

**The Minutes of the meeting of the Diocesan Commission
For Dialogue and Unity held at the White House
On 14th February 2009.**

1. Opening Devotions

The opening prayers were led by Bishop Michael.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs Julia Walton, Mrs Priscilla Barlow, Fr. Adrian Gates, Mr Brian Keegan ,Fr Hoan (John) Nguyen Minh.

2. Present

Bishop Michael; Rev Geoff Cook; Dom Antony Sutch; Rev Fr James Walsh;
Rev Ian Hatfield; Rev Chris Heath ; Rev Clive Brooks; Mrs Loris Squirrell;
Mrs Pat Bedford; Mrs Mary Hunt; Mr Peter Bowie:

3. Correspondence

Bishop Michael sent a letter to the Commission explaining that the Diocesan Pastoral Plan was now 5 years old and that he was initiating a review of it. The Commission was asked to send any comments by Palm Sunday (2nd April 2009).

Priscilla Barlow sent an email apologising for her absence. She also sent an update on the Northstowe development which is proceeding even more slowly, apart from the NIAB site. She was to meet with Tony Barker later and would send any relevant news in another email

Brian Keegan sent his apologies in an email along with a report on Action Points from the Inter-religious Sub committee and a list of members .

4. Appointments.

Fr. Walsh now Dean of Norwich is to suggest a new appointment to the Bishop. Peter Bowie is to ask his Dean to find a Clergy representative.

5. Minutes of the meeting of 18th October 2008

These were accepted as a true record.

6. Matters arising from the minutes.

Developments: This is a long drawn out procedure. Hopefully it will be tied up & signed by Monday 16th February 09. The lawyers have been wrangling for a long time. We are not partners to the Sharing Agreement.

King Hedges has £18,000 and the local R.C.s contributed £3-4,000. A record of this money is being kept in case it needs to be repaid. The Baptists have not given any money it is only a loan. On a cold snowy morning the R.C.s offered hospitality as they are the largest community.

Cambourne. (In other areas the news here is that the smaller developers are going to sell their land to larger developers or the Government). Gallaghers wish to off load the land to the Government for an Eco-town. The Eco- town legislation will bring changes to the 106 Agreements which enabled land to be set aside for

churches. This new legislation will put a levy on each dwelling for community buildings.

Northstowe is likely to be constructed but on a smaller scale.

Cambridgeshire East will have no development before 2016.

St. Lawrence's Parish may have more parishioners.

Hertfordshire C.C. has asked for a judicial review on building plans which is due this summer.

The depression is having a slowing down effect on projects and the Government wants more social housing at a lesser cost. At the moment 30% off e.g. £90,000 for £60,000. Churches will need to monitor plans carefully.

7. Inter- religious Sub-committee.

Brian Keegan's email with the Action Plan from the" virtual meeting "was Circulated to all present. The Global Ethics Exhibition Posters which came from Germany were shown by Lorris. There was no poster for the Sikhs so one was produced here in England for this exhibition. The set costs £50 and consists of 12 posters + 1Sikh and 1 ecologically themed panel. The posters display how they live and include a text from the main faiths. The set needs to be professionally mounted and quotes need to be requested for this work.

Once finished they could be circulated around the Deaneries and used at Christians/Churches Together events. Other possible places to display the set Include : Town Halls, Libraries, University Chaplancies, Schools.

When the posters are ready a letter will be sent to all Parish Priests to contact any interested party mentioned above, The CWL would be interested.

Funding : Donation boxes would be available.

8. Bishop's News

Bishop Michael circulated a list of his work.

The Methodist/ R.C. Commission discussed Baptism, the Eucharist and Ministries on a 4 year plan.

Baptism- there was not much discussion because there was not as much common ground as was thought and it needs more discussion. Does Baptism change a person? R.C.s say "yes" but not all Methodists believe there is "regeneration".

A " Eucharist Sacrifice" led by Bishop Michael was based on the hymns of John Wesley. The implications of this for Ministry is the sacrificial part of being ordained.

Taize Pilgrimage for young adults is 25th July to 3rd August 09.

