



Minutes of the Churches Together meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2016

1. Andrew welcomed us and read from Hebrews 10 which talks about perseverance in the faith and helping and encouraging one another in love.
2. Apologies: Jenny Troll, Mallie Sharpe, Johnathon Ford, Paul Doswell, Adrian Mann, Jill Seggar.  
  
Present: Richard and Joyce Norburn, Geoff Birkby, Andrew Soman (Chair), Regina Collender, Claire Rose, Rosemary Clare, Rev Elaine Colechin, Rev. Malcolm Rogers, Rev. Nick Alexander, Irene Hendley, Caroline Baker, Howard Scott, Eilish Heath, David Wakeford, Rev Robert Green, Martin Tilley, Heather Corbell, Gill Shaw, Marion Shaw, Andrew Caldecott, Richard Stephens, Mary Soman, Beth Soman, Elaine Green.
3. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting of 25/1/16 were proposed Claire Rose, seconded by Caroline Baker, passed nem. com, and signed by the Chair, Andrew Soman.
4. Matters Arising: Marion Shaw pointed out that she is the Historic Churches Trust rep. and not the Cathedral rep.
5. Syrian Refugee Update: Robert Green and Nick Alexander recently saw MP, Jo Churchill about the refugee crisis. No refugees have been allocated to Bury: all have gone to Ipswich. Nick and Robert thought that Bury could accommodate some. Jo expressed praise for the things going on in Bury like the Drop in Centre and Storehouse. Jo's view was that the present crisis would not go away and Bury would be asked in the future to take refugees and to prepare for the possibility.  
Nick took the opportunity to meet with 'Fresh Beginnings' in Ipswich who work with refugees. Also a cross denominational group called 'For Refugees' who seek foster parents among other things. They produce welcome boxes for refugees. Maybe we could invite them to come to a Churches Together event. Pass your name to Nick Alexander if you are interested in helping. Caroline told us that this is funded by the Home Office and we need to try to make a start soon to take advantage of any funding.
6. Treasurer's Report: 24 churches have now joined us. The income for the last year was £1,808 and expenditure was £2,123. The present balance is £3,378. Over a £1,400 was collected at the Cathedral on Good Friday. This will go towards possible Good Friday events next year. This will not appear in this year's accounts but next year's.
7. Malcolm told us the March of Witness did not take place because it was too late to organize road closures after the Passion Play was cancelled. We need to apply at least 4 months in advance for road closures for next year. It is possible that Mark Cordell of 'Bid for Bury' could help. The churches who walked from their places of worship and converged on the Cathedral made the event well worthwhile. 550 people were recorded as attending. Thanks to Robert Green, Malcolm Rogers and Phillip Banks for organizing it and for the Salvation Army Band for playing in the Abbey Garden were expressed from the meeting. Some ideas were offered for consideration for next year. A group of people is needed to start planning as soon as possible. Matt Rushby will be contacted to see what his ideas are for young people.
8. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: This takes place between 22<sup>nd</sup>– 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2017. Rev Carl Moorhouse and will be speaking at Southgate church on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>.
9. Ecumenical study groups start at All Saints on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm. They are all stand alone. 7pm for drinks and cake.

- 10 . Exchange of greetings: Geoff Birkby told us that this is the 20<sup>th</sup> year for exchange of greetings. Experiencing another churches form of worship is valuable. Geoff will try to encourage more churches to take part. Claire Rose volunteered to help. Geoff proposed that 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent might be better than the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday. Ministers are often too busy to organise people to go so another contact would be preferable.

The possible exchange of preachers during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January: Malcolm Rogers and Robert Green to mention this at the next Minister's Lunch. Exchange of Advent greetings also to be mentioned.

