

APPENDIX C

CTBI FOUR NATIONS FORUM ON EVANGELISM

29 and 30 November 2006 Hebron Hall, Cardiff

Present: representatives from most of the main practitioner bodies concerned with mission and evangelism in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and England.

Purpose: to keep abreast of current thinking in evangelism and to share news of new initiatives

1. “Making Sense of Generation Y” (ongoing research presented by its author Bob Mayo)

It is suggested that younger people are developing their own subjective and institutionally unbound spirituality, and that this is taking over from (church) religion. This research uncovered a coherent, meaningful world view in which neither traditional religious concepts and stories nor alternative mystical beliefs and practices had much of a part to play. In essence, this world view states: ‘This world, and all life in it, is meaningful *as it is*’. There is no need to look for something beyond this world for a ‘deeper’ reality. However, when this view, fails - tragedies occur, friends are lost - it is to the fragments of Christian belief and practice which remain in the wider culture that young people often turn, albeit momentarily and in an uncertain manner.

2. Some recent research by Phil Rankin, among young people in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, seems to cut across the above. It draws a fascinating distinction between formative and transformative spirituality and seems to suggest that there is not much evidence for the stated view that Generation Y is spiritual in outlook but not religious. It may turn out to be neither.

3. Resources

- The China Challenge: presentation by Caroline Fielder (CTBI China Desk). There are currently 400,000 members of the Chinese community in UK. Numbers are fastest growing in Ireland and Wales. A study guide being prepared by CTBI will help churches wanting to engage effectively with members of the Chinese community.
- Hope 2008 – an initiative designed to allow local churches throughout these islands to make 2008 a year for celebration of the Christian faith. Many simple practical ideas to be included could be relevant for Ireland. Churches will be able to sign up for information.
- Dei Gloria is producing material for cathedrals and greater churches offering ideas and resources to afford visitors an opportunity to engage with the Christian message
- A new resource “Open for you” offers guidelines for churches wanting to use buildings evangelistically.

Standing Committee – Report 2007

- The Olympic Ideal shares ideas on how churches might respond both nationally and locally to the Games. It will be circulated to all CTBI member churches next year.
- Work is under way to set up a web site for the sharing of mission resources.

Attending this Forum was a stimulating and informative exercise. An amazing amount of information was shared over the space of twenty-four hours. The challenge will be to find ways, through the Church of Ireland Council for Mission and other avenues, to share this information and to stimulate involvement in some of these helpful initiatives.

Paul Hoey 10/12/06