

Minutes of the CTiS Open Forum held on Wednesday 12th December 2012 at All Saints Church Hall

The Forum was attended by 40 people representing 13 churches.

1. The Forum was welcomed by the Chairman, Malcolm Offord

Rev Simon Gill outlined the vision for All Saints (65 new disciples for the church in 3 to 4 years) and the challenges this presented – introducing people unfamiliar with church practices to the church.

He said that once a month prayer walks were conducted round the Parish.

He added that for 8 years he had been praying for a Christian presence at Ormiston Sudbury Academy [previously Sudbury Upper School] and this prayer was being answered with the formation of a Christian Union at that school.

He led the worship which opened the Forum.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ken Steel, Lynda and Peter Sebbage, Rev Greg Webb, Liz Webber and Rev Chris Ramsey.

3. Minutes of October Forum

The minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

Item 8 – Spectrum Courses. EnGp had agreed it would not be possible to host/organise a series of courses in the Sudbury area, but had suggested the Spectrum iChurch training might be welcome in Autumn 2013. The contents of the course were outlined. A day's course could be run at a cost of £20 per person based on finding free of charge accommodation and on people bringing their own packed lunch. The Quakers and the URC offered a venue. 11 people indicated an interest. EnGp would contact Spectrum again for suggested dates.

5. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report showing the financial position as at 4th December 2012 had been circulated. There were no questions. The Chairman proposed that the report should be approved. The Forum agreed with this proposal.

6. Chairman's Remarks

- The Chairman thanked Peter Halden for all the work he done during his term of office as Chairman
- He emphasised the need to have a representative from each church on the Enabling Group. This representative is the channel of communication between EnGp and their church. Any church appointing a rep for EnGp was asked to advise Chris Rowe, the CTiS Secretary.
- I Spy Easter was being planned. Several activities had already been organised but each church had been asked to provide an activity. Ideas for activities for children would be welcome. Anyone interested in taking part in a drama activity should contact Eleanor Ridge.
- Town Pastors was an amazing activity. John Clark reported that there were 3 new female volunteers and one male volunteer. More male volunteers were needed. Frank Marsden had particularly requested prayer, not only from the prayer team, for the town pastors over 15th, 26th and 31st December.
- Sudbury on Show will be held on Saturday February 2nd 2013. CTiS will have a stand, but it was hoped that churches would also take part individually to keep the Christian profile high. Chris Proffitt said he had arranged for 6' of table space for CTiS. Application forms to take part can be obtained from the Town Hall, but it was noted that the deadline for applications was 15th December. It was hoped that Eden's would be able to front the CTiS stand at Thomas Gainsborough School [formerly Great Cornard Upper School] on February 4th.
- There would be a CTiS Lent course which would be open to anyone who wished to attend.
- Jane Kohler would be taking over convenorship of the Healing Group from Lynda Sebbage.

7. Christmas Outreach – Samaritan's Purse Shoe boxes

The Chairman reminded the meeting that communication was a vital part of this evening's Forum. He invited Nena Harding to talk about the Samaritan's Purse Appeal

Mrs Harding outlined the work that had been achieved since the first appeal in 2008. She said that Sudbury had become the heart of the Shoebox operation in the CO area. God, she said, was working in the most incredible way. Lives were being restored and changed through this operation. She said that "God has honoured us and blessed us in this work". More than 11,000 boxes leave the Sudbury warehouse and she herself visits schools and other organisations to talk about those who receive the boxes. She expressed thanks to CTiS for the work that they had done

- Storehouse

It was noted that the Storehouse are looking for two things:

A place where people who have public premises would be willing to set up a collection point. This would involve having a large bucket where people could put donations and some leaflets for people to pick up. It would also be helpful if one person could take responsibility for taking any donations to Storehouse when there is food collected.

Secondly, they are looking for premises in Sudbury where they can have a more permanent drop-in centre and a place to store the food so that they can expand what they are doing. The premises needs to be within walking distance of the town (as most of the 'users' are on foot) and at least one parking space for unloading and loading.

If there is anyone who can help with either of these, please could they contact the Storehouse team at storehouse@stourvalleyvineyard.org.

