

THE INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FAITH COMMUNITIES FORUM

at 2.15pm on Wednesday 19 October 2022

by Zoom

Co-Moderator: The Revd Canon Hilary Barber.

Present: Dr Desmond Biddulph (Buddhist Society); Minister David Bruton (Spiritualists' National Union and FCF Moderator); Mr Mohinder Singh Chana (Network of Sikh Organisations (UK) and FCF Moderator); Mr Peter Colwell (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland); Ms Siriol Davies (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland/Churches Together in England); Major Samuel Edgar (Salvation Army); Ms Elizabeth Harris-Sawczenko (Board of Deputies of British Jews); Ms Doral Hayes (Churches Together in England); Ms Prudence Jones (Pagan Federation); Mr Hassan Joudi (Muslim Council of Britain and FCF Moderator); the Revd Dr Reynaldo Leao-Neto (Methodist Church in Britain); Mr John Marder (Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK)); Mr Paras Meisheri (Jain Network); Ms Trupti Patel (Hindu Forum of Britain); Mr Neil Pitchford (Druid Network and FCF Moderator); Ms Tracey Prior (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints); Dr Riaz Sanatian (Baha'i Community of the UK); Mr Vinay Shah (Institute of Jainology); Mr Umesh Chander Sharma JP (Hindu Council (UK)); Dr Vinaya Sharma (Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK)); Mr Elliot Vanstone (Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales); Mr Kirit Wadia (BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha); the Revd Andy Williams (Inter Faith Working Group of the Baptist Union of GB); Lynda Williams (Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations)); and Rabbi Mordechai Wollenberg (Board of Deputies of British Jews and FCF Moderator).

Observers: Mr Narendra Waghela (IFN Co-Chair, membership categories other than NFCRB).

Apologies: Inter-faith Council for Wales

Moderator apologies: Mr Malcolm Deboo (Co-Moderator)

In attendance: Mr Ashley Beck; Mrs Hannah Cassidy; and Dr Harriet Crabtree (Inter Faith Network for the UK).

Mr Esmond Rosen (Barnet Multi Faith Forum); and Ms Emma Buckler and Mr Fayyaz Suleman (Leicester Council of Faiths) [for Agenda Item 7]

FCF ToRs and nature of minutes

A copy of the Terms of Reference of the Faith Communities Forum of IFN (FCF) is at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/about/governance>.

The minutes of the main sessions of the meeting of the FCF are made available beyond the FCF on the basis agreed by it in May 2017. The minutes follow FCF's agreed style: namely, points made by individuals are noted in the minutes and have the status of views of the individual who is present on behalf of their member organisation; any points agreed

by the meeting are clearly identified as such. Comments are unattributed except where from the Chair or where the Executive Director or another staff member has been asked to give input or to provide a point of information, or in particular contexts where the contributor has explicitly asked that their identity be noted. Within FCF meetings there is a chance for all bodies to contribute. Contributors carry responsibility for the accuracy of their contributions. Views expressed by contributors are not endorsed by IFN.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and apologies

1. The Revd Canon Hilary Barber, in the chair, welcomed those present.
2. Apologies were noted, including from Co-Moderator, Mr Malcolm Deboo.
3. A period of silence was observed, keeping in mind all those working for inter faith understanding and cooperation.
4. Canon Barber explained, for the benefit of new members, that the FCF was a forum for member bodies of IFN in the category of national faith community representative body. It was a forum for discussion of current issues of interest and concern rather than a decision-making body. It enabled sharing of views and good practice and networking.
5. Anyone wishing not to be included in screenshots of the meeting should indicate. The Chat function was not enabled. Where there were links to particular documents mentioned in discussion, participants could email them to ifnet@interfaith.org.uk to include with the minute or in an earlier follow up email. This approach reflected the experience of leaving Chat off at the last meeting and the increased engagement in the main discussion that this had seemed to encourage.
6. In keeping with the FCF's decision about the nature of minutes, apart from IFN matters, the relevant section of the minutes would be available on the IFN website. (unless the FCF requested a closed session at any point). Minutes would follow the usual style.

INTER FAITH NETWORK MATTERS SESSION

[Paragraphs 7 to 28]

MAIN SESSION

By agreement, Agenda Item 8 was taken before Agenda Item 7.

