



# Progressive Christianity Network Britain

Registered Charity No: 1102164

## ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL REPORT 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY - 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2017



PCN Britain Chair, Adrian Alker, leading a discussion at The Big Conversation, the 2017 AGM

### **Registered address**

26 High Street, Newnham, Gloucestershire, GL14 1BB

# The Progressive Christianity Network Britain

<b>Registered Charity No:</b>	1102164
<b>Governing Document</b>	Constitution adopted 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2003, and amended 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2004, 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2005, 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2009 and 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
<b>Object of the Charity</b>	The advancement of the Christian Religion in such exclusively charitable ways as the trustees in their absolute discretion see fit.
<b>Main activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Promoting a way of living consistent with the 8 points and with a progressive, inclusive, open approach to religion.</li><li>ii. Supporting groups of PCN members and non-members to explore a progressive understanding of Christianity.</li><li>iii. Supporting and encouraging members of the Progressive Christianity Network, both those whose faith is lived out within the community of church as expressed in mainstream denominational Christianity and those outside of any such organised institutional Christian framework.</li><li>iv. Networking, conferencing and providing forums for open debate about all aspects of Christianity, including interaction with people of other faiths.</li><li>v. Engaging in discussion and negotiation with members of different Christian denominations, promoting agendas and understandings that are both liberating and radical.</li><li>vi. Developing and encouraging progressive Christian congregations and communities.</li><li>vii. Promoting membership of PCN Britain</li></ol>
<b>Address:</b>	26 High Street, Newnham, Gloucestershire, GL14 1BB
<b>Bankers:</b>	The Co-operative Bank
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	David Ferguson
<b>Trustees for the period of this report:</b>	
Chair	Adrian Alker
Vice chair:	Paul Onslow
Secretary:	Sandra Griffiths
Treasurer:	Gareth Hexter until April 2017, Peter Stribblehill from May 2017
	Dave Coaker
	Maureen Foxall
	Ian Geere from April 2017
	Sue Hobley
	Tony Rutherford until April 2017
	Simon Cross from September 2017
	Pat Fuller
	Richard Gray
	Geraint Rees until April 2017
	Richard Tetlow



Attendees at the 2017 AGM

# Chair's Report on the Network in 2017

by Adrian Alker

At our AGM on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017, the trustees invited members to "A Big Conversation" about PCN and we were thrilled at the response and all the conversations we had in Birmingham about our organisation. Those conversations revealed just what a 'broad church' we are and the need for us to be facing many ways and yet with a core vision rooted in the exemplary life of Jesus.

Two months later, the Prime Minister called for a general election on 8 June 2017, amidst the continuing debate over Brexit. I thought it might be another interesting exercise to see what PCN members would have liked to have seen in any party political manifesto and I was not



disappointed again with the enthusiasm of the response! About 140 members emailed me with their concerns and priorities, which in summary revealed four main areas: the NHS and social care, the environment, the eradication of nuclear weaponry and improvements in education. Brexit was by no means top of the list!

It was a very humbling and heartening experience to receive all these emails, from people passionate about the kind of society and the kind of world in which we wish to live. PCN members were clearly saying to our political leaders that it matters greatly about how we live peacefully together, how we show compassion for the poor and the vulnerable, how we care about public services, about welcoming the stranger, about creating a fairer and more equal society, free from the threat of nuclear war.

PCN has always been a child of the Jesus Quest movement in a way. Taking its origins from our sister organisation in the USA, progressive Christians have been eager to underscore the firm foundations of biblical scholarship which emphasised the humanity of Jesus and the social, economic and cultural matrix in which his life was lived out. If we wanted to grasp what 'God' might be like in human terms and what God's passion was about, we looked to the life, teachings and works of the man from Galilee.

And so much of our work over the course of one year, be it through our conferences, our publications, the conversations in our groups, centres upon living lives filled with the same compassion, the same yearning for justice and peace as we glimpsed in Jesus. PCN members, be they also churchgoers, chapel attenders or not, are more concerned to live the life and ditch much of the dogma! We desire religion to be less about conforming to stated beliefs and doctrines and more about a freedom to explore meanings and share experiences. Thank you then to the record number of 700 members who in 2017 contributed so much to our Network. Your membership in both financial and other ways continues to be of central importance.

