Churches Together in Harborough

MINUTES OF THE FORUM MEETING

Monday 11 March 2019 at 7.15 for 7.30pm

at Our Lady of Victories

Attendees:

Rev Stephen Haward, Angela Zemlak, Keith Rugg, Janet Smith, Di Evans, Rev Barry Hill, Rev Andy Murphy, John Pearse, Maureen Douglas, Nessa Graham, Colin John, Andrea Kenney, David Nixon, Father Owen O'Neill, Rev James Pickersgill, Derek Williams

Welcome

Stephen welcomed everyone and thanked Our Lady of Victories for hosting the meeting.

Devotions

Canon Owen O'Neill

Owen read from Matthew Ch25 vv31-46 and spoke about the challenge of living out our Christian faith. Maureen then led intercessory prayer.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted on the attendance sheet and a record will be kept

2 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, 10 January 2019, were accepted by the meeting and signed by Stephen.

3 Matters Arising

a) Executive team

Following the Executive reporting on the need for a Secretary and a Publicity Officer, Derek Williams had offered to be the Publicity Officer. Derek's background was as an ordained Anglican who had worked as a Christian writer, editor and journalist.
Janet Smith proposed and Maureen seconded the motion that Derek be accepted as the new Publicity Officer. The representatives of the churches agreed unanimously with the proposal.

b) Holiday at Home

Barry Osborne had convened a leaders meeting and as a result the planning of Holiday at Home was going ahead. Maureen had attended the meeting and it was noted that a follow up review would take place as it had in previous years.

4 Election of Officer

See 3a above

a) Prayer News

As the new Publicity Officer, Derek gave his thoughts about recent and future events and felt that a quarterly prayer newsletter that would be sent electronically would give all the churches information about Church prayer events. If we don't know each other and our events, we can't support each other. He asked if the Forum think that people will respond if asked for information to include in a newsletter. The idea will be to focus on fellowship with all the churches and Christian charities. The meeting endorsed Derek's plans.

5 Recent Events

a) Peace Vigil – Friday 11 January at 5.00 pm on the Square
Twelve or so people met on the Square in silent prayer. Prayer cards were distributed and it proved to be an important time of witness and conversation.

b) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
The daily prayers at different churches were not very well attended with about a dozen each time. It was considered worthwhile. It was agreed that the Executive should look at the possibility of a Saturday event as well as an evening event for those who can't attend in the daytime. James was happy to host on the Saturday in St Dionysius.
The Baptist Church were thanked for hosting the Sunday service of Christian Unity. The Church was full with representatives from all the churches.

c) Plastic Pledge Event
Maureen reported that there had been a good turnout from the public. The HDC were thanked for providing £500 towards the work. The event in the Market caught people's attention. HDC is working with local businesses to improve their work towards reducing single use plastic. The CTH Eco group will be meeting at the Methodist Church at 7.00 pm on Thursday 14 March.

d) World Day of Prayer – Friday 1 March at 2.00 pm at the Baptist Church
The service at the Baptist Church was well attended. It was very competently led by the team with Maureen who stood in for Rose. The service ran smoothly and in a timely fashion which gave it life. It was felt that more people would be able to attend if the start time was changed or possibly hold two events (afternoon and evening) with two different teams to arrange.

6 Finance

Rose had submitted the budget and actual income/expenditure for 2018/19 and the budget for 2019/20. Three issues were then discussed:

i) The budget for the Good Friday event
Plans were underway for 2019 but the group had exciting new ideas that would need funding. If funding in principle was agreed it would mean an increase in subscriptions. The Executive will make the decision on whether CTH could afford to fund the new ideas to be brought to the next meeting.

ii) The cost of the It's Your Move booklets. These were distributed to year 6 pupils at the end of the summer term to help them move to secondary school. The question was asked as to whether CTH could afford them and whether there was a benefit.
The response was that it provided a good chance to meet with the youngster through a presentation. Also The CUBE used it as an opportunity to promote their work and particularly the Wednesday evening drop in. It was suggested that maybe The CUBE could be involved in the assemblies to promote the booklets and their drop-in service
The Methodist Church covered the cost to provide the booklets to Kibworth, Naseby and Husbands Bosworth Schools.
It would also be sensible to ask the schools if they saw a benefit and how many pupils usually have in year 6. The decision as to whether to go ahead with this will be brought to the next meeting. Stephen will order copies for this year if the Forum agreed to continue.

iii) Given the ideas from the new Publicity Officer the Executive would consider the need for a budget.

