



MINUTES OF THE MEETING
held on Thursday 9 February 2017 at Abbey Lane United Reformed Church

Present: Rev. Jonathan Burton, Rosemary Timms (Secretary), Rev. John Goddard, John Capper, Val Bowtle, Helen O'Neill, Stephen Rapkin, Kathryn Fiddock, Elizabeth Tindley, and Emma Turner.

Jonathan was welcomed as the Chair of the Council. Jonathan then led opening devotions focused on the theme of unity and forgiveness and shared a reading from Matthew 18.

Apologies: were received from Father David Clemens, Kelvin Pipe, Rev. David Tomlinson, Capt. Carol Baker, Rev. Caroline Vodden, Berry Wareham and David Oelman.

1. Vice-chair.

Rev. Caroline Vodden was willing to be vice-chair and the council were delighted to approve her appointment in her absence.

2. Consideration of the Agenda.

Added subject of 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation and of Martin Luther

3. Minutes of last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016 were approved and would be signed after the meeting.

4. Matters Arising and Review of Events.

4.1 Membership of the Council:

(a) Jonathan welcomed Kathryn Fiddock to the meeting and passed on our condolences on the recent loss of her husband Leonard.

(b) Since the last meeting we have also lost our treasurer, Clive Brooker.

Members paused to pray for Kathryn and all the family and friends of Leonard Fiddock and Clive Brooker.

(c) Jackie Bartlett has stepped down as a representative from the Society of Friends and David Oelman has agreed to join the council. He had to send his apologies for this meeting, however.

4.2 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

- ***The United Service:*** The URC had hosted it this year and it had been very well attended. There were children from a number of churches who enjoyed the children's activities. Very positive feedback was received at the Baptist Church Members meeting. The URC treasurer had agreed to bank and forward the collection which was to go to Christian Aid and Stort Valley Schools Trust. Stephen Rapkin would confirm in due course how much was given. Venue for 2018 would be agreed at the next meeting.

- ***The Agape Meal:*** The Baptist church had hosted the meal and those attending were very generous. After costs £212 was made and following a discussion it was agreed that this would be given to VBS. Rosemary Timms pass on funds. Venue for 2018 would be discussed at the next meeting.

- ***The Prayer Breakfast:*** A small group had met on that Saturday morning to enjoy breakfast and pray together. John Goddard was thanked for organising this event. Jonathan Burton felt that it was valuable to have a prayer meeting during the week of prayer.

4.3 ***Treasurer:*** John Capper had agreed to become the new CTSW treasurer and members thanked John and formally approved John's appointment.

5. Updates

5.1 ***Stort Valley Schools Trust:*** Jonathan advised that there is to be a praying for schools event on Sunday 12th March at Saffron Walden Community Church. Please take a poster and publicise this event which is at 6.00 p.m. for a 6.30 p.m. start.

5.2 ***VBS:*** The planned building work at Newport was a concern but happily Saffron Walden County High School have agreed that VBS can move back there this summer.

6. Finance

Rev Roy Fowler has received the relevant paperwork from Clive's family and will pass it to John in due course.

6.1 ***Account Signatories:*** It was agreed to continue with the existing practice of requiring just one person to sign. Rosemary Timms agreed to become the alternate signatory in the absence of John Capper.

6.2 ***Annual Accounts:*** The accounts have normally been produced at the end of each calendar year. It was agreed that we should invite someone to undertake an independent examination of the accounts at the end of 2017. Suggestions were invited for the next meeting.

7. Future Events

7.1 ***Lent Series 2017:*** *Fliers with details of the four sessions* had been circulated.

- Thursday 9th March at St Mary's – speaker Rev David Tomlinson 'The Return of the Prodigal'
- Thursday 16th March at the Salvation Army Hall – Rev Caroline Vodden "Father Forgive"
- Thursday 23rd March at Our Lady of Compassion – Fr David Clemens "The Inward Lent"
- Thursday 30th March at the Baptist Church – Rev John Goddard "Gethsemane"

7.2 ***Easter Publicity:*** Rosemary would ask Lisa Knight if she would co-ordinate the advertisement of the churches easter services.

