

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive of FACT held at the Bennett Centre, Vicarage Street

16 January 2014 at 7.30 p.m

Present Rev J Samways (in the Chair) Rev G. Owen , Mrs W Hunt, Mrs M Open ,Mrs A Kemp, Rev J Warren, , Mrs A Steele, Mrs A Vicars- Barber , Rev N Griffin, Mrs R Fenton, Mrs D MacDonald, Rev C Alsbury, Rev C. Walker, Mr. J. Parsons, Mrs. M Ostler, Rev J Nockels, Mr P Macey, Mrs M Sossi , Mr P Craig, Mr Taylor and Mrs J Caudwell

Apologies were received from Mrs D Ellis, Mrs M Lawton, Mrs J Carpenter, Mrs D-A Bryant , Rev. M Weymont, Mr M Dobbs, Rev A Chalkley , Mr. A S. Hawker ,Rev D Brinn , Mr T Harflett , Mrs. D. Stockford , Mr I Crook, Rev N Maxted

The meeting opened with a short act of worship led by Mrs J Caudwell.

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2013 having been previously circulated, were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chairman following this suggested amendment:

The final sentence of AOB 4: [with reference to the appointment of a Youth Worker]
'All members were asked to take that proposal back to their churches to seek a response' would have been more accurately recorded as, 'It was indicated that a small group would prepare a proposal in a form that members could take back to their churches to seek a response.'

It was noted that the Rev D Brinn had been inadvertently missed off the distribution list for some FACT notices.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of 5 September

Alpha courses in the town and at Buckland Dinham and currently at Beckington had had encouraging response. The possibility of future courses is being explored.

It was agreed that Rook Lane was an excellent venue for October's united events. Positive comments had been received about both the United Service and the Riding Lights production. It was further agreed that an evening united service be held in Rook Lane Chapel during October 2014.

The Christmas services advertisement in the Frome Times had been favourably received – 30 churches were included (gratitude expressed to Jim Parsons for placing the advert). Special thanks were due to Jackie Chilvers for her introductory piece. The Advent Travelling Torch had completed its journey: there had been three successful public carol singing sessions: at Sainsbury's, the Station and the Cheese and Grain. The Advent Service and procession of candles, together with the carol singing had, quite literally, been overtaken by the appearance of Jenson Button.

It was suggested that some of the Advent/ Christmas activities already carried out within church buildings could be made part of public outreach eg A Nativity Scene?

Prayers of thanks were offered for an effective few months of united witness.

Financial Report In his absence Mr. Ian Crook presented a written report

Draft accounts for 2013 will be circulated as soon as they are completed. We have invoiced £4963 for two years membership and three lots of adverts. The response has very been encouraging - £850 remains to be paid.

Total liquid assets are £7919, including £3870 in the General Fund.

Thanks were expressed for Ian Crook: his assiduous but non-anxious approach made him the perfect Treasurer; even a perfect treasure...

Easter Advertisement: **Jim Parsons will need detail of Easter services by the end of March.** He strenuously urged the necessity of someone to shadow him.

FACT Website www.fromeachristianstogether.org.uk Peter Craig was thanked for his work. The website is updated twice a week, and was receiving up to one hundred hits per week. Some comments had been received about the font used. **Representatives were urged to ensure links to the FACT website via their church websites and other publications.**

HOPEFrome: Phil Macey reviewed the year's work. Thanks were expressed to Jackie Chilvers for assuming the leadership of HOPEFrome. Concerns regarding the role of HOPEFrome during the Sunday Supermarket had been eased by an email from the Town Council asking for help! And members of HOPE Frome had proved invaluable during the recent December Supermarket. The Coffee Van is possibly HOPEFrome's highest profile success. But it can only appear every fortnight (despite a clear need for more frequent appearances). It is only due to the dedication of a relatively small number of dedicated volunteers that it operates at all. HOPEFrome's questions for 2014 are 'Are we doing the right thing?' 'In the right way?' HOPEFrome had been going for seven years. (The rest of the country have caught up by reconvening HOPE 14) Clearly there is a need for new blood (most of those involved have been there for seven years!) HOPEFrome request that churches grant them an opportunity to come and talk about the things they do, with a view to galvanizing support and recruiting more active participation.

Prayer was offered for continuing encouragement and wisdom.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity : Daily Prayer service at St John at 9.00 am ; invitation to join local congregations at weekday services; Pulpit Exchange on Sunday 19 January. All details on FACT website.

Lent 2014

Lent Lunches will take place at Christ Church Hall every Wednesday in Lent at 12.45 pm, beginning 5 March. Cost: £3.00. There had been a suggestion that meals could be simpler, without lavish salad accompaniments. Profits will be divided between Embrace the Middle East www.embraceme.org and HOPEFrome. Janet Caudwell will be contacting church groups to finalize arrangements. A brief talk based on Lenten hymns will be given at each lunch.