8. a) Mission Shaped Ministry course feedback

A number of those taking part in the course spoke about the course. Points made included:-

- the course had started from the point of view “are we seeing the churches grow?”. In reply it was noted that Church work was being done by increasingly few people.
- Churches needed to consider the best way of reaching out taking into account how society has changed
- the course looked at the route used to work towards discipleship – and this had worked in the context of football
- we start in the wrong place – we need to go where the people are and start there. We try too often to put our inheritance of the traditional church on other people.
- We need to come out of our comfort zones and go to them
- Churches needed to listen to what the MSM delegates are learning
- The course had attracted people from very different backgrounds
- A number of new independent churches had sprung up. Why had this happened? What is the link between the independent churches and the traditional churches? Are they working together and supporting each other? [It was noted that CTiS to an extent did this]
- We need to ask how we are going to reach out to those who need Christ in their lives. We as Christians have a duty of care to other human beings. [Simon Gill explained that those who participated in the course will be mentored after the course]
- The course was a great challenge with many new ideas – but it was emphasised that in implementing these ideas, it was necessary to be led by the Holy Spirit
- It was encouraging that CTiS had asked for this feedback and was supporting those who attended in this way
- The emphasis was on relationships. Everyone had relationships in their lives and needed to listen to God to see how He wants us to develop these relationships.

b) Updates

- Lynda Mackie reported back on the **Agape Café** which operated on the second Sunday of the month at Wells Hall Old School giving people space to talk to each other in a non-threatening environment. Tea and cakes and music were provided. Christian musicians left their testimonies on the tables. Non Christians were attending. There could be between 10 and 30 people. Consideration needed to be given as to how God wanted the Café to move forwards.
- Roger Pullan talked about the **18-35 initiative**. He reminded the Forum that Dave Gardner had told an earlier Forum that if CTiS wished this initiative to succeed, CTiS must be prepared to put resources into it. Roger referred to the work being done by Paul Tamsett with Fellowship Football and other Fresh Expression activities. He suggested that Paul should be paid for a day each week to develop these initiatives. It would be necessary to raise £6,000 per year. The New Life Church had agreed to find £2,000 and there had been other offers. CTiS were proposing that they should put £250 per quarter towards this initiative. Paul would be mentored by Dave Gardner, and there would be an accountability group involved. The Forum asked about the sustainability of

the CTiS part of the funding. The Treasurer said that this would be possible through the income raised by Kettle and Fish.

The proposal was seconded by Peter Halden and eligible reps all indicated their approval.

- **Explore** - Chris Proffitt reported that the Explore Support Group [Joy and Tim Ayrton, Chris Proffitt, Matt Warnock and Roger Pullan together with Rev Chris Ramsey and Rev John Boardman with Malcolm Offord ex officio] had held three meetings. Andy Beard had now been appointed as Local Development Officer, and has had a training day in Norwich with Chris Ford of Explore, a semi-national organisation, which aims to help schools and colleges help students to learn how to manage relationships successfully. Both Ormiston Sudbury Academy and Thomas Gainsborough School are enthusiastic about taking part and the first session is likely to be at Thomas Gainsborough School around Easter. Part of the session will give students an opportunity to talk to married couples about their marriage. Couples, who do not mind being cross examined on this subject are now being sought and it is hoped to have a training session for the couples in February. It is hoped to have Andy's contract finalised very shortly. Forum was asked to remember this outreach in their prayers.
- **JagFest** – Martin Sparks introduced the subject of JagFest to be held from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm on Sunday 5th May in Acton. It was hoped that this event, at which there would be Christian material available, would allow outreach to many people. There would be a number of displays and an auction of motoring items. Forum members were asked to look out for items that could be auctioned. Martin asked for prayers for and promotion of JagFest.
- **Father's Heart Foundation in Goa** – Chris Rowe showed slides of the development of the building to house the children's home with which her daughter was involved. The progress had been slow and fraught with difficulties. The final hurdle would be the granting of the third permission which would allow them to use the building. Forum was asked to pray that this permission would be given as soon as possible.

9. Any Other Business

- A calendar of future events had been attached to the agenda.
- February 2nd would be the date for the next Christian/Muslim dialogue. It was noted that attendance would be by invitation only – and only open to men.
- Malcolm Snow asked that anyone who had an email address should give it to him so that Church News could be sent to them. This was the vehicle for distribution of papers for the Forum, although the information was also on the CTiS website.
- Malcolm put out an appeal for two people to maintain the Google calendar on the CTiS website
- Tim Ayrton reminded Forum that No72 sells some books and would be able to order books on behalf of people if required.

10. Closing Prayer

The meeting was led in a closing prayer by Peter Halden.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm