

Date: 7 November 2014

Present:	Mrs J Caudwell Mr J Nockels Mr A Wyatt Rev J Samways (Chair)	Mrs J Carpenter Rev M Attwood Mr G Owen Mr P Craig (Secretary)
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Apologies:	Rev A Chalkley Rev C Alsbury Rev D Brinn Rev C.Walker	Mr I Crook Mr N Cooper Rev N Maxted Rev N Griffin
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From: Mr P Craig

Subject: FACT Leaders' Meeting November 2014

Date of Meeting: Thursday 6 November 2014

Time: 7.30pm

Location: (with grateful thanks to Colin and Janet) St John's, Frome

## 1 Welcome

John welcomed us and thanked everyone for attending. This meeting was effectively a Leaders' pre meeting ahead of the "Vision" Executive Meeting in January 2015. John opened the meeting in prayer and read Philippians Ch 2 verses 1-5. We joined together in prayers for Colin and his family, Nick, Bryce and the Methodist churches in the area.

## 2 Current Issues

### 2.1 Christmas Services Advert

Please email details of Christmas Services to be advertised in the Frome Standard again to Jim Parsons as soon as possible.

### 2.2 Christmas Light switch-on and Advent Service

Janet Caudwell is preparing a timetable for the 2014 Advent Light Relay and will publish it and send it to Peter to add to the website. On Friday 28 November there will be a 'Darkness to Light' service at St Johns, probably at 6.15 (tbc) prior to the switching on of the lights (expected to be at 7.00pm). Details of planned FACT Carol Singing events should be emailed to Janet who is co-ordinating them. A *WONDERFUL* invitation has been received to sing carols in the Sunday Christmas market on Sunday 7 December at 2pm in Westway near the Co-op. Do invite friends along.

### 2.3 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Sat 17 – Sat 24 January 2015)

A number of pulpit swaps have been arranged by Jim but he has yet to hear from some churches about their wishes and from preachers available. **Please contact Jim asap.** Through the week there will be a daily time of prayer at 9am in St John's Church.

## 2.4 Lent lunches and groups

John is to invite suggestions for Lent course material and with John Nockells will then make a proposal for others to comment on. Plans for lent lunches are also in hand. Jim proposed, and it was agreed, that HOPEFrome and the Middle East charity Embrace will again benefit from the surplus.

## 2.5 Pentecost

An open air service is again under consideration. It had been hoped Ward Jones could be the speaker but he is unavailable on that day. Ward is retiring in summer 2015. A service has been planned on Sunday 26 April at 6.00pm at Wesley to mark this occasion.

## 2.6 Frome Festival

The Frome Festival have agreed that FACT should organise a “Songs of Praise” in the Cheese and Grain on the evening of Sunday 5 July at the beginning of the Festival. This is a marvellous opportunity for FACT – please pray it becomes a ‘tradition’.

## 2.7 Hospital Rota

We are indebted to Michael White who has published a rota to the end of 2015.

## 2.8 Website

Peter requested that any items for the website should be forwarded to him in an “editable” form (i.e. non PDF) to make it easier to publish – Peter will create pdfs as required.

## 3 Vision

3.1 John read Revelation Ch 3 v1-6 (the lectionary reading for today (6/11/14) and asked what relevance does this have for the churches of Frome. A fascinating, honest and creative discussion ensued. Clearly, it lays down a challenge for us all. How can we best support each other? How can/should we ‘wake up’ and present the gospel to Frome?

3.2 A number of ideas were tabled and discussed to varying extents:

- a) “Fresh Expressions”
- b) “Sunday Night Live” perhaps held in the local Costa
- c) Leaders’ socials
- d) Informal worship/prayer at lunchtimes in strategic places
- e) An annual missional event.

3.3 The idea of letting buildings go, becoming “unfettered by buildings”, was discussed; experience suggests that it can lead to a greater sense of being “church”. Equally we were reminded of the vital role buildings play and that investing in the right buildings can also be the right thing to do e.g. Trinity’s current proposals.

It was acknowledged that mission in the broadest sense, engaging with the community in fresh ways to transform lives, has to be the primary purpose of the Church.

3.4 David Brinn and Andrew Chalkeley submitted some thoughts to reflect upon regrading the priorities/purpose of FACT and each resonated with the discussion:

a) David Brinn:

- I'm not sure what I see FACT as at moment. We've been an organisation which has constantly been changing and evolving and that's good.
- I welcome the prayer meetings and the shared social events (with the caveat that I don't agree with single sex events!)
- I welcome the movement of HOPE back to FACT and think that will pay dividends on getting it back to where it came from.
- I would welcome one big project a year of an outreach kind like the Olympic Cafe. It of course could never be that big. And perhaps that was the point where FACT got too big and although it was I believe absolutely the Lord's plan to do that for that one moment, it is right we have scaled back.
- I think FACT needs to decrease so churches can increase ( to paraphrase John the Baptist ) I feel we need to understand each other's views more and realise that no matter what we hope for, organic unity isn't coming in our life times or perhaps ever. That isn't a bad thing. I firmly believe that different churches can provide a home for different people and will attract different people.
- FACT exists therefore to be a hub for us to be together and show we are one church made up of many churches.
- I'd love to see "cross talk" back it showed out maturity in our relationships and a willingness to show the world we could disagree and still be brothers and sisters in the Lord.
- I think this type of mature ecumenism was a strength of FACT - we had moved beyond the "service followed by tea" which epitomises ecumenical groups in many areas.
- Therefore, in summary, more of that mature challenging stuff would be my vision for FACT.

b) Andrew Chalkley:

- Our priorities should be mission and repositioning our collective workload accordingly.
- I am beginning a discussion process of beginning to join up different churches youth work, so perhaps we might in the town join up small groups with a broad strategy?

3.5 Perhaps two phrases summed up so much of the discussion:

- a) Beyond the walls? – the title of a book Marie referred to, underlining the importance of engaging with the community.
- b) 'Raw, Real and Radical – a phrase someone offered as a challenge to our new Bishop in response to the question he has everybody: 'What sort of Bishop do you think God is calling me to be? We agreed our discussions reflected a similar desire for the role of FACT/all the local churches.

'And all the people said 'Amen'. ' We pray that it will be so.