

Minutes of the Walton Churches Partnership Council Meeting

19th June 2019 at 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Wavendon

Present: Rev. Matt Trendall (Chair), Rev. Ruth Maxey, Lynn Atkinson, Ann Beaton, Joyce Fennell, Ayokunnu Otunla, Steve Potter, Carolyn Sanderson, Emma Tyler, Sue Wilson.

Apologies: Klaus Reidel, Rev. Keith Straughan.

Welcome and apologies

Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting, and opened with prayer.

- 1. Approval of Minutes of last meeting** – 28th January 2019. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

Regarding the Minutes of the AGM on 3rd May, Lynn Atkinson had two points to raise:

- Item 3.0 – highlights from CtK – “Café Church is also a positive force.” This should say, “Carol singing is also a positive force.”
- Item 5 – representatives for Mission Partnership at CtK – says “Lynn Atkinson + one vacancy.” Should say, “Lynn Atkinson + Jo Watson.”

2. Matters Arising

- *Welcome to Steve Potter, new CtK Community Church rep. and thanks to Julia.* Steve Potter was welcomed to the meeting for the first time in many years. He replaces Rachael Jenkins as rep for CtK. Julia Davie, our former Treasurer, was emigrating to Canada at the end of the week. Matt wanted to minute his thanks for all of Julia's hard work. Matt welcomed Emma, from CWW, as our new Treasurer.
- *Lent Book/Groups/Series review* – Many read the book “Season for the Spirit”. 90 copies were sold across the WCP. Thanks go to Lynn for sourcing a stock of brand-new copies being sold for £2 each. The book was discussed in Home Groups, and Ruth M. set up a *What's App* group for her community at CWW. Reviewing the event, comments included:
 - A very rich, dense read;
 - Hard to read just on your own without discussion with others;
 - Some useful ‘nuggets’ that stood out;
 - Better to join a group;
 - Some just read the *What's App* comments rather than the book itself;
 - Not specifically a Lent Book – could be used at another time of the year;

- Perhaps next year, could extend the *What's App* group across the WCP.
- *Thy Kingdom Come* – Matt had encouraged congregations to take a prayer card and pray for 5 x people they know between the 10 days of Ascension and Pentecost. 100 such cards were taken up. Matt apologised that he had not had time to organise other events. Lynn suggested choosing one person from each congregation to take on organising an event in future. The website for *Thy Kingdom Come* had lots of ideas and suggestions.
- *WCP Membership renewal update* – Matt reported that while most forms have been received, a few were still trickling in. Thanks to Ruth for designing the form. As a result of this exercise, extra people had taken up membership.
- *WCP BBQ Sunday 21st July 3.30pm -6.30pm at Wavendon Rectory.* Food will be served from 4.30pm. Please bring a dessert/pudding if possible. £2 for adults, and £1 for children. Ruth offered to advertise via Facebook.
- *Ruth Gookey's induction Sat 7th September 3pm – update and plans.*
 - Steve and Lynn have been working on designing an invitation card to send out to all appropriate contacts;
 - The Pastoral Group are working on a Welcome Pack for Ruth;
 - Steve is liaising with the Ministerial Team to generate a list of key contacts for Ruth. Ruth M said that there was a Ministerial Team Away Day at the end of August, so conversation regarding this could be continued then with Ruth G.;
 - Matt is liaising with Alan Bird regarding the Ministerial rota from September onwards;
 - Ruth G will have to understand the work of CWW, and it was suggested that she could be invited to Dinner Church (4th Sunday of the month);
 - Steve also said it was important for Ruth G to be introduced to the Catholic Team. Matt will ask Klaus about this;
 - Ruth G officially starts work on 15th August 2019. Emma is currently dealing with setting Ruth up on payroll but, thereafter, the WCP will be using a Payroll Services company.

3. Finance

- *Approval of final 2018 accounts* – Emma reported that there were no major concerns. Without having to pay a minister for CtK for the past 3 years, this has allowed us to accumulate funds. We now have a healthy £95k in the bank.

Resolution 1 – To approve the accounts for 2018

Proposed by: Sue Wilson

Seconded by: Ann Beaton

Agreed unanimously

- *Update on Twinflower* - Ruth G and family would be moving into the Manse on 23rd July, and Peter Laws had ensured that all works would be completed by then. Ruth G had given 3 x quotes for moving expenses. All such matters had been agreed.
- *Update on Insurance renewal 2019-20* – Emma had renewed the insurance for another year with the same insurer as before. This year there had been a slight increase in premium at £800.72. Steve wanted to know what the insurance covered. This WCP insurance covers all our Walton Churches for public liability. Emma will email the insurance certificate to Matt and Lynn to display in their churches.
- *Any other financial feedback from congregations* –
 - i. Matt reported that St Mary's Chancel roof had been repaired in the past couple of months at a cost of £72k. Milton Keynes Council had been very generous in giving us a grant to fund this project. There were also plans to create a Garden of Rest.
 - ii. As Director of WCP Housing Ltd, Steve had sent off insurance paperwork to Company House.

4. Mission and Ministry

- *CtK Mission Review update* – Lynn reported that CtK's focus on "Where are we now?" began with sending out a questionnaire to church members, followed by a meeting for the whole congregation. Notes were taken to record ideas and opinions. A 2nd meeting was held last Tuesday to continue the theme, though attendance was disappointing. The gathering was asked to do some 'blue-sky thinking'. These ideas were matched against indicators that had emerged earlier on in the process. After this Sunday's service (23rd June), there will be follow-up in order to

crystallise ideas and generate objectives, that is, come up with what the church will actually do.