Agenda Item 8: Inter Faith Week

Brief update on developments on the Week

29. Canon Barber drew attention to the update on Inter Faith Week that had been provided. Members were invited to note this and to share any plans for the Week.
30. Dr Crabtree said that a number of NFCRBs had begun to share information about Inter Faith Week (IFW). For instance, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland had recently shared details of both IFW and Scottish Interfaith Week. It would be helpful

if NCFRBs could put information about IFW on their social media platforms and in their mailings across the next few weeks. The IFN office had been sending out tailored mailings to different types of bodies, such as hospices/hospitals and sports clubs. There were now many special days and weeks. IFW was, however, very important in the context of development of good inter faith relations and in religious literacy in the nations of the UK. It was an opportunity to ensure more focus on these, including the work of faith communities and how they contributed to society and also on inter faith activity. There had been a large increase in school and workplace involvement. Many schools were using it, in addition to Religious Education routes, to help young people understand local inter faith activity and how faith communities worked together on social issues on the basis of shared values. IFW also helped moved faith and inter faith issues up the agenda of local government and in national and UK Government contexts. It also helped that happen in some other types of organisations, such as youth bodies and sports organisations. FCF members were invited to encourage participation wherever possible.

31. In discussion the following points were made:

- The Buddhist diaspora worldwide was very fragmented. The Buddhist Society had thought about doing something with the diaspora that was resident in England, but it had proven difficult to organise. It was, however, using its Journal during IFW to explore a number of relevant issues, such as conflict and conflict resolution. The Society hoped to do more in the coming years. It was a difficult time and faiths had a role to play, both nationally and internationally.
- In previous years, prior to the pandemic, Leicester Council of Faiths had held an IFW event to which each faith community brought special dishes. The event would be returning this year.
- York Interfaith Group usually organised a number of activities for IFW. This year, this would include libraries organising storytelling about different faiths for young children.
- During IFW The Blackley Centre in Elland would be hosting an exhibition created by Religions for Peace (UK) entitled 'The Dignity of Women – Scriptural Reflections'. There would also be a related event for dialogue together.
- Calderdale Interfaith Council would be holding an IFW faith leaders meeting. It was also holding its annual celebration just after IFW, when it would be renewing its Faith Covenant with Calderdale Council. Sir Stephen Timms MP would be speaking at that event.
- Redbridge Faith Forum would be holding its usual peace walk during IFW. This would include visits to the local synagogue, vihara, church, temple and mosque. This helped people to get to know the places of worship and feel comfortable visiting.
- An IFW conference was going to be held in Southwark for faith leaders to come together to share information and ideas about the environment and cost of living crises and to look for ways to work more closely together.

32. Dr Crabtree said that IFN was working towards holding a brief, informal drop-in event for MPs early in IFW. If there were any MPs that FCF members would particularly like to be invited, members were welcome to let the IFN office know. One member noted that at the beginning of the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham, there had been an inter faith reception, which had proven a very useful event for meeting people of other faiths and meeting politicians.

Discussion of request to national faith leaders for an IFW message linked to religious literacy or other theme

33. Canon Barber said that, as noted, in the past couple of years, the FCF had invited faith community bodies and their leaders to share messages/reflections on social media linked to Inter Faith Week. The Background Note asked whether the FCF wished to do so again and offered a possible draft letter to faith leaders.
34. Dr Crabtree said that the draft letter suggested that faith leaders might wish to offer messages about the importance of religious literacy. This was a theme that had come up strongly and repeatedly across the last couple of years from many FCF members and more broadly. There was a concern that there remained undesirably low awareness of faith communities and of their contribution to society. It was in that context, and also in the context of religious literacy being a theme that had emerged strongly from the early findings of the Independent Faith Engage Review carried out by Mr Colin Bloom, that the theme was being suggested. It was, however, only a suggestion for FCF members to consider. Members might feel another theme was more appropriate.
35. The FCF agreed that an invitation should be issued to faith leaders to share messages/reflections on social media linked to Inter Faith Week, on the basis of the draft outlined.

Action: Invitation to be issued to faith leaders to share messages/reflections on social media linked to Inter Faith Week, on the basis of the draft outlined.

Ms Emma Buckler, Mr Esmond Rosen and Mr Fayyaz Suleman joined the meeting.

