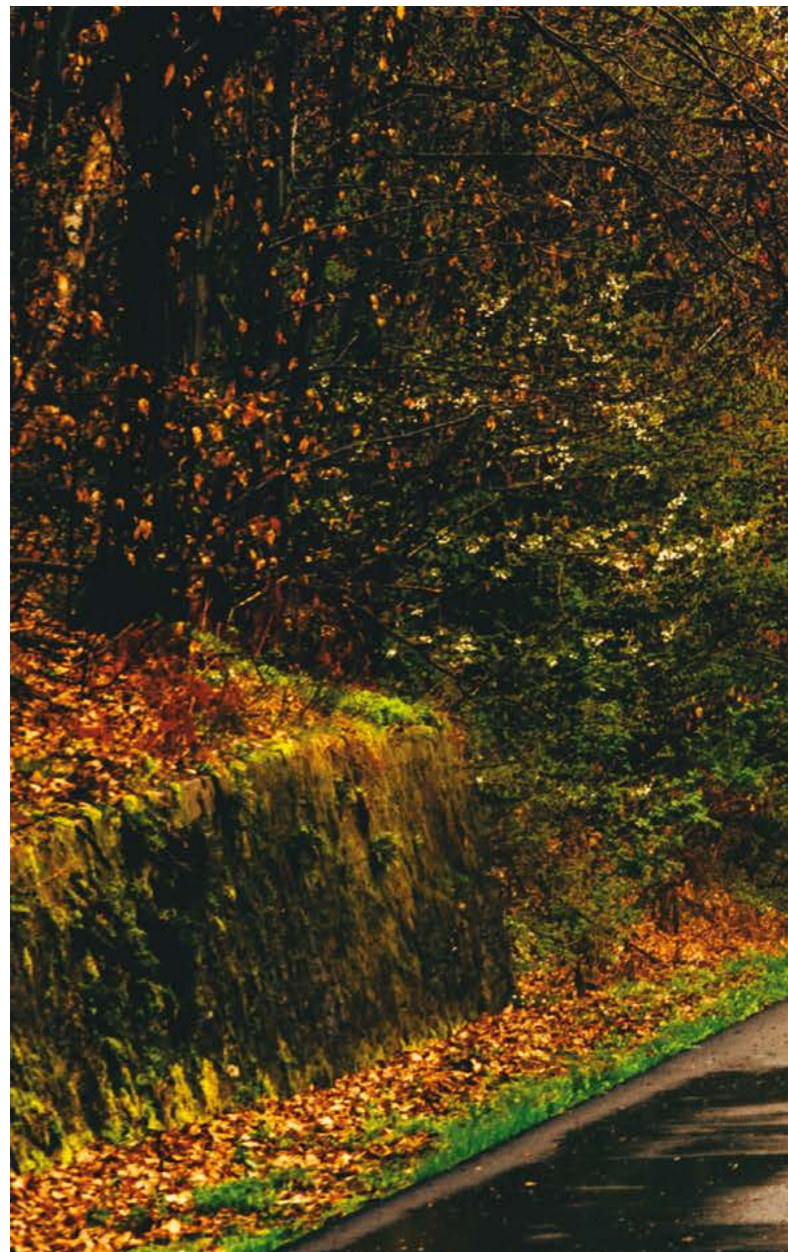
# Does evangelicalism have a bright future?

**Our research into evangelicalism shows only 59 per cent believe evangelicalism has a bright future in the UK. This means just under half of evangelicals aren't sure what's to come for the movement. So *idea* asked Gavin Calver, the Alliance's director of mission, if things were quite as gloomy as some of those answering our survey believe.**

**I'm often asked what I think about the future of evangelical Christianity in the UK. Is it facing impending doom? Is it outdated? Can there possibly be a bright future? Being a natural optimist, I need to fight off the desire to just paint a better picture and instead engage with some of the reality. This land has seemingly been in Christian decline for too long. In June 2015, *Christianity* magazine published some research from the Pew Research Center claiming that at the going rate of decline that by the year 2050 Christianity will lose its place as the majority religion in Britain.<sup>1</sup> Clearly things are not universally going well and we need to see real change. The stats don't look great, the picture isn't perfect, but God has not given up on the UK.**

If you read through Church history it's been far worse than this and the Lord has done amazing things here in the past. So why not now? It seems that much of evangelicalism is living with a 'negative script' – we need to drop this and see a brighter future. The media often kick against evangelicals, but it's not their perception we should be most attentive too. My experience since joining the team at Alliance more than a year ago has been very different to what is often seen as normal. I've seen many come to personal faith in Jesus, have been hugely encouraged by incredible models of church unity locally and have been delighted to meet many Christians my age who are keen to identify as evangelical. The experiences I've been having are not isolated either. I was recently having a coffee with a fellow evangelist who said that he'd seen more fruit in his ministry in the last year than the previous decade combined. Clearly God is on the move!

The term 'evangelical' may sometimes require redeeming, but it's far from redundant. We are people of the *evangel* – the good news; who hold firmly to the Bible, believe the death and resurrection of Jesus are the most important events in human history, consider conversion

