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THE MAGAZINE OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE
NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2021 • EAUK.ORG

1846-2021:
celebrating
175 years
strengthening the UK church

Motivating mission

Starting to share your faith is a little like learning how to run regularly. The 'Couch to 5k' training programme has helped thousands of people get moving, and we think it's a great analogy for sharing faith as well. That's why we've created Motivating Mission, a resource for church leaders to help their churches find their motivation, build their confidence and get out there.

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LOOK HOW FAIR WE'VE COME

It is such an incredible privilege to serve an organisation with 175 years of history uniting the church to serve Jesus. What a moment for many of us to pause and look how far we have come – there is so much to be thankful to the Lord for.

For me personally, the Evangelical Alliance's history holds a significant place in my heart because both my grandad and my dad led the ministry before me. I've known the honour it is to lead but also the huge personal cost involved. As a family, we were not able to spend as much time together as we would have wanted, but through that sacrifice the Lord was strengthening His church, bringing greater unity and salvation.

I have many positive childhood memories of the Evangelical Alliance, including a relaxed kickabout with many members of the staff team and selling cookies to raise money to help free an evangelical church leader who was in prison in the then USSR. I also vividly remember my work experience as a teenager—one week at Wimbledon FC and one week with the Evangelical Alliance, mainly because Wimbledon

couldn't take me for longer.

There have been some amazing, godly leaders serving at the Evangelical Alliance throughout its history, people who have surrendered everything to follow the Lord with endless passion and commitment to His church. One such person was the late Rev Dr Joel Edwards CBE, who sadly passed away in June.

Joel epitomised all that was good about the Evangelical Alliance: he was committed to unity, a wonderful leader, generous with friendship, a wise media spokesperson and a spirit-filled preacher. It's now my firm desire as CEO to stand on the shoulders of the giants who've come before me and push us on into this new season. I do believe that some of the most exciting years lie ahead of us, and we need to do all we can to continue the ministry.

As we look ahead and move forward, we do so underpinned by the sure foundation of the Evangelical Alliance, which will always remain the same. In a rapidly changing technological age, we evangelicals will continue to put the Bible at the heart of all we do; we will not lose sight of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the most important moment in human history; we'll continue with our heartfelt commitment to lead many to surrender their lives to Jesus; and we will be focused in our desire to see our faith lead us to activism, inspired by the love of Christ, across generations.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of the journey. Thank you for your constant prayers, encouragement and faithful support.

This forthcoming post-coronavirus season will be as challenging as any in our history. We are committed to assisting the social and spiritual rebuilding of the UK in whatever way we are able to. We will do all we can to bring about evangelical unity in this season. We will speak up, in truth and love, on the issues that matter. We will seek to be the good news people who are so desperately needed.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of the journey. Thank you for your constant prayers, encouragement and faithful support. We exist to serve the Lord and His church. As we have stood together over decades, the Evangelical Alliance has been deeply blessed through its members playing their part, the volunteers giving generously of their time, every member of staff making wholehearted contributions, and all the churches faithfully seeking to impact their community.

Please continue to pray for the Lord's direction, His hand on the Evangelical Alliance and the release of His will among us. Let's believe for an incredibly fruitful future, moving forward by standing together as one, doing all we can to be brave and kind as we seek to make Jesus known.

Yours in Christ,



Gavin Calver, CEO



TO KNOW
WHERE WE'RE
GOING WE'VE GOT
to KNOW WHERE
WE'VE COME
FROM

Rev Dr David Hilborn, principal of Moorlands College
and a member of the Evangelical Alliance board



Antique photograph of Seven Dials junction in London as it was in the late 19th century. It is a small circular square, a road junction of seven streets in Covent Garden in the West End of London. On 19 August 1846, more than 800 attendees gathered in Covent Garden for the inaugural conference of the Evangelical Alliance.

On 1 October 1845, 216 Christian leaders gathered in Liverpool's Medical Hall to share a big vision of uniting to make Jesus known. Ten months later in London, the Evangelical Alliance was born. One hundred and seventy-five years on from that birth, the vision remains strong.

As evangelicals, those who met by the Mersey emphasised the supreme authority of scripture, the centrality of the cross, personal conversion, and gospel activism. These emphases derived from the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s. But they'd gained momentum in the 1730s, with revivals led by the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield in Britain, and by Jonathan Edwards in America. To maintain and develop revival, John Wesley had called for a 'national union of evangelical clergy', but tribal loyalties died hard: he later lamented that evangelical unity had too often ended up as a 'rope of sand'.

Cooperation improved as overseas mission advanced with technology and imperial expansion.

The London Missionary Society (1795) and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804) were founded as interdenominational agencies. At home, though, unity remained more elusive, until a series of external challenges focused minds.

Many at Liverpool were concerned by a resurgence in Catholicism. That concern brought Anglican and Free Church Evangelicals together, leading to further cooperation as the Evangelical Alliance took shape. Roman Catholics had been denied various rights since the Reformation, but a Relief Act in 1829 restored many of them. From 1833, the Oxford Movement called for a recovery of Catholic emphases in the established Church of England. More than now, anti-Catholic sentiment defined evangelical identity. It was stoked further in 1844 when the Westminster government approved funding for a Catholic seminary at Maynooth near Dublin – then still part of the UK. Also much-discussed at Liverpool was a split from the Church of Scotland by 1,200 clergy,



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Join us along with Christians across the UK from the discomfort of your back garden, your balcony, your doorstep or come along to Webber Street in Waterloo, our centre for people who are homeless.

On 20 November 2021, raise funds for people experiencing homelessness to continue to receive a warm breakfast, a new set of clothes, help with finding accommodation and hear the gospel shared to them lovingly and sensitively!

For more information and to register, go to: lcm.org.uk/sleepout



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The Evangelical Alliance emerged as a major force for evangelical unity and witness. In doing so, it laid the foundations for the ministry it continues to exercise today.

on the grounds that Presbyteries should choose their own ministers, free from central church or state control.

But more conciliatory motivations were at work, too. Another Scot, James Hamilton, warned the Liverpool gathering that it should beware of taking “any mere anti-form”. The great Congregationalist John Angell James agreed: “Every chorus of human voices”, he declared, “depends on the ‘keynote’ being rightly struck”, and the keynote that must be struck now was “LOVE”. The Presbyterian David King invoked Jesus’ prayer for oneness in John 17: Christian union, not controversy, he said, should come first.

Suitably inspired, the Liverpool meeting appointed a provisional committee to take things forward, and on 19 August 1846, more than 800 attendees gathered in Covent Garden, London, for the inaugural conference of the Evangelical Alliance. The desire for a body that would “manifest and promote the unity of Christ’s people” worldwide was genuine, but it would take time to develop. Eighty-four per cent of those present were British, eight per cent American and the other eight per cent from Canada, continental Europe and beyond. Still, on the fifth day a basis of faith containing the ‘most vital truths’ of global evangelical Christianity was adopted with acclaim. Though the text of the basis has been revised since, the same truths remain at its core.

But then the Evangelical Alliance faced its first major test. British representatives proposed barring slaveholders from membership. This was before the emancipation of slaves in the US, and several Americans objected. After heated exchanges, it was agreed to compromise. The

Evangelical Alliance would be an affiliation of autonomous regional networks rather than an integrated global body. Yet the ‘British organisation’ that then emerged hardly confined itself to domestic issues. Indeed, it would tenaciously campaign for religious liberties in Turkey, Russia, Italy and Spain, championing evangelicals and others persecuted for their faith. This went hand in hand with vigorous support for evangelistic work, near and far.

One hundred and seventy-five years ago, the Evangelical Alliance emerged as a major force for evangelical unity and witness. In doing so, it laid the foundations for the ministry it continues to exercise today. A much smaller proportion of the UK population count themselves Christians now than would have done in 1846: never has the John 17 imperative been more relevant, and our great commission programme bears that out. According to the recent Mountstephen report, 245 million modern-day Christians are persecuted for their faith – more than when the Evangelical Alliance first began to advocate for religious liberties. So, we continue to work on this with Open Doors, the World Evangelical Alliance and others. More vicious forms of anti-Catholicism may have receded, but the need to uphold evangelical faith as the most authentic expression of the gospel still underpins our advocacy agenda, our Being Human project and the work of our Theological Advisory Group.

The calling discerned at Liverpool in 1845 and actioned in London the next year is as urgent as ever. As we celebrate this 175th anniversary, may God continue to bless the Evangelical Alliance as together we make Jesus known.



OUR RICH HISTORY IS MARKED BY MANY PROUD MOMENTS

1846

We started with 800 evangelical leaders at a meeting in London.

1861

Our first-ever Universal Week of Prayer is launched, as only God has answers.

1914–1918

During WWI, prayer was crucial, so we organised many large prayer gatherings.

1939–1945

Through a National Day of Prayer and other significant initiatives, we advocated for refugees.

