

Churches Together in Saddleworth

Minutes of CTIS AGM on Thursday 15th June 2023 at the Parish Centre, Uppermill

Present

V Butterworth, L Butterworth, Rev B Christopher, R Comer, J Dix, A Forster, Rev P Gillian, M Hindson, J Ratcliff, D Roberts, Rev J Rosedale

1) Opening Devotions and Welcome

Michael Hindson welcomed all to the Meeting especially Jane Ratcliffe, the Parish Administrator and new representative for St Mary's, Greenfield, then opened the Meeting with reflection and prayer.

2) Apologies for Absence

S Adams, S Gibson, R Gould, Rev S Jones, R Knotts, Rev K McNally, M Taylor, S Titmuss, D Townend

3) Minutes of CTIS AGM 2022

A Forster proposed these to be a correct record, seconded by V Butterworth and all agreed.

4) Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported a significant increase in the cost of our Insurance, as the maximum payout level has risen from 5 million pounds to ten million pounds, We need to make clear whether events are CTIS events or not. We can agree that an event is of great interest to us but is actually not under our auspices. The annual subscription from each member church is currently £40 and it was agreed to continue at this level.

5) President's Report

Introduction

It is a privilege to present this report after accepting the role of president a year ago. CTIS has no executive power over individual churches but should and does play the important role of influencing what takes place by looking at the wider context within which we operate. This includes showing relevance to the wider community as well as seeking ever-closer cooperation between denominations. Surfacing from Covid has shown that some have not returned to the previous routine of regular worship, and the cost of living crisis has hit not only individuals but also churches which are classed as businesses when it comes to paying for gas and electricity.

A – Community Visibility

Warm Spaces

We agreed to open up our churches to those in need during the winter and via the planning established good relations with the Parish Council, including attendance at two meetings of the Environment Committee, OMBC's Community Development Officer and the voluntary sector's Action together initiative. The bureaucratic requirements to be officially recognised proved daunting and on the whole attendances were disappointing but I believe it was worth trying and it at least showed that we are here!

a) The Good Friday walk of witness was very well attended and provided an opportunity to engage with the public en route. Handing out Palm crosses was well received

b) Carol singing outside the Con Club was very well attended and attracted a lot of passers-by and was another reminder to the public that we are here

c) Although the Whit Walks are not officially part of our remit, anyone on the field for the service could not help but be impressed by the huge number of people who are at least emotionally attached to what we are about

d) Our special meeting on Green issues also showed our concern for issues beyond the narrower church agenda and the fact that there is a meeting tomorrow in one of our churches with our MP, which is attracting an audience from beyond our churches again shows our relevance.

B -Internal Activity

We have continued to run Lent Courses (5 in all), Prayer breakfasts and the annual joint services in the Week for Christian Unity. The work of our Street Pastors is a primary example of faith in action and April's Commissioning ceremony was a most moving event.

We have also begun to recognise more explicitly the challenges faced by us all with dwindling congregations, increased costs and the fact that so many buildings are no longer fit for purpose, both in terms of upkeep and facilities.

From a faith and a buildings standpoint we have boldly decided to follow the steer given in our Constitution to review the future of Christianity in Saddleworth.

C) Thanks

Finally, thanks to you all for your support but in particular to, Secretary Dorothy Roberts, who calmly and thoroughly keeps everything in order and to our retiring Treasurer, Roger Gould for his dedicated service over many years

6) Christian Aid & Cafod Reports

i) Christian Aid Report

The following churches reported on Christian Aid activities to raise money.

Holy Trinity, Dobcross have raised £150

A Joint Coffee Morning by the Greenfield Churches has raised £427 and a further £167 was given in donations

Delph Whit Friday also raised a considerable sum of money.

St Anne's Junior Church had taken on a Breakfast event to raise money for Christian Aid.

UMC and St Chad's had given a joint collection

ii) Cafod Report

The following monies were raised in the year 2022/23

Harvest appeal 2022	£646.69
One Christmas card for all	£286.00
Donation from CTIS service at St Anne's	£120.00
Donation from funeral of John Spalding	£260.00 (+ some given on line)
Donation from CTIS	£210.00
Ukrainian appeal	£700.00
Donations in Cafod box	£110.90
Lenten fast appeal 2023	£522.00
Choir donation	<u>£35.00</u>
Grand total	£2,890.59

We were hoping to have a quiz night in February but with the flooding of the hall were unable to go ahead with this. The questions are ready for next time!

7) Street Pastors Report

This was submitted by Sue Titmuss and read to the meeting by Dorothy Roberts.

There are 8 Street Pastors and 8 members of the prayer support team. We are grateful to those we know who are supporting us in prayer outside of our patrol times.

We continue to patrol on Saturday evenings, setting out at 9.30pm from Ebenezer Congregational Church, Uppermill. Now the weather is a touch warmer there are more people out on the streets. Generally, the mood is happy rather than aggressive in spite of the amount of alcohol which is being consumed. Each premises attracts a different clientele and it's definitely a village of two halves. Most of those still around by 11.30pm have gravitated to the Granby/ Muse end of the high street.

We have good relations with the publicans and the door staff. However, the teams do change, and we have yet to reach the same degree of friendliness with the door staff at Muse after the departure of Jordan to the more exciting venues of Manchester.

Dan and his team at The Con Club are very friendly. The Con Club remains one of the busiest venues – Karaoke is very popular. Frequently at capacity, people are turned away and they are not always happy. The Hare and Hounds is jammed on disco nights. It does make us wonder how the residents cope with the volume of noise coming out of these places.

Sadly, we learned recently that Karben has ceased trading. A robbery, a serious flood in the kitchen, a steep rise in utility bills £5,000+, and an increase in rent £2,000+ has meant that the business is no longer viable. Karl and Ben have worked really hard to make a success of this venue and have invested a lot of money buying new “pods” for the outside garden.

Our chief concerns remain: the speed of the traffic racing through Uppermill, the taxis parking on double yellow lines and turning in the high street and the number of youngsters walking /veering into the road. We do what we can to keep pedestrians on the pavements. There was a serious accident outside the Granby several weeks ago on a weekday evening. A motorist, who was not speeding, did not see the young DJ from the Granby who was loading his car outside the pub. Dressed in dark clothing, he was just not visible. His injuries are life changing and, as far as we understand, he is still in hospital.

Needless to say, the staff at the Granby are very upset by this. We keep checking up to see how he and they are getting along.

As the weather improves and younger teenagers are leaving school, groups of 15/16 year olds have begun to appear in the village. A group we came across two weeks ago had spent some time at Greenfield cricket club and two of the young lads were very drunk indeed. (Probably shop bought alcohol, purchased by someone older) We ended up shadowing this group until they eventually dispersed. We couldn't find out what was upsetting these youngsters who were basically incoherent but very argumentative with anyone they came across.

We did patrol in Uppermill on Whit Friday evening. Needless to say, there was plenty going on, but the police were out in force and declined our help when we offered to sort out youngsters who were a bit worse the wear for drink!

We still enjoy our outings and will carry on for as long as we are able.

8) Election of Officers

The following Officers were duly elected by unanimous agreement

President - Michael Hindson

Vice President – vacant

Secretary – Dorothy Roberts

Treasurer –John Rosedale

Christian Aid Secretary – vacant

9) Constitution of the Working Party

The Working Party was first conceived not only as a vehicle to plan events, but also as a creative, directional group, exploring possibilities. It consists of the officers and others who are interested in being part of such a group. Some people come along to share ideas about a particular event or project.

It is open to everyone. We need your input so please consider joining this informal group.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm