



Seventh Annual Report – 25th June 2008

INTRODUCTION

Churches Together in Leatherhead (CTL) was formed many years ago as an informal body to foster cooperation between our churches. More recently it seemed appropriate to create a formal body in line with the practice of Churches Together groups elsewhere and so the present Constitution was adopted on 6th September 2001. This Constitution requires CTL to hold an Annual Meeting “in or around July ... at which the accounts shall be presented, officers elected, and policy and initiatives for the year decided”. The Inaugural Annual Meeting was held in Christ Church (URC) on 13th June 2002. The Sixth Annual Meeting was held at St.Mary & St Nicholas Parish Church Hall on 6th July 2007.

PARTICIPATION

The following are currently members of CTL: Anglican **Church of St.Mary & St.Nicholas with All Saints**; Anglican **Church of St.Michael, Mickleham** [see Note 1 below]; **Leatherhead Methodist Church**; **Church in The Theatre** [see Note 2 below]; Roman Catholic **Church of Our Lady & St.Peter**; **Christ Church** (United Reformed). **Liquid / Seed Bed** (North Leatherhead Youth and Community Groups) have also participated in CTL since 3rd March 2006.

[Notes: [1] St.Michael, Mickleham was welcomed into membership in March 2005 following their incorporation into a United Benefice together with St.Mary & St.Nicholas with All Saints; [2] Church in The Theatre (formerly Pioneer People) have participated “in relationship with CTL” since 15th January 2004.]

REPRESENTATION

The current Officers of CTL are: **Chairman** – Revd Canon David Eaton; **Treasurer** – Cathy Noble; **Secretary** – Paul Hamilton.

The following representatives attended meetings during the year: **St.Mary & St.Nicholas Leatherhead** – Revd Canon David Eaton, Revd Mary Cruddas; **Catholic Church** – Tony Hall, Val Luthwood, Pat Harris; **Methodist Church** – Revd Ian Howarth, Jean Plant, Les Prescott, Norma Shaw; **Church in The Theatre** – Matthew Noble; **United Reformed Church** – Mike Essex, Arthur Head, Dorothy Poulton, Revd Dean Tapley; **Night Hostel, Social Concern Group, Town Centre Forum** – Hilary Porter; **Youth** – Jay Bristow, Carol Gillott; **Liquid / Seed Bed** – Andy Smithyman.

MEETINGS

Five ordinary meetings were held during the year on: 5th September 2007, 27th November 2007, 9th January 2008, 13th March 2008 and 7th May 2008.

LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

The **Anglican Church of St.Mary & St.Nicholas with All Saints, Leatherhead Methodist Church** and **Christ Church (United Reformed)** entered into a Covenant on 9th March 2003. These churches fully recognise each other’s ministry as, for example, in exchanging ministers and celebrating Holy Communion. Partner Churches work closely together on such tasks as selecting new ministers, joint preparation of candidates for Confirmation and experimenting with new forms of worship. The Partnership is not in any sense exclusive – indeed, it is hoped that other Churches might in due course wish to join.

During the past year, each Partner Church Council has agreed further proposals to deepen the relationship (e.g. forming a joint Church Council and a 'team ministry') and the Churches are currently awaiting endorsement of these proposals by respective parent bodies.

TRINITY SCHOOL

One fruit of the Partnership is joint involvement in the new Voluntary Controlled Trinity School which incorporated the two former Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant Schools (St.Mary's & All Saints) and the former Middle School (Woodville). This venture was a national first which required the churches to engage through their various organisational structures – i.e. St.M & St.N at diocesan level, Methodist Church at national level and UR Church locally. The new School opened in Sept. 2007 using existing buildings on the Woodville site with further buildings now under construction.

The reorganisation also enabled the opening of a new Family Centre and Nursery at the All Saints site.

“PRAYER IN THE MORNING”

As part of their commitment to closer partnership, members of the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches together with Church in The Theatre have met for “Prayer in the Morning” daily since February 2003. “Prayer” starts at 9 am and runs for about 20 minutes with a simple liturgy including Confession, Psalm, Old Testament reading, Canticle, New Testament reading, Apostle's Creed, open prayer, a period of silence and the Lord's Prayer. It is currently held each week as follows: Monday – St.Mary and St.Nicholas Church ; Tuesday – Methodist Church; Wednesday – Christ Church; Thursday – Christ Church; Friday – St.Mary and St.Nicholas Church (Communion Service).

