

# CEEC

**PRESS RELEASE EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:00AM WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2021**

## **CEEC launches suite of materials to help churches examine their cultures**

1 December 2021, London, UK: The Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) has today launched a series of materials designed to help evangelical churches review, repent and reshape their cultures on the back of the recent Thirtyone:eight independent reviews into two prominent evangelical churches and their leaders<sup>1</sup>.

The materials are both in response to the criticism and recommendations made by the review, and the subsequent wider reflections of a representative group of Anglican evangelical church leaders (women and men, younger and older, lay and ordained, conservative and charismatic, and survivors of abuse) convened by the CEEC.

The resources include an introductory film, some culture review questions and a Liturgy of Lament for churches to take and actively use. The materials can be found on CEEC's website.

The CEEC describes the materials as 'first steps' in helping local churches reflect on, lament and address existing and potential issues surrounding power and abuse.

Ed Shaw, who chaired the CEEC's work on this issue, said: "These resources are very much the beginning of the conversation – with God and each other - on the issues of culture, power and abuse within evangelicalism.

"We are simply hoping to kick-start discussions that others will continue both within and across local churches. We are especially aware of further work that needs to be done on how badly expressed and applied evangelical theology has sometimes been used to justify unhealthy cultures, misuse of power and horrific abuse."

Alongside the film, the first of the materials is a Liturgy of Lament to allow people to express their sorrow and repentance in the light of abuses of power within evangelical churches. They are accompanied by anonymised survivor accounts of abuse that took place in evangelical contexts.

The second of the materials are a series of review questions written to help evangelical churches and their leadership (clergy and lay, church wardens and PCCs) recognise what is healthy and unhealthy about their cultures.

"The resources are for evangelical churches leadership teams - clergy, church wardens and laity - and PCCs across the country. They have been developed by Anglican evangelicals but, we hope, will be of help for other evangelical churches – and beyond evangelicalism. Problematic cultures, misuse of power and abuse are, sadly, to be found everywhere", continued Ed.

In the introductory film, Rt Revd Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford, said: "Speaking as a survivor of abuse myself, and having listened to the stories of survivors who have often suffered far more than I did, there is a sense that this is a life sentence. It really does damage people very badly.

"In the Psalms we read about how God is our refuge and strength, and in many ways churches should be places of real refuge. Tragically that's not always been true in the past.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://thirtyoneeight.org/media/2678/the-crowded-house-learning-review-full-report.pdf> and [https://walkingwith.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Final+Report+of+ECW+Review\\_March+2021.pdf](https://walkingwith.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Final+Report+of+ECW+Review_March+2021.pdf)

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“It’s therefore vital that we not only engage with safeguarding and training, but also look more seriously at the culture in our churches. We need to ask ourselves, ‘what might lead people to go astray, abuse to go unchecked, power dynamics to become unbalanced’. I think this resource will really help churches to engage with these questions.”

The Cultures Review Questions signpost many other resources and the questions may require updating after the publication of the Makin Review in 2022 and other reviews and events.

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## **Notes to editors**

### **About the CEEC**

CEEC was first created by John Stott to provide a "collective" evangelical voice within the Church of England, was registered as a UK charity in December 1969 and incorporated in September 2003.

CEEC exists to provide for the continuing need for an overarching group to which evangelical organisations, networks, institutions and churches can belong, based on common understanding of the Christian faith and its Anglican expression, and united by a common vision to promote and maintain orthodox evangelical theology, ethics and liturgy at the heart of the Church of England. DEF’s (Diocesan Evangelical Fellowships) are the de facto representative bodies of CEEC in each diocese.

CEEC aims to encourage evangelism, bible-based and Christ-centred formation of discipleship, evangelical leadership within the Church of England, and evangelical unity within and outside Anglicanism.

The membership of CEEC includes representation from Diocesan Evangelical Fellowships, Theological Colleges, evangelical networks including New Wine, Junia, CPAS, Church Society, CMS, Crosslinks and Fulcrum, and bishops.