1879

We raised our voice for persecuted Christians in Bohemia, and even met with the Austrian Emperor.

1924

As part of the British Empire Exhibition, we gave large evangelistic presentations in London.

1855

With a heart for religious freedom, we began pushing for this in Europe.

1918–1939

And during the interwar years we supported European Christians amid a rise in communism.

READ OUR STORY

Written by Rev Dr David Hilborn and Rev Dr Ian Randall, *One Body in Christ: The History and Significance of the Evangelical Alliance* traces the organisation from its foundation in 1846 up to 2001, using previously unexplored archives:

eauk.org/one-body-in-christ





2010

A heart for unity, we established the South Asian Forum to bring together and support the South Asian church (p. 20).

2013

To model and encourage unity amid diversity, we then set up the One People Commission (p. 21).



1954

38,000 people come to faith at the Harringay Crusade, which we sponsored with Billy Graham.

2016

Great Commission goes live, providing a digital hub to inspire everyday evangelism (eauk.org/great-commission).

1968

This saw us establish TEARFund (The Evangelical Alliance Release Fund) in response to famine and war.

We then collaborated with the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship on *Speak Up* so Christians know their legal freedoms when sharing the gospel (eauk.org/speak-up).

2020

In a year of bad news, contention, challenges and adversity, we shared the gospel, raised our voices, prayed and blessed our communities (see our latest annual report at eauk.org/annual-report-2020-2021).

1987–1992

Having identified the needs in the nations, we increased our footprint, opening offices in Belfast, Glasgow and Cardiff (see p. 12–15).

2014

The following year we campaigned with Care for the Family and CCPAS for children in care, which paved the way for charity Home for Good.

2021

And today, with our **18,000 individual, 3,000 church and 500 organisation members**, we celebrate **175 years** making Jesus known.

1960s

In post-war Britain, amid cultural changes, we promoted a united church confident in the gospel (p. 8–9).

2011

We took a deep dive into what it means to be an evangelical in ground-breaking report *21st Century Evangelicals*.

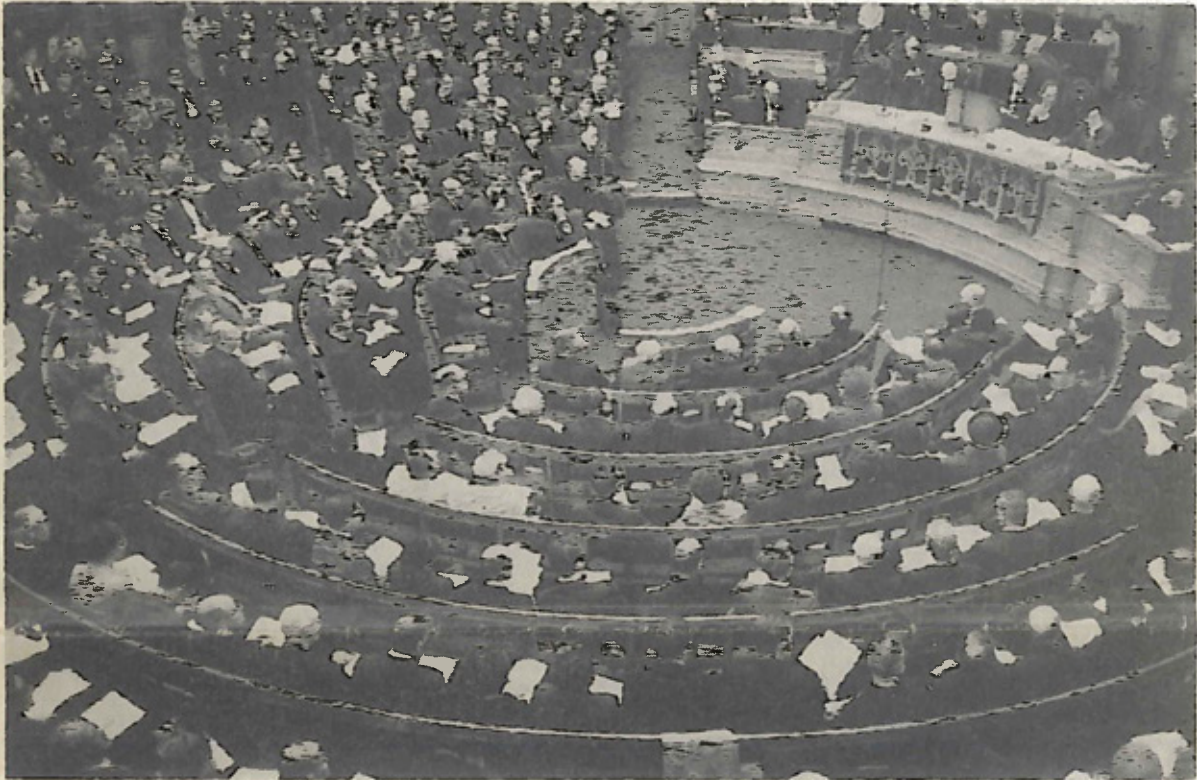
2019

After four years heading up mission, Gavin Calver is appointed CEO, following on from the good work of Clive Calver, Rev Dr Joel Edwards CBE and Steve Clifford (p. 10–11).

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

BROADSHEET

Price 6d Issued free to members Quarterly WINTER 1966/7



ASSEMBLY '66

The Second National Assembly of Evangelicals drew larger numbers of delegates than in the previous year, representing an even wider circle of churches and fellowships; but the basic composition of the Assembly, and its daily pattern, were much as before.

There was a very definite spirit of expectant concern as we met to consider the burning question of Evangelical Unity. The Commission which had been set up in 1965 had prepared and submitted its Report, and delegates had this in their hands before the Assembly.

This Report* revealed that there is no widespread demand at the present time for the formation of a United Evangelical Church, and that opinion among all groups of Evangelicals is divided on this subject—which many of us sensed already. It also revealed that there is considerable desire for the strengthening of links between Evangelicals, and the possibility of closer association or federation is very real.

At the opening Public Rally, on the Tuesday evening, Dr Martin Lloyd Jones had been asked by the members of the Commission on Unity to state publicly the views which he had expressed when being interviewed by them. He forcefully declared his conviction that the time had come for Evangelicals to leave their denominations and to come together, "not occasionally, but always". The

Winter Broadsheet 1966/7

Chairman, the Rev. John R. W. Stott, had earlier stated his convictions in the matter of evangelical unity; the time had not come for secession from his denomination, he felt. At the end of Dr Lloyd Jones's address he dissociated himself from the call to leave denominations, saying that the matter was to be debated in the Assembly, and that he hoped that no one would take precipitate action.

When the debate took place, on the following morning, points were firmly and forcibly made on both sides of the argument. One of the co-chairmen of the Commission on Unity, the Rev. Peter Johnson, proposed the acceptance, in principle, of the Report, with an effective speech; he urged the Assembly to demonstrate its maturity by the way in which its members could hold different and conflicting views without bitterness or personal feeling; the consequent discussion was a very good example of this. The outcome was the adoption by a large majority of the Report; this was taken, by most present, as an indication that the Assembly did not feel that the time was ripe for Evangelicals to take concerted action to leave their denominations and join in some new body.

But the next Resolution, moved by Mr Leith Samuel, the gifted minister of Above Bar Church, Southampton, showed that definite action must not be ruled out; it spoke of the Romeward trend, and

of the concern which this aroused among Evangelicals; it called for the evangelical position to be made clear, and for definite action to be taken to help those who are already involved in situations where secession is a matter of urgency. This resolution, too, was overwhelmingly approved.

Since the Assembly the debate has been going on at various levels. The Tuesday evening meeting in particular has been discussed. Opinions seem to be so equally divided that we may take comfort from the thought that justice was apparently done to both sides. The meeting, and the subsequent Press publicity, gave to Dr Lloyd Jones a very wide audience for the views which he and others share, and which have been discussed for some time in more restricted circles. At the same time the debate indicated that the majority of Evangelicals feel that they should stay in their denominations for the time being, although they are obviously hoping for closer links with those who share the same fundamental convictions about the gospel. There are other evidences of this desire for deepening unity and

continued on page 2



Gilbert Kirby, the Evangelical Alliance's general secretary between 1956 and 1966, planned for a major national assembly of evangelicals, which took place in 1966, at which two outstanding evangelical leaders publicly disagreed.

AS WITH ALL JOURNEYS, THERE HAVE BEEN GREAT CHALLENGES TOO

Rev Dr Ian Randall, historian

In his influential book, *The Death of Christian Britain*, Callum Brown argues that profound change took place in British society in the 1960s, and he focuses on a turning away from a sense of the Christian faith as being integral to identity. In the same period, best-selling books such as John Robinson's *Honest to God* (1963) offered a view of God that was very different to the evangelical understanding.

