

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 29TH MARCH 2014 AT 4PM IN CAREY HALL

Present: Revd Andy Potter (Minister) in the Chair, and 24 church members.

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed members present. Apologies for absence were received from Sonia Gumbs, Richard Greenaway, Carolyn Greenaway, Sarah Potter, Binnie Weston

## 2. Communion

Communion was celebrated, led by the Chairman.

**3. The Minutes** of the Annual General Meeting held on 23rd March 2013 were approved and signed.

**4. Matters Arising:** None

## 5. Election of Deacons

Andrew Forster had reached the end of his three-year term as secretary. Josie Lynn had resigned as a deacon part way through the year and moved away. There were also two long-standing vacancies for deacons, leaving three vacant positions in total. Merdelyn Banton and Tim Gillard were nominated for election as deacons while Andrew Forster was nominated for re-election as secretary.

- Paul Burt and Keith Richardson were appointed as scrutineers.
- The voting procedure was explained.
- Voting papers were distributed and then collected after the members had made their choices.
- All candidates received sufficient votes in favour and were therefore elected for terms of three years.
- It was agreed that the ballot papers be destroyed.
- It was announced that all deacons would be recommissioned at the service on the 13th April.

## 6. Confirmation of Office.

The Secretary presented the 'Positions of Responsibility' document listing the leaders of organisations, members of committees, church representatives, those with special responsibilities, and fellowship group leaders. The draft list had been previously distributed by email and at the Church Meeting and a number of amendments had been advised. One further correction was noted in the meeting regarding the cashiers. A final version is to be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

## 7. Finance.

Ian Blunn presented the accounts for 2013 and explained significant features. Ian thanked the cashiers and other members of the Finance Team for their help in the administration of the finance, and Tim Gillard and Zubair Khan for inspecting the accounts.

In addition to the Accounts, a sheet entitled 'Budget Comparison' was distributed which showed how income and expenditure compared to the budget.

In the accounts, the figures for 2012 are shown alongside the figures for 2013 for comparison. Where particular figures need to be explained in more detail, these explanations are included in the Notes at the back.

There was a general decrease in the loose and regular offerings, which re-established the pattern of recent years. This was partly offset by a significant increase in special donations – this income is more than welcome, though it does make planning for future years more difficult. The same amount of money was received from the Captain Pierce Johns Trust as in previous years. Income from premises was significantly higher than in previous years and well above budget. Income from gift aid has declined in line with the fall in regular donations, but we have benefited for the first time from the GASDS scheme, allowing us to claim gift aid on small cash donations. Significant ‘miscellaneous income’ was received – this was almost entirely due to a large refund in council tax which will not be repeated. In the end, total income to the General Fund was similar to the previous year.

Expenditure on ministry was less than in the previous year due to the fact that the Church did not employ a youth worker at all during the year. Unlike in the previous year, no money was transferred to the Repairs Fund. For these reasons, and others, total expenditure was lower than the previous year.

The Youth Fund received a transfer of money from the General Fund in accordance with the budget and grants from the Jack Petchey Foundation. Expenditure on youth activities and projects was similar to previous years. The balance at the end of the year was somewhat higher than the previous year.

The Fellowship Fund has received some generous donations, along with regular income from the Captain Pierce Johns Trust. Less money has been spent, and as such the fund has a healthy balance at the moment.

During the year we received the balance of the capital of the Denning Trust from the Baptist Union Cororation. It is being treated as a separate designated fund and no decision has been made on how it will be spent.

The Repairs Fund is generally used for normal repairs to the building while the Building Fund is used for larger upgrades to the building. The balance in both funds appeared healthy, but is somewhat flattered by the fact that some of the bills had not been received for the dry rot work until early in 2014 – in reality the balance of the funds is now much lower. In addition the boiler in the Clifford Wood room is in need of replacement and a survey is to be carried out to try and plan future maintenance. The Church Meeting have already agreed the expenditure of up to £5000 from the General Fund to pay for these two items as there is likely to be insufficient in the Buildings and Repairs Fund to cover them.

