

Minutes of Churches Together meeting Monday 24th April 2023 at the Salvation Army Hall

Present

Helen Moore (Chair), Andrew Caldecott (Christ Church, Moreton Hall), Elaine Green (Quakers), Julie Farrant, Sharon Steven (Whepstead Baptist), David Sutherland (Forge Community Church), Heather Corbell (Horringer), Regina Collender, Mark Shakespeare, Eilish Heath, Louise Bellerby, Walter Chenyika, Sheila Rush (all St. Edmund's RC), Pam Pitts (Cathedral), Paul Doswell, Paula Ashman and Robert Mark (Salvation Army), David & Betty Wakeford (Trinity Methodist), Gerda Tooley (Southgate), Sally McDermott (West Suffolk Vineyard Church), Rosie Perham, Philip Lloyd-Jones, Andy Williams (St. Peter's), Rosemary Clare (Garland St. Baptist), Andy Miller (NBLVT), Kevin Bullock (Bridge Community Church), Martin Tilley (URC), Margaret Steavenson (Cathedral and NBLVT) - Minutes

Welcome: Helen welcomed everyone to the meeting and read from Ephesians 1. Individual prayers were invited. She thanked the Salvation Army for showing Simon's video of the Walk of Witness to those present.

Apologies: Claire Rose, Andrew & Mary Soman, Val Gagen, Gavin Walter, David Bagstaff, Katrin Diverres, Peter Sebbage, Ali Miller

Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record, with the amendment that the "warm room" in Oddfellows Hall is NOT recognised as a CT place.

Chair's Report

Helen said she, Andrew Caldecott and Elaine Green had continued working as the management team in the absence of a new chair. She reported as follows:

We had a successful prayer morning at Bridge, thanks to Andrew and Mary Soman. We had 15 people attend, and others had sent apologies. It was an uplifting and encouraging time of prayer and worship.

Walk of Witness. We had 50+ active participants from 10 churches, that really is Churches Together. Thanks to all. We highlight the voluntary contribution of the Rickshaw riders, who transported several people up the hill and into the Market Square. Specific thanks must go to Andrew C. he does so much that is unseen but so important and this year he made sure we had excellent press coverage, 2 radio slots as well as Look East and BFP. Thanks also to Simon Ladd, not only did he give an excellent talk, he designed our wonderful posters and made them available as a Powerpoint slide to all churches, and then afterwards he has made and circulated a video and many photos. He was also a great encouragement throughout. Generally, we have received positive feedback. One issue raised was the lack of any disabled spaces or a designated seating area. We apologise that this had not been provided and we will make sure this is in place for 2024.

Heather suggested that in future more publicity be given in village newsletters, and Andrew thought a press officer might be useful. The sound system needs to be improved. Terry Stark (Cathedral Warden) had provided notes for guidance when future Walks of Witness are being organised which involve the Cathedral.

On a serious note, IF 2024 brings a WOW and Summer event, it is very important that we ensure there are 2 organising groups. It is too much for one person, we acknowledge of all Heather did in past years, but it is unreasonable of us to assume one person can take responsibility for 2 large scale events.

'Warm Rooms': St. Peter's now had a 'Community Space' in place of their Warm Room, St George's (? Update to come), St Mary's had an 'Open Kitchen' now, but the Cathedral's Warm Room was no longer available.

'Thought for the Weekend' in the Bury Free Press. There was discussion as to whether a link to this should be put on the CT website, or whether this would undermine the partnership we had with the newspaper. It was decided that Peter Sebbage should discuss this with Graham Turner at the BFP. It was important that due credit should be given to the BFP.

Financial report

Elaine had circulated a Treasurer's Report and an Accounts Summary for year end 2022/23 as well as for this meeting (24.4.23). As at 31.3.23 there had been a deficit of £1,308, however during the Walk of Witness on Good Friday £1,373 had been collected! It was proposed by Heather Corbell and seconded by Regina Collender that the accounts be now be passed to the Examiner Elaine proposed an increase of 10% in subs for 2024 but this would be further discussed at the next meeting.

Thanks were expressed to Elaine and Andrew.

New Officers: Helen suggested that current office-holders might be 'shadowed' by those interested in taking over their post. It was also proposed that efforts might be made to seek out people in various churches when the 'Exchange of Greetings' is held.

Study and Share: Tuesdays/Wednesdays in June were suggested, on the subject of unity.

Prayer Morning: 8.30am for 9am on Sat. 10th June. Venue?

Talks by individual Church members

Pam Pitts gave a talk on the work and ministry of the *Cathedral*.

After an overview at the beginning, she highlighted upholding Benedictine principles and noted 4 values: Faith, Welcome, Compassion and Confidence and what each means at the Cathedral. She also defined 4 key areas of work: Worship, Hospitality, Mission and Sustainability. The diocesan link with Kagera was included, the 9.00 All-age Eucharist and hosting special services for the county, community and diocese. The Social Action group has liaised with Hope in Action and a family has been housed in BSE. Work of the Learning Hub and the ongoing Lego Project were also mentioned.

Sunday 10th December Churches Together evening is to be held in the Cathedral.

Paul Doswell gave a talk and presentation on the work of *Salvation Army*, especially illustrating their music. Watch out for the 'Salvation Army' Brass concerts!

AOB:

The possibility of badges for Walk of Witness helpers was discussed.

More volunteers for BCY and the Drop-In were sought.

21st May 3 pm Memorial Service at St. Mary's

Men's Shed – Saturdays 10-2 in UK Centre at bottom of Eastern Way.

Exchange of Greetings: Regina offered assistance with this at a later date.

Dates of next two meetings: Monday 10th July and Monday 18th September (AGM).