7 Current and Coming Events

a) Lent Lunchtime Services at the Congregational Church

The first service had taken place led by OLOV with an excellent attendance and over 70 at the lunch. HEC are leading the next event.

b) Lent Study Groups

Di reported on the number of people booked to attend the Lent Study groups. She gave a review of her first time of planning the events.

- What went well: numbers signed up, most town churches involved and the enthusiasm of those signing up.
- Challenges: late sign ups, amount of personal contact expected, mind changing, poor take up in some churches, CTH website down so half were paper application, insufficient leaders
- Suggestions: single contact at each church; start before Christmas to at least get ideas of who will lead and who will host. In 2021 Lent starts mid February

Every other year is still workable and welcomed. Di was thanked for her hard work.

c) Good Friday planning meetings – 28 January, 18 March

The planning group are working hard and have set up a content sub-group and a logistic sub-group. Permission has been given by HDC and public liability insurance of £5 million is in place.

d) Thy Kingdom Come

This is the annual event between Ascension and Pentecost which will be 10 days from 30 May 2019. In 2018 HCC led a 21/7 prayer event in the Old Grammar School. The Baptist Church opened their doors from 5.00 – 6.00 pm each day. Anglicans would like to be involved in any event in 2019, and would like to know what other churches were planning.

e) Christian Aid Week

Janet read out the report from Rose:

Once again we will be looking at setting up the CTH website to include a sign-up system for each of the areas of Market Harborough for people to conduct door-to-door collections. The individual churches will be contacted in the next few weeks by Rose to arrange this and then disseminated throughout the relevant congregations who wish to join in the collections this year. There are also other ways which can be adopted to raise monies for Christian Aid and the materials can be obtained if required. These could include a Big Brekkie pack, Street Collections (Council permission required), Barn or other Dances, Coffee & Cake events, etc; any questions with regards to Christian Aid, then please contact Rose Williams before the end of March.

Following discussion Stephen proposed that churches would hold their own commissioning services for when they expected their largest congregation on the first Sunday of Christian Aid week. This was seconded by Andy Murphy and agreed by the representatives of the Churches. Rose was thanked for her work.

8 Organisation Reports

Bower House

Maureen reported that there was currently an eight week waiting period. Other services in Leicester have a 6 month waiting period. There are about 100 volunteers (50 counsellors and 50 support staff). There is much to be grateful for, with God remaining at the core. The AGM, at which all are welcome, will be on 11 July 2019.

Harborough Action for Justice and Peace Group

Peace Vigil – the annual peace Vigil in January brought a dozen or so people to The Square to pray for peace. The event had been publicised in the Harborough Mail. It provided the usual context and opportunities to have conversations with passers - by, and to distribute our cards with a prayer for peace and the words of Micah 6 v 8 on them. Maureen spoke and prayed with a pastor and his wife from the Philippines

A girl from St Joseph's school and her mum joined us for some of the time. No write up this year in the Harborough Mail.

The next meeting of HAJP is on Thursday 28th March at 7.30 at the Methodist Church.

South Leicestershire Community Sponsorship - SLCS – The re – settlement plan is with the Home Office seeking final approval. Maureen and Janet have undergone specialist safeguarding training recently to be able to work with the family when they arrive hopefully within the next couple of months,

Homeless

Andy reported that the Methodist Council are happy to allocate funds to the homeless project. Stephen would put Andy in touch with Jane White.

Jubilee Foodbank

Stephen reported that the AGM is on Thursday 4 May 2019, 12 noon at the Congregational Church. It has been a significant year as, in response to the increase in scale, they were now renting a depot space elsewhere. Discretion is requested so no one goes to the depot. The same procedures will still apply with food being delivered to the Congregational Church. Ongoing funding will be monitored

Justice and Peace

Janet reported that there will be an open meeting on Thursday 28 March, 7.30 pm at the Methodist Church. The South Leicestershire Community Sponsorship has completed the plans which are with the Home Office. They are waiting for a Syrian family from the refugee camps to be allocated by UNHCR.

Angela reported that over a dozen blankets and double sleeping bags which had been distribute between LESolidarity, who help refugees in Leicester and Syria, and Christian friends in France who are helping refugees in Calais.

There was no report from Street Pastors, The CUBE and the ECO teams (apart from 5c above)

9 Any other business

The website click through didn't work. Dave Kennard has rectified this at some expense. He has offered to review its use in the future.

10 Date of next meeting

Thursday	23 May, including AGM	St Nicholas Church, Little Bowden

Dates and venues for future meetings:

Monday	2 September 2109	Baptist Church
Thursday	14 November 2019	Methodist Church
Thursday	9 January 2020	Congregational Church
Monday	2 March 2020	Our Lady of Victories
Monday	18 May 2020, including AGM	tba

The meeting finished with the Grace.