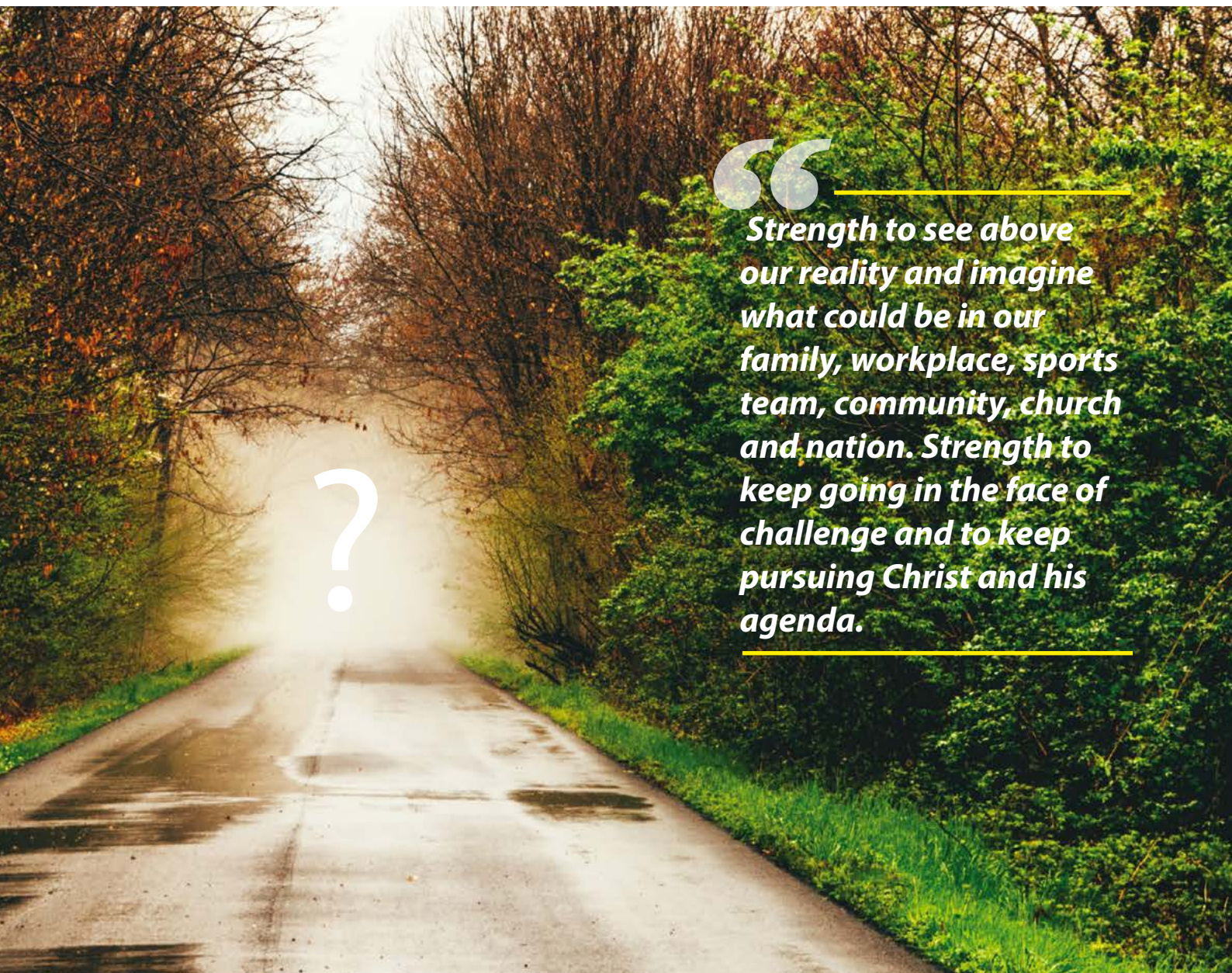


to be central and want to be active in shaping our land. It's not like we just stand back and wait for the world to become something else, we're involved in shaping the future and have a contribution to make about the kind of nation we live in. The American theologian, Leonard Sweet, puts it this way: "The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create." We evangelicals need to take responsibility for helping shape a future with a healthy church as part of it.

Many people's experiences are not as positive as mine, but I have great hope for the future and wholeheartedly believe that in my lifetime we will see an incredible move of God in the UK. Things have to turn around, hope hasn't died, and times will change. The only option other than seeing this move of God would be to die believing it's coming the next day! We need to choose to be people of hope, to say to the Lord that all we are is His, to pray fervently for change and to do all we can to encourage others that when it comes to evangelical Christianity we have a greater future than we've had a past. The best is yet to come!

Returning to the present, it's vital that we hold firm to our convictions and share the love of Christ in an increasingly secularised landscape. In the face of this one line from the famous hymn *Great*





“

***Strength to see above our reality and imagine what could be in our family, workplace, sports team, community, church and nation. Strength to keep going in the face of challenge and to keep pursuing Christ and his agenda.***

*is thy faithfulness* comes to mind. What we need as we build a better future is “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow”. Strength to see above our reality and imagine what could be in our family, workplace, sports team, community, church and nation. Strength to keep going in the face of challenge and to keep pursuing Christ and his agenda. This needs to marry bright hope for tomorrow; a hope that can’t be extinguished and inspires us to change things.

We need to keep seeing things in the right perspective. This world says “tell your God how big your problems are. The Lord says tell your problems how big your God is.”<sup>2</sup> He’s bigger than anything; the doubters, antagonists, sceptics, intellectuals; the list is endless, because He’s bigger than anything. We need to grow a confidence in this great big God and what He could do going forward.

There are reasons for encouragement all around us. The Church is doing so much good within society. The growth of numerous mission initiatives is having a profound impact and we should never underestimate this. For this mission to be effective it must involve both lifestyle and proclamation. Word and deed must go together. Jesus may have told us that “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me,” (Matthew 25:40), but he also specifically instructed that we should “go into all the world and

preach the good news to all creation,” (Mark 16:15). Deeds and words give a context to one another, but one alone can never be good enough.

We can’t expect people to come to faith by osmosis, sometimes we need to make the invitation. We need to pray for the self-assurance to step out knowing that whatever the outcome the Lord is with us. We are doing loads of amazing things but are we giving people an opportunity to meet Jesus? Let’s be people who give the invitation regularly. There will be many sociological benefits along the way, but our chief goal above all else must remain the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

We are all involved and it can never just be the role of the evangelist to lead people to Jesus. All Christians should have non-Christian friends. So who can you share with, and show Jesus to? Let’s all be in relationships with others where we are seeking to lead them towards Jesus. I wholeheartedly believe that the best days for the UK evangelical Church are yet to come, but for this to be true we all need to be involved. Step out of your comfort zone, pray fervently, get involved and believe the Lord will move and together we can create a better future.

<sup>1</sup> Christianity Magazine, Premier Christianity, London, June 2015

<sup>2</sup>A. Emiaghe, *Seven Women, One God* (Bloomington, AuthorHouse, 2010). 41





# That vicar off Gogglebox

***I don't expect everybody to be in the Kate Bottley fan club. But we're all in the Jesus fan club, aren't we?"***

**For millions of telly addicts across the UK, Kate Bottley is the only vicar they know. Proudly sat with her dog collar on, watching television with her husband Graham on the popular Channel 4 series *Gogglebox*, in an increasingly un-churched nation, she is the only weekly contact they have with a Christian.**

Kate has faced criticism from some within the Church for involving herself in what some might see as a facile occupation. But extrovert Kate sees the unique role she has as one in which she can bring the gospel to the millions who don't know Jesus.

Brought up in a non-Christian, working class, Yorkshire home, she is very familiar with trying to convey her faith to those who might not believe; to speak about the Church and Jesus in a way that people might understand.

"My mum was a school cleaner and my dad worked as part of the maintenance team in a brick factory," she said. "I grew up in 1980s terraced housing in the industrial city of Sheffield. I remember my dad being made redundant in the Thatcher years.

"My mum and dad had me christened as a baby because that's what you did in those kind of cultures back then. But we didn't go to church at all."

