



A REPORT ON AN EXHIBITION OF THE METHODIST COLLECTION OF MODERN CHRISTIAN ART HELD IN PRESTON, LANCASHIRE FROM 23 JUNE TO 18 JULY 2012.

Background and early planning

1. The City of Preston celebrates the Preston Guild only once every twenty years and 2012 is one such celebration. Whilst the processions, dinners and feasts are in early September, a year-long programme of events is held in the City by virtue of a royal proclamation dating back to the Middle Ages. Traditionally a substantial contribution has been made to the Guild by the various Christian Churches in the City, both individually and ecumenically and 2012 is no exception. For example an open-air service held on the first Sunday of September will attract thousands of worshippers led by national Church leaders.

2. Planning takes place over a five year-period prior to each Guild and the Methodist Church, through the Lancashire District and the Preston Ribble Circuit, felt that the Methodist Collection of Modern Christian Art could provide a focus for their contribution. Initial local thought as to how this might be achieved commenced in late 2008. The Reverend Peter Sheasby, stationed in the Circuit at Fulwood Methodist Church, held an ambition to be involved with an Exhibition of the Collection and Ken Wales, a member at that Church, had become aware of some of the works through his connexional work in the Methodist Church. Having collaborated on other projects they began the task of planning an Exhibition which later in the day became known as *Visible Faith*. This report seeks to tell the story of that Exhibition.

3. The report is written at some length for two reasons, First this was planned as more than an Exhibition – it was intended to be ‘an Event’ and, as such, it needs to be properly catalogued and placed in both the City and the Church archives. For example, it was hoped from the outset that the Exhibition would lead to a permanent legacy of the 2012 Guild. Second, the Trustees of the Methodist Collection of Modern Christian Art require a full report of each exhibiting of the Collection.

4. This vision for the Exhibition, which was sustained through to the delivery stage, eventually led to a number of outcomes being identified and these are listed below;

- a. To engage with civic and secular bodies in the promotion of an Exhibition of high quality Christian art
- b. To engage ecumenically and with other faiths
- c. To present to the people of Preston and beyond refreshing and challenging images of the life of Christ in a way which emphasised the traditional Christian narrative whilst engendering new avenues for thought and wonder
- d. To provide children and young people, especially from the many Church schools which serve this part of the world, with an opportunity to view the life of Jesus Christ in new ways
- e. To leave a legacy of the 2012 Guild which could be shown in the months and years to come in a variety of places within the Preston area
- f. To use the Collection and images from it in worship, in support of concerts and lectures and to draw attention to resources and approaches which Church worship leaders and teachers could use in the future
- g. To provide the resources which would enable the visitors to approach the Exhibition from their own starting point – spiritual, cultural or just curious.
- h. If at all possible, to create the possibility of ongoing theological and cultural discussion and debate on issues related to religion and art/culture.

5. Naturally, the opportunities and challenges presented by such a broad vision only emerged gradually during 2009 and 2010 as we began to bring others into the planning group. At an early stage we discussed our vision with Methodist Church leaders and with Dr Peter Lumsden, a Preston Methodist and a local preacher 'on trial', who is a Principal Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). Peter is also Chair of Preston's inter-faith forum and is much involved in planning the contribution of the Churches and of other religious groups to the Preston Guild. He had ready access both to the senior staff of the University (which has a respected School of Art) and the City Council, through its officers and elected members. In turn he put us in touch with two people whose contribution proved vital to our ambitions. Stella Hall had recently been appointed by the City Council as the Guild Festival Director and it helped that she had a great interest in the arts. (It was she for instance who played a lead role in bringing the BBC to Preston to present the Preston Passion on TV on Good Friday. The strong local memory of this TV programme provided the starting point of the Exhibition as we displayed first *The Cross over the City* which in itself is so resonant of Preston's inner-city geography). A second person, Professor Lubaina Himid MBE, is the Professor of Contemporary Art at UCLan and she swiftly confirmed her own personal interest in helping to present this Collection whose works she recognised as being of real artistic merit. (Professor Himid is a respected artist whose MBE was awarded for her contribution to multi-cultural art. She is much in demand by national galleries for her professional skills.) She offered jointly to curate the exhibition with Peter Sheasby.