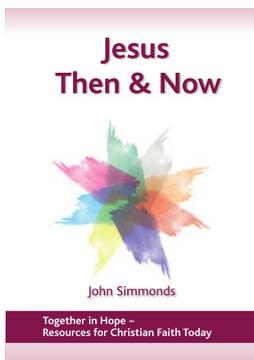
As ever PCN is indebted to the dedication of our trustees and in 2017 we welcomed Ian Geere, Peter Stribblehill and Simon Cross as new trustees. Meanwhile Sarah Guilfoyle does amazing work as our administrator as does Andy Vivian, our web editor, who graciously allows us to use his home as the PCN office, and also Jess Lee, our librarian. Meanwhile Dave Coaker continues to do a wonderful job as editor of Progressive Voices, our magazine so valued by members.

During 2017 we took delivery of a new PCN banner together with copies of our new highly attractive and colourful publicity leaflets which we hope will be widely distributed through our groups and at various events.



This year the Borg Memorial Conference was held at St Stephen's Church in Bristol, where our guest speaker was Robin Meyers, addressing the intriguing title, 'How I became a heretic – with help from Jesus'. Meanwhile the Australian theologian Val Webb again spoke at a number of regional events organised by groups in the network. In the autumn we welcomed back to the UK, the Canadian writer and minister Gretta Vosper, speaking in Leeds and in Birmingham.

For many years we have held a 'members retreat', an opportunity on a small scale for a more intimate time of sharing over a weekend. The 2017 residential proved to be another highly valued weekend, organised by Pat and Sandra with input from other trustees as well, in the enjoyable setting of the Chester Diocesan retreat centre at Foxhill.



'Together in Hope' has been the project over a number of years by which several booklets have been produced for group discussion and which have sold well and have hopefully achieved their aim. The four organisations working together decided that it was time to draw this particular joint endeavour to a close and the considerable balance of monies was distributed amongst the four organisations. Sales of the books will continue whilst stocks last and PCN hopes to produce some of its own booklets in the coming years. Thanks to all our authors and members of the editorial team for a successful venture.

As we now look ahead, the trustees, with ideas from the membership, (not least from that Big Conversation) will finalise our priorities for the next three-year period. We do want to bring to fruition new resources for learning, be they in a kind of course or series of short films and to use such resources to reach out to the many folk, young and old, who are searching for an organisation which will help and support them on their spiritual journey. We also wish to make PCN attractive to young people and we are aware of our needs to strengthen our presence and appeal on social media platforms.

It has been a great privilege and a joy to visit groups across the UK. Towards the end of 2017 I was able to lead a weekend at the Cairns Church in Milngavie, that lovely town which marks the beginning of the Highland Way. The following week I was sharing some time with our PCN group in Cardiff. I hope 2018 gives me similar opportunities to see how PCN is faring in other parts of Britain.

But I end, remembering that General Election of 2017 and a much bigger agenda: that is how progressive Christianity, shaped by the example of Jesus of Nazareth, can inspire us to work for communities and for a society which reflects the love and compassion of the One whose title of 'the Christ' gives us our title. PCN will need to raise its profile in the demanding world of political and social movements, working with others of different faiths and none to build that 'kingdom of God' on earth. I look forward to that agenda with some relish!

*Adrian Alker*

Adrian Alker, Chair, February 2018

# Financial Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2017

## 1. Summary

The accounts for 2017 have been prepared on the accruals basis, following a decision by the trustees to change from the receipts and payments basis used in previous years. This has resulted in a prior year adjustment to the closing position for 2016 of £4493. The main changes are the recognition of Gift Aid due to the Network at the year end and delaying recognition of subscriptions paid until the year they relate to. The accounts comprise the income and expenditure for the Year and a balance sheet.

The accounts show a surplus of income over expenditure for the year of £117 and balances at the year end on General Funds of £32,925 and Restricted Funds of £2406. There was a net deficit of receipts over payments in respect of events and a modest surplus in respect of sale of publications. Subscriptions received are more than in 2016, reflecting the increase in membership and also the move to accruals basis of account. Two gift aid claims were made during the year, £4849 for 2015 and £3397 for 2016, the £4385 shown in the accounts being the amount relating to 2017 adjusted for the accruals basis.

## 2. Donations

There were two one-off donations in 2016 mentioned in last year's report so that 2017 represented a more normal year.

## 3. Marcus Borg Memorial Fund

This fund has been established to financially underpin a series of annual lectures to honour the work of Marcus Borg. It is recognised as a restricted fund to avoid cross-subsidy with the General Fund. In 2017, a part of the balance was used as planned to fund the event during the year.

## 4. Events

Some of our major events during the year ran at a loss. The trustees examined the reasons for this and are concerned to try to limit the likelihood of losses in the future.