It might have been thought that there would have been a united evangelical response to these challenges. Instead, the Evangelical Alliance found itself at the centre of division within the evangelical community. Gilbert Kirby, its general secretary between 1956 and 1966, was deeply involved in the early 1960s in planning for a major national assembly of evangelicals, which took place in 1966. Kirby had a vision for united action and had brought thousands of evangelical churches into membership of the Evangelical Alliance.

But the hope for an assembly which would address the pressing issues in society was dashed. Two outstanding evangelical leaders, Martyn Lloyd-Jones of Westminster Chapel, London, and John Stott, of All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, publicly disagreed over whether evangelicals should stay in denominations that were theologically mixed. Evangelicals were in disarray. Those who followed Lloyd-Jones began to clamour for separation from such denominations. Many others believed, with Stott, that evangelical renewal could come within existing traditions.

There did not seem to be an awareness that different views on this subject had always been present in the history of Christianity, especially from the time of the 16th-century

Reformation. In the western church, there were those who sought renewal within the Catholic church, those who established new church-and-state denominations such as the Church of England, and those who further separated, such as Baptists and Methodists. The Evangelical Alliance from its beginning had tried to embrace all of these; that has been an important part of its strength.

In the 1960s, what had been a secondary issue, not an issue connected with the gospel, was made primary. Thus, the attention of too many evangelicals was directed towards disagreement with each other rather than looking for ways to come together and seek a Christian awakening in the UK. The 1960s did see a new movement, charismatic renewal, that bridged across divides, but it too became divided between those who believed it was necessary to leave existing churches and form new fellowships and those who embraced the Spirit's work happening across all streams of Christian life.

It was in the 1980s that a fresh vision for united evangelical action emerged. Clive Calver, who had been the director of British Youth for Christ, was appointed general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, aged 34. Early on in post, he referred back to the 1966 Assembly, with its divisive outcome, and urged the need for the Evangelical Alliance to be an inter-denominational uniting body. He urged the need for the kind of evangelical action that marked the early leaders of the Evangelical Alliance, and in particular he longed for the recovery of social concern. Many initiatives followed.

One issue which the Evangelical Alliance's leadership became determined to engage with was the

increasingly multi-ethnic nature of British evangelicalism. In the early 1980s only one black-led church was in membership with the Evangelical Alliance, and Philip Mohabir, who had come to Britain from the Caribbean in the 1950s, challenged Calver about this. The result was that the African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance (ACEA) was set up to give a greater voice to black and minority ethnic communities. Brian Mills, for the Evangelical Alliance, spoke of the call to the white community to "repent of deep-seated prejudices and coldness of heart which have created distance between us", and Mohabir, describing a world "torn apart by class differences and racial and sexual discrimination", urged evangelicals to "unite in order to become an authentic Christian witness" in society. This vision was continued by Joel Edwards, who led the ACEA and then became the Evangelical Alliance's general secretary.

The hope was that the divisive spirit which had been evident in the 1960s might have been overcome, but in the 1990s and into the 21st century a new area of division came to the fore amongst evangelicals. This was over women in ordained ministry. Evangelicals in the Church of England and in some of the Free Churches began to condemn those holding differing views from them. Again, the equality of women in ministry alongside men was not a new evangelical feature. Catherine Booth of The Salvation Army was a prominent example. But once again, instead of accepting legitimate difference of view, there was division. Perhaps the story of the past half-century's struggles can help to renew a commitment to united witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ for the future.

THROUGH THE HIGHS AND THE LOWS, WE'VE FOUGHT FOR A UNITED CHURCH CONFIDENT IN THE GOSPEL

To tell our story is to tell of wonderful blessings and the fruit of 175 years of ministry as we serve the UK church. But to tell our story is also to remember the pressure and pain of storms weathered: challenging conversations, cultural shifts and risks of division.

Throughout almost four decades of change, from 1983 to 2019, the Evangelical Alliance was led by three general directors who were steadfast in the pursuit of gospel confidence and precious unity. Each knew that God's faithfulness is greater than the storms and believed that together, with His help, the church could reach the spiritually hungry people of the UK.

Rev Dr Clive Calver (general director 1983–1997)

When Clive began his tenure in the 1980s, we faced the aftermath of the 1966 disagreement. "The issue underlying the disagreement was a very real one," Clive says. "The result was separation, division and a numerically emasculated Evangelical Alliance. The impact dreadfully weakened united evangelical action for much of a generation." But a new generation of leaders was emerging which was less aware of the divisions. "As a moment of opportunity for rebirth of a new resurgence of evangelical unity, it would be hard to equal," Clive explains. "And what happened next can never be attributed to individuals, solo projects or specific initiatives – but here was the opportunity for an evangelical rebirth. Anglicans and non-Anglicans, male and female, black and white, young and old, charismatic and non-charismatic, differences were



Rev Dr Clive Calver

laid to one side in favour of mutually participating in a new phase of evangelical unity... and God did it!"

During Clive's tenure, we experienced a great increase in membership, strengthened by his slots at Spring Harvest. We also formed coalitions with other evangelical organisations for advocacy, social action and unity work.

JOIN US

Join Clive, Steve and Gavin in an online interview, where they share memories, milestones, miracles and maybes as the Evangelical Alliance celebrates 175 years of ministry and looks to the future: eauk.org/175interview



Rev Dr Joel Edwards CBE (general director 1997–2009)

Joel, our first black Pentecostal general director, progressed and deepened the Evangelical Alliance's diversity. His desire for unity in Christ led him to seek to close the gap between different constituencies of evangelicalism.

In an interview near the end of his tenure, he shared his belief that "evangelicalism has changed massively", having become a lot more confident, diverse, engaged and eclectic, and the Evangelical Alliance now had "active partnerships".

He also spoke about how he had been encouraged by the Agenda for Change tour, which he took during the latter part of his tenure. The tour presented our mission, "which is about presenting Christ credibly, which is about evangelicalism recovering a sense of confidence in the meaning of evangelical as good news, and challenging people for long-term transformational ministry to see spiritual and cultural change," Joel explained.

"You go to some 25 centres and find that generally there's an overwhelming response which is positive from your members, and you also take that message to somewhere like Greenbelt and find that there is an overwhelming receptivity about that message, and that's massively challenging because it means that evangelicals really are serious, or becoming increasingly serious, about keeping the balance between proclamation and social action. I just think that's fantastic news."

(Joel went home to be with the Lord in June 2021. You can read our tribute to him here: eauk.org/joel-edwards-tribute)

Differences were laid to one side in favour of mutually participating in a new phase of evangelical unity... and God did it!



Rev Dr Joel Edwards CBE



Steve Clifford

Steve Clifford (general director 2009–2019)

During Steve's tenure, he took brave steps to foster and maintain the unity of evangelicals. "Right from the start I was absolutely clear God had called me," Steve recalls, "and it was impossible unless He remained with me through the highs and lows of leading such an organisation."

One of the challenges to navigate was a disagreement that arose. "A friend of mine in a well-known Christian magazine published an article challenging the historically orthodox biblical interpretation of issues relating to human sexuality," Steve recollects. Over the next weeks and months, we navigated the numerous conversations and debates which took place, statements which were made and eventually the decision to discontinue the membership of an organisation.

"Disagreeing, agreeably, respectfully and yet with clarity was vital," Steve explains. "We were being called to be true to our convictions but also to model our values, following the example of Jesus, full of grace and truth. The process was intense and at times painful, but I'm convinced the Evangelical Alliance came out of all this stronger."

We experienced many joys too under Steve's leadership, "committing ourselves to serving the local church and supporting the emerging unity movements which were springing up in towns and cities all over the country". Another of Steve's ministry highlights was "the emergence of the One People Commission in 2011, responding to the call that if we were serious about unity it had to be a unity which crossed all ethnic expressions". Steve also remembers how "God gave us a new home, a contemporary base in the heart of London, but also vibrant expressions of the Evangelical Alliance in each of the Celtic nations".

We were being called to be true to our convictions but also to model our values, following the example of Jesus, full of grace and truth.

Stationed in all four nations of the UK, to approach mission from every angle

In the 1980s and 90s, two things were clear: we needed to help evangelicals face the different challenges and opportunities, and we needed to encourage unity in each of the four nations of the UK as we all sought to make Jesus known. There was so much more we could achieve by recognising the unique context of each nation, affirming their distinctions and working closely together in unity.



Scotland

Scotland followed soon after, opening its national office in Glasgow in 1992, after Douglas Flett brought the need for a united voice in Scotland to Clive Calver's attention.

120 churches, 24 organisations and 898 individuals in Scotland are Evangelical Alliance members today.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland led the way in opening a national office in Belfast in 1987, after Clive Calver cheekily began addressing visionary church leader Ken McBride as 'general secretary EANI'.

45 churches, 28 organisations and 635 individuals in Northern Ireland are Evangelical Alliance members today.



England

The Evangelical Alliance was founded in London in 1846, at a meeting with delegates from across the UK.

2,620 churches, 440 organisations and 15,563 individuals in England are Evangelical Alliance members today.