It was only when she became friends with a Christian at secondary school that she started going to church. Or more specifically, when she set eyes on one of the boys in the yard at school when she was 14. Kate asked her friend who he was. "That's Graham, my vicar's son," my friend told me. And so I thought I should start going to church." Graham and Kate were married shortly after she finished university and are now the proud parents of two children.

"In that church, I found a bunch of people who, even when I was an obnoxious, argumentative, horrible teenager who wanted to shout at the world, gave me a space to do that. So I just used to go along and disagree, a lot. And didn't really believe a word of it. But then slowly, the love of the community and the truth of the gospel got me."

Kate eventually had, what she calls, "a classic kind of evangelical conversion experience".

She recalls: "When I first came to faith, my parents thought I'd joined a cult and I had



to reassure them it was just the Church of England. It was weird, but it wasn't that weird – it was state approved. I think they were really worried. The first flush of new faith can be overwhelming and I was very enthusiastic and probably went in a bit heavy. In response to my mum asking me things like whether I wanted beans on toast, I would say: 'Mum, let me tell you about Jesus.'"

She then went off to university, where she read theology before becoming an RE teacher. "I never thought I would do anything else," she said.

But then came the call to ordination.



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**- Dr Krish Kandiah, President, London School of Theology**

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Kate had always felt like God was calling her to do something "at the front". So she explored whether this was in being a church warden. "Then I discovered I really don't know anything about lightbulbs and fire extinguishers." And then she considered that it might mean serving the wine during communion. But it was when her vicar – after inviting her out for a curry – said to her: "I think God's calling you to be ordained" – that it all made sense.

Within eight months, she was at St John's College Nottingham training for ministry. In that time, her mother had a massive heart attack and stroke and ended up in intensive

care the weekend she was off for her final BAP (Bishops Advisory Panel). The night before Kate left, the vicar had read her the last rites. "She wasn't expected to still be alive when I came back from that weekend.

"But my dad made it perfectly clear – even though they weren't people of faith at the time – that this was what I had to go and do. God works in people who don't even believe in Him. So my dad said 'you're going to that vicar thing'. Mum came to faith when she regained consciousness.

"At my ordination, I promised to preach the gospel afresh to every generation. So when

people ask whether I want to come onto Radio 2 and tell nine million people that Jesus loves them, I think yeah, I really would like to do that."

But she still faces lots of criticism from within the Church – some of it horrendous: "I hope you burn in hell" to others simply telling her she is a "show-off".

"I don't expect everybody to be in the Kate Bottley fan club. But I think we're all in the Jesus fan club, aren't we? I went to drama school as a kid. I *am* a complete show-off.

"I have a spiritual director who I see regularly. He lets me have bragging rights. He'll start off saying, 'well what have you been up to this week?' And I'll tell him I had dinner with Chris Evans last night, for example. And he'll then say: 'Now you've had a moment to brag, now let's see what God's doing and what this is about'.

"It seems to me that at the moment I've got a lovely gift. I'm a show-off. God's using it. Sometimes the Church will say it's ok if you're an academic or a prayerful person for God to use that gift. But if you're a great big show-off, why wouldn't God want to use that, as well? Also, I know this business is fickle. So tomorrow morning there might be no more phone calls. And no one might ever want to talk to me again, and I'll have to say, d'you know what, that was lovely – but we're done. And I'd have to be able to let it go.

"I do get things wrong. But how amazing is it that God takes our faults, our messes, our chaos and takes it and uses it. My ministry might not look like your ministry, but that's alright."

*This interview was conducted at Greenbelt festival.*

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# Why I'm a member of the Evangelical Alliance

For 170 years churches and organisations have signed up to the Evangelical Alliance's basis of faith and joined in membership. From Skye to Southampton, from Coleraine to Cardiff, the Alliance works across 81 denominations, nearly 4,000 churches, 600 organisations and thousands of individual members.

And as a founding member of the World Evangelical Alliance, this means a connection to a global network of more than 600 million evangelicals. As a member, you become part of this network. We believe the Church is key to long-lasting change in our country - and that by working closely with our amazing members, we can transform our communities with the good news of Jesus. That's what membership means to the Alliance, but *idea* decided to ask the leaders of some of some lovely member churches and organisations what it means to them.



*Sailors' Society* is an international Christian charity that aims to transform the lives of seafarers and their families at home, in port and at sea through the delivery of chaplaincy, education and the relief of poverty and distress. Being part of Evangelical Alliance has been a huge encouragement to us, for the resources, the sense of partnership, the credibility it brings and the access to many like-minded organisations also seeking to advance the Christian Faith. Happy birthday EA!

**Chris Tuck**, *Sailors' Society*



The church I lead has many connections and relationships worldwide. We cherish and value these relationships and enjoy being part of something much bigger than ourselves. This is why we are members of the Evangelical Alliance and are delighted to be so. A unified body, a voice into culture and all the support and encouragement that that brings is as important now as it has ever been, as we seek to see churches strengthened, culture changed and the name of Jesus made famous in our nation. We are definitely better together.

**James Silley**, *New Community Church*



Christians are called to join the family of God. We work best when we work together. I love the diversity of the Evangelical Alliance. As we demonstrate practical unity across cultural and doctrinal divides we demonstrate the love that marks us out as children of God. The Evangelical Alliance is the place where we can come together with family for mutual support, and to speak with one voice of the hope and good news that we have for a broken, divided society.

**Graham Miller**, *London City Mission*



Our church, Woolwich Central Baptist Church, rejoices with the Evangelical Alliance as they mark the 170 years of existence. We celebrate this momentous occasion, realising the significant work the Evangelical Alliance does in the areas of mission, church unity, and social and community action. Our church is part of the Alliance because we believe in a unity that transforms our communities and societies. Through the work of the One People Commission and the GATHER initiative, the Evangelical Alliance promotes transformational unity. We are also part the Alliance because we believe in the gospel as good news for everybody! After all, that is what the word evangelical means in its New Testament context.

**Israel Olofinjana**, *pastor of Woolwich Central Baptist Church*



I've known about the Alliance for quite some time, as I'm part of the RCCG network. But I wanted my ministry to be a part of the Alliance because it is always there encouraging leaders to be more radical in the way people are reaching out to non-Christians. The Alliance also has many resources and open doors to the government, other churches and organisations - all these things that people on their own cannot have. I wanted to be a part of something bigger - to make a bigger impact to the lives of the community - and even a bigger impact nationally, which you can do as part of the Alliance. Another reason I joined the EA is it's diverse - it's not full of people from one background.

