

## Minutes of the CTiS&D Forum held on Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup> 2024 at St John's Methodist Church

**Present:** There were 23 people from 13 churches

1 & 2	<b>Welcome and Opening Worship</b> The Forum was welcomed by the Rev Ruth Ridge who also led the opening worship. This was concluded by Richard Stanford leading a song about Fairtrade.
3	<b>Apologies and Greetings</b> Apologies were received from Gerry Higginson, David Ford, Andrew Doarks, Andy Jowitt, Judith Offord, Faith Marsden, Andrew Dixey. [Faith and Andrew Dixey were interviewing a potential candidate to lead Future Vision] A warm welcome to the Forum was extended to Revd Canon Simon Pitcher, Rector of Lavenham Church, Sarah Leedham, the newly appointed manager of Foxearth Meadows, Rev Richard Stainer Assistant Priest in the Cockfield Benefice and World Development Adviser for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and to Rev Jim Stewart.
4a	<b>“God and the Climate”</b> Rev Jim Stewart gave us a presentation on “God and the Climate”. The presentation informed us that according to the BBC News <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Last year was about 1.48C warmer than the long-term average before humans started burning large amounts of fossil fuels, the EU's climate service says.</li><li>• Almost every day since July has seen a new global air temperature high for the time of year, BBC analysis shows.</li><li>• Sea surface temperatures have also smashed previous highs.</li><li>• The Met Office reported last week that <a href="#">the UK experienced its second warmest year on record in 2023</a>.</li></ul> He added that <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The year 2024 could be warmer than 2023 - as some of the record ocean surface heat escapes into the atmosphere</li><li>• It raises the possibility that 2024 may even surpass the key 1.5C warming threshold across the entire calendar year for the first time, according to the UK Met Office.</li><li>• Nearly <a href="#">200 countries agreed in Paris in 2015</a> to try to limit warming to this level, to avoid the worst effects of global warming.</li><li>• But it highlights the concerning direction of travel, with each hot year bringing the world closer to passing 1.5C over the longer term.</li></ul> Forum was asked to consider what Christians brought to the discussion and to see how Christian Aid was active in this area. He drew attention to Operation Noah - a Christian charity working with the Church to inspire action on the climate crisis and the Tear Fund - which currently works in around 50 countries, with a primary focus on supporting those in poverty and providing disaster relief for disadvantaged communities.  He summarised by saying that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The world is burning</li><li>• Christians know we are only tenants of this world</li><li>• Amos Trust: There is no planet B</li></ul> He gave us the link to Christian Aid where there is the opportunity to “get involved” in, for example, the campaign for climate justice or the campaign, or to act on poverty.

4b

**Fairtrade**

We were then given a presentation by Rev Richard Stainer on the subject of Fair Trade. Having given us the biblical justification for fairtrade, he explained what Fairtrade is as follows:

- Fairtrade is not a charity. It is all about giving people in developing countries a fair price for what they grow and make.
- The Fairtrade mark means that farmers not only receive a fair price and but they also receive a little extra which goes towards providing good things for their village or town such as new classrooms, proper toilets, clean water etc.
- Fairtrade crops are grown to high environmental standards. Farmers look after the wildlife and the soil.
- This is a long term relationship.

He gave examples of areas of need and cited the working conditions of children working on a cocoa plantation in the Ivory Coast



He explained the value of the Fairtrade premium and the way in which it was used to, for example, set up schools, study centres including libraries, clean water facilities. Care for the environment was also a feature of working with fairtrade.

We were reminded of the fairtrade products we could buy



We were also reminded that it was possible to be awarded Fairtrade Place of Worship status. The requirements were to:



1. Use Fairtrade products wherever possible (at least tea, coffee and sugar) and share information about Fairtrade products with the wider congregation.
2. Integrate Fairtrade into the life of your place of worship, at Fairtrade Fortnight or other times of the year. For example through events, stalls and worship.

It was noted that Sudbury's fairtrade status was due for renewal. Peter Halden had had little response from the Town Council to his request for discussions on the subject. The areas that needed to be considered were

## Becoming a Fairtrade Town

- Action Area 1: Boosting Fairtrade
- Action Area 2: Connecting Fairtrade
- Action Area 3: Fairtrade Changemakers
- Action Area 4: Fairtrade Ambassadors
- Action Area 5: Fairtrade Influencers



He gave us the following link to see how we could get involved, either as individuals or as places of worship:

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/get-involved-in-your-community/communities/>

He suggested that as individuals we should consider what each of us could do and he made the following suggestions:

### What steps could I take?

How about....

- Always buying Fairtrade chocolate when you shop.
- Buying Fairtrade fruit, particularly bananas regularly
- Buying a Fairtrade football next time
- Making sure your next T shirt, dress or pair of trousers are Fairtrade.
- Asking your local shop to stock more Fairtrade choices?
- Telling your friends about your favourite Fairtrade product
- Organising a Fairtrade cake sale at your place of worship



It was noted that Fairtrade fortnight this year would be from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

8	<p><b>Minutes of Forum 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023</b></p> <p>The minutes of Forum 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>
9	<p><b>Financial Report</b></p> <p>A copy of the finances as at 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024 as from 1<sup>st</sup> September had been circulated. This report was accepted and Peter Heard was thanked for his work on this. It was noted that a new treasurer needed to be found as a matter of urgency and church reps were asked to ensure that this appeal went out to their congregations.</p>
6	<p><b>Vision for CTiS</b></p> <p>The Chairman asked the Forum to consider what might be included in future plans. There had been suggestions relating to Easter; a prayer supper once a month had also been suggested so that those unable to get to the breakfast had the opportunity to join this prayer initiative; the possibility of a joint ALPHA course had been suggested; a joint Lent course in 2025 had been proposed; guidance was also sought on the format of future Forums, for example should one Forum include a meal. Officers would be glad to receive any ideas for future events/activities. The Chairman said he would put out an appeal for ideas through Church News.</p>
11	<p><b>Closing Worship</b></p> <p>The Chairman suggested the Forum should close with a session of open prayer in which we should consider all we had learnt this evening. We should pray for each other and for each other's churches.</p> <p>The Forum closed with the saying of the Grace.</p>

The Forum closed at 9.02 pm.