Wales

First-language Welsh-speaker Arfon Jones made sure Wales wasn't far behind, opening a branch in Cardiff in 1989.

153 churches, 24 organisations and 844 individuals in Wales are Evangelical Alliance members today.



Scotland director Fred Drummond filming *What kind of follower?*



The England story

The story starts in a meeting hall in London, where the Evangelical Alliance was founded in 1846. With delegates from different parts of the UK, we were always about uniting the church beyond England, and beyond the UK too (in 1912 we joined the World's Evangelical Alliance).

We promoted religious liberty and freedom across Europe, and hosted universal days and weeks of prayer in Queen's Hall London, which encouraged unity between denominations and a prayerful response to the war. Over the years, we held large-scale evangelistic events, and then in the 1960s and 1970s, we realised we also needed to focus our efforts on supporting local community-based evangelism.

This focus on community proved a solid foundation for what would come some four decades later. The GATHER network was formed in 2012, bringing UK churches together for prayerful and friendship-based local mission. This network encourages innovation through community-based gospel initiatives and the sharing of churches' practices and stories to inspire Christians across the UK to do the same in their city or town. Five years after its birth, GATHER hosted the first-ever Movement Day UK, which brought together 1,000 delegates ready to work together for the cultural, social and spiritual transformation of their communities.

Celtic expressions

As greater unity emerged in England, it blossomed in the nations too. Back in the 1980s, under the leadership of Clive Calver, we wanted to recognise diversity and encourage unity within the different parts of the UK, and so the Evangelical Alliance began to open branches in the nations.

"The Evangelical Alliance was weighted towards a largely southern English perspective then, yet evangelicalism is diverse throughout the UK, and I believed we needed to reflect that in Northern Ireland while uniting around the basis of faith. It is a 'God thing' that all the nations are now represented," says Rev Ken McBride, previous general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland story

Church leader Rev Ken McBride was captivated by a vision for evangelical unity while listening to Clive Calver speak in Belfast in 1986; it was time for the Evangelical Alliance to address the Northern Irish context too.

"Living in a deeply sectarian society, when Clive Calver visited Belfast in 1986, I said we needed the Evangelical Alliance here," Ken says. After that, Clive sent Ken letters addressed as 'general secretary, Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland', which must have made Ken wonder what he had

got himself into: "When Clive corresponded in an official capacity, I got the message I should do something about it!"

From there, Ken helped organise tentative meetings with church leaders to discuss the way forward. Over time they formed the Northern Ireland branch of the Evangelical Alliance, the first of the UK nations to do so.

Ken's vision was simple: that with agreement on the gospel and our faith in Christ, we could learn to work together for the good of the kingdom and His glory.

Memorable moments

We asked previous Northern Ireland directors which moments struck them most powerfully during their ministry with us:

"During 'For such a time as this', our event in St. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, to mark the 150th anniversary of the Evangelical Alliance, word came through of a severe terrorist incident. It was a stark reminder of the need for the church to unitedly call our world to a better way of living—that we are most incarnational when we point people to Jesus by loving Him and each other." – Ken McBride (the first general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland)

"Highlights for me included being able to see the development and growth of the Mission Agencies Partnership, the development of our public affairs work, including the appointment of our first public affairs officer, and the Kingdom Come leadership conferences, when so many leaders from across Ireland were blessed not just by great teaching and fellowship but also exemplified a greater desire for unity across denominational boundaries. I was blessed to be serving with the Evangelical Alliance in such exciting times." – Stephen Cave (director 2001–2011)

The story continues...

We also asked David Smyth, who has headed up the Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland since 2019, what his ministry highlights have been: "I've worked for the Evangelical Alliance for 10 years and have had the privilege of leading our work in Northern Ireland over the last 18 months. So much has changed in this time and the past year has obviously been incredibly challenging for everyone, but I've been so encouraged to see how the local church and Christian charities have stepped up. The good news is being shared and demonstrated, people are praying and reading scripture and loving their neighbours in practical ways. I'm excited to see and serve a church that is both more humble and more courageous in the days ahead."

The Wales story

Wales wasn't far behind, opening its office in Cardiff two years later, in 1989.

Evangelical Alliance Wales was birthed out of Welsh church leaders' passion to see churches working together for the gospel across the nation. We 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 and fostering positive relationships across varying evangelical traditions. 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!

Arfon continued to lead the Evangelical Alliance in Wales until 1999. "It was a privilege and a challenge to be appointed the first general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in Wales in 1989," he told us. "There were so many highlights: the highly significant Symposium on Nationhood, Language and Culture at Aberystwyth, Spring Harvest at Pwllheli, and exciting new developments such as the National Prayer Breakfast of Wales. One could go on, but the true highlight for me was the bridge-building between various evangelical traditions and the people I had the privilege of working with."

Memorable moments

We also asked Elfed Godding, who took on the mantle from 1999 to 2018, what his ministry highlights had been. "During my tenure as director of Evangelical Alliance Wales we enjoyed the privilege of hosting the General Assembly of Evangelicals in Cardiff in November 2001, launched with a celebration at the Cardiff International Arena which was attended by 5,000 people." Elfed recalls. "Other highlights include Waleswide – planting and strengthening churches in less-reached areas through the medium of Welsh and English, an invitation from the First Minister Rhodri Morgan to join the Welsh Government's Faith Communities' Forum, and regular contributions for BBC Radio Wales presenting a Christian perspective on a range of issues."

The story continues...

We asked Siân Rees, current director of Evangelical Alliance Wales, what her highlight has been since her appointment in 2019: "Everything relational. In 2019, we launched our regional hubs across Wales and gave key leaders, whether church leaders or bi-vocational Christians, an open invitation to speak into our work and vision. I love being able to tell their stories into the corridors of power. We are currently working on a programme to raise up a new generation of leaders who can communicate their faith publicly."

Siân Rees, director of Evangelical Alliance Wales



Glasgow city centre view (2019).



The Scotland story

Scotland followed soon after, opening its national office in Glasgow in 1992.

The journey began in January 1988 when Douglas Flett (who was to serve on the first executive committee of the Evangelical Alliance Scotland) wrote to Clive Calver concerning the possibility of the Evangelical Alliance filling gaps in Scotland. They met that March and Douglas spoke of the Evangelical Alliance being a conduit, uniting member churches and, hopefully, being a voice to the nation which Scotland lacked.

Memorable moments

We asked Mike Parker, who led the Evangelical Alliance in Scotland from 2003 to 2006 what his ministry highlights had been. “[My predecessor] David Anderson built a careful, prayerful, visionary framework for Evangelical Alliance Scotland, and to build on it I focused on visiting congregations, networks and leaders with similar priorities,” Mike shares. “They gave me a vital overview to encourage churches small and large. Highlights were the prayer networks, identifying avenues for joint ministry, evangelism and public engagement, and learning from imaginative and wise colleagues, including Jeremy Balfour, May Barr, John Smith and especially Joel Edwards. Thanks be to God for all of you, and may the Lord continue to lead you in witness and gospel outreach!”

The story continues...

We asked Fred Drummond, who has headed up the Scotland branch since 2006, what his highlight has been: “There are so many really. One of the big ones is working with great people whose passion is Jesus—the greatest highlight is those who work here. Another is signing an anti-sectarian agreement with some 10 churches a few years ago. We had a parliamentary reception, working with the Church of Scotland, and MSPs came to that. It was also great to call a meeting and see 100 leaders of larger Scotland churches praying and talking. Still, there’s more: to see people, team members and others, grow and develop. And then there’s initiatives such as Public Leadership Scotland.”



The Evangelical Alliance brings together church communities across the UK, appreciating that each nation is distinct, but connected physically and spiritually. Regional connections, relationships and distinctions matter too, which is why we are working on expanding our network, especially with churches in the north of England.



Be the difference this Christmas

This year has been one to remember. We've been told to isolate and avoid contact with others — an alien concept for many of us in the UK. Yet, for those living in countries like Liberia, being so far from roads, education and effective healthcare is a daily reality

Saving time, saves lives

Recently, our MAF Liberia team received a call for an urgent medevac. Five-month-old baby Sangai needed treatment for a condition that was eating her flesh. If she could get medical help, all would be well. But Sangai and her mother Blessing, couldn't because healthcare in Liberia's countryside is extremely limited.

A journey from their isolated village to Monrovia — Liberia's capital — meant a ten-hour journey by motorbike. Even if they made it to the hospital, suffering Sangai would probably have died.

However, thanks to MAF pilots Roy Rissanen and Steven Biggs, they were flown immediately to the capital — saving nine hours. 'On Friday afternoon at a remote village,' Roy recalls, I picked up a baby who was infected with a flesh-eating parasite. She was extremely ill.'

Fortunately, following a safe landing, MAF drove mother and child straight to ELWA (Eternal Love Winning Africa), a hospital run by Christian missionaries. 'She received regular treatment to remove the parasites,' reports nurse Margot, 'and she's such a little fighting champion.'

