

Churches Together in Harborough
Minutes of the Forum Meeting
Monday 14 November 2019 at Market Harborough Methodist Church

Welcome and Opening Devotions

Stephen welcomed new attendees who introduced themselves

Andy Murphy led the devotions. The meeting sang 'Faithful One so unchanging', after which Andy read from Luke 21 v 5 onwards. He spoke about how this reading is not very positive but we must remember that we live a comfortable life whilst other Christians are persecuted. We must not be terrified (or afraid); that Jesus will give us wisdom and the words to say. We must be who we are called to be.

When we have disagreements with those whose politics or position is different, what we need to do is to bring consensus, listen to people, change the tone of the conversation and be human. The Church must stand together, be more united, to bring people together. The buildings and structures are only temporary, only God is permanent.

The devotions finished with prayer and the hymn The Day Thou Gavest.

- 1) **Apologies for Absence** were noted on the sign in sheet along with the attendees
- 2) **Minutes of the last meeting** were approved and signed by Stephen
- 3) **Matters Arising**
 - a. Street Pastors Anniversary
The anniversary was very well attended; thanks were given to Andy for leading the service. On behalf of the Street Pastors Mandy thanked the CTH for the ongoing support it receives.
 - b. Prisons Week
The service took place at the Methodist Church on 13 October. James Pickersgill was thanked for his leadership. As the new Anglican Chaplain at the Prison, Emma Higgins was the driving force behind the idea of the service. It was agreed that although this was not arranged by CTH it was a shared event. Stephen proposed and Andy seconded that this become a formal CTH event. The meeting agreed to this being included in the CTH calendar.
 - c. Eco initiatives
The meeting were reminded to arrange events within their churches, inviting other churches to participate and not wait for CTH events. Keep Derek informed so the event can be publicised
- 4) **Communication**
 - a. Prayer Link
Derek is hoping to issue 3 or 4 prayer letters a year, with shared prayer requests. So far he has two requests from Anglicans, 2 from Cube, 1 from OLOV and 1 from Baptist. The Reps were encouraged to ensure a paragraph or few sentences were submitted about future events.

b. Logo

Following the AGM when the meeting requested that the Executive looked at a new logo, Derek went through the process undertaken and offered a new logo for consideration. The comments and queries were positive with some suggestions for text changes on the website accepted by the meeting. It was proposed by the Executive that the new logo was adopted. This was approved by the meeting.

A black and white version of the new logo would be produced and distributed along with the colour one in the next few weeks, and both versions go live with immediate effect. Angela asked that Mikki Longley be thanked for allowing the use of her picture of the town centre which had been used on the old logo. The Executive will send a card.

It was also agreed that the banners created a couple of years ago for events on the square be disposed of.

5) Holiday at Home

Barry Osborne had sent his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. He had sent the message that Christine Pierce from the Anglican Church had offered to become the new lead on the planning team. This was endorsed by the meeting. The Executive would send a card thanking Barry for his service and missional work with Holiday at Home

6) Reports from our organisations

a. Street Pastors

Mandy reported that the Street Pastors had a new Administrator Stephen Morse and a new Chair, Liz Howe.

They are working on recruiting new members and will be doing in-house training. They have visited Welland Park to give talks. Friday evenings have been very busy recently with lots of chats with young people who would like to be at the Cube.

Mandy asked about the food vouchers which only SPs are handing out but they are out of date. The Jubilee Food Bank contact, Jane White, should be able to help

b. Bower House

No report

c. The Cube

Charlotte informed the meeting that the Christmas Party (Silent Disco) for yrs 7-9 was being held at 5.30 pm on 11 December.

Welland Park (yrs 7-9) will be visited on 25-27 November on the theme of Thankfulness

Sunday nights group is going well with lots of questions raised about God and life
We are awaiting a few more volunteers in order to re-open on Wednesday evenings
The AGM will be at 12 noon on Friday 13 December; all welcome; there will be food

d. Jubilee Food Bank

No report

e. Torch

Kevin reported that the Carol Service will be at 2.00 pm on 11 December

A new booklet, Christmas freebie, includes excerpts from Christmas books available to order. A lot of work is being done promoting more churches to become Sight Loss Friendly Churches.