6. As a result of these discussions we were able to obtain a start-up grant of £450 from the City Council to cover early costs. Discussion with the Lancashire Methodist District Grants Committee led to a grant of £3000 spread over two years and this gave us the confidence to open discussions in a more serious way with the Collection's Trustees. Consideration was given at that stage to a wider search for financial support but this was not carried through because of the general economic situation at the time and our desire not to get in the way of the City Council as they sought funding for the Guild from the major grant providers. In retrospect that may have been an error but at that stage we were far from clear about what it might be possible to deliver and what commitments we could make. By the time we were clear the opportunities for external financial support had substantially diminished.

7. Perhaps the two most difficult early decisions we faced were the venue for the Exhibition and its timing. In the event, the timing was virtually decided for us by other commitments to loan the Collection elsewhere during 2012. To hold the Exhibition in June/July proved to be a judicious choice in terms of the availability of accommodation and the ability of schools to attend. We were not to know however of the very many counter-attractions at that time (a British interest at Wimbledon, the Olympic Torch in Preston, for example) and there was no possibility that we could have predicted the appalling weather. A clash with the Methodist Conference was seen by some as an advantage!

8. Several locations were theoretically available and each had its advantages and disadvantages. Fulwood Methodist Church had recently undergone a major renovation and in many ways is now suitable for exhibiting art but security would have been an issue and the effect on the day-to-day life of a large and busy Church would have been disruptive. If at all possible we preferred all the works to be on one site to cut down travel and ease organisation and supervision – so sharing the Collection between several Churches whilst attractive from a Circuit and/or ecumenical point of view was ruled out.

9. At an earlier stage we had attempted to elicit the interest of the Harris Art Gallery in central Preston. They were not unsympathetic but already had advanced plans in place for their own exhibitions for the Guild. In some ways there would have been a nice symmetry in displaying the Collection here given that it was one of the first venues used by the Trustees some fifty years ago. The Preston Minster, a nineteenth century city centre Anglican Church offered possibilities but the building was dark and lighting would have been expensive. It wasn't clear how it could offer us the flexibility in use of space we were seeking, especially for work with children.

10. In the event, our preferred solution was to use the St Peters Art Centre of UCLan which is a central part of the UCLan campus. This too is a nineteenth century Anglican church which had been decommissioned in the 1980s but it offered major advantages in terms of access, space, lighting (natural and artificial) and security and was adjacent to a modern Students' Union Building with a cafeteria and other facilities we could use for events which are

described below. The UCLan site also offered some opportunities for car parking but this perennial problem continued to be a deterrent we suspect for some potential visitors. It was fortunate that the only time the Arts Centre is not heavily programmed for UCLan's own activities is late June and July. At all other times it is a teaching, production and display space.

11. ***We cannot stress enough how grateful we were to be able to use these facilities; liaison with the Pro Vice – Chancellor, who showed great interest in the exhibition, led to the facilities being made available at no charge as part of UCLAN's contribution to the Preston Guild. Further the relationships which have been built up will serve the Church well in future years. For example, discussions will take place in September about the possibility of a series of seminars on religion and art over the next twelve months.***

12. By late 2010 a Planning Group had been created which began to draw in wider specialist volunteers and others with an enthusiasm for the project. Meetings were held every six weeks or so in the evening and whilst they often covered much ground previously explored they continued to develop the vision and to identify the organisational challenges.

13. A very substantial part of the planning during 2011 concerned how to develop our relationships with local schools. Ken Wales, although now retired, had held a senior post within the Education Department of Lancashire County Council and both he and Peter Sheasby were active as Methodist people within governing bodies and other local education bodies. Three benefits came our way as a result of this. We were able to bring into the planning group Dr. Lois Loudon who is involved with both the Methodist and Diocesan bodies responsible for Church schools; we were able to gain the services of Jen Farrington a recently retired primary school adviser – an ex-head and art specialist who was also a Methodist – and we were able to gain the very active co-operation of the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education. When the Diocesan Board understood what we were seeking to achieve they provided us with a grant of £2000 and offered to provide a contribution towards travel expenses for up to 20 schools at a maximum of £50.

