

Churches Together in Farnham Annual General Meeting Wednesday 13th October 2010 at Farnham Methodist Church

DRAFT MINUTES

Welcome and prayers by Revd Vida Foday

Apologies from Sadie Blankley, Revd John Evans, Revd Alastair Forman, Judith Gain, Revd Dr Anne Gell, Revd Michael Hopkins, Andrew Partridge and Kenton Sparks were recorded.

Minutes of AGM and Council Meeting October 2009 and Council Meeting 25th May 2010 were approved.

Reflections on Plan of Action and Role of CTF:

Andy Marriott said that during the year CTF has consulted and listened to the 21 member churches.. CTF is valued as an umbrella body, for communication and for Farnham wide events such as the Good Friday walk of witness. Cooperation between churches is already happening locally. New initiatives should come from natural groupings of churches working together. Andy requested that when Churches are planning any new ventures, they consider at an early stage if they would be more effective and fruitful if they joined forces with one or two other churches.

CTF Website:

Richard Wimbush gave a demonstration of the CTF website. He urged members to make more use of this valuable means of communication by letting him know what was happening in their churches. He warned: 'If you don't tell us, it won't appear!' (see full report in appendix).

REPORTS

Chair::

In her farewell report as Chairperson, Jenny Floyer said: 'Three years ago six of us raised our hands agreeing we wanted Churches Together to keep going, and to form a new committee. These six were Desmond and Benedict Parsons, Andy Marriott, Gwen Mansfield, Mary Clarke and myself. We spent some time in prayer re the way forward. We had a sense of new green shoots forming. Last year Michael Hall joined us as Vice-Chair when Desmond retired from the committee.

'My particular passion is to see the church turn itself inside out and be more accessible to the community. This may take some out of their comfort zone but if Jesus is leading we must follow. We have had two visits to our spring council meetings from Sue Loveday, Coordinator for Churches Together in Surrey, last year and this, and almost every church filled in the questionnaire we prepared following her first visit. This was valuable in discovering different church's vision for CTF and what churches are doing together in outreach.

'We concluded, as Andy has pointed out that CTF is an umbrella organisation with communication being our most important role. Clusters of churches in one area meeting together for mission and fellowship is the best way forward rather than CTF initiating events.

'However Friday Focus, The Week for Prayer for Christian Unity, Good Friday Walk of Witness, Christmas Day lunch for people on their own, etc., are all organised by individuals under the umbrella of CTF. We are most appreciative of their efforts. We are very pleased that ASSIST has asked to come under the umbrella of Churches Together and that Foodbank has asked to use the CTF logo to add to its validity.

'Quite soon CTF will celebrate its 50th anniversary; Desmond Parsons and George Baxter beginning this in the 1960s as Farnham Council of Churches. Some of the archives are here for you to view.

'It has been a great joy to work with my fellow committee members all of whom are extremely hard-working. We have kept the show on the road and trust we have been walking with the Lord in what we have undertaken.'

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Secretary:

Mary Clarke warmly thanked everyone for their support in what had been an unusually demanding year, with the implementation of the Plan of Action and the General Election Hustings on top of normal activities. She told CTF councillors. 'Busy as you all are, your response has really been fantastic.' Due to the dedication of the groups and individuals involved, inter-church activities continued to flourish and develop in Farnham, with exciting new projects such as Foodbank being introduced.

Mary said that although she still had a year of her three-year elected term of office as secretary to run, she had been hoping to hand over tonight to a new secretary. However this kind volunteer had had to withdraw, so Mary would carry on as secretary for the time being. She strongly urged people to volunteer for this most rewarding and not too demanding job and also for the vacancies on the steering committee.

Treasurer:

Andy Marriott said expenditure has been quite modest, so we have not approached churches for any contribution this year. The Unity service raised £301 which was given to Christian Aid for the Haiti Appeal: General Funds of £299.63 are carried forward to next year. Special Funds carried forward to next year are: Christmas Dinner £198.13 and Jubilee Debt £145.05. [See Appendix for a copy of Annual Accounts]

Friday Focus and Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Gwen Mansfield. [See Appendix for her Reports].

Friday Walk of Witness: There was agreement that the form of the silent walk through the streets of Farnham, following a wooden cross, should remain unchanged. Organiser Stewart Dakers said: 'The silence seems to work - its impact is extraordinary.' It was suggested that extra palm crosses, left over from Palm Sunday Services, should be handed out to those taking part so that everyone could carry one, showing onlookers that this is a Good Friday procession. It was also suggested that it was important to make eye contact with passers by, not just stare ahead.

