

# A JOURNEY TOWARDS UNITY

# IMPACT REPORT

ANNUAL REVIEW 2015-16

## From the general director

**It's amazing to have the opportunity to celebrate with you our 170<sup>th</sup> birthday. That's 170 years of uniting the Church for effective mission, and representing the Church in society. What a journey we're on!**

I am immensely grateful to every one of our members and supporters who joins us on this adventure and continues to make all that we do possible. Together, we are having a huge impact. So in this Impact Report I'm delighted to share with you – our Evangelical Alliance family – a snapshot of some of our key achievements and highlights from April 2015 to March 2016.

In our current turbulent political climate, last year's general election seems a lifetime ago. But it was just over a year ago that millions turned out to vote. Thanks to your support, the Alliance was right in the midst of it, equipping the Christian community with the tools to engage in the debate, and ensuring the Church was heard as a grace-filled voice. In fact, more than 1,700 people took part in 15 of our election hustings in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, enabling Christians to pose challenges and put their questions to MPs.

Yet much of the effective political discussion and influence the Alliance has is conducted behind closed doors with the men and women in power. So last year, your support enabled us to speak out against the government's Counter-Extremism Strategy - which could see Sunday schools inspected - and successfully challenge the Assisted Dying Bill, thereby protecting some of the most vulnerable people in society.

In 1846, when the Alliance was formed, it was with the main aim of bringing unity to the Church. Our founders were inspired by Jesus' prayer in John 17 that Christians might be one. And our vision and mission remain the same to this day. That's why, with your help, our Gather network has supported, equipped and established more than 120 unity movements – local gatherings of churches and Christian organisations working together in towns and cities to see them transformed by the gospel. And that's why we're all for promoting unity while celebrating diversity with our One People Commission – a growing body of key national leaders from ethnic minority churches across the UK.

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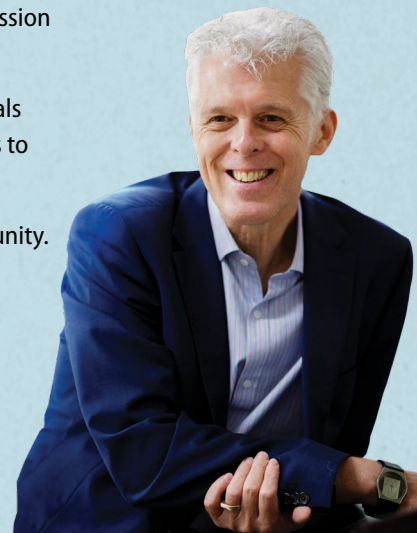
This unity is for a purpose. Thanks to your gifts and prayers, we united with HOPE and the Church of England last year to publish and distribute 32,000 copies of the *Talking Jesus* research report, exploring the UK population's understanding of Jesus. Challenged by the findings, we will be launching an exciting new programme this year to give churches and individuals all the tools they need to make Jesus known. You can read more about this Great Commission website on the back page, and look out for its launch in autumn 2016.

So thank you. The Alliance is indebted to you – the churches, organisations and individuals who generously support this work. Our existence, progress and achievements are thanks to your passion and commitment.

We look forward to achieving even more together in the future on this journey towards unity.

Steve

Steve Clifford  
General Director



# A JOURNEY TOWARDS UNITY IMPACT REPORT 2015-16

# 170

## YEARS SINCE THE ALLIANCE WAS FOUNDED

Our formation in 1846 – 170 years this year – had the unity of Christians as its main aim. Our founders were inspired by Jesus' prayer in John 17 that Christians might be one. And our vision and mission remain the same to this day.

*"I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them as you have loved me."*

**John 17:23**

## WORKING FOR A UNITED CHURCH: CONFIDENT IN VOICE, INSPIRED FOR MISSION.

Thank you so much for your support – you were with us through some exciting times in 2015-16. Thanks to you, here are some of the Alliance's highlights as we journeyed towards unity last year.

# 560

## ALLIANCE APPEARANCES IN THE MEDIA

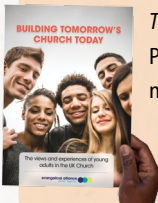
Thanks to your support, the Alliance appeared in the media a total of 560 times in 2015-16, notably including appearances in *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail*, and on the front page of *The Telegraph*, and on the BBC, Sky News and Fox News. We are committed to being a voice of hope, representing the UK's evangelical Christian constituency to the media, government and society as a whole.



# 5,000

## PEOPLE RECEIVE BUILDING TOMORROW'S CHURCH TODAY RESEARCH

Last year, our One People Commission – a body made up of key national church leaders committed to celebrating ethnicity while promoting unity – carried out a key piece of research into millennials in the Church, thanks to your support. The findings of the research, entitled *Building Tomorrow's Church Today*, were presented at a launch event on board the HMS President on the Thames, and gathered 160 people, one of the most diverse audiences the Alliance has hosted. Following the launch, the research has been posted, downloaded, viewed or ordered approximately 5,000 times.



