

**MINUTES OF THE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SAFFRON WALDEN MEETING**  
**held on Thursday 25 June 2015 @ Abbey Lane URC, Saffron Walden**

**Present:** Rev. John Goddard (Chair), Rosemary Timms (Secretary), Clive Brooker (Treasurer), Rev. Jonathan Burton, John Capper, Kathryn Fiddock, Rev Roy Fowler, Helen O'Neill, Elizabeth Tindley, Rev. David Tomlinson, Emma Turner and Berry Wareham.

John (Goddard) opened the meeting by reading Matthew Chapter 4 'The Testing of Jesus'.

**1. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Carol Baker, Father David Clemens, Jackie Bartlett and Val Bowtle.

**2. Consideration of the Agenda.**

Added under Matters Arising: Christian Aid Collection (John Capper)  
Added under Any Other Business: Café Church Review (Jonathan Burton)

**3. Minutes of last meeting.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2015 were approved and signed.

**4. Matters Arising and Review of Events.**

(a) **Christian Aid Collection:** Grateful to everyone involved in the recent Christian Aid collection. The total raised was £6,229.87 + gift aid worth £681.33 making a Total of £6,911.20. This is encouraging as it is an increase on last year.

(b) **Steve Murray Event:** The event was attended for the most part by people who attend our churches so was not really a vehicle for outreach. This could be because it was a mime event. Certainly the feedback we have was that mime would not appeal to the younger generation. It was also apparent that considerable knowledge of the Bible was necessary to understand the content. That said it had been well received by those who had attended. A brief financial statement had been circulated which showed that it had covered its costs producing a surplus of £41.00. This year it fell within half term. The Leaders would review what the purpose of an event at Pentecost might be and it would be on the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting.

**5. Finance Report.** Clive Brooker confirmed that

- The bill for the Easter advert was £185.00 and has now been received and paid.
- Six of the seven churches have paid their annual subs of £60 and the remaining one will be received on 1<sup>st</sup> July.
- The current balance is £361.76.

**6. Future Events**

(a) **VBS:** Rev Jonathan Burton circulated an update which identified where there was a need for more help and support. Over 480 children have been registered which is a significant increase on last year. The two new initiatives for this year are:

- A 'Parent's Tent' to encourage parents to stay and chat after dropping off their children
- A Youth Night which Sam LaRoche will be responsible for. Both of these events will need the support of helpers to set up and man them.

There was a brief discussion about the safeguarding policy and procedures for the Youth Event.

(b) **Lent 2016:** Rev David Tomlinson brought the suggestion that we organise a series of four sessions focused on different aspects and approaches to prayer. Each session to include input from a speaker and then an opportunity to pray together. Sessions to be on Thursday evenings during Lent – 25<sup>th</sup> February, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 10<sup>th</sup> March and 17<sup>th</sup> March, at different venues as it would be an ecumenical event. Everyone welcomed this and thought it was an excellent idea. Leaders to go ahead and organise this.

## 7. News from Churches

**Society of Friends:** John Capper shared something of the Yearly Meeting at Friends House in London at the beginning of May which he had attended and the public talk held recently on Cornelius Barritt and other conscientious objectors from our area.

**Gold Street Chapel:** Rev Jonathan Burton shared that they have now exchanged contracts on the church premises in Castle Street. They expect to move there during August and will then change their name to Saffron Walden Community Church. They recently welcomed a speaker from Embrace Middle East.

**Methodists:** Clive wished to record how pleased they were that their former premises will continue to be occupied by a church.

**St Mary's Church:** They have hosted a Tuesday Tinies session for some time and have recently added to this Tuesday Teas for Reception Class children and their parents. A number of lunchtime musical recitals are taking place over the summer. Looking ahead they have a Gift weekend in support of their building projects. Andy Finn, previously of St Mary's is to be ordained as a Deacon on 27<sup>th</sup> June in Chelmsford.

**Roman Catholic Church:** Grateful to St Mary's for hosting St Thomas More Primary Schools' Mass recently. Looking ahead they have planned a Family Picnic at St Marks, in Audley End village.

**URC:** As part of their 350 year celebrations this year they have invited the Moderator of the General Assembly to preach in September. Their Flower Festival on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> June was very successful. Rev Caroline Vodden's induction service on 5<sup>th</sup> September will be at Water Lane, in Bishops Stortford at 2.30 p.m. Rev David Tomlinson and Rev John Goddard would attend and welcome Caroline.

**Salvation Army:** They are celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Big Birthday Tea this weekend.

**Baptist Church:** Rev John Goddard shared that ticket sales are good for the Joanna Eden concert in support of Nepal tomorrow evening. We are hoping to extend and refurbish our kitchen. The leaders and members are currently considering whether we are being led to call a second minister to extend and expand our ministry in the community. We would appreciate prayer for this going forward.

## 8. Any Other Business

- **Café Church Review:** Rev Jonathan Burton shared that the initial pilot has come to an end. Following a review the decision has been taken to re-start in September on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. The objective is to attract and to invite people not actively attending our churches.

## 9. Future Dates:

- **1<sup>st</sup> July XL Mentoring Information Evening at 8.00 p.m.**
- **5<sup>th</sup> September induction of Rev Caroline Vodden at 2.30 p.m. at Bishops Stortford URC.**

## 10. Date of Next Meeting – 17 September 2015.

Rev Roy Fowler shared that Rev Caroline Vodden would attend churches together meetings in future although he would still be minister of Abbey Lane URC. Members wished to thank Roy for his input and on-going support.

Rev John Goddard closed the meeting in prayer.