



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KENT

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Minutes of a Meeting of Full Council Meeting

held 9:30 am to 1:15 pm, Wednesday 21st July 2004

at The Hermitage, West Malling, Kent

Present

Revd Robin Blount (C of E, Canterbury); Bishop Brian Castle (C of E, Rochester);
Revd Geoffrey Collins (URC); Pauline Condon (Quaker);
Revd Michael Cooke (County Ecumenical Officer, and Secretary to CT Kent);
Revd Malcolm Cooper (Methodist); Major Anthony Cotterill (Salvation Army);
Revd Colin Crook (C of E, Rochester); Revd Oliver Harrison (C of E, Canterbury);
Bishop John Hine (RC Southwark); Major Steve Huyton (Salvation Army);
Revd Dr Jeremy Ive (C of E, Rochester); Fr Wilfrid McGreal (RC, Southwark);
Fr Geoffrey Pointer (RC, Southwark); Canon Graham Rainford (Canterbury);
Revd Harvey Richardson (Methodist, and Chairman of CT Kent);
Revd Trevor Rolls (Methodist); Michael Staynes (Quaker)

Apologies were received from

Revd Tony Cross (Kent Baptist Association); Revd John Currie (C of E, Rochester);
Ven Patrick Evans (C of E, Canterbury); Mrs Ruth Matthews (Kent Baptist
Association); Revd Jim Perryman (C of E, Canterbury); Revd Bryan Shirley (URC);
Revd Nigel Uden (URC); Bishop Stephen Venner (C of E, Canterbury)

1. Opening Devotions

These were led by the chairman, who drew on Psalm 73, with thoughts of how hard it can be in ecumenical work to move from meetings to fellowship and community.

2. Welcome to Visitors/Newcomers

The Chairman welcomed the following to their first meeting of CTKent's Council:-

Revd Robin Blount (EO for Canterbury Archdeaconry, Canterbury Diocese)
Major Anthony Cotterill (Divisional Commander for Salvation Army,
replaces Lt Col David Jones)
Revd Oliver Harrison (EO for Maidstone Archdeaconry, Canterbury Diocese;
also minister at Grove Green
Anglican/Baptist/Methodist/URC LEP)
Rev Dr Jeremy Ive (Representing Rochester Diocese - also is minister at
Five Oak Green / Tudeley cum Capel; Anglican/URC
LEP)
Canon Graham Rainford (Bishop Stephen Venner's chaplain, and standing in for
Bishop Stephen Venner.)

3. Finance

In the absence of the Treasurer, Michael Cooke circulated copies of the budget sheets for 2005 commended by the Church Leaders at their meeting in December 2003. After some clarifications - e.g. why there were no provisions made for web expenses (none expected), or costs of arranging a CTK-sponsored conference (the only ecumenically planned conference in 2005 is Wellspring 2005), the meeting unanimously approved the deficit budget figures which show a 2.8% increase over 2004.

Members were asked to ensure their denominational Treasurer was aware of the agreed subscription. **Action: All**

Members will be notified as soon as the Examined Accounts for 2003 were available

Action: Michele Cascioli

As in past years the summary accounts will be published on CT Kent's website

Action: Michael Cooke

4. Issues from the Church Leaders' Meetings

4.1. Proposed Chaplaincy to the Fire & Rescue Service

Peter Coombs (Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officer to Kent Fire & Rescue Service had earlier been in correspondence with Bishop Brian about the possibility of setting up a Chaplaincy service to those involved in the Fire and Rescue service.

Michael Cooke had since met with Mr Paul Grout (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, People Services), and had outlined how the ecumenical Chaplaincy to Kent's police worked. With the Fire & Rescue service being much smaller than the police (only 3 areas, and one headquarters), and with the issues of many staff being on the Retained list, it had been suggested that in parallel

- (a) the fire service float the idea of a Chaplaincy amongst their employees, and
- (b) the churches should seek to identify ministers (or other authorised workers) who can understand what Chaplaincy is about ('soul friend', loitering-with-intent').

