

Churches Together in Newport Pagnell

Forum/Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 22nd June 2017

Present: Laraine Earle, Rev Nick Evans, Mary Howard, David Icke, Beth Mackay, Rev Jenny Mills, Geoff Morris, Linda Morris, Pat Parker, Deacon Klaus Reidel (Chair), Hazel Reynolds, Chris Row Secretary), Nita Tolley, Paul Tolley (Treasurer), Andrew Turner, Wendy Turner, Rev Jack Walker, Jill Walker, Bill Watson, Chris Watson, Neville Watson.

1. **Opening prayers and welcome**

The meeting opened with prayer led by Klaus Reidel.

2. **Apologies for absence**

Rev Nicola Martyn-Beck, Kimonie Nicholls, Molly and John Reardon

3. **Minutes of the last Forum meeting: 23rd June 2016**

The minutes were agreed. There were no matters arising.

4. **Nominations/election of new officers**

Paul Tolley agreed to continue for another year as Treasurer, and was nominated by Chris Row, seconded by Jill Walker and unanimously elected.

No nominations were received for the office of President so the post remains unfilled.

5. **Treasurer's report**

Paul Tolley presented his report which showed a credit balance of £1,379.91 of which £783.50 is being held for the Holiday Club. The remaining £596.41 is general CTNP funds. The cost of the Holiday Club in 2016 was £896, and so after the anticipated donations from parents, Paul expects a carry forward figure of £5-600 into Holiday Club funds for 2018.

The final sum raised for the Burkina Faso project of Christian Aid was £5,274.

Paul was thanked for his work as Treasurer and for agreeing to continue for another year.

6. **Working group reports**

Detailed written reports from each of the working groups were circulated prior to the meeting and the following points were noted in discussion.

6.1 **Ministers group** (see report submitted by Klaus Reidel)

The Ministers confirm the value of their weekly meetings.

Hazel Reynolds asked what emergency procedures are in place, in the light of the Grenfell Tower fire. Jack Walker and Jenny Mills said that Milton Keynes Council have a disaster contingency plan in place, within which both Lovat Hall and the URC are designated as relief centres. Jack agreed to remind the Council's Emergency Coordinator that the Churches are ready to help in an emergency.

6.2 **Christian Aid group** (see report submitted by Pat Parker)

£3432.41 had been raised during Christian Aid Week, in addition to the £2277.70 profit from Lent Lunches. It was suggested that the collection envelope should be redesigned to encourage giving, and Phil Evans, the Regional Coordinator for Christian Aid said that the

organisation was going to experiment with a “contactless bucket”.

6.3 Mission group (see report submitted by Hazel Reynolds)

a) Lent: Hazel asked for views on the two options put forward by the Mission Group. Both received a degree of support from the members present, and the Ministers were asked to decide what we should do in Lent 2018, and the Mission group would then organise it.

6.4 Communications group (see report submitted by Neville Watson)

The meeting endorsed the thanks expressed in the report to Beth Mackay, who had retired as Editor of “Connections”, and to Robert Hayward, who had now taken on the role.

Neville reminded everyone that the CTNP website and “Connections” (and through that the “Phonebox”) were both available to publicise Church events, but they needed details in good time. He plans to put a panel of information about church services in the “Phonebox” each month. The Welcome leaflet has been finalised, and extra copies can be made available whenever there are special events. The Communications Group (like the Mission Group) is still not representative of all the Churches, and would welcome more members, even if they merely act as a channel of communication without necessarily attending meetings.

Neville was asked whether there is a link to the CTNP website from MKWeb. He said there is not, but that he would follow this up.

6.5 Emergency Help Scheme (see report submitted by John Gordon)

Andrew Turner attended the meeting in John’s absence. He highlighted the AGM and Garden Party on 5th August, to which all were invited.

7. CTNP Holiday Club

Jack Walker reported that 89 children had registered to date, and that over 30 people had volunteered to help. He would welcome more (his target was 50 helpers for up to 150 children), and he was about to allocate roles. He advised that there was a possibility of having a children’s entertainer for the Thursday night party, which would have budgetary implications.

8. Carnival

Jack said that the Baptist Church would be having a pitch on the field to promote Alpha, and members of other churches would be welcome to help. As Bear Grylls is currently an Ambassador for Alpha, the theme would be den-building. Welcome leaflets would be distributed.

9. Any Other Business

Linda and Geoff Morris reminded members that they look after a set of giant outdoor games, which can be borrowed for events – free of charge for church events, and for a small donation in other cases.

10. Date of next Forum

The next Forum was arranged for **Thursday, 21st June 2018 at 7.30pm** at the Methodist Church.

Nita and Paul Tolley were thanked for providing refreshments at this meeting.

After the formal business, Chris Row, speaking as a Trustee of the Baptist Church, gave outline details of their plans for developing their building to provide more capacity, especially for work with children and young people. Architects were drawing up plans, and it was anticipated that, once these had been approved by the church members, planning permission would be sought during 2018.

Jenny Mills gave an update on the URC’s Mead centre project. £446,000 had been raised to date, and they were seeking the balance of the funding required, so that they could start building no later than May 2018. Jenny gave details of the “Mead Centre 500” initiative.

11. Guest Speaker: Phil Evans, Regional Coordinator, Christian Aid

Phil came primarily to thank CTNP for the funds raised for the Burkina Faso project. The target figure of £5,000 would certainly be matched five-fold by the EU, and he was hopeful that the extra £274 would be treated in the same way.

He gave us details of the country, which is landlocked and with a border with Mali, which has suffered recently from warfare which has spilled over the border. Near the Sahara, it is experiencing increasing desertification. Life expectancy is 55, and most of the population has less than 73p a day to live on. Christian Aid has been carrying out humanitarian work, but lately has become more involved in advocacy. Burkina Faso will be the focus of this year's Christmas Appeal. The organisation works on the ground with partner agencies to help communities help themselves, regardless of seasonal changes, and one of their successes has been enabling children to be sent to school (rather than working to help support their families).

Phil also gave literature about two campaigns – Big Shift and Clean up our Cash – designed to reduce the global reliance on coal.

The evening ended with The Grace.