

**Minutes of the Church Members Meeting Held on
Tuesday 16th July 2019**

Chair: Graham Simpson (Elder)

Secretary: Andrew Thompsett

Present: Sue Whitmore, Dave and Moira Miller, Mary Simpson, Michael Cassell, Jenny Stephenson, Colin and Denise Russell, David and Ruth Bellerby, Jim Clifton, Darren Brown, Farrell Clifford, Len Smith, Linda Williamson, Judith Smith, Annette Morris, Janet Stacey, John Smith, Lee and Lorraine Jackson, Alison Whiteley, Steve and Sue Parker, John and Christine Daniels, Danni Simpson and Anne Gosling.

Total Members Present - 30

Opening

The meeting opened in prayer of praise and blessing for what the Lord has done.

Andrew sought permission for Graham Simpson to chair the meeting.

Apologies:

Phil and Serena Stevenson, Gill Beams, Sally and Peter Plant, Steve and Heather Rigg, Jenny Stephenson, Lena Parker, Amy Lanelley, Tim and Catherine Wilson, Hannah Cassell, Dianne Clifton, Debbie Millington and Ian Simpson,

Minutes of CMM 14th May 2019

The minutes of the Church Members Meeting on the 14th May 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate record with no changes being required.

Proposed: Mary Simpson

Seconded: Jenny Stephenson

All in favour - No abstentions

There were no matters arising

Elders Update: Graham Simpson

We have come to the end of the series about generosity. It has been challenging to deliver, but hopefully both challenging and encouraging to work through as church together and individually.

We met with Annette early in July. Annette shared her encouragements and concerns regarding CBBC. With Kirstie and Alistair leaving, and Chris Butler's shift pattern, this leaves a hole in those willing and able to lead different age groups, putting additional strain on those who are committed week-by-week to teach and encourage our children and young people. The age range 3-9 years split into two groups is too wide, but with lack of leaders this is unable to be resolved.

A further 'creative day' is being considered, split into two half days for different ages.

Some additional resources would be helpful, such as beanbags, floor cushions, costumes for acting out stories, etc.

We want to thank Annette and the CBBC team for their commitment to serving our children and young people.

We have no potential people to consider for our next full-time paid minister. We have agreed with the CLT a timetable for the church becoming a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation). This would enable us to look outside of the Baptist Union's list of accredited ministers, to which we are currently restricted under the YBA trust deed.

Having opened Spirit Café on three Saturdays, with little response, we will be reviewing whether and how to move this forward into the Autumn. Thank you to all those who were willing to support this venture.

We continue to encourage prayer, particularly meeting together to pray. We have opportunity to explore how we develop our prayer life later in this meeting.

Finance: David Bellerby

David passed around a breakdown of the accounts which showed a balance of £58,443.09. A copy of the accounts may be seen on application to the Treasurer or Secretary.

Other reports incl Safeguarding:

Nothing to report other than a brief update from Open the Book

Andrew précised the report from Jenny regarding Open the Book which is on the website. He then encouraged those present who had not signed up to the members area to do so and offered his help if anyone was encountering problems

CIO Update

Andrew updated the meeting with exactly where we are as a church with the process and how things would hopefully move forward over the next few months. Once the solicitors have clarified some points the constitution will be posted on the website and people will have an opportunity to ask questions which will be answered and remain on the site for others to see. It may well be the case that we will be able to agree things at our next meeting in late October.

Steve Parker asked a question regarding what would happen if the church was wound up. The fact is that all our assets are at the moment owned by the YBA but in the future, any new assets (such as renew) could be owned by the church.

Becoming a CIO has other benefits in that it limits our liability if sued and it also enables us to look even wider for a future minister.

Discernment

Graham said that following on from the discussions at the previous church members meeting it was felt right to return to the subject of prayer and explore it in more depth, whilst we were gathered together.

He continued that he had been particularly challenged on Pentecost Sunday when reading the passage that Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost which comes out of Joel. It had made him think about what had come before, which took him to reading Joel

Jesus said “When you pray” not if. The foundation of Jesus’ life was prayer, talking with His father. We are also children of God. How can we better talk with our heavenly Father?