It was noted that because of ethnic diversity chaplains would eventually be sought also from non-Christian faith communities - and that the churches should be welcoming this.

It might then be possible to inaugurate in the late autumn of 2004 a starter chaplaincy in one of the more self-contained areas (e.g. Thanet).

Action: Church Leaders

4.2. Kent Industrial Mission

The Chairman outlined both the concerns of the Church Leaders to find the right way forward for Industrial Mission within Kent, and the lack of understanding between KIM and the Church Leaders. There had been painfully little progress in forwarding a proposal for research in possible ways forward. Canon David Grimwood, (Church in Society), John Ellis (Methodist Business and Economic Affairs) would be meeting soon with Harvey Richardson (representing the church leaders). The matter would then be a major item at the next meeting (due on 29 September 2004) of the Church Leaders.

Action: Church Leaders

We noted the retirement of Canon Noel Beattie. Michael Cooke was asked to write a message of thanks from the Council

Action: Michael Cooke

4.3. Co-chairmen to the Police and Ambulance Chaplaincies

Fr Wilfrid McGreal (current co-chairman) reported in general on the chaplaincy to the Police:-

- (a) Major Robin Macintosh (Salvation Army) was now serving 2 days/week at Police Headquarters; (he was also 3-days/week chaplain at Gatwick airport)
- (b) There was continuing good support for the Chaplaincy from the great majority of senior police officers
- (c) There had been a sudden and shocking recent death (that of Assistant Chief Constable David McCann, who had been aged 51, and previously in excellent health);

- (d) There would be a service of celebration for the work of the Police on November 6th at Canterbury cathedral; this service was being organised by a small working group, including a member of the Christian Police Association.
- (e) In conclusion: The Chaplaincy is served by some excellent chaplains, who are highly respected within the police force.

Fr Wilfrid's plans after Easter 2005 were uncertain (he finishes his current role as Prior of Aylesford) - and the churches therefore need to identify a new co-chair. Fr Wilfrid described the roles of such a co-chair as

- (a) Building up friendship between churches and police
- (b) Co-chairing three meetings per year of the ecumenical Chaplaincy
- (c) Attendance at 1-2 networking events each year in connection with the police.

Action: Church Leaders

Malcolm Cooper raised two additional issues for members to consider:-

- (a) because of the drive towards multifaith and/or ethnic diversity in areas such as Chaplaincy, should CTKent be the arena within Kent for wider promotion of multi-faith working?
- (b) How do churches care for people of other faiths/understanding?

Michael Cooke drew attention to the Fire & Rescue Service's useful publication "Cultural Awareness", with sections on beliefs and practices of many of the major faiths.

The wider issue of multi-faith was commended for discussion at the next Church Leaders meeting.

Action: Church Leaders

Co-chairman to Ambulance Chaplaincy: A replacement to Revd Russell Thomson was also needed.

Action: Church Leaders

4.4. Induction/Licensing of ministers to posts with an ecumenical role

This topic had been briefly discussed at the most recent meeting of Church Leaders. Various points were made in relation to the difficulties of combining within one service the legal part of an induction/licensing, with the wider commitment and welcome to the wider ecumenical community. Can much of the legal business be done beforehand? Is it clear who is responsible for drawing up the service of welcome/commitment? How far was the selection of the incoming minister truly ecumenical? Does the LEP have (and draw on) a Staffing Consultative Group who will advise the appointing denomination of some of the ecumenical issues? Geoffrey Collins noted that for Methodist/URC LEPs there is a fixed guideline for the service.

Church Leaders were asked to reflect on these points at their next meeting.

