

NCLF Newsletter

NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM | A BLACK CHRISTIAN VOICE

IN PURSUIT OF A JUST AND PEACEFUL WORLD

'And she gave birth to her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in bands of cloth and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.'
Luke 2:7 (NRSVue)

As we approach the joyous season of Christmas, we are filled with gratitude as we reflect on the incredible journey we have undertaken together. In the past year, we, the **National Church Leaders Forum (NCLF)**, have published the Second Edition of the **Black Church Political Manifesto**, which outlined 52 key recommendations and initiatives aimed at addressing contemporary challenges being faced by Britain's African and Caribbean communities.

Over the recent months we have been busy negotiating with the government and church leaders to take these recommendations forward, since

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NCLF Board

PICTURED: Dionne Gravesande, Dr R David Muir, Pastor Ade Omooba MBE, Rev Celia Apeageyi Collins, Elsa Caleb
Other Board members are: Bishop Dr Joe Aldred, Dr Marcus Chilaka and Rev Ronald Nathan

We wish you a very happy and blessed Christmas and God's peace for the year ahead.



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HOPE FOR JUSTICE 13 April 2024

The Racial Justice Advocacy Forum (RJAF), Premier Radio and the National Church Leaders Forum, are hosting the conference, Hope For Justice on 13 April 2024 at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, London from 11am to 4.30pm.

This conference will explore how the churches can better engage in the critical dialogue on police and criminal justice reform, and ways in which they can be better conduits between Black communities and the police, especially regarding trust, confidence and accountability.

This conference is a must for anyone who wants to see change in this important area. There will be a range of speakers from the church, community groups and the police.

To register to attend this day-long conference:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hope-for-justice-conference-tickets-703172246117?aff=CTBIWebsite>



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checks and balances are needed to ensure the Black community are fully represented, particularly within the judicial system. This is especially true since our churches remain at the centre of many causes and initiatives that have brought positive and sustainable change as *we work together for a more just and peaceful world.*

For us, Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and to come together in the spirit of love, peace and goodwill. It's a season that reminds us of the profound impact our collective faith can have on the world around us. Amidst challenges and uncertainties, our shared commitment to spreading love and kindness shines brightly as a testament to the strength of our faith community.

In the spirit of the season, let's extend our hands to offer comfort and support to those in need. Our collective actions can make a significant impact and, through unity, *we can be a source of hope for those facing challenges during this festive season.*

Our prayer remains, Lord, that as You took on flesh in a world that had no room for You, may *we be sure to keep our doors and rooms open for those around us.*

Wishing you and your congregations a blessed and Merry Christmas!

Ade Omooba MBE & Dionne Gravesande

Co-Chairs, National Church Leaders Forum

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YOUR WINDRUSH & THE



by
RICHARD REDDIE



It has often been said that alongside the Church and London Transport, the National Health Service (NHS) has been one of the major beneficiaries of the *Windrush* generation.

I know so many Caribbean women and men who have worked for the NHS as doctors, nurses, auxiliaries and the like. (Many of them were also Christians who helped to revitalise the Church on these shores. Indeed, in my church, virtually all the Black women over a certain age worked for the NHS in some capacity.) Likewise, my mother-in-law was recruited directly from Guyana to work in the NHS as a nurse, and in time she worked as a midwife at many of the leading hospitals in London.

That is why it was totally appropriate for members of the NHS to participate in the church-related events to celebrate the **75th anniversary of Windrush** on 22 June 2023. On that special day, the churches hosted a '**Walk of Witness**' which began at Waterloo Station in south London and ended at Southwark Cathedral, where a National Church Service took place in the afternoon.

The '*Walk of Witness*' featured 75 walkers and 30 supporters, which included staff from the NHS, such as **Dame Ruth May**, Chief Nursing Officer for England, who

was one of the speakers at the gathering that took place before the *walk* commenced.

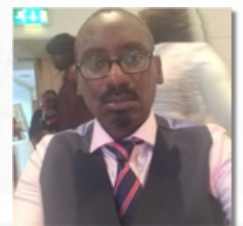
Similarly, NHS staff were also part of the groups who had their photographs taken at the *Windrush* Monument, alongside the specially created floral *Windrush* anchor, at Waterloo Station. Moreover, key personnel from the NHS joined other organisations who carried the floral anchor as part of a relay, en route to the Cathedral.



Picture credit: Jayesh Florist

The NHS staff were also present at the amazing church service at the Cathedral, in which all attendees remembered the struggle of the *Windrush* generation; celebrated their successes; and shared their desire to see the next generation flourish in the future.

As we know, Black people from Africa and the Caribbean, as well as those from East and South Asia, remain the mainstays within the NHS. It is hoped that events such as *Windrush* are appropriate reminders as to their invaluable and indelible contribution to keeping this country fit and healthy.



PICTURE: Richard Reddie





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FAITH IN LABOUR

Appointment of Darrell Redmond to new role of National Organiser for Black-majority churches

The aim of this brand-new role is to strengthen dialogue and relationships between Black-Majority Church (BMC) members and the Labour Party.

