**Churches Together in Kidlington**

**Notes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 2nd June 2025 at St Mary’s Church**

Present: Scott Cheeseman (Chair), Penny Pedley (secretary), Marilyn King (Treasurer), Janet Makepeace, Chris Robins, Margaret King, Margaret Day, Paul Charles

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| **Item** | **Notes** |
| 1. | Penny opened the meeting with prayer. |
| 2. | Apologies for absence were received from Felicity Scroggie, Phil Durrant and Paul Carter |
| 3. | The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising |
| 4. | Chair’s report: Scott reported  This year has been marked by deepening unity and active collaboration, as we continue to work together in service of our community and for the glory of God’s Kingdom.  A significant achievement was the successful funding of defibrillators for the village, made possible through the generous support of Kidlington News. We were also involved in organising the local political hustings, hosted at the Methodist Church and chaired by Bishop Stephen Croft, which gave all prospective parliamentary candidates the opportunity to share their vision with the public.  Our core annual events once again brought people from different congregations together in shared witness and worship. These included the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and shared meal, the Good Friday Walk of Witness, the ecumenical Pentecost service, and our summer Holiday Club for primary school children, supported by enthusiastic young leaders from various churches.  We were also mindful of those who are often overlooked, paying for grocery vouchers for refugees and providing friendship and activities through our support for the “Holiday at Home” programme for elderly residents who may have felt lonely during the summer. As the year drew to a close, we joined the community in the village Christmas light switch-on and distributed Christmas cards and candles to share joy and hope.  Together, we embody the spirit of Romans 15:5–6: “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other... so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We thank God for what has been achieved this year and look ahead with faith and unity |
| 5. | **Treasurer's report**. Marilyn presented the bank balances, £1113.99 in the community account and £613.48 in the business savings account. Payments have been made to reimburse Phil Durrant for vouchers for refugees and for the Christmas cards but there are minimal transactions other than that. No request has been made for subscriptions from the churches, but can be sent in September. |
| 6. | **Election of officers**: Scott Cheeseman confirmed his decision to stand down as chair. Currently no-one has offered to take on the role. The suggestion was made that there is a revolving chair, with people taking leadership for projects/activities that they are enthusiastic about. So membership of the Council is currently:  Chair: Vacant or revolving  Secretary: Penny Pedley  Treasurer: Marilyn King.  Other members of the Council are Paul Carter, Janet Makepeace (Methodist), Father Prem, Margaret King (St Thomas More), Felicity Scroggie, Paul Charles, Margaret Day (Anglican Churches), Phil Durrant, Chris Robins (Baptist) and Tunde Olowude (Redeemed Christian Church of God).  We look forward to welcoming Oliver Harrison who will be licensed to the Anglican parish in September. |
| 7. | **Other reports**  **Eco Group**: Nothing was received |
|  | **Refugees**: Nothing was received |
|  | **Kidlington news:** The chair of Kidlington News, Henry Brougham, sent a report that is attached with these minutes. Margaret Day read the conclusion to the meeting. |
| 8. | Review of CTK  This was an in-depth discussion which absorbed much of the agenda of the Council meeting. Scott had tabled a suggestion that the Council should stop holding meetings and make arrangements for CTK events by email. He cited a lack of energy and support for meetings. CTK’s constitution states that the Council should meet at least 3 times a year, and attendance should be at least 6, representing at least 3 churches. This has been achieved, but many meetings are close to quorum. In particular attendance by church ministers has been low. There is a clear problem that CTK meetings are seen as low priority as churches are busy with their own programmes.  The lack of energy is a problem – the Council has had the same people on it for many years and those who do most are getting older. Though their commitment is not in question and is hugely valued, it is hard to persuade others to join who might bring new ideas and fresh enthusiasm. With each of the churches being active and busy in their own right (not at all a bad thing), it is hard to find people who have time to give to ecumenical activities. It was suggested that the council might eat together at their meetings.  The meeting reflected on activities that are popular. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is important and the midday prayers, held in person this year, and the Fellowship meal were well attended. The World Day of Prayer service and Good Friday Walk also involved a good number of people from all the churches.  Activities like Holiday at Home and holiday clubs have been planned by individual churches but involved people from other churches to help make them happen. This could be a way of bringing people together more. Margaret K said that the Taize services held at St Thomas More could be publicised in other churches and they would welcome more people to come.  The Pentecost service is a great occasion bringing all the churches together for a morning service. The fact that other churches close their doors to encourage all members to attend the joint service is a strong expression of commitment to each other.  It was suggested that there might be more joint services – there used to be 4 each year, but these are now limited to the Pentecost service and the World Day of Prayer. These do not need to be on a Sunday evening, but could be at different times. Food could be a real attraction. This gave rise to the idea that CTK could suggest having a joint harvest service, followed by a bring and share harvest supper. There was general enthusiasm for the idea and a date was suggested of Sunday 28th September and to have the service early – perhaps 5.30 – and the food afterwards, so as to be finished before it gets dark. Kidlington Methodist church was suggested as a venue. Penny and Margaret K agreed to lead on organising this.  Another suggestion raised was joint study groups in Lent, or other times of year. |
| 9. | The next AGM will be held on Monday 8th June 2026 at Kidlington Methodist Church at 8pm. |
| 10. | The meeting moved on to uncovered items on the agenda for the Council meeting. |