



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KENT

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From: Revd Michael Cooke, Secretary to Council, and County Ecumenical Officer for Kent

Minutes of a Meeting of Full Council

held at 10:00 am, on Wednesday 19 November 2008
at The Hermitage, West Malling, Kent ME19 6HB

Members of Council present:-

Revd Robin Blount (Canterbury Diocese); Michele Cascioli (Hon Treasurer);
Bishop Brian Castle (Rochester Diocese); Revd Geoffrey Collins (URC); Revd Michael
Cooke (County Ecumenical Officer, and Secretary); Revd Malcolm Cooper (Methodist,
South-East District); Major Anthony Cotterill (Salvation Army); Revd John Currie
(Rochester Diocese); Revd John Hellyer (Methodist South-East District); Revd Peter Hills
(Methodist South-East District); Revd Jeremy Ive (Rochester Diocese);
Revd Guy Laurence (South Eastern Baptist Association); Revd Pauline Sparks (URC);
Michael Staynes (Religious Society of Friends); Revd Norman Tharby (South Eastern
Baptist Association); Revd Nigel Uden (URC, and Chairman).

Apologies were received from:-

Bishop Graham Cray (Canterbury Diocese); Major Sarah Kind (Salvation Army);
Bishop John Hine (Southwark Archdiocese); Fr Wilfrid McGreal O Carm (Southwark
Archdiocese); Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali (Rochester Diocese); Bishop Stephen Venner
(Canterbury Diocese)

1. Welcome and Opening Prayers

Nigel Uden read from 2 Corinthians 5: 11-21, and led prayers.

He cited three recently heard quotations:-

"Unity is no betrayal" (Giles Fraser, on today's "Thought for the Day");

"Ecumenism embraces diversity and does not destroy it" (David Cornick (CTE));

"The will to reconciliation may begin as a desire to end hostilities or make the
neighbourhood safer, and as such it is enormously important and beneficial. The task of
the Christian, however, is to extend the process inwards into the hearts of men and
women where it ceases to be 'mere business' and becomes an exercise in bringing about
the Kingdom of God." (Brian Castle, quoting Gabriel Daly, in Bishop Brian's new book,
"Reconciling one and all" - SPCK ISBN 978-0-281-05970-6)

Revd Norman Tharby (Regional Minister for South-Eastern Baptist Association, and
Revd Peter Hills (Ecumenical Officer for East are of the Methodist South-East District)
were welcomed to their first meeting of Council.

2. Apologies for Absence

These were noted, as above.

3. Previous Council meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2008

3.1 The Minutes (already distributed, but also downloadable from www.ctkent.org.uk) were
approved and signed by the Chair.

3.2 Matters Arising: Ecumenical Officer Succession

Nigel Uden detailed progress since the meeting in March 2008, in particular the
formulation by the Church Leaders of a draft Job Description / Person Specification for a
Development Officer/Researcher. Amongst points made to the circulated draft were:-

- Major Anthony Cotterill to be added to the list of the church leaders
- The appointment is planned for one year, with a reporting back towards the end of the year (? at a half-day meeting) – an “inspirational gathering” to ensure that insights from the Spirit in the larger body were also heard.
- Should advertising be beyond the church-related media? (Thinking of Christians from industry or commerce who may have more time on their hands)
- The Job Description needs to contain adequate and clear detail – John Currie, who has past preference in personnel issues, volunteered to help in the drawing up of a more formal Job Description.
- As noted in the last paragraph of the draft, the position would NOT cover the current support of on-going ecumenical activity in Kent. This would need to be separately covered. (See Minutes 3.3 and 4.1, below)

Conclusions:

(a) The meeting was supportive of the proposals to work towards the appointment of a Researcher/Development Officer.

The appointments group should contain one more member who had personnel experience, and who ideally would not be not clergy, nor male. Two further names were suggested as being suitable: Major Beverly McCombe (Salvation Army), and Louise Gilbert (Diocesan Secretary to Rochester Diocese) would be approached, in that order.

3.3 Providing on-going support to current ecumenical activities

Nigel noted that the Leaders and Michael had agreed that Michael be prepared to remain in post until 30 April 2009.

Beyond that, if the churches and Council are as committed as they should be, the Council would operate as a team to provide limited current support. It was noted from CTKent’s budget that the current pension provision (which would not be used for the Research post) together with other savings against budget should allow a payment of approximately £2,500-£3,000 per annum for a part-time administrative assistant.

3. Local Ecumenical Partnerships

4.1 Oversight of LEPs, and practical support of Churches Together groups

Expected to be covered by the existing Ecumenical Officers (NB two denominations are currently without a Denominational Ecumenical Officer – and Nigel would write to the Leaders drawing their attention to this.)