7.3 ***Walk of Witness:*** The police have not attended or officially closed any roads for the Good Friday procession. (Unlike the Remembrance Sunday Parade event) Last year there was a seriously concerning safety incident involving an articulated lorry overtaking the procession in the High Street. After careful consideration of the risks to voluntary marshalls and those walking, there was a proposal to try something different this year and to change the route to something easier to manage.

- ***Assemble in the Salvation Armt/URC car park in Abbey Lane at 10.30 a.m. for opening reflection time***
- ***Walk down the footpath into Park Lane and pause in order to reassemble on the pedestrian area between the sorting office and the houses.***
- ***Stop the traffic briefly in order to cross the High Street.***
- ***Walk along King Street, turn left and walk to the Market Square.***
- ***Walk up Market Hill to St Mary's Church.***

It was acknowledged that some people will be disappointed that we will not walk down the high street as this may mean that it has less of an impact on the community. However, if we publicise the walk of witness, and the reasons for it well in the local papers and explain the change of route, we may be able to raise the profile in that way.

Ged Pearce (from Baptist Church) is not able to co-ordinate marshalls this year. Churches were asked to see if there is someone else we can ask to co-ordinate things this year. Need to also decide if we are offering anything to the public by way of cards and/or easter eggs.

8. Pentecost

Church leaders are proposing a Churches Together Pentecost prayer event. This will be at the Community Church from 4.30 p.m. until 6.00 p.m. on Pentecost Sunday 4th June. It is linked in with Justin Welby's international event and the theme (title) is "Thy Kingdom Come". Please publicise as all are welcome.

Jonathan will coordinate the arrangements for this event.

9. News from Churches

- **URC:** On Good Friday at 2.00 p.m. people are invited to come and sing 'Stainer's Crucifixion'. On 15th July there will be a Flower Festival and History Exhibition focused on Martin Luther and the anniversary of the Reformation.
- **Salvation Army:** Jointly with the URC, they are arranging 'The Real Easter - Holiday Club' from 3rd to 7th April, for children in years 3,4,5,6 and 7.
- **Society of Friends:** On 22nd April they have arranged a day with the theme of 'Being a Quaker Community.'
- **St Mary's:** Building Work starts in March. 2017 has been identified as a 'Year of Invitation' to encourage prayer for specific friends who are not church goers and inviting them to something at the church during the year.
- **Our Lady of Compassion:** They have a Parish Quiz Night tomorrow. The Women's World Day of Prayer will be on 3rd March at the Salvation Army Hall.
- **Saffron Walden Community Church:** They held a Covenant Service in January and have set the theme of "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done" for 2017. They have a 'Messy Church' event at 2.00 p.m. on Good Friday. They have planning permission and funding for their building redevelopment. The next stage is to prepare tender documents.
- **Baptist Church:** Showing the film 'Chocolat' which focuses on Grace and Law on Ash Wednesday. Particularly enjoying the three Parade Services we have each year for children involved in uniformed organisations. Recently we are pleased that many parents are staying and attending these services as well. The leadership team are focusing on 'Marks of a Healthy Church'.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 500th Anniversary of the Reformation: John Goddard shared that at a recent church meeting there was a desire to publicise and highlight this anniversary and the impact of the Reformation. Council asked John to explore whether we can arrange an event and invite a speaker in the Autumn.

10.2 Stephen Rapkin had checked what information the Tourist Information Office have about churches and services to give people. They have a CTSW leaflet but it is very out of date. Jonathan took the copy and would find someone who be willing to update it.

11. Date of Next Meetings

- 6th April 2017
- 15th June 2017
- 14th September 2017
- 23rd November 2017

Jonathan closed the meeting with prayer.