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| MINUTES of the **Horsforth Churches Together** Wednesday, 1st May 2024at Cragg Baptist Church 7.30pm. |
| **Attendees:** | John Barnes (Treasurer), Judith Briggs, Adrian Hide, Jane Linley, Phil Maud, Barbara McLaren, George McLaren, Matt Powell (Chair), Cat Sayburn, Laura Schubert, Andrew Shepherd, Duncan Stow, Jill Woodman (Minutes), Rhoda Wu. |
| **Apologies** | Jonathan Cain, Lynne Gillions, Jo Lightowler, Paul and Margaret Metcalf, Deborah Pennington, Nigel Sinclair |  |
|  |  | **Action By:** |
| 1. | **Welcome**Matt welcomed all present and said how good it was to have such an amazing HCT. But this was also a time to look for future inspiration and encourage others to be part of HCT. We listened to the hymn ‘Be Thou my Vision’ and Matt read Joshua Ch 1 v 9 (Be strong and courageous…) before opening the meeting in prayer. |  |
| 2. | **Minutes and Matters Arising**The minutes from 10 Jan were agreed. Matters arising:Rhoda explained that the student placement regarding the free counselling service will not now be taking place. |  |
| 3. | **Review of Easter Events*** **Lent talks**

There were four Lent talks with different speakers held at different churches on the topics: Refugees, Education, the Environment and the NHS. Duncan said these had been very well attended, with over 30 people at each talk. Feedback had been very positive. The talks are still available online on the HCT website.* Traditionally, before Covid, HCT had a 3 year cycle of 1)Talks by various speakers 2)Lent home groups from different churches 3)Nothing jointly planned. The meeting decided after discussion that HCT home groups would no longer take place (most people attended a group from their own church when they were last held), so that in future we would just have talks every other year. Churches would do their own activities in the alternate year.
* **Walk of Witness**

This was well attended, helped by the good weather, the singing kept in step from front to back of the procession and the acoustics were very good at the service on The Green. * It was proposed that it would help if we had music to accompany the singing. Duncan will ask Deborah and Michaela about that possibility.
* There was a suggestion of having a Summer Songs of Praise or something similar at The Green. Church Leaders to discuss.
* **Lunch after the Walk of Witness**

The Grove as usual provided tea and hot cross buns after the Walk. This too was very well attended and enjoyed. Phil said that donations of £280+ had been collected for the Mission Aviation Fellowship. | DuncanChurch Leaders |
| 4. | **News from the Churches*** Phil rejoiced that The Grove had had two child baptisms. The children were aged 4yr and 13yr.
* Judith was thankful that someone had returned to their Fellowship after a long time.
* Jane explained that because their priest had to cover 3 churches, the Mass time at St Mary’s was now 11.15am (not 11am).
* Eight asylum seekers had attended the Walk of Witness. Some of them had previously attended a Pentecostal Church. They were put in touch with George, from Willow Green.
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| 5. | **The Food Pantry**St James now has the planning permission to build an extension to The Shed for The Food Pantry and are well on their way to completing the building. By the beginning of June it is hoped the Pantry can move from St Margaret’s to St James. It will include a place for coffee and to talk as well as a food store. Project Volunteers will be needed.Matt reminded everyone that donations of food are still needed for the Foodbank. |  |
| 6. | **Horsforth Town of Sanctuary**Laura Schubert has now taken over from Rose McCarthy as the new Refugee Support Worker with Horsforth Chaplaincy Project for 15hrs/week. She began in March. The funding is from Leeds City Council. Laura introduced herself at the meeting and gave an update of the refugee support work. A handout was also given out. Main points:* Rose is still chairing the HToS steering group
* There have been awareness raising events in schools
* Finding your Voice course had 15 participants – to help asylum seekers in public speaking so they could tell their stories.
* Monthly Sanctuary socials at St Margaret’s are enjoyed
* An asylum seeker is helping at the Community Café
* Eight men were delighted to join in the Walk of Witness
* The Conversation Group on Mondays at the hotel has a strong group of volunteers
* The hotel now has 180-200 residents, double the previous number.
* This means increased need for practical support: clothing, SIM cards, phones, bus tickets for English classes.
* Prayer, donations and volunteers always needed. A leaflet has been given to the churches with where to drop off clothing.