There was a good response to the special collections. The Thank Offering total was similar to the year before, the Harvest Offering was higher than the year before and the Christmas Day and Christmas Post Box collections were both very good.

A £10000 legacy was received from the estate of Jim Robertson. We appreciate this generous bequest and intend to use it for a purpose which Jim would have particularly supported.

A question was asked regarding the ‘War Memorial Bibles Fund’ which is currently £80. That fund was established after the Great War. However for many years now bibles have not been distributed. There is always the possibility of re-establishing the practice in some form. In the meantime continuing to show this relatively modest balance as a capital sum maintains its presence.

A question was asked as to why the expenditure on Sunday Club and Catering was so low. The answer given is that this reflects the bills that have been passed to Ian for payment. In practice people have been buying items for the Church from their own money and not claiming the money back, effectively giving those things as a donation to the Church. In the case of

Sunday Club expenditure had been very modest as this year a lot of previously purchased material had been used. Ian encouraged members not to be shy about making expense claims when they have paid for items on the Church's behalf.

The accounts were approved unanimously and Ian was thanked for his work.

## **8. Annual Report**

Andrew Forster presented the trustees' annual report for 2013. The report comes in two parts.

Part 1 contains the statutory information required by the Charity Commission, including the objectives of the Church and how the Church is governed. The first version of this was written after the Church first became a registered charity - it was carefully prepared following the guidance from the Charity Commission on what information is required and how it should be presented. As the Charity Commission's guidance has not changed significantly, and the Church's objectives and structure rarely change, this information is mainly the same from year to year. The main changes to this part from last year were:

- Removal of references to the youth worker
- The 'Appointment of Trustees' section was rewritten to document those trustees who had joined and left the diaconate in 2013.
- The Finance Review was written from scratch to document the Church's financial position in 2013.

Part 2 is an account of the activities that have been happening in the Church during the year. Contributions were received from leaders of many of the groups within the Church. Andrew prepared a Secretary's report which attempted to summarise the activities and events that had taken place during the year which had not been covered by the group reports.

The members thanked Andrew for compiling and publishing the Annual Report, as well as all the additional work that was required in preparation for this meeting.

## **9. Pastor's Comments**

Andy thanked the members for their continued support, encouragement and patience. Andy is grateful to the long list of people who appear in the Positions of Responsibility document, and also to those people who work hard for the Church and are not on the list.

Recent research published by the Cabinet Office revealed that Vicars and Ministers are believed to be the most satisfied in their jobs. This caused Andy to reflect on what he most enjoys about the job. He enjoys seeing people working together in the Church, meeting together, praying together and growing together.

Ruby Ager's son Julian told Andy that he believed one of the reasons Ruby lived so long was because of her involvement in the Church and how well supported she was. Andy responded that Ruby had also given us many gifts. Julian's comments reminded Andy that the Church is about people, and God's love for everyone. Our continuing mission is to go about sharing that love with everyone, both inside and outside the Church community.

## **10. Membership**

It was formally noted that Ruby Ager, our oldest member, passed away 2 weeks ago, having been a member since 1975.

John Melbourne has applied for membership. Andy said that it has been a joy welcoming John and his family into the Church family during the last year. Two members are needed to visit John and report back to the next Church Meeting. Tim Gillard and Carolyn Kindberg volunteered to do this.

**11. Dates**

- Deacons Meeting: 9th April
- Church Meeting: 24th April

**10. Any Other Business**

John Akec emailed Andy just before the meeting. He offered greetings to those present and informed us that he has just been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Juba. He reports that the rest of the family are doing well.

Tim Gillard asked for the work Sarah Potter has done in promoting and organising the hiring out of the buildings to be recognised, pointing out that her work has brought a large increase in premises income. Similarly the work that Nathanael Potter has done in organising the heating and looking after other technical matters within the building should be recognised.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 5.10pm

Signed.....

Date.....