Without MAF's speedy light aircraft, it's unlikely sweet little Sangai would have survived. However, thanks to MAF she is excited to be able to celebrate Christmas back home with her family.

Imagine losing a child this Christmas.

Facilitating rescue

For Anna in Adjumani, northern Uganda, MAF flights mean something different.

MAF has facilitated the launch of Tutapona's Children's Trauma Rehabilitation Programme. Now this 13-year-old refugee, forced to flee from her home when civil war broke out, is gradually finding her life restored.

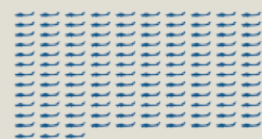
Today, MAF Uganda pilots like Matt Eagar enable staff and resources such as felt boards, peg people and clay to reach Adjumani, northern Uganda, to assist the Christian charity's Heroes' Journey programme.

Tutapona's rehabilitation initiative enables children who've endured unimaginable experiences to explore therapeutic activities that will help heal the trauma they've experienced; equipping them with the skills they need to survive, thrive and grow.



MAF IN NUMBERS

IN 2020 WE FLEW



123

light aircraft across hostile landscapes to eliminate hours, even days

3,500,000

kg of cargo transported — that's like 7.7 million Christmas jumpers



Every **5 minutes**

an MAF plane takes off or lands bringing medical care, emergency relief and hope to thousands

In Liberia there is

1 doctor

for every 25,000 people, 70 times fewer than the UK



'I really enjoy school,' explains Anna, who escaped the fighting in Juba, South Sudan six years ago. 'I really love learning how to write. I remember the fighting and having to drink sewage. I remember the armed gunmen who came to loot and kill.

'When we first arrived, I was relieved. But at night I couldn't sleep. Even during the day, I would just sit here, feeling miserable. But God is good. My mother was told about Heroes' Journey, and when I found out I was coming here, I was very hopeful!

'It's inspired me to study hard so I can accomplish my dreams and support my family. When I grow up, I want to help people. This programme is strengthening my brain. It makes me feel fresh again.'

'I've also learned to be thankful, to have faith and hope. Now, I sleep better, am getting better, and have hope for the future that things will change'.

This school is only able to run thanks to MAF supplying the staff and resources.

Facilities like this change lives.

Imagine a child suffering this Christmas.

Be the difference this Christmas and help MAF change more children's lives.

£10 could buy 12 precious miles of flying, saving lives like Sangai's and rescuing children like Anna. Plus, thanks to a generous charitable trust, the one-off donation you make today will be DOUBLED until our £50,000 target is reached, enabling MAF to impact even more lives!

For more than 75 years, MAF has been flying over jungles, mountains, rivers and deserts to help vulnerable people in hard-to-reach places. Every six minutes, an MAF plane is taking off or landing somewhere in the world to bring medical care, emergency relief and Christian hope to thousands of communities.

MAIN Anna, happy after attending the Heroes' Journey programme

 Candice Lassey / Tutapona

LEFT BAUBLE Baby Sangai and her mother Blessing in ELWA Hospital

RIGHT BAUBLE Mother and baby met at the airport by Nurse Margot

BELOW Anna with Tutapona Facilitator Patricia  Candice Lassey / Tutapona

I WANT TO BE THE DIFFERENCE THIS CHRISTMAS

£10 will buy 12 precious miles of flying and save lives. Help us save more lives and give a gift today.

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- Please debit my card account CharityCard, MasterCard, Visa (please circle card type)

Card number

Valid from date Expiry date CSV code (3 digits on the back of your card)

SIGNATURE DATE DD / MM / YY

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Please debit my account: Monthly Quarterly Date of first payment: 1st 15th

Please also complete the Direct Debit form to the right (Regular gifts are not eligible for match funding)

GET THE INSIDE STORY! For over 75 years, MAF has been flying to the most isolated locations in the world. Tick the box to receive inspirational updates, real-life stories and interesting country facts you can't read anywhere else.

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SCAN ME TO DONATE



It's all made possible by our
**DEDICATED
MEMBERS**

**Cambray
Baptist Church**
with us since 1956

Cambray Baptist Church was established in 1843, just three years before the Evangelical Alliance. Planting the church in a newly developing area of Cheltenham, the founders of the church shared the same founding passion—working together in the gospel to reach a needy world.

We remain passionate about standing alongside other churches that, built upon the solid foundation of God's word, have a heart for the gospel. We constantly experience that we can do more together than we could ever do alone.

In a season of growing opposition to the truths of God's word and the claims of Jesus, we need to stand together all the more. Facing the issues of identity and gender, there could be division over how to hold to and confidently proclaim the liberating truths of the God's word; facing unpopularity, it is easy for Bible-believing churches to gradually become insular, nervous about sharing the good news to a seemingly unreceptive world.

How do we respond? As Paul charged Timothy, we're to "fight the good fight of the faith", with one clear voice. It is as we stand together, helping and encouraging one another to boldly proclaim and live out the glorious gospel of Jesus, that the reality of the gospel shines brightly through us all.

Britain is not lost to the gospel. As the world gets darker, we shine brighter, standing together in the gospel.

Rev Dr Alwyn Barry, senior pastor

Torch Trust
with us since 1963

Reaching out to those who don't know Jesus has always been core to Torch Trust's mission. Around 250 people in this country are being diagnosed as losing their sight every day. You'll find them hidden away in every community and every church. Many blind and partially sighted people have experienced a greater degree of isolation through the pandemic: the mission field has grown. But we also have new tools, and Torch is embracing technology to develop new ways to do what we've always done - minister and witness to blind and partially sighted people.

We joined the Evangelical Alliance because partnership in Christ enables us to support and encourage one another in our mission. It's always easier to divide and differentiate than to work together. Paul wrote: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). I weep when we let dogma and doctrine hinder mission. My prayer is that we'd take unity and partnership in the gospel seriously. If we're going to see the UK recognise and respond to God's love, we have to make every effort to work together, putting mission at the heart of our churches and organisations.

Tim Jeffery, CEO

Britain is not lost to the gospel. As the world gets darker, we shine brighter, standing together in the gospel.

MAF

with us since 1989

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) is the world's largest humanitarian airline, with 123 aircraft carrying spiritual and physical support around the world, including to some of the most remote places. We exist to serve and grow the church. This has been our mission ever since WWII pilots founded the charity after the war in 1945, believing aviation could be used to spread the Christian faith and show Christ's love in action.

But we don't do it alone. We can't! We partner with 2,000 Christian and humanitarian agencies globally, including Tearfund, Bible Society, Wycliffe and Samaritan's Purse – all members of the Evangelical Alliance. And while MAF, with your prayers and support, travels to the far-flung corners of the world to help isolated people in great need, we know that God is doing the same in the UK through the Evangelical Alliance and its members, particularly amid the pandemic.

We are working together, as the body of Christ, so that Jesus' great commission is accomplished on earth. Our unity is the only way to see God's kingdom advance across our country and the world.

Joanna Lamb, PR and publicity manager

Marjorie Dunn

with us since 1997

I was a child in the 1930s when I was first introduced to Jesus. I used to go Sunday school, which was common then, and Jesus was there. I believed all the stories that I heard about Him. But it wasn't until many years later, when married with children and grandchildren myself, that I chose to be baptised. It was after this that I started going to New Life Church in Otley, a member of the Evangelical Alliance. Jesus was always at the heart of sermons; and these messages affirmed that He was indeed part of my life.

I've always valued messages and teaching about Jesus in our everyday life. I suppose that's why my husband Ray and I were drawn to Spring Harvest. We went for years, taking our children and grandchildren along for Bible study and Christ-centred messages. Clive Calver spoke there, and he influenced Ray and I greatly. After all these years, I remain connected to the Evangelical Alliance for the same reason: it talks about everyday life with



© Dave Forney, MAF

Jesus, which helps people, particularly during these coronavirus times.

I pray that millions of people will hear about Jesus through the Evangelical Alliance and its members, so that at His name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord (Philippians 2:10).

Individual member

Catch The Fire Farnborough

with us since 2021

We started Catch The Fire Farnborough on Zoom at the end of March 2020, the first Sunday of lockdown, after the Lord said: "Do you want to see how I do it?" Up to 50 people now attend the church, which is quite something, as we began with six and haven't advertised. The growth is astounding; it has to be God's favour.

I've been in church leadership for 30 years – a Baptist context – and in recent years we have linked in with Catch The Fire, an international network of churches that enables the world to encounter God's transforming presence. We've linked in with the Evangelical Alliance too, as there needs to be a united voice in the nations and across the nations that speaks at the level of society that individual churches can't.

As society continues to change rapidly, and the church changes for the better post-pandemic, we'll need a prophetic voice speaking into this. Due to its heritage and positioning within the church and society, I think the Evangelical Alliance is uniquely placed to shape the church in the UK so that it becomes the prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral community it's supposed to be. Its future is even more significant than its past.