UNITED SERVICES & EVENTS

Members supported the following United Services and events during the year:

Sat. 8th Sep. 2007 at 7.30 pm – Methodist Church – ‘**Celebration of Charles Wesley**’ with Pilgrim Players and Singers.

Sun. 30th Sep. 2007 at 6.30 pm – Methodist Church – ‘**New Fire**’ **United Service** – ‘contemporary’ worship and praise held on 5th Sundays – Revd Ian Howarth ‘interviewed’ by Revd David Eaton prior to his imminent Sabbatical – well attended and well received – some thought outstanding.

Sat. 1st Dec. 2007 at 4.30– 5.15 pm – Town Centre – **Community Carols** with Mole Valley Silver Band.

Sat. 19th Jan. 2008 – 10 am–1 pm – B-Free Café – ‘**Lynx for Prayer**’ – ‘drop-in’ Prayer to mark Week for Christian Unity (Fri. 18th – Fri. 25th Jan.).

Sun. 20th Jan. 2008 at 6.30 pm – St.M & St.N – **United Praise Service** to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – excellent participation by all Churches – very much united !

Ash Wed. 6th Feb. 2008 at 8 pm – St.M & St.N and Our Lady and St Peter – Services for beginning of Lent.

Fri. 7th Mar. 2008 at 2 pm – St.M & St.N – **Women's World Day of Prayer** – over 50 attended – collection of £115 sent to WWDP for world-wide mission.

Wed. 19th Mar. 2008 at 8 pm – Christ Church – Service to conclude Lent Course.

Good Fri. 21st Mar. 2008 at 10 am – Our Lady and St Peter – ‘**Stations of the Cross**’ Service followed by **Walk of Witness** via town centre to Methodist Church.

Pentecost Sun. 11th May 2008 at 10.30 am – Methodist Church – **United Holy Communion**.

Sun. 11th – Sat. 17th May 2008 – Christian Aid Week – see below.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Member Churches cooperated as usual in distributing Christmas Cards announcing the Services in our Churches to all households in the town. Grateful thanks again to Sue Roberts for organising printing and coordinating distribution.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK – 11th–17th May 2008

The Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches cooperated in house-to-house and street collections to raise an overall total of £ 3954 for Christian Aid (£ 4062 last year) despite some poor weather and difficulties in maintaining coverage. The major part of the collection came from the URC

team, ably organised by Anne Ray. It is hoped that the Methodist Church will manage to find an organiser for next year, after two years without one. There is a Christian Aid page on the Churches Together Website. Coordinator Frank Haslam.

LENT COURSE 2008

This year's Course was in the form of a weekly series on the theme '**The Lost Bequest ... the Bible's call for a just society**' held at the Methodist Church from Wed. 13th Feb. to Wed. 12th Mar. 2008. Each session comprised an introductory talk followed by small-group discussions and concluding with a general discussion. Talks were given by: (1) Revd Mike Stewart; (2) Sr. Maureen Henderson; (3) Revd Ian Howarth; (4) Ray Brown; (5) Revd Mary Cruddas. A Concluding Service was held on Wed. 19th Mar. (8pm – Christ Church). There were 35–40 participants allowing for 5–6 groups. Reactions were mixed – some wanted a repeat while others preferred the more usual house groups.

SOCIAL CONCERN GROUP

The CTL Social Concern Group met regularly during the year under the Chairmanship of Sheila Hill (St Mary's, Fetcham). Their primary aim is to monitor and engage with the local and wider issues of concern to all Christians including local charities and groups such as the Night Hostel, Pit Stop, Club House and issues of Trade Justice and World Development. They have a particular interest in North Leatherhead and strongly support a Leatherhead & District Credit Union which is currently being set up.

During the past year the Group has devoted most of its effort into making Leatherhead a Fairtrade Town and this was finally achieved in Mar. 2008. It required a specified proportion of retailers, restaurants, businesses, churches and other organisations to support Fairtrade products as well as an on-going publicity programme. A representative of the Fairtrade Foundation presented a Certificate at a small reception held following the meeting of the Town Centre Forum on 14th May 2008.

NIGHT HOSTEL

Hilary Porter (URC) represents CTL as a member of the Management Committee of the Night Hostel.

TOWN CENTRE FORUM and LEATHERHEAD AREA PARTNERSHIP

Paul Hamilton represents CTL on these bodies. The Partnership has been set up in association with the Forum to raise funds and deliver a programme of improvements to the town following the 'Leatherhead Tomorrow' survey conducted in 2005-2006. It was formally launched at an Inaugural General Meeting on 7th Nov. 2007. CTL is a 'member' alongside other local organisations who attend the Annual Meetings to oversee and approve the work of the Partnership's Officers.