Action: Nigel Uden

4.2 Training Day held on 1st October 2008

Thanks were expressed from those who had been participants to those who had helped convene and lead the day – including Revd Nigel Uden for his keynote address, Revd John Bradley (CTE’s Field Officer for South of England) and the three County Ecumenical Officers of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. It was suggested the day could be repeated annually.

4.3 Specific LEPs

Michael noted that the Ecumenical Council of Burham and Wouldham LEP (Anglican/Methodist) had voted overwhelmingly in favour of ending the LEP and replacing it with an Anglican Parish with a Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment. The implications of this decision (including the effects on the Methodist Chapel, and its Sharing Agreement) would be worked out over the following year.

5. London Boroughs of Bexley and Bromley

CTKent's Standing Committee had concurred with the sentiments expressed at our meeting of March 2008 that 'ecumenical care' of these be transferred if possible to Churches Together in South London.

It was noted that there was no boundary scheme which would necessarily suit all denominations, but that the present arrangement appeared less logical from a mission perspective. There might also be financial implications for e.g. Rochester Diocese who would be expected to provide DEO cover for two County bodies. On the other hand, putting Bexley and Bromley into South London would make more sense for e.g. the Catholic Archdiocese, and for the Methodist District.

Michael would write to (a) Churches Together Groups and LEPs in Bexley and Bromley; and (b) to the denominations requesting their views on whether such a transfer should proceed. Responses would be requested in time for action at our next Council Meeting due in e.g. March 2009.

Action: Michael Cooke

6. Finances of Churches Together in Kent

6.1 Accounts for 2007

Michele Cascioli explained the main variances between Budget and Actual. It was noted inter alia that the Accounts reflect

- (a) Some back-payments from earlier years for Churches Together Groups; and
- (b) Debtors of £2,088.

The accounts were approved *nem con.* (Copy attached to these Minutes).

NB Michele Cascioli would now submit the Accounts for Independent Examination.

Action: Michele Cascioli

6.2 Denominational subscriptions for 2009

Due to the cancelling of the Council Meeting in November 2007, the budget figures for 2009 had not been approved. The budget (attached to these Minutes) was adopted by the meeting.

(Note added post-meeting: Would Council members please ensure their denominational authority knew of the subscriptions now expected.

Action: All members

6.3 Budget and Denominational subscriptions for 2010

These would be discussed at Council's next meeting (expected March 2009).

Michele Cascioli was thanked for all his work on the Accounts.

7. Thames Gateway: Gateway Opportunities and action

Nigel reported that the Church Leaders had had a very helpful presentation from representatives of churches involved in the Thames Gateway. The group was preparing a revised and developed report which would be shared with Church Leaders at their meeting on 17th December 2008, and then be discussed at our next meeting (presumed to be in March 2009)

In comment the following were noted:

- (a) the Gateway project has certainly been slowed down because of the current economic climate; and
- (b) The publication of "Building Utopia? - Seeking the Authentic Church for the New Communities", by Laurie Green (ed) & Chris Baker (ed): (SPCK) - with the theme: Development on new urban areas e.g. Thames Gateway on both sides of the river; contains interviews with incomers (their expectations), those who have already been

in the Gateway area longer-term, and the planners and MPs.

The question is posed: What does this say about being Church in a new urban area?

8. European Workers

Discussion of this was deferred to the March 2009 meeting; denominations were asked to bring examples of initiatives.

Action: All members

We agreed to identify an individual who could give us some of the facts – Malcolm Cooper mentioned the possibility from KCC of Robert Hardy. Robin Blount may also have a contact from the Helpline charity for migrants in East Kent that he co-chairs.

9. Denominational (and joint) action relating to the economic downturn/recession

Malcolm Cooper mentioned the role of St Helens, Bishopsgate, which had seen many more City workers not merely passing the church by, but calling in with concerns.

Brian Castle mentioned

(a) the work (on Rochester Diocese's website) by Revd Hugh Thomas, Non-stipendiary priest in Rochester Diocese and who had formerly worked with Deutsche Bank before himself being made redundant; and that

(b) Rochester cathedral was also thinking of a series of talks in early 2009.

10. Other important denominational news

Rochester In recognition that 2009 is the bicentenary of Darwin's birth, and the 150th anniversary of the publication of "On the Origin of Species", there are expected to be various responses, including discussion relating to the issues of science and faith.

KWM Malcolm mentioned two relevant websites:-

(a) www.bandsatwork.co.uk (Bands is loosely based on John Wesley's idea that Christians are better equipped to live radical, honest and accountable lives if they meet regularly in small groups.)

(b) www.cabe-online.org (Affirming Christians in Business) – provides e.g. 31 principles for Christians at the workplace; the perspective is Christian, but the language is corporate.

