



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at Abbey Lane United Reformed Church

Opening devotions were led by Caroline.

Present: Rev. Caroline Vodden (Chair), Rosemary Timms (Minutes), Rev. David Tomlinson, Rev. John Goddard, Rev. Jonathan Burton, John Capper, Emma Turner, Kathryn Fiddock, Val Bowtle, Ted Jackson, Margaret Hurst, Elizabeth Tindley, Helen O'Neill.

Caroline thanked Emma Turner for taking the minutes at the last two meetings and welcomed back Rosemary Timms.

The opening reading was taken from Luke quoting the prophesy from Zechariah following the birth of John the Baptist.

1. Apologies: were received from Capt. Katrina Thurlow, Father David Clemens, Bob & Kathy Pledger, Suzan Bouton, Jean Mead.
2. Consideration of the Agenda.  
3 additional items were added: XL Mentoring Update, Election Hustings, Tools with a Mission.
3. Minutes of last meeting.  
The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were approved and signed.
4. Matter Arising and Review of Events
  - **Christian Aid Street Collection:** The collection 5<sup>th</sup> October raised £596 and the URC also had a collection which raised £163. John Capper confirmed that he would arrange a street collection in Autumn 2020. Caroline thanked John on behalf of the churches.
  - **VBS:** Jonathan confirmed that he and some other individuals had stood down from the committee but the current committee was considering a possible mini-VBS in 2020. Jonathan was happy to be a channel of communication.
  - **Chair 2021-2023:** Caroline confirmed that she would continue as chair for one more year and John Capper has agreed to be the deputy chair. We will need to appoint a new Chair and Deputy Chair after that.
  - **Saffron Walden Bike Ride:** Caroline had contacted the overall organiser of this event to express concern about road closures and access to church services, however, no one has responded.
  - **Churches Together in Essex and East London:** We are automatically part of this group but it has not been our practice to send a rep to their AGM which was on 24<sup>th</sup> October this year.

5. Finance

- John Capper confirmed that the balance in hand is £483.58 with one church still to pay their subs. Anticipated expenditure will be for the joint Christmas advert in the press which is usually £185.
- It was agreed to appoint Ged Pearce, subject to his agreement, to be our Independent Examiner again this year

6. Christmas 2019

- **Late Night Shopping 6<sup>th</sup> December:** Caroline advised that we will have a stall together with the Street Pastors this year. The plan is to handout cards with message of hope and a lolly pop this year. CTSW could fund those and fairy lights for the stall if that would be helpful.
- **Advent service:** The service at St Mary's is on 1<sup>st</sup> December at 6.30 pm and all are very welcome to this event.
- **Carol Singing:** The local Baptist churches normally sing carols at the local Community Hospital and the Salvation Army normally visit some of the local care homes to sing carols. (Caroline would check whether they will be doing that this year). The Baptist Brownies normally sing carols at Custerson Court and Audley Court; St Mary's at the Crown in Little Walden; and the Community Church at the OEG
- **Christmas Joint Advert:** Rosemary confirmed she would contact Lisa Knight to ask if she would co-ordinate this again.

7. Future Dates

- **2020 Dates:** The list of dates had been circulated with the agenda.
- **United Service on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January:** Will be at Abbey Lane URC at 10.30 a.m.
- **Agape Meal:** It was agreed this would be on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January (note change of day)** at Friends Meeting House at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m. Numbers attending to be passed on to John Capper please.  
Ted agreed to produce posters for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity events.
- **Lent 2020:**

8. News from Churches

- **Baptist Church:** Supported the Samaritans Purse Shoebox appeal again this year. There will be service of remembrance in association with the St Clare Hospice on the 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00 p.m. and we will again host an East Anglian Children's Hospice Carol Service on the 17<sup>th</sup> December.
- **Saffron Walden Community Church:** On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November there will be an open afternoon in their newly refurbished building between 3.00 and 5.00 p.m. Numbers continue to grow and they have booked the Town Hall for services between April and July to accommodate more people. A baptismal service was held recently and they have started a youth club.
- **St. Mary's:** Rev'd David Tomlinson is moving to Birmingham and his last Sunday is 24<sup>th</sup> November. Heartfelt thanks were expressed to David for everything he has done and for his role in CTSW. He would be much missed in Saffron Walden but our prayers were with him for his future ministry and life in Birmingham. St Mary's Christmas Fair 'Follow the Star' is on the 30<sup>th</sup> November. In March, Rev'd Rachel Prior will be going on maternity leave.
- **Our Lady of Compassion:** Father David had arranged his annual dinner. The youth club was going well. A series of reflections was taking place on the theme of Renewal.
- **Society of Friends:** A wreath of white poppies was laid at the war memorial again this year. They are collecting warm clothing for Quaker Homeless Action.
- **URC:** Their Winterfair is this Saturday – 16<sup>th</sup> November. They have a service of remembrance on 30<sup>th</sup> November and the Guild Annual Service on 4<sup>th</sup> December to which all

are welcome. They have been making up shoeboxes this year and are having some building work done on their church hall.

- **Salvation Army:** will continue to provide Christmas gifts to needy families and to work with the Foodbank and CAB.

9. Any Other Business

- **General Election Hustings:** The 4 local candidates are expected to attend the hustings at the Baptist Church on the 5<sup>th</sup> December from 7.30 – 9.30 p.m. (doors open at 7.00 p.m.) It will be chaired by Paul Parker, the Recording Clerk of the Friends and the town will be leafleted the weekend before.
- **Tools with a Mission:** David Wheeler from the Community Church is eager to set up a local group to collect and refurbish tools and is looking for storage and workshop space.
- **XL Mentoring:** John Goddard shared that it has proved hard to maintain this excellent work with volunteer leadership. So with much regret this may mean that it will wind down over the next six to nine months, ensuring that the current group of young people are supported to the end of the current academic year.
- **Stort Valley Schools Trust:** Jonathan shared that although there has been an issue regarding the theology underpinning SVST a change of approach has been agreed going forward.

10. Dates of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Caroline closed the meeting in prayer.