

Walton Churches Partnership Council

Minutes 1st December, 2021 at 7.30pm by Zoom

Present: Klaus Reidel, Revd. Ruth Maxey, Revd. Ruth Gookey, Stephen Potter, Sue Wilson, Jonathan Bailey, Revd. Matt Trendall, Ayokunnu Otunla, Lynn Atkinson, Ann Beaton (Chair), Carolyn Sanderson, Emma Tyler, Susan Ringsell (minutes)

Opening Prayer

1. Approval of minutes to last meeting (15th September, 2021) and Matters Arising from these minutes not covered by the Agenda

The minutes of the meeting of the 15th September, 2021 were agreed.

Matters Arising:

Living in Love and Faith: Ann apologised for not sending round an information leaflet but realised that what she had thought was a leaflet was the LLF Course material. Carolyn said it was a five-session course which could be accessed on-line with a short video. She felt it was a wider issue than human sexuality and would send the link to Ann to circulate to members.

Matt said there is going to be a big debate at General Synod and every parish has been invited to make a submission although he hadn't at this time. There is lots of discussion material from other denominations and it was felt this might be helpful to members. The Week of Christian Unity may present a further opportunity to look at this issue.

It was felt that we would look at this at our next in-person meeting. Would members please look at the material by the end of January 2022.

2. Review of CIO

Ann reported that the CIO Group had met on the 30th November and their recommendation to the Partnership was that we begin the process of converting to a CIO. This was unanimously agreed. The WCP would hold a membership meeting across the partnership to explain what is going to happen. This was proposed by Revd. Ruth Maxey and seconded by Revd. Ruth Gookey.

3. Safeguarding

Nothing to report

4. Finance

i Financial position to date

Emma – We are sound and there are no issues. The proposed budgeted loss for next year includes the extra money we were going to add to our parish share to aid other parishes struggling to pay their share. Emma said she is not concerned for next year. Everyone's share has been agreed and it was proposed that we give an additional £4,609 to our 2022 share to the Deanery to make it £66,000. This was proposed by Revd. Matt Trendall, seconded by Ann Beaton and unanimously agreed.

ii Draft updated Reserves Policy: for ratification

Emma said all changes requested in the last meeting had been made and sent around, no updates. It is fine for the auditors.

Revd. Ruth Maxey proposed the policy be ratified, seconded by Revd. Ruth Gookey.

iii **Budget and shares for 2022**

Emma said she had finalised the budget. It is reporting a loss but includes the extra share payment. We're still in a good position compared to other places in MK. Everyone's share had been agreed and they're happy. Shares shown on screen.

Revd. Matt Trendall asked if members were happy to give a little extra (see item 4 i) for next year. Matt proposed and Steven Potter seconded and all agreed.

5. CWW Reference Group

Steve Potter said the Reference Group met on the 23rd September, supporting Ruth M and Church without walls. The number of people attending CWW activities varied week by week and quite a few new families had come to join during the pandemic. Activities like Zoom Kids and Teens have been important. The finances and pattern of giving still remain a concern. Carolyn said that what struck her was how much the church was doing with events going on all through the week. It wasn't just Sunday that people took part in and it made a difference. It was very impressive. The Reference Group plan to meet again in January before the next WCP meeting (provisional date 5th January).

Ruth M said she was part of an expanded guidance group led by Jenny Mills, a URC Minister. Ruth M said she is funded in a particular way that isn't a cost the WCP.

6. Ministry

i. **50th Anniversary of the United Reform Church (CWW)**

Ruth M said we should do something about this for next year – heart of URC. There is a big celebration at the Methodist Central Hall on the 2nd October therefore October is probably the date of the actual birthday. Let's think about how we can celebrate this milestone.

ii. **Review of recent events**

Apprentice Course

Matt said the course went well with six core attendees. Two of the attendees were confirmed which is great.

Thanksgiving/Memorial Services/Remembrance

Matt said he was surprised there weren't more people but it was a valuable exercise. Ruth G said it went very well.

iii. **Advent and Christmas**

Ruth G said CTK had an Advent small group and there will be a Joint carol service with the Catholic congregation again this year and in person Christmas Eve crib service, as well as midnight and 9.30am Christmas day service. No service on Boxing Day. Café church is coming back.

Ruth M said that CWW were having Beers and Carols outside the Broughton pub on Wed 22nd December.

There will be two forest services on the 19th December outside and two Christingle services (morning and afternoon) as there is usually 40 people at each. There will be a Crib Service at St. Lawrences and Midnight Mass there too.

Matt said that at St Marys there will be a Christmas Concert on 7pm 4th December; Carol Service on 19th December at 6pm. No crib service but churchyard trail.

9.0pm Midnight in Bethlehem Service and 10.00am Carol Service on Christmas Day.