Agenda Item 7: Local inter faith organisations – their role and engagement with them by faith communities

36. Canon Barber welcomed Ms Emma Buckler and Mr Fayyaz Suleman from Leicester Council of Faiths and Mr Esmond Rosen of Barnet Multi Faith Forum. He drew attention to the general background information provided about local inter faith activity. He explained that three people would be offering reflections and that there would be an opportunity for questions and comments after they had all spoken. The first of these was IFN's Co-Chair, drawn from the local inter faith constituency. He welcomed Mr Narendra Waghela and explained that he was also an officer (Treasurer) of Leicester Council of Faiths.
37. Mr Narendra Waghela thanked IFN for inviting him to speak to the meeting. This was a general agenda item on the work of local inter faith bodies. However, he would like to offer a few brief reflections on the recent events in Leicester:
 - It had happened shortly before Her Late Majesty The Queen's funeral. It was hard to understand that.
 - Leicester had always been known as a diverse place where people had lived together in a harmonious way, practising their faiths alongside one another.
 - Many festivals were celebrated together in Leicester, including Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Vaisakhi, Passover and Ridvan.
 - People came from abroad to celebrate these festivals in Leicester. The Golden Mile and Diwali celebrations had put Leicester on the world map.

- People often said that they believed in peace, but those beliefs needed to be put into practice so that people could live in harmony and tolerance.
38. Mr Esmond Rosen, President of Barnet Multi Faith Forum (BMFF), thanked IFN for inviting him to speak to the meeting about its work. He said that:
- BMFF was started in 2004 but then restructured by creating an executive body, elected by an AGM, in 2012.
 - Since restructuring, BMFF had turned from a small circle of friends into an effective and dynamic organisation which planned and held events, meetings and cultural activities. This caught the attention of the wider public. It also caught the attention of Barnet Council and the Voluntary Sector'. BMFF worked in partnership with those and with the business sector to organise a 'Unity in the Community' celebration event which attracted over 2,000 people. That provided BMFF with the status and confidence to develop and sign a Faith Covenant with Barnet Council in 2014.
 - The Covenant is a strategic partnership arrangement with the Council, through which BMFF can legitimately call itself the voice of the faith sector and sit alongside colleagues. The pandemic had evidenced the real value of this arrangement.
39. Mr Rosen then showed a video covering some of BMFF's events and activities across the last year. This can be seen at <http://barnetmultifaithforum.org/>. He then offered the following further points:
- BMFF includes all faith communities in membership of IFN.
 - BMFF's main areas of work are education, enhancing understanding and bringing faith communities together to support each other and build healthier and stronger communities. It tackles many issues, for example the energy and cost of living crisis, mental health, violence and abuse against females, human rights, slave trafficking, and Holocaust Memorial Day.
 - Youth engagement is a priority for BMFF. It has appointed a young representative as its Vice-Chair. There is also a funding application in process to help to recreate Barnet Youth Faith forum.
 - Other key areas of work are climate change and the environment. BMFF participates in emergency planning groups and other subgroups to focus on these and other issues.
 - It has a partnership with Middlesex University, in which an Inter Faith Network has been formed. It also works alongside the Barnet Women's Interfaith Network, Nisa Nashim, Mitzvah Day, Black History Month and Barnet Asylum Service.
 - It has a Police Liaison Faith Officer and a Voluntary Sector Faith and Community Officer. The Council's Senior Community Engagement officer sits on its Executive. This strengthens its work.
 - BMFF is a charity which is run by volunteers. It has a very small working budget of £2,000. It could not operate as it does without the support and advice provided by its involvement with the Inter Faith Network for the UK. IFN's Trustees and FCF members are trusted faith practitioners and they give BMFF much needed inspiration, motivation and enthusiasm.
 - BMFF also works alongside the Faith & Belief Forum, FaithAction, the London Boroughs Faith Network, Faiths Forum for London and other groups which are dedicated to ensuring the faith sector is recognised by Government, local authorities and the public as the first group on the scene when tragedies occur and the last to leave to support those in need.

