



## **Minutes of the Open Forum**

**Thursday July 12<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm**

**At All Saints' Church, Acton, Sudbury, CO10 0BA**

### **1. Welcome & Opening Worship**

Gerry Higginson welcomed everyone and there was a round of applause for Tim Bloomfield in thanks for the BBQ. Caroline Hallett led the meeting in a hymn and prayer and we heard a reading from psalm 71. Faith Marsden spoke about 'Daring to hope', then Caroline interviewed her briefly about her calling.

The Forum was attended by 23 people from 12 churches.

### **2. Apologies**

Frances Attwood, Gill Phillips, Roger Pullan.

### **3. Welcome to new ministers**

In their absence Gerry welcomed Paul Clapham from Living Waters and Elaine Colchin from Long Melford URC, also Frances Attwood who has taken on the role of representative for Our Lady Roman Catholic Church.

### **4. Speaker: Melissa Naish - Sharing the work of Home for Good: Suffolk - A Christian response to the fostering and adoption needs in our county.**

Melissa spoke of her own personal experience as an adoptive parent and talked about the work of Home for Good nationally and locally before taking questions and showing a video. She spoke of the organisation's aims; to raise awareness of the need for adopters and foster carers within churches and encourage individuals and families to explore whether this is something they could offer, to support and advocate for adopters, foster carers and kinship guardians regardless of faith or background and to support and resource churches seeking to welcome families who foster, adopt or who offer kinship or special guardian care. She also encouraged churches to sign up to be Home for Good churches, supporting through prayer, finance and through providing space and a welcoming environment to support families in their area. Fuller notes are attached.

### **4. Minutes of Forum held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

These were signed with one amendment, under item 7 - Paul Clapham's title was amended from 'Pastor' to 'Elder'.

### **5. Matters arising from those Minutes**

None

### **6. Treasurer's Report**

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was approved, proposed by David Ford, seconded by Peter Halden and carried by unanimous vote. Peter Heard was thanked for his work.

## 7. Chairman's Business

Gerry reminded the meeting of the forthcoming visit of Pastor Peter Yuan from the Chengdu seminary in China which has been organised by Friends of the Church in China. He will be visiting churches and organisations in Sudbury on 17<sup>th</sup> July and meeting with church and community leaders over lunch.

## 8. News and updates

- No. 72 - Garden party at Assington on 15<sup>th</sup> July

This event was commended to the meeting. Details have been circulated with Church News.

- Pentecost Praise

This service was well received and there are plans to organise another one next year.

## 9. Your views

Malcolm Hill gave an update on Christchurch. The building is now on the market and 'The Hive' is looking to raise funds to purchase the building for community use. The building is ideal for community use, please do pray for this bid. There is also an application for the building to be designated as an 'asset of community value'.

## 10. Any Other Business

Jeff Lucas and Searchlight theatre are coming to Sudbury on March 26<sup>th</sup> 2019. More details will follow. Peter Halden is looking for a volunteer to take on ticket sales.

## 11. Closing Prayer

Faith Marsden closed the meeting in prayer.

### *Key section of the Churches Together in Sudbury and District Covenant*

*"We now resolve to come together as Christ's representatives in this area, as often as we can, in prayer and study, in prophetic and public witness, through evangelism and social action, to build up and strengthen the church and to contribute to the welfare of our community."*

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