



## Churches Together in Luton

### Agenda Annual Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**All currently paid up members of Churches Together in Luton are eligible to vote on items below.**

1. Welcome from Chairman, Tony Thompson
2. Apologies for absence
3. Annual Report / Financial report / Questions
4. Chairman 2023-2024 Michael Singleton
  - **Tony Thompson, leader of Hope Church** was elected Chair for 3 years in 2023.
5. Vice Chair.
  - **Michael Singleton** was elected Vice-Chair for 3 years in 2023.
6. Appointment as Secretary and Finance Officer.
  - Sue Penn, our administrator is a co-opted member of the executive committee and has served as secretary and responsible for finance. She is willing to continue to serve.
7. Election of new executive committee members

There are four places available. The current membership of the executive committee is:

<b>Deans:</b>	Mgr Kevin McGinnell	Roman Catholic
	Rev Canon David Kesterton	CofE
	Rev Patrick Kandeh	Methodist
	Rev Heather Whyte	URC

		<b>For re-election in</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Elected:</b>	Tony Thompson	2026	Chairman
	Michael Singleton	2026	Vice chair
	Vincent Cox	2024	Willing to stand
	Anne Crosby	2025	
	Josias de Souza	2024	Willing to stand

Everton Blake, Patrick-Chuks Obuseh and Phillip Oladejo have stood down.

<b>Co-opted</b>	Peter Adams	Interfaith
	Sue Penn (Administrator)	co-opted as secretary.

There are four places available to fill. ***Nominations to be received in advance to [Tony@hopechurch.co.uk](mailto:Tony@hopechurch.co.uk).***

8. Presentation by Dr Trevor Adams
9. Close in prayer Tony Thompson



# Annual report 2024

## **Introduction**

2023 was another busy year for your committee. Our communications and Racial justice groups continues their good work and there were plenty of meetings between our committee members and other parties to encourage working together.

## **AGM.**

Our AGM was held at the Chiltern Hotel in conjunction with a breakfast meeting. Steve Moody spoke at the meeting and provided a diagram of how people are affected by prejudice and how we can repent and reconcile. At the end of the meeting, people were asked to leave comments and requests for consideration. Several of these have been worked on in 2023. As a result, we are working with Diane-Louise Jordan to present something during Black History Month this year, a 'tool-kit' for how to deal with racial issues is being produced.

## **Pentecost Praise**

One event in 2023 was Pentecost Praise.

## **Breakfast meetings**

We held two breakfast meetings in 2023. These were very well attended by nearly 50 Church Leaders. A full cooked breakfast was provided, with fruit, bread, cakes etc by the excellent staff at the Chiltern Hotel. This provided an opportunity for leaders to meet other leaders and form friendships in an informal setting, and an act of spiritual reconciliation took place at our Autumn breakfast, concluding with a very moving singing of 'The Blessing'. After the success of these it was agreed to hold our AGM next year as a breakfast at the Chiltern Hotel again, with the option for people to attend just the AGM after the breakfast if they wished to do so.

## **Prayer Tree and Carols in the Mall.**

In December we worked with the mall and were able to have a Prayer Tree in the Mall. People were encouraged to write their prayers on tags on the tree. These were then collected and prayed for during Christmas church services. We also had carols in the mall, led by Vincent Cox and New Testament Church of God. The Mall provided Mince pies, which soon disappeared, and 200 New Testaments were also distributed.

## **Committee:**

We welcomed a new Chair at our AGM., Tony Thomspson from Hope Church. He has been a committee member for 10 years and brings a new approach to our team. We are very pleased that Michael Singleton has stayed on and become the vice-chair.

His outreach work with local leaders and groups has been much appreciated and he will continue with this.

We welcomed Partick and Phillip to join the committee. Other people who would like to join will be welcome, but we ask you to let me know in advance of the meeting if possible, so that new members can speak with Tony and appreciate what is involved.

Everton Blake will be standing down, but all other members are happy to continue to stand.

### **Membership**

Membership was down by 5 in 2023 despite welcoming a few new members.

### ***Communication Group***

The communications group has continued to meet, and we have introduced a new monthly article to tell how Christianity is alive and working in Luton. This is distributed via our newsletter channel, and we encourage you to print copies of this for your congregations to see what is happening in our town.

We have also been posting on our Facebook account and to a lesser extent, X (twitter).

We hope you will follow us on these channels and maybe other areas we have not yet looked at.

### **Christian Organisations Meeting.**

This took place on 13th October and there was an amazing response from Churches, schools, and charities. It was viewed as very successful. We decided it would be good to repeat this once a year.

### **Pentecost Praise**

This is a major coming together of churches from across the town. It was held at Stopsley Baptist church and Tony was the speaker this year.

### **Windrush Celebration**

2023 saw the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Windrush and a big celebration was held to mark this. Someone who came over then spoke and the meeting and many family members from Windrush families came along too. After the service all were welcome to join and chat with Caribbean food and drinks provided.

### **Truth and Reconciliation.**

Work in this group has continued in 2023. See the AGM item for more details.

