



Minutes of the Forum held on Thursday 16th March at Sudbury Salvation Army

The Forum was attended by 33 people from 9 churches.

Malcolm Offord chaired the meeting.

1	<p>Welcome, Opening Worship and Introduction</p> <p>Captain Emma Knights opened with worship which was accompanied by the band and by the choir. She then spoke about the work of the Salvation Army which takes place 7 days a week and includes worship, care for the elderly, Bible study, a parent and toddler group, a coffee morning. The charity shop which is open 5 days a week is there for those who want to shop and for those who need to speak to someone, or need help. She mentioned Maurice who prays on Market Hill every Thursday. She added that the Salvation Army were also responsible for victims of human trafficking. Police would bring victims to the Salvation Army who would transport them to a safe house. She said that if anyone was interested in helping with this work, they should contact her. She summarised the work of the Salvation Army as “Hearts to God and hands to man”.</p>
2	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Irene Lally, Faith Marsden, Lynda Sebbage, Gerry Higginson, Pat Ford, Vi Goodhand, Sue Kistruk, John Boardman, Ann Smythe, Ken Button, Peter Halden, Judith Offord and Cheryl Collins.</p>
3	<p>New Ministers</p> <p>There were no new ministers to be welcomed.</p>
5	<p>Minutes of the Forum held on 7th December 2016</p> <p>The minutes were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman.</p>
6	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ The Advent Trail had gone well. There had been 46 pictures displayed in 35 shops. After Christmas an art exhibition of all paintings submitted had been set up in St Peter’s and the public had voted for their favourite picture. 230 people had been through the exhibition. The two winning designs – one adult and one junior – were currently being printed as Christmas cards to raise funds for Future Vision. It was noted that Lavenham were organising an Easter Art Trail starting 1st April. ✚ The Grave Talk had taken place ✚ There would be a walk around the Sudbury Churches entitled “Churches in Sudbury – Past Present and Future” on Saturday May 13th. It was hoped that churches would be prepared to be open for refreshments and where appropriate, guided tours ✚ The WPCU service held at the Catholic Church had been an excellent service.
4	<p>Speaker: Simon Snell, regional co-ordinator, Christian Aid</p> <p>See notes of his address attached as Appendix.</p>
7	<p>Treasurer’s Report</p> <p>The Treasurer’s Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that Counsellor John Sayers had made a donation towards the costs of the Advent Art Trail, and that a donation for the same event was due from Waitrose.</p> <p>David Ford proposed that the accounts were accepted. The meeting approved this proposal.</p> <p>There were no questions for the Treasurer. Peter Heard was thanked for his work keeping the finances in order.</p>
8	<p>Chairman’s Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ It was very sad news that the URC would be closing at the end of this year. As a result Chris

	<p>Proffitt would no longer be the CTiS&D rep for the URC and would not be able to be the CTiS&D rep on the Friends of St Peter's. Malcolm Offord said that he was already on the committee of the Friends of St Peter's. The meeting agreed that he should be confirmed as the CTiS&D rep for FOSP. He emphasised it was very important that CTiS&D should maintain a good relationship with FOSP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ A new edition of the CTiS&D leaflet had been prepared. Churches were asked to take copies away with them – and get rid of the out-of-date copies. If more were needed, copies were available from Ruth Ridge ✚ Another piece of sad news was that Ken and Christine Steel who had been managing Kettle and Fish will retire at the end of the year. They had done an amazing job and had worked incredibly hard. It was necessary to find new people to take over from them – preferably a team. Kettle and Fish was the flagship of CTiS&D and was very much valued. Prayer on this subject was needed ✚ The Chairman hoped that all churches had given their congregation the opportunity to sign the Covenant sheets to indicate their support of the aims of Churches Together.
9	<p>News and Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Arthur Dagleish said that preparations were in hand for I-Spy Easter which would be held on Saturday April 15th. Easter characters in costume would be on Market Hill. Two more men were needed for this part of the activity. Volunteers were also being sought to run craft activities for children in St Peter's between 10.00 am and 3.00pm. More information was available on the Facebook page ✚ There was no additional information at this stage on Pentecost Praise which would be at Holy Trinity on 4th June at 6.30 pm. Bishop Martin would be speaking. It was noted that the service would be at the end of the "Thy Kingdom Come" week. It was hoped that the service would be linked to this in some way.
10	<p>Your Views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Rev Malcolm Hill expressed regret at the closure of the URC but was grateful for the reception that members had had from other churches in the district. He said that ecumenism had been forced on them but that the URC would carry on in spirit even if only one or two people remained. He said it was a church of freedom, but a church with responsibility. ✚ Peter Sebbage said that he had in previous years organised a Walk of Witness on Good Friday, and was prepared to organise one this year if people would support it. It was suggested that the Walk of Witness should take place on years when I Spy Easter was not taking place. This was agreed. ✚ Malcolm Snow said the meeting should acknowledge the good work being done by the Salvation Army not only in Sudbury, but throughout the country and the world
11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to the Salvation Army for their hospitality and for their music.</p>
12	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>The meeting closed with the Grace.</p>

Appendix

Notes on an address by Simon Snell from Christian Aid – March Forum 2017

Simon said he would be speaking about an expedition he had made to Kenya the previous summer. He brought to the Forum the greetings from Bishop Kanuku and the Pro Cathedral as he had been asked to do.

