



Minutes of the Churches Together AGM held on Monday 11 July, 2016 at 7.30 pm

Those present:

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| Richard Norburn (All Saints) | Joyce Norburn (All Saints) | Claire Rose (All Saints) |
| Mark Lupton (Vineyard) | Carol Lupton (Vineyard) | Rosemary Clare (Garland St) |
| Clare Mellor (Trinity) | Laurence Smith (St Marys) | Robin Bennett (Quakers) |
| Mary Soman (Vineyard) | Mary Elliott (NBT & Lark Valley Bene) | Elizabeth Elliott (Cathedral) |
| Geoffrey Birkby (Cathedral) | Mallie Sharpe (St Peters) | David Theobald (Vineyard) |
| Marion Shaw (Suff Hist Churches Trust) | Danyelle Catherall (Gatehouse) | Elaine Channen (Gatehouse) |
| Andrew Caldecott (CVM/HC3) | Regina Collander (St Edmunds) | |
| Mark Haworth (NBT/Lark Valley Bene) | Andrew Soman (Vineyard) | Jenny Troll (St Marys) |

- Welcome** – Andrew welcomed us to the meeting

Reading – Andrew read from 1 Peter 2 v9 – God choosing us as his people and what a privilege that is.

Prayer – Andrew prayed
- Apologies:**

Malcolm Rogers (St Marys), David and Betty Wakeford (Trinity), Robert Green (Garland Street) Jonathan Ford and Gill Shaw (Christ Church), Adrian Mann (NBT/BECT), Debbie Borda (Trinity), Jill Segger (Quakers), Irene Hendley (Just Traid), Paul Doswell (Salvation Army), Nick Alexander (St Peters), Eilish Heath ((St Edmunds), Caroline Baker (Cathedral), Peter Gibson (Southgate), Chris Trendal (Cathedral), Matt Rushby (BCY), Bernard Plume (HC3), Gerda Tooley (Southgate)
- Minutes of last meeting (AGM) of 11 April 2016** - approved and signed by the chair, Andrew Soman, after being proposed by Claire Rose and seconded by Richard Norburn.
- Matters Arising:**

1) Elaine Green (Quakers) needs to be added to those attending the last meeting.
- Bury Dementia Action Alliance Group – Elaine Channen**

Elaine explained that this is a new project in Bury St Edmunds at Gatehouse Charity. It has been found that there is a big gap of where to source information about dementia. The Alliance Group is a one stop shop working with outside agencies under one roof, eg Age UK. People caring for dementia people find they reach a crisis point and the dementia person then ends up in residential care. The Group help people to fill in forms, provide carer support groups, and a luncheon club for early diagnosis people. The aim is to make Bury a dementia friendly town and they are approaching businesses to help them understand the condition.

If anyone wants to know any more information please contact the group: dementiahub@gatehouse.org.uk or tel no 01284 754967.
- Finance Report** – Claire Rose gave her report:

Claire gave out copies of the accounts. There was a loss of £320 during the course of the year, leaving total assets of £3362. She advised that £1381.74 was collected at this year's Good Friday service. £300 had been put towards the Passion Play which did not happen so in all £1600 plus in total for Good Friday for next year.

Restricted Fund-Passion for Life – monies previously put aside for evangelistic events in the town. eg “On the Move”-Robert Green. These monies could possibly be used in the future for similar events. (For Who Cares?)

Claire does not think we need to increase the subs this year and proposed that we keep the same amount. There is a query as to whether the sub is either from the church or the benefice. Decided that it should be benefice. All agreed that subs should remain as they are.

Although no Passion Play took place in 2016 and is not planned for the foreseeable future approximately £2500 would be needed to plan for a Passion Play. Claire Rose advised that Jonathan Ford felt that churches should make donations towards this as there is then more of a commitment by them. The Council would most probably make a charge for road closures as other organisations are charged.

Claire advised that a Churches Together Rep is needed for Southgate Church Trustees.

Mary Soman proposed the accounts as they stand, and this was seconded.

Election of Officers

Andrew advised that he was prepared to stand for another year. Everyone present were happy that the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary should continue.

Mary Soman proposed and Richard Norburn seconded.

Clare offered a vote of thanks to the three officers.

7. **Good Friday 2017**

At present in touch with the Arc but the response is not encouraging. The aim would be to have a walk of witness after a Cathedral service to walk up to the Arc and then back down again. We are unable to book with the Arc until January for Easter and the road closures have to be requested by December. There is a planning meeting in two weeks' time to consider other options also. Claire Mellor suggested we go ahead with requesting road closures. The march brings people into the town.

8. **Referendum**

Andrew spoke of the time of great uncertainty at present but as Christians we have hope and we need to work together and show our unity.

9. **Share and Study Groups – Thanks**

Rosemary Clare advised that the sessions went very well and that on average 28 people attended each session and nine different churches were represented. David and Rosemary felt that they needed “new blood” taking the groups. They have given book tokens to each speaker and have a £3.18 surplus. David asked if £35 could come from Churches Together for a donation to All Saints Church. Andrew proposed that this donation is made and it was seconded. Andrew thanked Rosemary and David for their work on this.

