

Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament



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AGM Minutes

The Christian CND AGM was held on Saturday 12th November at Hinde St. Methodist Church from 11.30am-4.30pm

Those present: Caroline Gilbert, Mike Gilbert, Martin Birdseye, Martin Tiller, Kelvin Gascoyne, Patricia Pulham, Michael Pulham, Bruce Kent (1st half) John Bragg, Kay Finnegan, Tim Wallis, Diana Townsend, Geraldine Ellis, Chris Gidden and Janet Rawlings (2nd half)

Apologies: Claire Poyner, Malcolm Ellis, John Mc Manus, Bob Russell (from Derby) Sheila Knight, Neil Berry, Margery Toller and Monica Ridley.

The AGM was chaired by Caroline.

- 1) After the welcome to all, the opening liturgy, focussing on hope, was led by Patricia.
- 2) Minutes of the 2015 AGM were read. There was a reference to something Bruce had said the previous year but as the 2014 minutes were not available, no clarification was possible. Minutes were approved.
- 3) Claire's Office Report was read and accepted. The meeting wishes to convey thanks and appreciation of all Claire does for us, her hard work and professionalism.

4) Annual Report.

Patricia and Claire had produced this in a coloured version, for use also in general campaigning. The Church Statements Placards were mentioned and the suggestion was made that the writers of these statements should be approached to endorse what they had written earlier as some statements were several years old. Caroline pointed out that there was no reference to the fact that letters were sent to every Synod member at the beginning of July to ask them to do what they could to oppose the renewal of Trident. The report was approved.

5) Financial Report

As our treasurer was unable to attend for family reasons, he had forwarded a spread sheet with income and expenditure. Tim Wallis felt that it was not complete and it was felt that the usual accompanying notes would have been helpful and we will ask Neil to provide these to send out with this report. The report was approved as it stood. Michael said that we should thank Neil for his valuable advice regarding the legacy.

It was noted that no minutes of the EGM were available at this meeting and it was requested that these too would be sent out with the financial report.

Points made from the following discussion: it was suggested that the part of the bequest not being used in the current year should be invested in an Ethical trust. (John Bragg) This would have the advantage of providing interest as well as encouraging ethical investment (Michael Pulham) Bruce said we should look for an opportunity now for using the money as most peace organisations are having difficulty finding the resources for their work. We explained the criteria for giving grants, eg. £500 ceiling for any one grant, acknowledgement of CCND – also that we do not pay towards core-funding of other organisations but towards individual projects. In fact we had provided more than £3000 to CND via a donation for the anti-Trident March, and cancelling our annual grant.

Martin B. said that as the world has moved on, maybe we need to consider a big new thing to do, with ICAN or CND.

6) Elections to Executive. It was agreed that the Executive would be elected first, and then nominations made from these members for the 2 co-chairs.

All the current executive members were willing to stand again and in addition, nominations were received from Geraldine Ellis, Diana Townsend (co-opted for one year) and Chris Gidden. These people were duly elected. We had also received a nomination from Sheila Knight who offered office support but has problems with accessing certain venues.

It was decided that as she was unable to come to the meeting she would be contacted to find out how much help she could give without causing her problems, and see how best we could use her offer of help.

7) Elections for Co-Chairs

This proved more time-consuming than usual. Due to the generous offer by 5 exec members to put their names forward, we had a rare vote. The names proposed and seconded were Martin Birdseye, Chris Gidden, Caroline Gilbert, Michael Pulham, and Martin Tiller. As a result, Martin Tiller and Martin Birdseye were elected to serve for this year. (Martin T on the proviso that the exec. considers additional help to enable it to function more effectively)

8) Working in the Churches

After lunch we were joined by Revd. Dr. Justus Omoyajowo to lead our discussion on working in the Churches. Dr Justus described the position of the Church of England (He himself is an Evangelical Anglican) and how they felt unable to condemn nuclear weapons after the 2nd World War because of the MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) policy. He now thinks we are closer to nuclear war than at any time since because of the relationship between USA and US. The Russian Carrier that recently sailed through the English Channel was carrying missiles. Trump's Presidency may alter this.

He is proud that the Cof E has withdrawn investment in companies linked to all indiscriminate weapons, but we need to do more.

The essential question is "Who is thy neighbour?" In the story Jesus told of the Good Samaritan we know that Jews and Samaritans were fiercely opposed to each other but the Good Samaritan just saw another human being in need. In Justus's parish there are people from many nations but the Church does not worry about their ethnicity or faith but only their need. Many students from India or Africa are here on their own. They are just told "Call if you need any help".

Because some evangelicals believe that by praying for peace you are praying against God's prophesy that the earth will be destroyed by fire, it is difficult for them to see why we struggle against the renewal of Trident.

"Who is my neighbour" is a question understood by all Christians.

Comments: Michael .. We are spirit and body. Resurrection of whole of Creation Love requires free will.

Justus: NWs used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki still affect children.

John: Some people are so keen to teach about Christ they don't look at social problems

Caroline: "Who is my neighbour?" Try to sensitise others. How do we get this off-putting agenda considered.

Justus: Latch onto this platform.

Martin B; Focus changed from Trident Renewal to Ban Treaty - Humanitarian Effects.

Tim: Dilly Baker has a peace group in her church and puts banners on the church railings about N Ws . How do we get clergy to engage?

Justus; Clergy meetings and in Church schools. Via scripture. Jesus wants us to do something now. Reach out to others. Deaneries.

Janet: Christian stewardship is concerned with the world and its people.

Kelvin: We have been given the resources we need,

Justus: Right about stewardship - We are affecting the environment now.

Caroline: Tell about Marshall Islands. What about the victims? Is this a good way into your church?

We finished this discussion by each saying who might be contacted and what might be done. The suggestions included; Local Council of churches, workplace chaplains, prayer, group discussions, newsletters, via environmental concerns, Catholic Peace Sunday talk, putting CCND material out, talking to the Dean at Christ Church, Oxford) nuclear power concerns.

11) The way forward for CCND - further ideas

1) A day to think about our visions for the future

- 2) Keeping our international focus
- 3) Contact with Ethiopian Church at Kings Cross.
- 4) Keeping links with Church of the Lord in S. London.
- 5) Exec to prioritise links for young people – can our Twitter ‘Followers’ be persuaded to become CCND members?
- 6) Michael P. to continue approach to Peace Studies depts and Theological Colleges
- 7) Remember the “Oxfam Test” If Tearfund see their material could just as easily have been written by Oxfam – look at how it can be made their own – the CND test for us.
- 8) Use the right language for the right people .

Caroline distributed a paper with some of her ideas for how Christian CND might develop over the next few years. This will form part of our discussion at future Exec meetings together with ideas from the other executive members, as will suggestions for action made by participants at this AGM. It was also suggested that we look at ways of making CCND less London based.

Dr. Justus led us in a final prayer and we finished our meeting at 4.30pm..