

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 28TH MARCH 2015 AT 4PM IN CAREY HALL

Present: Revd Andy Potter (Minister) in the Chair, and 19 church members.

The Accounts, Annual Report and Positions of Responsibility documents had been distributed by email prior to the meeting and members were given paper copies on arrival.

1. Opening Worship was led by the Chairman

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed members present. Apologies for absence were received from Charlotte Khan, Keith and Barbara Richardson, Tim Gillard, Chris, Phil and Jackie Norman, Jenny Lane, Sarah Potter, Cliff Burrige, Sandra Burt

3. Communion was celebrated, led by the Chairman.

4. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 29th March 2014 were signed as a correct record

5. Matters Arising: None

6. Election of Deacons and Treasurer

- Ian Blunn had reached the end of his three-year term as treasurer. Carolyn Greenaway and Veronica Henly had reached the end of their three-year terms as deacons. There was also a vacancy for a deacon outstanding from 2013. There were therefore three vacancies for deacons (two for three years and one for one year) and one for treasurer (for three years).
- Ian was nominated to stand for a further term as treasurer. Carolyn and Veronica were nominated to stand for further terms as deacons and John Melbourne was nominated to stand for deacon for the first time.
- Paul Burt and Richard Greenaway 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.
- Carolyn agreed to serve a one-year term as deacon. Ian, Veronica and John will serve three-year terms.
- It was agreed that the ballot papers be destroyed.
- It was announced that all deacons would be recommissioned at the service on the 29th March.

7. Confirmation of Office

Andrew Forster 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. The following particular changes were noted from last year:

- After many years faithful service, Jenny Lane stepped down as secretary of the Missionary Committee, though she remains a member of the committee. Barbara Richardson has taken over the role of secretary.
- A Maintenance Committee was set up to manage the maintenance of the buildings after David Hann, who had been doing much of this himself for several years, gave up this role earlier in the year. The current members of the committee are Philip Norman, Tim Gillard and John Burridge. David was thanked for all of the hard work he had put in to looking after the buildings.
- The Communion Preparation rota was stabilised after having operated ad hoc for some time. Jenny McGee, Barbara Richardson and Andrew Forster joined Veronica Henly on the list of those who prepare the bread and juice before communion services.
- From the start of May Andrew Forster will take over organisation of the cashiers, adding this duty on to the main service rota. The cashiers were shown on the list as Cliff Burridge, Ian Blunn, Tim Gillard and Sonia Gumbs. However, two people are required to count the money, and it was noted that there were three others who regularly help the cashier - Rachel Forster, Jean Blaxland and Coral Burridge. In practice there is no real difference between the duties of the cashier and the 'helper', so it was agreed that all of the above will be shown on the list as 'cashiers'. At present, there are some weeks where no 'helper' is allocated and so the cashier has to recruit someone to help them on an ad hoc basis. It was agreed that in the new rota, two cashiers will be allocated to each week.

7. Finance.

Ian Blunn presented the accounts for 2014 and explained significant features.

- The finance reports through the year have been telling a consistent story so nothing in the accounts should come as a surprise. There has been no change to the accounting format from previous years. The General Fund is presented on the front page and the various restricted funds are presented on the other pages.
- The bulk of our income comes from donations and in line with the declining congregation the regular donations have declined, but not as much as in previous years. Special donations were significantly higher than the previous year. While the congregation is declining numerically, the generosity of the congregation is not declining. Income from premises has increased, partly due to increase in parties, partly due to increasing the rates from their previous low level. Special collections denotes the fact that we agreed to keep half of the Thank Offering for the General Fund. Gift Aid has declined in line with regular donations. GASDS has continued to provide a useful contribution. The Captain Pierce Johns Trust (CPJT) provided £800 which is in line with expectations.
- The miscellaneous income, which is a very big sum, has two components. One is compensation received from National Grid for a temporary cut in gas supply. The second, representing the majority, is an insurance claim following the burglary - at the end of the accounting period, the full amount of the claim had been received from the insurers but very little had been spent as the work to restore the building had not been carried out and very few replacement items had been bought.
- Look at expenditure on Ministry, the tax increased in line with the minister's stipend but NI was reduced as there was a government scheme to relieve NI on small businesses. Andy has not spent the full amount that he was allocated for his various allowances.
- The big picture is that the General Fund is breaking even on day to day expenditure but no provision has been made for expenditure on buildings.
- Youth expenditure has declined significantly. The only regular expenditure is the BB and GB fees and a subscription for resources for Ignite. A £400 contribution was received

from the Jack Petchey Foundation, but that is the last money that will be received due to the closure of the re:create youth club. The balance of the youth fund is mainly Jack Petchey money which must be spent on youth and accounted for as such.

