

**Minutes of the Church Members Meeting Held on
Tuesday 15th May 2018**

Chair: Graham Simpson (Elder)

Secretary: Andrew Thompsett

Present: Lorraine Jackson, Pauline Fuller, Catherine Wilson, David and Ruth Bellerby, Jenny Stephenson, Amy Lanelly, Jim Clifton, Dave and Moira Miller, Mary Simpson, Annette Morris, Lena Parker, Danni Simpson, Michael Cassell, Sally Plant, John and Christine Daniels, Gill Beams, Serena Stevenson, Len Smith, Colin and Denise Russell, Vicki Harrison, Anne Gosling, Darren Brown, Chris Butler, Linda Williamson and Steve Rigg

Total Members Present - 31

Andrew sought permission for Graham Simpson to chair the meeting.

Devotions

Graham brought the devotions from Exodus 33: 1:17

“For some of us this is a familiar story, but for me it has been good to read it again and to reflect on it. We often (and I include myself in this), think that we can just trot into God’s presence, say ‘Bless you Lord’ raise our hands, shout ‘Alleluia’, we go home and we get on with life. God says, ‘If you really want to find my favour, if you really want to see my glory then it will take more than that. Moses spent time to meet with God, to seek Him. He had a tent put up, a place where he could go and he would set himself aside from leading a million people or so, through some pretty hostile country where everybody was looking to put them down, where there was very little water, food was very scarce and there were lots of demands on Moses. Yet he knew that the most important thing for him to do was to set up a place where he could go and spend time talking and having a friendship discussion with the Lord God, Yahweh. He found time to be with Him, in the business of all the demands of his people. He saw that it was important to spend time with God. Joshua, his assistant never left the tent. Joshua was the guy who took over from Moses, because Moses modelled to Joshua the importance of spending time, face to face with God. Joshua copied that and he didn't leave the tent. Every time they moved on and then God would say to stay here for a time. They would pitch the tent and Joshua would return to it to spend time with God, because he wanted to meet with God, to know Him, because Moses had modelled that for him. He could see how important that was. And then, because God was so hacked off with the people of Israel He sent an angel. You will still have the victory. You will win. You will still inherit the land. You will still see victory, but I am not coming with you. Moses went, well hang on a minute, that might me all very well and good. Moses had such a relationship with God that he said unless you came with I aint going. I'm staying here, because winning victories, winning the land, seeing people set free and released is not what it's about. It is about knowing the presence of God, and having His presence with us. God agreed for His presence to go with them. He said I will do the very thing you've asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name. He was still hacked off with the people of Israel, but He said to Moses, because I know you, because I know what your heart desires, because I know your desires, with full energy and intent and purpose. Because of you My presence will be with you.

For us there are lessons which perhaps we need to reflect on, because so much of what we have been trying to bring in the preaching on a Sunday is that its God's presence thats important, seeking after Him. Its really design His presence. As Moses said, unless Your presence is with us then nothing will set us apart as Your people, and if God's presence isn't with us as His church then we are no different to the social club up the road. We can do all sorts of social things, meet and greets, working our fingers to the bone and helping people and support, befriend and encourage them, but if God's presence is not with us in transforming and changing lives then we are no different to the social clubs. We need to have a guard on our words and attitudes. The people of Israel were very good at grumbling and complaining. Leaders are not infallible. We might like to think we are, but we are not. Forgive us for perhaps when we come over like that. We are just trying to struggle along with God, in the same way that you are probably struggling along. Support and encourage one another, don't grumble and moan. If you've got a grumble and a moan, go and talk to the person you've got the grumble and moan with, not with the person who's got a sympathetic ear. Lets keep our focus on seeking and worshiping God, not on other things of this world. The children of Israel, when Moses was away getting the ten commandments, they couldn't wait for Moses to come back. They made a golden calf and sacrificed and worshipped that and in the end that was ground up and they were made to drink the golden calf. Thats why God says that we are not going to see His form, because once we do we will try to make an image like it. Making time for God should be our priority as God's people. We need to get close to God, like Moses and Joshua did, like many others in the bible did, that we read about and celebrate. We say, didn't they have a great relationship with God. Didn't God do marvellous things through them. It was because they knew God and spoke with Him. Cultivate in your hearts and minds a longing to speak with God face to face as with a friend. You might say, hang on a minute, in the bible it says that if people see My face they will die. I don't think thats a physical death, but it may be, but its when we encounter God in that real face to face way, that something that is inside us that is rebellious, obstinate, difficult, is unholy will die. And we might come alive with the Holy Spirit. Thats a brilliant exchange. Together we need to seek God's favour, God's presence and His glory. Lets not settle for second best. Succeeding without God's presence is only a failure. That passage actually goes on. Moses has had that conversation with God and says now show me Your glory, show me Your glory. He had been speaking with God face to face and there were times when he had to cover his face with a veil because of the presence of God, but Moses was still not satisfied and he said show me Your glory. My prayer for us as church, and the leaders prayer is for us as church, now show us Your glory".