14. An education working group was created, with serving teachers, under Jen Farrington's leadership to create materials which would interest Key Stage 1 and 2 schools by the links which were created between six of the pictures, chosen by the group itself, and the requirements of the national curriculum in several subject areas. These materials can be viewed by accessing the website of Fulwood Methodist Church and following the links. (www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk) Jen Farrington was in regular contact with schools encouraging them to arrange to attend and ensuring that every opportunity was given so that they could prepare for their visit – this was not just an end of term visit with little or no educational purpose.

15. One of the six pictures chosen was the Feeding of the Five Thousand by Eularia Clarke – a picture which proved to be of interest to a great variety of people and not just children. This gave us the idea of producing a large metallic badge for each child who attended the Exhibition which had part of the picture as the background superimposed with the inscription 'I am one of the five thousand'. Children and volunteers wore these badges on their visit with pleasure and took them home afterwards. A supply of these badges remains and will be used as part of the legacy.

The planning leading up to the Exhibition

16. Detailed planning began in earnest from September 2011. By now the Planning Group had formed a number of small sub-groups – publicity, education, music, spirituality, district events – with lead members. Other planning group members continued to work with the Trustees, the University and the City Council. This section of the report deals with each of these in turn.

17. We recognised how important it would be to have a group of volunteers who would be prepared to offer their services over the four weeks of the Exhibition. Tony Whitman, a Methodist and a retired professional engineer with experience in the planning of exhibitions, volunteered to lead this work and joined the Planning Group in mid - 2011. Volunteers were sought from the District, the Circuit, Fulwood Methodist Church, other churches and from Art Societies and in the event over 100 volunteers were used. Many opportunities were taken to

attract volunteers including a feature on BBC Radio Lancashire's Religious Affairs programme. A programme of off-site training and then on-site induction was provided a month before the Exhibition and immediately before the formal opening. Each day at least five volunteers were on duty and two of them were assigned to work with school parties. In addition one of the lead organisers was always present and sometimes two given the nature of that day's programme. A special emphasis was given in the training and induction to safeguarding issues but after consultation with safeguarding officers in the District/Circuit it was agreed that CRB clearances were not necessary beyond those already available.

18. Publicity began to receive attention late in 2011. We were fortunate to have the services of Jo Hart, a local Methodist, who is a talented graphic designer. She commenced work on a series of images and formats which could be used to publicise both the Exhibition and specific events. Examples of these can be seen at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk . It was helpful too to have adjacent to the St Peters Art Centre the UCLan Print Shop and we were able to negotiate a favourable rate in view of the large volume of printing we envisaged. This arrangement proved to be highly satisfactory to both parties and led to very high quality publicity and material for work with schools being available. The following steps were taken to publicise the event:

- a. Each Methodist Church in the District was sent a paper copy of all publicity
- b. All Churches in the Diocese received an electronic copy
- c. Chairs of District in the region were asked to publicise the Exhibition in their own districts
- d. Churches Together in Lancashire publicised the event both electronically and through posters
- e. Listings appeared in all the City Council Guild publicity
- f. Local press were provided with press releases through the University media services
- g. Radio Lancashire carried two substantial interviews first seeking volunteers then just prior to the opening

- h. Preston FM broadcast interviews with the Exhibition organisers
- i. Attempts were made to have the event placed in the Listings of the major national newspapers (without apparent success).
- j. An article appeared in *The See*, the Blackburn Diocesan newsletter.
- k. Signposting on the campus including additional pop-up banners and a large banner outside the Arts Centre itself.

Additionally, Fulwood Methodist Church has a well-developed web site and we decided to use this to host information about the Exhibition and to offer an email address so that individuals' inboxes were not publicised and over-used. John Butterworth undertook this work for us and continues to ensure that additional information about the Exhibition is on the web-site – including this report.

