

“The Liverpool-Cologne Churches Partnership”

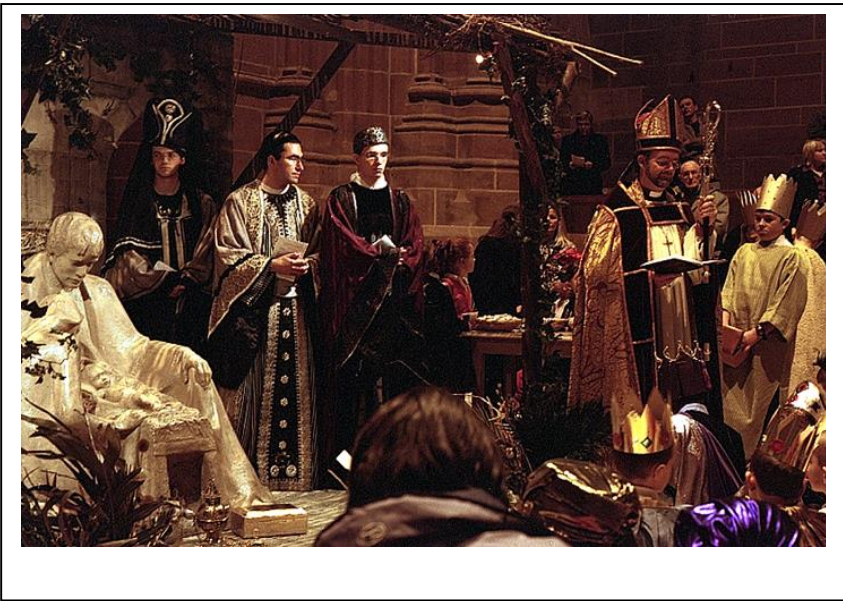
A Short History



In 1908, a party of 70 people came to Liverpool from Cologne Cathedral in order to study the work of the city's Anglican Cathedral, which was still in the process of being built! This is the earliest recorded event in a partnership between the churches of the two cities which has flourished since it was revived over 20 years ago, and now plays an important role in the formal 'twin-city' relationship between Liverpool and Cologne, which celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2012.

The present partnership between the churches of the two cities goes back to 1990, when a group of clergy and church workers from Cologne came to Liverpool to study the 'Faith in the City' report, which had such an impact on urban church life in the late 1980's. Since then, there has been a regular flow of clergy and church members of various traditions travelling between the two cities, taking part in each other's special anniversaries and events, and looking together at such matters as urban ministry, the involvement of the churches in evangelism, social action and community work, relations with people of other faiths, and the response of the churches to the problems faced by the unemployed, the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers. There has been valuable support from Cologne for the work of 'Somewhere Else', often known as 'the bread church', in Bold Street, and in these and many ways experiences have been shared, friendships made, and new insights gained.

So the partnership goes on. Such international partnerships have been truly described as an opportunity for 'circulation of the life-blood in the Body of Christ.'



Top row: Joint service at Liverpool Cathedral; The Mayors at Liverpool Town Hall.

Middle row: Signing the Visitor's Book at Cologne; The Stargazers at the Epiphany service in Liverpool.

Bottom row: Joint Girls' Choirs; Cologne, Liverpool Cathedral, Metropolitan Cathedral.

Music

There have been some notable musical events, particularly involving the Cathedral choirs of both cities. In 2004 the Girls' Choir from Cologne Cathedral visited Liverpool, gave concerts at both cathedrals, and attended a reception at the Town Hall, and later in the same year Liverpool Cathedral Choir visited Cologne for concerts in Altenberg and St. Maria im Kapitol and to participate in High Mass at Cologne Cathedral.

Two years later, Andreas Meisner, organist at Altenberg Cathedral near Cologne, gave a concert at Liverpool Cathedral, and in the same year Liverpool Cathedral Girls' Choir visited Cologne and gave concerts at various venues as well as a joint concert with the Girls' choir of Cologne Cathedral.

The 'Day for Europe' in Cologne in 2008 was presented as a Liverpool day. Stephen Pritchard, the Roman Catholic youth chaplain, took a small group of young people to take part, as well as a 4-piece band, 'The X Men', who played a part in the rock concert in the Cathedral in the evening.

Also that year, Benjamin Britten's 'War Requiem' was performed in the cathedrals at Altenberg, Cologne and Liverpool, with choirs from the cities and the cathedrals in Cologne and Liverpool participating as part of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture celebrations.

More recently, the Girls' choirs of Cologne Cathedral and both Liverpool Cathedrals sang together to celebrate Epiphany in Cologne and Pentecost in Liverpool, where they joined in celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and in the Walk of Witness along Hope Street.

