



**Minutes of the Churches Together Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 17 July 2018 at 7.30 pm
at All Saints Church, Bury St Edmunds**

Those present:

Elaine Green (Quakers)	Andrew Caldecott (CVM/HC3)	Pam Pitts (Cathedral)
Mallie Sharpe (St Peters)	Heather Corbell (Horringer)	Andrew Soman (Westley Comm)
Regina Collander (St Edmunds RC)	Eilish Heath (St Edmunds)	David Wakeford (Trinjity)
Clare Wakeford (Trinity)	Gerda Ewing-Tooley (Southgate)	Christine Whittingham (SA)
Steve Whittingham (SA)	Claire McMillan (Garland Street)	Thomas Mundell (Relevant)
Geoff Birkby (Cathedral)	Liz Huddleston (Southgate)	Howard Scott (Christian Aid)
Elaine Colechin (URC)	Duane Hall (BCY)	Catrin Diverres (Trinity)
Brian Clarke (All Saints)	Jennie Clarke (Gt Barton FC)	Sharon Steven (Whepstead Baptist)
Julie Farrant (Whepstead Baptist)	Claire Rose (All Saints)	Jenny Troll (St Marys)

1. **Welcome** – Heather welcomed us to the meeting and thanked All Saints for hosting the meeting and David and Clare for the cakes. She welcomed Sharon and Julie from Whepstead Baptist Church, and Duane Hall from BCY.
Reading – Heather read from 2 Cor 13.
Prayer – Heather prayed
2. **Apologies:**
Stephen Griffiths (West Suffolk Chaplaincy), Rosemary Clare (Baptist), Nick Alexander (St Peters), Mary Soman (Westley Community), Adrian Mann (St Johns), Marian Shaw (Cathedral/Suffolk Historic Churches), Christopher Griffiths, Joe Hawes (Dean Cathedral), Gill Shaw (Christ Church), Olivia Arthur (St Marys).
Heather suggested that two representatives are sent from each church and if you are unable to attend to try and get someone else to come.
3. **Minutes of last meeting of 30 April 2018**
Christine Whittingham said she had sent her apologies for not attending and this had not been recorded. Apologies given to her.
Minutes agreed.
Minutes signed.
4. **Matters arising**
Share and Study groups – three Wednesday evenings in June – 13, 20 and 27 June – 7.30 pm – Hyndman Centre. Andrew S said that he thought the studies went well and the churches were well represented.
Advent Greeting – now 'Church Greeting' and moving to Harvest time – 30 September. Exchange of greeting.
Who Cares – Andrew C advised that the report is nearly finished.
Review Good Friday – to be discussed in the Autumn. Good Friday 19 April 2019 – Andrew C had booked road closures.
Fair Trade Trail – Mallie reported that the trail went well – 50 people attended. Fair Trade gifts. Probably do something new another year.
Churches Together leaflet – Tourist Office had run out of leaflets. Pam had taken leaflets to the Tourist Office, Doctors Surgeries etc about things going on in various churches. Pam to send details to Jenny to be put in minutes.

5. **Chair's Report**

Heather said she had had a mixed experience this year, though never forgetting the privilege of what we do. She thanked Jenny, Claire, Nic, Andrew C and everyone for doing so much. We have grown in that three new churches have joined the group – West Road, Westley Community Church and Whepstead Baptist Church, also earlier Horringer Benefice. The Google Group has shrunk due to GDPR – now 70, after 55 are yet to renew. Heather hopes that reps in churches make Churches Together known in their churches. We have joint ecumenical projects flourishing eg the Bury Drop In and the BDI choir. The Prayer Breakfasts have been good though quite low numbers. We have felt the loss of Richard Norburn with his radiant faith and infectious enthusiasm as well as Godly advice. Heather thanked Southgate Church especially for attending the Share and Study groups. She has thanked Hugh Williamson and Graham Jack for leading these sessions. Heather thinks we should achieve more in outreach. She is sorry that the village churches have not involved themselves more (particular problem perhaps of transport, and much energy on looking after more traditional buildings with smaller congregations). We need to look again at our mission statement of John 17 – we need commitment. She has cancelled the event in the Abbey Gardens as it has been difficult to get music groups involved due to the holidays. The prayer day went OK though small in number. The prayer walking she felt is the right thing to do and hopes that more people might get involved.