- *All Saints Go4th update* – Carolyn explained that Go4th had now been going for 2 years. One event, several months ago, had been a talk on environmental issues. This has grown into an initiative to liaise with the local schools, and look at the issue of plastic, in particular. Children’s awareness will be raised by getting them to consider re-purposing single use plastic items, which will culminate in an exhibition at All Saints in the autumn. Schools have already been contacted and are keen to participate.

- *CWW Reference Group report* – As a member of this group, Steve has been focused on the Special Category Post of Ruth’s role. It seems perfect sense to request a further extension of 2 years, in addition to Ruth’s current 5-year extension, so that her presence dovetails with the new Pioneer Minister arriving. This has been flagged up to the Diocesan Pastoral Committee in Oxford. Ruth is cautiously optimistic, although she can foresee financial implications for the WCP in the future.

- Other CWW updates:
 - Sue reported on the Lyfe Groups that have recently been set up. There are currently 7 groups comprising of 3-4 individuals each who meet at various intervals. An hour is spent discussing faith and other life issues;
 - Relax Teens – Ruth has been trying to find a suitable model to follow. Through craft activities, massage, and guided meditation, teens are able to find some time just for themselves. Sessions finish with prayer. The first meeting on a Sunday was held from 2pm-4pm at the Hummingbirds Children’s Centre. It already feels like an outreach initiative;
 - Language Café – this is run in partnership with Hummingbirds Children’s Centre, aimed specifically at those for whom English is their second language. This venture has drawn in a number of volunteers.

- *Wavendon Pioneer Post update* – Tim Norwood, Area Dean, is keen to take this issue forward, although the question of financing the housing seems to be the current issue. The request to buy a house on Eagle Farm, for this new post, has to pass through 2 x sub-committees before going before a strategic body who, hopefully, will approve the money in September. Matt reported that several positive links had already been established on Eagle’s Rest. A small team comprising of Melvyn, Ope, Ruth M. and himself, are much involved with the new school building, and have permission to hold a Coffee Morning in the

school. All building is on target, and 80 children will be moving in by September.

As for the old school site, the Parish Council are taking over most of the space. The present nursery, which runs at the Community Hall, will relocate to the back classrooms. Matt is working hard to try to secure some office space for the church.

- *Bid for lay post recommendation* – with regard to the Diocese of Oxford considering significant investment in Milton Keynes, a small WCP team was put together to consider our specific needs. Another pioneer post was ruled out, given current trends. A ministry for youth work was attractive, but recent experience with recruitment had had its problems. “There was strong support for the idea of an Operations Manager, who could release more capacity for ministry among existing members.”

Resolution 2: That an Operations Manager would constitute our best ‘bid’ should we be offered the opportunity by the Diocese of Oxford in the near future.

Proposed by: Lynn Atkinson

Seconded by: Ayokunnu Otunla

Agreed unanimously

- *Youth Café Proposal* – Ruth has been working with Marco, of the Pulse franchise, to organise a dedicated service where teenagers can meet. Ruth is hoping that the Parish Council will finance the majority of set-up and maintenance costs, though the WCP will need to find a specific venue and pay for it. The Youth Café is proposed to operate over 36 weeks of a year on Monday evenings. At £30 per session, venue costs would be approximately £1080.00 annually. This was put to the WCP Council who responded unanimously in favour.
- *Taize Pilgrimage* – Ruth is taking 2 x families to France this August for a week. Ruth said she was prepared to open up the opportunity to any 18-30 year olds from the WCP.
- *Partnership-wide Autumn Alpha Course* – It was several years since the WCP had held an Alpha event, and it had always been well attended. Matt was aware that there was a need for this kind of teaching. Being aware that the Confirmation course and Alpha course had much overlap in terms of their content, Matt proposed to amalgamate the two, and offer a 10-week course held, hopefully, at CtK on Wednesday evenings, starting from 25th September

2019. This would mean that the course would end in time for the Confirmation Service on 17th November at 6pm. St Mary's has been asked to host this event this year.

- *Week of Guided Prayer 2020* – Ruth thought it was time to start considering dates and finance for this event. The venue will be the key issue, as St Michael's Priory is closing over the next few months. A provisional date of week commencing 15th June 2020 was set. We need to identify Prayer Guides and contact them regarding their availability. It cost the WCP £300 last time to reimburse the Prayer Guides for their travelling expenses and present them with a small gift. The Council agreed in principle.

5. AOB – Safeguarding

- The rules regarding who should have a DBS, have recently changed to include a much wider range of people. Anyone who is customer-facing in church needs to undertake on-line training. The Diocese of Oxford's website gives a list of who should do which course, that is, C0 or C1;
- There is also a requirement, from today, for churches to place their Safeguarding policy on the front page of their website. Matt has already done this for St Mary's and All Saints. Steve Potter agreed to action this on behalf of CtK. CWW will set up a small safeguarding group in order to ensure that the wide mix of vulnerable people in their congregation are covered;
- The Bridgebuilder Trust in Milton Keynes are currently working with Year 6 children to prepare them for secondary school, by distributing booklets to Primary schools. Matt asked if the WCP Council were willing to sponsor these booklets. St Mary's will cover St Mary's CofE school and Wavendon Gate school; All Saints will cover Middleton and Monkston and Oakgrove; CtK can cover Heronsgate School, although Steve preferred to take the matter to the Stewards at CtK first of all.

6. Date/Time of Next Meetings

The next meeting of the WCP Council will be on **Wednesday, 11th September 2019**. Venue: St Mary's at **7.30pm**.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.