- 11 . Brief Reports: Irene Hendley told us that Just Traid had a good Fair Trade fortnight.
- 12 . Howard Scott talked about Christian Aid. The Kenyan project went very well last year. The present appeal is to raise £4,000 by 2018 for Ethiopia. It is a fast growing African country but has a high infant mortality rate. Christian Aid aims to teach about sexual health and contraception. It also involves teaching women the basics of reading etc. The EU are adding £5 to every £1 raised. People are invited to raise money in any way they feel is appropriate.  
The Christian Aid service this year is at Christ Church, Moreton Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> May. Different ideas for raising money during the week are being considered because door to door collections might become more difficult. Anyone who has a good idea that has worked in the past should pass it on to Howard.
- 13 . Suffolk Historic Churches Trust: Marion Shaw told us about the Historic Churches Trust. It covers all denominations and was started in 1973 because villages churches, particularly, were falling into disrepair. The Duke of Grafton started it and the Cycle Ride was started in the 80's. This has now spread through 40 counties on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in September. Any church can apply to upgrade their church within certain parameters. Apart from one part-time secretary all the members of the trust are volunteers. £160,000 has been distributed in the last year.
- 14 . Prayer Breakfast: Thanks to the organizers of the last one at St. Edmunds. The next one is at Trinity Methodist on 25<sup>th</sup> June. We are looking for a volunteer church for the one after. Horringer might be a possibility. URC is happy to hold one but it will have to be in the school holidays.
- 15 . The next Come Together is on 18<sup>th</sup> June at St Mary's at 7.00pm. Andrew encouraged anyone who has not been before to come and try it.
- 16 . European Referendum: Andrew has received an email from Bury Stronger in Europe asking if CT is able to organize an event to hear both sides of the argument. The problem is being even handed and not allowing Party interests to take over. We decided to reject to offer.
- 17 . On 22<sup>nd</sup> April there is an Any Questions at the Cathedral at 7.45pm. Caroline Baker is the contact.
- 18 . The Drop in Centre is planning to be open on a second day from June. It will mean that more volunteers will be needed.
- 19 . Who Cares: Robert Green talked about this initiative, where we will be trying to find out where people in our communities are hurting the most. It will be a one sentence survey asking the question "What hurts the most?" In response to the findings of the survey churches will then respond in different ways to show that God cares and the church cares also. The first step is a church leaders meeting at 12.30pm on 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Vineyard Centre. This initiative is hoping to take place in West Suffolk between April and September, 2017.
- 20 . AGM: The Churches Together AGM is at the Vineyard Centre on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July. A bring and share supper starts at 7pm and the meeting at 7.30pm.
- 21 . AOB [a] United Nations Peace Day is on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September. The schools will be involved

[b] CVM: Andrew Caldecott will try to visit individual churches to promote Christian Vision for Men. He will be focusing particularly on suicides. Large numbers of men jump off Orwell bridge or find other ways to commit

suicide. CVM is involved in lots of positive actions. Andrew will send out more information via the website, [cvm.org.uk](http://cvm.org.uk).

[c] Andrew Caldecott told us about the Ministries Fair at the Cathedral on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. There will be numerous stands promoting the various ministries that are taking place. e.g. Town Pastors, ordained and lay ministry, Church Army, children and youth ministries etc.

[d] On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2017, all churches will be invited to join in Abbey Gardens as part of Midsummer 17. This will involve having a stand or pop-up tent to show what ministries or activities they are involved in. This will be a community event – a “Shop window” for churches and other voluntary organisations to be involved in.

[e] Call for Prayer: an initiative from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York to promote prayer across the country and focusing on ‘Thy Kingdom Come’. It takes place between 8<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> May. There will be 24/7 prayer days in which every Christian is invited to join in. The week of prayer will culminate in ‘Beacon events’ around the country over Pentecost weekend, where people will pray for the renewal of the Holy Spirit and the confidence to share their faith. More at [thykingdom.co.uk](http://thykingdom.co.uk)

The meeting culminated with 5 minutes of prayer about the concerns raised during the meeting.