All Saints: a Carol Service on the 19th December at 4pm: a Church Trail and 11.30 pm midnight service will probably be booked and a 10am Carol Service, Christmas Day There will be a full suite of on-line services. Boxing Day will be an on-line service. Klaus said that there would be a Catholic Mass on Boxing Day and it was suggested that congregations could be encouraged to attend that service if there was no Boxing Day service at their usual congregation.

iv. **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

Ruth M said that there is going to be a big community lunch in Broughton and Brooklands

Matt said Wavendon Parish Council were organising a Summer Sports Day on the 4th July. Ruth M said perhaps they could tie in with Broughton and Brooklands Parish Council. Civic Services pulling in two directions: so it was suggested that an early evening service on Sunday might be a good idea for congregations to avoid clashing with other events. It was felt that we should engage in community events and it wasn't the right time to hold a WCP event.

v. **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Dates: 18-25th January

Ruth M said we should think about a combined event. Steven said perhaps best to keep it simple and repeat the format from last year. After discussion it was agreed to hold a WCP Quiz Night on Friday 21st January 2022 at 7.30pm. We will need to look for an on-line quiz master.

It was noted that we should think about prayer for this week. The meeting said that we could join in Ruth M's early morning daily prayer. The Ministers will get together to discuss.

7. **Environmental Update**

Matt said the Great Big Green week went really well and thank you to everyone who helped.

8. **Congregational Round Up**

CWW

Sue and Ruth M reported that they had new members coming to their services.

Sue said they held a huge Café church in the school and are splitting their Christingle into two services because of numbers.

Ruth M said they had been moving around for quiet church and are using MK Village Hall for December and January but long term will be at Humming Birds Children's Centre.

They will be doing a 'No-one Alone' at the pub in the near future.

Christ the King

Ruth G reported that Renew was continuing slowly.

Some sad news: Grandma Elizabeth passed away and a Service of songs and tributes was held for Lola's father.

Heronshaw School came for their Harvest Service.

Lynn Atkinson reported that we had organised 67 gifts for the Angel Tree Charity and at a wrapping day at Christ the King 184 gifts from MK organisations or people were wrapped

St. Mary's

Matt said St. Mary's has had a great couple of months, coffee, quiz, children's church is back. Lots of new people attending. Jonathan is now our second Churchwarden. We had

a well attended Remembrance Day Service.

All Saints

CS Very similar to St. Marys. 2 weeks of coffee in church.

Also our collaboration with CWW on Friday coffee mornings.

More people attending now and hope it continues.

MT the online exhibitions (for example) have continued beyond expectation. Special thanks to Rosie for all her work on the exhibition and on the virtual choir.

Roman Catholic Church

Klaus said the church were getting 122 people every Sunday. Numbers stable, but lower than pre-pandemic.

There is a Worldwide Parish Consultation in the Catholic Church to listen to what's good, and what's not so good from the congregations.

This is happening in every catholic church in the world.

9. Diocese of Oxford: 10 Year Deanery Plan for MK: 2 years to go:

Matt: Nothing to report

10. Mission Partnership News

Bishop of Oxford's visit

Ann said that with regard to income the Bishop said that churches should not be concerned about numbers; it is quality not quantity.

People told the Bishop of the cost of maintaining old churches and the regulations needed to do work could be onerous. The Bishop said he understood this but remarked that faculties had risen by 50% during the pandemic.

A question was asked about why the Church of England doesn't recognise the Methodist safeguarding training: the Bishop said he would reflect on this but that safeguarding issues came directly from the national church.

A question was put to the Bishop about if the ecumenical system had a future in its present form. He said yes and not sure! Jesus calls the Church to be one but over the last twenty years ecumenism has taken on a much more informal structure. MK was in at the first and it may need to reconfigure its scaffolding and he suspects it will be different in the future. There is a diversity of culture in our churches and they are operating in lots of different ways.

The Bishop paid tribute to our clergy and PCC's; difficult decisions had to be taken and the best decisions are locally made but there was a feeling of decision fatigue now.

Carolyn added that what struck her most was the mention of leaner and smaller church numbers.

11. Any Other Business

No other business.

12. Date/Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2nd February (in person or zoom – tbc)

Wednesday 6th April (AGM)

Walton PCC

MT - Ratfiation – all agreed.

Note: members of Walton PCC are:

- *those WCP Council members affiliated to the Church of England and/or who have joined the Electoral Roll – namely Rev. Matt Trendall (chair), Rev. Keith Straughan, Ann Beaton, Jonathan Bailey, Carolyn Sanderson, Ayokunnu Otunla, Steve Potter & Lynn Atkinson*
- *....plus Walton's churchwardens – Pat Sawyer & Roger Hancock*

1. Approval of Notes to last meeting (15th September, 2021)

2. Matters arising – to note and agree decisions taken at the Partnership Council above regarding CIO documentation and finance

3. Date of next meeting – as per item 12 above

Notes are approved and dates of next meeting – 2nd February, 2022 and 6th April, 2022 (AGM)

The meeting ended with The Grace.