

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



A thousand years of God's love in Suffolk

Minutes of the Forum meeting held in Pilgrim's Kitchen on Wednesday 30 November 2022

Present: Canon Matthew Vernon (Chair), Sarah-Jane Allison, Susan Cockram, David Eaton, Fiona Knapp, Robert Lant, Louise Martin, Pam Pitts, Barbara Pycraft, Liz Rowlands, Alice Sheepshanks, Terry Stark, James Stark, Margaret Steavenson, Margaret Wheeldon, Doreen Young

Observing: Christopher Andrews, Hugh Steavenson

Not-attending: Carol Arnold, Dominic Holmes, Rev Sarah Geileskey, James Knowles, Jane Leung, Jane Movley, Anita Rooney, Karen Smith,

1. Welcome: Canon Matthew opened with a prayer on St Andrew's Day

2. Apologies: Canon Philip Banks, Margaret Bond, Cedric Catton, Paul Elkin, Gray Elkin, Dean Joe Hawes, Sue Hughes, Alex Knock, Sandie Lant, Jane Olive, Kathryn Mitchell, Tim Parsons, Liz Steele, Louise Stewart

3. Minutes: The Minutes of 28 September 2022 were approved with a minor amendment and duly signed.

Matters arising –

Benedict and the Cathedral – work is ongoing with Canon Michael Robinson and Canon Matthew Vernon with the assistance of a small group from the congregation which includes Chris Andrews, Andrew Todd, Penny Bentley, Rosemary Austin, John Parr, Lesley Barlow, Valerie Moore and Susan Knowles. They are looking at areas around hospitality and accessibility, how we run meetings, contemplative practice, prayer and styles of prayer. Also drawing Ignatian wisdom and other traditions as well as Benedictine wisdom.

Developing Cathedral Culture – following up on the questionnaire are Doreen Young, Sarah-Jane Allison, Fiona Knapp, Kim Judge and Kate Hibbert. In January a safeguarding Sunday will be held. Kim will research other surveys in this area and Sarah-Jane will look at other cathedrals and how they compile questionnaires.

4. Cathedral Governance Changes and the role of Forum – Matthew issued papers before the meeting on the constitution and statutes. Chapter has approved our proposal. Those present at the meeting were asked to consider who they thought they represented on Forum, both internal and external to the Cathedral? Chris Andrews encouraged us to think about the gaps of who is not represented, also recognising who do we represent that no-one else does?

Internal representation: 8am, 9am, 10:30am, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Evensong congregations, Lego, Flowers, Welcomers, Concert Stewards, Guides, St Edmundsbury Singers, Wardens, Head Verger and Vergers, Servers, Shop, Tourist Information Point, Learning Hub, Children and Young Families, Coffee Morning, Friends of the Cathedral, Friends of the Cathedral Choir. Staff, Chapter, Chief Operating Officer, Parish Giving, Patrons, Pastoral Support Team, Mothers Union, Yard Project, Choir Parents (past and present), Kagera, First Tuesday Lunch, Parish Teas, Warm Space, St Edmundsbury School Governors, Mindfulness, Electoral Roll, Christian Aid.

External representation: Visitors, exhibition and event attenders, concert and recital attenders, performers, Bury Bach Choir, Suffolk Sinfonia, Spiritual Directors, Artists, Cathedral Art Group, Bury Art Society, Fornham 03 Art Group, U3A, Bury Concert Series, Fair Trade partnership, Churches Together, Abbey 1000, Bury Writers, Homeless and vulnerable visitors. Local schools – Culford, King Edward VI, other parishes, other church attenders, Bury Drop In, Hope into Action, Retired Clergy.

Implications for the size of Forum. It may be that we already cover the majority of areas and so Forum does not necessarily have to grow too much. Occasionally young members have been invited but it is tedious for them– why not have a different meeting for young people? The token person in a group has to work really hard to sustain their interest and be heard. Better to include a large number of young people in a meeting. Informal occasions are really helpful here e.g. bowling, sleepovers and choir socials and tours. There is already a vibrant Young worshippers group. Suggestion that staff – eg Heads of Department – could inform and support Forum especially where they have involvement with the congregation. e.g. Naomi Sturges and worship material.

5. Dean's Report and Financial Update. Matthew reported that Dean Joe passed on his thanks to all those involved with the Christmas Market where over 11,000 people attended in 3 days. The recent St Edmund weekend was also well attended including sung Vespers, Lecture, light show, two new Canons being installed and welcomed. The Warm spaces project now occurs on Thursdays between 10-3pm in the old library, supported by 2 members of staff and volunteers in the lunch break. This is starting to be used and has been publicised across the town including via Churches Together. Large numbers attended the Advent procession and 11 young people took first communion last Sunday. Philip Banks wished to highlight that we have started reading from the Rule of Benedict at Evensong and Evening Prayer. The lighting of the tower has evolved so that it can be controlled electronically rather than physically changing filters. Coming up on 6th Jan – a celebration of Ukrainian Christmas. On May 6 King Charles' coronation will take place. Pilgrims Kitchen will be closed for boiler repairs in the New Year from 3pm on 31 December for first week of January.

Sarah-Jane reported that at the end of this year it will look like we have a large surplus, however the £70,000 surplus has actually been spent on renovating 3 Crown Street which in accounting terms is capitalised so does not show in the Profit and Loss. We are actively applying for grants for next year. An £86,000 deficit is budgeted for next year. In January an application for the Sustainability fund is to be made. Funding is also being sought from music trusts, and constant applications are being made throughout the year. The recent Gift Day had a £20,000 budget and we have received £21,000 to date. Thanks to all who have donated

so generously in these difficult times. Gift day letters were posted rather than emailed to encourage uptake using the new database Church Suite for a mass mailout – it was acknowledged that there had been errors, but this highlighted the need for the office to be informed if people die or move away. A notice to remind the congregation of who to contact will therefore be put in the weekly bulletin.

Why was there a lack of service sheets for the Advent procession? This was down to a reliance on past numbers attending a similar service and is always open to fluctuation, it is not a deliberate attempt to save printing costs. Request for Hymn numbers to be displayed even if they are in the booklets can be addressed but it is hard to do once a busy service, like the Advent procession, is underway. All to note if they are able, that worship booklets can be downloaded from the website in advance and either printed or read on phones during the service.

There will be a slight delay with the chairs launch – new date to be advised, possibly the Theo chair will be introduced before the Edmund Chair. Pews will be sold in one and two seater versions with reclamation carried out by Rough Stuff Oak. Some will be made into chopping boards and sold to congregation members before being made available to the public.

6. Missionary Giving and Social Action update

An update was sent before the meeting – if there are any charities or good causes which need supporting please get in touch with Canon Matthew Vernon or Sue Hughes. In particular suggestions are requested around the area of inclusivity.

AOB: Quantity of Service Sheets at services, Pam Pitts mentioned that Max Osborne will speak on Christian Unity on 15 January at 6:30pm at the Bridge Church, on the 7 February we will celebrate 25 years of First Tuesday lunch – all welcome from 12noon onwards.

The meeting finished with prayers at 7.57pm

Louise Martin/November 2022

Forum dates

2023: Wednesday 25 January, APCM Tuesday 25 April, Wednesday 21 June, Tuesday 26 September, Tuesday 21 November.

All will be held at 6:30pm in Pilgrim's Kitchen.