

Minutes of the Open Forum held on Wednesday 2nd March 2011

Present: 46 people from 15 churches

Apologies: Lesley Bannister, Ray Delaney, Andrew Dixey, John Bleazard, Chris Ramsey, Nigel Ford, Peter Heard, Jean Willings, John Boardman, Greg Webb, Keith Horton and Chris Barker

1. The Chair welcomed all those attending and also introduced Christine Rogers who was taking over from Malcolm Snow as Christian Aid Organiser for this district.
2. Ian Copeman outlined the history of the Springlands Christian Fellowship. Chris Rowe had set up outreach for children in Springlands in 1991 and this outreach continued. The Task Force prayer-walked round the estate on a regular basis. The Fellowship was small but through their ministry some people have become Christians and some have been placed in other churches. More people are needed to enable the Fellowship to achieve its vision for the area. Woodhall School had invited the Fellowship to meet on its premises and they were working closely with the school. There were many opportunities, but also disappointments, however the Fellowship knew that God was present in what they were doing.

Rev Ian Copeman then opened the Forum in prayer

3. **The minutes of the Forum of 6th December 2010**

The minutes the Forum of 6th December were approved as correct and signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising which did not appear on the agenda.

4. **Marriage Focus Group**

A report had been circulated with the agenda. Volunteers were still needed to man a stand at the Wedding Fayre at Stoke by Nayland on April 17th. Anyone able to help should contact Rev John Clark.

6 **Updates**

- 6a I Spy Easter** – Eleanor Ridge outlined the history of Easter Story and how this year it was planned to hold an event on Easter Saturday aimed at outreach to children. As well as a hunt for Easter characters on the Market Hill area, St Peter's would have all sorts of activities for children, an Easter garden which would form the backdrop for a short play. Kettle and Fish would be providing refreshments. Help with all aspects of this event were still needed and a board was circulated for volunteers to sign.
- 6b Pentecost Praise** - Peter Halden said that this year, rather than hold "Alive on Market Hill", it was planned to hold Pentecost Praise on the evening of Sunday 12th June at St Gregory's, when Mark Melliush, an inspirational speaker from St Paul's, Ealing would preach.
- 6c Men Unleashed** – Peter Sebbage introduced Paul Holgate who spoke about the conference for Christian men which was to be held on March 12th at the Stevenson Centre. He said that the ratio of women to men in church was 2:1. The conference was aimed at equipping, inspiring and empowering men. It was hoped that 200 men would attend. To support this challenging event, women were asked to pray.

7. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions. The meeting approved the report.

8. Future Events

a) – the Lent Course – all churches were urged to support this ecumenical course. The first meeting would be at St John's Methodist Church at 7.00 for 7.30 pm on Thursday March 24th. Subsequent meetings would be held as follows:

Thursday 31st March at St Andrews – session 3

Wednesday 6th April at the URC – session 4

Tuesday 12th April at St Peters – session 5

b) June Forum - the next Forum would be hosted jointly by the Parish Church and Methodist Church in Glemsford, and held at the Methodist Church on June 15th at 6.30 pm for a barbecue and 7.30 approx for the business meeting.

c) Party in the Park - It had been agreed that CTiS would take part in Party in the Park on Sunday July 24th. Any ideas about what CTiS could do should be sent to Chris Rowe [email c.m.rowe@talktalk.net].

9. Any other business

a) Quakers Conference – Sheelagh Ruse's report of her visit to a conference on "The Quakers Place in Churches Together" was shared with the Forum

b) Jennifer Rees Larcombe would be coming to Sudbury on March 19th to talk about "**Healing from the Inside Out**". The programme would be as follows:-

4.30 – 6.00 pm: Seminar: "Exercising the healing ministry"

6.00 – 7.00 pm: Light refreshments

7.00 – 8.30 pm: Talk by Jen Rees Larcombe, with prayer for healing & wholeness.

Volunteers would be required to set up, to help Kettle and Fish, and then to clear up.

c) Sudbury on Show – this would take place on March 19th from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Eleanor Ridge would co-ordinate the CTiS stand.

d) Lin Berwick Trust Dinner – notice was given of a dinner to be held on Tuesday 5th April 2011 to raise funds for the Lin Berwick Trust.

5. Future Vision

Chris Rowe explained that Future Vision was the overall charity, linked with the Scripture Union, which went into schools. There were 4 distinct areas of activity.

- n:vision – lunchtime and after school clubs. 7 schools were using n:vision
- school assemblies
- Open the Book – volunteers go into school assemblies and act out Bible stories. 6 schools are involved
- Life Path – a two day event for schools.

Over a 2 week period, Future Vision reaches more than 1000 children.

Future Vision would like to expand but there is a shortage of money. CR, subject to the agreement of the trustees would like to get Easter literature into every school. If trustees agree with this proposal, CR was looking for 50 people to donate £12 to cover the cost of the literature.

Christian Aid

A warm welcome was extended to Eldred Willey, Coordinator for Christian Aid in Norfolk and Suffolk, and his colleague Yaa who presented a **Christian Aid Roadshow**. The roadshow illustrated how Christian Aid creates sustainable projects in some of the poorest countries of the world, including Malawi, Nicaragua, Zambia and Ghana with particular reference to the eradication of malaria using practical preventative measures and by educating people about the cause and prevention of the disease.

Eldred said it was hoped to raise money by sponsored canoeing down the River Stour – from Sudbury to Bures – on Saturday 30th July. Anyone interested should give a contact address to Eldred (ewilley@christian-aid.org).

The Forum closed with prayer led by Yaa.