

West Swindon & the Lydiards Ecumenical Partnership
Meeting of ECC on 19th May 2008 at All Saints Church, Lydiard Millicent

Present:			
Chair Treasurer Secretary Ecumenical Team Leader	Chris Scarisbrick Dick Gray	Holy Trinity	Jane Skinner John Ridsdale
	Stephen Skinner (arr. late)	St Mary's	Lesley Franklin Pat Watson Angela Mak
All Saints	David Ratnam Tudor Roberts	Toothill	Anne Carter
		Westlea	Julie Scarisbrick Pete Gilder
In attendance	Pam Ray (Minutes)		
Apologies	Mark Dowling, Rachel Dowling, John Halstead, David Tapscott		
Not Present	Debbie Fleet,		

1. **Welcome, Opening Prayers**
Chris Scarisbrick led with a 'prayer for disciples' and followed this with prayers.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
Given as noted above.
3. **Approve Agenda**
Agreed
4. **Letter from Bishop Lee (CONFIDENTIAL)**
A letter had been received from Bishop Lee and was read out by Chris Scarisbrick. Much discussion ensued, and it was agreed that Chris should send a letter of response to Bishop Lee on behalf of the ECC, and he would circulate a draft for comments before finalising. A communiqué had been prepared to be sent to all churches within the partnership, to be read out at the end of Sunday service. This had been agreed between John Lloyd and Steven Skinner. Chris stressed this whole matter needed much prayer. **(action Chris Scarisbrick)**
5. **Report from All Saints, Lydiard Millicent** (given by Tudor Roberts)
 - Maggie's Cottage: Plans are being submitted this week (w/b 19th May). Please pray there are no hiccups!
 - Growth Plan: This is a 'work in progress', and written details were circulated and discussed.
6. **Financial Report** (report given by Dick Gray)
Thanks have been received from the Diocese for paying in full last year – in fact we have overpaid! Dick is in discussion with David Hargreaves re the additional amount to be paid to qualify for a full reduction. It had been expected that finances would be showing a £4K deficit, however, are in fact up by £1.5K. Dick feels this is a reasonable good position to be in. The income survey has now been completed, but not collated. More details to follow. **(action Dick Gray)**
7. **Election of 4th Deanery Lay rep**
Mary Poole (a member of All Saints, Lydiard Millicent) has been nominated as 4th Deanery Synod representative. She was appointed with thanks, there being no objections.
8. **Approve Constitution Draft 11.1**
All 4 parent denominations as well as Churches Together in England agree! There may possibly still be some errors, but it is the feeling of the constitution committee that this is about as close as we can get to what we want, and while everyone agrees it is worth going ahead. All Saints would like more time to look closer at some issues such as governance/standing orders. They are to hold a leadership meeting soon and can discuss this further then. It was pointed out that the Constitution wording was fine and that once agreed this would lead to further discussions i.e. governance/standing orders which are at 1st draft stage only.

David Ratnam, speaking on behalf of All Saints Church, felt it was important to note:

1. Respect for the individual life of the five local churches must be maintained.
2. Respect for the direction individual ministers are taking must be maintained.
3. Everything possible must be done to encourage ministers.

4. Global/ecological activities should be limited to the level which individual churches can buy into without too much distraction from their own agenda.

Anne Carter pointed out that we must hold back from categorically allowing individuality rather than unity.

Westlea Church felt further discussions could be had over points 6.1 and 6.2, but accepted that as it stood it was probably as good as it would get.

Chris Scarisbrick reminded everyone that in part this was still open to individual interpretation.

It was recommended that a letter of thanks be sent to the team/constitution group who have worked over the past seven years to reach this stage. It was also noted that a lot of the original work had been done by Stephen Skinner. **(action ???)**

Peter Gilder proposed that the text, from points 1 – 14 be approved. This was seconded by Anne Carter, and there were no objections. Chris Scarisbrick proposed that subsequent actions go to the standing committee. This was seconded by Julie Scarisbrick

9. Bishop's 'permission to officiate'

Bishop Mike of Bristol has granted Tricia Roberts permission to officiate. This was noted and congratulations/thanks passed to her via Tudor.

