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| MINUTES of the **Horsforth Churches Together AGM**  Wednesday 11 Jan 2023  7.30pm at The Grove | | |
| **Attendees:** | Cal Bailey, John Barnes (Treasurer), Judith Briggs, Lynn Cowling, Rachel Ford (Chair), Lynne Gillions (Secretary), Jane Linley, Phil Maud, Rose McCarthy, Paul Metcalf, Margaret Metcalf, Deborah Pennington, Matt Powell, Nigel Sinclair, Duncan Stow, Jill Woodman, Rhoda Wu | |
| **Apologies** | Jonathan Cain, Pete Lambert, Jo Lightowler, Miriam Parker. |  |
|  |  | **Action By:** |
| 1. | **Welcome**  Rachel welcomed everyone and opened the meeting in prayer. |  |
| 2. | **Chair’s Report**  Rachel gave this summary of the year to the meeting.  **HCT Chair’s Report for the 2022 year**  I started my year as chair of HCT grateful to have the opportunity to be involved with a such a fabulous group of prayerful, faithful people, committed to working together to share God’s love and spread the good news of the gospel in Horsforth. At the end of that year, that gratitude remains. Looking back over the past 12 months, I am astounded & encouraged by how much Horsforth Churches Together have achieved - the very many, creative ways in which, together, you (& it has been you!) have blessed the local community, loved your neighbour & witnessed o God’s love in word and deed.  **EVENTS**  The events calendar for the year seems to have been packed – all the regular events and a few new ones!  In March, a Covid ‘2 years on’ Memorial gave the local community space to reflect, grieve and process.  At Easter it was great to be back together again for the Good Friday Walk of Witness.  The summer months were busy ones – June in particular!  The Queen’s Jubilee picnic in the park at the start of June was wet but not a wash out! The churches were present in a wonderful, visible way – handing out ‘Our Faithful Queen’ booklets, plus providing games and activities for children and families.  In mid-June, a concert for Ukraine at The Grove raised nearly £3000 in support of those affected by the conflict there.  And then at the end of the month the Churches Together were a really valued presence at the Horsforth Gala – with free of charge games, an area for toddlers and a space to pray for Ukraine in the inflatable church.  The John Archer performance at Lister Hill on Gala Saturday was a great, invitational event.  In July, the Civic service was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate, encourage and pray for a whole host of different local organisations that work in and for our community.  The Perfectly pitched concerts in the first half of the year were well received and attended, making high quality classical music available to all.  And finally Christmas – at the start of December, the Farmers Market team provided vital support for Horsforth’s first Christmas Market – building on existing relationships with local businesses, and supporting an initiative aimed to really bless the local community and high street.  Christmas card distribution – including a fellowship meal at Cragg – went well, and Carols in the Park was, as always, a great success.  Rewind to Christmas also deserves a special mention – a fantastic team from across the churches worked to share and encourage reflection on the Christmas story with nearly 300 children from all but one of Horsforth’s primary schools. **REGULAR ACTIVITIES & ONGOING WORK**  As if all that wasn’t enough… regular Churches Together activities continued and expanded.  HCT Welcome pack was a new feature of 2022 – it has now been distributed to all churches/ made available in the library – a great resource for welcoming new folks to Horsforth and letting them know about the local churches in the area.  Open the Book Team – back in schools sharing stories from the Bible in a fun and memorable way.  Our support of MHA continued – welcomed Judith at the March meeting, continued to offer a monthly time of reflection/ prayer at their Thursday lunch club.  Christian Aid volunteers hit the streets in May – delivering envelopes that could be returned to any of the churches or to a post box in Morrisons, which raised £2578.  October marked the 10th anniversary of the Farmer’s Market, now back on Town Street.  Refugee work – this year we have been able to support Our Lady of Kirkstall Migrant Support Group, as they connect with and support male asylum seekers in the Parkway hotel. Shoes, good quality clothing, baking and Christmas presents have all been donated. The Horsforth Chaplaincy Project has also appointed Rose – to coordinate and take forward what we do as HCT in this area.  