Minutes of the FORUM

Wednesday 4th November 2026 7.00pm
QVSR Seafarers Centre, Felixstowe

	Present	Apologies
Boost		Josh Hunt
Christ Church Felixstowe		
Convent of Jesus and Mary		
Compass		
Falkenham St Ethelbert's		
Felixstowe Methodist Church	Rev Paulson Devasahayam, Sue Hockenhull (Secretary), Robin Pattinson, Mary Pattinson, Diana Robinson, Jill Tempest	Gemma Saxton
Felixstowe United Reformed Church	Rev David Rees, Brian Cutler	
Hope Trust		Tracy Hopkins
Maidstone Road Baptist	Shonaidh Marsh, Andrew Marfleet, Debby Marfleet, Corinne Stockdale	
Old Felixstowe Parish	Rev Chris Hood	Jean Macpherson, David Jennings
Quakers - Religious Society of Friends	Susan Morton	Annette Killworth
Ranelagh Road Christian Fellowship		Christine Lee, Colin Lee
River of Life Church	Pastor Rob Payne	
St Felix, Roman Catholic	Father David Croucher	Father Michael Smith, Angela Ashby, Stephen Badcock
St John's with St Edmund's	Rev Penny Brinkley (Moderator), Rob Watson, Charles Elliott	Rev Helen Rengert
St Mary's, Walton		Rev Georgina South
St Martin's, Trimley	Nina Davis, Mark Davis	
St Philips, Wadgate Road		
The Salvation Army	Jackie Fincham, Angela Barbrook	Martin Saxton
QVSR Seafarers Centre/Felixstowe Port	Alexander Campbell (CEO), David Pepper	
Stella Maris	Rev Richard Jones, Adrianne Jones	
Mission to the Seafarers	Darrell Fishbeck	

1. We were welcomed by Dave Pepper (Chaplain QVSR) & Alex Campbell (CEO QVSR) to the Seafarers centre The Centre is now 50 years old. There is now a great team of Chaplains working at the Centre. They are keen to reconnect with the Felixstowe community and we are invited to use the space "as a secular place but also as a sacred space".

2. Opening worship was led by Darrell Fishbeck (Chaplain Mission to Seafarers).

3. Rev Penny Brinkley as Moderator welcomed us on behalf of CTF.

4. Attendance and apologies were recorded as shown.

5. The minutes of the previous Forum meeting held 1st June 2026 had been circulated and were approved and signed.

6. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
a) Rev Helen Rengert had raised a vision for a 24/7 prayer space in the town. Discussions are on-going and it is hoped to find a suitable secular space.

b) Rob Watson had invited churches to take a service at the Centre. There is now a regular monthly service at the Centre – "Harbour Hope" last Sunday of each month at 6pm. to which everyone is invited.

c) It was noted the Ipswich Fairtrade Shop had moved to Felixstowe in August on a 6 month lease at 130 Hamilton Road. They are also able to come out to groups & events.

7. **Moderator's Report**
Rev Penny Brinkley reported that since the last meeting in May:
a) CTF prayers have continued, although small turnout at the last one in September at St John's. Next year we plan four quarterly meetings over the year (see below).

b) On the Ministerial front:
i) We said goodbye to Rev Enid Pow who has retired due to ill health. Rev Georgina South, in her final year of curacy, is taking on oversight until Easter at Walton & Trimley. Processing has begun to appoint a new Minister. We were asked to hold them in prayer as this process takes place.
ii) David Croucher was welcomed as Deacon at St Felix.
iii) Salvation Army have a new Minister – Major David Woodman.
iv) Ministers continue to get together with the next one in the New Year.

c) Advent: So far we haven't organised a book study as we have lost the venue in town (Evolve Cafe) and churches are busy.

d) We are still looking for more representatives to serve on the Steering Group and would encourage each church to be represented.
In May 2027 Rev Penny steps down as Moderator having served 3 years according to our Constitution requirement, so we need someone to take on that role.

e) The Seafarers Centre were thanked for agreeing to host the Forum meeting.

8. **Forthcoming Events**
a) Saturday 19th December from 11.30am we are planning a Come & Sing Carols at the Triangle. The Salvation Army Band will join us at 12 noon.

b) Week of Prayer 18th -25th January 2027
i) Pilgrimage Saturday 16th January 10am starting at St Mary's. It was suggested another trail from River of Life Church to meet together at Salvation Army for refreshments.

ii) CTF Prayers at St Felix Monday 18th January at 2.30pm

iii) Unity Service at St Andrews 3pm. Speaker tba.

iv) (It was noted a final service at URC Saturday 23rd January 11am. Our thoughts & prayers were given to the Ministers & congregation as they prepare to close.)

c) **Lent Courses**
Numbers had been declining for the ecumenical film courses (although good attendance at St Peter & St Paul). Perhaps we should take a break from a united course, allow churches to do their own Lent studies and then reflect?

d) **Easter Services**
i) Good Friday at the Triangle Friday 26th March 11am. Speaker: Pastor Rob Payne (River of Life).

ii) Sunrise Service Sunday 28th March. Speaker: Rev Wendy Smith.

e) **CTF Prayers 2027**
i) Monday 18th January 2.30pm at St Felix
ii) Thursday 15th April 10.30am at FMC Trinity
iii) July evening at St Nicholas tba
iv) Wednesday 13th October 11am at RRCF focussing on the persecuted church (Open Doors).

9. **The Chaplains at the Seafarers Centre**
a) **Deacon Rick Jones is Catholic Chaplain for Stella Maris** which has 22 UK Chaplains with a support team in London.
Rick, formerly a police officer, was appointed May 2026.
He covers seven Ports in East Anglia.
Their role is to give a welcome & support in difficult situations.
Seafarers need our prayer & we were asked to pray every Sunday for those visitors to our Port, those who work at sea & those who Minister to them.

b) **Darrell Fishbeck is Chaplain for Mission to the Seafarers (Anglican).**
Darrell is from Texas growing up in an evangelical bible belt. In 2021 he married an English girl & moving to Felixstowe was a fresh start.
He enjoys working ecumenically with the other chaplains.
Coming from USA he can relate to seafarers being far from home.
The QVSR Centre provides a safe place for seafarers & a place to unload problems.

c) **Dave Pepper is chaplain for QVSR (Queen Victoria's Seamans' Rest, a Methodist Chaplaincy).**
Dave covers Felixstowe & some of Ipswich.
He is recently retired and has worked in cross-cultural ministry.
As just one example, he told us of a Philippino cook, 40 years old, on a ship at Trinity Docks who had a stroke and was taken by ambulance to Ipswich Hospital where he received wonderful help & support from Philippino nurses. He is now in London at a QVSR rest home still needing care & support. It highlighted the problems for seafarers being away from home, away from family who depend on them financially.

10. Closing worship was led by Deacon Rick with a prayer & singing of Amazing Grace.

Rob Watson as a seafarer for many years & a volunteer at the Centre encouraged us to engage with the seafaring visitors, bringing a welcome to them.