Action: Church Leaders

4.5. Chairmanship of Churches Together in Kent from mid-2005

Harvey Richardson reminded the meeting that his three-year term would soon be completed and that he expected this to be his last meeting as chairman. Members were asked to consider urgently and prayerfully who should be approached as the next chairman - for the record (but there is nothing in the Constitution about the chairman coming every time from a different denomination) the previous chairmen were

Richard Third (Anglican); David Helyer (URC); Fr Wilfrid McGreal (RC);
Brian Smith (Anglican); Harvey Richardson (Methodist)

Action: All

5. Issues from Churches Together in England (CTE)

5.1. "The Gathering" (5-7 November 2004)

Michael Cooke drew attention to this meeting. Unlike the previously biannual meetings both of CTE's Forum which were attended by representatives of the national churches, county bodies, and Bodies in Association, etc, and of CTBI's Meetings, "The Gathering" was intended for *all individuals* who wanted to share ecumenical experience and be encouraged. Booking details were available from CTE. Robin Blount indicated he had already applied to attend.

5.2. Pilgrim Post

In response to questions about this publication by CTE, both Michael Cooke and Colin Crook encouraged its reading by all who have ecumenical responsibility or interest. Pilgrim Post is Churches Together in England's main regular communication of what is happening nationally and locally. The subscription for the six issues/year, inc. p/p, is currently £12 (with standing order), £13 otherwise. Details from Churches Together in England Tel 020-7529-8132.

6. Other National and Regional News/Issues, including

6.1. Regional Faith Forum / Regional Development Agencies

Geoffrey Collins reported on the recent (March 2004) Regional Faith Forum held at Central Hall, Westminster. Despite a good agenda which included issues like Government plans for regionalisation, Sarah Lewis' Report of Regeneration activities "Beyond Belief", attendance at the Regional Faith Forum had been limited - almost exclusively from the Christian churches (the only non-Christians were one Muslim, and one Rabbi). Questions were asked whether the venue had been appropriate ("Should it be held another occasion on the premises of a minority-religion?"), and of the make-up of the Committee who had drawn up the agenda.

Malcolm Cooper made the point that while CTKent arguably best represents churches working and being together *across greater Kent*, and while there are *local* interfaith initiatives (e.g. in North Kent), there is no effective regional interfaith representation or working. Although there were very few formal gatherings of people of a non-Christian faith in most parts of Kent, all our communities contained such people.

Wilfrid McGreal drew attention to the recent address by Mgr Michael Fitzgerald to the gathering of Catholic Priests, and that their new Archbishop (Kevin McDonald) had a strong interfaith interest.

All these issues would be forwarded for consideration to the Executive Committee for the Regional Faith Forum.

Action: Geoffrey Collins and Malcolm Cooper

6.2. Three-Faiths Forum in Bromley/Lewisham area

Michael Cooke described the emerging relationships and meetings between members of the Lewisham Mosque, two synagogues (one Reformed, one Orthodox), and a few local Christians. Michael's involvement had been because CTKent covers Bromley Borough; he had also been the Christian presenter at the one of the first three meetings at which one particular faith was described and then discussed. Each of these meetings had been very honouring and stimulating, and bode well for future meetings. In due course we may expect that a formal Forum affiliated to the Three Faiths movement may be established.

7. LEPs and Informal Local Partnerships

7.1. Latest situation(s) on LEPs

Updated green sheets summarising Partnerships in Kent had been circulated. Some amendments were suggested, and are incorporated on the next issue (appended to these Minutes).

A number of specific issues had been identified at the recent meeting of Denominational Ecumenical Officers (see the notes from their meeting), and were being worked on.

Action: EOs

In discussion the meeting agreed

- (a) To ask the Ecumenical Officers to consider CTKent sponsoring some local meetings for LEPs to share good and less-good experiences.

Action: EOs

- (b) The Secretary should reissue the Guidelines for what is expected of/from individual members of Council who act as contact with an LEP.

Action: Michael Cooke

- (c) All members should consider for which of the LEPs they could offer themselves as contact (there are gaps in our coverage). Malcolm Cooper suggested, for example, that it might make sense for there to be one contact covering the four Chatham LEPs.