11. AOB

11.1 Churches Advertising Network (CAN) radio materials for Christmas 2008.

The two 30-second clips were played, and after discussion the Meeting agreed *nem con* that up to £500 could be spent from CTKent funds on a series of pre-Christmas adverts on commercial radio using these materials. Michael would liaise with CAN to arrange this.

Action: Michael Cooke

11.2 Date of Next Meeting in 2009

Michael undertook to circulate all members to try to find a "best date" for a meeting in ~ March 2009; subsequent meetings would, however, depend on the appointment of the Researcher, and when it would be good to hold that feedback/inspirational meeting.

Action: Michael Cooke, re March meeting

12. Closing Prayers

These were led by Nigel Uden.

The meeting closed at approximately 12:15 pm.

Attachments:-

- (1) Draft Job Description /Person Specification for Researcher
- (2) CTKent Accounts 2007 (signed)
- (3) CTKent Budget for 2009

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KENT (CTK)

Proposed DEVELOPMENT OFFICER/RESEARCHER

The regional leaders of the churches in membership of CTK * seek to make a short term appointment for one year, for two days a week with effect from 1st May 2009.

Job Description

In collaboration with the leaders of the churches in membership of CTK, and in consultation with, inter alia, Churches Together groups, denominational Ecumenical Officers, CTK Council, representatives of other churches in Kent, people engaged ecumenically in specific church-based projects, secular agencies, etc, to drive a radical review of ecumenical working in Kent and Medway, in order to shape a vision and strategy which suggests new ways of Christians engaging in mission together.

Person Specification

Practising Christian, committed to helping Christians work together in mission.

Ability to reflect theologically

Research, analysis and development experience appropriate for a diverse context

Good organisational and IT skills

Good written and spoken communication skills

Flexible hours as required.

? Car driver, or able to make own arrangements for transport around the county

Funding

Approximately £8,500 per annum plus expenses

Advertising

The Anglican Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester,

The South East of England Association of the Baptist Church

The Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark

The South East District of the Methodist Church

The South East Division of the Salvation Army

The Southern Synod of the United Reformed Church

Churches Together in Kent

Churches Together in South London

Churches Together in Surrey

Churches Together in Sussex

County Hall

The Universities of Canterbury Christ Church, Greenwich, Kent and Sussex, Kings

College London

* The Right Reverend Dr Brian Castle - Bishop of Tonbridge (CofE), The Right Reverend Graham Cray (CofE), The Reverend John Hellyer (Methodist), The Right Reverend John Hine – Bishop for Kent (Roman Catholic), The Reverend Norman Tharby (Baptist), The Reverend Nigel Uden (United Reformed Church) and The Right Reverend Dr Stephen Venner – Bishop of Dover (CofE)

The Proposed Interview Panel

The Reverend John Bradley (CTE), Bishop Brian Castle, Bishop John Hine, Mrs Angela Scott
The Reverend Nigel Uden. Any others?

Work still to be addressed during the Researcher's year:

'Supporting, encouraging, developing areas of ecumenical working', including LEPs
Help in places with particular problems

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KENT					
RESULTS for 31st December 2007, BUDGET for 31st December 2007, 2008 and 2009					
		2007 ACTUAL	2007 Budget	2008 Budget	2009 Budget
INCOME		£	£	£	£
	Canterbury Diocese	3,475	3,481	3,620	3,765
	Rochester Diocese	3,480	3,481	3,620	3,765
	Southwark Diocese (RC)	3,480	3,481	3,620	3,765
	South East Baptist Association	696	696	724	753
	Methodist Church (South East District)	696	696	724	753
	Salvation Army (South East Division)	696	696	724	753
	Society of Friends (Quakers)	340	348	181	188
	United Reformed Church (Southern Province)	696	696	724	753
	(Local) Churches Together Groups	1,460	1,500	1,500	1,500
	Other Income	0	0	0	0
	Gross Bank Interest	101	50	50	50
	Total Income	15,120	15,125	15,487	16,045
EXPENDITURE					
	Stipend	9,004	9,004	9,220	9,447
	Pension	2,845	3,421	3,642	3,779
	Secretarial	70	250	250	250
	Postage and Stationery	157	500	500	500
	Travelling expenses	929	1,500	1,500	1,500
	Telephone	97	150	150	150
	C T in England	320	550	550	550
	Meeting Expenses	164	200	200	200
	Web Expenses	0	-	20	0
	Conference Expenses	204	200	200	200
	Radio Kent Contribution	300	300	300	300
	Sundry Expenses	115	100	100	100
	Total Expenditure	14,205	16,175	16,632	16,976
	Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	915	(1,050)	(1,145)	(931)
RESERVES					
	Opening Balance	9,349	9,349	10,264	9,119
	Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	915	(1,050)	(1,145)	(931)
	Reserves carried forward	10,264	8,299	9,119	8,188