40. Mr Fayyaz Suleman thanked IFN for inviting him to speak to the meeting. He said that it had been very interesting to listen to the presentation about Barnet Multi Faith Forum. There were many similarities with the work of Leicester Council of Faiths (LCoF). He made the following points about the work of LCoF:
- LCoF has been in existence since 1986. It was started initially by a group of individuals from different faith communities meeting at each other's houses and sharing refreshments. It then developed into something more tangible and formal. At the time of the formation, many faith communities played a part, but not every place of worship and faith centre in the city. Nevertheless, there was a platform for people to come together and show mutual understanding and develop friendships.
 - LCoF was for some time supported by Leicester City Council through a contract for a part-time worker to do more in-depth work with faith communities and to support the local authority with advice on faith issues. Over the years it undertook many programmes of work.
 - About 8 or 9 years ago, the local authority funding stopped. It was understood that the Council thought that LCoF played a pivotal role in building tolerance and understanding in Leicester but that funding was no longer needed. The context was in part overall local authority cuts but it was also seen as a political decision.
 - Members took the termination of Council funding as an opportunity to evaluate how LCoF operated, presented its work and connected with local faith communities. When LCoF was set up the model of representation had been, for example, having 4 Hindu representatives, four Muslim representatives, 4 Sikh representatives, and so forth. However, it found that its strength was representation of faith communities and this led to a revision of LCoF's governance. It now has faith organisations directly in membership, across Leicester but also Leicestershire more widely. The LCoF Board is now also representative.
 - LCoF has continued activities without local authority funding. It has played a pivotal role in terms of faith-based needs, for example, in hospital and school meals. It also responded to Far Right protests in Leicester.
 - Most recently LCoF has played a pivotal role during COVID-19. Leicester had the longest lockdown in the UK. LCoF undertook direct work with the local authority and the Resilience Forum to ensure there was a two-way communication mechanism in place. This meant that faith communities and places of worship knew what the guidance was and how to respond and adjust their services accordingly. LCoF also wrote to the then Prime Minister and Health Secretary to emphasise the important role of faith centres and places of worship and to ask for that to be taken into consideration when announcing lockdowns. With the support from the NHS, LCoF put out messaging about complying with guidance and safety. Within two weeks it created 30 videos by 30 faith groups in 15 different languages. These reached out to communities beyond Leicestershire. The videos went viral and drew the attention of NHS England.
 - LCoF does not just look at faith issues. It also looks at issues that relate to people, for example, from ethnic minorities, or newly arrived in the UK. LCoF's membership reflects different ethnic groups as well as faith groups. Faith communities from different diaspora have different needs. People often talk about 'the Hindu community' or 'the Muslim community' but they cannot be treated as one block. There are different groups within each community, often depending on which country, and which part of that country, they have come from.
 - LCoF's website shows its achievements and work. LCoF was born out of friendship and now is more proactive and looks strategically at how things can be

improved. It is currently not funded by any body and is looking at funding opportunities. It would like to continue to ensure that it has solid, representative governance.

41. Mr Suleman then offered some reflections on the recent incidents in Leicester.

- LCoF played an important role in seeking to ensure that the messaging about the incidents was correct and that social media was not used to divide people. It promoted messages of unity. It was in direct communication with the Police, the Chief Constable, the Mayor's office and local politicians.
- What happened was about groups of individuals with particular grievances causing division, which created panic and fear within different communities.
- Leicester's faith communities were united in saying that it was not a faith issue. Rather than being about 'Hindus and Muslims', it was about groups of individuals. The police needed to deal with it firmly and ensure the security of faith communities. There was a need to look at building bridges rather than apportioning blame.
- Sometimes there have been tensions in the world that have had an impact locally. LCoF has always been proactive in issuing statements and showing solidarity at such times. Whatever is done in the name of a faith, that faith should not be stigmatised. Such actions are important to send the right messages to avoid escalation and derision. That was the approach taken this time.
- LCoF knew some of the dynamics and spoke with the police about where they might helpfully have a presence. LCoF had meetings with the Hindu community, the Muslim community and new arrival communities as well. For example, on the second night of the troubles he personally went to a local Hindu mandir near the area where the troubles started. This was to meet with the community and to reassure them that he could offer some support, through his Muslim contacts, with any difficulties they encountered.
- Bodies like LCoF are not the problem, but the solution. Although such bodies recognise the problems early on, they tend to pick up the pieces and spend a lot of time and effort bringing people together and ensuring the right unity messaging. Although it was not members of LCoF causing the issues, they were happy to pick up the pieces in order to show solidarity. LCoF was very active in ensuring that the right steps were taken and avoiding a 'blame game' because of the possible consequences of that. It had many media interviews, including abroad, emphasising that they were focused on the solutions.
- The local authority has announced an independent investigation. The police are looking at what was and was not done properly.
- LCoF is focusing on having dialogue. There may be people from new arrival communities or people from outside Leicester or people with extremist views. It is important to talk with all of them. LCoF has created videos in different languages to try to reach those with grievances. It is a work in progress. There is never going to be a complete solution, but it is possible to drown out negative voices with positive action.
- Local inter faith organisations play an important role in highlighting common values, keeping people united and drowning out voices that seek to divide. The more recognition there is of the value that local inter faith organisations have in society, the more there will be greater impact across the board.

