



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

held on Thursday 22 November 2018 at Abbey Lane United Reformed Church

Present: Rev. Caroline Vodden, Rosemary Timms (Secretary), Rev. John Goddard, John Capper, Suzan Bouton, Val Bowtle, Kathryn Fiddock, Ted Jackson, Jean Mead, Margaret Hurst, Elizabeth Tindley and Emma Turner.

Stephen Rapkin has stood down and Margaret Hurst was welcomed to her first Churches Together Meeting as a representative from the URC.

Caroline had agreed to chair the meeting in Jonathan's absence.

Opening devotions were led by Caroline focusing on Psalm 34.

1. Apologies: were received from Rev. Jonathan Burton, Rev. David Tomlinson, Father David Clemens, Capt. Katrina Thurlow and Helen O'Neill.
2. Consideration of the Agenda.
No additional items were added.
3. Minutes of last meeting.
The minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2018 were approved and were signed.
4. Matter Arising and Review of Events
 1. **Christian Aid Street Collection:** The amount raised was £768.00 which is more than in previous years. Well done everyone who helped. The date for 2019 will be confirmed in due course.
 2. **Modern Slavery Speaker:** This proposed event has had to be cancelled but could happen sometime in the future.
 3. **VBS Update:** VBS 2019 is booked and going ahead and will be the 50th VBS that has taken place. The committee are unsure about the future for the event beyond 2019. They have been consulting with church leaders seeking their views on the vision for VBS and the way ahead. Leaders have been asked to speak to their churches and feed back to the committee by the end of the year. VBS has always been and still is an extremely successful and popular event in the town. John Goddard expressed thanks on behalf of everyone for the astounding work done by the committee year on year. It was agreed that whatever decision the committee make will have the full support of Churches Together.
 4. **CTSW Website:** Jonathan Burton had confirmed that all the changes agreed at the last meeting had been made and links to other churches updated.

5. Christmas 2018

1. **Late Night Shopping – 30th November:** John Goddard confirmed that once again we will have a stall offering opportunities for people to stop and to chat about Christmas. Plan to have a Christmas tree and invite people to create a personal message and hang it on the tree. Everyone is welcome to come along and anyone wanting to help should contact Jonathan Burton.
2. **Christmas Publicity:** Lisa Knight had confirmed she would co-ordinate our joint advert and CTSW members/leaders had been reminded to ensure that Lisa has all the information ASAP.
3. **Christmas Events:** In addition to the normal range of church events and those included on the yearly calendar churches were invited to advertise their charitable events which included:
 - URC Service on Saturday 1st December @ 5.30 p.m. (for those remembering lost loved ones)
 - St Mary's Advent Service on Sunday 2nd December @ 6.30 p.m.
 - The WI Carol Service at the URC on Monday 3rd December
 - The URC Ladies Guild Carol Service on 5th December @ 3.00 p.m.
 - The EACH Carol Service at the Baptist Church on 11th December @ 7.00 p.m.
4. **Searchlight Theatre Company:** Their production "The Man Who Gave us Christmas" will be at the Baptist Church on 20th December and fliers were distributed at the meeting. Tickets are available from SWBC and the Tourist Information Centre.
5. The Salvation Army are visiting Stanley Wilson Lodge and Hatherley to sing carols and Ashdon Baptist Church are expected to be singing carols at Saffron Walden Community Hospital.
6. The Salvation Army may have some spaces at their Christmas Day lunch for those alone at Christmas so do contact Katrina if you have a name to suggest. They are again collecting presents to distribute to local families and they would like any donated presents by the 14th December please.

6. Future Dates and Events

1. **United Service on 20th January at St Mary's @ 10.00 a.m.** It was suggested that the offering be split between Christian Aid and VBS.
2. **Agape Meal on 24th January at St Mary's** 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. Numbers to be notified to Kathryn by the 20th January please.

Kathryn would put together a poster for these two events and forward that to Rosemary for circulation.

7. News from Churches

- **URC:** On the 10th November they arranged a World War Commemoration Party which included a Quiz and an afternoon tea. In the new year morning worship will be held in the church hall during some building work on the chapel.
- **St Mary's:** They have their Christmas Fair on Saturday 24th November between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. which has a Dickensian theme.
- **Our Lady of Compassion:** They have had their Annual Supper and AGM since the last meeting.

- ***Society of Friends:*** They recently had a speaker from Quaker Homeless Action and will be collecting for them at Christmas. Many third-generation Chagossians face removal from the UK once they reach the age of 20. There is a private members bill going before parliament this week seeking to provide a legal route to UK citizenship for anyone descended from Chagos islanders evicted from British Indian Ocean Territory in the 60's and 70's.
- ***Baptist Church:*** Current sermon series has been on the subject of inclusion. This coming Sunday will be a 'Picnic Church' event, when the congregation will worship, share a picnic lunch, create some Christmas crafts and decorate the church. Pleased to have been able to host the recent 'Lest We Forget' event and to support the Scouts recent trip to the Battle Fields and War Graves.
- ***Saffron Walden Community Church:*** During their remodelling from April onwards they will be moving to the Town Hall for three or four months. Some other regular activities will also have to be temporarily relocated.

8. *Any Other Business*
No items were raised.

9. *Date of Next Meeting*
Thursday 7th February 2019.

Caroline closed the meeting with prayer.