

Minutes of the CTIS&D Forum – Monday 7th October 2019 – held at St Catherine’s, Long Melford

The meeting was attended by 32 people from 17 churches.

1. Opening Worship

Rev Matt Lawson welcomed the Forum to St Catherine’s. He said that St Catherine’s was a lovely chapel right in the centre of Long Melford which acted as a church hall. Those meeting at St Catherine’s included a weekly toddler group and a monthly youth club. Messy Church required more room so met at the local primary school.

In addition to the chapel, there was the beautiful and historical building at the top of the Green, the Parish Church which was ministering to all those who lived in Long Melford.

As he introduced the opening worship, he suggested that CTIS&D should find the opportunity to share communion together.

The Forum then shared in the opening worship acknowledging that “Jesus is Lord”.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Gerry Higginson, Rev Cheryl Collins, Nicki Dixon, Peter and Lynda Sebbage, Stephen Perkins, Graham Patrick and David Ford.

In the absence of Gerry Higginson, Malcolm Offord had agreed to chair the meeting.

3 Welcomes

A warm welcome to Churches Together was extended to Rev Ruth Ridge as the incoming minister for St John’s Methodist Church and to Rob Parker-McGee the new rector of the Box River Benefice. It was noted that while Rachel Hepburn was on maternity leave, Georgina and Syd Pinches were taking the reins at the Salvation Army. They were welcomed to this role.

4 Minutes of the July Forum and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the Forum held on Thursday July 11th 2019 were approved and signed by the chairman [Malcolm Offord]. There were no matters arising other than items already on the agenda.

5 Treasurer’s Annual Report and Accounts

A copy of the Accounts for the year 1st September 2018 to 31st August 2019 had been circulated. A copy of the Treasurer’s additional explanatory notes is appended to these minutes.

The Treasurer was thanked for all his work as Treasurer.

Graham Gilbert suggested that Fellowship Snooker needed more funds. It was agreed to look at this request.

Rev Faith Marsden said that she would explain later why Future Vision might need the whole £2000 which had been allocated to them.

The Forum accepted and approved the Treasurer’s Report.

6 Annual Reports

The Chairman said that the reports demonstrated how much outreach was being undertaken by the many activities under the umbrella of CTIS&D. He expressed thanks to all those involved in all the activities. He asked representatives of three of the activities to talk to the Forum about their work.

Abi’s Footprints – Gill Soper said the baby bank was a ministry of New Life Church. She said that:-

- Child poverty is a reality in Sudbury
- In the last 6 months they had responded to 70 requests for help following referrals from several different agencies
- Sometimes only one or two items are needed, but on other occasions, every thing is needed

- They supply, in very good condition, baby clothes, cots, stairgates and everything needed by parents with babies or children up to the age of about 3 years
- They are usually able to respond to requests very quickly
- If the parent is able to get to Ballingdon, they are able to choose what they want. If they cannot get to Ballingdon, they may be sent photographs to help them choose, and a parcel can be made up for them.
- Over the last year, the second hand value of goods distributed amounted to £7,500.
- Families are very appreciative of the help given. Often they are in paid employment but unable to make ends meet
- For some, it is the first time they have experienced the love of God
- Abi's Footprints meets people at the point of crisis
- Oasis, a place for mums to meet and enjoy free coffee and cake in a baby and toddler-friendly space, has just been launched in the Stevenson Centre
- The newsletter contains a prayer focus
- The challenges for families are often more than their material needs

A short video on the work of Abi's Footprints was shown.

Number 72 – Sarah Fernandez reported on the work being undertaken at Number 72. She said that:-

- Number 72 is a charity seeking to support all people wherever they are by listening, offering advice, and praying. Their mission is based on Isaiah 61: v1. Their main areas of service include:
 - A drop-in centre
 - Work with schools
 - Pastoral work
- Help with children could include helping a child develop their self- esteem [a 16 week course]
- Adults could need help and guidance with
 - Debts and threatening letters from debtors
 - Mental health issues – pointing out places where appropriate help could be offered
 - Giving help in respect of relationship problems, pointing the adult to agencies that can help them.

Sarah reported that Rob McNeish had been appointed as manager. She said that progress was being made in the areas of debt advice.

With the appointment of a new team member, they were hoping to start to offer specialist support and advice for parents of children with SEN needs.

Tim and Joy would be running a parenting course.

Sarah concluded that the issues they dealt with were many and varied, but that with God's help, Number 72 would be able to reach out in mission.

She led the Forum in prayer for Number 72

Future Vision – Faith Marsden explained all work for which Future Vision was responsible including "Open the Book", chaplaincy work in schools, creation of prayer spaces in schools. She said that with the change of Lesley's hours, there had been a challenge to continue Lesley's work with consistency. She told the Forum that Nicki Dixon had just been appointed to work alongside Lesley, and when Lesley was not present, to continue Lesley's work.

Ian and Liz continue with similar work at TGS. Prayer spaces were being set up in some schools so that there was a quiet space even when Lesley was not there. Faith said there had been requests to set up faith councils to consider ways to share the Christian ethos at their schools.

Open the Book was just starting at Long Melford Primary School.

Faith expressed gratitude for all the prayers offered for the work of Future Vision. She asked for consideration to be given to the release of the whole £2,000 allocated to them to cover the expansion of their work.

The Chairman commented that all three groups were expanding and moving into new areas and thanks were due to all three organisations.

The Forum accepted and adopted all the reports.