42. Canon Barber thanked Mr Waghela, Mr Rosen and Mr Suleman for their reflections. These had helped the FCF to understand further the importance of multi faith forums working at the local level and some of the challenges they were facing. They

highlighted the need to redouble efforts to live and share the earth equally and peacefully side by side.

43. Dr Crabtree said that these inputs were from two well-established groups, each currently dealing with different patterns of activity and issues around them. They were very helpful examples of the huge importance of this work and also the challenges of resourcing it.

44. Canon Barber invited any questions or comments. In discussion the following points were made. Responses from speakers are in italics.

- The presentations were very helpful in highlighting the work of local inter faith organisations and how they could work for wider society. Their work was much appreciated. How did LCoF feel about the media coverage of recent events?

LCoF found that there was helpful media and unhelpful media. Social media, with its speed and reach, was a big factor in creating more of a problem. Some of the media had spoken with some of the young people involved in the unrest. Other people had picked up that there was a wider agenda driving people to act in certain ways. Some of the outside media coverage, including from abroad, had not been balanced. As it was understood, there had been grievances about police inaction by a group of people who had attacked an individual; then there was racist chanting and the police did not act; and there was another attack and that caused young people to take matters into their own hands. Then a march took place which was supposed to have been a counter march to another march, which had never taken place. That resulted in the disorder that had been widely reported. Some media reflected the context well, that it was a historical issue, rather than a Hindu Muslim issue. Other media focused on the more controversial, divisive messaging. [Fayyaz Suleman]

- Both presentations were very encouraging and refreshing. There were so many issues in these times that caused division. Inter faith groups were in a unique position to focus on what united rather than what divided and to focus on friendship and working together. Ultimately, whether funded or not, those groups were key in making a success of the activities which could have a significant effect in their communities.
- It was very encouraging to hear the presentations. It was important to have networks of relationships to respond well when tensions bubbled up. Had there been any work in Leicester trying to listen to the grievances of the young people involved, who might have been caught up in something that was bigger than them?

He had received personal messages on social media about the fact that a group of young people were meeting together in the local area because someone had been attacked and their brother put a call out to say that he needed help. As Chair of LCoF, he felt it was important to understand. For three nights he met and spoke with young people. There was a stand-off with the police and some initial disorder, prior to the reported disorder. There were some grievances. The police were speaking with the traditional leaders, rather than speaking with the young people who had the grievances. LCoF told them that they should also speak with the young people. The Police took that on board well and responded by doing so. They knew who they were because the young people were issuing videos. LCoF used the faith centres and places of worship to reach out to young people connected with them. Some of the young people were not associated with the faith centres or places of worship, but they were reached through community groups formed around new arrival communities. It was about understanding that

young people in different communities respond differently. LCoF suggested that police speak with them in their mother tongue; and also use cricket as a language because they were passionate about cricket. If a cricketer spoke about being united and peaceful, that was more likely to resonate with young people than all the other work going on. [Fayyaz Suleman]

- It was important to talk to people. Sometimes people just wanted to be really listened to and to be heard.

