



## **Minutes of Bentley Baptist Church AGM held on: Tuesday 23rd March 2021**

Chair:            Andrew Thompsett (Secretary)  
Minister:        Joel Ward

Present: Tim and Catherine Wilson, Ian Simpson, Ruth and David Bellerby, Darren Brown, John Smith, Janet Stacey, Annette Morris, Sue Whitmore, Dave and Moira Miller, Lorraine Jackson, Gill Beams, Graham and Mary Simpson, Serena and Phil Stevenson, Sue and Steve Parker, Lena Parker, Anne Gosling, Hannah and Michael Cassell, Jenny Stephenson, Sally and Peter Plant, Colin and Denise Russell, Lynn Foltyn, Jim and Dianne Clifton, Chris Butler, Melanie Crewe-Butler and Pauline Fuller

### **Total Members Present 37**

Devotions – Joel Ward

2 Kings 6 15-17 When Elisha's servant got up early and went out the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. 'Oh no my lord! What shall we do?' the servant asked. 'Don't be afraid' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them'. And Elisha prayed, 'Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see'. Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills filled with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

It might look, sometimes at our church building and what surrounds it. It may look as we are in our homes during lockdown, as we see the world persecuted and attacked. It may look, as we go into our workplaces, or meet with non-Christians every day, that we are the ones who are surrounded, but the ones who are with us are greater than the ones against us. The Lord of heavens armies, rings us, stands with us. The power and authority of Jesus Christ, himself, is within us. And the next time you feel assailed, attacked, that the enemy is coming for you. Here is my challenge. Do we start to worry and get concerned or do we say, 'The one who is with me, is greater than the one who is in the world'. You, Satan, you've got nothing on Jesus.

Song: Surrounded (This is how I fight my battles)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWmjpF613y4>

Apologies:  
Lee Jackson

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 3rd March 2020**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record

**Proposed:** Michael Cassell

**Seconded:** Serena Stevenson

All in favour - No abstentions

There were no matters arising

**Minister Report:** Joel Ward

Secretary's Report (Appendix 1) – Andrew Thompsett

Acceptance of Report Proposed by: John Smith

Seconded by: Jenny Stephenson

Passed unanimously without any abstentions

Elders Report (Appendix 2) - Elders

Acceptance of Report Proposed by: Phil Stevenson

Seconded by: Melanie Crewe-Butler

Passed unanimously without any abstentions

Finance Report and Budget Proposal 2020 / 2020 – David Bellerby

The Finance Report was presented by David Bellerby and is available on request from the Treasurer or Secretary.

Anne asked for clarification over grants for renew 127 and Catherine Wilson asked a question concerning repairs and work completed. These were answered to everyone's satisfaction

Acceptance of the Finance Report and Budget for 2021: Chris Butler  
Seconded by: Annette Morris

Passed unanimously without any abstentions

Thanks were given to David for his work as treasurer and presentation of the accounts and also to Colin and the fabric team for their work along with all those who are involved in Foodbank in keeping those ministries going during this period.

**Election of Officers:** Andrew

'At the AGM it is our usual process to elect officer as and when required. There would be only one election this year, and that would have been for Graham Simpson as Elder. I would ask you to support a proposal, that in light of the fact that we are meeting on Zoom and the intricacies of voting that elections be postponed for a maximum of one year or until the next AGM whichever is the sooner. Once we transition to a CIO (more on that in the CMM) we will be required to have an election of all trustees within a certain period of time anyway'.

**Proposal Seconded by:** Jim Clifton

Passed unanimously without any abstentions.

The meeting concluded at 20.08

Signed: .....  
(Joel Ward - Minister)

Date:

## Secretary's Report to the AGM for 2020

The Elders have already covered the majority of the important happenings from 2020, so in light of a year that none of us would have ever expected, this will be a fairly short report.

Nicky Haylet became our only new member in 2020 taking our numbers up to 59.

This does not reflect numbers attending services, which up until lockdown was an average of 65 adults per service with the evening service attracting an average of 21 adults.

