



Church Members Meeting
held at Bentley Baptist Church
on Wednesday 27th September 2022 at 19:45

MINUTES

Present:

Joel Ward (Minister) Andrew Thompsett (Minute taker and Secretary)

Adrian Humphries, Michael and Hannah Cassell, David Bellerby, Barbara O'Dwyer, Serena Stevenson, Jim Clifton, Len Smith, Burcin LeFerve, Farrell Clifford, Ronnie Bussey, Dave Miller, Lorraine Jackson, Sue Whitmore, Janet Stacey, John Smith, Gill Beams, Carole Anderson, Christine Daniels, Linda Williamson,, Sue Costin, Karen Wilkinson, Steve Costin, Darren Brown, Catherine Wilson, Jenny Stephenson, Peter and Sally Plant, Melanie Crewe-Butler, Denise and Colin Russell, Lynn Folyton and Paul Kendrew-Jones

Total Members Present 35

Non Members present: Rob Vickress, Alyesha Wright

Devotions: Joshua 1:1-9

1 After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, ² "Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. ³ I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you— ⁴ from the Negev wilderness in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea^[a] in the west, including all the land of the Hittites.' ⁵ No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

⁶ "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. ⁸ Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. ⁹ This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."



Three times God says to him, 'Be strong and courageous' Be strong and stick to the cause. Don't look to the right or the left. God gave an instruction. This is where Moses followed me to and this is where you are going to follow me to. This is where you are going, don't look to the right or the left.

When we were praying earlier there were various words and pictures and one was 'seek ye first the kingdom of God'. That was what God was saying to Joshua, don't look around at what's going on, chase what I have for you. Another word was 'don't plan according to your abilities'. Don't look to the right or the left. Who have we got, what abilities do they have. Go to where God is telling you. God doesn't choose the equipped, He equips the chosen. Don't look to the right or the left, go after the destination that God has for you. There was also a picture of a battle and it was all going wrong, then there was a cry that the King was coming.

Joel then showed a clip from the 3rd film in the Hobbit trilogy. He explained that the dwarf army was near to defeat and they had their King inside the city with them. If they had looked around and said that because there were not many of them, they did not know what to do, they would have been defeated, but they didn't. The King came ahead of them.

We have some choices to make tonight. We could look around and say there aren't many of us and we don't have the skills we need. We like it how it is. We could do as Joshua was commanded. We don't look to the left or the right, but we look at where God has called us to go and we shout with one voice 'To the King'

Joel then prayed

Joel asked the question 'Where have we gone, from here to there' What are the testimonies that we can share. Some of the things where God has inspired.

Update on a rationalisation of prayer meetings

Joel also explained that due to the fact that the Tuesday evening was poorly attended, that in addition to the Tuesday afternoon and Friday morning prayer meetings, it was suggested that the Tuesday evening prayer event would be monthly. There will be a specific subject of prayer. One month it would be before the Church Members Meeting and on the other months, we would discern what the prayer subject matter will be. The next is on Tuesday the 25th Oct.

There were then testimonies shared of how good God has been during the last year.

Sharing what God is doing, grows our faith and builds us up.

Apologies:

Anne Gosling, Annette Morris, Alison Whiteley, Graham and Mary Simpson, Ian and Danni Simpson, Philip Stevenson, Tim Wilson, Steve and Sue Parker, Lena Parker, Dianne Clifton, Ruth Bellerby, Lee Jackson, Moira Miller and Chris Butler.

Minutes of the last meeting on 29th June 2022

Proposed: Steve Costin

Seconded: Serena Stevenson

Approved unanimously

Matters Arising:

None

Finance: David Bellerby

We have £76319.45. Looking back at the same time last year we had £74000.00, so we are in fact holding our own. The BU pension deficit has now been cancelled and that frees up around £300 a month. The heating budget is obviously more than we anticipated. We have now received our Gift Aid which was £12000.00. Offerings are going up.

Foodbank: Is increasing in demand and in the last 12 months it has spent £11000.00 on food. Thankfully most of that has come from grants and a few cash donations.