45. Mr Suleman said that BMFF was doing excellent work, in particular bringing social issues into inter faith activities, and LCoF would be learning from it. Mr Rosen said that LCoF had been doing a wonderful job in responding to the incidents. He wondered whether the withdrawal of funding might perhaps have altered LCoF's capacity to take a preventative approach to the issues that had been raised on social media.
46. Dr Crabtree said that both BMFF and LCoF engaged across a range of different areas. The support, encouragement and resourcing of the important work taken forward by local inter faith groups was a key point. How to pick up advocating for the importance of local inter faith work might be considered when looking at the development of IFN's Strategic Plan.
47. One reason that BMFF had been invited to present particularly was its partnership working with the local Council. As some FCF members would be aware, FaithAction had been encouraging local authorities and faith communities to sign up to a Faith Covenant. These 'covenants' were about principles for productive partnership engagement. While this might not be a fit for every local authority - and some had worked in informal partnership for years – many authorities and faith groups found the concept a useful one.
48. Canon Barber thanked the presenters again for their reflections.

Ms Buckler, Mr Rosen and Mr Suleman left the meeting.

Agenda Item 9: Inter faith engagement of faith communities

49. The following updates on inter faith engagement of faith communities were offered:
 - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) had done some work a few years ago on Antisemitism with the Council of Christians and Jews. It had now started work on a similar type of resource on Islamophobia with the Christian Muslim Forum. CTBI was aware that a lot of its focus on inter faith matters had to date been on Abrahamic faiths. It was now also looking to broaden that, beginning with some work around Christian-Sikh relations. In light of its ongoing work, it would like to invite Canon Barber to one of the meetings of the Churches' Forum for Interreligious Relations. The FCF contact would be in touch with Canon Barber about that through the IFN office.
 - The previous week, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) had held a meeting at Nottingham Cathedral, hosted by the Catholic Bishop of Nottingham, Bishop Patrick McKinney. 10 Thai Buddhist monks had taken part. It had been a very good event and there was an article on the CBCEW website about it. CBCEW was also updating the interreligious content on its website.

- A Hindu member said that they had been considerably involved in the incidents in Leicester issue. There were various elements that could be linked to sports hooliganism which had escalated into something related to faith. It had been, and continued to be, a trying time. It was difficult to strike a balance between defending the community and not fanning the flames. The local police, temple heads and youth groups were all working together. It was disappointing that the Mayor of Leicester had blamed the Hindu community in a media interview on Channel 4. It was not like that. There were external forces from other parts of the UK. The speaker had been under attack on social media for the approach taken. Local inter faith organisations had done a good job in containing the matter and preventing it spreading more widely. *Canon Barber said that he recognised that the situation was very difficult. It all underlined the need to focus on what united people, rather than on what divided people. Dr Crabtree said that figures in leadership roles in several communities had found themselves in the crossfire in the media. This was a broader issue for faith communities. It was becoming a more challenging time to be a leader. This was a key issue. The IFN office had often heard from people in the last month who had concerns about being in the eye of social media storms. Every time there was an impact of particular incidents, those in leadership roles were in the firing line personally and through their organisations. The FCF could come back to looking at the social media impacts issue at a future meeting perhaps.*
- The Treasurer and Chair of LCoF were, respectively, Hindu and Muslim. They had therefore had to be careful in how they tackled the issues. They had tried to contain it within Leicestershire. [Note: This comment was made by Mr Waghela who, as noted earlier in the minutes, is the Treasurer of LCoF as well as Co-Chair of IFN drawn from the Local Inter Faith Organisation category of membership].

Agenda Item 10: Other issues of current interest and concern

50. Canon Barber reminded members that this Agenda Item offered an opportunity to raise current issues of interest or concern to faith communities in the UK. Members had been asked to notify issues in advance. None had been notified.

Close of meeting

51. Canon Barber said that the date for the next FCF meeting would be circulated in due course. A question was raised about whether there were any plans for in-person FCF meetings in future. Dr Crabtree said that IFN's funding was somewhat lower this year and based on a budget which included only a limited number of in-person meetings. However, it would be possible to look at holding the next FCF meeting in person. A hybrid meeting was also possible. However, hybrid meetings could be hard to run and difficult to get engagement. They could also sometimes lead to a feeling of first and second class engagement. For example, those who met in person were able to meet informally in the margins of the meeting but the same option was not easily available for people on line. Canon Barber said that IFN had held an in-person Board meeting for the first time a few weeks previously and it had been good to do so.
52. An FCF member who was attending a meeting for the first time thanked all those involved. It had been a focused and clear meeting with items very relevant to what united rather than divided communities.

53. Canon Barber thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions; and also the Executive Director and staff team for their work to support the FCF throughout the year.

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