

Churches Together in Harborough
Minutes of the AGM and the Forum Meeting on Monday 7 September 2020
at 7.00 pm via Zoom

Attendees:

Voting attendees: (13)

Janet Smith, Angela Zemlak, John Pearse, Andy Murphy, Derek Williams, Rose Williams, Maureen Douglas, Alison Illiffe, Andy Giles, David Nixon, Stephen Haward, James Pickersgill, Theresa Kendrick

Non-voting attendees: (5)

Jeff Bonser, Mandy Gays, Jeannie Brightwell, Becky Davies, Charlotte Cooper

Welcome and Opening Devotions:

Janet welcomed everyone to the AGM that should have been in person at one of the Anglican Churches in May and is now by Zoom.

James led the devotions based on the season of Creationtide which is during the month of September and dedicated to God the Creator and Sustainer of all life. In Market Harborough although we have many churches becoming ECO friendly; with Mors Bags for Life; 2020 tree planting and the selling Fairtrade bags of rice we still need to think about our life styles.

James led us through a series of responses and then we listened to, and sang, How Great Thou Art, followed by prayers of worship, confession and penitence. He then led a second set of prayers with the response of: Father in Your mercy, forgive us and help us. God is a just God illustrated by: Deuteronomy 32:4, 10:18, 27:19, James 1:27 and Matthew 22:34-40. James asked us to look up Chief Seattle's speech given in 1854 which reflects how we care for each other, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLw56hHbpYI>

There was then a time of Intercessory Prayer with the response: Help us to respect and renew the earth, followed by a time of silent prayer. The devotions concluded with us all saying together the Lord's Prayer and James then prayed for the AGM, the Forum & the Executive, and especially for Janet & Andy in their new roles.

Apologies for Absence:

Christopher Brown, Keith Rugg, Brien Wilde, Lizzie Chadwick, Chris Davies, David Palmer, Dave Tomlin, Dawn O'Connell, Mel Stride, Deirdre Quinn

1) AGM Business

- a) Minutes of AGM Thursday 23rd May 2019
The minutes had been circulated earlier. They were accepted as a true record and signed by Janet.
- b) Reports (which were originally sent out in May 2020)
The reports had been circulated earlier. No questions had been received but it was clear that all the groups had changed their ways of working.
- c) Treasurer's Report and Accounts
The Treasurer's report and accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions and the accounts were accepted.

d) Election of Officers

Chair: Janet Smith	In post for two years
Vice Chair: Revd. Andy Murphy	Nominated for election to post for 2 years
Treasurer: Rose Williams	Eligible for re - election
Secretary:	Vacant, nominations invited
Communications Officer: Derek Williams	Eligible for re - election
Minutes Secretary: Angela Zemplak	Eligible for re - election
Christian Aid Co-ordinator: Rose Williams	Eligible for re – election
Accounts Examiner: K.E. Bentley	Eligible for re - appointing

- I. Janet had already taken up the post of Chair from May 2020 and she thanked Stephen for his work over the last two years.
- II. The proposal for Andy to become Vice Chair was made by James and seconded by Maureen. The proposal was accepted and Andy thanked the meeting for their vote of confidence.
- III. Rose had agreed to continue in the role of Treasurer and was thanked for all her work.
- IV. Yet again, there was no nomination for the role of Secretary. Janet asked we pray that someone comes forward as the lack of a Secretary impinges on the work of the Executive. Rose was thanked for taking on some the role.
- V. Derek, Angela and Rose were the only nominations for the roles of Communications Officer, Minutes Secretary and Christian Aid Co-ordinator and they were all elected.
- VI. Katherine Bentley was willing to continue as CTH accounts examiner and this was ratified at the meeting.

- e) Date of next Annual Meeting: Thursday 20th May 2021 – venue to be confirmed – hopefully in person but if not then by ZOOM.

The AGM closed with prayer led by Janet

2) Other Forum Business

- a) Minutes of Forum 2nd March 2020

The minutes had been circulated previously and were accepted by the meeting.

- b) Matters Arising: Good Friday Event 2021

It had been decided before Lockdown to cancel the Good Friday event for 2020. It is hoped that the event as planned for 2020 would happen in 2021. The screen had been paid for and although Lizzie Chadwick had moved away, Abbey had others to work with her. The HDC lead, Sairah Butt, was hoping that the situation in 2021 would allow the HDC to agree to the event, which was in their diary.

- c) Recent events: Christian Aid 2020

Rose reported that with no Door-to-Door collections, people had been asked to make donations, either via her or online. She had received £790 but did not yet know how much had been raised online. It is understood that the Kibworth area had raised around £1,000. All this is far short of the £8,000+ that is normally raised.