Darrell Redmond, firmly rooted in the Church of God of Prophecy (COGOP), has been appointed to the role of BMC National Organiser. He has a well-established background of previously-held community-focused roles at COGOP: in business, local government and not-for-profit sectors.

Darrell says: 'For decades, I have held the view that BMCs are a 'sleeping giant', waiting to be released to make an even greater contribution to civil society than it can already evidence. This may have been true decades ago but is no longer, and there was a view that Church and politics should never mix – even though every sermon from a BMC referring to Joseph or Herod has been preaching politics for nearly 75 years in the UK! Unfortunately, such sermons haven't always transcended into everyday life in Britain today. There are many unpublicised contributors to civil society from the BMC community.'



As well as increasing dialogue and strengthening relationships, my aim is to collaborate with these churches and to seek opportunities to meet community needs and aspirations.'

Darrell will also be working with prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs) to improve access to BMCs across the UK, and looks forward to building relationships with organisations like the NCLF. For more information on Faith in Labour, please email darrell.redmond@faithinlabour.org.uk



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HELP FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL HOUSING

The **Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN)** runs free weekly Zoom sessions on Saturdays (11am – 12.15pm) on a variety of health topics, and are designed to help Caribbean and African people achieve



optimal health in every area of their lives. The link to the Health Hour is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84516756373> and you can find out more details at www.cahn.org.uk

Do you have a Social Housing Issue?

Know your rights, know how to complain. Everyone deserves a home that is safe, secure, and well maintained, so if you live in social housing, your landlord is responsible for fixing issues including damp and mould, leaks, broken locks or changes you need to your home if you're disabled. They can also help with anti-social behaviour, like noisy neighbours.

Know the steps to get an issue fixed:

- Step 1.** Report it to your landlord. Then, if it is not fixed...
- Step 2.** Complain through your landlord's complaint process, and if you're not happy with the final response from your landlord...
- Step 3.** Escalate your complaint to the **Housing Ombudsman**.

The Housing Ombudsman is **impartial**, will **investigate fairly** and can **order your landlord to take action**. Know your rights, visit gov.uk/social-housing



"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me."

Matthew 25:40

Email us at info.nclf@gmail.com or connect with us on social media



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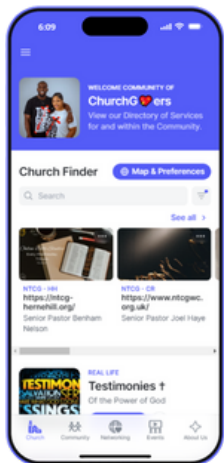
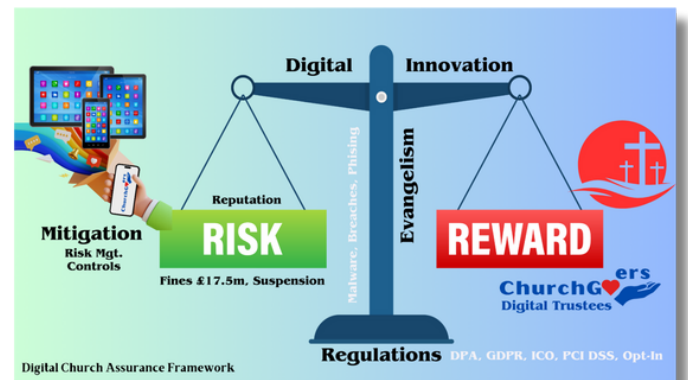
The Church's present-day dependence on digital technology for online services, donations, outreach, and evangelism puts increasing pressure on governing boards to appoint chief technical officers (CTOs), chief information officers (CIOs), and digital trustees. However, church leaders can now rely on the all-important knowledge-based platform and hybrid church assurance service from **ChurchGOers**.

Reap the Rewards:

With our Innovation, Regulations and Evangelism (IRE) framework, churches can balance the rewards of digital adoption with the assurance of risk mitigation. The **ChurchGOers** platform includes an extensive knowledge base of information, tools and best practices. Pastors receive real data-driven insights from our **church-service apps**, which collect ratings, reviews, and congregation testimonies. Furthermore, our benchmarking tool measures digital adoption scores against strategic targets and church standards. The **ChurchGOers** eco-system features e-payments, grants, business and event listings, plus an ecumenical directory.

Mitigate the Risks:

The emergence of hybrid churches and the adoption of digital technology significantly increase security concerns. Many churches are unaware that religious information is **within the highest GDPR risk category, attracting fines of £17.5m** and suspension. Our digital trustee service provides **risk management controls** that ensure regulatory compliance.



Digital Trustee Assurance:

Visit our website at

 <https://churchgoers.app>

or email us at

 churchgoers.app@gmail.com
for further information.

Reap what you sow and prevent your digital assets becoming digital liabilities!

Church leaders can now rely on the all-important knowledge-based platform and hybrid church assurance service



PICTURE: Paul Lawrence

Email us at info.nclf@gmail.com or connect with us on social media



PLEASE DONATE TO NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM (NCLF):

Barclays Bank PLC | Account Number **33315959** | Sort Code **20-41-50**

Thank you!