CRCW Ministry in Luton - it's all about the Touching Places

Since it began in January 2010, much of the work of the Luton CRCW Project has involved creating 'touching places' - bringing together members of the town's diverse faith and cultural communities, many of whom have little reason to encounter each other on a day-to-day basis. Often, there has been no need to 'reinvent the wheel' - opportunities are out there, and the role of the Project has been to get people plugged in and taking part in what is happening around them.

One World Week Celebration

Enabling the churches to take part

Making Luton a Fairtrade Town

Christian and Muslim friends decorate Fairtrade bunting

An Audience with 'Tookie' - Fairtrade Banana Grower
Sometimes, this has meant establishing partnerships to enable existing work to move in different directions, new people to be included, and relationships to be built:

'Precious Pearls' - Annual Celebration of International Women's Day

The local Council of Churches became a named partner

Beech Hill Exercise Group

Cohen's Yard Community Project

Bringing together a women's cooperative and a local church

Working together to reclaim a local park for community use

Frequently, it has meant fostering stronger ties by supporting and participating in initiatives organised by our diverse neighbours, including Open Days at our local mosques, Divali Celebrations with Hindu friends, and annual Naw Ruz (New Year) Celebrations with Luton's Baha'i community.
At times, the work of the Project has been extremely challenging, seeking to respond to Jesus' call to touch those whom others regard as untouchable.

**Work with Luton's Roma Community**

'Europe on Trial' - stand awhile in the other's shoes!

Developing Children’s Work; recruiting volunteers

Here in Luton, anything and everything is an 'excuse' for bringing people together - from archery sessions to woodland picnics; creative writing to fun and sun beside the sea...
But is there anything more effective than food?

Mainly, the Project has been a joy - sharing our lives and sharing a table; moving from strangers to neighbours, from neighbours to friends.

It's all about encounter. It's all about the touching places.

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A Table for All

Come as you are, because you are welcome.
Come take your place, and hear now the call;
The table is spread, and the music is playing -
Come take your place at the Table for All.
Don’t ponder now who you think is worthy,
When, where or how RSVP they sent;
Instead come with gladness, and joy overflowing,
For each person present was God’s first intent.

No special place for royal or mighty,
Earthly wealth and position a thing of the past
At the Table prepared with upside-down values,
Where the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

No longer division ‘tween have and the have nots;
Here no oppressed, neither those who oppress.
Where the world has said ‘no’ to dignity of justice,
Our God, at His Table, says ‘yes’.

And don’t be fooled into thinking God does not see colour;
His Table for All is no sea of grey -
He creates and admires, and declares ‘It is good’,
No matter what racist or bigot may say.

He calls to His people from every direction,
From the east to the west, the north and the south;
There’s drink for the thirsty of every nation,
A banquet abundant for every mouth.

A rainbow of women and men at His Table;
Different languages, customs, and faiths from all lands,
Invited to sit, talk and learn all together,
More human made by the joining of hearts and of hands.

So come sit with prince, and come sit with pauper,
With old and with young freely come take your rest;
Whatever the label, the burden you carry,
Lay it down, for now you are most honoured guest.

And let us not wait to dine at that Table,
For though it’s not yet, the Table is now -
Where valleys are filled, and mountains are levelled
And a sharing of fate emerges somehow.
Oh the Table is spread, and the music is playing,
Let’s listen and hear and respond to God’s call,
And live into being the Kingdom we cry for -
The Table with room for All.

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