What to do in Lent: Mary Clarke invited everyone to submit details as early as possible in 2011 for this leaflet.

University of Creative Arts Chaplaincy: Nick Mills has had to resign due to illness. Canon Andrew Tuck is in consultation with the Anglican diocese about the appointment of a successor.

Chaplain to Industrial Estate: pp John Evans. [See Appendix for his Report].

Christmas Day Lunch: Michael McDonnell made an appeal for volunteers to join the team. He said: 'The Christmas Day Lunch for people who would otherwise spend the day on their own, is now a tradition in our town. Coordinated by Churches Together in Farnham the lunch is provided **for** Farnham people, **by** Farnham people and it is enjoyed by around 80 very appreciative guests.' Arrangements were in hand for the Lunch to take place this Christmas, but volunteers were needed to join the team and learn the ropes this year, ready to take over, should any of the present team drop out next year. [See Appendix for his full report]

Christian Aid: pp Sadie Blankley. [See Appendix for her Report]

Jubilee Debt Campaign: Ann Scrase. [See Appendix for her Report].

ASSIST: Brian Kurton said that there had been a dramatic growth in activities in the past year. The Centre for over 60s in Borelli Yard had now been open for nearly 18 months. Their doings included pub lunches, Knit 'n' Natter, a series of free outings to places of interest using bus passes, and Bible study. He said: 'We have volunteers from every church in Farnham. I would love to come along to your church and talk about the work we do.'

Foodbank: The meeting heard that Farnham Foodbank was now under way and was due to be publicly launched soon.

FCCT / Catalyst: John Edwards said that FCCT had been going through a reshaping process. Although it no longer funded inter-church activities directly, FCCT wanted to encourage all such enterprise and would give advice and help in any way it could. 'God wishes that there should be one church here in Farnham. What we want to do as FCCT is to continue to support one church.' he said.

One World Week: Jenny spoke about plans for this town event at St Andrew's Church on 17th October. It would involve a forum discussion on the subject of peace within the context of a Christian service. One World Week is our biggest annual outreach opportunity. She said that it had been amazing to see so many people who are not Christians sitting in the pews of the church at last year's event. Many who would not normally be comfortable in a church service expressed appreciation of the event.

Election of officers:

Jenny Floyer had completed her three year term of office as Chairperson and was succeeded by Pastor Michael Hall who was elected Chairperson for up to three years. Gwen Mansfield resigned from the committee for health reasons. She has served for a number of years as Minutes Secretary, also with responsibility for Study and Worship and Friday Focus. (Gwen will continue to arrange Friday Focus). Jenny and Gwen were most warmly thanked for their long and dedicated service.

The Steering Committee now consists of just the three officers - Chairperson Pastor Hall; Treasurer: Andy Marriott; and Secretary: Mary Clarke. There were no nominations to fill the vacancies.

Any Other Business:

The sudden death of Revd John Cherrill while ministering at Acorn (Whitehill Chase) was announced and a silence was observed for him with prayer.

Jenny reported that CTF monthly prayer meetings are taking place at 10.30am on the second Tuesday of the month at St Joan's Centre.

Arrangements are being made for CTF's annual celebration of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2011, with United Service (23rd January 2011) (venue to be decided) and daily prayer meetings. [N.B. Post meeting – venue: St George's Badshot Lea.]

2011 AGM of Churches Together in Farnham: It was agreed that the meeting should take place on Thursday 13th October.

The evening ended with prayer

APPENDIX TO CTF AGM MINUTES 2010 - Reports:

MAKE USE OF YOUR CHURCHES TOGETHER IN FARNHAM WEBSITE

The site can be found from www.churchestogetherinfarnham.org.uk.
Or just google: Churches Together in Farnham.

The information is in three categories:

- Churches Together Events
- Member Church Events - &
- Church News.

Using the site is a great way of advertising your event or conveying your news to a wider public - for free. But it must be emphasised that information can only be put on the site if you let us know! The Church Representatives are the interface with Churches Together. So please keep us posted! Items to go on the site can be sent to secretary@churchestogetherinfarnham.org.uk or info@churchestogetherinfarnham.org.uk.