Rev Christopher Bird, senior leader

MEMBERS WHO SPAN THE EXTRAORDINARY DIVERSITY OF THE UK CHURCH

We have always believed in a united church. A church where everyone is valued, because we are all made in the image of God. A church where diversity is celebrated, because we recognise that we need each other, that we are stronger together. A church where God brings people together, because He delights to heal divisions and minister reconciliation. A church where the whole world is welcomed, because Christ’s love is for us, each and every one.

That’s why, 175 years on, we celebrate the diversity of our members and the unifying work of the Holy Spirit, remembering that “there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

Dayalan Mahesan, SAF national coordinator



“God is using us to help the church live as one, by increasing church diversity. That is a big encouragement, that Galatians 3:28 can happen. It’s one thing to read

that verse as a utopia of how heaven is going to be, but when you stand alongside people of different ethnicities worshipping together it encourages everyone that the church is truly international, and we are all one in Christ.

The South Asian Forum (SAF) has a real heart for connection; people often meet at one of our events and immediately join forces to do ministry

together. Seeing that divine collaboration start quickly is inspiring.

I’ve also been encouraged by how influential the South Asian community has become recently: it has really grown in influence and is now more prominent within the UK church. Before, the community was very much in the background and not integrated, but now it has embraced integration with the wider church a lot more.”

The SAF, part of the Evangelical Alliance, has been bringing together the South Asian church in the UK since 2010.

Bhav Joshi, SAF champion



“SAF is bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and opening up dialogue around some of the challenges we face. We’re able to share stories and inspire one another.

I know God’s calling me towards the Asian community but also towards the multi-ethnic church, so it’s good to be able to hear how different people share the love of Jesus, from those who have spent 20 years working in their community, to those sharing it via digital platforms.

Through community and praying in fellowship, we’re building up and inspiring God’s church and showing non-Christians that Jesus is for everybody. We encourage people to come together up and down the country, both men and women.

Being a Christian from an Asian background can be quite isolating, so we’re building a network of people who can understand one another from a cultural perspective and be a sounding board.”

The One People Commission and its members continue to prove that there is power in unity... In your unity, you set a bright example for society as a whole.” – Letter from the Prime Minister on the fifth anniversary of the OPC

Rev Dr Israel Olofinjana, director of the OPC



“The One People Commission (OPC) is made up of different church streams, networks, missions and ecclesiastical traditions: from Baptists to Pentecostals, from the

Redeemed Christian Church of God to the New Testament Church of God.

There are men and women, senior and young leaders. There are different ethnicities: Chinese, South Korean, South Asian, black African, Caribbean, as well as white British church leaders.

In Galatians 3:28 we see that Paul was at pains to list the different constituencies of the church for us, and in Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 we read about the great multitude “from every nation, tribe, people and language” worshipping around the throne.

Authentic unity can only work when we affirm, recognise and embrace each person’s distinctions, personality and denomination. The biblical writers have shown us that God is not colour-blind and that unity is not uniformity or assimilation.”

The OPC, part of the Evangelical Alliance, has been celebrating diversity while promoting unity since 2013.

Dr Jill Harshaw, executive director, Tiō Associates



“Our vision is to see the church transformed to be welcoming to people with intellectual disabilities. We have a commitment to our scriptural calling, as the church, to

do this together. We joined the Evangelical Alliance to learn, have a conversation together, advance and share our vision, make connections across the UK and open up insights into our work.

We see just how important unity is when we read that Jesus prayed for it in His final prayer in John 17:20–21. Unity stands in sharp contrast to the world, and it would be deeply unbiblical to try and sail your own boat.”

Member since 2021

Usha Reifsnider, cross-cultural ministry consultant and OPC member



“The outworking of Galatians 3:28 requires more than just repeating that important line, “we are all one”. The OPC set out to listen to the difficult issues,

and not just listen, but engage and work at them. That’s what I call the ‘real marriage stuff’, being one body.

I returned to the UK six years ago, having been a missionary overseas, so I see a lot of change here that young people can’t, but we must continue working. We’ll get it wrong a lot before we get it right, but we must never get tired of learning or feel like we’ve arrived. Friction brings energy, and energy is a requirement for growth.

In my relationship with the Evangelical Alliance, I’m very thankful that it has listened and has grappled with the hard things. I really like that the OPC and the organisation more broadly are not afraid of intensity.”

Kay Morgan-Gurr, co-founder of Additional Needs Alliance



“I’m dreaming and hoping, so I want to see the possibilities: for the church not to see diversity as something weird, for parents and children with additional needs to

be part of what’s around them, and for diversity, not division.

We joined the Evangelical Alliance to add our voice, to speak up for families in the Christian world. We see everything that’s been done through the OPC and the Evangelical Alliance’s work for unity, and it gives us hope for the future, that it can be the same for us. And we joined so people see us and find out about us, so we can help them. It’s not just what we can take, it’s what we can give.”

Member since 2018

All part of an alliance that stretches far beyond our shores

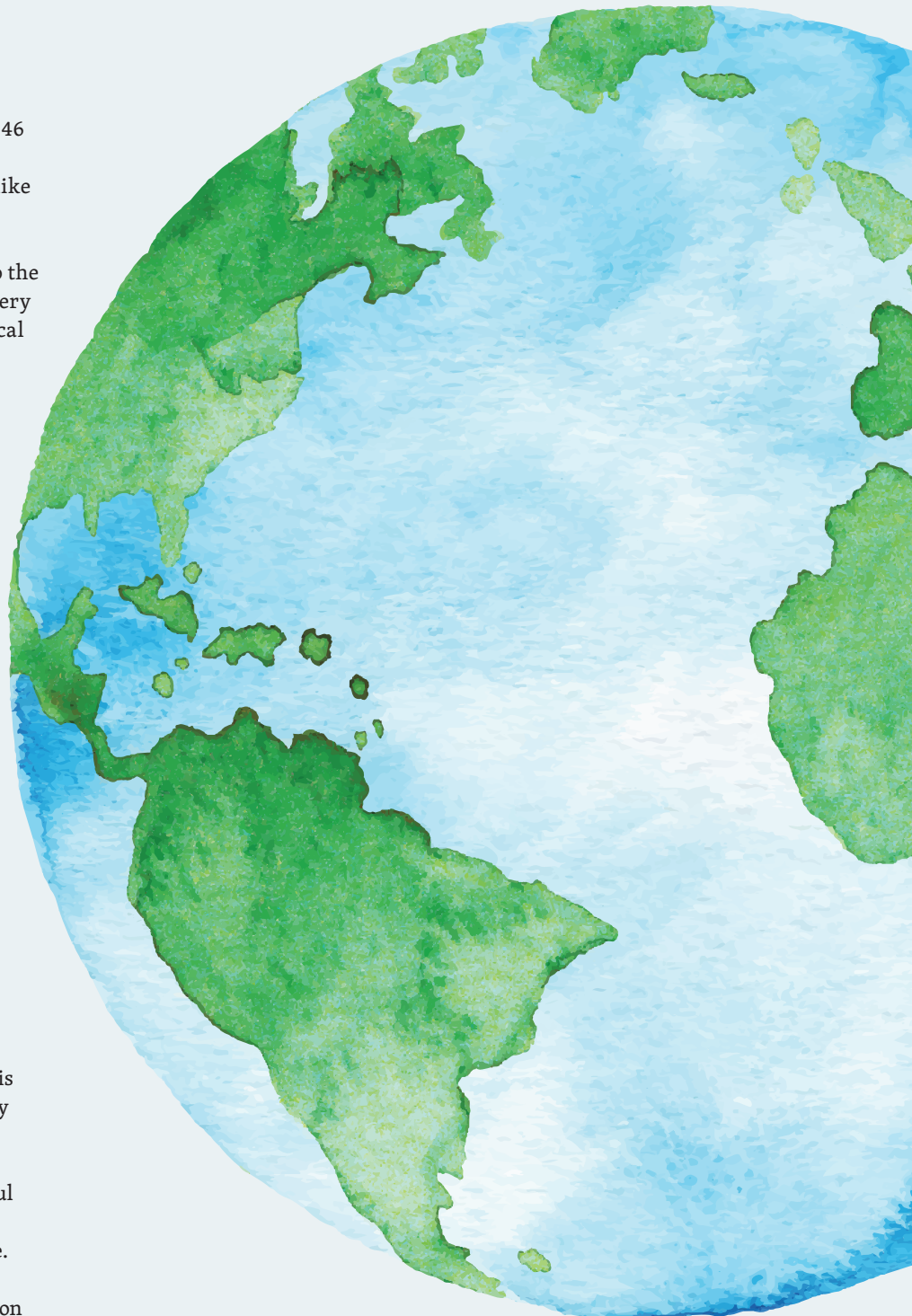
Dr Brian Winslade, deputy secretary general,
World Evangelical Alliance, New Zealand

As I sit at my desk quite literally on the opposite side of the world of where it all started, I am asking myself if those who attended the conference in London in 1846 would have been able to ever imagine what the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) would look like in the 21st century.