The Chair thanked Laura for her work.There was a short time of prayer for the Food Pantry and the HToS. |  |
| 7. | **GALA**A meeting has been held about ideas for the Gala on the 29th June 2024.Duncan is still looking for fresh ideas and asked everyone to email him with any suggestions. | DuncanAllChurches |
| 8. | **Inspiring our Churches to Engage with HCT**Matt asked us prayerfully to consider how HCT can continue to grow and how we can inspire our churches to be more involved. A 5 minute small groups discussion followed. Points brought from the discussion:* Gala – to think about the purpose of our presence at the Gala as the focus for fresh ideas, ways of doing things
* HCT – for everything we do, needs to be why, or for what purpose we are carrying out each activity
* If everyone brought someone else to an HCT event or meeting, it would encourage engagement
* Do we talk enough to our churches about HCT activities. Time should be allowed.
* How to empower the HCT reps – maybe all could use some of Duncan’s powerpoint slides of HCT events
* Prayer - Should we be asking those in the churches to be praying for more specific needs, e.g. a named person perhaps, to help engagement eg, for asylum seekers
* How to engage young people / families e.g. at the Christmas market (the Grove Christmas quiz was very popular last year). Message from the Bible in a bottle?

Matt would like to go round all the churches talking about HCT during the year. He is attending the Grove and Central Methodist in July. It would be helpful if Laura would go with him to explain about the refugee involvement. Leaders to let Matt know when he can visit.Matt suggested that the Chair should be in place for two years, not the current one year. It was proposed by Duncan, seconded by Judith and agreed at the meeting that this should be the case for Matt. But the proposal is to be considered again after Matt’s second year. | All ChurchesChurch Leaders |
| 9. | **Treasurer’s Report**The Treasurer reported that HCT bank balance is a healthy £8,400, thanks to all the churches, except one, paying by the 1st May. Perfectly Pitched has £912 of that total. |  |
| 10. | **Civic Service**The Civic Service will be held at The Grove, 23rd June. High Tea at 4.30pm followed by a service at 6pm. Phil encouraged all to support and attend this event. | All |
| 11. | **AOB****Trinity**Trinity FunDay 26th May. 12.00 Mass followed by a feast of food at 1pm and entertainment. Cat has distributed leaflets to all the churches. She encouraged all to attend and tell others about it. The CU at Trinity folded this year for lack of attendance. Cat asked all to pray for the students. There is a lot of mental health issues. Also to pray for the CU’s next academic year and how to best offer support at the new Trinity City Centre Campus which opens in September.**Live at Home**Barbara shared how Live at Home had grown since it began decades ago. It reaches 100s in the local community and has 5 staff and volunteers and is well respected in the community. Originally the smaller churches paid £150 and the larger churches paid £300 per year. This amount has not changed except following Covid, many churches no longer contribute towards Live at Home. Barbara requested that the churches start contributing again otherwise, an essential for the work, such as the mini-bus, will no longer be able to operate.**Dementia**Phil distributed a document about two local firms who work with people with dementia with the aim to help them remain at home as long as possible:‘Right at Home’ (bottom of Broadgate Lane) and ‘Home Instead’(the old hairdressers by Horsforth St Margaret’s Primary School). They will be holding an event about dementia on 23rd May at Lister Hill including an immersive trip through their ‘Dementia Experience Bus’. Phil encouraged the meeting to encourage people to attend.**Bedford Court**St Mary’s can’t do the date set for their service as Jane is away. Jane to phone Bedford Court and arrange another date in May.**Justice and Peace**Jane distributed an A4 document to each of the churches from CAFOD, raising questions about equality that could be put to all the electoral candidates before the general election. See the online link below.[Building resilient communities and tackling regional inequalities – document by CAFOD and SVP](https://assets.ctfassets.net/vy3axnuecuwj/79vXttZf7o5KeqxX97KSaq/f3d50911324e74fafd540cd3a2ea80cb/AYOE_Supporter_Briefing_-_Building_resilient_communities_and_tackling_regional_inequalities.pdf)**Healing Service**There is a Healing Service at 7pm on 20th June at St Mary’s. All welcome. | AllAllChurch Leaders and CongregationsAllJaneAll, Rhoda |
| 12. | **Closing prayer**Matt closed the meeting in prayer. |  |
|  13 | **Dates for Year Ahead 2024** (Useful dates updated from previous minutes)**HCT Meetings** Sept 4thNov 6th **Civic Service** 23rd June at The Grove, High Tea 4.30pm, Service 6pm**Horsforth Gala** 29th June**Walk of Art Weekend** 6th & 7th July**Carols in the Park** 14th Dec**Perfectly Pitched Concerts:**Thursdays 1pm: May 30th  Sept 26th  Oct 31st  Nov 28th **Dates for Bedford Court** 14th May St Mary’s, (to be rearranged), 9th July Willow Green **Planning Meetings** – come and join a team making our events special. Open to all : Oct 7th For Carols in the Park 7.30 at Cragg |  |
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