Finally – we have begun to respond to the cost-of-living crisis, by collating all the times the different churches are open during the week, and publicising that through churches and the HCT website.  **FOND FAREWELLS AND NEW FACES**  We have said goodbye to Mark & Jenny, from the Grove.  We have welcomed new leaders – Matt Powell at Lister, and Jo Lightowler leading the Methodist churches.  There have been changes in Duncan’s role, as he’s taken on responsibilities at Cragg, and in response to that welcomed Rose & Rhoda as new members of the Horsforth Chaplaincy Project.  **THANKS**  Judith, Nigel, Duncan & all involved with Covid memorial event  Open the Book Team – wonderful ongoing witness in our local schools  Matt/ Lister – hosting the John Archer evening  Phil/ Mark/ all at the Grove – Ukraine concert & hosting the civic service  Farmers Market Team – all they do, especially for the support shown to local businesses at Christmas.  Rose/ Rhoda - the ways they are already supporting & enhancing what we are able to do/ offer as a Churches Together  Nigel – leading Carols in the Park  Duncan – all that he does to allow us to be present at events like the Gala, and to make the Walk of Witness/ Carols in the Park possible.  Lynne – work as secretary  John – keeping an eye on the money.  **FUTURE**  Challenges ahead – finances – for churches, churches together & individuals  Challenge of finding new faces & new energy to support the work of HCT  There is opportunity too –  To demonstrate the love of God to our local community through a difficult winter  To grow and develop our work with the support and energy that Rose & Rhoda bring  And to discover – in potentially challenging times – that our God is a God who provides.  So – at the start of a new year – let’s set our hearts/ minds on Jesus; let’s prayerfully discern how God is calling us to serve him, encourage one another & build up his church in Horsforth in the year ahead – and let’s ask Him to provide for all that he calls us to be and to do. |  |
| 3. | **Treasurer’s Report**  John presented a summary of expenditure and income for the year ending 31.12.22. This included Perfectly Pitched Concerts. The year started with £6162 in the account and ended with £5640. Most of HCT expenditure was in line with normal expenditure with some costs such as Christmas cards being slightly more. The annual expenditure is about £6000 including Perfectly Pitched. HCT need to maintain an income of £5500.  Rachel thanked John for his work as treasurer. |  |
| 4. | **Horsforth Chaplaincy Report**  Duncan said that Carols in the Pubs had gone really well with people readily participating in the singing.  There have been significant changes this year as he has gone part-time with HCP. Rhoda Wu and Rose McCarthy are now employed part-time. Rhoda is supporting current projects and is working on communications and the website and Duncan noted the significant improvements she has made. Rose is focusing on work with refugees and asylum seekers. She is employed for one year and more funds will be needed if her post is to be extended. Currently, most of the funding comes from individual donors and the rest comes from churches and the Farmers’ Market. The January newsletter going out to churches gives details of how the project can be supported.  Rose spoke about the work with the refugees and asylum seekers in the local hotel. As well as providing clothes and trainers the men had been taken on a number of trips and participated in socials. A few had helped with the distribution of Christmas cards. Some had attended a Christmas service at St Mary’s. HCP had also been in contact with a mosque to help provide prayer mats and copies of the Qur’an. Three meetings have been held exploring the possibility of Horsforth becoming a town of sanctuary. Rose has attended training to help the men learn English and communicate their stories to others. Some of the men have joined in football with Duncan. Later in the meeting Cal commented that in Bradford they were really open to promoting all faiths and we should be confident in promoting our events.  Duncan concluded by talking about his work in Horsforth school. He was sad to lose Joel on the team but is now working with Annetta from Emmanuel Church. They did 5 back to back assemblies at Christmas. They are working with a Y8/9 group and are about to start a Y7 group.  The HCP team are now looking at ways to celebrate all the things that are going on in Horsforth. Watch this space!  Rachel thanked Duncan for all the work of the project. | All churches |