There then followed a time of prayer

Graham then welcomed Darren Brown to his first Church Members Meeting

Apologies:

Sue Whitmore, Farrell Clifford, Ronnie Bussey, Alison Whiteley, Val McMahon, Bernard Golding, Glen and Colin Harrop, Dianne Clifton, Melanie Crewe Butler, Ian Simpson, Hannah Cassell, Steve and Sue Parker, Tim Wilson, Heather Rigg, Lee Jackson, Phil Stevenson, Linda Williams and Lynn Foltyn

Minutes of AGM 27th February 2018

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 27th February 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no changes being required.

Proposed: Ruth Bellerby

Seconded: Serena Stevenson

All in favour

There were no matters arising

Minutes of CMM 27th February 2018

The minutes of the Church Members Meeting on the 27th February 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no changes being required.

Proposed: Colin Russell

Seconded: Amy Lanelly

All in favour

There were no matters arising

Elders Report and New Minister Update: Graham

The Tuesday evening prayer meeting has been a great source of encouragement as between 11 and 18 people have been involved. The focus has been and will continue to be for God's Kingdom to come on us and the area of Bentley and then beyond.

God answers prayer when we pray in accordance with His will. As we pray we sense His leading as to how we should pray and for what we should pray. He shares his heart with us as we seek Him and His ways.

On 5th May nineteen people went on to the streets and prayer walked the area around renew127. We propose we go again on Saturday 7th July, spreading the area wider covering different streets. Let us all continue to pray as Jesus taught his disciples, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven".

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. He commanded his disciples to "make disciples, baptising them in his name and teaching them to obey everything he commanded them". We want to reaffirm the church's vision 'To make disciples who make disciples'. We do this by witnessing to the love and goodness of God shown to us in Jesus.

First we 'Win' through loving others and sharing with them our experience of God's love to us. Unless we witness to God's love and power in our lives to win others for Christ, the next steps do not happen.

Then we 'Consolidate'. Take them through a basic discipling course so they understand who they are now in Christ.

We then 'Disciple'. Long term committed mentoring. Helping them grow in maturity in their faith.

We 'Send'. Encouraging them, through our example, to witness to God's love experience in their lives. This starts the process again.

As we seek to follow God's plan for His church here, we continue to seek for His anointed person, whom He has called to lead us into the fullness of His blessing. We had six applicants following the advert for new minister/leader, however none were seen to have God's hand upon them for this role with us. The leaders have met with Graham Ensor and Mary Taylor, YBA regional ministers, they are also prayerfully seeking who may be suitable for us. They have passed on one person whom we contacted but they were already in discussion with two other churches.

We need to keep focussed on what God is saying and how he is leading us. A prophetic word was spoken to us during the Fresh Streams conference in January. "God says I don't need a minister to talk to, I want to talk directly to the church as a whole". 'So each one of us needs to be listening to what God may be saying. There was also a picture of the throne of God, with gentleness and beauty coming from the throne, first to the church then flowing out to the town or village around. Clear the debris and plant flowers first, then plant trees'.