**Pastor Lola Ayeni**, *Magdalene Ministry/RCCG*





# Fair play?

## If your church plays music, shows films, makes photocopies or reproduces/projects song words, you need to consider copyright

**Churches increasingly use creative works and new technologies in their ministry and social activities. However, keeping up with copyright law can be a challenge.**

CCLI provides various licences that enable churches to push ahead with their ministry confident that they're legally covered. Churches which regularly review their use of copyright material are less likely to unwittingly infringe copyright law.

### Playing and performing music outside of worship services

Music is an essential part of many activities including youth clubs, coffee mornings, socials and outreach events. As agents for PRS for Music and PPL, CCLI offers two licences that cover the use/performance of music on church premises. The PRS for Music Church Licence

permits you to hold live concerts/recitals, and covers music on film soundtracks. When playing music recordings (such as CDs or MP3s), both a PRS for Music licence and a PPL Church Licence are required. These licences are not needed if you only play music during acts of worship, such as your regular worship services.

### Showing films/film scenes

Film scenes can bring teaching to life, and hosting film nights can engage those outside of the church in a culturally relevant way. CCLI's Church Video Licence (CVL) covers most major film studios. You'll also require the PRS for Music Church Licence if showing films outside of acts of worship.

### Reproducing or projecting song words

No music performance licence is required for songs played during your worship services. However, permission is required when you include the song words in service sheets or project them onto a screen for your congregation to sing. The Church Copyright Licence (CCL) permits you to reproduce the words to the vast majority of worship songs and hymns.

### Making photocopies, scanning and file-sharing

A typographical right exists in most publications. This means permission is required in order to photocopy pages from songbooks, study guides, children's activity books and magazines etc.. CCLI provides two licences that enable churches to legally copy, scan and electronically share typeset pages.

### Websites and social media

If you publish sermons, photographs, poems, songs, videos and other creative works on your website, always ensure you have permission from any speakers/performers/contributors as well as the copyright owners. To stream your services you may require a Limited Online Music Licence (LOML) from PRS for Music: [prsformusic.com/LOML](http://prsformusic.com/LOML).

**CCLI is here to offer advice and guidance to help ensure your church is correctly covered.**

To arrange a copyright review call **01323 436100** or email [uk@ccli.com](mailto:uk@ccli.com) quoting reference: **AD026**



# Children of the revolution

**As a young adult trying to make my way in the real world, nothing frustrates as much as evangelicals harping on about the world getting worse. "The world is going mad." "It wasn't like that when I was growing up." "Those days were simpler..."**

**We have somehow allowed ourselves to believe that we are victims of history, as if any point before the present was an easier time to be alive. The psychological term for such a way to view the world is 'declinism', whereby we are simply predisposed to look to the past with favour in our rose tinted Raybans. It causes us to foolishly throw around words such as liberal, intolerant, fundamentalist, commercialist, selfishness, as if they never caused problems for people of faith before, ever.**

## Context

Yet it is so important for us as young adults to understand that Jesus Christ lived in one of the most socially and economically unstable periods in history. Jesus didn't live in 'simpler times'. Nor was he exempt from the forces of liberalism or conservatism. His life was not stress free. We know this because history tells us that in an agrarian culture, like that of Jesus', the rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. By the time Jesus would have been a young toddler, the Romans had swept in and after just a short time they went from collectivising native surplus to simply taking their lands – a most scared treasure to the Jewish people – and with that came agitation from the peasantry of the day, causing their foreign occupiers trouble. We know from history that the Jews had lived relatively peacefully under foreign occupation for some time, however such resistance against the Roman Empire continued to grow and grow. There is no doubt that Jesus grew up in an uncertain world. Jesus lived among the division of his Jewish counterparts, and thus hostility was a very real discourse for the historical Jesus. More than a shift in culture, Jesus' world was



literally changing before his eyes. Aristocrats had come from the west and began building large villas on the mountainsides (commodities) and ports (commercialism and consumerism).

The context in which Jesus lived was complex, it was spinning out of control and no doubt caused confusion to the people of the day.

If there was ever a context so ripe for a revolution, that was it.

## Text

However, when we look at the text – Jesus did something massively different than what you may have expected. In the perfect context for a revolution, Jesus lived not necessarily a counter life, but rather a more creative one. That while being both fully man and fully God – there stood before him a mountain of corruption, instability, division, consumerism, collectivization and an array of evil kings on earthly thrones. But rather than a revolution, Jesus brought something more indispensable, more lasting than a season, relevant to all contexts until the end of time – a revelation.

This revelation is made known and passed to us through the word of God, displaying a Jesus so full of love and compassion, so full of restraint and good timing, the personification of wholeness and whose omnipotence didn't fracture his ability to have the perfect inter-personal relationship with mankind.

Author and historian John Dominic Crossan claims that in knowing the context of the historical Jesus his timing on earth is of no coincidence. Yet, knowing this context, coupled with the word of God, we see a Jesus who very purposely carried out his ministry the way he did. Not because it fitted with the context, or that no other challenges existed for him to need to do it any different, but because he set a precedent for us: that in all circumstances we should love and live like he did. Let's not be arrogant to think that it should be done differently. Nor too ignorant to see the value of his revelation for the world today. The revelation brought by Jesus lies at the intersection of our faith. It is all we have, and everything else must flow from it. We must come back to it time and time again. Let's be fixated by it and find our hope in it. No changing discourse can ever devalue it and no uncertain times can ever destabilise it.

We need your help to ensure the "missing generation" is no longer missing. *threads* is reaching out to the missing generation, young adults in their 20s and 30s who are leaving the Church in droves as they see faith as irrelevant, out of touch and side-lined from the very real issues they are facing.

For as little as £3 a month, you could become a supporter of *threads* and play your part in ensuring this generation is no longer missing – visit [eauk.org/supportthreads](http://eauk.org/supportthreads) or call 0207 520 3848





# The *idea*-playlist

## Hymns we all still love to hum

While music and worship have changed massively for many churches since the Alliance's start in 1846, some of the old hymns are still the best. Here are some of the *idea* team's favourite worship songs, which date all the way back to the 1800s.