# 1,735

## ATTENDEES AT NATIONS' GENERAL ELECTION HUSTINGS

In Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Alliance hosted 1,735 people at 15 hustings at local churches, enabling Christians to engage in the elections and put questions to MPs that matter deeply to the Church in those nations. Some of these

hustings also resulted in considerable local media coverage, spreading the word further afield of the Church's engagement in politics and giving voice to the Christian community.



# 480

## LEADERS INTERVIEWED FOR GREAT COMMISSION WEBSITE

With your generous support, we are launching an exciting new programme called the Great Commission this autumn. We are collating, creating and commending a wide range of evangelism initiatives, resources and training tools on one website – enabling churches and individuals to be talking about Jesus. Around 480 denomination, organisation and church leaders have been interviewed and surveyed to help shape this programme and identify the greatest needs in the Church to equip Christians for mission.



# 100

## PUBLIC LEADERS TRAINED AND EQUIPPED AT PILOT EVENTS

We are passionate about seeing more evangelical Christians serve and lead in local communities and in national life. With your support, we held a pilot Public Leadership training weekend in July 2015, with 30 young public leaders participating, and the first two Public Leadership networking breakfasts brought together 70 leaders who are influential in law, finance and business. We have also been developing a suite of resources for distribution in 2016-17.



# 350,000

## HITS ON THREADS WEBSITE

We can't thank you enough for all that your support is enabling *threads* – our online and offline collective of Christians in their 20s and 30s – to do. *threads* once again won Multi-Author Blog of the Year at the Premier Digital Awards in 2015, which celebrates excellence in Christian new media. We've been delighted to see online engagement grow exponentially, with a total of 350,000 hits on threadsUK.com last year, and more than 4,000 Twitter followers. With your help, *threads* has also begun to train church leaders to be more effective in reaching the millennial generation, with 80 leaders trained at two pilot training days.

# 6,580

## SURVEYS COMPLETED FOR 21ST CENTURY EVANGELICALS RESEARCH

We continue to equip churches and organisations with unique research into the evangelical community in the UK, through our regular *21st Century Evangelicals* research reports. In 2015-16, 6,580 surveys were completed for four reports into the beliefs, habits and practices of evangelical Christians, including surveys on British values, health and wellbeing, ethical consumerism, and intergenerational church.



# 4,200

## TAKE PART IN "100 DAYS OF PRAYER"

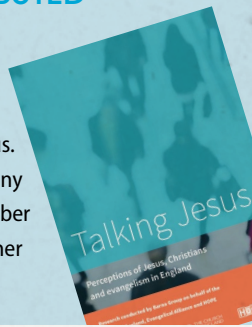
With 2016 being a year of centenaries – the Battle of the Somme and the Easter Rising – the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland partnered with 24/7 Prayer and festival Summer Madness to unite for "100 days of prayer for 100 years of history". Thanks to your support for the Alliance, we encouraged churches to host a prayer room, and we published a specially-curated magazine that was received well across the nation, with 4,200 people receiving the magazine or downloading the app in February and March alone.



# 32,000

## TALKING JESUS REPORTS DISTRIBUTED

With your support, in September 2015 the Alliance published the *Talking Jesus* research report, in partnership with HOPE and the Church of England, to explore the UK population's understanding of Jesus. 32,000 copies of this report were distributed, and many more downloaded online. The Alliance hosted a number of significant forums and workshops, bringing together church leaders to look at the findings.



# 54,000

## VISITS PER MONTH TO EAUK.ORG

We are thrilled to hear that our online presence continues to grow, with 54,000 visits per month last year to the Alliance's website, and 29,700 people across the UK following us on Facebook and Twitter. Thank you for your support and partnership.

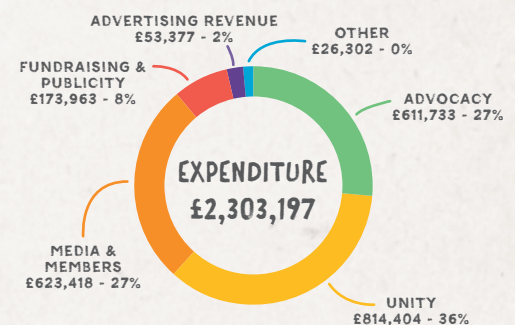
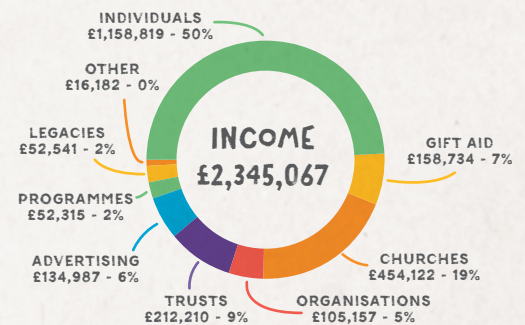
## POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Thanks to your ongoing support for our advocacy work in parliament on behalf of the UK Church, the Alliance's public policy team was – and continues to be – deeply involved in speaking out against the government's Counter-Extremism Strategy, particularly around out-of-schools education which could see church groups inspected. This has involved months