Action: All

7.2. Approving the Constitution of Tudeley-cum-Five Oak Green (A/U)

Jeremy Ive (minister at the LEP) explained the background to the current proposed LEP - and the fact that formally it was not a matter of Tudeley-cum Capel joining an existing LEP (even if that was what it felt like), but of an agreement between the Church of England and URC denominations.

Michael Cooke explained that an LEP Constitution needed to be approved not only by the local church members, but also by the denominations represented, and by the Sponsoring Body. The usual involvement of CTKent is through the Secretary, who reviews and will make suggestions for the Constitution (e.g. ensuring that all the usual clauses relating to e.g. Baptism, Membership or Staffing Consultative Groups are included and appropriately worded).

On the assurance that there had been this involvement from CTKent, the Constitution was approved. (For information a copy is appended to these Minutes.)

7.3. Other new partnerships (including Kings Hill)

Bishop Brian Castle outlined the pioneering work being done at/on Kings Hill - e.g. in a situation of large-scale development, where there was no church building, and where one denomination had funded a post (and provided a home) for a minister to work alongside and with incipient Christian house-groups. In such a new endeavour, some real difficulties were experienced - e.g. how such a minister relates with integrity with an incipient Community Church, many of whose members are not linked to other local churches.

Both the minister (Revd Stuart Mousir-Harrison) and the project was commended to our prayers.

Action: All

8. Other Ecumenical Work , including

8.1. Wellspring 2005 (18 June 2005, at Aylesford Priory)

Fr Wilfrid McGreal outlined the progress to date: Some of the speakers and many of the workshops were now booked (though some speakers were still needed); the project was beginning to develop the energy necessary to make the event a major success. A realistic pricing policy had been worked out; the final list of speakers would be clarified before long; publicity would be crucial; he hoped that the BBC Radio Kent Lent Series would provide an introduction to help enhance awareness.

8.2. Training for church involvement in Critical Incident Response

Jane Winter (Church and Society) had written to Michael Cooke to provide up-to-date information about the Training Programme. In summary, as a result of the first Training series 30 chaplains (14 clergy from Canterbury Diocese; 1 Church Army Officer, 4 lay people from Canterbury, 4 clergy from Rochester Diocese, 2 people from Church in Society, 2 Catholic priests, 1 Baptist minister, 1 lay Baptist, and 1 Bahai) were now trained; some minor tweaks in the training would be implemented in future series. The next series was being planned (19th May and 7th June 2005). Three denominations (Kent Baptist Association, Roman Catholic and URC) were still outstanding in their contributions to start-up costs - and it would help Jane enormously if these start-up costs could be fully covered.

Action: Baptist, Catholic and URC Denominations

Steve Huyton added the widespread feeling that the training had been very successful; tabards were on order, and (hard)hats made available. The programme had begun in the Emergency Services, but has been well picked up by the churches - the Emergency services are very grateful for this response from the faith communities. A major part of the training consists in helping would-be chaplains understand the dynamic between the various parts of the emergency services.

We were reminded that Church and Society is sponsoring this training

- (a) not because it is a denominational matter (it certainly isn't denominational), but
- (b) because they have the skills and resources to enable the training, and
- (c) they are doing the training on behalf of all faiths.

The Secretary was asked to write a letter of thanks to Jane Winter.

Action: Michael Cooke

Both Steve Huyton and Anthony Cotterill mentioned that a Critical Response in Kent might be not only for an event in Kent, but also for any relocation of people from an affected area of London. And such involvement might not be short-term.

9. Communications

9.1. Ecumenical Directory

The Meeting concurred that we would not be distributing a printed copy in 2004, but would keep the web version updated. (NB The web contains the 'pdf' version, which can be downloaded and printed locally.) Michael confirmed he would send a copy of the Ecumenical Directory to new members of Council.