Joy to the world –  
Isaac Watts – 1836

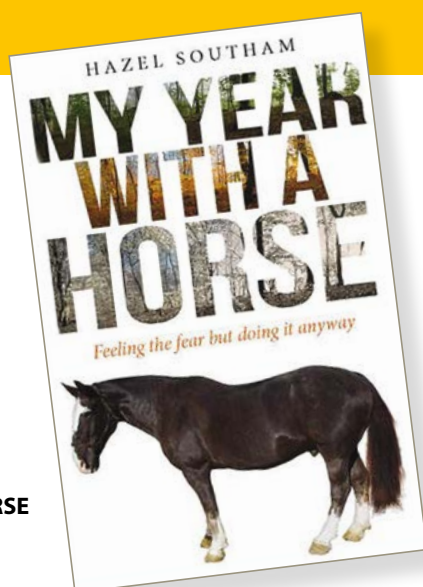
Hark! the herald angels sing –  
Charles Wesley – 1855

Happy day –  
Philip Doddridge – 1891

I love to tell the story –  
Arabella Catherine Hankey – 1874



## REVIEWS



### MY YEAR WITH A HORSE

by Hazel Southam

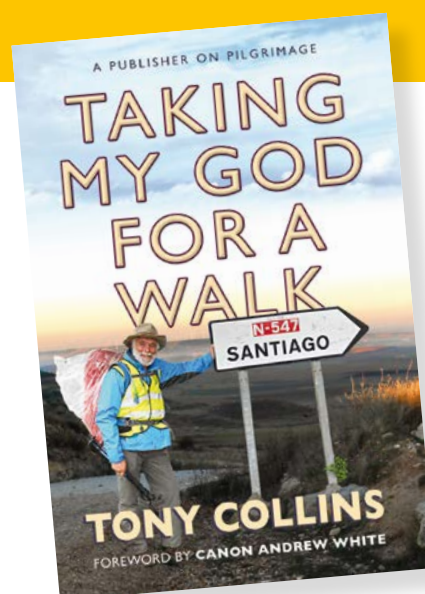
Lion Hudson

In her first book, Hazel Southam, a journalist with an enviable career, including a period of editing this very magazine, documents the hardest year of her life, and how her help came from an unexpected source.

Scared of horses for as long as she could remember, Hazel decided to make a New Year's resolution of learning to ride. While her father was falling into the clutches of dementia, her mother suffering from a stroke and Hazel herself was fighting a dangerous illness picked up on one of her international reporting trips, she booked her first lesson.

Duke, a 118-stone draught horse, went from her biggest fear to her closest ally. Hazel, a petite woman whose enormous courage and capability is evident from page one, admits she has "a dreadful habit of looking things that terrify me in the eye and taking them on," which makes a marvellous story for her readers, full of heartbreak and tragedy, but ultimately etched in hope and inspiration.

Reviewed by Amaris Cole



### TAKING MY GOD FOR A WALK

by Tony Collins  
foreword by Canon Andrew White

Lion Hudson

As someone who loves walking, I thought I was going to like this book, and as someone who became fascinated with the Camino de Santiago after watching Martin Sheen in *The Way*, I couldn't resist reviewing this book when I saw it. Tony Collins as a veteran of Christian publishing took a long overdue sabbatical to walk the nearly 500 miles from a tiny village in the French Pyrennes to Santiago in north-west Spain. Completed by hundreds of thousands of people each year, this route attracts pilgrims of all shapes, sizes and motives, from those seeing it as an activity holiday to others whose motive is to draw close to God. As much as the trail is now heavily populated the trial is very much individual. Tony recounts how he fared as he travelled across northern Spain and the challenges encountered, interspersed with insightful reflections on his wider journey through life. One day I may walk this route, but reading this book brings you close to the sights, sounds, and spiritual encounter many experience.

Reviewed by Danny Webster

# 5 things younger than the Alliance



**With 170 years under our belt, the Alliance has witnessed many historical events and enjoyed the arrival of many inventions that we take for granted today. We've survived two world wars, were baffled by the arrival of Alexander Graham Bell's telephone and predate the publishing of Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights. Here are five other things that have arrived since the Alliance's formation in 1846 – and we're very glad they did.**

## COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHY – 1850

The first colour magazine was produced by the Alliance in 1980s. The glossy editions of *idea* the Alliance is now able to produce means all you lovely supporters enjoy a quality publication bimonthly.

Colour photography was attempted in the 1840s, but early experiments had mixed results. Experiments were focused on finding a "chameleon substance" that would assume the colour of the light falling on it. Some encouraging early results seemed to promise eventual success, but the dim image formed in a camera required exposures lasting for hours – or even days. The quality and range of the colour was sometimes severely limited, such as the process invented by American daguerreotypist (the earliest photographic processes) Levi Hill around 1850. Other experimenters, such as Edmond Becquerel, achieved better results, but he couldn't find a way to prevent the colours from quickly fading when the images were exposed to light. Over the following several decades has similarly mixed results, until Gabriel Lippmann earned a Nobel Prize

in physics in 1908. He is remembered as the inventor of reproducing colour by photography.

## THE LIGHTBULB - 1878

While much of the Alliance office drenched in natural light, thanks to the floor to ceiling windows that span the length of the building, there are 137 lightbulbs in our England headquarters, and without them, we would struggle some days. While some historians claim more than 20 people worked on versions of the bulb that progressed into what we know today, Thomas Edison is generally credited as the inventor. The inventor and businessman began serious research into developing a practical incandescent lamp and on 14 October 1877, when Edison filed his first patent application for 'Improvement in Electric Lights'. However, he continued to test several types of materials for metal filaments to improve on his original design and by November the next year, he filed another patent for an electric lamp using "a carbon filament or strip coiled and connected ... to platina contact wires." This discovery marked the beginning of commercially manufactured light bulbs and in 1880, Thomas Edison's company, Edison Electric Light Company, began marketing its new product.

## INVENTION OF THE CAR – 1885

Speaking at more than 115 engagements since January, the Alliance directors often rely on their cars to visit our members across the UK for special events or to speak at churches on a Sunday morning.

While combustion engines had been around for years by the time the Alliance formed, it took until 1879 for German Karl Benz to patent the modern car, and another nine years for him to complete the design. His first '*motorwagen*' was built in 1885 in Germany. Benz began promotion of the vehicle on 3 July 1886, and about 25 Benz vehicles were sold between 1888 and 1893, when his first four-wheeler was introduced along with a model intended for affordability. Emile Roger of France, already producing Benz engines under license, now added the Benz car to his line of products. Because France was more open to the early cars, initially more were built and sold in France through Roger than Benz sold in Germany. In August 1888 Karl's wife Bertha Benz undertook the first road trip by car, to prove the road-worthiness of her husband's invention.

## THE RADIO – 1895 (ISH)

Radio is one of the ways the Alliance speaks into the media, telling the good news stories that the Church has to offer. Evangelical Alliance directors and experts on various topics are often asked by radio stations to come on the air and explain new research or evangelical views on the news of the day.