of engaging and collaborating with Christian and non-Christian MPs and other organisations to coordinate responses and challenge proposals. It has also led to considerable media coverage, including on the front cover of the *Daily Telegraph* in December 2015. In January's debate on the proposal, it was confirmed that 10,000 responses to the strategy were received, and we were informed that a majority of these were from Christians.

## 90% OF EXPENDITURE RELATED TO CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES



# 120+

## UNITY MOVEMENTS SUPPORTED AND EQUIPPED

We thank God for all that your support is making possible for GATHER, the Alliance's network of more than 120 unity movements – local gatherings of churches and Christian organisations in towns and cities across the UK. In 2015-16 we piloted and launched culture-specific groups, working together for transformation in the spheres of business, education, media, health and the arts.



# COMING UP...

We are so grateful for your partnership, which enables this work, and hope you will support us in the year ahead as we embark on these exciting initiatives and more:

## GREAT COMMISSION

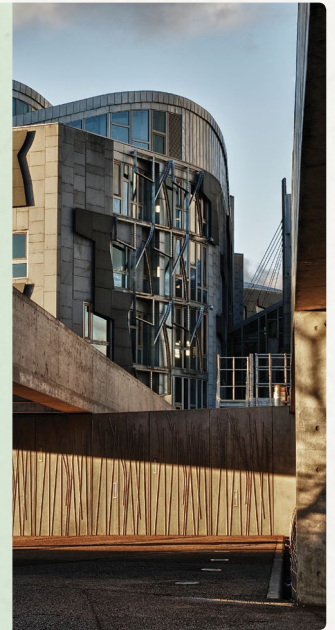
In autumn 2016, with your help, we will launch the Great Commission programme to equip the UK Church to communicate the gospel clearly, confidently and powerfully to those who don't know Jesus. Your support will help us produce and share weekly videos over the next few years of people coming to faith, changing the narrative to show that God saves. It will help collate and categorise evangelism resources and initiatives for easy access. It will enable training videos and articles to be distributed to build confidence and ability to powerfully spread the gospel.



## PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

Thanks to your previous support, aspiring and established public leaders are being equipped and supported at Public Leadership training conferences and networking breakfasts. In the year ahead, we will be launching the Scottish Public Leader programme, equipping a group of Scotland's aspiring leaders through one-to-one mentoring and group training. We have also appointed a new Public Leadership coordinator to focus on the programme's development, and will be producing two key resources for the Church:

- 1 a small group course called *Change the World*, with videos and printed materials to help churches look at why and how public leadership is an important aspect of living out faith, and
- 2 a training course for use by local Public Leadership networks, to help leaders live out and understand their leadership roles as part of God's mission.



## THREADS

In the year ahead, we'd love to hold regular training days for church leaders to equip them to reach out to the "missing generation" of young adults in their congregations and wider communities, just like *threads* is doing. So your ongoing support will enable us to hold a minimum of three training days a year to train more than 100 church leaders around the country.



## GATHER

We have some exciting plans for Gather – our England-wide network of local unity groups made up of churches and Christian leaders – in the year ahead. With your support, we will hold two significant conferences in autumn 2016 focusing on transformation and how to work together to see our communities changed by the gospel. Also beginning this autumn, and continuing through to spring 2017, the Gather team will be on tour, visiting unity movements across the country to share what God is doing through united groups of churches around the world.



## ASK SHARE GIVE

We are here to serve you – the Church. We love to equip, resource and support you with a whole range of resources; whether that's training and events in your area, regular theological or political emails or research materials to look at in your small groups. So get in touch and our dedicated information officer will do all she can to help you.

[info@eauk.org](mailto:info@eauk.org)

We love hearing your stories so we can share them with our member churches, organisations and individuals, to encourage and inspire. Do you have a story of the Church being good news to society? Do you know someone who's recently come to faith? Are you a public leader who could share how your faith impacts your leadership?

Get in touch at [stories@eauk.org](mailto:stories@eauk.org)

Thank you once again for your faithful support of this crucial work – I hope you've been encouraged by what you've read here. Please consider giving again or increasing your regular gift to make sure we have an even greater impact in the year ahead.

You can do so by ringing **0207 520 3830** or visiting [eauk.org/support](http://eauk.org/support)

evangelical alliance  
better together

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