

Minutes of the Church Meeting at Goring URC
On Thursday 26th July 2024
At 7.30pm in the Church

Welcome: Val G

Devotions: Caroline - Friendship

Those present: 20. Apologies 13

Minutes Agreed and Signed

Matters Arising:

Safeguarding update:

No Report.

August Bible Study:

- Mary reported that 25 people had signed up to the Bible Study including one person who was part of our fellowship and wants to join in the Study. If anyone else still hasn't joined they are to see Mary or an Elder and there are still people Mary has to invite to join in.

Elders Election:

- Voting slips were handed out to the meeting, Val G confirmed that both nominees on the voting slip can be voted for. Barbara Hillman and Mary Redman gathered the slips and counted them. A 75% vote is needed for the nominees to become members, the vote was over 75% therefore both Nominees will take their place as Elders for another 3 years. The slips will be shredded.

Church Family News:

- Hilary gave her report and 2 people who have been in hospital one is better and one has made progress.
- One of our older members is a little confused but really enjoys visits from church members.
- Love and prayers were sent from us all to Val G's husband who is recovering well from a serious cycling accident, hit by a car.
- Hilary concluded her report with the words 'Praise the Lord that he knows us all so well and is very good'.

Outreach:

- Good news: the Elizabeth Square development has people moving in from this week and the Lisa in the sales office has agreed to put the leaflet which has been prepared by the Outreach group and the Elders about our church ('The Church on the Corner') in the welcome pack given to all the new occupants.
- We called it 'The Church on the Corner' because that's what we are and the people living there will see us whenever they go out and come into the estate.
- The leaflet contains our Mission Statement, when we meet for worship, that the services are online, our website and what goes on each week reaffirming that we are part of the local community.
- Mind Coffee Morning: raised £93.24
- Next Coffee Morning: Friday 13th September in aid of 'Love Keira', a childhood brain tumour charity that Mary is involved with.
- The Barn Dance: Saturday 19th October - tickets available in September and we are hoping to offer cashless payments for those who want it.
- Holiday at Home: Last month I mentioned this will happen in April and more information will come at the January Church Meeting.
- Prayer Board: Some people from the Monday afternoon Coffee and Cake group have asked for this. We know we have a prayer book and the availability of prayers online but feel this will be more personal and will stand out in the coffee corner. Therefore we ask the meeting if a board could be made to put on the notice boards by the coffee trolley. This is a social area where we join together for Coffee, Bible Study, the Praise Evening and is easily accessible. Can I ask the meeting for permission to do this? **Agreed by the meeting.**

Property:

- Bett reported a leak in the toilets of the Main Hall therefore out of use signs have been put up, all doors are marked and closed while we await the plumber.

Finance and Hall Lettings:

- Finance Group met on 16 July.
- At the meeting I apologised to Wilf for an inaccurate response to his MoM question at the June CM. I had overlooked the need to scrutinise the 2025 allocation, particularly Goring's scoping factor. Rest assured I will be carrying out the necessary scrutiny when I receive the new allocation – probably next month. At this point I have no knowledge as to whether scoping has been determined since Andrew's retirement for either the immediate short term or indeed for the future.

Manse Policy update:

- Still no response to my email to the moderator.
- We need to consider the possibility that our Manse Income may need to be ring fenced against Manse improvement costs when a new Minister is called.
- This means, in effect, potentially removing this income source from our mainstream Income and Expenditure/Budget.

Property:

- Work on prioritising/costing the **Quinquennial Survey** recommendations is and will be ongoing – especially requiring revision once the **Sanctuary Windows**, issue clarifies. I am presently awaiting the structural survey report to enable us to proceed to gathering quotations.
 - Having put some "scores on the doors" it looks like the Quinquennial Survey costs may total some £35K+ over the next 5 years - excluding Sanctuary Window replacement.
 - Having agreed broad prioritisation criteria with Property Group our initial priorities for 24/25 amount to an estimated £8K+ broken down as follows:
 1. Structural Survey £1.5K - report awaited
 2. Gutter Clearance £250
 3. Pointing £2K - quotation to be sought by Property
 4. Roofs - previous quote £1,340 brought to CM needs to be revisited (estimate an extra £350?) – may I have CM approval to exercise my discretion in this matter?

Protecting the fabric of the buildings is the primary concern, although roofing recommendations regarding the transepts require more consideration with resolution requiring extra spends either this year or next – our Insurers are showing an unwarranted interest in the results of the Survey and our action plan response – this may force the issue as to how we proceed but I would prefer to take an objective rather than a subjective approach.
 5. H&S £500
 6. Decorating the Main Hall £2,170 – we have previously discussed this quote, aiming to have the work done during the summer holidays. Slippage due to the Quinquennial Survey and analysis thereof means we have missed this opportunity but the painter is able to do the work during the next half term.
 - The Quinquennial Survey makes various decorating recommendations and I have asked Property to work up a decorating plan. High on the list will be
 - external decorating issues
 - kitchen and Cornwall Room disabled toilet
- However, we are proposing to put the Main Hall at the top of the list because of its importance to our Rental Income revenue stream. I assume this meets with the meeting's approval.

