

County Ecumenical Officer Report

Open Meeting – November 2021

Churches Together Groups

- ❖ Since the last Open Meeting, I have attended meetings of Churches Together in Leominster and Ewyas Harold via Zoom and Hereford in person. Each of these groups were looking at the existing CT activities and considering how they might go forward.
- ❖ Churches Together in Ross published an online Pentecost Service (instead of their usual lunch and service get-together for Pentecost). https://youtu.be/JvLffW_S9ds
- ❖ Christians Together in Orleton at a meeting in the summer, noted that their Covenant suggests they hold 5 yearly reviews (led by the County Ecumenical Officer), the next of which they have agreed will take place Spring 2022. I attended an Environmental Service held by Christians Together in Orleton as part of a community-wide Eco project they are involved in.

Local Ecumenical Projects

Christ Church, Ross – I continued to meet with Geoff Hopper, Circuit Steward for the Methodist Circuit regarding the consultation to extend Phil Warrey's ministry. Subsequent to that I arranged a meeting with Steve Faber (Moderator) and Andrew Mann-Ray (Area Minister) of the URC West Midlands Synod as CTiH are the LEP sponsor for Christ Church. I also attended the Circuit Invitation Committee meeting at which the church representatives recommended he be invited to stay for a further 3 years.

Christ Church had a consultative 'Focus on Christ Church' day last month, at which members were encouraged to have an open conversation about the church's future, looking at finance and need for people to replace retiring officers. Deacon Angie Allport has kept me informed about the process.

Ecumenical Projects / Groups

Ledbury LEAF (Locally Encourage All to Flourish)

I have attended further Trustees meetings of LEAF (as a Trustee representing CTiH) – the new charity made up of all the churches in Ledbury working together. The charity is registered and the bank account is in place, and the Data Privacy Notice and Data Protection & Information Policy (which I had put together) were approved. I have also attended a Project Team meeting on Zoom with the team working well together, led by Rev Tony Hodder.

Church Leaders Together / Herefordshire Churches Houses of Prayer / Prayers for Youth

I have attended further meetings of the Hereford City Church Leaders Together group at which they share current issues and projects and pray together. I continue to occasionally join and publicise Herefordshire Churches Houses of Prayer for the regular Monday evening Zoom prayer sessions and the monthly Prayers for Youth Zoom sessions.

Church Lifeline Calls

I am continuing to host these Zoom meetings monthly, during which churches can update each other, sharing information and resources about social action projects, including Vennture projects. Andy Goode



of South Wye Community Money Advice Centre, Jacquie Allsop of Hereford Food Bank and Lynette Halpin of the Family Pastors at Vennture have spoken at various meetings through the year.

Vennture

Vennture have now moved into their new premises, near St James Church in Hereford. I have met with Ian Purcell, the recently appointed Street Presence Lead at Vennture to talk about churches in the county and how I can support him in his role.

Hereford Homelessness Forum; Hereford Food Bank

I have attended a Zoom meeting of this group (from which I receive regular minutes) and was impressed to hear about the huge steps forward in housing the homeless and rough sleepers over the last 12 months, and the partnerships between churches, Vennture and the Council.

I attended the AGM of Hereford Food Bank.

Marches Anti-Slavery Partnership

I have attended a further Zoom meeting of this group.

Methodist Circuit of Shropshire & the Marches

Welcoming of Rev Paul Arnold

I was invited to Green Lane Methodist Church last month to welcome Rev Paul Arnold as the new Minister (covering 10 churches from Orleton down to Garway). I also went to Leominster to meet up with him recently to discuss ecumenical possibilities in his area.

Anglican Diocese of Hereford

Bishop's Staff Meeting

CTiH was invited by the Bishop, along with Richard Shaw (Diocesan Ecumenical Officer) and Chris Densham (Shropshire CEO) to a meeting of the Bishop's Staff to talk about existing ecumenical partnerships in the county and potential opportunities. Subsequent to this, we met with Rev Carole Marsden (a previous Ecumenical Officer in Cumbria) to hear about how that County moved to more ecumenical working.

Hereford Diocesan Synod

For the new Diocesan Synod, from November, I have been co-opted by invitation of the Bishop to sit on the Synod, representing Churches Together in Herefordshire.

Hereford Cathedral

I was invited once again to the Anne Frank Service by the Herefordshire Jewish Community, via Zoom in June (as a Lay Canon representing the Cathedral as well as CTiH). I have attended another meeting of the Cathedral Council, representing the College of Canons.

I attended the installation of Rev Canon Sarah Brown and was happy to welcome her as the new Dean of Hereford on behalf of CTiH.

Schools Network

I am happy to continue to share and publicise the initiative by Mark Harrington to establish a Schools Network of individuals and churches (whatever denomination) who regularly go into schools for support and sharing of resources. I have attended further meetings of this group.

Hereford City Council

Rev Andy Morgan (Mayor's Chaplain) invited me to open the City Council's June meeting with prayers, which I was happy to do.

Licensings

I was invited to All Saints Church, Hereford to attend the Licensing of *Rev Ruth Hulse* as the Team Vicar of the West Hereford Team. I attended *Rev Guy Cole's* Installation and Licensing at Leominster Priory; and to Kingstone Church, for *Rev Caitlin Thompson's* Installation in the Abbeydore Deanery. I was happy to welcome all respective clergy on behalf of CTiH.

Kington & Weobley Deanery

I met with the Rural Dean of this Deanery, Rev Guy Wilkinson to discuss ecumenical potential in the area, including Almeley and Shobdon.

Churches Together in England

I joined other Ecumenical Officers via Zoom, in prayer for Candle of Justice, marking the anniversary of George Floyd's death.

I worked with Chris Densham (Shropshire) and Joanne Thorns (NE England) via Zoom to put together a resource (an A4 sheet), for CT groups looking to reimagine their work and move forward, which was then formatted by, and publicised through, Churches Together in England (attached).

I attended Ecumenical Officers' Consultation, held at The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire in September. The theme was 'Nourishing the roots – a chance to refresh our ecumenical vision'. It was organised by the National Ecumenical Officers of the main denominational members of CTE.

I am booked to attend a 'Meet the Pentecostals' webinar organised by CTE, with the new Pentecostal and Charismatic President Bishop Tedroy Powell.

CTiH

The **Facebook page** followers – now numbered 464.

<https://www.facebook.com/churchofchristinherefordshire>

The **newsletter** has 187 people who have requested to be on the mailing list. The CTiH website www.ctih.org continues to be updated with events (zoom and otherwise) on the calendar and the current monthly newsletter on the homepage (as well as archived newsletters).

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