Fabric: Colin Russell

There have been repairs to the church manse. Re pointing and the removal of a chimney, along with the installation of a lintel over the patio doors. The outside church wall has been treated (behind the screen) to prevent the damp which was starting to come through.

Joel: Ministers Update

Power Point presentation. Vision (Appendix 1)

Two key events, at Halloween and Christmas. We are looking for volunteers to help. Off the back of this and a Christmas Event we want to promote a regular midweek group for children from our community which we want to start in 2023. All of that is from this meeting and other groups and what they have discerned is the direction that God is pointing us in. It fits with our strategy and the way that God has told us to connect and lead people on a journey towards Him. It is a lot, but look how far God has led us in this last year. We have an intern and children who have had Open the Book have come into the Renew Centre (maybe only two) but its happened.

We need to keep talking about church growth. There are 130 seats in this room and around 80-90 people regularly attend and at the recent baptism there were 112 people here. That left 18 seats. If a family of four had arrived, I can tell you that there



were not 4 seats together. 25% of those who were here on Sunday have joined in the last year.

We clearly need to think ahead. We don't just want another 30 people to become Christians. We don't want to put a limit on what God wants to do. We need a solution. Too many people are becoming Christians! We need to create capacity for growth. I am going to share so that we can pray the next steps forward.

At the leaders meeting on Mon 3rd October the leaders are meeting with Alex Harris who is a YBA regional minister who has responsibility for church planting and church growth. That doesn't mean we are going to plant, just that we are meeting with someone who is an expert in what to do when your church is growing. Then later on 15th October the leaders have an away day to discern what God is saying. We are going to get the wisdom, get the experience, get the knowledge, but it means nothing, if as it says in scripture 'unless the Lord builds the house, the workers labour in vain'. So, we want to know what sort of house God wants us to build. At the November Church Members Meeting we will share what we think God is saying and do some more discernment and figure out what God is saying next.

Renew127 (Appendix 2)

We need to think about this building, about it's ministry, its resource, a powerful strategic presence. People have met Jesus there, they have done Alpha and some have come to church. People have been set free from poverty, depression. People are having incredible experiences of God's people in that place. If you have never been to Renew, it's great.

The lease expires next year and we currently rent at £600.00 per month. The trustees have met to discuss this and we believe that owning the property would be a good financial investment. If we owned the whole building the two-bedroom flat upstairs could bring in around £450 - £500 in rent. There are mortgage options and possibly grant available to support the purchase. In business terms even if the mortgage was slightly more than £600 with the rental, buying it would be a no brainer. We need to have some discernment here.

David Bellerby then presented some slides to explain the finances. (Appendix 3)

David had looked at some options. Over a ten-year loan period, for example we would have 120 monthly payments of £1274.00, which would mean a total repayment of £152,880, based on a purchase price of £130,000. Rent over the next 10 years would be £7500. Flat rent which we could receive is £57,000, based on £475 per month. The shortfall would be £20,800 over 10 years and we would then own the building.

A number of questions were raised about the limited use of Renew. Joel said that it was envisaged that we would use it a lot more.



We are not asking for permission to buy Renew and we don't know that Mark Jarvis will want to sell.

What we are looking for this evening is an agreement in principle from the Church Members Meeting, that we can pursue this, investigate this, the purchase of Renew 127. If it were to reach the point where we needed to make an offer, we would call a Special Church Members Meeting where we would be able to present all the information to be able to make a Godly discernment about what was the right thing to do. We will need continued discernment as we move forward.

Joel then prayed into the issue.

There was then a show of hands. The question was, 'If you are in favour of the trustees investigating this further, please raise your hands'

The vote was all in favour with one abstention.

Future Events

The Christmas Journey would be the Christmas theme

Saturday 10th December there would be a Christingle Family Event (time tbc)
Sunday 18th December Carol Service (No morning service)
Sunday 25th December Morning Family Service
Sunday 1st January, there will be a morning service.

In January we will look to running a new Alpha course

The next Church Members Meeting will be on Tuesday 29th November at 19:45 following the prayer meeting

The meeting then broke into groups for prayer

Joel closed the meeting in prayer at 21:01

Signed

..... on Tuesday 29th November 2022
Joel Ward (Minister)