10. **Brief Reports**

1) Just Traid – Irene Hendley sent in a report:

“Just Traid is ‘soldering on’!

We have been having a few lean weeks lately - not many shop sales and numbers down in our Café. I would therefore like to encourage you all to try to come and visit us. You may be only able to change one item of groceries that you usually buy, for an equivalent Fair Trade item but, ‘Every little helps’ as one of our supermarkets advertises! In this case you would be helping on a much wider scale than they can!

If you come down to our Café, again you would be helping, because our cake makers use as many Fair Trade ingredients as possible in the cakes they make for us.

We also have our secluded Courtyard with tables outside. As one customer said recently - 'Tables to sit at that are not on the road side.'

We are also looking for Volunteers to help in our Café or in the shop. We have a two shift system - Mornings or Afternoons. We are open Tuesday through to Saturday from 10am. until 4pm. We are still getting new Volunteers but, we are also losing some due to grandchildren commitments or illness either personal or family. Some of our Volunteers commit to just one or two shifts per month, others are able to do every week. Please take this message back to your churches for me - Thank you.

If anyone knows of someone who would be willing to have a Stall at their church - please ask them to get in touch. This is already happening in some of the local churches - Bury, Stowmarket, Cockfield, Lavenham and Thetford to name some.

- 2) Christian Aid – No-one present to give report
- 3) BECT – No-one present to give report

11. **David Theobald – Gideons**

David advised that the Gideons give out bibles in Suffolk. 80 million bibles are distributed throughout the world. There is a branch of the Gideons in West Suffolk and 320 bibles have been presented to West Suffolk College. They are also given to the Armed forces and the Police. Next year hopefully women are to be included in the organisation. David advised that there is now a Gideons Bible App which includes daily bible notes. There is a new initiative to give out bibles in schools – in all middle schools and a lot of upper schools in West Suffolk. He feels they need “new blood” in the organisation. Mark Haworth said he was concerned that the Gideons are going into schools when the Churches are already going into them. He thought it would be a good idea if the churches and the Gideons liaised together.

12. **Drop In update**

Robert Green has advised that they are now doing Tuesdays as well as Fridays. They have 20+ on Tuesdays and 30+ on many Fridays. They have a good team of volunteers but further volunteers are needed. Finance assistance is good. He feels God’s blessing is on this work.

13. **Who Cares 2017**

A small team has been formed for the Who Cares initiative. Event to be held on 25 February at St Marys Church. The initiative to run from August – mid-November and a responding phase from February to Easter 2018.

14. **Prayer Breakfasts:**

Andrew gave thanks to David Wakeford, Debbie Borda and the team from Trinity Methodist for arranging the latest Prayer Breakfast so well. The next Prayer Breakfast is on Sat 17th September from 8.00 to 10.00 am and will be hosted by West Suffolk Vineyard Church at the Vineyard Centre. (Arranged since the AGM.) A venue is needed for November. Andrew encouraged us to come along. There was a discussion about communications with the churches. Claire has the Treasurers’ names of the benefices and will ask them for representatives of each benefice.

15. **Come Together**

Saturday 18 June – numbers were down this year. However, positive reports were received from many who attended. A Come Together prayer event is to be held on 14 October at Christ Church, 7 for 7.30 pm. Andrew encouraged us to attend. Planning is underway for a summer Come Together event next year.

16. **United Nations Peace Day – 21/9/16**

Clare Mellor said that she had permissions for the Bury St Edmunds Chain of Hope. There will be small events and a main event on Sunday 25 September at 12.30 pm – linking the two war memorials with a chain of people. She needs 350 people each

way for this chain. On Wednesday 21 September they will hand out leaflets at Moyses Hall, Abbeygate Street and Angel Hill. West Suffolk College are holding a dance on the Wednesday and the media students are doing a project on the Sunday. She has the support of the Mayor and Council. They are also on facebook. It is an inter faith event and for everybody. Clare handed out some posters/leaflets.

17. **Advent Greetings**

To be held on 4 December this year.

18. **Christmas Fayre – service**

Churches Together service to be held on 27 November. Council to advise time of service. Need a group to head this up – usually the newest minister in the area speaks.

19. **Date of next Committee meeting:**

Monday 10 October at Just Traid Café at 7.30 pm.

20. **A.O.B:**

1) **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** – 22-28 January. Service on 22 January at Southgate Church at 6.30pm

Prayer lunches:

Monday – St Marys (TBC)

Tuesday – Garland Street (TBC)

Wednesday – Trinity Methodist

Thursday – St Edmunds

Friday –

Saturday – St Johns

2) **Prayer and Praise Sheet** – Jenny is not receiving many items for the monthly sheet. Please send her notices of events and prayer and praise items.

3) **Art Collection** – Mark advised that the Methodist Art Collection event is now being held in 2018 from 18 June to the end of July– a mission and outreach event. There are 50/60 paintings focussed on Jesus. Trying to involve secondary schools. To be held at Trinity Methodist and the Cathedral. Need help with stewards. £5000 needed - ? help from Churches Together.

21. **Closing Prayer**

Laurence Smith prayed a closing prayer.

Meeting ended at 9.30 pm.