

CTHH Chair's Report 2020-2021

What a year we have all been through together and apart!

2020 Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' saw us all making last minute revisions and recordings – driven by the adrenaline of the Lockdown and anxiety to keep doing things as normal. We had already cut short the Lent Groups.

But we soon learned what Live Streaming was and Zoom became a household name. Our CTHH Trustees meeting have been happening on Zoom, hosted by Pastor Joel and NLPC. We had our CTHH AGM on Zoom and were pleased that nearly as many people came to that as would come to a normal AGM (they are not often the big attraction of the year!). Nikki stood down as Chair and I (Austin) was appointed the new chair. I'm so grateful Nikki is still part of our team of Trustees. We said thank you and goodbye to Rev'd David Chapman. He has done so much for CTHH over the years including arranging the Hustings, coordinating the Lent Groups, administrating the Prayer Calendar, being a reassuring word of wisdom and so many other things. We welcomed officially Rev'd Andrew Brazier, Pastor Joel Nanganuri and Paul Boggis as Trustees. Along with Chris, Heather, Nikki and myself, we make a great team. We welcome other Trustees and traditions.

We have also been supporting a regular Zoom gathering of Hemel Church leaders, which is a gathering beyond the membership of Churches Together. These meetings have been a great support to those who attend as we discuss how we have seen God at work in our churches, the joys and the challenges.

We have initiated a season of promoting awareness of inclusion. We welcomed Becky and Matthew from The Torch Trust to talk to us about Sight Loss Friendly Church. We are also working on recorded interviews from church leaders about what inclusion means to them. We practiced that all age/ethnicity/ability/denomination inclusivity with 'The Lockdown Nativity' poem which was written by Rev'd Austin and adopted and performed by representatives from Churches Together in Hertfordshire. We enjoyed a Zoom visit by Doral Hayes, the Ecumenical Facilitator for CTH to our February Forum to hear what Churches Together in Hertfordshire and beyond were doing to establish and celebrate inclusion.

We were approached by Kim and Eamon from Cornergate Foundation which supports those in prison to find ways back into community and with the prayers and support of the Church. This inspired our choice of Lent Group material from the Prison Fellowship on 'Restorative Justice'. These sessions were well supported on Zoom and all who attended learned a lot. The intention was to lead from the Lent Groups into a theme for the Walk of Witness, or rather 'Zoom of Unity', but this did not happen because adrenaline had worn off and exhaustion had set in as all churches were putting all efforts into functioning independently – by now in the 3rd Lockdown! We need to be gentle and realistic with ourselves.

The CTHH Rambles ceased during Lockdown, but will be relaunching in June.

We look forward to hearing from Hope UK at our AGM and 'Through The Roof' Charity in October.

We have a well-functioning new Website for CTHH. Many thanks to Philip Russell for your wisdom on this. Facebook also helps us to get information out, and we will be reviewing our email circulations and representatives for the best effect.

Thank you to everyone's support during this tough year, and special thanks to all the CTHH Trustees and all your wisdom.

God bless.

Revd Austin, CTHH Chair.