YOUTH WORK

Leatherhead Youth Project (LYP) – this is an independent registered Charity formed by the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches together with Mole Valley District Council. It grew out of the efforts of Claire Gannon who was appointed Youth Worker by the Churches in 1999 and is now led by Jay Bristow who succeeded Claire in Nov. 2005. The LYP is centred on the **B-Free Café** which opened at All Saints Church in Apr. 2005 and is managed by Andy Gill. The **Café** currently opens 3.00–6.00 pm on weekdays (till 8 pm on Fridays) and provides a wide range of activities including pool, play-stations, computers for Internet access as well as an information centre. The main purpose of the **Café** is to provide activities within a safe environment and a strong Christian ethos. Attendance is typically 30-40 and the paid staff are supported by an energetic team of around 20 volunteers.

On-going church groups 'Courage' (8-10) and 'Victory' (11-18) meet on Sunday afternoons respectively 3.00-4.30 and 4.30-6.00 pm. They lead a monthly 'Triumph' Service at 6.30 pm on 2nd Sundays. A new group 'Blaze' (led by Joe Crome) was recently launched for young teens to provide a broad range of opportunities and experiences – including outings and community work such as gardening for elderly persons in conjunction with Age Concern.

Full details of the many activities at LYP are to be found on www.leatherheadyouthproject.com

Liquid Connection – this independent trust (which originated in The Theatre) is based at The Bridge Youth Club where it is led by Kyle Oliver and others.

Liaison – all youth leaders work closely together on a wide range of activities including: Therfield lunchtime club, 'youth-to-youth' mentoring scheme, evening sessions (night club, music workshop, DJ) as well as Christian camps and festivals (e.g. 'Freestyle' at Reed's School Cobham over Easter and 'Soul

Survivor’).

COMMUNITY WORK

Facilitating Group (Chair: Andy Smithyman) – this was formed in Sept. 2006 to help coordinate all the Youth and Community work in North Leatherhead and works closely with the **B@titude** community/charity shop (Website: www.beatitude.org.uk). It is associated with CTL though it has access to independent funds – especially ‘Seed-Bed’. Carol (Gillott) Bristow is part-time Administrative Assistant to the Group which helps to facilitate cooperative working and best practice among participants.

The **Group** is currently involved in several new community enterprise schemes including: (1) Holiday Caravan – at Pagham for hire by needy families; (2) Furniture Restoration Scheme – to provide employment and training for young people. It has also held a couple of evening ‘get-togethers’ at Starbucks to encourage people to think about ideas for their community, especially about what small projects or business ideas they have which might help invest back into their local street and wider community. Already, one outcome is helping a couple of people to start exploring photography, taking pictures to show the beauty of their location. One lady has been helped to set up a portfolio and is now being further helped with an online shop and small business plan.

Other ideas are coming through and the **Group** is exploring how to encourage these and how to shape some of the **B@titude** operation to support it. The shop is going well and continues to grow.

HOLIDAY CLUB

The annual Holiday Club – theme ‘**Waste Watchers**’ – was held at Christ Church – 13th–17th Aug. 2007. It was the biggest Club yet with around 100 children – mostly 5–7 year olds.

MENS BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP

The Men’s Breakfast Fellowship was inaugurated in Feb. 2004 and continues to meet monthly. It is hosted by a rota of churches and attracts an average attendance of around 20. It normally meets on the fourth Saturday of the month from 8.00 to 9.30 am and invites a speaker. Coordinator – Michael Ward.

PRAYER HOUSES FOR LEATHERHEAD

Since 1997 members of Church in The Theatre and Bookham Baptist Church have met in Leatherhead to pray for the town. In March 2004 they were re-launched as “Prayer Houses for Leatherhead”. Two Groups currently meet at 8 pm as follows: (1) 16 Highlands Avenue – every Wednesday; (2) 236 Kingston Road – 2nd & 4th Wednesday. Contact – Keith Creasey – Tel. 375350.

WELCOME PACKS

Norma Shaw coordinates a Churches ‘Welcome Pack’ which has been distributed since Jan. 2008 to all new residents in the area alongside other material under the aegis of a recently formed ‘New Neighbours in Leatherhead’ scheme. Each pack comprises a folder enclosing A5 sheets provided by each participating church and some 53 packs were distributed in the six months up to mid-June.

WEBSITE

Frank Haslam (St.M & St.N) maintains a Website for the Churches and other bodies in the Leatherhead area at <http://www.leatherheadweb.org.uk/>

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