



The Church of England Evangelical Council

Uniting evangelical bishops, leaders, networks, churches and organisations // www.ceec.info

PRESS RELEASE

Race: C of E evangelicals mark Martin Luther King Day with video promoting racial awareness for Christians

EVANGELICALS in the Church of England are marking Martin Luther King Day by urging Christians to think more deeply about racial issues.

The Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) is launching a suite of video resources aimed at getting congregations to think biblically about how they can become more racially aware, sensitive and inclusive.

The main video – entitled ONE – features Jason Roach, of The Bridge Church, Battersea; Mark Murthen of St James', Muswell Hill; Margot Knight, of Christ Church at All Saints, Wandsworth; Esther Prior, of St John's Egham; and John Dunnett of All Saints, Woodford Wells.

Martin Luther King Day, on Monday 18th January, is a public holiday in the USA – and this year it takes place just two days before the inauguration of president-elect Joe Biden at a time when both racial and political tensions are likely to be running high.

One of the participants, Esther Prior, a woman of colour, says she was once told by someone who knew her well, and knew she had mixed-race children: "I don't think mixed race people should exist – do you?"

The main video discusses issues such as anti-racism literature and systemic racism; individual responsibility; thinking Biblically and listening well; knowing history and theology; calling out injustice and raising up role models; and multi-ethnic congregations.

The President of CEEC, the Bishop of Blackburn, Rt Revd Julian Henderson, said: *"So much has happened in the news since the killing of George Floyd in the US last year that it would be too easy to forget the vital issues raised. We believe these are important matters for all churches to discuss and think about – and not only that, but to act upon. Racial discrimination has no place in our church or the evangelical constituency. We want to weed out all forms of racism."*

Rev Lis Goddard (CEEC member), commented: *"Even today, with increasing racial diversity in the UK, many evangelical groups, events and organisations both within the Church of England and the wider evangelical community are monochrome in terms of ethnic colour. We need to work hard to change that."*

Rev Dr Jason Roach said: *"The gospel impacts all of life. Churches should be beacons of racial integration and harmony and of unity amid ethnic diversity. This is a matter for all Christians to take seriously."*

The video suite is available via the CEEC website at: www.ceec.info

Ends / notes to editors follow on next page...

Notes to editors

CEEC was first created by the late Revd Dr John Stott, once described by *Time* magazine as being among the world's 100 most influential people. It was set up 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. The term 'evangelical' does not refer to a style of worship but to reformed orthodox Christian beliefs such as those set out in the Church of England's 1662 Prayer Book and 39 Articles. Literally, the word 'evangelical' comes from the Greek word for 'good news'.

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.

Evangelical networks which are member organisations of CEEC include Church Society, CMS, CPAS, Crosslinks, Fulcrum, Junia Network and New Wine.

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