It is perhaps worth observing that our own research in discussions with visitors suggests that by far the most effective form of publicity was by word of mouth!

19. Work with primary school children was given a high priority and was successful almost beyond our expectations. Individual letters were sent to all Methodist and Methodist/C.E. Schools in the area and to all local schools where we knew either Methodist people had senior posts or where the Circuit was involved with the school. All Church of England schools in the Diocese were contacted separately by the Diocesan office. They were invited to participate in the Exhibition in two ways:

- a. By submitting prior to the Exhibition individual or collective works of art produced by school children based on the theme the Life of Christ inspired by works within the Collection (viewed at this stage via the internet or on posters)
- b. By arranging for a party to visit the exhibition at a selected time reserved for that school.

During the course of our planning we were greatly favoured by an offer from a local artist, Peter Bourne, another local Methodist, to work with the children whilst they were visiting the Exhibition. This has led to the creation of four large murals featuring Jesus and individual self portraits of over 1500 children. These can be seen at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk. They will

be on display, with plaques referring by name to the Methodist Art Collection, in local churches and schools for years to come.

Entries to the art competition were administered by the staff of our local charity Methodist Action North West and were judged (by educators and professional artists) prior to the opening of the exhibition, framed (at cost by a Fulwood Gallery) and displayed throughout the exhibition. Four paintings were chosen along with the overall winner, a charming sculpture of Christ on a donkey. These too will be a lasting legacy of the Guild – although the donkey's life may not be long-lived! Again, these can be viewed at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk A majority of the entries was displayed within the Students' Union building on show to visitors to the Exhibition and to by-passers. Individual prize winners were presented with art materials at the opening ceremony and the two schools whose collective entry were of the greatest merit will each be presented with a framed image from the Collection for permanent display in the school in September.

In the event over 40 primary schools visited the Exhibition. A team of volunteers, led and organised by Jen Farrington, was on hand to welcome them and to show them the areas for bag and coat storage, the working areas and areas where they could safely consume their lunches. Prior to their visit they had sent us precise details of numbers, names of adults accompanying the children and times of expected arrival and departure. Each visiting school was able to study closely six of the paintings, displayed in the chancel area of the Arts Centre in such a way as to provide space for drama, dance and other expressive arts. Children could then see the rest of the Exhibition (often using material produced in the schools themselves to supplement our own booklet) and finally work in the Students' Union on the murals (safely away from the exhibits). As the murals developed they became a feature of interest to others passing through to use the cafeteria – as did the sixty or so shirts provided for the children's protection. For many children simply going into the exhibition space itself was a new event in their lives and the expressions of wonder and amazement were noted by many visitors. Having schoolchildren visit during normal opening hours was a benefit to all sorts of visitors.

(One passing comment is that our experience does not sit easily with the advice over school visits given by the Trustees. Certainly so far as primary schools are concerned the end of the summer term is almost the optimum time for school visits. The same may not be true for the secondary sector.)

20. We wanted music to feature prominently in the Exhibition. Mavis Fletcher, a local Methodist and a trustee for the Association of British Choral Directors, led on this important aspect of the planning. In the Centre itself four mid-day concerts were held – two provided by local schools/colleges, one provided by the Fourie brothers (two young and very talented local musicians) and, for many the highlight, was a performance by Somerville College Choir from Oxford which was on tour in the north-west. Attendance for these varied between 20 and 80 and each concert lasted for approximately 45 minutes. On the final Saturday of the exhibition, a concert was held at Fulwood Methodist Church by a choir which Mavis Fletcher had formed for the occasion including distinguished national and international musicians. A programme of choral works was chosen to complement images from the Collection which were projected for each item. The full programme offered by *Corro del Arte* can be found at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk and this also shows the images used at each stage of the concert.