### **Prayer Meetings**

Several streams of prayer meeting have continued to run monthly in the town. Once a month on Thursday mornings, Church Leaders have met for an early prayer meeting. Prayer for Luton has been adopted by members of the New Testament Church of God and held an initial meeting in December. The hope is to continue to

meet in different churches around Luton. Several other churches have been holding prayer meetings weekly or monthly and details of these are available on our website.

### **Ecumenical Deans' group**

The Ecumenical Dean's Group consisted of Mgr Kevin McGinnell (RC), Revd. David Kesterton (Anglican), Revd. Patrick Kandeh (Methodist) and Revd. Heather Whyte (URC). As well as their own meetings, Deans are very useful members of our committee. In 2023 they organised an event for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

### **Relationships with other groups in Luton**

Committee members are also active in other groups in the area such as Luton Council of Faiths, LASE, FACES, the Foodbank, The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, reporting to our committee on any issues we should be involved in.

### **Website and Newsletters**

The Website has continued to be one of our main communication tools. It is updated most days with items sent from our member churches and organisations in the area. We have included requests for volunteer support for both churches and organisations, many training opportunities, prayer meetings, Christmas gifts and jobs.

Each Thursday and Friday a newsletter is sent to all who are interested highlighting any new items and reminders of anything in the following two weeks. This includes a summary at the top so people can scan quickly to see if there is anything of interest, and a link to each item on the website for more information if desired.

[www.lutonchurchestogether.org.uk](http://www.lutonchurchestogether.org.uk)

### **2024 Plans**

Following the success of our two breakfast meetings in 2023, we will again plan a buffet breakfast for our AGM this year and a further breakfast meeting in the Autumn. These have proved an excellent way of mixing with people we might otherwise not have met. New friendships have been formed and it was observed people were not just sitting with friends but engaging with people from other races and denominations.

Our communications team will aim to increase our visibility amongst both other Christians and people outside of the church. Please feel free to share any Facebook posts so we can bring these items to people outside our immediate reach.

Our meetings on truth and reconciliation will continue and we will let you know of actions taken because of these meetings.

### ***In Conclusion***

Churches Together Executive are very grateful for the encouragement you give us and will continue our work meeting with the council and others, encouraging working ecumenically and supporting one another in Christ's name.

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## **Financial Report Churches Together in Luton Jan – Dec 2023**

Our subscriptions this year were down from £2150 to £1885. We received £30 in donations, £25 for extra directories and £1160 payments towards the two breakfast events. The Expenditure for the breakfast was £1115

We renewed our annual public liability insurance policy which covered our Christmas event in the Mall and further breakfast events in 2024 as well as any other events organised by CTL

We provided food for a Windrush 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event attended by many guests at a cost of £1000.

Web support payments totalled £246 covering three years to September 2023. A further payment will be made in 2024 to cover up to September 2024.

Office expenses and Bank Charges totalled £82. The honorarium to our administrator was £900. Owing to an accidental use of a copyright photo on our website, we incurred copyright fees of £409.

Overall, CTL income was £3100 and expenditure £4180 this leaves a balance of £5191 in our account and petty cash. The overall decrease in our assets in 2023 is £1080

A summary of the accounts is attached, showing all income and expenditure along with our current balances.

Sue Penn  
Acting Treasurer, Churches Together in Luton  
April 2024

## CTL Finances For the year ending 31st December 2023

### Income and Expenditure

	2022	2023
<u>CTL Income</u>		
Subscriptions	£2,150	£1,885
Breakfast buffet	£683	£1,160
Petty Cash	£0	£25
Donations	£40	£30
<u>Total Income</u>	<u>£2,873</u>	<u>£3,100</u>
<u>CTL expenditure</u>		
Office	£188	£9
Insurance	£129	£129
Bank Charges	£76	£73
Web support (3yrs)	£0	£246
Honorarium	£900	£900
Farsi bibles	£1,000	£0
Windrush food/Dec	£0	£1,300
Copyright	£0	£409
2xBreakfast	£873	£1,115
<u>Total expenses</u>	<u>£3,166</u>	<u>£4,180</u>
<u>Income - expenditure</u>	<u>-£293</u>	<u>-£1,080</u>

### BALANCE SHEET

<u>Balance as at 31st December 2023</u>	
HSBC	£5,156
Petty Cash	£35
<u>Total Assets 31st Dec 2023</u>	<u>£5,191</u>
<u>Liabilities</u>	
web support 2023-24	£72
<u>Total Liabilities</u>	<u>£72</u>
<u>Balance as at 1st January 2023</u>	
HSBC	£6,261
Petty Cash	£10
<u>Total Assets 1st Jan 2023</u>	<u>£6,271</u>
<u>Asset decrease over 2023</u>	<u>-£1,080</u>
<u>Net Assests 31st Dec 2023</u>	<u>£5,119</u>

The Accounts set out above were approved by the committee and signed on its behalf by

Tony Thompson - Chair

Date:

Mr M Singleton - Vice Chair

Date: