



Minutes of Bentley Baptist Church AGM held on: Tuesday 21st March 2023

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

Present: David and Ruth Bellerby, Pauline Fuller, Ronnie Bussey, Len Smith, Farrell Clifford, Chris Butler, Annette Morris, Colin and Denise Russell, Jenny Stephenson, Peter and Sally Plant, Martin and Alysha Wright, Phil and Serena Stevenson, Dianne Clifton, Sue Whitmore, Lorraine Jackson, Graham and Mary Simpson, Janet Stacey, John Smith, David and Moira Miller, Janice Hearne, Christine Daniels, Ian and Danni Simpson, Ann Gosling, Carole Anderson, Catherine Wilson, Steve Costin, Karen Wilkinson, Sue Costin, John Costin, Adrian Humphries, Michael and Hannah Cassell.

Total Members Present 42

Non-Members present: Dennis Filsell

Devotions – Joel Ward

HOW? or WOW! Kill the vision by asking questions

There was a leader of a mission team. He was often killing the team's ideas by asking all of these questions. HOW? So, what he learned to do with the members of his team, when they came up with these crazy ideas, which half the time were a non-starter, every time he would go WOW. WOW, that sounds amazing. Incredible, how did you come up with this, and let them unpack it. Sometimes he would then transition it, by getting others around and starting to talk about it. Often, in their organisation they were not pursuing amazing opportunities, by saying HOW before they said WOW.

We can look at some scripture:

- Abraham bowed down to the ground and he laughed to himself. "How could I become a father at the age of 100? How can Sarah have a baby when she is 90 years old?" God had just told him he was going to have a kid, and Abraham went HOW? When maybe he should have said WOW.
- But Lord Moses objected as the bush burnt in front of him. "My own people won't listen to me anymore. How can I expect Pharoah to listen? I am such a clumsy speaker?" The presence of God had just appeared to Moses in a burning bush and God had given him a mission and said he was going to do it and Moses said HOW?
- But Lord Gideon replied. "How can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my family. HOW can I rescue Israel?"

- “Don’t worry about this Philistine”, David told Saul on yet another occasion, “I will fight him.” “Don’t be ridiculous” Saul replied, “there is no way you can fight the Philistine and possibly win. You are only a boy and he is a man of war. HOW could you possibly do this?”
- In the Psalms, when the people of Israel were in captivity, their tormentors insisted on a joyful hymn. “Sing us one of those songs of Jerusalem.” “HOW can we sing the songs of the Lord? HOW can we worship God when we are not at the temple?”
- You have been very angry with us writes the prophet Isaiah, for we are not Godly, we are constant sinners. HOW can people like us be saved? HOW?
- The disciples were astounded. “Who in the world can be saved, they asked?” Jesus looked at the intently and said “Humanly speaking it is impossible, but not with God, everything is possible with God.”
- Everything is possible with God. Why? Because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Brothers and sisters, just think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were influential, not many were of noble birth, but God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong.

Remember all those characters from the Bible who said to God, but HOW? We know the end of their stories. We know that Abraham had a son and birthed a nation. We know that Gideon, the smallest man of the smallest tribe liberated Israel. We know that David defeated the giant. We know that Moses led people out of slavery and captivity. We know that God triumphed in every single one of those situations. Yet at the beginning, people stumbled, heroes stumbled and said, “God HOW?”

HOW or WOW? God has told us He is going to do something. I challenge us to start with WOW. WOW, God is going to do this. Let’s tell people, did you know that God has told us that He is going to do this. God says he is going to do this. He says He is going to do it. HOW? HOW will come. HOW always comes. In every one of those stories there is a lot to think about. I just want to encourage you church, in this season, let’s just go WOW. God has said it and He is going to do it.

Joel then prayed before the meeting.

Apologies:

Melanie Crewe-Butler, Alison Whiteley, Lee Jackson, Jim Clifton, Steve and Sue Parker, Lena Parker, Gill Beams, Connie Humphries and Tim Wilson.



Appointment of Scrutineers:

Andrew explained that as per the constitution, Phil Stevenson and Hannah Cassell had already been appointed as scrutineers. The postal votes, of which there were two received, will be counted immediately.

Once votes have been cast later, they will be added together to produce a final result.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 22nd March 2022

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the 22nd March 2022 were passed at the Church Members Meeting on Wednesday 29th June 2022.

Election of Officers

Graham Simpson is the only person nominated for the vacant Eldership position.

The scrutineers handed out voting papers and Joel prayed concerning the election. The votes were then collected in for counting. Whilst this was happening Joel gave a brief summary of the Ministers Report

Minister Report (Appendix 1):

Accepted unanimously without any abstentions.

Affirmation of Church Secretary (Andrew Thompsett) and Church Treasurer (David Bellerby)

Both were re-affirmed unanimously without abstention

Secretary's Report (Appendix 2): Andrew Thompsett

Accepted unanimously without any abstentions.

Joel announced that Graham had been elected to serve as Elder for the next 3 years

Joel then prayed for Graham in his role.