Lent Course: it is suggested that FACT groups follow *Saints At Prayer*, based on the Lord's Prayer. A launch meeting will be organized before Lent. Leaders' booklets would be funded by FACT. Individual booklets available for purchase.

Lenten Carbon Fast: committee members were urged to consider taking part in this. Details at www.lisforlifestyle.com

A suggestion from Colin Alsbury for Lent 2015: to pick up themes generated by the commemoration of Magna Carta which will be a national focus for 2015 and has strong links with Frome.

Christian Aid Week 11-17 May: it was hoped that groups could collect at Sainsbury's throughout the week again this year, in addition to any street collections which individual churches would organize.

Pentecost 2014

It was suggested that rather than meeting in the park and marching to a church for a service, we explore all congregations meeting centrally (by Cheese and Grain? Market Place?) following morning services, for gathering of praise and witness followed by a picnic.

Frome Festival 2014

- The following events had been booked featuring Simeon Wood (www.simeonwood.com) Opening concert at Merlin Theatre Friday 4 July, Soul Café at Rook Lane Chapel Tuesday 8 July. This is a FACT contribution to the Festival, with nothing for us to organize. (
- The Festival Feast on Saturday 5 July is crucially dependent upon HOPEFrome for setting up, litter picking and clearing away – it is important FACT members support this event. The Festival director was at pains to ensure that the Simeon Wood dates did not clash with the Feast to avoid a clash of interests.

Youth Work

The 'FACT and Christian Youth Work in Frome' paper that had been circulated was discussed:

1. The urgency of addressing the issue was unanimously recognised – congregations are aged and there is a significant gap between the life of the churches and the younger generation.
2. Notwithstanding that, fruitful links have been established with some young people in a number of churches (Beckington, Hardington Vale, Trinity and others) and in the past months there are young people who have made a commitment to Christ. It is crucial to build upon this.
3. If we can effectively support this work *together* (without compromising the work of individual churches) the outreach will be more fruitful. An important issue in effective young people's work is creating a 'critical mass' where they can encourage one another. – together we need to support these 'meeting places'.
4. The schools (especially Frome College, Sellwood and Oakfield) were acknowledged to be vitally strategic and offer an initial focus for FACT's support – the current proposal is for 3hrs a week
5. Clarification was urgently needed over the precise details of the Job Description, employment contract and CRB requirements (the last both for the worker to be employed and for all participating members of FACT)
6. There are sufficient funds already existing in FACT which the Trustees could administer to support this work and individual churches/individuals have written to pledge their support for FACT's involvement in youth ministry
7. **It was accepted that taking this step would require wisdom, grace and trust among FACT members..... and prayer.**
8. The FACT Executive unanimously commended:
 - that all member churches support in principal the proposal to establish a Youth Worker post – 'we have to start somewhere'.
 - A small group from FACT clarify important details regarding job description, employment legislation and CRB matters.
 - FACT would not be recognised as an 'employer' – this responsibility to be carried by a church (in this initial instance Trinity Church).
 - The FACT Trustees would offer financial support for the schools' element in the work as recommended by the Executive.
 - The shape/direction of youth ministry must be seen as dynamic and open to change, with FACT lending encouragement through prayer, wisdom and resources (personal and financial).
 - This is the first step in the journey.

Wider Youth Issues.

1. Chris and Miriam Hare had joined other members of Christian groups in active ministry at the YMCA.
2. Glenda Collier (GCollier@mendipymca.org.uk) organises volunteer help in the community for YMCA and wants to hear from anyone interested in serving in this way.
3. Jim Parsons reported on the work currently being completed on the cottage at the Dissenters' Cemetery which is being converted into two flats for the use of young people supported by YMCA.
4. Members were urged to support Get Sported, the Christian Sports group which had its roots in Frome and was now flourishing further afield. A planning meeting is being held at The Woolpack, Beckington on Tuesday 4 February from 5.30-7pm

News of Other Events with FACT Involvement:

- 0'Life begins at 70' workshops 25 September, 23 October, 27 November run by Dorothy-Anne Bryant at Frome FC
- Separate Men's/Women's events are being planned

Church events

2 February Teddy Bears Picnic 3.00 pm Wesley Church

First half of 2014 St Mary's 150 years celebration
Second half 2014 St Katharine's East Woodlands 300 years celebration

AOB

Details of Christian groups active in the Frome area but not affiliated to FACT was sought.

The next meetings

Leaders' Meetings: the Bennett Centre 12.30 pm 6 March, 3 July 2014

AGM 1 May 2014 7.30 pm Bennett Centre (followed by meeting of Executive)

The meeting ended with ended with *Father we adore you*, followed by the Grace.