6. **Outreach**

Relevant – Thomas advised that there are events in late October for Youth. Communicating with schools etc. This is in the early stages.

7. **Finance Report – Claire**

Claire thanked Bob Huddleston for examining the accounts. Made a loss of %224 over the year. Looking to the future – collection on Good Friday £1563.20 which is £300 more than last year. The £2284 held on the Treasurer's Account is now less due to payments for road closures etc. 24 churches paid up last year, including Horringer. Whepstead, West Road and Westley Community Churches have now joined. Next year hopefully 27 churches. Claire advised we had not made any donations in the last two years. She asks whether we think the subs should go up – at present congregations of 25 or less are charged £30 and more than 25 £60. Liz proposed that it stayed the same, seconded David. Elaine C says a lot of churches support charities anyway eg Drop In. There is also an issue with a charity giving to another charity. Elaine G suggests bringing a proposal for next year for increasing the sub. Work it on an average congregation size. Claire had hoped to have someone to take over as Treasurer. She asked the meeting if anyone would be prepared to take over but no response. She would e-mail the Google Group.

8. **Brief Reports**

Christian Aid – Howard advised that they had collected £600 more than last year. They had funded a project in Ghana. This was well funded. May change projects to Children with Aids. Trying to work on a project with the Cathedral – climbing the Tower steps.

Just Traid – No report.

West Suffolk Chaplaincy – The chaplaincy had been very busy over the last year with Stephen Griffiths joining them. The chaplaincy had grown and referrals have increased massively and they are now reaching areas of the hospital previously closed to them. Six local curates joined them on placement at the hospital during the year and they learned a lot from the Chaplaincy team. They have launched the chaplaincy in GP surgeries, they have once a month sing-a-longs at Glastonbury Court, staff teaching, re-vamping the chapel A/V system building new Chaplaincy web pages. The West Suffolk Hospital is the first hospital in the country to have the faith question on admission as a mandatory question with the patient being asked if they want pastoral care whether they have a faith or not. This has seen a rise in the number of referrals. They are looking for volunteers

BCY – Duane Hall is the new BCY rep. He is from Herts and is now living in Stanton. Doors have been opened to him with youths, Messy Churches and he co-manages 3 hostels. He has been to County Upper for a week and also Thurston. At Ixworth he is to go every month, King Edwards – assemblies and also Benedicts. He would like to have more church work. He is helping with the holiday club at St Peters. He wants children to come to an event and for them to be on fire. Wants more discipleship with young people.

Care Homes – Heather had been asked by Mark to update a Care Home list and which churches visited which care home. This she did and is to hand it over to Mark.

9. **Brian Clarke – Open the Doors** – Brian advised that there were 20 teams in the area which involved 100 volunteers. They have been going into primary schools for the last 14 years. The Lord had blessed them. They act out drama in authentic clothing. The children love it and look forward to seeing them. They bring in children to the drama so they take part in them. Brian said they need more volunteers. Brian and his wife Jennie acted out a drama to give us an idea. They usually go in for morning assemblies. Good fun. Brian had notices for us all to put up in our respective churches.

10. **Election of Officers**

Treasurer – Claire – proposed by Howard, seconded Eilish

Secretary – Jenny – proposed by Elaine G, seconded Liz

Chair – Heather – proposed by Claire, seconded Gerda

11. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 8 October 2018 The Crypt, St Edmunds

12. **AOB**

1) **Caring for Ex-Offenders** – Steve W advised that there is a conference in London on Monday 19 November 2018 at Holy Trinity, Brompton. Ex-offenders need the opportunity to re-build their lives.

2) **AGM** – David said he thought the AGM had been very encouraging and thanked Heather for her enthusiasm, and her work throughout the year.

3) **Week of Christian Unity** - Sunday 20 January 2019 at Baptist Church? Speaker already booked is Bishop Mike Harrison.

4) **Open Garden** – tea and chat in aid of Christian Aid at Claire's home on 5 August

5) **Headline Band** – Sunday 19 May – 11-7.00 pm.

6) **Football club** – event for support for family of boy who died on Boxing day.

11. **Closing prayer**

The meeting was closed with a prayer.

Meeting ended at 9.25 pm.