

Chair of Trustees for Reconciliation Initiatives

Introduction

[Reconciliation Initiatives](#) seeks to appoint a new Chair of Trustees, to work in partnership with the Executive Director. We seek a Chair who is enthusiastic about our vision, with suitable leadership and relationship-building skills, who can help move the charity forward as we grow and develop.

Since its public launch in June 2019, Reconciliation Initiatives has had at its heart a vision to support Anglican churches and dioceses in engaging more deeply with their local communities and neighbourhoods, and in contributing to greater reconciliation in society. We offer a route for Anglican churches to address the current missional challenge, and move into the future. We see this as therefore about entering into God's work in the world, and enabling the Church to fulfil more of her calling. Our next Chair of Trustees will help us to shape the on-going direction of the charity's work, as well as the culture of the organisation.

Since our launch, the charity has worked with 31 leaders from 10 different Dioceses across England, Wales and Scotland, primarily through a development programme called *Reconciling Mission*. This is designed for Anglican clergy sponsored in groups of four by their diocesan bishop. After an initial residential learning week, programme participants meet online in facilitated small groups for ongoing coaching. This aims to support participants with follow up implementation of their learning, working in collaboration with local lay people. We provide valuable inspiration and accompaniment for the journey, along with gentle accountability.

As a smaller charity, which started fairly recently, we are delighted by what has been achieved to date, under the challenging circumstances of the pandemic, and we look forward to the next stages of our development under the guidance of our next Chair.

In future, it is possible that the charity might expand to work in southern and/or east Africa, in collaboration with local African partners. However, the pandemic has raised questions about how realistic this may be, which we expect the new Chair to help us explore.

The charity employs two part-time staff, an executive director and an administrator, and also works with a group of associates who help deliver residential learning events and ongoing group coaching using an action learning model. The charity works, in several ways, in partnership with Coventry Cathedral, where its office was based until the start of the pandemic. Both of the charity's staff now work fully from home.

The Executive Director is Alastair McKay, who has a long track record of delivering adult learning and development programmes for church leaders. Initially one of the founding trustees, Alastair has been director of Reconciliation Initiatives since May 2019.

This document provides details of the role and of the type of person that we seek, along with some key information about the charity. Please contact our director, using the details at the end, if you would like to express an interest in the role of Chair of Trustees, especially during October and November 2021.

Chair of Trustees for Reconciliation Initiatives

Role Description and Main Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide leadership to the charity and its Board of Trustees, in partnership with the Executive Director, to ensure that the charity works to fulfil its charitable objects.
- Provide line management of the Executive Director, and ensure that the Executive Director has support in setting priorities and working for the charity's purpose.
- Ensure that the Board maintains clarity about the charity's purpose and core values, and that decisions taken by the Board advance the charity's purpose.
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to maintain the sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability, and timely reporting to the Charity Commission.
- Occasionally, represent the charity at an external function, meeting or event.

Relationship-Building

- Establish and maintain a strong and effective working relationship with the Executive Director, while ensuring that s/he is held to account for achieving agreed objectives.
- Maintain regular contact with the Executive Director and develop an honest relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns and challenges.
- Facilitate productive relationships with and among individual Board members, and enable the Board of Trustees to work well together as a mutually respectful group.
- Encourage Bishops and senior staff to sponsor participants in future programmes.
- Invite potential donors to contribute to the charity's finances.

Governance and Decision-Making

- Chair meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively, efficiently and impartially so that decisions are reached by the Board on a well-founded basis.
- Work with the Executive Director to ensure that Board meetings are well planned, useful and meaningful, and to give direction to the Board's policy-making.
- Ensure that the Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.
- Manage potential conflicts of interest to ensure that probity is maintained and that there is appropriate transparency in the charity's decision-making.
- Ensure that the Board is periodically refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge, diversity and experience needed to govern the charity effectively.

