

Minutes of Bentley Baptist Church AGM held on: Tuesday 22nd March 2022

Minister and Chair: Joel Ward
Minute Taker: Andrew Thompsett (Secretary)

Present: Tim Wilson, Ruth and David Bellerby, John Smith, Janet Stacey, Annette Morris, Sue Whitmore, Dave and Moira Miller, Lorraine and Lee Jackson, Gill Beams, Graham and Mary Simpson, Serena and Phil Stevenson, Sue and Steve Parker, Hannah and Michael Cassell, Jenny Stephenson, Sally and Peter Plant, Colin and Denise Russell, Lynn Foltyn, Jim and Dianne Clifton, Chris Butler, Farrell Clifford, Len Smith, Christine Daniels, Burcin LeFerve, Ian and Danni Simpson and Pauline Fuller

Total Members Present 38

Non Members present: Carole Anderson, Connie and Adrian Humphries

The meeting was available to watch on Zoom

Devotions – Joel Ward

1Thesolonians 5:16

'We want to align with what God has ready for us. I bring this tonight, not to discourage us, but to just make sure, that in a season where things feel great, we don't pat ourselves on the back and say isn't Bentley Baptist Church brilliant, but we keep saying, isn't Jesus amazing. All for Jesus. All for His glory. All for His kingdom so that many people come to know, not us, but Him. Lets keep our attention in the right direction. Praise is the Highway. One of the reasons is because in good seasons or bad it puts our attention and focus on the one who will do it.'

There then followed a time of prayer

Apologies:

Alison Whiteley, Catherine Wilson (on zoom), Glenys Kitchen, Linda Williamson, Jessie Spencer, Cyril and Joan Jackson, Melanie Crew-Butler, Ronnie Bussey, Lena Parker, Darren Brown.

Election of Trustees:

Andrew explained that as per the constitution, Gill Beams and Tim Wilson had already been appointed as scrutineers. The postal votes, of which there were six received, have already been counted.

We are doing this now because of the large number of votes to be counted.

Once all votes have been cast, they will then count them, add them to the postal votes and come back with the final result.

As you know this is our first election as a CIO and all positions were available. The nominee's tonight are:

Elders:

- Graham Simpson
- Ruth Bellerby
- Ian Simpson and
- Lorraine Jackson

Secretary:

- Andrew Thompsett

Treasurer:

- David Bellerby

Fabric Deacon:

- Colin Russell

You may vote for whoever you wish

Voting papers were distributed and collected

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 23rd March 2021

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the 23rd March 2021 were accepted as a true and accurate record

Proposed: Serena Stephenson

Seconded: Ruth Bellerby

All in favour - No abstentions

There were no matters arising

Minister Report (Appendix 1) : Joel Ward

Acceptance of Report Proposed by: David Miller

Seconded by: Lee Jackson

Passed unanimously without any abstentions.

Secretary's Report (Appendix 2) : Andrew Thompsett

Acceptance of Report Proposed by: Michael Cassell

Seconded by: Phil Stevenson

Passed unanimously without any abstentions

Finance Report and Budget Proposal 2021 / 2022 – 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 2022: Annette Morris

Seconded by: Chris Butler

Passed unanimously without any abstentions

There was then a short adjournment to consider all the results which had been recorded by the scrutineers.

When the meeting resumed, Joel thanked Dave Miller for the time he had devoted to the leadership, before stepping down. There was then a time of prayer for Dave

Andrew then announced that all those who had been nominated for positions of leadership and to act as Trustees for Bentley Baptist Church had been so elected.

There was a further time of prayer for those trustees.

The meeting concluded at 20.50

Signed:
(Joel Ward - Minister)

Date: Wednesday 29th June 2022

Minister's report for 2022 AGM

Looking back on 2021

In February 2021 I joined the church and began with a listening exercise - a consultation with all church members in which I tried to speak with those in significant roles and meet with each life group.

From this listening exercise, the Leadership discerned that God was giving us the focus for 2021 of '**Get Connected**' and the following 3 objectives:

1. Help every member of the church CONNECT with God in a fresh way to be released in their gifts and service
2. Develop a new strategy to CONNECT the practical and spiritual needs of local people
3. Develop a new strategy to CONNECT our friends, family and colleagues with Jesus

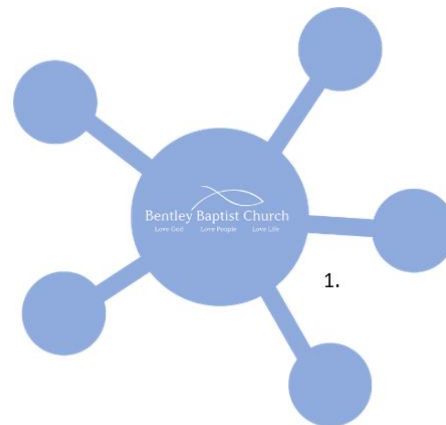
We achieved this by:

