



Churches Together

in Sudbury & District

Minutes of the Forum held on 7th December 2016 at St John's Methodist Church.

The Forum was attended by 34 people from 13 churches.

1	<p>Welcome, Opening Worship and Introduction</p> <p>Rev John Boardman opened with a prayer. He then spoke about the work of God at St John's highlighting three main areas. Firstly the church is actively involved with the work of A Rocha, specifically a new reserve at Foxearth (accessed from the road next to Phillips Avent in Glemsford). This reserve is a site of national scientific interest because of the habitat provided for dragonflies and is due to open officially on 13th May 2017. If anyone is interested in being part of regular working parties to maintain the site they should speak to John or the warden, Mark Prina.</p> <p>John also spoke about the recent appointment of Emma Smy, a community worker who will be based at St John's on Friday and Saturday. She is running a drop in on Friday from 10am-12midday and 1.30pm-4pm and 'Who let the dads out' on Saturday morning. Finally John mentioned the Advent course running at St John's on Wednesday mornings 10am-11am.</p>
2	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Jane and Patrick Kohler, Irene Lally, Faith Marsden, Lynda and Peter Sebbage.</p>
3	<p>Welcomes</p> <p>Gerry Higginson welcomed everyone to the meeting and in the absence of the speaker, Revd Hannah Bucke, who was stuck in traffic he gave a brief introduction about her work. There were no new reps to welcome to the meeting.</p>
4	<p>Minutes of the Forum and AGM held on 29th September 2016</p> <p>The minutes were approved by the Forum and signed by the Chairman</p> <p>Matters arising from those minutes</p> <p>There were no matters arising</p>
6	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>A copy of the treasurer's report is attached to these minutes. There were no questions and Peter Heard was thanked for his hard work.</p>
8	<p>CTiS&D's Chairman's Remarks</p> <p>Nothing to add.</p>
11	<p>Future Events</p> <p>The Christmas Tree Festival is running in St Peter's 8th-11th December and will be open Thursday-Saturday 10am-6pm and Sunday 10am-4pm. A number of churches have trees on display.</p> <p>Sudbury Advent Art Trail - the trail is up and running with 46 artworks in 35 different shops and businesses. In total we received over 175 different pictures, all of which will be on display in St Peter's on Saturday 7th January 2017, 10am-3pm. We have also teamed up with Jane Hatton, who is running a guided walk around the art trail on Saturday 17th December, starting from Kingfisher Leisure Centre at 1.30pm. People from the churches are encouraged to join as this will be a great opportunity to talk to others about the Christmas story.</p>

	<p>Pentecost Praise - a service is booked for Holy Trinity Long Melford at 6.30pm on Sunday 4th June. Bishop Martin Seeley will be speaking at this and it will be part of the 'Thy kingdom come' initiative.</p> <p>Agape Cafe - this meets on Wednesdays 10am-2pm at Wells Hall Old School. It is a valuable drop in point for local residents, but the cafe urgently needs more helpers.</p> <p>Grave talk - This is an opportunity for people to talk together about issues connected with death and dying. It will begin at St Gregory's on 22nd February, time to be confirmed.</p> <p>Walking Festival - It is hoped that we will organise a walk to be included in the Suffolk Walking Festival to include churches around Sudbury and to be entitled 'Now and then - a timely walk around Sudbury's churches and chapels. More details to follow.</p> <p>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - this begins on 15th January with a united service at Sudbury Roman Catholic Church at 6.30pm. At this service we will renew the Churches Together in Sudbury and District Covenant and all are encouraged to attend. Throughout the week there will be lunchtime services around the area. Publicity has been circulated with Church News.</p> <p>Church News - Malcolm Snow reminded everyone that if you know someone who wishes to receive church news and who is not receiving it, you should contact him. Malcolm and his assistants were thanked for their work on Church News, the website and the Google calendar of events.</p> <p>Prayer breakfast - A card and gift will be sent to Elizabeth Ellis from the prayer breakfast.</p>
12	<p>Speaker</p> <p>Revd Hannah Bucke is town centre chaplain in Southend. She spoke about the different models of church that have inspired her post, her own personal experience, the context that she found herself in and her response to that context:</p> <p>With regard to models of church, Hannah described the traditional model of church as attractional - inviting people to come in to events. Even Fresh Expressions such as messy church make assumptions about what people are looking for. The advantage of the attractional model is that it offers hospitality, however it is not the sole model. Hannah's ministry in the town centre could be described as an incarnational model, where the Church becomes guest. Hannah quoted from 'The Message' translation of John 1 "The Word became flesh and moved into the neighbourhood".</p> <p>The incarnational model of Church reminds us that Jesus was both host and guest. It seeks to meet people where they are and to journey with them. It is not about church planting, but about 'making God possible for people'.</p> <p>Hannah started her ministry in 2013, having candidated for Methodist ministry on the basis of doing something different. She arrived in Southend with a totally open brief and spent her first days and weeks simply walking around, talking, listening and praying as well as learning to view the town in which she lived with fresh eyes. Her ministry is about building relationships and being alongside people and she has found an understanding of the context essential. Southend is a seaside town, but also a place where poverty, debt and addiction are key issues. Hannah spoke about recognising the signs of these issues, for example numbers of pawnbrokers and betting shops.</p> <p>Hannah highlighted four main developments within her ministry. The first was 'Icons on Sea' an ecumenical group that seek to use the creative arts to promote the Christian</p>

	<p>message, primarily at Christmas and Easter. The aim is to evangelise in a non-threatening way "tell all the truth, but tell it slant" as Emily Dickenson wrote. Icons on Sea seeks to provide space for people to reflect, for the Spirit to move and to present the message in a language people understand.</p> <p>The second aspect of her ministry that has been particularly rewarding is working as chaplain to the Adventure Island theme park. Adventure Island employs over 1000 people and the management are very supportive of chaplaincy work having encountered it in other contexts. In this role Hannah works along a large number of young people and this has highlighted the difficult and complex issues that many face today. Hannah spoke about the importance of being alongside people and showing them that they are valued, as well as recognising that we do not bring God into a context, we need simply to signpost where he is already there.</p> <p>Another two aspects of Hannah's role are Chaplaincy to the homeless centre and being part of an interfaith working group looking at local issues. Hannah also works with the local foodbank and the Street Pastors.</p> <p>Hannah described her ministry as being incarnational, vulnerable, relational, contextual and organic. She has learned that it is important to be open to the people and the context where she is working and she has been surprised by the openness that people have to the Christian message. Contrary to what we so often hear in the media, atheism has not won and people are keen to hear about God. Hannah described her role as being 'not religious, but faith filled'.</p> <p>To find out more: www.icons-on-sea.org.uk</p> <p>Facebook and Twitter - Icons on Sea: www.facebook.com/iconsonsea/ and https://twitter.com/iconsonsea</p> <p>Holiness Journal 'Moving into the neighbourhood - embodiment, sacrament and ritual in urban mission (from 'Holiness and the Body' issue on the Wesley House website): www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/02-Bucke.pdf</p> <p>'Connexion' magazine (Autumn 2015 issue) http://methodist.org.uk/media/1834100/the-connexion-magazine-issue-3-020915.pdf</p>
14	<p>Closing Prayer The Forum closed with the Grace.</p>