- Remuneration: The role of Chair is a voluntary position, without financial remuneration. Travel and other essential expenses may be claimed in accordance with the charity's policy for trustees' expenses.
- Location: The charity is based in Coventry, where the Administrator lives; the Executive Director lives in London. Trustees' meetings are held either in London or Coventry when in-person; these meetings will now typically alternate between online and in-person meetings.
- Time commitment: Four Board meetings per year. Additionally, the Chair is expected to have regular conversations with the Executive Director; and occasionally to represent the charity at a public event. Trustees, including the Chair, usually serve a (renewable) three-year term.
- Reporting to: The Board of Trustees.

Person Specification

Along with the qualities required of a Trustee of the charity, the right candidate will be a person of solid Christian faith and prayer, who is:

- Able to listen well, be flexible, and show tact and diplomacy;
- Able to foster a collaborative working approach with others;
- Capable of handling contentious issues, and of engaging constructively with differences of view;
- Able to grasp the 'big picture' and share this with others;
- Firmly committed to the charity's objectives;
- Comfortable leading a charity that is operating nationally; and
- Able to network with other people and organisations for the charity's benefit.

Who will demonstrate:

- Proven experience of chairing meetings;
- Experience of charity governance and working as part of a Board of Trustees;
- Experience of Anglican systems and structures, especially within Britain;
- Experience of operating at a senior leadership level within an organisation;
- A positive track record over their working or ministerial life; and
- Some experience of external representation and delivering presentations.

And who has the following:

- Strong inter-personal skills and the ability to build relationships;
- Proven leadership and facilitation skills, and the ability to lead others;
- Knowledge and understanding of Anglican churches, systems and structures; and
- The scope to commit the time needed to conduct the role well, including the time to travel to in-person trustee meetings, overall averaging 4-8 hours a month.

Reconciliation Initiatives: Background Information

Charitable Objects

Reconciliation Initiatives (RI) is a registered charity in England, number 1174154. RI was formed as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in August 2017, and publicly launched in June 2019 at an event held at Lambeth Palace. The objects of the charity are:

To advance the Christian faith and in particular the gospel of redemption and reconciliation for the benefit of the public, by every available means, including, but not exclusively, through:

- a) the provision of training and education in the principles and practices of Christian relationship, community building, peacemaking and reconciliation; and
- b) in furtherance of the above, the provision of advice, consultancy and other services, to Christian church leaders, members and others including, but not limited to, those Christians who are members of churches within the world-wide Anglican Communion.

Reconciling Mission Programme

RI's principal offering at present is a programme entitled *Reconciling Mission*. This was originally intended to be one of two development programmes which formed a wider Anglican Peacemaking Institute (API). The second programme was provisionally entitled *Practical Peacemaking*, and was intended to be offered in southern and eastern Africa. However, the second programme is currently under review, in light of the pandemic.

The *Reconciling Mission* programme is intended as a contribution to helping Anglican churches face today's missional challenges. This recognises that there is a need to respond to social hardship and inequalities, increased since the economic crisis of 2008, and compounded by the ongoing viral pandemic. Added to this are the ongoing environmental issues facing the world, and a heightened awareness of racial injustice. The programme seeks to contribute to the emerging future of the church, in the light of the Covid-19 disruption, while connecting with the enduring five Anglican marks of mission.

The *Reconciling Mission* programme resources participants with a vision for mission as a journey towards greater reconciliation in the world, marked by deep engagement with local communities, drawing on an asset-based community development approach. The programme is offered to Anglican Dioceses in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. When participating, the diocesan Bishop and senior staff sponsor a group of four participants, typically experienced parish clergy from their diocese.

The Reconciling Mission programme begins with a week-long residential course of learning which incorporates:

- A dynamic adult learning course, integrating theological reflection;
- Biblical study led by Anglican speakers; and
- Anglican worship, morning and evening.

The residential venue is carefully chosen to facilitate community-building outside the formal sessions. Currently the venue is Launde Abbey in Leicestershire.

The residential course is followed up with on-going coaching for participants over 18 months. They meet together online every couple of months in small groups, using a facilitated action learning process, led by the director or one of RI's associates. This enables participants to keep working at implementing their learning, in collaboration with local lay people. The process provides both support and challenge along the journey, as well as companionship and diverse dialogue partners. In between the action learning groups there are occasional webinars, to provide inspiration and maintain contact; and an annual day conference held at Coventry Cathedral, for the cohort that is mid-way through the programme, and the cohort which has most recently completed the programme.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation work is being carried out by an independent researcher, Dr Joanna Sadgrove.

The first cohort of the *Reconciling Mission* programme, which began in July 2020, comprises four groups from the dioceses of Coventry, Gloucester, Llandaff, and a cross-diocesan group from the Scottish Episcopal Church. The second cohort, which began in June 2021, comprises four groups from the dioceses of Ely, Hereford, Lichfield and St Asaph. Recruitment for the third cohort starts in the autumn of 2021.

Public Webinars

In 2021, RI has piloted a series of [occasional webinars](#) in collaboration with [HeartEdge](#), a network for renewal coordinated by St Martin-in-the-Fields. The most recent of these webinars, on building bridges across Europe, was also co-sponsored by Coventry Cathedral. In future years such public webinars are likely to continue, probably once a quarter.

Staff and Associates

RI employs two part-time staff: an Administrator, Debbie Niblett, who lives in Coventry; and an Executive Director, Alastair McKay, who lives in London. Alastair has a long track record of delivering adult learning and development programmes for church leaders. Previously he headed up [Bridge Builders](#) for nearly 20 years, until ordination in the Church of England in 2015. He is author of the book, [Bridgebuilding](#); and he is licensed as a self-supporting minister in the Diocese of London.

In addition, RI works with a group of [associates](#) who currently include:

- Barbara Macnish, an independent coach, mediator and facilitator;
- Lia Shimada, a mediator and community practitioner;
- Liz Holdsworth, an independent facilitator and a programme leader in York Diocese;
- Al Barrett, rector of Hodge Hill Church, an Anglican-URC partnership in east Birmingham, and co-author of [Being Interrupted](#); and
- Paul Wright, a community animator with the Open Door Community Foundation in east Birmingham.

The *Reconciling Mission* residential learning week also includes visiting speakers.

Trustees

The current [Board of Trustees](#) for RI comprises:

Revd Canon **Tricia Hillas** (Acting Chair), Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, and a Canon of Westminster Abbey.

Revd **Adeola Eleyae**, Director of St Mellitus College, Chelmsford and Vicar of All Saints, Goodmayes in the Diocese of Chelmsford.

Mr **Iain Nettleton** (Treasurer), a partner with BDO, an accountancy and business advisory firm, who leads BDO's International Projects Group.

Revd **Karen West**, a curate in the Diocese of Winchester, and a recently retired independent consultant with extensive experience in learning and development.

Mr **Mark Simmons**, Lead Parish Giving Advisor in the Diocese of Hereford, and chair of the UK and Ireland board of the Community of the Cross of Nails.

Dr **Teresa Dumasy**, Director of Policy and Learning at Conciliation Resources, who leads their work on thematic policy engagement, internal learning and strategy.

Until recently the Chair of Trustees was the Rt Revd Peter Price, a former Bishop of Bath and Wells, who stepped down as Chair of RI in 2021, because of increased caring responsibilities.

This is a group of committed Trustees who bring a range of experience and interests, and who enjoy contributing to the discussions in trustees' meetings.

Finances

The charity's operating budget for 2021 is £71,000, with a projected budget for 2022 of £81,000 to £87,000 depending on the size of the *Reconciling Mission* third cohort.

The finances of the charity are in a healthy state, with a current account balance of £60,000 and reserves of £100,000 in a savings account. In these early stages of its development, the charity has primarily been supported by donations from private individuals who have shared the vision for the charity, and by grants from a couple of grant-giving trusts.

Expressing an Interest in Chair of Trustees Role

If you would like to express an interest in the Chair of Trustees role with RI, please contact our director, Alastair McKay, at director@reconciliation-initiatives.org, or text him on +44 (0)7999 492511 to arrange a time to speak. We especially welcome contact in October or November 2021.

After an initial conversation followed by a meeting in-person with the Executive Director, the next step would be an online conversation with a representative group of the Trustees, before a recommendation is made to the full Board. The hope is to have a new Chair in place early in 2022.