



OneBodyOneFaith

OneBodyOneFaith Co-Chairs Report

AGM June 2023

As we reflect on the previous year together, it is apparent to both of us just how much there is to celebrate and be proud of in the journey of OneBodyOneFaith this year.

We started the year giving thanks to Peter Leonard, the former Chair, for his years of leadership. His tenacity, courage and vigilance made a real difference to OneBodyOneFaith. This year also offered an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for the superb work and the enduring commitment of our Executive Director, Luke Dowding, offering a period of sabbatical for rest and rejuvenation. It has been a delight to welcome Luke back to the role reinvigorated, we missed him. Our huge thanks to the team of dedicated volunteer Trustees who very much stepped up in this period to help cover this time of sabbatical for Luke - thank you all for your hard work and commitment.

Our special thanks go to Katie for her sterling work managing the many tasks that happen behind the scenes to enable OneBody to fulfil its crucial advocacy and support work. We simply wouldn't function without her. Also, to David our Treasurer, who works behind the scenes keeping the wheels in motion and overseeing many of the approval and governance needs of the charity - we are very lucky to have David's support.

In particular, we would like to honour the fantastic work of our volunteer Chaplain, Lee Taylor. In his capacity as a volunteer, Lee has transformed and invigorated a space of prayer and reflection for our members in Rhythm on a Thursday evening. This is such a welcome and necessary space for many. Lee's leadership of spaces of Retreat has enabled us to reach new people in new ways. Lee has led all of this and it has made a significant difference to the space of pastoral support and welcome that LGBT+ so often need and benefit from. This is an area of our work that we want to grow and expand, and the staff team and Board of Trustees will be giving specific thought to this over the next few months. Thank you, Lee.

It is clear to us that our themes of safety and joy continue to be most welcome both within our own membership conversations and in our wider advocacy work. This year has been marked by a notable growth in respect for the work of OneBodyOneFaith, as leaders from a range of denominations have invited conversation with us and our presence in European discussions and the wider global dialogue has grown. Jarel recently attended the European Forum of LGBT+ Christian Groups and offers this reflection: *'It was a privilege to meet with LGBT+ folk from across Europe and the wider world in Venlo this month. It is clear that*



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the European LGBT Forum is working towards becoming a more inclusive space, and this was encouraging to hear discussed at the AGM. OneBodyOneFaith was glad to represent its members in Venlo and to share our work with others. The theme 'In Christ there is no East nor West' has inspired me to continue to seek ways for OneBodyOneFaith to work with wider Christians beyond the West.'

OneBodyOneFaith continued to demonstrate our broad-reaching impact in the hosting and leadership of the first [memorial event](#), which was an important recognition of the lack of safety and the impact of harm many LGBT+ people experience in church environments; a very real working-out of our commitment to the safety of LGBT+ people. This event has led to a series of discussions with denominational leaders in the UK and requests to organise and lead further events in Wales and in Scotland, which are now planning. The event captured hearts and minds to encourage a greater recognition of the experience of LGBT+ people in church, but also the gifts that we bring to the body of Christ. The event builds on previous engagement with government and has offered a platform on which to develop these discussions further, there will be more to follow on this next year.

As the year closes, we want to thank Trustees who have reached the end of their term with OneBody for all their support and service. As Co-Chairs we have particularly appreciated the consistent support of Nigel Nash, who has served us faithfully as Trustee for six years, but has been a very active member of the charity for several decades, dating back to the LGCM years. Nigel has been crucial in providing pastoral support and care to many and will continue volunteering alongside Lee to support others in this way. He has also been a crucial link to the Samaritans and to wider Anglican community. Thank you Nigel for all that you have done; we've been so appreciative of your time and commitment.

As we look forward to welcoming an exciting list of new patrons to OneBodyOneFaith, we are also looking for new Trustees. We would particularly welcome Trustees with global majority heritage, as we open new doors with UK Black Pride; Trustees who identify as Trans and Non-Binary; and Trustees with expertise in Corporate, Fundraising and Policy advocacy, to help us continue to grasp the opportunities presented to OneBodyOneFaith.

Our final thanks go to each of you as members of OneBodyOneFaith. Your faithful membership and support is what enables OneBodyOneFaith to be resourced to function, to advocate for, and support LGBT+ people of faith. We have been blessed this year by the lifetime commitment of Malcolm King and John Goodwin Green, who, in grace, left us legacy gifts to continue the work of the charity. We remember and honour these special lives, with our heartfelt thanks for their generosity.

We look forward with great anticipation to the year ahead, as we continue to advocate for the safety of LGBT+ people of faith and as we build spaces to



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celebrate the tremendous gifts and opportunities we have before us, as a people beautifully and wonderfully made.

May God bless you and keep you,

Jarel Robinson-Brown and Andrea King, Co-Chairs, OneBodyOneFaith