

Minutes of the Walton Churches Partnership Council Meeting

15th January 2020 at 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Wavendon

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

Absent: Klaus Reidel, Rev. Keith Straughan.

Welcome and apologies

Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1. Approval of Minutes of last meeting** – 12th November 2019. The previous minutes were approved without comment.

2. Matters Arising

- Unity Party – this will take place on Saturday, 18th January. Last minute preparations were discussed e.g. have enough people signed up to help with the various duties of setting up, washing up and clearing away, and helping with car parking? Donation baskets will be positioned as necessary;
- Church Statistics - Steve Potter has been collating these for the past 6 years. The main challenge is that different denominations provide their figures in different formats. Nonetheless, Steve suggested reviewing past years' statistics in an attempt to recognise any trends or patterns;
- Safeguarding Training Update – Matt has recently received further papers on this topic which he will address in due course. There are spaces available for 80 people to attend the training. This will take place on 28th March at 10.00am until 1.00pm at CTK. Those volunteering to be DBS Verifiers include:
 - *All Saints, - Ayokunnu Otunla*
 - *St Mary's – Joyce Fennell*
 - *CWW – 2 people*
 - *CTK – Rachael Jenkins*
- Environmental Policy feedback/updates from churches – Matt thanked Lynn for all of her hard work on this. At our last WCP meeting (12th November 2019), we agreed that, while we should have broad overall principles, details should be fine-tuned at each congregational level. Sue Wilson reported that Sue Maddox, from MK Council, had left some useful material with her. There had been much discussion at CWW. The main issue is that, despite lots of ideas, it is not yet clear which materials the Council will accept as compostable. For example, it is worth noting that most tea bags contain some measure of plastic. Lynn said that Clipper teabags are plastic-free. Ruth G. planned to start off discussions on recycling at CTK in 2 weeks' time.

ACTION: Lynn and Catherine intend to set up a display table at CTK showing common goods that are recyclable. They are willing to take this display around the WCP churches.

Charity Recycling MK, in Downs Barn, will recycle many items that are presently un-recyclable. This service is free. *Terracycle* is another such company, but they charge for their service.

The whole topic of recycling and buying environmentally-friendly goods is overwhelming. Where do we start? The best advice is to choose just one thing, and focus on that alone; then, move onto something else.

Matt reported that All Saints had made a very good start with their plastic-free exhibition. As a church, we need to set an example. Our churches can each audit their usage of energy and other consumables.

- *CIO registration update* – little news has been forthcoming so far. With a 2021 deadline, we need to make progress soon.
- *WCP Bursary Fund final application form and committee* – recruitment for committee members is in progress. Trish Rosewell has volunteered from St Mary's, and there are a couple of people from CWW. By the next WCP Meeting, the committee members all need to be in place so that the WCP Council can endorse it. Ruth will send out Bursary Forms.

3. Finance and Admin

- *Finance update* – Emma reported that we have £13,243.62 in our current account and £88,728.37 in our holding account.
- *Note re. CTK rebate for 2019* – Emma had received an email from CTK requesting £4k to balance their books. (The WCP were prepared to give up to £5k). Emma will ensure that these monies are transferred to CTK. Everything else is up to date.

4. Mission and Ministry

- *Pioneer Post update* – Matt, Ruth M, Melvyn Letts, and Tim Norwood met with Will Donaldson from the Diocese recently. Will Donaldson will put forward the final detail by the end of February. However, some very worrying news was delivered from the Diocese: that funding, for this new Pioneer post, is now only available for 5 years, and not for the 10 years that was originally promised! This changes many plans and assumptions, and Matt would like an Extraordinary Meeting of the WCP Council to be called in early February to discuss the repercussions of this news, and how it might be dealt with. Meanwhile, Tim will ask the Archdeacon if he can give any reassurances that financial help will be forthcoming from year 6.

There is now a team of 8 people in place to put together the profile for the new minister.

- *Eagles Rest initial work and future plans* – there is a core group of people who meet at the regular Wednesday Coffee morning (9.00-

10.00am) in the new school. The Carol singing event, before Christmas, went really well with 44 people turning up. Ruth G felt it was important for any new events on Eagles Rest to be video-ed so that our congregations could be made aware of this new growth.