Our challenge and responsibility is to seek God's face and deepen our relationship with Him. Unless His presence goes with us and directs us we have nothing to offer which is life changing. So let us follow in the way He leads us, let us encourage one another in this.

Graham explained in answer to a questions that the applications for the position of Minister were either rejected due to a lack of experience or the fact that for the others the Elders had felt no word from God that they had a calling to minister at Bentley on their lives. He went on to explain that this was not a process to be rushed into and that it was important that we wait for the right person in God's eyes. It may be later that we consider re advertising again, but we are waiting on God as we consider future actions.

Dave Miller reiterated the importance of Gods hand in the process and said that the those that applied had not been exciting. When it is right it will be like pieces of a jigsaw coming together. We are confident in the fact that this is His church and He will speak quite clearly when the right time and the right person is there.

Reports

There were no matters raised

Financial Report: David Bellerby

The financial report is available on request from the treasurer or the secretary.

At this time the church is in a healthy position and the committed giving specific to renew 127, just covers the rental of the property.

David encouraged anybody who wanted to review their giving in support of renew 127

Membership - Andrew

Andrew reported that following the review of membership Malcolm and Margaret Tansey had resigned their membership.

Andrew went on to talk about the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which were coming into force on 25th May. They do affect us at church and in order to comply we will be reviewing all the data which church holds on individuals, both historic and current. There are new forms available for you tonight which relate to membership and the church directory.

Safeguarding - Graham

Graham outlined the new Safeguarding Policy which had been updated in respect of renew 127 and which had been circulated to all members along with the minutes. There were no questions raised in relation to the policy

Proposed that the Safeguarding Policy be accepted by the church by Dave Miller
Seconded by Colin Russell

Graham went on to say that Peter Plant had agreed to take on the position of Deputy Safeguarding Officer, in support of Gill (Beams)

Proposed - Graham Simpson
Seconded - Chris Butler

All in favour

We are all here to support Gill and Peter and it is all our responsibility to safeguard our children.

As an illustration of the importance of their roles, a report was made over ten years ago and we were recently asked to provide statements in respect of that which supported a relevant court case.

renew 127 - Ruth Bellerby

We are getting lots of people from different ages and backgrounds and we are able to provide a safe place where they can be themselves. A local councillor has visited and she will be reporting back to Ross Jones, the mayor.

As from June we will be opening for an extra day, on a Thursday.

Graham thanked those that volunteer and for those that continue to give and pray.

Forthcoming Festivals and Events

Sunday 15th July is the Bentley Bonanza and we need inspiration on how to present church to all those who attend. We are looking at the theme of HOPE, (Happiness, Opportunity, Prosperity, Encouragement)

There will be some information about renew 127 and Who Let the Dads Out. If you are creative or feel that you can help in anyway please speak to us.

On Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th John and Sue Wilson, the missionaries we support in France are visiting. There will be a joint event on the Saturday along with the other two Baptist Churches and either Sue or John will be preaching here on the Sunday morning.

We will be prayer walking on Saturday 7th July and Harvest will be on Sunday 30th September.

August Services and Evangelism - Dave Miller

Throughout August the members of the Leadership Development Group will be leading the services. They will be shorter than usual and afterwards we will go into the park for time together.

On Sunday 27th May we have Adrian, a visiting preacher coming with his family. It is someone I met at Fresh Streams and felt it right to invite him. This is not connected in anyway with us looking for a new minister

On June 16th we are having a time where we look at Evangelism. Setting up two groups, one for setting up larger evangelism events and another about taking the message out onto the streets. This is about us stepping up on the evangelism side. Our vision of Win, Consolidate, Disciple and Send, as already mentioned will not work unless we Win, and then the church will die. This is therefore so important.

Due to Who Let the Dads Out taking place in the morning this will take place in the afternoon.

The meeting then closed in prayer, concluding at 21:10

Signed
Graham Simpson (Elder)

Date: 24th July 2018