He spoke first about the Maasai area. He said that that it was a very dry area. Water was not available in homes and rivers dry up in the dry season. Crops are likely to fail and farmers are having to learn new ways of farming because of climate change. One solution to the lack of water was to build sand dams – work supported by Christian Aid. A sand dam is a reinforced rubble cement wall built across a seasonal sandy river. They are a simple, low cost, low maintenance technology that retains rainwater and recharges groundwater. Sand dams are the most cost-effective method of water conservation in dry land environments.



The further one digs into the sand, the more water can be found. This allows the land to be irrigated.

Simon said this was a testament to the partnership with Christian Aid. He added that communities were now able to come together to discuss how to solve problems. They come together and work as a team.

He went on to describe a beekeeping project. He outlined the procedures that were followed by the farmers to collect all the produce from the beehives and how low-grade honey was made and sold by travelling round to neighbouring villages - some at quite a distance.

Christian Aid were now working with The Hive Group who for years have invested highly in research, innovation and training to ensure that the most modern and appropriate technologies for the African Bee are provided to the beekeepers in Africa. The group also completes the value chain by purchase, collection and processing all the bee products such as comb honey, royal Jelly, wax, sting venom and pollen from all the farmers to whom it supplies equipment and services which are then processed into high quality end products. Because there is a lack of equipment, the Hive Group will also lend out bee suits. They sell locally made beehives. Beekeepers are encouraged in this way to operate as a business. Simon pointed out the use of solar panels which were producing electricity at minimal cost.

Simon went on to speak about the project to Empower Women and Girls in Honduras and El Salvador. This project attracts EU funding, and is particularly aimed at indigenous women and girls who suffer from many health problems and from violence. The project was trying to change underlying attitudes. A lot of community training was taking place particularly in respect of maternal health and nutrition. Hundreds of people had been impacted already. One woman said “The work of Christian Aid has motivated us to believe in ourselves”. The canoe event which has taken place on the River Stour raised over £3,100 for this project – which has then been increased considerably by the EU fund.

Attention was drawn to the plight of refugees who arrive in Europe and who are living in appalling conditions. Christian Aid is helping refugees in Greece and Serbia, and continuing to work in the Middle East to support displaced Syrians and Iraqis. They are also working in other conflict-affected countries including South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In Serbia and Greece they are providing hot meals, water and washing facilities, and cash to refugee communities living in freezing conditions. Thankfully, in the sites in which Christian Aid's partners work, refugees have been moved into heated buildings.

Simon drew attention to a Christian Aid event due to take place at the Hyndman Centre, St Peter's Church, Hospital Road, Bury St Edmunds from 10.30-2.00 on Saturday April 8th.

He also spoke about the Diamond Awards for which nominations would be welcome.

In respect of the current East Africa Crisis Appeal he explained that drought combined with rising food prices has left the east and the horn of Africa, especially Kenya and Ethiopia, facing a food crisis.

Some parts of the region are experiencing the driest conditions in 60 years. After two poor rainy seasons in 2011, drought in countries affected has left more than 12 million people hungry and in urgent need of food and water.

Due to the lack of water, some schools and hospitals have been forced to close and people are travelling for miles to collect water to drink. He said that Christian Aid would be able to advise on how to make street or church collections. It was noted that the donations would increase if gift-aided.

It was noted that the Sudbury Christian Aid Group raised over £8,600 last year.



Lastly Simon drew attention to climate change and suggested that churches should set an example in this area. It was possible to become an eco church – an A Rocha initiative. There were only 5 eco churches in Suffolk of which St John's was one. Suffolk County Council also had many green initiatives.

Peter Sebbage drew attention to the official opening of the A Rocha site at Foxearth on May 13th. Help was always welcome in maintaining this valuable reserve.

Malcolm Snow said that

- Ann Boardman had agreed to take over as Christian Aid Organiser
- Christian Aid Week was 14th-20th May and more collectors were needed
- It was hoped to organise a fundraising canoe trip again this year

Simon was thanked for his most interesting presentation.