



MINUTES OF THE MEETING
held via zoom on Thursday 12th November 2020

Present: Rev. Caroline Vodden, Capt. Katrina Thurlow, Rev. Jonathan Burton, Rev. John Goddard, John Capper, Kathryn Fiddock, Ted Jackson, Elizabeth Tindley, Helen O'Neill, Val Bowtle, Ted Jackson David Oelman and Rosemary Timms

Plus for Hope into Action Presentation: Kate Doran-Smith (Hope into Action), Sue and Graham Walker, Hilary Walker, Andy Colebrooke & partner, Mike Felgate & partner, Rufus Barnes and Doris Stacey.

John Capper had agreed to chair the meeting.

The opening readings were followed by a short period of silence.

1. Apologies: were received from Father David Clemens, Suzan Bouton, Jean Mead and Margaret Hurst. Ted advised that this would be his last meeting as he would be standing down.
2. Hope into Action Presentation:
Kate had been invited to share something of the way Hope into Action can work in partnership with churches. The aim being to offer accommodation in a shared house to tenants who might otherwise be homeless or in temporary accommodation. Alongside this the tenants are offered a Christian support package in the form of a support worker, and prayer support. It would require one church to take the lead on behalf of the local churches and to sign any legal documents e.g. Service Level Agreement. A local group have been thinking about this already and it was suggested that leaders ask their churches if this kind of project is something they would like to get involved with.
2. Consideration of the Agenda.
No additional items were added.
3. Minutes of last meeting.
The minutes of the meeting held on 13th February were approved.
4. Matter Arising and Review of Events
The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an initial lockdown from 16th March 2020 and so none of the planned events were possible.
5. Chair and Vice-Chair 2021
Caroline Vodden expressed her thanks to John Capper for stepping into the role of chair this year. Katrina Thurlow confirmed she is happy to take the Chair in 2021. Vice-chair should be someone from St Mary's but John Capper agreed to continue as Vice-chair until St Mary's can provide a representative able to take over.

6. Regular Events

This second lockdown is expected to end on 2nd December but it is not clear what restrictions will remain and for how long.

Caroline suggested that as we would not be in a position to place an advert for our traditional Christmas services, we instead submit both a letter and a united message from Churches Together to the Walden Local. Caroline, Katrina and John Goddard would liaise on format.

In 2021 on-going restrictions on gatherings are anticipated so no plans can be made for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January. Possible suggestion was meeting for prayer virtually using zoom and church leaders would consider this.

7. Finance

John presented the accounts with receipts and payments to date. Ministers had suggested and it was agreed that subs would be paid as usual in 2021 building up a healthy balance with a view to perhaps arranging an event in 2021(?), maybe in the Saffron Hall.

8. News from Churches

BAPTIST : Regrettably Emma, church administrator has had to be made redundant and will also step down from Churches Together. Sunday morning worship via zoom is available. The XL Mentoring project, which has been supporting some of our high school children on a one-to-one basis, is not continuing. Sadly loose ends are being tied up to formally close this project down.

OUR LADY OF COMPASSION : unsure of Christmas services. As members of the society of St Vincent de Paul, they are ministering to elderly and vulnerable in the local area.

COMMUNITY CHURCH : Two Alpha courses have been held resulting in an on line discipleship. Zoom prayer Meetings were tried but were not successful. Also had a New Wine speaker on 'Listening to God', focusing on praying for local people.

ST. MARY'S : still in process of seeking new Rector, may be news soon. Death of Rev Tim Hardingham a shock to all, he will be sorely missed. Live streaming of services now happening. Hope to pre-record Christingle and Lighting the Christmas tree services. Sadly Advent Sunday service cannot go ahead in the planned way, they may move the date.

SALVATION ARMY : the final decision has been made not to open the Hall over winter, to be reviewed in February. Virtual prayer group and Coffee and chat happening. Just started recording virtual worship. Shop is closed at present. Toy Appeal - gifts can be dropped off between 1.00 and 2.00pm at the Hall on 21st, 28th Nov and Dec 5th.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS : worship from home to begin with, Zoom Sun and Wed evenings for 30 mins. Meeting house re-opened and blended worship using Zoom while allowed to do so before current lockdown. No lettings at present.

URC : Zoomed service every week for the WEBS Pastorate churches including Abbey Lane. We are in the process of fitting up the church and Vestry to stream services and other activities. Looking at our Church building in Newport and its future. Our Treasurer and Secretary are moving to Scotland in the near future. Lay preaching student, Tina, has been involved in worship.

Thanks were expressed to Ted Jackson and to Emma Turner for their involvement with Churches Together.

9. Any Other Business - Nothing added

10. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 11th March 2021