Would they believe if we told them that evangelicals would multiply exponentially into the hundreds of millions, that they would reach every corner of the world, and that national evangelical alliances would be established in more than 140 nations by believers who share that very same desire for visible and missional unity in Christ that brought them together 175 years ago?

The inaugural gathering attracted some 800 Christian leaders from Canada, England, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, USA, and Wales, and represented 52 'bodies of Christians'. The spiritual and socio-political climate at the time was interesting. On the back of spiritual awakenings on both sides of the Atlantic, and within the philosophical foment of published works by the likes of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, there was a growing call for the Christian church to promote the unity that existed among "all who, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, are bound to love one another". By the end of the conference the WEA was born.

The perceived challenges and threats to evangelicalism, as well as the grave social issues at that time, brought believers together across denominational and geographic boundaries. But is our world today so very different? There are many similar issues that we face today that challenge us to pray and stand united as followers of Jesus. From lurking secularism and relativism to hurtful divisions within the church as well as persistent societal evils like human trafficking and violence. And looking at the global picture, there are other issues like discrimination and outright persecution



that call for our solidarity with brothers and sisters in Christ.

The WEA at its core remains a movement committed to this imperative of Christian unity. We're better together than we are apart. The handful of national evangelical alliances in the 1800s has grown to 143 that are members of the WEA, with more exploring formal links. Alongside the WEA, the European Evangelical Alliance and eight other regional bodies that emerged since the 1950s serve their respective national constituencies.

In my own role where I focus on working with national alliances, I continue to be amazed at how unique each of them is. They respond to relevant issues in their nations. Some are large and strong and employ many staff. Others are small and volunteer based. Some have a long history like the Evangelical Alliance UK, others have been established just last year. But in each country, alliances seek to serve the body of Christ and facilitate what can only be achieved through unity and collaboration.

What evangelical alliances tend to have in common are three things: first, they provide resources and training on a range of expressions of the gospel; second, they gather Christian leaders together around best practice, thought leadership and cutting-edge praxis; and third, they speak prophetically to governments, media and the church on issues of justice, human rights and religious freedom.

At the global level, the WEA also engages with the United Nations, offering a voice on behalf of evangelicals on matters relevant to the church. The issues that the WEA is involved in today cover topics such as theology, mission, evangelism, peace and reconciliation, youth, children, climate change, disciple-making, inter- and intra-faith dialogue, business, women, diaspora, human trafficking, pastoral leadership training, advocacy and more.

In all it does, the WEA seeks to strengthen national alliances which ultimately serve the churches and believers in their respective countries. During the pandemic, this meant coming alongside several alliances where churches and pastors were struck especially hard. Through the

Pastors Emergency Fund (PEF) campaign in 2020, WEA raised support for the alliances in India, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe which disseminated it among pastors whose livelihoods were threatened by the lockdown. Their income is often based on Sunday offerings, but with no service taking place, they were left without any means to feed their families.

This year, the focus of the PEF shifted to Nepal where the Christian church is arguably one of the fastest growing in the world. While the news media focused on the crisis in India, the deteriorating situation in neighbouring Nepal did not get much attention. Without the availability of medical infrastructure, oxygen and other supplies, the Nepali church has lost a significant number of pastors to COVID-19. As Christians around the world joined hands, the Nepali church has been enabled to provide much-needed medical supplies as well as minister to hurting households.

Another example is the situation that came up in Rwanda, where a 2018 government decree requires every congregation to have a pastor with at least a theological bachelor's degree by 2023, or else the authorities will close their church. Reasons behind the order were sound, given the proliferation of self-appointed and untrained pastors starting churches and fleecing their people through a prosperity gospel. However, seminary training is beyond the financial means of most pastors and many lack the educational qualifications to enroll in a tertiary educational programme. At the request of the Rwandan Alliance, the WEA came alongside to help find a workable solution by brokering with partner ministries who can help finance theological students and offer places in two seminaries that can provide degree-level training. For those unable to study at a tertiary level, the WEA is reaching out to non-formal pastoral trainers to help with foundational ministry formation. In light of the decree's quickly approaching deadline, the WEA will likely be involved in formal representation to the Rwandan government to show how the national alliance is taking the need for pastoral training seriously but requires more time to implement it across the nation.

Similar stories could be told all around the world where the WEA together with its regional and national alliances respond to local needs, all under the banner of Christian unity and partnership. It seems that given the work currently engaged with, there is barely time to remember the past as we press on to the future. Suffice it to say that should the Lord tarry, the original vision of the WEA 175 years ago lives on.

The WEA at its core remains a movement committed to this imperative of Christian unity. We're better together than we are apart.



We now look ahead,
**standing on our
age-old biblical
values**



We believe in...



the one true God who lives eternally in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



the love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.



the divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament scriptures, which are the written word of God – fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.



the dignity of all people made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine wrath and judgement.



the incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ – born of the virgin Mary – truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.



the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.



the bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; His ascension to the Father, and His reign and mediation as the only saviour of the world.



the justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.



the ministry of God the Holy Spirit who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.



the church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers – given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.



the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

Led by a TEAM THAT BUILDS on the work OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE

We are co-workers in God's service. We are called to be builders. Like the early church in Corinth, there was no way that Paul would let them simply sit back on his amazing legacy. They were called to build heavenward, with Jesus as the solid foundation supporting it all (1 Corinthians 3:9–11).

We, too, move forward on this adventure, building on the work of those before us, seeking to make Jesus known in each new generation. Like those who shaped our 175-year history, we continue to speak on issues that matter, support our members, serve the church and

bring people together to see lives transformed in Jesus' name.



Speaking up for others is part of our DNA

“What excites me is speaking up for people. It's always been an important part of what we do.

From the word go, in 1846, there was a question around slavery, and we said: we're all for unity, but if you own slaves you can't be part of this. And then in the 1860s, we promoted freedom of religion: we saw that freedom was important for

everybody, not just for evangelicals.

Advocacy is part of our DNA and is still critical today. We drew from our history to inform our work against human trafficking; we explore what it means to be image-bearers in our Being Human project; and we reframe the conversation around abortion – that both lives matter.

Speaking up for others shapes our work around what it means to be human, and we speak out for freedom in a range of areas, for everybody, not just ourselves.”

Peter Lynas, UK director



We prize unity for the integrity of the gospel

“The gospel is a public story, public truth. When we talk of Jesus, we’re not just telling our story, but the God story. It’s our amazing privilege to tell it, loudly, in the public square. We get to model how to tell it well, knowing that people look at, critique or copy us.

It’s a responsibility I take seriously – yet our history encourages me. From our inception there was pressure to compromise on truth and justice, in order to accommodate others. We said no, the gospel and its integrity are more important. For an organisation that prizes unity, that’s challenging. But we prize it for the integrity of the gospel. That’s my challenge today: to speak out, not for popularity, but for the good, true and beautiful news of Jesus.

That’s how we started and that’s how I intend to continue, because it’s the gospel that changes lives.”

Jo Frost, director of communications and engagement



Jaws have hit the ground

“Making Jesus known is personal. It’s something we embody towards others. That’s why the Evangelical Alliance in Wales is so relational, with everything done through unity. The Bible is clear: where there’s unity, God commands a blessing. In our small, interconnected nation, our desire to work together is strong.

We express that in our two-fold ministry: with the church and in the public sphere. We’ve had amazing opportunities to establish relationships at the Senedd, to meet with them on key issues, and to tell stories. In our time with them, we personalise the story, showing how Jesus impacts lives; He’s not just words on a page. We share how the church feeds the hungry and helps the vulnerable. We have even shared

stories of people encountering Jesus at home – jaws have hit the ground.

We want to lift off the page who Jesus is, by being His hands and feet.”

Siân Rees, director of Wales



On our knees we become vessels of transformation

“Everything we do that develops the kingdom flows from encounter with Jesus. The book of Revelation speaks of tribes and tongues caught up in worshipping Him together, in the ultimate expression of what the cross achieved. The boundaries we put up will be broken down.

Uniting in worship today is a rehearsal for that heavenly existence. That’s why we bring denominations together through initiatives such as our UK day of prayer. And that’s why I’m in conversation with network prayer leaders to pursue more unity in prayer and the prophetic.

Without prayer and worship, Christianity is a religious shell. If you’re passionate about justice and kingdom living, it all flows from prayer and worship because it’s God who changes the UK. It’s tempting to think, if we have the best strategy, the church will grow. But humble, broken people, who spend a lot of time on their knees, become vessels for transformation.”

Fred Drummond, director of Scotland and prayer



We pursue justice and unity

“My vision flows on from people like Philip Mohabir, the Guyanese missionary.

He saw that certain churches weren’t engaging with one other, so he challenged the Evangelical Alliance to become more integrated. That led to what would become the African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance. It served people well, but I want to build

on that work, to see our One People Commission integrate and embed into all Evangelical Alliance work: mission, the Being Human project and more.