- The Fellowship Fund is slowly creeping up in balance as donations and income from CPJT are exceeding expenditure. It is difficult to allocate payments from this.
- No decision has been made on how to spend the capital from the Denning Trust so the balance has remained unchanged.
- Building Fund: £10000 was transferred from the General Fund. At the year end there was £7500 remaining, but most of that was spent in January 2015.
- We have applied to the Charity Commission to wind up the Repairs Fund as there is very little distinction between that and the Building Fund. The balance of the Repairs Fund is zero.
- Special Collections: The amount received for most offerings was comparable to previous years, though the Thank Offering was somewhat down. Gift Aid is still to be received on these offerings.
- Legacies: £10000 remains from the Jim Roberston legacy. It has not been decided what this will be used for.
- Assets and Liabilities: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced that the 3.5% War Stock is to be repaid so this is the last year it will feature in the accounts.
- In response to a question, it was explained that 'Special Donations' are one-off donations from regular donors over and above their regular gift.
- It was agreed that the accounts would be accepted.
- In addition to the Accounts, a sheet entitled 'Budget Comparison' was distributed which showed how income and expenditure compared to the budget.
- Ian thanked Tim Gillard and Zubair Khan for inspecting the accounts.
- The members thanked Ian for his hard work in administering the finance and for explaining the accounts clearly and intelligibly.

8. Annual Report

Andrew read out two paragraphs taken from guidance on the Charity Commission website explaining the purpose of annual reports. He particularly highlighted the idea stated in the guidance that the report should 'bring the charity to life'. The Annual Report is a public document, and as well as sending it to the Charity Commission for publication on their website, we voluntarily publish it on our own website and make copies available in the vestibule, aiming for it to be read as widely as possible. We deliberately go beyond the legal minimum for an Annual Report, aiming to give as full a picture as possible of the life of our Church and all the activities that take place in the hope that we will give a positive impression to those who are reading it that are not familiar with us.

Andrew presented the report for 2014, which contains 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. When preparing this year's report, Andrew read through the latest guidance and confirmed that it has not changed significantly. The Church's objectives and structure rarely change and so the information is mainly the same from year to year. The main changes to this part from last year were:

- The 'Appointment of Trustees' section was rewritten to document those trustees who had joined the diaconate in 2014.
- The Finance Review was written from scratch to document the Church's financial position in 2014.
- 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. This year, in addition to the reports that are usually received, Tim Gillard prepared a report on maintenance. 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 support and encouragement throughout the year. Andy has regular conversations with ministers of other churches and feels very blessed that he is well supported in comparison to some of them. He is grateful for the work of the deacons – the diaconate is an interesting mix of skills and gifts. Andy is grateful for those who do jobs for the Church which have not been mentioned or recorded.

Andy has been reading Coral's book [*A Wilderness Journey* - a history of the Church] and was impacted by words quoted from Ecclesiastes 3:

*There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,*

Life is complex – we go through periods of life that are great, with development and change, and there are plateaus where life is challenging. The same is true of church life. The Greeks have two words for time, Chronos which is clock time and Kairos which is qualitative time - "The *time* has come near, repent". God is always at work, but there are times when God appears to be especially at work, and sometimes you can only see those times when you look back. Andy wonders whether this is a special 'Kairos' time for us. It is a time of some challenges, but those are often times of growth – is this the time for God to do something special with us? Andy sees all sorts of encouraging things happening: 18-30 work, new families – spring time. God speaks, not just to the minister – significant things happen in church life when God speaks to the members and they respond. We should pay attention to God calling us.

Coral stated on behalf of the membership how much we appreciate Andy's leadership – especially how he has continued working faithfully even with many difficult things happening at home.

10. Membership

We have received a letter from Lewis and Jo Pearson which was read out. Having moved away to Alderholt four years ago, they feel that it is the right time to come off the membership role as they are increasingly more settled in their new home. This was agreed, with gratitude for the time they spent with us and for the difference their involvement made to Church life.

11. Dates

- Deacons Meeting: 8th April
- Church Meeting: 23rd April
- Anniversary: 10th May

10. Any Other Business

None

The meeting closed with the Grace at 5.12pm

Signed.....

Date.....