The site also has a location map and brief details of each of the member Churches. Additionally, there is a **Church Council Members' Area** for which a username and password are required. Here members can access the Directory to read or print out. This contains names and contact details of clergy leaders and representatives for each member church and associated bodies. This restricted part of the site also has documents such as draft minutes of Council Meetings (prior to approval) and the Responses to the Plan of Action, carried out this year.

Very few of the representatives ever look in the members' area. If you do not have your log-in details, you can go to the site, click on log-in and then follow the instructions. Leaders or Representatives who have never had a username and password can register on the site - and log-in details will be sent to them.

On logging-out the user will see that they are returned to the Network Farnham web-site (www.networkfarnham.org.uk) which provides all the facilities for the Churches Together in Farnham site. The Network Farnham web-site aims to provide information on the Christian scene to a wide audience.

Richard Wimbush

ACCOUNTS



Churches Together in Farnham

Accounts for 2009 - 2010

Income and Expenditure Account 1 September 2009 - 31 August 2010

GENERAL FUND

| | | Income | Expenses | Net | Balance |
|-----------|---|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| 2008/2009 | | | | | |
| £286.32 | Brought forward at 1st September 2009 | | | | £427.16 |
| 340.00 | Subscriptions | 0.00 | | 0.00 | |
| 0.00 | Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Collection + Donator | 301.00 | -301.00 | 0.00 | |
| -78.90 | One World Week | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | |
| 0.00 | Election Hustings | 34.00 | -60.00 | -26.00 | |
| 0.00 | Lent Activities | | 0.00 | 0.00 | |
| -25.76 | Administration | | -7.03 | -7.03 | |
| 0.00 | UCCA Chaplain | | 0.00 | 0.00 | |
| -94.50 | Public Liability Insurance | | -94.50 | -94.50 | |
| 140.84 | Total Income and Expenditure | £335.00 | -£462.53 | -£127.53 | |

£427.16 Balance CTF General Fund at 31 August 2010 £299.63

SPECIAL FUNDS

| | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---------|---------|--|---------|
| 440.52 | Holding Account for Christmas Dinner | 245.63 | -488.02 | | £198.13 |
| £157.05 | Holding Account for Jubilee Debt Campaign | 0.00 | -12.00 | | £145.05 |
| £1,024.73 | Bank Account Total | £580.63 | -962.55 | | £642.81 |

Mr. Andy Marriott
(Treasurer)

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FRIDAY FOCUS

Friday Focus continues to have its problems with printing and publication but by and large it continues through the year. I do have feedback from time to time on the appreciation of Friday Focus. Various churches have had to withdraw from writing this year and so there are gaps on the rota. If there are those among you who feel they could contribute two or three times a year I would be more than grateful.

Gwen Mansfield

STUDY AND WORSHIP

The 2010 United Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January, hosted by Farnham United Reformed Church as it celebrated its 350th anniversary year, was well supported and the daily prayer meetings were very well attended - more successful than ever. Our grateful thanks go to URC and to St. Joan's Catholic Church for hosting these events. There were those who were keen to continue the meetings and at last something is settled. There are now prayer groups on the second Tuesday of each month at the St. Joan's Centre, Tilford Road, from 10.30-11am, followed by coffee. St. Thomas on the Bourne have also arranged meditation groups and other churches are invited to join in. These will be on the first Tuesday of every month from 8-9 p.m.

Gwen Mansfield

FARNHAM TRADING ESTATE CHAPLAINCY

Religious faith is often portrayed as one of a number of different personal views of life. It is thought to be of comfort to those who hold it, and sometimes, but not always, to encourage them to be of help to their fellows. Christians know that their faith is a recognition of reality - the world is God's creation and is meant to be his kingdom; human nature is the object of his self-giving, redeeming love. That reality is what Workplace Ministry aims to witness to.

The small firms on Farnham Trading Estate are a congenial setting for me, as chaplain, simply to be seen from time to time, and to make it clear when I can that God and his people care for those who work there. It is particularly encouraging when practising Christians among the workforce make themselves known to me. And it is rewarding when someone who has no commitment to a faith, or even a social support system, confides some need, trouble or joy.

John Evans

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

The Christmas Day Lunch for people who would otherwise spend the day on their own, is now a tradition in our town. Coordinated by Churches Together in Farnham the lunch is provided for Farnham people, by Farnham people and it is enjoyed by around 80 very appreciative guests. Arrangements are in hand for the Lunch to take place this Christmas.

