

Minutes of Upper Thames Group Council

Held at 14 Bath Road, Wednesday 19th October 2016 at 8.00 pm

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

Apologies: Kathryn Gray, Matt Smith, Stuart Dagnall

1. Opening Prayer

2. Notes and actions from last meeting
All within agenda items.

3. Church snapshots

Latton – Held a successful Barbecue in September and Harvest Festival in October, followed by lunch. Both were well attended. Mums and Tots continues to go well on a Monday morning. It has been agreed by the Mission Team to host more breakfasts on a Sunday morning as well as organise more social events to help build relationships with those nearby in the community.

Leigh – The Waterhay services in July were again a great success – everyone enjoyed them. Thanks to Shirley and Suzi for organising them. Ride and Stride was very wet day and 2 people from Latton were the only visitors. The Harvest Festival service and meal afterwards were attended by 34 people and enjoyed by all.

Ashton Keynes – 2 cream teas have been held in the church building which have been well supported, with requests for more (next one on 23rd Nov). The Harvest Service and meal saw smaller attendances but was enjoyed by all. The School Reception year made harvest bread to be used at the service and meal. The church hosted the school for a harvest experience in the church building over 2 days, which was highly successful. The School will soon be hosting a seniors tea party. There will be a Family service trial at 4pm starting Feb 2017 and it has been agreed to move the carol service to 4pm. A youth café has started on Tuesdays after school and have had over 20 children to each.

Cricklade – The harvest festival in the field (held at Draper's Farm) was subject to rain, but this helped it to be enjoyed by all. The Choir did a concert in July to raise money for the roof, and an organ recital for the organ fund – both well attended. Applied for grant for the roof, with heritage lottery fund which was turned down. The Youth Café finished due to low numbers, but something is to be considered in the longer term.

4. Vicar's update

PB outlined some possibilities for the Bristol Diocese Strategy of Making Connections, starting by announcing that there would be a Lent Course on Diocesan Strategy which should be adopted by Home Groups and run across the group in 2017.

He also highlighted that, connection with God meant spirit-filled churches, connection with each other meant growing better relationships (including more parties and gatherings, and taking a risk in inviting others for coffee, beer or whatever), and connection with Communities was more than just social action, and included the intentionality to make new friends

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**

5. Safeguarding Actions for St Sampson's from safeguarding review in progress – **Action AG & SS**
6. Upper Thames Away Day
Harn Hill was not available for the May date we requested, so we will look at other options for venues, or possibly dates in April, June, July or September. **Action: PB**
7. Sermon series
The next sermon series are going to be on Stewardship (generosity and giving), the Holy Spirit and then the Lent Course on the Diocesan Strategy during Lent.
8. Uganda
Shirley Danby to pass details to PB on the Deanery Trip to Uganda in 2017. **Action: SD**
Ashton Keynes, Latton and Leigh collectively raised £307.70 for the Tearfund Water and Sanitation project through their Harvest Festivals. Cricklade will do a separate event to raise funds for this cause as they had a separate appeal for their harvest service. **Action: PB**
9. Youth work
We will continue to seek an applicant from SWYM, but in the meantime other alternatives for a youth worker will be sought. **Action: PB.**
10. Events
11th Nov - Latton Quiz Night
17th Nov - Alison Graham "Our Lady of the Window" at Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes
23rd Nov - Ashton Keynes Cream Tea
3rd Dec - Leigh – 6pm Lighting of the Christmas Tree – a new event
3rd Dec - Ashton Keynes Christmas Bazaar
2nd July 2017 – Michael Yeltin repeat talk on Martin Travers designs in St Sampson Church
11. Items for next meeting
"Send a Card" for Christmas –AK to propose 4 potential charities for the other churches.
Subsequent to the meeting – the AK charities may not be appropriate to the other churches so PB to look at other alternatives. **Action: PB.**
12. AOB
Foodbank – needs to be regularly advertised for St Sampson's, but also across the other churches. PB suggested that someone might champion this. SD to ask Gilly Riddington, who works for the Swindon Foodbank. **Action: SD**
13. Date & time of next meeting :
Thursday 9th February 2017 - venue Latton Village Hall
Thursday 27th April 2017 – venue Latton Village Hall

Chair for next meeting: Ian Wharton