

Church meeting. 30th September 2021

Chair Revd Andrew Sellwood

Welcome

Devotions. Caroline Hibbs.

Minutes of July meeting signed as a true record.

Apologies 5

Present 21

Matters Arising

Bett Swierk. Christian Aid

The new chair for Christian Aid is Archbishop John Sentamu.

This year's Aid collection In Worthing amounted to £8,000.

Their next AGM will be held at Goring URC on 26th October.

New ways of fund raising will be considered and there is discussion around a newsletter where all churches participating can advertise their various fund-raising activities.

Bett also reported on Christian Aid's on going work in Afghanistan

Shoebboxes

We are now registered with Link Hope.

Our boxes will go to families in Eastern Europe.

It is estimated we will be able to fill 10-15 boxes

Bett has requested boxes and if possible, wrapping paper which can be left under the table at the back of the church

AGENDA ITEMS

Andrew's time

Andrew spoke of the challenge to change our way of life to save the planet. Post Covid we are challenged to amend, adapt and change our lifestyle. This includes our Churches where we need to make radical change. Andrew encouraged us to focus our minds on what we can do to, not just survive, but to flourish and grow for God's kingdom.

Andrew also discussed the Moderator's letter to the churches regarding the deployment of ministers. By 2023 the Synod needs to reduce its number of ministers from its current 41 down to 34. Andrew counts towards this reduction due to retirement in June 2023.

This reduction is to do with scoping according to General Assembly guidelines, not finances. Goring URC is considered one of the larger churches in the Synod with around 70 members. The Worthing cluster has not been effective as each church had its own agenda and the necessary groundwork and preparation was not done. Andrew has expressed the need for churches to be prepared for any future clustering/grouping of churches.

It is inevitable that Churches will be working in larger groups in the future. Andy Twilley will be encouraging people to come forward and train as lay preachers/local leaders.

Andrew stated he will be doing his best to prepare both Goring and Sompting URC's for the changes coming.

There are many resources available to help churches grow and develop. As mentioned at a previous meeting The LICC (London Institute of Contemporary Christianity) has designed a training hub which can provide a 2-year learning programme. Andrew and Caroline Hibbs attended a LICC presentation and Goring URC have been accepted into the programme. A

core group (6 or 8) of people from Goring will be required to attend 4 half day training sessions a year and can then present back their findings to the church.

The work will be tailored to our church, and it is hoped we will all be inspired by this input.

Andrew mentioned that many other churches have already benefited from LICC involvement. The meeting was asked to approve going forward with LICC initiative. This was agreed unanimously by the church meeting.

Martin Hayward, mission enabler, is to do a mission audit with the church to help formulate our future plans. Andy Twilley will also be offering time and inspiration. It would be good if we can identify a project in our local community. If we do there is a possibility of us claiming up to £20,00 in grant funding if our proposal is accepted.

Financially the church is doing well. Various activities are taking place, messy church, puppet club, shoe box collection and junior church work.

News from Sompting.

Since coming out of lockdown we have thought and prayed long and hard about the future. We have changed the worship style it is less formal, and we now have a new enhanced audio/visual system. During our Service prayers, readings, music and lyric videos, film clips etc can be put together in a PowerPoint presentation. This has made such a difference for the good.

Shorter services with time over coffee to discuss the service or other relevant issues raised. Transforming a piece of waste land at the back of the church into a community garden we call it a 'grace space'. Working with the local community and in partnership with *men in sheds*. At the front of the church an artistic installation which is changed each month. It reflects on a current seasonal situation and shows the church is active. A monthly curry night open to non-church folk and each Friday night an informal meeting around a fire pit. A new mid-week praise service led by members.

There seems a new sense of purpose. People are wanting to become more involved in the life of the church at many levels.

Andrew asked the question, what happens here if we do not make some changes, do some things differently, what if we stay as we are, or worse, if we go back to how things were?

Post Covid we are presented with a fresh start.

He then offered encouragement to try something different. If we don't try, we won't know!

GROUP REPORTS

Pastoral. Hilary Redman

The meeting shared news of the fellowship and upheld in prayer those with special needs at this time. The meeting was reassured that Pastoral care was provided and received during lockdown.

The ministry of flowers is resuming with people to arrange and deliver in place.

A special request went out for volunteers to occasionally give a lift to a church member who would not otherwise be able to attend. Please let Hilary know if anyone has a special need for flowers.

Finance Report. Matthew Smith

Matthew informed the meeting of our current finances which included the £2,750 raised from gift day.

Little Fishes have given £9,420 for hall rental and electricity

Food bank collection has raised £310 so far.

Hall Letting.

Wilma is doing an incredible job on bringing in new groups and bringing back previous groups. Covid requirements continue to be met in respect of room lettings. Also getting our own church groups that feel ready, back in their allocated rooms.

Matthew also spoke of revisiting the option of Solar panels for which there are grants available.

A detailed report from Matthew will be included in the minutes file.

The meeting was asked to approve an increase from a £500 to a £750 spend by the property/finance committees and the need for any work to have only 2 quotes to go ahead without the approval of church meeting.

This was agreed by the meeting.

Property. Paul Redman

Minister's vestry washroom has a replacement toilet and hand basin. Painting is deferred until a later time.

Children's toilet by main hall needs replacing.

Heating engineers are booked for November to service the boiler and heating system in the church and manse.

Some urgent work has been carried out on the manse roof and agreement has been received from Synod to finance the rest of the work on the property.

Work was due to start on the church roof above the vestry and print room on Monday. The roof above the choir vestry will probably have to wait until next year but some work has been done as a stop gap.

Outreach. Rosina Bayley

Reported on the various outreach activities.

Pre-school puppet club.

Messy church for which there is an online booking system.

Toddler group resuming after half term*.

Skittles night arranged for 11th June 2022.

Fellowship in Cornwall Room.

Table tennis.

Coffee and Cake.

A meal for which can invite friends, possibly taking over a function room somewhere, is being considered.

Other activities such as a barn dance are also being considered.

The next Outreach meeting is on 16th November and the committee would welcome any new ideas.

Notices and Correspondence

An email has been received from Koinonia Care home requesting we put up a staff recruitment poster in our church. This was agreed.

Weight watchers made a request to put a sign on our notice board for the duration of their weekly sessions held in our premises. This was agreed.

AOB

*Reinvention of the Ark. Val Gill.

This is hoping to restart after the October half term.
It will be held on a Monday morning and will be renamed Mini Fishes
The Church meeting was asked for its agreement for this renaming.
Agreed by the meeting.
Volunteers are needed for coffee making and to spend time with children and carers.

Bible Society. Eileen Rhodes.

Margaret Butcher has now stepped down from this role. The meeting offered their thanks to Margaret for all her hard work.

Christina Shearer has agreed to take over this role and the meeting was asked for its approval. Post agreed by the church meeting.

A Bible Society event is taking place at Emmanuel church on 21st October at 14:30. Titled the World in Action. There will be a cream tea and a cake sale. Tickets £5:00.

There was a discussion around the Coffee and Cake and Tuesday Fellowship provision which will need careful consideration.

Date of next meeting Saturday 20th November at 10:30am.

The meeting ended with prayer and the sharing of the Grace