

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HARBOROUGH FORUM

Held on 22nd January 2015

Those Present: Jeff Bonser, Gary Brown, Donald Clinton-Smith, Nick Cook, Mary Daniels, Judith Devine, Maureen Douglas, Brian Kennard, Clare Kennard, Sue Macdonald, Owen O'Neill, John Pearse, Steve Pointer, Sylvia Saunders, James Shakespeare, Mel Stride, Sandra Ward, Rose Williams and Angela Zemlak

Apologies: Sheila Armstrong, Jadz Bower, Margaret & Mike Bowers, James Briggs, Deborah Chaloner, Jo & John Farnsworth, Sarah Hamilton, Lindy Kendell, Jean Molcher, Barry Osborne, Keith Rugg, Alison & David Tomlin.

1. **Opening Prayers – B.K.** opened the Forum. 'Jesus is the Name we Honour was sung and then Mark 14:1-11 was read. This referred to the woman pouring perfume onto the feet of Jesus. The point was that the woman gave what she could and showed her love by doing this. Prayers were said regarding that we love because Jesus first loved us.
2. **Welcome – J.S.** welcomed everyone to the Forum and thanked all for attending.
3. **Report from The Cube (Gary Brown) - Prayer Focus - See Appendix (1)**
JS congratulated all who were involved in The Cube project for reaching the point to be reaping the hard labours to produce such a wonderful resource for the youth of the town. Prayers for the project which had gone far beyond the initial dreams. NC reported that people had given generously throughout and referred to the 'Widow's Mite'. He thanked the Supervisory Board and trustees and the trainer of the Youth Workers and Management. It is hoped that The Cube will provide sustainable youth work for decades to come within the town. Prayers were also said for the youth in the town and for those who may no longer be in the care system.
4. **Minutes of Forum held on 17th September 2014**
 - i) D.C-S referred to his report from the last Minutes. Asking that this be amended to that the Credit Union does not now offer ISA's.
 - ii) SW asked for a feedback regarding Homelessness. This to be on the March Agenda.
5. **Matters Arising from Minutes**
RW reported (in the absence of James Briggs) that there had been a quote from the printers and the CTH Officers had decided to initially have 2000 printed. There would be space on the back cover for individual churches to add their own stickers. This would be issued in the next few months.
6. **Review of Past Events**
 - i) **Carols Vote & Christmas Lights:** JB reported that the Top 10 Carols Vote had gone exceptionally well. This had been promoted via the HFM, Harborough Mail, Churches publicity and the Council had also supported this. A Tearfund Leaflet by Hope UK had been distributed during this time which had included carols and also a history of the WW1 Truce. The Christmas Lights switch-on had been arranged by the Council but they had asked for volunteers from the churches and we had responded well to this. The Christmas Fayre gave another opportunity to vote for the favourite carols and be a presence within the town. The Carols by Candlelight Service at the Baptist Church had been recorded and broadcast on the radio on Christmas Day at 7pm on HFM which had included readings from members of the CTH. JS added that we should continue with the levels of communications with the Council. AZ commented that she tried to turn up to events to get to know people and then it is much easier to approach people if and when needed. JD suggested that a leaflet be produced to go into homes as well as HFM. This to be brought forward onto another Agenda.

- ii) **Home Alone Christmas Lunch** – Mel Stride reported that this had been very successful again with 84 in attendance. There had been carol singing and various activities in the afternoon. A different set of volunteers had been involved this year and it was felt that improvements had been made. 'Thank You' letters had been received and the event had also been reported upon in the Harborough Mail. Plans were already under-way for Christmas 2015. GB reported that a member of The Cube had attended and they had said it was the highlight of their Christmas. Waitrose had been thanked for their involvement with this event and also The Squires Effect who had given out food boxes.
- iii) **Peace Vigil** - JS advised that MD had taken over from Donald Clinton-Smith for the Peace & Justice Group. MD reported that this had taken place on Friday 2nd January between 4:30 – 5pm in the town on the square. Although there were not many in attendance the general public were curious as to what was happening. SP advised that more publicity be circulated for this in future years for more support to be added to newsletters, etc. well before Christmas. CK suggested that another date and time which was more convenient to people could be looked at.

7. Future Events

- i) **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** - NC reported on the plans for this coming Sunday(25/1/15) whereby there was to be a Sunday Service at the Baptist Church. The Junior Church would be split by age into three venues. Prayers had been said for an hour in 5 separate churches throughout the week and this had been well received and would look at doing this again in future years.
- ii) **Lent Course** - JD reported that the deadline for attendance at the Lent Course was 25/1/15. There were leaflets out to complete or this could be done on-line. Hosts and leaders are still required. Thanks were expressed to Dave Kennard for arranging the website for this.
- iii) **Lent Services** - JP was arranging the Lent Services and it was agreed that the Catholic Church would host this with the help of other churches.
- iv) **Good Friday – Act of Witness** – NC suggested that we could revert back to how we used to do this service in the square but maybe like a Fayre with stalls, etc. After further discussions it was agreed to have a sub-committee to arrange this – JS / SP / JB / AZ. The Service this year would be at the Methodist Church at 10 a.m.

8. Any Other Business

- i) Bower House Coffee Morning at the Theatre – 24/01/15 (9 – 12 noon)
- ii) Street Pastor Coffee Morning at the Theatre - 07/02/15 (9 – 12 noon)
- iii) Constitution to be b/f to another meeting but added that it is individual church representatives who are responsible to keep people informed of things which are happening from CTH.
- iv) Gary Brown distributed information and a collection cube to donate monies into for The Cube.
- v) NC reported that Father Owen was to celebrate the 50 years of being a priest later this year. Further details would be available at a later date.

9. Dates & Venues of Future Forums:

Wednesday	18/03/15	Evangelical Church (Room 1)
Tuesday	12/05/15	Baptist Church

- 10. **Reflections on Prayers** - JS reported that last month we prayed for the Credit Union, this month The Cube and next month will be the Street Pastors. This week specifically we have had the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. JS asked for a time of reflection as to what we all use to serve the common good. He read out a creed from the IONA Community. JS closed the meeting with prayers and thanked all for the work in the town and all the agencies. He asked that we push beyond our comfort zones. The Grace was shared.