

Minutes of the Church Meeting at Goring URC  
On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
At 7.30pm in the Church

Welcome: Val G

Devotions: Val B: Prayer, "My unfailing Friend"

Those present: 20 members: apologies 7

Val G welcomed the Rev. Roger Wood, our Visionary Companion (VC), to the meeting, inviting him to explain the process we are going through since Rev Andrew Sellwood retired last year.

Roger explained that he was appointed to be our VC by the Synod Pastoral Committee and the Moderator of Sothorn Synod, to help us to establish the vision and mission for our church. A lot of ministers are now retiring especially in Surrey and Sussex Synod Area (SASSA) and there are not enough trainees to replace them, therefore we will probably have to share a minister with 2 or 3 other churches. This will put more emphasis on Elders and members.

- 1) Elders: Elders are called as part of the leadership with a minister, however in vacancy the roll of the Elders becomes more important, especially important in spiritual leadership, more so than the administrative duties. This comes from the Biblical background of Pentecost when elders were appointed to oversee the church, of course there were no ministers then.
- 2) Church Members: Members all have a part to play, referring to 1 Corinthians 12, the body of Christ—we all have a role to play with the gifts, talents, and personalities, God made us to be. He also mentioned the other gifts of the Spirit listed in Romans.  
Roger talked about "Every member ministry", during the Reformation Luther, Calvin and others claimed that we are all priests in Christ, we all have a ministry and part of that is to support the Elders and minister when there is one.  
We are in a new situation and we need to go back to core of Christianity—what is the church---the Body of Christ.

The Elders are working on the Pastorate Profile of GURC, which will be passed to the Moderator and to the Pastoral Committee together with the profiles of two other URCs. Although not set in stone these are likely to be Sompting and Emmanuel.

In the north of our Synod four churches, Reigate Park, Redhill, Dorking and Banstead have put a joint profile together for one minister to be part of a team. The team will be made up of one minister, two retired ministers in the group, and a trainee non-stipendiary minister along with an elder from each of the churches and an administrator. It was mentioned that ministers are now being trained to work with multiple churches rather than a single church as in the past.

Roger emphasised that prayer is a very important part of this process.

Several comments and questions were made from the floor: 1) Having had experience of previous team ministries, it would be good to have more help and input from Synod as no one size fits all. It was felt that a business-like approach should be made and kept under constant review.

Roger: Requirement between the churches will be different, with different theological background, the minister will need to be adaptable.

2) Does a team ministry mean that churches have to work together or is it just the ministers?

Roger: three separate churches; the team lead will be the minister with an Elder from each church with a secretary/administrator and possibly including lay preachers from each of the churches.

There will be occasions when the churches meet to worship or socialise together.

As the minister will probably only take a service in each church once a month this will not change the need to find other preachers.

This is still an experiment, the North Downs Group will be watched very carefully.

What happens next? The Pastorate Profile needs to be completed, as does Somptings, Emmanuel's is nearly complete, it is hoped to claim a vacancy by summer. This is a good location, close to the sea and Downs, our church has good facilities including plenty of parking.

Val G thanked Roger for explanation of the process and the possibilities that the future holds.

The meeting continued:

The minutes of the previous meeting 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were agreed and signed by Val G.

Matters Arising:

Safeguarding update: nothing to report.

Agenda Items:

Church Family News: Hilary reported Joan Finlay died on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024 (103 years of age). The arrangements for a service of thanksgiving and a celebration of her life and witness will be held here, GURC, on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 2.30pm. The meeting stood in remembrance of Joan.

A number members and friends are in need of prayer at this time, and we are asked to pray for them.

It is noted that Rosemary Terry has resigned her membership and is happily worshipping closer to home.

Group Reports:

- Outreach: Val C reminded everyone about the Bring and Share lunch on Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup> and the next coffee morning on 12<sup>th</sup> July is for MIND.

- Property: Included under Finance.

- Finance and Hall Lettings: Matthew reports as follows

**Manse update:** New Tenants have been found at the asking rent of £2.3K pm and have taken occupancy today.

**Questions:?**

**Manse Policy update:** No response to my email to the moderator so far – other than to say she has passed it to Colin McCracken to look into.

**Questions?**

**Property:** I have discussed the Quinquennial Survey Report with Property Group and we are in the process of establishing priorities for the year ahead – this will involve making broad brush estimates of costs so we can determine what is affordable.

Much of our planning will depend on determining the way forward on the Sanctuary Windows, which is a key priority – as is resolution of various roofing issues.

As a first step we are seeking to obtain a structural surveyor report to advise on the “method of fixing and also wind loadings, due to the overall size of the opening”. The name we have is also an architect and we need architect services in respect of a roofing issue in the areas of the 2 transepts. Unfortunately, he has been on holiday for over 2 weeks, although he is due back today! I will seek to set up an early appointment and hope we can move on quickly to the next steps for both the windows and the roofing issues.

**Questions?**

**Accounts 2023**

The accounts have now been examined by Jenny Hoult of Evans Weir from Chichester. Copies of the accounts will be available in the vestibule and will be formally presented at the June Church Meeting.

**Questions?**

**Hall Lettings**

Nothing new to report, apart from 2 notices. Joan Finlay’s memorial service will be held in the Sanctuary on Friday 21 June at 2.30pm. On 4 July the Sanctuary will be used as a Polling Station for the General Election.

Notices and Correspondence: A big thankyou to those who cleared the hedge cuttings.

**AOB:**

Christian Aid: Bett reported that from the quiz and coffee morning £258 came in and together with the envelopes and with the sale of her homemade marmalade we should be able to send around £300.

There has been a request for a Baptism certificate, which is in hand.

The meeting ended at 8.15 with the sharing of the Grace.  
The next meeting is Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7:30pm

Signed by .....Val Gill 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024