21. **316** is a modern Christian band based upon Fulwood Methodist Church and they were asked to play two concerts of modern Christian music during the course of the Exhibition. On one Saturday a special event had been arranged which was termed a District Family Day which enabled children and families to work together in various artistic media including puppetry. This event was organised by Sylvia Lee, a Methodist lay worker, and staffed by volunteers from various churches who were prepared to work on different activities with children and young people and by other District and Circuit staff. Peter Bourne, our local artist, was also involved. **316** played a lunchtime set which perhaps had more of an impact than we imagined – that weekend the University had over 2000 visitors to its annual Science Fair and some came through to the hear the music, to enable their children to take part in the activities and then some even chose to visit the Exhibition. The set which **316** played on the Friday night, intended for Methodist and other youth groups, in spite of the barbecue which was provided, was less successful in terms of attracting young people. ***One thing the Trustees may wish to consider is whether there has been sufficient dialogue with representatives of the Youth Conference about how the Collection might be used with young people. Local organisers might welcome some ideas which may emerge from such a dialogue.***

22. On another weekend space was made available for more reflective activities in the Students' Union building. This was promoted as a District Spirituality Day and as part of the District's Year of Prayer. Deacon Anita Shaw and other colleagues and volunteers constructed prayer stations, a prayer tent and labyrinths which linked to some of the exhibits. Attendance was limited but those who came enjoyed it greatly and gave good feedback. Again, publicity and other attractions were significant here.

23. Lectures and guided tours were well received and popular. Peter Forsaith and Graham Kent (twice) each served us well. Professor Himid also offered an evening lecture tour based upon some of the exhibits which had particularly interested her along with reflections on curating an exhibition of this sort (for example the early decision of narrative or artistic contrast). An outstanding evening was enjoyed with Ghislaine Howard (and her husband) with a most illuminating lecture on her approach to art and the history of the development of the image of Jesus washing Peter's feet. Again, we wish more had been there but the intimacy that came from discussion in a smaller group more than compensated. Visits to her studio are being planned.

24. We also offered to receive parties from Churches – house groups, for instance – by special arrangement but this was not an option which met with much response. On occasion volunteers were asked for their understanding of various pictures and this increased the confidence of some volunteers to be more forthcoming when asked or when they saw an opportunity. On some occasions more meaningful discussions did then develop and questions of personal need were raised.

25. The Exhibition was also used to provide a venue for the annual Peake Lecture of the Methodist Church. This has previously been delivered as part of the Methodist Conference programme of activities and this was the first year the pattern had changed. A lecture on Galatians by Dr Peter Oakes of Manchester University attracted additional visitors to the Exhibition from a wide geographical area and took place in the context of the annual cycle of events organised by the Lancashire Theological Society which are usually held in a nearby Methodist Church. Also, Peter Lumsden arranged for the inter-faith forum to hold one of its

regular meetings at UCLan so that the members could come early to view the Exhibition and a number took advantage of that opportunity.

26. The Exhibition provided an opportunity for Circuit worship. Three services were held at 5.00pm on Sundays during the exhibition and each was attended by 20 – 30 people. This enabled the worship leaders to take up themes from the exhibition and to offer their own reflections upon them through readings, music and prayer.

27. It was decided also to have a Christian Bookstall in addition to the material provided for sale via the Trustees. The Preston Christian Book Centre was able to provide stands, notice boards and books which we could sell on a sale-or-return basis and these were carefully chosen by Peter Sheasby and Janet and Ken Wales. Initially we had hoped that this would primarily be a range of books concerning art and religion but PCBC were unable to source many of the books we thought of on a sale or return basis. (Sarah Middleton and Ken Wales had done some prior work on compiling such a list but many of those published in the last twenty years are not in print). In the event several of the leaders provided on loan their personal copies which went into a small reference library available to the public. A children's book stall on the Family Day was worthwhile. PCBC made a significant donation to our funds after the event.