Radio owes its development to two other inventions, the telegraph and the telephone, with all three technologies being closely related. Radio technology began as wireless telegraphy. Radio can refer to either the electronic appliance that we listen with or the content listened to. However, it all started with the discovery of radio waves - electromagnetic waves that have the capacity to transmit music, speech, pictures and other data invisibly through the air. Guglielmo Marconi, an Italian inventor, proved the feasibility of radio communication. He sent and received his first radio signal in Italy in 1895. By 1899 he flashed the first wireless signal across the English Channel and two years later received the letter "S", telegraphed from England to Newfoundland. This was the first successful transatlantic radiotelegraph message in 1902.

## UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE – 1928

The Alliance has a lot to say about politics, from the importance of Christians speaking in the public sphere – through the Public Leadership programme, to the need for members to campaign on certain areas of interest to evangelical beliefs. But Show Up, the campaign launched in partnership with Christians in Politics, has made a significant impact.

It becomes particularly clear that voting is a privilege that shouldn't be ignored when reminded that universal suffrage, with voting rights for women – though not for those under 30 – didn't arrive in Britain until February 1918. By the time of the third Reform Act in 1884, Britain was less democratic than many other countries in Europe. However, Britain managed to introduce reform without revolution – unlike much of continental Europe in the 19th century. This achievement contributed greatly to Britain's political stability in the 20th century. It wasn't until 1928 that women were also allowed to vote at 21 – in line with men.



**Y Care International Founder Terry Waite CBE launches Special Appeal to readers of Idea to help thousands of people in West Africa cope with the aftermath of the worst outbreak of Ebola ever**

# "Now Ebola is killing the people who aren't even infected"

**Terry Waite writes on why public donations are critical to preventing a further Ebola-related catastrophe**



As I launch this £189,902 appeal to you – and other readers of Idea – I am aware that there have been further recent deaths from Ebola in Sierra Leone.

Yet when I speak at public events people often say to me: *hasn't Ebola been beaten now?* Although the world's media has moved on from the Ebola crisis, in West Africa people are still at risk of dying from the virus and its terrible effects.

That is why my appeal is so urgent. **Without action now there is not just the risk of a further outbreak of Ebola but also thousands of survivors are in great danger from hunger and disease.**

Why is this? You may have seen on TV during the epidemic how death and fear tore communities apart. People stopped working because they were fearful of contracting the disease by mixing with others.

Breadwinners in thousands of families died and the local economy collapsed.

This August the survivors are still extremely vulnerable – many are struggling to feed themselves and their families.

**The truth is, without the help of donors now, a new Ebola and hunger catastrophe could kill many more in West Africa.** That is why I am seeking donations on behalf of Y Care International to urgently fund further projects, including:

- **HYGIENE: Firstly, donations are needed to prevent further outbreaks of Ebola.** Gifts will provide protected sources of

water – plus training in how to purify drinking water – to 12,960 of the most vulnerable slum dwellers.

- **JOB:** Secondly, donations are needed to provide training and capital to help young people like Gabriel to start up or rebuild their own businesses. Gabriel, from Liberia, survived Ebola but lost his father and many other friends and family. He had to fend for himself alone – and feared for his survival. But Y Care International's Food for Work programme enabled him to earn a living and put food on the table for the survivors in his family.

**"After so many people died all I could dream of was death."**

**Gabriel, 20 years old, Ebola survivor.**

£73.56 could help one young person to start their own business (and we are targeting 995 of the most needy young people in the very poorest communities in Liberia).

Y Care International is bringing hope and practical help to people in West Africa, who have endured so much suffering. But we cannot continue without more donations. That is why I have launched this £189,902 special appeal to raise funds for our urgent work in West Africa and around the world.

Please help by 25th October.

Terry Waite, CBE  
President of Y Care International

**Act NOW for Ebola Survivors**

**DEADLINE: 25<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER**

**They:**

- have been through the horror of the worst Ebola epidemic ever
- are suffering now because the economy collapsed during Ebola.

**You can help by:**

- giving **£25** towards the **£2,636** needed to construct water points in Liberia's West Point Slum to prevent further Ebola outbreaks
- giving **£73.56** to provide Vocational and Life Skills training to one jobless young person
- helping us raise a total of **£189,902** to rebuild lives in West Africa and around the world.



Donations will get traumatised young people like Gabriel back into work

**Y CARE INTERNATIONAL**

Y Care International is the international relief and development agency of the YMCA movement in the UK and Ireland.

**Complete and return the form below or give online at [ycareinternational.org/appeal/ebola](http://ycareinternational.org/appeal/ebola)**

Please note: your donation will be used wherever the need is greatest. Names have been changed to protect the identities of the young people we help.

Registered Charity No. 1109789

**Yes Terry, I will donate to your Special Appeal to help Ebola survivors rebuild their lives**

**I'd like to give** ☐ £25 ☐ £73.56 ☐ £2,636 ☐ Other £

☐ I enclose a cheque payable to Y Care International OR

☐ I wish to pay by: Visa/Amex/Mastercard/Maestro/CAF

Card No.

Start Date:     Expiry Date:

Issue Number   3 Digit Security Code:

Title  Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

Please keep me updated via email at:

Phone No.

**Please return to: FREEPOST RTKY-TBHS-RGLC, Y Care International, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP.**  
**You can also donate by calling Y Care International on 020 7549 3175 Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm.**

Thank you for your support – it is vital to us. We store your details securely and will never sell, trade or rent your personal information to other organisations. We'd really like to keep you up to date with our work and appeals occasionally, but if you'd prefer not to receive this information by ☐ mail or ☐ telephone just tick the appropriate box here and return this form, or contact us to let us know on [enquiries@ycareinternational.org](mailto:enquiries@ycareinternational.org) or 020 7549 3175.

give with confidence

**Y CARE INTERNATIONAL**



# In your words

We love hearing from you, so have your say on any of the issues raised in *idea* or make any comments about the Evangelical Alliance by emailing [idea@eauk.org](mailto:idea@eauk.org)

## BAD BABY BOOMERS?

I was surprised at the survey results as at 68 I have noticed my parents and my generation have been much more environmentally friendly than newer generations. How old were the people who responded? I suspect young and guessing. I wonder what the truth is.

My parents' generation were especially concerned at the price of everything after the war hated spending money on heating and did all sorts to cut down on energy bills. The legacy they received was inefficient heating. They found it difficult to keep warm, stuffed insulation everywhere. Yet we were worried British coal would run out and we also got gas from coal, so then what, freeze? More of the world's resources have been discovered and used in the last few decades.

We personally had our own house built in the 1980s. We insulated the floor and walls. Probably one of the first houses to have the floor insulated. We found heat exchangers far too expensive in this country, as they still are. Now we have solar panels, as do other over-60s in our street. We are puzzled why many don't like wind turbines and refuse them as ugly!

