



Churches Together Meeting on Monday 29th April 2019

At Trinity Methodist Church, Bury St Edmunds at 7.30 pm

Present

Mallie Sharp (St Peter's), David Wakeford (Trinity), Catrin Diverres (Trinity), Thomas Mundell (Relevant), Kevin Bullock (W.R. Church & Westley CC), Howard Scott (CCMH & Christian Aid), Debbie Borda (Trinity), Elaine Colechin (URC), Sally McDermott (WS Vineyard), Simon Harvey (St Mary's/St Peter's), Will Farrant (Whepstead Baptist), Steve Gray (St John's), Paul Doswell (S.Army), Robert Green (GS Baptist), Miriam Webb (NB Team), Pam Pitts (Cathedral), Geoff Birkby (Cathedral), Regina Collender (St Edmund's), Elaine Green (Quakers), Gerda Emery (Southgate), Andrew Caldecott (CVM), Eilish Heath (St Edmund's), Anna Parminter (St Edmund's), Ian Howells (WSH Chaplaincy), Heather Corbell (Horringer), Sarah Harper (St John's).

1. **Heather welcomed** everyone, and led a minute's silence for all who suffered in the violence in Sri Lanka, and others suffering religious persecution; then thanked Catrin, David, Debbie, for refreshments and Eilish for taking the minutes. Then followed a Bible reading from Romans 12 and Prayer.
2. **Apologies** – Claire McMillan, Sharon Steven, Julie Farrant, Duane, hall, Sharon Connell, Val Gagen, Hannah Morgan, Andrew Soman, Rosemary Clare, Nick Alexander, Claire Rose.
3. **The minutes** of the last meeting (11th February) were passed as accurate. HC thanked Carol Richardson for taking those minutes.
4. **Matters Arising** – Review of Good Friday Walk of Witness

Heather said that most comments she had received had been positive, though there was some suggestions made to improve movement of people.

AC said that overall the logistics had worked well, but the PA system needs improvement. MW wondered if some chairs in the Market Square would be helpful for those who find standing difficult. SG suggested a video link might help those with mobility issues. S.Harper felt that hymns were difficult, no blessing was given, and hearing the speakers was also a problem. IH thanked Heather and the team and spoke

of the importance of the Good Friday Walk, which gives a very positive statement about our faith. RG offered the thought that though theological differences play a part in the day, there is never a bad day to witness to our faith.

5. **Communication:** Web-site, google group, representation, publicity

Heather thanked Nic Wright for maintaining the website and Claire Rose for the google group, reminding people that information should be sent to Claire for inclusion in the google group. (Details are on the web-site 'Contact us' page).

HC commented that contact and conversation with parishes and clergy in some District parishes, is time-consuming, and encouraged parish/church representatives to be pro-active in promoting Churches Together events.

6. **Finance**

The Treasurer's Report from Claire Rose was accepted by the meeting, and it was noted that £1,487.26 was raised in the collection in the Cathedral on Good Friday. Heather thanked Claire for her work as treasurer.

7. **Outreach: Sunday 30th June Summer Celebration in the Abbey Gardens.** The steering group is HC, AC, HM, DH. Heather and Andrew updated the meeting on progress to date – there will be a stage and worship songs by different churches from 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm and Songs of Praise at 4.15 will bring the day to a conclusion.

HC had sent a letter to all churches and over 20 local church/village magazines with details of the event. Hannah M is coordinating the music with Duane (BCY). Churches are encouraged to bring banners, and wet/hot weather protection (possibly gazebos)

Songs of Praise will be led by Debbie Borda from Trinity Church and leaflets will be given out.

5. **Forward events:**

Prayer event: It is hoped to organise a 'prayer event' to pray for 30th June and there were many ideas put forward, including coffee and prayer on a Saturday or Sunday, a prayer session in a public place, a prayer tent in the Market Square, a prayer board to post prayers, and a prayer session in one of the churches. RG offered a Sunday evening service as the prayer event. EC offered the URC Church for this on Saturday 1st June with coffee in the hall and prayer stations in the church. The Saturday Prayer Coffee Morning at URC was agreed on.

Prayer Walking: HC reported that the prayer walking around the town will continue on Mondays meeting outside Moyses Hall at 2.30 pm. HC quoted the Dean's words about the W of Witness to show love and concern for the town (as well as commemorating Good Friday), and that this applies to the prayer walking, of course, not just for the churches but for the town and area including shops/businesses etc.

Study and Share groups will take place at All Saints' Church on Wednesdays – 8th, 15th, and 22nd May at 7.30 pm. Topics for study and discussion will be 'God's People', 'God's Mission' and 'God's World'. These are important if we want to try to discern what God may want to teach us as a wider group across denominations.

Next year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service will take place at St Mary's Church on Sunday 19th January 2020. Simon Harvey will lead the service.

Annual Church Greeting is organised by RC and GB and this will take place on 29th September. Consideration will be given to moving this date to earlier in the year.

Reports:

Mental Health Chaplaincy - A new Mental Health Chaplain has been appointed by the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust – Revd Samuel Chirwa, who is unable to attend this meeting. He is seeking volunteers to assist him in his new role which covers a very large area. Training will be offered for volunteers.

Southgate Trustees – DW reported that a new structure is now in place. GE reported that Southgate Church is organising a quiz to raise money for children in Kenya affected by AIDS to be held in Southgate Community Centre on Saturday 16th November.

Relevant – Thomas M reported that the last gathering at St Peter's church had gone very well. Thomas said we can see the 'Relevant' web-site for details of dates and venues.

There are publicity leaflets available that give all future dates and venues.

BCY – HC reported that Duane is working very hard and struggling a bit just now, and asks for prayer. HC hopes to organise a support group (at Duane's request), and asks everyone to pray for Duane and BCY.

Care Homes Grid will be given to Mark Haworth.

A.O.B.

The AGM was fixed for Monday 15th July at 7.30 pm, venue is St. Edmund's RC Church, Westgate Street.

SH spoke of the Town Memorial Service to be held at St Mary's Church on Sunday 12th May at 3.00 pm. IH offered support from the WSHT and St Nicholas Hospice.

Howard S said that it was important that churches in Bury St Edmunds support the service for Christian Aid week at the Cathedral 5.30 pm on 12th May.

The meeting closed with prayer offered by Robert G and Debbie B at 9.15 pm.