Agreed by the meeting

Budget Update:

- The main topic for our Finance meeting was the Budget update to end June. I do not intend to give you a blow-by-blow account. Instead, I will highlight the two major factors which impacted our deliberations:
 - the need to exclude Manse Income as mentioned earlier – projected £17K
 - the scale of exceptional spends – projected to exceed £13K (£8K arising from the Quinquennial Survey and £5K already spent on the repairs to the Hall ceiling above the stage and extension of the Hall heating to the stage area).
- These factors contribute to a forecast shortfall of £10K, which position would be much worse but for the level of our Hall Letting income for which we owe a big thank you to Wilma for all her diligent work on our behalf – I should have mentioned this when presenting the accounts last month. We should also record our thanks to Paul for all he does in his cleaning role, which saves a lot of money.
- Given the scale of the challenges facing us over the next few years (Quinquennial Survey and Sanctuary Windows) Finance Group consider it prudent to hold a Gift Day at Harvest and we are suggesting a Gift Day target of £5K to offset the forecast shortfall. The last gift day realised just under £3K but we trust in the Lord and will work with what He provides.
- We also noted the continued decline in member s giving and I intend writing to everyone encouraging that we all review our giving in prayer – I have noted that a number of members have already increased their giving for which many thanks
- **Approval of Gift Day proposal** for the Gift Aid at Harvest. **Agreed by the meeting**

Hall Lettings:

- Nothing new to report on Hall Hires per se. However, Wilma has written to all external groups advising them of the need to produce their own Safeguarding policies in future (in accordance with the new guidance mentioned in our recent safeguarding training. In addition, Wilma has requested updated details of all keyholders as part of her key audit (for insurance purposes). Also Wilma plans to issue new Licenses to Occupy to each group during August in time for the new Letting year.

Notices and Correspondence:

Email received from John Bunker with regard to the new future of our churches.

John Bunker, Convenor of Surrey and Sussex Synod Area Pastoral Committee.

The details to pass on to your Elders and Church Meetings:

- I am pleased to report that we will be combining Goring with Emmanuel URC, Worthing and Sompting URC, in a new 3-church pastorate.
- Separate arrangements are being made for Rustington and Littlehampton.
- We are now seeking an Interim Moderator, to work with the 3 churches, whom we hope may be in place by Sept. We hope the 3 churches can work on the combined pastorate profile, building on the work each church has done with their Visionary companions (VCs), during the Autumn and then be able to get this pastorate to the Moderator's meeting early in 2025.
- You have completed your own Pastorate Profile, which includes the Vision and Mission Statements and priorities for a new minister, as have Emmanuel and Sompting. You will then need to appoint say 2 Elders who might join a combined vacancy committee, to prepare the documents and coordinate the process with the Interim Moderator in due course. No hurry, as the IM is not in place yet, and there is another pastorate, which has two churches which have been without a minister for more than 3 ½ years, who will be considered before us.
- It is a very difficult overall picture, as the Pastoral Committee (P/C) only had a potential 3 further ministers for 13 churches, to make a total of 7 ministers for 29 churches in Surrey and Sussex Synod Area (SSSA). It is now just 1 year, 8 months, since I took over as the convenor of the SSSA P/C and we have had to find & train VCs to work with 16 churches in vacancy, to review their life and mission, within the new Synod Deployment Policy. Four of

those churches have a new minister starting in September. Another new minister started last November. We have in the last week had the last of the reports back, for a meeting on Thursday, so we have had a huge amount to do in that time. But we are getting there, having made real progress!

Questions:

- Matthew Smith asked if Synod Pastoral committee have worked out scoping or examining the 3 Churches. **TBA**
- Wilfred Rhodes asked if the Interim Moderator will come to church meetings, the answer is we have to wait and see.
- There will be joint elders for all three churches which will be dealt with in time.
- Will the Visionary companion to meetings etc. Val G said he has done his job and we have made a good relationship with him and he will be coming to preach again later in the year.

Wilf asked Val G to send 2 questions to JB about the scoping and moderator.

A.O.B.:

Members Handbook:

- This is for information It kept in the top drawer of the desk in the print room. Please do not leave it out if its used. This is a part of the Data Protection Laws.
THEREFORE IT MUST BE PUT AWAY AND NOT LEFT LYING AROUND. Thank you.
- Wilfred Rhodes reported that he had been to Durrington Community Church (formally LEP) who are no longer part of GURC. We had not been made aware of this fact having had no notification from them, so this means we no longer have any connection to to the Durrington Community Church. They have joined with Bury Drive Methodist Church.
- As there will only be 3 Elders from September **Val G** if we could ask Non-Serving Elders to lead devotions as Church meetings and other jobs that may be needed. **The meeting Agreed**

The meeting ended at 8.30 approx. by the sharing of the Grace.
The next meeting is Thursday 26th September at 7:30pm

Signed byVal Gill 26th September 2024