Arrangements for showing the images in Preston

28. This section describes the arrangements for the display of the Collection in St. Peters Art Centre. Early discussion between Professor Himid and Peter Sheasby led to an agreement that they would jointly curate the Exhibition and that the images would be presented chronologically to reflect the narrative of the life of Christ. Only six pictures were not shown in this way – the ones chosen to be of specific interest to visiting schools. As has been suggested, this would perhaps not have been Professor Himid's instinct but nevertheless the arrangement worked well.

29. The format for the Exhibition was based upon a large, white three-dimensional cross laid horizontally on the floor of the main body of the Arts Centre. Initially it was envisaged that this would accommodate all the pictures possibly some being double-banked but on arrival of the Collection it swiftly became clear that this would not work. It was fortunate that two long panels were available to us, painted black, on the inner-side of the walls of the Arts Centre and these rapidly were put into use. The pictures were hung by a number of the University's technical staff, two of whom are connected with Fulwood Methodist Church. Their presentation attracted much favourable comment as did the lighting – overhead artificial lighting could be adjusted to show each image to best effect and controlled by electronic timing devices. The only exception to this was the group of paintings in the chancel where it was necessary to buy immediate overhead light fittings and attach them to the display boards.

30. The Trustees will be gratified to read that the University staff involved, including Professor Himid, were very appreciative of the quality of the art and had no hesitation in saying that this was the most prestigious Collection that had been displayed at UCLan.

31. Each picture was labelled to assist visitors and cross-referenced to the catalogues which were either for sale or could be borrowed. In addition, Christine Odell (Sheasby) had written a prayer for each picture and this was printed in booklet form and offered to people as they came in. A copy of the booklet can be viewed at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk These booklets were very popular and of course echoed some of the work which took place on the Spirituality day. It was noticeable that on some occasions visitors were distracted by the inevitable noises of an open exhibition and once we were requested for a little more silence (not from the children!) to aid prayerful contemplation as people used the booklets.

32. The Collection was transported to us by Cart who also dealt with the removal. The arrangements were very good indeed and the staff friendly and punctual. However, the University have asked us to say that in their experience it is most unusual for such a large Collection to be in the hands of just two people. This places an excessive and unreasonable burden on the staff and volunteers who are receiving the exhibits and who may not be trained to handle such heavy goods.

33. No difficulties were noted with the condition of the works although later two blemishes (one on a frame) were noticed and these were reported to the visiting Trustees and subsequently. There was the occasional comment from visitors about the quality of the framing of a number of exhibits and the use of reflective glass. The programme of renewal being put in place by the Trustees was the burden of our reply.

34. We had made available to ourselves and our volunteers a simple statement which could be shown to visitors who questioned the use of Methodist resources on this Collection. This statement had been agreed beforehand with the Chair of the Trustees and the Connexional Treasurer and was referred to in our volunteer briefing.

35. The Exhibition space worked well. It was dry and reasonably well lit. It was cleaned daily by UCLan staff some of whom actually became rather interested in the exhibits. A system was put in place with University security staff where there was a formal opening, closing and handover of the premises at the beginning and end of each day. The whole complex was covered by CCTV and there were no security issues. Food and drink were not allowed into St Peters and at no time did we feel that the presence of children endangered the exhibits.

36. Generally speaking, the arrangements for working with UCLan worked well but placed a substantial demand upon the Exhibition organisers. This was simply because this is a large organisation with its own culture and communication systems. But attitudes and responsiveness were very good once a problem was identified. Perhaps the most difficult situations arose from the need to undertake emergency repair work on the exterior of St Peters itself which required third party contractors to be involved and severely restricted access for health and safety reasons.

37. Several weeks before the Exhibition opened we realised that more practical difficulties might arise than we had anticipated and furthermore that Peter Lumsden and other Methodists in UCLan could not be expected to abandon their day jobs to deal with them. At that point a decision was made to appoint a paid intern to act as a link between the organisers

and the University. A job description was written with a reporting line to Peter Sheasby, Ken Wales or Tony Whitman depending upon availability. Peter Lumsden acted as an academic mentor to enable this to be more than a job. We were fortunate to identify Faye Sophia Spencer, a second-year Fine Arts student, to perform this role. In due course she proved to be a natural worker with children and helped with many of the school visits. Faye also established a blog on WordPress (with over 100 entries it complemented the visitor book) and this can be read at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk The trustees are aware that all this material has been made available to Carol Dawson, an Open University researcher in London, who is studying visitor response to the Collection. It is probable that Faye will use her experiences in her studies in her final undergraduate year.