Both their and my generation washed nappies or rinsed them if not too dirty, rather than buying expensive disposables. We didn't buy prepackaged food as it wasn't available, and when it was we chose the cheaper option. OK, our motivation maybe was to save money, but not when we rinsed and returned milk, orange juice, fizzy drink bottles etc.

I remember as a child, we had one small black bin, the type with a lid on, and it wasn't filled

each week. Paper was given to the salvage man. No other bins required.

My husband when a teacher in the 1970s taught RE, geography etc and included caring for the environment in the classes.

I could go on, but you can probably tell I am one offended baby boomer.

As far as moral lifestyle choice is concerned, it is now very difficult for the young to choose. Immorality is the norm and you are weird if you try to not have sex before marriage. In fact, everyone is now looked on as stupid if they trust their spouse and expect a stable and happy family life according to magazines and the media. But that is a different subject.

**Pam Leake**

*Via email*

## DOUBTING DAVID

On what biblical basis does David Hilborn state that Mary's husband Joseph was "a middle-aged father"? (July/August magazine). The idea that Joseph was a widower when he married Mary is a myth invented by the Catholic Church to support their heretical doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. That way, Jesus' siblings can be explained as Joseph's children from his first marriage.

However, in Jewish belief, having many children was a seen as a blessing from the Lord so, after the birth of Jesus, Mary, who was greatly blessed, had four more sons and at least three daughters (note 'all his sisters',

## HEARD IN TWEETS

**Kay Morgan-Gurr @KayMorgan\_Gurr**

I was interviewed by our friends at @EAUknews last week about @childrenmatter! You can read it here: [eauk.co/29naofh](http://eauk.co/29naofh) via @idea\_mag

**John Risbridger @JohnRisbridger**

Inspiring sessions @KeswickC from Dave Landrum and Keiran Turner from @EAUknews on holiness and leadership in the public square

**Sailors' Churches @SailorsChurches**

Just emailing the fab @AmarisCole from @EAUknews about @idea\_mag and new edition dropped on the doormat! [pic.twitter.com/lx0LzGJw4q](https://pic.twitter.com/lx0LzGJw4q)

**Chine McDonald @ChineMcDonald**

Join us for an @EAUknews @PublicLeaderUK weekend on speaking in the media in October [thepublicleader.com/voice-for-good/](http://thepublicleader.com/voice-for-good/)

**Lynne East @LynneEast**

Congratulations to Sunbury's The Open Door Church, part of @EAUknews, a highly-commended cash prize winner in the ansvar. [co.uk/churchcampaign/](http://co.uk/churchcampaign/)

**APSCHURCH @apschurch**

Let's Talk Jesus: Video [talkingjesus.org/videos](http://talkingjesus.org/videos) via @EAUknews

**Danny Webster @danny\_webster**

Has Russia banned evangelism? Me for @EAUknews [eauk.org/current-affairs/news/has-russia-banned-evangelism.cfm](http://eauk.org/current-affairs/news/has-russia-banned-evangelism.cfm)

**Science & Religion @SciRelSpec**

@EAUknews We're looking for LDN based Xtians for research into religion &science. Could u RT our survey? Thnx! [goo.gl/oSoxBE](http://goo.gl/oSoxBE)

Matthew 13:56). I don't imagine David Hilborn subscribes to Catholic belief, so why does he say Joseph was middle-aged? Scripture does not tell us so we can't be certain, but it's reasonable to assume he was in his late teens. True, he was no longer around by the time Jesus was 30, but to die before 50 was not unusual at that time.

**Jenny Yates**

**Editor's note:** *David Hilborn is principal of St John's, Nottingham, chair of the Evangelical Alliance's Theological Advisory Group and the author of several books on doctrine, theology of culture and evangelical, pentecostal and charismatic Christianity.*

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*idea* is published bi-monthly and sent free of charge to members of the Evangelical Alliance. Formed in 1846, the Alliance's mission is to unite evangelicals to present Christ credibly as good news for spiritual and social transformation. There are around two million evangelical Christians in the UK, according to a 2007 Tearfund survey.

*idea* is published in accordance with the Alliance's Basis of Faith, although it is impossible in every article to articulate each detail and nuance of belief held by Alliance members. Articles in *idea* may therefore express views on which there is a

divergence of opinion or understanding among evangelicals.

Letters and story ideas from members are welcome, and will be considered by the editorial board, which reserves the right to edit letters and stories for length and style. We regret that we are unable to engage in personal correspondence. Unsolicited material will only be returned if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

*idea* accepts advertisements and inserts to offset printing costs. Advertising in *idea* does not imply editorial endorsement. The Alliance reserves the right to accept or refuse advertisements at its discretion. Articles may be reproduced only with permission from the editor.



**NSN**

# **NATURALLY SUPERNATURAL**

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and move in the power of the Holy Spirit*

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  - Kids work
  - Social activities for all ages & life stages
- 

Speakers will include Andy Croft, Ali Martin, Tim Ross, Mark Marx and Simon Holley. Worship will be led by Beth Croft and Tom Smith. More guests to be announced soon.

---

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THURSDAY 27TH JULY**

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# Let's celebrate

**Over the years, my wife Ann and I have learnt the importance of celebration. We've just had our 40th wedding anniversary and so took the opportunity to celebrate in a number of different settings with a wide array of church, friends and family.**

This edition of *idea* has marked the 170th birthday of the Evangelical Alliance, an alliance called together with a very specific purpose – to express the unity of God's people as Jesus prayed for us in John 17 with the amazing aspiration that the world might come to know Him.

There is a certain irony that as I write this, I do so with the backdrop of what has been the greatest political shaking that has been experienced in our country in my lifetime. Has there ever been a time when the divisions and disagreements across the UK have been more apparent? The referendum has revealed complex and deeply concerning fissures. A country which has prided itself on hospitality and tolerance has discovered under the surface pockets of unexpressed fears, anxieties and prejudice. This has been fuelled, in some communities, by a deep sense of powerlessness, of not being heard in decisions made by Brussels and Westminster. We are living in an age of a disunited United Kingdom.

While Christians didn't agree on the desired outcome for the referendum, what we can agree on is that in the shaking, it's time for the Church to model a better way of handling disagreement – and for us to engage in the profoundly important national conversation, as we look to the future, of what kind of society we wish to build.

On 19 August 1846, the conference that formally brought the Evangelical Alliance into being began in London. Of the 922 who attended, 84 per cent came from across the UK, eight per cent from the United States and seven per cent from mainland Europe. John Angell James, chair of the assemblies' planning group, declared: "In every chorus of human voices, the harmony depends on the 'key note' being rightly struck... That note I'm appointed to give and it is love." The marker was established, and what a wonderful marker. One that would spark a movement that would spread to 130 countries around the world, reshaping the face of society for generations to come.