I envision inter-cultural churches, unity, justice and integration. It all stems from my biblical, theological and sociological convictions, because at the heart of the gospel, there is justice and unity; because the trinity is diverse but one in essence; because the gospel is for all nations; because there is one human race; and because British Christianity is multi-cultural and multi-ethnic.”

Rev Dr Israel Olofinjana, director of the One People Commission



We’re nothing without our members

“I became an individual member of the Evangelical Alliance 24 years ago, after hearing Clive Calver speak at Spring Harvest.

It means so much to stand alongside others, contributing to work that benefits us all. We get to bring different people together, united around core beliefs that created the need for us in 1846. Now, it seems like there are even more ‘tribes’ than there were then, but we continue to bring people together, pool resources to lead innovation and cheer each other on.

Our capable council represents the diversity of evangelical Christianity and provides time and experience to challenge us and hold us to account. We personally connect with our member churches, contacting you to hear the challenges of the season, pray and assure you of our desire to hear from you.

We’re nothing without our members and the resources you entrust, which is why we have such strong levels of listening. And we’re nothing without God, who faithfully keeps us going.”

Emrys Jones, director of finance and operations

BECAUSE WE SEE WHERE WE'RE GOING WHEN WE KNOW WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

David Smyth, head of Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland

Have you ever tried to explain the Evangelical Alliance to someone else? This was my challenge when I started working here. I was often asked, where do you work again? And what do they do? It was not a communications failure or a complaint, by the way; it was just difficult to communicate the sheer breadth of our work across the church and the public square in a few sentences.

I'm the kind of person who likes to understand the big picture. I need to know where I'm coming from in order to plot where I'm going. So just a few weeks into my new job, still learning names and faces, I picked up a dusty copy of *One Body in Christ: The History and Significance of the Evangelical Alliance*, which traces the organisation from its foundation in 1846 up to 2001. Turning the pages, I quickly realised that working here would be a rare and wonderful privilege.

One of the moments in the Evangelical Alliance's history that stood out to me most was when we appointed a 'foreign secretary', Herman Schmettou, during the 1860s. This was part of a focus by the then executive council of the Evangelical Alliance to "draft memorials and send deputations to numerous governments, in order to secure religious freedom not only for evangelicals but also for Roman Catholics, Nestorians, Jews and others".

I just love the selfless audacity and vision of a charity that appointed their own in-house diplomat for religious freedom and commissioned them to go to other governments. I love how this ambassador was sent to secure and protect the freedoms of many who did not even believe in the gospel from

which they were benefiting. In an age where it is tempting to retreat or become fundamentalist, to play at a culture war instead of entering spiritual battle, this story has deeply shaped how I see our work. Today we remain committed to gospel distinctiveness as we bless and protect others beyond our membership and even our faith.

Fast-forward from the 1860s to the 1990s. In the whirlwind year when Tony Blair landed in Downing Street under New Labour, the now late Rev Dr Joel Edwards CBE took on the leadership of the Evangelical Alliance. Soon after, he embarked on a 28-town tour introducing a new 'seizing the moment' manifesto. This "covered a wide spectrum of concerns, from more effective evangelism and preaching to the promotion of biblical morality and...a serious re-commitment to social transformation". Again, I love the mix of boldness and humility within this organisation, going out on the road to listen and to envision renewed people and places right across the UK. Today we remain committed to unity and voice as we connect grassroots churches and government chambers.

And today our rich legacy continues to shape and inspire our work. Our member churches range from the old Anglican congregation in Dorset to the new plant in Aberdeen. Reformed, Anabaptist, charismatic—all uniting together to make Jesus known. Our member organisations serve children and young people, families, those in the care system, the hungry and homeless, trafficked and abused, the least and the lost. Our individual members and donors are people just like you, partners with us, gifting us with the prayers and financial support which make it all possible.





Altogether, an amazing alliance of sisters and brothers in Christ, proclaiming, demonstrating and embodying the gospel across time and place.

I've shared just two stories out of 175 years spanning monarchs and prime ministers, revivals and wars, and arguably the greatest technological and cultural revolutions in human history. We have birthed new organisations and campaigns, hosted national prayer days and discreet tables for important conversations. We've made friends and we've made apologies as we continue to listen, learn and lead. At times we have been prophetic; all the time God has been good and faithful.

Right now, we face huge challenges and opportunities which will require great faith and wisdom, compassion and conviction. As we look to the future, I can only pray that we will continue to be inspired by our past.

This year is my tenth working for the Evangelical Alliance—just a fraction of our existence—and to be honest, I still struggle to communicate who we are in a few sentences. Given all that has gone before, I wouldn't want it any other way.

Become a member today

You will join thousands of churches, organisations and individuals when you become a member of the Evangelical Alliance.

Working across the UK, with offices in London, Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast, we are an alliance dedicated to sharing fresh ideas, celebrating best practice and catalysing innovation through the country's evangelical community and beyond – all because we know that together we can achieve much more than we can ever achieve alone.

There are three types of membership: individual, church, organisation. Find out which suits you best and become a member today.

eauk.org/membership





Why not sow into this work so we can keep on making Jesus known?

Rev Wendy Pawsey, head of giving

As you've read in this commemorative edition of *idea*, the Evangelical Alliance has been in existence since 1846, but rarely has there been a greater need for it to be strong than in the coming months and years.

A snapshot of our history shows the Evangelical Alliance advocating for freedom across Europe, promoting and providing prayer cover, responding to needs, supporting churches and their leaders, building unity, fighting injustice, and helping thousands come to know Jesus.

In 2020, a year like no other, our unity flourished as we journeyed and prayed together. Working alongside networks, denominations and churches, we called the nations to a UK day of prayer, we hosted the Evangelical Alliance Leadership Conference, and we supported our many members as they negotiated the devastation and fallout from the pandemic.

In the midst of a rapidly shifting landscape, the prophetic purpose of the oldest and largest evangelical unity movement in the UK is needed more now than ever before. We are facing choppy waters, and it is vital we stand firm on God's word in a time of great challenge. The church is to prepare to be distinct despite the overwhelming pressure to conform from the secular tsunami taking place. As the darkness becomes darker, the light needs to shine brighter.

The importance of a united church and protecting gospel freedoms has never been so great. We will continue to produce resources, provide courses and offer counsel, as it is crucial for Christians to be well-equipped to speak into every public sphere. Moving forward, we need to be braver, kinder, younger (evangelical Christians will not be produced by osmosis) and broader. To make a difference, the recruitment, resourcing and empowerment of our membership is vital.

And because of this we are asking you to

partner with us to an extent you may have never done before. We don't ask this lightly, but with knowledge of the past, awareness of the present and expectations for the future.

With your help, and standing as one united body, we want to shape the four nations of the UK, support and uphold churches and their leaders, ensure everyone can hear about Jesus, and unite believers of all ages and ethnicities in more powerful and effective ways.

If you would like to be part of this, if you have a passion for Jesus and for the UK, then please stand with us through prayer, by sharing and promoting the resources we provide, and by ensuring we have enough funds to continue making a difference.

We have several events planned for our anniversary year which we would love you to participate in; and, led by the Spirit, we are asking those who feel prompted to commit to giving a fixed financial amount for the next three years.

Our aim is to raise an additional £175,000 of income per year, which will be used to get us closer to realising our ultimate vision of the evangelisation of the UK—that we might be the good news people, united in the gospel, speaking up on the issues that matter, and together making Jesus known. In an increasingly secularised society, the need to do this, to be heard above the crowd, is becoming more crucial.

Show your support

To make a gift or for more information, please call our giving team on 020 7520 3856, contact Wendy at w.pawsey@eauk.org or visit eauk.org/about-us/giving



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THANK YOU

Thank you for joining us as we looked back over some of the highlights of the last 175 years of the Evangelical Alliance and celebrated all that God has done. Since our beginning, we have been a member organisation, and today we continue to unite hundreds of organisations, thousands of churches and tens of thousands of individuals to make our Lord Jesus known.

As membership team leader, it is such an honour to work with and serve you. You are vital to the Evangelical Alliance, as you support and champion our mission to see the UK transformed in Jesus' name. Thank you for partnering with us and making a difference. Together we model the oneness of God's people, speak up on issues that matter and discover new opportunities to share the love and hope of Christ in our communities.

Sarah Paul, membership team leader

Let's PRAY

Our almighty heavenly Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

Thank you for your faithfulness and provision over the last 175 years. We are grateful.

Thank you, Father, for upholding the work of our organisation, and for each one of our members who has stood with us over the years.

Father, we pray for our members today: may they have the wisdom, courage and boldness to serve you wherever they are. In their villages, towns and cities, may they continue to be salt and light to those around them.

And Father, as we look to the months and years ahead, may you lead and guide each one of us in all that we do.

In Jesus' name we pray—amen.

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