38. The Exhibition opened with a private viewing for church leaders, civic dignitaries, senior UCLan staff and volunteers on the evening prior to the public opening. A substantial buffet was offered, paid for from the Exhibition funds and provided by the UCLan catering staff. This event provided an opportunity for speeches including an informative contribution from the Chair of the Trustees. It was also the occasion when we could announce the prize winners and present prizes to them in the presence of their parents and teachers. Atrocious weather did not help our cause, but this was an event enjoyed by over 150 people. A smaller event was held to mark the close of the Exhibition – tea and cake and some presentations to approximately 60 volunteers. Peter Forsaith’s contribution to this was much valued.

39. To reflect their interest and involvement in the Exhibition, the University has produced a short DVD based upon one day in the Exhibition and this is now posted on the University website and YouTube and can also be seen at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk

Concluding comments

40. We are in no doubt that the *Visible Faith* Exhibition has made a substantial contribution to the Preston Guild 2102. Many, if not all, our visionary aims have been met;

- The Exhibition was opened by the Mayor of the City of Preston at a ceremony attended by the Mayoress, civic leaders from South Ribble District Council and Lancashire County Council. At that event, the link with the 2012 Preston Guild was firmly emphasised.
- Church leaders from other denominations and traditions were present and some took part in the opening ceremony
- Over 1700 children (40 primary schools) attended the Exhibition and helped to create the murals which are now being preserved for permanent display
- The art competition based upon the Life of Jesus has provided further works of children's art of a very high quality which again will be a Guild legacy – the murals and the winning entries can be viewed at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk
- Partnership working with the City and UCLan was good and with the Anglican Church very productive. Many people from other Churches were involved as volunteers. Work with other faiths was less successful but a seed has been sown in the University about how this may be developed.
- Adult visitors numbered approximately 1800 – the Director of the Guild Festival tells us we should be delighted by this even if it is a little below our expectation. She writes *'I think that is a real achievement! Compare it to funded museums and galleries and it is remarkable. A big well done to all. We will want to include the children's work in our official Guild Document.'*
- Radio and press coverage was achieved at a time of competing claims for air-time
- Many of the images have already been used to enrich worship during 2012 and we are told of further developments in this respect through Local Preachers' meetings
- Over 100 volunteers were involved, increasing their own experience and confidence and raising interest in the Collection
- Substantial volumes of post cards and catalogues were sold along with other Christian material in partnership with a local Christian bookshop.
- We have not lost money and we have gained a lot of friends and new contacts!

- From personal comments and records in the Visitors' Book and on the blog we know that many people found the pictures deeply challenging (mostly in a positive way), encouraging and life-affirming.
- Some of us found our favourites amongst the Collection and these will stay in our memories for many years.

41. In general the quality of the art in the Collection was recognised and much commented upon. The new acquisitions were of real interest to many people and there was disappointment that postcards of more of the exhibits were not for sale. We permitted photography with the usual warnings and many photographs were taken.

42. Remembering though the emphasis in UCLan on contemporary art there was the occasional comment, especially from academic staff, that this exhibition was exactly as it is entitled – a Collection of Modern Christian Art – and a challenge might be to find pieces in the future which could take the viewer into new realms of perception and thought. All the works had their advocates and these may not be valid generalisations but to the writer of this report it could well be that the pieces which provoked most discussion were the most striking (The Dalit Madonna and The Pool at Bethesda), the most charming (the Annunciation and the Flight to Egypt), the obviously new (Walking on the Water, the Washing of the Feet), the naive and the abstract.