The meeting concluded at 20.15

Signed:
(Joel Ward - Minister)

Date: Tuesday 27th June 2023

BBC AGM 21.3.2

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Bentley Baptist Church. CIO Registered in England and Wales. No:1190319

Appendix 1

Minister's report for 2023 AGM

Looking back on 2022

Our focus for 2022 was given to us by God from Ephesians 6:10 and the key word was 'BE':

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

In line with our vision to **Make Disciples who Make Disciples** and informed by our **Discipleship Journey Strategy**, my four key strategic goals to achieve as the Minister in 2022 are listed below (alongside the outcomes):

Strategic Goals for 2022	What did we achieve?
Discern with the wider church the next step in being a healthy hub with spiritual outposts.	We discerned that the next step in being a healthy hub with Spiritual outposts was to plant the first Outpost. We discerned this would be at Renew and worked from October 2022 to develop the concept and assemble a team which met together through January and February 2023 and launched the first mid-week service at 10.30am on Thursday 23 rd February 2023.
Develop Alpha team, run the Alpha course and implement follow-up strategy.	We ran two Alpha courses through 2022, welcomed new team members and have run follow-up discipleship courses for those who completed the course and wanted to continue to explore faith. Many of those who went on Alpha courses are now part of the church family and some have been (or are soon to be) baptised.
Explore, discern and implement a youth ministry strategy.	We welcomed a Youth Work intern (Isabel) through Youth For Christ Doncaster in September, who is working in schools and youth projects during the week and with our young people on Sundays. The most recent developments for youth in Bentley BC have been a Youth Life Group (that is currently running the Youth Alpha course) and some mid-week one-to-one mentoring/discipleship.
Run 'Know yourself to lead yourself' course(s) to help everyone understand who God has made them	This 3-week course ran in October 2022 with around 12 regular participants exploring our Spiritual Gifts, the ways we each connect with God effectively (Spiritual Pathways) and our Mission Styles – the ways God has gifted us to share about Jesus in different ways.

to BE and where He might be calling them to serve.

The feedback from the course was positive and participants reported an increased understanding of their character, gifting and preferred style of mission.

Sunday Teaching

During 2022 we ran teaching series on 'Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power', 'The Kingdom of God', 'Leaders of Integrity', 'A healthy Spiritual diet', 'Encounters with Jesus', 'Counter-culture' and also explored God's vision for our church as we explored the Biblical basis for being 'A healthy hub with Spiritual outposts'.

Church Growth

On Sundays during 2021 average numbers in Sunday services were 51 adults and 20 children (total of 71).

On Sunday 23rd January 2022 the Sunday service was attended by 64 adults and 18 children (total of 82).

On the equivalent Sunday in 2023 the Sunday service was attended by 77 adults and 20 children (total of 97*)

*18% increase over the year and a 36% increase over two years.

Looking Up – what is God saying?

During our church away day and as we've prayed and sought to discern the will of God in our meetings and through prayer and fasting, we believe that He is telling us to discern the next opportunities to plant Spiritual Outposts – expressions of church in the wider community – during the coming year.

In spite of the growth we are seeing on Sundays, we do not believe that God is calling us away from our current premises at this time, but He is asking us to look for opportunities to 'enlarge the place of our tent' by planting tent pegs further afield such as the 'Church Outpost' at Renew 127.

We believe God is calling us to lead people on a Discipleship Journey, to Make disciples who make disciples, in expressions of church that include both the Hub of the Sunday service *and* Spiritual Outposts of Church planted and growing in the community – whatever they may look like.

Looking Forward - Minister's Strategic Objectives for 2023

1. Enable Bentley BC to explore and understand the vision to plant Church Outposts.
2. Train and develop leaders to lead in the Church Hub and to plant and lead Church Outposts.
3. Discern what and where the next two Church Outposts should be.



Appendix 2

Secretary's Report

Well, what a difference a year makes. We have been able to meet though 2022 without a break, even though Covid remains with us.

Our services are attracting more people on a Sunday, with average attendances of over 70 adults and 20 children.

We are called to 'Make disciples who make disciples' and have been blessed with new people and new Christians coming to church. This has resulted in 8 baptisms and 14 new members.

Once again, the leadership started the year with some of their number attending the Fresh Streams Conference.

We had our first AGM as a CIO, and the entire leadership team were up for election. We were joined by Lorraine Jackson being elected as an Elder, increasing the leadership team to eight persons.

At Easter we had a breakfast before the main morning service, something, which due to its success will be repeated in 2023.

In September we all came together to remember John Daniels who had died during covid. We had not been able to gather at the time and this was a fitting tribute to his life.

In October the wider leadership had an away day on the outskirts of Sheffield. This was a chance to discern what God was saying to us, looking forwards to how God was calling us to make spiritual outposts

Thank you to everyone who gives their time for God's work here in Bentley. There are too many of you to mention individually. There are however, never enough people, so if you want to be involved, then just speak with me or someone else on the leadership

My prayer for us all remains the same as last year, and seems even more relevant than it was last year. As church outposts are developed, we need to bind together and not feel divided. 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