| 5. | **Election of Officers**  Chair – No nominations received  Secretary – Lynne Gillions proposed by Nigel Sinclair all in favour  Treasurer – John Barnes proposed by Cal Bailey all in favour  Vice Chair – no nominations  Rachel prayed for the appointment of a new chair. | All Churches |
| 6. | **Minutes and Matters Arising**  The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. Matters arising:   * **Warm Spaces** are listed on the website and Rhoda should be informed of any additions. * **Bedford Court** Phil distributed handouts for each church A 6 weekly pattern will be offered. 14 Feb The Grove, 11 April Lister Hill, 30 May St Margaret’s, 11 July vacant * **Live at Home** On the first Thursday of the month, Phil will trial a 15 minute reflection around the piano. * **Perfectly Pitched** Deborah distributed leaflets for churches and requested volunteers for stewarding and refreshments. Dates are on Thursdays at 1.00pm 16 Feb, 16 Mar, 18 May, 1 Jun, 21 Sept and 23 Nov | All Churches |
| 7. | **Christmas Feedback**  There was a range of feedback:  Matt - It was his first year in Horsforth and he said it was amazing how much was going on.  Nigel – People in Horsforth were aware of the well-established events and how the churches co-operated.  Deborah – There were opportunities for us to contribute to events such as those organised by the council as well as organising our own. The new Christmas Market had been a great success.  Rose – Carols in the Pubs had been really enjoyable with people joining in.  Duncan – We could look at further ways of inviting Students, refugees and asylum seekers into our community. |  |
| 8. | **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 Jan**  Matt has organized the pulpit exchange on Sun 22 Jan  On 17 Jan, St Mary’s is organizing a Taize service at 7.00pm to which all are invited.  Rhoda distributed information about A Space for Prayer event to be held at The Grove from 12-4.00pm and 7.00-9.00pm. There will be displays to help focus the prayers and opportunities for prayer and reflection. Final details will be sent to churches and will be on HCT website.  It was decided not to be involved in the World Day of Prayer but to put our energies into the above event. | All Churches |
| 9. | **Lent**  It was agreed that HCT would concentrate on Holy Week activities |  |
| 10. | **St James 175th Celebrations**  Lynne distributed information about a series of events which the church is putting on during the year to celebrate this milestone. All are welcome to attend any of the events. | All churches |
| 11. | **Church Contributions**  Following an enquiry about church contributions and the reduction of churches in Horsforth, it was proposed and agreed that a new system of funding should be trialled. The budget was agreed at £3375. It is anticipated that the Town Council will continue to contribute £400 for the Walk of Witness. This would leave a contribution of £425 from each of the 7 churches. Any church financially able to do so might be able to give £525, other churches with more financial restraints might pay £325. A letter for distribution to treasurers will be sent to the churches asking for donations. Nigel said he would not want the budget to limit potential new activities in which case churches could be asked to support a specific new venture if appropriate. | HCT Reps and Treasurers |
| 12 | **Easter**  Phil is planning to organise a service in Trinity Chapel at 7.00pm on 4 April – 7 Last Words on the Cross.  The Walk of Witness is planned for Good Friday  Nigel will organise a sunrise service in Hunger Hills Woods on Easter morning. | All Churches |
| 13. | **Dates for the Year Ahead 2022**  **HCT Meetings**  Wednesday 1March  Wednesday 3 May  Wednesday 6 September  Wednesday 1 November  **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18 – 25 January**  **Tuesday** 17 January 7.00pm Taize service at St Mary’s  Sunday 22 January Pulpit Exchange  Tuesday 24 January Prayer Space Event 12-4.00 & 7-9.00 The Grove Small Hall  **Perfectly Pitched :** Thursday 16 February, Thursday 16 March, Thursday 18 May, Thursday 1 June, Thursday 21 September, Thursday 23 November  **Holy Week - 7 Words of Jesus** Tuesday 4 April 7.00pm Leeds Trinity  **Good Friday Walk of Witness** 14 April 11.30-12.30 led by Matt and Duncan followed by soup and hot cross buns at The Grove  **Easter Sunday** Sunrise in Hunger Hills 16 April  **Civic Service** St Jameswith cream tea as part of their 175 celebrations 23 July  **Horsforth Gala** Saturday 24June  **Walk of Art Weekend** 1-2July  **Carols in the Park** 9December |  |
| 14. | **AOB**  None |  |
| 15. | **Closing Prayer**  Cal closed the meeting in prayer. |  |