Taize evening at Peterborough Cathedral with Bishop Ian and also Rev Paulo from Taize was enjoyed by 40-50 young people.

Anglican/Catholic Bishops' Day of Reflection was to be a celebration of Queen Mary & Queen Elizabeth1.! However this was changed to a Day of Prayer & Reflection with both the Arch bishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor speaking. The evening meal was good . This event will be repeated e.g, 3-4 years. Could this be done at Parish level?

Faith & Voluntary Bodies. This was a dialogue with Social Services on the care given by this voluntary sector.

BBC Radio Norfolk 6.15pm. A good interview which focused on Ecumenical Questions in Norfolk. The 2 Cathedrals took part and music was chosen from Cambodia and Oscar Romero was remembered

Durham meeting: How to move forward without changing Catholic teaching?

The Methodist Covenant Service for example is deeply spiritual.

This can be Ecumenical. It is a renewal of a Covenant with God and each other within the Church – the Ignatius Loyola prayer. We could use it for our own service.

Catholic/Oriental Orthodox Forum. It was discovered that Baptism in “One Church” was not accepted by all and that some, namely the Coptic/Armenian Orthodox would “re- baptise” . A discussion that the churches were united with Apostolic tradition is to be continued. The Catholic Church accepts the validity of all main stream Christians.

U.E.A. “Any Questions” with Bishop Graham James, Rev Graham Thompson and Bishop Michael. Only 25 people were in the audience but there was a good discussion with no controversial questions being posed.

The hand book for Christian Unity is still ongoing. Ideas are coming along very slowly- either a booklet or a series of 5 themed leaflets.

The meeting at L’Arche Ecumenical project in Ipswich was good.

Coming Events.

Five, 20 minute talks on Wednesdays in Lent at Norwich Cathedral, 7.30pm after Eucharist at 7pm ,starting on 4th March. The themes will be “Blessed be God forever”, “Lift up your heart” and Praise”.

Feast of St. Felix 8th March , St John’s Cathedral at 4pm ,the two Cathedrals Evening Prayer, with the focus on Evangelisation followed by talks.

“Can we do anything about the unemployed?”

Bishop Michael replied that we cannot give out money but we need to offer a welcome in the parish community to support them. Have a drop in centre at the church hall and invite in experts from the Job Centre, Solicitors, C.A.B. speaker. Offer food and a hot drink.

Bishop Michael referred to the recent statement on the website about the revocation of the excommunication of the “Lefevre” bishops which had featured in the press.

9.Pastoral Plan Review.

This is to be looked at in Parishes and at Parish councils to formally review it. Commissions are to review their area.

Working together with other Christians. Pages 1-4.

Opportunities to meet with other Christians often comes through individual personal contacts who show leadership and not the whole congregation.

Big feast days and Christian Aid Week are good opportunities here.

Clergy Fraternal are key and need to be on a regular footing –about every 2 months. They should include an invitation to the full range of ministers and have an element of fun .

Social contacts are most important and an enjoyable way to get to know each Other.

A popular event is “Breakfast & Prayer “ at 7.30 am approx. 30 people attend.

A large number of lay people work ecumenically through organisations and doing social work together e.g.soup kitchen, working for the elderly.

This type of work and contact is not always reflected in Church statistics.

Welcome leaflets in different languages are a good idea.

Leaflets which are attractively produced to go into hotels with local church information are a worthwhile project. Two examples from Peterborough were shown.

Other Faiths: Justice and Peace is a good way to network with people of differing faiths both locally and nationally.

Mixed faith youth groups e.g Catholic/Muslim help youngsters to get to know each other better. In Peterborough the priest goes to the Iman's council because they are near neighbours .

More news is included in the attached reports .

Forum Meeting held on 12th February 09 .

This meeting covered the work of former City Centre Chaplains under headings: People at work: (Workplace Chaplaincy-environmental)

Concern for the vulnerable,

Identity- (New arrivals, communities , inter-faith.)

Young people,

Prayer and worship.

Date of the next meeting .

Saturday 17th October 09 at the Conference Centre , Poringland,
10.30am for 11am start.