7 Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman made the following comments:

- He commended reading all the reports that had been prepared
- He recommended that members accessed and used the "Time to Pray" leaflet prepared monthly by Eleanor Ridge. He said it was an amazing help to prayer
- Since John and Ann Boardman had left, the Fairtrade committee had been struggling. He hoped this group could be renewed and that the town could retain its fair-trade status. The Town Council had agreed to put the subject on their agenda, and Nicki Dixon who is passionate about fair-trade would probably be prepared to help. If anyone else was interested in getting involved they should get in touch with him.

8. Elections

The Forum approved unanimously the appointments en bloc of the following officers:-

Chairman	Gerry Higginson
Vice Chairmen	Malcolm Offord Peter Halden
Treasurer	Peter Heard
Executive Secretary	Ruth Ridge
Minutes Secretary	Gill Phillips
Communications	Malcolm Snow

9 Ratification of Appointments

The following appointments were ratified:-

Chairman of Kettle & Fish	Ruth Ridge
Managers of Kettle & Fish	Andrew and Anita Dixey
Friends of St Peters	Gerry Higginson

10 Future Events

- *Christmas* - Tom Mumford spoke to the meeting about the possibility of holding a carol singing event for about 30 minutes outside St Peter's on Christmas Eve. He suggested that possibly a couple of choirs and the Salvation Army Band might be asked to come. The timing should be when families were still around – possibly about 6 or 7 pm. It would be a witness to and reminder of the meaning of Christmas. The Forum agreed that this might be considered.
- *Lent* – Ruth said it was hoped to run joint Lent courses next year. The proposal was that the first and last sessions should be joint sessions. The sessions in between would be run at individual churches, but using the same material and would be open to others who wished to join in. Ruth asked that anyone who would like to assist in the preparation of the study material should contact her.
- *Easter* – nothing specific had been planned as yet. The Chairman said that if anyone had suggestions on how to give Easter an appropriate profile next year, they should contact him.

Malcolm Snow drew attention to the hard copy of future CTIS&D dates which was available. The Chairman thanked Malcolm for all the work he does with the preparation and circulation of Church News.

11 News from Churches and AOB

- All Saints reported that they had received a lottery grant of £153,000 which would enable them to repair the East window and one other window. This would enable them to focus their attention on other areas of ministry.
- Future Vision was holding a “Prayers and Puddings” evening at Suffolk Road Church on October 14th at 7.30 pm. Everyone was welcome.
- David Rout (Cornard Christian Fellowship) expressed grave concern about the public meeting on 3rd August between the Bishop and the Imam. He did not want to pull the church out of CTIS&D but felt he needed to raise his concerns about faiths who did not accept that Jesus is our Saviour. He accepted that we should love everyone, but felt it was difficult to see where the Islamic faith was leading. He felt he needed to share his church’s concern and asked people to pray about it.
Roger Pullan responded by saying that
 - He thanked David Rout for sharing his thoughts
 - That the object of any dialogue would be to proclaim the lordship of Christ
 - He suggested that all ministers – and anyone else interested should be called together to discuss the issues raised.

The Chairman agreed that this could be arranged

- Peter Halden said there was to be a free concert at St Andrews on October 17th at 7.30 pm.
- Lord Phillips had emailed Malcolm Snow raising concern about the lack of young people and young adults in the church. He suggested that a working group might be set up to share insights and ideas as to how to counter this trend.
The Chairman said that there was already a group looking into this problem. Rev Tom Mumford was a member of this group. However, only 4 churches had nominated someone to attend this group. Roger asked for prayers for this group to get a voice which would be heard. Tom said the group had agreed to spend some time getting to know each other and then they would consider how they could reach out.
- Ruth said that there was a lot going on at different churches. She suggested that consideration should be given to collating information on all these activities so that people would know all the activities being run for them. It was agreed that the proposal should be raised at the next EnGp meeting.
- Andy Jowitt expressed thanks to David Ford for all the effort he put into ensuring that Prayer Breakfasts could be hosted. These breakfasts were a valuable foundation for the week.

13 Time of Prayer

Time was allowed for a period of prayer.

14 Closing Devotions

The meeting closed with the sharing of the Grace

The **date of the next AGM** would be Monday 5th October 2020.

Treasurer's commentary on the annual report

The actual and excessive balance in the bank account is there because there are two cheques drawn in July 2019 that have not been debited to our bank account yet. These were drawn in favour of Andrew Dixey for K&F catering goods and were paid into his bank. They are cleared on his bank account so he has the money but Lloyds suggest that they may well have been charged to another unrelated account in error. Lloyds do not have any way of tracing them — only Andrew's bank have any chance of finding out where they went but of course they do not really have any incentive to do so. Therefore the only action we can take is to leave the money in our account for this new year in case someone notes that they have been charged incorrectly and complains and requires a credit. We will have to put the matter right next August if the money has not been debited by then. The balance I will show in my financial reports during the year will be the correct one for the year, not the inflated one.

We have discussed the topping-up of the sub-accounts from the K&F a/c and agreed to put £2000 in the Future Vision a/c again, but initially only expect to give them £1000 as their balances are good at present — we will look at this again during the year.

£1000 is to be set aside in the Eden's a/c in case they have a shortfall for the property.

£40 is required to top-up the 18s-35s & Fellowship Football & Snooker to £500.

I was anticipating that £1475.52 would be needed to top-up the Events Budget but only £1375.52 is needed to bring it up to £1500.

For the General a/c we had agreed to add £200 to offset the Insurance premium of the Town Pastors but their 48% share has gone up to £248 so we need to make that £250.

This should leave £6051.53 in the K&F a/c — we feel that we should seek to have an opening working balance of around £6000 as we have to consider the future in case St Peters is not available to us for a year.