

Minutes of Upper Thames Group Council

Held at Latton Parish Hall, Thursday 21st July 2016 at 8.00 pm

Present: Rev. Phil Bradley (PB) (chair), Adina Grace (AG), Ian Wharton (IW), Stuart Dagnall (STD), Sharon Smith (SS) and Jo Buxton (JB)

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies from Rev. Shirley Danby, Matt Smith, Kathryn Gray,
3. Notes and actions from last meeting
All within agenda items.
4. Church snapshots
Latton – 1 baptism since the last council. A grant has been awarded toward refurbishment of the bell tower ladder. The Diocese have reported back on the visit to look at church reordering which emphasised the amount of work needed to put together a Statement of Need and Significance. A Big Brekkie was held for Christian Aid that raised £270. Two historians recently visited the church for research purposes. Also a Mums and Tots has started up on a Monday morning which has started with average of 6 Mums per week.

Leigh – Church opened on Friday 13th May as part of prayer week. A number of baptisms and 2 weddings have taken place. The Village Barbecue on Sunday 12th June was well attended. 31st July will see the Waterhay services at 10am and 6pm. £1,000 was awarded to help with funding the South Door opening, although still waiting for the faculty.

Ashton Keynes – had a very successful summer fete well received by the community. All ages well represented. The School held an iSingPOP event, which connected the church, school and community, and was visited by the Bishop of Swindon. A church-led youth after school group will start in September – more leaders would be great. Friends of Holy Cross held a successful Barn Dance in the church (sold out!) with the pews moved back. The tower is still leaking, but is not considered to be of poor-enough state to obtain the larger grants, so has therefore been delayed.

Cricklade – Participated in the Cricklade festival in June with teas and coffees and trips up the tower. The Youth Café numbers have dropped during the summer but it will be relaunched in September. An application to the lottery fund has been made for the roof, which is still in bad repair –will find out in September whether it has been successful or not. The historic clock removal to the museum has now received a faculty. The organ has been refurbished and was rededicated on 10th July. Many occasional offices have been held. Michael Yelton came and did a talk on the Altars and windows designed by Martin Travers.

5. Vicar's update
A discussion took place on where the unity was between our 4 churches and where there was positive diversity. PB to report back to the next Group Council on the next steps – and will type up the results from the discussion in advance. **Action PB**
6. Safeguarding
Actions for St Sampson's from safeguarding review in progress –**Action AG & SS**
All Churches now have an agreed safeguarding policy.

7. Upper Thames Away Day
 Feedback from the 2016 Awayday was that John McGinley was an inspiring speaker, and that the venue at HarnHil was brilliant, and should be used again. A weekend away was discussed but felt to be cost prohibitive to many people.
 A 2017 Awayday was proposed and Shirley Danby has already requested possible dates from HarnHill. It was agreed that we need to find a way of encouraging messy church and fringe people to attend – possibly for a 2 hour slot in the afternoon from 3pm (including songs sung in schools). It was also agreed to publish an itinerary and details 2 months in advance to make it easier to invite others. **Action: PB**

8. Sermon series
 Feedback was that sermon series were very helpful. The next two sermon series are going to be on the Lord's Prayer, and Stewardship (generosity and giving).

9. Uganda
 Shirley Danby is finding out about the Deanery trip being planned for 2017 aimed at youth.
Action: PB (to pass to Shirley).
 It was recommended that the Harvest Appeal would again be for the Tearfund Water and Sanitation project. It was also suggested that we reuse material in services previously provided by Shirley to show how heavy water is, and powerpoints she used.

10. Youth work
 There have been no applicants from our SWYM advert. Other alternatives will be sought.

11. Events
 22nd July – Choir Summer Concert to celebrate the refurbishment of the St Sampson's Church Organ
 24th July – St Sampson's Day BBQ
 31st July – Waterhay services at 10am and 6pm
 11th September – 5:30pm – Leigh Harvest Celebration and BBQ
 17th September – Prof Ian Tracey - Celebratory organ recital in St Sampson's Church
 18th September – Latton Barbecue at 2pm
 25th September – 11am Cricklade Harvest Festival and lunch on the Farm – on a field down The Fiddle
 2nd October – 11am Ashton Keynes Harvest Festival and lunch
 9th October – 11:15am Latton Harvest Festival and lunch
 2nd July 2017 – Michael Yeltin repeat talk on Martin Travers designs in St Sampson Church

 To be placed on events page on website – **Action PB (to inform Sarah Smith)**

12. Items for next meeting
 Stewardship sermon series, and "Send a Card" for Christmas.

13. AOB
 None

14. Date & time of next meeting :
 Wednesday 19th October, 8pm – venue Latton Village Hall
 Proposed Thursday 2nd February 2017 - venue Latton Village Hall

15. Chair for next meeting: Ian Wharton