You all know that there are many volunteers who help on the day and on Christmas Eve and they are appreciated tremendously - and we will be distributing posters in November inviting these volunteers. The volunteers are supported by a TEAM - we call it the Christmas Day Lunch team - each member of which takes responsibility for a particular area - for example Transport, Publicity, Chef, Front of House - bringing together everything on the day.

The present team has been in place for several years, with only a few changes; however it won't be here for ever and it is important we look to the future. We would therefore like to invite you and members of your churches to join the Christmas Lunch team - and offer support in one of the key areas; learning the ropes and with a view to being able to take over next year if necessary, that is if a present member wishes to stand down. To learn the ropes this year and do the job next year, if required - that would be the commitment - you won't be taking on a job for life. Please consider carefully this appeal. It is only right that the fun and the privilege of working as part of the team should be shared by the Churches and it's right we put in place an arrangement for that to happen.

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[Forms had been distributed] for a response by you or a member of your church. Please return these to me after the meeting or return by post or reply by email. Very many thanks.

Michael McDonnell - 01252 712600 or email mjmcdonnell2004@yahoo.co.uk

CHRISTIAN AID

Christian Aid continues to be very well supported by churches and congregations across Farnham and in the neighbouring villages. It is good to have this opportunity formally to thank the church representatives and clergy for their sustained efforts on behalf of Christian Aid and its partners overseas.

As ever, the main event in 2010 was Christian Aid Week, which began with an evening service at St Peter's in Wrecclesham. This year the focus was on the slums of Nairobi, especially Matopeni where residents lack even the most basic water and sanitation services. About 400 volunteers around Farnham collected donations door-to-door and were rewarded with sums which are in line with recent years, some even better than in 2009. Their dedication did much to combat the air of economic gloom, and local supporters continue to deliver the message that, however much we feel under financial pressure, we are still rich beyond imagination compared to those who are on the receiving end of the work of Christian Aid's partners.

The annual accounts for 2009-2010 are still being prepared, so the full amount collected through the year is not available. Christian Aid Week itself raised £22,285, including reclaimed Gift Aid. Other fundraising activities included:

- Carol Singing at Sainsbury's Water Lane
- Lunches at Rowledge Methodist Church
- Raffle of an original watercolour by Michael Walsh with a frame donated by The Frame Centre in Downing Street
- Christian Aid banner prominently displayed at the URC in South Street.

A special mention this year for St Thomas on the Bourne, where Mavis Golding and her helpers managed to hold all the Midday Concerts through Lent, and the annual Plant Sale and Coffee Morning. in spite of all the building work going on around them.

There were also several emergency appeals, especially for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti, and the floods in Pakistan. In these and so many other places, Christian Aid will be there for the long term, so further collections are always welcome.

Turning to forthcoming events, please publicise and come along if you can to:

- Quiz Aid at St Andrew's church on Friday 15 October at 7:30pm
- One World Week service at St Andrew's
- A supporter rally and mass lobby of MPs in Westminster on 20 October (20.10.10)
- The Farnham Christian Aid autumn meeting on Wednesday 10 November at 8pm in the Leverton Hall (St Peter's church Wrecclesham)
- Carol Singing at Sainsbury's Water Lane on Saturday 11 December from 10:30 - this year we will be there in shifts for most of the day, using recorded carols between 'live' sessions. and so giving an opportunity for those reluctant to sing to take part by shaking buckets.
- Christian Aid Week 2011 is 15-22 May.

We will be saying a hearty thanks and farewell at the autumn meeting to Jo Taylor who has been the Farnham Christian Aid Treasurer for the last eight years. I am especially grateful for all that she has done, going well beyond the number-crunching, and she will be much missed.

Sadie Blankley

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FARNHAM JUBILEE DEBT CAMPAIGN

In April, we were able to have a display in Farnham library, and my thanks go to Michael McDonnell for making that possible.

The latest campaign is targeting the Export Credit Guarantee Department which uses taxpayers' money to back exports to the developing world. All too often, it supports dodgy deals which lead to human rights abuses, corruption, climate change and conflict to create toxic Third World Debts. Over 90% of developing country debt to the UK is now from failed export credits.

In the past, the new International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell has stated concern over the ECGD being used to support fossil fuel exports, and Vince Cable has been critical of the ECGD supporting arms deals.

A cross-party group of MPs, led by Helen Goodman has put down Early Day Motion 622 calling for a re-think of the department.

If you would like a supply of campaign postcards for your parishioners to send to their MP on this subject, please have a word with me.

Ann Scrase