- Creating the **Discipleship Journey Strategy**, showing simple 'stepping stones' on the journey of faith. Each step helps people CONNECT a little more with God and with the church to become disciples who make disciples.
- Creating clarity to understand where *each church ministry* sits in the Discipleship Journey Strategy.
- Meeting in the local park and online to CONNECT with one another during lockdown.
- Resuming onsite services and ministry activities whilst continuing online to ensure our church continues to CONNECT with those not yet comfortable to return to church.
- Employing Hannah Cassell as our Web Resources Leader to improve the way we CONNECT online.
- Running two CONNECT Prayer weeks to encourage and resource people to encounter God.
- Running a successful 'Superhero Party' to CONNECT with dozens of families.
- Running Preaching series with accompanying Life Group studies to help us CONNECT and understand the vision and strategy. These included:
 - 'Covenant: God's good plan to connect with us'.
 - 'Get Connected'. Understanding our 2021 focus.
 - 'Stories worth telling'. How God connected with individuals in the Bible and today.
 - 'Mission Styles'. Understanding how God has made each of us to connect others with Him.
 - 'Fear Factor'. Understanding how our connection with God helps us to overcome different fears.
 - 'Faith Factor'. Understanding the practical power of Faith that comes from our connection with God.
 - 'Connect at Christmas'. A series of messages about God's desire to Connect with us through the coming of Jesus.

As a result of these efforts, many people have responded God's desire to CONNECT with them and given their lives to Jesus. We've seen numerical growth in the gathered church on Sundays and new members of mid-week Life Groups.

We also held a Leader's Away Day at which God revealed a clear picture of the shape of our church in the days to come:

As we attempt to make disciples who make disciples through our discipleship Journey Strategy, our church is to become a **Healthy Hub with Spiritual outposts**¹. Discerning some of the detail of this vision is a task for the coming season.



Looking forward to 2022

The Elders believe that our focus for 2022 is from Ephesians 6:10 and the key word is '**BE**':

'BE strong in the Lord and in His mighty power'

In 2021 we received pictures of the future shape of our church and we have a clear strategy to fulfil our vision of 'Make disciples who make disciples', but many of the steps on the journey are unclear and we face several challenges. We will need more than clever ideas and courage!

This year, as we remember to find our strength in God, I believe that His power will be unleashed to guide us in His way.

Strategic Priorities for 2022

These are not exclusive, but they seem to follow on from our discussions and the path God has laid before us:

1. Discern with the wider church the next step in being a healthy hub with spiritual outposts.
2. Develop Alpha team, run the Alpha course and implement follow-up strategy.
3. Explore, discern and implement a youth ministry strategy.
4. Run 'Know yourself to lead yourself' course(s) to help everyone understand who God has made them to BE and where He might be calling them to serve.

Appendix 2

Secretary's Report

So, this is my first report as the church secretary since we officially became a CIO back in May 2021, after what was a long, drawn-out process, through a pandemic that nobody had expected when we set out on this process.

What difference has it made to us all in the running of church? Well very little really. There are certain things which have had to be formalised, but the reality is that the biggest change will be that when we come to the AGM we will be formally electing the Trustees of the CIO.

The Leadership kicked off the year with the Fresh Streams National Leadership conference, which in 2021, like so many other things, was held on line. Yes, it did mean that we couldn't interact in the same way, however it took nothing away from the words given by the speakers or the worship.

The major changes during the year have been the employment of three new people by the church and the taking on of a new property, Joel and Kirsty's house on a leaseback basis, a second manse.

In November, we employed our new cleaner, Karen Wilkinson, a regular (although relatively new attendee) making sure that everywhere is spic and span not just for ourselves, but for anybody who uses the church facilities.

In July we met and agreed to employ Hannah Cassell for one day a week as our Digital Resources Leader. We recognise the work that she has put in both when we were not meeting and since we have come back together to ensure that a Sunday service goes out on line, each and every week.

Oh, and one other person. After a long wait we appointed Joel as our new minister on the 1st February, and we all joined with people from across the country on 7th March for Joel's induction on Zoom.

Before we met together in church, and following the setback of a delay in the relaxing of the Stage 4 roadmap, we met on two Sundays for a picnic in Bentley Park. Finally, we were able to meet together in church on Sunday 25th July for worship and although we recognised that some of our congregation felt that it was too soon to meet with others, it was a joyous occasion to be able to worship together. Whether we are masks on or masks off, it matters not. It doesn't affect the reason that we are here, to offer worship and praise to our Lord.

In October we had first baptism since lockdown when we saw Neil Shakleton baptised. Baptisms are always a special day and this one was no exception.

The Leadership rounded off their year by going away together for a day. A day where God was heard powerfully in so many ways.

Church attendance has steadily grown since we have returned and we now have 57 members. With numbers growing it would be good to see that reflected in our membership during 2022.

I would like to thank everyone who contributes to making God's church here in Bentley such a great place to be. Some of you are mentioned in the reports you will have had the chance to read, but even more are not. Whether you head up a group, have another formalised role or just turn up and see that something needs doing, and just gets on with it, thank you.

My prayer for us all is that, as it says in Colossians 3: 'Above all, clothe yourselves with Love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony'

Thank you and Bless you all.

Andrew

Church Secretary