2 Chronicles 7: 14 “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land”, That was at the dedication of the temple and God invaded the temple and the prophets spoke that out,

This is what the prophet Joel spoke

Joel 2:12-17

“Even now,” declares the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing — grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the portico and the altar. Let them say, “Spare your people, LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

Graham continued ‘There is a real heart cry, God saying to the people of Israel, You are going through the routines of worship, you are going to the temple, they are bringing their offerings, they are doing their business before God, but God says, “Your hearts are not in the right place. Rend your hearts, not your garments” Deal with what is going on inside, in your thinking, in your attitude. Outwardly you might appear to be fine, but inwardly you are not in the right place. The prophet was speaking God’s words to the people, saying “Return to the Lord your God” These are harsh words for these people because they were following all the right routines, they were going to the temple, they were bringing their offerings, but God said “You are not really listening. Return to the Lord your God, My heart is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love”. We come to a God who longs for us to have a right and proper living relationship with Him.

We do talk about us gathering for prayer. We have tried to make prayer available, but attendance is less than a quarter of the congregation on a Sunday. Graham said ‘I don’t think that’s us committed. I don’t think that’s us saying we are going to gather and seek God’s face. I want the church to continue, I want the worship to go on. I want us to have a good worship band and to have good preaching (or not as the case may be) and I want us to do all these other things, but I’m not prepared to gather together and seek God’s face, with my brothers and sisters. I had a sense that God was saying to me, ‘that’s not good enough’. I feel that God has passionately put this on my heart to say, ‘It’s not good enough’. I know at least one life group meet fortnightly so that its members can come to a prayer meeting when they do not meet. It’s a good afternoon or evening off. Sorry, but its not good enough. We want God to move, to impact this society of ours, but I’m not prepared to get up of my backside to meet with people and pray. Gather the people, consecrate yourselves and set your hearts in the right place. Bring together the Elders. Gather the children, there’s no one left out here, young and old, so people with young families, there’s no excuse. Even

the bridegroom and the bride. You might be head over heels in love with one another, but God should come first. We really want to come together? You see, if we read chapter 1 in Acts, it says 'Those who were believers, about 150 were meeting together every day with one heart and one accord seeking God and then God poured out His Holy Spirit, then 3000 people came on that first day and then a few days later there were 5000' God multiplied His church. Why? Because people were prepared to pray and seek God. Then it goes on to say 'and afterwards I will pour out My Spirit on all people' After what? After that bit I have just brought to you, along with others as well.

We are saying to God. Don't make your inheritance an object of scorn. People are looking around saying where is their God. They say He is a God who heals, a God who moves mountains, who does all sorts of miracles. If God isn't answering its because we aren't in the right place before Him, as church, as church.

Jesus told His disciples a parable to show that they should always pray and not give up. He told the story of the persistent widow who kept on going and going until she got the answer she wanted. In Ephesians it says 'Pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Then the passage that we have up on the wall, 'Devote yourselves to prayer, be watchful, be thankful. And then 'Rejoice always, pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you, in Christ Jesus.

There are many other passages in the bible about prayer and encouragement to pray. We like the blessings, but we don't always like the conditions that go with them. I felt as church, as church members we have a responsibility to be able to honour one another and encourage one another in prayer, and in many other ways, but particularly prayer'.

After some consideration t it was decided to break into groups to discuss the areas brought forward from the previous meeting for further prayerful discussion.

These, and the resulting thoughts are shown in the attached document, Appendix 1

Future Events and Dates:

Tuesday 15th September a day of Prayer and Fasting

Sunday 29th September Harvest Festival followed by a 'bring and share' fellowship lunch

Tuesday 22nd October is the next Church Members Meeting

Graham brought the meeting to a close in prayer at 21:11

Signed

Date: 22nd October 2019

Graham Simpson (Elder)

More Intentional Prayer

Why is it Tuesday – Historic

If people can manage another night then that can be accommodated

Should it be on a night of a fortnightly Life Group

Devote a night in Life Group to prayer

Bring Life Groups together once a month to pray

24 hours of prayer

Pray at home for an hour slot or possibly at church

Impractical to come out at night

Every 2 or 3 months

Important to have a specific focus

Intentional prayer time on Sundays

Cyril – intentional prayer with children through the night when the congregation was only 12-15 people

John D – It works through the night

Rhythms of prayer

Set alarm for specific times of the day to pray and get into a regular pattern of prayer

Still need time to pray together

Daily rhythm

Roll out the renew format, especially the 12 noon Lord's Prayer

Celtic community use Morning, Mid-Day and Evening prayer

More Prayer Walking

Two's to prayer walk and adopt a street, at a time to suit

Sign up is a commitment

Handy for leaflet distribution

If you can't walk– pray for a road at home