It was not long before everything changed for all of us. We were plunged into a lock down situation with the Covid-19 Pandemic. On March 17<sup>th</sup> the church leadership had an emergency meeting and on government and BUGB advice shut down all meetings at BBC. No services or prayer meetings.

People all rallied and within a week we had a new Face Book Fellowship Group and we were involved in bringing online broadcasts to the fellowship.

Hannah (Cassell) takes the majority of the credit for enabling all that to happen.

At the same time, just one week into the full lockdown and 26 days after coming home from hospital, our good friend John Daniels went to be with our Lord and Saviour. This followed a long battle with cancer, during which time John remained ever faithful, speaking to many nurses, doctors and careers about his faith.

During the first relaxation from the full lockdown we supported Future Pathways (a provider of alternative learning) by stepping in to have them use our premises as a school, having been told by the council that they could not use 'My Place'.

Despite lockdown there were still things that needed to keep going.

I cannot move on without mentioning Colin and his fabric team who have done so much work, both inside and out, during lockdown, Thanks are due to you all.

When the first lockdown was eased, protocols were put in place for some meetings to take place. That included a short run of Life Group meetings, with chairs in two distinct piles, clean and used. Unfortunately, this was short lived and instead of looking forwards to the possibility of more meetings we moved into further lockdowns. Before that happened, we did have the chance for a socially distanced Church Members Meeting where the decision to invite Joel to become our new minister was taken.

We were fortunate to obtain a Covid-19 grant from DMBC which was available to us, as renew 127 had closed but we still had to pay rent and rates on the property

The process of becoming a CIO has dragged on through the year. It was not helped initially by the lockdown and then we had to jump hurdles concerning the Baptist Pension Fund and the lease agreement we have in relation to renew 127. We pray that these matters are resolved early in 2021.

Thank you and Bless you all.

Andrew

Church Secretary

### Elders Annual Report for 2020 AGM

2020 started full of promise and expectation. How was God going to lead us? What new and exciting things would we experience as we journeyed with Him? Would this be the year God would guide us to call a new minister? Little did we know how the year would turn out.

At the AGM, bookmarks stating the church vision were given to all members. In March, the Colossians Bible Study was started, only to be interrupted by lockdown. This was completed by recording and posting on the church website.

We had arranged for Joel and Kirsty to come and visit Bentley the last Sunday in March. This was cancelled due to Covid-19 and the protracted exploration with Joel as our next minister began. The invitation was made at the end of September, and we were thrilled when Joel accepted.

During April, we wrestled with putting on-line services together. What a blessing Hannah Cassell has been with her commitment to putting the recordings together for our services week by week, together with her inspirational work with the website and Facebook sites. She is a great example of service with commitment and joy.

We encouraged the church to get a right balance between God's mercy and judgement and to step out, socially-distanced, in Word, Works, and Wonders.

After much research, we prepared and issued a statement regarding The Passion Translation and our decision not to use this. The statement is in the member's area of the website.

During Sunday services in September and October, we explored the theme of Life-Affecting Priorities, seeing how following Jesus affected every area of our lives.

It was exciting to have a small team prepare the Christmas card sent out through Bentley New Village Primary School to every family. They were also delivered to the new-build estate on The Avenue. A big thank you to the whole team, and particularly to Hannah who set up the QR code and website link.

Sadly, John Daniels lost his fight with prostate cancer. Simon Lanelly also passed away after several weeks in hospital. Our thoughts and prayers are with Christine and Amy. It has been really difficult given we have been unable to make the personal contact normal in these circumstances.

The support across the fellowship with regular phone calls, and where allowed, meeting outside for coffee has been so encouraging. Life Groups and prayer meetings via Zoom have been a lifeline for so many - being able to see each other and talk and pray together.

Now with Joel as minister, we look forward and upward with anticipation and expectation to seeing God's Kingdom come as we seek to bless Bentley with His love and Justice.

The Elders

Graham      Dave      Ruth      Ian