

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG

CHURCH COUNCIL

Wednesday 5 November 2014
7.30 pm, the Vicarage

MINUTES

Present: The Rev'd Chris Lyon, the Rev'd Andy Markey (Assistant Chaplain), Catherine Allen (Churchwarden), Lynn Barclay, Tania Buhr (Secretary), John Dimond, Moira Hogg, Simon Norcross, John Overstall, Felix Rusere (Treasurer), Philippa Seymour, Evelyn Sweerts, Paul Townend, Chris Vaudrey (Churchwarden) and Martin Curwen (guest).

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

The Chaplain, as Chairperson, opened the meeting at 7.52 pm by welcoming everyone, especially Martin Curwen, Convenor of the Charities Committee, who had been invited to attend the meeting to report on the work of that committee. The Chaplain read from Hebrews 11, v. 32 to Chapter 12, v. 2, and said a prayer.

3. Apologies for absence

Cheryl Fisher.

4. Charities Committee Report – Martin Curwen

The Charities Committee consisted of Martin Curwen, the Convenor, Esmée Chengapen, Roderick Dunnett and Jacqui Spence.

Martin Curwen outlined the way the committee worked and briefly explained some of the criteria it applied when selecting charities to support. It preferred to select projects of an environmental or educational nature, and tried to ensure a mix of small and large organisations (some of which with a specific Christian outreach) and a good geographical spread; it sought out charities that had low overhead/administrative costs, and tended to favour proposals that offered the possibility of obtaining matching funds (e.g. from the Luxembourg government or the EU); support to any one charity was usually limited to 3-5 years and the number of charities at any one time was around six. Both national and international charities were usually selected. The committee was keen to satisfy itself that the bulk of the money donated would go to the end user, and therefore wanted to involve members of the congregation who had contacts with particular charities. Martin Curwen was concerned to have clear, workable criteria so that the Charities Committee could be satisfied that the money had been well spent. He would welcome more interaction with Luxembourg-based charities, as it would be easier to get feedback from them. Also, the committee needed new members.

He explained the **proposed charities for 2014**:

- i) Greyton Genadendal Education Trust – South Africa – EUR 2000
- ii) CSI Lëtzebuerg – Congo – EUR 2000
- iii) World Vision – Romania – EUR 2000
- iv) Connection St.Martin's – UK – EUR 2500
- v) Naledi – South Africa – EUR 2000
- vi) COPE – Laos – EUR 2000
- vii) Stëmm vun der Strooss – Luxembourg – EUR 500.

There followed a **wider discussion** of some aspects of charitable giving. The Chaplain emphasised that in his view our giving should focus on justice and peace in order not to perpetuate old attitudes and structures of privilege; the projects we supported should

generate trade and employment and thus enable people to stand on their own feet and participate in the world economy; our own small contribution could perhaps be leveraged better, for example by building links with organisations such as ALFI (the Association of the Luxembourg Fund Industry), which was looking into investing wisely, and by encouraging others also to support the charities we have selected. Simon Norcross and Evelyn Sweerts said that their homegroup had discussed economic justice and was keen to set up a partnership with a charitable project, possibly a church-based one.

The Chaplain had attended a meeting of Christian MEPs in Strasbourg at which the Secretary-General of **Eurodiaconia**, Heather Roy, had given an address on 'faith in action in Europe'. Eurodiaconia was currently running a project to overcome poverty and exclusion amongst Roma children. The Chaplain suggested inviting Heather Roy to speak in our church.

The Church Council accepted the list of charities proposed by the Charities Committee for our support in 2014.

5. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 8 October 2014 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings.

6. Action Points Review and Matters Arising

Action points review: See separate Action points spreadsheet.

Matters arising: None.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Chaplain welcomed Felix Rusere as the new Treasurer.

Felix Rusere presented the accounts for October 2014. For ease of comparison, he had added the figures for the previous month (i.e. September and October were shown side by side), as well as some notes to give further explanations.

Collections were generally low in October; all the four Sundays in October recorded significantly lower receipts as compared with September. In general, the employment costs were slightly higher than budget, and the 'fuel and utilities' item showed an increase that was due to the annual top-up, paid in October, for gas and electricity consumption between August 2013 and 2014. Overall, annual consumption of gas and electricity had increased significantly by about 27% and 7% respectively compared with 2013.

The Treasurer pointed out that it was difficult to identify separately the amounts received for Junior Church and coffee, but he was assured that, once the proposed Collections rota was in place, it would be possible to differentiate between these monies.

The Treasurer's report was accepted. The Chaplain thanked Felix Rusere for his first report.

8. Vicarage redevelopment

The Chaplain reported that he had met with Alain Devresse again and work was in hand. In searching for new premises, they were considering an office being offered by Hortis as well as other possibilities also in the rue de Muhlenbach. It would be good to find office space by next Easter.

9. Ministry Report

The Chaplain reported as follows:

- a) 'Convention' negotiation: this had been taking up a great deal of time; Philippa Seymour had been attending the meeting together with the Chaplain; the Luxembourg Government appeared to be unsettled and less confident about being

able to push through its reform plans; it had asked the individual '*cultes conventionnés*' to draw up proposals for their funding so that they would be able to function '*convenablement*'; these proposals were to be submitted by December 2014; the '*cultes conventionnés*' were also considering proposing common teaching on religions, and were thinking of launching a subtle publicity campaign on the value of religion. The next meeting with the Government would be held on 10 November. In the meantime, the Chaplain had invited the Luxembourg Prime Minister, Xavier Bettel, to attend our Remembrance Day service on 9 November and lay a wreath, and had also invited the rabbi and representatives from the Muslim community to attend.

- b) ALFI: the Chaplain had been invited to attend another ALFI (Association of the Luxembourg Fund Industry) conference.
- c) Christmas: the family carol service would be held on 7 December, followed by a pot-luck lunch, and there would be a (quiet) Evensong at 6.30 pm.
- d) Intercessions rota: the Chaplain would ask Phil Harvey to organise this rota.

10. Communications Policy

- a) Website: Chris Vaudrey reported that the new website was coming along very well and hoped that it could be launched by early 2015. Whilst Patrick Granger, who had developed the new website, was willing to act as webmaster to start with, a new permanent webmaster was needed. After some discussion, John Dimond agreed to be the new webmaster. Someone else would take over his role as organiser of the Collections rota.
- b) Pew Bibles, service booklets: the Communications Committee would be ordering the Bibles proposed by Catherine Allen, and work by Evelyn Sweerts and Andy Markey on the service booklets was progressing well.
- c) Computer purchase: John Dimond had researched the purchase of new computer equipment for the Church Office within a budget of 2 000€ and had recommended computer hardware and a router, leaving €300 of the budget for labour (file transfers, installation, etc.). The Council was happy to move ahead with this purchase.

11. Any other business

- a) There was a possibility that Dana Luccock, the Music Director, might be leaving after Christmas as she had been offered a job elsewhere.
- b) Evelyn Sweerts wondered if the Council might reflect on the possibility of changing the timing of the church services. The 11 am service did not finish until near lunchtime, thus making it difficult for families with children, in particular, to find time for Sabbath rest. The Chaplain said it would in principle be possible to bring the 11 am service forward to 10.30 am and to have the early service at 9 am. This matter needed further discussion at some other time.

12. Dates of next meetings

Wednesday 3 December 2014 at 7 pm for food, with the meeting to start at 7.30 pm.

Wednesday 14 January 2015

Wednesday 11 February 2015

13. Closing prayer

The Chaplain thanked Moira Hogg for providing supper and Catherine Allen for supplying cake. The meeting closed with a prayer at 11 pm.