

Minutes of the Church Meeting at Goring URC  
on Saturday 25th November 2023  
at 10.30 in the Church.

Welcome: Val G

Devotions: Val B shared 3 prayers.

Those present: 14 Apologies 3

Minutes of meeting amended, agreed and signed by Val G

Matters arising:

Safeguarding Training Update:

- Mary thanked those who attended the training and reminded the meeting that the second training session is at 10am on Tuesday 5th December.

Parking in Barrington Road:

- Lesley of Little Fishes met the person from the council to explain the need for double yellow lines on Barrington Road opposite the church, unfortunately there were no vehicles parked there at the time!
- After the visit we received an email to say the repairs had been done. Not quite the answer we needed.
- Therefore Val G said if nothing happens we should each write a letter to explain the situation in the hopes of getting a satisfactory answer. So no conclusion has been reached.

Church Family News:

- Hilary Redman reported that there was no major trouble and no-one is ill at the moment.
- She also reported that those who have received flowers from the church are very appreciative.
- Church Flowers: There is a notebook in the flower room containing the names of those who are to receive flowers week by week. It is ready for those folk who are to deliver them.

Elders Time:

- Nothing to report as there has not been an Elders meeting, the next Elders meeting will be the 4th January 2024.

Outreach:

- We were advised to keep an eye on the church dates for Christmas so we don't miss anything and Giles and Susie will be delivering the last of the Christmas services leaflets.

Property:

- Paul Redman said there was no official report but lots has been happening. Lesley manager of Little Fishes reported problems with water ingress and gutters overflowing in the recent heavy rain falls. 'Gutters & More' were called in to fix the problem which cost £125.00.
- The insurance survey mentioned that there is damp in the organ loft and G & M also checked the gutters while they were at the church; finding nothing obvious they recommended that the wall inside should have any soft dampness be scraped away to try to find the problem.
- The rubber mat has been purchased to cover the electrical lead for the microphone in line with Health and safety needs.
- Little Fishes 'Trustee Annual Report': (T.A.R.) ... Every year this report is brought to the Church Meeting and the salient points were read by Paul Redman.

Finance and Hall lettings:

- Matthew delivered the latest report so please see Appendix 1

- Also attached is the Budget for 2024. See Appendix 2
- He passed on a message from Wilma with reference to Hall Lettings that the Rowland Singers will be using the church for a concert rehearsal and the concert itself on 29th November and 13th December. These dates will appear in Welcome.
- Val G Thanked Matthew from us all for the work behind the scenes he does for this fellowship..

Notices and Correspondence:

- Val G reminded the meeting that we have given selection boxes and a Christmas Story book to the children at Christmas and asked the meeting if they agree to the spend again this year. The meeting agreed.
- Bibles: Mary reported that she had been asked about the lack of pew bibles in the church. She asked if the meeting would agree that we should buy some copies of the new version of the NIV that we are using now and include 2 large print copies. It will be a spend of £204.98 which was agreed by the meeting.
- Bett Sweirk asked what was to happen to the bibles we don't use anymore, the meeting agreed with the idea we sort them out and pass them on to the Bible Society or other organisations in need of them.
- Alf Parsons has been given the necessary information for becoming a church member: the meeting had agreed to him becoming a member on a date to be advised.

The Meeting ended at 11.30 with the Grace.  
The next meeting is Saturday 27th January 2024 at 10.30.

Signed by .....Val Gill on 27th January 2024

## APPENDIX 1

### Church Meeting Report 25 November 2023

#### Admin/Finance & Hall Letting

Finance meeting met on 7 November. But there have been developments since then, particularly on the property front. There has been a lot going on in recent weeks so my apologies to Finance and Elders where I have been unable to keep them abreast of things.

#### Manse update

I reported upfront costs totalling £7,418 at the September meeting. These were in fact £7,179 – the difference arising from a slight misunderstanding on my part as to what constitutes up front costs and what is deducted from rental income – accounting semantics.

Unfortunately, there were some unexpected extras, which were deducted from rental income

- Remedial electrical works necessary to secure an EICR certificate £504
- Plumbing repairs due to low water pressure which compromised the hot water system £108
- Oven repair £133.20
- Boiler Service £84

Although unexpected these essential costs would/should have been incurred had a minister still been in residence.

One other cost has been exercising collective minds and that relates to Landlord Legal Expenses and Rent Guarantee Insurance which was on offer from the agents at £300. I presented a lower priced option to Finance Meeting for £231.19 where we concluded that this was an acceptable price to pay for the cover on offer – I have paid this direct from the Church account.

#### Questions **no questions**

#### Vestibule Roof and Front Window

As previously reported we are still waiting for meaningful feedback/advice regarding replacement of the existing Sanctuary window frames with Aluminium and/or guidance on best alternative options. Best guess at the moment is that we will not be able to resolve the present issues before spring/summer.

In the meantime our Insurers have stated that insurance cover will not be available for the vestibule area until then.

Not only does this present us with an insurance issue it also presents as a potential H&S issue. Given the double risk facing the Church we have obtained a quote from Premier Building Consultants to rake out the present sealant around the window panes above the vestibule (where we are advised most of the water ingress is taking place) together with re-felting of the immediate roof area below the window. The cost is quoted at £1,375. We have not had time to secure a second quote but would like to recommend acceptance of this single quote given the urgency both in terms of H&S and the looming onset of winter, not to mention the proximity of winter.

I am seeking the Insurers' agreement to re-instate cover on completion of these works but have some questions to answer before getting a definitive reply.

## Questions

### Agreement **Agreed by the meeting**

#### Main Hall – Stage area

We have identified another H&S issue in the Main Hall stage area where there is extensive mould on the ceiling. Investigations have identified 2 contributory factors –

- Inadequate or (more accurately) no roof insulation, and
- Inadequate heating (the heaters on the stage do not work)

Premier Building Consultants have quoted £4,285 to carry out the necessary insulation works, while Bett is seeking a quote from Bourke & Cooper to extend the existing boiler fed heating system by the addition of radiators in the stage area. **Price from B & C - £1137.60 inc VAT**

I did ask Premier if the perceived H&S risk was reasonable – this was confirmed – therefore we need to take urgent steps to address this.

The other dynamic is when (particularly) the insulation work can be fitted in, given the business on the hall lettings front. Premier could fit in the “dirty” work between Christmas and New Year, with re-decoration hopefully being fitted in to the Hall Letting schedule.

Lee Nicholls insulated the rest of the Hall roof at the same time the Cornwall Room was upgraded. Unfortunately, he is too busy to come out and give us a considered quote at present, nor would he be able to do the work until some time in the New Year. He is happy to let us have an estimate based on photographs if that would help.

In addition to addressing the H&S risk, there should be significant benefits in reduced heating costs as well as enhanced comfort – the hall is difficult to heat to a satisfactory standard as things currently stand – unlike the Cornwall Room!

**Discuss where to site the radiators on the stage that this work should reduce the heating costs. The radiators will be under the windows at the back of the stage area. Matthew recommended we accept the premier quote and the Bourne and Cooper quote, unless Lee Nicholls comes back with a better one.**

**The meeting agreed to Matthews recommendations.**

## Investments

As previously reported we currently have some £50K invested in Synods cash deposit account. I have started thinking about our investment strategy going forward and shared my initial thoughts with Finance Group. We hope to develop a suitable strategy in the New Year and to bring recommendations to CM hopefully at the March CM.

## M&M

Following further representations to Brian Manners I have succeeded in securing a revised M&M request for £36,264 representing

- reinstatement of the 1% reduction principle against our 2023 contributions, and
- a £2,704 reduction on the original request

There is much to discuss with Finance Group around Synod's methodology, when next we meet, but I am content to draw a line under this matter for the time being and to recommend acceptance of this revised figure for 2024

**Questions/Discuss** [Matthew is happy with these deductions as we go forward.](#)

**Approval** [the meeting approved to the above](#)

### **Budget Update**

Taking into account estimated increases in income from Manse Income and Interest from our Synod cash account plus reductions reduced costs for Ministerial Expenses, as a result of Andrew's retirement, and significant cleaning cost savings thanks to Paul's fantastic ministry in this area I was able to report a projected surplus of over £11K for 2023. However, further property expenditure, for emergency lighting authorised at the last meeting, and already discussed tonight will eat into that figure. Nevertheless, we should hopefully see a significant surplus at end year, which is very welcome.

### **Gift Day Total**

The final Gift Day total is expected to be £2,993 against our revised target of £3.5K. I view this as a very healthy result, and when we consider our projected end year surplus it is clear that the Lord has blessed us once again, through your prayerful response – thank you all.

### **Budget 2024**

Next year's budget proposal is somewhat different from those of previous years in as much as I am forecasting a surplus of around £25K. I have made no attempt to factor in exceptional spends as there are just too many unknowns at this time. You will not be surprised that there is no intention at present to have a Gift Day in 2024 but this question may need to be revisited once we have a clearer understanding of what needs to be done in respect of the exceptional spends!

**Questions.** [See Appendix 2 for figures](#)

**Approval:** [The meeting approved](#)

### **Hall Lettings**

Thanks to your decision approve a discount where both halls are booked together Curtain Call Academy have commenced using our halls on Mondays and Wednesdays.

As mentioned at the last CM Rowland Singers are holding a concert in the Sanctuary on Wednesday 13 December - Wilma will be putting a notice in Welcome with the details.

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Budget Proposal 2024</b>					
	<b>RECEIPTS</b>			<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>		<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Offertory	£35,000	£33,000	Ministry	£36,636	£36,264
Rents	£20,000	£21,000	Pulpit Supply	£900	£900
Manse Income	N/A	£19,400	Minister/ Manse	£5,500	N/A
Interest	£50	£1,000	Cleaning	£5,000	£1,000
Investment Income	£400	£700	Utilities	£6,000	£7,000
Tax refund	£7,000	£7,000	Insurance	£3,500	£3,700
Donations	£1,000	£500	Maintenance	£3,000	£5,000
Joint Pastorate Contribution	£2,000	N/A	Church Music	£1,000	£1,000
Balancing Figure	£3,486	N/A	Junior Church	£200	£200
Grants	£0.00	£2,000.00	Printing	£500	£1,100
			Sundries	£1,000	£1,000
			10% Fund	£2,500	£2,500
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£68,936</b>	<b>£84,600</b>		<b>£65,736</b>	<b>£59,664</b>
<b>Projected surplus</b>		<b>£24,936</b>	<b>Exceptional Spends</b>		
			Sanctuary Windows		
			Vestibule Roof		
			Insulation		