



## MINUTES OF CHURCHES TOGETHER MEETING

MONDAY 3RD FEBRUARY 2020

### TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH BURY ST EDMUNDS AT 7.30 PM

**Present:** Elaine Green (Quakers) Helen Moore (Southgate Church) Regina Collender, Eilish Heath, Anna Parminter, Claire Lamont, Fr David Bagstaff (all St Edmund's Church) Jennie and Brian Clarke (Open the Book) Betty and David Wakeford, Mary Banham, Catrin Divers and M Fenn (all Trinity Methodist Church) Pam Pitts (Cathedral) Rosemary Clare (Garland St Baptist Church) Howard Scott ( Christchurch and Christian Aid) Will Farrant, Julie Farrant, Sharon Steven (all Whepstead Baptist Church) Heather Corbell (Horringer Benefice) Pauline Radley (St Leonard's Church, Horringer) Ian Howells (WSHT) Andrew Soman (Westley C.C.) Kevin Bullock (West Road Church) Andrew Caldicott (CVM/Christchurch)

- 1. Prayer** Heather C welcomed everyone, read from Matt 11: 16 - 19 and led the meeting in prayer.
- 2. Apologies** - were received from Claire Rose, Gerda Tooley , The Salvation Army, The United Reformed Church, and Bury Christian Youth.
- 3/4 The Minutes** of the previous meeting of 7th October 2019 had already been circulated and as there were no amendments Andrew S proposed that they be accepted as an accurate account, and this was seconded by Pam P and signed by Heather C.
- 5. The Finance Report** was given by Elaine G. Elaine offered a summary of the changes in the accounts, pointing out the large personal donation to the Summer Event and the expenses incurred for that event. She is exploring Gift Aid options but there are difficulties as Gift Aid can only be claimed by individuals, which means that monies raised from collections are not accepted.
- 6. CT Website** - Nic Wright looks after the CT website but was not able to attend the meeting. Instead he sent a report which Heather C read. Heather also circulated the list and details of affiliated churches, asking the churches to check the information there and contact Nic if it needs updating. He would like to update the whole website but as it is hosted by the national CT website he is limited as to what can be changed. Any ideas would be very welcome, please.
- 7. Google Group** - this is run by Claire R, and Heather C encouraged all members to update their details, if and when they have a change of email address.

**8. Facebook** - discussions are continuing and more information should be available at the April meeting.

**9. Christ Church, Moreton Hall** - Jonathon F is hoping to reinvigorate the CCMH support group as the population is expanding and it is expected to be between 10,000 - 15,000 in the future. The group would meet not less than twice a year and a chair would need to be nominated by the Chair of CT, with volunteers from different churches. Regina C wondered how JF sees RC involvement, as far as she is aware a RC Mass has not been celebrated there.

Ian H asked if a constitution would be available for volunteers, Heather said certainly it would.

**10. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** - Heather C said that the numbers who attended the lunchtime prayer sessions were very encouraging, with numbers being around 35 on all days and the Sunday evening service at St Mary's was also well attended with a very generous offering.

#### **11. Reports:**

(i) **Town Pastors** - Helen M spoke of her experience of 'shadowing' the town pastors for a night. She found it a moving and life-giving experience, encountering young people in difficulties, drug taking and drunkenness being common. It was inspiring to see how valued and respected the pastors were by both venues and people on the streets. There are 30 churches represented who are involved in the different ministries, praying, offering help and support to those who need it, and being a friendly presence in the town at night. Jo Copsey invited church leaders to come and 'shadow' the town pastors.

(ii) **'Pause for Hope'** - Heather C spoke of the plan to set up a cancer support group to pray for sufferers and their families, and for the medical staff. It is hoped that an annual united service might be arranged.

(iii) **'Open the Book'** - Brian Clarke spoke about Open the Book. There are about 100 volunteers and they bring 60 Bible stories into about 20 primary schools in Bury St Edmunds. These are very well received by both pupils and teachers, but more volunteers are needed. Most of the volunteers are retired people, but more people are needed to carry on this valuable work.

#### **12. Forward Events:**

(i) **Prayer Breakfast** - The Spring Prayer Breakfast will be on Saturday 21st March at Whepstead Baptist Church. Breakfast will be from 8.15 am, finishing about 9.45 am. Prayer will focus on the Good Friday service and Walk of Witness, and the short service in the town centre. Hopefully people can share transport for the Prayer Breakfast.

(11) **Good Friday** - The Good Friday Walk of Witness on 10th April will begin with the united service at the Cathedral followed by the Walk of Witness through the town to the Market Square, where there will be bible readings, school choir organised by Hannah M, Heather will also be inviting adult singers to sing, and prayers will be offered on the stage. Robert Green will give a concluding comment and prayer. Hot cross buns will be served in Garland St Baptist Church after the event. Regina C asked that those carrying the cross should walk slowly and Andrew C assured everyone that it is planned that everyone will gather on the Angel Hill before commencing the walk up Abbeygate St. He assured the meeting that all details of the Walk are in hand and asked for volunteers to help with stewarding along the route.

(iii) **Abbey Gardens Summer Celebration** - Heather C spoke about this event which will take place on June 28th between 1.00 pm and - 5.00pm concluding with a Songs of Praise. It is 1000 years since the Abbey was founded in Bury St Edmunds and it is hoped to follow the same pattern as last year, remembering the other celebrations taking place within the town, and that it is a celebration for all Christians not just one denomination. Hannah M will again organise music (schools and church bands) and Andrew S said a choir would be very important for the Songs of Praise..

**Date of next meeting** - the next CT meeting will be at West Road Church on 27th April at 7.30 pm.

#### **A.O.B.**

Andrew C spoke about the plans for a Men's Shed - Community Workshop. For plans to progress a site for sheds needs to be found and he needs to set up administration to organise this project. He made an appeal for volunteers to help.

Pam P outlined the 'Coming Together' events and handed out a leaflet which listed all the events and activities. This is to be up-dated in May.

Kevin B informed the meeting of an initiative from the senior leader, David Oakley, at West Road Church. They are focusing a prayer group on drug addiction and alcohol abuse and the county lines drugs problem in the area.

Heather C had a message concerning Revd Mary Elliot, a past chair of CT who is gravely ill and asked for our prayers for her recovery.

**13. Closing Prayers.** The meeting closed with prayers from David W, Andrew S, and Fr David B for all the projects that are taking place, and are planned, and for all those involved in the different churches.

Meeting closed at 9.25.pm.

EH / HC.