

MINUTES OF THE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SAFFRON WALDEN MEETING

held on Thursday 26 September 2013

Abbey Lane and Newport United Reformed Church, Saffron Walden

Present: Jonathan Burton (Chair), Margaret Snowdon (Secretary), Clive Brooker (Treasurer), Carol Baker, Jackie Bartlett, Val Bowtle, John Capper, Kathryn Fiddock, Jim Gascoigne, David Keeble, Elizabeth Tindley, Emma Turner, Berry Wareham, Robert Wiseman, Jean Wheeler.

The Chairman welcomed the Rev Lydia Smith, Curate at St Mary's, the Rev John Goddard, Minister of the Baptist Church and Brian Hillson, representing Meg Nettle, to the meeting.

John Goddard expressed his thanks to Melanie Mathieson for attending Council on behalf of the Baptist Church: she will now step down from Council.

Jane Martin from Gold Street has resigned from the Council due to ill health.

The meeting opened with prayer.

1. **Apologies.** Apologies received from Jane Martin, Meg Nettle, Helen O'Neill, and David Tomlinson.
2. **Consideration of the Agenda.** Report from SWAT. Christian Aid.
3. **Minutes of last meeting.** Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2013 were approved and signed.
4. **Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising not already on the Agenda.
5. **Finance Report.**

The Pentecost Account is now closed. The £61.75 loss on refreshments at the Tricks and Laugh event has been paid. All subscriptions are now paid. Balance of main account is: £542.71. A recent URC coffee morning raised £52.50 for Christian Aid. Margaret Snowdon is now authorised to sign cheques if necessary.

6. **Ratification of Amendment to the Constitution**

An amendment to the Constitution reducing the number of Churches participating to eight and updating the list of activities has been made. Copies of the amendment having previously been circulated and a further copy distributed at the meeting, all members agreed to the amendment.

7. **Christmas events 2013.**

Join Advent Carol Service at St Mary's 1 December 2013.

Late night shopping Friday 6 December. No one was available to co-ordinate this event. Discussion ensued around the fact that maybe the Street Pastors could make use of the stall but it was felt that this was not our decision to make and also our purposes would be quite different. Council representatives were asked to take this matter to their Churches. A stall will not be booked with Saffron Walden Initiative unless or until volunteer(s) come forward.

ACTION: ALL

Christmas Publicity. Discussion took place as to the necessity of advertising all the Christmas services in the local paper but a vote confirmed that this will continue. The Secretary will approach Lisa Knight to ascertain if she is agreeable to organising this for us. Publicity to be in the Walden Local on 11 December 2013.

ACTION: MAS

Later: Lisa has agreed to undertake publicity again.

It was suggested that perhaps for the future we explore the possibility of producing a leaflet for inclusion in the circulation of the Walden Local.

ACTION: MAS for agenda 2014

8. Chair and Deputy Chair 2014

Chair: John Capper. Deputy Chair: John Goddard.

9. Lent Groups 2014

A co-coordinator is needed to organise the Lent Groups for next year. Representatives were asked to take this matter to their Churches to ask for a volunteer. John Goddard offered to help resource material if a volunteer can be found. This needs to be resolved by the end of the year. **ACTION: ALL**

10. United Service 19 January 2014 - 10.30 a.m.

This service will be held at Abbey Lane and Newport United Reformed Church. Jim Gascoigne will lead and John Capper will speak. Activities for children will be held in the hall and it is envisaged that Youth Leaders will work together on this. Katherine from the Salvation Army will help and Mark Hayes will be asked to liaise with Matt Williamson from St Mary's.

Collection: 50% to Christian Aid. 50% to Uttlesford Food Bank.

The Agape meal is to be held at St Mary's Parish rooms on Thursday 16 January 2013.

11. Services in Care Homes

Monthly services are held in Stanley Wilson Lodge, Highfields and Hatherley but it is proving difficult to provide satisfying and purposeful service as resources are slim. After discussion it was agreed that the monthly services will continue to the end of the year but then will have to cease pro tem. The Salvation Army will continue to cover the major festivals. Carol will inform the homes of the changed status after Christmas.

ACTION: CB

12. Uttlesford Food Bank

The working group consisting of CAB, UDC, Waitrose, Carol Baker and David Tomlinson is good and they are going ahead with the Trussel Trust, who will set up advertising and logistics. Waitrose has agreed to provide a person for one day a week to run the food bank. Collections at Dunmow, Thaxted, Bishop's Stortford, Stansted and Saffron Walden. The launch is on 23 October 2013 in the Salvation Army Hall 7.30 p.m. Posters will be available and advertising will be in the local press.

13. Street Pastors

A Commissioning Service was held on Friday 13 October, which was well attended, and the Street Pastors had their first outing on Friday 20 October. It was pointed out that the Pastors were not actively seeking "trouble spots" but were going where there were people, i.e. skate park, town centre etc.

14. SWAT

Val Bowtle had attended a WOW event recently, and was impressed. She is hoping to add to the SWAT and thus be able to offer more to our local schools. A note from Val is attached to the minutes.

15. Christian Aid

John had recently held a meeting with the representatives and it had been suggested that a town collection be held. This has therefore now been arranged for 30 November 2013 in all the usual places around town. The collection needs to be audited and Brian Hillson agreed to take on this task

16. News from the Churches

Roman Catholic: BBQ held in summer. Recent outing to Walsingham. Father David holds Masses in sign language every so often.

Methodist Church. Ties with the URC are becoming stronger and Methodist members are appreciative of the help being planned by URC for the afternoon of Palm Sunday when their Church closes.

It was queried whether the Methodist Church can retain their individual status with CTSW after Easter when they have joined URC. This issue to be deferred to the Ministers' Meeting. **ACTION: MM**

United Reformed Church: The refurbishment of the outside of the Church is almost complete but will not be finalised until spring next year. The Pastorate Profile for WEBS (West Essex and Bishop's Stortford) is complete and two married couples have asked to see it. The Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome between URC and the Methodist Church is complete. Harvest Service 29 September.

Baptist Church: The new Minister, Rev John Goddard, is settling in. Co-operating with Gold Street on the Alpha Course. Very pleased to be part of the Street Pastors scheme.

St Mary's: New Youth Leader, Matt Williamson now in post. A special service was held recently to celebrate the ministry of Rev. Christopher Warren, who has to retire due to ill health. A new group "Coffee, Cake and Company" is starting as part of St Mary's mental health initiative on 29 September, with further monthly meetings planned.

Gold Street: Working with the Baptist Church on the Alpha Courses. VBS decision letter attached to the minutes.

Salvation Army. The charity shop opens on Monday 30 September 2013 at 9.30 a.m. Volunteers still needed to help in shop. The Well is now open three days per week.

17. Date of Next Meeting – 21 November 2013

The meeting ended with the sharing of The Grace.

Future Dates for 2013/14

Church Leaders Prayer Meeting	17 October
Church Leaders Business Meeting	7 November
Remembrance Sunday	10 November
United Nations Service	
Council Meeting	21 November
Advent Service	1 December
Minister's Lunch	11 December
Agape Meal – St Mary's	16 January
United Service URC 10.30 a.m.	19 January