SHIPLEY CHRISTIANS TOGTHER REPORT 2020 - 2021

During 2020 the activities of Shipley Christians Together were severely curtailed by Covid 19 restrictions. All the proposed Easter events in 2020 were cancelled, and activity since then has moved almost entirely online : -

* A united online service roughly once every two months on a Sunday evening
* The ministers’ weekly prayer meeting hosted by Rev Nick Blundell

Since the early part of 2019, Revd Keith Jones, as Chair of SCT, had been steering moves to apply for charity status in order to allow the organisation to apply for funding from various sources, and to employ a member of staff who would manage the proposed CAP Debt Centre for Shipley. Charitable status was granted in June 2020, creating CIO 1190091. The proposed new organisation would be constituted at the delayed AGM, which eventually took place via Zoom on 16th September 2020. Representatives of twelve churches attended: these were :-

Christchurch LEP Windhill

Christian Life Church

Crag Methodist Church

Northcliffe LEP

St Margaret's Parish Church, Frizinghall

St Paul's Parish Church

St Peter's Parish Church

St Theresa Benedicta Roman Catholic Parish (St Walburga's Church)

Saltaire Methodist Church

Saltaire United Reformed Church

Shipley Baptist Church

Shipley Salvation Army Corps

At this meeting the old organisation was wound up, and a new one established which would be steered by a group of nine elected trustees who, following nomination, were elected unopposed. These were

Pastor Adam Carver (CLC)

Caroline Firth (CLC)

Geoff Pollard (Baptist)

Andrew Gray (Methodist)

Mary Carroll (RC)

Rev Henriette Howarth (St Paul’s)

Euan Woodward (Christchurch LEP)

Rev Caroline Andrews (URC)

Hugh Firman (St Paul’s)

This group subsequently appointed Pastor Adam Carver as their Chair with Geoff Pollard as Secretary. As at April 2021 there are no Trustees from St Peter’s.

The main reason for seeking charitable status for SCT was to employ a CAP Debt Centre Manager for Shipley. St Peter’s had already agreed to be a part of the funding of this project and had set aside money from our Local Outreach Fund for this purpose. In November 2020, Thomas Knight was appointed to this post following an interview process and initial training from CAP. He addressed the meeting of St Peter’s PCC in March 2021. As a result of this meeting Maria Mullin and Andy Thorlby will be acting as our links with the Debt Centre.

During the last twelve months there have been two ministerial departures. Rev Mark Watson has moved from Windhill to a new parish appointment near Wakefield, and Major Mike Harris has moved away from Shipley Salvation Army. In January we welcomed the short-term appointment of Rev Philippa Slingsby, Curate at Tong and Holme Wood, to cover the vacancy at Windhill until the end of May 2021.

It will be important for St Peter’s to move quickly in 2021 to ensure that our lack of representation on the Trustee Body is rectified, in view of the fact that PCC money is involved in the Debt Centre Project. It is likely that at least two vacancies will occur in the near future, meaning that an election will take place at the next AGM, presumably in September. We look forward to renewed opportunities for gathered witness as Covid restrictions are eased over the coming months.

John Rainer