

## **Minutes of All Saints' Congregational meeting, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm**

**Attendees:** Pat Sawyer, Carolyn Sanderson, Matt Trendall, Nick Mills, Sylvia Bennett, Gill Farrow, Wayne Webb, Ian Corlett, Gloria & Paul Terrelonge, Dawn Bromley, Sandy Grey, Sedar Davis

**Apologies:** Alise Trendall, Jane Lee, Marina & Andy Rupal, Keith & Christine Straughan, Paul & Moira North, Catherine & Michael Held, David Sawyer, Sandra Mills

### **1. Welcome and opening devotions**

We shared evening prayer together during which Matt gave a brief reflection on Isaiah 52:

Our text for 2018 is taken from v1: ***'Awake, awake, clothe yourselves with strength'***

Isaiah 52 is a picture of renewal of life of God's people, of us being roused and clothing ourselves with God's strength. There are 3 strands: Prophecy (expand), Prayer and Power – life of Spirit.

Matt observed that this is a 'slow burn' for us, that what this means is not immediately clear yet, but remains an evolving vision and 'something to aim for' in 2019 and beyond.

Passage continues with lovely verse often quoted in Advent – 'how lovely on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news' (v7) – what does it mean to be a good news people? Perhaps for us at present:

- Go 4<sup>th</sup> – a key way we can both be and bring good news
- Generally being good news in our community – one or two new initiatives that speak of that – see item 4 later!

*What do we need to be this kind of 'good news people'?*

- Need God's help – it's a God thing
- Also play our part – 'everyone gets to play' – generous giving of ourselves, as we've been covering in our sermon series this autumn.

Matt concluded by sharing that he is 'tremendously grateful for committed support of so many of you gathered here – my hope and prayer is that we move on together, and that tonight both showcases and inspires some new ways to do that.'

### **3. Highlights of 2018 so far...**

People discussed in groups their personal church highlights, feedback included:

- The continuing work of Go4th Sunday
- The Harvest service and support for local charities Food Bank and Make Lunch
- The pruning work on the trees leading up to the church door

#### **4. MAIN ITEM: Growing as disciples**

Introduction: Matt introduced the main item by describing a disciple as someone who thinks like Jesus thinks, loves like Jesus loves and lives like Jesus lives. Perhaps 'apprentice' is a better modern word as we still have apprentices in our culture and it emphasises the idea of active learning and following. With this in mind, we split into groups and discussed two questions – key ideas that came out of these discussions were:

*What one thing could we do as a church to help you grow?*

- The value of testimonies – which connect the 'thinking' and 'living' areas of our lives, and give real examples and inspiration of God at work. The start of 'This Time Tomorrow' interviews had been well received and Matt promised to continue with these. Others hoped we could also share life stories sometimes.
- The growth of Go4th into the community, providing opportunities for people to put faith and outreach into practice.
- The importance of connection points – are we having enough social time/friendship building time as a church? Could we do more? (Note: a January party is now agreed!)

*Moving forward as a growing community: how can we grow our community life?*

The main idea that came out was the importance of 'greeters' in church – people who were good at looking out for newcomers and chatting to them, either before or after the service. Although in an ideal world everyone would play a part, there was a sense that having a few key people to do this proactively would be a good thing for us.

#### **New initiatives to share**

Alongside these questions, Matt shared about some exciting things developing among us:

- Learning Hub – Keith is leading on a very exciting project developing cutting edge online learning. It is hoped the parish will be able to host a pilot project, perhaps the first in the world to do so!
- Sanctuary Churches and talk by MK-Act – Matt and Ruth had attended some excellent training on domestic abuse in October. Part of the vision for MK is to have 'Sanctuary Churches' which are able to welcome and support those affected by domestic abuse. Matt is hopeful that our Partnership churches – including All Saints – can become such churches in 2019. As part of our commitment to this, Go4th is hosting a talk by MK-Act on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November at 11am in church, which will be open to the whole community.
- This Time Tomorrow – see note above. This Time Tomorrow asks someone what they will be doing 'this time tomorrow' – the idea being to showcase how people live out their faith in their work, and how God is interested in all of our lives! Rosie Neale had been interviewed in September and we followed up the interview by praying for her and all teachers. It had been a real blessing, and the plan is to have another TTT as soon as reasonably practicable. (Note: we had a 2<sup>nd</sup> TTT featuring Virginia Kagunda's work with Wycliffe Bible Translators on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November.)

- Developing schools work (Christmas Cracked, Clothing exchange) – Matt shared how relationships with local schools are continuing to grow. We have agreement in principle to run Bridgebuilder's 'Christmas Cracked' event with Middleton yr5s, and Oakgrove Primary are sending their yr6s for a Remembrance session on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November and also hosting a Clothing Exchange on 22<sup>nd</sup> November at the school. Other existing connection points (church visits etc) are still happening too.

## **5. Updates from All Saints & around the Partnership**

- New Baptist Minister appointment update – a great candidate has got through to the final stage – coming to 'Preach with a View' in January. Church and candidate both very keen. She wouldn't be able to move till summer 2019, but that's agreed by everyone. Do continue to hold CtK in your prayers.
- Pioneer Minister and new church school for East Wavendon – we are still waiting for final go-ahead from the diocese for the Pioneer Minister to be advertised in 2019, but the school is on course to open in September 2019.
- Membership at CWW and Partnership membership renewal 2019 – early 2019 marks the point for our 6-yearly full renewal of membership across the Partnership. CWW have recently introduced the idea of membership for the first time, and their work in producing a new form will form a good template for other congregations.
- Remembrance weekend: Centenary of Armistice – there is lots happening around the Partnership. Apart from the main services on the Sunday morning, Matt noted the exhibition all weekend at St Mary's and the prayer event at CtK on Saturday evening. Further details of both in item 6 below.
- Finance update – Ian gave an update on our current position – this year looks to be coming in as expected, with a forecast after Q3 very close to the original budget for 2018. Budget for 2019 to be discussed and agreed at the next Stewards' Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November.
- Quinquennial work 2019 – Pat updated the meeting as to how the plans for conducting the major Quinquennial works were proceeding. A builder has been selected and works are being carefully planned to minimise disruption for weddings, etc. More than half the money is available in the Restoration Fund, however we may need to raise a further £10k or so (through gifts and/or grants).

## **6 . Dates for your diary**

Remembrance Service Sun 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 10.50am *and also* 12-4pm exhibition Sat & Sun at St Mary's, plus prayers for peace Sat 10th Nov 7.30pm at CtK;

Christingle Sun 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 11.15am;

Carols Sun 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 4pm;

WCP joint service Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 9.30am at CtK, followed by Go4th carols here 11am;

Crib 3pm & 4pm Cmas Eve;

Midnight Communion 11.30pm Cmas Eve;

Cmas Day informal communion 10am

## **7. Night Prayer concluded the meeting at 9pm**