



**Minutes of Churches Together meeting
Monday 26th September 2022 at the Salvation Army Hall**

Present

Heather Corbell (Horringer benefice), Helen Moore (Southgate), Elaine Green (Quakers), Sharon Steven (Whepstead Baptist), Paul Doswell, Paula Ashman, Robert Mark (Salvation Army), Pam Pitts (Cathedral), Martin Tilley (U.R.C.) David & Betty Wakeford (Trinity), Andy Miller (LVNB benefice), Andy Williams (St. Peter's), Claire Rose (LVNB benefice), Daniel Robson (Garland St. Baptist), David Sutherland (Forge Community Church), Gerda Tooley, Mike Simm (Southgate), David Bagstaff (St. Edmund's RC), Regina Collender, Nicola Trask, Eilish Heath, Anna Parmiter, Waiser Chenyika, Phyllis McGonsa, Alison Flath (St. Edmund's RC), Ian Featherstone and Andrew Soman (Bridge Community Church), Sally McDermott (West Suffolk Vineyard), Gavin Moss (Bury Christian Youth), Margaret Steavenson (LVNB benefice). Robert Green (Bury Drop-In Centre)

Welcome: Heather welcomed everyone to the meeting, gave a reading (Eph.2 19-22), and prayed.

Apologies: P. Lloyd Jones, Val Gagen, Philip Banks, Rosemary Clare, Max Osborne, Catrin Diverres, Jason Vinyard, Richard Shone (7th Day Adventists), Trissa Orange, Andrew Caldecott, Thomas Mundell.

The Minutes of the last meeting were received and signed.

Matters arising: None

Chair's Annual Report: Heather thanked everyone for all the kindness shown during her illness, especially to Helen. Also, thanks went to the Cathedral for hosting the annual Advent Service. The Service held to start the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January expressed the main point of unity. The Good Friday Walk of Witness was successful, as were the Study and Share groups. The Summer Celebration in the Abbey Gardens went well, though Heather felt it had not yet reached its potential. Finally, she considered the Chairing of Churches Together to be an immense privilege, and she had greatly enjoyed the Christian Fellowship found in all the churches.

AGM Election:

After more than 28 days' statutory notice the following election took place:
(with no more than 2 votes per represented church)

The following Churches Together Officers were elected unanimously:

Interim Acting Chair - Helen Moore

[sending out information, + 'What's On & Prayer sheet , Week of Prayer in Jan. - Heather,]

Vice Chair - Helen Moore

Minutes Secretary - Margaret Steavenson

Treasurer - Elaine Green

Events assistant - Andrew Caldecott

Independent Examiner - Linda Andrews

Ex-officio: Website manager - Nic Wright

Google group manager - Claire Rose

Thanks were unanimously and wholeheartedly given by the meeting to Heather for her 5 years of Chairmanship. Helen expressed the hope that the work of witness would go ahead under a new Chair.

Financial Report: Elaine had circulated the Treasurer's Report. She noted a considerable deficit for 2022, in contrast to previous years. Much discussion took place about the financing of the Summer Event in future, as it was this event that was responsible for the deficit. David Sutherland pointed out that some churches had a great deal of money buried in their accounts. It was decided that Mike Simm would help Helen to work together on a letter to the member churches to explain the situation.

Other points made were that supermarkets usually supported community work, but would not be best for such an approach, as they are barred from specifically faith events.

Elaine said that the insurance premium had now been halved, owing to a previous error by the company. The question of payment for all the Jubilee crosses was raised, and Heather would investigate this, with others.

Warm Churches: Martin Tilley had asked that this initiative be considered. As a result the following provisional timetable for a warm church to be available + drinks for those in need was drawn up:

Southgate Church Centre – Monday morning

Bridge Church – Tuesday

St. John's, Southgate and URC – Wednesday

Bridge Church – Friday ?

Accommodation might also be available in the Cathedral.

It was decided that it would be impracticable to put in an application by CT by 30th September for a contribution from the Community Chest (as mentioned by Dean Joe Hawes recently), but individual churches might wish to apply. The Parish Councils were "working on it".

Bury Drop-in: Robert Green gave some of the history of the centre, which opened in 2015. It now had 90 registered guests, and 12 volunteers to provide services to them, and offer friendship. It is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11-1.30 for meals, but it is possible for people to apply for assistance on other days. Robert appealed for second-hand mobile phones and bikes.

Events:

The last Sunday in June 2023 has been booked for the Summer Event in the Abbey Gardens, as well as the stage equipment.

‘Relevance’: This is a Youth Night Worship Event, which will restart at the Vineyard Centre on 7th October – 7.30.pm.

Exchange of Greetings: Claire said there had been a good response to a CT invitation to take this up again, and 14 Churches are now involved.

Prayer Breakfast: Helen has this in hand

Christmas Event: It was planned to hold this on Nov.17th, on the night of the Christmas Lights switch-on. Further details soon.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 15th-21st. January, will be launched on 15th January 2023 with a united service at 6.30 pm at Bridge Church, West Road. Daily lunch-time prayers from 12.30-1.30 will be held at the following locations: Mon. St. Mary’s; Tues. Garland St. Baptist; Wed. Trinity; Thurs. St. Edmund’s Fri. U.R.C. Sat. St. John’s
Heather will send out guidance for this as required.

Any Other Business: Heather reported that Debbie Borda had been grateful for C.T.’s good wishes, and prayers.

Helen and Elaine presented Heather with Card, flowers and wine, and Sharon prayed

for her, as it was her last meeting as Chair.

Date of next meeting: Monday 30th January 2023 at St Edmund’s Crypt at 7.30.pm.

Closing Prayers: Heather and Paula prayed.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

MS / HC.