## 5. Joint Publications Project

PCN Britain has provided banking facilities for this joint project with three other organisations and it is recognised as a restricted fund to avoid cross-subsidy with the General Fund. During the year, the trustees decided to wind up this fund, distributing one quarter each to the three partner organisations who were involved in the project. This liability is reflected in the PY adjustment to this fund which then reflects just the portion of income relating to PCN.

## 6. Bank Charges

During the year the trustees decided to show income in full rather than net after charges by PayPal and Stripe. The amount shown is the total charge for the year for this expense.



Peter Stribblehill, Treasurer, February 2018

**Section A****Independent Examiner's Report**

<b>Report to the trustees/ members of</b>	Progressive Christianity Network Britain		
<b>On accounts for the year ended</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2017	<b>Charity no (if any)</b>	1102164
<b>Set out on pages</b>	Seven and Eight		

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
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<b>Name:</b>	David Ferguson
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<b>Relevant professional qualification(s) or body:</b>	n/a
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<b>Address:</b>	1 French Street, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 4DA
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**Section B****Disclosure**

No disclosures or qualifications

## Income and expenditure for the Year Ending 31 December 2017

	2017 Income £	Expenditure £	Net £	2,016 Net £	Note
<b>Membership and Donations</b>					
Subscriptions	21,173	-	21,173	16,096	2
Donations - general	155	-	155	2,847	
Gift Aid	4,385	-	4,385	0	
	<b>25,712</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,712</b>	<b>18,943</b>	
<b>Memorial Fund (Restricted Fund)</b>					
Donations	44	(282)	(238)	297	3
<b>Events</b>					
Bookings and donations	9,766	(1,760)	8,006	16,120	4
Underwriting fund	378	(164)	214	(39)	
Speaker and location costs	511	(10,560)	(10,049)	(12,041)	
	<b>10,655</b>	<b>(12,484)</b>	<b>(1,830)</b>	<b>4,040</b>	
<b>Joint Event (Restricted Fund)</b>					
Bookings and donations			0	6,321	4
Speaker and location costs			0	(5,472)	
	0	0	0	849	
<b>Publications</b>					
Sales	2,739		2,739	1,040	4
Publication costs		(1,964)	(1,964)	(926)	
Newsletter costs		(1,975)	(1,975)	(1,762)	
Leaflets		(1,745)	(1,745)	0	
Website		(300)	(300)	(1,512)	
	<b>2,739</b>	<b>(5,984)</b>	<b>(3,245)</b>	<b>(3,160)</b>	
<b>Joint Publications (Restricted Fund)</b>					
Sales	160	-	160	1,517	5
Costs	-		0	(126)	
	<b>160</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>1,391</b>	
<b>Interest Received</b>					
CCLA	46	-	46	72	5
	<b>46</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>72</b>	
<b>Operating Costs</b>					
Admin salaries		(10,019)	(10,019)	(11,752)	6
Insurance		(450)	(450)	(414)	
Management Committee expenses		(5,078)	(5,078)	(4,132)	
Other costs		(4,637)	(4,637)	(4,132)	
Bank Charges		(305)	(305)	-	
	<b>-</b>	<b>(20,489)</b>	<b>(20,489)</b>	<b>(20,430)</b>	
<b>Cash Surplus for Year</b>	<b>39,357</b>	<b>(39,240)</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>2,002</b>	

## Balance Sheet at 31 December 2017

Funds	2017					2016
	General Fund £	Memorial Fund £	Joint Event £	Joint Publications £	Total £	Total £
Balance at 1 January	26,012	1,092	1,701	2,016	30,821	28,819
Prior Year Adjustment	6,818		(813)	(1,512)	4,493	
Re-stated Balance	32,830	1,092	888	504	35,314	
Net receipts for Year	195	(238)	0	160	117	2,002
<u>Balance at 31 December</u>	33,025	854	888	665	35,431	30,821

Balance Sheet	31/12/2017 £	2016 £
<u>Assets</u>		
Co-operative Bank	13,202	10,919
CCLA	19,948	19,902
Gift Aid	3,979	7,840
Other Drs / Prepayments	76	314
<u>Total</u>	37,205	38,975
<u>Liabilities</u>		
Membership in advance	1,285	2,029
Other Cr / Accruals	489	1,632
<u>Total</u>	1,774	3,661
	-	-
<u>Net Assets</u>	35,431	35,314

  
Adrian Alker, Chair

  
Peter Stribblehill, Treasurer

28<sup>th</sup> February 2018