

GARSTANG CHURCHES AND CHRISTIANS TOGETHER.

St. Thomas,



Methodist,



Free Methodist



U. R. C.



St Mary; Michael; The Friends;



St. Helens.



Dear Secretary and Christian Friends,

When I became Chairman last May I wanted to ensure I did something during the year that would impact on the future of CTiG in some way – if only to ensure I wasn't asked to be Chair again!!

This is why I undertook to do a survey across all our Churches, about the different aspects of CTiG and how we could move forward together. I was very pleased to receive around 80 responses, with nearly every congregation having a representation. You will all know I produced a comprehensive summary of those responses for our Autumn meeting.

This allowed us to make decisions about how it appeared our congregations wanted CTiG to progress. There appeared to be little appetite for 'additional worship services together' in the busy liturgical diaries of each church. However there was keen interest in doing things together that were either 'a witness or an outreach'.

We therefore decided – at least for this year – to focus on 4 main events. These were "some sort of Carol Singing in the Community"; "Something reflective for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity"; The "Good Friday Walk" and "open air community singing" in arts and crafts week in August.

The specific events organised under these 4 joint activities were :- BBC Radio Lancashire Sings Christmas in Booths; a Reflective evening in Wesley's in Jan. led by Rev. Keith; The usual 6am walk from St Mary's to the Castle on Good Friday led by Andrew Wilkinson. The August Open Air Singing is 'in the pipeline'. The other thing I arranged this year was a collection of prayers, from each congregation, to be used as Intercessions in all our Churches during the 2 Sundays of Christian Unity Week. This replaced the 'Pulpit Swaps' which had proved limited in scope previously.

Alongside these specific events other things have evolved. The Thursday lunchtime Pause For Thought / Shoppers Service has now ended, with thanks to David Blanks for all his organisation over the years. Whilst each Church supports varying foodbank initiatives, we agreed to supply food parcels or food vouchers to families in the locality, identified by the outreach workers from the childrens centre. Whilst not specifically under the CTiG banner, Christian Aid is supported by different Churches in their own way. I quite like the Lent Soups at the URC.

The clergy still meet together for lunch periodically, as well as be a presence on the childrens festival walk. With regards to the clergy, we will ALL miss the contributions; love and grace shown by Father David over many years and we pray he enjoys good health in his retirement. The first thing I did as your Chairman after Easter was visit Father Tom as he joins our community of faith. We pray Tom will feel welcomed by all our congregations.

There has been various communications to and from CTiG during my year and I have attempted to keep people included in circulations to which other Christians are invited.

Finally, I cannot end my year without informing you of, and giving thanks for, all the wonderful support given to the Chair AND CTiG by Susan Willoughby. Susan is THE VITAL COG in all we do Ecumenically as CTiG.

Rev. Keith Borwick.