

Church Council Update

The following update reports on the discussion at the July CC meeting. There is not normally a CC in August, so the next one will be in the first week in September. If you have any questions or comments on any of this, please let me know or speak to any CC member. Thanks, Glenn.

Youth Work – The CC was very pleased to meet briefly with Lawrance Shama, our new Youth Pastor, who started work with us on 1st July. A formal welcome will be made at the Sunday service on 13th September. Lawrance had already been straight in at the deep end, attending 14-2-17 and Compass and this will be followed by meeting with Immerse. He shared some testimony regarding his visit to India before starting with us, which was inspiring and we hope that he will share more of this with the church as a whole. We look forward to an exciting and challenging time as Lawrance gets more involved with the young people inside and outside the church and gets to know the congregation.

Environmental Issues – Following the excellent “Age of Stupid” event we were joined by Martin Tillin to start to consider how we should respond to the various challenges before us (Climate Change, Sustainability, Ethical trading etc). An initial discussion was held and we decided that it would be appropriate use the Eco-Congregation (<http://ew.ecocongregation.org/>) assessment to check our current status and as a starting point for further discussion. A small sub group has been formed to do this review, please contact Beryl or Martin Tillin if you would like to participate in this. We expect that this will be an area for discussion at the AGM. The first of the environment information and prayer evenings organised by Ken Wood will be on the 27th July (Abingdon wide, not to be confused with the Church prayer evening that will take place on 21st July).

Church Weekend – This is a great opportunity (13th-15th November) for us to get to know one another better as a church family, so please put this in your diary and make it a priority. We have had a reasonable number of responses already but there are still a lot outstanding. Please could I encourage you to respond as soon as possible? The weekend takes a lot of organisation and it would be great to minimise unnecessary load wherever possible. If you have any questions please see Noreen Carvel.

Alpha – The Alpha supper will be on 1st October and the course at the Christian Centre will start on Monday nights from 5th October. Now is the time to be thinking and praying about who you need to invite to come along and of course help will be needed for catering, childcare and with the Alpha small groups. More information is available from Pamela Shirras.

AGM & Church Council – The AGM will be taking place on Sunday 18th October. Whilst this seems like a long time away, the summer will fly by and it will then be upon us very quickly. As well as an opportunity to discuss important issues as a church, this is when we elect Church Council and Joint Council members. There will be a number of vacancies on both of these bodies and we are also aware that certain officers have already been granted extensions by the JC to take them beyond the normal maximum of serving six years on the council. It is therefore vital that we get some new blood onto these important bodies and we would encourage you all to seriously consider if you are able to serve in this way. Please talk to a member of the CC if you would like more detail.

LEP Review – In conjunction with the Joint Council we have been considering a LEP (Local Ecumenical Partnership) review by the Churches Together in Oxfordshire (CTO). This is expected to take place in the autumn and covers all aspects of the church's life. This should not be considered as onerous or threatening, "More of a guided self assessment than an Ofsted Inspection". More details will be available shortly but please talk to Peter if you would like to be involved in this.

Admin – We do need to complete a number of Risk Assessments for various activities, Iain Carvel is coordinating this but will need input from all user groups. We realise that everyone is busy but we do need to fulfil our legal obligations, so please provide Iain with the necessary inputs. I would also like to remind everyone of some other important admin such as remembering to book the centre (even for Church events), and completing CRB forms when requested. Whilst these may seem a distraction at times they are vital to the smooth running of the centre, so we would appreciate your attention to them.

Abingdon Foodbank – Helen Wood has kindly agreed to be our coordinator for this. Please speak to Helen if you would like more details on this.

Finally – we are planning to have another Church bring and share BBQ after the service on 26th July. Please put that in your diaries.