43. It is of course not possible to finish a report of this sort without reference to finance. Our major sources of income have been mentioned above and we did not seek funds from other bodies. The Circuit undertook to underwrite the Exhibition to the extent of £2500 but this has not been necessary to date and seems unlikely. Some accounting is still to be done but we anticipate a surplus of around £500 with the overall cost of the Exhibition being some £8500. It should be recalled however that all accommodation, energy and cleaning costs were borne by UCLan. Neither should we forget that hundreds of hours of volunteer time were provided by very many people working in many different ways. (Appendices are attached which record the names of many of those involved – and we apologise to those who

inadvertently are not included. This list will be placed at www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk and corrections or additions to it can be made on request).

44. Within Lancashire we intend now to give some thought as to how we might support the Trustees in enhancing the Collection so that it continues to support local witness and mission as we feel Visible Faith has done.

Appendix

List of Volunteers for the Methodist Church Collection of Modern Christian Art Exhibition held in Preston June-July 2012

General volunteers assisting with visitors and school parties:

Edna & Ray Armstrong, John Atkins, Jenny Berrill, Anne & Roger Bott, David Breare, Anne Bullick, Yolande Burns, Linda Butterworth, Janice Carney, Allan Clarke, Jackie Clarke, Jo Counsel, David Crane, Dorothy Crane, Janet Cummings, Ian Dewar, Ann Done, Mark Ellery, Mary Fifer, Len Fletcher, Mavis Fletcher, Veronica Frost, Glenda Gilday, Edith Gorst, John Gregory, Ellan Gregory, Mary Gregson, Neville Gregson, Janet Grice, Stephen Grice, Barbara Griffiths, John Griffiths, Joan Hardman, Sue Harris, Ali Harrison, Jo Hart, Judith Harvey, John Hepworth, Yvonne Hepworth, Margaret Hobbs, Harry Hobbs, Barbara Hothersall, Alison Hoyle, Shazana Hussain, Mary Ibison, Myra Iddon, Roy Jolley, Gill Jolley, Pauline Kirkham, Joan Knipe, Anna Kulbacki, Judy Laing, Amanda Latham, Ann Leigh, Edward Lowes, Robert Matthews, Stewart McKinnell, Ann McKinnell, Helen McKinnell, Christine Middleton, Alan Needham, Gerard O'Neil, Chris Oldham, Geoff Oldham, Ann Parkinson, Heather Pratt, Debbie Price, Jacqui Rawlinson, Sandra Robinson, Leslie Ross, Roy Smith, Allan Smith, Alan Smith, Margaret Squire, Norah Stanton, Edmund Stewart, Libby Stone, Susan Szakacs, Margaret Thompson, Dave Topping,

David Turner, Janet Wales, Eric Waterhouse, Delma Whitman, Susan Wilson,
Eric Wolstenholme

Volunteers assisting with District Family Day

Charlotte Lyle, Stephen Parkin, James Wilshaw, Christine Beggs, Alison Adlum, Rachel Dodd,
Tracey, Alice Giles, Doris Giles, Hylda, Fiona Moretta, Sue Harris, Anna Penfold, Jean Nicholls,
Audrey Midgeley, Peter Bourne, Sylvia Lee, Linda Butterworth, Anna Kulbacki

Volunteers assisting with Spirituality day

Rev Deacon Ellen Monk-Winstanley; Deacon Jo Critchley; Deacon Dave Keegan;
Deacon Olive Garnett; Deacon Sylvie Phillips; Deacon Anita Shaw; Shirley Grundon

Volunteers and others involved in musical events

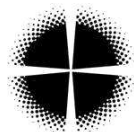
See www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk

Volunteers and others involved in work with the schools

Jen Farrington, Julia Allison, Lisa Fenton, Carol Williams, Yvonne Taylor and her staff,
Annette Cupitt and her staff, Rachel Slaney, Sylvia Lee, Nigel Francis and the staff of
Methodist Action North West.

The Staff of the University of Central Lancashire

Apologies are extended to those who assisted in any way with this exhibition and whose name
does not appear above.



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Crossroads Centre**

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www.fulwoodmethodist.org.uk