- d) Communications

Derek told the meeting about the Church's column in the Harborough Mail which was in response to the COVID-19 situation but was now had a wider context. It appears in the online version of the Mail as well as in print. Ministers and others had taken it in turn to write an article. This week Liz Howe has written an article on behalf of the Street Pastors. The column is being well received Derek is hoping to get another Prayer Letter sent out with information about how the different churches are coming out of Lockdown.

e) Brief Headlines from our organisations

- I. The Cube – Charlotte started by saying she was leaving her work at the Cube to train to become a foster parent, something she believes she was called to do and is excited about. Andy thanked her on behalf of CTH for all her work and dedication and led prayers for her future.

The Cube had moved online with some success but has now opened its doors having set up all the procedures necessary. There are now 3 part time councillors being kept extremely busy and thanks to Julie all the hirers are back. She asked for our continuing prayers for the finances. They had raised £2,500 from fund-raising recently and were applying for grants. The Christian Youth Group had moved to Thursday evenings. The Cube is celebrating 10 years since it started

- II. The Bower House team had not sent in a report. Since lockdown telephone counselling and a help line had been established and since August face to face work had restarted
- III. The Street Pastors had stopped going out in March but had restarted in July, patrolling in Welland Park and Little Bowden Recreation Ground and meeting families and younger children who, it is obvious, don't know about the work but interactions are increasing. The Ascension Trust relaxed the rules so they can go out in pairs (rather than 3 or 4) Night time patrols were stopped because of lack of social distancing in those they meet. Some team members were not going out because of their own health issues. The schedule has been late Friday afternoons and either Saturday or Sunday afternoons but as it gets darker it will just be Saturdays or Sundays. Prayer for the safety of the teams and meaningful encounters were asked for.
- IV. The Jubilee Foodbank had not sent in a report but they were very busy with a sharp increase in food poverty and prayers were needed for all individuals and families in difficulty.
- V. Torch Trust had a lot of people working from home. The Sight Loss Friendly Church training was continuing online.
- VI. The Homeless and asking for Help committee were planning to meet up with the Foodbank to review the ongoing work. There was a need for more people to be involved. If a Church Rep was interested or knew someone who might be interested then they should email Janet. Training would be given.
There was one homeless lady who knew of seven other homeless in and around MH and district.

f) Coming Events

- I. Market Harborough Fairtrade Group is selling Malawian rice once again during the autumn with the sale of Rice in the OXFAM shop and other venues and on the OXFAM stall this Saturday 13 September (see promotion posters for details).
- II. Prison week is 11-17 October. A team of Janet, James, Maureen and Emma, the Anglican Prison Chaplain at Gartree, will be meeting to discuss the options, which include a possible Online ZOOM service; sharing with the monthly Prison Fellowship meeting during the week or possibly a service in person. The Anglican team were working on live streaming technology but this might not be ready in time
- III. Father Owen's retirement
There will be no special service at Our Lady of Victories. Rose had coordinated a collection on behalf of CTH. This Thursday the ministers will be meeting and will give Owen presents from the Ministers' Fellowship and CTH. Prayers were asked for Owen's retirement. Andy had recorded an interview with Owen which would be sent out by the weekend to all the Churches and be put on the CTH website. Andy was thanked for doing this.
- IV. New Priest
Maureen told the meeting that the new Parish Priest will be Father Chris O'Connor. He is coming from Grantham but was brought up in Leicester. He has also been a Prison Chaplain.
- V. Remembrance Sunday
The Royal British Legion will not be organising a parade or meeting on the Square and groups will be able to lay a wreath independently.

g) Any other Business

Janet invited the Church Representatives to give a brief summary of their planned or actual opening.

- I. Congregational Church had been opened for four weeks. It has been very challenging not being able to sing and some who can't attend feel as though they are eaves dropping and not taking part.
- II. Methodist Church opened at the beginning of August but with people having to book and wear masks. It has been difficult particularly with not being able to welcome visitors who might just turn up.
- III. St Hugh's and St Nicholas had opened at the beginning of August for private prayer twice week. They also held communion services and asking people to notify if planning to attend.
- IV. St Dionysius opened for the first time yesterday (Sunday 7 Sept) for services, although open for Prayer twice a week from July. They had used a fogging machine between two Sunday services
- V. Our Lady of Victories is open for three services, Saturday evening and two on Sunday
- VI. Baptist Church have Messages and Services including Communion online and have a wedding on Friday after which a review of the risk assessment and planning will happen. It is hoped our small groups will soon be using space in the church building rather than trying to meet in parks and gardens!
- VII. St Peter & St Paul opened yesterday

There was no other business to discuss

h) Date and Venue of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th November at The Cube or via zoom

Janet thanked the Churches and Organisations Representatives for attending, with special thanks to James for arranging and hosting the meeting on ZOOM.

The meeting closed with the same blessing used earlier; Numbers 6: 24-26