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Churches will be encouraged to host informal café-style meetings over the weekend of 30th March to bring together people of all standpoints and encourage open discussion.

Backed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, newly-commissioned resources launched today invite people to 'get together and chat over a cup of tea and pray for our country and our future'.

Under the slogan 'together,' the packs include specially-chosen Bible passages, new prayers and prompt questions to start conversations.

Questions for those attending include: 'What effect has Brexit had in your family relationships, friendships etc and if you disagreed, has it been possible to disagree well?' and: 'What are the three main things we have in common that we can build on for a better future as a community and as a nation?'

Introductory notes for those taking part urge respect for the integrity of differently held positions, encouraging communities which feel the same about the issues to use their imagination to consider the viewpoints of those who feel differently.

The packs also include flyers, graphics for social media, and invitations which can be personalised for local use.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "As followers of Jesus Christ we are called to demonstrate that love for God and for each other, along with compassion, solidarity and care for the poorest, are our defining values. These values have been the bedrock of our national life for many centuries. They are not simply our history: they are also our best hope for the future.

"For this reason, a century from now the Church will be remembered for how it responded at this crucial moment in the life of our nation and country. Will we be those who worked to defuse tension and hostility? Will we be those who called for civility and respect in how we speak about, and treat, each other? Will we be those who never stopped praying with urgency and hope for our country, our communities and our political leaders – and for a way forward that allows every person, family and community to flourish?

"This is an opportunity for the Church of England to join together in prayer for God's kingdom to come, and for the good of all in society. I hope that each of us will take hold of these resources to help us pray for our country at this critical time."

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu said: "St Paul advises and urges Timothy to 'offer petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for everyone, for sovereigns, and for all in high office so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life, free to practice our religion with dignity. Such prayer is right, and approved by God our Saviour, whose will it is that all should find salvation and come to know the truth...' (1 Timothy 2:2 ff). Beloved in Christ, let us also pray without ceasing."

The resources, which have been prepared by the Church of England's Liturgical Commission and Mission and Public Affairs teams can be downloaded from churchofengland.org/together

Notes for editors

- Resources

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