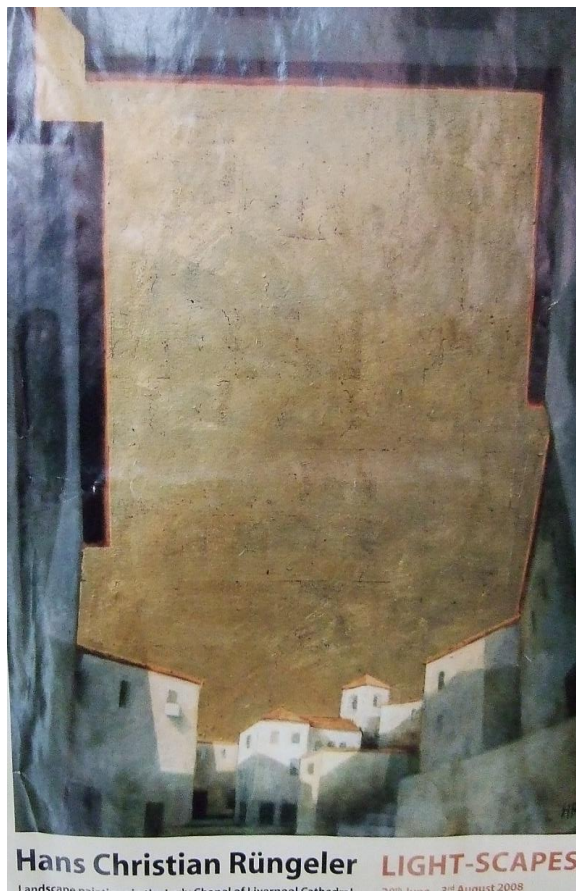
Visits

The churches have made some notable visits to each other's cities over the years. Some have involved taking part in special festivals and anniversaries, such as Epiphany and Reformation Day in Cologne, and Pentecost and the city's 800th anniversary in Liverpool. But some have been to mark key anniversaries of the Second World War, such as the 1,000 bomber raid on Cologne and the Battle of the Atlantic. The 60th anniversary of the ending of the war was commemorated by the planting of a tree in Cologne, in soil from Liverpool as well as from other cities, a moving symbol of a tree of peace planted with soil from cities that were formerly enemies and are now firm friends.

Young people have taken an active part in the partnership. A party of 50 from the Liverpool Archdiocese joined thousands of others at World Youth Day when it was held in Cologne, and some years ago a group of teenagers from Speke helped run a holiday play scheme for children there.

Church leaders, both past and present, have been actively involved. In recent years, Bishops James Jones and Tom Williams, and the Reverends Howard Sharp and Phil Jump, have all taken part in events in Cologne, and Archbishop Patrick Kelly has led a seminar in Liverpool on inter-faith relations with representatives from the Cologne churches. Dean Justin Welby represented Liverpool on Reformation Day in Cologne in 2008.

Other visits have involved local pastors from Cologne holding their annual conference here, and groups studying the response of the churches to the plight of the homeless and asylum seekers in each city. But each time a visit takes place, friendships are strengthened and our vision of the worldwide church is enhanced.



Belonging and Beyond
Lin Holland and Veronica Moos



Art

There have been a number of art exhibitions and installations, supported by the churches and particularly the cathedrals, in both cities over the years, and the use in worship of the Cologne cross and the star of Bethlehem provide a regular reminder of the partnership.

In 2004, the art installation 'Belonging and Beyond', a joint work by Veronika Moos-Brochhagen from Cologne and Lin Holland from Liverpool, was on display in Liverpool Cathedral before being displayed in Cologne and then later at the Metropolitan Cathedral. Later, two Cologne artists visited Liverpool to discuss future events for the Capital of Culture year in 2008, and an art exhibition by Hans Rungeler took place in the Lady Chapel of Liverpool Cathedral.

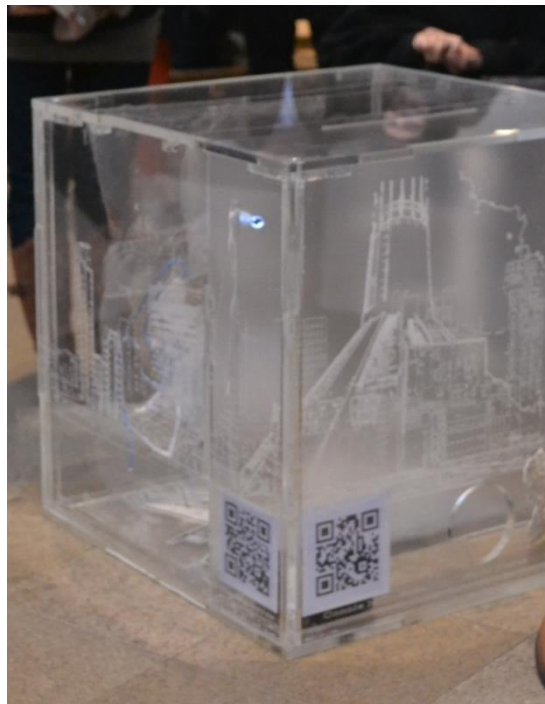
A notable installation of a series of 'steles of multi-coloured glass' by Raphael Seitz was opened in the grounds of Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral at Pentecost in 2010. It was dedicated by Cardinal Walter Casper, who preached at the Two Cathedrals Service.

Artist Colin Taylor was invited to undertake a residency at Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral in 2010 with the intention of producing a body of work, particularly drawings, of its interior space. Subsequently, the work transferred to Cologne where it formed part of the sixtieth anniversary of economic and cultural links between the two cities. Drawings of the Anglican Cathedral were exhibited alongside newly produced drawings of both the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and Cologne Cathedral.

The Crib

To mark the end of the 60th anniversary year, a 'Liverpool Nativity' crib was included in the annual Cologne Krippenweg - 'Crib Walk' - an international display of Nativity Cribs in venues across the city of Cologne.

Year 12 art students from Upton Hall School worked with ceramic artist Emma Rodgers to create a crib that brought together the nativity story and aspects of the City of Liverpool in a compact Perspex cube design. The crib was displayed in the Antoniterkirche, the Protestant church in the centre of Cologne's busy shopping district, and proved to be one of the highlights of the exhibition.



For further information contact: Revd Ian Smith, Ecumenical Development Officer, on 0151 709 0125: office@ctmr.org.uk
Revd Bob Andrews Convener of the Churches Link group. 0151 336 4890
bobandkay36@live.co.uk