10. Report on Emerge (given by Julie Scarisbrick)

- A formal structure is now in place between the partnership churches and the Emerge team.
- Jane Skinner has taken over as chair of the management team; Claire Camm is to be Partnership Youth Worker (a volunteer role) **as well as** being in paid employment with nCounter.
- Jane now has a lead role in certain areas, whilst Claire will lead in other areas. It is hoped this will give Claire a defined role, as well as scope for vision and direction.
- Discussion took place as to whether CRBs done on behalf of nCounter are to be accepted in the Partnership or whether additional checks were required. It was agreed that nCounter CRB checks would be accepted.
- A draft plan for future work was presented, and approved in principle, unanimously. NCounter will pass this to their trustees and apply for any available grants/funding.
- A question was raised as to whether nCounter were anticipating paying for the hire of buildings at Shaw. It was felt that they would pay for part of any hire.

(Stephen Skinner arrived.)

11. Report – Planning for Alterations at Holy Trinity Church, Shaw (given by Anne Carter)

Plans are being considered regarding conversion of space at Holy Trinity, Shaw to include a recording studio (Café Base), and arts café (Emerge), and a community café (Police). These plans were also taking into account the lack of kitchen space which restrict use, the Ofsted requirements of Acorns playgroup, and mission and pastoral issues. All would require major structural changes to the building, and ECC need to be aware of the explorations being made. It is possible the cost could be in the region of £75,000, but it was felt there are probably lots of grants available.

It was queried who would run the café? It was felt this would a great **partnership** opportunity, however it **must** be seen as such and not solely the responsibility of Holy Trinity Church. It was considered important that the space must remain flexible. All agreed to further exploration being undertaken.

12. Report – Partnership for Missional Church (spoken to by Stephen Skinner)

It is recognised that there is a need for deeper spirituality in churches in order to progress. This has been noted by the deanery. Further meetings are scheduled with Dr Martin Robinson and with Paul Rush. Stephen had brochures about the process and spoke about the proposal. It was suggested that lay people could be found to take it on and that Stephen would co-ordinate it. Stephen agreed this was a workable possibility.

Networking, with churches linked in a cluster with consultants, forms the basis for the partnership, but this involves a three to four year commitment. In USA and South Africa, 12% - 16% growth has been seen across all denominations. Various members felt very cautious about the amount of involvement, being additional to what was already being done. Anne Carter raised concerns regarding the lay commitment from some of the relatively small churches within the partnership.

All agreed the proposal to be fundamentally sound, but not totally convinced it is manageable. It was agreed that Stephen would look further at it as a possibility for early 2009 as opposed to Autumn 2008, and the possibility was raised of it being undertaken as a collaboration with other Swindon LEPs.

(Angela Mak left.)

13. Declare Support for Appointment of Governor(s) at Oliver Tomkins School(s)

Nigel Haworth (Swindon Family Church) has been nominated as a community governor at Oliver Tompkins Infant School, and the partnership support of his nomination was duly noted.

Norris Kiddle is standing for election as a foundation governor for the Junior School, and this was approved.

14. Approve Minutes of ECC Meeting 26th March 2008

It was proposed by David Ratnam, seconded by Dick Gray, that the minutes be approved. The only matter arising not dealt with elsewhere, was in respect of social programme inputs. So far the only return has been from Westlea Church. **(action ECC reps, not Westlea)**

15. Approve Notes from Standing Committee 23rd April 2008

These minutes were noted, and the meeting was advised there were three potential candidates for the position of partnership administrator.

Until such time as a secretary to the ECC is appointed, Jane Skinner is acting secretary. This is because of CRB issues, whereby there must be a named person.

15. AOB

Stephen Skinner spoke of an issue that has arisen with regard to Hook Cemetery: Spaces should have been reserved (but haven't been) by a Faculty. This could be resolved by having a joint faculty. This was quickly agreed.

Edward Glennie has asked that anyone interested in becoming a climate friendly community contact him as he is trying progress this idea.

12th July **Rock the Planet** is happening in Lydiard Park. What are you doing/how are you involved?

Meeting closed with prayer at 10.10pm