- Youth Café update – Ruth M. was very disappointed that all her efforts to get this up and running had come to nought. Her contact, Marco, had not told her that there was a deadline by which to submit all of her ideas, and the Parish Council had been very slow to progress the project.
- CWW Reference Group – The Reference Group has not yet met since the last WCP Council meeting. At that meeting, (12th November 2019) the Council were informed that the URC want to recognise CWW in a formal manner. However, the wording of a statement had proved problematic, given that the URC is a traditional, single denomination, and CWW is a new, ecumenical body. Since then, Ruth had put some suggested wording together, which she read out to the Council.

Proposed: that Ruth Maxey's wording, to formally recognise CWW as an ecumenical congregation by the United Reformed Church, should be put forward at the URC General Assembly in Birmingham on 10-13th July 2020

Unanimously agreed by WCP Council

- Redeeming our Communities open meeting Monkston Park
A Christian group, which came together almost 20 years ago in Manchester, has been invited by Thames Valley Police (TVP) to work within Milton Keynes. Back in 2000, this group launched a project called *The Message* which achieved some amazing transformational work in the Manchester local community. This work was so impressive that Liverpool police contacted them to replicate this work in their communities. Now, TVP have been granted some money to transform communities within Milton Keynes.
There will be an introductory event on 5th February in Monkston Community Centre from 7.00-9.00pm, which will take the form of a highly structured, facilitated conversation.
- Bible Course 2020 – Matt has ordered the booklets which should arrive very shortly. Those wishing to undertake the course, are invited to buy their own copy at a cost of £5 each.
- Ash Wednesday services and other Lent/Easter events – the Ashing service this year will be held at St Mary's at 10.30am, and will be open to all from the Partnership. There will also be an Ashing Service at CTK, but Ruth G needs to consult Father Francis first of all.
- Week of Guided Prayer – this is likely to be held at CTK this year, as St Michael's Priory is very uncertain as a venue. Father Francis is happy with this.

- Walton Grange – Ruth M put Ruth G in touch with Ian from Community Action. Ruth G is currently exploring what CTK can do to be involved in this very small estate, where there is currently no greenery or park, or other amenities;
- Craft Church – Discussions have been ongoing at All Saints as regards progressing their Go4th initiative. One idea has been to undertake some craft work of various kinds to bring people into the church. If there are any crafters that we know, or if we enjoy craft work ourselves, then please let Matt know so that this initiative can get underway.

5. Updates/feedback from around the churches

All Saints – Café Church has started, and new people have come in.

- Carol singing around Middleton was very good.

St Mary's – The Confirmation service was held on 17th November and was very well attended. The service was very emotional for the candidates and their families.

CWW – new people are joining the church.

- CWW are putting on a charity event in aid of MK's 'Winter Night Shelter' and 'Embracing the Middle East'.
- Milton Keynes Brass Band will be playing on Saturday, 22nd February.

CTK – On 25th November, the Ecumenical congregation celebrated the Feast of Christ the King with the Catholic congregation. There was a 'Bring and Share lunch, which went very well.

- Carol singing at Tesco, before Christmas, raised £229.30 for Willen Hospice.
- Following the Alpha Course, Andre was baptised (full immersion).
- The church hosted a talk by 'Operation South America' which aims to help girls from Paraguay.
- Ruth M. will be giving a talk on 22nd February about working out in the community.

6. AOB.

- a) Following the retirement of Peter Meek as Moderator of the East Midlands Synod, to whose leaving we gave a donation, Lynn mentioned that the Property Secretary was also moving on. Since we do not have a URC property as part of the Partnership, we decided not to send a donation;
- b) Ann said that she had been notified that Rev Dawn Saunders, of Woughton Parish, is moving to a role in the Channel Islands in the summer. The name of her replacement is Edson Dube.

7. Date/Time of Next Meeting – Extraordinary Meeting

4th February 2020 at 9.00am – 10.30am at St Mary's, Wavendon – to discuss Pioneer Post specifically.

The meeting closed with prayer.