Notes from Calne Partnership of Churches AGM

held at Church House 21st January 2016

These are just my personal notes to give PCC an update. They are not official minutes.

Background: Many representatives were expecting this to be a brief meeting because we had not been aware of anyone prepared to take on the role of Secretary for the Partnership. Unusually for recent meetings, there was a good turnout of representatives. The new RC priest, Father Vincent Curtis, only moved in the previous day so did not attend; neither did the Methodist Minister (Rev. Wendy Tucker). The only other apologies given were from Morcia Booton. You will be aware that I have been prompting you to find a third CofE lay representative since Anna Desch left.

Elizabeth Hitchens, due to be Chairman for 2016 and 2017, explained that she had contacted Ann Gell who had agreed to be minuting Secretary. Ann is not able to take on other secretarial duties because she does not have internet connection. Elizabeth will take on these duties in addition to being Chairman. Ann was not able to attend this meeting at such short notice. Carol West (the only Dayspring lay rep.) offered to take notes for this meeting and Lynda Bosworth, who had come in spite of being unwell, to handover documents to Elizabeth Hitchens, was taken home by her husband Francis. (They are both lay Baptist reps.)

For those of you who have not met Ann Gell:

Dennis and Ann Gell retired to Calne (Castle Street) last year. They enjoy BCP so tend to go to services at St Peter’s when they are in Calne at weekends. Ann is an active member of the Church Recording Group (NADFAS).

There were positive comments on the introduction of more Christian elements for the 2015 “Lantern Parade”. There are plans to increase the number of people in the Nativity element for 2016. Calne Players took part in 2015. As well as this exciting possibility (Guinness Record attempt if sponsor ship can be arranged), the Town Council is considering trying to arrange a Live Link with Bethlehem. The new Mayor is also looking at possibilities for a Christmas Dinner to be made available in the Town Hall.

Our annual subscription (£50) was shown in the Treasurer’s Report as paid. After payments for the production of Stations of the Cross Banners had been met by grants and work done on design (without charge) by a member of our congregation (Nick Belson), there was a balance of just less than £400. Subscription for 2016 at £50 per member church and the appointment of Dave Treviss to examine the accounts were agreed.

The officers for 2016 were elected as follows:

Chairman – Mrs Elizabeth Hitchens (also for 2017)

Vice-Chair - Rev. Sam King (Rep from Methodist Church for 2017)

Secretary (Minuting only) – Mrs Ann Gell

Treasurer – Derek Gard

Meetings for 2016 and 2017 AGM agreed, subject to Secretary’s availability, as:

Thursday ? April at Methodist Church (tba)

Tuesday 19th July at St. Edmund’s Church

Thursday 13th October at Baptist Church

Wednesday ? January 2017 at Church House

A full report from Eleanor Bujalska explained how much the Food Bank was needed. Five offers of help have been received since the October meeting enabling Eleanor to draw up a rota to share the workload. At peak times, such as Harvest, the storage at the Methodist Church overflows.

This year’s week of Prayer for Christian Unity was not marked because the ministers had failed to meet and agree possible joint services or other activities. It was agreed that there should be a Joint Service on Sunday 22nd January2017 at 4pm in St Mary’s Church. Bob will arrange this.

On Good Friday, 25th March 2016, there will be a United Service to be timed to link with The Stations of the Cross Walk starting at 9.30 am. Kathryn Miller to help Elizabeth Hitchens, in February to find venues for the Stations so that a map can be added to the leaflets explaining each station.

The General Election Hustings had been a good event so further Open debate Evenings may be arranged on topical issues such as the Referendum regarding UK to stay in EU.

No Lent Course will be recommended for CPC Ecumenical Groups this year, arrangements for 2017 need to be considered at the July meeting. It was agreed that events should be properly organised not last minute and poorly planned.

Dayspring has plans to purchase a replacement for the Open Blue Bus. At least £30,000 will need to be raised.

Bob said he would supply details of Susan Erb’s talk about Refugees on 6th February.

On 17th May there will be a special Service Evensong to celebrate a St Edmund’s Centenary. This co-incides with a twinning weekend.

The news was announced of the appointment of Graham Shore to be Headteacher of Holy Trinity CofE Academy. He has currently stepped up from Deputy Head to be Acting Head following Steve Heal’s departure at Christmas to take up the challenge of leading Malmesbury CofE Primary to become the largest Primary school in Wiltshire (3 form entry – 630 pupils).

Bob mentioned the possibility of forming a team trained to give Open the Book assemblies.