9.2. Media work

Fr Wilfrid reported on the need for churches to make full use of the opportunities provided by the church-friendly parts of the Media (he mentioned e.g. Kent Messenger, and reporters like Lynn Wallace-Ede and Jonathan Witchell at BBC Radio Kent) When sending information, remember the principles: "Don't fax - it may get lost" - "Use e-mail!"

The first programme from the 2004 Lent Series (and the planning of which had been mainly the work of Chris Stone and Fr Wilfrid McGreal) had been nominated for a Frank Gillard Award.

9.3. BBC Radio Kent Lent Course

See the above Minutes 8.1 and 9.2.

9.4. Notifying Ecumenical Events across Kent

Michael drew attention to Ted Bishop's retirement from providing the Calendar of Events - members were asked to ensure that Michael Cooke was now sent all such information.

Action: All

So long as events were notified to him, Michael Cooke would continue to put these up on Churches Together in Kent's website.

10. Denominational News

Catholic

Fr Geoffrey Pointer reported that Archbishop Kevin McDonald was visiting all deaneries in Kent, "getting to know us".

Salvation Army

Robin Macintosh has been appointed part-time chaplain to Police HQ (he's also part-time chaplain to Gatwick Airport).

Quakers

(a) Michael Staynes is (again!) Clerk to the East Kent Meeting;
(b) There is a National Consultation looking at how Quaker Structures can be freed up.

Methodist

(a) Malcolm Cooper drew attention to the Interfaith Lecture due on 28 September (involving Inderjit Singh, and Zadeki Bedawi);
(b) Harvey Richardson reported on the Methodist Conference's agreement to reorganise the current four London Districts to create one new one covering metropolitan London, and two Districts covering (broadly) the non-London areas North and South of the Thames. These arrangements would come into place in 2006;
(c) Harvey had been nominated to represent British Methodists within the Leuenberg Fellowship (Council of European Churches) - a fellowship of 100 churches committed to sharing of Communion, preaching and Social Action.

Canterbury Diocese Mystery Plays in Canterbury Cathedral

Rochester Diocese

(a) Colin Crook reported that he would be standing down as the diocese's Ecumenical Officer from August 2004; following also Canon Michael Howard's stepping down as Bishop's officer for Mission, Ecumenism and Parish Development, the whole Department was being reviewed.
(b) Bishop Brian reported on the Diocese's 1400th Anniversary celebrations (e.g. "The Day" in Rochester on Saturday 17th July; The Play in Rochester Cathedral (October); and the Pilgrimage from Rome to Rochester (November)

URC

Geoffrey Collins noted
(a) the ongoing work over deployment of ministers (some of the review being done in partnership with the Methodists)
(b) "Catch the Vision" - the national initiative to consider the structure of the URC

Baptist

No report available

European

Robin Blount drew attention to the Charta Oecumenica (being promoted through Methodist Districts, and within the Salvation Army)

11. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26th November 2003

These had already been distributed, and were approved without change by Council.

12. Matters Arising from Minutes of 26th November 2003

12.1. Leaflets for County Show (FC 3.2) - no action yet.

13. Any Other Business

13.1. Thanks to those standing down

The chairman thanked and offered good wishes to Colin Crook and (in their absence) Michael Howard and Lt Col David Jones for their contributions and support in ecumenical work. In turn, Harvey was thanked for his wise, gentle and focussed leadership of Council over the past 3 years.

13.2. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that meeting in approx. 8-9 months would be most appropriate, and therefore from the three dates provisionally earmarked for 2005 chose

9:30 am, Wednesday 16th March 2005 at The Hermitage

NB It might be wise also to keep free the last earmarked date of 2005

(Wednesday, 23rd November 2005), which is 8 months after the above March date.

14. Closing Prayers

These were led by the chairman.

Appended to Minutes: (1) Summary of Ecumenical Partnerships within Kent
 ('Green Sheets)
 (2) Constitution of
 Tudeley-cum-Capel with Five Oak Green