James mentioned the availability of an information workshop for anyone in church who is involved with supporting people with sight loss. This may be welcome teams, AV team, Ministers. Work needs to be done by church members' not just enthusiasts. The workshop will last about 2 hrs. James proposed to arrange a couple of sessions, one afternoon, one evening on different days in the New Year. This was agreed.

f. Justice and Peace

The annual Peace Vigil will be held on the Square from 5.00 – 5.30 pm on 10 January 2020

David Tomlin sent a report to say that the Naseby Square supporters group were planning to meet on Saturday 23 November at the Naseby Square at 11.00 am and then walk to the Town Square for 12 noon where they will have a petition that they hope passers-by will sign. They will also hand out flyers promoting a meeting at the Community Church on 6 December at 6.30 pm when there will be a chance to ask questions of HDC, Police and others

The theme of Fair Trade Fortnight (24th Feb to 8th March 2020) is 'Story Bombing' – to tell the stories of coffee and chocolate farmers to as many people and in as many ways as possible; then to encourage those people to tell someone else about the story they have heard / read. One of the ways we would like to promote this is by making story trails through the town starting in half-term, which is the week before Fair Trade Fortnight, and would like to ask the 5 town-centre churches to take part. It would involve displaying a printed story, or part of a story, somewhere visible to passers-by. Churches further out of town will be asked to use one or more stories during Fair trade Fortnight. More information will be sent to the churches after Christmas.

7) **Good Friday Planning**

Abby Smith and Lizzie Chadwick made a presentation on their ideas for the event on the Square. It would not be a service for Christians but an outreach event. Abby worked at Tresham College and had access to cameras, radio mikes and other equipment which was being offered free of charge. She worked with young people who were actors and technicians and would be available to assist in the event.

The idea was an interactive drama-led event with the theme of 'He meets us wherever at'

It would be relayed to a 20 m square LED screen. There would be drama, dance, songs and worship linked by an everywoman 'shopper' character. The actors would be amongst the audience with bags, shopping trolleys. They would empty their bags to find a stone/rock at the bottom which they would lay the bottom of a cross by the wall memorial or create a cairn.

There would also be a craft activity. This would involve people (adults and children) decorating stones. Abby and Lizzie would continue to work with the Good Friday planning team to ensure they received the support they needed.

The usual distribution of hot cross buns with special napkins and leaflets showing map of churches and their Easter Sunday service times inserted in the HOPE magazine.

Stephen thanked Lizzie and Abby for their hard work.

Stephen then asked the Churches to consider supporting this project by providing funding for the LED screen. The CTH funds would cover the costs of the event itself but would not have the funds to hire the screen. Christopher Brown had received several quotes and the most expensive of which is around £3,600 including VAT and other costs. This would mean each of the six churches would be asked to provide a maximum of £600. There have already been some pledges and there could be more donations or fund-raising. After some discussion the Forum Reps agreed to support the project.

Lizzie and Abby would welcome the chance to visit and speak to the different churches. They handed out a provisional timetable and running order for the day.

8) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The service will be at 10.30 am on Sunday 19 January 2020 at the Congregational Church. The prayer events will be in the following week. Stephen asked Reps to sign up their church to host an event from 12 noon -12.30 pm (see below 9c)

Stephen also asked for a small group to see if arrangements for children could be made. Dawn O’Connell and James Pickersgill offered to be part of the team

9) Any other business

- a. Andy Murphy offered to hold another hustings with the candidates for the General Election at his church. This was agreed.
- b. The question was asked as to whether we should lay a wreath on Remembrance Sunday. It was agreed that the Executive would give it some thought.
- c. Forum reps had signed their church up for hosting a prayer event for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Mon 20	Methodist
Tues 21	Anglican
Wed 22	Torch
Thurs 23	Baptist
Friday 24	OL Victories
Saturday 25	Anglican

10) Dates and venues for 2020/21 Forum meetings were offered all starting at 7.15 pm

- a. Thursday 9 January Congregational Church
- b. Monday 2 March OL of Victories Catholic Church
- c. Monday 18 May including AGM OL of Victories Catholic Church
- d. Monday 7 September *venue tbc*
- e. Thursday 12 November The Cube
- f. Thursday 7 January 2021 Methodist Church
- g. Monday 1 March OL of Victories Catholic Church
- h. Thursday 20 May including AGM *venue tbc*