As the assembly proceeded, two major agenda items needed to be agreed. Firstly, a statement of faith that captured the prominent characteristics of an evangelical theological understanding. Occupying the first few days it was navigated successfully due to a strong desire among delegates to reach across existing divisions over certain areas of biblical interpretation. Over the years, the evangelical basis of faith, as it became known, has had a great deal of attention and been the source of heated debate. However for the last two days, the delegates turned their attention to what was called 'the practical resolutions', now called 'evangelical relationship commitments'. These discussions focused on the very practical issues associated with how we relate to each other, how we build and maintain relationships and how we disagree agreeably. Unfortunately the practical resolutions have not received

**As a 21st century Evangelical Alliance, we remain convinced 170 years later that we are "one body in Christ", the foundational motto of the Evangelical Alliance.**

as much attention as the basis of faith. Perhaps if we had, some of the difficulties and pain faced in our local churches, national denominations or networks and organisations would have been avoided. Based on the premise that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, part of one family, it challenged us to pray for each other, be open to learn from each other, speak and write well of each other – even in our disagreements – and encouraged cooperation and avoid competition. Reading the relational commitments again, I'm convinced they stand the test of time and speak into a world of mass communication and social media. Do take the time to read these evangelical commitments, they can be found on our website.

As a 21st century Evangelical Alliance, we remain convinced 170 years later that we are "one body in Christ", the foundational motto of the Evangelical Alliance. Jesus prayed in John 17 that "we might be brought to complete unity then the world will know that you sent me". A unity that carries an amazing missional imperative. A unity that not only handles our disagreements well, but commits us to working with our brothers and sisters to see God's heavenly purposes fulfilled on earth.

This time of national shaking is a great opportunity for the UK Church. Let's not miss this opportunity. Let's pray, but also as the good news people proclaim a better way through both word and action.

## 170TH ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

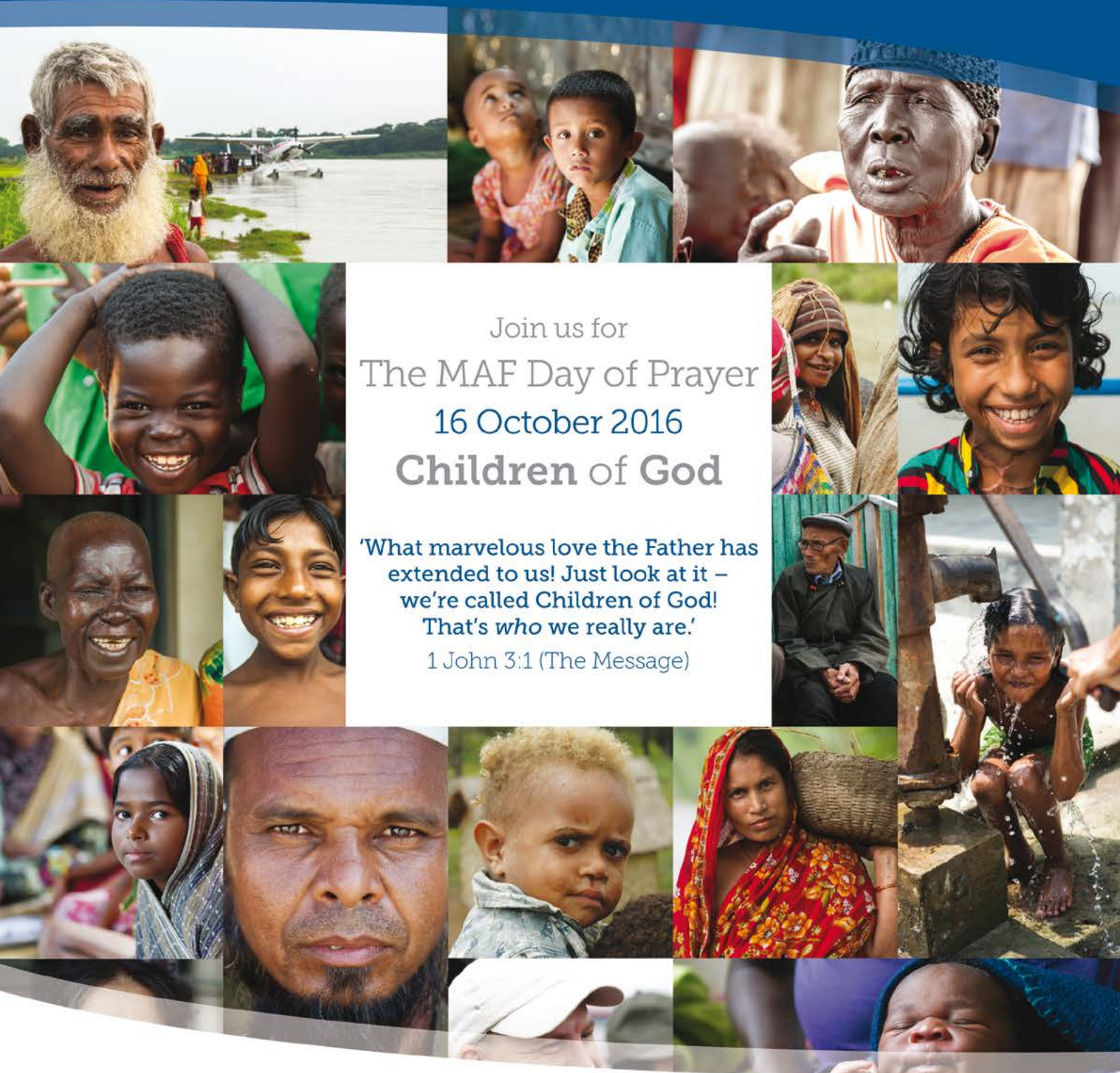
If I may, I'd like to make a special appeal to you to close this anniversary edition of *idea*. You may have noticed a covering letter from me enclosed with this edition. You'll see from this that we're running a special 170th Anniversary Appeal this year, launching with this edition.

Our 170th Anniversary Appeal is simple. **If just 170 of you, our wonderful members and supporters, increase your regular gifts to £18.46 a month to commemorate the year of our foundation, you could raise an extra £30,000 a year to do this core work of serving and representing the UK Church.** That's money that could be put towards protecting religious liberty, equipping the Church for evangelism, or uniting local churches to work together to transform their communities.

So will you please read the covering letter and consider whether you could be one of the 170? Thank you.



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16 October 2016  
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'What marvelous love the Father has  
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That's *who* we really are.'  
1 John 3:1 (The Message)

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Steve Clifford – General Director, Evangelical Alliance